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# Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

## *Newsletter – March 2013*

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

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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter. February has been hot and now the Park is browning off and the masses of green grass which was there coming into summer have died back. Some parts of the Park which it was not possible to walk around in the New Year (because of lush grass and undergrowth on the tracks) are now a lot easy to walk because of lower grass load.

The summer crews have been into the Park over the last month and they have done a great job of clearing and slashing the tracks. The Park has had two cuts this season which greatly improves the fire safety and reduces the risk for walkers and Park neighbors.

Over the last month we were contacted by a regular walker who had spotted a wombat in poor condition with mange. This started a string of communication with Tina the ranger. This has resulted in this person working with Tina to locate the wombat's burrow to try to apply some chemicals to fix this problem. An applicator has been constructed to go over the burrow so that the wombat touches it each time they enter or leave the burrow. The chemicals need to administered over a period of time, so hopefully they can find the correct burrow and help this wombat.

If you see anything (plant or animal) which the rangers can improve please contact them (or us). They cannot be in the Park all of the time, so users telling them about the problems helps to maintain the Park. They are there to oversee the welfare of the animals and the environment they live in and the public users can help in this process.

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

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## February Activity Report

### Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February

At this month's activity we had Ken, Beryl, Brenda, John, Wendy, Mike, Cathy, Darren, and Craig. The group met in the car park to catch up on any news and plan the day ahead.

Our job this month, was made easier by the summer crew has done a great job of cleaning up the Grand Strzelecki Track. This meant that we didn't need to slash and improve the track and could spend more time locating and removing weeds from the creek adjacent to the Grand Strzelecki Track. We loaded ourselves into two vehicles and drove into the beginning of the Grand Strzelecki Track. The drivers were even keen enough to drive in on this track up to the fourth creek crossing. The creek crossings are difficult since the grade into each creek crossing is steep. A suitable place was found to turn the vehicles and we decided to work in the creek in the area around the vehicles.

The group geared up and Craig, Mike and John used the chainsaw and poison to remove willows in the creek. Brenda worked on other weeds in this area. There was evidence of some dead and struggling willows from the spraying when the track was first put in. Some of these willows were regrowing, so more poison was put onto these trees. Cathy, Beryl, Wendy and Darren worked upstream. Some of the weeds we removed included teasel, tutsan, thistle and foxgloves.

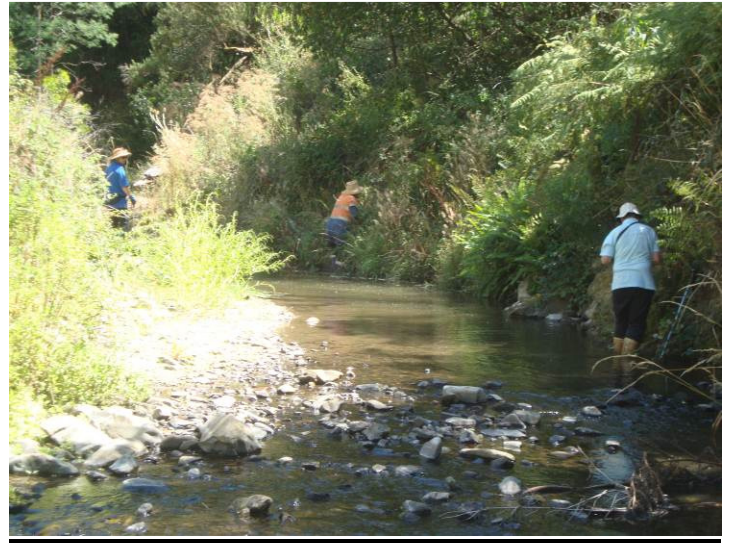
The creek level was shallow enough to allow us to travel most of the creek in gumboots. Only in some select areas did the depth get deeper than that. Although we were working in the creek, it was still hot work since there was no breeze and many sections were in the direct sun.

When the group broke for lunch, the creek was the selected location for lunch. It is not often you get the opportunity to eat your lunch in a creek. Ken returned during lunch. During the morning he had been adding to his plant and animal survey along the track. He started the survey when the track opened and he had used the morning to add many details to the survey.



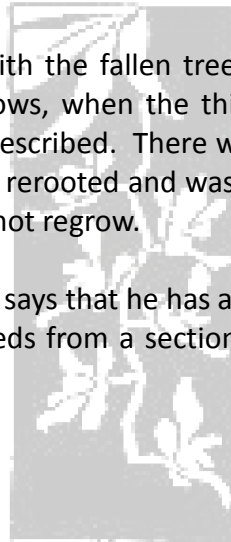
After lunch John, Craig and Darren travelled along the Grand Strzelecki Track to clean up a tree down across one of the creek crossings. Ken had located this tree earlier and bulk of the tree top had been removed by the summer crews. More limbs needed to be removed to make the crossing safer to use. The rest of the crew

returned to creek to finish off the areas between the third and fifth creek crossings. There were many weeds to remove.



For the crew that went upstream to deal with the fallen tree, Ken told us about two small willows he had located further upstream. These small willows, when the thick undergrowth, nettle and blackberries were removed were found to be a lot larger than described. There were actually four willows, one of which was the top of a willow which had been cut and then rerooted and was growing from many points. These plants were cut, poisoned and left to hang and hopefully not regrow.

Moral of the story is never trust Ken when he says that he has a small willow. Over the day we had not covered a great distance but had removed many weeds from a section of the park we had not worked before. Next month we will return to remove more weeds.



### **March Activity**

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March

The group will meet at 10.00am at the Junction Road car park to continue work upon the Grand Strzelecki Track to remove weeds from the creek. You will need to bring your lunch and suitable clothing for the weather conditions on the day. To get to the work site there a few creek crossings to make, so you may also need to consider suitable footwear.