

May 2006

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

Friends of Warrandyte State Park (FOWSP) Inc. PO Box 220 Warrandyte 3113
ABN 94170156655/ACN A0024890C

FOWSP Create New Garden

By Pat Coupar

Not for the first time Fowspians have turned their hand to some landscape gardening at the depot. On this occasion they have created a number of garden beds around the new Rangers office at Pound Bend.

For two hours one Thursday morning in April, 15 'Friends' worked with Rangers to plant 368 forestry tubes and 45 six and eight inch pots of indigenous plants. Among the plants are several rare or threatened species from Warrandyte and the Northern Reserves. Some have been grown and planted back to enhance populations in the bush, while a stock pot has been retained in the nursery for future proofing in case the natural populations are wiped out. Now the garden plants can act as a reservoir for these rare species.

The garden beds have been landscaped with large rocks, logs and mulch. Each one has a different theme. The entrance path is lined on either side with Kangaroo Grass (at the request of one of the rangers) which unfortunately have been food for some foraging animal, maybe rabbit or maybe roo.

An area has been set aside for the rare and threatened plants from One Tree Hill, Boomers Reserve and Rifle Range, these include a Guinea-flower, a Grevillea and the Rough Burr Daisy (*Calotis* sp.).



In the heathland section are various species of daisies and heaths that grow on the sheltered slopes of Fourth Hill. While the cliffs of Warrandyte Gorge are represented by an uncommon Saltbush (*Einadia hastata*) and Warrandyte's only indigenous Grevillea.

The project is not finished yet with an estimated 120-140 plants still to be put in the ground. I asked FOWSP nursery manager, Josh, what this next area would be called. After some thought he replied "Rare Roadside" for it is surprising how many endangered species turn up as remnants on roadsides. The future planting will include a rare recently discovered eucalypt from the area, but more about that later.

Bush Backyard

Autumn Gardening

By Pat Coupar

This month in my garden I have been pruning the natives. Smaller species like Correa and Dusty Miller I take to with the garden shears, while larger plants of Pomaderris and Daisy-bush are secateurs or sawn. This stops them getting too straggly and maintains a compact bushy appearance.

I have also been raking up leaves, bark and small branches that have come down over the last month or two in strong winds. Along with the prunings these will be mulched and spread around any new plantings.



Not surprisingly, following the rains, weeds have emerged. In my garden they consist almost entirely of Panic Veldt Grass *Ehrharta erecta* (you can read more about it in 'My Worst Weed'). I find the best way to

remove them is with a sturdy knife. Grassy weeds can be composted and returned to the soil as organic matter.

So what have you been doing in the garden this month?

The Raucous Little Wattlebird.

By Steven Katsineris

An irregular visitor to our garden is the Little Wattlebird, which mostly likes to visit while the two Southern Silky Oaks (a large Grevillea) are in flower. They come in pairs or in small groups and stay all day flitting about from one tree to the other and from branch to branch. They are vigorous, noisy and quite aggressive to other birds who also want to feed on nectar in the same tree.

After some weeks of frantic feeding the Little Wattlebirds disappear when the Silky Oak flowers die. They almost certainly move on to where the



next cluster of Silky Oaks or Banksias are blossoming. Although we have several Banksias in the yard, I planted them only a few years ago and they are still young (and as yet deficient in flowers).

Little Wattlebirds, also called Brush Mockingbirds, are the smallest of the Wattlebirds. The body is mostly dull grey-brown with fine white shafts on the feathers. The underparts are grey and more streaked with white. Because of the streaked plumage they are not easily seen among the Banksias, Grevilleas and other vegetation.

All Wattlebirds are honeyeaters, feeding mainly on nectar which they get by using a long, brush-tipped tongue, specifically adapted to probing deep into flowers. They also feed on insects, flowers, berries and some seeds.

Little Wattlebirds breed any time of the year. Their nest is a large untidy cup of twigs and grass, lined with shredded bark, feathers and plant material, usually in the fork of a Banksia, Tea-tree or eucalypt. One to three eggs are laid.

Little Wattlebirds have a preference for drier habitats including Banksia woodlands, eucalypt forests and scrubs and as well as urban parks and gardens. They are nomadic and partially migratory.

Although they are quite loud, these lively birds are very fascinating with their vigorous movements and peculiar and varied sounds. The Little Wattlebird is a rather odd, but wonderful visitor to our garden.

More Snippets Please

Let us know what is happening in your backyard. Keep contributions coming. Don't forget snippets can be about anything of interest in the environment and do not necessarily have to be about Warrandyte.

Contributions can either be dropped into the editor at 143 Brackenbury St, Warrandyte or via email at ian.coupar@vcp.monash.edu.au

The Insignificant One

By Lawrie Safstom

I am sitting in the warm autumn sunshine on the banks of an insignificant stream. Insignificant? No! Its waters some hundreds of kilometres of the Yarra Valley - it, and its tributaries supply a large percentage of the city of three million people - its sparkling waters are impounded, treated with chemicals and distributed over a very large metropolis - it CANNOT be described as insignificant!

As I cup my hands and scoop up my palms full of its water - it is dean, very dean, and I drink gladly of it - then another scoop! I look at it, ponder, dream.

Where have you come from? As I muse, a black duck paddles quietly up stream, a family of blue wrens are checking out the new Landcare plantings, magpies are warbling in the large cow paddock as they search for an early dinner. I gaze



again at the water cupped in my hands.

Where have you come from? What wondrous

sights have you seen? Where have the winds taken you? Were you recently in Africa, watering families of elephants, herds of impala? Have you travelled over great oceans, floated as vapour, high above far off lands?

What a wondrous thing you are! You can be frozen, expanding as you freeze - be boiled and turned into steam, expanding 25 times your normal state - flow through great tunnels to turn hydro generators - never go stale! You absorb salt, you rampage over vast expanses of space bearing up gigantic cargo boats. What would we do without you?

I return my small handful to the sparkling stream with a Bye for Now smile. I'm thinking. Will we meet again sometime? I'm not free, but you are free to travel under the Warrandyte Bridge, flow through the Pound Bend tunnel, bounce down Findon's Rapids, meander quietly through many suburbs and with one last daring dash, gleefully bubble over Dight's Falls. Dight's Falls! Do you remember the flour mill? Did you help turn the grinding wheels? And were you there when I filled my camp billy at Findon's Rapids in 1940?

Now, are you unobtrusively passing hurrying traffic and people, dodging inlet pipes to Newport Power station, and joining with a sigh the vast bay? Did you once pass this way long before it was a bay and rush through the great gulch towards the vast ocean? Have you met great whales?

I guess you've seen everything in your wondrous comings and goings.

I come back to my little world by the bank. I realize, as I gaze down the water rushing over the rapids, - I am the insignificant one!

The Franklin River

On high mountains melting snow forms new life, as water droplets gather together, they fall to the ground and little trickles flow, weak to begin with, but gaining strength. So starts a long journey down the mountains. Clear, clean, with purpose and vitality, gaining momentum, over and under all obstacles, becoming a small stream, it joins others along the way.

Bubbling and singing, cascading over waterfalls and rapids, the water swells,

tumbling down through deep, spectacular gorges and chasms. Uniting and strengthening a mighty force grows, with exhilarating power, roaring, foaming, white water, becomes a compelling torrent.

The deluge surges ever forward, through the wilderness, flanked by rainforest and sheer cliffs, the Franklin River flows free, onwards to the sea.

Steven Katsineris.

Wildlife Rescue

By Julie Pryor



Unfortunately we lost another koala this month. It was a female we had been watching for some time. She was getting heat stressed in the hot weather and the cold weather was not good for her either. She was an old girl, (aged about 11 years) she did not have a joey, she was possibly blind and was very thin. The Vets decided the kindest thing was to put her down.

