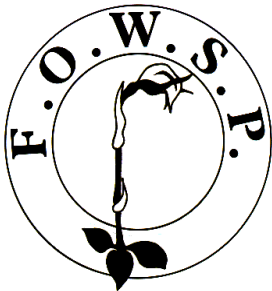


December 2024

Volume 42 Number 11

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

The final edition of the year (and the end of my first year as editor). I've had a great time putting it together and I hope you enjoy them.

As before, I must thank my regular contributors as, without them, the newsletter would be very short and just be me waffling on.

In this edition there is a report given to members at the recent AGM by Gray Arden (p2.) and the usual Round the Traps (p3.). Linda Rogan has contributed an article on Frogland and butterflies (p4.) and there is the final TAG report of the year (p7.). Lisa Jenkins has sent in her article on weeds, well researched as usual (pp 5 and 6.).

Finally, to complete the newsletter, I have included something on the birds of southwest West Australia and, for something completely different, on the Mandurah Giants (pp 8 to 10). If you are ever in Perth you must try and see them.

It remains for me to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and I hope you enjoy the forthcoming break, however long it is for you.

We'll be back in 2025 and the nursery will open after the New Year break.

John Young



Carnaby's Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*). This is a male (red eyes — no inference here!). Sadly their numbers are declining due to habitat loss etc. The population is ageing and not producing sustainable numbers of young.

There is an article on birds found on our recent WA trip on pp. 8 and 9.

**Deadline for February's newsletter is
Friday January 24th, 2025**
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

2024 AGM

As always, we thank Parks Victoria for allowing us to continue to play a part in the preservation and enhancement of Warandyte State Park and adjacent Parks Victoria lands. We particularly thank Ranger Team Leader Warren Murphy and his team of Rangers - especially our invaluable Contact Ranger Phil Rance and the ever-willing Col Bromiley.

We know Phil has more than enough to do without attending so conscientiously and effectively to our needs.

Without Col's keeping an eye on our water supply and running of the pump, our plants would not survive - especially during Josh's absences.

Our bush crew, the Thursday Activity Group has this year enjoyed several work days led by Ranger Cam Beardsell. As well as the satisfaction of completing a worthwhile task, Cam's enthusiasm about botany, ecology and local history is itself a good enough reason for attending.

We are most fortunate to have devoted, talented staff in our Nursery Manager Josh Revell and our Nursery Assistant Lynda Chambers.

I want to emphasise how grateful we are for all that Josh does for us, in his cheerful unassuming way. Countless thankless tasks fall to Josh, and are quietly dealt with without fanfare - or indeed anyone else being aware of them, for the most part.

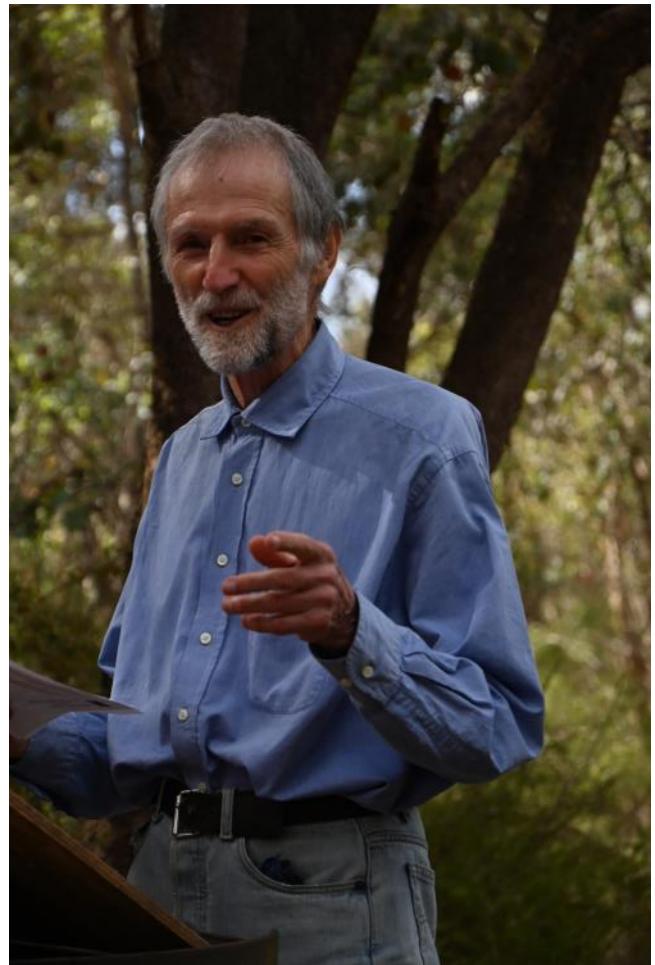
I'd also like to thank Lynda Chambers, our Nursery Assistant for service beyond the call of duty - she, like Josh, somehow manages to cope calmly and effectively with the many simultaneous demands of customers and volunteers.

