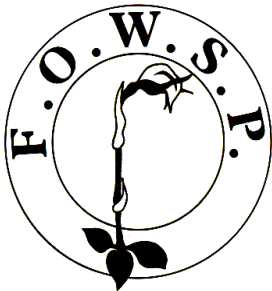


July 2024

Volume 42 Number 6

Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

Website: www.fowsp.org.au

Friends of Warrandyte State
Park (FOWSP) Inc. PO Box 220

Editor's Corner

A bumper newsletter this month.

We have the usual ***Around the Traps*** on page 2. That's basically it from me as I've been the recipient of a number of excellent articles for this edition.

Firstly, on p3. is the second half of Carolyn Noel's article on the Pollinator Garden. Pages 4 and 5 have another update on Froglands from Linda Rogan. Really, if you haven't been there recently, you should, as it is looking a treat.

Lisa Jenkin is going to write a series of articles on, of all things, weeds! Her first piece, on the History of Weeds in Australia, is on pp6-8 and it is an excellent read.

Don Vincent has written about the TAG activities in June on pp9-10. This may be the last for a while, as he and Carolyn are off to WA for a couple of months. Hopefully, other members of the TAG team will keep us updated.

Finally, I am indebted to Cathy Willis from Manningham Council for a report on the use of rope bridges to facilitate wildlife crossing of busy roads. I've summarised the report on p12.

John Young



A male Mistletoebird "*Dicaeum hirundinaceum*". Found all over Australia, where mistletoe occurs. They are, however, much more common in northern Australia. Josh photographed one in mistletoe near the office years ago but I have never seen one around Warrandyte.

**Deadline for August's edition newsletter is
Friday July 19th, 2024**

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

Around The Traps

Birthday Thursday



Again, nobody owned up to a birthday in June, therefore depriving us of a chance of an off-key rendition of "Happy Birthday". Still, the cake was delicious.

Recipe of the month

Spiced Carrot Dip

4 (about 500g) carrots chopped
 1 1/2 cups of water
 1/2 large vegetable stock cube, crumbled
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1 tablespoon white vinegar
 1 glove garlic crushed
 1/4 teaspoon ground oregano
 1/4 teaspoon paprika
 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
 (I am usually heavy-handed with the oregano and cumin)

Combine carrots, water and stock cube in a saucepan and bring to boil. Simmer, covered, about 15 minutes or until carrots are tender.

Drain and discard the stock.

Combine carrots with remaining ingredients, cover and cool.

Blend or process carrot mixture until smooth.

Serve with peppers, olives and bread.

Sybille



This is a Honey Badger "*Mellivora capensis*" or Ratel. The only species in the genus *Mellivora*, it is not a badger but it does like honey.

It is also extremely strong and ferocious and, apparently, holds grudges. In Lynda Chambers' recent African trip, she was advised by local staff **NOT** to try and find one in case of disaster. Hopefully, we'll have more tales from Africa in the future.



Lisa takes special care of the indigenous ferns at the nursery. Her eye was caught by these delicate fungi at the base of this fern as she weeded. Our guess is that they are a sort of *Mycena*.

The Pollinator Garden

Part 2 of 2

In the early stages of the garden, two *Pomaderris lanigera* were planted. Since these shrubs can grow up to 3m high, they seemed very inappropriately placed at the time – north-facing, close to the car park and near the stock garden from which Alwynne takes her cuttings. But the intention was always to keep them small through topiary. After 9 years these shrubs are still only 80cm tall but still very handsome examples of native plants. Their compact pompom form enhances their show of flowers each August. These two shrubs demonstrate that some native plants can be shaped and included into very formal gardens.



"Pompom" Pomaderris



Water bath with Lythrum etc.

With the addition of a new roof over the orchid area, the garden received another

big bonus. Since the new roof had to be put on at a different direction to the original, it was decided that the guttering should collect the rain water and deliver it to a bath placed in the pollinator garden. The overflow from the bath runs via an aggie pipe into one of the swales. I'm sure it has been instrumental in keeping our Correas and Indigofera thriving despite the long dry spells. It also provides the added bonus of some flowering water plants for our bee smorgasbord as well as becoming a home for tadpoles.

Recently, two taller red gum posts were added. The garden has grown so tall the sign was obscured from view and more bee nesting places were called for. The new posts were put beside the old ones and the sign raised.



The garden is now a thriving oasis that seems to be regenerating itself. But there is one area of the garden that just refuses to grow. The plants in this area die quite quickly despite being watered and fed. After reading a few chapters of *Teaming with Microbes*, a book about the soil food web by Jeff Lowenfels and Wayne Lewis, it seems possible that this area of soil is dead: there are no microbes here. The book states that soil doesn't make a plant. In fact, it is the other way around: the plants make the soil by attracting microbes to their roots. More experimentation is underway to try to find a way to activate this soil using natural methods. This book is also located in the FOWSP library.

Carolyn Noel

Frogland enters winter

The mizzly, chilly weather of mid-June didn't keep the stalwart FOWSPians away. Three members of the Frogland team may have thought twice but all agreed to feeling warmer and much better for coming out to work. There was much to pique my interest.



Red pathway fungi were in sight on our pathway. Elizabeth Hatfield identified these on iNat as *Leratiomyces ceres*. Wikipedia says it is commonly known as the chip cherry or redlead roundhead and is a mushroom which has a bright red to orange cap and dark purple-brown spores. It is usually found growing gregariously on wood chips and is one of the most common and most distinctive mushrooms found in that habitat. The name *Stropharia aurantiaca* has been used extensively but incorrectly for this mushroom (together with a number of similar synonyms).

The rain had topped up both the ponds and the ephemeral swamp. I will be watching for the appearance of the swamp everlasting (*Xerochrysum palustre*) which were planted last year. They should appear when the weather warms in Spring. (see top right next column)

Most exciting find of the day was thanks to Chris who noticed something strange moving on her jacket and instead of brushing it off, brought it to Linda for inspection. This was obviously a stick insect and iNat phasmid enthusiasts quickly identified it as *Ctenomorpha marginipennis*, the margin-winged stick insect, a species of stick insect endemic to southern Australia.



This resembles a eucalyptus twig and feeds upon trees including eucs. This was just a young one and to me it looked like a casuarina needle but I don't know whether it feeds upon Casuarina trees as well.



Since grazing and browsing animals are excluded from Frogland our cherry ballart (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*) has a particularly attractive weeping habit (see picture left). It is pleasing to have several healthy specimens with-

in Frogland. These trees are parasitic in that they require nourishment on the roots of other trees. This means they are difficult to propagate and especially to establish artificially.

Frogland enters winter (cont'd)



A mature Cherry Ballart

Frogland is not without its own brand of autumn colour. For example, the river bulrush (*Bolboschoenus fluviatilis*) adds a splash of yellow in the cold. We will cut it back later in the season.



At least two plants are showing early winter blooms. *Grevillea rosmarinifolia* with its tiny pink snail-like flowers are blooming well on a plant which sits beside its ID sign. This is particularly pleasing because it is hard to keep the signs near good examples of each plant.



It is also pleasing to see so many blooms on several common heath (*Epacris impressa*) which were transplanted from pots they had outgrown earlier this year. We are watching them carefully as they do not always transplant well and are difficult to propagate from seeds and from cuttings.



The white Epacris is also in bloom. It is the floral emblem of Victoria and although often known as pink heath, the usual local form has white flowers. We hope we will be able to collect some seeds from September this year.

Linda Rogan

A little history of weeds in Victoria

You'd think there would be ready consensus on weeds, on what they are and whether it's good to remove them — something like the adage 'I may not know much about art but I know what I like'. But there's a distinct ambiguity about weeds, especially in a colonised country like Australia, where most of the plants around us are introduced. When it comes to being a plant in the wrong place, whose place and when the plant under question got there is part of the problem.



Clearing mallee scrub

Early colonists were, of course, looking at the Australian landscapes in front of them with an eye to survival. They saw plants that would impede their efforts to grow food and that therefore had to be removed. In the first instance that meant clearing. Victorians were especially adept at this form of 'weeding', notoriously removing the vast swathes of forests that covered the state. But weeding was also tending the crops that colonists planted, removing the small plants that grew amongst their deliberately planted crops. And a good number of those were 'weeds,' the seeds of which had travelled from Britain mixed in with the seeds that they deliberately planted.

