



FRIENDS OF WARRANDYTE STATE PARK Inc.

NOVEMBER 1995

NEWSLETTER

WORKING BEE SUCCESS

Despite loosing an hours sleep because of daylight saving, about 25 FOWSP members (and a couple of non-members) turned out for a working bee on Sunday October 29th.

From 10am to 12md there was a hive of activity going on around the nursery and in Frogland which resulted in the following fantastic achievements.

The large shadehouse was completely re-mulched and the boxes of plants sorted into various categories.

The small polyhouse was given a thorough clean. Moss and algae, which had built up over the years, was scrubbed off all wooden structures and wire benches.

In Frogland, mulch was spread and a large area of extremely lush Sweet Vernal and Yorkshire Fog (two of the Park's worst grassy weeds) were removed.

Many other jobs such as soil sieving, pot sorting and general weeding were also completed.

The hard work was followed by a delicious sausage sizzle. Many thanks to everyone who came along for generously giving their time and for making the day such a success.

RANGERS HOUSES/REVEGETATION

Since the last newsletter 3 members of the FOWSP committee met with local MLA Phil Honeywood. The case was put to him that at least one Ranger should reside in or close to the Warrandyte State Park for reasons of Park security etc. As a result Phil Honeywood has conveyed the concerns of the group to the Minister for Conservation Mark Birrell and we are awaiting a decision.

The committee members also requested funds for the revegation of the vacant land where the houses once stood. Phil Honeywood intimated that this money could be obtained as a grant from Melbourne Parks and Waterways.



MEMO FROM MAJI

The Park Staff have been pleasantly surprised and excited by the numbers of Friends attending various working bees lately. It has been good to see the new Committee in action, and the support they have been getting all round. I'm sure that the weather has helped to bring people out as we shrug off those winter blues. I attended the recent Sunday working bee of the 29th of October and what a sight it was, wheelbarrows, shovels, mulch and people young and old moving around the shade house and replacing the mulch. Our Leading Hand, Colin Bromiley recently gave Don some assistance with the new soil bin. Some good ideas have surfaced regarding the sieving process!! I was fortunate enough to watch a demonstration of Alistair Trail's new "Briza" comb made from a recycled bow saw blade - a very clever tool, and so light. I have been around to the Koornong lately and seen what has happened to that old ivy patch! Well done to Cathy, Laurie, Peg, Margaret D & Margaret B and the rest of the crew.

Friends of Stone Brae played host to Wonga Park Kindergarten recently. The children were taken on an "Explorer's Trail", some planting and finished the afternoon with damper - they put a new meaning to "tracks and scats". The 300 plants were a welcome contribution to the "Ground Cover Matrix" Restoration project undertaken by the Friends.



Thanks to Ruth Rankin of the 'Osborne Landcare' group in spotting the illegal clearing that took place in the Park. It was a genuine mistake and the owner has agreed to a rehabilitation plan and no doubt will take up Ruth's offer of support.

Animals, animals everywhere! Our healthy koala population is on the move appearing in all sorts of nooks and crannies. Thank you to the people who keep sending fauna observations, we now have it on a data base thanks to Lucy Cotter, one of our work experience students. Julie Pryor and Kerrie Fairleigh (our animal shelters) tell us that their charges, 'K4koala' and 'that little wombat' are doing fine. Thanks to Kevin Mason (Healesville Sanctuary) who came to assist with an injured koala on Jumping Creek Rd. As it turned out 'Nigels Animal Rescue' and local vet Derrick Fairleigh just happened to be passing - one large stropky male koala fixed by the vet and last seen at Sandy Bay picnic are, Jumping Creek Reserve. It has been good to assist the Wildlife Care Network where we can. We all agree that people need to learn to share their domestic habitat with our local fauna.

