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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – November 2009

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaean.net>
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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter. Rainfall in the area has been down on the last month with 60mm in the water gauge since the last newsletter. Late last month there was another sizable downpour which again filled Billy's Creek. A few hot days over the last week just help to remind us that we are only a month away from summer.

This is the third newsletter from me and finally I am able to report upon an activity for you. Recently there was a wonderful profile article about Ken in the Latrobe Valley Express. It is included on the next page.

In park news we still have no local Ranger and it is likely to be a while until we have one with the process of replacing Rob being a slow one. Parks Victoria plan to slash all of the grass areas in the Billy Creek grasslands in either late November or early December depending upon the weather conditions.

In relation to Rob and the wonderful work that he has done for the park, this Friends group is going to have a dinner to thank him for the superb work he has done in the park and support he has given to this friends group. Rob's involvement could continue into the future but currently he has a different job within Parks Victoria and what a wonderful time to say thanks. The dinner will be held at the Yinnar Pub on Friday 4th December starting at 6.30pm.

The other point of interest was 35 new nesting boxes were placed along Billy's Creek by Green Corps in addition to the 5 existing ones. Yes, box number 5 has been found and all have now been plotted. We plan for one of the 2010 activities to be the checking out the use of these nesting boxes. There is also funding available for short courses in chainsaws etc. for anyone keen on gaining accreditation.

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

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October Activity report

24 people turned up to complete the Koala Survey. A number of family groups joined our survey teams, which bode well for the upcoming survey. Young eyes have tended in the past to locate more koalas. These numbers meant that we could have three survey teams. One team lead by Ken travelled from Jumbuk Road around the perimeter to the Kerry Road car park. Another team lead by Peter traversed the Stringybark Track while the third team led by Jane and Dennis searched the treetops along the Fosters Gully track.

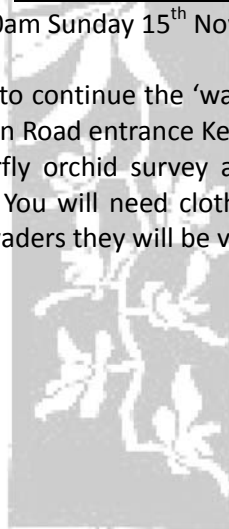
I dropped part of the Jumbuk Road crew off then joined the Stringybark Track survey team. Early on we sighted a Copperhead Snake beside the track (only the second I have ever sighted in the park) and a wallaby. Sadly we only sighted one koala on the top of the ridge at the far end of Stringybark Track. In total the groups located a total of 6 koalas, down from previous years. The koalas are around since while I write this a female koala is making her squeaking call. Yesterday we listened to the male's grunting call, so there are at least two koalas currently in the Tebb Terrace area.

All groups enjoyed the wonderful walking conditions and many spoke of coming back for next years' search.

November Activity

10.00am Sunday 15th November

We will meet at the Junction Road entrance to continue the 'war on Tutsan'. Note that is the change from the 2009 Calendar of activities. From the Junction Road entrance Ken will take one counter (somebody not keen on entering the creek) to complete the Butterfly orchid survey along the Fosters Gully walk. The rest will be entering Billy's Creek searching for Tutsan. You will need clothing and footwear suitable for the terrain and weather conditions on the day. If you have waders they will be very useful.



National park has new best friend

By CATHERINE SWEENEY

KEN Harris' affinity with the Morwell National Park is so strong, he can look at any species of flora or fauna within the park and promptly name what it is off the top of his head.

The president of Friends of Morwell National Park has spent hundreds upon hundreds of hours in the park after moving to the area in 1985.

"I love the natural bush everywhere, but this is local," Mr Harris said.

"I have an interest in orchids and there are about 40 different species in the park."

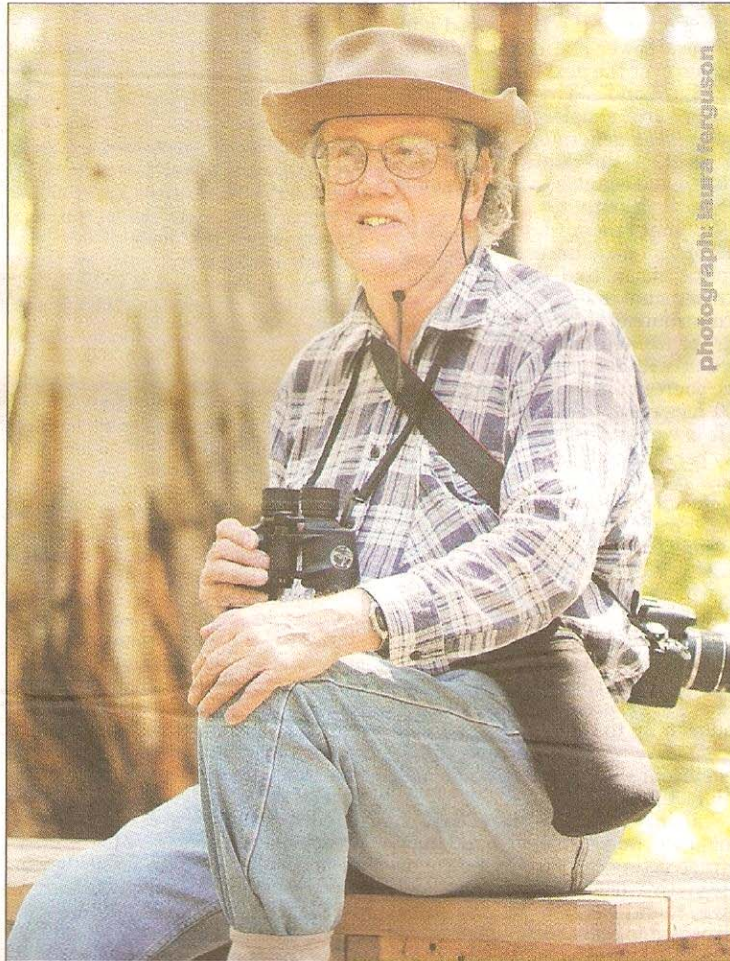
It is his dedication and commitment to the near 500 hectare park which has earned him the Victorian Environment Friends Network's 2009 Best Friend Award, presented at a ceremony last month.

It comes after Mr Harris received a Parks Victoria Kookaburra Individual Environmental award earlier this year.

His love for the park developed after he spontaneously decided to call in on his way to Wilsons Promontory more than 20 years ago.

Mr Harris was one of the founding members of the friends group in 1986 and has since produced a website and publication detailing the flora and fauna and walking tracks within the park.

Copies of his book "Flowers and Ferns of Morwell National Park" are still available for \$10 by phoning 5122 3137.



photograph: Laura Ferguson

A friend indeed: Friends of Morwell National Park president Ken Harris' dedication has been recognised with a 'Best Friend' award.

Where in the park is this?

Your task is to identify where in the park this photo has been taken. The park has many wonderful views to see and here is an opportunity to share your prize pictures with others.



Where in the park has this photo been taken? To take part in the discussion of possible answers you can come along to this month's activity. For those who are really keen, you can even go on a search for the spot the photograph was taken from.

So if you have a photo of a special corner or an unusual event that has occurred in the park, please send in your photos. They could be of one of the wonderful vistas or a rarely seen part of the park.

The previous two photos were taken on the Blue Gum Hill track looking downward towards the first seat (September) and last month the photo was of Billy's Creek looking up from the first track crossing.

Please send them to Darren via email at dhodgson@wideband.net.au or via mail to 90 Tebb Terrace, Jeeralang Junction 3840.