



WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Pre-Spring Newsletter

Volume 46/five

September/October 2016

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.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Online Flora of Victoria

Dr Frank Udovicic, Manager of Plant Sciences at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria will provide an overview of the transition from the old 4-volume Flora of Victoria books to a modern online resource, VicFlora. This has involved digitisation of the old Flora, writing hundreds of new descriptions for the species discovered since completion of the hardcopy Flora in the 1990s, and sourcing images for the new flora. Frank will provide a sneak peek of the new upgraded VicFlora due to be launched the following week.

OCTOBER MEETING

Annual General Meeting

Followed by

Fabulous Fungi

Fungal ecologist and the Fungimap Coordinator, Dr Sapphire McMullanFisher, will introduce you to fungi and the roles they play in keeping bushland healthy. You will also learn how to share information with Fungimap about the fungi you see.

**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

September

Thursday 1st: General Meeting 7.30pm - Online Flora of Victoria

Sunday 11th: Tawny Pond Planting (See news and Events)

October

Thursday 6th: Annual General meeting — Fungi

Sunday 9th: Weeding at Banyule Native Gardens (See news and Events)

Sunday 23rd: Breakfast with the birds - Banyule Flats (See news and Events)

News & Events

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday October 6th, 2016

7.30 pm at the Old Shire Offices, Beverley Road Heidelberg (Nomination forms on pg 8). Minutes of 2015 AGM available were published in Nov/Dec 2015 Newsletter.

1. BUSINESS

- 1.1 Confirmation of Minutes of previous meetings
- 1.2 Annual Report of the Committee
- 1.3 Financial statements
- 1.4 Election of members of the Committee
- 1.5 Annual subscription and joining fee

Upcoming Plantings (See WCS facebook for updates)

Sunday 11th Sept - Planting: 10am - 12noon: Tawny Pond planting, Somerset Drive Viewbank.
Continuing planting at one of our favourite spots. Melway ref 32:F2.

Sunday 9th Oct - Weeding: 10am - 12noon: Hand weeding of plantings at Banyule Native Gardens, Banyule Road, Viewbank. Melways ref: 32:F1.

Breakfast with the Birds

Sunday 23 October 6.30am-11.30am

Presented by Banyule City Council. Join experienced guides from Birdlife Melbourne for an early morning walk as they help to identify more than 70 species of birds. Followed by a light breakfast at the Old Shire Offices, off Beverley Road. Bring your own binoculars and wear comfortable walking shoes. Don't be late!

Cost: Free

Where: Old Shire Offices, Beverley Road, Heidelberg (Melway 32 3D)

Bookings: Essential. (Limit of 100 people).

www.trybooking.com/MDKH

Spring Outdoors

Spring outdoors is a regional program of environmental events brought to you by Banyule City Council, Manningham City Council and Nillumbik Shire Council. Runs from August to November. Breakfast with the Birds is part of this program. Other activities include plant identification, frogs, insects and gardening. For more details: <http://www.manningham.vic.gov.au/file/22171/download>

WCS subscriptions due

WCS membership subscriptions for 2016/2017 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:

Name of Account: Warringal Conservation Society
BSB: 633 000

Account No; 143918613

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

Who we are and how to contact us

Warringal Conservation Society Inc

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Email: warringal3084@gmail.com

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Newsletter

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Planting Coordinator: Heather Smith

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

News and Events cont.

Planting Report - National Tree day at Banyule Native Gardens - Sunday July 31st

This was a well attended planting that combined the efforts of the regular Warringal crew and others getting involved in National Tree Day. Meg and Eliza from the Banyule Bush Crew prepared the site by burning, and provided plants and equipment on the day. Two areas of the Native gardens were planted out with shrubs ground covers and some trees (Black Wood Wattles). The hard ground made digging slow, but over 600 plants went in.



Warringal Conservation Society Display at the Ivanhoe Library

Anthea Fleming organised an extensive collection of WCS and Banyule Flats photos and descriptions that was on display at the Ivanhoe Library for 3 weeks in August. The display included historical views of the Banyule Flats area and a history of WCS.



Banyule Council Grant for Signage

WCS has been awarded an Environmental Sustainability Grant of \$5000 from the Banyule City Council for signage at Banyule Flats. Thanks to WCS members Denise and Anthony Fernando for their work on this project. More details to follow.

Melbourne Water Banyule Creek rehabilitation

This project has ranged from the upper reaches of Banyule creek near Simpson Barracks, to where it runs into the Yarra at Banyule Flats. Weeds have been removed and trees have been planted. Some willows have been pruned to allow indigenous trees and plants to establish.



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Beverley Road Swamp re-plugged

Don Stokes, with assistance from Nazario Giuliani and James Deane, resealed the plate that stops water flowing out of the Beverley Rd Swamp. Water has risen to levels not seen for a number of years and the frogs are very happy.



Message from Treasurer

I am busy preparing the 2015-6 Financial Statements in time for our AGM. We have recently had two exciting grant application successes, one with Banyule City Council for signage around Banyule Flats, the other with the Bendigo Bank Community Bank Grants for a map of Banyule Flats. In the meantime, as you all will have noticed, the cost of everything is increasing, our rent for office space in the Old Shire Hall, insurance, postage, rent of a postal box, and more. La Trobe University has notified us of the recipient of the

Warringal Prize which we sponsor - \$500 to the most outstanding 1st year student in Environmental Science. Your committee decided that this was a cause worthy to continue. I have had to nibble into our savings to cover all these costs; and therefore I should be most grateful if you could send or transfer your subscriptions for 2016-7 as soon as possible please. Details are in this newsletter. Thank you to all those who have already paid.

Gratefully, Daphne Hards (WCS Treasurer)

July General Meeting Report

Planting and Working Bees

On Sunday 19 June, a successful Working bee was conducted around the Walter Withers' sign at the Native Gardens. Two plantings have been planned for July: Sunday 10 July, at the Tawny Pond, adjacent to the Somerset Drive carpark, Viewbank; and National Tree Day, Sunday 21 July at the Banyule Native Gardens, Banyule Road, Viewbank. With approval from BCC Heather has registered this event on the Planet Ark website, and we hope to attract members of the local community.

World Environment Day

We hosted a very interesting dusk walk around Banyule Flats to celebrate World Environment Day on Sunday 5 June, and we were joined by several members of other friends' groups in the Banyule area. A list of bird and other sightings is included in the July/August Newsletter.

Wildlife and environmental issues

We have received requests for donations from The Wilderness Society, Birdlife Australia, Environment Victoria and the Vic National Parks Association. We are members of these associations but do not contribute in monetary form to their campaigns. When there is a new campaign the Committee usually writes letters of support to relevant government ministers and organisations. If you would like to make an individual contribution, information on the campaigns is on the table for members to view after the meeting. The Public Open Space Plan for Banyule is being discussed at the Council meeting on Monday 11 July. The WCS Committee submitted comments on the draft, and the updated version will be available on the BCC website from midday tomorrow. Members are encouraged to read the report and to make comment individually.

Darebin Solar Bulk Buy Program

Darebin Council is providing an opportunity for local households and businesses to purchase competitively priced solar panel systems from a trusted supplier, Solargain, the Solar Bulk Buy program's appointed supplier. Members can obtain further details and organize a no-obligation quote on Darebin's website. The offer is open until September 2016.

Grants

The Committee is delighted to announce that our grant application for a Heidelberg and East Ivanhoe Community Bank Grant has been successful. We have received almost \$2,000 to cover the costs of design and printing of 5,000 guided walking map/brochures of Banyule Flats. An adaptation of a map designed by Anthea Fleming will highlight entrances to the reserve and significant features of the wetlands area.

Membership subscriptions

Annual membership subscriptions are now due.

WCS library

WCS has a good selection of references on the natural environment and environmental issues, stored in the WCS Office. Members can borrow these at General Meetings.

Banyule House

A local residents' network has been established to monitor development of Banyule House as an event venue. Although the company is advertising on Facebook and a website they have not yet submitted the required permits to BCC or the Heritage Council.

Dianne Williamson (WCS Committee Member)

August General Meeting Report

Planting and Working Bees

We had two successful plantings since our last meeting. The first on Sunday 10 July, at the Tawny Pond, adjacent to the Somerset Drive carpark. Then on National Tree Day, Sunday 31 July with the help of some new recruits we put 610 ground covers, shrubs and trees into the ground at the Banyule Native Gardens adjacent to Banyule Road. Our August planting is on Sunday 14 August from 10.00 -12.00 when we will undertake some further work around the Eucalyptus Studliensis at the bottom of the Somerset Road carpark. If you would like to receive an email reminder of dates and locations of our working bees please let Dianne know and we will add you to our distribution list.

Banyule Creek re-vegetation

We congratulate Melbourne Water on their woody-weed clearing and re-vegetation work in the section of Banyule Creek through Banyule Flats.

Unfortunately the channel clearing and recent heavy rains have dislodged a lot of litter which has washed onto the banks below the escarpment. We have asked BCC staff to discuss removal with Melbourne Water.

Yarra River Protection Act

This Act is an important development, which will clarify responsibility for waterways and adjacent floodplains. We hope it will add a layer of protection from freeway and buildings which would impinge on the river with new planning controls. The Yarra Protection Ministerial Advisory Committee has just released a report which is available from their website, and we have a copy here if you would like to see it after the meeting. Dianne attended a briefing on 29 July led by Andrew Kelly of Yarra Riverkeepers and Bruce Lindsay of Environmental Justice Australia. A further Yarra Valley Protection Ministerial Advisory Committee workshop was held on 2 August at the Centre Ivanhoe. Dianne attended to represent WCS and other community groups including Friends of Banyule and Riverlands Conservation Society were also present.

The intention is for this Legislation to be put to cabinet by December and for it to be enacted in the next sitting of Parliament. Please support this development until 9am on 9 August by making a submission or completing a short survey on the Ministerial Advisory Committee's website. The Yarra Riverkeepers and Environment Justice

Australia have discussion papers and suggestions for completing the survey on their websites.

Duplication of Hurstbridge Line and removal of Rosanna Station crossing

Community information sessions were held on 21 and 23 July. WCS member Michele Giovas attended and reported that planning was at an early stage with no preferred option as yet. As a Society we are supportive of public transport developments, however widening of the rail, especially through Rosanna and Macleod will require removal of trees, so we will keep a watching brief on the project to lobby for minimal habitat destruction.

Ivanhoe Library display

Anthea has set up a display of the work of the Society in the display case at the entrance of Ivanhoe Library.

Banyule House

Dianne Williamson reported that Council has taken action with regard to the 3 trees which were removed from the grounds without permits. Remaining trees are now surrounded by fence guards. The owners have submitted an application to the Heritage Council for building works which include internal re-modelling and the erection of a 'temporary' marquee on the tennis courts. The Committee will be submitting an objection relating to the marquee and the impact this will have on the view of Banyule House from the wetlands. When the owners submit an application for commercial use to Banyule Council we will make comment on the impact of noise and lighting on the wetland fauna.

Truck Curfew

A community briefing meeting was held earlier tonight and Don Stokes attended on our behalf and reported that Vic Roads appear to be making a genuine effort to listen to the public. The meeting was not well attended. If members would like to be involved in the discussions, another community meeting will be held

Date: Saturday, 6 August 11am-1.00pm

Venue: St. Margaret's Anglican Church, 79-81 Pitt Street, Eltham.

Dianne Williamson & James Deane (WCS Committee Members)

July 2016 Speaker – Outfoxed: Trapping Introduced Pests



Even though we live in suburban Banyule everyone with a love of the outdoors knows that our native wildlife is threatened every day by predators. Foxes and feral cats are doing very nicely. And the health of the Victorian bush is threatened by rabbits, deer, pigs and horses. Who else to come and talk to us than the expert, Mark Femby of Outfoxed, a local 3rd generation pest controller? His father and grandfather were doggers, off round their traplines on horseback. Mark has absorbed all their cunning but thanks his lucky stars he can use a quad-bike.

Mark's talk was more rapid fire questions and lengthy answers than a formal presentation. We started on trapping cats, dogs and foxes. Mark demonstrated the legal foot-hold trap, which grabs the foot without breaking bone or tissue, and does not distress the animal. He showed photos of a cat sitting quietly waiting to be released. The trap has to be dug in so that it is level with the ground surface and completely disguised, and the surroundings must not look disturbed. More than that, there must be zero scent of human being – the trapper must shower beforehand and all his clothes must be washed in odour remover. New traps have to be steeped in a gum leaf tea in order to blacken the steel, because foxes can smell steel. Preparation for a trapping run takes a week in total, with 3-4 hours for washing traps, however Mark insists that it take no more than 5 minutes to set a trap; it is crucial not to be too long in an animal's territory.

Mark's team also uses a variety of cage traps, for cats, rabbits and pigs. These have to be strong enough to restrain the animal, and anchored so that they cannot be turned and the door opened. And poison such as 1080 is still used, inserted into a tasty sausage of kangaroo meat and chicken fat. But this will lure domestic dogs and so has to be used with caution.

How do you lure a wily predator to the trap? In the past it has been with a favourite food, but some animals, especially alpha animals, get wary. Mark has developed a potion that is, however, irresistible. He uses the powerful scent of the foxes' anal glands to trigger their strong sex drive. A brew of homogenised anal gland and other biodegradable items dabbed on a stick will be too potent for even the most cunning fox to resist. Trapped animals are despatched humanely with a gun or anaesthetic, and then a post mortem conducted; the stomach contents are sent to be analysed, the skin removed, and the anal glands are retained for the magic potion. Mark calls the brew "fox bait", and similarly he has generated "pig bait" and "cat bait", the latter he wants to market as "Catastrophic"! Rangers Australia-wide are clamouring for fox, cat and pig bait, "they can't get enough of it!", and it has even been sent to USA and Russia. Mark proudly says it is manufactured in Banyule!

Trapping of foxes is conducted mainly in two seasons, early spring prior to and to prevent breeding, and in early January when young foxes disperse. There is no bounty on foxes in Victoria, so culling is up to private landholders, and Mark and his 16 employees to cover municipal parks like Banyule, plus State and National Parks. How does Mark measure success? As part of the preparation they do a thorough survey of the area to assess numbers and to choose trap sites; and after trapping they survey again. The anal gland baits have caused the efficiency to skyrocket.

Thank you Mark, for a positive conservation story.

Daphne Hards

August 2016 Speakers – The Tarkine Association of Victoria

The Tarkine is a beautiful and wild part northwestern Tasmania that is poorly protected. Emma, Aawa and Danny from the Tarkine Association of Victoria spoke about the Tarkine and why it should be preserved.

The Tarkine contains the largest tract of temperate forest in Australia and the second largest in the world. It spans 447,000 hectares, an area almost

twice the size of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). Some massive eucalypts are found in the old growth forest of the Tarkine. It also has mixed forest, button grass and Southern Beech. It is home to about sixty threatened species including the world's largest freshwater crayfish, Orange-Bellied Parrots, Quolls, the Tasmanian subspecies of the Wedge-Tailed Eagle, and Huon Pine. It is one of the

Tarkine cont.

few places that Tasmanian Devil populations free of Devil facial tumour disease are found. It was also the last place that the iconic Tasmanian Tiger was sighted. Aboriginal sites include massive middens of shells on the coastal dunes.

Only a small part of the Tarkine is protected by the Savage River National Park and a 2km wide strip along the coastline. Mining and logging are constant threat to the Tarkine. While the coastline is nominally protected due to its environmental fragility and aboriginal cultural significance, four wheel drives regularly drive through the area.

Our speakers went bush walking in the Tarkine and were baffled as to why such a beautiful and unique place was not protected. They spoke to Bob Brown who pointed out that this was an issue of national significance and suggested forming a Victorian Tarkine group.

For more information or to make a donation: <http://www.tarkineassociationvictoria.com/>

James Deane



Barbed Wire Entanglement

Rescuing animals caught on barbed wire is a sad fact of life for many wildlife rescuers each year. It is disappointing when the property owner is not interested in making the wire safer by improving its visibility to wildlife, and even not interested in an offer to do the same free of charge.

Victorian Advocates for Animals (VAFA) told us recently that, following correspondence with Suriya Vij (Acting Program Manager: Resource Protection and Management), the Department of Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has agreed to write to householders or property owners and remind them of the good work that rescuers do, of our responsibility toward wildlife, and of penalties that may apply to those who omit to take action to prevent ongoing suffering to animals. DELWP will also send ideas on how to, cheaply, make barbed wire fences safer for nocturnal animals.

Anyone who is aware of unsafe wire that poses problems for wildlife, on both public and private land, is encouraged to send information with a brief message to:

wildlife.portphillipregion@delwp.vic.gov.au The area of concern or the business or householder's name, the land location details or an exact address, and a photo of the barbed wire and any entangled animal at that spot and the date of any rescue, would be a great help.

Hopefully a prompt from DELWP will encourage action to remove or improve the offending fence.

Celia Smith



A Barking Owl, a threatened species, badly entangled in barbed wire. Photo: Jenny Maclean



Sugar Gliders have to be euthanased due to damage to gliding membranes. Photo: Scott Fagg



WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY

NOMINATION FOR COMMITTEE 2016-2017

I, _____ hereby nominate _____

for the position of _____

Signed: (Proposer) _____

(Seconder) _____

I, _____ hereby agree to accept the above position if duly elected.

Signed _____

All signatories must be financial members of Warringal Conservation Society



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Warringal Conservation Society Annual Subscriptions Due in July

Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Mobile:

Special area of interest:

Annual subscription type:

☐ Single \$15

☐ Family \$20

☐ Concession (seniors, students etc) \$10

☐ Life subscription \$150

Membership application/renewal (for July 2016-June 2017)

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)

Nature Notes

July

Heather Smith - Spinebills

Daphne Hards - 2 Tawny Frogmouths at the 'Tawny Pond', Grey Currawong at Banyule Flats

Dianne Williamson - 7 Pied Currawongs feeding in a Blueberry Ash tree on the Banyule Flats escarpment. Juvenile Tawny Frogmouth calling at Banyule Flats in the evenings.

Anthea Fleming - Black Cockatoos in her garden looking for grubs in acacias. Kangaroos at Banyule Flats on National Tree Day

William, Robert, James & Gianna - Earth Star Fungi near Steavenson Falls Marysville, very large Mountain Ash near Cambarville.



August

Celia Smith – 44 kangaroos near Rosanna Golf course, Firetail finches (Red browed) near Plenty River

William Deane - Straw-Necked Ibis Westerfolds Park

Robert Deane - Beetle larvae at National Tree Day planting

James Deane -Wombat near Horse Paddocks in Ivanhoe

Dianne Williamson – 2 Swans on Banyule Swamp

Irene Kearsey – Willows – heritage listed

Jane Crone – Wood Ducks in big Eucalypt, Spinebills

Anthea Fleming - Cattle Egret



Nature Notes cont



Kangaroos lounging at Banyule Flats on National Tree Day. Photo: Anthea Fleming

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