



Newsletter

Website: www.fowsp.org.au

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

Editors Corner

How quickly the holidays have passed, and with only the briefest pause in FOWSPian activities. The first committee meeting for the year has already been held. We welcomed our three new members.

Many FOWSPians participated in the excellent Eucalyptus identification walks at the end of 2013. Page two shows some of the information received during these walks.

Joan Broadberry introduces us to John Harris and his encounter with a snake with a problem. Maybe a drinking problem? You decide. See page 3.

On page 4, Carol Page gives insights and photos from the January walk on the Blue Tongue Bend Loop. Look for upcoming nature walks on Page 5. These are popular and bookings open 2 months before each walk.

A bee hotel and a pollinator garden beside the nursery? See how this is progressing on page 7 and also check the news from the last committee meeting.

Letters to the editor and visitors to *Linum marginale* are featured on page 8 and a real treat on page 9 where Joan B. tells us how "Housework pays off for a field naturalist." Also note our special thanks to retiring committee members.



Pound Bend Picnic area. Why are these Manningham and FOWSP members gathered here in December? See page 2.

FOWSP is the sum total of all the contributions made our membership. Only a small percent of the activities, promoting the Parks and local natural environment make it into our newsletter.

We would love to hear from more of our members:

Are you involved in any conservation activities ?

How are you enjoying the park's environment, flora and fauna?

What's happening in your back yard?

Take a moment to let us know, and of course enjoy this newsletter. *Linda*

Deadline for March 2014 edition newsletter is

Friday 21st February 2014

contributions can be emailed to Linda.Rogan.lindarogan@netspace.net.au
or posted to PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113

Which Eucalypts are these at Pound Bend?

Damp weather did not discourage participants at the Eucalytus identification walks held by Cathy Willis and Lyn Meredith in December 2013. We were not disappointed with the information presented.



Starting on the river flats lower slopes we observed the trees around us that were Manna Gums *E. viminalis*, Swamp Gums *E. ovata*, and Messmate *E. obliqua*. We were able to compare the bark, juvenile and adult leaves and sometimes buds, flowers and fruits against the sheets prepared for each species.

Moving to the lower slopes of the upper river terraces, the smooth white trunks with reddish patches that were shed in short strips proved to be Candlebark *E. rubida* whose leaves bark, buds and fruit are shown below.

As I had to leave early, I didn't get to the trees of the upper slopes but I am very pleased to have

such helpful notes and photos (below) to review in the future.

As FOWSPian Carol Page has said, "we are very privileged being part of the Manningham 'environmental educational' community" Photos by Lyn and Cathy

Candlebark *Eucalyptus rubida*



He IS for real!

Joan Broadberry

John Harris, director of Wildlife Experiences Pty Ltd and the president of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria* recently described the following experience in his column in the monthly FNCV newsletter. The Australian media often represents wildlife such as snakes, spiders and sharks as without value and deserving only of death. I asked John if I could reprint his column because it does just the opposite. His photos certainly command attention. I will leave it to you to supply captions. Good old Aussie humour should have a field day. Another issue arising from the incident is the importance of NOT littering the bush.



"While out doing nocturnal fauna surveys in north-east Victoria before Christmas, my colleague and I came across an Eastern Brown Snake in the middle of the track. After getting out to see what was going on, I noticed that the snake had its head stuck in an old spirits can. We put it in a box, drove back to the motel where it was rehoused in my pillowcase, before being put in the fridge for the night. The next morning I rang Wildlife Victoria who gave me some Vet numbers to call. I rang around the vets, far and wide, to no avail. They all baulked at helping when I mentioned that it was a 4-5 foot Eastern Brown Snake. One vet was overheard asked his vet nurse 'Is he for real?' Not getting any local help, I rang Healesville Sanctuary Animal Hospital then travelled to Healesville to drop the snake off. Once the snake handler had assessed the situation, the vet, vet nurse and media person joined him on the operating room. After about 10 minutes of careful handling and trimming of the can, the snake was eased out without injury. The snake was kept at Healesville until the following Monday when I picked it up and took it back home to Violet Town. Once the snake had slid out of the capture bag, I gave it a good talking to about the dangers of 'drinking while on the road,' and sent it on its way. The round trip to Healesville from Euroa was about 250km."

If you want to contact John, ecologist, zoologist, nature photographer, birder and wildlife guide, his email address is, wildlifeexperiences@gmail.com More of the story appears at the web address, au.tv/melbourne-zoo512604-posts.html?page=4



*John is scheduled to lead a night walk in the Manningham Environmental program. See p5.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of FOWSP

Walking Blue Tongue Bend Loop, Jumping Creek Reserve, Wonga Park

Photos and report by Carol Page



Cathy collecting *Leptospermum lanigerum*
River Tea-tree, Silky Tea-tree --- only the one tree
on the 4.2km walk and not easy access



Dragonfly *Orthetrum calidonicum* Male.-
Hovering over the Yarra

In January, Cathy Willis led us on another of her interesting monthly Council Nature walks. Pre departure we were shown contour, aerial and EVC (Ecological vegetation classes) maps.

We followed the narrow Yarra River track upstream from Jumping Creek Reserve to Blue Tongue Bend, stopping both for fabulous views of the river and relevant information on the vegetation. We returned along the management track, detouring into an area known locally as 'The Chapel', an outdoor stone seating area complete with a raised altar. It was constructed many years ago by the Clifford Park Scout Group. It is a tranquil setting.

It was a perfect temperature for walking and photography. To my delight there were a number of butterflies and dragonflies. Cathy's walks are always stimulating.

Thursday Activity Group (TAG)

JOIN US on the 1st and 4th Thursdays of the month from 9 am, (TAG workers only), to 12. 30 pm. Either meet at the depot, (sharp at 9:00 am for 9:15 start), or on site by arrangement. LEARN some vegetation management skills and help improve some special sites in the Park. Just tag along with the Thursday Activity Group (TAG).

Date	Location	Type of Activity	Who leads	Difficulty
6/02/2014	Lower Orchard Track	Caper Spurge Removal, Target the fruiting plants only*	FOWSP	Easy to moderate
20/02/2014	Alexander Road	Desert Ash Removal	Ranger	Moderate
6/03/2014	Boys Road	Tree guard maintenance & Polygala removal, & weedy Acacias.	FOWSP	Moderate
20/03/2014	4th Hill/gold memorial	Woody Weed removal	ACCA & FOWSP	Difficult

Difficulty Ratings:

Easy: Even terrain, some light lifting, kneeling and bending involved. Few tripping hazards.

Moderate: Uneven terrain, light to heavy lifting, kneeling and bending involved. Tripping hazards present.

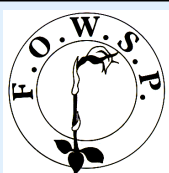
Difficult: Steep terrain, light to heavy lifting, working in over-grown areas and lots of bending. Many tripping hazards and slippery surfaces present.

***Must have long sleeves and pants, gauntlet gloves and glasses to participate in this activity.**

See fowsp.org.au/activities for more details.

Activities are cancelled on Total Fire ban Days and may be cancelled due to high winds or other extreme weather events.

FOWSP COMMITTEE 2014			OTHER FOWSP CONTACTS	
Artur Muchow	0415 383328	Secretary	<u>Nursery Manager</u>	Josh Revell
			Nursery Phone	0408 317 327
				nursery@fowsp.org.au
Lynda Gilbert	9844 0106	Treasurer	<u>Park Office</u>	9844 2659
Linda Rogan	9435 5806	Newsletter editor	<u>Newsletter assist</u>	Joan Broadberry
	lindarogan@netspace.net.au			9846 1218
Jason Patton	mobile 0402 121838	Webmaster and membership	<u>Wildlife Rescue</u>	Adriana Simmonds
	jason@parau.com			9722 2908
Cathy Willis	0418 142297		<u>Koala Rescue</u>	Julie Pryor
				9840 1593
Gray Ardern	0418 190261		<u>Librarian</u>	Judy Green
				9844 2096
Caitriona Young	9844 2842	Minute Secretary	<u>Market Trailer</u>	Sybil Ims 9844 1335 or
				0405 500 278 imsbs@netspace.net.au
John Blake	0418 329 937		Facebook Coordinator	Kelly Wooster
Kelvin Watkins	0488 039 774			
Sarah Qualtrough			Website:	www.fowsp.org.au



FOWSP/Manningham Thursday nature walks

Leader: Cathy Willis



This series of educational and interpretive nature walks will explore various sections of the Yarra River from the eastern end of Manningham in Wonga Park downstream to Templestowe.

Each walk is paced to allow participants to enjoy and appreciate the natural beauty of the area. Please wear appropriate clothing for the weather including a hat and sturdy footwear. Bring a water bottle and snack. All distances and finishing times are approximate.

Bookings are essential as places are limited. Bookings open 2 months before the walk date. Meeting points will be provided at time of booking, to book call 9840 9124 or email eepadmin@manningham.vic.gov.au

9.30 am Thursday 27 February Jumping Creek to Warrandyte Bridge We follow the river downstream, over the escarpment and then onto alluvial flats, through an old orchard and past some gold mining heritage. Distance: approx 3.5kms Time: approx 3hrs Rating: difficult (some sections of steep, narrow foot tracks)
NOTE: this walk will involve a 4km shared car shuttle as the walk is one way.

9.30 am Thursday 27 March Pound Bend Ridge, River and Nursery tour Up and over the rocky ridge we will come to the Rangers' Depot and FOWSP nursery. After a brief guided nursery tour and morning tea with the volunteers, we return along the shady river track. Distance: 3.5kms Time: 3hrs rating: moderate

9.30 am Thursday 24 April Mt Lofty circuit

Starting at the sacred Wurundjeri Bukkertilibul dreaming site on Brushy Creek, we head up to the highest point of Manningham that has a view of the river, where we overlook the start of the Warrandyte gorge. Distance: 5kms Rating: difficult (some steep sections)

Nillimbik



Sunday 23 February 2 pm. Make an insect hotel with Kat Irwin

Learn more about insect hotels and spend time making one to take home in this 1 & 1/2 hour workshop.

Venue: Edendale Farm, Gastons Road, Eltham Cost: \$20

Booking details are available on the [Edendale](http://www.edendale.org.au) website.

FOWSP THURSDAY PROGRAM

We meet for propagation and other nursery activities every Thursday morning at 9.30 am at the Warrandyte State Park depot, Pound Bend Road, Warrandyte (Melway 23 C10), unless otherwise stated below. Propagation takes place from 9.30 am to 12.30 midday.

No prior experience necessary -

There is always someone available to show you the ropes.

NURSERY OPENING HOURS

The nursery is open for plant sales (by donation) every Thursday.

9.30 am to 12.30 pm and

the first Saturday of every month, 9am to 1pm (to coincide with the Warrandyte Market) *and*

the first Sunday of each month

2 pm to 4 pm.

**Nursery is closed to customers and volunteers
on Total Fire Ban Days**

Prices 1st Jan..2014 note change from 2013

Members \$2.00

Non-members \$2.50



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Manningham Environmental Seminars 2014

Environmental Seminars are held on the first Wednesday of the month. Many of the seminars will be complemented with field sessions to facilitate broader education on the topics. No bookings are required for the evening talks however RSVPs must be provided for the field sessions at the relevant seminar. **Venue:** Chandelier Room at the Grand Hotel, Warrandyte **Time:** 7.30 pm



Wednesday 5th February 2014 Owl's response to the urban-forest interface presented by Hannah Grant. Urbanisation is a significant threat to biodiversity on a global scale. This seminar will present research to determine the impact of urbanisation on the distribution of the Southern Boobook, Powerful and Barn owls within Melbourne's urban-forest interface. Owls are top order predator species and discovering the impact on owls may identify the risks to the broader ecosystem.

Field Trip: Friday 7th February 2014 Our night owl prowls presented by John Harris, President of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria. He will lead a night walk through part of the Mullum Mullum urban-fringe forest way to hear, and hopefully glimpse, owl activity. This 2 hour Friday evening walk will complement Hannah Grant's presentation earlier in the week. You must attend the seminar to be eligible for a place on this walk. Bookings are essential.

Wednesday 5th March 2014 Victorian threatened orchid recovery presented by Richard Thomson, long time orchid conservation volunteer and Life Member of the Australasian Native Orchids Society. Richard will be presenting on the severe population decline of native orchids since the 1980s. Many species are continuing with a slow decline and the presentation will explore the work being done to support and increase the number of orchids, some that are very rare, including propagation and re-establishment. The unique relationships of our orchids and their role as habitat-health indicators, and how we may help sustain them will also be discussed. **Field trip to follow:** Expressions of interest to attend this weekday walk will be received at the seminar and confirmation of dates and time will be provided in winter. You must attend the seminar in March for a place in this field trip.

For further information, please phone Lyn Meredith on 9840 9326.

Seminars are FREE. No bookings required *Supper provided*

Pollinator Garden and Bee Hotel



Gray and Alana mix some sandy soil and clay for bee bricks. (left) Below, Alana pokes holes in the bricks. They are being made in the old cement trough

once used by well-known potter Elsa Ardern. (Gray's mum)

We have been told that Blue Banded Bees nest in the sandy mortar between mud bricks and will try to replicate this in the bee hotel.



The space beside the nursery (below) was opened up when the decaying Acacia was removed is the location for the pollinator garden below



So watch this spot..

Linda

News from the Committee

The meeting opened with a welcome to the new committee members John Blake, Kelvin Watkins and Sarah Qualtrough.

Office bearers were elected as follows

- Secretary: Artur Muchow
- Treasurer: Lyndy Gilbert
- Newsletter Editor: Linda Rogan
- Contact people: Lyndy Gilbert and Caitriona Young

• Membership Officer: Jason Patton
Monthly news for the newsletter (from committee, nursery, rangers) will be collected by Cathy Willis

Frogland – there was discussion about the decaying boardwalk and various options to completely or partially replace it. Kelvin will follow up with input from Jason, John and Josh.

Native Bee habitat garden – work to start as soon as possible when volunteers return in January. Linda will direct the works and has provided Josh with a list of potential plants, with an emphasis on plants that bloom over a long period and attract both bees and other pollinators.

Lyndy has carried out a detailed analysis of finances over the last 4 years, and provided a six month forecast. While expenses have risen considerably, FOWSP remains in a reasonably healthy financial situation.

There were no Ranger or Nursery reports this month.

Next Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday 11th February

Venue: Ranger Station, Pound Bend

Time: 19:30 pm sharp



FOWSP MARKET TRAILER

Thanks to those who helped out on 1st December 2013

Diane and John Baird, Jeff Cranston, Jan Davies

Christine Andell, Kim Cope

Lyndy Gilbert and Ken Crook

Trailer delivery by Peter Curry

The Warrandyte market is held on the first Saturday morning of the month from 8.30 am to 12.30 pm at Stiggants Reserve. Volunteers are rostered in pairs to (man/woman) the FOWSP information trailer for just one hour. If you are interested in being on the market roster for 2014 please contact **Sybil Ims 9844 1335/0405 500 278**

imsbs@netspace.net.au

First timers are always paired with someone more experienced.

Future market dates are: Saturday February 1st, March 1st, and Warrandyte Festival Sat & Sun. 22-23 March.

Letters To the Editor

Heat, water and memories



Emergencies, like the current bushfire threat, draw us together, and sometimes wild creatures shelter with us too. During this scorching mid-January, a tawny frogmouth, so large and soft and grey, has spent the heat of the day sitting on

the path against the back wall of our house. In the front of the house, more birds than usual have come to our birdbath.

Yesterday, a Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo came. Only once in the forty-six years we have lived here in North Warrandyte have we seen this cuckoo. That was some years ago, a flock of them filling our trees for half a day, calling loudly and causing the other birds to scold. Another visitor to our bird bath yesterday was our Ringtail possum. It drank for a long time, emptying our bird bath, and returned for more after my husband refilled it. On a scorching day a few years ago, a Sugar Glider also drank from the bird bath, and I remember an echidna having a swim in our lily pond. On our pond at present are patches of white foam with black spots, the eggs of the Spotted Marsh Frog whose clicking has recently attracted our attention. How grateful I am to the book "Discover Warrandyte", a great help in identification!. Thank you FOWSP

Marjory Burgess

Looking back looking forward

A MASSIVE thank you for 2013 of all our volunteers from the nursery staff, definitely could not have been done without all the dedication and knowledge bank which FOWSPians hold. Did you know that an average of 20 volunteers come rain, hail, rain again then sunshine every Thursday morning to assist in the conservation of indigenous plants from the Warrandyte State Park??? That is more than 3,000 hours for the year, not including the baking, painting and new constitution making. Ohh what a fun year it has been!

Looking forward to sharing the next one with all of you, there are lots of new projects in the pipeline.

Kel



Creatures that visit *Linum marginale*

One indigenous plant that has gone wild in my garden is *Linum marginale* or wild flax. The small blue flowers although attractive, only opens for a few hours a day and now have been replaced by papery seed capsules.

Flora of Melbourne tells me that Aborigines used to make cord and fish nets from the stems and used the seeds

as food. It's tall stems with small bluish leaves are also attractive to many insects. I have included photos of some on the email bonus page.

Unidentified bug on Linum bloom.



On 24th Dec. I collected a small looper caterpillar on the Linum and after a few days of eating Linum, it seemed to disappear. On 18th Jan. a small brown Wave Moth appeared in the cage and on searching I found an empty pupal case tucked into the base of the stems. This turned out to be a female Geometrid moth, *Ectropis excursaria* or Twig Looper. The caterpillar, pupal case and moth are shown on right.

Linda



Housework pays off for a Field Naturalist

Joan Broadberry



During a recent forty-one degree plus afternoon, inexplicably, I succumbed to the urge to mop out my bathroom. In a dim corner was a small grey lump: almost certainly a wad of floor-fluff. To my great surprise as I bent down to pick it up, it moved. Oh I thought, a spider, then, instantly, I realised I had come across something unusual and delightful. Large eyes and rounded finger and toe pads signalled to me it was gecko. Although this was a first for my home, I have seen geckos in the bush while surveying with the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria (FNCV).

I picked it up gently and noticed that its tail had been torn off. It seemed very likely that my cat had brought the creature into the house from her outside cat enclosure. Apart from the missing tail the gecko seemed unhurt, so I put it into a container with some bark and water, took some photographs and then finished off the bathroom. In the cool of the evening I set the tiny reptile free and was able to get a few more images before it disappeared into the leaf litter.

The animal was a Marbled Gecko, *Christinus marmoratus*. Its skin was soft and pinkish-grey in colour. Its body was attractively patterned by many dark swirls with a few orange patches just above where the tail had separated. Tails dropped as an escape mechanism will grow back. The Marbled Gecko's diet includes flies and small crickets.

I mentioned finding the gecko to my sister and she told me she had seen a Marbled Gecko in her woodpile a few months ago. I also recalled that last year there were two sightings and photos of these geckos in the FNCV's newsletter. On consulting the internet, I was quickly led to Museum Victoria's website. There I found a deluge of reports of Marbled Gecko sightings

Their pre-European habitat is considered to have been north of Melbourne but they are now extending their range. Marbled Geckos have probably been transported to the city in loads of landscaping rocks and timber. They are now quite common in suburbia, but are rarely seen because they are nocturnal.



Special thanks to retiring committee members

Jan Falconer

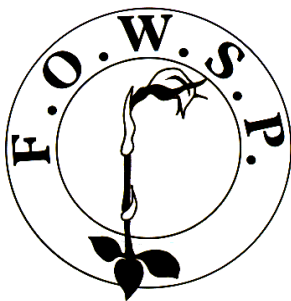
Sybille Ims

Kelly Wooster

for their many contributions to FOWSP and the committee. over the past two to three years.

Newsletter team
this month were:

Linda Rogan
Joan Broadberry
Mel Coupar (Line
drawings)



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Elbow Orchid *Thynninorchis huntiana*

One of the smaller orchids in Victoria and maybe the most difficult to see where it grows amongst the leaf litter in the bush. The genus name comes from the group of wasps that fertilise this orchid. The male wasps are duped by smell and appearance. Thinking it a wingless female wasp they grasp the labellum and try to fly away with it. The elbow flexes bringing the male into contact with the column and the pollen mass. LR

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PLEASE CHECK YOUR ADDRESS LABEL TO SEE IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE

FOWSP Membership Renewal Form

Name

Address

.....

Telephone no. Email

Membership (family) \$30
Concession \$10

Newsletter by email ☐ (tick box)

Send to: FOWSP PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113 or renew on the website www.fowsp.org.au with the option of direct deposit payment.

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Email photo bonus page

More Creatures found on *Linum marginale*.

Fig. 1&2.



1 & 2 *Sorama bicolor* male, the caterpillars feed on Eucalyptus. The adult colours look like old resin on a gum tree.

3. *Theclinesthes serpentata* Saltbush Blue Butterfly

4 & 5. *Scutiphora .pedicellata* , Metallic Jewel Bug.
6.& 7. A small wasp that I mistook for a bee. It has yet to be identified.

Linda



Fig. 6 & 7.

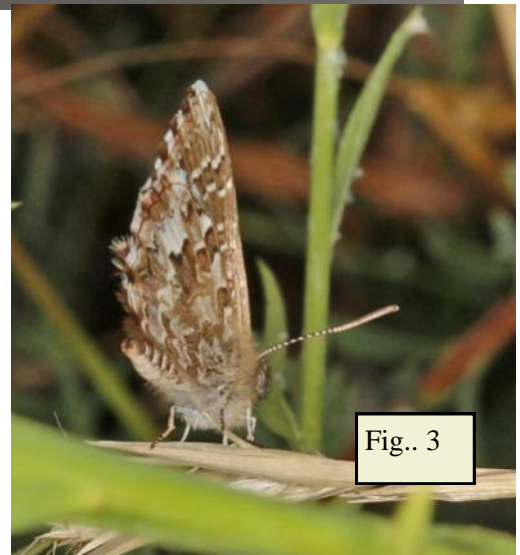
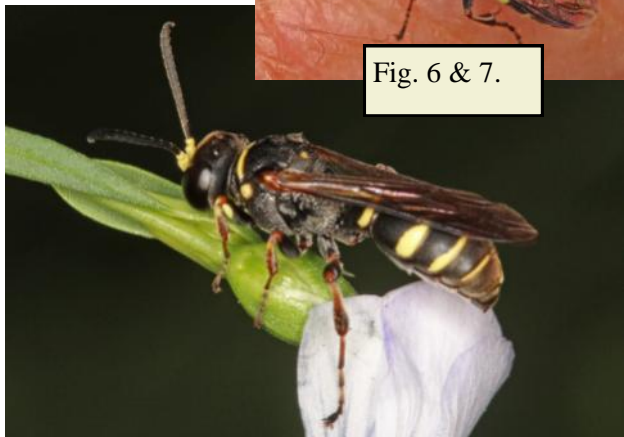


Fig.. 3

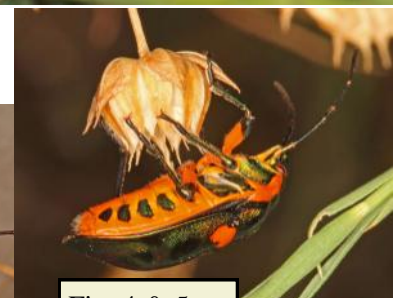


Fig. 4 & 5.

The photos of the fungus gnat in the last issue were taken by **Mitch Smith** who is also an excellent native bee photographer. He and his wife run the Woolenook Native Plant Nursery in Maffra.



Caption this photo that was taken by Josh. The winner will receive a free plant from the nursery (won't they Josh?).

Your photos can appear on this page (subject to space available) if you email them as follows:
lindarogan@netspace.net.au