



Friends of Chiltern Mt-Pilot National Park Inc.

Newsletter No. 355 May - June 2026

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FIELD DAYS

April 12th - Bartley's Block

It was a good turn out for our April Field Day with 12 of us heading to Bartley's Block (Howlong Rd, Chiltern) to remove Caper spurge; check nestboxes; map the large patch of blackberry and remove some smaller patches.

We pulled out hundreds and hundreds of Caper spurge plants, many of them growing within the grass tussocks.

Caper spurge (Euphorbia lathyris) is regarded as an environmental weed in Vic, Tas and the ACT. It has been cultivated as a garden ornamental. In Victoria it is listed as an invasive weed of riparian shrubland (i.e. along rivers or wetlands), and riverine escarpment shrubland plant communities.

It is poisonous to humans and livestock and its milky sap can cause dermatitis and eye irritation.
Weeds of Australia



Some had seed heads, as shown in the image on the right.





The largest patch of Blackberry was mapped (Google maps 'pin drop') and Parks Vic will be advised of its location.



A smaller but significant patch of blackberry was removed by a few energetic souls, using mattocks and picks. Several other runners were also removed in the surrounding area.

Thank you everyone for your hard work, and to Tony and others who returned the next day to remove even more of the Caper spurge. It is an ongoing problem on the Grasslands Block but it is hoped that our regular visits can keep it under control.

Liz Maartin

Nest box monitoring

The nestbox group found:

- two boxes with Tuan nests
- one box with a Tuan hidden down in residence
- one box with (we presume) 2 Krefft's gliders.



The team also met up with Sean Dooley on his block and checked his boxes too, quite a bit of Tuan evidence there.

Mick Webster



May 2nd - Grasslands walk and talk with Neville Bartlett

A clear and mild May morning saw 17 of us at Grasslands Block (Howlong Rd, Chiltern) to hear Neville speak about its history, and to view the various revegetation plantings that Friends has been involved with over the past 10 years.

In July 2025, Neville wrote a piece for the Friends Newsletter about the recent history and revegetation progress at Grasslands. See Newsletter #350 on the Friends website, or follow the link: <https://friendsofchiltern.au/newsletter-350-july-aug-2025>

The walk and talk on May 2nd provided the opportunity to see things 'up close' and hear more about the process which saw a privately owned block of land become part of the Chiltern-Mt Pilot NP. The transformation involved planting more than 4,200 tubestock (trees and shrubs) during 6 planting 'events', and took lots of hard work over many Field Days to water, weed and remove plant guards.

Some of the original group who were involved with the biggest revegetation event 2 days in 2018 where 4,000 plants were put in the ground. Many of these plants, now well established, can be seen in the mid-ground.

Neville commented that the current thinking is only 5% of plantings should include larger trees such as Eucalypts. The majority should be smaller or under storey plants such as wattles.

Successful revegetation around the 2 eastern dams has helped to stabilise erosion. Hedge, Spreading, Golden and Varnish wattles were planted.

We took the opportunity at the May Field Day to formally acknowledge the many years of service Neville has given to the group. From joining in 1995 Neville has been a general committee member for 4 years; Secretary for 16 years; President for 4 years; Treasurer for 2 years; Newsletter editor for 6 years, and the driving force behind the yearly Calendar (10 years or more). Our most sincere thanks go to Neville for the countless hours he has given as a volunteer.

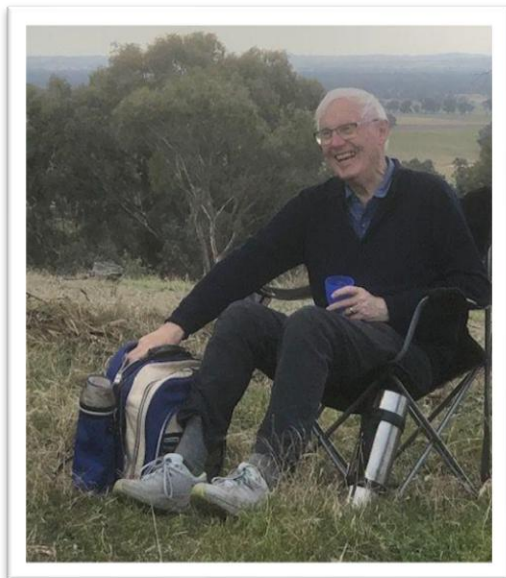
THANK YOU NEVILLE!!!!

