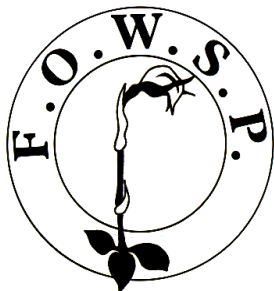


Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

Website: www.fowsp.org.au

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

Editor's Corner

The theme of this newsletter could well be a cautious 'recovery'.

Our wonderful nursery staff have been working hard to keep up with plant orders in strict COVID 19 safe conditions while the nursery is closed to customers. (See p. 6 for how to order plants).

Many FOWSPians have been propagating these plants in private homes.

The joy of the first day of limited return to volunteer activities at FOWSP has prompted the smiles on the faces on this page. Details on p. 8

Also on p. 8 you can read the news from long-time FOWSPian Olive Walters now on Coochiemudlo Island. Thank you Olive and special happy birthday wishes.

Happily, TAGgers have also begun a restricted return to bush recovery activities as explained on p. 2 and p. 4.

Joan Broadberry offers us an account of her adventures and ramblings in nearby Westerfolds Park on p. 3.

There is more good news about an important award to one of our FOWSPians who has been deeply involved in many aspects of native orchid recovery for around 25 years. Our heart-felt congratulations to Richard Thomson OAM is on p. 5.

I hope you share the editor's interest in another recovery story, this one from Lord Howe Island (via Birdlife Australia) on p. 7.

Acacias feature again in Lisa Jenkins' ongoing series 'Learning *Acacia* species identification through their names' on p. 9.

Please notice that this is the usual winter edition which combines July and August. The next one will be in September. Please keep sending your photos and stories to me. Let's hope September finds us progressing along the road to recovery. *Linda Rogan*



Marion...



...Alwynne...



...Linda and Marie, each well socially distanced but happy to be working again at FOWSP. See p. 8.

Deadline for September edition newsletter is

Friday 21 August 2020

**contributions can be emailed to [Linda Rogan editor@fowsp.org.au](mailto:editor@fowsp.org.au)
or posted to PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113**

Pauline Toner Reserve, Eltham. 18 June

Report by Don Vincent

This was the first TAG after relaxation of Parks COVID restrictions, and everyone was excited to join Rangers Phil and Cam at Pauline Toner Reserve. Woo hoo!

Cam gave us some history on the acquisition of this remnant piece of Eltham bushland, and the unique range of species present on this 2 Ha site. It narrowly avoided becoming the Eltham Primary School site and residential development in the 1980s, thanks to the significant effort of local residents, rangers, and both Pauline Toner as Minister for Education, and Joan Kirner as Minister for the Environment.

Our task was to clear cassinia and invading plants, such as Cootamundra wattle, pittosporum, Sallow Wattle, and various grasses, to maximise the opportunity for Sweet Bursaria and Eltham Copper Butterfly to flourish, as well as the myriad orchids (becoming rarer) and other plants. Many orchids were emerging, earlier than usual due to this season's wet summer/autumn; we were able to take great advantage of Cam's encyclopaedic identification skills. Evident, in addition to those in photos, were Gnat orchids, *Cyrtostylis reniformis*; Coarse Bottle Daisy, *Lagenophora huegelii*; emerging Large Waxlip, *Glossodia major*; and various sun orchids emerging.

(Continued on page 4)



Ranger Phil and volunteers Don, Robyn and David modelling new Parks Volunteer Hi-Viz vests
Not shown Ranger Cam and Kelvin and Carolyn also Gray and Barrie who worked at Naughton Road

Photo right: Climbing sundew *Drosera macrantha*
Photos Carolyn Noel

Remaining photos Don Vincent



According to Cam, a few specimens from the largest surviving population of the Veined Helmet Orchid, *Corybas diemenicus*, just emerging.



