



FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK NEWSLETTER



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Membership Subscription Renewals are due 1st July, 2013 (see enclosed form)

BRAESIDE PARK
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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of Parks Victoria or its staff.

www.braesideparkfriends.org.au

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Wednesdays with Ernie's 'A Team'

By Bev Bancroft

Extra help is always needed for a variety of jobs: meet at the Park Office, Wednesdays 9 am - 12:00 noon with morning tea 10.30 am (3 "C"s - Cuppa, Cake & Chat)

GRASSLANDS

Back to weeding & mowing & lots more to come.

GUARDS/ FRAMES

These were removed from the previous year's plantings in readiness for this year's programme.

PROPAGATION AREA

The group spent the morning removing sad looking Goodenia, weeds etc. Then the whole area was mulched, raked & tidied. Looked Fantastic – many thanks.

DINGLEY WATERWAY

Many Ovata & River Red trees were planted around our new wetland with Carex & Water Ribbons close to the water line.

SCHOOLS

Mentone Girls Grammar continue maintenance of their garden, weeding, raking & are a great help in pricking out grasses for our grassland project.

Help is needed for a variety of jobs - everyone is most welcome.

- meet at the Park Office, Wednesdays 9 am - 12 noon.
- morning tea provided

Wednesday afternoons are continuing 1 pm - 3 pm in the Friends Community Garden for anyone that is interested.

More help is always needed for a variety of jobs - everyone is most welcome.

- meet at the Park Office, Wednesdays 9 am - 12 noon.
- morning tea provided



Friends of Braeside Park Inc.

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This Edition of the Newsletter will provide an insight into some of the groups that use the park.

Mentone Girls' Grammar School — by Serene:

The Year 9 students of Mentone Girls' Grammar School are given the phenomenal opportunity to learn, as well as give back to our local community by having given the chance to volunteer our time to contribute to our much loved environment. Regularly, we would visit *Braeside Park*, anticipating a day of hard-work, learning new terms and skills and by all means a whole lot of fun.



The numerous activities we enjoy devoting our time into includes seed collecting, plant propagation and cutting a variety of plants, ranging from melaleuca squarossa to patersonia. Not only are we given the prospect to discover nature and be a part of it, we are also given the chance to exercise our co-operation, communication and often leadership skills whilst working in collaboration with our peers and coordinators in this gratifying activity.

Together, our efforts combine and a real difference is made. Whether that is doing a bit of the behind-the-scenes work such as watering and carrying out the soil or are knee-deep in the gardening, it is the support of any citizen that makes our environment a better place overall.



Working alongside one another; we have so far been fortunate enough to have the delightful Bev, engaging us and sharing her exceptional knowledge of Braeside Park. Her evidently dedicated nature inspiring us to commit ourselves to maintaining and building on the foundations already set before us by others who have made their mark in Braeside Park; furtherance, doing our own part in developing the environment we are so blessed to have.

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All in all, we find that bestowing our time volunteering is time well spent; in return we are accorded with knowledge and the satisfaction in overlooking the outcome of our efforts. We have



learnt that in order to receive a feeling of contentment we need to consistently endeavor and persist. We have found this activity a benefiting way to repay our community as well as a way to acquire new skills and comprehension of our local community.

So from all the girls who are so fortunate to take part; we thank the Braeside community for all your time invested in us and your generous opportunity given to all of us to become more prominent citizens.

McKinnon Secondary College— SURVIVOR IN THE WILD



Every year McKinnon Secondary College takes its Year 8 students to Braeside Park to complete the *Survivor in the Wild* Challenge. Assuming the role of environmental refugees who have lost their homes due to rising sea levels, the students must construct temporary shelters using limited resources, including cardboard boxes and string. This activity is part of a year-long program called *Survivor*, which aims to enhance students' teamwork and communication skills, as well as problem solving abilities and creativity. Above all, however, the challenge is a lot of fun and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Richard Long
Survivor Coordinator
McKinnon Secondary College



