



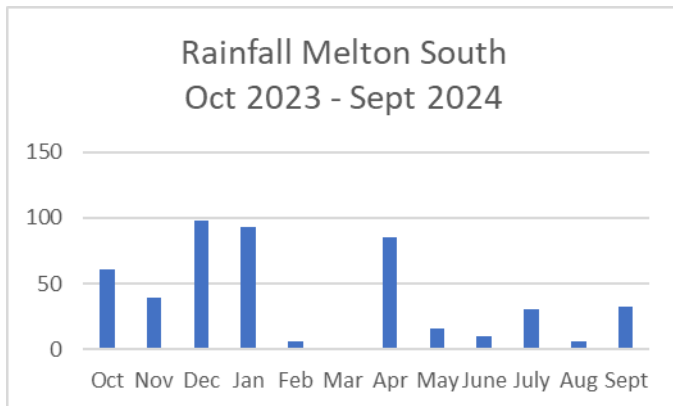
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

October 2024

WILDLIFE RESCUE

Ring: 13 000 94535

RAINFALL



A wild & tempestuous start to the month. Widespread storm damage & multiple power outages. Flooding in Tasmania! Even bushfires in NSW! All that for just 8mm rain!

32mm rainfall recorded in Melton South for September. Over the last year rainfall has fluctuated widely. After watering regularly over winter, sadly we are still watering into spring!

The Fields of Gold that flanked Eynesbury Road (& many local paddocks elsewhere) have faded. The glorious display of Golden Wattles has also faded, but has been replaced by the equally bright golden Bacchus Marsh & Gold-dust Wattle!

SEPTEMBER ACTIVITIES

Pinkerton Forest working bee

On Thursday 12th September Irene & Daryl returned to Pinkerton where we watered the plants near the carpark & sprayed Galenia. We had cancelled the previous week's working bee due to extreme weather conditions. The soil was still moist after 4mm rain here the previous day so we may skip our weekly watering of this site next week. A

nesting sites here as the many hundreds of Grey Box saplings are now looking quite bushy. The resident Zebra Finches were nowhere to be seen but they were recorded on the last quarterly bird survey in August.



The mysterious vehicle tracks through the Forest were followed where they were soon explained by the discovery that Serrated Tussock has been sprayed. Many thanks to Greater Western Water & to Themeda Ecology for spraying the Serrated Tussock!

Bird walk in Melton Gilgai Woodland

On Sunday 15th September Imelda, Brenda, Debra, Lyndall & Daryl participated in a bird walk in Melton Gilgai Woodland, hosted by Eynesbury Environment Group (EEG). It was a brisk walk in cold wintry conditions (9°). So cold in fact that even the birds seemed to have remained in bed! Fortunately the day was much more pleasant from the previous Saturday, which was wild, wet & windy! Due to the dry winter few wildflowers were to be seen, with the exception of the Egg & Bacon bushes (*Eutaxia microphylla* & *E. diffusa*) & purple *Indigofera*.

We were treated to the sight of over 60 Kangaroos crossing from the paddock adjacent to Long Forest Mallee, across the road into the property to the immediate north of the Reserve.



We even found some rubbish had been dumped here, at the very back of the reserve where it could not be seen from the roadway. Even a red plastic shopping basket full of timber carpentry offcuts! The basket & its contents were removed, to be recycled as BBQ fuel. However the basket of timber became heavier the further we walked so we left it by the track, to be retrieved at a later date, each of us carrying two pieces each. Sadly Harkness Road seems to have become a popular dumping ground for household & building waste, as do many quiet roads just outside the town. Melton appears to be a hotspot for rubbish dumping! Shame on us!!



The Choughs noticed by observers a few days ago were nowhere to be seen.

17 birds seen were:

Magpie	Little Raven	Mudlark
Willy Wagtail	Red Wattlebird	Noisy Miner
White-plumed Honeyeater		Blue Wren
Red-rumped Parrot		Eastern Rosella
Little Corella	Galah	White-faced Heron
White Ibis	Crested Pigeon	Kookaburra

Pinkerton Forest working bee

On Thursday 19th September Irene & Daryl returned to Pinkerton where we watered the plants on the mound near the carpark, then watered the plants near the Green Shed; we then watered those planted by Themeda beside the Shed as we still had water left over. There was still moisture in the ground near the Shed where it is sheltered from the winds by the Forest trees.

