

August 2001

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

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

Nursery Continues to Grow

By Pat Coupar

It seems there is no stopping the expansion of the nursery at the Warrandyte State Park depot. Such is the demand for plants, there is simply not enough room to accommodate them all while at their young, vulnerable stages of propagation.

With thousands of plants being grown by the 'Friends' each year for revegetation and community purposes, there is a desperate need for more polyhouse space, particularly during the colder months.

At the present time we have the original small polyhouse which is used for germinating seeds and striking cuttings. This has been overflowing for some time with many trays having to be kept on the ground. The other larger polyhouse, built by the 'Friends' several years ago, is also always full of boxes of newly pricked out plants.

At a recent meeting of the FOWSP committee a decision was made to purchase a third polyhouse so that we can have a greater number of plants ready for planting by spring. Details of the exact size and construction, and its position in the nursery, are yet to be finalised.

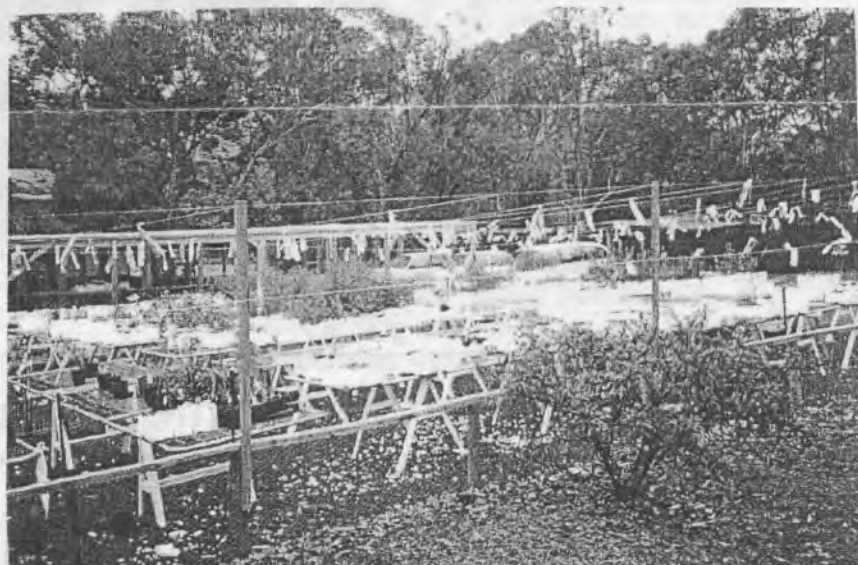
While there is somewhat of a lull in the general pricking out of seedlings at the moment, there is plenty to do - sorting boxes, weeding and general maintenance.

The Thursday workers had a treat last week with a number of ferns needing to

be repotted. A selection of these was then made available to members for a small donation.

Ferns are usually 'off limits' as they are not a major part of Warrandyte's vegetation communities and are therefore not used for revegetation purposes. Those being grown at the nursery are mostly as a result of a 'fern rescues' - many came from the Jumping Creek roadbridge reconstruction site.

The nursery has not been without its problems in recent times. First there was The Rat (or rather Rats) and now there are The Cockies - see the article by J.R in this month's newsletter. Hence the elaborate anti-bird apparatus consisting of lines and aluminium foil overtopped by a magnificent scarecrow or rather scarecocky named Scary Josh!



Notes from Florio

Newsletter of the Royal Botanic Gardens

Scarlet Blaze

Victoria's newest plant; a variation of Cinnamon Wattle (*Acacia leprosa*), has blood red flowers, is to be known as Scarlet Blaze, and will be



Victoria's floral emblem for the Centenary of Federation celebrations.

The story began in 1995, when a single bush with the red mutation was discovered in a State Forest north-east of Melbourne. The plant has now been propagated from cuttings, as plants grown from the seeds revert to yellow flowers. The parent bush has since died. Scarlet Blaze will be released this year through Plant Growers Australia.

Grey headed foxes

Nearly 10% of trees, ferns and palms in the Fern Gully have died, and a further 45% have major damage.

A variety of actions has reduced roosting of about 20,000 to 7,800. Culling, noise disturbance and other methods have been adopted. Patrols for 24 hours have been providing security for the gardens from a small number of protesters opposed to the culling.



Long Island

Extensive work has been carried out on the Island removing exotics and establishing indigenous plants, and designing a billabong and backwater. The objective is to emphasise indigenous culture and to reflect the Aboriginal custodianship.

