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Welcome to the November edition of our newsletter. It is a little bit short on news as we have only just arrived home from our nine week jaunt to sunny Queensland. We are able to report that we saw well over one hundred different birds but due to the drought in northern NSW and southern Qld, we found more wild flowers in our own front yard when we arrived home than during the whole time we were away. Very disappointing from a holiday point of view, but great results from Michael's hard work.

THE 4th TREE PLANTING DAY – by Danny Barclay

It was another success on the last day of tree planting for this year. I arrived punctually at the regular meeting spot at Junction Road car park. Surprisingly Rob was already present getting organized while waiting for the rest of the team to show up. As I prepared myself to dig and plant, I was aware that two new faces had arrived. I was unable to greet them straight away as Rob had asked me to stay behind and wait for some more arrival while he took the newcomers off to collect some tree guards.

The weather wasn't looking to promising while I was waiting for more participants to arrive, but it began to clear nicely as the day progressed. Twenty minutes later a number of cars had driven by but they had all headed for the Jehovah Kingdom up the road. Eventually someone who believed planting trees was a good religion, came into our car park and dropped off three more newcomers – Ben, Angela and Katie, who were from the Catholic Regional College. Soon after saw the arrival of Ken followed by Wendy. Unfortunately the group didn't get any larger while we were waiting for Rob and the others to return. Meanwhile Ken inspected a recent fallen tree by the creek and collected a few branches to pick a number of buds to add to the seed collection.

When Rob returned with the tree guards, he introduced Eric and Jeremy who were also CRC students. Before we left to start work, Rob, Ken and myself demonstrated how to dig, make holes and plant trees for the newcomers. It took a while for the youngsters to get used to digging and planting but they became professionals by the end of the day.

The first session of tree planting was to plant short growing trees along the creek near the car park. When this was completed we migrated up the creek and along the way

we met the local kangaroos lying in the sun. While we were moving from one site to another, there were some priceless moments to be had while watching the newcomers trying to cross the creek without gumboots. They all passed their gymnastic performances. At the third site things were just as treacherous as some of us had to slash through a thick crop of stinging nettles while others collected tree guards. There were no screams this time but there was a dock close by for the minor casualties.

We moved over to another part of the creek to have lunch. Ben, Angela and Katie sat with us with their huge camping sack full of goodies, while Eric and Jeremy sat at their own feeding perch which bridged over the creek. Ken and Wendy experimented with putting wild watercress in their sandwiches, while I ate mine the way I had made it – just in case the watercress disagreed with them. Rob arrived late for lunch, but he also tried the watercress. Talk about gourmet foods. All we needed was the good silver or the fine china! My knife was famous and much liked by Rob as he used it to peel his orange.

After lunch we planted a heap of trees on the slope not far away and during the afternoon we worked around a swampy area where the four wheel drive had got bogged during the second tree planting day. It was our greatest effort of the day. Rob performed a spectacular four wheel drive maneuver around the swamp whilst trying not to get bogged.

At the end of the day everyone was thanked for their help. Wendy kindly took Angela and Jeremy home and Rob took Ben, Katie and Eric as they had all been dropped off and needed transport home.