



WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Deep Winter Newsletter

Volume 43/four

July/August 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.

JULY MEETING

Mid Winter Soup Night

MIDWINTER MEETING—gather at 6.30pm for home-made soup and snacks before the Meeting which starts at 7.30pm! Bring soup, bread or something else to share. ALL WELCOME.

Bush Blitz survey of flora and fauna in South Australia—Robert Bender

Robert's latest earth watch project was a survey of the major flora and fauna on a property bordering the Gawler Ranges NP.

AUGUST MEETING

Meeting speaker to be advised.

**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**

Annual Subscriptions Due by July 1st

Membership application/renewal for July 2013-June 2014 can be paid now either by cheque or money order to:

Warringal Conservation Society PO Box 64 Rosanna VIC 3084

(or come to our monthly meeting and see treasurer Daphne Hards)

Please provide phone and address for administration and receipt return.

Donations always welcome

AT A GLANCE

July

Thursday 4th: Soup night starting at 6.30pm followed by General Meeting 7.30pm—Robert Bender, Flora and Fauna survey.

Sunday 28th: National Tree Day—planting near entrance to Banyule flats swamp seat.

August

Thursday 1st: General Meeting -

Sunday 18th: Planting at Tawny Pond near Somerset Drive car park.

News & Events

Upcoming Plantings

July 28th National Tree Day– Swamp Seat Planting (near entrance to Banyule flats bird hide)-Planting a range of indigenous vegetation to encourage wildlife into the area

August 18th - planting at Tawny Pond near Somerset Dve carpark -Continuation of plantings around the pond to increase the diversity and indigenous coverage for birdlife in the area

Planting report– June 16th Western Habitat Link

About 400 plants were put in along the Banyule creek access. This continues planting along the creek that we have been doing for several years. The site was prepared by burning and plants included flax lilies (*Dianella*), grasses, *Coprosma*, paper barks and Kidney weed. Thanks again to the Banyule bush



crew for organising the site and plants.



Who we are and how to contact us

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Presidents Report - May 2013

FISHING GROUPS SEEK TO ROLL BACK MARINE SANCTUARIES

As members are aware, 2012 was the year where the Federal Government approved the largest network of marine sanctuaries in the world. Information from Save Our Marine Life, however, has advised that they have uncovered a new campaign by some fishing groups to use the coming Federal election to roll back this hard-won protection so vital for the future of our turtles, whales, sharks and fish. It was stated:

"We are seeking commitments from the Coalition that if elected after September 14 they will review the regulations and reverse the Biggest Aussie Angler Lock out in History... We are organising a number of activities, such as write-in and phone-in campaigns and local rallies, to raise the profile of our issue with the community." (Keep Australia Fishing)

It is known that ordinary fishers support marine protection. This campaign, however, has been remarkable for the extent of its misleading information - enough to make even reasonable people concerned (if it were true). Luckily one of Australia's most trusted voices, the Founder of Clean Up Australia Ian Kiernan AO, has set the record straight. He's produced a [short video and micro-site](#) with a plain-talking message about our new parks.

By correcting the record Save Our Marine Life are hoping the plan to kill our marine parks is exposed for what it is, falls flat and disappears forever. Here's how you can help make this happen.

1. Check out Ian's Kiernan's message on the website

2. Forward the site's link to anyone you know, especially if they fish.

Post the link social media (even fishing or other marine-related pages).

Call for Victorian Government to stop the attacks on our Environment

Environment Victoria is seeking assistance from individuals and Groups to sign petitions in a campaign calling on the Victorian Government to stop the attacks on our Environment.

EV has stated that the petitions are important because they reflect public opinion. They're our way of telling our politicians that Victorians want the state government to protect our environment, not destroy it. What's more, they show that we've had thousands of conversations with Victorians about

this campaign, face-to-face and neighbour-to-neighbour. That's the most powerful thing we can do to spread our campaign message, and our politicians know it too.

EV is currently targeting five key neighbourhoods across Victoria, selected for their special strategic significance to the campaign: Frankston, Mordialloc, Prahran, Blackburn and South Geelong.

The petitions will be presented to our MPs in June, and they aiming to get over 10,000 signatures by the end of May.

Everyone is urged to go to the EV website to download a petition, and to participate in campaign events.

Animals Australia calls for assistance and a vote against Live Animal Export in the Coming Federal Election

Assistance is sought by Animals Australia. The Standards for how sheep can be treated in Australia are currently open for public consultation. This means there is opportunity to make our concerns heard.

With respect to sheep, one would be forgiven for thinking the Standards and Guidelines are designed to protect them. But the reality is they effectively bypass animal cruelty laws to allow sheep to be subjected to cruel practices that would be illegal if performed on our pets at home.

What will the new Standards mean for sheep?

There will be no requirement for food and water to be available to all animals daily; no requirement for shelter or shade to be provided; and no requirement for all animals to be inspected regularly. Painful procedures will also continue to be permitted without any pain relief.

These invasive procedures will still be permitted without pain relief:

[castration](#)

[tail docking](#) (cutting a lamb's tail off)

[mulesing](#) (cutting off the skin from around a lamb's buttocks)

[invasive breeding procedures](#)

Workers will still be allowed to:

[strike animals](#)

[use an electric prod on animals](#)

[confine sheep to individual pens](#)

[indefinitely](#)

Pet sheep will also be allowed to be permanently tethered to a small area, alone.

Millions of animals spared from live export

Recent industry figures show that live export is in

Presidents Report - May 2013 cont.

decline, with a significant reduction in the number of Australian animals exported each year. This trend is in large part thanks to the thousands of caring Australians who continue to speak out against this cruel trade. With each incident of abuse exposed by investigators and whistleblowers, and each action taken by compassionate Australians, the cruel grip of the live export industry weakens—and more animals are spared this terrible fate.

An industry in decline

A range of factors have led to the gradual decline of Australia's live export industry over recent years. These include the declining sheep flock in WA, increased cropping due to higher profits on offer, reduced demand for live animals from key markets and trade disruptions in importing countries. 18 investigations over the past decade exposing the brutal treatment of Australian animals in importing countries have fuelled public concern and diminished political support for an already unstable industry.

Industry statistics show that, 2.2 million fewer animals were exported in 2012 than in 2008, and

Australian Government forecasts predict that this trend will continue. That means fewer Australian cattle, sheep and goats will be forced to endure long, stressful sea journeys--with most facing fully conscious slaughter in countries with no laws to protect them.

The reality is, live export is a small and declining industry. It accounts for just 0.3% of Australia's total exports. For the vast majority of producers involved in this trade, live export revenue represents between just 3% and 7% of their entire farm income. This is because most farms are mixed enterprises with cropping increasingly paying greater dividends. A succession of economic reports have confirmed that live export is risky business and ending the trade will be better for producers, the economy and it will create jobs in Australia.

In the lead up to the Federal election in September, live export is proving to be an important issue, and many in the Australian community are sending our country's politicians a clear message of "No Ban, No Vote".

Presidents Report - June 2013

Planning Minister approves bike trail link

As members may be aware, it was reported in The Age on 3 June 2013 that the Darebin Creek Shared Trail extension has been approved by the Planning Minister. This 1.8 km extension was considered to be a crucial link to improve safety and access for cyclists & will now link Melbourne's six most popular bike trails by a bridge over the Yarra River, connecting the Darebin Creek Trail to Melbourne's eastern cycling network.

All the local councils had extended planning permits, except for Boroondara council, where the Yarra bridge will bring the trail through Willsmere Park to connect with the Main Yarra Trail. Although Boroondara proposed an alternative route for the trail, this was rejected by the Planning Minister.

It was stated that Bicycle Network Victoria had been campaigning for the connection for 17 years. The State Government allocated \$18 million to complete the project, including a route along the Darebin Creek and a new bridge across the Yarra.

speaker talking about the proposed extension of our Marine Parks. I am pleased to report that Australia's new marine parks were voted on last night in Parliament.

You may remember that Australia declared the largest network of marine parks in the world last November. Approval for any new parks and sanctuaries is needed from Federal Parliament before they become law.

On 4 June 2013, the Lower House voted and all new marine parks and sanctuaries were approved, which is a great result. The Senate will vote on this on 25 June 2013.

An interesting note is that traditionally there was strong support to protect our marine wildlife from both sides of politics with Liberals protecting the Great Barrier Reef and the current Labor government delivering the national network. However, given the polarized politics of today, the vote was split along party lines with the Independents carrying the day FOR marine parks and sanctuaries.

Australia's New Marine Parks

Members may recall that last year we had a guest

May Speaker– Sue Bendel—Leadbeater’s Possum

Leadbeater’s possum is Victoria’s endangered Faunal emblem. It is a very small possum that only weighs 100-125 grams and was first reported in 1867. It was declared extinct in the 1950s after not being seen for many years. It was rediscovered in 1961 by Eric Wilkinson.

Leadbeater’s possum relies on montane forest with an understory of wattles and large old trees (dead or alive) to live in. They move through the forest canopy but will not move along the ground. A small population of Leadbeater’s possum also lived in alpine forest at Lake Mountain, but the last three known possums in this population were taken into captivity after feral cats were seen stalking them. Around 42% of the habitat was burnt in the bushfires of 2009 and about 1000 possums are thought to have survived. Salvage logging (removing burnt trees) has

also removed many of the larger dead trees that would have provided possum habitat as regrowth occurred. Logging of remaining possum habitat is the most important threat at present.

For more information see:

<http://leadbeaters.org.au/>



June Speaker– Sonja Ross– Bird Photography

The Melbourne Branch of Birdlife Australia has an enthusiastic Digital Photography Group, led by Sonja Ross. At the June Meeting, she showed us two beautiful compilations of photographs taken by Photography Group members. They were titled *Singing in the Rain* and *The Early Bird catches the Worm*.

The first showed the ways birds use water. We saw enough photos to illustrate a book on the topic—from those who must live in or on it, like the Musk Duck. Others must have it to breed - Chestnut Teal, shown mating on, or from the female's view, under water. Welcome Swallows and Magpie-larks need mud to build nests. Grebes build floating nests of weeds, and carry their delightful striped chicks on their backs. Swans and other waterfowl escort their swimming young.

Feeding techniques - ducks up-end, herons stalk and stab, Pelicans use their bills as a dip-net. Spoonbills and Ibis feed mainly in fresh water, while the migrant waders, such as Sharp-tailed Sandpipers, feed along tidal shores. Other waders included Hooded Plover on a beach, and Black-winged Stilts and the familiar Masked Lapwing.

Most birds bathe and then preen themselves—garden birds such as Red Wattlebirds, Silvereyes and honeyeaters will enjoy a bird-bath, or like the Red-capped Robin, bathe in a puddle in the road. Sea-birds such as Giant Petrels and Albatrosses and the assorted Penguins of the Southern Ocean leave the water only to breed.

The Early Bird catches the Worm covered birds'

feeding behaviour. Redbrowed Finches and Turquoise Parrots were taking grass-seeds. One appealing photo showed a Gang Gang extracting Liquidambar seeds from the spiky fruit. Honeyeaters take nectar from flowers – Eastern Spinebills and Little Wattlebirds were seen at grevilleas, and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters also take fruit such as Native Currants (*Coprosma*). Other fruit eaters include Satin Bower-birds and Cockatoos. In a short film some young Emus were eating saltbush berries.

A Laughing Kookaburra had caught quite a large snake, and a Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo had mined its way into a tree-trunk to take a borer grub. A Striated Fieldwren had caught a dragon-fly. A White-fronted Chat had caught a grub, and a Superb Blue Wren had a small insect. Crested Terns plummet into water for small fish, while Whiskered Terns fly low, skimming prey from the surface. Grebes hunt their prey swimming underwater. Most herons stalk their prey or stand to ambush it, but Little Egrets sometimes gather to dance through the shallows, snapping up what they disturb from the bottom. Perhaps the most impressive hunter was the Osprey which had caught a fish in its talons – and few of us will forget the Nankeen Kestrel whose prey – a small bird – had been entirely eaten except one leg and foot – also apparently on the way down.

Members thoroughly enjoyed the photographs, as well as discussion with Sonja afterwards.

Anthea Fleming

Nature Notes—Members observations

MAY

James Deane reported a Wombat. Jane Crone had seen a Eastern Rosella in Eaglemont and Flocks of Corellas. Anthea Fleming saw a Gecko, possibly a marbled, in her house, and a Scarlet Robin at the Banyule billabong. Robert Bender reported Straw necked Ibis, Egg yolk fungus, and Sue saw a Hoary Headed Grebe.

JUNE

James Deane had seen a group of 20 Whistling Kites at Banyule Flats, and also a pair of King Parrots. Gianna reported GangGangs, and a Peregrine Falcon carrying a bird.

Jane Crone 's Liquidambar was visted by a Crimson Rosella, seeking seeds. Rainbow Lorikeets came to the same tree. Flying-foxes and Silvereyes were also seen in her garden, and a Tawny Frogmouth was seen perched at night on the rotary clothes-line.

Robert Bender reports that two Tawny Frogmouths are back at their usual roost at Wilson Reserve.

Lene Jakobsen saw Sulphur-crested Cockatoos eating from seedpods of an Illawarra Flame-tree.

Don Stokes reported that a white owl – probably a Barn Owl- had swooped at him in Hodgson St. Street.



1-3. Whistling Kites; 4. Scarlet Robin.

Anthea Fleming

Would you like to receive your newsletter by email rather than a paper copy in the regular mail

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