



# FoCC Incorporated

# Spikey News



Linking the community with Woovookarung and the Canadian Corridor  
June 2021 Issue Number 78

## Dementia

## Friendly Forest

## and Sensory Trail

## opened

### Spikey News features

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### 1. Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail

Ballarat's dementia-friendly trail was opened on Friday June 25<sup>th</sup> by Michaela Settle MP and Anne Tudor OAM onsite in Woovookarung Regional Park.



Anne and Michaela opening the trail. Image courtesy Ballarat Courier June 26<sup>th</sup> 2021.



"The trees are asking how we are" window along the trail. Image courtesy of Jess, June 26<sup>th</sup> 2021.

*"The trees are asking how we are" were Edie Mayhew's words when partner Anne Tudor first took her to the site of what would become Australia's first dementia-friendly forest sensory trail.*

*For more than three years, steps towards the inclusive trail have been taking shape in Woovookarung Regional Park. It is a project led by Ms Mayhew and Ms Tudor that drew in the city's dementia network, Parks Victoria, Friends of Canadian Corridor and school and community groups for planning, caring for seedlings and planting.*

Courtesy Ballarat Courier June 26<sup>th</sup> 2021



The opening of the trail on Friday June 25<sup>th</sup> 2021

The trail is amazing and is designed to meet the needs, interest and provide encouragement to people living with Dementia, carers and the public.

## DEMENTIA ALLIANCE, BALLARAT



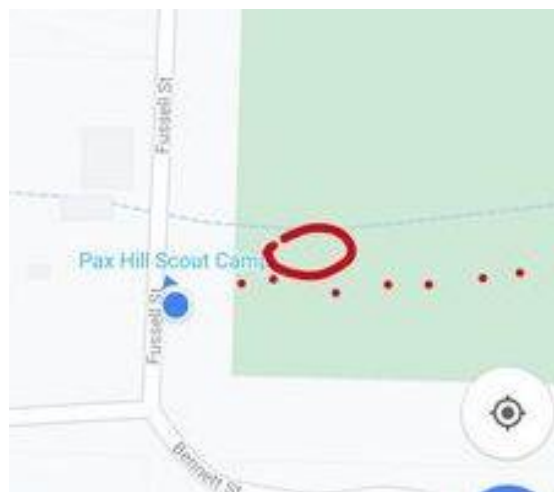
*Building an Inclusive, Enabling Community for People Living with Dementia*

Special praise for Ballarat Bigger Hearts Dementia Alliance for gaining Dementia Australia seed funding to start the project. The community groups for their strong support in kind and financial, Thomson Hay Landscape Architects for their capacity and vision to bring the project forward and Parks Victoria for their project management with requirements outside of normal Park works.

Additional work such as granite sand trail topping and a board walk at the eastern end are still to be completed. A grand public opening will be held in on site in September.



Location of Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail.



Map provided by Koala observer June 4<sup>th</sup> 2021

### 2) Mt Buninyong



June 15 Mt Buninyong. Image Courtesy Cheryl.

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

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. Koala spotting

- 1) **Pax Hill Koala spotting.** A Koala was observed in Pax Hill Scout Camp on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2021. The area around Pax Hill, Wilson St and Boundary Rd has hosted several Koala reports over the past months.

### 3) Vale Scotsburn Koala

On Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup> a local wildlife rescuer was called to an injured Koala at Scotsburn. After assessment by a Vet that the injuries were too great for the Koala, it was put down.

### 4) Vale Sebastopol Koala

Two weeks ago, an injured Koala was picked up by wildlife rescuers in Sebastopol. It had been transported there by non-thinking people following a road incident and did not survive its injuries.

### 5) Central Ballarat Baby Koala report:



# RESCUERS SEARCH FOR JUVENILE KOALA

BY HAYLEY ELG

WILDLIFE rescuers are appealing for help to find a koala in Ballarat Central.

The koala, believed to be a juvenile, was last seen crossing Eyre Street away from the Queen Elizabeth Centre on Wednesday morning.