Our favourite *Pterostylis nutans*, an early riser

Rambling in Westerfolds Park

Joan Broadberry



While walking in drizzle in Westerfolds Park in late March, I came upon a very large kangaroo. I immediately assumed I was looking at an alpha male whose role it was to protect the mob of females and joeys I could see behind him. This was a massive animal. The first thing that struck me was the diameter of his chest and his formidable shoulder muscles. Alert and watchful he raised himself up to his full height and I noted that he was taller than me. We stared at each other and I became a little wary, as I was alone, (self isolating!). Gradually we both relaxed and, moving carefully, I felt inside my bag for my camera and took some photos. Unexpectedly, the huge animal moved slowly away from the mob and crossed the path in front of me. His gait seems have a look of old age about it, but this may have been an impression given because he moved slowly. In a minute or so he had disappeared into the bush. I did a rethink and surmised that this was maybe not an alpha male, but possibly an older animal now relegated to the edge of the mob.



I headed back the next day with a tape and measured the width of the road. It was 5 metres. Using some rough maths, I calculated that the 'roo in my photo measured nearly 2 metres (6 3/4 feet) from front claw to tail tip. A large Eastern Grey Kangaroo male typically weighs around 66 kg. Its scientific name is *Macropus giganteus* (gigantic large-foot). Only the Red Kangaroo is larger, weighing up to 90 kg. Also known as the Great Grey Kangaroo, it is no wonder he caught my attention. I had been looking at the second largest and heaviest native land mammal in Australia. Amazingly I was only a short walk from my home in suburban Templestowe.

I have observed many Eastern Grey Kangaroos over time and the dominant image in my mind is of sweet, furry, grey mothers with cute joeys peeping from their pouches or at foot. They feature on travel brochures, calendars and post cards. But these images are not the full story. There is great sexual dimorphism in Eastern Grey Kangaroos. Females commonly weigh 40% or so less than a male at around 17-40 kg and are far less muscular.

The male's statistics are impressive. The maximum ever recorded length of an Eastern Grey was 2.9 m (9.5 ft) measured along the body curve, from nose to tail, with its maximum weight being 91kg (200 lbs.). This enormous animal measured 1.7m (5.5 ft) when standing normally and about 2m (6.5 ft) when standing on its toes. An adult kangaroo's powerful tail is a massive cylinder over 1 m long. A single hop from a large male can be up to 9 metres (29 ft) in length and 2m (10 ft) in height.

On Friday of the same week, I went back to Westerfolds Park, this time with a purpose. I wanted to find the mob of kangaroos. I did find them and counted over 75 individuals bunched in a loose mob, resting behind screening vegetation away from the major paths. There were at least two large males watching over them, although I was unable to recognise the individual I had encountered earlier in the week. Again I was astounded that such a large number of kangaroos lived almost within sight of my house.

I had an unexpected experience as I walked back along a narrow dirt track. I came across a lone Long-billed Corella sitting on the grass and making no attempt to move away from me. It showed no injury but was obviously in need of help. I looked up and heading towards me was a youngish man in a wheelchair with two dogs on leads. He stopped and told me he had just rung a friend who is a wildlife carer and was going to take the distressed bird to her. I offered to help and he tied the dogs to a nearby tree. Then with a towel which had been padding the wheelchair, I scooped up the corella making very sure to keep clear of its beak which I judged could have taken a finger off. I untied the dogs and, with the swaddled bird in the crook of one arm, the man gave a wave and propelled the wheelchair towards the car park, the dogs following obediently off lead. I learned just one thing about this Good Samaritan, and it wasn't his name. It was that he owns a female Eclectus Parrot.

(Continued from page 2)



A healthy start for some Blunt Greenhoods, *Pterostylis curta*, becoming scarce in the Eltham area.



A vibrant stand of Trim Greenhoods, *Pterostylis concinna*



Pterostylis concinna close-up

The TAG conduct was significantly different this time with, sadly, no morning tea from Lindy!! Very much missed! We required a Park's letter authorising our attendance and a specific COVID rules briefing including, of course, 'everyone must be feeling well'. See page 6 for summary of requirements.