Stephen Anderson will be running a 'Parkare' meeting soon to see how we are all going and where we all may wish to head. Hope to see you all at the end of year 'Bush Dance'

Regards
Matt



FOWSP ON LOCATION (one)

Olive Walters is never one to miss an opportunity when it comes to picking up tips on propagation, particularly of wildflowers. On a recent trip to Perth she not only sought out the following hints from a propagation expert at Kings Park, but Olive also returned with a precious bottle of water.

This was no ordinary water, one whiff of the murky contents was enough to discover its special properties - smoke.

There has been much interest in the recent research being carried out in W.A. on smoke initiated germination either using smoke directly or in solution. Plants which have had their germination enhanced by this technique include: *Acrotriche serrulata* (Honeypots), *Astroloma humifusum* (Cranberry Heath), *Correa glabra* (Rock Correa), *Epacris impressa* (Common Heath) and *Hibbertia* spp. (Guinea Flowers).

Here are the hints Olive brought back from Bob Dixon, Kings Park W.A.

Cover seed with crushed granite or blue metal - 2 to 3 times depth of seed.

Plant fairly small seeds in Autumn.

Prick out 2-3 days after germination.

Acacia (etc.) seed - if old may need to be heat treated twice.

To sterilize seed mix - put in poly bag - 2 inches thick - moist - in full sun for about three days.

Use round (flat) end of dibble stick to make hole when pricking out.

Take cuttings early in the day.

Soft cuttings - keep tip.

Hard cuttings - remove tip.

Try setting cuttings in a trench in the mix.

BITS & PIECES

1. Thank you to Robina and Tony Summers of Pigeon Bank Lane Studios. For our Wattle Day display they produced, at very short notice, labelled and laminated cards on which we can mount samples of Warrandyte's 15 indigenous wattles.
2. We are looking for a person or persons who would enjoy looking through several boxes of old FOWSP files and memorabilia, the aim being to cull unnecessary material. If this appeals to you please phone Pat or Mike.
3. Please put your "inspiration-cap" on as we'd like heaps of suggestions for an appropriate name for our newsletter. If you can't personally post it in the Folly suggestion box, you could send it to Joan at 101 Bradleys Lane. So far we have 7 suggestions.
4. Have you noticed the extensive landscaping and indigenous planting occurring on the south side of the river? The City of Manningham outdoor staff are doing a fantastic job. Congratulate them if you get a chance. Areas being improved include Mullum Mullum Creek, Stiggants Reserve, The Bridge roundabout, the cricket and football grounds, Finn's Reserve, as well sections of the verge on the Heidelberg - Warrandyte Rd.



FOWSP ON LOCATION (two)

FOWSP member Ray Clarke is over 80 years old, but Ray has shown that age is no barrier to an active life. When he's not heaving boxes and shovelling mulch at the nursey on Thursdays he's out walking. Recently he returned from a trip to New South Wales during which he walked 85kms.

Here is Ray's account of his visit to the rainforests and northern rivers of N.S.W.

There are 39 National parks from Newcastle north to the Queensland border with a total area of over half a million hectares. The Parks vary widely in character and vegetation from sub-tropical rainforest to dry sclerophyll granitic country and include coastal parks and large areas of wilderness.

Six of us set out from Coffs Harbour with a tour guide/bus driver up the Bellinben River valley. We found the place where Frederik Doepel, who had arrived from Finland in 1880, built and launched the "Alma Doepel" in 1903. His ship building must have been sound as she still sails in Port Philip Bay.

The following two days walking in the rainforests of Dorigo and The Never Never introduced us the amazing size and variety of the trees in the area. As well as Red Cedar (sadly mainly cut out), there was Black Butt, Scribbly Gum, Angophora, Tallow Wood, Spotted Gum, Coach Wood, Hoop Pine and Blue Gum. I noted at least twenty or more other species. The creepers, epiphytes, and understory are never ending. Murderous strangler vines themselves grow into enormous trees.

We moved on to the New England Plateau where at Lookout Point, 1564m., the ice crackled under our feet, but the 270 degree view of mountains, valleys and the distant Pacific Ocean justified the effort. During one of the longer walks, we climbed abrupt Cathedral Rock, a rock scramble inculding help from a stout anchored chain while working along a rock face.

