



# FoCC Incorporated Spikey News



Linking the community with Woowookarung and the Canadian Corridor  
October 2022 Issue Number 93

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## 1. FoCC turns 10 years old!

The Friends of Canadian Corridor began on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 with a meeting of local environmentalists at the Italian Club in Mt Clear. The published notes from the meeting:

[Notes for inaugural meeting of the "Friends of the Canadian Corridor", held at the Italian Club, Recreation Drive Mt Clear at 12.30pm on November 11 2012.](#)

The meeting decided:

### "Name of group

The groups interim name will be "the Friends of the Canadian Corridor"

### Where is the Canadian Corridor

The group agreed that it was south of the freeway, east of Main road, north of Union Jack reserve and Mt Buninyong, and its eastern boundary is around Yankee Flat Road.

## Aims

- To consider the creation of a Regional Park
- To find out what guidelines and strategies currently apply to the corridor"

Members from the group agreed to follow up contacts, locate plans and take actions to protect the Canadian Corridor.

And that's what has been happening ever since!

## 2. FoCC 2022 Annual Meeting

All members and friends are welcome to attend the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Canadian Corridor Incorporated:

To be held at Earth Ed, Olympic Avenue, Mt Clear, at 7pm Wednesday November 9<sup>th</sup>.

### Agenda:

- Minutes of FoCC annual meeting November 17<sup>th</sup> 2021.
- Presidents report
- Treasurers report
- Election of Office Bearers
- General Business
- Presentation: **Ten years of recollections**

Birthday cake and light refreshments served.



More information from <http://www.focc.asn.au/events/> or [focc@gmail.com](mailto:focc@gmail.com) or Mob 0408509591

J Rootes FoCC Secretary

## 3. Wildflower Trail success

The seventh wildflower walk at the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail has been an outstanding success. With rain on almost every day, numbers are well down on last year. The feedback from the walk has been very positive.

Thirty-seven different wildflowers, shrubs and trees were highlighted with pop up signs along the walk. The Field Naturalists club of Ballarat identifies the wildflowers and the rest is up to nature.

This year all wildflowers were able to be identified by QR codes on each sign. The QR codes are linked to the FoCC website.



Phytophthora control measures at the wildflower walk start. Image 24<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

**4. Dementia trail wins Australian Architecture awards  
Another gong for Thomson Hay.**

Thomson Hay the Landscape Architects for the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail have won the prestigious 2022 AILA National Landscape Architecture Award for Health and Education Landscape

The National Landscape Architecture Award was presented at the 2022 AILA Awards in Brisbane to Thomson Hay on Friday October 14<sup>th</sup>. More information at:

<https://aila.awardsplatform.com/gallery/OEZZaYEG/VQOxLvEV?search=42372b8ac95564e9-10>

This award compliments the Victorian Landscape Architecture ward won in June 2022. See Spikey June Issue 89 for that award.

**THOMSON HAY**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



**5. Big turnout for backyard Bird Count**

The Birds Australia Backyard Bird Count was held from October 17<sup>th</sup> to October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

