

July 2001

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

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

Any Winter Wildflowers?

By Joan MacMahon

June 14th, 10a.m., a grey morning with rain threatening; even so, about a dozen of us met at the end of Tunnel Street, high up on Fourth Hill. I was looking forward to examining the different plants as I hadn't given myself a chance to wander in the drier parts of Warrandyte for several years.

We spent a bit of time removing those black mesh rabbit guards, sometimes having to carefully untwine the Small-leaf Clematis which had taken up residence in quite a few of them. We made a few sizeable piles for later collection. Then we set off, aiming to discover any early flowering plants. We were lucky to have three identification experts with us - Cathy, Pat and Josh - so the many unknown plants were soon identified.

I learnt that all of Warrandyte's seventeen types of acacia are now found in the Fourth Hill zone. (Even *Acacia lanigera*, the Woolly Wattle, rare and localised, with an endangered district status has been planted there.) Between us, and without trying very hard, we found nine different species.



They ranged from the almost prostrate Thin-leaf Wattle to the tree sized Silver and Black Wattles.

Ranged in the middle were Golden, Spreading, Varnish and Juniper Wattles, as well as

Lightwood and Blackwood. And we were treated to one Juniper Wattle already in flower.

Did you know there are fifty-three members of the daisy family in the Warrandyte area? This seems an extraordinarily large number to me. We were lucky to see one which is listed as rare and endangered - Shiny Everlasting. It makes a handsome garden shrub, having bright yellow everlasting-type flowers. Keep an eye out for when it's available from the nursery. Several other lovely daisies, though not in flower, caught our eye including Button Everlasting and Showy Podolepis.

Several members of the heath family are widespread on Fourth Hill and Common Heath was already flowering, while the Beard-heath was heavily in bud.

We came across another two, easily confused because of the similarity of their botanical names. The first, *Astroloma humifusum*, known as Cranberry Heath is a ground hugging plant that flowers mainly from May to September. We came across one with its lovely deep pink flowers, as usual hidden by the leaves. The second is *Acrotriche serrulata* or Honey-pots, a more upright, softer plant. None of these were flowering yet. The flowers, rich in nectar, were apparently a food source for the Aboriginal people.

Of the other twenty or so types of plants we saw, I'll only mention a couple. There were lots of correas in flower. These shrubs (also known as Native Fuchsias) have pale green bell-like flowers with prominent stamens which honeyeaters love to visit. They make good medium-sized garden shrubs. In a clump they look lovely.

Contd on next page

Any Winter Wildflowers? contd:

We came across another favourite of mine, with the delightful name of Love Creeper. It's an unobtrusive little twiner when not in flower, having hardly any leaves. When flowering (September to December) it develops bunches of bluish-mauve pea-like flowers. It occurs naturally in the temperate parts of every state, being found on heathlands, in damp sandy valleys and dry sclerophyll forests from sea level to mountain

tops. It sometimes gets itself caught up in those black mesh plant guards.

And finally, in a drier environment than I would have expected, we came across a few shrubs of Hop Goodenia, not looking as lush as they can in moister areas. Nevertheless, one had a few yellow flowers – bright spots in an overcast day.

Overall a very pleasant way to spend a winter's morning.

The Wonderful World of Fungi A Walk with Bruce Fuhrer

By Elizabeth Sevier

We set off from Jumping Creek Reserve at 10.am on our regular Thursday morning. The air was mild, but the sky was cloudy in the midst of a rather dry season. So we were all a little uncertain about the prevalence of mushrooms, toadstools, puffballs and other fungi to be seen.

We entered Stane Brae from Jumping Creek and our first terrain was across some cleared pasture land where we found specimens of *Agaricus campestris* – the edible field mushroom and another gilled fungus, *Clitocybe clitocyboides*. Leaving behind about fifty kangaroos, we descended to the river and entered the riparian forest. It was like another world, although not completely idyllic, as you could guess from the name 'Smilax Walk', but Bruce led us into the damper and mossier parts.

Along the way we noted the variety of fungi and the functions of different species. Some are wood-eaters helping to break down dead wood, others live on trees and assist their growth, whilst others live off the roots of trees and have been known to kill trees.

Bruce Fuhrer has an extensive and detailed knowledge of fungi and we were very appreciative of the information he imparted to us. We were delighted by all the colours of the *Mycaena* group of fungi which are found on dead wood. Among them we saw *Mycaena interrupta*, the white-tipped *Mycaena albidofusca* and others in less spectacular colours, but all of them in groups.

