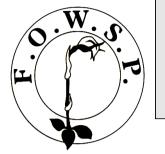
# Friends of Warrandyte State Park



# Newsletter

Website: www.fowsp.org.au

Friends of Warrandyte State Park (FOWSP) Inc. PO Box 220 Warrandyte 3113 ABN 94170156655/Incorporation No. A0024890C

#### **Editors** Corner

IT HAS BEEN GREAT to receive articles from several writers this month. In fact more than could be fit into this newsletter. I'm pleased to have something ready for next month. A high priority for this month was preparation for, and participation in the Warrandyte Festival. Thank you to all involved. There is a brief report on page 7.

A highlight was a visit and talk from the Senior Botanist, Flora Database Curator and Threatened Species Officer, David Cameron (photo right). A bit of the wealth of information he had to impart is reported on page 3.

Member and new contributor, Lynda Chambers has shared her sightings and insights into local reptiles, of which she is rather fond, on page 3.

Joy and Barrie give us a glimpse of the Wurundjeri Eel Trap Ceremony held in March page 4. Conveniently, the May Environmental Seminar will feature Uncle Dave Wandin who will be able to tell us much more of the story. See page 5.

Enjoy the pleasure of a stroll on Bridgewater Bay, Portland with Bruce and Eileen Fuhrer on page 8.

Janaya brings us some tidbits from recent TAGS and STAGS that make such a contribution to the Park on Thursday mornings. See page9.

And why the smiling bee post on the right? Well on 31 March I spotted a large female resin bee entering the left eye so this bee home is now inhabited.

Keep the newsletter items coming and enjoy this edition.

Línda



David Cameron who spoke to FOWSPians following up from Jane Woolard's earlier presentation of her book.



Deadline for May edition newsletter is Friday 22nd April 2016 contributions can be emailed to Linda Rogan editor@fowsp.org.au or posted to PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113

#### Twas the Season By Lynda Chambers

DURING THE WARMER SEASONS of the year it is not unusual to spot the odd reptile when out in the bush. This year saw some exciting finds, all very close to our house in the Park Orchards / South Warrandyte region. We are fortunate to have, what feels like, hundreds of the Grass Skink *Lamprosholis guichenoti* often seen scampering through the native grasses, sunning themselves on rocks, or climbing the rough wall of the house – with the occasional miscalculation and subsequent fall. Although I am always on the lookout for other (small) skink varieties I am yet to get lucky.

On a recent walk in the bush surrounding our house, stalking birds and other beasts, I came across a Jacky Lizard *Amphibolurus muricatus* who allowed me to approach close enough to snap a photo. This was not the first time I had spotted one of these attractive lizards but certainly the first time I was able to get a semi-decent shot of it. On the same walk I also spotted an Eastern Tiger Snake *Notechis scututus scatutus* moving between grass patches and seemingly oblivious to my presence.

Much closer to the house were other recent slithering visitors. I am used to seeing snakes on warmer days and was surprised one cooler morning by a movement to my right, about 1.5 m away. It was an Eastern Small-eyed Snake *Cryptophis nigrescens* who was not impressed with my passing so close and had reared up. Of course, my response was to run inside for the camera. We have seen these snakes many times before, but usually down near our creek, where a small 'family' of them can regularly be seen. We have never seen one up near the house before.



Grass Skink Lamprosholis guichenoti



Jacky Lizard Amphibolurus muricatus



Eastern Brown Snake Pseudonaja textilis

These snakes are not aggressive and it was more than happy to move off to somewhere a little more secure -a hole behind our retaining wall.

The other recent encounter was from a much safer distance, and location. Bird alarm calls alerted me to an Eastern Brown Snake *Pseudonaja textilis* below the balcony. The snake was in a hurry to 'hide' and attempted to find shelter in the native grasses surrounding a pond. This was short-lived as it was disturbed by a Short-beaked Echidna *Tachyglossus aculeatus* who was enjoying a 'bath' in the pond. This gave me time to grab some photos before it disappeared behind a large log.

Other reptiles seen on our property, but not this summer, include the White-lipped Snake *Drysdalia coronoides* and Common Blue-tongue Lizard *Tiliqua scincoides*. But you never know who will be spotted next nor when!



Eastern Small-eyed Snake Cryptophis nigrescens

PS Later in March I spotted another skink, the Weasel Skink, *Saproscincus mustelinus* 

References and for further information:

Ehmann, H. & The Australian Museum (1992) *Encyclopedia of Australian Animals: Reptiles*. Angus & Robertson Books, Australia

Swan, G. & The Australian Museum (1995) *A Photographic Guide to Snake & Other Reptiles of Australia.* New Holland Publishers, Australia.

