

November 2003

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

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

We Need Your Help

By Joan MacMahon

We have lost patience. Eleven years is a very long time to be watching in frustration, so your wonderful committee has decided to stop quietly gnashing it's teeth and has embarked on a lobbying campaign. To this end we have written to the Minister for Conservation, every other relevant politician we could think of, the Victorian National Parks Association (our parent body) and the media (Diary, Leader, Age, Sun-Herald). Letters were posted around the 20th October.

What are we so fussed about? In modern parlance it is the lack of an integrated approach to the management of Warrandyte State Park. For example, weeds are (when there is money available - and that's another story) weeded or poisoned up to the fence lines. But what about the ivy patch or the swards of that bright green panic veldt grass, pushing against the wire from the neighbour's side? And what about those pittosporum trees or that cotoneaster, both with

ripe berries for the birds to carelessly drop over the fence? We need someone on the Parks Victoria payroll with time to talk to the neighbours. Simple!

And what happened eleven years ago? Many folk will remember Fay Valcanis, she did a wonderful job as our ParkCare officer. We locals were buoyed by her presence, knowing the work she was doing was crucial to the long term improvement of this place we love. We were deeply disappointed when the government axed the position. We want it reinstated.

We have printed in this newsletter a copy of our official letter to the minister, so feel free to pinch bits of it or compose your own.

Please write to the minister and your local representatives (addresses on following page) as well as the papers. If each of us put in an hour of effort we may be successful. Then we can all rest easier, knowing that while natural processes take time, at least we humans are doing our best.



FOWSP 21st Birthday Celebration

All past and present members are invited to the FOWSP 21st birthday celebrations which include:

- Raptor Display
- Green Singers
- Auction of Wildflower Pots
- Group Photographs

Date and Time: Sunday December 7th 11.00 am Onwards. Lunch will be provided

Place: The 'Folly' Warrandyte State Park depot, Pound Bend Road, Warrandyte (Melway 23 C10)



<u>North side of the river:</u> Danielle Green MP Member for Yan Yean PO box 376 Diamond Creek 3089 9408 3833 Danielle.green@parliament.vic.gov.au	<u>On the south side:</u> Heather McTaggart MP Member for Evelyn 15 Hutchinson St Lilydale 3140	Andrew Olexander Member for Silvan Shops 5-6/232 Ridge Rd. Olinda, 3788 97512200 9751 2600 (fax) andrew.olexander@parliament.vic.gov.au
B.Forwood Member for Templestowe Province 93 Upper Heidelberg Rd. Ivanhoe 3079 9479 4300	Phil Honeywood MP Member for Warrandyte 44 New St Ringwood3134 9707396 phil.honeywood@parliament.vic.gov.au	
Lidia Argondizzo Member for Templestowe Province Suite 5/101 Burgundy St Heidelberg 3089 9457 6188	Carolyn Hirsh Member for Silvan 13A Civic Place Ringwood, 3134 98708284 9870 8119 (fax) carolyn.hirsh@parliament.vic.gov.au	Mr. Thwaites, Minister for Conservation Level3/1 Treasury Place East Melbourne, 3002

Letter to the Minister

The Friends of Warrandyte State Park (FOWSP) have been involved with the promotion, protection and enhancement of Warrandyte State Park for over twenty years. We help care for approximately 676 hectares of fragmented native parkland which is encircled by private and municipal land, the majority of which is heavily weed infested or managed in a manner which is not complementary to the park's environmental values. Consequently, despite some contracted weed management work organised by Parks Victoria, weeds continue to invade from properties adjoining the extensive park boundaries, placing us on a perpetual weed control treadmill.

We strongly believe that a sensible and practical approach to correcting this problem and therefore maximising environmental diversity is to educate the community about park management objectives, which of course includes the problem of weed invasion. This applies particularly to those with properties adjoining or within close proximity of the park. We believe it is false economy to skimp on this critical aspect of park management - it guarantees the problem will continue into the foreseeable future!!

Steps were taken in this direction about ten years ago when Parks Victoria employed a ParkCare Officer responsible for community education, provision of resources to help them control weeds and suggesting more appropriate land management practices to park neighbours. Shortsightedly, this ParkCare Officer position was made redundant after a short time.

The Friends of Warrandyte State Park urge that consideration be given to reinstatement of a Park Care Officer/Community Education Officer position at Warrandyte State Park. We believe the benefits of such an initiative would be to raise public awareness, improve the environmental qualities of the park and allow park officers and volunteers to better focus on other park management issues.

