

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.

Edition No. 40 Autumn/Winter 2017



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello Glenfernians and welcome to the latest winter edition of *The Glenfern*.

Our conservation project just shows what a community can achieve. A bold and consistent goal, thoughtful planning, willing hands and deep community support can get results. I like to think Glenfern is a great example of thinking globally but acting locally. It is difficult to change the world as an individual but by joining ambitious community projects we can make a good start. If many communities run good projects we can make a real difference across the environment.

You can see this line of thinking frequently in the media. *The Herald Sun* has been running a series of posters as part of a Sustainability Education Kit; the first poster in the series was focused on animals and plants and noted that our flora and fauna are being pushed to the

brink. It urged all Australians to play a role in protecting our flora and fauna and went on to say "*Clearing invasive weeds and joining community groups that look after local bushland and park areas also has a positive impact on local plant and animal populations*"

That sounds like Glenfern to me; a community group looking after bushland! So how about it—can you help?

So what has been happening in Glenfern over summer? Here is a quick rundown on some goings on in our reserve:

- The walking tracks have been repaired and upgraded;
- The Council has introduced a regular mowing service to keep our grassed area in good shape;
- We had our first working bee in Forest Park Reserve;
- We have hosted walk by U3A;

- Using grant funding we have removed all the pittos from area 7—such a wonderful result!
- We have done tree planting in area 7 and part of area 6 and below the quarry;
- We have hosted 140 students from Trinity College;
- We have explored nearby creek reserves;
- We are working on nest boxes for bats, sugar gliders, kookaburras and parrots;
- We have hosted a visit by the Ambassadors—a new local junior environmental group;
- We have run regular monthly working bees and monthly midweek working bees.

It has been a busy and rewarding time. Thank you to all the volunteers and our supporters who have contributed.

David Moncrieff



friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands Inc.

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS VISIT GLENFERN

Earlier in the year, we received a request from Trinity College (a branch of Melbourne Uni) for us to host their international students once more. Could we cope? Each November we manage this, but this time there were to be 140 students plus four teachers! Furthermore, it would be a whole day affair, with half the students attending a morning or afternoon session, while the other half visited Grants picnic ground.

These 18–20-year-old students are often very new to Australia, some with limited English. This outing helps to familiarise them with Australian bush and customs.

Well, there is no doubt that this was Friends of Glenfern's largest event on record. With the full support of the dedicated and knowledgeable Committee, we somehow handled the day. Here's a breakdown of the activities:

- Plant 240 trees in Area 7, recently cleared of Pittosporum as part of the CMA's Fire Load Reduction Grant Scheme. See more about it in this newsletter.
- Take four groups of students on a "walk and talk", covering history, physical characteristics and environmental values.

- Cover a range of questions which formed part of their major project that centred on coping with severe events including bushfire, drought and flood.
- Have a lunch break, then do it all again.

We felt it went well, with the teachers expressing their appreciation for a job well done. This was capped off with a generous donation. After packing up, each committee person returned home with sore voices and warm hearts. Could we do it again? Sure could! Thanks Trinity students. Thanks teachers. Thanks Glenfern Friends.

Andrew Fullagar



POWERFUL OWL *It was an anxious wait—but she is back !!*

A few months ago, DELWP Wildlife Officers were made aware of an injured Powerful Owl found in Alfred Street, Ferntree Gully. Through the community network, we were made aware of this unfortunate incident. The concern for us was it may have been the female from our local pair;



it certainly was within its home range. Unfortunately, this bird died after it eventually was delivered to the Australian Wildlife Health Centre, located at Healesville Sanctuary.

It's great to see threatened species, such as Powerful Owls co-habiting the urban fringe, but unfortunately they

sometimes fall victim to hitting powerlines and car windows, whilst hunting their prey at night.

Caring for unique bird species can be tricky so it is important to know what to do if you find a sick or injured threatened bird so that you it can get the help it needs as soon as possible.

Here are some basic steps:

- 1) Catch, restrain and secure the bird in a towel or blanket

- 2) House the bird in a ventilated cardboard box
- 3) Place it somewhere dark and quiet, till you make an alternative arrangement for its care and rehabilitation

Make sure you get it to a specialist experienced in treating threatened or unique birds, such as the Australian Wildlife Health Centre or an Avian Specialist. Powerful Owls are apex predators and generally are monogamous (that is they pair for life), so it's important that these unique birds received specialist attention within 48 hours of its discovery.

The Ferny Creek female eluded us for a few anxious weeks, post this discovery, but eventually appeared with her long-time partner. Let's hope they have a successful breeding season this year!

Mike Sverns

THE FIRST WORKING BEE FOR 2017

Sunday, February 19th saw this years working bees off to a great start. The volunteers started from Hill track and concentrated on weeding below Wallaby Walk keeping a lookout for the usual culprits. As with all the working bees, there is always a very enjoyable morning tea and informative talks presented by some of the members. The reward from joining in on these regular occasions is that everyone can see the results of their efforts, a healthy looking bushland reserve.



The remotely controlled tracked chipper being used by the contractor Yarra Ranges Fire Management.

UPDATE ON OUR PITTOSPORUM CAMPAIGN

In the last newsletter we reported that the Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands has launched a new campaign to remove the invasive Sweet Pittosporum from our 40 Hectare reserve at Upwey. We have now spent \$34,450 on contractors to remove Pittosporum over summer. Area 7 (at the west end of the reserve) is now pittosporum free and we also took out about half of the remaining thicket in Area 6. We have also spent \$800 on trees and shrubs to rehabilitate those areas. The planting is looking very promising—as the rains were timely.

All of our plants were purchased from the Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery. We strongly recommend that if you are thinking of planting in your yard or local reserves that you visit the nursery and discuss your needs with the experts there. They can supply large and small orders and have a great variety too. All plants are grown from plant material collected in the Southern Dandenongs region.

This project is supported by the Port Phillip and Westernport CMA, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.



THE AFTERMATH OF THE BIG STORMS...



In November and December last year Melbourne was hit by some severe storms and our Bushland reserve did not escape unscathed. A trail of destruction, especially along Ferny Creek, left many large trees uprooted and the volume of water that surged down the creek left large mounds of debris entangled in the fallen trees. A walk along Ferny Creek Track and Creek Side Track towards the depot will bring to light just how much impact the storms had.



After clearing, the pittosporum the area is ready for replanting, with endemic varieties.



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WORKING BEE DIARY

up to November 2017

- * Sunday June 18th
- * Saturday July 15th
- * Sunday August 20th
- * Saturday September 16th
- * Sunday October 15th
- * Saturday November 18th

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

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.

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.

DETAILS OF EACH WORKING BEE CAN BE FOUND ON THE WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK.

By being a financial member of Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands, you enable the group to gain valuable Funding Grants to finance 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.
Three year memberships are now also available.

REFERENCE LIBRARY FOR MEMBERS

The Friends group has a range of books and articles that are available for borrowing.

The list will soon be available on the website with details about how to contact Luke (pictured at left) and borrow items.



MID WEEK INITIATIVE CONSERVATION AND CONVERSATION

First WEDNESDAY of the month, 9–11am.
Meet at the central car park on Glenfern Road.

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Call 9882 4905 for all your printing needs.

Native Vegetation Management

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Or: armin@weedsmart.com.au

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Visit our Facebook page for up-to-date information and befriend us!

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

PLEASE report rubbish dumping to:
Shire of Yarra Ranges
Ph: 1300 368 333

Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands Inc.

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