

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.17 Spring Summer 2006

friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands Inc.



GLEN FERN BUSHLANDS SUMMER WONDERLAND



As we come into Summer you'll find Glen Fern Reserve alive with birdsong. The summer visitors like Rufous Fantails and Satin Flycatchers have arrived while other species like the myriad of honeyeaters that can be seen here have increased to their summer numbers. On a hot summers day the Reserve can be a haven from the heat with its walking trails under a cooling canopy of trees. If you're lucky you may catch sight of tawny frogmouths getting ready for mating or Grey Kangaroos feeding amongst the grasslands. Come and enjoy Summer in our Reserve! *photo by Mark Fanthorpe.*

What's been happening?

- The Shire have Yarra Ranges has been clearing tracks of vegetation for CFA truck & 4-WD access to much of the area. The work is yet to be completed with improved surfaces and a truck turning circle in the centre of the old quarry planned.
- Grass will be mown as usual along the Ridge Track and Blackberries will be sprayed during December – January.
- Some fuel reduction done by Shire contractors reduced the fuel on the upper slopes by burning off several heaps of dead Boneseed skeletons. This also greatly improved the look of the area, removing that grey haze!
- The Friends have started to remove the inner mesh fence around the old quarry site. Three sessions have been held to decide how it is best done. The exploratory testing has been so successful that almost 2 sides (about 1 km) of the fence wire are gone, collected by a scrap metal merchant a few days after it was removed. Now we know how to do it, a call will go out, probably in late January to take out the rest. Help will be needed since very thick vegetation surrounds some parts. The poles remain so we are investigating ways to cut these down once fire season is over. If you have ideas for this please tell us!

President's Message – Summer 2006

After another very eventful year in Glen Fern Valley Bushlands we have a new and energised committee. Welcome to new members Gillian & Paul Derezyckj adding their energy and enthusiasm. Many thanks to outgoing member Sandra Cory for her solid support and using her connections to get donations. We hope she finds time to join us again.

The Friends gratitude goes to the outgoing committee for all their efforts during the year, running an extra working bee to help our neighbours in the Archery Club, making the larger events work smoothly. Tree Day was especially big this year, so it was all hands on deck to run it! The burn off working bee was a big one, run safely under Safety Officer Roger Mazzolini's watchful eye and water tank with fire pump!

This year we have attracted support of donated small equipment from **Bunnings Scoresby** who looked kindly on our request for some small tools and plant propagating equipment. Many thanks to Bunnings and also many thanks to Sandra Cory for arranging it.

Support from the Shire of Yarra Ranges for Friends groups generally and our reserve in particular has been wonderful. Melbourne Water is again planning to attack weeds in the riparian zone, much to our delight. Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery has helped

We are heading into a very hot; dry Summer so I urge all of you to be watchful for any sign of fires as you enjoy walking in our beautiful reserve. You should also look out for the Rose Hyacinth Orchids that bloom in Summer and the return of our migratory friends the Rufous Fantail, colourful cousin to local Grey Fantail.

The Friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands wish all our members and supports a safe and enjoyable holiday season. Hope to see you at working bees again in February.

Ian Rainbow,

President, Friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands

At the AGM held on October 11th 2006 a New Committee was elected.

- President- Ian Rainbow
- Secretary- Sarah Tebutt
- Treasurer- Richard Homersham
- Roger Mazzolini-Safety Coordinator
- Serg Zaccaria- Funding/Flora
- Marilyn Thomas- Assistant Working Bee Coordinator
- Gillian Anderson- General Committee Member
- Paul Derezyckj -General Committee Member
- Linda Fullagar- Flora/Part Time
- Andrew Fullagar- Working Bee Coordinator/Part Time
- Mark Fanthorpe-Newsletter editor
- Roger Vize-Web-site manager

Our Reserve Birds

The Tawny Frogmouth

Pordargus strigoides

One of our Reserve's nocturnal birds, it's familiar 'oom oom' call at night is often heard at night in gardens throughout the Dandenongs. Hard to spot, they often blend in so well they look like a broken branch on a tree. *photo by Mark Fanthorpe.*



Clean Up Australia Day, Sunday 4th March

This is our next major event. Over the last 4 years we have removed about 72 cubic metres of rubbish, not including 25+ car bodies (2 very recently discovered!). There is still a bit to go so we will again be running this event. I look forward to meeting you there.

If you see any rubbish dumped or graffiti on the Reserve fence please report it promptly to the **Shire of Yarra Ranges on 1300 368 333.**

Garden Weed Removal Hints

by Marilyn Thomas

English Broom

(*Cytisus scoparius* subsp. *scoparius*)



Utah State University Archives, Utah State University,
www.forestryimages.org

A tall shrub with clover-shaped leaves and yellow or red flowers in spring. Small plants are easily pulled out and can be composted. Larger ones can be cut and the stump painted with glyphosphate herbicide. It is best to remove the plants before they begin to flower.

Tracking the changes in Glen Fern Bushlands through the seasons

- New bird seen in reserve...Red-chested Button-quail.
- Grey Kangaroo in open bushland in early morning, another killed on Glenfern Road
- Blue-tongue lizard sighted in long grass near Ridge Track
- In flower now: Black Wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*), Common Appleberry (*Billiardiera scandens*), Dogwood (*Cassinia aculeata*), Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium fimbriatum*), Kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*), Spear grasses (*Stipa rudis*), Victorian Christmas Bush (*Prostanthera lasianthos*).
- Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos commonly screeching around the taller trees
- Grey Currawongs have bred again
- Tawny Frogmouths seen getting closer to each other in preparation for breeding

Community Day 15th October 2006

A very successful Community & Weedbusters Day was held on Sunday October 15th. Participation was the key for all, including Ferntree Gully Scouts. Groups scoured the grasslands along the Ridge Track for Paterson's Curse (*Echium plantageum*) (probably introduced on 4-wheel drives) while others planted, with some water and mulch, 50 Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*) saplings kindly donated by the Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery below the car park. After a very chatty morning tea many people followed Weed Guide Darcy Duggan to learn about the effects of loss of small native mammals on the landscape (these would normally keep the area between tufts of deep rooted native grasses clear, however predation by cats and dogs reduced the numbers allowing shallow rooted weeds to invade & dominate. The effects are seen in the large areas of dying weedy grasses in the drought. The deep-rooted perennial native grasses help retain water in the soil profile & survive better). People interested in things that move followed Laurie Living along the quieter tracks to identify the local & migratory birds. The Fantail Cuckoos had arrived and were looking for egg sitters!



Ferntree Gully Scouts & others planting to replace dead trees on our Community Day on 15 October.

Corporate Sponsor

We would like to acknowledge the kind and generous donation of tools and supplies by

Bunnings Scoresby
Ferntree Gully Road
Scoresby

Victorian Christmas Bush (*Prostanthera lasianthos*)

As the weather warms up towards the end of December most of the plants in the bush have finished flowering, so it is always cheering along the Creek Track in Glen Fern Bushlands to see masses of white flowers on the dark green shrubbery of the Victorian Christmas Bush (*Prostanthera lasianthos*) scattered in the low to mid-storey of the shadier forest of the riparian zone. Crush a leaf between your fingers and inhale the strong odour of mint you release. The leaves are dark green above, pale green beneath and the edges have small teeth.

This is one of the shrubs coming back as regrowth near the creek in areas that have been freed of Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*), Boneseed (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*) and Spanish Heath (*Erica lusitanica*) by the Friends over the last five years.

There is another indigenous Mint Bush in the Dandenongs, the Balm Mint Bush (*Prostanthera melissifolia*). It flowers earlier and has mauve to violet flowers. You can see some flowering during late November to December in plantings beside Glenfern Road near the end of Morris Road.

The Glenfern

DIARY for 2006

- Sunday 18th February
- Sunday 4th March –
Clean Up Australia Day
- Saturday 17th March
- Sunday 15th April
- Saturday 19th May
- Sunday 17th June
- Saturday 21st July
- Sunday 29th July –
National Tree Day
- Sunday 19th August
- Saturday 15th September
- Sunday 21st October –
Community & Weedbusters Day
- Saturday 17th November
9:30 – 12:30 am
Central car park
Glenfern Road, Upwey
Melways 74 G10

As a business you can sponsor our newsletter for as little as \$50 per edition (2-3 per year). Newsletter distribution is about 200 local homes. Let us know if we can help you publicize your business.



Victorian Christmas Bush
(*Prostanthera lasianthos*)

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 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 18th February 2007

Corporate Sponsor

Blitz Graphics

Designer and Maintainer of our Website.

Phone Roger Vize on 9754 6910

for your website needs.

<http://blitzgrafpx.tripod.com>