

PO Box 19
Churchill
3842



President:
5122 3137

Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – December 2009

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaean.net>
A0016319X

Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter. Rainfall in the area has been down greatly on the last month with the only water in the gauge collected this weekend. So much for hopes of some good spring rains.

In park news we still have no local Ranger (although it was good to have Mark along at the November activity), but interviews for the position have been held and Parks Victoria are looking at appointing somebody from within their organization rather than somebody from outside. Hopefully a new Ranger will be able to come to the December activity.

In relation to Rob and the wonderful work that he has done for the park, the Friends group is going to have a dinner to thank him for the superb work he has done in the park and for all of the 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.

Celebratory Dinner for Rob Howell

Come along and join in the celebratory dinner to say thanks to Rob for the many years of support he has given to the Friends of Morwell National Park.

When: Friday 4th December
Time: 6.30pm
Where: Yinnar Pub

Please come along



The 2010 Calendar of activities is contained on the last page.

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

President: Ken Harris, 51223137

Vice-President: Peter McDonald

Secretary: Beryl Nelson

Treasurer: Wendy Steenbergen

Publicity: Denis Sultana

Public Officer: Jane Sultana

Newsletter Editor: Darren Hodgson, 90 Tebb Terrace Junction Junction 3840, 51222108, dhodgson@wideband.net.au

Members: Mary Austin, Jack & Margaret Barker, Mike & Cathy Beamish, Eulalie Brewster, Reg Felmingham, Tom Lawless, Peter & Wendy McDonald, John Pulis, Joan Sikkema, David Stickney, Laura Webber, Australian Plant Society (Latrobe Valley).

Where in the park is this?

The last months' photo was taken at the start of the Clematis Track. The track sign in the foreground is the sign marker for beginning of the Pipeline track and the Clematis track sign is at the back. Where in the park is this, will return next month. I have overdone the other pictures this month, and didn't need another.

November Activity report

We gathered in the Junction Road car park readying ourselves to battle with the Tutsan. It was good to see that we were joined by Ranger Mark. Mark had brought the waders and weed killer needed to make an impact on the Tutsan. Mark was able to update us on the ranger situation and update us on Blue Gums and Blackwoods on Blue Gum Hill. It was good to hear that these trees are surviving. They are not growing at a great rate but at least they are surviving. The special spray to stop kangaroos and wallabies from eating the leaves is working. There is a possibility that Greenfleet may do more planting on this hill (and around the corner) into the future.

Ken also brought his Best Friends Award to show the group.

The group divided off with Ken and Peter completing the Butterfly Orchid survey while the rest of us battled with the Tutsan.

The war on Tutsan continues.

The crew that went into battle included Cathy, Mike, Beryl, Wendy, Darren, Margaret and John. The group split to two groups, Beryl, Wendy and myself heading downstream, from the second creek crossing on the Coprosma track, while the rest travelled upstream. John, Margaret and Mark had to leave early, before lunch. Our group found quite a bit of Tutsan on the Coprosma track itself before we entered the creek. The area was flooded two years ago and it must have been then that these seeds were spread. This will also mean that if it is on the track (where we can see it) there will be a lot in the undergrowth where we currently can't see it. This indicates we will have problems ahead. One example of this was a large plant in flower located beside the Weir track near the turn off to Blue Hill track. It took Beryl at least half an hour of battle to remove this plant grouping.



Although we have recently covered these areas, much Tutsan was still found. We will probably still find it in twenty years time! The area covered was from the second creek crossing on the Coprosma track to the fallen tree on the flat beyond Billy's Weir. (Half way between Billy's Weir and the Blue Gum Hill track turnoff)

Butterfly Orchid update

The butterfly orchid survey was completed by Ken and Peter. The continued dry weather has had a negative effect on both the orchids and the plants which they grow on. The trees which the orchids grow on are drying. In most plots only a few of the host plants have survived. The orchids can only survive a year or two on a dead plant or branch.

In Ken opinion, if the dry conditions continue to kill the host plants the orchids in the survey plots have a lifespan of 5 to 10 years. A lot less orchids were counted this year.

On the positive side they saw a Powerful Owl during the survey.

Friends get together

The Friends get together occurred later that evening, with friends from 9 different Friends gathered to celebrate in Traralgon. Rob came along and was able to update us on some park information. Rob suggestions included collecting Bluegum seed in January 2010 since some of the seed currently in storage is up to 20 years old, and we will do some more tree planting in mid 2010. The seed can be collected from off a mature gum off Reidy's Road (top corner of the park).

It is some of Rob's suggestions that form the basis of December's activity with the nesting boxes. He updated us on how they were put in and the opinion that they would need to be modified like we will do in the next activity.



December Activity

10.00am Sunday 20th December

We will meet at the Junction Road entrance to undertake some work on the nesting boxes along Billys Creek. 35 nesting boxes were recently added to the area that had 5 existing nesting boxes. The plan is to modify some of the new nesting boxes. All of the new nesting boxes have 5cm round holes and the smaller birds will prefer nesting boxes with smaller holes so that no prey can get into their nest. We will modify some of the new boxes. We will also work on mapping the locations of the nesting boxes. Hopefully Rob will be able to provide the GPS coordinates from when the boxes were placed. We can add to these records the details of the nesting boxes that have been modified. A big thank you to John who is looking after the timber for us.

You will need clothing and footwear suitable for the terrain and weather conditions on the day. Note: to the ranger on the day – we will need at least one long ladder and there is one currently at Rob house.

After the activity we will have a BBQ lunch at the Kerry Road picnic area.

If you want to undertake the activity and then go to the FMNP BBQ, you can bring along your BBQ food since I will store any food in my fridge while the activity is being completed.



FMNP Christmas BBQ

Come along and enjoy in a BBQ lunch to celebrate another successful year of activities for the Friends of Morwell National Park.

When:	Sunday 20th December
Time:	12.30pm
Where:	Kerry Road Picnic Area
What to bring:	BYO meat, drink and bring either a salad or sweet.

Please come along.

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Calendar 2010

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Activities are scheduled for the third Sunday of each month, with extra days scheduled as required.

Date:	Activity:	Venue and Time:
January 17	Weir Walk Weed Removal/Seed collection	Junction Rd, 10.00am
February 21	Weir Walk Weed Removal	Junction Rd, 10.00am
March 21	Track Maintenance	Kerry Rd, 10.00am
April 18	Weed Removal	Junction Rd, 10.00am
May 16	To be advised	To be advised, 10.00am
June 20	Tree Planting	Junction Rd, 10.00am
July 18	Tree Planting	Junction Rd, 10.00am
August 1	AGM	To be advised, 1.30pm
August 15	Walk in the park	To be advised
September 19	Spotlight walk or Weed removal	To be advised
October 17	Koala Count	Kerry Road, 1.30pm
November 21	Orchid Survey/Odd jobs	Junction Rd, 10.00am
December 19	Nesting box survey/Christmas Function	Junction Rd, 10.00am

For all activities, it is BYO food, drinks, suitable clothing and footwear, and other personal items, unless otherwise indicated in the newsletter. Up to date details of each forthcoming activity are provided in the monthly newsletter, which is mailed to members and available to the public on the website.