

March 2025

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Friends of Warrandyte State Park



Newsletter

Website: www.fowsp.org.auFriends of Warrandyte State Park (FOWSP) Inc. PO Box 220 Warrandyte 3113
ABN 94170156655/Incorporation No. A0024890C

Editor's Corner

Well, I spoke too soon. The second Thursday in February was an "extreme" fire danger day and a day of Total Fire Ban — so no nursery activities. However, though a short month, there was plenty happening.

There are two articles by Gray, who has stepped into the breach with some of my regular correspondents being unavailable. Gray gives us the low-down on the **FOGO** scheme that has been in place for couple of years now (pp. 2 & 4).

He also writes about a little known project for our TAG team. This is the rehabilitation of the *Nilja* property, within the Longridge Farm complex. Hopefully, when completed, the area will get better known (pp. 5 & 6).

Round the Traps is on p.3 and there are more photos on the tank painting project on p.4. The TAG report is on p.7 and a bonus article on birdbaths p.9.

John Young

The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria (FNCV) have released their calendar of events for the first 4 months of the year. It can be found at <https://www.fncv.org.au/calendar-of-events/>

For a hard copy, please contact Artur Muchow at mlyn@netspace.net.au



Above: believe it or not — this is not an exotic spider crushed into a seat but a mark in the plastic!

Platypus can be sighted along the river in Warrandyte, although you need to be lucky. Late winter / early spring is best when young are being fed. For anybody interested, there is an organisation researching and helping to preserve this unique Australian mammal.

Information from the Australian Platypus Conservancy can be found at www.platypus.asn.au.

**Deadline for April's newsletter is
Friday March 21st, 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**

FOGO — food organics garden organics



*Above: from this to this — my FOGO bin to the **bio gro** site for reworking (**bio gro** photo extracted from the Manningham Council website)*

From Gray

It is so unusual for me to miss a FOWSP Thursday that one dear member rang to check up when I failed to attend last Thursday. I was just fine, thanks; the reason I was absent was because I went on the FOGO trip organised by Manningham Council!

We were whisked by minibus to the **bio gro** (yes, all lower case!) plant in Dandenong South, where we were hospitably welcomed, then given an informative talk about the plant.

Lets see what I can remember:

First of all a brief history was given: Mr van Schaik started **bio gro** 45 years ago, originally composting forestry waste to make products for horticulture, agriculture, viticulture and landscaping. When governments (especially councils) more recently became interested in diverting organics from landfill, **bio gro** already had the knowledge and experience to participate.

Then the rationale was explained to us:

Organics in landfill produce copious carbon dioxide, and because landfill is an anaerobic environment, methane is also produced. As you know, methane is an even more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

These abundant plant nutrients in house-

hold and garden waste are too valuable to be entombed in landfill - not to mention the enormous volume they otherwise fill in the decreasingly available tip sites. Apparently 350,000 tonnes of organics are diverted annually!

Then followed a lively discussion about what can and cannot be put in our green-topped bins:

Most of us had a firm grasp of the basics, but all of us had at least one question to ask:

Paper bags instead of the special FOGO bags? Yes. Newspaper? Yes. Small amounts of any paper except glazed, waxed or plasticised paper? Yes, but preferably shredded.

Then we donned protective clothing and were led around the plant. I was glad I had my ear plugs as it was very noisy.

Front-end loaders scoop up the green-bin contents to keep the fast-moving conveyor or belt loaded. Men on either side of the belt skilfully and rapidly remove the ineligible things people have put in their bin. I saw them remove plastic bags, cans, bottles, rocks, a brick, and a towel. I noticed that, if an ineligible type of bag had been used, the whole bag was discarded, as there's no time to open and empty the bag. Apparently 2% of the bin contents are ineligible, but I'm not sure if that is by weight or by volume.

Cont'd p.4

Around The Traps

Birthday Thursday



Above: some people have no choice but to acknowledge birthday Thursday. Everybody knows when Josh's birthday is



*Above: an orb-weaver spider, probably the Garden Orb-weaver (*Eriophora transmarina*), found with seeds collected at the nursery*

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 (optional)
 1 tsp vanilla extract
 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!

Yield 24

Serving Size 1

Nutrition Per Serving:

Calories 61 Total Fat 3g Saturated Fat 2g
 Unsaturated Fat 1g Cholesterol 8mg Sodium 72mg Carbohydrates 7g Fibre 0g
 Sugar 3g Protein 1g

Sybille

Artist in Residence

Below: the TAG team continued their work on the old tank. Lauren has created some beautiful butterfly images



From p.2 FOGO explained

The cleaned material is then ground up and transported to the distant composting site, which is near Bendigo.

We saw film of the machinery turning and spraying water on very long windrows of compost. Great care is taken to maintain a temperature of 70 degrees Celsius, to kill any pathogens. This is done by turning the windrows to aerate them, and water them if necessary.

Over a cuppa and a bicky, there was an enthusiastic discussion and everyone had more questions following what we had just seen.

Our guide showed us various bags sold by supermarkets which deceptively resemble the correct FOGO bags, but which, being made of non-biodegradable plastic, are ineligible. Now that wouldn't be deliberate would it? Surely just a coincidence that they are a nice green hue!

The correct FOGO bags are made of a compostable plant-based material. They are available at the service desk at the Manningham Civic Centre, and at the MCC office near the roundabout at the Templestowe end of Blackburn Road. Or, as I said before, you can use paper bags.

A final note on the FOGO bags: our guide suggested that it is better to just twist the top of the bag, rather than tying a knot in it. Another tour of the **bio gro** plant is coming up on Tuesday 1 April (yes, I know what that date means, but it really is the correct date. Check the MCC website if you doubt it).

I recommend the tour, and suggest you think of any questions you have about FOGO, as this is your chance to have them answered.

Incidentally, if you turn up a bit early, you can get a pack of FOGO bags from the MCC service desk, which opens at 8:30.

Gray

Left centre: Imperial Blue butterfly (Jalmenus evagoras)

Below: Imperial White butterfly (Delias harpalyce)

Nilja garden rehabilitation

For the past eight years or so, FOWSP has been rehabilitating the heritage garden at the site of the historic Nilja homestead, within Longridge Farm, Yarra Valley Parklands.

During those years, with hand-tools alone, we have removed acres of agapanthus and bulbine garden escapees. So far our efforts have concentrated on the surroundings of the fenced garden; and we have also killed woody weeds including sallow wattle and giant privet.

Within the garden there is a dense infestation of agapanthus, which was a daunting prospect for our TAG team, courageous and indefatigable as they are. We resolved to seek a grant which would allow us to engage Ant Owen, our knowledgeable weed-man, who has had long experience managing weeds within WSP. Months passed, but we were unable to find anything suitable to apply for - but our opportunity came about in the following unlikely way.

I had led a TAG at the Nilja Garden, but had forgotten to take bags for removal of the weeds we had dug up. The remedy was to make repeated trips with my old rucksack - an enjoyable walk through the Naughtons and Rush sections of the Park - and carry the weeds out to my green-topped bin.

I was training for one of my long hikes at the time, so it all fitted together nicely. One evening as I emerged from Naughtons, Don Hughes, well-known Warrandyte figure, called out to me, so I stopped for a chat, during which I told him about the Nilja project. "You should apply for a grant from Warrandyte Lions," said he.

We did, and were successful, for which we are extremely grateful.

Restoration of the Nilja Garden is important as it will help to keep alive a local historical treasure in danger of being forgotten.

A brief history:

Nilja was the home of Angela Booth, the first female councillor in the Municipality in the 1920s, when the garden was established; then it was the home of Sir George Reid, who was Victorian Attorney General from 1955 to 1972 (and to whom my Sunday School teacher was married!).

Nilja was burned down in 1970, because Parks Victoria left it unoccupied - a disastrous mistake.

The garden survived the fire, although neglected and unmarked for many decades. Many fine old trees and unusual shrubs survive to this day - along with the exuberant weeds.

We plan to continue to rehabilitate this garden, to make a little-known historical site visible, and as it is readily accessible, an interesting focus for walks in a lovely but under-visited part of the Park.

For the less physically active, it has the potential to be a peaceful, shady place to contemplate a quiet reach of the Yarra in surroundings that are unusually tranquil for somewhere so close to urban development.

Gray



Above: Watsonia bulbifera in its dormant state — it greens up later in the year

Nilja garden rehabilitation cont'd



Two views of the enclosure at Nilja. Top shows the agapanthus infestation that is the major concern and below is a general view of the site

TAGS in 2025

February 2025 has been busy maintenance month, as usual for this time of year.

January ended with fencing repairs, weeding and collection of stakes and guards from our Endeavour Bank enclosures and National Tree Day plantings in 2022. Success rates of trees for NTD were high, but less so in the enclosures due to the dry summer.

February commenced with leaf clearing and Cassinia thinning (at the Dodds St, St Andrews, enclosures) to improve habitat for Slender-tailed Dunnart and the Wine-Lipped and St Andrews Spider orchids. Further maintenance and fence repairs were completed at Morrisons on 20th February.

We were then treated to one of our favourite gigs - the Dunnart Affordable Housing Estate on One Tree Hill. This area has not been burnt for some 15 years, so many of the grasses are old, and the previous flush of *Hakea ulicifolia* and *Grevillea alpina* are senescing. As a result, the Dunnarts are surviving at low levels but still protected from foxes in the enclosures and under the tile housing. A large group took on the task of renovating over 60 Dunnart homes (with improved amenities and real estate values, of course) under Cam's and Phil's guidance.

We were rewarded at day's end with one female Slender-tailed Dunnart (see below) under a piece of corrugated iron, probably sheltering after feeding on beetles.

Don



Above: Cam showing how it's done



Above: *Hakea ulicifolia*



Above: Keiran and Belinda on renovating duty

TAGS (Thursday activity groups)

TAGS meet at the nursery at 9.00 am for a 9.15 am departure. Please remember to wear appropriate foot-wear 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>

6/03/2025	Pound Bend/Tunnel Road + 3 bridges	DAVID	Maintenance incl. ex. carpark planting	Moderate
13/03/2025	Hochkins Ridge, Wonga Park	PHIL	Weed work	Moderate
20/03/2025	Pound Bend - Road reserve, Boys/Gallatlys Rd	DON/GRAY	Woody weeds - polygala, pittosporum, English ivy.	Easy-Moderate
27/03/2025	Fourth Hill - School Fence	PHIL	Cassinia thinning, weeding	Easy-Moderate
3/04/2025	Fourth Hill - Whipstick Gully	DON	Woody weeds - polygala, pittosporum, English ivy.	Moderate
10/04/2025	Morrison's - Early Hill Fence	PHIL	Cassinia thinning, woodies	Moderate
17/04/2025	Endeavour Bank	ARTUR	Fencing and planting - Grant acquittal Melb Water	Easy-Moderate
24/04/2025	Harding / Red Beard Fence	PHIL	Weeding and planting	Easy-Moderate
1/05/2025	Koorngong - Yarra R Linear Res	CATHY/	Weeding	Easy-
8/05/2025	Pauline Toner Reserve	PHIL/CAM	Planting	Easy-Moderate
15/05/2025	Harding Fence	DON	Cassinia thinning, Hakea seed collection	Moderate
22/05/2025	Spadoni's Yarra Glen	PHIL/CAM	Planting and maintenance	Easy-Moderate
29/05/2025	Fitzsimons Wetland	CATHY	Weeding and planting	Easy
5/06/2025	Walert Creek	PHIL	Woody weeds, check Southern Toadlet	Easy-Moderate
12/06/2025	Endeavour Bank	ARTUR	Fencing and planting - Grant acquittal Melb Water	Easy-Moderate
19/06/2025	Candlebark Park	PHIL	TBC	Moderate
26/06/2025	Pound Bend - slash break	DAVID/	Weeding - freesias, woodies	Easy-
3/07/2025	Frogland	LINDA	Weeding	Easy
10/07/2025	Walert Creek	DON	Maintenance, woody weeds	Moderate
17/07/2025	Haslam Fence	PHIL	Grassy weeds, reveg maintenance, thinning	Easy-Moderate
24/07/2025	Endeavour Bank	JOSH/	National Tree Day prep - lay out plants,	Easy
31/07/2025	Fourth Hill - Wildcat Gully	PHIL	Weeding angled onion near wiregrass, planting Poa tenera	Easy-Moderate
7/08/2025	Laughing Waters	PHIL	Woody weeds	Easy-Moderate
14/08/2025	Chaim Court	PHIL	Woody weeds, planting	Easy-Moderate
21/08/2025	Endeavour Bank	JOSH	NTD plant check/maintain	Easy
28/08/2025	Fourth Hill - Fiddler Fence	PHIL	Planting, woody/grassy weed control.	Easy

Birdbaths

The picture of the Grey Fantail, using the birdbath at the nursery, got me to musing about how installing a birdbath in your garden can reap rich rewards. Sadly, at home, we don't get the really small birds because the Noisy Miners chase them all off — an experience all too many of you will relate to. However, the local parrots and larger birds do hold their own.

Since last month, two new species at FOWSP have been photographed by Kim.



Above: Spotted Pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*) and White-browed Scrubwren (*Sericornis frontalis*) Photos: Kim Tarpey



Above: in my garden — Musk Lorikeet (*Glossopsitta concinna*), Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus moluccanus*) and, naturally, a Noisy Miner (*Manorina melanocephala*)

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.

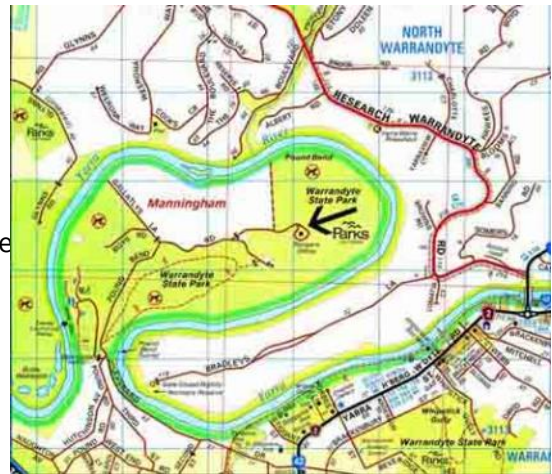
9.30 am to 12.30 pm *and*

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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Weekday Bird Walks - Eltham Lower Park

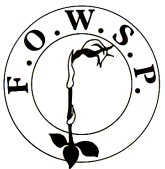
Join Council's Biodiversity Officer for a morning bird walk at Eltham Lower Park. This event offers a wonderful opportunity to observe and learn about local bird species in their natural habitat. This event is for all experience levels, from curious beginners to serious twitchers.

When

Tuesday, 18 March 2025 | 09:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Location

Eltham Lower park, 570 Main Road, Eltham



FOWSP MARKET TRAILER

Thanks to those who volunteered to run the trailer on **Saturday, 1 February**, Christine Arndell, Chris Jay, Marion Thomson, Jeff Cranston, Marie Krause and Pam von Drehnen.

Trailer transport: Artur Muchow



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, 5th April 2025

Saturday, 3rd May 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	
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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	Wildlife rescue Victoria	<u>Manningham Council Rep</u>	
lynm333g@gmail.com		https://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/contact-us	Cathy Willis	0427 660 651
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		Lynda Chambers		
		0466 274421 phenolo-		
		gist@gmail.com		

Next Committee Meeting	
Date:	Tuesday March 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.