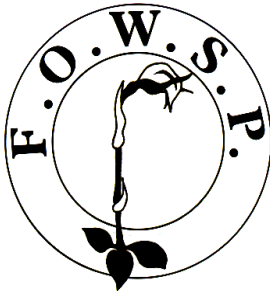


Friends of Warrandyte State Park



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

For those of you who noticed, we had no TAG news in the April newsletter, This one will make up for that.

I have learned recently that the acronym TAG, which came from Thursday Activity Group, was first coined by Pat Coupar many years ago. Information about Pat and Mike's latest book project will be found on p. 9.

The catch up on TAGs can be found on this page, pp. 2 and 3 and p. 8. I'm sure you will agree that the TAGers have been busy indeed.

Perhaps the delay in some reports was because of the time Don and Carolyn spent enjoying the scenery at Mount Buffalo. They share that with us on p. 4.

Some information about some rather special brown butterflies can be found on p. 5.

See the nursery news on p. 6.

Another instalment of 'Getting to know our local native bees' can be found on p. 7. This time we hear more about leaf-cutter and resin bees.

A heartfelt thank you is on p. 8.

A book review of *Wings of Change—A Naturalists Guide to Butterflies, Moths and their Caterpillars* is on p. 9. This book has been secured for the FOWSP library.

The last pages are filled with some photos and information which I hope you will find of interest. Remember to enjoy this instalment and plan what you can offer for a future newsletter.



TAG workers are not only dependable and hard working, as shown here they are also colourful. Seen here at Andersons Creek, Carolyn and David weeding amongst the established *Poa* sp. (grasses).

Linda Rogan

**Deadline for JUNE edition newsletter is
Friday 20 May 2022**

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

Catch up with the TAG Team

Just because we haven't heard from our fearless TAG team in the last month doesn't mean they haven't been busy as you will see from the following photos and snippets.

Rifle Range from Butterman's Track

On 23rd February and again on 31st March, the TAG team were delighted to see the growth at Rifle Range since our previous visit some two years ago. Plantings from about three years ago are progressing well with many two to four metres high. Ranger Cam's strategy of planting Eucalypts, Acacia and Leptospermum in amongst the bracken worked well, with many surviving and, while spindly, not suffering deer browsing (right above). Less successful were similar plantings of only two years ago in open areas (right below). Despite guards and stakes, these suffered extensive deer damage. We spent both days removing guards from the many established trees, as well as removing persistent belladonna lilies.



Good growth amongst the bracken



Barrie attacking the belladonna lilies



Deer-damaged eucalypt

Endeavour Bank, Pound Bend 3 March
 After extensive planting on National Tree Day three years ago, a small group returned to find extensive growth, especially Lomandra, grasses, Leptospermum, and *Goodenia ovata*. It was a solid morning spent removing guards. (Photo right)

Pauline Toner Reserve

There are no photos from the TAG of 10th March to Pauline Toner Reserve. It was reported that Cam was not able to whistle up a single Eltham Copper Butterfly this time despite the butterflies being plentiful one year ago.



Brian, Barrie working, and Kelvin showing off

Gallatlys Road Pound Bend

TAG of 17th March at Gallatlys Road, was another woody weed exercise. We removed pittosporum, polygala, ivy and other emerging woody weeds.

Our TAG of 24th March to red beard orchid fence was again led by Ranger Phil. Our task was to continue the removal of any emerging woody weeds, and thinning of *Cassinia longifolia* to maintain this important orchid area. In addition to orchids, this location has some remnant *Hibbertia obtusifolia* (grey guinea glower) and is the last known location of *Calochilus paludosus* (red beard orchids) in the Warrandyte State Park. Also present is a small community of *Acacia ulicifolia* (juniper wattle).



Phil and David on woody weed duty



Don, Brian and Barrie after the day's toil at Rifle Range off Buttermans Track. Photo by Carolyn



Barrie, David, Carolyn, Brian and Robyn at Rifle Range enjoying morning tea.



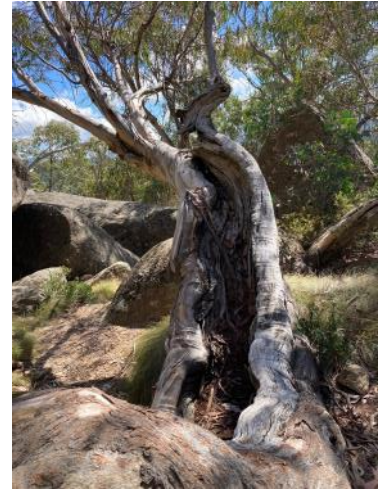
Carolyn, David, Phil and Judith enjoying morning tea.

