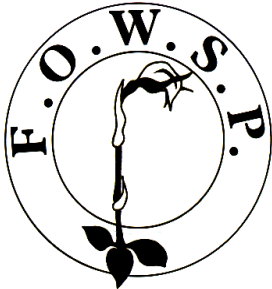


Friends of Warrandyte State Park



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

This month we have all learned more about what is within 5 km of our homes. Warrandytians are particularly lucky in their options for exercise.

All our lives have changed in ways great and small. Many of us who haven't sewn in years have learned to make face masks. Some of the more talented have made additional masks for doctor's surgery staff.

In spite of everything spring is



A smile from Mike and Pat in Mallacoota
They are finding rebuilding their garden a great way to raise their spirits

rushing toward us with orchids now plentiful. We revisit Professor's Hill and Kelvin shows us what is in bloom there on p. 2.

Those walking along the rivers and creeks can keep an eye out for rakali whose story is on p. 3.

On p. 4 and 5 Lisa takes us, once more, on an exploration of the etymology of *Acacia* species names.

Bruce Fuhrer digs into his wonderful archives to highlight three rare fungi that he has photographed in the moist area of Jumping Creek Reserve over the years on p. 8.

Thanks to all who have taken their time to share their knowledge, thoughts and photos in this newsletter. We know this is a very difficult time for everyone and missing seeing friends at the nursery is a big part of this for many. Stay strong, stay healthy.



At Hawkes road, north Warrandyte...
Double headed *Pterostylis pedunculata* Photo: Kelvin Watkins

Linda Rogan

**Deadline for October edition newsletter is
Friday 18 September 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**

FOWSP Newsletter
September 1992.

David Cameron - On Professor's Hill.

An afternoon with David Cameron on "HIS" hill....possibly the best small wildflower reserve in Victoria (perhaps Australia?) is an irresistable treat. Maybe that was why fifty or so folk - Field Nats, S.G.A.Ps, Bird Observers and Fowspians were there. We kept advertising to a minimum - sorry those who missed out - but the hill is small, orchids and wildflowers tender and even those who care have feet which trample..... No doubt about how much we are able to learn from David. The highlight for F.O.S.P. was the sight of *Caladenia oenoecheia* "Wine-lipped Spider Orchid" only found on the Hill and at One-tree Hill on Watson's Creek. We found 12 specimens and the one

Professors hill, north Warrandyte..

The above is an excerpt from FOWSP Newsletter September 1992. The following information from a talk at FOWSP by David Cameron was reported in April 2016.

Professor's Hill in North Warrandyte is an area that has been of particular concern to David at a time when a developer was seeking to develop this entire hillside... 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 wine-lipped spider-orchid *Caladenia oenochila* Proof from Kelvin's photo of 24 August 2020 that this spider-orchid still remains at Professor's Hill.



More evidence of biodiversity of Professor's Hill:

common hovea *Hovea heterophylla* (above left) and a flat growing sundew (centre) possibly *Drosera aberrans* (photos Kelvin), and a lovely photo of the early blooming leopard orchid *Diuris pardina* taken by Annie.

Rakali/water-rat Australia's otter?

With our 5 km restrictions and one hour of exercise, I hope some of you are getting to walk along the rivers and creeks. With the icy rain falling today they should be flowing well. If so I hope some of you will see rakali, the lovely water-rat that is our largest rodent but actually resembles an otter in many ways.



Rakali/ water-rat *Hydromys chrysogaster*
The white tail tip is diagnostic. Photo Carolyn Hall

According to the Australian Platypus Conservancy,

- 'Its body is elongated and streamlined, and its tail is thick and muscular to help serve as a rudder when swimming. The hind feet are partly webbed and paddle-like.
- The ears are small and can be folded flat against the head, and the muzzle is blunt and furnished with a dense set of over-sized whiskers.
- The fur repels water, drying quickly when animals exit the water.'

The latest newsletter, Platypus news and views 80, mentioned that rakali, in contrast to platypus, are most likely to be seen in winter and to a lesser extent in autumn. It goes on to say,

'It is therefore possible (though by no means proven) that the spike in rakali sightings in autumn and winter at least partly reflects the fact that large numbers of dispersing juveniles are on the move then, looking for a place to settle. Alternatively, it's definitely the case that water-rats are not well adapted to cold weather – their body temperature starts dropping within minutes if the water temperature is less than 20°C. – so it's also plausible that rakali may become more diurnal in autumn and winter (and hence be seen more often) primarily in a bid to stay warm.'