Wildlife Victoria volunteer rescuers searched the area for the koala throughout the day and knocked on a number of doors asking residents to check their properties.

Rescuer Jessica Robertson asked residents living in the area to search their properties for the koala. The koala was seen in an area where habitat is scarce and the risk of a dog attack or being hit by a car is high.

"Check all areas something could hide- all nooks and crannies around the backyard and sheds," Ms Robertson said. "It could be hiding in bushes or up or under a tree."

Ms Robertson said the koala would be petrified by the noises in an urban area. As koalas can die from stress, keeping it to a minimum is essential. If located it is advised not to approach the koala and not to touch or attempt to feed it. If able to do so, it should be contained in an area away from dogs and humans. If the animal is visibly injured, a blanket can be placed over it to create a dark and quiet space. Wildlife Victoria should be informed straight away and the nearest available rescuer will be contacted.

It is not yet known if the koala is injured.

Rescuers have not yet determined how the koala got to the area - it could have been brought to the area by a human or it could have found its way there itself.

But there is no food for the koala in the residential streets and it will continue attempting to cross roads to get away from suburbia. Wildlife Victoria: 8400 7300.

Page 9 Ballarat Courier June 24<sup>th</sup> 2021

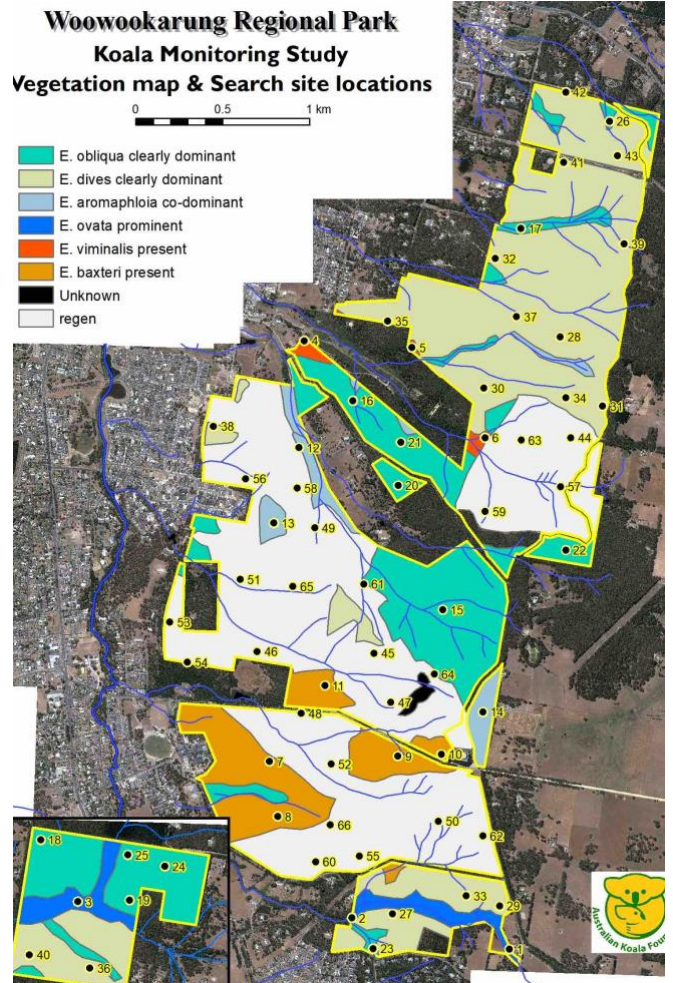
Winter seems to be a quiet time for Koalas. This is the third year of our citizen science Koala count. Sightings were also low in the colder months during 2019 and 2020.

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.

## 4. Koala Monitoring

The last two sites of the Koala monitoring program were disrupted again by Covid closures. Hopefully they will be completed within the next weeks. The map below shows where all the monitoring sites were including the inset showing the sites in Union Jack Reserve. So far over 40

wonderful volunteers have put in over 400 hours of volunteer time.



