

November 2007

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

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

A Timely Show

By Pat Coupar

Snakes have been in the news a bit recently, with reported sightings around Warrandyte and in the Yarra Valley Parklands especially Westerfolds Park.

With the early arrival of warmer weather in October, snakes have now come out of their winter hibernation. They are hungry and they will be looking for mates for breeding.

Warrandyte has a number of highly venomous snakes including Copperheads, Red-bellied Blacks, Eastern Browns and probably our most common snake – the Tiger Snake.

On warm sunny days snakes may be seen basking on rocks or bare earth – they are sometimes encountered lying on or beside tracks in the bush.

Tiger Snakes are often found near water where they feed on frogs and other prey. It is advisable, when walking in the bush, to wear thick socks and proper shoes. Always watch where you put your feet and never put your hand into hollow logs.

With all this snake activity it is very timely that we have organised 'Black Snake Productions' to come out to our 25th Anniversary celebration on November 25th to give us an educational show.

Black Snake Productions are a family run business that offer "conservation based shows that are full of fun, fact and action for all ages". It sounds too good to miss even for those snakes phobics.

Notice of FOWSP Annual General Meeting (AGM)

All members are invited to attend the Friends of Warrandyte State Park AGM

Date: Tuesday December 11th at 6.00pm

Where: The Folly, Pound Bend Rd (Melway 23 C10)



BYO food and drink for a bbq following the AGM and as the light fades there will be a Special Presentation

A Journey into East Africa

with Pat and Mike Coupar

Visit the rare Mountain Gorillas in the rainforests of Uganda. Take a trip along the Victoria Nile, the haunt of hippos, crocs and abundant birdlife.

Then travel on to Tanzania for the ultimate safari, where we see lions, elephants, giraffe, zebra, baboons and a variety of antelope and monkeys.

Come and join me

Bush Backyard

The Victoria Grevillea

By Steven Katsineris

When we moved into our house in Hurstbridge the yard already had a number of established trees and shrubs, including several Bottlebrushes and three Grevilleas. Of these bushes, I soon noticed that the Grevilleas, particularly the two Victoria Grevilleas were the most popular favourites with the native birds visiting the garden.

While they have a peak flowering period, Grevilleas flower all year round. Grevilleas attract nectar-eating animals to assist them with pollination. Their flowers appeal to honey-eating birds, butterflies, bees, beetles, moths, and even small possums and other marsupials.

One of these Victoria Grevilleas was in an otherwise dry, barren area, at the top of the yard. It was in an especially well placed position just outside the large windows of the house, giving us a marvelous view of the honeyeaters and other birds attracted to its red flowers. Throughout the day there would be a succession of Eastern Spinebills, Noisy Miners, Scrubwrens, King Parrots, Eastern Rosellas and Crimson Rosellas taking it turns to come and feast, some sipping nectar from one flower after another and others feeding on the flowers.

We all got a lot of enjoyment from watching these birds visiting this Victoria Grevillea. And what wonderful sights we saw, with Noisy Miners dangling upside down from branches to get to the nectar and Eastern Spinebills flying in the air while taking nectar from the flowers.

But unfortunately, this particular old Grevillea was situated in very poor, rocky soil on a steep embankment and it was struggling to survive. Some of its branches were already dead and the weight of its branches was also pulling its roots out of the ground. Despite my efforts to prop it up and cut off the burden of the lifeless branches to stop it falling over, it was fading away.

In planning for its eventual demise, I planted another Victoria Grevillea, not far away from the other one, but in a flat spot with better soil. My intention was that this would provide food for the birds by the time the other one was dead. Within a year it had grown over a metre and was thriving, with plenty of flowers. By then I was able to remove the other almost completely dead old Victoria Grevillea.

After that I restored the mound, landscaping it with large rocks and more soil and planted smaller, hardy groundcovers and shrubs that have since grown well there.