As I say every year, thanking people is a thankless task, as I will inevitably forget somebody, and even if I didn't, there are always more people to thank for contributing to the great year that we have had.

Gray

Top right: Gray gives his summary

Bottom right: Artur addresses members



Around The Traps

Christmas lunch

As usual, FOWSPians gathered at the folly to enjoy lunch just before the Christmas break up. Quite a few members turned up and we had some new faces and visiting members returning to see old friends.

Thanks to everybody who brought in a salad or dessert.



In Lynda's garden



Three ring-tailed possums compete for space in a possum box in Lynda's garden. An interested by-stander looks on.

Recipe of the month

Easy Vegan Coconut Cherry Cookies

Ingredients:

4 tbsp desiccated coconut or rolled oats
 50 g / ¼ cup caster sugar
 75 g / 3 oz dairy-free butter or margarine
 1 tsp vanilla extract (optional)
 95 g / ¾ cup self-raising flour
 12 glace cherries, cut in half

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 180°C / 160°C fan / gas mark 4 / 350°F. Grease or line a baking tray.

Prepare a bowl with the coconut or rolled oats.

In a large, separate, mixing bowl, beat the margarine and sugar together until light and fluffy, then stir in the vanilla. Stir in the flour and mix into a dough. Divide the dough into 24 pieces and roll into balls with slightly damp hands. Roll and shake in the coconut/oat mixture to thoroughly coat.

Place onto the baking tray, allowing enough room in-between for the biscuits to expand (use two trays if you need to) and press down slightly. Top each ball with one of the cherry halves.

Bake for 15-20 minutes until lightly golden.

Allow to cool before serving and enjoy!

Sybille



In Don and Carolyn's garden—a Yellow-faced honeyeater (*Caligravis chrysops*) on a nest. Normally difficult to see clearly as they flit in the canopy, this is a lovely photo.

Of butterflies and Frogland

As predicted, the Imperial Blue butterflies at Pound Bend have come out in numbers. On the morning of November 21st, just before I arrived at Frogland, they put on a wonderful display. At least three of the acacias had numbers of adult butterflies still hanging around the pupae cases probably awaiting the emergence of fresh females. The largest number I saw in one twig was eight (photo below). Before I left, the sun shone, and many began to open their wings to show shimmering blue. Colonies are active on the golden wattle *Acacia pycnantha* and the black wattle *Acacia mearnsii*. If the winds don't get too hot, some should be present over summer into early autumn.



Arriving at Frogland, I was impressed by how lovely the Poa and other native grasses were looking as their flowering heads waved in the gentle breeze.

The yellow blooms of the running marsh flower, *Ornduffia reniformis*, held its fringed yellow flowers high above the leaves at water level in the top and bathtub ponds. Photo (top right) shows Chris tidying up the top pond.



Left: *Goodenia oblongata* the lanky goodenia was also blooming at the pond edge.



A special surprise for me was this cup moth hanging on a stem of Carex in the ephemeral swamp area. I believe it is Mottled Cup Moth, *Do-ratifera vulnerans*, whose caterpillar's feed on eucalypts.