Rakali, showing the typical bow wave Photo Carolyn Hall

While reading the afore mentioned I remembered that a friend of mine from Ballarat had taken some excellent photos of this animal which she observes in Lake Wendouree. She was happy to share them here and she added the following information.

(Continued on page 9)

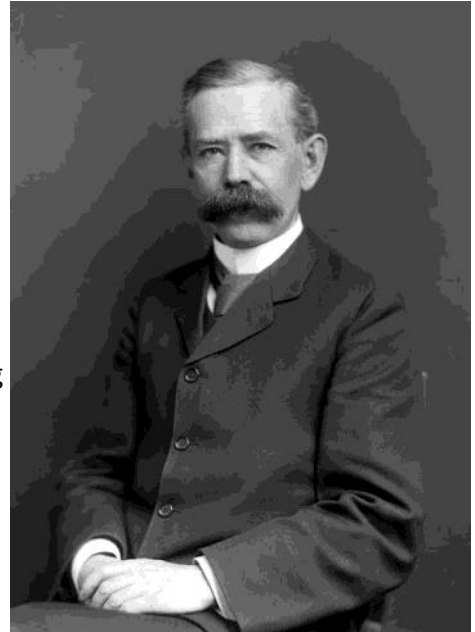
Learning *Acacia* spp. identification through their names

Black wattle *Acacia mearnsii* for Edgar Alexander Mearns (1856-1915)

Heath wattle *Acacia brownii* for Robert Brown (1773-1858)

As we have seen, a botanical name for a plant will sometimes indicate its usefulness in the eyes of the namer. I myself have used acacias for purposes other than gardening. I was looking for a way to tannin fibres naturally as part of the mordanting process, the step one takes before dyeing fibres with plant materials (mordanting helps the colours take). Acacias are rich in tannin, so I got some bark from a dead trunk in the garden, left it in water for a while and soaked my fibres in the resulting liquid. I then took the second mordanting step (soaking in a protein, for which I used soy milk, a traditional Japanese mordanting substance) and my fibres were ready for the dye bath.

Victorian-era industries had a different need than me. In burgeoning industrial societies, leather was a key heavy-duty material. Think, for instance, of the need for saddlery in workplaces reliant upon horses for transportation, or boots for factory workers. *Acacia mearnsii* was discovered to be an excellent source of tannin and various processing hubs were set up where indigenous trees were stripped of their bark, which was ground up and mixed with water. It's even possible that it occurred in Warrandyte—see *Yarra: A Diverging History* by Kristin Otto. Prepared leather was soaked in the liquid, then dried and shipped off. *Acacia mearnsii* was thus used during the peak of nineteenth-century industrialism, on an industrial scale for goods that were required for industrial output to continue and expand.



Edgar Alexander Mearns
photo from Wikipedia



Acacia mearnsii photos from Flora of Warrandyte

Notice the irregular pattern of the glands which produce nectar and are diagnostic of this species.

Both *Acacia mearnsii* and *Acacia brownii* are not named for plant usage but for men, and the century dividing those two men shows the potential damage done in the overuse of plants such as *Acacia mearnsii*. It was named for Edgar Alexander Mearns (1856-1915) and *Acacia brownii* for Robert Brown (1773-1858). Both were naturalists who were part of significant expeditions which cemented their reputations: Brown

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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 Meeting
Date: Tuesday 8 September 2020
Venue: Electronically
Time: 19:30 pm sharp

was with Flinders on the Investigator (1801-1803) and Mearns was with the Smithsonian-Roosevelt African Expedition (1909-10) which collected material (largely animal) for the Natural History Museum in Washington, D.C..



Robert Brown (1773-1858)
photo from Wikipedia

Brown was part of the older tradition of botanist-he was a contemporary of Banks who put Brown forward for the Flinders expedition. For Brown and Banks, Australia must have seemed a cornucopia and the potential usefulness of the plants they identified unbounded. By Mearns' time, the places colonized by European powers had been 'used' heavily by those Europeans. Industries such as tannin collecting had contributed to environmental degradation, species loss and the destruction of indigenous peoples' cultures. Roosevelt's expedition was a recognition of that, since they were collecting material that was disappearing in the wild so that it could be preserved under glass. And the specimen that Mearns used to identify *Acacia mearnsii* is an embodiment of the problem since he collected it in East Africa, where it was being cultivated for firewood and tannin and is now a significant environmental weed.



