



FoCC Incorporated Spikey News



Linking the community with Woowookarung and the Canadian Corridor
August 2022 Issue Number 91

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1. Sean Dooley "Birdman" at the Eureka Centre

It was a full house for the Sean Dooley presentation at the Eureka Centre on Wednesday August 17th. Sean is the National Public Affairs Manager for BirdLife Australia, regular ABC radio guest, author of *The Big Twitch*, and former holder of the Australian Big Year twitching record.



Sean in action at Eureka Centre

His presentation focussed on woodland birds and he presented birds that were doing well, those in the middle and those declining or worse, those in real trouble. Sean spoke about good things that can assist birds in our local habitat. Such as, building bird boxes to provide nesting sites.

Leaving fallen timber, branches and leaves on the ground creates habitat for ground loving birds.

Fact: Clearing or raking bushland creates a haven for Noisy Miners which then go on to crowd out local birds.

By all means clear where required for fire reasons, but wholesale raking deprives our local birds of habitat.

NEWS

Birdman flying to town for talk

BY EDWINA WILLIAMS

FRIENDS of Canadian Corridor will host a public talk by 'birdman' Sean Dooley next week.

Mr Dooley is the former Australian Big Year twitching record-holder, author of *The Big Twitch*, and national public affairs manager of bird advocacy organisation BirdLife Australia.

The Friends invited him to speak after a growth in community interest in Woowookarung Regional Park and the broader Canadian Corridor's native birds.

"During the pandemic, so many of us were restricted in our movement. Our lives were quieter, and a lot of people noticed birds for the first time, and became really enchanted by them," Mr Dooley said.

"That connection with nature is

something that might have been missing from peoples' lives, but people have begun to appreciate their local patches; bush, wetlands, and open grasslands where you can get out and breathe.

"Birds are a big part of that. We saw a huge upswing in enquiries at BirdLife Australia. It's had a really profound, and hopefully lasting, impact on people."

Mr Dooley said having a constant connection to nature is important, and groups including FoCC represent the best of that. "Local people connecting with their local habitats and wildlife... ensures those green spaces continue to be green and healthy, so that's what I will focus on in my presentation."

Ballarat borders several different types of habitat and Mr Dooley said it's a bird-rich area, great for



Twitcher: Sean Dooley is a regular guest presenter on ABC Radio Melbourne as part of the Squawbook segment. Photo: ELEANOR PHILPOTTS

spotting species.

"You've got wetter, taller forests, grasslands to the south and west, wetlands dotted around, and dryer woodland to the north, so there's no one dominant or iconic species for the area," he said.

"It's a fabulous mix of birds, so I'm looking forward to getting there and seeing if I can get out and do a bit of birding myself."

His favourite suite of birds are those that can be found in eastern Australia's inland woodlands.

Although rare birds like the regent honeyeater and swift parrot are declining in their numbers,

populations of formerly common birds are also less prevalent, including brown tree creepers.

"It's really important that people connect with those birds because the basic reason for the decline overall is the historic clearing of habitat, and the connectivity of that habitat."

"We need connection between patches of habitat for certain species or else they'll die out, even in good patches," he said.

Mr Dooley will present at the Eureka Centre next Wednesday, 17 August at 7pm. Tickets are available at try.booking.com/BRTFM.

Article courtesy Ballarat Times: August 11th 2022

2. New Park Regulations

On July 22nd the Victorian Government released the "Draft Metropolitan and Regional Parks Regulations".

The opportunity to respond closed on August 22nd 2022.

The FoCC noted the new regulations in the July edition of Spikey News.

The new regulations take over from a hodge podge of old regulations, some vested with the Environmental Protection Agency and others with the old Crown Lands Act.

For instance, rubbish dumpers and firewood thieves were only able to be fined at a low level. The new regulations are much clearer as to what can and can't be done in a Park, where permits are needed and stiffer fines.

