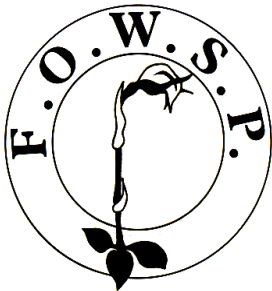


October 2024

Volume 42 Number 9

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

Here is the October edition of the FOWSP newsletter.

This edition is slightly late and I do apologise. School holidays (grandchildren minding) and my orchid club's annual show have conspired to restrict my time to put the newsletter together.

In Don Vincent's continued absence in WA, the TAG team have tagged together to provide two reports. One by Geoff Sutter (Boomers and One Tree Hill p.7) and one by Joy Hick (St. Andrews NCR p.6). Thank you to both.

Lisa Jenkins has produced her 4th article on weeds and this appears on pp. 4 and 5.

Around the traps is, as usual, on p.2 and features some of the wildlife appearing in and around the nursery. There is also a piece I put together on Victoria's avian emblem, the Helmeted Honeyeater on p.3.

Other news finishes off the newsletter, so please check there for TAG dates and other activities.

People's gardens should be gorgeous now — why not send photos?

John Young



Little Corellas (*Cacatua sanguinea*) are becoming more common around urban Melbourne. It wasn't always so. Originally there were three distinct populations in the more arid interior and none on the coast. Now with land cleared for farming and some introductions, they are widespread, including Tasmania and the tropical north.

**Deadline for October's newsletter is
Friday **October 25th, 2024**
contributions can be emailed to John Young editor@fowsp.org.au
or posted to PO Box 220, Warrandyte 3113**

Around The Traps

Birthday Thursdays



Once again nobody owning up to a birthday in September. A lovely cake nevertheless.

Morning teas are a bonus for volunteers on a Thursday. If you have time, come along to the nursery, 9.30am to 12.30pm.

Horror find in my garden



I saw this bright metallic blue/green "ant" (about 25mm) climbing one of the walls on my house recently. At first, I thought it was an ant and that I had an infestation of something unusual.

In fact, it is a female flightless wasp, paradoxically called the Blue Ant wasp '*Diamma bicolor*'. Apparently common in south eastern Australia, it only stings if provoked. Phew!

Destroying the garden



This loveable rogue is intent on destroying our garden at the moment!

Recipe of the month

Figgy Bites

1 1/2 cups almond meal
 1/2 cup cocoa powder
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
 1 cup soft dehydrated figs, stems removed
 1 tablespoon water
 1/4 cup maple syrup

Use a food processor or blender. Add all of the ingredients and blend until well mixed. If you are having trouble because the dough is stiff, add tablespoons of water (one tablespoon at a time) until the dough forms. It should be stiff but don't burn up your food processor!

Use a cookie scoop (or small spoon), a small size is perfect. Scoop the fig dough into balls and place them on a parchment paper-lined cookie sheet. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

Remove and roll in your choice of coatings: nuts, chocolate, sprinkles, cocoa powder, etc...

Store in the refrigerator.

Sybill

Frogs galore



Southern brown tree frogs (*Litoria ewingii*) found lurking in tub in one of the shadehouses. Obviously breeding well at the moment.

Helmeted honeyeaters

The Helmeted Honeyeater (*Lichenostomus melanops cassidix*) is a distinctive and critically endangered subspecies of the Yellow-tufted Honeyeater (*Lichenostomus melanops*). They occur in the wild only as a tiny population in the Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve. It is Victoria's only endemic bird, and, perhaps for this reason, was adopted as one of the state's official symbols.

This was unfortunate as they almost went extinct about 30 years ago, before a concerted effort was made to rescue them. A breeding programme with Melbourne Zoo and the State government has resulted in the re-introduction of the bird into its only known remaining habitat west of Melbourne. There is group dedicated to preserving their remaining habitat — *Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater* (www.helmetedhoneyeater.org.au) if you are interested in helping out.

The Helmeted Honeyeater prefers riparian and swamp forests dominated by Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*), Swamp Gum

(*Eucalyptus ovata*) and Mountain Swamp Gum (*Eucalyptus camphora*). Understorey shrubs, such as Broom Tea-tree (*Leptospermum scoparium*), Scented Paperbark (*Melaleuca squarrosa*), Prickly Currant-bush (*Coprosma quadrifida*) and Woolly Tea-tree (*Leptospermum lanigerum*) provide nest sites for the Helmeted honeyeater.

