

To conserve and enhance the diversity of native flora and fauna of the Glen Fern 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.14 Summer 2005

SUMMER WONDERS IN GLEN FERN VALLEY RESERVE

friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands Inc.



Summer is upon us once again and Glen Fern Valley Bushlands is a great place to spent a weekend afternoon or unwind with a relaxed walk after a day at work. Head down the hill from Glenfern Road and soon you're walking along Ferny Creek under the shade of beautiful manna gums. Stop and listen to the bush sounds around you and you may catch a glimpse of our wonderful wildlife, like the Superb Fairy Wren above, photographed recently by GFVB member Ian Rainbow. Gaze upward and you may find a sleepy koala in the treetops or just stop for a while and contemplate life as Ferny Creek babbles past. Why not put on your runners or get on your bicycle and discover the many tracks throughout the reserve. Glen Fern Valley...it's on your doorstep. Come out and enjoy it.

Welcome to All Our New Members

A big welcome to all our new members that have signed up since the membership drive a month or so ago. It's great to have you on board as we continue to work towards the rehabilitation of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands. A big thanks to those who have renewed their membership. We're glad you're enjoying being part of it all. For those who have not renewed their membership, we hope you do. We need your ongoing support. Remember subscription fees can be easily paid at the local Shire of Yarra Ranges offices in Main Street Upwey.

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President's Message Summer 2005

At the end of a year of much achievement in the Reserve I want to look forward. Our sister reserve, Birdsland, was feted for its 21st birthday in November, when the new information board, new wetlands and the SDCN were all on show. Will Glen Fern Valley Bushlands look as good on its 21st birthday in 16 years? The vision from our management plan includes “*Viewing points, interpretive information and pleasant walking tracks and facilities help visitors to appreciate the area and reflect on the community's changing attitude to the environment since the former quarry was closed in the 1980s ... major weeds controlled and strong regeneration of the original vegetation ... a well-known destination for people interested in enjoying quiet bushland and wildlife.*” To which I would add, a strong community spirit formed by residents joining group activities in a common goal to develop awareness of the environment and acquiring the skills & knowledge to improve it. This sense of community will be widespread with strong links to many other Friends groups, facilitated by the Shire's community website and large Friends Groups Liaison Department. Not too fanciful I hope as State and Local Governments are increasingly recognizing the value of supporting community-building activities. I hope we can attract even more community involvement over the coming year to accelerate the improvement of the reserve. Inspired by Tim Flannery's new book, “The Weathermakers”, our household now subscribes to green electricity and Greenfleet, however I get far more satisfaction from FoGFVB activities, which also help reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere! In the coming year we intend to complement our weeding activities by propagating indigenous seeds collected from the reserve, and then planting the seedlings back in the more heavily weeded areas later in the year. Why don't you come along and join our happy band?

Ian Rainbow

President, Friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands

Glenfern Timelines



Tracking our ever changing Reserve throughout the seasons

- ❑ Soldier beetles swarming over flowering Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*)
- ❑ Eastern Yellow Robins raising young. (See photo opposite)
- ❑ Fan-tailed Cuckoos heard calling throughout the night during October.
- ❑ Satin Flycatchers, Rufous Whistlers and Rufous Fantails (summer visitors) have returned to the Reserve.
- ❑ King Parrots seen feeding in the Reserve.
- ❑ Red-bellied black snake spotted.
- ❑ Blue-tongue Lizard spotted in November

photo: Ian Rainbow

Help reduce damage by 4WD vehicles and trail bikes and dumping of rubbish within the Reserve by reporting illegal activities to the **Shire of Yarra Ranges Ranger** on **1300 368 333**
24hours/7 days a week.

Our Reserve Flora

To many the thought that our peaceful Glen Fern Reserve might be swarming with voracious carnivores might be a bit strange! Sure we have the occasional visit from a Wedgetail Eagle and Peregrine Falcon by day or various owls at night, but permanent residents?! But it is true; the reserve is home to a healthy population of Tall Sundews (*Drosera peltata*) (see photo below). These small plants survive in swampy, nitrogen deficient soils by catching insects in droplets of sticky secretions that also digest their prey. Seems a good way to keep down midges and mosquitos, eh?

They are 6 to 50 cm tall; leaves on the stem are attached alternate, with 5 to 10 flowers on uppermost stems, white in colour. Flowers from mid Winter to early Spring. Patches of Sundews form a beautiful hazy glow across the grasslands when they catch the late afternoon sunlight. If you want to know more about this interesting group of plants and their even stranger relatives, visit the Victorian carnivorous plants society website at <http://www.vcps.au.com/>.



photo: Ian Rainbow

AGM Report

The Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands held their 2005 Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 12 October. All positions on the Committee were declared vacant and a new committee formed. The new Committee is as follows:

- **President:** Ian Rainbow
- **Treasurer:** Richard Homersham
- **Newsletter & Fauna:** Mark Fanthorpe
- **Flora:** Gaye Cranfield, Sandra Cory, Linda Fullagar
- **Secretary & Public Officer:** Sarah Tebbutt
- **Funding, Communications & Flora:** Serg Zaccaria
- **Working Bee Co-ordinator:** Andrew Fullagar
- **Safety Officer:** Roger Mazzolini

Many thanks for all her hard work go to Marilyn Thomas who stepped down from the role of Treasurer, a position Marilyn held since the inception of the Friends Group.

The Treasurer's Report declared that the Group has a current bank balance of approximately \$2,127 and that all financial records have been balanced for the 2004/05 Financial Year.

Our Reserve Birds

The Australian King Parrot

Alisterus scapularis

A brilliant scarlet, green and blackish-blue parrot, at around 42cm in length it is a significantly larger parrot than either the Crimson Rosella or the Rainbow Lorikeet, though not as common in our area as either of these birds. The male gives out a piping whistle call. They travel in small flocks and often visit gardens when fruit trees are ripening with fruit. photo: Mark Fanthorpe



Working Bees

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, rubbish removal and inspections of previously weeded areas. Everyone is welcome. Entry for cars is via the Parks Victoria (Fire Access) gate on Glenfern Rd, Upwey (about 1/2 way along the land) The site reference is Melways 74G10. Please bring gloves, hand tools, water, and, depending on the weather, a hat or wet weather gear. In the event of inclement weather the working bee will be cancelled.

1st working bee for 2006 is on Sunday 19th February 2006, 9.30am-12.30pm.

Clean Up Australia Day is on Sunday 5th of March 2006, 9.30am-12.30pm.

Garden Weed Removal Hints

from Marilyn Thomas

English Ivy – Three or four-lobed dark green leaves on long-running, woody stems. Stems should be pulled up along their length. Pile plants where they can dry out without touching soil – over a tree branch, or on cement or asphalt. Dry plants can be burnt or tipped but should not go to green waste collection as even small parts can regenerate. English Ivy only flowers and sets seed after climbing so if your ivy is growing up a tree, cut the stem about 2m above ground level, out of reach of children and pets, and tie a small plastic bottle filled with herbicide onto the cut end to be absorbed by the plant.

And last but not least...

- ◆ Improvements to the Reserve since newsletter include the new lavender-topped path that extends from the central Glenfern Road car park to the New Road corner and the completed pedestrian entry point 'gate' at the New Road carpark, designed to restrict motorcycle access.
- ◆ A great turnout of 37 people enjoyed our annual Community Day on October 16 with flora walks conducted by Darcy Duggan and fauna walks led by Laurie Living. Tree Planting was also on the menu. A fun morning was had by all. Many thanks to Darcy and Laurie for their time and expertise.
- ◆ Gaye and Roger have recently completed the two-day St John's First Aid course provided by the Shire. Well done to them both! This now brings us to five level 2 First Aiders in the group.
- ◆ The Shire of Yarra Ranges is revamping their website to help Friends and other volunteer groups. It contains much useful information. It is well worth a visit at <http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/> then go to For Residents/Environment/Friends of Groups.

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We would like to wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year