

November 1996

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

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

'Friends' Offered Summer 'Interps' Contract

By Cathy Willis

The Friends Committee of Management learned recently that there is likely to be a severely reduced summer interpretation program at Warrandyte State Park this year.

In previous years a seasonal Ranger, with assistance from permanent Park staff, has been employed to run the program, which 'interps' the natural environment to the public by offering bird walks, koala counts, gold panning and the experience of traditional billy tea and damper in the bush. However, new Departmental policy is to contract out to commercial operators the running of these programs at Parks like Warrandyte which have high visitor numbers.

The Committee first heard of this new system when approached by Park staff to see if we (the 'Friends' group) would be interested in running the summer program in return for a substantial donation to our organization. Apparently the Department had advertised for expressions of interest, but it appeared there were no takers. The Fowsp Committee discussed the issue and decided

that the group could not become involved in running the summer program for both practical and philosophical reasons. Running a successful 'interps' program involves much preparation, organisation and time - more than we could take on with all our regular activities as well. The Committee also felt strongly that running a commercial enterprise is not in line with the aims and objectives of the group.

The situation as it stands is that Park staff will run a reduced summer 'interps' program, possibly only four activities over one week. They been told that they must charge commercial rates. This will result in the public paying three to four times the amount previously charged for each activity. With the number of Rangers at the Park now reduced to only four, running these summer activities will add to their already heavy workload.

In addition, since Ray Jasper left there is no longer a Ranger at the Park dedicated to fire management. This work will now be shared amongst the present staff.

FOWSP THURSDAY PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 21ST The Fourth Hill Collection

Leave the Depot at 1.15pm or meet on site at 1.30pm

Many of the wattles and pea seeds will be ready for collection, bring along paper bags.

Leader Pat Coupar Meet at car park at the end of Tunnel St (Melways ref. map 35 F1)

NOVEMBER 28TH Attention Frogland MORNING ACTIVITY

Meet on site at 10.00am

This specially created wetland has been given a grant of money by Melbourne Parks and Waterways for weed control and planting of rare species. It deserves a morning a month of our time.

Leader Jenny Hoskin. Meet at the Depot Pound Bend Rd (Melways ref. map 23 C10)

DECEMBER 5TH A stroll around Blue-tongue Bend

Leave the Depot at 1.15pm or meet on site at 1.30pm

This is one of the most delightful circuit walks in the Park. It is especially enjoyable in early summer when the Christmas bushes are in full flower.

Leader Joan MacMahon. Meet at Sandy Bay car park Jumping Ck (Melways ref. map 24 A9)

DECEMBER 12TH Mount Lofty Wetlands

Leave the Depot at 1.15pm or meet on site at 1.30pm

A visit to the closest billabong wetland to Warrandyte, see some rare aquatic and semi-aquatic plants in what is still Warrandyte's Promised Park.

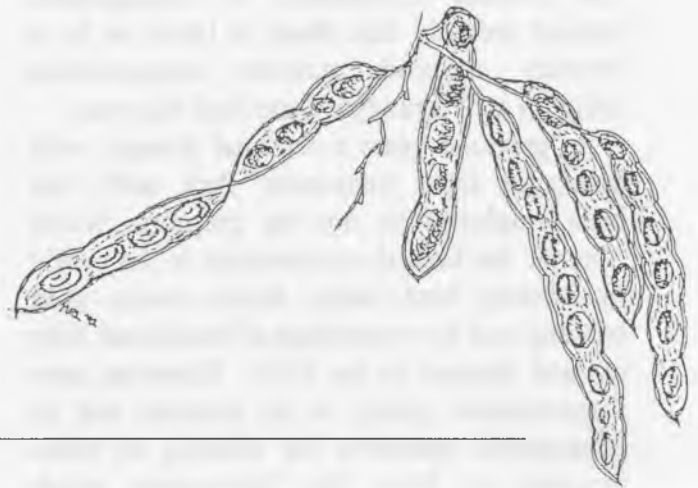
Leader Flora Anderson. Meet at the end of Lower Homestead Rd, Wonga Park (Melways ref. map 279 B4)

DECEMBER 19TH Stocking Removals MORNING ACTIVITY

Meet on site at 10.00am

We will be revisiting sites on The Common and Fourth Hill to remove all the stockings placed around the various plants a few weeks ago.