We would appreciate your feedback and look forward with anticipation to the reinstatement of a ParkCare Officer.

What Shall We Call Them?

Are you one of those many people wondering whether the plant that has just appeared down the back yard is a weed about to smother all the good work of the last few years or a long lost 'goodie'? If so help is nigh!

We are going to run a series of biodiversity enhancement training sessions/gatherings of like-minded persons /how to be a good neighbour to Warrandyte State Park workshops/community

get-togethers/plant identification seminars. A free plant for the most inspired title!

Anyway we are starting this year on the Sunday after our 21st birthday celebration. This means Sunday 14th of December and it's at Joan's, from 10.am to 12md. Let her know numbers and, if the time doesn't suit, what would be better. She lives at 101 Bradleys Lane.. BYO. plants, friends, neighbours sorry no dogs. Fowsp members free, non-members a gold coin donation. Hope it's not too close to Christmas for you.

FOWSP Annual General Meeting (AGM)

You are all invited to come along to the FOWSP AGM. It is being held at Geoff and Lee Speedy's place (69 Research/Warrandyte Rd ph 9437 0894) on Wednesday December 3rd at 7.30pm. Please bring a chair and plate of nibbles. Come and enjoy the great location - fine views to the Dandenongs - and an intriguing, owner built, architect designed, partly mud-brick, partly timber, work in - progress.

Two of our committee members are stepping down so we are hoping at least three or four people will step forward! How's that for optimism? Meetings are held once a month for two to three hours. Please don't think that you will be worked to the bone. We all miss meetings at times and we grant ourselves a month off in January.

The two committee members stepping down are Flora Anderson and Joan MacMahon. Flora, after many years of living in Wonga Park and doing wonderful work for our local environment, is moving to the inner city and the beach and Joan, well she's not moving but is just taking a break.

We would like members to respond to these two requests:

1) Currently committee members take turns to stick the address labels on the newsletters and deliver them to the Warrandyte post office. It would be great if other members could give a hand. Able to help? Please give Lee a call - her computer houses our membership list, she keeps it up to date and creates the labels. She's a data base wiz!

2) Most of you probably have a copy of our 'Gardener's Guide to Indigenous Planting in Warrandyte and Surrounding Areas'. If not, we have it at the depot and our market trailer. As well Joan started selling it last December to various outlets in Warrandyte. So far she has offloaded 449 copies which is great. We are looking for more outlets, as well as a few people to give Joan a hand. Please phone her (9844 3213) with offers of physical help or ideas re new outlets (especially in Park Orchards and Wonga Park).

Our current outlets are The Soil Shop nursery, Goldfield Cellars, the Neighbourhood House, Information Warrandyte, Harvey World Travel, Warrandyte post office and the Folk Art shop. Please support these businesses, they are all keen to promote our indigenous plants and the wildlife that so depends on them.

My Worst Weed

By Pat Hodson

To think that the plant I found most attractive in my childhood is now my worst weed (along with Myrtle-leaf Milkwort).

My Mum had it indoors in a jardiniere on a high stand. It grew beautifully and fell in cascades to the floor. So little attention was needed and a delight to behold.

Two specimens were encouraged to grow on the chicken wire bordering the vegie patch. All the tender-loving care was wasted on these. I came and went over the years and noticed these two outdoor plants grew nary an inch - just hung on, while the one indoors continued to thrive. Why? The soil out there was some of the Western Districts's best.

Now I see it here in Warrandyte as I walk in the great outdoors. Because of its dense root



system I'd developed the habit of breaking off all the greenery, thinking at least I'd delay the berry stage. But now I feel I must desist and let a leaf hopper or rust fungus do the controlling and finally put an end to that beautiful, but undesirable greenery - Bridal Creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*)

Your Worst Weed

Contributions (even verbal) can be passed on to Pat at the nursery on Thursday mornings or sent by e-mail: ian.coupar@vcp.monash.edu.au or posted to Pat at 143 Brackenbury St, Warrandyte, 3113.

Letters to the Editor

Dear fellow Friends

I have just been shown the September issue of your Newsletter (mainly because of the article on the introduced moss). I must congratulate you on producing an interesting and informative newsletter.

I happened to notice under 'I Spy' a reference to the name change *Corymbia* for some former *Eucalyptus* species ('Frightening Faces'), and the plea "Could someone explain the detail?" In case no-one else has responded, I am giving below something of the story.

