



FoCC Incorporated Spikey News



Linking the community with Woowookarung and the Canadian Corridor
February 2023 Issue Number 96

Spikey News features

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1. Clean Up Australia Day at the Lookout



The FoCC will be hosting a Clean Up Australia day site this Sunday March 5th 2023 10am to noon. The meeting point is the Lookout on Boundary Rd, Mt Clear.



The clean-up will focus on the roads and trails around the lookout area. Solid footwear and clothing recommended.

2. Smart Building and Living Expo 2023 at Buninyong

The FoCC held a stall at the Smart Building and Living Expo 2023 at Royal Park at the Buninyong Sustainability Expo on Sunday February 26th.

The stall featured information and giveaways on all the FoCC activities for this year.

In popular demand were the Flora and Fauna, Wildflower and Insect brochures.

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Jeff and Valmai at the FoCC stall early in the day. Feb 26th 2023.

3. FoCC General meeting

The February FoCC general meeting was held at the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail shelter on Wednesday February 15th 2023.

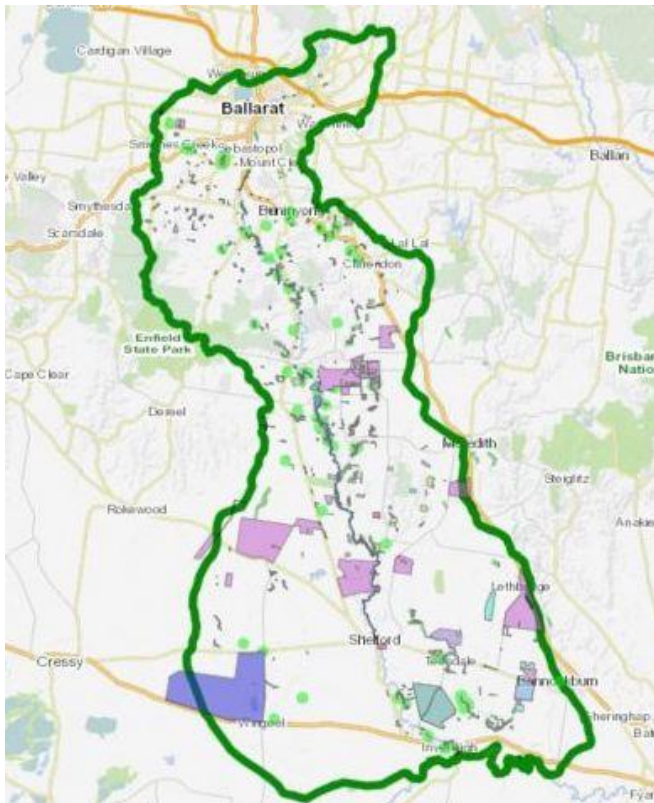


Bianca addressing the meeting

Guest speaker was Bianca Fammartino Landcare facilitator at the Yarrowee Leigh Catchment Group.

Bianca spoke about the role of the group and the work it undertakes:

- There are eight Landcare groups within the Group, the FoCC is one of the Landcare groups.
- The group facilitates the revegetation and restoration of private and public land by working with local groups.
- The Yarrowee Leigh Catchment Group covers the catchment area of the Yarrowee and Leigh Rivers ranging from the Kirks and Gong reservoirs on the Yarrowee River south to Inverleigh.



The area covered by the Yarrowee Leigh Catchment group.
Image from <https://www.leighcatchmentgroup.org/map>

4. **New Species of Grasstree found in WRP**

A third species of Grass Tree has been found recently in Woowookarung Regional Park.

The identification of the new Grass Tree species was made last year by researchers whilst undertaking a Parks Victoria study into Phytophthora infections within Woowookarung Regional Park.



The new species is the multi headed grass tree at the centre of the attention. Image 23rd February 2023
Parks Victoria Rangers helped FoCC friends and Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat members take part in an identification session in the Park on Thursday 23rd Feb.