The Grevillea was named in 1804 after Charles Frances Greville. Grevilleas are mostly small to medium shrubs, but some grow into large trees. They are the largest and most diverse plant genus in Australia. Grevilleas are widespread across Victoria and the rest of Australia, generally growing in drier, interior locations, although a few species grow on the coast. They are very popular with gardeners and extensively cultivated.

The Victoria Grevillea (*Grevillea victoriae*) was named in honor of Queen Victoria. It is a hardy, erect to spreading shrub, usually 2 metres in height and 3 metres wide. The Victoria Grevillea grows well in full sun or part shade and it tolerates cold weather and frosts. Ranging in colour from apricot, pink, red, orange, yellow and brown. In the wild they are found in sub-alpine regions, mountain ranges, surrounding forests and in some coastal areas.

That Time of Year Again

By Pat Coupar

I have never considered myself a particularly allergic person, but in recent years things have changed somewhat. I have now joined the ranks of the hay fever sufferers.

After years working and walking in the bush I have become sensitive to the nasty little grass pollens.

Around October I get the first tingle in the nose. As the weeks go on this develops to full blown sneezing attacks and runny nose. Fortunately my eyes seem to be unaffected. So far anyway.

I have been able to work out the major culprits – Sweet Vernal Grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) and Tussock Grass (*Poa* spp.). They often grow together and flower at the same time.

Until a few years ago sufferers had little choice of medication, other than those with drowsy-making side effects. However, today there are a number of very good, very safe non-drowsy antihistamines on the market that certainly reduce the symptoms.

What's happening in your backyard this month?

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

A Walk in the Common

with Cecily Falkingham

Report by Joan Macmahon

Cecily is a fantastic, self-taught naturalist who's been guiding walks in some of Melbourne's natural remnants for several decades (at least). She is soon to retire so I knew this was a special occasion – not to be missed! And this experience was a good example of a common phenomenon – one issue (human use of bushland) being viewed in opposing ways by different groups of people, so read on...

The group met at the car park at the southern end of Haslams Tk, not far from Johansons Rd (Mel 36 A3). We turned right from the car park to follow the track north, beside the fenced area. Immediately we noticed the track was badly damaged by horses hooves, even though there were clear "please don't ride here" signs on a nearby pole. Oh dear not a start to lift our spirits.

The first good things we noticed were some orchids, Tall Greenhoods (*Pterostylis longifolia*) – they have multiple flowers, green and white with a brown tip widely spaced along the stem and are Melbourne's commonest orchid. Nearby were some erect, thin leaves about 40cm high which looked like Onion Grass (*Romulea rosea*). Cecily believes this may be Australia's most widespread weed. Another imported member of the iris family! This one from South Africa. I took the plunge, pulled hard and yes up came the small white bulb in its brown covering.

Then a real joy, a patch of those wonderful little insectivorous plants, Scented Sundew (*Drosera wittakeri*), very prolific post fire. Then more treats, two sturdy Nodding Greenhoods (*Pterostylis nutans*), each with a single, nodding translucent green flower.

Cecily was inspired to mention the wonderful work done every year for 20 years (!) by folk from Ringwood Field Naturalists (in the Jumping Creek section of our Park). Her inspiration? We were walking past an area very recently cleared of Bridal Creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*) and other weedy species by the same group. Fantastic and we thank them very much.

Cecily reckons WSP rangers would be one of the best groups she had dealt with i.e. they take her information seriously unlike some other Park's staff she has dealt with where being a self-taught amateur naturalist the attitude can be condescending and non productive.

Birds; we soon saw a smallish plain breasted brown bird, probably either a female or a young male Golden Whistler. Cecily explained that the

female and young male Rufous Whistlers have obvious vertical streaks on their breast and also that she has seen male Olive Whistlers near the river in Warrandyte and thought part of their call somewhat like that of a whipbird. The others saw a White-eared Honeyeater and we heard a Grey Shrike Thrush and a Spotted Pardalote.