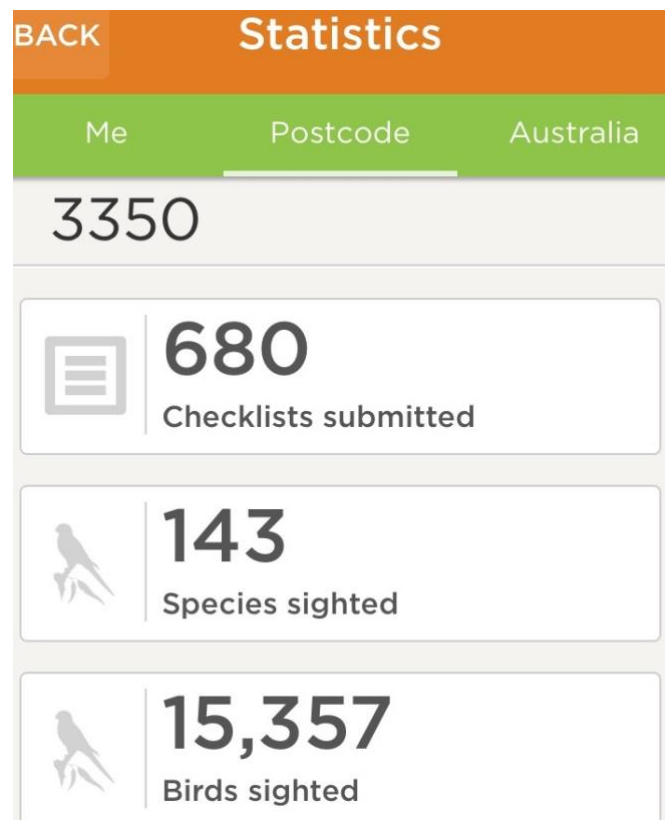


*"Eyes will be on the skies next week as Ballarat's twitcher community take part in Birdlife's annual bird survey event.*

*The Aussie Bird Count, which began in 2014, asks all Australians to take 20 minutes out of their day to stand in their backyard, look up, and track the variety of birds they see in their neighbourhood.*

Article Courtesy Ballarat Courier 13 October 2022

**Another successful local Bird Count**



Bird Count statistics for 2022. At 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**6. Parks Victoria grants FoCC \$1125 for volunteer activities**

Parks Victoria have granted the FoCC \$1125 for volunteer activities in 2023. The funding will be used to host a forum to encourage friends to be more actively involved in the well-being of the Park. More details next year.



Supporting  
Nature's  
Future



**7. Mt Helen Reservoir fills with startling finds**



Intrepid researcher Colin has uncovered an article in Trove which uncovers the mystery of the Mount Helen Waterworks scheme.

There are quite a few maps around showing a water reserve on the north side of Greenhill Rd in the south of the Woowookarung Regional Park. What has been missing has been the details of the actual reservoir. This article resolves much of that problem.

**THE MOUNT HELEN WATER SCHEME.**  
 On Thursday, 27th February, the members of the Sebastopol Borough Council made an inspection of the Mount Helen waterworks, with a view of seeing for themselves the advisability of accepting the offer of the Government to lease them to the council at the rate of 6 per cent. upon the expenditure on the works by the Government, and the cost of the purchase of the race leading from the dam to the White Horse Ranges from F. C. Baker and party, making a total of about £2800. A start was made

From the Ballarat Star (Vic. : 1865 - 1924), Friday 28 February 1879, page 3

The original article can be found at Trove:

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/200133211>

The Mount Helen Water Scheme begins with a reservoir built in the late 1870's at the western end of the Gorge.

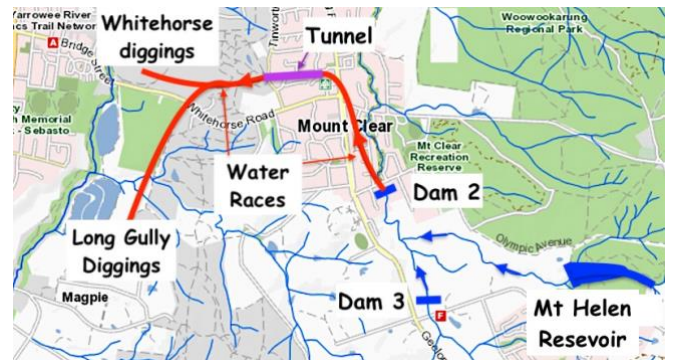
The dam wall is still there today albeit with a massive gash in the dam wall. Originally the reservoir had a 9-inch pipe and valve to control the outflow. The gash probably occurred from the retrieval the pipe and valve for use elsewhere.

