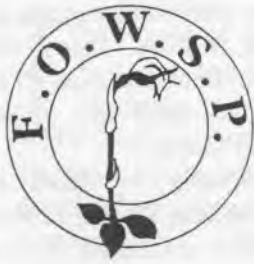


February 2002

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

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

FOWSP Future Looking Good

By Pat Coupar

Last year was an exceptionally good year for our group, with membership climbing to around 236. It is hoped that this year will see further increases.

Once again the main focus of the group was the nursery, with weekly Thursday propagating mornings being well attended. There has been considerable interest in planting indigenous species and this is reflected in the number of plant sales on Thursdays and Sundays.

The stall, or rather display trailer, at the monthly Warrandyte market and festival continues to be a great shop front for our group. As well as promoting our organisation, we supply a variety of information on the local environment.

This year, with the aid of a Parks Victoria grant, we are producing several brochures on the local plants. These will be available at the stall and from the Park.

There are still some copies of our book, Discover Warrandyte for sale although numbers are dwindling. So if you haven't bought your copy yet, don't miss out. At the present time there are no plans to republish it.

At the end of last year, two of our long-standing committee members resigned. Cathy Willis took over the unenviable role of secretary in 1996 soon after the Committee of Management was formed and did a fantastic job in that position. She has also been the committee's contact person for the group as well as being the 'Warrandyte Diary's' plant guru and nursery contact.

Alastair Traill is also standing down from the committee after many years as our Green Wedge Seminar representative. Al was one of the instigators of this incredibly successful series of talks on all aspects of the environment, sponsored by Manningham Council, which has been running now for several years.

While we are sorry to see Cathy and Al go, we thank them for their time and hard work over the years. And we welcome a new member, Melanie Birtchnell to the committee and hope her stay will be a long and happy one. If anyone else is interested in joining the committee there are still vacancies. Meetings are informal and take place once a month.



New polyhouse full of young plants

A Day with the Friends of Kurth Kiln

By Lee Speedy

Each year in May, Parks Vic. hold their festival and family day out at Albert Park. For the last two years we have taken our blue trailer and installed it alongside the "Friends" village. This gives us a chance to talk with people from diverse Friends groups, often with a different focus to ours. Last year we briefly chatted with as many as we could, including Friends of the Grampians Gariwerd (who sell an orchid CD) and Friends of Nyerimilang, who have a historical home and property as their centrepiece.

Both years we have chatted with a noticeably friendly man from the Friends of Kurth Kiln, named Meinhard Holtz. Now I'm sure there are lots of volunteers and rangers involved with the Kurth Kiln Park and nearby Bunyip State Park, but it is Meinhard and his wife Hilda, with whom we are the most familiar.

The first question we asked was the meaning of the name. Kurth Kiln is a kiln invented by a Professor Kurth to process charcoal from trees and installed back in 1941. The kiln and related buildings are gradually being restored. They provide the picnic ground and very agreeable setting, alongside a small picture-perfect lake.

When someone speaks proudly of "their Park" you really don't know what to expect. Will it be a tiny, but loved fragment of bush? Well, one Saturday morning in September, Geoff and I took Meinhard up on his offer and went out to see for ourselves. When we arrived, the volunteers were comfortably seated under a huge shelter for an informal meeting and picnic. Our "Friends" Wolfgang and Marie had beaten us to the Park and were already enjoying the ample hospitality provided (several types of cake).

The highlight of the morning was being led by Meinhard along the newly created "Ron Thornton

Track". This interesting and diverse track is the result of much hard work by Meinhard over several months. Some of the 1000 metres of winding path aligns with an historic tramline track and is mostly uphill from the Tomahawk Creek.. We enjoyed the riparian plant communities along the way, noting Silver Wattles, Dusty Miller, Wiry Bauera through to Bootlace Bush (*Pimela axiflora* ssp. *axiflora*), tall ferns and of course enormous Mountain Grey Gums.