Trees of Braeside Park

Eucalyptus camaldulensis River Red Gum - Murray Red Gum

By Joanne Cody

This tree is one of the most widespread eucalyptus or gum tree species in Australia and within Braeside Park. It belongs to the Myrtaceae botanical family. It was originally named *Eucalyptus rostrata* by the botanist Diederich von Schlechtendahl in 1847 because of the rostrum or beak on the cap of the unopened bud. This name continued to be used until as late as the mid twentieth century which caused considerable botanical confusion as it had also been named *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* previously in 1832 by the head gardener Frederick Dehnhardt . It was a forty foot red gum in the famous garden Camalduli of Francesco Ricciardi, Count of Camaldoli . Apparently it had originated from John Oxley's 1817 exploratory inland expedition from Sydney to the river Lachlan in NSW. He collected plant material for the Earl Bathurst who was Secretary of State for the Colonies and also for the Austrian Emperor. Some of his collection found its way to Italy where in 1822 an Australian River Red Gum was growing in the garden behind Naples. This garden has since vanished but the name *E. camaldulensis* has remained as it has scientific prece-



This Redgum located in the southern portion demonstrates how resilient these trees are with the lower portion still growing vigorously and the upper portion which died many years ago providing hollows for a numerous wildlife.

dence over *E. rostrata* as the first name for this tree. River red gums can live from 500 to 1,000 years and have existed for around 50 million years.

River Reds and many other eucalypts have an ominous nickname, "Widow Maker", as they have a habit of dropping large branches without warning. This form of self-pruning may be a means of saving water or simply a result of their brittle wood. These trees have a great demand for water hence their growth habitat is confined to river beds and low alluvial flats subject to flooding.

River Red Gum ...continued

The original people of the Braeside Park area belonged to the Bunurong tribes. The various Koori names for red gum include biall, yarra, moolerr, polak and karrawirra. The bark and timber was very popular for building canoes and as material for roofs. The nectar produces a golden honey known as red gum which is still widely eaten and enjoyed today. Kino which is a complex mixture of tannins & other substances from the trunk exudates was exported from Botany Bay around 1810 to England. The early settlers mixed it in water to be drunk for cases of diarrhoea. It was also used as a gargle for sore throats or as a wash for skin sores. A recipe using Kino as a medicine was given in the British medical journal the Lancet using 2 to 4 drachms doses. However the aborigines had little use of the eucalyptus Kino.

The aboriginal people of Australia did use the leaves of Eucalyptus species as a tea for fevers,



One of the larger Redgums also in the southern portion of the park.

and in poultices for infected wounds and inflammations. Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory of Australia used the leaves of *E. camaldulensis* and *E. tetradonta* in washes and liniments for joint and muscle pain, as a mouthwash in cases of toothache and for symptoms of cold and flu. It was prized for its disinfecting qualities. The sap was collected, boiled in water until dissolved and then rubbed onto sores and cuts. Its heartwood diluted with boiled water was an effective treatment for diarrhoea in children.

The aborigines obtained water from the superficial roots. The roots were excavated or lifted to the soil surface. Then the root was cut into pieces about 45 cm long, debarked, held vertically, and blown into, the water then draining into a container. It has been traditionally used as a musical instrument using the mouth to make music and you can hear Herb Patten do this on You Tube.

River Red Gum ...continued

The colonists found many similar uses for gum leaves but also some new ones such as stimulating hair growth and curing scurvy. The Danish herbalist H.P Rasmussen who lived in Sydney around 1890 had recipes for eucalyptus leaf baths, ointments & other preparations for earache, ulcers, piles and skin diseases. We are all very familiar with eucalyptus oil for colds, cough, fever and many other complaints. The oil is used in inhalations, mouthwash gargles and dental preparations, as well as in skin rubs to relieve muscle aches and pains. It is a common ingredient in cough syrups and candies. It is used also in domestic cleaners and room sprays as a general disinfectant, and deodorizer about the house. The first oil came onto the market in 1852 at a distillery at Dandenong creek by Melbourne pharmacist Joseph "Bosisto"- a brand that still exists today.

We know only too well the volatility of eucalyptus oils. Eucalyptus trees have a special connection with fire, whereas the leaves burn easily because of their essential oil content, the tree itself survives the fire and

actually thrives and regenerates after a fire. The true scent of Eucalyptus has this regenerating spirit of survival through fire, of rising like a phoenix from the ashes again and again during its life with the sprouting growth of fresh new young leaves.



Another resilient tree with the main growing trunk having died but there is several branches growing from the lower trunk

The leaves contain 0.1–0.4% essential oil, 77% of which is cineol. There is some cuminal, phellandrene, aromadendren and some valerylaldehyde, geraniol, cymene, and phellandral oils, and 5–11% tannin. The Kino contains 45% kinotannic acid as well as Kino red, a glycoside, catechol, and pyrocatechol. Leaves and fruits test positive for flavonoids and sterols.

So enjoy your walk in Braeside Park and inhale the air amongst the many red gums.

Parks Victoria Grants:

In December the Friends applied for three grants through the Parks Victoria Community Grants Program. In the last month we have been advised that only one of those grants has been successful. The Friends have received \$6,100 for Woody Weed Control within the Heathland. This project is delivered with the assistance of the Park staff.

The grants not successful included further sculpting of the cypress tree stumps and interpretive signage for the Community Garden Site.

The Friends committee at the May meeting agreed to continue with the work undertaken with the two stumps already completed. This means a third stump is to be sculpted which will highlight the three species of possums found within the park. This work will occur sometime over the next three months.

Park Report:

There is not much to report but the below item certainly has been a focus for staff over the last couple of months with further work planned over the coming year.

Rabbits:

During March a pindone carrot baiting program was delivered to reduce the rabbit population. Monitoring following that program identified that there is a few hot spots where there is still a healthy number of rabbits being recorded. These areas have now been treated as a follow-up baiting program.



Following this fumigations and ripping of warrens will occur along with rabbit proofing fencing of park of the eastern boundary of the park and harbour removal at several locations.

To reduce the rabbit harbour around the Eastern boundary of the park a new fence has been installed through the grazing paddocks which is approximately 25 metres back from the park boundary. This will allow for access to the area immediately once the old fence which is just 6 metres in from the park boundary is removed.

Further to this works addressing rabbit proofing fences along the eastern boundary are being programmed to occur in the next few months.

Further works will included pruning of vegetation, harbour removal, warren ripping and fumigaton, liaison with neighbours, further fencing and monitoring of the works undertaken.

Des Lucas, Ranger in Charge.

Mystery Walk:

By John Burns

On Sunday 19th May 2013, Des Lucas led 14 people on an infotainment Mystery Walk commencing at 2:00p.m. from the Visitors Centre.



The Redgum Stump with branch growing

We were driven in two ranger vehicles and Ian Langdon's car, around the park to an area between Long Swamp & the Race Track Gate. There we alighted and walked east to view the new fence, that had recently been built. Upon returning to Red Gum Trail, Des pointed out the Red Gum Stump that had been cut to form a chair, where we noticed that after the long drought a branch had grown from the site of the stump. With a little imagination this could be pruned to form an umbrella!

After progressing to the entrance gate of the track where Phar Lap trained. We walked passed the Grassland area and approached the new dam, which had recently been dug. Moving onto the solid park of the track, most of us realized the Mystery of why we were a couple of inches higher! In this area we saw several trees which were struck by lightning, possibly 100 years ago. Also there were numerous young River Gums, about a metre high.

Next we journeyed around the remainder of the Red Gum Trail, then we proceeded to the playground, followed by afternoon tea at the Visitors Centre.

Bird Report:

Steve McDonald has recorded some interesting observations over the last month or so that include the following, Pacific Heron, 16 Pink Eared Ducks, a pair of Black Winged Stilts, 2 sightings of Crimson Rosella, Golden Whistler, Grey Currawong, Intermediate Egret, Australasian Bittern, Pacific Gulls, a flock of Little Corella's, Nankeen Kestrel, Collared Sparrow Hawk, Eastern Spine Bill, Little Tern, this is the first recorded observation of this specie by Steve, Female Blue Winged Parrot, Magpie Geese (Woodlands), Little Eagle, Spotted Harrier, Hobby Hawk, Brown Falcon, Square Tailed Kite and Whistling Kite. Its worth noting that on Australia day Steve surpassed his highest number of species on an individual day increasing from 92 to 96 species.