Woowookarung is already well known for its extensive Grass Tree stands and a third species adds an exciting new species to the already large range of wildflowers, shrubs and trees found in the Park.

The new species is *Xanthorrhoea caespitosa*, commonly called trunkless Grass Tree.

The other two species in Woowookarung are *Xanthorrhoea Australis* which is a large Grass Tree with a solid trunk. The much smaller *Xanthorrhoea minor* is also trunkless with smaller leaves and a shorter spike when flowering, when compared with the new species.

The new species of Grass Tree is often multi headed and greener in colour than the other two Grass Trees.

It is listed under the Flora and Fauna guarantee act as vulnerable.

5. **The “Bunny” Trail at 55 Recreation Rd progress**

The “Bunny” Trail moved another step forward with a very successful pine sapling removal working bee on Saturday February 18th.

The working bee’s volunteers aim was to clear the pine saplings from the trail route between the old rail embankment and the entrance to Woowookarung Regional Park.



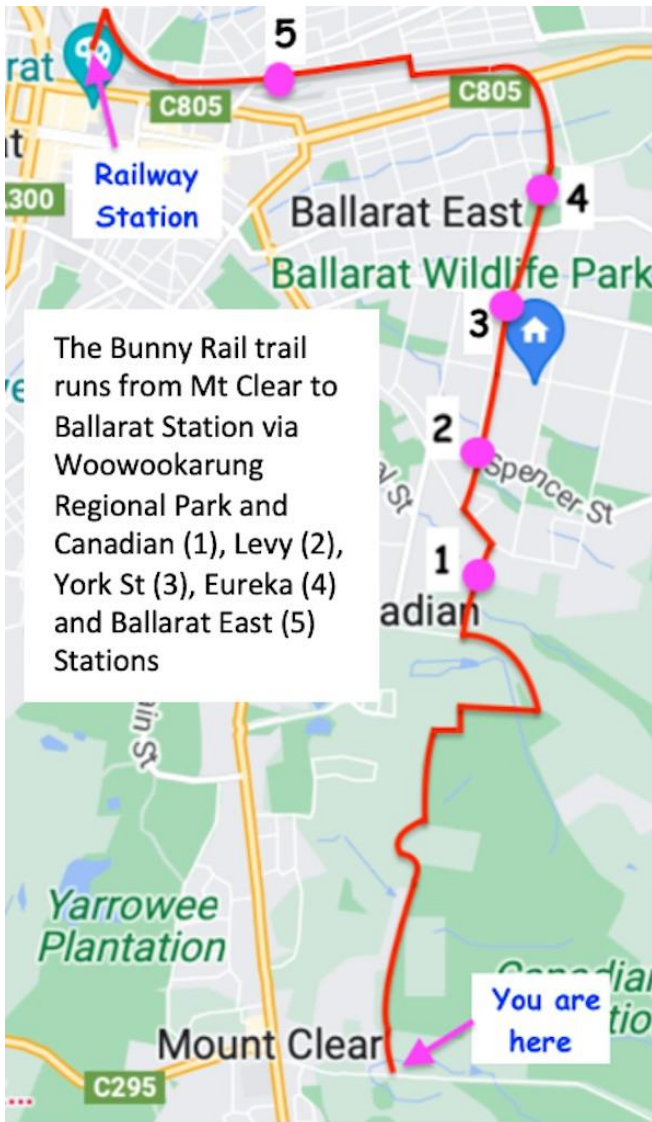
Volunteers at work. Image Feb 18th 2023

The newly cleared trail will allow contractors to install a drainage pipe and prepare the trail surface before putting the final topping on the trail.

Community Bank
Buninyong

B Bendigo Bank

The works on the trail including the bridge across the creek are being paid for by the generosity of the "Community Bank Buninyong" community investment program.



