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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – November 2018

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

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.

"September 3, 1989

Dear Friends,

Well, it's been a pretty hectic month, starting with the visit of a few friends to Coolart on August 20. By all accounts, the hospitality shown by the Friends of Coolart was almost as impressive as the parkland that they represented.

It was our turn the following week to play host, this time to members of Friends of Warrandyte State Park. Fortunately, the bleak weather had no effect on the enthusiasm on the large group of visitors, who first tackled the Fosters Gully Walk, then had a look at the new park extension at Billy's Creek. We also took the opportunity to pin down the Roache's to present them with a belated send-off gift.

Our next meeting is on Sunday, September 17. We will be meeting at Fosters Gully at 1:30 p.m. for a Special General Meeting, followed by a koala survey. As a couple of administrative items stemming from the A.G.M. need to be sorted out, your attendance at this meeting will be appreciated. More importantly, your eyes are urgently required to make the survey a success.

Some of you may have noticed the snippet of good news in Keith Hamilton's column in the L.V. Express of 18/8/89, in which he announced a \$40,000 grant to Morwell National Park "for staffing and new facilities".

I received a letter recently from Deborah Burke apologising for missing the A.G.M., as well as outlining progress with the Morwell National Park Management Plan. Essentially, the draft report is about 75% complete, with the Park development chapter yet to be commenced. No recommendations regarding development of the new area of the park have been made. As the letter is quite extensive and informative, we will be discussing it at length at the next meeting.

Please note that DCF&L have invited us to help staff a display board dealing with Morwell National Park at Mid Valley shopping centre on Friday, September 15 and Saturday, September 16. We will also be taking the opportunity to inform people of the Friends group. The more volunteers we get, the less time each of us will have to attend, so please don't leave it to the others to help out."

"Bye for now, Steve Shinnners."



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

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President: Matt Campbell

Vice-President: Ken Harris

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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).

Over the last month there was a professional development workshop for ClimateWatch. Matt, Ken, Tamara, Mike, Cathy and Darren were able to attend the PD session. ClimateWatch is an environmental partnership between Earthwatch, Parks Victoria, National Parks groups and school groups. A ClimateWatch trail has been established at Foster's Gully with this being the only ClimateWatch trail in Gippsland. It is hoped that school groups (with the support of Parks rangers) will survey selected plants and animals they locate on this trail. The more data that is collected will give a bigger picture of changes that are happening to the species in and around the park. Some details of the ClimateWatch program follow:

ClimateWatch in Parks: Building resilient parks through community stewardship

Earthwatch and Parks Victoria are excited to announce their three-year partnership program, *ClimateWatch in Parks*. The project will involve the creation and utilisation of ClimateWatch Trails in select parks and reserves across the state, connect schools and communities to their local parks and reserves, and build their capacity to collect data that will help inform land management decisions.

Earthwatch will support this local engagement through:

1. Recruiting schools and community groups to participate in the project.
2. Creating a 'ClimateWatch trail', where students and community members can use Earthwatch's ClimateWatch app and website (www.climatewatch.org.au) to collect data on the impacts of climate change on local plants and animals.
3. Conducting a workshop in each target location for participating schools and local stakeholders, such as councils and community groups. The workshop will include training in the use of the app and website, assistance to develop a long-term data collection program and (for teachers) support to embed this in their school curriculum.
4. Providing secondary schools with educational resources, which detail the impacts of climate change and include links to the Australian Curriculum.
5. Providing the data collected to Parks Victoria and other land managers, to assist them with their planning and on-ground management decisions.

Participants of the program will be provided ClimateWatch resources (species field guides, ClimateWatch recording sheet, curriculum resources) training in the ClimateWatch app and species identification and will be supported locally by Parks Victoria rangers throughout the program.

During the last month we received results of the DEWP survey into nesting box use across Victoria.

DEWP Nesting box survey

Summary of results

We received information about nearly 10,000 nest boxes across Victoria. Boxes are housing a variety of mammals and birds (not always the targeted species), and providing useful information. Their installation and monitoring represents a huge investment by people across the state.

Seventy-eight respondents provided information on behalf of 94 'programs' that support 9845 nest boxes across Victoria. The number of nest boxes installed per program ranged from 1 to 1100. Community groups had installed 57% of nest boxes. Respondents were primarily motivated to support wildlife, and to engage the community with nature.

Thirty-three native mammal and bird species were recorded using nest boxes. Sugar Gliders were the most common species recorded (49 programs). Over half (65%) of nest boxes were monitored at least once per year. Barriers to monitoring nest boxes included difficulties coordinating volunteers, inaccessible nest boxes, and dealing with feral honey bees. Most programs (64%) had curated and stored monitoring data, but few had completed statistical analyses or published results.

The large number of nest boxes installed across Victoria have supported a wide variety of fauna, including threatened species. Increased support for nest box programs, particularly those run by community groups may increase our understanding of the degree to which nest boxes support fauna. In addition to ecological insights, community groups would benefit from help with program design, monitoring, data storage and analysis.

October Activity Report

Activity one – Orchid Walk

At the Orchid Walk we had Matt, Tamara, Beryl, Grant, Rose, Hayley, Joelle, Graeme, Darren and Ranger Shane. We had apologies from Wayne and Ken. For the orchid walk we were joined by seventeen people from the community. A really great turn-up. Some had read about the activity on Parks Connect and others via the local press and were keen to see what orchids were out today. Matt welcomed the group and went through the necessary safety instructions for the walk. JSA was discussed and all people signed in.