Since the earliest attempts at eucalypt classification, major subgroups have always been a feature, and Bentham first recognised the 'bloodwoods' as a group in 1867. In 1971 Pryor & Johnson produced a classification which defined largest groups as 'subgenera', and the 'red' and 'yellow' bloodwoods were listed in a subgenus *Corymbia*. A simplified summary of the southern subgenera is given in the table on page 42 of *Trees of Victoria and Adjoining Areas* (Costermans, 1994).

In 1995, Hill & Johnson of the National Herbarium of NSW published an extended paper on the group in *Telopea* vol. 6 arguing that subgenus *Corymbia* was as distinct from the other 'eucalypts' as was the long-differentiated genus *Angophora*, and that these two groups were probably closer to each other than to the other major groups. They raised the subgenus *Corymbia* to a new genus *Corymbia*, so that all the 'bloodwood' species (113 species, including some new species) would become members of this genus, not *Eucalyptus*.

As with any proposed change, this new genus was not immediately and automatically accepted. However, taxonomists associated with all Australian herbaria eventually decided that the change was justified, and would be accepted on a national basis.

Exactly what makes the group different is too complex to explain here, but the most obvious

feature is the compound nature of the inflorescence (i.e. the bud clusters in a compound branching structure) which is usually at the ends of the branchlets - this has the effect of making the flowers more conspicuous. The fruits are usually fairly large, and somewhat urn-shaped.

The 'bloodwoods' are mainly distributed across northern parts of Australia, but those we know in Victoria are the Red Bloodwood *Corymbia gummifera* (which was originally described in 1788) and the yellow bloodwood Spotted Gum *Corymbia maculata*, as well as the commonly planted Lemon-scented Gum *Corymbia citriodora* and the WA Red-flowering Gum *Corymbia ficifolia*.

It is encouraging to note that Professor Pauline Ladiges (Melbourne University), who has studied the whole group, believes that there is no present case to similarly raise the subgenera *Symphomyrtus* and *Monocalyptus* to genera status. However current DNA research is certainly likely to produce major changes in some other areas (see, for example, the Introduction to the latest *A Census of the Vascular Plants of Victoria*, 7th edn, 2003).

Leon Costermans

I read with interest your regular newsletter, and it recently occurred to me that my silence may have been construed as disinterest.

No so! I receive several similar publications, and I must concede yours is exceptionally professional; a credit to yourself and all contributors.

I appreciate how difficult funding these enterprises are, and although it is not intended as a membership fee, I hope you will accept a small donation to the cause.

Keep up the good work. I shudder to think where the Shire would be without you, and other 50 'Friends' and Landcare groups who contribute so much to the environmental health of this region.

Bob Stubbings

(Nillumbik Shire Council, Yanakie Ward)



Zoological Meanings

Platypus

Ornithorhynchus anatinus

"duck-like bird-snout"

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.

The nursery is open for plant sales (by donation) every Thursday 10.00am to 12md and the first Sunday of each month 2.00pm to 400pm.

Sunday Opening Days for 2003

December 7th



Important Notice

Please note the nursery is only open for plant sales during the above times. Some members and non-members have been turning up for plants (and advice) outside these hours without prior arrangement. If you find it impossible to come during official opening times please contact the nursery manager first.

Forthcoming Events

FOWSP 21st Birthday Celebrations

Sunday 7th December

Details in next newsletter

AGM

Wednesday 3rd December

Place: Lee & Geoff Speedy's house, 69 Research-Warrandyte Rd, Nth Warrandyte

All members welcome. BYO chair

FOWSP Committee 2003

Flora Anderson 9722 1776 Public Officer
Pat Coupar 9844 1650 Newsletter Editor
Ray Clarke 9841 8507 Treasurer
Sue Shepherd 9844 3754 Assistant Treasurer
Peter Curry 9844 0958 Secretary
Lee Speedy 9437 0894 Membership Secretary
Mike Coupar 9844 1650
Melanie Birtchnell
Karen Reynolds 9712 0797
Joan MacMahon 9844 3213
Michelle Hanslow 0402251577

Wildlife Rescue
Julie Pryor 9722 1117

Market
Marie Krause 9712 0498

Park Office 9844 2659

Nursery Manager 0408800026

Green Wedge Environmental Seminar Series 2003

Thursday 4 December - "Phytophthora (cinnamon Fungus)"

Speaker: Ian Smith, Senior Forest Pathologist, Forest Science Centre, Department of Sustainability and Environment. Ian will discuss the latest research into dieback caused by Phytophthora, occurrences in our area, and how we can prevent its spread.

