

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 Glen Fern Valley Bushlands Inc.  
Edition No.16 Winter 2006

## GLENFERN ROAD PERIMETER FENCE COMPLETED

friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands Inc. 



*photo by Ian Rainbow.*

The remainder of the fencing along the southeast corner, including removal barriers for CFA access has recently been completed. This has greatly enhanced the public view of the reserve and improves security against 4WD and motorbike access. Glenfern Valley Bushlands is looking better by the day and has becoming a public space our community can be proud of. More and more people now use the reserve, be it for walking dogs along the top track or exploring the new paths being opened. Within this newsletter you will find more details of these new tracks. We hope you enjoy discovering them for yourself.

### What's been happening?

- Another three car bodies were hauled out to the car park and have now been removed by the Shire. These are the last!!
- Around many of the tracks in the Reserve there is clearing work to meet access requirements for the CFA, including some new tracks. Maintenance of these tracks will become an annual requirement before each fire season.
- The grasslands along the ridge have been mowed to try to suppress seed set by Paspalum grass and thus favour indigenous grasses.
- Along the creek you may have noticed English Ivy, Wandering Trad and Sweet Pittosporum is dying. This is at the hands of contractors for Melbourne Water, whose support we greatly appreciate.

## President's Message Winter 2006

Coming up to the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the campaign to establish Glen Fern Valley Bushlands we can view the great achievements in the reserve with some considerable pride and we might be tempted to rest on our laurels, were there not so much more to do! We can look at our main objective, "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." and say that we have established an annual program that continues to advance all aspects of that statement. Our efforts have received continual and growing support by the Shire of Yarra Ranges who manages this reserve for the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

This year we have expanded our connections into the broader community with visits by 1<sup>st</sup> Ferntree Gully Scouts and a group from Ford Credit doing company sponsored community service. Our gratitude goes to both of these organisations for their help. We have shared a working bee with the Sherbrooke Archers to remove almost all the Boneseed on their site, strengthening the links and removing a significant source of new seed.

**Ian Rainbow,**

**President Friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands**

## National Tree Day, Sunday 30th July

An approaching major event is National Tree Day, for which the Shire is donating 500 plants, sourced from Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery using some seed from our site, as well as stakes, sleeves and mats. Recent working bees have "tidied up" the target areas ready for planting. This is a great opportunity for all to enhance the diversity of plants on the site, so why not come along, get a free plant and take the opportunity to support our efforts by joining the Friends? There is a form included in this newsletter. I look forward to meeting you there.

## Glen Fern Timelines



*photo: Ian Rainbow*

### Tracking our ever changing Reserve throughout the seasons

- Many species of fungi seen (see photo in this edition)
- Koala seen on recent working bee (in a Sweet Pittosporum tree of all things! - see photo opposite)
- Drooping Cassinia, Chinese Tree-shrub discovered in Reserve. This is a new plant for our Reserve.
- Female Sweet Pittosporum producing many seeds
- Spanish Heath flowering
- Angle Onion emerging

## Garden Weed Removal Hints

*by Marilyn Thomas & Olinda Creek Landcare Group*

**Angle Onion Weed** – Small bulb plant with small white lily-shaped flowers and strong garlicky odour. Lies dormant for most of the year, and comes up quickly in winter to early spring, especially in shady areas. Hand pulling is practical for isolated clumps, but small bulbs can break off and be left behind, so the area will need to be cleared in subsequent years. Brushcut **only** before flowers are formed, as mowing will spread seeds. The secret is to start cutting early and a few cuts will exhaust this year's bulbs, as in the early stages of growth Angle Onion Weed is approaching the stage of bulb depletion. Digging a few bulbs up and rubbing between the fingers will show when the bulbs are almost empty

The daughter bulbs will be up next year. Repeating this process over two years will almost eradicate this weed. Large areas can be sprayed with a glyphosate herbicide.

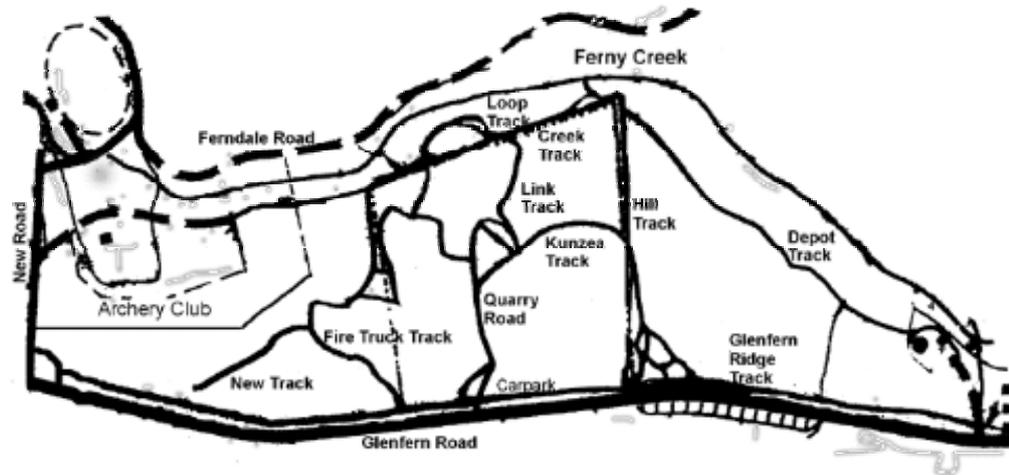
## Tracks Named and a New Track established in the Reserve