Leader Cathy Willis. Meet at Haslams Tk the first car park on the left (Melways ref. map 36 A4)



A Farewell to Matt and Cecilia

In recognition for all of their hard at Warrandyte State Park 'Friends' would like to say farewell to Matt and Cecilia with a barbeque evening.

Date and Time: Saturday November 30th at 6.00pm

Place: The Folly.

Just bring food and drink and a plate to share



Book of the Month

A Field Guide to Australian Butterflies

By Robert Fisher (Surrey Beatty & Sons, 1995)

A Review by Mike Coupar

This is a useful addition to the naturalists book collection. Its particular advantage is that it fits as comfortably in the glove box and pocket as on the book shelf. However, as with all pocket book field guides it can only provide limited information, so this is definitely not a book for the experts.

The main purpose of the book is to illustrate 200 of Australia's nearly 400 butterfly species. As emphasised in the preface, the selection comprises those likely to be encountered by the field naturalist in urban and natural environments, but some less common species are included because of their outstanding beauty. A case in point would be the magnificent Cooktown Birdwing described on page 84 and illustrated on page 85.

Robert Fisher has had a long-standing love affair with butterflies and his book entitled '*Butterflies of South Australia*' published in 1978 is still an authoritative work. The greatest attribute of this present book is the intimate closeup photography of the different stages of life cycles. This is shown in the introductory sections of the Families. The author reveals the details of minute eggs and of tiny caterpillars hatching from them. It is also a joy to see so many sharp and colourful pictures of caterpillars and chrysalises. All too often these stages of the life cycle are neglected by other authors and publishers. Some of these photographs of the early life cycles in '*A Field Guide to Australian Butterflies*' are every bit as sensational as the adults. One that stands out is of a caterpillar of the *Genoveva Azure* offering secretions

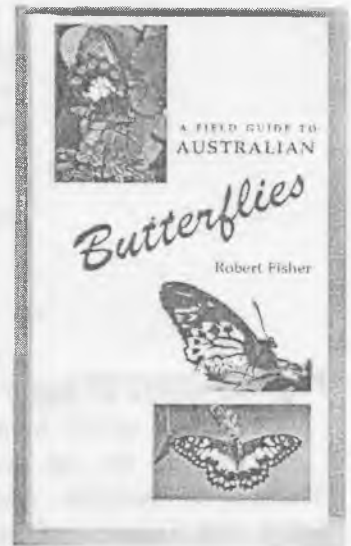
from its nectar glands to a *Camponotus* ant in exchange for protection against predators. The pictures also reveal the secret lives of some caterpillars, such as the Skippers, which build shelters and those that are not noticed because they blend with their surroundings.

At the other extreme they show how the conspicuous caterpillars protect themselves by displaying bright bands of colour or spiky projections. It is also refreshing to see so many of the adults in their natural state although, for practical and identification reasons, many pinned specimens from the South Australian Museum have been utilised.

The book is organised into an eight page introduction followed by descriptions of each species. Scientific and common names are given followed by a relatively short description which relates to the male and female adults, distribution, and life history. It is a pity some of the foodplants have not been given common names because it can be a daunting task coping with scientific names of butterflies and plants all in the one go.

While on this issue of names, the words larva and pupa are used throughout the book, where 'caterpillar' and 'chrysalis' respectively would have been a better choice since they relate specifically to butterflies rather than insects in general. However, these are very minor criticisms.

The text information typically occupies half a page per species on the left hand page, while the colour photographs are on the right. There is a useful glossary and bibliography at the end.



The 'Friends' go to Ironbark

By Pat Coupar

Photographs Ron Taylor. Artwork Ant Owen

*He fetched a wild up-country yell might wake the dead to hear,
And though his throat, he knew full well, was cut from ear to ear,
He struggled gamely to his feet, then faced the murderous foe.
"You've done for me! You dog, I'm beat! One hit before I go!
I only wish I had a knife, you blessed murdering shark!
But you'll remember all your life the man from Ironbark."*

Extract from "The Man from Ironbark" Banjo Patterson

The words of Banjo Patterson and Henry Lawson spilled from the lips of Neal and Ben as we sat around the comforting flames of the campfire. Above, the night sky was dotted with a myriad of stars and the occasional satellite. Peace and relaxation reigned.