Wilson, S.K. & Knowles, D.G. (1992) Australia's Reptiles: A photographic reference to the terrestrial reptiles of Australia Cornstalk Publishing, Pymble, NSW, Australia.

Also see p. 12 for electronic newsletters only.

#### Beyond Laughing Waters Road



Lyndy presented David with a token of FOWSP appreciation.

IT WAS A PLEASURE for FOWSPians to listen to David Cameron as he talked about his home area just upstream from Laughing Waters Road. His parents built a mud brick dwelling during the period of bushfires in the 1960s. He recalls battling the 1969 bushfires along side his dad. David's parents were early FOWPSians who assisted with the erection of the covered section of the Pound Bend Nursery. The conservationist streak has run through the generations as his son also was the champion for preservation of local bushland including the Chase.

David had many fascinating stories to tell from his years of working in the public service where he described being on a political knife-edge most of the time. He remained a champion for conservation of biodiversity at times when politics would have dictated more leniency toward development. It was his extensive technical knowledge that allowed him to maintain his balance and in many cases achieve his goals in biodiversity. At one stage he was moved to a regional office which turned out to be Warrandyte State Park and had his office set up in a converted toilet block. Here he was able to extend his botanical knowledge to Bryophytes and fungus. He recalls fruitful fungi forays with Bruce Fuhrer.

He also wrote A field guide to rainforest identification in Victoria : differential species keys for the delineation of rainforest boundaries and has donated a copy to FOWSP. It made clear the need to protect rainforest and the need for significant buffer areas to prevent detrimental edge effects. This is an ongoing battle. David is currently a Senior Botanist, Flora Database Curator and Threatened Species Officer for the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning

Professor's Hill in North Warrandyte is an area that has been of particular concern to David at a time when a



Ranger Bernie and former Ranger Steve came to hear Dave's presentation

developer was seeking to develop this entire hillside but into less than the council required 2 acres allotments. The proposed development would have devastated the natural values of this area. His research showed that the biodiversity of this hillside exceeded not only all small local reserves but in fact anything statewide except for the "giant national parks". This battle was won with the help of a sympathetic Shire President, the Warrandyte Conservation League and David's paper documenting the environmental value of this area. While some species have since been lost the overall value of this reserve remains very high.

The battle to conserve biodiversity continues.

#### FOWSP Newsletter

#### Wurundjeri Eel Trap Ceremony

THE DAY COMMENCED with a traditional Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony, conducted by Wurundjeri Elder Dave Wandin.

The rediscovered eel trap at Laughing Waters was then visited & Uncle David gave a demonstration of the traditional method of catching eels in the river, using a new & locally made, eel trap (photo right).

Bush tucker food was served for lunch, comprising short finned eel, kangaroo, emu, crocodile and possum.

Friends of Yarra Valley Parks have a long association with the area & have played a role in growing some of the indigenous plants for the project under the guidance of Cam Beardsell.

This Eel Trap event was hosted by The Wurundjeri Tribe Land Council on March 24 at Laughing Waters and Morrison's, as a follow up to the Narrap Project. Joy and Barrie were invited to represent The Friends of Yarra Valley Parks.

Of special interest to Joy and Barrie on the day was the focus by the Elders on educating the next generation of Melbourne's indigenous community.

Joy and Barrie

More information about this site can be found in Jane Woollard's book entitled Laughing Waters Road, Art, Landscape & Memory in Eltham and by attending the Environmental Seminar on May 4th (see page 5).

#### TAGS (Thursday activity groups)

TAGS meet at the nursery at 9.00 am for a 9.15 am departure. Please remember to wear appropriate footwear and clothing for the weather, and please bring your own filled water bottle. Contact number: 0408 317 327

#### 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.

Thurs	7 April	9:00-12:00	Gold Memorial car park	Woody weeding with ACCA	Difficult	FOWSP & ACCA
Thurs	21 April	9:00-12:00	Naughton Ave	Woody weeding	Difficult	FOWSP
Thurs	5 May	9:00-12:00	Fiddler Gulley	Fencing	Moderate	FOWSP
Thurs	19 May	9:00-12:00	Lower Orchard Track	Maintenance and weeding	Easy	FOWSP

Check the website for any changes at http://fowsp.org.au/activities.php

<u>Please note TAGS and activities will be cancelled on Total Fire Ban days or when weather conditions are</u> deemed hazardous.

