

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. 26 Summer–Autumn 2011



## FERNY CREEK

Photos of the Creek in flood February 2011 Glenfern Valley Bushlands

— we had approx 300mm of rain in 18 hours. The landscape of the creek-side has been totally remodelled due to the huge amount of water flushing through and the unfortunate undermining of some magnificent trees which have fallen and created traps for debris washing from upstream. *Thank you Robert Bonici, a visitor to the reserve, for the above photograph.*

## Australia Day Awards

Congratulations to one of our members, MARK ADDISON, who has been declared **Yarra Ranges Council's "Citizen of the Year"**. Mark is a member of the Upwey Township Group, which organises the Billycart Races. He is also involved with the Upwey-Belgrave RSL, and has been a keen supporter of, and working-bee helper for Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands. He is currently working in the USA, but still receives our emails and newsletters.

Congratulations Mark, we are proud to have you as one of our "Friends."

### Awards were also presented to:

Robert Pergl – **Young Environmental Achiever** (Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery, Sherbrooke Community School)

Bill Incoll – **Latrobe Valley Community Australia Day Award**. (Friends of Sherbrooke Forest, Monbulk Landcare Group and many others.)

Betty Marsden – **OAM** (Save the Dandenongs League)

Carolyn Seeger – Wildlife Carer



### Apologies for the long wait for this newsletter.

Suddenly it is March and I am finally sitting down to write! It is not for lack of things to put down, but lack of time for writing. Now the days are closing in a bit I can find more time to sit at the computer and not wander around the forest or cut ivy off roadside trees!

The Committee and some of our volunteers have been hard at work over the (wet) summer clearing the tracks of fallen trees, cutting grass to open up walking tracks to make Glenfern Valley Bushlands more accessible for walkers and visitors.

We hope you have noticed the changes at the main central entrance, where the perimeter fence has been lowered and barbed wire removed to enhance the look.

With six hours effort of ten people, the main entry now looks welcoming, and the reserve no longer looks like "locked up" private property

Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands Inc.

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friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands Inc.

**Feedback from our member survey has highlighted a desire for more information about the plants in the reserve ...**



## Hop Bitter Pea

*Daviesia latifolia*

Have you seen this plant growing in the Bushlands? We have only seen one specimen growing there. It is our plan to introduce more of these plants. It is very common in the neighbouring Knox area and would be an attractive addition to any suburban garden.

**Size:** 1-3m x 1-2m

**Description:** Open to dense erect shrub with angular branchlets.

**Leaves:** Leathery, blue-green elliptic to egg-shaped leaves 2-15cm x 5-70mm with network of prominent veins and wavy edges.

**Flowering:** Many-flowered sprays of small fragrant pea flowers, with a distinct bract at the base of each stalk. Triangular pod.

**Flower Colour:** Yellow and brown

**Flowering Time:** September to December

**Growing Conditions:** Dry well drained clay soil on drier slopes of mountain forests to 1800m. Frost and snow tolerant. Full sun to dappled shade.

**Garden Use:** Hedge or screen plant in shady sites. Can be pruned to shape. Leaves were used to replace hops by early settlers.

If you would like to learn about the plants and weeds in your garden or surroundings, we are always happy to assist and advise our members

We have been lucky to have Ian Kitchen from the Field Naturalists Club of Vic and friends lead two night walks in Glenfern Valley Bushlands for our members.

With approx. fifteen people on each walk, we meandered around the riparian zone, searching for nightlife. After spotting several possums (Brush-tail and Ring-tail), we were very excited to see this beautiful female Powerful Owl (pictured right) roosting near the creek. We also enjoyed hearing her young fledgling calling from nearby. A delightful time was had by all.

Following the success of these educational walks, we will plan more in the future.



Female Powerful owl – Photo – Carol Streeter

## This weed needs our attention:

**English Ivy** *Hedera helix*

“Environmental Weed” – Listed as fifth most serious on the list of invasive weeds in Yarra Ranges Shire.

English Ivy is a climbing or creeping plant. Ivy eventually kills its support plant (mainly trees) by smothering them. The weight of the ivy may cause the support plant to collapse or blow over in strong wind.

Flowering and seeding occurs in Autumn when the plant has grown vertically and has access to more light. The berries are eaten by birds and the seeds are dropped in gardens and bushland. This plant also reproduces vegetatively, with stems taking root and spreading from each node.

Control Ivy at ground level by pulling up stems, whilst being careful to remove all leaves and broken segments. Dab any remaining broken or cut stems with neat glyphosate to prevent regrowth. For Ivy in trees, cut a piece out of all stems and dab the remaining cut stems (upward **and** downward) with neat glyphosate. Check for regrowth in a few months.



President Andrew Fullagar presented the Environmental Award to Rachael Dingfelder for her winning entries to the Poster and Essay Competition.

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



The weather seems to be a regular theme for my report. But then one realizes how much the reserve and our progress depend upon it. Having survived ten years of drought, we have just experienced one of the wettest years on record. At the beginning we delighted in the return to growth conditions, the exuberant flowering, the hum of insect activity and the restless nature of the bush as it revelled in the favourable conditions. Shrubs replete with foliage dared to obscure our view through what normally provides an open vista. And the grasses, Kangaroo, Weeping and Spear, launching themselves to one and a half metres or more. Several times, Ferny Creek has over-spilled its banks, replacing old material with new on its hurried way.

Could there be a down-side to all this activity? Despite our assistance to the natural flora through our ongoing management, weeds have also enjoyed the conditions. As moisture reaches lower levels in the soil, weed-seeds dormant for years rapidly germinate to gain an advantage over their indigenous rivals. Blackberry bushes, struggling little clumps some months ago, sprawl out in arrogant annoyance. We know that this year we'll have our hands full in tackling these new outbreaks.

This could be daunting and depressing, but I know our group will rise to the challenge. We're delighted to have increased our membership this year, and we welcome our new friends. At the same time, I acknowledge the continued hard work from our stayers. Well done all.

Progress on our major Grants Projects (Melbourne Water and Caring for Country) has been baulked by the rain making access very difficult. We're hoping we can now accelerate the works provided we have some fine days. We are indebted to each for their continued support, for without it, progress would be difficult in such a large reserve.

We thank the Shire of Yarra Ranges too, for agreeing to a second grass slash this year. What a difference that has made to the beauty and fire-readiness of our Bushland!

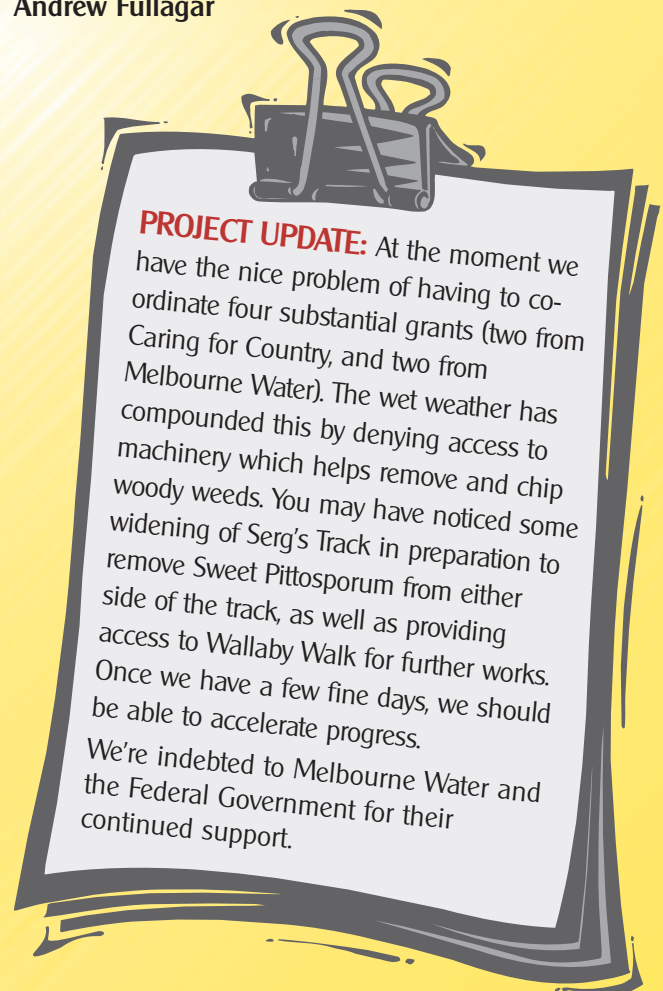
Currently, we are investigating quotes and designs for a new front gate to replace the existing tired monster. More news soon.

In another exciting project, we are brain-storming ideas for the old quarry site in the middle of the reserve. Education, meditation, relaxation and recreation seem recurrent themes. If you have any startling ideas – the more startling the better, please pass them on.

It's been a brilliant past few months, and the future is exciting. It really is enjoyable working with like-minded people, and we'd love to have you along contributing whatever you can, whenever you can.

See you soon.

**Andrew Fullagar**



# The Glenfern

## WORKING BEE DIARY 2011

- \* Saturday 19th March Area 2. Buckley's Farm Track and Manna Gum Track – near Archery Club
- \* Sunday 17th April Eastern Grasslands, Echidna to Hill Tracks
- \* Saturday 21st May Eastern end – near Serg's Track
- \* Sunday 19th June Echidna to Manna Gum Tracks
- \* Saturday 16th July Hill Track East to Pittosporum jungle
- \* Sunday 15th August Buckleys To Manna Gum Tracks – Along Ridge

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

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Working bees are held every third alternate Saturday or Sunday morning of the month.

Members, Committee and interested supporters meet on-site to take part in weeding, planting and talks about indigenous plants and weeds.

**Everyone is welcome, and they are surprisingly enjoyable!**

Entry for cars is via the Parks Victoria (Fire Access) gate on Glenfern Rd, Upwey (about ½ way along the reserve) The site reference is Melways 74 G10.

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.

By being a financial member of Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands, you enable the group to gain valuable Funding Grants to help us with 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](http://www.glenfernvalleybushlands.org.au)

Membership is only: \$5 Concession, \$10 Individual, \$15 Family or \$50 for a business sponsor

## Discovery Day

Saturday 23rd October 2010



Even with some inclement weather to start the day, we were able to do some amazing walks and talks in the reserve. Included was an informative talk from Darcy Dugan a well known environmentalist in the hills.

Glenfern Valley Bushlands has many species of birds that inhabit the Reserve, as well as many visitors, and a bird talk and walk from Geoff Russell was very well received.

A big thank you to Vicki and Jackie from Southern Dandenongs Landcare Group, assisted by Selby Joey Scouts who filled in the stark plantings at New Road which had succumbed to the previous dry weather.

Glenfern committee members Michael, Sharon, Roger, Marilyn and Paul, supervised visitors planting two bare patches adjacent to the Archery Club fence-line at the New Road end.

Indigenous plants were supplied by our local Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery at Birdsland.

**Thank you to our Corporate Sponsor:**

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Please report rubbish dumping and vandalism to Yarra Ranges Council. Removing dumped rubbish takes our bushland crews off their valuable work, to clean up after thoughtless individuals.

**Ph: 1300 368 333**



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