Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Boost to Community Education

By Geoff Speedy

ommunity education is an important role for FOWSP in improving Warrandyte State Park.

There are many avenues of Community Education. The most effective one is by FOWSP members simply talking to their neighbours about Warrandyte's magical natural environment. The more appreciation that people have of the local setting, the more they will be motivated to protect and enhance it. That the neighbours know about our organisation and understand there are many resources available through FOWSP is an important first step. (Access to rangers, the library & brochures, expert FOWSPians etc,etc)

Our members receive this newsletter which keeps them informed on monthly basis. Also, the close relationship that FOWSP has with the Warrandyte Diary allows more controversial subjects to the aired, and worked through by the community.

Brochure publications with support from Parks Vic, Nillumbik & Manningham have in the past been an important conduit in the past. This year brochures regarding Bryophytes (non-flowering plants) and a Greencorps Frogs Poster will be published with support from FOWSP.

The Market trailer collects brochures from many sources, and distributes them to the general public each Market Saturday. The warm and friendly welcome that the public receive from these marvellous volunteers may be that person's first steps to a long term appreciation of the bush.

The committee have decided to boost FOWSP's efforts in the area of Community Education in 2005 by employing an undergraduate student for one day per week until June. The student, from an environmental course at La Trobe University, will receive a cadetship from FOWSP to be jointly supervised by us & La Trobe University.

The student's task will be to manage and improve FOWSP's publications and Community education on a weekly basis. FOWSPian's may expect to see an increase in the numbers and quality of brochures available at the Market trailer, and environmental handouts will be prepared for new Warrandyte residents and Teachers.

An announcement will be made next month about the appointment, although if any FOWSPians can recommend a La Trobe environmental student, applications will be accepted until Friday 18th March.

New Walks Program

Friends of Warrandyte State Park, in conjunction with Mannigham City Council, have organised a series of monthly walks in and around Warrandyte State Park and other local reserves. The walks will take place on the first Sunday of each month and the fourth Thursday of the month. See centre page for details.

Bush Backyard

Contributions this month from Sandy Jones and Steven Katsineris

Bronzewing Bonanza

By Sandy Jones

hen living in Yarra Street we had a bird feeder on the frontyard. We had many visits from cockatoos, galahs, magpies, pee-wees, rosellas and the odd kookaburra.



Then there was the pair of bronzewings – they would only visit during school holidays. Why the school holidays? Well they lived at the local primary school so when the kids were not there the food scraps were gone. Therefore the birds had to find extra food somewhere else, hence our frontyard was the place to 'hang out'.

A few years ago we moved up the road. Directly across the road from our house is a bushy block and with the help of an extra feeder or two we welcomed our new feathered friends. It wasn't long before we had a visit from a family of magpies (they had a nest in the tree beside the fence), a few rosellas, a group of noisy y miners, some cockatoos, a couple of galahs and, surprisingly, a pair of bronzewings.

This time we had bronzewings in our backyard on a regular basis. I don't know what it was, maybe all the attention, but they told a few friends because it wasn't long before that pair became three pairs. Then as time went on it was, that six would become ten or eleven and even more. So on a good day (or evening) we would have up to twenty bronzewings.

Sometimes when I am cooking, it's fun to look out of the kitchen window and see the birds sitting on fence with a few scattered on the ground. There is always a pair somewhere.

Summertime sees the bronzewings sunbaking on the fence or in the middle of the

lawn or seeking shade under the bushes. The smart ones soak themselves in the bird bath. Unfortunately we have lost the odd bird to the neighborhood cat — currently we have a bird that seems to have survived such an attack. He looks a little messy and ruffled on his chest, but he seems to be coping without any tail feathers. We are also delighted to have the next generation present at the moment — yes we have three young ones exploring our backyard. So, here's to the beauty of our local bronzewings.

