

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 Kate Thwaites MP, Member for Jagajaga

MARCH MEETING (ONLINE)

Dr Barry Clark - Artificial light at night - a serious environmental hazard

Modern society depends heavily on artificial light. However, there is accumulating evidence that exposure to artificial light at night can harm many species including humans. Combined with the use of fossil fuels to power lights, the environmental case for large reductions in night time lighting is growing. Barry will discuss the reasons underlying ongoing increases to artificial lighting, and the benefits of being more careful with its use.

APRIL MEETING*

Janine Rizzetti - Planting Heidelberg

The Heidelberg District has always attracted planters and gardeners, from the 'food basket' of Melbourne of the 1840s through to the garden suburbs of Ivanhoe and Eaglemont. Janine is a historian and the Secretary of Heidelberg Historical Society. She will present a talk based on Heidelberg Historical Society's 2018 exhibition 'Planting Heidelberg'. This talk traces the history of the Heidelberg District through local people getting their hands dirty by getting stuck into the garden.

*Planned venue is the Old Shire Offices.

When operating normally:

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

AT A GLANCE

March

Thurs 4th: Online General Meeting - Artificial light

Sun 7th: Clean Up Australia Day

April

Thurs 1st: General Meeting at Old Shire Office - Planting Heidelberg

*See News and Events for more details

Message from the President

Dear Members,

I recently participated in the Yarra River - Bulleen Precinct hearing that will guide future land use along the Yarra River corridor in Bulleen. During the hearing, a property development group argued that the public do not have a connection with, or desire to preserve, the Yarra River floodplains. The history of Banyule Flats and the genesis of the Warringal Conservation Society (WCS) strongly suggests otherwise. WCS was formed over 50 years ago by locals who were concerned about the prospect of losing the Yarra floodplains at Banyule Flats. Since then WCS members have worked with the Banyule City Council to protect and restore the area. When speaking at the hearing, I showed a photo of WCS members spreading mulch at Banyule Flats in 1981 (right). The late Reg Johnson, a formative figure in WCS, is in the foreground on the left. Anthea Fleming is in the background and is still attending WCS plantings 40 years on. The preservation and restoration of Banyule Flats illustrates that the public does value the Yarra and its floodplains. It is also an example of what might be achieved elsewhere along the Yarra corridor provided the floodplains are protected. For more on the history of WCS and Banyule Flats, see Anthea's excellent article on our website at: <https://warringal.org.au/about-us/history>

James Deane



News & Events

Upcoming Meetings

Thursday 4th March at 7.30pm

General Meeting (Online via Zoom). Dr Barry Clark speaking on Artificial light followed by Nature Notes. Meeting ID: 873 9721 5617 Passcode: 460427

Thursday 1st April at 7.30pm

General Meeting (aiming to hold in the Old Shire Office) Janine Rizzetti from the Heidelberg Historical Society speaking on the "*Planting Heidelberg*." Followed by Nature Notes.

Upcoming Activities

Sunday 7th March - Clean Up Australia Day

Meet at the Stockyards at the end of Plymouth Street, Heidelberg. Dress for the weather, bring gloves and water. Please register your interest by emailing warringal3084@gmail.com or registering on the WCS Facebook Clean Up Australia Day event page.

April activity - To be finalised. See WCS facebook and website for details.

Who we are and how to contact us

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Twilight Walk report

Our twilight walk was delayed by one week due to the most recent lockdown and went ahead on Saturday 20th February. Conditions were perfect and a group of 16 headed up the Viewbank hill (a). Tree Violet (*Melicytus dentatus*) bushes loaded with berries were noted on the way (b). The view of the surrounding area from the hill was impressive (c). Red spotlights were used to find animals without disturbing or blinding them (d). Animal sighted were:

- Common Brushtail Possum - a group of 3
- Ringtail Possum - group of 2
- Tawny Frogmouth x 1
- Southern Boobook - possible sighting
- Orb-weaver Spiders (e) - about 8

Thanks to: Heather Smith for organising; George Paras for leading the walk; Daphne Hards for taking notes; Rob Granter, Deb Colville and Michelle Giovas for photos.



News & Events cont.

Anne Bennett's 50 years of WCS Artwork

A reminder to get down to Warringal shopping centre to see Anne Bennett's wonderful artwork celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Warringal Conservation Society. It will be on display until Friday 26th March 2021.



The Eels of Dandenong Creek

The First Friends of Dandenong Creek have produced a fascinating video on the eels that frequent this urban waterway. It features speakers including Steve Marshall who discussed stormwater pollution at our November General meeting last year. The video is available at:

<https://youtu.be/umZINGATy0E>

Welcome to WCS

We extend a warm welcome to Jemma Croft and trust that her membership will be rewarding

Victorian Duck Season 2021

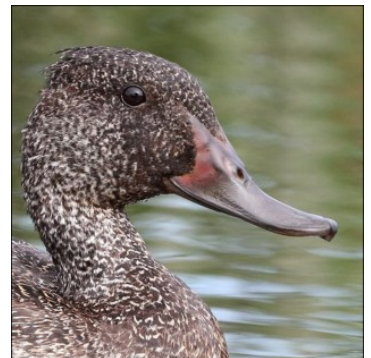
The Victorian Game Management Authority has announced that in 2021 the Victorian duck hunting season will run for 20 days from Wednesday, May 26th to Monday, June 14th. Hunters will be allowed a daily bag limit of two game ducks per day.

WCS has written to our politicians many times over the years calling for a ban on recreational duck shooting in Victoria because of the threat to wildlife and biodiversity. Native ducks are now facing a dire situation in Eastern Australia due to the pressures of climate change, bushfires, drought, and habitat loss.

Wetland bird surveys over more than three decades suggest a long term decline in native duck populations. The most recent aerial survey of wetland birds in Eastern Australia, by Professor Richard Kingsford and his team from the University of NSW in October 2020 [1] shows that native duck breeding is now at unsustainable levels, especially among game birds.

Duck shooting is also cruel and remains uncontrollable, despite millions of dollars of public money being spent on management and compliance. A recent survey of hunter knowledge by the Game Management Authority, found most duck hunters could not correctly answer questions about the humane killing of wounded birds and the identification of game species. (see Table 9 in [2]). This result does not surprise the WCS members who

attend opening weekends on wetlands near Kerang. Hunters there have been witnessed blatantly flouting the regulations such as shooting at protected species and not humanely killing the birds they shot. Few of these hunters have been prosecuted for their illegal behaviour.



The threatened Freckled Duck (Birdlife Aust.)

Duck shooting was banned years ago in NSW, Qld, WA, and the ACT. Recently, the Victorian Environment Minister announced \$7.4 million in new grants for “protecting and enhancing our precious biodiversity”. If biodiversity really matters to this Government, then duck hunting has no place at this time in this State.

Please add your voice to the call for a ban in Victoria with a quick (or a long) email to one or more of our politicians. Some addresses are:

mary-anne.thomas@parliament.vic.gov.au
daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au
anthony.carbines@parliament.vic.gov.au
Sonja.Terpstra@parliament.vic.gov.au
lily.dambrosio@parliament.vic.gov.au
shaun.leanne@parliament.vic.gov.au

Duck Season cont.

nazih.elasmar@parliament.vic.gov.au
jaala.pulford@parliament.vic.gov.au
gayle.tierney@parliament.vic.gov.au
Jaclyn.Symes@parliament.vic.gov.au
harriet.shing@parliament.vic.gov.au

t-breaking-rains-not-enough-boost-wetland-bird-numbers

2. https://www.gma.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/614194/GMA-Hunters-Knowledge-Survey-Report.pdf

References:

Celia Smith

1. <https://www.ecosystem.unsw.edu.au/news/drough>

Nature Notes February 2021

Dianne Williamson remarked on the very heavy load of fruit this summer on Tree Violet. She saw at least 24 Rainbow Lorikeets feeding on one shrub. Anthea Fleming also saw a pair of Red-rumped Parrots (usually ground-feeders) perched in a Tree Violet, eating the berries.

Very heavy rain fell on 28th and 29th January – Viewbank weather station recorded the heaviest fall in the metropolitan area. This raised water levels in creeks and the Yarra, and there was some flooding in Wilson Reserve. The Wombat burrows there were flooded, with the distressing result that a well-grown young Wombat was drowned. Ro Nixon photographed it and its mother, which was obviously grieving (shown by Robert Bender).

Michelle Giovas recorded Thornbills (probably Brown), hunting insects and cobwebs in her garden. At Warrnambool she photographed a Sooty Oyster-catcher on the beach, and Fairy-wrens at Port Fairy.

James Deane saw an Echidna on the scarp near the Plenty River, and a Boobook near street-light (perhaps looking out for moths.) In Tasmania with his family, he saw both Sooty and Pied Oyster-catchers. Over Cradle Mountain they were lucky to see a pair of Tasmanian Wedgetails, now rare. Views of Dove Lake showed both Pencil and King Billy Pines. A refuge hut was built in 1965 of timber from King Billy Pine – this would not now be permitted.

Daphne Hards showed a well-known weed, Madeira Winter-cherry, known to children as Jaffa Plant. A Skipper butterfly, the Yellow-streaked Grass-dart, has been numerous. She also showed a fast-looking blue Flower Wasp, a Robber Fly, and an Orb-weaver Spider. Also a Sparasid Huntsman, with crab-like fore-legs, a Cicada, and some Geometer Moths – these have looper caterpillars, known to Americans as inch-worms. Does any-one else recall Danny Kaye's song about the Inchworm measuring the Marigolds?

Anthea Fleming showed pictures of the Darebin Creek in flood (below), a close-up of a male Redrump Parrot eating Tree-Violet berries, a White-faced Heron, a mystery bee, and a Twisted Moth (all next page).



Nature Notes cont.



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WARRINGAL



CONSERVATION SOCIETY
COVERING THE CITY OF HEIDELBERG