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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – June 2018

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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter.

John's Jottings

This snippet on the activities of the Friends of Morwell National Park was sourced and edited from early Newsletter files.

"APRIL 1989

Dear friends,

Last month, the friends undertook to clear some of the 'hard' rubbish from the Billy's Creek area. It was a pleasant afternoon although quite cool & marred by the lack of attendance by a number of members. This made the meeting very difficult to conduct as there were not the numbers for a quorum. However a meeting was held and the business arising will be accepted at this months' meeting.

The main topic of discussion for most of the afternoon was the public meeting held in Churchill about the access track along Billy's Creek. A short summary by one of the friends is attached.

The report on the Friends conference by Ken Harris was also handed out at the last meeting & I feel it as an excellent summary of events and well written. Well done Ken.

Next months' meeting & jaunt will take place on 21st May at Fosters Gully at 1.30pm. NOTE THE CHANGE IN VENUE. It will involve a jaunt through the new area of the Park on "Peel's Land". So get your walking shoes & join us. There will be a short meeting beforehand.

The news is through that a new Ranger has been appointed to the Park. His name is Robert Howell but at this stage very little else is known about him. So stay tuned, he should take up his position sometime in May hopefully.

That's about all for now so cheers until the meeting.

Shelley."



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May Activity Report

At this activity we had Matt, Wayne, Beryl, Ken, Tamara, John, Peter, Graeme, Mike and Darren. We had an apology from Rose. We met in the car park in raincoats. It started out as a cold and wet day. Also in the car park were Rangers Darren and Kristen. They visited briefly before we started the meeting and activity.

Ken spoke about his book - Moths of Morwell National Park and it is progressing well. Ken showed the group a test print of one of the pages. With the funding of the book, Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists have agreed to put in \$1,000 while our group will put in the remaining \$3,000 to cover all of the printing costs. The planned print run (for a book of at least 20 full colour pages) is for about 650 copies.

With ongoing funding of our group it has been explained that we have two future options – one via submissions from Parks and Government departments for projects that meet Park Victoria and submission requirements. The other is by organizing outside sponsorship. Outside sponsorship would provide independence but may require us to promote that organization in some way. If we want access to Parks rangers we will need to publish our calendar of activities for each financial year. We will make the 2018/19 calendar of activities at the meeting next month.

For our June activity we will hold a meeting instead of our planned activity. The meeting will be to discuss and decide upon priorities for our group. We will gather at the Banniff Road entrance at 10.00am on Sunday June 17th. You are asked to bring with you projects ideas our group could be involved in for the longer term benefit or improvement of the Park.

John has collected 10 new nesting boxes for the replacement of current broken or unusable boxes. These boxes were constructed by Churchill Men's Shed. The group discussed and agreed to cover the expenses of the people who are providing their vehicles to transport us and the equipment into the activities. The expenses will be paid annually and one of the first payments will be to Matt for the repairs to his vehicle, the damage occurring at an earlier activity.

DELWP (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning) has received our data from our nesting box surveys. They have commented positively about how comprehensive and well organised our nesting box data is.

Today's activity was to complete the nesting box survey which was cancelled last month because of rain. It was touch and go to see whether we would complete the survey today. If it became too wet we would have to stop since the camera and connectors do not handle getting wet and are easily damaged by water.

Throughout the morning we were able to complete the nesting box survey. A few times we needed to protect the camera from the rain but fortunately the showers were brief. While travelling through the understory many patches of ivy were found. A few collected this ivy while the others searched the nesting boxes. A few boxes were recorded that need future repairs.

Over the day we sighted 51 sugar gliders and one ringtail possum. These numbers may increase when a closer look at the photos is done. A few of the boxes had active sugar gliders which came out of their boxes while we completed the count. There could have been more gliders in these boxes, but we were not going to investigate further and risk disrupting the sugar glider any more. The photo beside shows a sugar glider watching us from the inside of one of the nesting boxes.

These possum totals are great and higher than the other recent winter counts.





These last photos show what is seen on the camera screen connected to the pole mounted camera. In this box we estimated there were at least 6 sugar gliders nestled in together.

June Activity

Sunday 17th June 10.00am

The group will meet in the Baniff Road entrance to take part in a meeting to discuss priorities for our group. You are asked to bring with your ideas of projects our group should be involved in for the longer term benefit or improvement of the Park. We will put together the program of activities for the 2018/19 financial year. This is a change to the original calendar.