We were amazed at the squid-like shape and brilliant red of *Anthurus archeri*, but appalled at its nauseous aroma (not called a stinkhorn for nothing!)

We progressed to a damp, mossy area with patches of stagnant water in the gully. Here, Bruce became very excited about some mosses that he had seen only in more mountainous forests like the Dandenong Ranges. Even more engrossing were some rare fungi sample. One was *Plectania campylospora* which had little black cups ready to fill with water.

I find the *Trametes* bracket fungus very attractive in their layers of colours of colours displayed from the rims to the central zone near the wood – these grow on dead wood. We



also saw *Psathyrella* species, a gilled fungus, the colour of which depends on the amount of water present. There were many *Cortinarius* species of different colours and an orange smudge on a tree which turned out to be *Micoacia subceracea*. One of the most interesting specimens was *Pillobolus*, which, when viewed under a hand lens revealed a flask-shaped structure with a tiny ball on top which responds to the sun. When the sun is directly overhead its spores shoot directly upwards.

So we wandered on. At 11.30am Josh called us to reality and we made our way back towards Jumping Creek Reserve where Cathy showed her skill with a barbeque and we ate lunch and drank coffee.

Once again we feel very appreciative of Bruce Fuhrer for sharing his knowledge and describing the fungi so clearly to us.

GOLD in Warrandyte

By Geoff Speedy

During the recent 150th Anniversary of Gold in Warrandyte, the observation was made that the gold reefs tend to align with each other, in a roughly north-south direction, which is also roughly parallel to the folding of the mudstones seen in the Yarra River.

The explanation for this behaviour is based on massive movements of the earth's crustal plates. Seafloor plates are made of heavier rocks than continental plates, and usually are forced down below the continental crust where they meet. Seafloor plates also grow and spread (8mm per year) in the centre of the sea, and are consumed when they are forced down (subducted) below the continental plates. The tremendous forces of gravity and friction cause earthquakes in these "subduction" zones and also melt the parts of the rock with low melting points.

The rock parts with low melting points are metals (e.g. gold) and quartz. Deep below the surface, (2km - 10km) in a subduction zone, there are pockets of molten gold, metals and quartz, with superheated water and other gases. So long as the seafloor keeps spreading, there is nowhere for this to go, because the rocks above are being tightly compressed.

The compression caused by the seafloor spreading has also folded the mudstones above into the tight folds. Across Victoria, the mudstones of 500-600 million years age have been shortened by 40%, i.e. 500km of layered mudstone squashed into 300km, with folding and faulting, heating and thickening. When the seafloor stopped spreading, before 410 million years ago, the compression stopped, and as the tightly squashed mudstones relaxed a little, cracks appeared, mostly aligned with the direction of the folding. Into the cracks escaped the superheated quartz, gold, liquids and gasses.

The gasses also opened up additional weaknesses in the mudstones, especially where a stronger mudstone layer was interleaved with softer layers. "Saddle" reefs of gold and quartz occur on each side of a "anticlinal" fold where the stronger layers caused cavities to occur. The really productive gold mines of Ballarat and Bendigo exploited these saddle reefs down to depths of 5000 and 6000 feet. Who knows whether the saddle reefs still exist under Warrandyte, just out of reach of the old-time gold miners.

See also: <http://www.agcrc.csiro.au/projects/1053MO/index.html>
(Next Month – How geologists can date rocks hundreds of millions of years old)

The Ode to a Spelling Checker

I have a spelling checker,
It came with my PC.
It plane lee marks four my revue
Miss steaks aye can knot sea.

Eye ran this poem threw it,
Your sure reel glad two no.
Its vary polished in it's weigh.
My checker tolled me sew.

A checker is a bless sing,
It freeze yew lodes of thyme.
It helps me right awl stiles two reed,
And aides me when eye rime.

Each frays come posed up on my screen
Eye trussed too bee a joule.
The checker pours o'er every word
To cheque sum spelling rule.

Bee fore a veiling cheeker's
Hour spelling mite decline,
And if we're lacks oar have a laps,
We wood bee maid too wine.

Butt now bee cause my spelling
Is checked with such grate flare,
Their are know fault's with in my cite,
Of nun eye am a wear.

Now spelling does knot phase me,
It does knot bring a tier.
My pay purrs awl due glad den
With wrapped word's fare as hear.

To rite with care is quite a feet
Of witch won should bee proud,
And wee mussed dew the best wee can,
Sew flaw's are knot aloud.

Sow ewe can sea why aye dew prays
Such soft wear four pea seas,
And why eye brake in two averse
Buy righting want too pleas.

*Jerrold H. Zar; The Graduate School, Northern Illinois University
Published January/February 1994, in Journal of Irreproducible Results..*

It's Worth a Visit

By Pat Coupar

I was inspired to revisit Phillip Island after reading Geoff Durham's article on the Nature Park in last month's Parkwatch (the journal of the Victorian National Parks Association). He began the article by saying *"If you haven't visited Phillip Island for some time, it's worth doing so for walking, birdwatching, car touring and site seeing"*. We hadn't, so we did – a few weeks ago.

The highlights for me of our weekend at Phillip Island were Rhyll Inlet and Cape Woolamai. Rhyll Inlet, on the north-east side of the Island, is a



Ramsar site of international significance. A

boardwalk has been constructed through a low forest of Grey Mangroves and mud flats to the edge of the inlet. Here we watched spoonbills, herons, egrets, swans,

cormorants, teal and other ducks feeding in the shallows.

At the Cape Woolamai we chose to do the eight kilometre Pinnacles Loop walk around the headland. Starting from the Woolamai Surf Lifesaving Club, the first kilometre of the walk is south along the beach. Beach walking is always exhilarating, but especially in winter when the surf is wild and fuming and the sand is firm and untrod.

The track swings away from the beach up a series of steps and follows the rim of the cliff through a mix of indigenous and exotic low vegetation. This is Short-tailed Shearwater or Muttonbird – as they are more commonly called – territory. The ground is pitted with their burrows on both sides of the track. It is a massive rookery

extending over much of the headland. The birds though were not at home, having set off in April on their 30,000 kilometre journey to North America. They won't be back again until September. No birds meant no snakes to worry about and we could concentrate on the views.

And views were everywhere. Deep gaping gulches with frightening drop offs have eroded the cliff face. The Pinnacles themselves are jumbled jagged stacks of salmon pink rock rising like spires from the boiling ocean. The rocks are an unusual pink granite from the Devonian era – that is, they are ancient – about 360 million years old!

Along the way seats have been strategically placed to allow the walker to rest while taking best advantage of the views. The track climbs steadily to the highest point on the Cape and also the Island – a meagre 109 metres, but it looks and feels much higher. From this grandstand a 360° panoramic view takes in a vast expanse of ocean, the surf beach, the isthmus, the bridge to San Remo and across to the Mornington Peninsula. Looking south you can follow the coastline from Kilcunda to Cape Patterson and beyond to the Gippsland Hills.

From time to time squalls of slanting rain raced in from the ocean, but fortunately most of them missed us and the majority of our walk was in weak winter sunlight.

I have to mention Phillip Island's signs – they are, in my opinion, simply awful. Excessively bright. Obscene. In shining painted metal the council signage is red and yellow, while the Nature Park signs are of similar construction in aquamarine blue and yellow – both would be better placed at a railway station. Do people really like these garish colours? Bring back the subtle green and brown wooden variety, I reckon.

Signs aside, I do recommend a trip to Phillip Island and can only reiterate Geoff Durham's words – *"If you haven't visited Phillip Island for some time, it's worth doing so"*.

Snippet

Here's an interesting snippet from POTOROO review no. 166 environment newsletter of East Gippsland.

It's taken from David Yenken's recent book 'Resetting the Compass' and is headed Dematerialism. It's a concept we need to see being discussed. Here's the quote.

"There's a term called dematerialism and it's applied to the economy. Targets regularly proposed, and already adopted by some European countries, are the need to achieve a factor 4 (75%) reduction in fossil energy and a factor 10 (90%) reduction in material use per head of population in this century. Hence the growing emphasis around the world on very large reductions in material and energy use, the aim being to provide a similar or better human service with a vastly reduced energy and material input.

The dematerialism debate barely exists in Australia. It needs to be given real prominence.

In other words we need to do more than just Recycle"

Check out your local library – if they don't have a copy ask them to buy one in.

Browsing the Billabongs

(Part Two)

By Elizabeth Sevier

Further along the river is a natural water feature in the form of Montpelier Billabong, north of Odyssey House, across the river from Westerfolds Park. In the true sense of the word it is probably not a billabong because it is still joined to the Yarra at both ends. Friends of the Yarra Valley have spent a few Sundays there over the years, planting and tidying, but there is still a lot to do. Near the billabong we have found the tallest River Bottlebrush we have ever seen, There are also several Yellow Box trees to harvest for seed.

