



THE FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK

NEWSLETTER

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Braeside Park

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Friends of Braeside Park

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The Friends are changing the newsletter to email format only. This allows us to comply with Covid-19 guidelines and to maintain our low membership fees for the future.
braesideparkfriends@gmail.com



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

President's Report 2019-2020

It is September holidays and Melbournians are still under restrictions. The extra hour of freedom to exercise, within the 5 kilometre of our homes, has mean many visitors to Braeside Park.

Braeside Park visitation is about to pass 500,000 for September which was the total visitation for 2019.

More Parks Victoria staff has been an issue for a long time, especially when managing numerous parks. The impacts of improved visitation has made the need for more temporary signage – such as No Dogs as dogs in the park has increased substantially. There has been more littering and graffiti. There has been copious issues raised with ranger staff – all requiring a written response plus on ground action. There has been more access road maintenance and maintenance on access road bollards as vehicle hit these. In addition, there has been more people using the park as a toilet!

Which is probably why I walk in the Park as early as restrictions allow and why other Committee Members walk as late as restrictions allow.

I have seen a few late night revellers, possums, foxes and tawny frogmouths, sneaking home in the pre-dawn light. Our Braeside Park rabbit populations seem to have not such sense of priority and blatantly sit by or on the paths observing me. The Pobblebonk, Spotted and Striped Marsh, Southern Brown Tree and common frogs have been in full voice lately. Maybe the frog residents have learnt to utilise that early quiet period before the factories, Freeway constructors and commuters begin their daily din to advertise their presence to other frogs in the Park. The early birds, Magpies, White-Plumed Honeyeaters, Kookaburras and Ibises, all seem to enjoy a pre-dawn sing-song before the noisy human neighbours take over. Black Pacific Ducks, especially after rain, appear to like early morning strolls around the Park as I have exchanged greeting with the few crossing the paths near the Visitors' Centre.

I love the smell of early morning in the Park – the sweet fragrance of wattle and swamp melaleuca mixed with pine-like, slightly smoky smell of the cypress and overtones of fresh bread!

Very, very occasionally I encounter another human being. One regular rider dips or turns off his light when I appear and mumbles through his mask, "good morning".

Pre-dawn in the Park is a delight, which I selfishly do not want to share.

Judith Sise

From the Secretary

The Friends look forward to renewing their onground activities in 2021, with the further expected easing of coronavirus restrictions, and a return to some form of normality. The Friends committee has in the meantime been busy preparing grant applications, promoting membership renewals to keep the group involvement ongoing, and to support our committee's need to reconnect.

While currently meeting on zoom, we had a recent consultation with the Mordialloc Freeway construction agency MRPV, which was fruitful and informative.

One suggestion was that we would like feedback from the membership and the park visitors (a dramatic increase in 2020) on interests and activities moving forward.

From the Secretary (cont.)

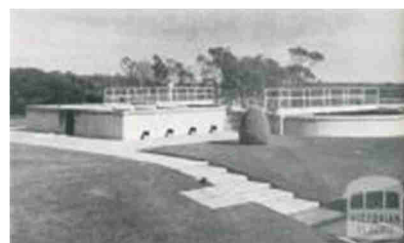
These include encouraging more of the park visitors to join the friends as formal members, membership form with this newsletter; your questions and input into the freeway constructions for the information of the committee to progress with MRPV; increased involvement in Friends activities in 2021, what activities you would like to see; people with writing and publishing skills to assist us with our Friends history project, proudly 30 plus years; and other directions to really promote the work of the Friends and Braeside Park as a unique and special environment in 2021.

Recent newsletters have featured photographs of our fabulous Facebook page, featuring many features of Braeside Park not usually seen. One example is our 'friendly' foxes, and birdlife that abounds in Braeside Park. Seeing the fungi is also an exciting experience. The Friends welcome contributions to this newsletter from park visitors and photographs of special activities for your family and group experiences. Braeside Park is a prized open space in Kingston with changes in usage as highlighted below.

These photographs highlight the past and present history of Braeside Park with the use as Melbourne's South Eastern Sewerage Treatment Plant from 1940 to 1978.



This development was planned from 1928, but construction was delayed by the economic recession of 1929, and not completed until 1940. Another important remnant of this period is the red brick building at the end of the Cypress Drive, the former pumping station and other buildings, saved from the path of the Mordialloc Freeway and an important part of Braeside Park, now the Park Office. Parks Victoria is updating the Park Precinct Plan with an update shortly. The water body is the training area for Phar Lap and other equine residents in the past when Harry Telford trained his stable of horses at Braeside. Known also as 'Phar Lap's Swimming Pool.', on the Racecourse training track. We plan to get more photos to show other aspects of Braeside Park highlighting the agricultural background for the next issue.



