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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – November 2026

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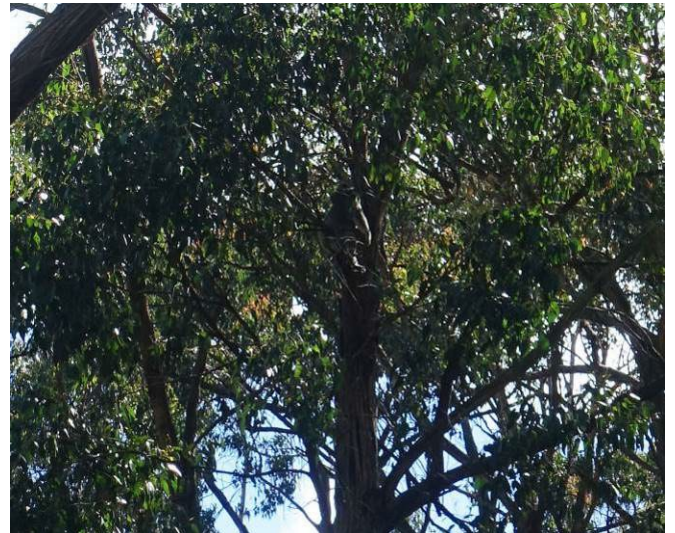
For the activity we had Ken, Duncan, Tamara, Matt, Peter, Joelle, Gordon & Darren. We had apologies from Mike, Cathy, Beryl, Graeme, Anita, Olga and Caitilin.

Our group was joined by thirteen community members keen to find koalas. As the group met in the Kerry Road picnic area, Gordon and Matt welcomed everybody and provided the necessary safety information. It was wonderful to have a large group with some walkers coming from Melbourne for the day and another Yvonne Aplin coming from NSW. Yvonne was part of the original committee who worked and supported the original founding of the National Park. Yvonne has been in regular communication with Caitilin and it was wonderful to hear her describe the park of the past and how many of the great parts are still with us now.

The Aussie bird count is being conducted over 19th-25th October. If you would like more details, they can be found at aussiebirdcount.org.au. In sad news the group who broke into the shed have returned and widened their hole into the shed. The back door which was secured and has not been reopened.

For the koala count we had a lovely spring day, and this was a factor in getting many walkers out for the day.

While in the picnic area, we searched the trees around and the normal koala often found above the picnic area was not to be found. Later somebody spotted a koala in the distance. It was good to have one under our belts.



The walkers then made choices about which track they wanted to undertake.

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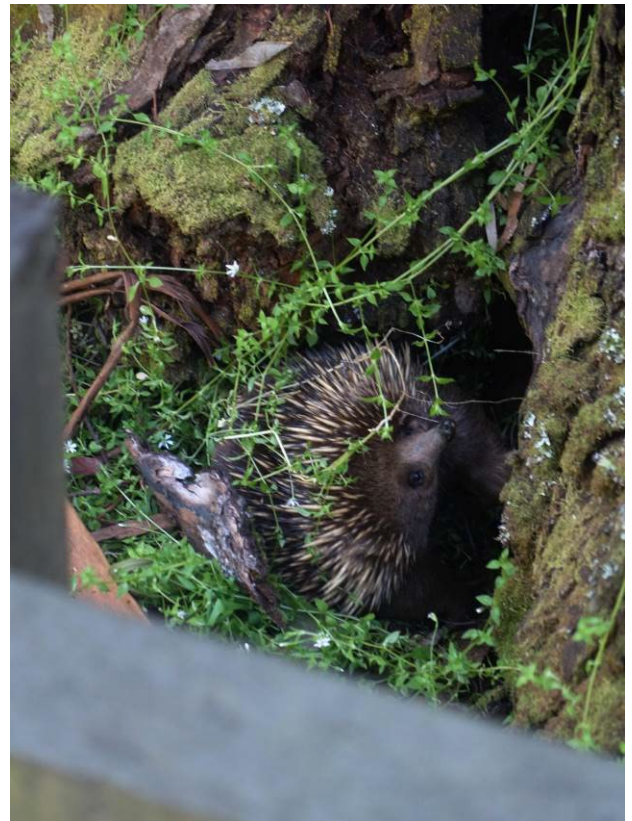
Peter drove Matt and Tamara to Jumbuk Road so they could do some bush bashing along the Jumbuk Road track. Gordon, Darren and Yvonne and another community member walked around Stringybark track while Ken, Duncan, Joelle and Peter took the other eleven community members around the Fosters Gully Track. These walkers choose between completing the full circuit or walking to Lyndon's Clearing and returning from there.

It was good that Fosters Gully crew, keen to find koalas, found the most. This group located 6 separate adult koalas with one having a joey, making a total of seven koalas. This group was the first to return to the picnic area. The Stringybark track group was less successful, only seeing one koala scat during their walk. When the smaller group returned later for the orchid walk a koala was located near that scat. During this walk a lyrebird, skink, echidna and many birds were seen. The Jumbuk Road group had the hardest path and were the last to return to the picnic area. They located one koala at the top of the hill.

The overall koala count across the three tracks was:

Track	Number of koalas
Fosters Gully	7 koalas
Stringybark Track	1 koala
Jumbuk Road Track	1 koala
Total	9 koalas

While lunch was eaten, an echidna looking for its lunch, was spotted in the hollow at the base of the old peppermint gum just over the fence.



After lunch many of the group left (some to complete other short walks in the area), so that left us with a smaller group for Orchid Walk. Matt, Tamara, Joelle, Peter, Lyn, Colin & Darren travelled to Stringybark Track looking for orchids.

At the start of the walk around Stringybark, a koala was seen moving in a tree (which was not located in the morning walk). The search for orchids also became a spider hunt. Whether it was spider orchids or other little spiders, the search widened. With Matt knowing the likely locations for orchids we walked a little beyond the second crossing and then cycled back to the second crossing. We used this cross track to find many common bird orchids on the return loop. Another two echidnas were also spotted.



Below are some of the orchids and insects observed during the walk. Thanks to Tamara for some of the photos included.



Chocolate lily



Common Bird Orchid



Waxlip Orchid



Tall Sun-orchid



Pink Fingers



Stink Bug (*Ocirrhoe westwoodi*)



Flying Peacock Spider



Bee-mimic Robber fly (*Laphria rufifemorata*)

November Activity

Sunday 15th November

The group will meet in the Kerry Road car park to undertake a nature walk and separately a few will complete the Butterfly Orchid Survey. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.