

April 2002

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

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

Natives go Wild in Warrandyte

By Pat Coupar

It may be better to plant roses than certain Australian native plants. Better still to plant indigenous.

The difference between indigenous and native species is not always clearly understood. But if a plant is growing outside its natural range then it is considered exotic regardless of whether it is an Australian species or one from overseas. Indigenous simply means occurring naturally in a particular area. Some of Warrandyte's worst environmental weeds – Cootamundra and Sallow wattles and Sweet Pittosporum - are Australian natives, promoted in the past as the plants to grow in Australian gardens.

But times have changed. Local councils, and Manningham in particular, are using indigenous species for their plantings in reserves and on most of their roadsides, with every attempt being made to obtain seed from the correct provenance.

Last year, Manningham published an excellent booklet called 'Native Splendour', aimed at encouraging residents to garden with indigenous plants. The text is clear and concise and 50 species - ranging from trees and shrubs to grasses and climbers – are featured in full colour. Nurseries supplying indigenous species are listed at the back of the book. This publication is free and can be obtained from the council offices and FOWSP (at the monthly Warrandyte market). It is a must for anyone remotely interested in planting local species in their gardens.

A year earlier Manningham published a small colour booklet on weed identification, with information on: types of weeds, methods of control and identification of the major weeds of

the area. Nillumbik has similar publications on indigenous species and environmental weeds.

The majority of plants stocked in Warrandyte's two closest commercial nurseries, however, are from overseas. These include some, like privet, prunus sycamore maple, ivy and Parrot's Feather (see article in this newsletter) that are recognised environmental weeds.

It is illegal for the nurseries to sell environmental weeds, but it is disappointing, in an area like Warrandyte where many people live so close to the bushland, that efforts have not been made to curb their sale.

While both nurseries sell Australian natives - mostly wattles, grevilleas, bottlebrushes and hakeas - only one had a few tubes of local indigenous species. No attempt had been made to 'pot them on' into larger pots like other plants for sale, and information on the indigenous plants was minimal. In fact their inclusion in the nursery seems a bit of an after thought.

FOWSP, with its ever-expanding nursery, plays its part in educating members and non-members in the value of planting indigenous species. In most cases, though, we are talking to the already converted.



Sweet Pittosporum



Friends of Stony Creek Catchment

Home of the Wedge-tailed Eagle

Our next activity is Sarah Eggleton, from Waterwatch Victoria, who will be coming out to speak to members and instruct them how to test and monitor the water in Stony Creek. This be the-start of a hopefully, exciting monitoring program that will potentially see a gradual improvement of water quality, as we work to remove weeds and restore the creek.

Details are as Follows:

Where: Corner Research-Warrandyte Rd and Stony Creek Rd, Warrandyte Nth.
When: Sunday the 28th April at 1.00pm
What to Bring: Rubber Gloves as you may be dealing with chemicals

If you would like to be involved in the FOSCC committee or have any further questions, please contact me, Josephine Lee at 9833 6977 or 0414960274.

Looking forward to seeing you there,
Josephine Lee, FOSCC coordinator

First Meeting

by Lee Speedy

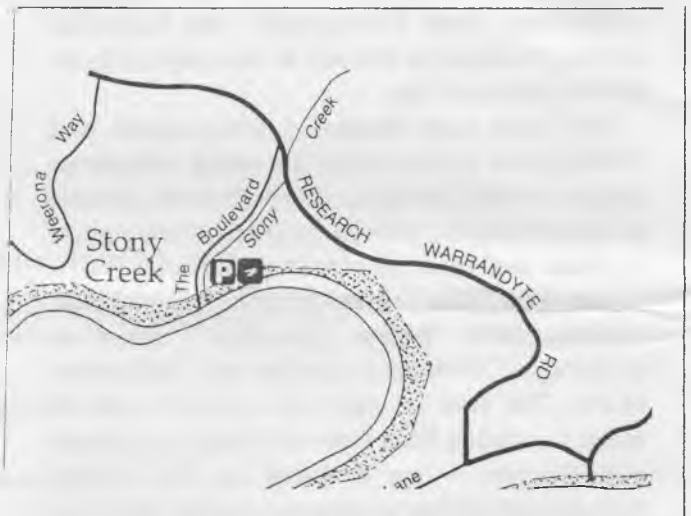
On Sunday 7th April, I had the pleasure of joining in with the first working bee, talk and walk organised for the **Friends of Stony Creek Catchment (FOSCC)** in North Warrandyte.