Map courtesy of Louise

## 5. Koala Committee

After a number of requests going back to last March about the need for the Cities Koala Plan to be reinvigorated, the FoCC met with the COB on June 16<sup>th</sup> and began to identify the issues and prepare a way forward. Over the next few weeks, the FoCC will be quietly working with Council on outcomes. More to come in the coming months. During June several press articles outlined the wish for dialogue to begin restarting the Koala Plan. As Ditchy saw it:



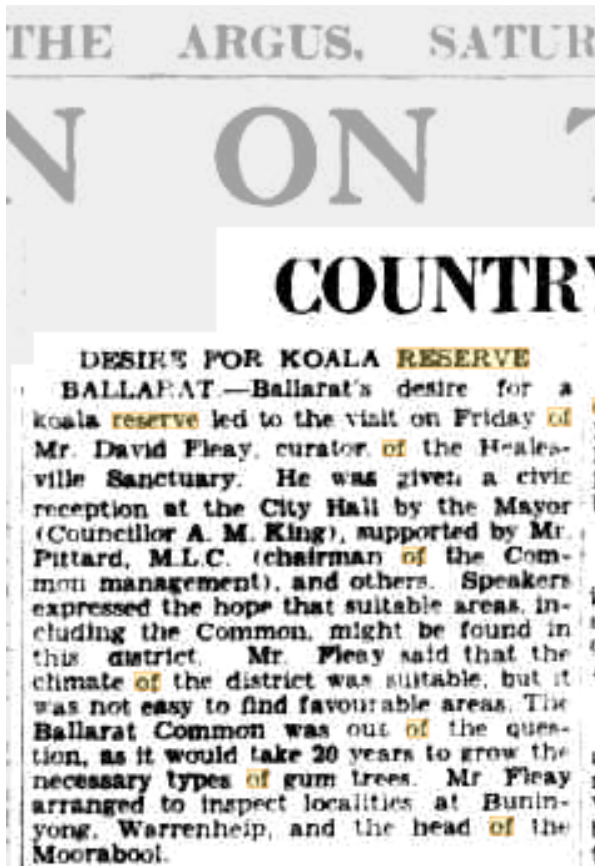
KOALA COMMITTEE TO MATCH CURRENT KOALA CONSERVATION PRACTICES  
Ballarat Courier May 31<sup>st</sup> 2021



6. “Desire for a Koala Reserve” article circa 1939

The May Spikey News edition featured a story of the Koala Reserve at Wendouree in the 1950’s and 60’s.

The Argus in 1939 mentions the common at Wendouree as not being possible, as it would take 20 years to grow the trees. Sites visited were Buninyong, Warrenheip and the head of the Moorabool. Does anyone have any more information?



The Argus 1939

7. Courier’s front page Koala promoting Vaccination.



Page 1 Ballarat Courier June 4<sup>th</sup> 2021

8. Woovookarung classic car collection revisited

A friend has sent in evidence of another classic car on private property adjacent to the Park.

An early 1950’s Singer SRM 1500, which was quite a good little car in its day, is slowly turning into iron oxide.

