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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – March 2014

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaean.net>
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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter.

During the next month there will be a number of Green Walks in the Park. The program aims to get more people walking, more often, in more local parks, state parks and bushland reserves. It is a Heart Foundation initiative, and further information about the range of Green Walks is available at <http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/active-living/Pages/green-walks.aspx>

The walks that are planned in Morwell National Park during March are:

Saturday, March 8
Sunday, March 9
Tuesday, March 18
Sunday, March 30
Monday, March 31

In other news, Matt has found a native species of fish in Billy's Creek that was not on record up to now. Matt had seen Tupong in the lower reaches of Billy's Creek as a kid and had caught them in the Morwell River. Last month, he could have sworn he saw a pair in the pool below the weir wall. Then during an all-night mothing session he visited the weir and was convinced that around a dozen Tupong could be seen resting on the bottom. Returning there with some worms and small hooks he managed to land 8. He then ventured further downstream and tried a couple of more spots but no more Tupong were located.

The Tupong, *Pseudaphritis urvillii* is a bottom-dweller of brackish estuaries, but also inhabiting slow-flowing freshwater streams. It is common in coastal drainages of Tasmania and south-eastern mainland from the Murray River (SA) to Bega (NSW). Usually found near the coast.

The fish that Matt caught were returned unharmed to the creek.



Photograph by: Matt Campbell

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February Activity report

At this activity we had John, Matt, Beryl, Brenda, Wendy and Darren. The group met in the Junction Road car park and decided on a plan for the day. Our plan for the day had to take into account we had no access to the shed and no access to the tools, poisons and waders. We will need to look into getting more keys to shed, so that we avoid this situation in the future. Luckily we could open the gates since Matt had keys to these.

The group divided into two groups. Matt, John and Darren used the chainsaw to remove some trees down across Billy's Weir Track while Beryl, Brenda and Wendy undertook weed removal. The weed removal group started from the car park and worked upstream. They stuck mainly to the banks of the creek and sometimes entered the creek as far as their gumboots would allow. Fortunately the creek is low after the recent dry spell. They found some thick patches of ivy that will need spraying to be fully removed.

The other group collected the chainsaw and then drove a little way down the track to the first tree which had fallen across the track. A few more trees had come down further along the track, so these were also removed. The group travelled to the Weir, but found no more trees down in the second half of the track. They then headed up the Lodge Track to site of the old lodge. John has been researching the history of the park and Matt was able to help him locate the old lodge site. Matt as a child regularly travelled around this part of the park and the creek areas.

The groups met up and travelled back to the car park for lunch. Towards the end of lunch the wind got cold and there was a hint of rain on the wind. The group decided to end the day then. At the next activity it would be good to have the pole mounted camera to check the bat boxes.

Over summer there has been work done on the Grand Strzelecki Track. The track has been widened and creek crossings improved. Along the track a vehicle can now travel to near the park boundary. The large rocks from the creek crossings and the steep grades into some of the crossings have removed. The depth of each creek crossing is no more than a foot in depth.





March Activity

Sunday 16th March

The group will meet at 10.00am in the Junction Road car park. The group will work on two tasks – one group will use the chainsaw to clear Stringybark Track and put holes into the bat boxes while the other will work upon weed removal along Billy Weir track and from Billy's Creek. You will need to bring clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.