It was wonderful to be joined by some 'old hands' for Neville's morning tea which was held at the top of Grasslands with its amazing views.



Thank you Neville for taking the time to show us around Grasslands. And thanks to all for helping celebrate with us, and to Ira Robinson for the great photos of Neville and the group 😊

Liz Maartin



FUNDRAISING: DISCOVER CHILTERN - MT PILOT NATIONAL PARK

Indigo Shire Council sponsored this event to encourage people to discover the local environment. We had 30 hardy people turn up on a cold and slightly wet afternoon learning about Mt Pilot and surrounds. A highlight was seeing some greenhood orchids along the walk. Jim Blackney was very informative and kept the audience engaged and entertained for the entire two hours. A special thank you to Kerrie Warburton and Millie Gunner from Ovens Landcare Network Inc., who worked tirelessly with Liz Maartin to make this event such a success. Thank you also to the members that catered for the event. The funding allowed for a print re-run of the bird brochures.

Chiltern–Mt Pilot National Park showcases two distinct geological landscapes that tell the story of hundreds of millions of years of Earth's history. The Chiltern section is formed from ancient marine sediments, including sandstone, shale and mudstone, deposited on the floor of a deep ocean around 450–490 million years ago. These rocks have weathered over time to create the gently undulating hills that support the region's iconic Box-Ironbark forests.



In contrast, the Mt Pilot section is dominated by granite that was deep underground during the Devonian Period, approximately 360–405 million years ago. The eastern part of the park, including the **Mt Pilot Range**, is dominated by the **Mt Pilot Batholith**, a large body of granite that intruded into older rocks during the Devonian Period. Over millions of years, erosion has exposed the rugged granite hills, striking boulder formations and scenic features such as Woolshed Falls that are characteristic of the area today.

The Chiltern–Mt Pilot landscape is the product of **hundreds of millions of years of weathering and erosion by water**. The dramatic granite outcrops, rocky gullies and creek valleys are classic examples of an ancient Australian landscape that has evolved through prolonged erosion under relatively stable geological conditions.

Tanya Thompson



COMMITTEE NEWS

The committee meet bi-monthly and we always have a productive meeting. We have decided to replace the signage on Whitebox Walk, using existing funds. Quotes have been sourced and we are in the process of reviewing the content of the current signs, updating that content and placing an order for new signs. New signs will utilize the existing stands, as they are in good condition.

The committee unanimously and enthusiastically bestowed Life Membership for Neville Bartlett, due to his long standing and continuing involvement in the organisation. Please congratulate Neville when you next see him.

You may have notice a new logo showcasing the trunk of an ironbark. This has been updated as the old logo had the regent honeyeater, which sadly is no longer found in the park.

All members are encouraged to share any ideas they have for the groups' activities, field days etc. Let the committee know what you would like to be involved in!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2026-2027 IS NOW DUE.

The cost is \$20/year for an individual/couple/family. Please see the form attached to complete and return. Any questions don't hesitate to contact Liz:
secretary@friendsofchiltern.org.au or 0423406858

RAINFALL- MICK WEBSTER

Total for April 25mm - mean is 48mm

Total for May 86mm - mean is 62mm

Total for year-to-date 319mm (mean is 241mm) The wettest May since 2019

Total for same period last year was 151mm

Looks like June might start well too!

The average annual rainfall for Chiltern is 693 mm.

NEXT FIELD DAY:

Saturday July 4th - Removing olives at Mt Ochertyre

If you are unsure on the day, you can call Liz: 0423 406 858

REMAINING FIELD DAY DATES FOR 2026:

Saturday 4th July, Sunday 2nd August, Saturday 5th September (AGM and talk), Sunday 4th October, Saturday 7th November and our end of year gathering on Sunday 6th December 2026.

NB: For even months, the field day is held on the first Sunday of the month and for odd months, it is held on the first Saturday of the month.

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