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NEWS

LETTER

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If you have any items of interest about your park please send these to "FELP - Editor - PO Box 91 Emerald".

EDITORIAL.

It's been a while since the last newsletter my apologies for that, much has happened since.

The new playground has been operating now for about 28 months and has been a popular success. Aimed primarily at teenagers, in order to expend some of their occasionally destructive energy. However children of all ages have been making good use of the facility. The adult exercise equipment has also been popular. Recently upon the friends request a fence has been installed along the steep bank side to avoid accidental falls down the steep slope.

Although the park is basically a peoples park, the greater area is the Western arboretum. This area has been sadly neglected for many years and as a result is overgrown with rogue species of trees, plants and weeds. The friends have used the weed-busters program to recruit helpers and attempt to clean specific weeds over recent years. The rangers have also been working intensively on this area too. Unfortunately the task is well beyond our joint resources. So it is a welcome relief to learn that a new program for the rehabilitation of the area has been instituted by council.

The Federal grant was applied for park upgrades during the previous administration and has been received by council. This \$500,000 will be matched by council (this years budget) to double the amount. We look forward to many improvements to the park facilities and infrastructure. in this term.

Our request for a viewing platform in place of the old water-slide pool has finally been completed and is a fine asset to the area. A border garden is in progress to soften the area.



The photo was taken prior to the new fence being installed and shows how sharply the ground falls away on the far side. So we are pleased that council agreed to its installation. In spite of appearances, adults do get a chance to do their morning exercises on week days.

AUSTRALIAN GRIEB.

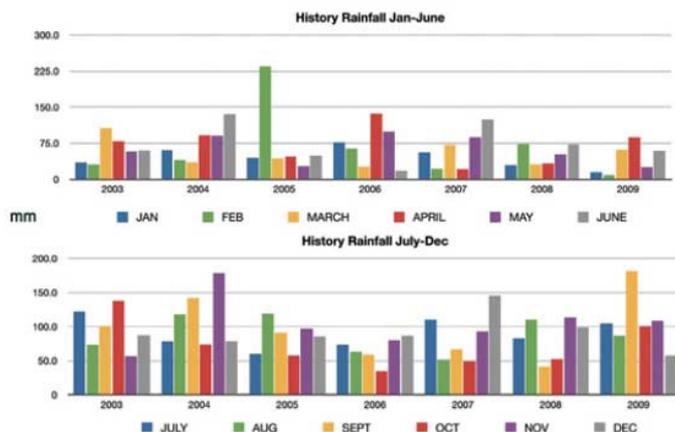
November saw the Australian Griebs busy building a nest in the open lake, anchored by the growth of weed reaching the surface. The nesting female laid 6 eggs and over the following five weeks was assisted at regular intervals by the male partner to incubate and hatch four tiny griebplings. constant attention was required to build up the nest to keep it from sinking, using pieces of weed harvested from below.



The changing of the guard occurs every few hours for the little griebs.

EUROPEAN WASPS.

The warm weather season was well under way when there was a sudden appearance of millions of European Wasps. Many of their nests were discovered in the park surrounds and so they were exterminated accordingly. As the cooler weather arrived the wasps disappeared almost as suddenly, helped perhaps by the prompt action of our park rangers. It would be nice to think we are winning this war, but I expect they will re-appear next season.



ANNUAL RAINFALL 2009"

Rainfall last year picked up in the last quarter to almost reach the annual average since 2003. Unusual moisture from the north down through inland rivers and lakes may be the stimulus for this. Hopefully the floods from Queensland will continue to feed the system for a while yet and so boost our rainfall for this year.