This delightful afternoon was arranged by FOWSP member Josie Lee, with an ample BBQ and supportive talk provided by three Nillumbik council staff. It was a terrific start to a sunny afternoon, which was followed by an informative and measured walk with botanist David Cameron. David gave us much detail on the plants both good and pest, as we walked along the neglected creek.

Our group included long-standing local Mark Gardner, who had some years earlier tried to get FOSCC flowing. Mark has much hands on experience in weeding and revegetation, which became obvious as he willingly waded in to grab required weed samples! Four hours, many free plants (thanks Josh) and dozens of answered questions later, we actually decided to all go home!

If you live in the streets surrounding Stony Creek, or know someone who does, please DO tell them about this new Friends group. Many locals from Floods Road across to The Boulevard are likely unaware of the fabulous variety of local

conservation groups. Sunday's turnout was both thrilling and inspiring, to witness amongst others, a small road of connecting neighbours, itching to make a difference to their slice of Warrandyte.



Book Review

By Flora Anderson

Manningham from Country to City

History of City of Manningham, a community today of over 110,000 people

This handsome hardback has been produced by HistorySmiths, Melbourne based business specialising in commissioned histories and biographies. The writers, Barbara Pertz and Fiona Walters, sought the assistance of local historical societies and historians as well as a great number of people throughout the City, even to far flung, sometimes forgotten, Wonga Park.

The very first illustration in the book, apart from the photograph on the cover of the luscious Noonan freestone peaches, is a painting by the father of Wonga Park resident, Diane Reynolds - the late Dick Ovenden.

From the disruption and displacement of the first people, the Wurundjeri - the story then follows the early settlers, graziers, farmers, gold

miners and orchardists to the present day citizens of city and urban fringe.

The arts, environment and community are covered comprehensively. and all chapters are accompanied by historical photographs.

I was particularly interested in the story of the 'wedge of green'.

The management of the outward growth of Melbourne's metropolitan regions arguably began in 1929 with a report by the Melbourne Town Planning Commission. In 1962 a 'corridor wedge' concept was first proposed, by the Board of Works. Five years later, two reports (Board of Works and Town & Country Planning Board) recommended that in between corridors of settlement, wedges of non urban land be preserved as breathing spaces. Thus, the beginning of the 'green wedge' concept. A fascinating story unfolds, until today the term is applied to all non-urban use land.

Equally interesting is the story behind the preservation of land now known as Warrandyte State Park. Mount Lofty, the Wonga Park section, for which we lobbied not so many years ago, gets a mention of course.

A great read and a magnificent resource.

Library Notes

From Judy Green (librarian)

The following books have recently been removed from the library without being entered in the borrower's book.

If anyone has them could they please enter details in the record book if they are still in use.

AR102 Encyclopaedia of Australian Animals – Reptiles by Harold Ehmann

EN525 The Yarra a Natural Treasure by David and Cam Beardsell

FL629 The Visual Dictionary of Plants

Fungi Walk



Fungi expert and FOWSP member, Bruce Fuhrer will be leading a 'fungi search' on **Saturday May 11th**

The location is still to be finalised due to the rainfall over the next month. Likely locations for the walk are: Kinglake, Healseville, Warrandyte or Shepherds Bush.

A maximum limit of 35 people has been set.

If anyone is interested in attending ring Jaci Oxer (Parks Vic. District Visitor Programs Co-ordinator) on 9545 3755

Newsletters

The following newsletters and reports have been received over the last month and are available to borrow. They can be found in a blue box in the Friends 'Folly' at the Warrandyte State Park depot, Pound Bend Road, Warrandyte (Melway 23 C10).

Ecoss – Science for the Environment, CSIRO

Nillumbik Environment Strategy – Actions for a Sustainable Future

The Source, Melbourne Water

50 Update (Victorian National Parks Association)

Greening Australia Training Program (April/May)

A growing Concern, Candlebark Community Nursery

Crisp News, Community of Ringwood Indigenous Species Plant Nursery

Catchment News Update, Port Phillip & Western Catchment & Land Protection Board

Save Albert Park

Friends of the Grampians National Park

Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater

Friends of the Eltham Copper Butterfly

Contributions Contributions Contributions Needed Needed Needed

The editor is desperately seeking contributions for the newsletter from FOWSP members. It would be especially good to hear from any new members who have joined in the last year or so.