The Friends would encourage email responses to braesideparkfriends@gmail.com, or phone to 0417 323 460– We look forward to a more active role in 2021 in onground activities. All enquiries welcomed by the Friends of Braeside Park. Your support of the Friends group is greatly appreciated and we encourage you to get involved in 2021.

Margaret Hunter



From the Secretary (cont.)

Membership renewals for 2020 -2021

The strength of any Group is only as strong as its membership base. As our original members grow older, the Friends of Braeside Park needs replacement members, and supporters both individual, family and corporate.

While our programs are on hold in 2020, we plan to re-establish a strong level of activities in Braeside Park in 2021.

Our pre-Covid-10 activities included guided tours, tree planting, walking programs (as appropriate including night walks), ranger led walks, seniors walks, Clean Up Australia, and Waterwatch (a 20 year history in Braeside Park).

All will look different with precautionary measures to ensure our personal safety from the virus as well as the normal safeguards. Propagation and nursery volunteers are always welcomed as are other volunteers at different times. We encourage you as a community to support the work

Enquiries about the Friends of Braeside Park into 2021 can be got from the Secretary on braesideparkfriends@gmail.com or 0417 323 460.

We won the City of Kingston's Community Group of the Year Award in 2015.

Membership rates are - Concession \$5 pa, Individual \$10 pa, Family \$15 pa, and corporate \$20 pa. Please check our website for further information.

A copy of the membership form is included at the end of this newsletter.

Margaret Hunter

Articles of the Month

Friends of Braeside Park

Singapore with an area slightly larger than Westernport Bay and a population of 5.5 million boasts about its green lungs (parks) and being clean and green. Its new mascot is an otter, which can swim in the harbour! Victoria's animal logo, Leadbeater's Possum is critically endangered because of habitat loss. This possums nest in the hollows of old trees (150-200+ years), which are logged by VicForests or burnt in bush fires which happen where people live. Victoria's forest-lungs are regularly logged and burnt by its Government. We burn brown coal to provide energy for our increasing population. (A fine 1920's technology once celebrated for giving East Germany its distinctive atmosphere.) We fill large holes with our waste. No one would call Garden State Victoria clean and green. However, Victorian citizens see the need and are ready to take up the challenge. What is lacking is Governmental leadership.

- * The Andrews Government's election policy 'Our Environment, Our Future 2014' claimed Labour "has a long history of extending our national parks and reserves" which is where it then remained. In the Time of Covid-19, the Andrews Government is exposed as tracking as the worst performer in terms of park creation in the last 60+ years - only 6.55 ha per day in office.
- * What can Mr Andrews and his government do to boost the economy and tackle the deficiency of open space in Melbourne? Well, the Chain of Parks across South Eastern Melbourne as proposed by Kingston Council would be a very good place to start.
- * The plans are already in place.
- * Two major regional parklands: Karkarook Park and Braeside Park linking a Chain of Parks was proposed by Kingston Council as far back as May 1994 and is still the core of their vision in their Stage 2 Open Space Strategy 2020.

Articles of the Month

Friends of Braeside Park (cont.)

- * There is core area of 355 hectares (the size of about 150 MCGs) of publicly owned land to create continuous park “spine” from Warrigal Road, Moorabbin to Braeside Park, Dingley. There is a range of parks to complement Braeside Park and other recreation areas serving families using a threshold of 2.4ha/1000 population as a provision of open space. There could be a central pedestrian and bicycle trails/shared paths over the 10-kilometre length of the linked parks with secondary trails and links to the surrounding communities utilising a variety of reserves, sporting fields and environments to address the needs of different populations.
- * Now is the time to buy and to construct.
- * A mix of parties own the land needed to achieve the Chain of Parks idea including Council, State Government and private companies. A Public Acquisition Overlay, which identifies land to be purchased by a public authority (in this case Parks Victoria), was applied to 128.2 hectares of land needed for the project.
- * “Protecting Green Wedges, which are the lungs of our city, has been a strong priority of Kingston Council and the Victorian Government and key to that is finally moving on industrial waste operations.” There is that metaphor again- green spaces acting as lungs!
- * Kingston Council has recently voted (February 17, 2020) to reject two applications by a company to extend its industrial waste operations in Kingston’s Green Wedge. “The safeguarding of Melbourne’s Green Wedges is far too important to be left to VCAT and we (the Kingston Mayor and Council) call on the Planning Minister to ‘call in’ the application and act in the best interests of the environment, our community and the integrity of the Planning system.”
- * Developers, Waste Operators etc. all play Councils off against State and Federal Government legislation. What legislation!? The slight, optional Environmental Effects Act 1978 remains in force - incredible! Environment Protection Agency responds when citizens identify problems but then does nothing. Community Consultation is wasting volunteer’s valuable time, as the outcome are pre-decided.
- * Hence the construction of the Mordialloc Freeway beside Braeside Park, severely affecting the natural environment and to the detriment of community well-being. Image that space as an environmental trail for bikes/walkers now in the lock-down!
- * Hence the approval of kick-starting the economy by building two 12-storey buildings in Dandenong- more hard surfaces to increase the urban heat Island effect.
- * Hence, plans for high/Medium/Low density buildings to cram in more people but where will their young kids go to play. Ask any students confined inside during the recent Covid-19 lockdown, they want open green spaces – parks and trails.
- * Each day I walk in Braeside Park for my one-hour exercise and feel blessed to have access to this space but on a sunny day, it is jam packed with families because there is nowhere else to go. Think 10, 20 years hence and the Park swamped in a wave of humanity seeking respite from rising temperatures and high-density housing...
- * What can we do? Well there is a Council election in October so why not ask the aspiring councillors when the Chain of Parks will become reality? Remember the State
- * Government’s Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for Growing Populations (email to eii@parliament.vic.gov.au) - why not suggest the Chain of Parks as planned by Kingston Council.
- * Exploring Braeside Park is a wonderful adventure but imagine having a chain of parks to explore.

Judith Sise

Articles of the Month

Wood Structures (adsimilis Crop Circles)

During the last couple of years, I have seen a number of wood structures resembling a rough shelter in the park.

For a while, the number of these buildings remained more or less constant and predominantly in the trail heading to the duck ponds.

Since the Covid-19 restrictions, these wooden structures have started appearing all over the park. Some are quite elaborate, but others are just a few branches thrown together.

At first, I thought that these were all done by kids playing, but a closer look shows careful construction and complex stacking of branches. Some of these branches are large and very heavy, which would point at strong adults getting seriously involved.



Alternatively, we have a situation similar to the famous crop circles which mysteriously appear during the night.



Perhaps fairies in the park get bored and get up to some mischief, or is it aliens?



David MacLean

Articles of the Month

Wedding Bush (*ricinocarpus pinifolius*)

Every year we get the pleasure of the spring walk led by Des Lucas.

During this walk we have the opportunity of viewing many different birds, trees, flowers, orchids and beautiful wedding bush. During spring between August and October this bush flowers producing a spectacle of white over a sea of green. Wedding bush is also believed to have been use by indigenous people in ceremonies.



Hopefully we will be able to enjoy the spring walk next year when Covid-19 restrictions are eased.



David MacLean



Victorian Environment FRIENDS NETWORK

2019 Best Friends

Awards

Highly Commended: Margaret Hunter

Friends of Braeside Park

- Began as a committee member of Friends of Braeside Park in 2002
- President in 2004
- Secretary in 2014-19
- Applied for grants, assisted and led the reorganising of the Visitors' Centre, revitalised the Nocturnal Walks, Senior Walks, Spring Walks and Cub and other community walks program
- Maintained open communication with Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water and Kingston Council in all aspects relating to Braeside Park
- Organised Friends' meetings with VicRoads regarding the proposed development of the Mordialloc Freeway and subsequently representative on the Freeway Reference Group
- Involved with the Seaford-Edithvale Wetlands and VEFN
- "I am not sure how she manages to commit to all these groups but it shows a dedication to the conservation of the natural environment and the history of our area that is outstanding."

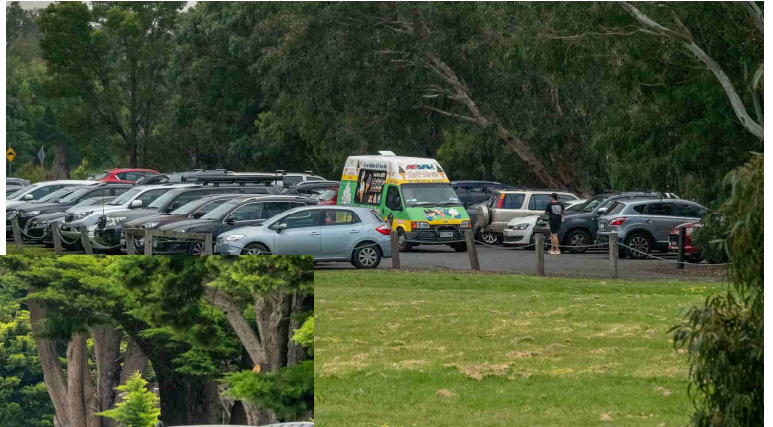


(The above is an extract from the official presentation powerpoint - Ed.)