The Beauty of the Buffalo Plateau



View from The Horn

The Buffalo Plateau is a wonderful alpine enclave, from the snow gum-clad hills and the open alpine grasslands to Lake Catani (below). My aunt and uncle reported ice skating on the lake in the 1930s and 1940s, but apparently it has not frozen over sufficient-



An ancient snow gum

ly for skating since that time. Repeated fires over the past two decades have caused slow recovery in some areas, especially The Horn area at the Southeast tip of the Plateau, but many other areas appear to have recovered better.

Thanks to Don and Carolyn for sharing beauty from a recent trip.



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

5/05/2022	Pauline Toner Reserve	Cam	Planting 130 plants	Easy
12/05/2022	Josh Block Buttermans Tk, Kinglake NP	JOSH/ CATHY	Acacia howittii and Hakea salicifolia removal	Moderate
19/05/2022	Endeavour Bank	ARTUR	Grant planting	Moderate
26/05/2022	Scotchmans Hill	CAROLYN	Weed removal, planting	Easy
2/06/2022	Burgan Bend	PHIL	Orchid maintenance, Planting, Burgan Thinning, Fencing	Easy-Moderate

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.

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

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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
Mel Coupar (Line drawings)

Next Committee Meeting
Date: Tuesday 10 May 2022
Venue: Education Centre, Pound Bend
Time: 19:30 pm sharp

The Andersons Creek catchment excels for butterflies

One of the side benefits of attending TAG work sessions on Thursday mornings is the opportunity to learn about the rare and more common plants and animals from knowledgeable people such as Cam Beardsell. On 14 April Don was able to photograph two of the more rarely seen species toward the end of their flight season in the Fourth Hill/Anderson's Creek Catchment area. Cam has said that this area boasts the most species of breeding butterflies in all of the Middle Yarra area. Thanks to Don for these photos and information.



It requires a sharp and trained eye to see the differences in these two species.

The spotted brown *Heteronympha paradelfa* (left) (distinctive white spot inside black, as shown by the arrow).

Two views of Banks' browns *Heteronympha banksii* male (right).



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

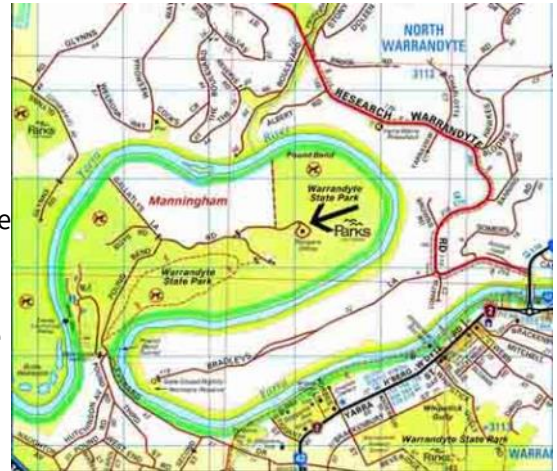
The nursery is open for plant sales every Thursday.
9.30 am to 12.30 pm and

the first Saturday of every month, 9am to 2pm (to coincide with the Warrandyte Market) April to November only.

Closed Christmas and New Years days.

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

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



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NURSERY NEWS

As COVID restrictions continue to ease we would like to remind everyone to be considerate of the health of those around us, particularly our much valued volunteers, a number of whom have underlying health conditions. With this in mind, we would request that you refrain from attending the nursery if you are unwell for any reason.

If you are a close contact of a positive COVID case, but test negative yourself, we remind you that you are still required to wear a mask and to strongly consider staying at home to protect our vulnerable members.

Now that the rain has finally arrived, it is a great time to get out in the garden. To celebrate this, during May, the nursery will be having a sale of selected species, focusing on our wonderful indigenous trees and shrubs. So come down and pick up a bargain.

Lynda Chambers

A reminder that the nursery will be open on Saturday May 7 from 9 am to 1 pm.

SPECIALS include *Acacia dealbata*, which has grown tall but has healthy roots in tube stock. This *Acacia* plant with silvery bipinnate phyllodes has a raised gland at the junction of each pair of leaflets. It is essential to the life of many native insects and is a reliable place to find them in summer.

One January day this year I photographed more than 8 types of insects in a small grove of this *Acacia dealbata*. It is also one of the favourite food plants for colonies of imperial blue butterflies *Jalmenus evagoras*.



Insects on *Acacia dealbata*: a flat-faced long-horned beetle; Botany Bay weevil; Belid weevil and on the right two imperial blue butterflies.

Linda Rogan

Getting to know our local native bees
 Leaf-cutter and resin bees-the megachilids

It would be hard to say which is my favourite group of native bees. However, it is clear that this group, the megachilids, are the ones I have been able to observe the most. Mainly because they are the ones most often found in my bee posts in my garden. At least six species have been identified in or near there. The composite photo below shows some of the stages of a small female resin bee building her nest and finally closing it off with a mix of chewed plant and resin.



Native resin bees are closely related to leaf-cutter bees, both *Megachile* sp. They have powerful mandibles or jaws. I find it hard to tell the two apart on flowers or in photos. Although the abdomen of the leaf-cutter is slightly broader and flatter. Each type has a different nesting strategy. Resin bees choose a narrow, deep hole in wood or rock and line their brood cells with resin. They shape a small ball of nectar and pollen deep inside the hole and lay an egg on this before sealing the hole with a resin and chewed-leaf door. The leaf-cutters differ in that they line and seal their nests with circles cut from leaves which they carry one at a time to their nesting hole from nearby vegetation. They tuck them together to make a snug capsule for their eggs and food supply .

Another exciting aspect of watching bees at their nesting site is capturing the moments when males meet the females. Although the females are the only ones to spend much time at the nesting post, at certain times, especially as females are newly emerging in the spring, males will be seen patrolling the nesting area. They have to be quick because they want to be the first male to catch hold onto the emerging female, thus securing the possibility of mating. In my observation, the coupled megachilids drop to the ground and hide themselves amongst the vegetation while mating occurs . Occasionally they have pauses long enough for me to get some photos (left). The female is the larger of the two with the bigger jaws.



Another time numbers of male megachilids can be seen together is on cool mornings when males can be discovered clustered in their nighttime roosting site. I have seen 12 males with their bright orange tail-tips on a single strand of grass (right).



Linda Rogan

Fourth Hill and Wildcat fenced areas

On 14th April a small dedicated group of TAGers joined Ranger Phil at two sites, Betton Fence and Wildcat Fence. Woody weeds were our target, revisiting these enclosed sites to open them up and allow emergence of rare species including many orchids. This continues the long history of Parks Vic and FOWSP nurturing these valuable sites. We were fortunate to find the diminutive and well-camouflaged sharp midge orchid (*Genoplesium despectans*) with tiny flowers on a stem only about 12 cm tall, and the parson's bands orchid (*Eriochilus cucullatus* photo right), both Autumn flowering.



Parson's bands orchid

Anderson's Creek TAG

A joint TAG with Anderson's Creek Landcare group was led by Fritz on 21 April, with Ranger Cam briefing us on the need to regenerate habitat for the rare banks brown and spotted brown butterflies (see p. 5).

Notably the Fourth Hill area and the Andersons Creek catchment supports a very high diversity of 32 resident breeding butterfly species (Cam Beardsell). Invasive weeds, climate change and predation by deer and kangaroos have led to habitat loss. The group enthusiastically attacked the cocksfoot, sweet vernal and panic veldt-grass to make way for planting and watering 120 *Poa ensiformis*. The latter and wire grass form the main egg laying and larval feeding sites for these butterflies, and Cam is also propagating wire grass for later planting.

Many thanks to TAGers for all this hard work and to Don for photos and reports.



Our ACL partners (Fritz on the right) hard at work clearing a site...



...and Judith clearing another to make way for new planting

Vale Dr Peter Sharp 1960-2020

FOWSP would like extend our condolences to the Sharp family and thank them for donating Peter's galvanized greenhouse table to the nursery. His brother Greg kindly delivered this and it looks like it will be just the right size for the greenhouse. Greg's words are below:

'Peter had a passion for native Australian plants but particularly for those endemic to the Warrandyte area and his garden in Campbell court was a great reflection of this.

He would be really pleased to know his propagating table was being put to good use at FOWSP, where he was a keen supporter of FOWSP over many years.'



BOOK REVIEW

Wings of Change –A Naturalists Guide to Butterflies, Moths and their Caterpillars

by Pat and Mike Coupar

What exciting news: the Coupars have printed a new book on butterflies and moths and their caterpillars! A lucky few long-term FOWSPians treasure their copies of *Flying Colours—Common caterpillars, butterflies and moths of south-eastern Australia*, which was printed in 1992. It has long been out of print. For many years, Pat and Mike have been urged to re-print that beautiful book. Sales of *Flying Colours*, along with Pat's *Green Over Gold* and *Discover Warrandyte*, gave FOWSP the funds required to become financially sustainable. On Page 9 you may like to add that there is a copy of 'Flying Colours' in the FOWSP library - reference number IS708.



Josh was welcomed back from his travels by receiving a copy of this new book

Wings of Change is not just a reprint but an expanded version and is aimed at naturalists who are interested in learning what a caterpillar grows into rather than just being able to tie a name to the adults they may observe. This book contains most of the information of the first book, such as finding, collecting and rearing caterpillars, with the following additional chapters:

Classification and characteristics; caterpillars as pest and biological controls; conservation; attracting butterflies and moths to your garden.

The 184 pp. includes additional families of moths and species of moths and butterflies. Each species includes common and scientific names, photos and descriptions of the caterpillar, adult and often both sexes where they are notably different. (See figure right). They also include occurrence and foodplants, notes on the pupa and sometimes a story about how the caterpillars were found and hints on rearing the species.

As the book is self-published, certain things such as an index have not been included.

If this information has peaked your interest, the most important thing to know is that there are only around 50 copies left. The

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131 Moths

Wings of Change

BOISDUVAL'S AUTUMN MOTH *Oenosandra boisduvalii*



Caterpillar Size 45-50 mm. A fleshy greenish-grey sparsely hairy caterpillar with small white spots over the body. The head is orange-brown.

Occurrence Southern Australia. Autumn, winter and spring. Open *Eucalyptus* forest. The caterpillars rest in groups during the day under bark and feed at night. May be found by searching under bark.

Foodplant *Eucalyptus* spp., including Narrow-leaf Peppermint *E. radiata* particularly young leaves.



Photo: Peter Marriott

Male

Pupa Pupation occurs in a woven cocoon in the soil.

Adult Males and females are so different they were thought to be different species. Wingspan: 50-55 mm. The forewings of the female (photographed) are white with a broad orange speckled black band. There is a large tuft of white hair on top of the head. The male has pale greyish-brown forewings with scattered gold and black spots. The hindwings are cream without spots. The abdomen of both sexes is striped in orange and black. Adults play dead dropping to the ground if disturbed. Flight period: autumn.



Female

Note: we have found female moths during the day resting on low shrubs and on the trunks of eucalypt trees.

Coupar have kindly suggested that half the price of each book sold though FOWSP will go to help support our conservation efforts.

These books are currently in Mallacoota. If you are interested email our treasurer Lyndy as follows: treasurer@fowsp.org.au with your name and postal address and Lyndy will arrange for you to pay \$26 plus postage via FOWSP and arrange for the book to be posted from Mallacoota.

Review by Linda Rogan



Two gorgeous insects found at Jumping Creek Reserve and photographed during a visit by the Entomological Society of Victoria on 23 April 2022.

Left is the shiny satin moth known as Clara's satin moth *Thalaina clara*. It was named in 1855 and I was unable to find out who Clara was. The larvae feed on *Acacia mearnsii* and *Acacia dealbata*. (Another reason to grow *Acacia dealbata*.)

Right is the colourful, pleasing fungus beetle. It is in the genus *Episcaphila* and apparently feeds on fungus such as bracket fungus on trees. *Linda Rogan*

Are your subs due??

Please check the message on the email you receive with the newsletter link . If they are due soon a message such as below will be included in the email.:

'Please note that, according to our records, your Membership is due to expire on . Please click on the link below to re-new your Membership.

http://fowsp.org.au/membership.php?member_id=&membership_renewal=Yes

Of course, if this matter has been attended to recently, please disregard.'

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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 photo bonus page



My first sighting of the feather-legged bug. I have seen drawings and been keen to find these bugs while searching under falling gum bark. Success came at Jumping Creek Reserve on 23 April 2022. On the right are the young. Even the adult is few millimeters long so hard to see. The amazing thing about these bugs is *Ptilocnemus* have a trichome (specialized gland) on the underside of the abdomen whose exudate is avidly sought by ants when the bug raises itself to allow them access. The secretion is narcotic and makes the ants easy prey.

Linda Rogan

Stop Press:

Cathy Willis, just back from United Arab Emirates, reports 'Josh and I were lucky enough to meet up with a fellow member of the UAE Natural History Group, for a guided tour of parts of the Al Wathba Wetland Reserve. Claudia Steuber is a German geologist living in the UAE, and has become the 'volunteer expert' (her words) on all things 'Al Wathba wetlands'. For a peek at just a few of the birds here see below. We hope to hear and see more in the June newsletter.



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



Mystery tagger on
Rifle Range work day