

Newsletter

No.7 Spring/Summer 2003



Photo by Ian Rainbow

Our Mission: 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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What's been happening?

- The Draft Management Plan for the Glenfern Valley Bushlands was released at a Public Meeting on October 9. The draft is currently on exhibition and comments and feedback are welcome. Copies of the draft management plan can be viewed at the Council offices in Main Street, Upwey. An amazing amount of work has been done in writing this draft. In fact, it is a fascinating read.
- Membership of the Friends of Group now stands at 60, which is excellent. Thank you all for your support. We also welcome to our committee Sian Bloom.
- We would like to thank Linda Taylor for all her hard work over the last two years, she has been a committed member of our group and will be sadly missed. Maybe the Blue Mountains have another friends of group waiting for her skills?

Committee of Management meetings continue each month with the welcome recent addition of involvement of Melbourne Water. Formal reservation of the land will occur within the next few months, we plan to have a celebration to mark this special event, Stay tuned.

What's Out There

Spring and Summer visitors are starting to return to the Reserve. Since early this

month Rufous Whistlers have been calling regularly, along with Satin Flycatchers and at least two cuckoo species, the Fan-tailed cuckoo and the Horsefield's bronze cuckoo.

Certainly the Reserve is alive with bird calls at the moment, despite the wet October we have experienced. In coming months we expect to catch sight of Rufous Fantails again (a very pretty bird) and Sacred Kingfishers.

If you see anything of interest on your walks in the Reserve why not share it with the rest of the Friends Of Group. Mammals especially have always been hard to spot and any sightings of Swamp Wallabies, Koalas, Echidnas or Wombats (anything in fact, even foxes) with a record of the date will be gratefully included in the Group's Fauna database.

Who we are.....

One of the founding members of our enthusiastic and supportive Friends of Group is David Mackay who moved from the Belgrave area to Upwey just this year. David has been active in researching different funding pools the Friends of Group could access to gain further monies to continue the work we are doing.

David became interested in Glen Fern Valley Bushlands when Sarah and Serg raised the community's awareness of the area at the very first public meeting held way back in September 2001. He decided then and there to actively join with other community members to form the committee that has taken this venture to where it stands today.

He is a new dad to Zac who is 4 months old and this has inspired him to take on the role of carer part time so he now sees himself as semi-retired from the full time working world. Now that he can spend more time at home with the family, he can enjoy working in the garden planting local natives and trees. One pet hate of David's is seeing people plant Agapanthus and other environmental weeds in their own gardens.

David's interest in the environment, and enthusiasm for active participation is a great asset to the Friends Glen Fern Valley Bushlands. Thanks David!

The Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration-

Ian Rainbow

Many of us who are working to regenerate the Glen Fern Valley Bushlands have hear the "Bradley Method" mentioned but not described beyond the idea of working outwards from the least weed infested areas. This is now available in a small book "Bringing Back the Bush, The Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration" by Joan Bradley, published by Reed New Holland in 2002 for about \$20.

This easily read book describes in detail how to encourage regeneration of the bush through minimal impact weeding, root tracing, minimal earth disturbance and replacing the litter or mulch layer to deny further access to the weeds. A very practical description of technique and tools as well as the basic philosophy, which is deceptively simple and patient. but most efficient way to allow the local native plants to return which may reduce the need to weed an area many times over.

Many of the techniques are described for Sydney plants but could easily be generalised for our area.

The three principles are; work outwards from good bush areas towards areas of weed; make minimal disturbance to the environment; do not over clear. The elaboration of these 3 principles makes good reading and should confirm the efforts of the Friends group. I recommend this book to all interested in Bush Regeneration. Why not ask for it at Wormhole in Upwey?

A note to Members/Supporters

Wormhole Books in Main Street, Upwey (next door to the post office) has agreed to collect membership renewals or new memberships for the group. Please take advantage of this convenient service.

- *Working bees.* Every 3rd Sunday of the month (Saturday working bees being trialed in 2004).
- *Flora and Fauna Surveys.* Our Fauna and Flora groups regularly carry out survey work. If you are interested in attending a survey, please contact the group.
- *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

Community Day & Working Bee: Sunday 16 November 2003, 9.30am - 12.30pm.

A Community Day has been planned with guided flora and fauna bushwalks, some weeding and cleaning up and a BBQ at 12.30pm to top off what we hope to be a fun and productive morning. Local Scouts will be attending to help out so why not come along too. Hopefully the native blooms as seen recently will still be around, do you know what our indigenous flowers look like? Here's your chance.

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.

Please note, No working bees in December 2003 or January 2004

Working bees for 2004

February- Sunday 15th

March- **Saturday 20th**

April- Sunday the 18th

Our Website

Check it out for breaking news and other information. Recent additions include a 3D flyover of the site (look under animations, warning some animation files are large, up to 1.5mb) but worth the wait.

Follow the link below and add it your favourites for future reference.

<http://glenfermbushlands.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 Mark 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 Street, Upwey. Phone 9754 1200 for all your banking needs.

Pig & Whistle Tavern, 1429 Mt Dandenong Tourist Road, Mt Dandenong. Phone 9751-2366

Wormhole Books, 27A Main Street, Upwey Phone 9754 5440

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.