



Bungalook News

Newsletter of the

Whitehorse Community Indigenous Plant Project Inc.

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Come and join us on our next Friday Walk

Friday 23 September 2016

9.30 am

Damper Creek – a beautiful creek environment
with Doug, Frank and the Friends of Damper Creek
Meet at the carpark Stephensons Rd. Mt. Waverley

Melways 61 F9

All welcome

“Volunteers are Happy People”

Thus commented the driver of a truck load of gravel, surrounded by our team ready to start shovelling and spreading 5 cubic metres of topping around the potting shed and car park. What a huge effort with most of the task completed by morning tea time.



With these cold and sometimes rainy winter days it has been time to attend to maintenance jobs around the nursery. After the hectic weeks in May, June and July a few quiet weeks are very welcome.

Two major projects are underway at the moment. What is called “the grasses” area is to be upgraded with a much improved watering system. In addition, it is anticipated that the entire section will be covered in shade cloth for the summer months.

We recently met with a manager from Yarra Valley Water to discuss the option of lowering our water bills. We are a not-for profit organisation eligible for certain discounts; a situation we have been trying to negotiate for many years!

Huge orders have gone to many of the advisory committees working on projects within the bushland parks. Along with Greenlink Box Hill we were able to supply a total of 3030 tube stock to a Melbourne Water project on the Dandenong Creek. National Tree Day saw yet another cooperative exercise with Greenlink; a total of 1,000 of our plants provided to Whitehorse Council (ParksWide) for a community planting in Highbury Park. We also supplied plants to six schools who participated in National Tree Day – five being sponsored by our local State MP. And still customers come to the nursery searching for a few plants here and there for their own gardens. It's so pleasing to hear many comment on the fact that they live near a certain park and wish to extend indigenous vegetation into their own little piece of paradise.



Unfortunately, we were unable to go out into the field and take a walk to the Heatherdale wetland and retarding basin in June. The threat of rain, hail and even snow was just too much. The walk is now planned for December. With warmer weather and the promise of drier under foot and the bursarias flowering we look forward to meeting some of the enthusiastic local volunteers.

In the meantime, we are planning a walk on 23 September to Damper Creek. Doug and Frank are again keen to guide us along this magnificent creekland (see above notice).

As well as giving many hours to our nursery, there are many who are also involved with the care and management of our local bushland parks. Among those recognised by Whitehorse Council during National Volunteers Week were Les Smith (for more than 45 years), John Louden and Margaret Witherspoon (38 years) and Su Dempsey (34 years)



Thanks also to the nomination by two WCIPP volunteers, Margaret was also presented with a certificate of recognition by the local Federal MP, at a recent evening function celebrating volunteer achievements in the eastern suburbs. Some people do amazing things out in the community.

And last but not least . .

Production for the past three months – 4,948 plus 348 for Knox Environment Society (seed supplied 348)

Hours 914

Pictured: Margaret, Les, Su and John

Healesville Freeway Reserve – Community Campaign

At the last Healesville Freeway Reserve stakeholder meeting held in August'16, VicRoads announced that 21 titles of unencumbered parcels of land have been deposited at the Titles Office for transfer to Crown. It is now just the amount of time the Titles office takes to effect the transfer to Crown for that land to be saved as Open Space for the community. I do not know how many hectares it amounts to but it is the bulk of the land on that corridor. That leaves 9 titles of encumbered land, which will be released over time as the tenancy falls vacant.

We are over the moon with this, as we can now start concentrating on the draft future uses and the development of the Establishment Plan for the corridor.

This has truly been a community campaign and we thank all the volunteers who generously assisted us, we also want to thank the community for supporting the campaign by signing the petition, coming out in large numbers to attend public events and voting to let us know exactly what they thought and wanted for this land. That gave us the conviction we were truly representing the views of the people.

A special acknowledgement and thank you goes out to Amanda Simpson and Margaret Rackham who joined the Friends of the HFR right at the start, in the early days of the campaign and stayed committed, active and supportive throughout the whole process. The work of Lindsay Cowling is also acknowledged, he joined us later in the process and has been an active and supportive member ever since.

The role of the Labor Party also needs to be acknowledged, they recognised the views of the community and pledged to save the land if they won Government. After the election, even though they did not win the seat, Labor have followed through and kept their promise to save the land by transferring it to Crown and we are very grateful.

This outcome would not have been possible without the participation and support of the Friends of the HFR, Volunteers, the Community and the Labor Party keeping its election promise on this issue.

We look forward to the development of a wonderful community park, an asset to the area. Please do participate in the forthcoming Community Consultation on the future uses of the land, events will be advertised so please look out for them, come along and tell us what you think.

Anne Makhijani



They never give up:
Public rallies in support
of the Friends of the
Healesville Freeway
Reserve
Left: 22 March 2014
Right: 25 October 2014



Out and About

Yarran Dheran



Celebrate Australian Wattle Day at Yarran Dheran on Saturday 10 September 10.30 – 12 noon

Walk the bushland in Yarran Dheran and Antonio Park with local guides on Sunday 18 September 9.30 am – 12.30 pm.

NEWSFLASH Our ponds have water going through them again after many years! Come and see the waterfall while the rain lasts

ParksWide Environmental Education

Free environmental and sustainability education programs for children and community groups of all kinds, including pre-schoolers, primary and secondary students, scouts, guides and walking groups are offered by the City of Whitehorse. A visit to Yarran Dheran Nature Reserve can be tailored to suit groups of most kinds!

This service is coordinated by Council's Education Program Officer, and is supported by experienced volunteers



Bellbird Dell



Bellbird Dell mascot.

Happenings at Bellbird Dell

Improved Water Regime by diverting storm water into the Dell's multiple ponds through nearby drains, in order to 'flush' them. This is a long term goal. One pond has been modified, however work has now ceased.

Track name. To make it easier to organize volunteer activities and council works.

Hoping to help younger people see the park is a place to protect and cherish

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary

Bush Care's Major Day Out

Saturday September 10, 2016 10 am to 12 noon. Meet at the Visitor Centre

A special effort to get rid of those pesky weeds. Bring gloves if you have them. Tools provided. Don't forget your hat and water bottle.



Note: This event is on a Saturday NOT Sunday when other groups may be doing the Major Day Out.

Talking Turtles with Turtles Australia Inc.

Sunday September 11, 2016. 2pm to 4pm at the Visitor Centre.

Meet some live turtles up close: learn how to identify the different species, and how you can be of the TurtleSAT Community Mapping Program

Your gold coin donation will help fund their valuable research and work to protect and preserve populations and habitats of Australian freshwater turtles.

Wattles and Wildlife

(This following article has been sitting in a computer file for quite some time. Apologies for not being able to credit the source.)

Wattles are one of the most widely recognised native plants. This article explores a few aspects of the less well known relationship between wattles and wildlife.

Wattles and Birds

The seeds of wattles are eaten by birds including Red-tailed Cockatoo, Gang Gang Cockatoo, Emu, Crimson Rosella, Red Wattlebird, Superb Fairy-wren, various honeyeaters, King Parrot and Bronzewing Pigeon.

Certain birds glean insects directly from the foliage of wattles. The Brown Thornbill feeds mainly from acacias. Fan-tailed Cuckoos are common amongst wattles. Many wattles possess glands at the base of the leaves or edge of the phyllode (leaf stem that has been modified to appear and function like a leaf).

During flowering this gland may produce a sugary fluid that attracts a wide variety of birds including silvereyes, honeyeaters (new Holland, White-naped, Yellow-faced, White-plumed, Crescent, Spiny-cheeked) and thornbills. Wattle pollen has been observed in bird feathers and birds are known to act as pollinators of some wattles. The Little Corella has been observed feeding on wasp larvae in galls on Acacia spp.

Wattles and Mammals

Research in rural remnants in Victoria has shown that the number of Sugar Gliders is determined by the amount of plant exudates during winter. The most important exudates are the gums produced by certain species of wattles, particularly Black Wattle, *Acacia mearnsii*. The density of Sugar Gliders has been shown to

range from a minimum of one animal per hectare where wattles are absent, to as many as twelve per hectare where wattles are abundant. Sugar Gliders and Squirrel Gliders use acacia gum as an important source of carbohydrate during winter when other sources of energy – food rich, such as nectar and some insects are scarce. The quality and quantity of gum produced by different acacia species is highly variable. The gum of Black Wattle is water-resistant and persists on the plant throughout the year whereas Blackwood is not a gum producer.

The rare Leadbeater's Possum, which is found in the Mountain Ash, forests of Victoria's central highlands, feeds on the carbohydrate-rich sap of certain wattles. Where hollows are not limiting, the abundance of suitable wattles is the next most important factor determining the numbers of this possum.

Wattles and Invertebrates

Most of the insects which visit or live on wattles do not pollinate the flowers but come to take leaves, pollen or nectar. Ants, native bees and wasps are attracted to the sugars produced by wattle glands during the flowering period. Wattle seed possess an oil-rich attachment that is designed to attract ants which aid in seed dispersal.

A study conducted near Melbourne identified sixty species of moths, some rare, on wattles. Thirty-six species of wattle are known to be food plants for Australian butterflies.

Galls, such as those found on some wattles, are produced in response to infection by flies, wasps, psyllids, thrips, scale insects, beetles, bugs, mites, nematodes, fungi and bacteria.

It should be remembered that wattles are only part of the plant community. To create a sustainable habitat for wildlife requires consideration of all the other species typical of the plant community and location.

Photo: Courtesy Ian Moodie

