March 2026 **Volume 44 Number 2**

Friends of Warrandyte State Park

Newsletter

Website: www.fowsp.org.au

Friends of Warrandyte State Park (FOWSP) Inc. PO Box 220 Warrandyte 3113
ABN 94170156655/Incorporation No. A0024890C

Editor's Corner

Hi

Thank goodness February is over. Although we can still expect some hot weather, hopefully the searing temperatures and total fire ban days are behind us.

I missed most of February by going on a two week bird watching trip to southern Vietnam. Starting in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), we went north and west, skirting the Cambodian border, before finishing in Da Nang in central Vietnam. It was a very rewarding experience, not just for birds, but for the food and an insight into rural Vietnamese life. Naturally, I've got some pictures of birds from my trip in this newsletter.

Also we have ***Round the Traps*** (p.2), a book review by Lyn (p.3) and a trip report from the Dandenong ranges from Linda (pp.4 and 5).

John

Warrandyte Festival

The festival is on again on the weekend of March 21st and 22nd. As well as the parade and all the fun activities, there will be an information booth with FOWSP, Anderson Creek Landcare and others. The theme of the festival is ***Celebrating Volunteers*** so it couldn't be more appropriate.

This is a magpie?

An Indochinese Green Magpie *(Cissa hypoleuca)* found in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and parts of China. I think we can agree it is a stunning bird. However, it rarely shows itself, being content to fossick around in dense montane rainforests.

Deadline for March's newsletter is
Friday March 27th, 2026
contributions can be emailed to John Young editor@fowsp.org.au
or posted to PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of FOWSP

Around The Traps

LOOK CLOSELY FOR POLLINATORS

Over the late summer months, *Lythrum salicaria* (purple loosestrife) is in full flower. It's a source of nectar and pollen for several pollinators, including blue-banded bees, native bees, butterflies and hoverflies. It can be grown in the confines of a bucket, where maintaining boggy soil is manageable.

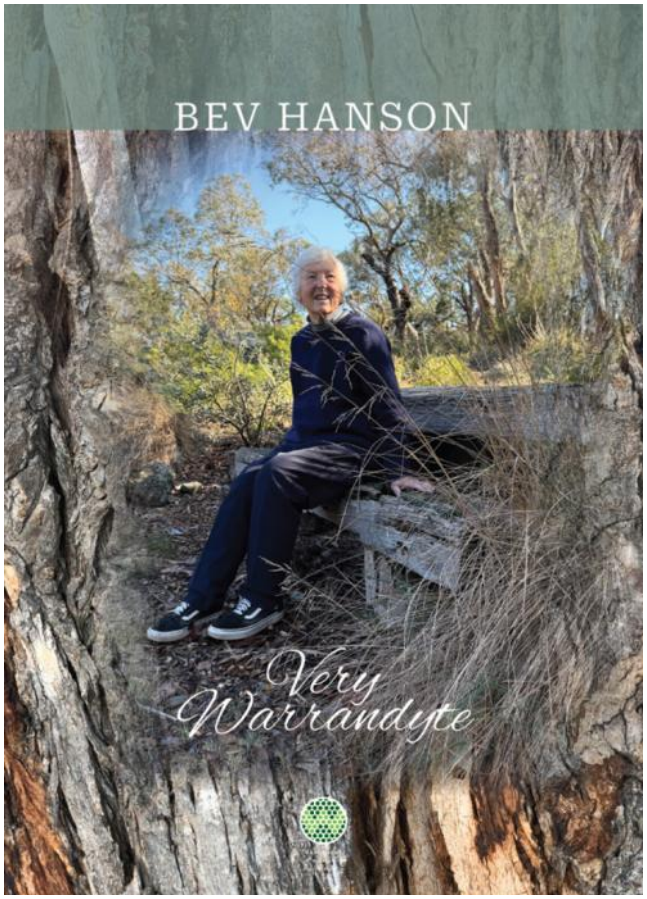
The top right photo shows flowering *Lythrum.* On closer inspection of the photo (see below), you can see two bees: a cuckoo bee and a blue banded bee. *Photo Joy Hick*

Above: A praying mantis and a white cabbage moth, interacting on *Lythrum salicaria*. *Photo Nicola Naylor*

It was Pam's turn to cut the monthly birthday cake in February.

Book chat with Lyn

BEV HANSON: VERY WARRANDYTE



FOWSP has purchased a copy of the book *Bev Hanson: Very Warrandyte* by Jenny Brown for our library.

This is a gorgeous book about Bev Hanson and her gardens and designs, as well as all she has done to preserve and enhance Warrandyte. There are many quotes from Bev, which makes it seem very personal, and it is beautifully laid out with lots of photos and illustrations. The pages from the book (shown above) are a collage of photos of Bev's own garden, which she regularly opens to the public.

