



FoCC Incorporated Spikey News



Linking the community with Woowookarung and the Canadian Corridor
March 2023 Issue Number 97

Spikey News features

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1. FoCC General Meeting – “Recording flora and fauna”

A general meeting and workshop on how to record flora and fauna observations and input into I Naturalist and the Victorian Bio Atlas, will be held at **7pm on April 26th** at Earth Ed Centre, Olympic Avenue, Mt Clear.

Agenda:

- Purpose of monitoring and recording mediums?
- Lessons from Citizen Science Koala spotting
- How to add to I Naturalist
- How to add to the VBA
- Cameras and their use
 - Uses
 - Protocols
 - Possible outcomes
 - FoCC cameras

All friends welcome.

Note: The meeting date has been moved a week later to Wednesday, April 26th 2023.

2. Five big illegal asbestos dumps in Woowookarung Regional Park

Late on February 18th or thereabouts, four tip truckloads of building materials were dumped by a large tip truck along Boak Rd Mt Clear. A further dump occurred along Dozed Rd, Mt Clear.

The FoCC reported the dumps to the Environmental Protection Agency, Parks Victoria and the City of Ballarat. Later, Parks Victoria confirmed the dumps contained asbestos.

If any friend saw anything suspicious around that date or knows of a recent demolished building with lime green or

white weather boards and downpipes, please contact Parks Victoria or the City of Ballarat or the FoCC.



Asbestos laden dump on Boak Rd Mt Clear. Image 26th March 2023

3. Clean Up Australia Day at the Lookout



The FoCC hosted a Clean Up Australia day site at the Lookout on Sunday March 5th 2023.



Local MP Catherine and Penny doing their bit on March 5th 2023

The clean-up focused on the roads and trails around the Lookout area. Most of the rubbish was food and drink litter.



The final collection, Sunday March 5th 2023

4. The “Bunny Trail” at 55 Recreation Rd progress

The “Bunny Trail” bridge was installed on Thursday March 23rd. The bridge is funded by the Community Bank Buninyong, Community Investment Program. Lloyds Engineering of Wendouree built the bridge and installed it adjacent to the original 1889 wooden rail bridge.



Installed bridge at 55 Recreation Rd. Image March 24th 2023



Earth works on the trail Friday March 31st 2023

Drainage and trail topping works at the north end of the trail will happen in the next few weeks. Once completed the trail will be open for use.

5. Working bee at 55 Recreation Rd April 4th

A working bee will be held 9am to 11 am on Tuesday April 4th at 55 Recreation Rd to complete the tidying up of pine saplings, logs and trail preparation.

The work requires a range of hand saws, long and short handled cutters, shovels and rakes. The FoCC will supply gloves, a safe working environment and a cup of tea and bikkie at the end. Solid footwear and clothing required.

6. Community Bank Buninyong provides FoCC with “Community Gold” gift cards

The Community Bank Buninyong has gifted the FoCC a set of “Community Gold” gift cards to give away to friends participating in FoCC activities.

Volunteers at the recent FoCC Working Bee at the 55 Recreation Rd, removed pine saplings and cleared the path of the new track all received “Community Gold” cards. We thank Buninyong Community Bank (BCB) for their support of this project. As part of the project BCB donated \$250 of vouchers for project supporters. Volunteers at the 55 Rec Rd project showing their Community Bank of Buninyong “Community Gold” cards.



FoCC volunteers with “Community Gold” card. Image: March 18th 2023



Note: The construction of the “Bunny Trail” bridge and trail on 55 Recreation Rd Bushland Reserve is funded by the generosity of the “Community Bank Buninyong” Community Investment Program.

7. Bird of the Month XVIII (March 2023)

Silvereye (*Zosterops lateralis*)

Variety and uniqueness. Subtlety and understated beauty. Tenacious pocket rocket. If these attributes strike your fancy, then Silvereyes are the bird for you! As the only southern Australian member of the ‘White-eye’ family, Silvereyes belong to a branch of their own on the evolutionary tree, bringing diversity to a regional bird assemblage largely represented by honeyeaters (Family *Meliphagidae*), parrots (Family *Psittacidae*), cockatoos (Family *Cacatuidae*), Family *Artamidae* (e.g. magpies, butcherbirds, currawongs) and ravens (Family *Corvidae*). With its olive-green, grey, and buff, Silvereyes may lack bright colours and eye-catching flamboyance – making this cutie is one for enthusiasts of pastel tones. Although quite small (10-12.5cm), Silvereyes are said to be “aggressive at bird tables”, with an “intimidating threat display of flared eye-rings”.



Above: adult Silvereeye (image credit: Colin Trainor), and below: all adult Silvereyes (image credit: Rob Loveband).



Silvereyes inhabit eucalypt woodlands and forests, as well as parks, gardens, orchards and vineyards. Silvereyes have a varied diet comprising insects, fruit and nectar. The vocalisations of Silvereyes have been described as “thin peevish ‘psee’”, with an alarm call of “wavering ‘wee-ee-ee-ee-ee’” and a territorial song that is a “rapid succession of high-pitched notes, trills, warbles”.

Breeding season is September to January. Up to three broods may be raised per season, with clutch sizes of 2-4 eggs. Both male and female (indistinguishable) share the nest-building, incubation (14-15 days) and feeding duties. The nest is a small, deep cup, of fine grass, bound together with spiderwebs and suspended from shrubs or the lower reaches of trees.

Silvereyes are not only diverse from the region’s other birds, but also diverse of and within themselves. Up to nine races (or sub-species) are recognised within the entire species’ geographic range, and each has subtle variance in plumage from the others. Complicating matters, the eastern races regularly migrate intra-nationally and may replace each other in their different areas for parts of the year. For example, in the south of their range, Silvereyes move north each autumn and return south in winter to

breed, while the Tasmanian race (which have chestnut flanks) migrates northward in mid-summer and returns to Tasmania in Aug-Oct.

Next time you wander through Woookarung Regional Park, or another local bushland patch, park or garden, don’t forget to listen out for the peevish trills and warbles of these pastel olive pocket rockets!

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).

8. CSIRO to undertake a four-year study of local Koalas

The CSIRO is working with the FoCC, Moorabool Landcare Network, Leigh Catchment Group and other agencies and groups to monitor Koalas in our area. The CSIRO program is working across Australia building the knowledge base about Koalas as the statement below explains:

The Australian Government has funded the development of a \$10 million National Koala Monitoring Program (NKMP).

The program aims to fill knowledge gaps for future Koala recovery and management efforts.

CSIRO is leading the co-design of the four-year program and facilitating the roll out of NKMP with the broader Australian community. The key objectives of this monitoring program are:

- Inclusive – to enable all members of the Australian community to contribute to this national koala monitoring effort
- Long-term – to build individual and collaborative capacity to collect robust data that can be used for evidence-based decision-making
- Integrative - to build best-practice methods and data management systems to integrate available and new data to provide local and national insights into koala population status and trends

The CSIRO study will build on the Koala data that has been built up by the Australian Koala Foundation, the City of Ballarat’s Koala Plan of Management studies, the FoCC and others over the past 50 years in and around Ballarat.

More information:

<https://www.csiro.au/en/research/indigenous-science/managing-country/koala-monitoring-program>

9. Fern Loop and Cherry Ballart trails

Parks Victoria held a listening post about the new trails on February 1st and have published the results as follows:

What did we ask?

We asked for your feedback on our proposal to create two new trail experiences: The Fern Loop and the Cherry Ballart Loop, as well as the changing access to motor vehicle access into this section of park.

What key things did we hear?

- We received unanimous support to create the two new trail experiences in this section of the park, as it leads through an interesting section of the park.
- We also received unanimous support to our proposed reduction in motor vehicle access to this section of the

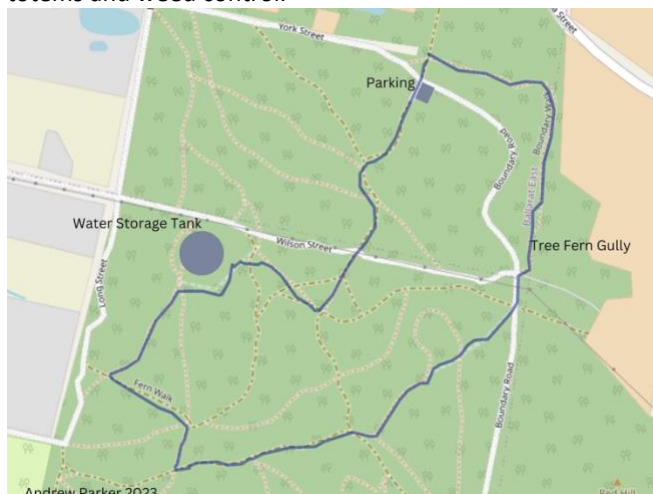
park, and the importance that walkers, bike and horse riders continue to have access on tracks that are sustainable.

- We also received unanimous support to the 2 proposed names: Fern Loop and Cherry Ballart Loop.

What additional information did you provide us?

- Many people commented on how they would like to see the trails be kept 'as natural as possible' and only surfaced when needed to keep feed dry or repair damaged sections.
- People also recommended to us to use good signage at the start at the Cathie Street car park, and using directional totems along the route.
- People commented that they do not want to introduce or spread *Phytophthora cinnamomi* further in the area and that the track should avoid infected areas.
- People would like to see the new trail experience reflected on the official park map.

The first bollards are being installed and bog holes being rehabilitated. Further work is some minor tree hazard reduction works, fencing, the installation of stepping stones, regulation signage, 2 duckboard crossings, an information board with updated map, a seat, a *Phytophthora cinnamomi* hygiene station, directional totems and weed control.



Map of the trail. Courtesy: Andrew of U3A walkers

10. Specimen Vale Group

Friends of the Yarrowee River is currently running small local group activities.



Mulch spreaders at work. Image: Courtesy of Specimen Vale Group March 2023

The Specimen Vale group meets fortnightly, weather and other commitments permitting, and it's a lovely, relaxing way to spend an hour or two with like-minded people slowly improving the biodiversity of one of Ballarat's many green corridors.

The next working bee is scheduled for 9:30 – 11 on Thursday April 13th on Specimen Vale, at the western side of King St South, Ballarat East.

If you would like further information, please contact

Ellen Scott millie.newington@hotmail.com

Merrie Harvey merrieharvey@gmail.com

11. Park Works

As part of the Fern Loop and Cherry Ballart trails, vehicle tracks have been closed around the Wilson St and Boundary Rd area.

Around 250 bollards are being placed to keep vehicles out but to allow shared access for others.



Bollards and fence at Red Hill on Boundary Rd. Image March 26th 2023

12. Koalas

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. Images are gold!



Koala on Recreation Rd. Image: Courtesy of Tracie. March 25th 2023



“Very excited to get my first ever wild Koala sighting right here in Woowookarung at the lookout of all places. Sitting down for lunch at the picnic tables I got to watch this one rustle out of the Bracken of the re-gen block, trot across open ground and head up a tree next to the entrance of the Grasstree Nature Trail.”

Image courtesy of Mitch. March 27th 2023

13. Pilgrims Walk

The Buninyong Uniting Church and the FoCC hosted a short pilgrim walk in the Park’s south.



Pilgrim walkers near Hendersons Lane Mt Helen. Image: Courtesy of Paul, March 4th 2023.

And written for the event was the pilgrims walk prayer:

*Every step is not our own
 The path under our feet, is not our own
 The breath we take in, has been taken out before
 The Breath we give out, also belongs to others
 In my walking may others be blessed
 In my walking may I be blessed
 In my walking may the earth be blessed
**May each step awaken my awareness of belonging
 May each step awaken my will to serve all beings
 May each step awaken gratitude and peace
 Let us go, welcoming the earth***

***Let us go, welcoming whoever we meet
 Let us go, welcoming whatever becomes the way***

Courtesy: Rev Paul Sanders, Uniting Church Buninyong

14. Dark Sky in the Park

The Ballarat Observatory is hosting an International Dark Sky Week event in Woowookarung Regional Park on the Friday evening of April 21st 2023.

- Come and learn about the Fauna at dusk with Andrew in the Park
- Look through our telescopes and learn about why it is so important to protect our DarkSky and what you can do about it, with Ballarat Astronomical Society members.
- Wear sturdy walking shoes and dress for the cold weather.
- Meeting point info is via the Ballarat observatory website below:

<https://ballaratorbservatory.org.au/event/international-dark-sky-week/>



The telescope on dusk last year: April 22nd 2022.

15. Dementia Trail featured on ABC

On Friday March 3rd at 7.30pm on the ABC Gardening show, host Millie featured a long session on the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail, the ideas behind it and some of the wonderful people involved in it.



The FoCC has received many comments about the wonderful way the story was told.

And from Costas Corner at:

<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/costa-s-corner-10th-march-2023/102075958>



Image and comments below from Costas Corner. *It's such a privilege to be able to tell the stories we do week in and week out here on Gardening Australia, and it never ceases to amaze me to see the work that people are doing and the care behind the work they are doing in so many different nooks and crannies of life that of course, have a path back to plants, horticulture and gardening. The stories stay with you because of the people that you get to meet and the connections you make with them and their world. I don't need to look very far, for example Millie's story last week about the [Dementia-friendly Forest and Sensory Trail](#) is one that resonates with the heart because of the long-term impact it is having on the lives of many and the potential for that to be replicated by others who have seen it now..... Costa.*

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

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.

17. 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, call Crime Stoppers.

18. FoCC Membership

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

are free. New members after July are credited to the next year. Membership forms are available online or email focinfo@gmail.com

19. 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.

20. 2023 Calendar of events

April 4 th	Working bee at 55 Recreation Rd.
April 21 st	Dark Sky in the Park event.
April 26 th	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 17 th	FoCC Forum. “Water races and sluice fields”. Guest Speaker - Susan Lawrence - La Trobe University, Department of Archaeology and History, Melbourne, Australia
May 21 st and 22 nd	Ballarat Heritage Festival: Central Highlands Water mining water races and Sluice field guided and pop-up walk. Starting point Sparrow Ground.
June 21 st	FoCC General Meeting: Topic Tba
August 6 th	7th Tree planting. Dozed Track area.
August 27 th	Slow tree identification walk. Meet at Dementia Trail rotunda
September	Koala Forum
October (early)	FoCC Sunday afternoon visit to Clarksdale Bird Sanctuary
October 16 - 22 nd	Great Australian Backyard Bird Count
October (late)	8th Annual Wildflower Walk.
November 15 th	7th Annual Meeting
December 1 st	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 Yarrowee Leigh Catchment Group. Circulation this issue is to ~~1061~~ 1066 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.

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