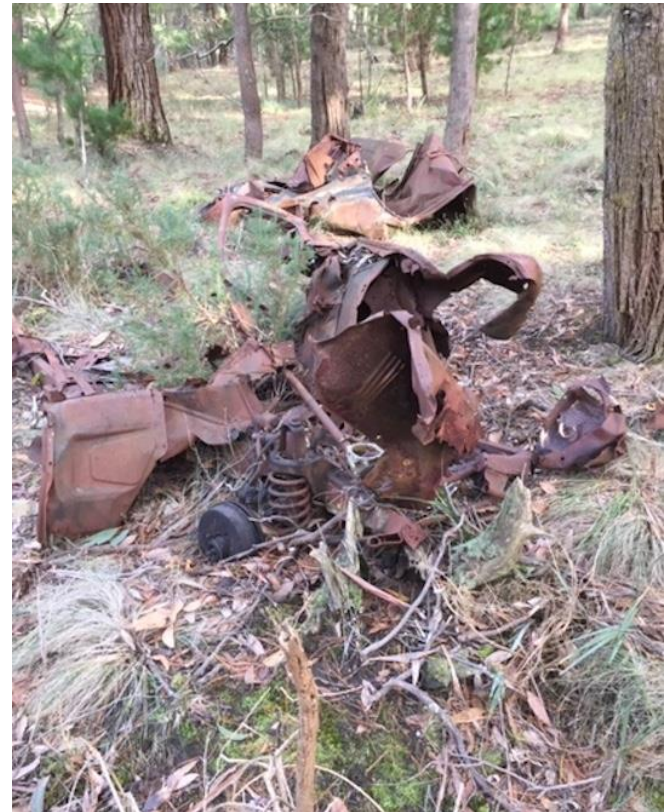


Image of Car June 2021

9. Antechinus and Phascogales

Recently two Antechinus were sighted on the eastern side of the Woovookarung Regional Park near the Lookout. One sighting was in a neighbouring wood heap and the other on the Nature Trail.

Antechinus look like mice but are quite different, being marsupial.



© Michael Sale

Image courtesy of Ballarat Courier article April 4<sup>th</sup> 2020

More information:

<https://www.thecourier.com.au/story/6709953/the-violent-randy-life-of-a-mini-marsupial-the-antechinus/>

The forest on the south side of the Lookout and running east along Woodvale Rd is an area of high biodiversity values. The area is considered to be likely Antechinus and Phascogale habitat

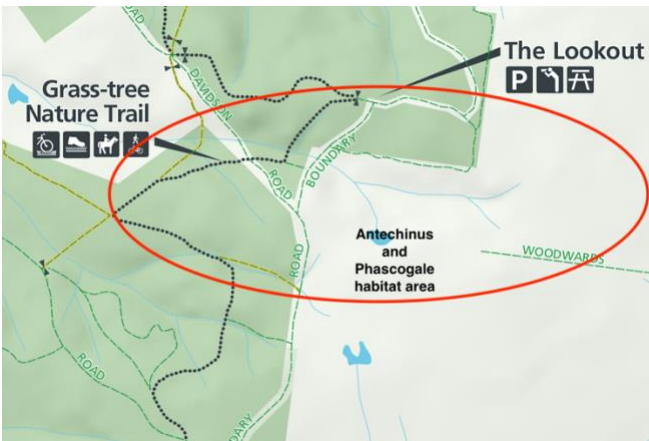




Phascogale image: Courtesy SWIFFT

More information:

[https://www.swiff.net.au/cb\\_pages/sp\\_brush-tailed\\_phascogale.php](https://www.swiff.net.au/cb_pages/sp_brush-tailed_phascogale.php)



Location of Antechinus and Phascogale habitat on Park and private land.

In 2017 the Latrobe University placed Phascogale nest boxes into the area.



Phascogale nest box south of Boundary Road near the Lookout. Image June 16<sup>th</sup> 2021

10. Gorse and a 1950s approach to Ballarat

The novel "Requiem for a Wren" by noted author Neville Shute, published in 1955 has the amazing evocative description of approaching Ballarat from Melbourne with: "We dropped off the hills at eighty miles an hour on the way to Ballarat, and there were long gorse hedges all in bloom that the property owners in that part effect, mile after mile of them scenting the countryside in the warm sun as we drove on into the western district"

Times and values do change!

So far Parks Victoria has spent about \$170000 on gorse and weed removal in the Woookarung Regional Park.

11. Parliamentary Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for growing populations

Recently the Ballarat Courier highlighted the lack of a City of Ballarat response to this inquiry.

4 THE COURIER Saturday June 19, 2021  
NEWS

**Growth inquiry clash**

BY CALEB CLIFF

A COMBATIVE series of exchanges between senior City of Ballarat officers and state government MPs during a recent parliamentary inquiry into the challenges of growing populations has revealed council's frustration with planning regulations and outcomes, but also brought into question council's preparedness for the inquiry.