Streamside forests are now rarely more than 200m in width in agricultural areas such as Yellingbo. The Friends group are mainly concerned with maintaining and expanding this limited natural habitat.

The Yellow-tufted Honeyeater is much more common and can be found in many locations along the eastern seaboard north to about Gympie, Qld. One good location, which we visited recently, is the Crusoe Reservoir, just south of Bendigo, where the bird is abundant. Though some two hours north of Melbourne this spot has an excellent range of birds, including the Chestnut-rumped Heathwren (*Calamanthus pyrrhropygia*), and is well worth a visit.



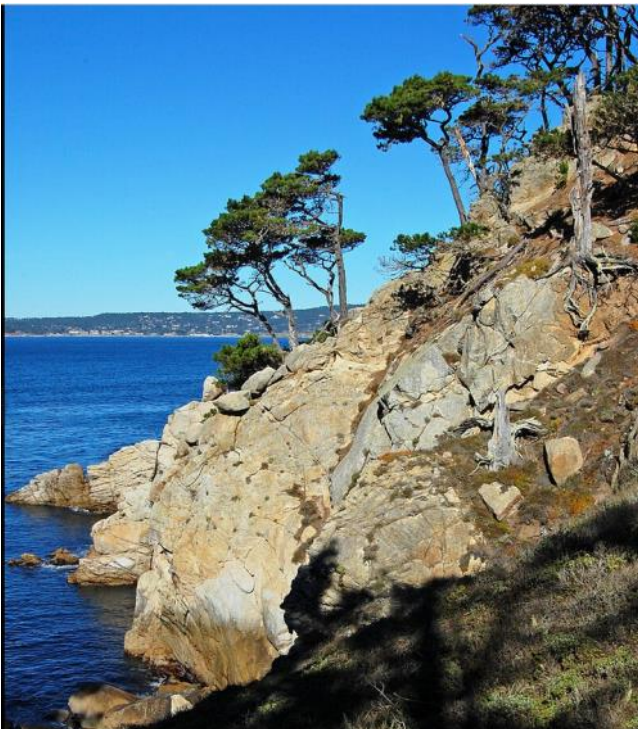
The nominate race *Lichenostomus melanops* is on the left and *Lichenostomus melanops cassidix* is at right. You can see the extra large yellow tufts on the Helmeted Honeyeater and its slightly raised (and brighter) tuft of feathers on the crown.

A little history of weeds in Victoria

Farming — windbreaks and grasses

I'm interested in two types of weeds that were introduced by farmers into Victoria. Windbreaks give me a chance to talk about my bugbear, *Pinus radiata* or Monterey pine. I do bang on about it, I know, but I find it fascinating that we and Northern California swapped weeds, so to speak. They got *Eucalyptus globulus* (Blue gum) in the same period and for the same reasons that we got the Monterey pine, to use for windbreaks and timber. In both places the species became pests, still with us, causing problems and growing taller, bigger and stronger, unlike their parent plants.

Pinus radiata is primarily a coastal plant, small, scrubby trees that have to fight to stay upright against the Pacific winds.



Here it is a much more upright, larger tree. There were many stands of it historically in Manningham, planted as windbreaks to protect the orchards which dominated the area.

In fact, there was a stand on High St, Doncaster, that was registered for its local significance in 2006 because it had survived the change of the area into one of

housing and commerce (it's since been removed). But we all know what happens when *Pinus radiata* is allowed to grow — nothing else can compete with it, nothing can grow under or next to it. I remember playing as a child on an empty block that was covered exclusively with the things. There was a strange, otherworldly quality to it, redolent of Germanic fairytales, especially when the wind blew and a sound something like a broom sweeping came out of the trees. Windbreaks were necessary in part because of the wholesale clearance of land for agriculture. Normal airflow was disturbed by the removal of trees and shrubs and in some parts of the state that would have had a radical effect.



