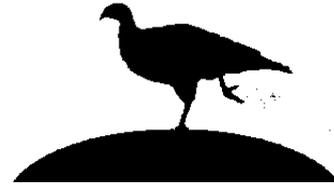


Victorian Malleefowl Recovery Group Inc.

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Newsletter September 2005

Coming VMRG events

October 8, 9 - Training weekend, AGM
October to January - Nest monitoring
February, 2006 - Committee
February 2006 - Newsletter
March 2006 - Reporting back meeting
May 2006 - Committee

See www.malleefowlvictoria.org.au

Present Committee

President	Neil Macfarlane	5030 2925
VicePresident	David Thompson	5030 2254
	dvthommo@bigpond.com	
Secretary	Ann Stokie	5229 8648
	annos@iprimus.com.au	
Treasurer	Ralph Patford	5275 3019
	r_patford@hotmail.com	
Committee	June Brown	5233 4636
	junepeter@iprimus.com.au	
	Gil Hopkins	5383 8207
	giliz@netconnect.com.au	
	Ross Macfarlane	9557 5016
	ross.macfarlane@ozz.bp.com	
	Peter Stokie	5229 8648
	pstokie@iprimus.com.au	
	Ron Wiseman	5083 3240

Latest update

The Greencorps Grid Re-searching Team from Mildura continues to do a great job, and they have successfully completed five grids and added an extension to the Lowan grid. There has been a slight change of plans for their remaining weeks of their program. They will be working out of Mildura, and expect to complete another two sites closer to Mildura, including Annuello from Monday 19 to Wednesday 21 September.

They welcome any assistance from VMRG members. If you have the time to join them, even for a day, your support would be appreciated. Please contact Donna Tidey at Mallee CMA on 03 5051 4384 to confirm arrangements prior to your visit.

If you want to nominate for the committee or executive, do it now because forms have to be in by September 30

Malleefowl nests

Last Newsletter I said "Usually we expect the 'chooks' to use one of the nests in their area, and to change nests each year, depending on leaf litter and food available. Some say the female chooses the nest site; others say it's the male. But now and then they make a completely new nest."

Keith & Cynthia Willis replied "we have been involved in monitoring and observation of these birds for a number of years now and we know of birds using the same nest for seven and eight years in a row. We believe that if there is enough litter available and there is no interference from predators (human or other), the birds will continue to use the same nest". They continued "we have also observed birds using nests close to each other alternately sometimes one, two, or more years apart, so as someone once said, the more we learn, the less we know !!!!!"

What's your experience?

Check out the website information and send your comments to giliz@netconnect.com.au

Available now from Secretary Ann at annos@iprimus.com.au are:

***Training weekend October 8/9 registration
Oct 8 AGM agenda, reports and minutes
Election rules and nomination form***

Did you know?

The giant mound-builders *Progura naracoortensis* and *Progura gallinacea* died out soon after the arrival of man in Australia (listed as about 35,000 years ago), and their bones have been found in limestone caves. *Naracoortensis* was a relative of the malleefowl, but about twice its size. Check out the display at Naracoorte caves next time you are in the area.

An early naturalist, K H Bennett wrote of the malleefowl: "Its actions are suggestive of melancholy, for it has none of the liveliness that characterizes all other birds, but stalks along in a solemn manner as if the dreary nature of its surroundings and its solitary life weighed heavily on its spirits". I can't agree with this. It 'stalks along' because it is regal and in control of its environment, unhurried even by uncouth pale-skinned humans disturbing its peace and trying to make it use its precious energy inefficiently.

What do you think?



Malleefowl at Little Desert in January, still working

News from the Committee

Included at the meeting of August 13 were:

- Modifications to the Training Weekend following from members suggestions
- Information about camping and driving in National Parks
- Providing a certificate of participation
- Showing monitors their data
- Providing St Johns First Aid pamphlets
- Not to conduct vegetation survey this year
- To make a presentation from VMRG to Greencorps members for their work
- AGM agenda and processes
- Financial statement & accounts approval

- Getting a computer-based financial package
- To investigate insurance for Satellite phones
- Grant applications were tabled and discussed. All grants have been successful
- Presentations to be made to Bird Observers Club, and Birds Australia Congress
- Written response to the Fire Code Review by Ann
- Reports of Grid Re-searches by Greencorps
- Report from National Recovery Team Meeting
- Purchase of a 'permanent' display, design to be finalised
- Roles for Committee members
- Using group email for committee discussions
- To recognise outstanding service to VMRG
- To invest funds from 2004 forum as a basis for 2006 forum
- To investigate archiving historical material
- Rainfall data logging equipment - no success yet
- Information from Wedderburn Conservation Management Network for proposed ecological burn.

Something else!

While the Committee were working away discussing all these extremely important issues, Ann looked out the window and saw this marsupial in the bird feeder. We know what it is, do you?



What would you like in the Newsletter?
What have you done?
Tell Gil and send pictures to
giliz@netconnect.com.au