So which are the weeds? The trees that they cleared, the wheat that they chose to grow or the plants that hitched a ride — perhaps fumitory (*Fumaria officinalis*), chickweed (*Stellaria media*) or linseed (*Linum usitatissimum*), all identified in Melbourne as weeds by 1859, and still

considered weeds of arable land in Britain and environmental weeds in Victoria today?

Indigenous Australians must have looked on matters entirely differently. For them, colonization was a great tsunami of species — plant, animal and human — that threatened to wipe them out altogether. Bill Gammage and Bruce Pascoe have written about how cattle brought by the colonists destroyed yam daisies (*Microseris* species) that were being farmed by Indigenous peoples, for example.



Indigenous women farming yam daisies

And the British colonists brought their own sets of association with these species, along with the plants themselves. Most colonists would have had some contact with the plants of hedgerows, fallow fields and wastelands, places that traditionally provided medicinal and food plants for the rural poor. Fumitory, for example, was used for digestive problems, skin conditions and conjunctivitis;



A convict gardening

A little history of weeds in Victoria (cont'd)

chickweed for wound healing; and linseed for certain kinds of cancer, amongst other things.

So fumitory was a weed when it was in a wheat crop but a valuable remedy when a child had eczema. And since the British colonist brought their class system to the colonies and practices of land ownership, a convict might weed fumitory out of a wheat crop for a wealthy squatter, having little invested in the value of a well-weeded field but would certainly be interested in physicking her family with a familiar plant.

Another ambiguity arose from the influence of an intellectual movement that was born around the same time as the Sydney and Hobart colonies. For Romantics, weeds were a symbolic counterpoint to the restrictions of civilization, a sign of nature freely acting despite human attempts to control it. In his poem 'To the small celandine,' Wordsworth favourably compares the celandine (*Ficaria verna*, a traditional cure for haemorrhoids and now an invasive species in much of the United States and Canada) to pansies, lilies and violets, seeing it a modest, native harbinger of spring. The celandine, are like the rural poor whom Wordsworth celebrated for their closeness to nature, out and about on the moors and in the woods — 'there's not a place,/Howsoever mean it be,/But 'tis good enough for thee'. And the painter Caspar David Friedrich, who, like Wordsworth, thought deeply about time and what it meant, used weeds to represent passing time



Friedrich's Eldena

and, by extension, sublime connection to the spiritual world. For Wordsworth and Friedrich weeds were a way to appreciate the natural and spiritual worlds, seasonal cycles and the inevitability of decay and death.

There's a modern version of this. Urban activists argue for the aesthetic and environmental benefits of 'spontaneous urban plants' and in the related phenomena of 'novel ecosystems,' human-built environments that can't be restored but which are inhabited by new combinations of plants and animals. People like Sophie Leguil, who runs a website called morethanweeds.org, want to change perceptions of weeds growing in, say, pavement cracks or on abandoned city land and end the 'alienation from nature' experienced by so many urban dwellers. Some other advantages, the argument goes, is that weeds help maintain biodiversity, cool cities and sequester carbon. Honouring weeds, Leguil says, 'may be a first step needed to heal our broken relationship with nature'.



Guerilla gardening

A little history of weeds in Victoria (cont'd)

At FOWSP we deal with weeds according to the category that they've been formally placed in. Those considered most serious are WONS, or Weeds of National Significance. There are 32 WONS, species which have been deemed to be major threats to agriculture, the environment or social health. The WONS that affect Manningham and Nillumbik include bridal creeper (*Asparagus asparagoides*) and blackberries (*Rubus fruticosus*).

Then there are noxious weeds. They are species that have been 'declared' to be noxious because they do, or have the potential, to cause harm. There are four subcategories. They include St John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) and watsonia (*Watsonia meriana* var. *bulbilifera*). Landholders are required to control or remove plants in these categories. The third major category are environmental weeds and that includes agapanthus (*Agapanthus praecox* ssp. *Orientalis*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Environmental weeds threaten natural ecosystems but are not (yet) officially 'declared'. Plants can be on all three lists.

There are other categories and lists — for example, Agricultural Sleeper Weeds, the National Alert List for Environmental Weeds, the National Priority List of Exotic Environmental Pests, Weeds and Diseases and 'Conflict species', plants that provide significant economic benefits but which have the potential to be highly invasive (*Pinus radiata*, for example).

The only ambiguity most of us face when weeding is precise identification. Since we're working on bushland conservation and rehabilitation, we remove the lot-WONS, noxious weeds and environmental weeds - whether on TAGS or in the nursery.

But we all must have more complicated memories or associations with plants that are on one of these lists. One of mine is of first seeing Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) in its natural setting in Monterey, California, not far from infestations of Tasmanian blue gum (*Eucalyptus globu-*

lus). A friend who had a few on her property would darkly mutter about how everyone hated them. I realized that in that wild, international moving around of plants in the late 19th century, we had simply swapped plants — native to one place but weeds in the other. And I remember collecting quaking grass seedheads (*Briza maxima*) as a child, for making Christmas decorations.



Briza maxima

So I thought I'd write some articles for you all on the history of weeds in Australia — what came from where and why. I'll be looking at some 'favourites' such as agapanthus, prickly pear and blackberries through the lens of those who brought them here. Hopefully, you can have a bit of history in mind when you're head down, bum up, weeding away in this particularly weedy winter. I'm looking at you, oxalis!

Lisa Jenkin

Editor's note:

Lisa included a comprehensive list of references in this article which were omitted because of space. Please contact me as editor if you wish to see any of the sources of the pictures or other information.

TAGs in 2024

We have reached the halfway mark in the year, with a diversity of weekly TAGs, including ten with rangers Phil and/or Cam, that involved woody weeding, grassy weeding, planting from river flats to rocky hillsides, construction of exclosures, and even an impromptu day of tank painting! TAGgers are all very enthusiastic as well as energetic, and our mornings are always capped off with an enjoyable morning tea prepared by Sybille and Kay.



Above: Robyn and Geoff eagerly await morning tea

We have had memorable moments such as the sighting of a pair of peregrine falcons at Spadoni's, or preparing beds for rare orchids.

The most recent rare orchid event on 30th May was our second foray to Boomers Reserve to dig and place soil, charcoal and fibre in preparation for planting of the charming spider orchid '*Caladenia amoena*'. This endangered species has had only five populations recorded since the 1960s. One locality was discovered on

private property next to Boomers by Cam, but the property was subsequently developed and the orchid population exterminated.



Above: Brian, Barrie, Kelvin and David preparing the bed

Cam collected seed from another population and, through Parks Vic in collaboration with the Royal Botanic Gardens and DEECA (Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action), is seeking to reestablish these precious gems in Boomers. Another site is being established in Plenty Gorge.



Above: Cam puts in the finishing touches

TAGs in 2024 (cont'd)

On 6th and 13th June, TAGs were at Endeavour Bank to acquit a grant received from Melbourne Water for floodplain restoration.

Over the past 5 years, some 8 ten-metre square fenced exclosures have been established along with their attendant plantings to reestablish a range of eucalypts, acacia, pomaderris, correa, caryx, myrsine and grasses. Despite some predation and extensive weed growth, the exclosures have had moderate to good plant survival.

The grant has enabled us to, so far, more than double the area of three exclosures and complete planting while the soil is damp.

Don Vincent

Right: The TAG team working on the exclosures



Below: Joy hand weeds a previously prepared bed



Above: Carolyn planting sheltering poa, themeda and dichelachne grasses.

TAGs in 2024

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.

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

4/7/24	Frogland	Linda	Weeding	Easy
11/7/24	Nilja / Longridge Farm	David / Robyn	Weeding—watsonia , blackberries	Easy
18/7/24	Rifle Range	David / Robyn	Planting reveg maintenance	Easy
25/7/24	Endeavour Bank	Josh/ Artur	National Tree Day prep	Easy
1/8/24	Haslem Fence	Phil	Grassy weeds	Easy / Mod

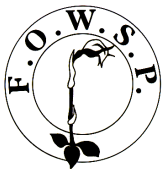


Market trailer transport, help needed.