To read the regulations:

https://engage.vic.gov.au/MRP_Regulations

The FoCC response was as follows:

The new “Metropolitan and Regional Parks Regulations” are most welcome for the following reasons.

- Prior to these new regulations the Woowookarung Regional Park was an un-regulated Park with overlapping regulations based on different acts and regulations. For example, rubbish dumpers were covered by Environmental Protection Authority rules and firewood thieves by Crown Land regulations.
- The new regulations provide certainty, by bringing all the relevant regulations together into one document.
- The new rules are consistent across the fourteen identified Regional Parks. The new regulations clarify public access, public use and create clear rules for the protection of the natural values that underpin all Regional Parks including Woowookarung.
- The benefits of the new regulations can be demonstrated by an incident in 2021, where an off-road vehicle deliberately overran a number of grasstrees. That incident resulted in a paltry ninety-seven dollar fine, the only penalty available at that time. Under the new regulations the fine would be a more appropriate 20 penalty units. (\$3400 approx).
- The new regulations also provide similar penalties for other infringements to the Parks natural values.

The friends appreciate the opportunity to respond positively to these new regulations.

3. Tree planting August 7th

Five hundred trees were planted in Woowookarung Regional Park on Sunday by 34 wonderful volunteers. The trees were planted in the ex-blue gum plantation area around the corner of Dozed Rd and Katy Ryans Rd.

The plantation blue gums were removed in 2012 and the area left to regenerate naturally. A large gorse infestation was removed in 2019 by Parks Victoria.

The area over the past ten years has regrown with good quality native ground cover and many Blackwood trees. However very few eucalypts have regenerated.

The tree planting added the missing tree varieties to the area. Trees planted were Peppermint Gum, Messmate, Scent Bark with Yarra Gum and Swamp gums in the wet lower lying areas. The trees were propagated from seed sourced from the Park and grown by the Cities “Ballarat Community Nursery”.

The planting was the sixth annual tree planting in the Park with a total of 3300 trees planted so far.



Volunteer tree planters being briefed



Volunteers at work planting trees

4. Federation University Tree Planting

Federation University have been busy doing their bit in restoring the Canadian Corridor with a targeted tree planting in the University Grounds.



The flyer for the University Tree Day

5. Bird of the Month XII (August 2022)

White-throated Treecreeper (*Cormobates leucophaea*)

If you're an avid bushwalker, chances are you've heard the various, conspicuous piping and trilling vocalisations of this vociferous songster. Perhaps you glimpsed a flash of its swift, undulating flight between trees. If your gaze followed its movement, you might have found a bird slightly-larger-than-a-sparrow (16-17.5cm) busily scaling a tree. Sound familiar? If you didn't know what it was at the time, read on, and perhaps you can corroborate that the mystery bird you heard or saw was quite possibly a White-throated Treecreeper.

The vocals of the White-throated Treecreeper have been described as 'rapid, high-pitched, penetrating piping', 'loud, ringing, clear musical "whit-whit-whit-whit"', 'rippling "quit-quit-quit"', and 'mellow, musical "twiet-twiet-twiet"'. Mid-brown or dark greyish-brown upperparts, with white-streaked flanks, olive-cream underparts and of course the titular white throat; White-throated Treecreepers are visually unmistakable in parts of its range (such as here in Ballarat) where none of the five other Australian treecreeper species occur. Females can be distinguished from males by the orange patch on the female's cheek.



Adult female White-throated Treecreeper. Image credit: Rob Loveband.

Its habit is also quite unmistakable. Spiralling its way up (preferably rough-barked) trees, the White-throated Treecreeper scampers headfirst in an almost gravity-defying feat of athleticism, probing the bark for ants and other insects/spiders as it goes, before dismounting with a

hurried glide to the base of the next tree, where the cycle repeats. It is quite a sight to behold!

