



# FRIENDS OF WARRANDYTE STATE PARK

AUGUST

NEWSLETTER

1987

GLEN JAMESON '@@ "%(£ 844 2395

## Last Meeting

We had twenty people attend the July meeting ( 14 Fowspians, 5 people from Australian Native Orchid Society & Ross Williamson from C.F.L), in a project that saw us put Native Orchid tubers into the Black Flat area. The Orchids were saved from a Housing Development in Eltham.

Some 64 boxes of Orchids, of about 12 different species were successfully relocated. The area of Black Flat, for many years an Orchard at the turn of the century & until the 1930's, is very poor in orchid species. We observed only two plants all day, Tall Greenhoods when there should have been so many more. Remnant plants dot the area but nothing like they would have before disturbance.

Fowspians who attended recieved loads of interesting information on identification, growing & appreciation of native Orchids & will eagerly await to see the success of the operation in the Spring of 1988. Many thanks must go to Lorraine Marshall, who is the A.N.O.S. Conservation Officer. Lorraine was responsible for the finding of the threatened Orchids, for mobilizing A.N.O.S. support & supervising the job. Helen the President of A.N.O.S. was there helping, & full of praise for the operation, the first of its kind for the A.N.O.S. Also great work from Ross Williamson from C.F.L. who spent time getting permission from the Bureacracy, visiting the site & finally overseeing the operation. Park Rangers, especially Chris Worrel, were instrumental in seeing that everything went smoothly...A GREAT JOB...

We then trundled back to the Pound Bend Depot to have a cup of tea & Fruit Cake ( thank you Heather, it was delicious) & listen to Micheal Braby talk on the Eltham Copper butterfly.



**Dull Copper** *Paralucia pyrodiscus*. Larger, more rounded. S. Old to Victoria. Larva pale yellowish grey, on blackthorn, attended by small black ants. L.



**Bright Copper** *Paralucia aurifera*. S. Qld to Victoria and Tasmania. Larva greyish, variously marked, with a pair of projections on back, on blackthorn, attended by small black ants. L.

The Butterfly seems to be a bit of an errant Gypsy. It has been collected from different places, beginning in the Eltham area, & heading N.W. up towards Kiata which is only other known habitat at the moment.

Developers have given the group trying to save the Flutterby until Christmas to find 250,000\$ to buy the land ( sound familiar). Already bulldozing near the colony has put the area at risk. Sensitive environmentalists no doubt. Micheal had some of the attendant Ants in a jar, Ants that carry the pupae from the foliage where they feed to little hibernation chambers underground. They are essential to the Butterflies survival. Sweet Bursaria is the plant necessary for the Butterfly to feed upon, small plants at that. So it is a very particular enviroment necessary for its survival.

Micheal then spoke at length on other local butterfly's habits., their depndance upon certain local trees & shrubs. Thank you Micheal for a great talk & hope that all goes well.



The ecology of the Eltham Copper involves an association with the localised dwarf form of the *Sweet Bursaria*. This is the only known food plant of the butterfly larvae. The larvae are attended by a small black ant, *notoncus enormis*.



The ants nest at the base of the *Sweet Bursaria*. where the butterfly larvae are attended during the day. The ants devour a secretion of sugars from the larvae. At night the ants escort the larvae to the foliage of the food plant to graze.

# ELECTORATE OFFICE:

Shop 2 ANZ Building

Arthur Street

ELTHAM 3095

Telephone 439 1500

Dear Fellow Australians.

## BUY THE BUTTERFLY A BIRTHDAY

1988 marks Australia's Bicentenary.

Our landscape has undergone dramatic and sometimes disastrous changes. Much of our forest cover has gone. Many plants and animal species have become extinct. But when we consider that, in 200 years of colonisation we have not lost a single species of butterfly, the plight of this fragile local resident takes on a special perspective.

Unless the combined efforts of Eltham Council, the State government and all of us (that's you too), can come up with the money needed, this beautiful and unique little creature may vanish forever!

Let's make sure Australia's birthday celebrations include a special celebration of the Eltham, Copper Butterfly's survival!

BUY A BUTTERFLY A BIRTHDAY TOO! Your dollars will determine the destiny of one of Australia's smallest and most beautiful creatures!

I commend the Appeal to all those who have an interest in protecting our native species and in particular the endangered Eltham Copper Butterfly.

Yours sincerely,

*Pauline Toner*

Pauline Toner, M.P.

Member for Greensborough.

All amounts of \$2 and over are Tax Deductable.

