

Newsletter 085 May 2001

Description

Dear Friends

On another glorious autumn day Friends attacked the ferals on Brady's Bushland Reserve and removed the last of the rubbish. Bridal Creeper was sprayed, Briar Rose dug out and a large Cootamundra Wattle was felled. One bird, an Eastern Yellow Robin, was added to the fauna list. Now we await spring to add to the flora records. Someone who had visited the reserve last year remarked that it was a rubbish dump. A pleasant surprise awaited him for this visit. It really is great to have made a difference. Thanks everyone.

On to Frogs Hollow for morning tea and a chat. Lots of juvenile ferals there especially Bridal Creeper. However a pair of sharp-eyed young members had us working hard with the spray as we worked our way across the block. Briar, some Hawthorn and thistles were dealt with while the Blackberries were left for Parks crew to spray. Six years ago Friends first targeted Frogs Hollow's growth of fruit trees and other ferals and after several follow-up sessions now only a few seedlings are found.

The Ironbark is flowering well at present and scattered White Box trees are in flower. All the honeyeaters can be found but numbers are still low with the exception of the resident Yellow-tufted and Fuscous. Only one Swift Parrot was seen. It seems that central Victoria has all the Swift Parrots this year. Maybe when our White Box bursts into flower in the coming months they will come this way.

Regent Honeyeaters are still around but very difficult to locate as they are not in good voice. Interestingly one has been reported from Bairnsdale so they do get around! Amongst the plants we noted many young Grevillea Alpina, Goldfields Grevillea. This shrub suffered greatly in the drought years so its reappearance is pleasing, birds enjoy the nectar, Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters like to nest in it, Turquoise Parrots eat the ripening ovaries and humans enjoy the many shades of red-orange in its flowers. Pterostylis parviflora, Red-tip Greenhood is plentiful this year.

Greenhill Dam has been an interesting spot over the past month. Purple-crowned Lorikeets were unusual visitors and though not unusual, but very entertaining, parties of Gang Gangs are regularly coming to drink in the evenings. Watching the adults feeding their begging young and then refusing to take any further notice of them is quite funny. The adult male and female birds then proceed to preen each other, ignoring the begging behaviour of the offspring. The grooming was not restricted to the head and neck as we observed the female carefully groom the wings of the male. Their 'creaky door' calls announce their arrival, presence and departure.

Bag Shelter Moths and Processionary Caterpillars

Thanks to the members who responded to the call for further information on these. It was frustrating trying to track down the species which construct the ground-level tent shelters. Help came in the form of the Wildlife Australia magazine on the page entitled 'Young and Wild' a page for young naturalists written by Stuart Traynor.

The species that builds the bag in the foliage, is Ochrogaster contraria, Itchy Grubs. This species can be seen on the Freeway Wattles but I have yet to see it in the park. The tent building species is Ochrogaster infusa. According to the article the caterpillars emerge at night to feed and leave a silk trail to find their way back to the tent. However, I was reading an article by Graham Pizzey on his observations of Processionary Caterpillars in which he states that he has looked for this silk trail and has been unable to find one. Next time we see them closer inspection is required.

Affiliation with Environment Victoria: A decision was made to take up affiliation with this group.

Friends of Warbys Trip May 12th. Meet at Chiltern P.O. at 9.00am

Friends will be doing some tasks in the Arboretum and walking the Friends of Warby's Walk Track. It will be good to see what another group achieves and share ideas. Hope to see you there.

Newsletter by Email If you have an email address and wish to receive your newsletter in that form please let me know. It will save quite a lot of postage, paper and time.[Roy here - I will send individual e-mails this time. Please let us know if you are willing to receive a bulk mailing. i.e. a lot of addresses listed]

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY JUNE 3 MEET AT CHILTERN POST OFFICE AT 10.00AM NOTE TIME CHANGE

Nest box/log surveying. Contact Neville Bartlett 0260 208 632

Bring lunch, energy and a friend. This activity will also take place on Saturday 2nd, meet at 9.00 at the Post Office.

The activity will continue on Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th Please contact Eileen on 0357 261 484 if you are available to help on these days. Bruce Quin, who undertook the Turquoise Parrot study will be present on all days.

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN PARK inc MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL. Membership of \$10.00 falls due on June 30th .

Please find enclosed my membership of \$10.00 for 2001-2002. Membership covers the whole family and 11 newsletters.

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Category

1. Newsletters

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