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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – October 2014

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaeon.net>
A0016319X

Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter.

At the September activity the nesting boxes planned for the Baniff's Road area of the Park were discussed. The boxes to be constructed by the Men's Shed are not likely to happen. Craig has been approached by the CLIC program at Traralgon College and they have offered to make nesting boxes for us. The CLIC program focusses upon community based projects and they would like to make and help with the installation of nesting boxes. We will have Craig talk to the CLIC group and start them upon constructing the nesting boxes. The nesting box plans they needed have been provided by John.

John's Jottings

John has continued with his historical collecting and this month his snippet is on the formation of the Park, which was lifted from an article: THE MORWELL NATIONAL PARK by Dr. L.H. Smith, M.Sc., D.Ph. (Oxon), F.R.A.C.I. Director of the National Parks Authority of Victoria.



Continued from last month

"My first visit to the area took place on 30th. September 1965. It was a fine sunny day and the omens were good. Looking back through notes prepared on this visit, I find that I wrote as follows: 'The scenery is truly beautiful. In addition to scrub consisting of low acacias and dogwood there are numerous blanket-leaf and pittosporums, great masses of varnish wattle, and towering above them many magnificent eucalypts, Blue Gums (*E. bicostata*) and Grey Gums (*E. cypellocarpa*) being the dominant species. We saw a number of Nodding Greenhood Orchids and Butterfly Orchids (in bud). There were also some magnificent tree-ferns'.

And on bird-life: 'It is an excellent bird area. Within a few minutes we had heard the Bronze Cuckoo, the Golden-bronze Cuckoo, the Grey Thrush, the Grey Fantail, the White-throated Tree-creeper, Thornbills, Pardalotes (2 species), the Crested Honeyeater, other species of Honeyeaters, Silvereyes, Golden Whistlers, Spinebills, Blue Wrens, the Fantail Cuckoo, and the Whipbird; and we were greeted by the songs of these birds as we proceeded up the gully. A lyrebird had called a greeting before we were out of the car'.

On this excursion I was accompanied by Mr. John Connan, Morwell Shire Engineer, and Mr. R.G.M. Yorston, one of the Authority's technical Officers. I recall that we made slow progress as we paused to admire the many attractive features. "

"Later on that same day, I attended by invitation a meeting of the Morwell Shire Council and informed the Council that in my opinion the area was suitable for dedication."

To be continued next month

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

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

September Activity Reports

Part 1 - Bushcare Major Day Out (6th September)

At this activity we had John, Matt, Tamara, Beryl, Ken, Brenda and Darren.

This activity was part of the Bushcare's Major Day Out. It was a special, extra activity scheduled to coincide with this national program. Bushcare's Major Day Out is a national day designed to encourage us all to take part in the restoration and maintenance of our remaining bushland. Bushcare's Major Day Out is a day specifically designed to give of us the opportunity to find out what is being done and what can be done in our own neighbourhood. It's a fun day where anyone, young and old can work alongside and learn from experts and experienced volunteers.

It was hoped that some members of the community would come along and enjoy viewing the contents of the nesting boxes. Sadly none did, but the crew was large enough to survey all of the boxes over the day. The use of the pole mounted camera made it possible to survey all boxes in the day and we found a similar number of animals to those found in the summer surveys. While completing the survey, John was also able to rehang two boxes which had previously come down and made improvements to a few other boxes.

Over the day 45 sugar gliders were counted, with this total being similar to the numbers counted last summer. It was good to observe that the animal numbers are consistent through-out the year. In some of the boxes it was harder to count the number of sugar gliders since the animals were nestled very closely together. It was hard to know when one animal finished and the next started. A more exact count was made later when the footage could be viewed more closely.

Along with the sugar gliders, we saw a number of wallabies and kangaroos and a trout in the creek. Over the day we also listened to the calls of many different birds.



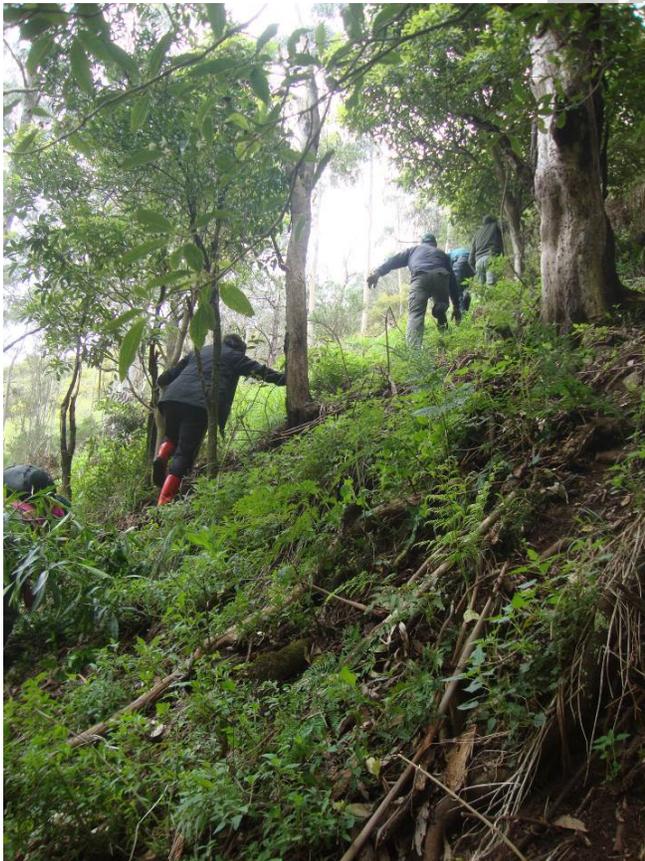
Part 2 – Fence removal (21st September)

