June 2022 **Volume 40 Number 5**

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*

It is always pleasing to see new faces at the FOWSP nursery. On Thursday 19 May, we had the bright young faces of the two truck drivers (right). They took some of our venerable trucks for a bit of a spin.

We also had Sophia and Simon helping to fill trays with newly pricked out plants (below). Simon had learned of FOWSP when attending one of the propagation courses. We hope to see them again.

This month we have had lots of action with orchids beginning to appear where the TAGers are working (p. 2) and Frogland features on p. 3.

Two young truck drivers honing their driver skills at the FOWSP nursery and Mum chooses plants

Gray gives us two stories. First, p. 7 'Why the Pound in Pound Bend?' and second, 'Mistletoe tales inspired from FOWSP' on p. 8.

There's more to learn about some of our local native bees, the carpenter bees, on p. 9.

The newsletter finishes with a few more photos from around FOWSP.

Please enjoy, *Linda Rogan*

Deadline for July/August edition newsletter is
Friday 17 June 2022
contributions can be emailed to Linda Rogan editor@fowsp.org.au
or posted to PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113

TAG of 28th April to Fiddler Fence

Continuing our series of TAGs to the Fourth Hill area including the fenced enclosures, ranger Phil led us to Fiddler Fence. Following a cool burn in March 2020 that TAGgers had assisted PV prepare, there has been a prolific response from the seed bank in the soil, with native grasses, *Acacia genistifolia*, *Acacia pycnantha*, *Hardenbergia violacea, Pultanaea gunnii* and *P. prostrata* all evident.

Brian, Phil and David in full planting mode post the 2020 cool burn

Phil noted that Wine Lip Spider Orchids *Caladenia oenochila* and Woodland Plumed Orchid *Pterostylis plumosa*, which thrives after fire, had emerged, confirming the value of the burn.

This area is the last refuge on Fourth Hill of Bearded Greenhood *Pterostylis plumosa* (the pollinator may be extinct locally).

The small group enthusiastically planted Woolly Wattle *Acacia lanigera*, Arching Flax Lily *Dianella perfragrans,* Twiggy Daisy Bush *Olearia ramulosa*, and Grey Guinea flower *Hibbertia obtusifolia*, followed by equally enthusiastic removal of any emerging woody weeds. Also evident were some of the autumn orchids, including the minute Tiny Greenhood *Pterostylis parviflora* .

Tiny Greenhood *Pterostylis parviflora* suffering some insect attack, with one of the giant Fourth Hill mosquitoes for size comparison

Return to Pauline Toner Reserve

It's always a pleasure when the TAG is led by a ranger, especially Cam. He is so knowledgeable, has a lifetime of experience as a ranger and is an avid observer of the natural environment. This time we were at Pauline Toner Butterfly Reserve planting Sweet Bursaria for the Eltham Copper butterflies and Themeda for the Blunt Greenhood orchids seen last year.

FOWSPians planting *Themeda* sp. (right) near the Greenhood orchids (above). The following question asked on Facebook is yet to be answered: 'Do the Themeda and the Greenhoods have an association?' If you know the answer, please let us know.

Frogland, luscious in May

There has been enough rain to give Frogland a much greener appearance. The top pond is staying full with *Persicaria decipiens* which is currently in bud and will give us pink flowers for the native bees in spring and summer (photo right).

The juniper wattle *Acacia ulicifolia* is in full bloom with pale yellow pompoms but the prickly foliage discourages too close an inspection (photo left).

It was pleasing to see the muttonwood plants *Myrsine howittiana,* about six of which were planted a few years ago, appear to be surviving and slowly gaining height. Planted in slightly moist areas just downhill from the bottom pond, they have survived without additional water over two very dry summers. It is important for locals to become familiar with this slow-growing indigenous shrub as to the untrained eye it superficially resembles the sweet pittosporum *Pittosporum undulatum* (an east Gippsland plant which is weedy in our locality). Rumour has it that some 'professional' weeders mistakenly removed muttonwood within the park. It is usually found in moist forests or along rivers and streams (photo right). When mature it produces attractive purple berries.

An interesting newcomer in Frogland is the satin everlasting *Xerochrysum leucocidium* (photo left). Rare in our area but found a few years ago near Sugarloaf. We hope it will thrive in a spot near the upper pathway.

Gall facts from Long Forest

On 1 May Peter and I were part of a nature photography group who visited Long Forest. Strolling along the pathways (below), amongst the bull mallee, several of us noticed these large growths, reminding me of hard green olives (below), on some of the bull mallee trees. With the help of iNaturalist I was able to learn the nature of the insect which creates these growths.

Although some galls are caused by small wasps, these particular ones are produced by felt scale insects.

(Continued on 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

2/06/2022	**Burgan Bend**	**PHIL**	Orchid maintenance, Planting, Burgan Thinning, Fencing	Easy-Moderate
9/06/2022	**Endeavour Bank**	**ARTUR**	Grant planting	Moderate
16/06/2022	**Mt Lofty**	**PHIL**	Planting and reveg maintenance (Yarra Gums et al.)	Moderate
23/06/2022	**Walert Creek**	**DON**	Maintenance and replanting	Easy-Moderate
30/06/2022	**Pound Bend slash break**		Weeding	Easy
7/07/2022	**Scotchmans Hill**	**CAROLYN**	Weed removal, planting	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.

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

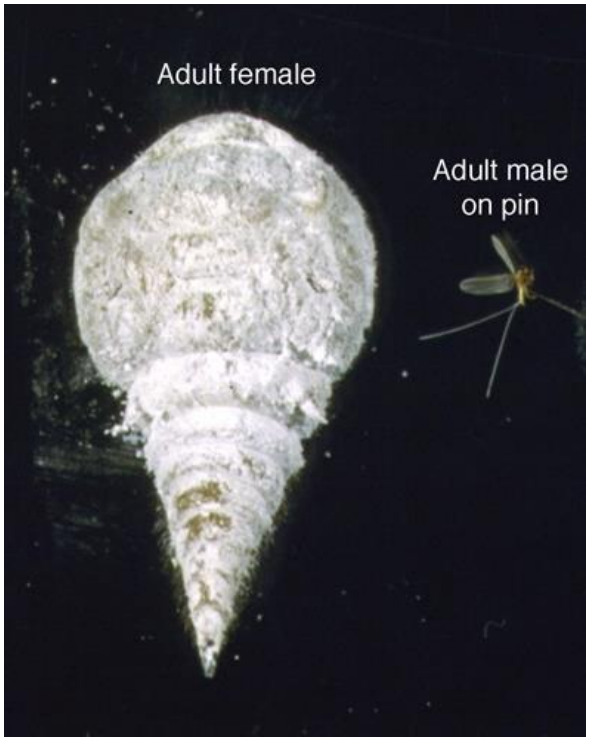
Please note TAGS and activities will be cancelled on Total Fire Ban days or when weather conditions are deemed hazardous.

FOWSP COMMITTEE 2021-2022			OTHER FOWSP CONTACTS
Artur Muchow	**0415 383328**	**Secretary**	**Nursery Manager Josh Revell** **Nursery Phone 0408 317 327** **email nursery@fowsp.org.au**
Lynda Gilbert	**9844 0106**	**Treasurer and Membership**	**Park Office 03 8427 2132**
Linda Rogan	**0491 112 692** **editor@fowsp.org.au**	**Newsletter editor**	**Newsletter assist and Librarian** **Gloria Moore 0402 285005**
		Facebook Coordinator	**Carolyn Noel 0409 901441**
Gray Ardern	**0418 190261**		**Market Trailer Jan Falconer** **9844 1226 or 0419 872 096** **email trailer@fowsp.org.au**
Lynda Chambers	**0466 274421** **phenologist@gmail.com**		**Manningham Council Rep** **Cathy Willis 0427 660 651**
Lyn Moore	**0409 683 041** **lynm333g@gmail.com**	Wildlife rescue Victoria https://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/contact-us	**Webmaster** **Jason Patton 0402 121838** **jason@parau.com**
Kelvin Watkins	**0488 039 774**		Website: www.fowsp.org.au
Jeff Cranston	**0418 396 647** **legality@bigpond.com**		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, Lyn Moore

Next Committee Meeting	
Date:	Tuesday 14 June 2022
Venue:	Education Centre, Pound Bend
Time:	19:30 pm sharp



(Continued from page 4)

Wondering what felt scales look like, I investigated further. The following information and photo left, about the felt scale, is from Wikipedia.

'Adult females are wingless, have very small (or no) eyes, and their legs are short and stubby (see left). A female remains within the gall she initiated when a crawler, mating through the small apical opening of her gall. She reproduces inside the gall and her tiny offspring (≤ 0.4 mm) escape through the same small opening'. 'Adult females of *Apiomorpha* can range in length from 2 mm to 45 mm, depending on species, and can live up to five years as adults. In contrast, adult males of *Apiomorpha* are small (about 1 mm in length) and winged (see left). ...they do not have a mouth and, instead, have an extra pair of eyes on the underside of their head (i.e., they have four eyes, two on top and two underneath). Males leave their galls (below) as adults and search for females. They are weak fliers and typically walk on their host plant looking for females before taking to the air. After leaving their gall, adult males only live about one day'.

I was amazed to learn how these tiny insects make such a mark on the form of the Eucalypts. Each of the offspring make their own gall with females' being like the ones on p. 4 and males like the ones seen on the right.

Linda Rogan

FOWSP THURSDAY PROGRAM

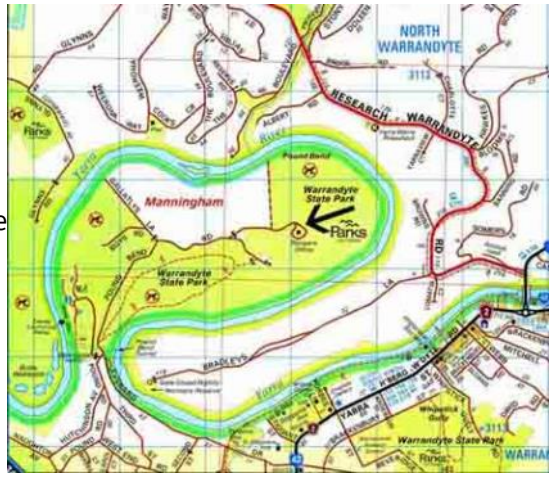
We meet for propagation and other nursery activities every Thursday morning at 9.30 am at the Warrandyte State Park depot, Pound Bend Road, Warrandyte (Melway 23 C10), unless otherwise stated below. Propagation takes place from 9.30 am to 12.30 midday.

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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Environment links on Manningham Council website

With the re-arranged Manningham Council website, it appears the link below is the place where all things environmental appear.

https://www.manningham.vic.gov.au/about-council/environment-and-sustainability

The council has an e-newsletter you can subscribe to to keep up to date with their latest environment and sustainability events

Our Climate Action Plan

As a Green Wedge Shire, Nillumbik Council is acutely aware of the multiple threats facing all communities and ecosystems as a result of climate change. This requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local government. Council has Declared a Climate Emergency, commits to a climate emergency response, and will proactively integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation into all Council actions. For more information see the link below:
https://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Explore/Climate-and-sustainability/Climate-change

https://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Explore/Environment/Events-activities-and-education
Examples of activities below:
18 June 2022 Composting and worm farming

3 July 2022 How to Create a Habitat Garden At Nillumbik Nursery

Why the Pound in Pound Bend?

Have you ever wondered why Pound Bend is called Pound Bend? Or why Pound Road is called Pound Road?

The pound in these names has nothing to do with the pre-decimal currency – it refers to the animal pound that used to exist at the bottom of the hill.

When I was a boy, the site near the tunnel and between Everard Drive and Pound Road was indeed an animal pound – that is to say, a place where stray animals were impounded. It was built in the 19th century, from sturdy post-and-rail bush timbers, and the Pound Keeper's cottage, still standing but now modified, was situated on the opposite side of Pound Road.

We children used to try to ride any horses that were impounded there – miraculously without any broken bones!

On one occasion there was a billygoat with magnificent horns – I implored Mr. Hutchinson, the pound keeper, to let me have him if he were not claimed. Billy was not claimed, so I triumphantly led him home – but unfortunately for me, and even more unfortunately for Billy, my mother insisted that I took that 'stinking useless animal' back to Mr Hutchinson.

Billy disappeared but I soon got over my grief and forgot about him. However, much later I found his bleached skeleton in the bush — apparently where Mr Hutchinson had shot him. I took the skull, with its magnificent horns home and Dad mounted it above our old garage where it hung for many, many years.

The sturdy timbers of the Pound were burnt in the bushfire that swept through Warrandyte in the early 60s, but the pound was never rebuilt.

This photo was taken on 5 May about 1 week after a large group of concerned local people had completed their work

With the installation of a crossover in recent times, more and more cars have gained easy access, wearing down the former grassy surface right down to the subsoil - with the eroded soil being washed into the Yarra.
Apart from this regrettable damage, local residents have also been irritated by the littering of the site and the unsavoury behaviour of some of the visitors.

