Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

Friends of Warrandyte State Park (FOWSP) Inc. PO Box 220 Warrandyte 3113 ABN 94170156655/ACN A0024890C

Hochkins Ridge Flora Reserve

By Andy Nixon (Ranger-in-Charge)

ochkins Ridge Flora Reserve provides residents with a beautiful spring wildflower display each year and a chance to live alongside some of Australia's unique wildlife. A number of small marsupials, and even the occasional koala, are frequent visitors to the reserve. Not to mention the array of frogs, butterflies, reptiles and insects that call the reserve home.

Hochkins Ridge Flora Reserve is however most renowned for its flora. It has high regional to State significance because of the diversity of its flora. 250 indigenous plant species have been recorded in the reserve, 64 of which are rare at a local level, 28 at a regional level and 2 are rare statewide. In particular the reserve is renowned for the richness of its orchid and wattle populations. Thirty-nine orchid species, 13 wattle species and one naturally occurring hybrid wattle have been recorded. Such high numbers are considered exceptional in a relatively small reserve and it is therefore critical that they are protected.

Once owned as a private parcel of land, the Crown bought this delightful pocket of Grassy Forest from Mr Clem Hochkins in 1984. Mr Hochkins sold the land to the people of Victoria at a very generous price. His legacy now remains for us all to enjoy. The 'public' management has see-sawed between old government departments, committees of management, and local government. It has for the last 12 months been in the hands of Parks Victoria. Like so much of the public estate, Parks Victoria and its rangers need to find a balance between conservation and recreation

in managing the land. Being in the Nature Conservation Reserve category, as the name implies, the principle management objective is weighed in favour of natural environment conservation objectives.

Parks Victoria manages the reserve to protect these values by running pest plant and animal programs, to reduce threats from weed invasion and grazing by rabbits. However the reserve is also threatened by human activity. In particular Parks Victoria has become aware of illegal activities occurring in Hochkins Ridge Flora Reserve, namely riding of mountain bikes and the creation of mountain bike tracks within the reserve. Bike riding within Hochkins Ridge Flora reserve is not permitted and nor is the clearing or removal of vegetation or digging within the reserve to form a track. There are many associated risks involved with bike riding, including the safety of riders and other park users, the creation of an erosion hazard and damage to and destruction of native vegetation. disturbance caused through digging to create new tracks within the reserve encourages weed growth, further inhibiting native vegetation.

Any member of the public can assist the park staff in managing this special place, particularly residents local to the area. As we cannot be on-site regularly, you can be our 'eyes and ears'. Talk to users who you feel may not being doing the right thing and if needed contact us so that we may follow up the issue appropriately.

Trust you find the time to enjoy a winters walk in Hochkins soon. Melways Ref. 37 K8

Bush Backyard

Contributions this month from Steven Katsineris

The Energetic Eastern Spinebill.

Steven Katsineris

ne of the loveliest birds to visit our garden is the petite and beautiful Eastern Spinebill. It has a long, narrow beak that is perfectly suited for extracting nectar from nectar-bearing flowers like Grevilleas and Correas that we have in our garden. Attracted by the many flowering native plants in the yard, they fly around very swiftly and erratically, back and forth between the different bushes. We frequently see Eastern Spine bills hovering in flight, like hummingbirds as they take nectar from the

blossoms. Their favourite plant seems to be the long flowering Victoria Grevillea, which they visit most regularly, meticulously working their way through every flower on each bush. We



often observe them quite clearly close to the house in pairs or singly.

Eastern Spinebills are small, about 150-160mm (six inches) long, including the beak. The head is a glossy black; the chin and throat are white with a rufous centre. They have a black crescent over the shoulder, while the under parts are a pale cinnamon brown colour. The tail is black and the wings white. Their voice is a high-pitched rapid piping call.

Nests are a small cup shape, made of grass, moss and hair, lined with feathers and bound with spider's webs and are located on a small fork in a tree or shrub, between 1-5 metres high. They have 2-3 eggs.

Eastern Spinebills live in forests and woodlands habitat, in thickets along watercourses; mainly in coastal shrub and heath areas or on the Divide; occasional inland; in well-vegetated gardens (as in our case). In Victoria they are found throughout the south and northeast. They are common in some places and uncommon in others, with altitudinal and inland movements in autumn and winter.

Eastern Spinebills are a pleasure to watch, they

are elegant and lively and wonderful small native birds to have in your garden. To attract them to you're yard plant 'bird-loving' Australian indigenous vegetation, their flowers are proven magnets.

The. Playful Magpie.

Steven Katsineris

our garden in Hurstbridge. They walk placidly around the yard feeding or sing in their full melodious caroling voice. We also have a pair of magpies that are almost permanent residents, having taken over our yard, the nature strip and nearby area as their territory. The other magpies that visit our yard are possibly the offspring of the pair, from previous years, as they seem to associate without any problems. The pair feed, roost and nest in our yard year round, usually having two, or three young each time.

They are very interesting birds to watch, especially when they have a family around, as both the adult pair and particularly the young magpies are very playful. We have often observed the immature magpies wrestling each other on the ground and, even funnier, many times on our children's trampoline. Other times they wrestle, splash or play about in the children's plastic paddling pool. Sometimes we have also seen them playing together or individually with a piece of string or a stick, or dive-bombing each other in a playful manner.

One day I watched one of the adult magpies for ten minutes playing with the children's totem tennis. It would peck at the tennis ball with its

beak and when the ball swung around it would run around and around the totem pecking it again and again so the ball kept swinging around. I wondered if had the magpie learned this from observing the children playing this game or had discovered it by



accident. I certainly know it was a delightful experience to see.

More Snippets Please

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

Wildlife Rescue

By Julie Pryor

Bunyip, the Koala from Bunyip State Forest has returned home. He spent a couple of days at Healesville Sanctuary where he had blood tests

and urine tests, all came back ok, he had gained about 1kg in weight, so a Ranger has taken him back to where he was found.

A koala was found on the ground at Pound Bend. The post mortem result was old age. Her teeth had worn down to the gum line. The post mortem results on the Koala from Bradleys Lane also showed old age. The Koala had a tag in her ear which meant she was released in either 1985, when 30 koalas were released from French Island, or 1988 when 33 koalas were released from Sandy Point. Unfortunately the tag did not have a number it only had FWD so we could not say which release she was from.

As koalas usually live 10 to 15 years she had found a good patch to live in because depending on which release she was from she would have been a least 17 to 20 years old and add a year or two on to that because back young were not tagged. Whichever release she was from she was an old koala.



Two Wombat calls were received yesterday one in Pound Road on a private property, the other had been hit by a car in Jumping Creek Road. These two calls were attended by a new shelter person in Warrandyte as I was unable to attend.

At present the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF) have a petition running to try and have the koala listed as vulnerable nationally. They have put a submission to the Federal Government and would like as many people as possible to sign their form in support of what they are doing.

At present I am putting a submission together to send to our State Government to have the Koala listed in Victoria.

If you would like more information and are interested in supporting the AKF submission you can go to: www.savethe koala.com, click on "Vulnerable Listing" and follow the directions. Alternatively you can contact AKF on 07-3229 7233.

Did you know the Wombat is the closest relative of the Koala?

Koala Sightings This Month

Warrandyte State Park near Yarra Brae Farm Melbourne Hill Road Warrandyte

Mosses and Liverworts

By Kirsten Brunt

Recently Geoff Speedy and I had a meeting with Bruce Fuhrer who is an expert in the world of Fungi, Mosses and Liverworts. Bruce kindly gave us his assistance and was the resource behind creating a brochure called Mosses and Liverworts of Warrandyte. The completed brochure will feature colored pictures of Warrandyte's most spectacular Mosses and Liverworts along with a description and the type of habitat in the Park they can be found in.

This brochure will compliment the series of other brochures produced which focused on Warrandyte's Wattles, Eucalypts and Wildflowers.

Once this brochure is completed, there are plans to produce similar brochures on the Butterflies, Moths and other Insects and Fungi of the area. All these brochures together will hopefully help in creating community awareness on the precious treasures Warrandyte State Park holds.

Bruce has published much of the work he has done over the years on Fungi, Mosses and Liverworts. If you are interested in taking a look at his work, his book will be on display for sale in the FOWSP market trailer



Victorian Field Naturalist Club turns 125



By Joan Broadberry

elebrating its 125th anniversary at Mueller Hall in Melbourne's Botanic Gardens, on the weekend of 28th – 29th May 2005, the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria (FNCV) has the distinction of being Victoria's oldest environmental group and the first field naturalist club in Australia.

Each session of the two day symposium was chaired by a current or past FNCV president or vice-president. A total of 19 papers were presented. Topics related to the club's history, development and future. Many photographs of great historical significance accompanied the talks. With 125 years of history to draw on, the speakers' hardest task was selecting their material. The breadth, depth, variety and interest of the presentations made it a never to be forgotten weekend.