Some suggestions for topics:

My Favourite Place
 River
 Road
 Beach
 Person
 Weather

Book Review

Film Review

Sightings Fauna (native or introduced)
 Flora (native or introduced)
 Geological
 Astronomical (pertaining to the universe)

Reports on activities
 Seminars

Poems

Cartoons

All contributions welcome from a few lines to a page, hand written, typed or on disc.

Reminder

Subscriptions are now overdue. If you are unsure if you have paid, please check the address label on the front of your newsletter to see if your sub. is due

Worth Repeating

Parrot's Feather fast and dangerous

By Lalith Gunasekera

Parrot's Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) also known as Brazilian Water Milfoil or Thread of Life, is an introduced aquarium plant spreading at an alarming rate in some of the channels and creeks of northern Victoria.

Parrot's Feather is found throughout the rivers, ponds, lakes and irrigation channels of New Zealand, Japan, USA, France, Africa and Java. It was first discovered in Sydney in 1908 and has since spread to the other parts of Australia except the Northern Territory. It has been declared a noxious weed in Western Australia and Tasmania but is freely available in most of aquarium shops in Victoria and some other states.

Originally Parrot's Feather was a moderate sized perennial herb native to the Amazon River in South America. It grows in slowly moving water on and near the banks of rivers and in the mud of shallow ponds. The stems are relatively stout, particularly submersed but with considerable portions of leafy branches emersed. The stems can grow up to two metres long which form a tangled mass in the water. The garish green leaves are whorled. Each leaf is feathery-like and about two to four centimetres long. The flowers are borne in the leaf axils but are rarely seen in countries outside its native range. Propagation is mainly by stem fragments, as fertile seeds are not produced in Australia.

Recent investigations conducted by Goulburn-Murray Water at Tatura found that Parrot's Feather has spread quickly through the channels and creeks of Northern Victoria and has been recorded at Gunbower, Campbell's Creek near Castlemaine, Lake Nagambie and Lake Benalla.

The dense growth of Parrot's Feather stems can impede water movement. The stems are fragile and break readily during storms to form floating mats which can block irrigation canals, pumps and metering devices as well as shallow streams, causing flooding.

Parrot's Feather tolerates a wide range of temperatures, growing most aggressively in warmer areas. Growth rate is reduced during the winter months and the plants can remain viable but dormant when the water surfaces are frozen over.

Parrot's Feather is a significant threat to irrigation systems. The plant mats also interfere with the use of lakes and rivers for recreation and provide an ideal breeding place for mosquitoes. In addition, Parrot's Feather is competing with native aquatic plants and changing the native aquatic environment.

Parrot's Feather has long been considered a potential major weed of waterways in Australia. It is important to prevent its further spread and destroy existing infestations before they cause serious damage to agriculture and the environment in Australia.

Source: Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management, Autumn 2002



"I SPY"

By B.G

Testing Times in Tasmania

Your favourite sundries scavenger has just spent one month in Tasmania, albeit with 10 days marred by back pain (no sniggers please) and agony.

Nevertheless visits to Cockles Creek ("the end of the world") at the edge of the World Heritage Area, the Hartz Mountain National Park (Arve Falls and alpine moorlands), Russell Falls at Mt Field N.P, a fleeting glimpse of the pink peaks at Freycinet N.P, a look at Columba Falls and a drive past the Great Lake (Central Plateau Protected Area) were rewarding.

Peter at the Park

Peter Lawler from Plenty Gorge Park is replacing Colin Bromley for 10 months. Colin has been seconded to Westerfolds Park.

Farrar and Fauna

Ranger 'Frankie' David Farrar is now recording sightings of any fauna in Warrandyte and adjacent areas. The information will be put on computer and will enable better correlation and research into fauna locations.

Previously the information was hand written into a book located somewhere at the depot. So please notify Frankie of any appropriate sightings (03) 9844 2659.



Elsa's Expo

Who was the Thursday morning helper who was heard to boast that many years ago she walked over the Cradle Mountain topless!? (Not all the way). Apparently she was disquieted by the fact that no one came the other way.

Elsa is off on a trip to Tasmania again soon.

Arapiles Aches

Committee member, Mel Birtchnell, is recovering from rock climbing injuries – ankle and upper arm. They didn't stop her from helping on Thursday though.

Melanie got 90% for her Honours Literature Review on the topic of eucalypt flowering.

P. proliferatum

Lee Speedy sought the advice of several 'Friends' on a mind boggling exercise, She and Geoff had been invited to a fancy dress party where the costume had to start with the letter P!

It was a massive mental exercise.

Research Reveals

Keely Ough of DNRE has carried out research into wet forests of Victoria dominated by Mountain Ash. Results showed that in clear-felled areas, weeds and sedge species occurred more frequently than wildfire sites.

In wildfire regeneration, re-sprouting shrubs, tree ferns and most ground fern species were more abundant.

Ough suggests "Forest management could be improved by retaining areas in the coupe from which machinery is excluded, but timber extracted, broadening seed collection and sowing operations to include some understory and overstory to provide protection of seeds, and minimising weeds."

Quote in Ecos January-March 2002, from Australian Journal of Botany 49:645-664. The National Forest Policy states as one of its broad goals "the management of the permanent forest estate in an ecologically sustainable manner so as to conserve the full suite of values, including biological diversity."

I Spy continued on next page



I Spy continued



Polystyrene Places

An examination of the source of the polystyrene boxes we use for holding seedling tubes indicate that the boxes come from places like Bairnsdale, Mildura, Gympie, Murraawee, Gatton QLD., Merbien, Kooweerup, Laiely and Virginia S.A. amongst others.

And they have been initially used to hold grapes, sweetcorn, plums, peaches, nectarines, capsicum etc, etc.

Strait Spirit

Caught up with two ex-committee members when returning on the Spirit of Tasmania vessel. Ron

Taylor and Janney Hansford. Janney has been involved in an eco-tourist course at Ballarat University.

More Greencorps

A new group of young adults are in a Greencorp group working between WSP and Westerfolds.

More on this activity later.

Tuan Tries

Early April Terry and Marie helped Frankie Farrar put up several boxes for phascogale's (Tuans) in the Park.

I am told Kath Andrew has her own video of tuans.



Worth Repeating

Bug a curse on weed

A tiny bug with a huge appetite for the weed Patterson's Curse is worming its way into Victoria's farming heartland.

State stocks of the crown boring weevil have reached an all-time high, with 30,000 of the weed-destroying mites collected this season to be distributed to other infested sites.

Victorian program coordinator and Department of Natural Resources and Environment technical officer Kerry Roberts said the weevils were helping the fight against the weed in what had proved to be a good season for it.

"We have collected them in the past but only in small numbers," she said.

"Rather than New South Wales having to collect and supply the other states we have now got supplies of our own."

The weevil species was introduced into Australia in the early 1990s to help fight the toxic weed.

While the weevils will move around by themselves, Ms Roberts said the weeds could be eradicated faster with human intervention.



"Rather than wait for them to spread naturally, if we collect a few and get distribution started they will spread quicker," she said.

"If the Patterson's Curse is not around they will starve."

Collection took place on field days near Euroa, with the weevils to be transplanted as far away as Violet Town, Lara, Kyneton and Benalla.

Each landholder could take home about 1000 weevils, which fed off the crown and

roots of the plant.

Ms Roberts said Patterson's Curse was introduced into Australia in the late 19th century and quickly ran out of control.

Source: Herald Sun 9/1/02





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Leaf Curling Spider
(Phonognatha graeffei)

Have you noticed all the brown rolled up leaves suspended, usually at face height, in the bush over the last few weeks? These are the daytime retreats of the Leaf Curling Spider – a very common species in gardens and bushland around Warrandyte. This spider belongs to the group of orb weavers, but you will only see its beautiful wheel web on cold autumn mornings when the sun lights up the sparkling droplets of dew on these intricate constructions.

FOWSP Membership Form

Name

Address

.....

Tel. no.

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

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113

Special Membership Offer

Receive a discount if you renew your membership for three years

Single: \$40.00

Family: \$50.00