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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – October 2018

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaeaan.net>
Official Address of FMNP - contactfmnp@gmail.com
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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.

"August 19, 1989

Dear Friends,

The Annual General Meeting of the sixth of August went smoothly, with all positions on the committee being filled.

The committee members are:

- Ken Harris - President
- Yvonne Aplin - Vice President/Activities co-ordinator
- Steve Shinnars - Secretary
- Joanna Aziz - Treasurer
- Judy Lambert & Neil Grigg - Committee members

Thanks to all who attended, and please remember that a committee can only be as effective as the membership behind it, so please be generous with ideas, enthusiasm and, most importantly of all, attendance at our monthly gatherings.

Speaking of enthusiasm, please try to attend our next meeting on August 27th. We will be meeting at 11:30 a.m. at the Foster's Gully car park to host a visit from Friends of Warrandyte State Park. Please bring a plate of munchies to greet the Friends with.

Finally, subscription fees are now due. Fees are still \$10 for individuals and \$15 for families. Please be prompt with your payment either by fixing it up at the next meeting, or by posting a cheque or money order along with the form below.

Bye for now, Steve Shinnars"



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President: Matt Campbell

Vice-President: Ken Harris

Secretary: Beryl Nelson

Treasurer: John Barker

Publicity: Tamara Leitch

Public Officer: Beryl Nelson

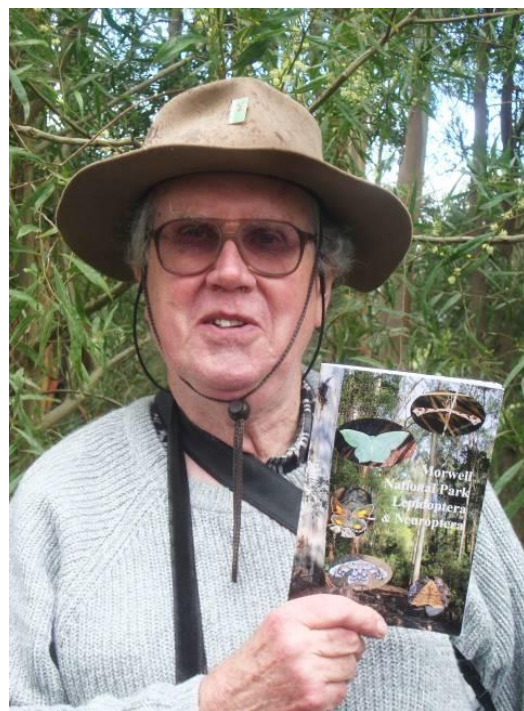
Newsletter Editor: Darren Hodgson, hodgson.darren.d@edumail.vic.gov.au

Other members: Margaret Barker, Mike and Cathy Beamish, Eulalie Brewster, Graeme Busch, Kerry Campbell, Joelle Champert, Chris Lange, Peter & Wendy McDonald, Rose Mildenhall, Denis Nagle, Grant Pengelly, Wayne Pengelly, Joan Sikkema, Wendy Steenbergen, Australian Plant Society (Latrobe Valley).

September Activity Report

At this activity we had Matt, Wayne, Grant, Ken, Tamara, John, Graeme, Mike, Cathy, Rose, Hayley, Joelle and Darren. We had an apology from Beryl. For this activity was also had a new member Laura who had joined us after finding us on Park Connect.

Ken was happy to give out copies of his new book – **Morwell National Park Lepidoptera & Neuroptera**. The completed book has now come from the publisher and shows 670 different species of Lepidoptera found in the park. It is credit to Ken and his hardworking support team who have spent the last decade systematically recording the butterflies and moths found in the park. The publishing of the book has been funded jointly by the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club and Friends of Morwell National Park. Members of these groups will receive a copy of the book while anybody else can get their own copy from either Ken or Matt or from Churchill Newsagents for \$5.00. Everybody was very happy flicking through the book, looking at the many pictures at the beginning of the meeting.



The meeting was held in the car park before the activity started. Matt reported on a number of different meetings and conversations he had had over the last fortnight. Matt spoke to a keen student group at Lavalla College who are making 10 nesting boxes for us to locate within the park. He was able to provide feedback on their designs. These boxes will replace broken boxes and will be numbered and include laser engraving. He spoke to another group in the school who want to complete some track maintenance. They originally planned to work on the Grand Strzelecki Track, but since this difficult to access decided that some of the tracks in the park will be better. They plan to undertake the track maintenance on the 30th October with Matt and Ranger Jo to support them.

Matt met Simone Louwhoff from Federation University and discussed weed management techniques used in the park. He also visited Federation Training and spoke to group of newly arrived citizens about the local wildlife. Their understanding of Australian animals is very limited and they know little about the Australian bush. There is an opportunity to get them into the park to understand that they are safe in the Australian bush and they cannot eat every animal they see.

Matt saw Helen Dickson the District Manager of Parks Victoria in Eastern Victoria and discussed the risks of people using their own vehicles on Friends activities. Private vehicles are not covered for damage which could occur at a Friends' activity. She was unaware of this and most other groups are also unaware of this. She is to follow up on this problem.

Matt also met with the Latrobe City Mayor and pointed out that in Wellington Shire they are very supportive and involved in the National Parks in their shire. An idea the Council are behind (with possible support of the LV Authority) is to upgrade the toilet block opposite the Junction Road car park. This toilet block (on council land) would be a great improvement since the existing toilets are in very poor condition. Having quality toilets near this part of the park would greatly improve its usability.

Matt met with Jay and David Egan who want to collect seed in the park for a revegetation project near the park. A permit will be require for a seed collection activity and it was found that these permits are available on Park Connect. We had planned to collect seed early next year, so we may be able to join this seed collection to get the seed we need and avoid applying of our own permit.

Joelle spoke about the revegetation project which is on land near our southern boundary and is part of the larger project to make a native corridor through the Strzelecki hills. The plans for this site includes weed removal and then replanting with a possible plan to spread seed on newly cleared sites. Joelle also spoke

about a youth based Landcare group who are keen to complete some track maintenance tasks. They want to come for a day, work an area and then move on.

It has been impressed upon Matt that all members need to register on Park Connect. Printed attendance lists and JSAs are no longer supported by Parks and all lists and JSAs need to be on Park Connect. Our list of activities is currently logged on Park Connect. Each of us need to enroll on Park Connect and list Morwell National Park as their park and that lets Matt manage the lists of who was at each activity. If don't sign up for an activity, Matt can add enrolled people later. The non-Internet users are a problem which will need to be overcome. The group then went through the JSA for the day's activity which was on Parks Connect.

A few months ago we applied for the Climate Watch project and we have yet to hear the results of that application. Co-incidentally there is a Climate Watch in Parks program running in our Park (at the ClimateWatch trail!) on 10th October. In the program school groups create a 'ClimateWatch trail', where they use Earthwatch's ClimateWatch app to collect data on the impacts of climate change on local plants and animals. The program connects schools and community groups to their local ClimateWatch trail. Training will be provided to assist participants in embedding citizen science, climate change and biodiversity monitoring into teaching and engagement activities.

The days' main task was to complete the winter survey of the nesting boxes located along Billy's Creek. It was a very cold day where coats, beanies and gloves were necessary. There were also a few small trees down across the Billy's Creek track, so a small group handled this while the main group worked on the nesting box survey. Matt and John collected the chainsaw and along with Graeme and Darren worked down to Billy's Weir clearing the number of small trees from across the track.



The main group started from the car park and began with the nesting boxes nearest Junction Road. Using the pole mounted camera, each box was located and then the camera was placed through the hole to video and collect still images what was inside each of the boxes.

All nesting boxes showed signs of use with scratching around the holes and leaf litter in most boxes. The sugar gliders, who are the most common users of the boxes, will live in small family groups and frequently change boxes. Multiple gliders will huddle together in a box especially during the cold of winter. A few boxes were found to have 6-7 sugar gliders huddled together.

A number of boxes are in need of repairs or need replacing, so these repairs will be scheduled for another activity. We hope that this can be done in November.

The two workgroups rejoined before lunch. Throughout the morning we had scattered showers which would eventually clear after each passing shower. The forecast of clearing showers was repeatedly accurate. During each shower the pole mounted camera and cables needed to be protected from the rain.



Lunch became a scattered affair with one group stopping to have lunch while another continued on with the survey. Next to our lunch site there was a wonderful example of a Hanging Mistletoe which led to a conversation about the birds in the park that spread the mistletoe seeds. When the groups rejoined, only a few boxes needed to be surveyed. When the last boxes were completed, a car ferry returned most back to car park to end the day. A few enjoyed a walked back.

Joelle got some great shots of gliders welcoming the survey team. Thanks Joelle for these photos, which follow.



October Activities

Sunday 21st October

Activity 1 – Orchid Walk

10.00am

The first activity will be a walk of around Fosters Gully or Stringybark Track to search for the orchids which can be found at this time of the year. You will need to bring clothing suitable for the weather conditions on the day.

If you are staying for the koala count you will need to bring your lunch, which can be eaten in the Kerry Road picnic area between the activities.

Activity 2 - Koala Count

1.30pm

The Friends of Morwell National Park will be carrying out the annual 'Koala Count in the Park'. Willing participants are requested to meet at the Kerry Road - Fosters Gully car park at 1.30pm to commence the Koala count.

The 'Koala Count in the Park' event is part of the long term strategy to document the numbers and measure the general health of the koalas within Morwell National Park.

Bring your family and friends and enjoy a pleasant stroll in the park while simultaneously helping the team in spotting the resident koalas that may be found in the park.

Participants are advised to bring suitable clothing and footwear applicable for the weather conditions, and if possible, bring a pair of binoculars as it certainly makes it easier to spot the koalas.

