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# Friends of Morwell National Park Inc. *Newsletter – January 2018*

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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter. This will go out at the end of 2017, but it will be the first newsletter for 2018! Happy New Year to all.

This month we swap John's Jotting for Ken's Kritters. (I know that kritters is spelt wrong but this is better for the alliteration.)

## Ken's Kritters

Matt and I were light-trapping for moths near the West Boundary on Stringybark Ridge on Wednesday 13th Dec. A greengrocer cicada - *Cyclochila australasiae*, appeared underneath the sheet and Matt put it on his shoulder. Two more put in an appearance later and he eventually had 3 cicadas that sat on him throughout the rest of the evening. At one point, one walked up over his chin and walked straight up his face, leading to my second picture. I didn't manage to photograph him with 3 cicadas, but you could suggest he has a magnetic attraction for greengrocer cicadas!



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## December Activity Report

At the first activity we had Ken, Matt, Tamara, Wayne, Graeme, Rose, Mike, Peter, Joelle and Darren. We had an early start so that we could survey all of the nesting boxes before we had our Christmas breakup at lunch.

We started at 9am and started with the boxes closest to the car park. While we surveyed the first boxes, we were joined by those who arrived late. While a few people scouted out the next boxes to survey, another group of three used the pole mounted camera to inspect each box, video record what was in it and record the results on the results sheet. The roles swapped regularly thru the morning with most getting the opportunity to operate the camera and see what was in the boxes.

The count started slowly with few animals found in the first boxes. The animal numbers increased as we moved further into the count. As we swapped and changed roles it allowed others to follow up on patches of weeds or other issues that need to be dealt with. As we went around, we recorded a few boxes which needed replacing or repair. This will be dealt with at the next activity. We will need Ken to bring the nesting box survey sheets to the next activity, so that we have the list of boxes to repair.

The group finished up around 12 noon and then moved back to the car park. Most walked back enjoying the walk along Billy's Creek. The group then moved on to Kerry Road for the BBQ lunch.

Over the day we located at least 36 sugar gilders, 1 agile antechinus and 1 ringtail possum in the nesting boxes. There may be more found when the photos and videos are looked at on a bigger screen. These figures are lower than the same time last year but higher than the winter count.





For the Christmas breakup lunch we had Ken, Faye, Matt, Tamara, Mike, Cathy, Wayne, Chris, Peter, Joelle, Graeme, John, Margaret, Wendy S and Darren. Margaret and John had done a great job in organizing the food for lunch. It was found that the BBQ in the picnic area was not working, so Matt had go home to pick up a BBQ while Wayne also was contacted to bring one in. It took a little longer to cook, but a good lunch was had. We had each brought different salads and these were shared with the cooked meats.

After lunch we had a short meeting. Matt reported on a meeting he had had with ranger Shane. Some people in Parks Victoria have had concerns about our disappointment around our lack of access to rangers and support. A few suggestions were presented – for our group to stop doing park maintenance, have activities during the week (when a ranger can attend) or having regular meetings with either Parks Victoria or rangers during the week. Those ideas were not practical and would negatively impact on the main reason we work for this group. Week time activities and/or meeting would not be practical for most in the group who work then. We all volunteer our time because we value Morwell National Park and want to improve the space.

### **January Activity**

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January 10am

The group will meet in the Junction Road car park to complete track maintenance, weeding and repairs to the nesting boxes. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.