A Grand Find

Last month a rare orchid was discovered growing in a Manningham Council Reserve in Park Orchards. The discovery was made by a member of the bushland crew who was walking the reserve looking for rabbit burrows.

The orchid is *Pterostylis grandiflora*, commonly known as the Cobra Greenhood or Superb Greenhood. Both common names suitably describe this majestic orchid, which has a large green striped flower with flared brown petals like a cobra's head on its hood.



The orchid is a declared Victorian Rare Or Threatened (VROT) species. According to Backhouse & Jeanes (The Orchids of Victoria 1995) the Cobra Greenhood is rare in Victoria and known from very few, widely scattered locations.

There is an old record – about 70 years old – of this species growing in the Ringwood area. Needless to say this recent find will be monitored very carefully in the future.

An Invitation to join the Friends of Kurth Kiln

Date & Time: Saturday September 8th at 10.00 am.

Place: Kurth Kiln Reserve. Approx. 10km north of Gembrook, in the corner of West Beenak Rd and Soldiers Rd

Fowspians have been invited to join with the Friends of Kurth Kiln Group on their regular monthly activity. BBQ lunch to follow bring a plate to share.

Kurth Kiln got its name from the old charcoal kiln devised and designed in early 1940 by Professor Kurth from the University of Tasmania. The kiln was the only one of its type in Victoria which could operate continuously around the clock.

New Forestry Tube Re-use Program

As a post-graduate student from Monash University, I, Louise Baker, will coordinate the program. It aims to get plant purchasers to return their forestry tubes; its success depends on the cooperation of members of the public, FOWSP and government and commercial organisations. Why return forestry tubes? There are three key objectives to the program: Reduce environmental impact, save FOWSP money and, to uncover less obvious costs of recycling.

The program

Only forestry tubes will be accepted under this program (to minimise any sorting by FOWSP nursery staff and ensure all returned tubes can be used). The tubes can be deposited at the monthly FOWSP Warrandyte market stall or at any other time at the Warrandyte State Park depot.

Reduce environmental impact

Studies have shown that re-using is far more environmentally beneficial than recycling. So by encouraging the re-use of forestry tubes, we can play a small part in reducing our impact on the environment. Less fossil fuel will be burnt for energy used in creating landfill sites, lighting

waste centres and processing waste. There will also be petroleum savings - by reducing plastics production and transportation.

Save money

By re-using forestry tubes we can reduce the need to purchase new tubes. FOWSP pays about 9c per tube; the depot nursery used 60,000 tubes last year and approximately one third of these were new. This program will free up money for other projects.

The Myths of recycling

The third aim of the program is to build awareness about how much recycling actually costs (some forestry tubes can be recycled). We don't often consider this, but recycling requires many resources: transportation to the recycling centre, production, packaging and delivery of recycled products - not to mention the costs of structures that support these activities (eg lighting of road networks and petrol). With this awareness I hope people will automatically think to re-use before recycling and apply it to all aspects of their lives.

For the success of this program, please watch out for the signs and return your forestry tubes.

Thanks

Louise Baker

A CRISP Excursion

By Flora Anderson

The Community of Ringwood Indigenous Species Plants (CRISP) Nursery was originally the City of Ringwood Nursery but was able to retain the very neat acronym when the community took over from Council staff.

After amalgamation and the formation of City of Maroondah, the City depot was transferred to Croydon leaving the volunteer group at the original site in Greenwood Avenue with the buildings and the extra space as well as a nursery manager, Dale Morgan.

It was Dale who showed three of around the nursery on Friday July 27th, while the volunteer group got on with pricking out seedlings and the many other tasks associated with keeping a plant nursery healthy, wealthy and wise. We had our chance to chat with the group over an especially delicious morning tea later in the morning. I was delighted to see that of the dozen or so volunteers, six at least were also members of the Australian Plants Society Maroondah Group. Their expertise in growing and propagating Australian plants is, I am sure, a great asset to CRISP.

Cathy and Josh were very impressed with the healthy looking tube stock in the large polyhouse. We came away inspired to ask the FOWSP Committee to approve an extension to our polyhouse accommodation, so that newly pricked out seedlings and cuttings can be kept longer under shelter, especially in the winter. (See front page article)

Dale told us she had had good results with smoke treatment of some seed. In a separate shade house endangered species are kept growing in larger pots as stock plants for cuttings. Some no longer exist or are rare in their natural habitat. Most have been rescued from building sites.