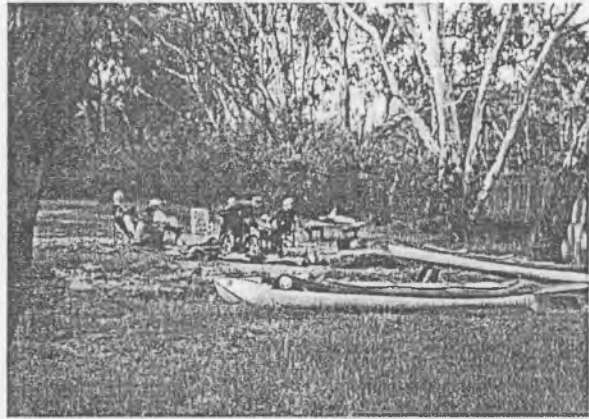
The 'Friends' weekend camp was an informal affair. The only thing organised was the date, October 12th, and the place, Majors Creek - a large backwater of the Goulburn River about ten kilometres south of Nagambie. If it had been one week earlier the trip would have been cancelled. Following days of heavy rain, the small wooden bridge over the backwater, and most of the camping area, had been half a metre underwater. In fact the 'road closed' sign was still in position when we arrived, along with another warning 'water across road' the latter of which proved to be the case. However, the water was not deep and the surface underneath solid, so all vehicles made it through safely. Surprisingly the camp site itself had dried out remarkably well from the previous week's deluge.

The weather was kind to us over the three days with sun, mild temperatures and no rain. In two canoes and one small motor boat we ventured onto the water. Almost every dead tree was a potential nesting site with hollows of all sizes. Parrots were prolific, especially the red-rumped variety; water birds rustled in the reeds and made strange unbird-like noises at night.

Forays were made by car and on foot into the forest - a forest dominated by Red Ironbark eucalypts. These remarkable trees with their black, deeply-furrowed bark have been assaulted over the years for timber and other uses and now less than 25% of Victoria's Box - Ironbark forests remain.



The 'Friends' go to Ironbark



The Rushworth State Forest (Note: not even given the status of a National or State Park), has a wonderfully diverse understorey of wattles, peas and heaths, while the ground flora is rich in wildflowers, especially those most sought after gems - the orchids and lilies.



Then there was Whroo. Once a thriving gold town in the mid 1800's, but now all that remains are the tunnels, the mines and a cemetery with a few sad reminders of the terrible hardship of those times.

This was the fourth 'Fowspian' camp and it seems that a tradition has now been established. Those who came and those who missed out are now asking - "When and where is the next one?"

To the Wide Open Spaces

By Ron Taylor

After what seems to be weeks of speculation, we now know where our previous Ranger-in-Charge has got to.

Following the relocation of Matt Le Duc to Woori Yallock several months ago, he has since resigned from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment in Victoria and has now really relocated to the wide open spaces.

Matt has taken up the position of Ranger-in-Charge at Mootwingee National Park in the far west of New South Wales. For those who say "where" it is about two hours drive north of Broken Hill. The Park is known for its extensive aboriginal artifacts and rock paintings. Matt will be working with the local aboriginal community and has several aboriginal staff working with him at the Park as guides etc.

Matt and family will be living in the Park adjacent to the information centre and by all

accounts the house has its share of 'creepy crawlies'.

Ethan has already enrolled with the 'school of the air' and he is looking forward to having his own radio. Cecilia will no doubt find some way of getting tourists involved in a 'Friends' group (put in a plant before you leave!)

Both Matt and Cecilia have given their best to the Warrandyte State Park during their time here, Matt with his knowledge and expertise as Ranger-in-Charge and Cecilia as a committed and hard working Committee member of the Friends group.

As a family they have made a lot of friends in and around Warrandyte and as friends we will all be sorry to see them leave the area. We wish them well in their new venture and we know that there will be better times ahead and rest assured that there will be visitors from down south who will want to check out Matt's new Park.

"I SPY"

By B.G

Majors Creek Weekend

Mobile phone. Neal Tessier drove around and around the area trying to use a car phone to contact Betty. Modern technology, however, has its limits.

Mobile canoe. Just ask Ron Taylor, apparently the canoe 'took off' from the trailer he was towing. The canoe rode (road) the freeway quite well!

Brown Snake Walk

Shirley Mandemaker's walk around Professors Hill attracted a good number of people. The brown snake seen near the start of the walk was not amused, vanishing down a nearby hole.

More Staff Lost

Maree Kirkpatrick of Construction and Maintenance (previously trainee ranger) has not had her employment continued. Shame. Hope we see her back with the Park again soon.

The Great Southern Migration

Olive and Andy Walters have returned from Cootchiemudlo Queensland.

Ray Clarke has returned from Broome W.A.

Flora Anderson has returned from Lord Howe Island.

Don and Barbara Cameron will be on their way back from Samoa via New Zealand.

Andy Nixon

The Ranger in Charge and the Edna Walling connection. Stay tuned.

Photogenic Phefley

Ranger Brian Phefley has been coy about his photograph being displayed in the local paper - looking at birds. All in the line of duty too.

Then What?

Justin Welander, who spent six months at the Park as a Trainee Ranger, has been employed for a further month as a Construction and Maintenance worker. Justin has become a dab hand at fence building.

Koala Count

One Thursday lunchtime recently, the people sitting in the Folly were astounded to see a koala 'lope' around one side of the dam, then climb up a eucalypt tree right in front of them.

Floristic Survey

Fowspian, Jenny Hoskin, studying Resource Management at the Outer Eastern Institute of Tafe, has prepared an interesting project survey on Frogland. This survey will be available in our own library for perusal.

Pot Belly Tray

Ron Taylor has made a much-needed new ash pan for the Folly stove. And wait 'til you see the new bbq that Ron and Colin Bromley have been working on!

Tawny Frogmouth Barbecue

The Stane Brae grass-planting and 'Twilight Barbecue' was a well attended success. No we didn't barbecue the Tawny Frogmouth, but it did sit on a nearby branch

'humming' and watching while its photograph was taken by 'Friends' only two metres away. A beautiful and natural experience.

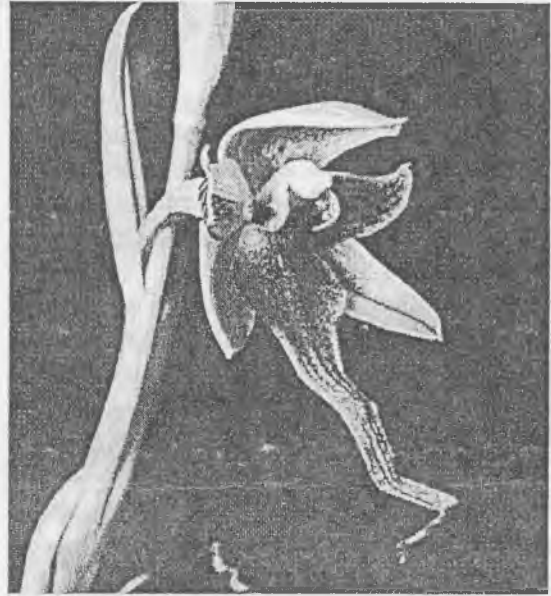


New Orchid Finds

Warrandyte's team of orchid gurus have done it again. Following finds earlier in the year of the Mayfly Orchid (*Acianthus caudatus*) and the Red-tip Greenhood (*Pterostylis* sp. aff. *parviflora*), three more new orchid records for Warrandyte State Park have been found and there is probably a fourth which is yet to be confirmed. In addition, two other species thought to be extinct in the area have been rediscovered.

The new records are firstly, the Notched Onion Orchid (*Microtis arenaria*), a robust orchid characterised by a pointed upturned tip to the dorsal sepal and a deep notch in the labellum. Secondly, *Caladenia* sp. aff. *prolata* (no common name) which is similar to a 'white' Pink Fingers and the status of which in Victoria is insufficiently known. The other find was a naked or hairless form of Red Beard (*Calochilus paludosus*) see photo. This variant or peloric form, as it is called, is considered to be very rare in Victoria.

The two orchids rediscovered were the White Caladenia (*Caladenia catenata*), a beautiful large white-flowered orchid which is endangered in Greater Melbourne, and the Short-lip Leek-orchid (*Prasophyllum brevilabre*), our only Leek Orchid. Although this may change very soon when a group of plants, presently in bud, come into flower.



On the down side, the Donkey or Wallflower Orchid (*Diuris corymbosa*) - a large golden orange orchid, has not been seen in the Park for the last three years. Despite a concentrated search by 'Friends' on The Common where the largest population occurred, no plants could be found.

If anyone has seen this lovely orchid in or around Warrandyte State Park this year, please ring either Ranger David Van Bockel on 9844 2659 or Pat Coupar on 9844 1650. It would be a great shame if this one were to join the list of extinct orchids for the Park.

Christmas Party



Date: Wednesday December 11th

Time: 7.00 pm onwards

Place: Stane Brae. (Proceed through the gate at the end of Stane Brae Crt to the end of the track and look out for FOWSP signs. Melways ref. map 24 C9)

Our last Twilight Barbeque' was so successful that we decided to have another one at the same place for our Christmas Breakup.

Just bring along food and drink for the barbeque and a chair to sit on. Billy tea and damper will be provided. Bring along bathers for a swim if it's hot.

A Tribute to Georgie Saunders (nee Waterman)

by Joan MacMahon

Gentle, thoughtful, engaging, bright-eyed, enthusiastic, meditative, highly literate, a skilful communicator-.....all these are aspects of the Georgie some of the "Friends" had the pleasure of knowing. It is a sadness to report she died recently after a tiring battle with illness.

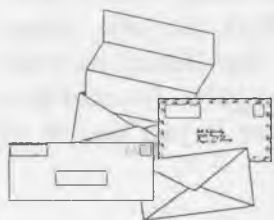
Georgie contributed enormously to nature conservation through her Australia-wide work in Park interpretation. Kosciusko, Wilson's Prom, Gulf Station, Yarra Valley, Mt Eccles, her beloved Wyperfeld, Warrandyte and Kakadu are just some of the places she used her talents. She was a longtime Warrandyte resident so it must have been a pleasure for her a couple of years ago to be based at the Park depot. Along with Pat and Mike Coupar, Bruce Bence, Ron Taylor and others she helped to bring the gold history and natural history of the Whipstick Gully area alive so that thousands

may now share what until then only a few had known.

Her last major project is significant. It was the visitor centre at Kakadu. Georgie and young son Edward, (joined whenever possible by husband Don) lived for many months at Jabiru, while working with the various groups involved in the project.

And so it is that Georgie leaves behind a wealth of ideas, accomplished projects, many, many friends and her family (which includes some of the Bunitj people of the Kakadu region).

We hope you approve of our gesture to her; the planting of a special garden area near our beloved 'Folly'- a garden that will grow and flourish in the same way we believe her ideas will spread knowledge and love of our precious natural world.



Letters to the Editor

Dear Mrs Coupar
First let me say that
I'm glad you enjoyed

your encounter with the children. I find the little ones rather sweet myself, though not enough to devote my life to them. This brings me to the point of this letter. I feel compelled to set the record straight regarding the status of female emus.

I understand that you female humans have not yet gained true liberation so yours is an understandable misconception. Also in persuading our male folk to don skirts we have not discarded them ourselves except figuratively.

You see the point I am getting to is that we females allow them their little bit of slap and tickle (and I will not deny that it's very enjoyable) and then...we leave them holding the babies so to speak. This leaves us free to go off and seduce another poor lovesick Romeo and we tie him up with more babies.

I can highly recommend this way of life. Not only are we free of the burden of motherhood, but



our males are too busy to get into mischief and they make wonderful fathers as you have noticed. Credit where it's due.

yours faithfully
Annie Mew (Ann E Mu)

Ed. Note: A humble apology to all male emu's who might have been offended by the article in last months newsletter (Deserted). P.C

An Unusual Reaction

By Fia Clendinnen

Just lifting my arm was an enormous effort, but I kept telling myself I had to raise someone on the telephone. My kids would be coming home on the bus soon and someone had to be there to walk them home. I made phone call after phone call, but all I got were answering machines. With one hand I was holding ice blocks against my leg. And then, thank goodness, my friend Cathy was home.

"Cathy, can you come over straight away?" I croaked.

"Yeah, sure, " she said and she sounded amused. A few minutes later she walked in the door jingling her car keys.

"What's up?" she asked, looking down at me as I lay in a heap on the floor, surrounded by melting ice blocks.

"Can you take me to the doctor?" I said conversationally, "I think I need an injection."

I heaved myself upright to follow her out to the car. Suddenly I was back on the floor and this time, without warning, I was vomiting copiously. I felt weak and utterly washed out, but I was calm because Cathy was there and I knew she would look after me. But I'd given Cathy an awful fright, and she swore profusely as she ran around with tea towels mopping up my vomit.

"Right that's it," she said desperately, "I'm signing up to do a First Aid Course."

The doctor came and gave me an injection, Cathy changed my clothes and picked up my kids, my husband came home from work, amazed at the drama.

"What happened?" he asked.
Well, it was a summer's day and I was out cutting

the grass with a sickle. I didn't want to cut the grass but we'd been served a Fire Direction notice by the CFA. I was wearing a skirt and sandals and I felt a slight prick on my bare leg. Was that an insect bite or did I brush against a sharp stick? I kept cutting grass. I felt a little giddy. Am I having a reaction to an insect bite or am I feeling over anxious? I couldn't be sure. But then I started to get a fizzing, crawling feeling all over my skin and I thought I'd better go inside and ring someone up, just in case. By the time I got to the house walking was an effort.

Funnily enough, just a couple of hours before I'd been talking to someone from the Poisons Information Centre about a reaction I'd had a month earlier to a bite from a hatchet wasp (Family Evaniidae).

"Oooh," said the man on the phone when I described my symptoms, "That sounds a bit nasty. I'd talk to my doctor if I were you."

All's well that ends well. Later that day, while I lay on my kitchen floor, my doctor and I did discuss my unusual reactions to certain insect bites. He took my pulse and blood pressure and reassured me that I was not having an anaphylactic reaction. It was nothing life threatening. After about an hour I felt more or less normal, just very tired. He gave me some pills to take for next time.

So what bit me? Was it a spider, one of Pat and Mike Coupar's friends? Or was it a friendless ant? I'll never know. But this little story goes to prove a point I've been trying to make with the CFA for years: while bushfires are hazardous, cutting the grass has it's own problems.

Cinnamon Fungus Slide Night

with Gretna Weste

Date: Friday November 22nd

Time: 6.30 pm for BBQ slides to follow

Place: The Folly, Pound Bend Rd (Melways ref. map 23 C10)

Dates for your Diary

NOVEMBER 21ST The Fourth Hill Collection
(see thurs. prog. for details)
Contact: *Pat Coupar* 9844 1650

NOVEMBER 22ND An Introduction to Cinnamon Fungus (See ad. this newsletter)
Contact: *Flora Anderson* 9722 1776

NOVEMBER 24TH The AGM and Tour of revegetation areas (See ad. this newsletter)
Contact: *Ron Taylor* 9844 4285

NOVEMBER 28TH Attention Frogland (see thurs. prog. for details)
Contact: *Jenny Hoskin* 9808 9231

NOVEMBER 30TH Farewell BBQ for Matt and Cecilia (See ad. this newsletter)
Contact: *Ron Taylor* 9844 4285

DECEMBER 2ND. Warrandyte Market
Contact: *Betty Oke* 9844 3763

DECEMBER 4TH. Koornong Sub-group
Contact: *Cathy Willis* 9844 1841

DECEMBER 5TH A stroll around Blue-tongue Bend (see thurs. prog. for details)
Contact: *Joan MacMahon* 9844 3213

DECEMBER 11TH FOWSP Christmas Party
(See ad. this newsletter)

DECEMBER 12TH Mount Lofty Wetlands (see thurs. prog. for details)
Contact: *Flora Anderson* 9722 1776

DECEMBER 19TH Stocking Removals (see thurs. prog. for details)
Contact: *Cathy Willis* 9844 1841

Any sub-group or individual who would like to advertise an environmental activity in this newsletter please ring Pat Coupar on 9844 1650

Annual General Meeting

Date: Sunday November 24th

Time: 1.00pm onwards

Place: The Folly, Pound Bend Rd (Melways ref. map 23 C10)

All members are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM). It is a chance for you to have your say and a time to elect a new committee.

The meeting will be followed by a walk around the nursery, 'Frogland', the Coup and Endeavour Bank to admire all the achievements of the past year. Finishing with afternoon tea around 4.00pm. Please bring a plate of something to share.

If you would like to be on the Committee of Management next year, just get two Fowsp members to nominate you. Nomination forms can be obtained from the 'Folly' or can be posted out by ringing a member of the present Committee (see back page of newsletter). Please return the completed form to Fowsp P O Box 220 Warrandyte 3113.

Serpent on the Hill

By Jan Tindale

Our walk at the Professor's Hill Wildflower Reserve on the 17th of October turned out to be a lot more exciting than anyone would have anticipated. For that we thank a big brown snake which belied its species well-documented reputation for aggression, by having only one thing in mind: escape.

There were 11 of us, including two children, on the walk which was led by Shirley Mandemaker. Amongst the numbers was our newest 'Friend', Lolita Booth, from Templestowe.

It was a warmer-than-usual day for the time of year, and as we entered the fenced reserve I warned everyone to beware of snakes. I should have heeded my own advice.

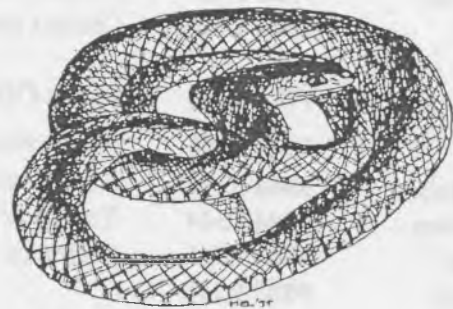
I knew Lolita to be particularly interested in native orchids and I walked beside her at the head of the group, straying ever-so-slightly off the track (another no-no) to point out to her a Yam Daisy growing beside a fallen tree.

The Yam Daisy was not alone. Coiled beside it, as I bent to show the flower to Lolita, was the biggest brown snake I have seen. Oh dear. What had I led our newest 'Friend' into? I froze. So, I think, did Lolita. The snake didn't. It came to life, not in a hurry but in circular motion, quite majestically. It was a beautiful specimen, golden brown, as thick as my wrist. The sun enhanced its beauty.

The problem was that the steep rocky terrain and the fallen tree really gave it nowhere to go, except towards us. I suppose it was 30 centimetres from my feet when I took a backward step, knocking over the poor lady behind me, but fortunately injuring neither her nor the baby in her back harness. Obviously bewildered, the snake moved, still creating its own circles, towards Lolita.

At no stage had the snake made any attempt to strike at either of us. We had disturbed its sun-basking, yet all it wanted was to get out of there and leave these intrusive Fowspians far behind. Which it did, sussing out the end of the log which was holding it captive and slipping very gracefully downhill.

So why did a member of a much-maligned snake species pass up a golden opportunity to bite a couple of people? We can only assume it realized it was among Friends.



Molly's Return

Fourteen months ago a young koala weighing just 780 grams was found on Ron Day's Track at Pound Bend. She was taken into care by, Julie Pryor, a dedicated local wildlife rescuer. The koala, named Molly, was given succulent young eucalypt leaves to eat. Some Fowspians were lucky enough to meet the cute little marsupial when Julie came down for fresh supplies of leaves from the Fowsp coup. On her release recently Molly weighed a healthy five kilograms. We wish her a safe and happy life back in the wild.

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Committee

Mike Coupar	9903 9567	Contact person
Cecilia Le Duc	9722 1926	Contact person
Ron Taylor	9844 4285	Contact person
Flora Anderson	9722 1776	Public Officer
Pat Coupar	9844 1650	Newsletter editor
Joan MacMahon	9844 3213	Newsletter editor
Anthony Owen	9844 1344	Treasurer
Cathy Willis	9844 1841	Secretary
Jenny Hoskin	9808 9231	

Membership

Judy Thomson	9844 1590
Marg Dimech	9844 3812

Market

Betty Oke	9844 3763
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