



FoCC Incorporated Spikey News



Linking the community with Woookarung and the Canadian Corridor
July 2023 Issue Number 101

Spikey News features

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1. 2023 Seventh annual tree planting

The FoCC will host the planting of 500 trees in the Dozed Rd and Katy Ryans Rd area on **Sunday 6th August 2023 beginning at 10 am.**

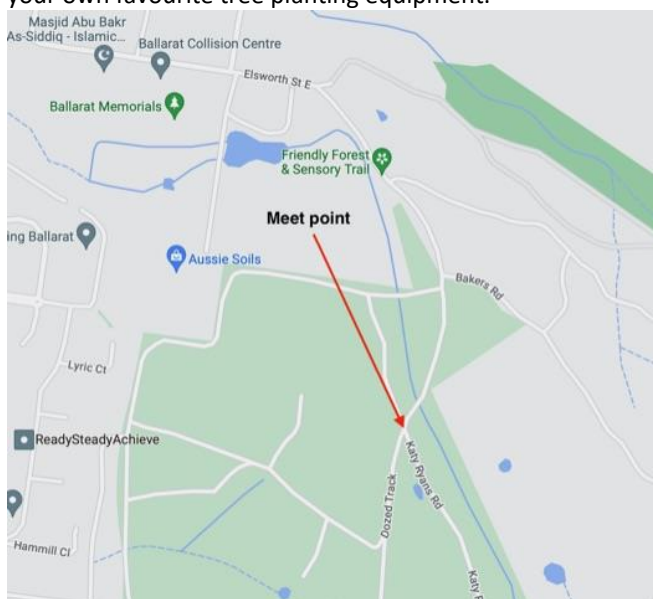
This will be the seventh mass tree planting by the FoCC beginning with 220 trees in 2017.

The trees are supplied by the wonderful people at the City of Ballarat Community Nursery. The trees are propagated using locally sourced seed.

The nursery was established following a recommendation from the 2006 City of Ballarat's Koala Plan of Management.

Details:

Meet at Cnr of Dozed Rd and Katy Ryans Rd, Mt Clear. Solid footwear and warm hard-wearing clothing required. It may be wet. The FoCC will supply gloves and tools or bring your own favourite tree planting equipment.



Meeting point map.

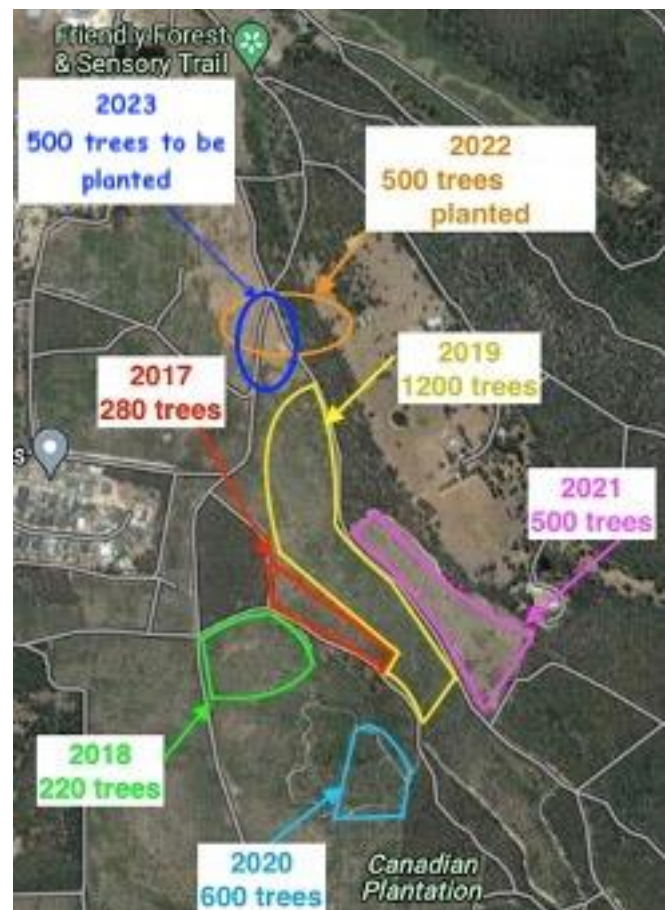
The tree planting will conclude with a cuppa and sausage sizzle courtesy of the Community Bank Buninyong.



Sponsored by:



Tree planting 2017 to 2023



2017 to 2023 tree plantings.

2. FoCC 16th August 2023 General Meeting

BALLARAT BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY **Strategic Engagement Plan**

The forthcoming Ballarat Biodiversity Strategy will be the focus of the FoCC August General Meeting. The guest speaker will be Mr Heath Steward, Senior Sustainable Policy and ESD Officer at the City of Ballarat. Heath will outline the process and progress being made in developing the policy.

One focus of the council plan is:

How do we improve the health of natural environment!

The meeting will provide an opportunity to ask questions about the forthcoming strategy and formulate solutions.

The FoCC general meeting will be held at:
7pm Wednesday 16th August 2023
Earth Ed Science Centre
Olympic Avenue
Mt Clear
Light refreshments served

3. City of Ballarat and Town of Inagawa Japan - Koala Murals



Town of Inagawa Flag

The City of Ballarat and Town of Inagawa, Japan began a sister city agreement in 1988 to facilitate educational and cultural exchanges between the two cities.

This year is the 35th year of the agreement, which was renewed again by the City of Ballarat on 26th July 2023.

In 2003 two Koala ceramic murals were made, one in Ballarat and one in Inagawa Japan from paintings created by local wildlife artist Steve Morvell. The Inagawa mural now hangs in the Cities' Phoenix Office building and the Ballarat mural is in the Town of Inagawa Library.

The Ballarat mural was created by students from Ballarat and Clarendon College, Beaufort Primary School and Buninyong Primary School in a series of workshops in Ballarat with assistance from the Australian Koala Foundation and oversight from Steve Morvell.



Inagawa Koala. Original Artwork by Steve Morvell. 2003.



Ballarat made ceramic Koala mural in the Town of Inagawa Library 2003.

With the twentieth anniversary of exchange of the murals this year, wildlife artist Steve Morvell has produced a new Koala painting to celebrate the anniversary. The FoCC is indebted to Steve for the painting and to Macarthur Frameworks and Gallery Ballarat for their generous donations.



2023 Koala. Artist Steve Morvell.



The Koala painting by Steve Morvell handed to Mayor Des Hudson by FoCC Secretary Jeff Rootes in front of the City of Ballarat’s Inagawa made 2003 Koala mural on 13th July 2023.

The painting will be handed to the Town of Inagawa in Japan by the City of Ballarat Mayor and Chief Executive Officer in their visit to Inagawa in the first week of August 2023.

4. Koala: National icon – local treasure Forum.

Koala: National icon– local treasure Forum

**Eureka Centre
Stawell St Eureka**

5 – 8 pm Thursday September 14th 2023.

Key speakers at the forum are:

- Ms B Wetherall - Director Infrastructure and Environment, City of Ballarat.

- Dr Desley Whisson - Senior Lecturer in Wildlife and Conservation Biology, Deakin University
- Dr Cathy Robinson – Principal Research Scientist, CSIRO Land and Water
- Mr Jackson Cass - Landcare Coordinator, Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group
- Current Ballarat Koala researchers with the University of Melbourne and Federation University.

The forum will be opened by the City of Ballarat Mayor Cr D Hudson.

The event will begin at 5pm with a light supper break at 6pm and conclude by 8pm.

The forum will first celebrate the ongoing Koala initiatives and events from the past two decades including:

- The 20th anniversary of the exchange of Koala murals between the City of Ballarat and its sister city in Japan, the Town of Inagawa. (See item 3)
- The development and incorporation of the Koala Plan of Management into the Ballarat Planning Scheme in 2010.

The Forum focus is on current Koala monitoring and Koala initiatives including:

- The University of Melbourne and Australian Koala Foundation Koala scat research by Louise Jory,
- The CSIRO National Koala Monitoring Program across Australia including the Ballarat and Moorabool Local Government Areas.
- The current Federation University Koala DNA sampling program plus the FoCC citizen science Koala spotting program

Outcomes expected: The forum will stimulate discussion and initiatives for improving the biodiversity, Koala and wildlife habitat and well-being in Ballarat for inclusion into the forthcoming Ballarat Biodiversity Strategy.

Tickets to the forum will be available at the end of the second week of August on Try Booking. Booking details and further information will be circulated widely soon.

Proudly sponsored by:



CSIRO National Koala Monitoring Program

The CSIRO National Koala Monitoring Program (NKMP) is a Federal Government program being delivered across Australia. The Program will broaden our understanding and unify the different monitoring techniques used in different parts of the country. The NKMP aims to deliver a robust estimate and build a long-lasting capability to monitor and assess trends in koala populations. More info at:

<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/threatened/species/koalas/national-koala-monitoring-program>

5. FoCC Tree ID slow walk

A Tree ID slow walk looking at the many different species of trees in the centre of the Woookarung Regional Park will be held on Sunday **August 27th 2023**.

Meeting point is the **Dementia Trail car park at 10 am**.

Good walking footwear, warm clothing and water are essential. The distance to be walked is around 3km.

Knowledgeable local naturalists will lead the walk and highlight the array of species in the Park along the way.

The walk will encompass the forest around the Dementia Trail, Bakers Rd and Katy Ryans Rd area.

A cuppa at the end.

Registration recommended: pls email focinfo@gmail.com

Or text /phone 0408509591

6. Bird of the Month XXII (July 2023)

Galah (Eolophus roseicapilla)

Okay, this Ballarat winter is almost at Antarctic proportions! You want a bird that comes to you, so you don't have to come to it. I raise to you the Galah. Common and conspicuous enough to be enjoyed from the comforts of your home. Colourful enough to brighten your day, when skies are grey. Talkative enough to indulge an appreciation of birdsong. Quirky to observe its playful shenanigans. Say no more, this bird sure has a very accessible, and loveable larrikin charm – just the tonic for your winter melancholy!

Galahs are a medium-sized (34-38cm), pink and grey cockatoo. The crest, which is often folded down, may be white or pinkish white. The pink of its plumage may vary in intensity, given some individuals are a rose red. Females have red eyes, whereas males have dark-brown eyes.



Left: Adult male Galah (note the dark brown eye). Right: Adult female Galah (note the red eye). Image credit: Rob Loveband.

Galahs inhabit open country, open woodland, watercourses, town parks, and sporting fields, provided suitable trees are available. Highly social, Galahs occur in pairs through to large flocks, which congregate on the ground to feed on seeds/grains.

Breeding season is from July through December. Galahs require tree hollows to support breeding success. Nest trees may be alive or dead. The hollow floor is lined with green, leafy twigs. Both parents share incubation (and other parental care) duties of clutches of 2-6 eggs. 'Several' broods may be bred per breeding season, with the young fledging at the age of 6-7 weeks, and being dependent until 3 months old. Galahs form permanent breeding pairs, and can be relatively long-lived, with wild individuals living to 40 years old.

Galah vocalisations are 'rather harsh, metallic, and abrupt, yet not unpleasant: "chirrink-chirrink, chirrink-chirrink". Also, 'in alarm, harsh, scolding, rasping screeches'.

Galahs' flight behaviour is characterised by deep wing beats, and "acrobatic", "swift and tilting" flight, which takes an "erratic and crazy route across the sky".

Speaking of 'crazy', Galahs are known to shower themselves in the rain by hanging upside-down from powerlines, with wings outstretched.

Galahs, as a population, are common and in some cases "very abundant". They are sedentary (i.e. non-migratory), and/or locally nomadic. Population numbers are growing around human habitation, given increasing availability of water, and the clearing of heavier forest, has enabled Galahs to expand their once-inland geographic range coastward. Indeed, this applies to the Ballarat context, as here Galahs were uncommon at the turn of 21st century, and absent a few decades earlier.

Next time you wander through Woookarung Regional Park, particularly on the border of farmland – OR you're partaking in some indoor birding through the lounge room window – keep an eye on the nature strips, powerlines and sky, where you may well see (or hear!) the crazy loveable larrikins that are Galahs!

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).

7. Koala sightings

The FoCC Citizen Science Koala Count now totals 287. October to March is Koala breeding season and peak sightings season, so sightings tend to be less now. They are still there, just harder to spot.

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



This Koala is a bit hard to define. On the North side of Katy Ryans Rd Mt Clear. Image courtesy of Peter. 6th July 2023.

"Koala spotters wanted!"

Can you help Siobhan collect Koala scat across Ballarat? There is currently amazing work being done in the Gippsland region of Victoria with profiling koala populations and learning about their genetic diversity. Siobhan is attempting to find Koalas around Ballarat in the hopes of collecting some scat (poo!) for DNA analysis. If you spot a koala anywhere in the Ballarat region and surrounds it would be amazing if you could let her know! Scat is best collected by tweezer or tooth pick. Human handling can damage the DNA. Siobhan is hoping koala spotters will call her and arrange for a collection. So far 27 collections have been made. Contact Siobhan on: siobhanheenan@students.federation.edu.au or her mobile - 0437420865" Koala scat found near the junction of Wilson St and Boundary Rd. Collected carefully and placed on toothpicks ready to join the Koala scat DNA program.



Scat found at Wilson St and Boundary Rd. Image 31st July 2023

8. Park works

Parks Victoria have installed concrete pads at the new car parks along Olympic Avenue and the overflow car park at the Dementia Trail.

A second Grasstree Creek crossing has been put in on the Cherry Ballart Trail. The creek crossings reduce the risk of walkers and cyclists picking up phytophthora in wet areas.



Second Grasstree Creek crossing: Image 9th July 2023.

9. Tree stakes and guard recycling working bee

A FoCC working bee picked up a ute full of 1500 tree stakes and 500 tree guards in Woovookarung Regional Park on Saturday 15th July 2023. The tree guards and stakes were collected from the 2021 tree planting area along Katy Ryans Rd. Fourteen volunteers took just over an hour to collect the stakes and guards. They will be reused in the forthcoming FoCC tree planting on Sunday 6th August in the area around the corner on Dozed Rd and Katy Ryans Rd in Woovookarung Regional Park.



Happy recyclers at the end of the working bee.



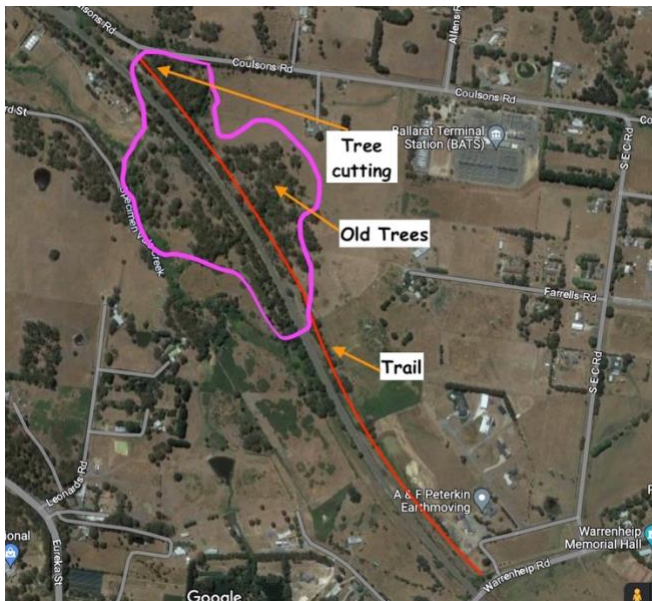
A ute load of recycled stakes and guards ready for sorting.

10. Warrenheip shared rail trail possibility

The eastern end of Strickland Parade runs from Coulson Rd along the north east side of the rail line up to Warrenheip Rd Warrenheip. The parade is just a track and is partly on Council land and partly on Vic Track rail reserve.

The idea for a trail has been proposed by the Committee for Warrenheip, a local group which has just received \$10000 to build a walking trail in Warrenheip on the old recreation reserve.

The possibility of connecting Warrenheip with Ballarat via the Strickland Parade is a great opportunity.