CRISP's main function is to supply City of Maroondah with plants for street plantings, public open space etc., but is also open to the community Wednesdays and Fridays as well as the second Saturday of every month. These sales, to Council and Community keep the nursery self-sufficient. I noticed that their plant labels ask that tubes be returned to the nursery.

A big thank you to Dale and her team for a most enjoyable visit. It's a very good thing to meet with groups with whom we have so much in common and to have the opportunity to share ideas and experiences.

Petite Parks by B.G

Caranbirini Conservation Reserve

Approximately 50 kilometres south of Borolooloo –
Temperature range 13C to 30C

The sounds of silence are beautiful here.

Lots of herbaceous plants,

Small shrubs and grasses, sandwiched in the layers of rock above.

Spinifex on the ground,

And small eucalypt species with spreading white trunks.

Wattles like, yet not, Golden Wattle.

In cliff clefts, clumps of dark rich green herbs,

Lobelia-like with a small blue violet flowers.

No rubbish, no graffiti.

We walked between the sandstone columns,

In the shade.

Cool clean sand – like a deep, open-roofed labyrinth.

In the deeper, narrower clefts various climbers,

And tall thin shrubs with a hibiscus-type pink flowers.

The lead in contains a waterhole,

100 metres long with waterlilies and dragonflies.

Lunch on the small bridge over the water.

Barrawulla walk loop - two kilometres through the rock area.

And the Jagududja walk,

Five kilometres on a grassy plain.

No entry cost.



MESSMATE

An explanation by Ray Clarke

The name “eucalyptus” comes from a Greek word “kalyplos” meaning “capped” referring to the cap or operculum on the fruit. When the fruit ripens and this cap pops off, the very fine seed is disseminated to the winds. As the blossoms are high up on most trees, the collection of seed for propagation is difficult.

Recently, Pat and Cathy spotted a fallen branch from a Messmate (*Eucalyptus obliqua*) which was loaded with fruit (gum nuts). This was in the Koornong Reserve (see article in the



Warrandyte Diary, July edition) and a party of four Friends of the Koornong then descended on the branch and, in half an hour's stripping, collected enough fruit

to provide a splendid store of seed. The fruit will now be allowed to dry and pop so the seed can be collected for propagating.

The party of Koornong Friends then went on with the perpetual job of moving through the forest and chopping out pittosporum, blackberry, thistle, ivy and other nasties.

New Librarian

FOWSP has a new librarian. Judy Green has offered to take over the task of looking after our well stocked, ever-expanding library located at the Rangers depot. Many thanks to Ray Clarke, our previous librarian and now treasurer, for all his work in cataloguing books and maintaining the library so well.

All FOWSP members are eligible to borrow books on a regular basis as well as use the reference section during times when the office is open.

FOWSP THURSDAY PROGRAM

We meet for propagation and other nursery activities every Thursday morning at 10.00am at the Warrandyte State Park depot, Pound Bend Road, Warrandyte (Melway 23 C10), unless otherwise stated below. When there is no scheduled afternoon activity we often go on a spontaneously organised walk. Propagation takes place from 10.00am to 12 midday followed by lunch. No prior experience necessary - there is always someone available to show you the ropes.

This activities list will be pinned on the noticeboard in the Folly.

AUGUST 16TH NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

Plant sales (by donation) 10.00am-12md

AUGUST 23RD MORNING ACTIVITY

Planting at Norman Reserve in the car park fence.

Followed by a short walk to Antechinus Swamp where some rare plants can be found.

Meet at Norman Reserve at the end of Bradleys Lane. 10.00 am (Melways ref. 23B12). Morning tea provided.

AUGUST 30TH NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

Plant sales (by donation) 10.00am-12md

SEPTEMBER 6TH NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

Plant sales (by donation) 10.00am-12md

SEPTEMBER 13TH NURSERY

Propagation morning. 10.00 am onwards.

Plant sales (by donation) 10.00am-12md

Note: Informal walks or planting activities may be organised on propagation mornings

Green Wedge Seminars

(Entry Free)

Thursday September 6th "Getting to Know Weed Weaknesses" (Randall Robinson)

Thursday October 4th "Bat Nesting Boxes" (Robert Bender)

Thursday November 1st "Orchid Propagation for Bushland Regeneration" (Rob Cross)

Time: 7:30pm

Place: Currawong Bush Park, Conference Room, Reynolds Rd, Doncaster East (Melways ref. 34 H6)

Enquiries: Samantha Bradley 9840 9307

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Green Wedge Seminar Series is now in its 5th year. For it to continue the organisers are looking for more input from you. If you have any suggests for topics and/or speakers for next year, please ring Alistair Trail on 9722 1518

One Way

If you are driving into the Warrandyte State Park Rangers depot and nursery area at the end of Pound Bend Road, please note the new stop/one way signs. Due to the expansion of the nursery and the new tea room attached to the office, traffic is now a little congested in the area. To resolve the problem a clockwise one way system has been established around the office and nursery.

Deadline for the September Newsletter is September 3rd

FOWSP Committee 2000

Cathy Willis	0418142297	Contact person		
Flora Anderson	9722 1776	Public Officer		
Pat Coupar	9844 1650	Editor	<u>Wildlife Rescue</u>	
Ray Clarke	9844 2351	Treasurer	Julie Pryor	9722 1117
Peter Curry	9844 0958	Secretary	<u>Market</u>	
Lee Speedy	9437 0894	Membership Secretary	Marie Krause	9712 0498
Geoff Speedy	9437 0894			
Mike Coupar	9844 1650		<u>Park Office</u>	9844 2659
Alastair Traill	9722 1518			
Anthony Owen	9844 4867			
Karen Reynolds	9712 0797		<u>Nursery Manager</u>	0408800026

FOWSP Committee Meetings for 2001 will be held each month at 7:30pm on the Wednesday before the monthly Warrandyte market.

Next meeting is on Wednesday August 29th at Cathy Willis's house:

Plant Sales (By donation)

Dates

Thursday 16th August 10.00am-12md
Thursday 30th August 10.00am-12md
Sunday 2nd September 3.00pm-4.00pm
Thursday 6th September 10.00am-12md
Thursday 13th September 10.00am-12md

Community Spring Planting Day

Manningham City Council and the Friends of the Island have organised a planting morning at a prepared site at Warrandyte river frontage near the Island

Date & Time: Sunday September 16th at 10.00am. Followed by a BBQ at 12md

Place: Meet at the 'Stonehouse' car park at the corner of Warrandyte-Ringwood Road and Tills Drive (Melways ref. 23H11)

Further information ring Gay Harris 9688 4528 (BH) or 9844 1448 (AH)

**Next Warrandyte Market is on Saturday
September 1st**

Book Review

By Pat Coupar

Bush Invaders of South-East Australia

A guide to the identification and control of environmental weeds found in South-East Australia
By Adam Muijt
Published by RG & FJ Richardson

Having sent off my pre-publication order several months ago, I waited with great anticipation for this book and I was not disappointed when it finally arrived. In fact, with a hefty 304 pages, it was larger, thicker and contained more information, line drawings and photographs than I had expected.

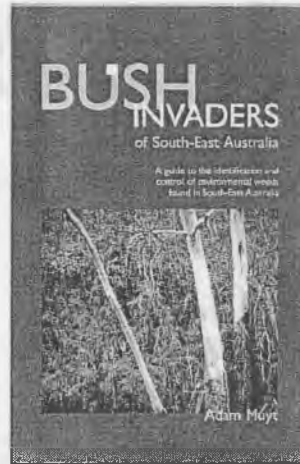
The book is written by Adam Muijt and sponsored by the Weed Society of Australia. Adam has a background in horticulture and bushland management, and for the last ten years has been working in bushland conservation and restoration projects around Melbourne.

As far as I know this is the first book of its kind, covering not only the identification of environmental weeds but also their removal and control.

Although some herbicides are mentioned by name in the introductory chapter on herbicide control, details of which specific herbicide to use for which weed have regrettably, but understandably, been omitted. As it is, a necessary disclaimer at the front of the book states that the material contained in the book is provided as information and is not to be viewed as recommended practice.....

The book is divided into two parts: the first outlines problems of environmental weed invasion and discusses management issues. This is followed by details of weed control methods including: manual removal, herbicide control, woody weed treatments, fire, slashing, biological control, mulching etc.

The second section, and the bulk of the book, is dedicated to the identification of the most serious environmental weeds of south-east Australia. It covers a range of grasses, herbs, creepers and climbers,



shrubs, trees and a small group of aquatics - a surprising omission from which is Parrots Feather - a potential problem weed of our area.

The descriptions of individual weed species are comprehensive with details of all diagnostic features such as stems, leaves, flowers, fruit, roots and, in the case of grasses, ligules. As well, there is information on the country of origin,

purpose of introduction, form, distribution within Australia, invasive summary, control and removal, and similar invasive species and confusing indigenous species.

Several clear colour photographs of the weed in habitat, its form, leaves, flowers and any special identification features accompany the text of each species

While the book is extremely detailed, it is easy to read with short chapters and many headings and sub-headings in bold type with well-chosen quotes from people like Tim Low (Feral Future) and Joan Bradley (Bringing Back the Bush) at the beginning of each of the early chapters - a nice touch that always appeals to me.

There is an extensive (378 in total) list of references at the end of the book - an indication of the extraordinary amount of research carried out by Adam in order to produce such a detailed book.

I recommend Bush Invaders for anyone remotely interested in the identification and control of environmental weeds. In Warrandyte, because many properties are bush blocks, environmental weeds are also a large component of our garden weeds.

A copy of this book has been purchased by FOWSP and is kept in our library and may be borrowed by members from our library at the Rangers office.

A Rare Treat

Botanist, Cam Beardsell, probably knows the One Tree Hill area better than anyone. Not only can he tell you about the plants and vegetation communities, but his wealth of knowledge extends to geology, birds, animals, insect, reptiles and fish.

Cam has offered to lead Fowspians on a walk of this special, highly significant, reserve and reveal some of its secrets including several rare and threatened orchid species.

The walk will take about two to three hours with some steep sections.

Date & Time: Saturday September 1st at 9.30 am.

Place: Meet at the 'Tanks' picnic area at the junction of One Tree Hill Rd and Mine Shaft Rd (Melways ref. 265 D6)



Snow in Warrandyte?

By J.R.

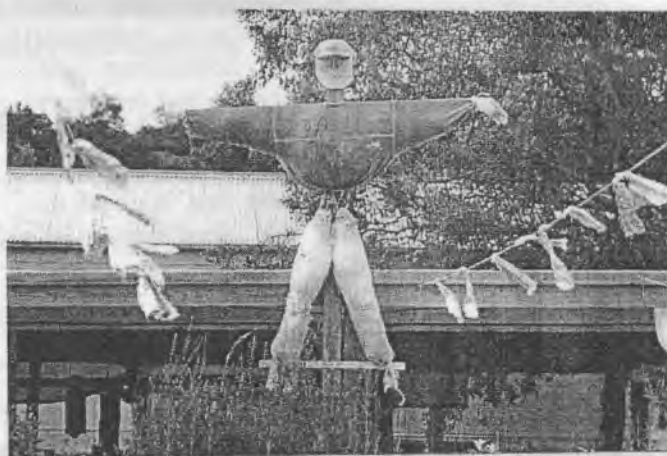
While the traditional snowfields of Victoria have had one of their worst seasons on record, an unlikely alternative has been found. Oops. Well that's what it seemed like when Cathy arrived at the nursery one recent Sunday afternoon. A light powdery covering spread across the hardening off area.

On closer inspection she found herself in a sudden whiteout. No, it wasn't the frozen precipitation that you are thinking of, that usually breaks the wallet and knees and leaves you thinking you'll never drink again. It was a huge flock of white cockatoos with itchy beaks that had piece by piece been happily dismantling the polystyrene boxes and the plants in them.

With an enormous guttural shriek, and some protest from the cockies, Cathy quickly dispatched them to the furthest reaches of the Park. Only to have the process repeated on Monday. With the nursery manager up to his ears in his own white powdery stuff (plaster), the entire regiment of Warrandyte State Park staff was enlisted and the local IGA supermarket cleaned out of Alcoa (foil) products. This worked – almost. Some wise old cockies worked out they could attack from the ground and continue to ravage their targets.

With virtually all other avenues exhausted the secret weapon was unleashed, a scarecrow. Yes, not the most advanced technology but effective none the less. It was made and positioned and now dominates the skyline, some say with too much of a likeness to the nursery manager (they are his old clothes). Others suggest it was his cheap way of having his own monument.

Now it doesn't snow in Warrandyte and there is no cocky problem.



STOP PRESS: Friday August 3, 2001. Two loud and agile staff members averted further disaster this morning when six recalcitrant cockies returned for some more fun. Help!

Thermo-Chronometers - Fission track Dating of Rocks.

By Geoff Speedy

Many rocks contain small amounts of radioactive material. When a radioactive element decays it creates energetic particles which will destroy any normal mineral it strikes. Because radioactive decay always occurs with a fixed amount of energy, the path of destruction is always a fixed length in a given mineral. Radioactive decay occurs at a random interval, but constant rate, so fission tracks are always being created in rock crystals.

