



FoCC Incorporated Spikey News



Linking the community with Woovookarung and the Canadian Corridor
January 2023 Issue Number 95

Spikey News features

1. FoCC Membership for 2023 due
2. FoCC General meeting
3. Listening post at Cathies Lane Ballarat East
4. Park works - Phytophthora sampling
5. Bird of the Month
6. Bunny Trail at 55 Recreation Rd progress
7. Koalas
8. Clean up Australia Day
9. Parks Victoria Chairperson visit to Dementia Trail
10. Xmas drinks report
11. Haymes Rd update
12. 2023 Smart Living Expo Buninyong
13. Revegetation of old 4WD track

1. FoCC Membership for 2023 due

FoCC membership for 2023 is due.

Many thanks to those who have already paid their 2023 membership.

Membership of the FoCC is just \$20 per calendar year.

Children of members are free.

All new and renewing members will receive a copy of the "Indigenous Insects of Southern Ballarat" by mail.

1. You can pay for **membership** via Trybooking at:

<https://www.trybooking.com/CFLFU>

Cost is \$20.50 via Trybooking. You can also make a donation of any size via this process.

2. Bank transfer to details: **Bendigo Bank Buninyong**

BSB 633000 Account No 184147098

Note: Please add your name to the bank transfer and email focinfo@gmail.com your name and the date of the transaction. If your postal address has changed, please let us know.

3. Payment to the Treasurer at a FoCC meeting or
4. Cheques should be made out to "FoCC Incorporated" and addressed to:

FoCC Treasurer
PO Box 83,
Mt Clear Vic, 3350.

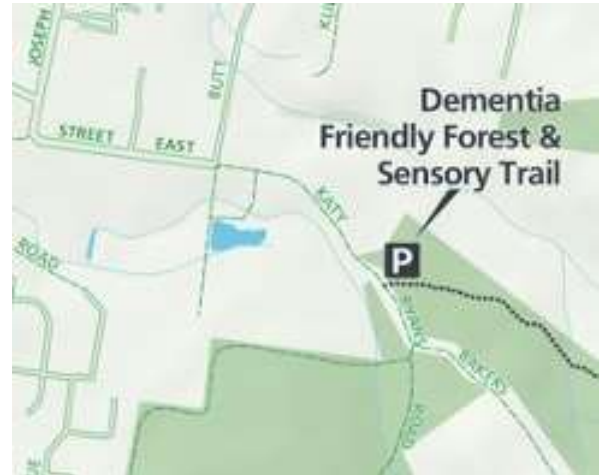
2. FoCC General meeting

The FoCC February general meeting will be held at 7pm on Wednesday February 15th outdoors at the **Dementia Trail shelter**, Katy Ryans Rd, Mt Clear.

The agenda will include the FoCC's activities for the coming year with presentation and discussion on Landcare, Parks works and FoCC projects. All welcome.

PS Bring a chair. Insect repellent provided or BYO.

FoCC January 2023 Spikey News



3. Listening post at Cathies Lane Ballarat East

Parks Victoria are holding a trail listening post on Wednesday 1st February between 4.30pm and 6pm at the Cathie St Car Park, Ballarat East.

Parks are proposing to upgrade existing local tracks to form a double loop 3 km long neighbourhood trail for walkers, runners and cyclists.

Friends are encouraged to attend, view the proposed trail and discuss with Parks Victoria Rangers items of interest.

More info: woovookarung@parks.vic.vic.gov.au or phone 131963





Listening post meeting point

4. Park Works - Phytophthora sampling

“Parks Victoria commissioned Ecology Heritage Partners Pty Ltd to undertake an ecological survey of Phytophthora impacts within Woookarung Regional Park during April 2022. The purpose of this assessment was to map changes in Grass-tree distribution, cover and health since 2017, that may be caused by the impacts of Phytophthora. Ref: Managing phytophthora WRP Dec 2022.



A grass tree, possible phytophthora affected beside a wet area. Image courtesy of Parks Victoria 19th Jan 2023.

Parks Vic Rangers have been active in the Park collecting soil and root samples for testing at the Latrobe University soil testing facility for phytophthora fungus. Samples have been taken from many locations throughout the Park. The results will take several weeks to obtain.



Rangers Alex and Rory collecting soil samples near Boak Rd Mt Clear. Image 18 Jan 2023

5. Bird of the Month XVI (January 2023)

Australian Magpie (Cracticus tibicen)

This is a bird with a difference; a local Australian Magpie case study serving a poignant lesson. It centres on humans feeding wildlife – an important topic warranting increased public awareness.

