



FRIENDS OF WARRANDYTE STATE PARK

NEWSLETTER

MAY 1990

Editorial

The 'Merry month of May' has certainly also become the busy month of May! with the advent of Arbor Week. This special event really extends over more than two weeks, as it is closely followed by World Environment Day. We have witnessed the arrival of many enthusiastic school children at Pound Bend. Here they have been given talks and instruction on the value of trees, their propagation and allowed to plant many hundreds that had been grown in the nursery. The Rangers and staff spent considerable effort to make this program run smoothly. Plantings were also arranged for the students in their own school yards.

As a result our nursery has been greatly reduced in stock, but we start at once on a new program of germination and propagation for the next springtime planting. The whole exercise is part of a longterm program to help children grow up with with a better appreciation of the importance of their environment.

We should not forget that adults have a responsibility to their surroundings and need to be vigilant, to prevent needless damage to our fragile environment. Such incidents as building projects by municipal authorities, housing projects by private individuals, and many government utilities, have the potential for an irreversible damage. In many cases regulations are not complied with from a lack of knowledge, in others a deliberate attempt to satisfy some selfish need. Either way we have a duty to the community to contact one of the many action groups that are available. We are fortunate to have sympathetic residents on our councils who are always ready to assist in protecting our landscape.

Sometimes bureaucracy has made life difficult for small groups. The grand plan of the Federal Government to plant a billion trees in the next ten years has not impressed a group of citizens in Longwood (Vic.) Last year they purchased 1000 trees from Tree Victoria, and half of them arrived D.O.A. and half of the rest died shortly after planting. This year they purchased their trees privately and asked the Tree Vic. for some rabbit guards, only to be told they would to make a special application to obtain ministerial approval. Tree Vic. said they had no money. Seems strange after the government had allocated \$320m in the budget. The amount this small town requested was only \$2000. If they get their trees planted, I guess the rabbits will be the main benefactors. We are fortunate to have rabbit guards but if we run out at least we know where not to go.

'Power manifests itself in conspicuous waste and the habit grows until conspicuous waste imagines itself power!

Elbert Hubbard.

'Children begin by loving their parents; as they grow older they judge them,- sometimes they forgive them!

'The highest and most lofty trees have the most reason to dread the thunder.'

Charles Rollin.

Two Treats in Store

FRIDAY EVENING MAY 25th.

A Special Slide Night in front of a roaring fire in the old Skip Moyle Hut in Blacks Flat. Pat and Mike Coupar will show us some of their collection of photographs of local Fungi, Flora and Fauna. Great preparation for the Sunday Walk.

TIME: 7.30.

B.Y.O. Folding Chairs and Supper
(Billy Tea provided)

Gate at Blacks Flat (Tills Drive)

will be open. Follow the signs- plenty of parking outside the Hut.

Enquiries; Coupars 844 1650

Burkes 844 1060

Melway 23 J 10

SUNDAY AFTERNOON. MAY 27th. Sunday Family Meeting.

The Slides will have inspired you to see the Fungi in the "flesh" so this is your opportunity to have the Coupars lead you and your family on a wonderland walk to see the mysteries of Blue Tongue Bend. For those keen to also give a little labour of love to this place we will be having a working-bee to clean up the old outdoor Scout Chapel, another magical spot. Jobs for all ages and energy levels. The Chapel needs a general tidy, some of the Burgan which is encroaching needs clearing (tools supplied) the seats need repositioning/rebuilding (bring gloves to lift the stone slabs-they are a bit rough) Some people may never have seen this Historic Chapel so don't miss. Then of course we have the Magical Fungi Tour!

TIME: 1pm. At Sandy Bay (Jumping Creek Reserve Melway 23 K 9.

BRING: Gloves, something to have with Billy Tea.

Pat ~ y ~ pus Page

A CONFUSION AMONGST THE PROFUSION OF POMADERRIS

There are three species of Pomaderris that grow along the track in a narrow band from Black Flat to Jumping Creek. That in itself is a significant occurrence that is not common elsewhere in Victoria. The fact that some of the plants are so variable in leaf shape and size makes identification at times quite difficult, even for the experts.



The easiest of the three to identify is Pomaderris aspera (Hazel Pomaderris). It grows closest to the river, reaches the greatest height and has the largest leaves. The leaves are lance-shaped, dark green above with deeply indented veins, the underside is much paler green and has a covering of soft hairs.



Pomaderris prunifolia (Plum-leaf Pomaderris) is the dominant species along parts of the river track and up the drier rocky slopes. In some areas it occurs in almost pure stands. However it is quite variable in character, generally the leaves are similar in shape to P. aspera but less than half the size. They are dark green above with indented veins and paler in colour underneath. The veins and stems of young growth in particular have rusty coloured matted hairs, hence the confusion with P. ferruginea (Rusty Pomaderris) which, except for an isolated occurrence in the Otways, is only found in the east of the state.



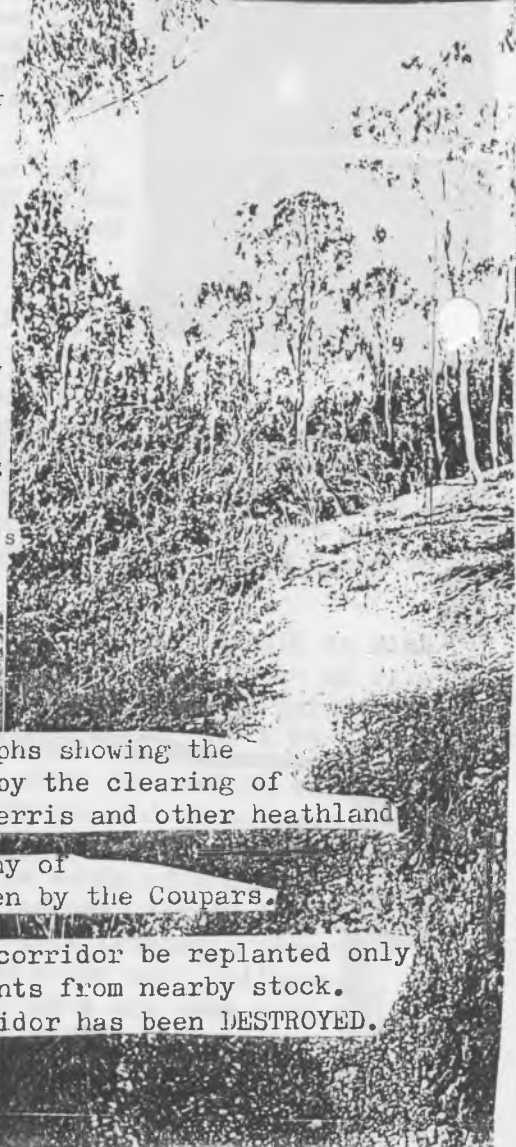
The third species of Pomaderris is Pomaderris racemosa (Slender Pomaderris) this is more scattered than the other two. It has the smallest and thinnest leaves which are more oval in shape. They are dark green above with sunken veins and pale green underneath and are less hairy.

To add to the confusion there is another shrub growing in the same area which looks somewhat similar. Spyridium parvifolium (Dusty Miller) belongs to the same family as Pomaderris (Family RHAMNACEAE) and at times, when it has not developed its characteristic dusty-grey floral leaves, its older, darker leaves look a little like those of P. racemosa.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
MELANIE COUPAR.

Pomaderris is probably one of the most overlooked of our native plants. It is rarely cultivated in nurseries and yet there are at least twenty-five different species growing naturally in Victoria, some are uncommon and localised and several occur only in East Gippsland. The flowers which are clustered along branchlets vary in colour from pale cream to deep golden, while some have a green or pinkish tinge which makes them most appealing. The leaves have a lovely felt-like or velvet texture and are a deep green in colour.

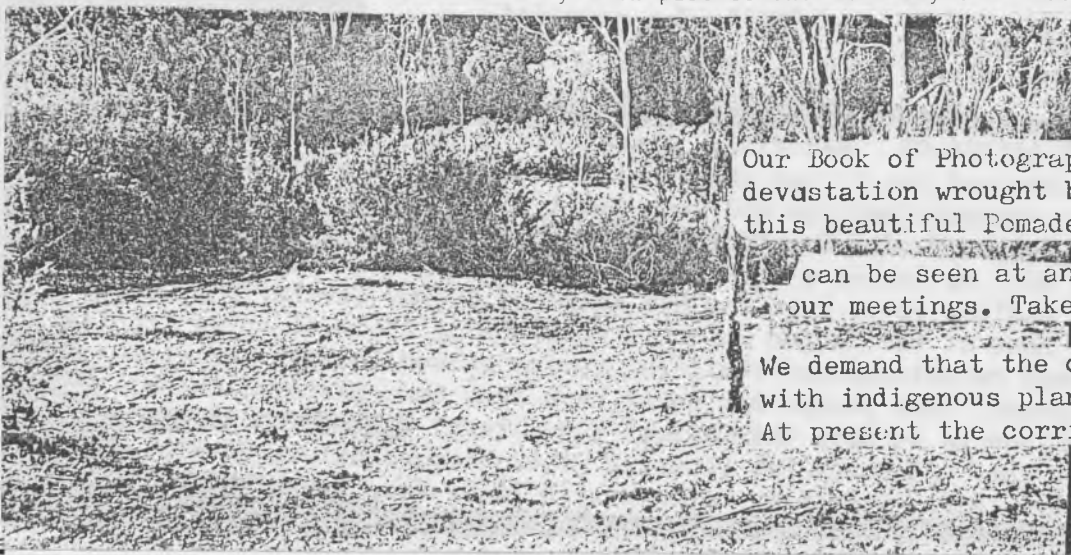
Next time you are in the bush look out for our local Pomaderris they won't be in flower until the spring but they are nevertheless a most attractive tree and very much part of the Warrandyte scene.



Our Book of Photographs showing the devastation wrought by the clearing of this beautiful Pomaderris and other heathland

can be seen at any of our meetings. Taken by the Coupars.

We demand that the corridor be replanted only with indigenous plants from nearby stock. At present the corridor has been DESTROYED.



Blue Trees and Yellow Wattle

Can you imagine a place of blue trees? I remember this place in the summer, how the twigs and brown leaves cracked under my feet. The colour of winter was green set against an azure sky. In spring yellow was the dominant colour as if the bush was on fire. I remember the river flowing and how it negotiated gorges and flats and how its banks were guarded by the largest trees I had ever seen. Sometimes there was a scent of peppermint in the air. There were always many strange sounds such as a constant ping, ping, ping... Sometimes there was a glimpse of a dark shape before it disappeared into the undergrowth. A dirt track led into these experiences and ended at a beach on the river, ideal for a summers swim.

These aren't the childhood memories of a long lost land, by an eccentric old man. In fact the place is still here right on our doorstep. The dirt track is now bitumen and the bush is as it was - well mostly, but read on! I know now that the blue trees have a name - Red Box. The giants guarding the river Manna Gums. The azure sky is a sign of pure, unpolluted air. Yellow fire is wattle in flower. The aroma of peppermint drifts in the breeze from the Eucalyptus radiata trees. The ping, ping, ping... sounds are the calls of the Bell Miner birds, and the disappearing shapes are Eastern Grey Kangaroos, which incidentally are the closest mob to Melbourne.

Our family have often visited this place. Once we were stopped and asked questions at the start of the dirt track as it was then. Answers were entered on a clipboard the most important of which was "YES, PLEASE!" to the question "should this place be preserved by its inclusion into the Warrandyte State Park?" The bush along the track and down to the beach on the river received official protection to the credit of the State Government in 1975 and a further edition being made 3 years later. The name of the place I am describing is JUMPING CREEK RESERVE.

When you walk westwards along the river track from Jumping Creek Reserve you enter another large area of the Park called Black Flat also given official protection in 1975. Slightly more than a mere month ago these refuges were linked by a smaller tract of Park running alongside the river. Above, looking south away from the river was also bush which extended to the brow of a hill to give a rare feeling of wilderness so close to the suburbs. The biological content has been surveyed in this region and found to be of high conservation value. In the first study of 1979 (Gullan et al), it was established that the vegetation east of Black Flat contained examples of the rarest and most endangered plant communities along the Yarra River. Later, in 1983 (Frood et al), State significance was assigned to the area. As a result this Crown Land outside the narrow river strip of Park was zoned Landscape Interest A. Retaining this high conservation status the land was sold by the City of Doncaster and Templestowe, regrettably not to the State Government, but to private individuals. Because of the zoning, sale was on the understanding that the owners were not permitted to interfere in any way with the vegetation (including understorey) without specific approval from the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands and local council. In essence the owners agreed to become guardians or custodians of the land rather than owners in the strict sense of the word. Now a significant proportion of this land together with its rare plant associations are no more. No more will animals such as the kangaroos pass between Jumping Creek Reserve and Black Flat along their bushland corridor. No longer can we enjoy the peace and inspiration that the bush gives us when walking the track between the two reserves because there is none.

Slightly more than a month ago approximately 4 ha of Lot 3B, Nelson Road together with about .1ha (1100 sq. metres) of the State Park was destroyed by bulldozers. Now all that is left are a few scattered and lonely young trees on a battlefield of bare brown and eroding topsoil.

How could it happen? Why was it allowed to happen? Unfortunately we do not know the answers to these questions. The owner of Lot 3B is refusing to face the media and in any case it is all too late. One thing is clear that his attitude and those like him of indifference or even abhorrence towards the natural world cannot and will not be tolerated. No one is above the law to do as they please with a Park which is under the collective guardianship of the people of Victoria. No one can disregard State Government and council regulations, and no one, especially in these times, can destroy natural environments without causing harm to themselves as well as others.

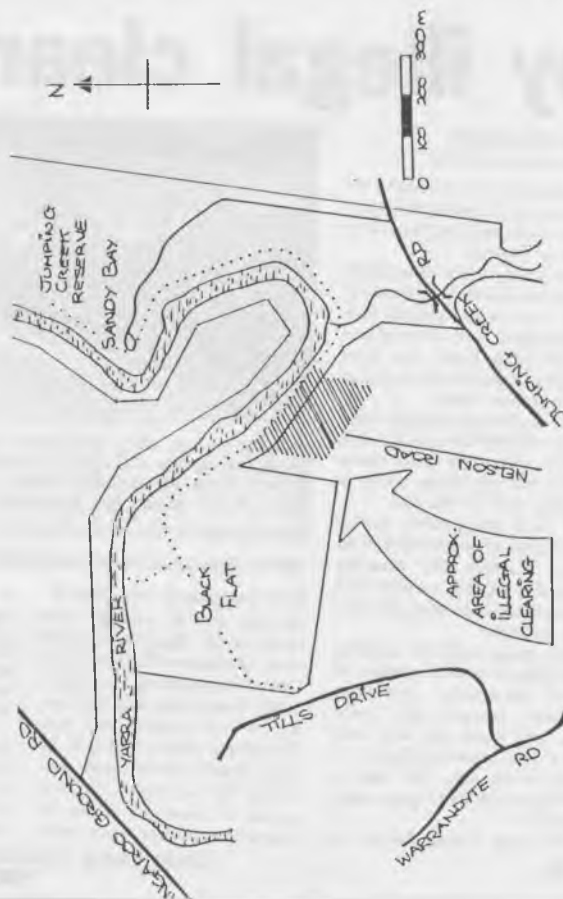
Rest assured that action has been taken at different levels and that the Park does indeed have many Friends. The Friends of Warrandyte State Park (F.O.W.S.P.) are working tirelessly to ensure that no one shall ever again harm our unique environment of blue trees, golden wattles and a river running free through its heart.

Mike Coupar

REFERENCES:

Frood, D. et al 1983 Sites of environmental significance - In the flood plain of the Upper Yarra River. Department of Geography University of Melbourne.

Gullan, P. et al 1979 Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority: Sites of environmental Significance (Botanical). Ministry for Conservation, Environmental Studies Program. Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority, Melbourne.



RE-DRAWN FROM 'WARRANDYTE STATE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN'

Hot House Gossip and Cold Things.

As to how successful Arbour Day was....?.....just look at the FOREST the local school children planted! And the empty shade house. A special Springtime planting is scheduled and the Teachers and Children are keen to see the next stage of our revegetation project (and how big the Autumn plantings have grown.)

Thursday Group recently visited C.O.D.A.T. Council Nursery. We were very impressed with the facilities in general and delighted with the amount of Indigenous Stock they were propagating. We would like to set up a co-operative arrangement for seed and cutting material "help" and the staff at the council would like to see the Nursery utilised by community groups and local schools. A great beginning.....

Those people who responded to the Subscription "Accounts"....THANKYOU.

You may have noticed that some Newsletters were not stamped last month! The Posties were Keith Thomson and his side-kick Ross Coupar (both won a triple gold star for effort) and Gail Roche and the "Rochettes"

We welcome a very enthusiastic group of new members who are really becoming involved. They cover the whole spectrum of ages and experience and it is wonderful how quickly they become "old" hands. The walk which the Coupars are leading (and the slide night) will be a good way for the newer members to become "oriented" into some of the more remote areas of the Park.

Local Townscape Committee to advise Doncaster/Templestowe Council has Pat Coupar as our representative. We have applied to have Mark Gardner on the Pest Plant Committee

Gave several local "no man's land" planters our old and most bedraggled stock to plant out recently. The report.....NOT ONE PLANT LOST!....Chris Cantor and Ben Gotlib both seem to have magical restorative powers!

The April Family Meeting on Sunday 2 th. was an interesting day. Tasks were varied and the W. E. I. members who joined us chose the task of cleaning up the banks of Jumping Creek (including under the Bridge on Jumping Creek Rd.) -despite an ominously glowering sky. Anne Warren won the Greenie Gum-Leaf award for magnificent effort- thanks Anne. All of us walked past the site of the illegal clearing and reeled in horror. Other groups and families walking that day were equally horrified and asked what action they could take.....as Mr Barnes has used the walking track as his boundary folk feel a sense of "trespass" as they walk that track which is actually OUR PARK....The Thursday propagation group have begun to collect Propagation material from this area and hope to begin restoration work as soon as possible. If you haven't viewed the devastation yet walk up the track from the car park at Jumping Creek Pionic grounds and head towards Blacks Flat. Marg will also show the Photo Book which Mike and Pat Coupar compiled to any people interested.

Arbour weeks will pretty much empty the shade house so plenty of work available for members at the Nursery.

Also making a new "Hardening off" area. All ages and levels of experience welcomed.

Wildlife corridor cut by illegal clearing

By BRETT WRIGHT, Environment Reporter

A popular park containing the nearest natural colony of kangaroos to Melbourne has been damaged by clearing.

According to the Department of Conservation and Environment, a narrow section of Warrandyte State Park, running next to the Yarra River, has been partially cleared by the owner of nearby private land.

The department said the owner had cleared not only his own hillside, but about 1100 square metres of vegetation along a walking track in the park.

A local conservation group, the Friends of Warrandyte State Park, claimed the clearing severed a wildlife corridor and had created a potential soil erosion problem.

The group said the clearing had isolated several species of small mammals, including echidnas, possums and wallabies, and wiped out food trees for a rare butterfly known to occur in the area. The area is well known for its kangaroos and wallabies.

The local Liberal MLA, Mr



Local M.L.A. Phil Honeywood has truly shown his Green Colours over local issues of late. His help has been invaluable regarding the illegal clearing. He has expressed determination to see the Green Wedge protected, the Warrandyte State Park Plan IMPLEMENTED SOON....in fact he wishes to be seen as as much a Greenie as any other possible Local Member. F.O.W.S.P thank him sincerely for his aid during a few recent local crises.....!

Phil Honeywood on the bulldozed land.

Picture: Bill McAuley

Phil Honeywood, described the clearing as "an outrage" and called on the State Government and Doncaster-Templestowe Council to prosecute the owner.

Mr Honeywood said the zoning of the private land was "landscape interest A" which, he said, should provide some protection for vegetation. He was critical of council's failure to ensure that owners were aware

of the restrictions which apply in sensitive zonings.

The council says the owner, Mr George Barnes, did not have a permit to clear the vegetation, and would be required to revegetate the property.

Mr Barnes said he did not think any parkland had been damaged, and most of the clearing was carried out last year before he received his permit to build.

Friends of park see red over clearing

The Friends of Warrandyte State Park have called on the Doncaster and Templestowe Council to prosecute the owners of a property in Pelham Road who have cleared an area of native vegetation.

The property adjoins a south-eastern part of the Black Flat section of the State Park.

In a letter to the council the Friends said the "integrity of the park has been seriously jeopardised by this outrageous act"

They said the plants cleared were part of a very significant strip of

"The clearing has included the grasses, and the topsoil has no cover."

It is understood the owners of the property had been permitted to clear vegetation, but not trees, by council.

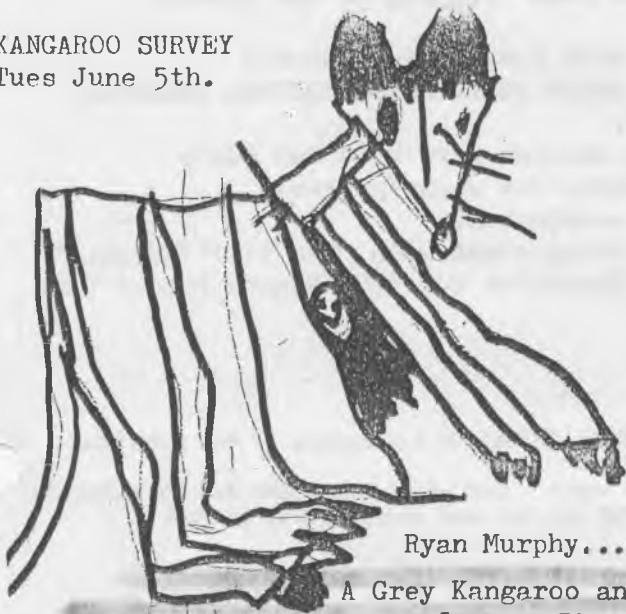
About four hectares are involved where the owners plan to build a house and a shed.

The Friends of Warrandyte State Park want the council to force the owners to carry out restorative planting of the area.

Koala Count took place on Thursday the 10th May.

It was not as well "Friendred" as our October one but never the less provided valuable statistics. The Kangaroo Count (our inaugural one!) is to be Tuesday June 5 at 9.00. Ring the Depot for info. 8442659. Roger Gamble from East Doncaster High has organised a team of Environmental Studies Students to join us so it should give us very valuable information. Next Koala Survey will be a weekend one.

KANGAROO SURVEY
Tues June 5th.



Ryan Murphy.....

A Grey Kangaroo and her
Joey.



Stoney Creek News

Mark Gardner was really surprised at the response to "Gad's Gang" at Stoney Creek- after all it was Mothers Day! Ten workers arrived plus kids and the job he had planned was well and truly done. Stoney Creek area is responding to the loving attention- as are the residents! Mark and Brian Pullman are planning (and training for) a cooperative approach to Bradleys Lane. GAD'S GANG...Stoney Creek 2nd Sundays...9am till 11. 8443799

Penny Possum sends her love. She began "living" in a new Highschool grounds and of course has been busy "adjusting" to new

This is a picture drawn for us by Ryan Murphy who likes to draw all kinds of pictures for us.....

This is really strange....one day he took his Mum Zoe and his little brother Kieren shopping at Harry Heaths Supermarket. When they got out of the car Ryan looked up into a tree nearby and what did he spy but an old steam Iron in a Gum-tree.

He showed his Mum and Kieren this strange sight. They thought and thought and all three decided that this perhaps could be.....

an IRONBARK TREE.....!

AND..a comment for the road...our Doug Seymour has been doing great stuff...lots of tantrums over counters and quick trips to deliver stuff to Ministers at Parliament house...APPRECIATED.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

NAME..... ADDRESS..... Enquiries 844 1060.

Family Members.....

..... P/C

Family
Subscription : \$10.00

PHONE NUMBER.....

I also enclosedonation.

P.O. Box 220 WARRANDYTE. 3113

Dates for the Calendar

Next Newsletter....A message from our Head Ranger Ian Roche. His fans have been nagging!

- June 5th Kangaroo Survey. 9am Depot. Tuesday.
- May 25th Slide Night with the Coupars 7.30. Blacks Flat (Old Office)
- May 27th Walk guided by the Coupars/maintenance on Scout Chapel Jumping Creek 1pm.
- June 2nd Market Stall at Stiggants 9.30- 1.00 Getting organised for World Env.Day Tree Plantings- W.E.L. Members Welcome. Some "tidying"of the Arbour Week plantings.
- June 3rd. WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY. Tree Plantings with Local Guides/Scouts Enquiries Office: 844 2659. VOLUNTEER ADULT ASSISTANTS REQUIRED URGENTLY.
- June 24th CHANGE OF VENUE. FAMILY SUNDAY MEETING.
We plan to complete our eradication of English Ivy- Wild Cat Gully Assessment of Ferns (which may need protective signs/guards)
Possible Broom pull, more in the next newsletter.
- Thursday Nursery Group. Every week All welcome. Bring a sandwich 10am till "finished"
STONY CREEK/BRADLEY BRIGADE Venue Melway 23 C 8 Enquiries 844 3799 Second Sunday 9am.

ESSAY COMPETITION

Not one entry yet...and we know what thinking caring environmentalists you all are..... or could it be...No I shudder to think....

TOPIC : ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - Responses of the individual.
About 500 words - send entries to FOWSP Box 220 Warrandyte 3113.
A fascinating PRIZE for the best entry will be awarded

Noted at the Arbour Week school plantings...Hidden talents in our Construction and Maintenance Staff. Paul May had those children in the palm of his hand. Craig driving the "hole monster" attained hero status also made a real hit with his talk and Mark? what more can be said of our "Gad"? The Rangers were all wonderful but it was great to see that hidden talent shine. (Saw Paul's sister, a Warrandyte Primary "planter" pink with pride) Great Stuff Rochie!

GOLDEN GUM LEAF AWARDS TO PAUL, CRAIG AND "GAD":

- MARGARET BURKE Co-ordinator 8441060
- DOUG SEYMOUR Secretary 8442740
- ANNE BEDFORD Asst. Sec. 4383216
- GAIL ROCHE 7221926
- OLIVE WALTERS 8464729
- IAN BURKE..Editor 8441060
- KEITH THOMSON Treasurer 8441590
- MARK GARDNER Group Advisor 8443799
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