Our track turned in a southerly direction and down a badly damaged slope on which horse riders had placed logs at intervals so they could do jumps. Because of these obstructions the trail bike people had ridden on top of the delicate ground flora. Goodbye habitat.

The area we were in had been control burnt last May, so was fairly open and as well there looked to be a lot of drought-stressed eucalypts (with thin canopies). Major parts of the burnt areas were now covered with thousands, maybe millions, of newly-risen lily leaves – Vanilla and Chocolate (what a picture this will be in a few months). Also Small Grass Trees with lots of new leaves, and masses of the herb, Blue Pincushions (*Brunonia australis*). There were some dense patches of newly germinated, slightly succulent plants we couldn't identify, as well as some much less dense patchers of newly germinated eucalypts – at first we suspected they were Long-leaf Box, but the leaves were the wrong shape (Cecily carries a collection of brochures) and had a very strong pepperminty smell so were most likely Narrow-leaved Peppermint. Very uplifting to find these as I'm familiar with many areas locally where there's never a sign of the eucs 'giving birth'. Also many types of fungi: patches of a small orange-brown cup fungus, individual cups were tiny, about 4mm across. Cecily identified it as *Licccaria lateritia* a dominant mycorrhizal associate of eucalypts.

Soon we came to the worst mess of the day, damaged track as well as some bush – lilies, orchids, who knows what else trampled on...It was here I started noticing piles of horse poo – apparently one lot can contain up to a dozen weed types.

Then we came upon some tiny, very newly germinated wattles – what will they grow up to be? One of our group spied a puff-ball type fungus. Cecily wasn't convinced and suggested the likelihood of a golf ball. She was right! Next we noticed a large bracket fungus, a White Punk - about 22cm wide by 10cm deep. It had fallen to the ground as they do because of the action of the beetle larvae which burrow into them. They can cause heart rot in their host tree. (Cecily's noticed a big increase, presumably drought-caused along the Mullum Mullum valley over the last two years of regular walking there).

Then we hear the clear call of a Butcher Bird. There was plenty of Thatch Saw-sedge (*Gahnia radula*) resprouting gamely, even in these dry conditions, with lovely bright green leaves. How much more would there be if this was a moister area?

Entering an unburnt area we saw a lone wattle flowering way off the track, so using our binocs we reckoned it was a Spreading Wattle (*Acacia genistifolia*), this one with thin, sharp 'leaves'. Does the title refer to its shape or its behaviour? Individual plants don't spread all that much in my experience, but it's a great survivor. Then we saw yet another fungus, this one looking much like an edible mushroom, but using her mirror Cecily demonstrated the gills were fawnish/pinkish, so better leave it out of the frying pan.

Early on I forgot to mention we found three strange Acacia seedlings, probably *Acacia elata* (Cedar Wattle), a NSW wattle that Cecily had spotted here years ago. Target for a future working bee?

We saw virtually no honeyeaters, maybe due to the lack of correas and heaths? Unfortunately we cam across several patches of the bright green herb bittercress (also known as Flickweed), right beside the track and not yet flowering. It may be that ten minutes of weeding might have eliminated them. But anyway is this a weed to really worry about? It's an annual, easy to pull and with very little bulk. Who knows? Also there were heaps of lush newly germinated grassy weeds which caused me to think it might be where to find people with spare time!

One of our group was wondering about a tiny ground-hugging herb with deeply scalloped leaves. Could be Stinking Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle laxiflora*) but the leaves had no smell – that's because it's the flowers that are unpleasant to one's nose.

Close by was another little ground-hugging herb, Austral Cranesbill (*Geranium solanderi*). Then we walked north along the very horse-damaged track – the moist soil increased the damage – until turning east and heading back to Haslam's Tk.

On the way we saw another collection of amazing fungi, scattered around the burnt base of a stump. They looked at first glance like thin bits of weathered, convoluted brown rubber. Cecily checked our fungi brochure and found it was *Peziza echinosperma* – what a crazy name! and it's usually found near burnt timber.

