



# Bungalook News

Newsletter of the

Whitehorse Community Indigenous Plant Project Inc.

Issue No 79

December 2021- Feb 2022

Email: [wcipp@yahoo.com.au](mailto:wcipp@yahoo.com.au)

Website: [www.wcipp.org.au](http://www.wcipp.org.au)

INC No. AOO38536X ABN No. 93 430 138 344

True Spring, according to the Middle Yarra Timelines calendar, occurs in Melbourne across the months of October and November. While the extra La Nina rainfall soaked us this Spring, the local flora and fauna flourished abundantly. Many of us have had increased time out walking and exploring the local reserves and open spaces which were the scenes for increased numbers of walkers, plus many picnics and outdoor gatherings in the interim stages of easing up lockdown. We appreciate our local bush patches and open spaces even more now and finding new spots has been another positive aspect across the year.

In this newsletter, you can read about how we managed over the last couple of months, and how some of the local parks advisory committees and friends groups fared. More information is provided on their own websites, and these are well worth reading. We feature Wandinong Reserve in Canterbury Road in this edition, one of those secluded precious patches of remnant bushland within Whitehorse. Council kept us informed and learning throughout our house-bound months, and one of their offerings was a Zoom session about Mistletoe. This is an under-rated plant, and its significance is explained in our article below. We will include a section on the vital practice of Seed Collection in our newsletter from now on and begin with a short report of one such walk recently in Antonio Park. You may have noticed the trees being planted around our locality as a compensation for the enormous loss of trees due to the North East tunnel project and we have an article about them. Finally, our feature plant this edition is the Victorian Christmas bush. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all an extra Merry Christmas season of celebrations with your family, and we thank all our friends, members, volunteers, and readers for their support over this unique and rather weird year. We all made it through to here - Seasons Greetings and thank you again.



## Contents

[Nursery report](#)

[Meetings](#)

[Seed collecting](#)

[Mistletoe](#)

[Feature plant](#)

[N-E Link trees](#)

[Wandinong](#)

[Blackburn Lakes](#)

[Yarran Dheran](#)

[Creeklands](#)

[Christmas function](#)

## Opening up – again! Nursery report

Slowly but surely Bungalook nursery, like shops, cafes, and businesses of many kinds is opening up for volunteers to return, and to the public for sales of our ever-increasing range of local plants. Thanks to COVID-19 restrictions the bushland parks committees and friends have been unable to care for our parks for nearly two years. However local gardeners have been enthused to spend time improving their own gardens. A click and collect system at the gate has been difficult but achievable. Chatting with a customer, even at a distance, has been most satisfying, for both parties I suspect.



Meanwhile, the nursery has continued with minimum volunteers. While the weeds have grown under the outside benches, there have been some exciting results with propagation of some previously difficult species. Now in stock are some delightful new plants suitable for enthusiastic home gardeners.

Left: *Brachyscombe multifida*

These include *Pultenaea gunnii* (Golden Bush-pea), *Pelargonium australe* (Austral Stork's-bill), *Brachyscombe multifida* (Cut Leaf Daisy), and the latest, *Rytidosperma pallidum* (Red-anther Wallaby-grass) – a distinctive local indigenous grass (limited stock at this stage).



Some of these species have recently been placed in the outside stock and may need a little time to harden up.

Left: *Pultenaea gunnii*



Above: *Rytidosperma pallidum*

### Living with COVID-19

While the requirement for double vaccination is not in our control, how we implement it is. There are significant legal obligations in complying with the directions related to vaccination. The impact of not complying upon the safety and wellbeing of others, the reputation of the nursery and the financial implications of fines is paramount.

Thank you to all who so willingly demonstrate compliance with this requirement.

### Moving Forward

Even with the difficulties of COVID and the need to communicate via zoom, all volunteers have been invited to join regular gatherings to initiate planning into the future. Every Thursday morning a group

has met to 'brainstorm' so many ideas and initiatives. Emails, phone calls and face to face, when possible, have been the means of bringing together a vast amount of information.

Because of the imminent need to share the roles within collection of the seed and plant material a group of those with permits to 'Take Protected Flora' issued by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning met on Wednesday 17 November. (*Ed: See the article below.*)

Other vitally important areas include Production, Sales, Irrigation, Events, Site and Equipment Management, Marketing, and more. All needed for the ongoing smooth coordination of the nursery. Also included in so many ideas discussed at great length have been the reorganisation of the working layout of the entire nursery – work shed, igloos and irrigation system. What was suitable more than 20 years ago could well be improved for such a vital, community asset when looking to yet another 20 or more years with emerging community expectations. From worldwide climate change strategies to Urban Forest Strategies, and the care of our bushland parks and gardens our small nursery can play a part.

Margaret Witherspoon

## Bungalook Meetings

### AGM

We held our AGM on 24<sup>th</sup> November. The committee is now composed of six Community members and six representatives for the Whitehouse Municipality Bushland Park Management Committees.

The positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer were filled by Mark Anderson, Michael Murray, Margaret Witherspoon and John Rogan respectively.

Our great thanks for the time given to the committee by those leaving. We cannot operate without people taking on these responsible positions. And a big welcome to those taking up the positions listed above and others remaining on or joining the committee. We are very lucky to have people interested in taking the Nursery forward as we start to proactively consider many suggestions and recommendations including the directions listed in our 'Ten year plan' issued one year ago.

### Seed collectors

Bungalook Nursery seed and cutting collectors met on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

We discussed the activity of collecting plant material from bush reserves in Whitehorse which is authorised by DELWP under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. The permit is granted 'in order to take / keep / trade in protected flora for the purpose of commercial sale and propagation and revegetation projects'. Many conditions apply. Discussion was held on exclusions from collecting threatened taxa, from listed communities (which does not apply in the City of Whitehorse) and controls of over-collecting in any area. Some comment was made on stock control, collection scheduling, collection recording and seed storage.

The issue of collecting when Bungalook, Greenlink and Whitehorse Parks and Environment members may all unwittingly be collecting from the same location was considered. This issue which has been raised previously needs some assessment. The opportunity for recording the GPS locations of some species, particularly particular trees or hard to find species was recognised and is already in the early stages of a work in progress.



## Seed collecting in Antonio Park

We have a team of registered seed collectors who faithfully head out into our local bush reserves each season to notice what plants are growing and to collect from species needed at the nursery to replenish our supplies of stored viable seeds awaiting sowing at the right time across the year. Our volunteers can team up and share knowledge, teach each other plant ID and locations of where particular species are growing.

Recently three of us went to Antonio Park to see whether the Button or Curling Everlastings, *Coronidium scorpioides*, were ready. We had noticed a couple of patches flowering there on a previous foray but needed to wait until the yellow button flower-heads are past their prime and have dried out and clumped into fluffy seed-heads. We were careful not to take more than the allowed ten percent from each plant and from ten percent of the plant community and put them into paper bags labelled with date of collection, species, number of plants collected from and who collected those seeds.

Antonio Park is a treasure house of different indigenous plant species and we were happy to see plenty of species that are needed to boost our stocks of seeds and cuttings. We discussed which particular *Cassinia* grows there, and learnt from Marion that there are two different *Cassinias*, *aculeata* and *longifolia* and how to distinguish between them. We also collected hard seed pods from *Hakea decurrens* and vowed to remember to bring gloves next time as those pods are well guarded with spiky foliage. There are many *Correas* growing there which can be propagated through cuttings, plus numerous *Acacias*, as mentioned in the previous newsletter, also plenty of lovely wild flowers nodding among the mix of local weeds and grasses. We saw Chocolate Lilies, Milkmaids, *Pimelea*, *Pultenaea gunnii*, *Hypericum*, and the gorgeous bright blue heads of *Brunonia*. Also spotted and noted were *Platylobium obtusangulum*, *Acacia implexa* and *myrtifolia* and even *Billardiera mutabilis*



Above: *Pimelea humilis*



*Billardiera mutabilis*

They are but a few of the wonderful array of species in that special remnant bushland near the eastern border of Whitehorse, and a wander along the paths there, whether with the purpose of gathering seeds, watching out for birds, or simply enjoying a glorious late Spring/Early Summer day out, are something we could recommend doing before this year is over. It is also only a short walk across to Yarran Dheran which is another very beautiful local place to explore.

Christine Hallam.

Photos: Christine Hallam, Mark Anderson

## Mistletoe

### Setting up a trial collection and propagation project.

Our Gardens for Wildlife Garden Guides often hear about the loss of small birds from our suburbs. Gardeners are keen to know what they can do to bring them back. The answer to this is not simple. Many small birds are insectivorous so growing plants that support insects is likely to be part of the answer. Recently, ecologist David Watson spoke via Zoom to our community on the importance of mistletoe as a food source for insects and birds. Mistletoe is often considered to be a pest and damaging trees. Whilst Mistletoe may be heavy and lead to a tree branch falling prematurely, the benefits as noted above and including promoting tree hollows are very significant.



Drooping Mistletoe. - I Moody



Drooping Mistletoe - I Moody



Grey Mistletoe - I Moody



Creeping Mistletoe - I Moody

Whitehorse City Council in partnership with Gardens for Wildlife, Bungalook and Greenlink nurseries, are developing a project to locate, collect, distribute and run a trial to grow some mistletoe seeds. Bungalook and Greenlink are ideally positioned to play a key role with their teams of licenced seed collectors and established plant distribution links.

The Municipality of Whitehorse has three species of Mistletoe:

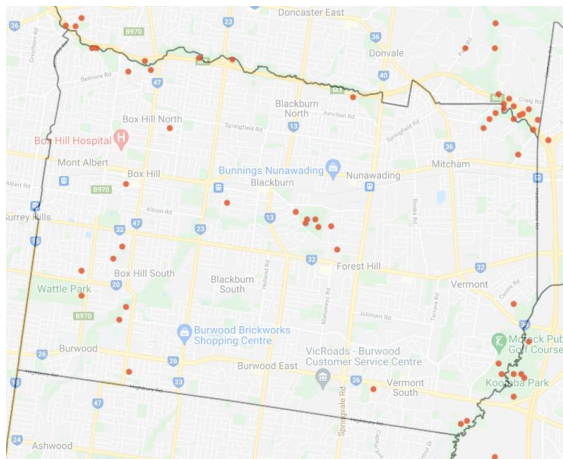


*Amyema pendula* subsp. *pendula* -- Drooping Mistletoe, know to host on Eucalypts and Acacias.  
*Amyema quandang* var. *quandang* – Grey Mistletoe, known to host on Acacias.  
*Muellerina eucalyptoides* – Creeping Mistletoe, known to host on Eucalyptus, Others (occasionally),  
 Exotic trees (e.g., *Quercus*, *Prunus*, *Betula*, *Platanus*, *Schinus*)

The distribution of Mistletoe seeds is very dependent in Southern Victoria on the Mistletoebird and to a less extent on the Wattlebird. The key action by the Mistletoebird is eating the seed, passing the seed through its gut in a few minutes and deliberately depositing those seeds in a sticky sack on a nearby branch. The Wattlebird is known to randomly deposit seed wherever it defecates. Further north the Painted Honeyeater is a key distributor, 41 species of birds feed on or live in Mistletoe.

One of the challenges for the project is finding Mistletoe in our reserves and gardens. Because of the link between Mistletoe and the Mistletoebird, and very few Mistletoe sighting in e.g., iNaturalist or the Atlas of Living Australia (ALA), one guide is the reporting of Mistletoebirds over recent years.

ALA shows the following distribution. Our search for Mistletoe can follow this information. We must not assume that the Mistletoebird of Mistletoe prefers water channels. It is likely that stripping out vegetation elsewhere removed both Mistletoebirds and Mistletoe. A few surveys to date show the distribution to follow this pattern very strongly.



Atlas of Living Australia – Mistletoe distribution.



A male Mistletoebird with a beak full of mistletoe fruit  
 (Photo: Chris Tzaros)

The concept is that all Mistletoe sightings are recorded and laid on a map. You as readers will in due course, be able to play a key part in reporting sightings.

In a message to Gardens for Wildlife gardens, we know that it will take a long time to see results but any steps we can take to support small birds are valuable.

You can find out more about David Watson’s work at the links below:

- <https://ecosystemunraveller.com/>
- <https://www.publish.csiro.au/book/7857/>

And other information below.

- <https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/a-sucker-for-bioiversity---mistletoe/11796786>
- <https://www.birdlife.org.au/documents/Landcare Mistletoe newsletter article final.pdf>

Mark Anderson and Margaret Witherspoon

## Feature plant

### **Victorian Christmas Bush** -*Prostanthera lasianthos*

Spectacular when in flower around our Christmas season from November to February, this small tree or compact tall shrub is the largest of the native mint bushes. It has masses of white flowers, spotted



on the inside with purple and orange, which provide nectar for birds. It is widely distributed along the eastern coast of Australia including Tasmania and is found locally and around Lilydale and the Dandenong Ranges. A compact tall shrub or small tree in some areas, it grows between 2-6 m high, 2-4 to 2-8 m in width. It can be a useful screen plant and its dense foliage also provides protective habitat for birds to hide amongst. It grows in full sun through to full shade. While it prefers moist well-drained loamy soils, it can manage our clays as well. Mulching is beneficial around this plant, and it responds to regular summer watering. It has minty aromatic

leaves and when not in flower it can be detected when touched by its menthol fragrance which is more pleasant than some native Mint Bush scents. These can be used to make tea or flavour food, so it is one of those versatile bush tucker plants. This showy local shrub is also attractive to not only birds but also bees and butterflies.

**Further information:**

[Whitehorse Council information](#)

[Flora of Melbourne](#)

[VICFLORA](#)

## Trees and North-East link

The huge North East Link road-building project will unfortunately require the removal of thousands of trees, some of them very mature. But with two planted for every one removed 30,000 new trees will be planted within in the project and in nearby suburbs.

Nearly 800 responses to a community survey last year helped decide the locations for planting. Local parks and reserves were two of the most popular locations, with people asking for indigenous and native species to be planted wherever possible.

By now, more than 400 trees have been planted across six council parks and reserves near the Eastern Freeway. Indigenous and native eucalypts and wattles have been planted with Manningham and Whitehorse councils in Katrina Gully Reserve, Doncaster, Morris Williams Reserve, Bulleen, Heatherdale Creek Parklands, Mitcham, Memorial Park, Box Hill North, R.E. Gray Reserve, Nunawading and Slater Reserve, Blackburn North.

Trees planted in Whitehorse Council parks were grown from seeds collected locally. Some of these parks have plantings by Advisory Committees of plants sourced from Bungalook Nursery in previous years. If you walk through any of the above parks keep an eye out for the new plantings.

This is one of the dozen or so that have been planted in R.E. Grey Reserve.

Marion Siseman



## Wandinong Sanctuary

In 1856 an area of 68 acres was sold to Mr John Woods from the Crown. The area was later subdivided and in 1913 approximately 3 acres was purchased in the name of Janet Emily Billing who would later marry Albert Arthur Hooke in 1914. They named the land Wandinong it being a combination of two names which were special to them, Wandin, the place in the Yarra Valley to which they would ride their bicycles and Ethel Turner's book "The Camp at Wandinong".

Wandinong was described as being thickly covered with trees and undergrowth including grasses and wildflowers. From photos provided by the Hooke family there is evidence of a wide variety of wildflowers including 3 species each of *Diuris* orchids (Golden, Tiger and Donkey) and *Caladenia* orchids, *Glossodia* orchids (waxlip), *Epacris impressa* (Common Heath), *Hardenbergia violacea*, *Hovea heterophylla*, *Leucopogon virgatus* (Common Beardheath), *Tetratheca ciliata* (Pink Bells), *Pimelea humilis* (rice flower), *Stylidium* sp (trigger plant) and *Wurmbea dioica* (early Nancy).

The Hooke family built a simple home with outbuildings in the centre of the property. A photo of this is placed in the park near the site of the old house. There was no water supply or electricity in the early years. They had six children who grew up enjoying the freedom of a bush life. The family also had chickens and at one time also a house cow. Mr. Hooke refused to buy a car, calling it a 'modern inconvenience'. He rode a bike everywhere including for business purposes and the family often had biking holidays. The Hookes practiced mosaic burning of their property and enjoyed the flush of new growth and wildflowers which would grow after the patch burning. They also removed any weeds such as blackberry.

In the 1960s the Hookes marked the births of their twenty grandchildren by planting trees in the Ronley St block. Many of these trees are still there; others have been replaced as needed. The original name plates installed by the first Committee of Management have been replaced with new steel markers showing the name and year of birth of each child.

In 1959 Mr. and Mrs. Hooke became members of the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society and decided that they would like the property to remain intact and be set aside for the public to enjoy the peace and quiet of the natural environment. In 1966 and 1968 they signed Deeds of Gift to gift the land to the then City of Nunawading as a 'sanctuary for birds, wildflowers and native vegetation and a place of public resort and (passive) recreation". Mr. Hooke died in 1972 and in 1973 Mrs Hooke activated the Deeds, giving the property to the City. By that time many weeds



had taken hold as the Hookees had struggled to maintain the property as they had done for the previous decades.

As required by the Deeds, a management committee was established and it was decided to remove the house and outbuildings. The woody weeds such as *Pittosporum* were removed early on but other weeds such as angled onion proved a little more persistent.

Forty eight years later and [Wandinong Sanctuary](#) is still a beautiful place of peace and calm. Much of the remnant vegetation remains and the Advisory Committee have gradually been reintroducing some of the wildflowers which were enjoyed by the Hooke family. *Stylidium*, *Pimelea*, *Hibbertia*, *Coronidium scorpioides*, *Hardenbergia* and several of the pea family such as *Daviesia* and *Dillwynia* have all found a home, planted as tube stock from Bungalook Nursery. They join the remnant vegetation which includes five species of greenhood orchid, *Arthropodium strictum*, *Platylobium*, *Burchardia*, *Xanthorrhoea* as well as numerous Acacias, and other indigenous plants. While weeds are still a problem in some parts of the park, they are becoming less so year on year.

Ref: Wandinong Sanctuary: Its Origins, Objectives and Development

Photos: Bill Ellemor and C. Tenni



The Hooke house in Wandinong



The view now from the same position.



Left: *Cassinia longifolia* in flower with *Acacia mearnsii* in the background.



Right: A recent photo of some of the wildflowers in Wandinong

Cath Tenni.

## Sightings at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary



(Ian Moodie)



With the increased number of visitors to Blackburn Lake Sanctuary, it has brought all sorts of unexpected sightings and experiences! Several excited visitors report sightings of the tiny Spotted Pardalote in various parts of the Sanctuary and a few sightings of a Painted Button Quail. We're unsure whether it was an escaped caged bird, or a visitor. The monthly bird list at the Visitor Centre has seen an increase in the number of visitors who are recording their observations. The brochures available have been popular and keeping Su & Andy busy reprinting and replenishing them.

In general, visitors are enjoying discovering the bushland.

### Weeding & planting days

As is the situation with all the bushland parks, working bees were few and far between. We were lucky to fit two planting days in. One on the 1<sup>st</sup> May where we planted two hundred tube stock from Bungalook, in the area at the Boardwalk. They have flourished with this abundance of rain.



On another day three hundred seedlings were planted down near Friends Bridge. Again, the rain has been a bonus.

**Thanks to everyone one of you wonderful volunteers at Bungalook, and our enthusiastic volunteers at BLS.**

**Anne Payne**



<http://blackburnlakesanctuary.org/rsp-whatson.php>



## Yarran Dheran - NOCTURNAL WILDLIFE PROWL

### NOCTURNAL WILDLIFE PROWL IN YARRAN DHERAN

COMMON RINGTAIL POSSUMS, COMMON BRUSHTAIL POSSUMS as well as SUGAR GLIDERS, MICROBATS, EELS, AUSTRALASIAN NIGHTJARS, and TAWNY FROGMOUTHS all live in Yarran Dheran. All feed at night. While possums live principally on leaves of eucalypts, tea-trees, paperbarks and wattles and some flowers and fruit, the diet of sugar gliders includes invertebrates, nectar, pollen or sugar exudates on leaves and bark. We sometimes see eels in the Mullum Mullum Creek as well.

#### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Join us on this popular nocturnal wildlife prowl to be led by Ian Moodie, well-known and knowledgeable local environmentalist and experienced walk leader



#### WHAT IS THIS?

A **talk** about some of the wildlife we might see  
A **spotlighting** walk through Yarran Dheran to see what wildlife we can find

#### WHERE?

[Yarran Dheran](#) Nature Reserve. Enter at Ashburton Drive (Melways 49 B7) to meet at the Information Centre

#### WHEN?

**Friday 3 December 2021**

**8.00 – 9.30 pm**

#### COST?

This event is free

*Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Not suitable for very young children or prams. Please, no dogs*

#### BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

Numbers are strictly limited for this activity. A waiting list will be established if demand exceeds places.

Email [gay.gallagher@bigpond.com](mailto:gay.gallagher@bigpond.com) to register.

#### BRING A TORCH AND WEAR CLOSED FOOTWEAR



For information about Yarran Dheran or details about events, Visit their website [at https://yarrandherannaturereserve.wordpress.com/](https://yarrandherannaturereserve.wordpress.com/) or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/YarranDheran>



### News from Up the Creek (Blackburn Creeklands)

The Creebies are very pleased that their regular park activities are getting back to normal (for the double-vaxed at least!) after the long lockdowns.

Their regular Thursday Morning working bees restarted again from the 4<sup>th</sup> November. There's plenty of work to do - given the good rains this season and there being two years of weed seed in the ground. So much so, restoring order will have to be the priority for the coming year rather than new planting projects!



**Tawny Frogmouth father and chick – Blacks Walk 6/11 (photo: Ian Moodie)**

Bungalook Nursery is a major source of plants used to regenerate the Creeklands – supplying habitat for our indigenous fauna such as the Tawny Frogmouths.

The Creebies also managed to sneak a Whitehorse Council Bird Walk in on the 6<sup>th</sup> November - which was a close approximation to the Committee's usual Spring Bird Survey – albeit a little later than usual and under a more restricted format due to the need to control numbers and social-distancing. It is nice to see the Creeklands continuing to provide the resources for a new generation.

If you'd like more information, please e-mail [BlackburnCreeklands@gmail.com](mailto:BlackburnCreeklands@gmail.com) or visit: <https://blackburncreeklands.wordpress.com/>.

## Bungalook Nursery Christmas function

17 December 2021



The nursery will hold its Christmas gathering in the form of a catered gathering within the Nursery. Traditionally this has been an onsite BBQ. By remaining outside we can satisfy the desire by us all to stay safe and appropriately distanced, but also provide shade.

The details have been advised separately, but keep the date free.

### Next Committee Meeting:

15 December 2021. We are moving to monthly meetings.

### Bungalook Nursery Newsletter February 2022 edition: 80

We are seeking articles for each edition of the newsletter. Please submit items for the next newsletter by 23 February 2022. Submit to [wcipp@yahoo.com.au](mailto:wcipp@yahoo.com.au) marked for the attention of the newsletter editors.

### Bungalook Nursery Newsletter editors:

Mark Anderson and Christine Hallam

WCIPP Inc recognises the Wurundjeri/Bunurong people as the traditional custodians of the land on which the nursery is located.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Nursery.