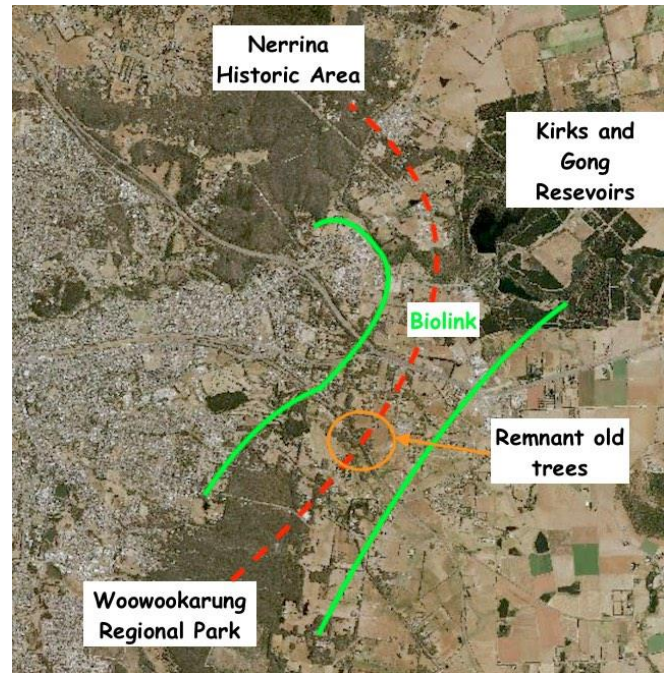


Map showing the trail path in red. The remnant old growth forest area and the site of tree cutting.

Remnant old growth forest

Possibly the largest old growth forest in Ballarat straddles the proposed rail trail and railway line between Ballarat and Warrenheip at Woodmans Hill.

The area outlined on the map above contains up to 200 very old big trees. The remnant forest is a major part of the Canadian Corridor or bio link that connects Woowookarung Regional Park and Prior Park to the Nerrina Historic area and the Creswick State Forest via the Gong and Kirks Reservoirs.



The bio link between Woowookarung Regional Park and Nerrina Historic site via the Gong and Kirks Reservoirs.

1989 Report

“The value of remnant vegetation as wildlife habitat on the urban fringe of Ballarat” was a study undertaken by Eleisha Birkin at the Ballarat College of Advanced Education in 1989.

The report studied five remnant vegetated areas in Ballarat including the “Woodmans Hill” remnant forest which straddles the rail line. The report noted:

- A koala presence encouraged by the remnant stand of Eucalyptus Vinimalis trees (manna gums). Ref: Page 75 Birkin report.
- A connection southward to the Canadian State Forest (Woowookarung Regional Park) via farmland remnants and a pine plantation. Ref: Page 53 Birkin report.

Key implications from the report were:

- “Small patches have value in maintaining regional populations of birds and animals...”
- “All remnants must be considered as part of the conservation network and not just those designated as reserves”
- The role of a management body is then to increase environmental awareness in the community and provide direction and information for the network of remnant vegetation on both a regional and local scale”

Ref: Page 84 Birkin report.

Thirty-four years later, the remnant forest is still there, right in the middle of the Canadian Corridor and Biolink. The remnant forest should be added to the forthcoming Ballarat Biodiversity Strategy as an area to be protected and enhanced.

Illegal tree cutting in old growth forest

At the eastern end Coulson Rd end of the Strickland Parade track, two very old eucalypt trees on the Council Road Reserve were cutdown last year. Legal action by the Council has occurred.



Illegally cut old eucalypt trees on Strickland Parade. Image 29th July 2023.

11. Another developer claiming no Koalas

A headline in the online Ballarat Courier claiming:

Report finds no koalas for subdivision proposal despite council's map

Report finds 'no evidence' of koalas at Fussell Street location.

Alison Foletta



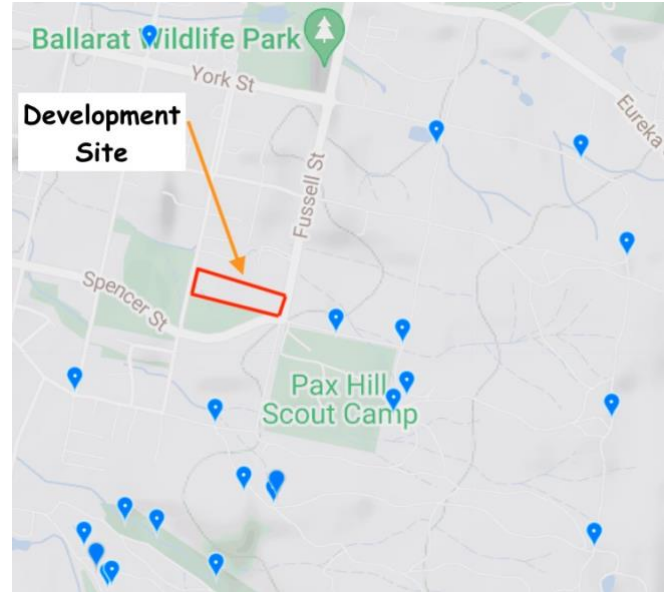
Image: Courtesy Ballarat Courier 31st July 2023

In Ballarat when developers prepare subdivision plans on designated Koala Habitat, the usual claim is, no Koalas were found. They will visit the site once, then write a wordy claim that there are no Koalas on site and no evidence that there ever has been. The developer's report states:

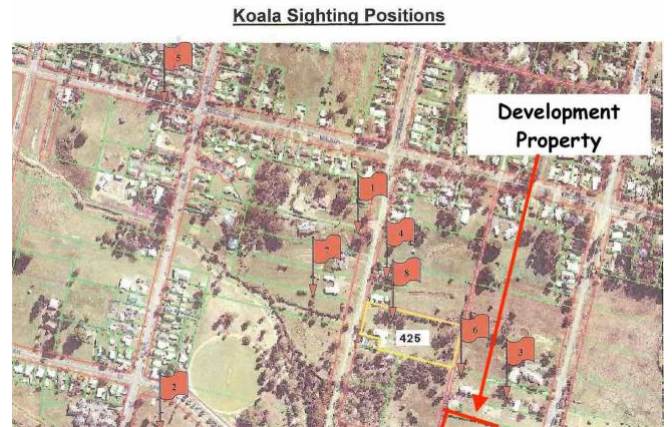
No koalas were observed during the assessment and no evidence was found to indicate that koalas are currently occupying the study area.

Ref P13 452 Fussell St Canadian Vegetation and Koala Habitat Assessment MTES June 2021.

The FoCC notes from long experience that Koala assessment researchers confine enquiry to the hopelessly out of date Victorian Bio Atlas, whilst conveniently ignoring the authoritative "iNaturalist" website or even the local FoCC Koala sightings, on line at focc.asn.au.



Koala sightings around the development site 2020 – 23. Ref: iNaturalist.



Koala sighting map 2010.

This 2010 map was presented to the VCAT hearing at 425 Richards St Canadian which is a neighbouring property to 452 Fussell St. That VCAT hearing in 2010 was a test case for the Cities then new Koala Plan of Management (KPOM). The VCAT hearing upheld the validity of the KPOM with a ruling that saved 21 Koala habitat trees by placing the trees into designated tree protection zones. The developer at 452 Fussell St should read the VCAT outcome and adjust their plans accordingly.

Any friend concerned or affected by the application is encouraged to submit an objection to the Council. The development application may be found at:

<https://eservices.ballarat.vic.gov.au/ePathway/Production/Web/GeneralEnquiry/EnquiryDetailView.aspx?Id=1466951>

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:
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.

13. 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>

- **DEECA 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.

14. 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

15. FoCC facebook and webpage

www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/

Rob is overseeing the webpage webmaster@focc.asn.au
The FoCC has well 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.

16. 2023 Calendar of events

August 6 th	7th Annual Tree planting. Katy Ryans Rd and Dozed Track area. 10am start.
August 16 th	Ballarat Biodiversity Strategy. Guest speaker: Mr Heath Steward Sustainable Policy and ESD Officer at the City of Ballarat 7pm at Earth Ed, Olympic Avenue, Mt Clear.
August 27 th	Slow tree identification walk. Meet at Dementia Trail rotunda at 10am
September 14 th	Koala Forum at the Eureka Centre.
October (early)	FoCC Sunday afternoon visit to Clarksdale Bird Sanctuary
October 16 - 22 nd	Great Australian Backyard Bird Count
October 29 – Nov 5	8th Annual Wildflower Walk. Staring at the Dementia trail.
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 Woowookarung 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 ~~1110~~ 1114 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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