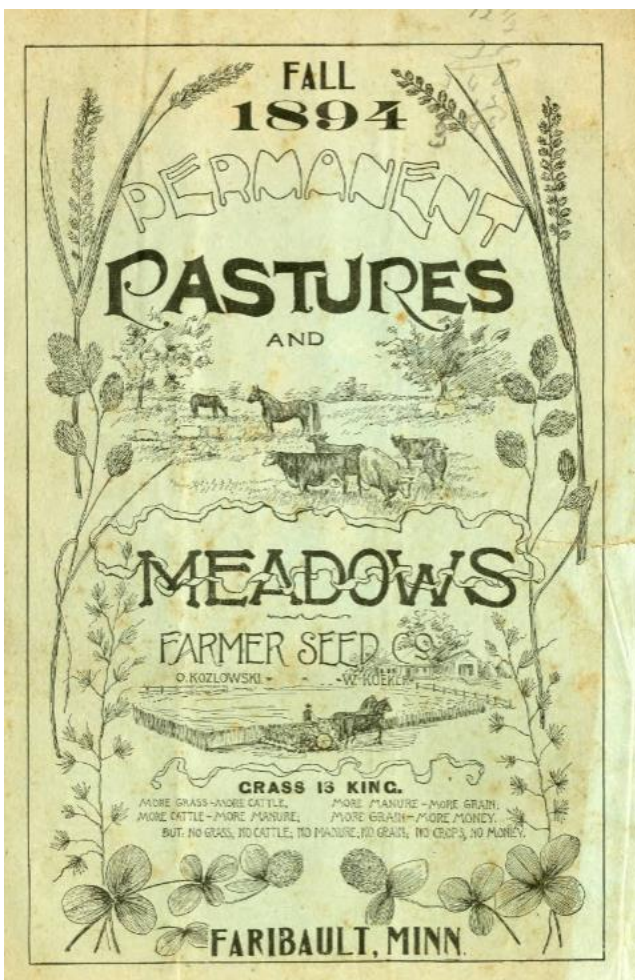
An even greater effect came from the planting of grasses and other grazing plants for pasture. Fairly early on, settlers experimented with a variety of imported seeds. They were following British practices, of course, where experimenting by mixing and sowing seeds according to different conditions had already been carried out. Early British mixes were complex and could contain the seeds of about 20 species but as trials continued, it proved that certain species came to dominate when planted and the mixes came to contain just a few species.

This kind of work was also happening in Victoria. An article in the *Melbourne Leader* in June 1880, describes what Thomas Walton, of Tareen Banks, Drouin West, was doing and includes his advice for achieving good pastures. His recommended species include all sorts of familiar weedy grasses: perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), for example. Tragically, he also said that, although farmers and graziers often observe that

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

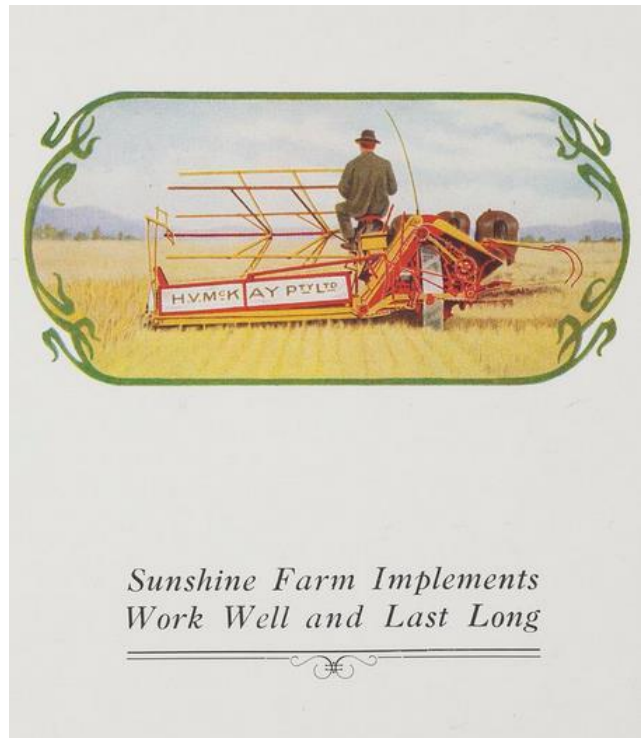
'there's nothing like the native grass if it could only be cultivated', Walton had managed to grow kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*), Hooker fescue (*Festuca hookeriana*) and native oat grass, (which is, perhaps, *Themeda avenacea* (oat kangaroo grass)). Imagine if Walton had persuaded a substantial number of farmers to run their cattle in paddocks of cultivated kangaroo grass. We'd be in a very different state now.

Farmers were understandably keen to maximize their profit and saw rich pasture as a path to this, as this American seed catalogue shows.



The ditty just below the line 'Grass is King' is 'More grass-more cattle. More cattle-more manure. More manure-more grain. More grain-more money. But no grass, no cattle, no manure, no crops, no money.' Australian farmers were just as

prey to seductive images of lush crops and shiny equipment.