Acacia brownii from Flora of Warrandyte

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

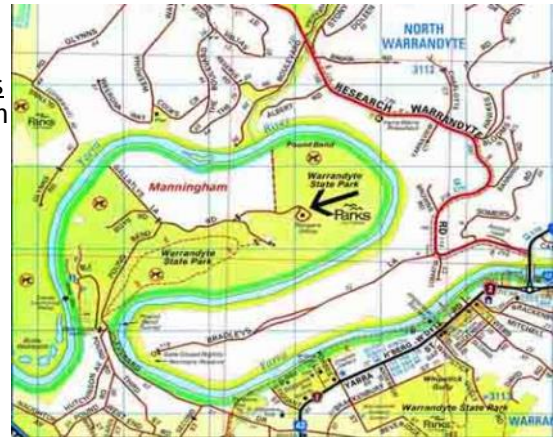
The nursery is sales every Thursday. 9.30 am to 12.30 pm and the first Saturday of every 9am to 2pm (to coincide with the Market) April to November only.

**Closed at present
See p. below**

OPENING HOURS

open for plant

month,
Warrandyte



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Status at the FOWSP nursery August 2020

- There is a COVID lockdown and the nursery is closed to customers and volunteers.
- We are unable to sell plants at this time which may extend into the future.
- We do not know when the lockdown is going to finish, or when Parks Vic will allow customers and volunteers back on their land. We feel sad that conditions have changed so dramatically. A lot of volunteers rely on FOWSP for their social needs and give back to the environment that they care passionately about. However we are continuing to work to provide the plants you will need until spring. If you wish to place an order, please:

1) have a look at the stock list, available here:

http://fowsp.org.au/docs/Other/FOWSP_Stock_List_for_Sales.pdf

2) email FOWSP nursery email nursery@fowsp.org.au with the species and quantity required. Please include your contact phone number;

3) when they are read and we re-open, 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. Please be patient -

With best wishes

After twelve memorable years as nursery assistant, Annette will be leaving this position at the FOWSP nursery. She has been looking after the plants and people in the FOWSP community, keeping things in motion to get plants to people who need them and helping to integrate the smooth running of the nursery activities for volunteers and customers. In addition, she has helped FOWSP move away from disposable plastics and tea bags and kept an eye out for opportunities to make FOWSP more environmentally sustainable. The committee want to thank Annette for her years of service. She will be missed. We do send her best wishes for the future.

We also say farewell to Lisa who has resigned from the FOWSP committee. Thank you Lisa for all your contributions and we look forward to continuing to hear from you with your newsletter articles and eventually as a volunteer when conditions allow. We wish you all the best.



Lisa, Jan, Annette, Gloria, Joy
Photo by Lynda Gilbert November 2019

Colour from around the FOWSP nursery



Kelvin sends us a touch of colour he found around the FOWSP nursery when exercising in mid August.

Golden-tip *Goodia lotifolia* (above)
 Running postman *Kennedia prostrata* (above right)
 Early nancy *Wurmbea dioicia* (right) This is our earliest blooming lily and the swollen ovaries show this one is female. Male and female flowers may occur on the same or different plants.



News from Frogland

Thanks to Jason and Peta who took their exercise at Pound Bend a significant breach in the Frogland fence was discovered. In early August, a large animal, a 'roo or a deer had crashed into one side and leapt out just catching the top of the fence on the way out. Fortunately the damage was discovered and able to be repaired by these masked walkers before Frogland became a haven for grazers and browsers.



Animal crashed in here (photo above left) and out again (photo above right)

**Three rare *Entoloma* fungus species from
Jumping Creek Park, Warrandyte
Bruce Fuhrer**

The fungus genus *Entoloma* is characterised by mostly small to medium sized “mushrooms” (1.5 cm to 6.0 cm caps) that produce a pale brownish-pink mass spore deposit. Individual spores under the microscope are angular or multi-sided in all views.



Entoloma percrinitum
Uncommon and usually found in shallow mossy depressions on rock ledges. Caps have a distinctive texture and grows to around 35mm diameter. This was found in Jumping Creek Park about 2016.

Atlas of Living Australia shows observations of this species in Victoria and Tasmania.

Entoloma sp. (yellow -gold) This fungus has been seen only once by Bruce and that was in 2019 when out searching with John Eichler. The caps are around 20mm diameter, some gills with dark margin.



Entoloma sp.C This fungus, growing on a decaying log, was photographed in about 2010. It appears to be most like *Entoloma byssisedum* but at 60mm across, it is much larger. *E. byssisedum* is itself quite rare. Unlike most *Entoloma* sp. these two are found in rotting wood rather than soil.

Jumping Creek Reserve is a well known ‘hot spot’ for unusual fungus so keep your eyes open when walking there in fungus season.