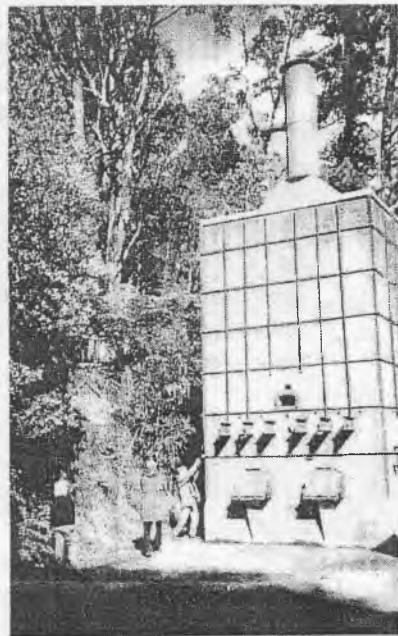
We stopped occasionally to check exact species and to look for orchids, finding *Pterostylis alpina* amongst others. The entire track is within a lovely forest but the tramline area, being more open, had a magical feel about it. I could have happily picnicked there. Around this time, Meinhard told us of his familiarity with leeches, whilst making the track. So I decided not to linger after all!



Near the end of the walk, we saw some very mature Burgan and wattles, with height and girth unlike those found in Warrandyte. When we reached the crystal-clear Tomahawk Creek, I couldn't help thinking how lovely it would be to live here. Ursula and Alfred Klink already do, owning some adjoining land (maybe next trip?).

Generally, the plants were taller and stronger than our Warrandyte equivalents. I don't know how much extra rainfall Gembrook gets, but the lushness of the plants was very evident. There was also an amazing yellow display of fire-germinated Myrtle Wattle, along the roadsides and several metres in. We were treated warmly by the Kurth Kiln friends all day, but I couldn't help wondering if Meinhard has received much recognition for his efforts. I believe he also spends a lot of time voluntarily weeding, especially Ragwort. Now doesn't that sound like a fun way to spend your retirement?

Kurth Kiln is large Park with sealed roads leading to it and cleared open spaces suitable for picnics. I recommend a lazy afternoon there. I think it is a great place for a family reunion, bushwalking or historical exploration.



Worth Repeating

Animal Inequality

Peter Myroniuk

The rescue of wounded kangaroo Billy the Kid is a happy conclusion to a troubling incident.

While huge numbers of Victorians responded to the roo's plight with compassion and concern, we shouldn't forget that someone deliberately went out to kill or maim the young animal.

It's just another example of the fact that when it comes to native wildlife, some creatures are more equal than others.

The kangaroo and the koala are internationally recognised symbols of Australia.

They belong to a group of animals that are unique in the world - the marsupials, or pouched mammals.

But despite their intrinsic beauty they are valued differently by many Australians.

In rural Australia, kangaroos are generally considered to be pests that need to be controlled.

This is exemplified by the Federal Government recently increasing the kangaroo cull quota from 1.5 million to 6.9 million.

Koalas on the other hand are revered and cherished by many and culling them is an abhorrent concept for most.

Yet in some areas of Australia, koala populations are so high that they are killing eucalypts through over-grazing.

So why the different values? They are both sentient animals, unique and truly Australian.

Why do some Australians view kangaroos in such a way that they happily inflict the sort of suffering experienced by Billy the Kid?

I think the answer lies in how we as a society value not only wildlife, but also nature in general.

Despite being one of the only Western nations that has significant numbers of wildlife living close to urban environments, we vilify many of our animal neighbours.

We cannot stand possums defecating on our concrete driveways or eating the roses. Farmers



New Holland Mouse

have a hatred for wombats digging under their fence lines or cockatoos eating cereal crops.

We consider these animals pests to be dispensed with. And it's not just the common species that suffer.

The grey-headed flying fox has recently been listed as a threatened species, yet in Melbourne it is demonised, as the disease-carrying destroyer of the Botanic Gardens.

Similarly, for some, rats and mice are nothing but vermin, yet how many Australians know that we have 60 different kinds of native rats and mice?

The new holland mouse, one of Victoria's most threatened rodents, is a beautiful small mouse that has no mousy odour, lives along the coast and mainly eats seeds.

But many people would probably be disgusted by it because it looks like a common mouse.

The value of wildlife and nature is not how we control or exploit it for economic gain, but how we can enjoy its beauty and wonder.

We need to learn to live harmoniously with wildlife and learn to manage it in a way that instills a sense of custodianship in our children.

Australians live on a unique island with unique natural wildlife, so let's get it right.