Now I had better be a bit careful about how I express this, but I hope I can say, uncontroversially, that appeals for remedial action by the powers-that-be have so far been agonisingly slow and indecisive. Well – this is Warrandyte, so the community has simply gone ahead and begun planting out the site with indigenous vegetation.

In spite of the infertile, exposed nature of the site, and the long hot and dry spells, the determined "guerrilla gardeners" have achieved wonders - do admire when you are next passing by!

Gray

Mistletoe tales inspired from FOWSP

Volunteers at the nursery on Thursdays have their morning tea beneath a splendid large mistletoe, *Amyema pendula*. Drooping mistletoe is its common name, appropriately enough!

This species is the most common one in Victoria, but nationwide there are another 90+ species of mistletoe. *A. pendula* is in Loranthaceae family, along with 70 or so other Australian species, but there is also a smaller family of mistletoes, namely the Viscaceae. The latter family contains the Christmas kissing mistletoe of the northern hemisphere, best known to us from Christmas cards.*

Many mistletoes are spectacularly beautiful plants, and they all provide important ecological services, which include feeding birds, insects and furry animals including sugar gliders.

Of course the jewel-like mistletoe bird immediately springs to mind, but another 30+ birds feed on the flowers and fruit, including the endangered regent honeyeater.

Another 245 species of birds have been recorded nesting in mistletoes – for over a decade a pair of little ravens raised a chick or two each year in a stick nest atop a drooping mistletoe at my place.

The larvae of 20+ butterfly species, including Azures and Jezebels, also feed on the nutritious leaves, as do possums. (Also see p.10).

That's not all, by any means! The host eucalypts provide poor shade for wildlife, but mistletoes provide dense shade and safe hiding places. Host plants usually withdraw nutrients from their leaves before shedding them, but when mistletoes shed their leaves they are still full of nutrients — to the benefit of ground-dwelling diners.

These diners are not just the furred and feathered varieties, but include invertebrates and fungi. Not surprisingly, the soil beneath mistletoes is more fertile than beneath trees without mistletoes.

The flowers and fruits of the mistletoe tend to be available at times when such foodstuffs are in short supply.

The sweet, fat-rich fruits of mistletoes were a food source for aboriginal people – and Warrandyte children of an earlier age. I am told that these fruits were called snotty gobbles, but I assure you that we did not call them that!

One remarkable characteristic of mistletoes is that they not only parasitise trees – they frequently parasitise one another! I have twice seen *Viscum articulatum* as a parasite on *Dendropthoe homoplasticum* (right).

I had to tell you that, in order to be able to trot out this dreadful bit of a doggerel:
Big fleas have little fleas
Upon their backs to bite 'em.
Little fleas have smaller fleas
And so *ad infinitum*.

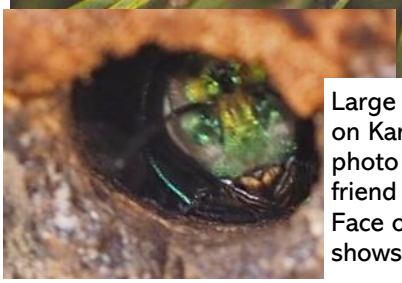
Gray

*Linda Rogan's memories from childhood in Oregon were collecting these 'kissing' mistletoes after her father used a rifle to drop them from high in the wild oak trees.

Getting to know our local native bees

Carpenter bees large and small

Carpenter bees are a subfamily of the varied Apidae family, which includes all the blue-banded bees, teddy bear bees, stingless bees (which live along the NSW coast and further north) and of course our exotic European honeybees.



Large green carpenter bee on Kangaroo Island (top photo was taken by my friend Bernhard Jacobi. Face of the female bee shows below.

Large Carpenter bees

In Australia, the large carpenter bees are some of the largest and most impressive bees because we do not have any native bumblebees (although feral bumblebees are now common in Tasmania). Perhaps this is why some of our large carpenter bees are mistakenly called 'bumblebees'. Sadly, none of the native large carpenter bees exist in Victoria. This was not always the case. In the late 1800s, the beautiful green carpenter bee was once common in both Victoria and South Australia. It now tenuously hangs on only in a small part of Kangaroo Island SA. I was lucky enough to visit Kangaroo Island, in 2016 and see this exquisite large carpenter bee.