This caterpillar of that species was photographed by me in Eden Park, Vic in February 2024.

Linda

A little history of weeds in Victoria

6: Groovy gardens

I had expected that I'd take us into the later twentieth century in this article. My reason for this is that I associate this month's weeds — *Agapanthus africanus* (Agapanthus) and *Tradescantia fluminensis* (Wandering Trad) with the 1970s. I thought of Trad as one of the trailing, louche plants for Alistair Knox-inspired houses, with glass atriums holding hanging baskets of the stuff alongside strappy tropical plants and ferns and the gardens scattered with those extraordinary bouffant blue blooms of the Agapanthus mixed in with various natives.



Above: Margaret Olley's 1962 "Agapanthus and Plumbago"

But I was wrong on both counts. A little bit of reading revealed that both of them left their home regions much earlier. Tradescantia was first reported on in Australia in 1844 and Agapanthus in 1839. And their use brings me to the issue of weeds and aesthetics, that is, how some garden escape weeds are the now-unwanted remnants of earlier fashions, as undesirable as cassette tapes and oversized shoulder pads but a lot more damaging to the bush.

Let's begin inside, with those hanging baskets. I probably don't need to provide an image of that 1970s aesthetic since most of you will remember it very well, but for those of you under 50, here's the look:



It went with trailing Laura Ashley dresses and a lot of hair (both male and female) and was an obvious revival of the Edwardian period. But its roots go back a bit further. Here's a predecessor:



This is in Berlin in the 1830s. Glass-houses, conservatories and Wardian cases (a terrarium designed to transport plants by ship) delighted the 19th century upper- and middle-classes in Europe. They were warm, light places that contained a riot of green and colour from the far-flung imperial corners, a stunning contrast to a Prussian (or English or French) winter. Both Agapanthus and Tradescantia found homes in these places, having been exotics in the gardens of the wealthy after coming to Europe in the 17th century

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

When the Australian colonies were established enough to have flower shows, free colonists displayed their wares fulsomely. They were blessed to be in climates that allowed them to grow their plants outdoors — no need for conservatories — and they pumped out ornamental plants.

Those first mentions of the two species, that I cited above, are in newspaper reports on prizes won at flower shows. Both species appeared regularly in such articles throughout the century. They were clearly easy plants, easy to propagate and easy to groom so that they looked good for the garden and for shows.

FLOWER SEEDLINGS FOR PRESENT PLANTING

E. A. LASSCOCK, Lockleys.

Lawns of Emerald
AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS
REAL RUBBER HOSE
LAWN MOWERS
COLTON, PALMER & PRESTON, Ltd.

CARNATIONS
LANE'S NOVELTIES.

F. CALEY SMITH, ALDGHATE.

SYSTEMATIC WATERING
GARDEN HOSE.

THE TRADESCANTIA
Ornamental Greenhouse Plants.



Above: instructions for handing a Trad, Adelaide Express and Telegraph 1913

They have very different origins and needs. Tradescantia is named for the Tradescants, father and son both named John. They were 17th century English plant hunters and gardeners for the nobility. They were also collectors of curiosities and opened a museum called Tradescant's Ark which included a garden. In it they grew, amongst other things, the plant named for them and collected from the American colony of Virginia. The Tradescantia genus is indigenous to the Americas and the one that is most problematic here, *Tradescantia fluminensis*, is native to Brazil and Argentina and is happiest with moisture and indirect light.

Samples of Agapanthus were first taken to Europe from South Africa by the Dutch

East India Company and described in 1707. They were planted in gardens such as the Jardin des Plantes in Paris which had been founded by Louis VIII, then travelling through the classes until they were commonly cultivated by the 19th century. It thrives in dry, sunny conditions, as do the many plants that are from South Africa and are weeds for us (Gazania, Boxthorn, Watsonia).

When they became weeds in Australia is not clear, though surely it must have been not long after they first grew here. They're both so good at being weedy! As we all must know, Tradescantia is an absolute bugger. Any small piece can grow so, once it's disturbed, it spreads like crazy and it creates thick mats that smother everything. Removing it requires absolute vigilance, repeat efforts and/or chemicals. Agapanthus present a different problem. It has rhizomes, so vigilance is required here too, and those rhizomes can wedge themselves very firmly in clay soil.

But rather like fashion in clothing we have to ask — why do some things take off and not others? Clearly the means of reproduction and adaptability are key factors. And once a thing's around everywhere, it becomes the default for its type. When people want tough pants they say they want jeans and they know they can get a pair in any shopping centre; when people want a hardy, colourful plant to line a driveway they go for Agapanthus because they're still available in most nurseries, despite being weeds. One online garden supplier justifies this by saying that they offer sterile and low-risk varieties alongside the problematic ones because Agapanthus are 'robust and popular.' Another exhorts us 'not (to) feel guilty about using Agapanthus, as they are part of our gardening history.' But just because something's popular, be it plants, clothing or political, doesn't mean that it's right...

So part of the job of landcare is to sell alternatives by example — lining a driveway with Dianellas or Lomandras and covering a bare patch with Hardenbergia or Kennedia. And wear whatever pants you want when you do it.

Lisa Jenkins

TAG Report November 2024

After spring rains and warm weather, November TAGs were a full-on assault on weeds, both woody and grassy.

We twice visited Fiddler Fence on Fourth Hill, once with Phil to weed and repair the boundary fence to exclude rabbits, and again to weed briza and sweet vernal, and control cassinia growth.



Above: Dave with Brian and Phil on fence repairs at Fiddler Fence

Phil also led us to Chaim Court on the Mullum Link Track for pittosporum control, and Burgan Bend at Jumping Creek to weed sweet vernal from the orchid areas. Although we were a little late for flowering, we were pleased to see plenty of leaves of the large bird-orchid, *Chiloglottis valida*, showing they had extended quite significantly from the protective cages, but becoming heavily infested with weeds. Also present and being nurtured in this area are the broad-lip bird-orchid *C. trapeziformis* and bronze bird-orchid *C. x pescottiana*, the hybrid form.

We also attended Naughton Avenue at Pound Bend for our usual pitto patrol, also picking up the stray agapanthus, ivy and succulents 'released' from nearby properties. Unfortunately, Geoff, our eagle-eyed botanist, found a large patch of the noxious Chilean needle-grass *Nassella neesiana*, which we duly reported to both Parks and Manningham council. It is readily distinguished from most indigenous grasses, as at the junction of the seed and the awn (tail of the seed) there is a raised crown (corona), a ridge of small teeth encircling the awn.



Above: TAGgers enjoying a luxury seated break for morning tea.



Above: Chilean needle-grass seed, clearly showing the corona.



Above: At Mt. St Leonard, Kinglake National Park — Macleay's Swallowtail butterfly *Graphium macleayanus*. Photo Kajsa Falkemar

Don

Some birds of southwest WA



Above: Red-eared firetail *Staganopleura oculata*. The only finch in Southwest WA

Caitriona and I have just returned from a trip to the southwest corner of WA. Whilst it doesn't look very big on a map showing the whole of WA, in fact it is about the size of the UK and it is nearly 500km from Perth to the far south coast .

West Australia has an outstanding variety of plants, as was seen in some of Don Vincent's recent visit report. It also has a number of indigenous bird species, particularly in the southwest, where the large desert areas between South Australia and West Australia, have resulted in evolutionary changes between east and west coast.

This can be seen in the number of species that are similar to their east coast cousins. Thus we have Western Rosella, Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler, Fieldwren, Spinebill, Wattlebird, Shrike Tit, Thornbill and Corella among others. There are, as well, the two Black Cockatoos, Carnaby's and Baudin's, which are similar to the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo that we are more familiar with.

The first part of the trip was an organised tour centred around finding what are known as the 3 *skulkers*. These three, very difficult to find, birds are all seen around Cheynes Beach on the far south coast and in a small surrounding area.

They are Black-throated (formerly Western) Whipbird (*Psophodes nigrogularis*), Western Bristlebird (*Dasyornis longirostris*) and the Holy Grail, Noisy Scrubbird (*Atrichornis clamosus*). I managed to

photograph the first two but not the scrubbird. A fleeting glimpse as it ran across the road, just before dark, was it.



Black-throated Whipbird in full song. Unlike its eastern cousin, there is no whipcrack, rather a melodious trill and a rasping chuckle



Western Bristlebird, singing its heart out but also avoiding coming fully out of cover



Western Shrike-tit (*Falcunculus leucogaster*) differs from its eastern cousin by having a white belly

Some birds of southwest WA cont'd



Red-capped Parrot (*Purpureicephalus spurius*) is only found in the southwest of the state



White-breasted Robin (*Quoyornis georgianus*), another endemic



Red-winged Fairywren (*Malurus elegans*), is endemic



Western Yellow Robin (*Eopsaltria griseogularis*) has a broad grey chest band as well as the yellow front

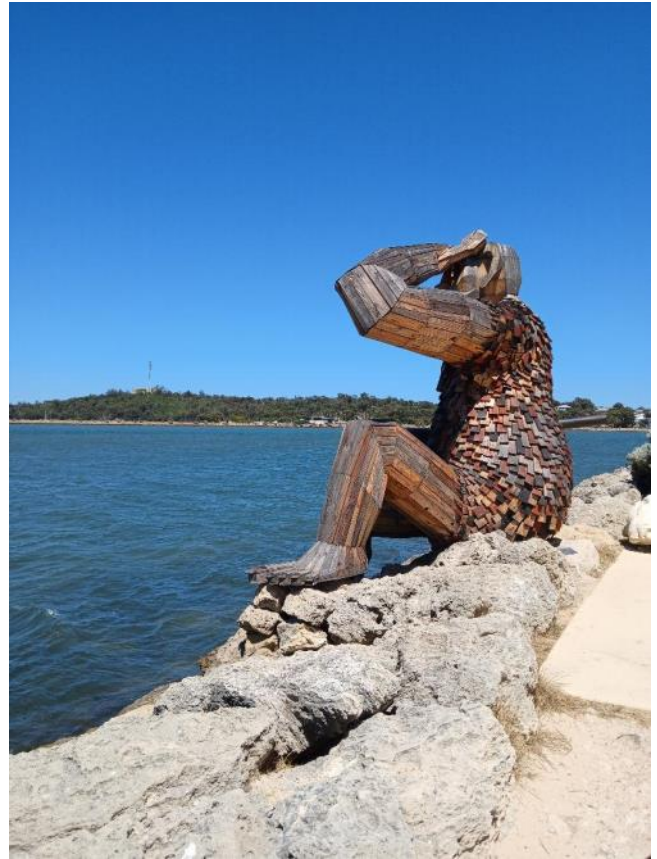


Western Rosella (*Platycercus icterotis*). This is a female — looks like a cross between our Crimson and Eastern Rosellas doesn't it?



Finally Baudin's Black Cockatoo (*Zanda baudinii*). It's lower mandible (bill) is elongated compared with Carnaby's as it has adapted to feed only on Marri and Karri seeds. It has a much more limited distribution, found only in the far southwest

The Mandurah Giants



The Mandurah Giants are a series of sculptures by Danish 'recycle' artist Thomas Dambo. There are 6 in total. Five are accessible directly and the sixth is hidden and you need the first 5 to solve the puzzle of its location. However, as one is in Subiaco about 75km north of Mandurah, we found four and retired.

They are clockwise from top left: Santi Icto, Seba's Song, Little Lui and Yaburgurt Winjan Cirklestone.

Some extra photos to enjoy



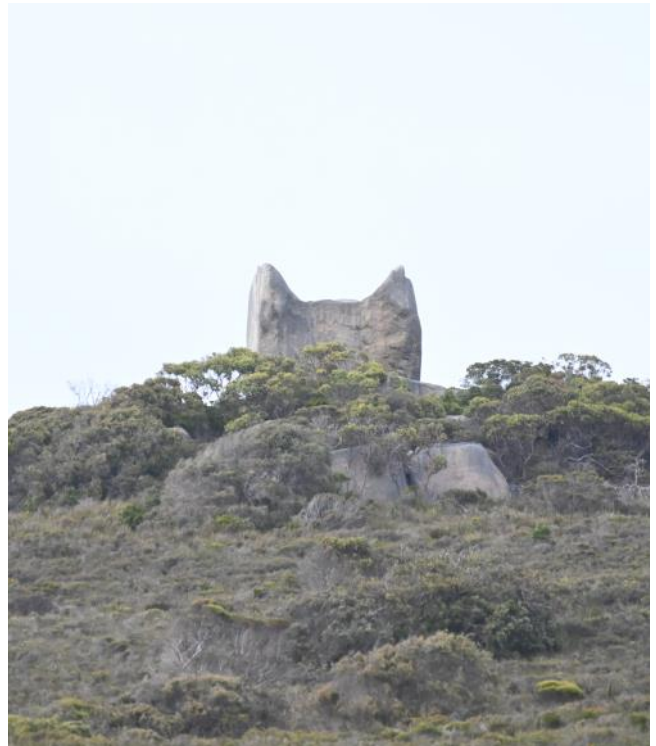
Flying duck-orchid (Caleana major)



Large tongue-orchid (Cryptostylis subulata)



Scarlet/Waratah or Albany Banksia (Banksia coccinea), just finishing. What a sight it must be with dozens in full bloom



A giant cat terrorising Cheynes beach. Bravely, we ignored it as we searched for birds

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.

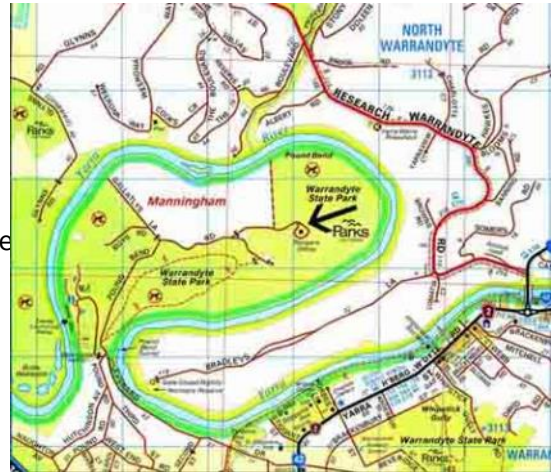
No prior experience necessary -
There is always someone available to show you the ropes.

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: Mmbbers \$2.50 Non-members \$3.00 (tube stock)



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TAGs in 2025

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:

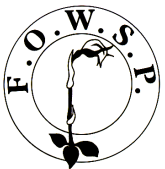
Easy: Even terrain, some light lifting, kneeling and bending involved. Few tripping hazards.

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>

The TAG team are working on their programme for 2025 and monthly events will be noted from February's newsletter on.



FOWSP MARKET TRAILER

Thanks to those who volunteered to run the trailer in **November** and **December**. *Jan Falconer, Christine Andell., Chris Kay, Marion Thomson, Pam von Drehnen, 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 on 0419 872 096 or email trailer@fowsp.org.au
First timers are always paired with someone more experienced.

Next market dates are:
Saturday, 1st February, 2025
Saturday, 1st March, 2025

FOWSP COMMITTEE 2025			OTHER FOWSP CONTACTS	
Artur Muchow	0415 383328	Secretary	<u>Nursery Manager</u>	Josh Revell
			Nursery Phone	0408 317 327
			nursery@fowsp.org.au	
Tony Oliver		Treasurer and Membership	<u>Park Office</u>	03 8427 2132
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	
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legality@bigpond.com		Lynda Chambers	Carolyn Noel	0409 901441
		0466 274421 phenologist@gmail.com		

Next Committee Meeting	
Date:	Tuesday February 11, 2025
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.