The water from the Mt Helen Reservoir flowed down what was known as Mt Helen Creek to join "One Eye Gully" now known as Canadian Creek and into dam (2) on Canadian Creek on the south side of Olympic Avenue Mt Clear.

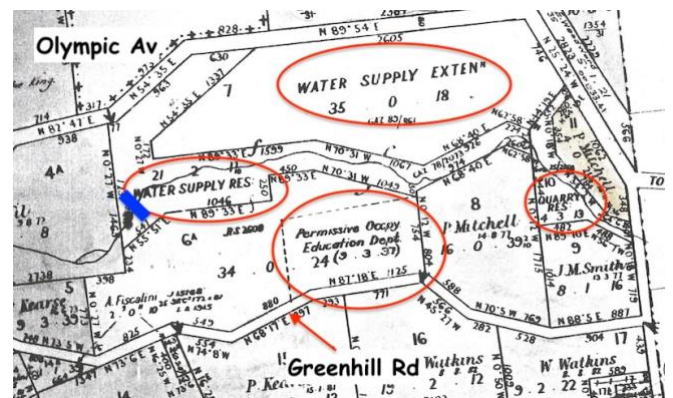
Another dam (3) was to be constructed on the Canadian Creek at Greenhill Rd.

Water from the Olympic Avenue dam (2) was to run along a water race to roughly where the Mt Clear IGA store is today where a 1000 ft long (300m) tunnel was planned to run west under Tinworth Avenue to provide sluicing water to the Whitehorse diggings in the Whitehorse Rd area and further south to the Long Gully diggings. The water race follows the 450m contour line. The tunnel runs under Tinworth Avenue which has a high point with an elevation of above 460m.

It is not known at this stage whether the tunnel ever was built.



FoCC map of works



Mt Helen Reservoir Water Reserve (dam wall in blue) Greenhill School and Quarry details. Map dated 1951.

## 8. Bird of the Month XIV (October 2022)

### Golden Whistler (*Pachycephala pectoralis*)

As spring continues to set in, what better way to rejoice in the increased bird activity and diversity. Take a deep dive into the world of one of our most brightly-coloured, vocally-conspicuous, spring/summer additions to the local bird assemblage. That of the Golden Whistler.

Belonging to the family *Pachycephalidae* which comprises all Whistlers, Shrikethrushes, and Shriketits, the Golden Whistler is a smallish (16-18cm) bird with a stubby bill, and greatly disparate plumages between males and females (i.e. sexual dimorphism). The adult male Golden Whistler (pictured below), true to its name, sports a spectacularly rich, vibrant golden-yellow breast that is sure to dazzle any onlooker new to (and familiar with) its burst of colour. While surely making many regret not having known of their beauty long ago (wouldn't you be enticed to scour the bush for viewing/photo opportunities?!). The adult female (and immature birds of either sex), meanwhile, are much more subtle and unassuming in their adornment of brownish grey and greyish olive – not quite so jaw-dropping, but still beautiful in their own understated way. And don't forget

its whistles which culminate in a distinctive whip-crack! Such an aesthetically, and vocally, charming bird – it would be a shame if it *flew* under anyone’s radar any longer!



Left: Adult male Golden Whistler



Right: Adult female Golden Whistler (Image credits: Rob Loveband).

The Golden Whistler’s vocalisations have been described as “many sweet notes; brisk ‘sweetawit, sweetawit’; rising ‘wheat-wheat-wheat-WHITTLE!, brisk ‘dee-dee-dee-ah-WHIT!,” (the ‘WHIT!’ being the whip-crack). Also, “persistent, loud, ringing, whistles in a long, rapid sequence, swelling in volume”, and a contact call of single, rising ‘seeep’. Endearingly, in spring, both sexes are known to sing “vivacious” duets, and display with “see-saw” posturing.

Breeding season for Golden Whistlers is from August to January. Females produce one brood of 2-3 eggs per breeding season, and the clutch is incubated by both sexes. Nests – an open cup of woven rootlets, stems, twigs, bark strips, casuarina leaves or fern fronds bound by cobwebs – are positioned 0.5m to 6m high in a blackberry thicket, shrub or tree. Juveniles have a rufous (orangey brown) plumage.

Outside of breeding season, Golden Whistlers occur in singles, or mixed-species Whistler companies (Australia is home to 9 species of whistler, 2 of which occur in Ballarat, the other being Rufous Whistler). Golden Whistlers of southeast Australia are said to migrate locally, which usually entails much of the region’s population to migrate from highlands to lowlands during autumn-winter. Sedentary year-round residence, and coastal-inland movements are also noted of this widespread species.

Typically, Golden Whistlers prefer dense forests and woodland, but also inhabit wooded watercourses and shelterbelts, and may be visitors to parks, gardens, orchards, and golf courses. An insectivore, Golden Whistlers forage amongst trees and taller understorey shrubs, gleaning insects off foliage.

Next time you wander through Woookarung Regional Park, or another local bushland, listen out for the wheaty whip-crack song of the Golden Whistler! And if you’re able to locate the magnificently golden-yellow male, take a moment to marvel at its jaw-dropping beauty!

*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).*

## 9. Koala sightings

October to March is Koala breeding season and peak reporting season.

This is the time when it becomes obvious with their noisy grunting that a male Koala is the area.

Females are generally quiet and therefore hard to see.

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

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

All koala sightings are recorded and put onto the Victorian Bio Atlas as permanent record.

The Victorian Bio Atlas is the authoritative source of biodiverse records and is often cited by developers.

Sometimes claiming no Koalas. Every Koala sighting refutes those developers that claim “no Koalas were sighted or have been reported”.



On a firebreak near Winlea Court Mt Helen. 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022. Image courtesy of John.

Koala scat was recorded at Mt Helen and beside the Canadian Creek path just west of the controversial development in Haymes Rd Mt Clear on Saturday October 29<sup>th</sup> 2022.





Koala on Mt Buninyong. Image courtesy of Ashley, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2022.

A Koala was rescued by wildlife carers from an attack by two dogs in Buninyong just south of the Sanctuary in Mt Helen. The koala suffered an eye injury. Dog attacks are one of the three main causes of Koala injury.

In the early 2000's the City of Ballarat kept records of dog attacks on Koalas.

*“The Ballarat community-based koala survey (plus wildlife carer records) produced 70 reports of dog attacks on koalas in the City since 1995. A majority of these koalas reportedly died as a result of the attacks.”*

From page 29 Vol 1 Koala Plan of Management, CoB 2006



A lucky rescued Koala in Hitchcock Rd. Image courtesy of Jessica. 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022

#### 10. Gardening Australia films “Costa” at the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail.

Late in September the ABC Gardening Australia crew and Costa filmed a Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail segment for future broadcast. The filming lasted for a very long day on site.

No previews have been obtained so tune in when its on!



Film crew and equipment. Image 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022

#### 11. Dementia Trail wetland fills

The Wetlands at the centre of the Dementia Trails wetland loop walk filled for the first time in years with the deluge on Thursday October 13<sup>th</sup>.

Recent Parks Victoria drainage works has helped in diverting some nearby run off into the wetland.

The wetland was actually a holding dam for water supplied from a nearby water race for use in sluicing for gold.



A well filled wetland. Image 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022





Spotted at the start of the Dementia Trail. Image 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022

- Planned vegetation removal would degrade the leafy neighbourhood character.
- That the application was speculative in its ambition.
- Pedestrian safety
- Flooding
- Loss of old habitat trees that cannot be replaced.

Residents should put their concerns and solution into writing to the Planning Department at the City of Ballarat. Objections can still be lodged.

The FoCC position is that the proposal does not fit in with the Ballarat Planning Scheme requirements particularly the requirement to protect Koala Habitat.

