



# FoCC Incorporated Spikey News



Linking the community with Woovookarung and the Canadian Corridor  
September 2025 Issue Number 124

## Spikey News features

1. 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildflower Walk
2. Seniors Festival Wildflower Walk promotion
3. "City of Ballarat" Wildflower Walk Seniors Week promotion.
4. Bird of the Month XLV (September 2025)
5. Soapys dam
6. Surprise grasstree find
7. Koala sightings
8. Great Aussie Bird Count 2025
9. Murnong
10. 'WETLANDS RESTORATION: Prescriptions and Practice'

## 1. 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Wildflower Walk

When: 10am Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October to Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October.

Where: At the Dementia Forest and Sensory Trail in Woovookarung Regional Park.

The trail starts at the Rotunda at the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail on Katy Ryans Rd.

The Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat and FoCC have organised the self-guided pop-up wildflower trail signage. This year wildflowers have already begun to bloom with traditional favourites such as "Eggs and Bacon" bush pea colouring the forest.

The walking trail is a gentle walk uphill on formed track. Good footwear is recommended.



Location of wildflower walk.

The walk has grown from a small guided walk of 20 participants in 2016 into a week-long pop-up walk with signs identifying the wildflowers along the trail. The walk is now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year and is a joint FoCC and Field Naturalists Club Ballarat project. Last year 800 visitors walked the wildflower path along the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory trail in Woovookarung Regional Park.

*Pultenaea gunnii*  
Pea Family (Fabaceae)

Golden Bush-pea



Widespread in Woovookarung.

Regenerating in former plantation areas.



Golden Bush Pea Sign.

Hopefully the bush pea will be in peak flower during the walk. One of 40 signs along the trail.

## Afternoon tea

To celebrate the end of the Wildflower Walk, a BYO afternoon tea will be held at the Rotunda at the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail Rotunda at **4pm Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2025**. All friends welcome. Just turn up and bring a chair!

Part of the celebration is to pick up the signs from the trail!!!!

## 2. Seniors Festival Wildflower walk promotion.

### 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Woowookarung Wildflower Walk

**Sunday 12 to 19 October (Daily)**

The Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat and the Friends of the Canadian Corridor are hosting a self-guided pop-up wild flower trail walk along the Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail in the central part of the Woowookarung Regional Park. The 1.2 km long walking trail start point is the Car Park and the trail is a gentle uphill on formed track with the return a gentle downhill. Good footwear is recommended. A description of the wildflowers can also be found at [focc.asn.au](http://focc.asn.au)

**When** 11am-4pm

**Where** Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail in Woowookarung Regional Park, Katy Ryans Road, Mt Clear

**FREE EVENT**

**Enquiries** Email [foccinfo@gmail.com](mailto:foccinfo@gmail.com) or visit [focc.asn.au](http://focc.asn.au)

**Bookings** Not required

Walk details from the 2025 Seniors Festival Program.

## 3. "City of Ballarat" Wildflower Walk Seniors Festival promotion.

### Wildflower Wonders: A Guided Walk Through Woowookarung

**Monday 13 October**

Join us for a peaceful and informative wildflower walk through Woowookarung Regional Park. The walk will follow the self-guided Wildflower Walk. Insights and guidance provided by the Sustainable Environment Ballarat team. This event offers a deeper look into the native flora of the region, with insights into the seasonal blooms and the unique ecology of the area.

The trail is suitable for carers, assistance dogs, and visitors from aged care settings, making it a welcoming experience for all abilities.

**When** 10-11.30am

**Where** Dementia Friendly Forest and Sensory Trail in Woowookarung Regional Park, Katy Ryans Road, Mt Clear

**FREE EVENT**

**Enquiries** Call Kelsie 0497 668 355 or email [sustainableenvironment@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:sustainableenvironment@ballarat.vic.gov.au)

**Bookings** Not required

City of Ballarat guided walk details. Courtesy: 2025 Seniors Festival program.



## 4. Bird of the Month XLV (September 2025)

### Flame Robin (*Petroica phoenicea*)

Another month, another unprecedented specie record at a location within the Corridor! Flame Robin at Mount Buninyong Scenic Reserve. Following a bushfire in March, multiple Flame Robins of both sexes and different ages were observed foraging about the charred understorey. Now, if the 'Flame' name, its fiery orangey red and ashy grey, or its scientific name being a derivative of phoenix (you know, the mythical bird that rises from the ashes) – don't all evoke fire symbology, then perhaps the following excerpt from the Australian Bird Guide (Menkhurst *et al.* 2019) will solidify its affinity with fire:

"... [Flame Robins] readily, but temporarily, colonises cleared or burnt areas."

That theory certainly seems to be the case here, given the fact the Flame Robin, previous to the bushfire, was not known to Mt Buninyong, and now its presence is strongly concentrated on the burnt side of the mount. What needs to be considered, however, is the possibility that the Mt Buninyong Flame Robins may be representative of the species colonising other areas within the Corridor. So, are there Flame Robins newly present elsewhere in the Corridor??



Adult male Flame Robin. Image Rob Loveband

In Australia, we have five species of reddish-breasted robins, the Petroica robins. All five species occur in Ballarat. Ballarat's, and certainly the Canadian Corridor's, most common is the Scarlet Robin, with the Flame Robin being the second-most common, and the other species all being recorded at irregular intervals, and either localised or on the extreme outskirts of greater Ballarat. The Flame Robin, by Petroica standards, tends to be associated with open country – particularly during autumn/ winter – which lends itself to the Flame Robin's western-leaning distribution throughout Ballarat. By comparison, the Scarlet Robin is usually resident at multiple forest patches

throughout our beloved Canadian Corridor. To help with distinguishing between the two very similar-looking species, please refer to the table below.

	Flame Robin (male)	Scarlet Robin (male)	Flame Robin (female)	Scarlet Robin (female)
Upper parts	Ashy grey	Jet black	Pale brown	Greyish brown
Under parts	Orangey red Longer, wider distribution of red: Red extends to lower torso Red extends entire width of breast, bordered by black shoulder	Pale red Shorter, narrower distribution of red: Red ends at mid-torso White border between red breast and black shoulder	Breast colourless (brown)	Breast peach-coloured
Throat	Orangey red Red extends to lower chin	Jet black Red ends at collarbone	Pale brown	Greyish brown
Fore-head	Small white forehead patch	Large white forehead patch	Smaller patch	Larger patch
Stance	Upright posture	Leant forward	Upright posture	Leant forward
Vocals	High-pitched, lilting "you may come, if you will, to the sea"	Pretty, lilting "wee-cheedalee-dalee"	Brief "peep"	As per male.

A small (11-14cm) insectivorous passerine (songbird), Flame Robins are typically viewable owing to their habit of persistently pouncing from a low perch to the ground, in habitats of open understorey or clearings. Their disposition is generally not flighty, providing encouragement that if they are occupying an area, their presence will be revealed. Flame Robins breed in uplands, in eucalypt forests/ woodlands. Most individuals depart the breeding habitat in autumn/ winter for open woodlands and farmland, where – unique among Petroica robins – it flocks in groups of up to 20 individuals.

Breeding season is August–February. Nest sites vary widely, ranging from tree hollows (often charred/ burnt out) or hollowed stumps; behind peeling bark; forked branch; amongst exposed roots; woodpiles; earthen embankment; mineshafts; and even sheds. The nest is an untidy bowl of plant down and fur/ hair, loosely bound together by spiderwebs. The female is responsible for nest-building and incubation duties (clutch size: 3-4 eggs; incubation period: ~14 days).

Flame Robins are endemic to southeast Australia. Their conservation status is 'Least Concern' (global) with a

decreasing population trend. Federally and in Victoria, the species' extinction risk is classified as 'Secure'.

Next time you wander through Woookarung RP, and the Corridor's other patches where forest meets open farmland – please run a watchful eye over the grassy ground covers and low perches, ready for any opportunistic sightings of the avian symbol of fire that is the Flame Robin!

*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' brochure series.*

### 5. Soapy's dam

The Urban Ripple plantings at Soapy's Dam have been a huge success.

Originally the plan was to plant 1000 trees, shrubs and grasses at Soapy's Dam during 2025 according to the Urban Ripple project plan.

Due to some problems at other sites an extra 1200 plants were available for planting, making a total of 2200 planted. Of these 1800 were planted by students from Damascus College, Mt Clear College, Mt Rowan College and Woodmans Hill College, all along the south side of Soapy's Dam. Next year the students are set to continue planting to complete more of the reserve's habitat restoration.

### Want to know more about Soapys Dam?

A draft brochure has been produced by the FoCC telling the story of Soapy's Dam as the FoCC knows it. It has been posted on the FoCC website.

At:

<https://www.focc.asn.au>

The FoCC welcomes new information about Soapys Dam or feedback on the brochure. The FoCC is keen to document as much as possible about the reserve's history. Hopefully some of the information will be incorporated onto public information signage at the reserve.

### 6. Surprise grasstree find.

Much to the surprise of students and staff at Soapys Dam Reserve two small grasstrees were found growing in the middle of the designated schools planting area.

In the 1960's the land was covered in shallow mine holes. These were filled in around the late 1960's and are shown on the FoCC's 1970 aerial Images as disturbed land.

Since then, grasses and weeds have grown across the area leading to the reserve being regularly mown by the CoB for fire fuel reduction reasons

Fast forward to August 20<sup>th</sup> 2025 and two small Xanthorrhoea Minor grasstrees were found growing in the middle of the reserve.



Arrows point to the two small grasstrees found in the middle of the schools planting area. Image 20<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

Yep! The arrows point to two small grasstrees growing in the middle of a mown reserve.

Further searching around the reserve site discovered three more older and larger grasstrees, one in amongst the gorse along Soapy's Creek.

#### 7. Koala Sightings



Mt Buninyong Koala.

Image: Courtesy of Cathy, 5<sup>th</sup> Sept 2025.

A koala spotted by Maggie on the west side of the Fern Walk between York St and Wilson St Ballarat East. 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025.

October to March is Koala breeding season and peak sightings time. 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 (even if a little blurry).

All Koala sightings are entered into the iNaturalist online data base.

The complete list of sightings can be viewed at <https://www.focc.asn.au/koalas/>

#### 8. Great Aussie Bird Count 2025

AUSSIE  
BIRD  
COUNT



#### Why counting matters

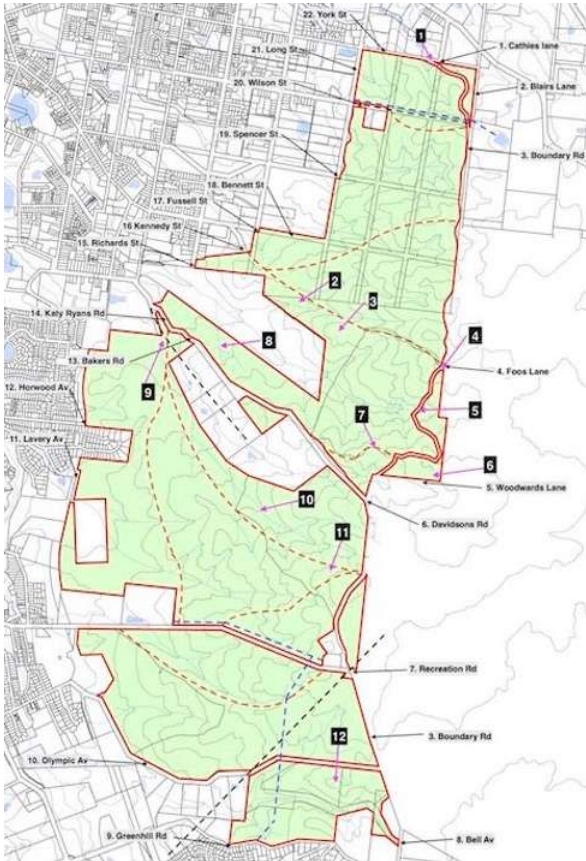
Birds are everywhere. In our backyards, balconies, local parks and schoolyards, and they have amazing stories to tell about the health of our environment. Right now, one in six Australian birds faces the threat of extinction, making it more important than ever to pay attention.

The Aussie Bird Count is a fun, easy way for all of us to take a national snapshot of the birds we see and start noticing the nature around us. With just 20 minutes, you can help build a picture of how our feathered friends are faring and contribute to something that really counts.

#### Woookarung Regional Park spotting locations

The FoCC map of suggested bird count sites in the park is below

To participate download the app:  
<https://aussiebirdcount.org.au>



### 9. **Murnong**

Murnong is traditional food of the Wadawurrung people. Before the squatters and gold rush, Murnong was widespread in the Ballarat region.



Murnong in flower, east side of Mt Clear College. Image: Courtesy of Ash, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

### 10. **‘WETLANDS RESTORATION: Prescriptions and Practice’**



Mullawallah Wetlands.

Invitation to a presentation by:  
Peter Gell, Emeritus Professor, Federation University  
On Tuesday 14th October 2025 at 7.00pm  
at  
Lucas Community Hub,  
17 Coltman Plaza, Lucas.  
(Enter via Coltman Plaza)  
Tea/Coffee and light supper  
Enquiries: Friends of Mullawallah Wetlands  
Email: [mullawallahwetlands@gmail.com](mailto:mullawallahwetlands@gmail.com)

### 11. **Rubbish dumpers, thieves and vandals**

The FoCC urges Park friends to report vandals as well as 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**. All information is treated by Parks Victoria Rangers professionally and confidentially.

### 12. **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>

Wildlife Victoria (03) 8400 7300

### **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.

### 13. Membership

Membership runs from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December each year, Membership fee is \$20 per year. New members and renewals after July 1 are credited to the next year.

[Membership is available online](#) or email [focinfo@gmail.com](mailto:focinfo@gmail.com)

### 14. 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 over 1300+ 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.

### 15. 2025 Proposed Calendar

The calendar is prepared by the FoCC committee.

12 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	<b>Wildflower Walk:</b> Dementia Trail, Katy Ryans Rd Mt Clear. Self-guided pop-up walk open every day.
13 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	<b>Wildflower Wonders</b> A guided walk by City of Ballarat officers through Woowookarung.
20 <sup>th</sup> to 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	<b>Back Yard Bird Count</b>
Early November	<b>Celebratory “Urban Ripple” BBQ hosted by Rotary clubs of Ballarat. Date TBC</b>
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>FoCC Annual Meeting</b> and election of office bearers

Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2025	<b>Drinks at the Lookout</b>
--	------------------------------

**Spikey News** is published monthly for the Friends of Canadian Corridor Incorporated. Registered No A0097535B. The FoCC is a Landcare group registered with Landcare Victoria Inc and a member of the Yarrowee Leigh Catchment Group.

The purpose of “**Spikey News**” is to link the community to Woowookarung Regional Park and the Canadian Corridor Circulation this issue is to ~~1278~~ 1306 subscribers. Welcome to all new friends.

Any opinions expressed in **Spikey News** are made by the editors in good faith and do not officially represent Parks Victoria or the FoCC.

Previous issues of Spikey news can be found at our web site, [here](#).

We are proud to walk this land with the Wadawurrung people and all other First Nations people.

Web - [www.focc.asn.au](http://www.focc.asn.au) **Facebook**  
<https://www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/>  
Unsubscribe by emailing [focinfo@gmail.com](mailto:focinfo@gmail.com)

<p>Friends wishing to add articles to the FoCC update may do so by emailing <a href="mailto:focinfo@gmail.com">focinfo@gmail.com</a> Feel free to circulate widely including doctor’s waiting rooms, work offices, friends and neighbour</p>
--