Every first Saturday of the month FOWSP volunteers represent our group at the Warrandyte Market.

Help is needed to transport the trailer to and from the market.

We still have some vacancies on that transport roster. If you have a car with a tow ball and are willing to help us please contact Artur 0415 383 328 to find out more details.



FOWSP MARKET TRAILER

Thanks to those who helped out on Saturday 4 May 2024, **Jan Falconer, Chris Kay, Christine Andell, Pam von Drehnen, Marion Thomson and Sybille Ims .**

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
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:

Saturday, 6 July 2024
 Saturday, 3 August 2024

Rope Bridge Crossings

FOWSP members will probably have noted the rope bridge across the river by the Warrandyte bridge. Recently, as part of the widening of Jumping Creek Road between Homestead Road and the Ringwood—Warrandyte Road, a number of bridges were installed to facilitate wildlife crossing as the works progress.

Manningham Council engaged environment consultants, WSP, to monitor these rope bridges, starting in 2023. An interim report was seen and shows some interesting results that I'll attempt to summarise.

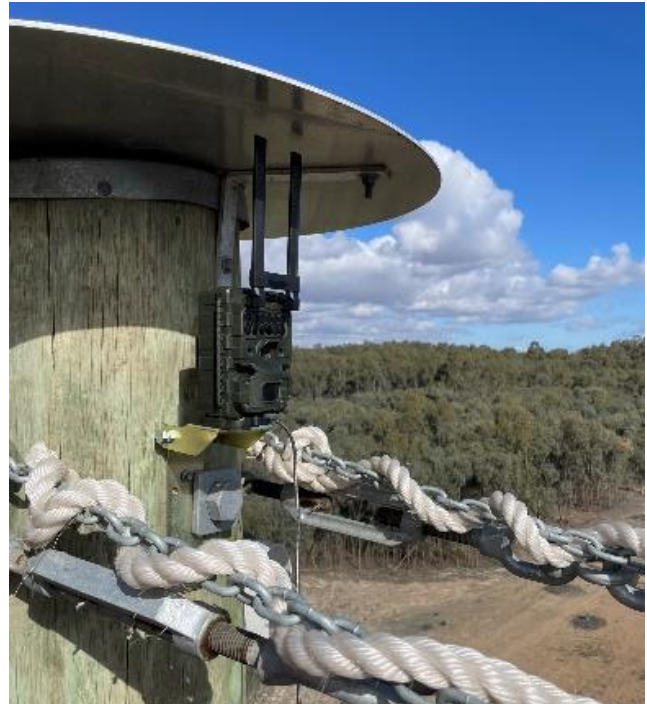
Monitoring is being done by remote cameras, installed initially on 5 of the 8 rope bridges. Of particular interest to the WSP researchers was the movement of the Brush-tailed Phascogale '*Phascogale tapoatafa tapoatafa*', a species listed as vulnerable in Victoria. Other species using the bridges were the rather more common Brush-tailed (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) and Ring-tailed (*Pseudocheirus peregrinus*) possums. One species of glider was also seen, Krefft's Glider (*Petaurus notatus*), although it was posited that the glider uses the bridge as a launching place rather than a crossing point.

A significant number of phascogales were seen, with numbers peaking after the summer period. No conclusion was drawn as to why this was so, although dispersal of young after breeding is a possibility.

One interesting finding is that there were no recordings of owls, and only one of a Tawny Frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*). This suggests that there is no increase in predation when the bridges are used by these nocturnal species.

The overall conclusion is that the bridges are working and are effective in enabling safe crossing of wildlife over busy roads. Further monitoring is planned. These results suggest that perhaps more bridges could be installed around our area as they

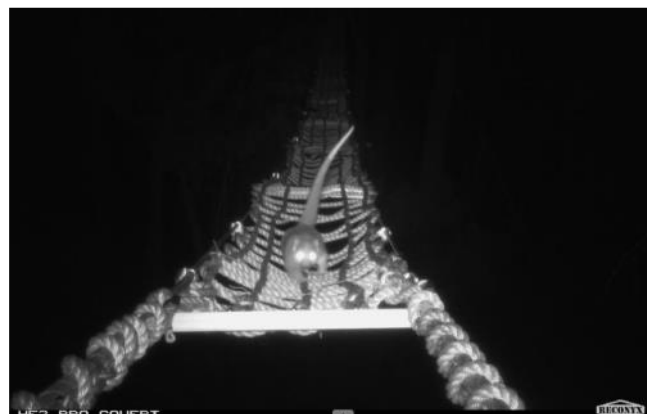
Original report by:
Emi Arnold WSP
Manningham Council



Above: rope bridge and camera



Above: Brush-tailed Phascogale



Above: Ring-tailed possum

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.