I saw a Crimson Rosella land in a nearby tree and commented it was good no Rainbow Lorikeets were in sight (they can be bullies) – Cecily knows then as 'rats with wings'. Talking of

which we soon saw a collection of very large dark wing feathers and one piece of broken bone, someone suggested it might be the remains of an ibis. Perhaps it had been grazing in the paddock next door and met a hungry fox?

Finally we saw yet another type of fungus which looked very much like a bit of horse poo (ironic, as there was plenty of the real stuff scattered along the way). It was known as *Pisolithus tinctorius*, but its new name is *Pisolithus arhizus*. It's the size and look of your average plop, dark brown exterior and after cutting this one open with her knife we saw the beautifully patterned interior with its gold, cream and dark brown spore receptacles. It was reminiscent of a complex Aboriginal painting.

On our right Cecily pointed out a large old Red Box with three holes in the trunk. Two were rounded and probably would be used by parrots, while the top one was a narrow vertical slit which might be used by some of our smaller bats.

Too soon we were back at the cars, our heads full of a mass of cheerfully and clearly given information on so many aspects of a 'walk in the bush'. Cecily is a treasure and will be missed by those of us keen to learn about and protect the precious web of life.

Cecily and I both informed Park staff about the damage and when I returned three days later I was pleased and surprised to see the logs had already been cleared from the track. Considering the increased area our rangers have to care for I wasn't expecting such rapid action.

Does anyone have any suggestions on how we can help educate the horse people? Maybe you have contacts at the nearby riding school, Tandivale and could ask for their advice and assistance?

And how about this for a coincidence? Cecily tells me she phoned the Park office just over a month later to ask whether anything else would/could be done to prevent further damage. It turned out some of the rangers were at the Common working on improving the signage re where horses can and cannot be taken.

I know I alluded to the phenomenon of greatly diverging views in the introduction. Well I've run out of time and energy to write about it, so maybe in a future edition...? Wish me luck please.



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

Non-members \$1.20



Sunday Walks 2007

Walks are 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

December 2nd 8.30pm Pound Bend Nightlife Jodie Godfrey

Thursday Walks 2007

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

Market Volunteers

A big thank you to the following people who volunteered their time on the FOWSP trailer at the September Warrandyte market: Ray Kruger, Alison Thom, Jan Smits, Marjan Kiewert, Peter Curry, Tim Bedford and Anne Warren. The trailer was delivered and returned by Peter Curry.

And thank you to the following people who volunteered their time on the FOWSP trailer at the October Warrandyte market: Ray Kruger, Alison Thom, Cath Andrew, Antje Bauer, Tony Honeyborne, Wolfgang and Marie Krause. The trailer was delivered by Peter Curry and returned by 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.



FOWSP Committee 2007

Joan Broadberry	9846 1218	Treasurer
Pat Coupar	9844 1650	Newsletter Editor
Joan MacMahon	9844 3213	
Peter Curry	9844 0958	
Mike Coupar	9844 1650	
Karen Reynolds	9712 0797	
Martyn Hiley	9844 4547	
Artur Muchow	0415383328	
Gray Ardern	0418190261	
Winsome Coutts	9844 5819	

Nursery Manager 0408317327

Park Office 9844 2659

Wildlife Rescue Adriana Simmonds

Koala Rescue Julie Pryor 9722 1117

Market Marie Krause 9712 0498

Thursday Activity Group (TAG)

The Thursday Activity Group will continue next year with a new program of activities, co-ordinated by Ranger Jodie Godfrey and FOWSP member Joan MacMahon

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).