The City of Ballarat appeared at the Legislative Assembly Environment and Planning Committee Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for Growing Populations on April 21.

Council officers Natalie Robertson (director, Development and Growth), Bridget Weatherall (director, Infrastructure and Environment), Steve Van Orosou (executive manager, Operations, Infrastructure and Environment), and Joanna Coucaden (executive manager, Development Facilitation, Development and Growth) were named as witnesses.

The City of Ballarat was given three in-depth submissions; the City of Greater Shepparton, made a five-page submission. Those three councils made these submissions well within the committee's December 2020 deadline, whereas Colb made its submission to the inquiry two days after appearing before it in April, four months after deadline. Council says it was granted an extension.

Labor party MP Will Fowler was left unsure of what Colb was bringing to the inquiry. "We are sort of flying, I guess, a little bit blind here," Mr Fowler said.

"Normally in these hearings, we have a submission from the parties or an opening statement about what it is that you would seek to have changed."

Questioned about the Colb urban forest action plan, which has a target of 40 per cent tree cover for Ballarat by 2040, Ms Robertson said the target was 'on track' - if the budget was 'upcaled'. However in its post-submission Colb admits it is falling behind in tree planting.

"Council currently funds \$500,000 per year for tree planting which yields approximately 1500 trees per year. In order to reach the target of 40% we have deficit of 120,000 street trees."

All four officers told the inquiry the City was struggling to meet maintenance levels because of the swelling population, staffing, resource and budget restrictions.

"...we are not able to keep up with the level of service that the community is expecting or that we would like to see to make sure that we are managing risk when it comes to the safety of tree management or with parks or with other facilities that we are offering to the community," Ms Weatherall said.

But it was an exchange between labor MP Danielle Green and the officers which unsettled things, after Ms Coucaden and Ms Robertson questioned whether state government policies supported best practice environmental and planning outcomes.

"...we can be as ambitious as we like... with our licenses and schedules and zones or local policies... but unless the state government is able to support those ambitious planning policies... we raise expectations within the community through those processes, and then often council gets to the planning panel and then it gets sent back," Ms Coucaden said.

"In the context of this hearing and feeling like we do a magnificent job trying to achieve what we do and not liking the course we are heading down in the way of questioning... we think state policy can be better, we think strategies can be better," Ms Robertson added.

Ms Green drew the officers' attention to the environmental plans of the City of Whittlesea, which she said had won UN awards.

"I was sort of rebuffed to be a bit prickly here, but I have done knocked in Lucas. Ballarat's Friends of Canadian Corridor made a 26-page submission. It is just really letting the side down," Ms Green said.

"I feel like you need to be asking your developers to do more, whether it is planning controls or whatever it is," Ms Robertson responded, saying Lucas had a "spectacular central park" and the area was still "young and immature".

"I know the developers will be disappointed to hear that, who are very entrenched in Ballarat and very proud of the product," she said.

The inquiry, established in August 2020, has taken 264 submissions on 'current and future arrangements to secure environmental infrastructure, particularly parks and open space, for a growing population.'

Contributors include huge government departments like DELWP; large bodies like the Planning Institute of Australia and the Housing Industry Association, the Victorian Planning Authority - to down through urban and regional councils to community groups and individuals.

Ballarat's Friends of Canadian Corridor made a 26-page submission.

Courtesy Ballarat Courier Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup> 2021

The FoCC was the only Ballarat entity to make a submission and the submission asked:

1. **For resources to be provided for Municipalities, Government Agencies and community groups to construct infrastructure within the identified Parks, Reserves, public land and associated connecting creeks.** Infrastructure such as visitor nodes and facilities, access parking facilities, accessible shared walk and cycle trails including such items as bridges and creek crossings between existing trail heads and identified loops be provided for. Our specific requests for infrastructure funding are for:
  - a. Woookarung Regional Park Visitor Centre construction.
  - b. The Gorge Bridge construction.
  - c. Goldfields Track from Pax Hill to Greenhills Rd construction of trail and creek crossings
  - d. City of Ballarat to Woookarung Regional Park and associated creeks and parklands connecting trails construction.
2. **That a property purchase or transfer system for adding land with recreational amenity opportunities to existing Parks and Reserves be set up.** The FoCC has identified a number of properties that could be added



to existing Parks and Reserves. All the land identified has significant biodiversity values and would also add substantially to the sustainability of the Wildlife or Bio Link Corridor that is centred through Woowookarung Regional Park on Ballarat's eastern side.