While reading about Bev's life, we also learn how landscape design and the use of native plants have changed over the years and how many environmental battles Bev has been involved in that have made Warrandyte what it is today. We can also read explanations of the principles she uses in her garden designs.
I also just enjoyed the pleasant experience of reading such a lovely and inspiring book and would totally recommend it. The library reference number is ED431 (white sticker).

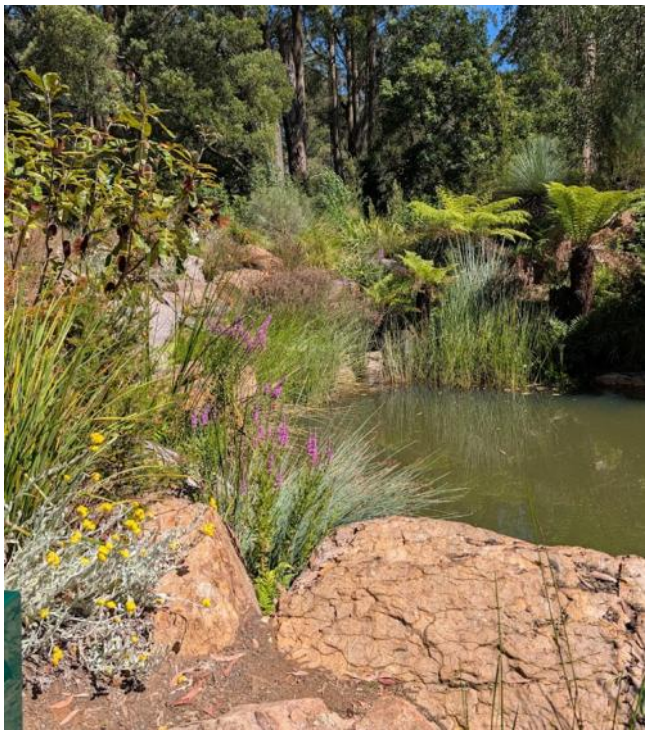
Lyn

Summer Sojourn

Dandenong Ranges 2-5 February 2026

It could have been a day trip, but staying three nights allowed us to soak up some of the atmosphere of the Dandenong Ranges in summer.

Our first priority was visiting the Chelsea Gardens. Arriving early and on a Tuesday, the first hour felt exclusive. We found it moving. Featuring plants from across Australia, the garden was enhanced by the *Eucalypts* in the background *(photo below)*. *Lythrum* bloomed near the dam *(top right)* and some of the summer flowering plants from WA added colour *(bottom right).* We did see, but I couldn't photograph, some native bees amongst the blooms. The whole effect upon us was enchanting and emotional. We stayed until a slowly growing crowd intruded on our reverie. It is hard to describe but the feeling of being in the garden was almost religious.



Above: Chelsea Garden path with Waratah sculpture

For more information see the following link from Parks Vic: https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/dandenong-ranges-botanic-garden/attractions/chelsea-australian-garden-at-olinda

As luck would have it, a total fire-ban was declared on the Wednesday, and all the National Parks and Gardens were closed. We chose to spend a few hours at SkyHigh, where parking coast $5, but the wind was refreshingly cool and the surrounding area was free to wander. While most of the tourists spent their time taking in the view (hazy through the smoke of the Lerderderg fire), we explored the short forest tracks.

Highlights of the walk were some Pink Hyacinth Orchids *(Dipodeum roseum — see above)* a range of common butterflies and an echidna slurping up ants at the edge of the track.

The delicious cakes at the SkyHigh Bistro and a tasty dinner at Indian by Nature made for an enjoyable way to spend time when parks were closed.
https://www.skyhighmtdandenong.com.au/

We were able to spend an hour at the nearby Karwarra Native gardens before returning home. I was intrigued by the way that the same blooming Pink Hyacinth Orchids were scattered amongst some of the curated parts of the garden.

I wondered how it was possible that, while many shrubs had been planted, the orchids, which can't be successfully transplanted, have continued to thrive.

Above: Xerochrysum at Karwarra

Those who know me well will not be surprised that Peter erected a lightsheet one night so that I could photograph the local insects. This Southern Moon Moth was the most eye-catching find. The caterpillar of this moth feeds on various *Acacia* species and grows to about 7cm before pupating. The adult moth often shelters in sheds or other protected areas motionless for months. Perhaps you may find one in your shed?

Above: Southern Moon Moth (Dasypodia selenophera)

Linda

Pittas anyone?

