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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – October 2008

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

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G'day everyone and welcome to the latest edition of your newsletter. I hope everyone has been able to enjoy the lovely spring weather, although the lack of rain is once again a concern. September, normally our wettest month, has again delivered poor rainfall, with less than 50mm registering in our gauge at Boolarra. 30mm at the beginning of October helped, but we are still going to struggle moving into summer if we don't get some regular falls.

Items of interest from the Park include approval for a grant of \$8450 to assist us in the continuing removal of weeds, particularly Tutsan, from the Park. In the mailbox, we received the Friends of Coolart Newsletter 3/08 and also a card from Eulalie Brewster to convey her appreciation of the Honorary Membership bestowed at our recent AGM.

October Activity

It is once again time for the annual Koala Count! We will meet at the Kerry Road picnic ground for a BBQ lunch at midday on Sunday, October 19. This is not a catered affair, so you will need to bring your own everything including meats, salads, savouries, sweets and drinks. Extra chairs will no doubt come in handy, particularly if we need to share the facilities with the general public. The Koala Count is programmed to begin at 1.30pm, so you will also need to bring along your favourite walking attire and any accessories, such as camera or binoculars, which will assist with your participation.

Weed Wars, Episode XX **September Activity Report**

Sunday, September 21, saw 7 intrepid members join Ranger Craig for our 20th effort to contain the spread of weeds through our Park. Before we could reach our work location though, we had to remove a series of fallen trees from the track, but Craig's chainsaw made short work of them and we made our way to the weir to be greeted by a flock of sheep! After chasing them up the hill, we split ourselves into 2 groups of 4 and commenced hunting down and exterminating any Tutsan plants we could find. A solitary willow joined the Tutsans in that great arboretum in the sky! An enjoyable break for lunch at the weir saw us entertained by a pair of Black Ducks looking for a quiet spot on the creek and a couple of early Imperial White Butterflies dancing through the rays of sunshine. Ken's observations of the outing are included below:

Plants and Moths from September Working Bee by Ken Harris

We spent our September working bee removing Tutsan from Billys Creek once again. This time we covered the section from the upper Coprosma Track ford down to the Weir. The cuckoos have returned from northern climes and we heard the Fan-tailed Cuckoo and the Shining-bronze Cuckoo often as we laboured.



We of course saw lots of clumps of Stinging Nettles and I noticed that almost every patch of nettles had caterpillars on it. These are the caterpillars of the Black and White Tiger

Moth – *Spilosoma glatignyi*. I have found these previously and to identify them, I reared one through until it hatched into this lovely moth.



I also found one tiny little moth resting on a stinging nettle leaf. I cannot so far identify even to the family, although I think it is probably one of Oecophoridae. I did get its picture, which I am showing here at about twice its natural size.

We stopped for lunch at the Weir and I spotted some plants growing on the



upturned base of one of the fallen Manna Gums. They look like weeds, but are actually a native member of the Cabbage Family, Forest Bitter-cress – *Rorippa dictyosperma*. I was very pleased to find these as although I included the plant in the Flowers and Ferns of Morwell National Park, I have not seen one since I first recorded it back in 1990. It was somewhere very near to the Weir that I found it growing previously, possibly a little way up the Lodge Track.

When we resumed our search for Tutsan, Craig Cambell who was with us in place of

Rob Howell for the day, spotted a Strap Water-fern – *Blechnum patersonii*, growing on the very edge of the creek. This was an even more pleasing find than the Bitter-cress. The Strap Water-fern is on the early list of plants in the park, but despite my best endeavours I have never been able to find one. It was growing alongside the Lance-Water-fern – *Blechnum chambersii*, which was only recently added to the Park list, together with the commoner Soft Water-fern – *Blechnum minus* and Fishbone Water-fern – *Blechnum nudum* and also the Shiny-Shield-fern – *Lastreopsis acuminata*.



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