Warringal Conservation Society

WINTER 2025 Volume 56/3 **JUNE/ JULY**

From 1970 Warringal Conservation Society has been an active and effective steward of Banyule's environmental heritage.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung as traditional custodians of the land on which we live and meet, and pay respect to past, present and future elders.

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

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

General meetings are now bi-monthly.

See you all in February, April, June, August, October and December.

Meetings are the first Thursday from 7.30pm at the Old Shire Offices, 60 Beverley Rd, Heidelberg. Enter from Beverley Road. **All Welcome**

NEW AND RENEWING!

The Society is pleased to welcome new member Fiona Chircop- thank you for your support. We look forward to meeting you all in person at a meeting, working bee or activity soon.

Is your membership up to date? Membership fees for 2025/26 are due by July 1st. You can renew online or use the form on the back page.

WCS ON FACEBOOK

facebook.com/WarringalConservationSociety

WCS ON INSTAGRAM

@warringalconservationsociety

JUNE MEETING

BRIAN DANIELLS: Learning for Impact: Engaging Students in Sustainability Through Direct Experience

Discover how Bundoora Secondary College is creating real-world opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of sustainability. From breeding southern pygmy perch to exploring soil health and regenerative agriculture, students are empowered to make meaningful contributions to their community and environment.

AUGUST MEETING

MIKE CLARKE: Managing fire for wildlife: it's not rocket science, it's way more complex than that!

Mike Clarke, Prof. emeritus of Zoology, Ecological, Plant and Animal Sciences at La Trobe University, Bundoora will speak on his and his team's work on fire and the challenges of managing fire for wildlife in an era of climate change.

COMING UP

JUNE

Thursday 5th: General Meeting from 7.30pm

Sunday 22nd: Planting activity. See page 3.

JULY

Sunday 20th: Planting activity. See page 3.

Sunday 27th: National Tree Day. See page 3.

AUGUST

Thursday 7th: General Meeting from 7.30pm

Sunday 24th: Planting activity. See page 3.

THE WCS TEAM AND HOW TO CONTACT US

Warringal Conservation Society Inc
PO Box 64 Rosanna 3084

Email: warringal3084@gmail.com
Website: www.warringal.org.au

Instagram: @warringalconservationsociety
FB: www.facebook.com/WarringalConservationSociety

President: James Deane

Treasurer: Leonie Pope

Secretary + Newsletter: Heather Smith

Planting Coordinator: Rob Granter

Committee: Anthea Fleming, Michelle Giovas, Doug McNaughton and George Paras.

PLANTING REPORT – SOUTH PADDOCK

Our first planting for the 2025 season was on Sunday 27th April. There was a very good turnout. We were pleased to have Bushland Management Coordinator Chris Callahan in attendance on the eve of his retirement (see below right)

We planted and guarded 260 plants. This work will create the mid-storey of a wildlife corridor connecting the Yarra River to the Banyule Billabong. This will be appreciated by the gliders and birds that already use the area.

As always an extra special thankyou to Warwick, Sam, Elisa & Chris from the Banyule City Council for their wonderful planning, site preparation & ongoing support.

DAPHNE RECEIVES JAGAJAGA AWARD

Congratulations to Daphne Hards on receiving the Jagajaga award for her outstanding service to Warringal Conservation Society and preserving and restoring bushland in Banyule. Daphne's contributions include:

- A member of WCS since 2003
- Treasurer from 2011 to 2024 (13 years)
- President from 2017-2020 (3 years)
- Committee Member (16 years)

Daphne kept the Society on track and was always ready to roll up her sleeves to deal with submissions, grants, balancing books, planting and weeding events and more. On behalf of the Society and its members and friends, thank you Daphne!

A note from Daphne

"Thank you to the WCS committee for nominating me for a Jagajaga Award. My contribution to the Society gave me a new focus after a career in medical science and I am very grateful for all the novel things that I learnt. Elements of finance, ecology plus public speaking. The North East Link took a chunk of me. Overall, it was a great ride so thank you WCS."

Daphne Hards

THANKS CHRIS

After 37 years working with the Banyule Council, Bushland Management Coordinator Chris Callahan is retiring. Chris has been a constant, helpful and encouraging friend at the Council for as long as most of us can remember. It was fitting that Chris attended our April planting and enthusiastically got stuck into planting and assembling tree guards. We thank Chris for his dedication and wish him well for his retirement.

REVEGETATION WORKSHOP REPORT

WSC president James Deane, his son Robert and I represented our society at a fantastic revegetation workshop at the Phillips Fox Billabong on May 10th. This is such an inspiring project which is still evolving. We heard from Andrew Lees (Friends of Yarra Flats Park), Andrew Wood (Yarra Riverkeepers) and Rebecca Penrose (Melb Water) on the processes of successful restoration. 40 years ago this was farmland and now its returning to its natural state with an exceptional healthy tapestry of plants creating an emerging understory, mid storey and canopy.

