

PO Box 19
Churchill
3842



Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – May 2014

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaean.net>

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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter. The season has finally changed with days getting cooler and rain now more common. The summer past was not very hot and was remarkable for not very much variation in temperature or conditions across the season.

During the last month there were few Green Walks in the Park. Green Walks is a Heart Foundation initiative, in association with Latrobe Council. The program aimed to get more people walking, more often, in more local parks, state parks and bushland reserves. The groups varied in size and provided the opportunity for the community to experience the park. In the coming months there is one walk each month planned in Morwell National Park. The next Green Walks in Morwell National Park will be:

Tuesday 6 th May 10am	Billy's Weir Walk (starting from Baniff's Rd)
Wednesday 4 th June 10am	Foster's Gully Walk (meet at Kerry Rd)
Thursday 3 rd July 10am	Billy's Weir Walk (starting from Baniff's Rd)

Victorian Walks are working with Mike to make a feature walk out of the Foster's Gully walk. It would be based upon the old numbered walk along Foster's Gully. Mike has started work on this by locating most of the number location markers through Fosters Gully.

John's Jottings

John has continued with his historical collecting and this month his jotting relates to milling and mining in Morwell National Park. This snippet is from our May 1987 newsletter.

A smaller group met prior to our walk and we all benefitted from the extra time to discuss some issues. The extra time gained was well spent in the park with such capable guide as Ian and Os Brewster.

The saw mill was situated in the stringy bark walk area and although time, fires and vegetation has almost obscured most features it is possible to see and understand how it operated. The exact locating of the site was very much a team effort that we must thank first of all Margaret and Frank for their initial enquiries and secondly Ian for his persistence and interest in following up all their leads. Only his retelling of how it operated made us understand and visualise what was there.

The mine shaft we thought would be a bit of a search but Mr and Mrs Brewster made an effort to be with us and led us directly to the site. Os and his brother had the dubious pleasure of digging this shaft to the depth of 104ft in 1946 before it was abandoned and it was eventually filled in without yielding gold or tin. Again there is little to see but listening to what Os had to say about the shaft itself and the bush around it was most interesting. I cannot thank Mrs Lyndon and Mr and Mrs Brewster enough for making the effort to join us and sharing so much of their knowledge with us.



Friends of Morwell National Park Inc: PO Box 19, Churchill, 3842, <http://morwellnp.pangaean.net>.

President: Mike Beamish

Vice-President: Ken Harris

Secretary: Beryl Nelson

Treasurer: John Barker

Publicity: Peter McDonald

Public Officer: Beryl Nelson

Newsletter Editor: Darren Hodgson, hodgson.darren.d@edumail.vic.gov.au

Other members: Mary Austin, Margaret Barker, Cathy Beamish, Eulalie Brewster, Matt and Kerry Campbell, Wendy McDonald, Joan Sikkema, Wendy Steenbergen, Australian Plant Society (Latrobe Valley).

April Activity report

At this activity we had John, Matt, Beryl, Brenda, Mike, Cathy, Wendy, Darren, Tamara, Chris and He. Chris, He and Tamara were all along for their first activity. He is an international student from China, studying locally. First item of business was to plan the day ahead. The activities were made more difficult since we had nobody there with keys to the shed and therefore did not have access to waders, poison or other gear. Matt had a key to the gate so we could get vehicles into the work sites. We need more sets of keys for the shed, since this is the second activity this year we have not had access to the gear we needed for the activity. Mike will follow up with Craig about getting more keys made.

The larger group broke into two to work on two different tasks. Matt, John, Cathy, Mike, Tamara and Brenda went to put holes into the remaining bat boxes. This task was made more difficult since the map with the locations of bat boxes was with another, so the group had to operate from memory. The bat boxes were first checked with the pole mounted camera and if no animals were in the box a hole was added to the front of the box. Four of the bat boxes were found to have Sugar Gliders or Agile Antechinus, so these did not have hole put into them. Some of these boxes were also the same boxes which had animals in them last month. It good to see the continued use of these boxes which are very difficult for these animals to access. The small slit openings have widen on some boxes to provide access, but the added holes should made it easier for animals to access and for us to survey.

The other group of Chris, Wendy, Beryl, Darren and He worked upstream in Billy's Creek removing weeds. Wendy and Beryl worked in the stream (in waders which Mike and Cathy had fortunately brought) while Chris, He and Darren worked along the creek banks. It was good to observe that there were not many small Tutsan plants and the ones we were locating were more advanced plants (missed in previous years). There had been previous spraying so many of the plants we were locating were already sprayed. Most plants were in fruit so it was good to get rid of these berries which are easily spread by birds.



The groups met up when the bat box group had completed their work. One area the group will need to look into is the possibility of putting more nesting boxes into other parts of the park. The boxes currently in the park are being well used and it would be interesting to see whether they would be used in other parts of the park and whether different animals may use them in other parts of the park. Shane has discussed the possibility of providing or sourcing some more nesting boxes for us.

After lunch the groups joined together and worked on weed removal. The groups worked up to the Baniff's Road crossing of the creek. There were less weeds in the afternoon sections since the thick grass cover running up to the creek resulted in less weeds.

At the end of the day a koala was since above the cars. Mike informed us that it was above us during lunch and most of us had not seen it. During the next hour or so it had moved to its new location nearer the cars. Along with the many kangaroos seen during the day, many different animals were observed.



May Activity

Sunday 18th May

The group will meet at 10.00am in the Junction Road car park. The group will work on two tasks – one group will work upon weed removal along Billy Weir track and from Billy's Creek while the other will complete track maintenance upon the Blue Gum Hill Track. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.

Note: this is a change from the original calendar, since the creek level remains low providing good access to the creek (only part of the creek from the car park to the Baniff's Rd crossing has had weed removal completed) and the Blue Gum Hill Track has become overgrown.

Rangers: we will need the Parks slasher to help with the clearing of the undergrowth which is obstructing the Blue Gum Hill Track.