Elder Dave Wandin demonstrates use of the eel trap

**FOWSP COMMITTEE 2016** 

#### **OTHER FOWSP CONTACTS**

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John Blake	0418 329 937		Manningham Cour	<u>ncil Rep</u> Cathy Willis 0427 660 651
Kelvin Watkins	0488 039 774			
Jan Falconer	0419 872 096		Website: www.	fowsp.org.au

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

**Newsletter Team this month:** Linda Rogan, Peter Rogan and Mel Coupar (Line drawings)

Next Committee Meeting				
Date:	Tuesday April 2016			
Venue: Education Centre, Pound Benc				
Time:	19:30 pm sharp			

# **Manningham City Council Environment Seminars**

# **The Environment 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. Due to the popularity of the field trips bookings are limited to

vided for the field sessions. Due to the popularity of the field trips bookings are limited to three field trips per person. You must attend the corresponding seminar to keep your field trip booking. **Bookings now open.** 



**Venue:** Bull and Bush Room at the Grand Hotel, Warrandyte **Time:** 7.30 pm **Enquiries:** Lyn Meredith, 9840 9326

Wednesday 6 April, 7.30 pm Victorian Koalas A snapshot of wildlife disease research

This seminar will explore disease in Australian wildlife from the point of view of disease ecologist Alistair Legione, a PhD student at the University of Melbourne. Alistair's research focuses on two key diseases in Victorian koala populations, Chlamydia and retrovirus. Alistair will also discuss his previous research on a disease in possums, which has public health implications.

#### Wednesday 4 May, 7.30 pm Wurundjeri and land management presented by Uncle Dave Wandin

Wurundjeri elder Uncle Dave Wandin has been working with indigenous land management teams for the conservation of significant cultural heritage and ecologically rich sites and will describe past and recent works with a focus on current effort by the Narrap Team at the Yarra River eel trap site. Bookings are not required for this seminar.

#### FIELD TRIP: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

Tuesday 10 May, 10.00 am – 12 noon Presented by Dave Crawford

Dave Crawford is an educator of ecology and traditional Aboriginal culture. Dave will lead us on a walk and provide a workshop for participants to try their hand at some traditional skills such as string making. Please note, you must attend Uncle Dave Wandin's seminar to be eligible to attend and keep your booking for this field trip. Bookings are essential, please email eepadmin@manningham.vic.gov.au

## FOWSP THURSDAY PROGRAM and Nursery

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

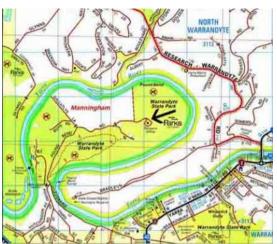
No prior experience necessary -There is always someone available to show you the ropes.

#### **NURSERY OPENING HOURS**

The nursery is open for plant sales every Thursday. <u>9.30 am to 12.30 pm</u> 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.

Closed Christmas and New Years days. Also closed to customers and volunteers on days of severe weather and on Total Fire Ban Days

Members \$2.00



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**Prices:** 

### FOWSP/Manningham Thursday nature walks Leader: Cathy Willis



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

Non-members \$2.50

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.

#### Thursday 28 April 2016, 9.30 am Mt Lofty Circuit Nature Walk

Starting at the sacred Wurundjeri Bukkertilibul dreaming site on Brushy Creek, this walk will head up to the highest point of Manningham, which has a view of the river and overlooks the start of the Warrandyte gorge.

**Distance:** 5 km **Time:** 3 hours **Rating:** Difficult – includes steep and/or narrow sections, slippery sections, or high tripping hazards. All distances and times are approximate.

#### Thursday, 26 May 2016, 9.30 am – 12.30 pm Candlebark Park to Beasleys Nursery

This walk will be a gentle stroll along the river flats that have provided an abundance of ecological resources for millennia, and still support a wide range of native fauna and flora, and an organic orchard. This walk will involve a 5km shared car shuttle as the walk is one way.

Distance: 5 km Time: 3 hours Rating: Easy

All distances and finishing times are approximate.

Ratings:

**Easy** – Flat or undulating well formed tracks/paths with low tripping hazards.

**Moderate** – May include some moderately steep or narrow sections or have higher tripping hazards. **Difficult** – Includes steep and/or narrow sections, slippery sections, or high tripping hazards.

Bookings can be made online and are essential as places are limited. Bookings open 2 months before the walk date. www.manningham.vic.gov.au/nature-walks

The meeting place will be provided at the time of booking.

Please note that nature walks will be cancelled on a day of Total Fire Ban or extreme weather warning as Parks Victoria will close all local parks.

