

To conserve and enhance the diversity of native flora and fauna of the Glenfern Valley Bushlands while preserving community access and encouraging education and compatible uses for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

The Glenfern

The Official Newsletter of The Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands Inc.
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President's Report

It's been a long hot dry summer. In fact Bureau of Meteorology's nearest weather station, the Scoresby Research Institute, recorded its hottest summer (2.3 degrees above average) for at least ten years with only 73% of the normal summer rain. The tough weather has taken its toll on our



treescap and on our new plantings. It is always a risk that some of our new plantings will not survive – we just need to live with that risk. Our climate has never been really friendly and with the evidence that our local climate is heating and drying up, it's a stark reminder that we must do what we can to retain the natural environment on our doorstep. With your help Glenfern Valley Bushlands will survive and thrive.

Apart from the many projects on the go within the Bushlands the Committee has been busy in the background looking for opportunities to strengthen our connections with our environs and local community.

Birdlife Australia

We have been indeed fortunate to have increasing contact with Birdlife Australia over the last couple of years. BirdLife Australia is devoted to promoting Australia's native birds. In past years this organisation has assisted us with bird walks on Discovery Day but on the 19th March, 15 members from Birdlife Australia conducted an outing at



Bird photos: Mike Sverns

Glenfern. On a perfect autumn day 37 species of birds were recorded in the reserve. Our birdlife is a wonderful asset and their growing presence confirms the value of rehabilitating the reserve to its original bushland state. Mike Svern and I had the pleasure of joining this group for the outing. We marvelled at the collection of expertise and experience of this group gathering bird observations.

Opportunities along Ferny Creek

Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands has been taking a closer look at the management of land on the north side of the Ferny Creek and up to Ferndale Road. Should an opportunity come up we could take care of this strip of land in the same way we care for the current reserve. The area is currently not well managed and is a source of weed infestation into Glenfern Valley Bushlands. Tragically Ferndale Road is a secluded track that has become an increasingly common area for anti-social behaviour and rubbish dumping. In contrast it could, with some tender loving care, provide a wonderful entry to the reserve for those living in the vicinity of Leonard Street.



friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands Inc.

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Supporting the Glenfern Green Wedge Many of you would know of the proposed development along Glenfern Road in the area known as the Green Wedge. Glenfern Valley Bushlands has made a modest pledge to support the Friends of the Glenfern Green Wedge Inc in their campaign to raise funds to buy more land to be added to the area that is promised to be set aside as a public reserve if VCAT approves the development in a hearing set to open on April 22. If the development proceeds Glenfern Valley Bushlands will work closely with the Friends of the Glenfern Green Wedge to preserve the shared natural corridor along Ferny Creek. We urge all to support this new group. You can contact and pledge support for this Group through their website <http://www.fggw.org/>

CFA No group deserves more praise than the Upwey CFA. Driven by volunteers, they provide a service too easily taken for granted. From time to time we meet with the Council and the CFA to discuss topics of mutual interest. Over summer we have all agreed to some changes in the fire track layout and new access to the reserve. A new gate has been erected just below the car park on New Road. This will allow CFA vehicles to better access the network of tracks in the reserve. With the clearing of pittosporum along Serg's Track and around Wallaby Walk, the CFA will also have access to the Depot end of the reserve for the first time in decades.

Environmental burn For many years DSE have earmarked a portion of Glenfern for a fuel reduction burn, however our high volume reduction of Pittosporum undertaken with Melbourne Water and Caring for Country grants along Serg's Track and between Wallaby Walk and Ferny Creek has demonstrated a good alternative approach. Nonetheless we do have a proposal with Council to conduct a very small, well controlled environmental burn in a small pocket near the corner of Glenfern Ridge Track and Hill Track. The target area is currently marked with star pickets and flags if you want to check it out. If this goes ahead (perhaps in the autumn of 2014) it will also be a training opportunity for the local CFA. An environmental burn would provide Glenfern with additional insight into managing areas degraded by pasture plants. Without sufficient animal grazing or occasional burning the grass clearings are being dominated by introduced pasture grasses. Burning, on the other hand, may bring on a new round of woody weeds – hence the trial to establish the facts.



KEEP YOUR EYE ON THIS SPACE!

We are expecting work over the next few months to upgrade the front gate parking bay. Keep an eye out for new signage for the reserve.

*Please join Friends of
Glenfern Valley Bushlands*

The reserve has much to offer. We ask that you take a few minutes to check to ensure your membership is up to date and /or to join the Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands and please pass on the invitation on to family and friends. Membership is inexpensive but is a powerful signal to Government agencies that the community is supportive and participating in the Glenfern project. The larger the membership the more we can do. Thank you to the many of you that are members already. It is worth it, take a look for yourself – visit your wonderful Bushlands. Check out our website for more details. <http://www.glenfernvalleybushlands.org.au/>

David

Friends, Grants and Projects

One of the great things about Glenfern Valley is the variety of activities we undertake. Over the past ten years, our versatile team has removed fences and car bodies, has erected tables and info shelters, has coordinated community and educational events, while concentrating on the core need to rehabilitate and conserve our beautiful Bushlands.

Last year, we managed three projects funded by grants. Firstly, our ongoing support from Melbourne Water enabled us to remove the woody weed Sweet Pittosporum from over a hectare of the reserve. This enabled us to selectively replant, and then watch remnant seed germinate because it was no longer inhibited by the Pittosporum. As well as totally shading out the under-story, Pittosporum releases a chemical which limits growth of other species. Though the area looks somewhat sparse in the short term, our experience of past projects gives us confidence that regrowth will predominantly be indigenous species rather than weeds. Keep an eye out at the bottom of Serg's Track as the bush transforms into more natural open forest.



Our second project involves the restoration of the old quarry site. A Caring for our Country grant enabled us to take the first steps towards converting the quarry from an eyesore to an oasis. We have very cost effectively installed new tracks with gravel toppings, suppressed the prevalent weeds including Hemlock and Kikuyu then replanted on three boundaries to form a buffer which now protects the surrounding high quality areas. This year, we plan to install an educational amphitheatre where we might spread the environmental message to various groups including local schools, Guides and others.



Finally, though it has taken longer than anticipated, we are drawing to the end of our "Entrance of Significance" project. Through a Shire Cultural grant we have been able to beautify our main gate, while at the same time recognize the significance of the area to the Aboriginal people. We are delighted with the metal cutouts of the Spirits Bunjil and Waa. Soon we will erect an information pedestal which will describe the Spirits, plus give some cultural background.

We are delighted that so many members are involved with the many aspects and activities at Glenfern. If any of the above projects interests you, please get in touch as we'd love to have you along.

Look forward to seeing you at Glenfern soon.

Andrew

A Visit from Upwey Junior Guides

In November Glenfern Valley Bushlands was visited by the Upwey Junior Guides, four leaders and twelve girls ranging from six to ten in age who had a guided walk around the reserve. We had a nature hunt where the girls had to find leaves, flowers, birds and animals. Also a sensory adventure, identifying the scents of various plants growing in the area eg: Eucalyptus.

After our walk, a picnic dinner was enjoyed while we told them about the reserve and the legends of the gate spirits. We are looking forward to a return visit and hopefully engage the older group of ten to fifteen year olds.



The Glenfern

WORKING BEE DIARY 2013

- * Sunday 21st April
North West Boundary with Archery Club
(Area 12)
- * Saturday 18th May
Serg's Track
Removing more pittosporums!
- * Sunday 16th June
Echidna to Manna Gum Track
- * Saturday 20th July
Hill Track Eastwards
- * Sunday 18th August
*Ferny Creek Track Sarah's Track
to Hill Track*

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Morning Tea 11-ish)
Central car park, Glenfern Road, Upwey
Melway Map 74 G10

Working bees are held every 3rd alternating Saturday or Sunday morning of the month.

Members, Committee and interested supporters meet on-site to take part in weeding, planting and talks about indigenous plants, animals and weed ID.

Everyone is welcome.

Entry for cars is via the Central gate on Glenfern Road Upwey (about ½ way along the reserve)

Site reference: Melways 74 G10.

Bring a water bottle and depending on the weather, a hat or wet weather gear. Please wear long pants and sensible shoes/boots.

In the event of a Fire Ban or inclement weather the working bee will be cancelled.

By being a financial member of Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands, you enable the group to gain valuable Funding Grants to help us with works in the reserve.

If you would like to become a financial member, please download the membership form from our website at: www.glenfernvalleybushlands.org.au

Membership is only: \$5 Concession, \$10 Individual, \$15 Family or \$50 for a business sponsor

Fungi – the good, the bad and the ugly

Guest speaker – Dr Mary Cole
Agricultural Scientist and Mycologist

Presented by
Friends of Sassafras Creek
Friday 10th May, 7.30 p.m.
Monbulk Hub

If you would like to attend
or for more information
call Jane Hollands 0412 101128



We are troubled by the amount of rubbish being dumped on the perimeter of the reserve recently

PLEASE report rubbish dumping, graffiti or vandalism in the reserve to Shire of Yarra Ranges
Ph: 1300 368 333

National Volunteer Week[®]

13-19 MAY 2013

Will you volunteer this year?

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