

# FRIENDS OF WARRANDYTE STATE PARK NEWSLETTER



SEPTEMBER 1990

## Editorial

It was back in 1805 Thomas Jefferson made a speech concerning the policies of government and their effects on our daily lives. He said, "I place the economy among the first and most important virtue and the public debt as the greatest danger to be feared.....the same prudence which in private life would forbid our paying money for unexplained projects forbids it in the disposition of public money....". We could probably have benefited a great deal in this society to have the help of people like Jefferson. We do have however a large band of workers that are involved in many diverse activities that are collectively known as volunteers. There are Red Cross workers, Rotary, Apex, Lions, remedial teachers, Scout groups, and church workers, to mention but a few. Most of their work is not even noticed by a large part of the community. A volunteer can be defined as; 'a person who spontaneously undertakes tasks or work on behalf of others.' They are people from all walks of life. Some are young involved in bringing up young families, and a large proportion are on the retired list. The latter are often involved with several different groups.

The FCWSPIANS are a good example of such a charitable group and often involve other members of their families. Amongst their members are many people with talents and knowledge from working lives. They have a valuable contribution to make in terms of judgement and experience exercised over many years. Also, one of their unique attributes is to establish good communication with people from all walks of life. Retired members differ from employed persons, in that their time is not circumscribed, nor is it confined to one activity. Although the time they can allot to volunteer work is variable their achievements are notable. The work they perform is a valuable supplement to the more than somewhat stressed financial budget of the State Park, as it is to all other similar groups in the community.

We would really like to see a few more members and their friends come to our Thursday morning meetings. We have a fairly large family membership but can always do with some more help on our many projects. Just think; you would be helping our State Government, and you would certainly gain the approval of Thomas Jefferson.

"The secret of happiness is not in doing what one likes, but in liking what one has to do."  
James M Barrie.

"A volunteer is worth two pressed men."  
18th Century Proverb

"To remain on Earth you must be useful, Otherwise Nature regards you as old metal, and is only waiting for a chance to melt you down."  
E. Hubbard.

"You can lead a boy to college, but you can't make him think." E. Hubbard.

## Another Double Feature Weekend Sunday Family Meeting

The success of the May Fungi Friday- Sunday Family Meetings has prompted us to develop this coming event. Pat and Mike Coupar have agreed not only to lead a walk to see what is in Flower and Flight but also to prepare us for the experience on the Friday evening prior SO.....

On FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 28th.....7.30p.m. at the old SKIP MOYLE HUT at BLACK'S FLAT

"WHAT'S IN FLOWER AND FLIGHT"...Presented by the Coupar Family...Bring Supper to share. All the family welcome - bring a chair or cushion. Follow the new F.O.W.S.P. arrows (Ross Coupar made and will install them!) The slides will delight and surprise you.....THEN

OUR SUNDAY FAMILY MEETING. Sunday September 30th. 1.00p.m.

We meet first at Stoney Creek (Look for the banners and arrows) and there we meet the Stoney Creek Weeders..."Gad's Gang". Mark Gardner will give us a talk on what has been achieved so far, show us his MULCHING technique and put us all to work for an hour. Much can be accomplished in that time and the children will all enjoy the mulching! Afternoon tea will be next.....Mark being available for talk and questioning then.

NEXT OFF TO PROFESSOR'S HILL

At Professor's Hill Pat and Mike Coupar will lead up on one of their most enjoyable and informative Walk, Talk and Gawk strolls. So much is in flower and flight at this time of the year....including many of the orchids. They will be able to tell us of their progress in photographing every species in Warrandyte. (We hope these photographs will be the jewel of our plant lists and surveys.)

ENQUIRIES.....844 1650 or 844 1060.

SEE YOU ALL.

