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# Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

## *Newsletter – October 2022*

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Welcome to this month's newsletter.

### **September Activity Report**

For the activity we had Matt, Ken, Anita, Graeme, Caitlin, Peter, Jay, Joelle, Dennis, Justin and Darren. There were apologies from Gordon, Mike, Cathy and Tamara.

The group had two tasks to work on during the activity. The first task was to make repairs to more of the nesting boxes. After the many storms many nesting boxes needed either repairs, reattachment to the tree or replacement. So the first crew were to continue making repairs to the boxes which started last month.

The second group were to spread seed into bare areas around Billy's Weir and the Grand Strzelecki Track. Earlier in the year the group collected seed, which Wendy has been kindly storing and maintaining. A big thanks to Wendy for looking after this seed. Jay had spent the previous day preparing the seed for spreading. Some seed needed to either smoked or mixed with wet sand for distribution. So Jay and Joelle came armed with many bags of seed (a mixed wet mix and a dry mixture) ready for many teams to distribute seed.

The activity started with a shuffling of crews and vehicles so that Peter and Caitlin could drive in along Billy's Creek Track, Graeme could open the gate at Baniff's Road to allow Jay and Joelle to drive in from there and then Graeme could collect new boxes and tools from the shed. He then returned back to Billy's Creek Track to work on box replacement. Graeme, Ken, Justin and Dennis worked on box replacement and repairs. This crew had two ladders which made it easier to get the boxes up. The team was hampered by not having the list of boxes needing replacement or repair so they needed to work from the maps and find boxes that needed maintenance or replacement.

The photos below shows Graham and Denis, first erecting a new nest box and secondly taking down the old topless box on a tree 5 metres from the first. The old box was on a dead tree and there was concern that putting a ladder against it might bring it down, so it was balanced by a ladder on each side and all ended well.

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With the seed spreading crews - Jay and Joelle worked along the Pipeline Track towards Potato Flat, while Caitlin and Peter worked on side creek at the base of Blue Gum Hill and along Blue Gum Hill Track, distributing seed along the banks of the creek and on the slopes above. Anita and Darren worked along the Grand Strzelecki Track. Each team spread seed into patches of dead blackberries. The hope is that the seeds will germinate among the blackberry canes where that can't be grazed upon by animals. The few months earlier Parks contactors had sprayed the many blackberry patches along the creek and upon the banks to kill the blackberries and support our planting.

Sadly the feral animals in the park are increasing. During the day we saw a deer (on the Grand Strzelecki Track), multiple feral cats, a herd of sheep and four goats on Blue Gum Hill. Fortunately we also saw a wombat, wallaby, ducks, kangaroos and sugar gliders.

Before Billy's Weir one of the washed out bridges had been reused as a temporary bridge. Sadly this bridge has again washed downstream and now can't be used to cross the creek.



Anita and Darren enjoyed the walk along the Grand Strzelecki Track. Along this track we enjoyed finding three waterfalls flowing into Billy's Creek including the Billy's Creek Waterfall. These waterfalls are seasonal so they are rare finds. They made the twenty creek crossings to spread seed to the park boundary.

Although the blackberries have been sprayed this has provided the opportunity for many other weeds like thistles, tutsan and willows to grow strongly in and beside the track. The density of the weeds increases as you move further along the track toward the park boundary.



## **October Activity**

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> 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 and a seat, 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.