#### Warrandyte Festival and Market Trailer

A huge thank you to all of you for the time you gave to achieve very successful results for FOWSP and the trailer at the Warrandyte Festival March 19th and 20th.

We took over \$700 over the two days, in plant sales and membership renewals. But, even more importantly, we engaged with, and gave lots of information to many people, some of whom had never heard of FOWSP, or the work we do.

Whilst Jan was there on Saturday we were constantly busy and the hour just whizzed by. There was a great atmosphere at the Festival and all of the people she spoke to were genuinely interested in obtaining information and plants. She found it a most enjoyable experience and hopes you all did. Without the help of all of you we could not manage such good representation.

Special thanks to Caitriona Young, Peta Cumming, Jason Patton, Lyndy Gilbert and Ken Crook, who, unasked, staffed the trailer for an extra hour on each of the days, as there were still plenty of people around. It is probably worth rostering the extra hour next year.

Also thanks to all those who have helped back at the nursery doing all the various chores, including those shown below, involved in preparation of plants. At FOWSP it's everyone working together that makes the difference.



#### FOWSP MARKET TRAILER at Warrandyte Festival Thanks to all those who assisted with the trailer

Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th of March 2016

Marion Thomson, Sybille Ims, Alison Thom, Louise Clear, Jan Davies, Steve Anderson, Caitriona Young, Jan Falconer, Lee and Graham Deacon, Christine Andell, Rachel Smith, Lyn Moore, Kelvin Watkins, Antje Bauer, Lynda Gilbert and Ken Crook.

And to those who helped out on Saturday 5th March 2016 Diane and John Baird, Jeff Cranston, Lyn Moore Lee and Graham Deacon, Lyndy Gilbert and Ken Crook



Special thanks to John Young who transported the market trailer.

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 December or in 2016 please contact Jan Falconer 0419 872 096 email trailer@fowsp.org.au *First timers are always paired with someone more experienced.* 

Next market dates are: Saturdays, April 3rd and May 7th

#### A stroll on Bridgewater Bay , Portland with Bruce and Irene Fuhrer



Hooded Plover (Thinornis rubricollis)

DURING A RECENT trip to Portland we decided to have a light lunch at Bridgewater Bay about 20km to the west followed by a stroll on the beach towards Cape Bridgewater. This is the second highest point on the Victorian coast after Mt. Oberon, Wilsons Prom.

On passing the resident colony of Crested Terns, children's surfing lessons and other activities we were surprised and delighted to find we were following a lone Hooded Plover along the waters edge.

Hooded Plovers were once common along the beaches in the region but increasing uses of beaches for various recreational activities and predation by feral animals have drastically reduced their numbers. Serious efforts are now being made to educate beach users towards care and conservation of these beautiful birds.

Photos by Bruce



Cape Bridgewater and Cakile maritima (Sea Rocket)

Crested Terns and a Silver Gull

#### STAGS and Tags for March

First of all, the editor asked Janaya what was meant by the acronym STAG. Some will recall the TAG means Thursday Activity Group and these are prescheduled for 2 Thursdays per month and announced on our website activity page and in this newsletter. However recently a group of workers who especially love working out in the park weeding, planting, fence removing and fence building and much more, now head out on the unscheduled days to finish uncompleted jobs or anything else that has come up. These are organised on the day and have been dubbed STAGs. Janaya suggests the 'S' may be for Spontaneous or Super. Just to confuse matters, she has started calling these 'extra' TAGS or ETAGS, so take you pick but flexibility is the key.

Janaya has left me some notes to give an idea of what has been occurring:

18/2/16 - Three Bridges. Gray led this group and they completed a day of weed eradication and maintenance around the planting site. The area is now looking very good.

Later in February extra TAG - Morrisons. Successful removal of *Acacia baileyana*, and various other Woody Weeds.

3/3/16 Boys Road again was another successful weed removal activity.

17/3/16 A small group went to the end of Laughing Waters Road (Gaybrook) and removed agapanthus and lilies (please check correct plant with Gray), from the lower track section. Weeds were thrown into the "Planned Burn" site on the upper slopes. This work will support ongoing weed treatment for this area and the proposed planned burn. The Fire team have been working hard to prep this site. If you are in here you may notice many trees missing, these are *Acacia decurrens*, a weed tree for this area.

