

PO Box 19
Churchill
3842



Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – June 2014

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

Green Walks continue to be held in the park each month with aim to get more people walking, more often, in local parks, state parks and bushland reserves. The next Green Walks planned in Morwell National Park are:

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)
Sunday 24 th August 10am	Foster's Gully Walk (meet at Kerry Rd)

At the beginning of the May activity the group got together to make some plans.

Ken discussed a lichen brochure he has been working upon with a lichen expert. He has spent the last four years collecting the material to be included. The brochure will be specifically about the lichens found in Morwell National Park. 80 of the 100 known species will be featured in the brochure. Ken has looked into the printing costs and is going to look into available grants from a range of different organizations. He has had discussions with Field Naturalists about sharing the printing costs with the friends group. A discussion was had about the pros and cons of providing the brochure to the public for a small cost or whether to provide it for free. Who was the target audience was discussed.

The group agreed it was a good idea to have this brochure printed and were happy with the suggested layout and presentation. The group agreed to fund the brochure in part or in total if necessary.

Matt over the last month had a conversation with Ranger Shane and Shane has been able to get us some more sugar glider boxes. These boxes have been constructed by Sale Men's Shed and it is planned for them to be installed by Community Volunteers Australia. They will be located along the Baniff's Rd entry track, since this environment (like the Billys Creek track) has been replanted and lacks the natural nesting hollows of an old forest. These boxes will extend the area covered by boxes and expand the sugar glider and possum area. The installation of these boxes is planned for the weekend of 29th and 30th June and a few people from our group will be needed to assist Community Volunteers Australia who will bring all of equipment and labor needed to erect these boxes. The boxes will be located on a variety of tree types and compass locations. GPS locations will need to be recorded.

Through the discussion a few other items arose that need to be handled in the future. We need to add pictures and video from the nesting box surveys to the Friends of Morwell National Park web site. Nesting box number 2 has come off its tree and needs to be put back again. Addition keys to gates and to the shed still need to be made.

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).

John's Jottings

John has continued with his historical collecting and this month his jotting comes from September 2003 and it has been taken from 'A brief history of Billys Creek' compiled by Hilmar Batza.



"Billys Creek was named after William (Billy) Hillier, who together with Nicholas (Nicol) Brown, were the first holders of Scrubby Forest Run (5,370 acres) from 1848 to 1868."

"It would appear both men had some sort of a 'fall-out' because they divided the run into two with Hillier taking the eastern half between Middle Creek and Billys Creek and Brown taking the western half between Morwell River and Middle Creek. Hillier built himself a hut and stockyard on the other side of Billys Creek and began a hermit-like existence. His part of the Scrubby Forest Run came to be known as 'Billys Side'.

In those days the area was very wild with lots of dingos and mobs of kangaroos. Local aboriginals wandered around the area and were often regarded as troublesome. Hillier planted a number of gooseberry bushes and a furze hedge around his hut in an apparent effort to protect himself and to keep the aboriginals away. Around 1870, Hillier was found dead on the banks of Billys Creek after being speared by aboriginals.

He was buried on a small rise about three chains from Billys Creek on property later owned by Douglas McFarlane, who acquired it through the Soldier Settlement Scheme after World War 1. All that remains of the burial site today is a small briar rose bush. The site is located somewhere near the boundary line of O'Hara's and Law's properties."

Please note!

According to the Place Names Committee, Billys Creek is spelt without an apostrophe.

May Activity Report

At this activity we had Matt, Mike, Cathy, Ken, Wendy, Peter, Darren, He and Craig. The group meet in the car park and caught up on the last month's news. For Ken and Craig this was their first activity in a while.

The group travelled into the park in three vehicles, and split at the Baniff's Road creek crossing. Mike, Cathy, Wendy and Peter worked on removing weeds from Billys Creek. Tutsan was still found and it was observed that the plants which were sprayed a few months ago were reshooting and still contained many berries. The group formed the opinion that we are having an effect on Tutsan and plants being located are one missed in previous years. Not many small plants are being located. The group made it as far as the second bridge crossing at Potato Flat.

The other group of Matt, Ken, Darren, He and Craig took whipper snippers and a brush cutter to clear the track to the top of Blue Gum Hill. The beginning of the track was lost amongst stringing nettles. These were cleared away making access along this track much easier. Further along the track it was less overgrown and there was less work required to clear this track.

At the top of Blue Gum Hill a decision was required. The track at the top is less clearly defined. The track was lost among the bracken and confused by an old fence line and a side track across the hill. Two tracks at the top were cleared, one which follows the old track line and another which crosses the fence line to a vehicle track. In further activities it would be good to remove this fence line. Both sides of the fence line are in the National Park, so the fence is not needed. Since we don't have any trees to plant we could remove this fence instead of the planned tree planting activities.



June Activity

Sunday 15th June

The group will meet at 10.00am in the Junction Road car park. While the creek level remains low and easy to traverse, the group will continue to work upon weed removal along Billys Weir track and from Billys Creek. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.

Additional June Activity

Weekend of 29th and 30th June

A few group members are needed to support Community Volunteers Australia to erect 15 sugar glider boxes along the Baniff's Road track. Meet at the Baniff's Road entrance.