There was lots of fantastic information shared from restoration grant application, enhancing community involvement, the practicalities of preparing the site, plant selection and the "when, what and how" of planting to maximise success and create a self-propagating system.

Rob Granter

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

JUNE: SUNDAY 22nd: PLANTING. Banyule Swamp South (Alan Noy Wetland)

JULY: SUNDAY 20th: PLANTING. Warringal Parklands east – Next to the Main Yarra Trail and east of Possum Hollow playground

JULY: SUNDAY 27th: PLANTING. National Tree Day at Rosanna Parklands.

AUGUST: SUNDAY 24th: HAND WEEDING. Location to be announced.

Watch WCS Facebook and Instagram for more details

NORTH EAST LINK WORKS UPDATE

I attend the North East Link – Community Liaison Group CLG (North) meetings on behalf of Warringal Conservation Society and Friends of Banyule. This CLG deals with the project from Lower Plenty Road to the Plenty Rd M80 Construction works. The CLG meetings are held every 6 weeks. They are largely an exercise in futility as concerns that the community or that I raise are disputed and seem to be rarely addressed or acted upon. I think the reason for this is NELP do not want any complaints on the public record. However, these meetings are an opportunity for NELP to tell us what they are going to do next and to report on the number of complaints, enquiries, engagements and compliments they receive.

From SPARK (south of Watsonia Rd)

Total Number of interactions in February 2025: 599	Interaction Type
143	Enquiries/Comments
264	Project engagement and responses
187	Complaints
5	Compliments

From M80Road Alliance

During February/March2025:

Total Number of Interactions	Interaction Type
213	Complaints
128	Enquiry/Comment
23	Compliment
140	Proactive check in

NORTH EAST LINK UPDATE CONTINUED

The nature of people's complaints is dust, noise, light pollution, parking, property access and traffic management. The diagram below shows the Construction stages of the almost 50m high unfiltered tunnel vent at Blamey Rd which will also house the secondary tunnel control room.

We also need to be on the lookout for the plans for the multi-storey carpark of a yet unknown design for Watsonia Station. Plans will go on public exhibition sometime this year for construction 2026 -2028

Timelines for some works near Watsonia is shown to the right) and an artist's impression of the finished product is shown below with a "green bridge" looking like a jungle with no signs, traffic signals or lighting. poles shown. These works are scheduled to be completed by Q1/Q2 2028.

Key milestones	Completion date
Elder Street realignment	Q1 2025
Dennett Street noise wall	Q3 2025
Service Road retaining wall	Q4 2025
Elder Street landscaped bridge	Q1 2027
Watsonia Road landscaped bridge	Q1 2028
Service Road realignment work	Q2 2028
Watsonia Station car park	Q2 2028

If you want issues raised at the CLG please contact me on michellegiovas@gmail.com or 0409 179 121

Michelle Giovas

GUEST SPEAKER REPORT

APRIL > JEFF DAVIES – BIRD ARTIST

Most of us are familiar with Jeff Davies' work, as he is one of the illustrators for the *Australian Bird Guide,* and the new *Compact Australian Bird Guide*, both published by CSIRO. He trained at Caulfield Technical College, at first painting abstracts and studying the composition and structure used in realist paintings.

He spent eight years preparing the illustrations for the first four volumes of *HANZAB* (the *Handbook of Australian and New Zealand Birds).* I met him when he was working on ducks for the first volume, using museum skins as reference, as well as slides, photos and observations of wild birds. Some specimens had to be borrowed from inter-state. Illustrations of both sexes, adult and immature birds and downy young were required, as well as the birds in flight. From 1988, he was working 7 days a week, and often at night. The first volume was launched at the Christchurch Ornithological Congress in December 1990.

Jeff also paints large pictures of birds in their natural habitat. These have to be done in the studio. One was a commission – a portrait of two pets, a Sulphur-crested Cockatoo and Long-billed Corella, which he posed on a fence (centre right). Other showed Rainbow Lorikeets in a Tristania, and three Pelicans on Mallacoota jetty, also a pair of Scarlet Robins in Box Ironbark forest and Pied Currawongs in the snow at Dinner Plains. His work is done mainly in water-colour.

The next big project was the *CSIRO Australian Bird Guide.* Jeff was the principal artist and art editor. It includes all the birds from all Australian territories, including Cocos-Keeling. It was easy to collaborate with other artists (Peter Marsack and Kim Franklin) by internet. The birds are first drawn on heavy tracing paper, then the plate planned in outline. The colour work must be done in daylight. And how is the book to be arranged – in correct scientific sequence or by identification? I D won – so the very similar but unrelated Swallows and Swifts are close, and also the Quails and Button-quails. In my opinion, the *Guide* completely out-rates all previous field guides. But it is quite large and heavy, as Jeff noticed when he took it on a caravan tour to Western Australia. He suggested a compact version, using the material from the *Guide,* but only half the weight, with the images half-size. Jeff prepared this on his computer, over two years. The *Compact Australian Bird Guide* is the result. It is the ideal glove-box book for travellers – but it doesn't give you any detail on life history; for that you will need the big *Guide.*

At present Jeff is working on a large painting of two Night Parrots, in their natural habitat of old *Triodia* tussocks on gibber plain. First the Covid epidemic interfered with getting to see specimens, then the Queensland Museum was renovating. He was very fortunate to be invited to Pullen Pullen station, where the bird was re-discovered, to sketch and photograph its habitat – and actually heard the bird. He didn't see it. They roost in tunnels in the impenetrable tussocks and nest there, only emerging late in the evening. Fortunately Dingoes there prey on cats and foxes, which have almost extirpated the parrots over their former wide range. Geoff has used skins as reference (I was once shown a skin in the Museum of Victoria). It was extremely interesting to see such a large and very detailed work in progress. We look forward to seeing it when it is finished. This was a very interesting and enjoyable talk.

Anthea Fleming

NATURE NOTES - APRIL 2025

The star report from the March Clean-Up Day was a Lewin Rail, spotted by George Paras near Banyule Creek. Seldom seen, it is a plain version of the Buff-banded Rail, with rufous crown and hind-neck and a longer bill.

Dianne Williams saw Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, with a young one, and 10 Spotted Pardalotes in a Manna Gum.

Jen Chellew had provided a nest-box for a Ringtail Possum, but it preferred the peg-bag (right). She also saw some Sambur Deer outside Westerfolds Park.

Robert Bender remarked that Sugar Gliders preferred a bat box to their official nest-box.

Daphne Hards had a Tawny Frogmouth in her garden, Pied Currawongs have been spitting out pellets in her bird-bath.

Jane Crone's Salvias have attracted Blue-banded Bees to red flowers, while Eastern Spinebills prefer blue.

Robert Bender saw a dead Flying Fox (a), probably electrocuted, in Wilfred Rd. At Wilson Reserve, he photographed a White-browed Scrubwren (b) under the Muttonwoods, a Yellow Robin (c), a Praying Mantis (d), and a Weasel Skink (e). While he was weeding, a Grey Butcherbird (f) followed him about. He also photographed some ground ferns (g) and a Maidenhair Fern (h) growing in the shelter of an old tree guard.

a

b

c

d

e

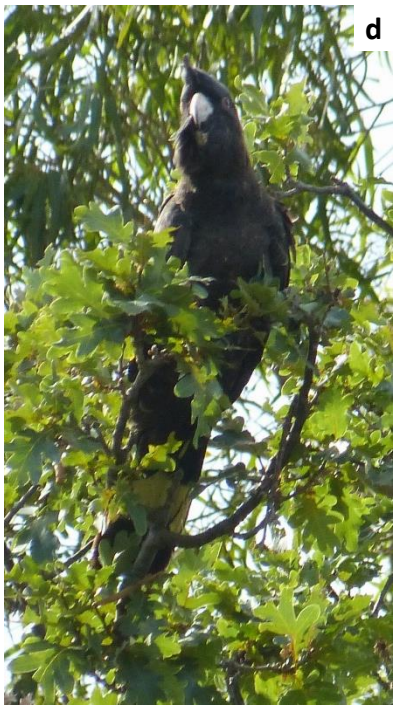
f

g

h

NATURE NOTES CONTINUED

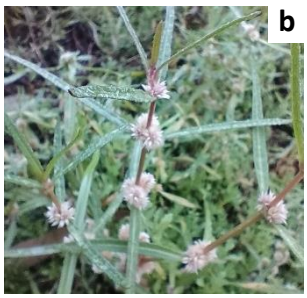
Anthea Fleming showed photos of developing Mistletoe berries (a), a female Blue Wren (b) in tussock and an egg case of cocoon (c). Also seen was a Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo (d) in a neighbour's oak-tree, investigating the acorns.



BANYULE BILLABONG - MAY 2025

The Banyule Billabong is nearly dry after holding water since floods in 2023. Shallower parts of the billabong have been dry since March and are growing a lush crop of pioneer plants (a) including the native species Lesser Joyweed *(Alternanthera denticulata)* (b), Knotweed *(Persicaria sp.)* (c) as well as introduced Marsh Yellow-cress (*Rorippa palustris*) (d). Water from previous smaller flooding events has not lasted long and resulted in a mass of thistles growing on the billabong floor when the water dried up. The latest more prolonged and extensive presence of water has been more effective at drowning thistles and their seeds. Carp (e) that made their way into the billabong during flooding have died and been eaten by scavengers. Mudflats left by the receding water are covered in animal tracks (f) including those of birds, wombats, wallabies and unfortunately deer (g). It is the cycle of wetting and drying that keeps billabongs healthy and hopefully we will not have to wait too many years to see water in the Banyule billabong again.

James Deane



Your ongoing membership enables the Society to actively undertake projects that contribute to advocating for wildlife and the natural environment, to provide information to members and the community ranging from local to global environmental issues.

MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2025/26 ARE DUE BY JULY 1st 2025

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.

BANYULE FLATS WILDLIFE

If not delivered return to: PO Box 64 Rosanna 3084

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