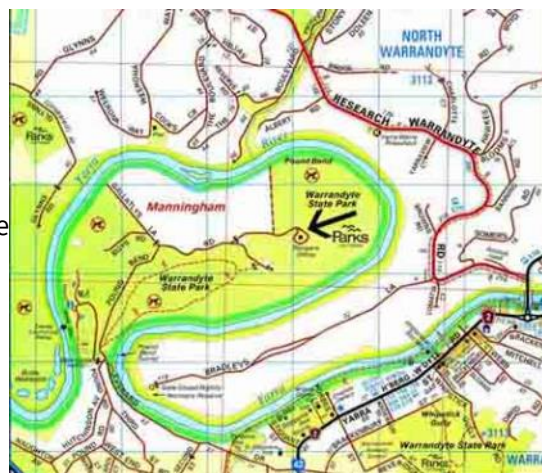
9.30 am to 12.30 pm and

the first Saturday of every month, 9am to 1pm (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 \$2.50 Non-members \$3.00



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Gardening with Indigenous Plants

Next date: Saturday, 27 July and 14 September

Where: Edendale Community Environment Farm, 30 Gastons Road, Eltham, 3095

Join local plant expert Fiona Cross and learn about the indigenous plants of Nillumbik. Find out which plants best suit your garden and gain planting and care information so that you can "Live Local, Plant Local".

Don't forget you can still donate to FOWSP. Deductions before June 30 can be included in your tax assessment
<https://www.landcarevictoria.org.au/LVI/Donate/Make%20a%20donation.aspx>

Manningham Events

Here are a few events in Manningham for July with an environmental theme.

July 3

Winter fruit tree pruning

7—9.30pm Manningham Function Centre

July 24

Longridge Walk (about 5km)

9.30 to 11.30 Location to be advised on registration.

July 28 National Tree Day

9—10am Ruffy Lake Park

11am—1.00pm Mullum Mullum Creek.

Please go to the Manningham website www.manningham.vic.gov.au for more details and bookings.

Nillumbik Event

July 11

Forest Health Monitoring.

7-8pm. This is a ZOOM event. You'll need to register to get the Zoom link.
www.nillumbik.vic.go.au

FOWSP COMMITTEE 2024		OTHER FOWSP CONTACTS	
Artur Muchow 0415 383328	Secretary	<u>Nursery Manager</u> Josh Revell Nursery Phone 0408 317 327 nursery@fowsp.org.au	
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Joy Hick 0418 573916		<u>Newsletter assist and Librarian</u> Lyn Moore	
Gray Ardern 0418 190261		<u>Market Trailer</u> Jan Falconer 0419 872 096 trailer@fowsp.org.au	
Lyn Moore 0409 683 041 lynm333g@gmail.com	Wildlife rescue Victoria https://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/contact-us	<u>Manningham Council Rep</u> Cathy Willis 0427 660 651	
Robyn Hull robynamelia@bigpond.com		<u>Webmaster</u> Jason Patton 0402 121838 webmaster@fowsp.org.au	
Jeff Cranston 0418 396 647 legality@bigpond.com	Staff Representative Lynda Chambers 0466 274421 phenologist@gmail.com	<u>Facebook coordinator</u> Carolyn Noel 0409 901441	

Next Committee Meeting	
Date:	Tuesday July 9, 2024
Venue:	Education Centre or Zoom Pound Bend
Time:	17:00 sharp

Are your subs due??

Please check the message on the email you receive with the newsletter link by scrolling down beyond the link . If subs are due soon a message such as below will be seen 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)

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