24/3/16 Lastly Janaya reported and supplied some photos of a work day at the Petty's Orchard site. In addition to clearing away much

hawthorn, prunus, small pines, ornamental fruit trees, and *A. decurrens*. However for the latter, the tall trees were left standing for the zoo. Ap-



How, for the love of elephants, were Gray and Amy persuaded to leave these weedy *A. decurrens* standing?

parently the elephants, giraffes, and primates love the *A. decurrens*. We will return in coming weeks, to continue the clean up works, and prepare area for the July planting(s). Great work by whole team.

The next TAG is with ACCA at Gold Memorial on 7 April 16.

In between Bernie would like to run a few ad hoc days with a small group of volunteers to work on the Fiddler

Gully Fencing. Janaya would like to run a few STAGs/ ETAGs at various sites such as Mullum Mullum (Heads Road creek line), preparation of Petty's Plant site (continue removal of Prunus and fence line).

A personal note from Janaya:

I would just like to thank all of the Volunteers for their efforts so far this year, both within the Nursery and on TAGs, it has been a very busy time so far with seed collection, propagation, preparations for sites across the PV Middle Yarra estate and ongoing maintenance and weeding projects. *Thanks Lyndy for special Easter play lunch*. Hope all had a very Happy Easter, that was a safe one for all of you and a chance to rest and recuperate and spend time with Friends and Family. *Jawaya* 



Amy, divides (smashes?) the chocolate rabbit to share.



Name

**Membership** (family)

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\$30

\$15

Phalaenoides glycinae Grapevine moth This moth was found inside one of the igloos at the nursery.
Although this moth is endemic to SE Australia it has long been considered to be an agricultural pest on grapevines. In 1862 the Indian Myna was introduced into Australia in an unsuccessful attempt to control this and other insects. Now the bird itself is considered a pest in many areas.

Línda

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

FOWSP Membership Renewal Form

Address .....

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Newsletter by email (tick box)

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

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper

#### Email photo bonus page



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

Basic facts about the species mentioned compiled by Lynda Chambers p. 2:

White-lipped Snake (35-50 cm): This snake can be identified by a conspicuous white strip, edged with black, along its upper lip. The upperparts can be highly variable in colour from brown to reddish-brown to grey to olive-green. It can be found throughout south-eastern Australia, including Tasmania, in woodlands, heath-lands, and dry sclerophyll forests, particularly in wetter areas where there is a tussock groundcover. It is venomous but not dangerous. Status: Secure.

**Eastern Tiger Snake** (120-200 cm): Predominantly diurnal, this snake has a robust body with the head (slightly) distinct from the body. The upperparts vary in colour from black to dark-brown to olive-green, and may or may not have the distinctive yellowish 'tiger' stripes. It is found throughout south-eastern Australia, preferring moist areas. It is usually shy but if cornered will hiss loudly and inflate its body. It is venomous, dangerous, and capable of inflicting a potentially fatal bite. Status: Secure.

**Eastern Small-eyed Snake** (60-120 cm): Similar looking to a juvenile Red-bellied Black Snake *Pseudoechis porphyriacus*, this snake differs in having very small eyes and the pinkish-red being restricted to the ventral scales. It can be found in the humid areas of the east coast and ranges in a variety of habitats, including wood-lands, wet sclerophyll forests, heathlands and rocky outcrops. When provoked or cornered this species thrashes about aggressively but rarely bites. It is considered potentially dangerously venomous. Status: Secure.

**Eastern Brown Snake** (150-250 cm): This snake has a slender body with its head barely distinguishable from its neck. Colours vary from tan to almost black. It can be found through all the eastern mainland states and some of the NT and South Australia, preferring drier areas. It is venomous, aggressive if provoked, and capable of inflicting a potentially fatal bite. Status: Secure.

**Jacky Lizard** (25-35 cm): Part of the dragon family of sun-loving diurnal lizards. Found in coastal and adjacent areas of south-eastern mainland Australia in dry sclerophyll forest, woodlands and coastal heath, it is a semi-arboreal species and is usually seen on tree stumps or branches. Upper parts are grey to grey-brown with a series of lighter patches along the back. Male territorial display and combat involves tail-waving, head-bobbing, and raising the body off the ground. Status: Common.

**Grass (Garden) Skink** (4.5 cm, excluding tail): A small skink with a moderate to long fragile tail. Colour varies from brown to olive-brown to grey with a dark vertebral stripe from the nape to base of tail. This species is found in southern Australia and is common in settled areas, particularly in suburban gardens. Status: Secure.

**Common Blue-tongue Lizard** (45-55 cm): One of the world's largest skinks. Found throughout eastern and northern Australia in a variety of habitats. The southern ones are yellow-brown to silver-grey above with dark -brown to black stripes. Status: Secure.