

Newsletter 208 July 2012

Description

Dear Friends,

After a very heavy frost we were presented with a glorious sunny day as we worked at Chiltern Valley No 2 Dam. We were happy to welcome three members and two visitors from Melbourne who helped with the tasks at hand which included hoeing thistles around the hide, walking track maintenance, spraying and tree guard construction and placement. After a spot of bird watching morning tea was taken at the dam entrance where we basked in sunshine and chatted.



The entrance plantation created four years ago was in need of tidying up so all hands set to removing old plastic guards and collection of stakes for further use. While doing this we discovered quite a few Bull-oaks and White Cypress Pines which were still the target of rabbits and hares.

Arrangements were made to purchase tall wire and stakes to protect the struggling plants. This plantation has been very successful and what was once an area of weedy grasses is now pleasantly vegetated with local species resulting in a more pleasing space and an increase in bird activity.

Lunch, by now well deserved, was enjoyed at Bartley's Block before we spent the afternoon checking nest boxes. Our first batch of eight boxes yielded four boxes containing very sleepy animals.



Two housed Squirrel Glider and two housed Sugar Gliders rolled into a huddle so tight we could only guess at how many were in the boxes.

Our next set of boxes, high up on a ridge yielded no animals but all had signs of use. By now it was past 4pm and the cold was fast descending so a great day concluded. Tuans are opportunistic animals. Susie Duncan sent a photo of one which was utilising a mail box!



Around the park

Winter has brought its own signature to the park by way of colourful fungi,





the first blossom of the Golden Wattle (spotted on June 22nd on Ballarat Road) early troops of Nodding Grenhoods and scattered flowers on some pea species.



Some heavy frosts after a wet period have made the ground litter soft and silent to walk over.

There is a superb stand of Western Golden-tip on Magenta Track. Like Golden Wattle and peas, this uncommon pea species has thrived since its germination post the burn two years ago. This flower is featured on this month's calendar page. The fire has also helped the Cootamundra Wattles to emerge and Friends have attended to them!

Still of concern, is the lack of sightings for the Hooded Robin so if anyone records this species in the park or surrounds please let me know. Presently they are absent from their usual spots and despite having six people surveying for Swift Parrots and Regents none were seen. However there are still Swift Parrots on White Box Road near Rubida Track.

From the Ranger's Office

Contractors have been spraying Bridal creeper and will continue over next month. Grader has finished on flood damage restoration in Mt Pilot due to wet weather. Further flood recovery works will be undertaken when conditions suit later in the year. Three old timber footbridges have been replaced on White Box walking track with new steel and plastic structures.

Rainfall

June 22.6 mm over 6 days. Year to date: 566.4 mm 39 over days.

NEXT MEETING : SUNDAY AUGUST 5TH

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00 AM BYO chair, water, binocs, friend, lunch..We will tidy up Tuan enclosures and in the afternoon do some nest box checking and seeking early orchids. Hope you can be there to enjoy! Contact in the field: Eileen 0407 486 480 or 57 261 484

BIODIVERSITY WEEK SEPTEMBER

Wildflower Walkabout, Chiltern section of the Chiltern Mt Pilot National Park. Thursday September 20th. If interested place this date in your diary. Details in August newsletter

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN NATIONAL PARK inc MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership expires on June 30th 2012 and can be renewed by following the procedures on the [membership page of the Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot Park](#)

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