Taking advantage of a trail formed in the distant past, we asked the Shire to slash a path, starting in the grasslands about 200 m from the New Road corner, skirting the Archery Club area and several hundred metres later joining the winding Fire Truck Track on its way down to the wetland area and the Creek track. This track makes possible a very easy circuit around the Reserve taking in all the diverse habitats, from the Riparian zone, via Grassy Forest to the grasslands at the top. You can view the wonderful indigenous plants from the hollow bearing, habitat forming, stately Manna Gums to the

distinctive Kangaroo Grass. You may be lucky enough to see a Koala or Swamp Wallaby. You will certainly see and hear a few of the more than 80 species of birds that frequent the area and in the right season some spectacular fungi.

The circuit crosses many areas that the Friends and others have weeded or sprayed and which are now showing significant regeneration, or more recently treated areas where the Sweet Pittosporum or Boneseed are dead or dying but yet to decay under the combined attack of fungi and small creatures normally hidden from view.

To help you find it we have placed signs at the ends of New Track under the officiating eye of Gaye Gadsden, Environmental Volunteers Support Officer of the SoYR.



## GFV Bushlands / Ford Credit Rehabilitation Activity - 29th May 2006

*by Rohan Coxhead, Ford Credit*

On a crisp May morning, nine Ford Credit employees teamed with two members of the Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands Group to learn about and assist the rehabilitation of our native landscape. The bushlands are being transformed from an old quarry and dumping ground for rubbish into a nature wonderland.

The day started with a tour of the site. Many native animals have been observed in the bushlands including Wallabies, Koalas, Wombats and numerous species of birds. It only took a couple of minutes for the group to completely "disappear" amongst the trees. Our first weeding victim of the day was Boneseed - an invader from South Africa. The group fanned out and removed this plant, giving the local flora a chance to fight back.

After a lunch break and a hot drink, we moved to a different area in the reserve, beside Ferry Creek. This region had been thoroughly weeded previously, and we were on the lookout for any regrowth. The weeds in this area are actually a native species of East Gippsland, Sweet Pittosporum. However, just 300km away from their place of origin, they grow unchecked, and crowd out local plants.

The day was a great success, and we were able to learn more about the natural environment while assisting a grass roots community group to restore a large section of land to its original splendour.



## New Plant for Glen Fern Bushlands Reserve

*by Linda Fullagar*

***Cassinia arcuata*** (Drooping Cassinia, Chinese Tea-shrub) **see photo above**

Whilst walking in the reserve the other day I came across a plant that I recognized but had not seen in the Glen Fern Valley Bushlands before. In amongst the native grasses and regrowth was a drooping shrub called *Cassinia arcuata*. It was growing beside the track in an area that had been cleared of

weeds and left to naturally regenerate. A relative to *Cassinia aculeate* (Dogwood), the *Cassinia arcuata* is a small fast growing shrub, 1-2 metres high with small narrow green leaves (5-10mm) that have a spicy curry aroma, tiny, shiny pale brown drooping flower heads in summer-autumn. It likes a well-drained soil in an open semi-shaded position. Yellow and Eastern Rosellas and the Eltham Copper butterfly may use it as a food source. Usually it appears on disturbed and bare soil and quite often occurs around the Victorian goldfields where it got its common name of Chinese Tea-scrub as it was widely distributed by Chinese diggers during the gold rush. Next time you are in the reserve see if you can spot it next to the eastern end of the track parallel to Glenfern Road

## Our Reserve Birds

### The Galah

*Eolophus (Cacatua) roseicapilla*

Increasingly common in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne these pink and grey cockatoos are often seen flying over Glenfern Reserve. *photo by Mark Fanthorpe.*



## The Glenfern

### DIARY for 2006

#### Been There Done That

- Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February
- Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March –  
Clean Up Australia Day
- Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March
- Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April
- Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May
- Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June
- Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July

#### Coming Up

- Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July –  
National Tree Day
- Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September
- Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October –  
Community & Weedbusters Day
- Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November

9:30 – 12:30 am

Central car park

Glenfern Road, Upwey

Melways 74 G10

## Working Bees

Working bees are held every 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 ½ 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 a Fire Ban or inclement weather the working bee will be cancelled.

**Next Working Bee is Sunday 30 July (National Tree Day) where we will be planting 500 trees throughout the Reserve.**



Fungi recently seen in the Reserve. A pen tip shows the relative size. *photo by Ian Rainbow*

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