White-throated Treecreepers usually live solitarily during non-breeding season, but then in pairs and family groups during breeding season. Breeding season for White-throated Treecreepers goes from August to January. Up to two broods of 2-3 eggs may be produced per breeding season. The nest site is usually in a hollowed-out tree trunk/branch at heights of 5-20m, but they may sometimes even select mineshafts and cavities in buildings as the nest site. Females build the nest – a cup composed of bark shreds, grass, fur/feathers, and sometimes charcoal. Females incubate the eggs, but both sexes help feed the young. Unlike other Australian treecreepers, White-throated Treecreepers are not cooperative breeders, meaning matured offspring do not remain the parents' territory to help raise subsequent broods.

Residents of south-eastern Australia's eucalypt forests and woodlands, White-throated Treecreepers occupy territories year-round. They may also inhabit tea-tree and banksia scrub. Whether eucalypts or other selected native overstorey, White-throated Treecreepers require large swathes of unbroken tree cover. Shy, hesitant, and risk-averse in disposition, White-throated Treecreepers habitually opt for short flights between neighbouring trees, and will instinctually avoid long transits over exposed clearings (for fear of increased vulnerability to predators), and seldom venture to the ground. This means, that, for White-throated Treecreepers to disperse to an unoccupied habitat patch (which, given as many as six offspring per breeding season must disperse from the parents' territory before the next year's breeding season), they ideally require landscape/vegetation connectivity to safely traverse there. This is why White-throated Treecreepers are one of many species (avian or non-avian), that are sensitive to habitat fragmentation, and one to benefit from wildlife corridors (also known as habitat linkages or 'biolinks').

Next time you wander through Woookarung Regional Park, or another local forest patch, listen out for this piping, trilling songster, and hopefully you'll be able to watch and admire their fascinating, gravity-defying spiralling ascents of trees!

Author note: FoCC Committee member and co-admin of FoCC's Facebook and webpage, Joel Ellis is the resident bird nerd, amateur Powerful Owl researcher, and editor of FoCC's (co-funded) 'Indigenous [Species] of Southern Ballarat' trilogy of brochures. Joel has studied birds up to Honours degree level, interns as an ecological consultant (ornithologist), and is a member of BirdLife Australia (Ballarat branch).

6. Tree ID Walk

"What tree is that?" was the hot topic at the Tree ID walk in the Woookarung Regional Park on Sunday August 28th.

The walk organised by the Friends of Canadian Corridor and the Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat followed a loop trail around the Dementia Forest and Sensory Trail area. Many different species of trees were observed along the trail. To some people the forest is just bush, but to the walkers it was an area rich in tree species. Walkers used the wildflower brochure as a identification resource. The guide was produced last year in conjunction with the Leigh Catchment Group Landcare Network and funded by the Community Bank Buninyong. A wonderful presentation of the facts about each tree species by our guide John helped make the day a very rewarding experience



Tree sniffing of the aromatic Scentbark tree

List trees identified

Eucalypt species - 9

Eucalyptus aromaphloia Scentbark

Eucalyptus dives Broad-leaved Peppermint

Eucalyptus obliqua Messmate

Eucalyptus ovata Swamp Gum

Eucalyptus radiata Narrow-leaved Peppermint

Eucalyptus rubida Candlebark

Eucalyptus yarraensis Yarra Gum

Eucalyptus baxteri Brown Stringybark (Gum nuts and juvenile foliage only)

Eucalyptus globulus Blue Gum

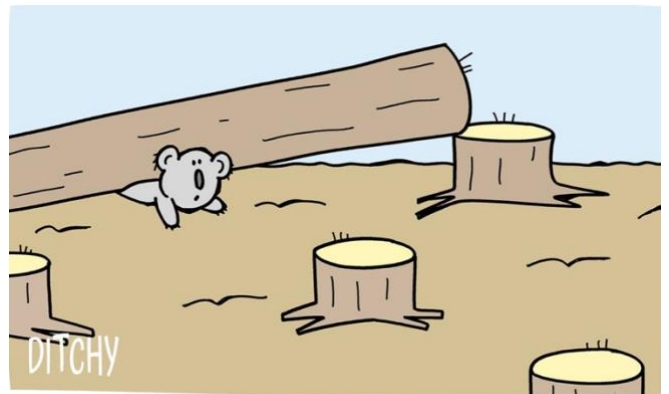
Other trees:

