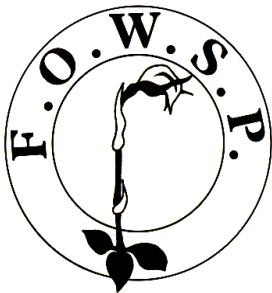


May 2025

Volume 43 Number 4

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

Hi

I hope you enjoy the May newsletter.

In a new section, Carolyn Noel has provided an excellent insight into her property in North Warrandyte. This is on pp. 3-6 and details her, and Don's, efforts to provide multiple areas and habitats in what is a fairly large block.

Both Carolyn and I were hoping that this might trigger some of you, the readers, to take a few photos of your garden and provide some comments. It doesn't have to be lengthy, some photos and captions will be sufficient for me to form an article for others in FOWSP to enjoy.

As well as providing a recipe for **Around the Traps**, Sybille has told us about some highlights of her recent trip to South Island, New Zealand. These can be found on p.7 and there are a few photos of endemic New Zealand birds on p.8.

Kim has sent in some photos from Western Victoria for you on p. 10.

Please note that Caitriona and I are off on our travels through May into mid June, so there won't be a Newsletter in June. The next edition will be July.

John Young



Sybille and Brian Ims recently visited South Island, New Zealand. In particular, she mentioned seeing a host of fantails outside her hotel window. This is a dark morph version of the Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura fuliginosa*), which is seen on South Island and is unique to New Zealand.



A sloth — I'm sure we'd all like to hang around all day. See Lynda's photos p.9.

**Deadline for July's newsletter is
Friday June 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**

Around The Traps

Birthday Thursday



Anne admitted to having an April birthday and was rewarded with Sybille's lemon sponge (and 4 candles).



Small flocks of Superb Fairy-wrens (*Malurus cyaneus*) have been seen feeding in the igloos. White-browed Scrub-wrens (*Sericornis frontalis*) have also been spotted.

Recipe of the Month

Pritikin Style Cake (Vegan)

25 dried apricots
 10 dried figs
 10 dried prunes
 2 pears cut into 1/4s or 1/8th
 2 cups of water
 1 cup w/meal S.R. flour. (I used normal)
 2 large bananas
 1/2 cup almond meal
 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon (opt)
 1 teaspoon grated orange rind (opt)

Put all dried fruit in a saucepan with water.

Bring to boil. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes.

Remove 10 apricots.

Puree fruit with cooking liquid including bananas.

Mix flour and almond meal into puree.

Add chopped apricots and any other dried fruit mixture, cinnamon and orange rind.

Put half into a log or loaf tin.

Place pear pieces on top of the mixture.
 Top with remaining mixture.

Bake 180C in a log or loaf tin. Bake 40 minutes - leave in tin to cool.

Brush the cake, while still warm, with slightly diluted lemon cordial. Marmalade could also be used.

Enjoy.

Sybille



OK, so I was looking for a filler. This 25mm bull ant (*Myrmecia sp.*) caused a bit of consternation at morning tea.

Carolyn and Don's Garden

I want to preface this article by saying I was asked to write about our garden by John. He hopes this will be the first article of many written by other FOWSPians who wish to introduce their garden too.

Overview Our block encompasses eight acres and several ecotones – it starts at the top of a hot, dry, north-facing slope with shallow clay soil and runs downhill to an ephemeral creek before continuing back uphill to a damp shady south-facing slope. When we get plants from FOWSP, we decide ahead of time if they are tough enough to survive on the top of the hill or if they need to go further down in the gully. It's an interesting garden because of the different planting environments but it's also a huge challenge due to the severe slope. It is not possible to use a vehicle to assist. Some days I feel like a mountain goat, and it's an all-day job to put a few plants into the bottom in an attempt to revegetate some badly denuded areas. Some days we take a thermos of coffee and a picnic with us on these excursions.

The garden is broadly divided into two areas: inside the deer fence and outside it.

Inside the deer fence we have several rooms; the Japanese Garden, the Mexican Garden, the Salvia Garden, the Vegetable Garden, the Cottage Garden (not because it has cottage plants but because it is near my studio) and the Orchid Paddock. As well as my 'rooms', there are some indigenous revegetation areas. It all sounds very glamorous, but it's really just a way to clump types of plants that like the same growing conditions and so that Don and I can find one another because we are able to designate where on the block we are working.

Outside the deer fence is natural bush that we are trying to maintain and improve. It is mostly Red Box forest with some remnant stringybarks. There is a large patch of *Gahnia* running in a groove down the middle of the north-facing slope. Most of the water runs this way to an almost derelict, man-made dam. We have discovered that wombats prefer to dig in softer soil as this groove has an old wombat burrow, which is collapsing, all the way along it. Naturally, we call this area the wombat gully. I have also seen a fox come out of this old burrow. Because

of the perilous slope, I have raked a zig-zag path so I can drag wire, star pickets, plants, water and tools to the bottom of the block without sliding on the loose rocks and slippery gum leaves. The wombat also uses this path; in wombat season we find wombat cubes perched roughly every 3 meters all the way to the top of the garden. Below the dam and up the southern slope the Red Box largely peter out and the *Kunzea* take over. On the southern slope, the *Kunzea* are tall and very elegant and create an almost continuous shady canopy that has a field of *Microlaena*, *Dichondra* and maidenhair ferns underneath. In winter we go down to photograph the fungi fruiting.

Below: a section of the Wombat Gully



I thought in this article I would cover three areas in greater detail: my Japanese garden, the revegetation zone outside the deer fence, and the vegetable garden. (cont'd p. 4)



Above: the Japanese Garden

Carolyn and Don's Garden (cont'd)

The Japanese Garden - this is one of my favourite areas. It is small, easy to maintain, close to the house and has two birdbaths that get lots of use. When we moved into the house about eight years ago, we inherited some trees that we would not have planted – a Golden Robinia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and a Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*). We think these weedy deciduous trees were planted on the north side of the house to shade the house from the summer sun but let the light in in winter and possibly for bush fire mitigation - we have heard the speculation that very leafy green trees might not burn as readily as a gum. These trees create a green, canopy of deep shade for my Japanese Garden in summer.



The Japanese garden is really just a mound of dirt covered in *Dichondra repens* and *Enchylaena* (which the lizards love). It features two *Xanthor-*

rhoea and I have tucked a couple of sun loving Bromeliads into crevices between the rocks (I love my brommies). We commissioned an earthmoving company to place some lovely feature rocks that represent the mountains, the hills and the plains. The Tuscan Toppings surrounding the mound represents the ocean. Like all good Japanese gardens, it has a tricky water feature, a beautiful wind chime and a wooden bridge. The semicircular bridge is very special because Don built it and it is cantilevered over the slope so one is compelled to take in the view as you enter. Don couldn't manage semicircular and arched bridge – oh well! For those of you who are concerned about the weedy trees so close to our wonderful bush, I can assure you they do not have the opportunity to make seed. The Honey Locust is a bee magnet when it flowers, and it literally hums so much it has been christened the bee tree. But it is a cultivar that doesn't set seed. The Golden Robinia is stunning when it flowers with sweet smelling white flowers that look like wisteria – the possums love them and the ringtail possums

eat every flower within two days, so it never gets the chance to seed. The two birdbaths are visited by very different birds. The glass birdbath is in a more open location and a favourite of the bigger birds such as the cockies, magpies, currawongs and kookaburras, whilst the terracotta birdbath, which is closer to the shrubby understory of red bottlebrush some tall salvias and a damp shade house is a favourite of the Eastern Spinebills, Pardalotes, Weebills, Brown Thornbills and White-cheeked Honeyeaters. I have created a window by training plants around an old trampoline ring so that we can sit and watch the birds whilst we have morning tea. (See photo below).



The Revegetation Zone – This area is down the slope outside the deer fence so anything that gets planted here gets a tall ring of aviary wire around it that is attached to star pickets or sturdy wooden stakes as the deer, kangaroos, wallabies and wombats are constantly hungry. We have learnt our lesson always to wire the rings down as some were invaded and decimated by some hungry animal – either a wombat or wallaby – that lifted the ring, got in and ate everything. Yes, it also figured out how to get out! Despite our losses, we persist and we have managed to establish some of the indigenous plants once again. When we go to the trouble of placing a ring, we make it big enough to hold several plants: a tree, a couple of shrubs, several grasses and a wildflower or two. For instance; in the large ring in the photo (see p.5), there is an *Acacia leprosa*, a few *Poa sieberiana* and a couple of *Dianellas*. This ring also rewarded us with a few Nodding Greenhoods that must have popped up from a discarded pot that I thought was dead.

Carolyn and Don's Garden (cont'd)

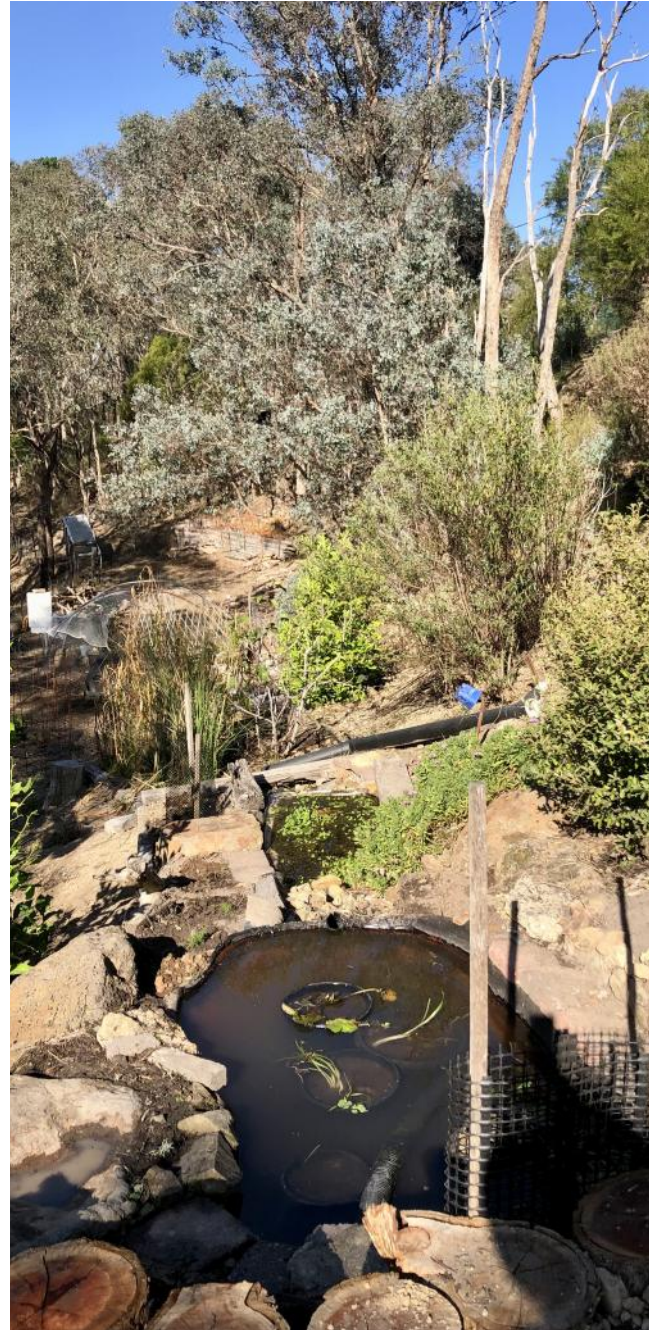
I'm not sure if we have had any effect, but since we have improved the biodiversity down here, the *Gahnia* has spread further up the slope. Every now and then, we take our hand diggers and a sack down the garden to have a weeding session. We target boneseed, blackberry, arum lilies and pittosporum and we have mostly managed to clear our block of these nasties. Occasionally, we walk up the creek to our neighbour's place as there are no fences down there and no one else seems to care for the area but us. Down near the ephemeral creek, Don has planted Candlebark, *Myrsine*, *Pomaderris*, lots of grasses and groundcovers as well as *Glycine*. I propagated some tree ferns from one of the last remaining ones struggling to survive on the edge of Kallaroo Ct so we have also given them a go.



Above: one of the ring-fenced areas described above

The Vegetable Garden – I thought this area of our garden might be of interest because it is a huge wicking bed. It is an old above-ground swimming pool that was a lily pond when we moved in. When the council informed us we had to put a pool fence around it, we decided it had to go. But rather than remove the entire infrastructure, we turned it into a terrific wicking bed that grows kilos of tomatoes, capsicum, zucchini, rhubarb, strawberries, broccoli, beans etc. and provides most of our leafy greens as well as some water-hungry herbs such as basil. It is plumbed into the house gutters so the water well fills itself when it rains, and the overflow runs into a series of ponds

that filter the excess nutrients and provide a frog-friendly environment before draining down the gully. (See photo below).



We have discovered that wicking beds require a soil with extra organic matter to prevent it from becoming compacted – especially if you are walking on it as we do. So our soil is a 50/50 mix of good vegetable soil and old mushroom compost. In the photo that includes the wicking bed (see p.6), you can see how we access it up the plank and down the other side (the wallaby has also recently discovered this smorgasboard).

Carolyn and Don's Garden (cont'd)



In its creation, Don carted over 300 wheelbarrow-loads of soil down the garden and into the wicking bed via this ramp. I recommend, if you want to give wicking beds a try, you start with something a little smaller like an IBC similar to the ones that feature in the Mexican Garden Photo (see photo below).



IBC wicking beds.

I am happy to do a demonstration workshop about how to create a wicking bed at FOWSP one Thursday if anyone is interested. I have lots of fruit trees and a 16-year-old lemon tree thriving on the deck in one of these pots.



If you would like to hear about more of my garden and some of my experiments, please let John know. In the meantime, I'm keen to hear about other FOWSPians gardens. And see lots of your photos.

Carolyn

Royal Albatrosses in NZ



Above: A Royal Albatross (*Diomedea epomophora ssp. sandfordi*) photographed off the Otago peninsula. Sybille and Brian Ims visited the nesting colony recently and provided this report (below). The larger *ssp. Epomophora* nests on off-shore islands in the southern Pacific Ocean.

A wonderful experience of New Zealand wildlife was the Royal Albatross Centre in Dunedin on an extremely windy and wet day. This, we were told, was perfect for albatrosses.

After a brief presentation of the albatross breeding cycle and short film, we walked up to the glass observatory. From there we saw the albatrosses soaring over the water and some fledglings doing wing-strengthening exercises.

There is a live cam to see the Royal Albatross

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/birds/birds-a-z/albatrosses/royal-albatross-toroa/royal-cam>

The information below was taken direct from the website. I couldn't think of a better way to explain the efforts to protect the Royal Albatross.

The nesting area on the headland at Taia-roa Head on the Otago Peninsula is a 'hot spot' - a sheltered area where summer ground temperatures can reach 50 de-

grees Celsius. These conditions aren't ideal for a genus that's far better adapted to subantarctic conditions, but they chose this place.

In earlier times both adults and chicks could die from heat exhaustion. There is now a sprinkler system that on hot days sprays water over the nest to cool the bird.

Hot conditions during hatching is a major problem as adults will stand up to cool themselves, leaving the egg exposed to risk of fly strike. Albatross chicks can take up 6 days to complete the hatch. Any fly eggs or live maggots laid in the egg during this period will often result in a dead chick.

Staff hatch all the chicks in incubators leaving a dummy egg in the nest. The nest is sprayed with Avian Insect Liquidator (AIL) when the hatching egg is removed and on return of the day old chick who has had AIL applied also. This has significantly reduced fly-strike.

Sybille

Some unique New Zealand birds



Above: a truly unique New Zealand bird, a Tui (*Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae*). This bird has a large vocal range and can be heard but not always seen. Note the interesting fact that New Zealand has managed to use its Maori names for many species. The fantail on p.1 is a *Pi-wakawaka*!



Above: a male Tomtit (*Petroica macrocephala*). The South Island version has a yellow breast and North Island has a white breast.



Above: a Stewart Island robin (*Petroica australis ssp. Rakiura*). On Stewart and Ulna Is. these birds are so tame they appear if you scratch the leaf litter!



Two of New Zealand's parrots. Top is a Kea (*Nestor notabilis*) named for its call. This bird is notorious for stripping the rubber seals from parked cars. The photographed bird is feeling very sorry for itself because it was pouring down!

Below is a Kaka (*Nestor meridionalis*), also named for its call. This bird on Stewart Island had got used to being fed apples by the owner of our B&B.

The most interesting of New Zealand's parrots is the flightless Kakapo or "Owl-parrot" (*Strigops habroptilus*). This is so rare as to be impossible for amateurs to locate. It is found on Stewart Island but, of course, we didn't see one!

John Young

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>

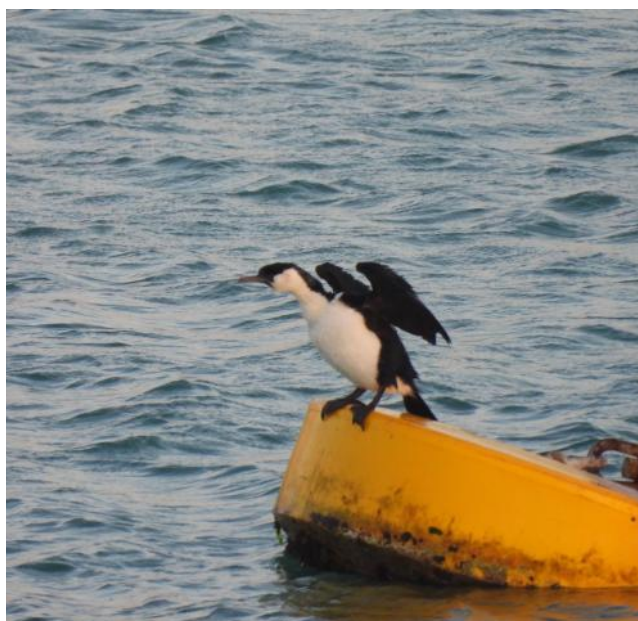
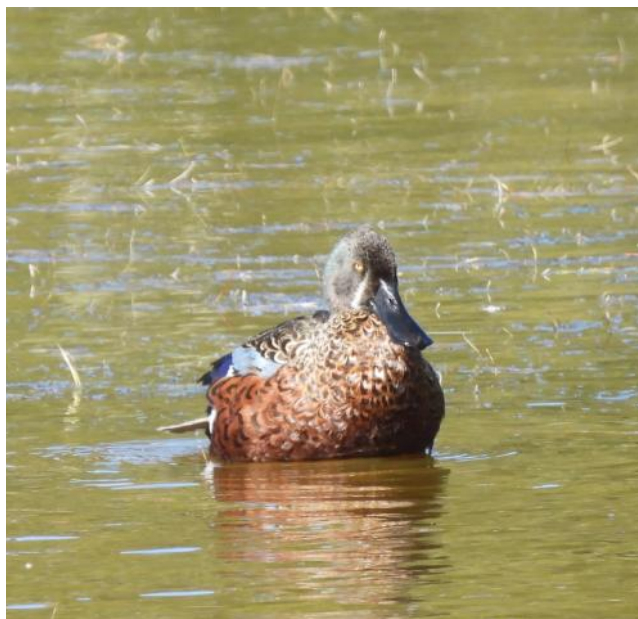
8/5/25	Pauline Toner fence	Phil/Cam	Planting	Easy/mod
15/5/25	Harding fence	Don	Cassinia thinning/seed collection	Mod
22/5/25	Spadoni's Yarra Glen	Phil/Cam	Planting and maintenance	Easy/mod
29/5/25	Fitzsimons wetland	Cathy	Weeding and planting	Easy
5/6/25	Walert Creek	Phil	Woody weeds/southern toadlet	Easy/mod
12/6/25	Endeavour Bank	Artur	Fencing and Planting	Easy/mod



These are a few of the images that Lynda sent to Josh from her trip to Costa Rica. I'm hoping she will be able to give us a report and a few more exciting creatures.



Some water birds from Western Victoria



Kim and Gary recently did a trip to the Warnambool / Port Fairy area and Kim has sent in these pictures of some of the waterbirds found in the area.

They are (clockwise from top right)

Australasian Shoveller (*Anas rhynchos*)
 Black-faced Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax fuscescens*)
 Sooty Oystercatcher (*Haematopus fuliginosus*)
 White-headed Stilt (*Haematopus leucocephalus*)
 Nankeen Night-heron (*Nycticorax caldonicus*) - note its breeding plumage

Kim Tarpey

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.

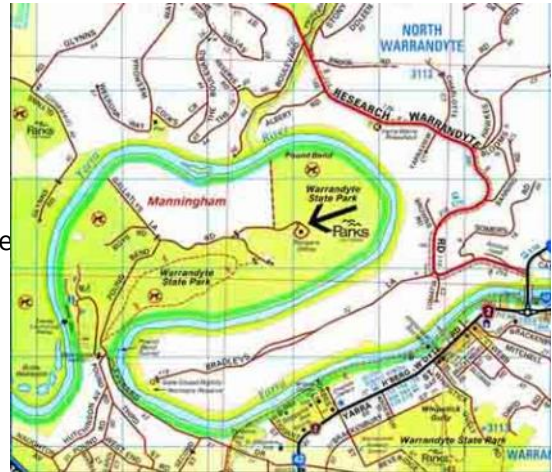
9.30 am to 12.30 pm and

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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Nillumbik Gardens For Wildlife

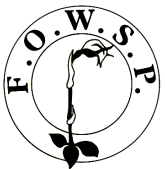
Gardens For Wildlife is a Nillumbik Council initiative designed to encourage and guide local residents to create wildlife friendly gardens that support biodiversity and improve habitat connectivity.

Upon registering your interest (Google Nillumbik Gardens for Wildlife where you will see an on-line form), You will be visited by two trained, friendly and local 'Garden Guides' who will undertake an assessment, provide suggestions and a written report.

The programme is designed to provide guidance on habitat planting with indigenous plants. It is not a general gardening advice service, nor does it provide guidance on design or landscaping.

There is a newsletter with plenty of ideas for our own gardens, as well as a featured plant.

Each edition starts with the indigenous season we are currently in and runs through some of the things that might be happening.



FOWSP 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. *(Note: no trailer April 5th)*

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, 3rd May 2025
Saturday, 7th June 2025

FOWSP COMMITTEE 2025			OTHER FOWSP CONTACTS	
Artur Muchow	0415 383328	Secretary	<u>Nursery Manager</u>	Josh Revell
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			nursery@fowsp.org.au	
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treasurer@fowsp.org.au		Membership		
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			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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lynm333g@gmail.com		https://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/contact-us	Cathy Willis	0427 660 651
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legality@bigpond.com			Carolyn Noel	0409 901441
		Lynda Chambers		
		0466 274421 phenolo-		
		gist@gmail.com		

Next Committee Meeting	
Date:	Tuesday May 13, 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.