Footnote: As I was cooking tea after writing this, I noticed an unexpected visitor. A kookaburra landed on our railing and enjoyed the attention he was receiving (I almost burnt the tea) It didn't take much coaxing from my brother for the kookaburra to take the meat he had offered. I don't know if kookie was just passing by or had moved into the neighborhood, but we hope to see him again soon.

Carnivorous Currawong

By Steven Katsineris

ne afternoon while I was watering our back garden, I noticed a currawong above me on a low branch of a Yellow Box tree, just arms length away. It seemed unconcerned about my presence and looking intently at where I was watering. A moment later while I still was wondering about its curiosity, it swooped down to the ground next to me and grabbed something in its bill and returned to a branch. I looked up and saw it

had caught a mouse, which it then proceeded to pull apart with its beak and then eat. As I had only ever seen them eat insects. flowers and fruit thought this

fruit I thought this was a very interesting incident.

Mistaken Identity

By Steven Katsineris

ne day while weeding on our nature strip, a woman from up the road stopped her car to let me know that she had seen three snakes on our nature strip the other day – two on the house side and another on the other side of the road. I thought this was a very unusual sight and wondered if she was exaggerating or had confused them with the several Blue-tongue Lizards that live there.

After that I kept checking the nature strip, but only saw Blue-tongue Lizards several times, including two at once.

On Saturday Feb 12th my son, Andreas and I went to a



fascinating information session at Edendale about reptiles that live in our area. The guest speaker, Simon the reptile man, made an interesting comment that many of the calls he gets from residents concerning snakes actually turns out to be Blue-tongue Lizards. While we do have snakes around our area, including on the nature strip and sometimes in the yard, I think this case was one of mistaken identity and shows the usefulness of educating residents about local snakes and lizards.

Update on the Waterdragon (last month's article by Steven Katsineris)

When we were on holiday at Mallacoota, we saw wild Eastern Waterdragons at Genoa Falls. The one we found in our yard is now a permanent resident at Healesville Sanctuary.

Editor's Note. We were also on holiday at Mallacoota this summer and saw the waterdragons at Genoa Falls.

Anyone who has been in the vicinity and tried to find the falls may have noticed – or rather not noticed – that there is <u>no</u> sign post from the highway to the falls. The reason for this is that because the dragons are so tame certain disreputable people have been catching them and selling them on the black market.

More Snippets Please

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 ian.coupar@vcp.monash.edu.au

More Thefts

In May last year we reported that there had been a number of thefts of plants from the Warrandyte State Park nursery that is run and managed by the 'Friends'. Following the article in the newsletter the thefts stopped and, in fact, one valuable plant that had disappeared was returned.

In recent weeks thefts have started happening again, this time complete boxes and trays of plants have been taken as well as selective species amounting to several hundred dollars. Once again we can only reiterate that we are extremely upset by these activities. Many Fowspians give their time for free every Thursday to propagate a wide range of plants for State Park revegetation, species enrichment and the community. It is distressing to know that someone has come along and helped themselves to some of these plants.

For those people who are revegetating their own block and require large numbers of plants we ask them to put in an order well ahead of time so that we can accommodate their needs. Most people do the right thing and let us know their requirements early. However, this year with the thefts some of these pre-ordered plants may not be available. Park staff are aware of the situation will be on the look out for any unauthorized person. It would be a great shame and a great expense if we are forced to secure the whole nursery by fencing to keep out thieves.

Wildlife Rescue

By Julie Pryor

n November the 17th Koala was in a tree at the corner of Mitcham/Doncaster

Roads and Old Warrandyte Road. As a six lane Highway was not a safe place for her we relocated her to the Mullum Mullum reserve.

Last October I released Kal_El along the river in Warrandyte, he was still a bit of a mess with stitches in his nose and fur missing, but he was stressing in captivity so I decided the best thing for him was to put him back home. He came in weighing 10.5 kilo in early October and on release in late October he weighed 13 kilo. Unfortunately Kal_El is back At first I thought he had been hit by another car, but on investigation he only had a slight nose injury and a little bleeding from his mouth, this was a new injury and the stitches had healed beautifully.