The koala is still in Oban Road, it appears OK at present. It is moving from tree to tree and is not sitting on the ground or looking for water.

Another koala has taken up residence in a property on Yarra Street, it has stayed for several weeks and it seems very happy.

Koalas will live for 10 to 15 years in the wild; this will depend on the leaf. If the animal is in a good area it will live longer, but if it is on a dusty road and the leaf is dusty it works like sandpaper on their teeth and their teeth wear away quicker.

What to do if you have a koala in your yard

- Please do not attempt to handle a koala, they are not as cuddly as they appear.
- Koalas become stressed easily by dogs. Please put any dogs in the house or garage until the koala has left - usually overnight. Koalas have been known to inflict nasty wounds on dogs.
- Alert your neighbours that a koala is present and ask them to restrain their dogs. **NB** Dog attacks account for 2000 koala deaths per year Australia wide.
- If practical, place a plank of wood securely from a tree to a fence, this can help a koala exit your yard without having to go on the ground.
- If your dog is barking please go and have a look. You may get a pleasant surprise - it might be a koala



Stony Creek and Yarra Junction Restoration Group (SCYRG)

SCYRG is a North Warrandyte community group that aims to restore Stony Creek to its original state using plants that are indigenous to its botanical history. We are an informal family oriented group, and invite everyone to come down and make a start to the restoration of this beautiful creek.

No experience is required, just some time and a little passion for our natural environment. We are involved in weeding, weed management, plant propagation and planting. There will be free plants to take home, social get togethers and some talks from local experts. We presently meet every second weekend on alternating Saturdays and Sundays.

For more information call Leon on 98445995 or Email SCYRG@hotmail.com

People in Plants

By Shelagh Morton

Hardenbergia violacea



Baron Karl von Hugel, an Austrian diplomat passionate about botany, visited Australia during his world tour in 1831. His sister Countess Franziska Was married to Count von Hardenberg, a German diplomat, and was a patroness of botany in Austria. Von Hugel botanized in Western Australia, New South Wales, Fiji and Norfolk Island. His "New Holland Journal" (November 1833- October 1834) would be a fascinating read to discover where and when he named this lovely pea vine for his sister.

Von Hugel is remembered in our locality in *Gompholobium huegii* (Karalla) and in *Lagenifera huegelii* (Coarse Bottle Daisy).

By the way *violacea* means blue (Latin).

FOWSP THURSDAY PROGRAM

We meet for propagation and other nursery activities every Thursday morning at 10.00am at the Warrandyte State Park depot, Pound Bend Road, Warrandyte (Melway 23 C10), unless otherwise stated below. When there is no scheduled afternoon activity we often go on a spontaneously organised walk. Propagation takes place from 10.00am to 12 midday followed by lunch. No prior experience necessary - there is always someone available to show you the ropes.

PLEASE NOTE

The nursery is open for plant sales (by donation) every Thursday. Please note new opening times for Thursdays 9.30am to 12.30pm and the first Sunday of each month 2.00pm to 4.00pm.

New Prices

Members 80 cents

Nonmembers \$1.20

Important Notice

Please note the nursery is only open for plant sales during the above times. Some members and non-members have been turning up for plants (and advice) outside these hours without prior arrangement. If you find it impossible to come during official opening times please contact the nursery manager first.



Sunday Walks 2006

Meet at 10.15 am. Bring a water bottle and snack to eat on the walk if you wish. Wear walking shoes and clothing appropriate to the weather. Walks will last approximately 2 hours. Join us after the walk for a BYO lunch (BBQ available) at 'the Folly' at Warrandyte State Park Rangers Depot, Pound Bend. Hot and cold drinks provided.

Walks are FREE. Bookings are ESSENTIAL. For more information contact Jeanette 9840 9129

June 4th 'Mullum Mullum Creek' Jane Pammer, Manningham City Council
Park access track near Cnr Schafer Drive and Larnoo Drive, Doncaster East. (Mel ref. 34 G62).

Launch of Fungi Brochure

When: Sunday July 2nd 1.00pm to 4.00pm

Where: Sandy Bay picnic ground at Jumping Creek Reserve



FOWSP Committee 2006

Joan Broadberry	9846 1218	Treasurer
Pat Coupar	9844 1650	Newsletter Editor
Peter Curry	9844 0958	
Geoff Speedy	9437 0894	
Lee Speedy	9437 0894	Membership Secretary
Mike Coupar	9844 1650	
Karen Reynolds	9712 0797	Minutes Secretary
Martin Hiley		
Artur Muchow	0415383328	
Winsome Coutts		
Michelle Hanslow	0402251577	

Nursery Manager 0408317327

Park Office 9844 2659

Wildlife Rescue

Julie Pryor 9722 1117

Market

Marie Krause 9712 0498

Manningham City Council Environment Seminars 2006

The seminars are FREE

Held on the 1st Wednesday of the month, no bookings required

Time: at 7.30pm



Please Note: NEW VENUE: South Warrandyte Hall, 66-68 Hall Rd, Sth Warrandyte (Mel ref. 35 J8)

June 7 th	'Rakali the water rat'
July 5 th	'Up close and personal with a feral fella'
August 2 nd	'Bell Miner and eucalypt dieback'
September 6 th	'Wetlands of the Yarra Catchment'

Geoff Williams
Peter Voutier
Amanda Dare
Dylan Osler

Thursday Activity Group (TAG)

The activities will take place on the first Thursday of the month from 10.00am to 12md. Either meet at the depot or on site.

So if you are interested in learning some vegetation management skills and helping improve some special sites in the Park just tag along with the Thursday Activity Group (TAG).

TAG dates: Thursday June 1st **Spadonis Planting.** Meet at the depot at 9.30am for a morning with Ranger Cam Beardsell. Activity includes planting back the rare Yering Silver Gum

Thursday July 6th **Rabbits at Pound Bend.** Meet at the depot at 10.00am

Deadline for June newsletter is May 29th

Rabbits

By Pat Coupar

Last month's TAG (Thursday Activity Group) activity was a great success. While activities so far have concentrated on planting and weed control, the target species this month was rabbits.

Ranger Jodie Godfrey spoke to the whole Thursday group at the nursery giving an overview of the rabbit problem in Warrandyte and the various methods that have been used to control these pests. She said that recently the method of laying bait trails has been replaced by setting up bait stations in order to minimise the risk to non-target animals. By the number of questions it was obvious that rabbit control is a hot topic, with many members having problems with rabbits on their own land.

After the introduction, eleven participants went down to Pound Bend Reserve where Jodie has been carrying intensive rabbit control along a section of the river bank. Before we set off she explained to the group what the activity involved and asked if anyone had problems with her carrying out fumigation and the gas that is released using this technique – nobody did.

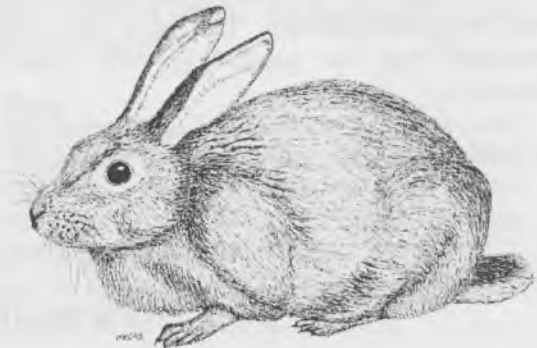
Jodie told us that she had been over this particular site several times and this was yet another follow up to look for any new burrows - active or not. Armed with shovels and marking tape we set off along the river track back towards the depot. It didn't take long to find our first burrow, although there were a few droppings they did not look recent and it seemed the burrow had not been used for some

time. Ones like these are collapsed by back filling as Jodie demonstrated.

Spreading out, we searched the slope between the track and river - some of us with shovels and some with tape. We found quite a number of old burrows which we marked with tape and back filled, but only a couple that had signs of fresh excavation and droppings. At the first of these Jodie gave the group a talk about the fumigation process and showed a number of interested members how it is carried out.

All morning Jodie was bombarded with questions about rabbit control which she answered with cheerful patience. We all agreed it was a most worthwhile activity both in terms of helping out the rangers and for the knowledge gained. We hope to book in another rabbit control morning in a few months.

Like most things, rabbit control is badly under-funded and the Park under-staffed to carry out the work. Jodie is responsible for rabbits at both Warrandyte and Westerfolds. If we can help in some small way, it makes these Thursday activities worthwhile.



Festival Volunteers

Many Fowspians gave up their time to volunteer their services over the two day Warrandyte Festival – none more so than Marie Krause. Marie not only organised the roster for the FOWSP trailer, but spent much of the weekend down at the festival making sure everything ran smoothly.

The FOWSP trailer is our shop front providing a wealth of information on the local environment, indigenous plants, pest animals and weeds. In addition, almost every month, new members are signed up. Organising monthly rosters is not an easy task, but Marie has been fantastic over many years, she deserves a huge congratulations and thanks

Many thanks to the following Fowspians who helped at the festival: Ray Kruger, Marion Thomson, Jan Smidts, Marion Kiewert, Julie Bishop, Joan MacMahon, Pat & Mike Coupar, Sue Shepherd, Alan Woolcock, Tony Honeyborne, Cath Andrew, Helen Riddell, Adrienne Hilton, Marie and Wolfgang Krause

My Worst Weed

By Pat Coupar

My worst weed – for this month at least – is Panic Veldt Grass (*Ehrharta erecta*). It flowers and seeds throughout the year, but goes berserk after rain with a massive germination of one-leaf seedlings. No sooner have you got rid of one batch, a week later a new lot has germinated. This grass can grow through almost anything, including scrambling through metre high shrubs.

Originally from South Africa, it is not certain how the grass entered the country although suggestions are it was accidental and came in as an agricultural impurity. It is a known contaminant of bird seed and commonly harvested by pet owners to feed caged birds and guinea pigs.

Panic Veldt is a long-lived grass and produces copious seeds. It invades most vegetation communities from open forests to riparian regions. They are quick growing and can flower and seed within a ten weeks of germination. The seed is dispersed by water, wind, birds, slashing, and in garden rubbish. The seed has a 100% viability, but the plants can also grow by rhizomes.

Non-selective herbicides and grass-specific herbicides can be used to control the weed. But

regular follow up is essential and may have to go on for several years depending on the extent of infestation. Handweeding is effective in small areas, but again it is critical to follow up every month or so.

One piece of advice I can offer is 'don't bite off more than you can chew' in other words don't take on an area that you cannot maintain, otherwise it will be a life times work trying to eradicate this pernicious weed.



Your Worst Weed

Contributions (even verbal) can be passed on to Pat at the nursery on Thursday mornings or sent by e-mail: ian.coupar@vcp.monash.edu.au or posted to 143 Brackenbury St, Warrandyte, 3113.

News from the Committee

April 2006

Rangers Report

- Summer Rangers have finished
- New fencing & signage for Pound Bend inlet tunnel
- Fuel Reduction burns at Timber Reserve & Mt Lofty Plenty Gorge
- Phascogale survey + Kinglake – only 2 animals recorded
- Warrandyte Festival – very successful
- Community working bee at Hodgkin's Ridge Reserve
- Gate opening policy to be reviewed this month

Nursery Report

- Quotes obtained for new sprinklers
- Nursery attendance is good, new semi-retired people and new Deakin students
- Water Watch Kit available from Manningham, Will be training people to continue monitoring on afternoon of TAG monthly will be full day course. Results to PV, Manningham

Other Business

Chief Ranger, David Sewell, will attend committee meeting in June

Note: All committee meetings are open to any member who wishes to come along.

"I SPY"

By B.G



Typical Thursday

Sampling Thursday 13th April 2006 at the depot nursery I spied: Bruce Gullen pricking out Acacias, Mitchell Whalan (2½ year old) pricking out Lomandra, Ryan Delandre helping to pull out stakes and guards (Ryan is studying Environmental Management at Deakin) and Kiera Speedy, 18 months old, visited under supervision of her father Geoff Speedy. She found the ground gravel fascinating. Also, visiting from Nowra, was Constance Jessie Anne Mee!

Students Studying

Also helping on the day were Belinda Christie who is at Deakin studying first year Environmental Management and Law, and Francene O'Connor studying Landscape Architecture at Melbourne University.

Dry Digging

Another April morning a group of volunteers were seen breaking into the hard, dry earth/clay in the garden bed in front of the new Rangers office – making lots of holes suitable for planting 368 seedlings. Also holes for another 45 plants in six inch pots plus one Banksia.

Working hard at this job were: Sue Shepherd, Alwynne Buntine, Ken Crook, Marie Krause, Lee Johnson, Francene O'Connor, Ray Kruger, Joan MacMahon, Lyn Douth, Rosanne Pirotta, and rangers Andy Nixon, Colin Bromley, and Kylie Tenace.

There was also a small frog pond in the making.

More Miniature

There are new walls on the old toilet block at the depot – they are colour co-ordinated with the walls on the depot office. Changes are taking place to the way in which vehicles are moved around the depot, e.g. another road and various signs. Watch out for these.

Kangaroo Count

On a fine Thursday morning in late April a group of fourteen Friends, led by Melanie Lange set out to do a kangaroo survey near Stane Brae. Participants formed a long, long, line, spaced themselves evenly and moved forward away from the assembly area. *"Each person only counts the kangaroos on their left"* said Melanie. After a few more instructions and clarification the counting began as the human line moved across old pasture land and through sparsely spaced shrubby growth.

All the above being watched curiously by a nearby mob of variously sized kangaroos.

Counting Continued

As the convoy of cars had passed on its way to the assembly area, at least 40 kangaroos were sighted along the track. Also noted were many hundreds of recently planted seedlings, protected by stakes and plastic guards.

I Spy did an independent survey of cars: there were various hues including canvas beige, silver, cashmere, rouge Lucifer, an aquamarine, two reds and one white!

Roo Poo

An on the spot survey by yours truly found many roo droppings, some brown, some dried white ones and lots of fresh 'blocky' drops – all about the size of a good alley (marbles).

There were at least 10 fresh droppings per square metre as far as the eye could see.

Roo Results

I have not received the results of the survey of what I believe were a very large number *Macropus giganteus* which is also known as the Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Grey Kangaroo, Forester and Scrub Kangaroo.

Flora and Fauna Favoured?

We seem to have a lack of articles about insects in the State Park, Is there an entomologist in the Friends?





Surface
Mail
only

Postage
Paid

REGISTRATION BY AUSTRALIA POST

PP 346802 / 0005

If undeliverable please return to
Friends of Warrandyte State Park Inc.
P.O. Box 220
Warrandyte, 3113



Fly Agaric

(Amanita muscaria)

A distinctive common toadstool with a white-pimpled bright red or orange cap and a chalky white stem. The Fly Agaric is an introduced species from the Northern Hemisphere and is often found growing under pine trees, although more recently has been seen growing under native trees in the damper forests of Victoria and Tasmania.

This fungus should not be eaten as it is very poisonous.

FOWSP Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

Email.....

Special Interest:.....

Membership \$20

Concession \$10

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper