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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – February 2022

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaean.net>
Official Address of FMNP - contactfmnp@gmail.com
A0016319X

January Activity Report

For the first activity of 2022 we had Jay, Joelle, Ken, Mike, Cathy, Graeme, Rose, Peter, Darren and Ranger Gabby. Matt came for the morning meeting and to get the activity started. Anita was able to juggle her schedule to come along for her first activity. Rose had two grandchildren along to help out. We had apologies from Gordon, Beryl and Tamara.

Over the school holidays there have been a few junior ranger programs. The bush detective sessions encourage children to learn the secrets of the bush by tuning the senses to discover who is hiding out of sight. Matt and Ranger Gabby took a small group around Foster's Gully on the Saturday before our activity.

For the day's activity we had two tasks to complete. The first was to complete the annual nesting box survey and the second was to collect seed for future planting. The group met in the carpark to plan the day ahead. In splitting the group, it was decided that Jay, Joelle, Peter and Gabby would work on seed collection. Jay and Gabby drove around to the Baniff's Road entrance and collected seed around the Pipeline track. Joelle and Peter collected along the Weir track.

The rest of the group worked on the nesting box survey. Before the activity Matt had tested the pole mounted cameras and found problems with the first one so we were limited to the second backup camera. We had not used this camera before and found that it was not holding charge well. Matt located a charger so we could charge the camera battery from a car cigarette lighter. This camera had no audio available so we needed to identify each box visually, by showing each box number, before viewing each box.

Anita drove her 4WD in to carry lunches, camera equipment and to recharge the camera. A number of boxes had come down in the June storms where the trees the boxes were on came down or they were knocked down by other falling trees. Four fallen boxes were found and at least two more are missing under fallen trees. At the next activity we will work on replacing these fallen boxes and make repairs to others.

During the activity we found that the camera lost charge quickly and this meant that it needed to be recharged often. This slowed the groups' progress. It was decided a powerbank should be investigated since the camera can be used while being charged. We should also look into wireless pole mounted cameras, since they are the next stage of this technology and will improve the recording process.

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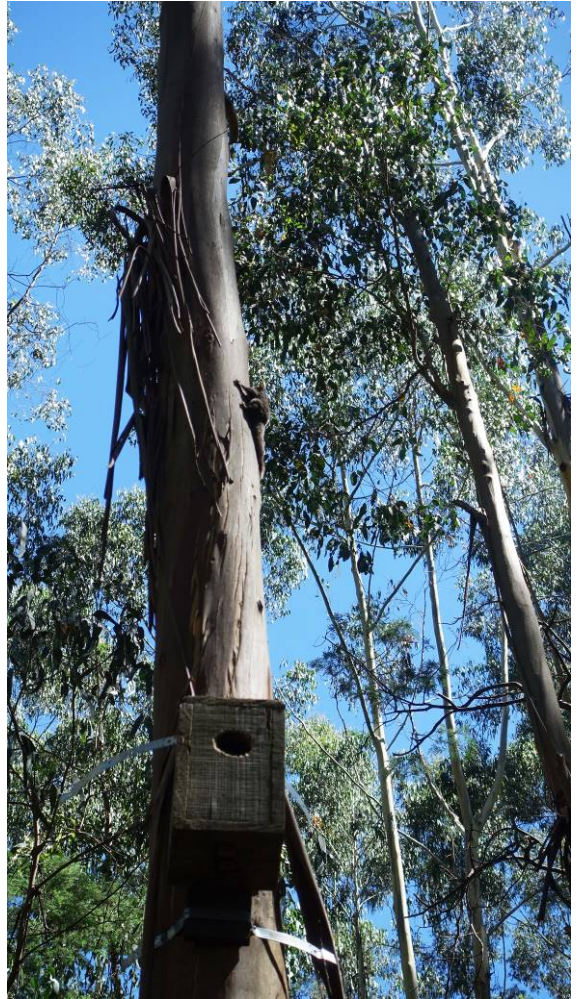
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At two of the nesting boxes, the sugar gliders were active and came out when we came to inspect the box. One sugar glider came out and climbed the tree while another poked its nose out of the hole.

Over the day we did not survey all of the nesting boxes. Towards the end of day we found a badly injured kangaroo. We guessed that it had been hit by a car on one of supporting roads. We finished the day by dealing with this kangaroo.

The boxes around Baniff's Road and up the Butt Butt track were not surveyed and will need to be done next month. The numbers of animals found in the boxes was less than in previous years. Around 30 sugar gliders, one ringtail possum and a few Agile Antechinus were observed throughout the day.

We will finish the newsletter with some news from Jay.

Currently Parks Vic has a blackberry spraying operation along Billy's Creek and the intention is to seed the dead blackberry canes with indigenous species between autumn and early spring. Yinnar, Yinnar South Landcare has been using this planting method successfully on our re-veg project upstream from the Park for the last three planting seasons, and we're assisting Parks Vic with this project.

The project inside the Park will run for the next three years, but because of a sudden influx of flood recovery money, a large area of blackberry will be sprayed this summer.

Volunteers from Friends of Morwell National Park and Yinnar, Yinnar South Landcare Group as well as Parks Vic staff have been collecting seed. We'll be assisted by TAFE students later next month.

Meanwhile, the seed keeps getting ripe.

We are hoping to source all the seed we need from inside the Park boundary, and we have the necessary permits to collect it there.

If anyone can help out with collecting on Tuesday January 25 and/or Saturday Feb 5, could they please let Jay know.

E-mail is best so that Jay can send you a species list etc. Email Jay at jduncan@speedweb.com.au



February Activity

Sunday 20th January 10.00am

The group will meet in the Junction Road car park to complete a variety of activities. We need to finish the annual survey of the nesting boxes (started last month), make repairs and replacement to other nesting boxes and collect some seed for planting later in the year. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.

If you are to be involved in seed collection, Jay has put the following equipment list together for seed collection: secateurs, loppers, old pillow cases, flexible tubs, plastic bags, paper bags, clothesline, clothes pegs, clipboards, 4B pencils and blank plant labels – rounded.