

Newsletter 069 November 1999

Description

Dear Friends

An industrious group rolled up for the November meeting . The old enemies Caper Spurge, Genista and Thistles were targetted at Bartley's Block and the Howlong Road site. As I was away for this meeting Scott has contributed this report. Take bits of it with a grain of salt please!

After morning tea at Bartley's it was on to the 'mine hole' where the Turquoise Parrots teased us with calls only allowing an occasional glimpse. We abseiled down the 'mine hole' and pulled all the Genista we could reach. {I'll have to check that one out!}. Next we travelled down to the 'hotel' site and were greeted with a sea of small Genista plants. On hands and knees we progressed slowly over the patch. The plants on the Howlong Road revegetation site were checked and some stakes and guards were removed from larger plants and replaced on smaller plants. Natural regeneration at this site has been plentiful and it shouldn't be too long before it's healed.

Lunch was at Indigo Goldfields Cemetery. From all accounts it lasted until 2pm, apparently the morning activity took its toll! The new information board at the cemetery provides updated and new information about the history of the cemetery

Around the Park:

Friends observed a small kangaroo being chased by a fox which in turn was pursued by a larger kangaroo, presumably the mother. The outcome of the chase was not seen.

The *Acacia deaneii* ssp *deaneii* which were planted on Mt Pleasant Road several months ago are under great pressure from grazing kangaroos. Susie reported that most of the guards were pulled off and the plants chewed to ground level. The plants had been doing well so perhaps as the green pick dries off, the new growth of the wattles becomes a juicy meal. It has been suggested that we should have a 'wire guard making session'. This more sturdy protection has been successful at the Depot site.

The *Eucalyptus blakelyi* is flowering well in many parts of the park. It is possible that a few Regent Honeyeaters may have sensed this since one has been seen at Cyanide Dam, {12th November} and another, in late October, living dangerously by flying low across the freeway at Barnawartha ! So please keep a look out for these elusive birds.

The wildflowers are putting on their final show before the summer period. Finger Flower, Golden Everlastings, Dianella, the late flowering Leek Orchid, *Prasophyllum* sp and two species of Onion Orchid can still be seen.

At Chiltern Valley No.1 Dam a pair of Pink-eared Ducks have raised five young. This is a new breeding record for the park.

Weeds, Another Perspective:

At Chiltern Valley No 2 Dam I came across a Rainbow Bee-eater motionless on the ground. Picking it up I found that its wing was firmly entangled in a head of Briza major, or Blowfly Grass. Presumably the bird had dived to catch prey and become caught. The fine stems that bear the seed heads are as tough and slender as fine fishing line. I removed them carefully hoping that the wing would be undamaged. Everything was fine and the bird flew away calling as it rose. Through its ordeal the Bee-eater remained silent and still which made the job much easier.

Ranger's Mobile Phone: In case you didn't record it from the September newsletter is: 040 7292 553

Regent Honeyeater News: Birds are again breeding in the Bobbinawarah district. Eleven birds were located on private property and seven of these were banded by David. One bird caught had lost two of its colour bands. Fortunately the metal band bearing its number was still in place and the information it provided amazed and delighted us. This female bird was banded by Peter Menkhurst at Depot Road, Chiltern in November 1989, in the early days of research. Now rising 10 years this bird was feeding nestlings. Four more birds were found on a nearby property and two were caught. A further nesting pair are also in the area and Jim will target these as well.

The birds at Corry's Wood reared two young and when last seen in late October the young were flying strongly.

It is of great interest that all of this year's breeding birds have been feeding in planted natives such as Mugga, Leucoxydon rosea, and various Bottlebrushes.

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY DECEMBER 4TH WILL BE A TEA MEETING

Meet at Bartley's Block at 3pm. BYO tea, gloves, torch.

We will do a final clean up of the Genista in the afternoon.

Afternoon walk with spotlight walk in the evening probably around Bartley's Block. Contact: 03 57 261 484

Category

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