December 6th Tree Guard Removal at Stane Brae

For more information contact either Jodie on 9844 2659 or Joan on 9844 3213

Manningham City Council Environment Seminars 2006

Held on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm at South Warrandyte Hall, 66-68 Hall Rd, Sth Warrandyte (Mel ref. 35 J8) The seminars are FREE. No bookings required



December 5th Dr Marissa Parrott "AMAZING AGILE ANTECHINUS"

25 Years to Celebrate

Place: The Folly, Rangers depot, Pound Bend Rd, Warrandyte

Date and Time: Sunday November 25th at 12.30pm

A special lunch will be provided and many activities including a continuous slide show and Black Snake Productions Reptile Show

If you would like to attend please reply ASAP to PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113 or by email to friendsofwsp@gmail.com

Important Notice

Correction: the celebration is on Sunday and NOT Saturday as advertised in last month's newsletter

Deadline for December newsletter is December 2nd

contributions can be sent to PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113 or email ian.coupar@vcp.monash.edu.

Letters to the Editor

These letters were received following the August/September newsletter, but due to our 25th anniversary special newsletter last month were not able to be printed until now.

Letter 1

This is a response to two items in the latest edition of FOWSP newsletter.

First, re Joan MacMahon's sighting of Crested Pigeons.

In mid-July, two were perched on the powerlines in Jull Parade (Oban Road end). Better still, last Friday (August 17th) there were five on the same powerlines. When the first ones were mentioned at the Ringwood Field Naturalists meeting in July, there was at least one other sighting reported.

The second comment is regarding Mike's discovery of the mountain bike track on Fourth Hill. Hochkins Rise has also suffered in the same way either in 2006 or 2005. Loughies Bushland was similarly treated either in 2004 or 2005.

Does that say 2007 was Warrandyte State Park's turn?!! There are probably more places to hide in WSP, but the lads are certainly fast and determined workers! Between weeds and wreckers, there's room for plenty of work and surveillance – we'll never be short of a job.

Ruth Christensen

Letter 2

Crested Pigeon Sightings

I saw two birds on a tree branch in Box Hill, only about two metres south of the noisy and busy Box Hill transport interchange and shopping centre about two months ago. I haven't seen any more since then, but I haven't been there many times since then. However, I saw one at Westerfolds Park yesterday (September 3rd). Cam Beardsell says they are sometimes seen in Yarra Valley Parks. It's great news when a bush bird reappears in the Parks.

I loved Joan's report on the platypus in the river near her home. I saw one in the Yarra at Finn's bridge two weeks ago, swimming near the surface of the water – the clearest view I've had in the local scene. My sighting was thanks to a walker who walks in that area frequently. A man came along while I was watching and said he recently saw four! Apparently a family. Some Monday walkers from the 'Sam's' Monday group of seniors from Manningham district saw one very clearly from the bridge that leads into Westerfolds from the Odyssey House surroundings a few weeks ago. Good news! We wish the little creatures all the best and a long platypus life free of bits of plastic and other hazards.

Elizabeth Sevier

People in Plants

By Shelagh Morton

IV Fagi Four beeches

Have you noticed that the four *Nothofagi* that occur in Australasia are all named after people connected to botany?

None of these trees occur in our immediate area, but very close in Kinglake National Park. One can find *Nothofagus cunninghamii*, the lovely myrtle beech named by William Hooker for Alan Cunningham, the government botanist who collected the species at Macquarie Harbour about 1820. Myrtles need high rainfall and humidity and flourish in Tasmania. The strong red wood is highly prized for turning and furniture making.

Also growing, mainly in alpine Tasmania, is the deciduous shrub *Nothofagus gunnii* or Tanglefoot. The stunning autumn coloured foliage has been beautifully captured by Peter

Dombrovskis in his photographs. William Hooker honoured Robert Gunn, the Tasmanian botanist I have already written about, when he described this species.

Nothofagus moorei (Antarctic Beech or Negrohead Beech) proved to be a problem until I came across an entry in the library in Carnarvon Gorge National Park Centre library recently. Charles Moore was the Director of the Botanic Gardens in Sydney for many years and Baron von Mueller named this interesting tree for him. Antarctic beech is considered an ancestral rainforest species connected to Gondwana. I was fortunate to see some in Lamington National Park last year.