Ian and Margaret Langdon have also undertaken a survey of the wetlands on 21st April 2013 for a 4 hour period in the morning and have recorded 65 species with an overall total of 1166 birds.

Bird Banding Program—Malcolm Brown reports that 14 birds were trapped and included the White Plumed Honey Eater, Superb Fairy Wren, Brown Thornbill, White-browed Scrub Wren.

Well done and many thanks for your ongoing information and contribution to the monitoring.

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Environmental Monitoring Program:

Feedback from some readers has expressed they did not understand the article which was in the last newsletter. So please find below version two of that request.

Over the last year or so rangers from across the following group of Parks in South Eastern Melbourne (Sandbelt Parklands of Braeside & Karkarook Parks), (Dandenong Valley & Wattle Parklands, of Jells, Norton, Koomba and Wattle Park) and (Berwick Parklands of Cardinia Reservoir Park, Lysterfield Park, Churchill National Park and Dandenong Police Paddocks) have identified that there is a large gap in current environmental monitoring information/data.

This prompted the group of rangers to seek ways to address this gap in information and the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria was approached and agreed too becoming a partner in developing and delivering a monitoring program over the next few years.

The project has now progressed to a stage where participants are being sought to assist with its delivery.

The question is are you interested in becoming involved in this great opportunity to gain knowledge, experience and meet new people whilst recording data which will help to develop key environmental management decisions for the future?

If interested in this program please call the park office on 9265 7300 and provide details as per the below paragraph.

Your Name, contact phone number, email, what activity you want to be involved in from Bats, Birds, Camera, Frogs, Reptiles and Spotlighting and finally where you would like to be involved from Sandbelt, Dandenong Valley, Cardinia and Lysterfield.

Update:

On Monday the 27th of May the first lot of monitoring cameras have been placed within the park along with hair tubes. It will be interesting see what result come this lot of monitoring work.

Other News:

The friends of Braeside Committee have provided another mower (ride – on) for volunteer use & particularly for our grassland project.



Activity Calendar 2013

Weekday Project:

Every Wednesday with Ranger staff commencing at 9:00 am from the Park Office. Activities can include, weeding, mowing weeds, mulching, planting, fencing etc.

Community Garden:

3rd Sunday monthly 9:30 am to 12:00 Noon.
A short meeting followed by various garden and nursery activities.

Nursery—Plant Propagation:

1st Saturday, 1st Monday and 3rd Sunday from 10:00 am to 12:00 Noon.
Undertaking a variety of propagation activities. To confirm your attendance call 9551 4578.

Committee Meeting

The 4th Monday, monthly at 1:00 pm at the Visitor Centre.
The Committee meets to make decisions about the running of the group.

Water Quality Monitoring:

The 3rd Tuesday, monthly at 9:00 from the Park Office.
Water Samples are taken and monitored from the Dingley Waterway and Wetland.

Bird Observations:

A set bird observation is completed monthly around the main wetland.
Call Ranger Glen Oliphant on 9265 7300 to become part of this program.

Special Activities:

Nightwalks are offered from April through to September. Gold Coin Donation. For details and bookings please call 9551 4578.

National Tree Day planting:

Saturday 27th July from 9:00 am till 12:00 Noon follow the signs after entering the park.

**Community Nursery is Open on the Third Sunday of the Month
10:00 to 12:00 noon – Seedlings \$2.00 each.**



Join us on Facebook

Newsletter contributions from, Joanne Cody, Bev Bancroft, John Burns, Students Mentone Grammar School (Serene), Steve McDonald, Malcolm Brown, Richard Long, Survivor Coordinator at McKinnon Secondary College & Park Staff.

Contact us via email on information@braesideparkfriends.org.au

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