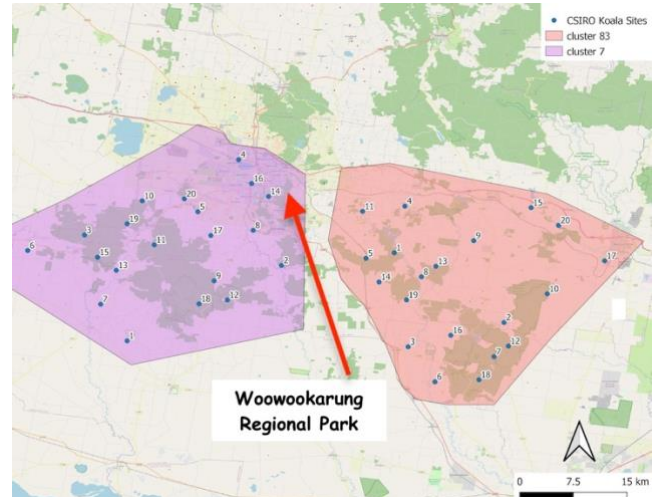
The Bunny Rail trail runs from Mt Clear to Ballarat Station via Woowookarung Regional Park and Canadian (1), Levy (2), York St (3), Eureka (4) and Ballarat East (5) Stations

FoCC Mt Clear to Ballarat Station “Bunny” trail map. Progress on The “Bunny” Trail will include a 9-meter-long steel bridge being installed over the creek in the next couple of weeks followed by fencing and protective bollards near the bridge. When complete The “Bunny” Trail will allow walkers and cyclists to ride from Mt Clear to Ballarat Station passing five old railway stations along the way, all on defined trails and roads as shown on the map.

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

The FoCC is partnering with local Landcare networks in a CSIRO lead Koala population study across the catchment areas of the Moorabool Landcare Network and Leigh Catchment Group. Agencies such as Parks Victoria and local government are also involved. The Australian Government is funding the Koala study as a response to the disastrous 2019 -20 bushfires. The study is across recognised Koala habitat. The FoCC citizen science Koala sighting data was recognised by the CSIRO as a quality record and has now been added to the koala data collection.

There are koala sightings in Ballarat dating back to the 1970’s and this historical data is very helpful. The City of Ballarat’s Koala Plan of Management adds additional sources of data and evidence. The study has proposed to cover the areas shown on the maps below. Enfield Regional Park is in the centre of the left-hand side cluster and the Moorabool Shire on the right-hand side. The Canadian Corridor and Woowookarung RP are in the middle.



The CSIRO draft study areas for the four-year Koala study.

CSIRO research staff met with local Landcare, local government and koala advocacy groups at the Lookout in Woowookarung Regional Park. The CSIRO staff outlined how the study would proceed.



Participants from CSIRO, Australian Koala Foundation, City of Ballarat, Yarrowee Leigh Catchment Group, Moorabool Landcare Network, BWRAC and FoCC. Image 22 February 2022

7. Listening post at Cathie St for new trail

Parks Victoria Rangers held a well-attended listening post in Cathie St, Woowookarung Regional Park on Tuesday February 1st. Forty attendees comprising neighbours, community groups and park users discussed the plans and provided feedback, suggestions and information about the nature and location of the proposed trail.



Participants at the Cathie St listening post



Adult Grey Fantails. Note the fanned tail (bottom) and drooped wings (both), which are two characteristics of typical Grey Fantail posture. Images by Rob Loveband.



FoCC map of the proposed trail

8. Bird of the Month XVII (February 2023)

Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura albiscapa*)

Like your birds flirty and performative? This feathered friend is just that – and more! Seductive embellishments aside, the Grey Fantail, is nonetheless sure to dazzle with its overt, fluttery prancing and fanned tail. This cheeky bird is perhaps unfamiliar to the uninitiated, but is an endearing ‘gateway bird’ for beginners looking for charismatic bushland secrets, detectable at a minimum of time and effort invested by the observer – if they just search beyond the realms of magpies and ravens.