The Southern Beech, *Nothofagus solanderi* covers large areas of the South island of New Zealand and dates back to Gondwana. While circumnavigating the islands Captain Cook spent some time in Dusky Sound where the subantarctic beech flourishes. One wonders if this is where Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander discovered this lovely tree.

Slaughter

By Pat Coupar

In August this year Mike and I visited Uganda. Without doubt, the highlight of the trip was our time spent with the Mountain Gorillas in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Before commencing our trek we were given a briefing from the ranger on the strict rules that must be followed when in the presence of gorillas (any breach of the rules may lead to termination of the tracking without a refund).

After our life-changing encounter with these magnificent placid primates we were again taken into the small room that served as the Park headquarters where we had an in depth debriefing from a senior officer of the Ugandan Wildlife Authority (UWA). This included a special graduation ceremony in which we were each presented with a certificate. Before leaving, the ranger gave a 'from the heart' appeal for all of us to become ambassadors for the gorillas when we returned to our respective countries.

Tourism brings in money, not only for the UWA but for the local community. This is essential if they are to stop clearing the gorillas rainforest habitat for crops.

Not long after returning home, we received this devastating newsletter from the humane society.

Help Stop the Slaughter of Mountain Gorillas

On August 13th this year, the Sydney Morning Herald reported a terrible animal tragedy in central Africa. Author Stephanie McCrummen began her article:

"They heard the gunshots at about 3pm, echoing across the green mountains of a vast park tangled up in vines, fallen trees and scarred by years of war.

Rangers in the Democratic Republic of Congo knew immediately what it was, and in their frayed uniforms and rubber boots began hacking their way with machetes into the jungle-like forest. This time it was Rubiga.

The rare mountain gorilla had been shot execution style – once in the back of the head and a second time in the hand. When the rangers found her hulking, lifeless body, her two-month-old baby, barely alive, was still clinging to her chest.

'Everyone started crying' recalled Jean-Marie Serundori, who helped wrap the body in plastic sheeting and carry it down the steep mountain side on a wooden stretcher. 'We love these gorillas.'

This tragedy almost too great to comprehend, but, as reported by Newsweek, it became far worse:

"The rangers crowded around and caressed the gorilla's singed fur. They shook their heads and clicked their tongues with disapproval. One grabbed her hand and held it for a long time, his head bowed in grief. This gorilla – whom the rangers knew as intimately as they do all those who live in their sector of the park – was named Mburanumwe.

Her killers had set her alight after executing her. Now her eyes were closed, as if in deep concentration. Nearby the rangers found the bodies of two other adult females, all from the same 12 member family. Two infants had been orphaned. A male would be found dead the next day. The massacre, first discovered on July 23, could be the worst slaughter of mountain gorillas in the last quarter century."

The gorillas were part of a well loved family troop known to researchers as the Rugendo family, often visited by tourists from around the world. The dead male gorilla, Senkekwe, was the troop's leader – an alpha silverback male – and his loss is a serious blow to the remaining family members. And no one knows why they had to die. One man has been already arrested over the deaths and another is being pursued by police.

Since the start of 2007, nine gorillas have been murdered in Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, more killings than occurred during the height of the bloody civil conflict of the 1990's. Virunga National Park, near the border with Rwanda, is thought to provide critical shelter for around 360 of the world's surviving 700 mountain gorillas, with the other 340 found in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park in Uganda.

In the decade civil war, around 150 poorly paid and poorly supplied park rangers have also met their death defending the gorillas.

Since this article was written another two gorillas have been slaughtered. More information can be found on this issue on the website of The Humane Society: www.hsi.org.au



"I SPY"

By B.G

Perhaps?