Peter Myroniuk is president, Wildlife Victoria

Source: *Herald Sun* 16/1/02

Mammal Facts

Have you seen the new book "A Field Guide to the Mammals of Australia" by Menkhorst & Knight? (\$39.95, Oxford University Press). It has a bewildering list of mammal names. There's a few we've all heard of like bilbies and quokkas, but what about the mulgara, kultarr, ningauai and the mala? This beautifully illustrated guide lists 379 mammals (indigenous and introduced) including rodents, bats & whales. If you wish to learn more about our furriest critters, the guide details at least 37 wallabies, 26 possums, 19 dunnarts and 11 bandicoots!

Book Review

By Pat Coupar

Environmental Weeds – A Field Guide for SE Australia

Kate Blood

CRC Weed Management Systems

When I first saw this

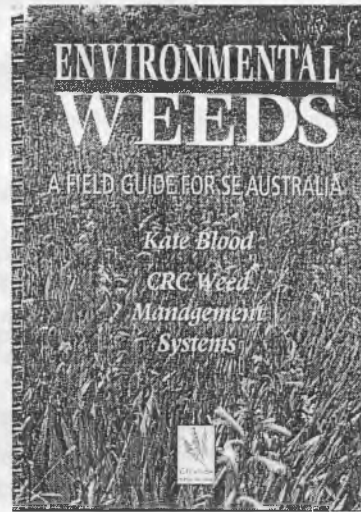
book advertised I thought – do I really need another book about weeds? I had recently purchased 'Bush Invaders' by Adam Muyt, which is an excellent comprehensive guide to the identification and control of

environmental weeds of south-east Australia. As well, I have on my shelf at least half a dozen books or booklets on Australia-wide noxious, environmental and crop weeds, along with several pamphlets on the major weeds of the local area.

As weeds are my work – or at least their identification, mapping and control - I thought perhaps it was prudent to purchase this latest weed book written by environmental weed expert Kate Blood and published by CH Jerram Science Publishers.

The decision was a good one. I liked the compact (A5 format) 228 page book immediately I saw it. It has a sturdy ring binding – most useful for a genuine field guide where it is an advantage to be able to fold each page back on itself.

Although there is the inevitable overlap, comparisons should not be made with other weed



books. Each one has its own focus and there is often a need to consult several books on the same subject to obtain as much information as possible.

The strengths of this book are: an easy to follow layout with clear, good quality photographs and detailed descriptions of around 175 species. Sub-headings include: Family; Origin; Weedy Distribution; Invades; Description (flowers, fruit, leaves, stems etc.); How it Spreads (reproduction, spread by); Ecology and Look-alikes. In addition, there is interesting scientific and anecdotal information on medical and culinary uses, toxicity and derivation of names.

Some of the alternative common names had me smiling. For instance Cootamundra Wattle is nicknamed 'Coot-a-bloody-mongrel', while Tree of Heaven is called (among other names) Rotting Carrion Tree, Baked Sewage Tree and Kerosene Tree. Arum Lily is also known as Pig Lily, St Joseph's Lily, Funeral Flower, Lily of the Nile and Death Lily.

The one aspect of the book that I find confusing is the distribution map for each species. Circles on the map indicate herbarium recorded locations. This is somewhat misleading because many of the common weeds are so well known and widespread that few have been collected for herbarium records. In fact for Boneseed there is no indication of a herbarium record anywhere in Victoria! This lack of data is acknowledged by the author in the introduction.

The map also shows the potential for invasion rather than actual invasion. This is shown by shading in pink (high), dark green (medium) and pale green (low). However, I would prefer to see a distribution map of the species based on current knowledge.

Disregarding the maps, I find this an excellent reference book and field guide which complements well the various other books available on the subject of weeds.

Travelling Weeds

Florida USA's top three woody weeds are Australia's Sheoak (*Casuarina* hybrid), Australia's Paperbark (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) and Brazil's peppertree. There are over half a million hectares of Paperbarks, increasing at six hectares per day. This remarkable propagation was helped by broadcasting seed from aircraft and planting thousands of paperbarks for "stabilisation" (*Feral Future* - Tim Low, pub. 1999).

Hanson's Bush and Garden on ABC's Gardening Australia

Channel 2's Gardening Australia has a new presenter, 24 year-old Melissa King grand daughter of Fowspian and Ringwood Field Naturalist member Marion King.

One of her first assignments was to film the bush, over which there is a covenant with Trust for Nature, and garden at Bev and John Hanson's place at the top of Webb St, Warrandyte.

An eight minute segment should be shown on Friday February 22nd at 6.30pm and repeated on the following Sunday at 1.00pm.