Acacia melanoxylon Blackwood

Acacia stricta Hop Wattle

Exocarpus cupressiformis Cherry Ballart

7. Couriers "Ditchys" Koala view



COMMON KOALA INJURY

Courtesy of Ballarat Courier

8. Koala spotting

Spotted on the road at Mt Buninyong summit.



Walkers at the start



Walkers at the foot of a Yarra Gum. These trees are quite rare in Ballarat



Image: Courtesy of Gary August 4th 2022.

Spotted at the Dementia Trail east end, some Koala Scat.

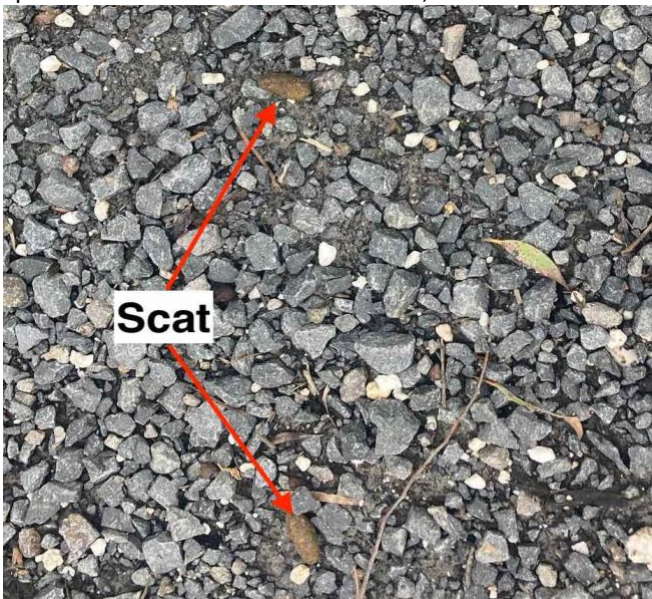


Image courtesy of Jessica August 7th 2022

9. Gorse

Gorse is a major woody weed in and around Ballarat. Parks Victoria are doing an excellent job in controlling Gorse and Broom in Woowookarung Regional Park.

However, the Power Line easement that crosses Recreation Rd in the Park is a gorse wasteland. The Gorse is the responsibility of the Power Line company.



Powerline gorse problem. Image August 26th 2022

For any local landowner with a Gorse problem help is at hand:

Victorian Gorse Taskforce:

The key focus of the Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) is to support community-led gorse control by providing funding, education and resources to implement and sustain local gorse control projects.

For more info: <https://vicgorsetaskforce.com.au>

Thanks to Jason for the heads up on this topic.

10. New Woowookarung street signs

The FoCC wrote to the City of Ballarat some weeks ago requesting the installation of signs to Woowookarung Regional Park be installed at the Main Rd and Elsworth St roundabout, Joseph St intersection and Katy Ryans Rd. Subsequent discussions with Council Officers have resulted in signs to be placed at those sites above plus an extra sign at the Eureka St and Cathie St intersection.

Installation will occur in a couple of months.

The design of the street sign is:



Image courtesy of City of Ballarat

11. More on the Old Colonists Indigent Asylum at Mt Clear

Following the article in the July Spikey edition about the Old Colonists Indigent Asylum at Mt Clear the following article was provided by Gerald Jenzen for Spikey readers

THIRD TIME LUCKY-CHARLES ANDERSON GROVE

One of the original objectives of the Association was “to provide the shelter of a house for those Pioneers of the Goldfields whom the reverses of fortune have deprived of the means of procuring the comforts of life in their declining years.”