Toad Tally

The road kill of cane toads in the Warrandyte Parks area has dropped to about 30 per day. This may be due to the lack of water after 10 years of drought.

There is concern about the toad which was found to have swallowed a complete adult grey kangaroo.

Mmmmm

The opening of the 5 hectare McLomnads complex at Pound Bend was attended by various dignitaries.

A press statement was issued by the Minister for Tourism mooted the possible use of cane toad meat as a product ingredient.

The firms representative said the "this is our contribution to protecting the environment."

Rabbit Refuges

The Overseas Control Scientific Research Institute (OCSRI) will continue its research program in an effort to breed rabbits which will only eat blackberry bushes, ivy and cane toads.

This follows the refusal of the Emigration Department to declare rabbits as refuges and deport them on an island paradise.

Parliamentary Parks Pledge

Rushing through the legislation trebling funds and working staff at all Government Parks, the minister responsible pledged that all Parliamentarians would give at least 10 days voluntary labour to support Park voluntary groups.

Perhaps?

- The rock concert held in WSP to raise money for endangered environments was a spectacular success.

The promoter/sponsors claim that the bulldozing of the entire Jumping Creek area was necessary to appropriately accommodate the 80,000 people who attended.

- The 100 metre by 20 metre concrete platform built in the Yarra at Sandy Beach will remain as a public promenade, with retail outlets.

- This will not interfere with the approved plan to build a small refined casino across the Yarra at Blue-tongue-Bend. In fact the water will be dammed between the two tourist facilities to enable miniature Titanic boats to ply between the two features.

- Plans for a scaled down rice farm on the Yarra banks wetland is also well under way.

- The proposed takeover of Warrandyte environs by the Commonwealth government to build a mini Canberra is also going ahead.

- As is the mooted plan for an African Safari Park at Warrandyte State Park.

Mountain Bike Riding in Fourth Hill – an update

Following our front page article in the August/September newsletter on the damage caused by mountain bikes on Fourth Hill, we have received the following response from Conrad Annal, Ranger-in-Charge.

This was emailed to us in September, but due to the 25th Anniversary special newsletter we have had to delay its inclusion until now.

Conrad wrote :

"As discussed, below are some dot points on what Parks Victoria has been doing to address the illegal use of Mountain Bikes in Fourth Hill, Warrandyte State Park, since you first raised this issue with the Park staff.

- Signage has been installed, highlighting to Mountain Bike Riders

that it is illegal to ride off Management Vehicle Only tracks.

- All illegal tracks have been closed by the Ranger staff by placing branches etc across the tracks.
- Patrols of this area have increased, including education to Mountain Bike Riders about the Park Regulations.
- Articles in the local Media have highlighted Park Regulations and where Mountain Bike Riding is permitted.
- I have met with the Mountain Bike Association to discuss this issue, so that we can work with Mountain Bike riders so that they respect the Park Regulations and Values."

Many thanks to Conrad for keeping us informed about this serious issue.



Print
Post

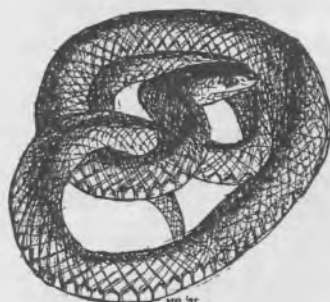
346802/0005

Postage
Paid
Australia

REGISTRATION BY AUSTRALIA POST

PP 346802 / 0005

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



Eastern Brown Snake

(Pseudonaja textilis)

A large, slender brown snake, sometimes found around houses, particularly in rural areas. The snakes shelter under logs, amongst rubbish or in crevices.

Eastern Brown Snakes are active during the day feeding on house mice, rats, lizards, and small birds. They are fast moving and their venom is among the most lethal in the world. While Eastern Brown snakes are quite common in Warrandyte, they are not often encountered.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL TO SEE IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE

FOWSP Membership Renewal Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

Email.....

Membership \$20

Concession \$10

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper