



the He Ho Herald

Newsletter of the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater Inc.

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Image © Krystii Melaine

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Robert Anderson OAM

Bob Anderson was recognised with a Medal of the Order of Australia in the Queens Birthday Honours recently. The Order of Australia is the pre-eminent way that Australians recognise the achievements and service of their fellow citizens. A long standing Friends member Vivian Price was the driving force behind Bob's nomination and she was enthusiastically supported by Parks Victoria and state politicians. Bob's recognition is certainly well deserved as just a small extract from his nomination testifies.

Robert Anderson was the founding president of the Friends; a role he has filled for eighteen and a half of the last twenty one years and continues to fill to this day. Although the position of President is voluntary, Robert has been spending on average 20-25 hours a week on activities associated with the Friends.

Under his stewardship, the Friends have been active participants in supporting the recovery program of the Helmeted Honeyeater, employed both Co-ordinator (part-time) and Nursery Manager (part-time) positions funded through nursery sales, supported a strong and diverse volunteer group, been key participants in partnership programs supporting conservation initiatives and successfully lobbied the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments.

To date the Friends have revegetated 15 hectares of streamside, floodplain and dry forest communities: the majority of which has been on private properties adjoining Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve. The plants for this revegetation work are grown in the Friends' nursery which also supplies the plants to various Government agencies and local groups for revegetation activities.

The Friends have successfully managed grants from both Victorian and Federal Governments as well as published four books; Hilton the Helmeted Honeyeater (launched at an Annual General Meeting in 2000), Hilton Hunts for a Home (launched by Governor John Landy AC, MBE in 2004), Yellingbo a Special Place (launched by the three local Members of Parliament in October 2006) and The Friends First 20 years (launched at the 20th birthday celebrations in 2009).

Robert's work on behalf of the Friends has been recognised by a variety of Awards including:

- 1999 Shire of Yarra Ranges Certificate of Recognition for valuable work over a 10 year period
- 2005 Shire of Yarra Ranges Environmental Achiever of the Year; and
- 2005 Kookaburra Award for contribution towards Healthy Parks



Image Sue Tardif

In addition to his work with the Friends, Robert is also active in the Friends of the Royal Cranbourne Botanic Gardens and the Karwarra Australian Plant Garden at Kalorama. Most recently, Robert has planted the new gardens at the Country Fire Authority Station in Badger Creek.

CEO of the Port Phillip and Westernport CMA David Buntine says “the work of people like Bob Anderson, and indeed all those involved with the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater, is important because it not only reminds us that there are real people out there, doing real work for the environment, but also because recognition reminds us that the broader community notices, and is inspired by, the work of volunteers in groups like these. We’d like to congratulate and thank Bob, and all those involved with Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater, for their great work.” As you will note in Bob’s president report he is retiring from the Friends committee at the upcoming AGM. Although his leadership and insight will be missed on the committee it will certainly be a boon for the Friends nursery as he redirects time and energy to his great passion – Australian flora. Please help us say thank you to Bob at the AGM. Details inside.



Christmas break up Member’s Day - Sunday 28 November

“You have Tall Greenhood Orchids! They’re beautiful.” **Wendy, Junior Field Naturalists Club** (on a walk along Woori Yallock Creek)

Please join us for the last of our Member’s Day gatherings this year. If you’ve never been before, we send out a special invitation to you. Family and friends are welcome. Please bring them along too.

On the day we will tell you a little about our current use and future plans for the depot. You can choose to join a walk along Woori Yallock Creek or sit and soak in the quiet bush atmosphere and watch the birds in the trees. Woori Yallock Creek is flourishing with good winter rain this year. We’re seeing different plants, fungi, birds and animal activity this year and we’d love you to experience it with us.

Venue: ‘The depot’ on Woori Yallock Creek
Address: Cnr Shield & Macclesfield Roads, Yellingbo.
Melway ref: 307 F1 / 305 F12 (look for the yellow Welcome sign)
Date: Sunday 28 November 2010
Time: from 12 noon – 3.30pm
BYO: picnic or BBQ food, cold drinks, plates, cutlery & cups. (We will supply tea, coffee & a BBQ for your use).
RSVP’s aren’t essential, but appreciated on 5964 8341 or heh01@optusnet.com.au



Image Sue Tardif

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New Members

The Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater would like to welcome to the group our **new members**:

J. McLay – Millgrove, S. & W. Schouten - Yarra Junction, P. Johnston – Bayswater, G. Sadlier - Yarra Glen

Donations to community education /depot upgrade – Thank you for your support

M. Ross A.M., M. Dear, C. Duncan, P. & K. Best, R. Purnell, D. & S. Williams, H. & J. Plowright, M. Williams, C. Page, B. , Hubschmann, J. & B. Woolley, P. Ure, V. Williams, D. Neylan, J. K. & M. Cameron, J. Fleming, R. Mauger & C. Taylor, D. & N. Gross, R. & K. Anker, A. J. Blaskett, M. Lynch, D. & E. Carew, P. Johnston, C. Woodford, J. McLay, S. Everitt, A. Jackson, C. Barraclough, L. Thomson, G. Anderson, R. Case, The Case Family, M. Serong, H. & G. Peper, H. Wurth, F. Flood, D. Howell & B. Carroll, K. & S. Ruhsam, R. Radford, R. & D. Meagher, I. Livingstone & J. Turton, R. Anderson, E. Smallwood, H. Ottow, I. Pearey, P. & T. Miskin, R. Walkley, Menzies Creek Primary School, R. Stevens

Donations to habitat plants

Grade 5 Belgrave South Primary School students

Perhaps you would like your donation to be 0.5% of your shopping spend at IGA stores. Just ask for a community benefits card at IGA and they will process the funds to us.

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Contents

Christmas breakup – Members' Day
Contacts, New Members etc
A View from the Swamp
What's on – Calendar
President's Report
Coordinators' Column
Nursery News
Out in the Field
Richard's Reveg Rambles
Feeding Footnotes
National Volunteer Week thank you
Merchandise
Membership reminder
AGM notice and nomination form

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A View from the Swamp *editorial comment*

Congratulations Bob. What exciting news we have had recently. All members appreciate the dedication and endless hours that you have given to the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater. You have guided the Friends to their continued efforts and successes with a dedication that is amazing. We are all proud to say we know you.

Sandra



What's on - Calendar of events

September			October			November			December		
Date		Activity	Date		Activity	Date		Activity	Date		Activity
Thurs	2 nd	Nursery	Tues	5 th	Nursery	Tues	2 nd	Nursery	Thurs	2 nd	Nursery
Tues	7 th	Nursery	Thurs	7 th	Nursery	Thurs	4 th	Nursery	Tues	7 th	Nursery
Thurs	9 th	Nursery	Sun	10 ^h	Reveg	Tues	9 th	Nursery	Thurs	9 th	Nursery
Tues	14 th	Nursery	Tues	12 th	Nursery	Thurs	11 th	Nursery	Sun	12 ^h	Reveg
Thurs	16 th	Nursery	Thurs	14 th	Nursery	Sun	14 th	Reveg	Tues	14 th	Nursery
Sun	19 ^h	Reveg	Tues	19 th	Nursery	Tues	16 th	Nursery	Thurs	16 th	Nursery
Tues	21 st	Nursery	Thurs	21 st	Nursery	Thurs	18 th	Nursery			
Wed	22 nd	Committee	Tues	26 th	Nursery	Fri	19 th	Newsletter deadline	Tues	21 st	Nursery
Thurs	23 rd	Nursery	Wed	27 th	Committee	Tues	23 rd	Nursery	Thurs	23 rd	Nursery
Sun	26 th	AGM	Thurs	28 th	Nursery	Wed	25 ^h	Committee			
Tues	28 th	Nursery				Thurs	25 th	Nursery			
Thurs	30 th	Nursery				Sun	28 th	Members' Christmas party			
						Tues	30 th	Nursery			

Revegetation activities are held at differing locations around the Yellingbo Reserve and area. Activities may include tree planting, seed collecting or works around the nursery or reserve. Meet at the **Yellingbo Ranger's House, 1217 Macclesfield Road, Yellingbo** (Melways Map 305 Ref. G11) at 10am. BYO Lunch. Most equipment is supplied. **For further information call Richard Case on 9720 4062.**

Nursery activities days are held at the Rangers House (see above). They run between 9am and 3pm, with (BYO) lunch. Work mainly involves the potting up of young seedlings. **For further information contact our Nursery Manager, Michelle Faram on 5964 8341**

The nursery is closed on all public holidays and days of total fire ban.

The President's report *by Robert Anderson*

Annual General Meeting Sunday - 26/9/2010

In the last newsletter details about our guest speaker, Kevin Mason, were provided. Kevin has since retired from his long service with Healesville Sanctuary. Started in 1960 and retired in 2010, Kevin will have much to tell us. As I stated in my previous report, I am really looking forward to his presentation.

Don't forget bring your newsletter to gain entry to the Sanctuary for the AGM on Sunday, 26th September.

Start at 12 noon with a barbecue with hot/cold drinks provided by the Friends. Bring a salad or dessert to share.

I am also looking forward to the reports of the group. 2010 has been a **record** year.



Image: Sandra Turnley

November Meeting Sunday – 28/11/2010

From 12 noon join us at the Depot Shed for the last meeting of the year.

Bring your own lunch. Barbecue, tea/coffee supplied

Hear about the breeding season to date. With nests being commenced earlier than usual the breeding results could be interesting.

Bruce and Sue Tardif, our coordinators, will tell us of their revegetation/education programs. When schools visit Yellingbo the students receive a top class, well-rounded environmental experience. Money donated throughout the 2010/2011 financial year will be set aside for improving facilities at the Depot Shed. It is not an ideal classroom by any stretch of the imagination. In all my 35 years of working in schools, I did not have such limiting facilities.

My Last Report

This is my last report as I have not renominated for the committee.

An enormous thank you goes out to the huge number of people who have helped me make the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater such a strong organisation. It is wonderful to belong to a group that really cares for the natural environment.

Not leaving the nursery, the birds and all the Friends, just retiring officially.

Robert Anderson

Coordinators' Column *by Sue and Bruce Tardif*

"My new favourite creek is Woori Yallock Creek. It's fantastic." Mark, Junior Field Naturalists Club

A wet planting season! Remember them? Since we took over the coordinator's role in May 2007 the *Eucalyptus viminalis* floodplain has been in name only. This year we have seen the Woori Yallock Creek and swamps in a different light with lots of water and many of the old water course lines inundated. We are often planting with a frog chorus in the background.

Whilst the wet has made access by car to set up the pump and deliver the plants and Hamilton planters to our planting sites difficult, the wet ground has been ideal for planting... and it's been fantastic to have a use for gumboots again!

So far this season we have hosted 16 revegetation days and given 31 talks with a biodiversity theme. In this the International Year of Biodiversity our emphasis is on the conservation of native species and their habitat. At the time of writing there are a further 6 revegetation days scheduled through to late September including one with Zoos Victoria & RACV staff, two with NAB staff and one with Food For Trees staff and members. We have so far planted 11,396 habitat plants and by the end of our planting season we would have planted a total of 25,746 plants. Plus, we've helped out with plantings at both of our Ambassador schools - Yellingbo & Macclesfield PS's. It's been a big year for us and the nursery.

We have really enjoyed working with our regular schools and establishing a new relationship with St. Brigid's PS and the Junior Field Naturalists Club of Victoria this year. Highlights have been a class of prep students who astounded us by planting 300 plants in just 1½ hours and the number of enthusiastic parents who have come along with the schools to assist. We have also thoroughly enjoyed our walks after planting to discover the wonders of the bush such as stinkhorn and coral fungus, animal tracks and scats, tree hollows, animal bones, amazing wombat burrows and the various bird calls. On the walks the kids are encouraged to find something in the environment starting with each letter of the alphabet. The answers can often be very perceptive but when things get tough we sometimes resort to Latin Q for *Coprosma quadrifida* can save the day! We would like to thank Jessie Garratt, Jess Merritt, Beryl Hubschmann, Wendy Anderson and Jess Parrish who have ably assisted us with our revegetation days this year.

Whilst we are still managing a number of grants (they usually run for 18 months) the new rounds of grants through various agencies are open or will open soon. Thanks to Steve Robertson from Parks Victoria we have already been successful in our application for a Healthy Parks Healthy People 2010/2011 grant that will see us planting in a degraded section of Cockatoo Creek. We will soon prioritise further what we want to achieve in 2011 with a walk through the reserve with Bob Anderson and Michelle Faram. This will help us decide on areas for revegetation and what species the nursery needs to grow for our program.

Best animal sighting for August? Whilst pegging out new planting sites for our fencing contractor a family of ducks with 7 young were swimming on the floodplain next to our April plantings! I wonder what we'll see down by the creek at our Christmas break up Member's Day on Sunday 28 November. See you there we hope. Look for details elsewhere in this newsletter.



Belgrave South Primary School students donated their pocket money to us to buy plants. They also came and planted in June.



The Junior Field Naturalists Club even enjoyed washing the tools at their planting day in August.

Images: Sue Tardif

Nursery News *by Michelle Faram*

While the winter weather this year has been colder and wetter than in the past few years, it has not put off the hardy volunteers, including a number of the newer volunteers, with many still turning up to the nursery to help out despite the cold winds and lack of sunshine.

We remain busier than ever with order preparation, stock and nursery maintenance taking priority along with slightly reduced production levels. There have been well over 60,000 plants ordered this year and we have already sent out over 35,000.

The hardworking volunteers were rewarded for their efforts back in May with Parks Victoria recognising their involvement in the protection and enhancement of Victoria's parks by presenting a certificate of appreciation during National Volunteer Week.

Two morning tea's were organised by the local Parks Victoria ranger Steve Robertson for the benefit of the Tuesday and Thursday nursery volunteers. A wonderful selection of delicious treats and a sing-a-long to the Heho theme song, accompanied by Sandra Turnley on guitar, were enjoyed by all. Certificates were presented by Steve Robertson, Ranger Yellingbo Conservation Reserve and Bruce Quin Field Ornithologist, Helmeted Honeyeater Recovery Program from the Department of sustainability and Environment.



*Images:
Michelle Faram*

Out in the Field *by Bruce Quin*

Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve

2010/2011 Breeding Season

The 2010/2011 breeding season for Helmeted Honeyeaters at Yellingbo has just begun. The first eggs that we are aware of were laid during 21st – 23rd August at the reintroduction area. Another nest was located on 23rd August at the last naturally-occurring colony, upstream of the release area. This nest was close to completion, with the female lining the interior of the nest. Both nests are to receive eggs from Healesville Sanctuary as part of genetic management of wild and captive colonies. The nest at the reintroduction area will receive more genetically desirable eggs because the members of this pair are closely related. Eggs from the pair at the naturally-occurring colony are being targeted to add variability to the genetic composition of the captive colony. In this case, an egg swap will take place between the Sanctuary and Yellingbo nests.



Image: Sandra Turnley

2010 Release

Six immature Helmeted Honeyeaters bred at Healesville Sanctuary during the 2009/2010 breeding season were released at the south end of the re-introduction site at Yellingbo on the 6th May. Three of the release group persist at the release site. One pair may be forming, while the second female has been frequently sighted amongst established birds to the north. Hopefully, she is interested in one of the unpaired males there.

