

June 2000

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

Friends of Warrandyte State Park (FOWSP) Inc. P O Box 220 Warrandyte 3113

Burgan Trial Continues

By Pat Coupar

Just over a year ago FOWSP began its attack on Burgan (*Kunzea ericoides*) at Black Flat. The site, near the south-east perimeter of the Reserve, was chosen not only because it contained dense Burgan with associated eucalypt dieback, but also because it has defined edges from which to work, including an adjacent open area containing a number of significant annual herbs and sedges.

Andy Nixon, Ranger in Charge, led the charge (so to speak) with the chain saw. Fowspians followed with 'dabbers' of Round Up (glyphosate) to paint onto the cut stumps. FOWSP 'dragers' moved in to haul the cut branches over to a rapidly growing pile, to be burnt at a later date.

Others were busy pulling small Burgan seedlings which had germinated since last years blitz and guarding eucalypts, wattles and peas that had also responded to the clearing. Some struggling seedlings were also found as the Burgan was cleared, including an interesting Flax-lily (*Dianella* sp.) and Lomatia (*Lomatia* sp.).

Fungi expert, Bruce Fuhrer came along to give another aspect to the Burgan issue. Bruce showed us photos of a number of new fungi species – some undescribed, that he had found growing in moss beds under dense Burgan. It seems there is at least something good to come out of this aggressive coloniser. While Bruce is not against the Burgan removal at Black Flat, he wanted to be sure that we were not working too near to his study sites.

So why are we removing one of Warrandyte's

indigenous plants? The Burgan issue is a contentious one that has been simmering for a long time. Certainly in Warrandyte this species is out of balance and out of control.



The above photograph is taken of Yarra Brae hill slopes from the river. It shows the domination of Burgan that is so dense that only a few straggling eucalypts can make it through the thick understorey and many of these are either dead or dying. The diversity of wattles, bursaria, pomaderris and other small trees and shrubs is simply not there.

Burgan control in Warrandyte State Park is not a realistic achievable option. It is labour intensive and not self-sustaining. The trial at Black Flat is just that – a trial, a place where we can monitor and record over the next few years what happens to a site once the Burgan has been removed. And, at this early stage, the natural regeneration of species other than Burgan is looking promising.

The Flora is Launched

By Jane Pammer

It will be strange to know a Pat Coupar who isn't busy with the 'Flora of Warrandyte'. I have only known her closely for the last five years – 'Flora of Warrandyte' began in earnest about this long ago.

The launch of the 'Flora' took place in the Friends 'folly', several Friday's ago – such an enchanting space especially with a fire going (which it was) and night all around. Approximately 50 people gathered to witness the launch. A great turnout, particularly given the start time was after dark, it was raining and the venue was outdoors!

The two volumes were displayed on two lecterns (the wooden stands from which bible readings and the like were done, in school assemblies of my youth). A nice touch I thought, and a pair of white gloves provided for those with sticky hands (there was plenty of food).

Andy Nixon, Ranger in Charge, hushed us and launched these gems, then David Van Bockel and Pat said some words. Modest words compared to the significance of the project they had just

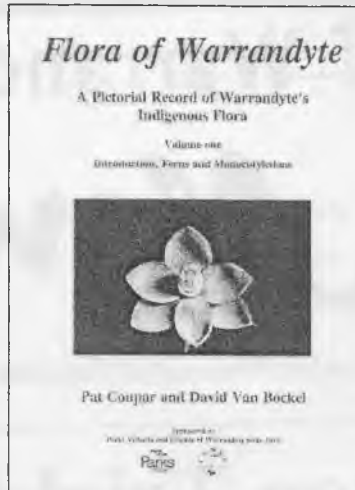
completed. I do remember that Pat thanked her trusty camera and the indigenous plants of the Park, and expressed the hope that these books will contribute to the task of trying to conserve these plants.

I know that for both of them it was a momentous occasion because it signified the conclusion of a highly consuming and lengthy project. For the rest of us it was a chance to thank them for their labors through our presence.

These final volumes contain a fascinating introductory section on the different plant communities within the Park, with one or more photos of each – nothing like a picture to say many words.

Thank you to the staff of Warrandyte State Park for hosting the evening, the food and drink and firewood was provided by them as well as a tarpaulin to extend the undercover area – vital in the wet circumstances.

I had a lovely evening and am glad to have participated in a collective thank you.



Arbour Week Plantings

By Cathy Willis

FOWSP members, along with Park staff, put 500 plants in the ground at two major plantings during Arbour Week in May.

The first was on Thursday morning at Tarooma Reserve. About twenty people planted, guarded and watered in 250 trees and shrubs.

Tarooma Reserve borders Anderson's Creek, where Melbourne Water has recently carried out stream flow improvement and weed work. It is also one entrance to "Warrandyte Walk", the walking track along the river through the township. Manningham City Council bush crews have vastly improved this previously weedy riparian strip in recent years, so it seemed appropriate that we lend our support to this joint effort of the three agencies. A shrub layer was almost absent around the car park in Everard Drive, but not any longer! It was a beautiful sunny morning and a fantastic turnout, thanks to all the old and new faces who came along to lend a hand.

Arriving at Mt. Lofty wetland on Sunday morning I saw large group of people standing around the entrance and thought "oh no, we didn't bring enough plants!". In my dreams. They were

actually a VNPA Walk, Talk and Gawk group assembling for a guided tour of Mt. Lofty lead by Flora Anderson. It was in fact a very small group of

FOWSP members (all but one were committee members) and Park staff who enriched the wetland edges with another 250 sedges, semi-aquatic wildflowers, shrubs and trees. Many thanks to the VNPA members who all planted a grass each.



So was Arbour Week a success?

The Flora Management Team and the Nursery Manager started planning last year. Staff and the committee worked out dates and details. Contractors prepared the sites. The all essential Thursday propagators produced the goods. On Thursday at Tarooma Reserve it all came together and was great to see. But despite the excellent company and delicious BBQ on Sunday, I personally found it to be a very disappointing day.

To Own One Percent of Australia

By Ray Clarke

This is the twenty five year objective of Earth Sanctuaries Ltd. The company is the first publicly listed company in the world with the core business of conservation as an economically viable business.

Founded in 1985, their procedure is to acquire land, fence it against feral animals, eradicate the feral animals and weeds in the area, commence revegetation, and then to introduce threatened native animal species.

The company already has four properties in South Australia, and three in New South Wales, which are attracting regular income from visitors.

As a result of a recent share issue, \$12 million was subscribed in shares at \$2.50 each.

A recent purchase at Little River near the You Yangs, of Murrawoolan will be open to the public by Christmas. They estimate they will have 100,000 visitors a year from Geelong, Melbourne and further afield, The property will be of 1,200 hectares, and they propose to introduce Brush-tail Rock Wallabies, Eastern Barred Bandicoots, Southern Brown Bandicoots, Long-nosed Poteroos, Eastern Quolls, Red Betongs, Eastern Brush-tailed Betongs, Rufous Wallabies and Platypus.



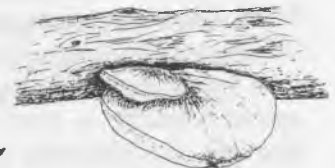
Revenue for the year to June 1988 was \$899,255. This year it is projected to be over \$2,500,000 and next year over \$3,000,000. There are now over 28 million shares on issue, held by more than 6,500 shareholders.

The prospectus for the recent share issue (now closed) is in the library, and makes fascinating reading. The various properties are described and the qualification of management detailed. Twenty-one tourism and ecology awards between 1988 and 1998 are listed.

Dr. Harry Butler, in a long letter supporting the company says " I salute John Wamsley (the Managing Director) and his people for their vision and achievements to date."

