



# FoCC Incorporated

# Spikey News



Linking the community with Woovookarung and the Canadian Corridor  
May 2021 Issue Number 77

## Covid Edition

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### 1. Water Race walk

Over the past months the FoCC had been preparing a walk along three of the water race systems near Sparrow Ground, Pax Hill and Saw Pit Gully.

Alas the event is cancelled until further notice



Friends of Canadian Corridor, Ballarat

5 hrs · 🌐

Sunday's Water-race Walk has had to be postponed due to the current Covid Lockdown. Hopefully we will be able to enjoy it in June or July.



### 2. Birds Forum event postponed until August 18<sup>th</sup> 2021.

FoCC May 2021 Spikey News

The FoCC was preparing to host a “Birds” Forum on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June featuring the guest speaker.

**Mr Sean Dooley**

**National Public Affairs Manager for BirdLife Australia,**  
author of The Big Twitch, and former holder of  
the Australian Big Year twitching record.

**This event is postponed to August 18<sup>th</sup> 2021**

### 3. May 16<sup>th</sup> Working bee – To pick up stakes and tree guards

A FoCC working bee picked up used tree guards and stakes along Katy Ryans Rd Mt Clear on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2021.



Working bee report. Courtesy Ballarat Times 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021.



A ute load containing 1500 recycled tree stakes and 500 trees guards Sunday May 16<sup>th</sup> 2021.

This year it is planned to plant 500 trees at the end of July near Katy Ryans Rd and the recycled materials will be reused there. More information soon.

### 4. Park Works -Dementia Trail

Work on the Dementia Trail is proceeding well with many of the trail's features being installed. Hopefully within the

next week or so the entrance shelter will be erected adjacent to the car park.



Trackside furniture 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Word is that the trail may be completed by the end of June.

### 5. Koala spotting

Is there one Koala or two Koalas in this image? The photographer could not be sure!



The Crater Mt Buninyong. Image courtesy C Vawdrey 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021

Winter seems to be a quiet time for Koalas. This is the third year of our citizen science Koala count. Sightings were also low in the colder months during 2019 and 2020.

If you see or hear a Koala please send the information containing the when where and how to:

[focinfo@gmail.com](mailto:focinfo@gmail.com). Images are fabulous.

### 6. Gorge water pipe easement works continue

Central Highlands contractors have been busy closing vehicle access points along the water pipe easement track to the Gorge.

Central Highlands Water are planning to restore the eroded sides of the gorge as shown below



Damage on the Gorge north face with the newly installed gates and fence in the background. Image 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

### 7. Federation University Student investigate park restoration

Federation University students met at The Lookout to learn more about the Parks habitat and the restoration of that habitat on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021.



Federation University students at the Phytophthora cleaning station on the Nature Trail. Image 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

**Phytophthora:** There are a number of Phytophthora infected sites in the park particularly amongst Grass Trees. Dead or dying Grass trees are an indicator of, but not proof of Phytophthora.

There are two Phytophthora cleaning sites. In addition to the site on the Nature trail another Phytophthora is at the Parks Mountain Bike track at Mt Clear.

*Phytophthora cinnamomi* poses a significant threat to the Australian environment. This plant pathogen can spread easily, causing disease, death and potential extinction in susceptible plants, and loss of habitat for animals. The disease, Phytophthora dieback, is often difficult to detect and can cause permanent damage to

ecosystems and landscapes before it is identified. *Phytophthora cinnamomi* can remain dormant for long periods during dry weather and is impossible in most situations to eradicate from infested areas, so it is critical to prevent further spread. Any activity that moves soil, water or plant material can spread Phytophthora – this includes recreational activities such as bushwalking, off-road vehicle use and gardening, as well as other activities such as road building, land management, timber harvesting and mining. To minimise spread of the disease from one site to another, it is important to ensure that footwear, tools and vehicles are always clean on arrival and departure, to source pathogen-free material and plant stock and dispose of garden waste carefully.”

Source:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive-species/diseases-fungi-and-parasites/phytophthora-cinnamomi-disease>

**8. Wendouree Koala Park**

The Courier Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2021 contained an opinion piece regarding the future of the old Ballarat Common.

“ As early as 1940 a portion of the Common was planted with endemic eucalypts to create a koala sanctuary for the region's nearly disappeared marsupial. “

The Koala Park was adjacent to the corner of Gillies St and Learmonth Road in Wendouree. A friend who worked at the then Country Roads Board Depot remembers the trees in the 1960's. There is also a Koala Park at Creswick.

**9. Track restoration – Helping nature recuperate**

In 2016 an old motor cycle track existed east of Dozed Rd.



4WD damage on the old motor cycle track 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016

The FoCC organised for 500 trees to be planted in the area during the 2020 second Covid lockdown. The scene today is different. The power of nature's recuperation is amazing.



Same place 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**10. Koala Monitoring**

FoCC volunteers have been busy working with University of Melbourne research student Louise in looking for and finding Koala scat in the park and Union Jack Education Reserve.

Nearly forty sites have now been checked. Each site is made up of 20 native trees. An area 2 metres in radius is searched around each tree for Koala scat.

Around half the sites have contained scat. Some sites were covered in scat. And the scat source was found above the site in Saw Pit Gully.



Volunteer Koala scat searchers at the Woowookarung Regional Park sign on Katy Ryans Rd Mt Clear. Image 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Koala research.**

A few weeks ago, I had a Friday off work and decided to go along to volunteer with the koala research that Louise Jory is doing in Woowookarung. There were 7 of us and we covered 3 sites in the morning, searching the ground in a two-metre radius around 20 trees at each site looking for

koala poo. I didn't find any poo but there as one spot where there was a lot of koala poo found under a tree so I now know where to look up when I walk in the park. The weather stayed fine all morning and Louise supplied a hot lunch of sausages in bread, banana cake and coffee at the best lunch spot in town, The Look Out. I learnt a lot about koalas in general, koalas in the park and lots of other interesting things about the park. I really enjoyed my morning despite spending a good part of it crawling around on my knees searching through leaves and sticks for koala poo! I am one of about 35 people who have contributed to the research this year. If you missed out it will be repeated towards the end of the year. It may not be glamorous but how often do you get to participate in some real research so close to home that will contribute to better mapping and planning to keep koalas in the park into the future or to spend the morning with koala experts sharing their knowledge. Knee pads and gloves were provided if you don't have your own. And your friends and family might think you are a bit odder than they did before but I'm OK with that!

Contributed by Kim

### 11. Koala Committee

The FoCC began the citizen science koala spotting in 2018 after a concern that maybe "Koalas did not exist in Ballarat anymore"

We now know Koalas do exist and they present in very small numbers from Brown Hill in the North to Buninyong and beyond in the south.

Over the past three years the FoCC citizen science Koala spotting has collected 105 individual Koala sightings within the Ballarat locality.

The City of Ballarat in the early 2000's lead Australia with the first municipal Koala Plan of Management (KPM) and by 2010 had actually embedded the plan into the Ballarat Planning Scheme.

By 2010 the following items were in place

- In 2008 a base line Koala Monitoring count was conducted.
- Ongoing support for COB indigenous tree nursery
- C137 VPO1 and ES05 Overlays implemented into Ballarat Planning Scheme (gazetted 2010)
- Living with Koalas Pamphlet produced (award winning)
- Koala fencing rules enforced most of the time
- Applied dog free rules – eg Jenola Court

However, since then key Councillors and Personnel have left the city and the application of the plan has been less supported with some items still waiting to be put into place.

Some of the items are:

- Road signs and speed restrictions
- Environmental COB staff trained to capture treat Koalas
- Regular koala number monitoring
- KPM implementation committee enabled
- Senior COB officer appointed with responsibility for KPM.
- Adding or enhancing Koala habitat within the ES05 areas

Other items that should be on the agenda are:

- Methods to reduce inconsistent application of Koala habitat retention rules when subdivisions are created.
- Injured wildlife information signs with the corridor and on the Council website. Currently the Council provides zero information to assist local people with injured wildlife.

4 THE COURIER Monday May 21, 2021

NEWS

## Koala group back on radar

Plans for committee set to progress

BY JOLYNN ATTWOOD

PLANS to protect the declining koala population around Ballarat could soon be given a boost.

A move to install a so-called koala committee - a strand to the council's koala plan which was much headed at its 2008 launch - looks to be back on the table.

The committee was not installed at the time and eventually fell off the radar. However, environmental advocates from the Friends of Canadian Corridor (FoCC) have put the project back on the radar, raising the possibility in several council meetings since 2019.

The move has been confirmed in minutes recently published for last month's council meeting, which included another special session from FoCC, president Bob Harmon, sharing an update on the committee.

He said: "We are concerned there are a number of operational problems to do with the local koala population that are sadly being neglected".

The council officer response was published in minutes last week. It con-

ferred that the Living Corridor project - a broad-ranging exercise aiming at offering community and protection for Ballarat's natural areas - had been delayed.

"This was partly due to re-

sourcing, Ballarat's director of development and growth

Shirley Robinson said.

However, the minutes

report Mr Robinson was

happy to initiate the koala

committee. She also said

the council had employed a

consultant to look at the koala

corridor and help understand

the municipality's

measurements in the area.

The delay of the Living

Corridor project has come

as a disappointment to environmental

groups in the city, including the Friends of

Canadian Corridor.

Its aims were to protect

the continuity of natural

areas and the connections

between them.

Council officers said in

August last year that the city's

koala management plan

would be assessed as part of

the Living Corridor work.

In March 2020, council

officers had stated the koala

population was on a downward

trajectory, based on several

reports received.

Several councillors said

they wished to participate.

Citizen science projects

have indicated there are just

a handful of the municipality

of the local area has been the

subject of several anecdotal

reports received.



POPULATION PRESSURE: A picture of a wild koala sheltering in a tree on a Mount Helen property in May last year. Peter Newstead.

The declining number of koalas in the area has been the subject of several anecdotal reports received. Recently Louise Iry - a researcher from the University of Melbourne - has begun work in the area to give more scientific weight to the figures. Working in Woorekarung Regional Park, Melbourne, Iry said she hoped the project would allow the health of the population in the area to be better understood. Among the threats faced by local koalas are habitat loss, cars and dog attacks.

Courtesy Courier May 31<sup>st</sup> 2021

### 12. Public Lands Management act

Recently the State Government released a discussion paper on Public Land Management.

The FoCC made a response highlighting:

*Our experience over the past nine years, working through the establishment and management of the Woorekarung Regional Park and associated public lands at Ballarat, is that the current legislation with its various acts and interpretations, makes effective management slow and unwieldy.*

*The ability of DELWP and Parks Victoria officers to follow up rubbish dumpers, illegal wood thieves, vandals and the like is hampered by the lack of effective regulation relating to publicly managed land. We hear of prosecutions relying on outdated and inadequate crown land protection rules being used to prosecute breaches in the Woorekarung Regional Park.*

The Friends strongly support the rewrite of the Public Land Legislation.

### 13. Why Garden waste is so bad for the park

This load was dumped illegally in the park near Dozed Road in mid-February.



13<sup>th</sup> February 2021

By Mid-May, the image below shows what has grown.  
 Note: Tom a Parks Victoria ranger has now applied a weedicide to the heap and hopefully has put a stop to the weeds. What is disturbing is that this dump was just metres away from the locally rare flat leaf penny pea site



Image 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**14. Woovookarung classic car collection.**

Since the gold rush the bush has been often used as a dumping ground for cast off relics. Occasionally the cast offs become a feature.

The Eureka Orienteers 1975 map showed several wrecked cars as navigational features within the landscape.

1.



HR Holden (1966-67) was shown on the 1975 Eureka Orienteers map. Slowly turning into iron oxide.

2.



In a mine hole in Saw Pit Gully, a mid-sixties Mazda 1200

3.



North South track. A burnt early 2000's Nissan Pulsar

4.



Car boot remnants near North South track

5.



Unidentifiable 1930's Car body beside the Gorge

6.



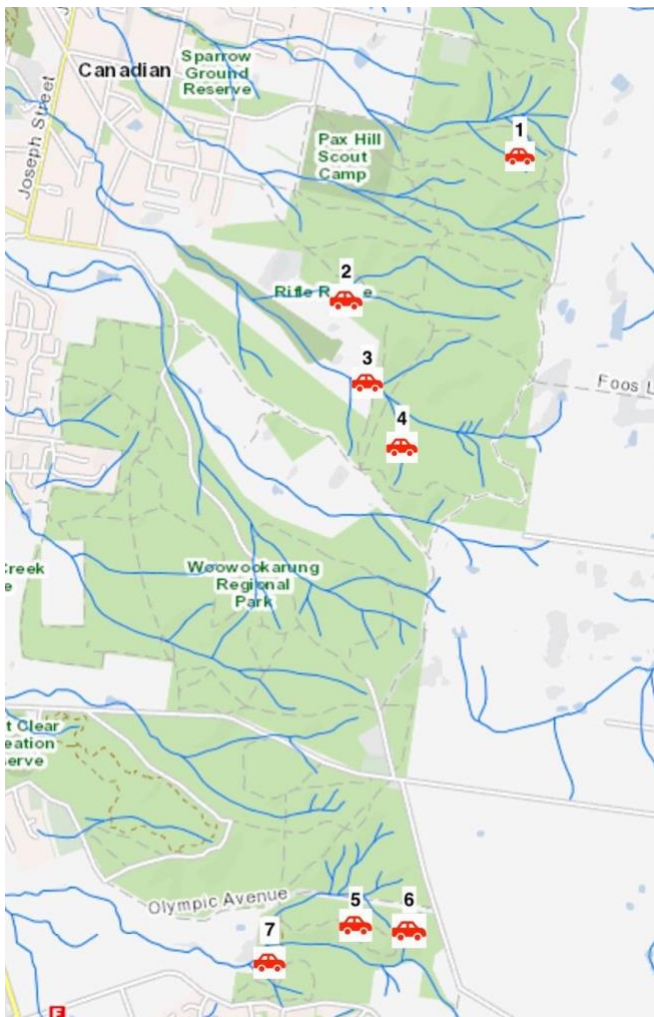
1940's Car in sluice field at top of the Gorge.



This photo was found in the old Quarry Cottage near the Gorge sluice field. Is it the same car? Image courtesy Peter



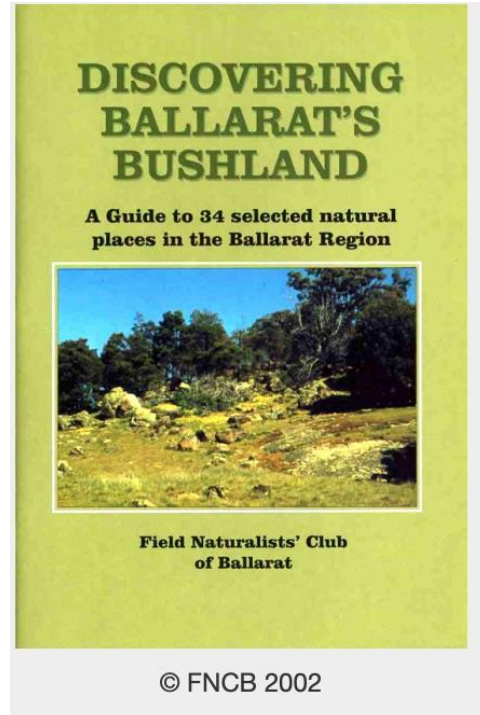
7. Unmistakable FJ Holden shape in a gully off Greenhills Rd.  
**Woovookarung Classic car collection Map**



Map of Woovookarung classic car collection.

### 15. **Canadian Forest Park 2002**

The Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat have produced many excellent publications over the past years.



In 2002 the publication "Discovering Ballarat's Bushland" described the Canadian Forest Park as:

*The Canadian Forest Park provides a green belt around the skyline to the south-east of the City of Ballarat. It is an ecologically significant zone and managed as a multipurpose area for the Ballarat community.*

**Location:** The bushland reserve is southeast of Ballarat. Vic roads 76 G3 and 257 U14-20. Access is off Eureka St via Cathie St, or travelling south along the Ballarat – Buninyong Road C294 a left turn into York St, Clayton Spencer or Wilson Streets will bring you into the Forest Block.

**Facilities:** There are no facilities but the gravel roads are good.

**Flora:** Messmate Stringybark-Peppermint type forest dominates the vegetation. Interesting understory flora includes nine acacia species, attractive stands of Cherry Ballart, and various cassinias, parrot peas, milkwort and daisies. The herb layer includes a variety of orchid species, chocolate lilies, bluebells and violets while grass-trees are common throughout the Forest.

**Fauna:** Surveys have recorded the Grass Skink, Blue Tongue Lizard and Mouse Dunnart. The Koala is occasionally seen and the Swamp Wallaby may venture into the Forest from adjacent bushland. Considering the central location, bird life is unexpectedly plentiful due mainly to the nearby Yarrowee river vegetation. Various honeyeaters, thornbills, White-throated Treecreeper, Scarlet Robin, White-winged chough and grey fantail are often seen.

**Geology:** The Park is underlain by Ordovician sandstones, mudstones and slates.

**Other Information:** The Park has a disused rifle range off Clayton St. Horse riding, jogging, orienteering and nature study are additional pastimes of interest to tourists. At the top of Wilson St, a large water tank is used for domestic supplies was built in 1982.

**16. Tawny Frogmouth spotted near Recreation Rd Mt Clear**

The Park has many varied wonders within it. Just being in the right place at the right time is important as this image of a tawny Frogmouth shows.



Tawny Frogmouth. Image Courtesy of Rex April 8<sup>th</sup> 2021

**17. Rubbish dumpers, thieves and vandals**

The FoCC encourages Park friends to report track vandals, rubbish dumped, dumpers, wood thieves and other suspicious activity to Parks Victoria on 13 1963 or email: [woovookarung@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:woovookarung@parks.vic.gov.au)

If an offender is spotted, please note vehicle registration details as vehicle identification is most helpful, plus location and details.

**18. Membership**

Membership runs from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December each year, Membership fee is \$20 per year. Membership forms are available online at or email [focinfo@gmail.com](mailto:focinfo@gmail.com)

**19. FoCC facebook and webpage**

Joel at is now overseeing the FoCC Facebook page. [www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/)  
Rob is overseeing the webpage [webmaster@focc.asn.au](mailto:webmaster@focc.asn.au)

Currently we have just over ~~766~~ 788 friends following us on facebook and growing. Welcome to all new friends. Feel free to pass on to other friends and press the like button.

June 16	<b>Postponed</b> Forum: Sean Dooley, National Public affairs Manager Birdlife Australia.
	Water Race walk – When Covid restrictions lift.
July (late)	Koala tree planting x 500 trees
Aug 18	<b>Forum:</b> Sean Dooley, National Public affairs Manager Birdlife Australia
Sept	FoCC visit to Clarksdale. Bird ID. Date TBA
Oct 17 – 24	Woovookarung Wildflower Walk.
Oct 18 – 24	Great Aussie Backyard bird count.
Oct 20	Annual Meeting
Dec 3	Drinks at the Lookout

The FoCC Spikey News is published on behalf of the Friends of Canadian Corridor Incorporated, Registered No A0097535B.

The purpose of “Spikey News” is to link the community to Woovookarung Regional Park and the Canadian Corridor.

Circulation this issue is ~~754~~ 768 Welcome to all new friends. The update is generally published monthly. Friends wishing to add articles to the FoCC update may do so by emailing [focinfo@gmail.com](mailto:focinfo@gmail.com)

Feel free to circulate widely including doctor’s waiting rooms, work offices, friends and neighbours. We are proud to walk this land with the Wadawurrung people and all other First Nations people.

Any opinions expressed in the publications are those of the editors and do not officially represent Parks Victoria or the FoCC.

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