



# WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY

## *True Spring Newsletter*

Volume 43/six

November/December 2013

*Warringal Conservation Society is a local, not-for-profit, community organisation caring for the environment in Banyule.*

*Formed in 1970, the Society is an active and productive steward of Banyule's environmental heritage.*

### **Join us!!**

Warringal Conservation Society is not just a local environment group: it is stimulating, fun and companionable and takes an active role in the wider community.

Single \$15,  
Family \$20  
Pension/student/  
unemployed \$10  
Life \$150

Articles and photographs for the newsletter are welcome. We may edit for legal, space or other reasons. Opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Warringal Conservation Society.

Newsletter printed courtesy of Jenny Macklin MP.

## NOVEMBER MEETING

### **Anthea Fleming - Kimberly Coast**

During September, Anthea and Brian Fleming spent 10 days at sea along the Kimberley Coast of Western Australia - seeing fantastic rocky landscapes, mangrove swamps and sandy islands full of nesting seabirds. A wonderful place for birdwatchers and photographers.



Caspian Tern



Brown Booby

## DECEMBER MEETING

### **Member's Night**

Warringal Conservation Society members will present accounts of their recent trips and notable sightings.

**Meetings on first Thursday of the month  
from 7.30 pm at the Old Shire Offices,  
60 Beverley Road.**

**Enter from Buckingham Drive near the Banyule Theatre and  
Greening Australia. Melways map 32:D3. All Welcome**

## AT A GLANCE

### November

**Thursday 7th:** General meeting—speaker Anthea Fleming - Kimberly Coast

### December

**Thursday 5th:** General meeting. Member's night

## News & Events

### Warringal Conservation Society End of year outing - The Briars

On Sunday November 10, we will be heading down to The Briars at Mt Martha on the Mornington Peninsula. The bus will leave the old shire offices at 9am and we will probably return around 4pm. There are some walks, a wetland and the historic house itself. There is picnic facilities and a cafe which needs to be booked directly if anyone wants that option. Parks vic have said there is a good guide for us who will take us around the house and other places. We have 4 spaces left at the time of writing. (Contact Heather - [elephantstamp@optusnet.com.au](mailto:elephantstamp@optusnet.com.au))  
[http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Leisure\\_Tourism/The\\_Briars](http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Leisure_Tourism/The_Briars)



### September Planting Report - Banyule Flats

On Sunday the 15th we met at the Somerset Rd car park and planted buffer of Lomandra, grasses and other low plants along the fence line next to Tawny Pond. The aim was to create a barrier of hardy plants to stop litter blowing into the pond. A Tawny Frogmouth was spotted at Tawny Pond after the planting.



### October Weeding - Wilson Reserve

We joined the Wilson Reserve mob at the south end of Chelsworth Park in Ivanhoe. Supported by bushland crew member, Damian, WCS reps Daphne, Chris, Don, Phoebe, Roly and Heather helped the 13 strong FoWR to clear Galium, Fumitory, Vetch and Creeping Buttercup from around Reedy billabong. We then moved up to the west end of the sports fields and got to work on the weeds there - thistles, Gallium, Fumitory, Trad, mallow. Near the end of the morning Robert Bender was pulling Trad from among the shrubs and exposed three eggs, perhaps Rail. He squished one accidentally and then relocated the other two under a pile of Trad, as mum had hidden them that way.



## Who we are and how to contact us

### Warringal Conservation Society Inc

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Email: [warringal3084@gmail.com](mailto:warringal3084@gmail.com)

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**Vice President:** Anthea Fleming

**Treasurer:** Daphne Hards

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### Newsletter

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**Planting Coordinator:** Heather Smith (standing in for Anthony Fernando)

**Committee:** John D'Aloia, Anthea Fleming, Celia Smith, Daphne Hards, Dianne Williamson, Marion Ware, James Deane.

## News & Events cont.

### Message from the Treasurer

Though individual acknowledgements have been sent out, I should like to say how gratifying it has been to have so many members sending in their renewal subscriptions for 2013-4. A collective thank you from the committee.

If there are some who rue the fact that we do not promote internet direct deposit, please let us know. We need encouragement too! I have heard it can be torrid for the treasurer when members forget to sign their deposits, hence the hesitation. By keeping your membership up to date you share in our group memberships of the Australian Conservation Foundation and Environment Victoria, thus supporting all the good work they do.

And another big thank you to those who have taken a Life Membership. That speaks volumes.

Lastly, a very warm welcome to the following New Members. You'll be amongst friends loving the environment, and we hope your membership will be rewarding.

Vivien Newnham  
Roly Hieser  
Rowan Harrison  
Christine Taylor  
Steve Gilbert  
Janine Rizzetti

*Daphne Hards (WCS Treasurer)*

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### Eltham Copper Butterfly Count

On the evening of Tuesday 8th October a group of volunteers and staff from the Banyule Bush Crew met at Andrew Yandell Reserve to go looking for caterpillars of the rare Eltham Copper Butterfly. Meg, Kylie and Alan from the Bush Crew will be familiar to WCS members through the help they give us with our plantings. It was 8pm and a beautiful calm night, perfect conditions for caterpillars we were told.

The Eltham Copper Butterfly is known from a handful of sites in Victoria, including a managed area of Yandell Reserve in Greensborough. The butterfly larvae (caterpillars) emerge at night to feed on the native shrub Sweet Bursaria. By day they live in ant's nests near the base of the Bursaria. They bribe the ants with a sweet secretion and the ants protect them vigorously during their nightly excursions.

We did a survey of a fenced section of Bursaria that is managed to provide ideal caterpillar

### Duck Shooting update

As yet no shooter has been charged over the slaughter of waterbirds at a private wetland near Boort at this year's opening weekend of Victoria's duck hunting season. As reported here earlier, the mass killing included many non-game birds, rare freckled ducks, and swans. The Government has been accused of "stalling" over its investigation which has involved Victoria Police and wildlife officers. However, a spokeswoman for Agriculture Minister Peter Walsh recently told *The Weekly Times* (October 23, 2013) that after seven months of collecting statements and evidence, the long investigation is almost complete. Mr Walsh has said previously that individuals involved in the illegal killings should have the maximum penalties applied to them, and that they should not have the privilege of hunting again. Members may view the full article via the link below..

[http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/article/2013/10/23/586822\\_national-news.html](http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/article/2013/10/23/586822_national-news.html)

*Celia Smith*

conditions. Every Bursaria shrub in the area was checked for caterpillars. Generally it was the ants that were easier to spot than the caterpillars they were guarding. Most of the Bursaria is kept quite low and the caterpillars seem to prefer small scrappy looking plants. Caterpillars were not that common so each find was exciting. The caterpillars were not excited to have a light shone on them and often headed back to the nest with their ants. We found more than 70 caterpillars which was double the number of last years survey.

*James Deane*



## September Speaker– Robert Bender— Koalas of the Otways

Robert presented a talk on a recent project he went on in February this year. He studied the koala population of the Bimbi area of the Otways.

Koalas were shot out or displaced from most of their former habitat in Victoria, but introduction to suitable remaining and re-established habitats have been quite successful. Many existing koala populations are outgrowing their available habitat and all suitable relocation sites have already been used. Robert described how the koala populations of areas of the Otways are so dense that they are eating their preferred Manna gum woodland to death.

Robert worked on a project studying the habits of koalas in the Bimbi region using radio tracking collars. Koalas spend about 70% of their time resting and are most active at night, which is why they are most often seen sleeping. Collared koalas were located on a daily basis and notes made as to their location and the habitat they were occupying. This provides a picture of habitat use by koalas and shows how individual animals interact with each other.



Part of the work was replacing batteries in radio tracking collars, which of course requires catching



the animals. Robert described how koalas were caught with a nose on a pole and restrained while the collar was sorted out.

Questions arising from this work are:

- will the Bimbi koalas eat out all their Manna gum and starve?
- will they adapt to the nearby Shining Gum woodland?
- can seed propagation save the Manna gum in time?



*James Deane*

## October Speaker– Daphne Hards - Papua New Guinea

Daphne showed beautiful photos of her trip to Papua New Guinea. Her trip included Mt Hagen in the highlands, and a boat journey along the coast of the mainland, and a to a number of islands.

Images of the Sepik river and the people who live there were spectacular. The locals appeared in their dugout canoes with things to sell whenever a boat turned up. The kids were extremely comfortable on the water and amused themselves by paddling around in worn out dugouts. In the villages there were large Haus Tambaran (Spirit houses) that pay tribute the ancestors and house collection of carvings a decorations. The people of the Sepik have fondness for crocodile and these feature in many of the carvings.

In the Trobriand Islands Daphne enjoyed watching a game of the local version of cricket. The Islanders apparently thought that the traditional version of cricket was not up to scratch and have introduced a number of innovations including an unlimited

number of players and a lots more ceremony. Daphne described an elaborate dance and chanting routine that they do to intimidate the opposition. Someone asked whether this was done at the start of game, but Daphne replied that it was done after each ball.

Daphne is always keen to spot a few birds and this is something that proved difficult. Lots of birds end up as head-dress decorations in PNG, so they have probably learnt to keep a low profile. Cassowary feathers also grace many woodcarvings.

Another interesting observation that Daphne made was that mobile phones are just as popular in Papua New Guinea as they are here.

Daphne brought back a collection of carvings, woven string bags, ornaments, an arrow and a penis gourd that everyone was able to have a look at after her talk.

*James Deane*

# WCS Financials 2013

WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.  
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS  
for the year ended 30th June 2013

	2013	2012	
	\$	\$	
<b>Receipts</b>			
Subscriptions			
Life membership		150.00	
Annual subscriptions	395.00	715.00	
Prior year	150.00	135.00	
Donations	350.60	766.30	
Sales of publications		205.00	
Bank interest	437.89	129.39	
Grant-Melbourne Water (Insurance and Postage)	1100.00	1,100.00	
Banyule Council Bond Refund	300.00		
	<u>2733.49</u>	<u>3,200.69</u>	
<b>Payments</b>			
Newsletter costs	387.81	427.65	
Meeting expenses (includes A-frame)	509.53	764.95	
OSO Office Rent	522.30		
Insurance Premium	790.00	790.00	
Banyule Council Bond	300.00		
Library acquisitions		59.95	
WCS Prize - Latrobe University	250.00	250.00	
Subscriptions			
Australian Conservation Foundation	65.00	65.00	
Environment Defenders Office			
Environment Victoria	110.00		
Donations			
Australian Conservation Foundation	45.00	50.00	
Coalition Against Duck Shooting	50.00	50.00	
Friends of Banyule			
My Environment Inc	50.00	75.00	
Victorian National Parks Association	50.00		
Wildlife Victoria			
Friends of Leadbeater's Possum	50.00		
Mailout re Friends of Banyule			
Website hosting		286.20	
Postage, stationery, sundries	248.29	167.80	
	<u>3427.93</u>	<u>2,986.55</u>	
Surplus/Deficit for year	-694.44	214.14	-2,710.13
Balance brought forward	9,683.79	9,469.65	12,179.78
Balance carried forward	<u>8,989.35</u>	<u>9,683.79</u>	<u>9,469.65</u>
<b>The balance carried forward -</b>			
Bendigo Bank			
Club Cheque account	455.65	255.24	
Term deposit	8533.70	7128.55	
	<u>8989.35</u>	<u>9683.79</u>	

S. E. OBLIUBEK  
Chartered Accountant

93 New Road  
Oak Park 3046

## INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.

### Scope

I have audited the attached Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013 of the Warringal Conservation Society Inc.

The Society's Committee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial reports and the information contained therein and has determined that the accounting policies used are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members.

I have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of the Society. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act. I disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

### Qualification

As is common for organizations of this type, it is not practicable for the Committee to maintain an effective system of internal control over subscriptions, meetings income, donations and other fund-raising activities until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, my audit in relation to these items was limited to amounts recorded.

### Qualified audit opinion

In my opinion, (except for the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitation discussed in the qualification paragraph not existed) the financial report presents fairly the results of its operations for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

  
S. E. OBLIUBEK  
Chartered Accountant  
Auditor

11th September 2013

## Nature Notes—Member's observations

### September

Doug McNaughton - Nankeen Night Heron on the Yarra

Roly Hieser - A Black Cockatoo

Daphne Hards - Ring Tail Possum eating apricot

Robert Bender - King Parrot, Goulds Wattled Bat, Kookaburra, Stink Horn fungus

### October

Anthea Fleming showed a picture of a Fantailed Cuckoo, which on 31st August flew into a glass door and stunned itself. It was captured by putting a tea-towel over it and it clung to the frame, confined in a shoe-box for an hour to recover, and then released. It flew away strongly. She observed a White-faced Heron's nest, at Banyule Flats, cannily placed over the Yarra on a horizontal branch, but almost hidden by overhanging leaves. There were three young birds on 29th Sept, still downy. By 6 October they were well-feathered.

Robert Bender reported a Lynx Spider that has spines on its legs

James Deane - a Black-Faced Cuckoo-Shrike nesting in a redgum in the Simpson army Barracks



On Sunday 6th October, Banyule Swamp had a very strange visitor – a large female or immature Musk Duck. Unfortunately it was too busy feeding, making repeated dives, for a photograph to be possible – it was also keeping far away on the western side of the Swamp. In fact it spent far more time below the water than on the surface. In the 1970s a male Musk-duck was occasionally seen in the Billabong, when there were few trees on the banks, and the area was still mainly cow-paddock - but I have no record of any being seen in-between. Richard Loyn agrees that this is a very unusual sighting.

SAD FATALITY - Today we found a large dead Water Skink, length 215 mm, in the bottom of a metal plant-pot stored in our garage. It must have been exploring, and having fallen in, could not climb out. To make matters worse it looked as if it was gravid (they produce live young). The moral is – store such things upside-down!

*Anthea Fleming*

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If not delivered return to: PO Box 64, Rosanna 3084



**WARRINGAL  
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SOCIETY**

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