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# Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

## Newsletter – October 2023

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaeaan.net>  
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Welcome to this month's newsletter. A big thanks goes to Caitlin who has written and provided all of the photos for the September activity report.

### September Activity Report

For the activity we had Matt, Ken, Tamara, Beryl, Caitlin, Anita, Rose, Mike W, Jay and Joelle. We had apologies from Gordon, Graeme, Mike B, Cathy and Darren.

At the September meeting of Friends of Morwell National Park, news was shared of a visit to the park by local Members of Parliament - Melina Bath and Martin Cameron, who had come to inspect the damaged bridges in the Junction Road area. The delays in repairing the bridges after the storms in June 2021 have been raised by Ms Bath in state parliament, and Parks Victoria is believed to have appointed a project coordinator.

Members of the group who are working to produce a guidebook to the birds in the park reported that they have held some productive initial meetings, and the wider group approved a proposal to seeking funding for the project. An update was also given on the Strzelecki-Alpine Biolink project, which has held two meetings this year and is progressing slowly. The Jeeralang Junction Local Recovery team have put together an improvement plan for the Billy's Creek Reserve opposite the Junction Road carpark. As part of the recovery efforts after recent disasters they are planning improvements to the park including an all-access walking circuit, shelter and picnic tables and interpretive signs.

With no appropriate vehicles available to carry tools and equipment into the park, the plan for doing track maintenance was abandoned in favour of a bird observation walk along the Billys Creek Track. Only a few hundred metres from the car park, we found a wombat munching grass in the middle of the track. Upon approaching it carefully, we saw that it was infected with mange. Once it had scurried off the track and into the bush,



Bare-nosed wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*)

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**President:** Ken Harris

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we continued with our walk.

A total of 24 bird species was observed over the course of the day, with the most numerous being the superb wren and golden whistler. Other sightings included eastern yellow robin, white-throated treecreeper, Australian king parrot, laughing kookaburra, and the ubiquitous pied currawong and Australian magpie.

Some members of the group cleared a fallen wattle tree that was partially obscuring the track while others noted the profusion of mountain clematis (*Clematis glycinoides*), which was flowering in great display high up in several trees.

We were pleased to see four koalas, including one that was actively climbing near our lunch spot. A parcel of eight fallow deer, led by a buck with impressive antlers, was also observed in the bush adjoining But But Track, and two grey kangaroos were sighted up near Tebb Terrace.

While we may not have completed much maintenance this month, we all enjoyed our time in the national park, appreciating the varied beauty of the flora and fauna that inhabit it.



Australian admiral (*Vanessa itea*)



Mountain clematis (*Clematis glycinoides*)



Billys Creek

## **October Activity**

Sunday 15<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.