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# Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

## *Newsletter – November 2021*

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaeon.net>  
Official Address of FMNP - [contactfmnp@gmail.com](mailto:contactfmnp@gmail.com)  
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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter.

After the September Activity Matt, Tamara and Ken went to Silvertop Hill to check out the dairy plant. They found that the mystery plant was in flower. It was not however the native dairy plant that they had suspected, but a weed from a completely different family.

It proved to be the Giant Viper's Bugloss - *Echium pininana*, a garden escape originally from the Canary Islands. Tamara soon spotted a large number of plants of the same species on private property at the edge of Brewster's Rd, only 200 metres from the plant in the park. Matt broke the main stem to prevent it setting seed this year and we intend to see that it is removed.



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

Official Address of FMNP - [contactfmnp@gmail.com](mailto:contactfmnp@gmail.com)

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Morwell National Park was partially reopened last month after being heavily impacted by severe storms in June. Most tracks within the park still remain closed while arborists remove dangerous limbs from above and around the walking tracks. Currently the following Morwell National Park Sections of the park will remain closed until further notice, including:

- Stringybark Track
- Grand Strzelecki Track
- Sections of Billy's Creek Track
- Brewster Road entry
- Braniffs Road entry

Open areas are:

- Fosters Gully
- Billy's Creek Track: 1km from Junctions road

If you are yet to renew your 2021-2022 membership, please do so as soon as possible by direct deposit into our bank account –

Name:	Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.
BSB	063864
Account Number	10013722

Alternatively, post your renewal to our mailing address at PO Box 19, Churchill VIC 3842.

## October Activity Report

For this month we had two activities. In the morning we had an Orchid Walk to discover which orchids could be seen either in flower or leaf form. In the afternoon we had our annual Koala Count. For the Orchid Walk we had Gordon, Graeme, Tamara, Joelle and Darren. We had Ange and Sean along for their first activity. Ange is a returnee to the Valley and Sean is an eager bushwalker keen to discover more in the Gippsland environment. We had apologies from Matt, Mike and Cathy.

Over the last week Parks have had arborists working around Stringybark track removing dangerous trees and branches. With that work complete, it was safe of us to walk this track to investigate the orchids visible. The bridge leading to Stringybark Track is still broken (so this track is likely to be closed until the bridge can be either replaced or repaired), so access was gained by the side track.

We found this normal dry track, very wet. Ground water was holding on the surface making many large puddles and in some places torrents of water washing down the track.

During the activities today, we recorded nine orchid species flowering:

- ❖ *Caladenia catenata* (White Fingers)
- ❖ *Caladenia carnea* (Pink Fingers)
- ❖ *Caladenia transitoria* (Eastern Bronze Caladenia)
- ❖ *Caladenia moschata* (Musky Caladenia)
- ❖ *Chiloglottis valida* (Common Bird-orchid)
- ❖ *Diuris orientis* (Wallflower Orchid)
- ❖ *Glossodia major* (Waxlip Orchid)



- ❖ *Pterostylis pedunculata* (Maroonhood)
- ❖ *Pterostylis alpina* (Mountain Greenhood)

Although not in flower, the leaves and/or buds of an additional five orchids were seen:

- ❖ *Chiloglottis reflexa* (Autumn Bird-orchid)
- ❖ *Corybas diemenicus* (Veined Helmet-orchid)
- ❖ *Microtis* sp. (Onion orchid)
- ❖ *Sarcochilus australis* (Butterfly Orchid)
- ❖ *Thelymitra media* (Tall Sun-orchid)

All were on Stringybark Ridge, except for the Mountain Greenhood and Onion Orchid, which were observed along the Jumbuk Road Track during the koala count. Thank you to Tamara for her collection of this information.

In the afternoon we held the Koala Count. Many people from the community had come along to help with the Koala Count. From our Friends' group we had Gordon, Graeme, Tamara, Joelle, Jay, Wayne, Ken, Beryl, Joan and Darren. We had apologies from Matt, Mike and Cathy. Also we had Ange and Sean from the earlier activity and at least 10 members of the public to help with the search. There were enough people to make three different hiking circuits.

Tamara, Graeme, Sean and few adventurous community members made the trek up Jumbuk Road via vehicle to walk overland along the Jumbuk Track. This group spotted 4 koalas with two in the same tree.

Beryl, Wayne and large community group walked around Stringybark Track and found 6 koalas. Two were on the ground fighting. It was good to see that koalas have returned to area affected by the 2019 bushfires. Last year no koalas were located in this area but this year a few koalas were spotted here. A thick undergrowth of bracken, wattles and small gums now blankets this area. The bushfire and good rains has been good for growth in this area.

The last group with Ken, Joelle, Jay, Gordon, Darren, Howard, Ange, Wendy and John walked around Foster's Gully. This group found the track very wet and only sighted one koala. At Lyndon's Landing we clearly heard three different male koala's calling to each other.



### **November Activity**

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November - Kerry Road

The group will meet in the Kerry Road car park to complete the Butterfly Orchid Survey and some track maintenance. To ensure that the group is not larger than 10 in size we will have a number of small work teams. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.