All this was a relatively minor inconvenience, as everyone was delighted to be back out on a TAG on such a nice winter's day.

TAGS (Thursday activity groups)

TAGS are resuming on a restricted basis. Participants are as rostered on only. Please remember to wear appropriate footwear and clothing for the weather, and please bring your own hand sanitiser, filled water bottle and any food you require. At present no shared food is allowed.

If you are interested in being rostered on for a TAG and you are not already rostered with Gray, Don or Artur, please email nursery@fowsp.org.au Be sure to include your **contact phone number** so that you can be contacted and rostered according to your skills and interests and also according to places available.

See p. 6 for summary of restrictions.

2/07/2020	Endeavour Bank	PHIL/ Artur	Exclosure fencing, planting	Easy
9/07/2020	Endeavour Bank	Artur	Grant planting	Easy
16/07/2020	Fourth Hill	PHIL/ Artur	Billy buttons planting	Moderate
23/07/2020	Betton Fence	Phil	Cassinia thinning, planting	Moderate
30/07/2020	Nursery/Endeavour Bank	Josh	National Tree day prep.	Easy
6/08/2020	Walert Creek	PHIL/ DON	Guards maintenance, weeding	Easy
13/08/2020	Chaim Court	CATHY	Woody weeds and plant stuff.	Easy-Moderate
20/08/2020	Endeavour Bank	ARTUR	Grant planting	Easy
27/08/2020	Candlebark	PHIL	Joint working bee with FYVP. Woody weeding	Easy
3/09/2020	Endeavour Bank & Frogland	LINDA/ MARIE / GRAY	Thistles, Fumaria, Sticky bedstraw weeding/restoration of tree guards	Easy

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.

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

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

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			FOWSP general enquiry number	1300 764 422

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, Gloria Moore, Lisa Jenkins

Next Committee Meetings	
Date:	Tuesday 14 July and 11 August 2020
Venue:	Via Zoom until further notice.
Time:	19:30 pm sharp

Richard Thomson OAM

What a pleasure to congratulate one of FOWSP’s own who has been awarded the Order of Australia Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours for his service to the conservation of Australian native orchids. Known to many of us as Dick, he and Marion have been FOWSP members since 1999 and both have contributed greatly to our organisation. Richard contributed for several years on the FOWSP committee and played an important back-up role as assistant treasurer. Amongst other things, he brought to FOWSP essential knowledge about the propagation and maintenance of rescued orchids.

Quoting from Australian Native Orchid Society Victoria: ‘Richard has been a committed member of ANOS Victoria coming up for 29 years. During this time he has been tireless in his approach to orchid conservation as our Conservation Convenor. He has also taken on roles on committee, runs the seed propagation group and has organised Spring Shows and numerous field trips, to mention just a few activities.’

‘Richard has always been an invaluable source of information to those who seek it, as well as a welcoming friend to our members.’ FOWSPians strongly endorse this statement from our own experience.

At FOWSP Richard turns up early nearly every week to do the thankless but essential task of sorting the propagation tubes, and loading them into their racks (also often assisted by Marion), which is a task trickier than one might think. This he reliably does before applying his expertise to the propagation and maintenance of our orchids - many of which are rare and threatened. Richard is always modest about his broad and deep knowledge.

FOWSP offers a hearty congratulations as well as sincere thanks to Richard and we hope to enjoy many more years working with him.

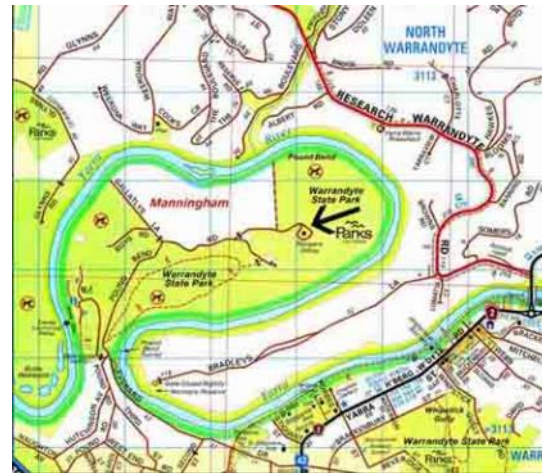


FOWSP NURSERY INFORMATION

As you are aware, our nursery has been closed to customers. However we are continuing to work to provide the plants you need this planting season from now, until spring. If you wish to place an order please:

- 1) have a look at the stock list, available under publications/ other on the website.
- 2) email FOWSP nursery email nursery@fowsp.org.au with **YOUR CONTACT PHONE NUMBER** and wish list of the species and quantity desired;
- 3) you will be contacted and given a cost, location and **time** for pick up;
- 4) be prepared to pay by credit card - we cannot accept cash at this time.

Please be aware that quantities will change as orders come in, and we will try to update the list as often as possible. As restricted volunteers are allowed on Parks Victoria land at this time, please be patient - staff are working hard to keep the service going.



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Prices for tubes: Members \$2.00 Non-members \$2.50

Closed Christmas and New Years days.

Also closed to customers and volunteers on days of severe weather and on Total Fire Ban Days

FOWSP VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The FOWSP program for volunteers is on Parks Vic land and is resuming on a restricted basis in line with requirements from Parks Victoria.

At this stage each volunteer must be rostered to specific times and positions within the nursery area to allow appropriate social distancing. If you wish to assist at this time you will need to email nursery@fowsp.org.au including your **contact number** and which tasks you are prepared to carry out independently and whether you are available on Wednesdays or Thursdays.

All volunteers on Parks land need to observe the following:

Sign in at the beginning including your **contact phone number** and sign out at end of each activity.

Adhere to physical distancing and good hygiene practices as per DHHS guidelines.

Bring your own hand sanitiser and any food and drink you require. These are not to be shared.

Gloves will be provided but we will ask volunteers to use one pair and take them home with them for re-use next time.

You will be given a run down of all restrictions which apply and which you must adhere to, before beginning any volunteer activity.

In addition transport to and from any volunteer activity should not include sharing a ride in a vehicle with anyone that is not part of your household group.

******Please stay away If you, or anyone in your "household group" has had any fever, cold flu-like or Covid-19 symptoms during the last 2 weeks, and/or has been identified as a 'close contact' in the last 2 weeks.. Also as a general practice, stay away if a member of your household group has symptoms of gastroenteritis or other infectious diseases.**

Paradise Regained (including excerpts from June 2020 Birdlife Australia)

An excellent story of recovery which grabbed the editor’s attention:

‘When rats arrived on Lord Howe Island in 1918, they turned it from an island of dreams into a deathly nightmare, running rampant through the island’s unique birdlife. Over a century later, the battle to defeat the rodent’s reign of terror is over. Cara Schultz chronicles the remarkable effort to restore paradise.

Jack Shick was waiting on Mount Gower in June last year when the helicopter came in, a huge crate swinging on a 15-metre rope beneath it. He was there as the team of scientists trapped their small, feathery, precious cargo—Lord Howe Island Woodhens—and placed them carefully in plastic boxes, before fitting them into the padded framework of the crate. He was watching as the helicopter lifted into the air once more, the crate full of birds dangling underneath, and flew down the 875-metre mountain on the five minute trip to the main settlement, back to the specially-designed captive facility the woodhens would call home for the coming months...

...Then, in the weeks before the baiting started in May 2019, teams were transported by helicopter to capture 50 woodhens from around Lord Howe’s precipitous mountains, including five from Lidgbird, 15 from the Big Slope, and 30 birds from Mt Gower. In all, 50 per cent of the currawong population (122 birds) and 85 per cent of the woodhens (235 birds) were plucked from mountains and lowlands to be kept safe and sound while the baiting took place...

...Jack reckons they (birds) didn’t miss a beat. “The Currawongs have bred up like crazy. The birds are going mad—they handled captivity with no problems.” Over 20 woodhens were captured on his block before the program. He says that since they were returned in early December last year, “there have been 18 chicks already, which is way more than usual. Two pairs have already had two lots of chicks. The woodhens are celebrating.”..