Similarly, the growing urban population was seduced by the idea of rolling pastures and fat cattle.

What this left us with is a laundry list of grasses and other pasture plants that infest indigenous areas, at the same time as they're being planted as pasture. The competing interests in these species is best illustrated by an entry in a plant listing for perennial rye-grass:

One of the most valuable and nutritious pasture grasses. Widely grown in high rainfall areas of southern Australia. In-vades native wetlands and riverside vegetation as well as cereal pastures.

How we might draw boundaries between these different areas is a matter for constant negotiation.

Lisa Jenkins

Please contact the editor for sources for this article.

TAGs in 2024

St Andrew's Nature Conservation Reserve, Flora Crescent, St Andrew's

September 19

The reserve was awash with spring growth when the TAG team visited in September. The reserve is enclosed by a high fence. Parks Victoria staff and volunteers regularly maintain this enclosure.

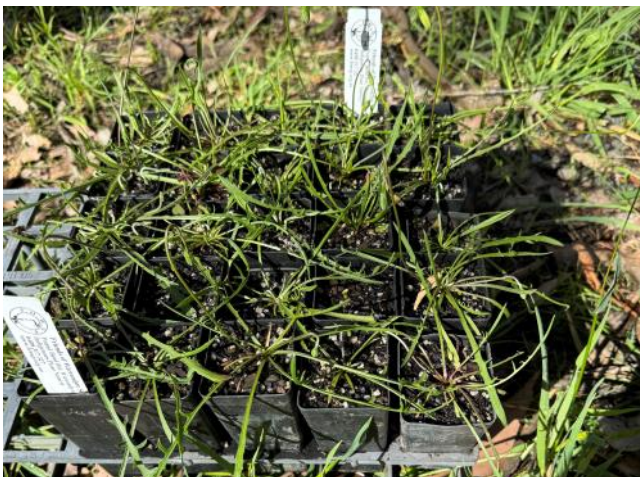
Many plant species also exist outside the fenced area but are spread more sparsely.

Our task was to plant the Yam Daisy tubes (*Microseris walteri*) that were grown in the nursery, from seed collected by Parks Victoria.

Joy Hick



Above: Apple berry (*Billardiera mutabilis*)



Above: Waiting for planting



Above: Ants are *Dolichoderus doriae*



Above: Pink fingers (*Caledonia carnea*)



Above: Jacky Dragon (*Amphibolorus muricatus*)

**Boomers Reserve and One Tree Hill
September 5
(with Cam and Phil)**

We first headed out to Boomers Reserve to have a look at *Caladenia amoena* (Charming Spider-orchid — photo below). Cam told us that most of the habitat had been created, with moss and compost of *Acacia prominens* (Gosford Wattle) and *Allocasuarina* (Sheoak) added in.



Here, the pollinator is a wasp which had pollinated 16 of the 36 individuals in the population this year. The remaining plants having been hand pollinated. Cam said there has been plantings of *Daviesia leptophylla* (Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea) and *Hardenbergia violacea* (Purple Coral-pea), which are important for the wasp.

We then moved on to One Tree Hill Reserve and the group split into two, with one group focusing on woody weed removal and the other group planting up a land slip with *Gahnia sieberiana* (Red-fruit Saw-sedge) between the road and Happy Valley Creek.

Cam said the *Gahnia sieberiana* should do a good job of binding the soil and limiting further land slips and it also attracts the Banks Brown Butterfly.

Following this, the two groups met up to have a look at *Caladenia rosella* (Rosella Spider-orchid — photo top right) along Beardsell Track. Cam informed the group that the population consists of 172 individuals, of which 65 are wild and 107 have been planted and the microrhizal fungi allowing a symbiotic relationship and presence of lithophytic moss are vital to the orchid's survival.



Cam told us a bit about a bee species that pollinates a proportion of the plants. The bee, *Leioproctus obscurus*, is most closely related to members of the family found in South America. He said the plantings of *Daviesia leptophylla* and *Hardenbergia violacea* were also important for the bee.

Cam also pointed out the occurrence of *Calotis scabiosifolia* var. *integrifolia* (Rough Burr-daisy) and *Olearia ramulosa* var. *tomentosa* (Twiggy Daisy-bush) as locally rare in this area.

Phil then lifted up quite a few of the tiles placed to provide habitat for the Small-eyed Snake and Dunnart. We were in luck with the snake, but not the Dunnart!



