

Newsletter

No.4 Summer 2002/2003

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.

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A note to members

First, to those members who are receiving a newsletter for the first time, welcome. Thankyou for caring about an area that is of tremendous local significance enough to become actively involved in its future. It's great to see such an active community spirit.

Second, for our original members, as we have recently celebrated our first anniversary as a group it is now time for those who joined a year ago to renew their membership, you will be notified soon if this applies to you.

The local/state Government is behind our group and recognises the valuable contribution we are making to the cause of local environmental conservation. This recognition has only been won because we are a very active group and because we represent the voice of the community. This requires a healthy database of members and your active participation.

Finally, there is room for some new faces on the committee and we would welcome any contribution members can make to the running of the group. If you would like to help out, please contact Serg Zaccaria or Sarah Tebbutt on the number given above.

What's been happening?

- *Announcement of funding by Bracks Government.* Due to the hard work of our lobby group and the support of newly-elected Member for Monbulk James Merlino and Craig Smith from the Greens. We have been successful in presenting our case for reservation of the land to the Minister for Conservation and Environment, Sherryl Garbutt. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, with the recent announcement that the Bracks Government will match the \$50,000 contribution by the Shire of Yarra Ranges for the development of a management plan and the first stage of its implementation, and set up a Committee of Management. The Committee of Management will be formed immediately, made up of representatives from the community, the Shire of Yarra

Ranges and the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment. The land will be classified at the recommendation of the Committee of Management. If the recommendation is that the land be reserve land, it will be reserved. This is an enormous achievement by our group – thank you once again to all members and supporters for your help in making this happen.

- *First meeting of Committee of Management.* Tuesday 17th December saw the first meeting of the newly-formed Committee of Management. In attendance were Serg Zaccaria, President of Friends of Glen Fern Valley Bushlands, and representatives from the Shire of Yarra Ranges and the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment. This initial meeting was to set in place the groundwork for future works and funding, more news will pass on as it comes to hand.
- *Working bees.* Every 3rd Sunday of the month Members, Committee and interested supporters meet on-site to take part in a working bee. To date about 7 acres of weeds are under control and natural regeneration is occurring. It is amazing to see what a small group of people can achieve in such a short period of time. The work on the site will be on going for many years and as the saying goes “many hands make light work”. Next year we hope to start to carry out revegetation work, so those of you who love to plant, your time is coming soon. So please try to make the time in the coming year to attend a working bee, whether a few or all of them.
- *Flora and Fauna Surveys.* Our Fauna and Flora groups have also been regularly carrying out vital survey work. With the coming of the warmer weather we have sightings of 60 or more bird species each month with new species being added all the time.
- *Committee meetings.* The committee meets once a month and we welcome the attendance of Members. Please contact us using the details above if you'd like to attend.

Coming up

Working Bee: Sunday 16th February 2003 at 9.30am.

With the holiday season, the hotter weather and the increased fire danger January will be a rest month for the group but it's back into it again refreshed and raring to go in February. Please bring gloves, hand tools, water, and, depending on the weather, a hat or wet weather gear. 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. Finish time will be about 12:30.

Next committee meeting: Wednesday 12th February 2003 at Ruby's 7.30 p.m.

Website

Our website is now up and running, so please check it out for breaking news and other information (local weeds etc). We hope to have other information on the site, such as photos and archived newsletters in the near future. A big thanks to Roger

Vize for his work on this site. <http://glenfernbushtlands.tripod.com>

Newsletter Contributions/Feedback:

Do you have any ideas or feedback for our newsletter, it's your newsletter. Would you like to share some of your knowledge, experiences, with our group? If so drop a line to our editor Jason Glasson for possible inclusion into future newsletters.

Corporate Sponsors

Ruby's Café, Burwood Highway, Belgrave. Phone 9754 7445 for bookings.

Upwey and District Community Bank, 30-32 Main St., Upwey. Phone 9754 1200 for all your banking needs.

Naturally, any other businesses out there that can assist us would also be sure to receive a mention in our newsletter!

As a business you can sponsor our newsletter for as little as \$50 per edition (4 per year). Newsletter distribution is 200 local households.

Let us know if we can help you with your business.

Upwey & District
Community Bank Branch

 Bendigo Bank



The Benefits of becoming a Member

As a concerned member of the community you would like to see the Glen Fern Valley Bushlands area reserved for the use and enjoyment of the local community and its considerable natural beauty and environmental values safeguarded and enhanced. Becoming a Member helps make that desire a reality.

Members are mailed or e-mailed a copy of each newsletter as part of their membership.

Membership fees are kept as low possible to encourage maximum participation and to keep our "Grass Roots" foundations just that, local people looking after their

local environment.

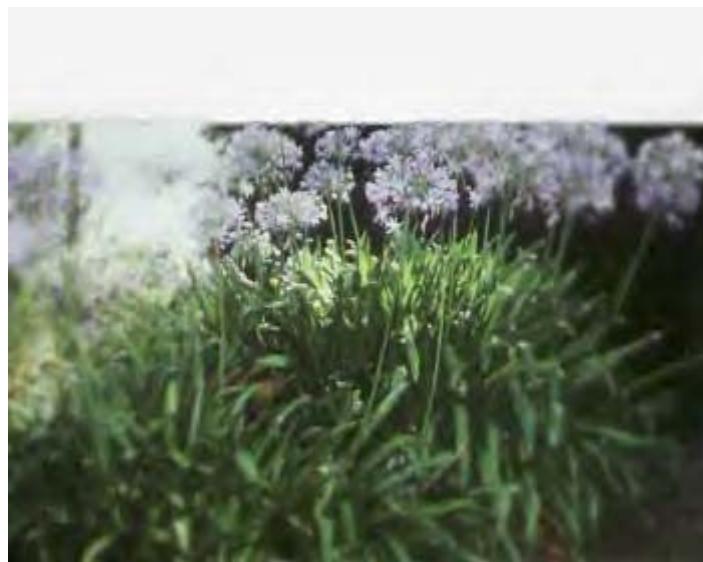
The friends of group has received **no** funding for the day-to-day running of the group, so mail outs, posters, printing, incorporation costs etc, must be met by membership fees.

So if you can help with the work of our group via membership, donations, or in-kind your contribution is most welcome.

We also distribute the newsletter to local libraries and community centres for interested people to pick copies up, please keep an eye out for them.

If you would like a membership form please contact us or visit our website.

Wonderful Weeds #1 **Agapanthus**



Agapanthus praecox ssp orientalis

Origin/Description

South Africa

Evergreen herb in leafy clumps to 60cm, flower heads to 120cm. Thick rhizome. Flowers Nov-Feb, mauve or white. Leaves and rhizomes poisonous. Reproduces By seed and vegetatively (rhizome growth or fragments). Spreads in dumped garden waste and contaminated soil.

Control Methods

1. Remove flower heads prior to flower.
2. Dig out leaves and rhizomes and dispose in garbage (does not compost well). Roots do not regenerate.
Spraying glysophate herbicide has little or no effect on plant

Replacement of Weed Species

Replacement indigenous plants (and good advice) are available for around \$1 from
Kes Community Nursery. Ferntree Gully
Sundays 10am-4pm
Rear of Ferntree Gully Secondary College Melways 74A2
Mick Van der Bree Tel- 9763 7017

Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery. Belgrave Heights
Sundays 9am-12pm
Birdslands Environment Centre Melways 84C2
Michael Butler Tel-9754 8224

That's all for this edition, hope everyone has a lovely Christmas and New Year.
Please stay safe and we'll see you in February.

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