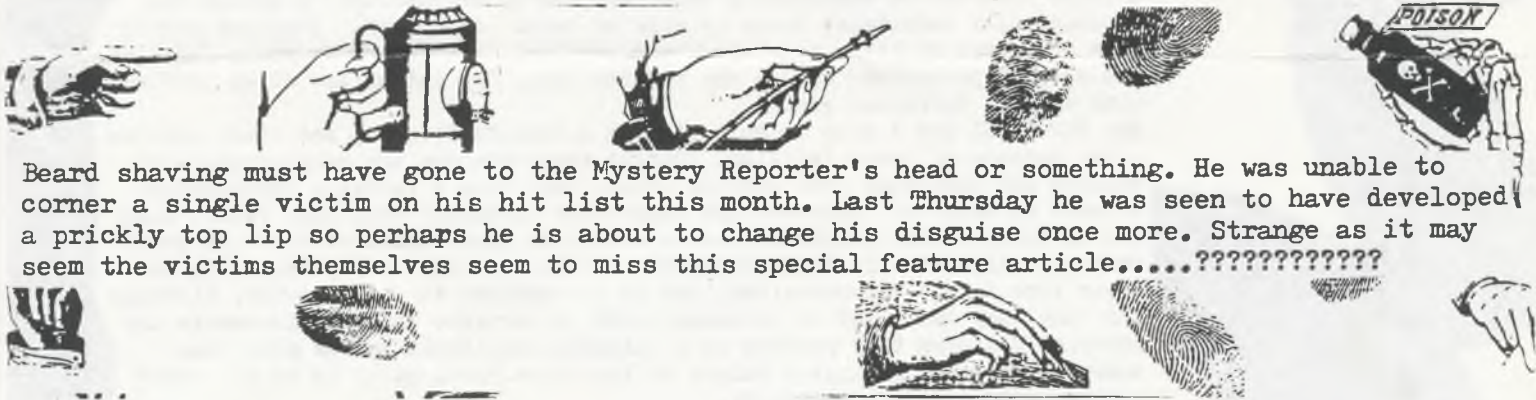
Two extra little gems which the "layout assistant" wished to add to the newsletter. Both of them on Ian's list of quotations to add to his editorial.

"Genius is fine, but if it comes to a showdown  
gumption is better." Elbert Hubbard.

"Knowledge is the distilled essence of our intuitions,  
corroborated by experience." Elbert Hubbard.

## Townscape Working Bee

This Newsletter will arrive too late to advertise our Joint Townscape Committee/ F.O.W.S.P plant up at the end of Forbes St. (behind the Squash Courts) Gail Roche and Judy Thomson are leading the Catering Crew. The Council Nursery supplied many of the plants, got some from Alan Noy and the Friends gave what they could spare. We hope to report a wonderful day next month. Jane Marriot and Pat Coupar planned it all beautifully.



Beard shaving must have gone to the Mystery Reporter's head or something. He was unable to corner a single victim on his hit list this month. Last Thursday he was seen to have developed a prickly top lip so perhaps he is about to change his disguise once more. Strange as it may seem the victims themselves seem to miss this special feature article.....???????????????

**Follow-up to the Lyrebird survey** Participants received a copy of Mimical Notes from Friends of the Lyrebird giving a report of the count held on 7 and 8 July. 63 out of a total 80 sites were covered and 60 male lyrebirds were confirmed in the park. See you there in 1991?

*Cary Harris*

## Hot House Gossip and Cold Things.

David Van Bockel is enthusiastic about his appointment as "OUR" ranger. He promises a regular "column"...This issue has his first piece. David has had quite a bit of experience at Andrew Pagets Indigenous Plant Nursery as well as being a Park Ranger. He and Mark Gardner are preparing to give a seminar on several "new" areas....direct seeding and grasses.

We are getting much feedback about Pat Coupar's Pages both in our newsletter and the Diary. Melanies drawings excite the same enthusiasm. Pat and Mel are "regulars" in Tirra Lirra-a new magazine about the Yarra Valley. It is available from the News Agent at West End. So have a look.....maybe they will do a book together some time in the not too distant future?

The Skip Moyle Hut is really becoming important in our Programme...a "regular" venue for "night activities. Our building experts have decided to devote another portion of our time to its renovation. Alec Manson is organising collection of some second hand masonite and the Thursday refurbishers are planning to reline it. If you are interested in helping contact Alec at the next meeting or Phone....844 2557.

