

## **Mt Cole-Pyrenees Nature Group**

### **President's Report August 2024**

This year has been a very challenging one for our group.

The bushfire on Mt Cole has impacted us all and time will tell how well the forest recovers. As you all know, the impact on wildlife and vegetation have been horrendous. The forest was closed for many months which hindered any conservation activities. How our group can help with regeneration and conservation efforts will be the focus of the coming year.

Interest in our group is growing fast and we have seen an increase in our paid up membership numbers. Subscriptions are essential for our group as we have ongoing operational costs such as insurance and fees to Landcare Victoria.

Early this year our group hosted a Biolink "get together" with Project Platypus on our property at Glenlogie. We discussed ideas for grant submissions, shared landscape goals and assisting threatened species.

We then did a walk to the Wimmera River to examine the impact of the fires and to examine which trees were likely to survive and which had some epicormic growth.

We have had some notable successes with our grant applications:

- We have received funds from Upper Mt Emu Creek Landcare Network which has enabled us to buy materials for 20 nesting boxes being made by Donald Secondary College woodwork students.
- Our group's application for \$15,000 worth of funding from Landcare Victoria to build nesting boxes, install cameras and conduct workshops was successful. This application for funding focused on nesting boxes for the Phascogale and Squirrel Glider –two species under threat on Mt Cole.
- We have been successful in securing funding of \$958 from the Pyrenees Shire Council to host another guided Nature Walk and picnic in Spring. This will be a "Recovery Walk" to view the forest and observe how it has regenerated after the fires. This walk will be attended by the ecologist, Neil Marriott on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

Nest box workshops, seminars and installation activities will be organized soon.

We aim to build on our links with other organizations such as The Gordon Wildlife Alliance, Project Platypus and The Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance which has been very helpful to us by providing advice about nesting boxes for our grant applications.

We are also aiming to strengthen our ties with DEECA by partnering with them in Citizen Science projects.

Our meeting early this year with DEECA was extremely productive. DEECA are very supportive of our group and are keen to have us involved in various activities such as monitoring wildlife and revegetation activities.

Due to the growth in interest in our organization and the challenges ahead, we always need committed individuals to assist in an executive capacity. We need administrative assistance and boots on the ground to realize our conservation aims.

Christine Baines  
August 2024