With its grey upperparts, white eyebrows and beard, and buff (i.e. beige) belly, the Grey Fantail is one of the better-known, easily-recognisable small (14-17cm) birds in Australia. Insectivorous, the Grey Fantail’s foraging behaviour is characterised by tireless, aerial gymnastics, whereby they exuberantly dismount from the outer branchlets, twisting, turning and looping with tail widely fanned, hauling in flying insects as they go. Rinse and repeat! Grey Fantails rarely sit still, but the consolation is that they are conspicuous, inquisitive, and nerveless, which ensures that they don’t retreat to cover or depart the area before you can get a good view of them.

Grey Fantail vocalisations have been described as a “sharp ‘dek’”, “sweet, tinny, animated fiddle-like song”, and “squeaky, scratchy sounds”.

Grey Fantails inhabit eucalypt forests and woodlands, watercourses, parks, gardens and golf courses. They occur (almost) Australia-wide. Grey Fantails may partake in partial, northern migrations during winter, but some may ‘over-winter’ in the south year-round.

Breeding season is July–March, but is most intensive from August–December. Several broods may be raised per season (clutch size 2-3 eggs). Both male and female (which are visually indistinguishable) share the nest-building, incubation (14-15 days), and feeding duties. The nest, which resembles a ‘wineglass with no base’, is composed of plant fibres, bound together with spiderwebs. Nests are often supported by a forked branch, at heights of 1-12m (typically 2-5m).

Next time you wander through Woookarung Regional Park, another bushland patch or Blackwood-lined creek, don’t forget to focus in on the fiddle-like songs and squeaks, and fluttery fanned tail of the charming Grey Fantail!

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. Ten years of regrowth at the Lookout

In February 2013 the former blue gum plantation had just been removed when the image below was taken from near the Foos Lane and Boundary Rd junction. Not only were the blue gums removed, but the stumps were bulldozed and the ground was dug to a depth of 600mm (2ft). At that time the existential question was, how would this bare land be able to regenerate?



Image Jan 28th 2013

Ten years on the answer is quite clear. Let nature get on with it with a little bit of help from some aerial tree seeding.



The star marks the lookout. Image Feb 25th 2023

10. 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!

All koala sightings are recorded by the FoCC onto the Victorian Bio Atlas as a permanent record. This is the authoritative source of biodiverse records and is often cited by developers. Every Koala sighting refutes those developers that claim "no Koalas were sighted or have been reported".



Union Jack Koala. Image courtesy of Kate Jan 24th 2023



Two koalas in the same tree on Boundary Rd near Olympic Av corner Mt Clear. Image courtesy of Peter D Feb 1st 2023.

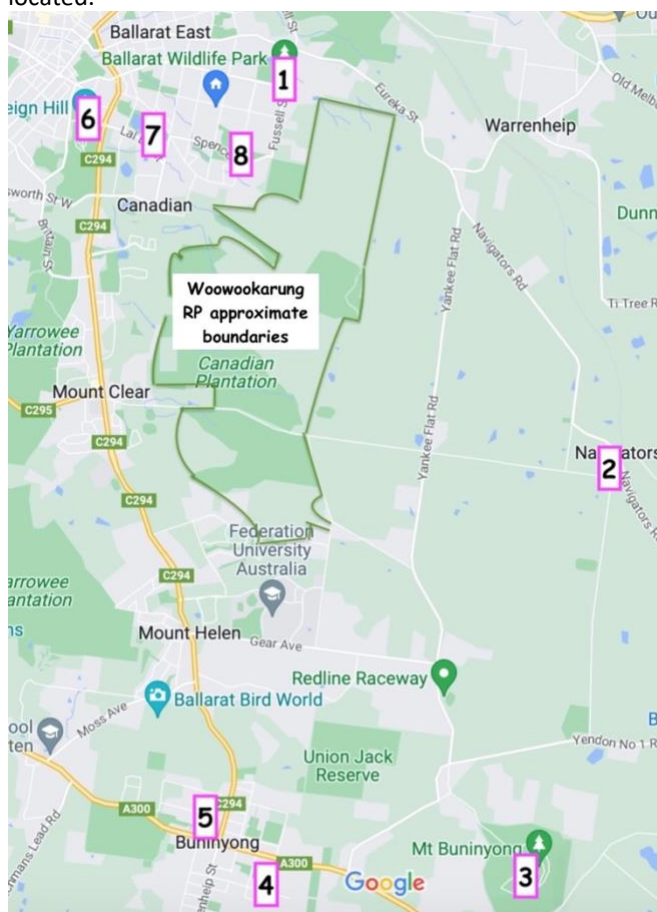


Koala near the corner of Bakers Rd and Davisons Rd near the south gate. Image courtesy of Peter N Feb 2nd 2023.

And, observed on February 22nd 2023, two more Koalas beside the Grasstree Nature Trail just below the Lookout. Many thanks to Lynn for the report.

11. Toilets around Woowookarung Regional Park

The question of where the nearest toilet is to Woowookarung Regional Park is an often asked question. The map below shows where existing public toilets are located.



Public toilets around Woowookarung Regional Park. Map courtesy of google.

1	Eureka Stockade Reserve, Stawell St Eureka
2	Navigators Hall, Navigators Rd Navigators
3	Mt Buninyong Reserve, Wallaby Track Mt Buninyong
4	Buninyong Botanical Gardens, Inglis St Buninyong

5	De Soza Park, Warrenheip St Buninyong
6	Sovereign Hill, Bradshaw St Golden Point
7	Lake Esmond, 233 Larter St Canadian
8	Sparrow Ground, Spencer St Canadian

Note the absence of public toilets in the Mt Clear area!

12. Pilgrims Walk

The Buninyong Uniting Church and the FoCC are hosting a short pilgrim walk in the Park's south. Details below.



A Short Pilgrim Walk

& Making a walking Stick

organised by
Buninyong Uniting
Church & Friends of
Canadian Corridor.



Saturday 9:30-12:00 March 4

-community walk with opportunity to discover historical, ecological and cultural significant landmarks.

-Enjoy the connection of walking with others.

-Moments for pausing and gentle reflection on walking as a spiritual and life enhancing activity

Approximately 8ks leaving from the Buninyong Uniting Labyrinth, Learmonth St. Through gold field tracks and part of the Woowookarung Regional Park. Concluding with **Lunch together 12:30 church hall.** Moderate fitness required. **Leaders: Jeff Rootes and Paul Sanders**

Making a 'Walking Stick' 1-3:30pm.

Following lunch: A workshop to decorate your own walking stick. A creative workshop to design and finish your own unique walking stick. **Walking:** Donation to 'Friends of the Canadian Corridor.

Walking Stick: Donation to artist.

Booking and further info: Paul Sanders. 0407833515

13. Vale Don Boak

Earlier this month Don Boak, an avid supporter of the Friends of the Canadian Corridor passed away quietly. Don was an inaugural FoCC committee member. He was interested in everything that was happening in the Park, particularly around his home area in Mt Clear. Don had an incredible memory of old Mt Clear. He provided many anecdotal stories such as: the origins of the name of Olympic Avenue, the Park connection with Joh Bjelke Peterson, where firewood permits were available from, Bailey's bone mill and so on. The Number 47 tree on the City of Ballarat Significant Tree list is on the Boak property at Mt Clear. The tree is a big old spreading Scent Bark. Dons wish was to find out how old it was!

Even last year, Don was still discovering new stuff, an echidna that was hunting around his yard, Kookaburras acting strangely, an old kangaroo that he knew that had passed away and he wanted to know why? He will be missed!

14. Dementia Trail to be featured on ABC

This Friday March 3rd at 7.30pm on the ABC Gardening show, host Millie will be featuring the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail, the ideas behind it and some of the wonderful people involved in it.



15. 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.

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. FoCC Membership

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

Memberships paid during February should receive their receipt and insect brochure in the next few days.

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 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.

19. 2023 Calendar of events

The calendar is prepared by the FoCC committee.

March 5th	Clean Up Australia – 10am at the Lookout.
March 18 th	55 Rec Rd working bee.
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 Clarkesdale 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 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 ~~1042~~ 1061 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**

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