Let’s be clear: connecting with nature is roundly encouraged. Please strive for a wildlife-friendly backyard. How exactly we attract wildlife to our backyard is what’s in focus here.

What are the risks associated with feeding wildlife? The risks are categorised into behavioural and nutritional disruptions. Firstly, feeding wild animals breeds altered behaviours. Unnatural patterned behaviour replaces the species’ natural foraging behaviours/diet. That’s when wildlife default to begging, phasing out their wild instincts. Thus, the wild animals become somewhat tame, and dependent on humans.



Adult (male) Australian Magpie. Images by Rob Loveband.

How does this relate to the local case study? My street's resident magpies exhibit bad habit-forming, whereby 12-23 individuals, flock to exploit hand-outs. Surveying homeowners' movements, loitering and encroaching close, begging for artificial food. When their usual providers pause/cease provisions for reasons unforeseen, the resident magpies redirect to other neighbours. This suggests human dependency, as begging is the default, and hand-outs the primary sustenance, resulting in diminished natural foraging behaviour/diet. This behaviour is intergenerational; with parent magpies teaching juveniles to beg – which likely bodes poorly for the population's resilience against fluctuating human assistance.

Secondly, nutritional disruptions. All fauna possess digestion geared towards metabolising a certain diet, adapted throughout thousands of years/generations of evolution. Since human agency has introduced novel foods, wildlife is being exposed to artificial foods that their physiology isn't evolved to digest. Bread, mince, chips, etc. clog animals' digestive tracts, i.e. any goodness is unable to be extracted. Upset stomach aside, malnutrition and other health complications are risks. For example, carnivorous birds may suffer calcium deficiency from eating processed (boneless) meats, as the absence of bone doesn't support their nutritional requirements. This may lead to brittle bones, bill, and eggshells.

Evident in the case study magpies is poor feather condition. Most have tattered and discoloured feathers (brownish, not the mottled grey of youngsters). This poor feather condition has been observed over several months, which outlasts moulting cycles, and is uncharacteristic of any plumage age. Thus, it is almost certainly caused by poor diet.

The long-term implications? Unnatural behaviours and poor nutrition, combined, this case study suggests an intergenerational ill-health that presumably bodes poorly for the genetic fitness of the local magpie population – and this trend needs reversing!

Recommended practical resolutions? Prevention is better than cure, but if it's too late, be not guilt-ridden, but rather empowered to learn and reform. Weaning them off provisions encourages natural foraging. Feeding intervals are important for patterned behaviour, i.e. if provision times are few and far between, birds are unlikely to congregate like clockwork for hand-outs. During weaning, try a revised menu of natural foods specific to the target species. Please always refrain from breads, mince, and chips!

Better yet, attracting wildlife to your backyard, through birdbaths, and a native garden, is unreservedly encouraged. Providing water is permissible, as safe drinking and bathing water is a far-less accessible commodity, and one that may

be life-saving during extreme heat (see image below). Birdbaths of different sizes, depths, heights, and proximities to cover, are considerations for catering to avian diversity, including small, risk-averse species. The only caution is that birdbaths MUST PLEASE be cleaned and sanitised regularly to prevent disease transmission!



As for a native garden, this is great for providing food, foraging substrates, shelter and nesting resources for native fauna. Sourcing locally indigenous flora of local provenance is the pinnacle!

Next time you see Australian Magpies, rather than passing them off as dime-a-dozen, consider it a reminder that well-intentioned stewardship of wildlife can elicit unintended ill-effects; hence, we must spread this educational message. Let's all enjoy a summer in the outdoors, connecting with nature in an informed manner!

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.

6. Bunny Trail progress at 55 Recreation Rd

The Bunny Trail project at 55 Recreation Road is well underway courtesy of a Community Investment Program Grant from the Community Bank of Buninyong.



- Bridge construction commenced: The FoCC contracted Lloyds Engineering to construct and install the bridge

across the creek. The steel bridge has been built and it is now in Geelong to be galvanised for weather protection.

- Site visits have worked out the location of the bridge concrete footings and access for machinery. Small pine trees along the access path have been removed.
- Parks Victoria rangers met the FoCC to sort out the details of the entrance into the Park. The entrance will include a lockable bollard to allow maintenance access.

7. Koalas



1. University Drive Mt Helen. Image courtesy of Daniel 9 November 2022.

2. Another Koala observed by Daniel on 16 November along East Terrace Mt Helen (Fed Uni). No image.



3. Union Jack Education Reserve Buninyong (Gittins Lane). Image courtesy of An 7 December 2022

4. East end of Olympic Avenue Mt Clear. Heard by Bob on 26 December 2022. No image.



5. Lavery Avenue Mt Clear. Image courtesy of Rex 29 Dec 2022.



6. Lal Lal Drain near east end of Rifle Range. Image courtesy of Kellie 2 Jan 2023.



7. Dementia Trail. Image courtesy of Pat 5 Jan 2023.

8. Clean up Australia Day March 5th 2023

The FoCC will be hosting a Clean Up Australia day site. The meeting point is the Lookout on Boundary Rd, 10am to Noon.