For further information contact about the seminars contact:

Cathy Willis – Conservation Officer. Ph: 9840 9122

Email: cathy.willis@manningham.vic.gov.au

Deadline for the December newsletter is December 7th

RAPTOR DISPLAY.



Just one of the special events FOWSP have organised for our 21st Birthday Celebration

Bush Backyard

Contributions this month from Sandy Jones and Pat Coupar

Better Duck

By Sandy Jones

On the morning of November 1st I was outside feeding my rabbit 'Sweetie' when I received an unexpected visitor. Landing nearby was a Maned Duck. With his beak he explored the long grass looking for that nice fat grub or wriggly worm.

Coming nearer to me, I thought I'll throw some Weet-bix (my rabbit loves it), to the duck. Well, did that make his morning! I was about to throw some more 'bix' when my new found friend spotted something on the ground. If the duck thought the 'bix' was beaut he was about to discover that rabbit food tasted even better, (I had thrown a little away on to the grass).



For the next ten minutes that duck ate every crumb of that food.

Watching the bird enjoy his morning meal, I forgot to watch out for the threatening dark black

storm clouds. The next thing I knew I was feeling the first raindrops. Therefor I knew I had to say goodbye to 'Sweetie', but in doing so I made too much noise and spooked my fine feathered friend. The last I saw of him he was flying south.

I don't know where he is, but I do know to look out for one rabbit-food-eating duck!

Addicted to Pots!

By Pat Coupar

This year I have discovered the delights of pots – terracotta pots that is! Many of our local wildflowers adapt well to growing in pots. By planting a range of species you can have a colourful display right through spring and summer.

One of the first species to flower in my newly-planted pots is the Grass Trigger Plant

(*Stylidium graminifolium*), that was several weeks ago and it is still putting up more flower spikes. Even when this plant is not in flower, during winter, its tufts of tussocky leaves look just as attractive.

Many of our indigenous daisies also do very well in pots. When you see the display our nursery manager has accumulated of our local wildflowers down at the nursery you too could get addicted to pots.



More Snippets Please

The feedback on this segment has been very positive, but it does rely on you, the members, to keep contributions coming.

Don't forget snippets can be about anything of interest in the environment and do not necessarily have to be about Warrandyte.

Contributions can either be dropped into the editor at 143 Brackenbury St, Warrandyte or via email at jan.coupar@vcp.monash.edu.au

The Dams are Up

Facts:

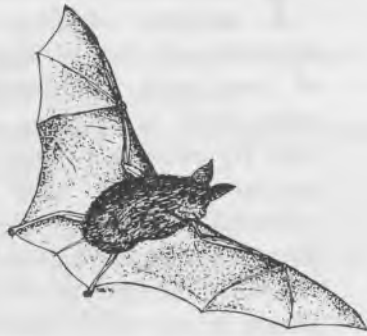
- Melbourne Water Storages have a capacity of 1,773,000 Megalitres.
- They currently hold 1,013,406 Megalitres
- This means they are 57% full

Locked Out

The issue of gates on mines may not yet be over. The FOWSP committee is trying to get to the bottom of it.

Several months ago we were officially informed, by a WSP ranger at a committee meeting earlier this year, that it had been decided that gates across Geraghty's and Victory mines on Fourth Hill were necessary for safety reasons. However, the use of the mines by bats had been taken into consideration and the gates would not be entirely solid, but would have a grill large enough to allow access by bats. The committee was reasonably pleased by this compromise.

So what has been installed on these mines? Solid gates with no grills. At the last committee meeting in November we asked why this had happened. We were told that the decision had been made because the size of grill needed for the bats to fly through was also large enough for a small child to squeeze through.



This was extremely disappointing. Warrandyte has recorded a number of bat species for the Park and one of the rarest, the Southern Myotis, is known to have used Geraghty's mineshaft and tunnel. This species is unusual as it catches its prey mainly by skimming over the surface of water grabbing aquatic insects and tiny fish from the water while in flight.

Since the most recent committee meeting questions have been asked of two bat experts who have been involved in the decision making process. It appears that at a meeting prior to the installation of the gates Parks Victoria were advised that fully sealed gates were inappropriate for these mines. While there is no consensus on the exact width of grills that will allow bats in and keep children out, it seems it is possible to have aperture large enough for the Southern Myotis a small bat - to fly through without the risk of children getting in.

Geoff Speedy, FOWSP representative on the mines committee said that "an opportunity has been missed to preserve Warrandyte's heritage while still making it readily available to the public. The current solution is deleterious to the bat population." he said "We don't believe Parks Victoria have been fully forthcoming on this issue."