Pictured here are three of the four Pittas listed for Vietnam. They are (from top to bottom): Bar-bellied Pitta *(Hydrornis elliotii),* Blue Pitta *(Hydrornis cyaneus)* and Blue-rumped Pitta *(Hydrornis soror).*

Pittas are smallish, about 20cm beak to tail, but as they all have almost no tail, they appear as chunky, bantam sized birds. Although they can fly, they usually hop along the floor in dense vegetation seeking out insects, snails and other food among the leaf litter.

Pittas are an Asian genus, spread from the Philippines, through South-east Asia to Indonesia and PNG. Australia has three species as mentioned in an earlier newsletter. There are a couple of Pittas in Madagascar and Mozambique but not elsewhere in Africa.

These beautiful birds are much sought after by bird watchers everywhere and we were privileged to see these three recently. We had to work fairly hard to get them, walking into the rainforest and staking out patches of open ground amongst the trees and vines. Having said that, once we were in place behind a shade cloth screen, we only had to endure a few bottom-numbing hours waiting for them to turn up and pose for the cameras.

More beautiful birds

Shades of home. Owners of a café near Da Lat, Vietnam, had planted weeping *Callistemons* as bird attracting trees and it worked! The café has become a must do stopover first thing every morning before heading out for a day's birding. Top left is a Grey-crowned Crocias *(Laniellius langbianis),* top right, a male Black-throated Sunbird *(Aethopyga saturata).*

Below, the wonderfully named Germain's Peacock-Pheasant *(Polyplectron germaini)*, a male, seen at one of the hides.

TAGS (Thursday activity groups)

TAGS meet at the nursery at 9.00 am for a 9.15 am departure. Please remember to wear appropriate footwear and clothing for the weather, and please bring your own filled water bottle.
Contact number: 0408 317 327

Difficulty ratings:
Easy: Even terrain, some light lifting, kneeling and bending involved. Few tripping hazards.
Moderate: Uneven terrain, light to heavy lifting, kneeling and bending involved. Tripping hazards present.
Difficult: Steep terrain, light to heavy lifting, working in over-grown areas and lots of bending. Many tripping hazards and slippery surfaces present.

Check the website for any changes at http://fowsp.org.au/activities.php

5/3/2026	Pound Bend Tunnel	David	Maintenance inc. carpark planting	Mod
12/3/2026	TBA	Phil/Cam		Mod
19/3/2026	Pound Bend Rd Gallatly's	Don/Gray	Woody weeds	Easy/Mod
26/3/2026	Hodgkins Ridge Wonga Park	Phil	Weed work	Mod
2/4/2026	Fourth Hill Whipstick Gully	Don	Woody weeds	Mod
9/4/2026	Pauline Toner Reserve	Phil/Cam	Cassinia thinning/woody weeds	Easy/Mod

Recipe of the Month
Easy Carrot cake

Cake

260g plain flour
2 tsps baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1 1/2 tsps ground cinnamon
295ml vegetable oil
200g granulated sugar
190g brown sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
4 large eggs (room temp)
300g grated, peeled carrots
120g chopped pecans
70g raisins

Icing

225g cream cheese
2 tsps cornflour (optional)
140g caster sugar
1/3 cup **(cold)** full cream
1/2 cup pecans (topping)

Preheat oven to 180C. Grease two 22cm cake tins and line with baking paper

Mix flour, baking soda, salt and cinnamon in a bowl

In a separate bowl, mix the oil, caster sugar, brown sugar and vanilla. Add the eggs, one at a time and whisk in well

To the wet mix, add the dry ingredients in 3 parts, gently stirring until they disappear and the batter is smooth. Stir in the carrots, nuts and raisins

Divide the mix between the 2 tins and bake for 30 to 45 minutes until the layers are springy to the touch

Remove the cakes from the oven, leave in the tins for 15 minutes before cooling on cake racks

For the icing, mix the cornflour and sugar together

Beat the cream cheese in a bowl until very smooth. Add the sugar and cornflour carefully, a teaspoon at a time

Pour in the cold cream. Beat on medium to medium high speed until it is whipped and creamy. If this doesn't work, chill for 15 minutes and try again

When the cake layers are completely cool, ice one to form an even layer. Add the second layer and ice the top. Leave the sides as is. Finish with a handful of nuts

Sybille — from www.inspiredtaste.net

FOWSP THURSDAY PROGRAM

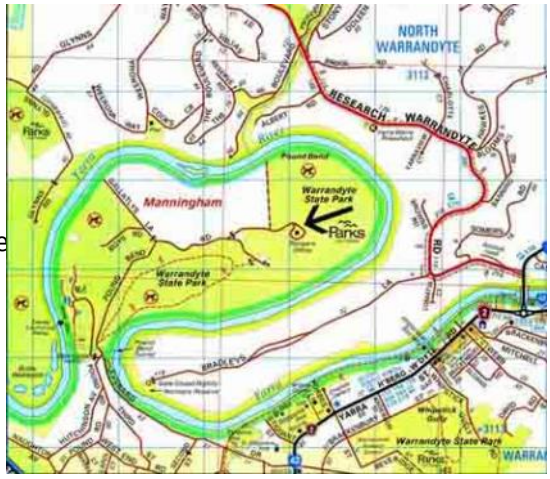
We meet for propagation and other nursery activities every Thursday morning at 9.30 am at the Warrandyte State Park depot, Pound Bend Road, Warrandyte (Melway 23 C10), unless otherwise stated below. Propagation takes place from 9.30 am to 12.30 midday.

No prior experience necessary -
There is always someone available to show you the ropes.

NURSERY OPENING HOURS
The nursery is open for plant sales every Thursday.
9.30 am to 12.30 pm *and*
the first Saturday of every month, 9am to 1pm (to coincide with the Warrandyte Market) April to November only.

Closed Christmas and New Years days.
Also closed to customers and volunteers on days of severe weather and on Total Fire Ban Days

Prices: Members $2.50 Non-members $3.00 (tube stock)



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Nillumbik Gardens For Wildlife

Gardens For Wildlife is a Nillumbik Council initiative designed to encourage and guide local residents to create wildlife -friendly gardens that support biodiversity and improve habitat connectivity.

Upon registering your interest (Google Nillumbik Gardens for Wildlife where you will see an on-line form), you will be visited by two trained, friendly and local 'Garden Guides' who will undertake an assessment, provide suggestions and a written report.

The programme is designed to provide guidance on habitat planting with indigenous plants. It is not a general gardening advice service, nor does it provide guidance on design or landscaping.

There is a newsletter with plenty of ideas for our own gardens, as well as a featured plant.

Each edition starts with the indigenous season we are currently in and runs through some of the things that might be happening.

FOWSP MARKET TRAILER

Thanks to those who volunteered to run the trailer in February.
Christine Arndell, Chris Kay, Pam von Drehnen, Jeff Cranston, Lyn Moore, Jan Falconer and Artur Muchow
Trailer transport: Artur Muchow

The Warrandyte market is held on the first Saturday morning of the month from 8.30 am to 12.30 pm at Stiggants Reserve. Volunteers are rostered in pairs to man/woman the FOWSP information trailer for just one hour.

If you are interested in being on the market roster
please contact Jan Falconer on 0419 872 096 or email trailer@fowsp.org.au
First timers are always paired with someone more experienced.

Next market dates are:
Saturday, March 7th 2026
Saturday, April 4th 2026 (Easter Saturday)

WSP COMMITTEE 2026		OTHER FOWSP CONTACTS
Artur Muchow 0415 383328	**Secretary**	**Nursery Manager Josh Revell** **Nursery Phone 0408 317 327** **nursery@fowsp.org.au**
Tony Oliver **treasurer@fowsp.org.au**	**Treasurer and Membership**	**Park Office 03 8427 2132**
John Young 0412327798 **editor@fowsp.org.au**	**Newsletter editor (non committee position)**	**Ranger contact** **Phil Rance** **philip.rance@parks.vic.gov.au**
Joy Hick 0418 573916		**Newsletter assist and Librarian** **Lyn Moore**
Gray Ardern 0418 190261		
Lyn Moore 0409 683 041 **lynm333g@gmail.com**		**Market Trailer** **Jan Falconer 0419 872 096** **trailer@fowsp.org.au**
Jono Del-Re		**Manningham Council Rep** **Cathy Willis 0427 660 651**
Jeff Cranston 0418 396 647 **legality@bigpond.com**		**Webmaster** **Jason Patton 0402 121838** **webmaster@fowsp.org.au**
Staff Representative		**Facebook coordinator** **Carolyn Noel 0409 901441**
Lynda Chambers 0466 274421 phenologist@gmail.com		

Next Committee Meeting	
Date:	Tuesday March 10, 2026
Venue:	Education Centre Pound Bend
Time:	17:00

Are your subs due??

Please check the message on the email you receive with the newsletter link by scrolling down beyond the link . If subs are due soon a message such as below will be seen in the email.:
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FOWSP Membership Renewal Form

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Telephone no. ..... **Email** .....

Membership (family) $30 **Newsletter by email (tick box)**
Concession $15

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113 or renew on the website www.fowsp.org.au with the option of direct deposit payment.