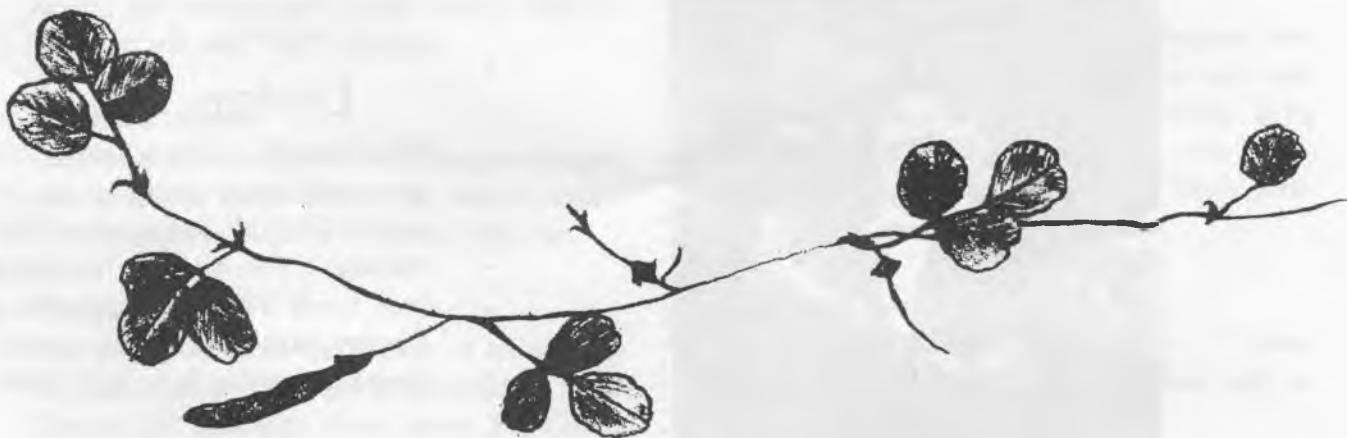
The film crew, who came from Tasmania, were on the property for ten hours, but not all was plain sailing. Michael Looker from Trust for

Nature was about to be interviewed when a neighbour started up his chainsaw and informed John he would be working for an hour!

Plan B was adopted – filming from the house roof. After the chainsawing, another neighbour started his whipper snipper and said he would be half an hour! Light aircraft continually flew overhead and next door's donkey brayed from time to time. Competition tennis which was supposed to take place on the Hanson's court had to be relocated to a neighbour's.

The film crew said some places are ten times worse. When they filmed the roof garden of the Casino, for instance, a helicopter kept landing at the helipad in addition to all the other city noises.

Let's hope that this segment, featured on Garden Australia, will help people to appreciate the value of our natural bush.



Green waste project threatened

By Sarah Hudson

The eastern suburbs could be dumped with thousands of tonnes of rubbish from today if a planned recycling centre fails.

The centre, in Lilydale, was to recycle 60,000 tonnes of compost a year from five eastern suburbs.

Instead the waste could be dumped in landfill if today's negotiation deadline between the contractor and the State Government breaks down.

The contractor, Least Waste, is disputing the cost of rent for the land, owned by State Government-run Yarra Valley Water.

Least Waste chairman Bob Beynon said after years of community consultation and EPA approvals, the centre could fail because of the high rental costs.

"This is a state significant environmental project" he said.

"If we have no response from the Government by Tuesday, we will jettison the project."

The five councils are Knox, Maroondah, Manningham, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.

Manningham mayor Julie Eisenbise said: "If we don't have the facility, it costs us a minimum \$120,000 a year to transport the waste," she said. "It ends up being cheaper to send it to landfill."

A Government spokesman said the issue was being dealt with through the EPA, which was still negotiating to reach resolution.

Yarra Valley Water managing director Peter Harford said while the centre was crucial, the company would not subsidise it.

Opposition environment spokesman Victor Perton said the centre should be rescued.

Source: Herald Sun 22/1/02

Christmas Breakup 2001

Santa hogging the camera at the End of Year/Christmas party ~ discovering both Andy Nixon and Judy Green's Christmas wishes. Hope they come true ...



Laptop Loan

Would any FOWSPian have an old unwanted laptop computer to donate to FOWSP, just to record the minutes? The Minutes Secretary only needs a B&W laptop with a floppy disk drive that works! Please phone Geoff on 9437 0894.

