

June 2006

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

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

FOWSP's New Brochures

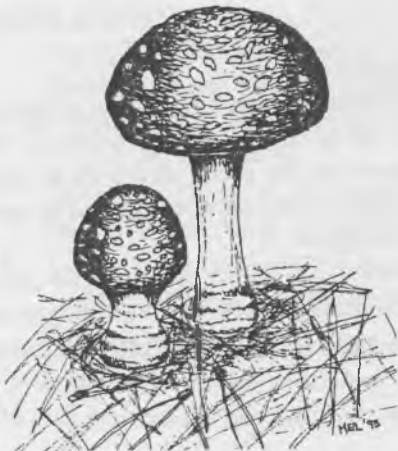
By Pat Coupar

Thanks to some timely and consistent autumn rain, this year has seen one of the best displays of fungi for many years. Already there have been various different types of gilled fungi – snowy white ones, brilliant mauve and all shades of brown – coming up amongst leaf litter, at the base of tree trunks and on mossy logs.

In more open grassy areas some very large boletes have appeared. These are a massive toadstool type of fungi with a thick stem and spongy pores, instead of gills, underneath the cap.

How timely it is then that this is the year when FOWSP is launching its long awaited fungi brochure.

With text and photos supplied by our own Fowspian and renowned fungi guru Bruce Fuhrer, the colourful brochure has been designed by Carol Styles. The brochure features an array of some of Warrandyte's most colourful species on the front cover and a variety of 18 different fungi are described inside.



Among these are three rare species from the genus *Hygrocybe*. These gilled fungi are very special in that the only records of them are in Warrandyte State Park at Jumping Creek Reserve. One is actually named after Jumping Creek, '*saltorivula*' being a latinised form of Jumping Creek and another, *fuhleri*, was named after Bruce Fuhrer himself who discovered it.

Also being launched next month is another new brochure. This one is on local mosses. Once again the text and photos are Bruce's work, but this brochure has been designed by long time FOWSP member Zoe Murphy who in 1993 co-designed our book 'Discover Warrandyte' which is now sadly out of print.

The two brochures have both been designed in the same format as our three previous fold out brochures on Warrandyte's eucalypts, wattles and wildflowers. The new brochures will be launched at a special event to be held at Jumping Creek Reserve on Sunday July 2nd (see inside newsletter for details of time and bookings).



There will be a small charge for the brochures. They will be available for sale at the launch and later at the FOWSP trailer at the Warrandyte Market held on the first Saturday of the month.

Bush Backyard

My Favourite Wattle

By Pat Coupar

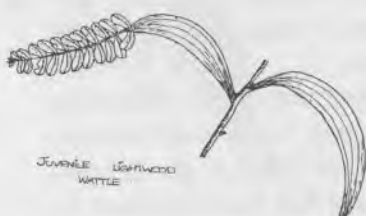
I have just decided that Lightwood (*Acacia implexa*) is my favourite wattle. About six months ago, not really knowing what would happen, I chopped the top of one that had grown too big outside the family room window. This rather crude and drastic prune stimulated a mass of new growth from the trunk, the result is a two metre high bushy shrub. Perfect.

Lightwood is such an adaptable, elegant wattle. It will grow well in sun or shade, on dry stony sites as well as deeper, damper soils. When planted close together, groups of Lightwood look particularly attractive with their dangling narrow, sickle-shaped leaves.

While most wattles flower in late winter or early spring, the fragrant creamy-yellow balls of Lightwood appear in December long after the others have turned to seed.

Like all wattles, the leaves of Lightwood start out as feathery before the adult flattened phyllodes develop. Stress, fire or pruning will cause a mature tree to produce juvenile leaves again. Like a confused adolescent, plants will often display a combination of juvenile and adult leaves.

Lightwood is quick growing and long-lived, making it an ideal screening plant and, as I have just found out, it relishes a heavy prune at any time.



