

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. 21 Spring 2008

Community Discovery Day

Sunday 19th October
10:00 - 13:00

Guided tours about weeds and indigenous plants and bird watching.

A free plant to All.

Come and see the work that has been done and learn about our plans for the future.

All Welcome

Can You Help?

Do you know any history of the reserve from 1950 onward? Paul and Gill are compiling a history of the land and need some help to fill in the blanks from the early 1950s.

Please contact us at glenfernbushlands@hotmail.com



Image: Paul Derzyckj and David Moncrieff!

Our first new picnic table is clearly a hit with the locals who could not wait for the committee work crew to get out of the way before inspecting it! Well done to all involved, especially Andrew and Tony for building it, Richard for painting and **South East Water** for funding this and another table to be placed near the New Road car park soon. Look out for a few seats to be placed around the reserve too.

Installing the table is just one of many activities the Friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands have underway outside normal working bees. Members have attended various units of the Conservation and Land Management course to better understand and plan for the needs of the reserve. Five First Aiders have been re-accredited, so that all working bees are safely run.

Recent connections with the Upwey Township Group has allowed us use of the St John's Ambulance Hall as a permanent meeting and storage room. This led us into planting a hedge along the Upwey bike path in association with the UTG, Shire of Yarra Ranges and Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery. We

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 friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands Inc.

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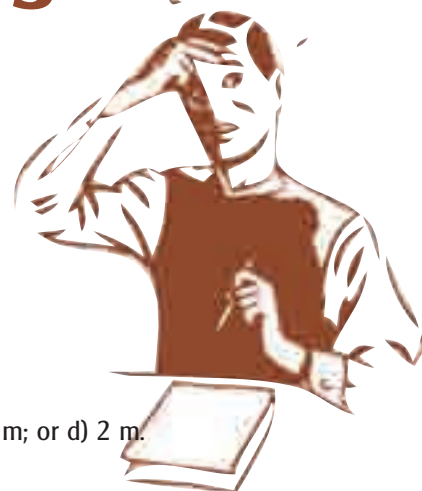
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Glen Fern Valley Quiz Spring 2008

Answers on last page

1. What is the common name of *Acacia melanoxylon*?
2. Approx how long is Glen Fern Valley Bushlands end to end?
3. On what date is the working bee in November?
4. How does the weed *Agapanthus* spread?
5. After whom is Serg's Track named?
6. In which direction does Ferny Creek flow?
7. What recreation club borders Glen Fern Valley Bushlands to the NW?
8. Why are motorbikes banned from GFVB?
9. What is the wingspan of an adult Powerful Owl? a) About 50cm; b) about 1 m; c) about 1.5 m; or d) 2 m.
10. Why are Bellbirds sometimes a nuisance?



BUSH INVADER

Hawthorn: Crataegus monogyna in the family Rosaceae.



Image: Ian Rainbow.

Deciduous tall shrub or small tree up to 6 metres with long thorns up to 2.5 cm. White or pink flowers 5 -10 mm across. Produces red berries in late Summer & Autumn in clusters. Each berry has a single seed. Large plants can produce thousands of fruits each season. It is slow growing and may live for 100 years. Grows in both shade and full sun.

Introduced by early settlers as a cheap form of fencing, it can form dense, impenetrable thickets that can harbor pest species such as foxes, although it also gives shelter to birds and small mammals.

Hawthorn is used in Chinese traditional medicine for strengthening heart function, lowering blood lipids & improving blood circulation. The fruit is made into a popular food product in sugared strips on a stick (similar to a row of small toffee apples). The juice has also been made into fruit drinks, soft drinks and vinegar product.

Crataegus monogyna is classified as a *Noxious Weed* in Victoria and South Australia. It is a significant threat in Glen Fern Valley Bushlands.

Alternative to plant: Sweet Bursaria

Visit by Billanook College Students

Recently nine Billanook students decided to spend their Community Day activities contributing to the Glen Fern Reserve project. So they spent a happy afternoon helping Ian, Linda, Gill & Rory planting a variety of shrubs to help restore the mid-story habitat for birds in an area we have cleared of Sweet Pittosporum along Creek Track. Billanook kindly donated some Seasol to help along the new plants, which were sourced from Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery. The plants were Musk Daisy Bush, Hazel Pomaderris, Pale Flax Lily, Manna Gum, Golden Tip, Kangaroo Apple and Snowy Daisy Bush. Manna Gum and Pale Flax Lily were propagated from seed collected in the reserve. Shire of Yarra Ranges provided tools and gloves.

After a short break and a snack we changed the pace and physical effort by attacking some Sweet Pittosporum directly by pulling them out of the ground. This technique usually needed two students per tree! They made great progress, although we thought one student had been lost after his mates buried him in a pile of Pittosporum!

Thanks to Billanook and to Emily Cox for arranging the event. FoGFVB look forward to another one next year.



Image: Emily Cox

Community Involvement at Upwey Planting



Friends of Glen Fern Valley have spread their wings outside the reserve, linking with other community groups to weed, mulch and plant more than 600 grasses, lilies and shrubs along the Upwey Bike Path. Planned and run with the Upwey Township Group, Shire of Yarra Ranges and Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery the event attracted members of Friends of Belgrave Lake Park, Southern Dandenongs Landcare Group and Belgrave Police. Noel Cliff, Streeton Ward Councillor, proved adept at attracting passing members of the public to put in a few plants each! Plants were all treated to some Seasol in collected rainwater.

Image: Peter van Santen

Did you catch us on the Channel 10 News in May?



Image: Paul Derezyckj

FoGFVB applied for a Channel 10 – Telstra Environment Awards and they liked it enough to run a news report about our efforts. A great planting working bee was held mid-week to allow a Channel 10 crew to collect footage and interview us. This put us in the running for a Telstra/Channel 10 monthly prize of \$2000. We did not win the money but were pleased and very grateful for the demonstration of support on the day from staff and councillors of Shire of Yarra Ranges, Southern Dandenongs Landcare Group, Friends of Ferny Creek and many other people. The publicity that night on the news was pretty good too, and gained us much local recognition. A lot of plants were put in to help restore the shrubby layer of the riparian zone and re-create essential bird habitat.

Rory demonstrates our planting techniques

Many of us had a say in the report. Gill Anderson-Derezyckj caught our feeling for the reserve with “It’s our big backyard” and Gaye Gadsden’s final words “It takes the care of the community to make a reserve look this good” really capped it off. We have a copy of the TV report if you want to see it again.

Members’ Activities

There are many benefits to joining a Friend’s group. Not least are training and educational opportunities provided by the Shire of Yarra Ranges through NMIT and Swinburne Uni, many of which can be counted toward the Conservation and Land Management Diploma. Active members receive generous discounts to courses on Weed ID, First Aid, Native Plant ID, Wetlands and Waterways Management, Chemical Handling, Fauna ID, and many of us have attended some or all of them.

These courses develop camaraderie through the network of groups and can be enormous fun. They give us new skills and help us to care for and have a greater understanding of the threats to its flora and fauna.

Many other courses are available such as Water Testing, Frogs, Newsletter writing. Check the Shire of Yarra Ranges Website and Local Papers to see what is on offer.

The Glenfern

WORKING BEE DIARY for 2008

- * Tuesday 14th October – AGM
- * Sunday 19th October –
COMMUNITY DISCOVERY DAY
- * Saturday 15th November
- * Saturday 6th December
– evening picnic

2009

- * Sunday 15th February
- * Saturday 21st March
- * Sunday 19th April
- * Saturday 16th May
(or nearest official Tree Day)
- * Sunday 21st June

9:30 am – 12:30 pm
Central car park
Glenfern Road, Upwey
Melways 74 G10

Answers to Quiz:

1. Blackwood (Wattle) *1 point*; 2. 1 kilometre. (Easy walk), *1 point*; 3. Saturday 15th (9.30 a.m.) Don't miss it! *1 point*; 4. Expanded root rhizomes, seed dispersal through air, water run-off, people's shoes and vehicles. (Make sure none come from your garden, please!) *1 point for each*. 5. Serg Zaccaria (Co-initiator of Friends of GFVB) *1 point*; 6. From East to West (on GFVB's northern boundary) *1 point*; 7. Sherbrooke Archery Club, *1 point*; 8. Noise, public safety, erosion, track damage, native animal disruption, native plant destruction, etc. *1 point for each*; 9. Approx 1.5 metres! (Yes they're big aren't they!?) *1 point*; 10. By driving out other indigenous birds that help to control insect infestation of eucalypts, *3 points*.

Scores:

Less than 7 Not bad, but perhaps you'd better come along to a working bee to learn more.
7-13 Nice work. See you at the next working bee now that you know when it is!
14 or more That's brilliant! Come and share your knowledge with us and others – we need you!

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Foundation Studies Course

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*Our Annual General Meeting will be held
from 7:30 pm Tuesday 14th October at
St John's Ambulance Hall in Upwey
(near the skate park).*

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.