

Newsletter 205 April 2012

Description

The April 2012 Newsletter is now available

Dear Friends,

Our meeting day fell on April Fools Day and the first day after the end of daylight saving. Only one member got caught out and HE shall remain nameless. On a beautiful autumn morning it was a pleasure to be working at Chiltern Valley No 2 Dam.



A fantastic group of workers tackled the many tasks. Peter made wire guards to foil the hares and kangaroos which are particularly attracted to the young White Cypress Pines. Neville and Richard cleared the walking track while the rest of us sprayed, hoed thistles, installed the guards and prepared the holes for the replacement plants.



Morning tea was well deserved. Over lunch we discussed the bird species we should include on the pamphlet. Birds for the day included Whistling Kite, Little Eagle and a pair of Brown Falcons calling overhead. Bush birds included White-plumed and Black-chinned Honeyeaters, Golden and Rufous

Whistlers, Fairy Wrens, Black-faced and White-bellied Cuckoo shrikes, Willie Wagtail and Grey Fantail, chattering Red-rumped Parrots and Eastern Rosellas.



Around the gate were Diamond Firetails and White-browed Babbblers. Waterbirds were scarce as the dam level is still quite high. A most enjoyable and productive day ended around 3pm. Park bird brochure: Work on this is progressing well. If you wish to contribute to the selection of species for this project please send your suggestions to : nulgerong@westnet.com.au for consideration. With over 200 birds on our park list choosing around 80 species will be a challenge.

Rutherglen Conservation Reserve

Five members undertook nest box checking with some great results. From the fourteen boxes six were occupied, two had bees in residence, six housed animals, five were unoccupied and one was missing. Two Tuans and ten gliders were recorded. Very satisfying. The mosquitoes were in plague proportions so the repellent was well used. Birds were relatively scarce, fantails, whistlers, weebills and grey butcherbird were recorded. An unidentified raptor puzzled all of us and we ended up deciding it was a Little Eagle. The light was very poor and the bird was not very co-operative. On the ground there were drifts of the pea Variable Glycine, much of it displaying spikes of purple flowers. Two new plants were recorded for the block. River mint, mentha australis, much of it bearing small white flowers. It puzzled us so Neville Walsh kindly identified it for us. If only we had crushed the leaves the fragrance would have given its identity away. The other plant was Haloragis heterophylla, a Raspwort . Spring may well bring forth more new species following the wet summer.

Vale Midge Kench Friends were saddened by the recent passing of member Midge Kench. Midge was a supporting member who had battled illness for some time.

Around the park

White Box is in good bud and some is in flower. Swift Parrots have reached the mainland so if you are after a Swift Parrot sighting, target the White Box.

The winter migrants are showing up, Golden Whistlers are in good voice, there are Gang Gangs around Bartley's Block and if you are lucky still Scarlet Honeyeaters. The three species of Red Robins are brightening the bush. So far there are no reports of Regent Honeyeaters anywhere. We will keep

looking and hoping.

Fuel reduction burns have been carried out on Callitris Track, 70ha, White Box Rd /Muffler Track, 70 ha and Mosquito Track, 70 ha. The fox baiting program is underway. So far we have had about 25-30% bait uptake. Baiting program was from 20/02/12 to 20/03/12. Pigs continue to be a problem. Please report any sightings to Parks Victoria on 0357 208 194 This will assist with the location for setting the traps.

Rainfall:

March: 296.4 mm over 8 days Yearly total to date: 497.9mm Over 22 days

NEXT MEETING : SATURDAY MAY 5th

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00 AM BYO chair, water, binocs, friend, repellent. Action on Tuan enclosures. Weeding, pruning, byo gloves and tools you are comfortable using. Afternoon walk. Lunch at Greenhill Dam. Contact in the field: Eileen 0407 486 480 or 57 261 484 or Neville on 0412 399 439

Category

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