...As of the start of May this year, there have been no signs of live rodents since September 2019. Everyone is cautiously excited that the eradication has been a success, but an official declaration (in line with best-practice protocols) will not be made until August next year...’



Lord Howe Island Woodhen photographed by Linda R. on a hike up Mount Gower in 2007.



It is well worth reading the whole of this article in *Birdlife*. For me, it has stirred many happy memories of a visit to LHI in 2007 when rat control was in early stages.

I have included photos of the woodhen and the currawong from my trip in 2007. I can’t remember why I chose to photograph the currawong in black and white replacing the bright yellow-orange eye colour later but it was early days with the camera back then. It is possible I switched to black and white by mistake as I checked my original copy and everything that day was monochrome.

Linda R

Recovery, with restrictions, for FOWSP volunteers

There were smiles all around on the faces of the volunteers rostered on for various important tasks at the FOWSP nursery and Frogland on 18 June. Marie and I were pleased with the general condition of Frogland but I had been chafing at the thought of the blackberry plants found amongst the *Goodenia ovata* which I had planned to remove in mid-March. In my mind they had expanded to occupy half of Frogland.

Alwynne had been continuing with cuttings at home but this day could collect her material from Frogland and work at the nursery. Marion single handedly resumed the important tube into trays task. Not shown here, Dick was back in the nursery quietly looking after the orchids.

See also p. 6 for volunteer rostering and restrictions.



Letter from Olive Walters Coochiemudlo Island Queensland 12 May 2020 (received 29 May 2020)

If anyone is planning to go to Queensland soon, could they please pop in and see Olive, take a photo of her and interview her. She has turned 90 and it would be great to tell her story to FOWSPians if she agrees?

TO FOWSP

Please find enclosed our subs for 2020 – a little late, sorry!

I have recently celebrated my ninetieth birthday, but am still motoring on so have decided to join FOWSP for one more year.

I'm still managing some environmental weeding – particularly along "Curlw Creek" which was heavily infested with Singapore daisy weed. I've managed to spend so much time there lately that I have decided to call it COVID19 Corner!

We have just resumed (socially distanced!) attendance at our little nursery so that has given our spirits a little lift. The few vacant blocks on our little island are gradually being cleared and built on so it's necessary to keep growing local plants for planting in our emerald fringe and in people's gardens.

I was devastated to learn that Pat & Mike Coupar were burnt out in the Mallacoota fire - I first learnt of it in the recent copy of CHOICE magazine in a tiny article Pat had submitted to it. Now I have received my latest newsletter and read about the full horror of their experience – they were absent so totally unable to save anything! What a dreadful homecoming.

If anyone at FOWSP has kept in touch with them, could they please pass on my condolences. -I am so sad for them. I had hoped and prayed they would be spared though I had visited them and knew how close the bushland was to their lovely home.

Yours sincerely
Olive Walters

Learning *Acacia* species identification through their names

Lisa Jenkins

Acacia melanoxylon-blackwood from the Greek μέλας (black) and ξύλον (wood)

Acacia genistifolia-leaves being broom-like



Acacia melanoxylon photo from Flora of Warrandyte online

As a textile artist I learnt circuitously about the colonial-era industries that existed in Australia around acacia (I'll talk about textiles next time), including the acacia timber industry about which I knew very little. I was aware of the nineteenth century interest in eucalypts, but I didn't appreciate how widespread the use of acacias had been and how *Acacia melanoxylon*, or blackwood, was a key species. And unfortunately, it, like various eucalypt species, has gone on to be a major pest species in some countries.

In his *Select Extra-Tropical Plants, readily eligible for Industrial Culture or Naturalisation* (1881), Ferdinand von Mueller lays out the case for planting 'useful' species. He says that he's writing to promote 'the introduction and diffusion of the very many kinds of plants which in temperate geographic latitudes may be extensively reared in forests, on fields or pastures.' He is hoping that his book appears in all state schools and, with the 'increased ease of communication,' others in the rest of the world will also be able to 'promote introductions of new vegetable treasures from unexplored regions.'