There is a lot to celebrate. The FNCV was founded at a Melbourne meeting in May 1880. The first excursion group was carried by train to the heathlands of Brighton on the afternoon of Saturday 19th June 1880. Wilsons Promontory became a favourite club haunt, and in 1898 the FNCV was largely responsible for convincing Parliament to preserve the Prom as Victoria's first national park. The club was also crucial in establishing the Mount Buffalo, Wyperfield, Croajingolong, and Little Desert National Parks.

Well known organisations including the Victorian National Parks Association, FungiMap and Plants Australia all began as part of the the FNCV. In 1940 the club originated the prestigious Australian Natural History Medallion, and continues to sponsor it.

In addition, the FNCV publishes Australia's longest-running scientific journal, *The Victorian Naturalist*, which boasts an unbroken record of publication since 1884.

In 1994, after many years of renting premises, the FNCV moved into its own building in Gardenia St. Blackburn. The office now is staffed three days a week by a paid administrative officer. There is a large, wellorganised library available for borrowing and research. With a membership now close to 1000, the FNCV operates as nine special interest groups (SIGs): Botany, Geology, Marine Studies, Fungi, Microscopy, Fauna Survey, Terrestrial Invertebrates, Bat Study Group and the very popular Juniors Group. The FNCV program is extraordinary, with each month averaging more than fifteen field trips, talks, camps or workshops. In addition to the Vic Nat, a monthly newsletter, Field Nats News, has been published since 1991. The library, all SIGs and both publications are run by volunteers. The FNCV must be almost unique in its productive partnership between experts and amateurs in the various fields of natural history.

A highlight of the symposium was a fully costumed three-act play *A Signal Service*, written and performed by Friends of the Woodlands Historical Society. This wonderful production imagnatively depicted the FNCV's formation and two other significant episodes in its history.

Thursday Activity

Date & Time: September 1st at 10.00 am Place: Fourth Hill. Bimbadeen, Webb St. (Mel ref 23 G2)

Meet at the depot or on site

Activity: Woody Weed Control Morning tea will be provided

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

July 25th Wattles on Fourth Hill

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.

For more information contact Cynthia Briscoe 9840 9129

August 7th Timber Reserve. "The results of ecological burning". Leader ranger David Van Bockel. Meet at the rangers depot. Pound Bend Rd, Warrandyte> Melways 23 C10

September 4th Fourth Hill "Wattles and Wildflowers". Leader Cathy Willis. Meet at Tunnel St, Warrandyte Melways 35 F2

Deadline for September Newsletter is September 4th

FOWSP Com	mittee 20	005	<u>Nursery Manager</u> 0408317327 <u>Park Office</u> 9844 2659
Dick Thomson	9850 9867	Treasurer	Assistant Treasurer Ray Clarke 9841 8507
Pat Coupar	9844 1650	Newsletter Editor	
Peter Curry	9844 0958	Secretary	Wildlife Rescue
Geoff Speedy	9437 0894		Julie Pryor 9722 1117
Lee Speedy	9437 0894	Membership Seci	retary
Mike Coupar	9844 1650	Market	
Karen Reynolds	9712 0797	Minutes Secretar	y Marie Krause 9712 0498
Artur Muchow	041538332	8	
Michelle Hanslow	0402251577		Publications Officer
Kyen Knight	041814996		Kirsten Brunt 0438411278

Manningham City Council Environment Seminars 2005

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"

MANNINGHAM

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	TAG ACTIVITIES
2 nd August	6 th August	28 th July	4 th August
TBA	3 rd September	25 th August	1 st September
TBA	1 st October	27 th October	6 th October

Thursday Activity Group (TAG)

Activities will take place on the first Thursday of the month from 10.00am to 12md. Either meet at the depot or on site. If you are interested in learning some vegetation management skills and helping improve some special sites in the Park just tag along with the Thursday Activity Group (TAG). No previous experience required.

1st September - Fourth Hill. Tunnel St (Mel ref 23 G2) 6th October – Norman Reserve (Mel ref 23 B12)

Falling in Love

By Peggy Safstrom

he last hour of driving was not pleasant. The winter sun sinking lower and lower below the sun visor straight into my eyes was definitely not pleasant.

We had left Warrandyte that morning at 9.00am. We should have been up the Calder Highway to Ouyen by 4.00pm or 5.00pm. I guess we must have changed drivers and stretched legs too often. Also, chatting to that 'old timer' at Wycheproof – which was very interesting – was nevertheless an unscheduled stop. But at last we were there at Ouyen. Able to turn north for the last leg up to Hattah, away from westerly travel, gratefully out of the sun's glare.

South Australia has become our preferred outback camping holiday state. The roads are less traveled. So Hattah, or rather the Hattah/Kulkyne National Park, is very often our first couple of night's camp on our way to South Australia. After all the preparation – van/food/clothes – finalizing things at home, asking friends to fill in for us on rostered duties etc, pulling in to Hattah cancels the lot.

Falling in love is not a 'one off' thing. We've done it over and over. Rounding the curve of Lake Hattah, seeing that welcoming, erratic line of gnarled old River Red Gums with their great burls, and we are hooked again. As always we just stopped, right there, with a deep drawn "ahhhhhhh!"

Gazing at that well remembered – and much too often photographed – scene, heart happy, we sat there until the bronzed branches dulled back to their pink-splashed cream as the sun set. Then, happily finding that we were the only ones there, we made for our favourite spot – well clear of the great widespread branches which, by the ones we see sprawled on the ground under the trees, don't always remain arched above, attached.

Gathering handfuls of dried yellowed leaves, twigs and small branches from the fallen timber we made a small fire. A full moon rose over the hill. A full moon – a campfire – Hattah. Heaven. For the first time since we were originally love-struck in the early 1970's, no water lapped gently at the ankles of the massive gums. The lake was bone dry. Instead of water tickling their toes, a mini forest army of saplings marched around the perimeter of the lake 15 to 20 deep. We had

seen these hundreds of dear little gums, about knee high, encircling the high water mark a couple of years ago, realized that they were the accumulation of seeds blown to the edge. Now they were a dense house-high barrier. Had the lake been full, there would be no view of it from the camp area now. I couldn't help but feel sorry for the robust young gums as it is certain that Lake Hattah will fill again in time and drown them.

I'm not one to hug trees, but a gentle stroke down a shining Red gum trunk seems to come involuntarily. Not so a Black Box, its roughbarked branches would reach right across my back garden. Hands thrust deep in pockets, a respectful 'wow' satisfies.

We've never found Hattah windy or rainy. Could it be our love for it preceeds us and produces the calmness and bluest of skies? Our delight is to stroll the half-day walk around the lake, which seems to take the best part of a day to do, stopping to admire the uniquely-shaped, magnificent burl-studded trees, pausing to absorb the clear flute-like calls of the Pied Butcherbird, stalking a family of emus, trying to guess the length of a startled kangaroo's bound or sneaking up on a goanna spreadeagled on a branch, my camera at the ready.

Back at camp, happily weary, Apostlebirds greatly amuse us as we change our shoes and rest our feet upon a convenient log. Running across the ground, tightly packed, they mill around us, chattering, squabbling, picking away for any bits dropped from our snack – pushing, shoving, tipping over and under each other's tails unconcerned at our peals of laughter, in and out between our legs, then as if on cue, off again all together to the next amusement park.

Hattah! Seventy-five kilometres short of Mildura up the Calder Highway. Approximately seven hours from Warrandyte. You'll fall in love too.





Heaps of Helpers

June school holidays found quite a few young people at the depot. Patrick (19 months), Tom (6 y-0) and Molly (5 y-0) were at the nursery helping 'mum' Magella O'Brien choose plants. David (9 y-0), Matthew (7 y-0) and Michael (5 y-0) were with mum Naomi Walsh discovering the depot activity. In the nursery Nick Lyell (10 y-0) was dividing maidenhair fern. Kiera Speedy (9 months) also arrived with her parents. Also present was Ben Frowd (7 y-0). And Claire Babic (6 y-0) was helping by offering biscuits to all and sundry.

Further Friends

Keith Jardine has been active, helping clean and sort the Folly building. Winsome Coutts (who is hoping to shift to Warrandyte) was pricking out *Clematis microphylla* and David Jenkin came to help to gain experience (David is finishing an agricultural apprenticeship at Ballarat TAFE).

Greywater Greening

Sam Cox picked up nearly 500 nursery plants for use in a 'greywater' indigenous planting project.

C.O.E Car

A short walk at the depot found our new Publicity and Community Education appointee Kirsten

Brunt in her car sorting out a whole variety of information brochures, some of which were given to visiting children.

Boab Bonanza?

Young Boab roots are being trialled as a new vegetable by the Western Australian Agricultural Department in conjunction with local growers in the Kimberley. The growing of a seedling Boab as a vegetable was taken from a Madagascan source. "Tastes like a radish or water chestnut or a sweet parsnip flavour". "Can be diced with mango and doused with Bacardi'.

Source: newsletter of the Australian Food Plants Study Group (Jan 05).

Market Helpers

Many thanks to the following people who helped out at the FOWSP trailer at the July market: Cath Andrew, Ray Kruger, Jenny Todd, Jan Smidts, Julie Bishop, Wofgang and Marie Krause and Helen Riddell.

Nursery Nuances

Question: Why don't eucalypts have a middle name? Answer: Well, they have a Christian name and a surname. Question: But are trees religious? Quick as a flash Melanie said "No, because they're evolutionists."

Interview of the Month

From Cow-horns to Caladenia cruciformis

By B.G

Mid-May found Dick Thomson sorting out and placing empty plant tubes into nursery trays – a quiet job at the top end of the depot nursery. Dick is also temporarily filling in as treasurer following Ray Clarke's ten year stint of highly expert financial leadership and organisation.

Dick was born in Brunswick and grew up in Lockington where his father had a garage cum engineering business. After year 10 at Echuca Tech, he attended RMIT completing a Bachelor of Applied Science – physics. He completed his teacher training and taught in various schools around the state.

<u>Ouestion</u>: When was your interest raised in things botanical? <u>Answer</u>: Bushwalking, seeing plants, thinking about how they fitted into the big system.

The first organisation he joined was the VNPA, then the Australian Native Orchid Society where he has held the position of Terrestrial Study Co-ordinator and Vice President (he is a life member).

Dick does voluntary work with DSE – works with threatened species and is also a volunteer at the Herbarium once a week. One of his tasks is isolating fungi from orchids. Amongst his successes has been Caladenia 'cruciformis'.

His other interests includes watching tennis and a bit of football. He is a Geelong fan. He is also a Rotarian – "they raise funds for the local community and overseas needs." He drives a 12 y-o Jackaroo, likes non-spicy foods; favourite fruit? Mango.

Dick joined FOWSP about 7 years ago. "Major concern with the loss of the environment." He believes in re-using, not so much recycling. Dick like a broad range of jazz, classical music and country and western.

Favourite indigenous Warrandyte plant – *Pterostylis nutans*, (Nodding Greenhood) because it always greets you And so ended the interview with the 'man of the month'.

Interviewers note: Nodding Greenhood is often called 'cow-horns' by country children. Source: an early edition of Wildflowers of Victoria by Jean Galbraith.

Warrandyte Wattles – Despoiling of a Natural Treasure'

'Warrandyte Wattles – Despoiling of a Natural Treasure' is a delightful little book written by Murray Houghton and published by the Warrandyte Historical Society.

It documents the history of the wattle in Warrandyte with excerpt from old newspapers complete with illustrations. It makes fascinating reading.

The book costs \$2.00 and is available on from the nursery on Thursdays or at Warrandyte Museum



by Murray Houghton

Wattle Week



The first week in September is Wattle Week. FOWSP will be celebrating Wattle Week with a sale of some of Warrandyte's indigenous wattles. The plants will be available at the FOWSP trailer at the Warrandyte market (Saturday 3rd Sept) or at the State Park nursery on Sunday 4th 2.00pm-4.00pm or Thursday morning 10.00am-12md.

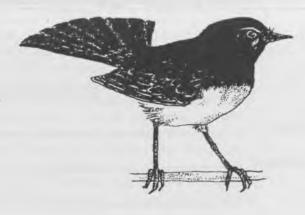
Tastes Of Paradise

By Olive Walters

We began our travels by visiting Pat and Mike Coupar at Mallacoota early in June where we were floored by the amazing view from their lounge over the inlet and out to Gabo Island. Then we had coffee on their neighbours deck looking at a Satin Bowerbird and a King Parrot in their trees.

Two days ago I sat on a creek bank at Kingfisher Park at Julatten in North Queensland and watching Grey and Rufous Fantails, Spectacled and Pied Monarchs, Yellow Spotted Honeyeaters, White-browed Robins, Grey-headed Robins and a lone Willie Wagtail flying past my head and bathing in the clear creek water.

Two tastes of paradise a very long way apart.





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Rock Correa

(Correa glabra)

Rock Correa is the most common species of Correa in Warrandyte. It grows on dry rocky sites in exposed situations. Good examples of this bright green shrub can be seen along the narrow walking track high above the river between Black Flat and Jumping Creek Reserve.

Rock Correa is an ideal plant for Warrandyte gardens and responds well to regular pruning. Usually the pale greenish-yellow flowers appear in autumn, but this year they were late and many plants are still flowering when in most years they would be finished. Birds, like Eastern Spinebills obtain nectar from the tubular flowers by biting them off at the base.

FOWSP Membership Form

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

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113