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# Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

## *Newsletter – April 2024*

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Welcome to this month's newsletter.

This month we had two activities, with nesting box repairs in the morning followed by an evening walk and mothing survey. Since the activity the previous month needed to be cancelled, splitting the activity allowed for all the planned tasks to be completed.

In the morning activity we had Mike, Gordon, Beryl, Graeme, Ken, Rose, Caitlin and Darren. We also had Jackson and Kae along to take part in the activities. With a small group needed to work upon the nesting boxes, it provided the opportunity of others to complete other tasks. Caitlin, Kae and Ken went for a walk along Billy's Creek while Beryl and Rose removed weeds.

After walking along Billy's Creek Caitlin and Kae walked around Fosters Gully where they saw a lace monitor.

The rest of the group worked on replacing nesting boxes which had either come off the trees, lost over time or were damaged and repair was not viable. Over the morning six boxes were replaced and two boxes were removed from their fallen trees. With the undergrowth dying back it was now easier to find the fallen boxes. One of these boxes was good to go back onto a nearby tree while the other was replaced by a new box onto a close tree.



Our stock of replacement boxes not now mostly exhausted so any future works will need be either repairs to the existing boxes or new boxes gained from other sources.

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For the last box the group need to cross the creek. One vehicle drove across the creek with the rest of the group finding a swallow part of the creek to ford. After the last box was mounted and group travelled back across the creek and used both vehicles to return to the car park. At 2 pm this last group finished and returned home for lunch.

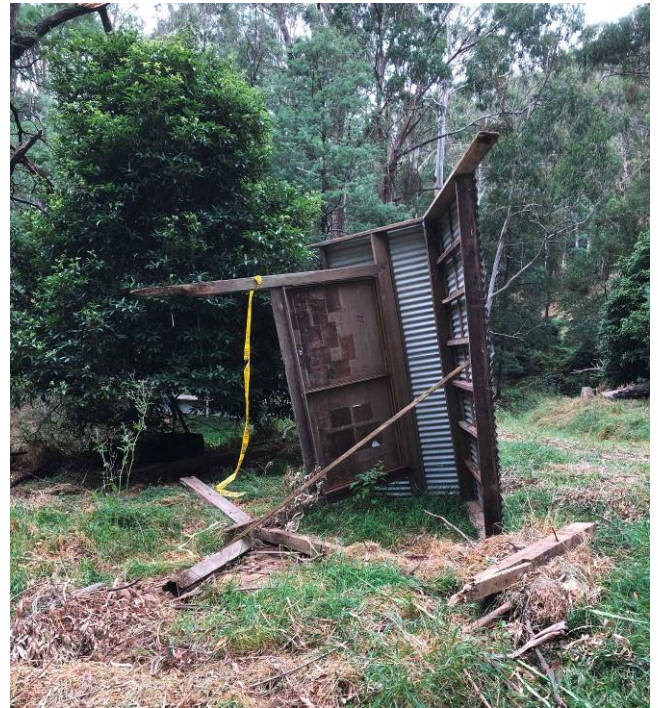
During the week before the activity Graeme had made multiple trips into the park and had removed many bag loads of weeds. Along with bags collected by Rose and Beryl many weeds were removed.

Later in the evening Jay, Joelle, Ken, Matt, Caitlin, Kae, Cathy, Mike, Tamara, Anita, Wendy, John, Graeme and Darren returned to the Junction Road picnic area.

Around the picnic table we caught up on what had happened over the last month. Work continues upon the bird book with the group working upon the image selections. For some of species, more images were needed. A request was put out and the response filled most of the gaps. The work upon the bird book continues.

Recently a meeting was held with representatives from Parks Victoria. Parks have reported that they are continuing in their efforts to repair the many broken bridges across the park and await responses from the insurance providers. Project managers have been appointed to oversee these works. The plan is to split the works in half since the Kerry Road section will be smaller than the Billy's Creek section where at least three new bridges are required. With the works split it is hoped that replacements will be seen sooner. Evidence of the original conditions of damaged and broken facilities need to be collected.

Parks also have plans to remove all information shelters (the one at Kerry Road was removed a few years ago) and replace them with metal information signage at each entrance. The shelter beside Billy's Creek was pulled out when the trees from the February storm were cleared from the tracks.



On dark, Mike and Cathy along with Ken and Matt went to set up their mothing sheets.

On dark the group meet at the first mothing sheet. As darkness came in the group watched bats flying overhead and between the treetops. The spot light walk travelled along Billy's Creek Track and saw a koala, wallabies, kangaroos, eel, trout and heard sugar gliders. When the group returned to the mothing sheets, they found that only a few moths were attracted on that evening.



Ken reported that because it wasn't very warm the results were a bit disappointing. Nevertheless, Matt and Ken had at least 30 different moths and Mike and Cathy had 22 and there was a little overlap between the two, so more than 42 moth species were found with more than 56 species in total.

One moth on Mike and Cathy's sheet, *Macrobathra Desmotoma* was a new one for the Park, making it the 795<sup>th</sup> moth species found in the park.



One little beetle on Matt's sheet, *Ulodes Verrucosus* was of interest because it was the second one from the Park (first recorded in April 2011) and because there are only 6 records on iNaturalist and the previous one from the Park was the first known picture of the live beetle.



A few days after the activity Caitilin after a walk around Fosters Gully (where she saw a mob of kangaroos), randomly met a journalist and photographer from the Age newspaper. They were reporting on the Strzelecki koala, so Caitilin took them on a tour of Fosters Gully where they saw one koala. They got great photos of black cockatoos, other wildlife, and scenery. Caitilin told them about our Friends group and some of our activities, including the koala count and orchid survey, and she also told them about the bird book. She mentioned that Parks Victoria will be undertaking many repairs in the park.

The article is supposed to come out sometime next week, so keep an eye out for it.



### **April Activity**

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April 10am

The group will meet at Kerry Road to complete track maintenance. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.