In Apatite crystals, the length of a new fission track is 16 micrometers (16um). If the Apatite crystal, containing fission tracks is heated to 110 degrees Centigrade, all the tracks will disappear (healing), starting from each end, and finishing in the middle, as the crystal lattice repairs itself. However, if the temperature is only partly raised, the fission tracks will partly heal (e.g. 12 um, 14 um length).

By examining the length and numbers of fission tracks, you can determine the temperature history of a particular Apatite crystal, going back hundreds of millions of years (so long as it never actually exceeded 110 degrees Centigrade in that period). Apatite crystals make a convenient thermo-chronometer for sedimentary geologists.

(See <http://www.agcrc.csiro.au/projects/2005LO/fta.html>)



By B.G

Ranger Replaced

Ranger Lachlan Davis (ex Grampians National Park) is replacing Ranger David Farrar for five months.

Helpful Helpers

Brian James was seen busy working in the pricking out area, whilst Bronte Jordan (4 years old), Ethan and Cecilia were helping the Friends plant Banksias.

During July

Pam O'Donnell and Pat Martello have just discovered the 'Friends' activity after at least six years of walking in the Park.

Lurching Lunchroom

The Rangers work depot lunchroom has been shifted to a position next to the office main building. But is it on the level? Does it wobble when you walk?

Real Regulars

As well as all the new helpers mentioned in this column over the months, we should not overlook all the regular, reliable helpers e.g. the first Thursday of August saw Elsa Arden, Joan MacMahon, Marion King, Flora Anderson, Pat Anderson, Pat Coupar, Elizabeth Sevier, Ray Clarke, Alwynne Buntine, Irene Fuhrer, Cathy Willis, Lee Cameron, Barbara Coker, Luke Crothers, Ian Nixon, Judy Green, Josh Revell, all contributing with Ben Gotlib just attending (Ed. Note and reporting)

Position Not Permanent

Business Support Officer Kay Williams is now seconded to the Park for the next ten months. Kay was recently seen helping the unloading of wooden stakes from a truck.

Scary Scarecrow

A rapid response to the bird attack was to erect a scarecrow using the nursery managers clothes (lucky for us he has a second set).

Cinnamon Coup

Acacia leprosa "Scarlet Blaze" – a red flowered wattle (see article "Notes from Florio in this months newsletter). Yours truly was with one of the first walking groups to find and photograph this plant. There were many doubters at the Park and amongst the Friends.

Gretna's Garden

The Maroondah Australian Plant Society will visit the garden of Gretna Weste (botanist and FOWSP member) on August 19th this year.

Green Corps Characters

Mark Gardener is leading a team on the Yarra River Bio-Link Project. (50% WSP & 50% Yarra Valley Parks). It is a 26 week program involving Andrea Rogers, Mary Thomas, Kerry Deyell, Joanne Pryor (Altona), Lindsay Buckles, Josie Lee, Alice Buckles, Liz Leake, Sarah Green and Sean Whittle. Most are from the eastern suburbs.

Bruce Fuhrer was present on the day as a sessional teacher.

Changing Changes

Louise Baker, as part of a part of a post graduate course in Environmental Science is carrying out a three month exercise in social change and changing (and changes in) peoples behaviour. Seen at the Park at the end of July.

KTRI OPEN DAY

The Keith Turnbull Research Institute (KTRI) is holding two open days on Friday 5th and Saturday 6th of October. They are inviting school and university groups, weed and pest management professionals, farmers, Landcare and Friends groups and the general public to see the sights and presentations and learn more about the work being carried out at the Institute.

At a recent FOWSP committee meeting, WSP Ranger-in-Charge, Andy Nixon, proposed that he could organise a minibus for an excursion on the Friday to visit KTRI's open day if enough people were interested.

If you would like more information contact Andy on 9844 2659 or Cathy on 0418142297.



Surface
Mail
only

Postage
Paid

REGISTRATION BY AUSTRALIA POST

PP 346802 / 0005

If undeliverable please return to

Friends of Warrandyte State Park Inc.

P.O. Box 220

Warrandyte, 3113

Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*)

Australia's floral emblem. Golden Wattle is a small tree with broad shiny green leaves (phyllodes) and long sprays of deep golden-yellow, perfumed flowers. It is a common species in Warrandyte preferring drier open sites such as the slopes of Fourth Hill and The Common.

Aboriginals used to cut notches in the bark to collect the edible gum.



FOWSP Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

Family \$20

Single \$15

Concession \$10