Leaving this wonderland we drove to Yamba at the mouth of the wide Clarence River. We spent a day walking the Angourie Coastal Park among prolific wildflowers which included Hovea, Hardenbergia, Kennedia, with wild Iris and Hibbertia making a startling contrast of purple and gold. (Pat and Cathy would have been in raptures).

In addition to the magnificent coastal views we saw Whistking Kites, Brahminy Kites, White-cheeked Honeyeaters (tuppence a bunch), Red-backed Wrens, Gannets, Terns, Cormorants and Wattle Birds - both Red and Little. A Humpback Whale was spouting offshore, and a marine biologist introduced us to some of the extraordinary lifestyles of the odd sea animals that live under the rocks.

On another sun-drenched day we voyaged up the Wooli River for a barbeque and wandered the banks seeing an amazing assortment of birds. (In two weeks I identified 94 species of birds which included water birds, predators, ground and bush birds).

Finally, working from Grafton, we spent more time in The Gibraltar N.P., 17273ha., and the Whelshpool N.P. 27715ha. In all, we walked 85km., all of which were in National Parks - memories to be cherished.

FOWSP CLASSIFIEDS



Wanted: One or more bibliophiles.

Qualifications: A love of books.

Task: Care for our wonderfully comprehensive library.

Remuneration: Heaps of satisfaction and the opportunity to read marvellous books you couldn't possibly afford to buy.

Location: Presently housed in the depot. We hope to make the books much more accessible by moving them to the proposed Folly extension. This will be another major "Friends" building project which at this stage is on the drawing board (Ron Taylor's.)

Contact: Any committee member would love to hear of your offer to take the job.

(Finally thanks again to Shirley Mandemaker for caring so well for our library.)

CHRISTMAS HAMPER

We still have heaps of space in our Christmas Hamper - all contributions will be received gratefully by Cecilia le Duc. No need to restrict yourself to food items - anything you think some other human being might enjoy - will be a welcome addition.

If you can't personally bring your offering down on Thursdays you might ask another member to help you out. If you're really stuck either Joan (844 3213) or Cecilia (725 3959) would be happy to collect your offering.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Our Christmas get together (nice and early) is on **FRIDAY 17th. of NOVEMBER** in the Mechanic's Institute Hall. Great fun for family and friends as it's a **BUSH DANCE**. Tickets are available from Cecilia (725 3959) or Joy(844 2638) at approx. \$5 a single and \$10 a family. Our hamper will be won by some lucky person - maybe you !!! This is a chance to get together and enjoy congratulating ourselves for all the marvellous improvements we've made in 1995 to the nature reserve we call Warrandyte State Park.

FINAL SUNDAY ACTIVITY (26th NOV)

Come and see the towering Manna Gums (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) in Normans Reserve. Some are old enough to have hollows large enough to attract parrots and lorikeets (and who knows what variety of nocturnal birds and mammals)? On the ground we know from some trapping done in early 1992 that Brown Antechinus and Swamp Rat have used this area. Let's use this opportunity to improve their habitat. We will also be having a look at some of the rare and significant plants which "lurk" in this section of our park. Starting time is a little later than usual, being **2 PM**.

Meet us at the end of Bradley's Lane. BYO gloves, planting and weeding gear and some afternoon tea which will be at Joan and Ken MacMahon's place.

BRISBANE RANGES VISIT - 8th. OCTOBER

Owing to numbers being down, we decided that the local bus was going to be a bit expensive, with that in mind 9^{1/2} members of F.O.W.S.P. set off from Pound Bend at 8.20am. sharing their cars. We had a couple of minor deviations along the way due to some of us not being 100% sure of which direction we were going in! One certain lady headed East out of Pound Bend instead of going West!!

We arrived at the Stieglitz Court House (very historic) at about 10.30 to be met by the Friends of the Brisbane Ranges group. After sorting ourselves out, introductions and learning who was who we set off for a walk before lunch. We followed a creek line through the old mining area, lots of old diggings, nothing really exciting plant wise on that stretch until we climbed up to the ridge tops. We found several species of Orchids some of which were quite prolific in higher areas, very similar to Warrandyte. This was also our first encounter with the Austral Grass Tree.

We all had lunch at the Bert Boardman Picnic area, about 5 minutes from Stieglitz, lots of other picnickers so it wasn't as quiet as we would have thought.

The afternoon walk was quite different, through flatter, more sandy country with a much lower tree canopy. The wild flowers in general were more abundant on this walk, in particular several different species of Peas in flower, along with local Grevillea species. The Grass Trees were everywhere, to see so many at the one time looked spectacular, probably the plant most associated with the Brisbane Ranges area. Unfortunately, several areas had fallen victim to the root disease Cinnamon Fungus, leaving dead Grass Trees in patches in this area of the Park. Of all the hundreds of Grass Trees that we saw we were lucky enough to find only one in full flower, quite an amazing sight as the flower stem appears out of all proportion to the plant itself, Pat and Angie looked rather small standing next to it.

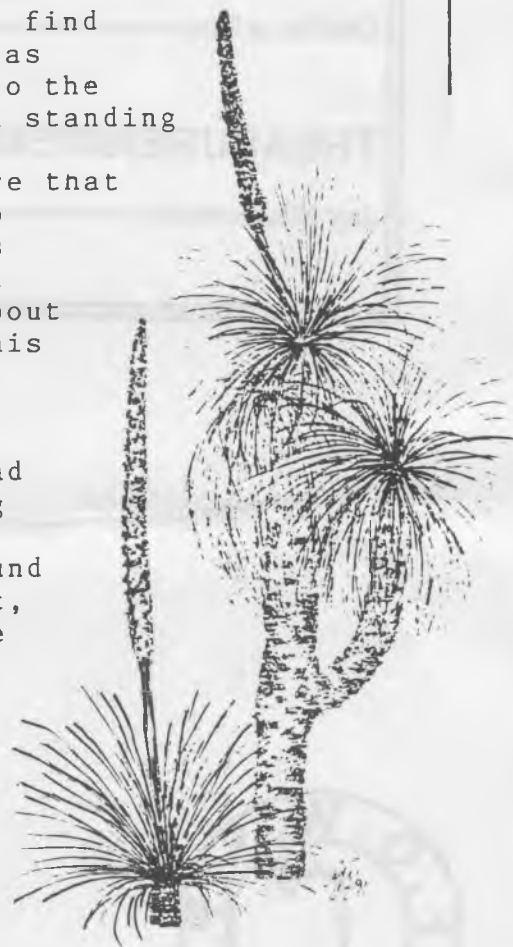
During the afternoon walk we were all sure that one of the chaps from the Brisbane Ranges Group was trying to Con Pat into having a look at his land adjacent to the National Park. He realised that she seemed to know what she was talking about so hoped for a bit of plant identification at his place, he was a bit disappointed when we headed for home.

We arrived back at the car park at about 3.30pm. all hanging out for a cup of tea. We had a chat with the Brisbane Ranges group, learning how to obtain the Orchids of Victoria book for \$8.00! We thanked the group for showing us round their Park and for making it an enjoyable visit, we also extended to them the invitation to come over to Warrandyte State Park and see how it's really done!

All in all we had a great day with good weather and the opportunity to meet another group and to visit a different environment to that found in Warrandyte.

Ron Taylor.

PS. The 1/2 member was Ethan le Duc.



Xanthorrhoea australis

Thursday Nursery Activities.

10am onwards. Lunch, soup roster. Come and learn how to propagate our indigenous plants. Walk in the afternoon. Learn your way around the Park, identification skills, seed collection, have a marvellous time.

REGISTRATION BY AUSTRALIA POST

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