The Wood Duck

By Steven Katsineris

Though they rarely visit our yard, Wood Ducks (or Maned Duck) are a common sight in the open woodlands opposite our house, in Ferguson's Paddock and around the rest of the Hurstbridge district in parks, grasslands, wetlands and near the Diamond Creek. We often see them wandering across roads with their young moving from one feeding spot to another. Sometimes we have seen them perching on logs or in trees. Also, every now and then, I have seen them emerge from a tree hollow. On our trips to various parts of Victoria and NSW we often see them too, usually in pairs.

The male Wood Duck's head and neck is chocolate brown with a small black mane. The body is pale grey with black belly. The wings are a pale grey, with white underneath and the tail black. The female has a pale brown head and neck, a mottled brown and white breast and a white belly. The wings are the same as the males.

The Wood Duck feeds on grasses, clover, other herbs and insects.

Wood Ducks form monogamous breeding pairs that stay together. They nest in tree holes, over or near water and often re-use the same site



every year. Wood Ducks lay between 9-11 eggs. Both the parents feed the young and they stay with them for a month or so after fledging.

Wood Ducks inhabit grasslands, open woodland, wetlands, flooded pastures, dams, creeks and also in bays and inlets along the coast. They are not fond of dense woodland or brackish water and are rarely seen on open water. They prefer to forage in shallow water of swamps and ponds or in grasslands where there is short grass. They have benefited greatly from human changes to the land, with the formation of farmland came dams, pastures and irrigated crops that suit this species.

The Wood Duck is found in well-watered and lightly timbered regions of eastern Australia. There are reports of it occasionally visiting Tasmania, but I have never seen Wood Ducks in my years there.

More Snippets Please

Let us know what is happening in your backyard this month. 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

When is a Tytonidae a Podargidae?

By Cath Andrew

Or, when is an Owl not an Owl but a Frogmouth? Watching a Tawny Frogmouth recently using its beak to catch moths on a window, reminded me of what lovely special birds they are. They are one of Warrandyte's endearing and most readily seen nocturnal birds. Many people mistake them for owls and maybe my observations may help give TFMs the credit they are due!

Despite a common ancestor 55 million years ago, the most obvious distinction between owls and TFMs is their behaviour. During the day, TFMs blend into the dead branch upon which they roost. They will slightly raise a beak and bristly eyebrows when they are disturbed. Instead of being alert like the Powerful Owl, the TFM tries to become a dead branch. It closes its eyes and pretends you don't exist. The Owl, on the other hand, will follow you with its large, very wide, yellow eyes.

Although both birds are nocturnal feeders, have large eyes and have broad wings for silent flight, there are other differences between owls and TFMs. TFMs have a large very broad, slightly hooked bill that gapes yellow-green. Owl's beaks are narrower and more hooked, suitable for tearing prey. Owl's heads tend to be rounded, while TFMs are flatish and large. Owls have a pelvic muscle structure supporting large, strong feet, to enable them to catch and hold prey, and large forward facing eyes. Their neck can rotate about 270 degrees and some have extraordinary facial discs to aid hearing. Because TFMs diet is large moths caught in flight with their beaks, and spiders, not mice, small possums, or rabbits, it does not need the same body attributes as the owl.

Nests of the TFM are easily visible, whereas our Powerful Owls, for example, hide their young in hollows in large trees. A TFMs 'nest' consists of sticks, flimsily arranged on a horizontal branch or they may use a nest abandoned by other birds.

So perhaps next time you see a squat bird, with mottled, soft, grey feathers and a longish tail, it could be a *Podargus strigoides* (or it could be a *Eurostopodus mystacalis*!??)



OWL



TFM

News from the Committee – May 2006

Rangers Report

- Kylie Tenace will be project officer for 6 months.
- Annie Volkering is new Regional Manager
- Pound Bend Tunnel precinct nearly finished. Timber viewing platforms, Safety signage along river. Canoe safety signage
- House on corner of Main gate to be demolished.
- New network cable for computers
- Controversy from the public over 'Non-closure of gates' & 'Harris Gully Block burn'
- Conrad Annal is acting Ranger-in-Charge at Westerfolds. Andy Nixon is Acting Chief Ranger.

Committee Meetings will be held at 7.30pm in the meeting room at the Rangers Office, Pound Bend Rd, Warrandyte on the following dates: July 11th, August 15th, September 12th, October 10th. The AGM will be held on Sunday November 12th

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

Trust for Nature

By Geoff Speedy

The Trust for Nature was established by the Victorian Government in 1972 to promote private conservation in Victoria. Over the past 33 years it has registered 624 legally binding covenants to protect 25,670 hectares of privately owned bush. Also, 111 properties totalling 40,590 hectares are owned and managed by the Trust, and 42 properties have been bought, covenanted and later sold to like-minded individuals. (See www.tfn.org.au for a list of current properties for sale).

Ned's Corner station near Mildura, Victoria's largest freehold property was purchased in 2002, and is a flagship landscape-scale conservation project for the Trust for Nature, Conservation Volunteers Australia through the BHP-Billiton 'Revive the Wetlands' project, DPI, DSE, Mallee CMA, La Trobe University, Millewa-Carwarp Landcare, Parks Vic, Norman Wettenhall



Foundation, the R.E. Ross Trust, The Nature Conservancy (US), Natural Heritage Trust and the Bird Observers Club (Sunraysia Branch). Since the removal of stock, planting of 20,000 seedlings, erosion control and wetlands re-establishment, the property is now in much better shape.

Willis Nature Park in St Andrews is about 90 hectares of high quality bush land extending from Smiths Gully to St Andrews, bounded by Black Cameron Rd and the Caledonia Creek. A new Friends group will be formed to enhance community involvement in the management of the property. The property was opened in July 2004. Lee and I have been on the committee for the Willis Nature Park for a few years.

To be or not to be a Monticola

By Alwynne Buntine

I was walking with friends along a mountain track in the eastern highlands towards an alpine meadow where we wanted to look at the *Richea victoriana*, one of the more unusual and confined candle heaths.

As I left the path to walk across the grass towards the stream edge where the candle heath was growing, I stopped with one foot in mid-air. I was about to plant the suspended foot in the middle of a colony of tall large-flowered greenhood orchids. The stems were about 25 to 30 centimetres in height, the large flowers a translucent white with prominent dark green stripes.

I conferred with the rest of the group. Thinking we had found an end of the season colony of *Pterostylis alpina*, it was duly photographed, with us deciding we were lucky to have found it as it was so well camouflaged in the green grass.



However, one of the party was not quite sure that it was definitely *Pterostylis alpina*, and on returning home and consulting 'The Orchids of Victoria' by Backhouse and Jeanes, discovered that it was *Pterostylis monticola*, very like *alpina* but with subtle differences.

We could be excused for the first incorrect identification because it was only named as a separate species in 1994, until then it had been included with *Pterostylis alpina*. However, no matter what the name, it's still a great thrill to come upon such a magnificent specimen when you least expect it.

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

Held on the first Sunday of each month. 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

July 2nd. Fungal Foray. Bruce Fuhrer. Meet at Sandy Bay car park, Jumping Ck Reserve (Mel ref 24 A11) BBQ lunch provided RSVP for catering)

August 6th. Discover Hillcrest. Cecily Falkingham, Meet at Lisbeth Ave (at Hillcrest sign), Donvale (Mel ref 48 K5)

September 3rd. Wattles and Wildflowers. Glen Jameson. Meet at Park gate, Tunnel St, Warrandyte (Mel ref 35 F2)

Thursday Walks 2006

Held on the fourth Thursday of the month at 1.00pm. Meet at the nursery, Pound Bend Rangers depot, Pound Bend Rd, Warrandyte (Melways 23 C10). Walks will last approximately 2 hours.

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	9844 4547	
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)

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'
October 4 th	'Koorie landscapes'

Peter Voutier
Amanda Dare
Dylan Osler
Beth Gott

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

Thursday August 3rd **Woodies at Timber Reserve.** Meet at the depot at 10.00am

Deadline for July newsletter is July 2nd

Mallacoota Meanderings Day Trip to Shipwreck Creek.

By Steven Katsineris

While we were on holiday in Mallacoota we took a day trip south to rather wild, remote and unspoilt Shipwreck Creek, which is part of the surrounding Croajingolong National Park wilderness.