Matt reported that the shed holding all of our work equipment was broken into and all of our work items were stolen. Repairs have been made to the shed so that it is now secure. The stolen equipment is covered under insurance but not likely to be replaced soon. This has made future activities more difficult since we now don't have the equipment we normally use.

Shane told us that the BBQ in the Kerry Road picnic area is broken and steps are being made to have it repaired. There has been problems in locating somebody who can repair it and what paperwork needs to be completed so that it can be repaired. Shane is still following this up.

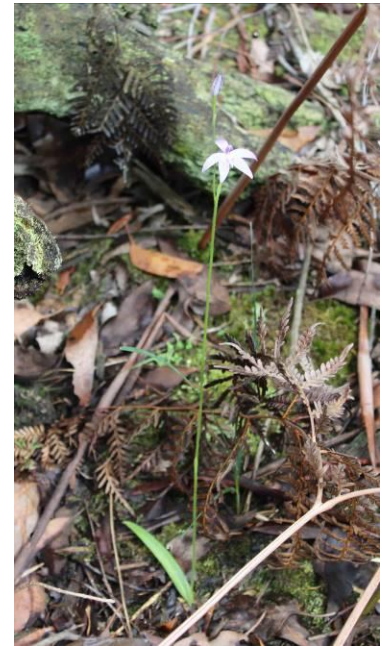
Over the last month there was a session looking at using Tutsan rust around Walhalla. The rust spores are introduced to a Tutsan patch and days later removed. The results have varied from patch to patch where in some test areas the rust has no effect. It is difficult to know whether it will have any effect in our area since it has not been tested here.

The weather for the day started off wet but remained clear and was great for orchid viewing. Beryl and Graeme went off to the Billy's Creek Track to remove ivy which has started growing in many places in the undergrowth. For the Orchid Walk Matt led the group and pointed out many orchids and interesting plants while Joelle followed at the tail of the group. The group were thorough investigating many small orchids and other little flowers found beside the track. Many orchids were located.

The books of the plants, lichens and moths of Morwell National Park were popular and many of our community members were able to get copies from Matt.

Some of the orchids and flowers found during the walk are shown below:





Activity two – Koala Count

For the Koala Count we had Matt, Tamara, Beryl, Joelle, Graeme, Darren and Ranger Shane. We were joined by thirteen members of the public. One person had even travelled down from Melbourne just for the Koala Count. A few of the people who completed the orchid walk remained for the Koala count. Matt welcomed the group and told them what they should be looking for during the count (what koala and tree details to look for). JSA was discussed and all people not at the morning walk signed in.

The group was divided into three groups with Fosters Gully, Stringybark Track and the Jumbuk Road fire break being surveyed.

Matt, Shane and Graeme travelled to the top of Jumbuk Road and walked back via the fire break. They drove to the top of the track and found two koalas on their trip back to the Kerry Road car park. Beryl and Tamara took a group of walkers around Stringybark Track and they saw four koalas on their track. Joelle and Darren took another group around Foster Gully to find 6 koala. Their count was improved by koalas found by the other groups in parts of their area. Two koalas were also found above the car park and above the road into the Kerry Road car park.

Surprisingly the Jumbuk fire break group was the first to return which was unexpected since they had the longest and most difficult walk.

This total of fourteen koalas is the largest total we have had and interesting since last year we had a lowest recorded total. This is great result since all koalas seen seemed to be good health and many were awake and watching from their high perches. The numbers located each year have been variable and this variation has also between the different tracks, which makes sense considering koalas are very mobile animals.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Foster's Gully	3	8	4	4	8
Stringybark Track	2	3	7	1	4
Jumbuk fire trail	3	1	2	2	2
Totals	8	12	13	7	14

Over the three walks, many other animals were seen including a lyrebird, echidna, wallaby, falcon, eagles and many other birds.



Latrobe Friends & Volunteers BBQ dinner 2018

Friends of Baw Baw National Park
Friends of Morwell National Park
Friends of Tarra Bulga National Park
Friends of Mt Worth State Park
Friends of Tyers Park
Mt St Gwinear Ski Patrol
Friends of Crossover Regional Park
Friends of Glen Nayook

The Parks Victoria Latrobe team extend an invitation to you and your family to join staff for a BBQ dinner to celebrate the significant contributions made by Friends Groups and volunteers in park management during 2018. This is an opportunity to network with members of other Friends Groups and celebrate achievements together.

When: Friday the 30th of November 2018 from 5pm

Where: Bert Thompson Reserve (Behind Red Rooster in Argyle Street, Traralgon)

A BBQ dinner and soft drinks will be provided. Please BYO drinks, plates, cutlery and chairs.

RSVP (with any dietary requirements) to Jo Durrant at 71 Hotham St Traralgon, on 0436658996 or Email joanna.durrant@parks.vic.gov.au **by Monday the 26th of November 2018.**

November Activity

Sunday 18th November 10.00am

The group will meet in the Kerry Road car park to complete the Butterfly Orchid Survey, some track maintenance on Muttonwood Track and repairs upon the nesting boxes. The group will split into smaller work groups to complete these three different tasks. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.