Sunday Propagation Opportunity

Sunday, March 3rd 2pm~4pm

Sunday, April 7th 2pm~4pm

Sunday, May 5th 2pm~4pm

For those frustrated propagators, newer members or botanically-minded people prevented from attending on Thursdays by the inconvenient demands of work, FOWSP will soon be trialling a Sunday group, once a month. As with the weekly Thursday sessions, these will be held at the Nursery behind the Ranger's office at Pound Bend, Warrandyte (Melway ref. 23, C9.)

No propagation experience is necessary, you will be trained in the necessary techniques, each volunteer "earning" a couple of free seedlings and the benefit of positively helping Warrandyte's environment. Last year, 60,000 plants were planted in Warrandyte soil as a result of the Thursday morning propagation group. Any queries, contact Geoff Speedy 9437.0894.



“I SPY”

By B.G

Fire Fighters

The “summer crew” from December 2001 onwards are Roger Cross, James Riddell, Len White and Con Maxalot (who is crew leader).

Festive Food

The “End of Year” party for WSP staff and friends included tasty morsels of fruit platters, french tomato and marinated olives, home-made bread, shortbread, mince tarts, prunes, salmon and avocado dip, tossed, potato, rice and other salads, spit-roasted pork, beef, various other viands-victuals and “late” potatoes.

Anderson Arrives

Stephen Anderson (exWSP and Kinglake Ranger) now at Uluru, dropped in to say hello to everyone. He had his nephew Nicholas with him.

Holiday Helpers

The work goes on in the Nursery. A typical holiday team (January 17th 2002) consisted of Marie Krause, Bill Roxburgh, Brian James, Ray Clarke, Elsa Arden, Joan Broadberry, Judy Green, Terry Gallagher, Alicia Houston, Pat Coupar, Ben Gotlib and Josh Revell.

Others were arriving later. Jared Sproule-Carroll, a local resident from Bradleys, turned up to help. Jared is trying to get into “Parks” and hopes to do a course in Natural Resource Management.

Baynes Ballarat

Irene Baynes (now known as Irene Fuhrer) has struck two ‘Cherry Ballarts’ from cuttings, last year at the park - both ‘strikes’ are doing well. No mean feat, as those who propagate indigenous plants will know. Perhaps it’s to do with the fact that Irene used to be a home economics (cookery) teacher?

Warrandyte What’s On

The Summer activities organised for the public are proceeding ~ led by Sally Keany.

Tardy Times

The Volunteer Award Certificates for the Thursday Friends turned up 3 months later. Ask Cath Andrew about this matter.

Just Judy

There is a photograph in existence (see opposite page) which shows our local, well-respected lady Judy Green sitting on Santa Claus’ knee, at the End of Year party.

“I saw Grandma sitting on Santa’s knee” might make a popular Christmas song.

Themeda Theme ~ Stipa Stipend

Flora Anderson led a small group of seed collectors along the Pound Bend firebreak collecting grass seed.

Parking Peril

A “new” one-way road has been designed and is operative around the PB depot office and nursery area. Please do NOT park anywhere along this route as it could prevent fire & other essential vehicle responding to urgent calls. Other parking changes are planned.

Bouncing Boxes

Ray Clarke has several times stacked our store of empty polyurethane ‘seedling’ boxes only to have the wind disarray them.

‘bout Barak

The National Gallery of Victoria has acquired “an outstanding drawing by Wurundjeri artist William Barak (c.1824-1903)”.

The drawing Untitled (Ceremony) 1900 is inscribed in the lower left “King Billy/yarra tribe/ Jan 22 1900”.

It will be exhibited in the first hang at the entrance of the ground floor space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art at Federation Square. The NGV has seven Barak drawings.

From the NGV member’s magazine “Gallery” Dec 2001-Jan 2002.

Nikki from the North

Nikki and her friend Glyn (travelling from the north of England) turned up to help plant indigenii in the Park.



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Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa*)

A summer-flowering shrub or small tree. Sweetly perfumed sprays of white flowers are clustered at the ends of the woody, spiny branches. On warm days the flowers attract many insects including jewel beetles and butterflies.

In autumn, the flowers are replaced by rusty-brown, papery seed capsules which rattle musically in the wind.

Sweet Bursaria makes a great garden plant and will grow well in most situations.

FOWSP Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

Family \$20

Single \$15

Concession \$10

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113