David Bellamy says " They (Earth Sanctuaries) cut the crap out of conservation and get on with the job of saving species."

It seems certain that we shall hear a great deal more of this company in the years to come.



Fungi Walk

at Jumping Creek Reserve led by renowned expert Bruce Fuhrer.

Date & Time: Thursday June 15th at 9.45am.

The walk will start promptly at 10.00am

Place: Meet at Sandy Bay car park, Jumping Ck Reserve (Melway ref. Map 23 K9)

BYO lunch



Emerging Weeds

By Pat Coupar

The term 'new and emerging weeds' is spoken about a lot in environmental circles these days. Last month I attended a Greening Australia seminar entitled 'Identifying and Managing Emerging Weeds' to find out more. The seminar was held at Braeside Park in the southern suburbs – quite a hike from Warrandyte in peak hour traffic, but well worth the effort.

Only seven other people had enrolled for the seminar – disappointing for the presenters, but not so for the participants because it meant a more informal day with plenty of time for questions and discussion on how to deal with particular situations.

The presenter for the morning session was John Weiss from Keith Turnbull Research Institute, DNRE. He explained firstly that an emerging weed is not simply a new introduction into Victoria of a plant species which has the potential to invade – although many are – it may also be a weed, like Patterson's Curse, that is already well established in some areas, but could be considered emerging in other areas like the Yarra Valley where it is in the early stages of invasion.

Some weeds are considered 'sleepers'. These are species that occur in low populations at the present time, but have the potential to assume major significance given the right conditions e.g. changes in environmental conditions such as flood, fire or climate change.

We were told some dreadful horror stories of new weeds and their explosive ability for rapid spread resulting in costly control, including one example of a plant that for 50 weeks of the year remains hidden underground, leaving a window of opportunity of just two weeks in which to control it. We were shown slides of grasslands dominated by Serrated Tussock Grass (*Nassella trichotoma*) and paddocks of Cape Tulip (*Homeria* spp.) – an invasive noxious weed of the Western district which, with its oxalis-like corms, is extremely hard to control.

Aquatic weeds were mentioned only briefly with reference to Fanwort (*Cabomba* sp.) and Alligator Weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*), considered by John to be the most aggressive weed of all.

The key points for dealing with emerging weeds are: early detection; identification; reporting; assessment and management. We split into two groups to come up with our own ideas of what, where, when and how to carry out the above. The other participants included, a couple from Save the Bush working in bushland management like myself, two representatives from Vic. Roads, one from Nillumbik Council and one from Natural Resources & Environment, Wimmera region.

After lunch Lincoln Kern from Practical Ecology, and editor of the Indigenous Flora & Fauna Association (IFFA) newsletter, took over the presentation. Lincoln brought home the difficulties encountered when managing weeds that – as they often do – span areas managed by different authorities and private landowners.

Afternoon tea was followed by a wander outside to look at a few weeds first hand. There was an in depth discussion on Chilean Needlegrass (*Stipa neesiana* subsp. *neesiana*), listed by the federal government in June 1999 as one of the top twenty worst weeds in Australia. The biology of this grass makes it hard to control and, apparently, seeds can remain in the soil for over 60 years.

One of the most recently discovered weeds in Warrandyte, found growing on the banks of the Yarra, is Vietnamese Mint. I found out that Blackburn Lake also has the same problem weed. I learnt that Tutsan (*Hypericum androsaemum*), a weed of moist forests, creek and river banks, which seems to have taken off in Warrandyte over the last two years, is now on the decline in many areas due to a rust. However, according to John, a population of Tutsan at Healseville is resistant to the rust, we can only hope that Warrandyte's infestation is not likewise resistant.

Emerging weeds, their identification and management is a subject we will hear more about in years to come. Everyone who attended the seminar had their own story to tell and it was good to share experiences and get different perspectives to common problems. It makes our own seem not quite so bad after all.



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.**

This activities list will be pinned on the noticeboard in the Folly.

JUNE 15TH Morning Activity

Fungi Walk with Bruce Fuhrer.

Meet at Sandy Bay, Jumping Ck Res.
at 9.45am (see ad this newsletter for details)

JUNE 22ND NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

JUNE 29TH NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

JULY 6TH NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

JULY 13TH NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

JULY 20TH NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

Green Wedge Seminar Series 2000

Thursday 6th July "Macquarie Perch and River Management"

Bill O'Connor, a fish biologist from the Flora and Fauna Branch of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. The Macquarie Perch occurs naturally north of the Great Dividing Range. It was introduced into the Yarra 100 years ago. This seminar will concentrate on the biology of the Macquarie Perch, river management, the importance of streamside vegetation and environmental flows in rivers.

Thursday 3rd August "Weed Ecology"

Geoff Carr, director of Ecology Australia, has an extensive knowledge of Victorian flora and the processes that threaten our precious bushland. The seminar will focus on the ecology of weeds, their lifecycles, control and management.

Thursday 7th September "The Impact of Urbanisation on Remnant Vegetation"

Nick Williams from the Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology (part of the Botanic Gardens), will speak on changes in urban vegetation changes over a period of 10 years on landscape and community scales.

The seminars are held at Currawong Bush Park (conference room), Reynolds Rd, Doncaster East 3109.
Melways ref. 34 H6

Starting Time: 7.30 pm

Cost: Free

Tea, coffee and biscuits provided.

Sponsored by Manningham Council

The Deadline for the July Newsletter is July 2nd

FOWSP Committee 2000

Mike Coupar	9903 9567	Contact person	
Flora Anderson	9722 1776	Public Officer	<u>Wildlife Rescue</u>
Pat Coupar	9844 1650	Editor	Julie Pryor 9722 1117
Anthony Owen	9844 4867	Treasurer	
Cathy Willis	9844 1841		<u>Market</u>
Peter Curry	9844 0958	Secretary	Betty Oke 9844 3763
Lee Speedy	9437 0894	Membership Secretary	<u>Park Office</u> 9844 2659
Geoff Speedy	9437 0894		
Alastair Traill	9722 1518		<u>Nursery Manager</u> 0408800026

FOWSP Committee Meetings for 2000 will be held at 7.30 pm on the second Tuesday of each month. Date for 2000 are as follows:

August 8th
September 12th
October 10th
November 14th

July 11th

The committee would appreciate prompt payment of subscriptions. Every year late payment results in considerable extra work for the committee.

A RED DOT on the front of this newsletter indicates that we have no record of your subscription for this year. Please let us know if our records are incorrect.

If we have not received your renewal by JULY 1ST membership will be discontinued.

FOWSP Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

Single \$15
Family \$20
Concession \$10

ALL Fowsp membership fees for 2000 are now due. Please fill in the above and return this form with your subscription to the Secretary, P.O Box 220, Warrandyte 3113.

Membership entitles you to one free plant a month from the market stall, 11 newsletters per year and the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities including slide nights and excursions throughout the year.



News from the Australian Koala Foundation

Koalas Live in Home Ranges

Koalas are not migratory animals. They are highly territorial and in a socially stable group, each individual koala will have its own 'home range' area.

A home range varies in size depending on the habitat quality of bushland. Habitat quality can be measured in terms of the number and density of key food trees. Each home range consists of a number of 'home range trees' and a number of 'food trees', the latter of which are sufficient to support a koala for the term of its natural life.

The 'home range trees' define the boundaries of the individual koala's home range and can be likened to surveyors pegs marking the extent of a property. They are not always apparent to the human eye, but koalas can tell whether a tree 'belongs' to another koala or not.

Even after a koala has died, other koalas usually won't move into the 'empty' home range for about a year, which is the time it takes for the scent markings and scratches of the old owner to disappear through weathering and the decortication or peeling of the bark.



Within a socially stable group, the home ranges of individual koalas overlap with those of their neighbours. It is in the shared, overlapping trees that the majority of social interaction takes

place. It is here that boy meets girl. These are very important trees.

In fact all the home range trees and the food trees are important to the welfare of each individual koala and the group in which it lives. Removal of any of these trees causes disruption in the community and extensive clearing can potentially destroy the group, putting all the koalas at risk of dog attack, car accident, malnutrition and increased susceptibility to disease.

One of the best ways to check whether a tree is being used by a koala is to check for faecal pellets at the base of the tree. Faecal pellets resemble olive pips and are brownish in colour. If you break one open, you can see how finely the eucalyptus leaves are broken down. Unlike possum pellets, koala faecal pellets are not generally fibrous and don't have remnants of insects in them.

Nursery News

From J.R the N.M

Congratulations to the Thursday morning propagation group. They have pricked out over 5,000 plants in the last few weeks. The nursery is full, but we are still having trouble keeping up with the demands for Parks Victoria revegetation, community needs and various orders.

Two thousand plants have gone to Mount Lofty already and another 2000 are waiting to go to other areas of the Park.

The turn out to Thursday propagation mornings has been terrific with many experienced people assisting and training new volunteers. We now have a new table so there is plenty of room for everyone.

The soup roster has begun so even if the work is cold there is something warm to look forward to.

Thanks to the collector of boxes (I-Spy's B.G) and to everyone who has helped at the nursery. Just the other week the call went out for some new shelves in the 'white room'. The response was 'Speedy' to say the least. Thanks to Geoff (Speedy) and Geoff (Larkin).



Botanical Meanings

Kunzea

Dr Gustav Kunze 1793-1851 professor of medicine and botany in Germany. Worked on Præiss's collection of Australian plants 1844-48



These shy, secretive monotremes were once spread across Australia, but no one knows how many are around today. Over the last five years sighting reports from ECHIDNA WATCH participants have given scientists a baseline of data against which to study trends in echidna habits and survival.

Scientists need your help to find out where and how many echidnas are still being seen. Are they becoming threatened?

After evolving for 110 million years it is time to explore and reveal the secrets of their success. Every time you go into the bush keep an eye open for Echidnas - fill in the survey form and send it to ECHIDNA WATCH Survey, Post Office, Penneshaw, S.A. 5222. For additional information contact: Echidna Care Inc. 8 King Edward Ave, Hawthorne SA 5062

ECHIDNA WATCH -- A Sighting Report From ...

Observer's Name
Address:

I Saw an Echidna! <input type="checkbox"/> Alive/ <input type="checkbox"/> Dead (one sighting per form, please)
I was: <input type="checkbox"/> in a vehicle/ <input type="checkbox"/> on foot/ <input type="checkbox"/> on a bike/ <input type="checkbox"/> other. Date (DD/MM/YY): _____
Time of Day: _____ Closest Town/Landmark: _____
State: _____ Postcode: _____ Type of Country: _____
If more than one, how many were together? _____ Size, colour: _____
What was it (were they) doing: _____
If not alive, death by: <input type="checkbox"/> road kill/ <input type="checkbox"/> predator/ <input type="checkbox"/> natural/ <input type="checkbox"/> unknown.
Additional comments:

I Frequently See (or Saw) Echidnas!
From _____ to _____. (dates please) I saw echidnas roughly _____ times per _____ week/ _____ month/ _____ Year. In addition, I saw _____ dead echidnas in that period.
Closest Town/Landmark: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____
Type of Country : _____ Times of day: _____

Bunny Busters 'burbs' Boon

The largest co-ordinated campaign to produce rabbit-free zones in the Warrandyte-Wonga Park area has entered its third year with an unprecedented 1800 households taking part.



The program, a joint venture between the community, Parks Victoria, Manningham City Council, Nillumbik Council and The Department of Natural Resources & Environment, covers over 3000 Ha of public and private land. The participants have released their unofficial catch phrase, "if you're not part of the solution - you're part of the problem".

Anyone seeking more information should ring Glen Jameson, 9844 2659.

Source: WSP May/June 2000 Newsletter



Tables Turning

New tables for the 'Folly' building and environs have been built from recycled ironbark timber and will soon be in situ.

Teaspoon

Where have all the teaspoons gone? We need some more in the 'Folly'.

May Market

Staffing the new C.I.T (Community Information Trailer), used to replace our stall, at the May market were: Neal Tessier, Mark Hassell, Joan MacMahon and Rob Nabben. Many thanks.

Friends Feature

Nicky Adolphson and Jessica Jacobs (final year students at the Swinburne Lilydale campus) are doing an assignment on several 'Friends' groups (including ours).

Furry Friends

Have you seen the Cadbury's Furry Friend series? They include statements like "Tiger or Spotted-tailed Quolls are rare on the mainlandlogging threatens their habitat and foxes and catsmake it hard for Quoll's to survive".

And re the Mountain Pygmy-possum "Tourist development (ski runs, roads) in alpine areas could reduce its habitat even more if care is not taken".

It's good to see a big corporation publishing information like this.

Camping Convenience

The Maroondah Journal newspaper recently reported that "a new public amenities block in a state camping ground in neighbouring Warrandyte is sure to get plenty of use. The shower and toilet facilities had to be located about 100 metres above the Yarra River to ensure there was no risk to river quality".

The mind boggles!

Manningham Weeds

Manningham City Council has produced a small booklet on Weed Identification. For advice, phone Natural Resources & Environment (NRE) offices Box Hill, 9296 4400.

Trust the Trust

Save the Bush, the bushland regeneration arm of the National Trust, will now be jointly operated by the National Trust and Greening Australia, Victoria. Practical work includes environmental weed control, water quality monitoring, site surveying and mapping.

James Gillespie (B.App.Sc. In Horticulture of the University of Melbourne, Burnley 1998) is the manager of the program.

Powerful Person

Jan Tindale was first to see a powerful owl high in a tree on a recent walk led by Ranger David Farrar.

Focaccia Feast

The focaccia, baked by Jeni Willis, for the minestrone soup lunch on Thursday May 24th was well savoured.

Freeway Folly

Is the Bateman Street Bushland (Healesville Freeway Corridor) - an area of 23 acres of remnant forest including 130 species of indigenous plants - soon to be sold off by Vic. Roads for housing development?

The Australian Plant Society wants people to write to the relevant ministers in the state government about this.

Salvinia Solution Leads to Hydro-hyacinth

Research by CSIRO has found a 'salvinia weevil' which munches away at the South American floating fern (salvinia). Salvinia chokes waterways, destroys fisheries and harbours disease-carrying mosquitoes. But! Clearance of salvinia opened the way for a water hyacinth invasion. Another problem! Now a different weevil had been introduced to reduce the water hyacinth problem. (Source: CSIRO, *Ecos*, April-June 2000).

Fungal First

In a world first, CSIRO scientists have succeeded in breaking spore dormancy in certain ectomy corrhizal fungi (which colonise the roots of native woodland plants such as eucalypts. (Source: CSIRO, *Ecos*, April-June 2000).

Persons Present

In the listing of those present at the recent 'Flora of Warrandyte' book launch, I omitted one important group - the Rangers of Warrandyte State Park. Their support in this, and a wide range of other activities, has been invaluable.



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

Jelly Fungi (Tremella spp.)



Gelatinous convoluted fungi, usually found growing on wood. May be bright orange or white. Members of this group of fungi have a high water content and feel like jelly to touch.

Come along to the fungi walk on June 15th, there is a good chance that you will see some of these strange fungi then.

FOWSP Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

- Family \$20
- Single \$15
- Concession \$10