### 12. Park Lake

This gorgeous little lake (old fire dam) is in the middle of the ex-plantation area east of Dozed Rd. The former motor cycle track ran past it. An amazing example of how nature is repairing itself in the previous plantation areas. During this wildflower season it is worth talking a look at the variety of wildflowers that have re-established in the plantation areas.



Image 14th September 2022

### 13. Community information meeting

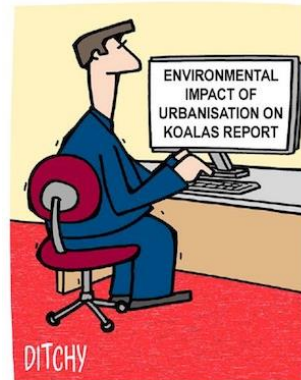
On Thursday October 27<sup>th</sup> the City of Ballarat hosted a “Community Information meeting” about a proposed development at 43 Haymes Rd.

The meeting heard from the Developers representative and then focussed on local residents’ concerns.

There was qualified support that the land could be developed taking into account the large amount of Koala vegetation on site.

Concerns raised covered:

- Loss of a large amount of Koala habitat
- Impact on local Koalas known to inhabit the area



WRITING THE REPORT



IMPLEMENTING IT

Ballarat Courier 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2022



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

### 14. Pine tree removal at 55 Recreation Rd

Volunteer works have now got underway at the old Bunny Railway Recreation Road Bushland Reserve in Mt Clear.

Two to three thousand pine saplings were removed in working bee blitz on Sunday Oct 9<sup>th</sup>.

Volunteers removed small pine saplings that were strangling native vegetation in the bushland reserve. One volunteer kept count and managed to remove over 500 saplings in the two-hour working bee.

Larger pine trees and all native vegetation is to be left as valuable Koala and Bird habitat.

The working bee also installed safety barriers in front of the remains of the Heritage Rail Bridge.

During the last week of October, the FoCC has met with the CoB Parks and Gardens personnel and contractors to plan the installation of a new shared access bridge beside the old rail bridge.

The bridge is being funded by the wonderful Community Bank Buninyong.



Community Bank Buninyong. Sponsor of the Bunny trail Bridge and trail.



Volunteer workers in front of the safety barrier on Toms Creek and site of the bridge. Image 9<sup>th</sup> October 2022.



Pine saplings before the working bee. Image 9<sup>th</sup> October 2022



Pine removal. Image 9<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**15. New signs show the way to Woowookarung Regional Park.**

The FoCC wrote to the City of Ballarat recently and after a short consultation, the Cities signs officer organised for four new “Woowookarung Regional Park Signs to be installed. The sign below is on the corner of Elsworth St East and Katy Ryans Rd.



New Woowookarung Regional Park sign. Image 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

The other three signs are at:

1. Corner of Eureka St and Cathies St, Ballarat East
2. The roundabout at the junction of Geelong Rd and Elsworth St East Canadian.
3. The tee junction between Elsworth St East and Joseph St.

Well done City of Ballarat!

**16. October 13<sup>th</sup> wet day. Victoria's big rain.**

A very wet day in Ballarat. 80mm of rain in Canadian. Local creeks were running a gusher.





Toms Creek under the rail bridge at 55 Recreation Rd.  
Image 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022

#### 17. **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.

#### 18. **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.

- **Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation**

The Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation group was established in July this year by Ballarat wildlife carers and veterinary professionals to respond to the growing need for specialised care of sick and injured wildlife in Ballarat and surrounding areas.

More information: <https://www.bwrac.org.au>



#### 19. **FoCC 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)

#### 20. **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 ~~979~~ 987 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.

#### 21. **2022 Proposed Calendar**

The calendar is prepared by the FoCC committee.

November 9 <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 ~~1018~~ 1019 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.

**Web -** [www.focc.asn.au](http://www.focc.asn.au) **Facebook**

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

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