While the first home at Charles Anderson Grove was not built until 1925 the Association provided relief for needy pioneers from the time it was formed in 1883. Relief included monthly monetary payments, loads of firewood, medical assistance and distribution of Christmas boxes of groceries to deserving pensioners and in some cases payment of burial costs. Records indicate that in September 1922 three of the pensioners being assisted by the Association were accepted as residents in the newly erected Hassell Homes in Gillies Street. (now demolished-opposite the High School)

The first site for an Asylum for Indigent Members of the Old Colonists Association was temporarily reserved from sale in October 1891. The site was approximately 28 acres in area in Mt. Clear nearly opposite Midvale Shopping Centre in Main Road. The site was heavily timbered and when cleared over 260 tons of wood was sold to the Woah Hawp Gold Mining Company. A set of gates were erected but no

homes built although a plan for this reserve was drawn which showed twenty buildings ranging from one to four unit buildings. The reserve was revoked in November 1909. The second site temporarily reserved in November 1909 as an Asylum was in Alfredton and consisted of some 7 acres and was adjacent to land reserved for an Abattoirs for the Ballarat Council. The reserve was revoked in February 1912 as it was deemed more appropriate to be added to the Abattoir site. Council suggested four (4) other sites in exchange for this land and they were inspected by the President, Vice President and Secretary on 22 December 1912.

The first site inspected was land on the west side of Creswick Road opposite the brick kilns (now occupied by the showgrounds and oval). The land was described as being good quality, well fenced, no trees, good drainage and ample acreage but some distance from trams.

The second site was Perry Park which was described as being good land, well fenced, having frontage to Gillies Street, good drainage and about 26 acres (but subsequently reduced to 10 acres). It was closely planted with Pinus Insignias and Wattle and had easy access from the Botanic Gardens tram.

The third site was the North West portion of Victoria Park (corner of Sturt and Gillies Street) and was described as good land, well fenced and drained and well located.

The fourth site was the South West corner of Victoria Park and known as Pound Paddock (corner of Winter Street and Gillies Street). It was considered to be low lying and too close to the Abattoir and was also a considerable distance from trams.

While the third site was recommended as the most suitable for the erection of homes it was considered unwise from the point of view as citizens to reduce the acreage of the park and therefore it was recommended that the Perry Park site be asked for as the most acceptable to the Association for the building of homes.

The site was eventually temporarily reserved for an Asylum for Indigent Members of the Association in April 1914 with the gates from Mt. Clear having been removed to the site a year earlier and eventually erected in 1917 for £12.10.0. In the same year the first 290 pine trees were advertised for removal in July and sold for £16. A sign indicating that the site was reserved for the erection of cottages was erected in September 1917. Stripping of the wattle bark (for tanning) and the cutting of the wood occurred in November 1918 with the land then being leased until it was required for the construction of the first homes in 1924.

While the site was the third to be reserved it was the only one which was used for its intended purpose. It was named as Charles Anderson Grove in honour of Charles Anderson who joined the Association in 1918 and was President of the Association from 1942 to 1944.

(This article adds further information to that originally prepared by Les Drury in the September 1993 Old Colonists Newsletter)

12. Rubbish dumpers in Woowookarung RP

A very large dump south of Katy Ryans Rd occurred in Mid-August. The ABC radio picked up on the story.



Image courtesy of ABC Facebook

13. City of Ballarat Biodiversity Policy workshop.

A large gathering of Environment groups, Landcare and Nature groups participated in the City of Ballarat Biodiversity Policy Workshop on Monday August 15th. The workshop was the starting point for a new CoB Biodiversity Policy.

- In 2014 the CoB produced a 2040 Strategy which included the goal of city wide 40% tree cover and a Living Corridors strategy with a Townships strategy.
- In 2015 the CoB began consultation with the Ballarat East community about a Ballarat East township plan. That strategy was finished in 2018 and has not yet been released due to the need to complete an overarching Ballarat wide Housing Strategy first. The Ballarat East plan is still gathering dust 7 years on. The Ballarat East plan was very specific about protecting the eastern forest zone (Woowookarung Regional Park) and the land abutting the zone. Later a Buninyong Township plan began and it is languishing also!
- In 2018 the CoB began to develop the Living Corridor Strategy for the entire eastern side of Ballarat.
- The FoCC worked with the CoB on a broad range of items such as:
 - Little creeks protections including retention basins being equally water retention and biodiversity reserves.
 - Vegetation protection and revegetation. Keeping the corridor leafy
 - Bush road speed limits to protect wildlife
 - Underground power cables to reduce tree pruning
 - Walk/cycle trails and integral part of planning
 - Improving the Koala plan.

The Living Corridors Strategy if it had been implemented would have changed the development rules for the Corridor. Alas it was shelved in early 2021 amid the turmoil in the CoB stemming from the complete changeover of the Cities upper management in 2020.

The City does have the 40% tree cover policy now in place. However, there is no plan in place to actually implement the plan. To achieve 40% tree cover the Council will need to plant 1.25% of Ballarat each year to get there! At present in

the east, big old trees and vegetation are being removed faster than the small amount of planting that is occurring.

The FoCC welcomes the Biodiversity Policy Workshop as a re-start of the 2040 Strategy intention for a new version of the Living Corridors Strategy. It should pave the way for the Townships Plans to re-surface and be placed where they belong in the Ballarat Planning Scheme.

The outcome of Biodiversity Policy Workshop was that the Vision and the main features of the Policy was identified.

The CoB expects to have the Policy document before Council by November.

After the Policy is in place the CoB will then prepare the Strategy Plan which should be the action plan for Biodiversity etc In Ballarat. Hopefully that will be in place by mid 2023.

Because there has been significant work already done on the Township Plans and the Living Corridors, the Strategy should come together relatively quickly.

14. **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

In emergency situations please call 000

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

15. **Error**

In the last Spikey News a map image was left unacknowledged in the article "*Another development proposal Mt Clear*".

Spikey News apologises for the mistake.

16. **Useful information**

- **Parks Victoria Woovookarung email address:**

woovookarung@parks.vic.gov.au

- **City of Ballarat wildlife information:**

<https://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au/me/pets-and-animals/wildlife>

- **DELWP wildlife issues reporting information**

Report wildlife crime to Crime Stoppers Victoria on **1800 333 000**.

Report any wildlife at immediate risk of deliberate harm or neglect to **136 186**. Other matters relating to wildlife and wildlife management should use the **136 186** too.

The Help for Injured Wildlife tool will help you locate and contact the closest relevant wildlife carers and rescue and rehabilitation organisations to help the injured wildlife.

The main point to reiterate is for any matters related to wildlife crime, to call Crime Stoppers.

17. **Membership**

Membership runs from 1st January to 31st December each year, Membership fee is \$20 per year.

Reminders are sent out after the November Annual Meeting.

New members after July are credited to the next year.

Membership forms are available online or email

focinfo@gmail.com

18. **FoCC facebook and webpage**

www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/

Rob is overseeing the webpage webmaster@focc.asn.au

The FoCC has ~~940~~ 962 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.

19. **2022 Proposed Calendar**

The calendar is prepared by the FoCC committee.

October 17 th to 23 rd	Great Australian Backyard Bird count
October 23 rd to 30 th	7th Annual Wildflower walk at the Dementia Trail.
November 16 th	FoCC Annual meeting
December 2 nd	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 a member of the Leigh Catchment Group. Circulation this issue is to ~~967~~ 1008 subscribers. 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

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 made in by the editors in good faith and do not officially represent Parks Victoria or the FoCC.

Web - www.focc.asn.au Facebook

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

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