



# FoCC Incorporated Spikey News



Linking the community with Woookarung and the Canadian Corridor  
September 2022 Issue Number 92

## Spikey News features

1. Many errors in claims by Developer in Mt Clear.
2. 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildflower Walk
3. Minister release State Water Strategy
4. Bird of the month
5. Aussie Backyard Bird Count
6. Koala spotting
7. "Our Ballarat" recognises the Dementia Trail
8. Sparrow Ground recognised by the CoB as a Native Ground Cover area
9. First Working Bee at 55 Recreation Road
10. Forest Remnants
11. Ballarat Seniors festival
12. Rubbish dumpers, thieves and vandals
13. Useful information
14. Membership
15. Facebook and Web
16. Calendar



Koala on Kylie Court which backs onto the property. Image courtesy of Dave. December 2020.

Local Koala observation over past two years show 16 koala observations in and around the Haymes Rd area.

### **1. Many errors in claims by Developer in Mt Clear.**

An amended "Biodiversity Assessment" for a proposed 27 lot residential subdivision at 43 Haymes Road, Mount Clear, Victoria" contains plans to destroy 2.9 hectares of Koala habitat and remove 13 critically endangered Yarra Gums in a report published on the City of Ballarat E Planning applications website. This is up from the 2.7 hectares of destruction proposed in the first assessment published in March this year.

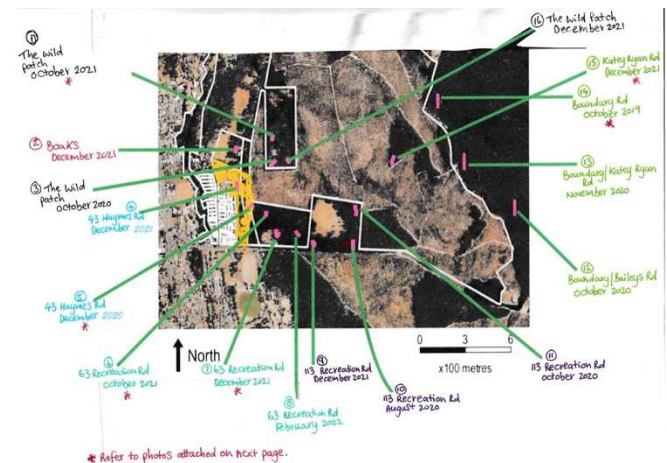
The proposed removal of the Yarra Gums would reduce by one third the number of Yarra Gums that actually exist in the Canadian Corridor according to the maps published in the report. The property contains the largest concentration of Yarra Gums in the Corridor.

The Courier reported: *"the potential ecological impact on koalas and other endangered species visited by a large subdivision in Mount Clear would be minimal according to a report commissioned by the developer"*.

Courier 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022

The report claims that the Koala habitat is not valuable and that "no koalas" were recorded there on their one-day visit. This shows that the "biodiversity assessment" was not based on actual local observation or recorded facts. The assessment authors did not speak to any knowledgeable locals.

The following image of a Koala on the Haymes Rd Land shows that it is Koala habitat.



Koala sighting map courtesy of Tracie.

Koala Scat was found on the boundary of 43 Haymes Rd and 55 Recreation Rd just three weeks ago.



Scat: 11<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Tree 54 is a healthy but critically endangered Yarra Gum located on the Recreation Road Reserve footpath. The plan is to destroy it too.



Yarra Gum on the Recreation Rd Footpath. Image September 29<sup>th</sup> 2022

How Ditchy in the Courier saw it.



Courier 18<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**A Sugar Glider rescued** was by local wildlife carers at the rear of a Kylie Court property. The sugar glider was released back into its home vegetation after receiving care. The property butts onto the Haymes Rd property. The sugar glider would have been resident in the extensive vegetation east of Kylie Court. Sugar gliders utilise old mature tree hollows. The proposed development not only would destroy Koala habitat but the habitat of these little sugar gliders also. Many thanks to the hard-working wildlife rescuers who look after injured wildlife.



Image courtesy of Jeff a Kylie court resident. The sugar glider was released back into adjacent bushland on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

## 2. 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildflower Walk

Yes folks, the seventh annual wildflower walk will be on **October 23<sup>th</sup> to October 30<sup>th</sup>** along the Dementia Forest and Sensory Trail.

The Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat and the FoCC have organised the self-guided pop-up wild flower trail walk in the central part of the Woookarung Regional Park beginning on Sunday Oct 23rd at 11am.

The walking trail start point is from the Car Park at the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail on Katy Ryans Rd. Direction signs will be on Elsworth St.

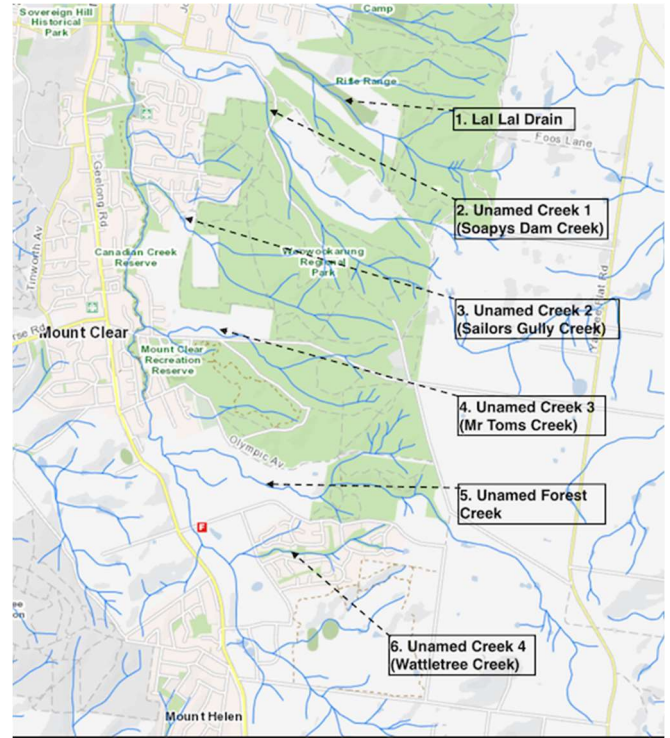
Signs will identify the start and the path will be marked with wildflower information signs to identify the diverse range of wildflowers.



The walking trail is a gentle walk uphill on formed track. Good footwear is recommended. Social distancing and hand hygiene practices are recommended to protect against Covid 19



Sample wildflower sign along the walk. Image 2021.



The map provided to the CoB identifying the 6 southern little creeks for inclusion in the Yarrowee plan.

### 3. Minister release State Water Strategy

The Hon Harriet Shing Minister for Water released the State Water Strategy via DELWP on Sept 5<sup>th</sup> 2022.

A copy can be found at:

<https://water.vic.gov.au/sws>

One priority listed in the strategy is one that supports the FoCC's interest in the protection and restoration of Little Creeks.

The report says:

4.4 Provide funding for priority actions in the *Yarrowee River and Tributaries: River Corridor Master Plan* to ensure the parklands can cater to the recreational needs of the growing community while balancing the protection of cultural and environmental values and restoring habitat.

This is vindication of the FoCC's request made to the City of Ballarat in the August 12<sup>th</sup> 2020 online meeting where the FoCC succeeded in convincing the Council to include the additional six extra little creeks in addition to the four named creeks in the Canadian Creek basin.

The creeks covered under the "tributaries" are:

### 4. Bird of the Month XIII (September 2022)

#### Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*)

At FoCC, we are passionate about all native species, but we make no secret of our fondness of the Powerful Owl.

'Endangered' in Victoria, Powerful Owls are a prized local rarity in The Corridor. Confirmed presence of Powerful Owl is grounds to abort developments in the sites they occupy, such is their rareness and need to be protected.

Endemic to south-east Australia (i.e. occur exclusively, found nowhere), Powerful Owls occupy territories year-round, within forests and woodlands.

Powerful Owls require large hollows for breeding success. For hollows to be suitable, the gumtree must be aged 150-500 years old! Habitat loss and diminishing availability of hollows suitable for nesting are major threats to Powerful Owl survival, along with second hand rodenticide poisoning, and collisions with vehicles and powerlines.

Breeding season is from April–September. Breeding pairs mate for life (up to 30 years). The sexes look alike, but males are larger and have a boxier head than females. The male prepares and defends the nest, while the female incubates a clutch of 1-2 eggs, and feeds hatchlings food delivered by the male. Juveniles have more white throughout their plumage than adults, as they progressively moult their white downy feathers. At around 6-7 months old, juvenile Powerful Owls look identical to adults, but remain dependent on their parents – listening for their begging trills is the only way to distinguish them from their

parents. Offspring may remain in the parents' territory for over a year.

# MISSING

**HAVE YOU SEEN THIS BIRD???**

**Powerful Owl, Endangered, answers to 'Powl'**

Last seen Oct 21<sup>st</sup> 2021 in the Mt Helen area

**Appearance:** thick-set (66cm; 1.5m wingspan); dark grey-brown head & upperparts; chevron-patterned breast; eye mask; massive, yellow feet




Image credit: B No Loveb.

**Voice:** Deep, loud 'whooh-hoo', heard up to 2km away

**Possible whereabouts:** Forests with large hollows, abundant prey (e.g. possums) & sheltered roost sites of gumtrees, pines, or Blackwoods

**Urgent:** Vulnerable to habitat loss & hollow shortage, secondhand rodenticide poisoning, collisions with vehicles & powerlines

**Good Samaritan:** Its predation of possums prevents overpopulation of prey, which limits tree damage by over-browsing of vegetation

**Detective clues:** trace evidence beneath roost site, include whitewash (poo, looks like splashed paint), regurgitated pellets (looks like vacuum dust balls, containing fur & feathers) & discarded prey remains

**Please report local sightings\*\*\*** to Friends of Canadian Corridor via email/direct message to FoCC Facebook admin. (\*\*\*)CAUTION: FoCC advises the withholding from social media of precise sighting location & landowner names, to protect Powl's from disturbance & wildlife crime).

Powerful Owl – please submit your sighting details\*\*\* to Friends of Canadian Corridor via email or direct message to FoCC's Facebook admin.  
 (\*\*\*)CAUTION: FoCC advises the withholding from social media of precise sighting location & landowner names, to protect Owls from disturbance & wildlife crime).

**5. Backyard Bird Count**



**The Aussie Backyard Bird Count is back  
OCTOBER 17-23 2022.**

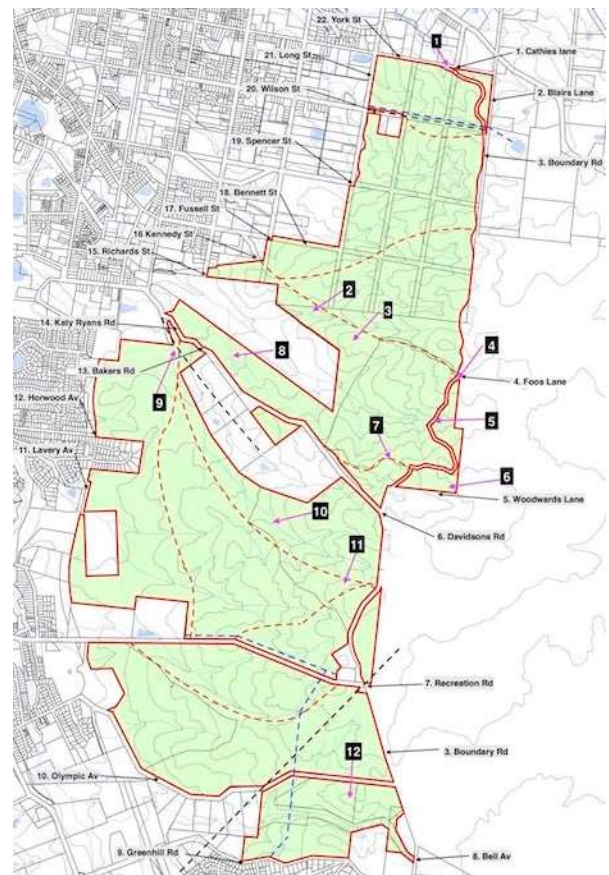
The #AussieBirdCount is a great way to connect with the birds in your backyard, no matter where your backyard might be — whether it's a suburban backyard, a local park, a patch of forest, a farm, down by the beach, or the main street of town. All you need to take part is 20 minutes and your favourite outdoor space - you don't even have to leave home, making it the ultimate Covid-safe activity! As well as contributing to BirdLife Australia's knowledge of Aussie Birds, you will have the chance to win some great prizes! Head to the website and register as a Counter today.  
<https://aussiebirdcount.org.au>



Powerful owl with possum. Image 2021, courtesy Rob. As Australia's largest owl, and true to their name, Powerful Owls are the only bird in Australia capable of taking flight with prey heavier than itself in tow. Prey can be as large as cat-sized Common Brushtail Possum and even subadult Koalas! Arboreal (i.e. tree-dwelling) mammals, e.g. Common Ringtail Possum, brushtails, and Sugar Gliders tend to be favoured, while Black Rats (introduced), and birds are also commonly preyed upon. Powerful Owls, as a top-order predator, are ecologically important for the role they play in keeping prey populations from proliferating into overpopulation.

Next time you contemplate a day stroll through local bushland, perhaps defer it until the evening, and listen out for the 'whooh-hoo' utterings of this awe-inspiring owl. And if you are so lucky as to hear, see or even photograph a

The FoCC map of suggested bird count sites in Woookarung Regional Park.



Suggested count sites

**6. Koala spotting**

West end of Shire Avenue near the sanctuary



Shire Avenue. Image courtesy of Marg. 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022.

Mt Buninyong Blackberry Lane.



Beside Blackberry Lane Image courtesy of Gary 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Koalas scat observations



Scat on west side of 55 Recreation Rd. 11<sup>th</sup> September 2022



Scat in Lal Lal Drain near east end of Rifle range. Image 11<sup>th</sup> September. 2022.



Scat at the East end of Pax Hill. Image 11<sup>th</sup> September 2022



Scat near Boundary Rd north of Pennyweight Gully. Image 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022

**7. Our Ballarat recognises the Dementia Trail**

The latest "Our Ballarat" has a feature on Anne Tudor AO and the story of the dementia trail and the story behind the trail.

The article can be found at:

<https://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au/city/ourballarat-magazine/ourballarat-spring-2022/ballarat-changemakers-ourballarat-spring-2022>

### 8. Sparrow Ground recognised by the CoB as a Native Ground Cover area.



The new CoB sign highlighting the Biodiversity in the Ballarat Region” value of “Native Groundcover” on Spencer St Canadian. September 2022

Sean Dooley at the FoCC birds forum spoke about leaving fallen litter and limbs on the ground as habitat for woodland birds to forage for insects and grubs.

### 9. First Working Bee at 55 Recreation Road

A working bee has been organised to remove small pine saplings from the bushland reserve at 55 Recreation Rd. Work involves cutting pine saplings with long handled secateurs or handsaws. Good physical stamina as the saplings must be cut at ground level to stop regrowth. Solid footwear and clothing essential.

The removal of the saplings will allow the native understory to regenerate.

Registration required. [focinfo@gmail.com](mailto:focinfo@gmail.com) or 0408509591. Time Sunday October 9<sup>th</sup> 10am to 12noon.



Pine saplings to be removed.

### 10. Forest remnants

The forest contains many remnant of previous activities.



Dunny cans dumped in a gully in the north east corner of the Park. According to locals the area to the north was a night soil contractors depot. Image 25<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

There are two abandoned water tanks on the east side of Richards St. One is shown below.



Parks Victoria weed control has removed the vegetation cover and uncovered the tank. Image 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022.

### 11. Ballarat Seniors festival

A trail walk organised by Ballarat Life Activities Group as part of Ballarat Seniors Festival month.

#### One Hour Trail Walk

**Thu 13 Oct. 9:30am**

Over the age of 65? Join Ballarat Life Activities Group members for a walk and talk along the Woovookarung Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail. Located only 3.5kms from the Ballarat CBD.

**Venue:** Katy Ryans Rd, Mount Clear.

**Enquiries:** 0403 591 003

**Cost:** Free

**No toilets available**

Courtesy Ballarat Times Page 19 Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> 2022

### 12. 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)

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.

### 13. Useful information

- **Parks Victoria Woovookarung email address:**

[woovookarung@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto: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.

### 14. Membership

Membership runs from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:focinfo@gmail.com)

### 15. FoCC facebook and webpage

[www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/](http://www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/)

Rob is overseeing the webpage [webmaster@focc.asn.au](mailto:webmaster@focc.asn.au)

The FoCC has 962 972 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.

### 16. 2022 Proposed Calendar

The calendar is prepared by the FoCC committee.

October 9 <sup>th</sup>	Working bee to remove pine saplings at 55 Recreation Rd. 10am to 12noon. Registration required (see article #9 page 6)
October 17 <sup>th</sup> to 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Great Australian Backyard Bird count
October 23 <sup>rd</sup> to 30 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> Annual Wildflower walk at the Dementia Trail.
November 16 <sup>th</sup>	FoCC Annual meeting
December 2 <sup>nd</sup>	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 ~~1008~~ 1013 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](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 made in by the editors in good faith and do not officially represent Parks Victoria or the FoCC.

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