More details next Spikey.

9. Parks Victoria Chairperson visits Dementia Trail

Parks Victoria Chairperson John Pandazopoulos visited the Dementia Trail in November. The visit arose from the Dementia Trail winning a State Sport and Recreation Award earlier in November.

 John Pandazopoulos is at Woowookarung Regional Park. November 24 at 1:02 PM · Mount Clear, VIC · 🌐

Wonderful that our Parks Victoria Dementia Friendly and Forest Therapy Trail has won another award. This time in the State Sport and Recreation Awards in addition to State and National Architectural Awards. Woowookarung is a new Park established in 2018 on the outskirts of #ballarat Its a nice easy walk.



92 1 Comment 1 Share

Like Comment Share

 Sia Pan
What a wonderful initiative. Just because people have an illness doesn't mean that they can't enjoy the simple pleasures of life. 🙌👍

10. Xmas drinks report

A well-attended Xmas drinks at the lookout experienced a great Ballarat sunset.



Ballarat Sunset at the Lookout. Dec 2nd 2022. Image courtesy of Rob

11. Haymes Rd update

The proposed 28 lot development at Haymes Rd has been rejected by the City of Ballarat.

In a letter to the FoCC dated November 25th 2022 the CoB said,

"The proposal fails to adhere to the objectives of the Planning Policy Framework of the Ballarat Planning Scheme"

12. 2023 Smart Living Expo Buninyong

The FoCC will host a stall at the 2023 Smart Living Expo Buninyong at Royal Park Buninyong. Always a good time to catch up with Friends and see and talk about sustainability opportunities.

Ideal place to pick up one of our brochures.

13. Revegetation of old 4WD track

Parks Victoria and volunteers planted out an old 4WD track on the North side of Katy Ryans Rd a couple of years ago. The track was along the edge of a plantation block and no longer in use. It was mostly hard clay and yet the plants have struck and surprisingly other hardy native shrubs and trees have also begun to grow. This is nature repairing itself perhaps helped by three wet winters.



Revegetation of an old plantation track. Image 29th Jan 2023

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:

woowookarung@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.

Why dumped garden waste causes problems in the Park?



An old weed infested garden waste dump. Image: Beside the Grasstree Nature Trail, 29 Jan 2023

15. Useful information

- **Parks Victoria Woowookarung email address:**
woowookarung@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.

16. FoCC Membership

Membership runs from 1st January to 31st December each year, Membership fee is \$20 per year. Children of members are free.

Reminders were sent out recently.

New members after July are credited to the next year.

Membership forms are available online or email focinfo@gmail.com

17. FoCC facebook and webpage

www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/

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

The FoCC has over 1000 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.

18. 2023 Proposed Calendar

The calendar is prepared by the FoCC committee.

Feb 1st	Parks Victoria New Trail listening post info meeting, Cathie St Car Park Ballarat East. 4.30 to 6pm.
Feb 15th	FoCC General Meeting. Dementia Trail rotunda. Speakers include Landcare and Park updates.
Feb 26th	Buninyong Sustainability Festival – FoCC stall
March 5th	Clean Up Australia – 10am at the Lookout.
March	55 Rec Rd working bee. Details soon
April 19th	FoCC General Meeting – “Recording flora and fauna”. A workshop on how to put flora and fauna observations into I Naturalist and the Victorian Bio Atlas.
May 17th	FoCC Forum. “Water races and sluice fields”. Guest Speaker - Susan Lawrence - La Trobe University, Department of Archaeology and History, Melbourne, Australia
May 21st and 22nd	Ballarat Heritage Festival: Central Highlands Water mining water races and Sluice field guided and pop-up walk. Starting point Sparrow Ground.
June 21st	FoCC General Meeting: Topic tba
August 6th	7th Tree planting. Dozed Track area.
August 27th	Slow tree identification walk. Meet at Dementia Trail rotunda
September	Koala Forum
October (early)	FoCC Sunday afternoon visit to Clarksdale Bird Sanctuary
October 16 to 22	Great Australian Backyard Bird Count
October (late)	8th Annual Wildflower Walk.
November 15	7th Annual Meeting
December 1	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 Woowookarung 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 ~~1037~~ 1042 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/>

Unsubscribe by emailing focinfo@gmail.com