The fur he had missing was from his last visit where it had not grown back, his weight is now 7.8 kilo. I do not know what has happened to him. Since he came in on the 2nd



of February he has been eating well and he is very easy to work with, as yet I have not stressed him (or myself) by trying to weigh him but he does look better.

Another Koala came in on the 25th of January. She came from the Otway Ranges; you may have seen the article in the Herald Sun on the 26th of January. The person who found her knew a little about koalas, but he still fed her pineapple cordial, she sat on the ground and was very thirsty for a few days, but she is now up the tree and eating well. She is not a well koala, but she is getting better. She is getting grumpy and is starting to move around her enclosure, she will probably be here for a while yet.

I was away during February and a call came from Harris Gully Road. Another koala had been hit by a car and left to die. Kerri and Derek Fairley were able to go out to help this little one, unfortunately her injuries were too much for her and she had to be euthanized. I know it can be difficult to find help at 1.30 AM but always try the Wildlife Victoria 0500540000 or Help for Wildlife 0417380687 both of these numbers are 24 hour numbers.



On Our Way (Part One)

By Peggy Safstrom

wo whole weeks in Tasmania - middle of March - The Spirit of Tasmania. Must be up early. Must be at Station Pier by 7.30.

We made it! Blue sky. Still water. Flotillas of yachts. Lovely! Sun streaming on us. Hair dancing in the breeze. The last rope hauled in. Water churning. Boat slowly turning towards Tasmania. We're on our way.

Where to sit - stand - lean? Out in the open, tucked in behind glass with wonderful, open views? Along the sides, with tables and padded chairs? At the front or stern, in carpeted lounges? What suits us best? Yes, the ¾ glass enclosed area, sunshine, but a gentle breeze. This'll do us for the day. A whole day to watch for the occasional seabird, the gentle undulations of the waves - not quite a millpond, but THIS is Bay water. Will Bass Strait be as calm?

Look! There's the Heads. And look out there - flat as a pancake! A leisurely day. Time to think. Time to read. Time to write. A whole day without chores. A WHOLE day without chores! Heaven!

Can You Help?

One of our members and regular newsletter contributor, Sandy Jones, is very keen to help out at the nursery on Thursday mornings. However, she needs transport. If there is anyone who can give Sandy a lift (she lives in Warrandyte) to and from the nursery she would be most grateful.

If you are able to help please give Sandy a call on 9844 3628.

FOWSP THURSDAY PROGRAM

We meet for propagation and other nursery activities <u>every</u> Thursday morning at 10.00am at the Warrandyte State Park depot, Pound Bend Road, Warrandyte (Melway 23 C10), <u>unless otherwise stated below.</u> 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.



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.

Thursday Walks 2005

Meet at 1pm at the Nursery, Pound Bend Rangers Depot, Pound Bend Road Warrandyte (Melways Ref. 23 C10) to car pool to walk starting point. Bring a water bottle and snack to eat on the walk if you wish. Wear walking shoes and clothing appropriate to the weather. Walks will last approximately 2 hours

March 24th The Koornong/Wombat Creek Leader Pat Coupar

A pleasant walk along the river track in this little known area of the State Park that has undergone some dramatic revegetation in the last year. Learn about the various techniques used to transform this previous weedscape..

March 28th Fauna Walk. Location and leader still to be decided.

Sunday Walks 2005

Meet at 10.15 am. Bring a water bottle and snack to eat on the walk if you wish. Wear walking shoes and clothing appropriate to the weather. Walks will last approximately 2 hours. Join us after the walk for a BYO lunch (BBQ available) at 'the Folly' at Warrandyte State Park Rangers Depot, Pound Bend. Hot and cold drinks provided.

April 3rd Eucalypts Meet at Pound Bend picnic area – leader Glen Jameson May 1st National/State/Manningham Biosite. Meet at Fourth Hill – leader Paul Foreman For more information contact Cynthia Briscoe 9840 9129

Deadline for April Newsletter is March 27th

FOWSP Committee 2005

			Wildlife Rescue			
Pat Coupar	9844 1650	Newsletter Editor	Julie Pryor 9722 1117			
Dick Thomson	9850 9867	Treasurer				
Peter Curry	9844 0958	Secretary	<u>Market</u>			
Geoff Speedy	9437 0894		Marie Krause 9712 0498			
Lee Speedy	9437 0894	Membership Secretary	Assistant Treasurer			
Mike Coupar	9844 1650		Ray Clarke 9841 8507			
Karen Reynolds	9712 0797	Minutes Secretary	Nursery Manager			
			0408317327			
Michelle Hanslow0402251577						

Manningham City Council Environment Seminars 2005



9844 2659

Park Office

2nd February Lynda McLaughlin – "Climate Change and Melbourne"

2nd March Neville Rosengren – "Geomorphology of the Yarra Catchment"

6th April Mike Harper – "Urban Fauna"

4th May Authur Stubbs - "Pasture Management"

1st June Andrew Pritchard – "Threatened Flora Species Recovery"

6th July Kate Whitehouse – "The Long Yarra Walk"

3rd August Melanie Birtchnell – "Tree Decline in Jumping Creek Reserve"

7th September Glen Jameson - "Recoverability of Landscapes"

5th October Heath Butler - "Growling Grass Frog"

2nd November Scott Watson - "Indigenous Garden Design"

7th December Paul Barnard - "Wildfire Behaviour and Community Safety"

Please Note: The seminars are now on WEDNESDAY nights

The seminars are free and no bookings are required.

Supper provided.

Time: 7:30pm

Venue: The Function Room Grand Hotel

120 Yarra Street, Warrandyte. (Melways Ref. 23 El1)

To join us for dinner at the pub before the seminars, book a seat in the Bistro on 9844 1199.

For further information contact: Cynthia Danby 9840 9129

Dates for your Diary

(COMMITTEE MEETINGS	WARRANDYTE MARKET	THURSDAY WALKS
	day 1 st March	5 th March	24 th February
Tues	day 29 th March	2 nd April	31st March
Tues	day 3 rd May	7 th May	28 th April
	day 31 st May	4 th June	26 th May
Tues	day 28 th June	2 nd July	30 th June

FESTIVAL DATES
19th and 20th March 2005.

Back From the Brink-The Survival of the Cyprus Monfton.

By Steven Katsineris

The largest and most well known wild mammal on Cyprus is the Moufflon. The Cyprus Moufflon is a unique species, only found on the island. The Moufflon according to what we know from the archaeological and zoological information, arrived in Cyprus during the Neolithic period, some 8,000 years ago. The first inhabitants (the Neolithic settlers) arrived on Cyprus with a variety of animals, including deer, pigs, goats and sheep. Some of these animals escaped and became wild populations living in the forests. Because of the remoteness and ruggedness of the m01.mtain forests of the Troodos region they remained uninhabited for a time and these wild species, like the Cyprus Moufflon flourished. Later though people settled in the mountains and due to hunting and the clearing of the forest some species became extinct or had their numbers reduced. The endemic Moufflon survived these pressures.

Identification. The Moufflon is a type of

mountain sheep, shy, very nimble and a skilled climber. combines the grace and beauty of a deer with the agility of a goat. The Moufflon is medium-sized a sheep, standing between two and four feet tall at shoulder with adult males weighing about 1201bs. Females are slightly smaller than



the males. Males have large, spiral, curved horns that are usually around 24 inches (60cm) long in the adult. It is light red-brown in colour with a pale patch on its stomach and rear and a dark back stripe marking the head, back and tail. This combination of colours let it blend well into the forest, allowing it better protection. It has a course, heavy coat and develops a wooly undercoat in the winter.

Behaviour. The females are social and remain in groups, while the males are solitary for part of the

vear. The longevity of an individual sheep depends on the population's status. In a declining or stable population Moufflon can live between 10-20 years. In an expanding population, with heavy reproduction the average life span is reduced to only 6-7 years. The ewes do not breed until they are 2-3 years of age and the males don't breed until they are about 7 years of age. Like most wild sheep, Moufflon go through a rut in late autumn and early winter. The males have a strict hierarchy based on age and size of the horns. The ritualized crashing of their horns together reinforces that dominance. The dominant rams then mate with the females. The mating season is in November. The male has a variable number of females, ranging from two or three and up to eleven. After the mating season groups of 10-20 either all males or all females form and stay together during the winter. In spring, as delivery time nears, the female herds split up into smaller groups, while the male stays on his own. The ewes give birth to one or two lambs, in late April or early May. The young females remain with the mother's group, while the males are forced into their own group by 2-4 years of age.

Food. Moufflon are herbivores, feeding on the short grasses that grow on mountain slopes. Like most wild sheep they are found in highland areas. Most populations undergo a seasonal migration, generally dispersing upward and over large areas in the summer and concentrating in sheltered valleys during the winter.

Range. The Cyprus Moufflon lives in the Paphos forest of we stem Troodos Mountains. During the summer months they mainly stay on the high, forested ridges and summits, where they obtain the benefit of the cool shade of the pine and cedar trees and the breezes. In winter they move to lower altitudes, but stay concealed in the shelter of the thick forest.

Threats to the Moufflon. Because of the French Lusignan's and the British enthusiasm for hunting, the Cyprus Moufflon became a very popular hunting animal and its numbers decreased rapidly during the medieval period.

The reduction of the forest habitat due to land clearing was also a contributing factor in their decline. By 1938, there were at most 20 Moufflon remaining on the island and firm measures had to be taken to preserve the species. In an effort to save it from extinction it was declared a protected species.

Continued on next page:

Back from the Brink continued:

Conservation Measures. In 1939, the British colonial government banned its hunting and declared the whole of the state forest of Paphos as a prohibited hunting area.

In 1945, in order to further ensure its survival and help its recovery in safety, a large protective enclosure for several of them was built next to the areas main forest station at Stavros tis Psokas. To further spacious ensure their survival a second enclosure was built in the Platania area near Troodos. This also gives Cypriots and overseas visitors the opportunity to watch these rare, shy and elusive animals, as they are very fast and difficult to observe in the wild.

These were very successful achievements, with the numbers of wild Moufflon, increasing from the 15-20 of them in 1938, to over 200 in 1966 and an estimated 800 by 1985. In 1992 there were an estimated 1,200 Moufflon to be found on the island. By 2000, this had increased to a population of nearly 3,000 animals. In 1967, the Government of Cyprus signed the 'Form of Acceptance of

Ultimate Responsibility of Rare Wildlife Species,' thus pledging to guarantee the Moufflon's welfare and survival.

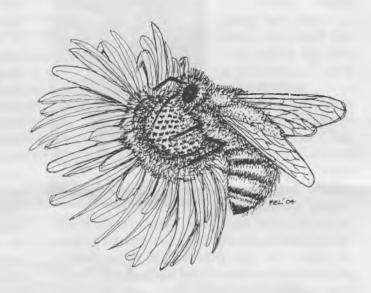
As the Cypriot public became more aware of the unique splendor of the species and its dire situation, the Moufflon became a great source of national pride and the desire to save it became a national cause. Today the Cyprus Moufflon is considered the national animal of Cyprus and its symbol appears on among other things, the airline Cyprus Airways, stamps and coins. Tremendous efforts have been made to protect the endangered Cyprus Moufflon and it is now fairly widespread throughout its range. Once on the brink of extinction, the Cyprus Moufflon survival is looking more and more assured.

When I was in Cyprus I was fortunate not only to see Moufflon in the enclosures, but while traveling in the mountains one day, I got to observe for several minutes a magnificent male Moufflon standing on a cliff, beside the road where we had stopped.

Sonnet in Early Summer

By Paul Jones

Hiving honey bees hover above lavender and campanula, in bright sunlight weaving designs indiscernible. Snails paint pearlescent patterns on concrete paths, from protecting shells of night interlacing time-old traceries. I would seek to dwell soar with the patterns of bees, a part of their perfumed flight; astride snail-nacre artistry of their secret hierograms, to glimpse God's infinitude.





By B.G

Godfrey - Grampians - Gariwerd

Jodie Godfrey was one of four W.S.P staff who attended the fires in western Victoria recently. She said that they stayed at the Horsham showgrounds in tents and were using portable showers and 'loos'.

Summer Success

The summer activities at the Park this year were all very successful. They included: 'Breakfast with the Birds'; 'Gold Discovery Walk'; 'Annual Koala Count' and 'Warrandyte After Dark'. These activities are normally on throughout January each year.

Visitor Volunteer

Charles Belshaw was found putting empty tubes into the box-trays in preparation for the propagating process. This tube work is a repetitive, but essential job often not seen by others.

Charles studied at La Trobe campus at Mount Buller. He says he is "the better half of Amy" another helper at the nursery. His father designed the 'call waiting' for Telstra.

Altona Associates

On January 27th Caed Jacobson, an 8 year old at Altona Primary School was helping to sieve material separating out small bulbs of the *Pterostylis concinna* orchid. His sister Ana Jacobson, almost 10 years old, was also helping. Both were at the depot with Leon Grinszpan.

Warrandyte Wander

Mid January, Ken Crook – a FOWSP member, member of the Warrandyte Historical Society and a participant in the VNPA Bushwalking Activities Program, organised a local activity for 17 VNPA members.

It included talks at the nursery by Josh Revell and Glen Jameson, a visit to the Old Post Office Museum and a walk which took in Pound Bend, the nursery and Blue-tongue Bend in the afternoon.

Ken led the walk through Warrandyte's fascinating Wurundjeri and European history. Well done.

River Rove

After the Thursday morning activity, Kyen Knight led a river walk during that afternoon.

Site Stumped

Stumps are in for the base of the new offices at the depot.

Steve Seen

Steve Munro was helping on Thursday morning at the nursery.

Interview of the Month

Meeting Melanie

By B.G

elanie Lange is one of the two people who regularly help Josh at the nursery on Thursdays. She also comes on other days to assist in seed collection and sorting.

'Melly' is currently studying the second year of Conservation Biology and Ecology at La Trobe (Bundoora campus). Blue-eyed, approximately 175 cm tall, she tells me that she is a Libran by birth with an appropriate tattoo – where?

Born at the Lilydale Bush Nursing Hospital she went on (not immediately) to Luther College to complete year 12. After denying any criminal record, she finally admitted to a couple of parking fines. Her favourite sports are hockey and netball, she does like rock music and Tom Yum Soup.

And what started Melanie on her present path of environmental activity? "The area I was working in was making me lots of money, but I decided that this was not what (my) life was going to be about". And her pet environmental topic? "The wastage of water".

Footnote: Melanie was last seen running the nursery activities one Thursday morning.



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If undeliverable please return to Friends of Warrandyte State Park Inc. P.O. Box 220 Warrandyte, 3113 Surface Mail only

Postage Paid



Upright Water-milfoil

Myriophyllum crispatum

This terrestrial or aquatic herb is a commonly found growing in damp mud in swamps or slow-flowing water. It has bright green spindle-shaped stems and leaves. The small creamy-red flowers develop in the axils of the leaf whorls over the warmer months.

Milfoils are great plants for a garden pond, but beware of Parrots Feather (*M. aquaticum*), an invasive introduced species that is still sold in nurseries.

The best place to see the native milfoil is the Mount Lofty swamp at the end of Homestead Road.

FOWSP Membership Form

Name					,
Address	•••••	***************************************	•••••	>	
*****		*************	••••••	•••••	••••
Tel. no					
Membership	\$20				
Concession	\$10				

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113