Bunyip State Park

2010/2011 Breeding Season

Building of two nests has been observed at Bunyip State Park during the 2010/2011 breeding season to date. One of these nests seems to have already been abandoned. However, other females have been carrying nest material and more nests will be found soon. The number of birds recorded at Tonimbuk release sites recently has been about 20, indicating that some have dispersed to other locations. However, a visit to nearby private property and Labertouche North on 18th August, where Helmeted Honeyeaters have occurred in the past, failed to detect any Helmeted Honeyeaters. These areas will be visited again in the not too distant future.

2010 Release

22 immature Helmeted Honeyeaters bred at Healesville Sanctuary during the 2009/2010 breeding season were released in habitat along Diamond Creek floodplain, approximately eight kilometres upstream of the Tonimbuk sites, on the 20th April. The release group began to frequently use at least one other area additional to the release site (Gembrook) in May. From the last week of June, supplementary food was decreased significantly and since then, the number of 2010 releasees recorded at Gembrook has generally been much lower. Nine birds were recorded on 7th July, after which it has been six birds or less. However, three individuals from this year's release group were recorded at Tonimbuk during late June and mid-July by Mike Harrison and Gavin Jackson. It is likely that one of these birds was seen at Tonimbuk mid-August too. But, we need to search else-where for the birds because most of the Helmeted Honeyeaters released into Bunyip State Park during 2010 are in parts unknown.

An update on breeding and searches for missing release birds will occur in the next He Ho Herald. Regards, Bruce.

Reveg Rambles *by Richard Case*

A mixed bag to report on this time around; seed collecting, planting and maintenance.

The 16th of May began with the calls of the Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo framed by the fog, all other noises blocked out. Today we went to Macclesfield Creek Bushland to collect Hakea seed. From the slopes we obtained Dagger Hakea, Furze Hakea and Bushy Needlewood. Various bird calls including Scarlet Robin enlivened our morning as the fog melted away.

In the afternoon we switched plans. The power line company had trimmed lots of trees along Evans Road. Here we collected good amounts of Broad-leaved Peppermint and Silver-leaved Stringybark. Further down the slope we found more Bushy Needlewood and Scentbark. Continuing on to the swamp, we collected Scented Paperbark and Woolly Tea-tree.

On the 13th of June, we returned to Macclesfield Creek Bushland, looking for and collecting a small amount of Yellow Hakea seed. As we worked, we looked for Helmeteds but did not see or hear any. I put the abandonment of this site down to the drought, upstream dams and the consequent lowering of the water table. This seems to have affected the health of the Mountain Swamp Gum and the insect populations they carry. The Gums are looking very scraggly. Even more dramatic is the death of swathes of Scented Paperbark thickets, formerly used by the Helmeteds for nesting.

Moving on, we combed the sides of Turn-Off Hill for Bushy Needlewood, Furze Hakea and Dagger Hakea. After lunch, we travelled some of the roadsides before collecting Red Stringybark. A difficult tree as most of the seed is carried high and out of reach.

Planting at last, on the 18th of July! We put in a small amount of Black Anther Flax-lily, reinforcing the “wild” plants that grow beneath the Swamp Gums and Messmates where the Wood Ducks were searching for a nest site.

Next stop was the big fenced paddock at Manuka Meadows. Here we planted 200 Scented Paperbark on the flats and 80 Long Purple-flag a little higher up, where they should find the lower slopes to their liking. We also cleared the fence of fallen branches which were allowing grazing animals in.

On the 8th of August we returned to Manuka Meadows to mend broken joints in the fence, again, caused by grazing animals. A highlight of the morning was a Swamp Harrier drifting slowly overhead. In the afternoon, we followed the fence line up into the top paddock where Greenhood Orchids grow under the Stringybarks. Here the fence was largely intact, so all we had to do was enjoy!

Feeding Footnotes

by Marilyn Serong

A seldom mentioned, but none-the-less important task of those of us who provide the HeHos with their supplementary food at Yellingbo is to clean the two bird baths and replenish the water. Each bath is simply a large baking-dish set in a frame supported by a tall pole and located close to protective shrubbery. The birds often arrive at a bath in a group of six or even more. Each HeHo has several quick and very active ‘dips’ before finding a nearby perch, shaking off excess water and thoroughly preening. Not a



Image: Marilyn Serong

feather is overlooked in this careful procedure. The bird works deeply into its short breast feathers then turns its attention to its long flight feathers, running each deftly through its slightly open bill. This is accompanied by full stretches of the wings.

Why provide artificial baths when there is adequate water in the nearby creek? The bath-water is much cleaner and the baths are well off the ground away from possible ground-dwelling predators. The baking dishes that contain the water are positioned so high that I cannot see into them unless I jump. There is an art to removing and replacing the baths from their stands without having a bath yourself. The HeHos are not the only birds to use the baths. White-naped and White-eared Honeyeaters are frequent visitors. Even a Scarlet Honeyeater has been seen at one of the baths. That was quite a surprise.

Thank you to all our volunteers... the He Hos couldn't do without you!



The Friends celebrated National Volunteer Week with morning teas in the beautiful YNCR nursery gardens. Parks Victoria Ranger Steve Robertson presented certificates of appreciation to volunteers who support the Friends in so many different ways. – birdfeeding, nursery work, committee, newsletter, publicity...the list goes on.

If you would like to become a volunteer, contact the Friends on 59648341



Volunteer help is required with the supplementary feeding of Helmeted Honeyeaters at the Yellingbo and Tonimbuk re-introduction sites. Please contact Bruce Quin on 59544010 or 0412576646 if you would like to assist this work.

Helmeted Honeyeater Merchandise

Summer stock available

	number	size
Steel Blue Polo Shirts - <i>m, l, xxl xxxl</i>	\$35 each <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Blue Polar fleece jackets <i>with Leadbeaters possum, vests available</i>	\$35 each	
Green Polar fleece jackets <i>l-xl-xxl-xxxl</i> <i>with He Ho emblem</i>	\$35 each <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Green Canvas Hat 8'' brim <i>sizes 57, 61cm</i> <i>with He Ho emblem</i>	\$18 each <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Artists Cards with envelopes for all occasions	\$2 each <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>M.Heeley's of epacris, greenhoods, E. fulgens E. campohora , J. Flinn and D Williams He Ho (circle choice)</i>		

10% P&H
TOTAL

Name:.....
 Address:.....
P/code.....
 Sub total: \$.....
 Postage and Handling 10%: \$.....
TOTAL enclosed \$.....
 Send to: Friends of Helmeted Honeyeater
 PO Box 131
 Woori Yallock 3139



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS for 2010-11

were due on 1 JULY 2010

Have you updated your Membership yet? Phone 59648341 for details.

If undelivered please return to:
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Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater Inc.

Annual General Meeting

Sunday September 26th at Healesville Sanctuary

Free entry to Sanctuary by showing this newsletter at front entrance

12 noon BBQ lunch at Robert Eadie Pavillion

2.00pm AGM at the Theatre.

Includes Committee elections and reports. Followed by Guest Speaker Kevin Mason

Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater Inc.

Nomination form 2010 elections

I (proposer's name).....
a financial member of the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater Inc

nominate (nominee's name).....
a financial member of the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater Inc and personally known to me, for
the position of Committee person

Signature of proposer..... date.....

I (seconder's name).....
a financial member of the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater Inc, hereby second the nomination of
the applicant who is personally known to me.

Signature of seconder.....date.....

I (nominee's name).....
a financial member of the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeaters Inc, hereby accept this nomination

Signature of the nominee.....date.....