At this activity we had Matt, Peter, Brenda, Beryl, Darren and ranger Craig. For this activity we had a small but dedicated team. We drove along the Weir Track past the Weir.

Our task was continue with the removal of the fence which runs adjacent to the Blue Gum spur track from the Billy's Weir track to the top of Blue Gum. In previous activities we had removed the bottom and top parts of this fence line. The central part of fence remained. We started at the bottom of the hill and slowly worked our way up the steep slope to where the remaining fence started. The steep slope made the task difficult and navigating your way up the slope was challenging.

Over the day we removed a few hundred metres of fence line, up to where the fence line crosses the spur track. During the day we collected much barbed wire and many star pickets. The star pickets remain beside the spur track to be collected later. While working up the hill the barbed wire was rolled up and left for later collection. When we reached the spur track we collected our gear and rolls of barbed wire near this work site. Craig and Matt worked back down the old fence line collecting the rolls of barbed wire taking these to the vehicles. The rest of team took the gear and other rolls of barbed wire down the spur track to the vehicles. It was hard to carry these heavy and prickly bundles down the steep hill.

The group moved back to Billys Weir for lunch. After lunch we returned to the car park and Craig took the barb wire to the tip. A few hundred metres of the fence remain and if it is to be removed in a future activity it would be best to work from the top of Blue Gum and move all wire back to the pile at the top of Blue Gum. This bundle of wire at the top of Blue Gum and the star pickets beside the spur track need to be removed at some stage.



October Activities

This activity in Trafalgar may be of interest to some members.

SPRING INTO NATURE
WEST GIPPSLAND

Wildflowers, wildlife and wandering at Uralla Nature Reserve

Trust for Nature's Uralla Nature Reserve provides an experience of the varied forest habitats that once covered the Strzelecki Range foothills. Purchased with assistance from the RE Ross Trust, the Reserve is managed by Baw Baw Shire Council and Friends of Uralla Nature Reserve and supports endangered Shrubby Foothill Forest, Damp Forest, Strzelecki Warm Temperate Rainforest and a diverse range of flora and fauna.

Activities include:

- **10am:** Fauna survey display and discussion with wildlife ecologist Ann Williamson.
- **11am and 1:30pm:** Guided nature walks and bird watching with naturalists and wildlife artist, Nicolas Day.
- **Dusk until late:** Spotlighting for nocturnal fauna.

Come for part or all of the day and evening. Please let us know of your intentions when you RSVP.

Saturday, 11 October
9:30am until late

Where: 155 Giles Road, Trafalgar.

Distance from Melbourne: Approx. 1.5hrs (130km). Map: 97 D5

RSVP: By Wednesday, 8 October to John Hick,
johnh@tfn.org.au
or phone (03) 9754 7851
or 0437 589 317

Bring picnic meals, snacks, sturdy shoes and suitable clothing.

Guided walks will vary in length and difficulty.



October Activities

Sunday 19th October

Activity 1 – Orchid Walk

10.00am

The first activity will be a walk of around Fosters Gully to seek out the orchids which can be found at this time of the year. You will need to bring clothing suitable for the weather conditions on the day.

If you are staying for the koala count you will need to bring your lunch, which can be eaten in the Fosters Gully picnic area between the activities.

Activity 2 - Koala Count

1.30pm

The Friends of Morwell National Park will be carrying out the annual 'Koala Count in the Park' on Sunday 19th October. Willing participants are requested to meet at the Kerry Road - Fosters Gully car park at 1.30pm to commence the Koala count.

The 'Koala Count in the Park' event is part of the long term strategy to document the numbers and health of the koalas within Morwell National Park.

Bring your family and friends and enjoy a pleasant stroll in the park while simultaneously helping the team in spotting the resident koalas that may be found in the park.

Participants are advised to bring suitable clothing and footwear applicable for the weather conditions, and if possible, bring a pair of binoculars as it certainly makes it easier to spot the koalas.