He lists the species alphabetically and then has indices under a great raft of headings-plants useful for things like Hedges, Graves, Honey, Yielding Table Pulse or Various Esculent Fruits (it means edible-I had to look it up), Sand-coast plants and Scenic plants (Other than Palms or Bamboos). Taken as a whole, these headings are laying out the 'vegetable'

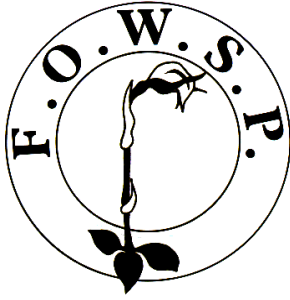
needs of an independent, prosperous, European agrarian society. For many early settlers, Australia seemed to offer the possibility of just that, a chance to have a stake in an independent, prosperous country, an option they hadn't had in the European country of their birth.

Acacia melanoxylon, the 'well-known Blackwood of our river flats and moist forest valleys' is firmly in the timber category. Von Mueller is enthusiastic about *A. melanoxylon's* properties, saying the wood is useful for furniture, 'railway and other carriages,' boat-building, crutches, organs, casks, billiard-tables, pianofortes, bending under steam and veneers. 'It takes a fine polish,' he says with a salesman's gusto, 'and is considered almost equal to Walnut.' He is describing the kinds of goods highly valued in the late nineteenth-century-pianos, church organs, private carriages and billiard tables and comparing the finish of *A. melanoxylon*, the 'black' wood, to that of one of the status timbers, walnut.

I learnt about '*genistifolia*' doing a Google search. When I was looking for its meaning, I came across another species which is also a *genistifolia*, *Linaria genistifolia* (toadflax) which is described as having spreading qualities. 'Genistifolia' is from the similarity of the leaves to the broom plants (*Genista* sp.) and the 'broom' comes from the traditional making of household brooms from *Genista* species. I think of *Acacia genistifolia* as a plant which can help little birds conceal themselves. So, for me, the sweeping/spreading connection is that the plant sweeps or spreads across the ground like a broom, making a safe haven for Silvereyes, Blue Wrens, Pardalotes, Eastern Spinebills and other small birds. And I'm pleased to say that this winter I've seen all of those species at our pond, the edges of which are planted out with various things including, you guessed it! an *Acacia genistifolia*.



Acacia genistifolia photo from Flora of Warrandyte online



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**Forest germander
*Teucrium corymbosa***

One of the rare and localised plants of WSP which is cultivated by cuttings at the nursery. As it can be difficult to re-establish in bush regeneration areas we are very pleased to find that several healthy plants have survived in Frogland and thrilled to see many new seedlings which have been stimulated by autumn rains. Finally it appears we have an adequate supply of healthy plants for Alwynne to collect cutting material.

This plant occurs in cliff / escarpment shrubland e.g. on the exposed north facing cliffs below Naughton Avenue.

Linda Rogan

July/August 2020 Vol. 38 no. 6

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 \$15

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.

EMAIL NEWSLETTER? Your notification comes as a note **in the email with the newsletter** link .

In Frogland in autumn 2020...

Email photo bonus page



...*Euchiton* is forming an attractive ground cover under some *Hakea* (1); many caterpillars of the magpie moth are munching on various species of native *Senecio* so expecting lots of moths soon (2); *Teucrium* seedlings are popping up (3); earthstars are 'shining' (4); *Correa* plants are blooming and many blossoms falling to the ground (5); last photo is a test of your eye for detail: Can you pick out the weedy *Fumaria* amongst the *Daucus* and *Pterostylis*? (6)
 Linda R

**Your photos can appear on this page (subject to space available) if you email them as follows:
 editor@fowsp.org.au**



Frogland upper pond autumn 2020

Small blue sign with illegible text near the water's edge.