Another building project underway is the "Folly". It needed a more professional touch (?) so tenders were "let". Several quotes etc later we have Barry Gesthuizen and his father John about to begin the "heavy" work. Barry is a member and runs a Fern Nursery in his spare time with Fiance Jenny his full time organiser. We hope to have time to learn from Barry how to propagate some of the Ferns in Whipstick Gully. Apart from our ulterior motives we look forward to seeing the Folly at long last begin to take shape.

We had a letter from Joan Ragg, a valued regular, this week...Joan had an awful experience- a car smash. As many people will know Joan was left deaf and debilitated by meningitis which almost killed her years ago. She is well known in Warrandyte as a Greenie and does a great deal for others. She is home from the Austin....a broken sternum, much bruising and dented confidence later and is now minus the car she relies heavily on. She is recovering and wishes to come to all our "meeting and does" but needs lifts. Hope you will all rally and assist. She is at 417 W'dyte- Ringwood Rd. Propagators have missed her lately...she is our champion "bricker-outer".



While I was fluttering around Black Flat one Sunday at end of August I witnessed a transformation that surpassed my metamorphosis from chrysalis to butterfly! A group of FOWSPIANS descended on the Skip Moyle Scout Hut with wheelbarrows, brooms, a truckload of gravel, shovels, rakes etc., and in the space of an afternoon a neglected tin shed had been cleaned, ringed by stone paths and had a ramp added to become the atmospheric venue for an evening concert led by Joy and Greg Hildebrand around a roaring log fire. They also found time to conduct a sedge identification walk led by Gail Roche and Gay Harris, serve billy-tea, organize a barbeque and surprise a now de-fungied Ben Gotleib with a birthday party. Unfortunately, the Pears family who were plucked from an innocent Sunday stroll in the park, promptly joined up and coerced into doing a magnificent job picking up broken glass were unable to stay for the festivities - thank you and welcome! Thanks also to all who helped especially the Roches, the Riddell brothers and Bill White who, as usual, came up with instant solutions to all the construction problems. Still can't understand why all those people were turning around in circles though with a finger on the top of their heads, chanting 'ding, dang, dong - ding, dang, dong'! I think I'll just settle on the window sill for a bit and think about it .....

TOOTH-FINERS

by 'Butterfly' *Gay Harris*

Thursday Propagating Group

Now that the weather is starting to warm up, the wildflowers beginning to flower and the Fantail Cuckoo is singing, it's time again to be getting out into the park to simply go for a stroll. Once the hard work of the morning is over, we will be visiting the various parts of the park to observe and enjoy all it has to offer. This will be an informal time and will also include some seed collecting and identification of the various plants, birds and insects.

NB: The propagation group require small containers to store seed in, eg. small vegemite jars or 35mm photographic film canisters. Also any spare seedling punnets (14cm x 8cm) for growing seeds in. If you have any of these items spare, could you please pass them onto a member of FOWSP or leave them at the nursery. Thanks.

Plant List

We are preparing a current plant species list for Warrandyte State Park, utilising Arthur Williamson's list as a basis and incorporating all the updates that Pat Coupar and Gretna Weste have recorded.

Please contact me at the park office (844 2659) if you know where any rare or interesting plants occur, or if you have access to any plant lists of the area (such as your Uncle, the family botanist, who may have prepared a list 50 years ago). Any information welcome.

Thanks, David Van Bockel.

*Handcraft Group*

CRAFT CORNA.

The search for someone to volunteer their expertise for making a paper recycling press is on. If someone is interested please contact me Gail Roche on 722-1926 as soon as possible. I have photo copies of a press design for you to use.

In the mean time could everyone keep their junk mail pamphlets and either bring them to the Depot on a Thursday or bring them to the Market Stall.

We also need people interested in helping with the actual making of paper. If you would like to help give me a ring on the above number.

WE NEED YOU!!!

Words  
from  
OUR  
OWN  
RANGER

Running the Nursery is a VERY rewarding voluntary occupation. Lots to do and we will teach the newcomer "from scratch" (first job is pot washing!) The local branch of "Gossips Anonymous" meets at the same time along with the "Comedy Club"...so do join us. We are not missing time during School Hols....Children with an Adult are welcome. We have lots of "babies" to prick out into pots (urgently) and lots of seed to collect and process. Come and see the fabulous "first ever" Correa grown from seed....?????

We were glad to be able to re-organise the prizes in the Wonga-Park Goodfellows Colouring competition. The entrants were all to receive a tree to plant. Trouble was the Goodfellows "head office" sent out the prizes - Cypress Trees (PINES! gulp) Gail Roche is a customer and when the Tankhauser's explained, our Nursery was able to save the Wonga Park gardens from invasion. The prizes are now Indigydites or seed and how to grow leaflets. Tankhauser Family are now new members.

Seen stopping the traffic at dusk, to save twelve tiny ducklings from certain gorey death were Stan Andrew and daughters Jenny and Georgie. The girls tucked back safely, Stan was finding being traffic warden rather tricky when Paul May saved the "evening"- all twelve babies survived the peak traffic and Jenny and Georgie enjoyed carrying the last two to safety and an anxious mother duck. Stan sends his thanks to Paul's timely help.

An idea floated last year, shelved, then dusted off is the idea of an Environmental Green Bag for new residents of our Wonderful Warrandyte. It would have some bits and pieces about which groups are where, how to find/join them, some maps, spare bits of newsletters, our programme some free seed and perhaps an offer of a free plant when they visit our market stall. We need some people to work on the idea, put together a few prototype bags to give out at the market then to look at organising distribution to local Estate Agents. WHO IS INTERESTED IN BECOMING PART OF THIS SUB-COMMITTEE? Enquiries....Margaret Burke 844 1060.

Any Fowspian visitors to the home of John, Kerry Boyle and family must admire their nature strip and bush area fronting the road. John's management of the area has paid them off with a wonderful display of Greenhoods, wildflower species and native grasses. Several members are signing up to "help" with his next controlled burn. Congratulations Boyles.

The V.N.P.A. Bushwalking group have chosen Warrandyte as the venue for a "Special thank you just for being there" Work Day. We are busy organising the event for next year's programme. We just hope that all the bushwalkers are as good workers as Jean Phibbs who came out to join our July meeting...she arrived early keen to "get into it" and was given the task of preparing an area (weeding) and transplanting some Dichondra. Tool she was given was a sawn of scrap of star picket! Jean did the job with great enthusiasm and the Dichondra is doing well.

Something we must support is Stephen Anderson's Eltham Copper Butterfly Friends group. If you have friends or rels etc. in Eltham ....get them off to join in. And F.O.W.S.P. members ARE allowed to help. Contact Seve at the Park Office 844 2659. Next meeting October 21st.

Mark Gardner welcomes all those interested in joining the regular "Gad's Gang activities at Stoney Creek to his next meeting (after the special Sunday Family Meeting) Sunday October 14th 10am.

We have begun an exchange of newsletters with the Mechanics Institute and Arts Association and we hope to involve more and more of the Community in our projects- these effect lots of the Warrandyte residents.....and we are all a part of our environment. We note a gardening Working Bee is planned at the Mechanics Hall on SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 29th 10- 2.00. Perhaps some of our members may like to help. Contact Doug Macrae 844 1198.

## STOP PRESS!

Well it is amazing just how the Friends can "rise to an occasion". We were worried about our lack of rabbit guards (or funds to purchase same...\$2.50 with stakes approx) and asked Ian Roche to check all avenues. He went off to do just this asking Pat Fricker at the M.M.B.W. how he manages this problem. Pat's problems however were not buying the guards but not having the person power to remove ones no longer needed! So it was a marvellous opportunity to put into practise the wonderful new ideal of CO-OPERATION. (We have of course long BEEN "fraternising") Next thing was a Warrandyte Ring-around and a huge team of Fowspian volunteers poured into Westerfolds. And you should see what we have to show for our efforts.....We will count the "spoils" and let you know next month.

Many thanks to Pat Fricker and to Glen Jameson for his help, talk on the Boards Parks and Programme and his talk and demonstration of the latest techniques in tree planting. Glen showed us the Boards Hamilton Tree Planter and demonstrated its use. We hope that lots more co-operative efforts like this take place.

ANOTHER LITTLE SNIPPET. As Gail organised the refreshments for the Townscape Plantup Harry Heath's came to our "impoverished" rescue. They supplied us with 100 cans of drink for the planters, and subsidised the damper and bickie purchases. Makes us all very pleased to be part of a true Community effort. Thankyou

Pat-y-pus Page

### ARTISTS OF THE BUSH

I remember when I was young, spending idle moments carefully picking away at the outer surface of green leaves, in an attempt to uncover the delicate structure of the veins and expose the bare bones of the leaf. Inevitably the fragile, flimsy tissue would tear before a perfect skeleton could be obtained.

Perfect skeletonized leaves of all shapes and sizes are a familiar sight in the bush and garden. But have you ever wondered who created these masterpieces of nature? In most cases it is the insects, and in particular the caterpillars. Eucalyptus leaves are target of the aptly named Gum Leaf Skeletonizers which are quite common at this time of the year. These caterpillars favour the tender young growth of juvenile trees, nibbling away the soft green outer layer of the leaves until all that remains is a skeletal network of veins, which as they dry become brown and brittle.

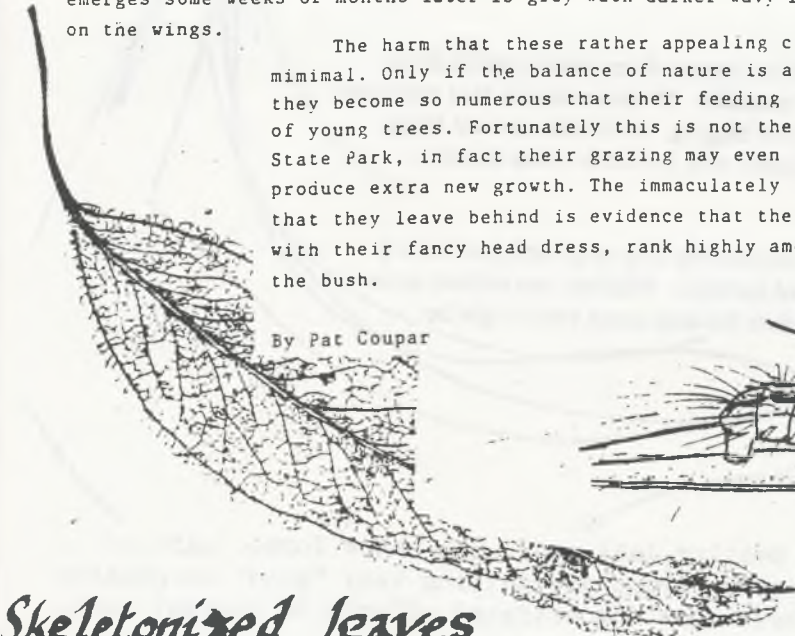
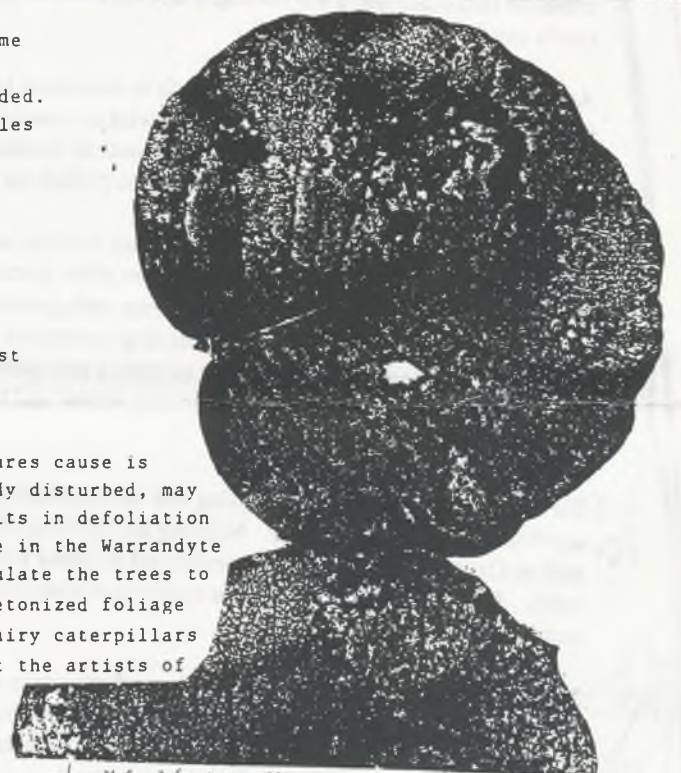
These little caterpillars, particularly when young, are gregarious, that is they like being together, they like feeding together; after all in the natural world there is safety in numbers. Many caterpillars hide during the day and come out to feed in relative safety at night. The Gum Leaf Skeletonizers however, can be seen in broad daylight, huddled together while grazing the leaf surface. They are fairly small creamy-yellow caterpillars covered with long white hairs. These hairs are reputed to cause some skin irritation, but I have handled the caterpillars on many occasions and never noticed any kind of reaction. So perhaps it is only those with very sensitive skins who need to be cautious about touching these hairy creatures.

The caterpillar has an interesting feature which I have not seen on any other caterpillar: to grow caterpillars must, from time to time, form a new skin and shed the old one, this is called moulting. Some may eat the cast off skin but usually it is discarded. The Gum Leaf Skeletonizer however, retains the moulted head capsules of the old skins which form a pile on top of its head. Since they moult about 10 times before pupating you can imagine what a magnificent 'head dress' adorn the more mature caterpillars. The probable reason for this elaborate decoration is one of defence. The pile of discarded head capsules resembles a horn and act as a warning to predators to stay away.

The caterpillars feed for several weeks and then pupate in brown, woven cocoons attached to an old skeletonized leaf, against which the pupae are superbly well camouflaged. The moth which emerges some weeks or months later is grey with darker wavy lines on the wings.

The harm that these rather appealing creatures cause is minimal. Only if the balance of nature is already disturbed, may they become so numerous that their feeding results in defoliation of young trees. Fortunately this is not the case in the Warrandyte State Park, in fact their grazing may even stimulate the trees to produce extra new growth. The immaculately skeletonized foliage that they leave behind is evidence that these hairy caterpillars with their fancy head dress, rank highly amongst the artists of the bush.

By Pat Coupar



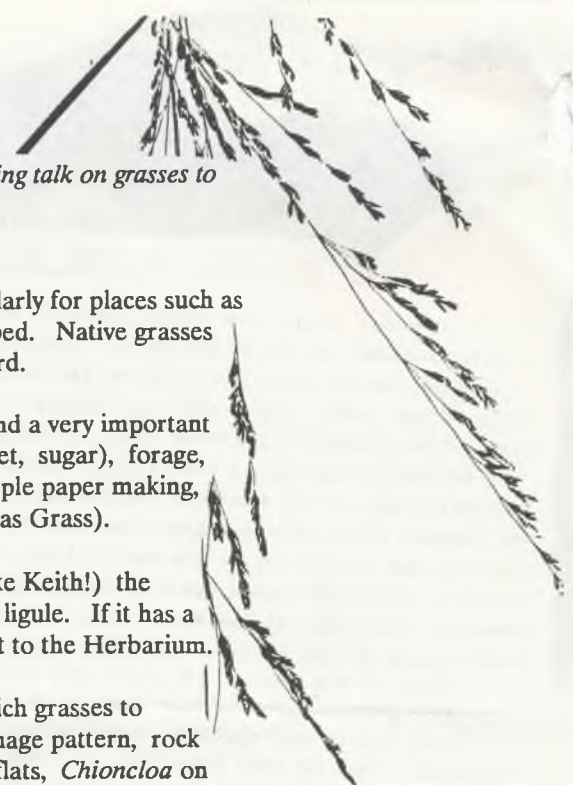
*Skeletonized Leaves*

GUM LEAF SKELETONIZER CATERPILLAR



# GRASSES

by Keith McDougall



The following is typed from the notes supplied by Keith after his most interesting talk on grasses to Friends.

Why bother with grasses. The restoration process is more than trees particularly for places such as Warrandyte State Park and Organ Pipes National park that have been disturbed. Native grasses give the new vegetation a natural appearance and are often less of a fire hazard.

What are grasses? They are one of the largest families of plants (*Poacea*) and a very important group of plants economically for food (wheat, corn, rice, barley, oats, millet, sugar), forage, lawns, soil conservation using a fibrous root system, manufacturing for example paper making, building materials (bamboo) brooms and perfumes and for ornament (Pampas Grass).

Are they incredibly difficult to identify? Not really, (at least for an expert like Keith!) the procedure is to see if it is grass-like in appearance and then identify if it has a ligule. If it has a ligule, then one can get help from books to identify it or if all else fails send it to the Herbarium.

What is needed to re-establish a grassy sward? One first needs to decide which grasses to establish by looking at any remnant areas nearby with similar soil types, drainage pattern, rock types, soil depth etc. In Warrandyte this could be *Poa labillardier* on wet flats, *Chioncloa* on dry slopes and *Themeda* which is becoming dominant where trees are sparse or have been cleared.

It is good to get grasses planted before trees although it is obviously great to get tree cover going. There is a need to decide on method of establishment. It may be by transplanting though this is tedious and not very productive or by direct seeding which is the best value for money.

Mechanical harvesting techniques are best. However need is related to seed production of particular species and the sites. EG *Themeda* produces few seeds per plant and even fewer viable seeds so therefore hand harvesting is not very effective. *Poa* however produces many seeds and much can be harvested by hand.

At Organ Pipes National park *Themeda* is harvested by cutting off heads with a suitable sickle bar mower while removing as little leaf material as possible. Harvesting is usually in January and the heads are raked up and placed in a container to transport to planting site. The heads must not be left too long on the ground, they should be picked up within a few hours of cutting.

To establish the seed the technique is to cut the hay and spread it on the ground, a very simple method. The seeds fall from the hay soon after spreading and drill into the soil to a depth of 1cm. They won't germinate through dense cover and germinate in the following late spring or early summer. To enable germination, burning to remove hay and weed cover is essential at first opportunity in spring. This gets rid of weeds and provides good conditions for *Themeda* germination which occurs when the soil is moist and the temperature high enough (between October and March).

To manage the new sward burning will be required every 2 or 3 years if any other species is to survive among the *Themeda*. Mowing and grazing is also possible. Weed control is also necessary and at Organ Pipes this is being achieved by hand pulling and digging, herbicides are not being used. However where *Phalaris* is major problem some control with herbicides may become necessary.

It is possible to use mulches to retain seed moisture and improve the rate of growth particularly when seedlings are young and it may improve the chance of survival. Mulches can include straw (not hay; wheat or oat hay better than others such as *Phalaris* because some seed might be present), bitumen, brown coal or paper

Reprinted this year. Keith spoke at our July meeting last year. His notes formed part of a hand out we produced for the market. The nursery group are getting very "good" at grasses - better all the time. This year we hope to have some concentrated efforts to collect seed.

Percy Possum's Picture Parade



Mother Koala  
in the tree -  
Father is on the  
ground looking  
for his home.  
Can you see the  
bird?



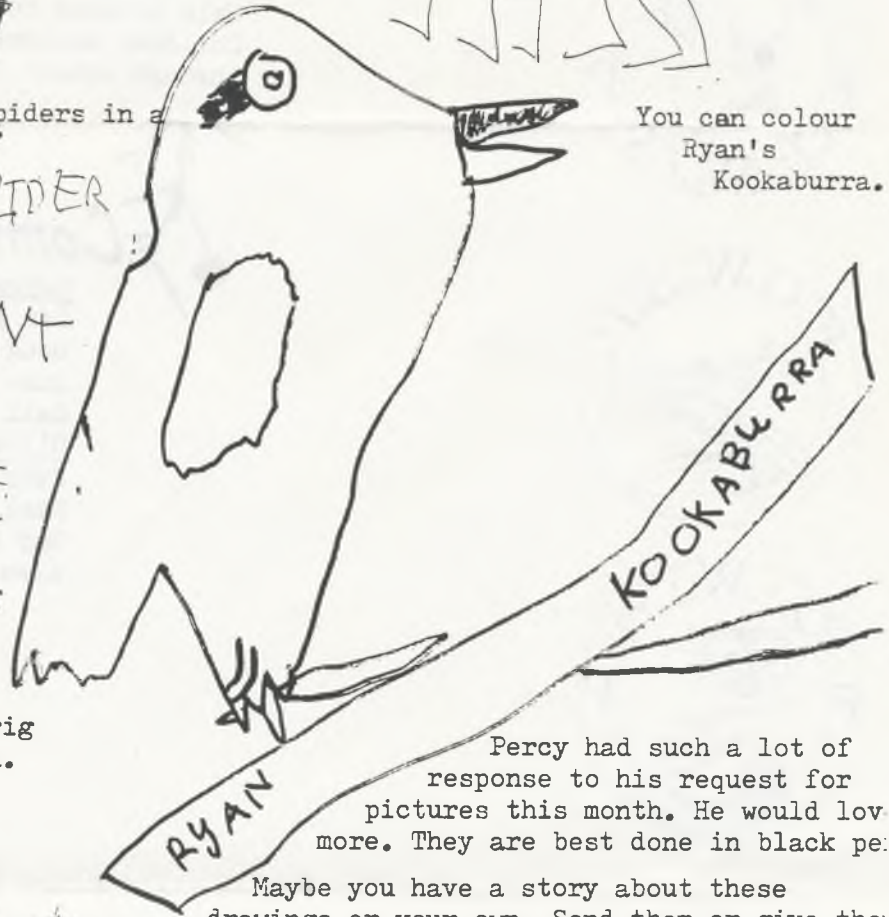
OKI

SOBBY



You can colour  
Ryan's  
Kookaburra.

Baby spiders in a  
sack.



Suzette drew a sprig  
of Wattle in bud.

Percy had such a lot of  
response to his request for  
pictures this month. He would love  
more. They are best done in black pen.

Maybe you have a story about these  
drawings or your own. Send them or give them  
to Marg or Ryan

Suzette Hunter

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

1990.

NAMES.....

ENQUIRIES 844 1060

ADDRESS.....PHONE.....

.....POSTCODE.....

Family Subscription \$10....Remainder of 1990 for NEW members is \$5.00 Renewable January 1991.

Donations help us to keep membership as low as possible and are gratefully received.  
We enclose ..... donation.

P.O. BOX 220 WARRANDYTE 3113.

# Melanie's Badge Designs



## DATES FOR THE CALENDAR

- September 28.....Slide Night Skip Moyle Hut  
Pat and Mike Coupar.
- September 30.....Meet and learn from Gad's Gang at Stoney Cr.  
Guided walk after with the Coupars.
- October 6.....Market Stall at Stiggants. Roster.
- October 14.....Stoney Creek Weeders. Enq.....844 3799
- October 21.....Friends of Eltham Copper Butterfly. Enq..8442659
- October 28.....Koala Count....Enq. Committee.
- November 25.....Break-up at the Depot. Will the folly be ready?  
To be decided.....A. G. M.

January Slide night and astronomy walk  
Evening Kangaroo Census Survey & B.B.Q.  
Trip on the Steam Tug "WATTLE".  
Several Building Projects.

EVERY THURSDAY Propagation Group run the Nursery at Pound Bend  
No experience necessary. Bring Lunch.  
Walk or Seed collection after lunch.  
Children welcome with an adult. We meet all  
through school holidays.



## Committee

Margaret Burke	Co-ordinator	844 1060	*
Ian Burke	Editor	"	
Doug Seymour	Secretary	844 2740	
Anne Bedford	Asst. Secret.	438 3216	
Gail Roche	Craft	722 1926	
Olive Walters		846 4729	
Judy Thomson	Treasurer	844 1590	
Mark Gardner	Group Adviser	844 3799	
Gay Harris	Social Sec	844 1448	
Alec Manson		844 2557	

P.O. Box 220  
Warrandyte 3113

Acacia Brownii  
(in Cultivation)