There are plenty of great family beaches in and close to Mallacoota, but for those who are more ambitious and seeking virtually untouched natural areas, Shipwreck Creek is well worth the effort.

It was a lovely, warm and sunny day. We leisurely drove about 15 kilometres along the Centre Track, on an unsealed road. It was somewhat rougher than last time we were there, although drivable by ordinary car if slow and careful. On the drive through the beautiful mostly Banksia and Eucalypt forest we saw quite a few Black Wallabies, several Red-necked Wallabies and Crimson Rosellas.

We arrived at the small Shipwreck Creek campground and walked through the She-Oak, Bloodwood and Melaleuca trees to the nearby Shipwreck Cove. Impressive rocky outcrops encircle the secluded cove and beach, with the pretty Shipwreck Creek flowing to the sea. The safe, shallow creek and sandy beach are wonderful places to picnic, play and explore. The area abounds in amazing, deserted and out-of-the-way little coves, caves and beaches.

After morning tea we all went along the short, (two kilometre) Heathland Walk where we saw an incredible diversity of wildflowers, including orchids, many more birds and some more Black Wallabies. The walk also has stunning views of the jagged coastline. At the point where the Heathland Walk turns to return to the Shipwreck



Creek campsite the rest of the family decided to go back. Our youngest daughter, Lara is only five and it was a big walk for her.

Our oldest daughter Sian and I continued along the adjoining Old Coast Road Walking Track for some distance into thicker Bloodwood and Hakea bush. We saw a lot more wildlife, Emu Wrens, Willy Wagtails, Crimson Rosellas among other animals and even saw the rare and endangered Ground Parrot, which Sian spotted.

After a while we turned back and met the rest of the family who were splashing in the water and waves at Shipwreck Beach. We ate lunch, strolled the length of the beach, paddled in the creek and played for some time. We then returned to our apartment in Mallacoota, via the Centre Track.

It had been a very enjoyable, stimulating and very memorable day together in the remarkable natural splendor of wild East Gippsland.

March. 2005.

Market Volunteers

A big thank you to the following people who volunteered their time on the FOWSP trailer at the May Warrandyte market: Helen Riddell, Marion Thomson, Sue Shepherd, Pat Anderson, Peter Curry, Mark Hassell, Marie and Wolfgang Krause

Anyone who would like to be rostered on to help with the trailer, even for just one hour, can contact Marie Krause on 9712 0498. New members especially welcome - no previous experience necessary.

Brochures Launch

Date: Sunday July 2nd at 10.15am

Place: Sandy Bay car park, Jumping Ck Reserve, Warrandyte (Melways 24A9)

There will be a fungal foray around the picnic area with Bruce Fuhrer before a BBQ lunch and launch of the fungi and mosses brochures. BYO drinks and salad.

For bookings ring Jeanette 9840 9129

Worth Repeating

Not Bird Flu – Agapanthus Bush Virus!

By Peter Gurney

Bird flu is spreading across the continents. Thankfully our continent, at least for the short term, remains untouched by this pernicious avian disease.

However, this article is about the continued spread of a plant that is increasingly popping up through our bushland and will degrade our native flora, just like bird flu may one day degrade our native fauna. In this case we can take action to help our bushland deal with the threat but we need to start now.

Agapanthus is quite an elegant plant. It originally comes from South Africa, is well suited to our climate and in the summer has long flower stems with large purple or white flowers. The leaves are long and shiny and the tips droop towards the ground. The plant spreads by dropping seeds after flowering, and by division of the bulb under the soil. Local evidence suggests that the seeds are also being spread over distance by birds as young plants are appearing at considerable distance from any established plants.

As agapanthus spreads it forms dense clumps that completely exclude other plants. It consumes moisture and nutrients in the soil and is a winner in the plant survival stakes. In the bush it particularly affects our small shrubs, ground covers and delicate wild-flowers. It provides good cover and habitat for introduced animal pests, particularly rabbits and foxes.

Agapanthus was planted on a number of properties in the Bend of Islands long before it was understood what a bushland pest it would become. Agapanthus is now a declared 'environmental weed' in Victoria. This means that it affects natural systems rather than agricultural systems which are affected by the better known 'noxious weeds'. Local evidence is that agapanthus is now spreading from the original plantings and dispersed plants have been found both close to the original plantings, downstream/down slope from those plantings, even 100 or more metres from those plantings.

What can we do to stop agapanthus becoming a problem beyond our scope to deal with as individuals or a bushland conservation orientated community?

Firstly, every year in late summer landowners with agapanthus on their property need to remove the flower heads immediately after flowering. The flowerheads are easily removed with secateurs and can be disposed of in the green waste bins provided by Nillumbik Council. It is strongly recommended not to leave the seed heads on the ground or pile them up for burning, but to bin them immediately.

Throughout the year seedlings around parent plants and elsewhere on the property should be dug out. When small they come out easily; try and get the bulb and all the fleshy roots too. Mature plants are not so easy to remove but it is strongly recommended that



where there are not many plants they be dug out. When there is a dense planting it may be better to use other methods.

As a community we all need to be able to recognise agapanthus and to remove any plants discovered when out walking around the area. Young plants are appearing on the road verges and in some of the gullies near agapanthus infestations. It takes only a few moments to dig around each small plant with a stick and to pull it out and hang it upside down in the fork of a bush.

Source: This article has been edited from BICA Newsletter March 2006

Yellow Wattlebird (or Tasmanian Wattlebird)

By Steven Katsineris

As a youth growing up in Tasmania I often went bush walking and camping along the east coast and I would frequently see Yellow Wattlebirds on these trips, especially in areas with a lot of Banksias. Also where my parents lived at Lindisfarne, a suburb on Hobart's Eastern Shore and Yellow Wattlebirds were fairly common in the mostly Eucalypt woodlands adjacent to their house.

Later when my family and I lived near the beach at Dodges Ferry, a small seaside town on the south east coast, Yellow Wattlebirds were regular visitors to our yard. They would visit our garden singly or in pairs. And whenever we went for a walk to the beach or on the tracks through the sand dunes we would always come across Yellow Wattlebirds. Sometimes you couldn't see them, but you could hear their distinctive loud calls throughout the bush, harsh, deep, gurgling notes, sounding quite like coughing or vomiting.

Yellow Wattlebirds have a mostly whitish face, with a prominent long yellow wattle hanging from each cheek. The upper body is grey and darkish brown, the head streaked black while the back and shoulders are buff-white. The under parts are whitish, with darker streaks. The centre of the belly is yellow. The tail is long and tipped white.

Yellow Wattlebirds inhabit mountain scrubs, subalpine and lowland forests, open woodlands, coastal scrubs, especially those with Banksias, parks and gardens. They nest high up in the fork of a tall shrub or tree, hidden in foliage. The nest is a large saucer shape, made of bark, twigs and wool, lined with grass and wool. Two to three eggs are laid.

The Yellow Wattlebird is Tasmania's (and indeed Australia's) largest honeyeater; they feed mainly on nectar and insects, sometimes fruit from orchids. It is found only in Tasmania.

While I wouldn't describe the Yellow Wattlebirds voice as beautiful, it is however a sound etched in your mind, a wonderfully unique call that penetrates only the Tasmanian bush.



Trail Bikes

*See the leather coated fella
Biking over dianella;
See his mate, whose tyres are makin'
Such a meal of egg-and-bacon,
See the bare and widening crack,
Once a narrow grassy track,
And its growing load of silt,
Sorry evidence of guilt;
Wonder when all this is done
It's described as harmless fun
By the fearless two-stroke crew
Who disturb the kangaroo
And oblivious, or blind
To the mess they leave behind.*

Evan Elpus, August 2003

(This poem was inspired by the trail riders who
terrorise)

Source: 'A Growing Concern'



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Eastern Spinebill

(Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris)

The Eastern Spinebill is a honeyeater, commonly found along the east coast of Australia. It feeds almost entirely on nectar which it obtains, during these cooler months, from grevilleas, correas and heaths. Its long curved bill is able to probe deep into the bell-shaped flowers. Eastern Spinebills are often seen in gardens and bushland around Warrandyte.

FOWSP Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

Email.....

Special Interest:.....

Membership \$20

Concession \$10

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113

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