The Banyule Billabong is a true billabong, having separated from the river. It needs a high water level from the Yarra to refill. The last time I saw it, it was dry. Many water birds enjoy its wide area and marshy character. This area is cared for by the Warringal Conservation Society which has regular plantings in the area. The Friends of Yarra Valley Park (FYVP) have also helped there. We are told that our early wattle plantings are now beginning to show signs of age. Another input is needed soon. Two more natural billabongs remain in the Yarra Flats Park, adjoining Bridge Street,

Heidelberg. The oldest of these is the Annulus, so called because of its beautiful round shape. This shape is a strong indication of its age. The open part of its original horseshoe shape has closed and built up with silt over its thousands of years existence. It has now been dry for about three years and is actually getting hard to find.

The Bolin Bolin Billabong has water in it now. There is a channel connecting it to the Yarra which ran with water for three days last year. The small falls of rain since then has maintained the water level.

Bolin Bolin gave its name to Bulleen. Once it was part of a wetlands area that stretched right along to where the Eastern Freeway is now. It was an area which nurtured prolific food for the Wurundjeri and was their preferred place of settlement in early Melbourne. Instead the clan members were swept off to Corranderk near Healesville. The billabong is thousands of years old but not as old as the Annulus because it still keeps its horseshoe shape.

A few wednesdays ago, the nursery group of FYVP spent a happy and sunny, but physically demanding, morning planting some of our River Red Gum seedlings in the paddock between Bolin Bolin and Veneto Club.

Thanks to Glen Jameson and Patrick Fricker for much of this information.



Zoological Meanings

Nankeen Night-heron

Nycticorax caledonicus

"Caledonian night crow"

An Invitation

Fowspians have been invited to visit the C.R.I.S.P (Community of Ringwood Indigenous Species Plant Nursery) nursery.

This nursery, like the Warrandyte State Park nursery, is run by volunteers. They supply plants for the Maroondah Council, local schools and various environmental groups.

Their aims include: growing plants that are now rare in the Ringwood area; replenishing reserves with their original flora; reducing weed growth in the reserves; increasing food and shelter for native birds, insects and other animals, and supporting other groups involved in revegetation and maintenance of bush reserves.

Date & Time: Friday July 27th at 10.30am. Morning tea will be provided

Place: CRISP nursery, 17 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood

Rangers Report

June/July 2001

By Andy Nixon
Ranger In Charge

The last few months at the park have been busy for all sorts of reasons. Many people have been involved in delivering projects, all of which will see eventual benefit to the park. Rangers, contractors, Green Corps young'uns, FOWSPians, fire crew, consultants and others. *It would seem that we are going to need a larger carpark.* Much has been to do with rapidly finishing off some of the year's projects, preparing for the forthcoming year, and cooperative commencement of tasks. In particular I refer to the Yarra Biolink project. And the plants for this project are to be found in your nursery.....

The 28,000 plus seedlings that have been grown by the Thursday nursery volunteers have been ready to burst their tubes the last few months. Like dogs on the leash straining to get off, your plants have seen the open pastures waiting for them. And with the exceptionally mild weather, plus good supply of water being kept up, the plants are in robust health. Now with the 10 young folk from Green Corp with us, the plants are finding room to now spread their roots in places like Pound Bend paddocks (above and below the office), and riparian zones in the PB picnic area. We will all be proud to return in five years, ten years, and I hope, twenty years, to see the results. A veritable forest no doubt!

Other environmental activities that have occurred over the last few months have included:

- significant work concluded on our pest plant projects, \$59,000 being expended during the year
- rabbit management continues in our focus areas, much as per last year. The support of community rabbit action groups has been and will continue to be, instrumental in the control of this serious pest. (you may have read in other publications, or if you are a member of one of these groups, that the greater Warrandyte area is now the largest community rabbit action program in the nation – in terms of participants)

- fencing of orchid and other indigenous flora species sites – Jumping Creek, One Tree Hill
- banding of our brood of young powerful owl chicks, production of some cosy homes for *Tuans*, and even a sighting of some large 'quadruped grazers' in a not to be named area of the estate.

And other happenings.....

- a survey of boundary intrusion by neighbours into State Park and conservation reserves land. Some interesting results found, though it must be reported that the majority of folk respect the wonderful adjunct that they are party to.
- removal of an old house in Gallatlys Lane, Pound Bend (with subsequent plantings by FOWSP)
- the full set of park brochures upgraded.....look out for them on your next stroll
- a face lift to many sites with general maintenance to signs, buildings, carparks, picnic tables etc. by contractors and fire crew. (Apologies for taking a little while to repairing the very bad vandalism attack we had to our signs back in April. This attack also occurred in the Dandenongs and Cardinia park-lands on the same weekend)
- input into the forthcoming celebration for Victoria's 150th anniversary of the discovery of gold. Warrandyte is the feature of course, and with plenty happening on the last weekend in June I encourage you to participate in one of the many activities. Not often that one can say I was participating in a 'sesquicentenary' event.
- Ranger David Farrar has moved to a secondment for seven months to Wilsons Promontory NP, and ranger Glen Jameson is also to go on secondment – to Uluru / Katja-Juta NP in the July / August period.

As the financial or 'works' year is drawing to a close I wish to thank in particular those many of you who have assisted and made contribution to the activities undertaken at Warrandyte State Park. I know that the local community and particularly Parks Victoria highly value your contributions. I look forward to next month, sharing with you some news regards the outcomes of your 2001 grant applications.



Another Favourite Place

By Cathy Willis

There is a ridge above Mogg's Creek that never fails to take my breath away. Sometimes it's because of the vertical climb up from the beach, or the icy wind off Bass Strait. But always I am blown away by the stunning combination of the view and the wildflowers.

The last weekend in May brought king tides and fine still weather to the west coast. From the ridge I could see the entire sweep of sand from Split Point lighthouse at Airey's Inlet all the way to Lorne, the monstrous Cumberland Resort thankfully only a vague pink blur from here. Tiny black dots near the water's edge highlighted the best surf breaks along this stretch of coastline.

Off the track edges the Dwarf She-oaks and a myriad other heathland plants leave tantalising tiny gaps – perfect habitat for orchids. Mosquito Orchids and Tiny Greenhoods were in flower, several other



Greenhood species and Sun orchids leaves were everywhere. The Spider and Donkey orchids, among others, were waiting for my next visit in spring.

Picking my way delicately towards a flowering Grass Tree I startled a wallaby. We exchanged a long look until it decided I wasn't a threat and continued to graze watchfully on the fresh green growth of Button Everlastings. I quietly left it in peace.

The easy way to reach my ridge is to drive to the end of Ridge Road in Fairhaven and walk along the management track towards the ocean. However, Angahook-Lorne State Park has many beautiful ridges – find your own.



Busy Business

Seen recently, Janine McNeilly-Rowe at a meeting with Ranger-in-Charge, Andy Nixon, discussing business-type matters – project managing and budgeting.

Kay Comes

Kay Williams has come from Head Office in the city (ex Community Grants Department) and will be 'acting Margaret' for six weeks.

Her duties will be as business support officer and administrative support at Warrandyte State Park.

Welcome Kay.

Heaps of Helpers

Also 'caught' helping at the end of May were Adrienne Hilton, Dina Dare, David Ellis and Leigh, who is finishing her certificate 4 in 'Assessment and Workplace Training' through Box Hill TAFE – why Box Hill? "because it's the second closest and cheapest.

Petite Parks

By Ben Gotlib

As the cold autumn turns to colder winter, our thoughts turn to that country we visited and fell in love with last year – the real Australia.

Travelling was like knitting a tapestry (excuse the mixed metaphor) in our minds. Each place was like a hidden pearl, open the scraggy shell and there it is – in your own backyard.

Four small areas stood out for various reasons.

- Caranbirini Conservation Park
- Mirima (Hidden Valley) National Park
- Grigson Lookout
- Hakea Reserve

They all moved our senses in different, but the same way – the feel underfoot, yielding or firm sand, pebbles, hard rock. The smell of freshness – no pollution. The true sound of silence – not a vacuum, but a soothing balm. The taste of Australia.

You who have not been there may not understand (Apologies to Dorothea).

Stand by for descriptions of the above four locations over the next four months.



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Rock Correa (*Correa glabra*)

One of Warrandyte's winter flowers. This dense shrub is common in Warrandyte, especially on the rocky cliffs overlooking the river. It has rounded, bright green, shiny leaves and pale yellow flowers. Many hybrids occur in the Park between this species and Common Correa (*Correa reflexa*) which has rougher, hairy leaves with the terminal pair of leaf bracts generally reflexed over the flower.



FOWSP Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

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