Eynesbury Market



Annette & Chris at Eynesbury Market



Eynesbury Environment Group participated in Eynesbury Market on Sunday 22nd September. This market was more successful than the last. The weather was much more pleasant with more stall holders & many more visitors. There were a few strong squalls that picked up the dust & slightly raised the marquees but nothing dramatic. There appeared to be almost as many dogs as children! Our display of locally indigenous plants was a great success. In Lorraine's words "*one membership & \$165 in plant sales*". Two people even enquired about culinary herbs! At first it seemed as though we were out of the way this month but we seemed to attract more attention (& sales!) situated as we

were among the food stalls & beside the coffee caravan.

Pinkerton Landcare & Environment Group AGM & working bee

On Thursday 26th September PLEG held a working bee followed by its AGM. For the first time since planting this year we were able to skip watering as we had received 21mm rain in the preceding two days & the soil was still damp! We removed Galenia instead. We were visited Suzie Geratty (Naturewest Co-ordinator) & Armer from Melton (Little Blind Creek Environment Group). Present were Irene, Rosemary, Lorraine, Simon, Suzie & Daryl. Suzie conducted the AGM declared all positions vacant & all office holders were re-elected.

OCTOBER ACTIVITIES

Bird walk in Pinkerton Forest

Saturday 5th October 9.00

There will be an unscheduled bird walk in Pinkerton Forest on Saturday 5th October 9:00. A group of people on the last bird walk in Strathulloh Woodland asked to visit to Pinkerton as they had never been there. PLEG and EEG are invited to participate also. Note: this is not on our scheduled EEG bird walks as there are no paths through the Forest. There is a gravel vehicle track around the perimeter if we don't wish to bushwalk.

From Melton head south along Exford Toad to the T intersection ay Exford, at the bottom of the steep descent

Head east (turn left), up the steep rise.

Continue along Greigs Road, past Butler Road, to the T intersection at Mt Cottrell Road.

Turn right (south) into Greigs Road, beside Mt Cottrell

Next to the third house on the right there is a lane. It will have a banner stating Pinkerton Landcare & Environment Group.

Please make sure the gate is kept closed behind you as this is a working farm with strict biosecurity protocols

Wear sturdy footwear as this is bush with no tracks. Also we have a few Brown Snakes, making sturdy footwear and socks important. They are starting to emerge now in warm weather so they should be active in October.

There is a Blue-tongue Lizard living in the stone wall beside the lone tree about 100 metres from the Mt Cottrell gate. On sunny days it likes to sun itself on the track. When the sun gets hotter it likes to

move into the thin shadow cast by the tree, where it becomes almost invisible. We have had to shift it a few times to avoid running over it! There was a pair here but sadly one was run over last spring. Blue-tongues have no road sense!



Night Walk in Eynesbury Forest

Saturday 5th October 7pm - 9pm

Eynesbury Environment Group will lead a walk in the dark through Eynesbury Forest. BYO torch, wear warm clothing & sturdy footwear is essential! A walk inn the dark through the bush is an unbelievable experience. We hope to see Possums & Tawny Frogmoths as well as hearing the calls of the Boobook Owls. Meet at Toorong Rd at 7.00 pm

Bird walk in Eynesbury Forest

Saturday 19th October 9.00

EEG will lead a bird walk in Eynesbury Forest. We will walk along the track from the Discovery Centre to the old shearing complex then back again. No bushwalking involved! We expect to se a many of the 170 species of woodland bird for which Eynesbury is rightly famous. We may even see some of the many kangaroos that live here. Meet at the Discovery Centre at 9.00 am

Eynesbury is a 200 hectare Grey Box Woodland with over 170 bird species observed so far, as well as a small ornamental lake rich in wetland birdlife. A rare oppportunity to see woodland bird species. Toilet facilities, general store, restaurant & bar! On Fire Ban Days, walk will be around the lake only. Eynesbury Discovery Centre Melway 226 Ref H1

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Bird walk in Long Forest Mallee

Saturday 16th November

Long Forest Mallee (LFM) is a unique Mallee remnant between Melton & Bacchus Marsh. Long Forest Road Melway 335 Ref E3

**Sunday 3rd November 9am - 11:30am
Eynesbury Flora Walk**

Led by Simon and Lorraine Jolly. Meet outside of the Eynesbury General Store. Bring long pants, walking shoes, water, binoculars (available to borrow), camera. All walks are free! All ages, bird watching abilities and interest levels welcome