Mike Coupar, Committee Member

A Poem for Computer Users

A computer was something on TV
From a science fiction show of note
A window was something you hated to clean
And ram was the father of a goat.

Meg was the name of my girlfriend
And gig was a job for the nights
Now they all mean different things
And that really mega bytes.

An application was for employment
A program was a TV show
A cursor used profanity
A keyboard was a piano.

Memory was something that you lost with age
A CD was a bank account
And if you had a 3-inch floppy
You hoped nobody found out.

Compress was something you did to the garbage
Not something you did to a file
And if you unzipped anything in public
You'd be in jail for a while.

Log on was adding wood to the fire
Hard drive was a long trip on the road
A mouse pad was where a mouse lived
And a backup happened to your commode.

Cut you did with a pocket knife
Paste you did with glue
A web was a spider's home
And a virus was the flu.

I guess I'll stick to my pad and paper
And the memory in my head
I hear nobody's been killed in a computer crash
But when it happens they wish they were dead!

Author unknown



By B.G

Animal Activity

During October two 'Friends' on their way to the depot had to 'brake' for a pair of wood ducks and their twelve ducklings. Climbing up the bank, the little ones had to make several attempts – like the little red engine – "I think I can, I think I can".

Also right in 'town' of Yarra Brae all the cars stopped as two teenage girls were ushering an echidna across the road.

Looking Forward

New member Jan Smids has already turned up several times to help. Jan and her husband enjoy walking and are looking forward to gardening after "the outside structure is finished."

Mid-October Meander

The 'Accroffims' walking group of about forty mature adults did the round from the car park near the Jumping Creek Reserve entry through the rest of the reserve and then to Black Flat, and return. The same group from Mooroolbark did a Normans Reserve to Stiggants Reserve walk in February.

Nixon Note

"The fire crews are arriving soon."

Bicycle Boy

Geoff Speedy (husband of an unnamed committee member) completed a 210/220 km bike ride around the bay. Congratulations Geoff your parents will be proud of you.

More Market

Anne Warren, Marjan Kiewiet and others worked at the November market stall. This activity just quietly goes on with lots of 'Friends' helping over the year, and well organised too.

Josh Away, the Animals Play

At one nursery morning recently, when Josh was off to see a specialist, a koala came wambling (walking/ambling) along the ground just near the nursery area. Moments later three grey kangaroos bounded down past Frogland area.

Green Corps Continued

Estelle Toulmin (from Werribee) graduated from year 11 at McKillop College. She hopes, in the future, to be more involved in bio-control of plants and animals, especially 'hands on' and to learn more about Australian animals. She loves music as well.

Daniel Davis (Warrenwood) attended Norwood Secondary College and is currently with Green Corps. He hopes to get full-time employment with Parks Victoria or Natural Resources and Environment and would like to end up in Fisheries. Naturally Daniel is a very keen fisherman. Biggest fish caught was a one kilo bream/trout.

Ed. Note: What's a bream/trout?

Committee Member Commits

Melanie Birtchnell is tying the knot with Steve Asirvadem in the fourth quartile of November. Congratulations and best wishes.

Quo Vadis?

Ecos, a CSIRO magazine reporting on scientific research related to the environment is 'on the move'. In April-June edition changes were flagged relating to a new partnership between CSIRO and ECOS Futurers through the Natural Business leaders forum on sustainable development.

Words/phrases such as: industry, sustainability, excellence, exceptional CEO's, business sector, paradigm, more relevant to the needs of the 21st century, concerns of our over-regulation, solutions for a wealthy and sustainable future, 'better bang for our buck', strategic proactivity.

Which way will matters go?

Ecos articles are now on line at www.publish.csiro.au/ecos.

Ecos Extra

The July-September 2003 headlines – "Specially engineered wind turbines are exceeding expectations in Antarctica" and "Gore gives a wake-up call for leadership" and "Government and business agree on action plans" and "a platform for change." (Platform seems to be the new 'in' word everywhere.)

Leap Year Looms

Here's hoping everyone has a good New Year in 2004 free of pain, ill-health, but full of unexpected pleasures.



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Mountain Clematis

(Clematis aristata)

One of two species of Clematis found in Warrandyte – the other being Narrow-leaf Clematis (*Clematis microphylla*). Both are perennial climbers with starry white flowers, as its name suggests the Mountain Clematis occurs in shady sites with deeper soils. In Warrandyte it can be seen scrambling up trees and shrubs in gullies and along the river.

After flowering both species produce attractive feathery seedheads which are sometimes referred to as Old Man's Beard.

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

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper