Warringal Conservation Society

DEEP WINTER NEWSLETTER Volume 53/4 JULY/AUGUST 2022

Warringal Conservation Society is a local community organisation caring for the environment in Banyule.

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

Keep up to date on WCS activities by visiting our Facebook page or website www.warringal.org.au

Join us!

WCS has a lot to offer: plantings, activities and monthly meetings with guest speakers from a wide range of disciplines and interests. Membership information in this newsletter or go to the web page.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather, and pay our respect to Elders past, present and future. We recognise their continued connection to the land and waters of this beautiful place, and acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded .

Articles and photographs for the newsletter are welcome. Note we may edit for space or legal reasons. Opinions expressed in guest material are not necessarily those of the Society.

Newsletter printed courtesy of Kate Thwaites MP, Member for Jagajaja.

JULY MEETING

ANDREW LUCAS Friends of Yarra Valley Parks

Andrew Lucas, long-time member of Friends of Yarra Valley Parks, is coming from upstream on the Yarra River to tell us about caring for their areas of the river valley. Andrew will talk about their project to restore the degraded Murundaka and Montpelier areas. The project is on-going but Andrew will show the results to date. We look forward to welcoming our upstream neighbours!

AUGUST MEETING

JACINTA HUMPHREY Birds in the 'burbs: How do birds respond to urban development?

As our population continues to grow, so do our cities and suburbs, altering natural habitats by removing vegetation and replacing it with houses, shops, and roads. So how does this impact the birds that share our cities? Jacinta Humphrey will present on her PhD research investigating the influence of urban development on birds across Greater Melbourne.

AT A GLANCE

JULY

Thursday 7: General meeting from 7.30pm

Sunday 10: Planting at Native Gardens (Entry bed 1) 10am–12noon

AUGUST

Thursday 4: General meeting from 7.30pm

Sunday 14: Planting at Native Gardens (Entry bed 2) 10am–12noon

Meetings are the first Thursday of the month from 7.30pm

Please note that monthly meetings are again face-to-face 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**

Photo: R Granter

Monthly working bees have started again! See page 7 for upcoming activity dates.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Thanks to everyone who has made it to our events this year. We have had inspiring speakers at our monthly meetings and very productive plantings. Our 50th Anniversary celebration was a wonderful event; a great opportunity to catch up with friends and reflect on the Warringal Conservation Society's achievements over that last 50 plus years. More on that within these pages.

The Warringal Conservation Society is not the only group that has been busy catching up on planting along our local stretch of the Yarra River corridor. Upstream of Banyule Flats along the main Yarra trail the Yarra River Keeper Association and Friends of Yarra Valley Parks have planted hundreds of trees and shrubs. These will grow to replace the old Silver Wattles that are dying and falling over. Downstream of Banyule Flats, the Friends of Yarra Flats Park and the Yarra River Keeper Association have been busy, particularly at Annulus and Phillips Fox Billabongs in Ivanhoe. It will be exciting to watch these plants grow and provide more wildlife habitat over the coming years.

James Deane

NEWS UPDATES

WARRINGAL PRIZE 2022

Congratulations to this year's recipient, Frances Rowlands. We look forward to meeting Frances at a working bee or meeting over the coming months.

Sherbrooke Lyrebird Dawn Survey 2022

The 2022 Sherbrooke lyrebird dawn surveys have recommenced. Two have passed and final one for this season is coming:

Date: Saturday 16 July.

Where: Grants picnic ground, Kallista

Bring: torch, pencil, smart phone or watch/ compass.

Breakfast provided after the survey. More info and to RSVP: alexmaisey@hotmail.com or 0430 616 622

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

The society welcomes new member **Belinda Henkel** and looks forward to catching up with Belinda at a working bee or meeting soon.

A reminder from the Treasurer

After 11 years it is time for Daphne to pass on the baton of the Treasurer position to someone else. It would be ideal to pass the baton on at the next AGM in October 2022, so please give it thought. Our finances are in great shape!! For more info contact Daphne on email: warringal3084@gmail.com

VALE KATHLEEN JOHNSON 1922-2022

Kathleen Johnson made the most of her contribution to Warringal Conservation Society (WCS) from its inception in 1970 to 2000. She claimed that it was her husband Reg who pitched in a big way, but she supported him in his enormous contribution to conservation in this state, for which he was awarded an OAM.

Her interest in the native flora of Victoria was a lifelong passion, and she and Reg were avid bird observers. Kathleen was a member of the sub-committee which compiled the Society's publication, Birds of Heidelberg and the Yarra Valley, in 1981.

Kathleen could get very annoyed by a local issue, e.g., rural rubbish dumping or tree removal in Banyule, and would dash off a letter to the local authority, often with prompt results. In the early days she attended all the WCS tree plantings at Banyule Flats, for which we are the beneficiaries. With Mrs Mary Hook, Kathleen was a steadfast supplier of teas for WCS' general meetings. She told me that her specialty was pikelets!

Kathleen was very well read and never missed an environmental article in The Age. Reg had a worthy sounding board for his ideas. A most endearing character was Kathleen's friendliness to all, though fair to say she didn't suffer fools gladly.

Daphne Hards

THE WCS TEAM AND HOW TO CONTACT US

Warringal Conservations Society Inc
PO Box 64 Rosanna 3084
Email: warringal3084@gmail.com
Web: www.warringal.org.au
FB: www.facebook.com/WarringalConservationSociety

President: James Deane. Telephone: 8060 8983

Vice President: John D'Aloia

Treasurer: Daphne Hards. Telephone: 9497 4831

Planting Coordinator: Rob Granter

Committee: Anthea Fleming, Daphne Hards, Doug McNaughton, James Deane, John D'Aloia, Michelle Giovas and Rob Granter.

Newsletter: Editor: Heather Smith 0423 191 977
Email: wcs.editor@gmail.com

WCS 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

May 15 2022 was forecast to be 21°C, sunny with mild breezes, and so it was. The perfect backdrop for our 50th Anniversary celebration, which was delayed from 2020 due to Covid-19.

The day started with a very successful planting at Tawny Pond where 30 participants installed 450 plants. The main event followed immediately, nearby and adjacent to Banyule Swamp and the Manna Gums, highlighted by a commemoration banner and our mammoth yellow five-0 numbers.

Our group swelled to approximately 50, young and old, fit and lame, and we warmly welcomed several Banyule Councillors and Council Staff. After a cuppa supplied by the Bush Crew's Kylie and Emma, greeting of old friends and much chatter, our President James Deane made a speech about WCS' history and achievements. Long-time member Anthea Fleming acknowledged the huge contributions of past Presidents.

We were delighted to greet two foundation members, Lorraine Wallis and Liz Evans, and Margaret Pollock who had travelled from Ballarat. Banyule Council kindly supplied a tasty finger-food lunch from the French bakery on Waterdale Road. Chris Callahan, our Bushland Management Co-ordinator, made a reply speech giving some background to environmental restoration in the Cities of Heidelberg and Banyule, and the great relationship built between WCS and the Bush Crew. Chris had previously organised a magnificent commemorative rock and plaque which was unveiled by Lorraine and Liz, to much applause.

Warm sunshine continued to shine on our celebration of WCS' active history and all those who had participated in it. A very happy day was recorded in many photographs, some seen here.

Daphne Hards

At right: Society foundation members, Lorraine Wallis and Liz Evans unveil the plaque. Below left to right: Speakers Chris Callahan and James Deane. Anthea Fleming. Daphne Hards. The commemorative rock with plaque.

Photos: J Milkins

WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY

BIRDS OF THE CITY OF HEIDELBERG -- APRIL, 1974.

Edited by Howard Jarman

+	- introduced species	R	- rare
(b)	- breeding observed	C	- common
VAG	- vagrant	VR	- very rare

****

Stubble Quail R
Brown Quail VR
Common Bronzewing Pigeon VR
Rock Dove (Domestic Pigeon) (b) C +
Spotted Turtle-dove (b) C +
Spotted Crake VR
Marsh Crake VR
Lewin Rail VR
Spotless Crake VR
Dusky Moorhen (b) C
Eastern Swamphen (b) C
Coot (b) R
Little Grebe (b) C
Hoary-headed Grebe R
Black Cormorant C
Little Black Cormorant R
Pied Cormorant VR
Little Pied Cormorant C
Australian Pelican R
Silver Gull C
Red-kneed Dotterel VR
Australian Spur-winged Plover (b) C
Banded Plover VR
Black-fronted Dotterel (b) R
Eastern Curlew VAG
Greenshank VAG
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper VR
Australian (Japanese) Snipe R (summer)
White Ibis R
Straw-necked Ibis R
Royal Spoonbill R
Yellow-billed Spoonbill R
Cattle Egret R (winter)
Little Egret VAG
Plumed Egret VAG
White Egret R
White-faced Heron (b) C
White-necked Heron R
Nankeen Night-heron R
Maned Goose (Wood Duck) R
Black Swan (b) C
Chestnut-breasted Shelduck (Mountain Duck) R
Mallard + R
Black Duck (b) C
Chestnut Teal R
Grey Teal R
Blue-winged Shoveler R
Pink-eared Duck VR
Hardhead (White-eyed Duck) R
Boobook Owl C
Barn Owl R
Swamp Harrier R
Australian Goshawk (b) R
Collared Sparrowhawk VR
Wedge-tailed Eagle VR
Australian Little Eagle VAG
Whistling Eagle VR
Black-shouldered Kite (b) R
Little Falcon (b) R
Peregrine Falcon R
Brown Hawk R
Nankeen Kestrel R
Rainbow Lorikeet VR
Purple-crowned Lorikeet VR
Little Lorikeet R
Musk Lorikeet R
White Cockatoo R
Gang Gang Cockatoo R
Galah C
Crimson Rosella C
Eastern Rosella (b) C
Red-backed Parrot (b) C
Blue-winged Parrot VR
Swift Parrot R
Spine-tailed Swift C (summer)
Fork-tailed Swift R (summer)
Tawny Frogmouth R
Dollar Bird VR
Laughing Kookaburra (b) C
Sacred Kingfisher (b) C (summer)
Azure Kingfisher VR
Spotted Nightjar VAG
Pallid Cuckoo C (summer)
Horsefield Bronze-cuckoo C (summer)
Golden Bronze-cuckoo R (summer
Welcome Swallow (b) C
Tree Martin R
Fairy Martin (b) C
Rufous Fantail R
Grey Fantail R
Willie Wagtail (b) C
Restless Flycatcher (Scissors Grinder) R
Satin Flycatcher VR
Scarlet Robin VR
Flame Robin C (winter)
Rose Robin VR
Hooded Robin VR
Jacky Winter R
Southern Yellow Robin (b) R
Golden Whistler R
Rufous Whistler R
Grey Shrike-thrush (Grey Thrush) C
Magpie-lark (b) C
Eastern Shrike-tit (b) R
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike C
White-winged Triller R (summer)
Dusky Woodswallow R
White-browed Woodswallow R (summer)

HISTORICAL DOCUMENT: BIRD LIST 1974

While working on the 50th Anniversary celebration event Daphne contacted long-time members to ensure that they had received their invitations. Through this she met foundation member, Lorraine Wallis, who had retained some documents and newspaper cuttings from her time on the WCS committee in the seventies.

Of particular interest is this list (page 4 and below) from 1974, identifying 160 odd birds from across Heidelberg. How many are still around today? Will/can our revegetation work ever overcome the amount of development and habitat clearing that has and still is occurring? What I found interesting is that both White and Strawnecked Ibis are listed as rare. Over my 20+ years in the area I have seen whole football ovals annually covered in Ibis flocks. Until about three years ago when numbers dropped suddenly. After a complete absence – this year I have observed the odd single, or pair, feeding on the Beverley Road oval.

If you have any thoughts on this or other sightings you would like to share, send me an email – we would love to hear them.

Heather Smith

WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Birds of the City of Heidelberg

Page 2.

Blackbird + (b) C
Song Thrush + (b) C
Olive-backed Oriel VR
Ground Thrush VAG
White-fronted Chat R
Striated Thornbill R
Little Thornbill (b) R
Brown Thornbill C
Yellow-tailed Thornbill (b) C
White-browed Scrub-wren (b) C
White-throated Treecreeper VR
Rufous Songlark R (summer)
Brown Songlark R (summer)
Little Grassbird R
Australian Reed-warbler (b) C
Golden-headed Fantail-warbler (Cisticola) (b)
Superb Blue Wren (b) C
Mistletow-bird R
Spotted Pardalote (b) C
Striated Pardalote C
Grey-backed Silvereye (b) C
Eastern Spinebill R
White-naped Honeyeater R
Fuscous Honeyeater R
Yellow-faced Honeyeater R
White-eared Honeyeater VR

Yellow-tufted Honeyeater VR
White-plumed Honeyeater (b) C
Yellow-winged Honeyeater R
Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater R
Bell Miner (Bellbird) R
Noisy Miner C
Regent Honeyeater VR
Little Wattlebird R
Red Wattlebird (b) C
Australian Pipit R
Skylark + (b) C
Zebra Finch VR
Red-browed Finch (b) C
Chestnut-breasted Finch VAG
House Sparrow + (b) C
Tree Sparrow + (b) R
Goldfinch + (b) C
Greenfinch + (b) C
Starling + (b) C
Indian Mynah + (b) C
Little Raven (b) C
Australian Raven R
Pied Currawong VR
Grey Butcher-bird (b) C
Black-backed Magpie VAG
White-backed Magpie (b) C

OTHER ITEMS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST

PETITION TO MAKE BANYULE AN ICAN CITY

Once again, with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we see the existential threat of nuclear weapons. As local Councils directly represent communities and ordinary people, they have a powerful role to play in driving important change.

Please consider signing this petition asking Banyule City Council to join 40 other Australian councils by becoming an ICAN city. Doing so will encourage the Australian Government to honour their commitment to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. **Petition link: https://me.getup.org.au/p/ICAN-Banyule**

More information on the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons go to: https://icanw.org.au/

A SECOND LIFE FOR SECONDHAND BOOKS

The Diamond Valley Oxfam Book Sale is on again this October! We're looking for donations of good quality books – children and adult, fiction and non-fiction. We'd love non-tatty paperbacks, up-to-date fiction and non-fiction. No Readers Digest, magazines or Encyclopedias thanks. More information can be found at **www.facebook.com/DVoxfamBookfairEltham**

From 9 July books can be delivered to the Monty Hub (1 Mountain View Rd, Montmorency) between 2pm-4pm on Saturday and Wednesday afternoons.
Or dropped off to us in Heidelberg. Send a message via the FB page for other collection/drop off options.

Heather Smith

MAY + JUNE WORKING BEES

MAY: 50th planting at Tawny Pond: What a spectacular WCS community planting morning. That's 450 more plants in the ground and guarded at Tawny Pond. Thank you to everyone that came and contributed.

Both photos from the 50th planting. Photos: R Granter

JUNE: Banyule Swamp East site

A bright but chilly morning at Banyule Swamp East - planting in the fenced area and along the Main Yarra Trail embankment.

Three types of guards to suit different species: galvanised mesh, open plastic mesh and the more common triangular coreflute type.

WCS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP /RENEWAL JULY 2022 - JUNE 2023

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Special areas of interest: *This helps us when arranging speakers and events.*

_____

Subscription types:

☐ Single $20 ☐ Concession $15 (seniors/students etc)

☐ Family $25 ☐ Life subscription $200

There are three ways to renew:

1. Renew online at:
www.warringal.org.au/about-us/membership

2. Pay by direct debit:
Acc name: Warringal Conservation Society
BSB: 633 108 Acc no: 143918613
(Be sure to identify yourself as the depositor.)

3. By mail: Fill in this form and mail with your cheque or money order to:
PO Box 64 Rosanna 3084 Victoria.

Any queries email: warringal3084@gmail.com

☐ I would like to receive my newsletter by email.

☐ Yes - put me on the Plantings notification list.

WORKING BEE CALENDAR 2022

We'd love to see you! Put the dates below into your calendars, then watch for newsletter/ email /Facebook updates. All start at 10am, finish around 12noon – usually with a cuppa and chat to finish with.

July

Sunday 10: Planting at Native Gardens - entry bed 1

August

Sunday 14: Planting at Native Gardens - entry bed 2

September

Sunday 11: Woody weed removal OR Hand weeding TBA

October

Sunday 9: Hand weeding TBA
Sunday 30: Banyule Grasslands Walk

November

End of Year Field Trip, organised by WCS

KRACK KAPOK KREW

Kapok (Moth) Vine (*Araujia sericifera*) is an extremely invasive weed currently spreading its robust tendrils along the Yarra River and Banyule Flats. Its flowers are white or pale pink, bell shaped and appear in summer. Its stems contain milky sap that irritates skin and stains clothing. Its large, egg-shaped fruit resemble 'chokos' which split lengthwise to release thousands of tufted, blackish-coloured seeds.

Recently, some members have been meeting, armed with rakes, cutters, ladders and bags, to remove as many as possible. The main attack methods are to search out the main stems in the undergrowth and cut and paint them, and then remove any pods, often hanging high in shrubs and trees, before they split.

It is very satisfying work that does appear to be making a small dint in the population spread (maybe?).

If you'd like to join the Krack Kapok Krew email warringal3084@gmail.com for future dates.

SCOUTS NIGHT WALK

The night walk on 25 May with members of the Watsonia Scout Group was a great success. A mild cloudy windless evening gave ideal weather. George Paras and I met Scout Leader Tim Macgill, Assistant Scout Leaders Tamasin Tunny and Julia Watson, and about eight scouts, boys and girls. Tom Crawshaw from the Darebin Creek Bush Crew represented Banyule Council.

While our eyes got used to the twilight, George spoke to introduce the area, and a Tawny Frogmouth flew from a wattle. Along the track to the Plenty Footbridge, George used a strong torch with a red lens to search the trees and bushes. Ringtail Possums seemed to be the dominant species – a total of 18 were counted overall - but Brushtail Possums were also abundant. We could hear *Geocrinia* frogs in the Frog Bog. We walked as far as the Plenty Footbridge, where the water looked very clear – the Yarra water seemed less so. Here we could hear a Wood Duck calling, probably on the golf-course. On the way back we were pleased to see another Frogmouth and then a Grey Kangaroo, a little way down the Windmill Track; judging by the thuds, he was not alone.

This was followed by the star sighting, a young Wombat. He moved ahead of us for a while, then tried to get through the fence, and bounced off it a few times before he found a gap to squeeze under. Then he could graze safely in the paddock. It's a pity that he seemed to be affected by mange. We wondered if he could be treated.

We finished our walk with an inspiring short talk from George. He pointed out that in Victoria's tall forests, Greater Gliders used to quite common, like the Ring tails we had seen. They are now seriously endangered, because of the loss of habitat, after major fires, destruction of old hollow-bearing trees and logging. Patrol Leader Alessandro de Maria thanked us on behalf of the Scouts. It was an enjoyable evening all round.

Anthea Fleming

MAY GUEST SPEAKER REPORT

TOM CRAWSHAW: BANYULE NORTHERN GRASSLAND RESERVE

For over six years, Banyule Senior Ranger Tom Crawshaw, has spent most of his time in the Banyule Northern Grassland Reserve which contains the largest remnants of pre-European vegetation along Banyule's stretch of the Darebin Creek. Tom spoke about the Council's largest direct seed restoration project which has been about eight years in the making.

Most of the remnant vegetation within this 6ha reserve belongs to the ecological community Grassy Eucalypt Woodland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain, and listed as endangered under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Less than 5% of this community remains in Victoria.

The grassland forms part of the Darebin Creek Trail Park, an important wildlife corridor between Darebin Creek and the Yarra River. Located on the most eastern edge of the Victorian volcanic plain, for thousands of years it was managed by the Wurundjeri. Following European settlement most of the wildflower species were lost due to grazing and the introduction of weedy pasture grasses. The remnant vegetation is predominatley found along the rocky escarpments where the cattle couldn't get to easily.

Earthworks to repair the creeksides, drainage and nearby areas cleared for development have all changed the vegetation. The closest area of remnant grassland is located 8km away in Bundoora Parklands.

After eight years of removing weeds (there were regular burns) and depleting the seed bank, by April 2021 the site was ready to be direct seeded with a mix of eight different locally indigenous grasses (5 Wallaby Grass species, 1 each of Plume, Spear and Kangaroo). Tom and the crew had great success with this method – restoring habitat and boosting biodiversity of over 2000 square metres of Grassland Reserve.

There are now many grassland species in the reserve, including blue devils, kangaroo grass, yellow rush lily, lemon beauty heads and bronze bluebell. And a diverse range of native Australian wildlife use the grasslands for habitat and as a food source including spotted pardalotes, eastern blue tongue lizards, brown goshawk, eastern grey kangaroos and tiger snakes.

This reserve is managed by the Banyule Bushland Management Unit, with assistance from local volunteers. If you are interested in helping, join the Friends of Darebin Creek.

Heather Smith

****Tom has generously organised a Northern Grassland Wildflower Walk for WCS members to see the Grasslands on Sunday 30th October, 10am-12pm. More details closer to date****

CONTRIBUTE YOUR OBSERVATIONS TO SCIENCE

We love to hear about your wildlife observations which are recorded monthly in WCS Nature notes. But did you know that by recording and sharing your observations through **iNaturalist**, you'll be helping create research quality data for scientists working to better understand and protect nature? The iNaturalist app lets you record observations of plant and animal life, helping build our collective knowledge of the state of Banyule's ecosystems. This information can be used to design better and more effective environment projects around our area.

Check it out at: https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/

Photo: Geoff Shuetrim Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Bulahdelah, NSW.

JUNE GUEST SPEAKER

VIRGINIA TRESCOWTHICK: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AUSTRALIA

Virginia is a lawyer with Environmental Justice Australia (EJA), an independent group that provides legal advice and representation for community groups tackling environmental issues including pollution, climate change and species loss. They also seek improvements to existing legislation to better protect the environment.

EJA provided legal support to the Yarra River Keeper Association during the North East Link Environmental Effects Statement hearing in 2019. Other recent cases have involved opposing Vic Forests' plans to log fire-damaged habitat, young Australians complaint to the United Nations regarding inaction on climate change, challenging the Environment Protection Authority's assessment of coal fired powered stations in the Latrobe valley, and seeking justice for First Nations people.

Virginia spoke about her work with community groups in relation to the Crib Point Gas import terminal and the Fingerboards mineral sands mine. These cases are notable because community groups successfully used the Environment Protection Act and the Planning and Environment Act to protect the environment.

Crib Point in Westernport Bay was the site proposed for a gas import terminal by AGL. The proposal would have featured a 300m long floating terminal/storage facility and a pipeline. Imported liquified gas was to be regasified in a process requiring a huge volume of seawater (about 180 Olympic swimming pools worth per day) to be chlorinated, used for heat exchange, and then discharged back into the bay. Westernport Bay is recognised as a wetland of international significance under the Ramsar Convention and the detrimental effects large amounts of chlorinated water on marine life were of great concern. Virginia and the EJA team represented an alliance of community groups seeking to stop the project (Environment Victoria, the Victorian National Parks Association and Save Westernport) at a 10 weeklong public hearing. Eight expert witnesses were engaged on to provide evidence on marine, biology, seawater chemistry, engineering, and hydrodynamics. Key arguments against the proposal centred on Australia's Ramsar obligations and the need to prevent the irreparable and progressive loss of significant habitat. Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Minister for Planning rejected the proposed gas import terminal, saying it would result in "unacceptable environmental effects" to the internationally significant Westernport Bay.

The Fingerboards mineral sands mine was a proposal for an extensive open cut mine in Gippsland. The proposed mine site was near a significant market garden area, and the Mitchell River which flows into the Gippsland Lakes. About 250 hectares of endangered and vulnerable native vegetation and habitat for threatened species would have been lost. Contamination of the Mitchell River, the Gippsland lakes and nearby agricultural land were dangers. The material that was to be mined is radioactive meaning that is presented additional dangers if it escaped the mine site. Large volumes of water, extracted either from groundwater or the river, would have also been required to operate the mine. There was great local opposition to the mine and Virginia and the EJA team supported a group of motivated and organised community group called Mine-Free Glenaladale. The public hearing spanned 10 weeks and expert witnesses were engaged to comment on ecology, ground water, economics, and mining. The hearing revealed flaws in the proponent's plans, including calculations relating to groundwater usage and a failure to consider the handling and transport of radioactive material. There also appeared to be no prospect of the project achieving the no net loss of biodiversity required. Locals spoke in detail about the potential impacts on the area and the community. Following the hearing, the Planning Minister deemed the project to be an unacceptable risk to the environment.

Virginia noted the Crib Point and Fingerboards cases are only the second and third times in 43 years that an Environmental Effects Statement process has halted a development. In both cases a huge effort was required from the community and legal representation was expert evidence was essential. To often the community do not have the resources to get a fair run at Environmental Effects Statement hearing. This is a critical flaw in the current system that need to be addressed. For more information on the Crib Point and Fingerboards cases see https://envirojustice.org.au/crib-point-terminal-rejected/ and https://envirojustice.org.au/a-huge-win-for-a-stellar-community-campaign/

James Deane

NATURE NOTES – MAY

Doug McNaughton, Don Stokes and **John Hargreaves** all reported Butcher bird sightings.

Celia Smith saw a large kangaroo near Possum Hollow playground.

Jane Crone reported Thornbills and Silvereyes using her shallow bird bath in Eaglemont.

David Berry Eastern Spinebill sighted in Moutainview Pde.

Robert Bender caught an Eastern Dart Tree frog – a nasty invader. But let it go again.

George Paras has regularly heard Boobook Owl calling, over the last two-three year, in tall River Gums in large (residential) properties on Waiora Rd (between Joynt & Cherry Streets), along the Macleod ridgeline, from both upslope and within the V.C.Estate Reserve North, and also from the Forensic Drive Bushland Nature Conservation Reserve on the west side of Waiora Rd (Crown Land managed by Darebin CC).

He also observed Common Sun-orchids (*Thelymitra pauciflora*) re-popping up in his garden (from transplants provided last year by Denise Fernando), and elsewhere throughout the Macleod V.C.Estate, where original soil crusts in front yards and kerbside nature strips persist, where there's been no soil cultivation or fertilisation, and grass/lawn cover is sparse, with original intact moss and lichen soil crusts persisting.

John Hargreaves reported seeing on Banyule Swamp an Australasian Darter and five hardheads splashing/charging about.

Daphne Hards reported that her two resident Spinebills are now three.

Alida McKern watched Rainbow Lorikeets on her Black Genoa Fig tree. Saying they are tidy eaters – eating all the fruit not just a bite out of each fruit.

James Deane saw Ring tailed possums one evening, and also reported seeing a large bird on the pole by his back fence (responsible for the white droppings). He initially thought it was a Powerful Owl but it turned out to be a Tawny Frogmouth.

NATURE NOTES - JUNE

Daphne Hards reported Eastern Spinebills and a Frogmouth in her garden, with Flying Foxes overhead. She was very impressed by a visit to the Darebin Grasslands - access from the west end of Docherty Rd.

James Deane has seen a Little Eagle over Banyule Flats several times recently; it appeared over our Anniversary Celebration and also over our Kapok Vine Working Bee. Also spotted five sugar gliders exiting one tree hollow.

Georg Paras reported Gang Gangs in the Macleod area. Also reported by Daphne and Doug.

Dianne Williamson spotted two Swans on the swamp.

John Hargreaves observed Grey Shrike Thrush in his garden.

Don Stokes saw (while cycling) from the Main Yarra Trail towards Bonds Rd – about 70 kangaroos with one white youngster with brown eyes.

On May 29th, **Anthea Fleming** watched three Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos fly over by Darebin Creek in Ivanhoe; **Heather Smith** has also seen small flocks of them feasting high in Heidelberg Park pine trees.

HAVE SOMETHING YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

We'd love hear about your sightings and experiences around the Banyule Flats and surrounds. Send your stories and/or photos to wcs.editor@gmail.com. **Copy deadlines for 2022 are: 13 August for Sep/Oct issue. 15 October for Nov/Dec issue.**

If not delivered return to: PO Box 64 Rosanna 3084

Warringal Conservation Society