**Eynesbury Environment Group Meeting
Wednesday 13th November 7 – 9.00 pm**

**Pinkerton Landcare & Environment Group
Xmas breakup Thursday 12th December**

**Eynesbury Environment Group
Xmas breakup Friday 13th December**

**Possum Walk at Hannah Watts Park
January 2024 ? Details TBA**



Brush-tailed Possum at Hannah Watts Park

We had to cancel our Possum Walks due to several year's Covid lockdowns. The walk is along a concrete footpath (no bushwalking in the dark!). We *should* be able to guarantee to see possums. Numbers of possums live in the Possum Tree and they emerge at nightfall to feed on picnic leftovers in the playground. This is a child (& elderly person!) friendly event, with possums (virtually) guaranteed. (sadly nothing in life is guaranteed!)
Date & details TBA

Eynesbury Market

Eynesbury Environment Group is a regular participant in Eynesbury Market as a stall holder
Sunday 22nd September Sunday 27th October
Sunday 24th November Sunday 22nd December

BIRDWATCHING IN MELTON

Birdwatching activities in Melton are now confined to two groups.

These include:

- Pinkerton Landcare & Environment Group
- Eynesbury Environment Group

PLEG / Werribee Wagtails

Bird surveys at Pinkerton & Eynesbury

**Note: change to quarterly bird survey days
*Pinkerton/Eynesbury quarterly bird surveys will now be done on a week day in the future.
The surveys will be done on the third Wednesday instead of the Sunday.***

Pinkerton Landcare & Environment Group (PLEG) & Werribee Wagtails once again invite the community to join them birding at Pinkerton Forest & Mulla Mulla Woodland (Bush's Paddock) in the morning & Eynesbury Forest in the afternoon. Toilets, café & bar at Eynesbury & composting toilet at Pinkerton. Eynesbury Forest, is one of Victoria's largest remaining stands of Grey Box), We finish around 3 pm. Flat but uneven ground, with no paths in Pinkerton. Part of the Eynesbury walk is on a bush track.

Within the greater City of Melton, over 170 different bird species have been recorded. About 127 bird species have been recorded at Pinkerton & 170 at Eynesbury to date. Wedge-tailed Eagles regularly nest in these woodlands. These quarterly surveys provide valuable scientific data as to both bird diversity & numbers in these woodlands. This data helps us make decisions & plan for the protection of our vulnerable birdlife. Citizen science in action! We may see some of the 60 or so kangaroos that live across all three of these adjoining sites as well as the several hundred kangaroos in Eynesbury. Birds of Pinkerton & Eynesbury Forests are recorded on eBird.

Pinkerton is private property located at <http://goo.gl/maps/drFnS.0-p;l.;>
From Werribee, drive up Tarneit Road, turn left into Boundary Road, then turn right into Mt Cottrell Road. After about 3 Km, just after a rise, there is a group of houses on the left. The gravel track to Pinkerton (behind a locked gate) is just before the first house (1668 Mt Cottrell Road).

Mulla Mulla Grassland (formerly Bush's Paddock) is accessed by the same track. For more info: John McKenzie jackmack37@hotmail.com; or Daryl Akers jenniferkayakers@outlook.com; (0438 277 252). Meet at Mt Cottrell Road. Melway Map 221 Ref H8 Gates open 8.45 am, walk starts 9.00

Pinkerton & Eynesbury bird surveys are now held quarterly on the *third Wednesday of February, May, August & November*
Wed. 20th November

Eynesbury Environment Group: Nature Walks

The Eynesbury Environment Group's (EEG) nature walks are back for 2024. Join us for a guided walk through the Eynesbury Grey Box Forest and discover why it is one of the most important woodlands around Melbourne.

Meet outside of the Eynesbury General Store. Bring long pants, walking shoes, water, binoculars (available to borrow), camera. All walks are free! All ages, bird watching abilities and interest levels welcome. More walks and events are added throughout the year. For further details, updates or to join the Group contact us at: eynesbury.environment.group@gmail.com; or follow Eynesbury Environment Group on Facebook.

Eynesbury Environment Group's nature walks
Saturday 5th October 7pm - 9pm
Eynesbury Nature Night Walk
Meet at Toorong Rd

Sunday 3rd November 9am - 11:30am
Eynesbury Flora Walk
Led by Simon and Lorraine Jolly

EEG: Melton Bird Walks 2024 schedule

Saturday 19th October Eynesbury Forest
Eynesbury is a 200 hectare Grey Box Woodland with over 150 bird species observed so far, as well as a small ornamental lake rich in wetland birdlife. A rare opportunity to see woodland bird species. Toilet facilities, general store, restaurant & bar! On Fire Ban Days, walk will be around the lake only. Eynesbury Discovery Centre Melway 226 Ref H1

Saturday 16th November Long Forest Mallee
Long Forest Mallee (LFM) is a unique Mallee remnant between Melton & Bacchus Marsh. Long Forest Road Melway 335 Ref E3

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

Darley Community & Garden: Spring Fair
Saturday 12th October 10.00 – 3.00

'The spring fair is the Community activation for the Darley Community Art Garden. Where they showcase the garden, have groups attend to show their products, talk about the environment, the best plants to have in gardens, and discuss with the general public knowledge and information about

different groups that are in the local vicinity Maddingly Botanical will be running a workshop on some native plants.'

The Darley Community Art Garden (DCAG) at the Bacchus Marsh Baptist Church 31-37 Holts Lane Darley. Contact Felicity 0400 520 042

admin@urbanmarkets.com.au;

**2024 NATIONAL ENTOMOLOGY INSECT EXPO -
Woodend Buffalo Stadium 4th-6th October**



'The National Entomology Insect Expo is Australia's largest exhibition showcasing the entire Science of Entomology (Insects) to the general public. This spectacular exhibition will promise visitors a unique and fascinating look into the world of insects and their relatives.

Featuring Entomologists, Insect Researchers, Breeders, Spider and Scorpion Keepers, Insect Educators and Specialist Insect Retailers, this amazing event also brings together a large number of static Entomological Collections, 'Live' Insect displays, Spiders, Scorpions and Related Invertebrates, Childrens Workshops, Entomological Merchandise and the ongoing research work of the C.V.R.I.C. Over 100 exhibitors from all over

Australia will feature spectacular displays, many of which have never been seen by the public.

Featured Insect Pantomime Entertainment will be there to meet and greet all visitors and Quality Food Catering will also be available On-Site during the entire 3 day event.'

TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE. admin@cvric.com.au;

The third NATIONAL INSECT EXPO for 2024 will be held on the 4th - 5th and 6th of October at the Buffalo Sports Stadium, Forest Street, Woodend.

Tickets are now available and due to venue Capacity Limits, priority will be given to Pre-Booked On-Line Ticket Holders.

In order to avoid long queues, we suggest you book your tickets early here:

<https://courses.cvric.com.au/index.php?route=product/category&path=65>

The Insect Expo Team

Live displays	Insect breeders
Insect craftworks	Scorpions & spiders
Entomology publications	Workshops/activities
Insect keepers & experts	Rare collections
3 days of rare & unique displays	

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

New Environment Group: Trash Patrol Melton

There is a new volunteer environment group in town!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/330071463783370/>;

OTHER LOCAL EVENTS

Big Apple Café Bacchus Marsh- live music Sunday 27th October 11.30 – 1.30

Amber Gould will be busking at Big Apple Café, a live music venue in The Avenue (432 Bacchus Marsh Rd).

<https://www.facebook.com/BigAppleCafeBacchus/>;

MELTON WILDLIFE

Brown Snake in Pinkerton



Our resident Brown Snake recently emerged from its home beside the Green Shed to take advantage of the all too brief warm weather, to drink from the water trough & presumably to hunt for food after the cold winter. It appears to be about as long as the water trough!

Kingfisher arrives early in Melton

A Sacred Kingfisher was seen on a Melton South clothesline at the end of September. They seem to like clotheslines. It then proceeded to forage in an adjacent Apricot tree, to the annoyance of the local New Holland Honeyeaters. These usually arrive in Melton in late October so this appearance was a bit surprising!



Sacred Kingfisher Brookfield late November 2017

OTHER

A poem by Evelyn Stephens (aged ten) concerning an all too familiar theme

Bushfire

*The sky turned black in the restless afternoon,
The darkness coming before the rise of the moon.*

*The animals all left in a rush,
As the ash choked the old bush.*

*The fire licked high,
Its burning tendrils reaching the sky.*

*The trees creaked and moaned,
As they fell with a groan.*

*The fire had finally ended,
But the bush was gone as each of the trees had descended.*

Evelyn Stephens