Newsletter 056 September 1998

Description

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Dear Friends

It is a pleasure to write to you following 40mm of rain and with spring in the air. The rain certainly triggered the plants to begin their spring display. The eucalypt blossom, which was looking rather tired after a few warm days, has sprung into life again and if the birds are a guide it is productive. It took just a few days for the silence at Magenta to be replaced by bird song, thatâ??s if you call the Noisy Friarbirdsâ?? calls songs! All the usual honeyeaters are present although it is noticeable that Brown-headed and White-naped H/es are not as plentiful this year. Swift Parrots can still be found at Cyanide Dam and in areas where White Box is flowering. Turquoise Parrots are moving back into the park and seeking out territory after wintering in the open areas around the town {like the football oval!} Yellow-tufted H/es have eggs. Cuckoo Shrikes are building. Migrants are returning, Dusky Wood swallows, White-breasted Wood swallows {at Chiltern Valley No. 2 Dam}, Grey Fantails, Fantailed and Pallid Cuckoos and lots of Orioles have all been recorded.

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The wetlands actually resemble wetlands again and White-necked Herons, White-faced Herons, Great Egrets, Darters and Pelicans are back. However much more rain is needed to fill the wetlands and the park dams. Cyanide Dam remains divided by a mud bar.

The forest floor is becoming more interesting each week. The Greenhoods are fading although some Pterostylis curtas can be found in shady damp areas and there are plenty of Maroonhoods out. There are mats of Helmet Orchid leaves but very few flowers. Waxlips, Glossodia major are abundant, Leopard Orchids, Diuris pardina, Snake Orchids, Diuris lanceolata are also plentiful. There are carpets of Pink Fingers, which range in colour from white to deep pink. If you are an orchid fan you could spend some time trying to find Caladenia fuscata amongst the Pink Finger flowers!

Due to the drought there is very little Hardenbergia this season . The Pea undergrowth has also been badly affected. Cheer up there will be good seasons again.

Work this month was tough! The area was full of feral plants, Briar, Privet, Apple, Cotoneaster, and Cootamundra Wattle and was a daunting sight. However we tackled it from the outer edges and confined the pests to a strip in the gully which due to their size and density require spraying. There were lots of wildflowers and small birds in the block. As we worked and later as we enjoyed morning tea we were serenaded by a Red-capped Robin and a Western Warbler {Gerygone}. We took a walk around Bartleyâ??s Block and cleared a mine hole of its crop of large Genista, leaving the tiny ones to be hand sprayed. At the Howlong Road site there is a good crop of seedlings emerging and these will be dealt with later in Spring.

From the Meeting:

1. The application for the Parks Victoria Grant has been sent. Thanks to Jim Blackney for attending to this.

2. The insurance report for 1998-9 has been forwarded to Parks Victoria.

3. The Incorporation fee has been paid .

4. Accounts were passed for payment.

5. Next Meeting, October 3rd. we will host the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalistsâ?? Club. Albury/Wodonga Field Nats will be invited to be present.

Peechelba Plantings.

Doug whipped us into line on a beautiful spring day and 1000 trees were planted. Threats of a moonlight supper ensured were didnâ??t slack. Of course we didnâ??t starve either! Sallyâ??s scrumptious fruit cake, Lisaâ??s yummy slice and Chiltern Bakeryâ??s Apple Twist were polished off at morning tea time. Great weather, good company, good food and the satisfaction of looking back at two roadsides lined with trees gave everyone present a great deal of pleasure. Hopefully the Grey-crowned Babblers will enjoy the plantings in years to come.

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Membership:
Thank you to those who have renewed their membership. This will be the final newsletter for unfinancial members.

Tee Shirts: Spring is in the air and Tee Shirts have begun to sell again. Do you need a new one?

â??Flutterings in a Forgotten Forestâ?• : Scott has prepared this exhibition at the Burke Museum in Beechworth. It features the attractions and values of the Box-Ironbark Forests. If you are in Beechworth you may like to visit the exhibition.

Park Name Change:

We would like as many people to vote as possible. If you are unable to attend you may wish to appoint a proxy to record your vote.

The motion is â??That subject to funding from Parks Victoria, at the October General Meeting the group will decide whether or not to change its name to Friends of Chiltern Box-Ironbark National Park inc.â?•

I hereby appointâ?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦to be my proxy for the meeting to be held on Saturday October 3rd and any adjournment thereof.

Signedâ?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦â?¦.

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY OCTOBER 3

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00am. Bring gloves, secateurs, lunch, energy and a friend.

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists will be visiting. They will arrive at 10 oâ??clock.

There is a small amount of feral vegetation left to remove from the site behind the school. We should accomplish that before 10.00am

Bird Watching on the Way to Work

A member of Friends rang to tell me of the Bush Stone Curlew he sees each morning, standing like a statue on a ridge and under a small eucalypt. What a way to start the day! He also hears them calling near his home. Interestingly these sites have been Curlew territory for several years. Itâ??s good to know that they have eluded the fox population.

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A visitor from Bendigo rang to report the arrival of the Rufous Whistler. He came in search of Turquoise Parrots and spent a lot of time observing them at Bartleyâ??s Block. â??Absolutely stunning birdsâ?• was his comment. He also enjoyed the Diamond Firetails on the football oval.

Category

1. Newsletters

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