Above: Small-eyed Snake (*Cryptophis nigrescens*)

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>

3/10	Frogland/Endeavour Bank	Linda/ Josh	Ixia removal/weeding	Easy
10/10	Craspedia fence	Phil/Cam	Weeding/thinning	Easy/Mod
17/10	Mullum Link Track / Craig/ Beckett Rd	Robyn	Weeding/Maintenance	Easy
24/10	Morrison's/early hill fence	Phil	Disa/serrated patrol	Easy/Mod
31/10	Fourth Hill/Fiddler	Don	Disa/Sweet vernal	Easy/Mod
7/11	Fourth Hill/Fiddler/Wild Cat fence	Don	Disa/Sweet vernal	Easy



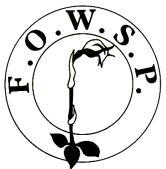
Can you
lend a
hand?

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 volunteered to run the trailer on **Saturday, 7 September**, Christine Arndell, Chris Jay, Marion Thomson, Jeff Cranston and Lyn Moore.



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 or email trailer@fowsp.org.au
First timers are always paired with someone more experienced.

Next market dates are:
Saturday, 5 October 2024
Saturday, 2 November 2024

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.

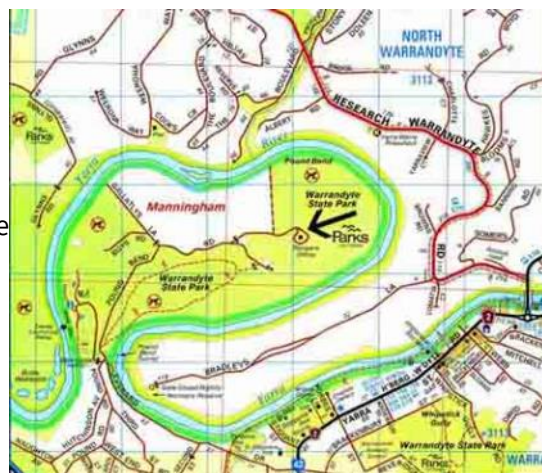
9.30 am to 12.30 pm and

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 (tube stock)



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Backyard bird count

As part of this week-long event, why not join local ecologist John Harris as he takes you on a journey through Warrandyte State Park's Fourth Hill. John will undertake a bird survey and help you identify birds found in the Warrandyte area.

Walk rating: 3km moderate, includes steep and narrow sections, creek crossing, slippery sections and tripping hazards.

What to bring: solid shoes, weather appropriate clothing, a water bottle and your own binoculars. Light breakfast will be served after the walk.

When: Friday 18th October from 8 to 11am.

The meeting place will be at Gold Memorial Drive Picnic Ground. Please arrive 10 minutes before the walk starts.

Don't forget you can still donate to FOWSP. Deductions can be included in your tax assessment.

<https://www.landcarevictoria.org.au/LVI/Donate/Make%20a%20donation.aspx>

Gardening for biodiversity

An early notice of a series of seminars on various aspects of modifying your garden for biodiversity. They will be held at the **Currawong Bush Park Conference and Environment Centre** on Tuesday / Wednesday 20 and 21 November, as well as Tuesday / Wednesday 28 and 28 November. They are 7pm to 9pm with a 6.45pm arrival time.

Registration is necessary. Go to the Manningham Council website and look up Environment and Waste under **What's on**.

Early / Early notice

Moths and Butterflies Australasia are holding an event in conjunction the Field Nats next March. Included is an evening **Light Trapping** at Pound Bend Reserve on Friday 28 March, 7 to 10.30pm. For details see:-

www.maba.org.au/upcoming-events

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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treasurer@fowsp.org.au				
John Young	0412327798	Newsletter editor	<u>Ranger contact</u>	
editor@fowsp.org.au			Phil Rance	
			philip.rance@parks.vic.gov.au	
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	Wildlife rescue Victoria	<u>Manningham Council Rep</u>	
lynm333g@gmail.com		https://www.wildlifelvic.org.au/contact-us	Cathy Willis	0427 660 651
Robyn Hull			<u>Webmaster</u>	
robynamelia@bigpond.com			Jason Patton	0402 121838
			webmaster@fowsp.org.au	
Jeff Cranston	0418 396 647	Staff Representative	<u>Facebook coordinator</u>	
legality@bigpond.com		Lynda Chambers	Carolyn Noel	0409 901441
		0466 274421 phenologist@gmail.com		

Next Committee Meeting	
Date:	Tuesday October 8, 2024
Venue:	Education Centre 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.