Photos by Bruce Fuhrer

On the phone line

New Year's Eve 2021 will be extraordinary

Bruce and Irene Fuhrer both 'coping as well as can be expected under the circumstances .' Irene is not getting around so well and Bruce is suffering from an unfortunate birth. The story is that Bruce arrived on his birthday to the acclaim of fireworks and boozy parties. A few years later he realised that all the fuss wasn't about him but about New Year's Eve which shared the date. He says he has never gotten over the disappointment. That will be from 90 years ago when 2020 turns over to 2021.

A family correa

Alwynne Buntine also coping 'as well as...' She had just come in from the garden where she had ducked out between showers to pick some white camellias.

In Alwynne's garden is a patch of various species of correa from various sources. Recently she noted a seed pod on one of the bushes and made an effort to raise some from seed. She was rewarded with a single surviving seedling. This year it produced a bloom which was green fading to yellow near the calyx. Obviously a hybrid quite different from its parents. Her grandsons Thomas and Lachlan (11 and 13) were quite excited saying, 'We are the first people in the world to see this flower'. They decided to name it Tholan for the two of them. Alwynne will now try to make new plants, for the family, via cuttings. In the meantime Alwynne continues to look after some cuttings of Banksias, Olearia and most excitedly Epacris. The latter are from plants she is looking after from the nursery so it will be very exciting if they survive.

New hip success

Joy Hick Is recovering well from her total hip surgery. She has been driving and gets out into the garden (weather permitting) but not quite getting down on her knees for the weeds at seven weeks post op. Nothing will hold her back now.

All have been missing FOWSP and are keen to be able to get together soon..



Egg and bacon *Pultenaea* species in bloom at Fourth Hill.
Photo Lyndy Gilbert

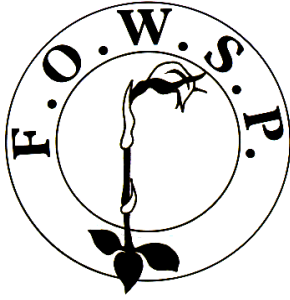
(Continued from page 3)

'The Rakali in Lake Wendouree feed on yabbies, young fish and whole trout with which the lake is stocked – that is what the large fish is. They also catch newly hatched cygnets! They can be seen early in the morning swimming and diving – the white-tipped tail is diagnostic. They swim low in the water and have a very recognisable "bow wave" or ripple. Their passage underwater is marked by a line of small bubbles. When they have caught a crustacean or small fish they climb out of the water to eat it; in the case of the trout they tow it to the edge of the lake, which here is concreted. The hind feet are partially webbed to make very efficient paddles but at the same time enable them to climb onto twigs to eat their catch. When they have finished eating they wash their face and paws!'

So watch out for these as well as for platypus along the lakes and creeks and be sure to report any sightings to the Australian Platypus Conservancy <https://platypus.asn.au/>
Or download the app <http://platypusspot.org/>



Rakali eating a large trout which are stocked in Lake Wendouree. Photo Carolyn Hall



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***Diuris pardina* leopard orchid**

Lyndy Gilbert is a lucky Warrandytian with wonderful reserves such as Tindal's within the 5km range. She has contributed this lovely photo of one of the earliest donkey orchids which was nestled under some beautiful blooming Hardenbergia.

This is a widespread and common orchid in Victoria. What a welcome treat to the eye after so many weeks of wintry isolation.

Blooming in Warrandyte in August, it can still be seen blooming in the mountains in early summer.

Thanks for the photo Lyndy.

Linda Rogan

September 2020 Vol. 38 no. 7

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

FOWSP Membership Renewal Form

Name

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.....

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Membership (family) \$30
Concession \$15

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

Email photo bonus page



Thanks to Kelvin for all the photos on this page. Upper left, the tall greenhood is from Professor's Hill. Upper right the pink heath *Epacris impressa* was from along Betton track. Photo left shows the lovely blue fingers which have now returned to the genus *Caladenia* so once again *Caladenia caerulea*. It is very difficult to keep up with orchid name changes.

Kelvin and Annie are not the only ones to enjoy our winter orchids. The brown click beetle in the photo enjoyed a feast of nodding greenhoods



Pterostylis nutans on Kelvin and Annie's property leaving a patch of these orchids, 'eaten from the inside leaving just a shell' of the hood. The editor checked to see what the adult beetles eat. *A guide to the Beetles of Australia* by Hangay and Zborowski indeed states 'many are phytophagous' or plant eaters.

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



Clematis microphylla
In Frogland