The large green carpenter bee is extinct in Victoria and you are very unlikely to see any large carpenter bees within Victoria.

Small carpenter bees

Happily, you are highly likely to see lots of the small carpenter bees, especially members of the genus *Exoneura.* Typically the *Exoneura* species have a glossy black head and thorax, and often a small cream or yellow face marking. The red abdomen has a distinctive wedge shape that serves a very special purpose. The flat rear surface is used to block the entrance of their nest, which is usually a burrow, inside a pithy stem. These small but attractive bees are remarkable in several ways: Two or more females may share a burrow but not all will lay eggs. Unusually the way the young are piled loosely within the burrow, where they are fed moistened pollen by the adults until they pupate, still loose within the burrow. Also unusual is the fact that the adults live over winter with both males and female dormant in the nest and then getting an early start with nesting in the spring.

Exoneura species feeding on *Angophora* (above) and white heath (right).

Similar to the large green carpenter bees on Kangaroo Island, at least one species of local *Exoneura* choose to nest in the dying stalks of grass tree flowers. These stalks become rare after ten years post bushfire leading to *an Exoneura* housing shortage.

Linda Rogan

June 2022 Vol. 40 no.5

Mistletoe day moth

This beautiful day moth is another insect that is dependent upon the mistletoe as a food plant for their caterpillars. (See Gray's article on p. 8). Similar to the adult, the caterpillars are black and white with flashes of red. As well as feeding from the flowers, the clever females lay their eggs in batches on the clumps of mistletoe.

This photo was taken in January 2020 .

Bee seeking warmth??

This male *Homalictus* species bee is remarkable only in that it appeared on our window (inside) when the inside temperature was about 18° and outside about 16° at a time of year when I seldom see any local native bee activity. It looks to me very similar to *H. punctatus* which may be seen roosting together in clusters in the hundreds over summer.

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 renew 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.'

FOWSP Membership Renewal Form

Name .....

Address .....

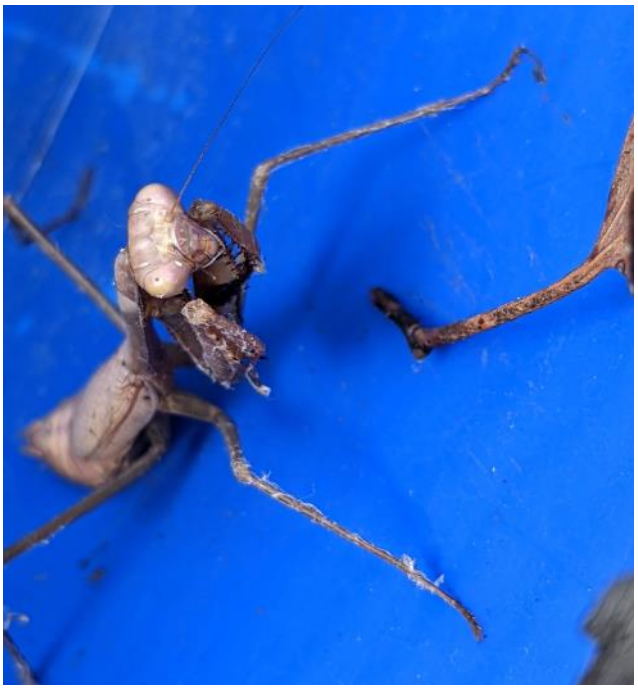
..... ☐

Telephone no. ..... **Email** .....

Membership (family) $30
Concession $15

Newsletter by email (tick box)

Email photo bonus page



- First one predator from the nursery. Louise brought this female false garden mantid *Pseudomantis albofimbriata*, down to Frogland for me to photograph. It had been gaining her attention by crawling on her shoulder.
- Secondly, a tiny beetle which was one of hundreds feeding on some of the native hemp *Gynatrix pulchella.* We have many of these shrubs which have self-seeded in Frogland and I expect sufficient numbers of this plant will fully recover from the partial defoliation and not be a problem.
- Below left, one of the autumn greenhoods *Pterostylis ampliata* (previously *P. revoluta*) which are thriving around the Warrandyte area at the moment..
- Lastly an attractive assemblage of fungi in my back garden which could be *Oudemansiella* likely in the *gigaspora* group.

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

Nature designed this charming arrangement together with the bonsai *Allocasuarina* at the FOWSP nursery.