Send cheques to:

VICTORIAN CONSERVATION TRUST

(BUTTERFLY APPEAL)

C/O ANZ BANK

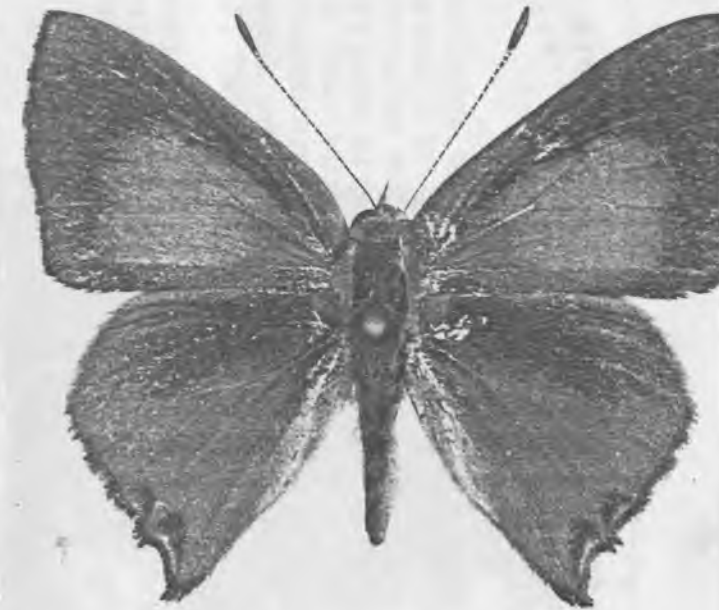
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Eltham 3095

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Donation.....



## *Paralucia pyrodiscus lucida*

"shining fire disk of light".

The Eltham Copper is a small, bright shining butterfly, with a wingspan of 27mm, the larvae feeding on the widespread shrub *Bursaria spinosa*. David Crosby named it in 1951 (*Victorian Naturalist* 67: 225-6). Charles McCubbin (*Australian Butterflies* 1971) for-saw that "This race may soon be extinct since the restricted area where it is found is being developed for housing".

Its last remaining habitat in the Eltham - Greensborough area was thought to be obliterated by development, or too small to survive. In January this year Braby found two major new colonies in the Eltham area, big enough, it was thought, to ensure the long term survival of the insect. At Kiata in the Wimmera area is another colony. Populations between these two districts are thought to be extinct.

# Next Meeting - Onions of Darkness

AUG. 23rd.

I would suppose that many people involved in community groups know the feeling. That certain task, or part of a programme, or time of your life when you feel that you are Colonel Kurts. (Kurts was the central character in "Apocalypse Now" who, carried away with his work, "went up the River", starting his own private army to fulfill his madness.).

When the vision of an ideal is looked at in the cold August light & the illusion that we are getting somewhere is suddenly shattered. Up the proverbial River with or without the proverbial canoe!

Such is the Onion Weed Pull at Gold Memorial every August.

Not that the F.O.W.S.P. don't have much success in the field. Every other project that we have done, shows something for our efforts. Many are reaping great rewards. Take for an example the pine tree removal at 4th. Hill. A bloke came to our stall at the Warrandyte market, to tell me of the prodigious growth in Orchids since we began removing the Pines in 1982. He had been coming to Warrandyte for 30 years, mapping & photographing 4th. Hill Orchids for the past 6 years, the culmination of all his efforts was when he found the Hare Orchid in flower for the first time in 30 years. He was so glad that he had found someone to tell, afraid that his knowledge may not be passed on.

Times like those & you don't feel like Colonel Kurts. The world is connected by the threads of life. We are making sense. We are holding on to those threads. It is just when we come to the Onions of Darkness that things become a little awry. For a start not many people turn up. The amount of onion weed is prodigious. The only way to rid

the Park of them is to hand pull them & remove them. We must make a start somewhere. Some places are obviously showing great improvement, Maidenhair Fern is returning here & there, but there is so much to do.

If ever we need a big roll up it is on August 23rd. A free B.B.Q. will be on for young & old, either for lunch or a chew through the day. Guest speaker is Barbara Blandford, who will speak on Native Snails & Wildlife Refuges.

Onion Weed is genocide. It is killing everything along the Historical Andersons Creek. Come along & try some Bradley sisters' recipes for Onion Weed. Share a joke or two with the colonel around the B.B.Q. We start at 12 noon, the onion weed has 20 years start. Come where Eagles dare, Sing "From Here to Eternity", Rambo those weeds.....



Rendezvous.  
Gold Memorial Rd.  
Car Park.

# What to bring

for some blackberries.

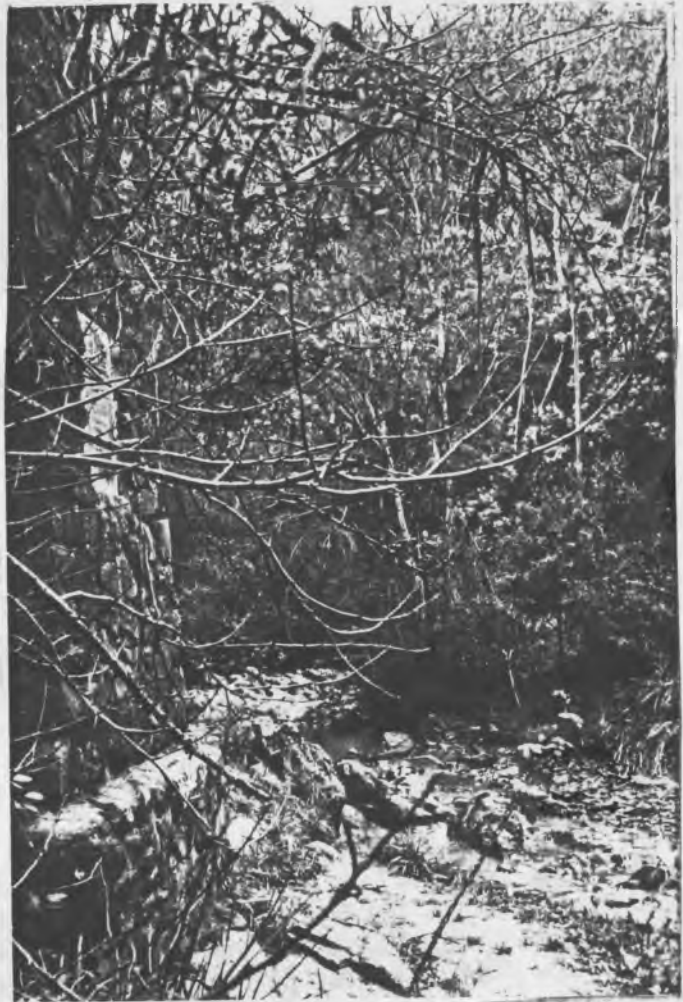
Gloves, small tools such as a trowell, secateurs, small weeding tools, mattock

## Indigdytes in flower

Warrandyte is coming alive with the colour of Wattle. The Spreading Wattle (*Acacia genistifolia*) is a treat at the moment, look for it at the top of Pound Bend Rd. The other wattles are beginning but the one which will catch our noses & eyes will be the Silver Wattle (*Acacia Dealbata*). It will be in full bloom along Andersons Creek when we meet at Gold Memorial Car Park on the 23 rd. of August.

Greenhood Orchids are out in their usual abundance, if we take a look around 4th. Hill we should see the Nodding, Trim, Tall & Ruddyhood.

Helmet Orchids are also out



GOLD MEMORIAL CAIRN ALONG ANDERSON CK. WITH SILVER WATTLE IN THE BACKGROUND.

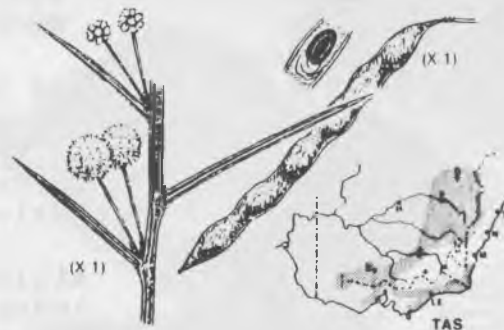
*Acacia genistifolia* (formerly *A. diffusa*) Spreading Wattle

rigid, erect or spreading shrub, 1-3 m. Widespread and common, especially in drier open-forests below 1000 m on low soils of sedimentary origin.

LEAVES: Green, stiff, straight, sharp-pointed phyllodes, somewhat flattened, 1.5-5 cm x 1-2 mm, one raised central vein per phyllode. Ultimate branches green and ridged.

FLOWERS (May-Oct): Pale to bright yellow; globular heads on slender peduncles, 2-4 per axil.

FRUIT: Narrow, almost straight, 5-11 cm x 4-6 mm.



## The Bradley Method

Essential to our development as expert bush weeders, is familiarity with the Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration. The method has been evolved to deal with problems such as those we face. Here is an extract from their philosophical & practical treatise, keep in a drawer for later, use the method in your garden at home.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

### Work from Good Areas Towards Bad Ones

The essence of our method is that native plants have an unexpected power to re-colonise ground which exotic plants have taken from them. Given a proper chance, they will take back the space which weeding makes available to them. They can't do this if you work from bad areas towards good ones.

Where exotics meet natives, there are opposing pressures, and the natives give way to the stronger plants from alien environments. The balance is in favour of the weeds, but only slightly. Starting by clearing the worst areas is worse than inefficient - it is actively harmful. Weeds are given ideal conditions when bare, disturbed soil is suddenly exposed to full daylight. The balance is tipped to favour the weeds, and such areas are far harder to regenerate than those which are left undisturbed.

Working a little at a time from the bush towards the weeds takes off the pressure under favourable conditions. Native seeds and spores are ready in the ground, and the natural environment favours the plants which evolved in it. The balance is tipped towards regeneration. Keep it tipped that way, by always working where the strongest bush meets the weakest weeds.

### Keep the Soil Deeply Mulched

In undisturbed bush, the soil is covered with a litter of petals, leaves, twigs, branches and fallen logs in all stages of decay. This natural mulch is full of organisms, some of which are essential to the growth of native plants. It holds moisture, prevents erosion, and keeps the soil from sudden changes in temperature. As it decays, it returns plant foods to the soil. The natives love it, and very few weed seedlings come up through it.

Disturbed soil favours weeds against natives. Weeding, however carefully done, leaves gaps and disturbs some soil. Replace all the natural ground litter that you can, and where possible mulch also with the weeds themselves.

### Allow Regeneration to Dictate the Rate of Clearing

The better the bush, the greater the area which can profitably be weeded at any one time and place. Regeneration slows down as the weeds get thicker, and the weeding rate must be reduced to match.

Never over-clear. Under-clearing can do no harm, but over-clearing makes regeneration much slower and more difficult. At best it involves a great deal of tiresome and unnecessary follow-up work,

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and at worst it can make regeneration almost impossible without expensive and time consuming replanting. If you have a lot of helpers, spread them out to weed small amounts in many places. The total area they weed will be just as great as if you had concentrated them in one place, and the regeneration rate will be very much greater.

In the plan of work we have put down sizes of areas to be cleared as you reach the thicker weeds, but these are suggestions only. Experience in your own environment is the only guide we know to keep clearing geared to regeneration. There is a great temptation to go just a little further when you know you really should not. If you do, you will pay for it next season, pulling up hundreds of weed seedlings which would never have had a chance to grow if you had kept them smothered, first by their parent plants and then by regenerating natives.

The end results of the plan of work will be most impressive, but at the beginning its effects will be essentially unspectacular. Few people notice a scattering of weeds among the bush plants, and even fewer will notice their absence when you have pulled them up. On the other hand a large clump of a well-known weed like lantana is an eyesore in a prominent position, and you will be under pressure to get rid of it. Resist all temptation to abandon the plan of work for the sake of doing window-dressing. Remove those weeds systematically from the bush outwards, as described on Page 9. Explain what you are doing, and why you are doing it. You will find, as we do, that people will readily understand.

Feel your way from bush towards weeds,  
and be guided by whether weeds or natives  
grow to fill the space which you create  
by weeding. If you are at all uncertain,  
STOP. There is bound to be another  
place where you can take more weeds out,  
profitably.

**BEST & DIRTIEST  
WEEDERS WIN  
ONION WEEDER  
DEEDER POSTERS.**

J. Bradley,  
46 Iluka Road,  
Mosman, 2088

June, 1971

## WEEDING TECHNIQUES - GENERAL

We follow four general rules: disturb the soil as little as possible; sweep back the surface mulch over any soil you do expose; mulch with the weeds themselves; and watch where you put your feet.

### DISTURB THE SOIL AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE

We never use a heavy tool when we can use a light one, and prefer hand-pulling to using any tool at all. Our most widespread weeds, such as lantana and boneseed, are surface-rooted, and can be pulled up with surprising ease. If they are too big for simple hand-pulling, we get them out by cutting the roots a couple of inches below the soil surface, using the smallest tool that will do the job. A sharp sheath-knife or a pair of seccateurs will account for all but the very largest specimens, for which we use a hatchet or a pair of pruning shears. If the cut ends of the roots are left well buried, they don't grow again.

Cutting roots one at a time can be a tedious process, but don't get impatient and fetch a mattock. Heavy tools cut the roots of nearby natives, kill small native seedlings, break up the essential surface mulch, and bring weed seeds to the surface where they germinate. Time taken to keep down soil disturbance is more than repaid in time saved doing follow-up work.

### SWEEP BACK THE SURFACE MULCH

However carefully you weed, you cannot avoid disturbing some ground litter, and exposing some soil. Repair the damage as you go. When you hand-pull a big weed, and some soil comes up with it, you can usually scuff back the mulch quite easily with your foot, but get your hands to it if necessary. If a weed is so big that you have to cut roots, sweep the mulch aside and put it back afterwards. If you forget this brief piece of work, you will very likely find a weed seedling coming up later on in the bare patch.

### MULCH WITH THE WEEDS THEMSELVES

Burning weeds, or carting them out of the bush, is worse than unnecessary - it is wasteful. We keep everything we possibly can to add to the mulch. In dry places we find it safe to put most weeds back on the ground with their roots in the air. In damp places we hang them up on the nearest native until they dry off. It is marvelous what delicate looking native ferns will support if you spread the load and put it down gently. Curtains of Asparagus sprengeri look a bit odd hanging on trees, but we don't worry. It all dries out in the end, and we either let it break up in its own good time, or put it back on the ground. We find woody stems, laid down across the slope, useful for erosion control.