The properties are:

- Rifle Range
- 55 Recreation Rd bushland reserve
- Sandy Banks
- Sailors Gully ex Ballarat to Buninyong Railway
- Woodwards Lane unused road
- Mount Xavier Golf Course
- Central Highlands Water lots (Brewery Tap Rd)
- Inlier properties for sale with the boundaries of Woowookarung Regional Park

To read the full FoCC submission

[https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/epc-IA/Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for Growing Populations/Submissions/164\\_2020.09.28 - Submission - Friends of Canadian Corridor.pdf](https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/epc-IA/Inquiry%20into%20Environmental%20Infrastructure%20for%20Growing%20Populations/Submissions/164_2020.09.28_-_Submission_-_Friends_of_Canadian_Corridor.pdf)

### 12. 611 Richards St Property up for sale

The property shown below in Richards St, Canadian has been put up for sale. The property is zoned residential and may be subdivided. It contains significant Koala Habitat Overlay ES05 and Bushfire overlay issues.



611 Richards St property courtesy of: realestate.com.au

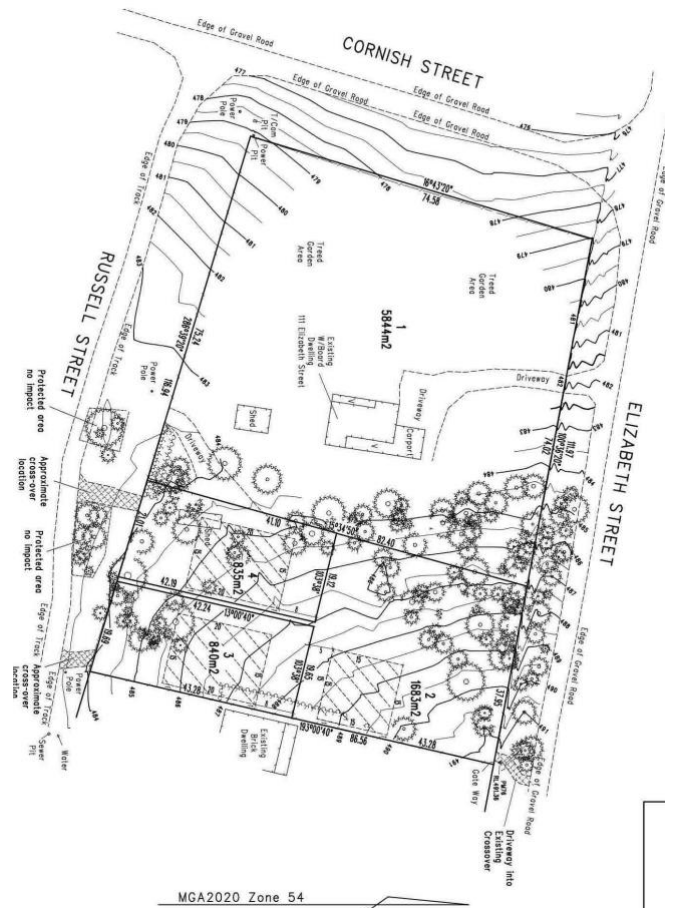
### 13. 109 Elizabeth St Buninyong development objection

Last year the FoCC objected to a development proposal which would have required a large number of Koala habitat trees to be removed on the Elizabeth St side of the property.

The objection was supported by the Buninyong Community Development Association and local residents and was successful in reducing the number of lots from five to four and fitting the planned building envelopes into existing open spaces on the land.

The outcome demonstrates that residents should be vigilant in keeping an eye on local small subdivision plans, which sometimes try to knock over Koala habitat.

### Final Plan



Final plan of subdivision.

### 14. Wind Damage

The windstorm of Thursday June 10<sup>th</sup> which damaged many parts of Victoria felled many trees in the Park.



Tree damage south of the Lookout. Image June 11<sup>th</sup> 2021  
One area hard hit was on the south side of the Lookout and adjacent to the Nature Trail.

Parks Victoria and City of Ballarat crews spent several days clearing roads and trails of fallen limbs and trees.

### 15. Volunteers and associated community groups

FoCC recently undertook an organisation health check as part of an application for funding. FoCC members and friends provided 1660 hours of volunteer time on a wide

variety of FoCC projects and activities during 2020 -21 financial year.

The FoCC has 65 community organisations listed as associated organisations.

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

The FoCC encourages Park friends to report track vandals, rubbish 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.

**17. 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)

**18. 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 ~~788~~ 802 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.

Aug 9 <sup>th</sup>	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	FoCC 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.

The FoCC is a registered Landcare Group with Landcare Victoria Inc and is a member of the Leigh Catchment Network.

Circulation this issue is ~~768~~ 770. 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.

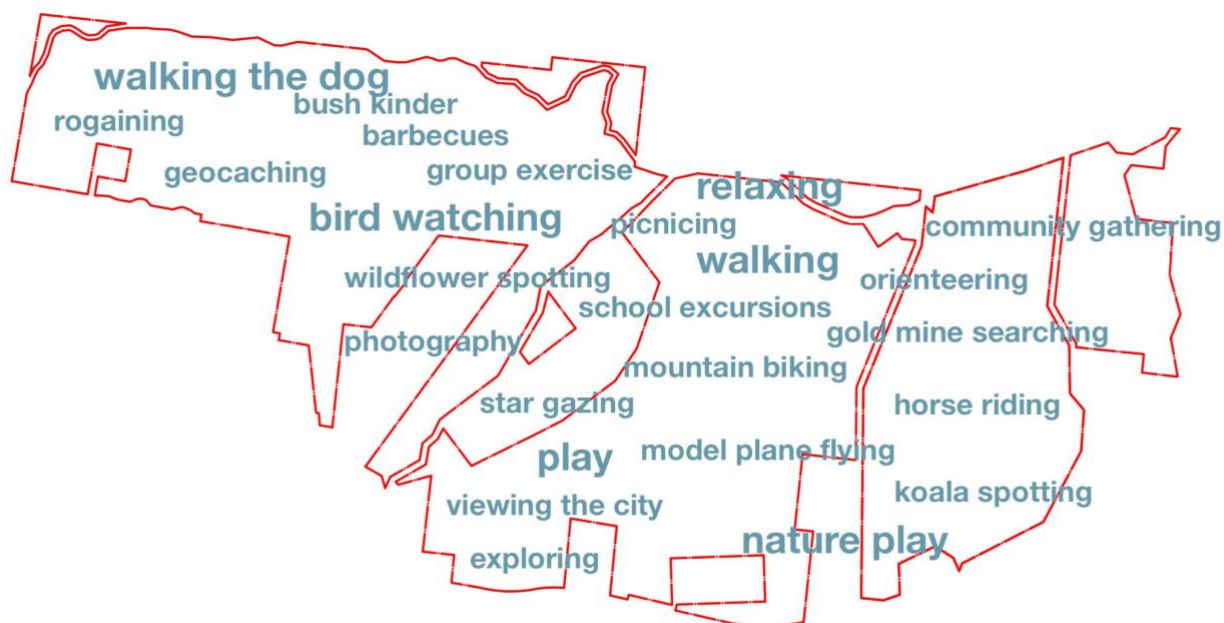
We are proud to walk this land with the Wadawurrung people and all other First Nations people.

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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<https://www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/>

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*activities within the park...  
one park... many parks...  
orchestrating the mix...  
what are the experiences?*

SITE|OFFICE

Image: Originally published by Site Office in an early draft edition of the Park Plan 2017.