



WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY

## *Deep Winter Newsletter*

Volume 47/four

July/August 2017

*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 \$20,  
Family \$25  
Pension/student/  
unemployed \$15  
Life \$200

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**

### **Midwinter Soup night - 6.15pm**

Food from Foodworks Ivanhoe – \$5 kids, \$10 adults to subsidise operating costs and Warringal Prize. Fruit juice and soft drink provided, BYO beer & wine. Meeting follows at 7.30pm.

### **John Morgan – Native Grasslands**

John is a plant ecologist at La Trobe University. His research focuses on the population dynamics of plants, the impacts of natural disturbances and global environmental change. He is interested in the interactive effects of fire, grazing and drought in grasslands and woodlands in southern Australia, and how climate change, fragmentation and shrub encroachment affect ecosystems. John will speak about Australian native grasslands.

## **AUGUST MEETING**

### **Andrew Kelly - Yarra River Keepers**

Andrew is Vice President of the Yarra River Keeper Association. In Andrew's own words "We advocate for the River: for green spaces, for water quality, for biodiversity, for the birds, animals, insects and reptiles along the River, for good planning decisions, for the tributaries, for the parklands, for appropriate recreation; and for an understanding of our river and its role in the life of the city of Melbourne. We lobby governments and we educate the community. We tell the story of the River."

**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**

### July

**Thursday 6th:** Soup night starting 6.15pm

General meeting at 7.30pm - Native Grasslands

**Sunday 30th:** National Tree Day, Banyule Native Gardens - (See News & Events)

### August

**Thursday 3rd:** General meeting at 7.30pm - Yarra River Keepers

**Sunday 27th:** Sunday 27th August - Planting with Friends of Darebin Creek - location TBA. (check WCS Facebook)

## News & Events

### Upcoming WCS working bees

#### July:

Sunday 30th July: National Tree day. Location - Native Gardens beside Banyule Rd, Viewbank. Time 10am - 12noon.

#### August:

Sunday 13th August - WCS planting - location TBC [possibly Banyule Native Gardens]. 10am - 12noon.  
Sunday 27th August - Combined planting with Friends of Darebin Creek - location to be confirmed. 10am - 12noon.



### Planting reports

#### Sunday 21st May - Warringal Pond (top right)

Larger trees including Blackwood Wattles, Mana Gums and Swamp Gums were planted at two sites near Warringal Pond. Trees were protected with star picket guards.

#### Sunday 4th June - Tawny Pond (bottom right)

More tubestock went in between the pond and the carpark. The plant cover in this area is getting denser and more extensive as we revisit regularly.



### WCS subscriptions due

WCS membership subscriptions for 2017/2018 are due in July. Thanks to everyone who has already paid! The rates are on pg 1. These are used for the costs of running the Society that include hall hire, insurance, and postage. Subscriptions can be paid to the Treasurer Daphne Hards at a meeting or planting, or a cheque can be sent by mail using the form on page seven of this newsletter. Subscriptions can

also be paid electronically directly into the Society's bank account using the following information:

Account Name: Warringal Conservation Society  
BSB: 633108 Account No: 143918613

Be sure to identify yourself as the depositor. To be certain, you can email [warringal3084@gmail.com](mailto:warringal3084@gmail.com) that your deposit has been made.

### Who we are and how to contact us

#### **Warringal Conservation Society Inc**

PO Box 64 Rosanna 3084

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

Web: [www.warringal.org.au](http://www.warringal.org.au)

[www.facebook.com/WarringalConservationSociety](https://www.facebook.com/WarringalConservationSociety)

**President:** John D'Aloia

Telephone: 0478739288

**Vice President:** Anthea Fleming

**Treasurer:** Daphne Hards

Telephone: 9497 4831

#### **Newsletter**

Editors: James Deane & Gianna Romano

Telephone: 94585985

Email: [wcs.editor@gmail.com](mailto:wcs.editor@gmail.com)

Compilation & Mailing: Margaret Pollock, Heather Smith, Don Stokes

**Planting Coordinator:** Heather Smith

**Committee:** John D'Aloia, Anthea Fleming, Celia Smith, Daphne Hards, Dianne Williamson, Penny Grose, Doug McNaughton, James Deane.

## News & Events cont.

### Welcome to new WCS members

We extend a warm welcome to new members:

- Ite Sonder
- Kerri-Anne, Nicholas, Lachlan, Maya and Holly Deane.

### North East Link Community Survey

The North East link authority is doing a survey of people who live in or travel through the Banyule and Nillumbik area where the road project is planned. This is a good opportunity to state what you value about our area and voice concerns. The response options for some questions are limited but you can also fill in a text box to explain your thoughts further. A link to the survey can be found at: <http://northeastlink.vic.gov.au/>

### WCS Greeting Cards

Daphne Hards has prepared greeting cards featuring Banyule Swamp (right). They are \$3.50 each or 3 for \$10. Available at general meeting or by contacting the committee at WCS email [warringal3084@gmail.com](mailto:warringal3084@gmail.com)  
Help support the protection of Banyule Wetland against the N-E Link threat.



## May General Meeting Report

### Fundraising

HTC's Pride and Prejudice, Thursday 27 April "preview". An enjoyable evening raising \$90. A saucer is on the front table for gold coin donation towards annual the Warringal Prize. New greeting cards for sale on front table.

### Planting and weeding activities.

We supported Friends of Salt Creek, Sat April 6<sup>th</sup>, and Friends of Plenty River, Sun April 7<sup>th</sup>. Small turnout but very nice to share time with neighbouring groups. The May working-bee will be Sunday 21 May at Warringal Pond at the Sills Bend end of Heidelberg Football Club carpark. 10am – 12 noon. Planting 30 semi-established trees.

### North East Link

The North East Link Authority is conducting "expert engineering, environmental and social investigations" to "help determine the best design for the project, with a focus on protecting existing urban areas, and minimising the impact to the environment".

**Phase 1: This year, 2017:** The project Business Case will be developed, and input will be sought into the project, its objectives and the best corridor. At the end of this phase, a preferred corridor will be released.

**Phase 2: Early 2018.** Input will be sought into the project details and proposed alignment along the preferred corridor.

**2018 State Election:** Daniel Andrews has stated that the final plan will be an election Policy. You can register on the NE Link Authority website to receive updates and information on community consultation.

The WCS has had a long-standing policy advocating for improved public transport rather than freeway development. We do however need to be prepared to advocate for protection of the wetlands if the decision for the 'missing link' is to build a freeway under, through or over Banyule Flats. Dennis O'Connell urges us to keep up the phone calls, emails etc. to State Politicians, local and state newspapers.

President John D'Aloia and Friends of Banyule's



## May General Meeting Report cont.

Dennis O'Connell met Anthony Carbines MP in March putting our position. Daphne met Anthony Carbines at local function April 30 and indicated our watchfulness.

BCC is holding a forum at Streeton Room, the Centre Ivanhoe on Tues May 30 at 7-9.15pm, with guest speakers from various stakeholder groups to inform the community of NE Link developments. Register attendance by searching in BCC's What's On page.

### Shaping Banyule Discussion forum

Proposed Council Plan 2017- 2021 and Budget 2017/18 have been released and the committee will collate April's discussions into a submission.

### Environmental Issues:

Daphne Hards spoke with Sarah Gaskill regarding the activity at Bollin Bolin Billabong location. Separate action to create a wetland in adjacent southerly paddock using storm water drained from Marcellin playing fields under Bulleen Rd. Water to be used for watering golf courses and playing ovals.

Joint project of Manningham Council and Melbourne Water. Forms part of the 2013-4 plans which we understood lost funding.

**Sarah Gaskill**, Senior Environmental Water Resources Planner – Integrated Planning, Melbourne Water - **Banyule Billabong Refilling**

Sarah attended the meeting and gave a short review following the November 2016 refilling of Banyule Billabong from the Yarra River. Peak depth was approx.1.2m, but all evaporated by April 2017. They took photos before, during and after, and did vegetation assessments before and after. There was a great reduction in weeds, and native vegetation sprang up as the ground dried. There was a great response from frogs and birds. Melbourne Water is now looking into long term watering solutions including, possibly, overflow from Banyule Swamp. Sarah will keep us informed.

**Speaker: Richard Loyn**, a local resident and Warringal member. Title: Finding birds and other wildlife in Colombia and Venezuela. (see pg 5)

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## 2017 Duck Shooting Season

The Victorian three month long duck shooting season ended on June 12th. In the week following the close of the season shot protected birds, like the blue-winged shoveler, and thousands of spent plastic shotgun cartridges were dropped by activists outside the Agriculture Minister's Office in Ballarat. All had been left behind by duck shooters on wetlands that included Ramsar listed wetlands of international importance. But how many duck shooters have been prosecuted for killing protected birds? How many duck shooters have been prosecuted for littering our wetlands?

Rescuing wounded birds and collecting illegally shot, protected, threatened and endangered species during the duck shooting season is a dangerous and

stressful job. For their acts of kindness, volunteers often face steep penalties.

This year, four young volunteer rescuers were fined almost one thousand dollars each for helping wounded native waterbirds on opening weekend. A legal fighting fund has been established to challenge this injustice in court. Supporters, who are unable to go to the wetlands but want to know what they can do to help, can make a very welcome donation. Go to [banduckshooting.com/donate](http://banduckshooting.com/donate)

*Celia Smith*



*Cartridges and dead ducks on display*



*Blue-winged Shoveler ('cannot be hunted in 2017')*

## May Speaker - Colombia and Venezuela.

Attendees at the May meeting had a real treat in the form of local birdo, Richard Loyn and his talk 'Venezuela and Colombia: from the Caribbean to the Llanos and high Andes.

He travelled to Venezuela in 2014 and Colombia in 2015. Both tours were three weeks each and he saw over 600 species each trip. He began with a brief description of each country:

- Colombia is home to 48m people, GDP per person is \$8,000 with inflation at 6%.
- Venezuela has 29m people, GDP is \$16K per person with inflation between 62-141% and rising. Petrol was 2 cents a litre – which meant because it was so cheap hardly anyone was importing it, so the supplies were very unreliable – resulting in long, long queues at the outlets.

The basic bird stats give an idea of the massive number of species to be seen.:

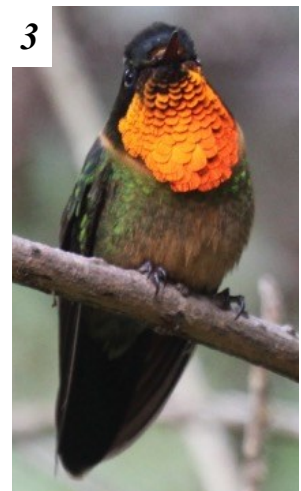
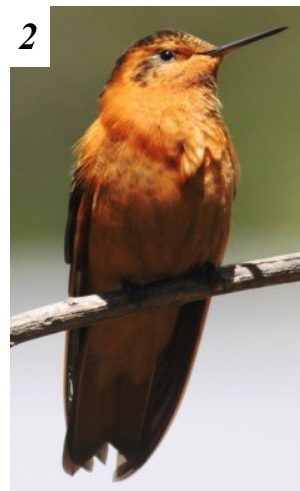
	Columbia	Venezuela
Bird species	1900	1417
Endemics	73	48
NGOs	Pro Aves	Bird Vene-
NGO reserves	18	
Birds spp in reserves	1100	

The landscapes over both countries varied widely – with the tours traveling through highlands, mountains, rainforests and massive flood plains. He met many new families of birds and had many wonderful photos to show us. We heard about Ant birds – so named because they specialise in following columns of army ants to eat the small invertebrates flushed by the ants, and the Purple-throated Fruit Crow which feeds on fruit and nectar. There were Humming birds, Dollar birds, Toucans, Spine tails and Cotinga to name a few.

My favourites were the Rufescent Tiger-Heron and Scarlet Ibis, both at El Cedral in the llanos wetlands area of Venezuela. All images reproduced here are by Richard. Many thanks to him for sharing these wonderful images and his travels with us.

Heather Smith

1. *Rufescent Tiger-Heron*
2. *Shining Sunbeam*
3. *Orange-throated Sunangel*
4. *Sunbittern displaying*
5. *Roseate Spoonbills*





## June Speaker - Jemma Cripps - Kangaroos at Anglesea

Jemma Cripps works on Leadbeater's Possum at the Arthur Rylah Institute. She did her PhD on Eastern Grey Kangaroos and continues to contribute to a long term project at Anglesea.

Eastern Gray Kangaroos are found along the east coast of Australia. There is a population of about 250 animals at Anglesea, with a concentration at the golf course. Anglesea is suitable for kangaroos because it has patches of remnant vegetation throughout the town, not many fences to restrict movement, and nearby heathland. The kangaroos shelter during the day and forage at dawn and dusk. They are used to being close to people, particularly golfers, and have become a tourist attraction.

Males weigh up to 80kg and females are about 40kg. They form loose and changing groups and congregate during the spring mating season. Males fight and guard females during the season and then disperse. Gestation is 36 days with the joey leaving the pouch at about 10 months and then hanging around its mother for another 6 months.

The fact that Anglesea kangaroos are very used to people makes them easier to work with. Jemma is involved in a study that began in 2007 and examines the ecology of urban kangaroos, fertility and parasites. A number of kangaroos have been caught and fitted with identifying collars and ear tags (bottom right) that allow monitoring of individuals. Tissue samples have been collected to determine the paternity of young. Radio trackers have been used to monitor the dispersal of male kangaroos outside that mating season. Contraceptive implants have been trialled on females and a formulation that reduces fertility for about 5 years has been identified. This fertility control approach has since been used at Gresswell forest where kangaroo numbers were becoming larger than the environment could sustain. Jemma has also studied the numerous parasitic

worms that live in the gut of kangaroos.

Monitoring has shown the kangaroo population to be reasonably stable, but there are a number of threats they face. The biggest danger is the road, particularly to males as they disperse after mating. Dogs have also killed kangaroos and golf balls sometimes do enough damage to fatally injure an animal.

See Angair for more information:  
<http://angair.org.au/kangaroo-research>

*James Deane*



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## Nature Notes May

**Jane Crone:** Insectivorous bat [micro bat] came in to her house – used a tea towel to gently relocate it outside. Also had seen Eastern Rosellas and Eastern Spinebills in garden and two Currawongs in the bird bath.

**Daphne Hards:** Eastern Spinebills .

**Ite Sonder:** Has twice seen Eastern Grey Kangaroos at the swamp around 8.30am

**Denise Fernando:** Marbled Geckos in her father's red gums and inside the house.

**Heather Smith:** Two white-faced Herons in Beverly Rd swamp. 9 May: At the mouth of Fanning Bend - four large, white Egrets rising up over the banks of the river early one misty morning. Looked spectacular against dull greens and wet blacks of the ironbark trunks.

## Nature Notes June

**James Deane** reported a Swamp Wallaby in Yarra Flats Park, on the shared path near the horse paddocks.

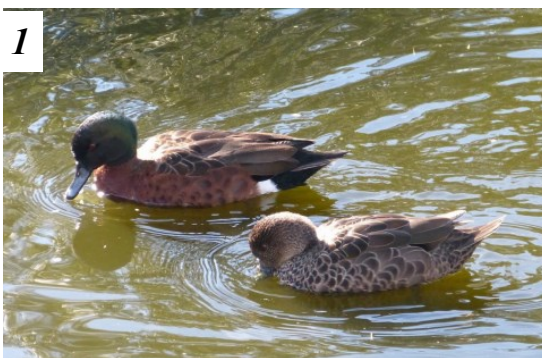
**Daphne Hards** saw 21 Cattle Egrets, a Powerful Owl, and a Grey Goshawk (white form) at Banyule Flats.

**Doug McNaughton** reported seeing King Parrots.

**Jane Crone** had Eastern Spinebills in her garden.

**Anthea Fleming** showed pictures of a Swamphen which flew from Banyule Swamp to feed – perhaps on caterpillars – among the leaves of an over-hanging gum-tree, and a Musk Duck swimming there. She also showed a picture of a large nest of European Wasps, on the half-dead Golden Poplar on the Yarra bank, close to the Goat Track, upstream from the Windmill. Walkers and cyclists should take care on this part of the Track.

1



2



1. Chestnut Teal (Darebin)

2. Little Pied Cormorant (Mill Park)

3. Wood Ducks (Beverley Rd wetland)

4. Eurasian Coot (Mill Park)

Photos: Anthea Fleming

3



4



### Warringal Conservation Society Annual Subscriptions Due in July

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Mobile:

Special area of interest:

Annual subscription type:

☐ Single \$20

☐ Family \$25

☐ Concession (seniors, students etc) \$15

☐ Life subscription \$200

**Membership application/renewal (for July 2017-June 2018)**

**Donations always welcome**

**Please send this form and subscription (cheque or money order) to:**

**Warringal Conservation Society PO Box 64 Rosanna 3084 VIC**

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



## European Wasps

Everybody knows what a European Wasp looks like, but few have seen the nest, because they usually prefer sheltered sites such as underground crannies or inside house-walls. However one should know what the nest itself looks like. I found this one in a sheltered position on the trunk of the large moribund Golden Poplar at Banyule Flats – a bulging grey mass about the size of a large shopping-bag. It is on the Yarra bank some way upstream from the Windmill, along the Goat-track. The nest is built of a brown-paper like structure – the wasps may be seen chewing weathered wood on old fences and logs. In fact wood-pulp paper was invented after observation of wasp behaviour. I have informed Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria and I hope they will take action to poison them. Meanwhile, walkers should treat this site with caution. European Wasps can sting repeatedly and will attack in large swarms if disturbed. They must be viewed as a serious danger. *Anthea Fleming*



1. Arrow shows position of wasp's nest. 2 Wasp's nest detail. 3. A wasp chewing wood.

Photos: *Anthea Fleming*

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



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