Residents

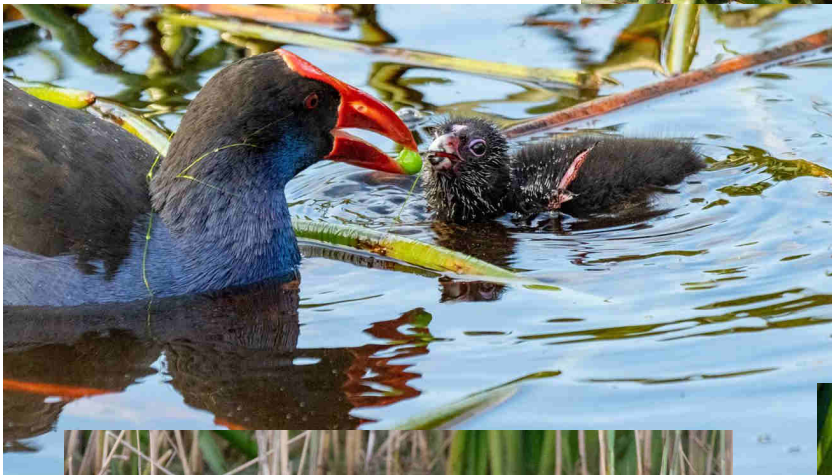
It has been a wet and windy spring so far this year. The grass is the greenest that I remember but it is difficult keeping your hat on when walking in the park.

Friday the 23rd Oct saw the largest number of visitors to the park in recent history (maybe ever?). Every car park was full and there was an overflow into the access roads.

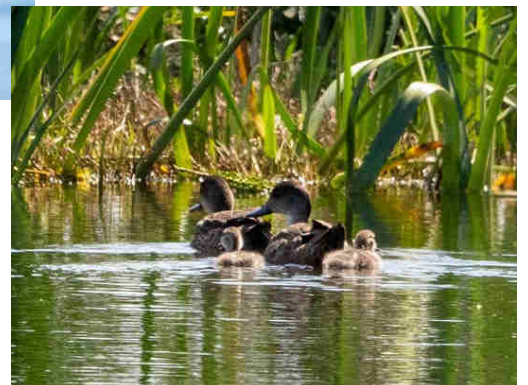


Despite this, social isolation and good manners were in view.

Many birds have been proudly showing their offspring the way of life. The noisy miner chicks could be heard all over the park. In the ponds you could find various ducklings as well as chicks from coots and the purple swamphens.

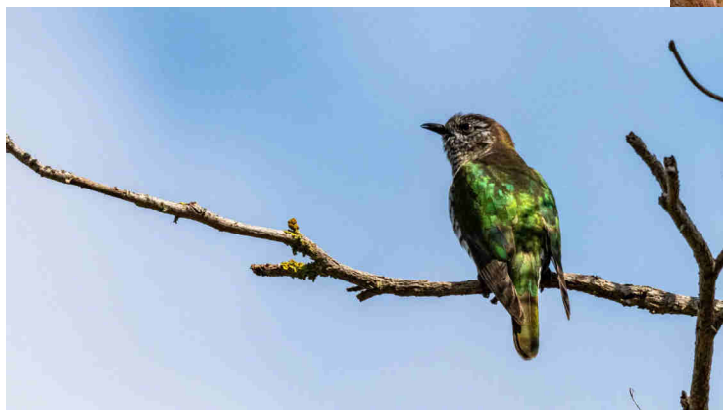
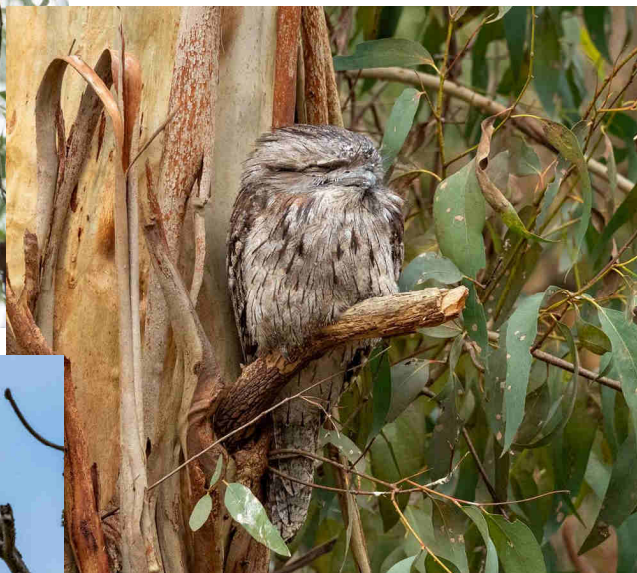


The young swamphens are a delight to view as they have legs and feet larger than the rest of their bodies (a bit like the Chicken Walker in Star Wars).

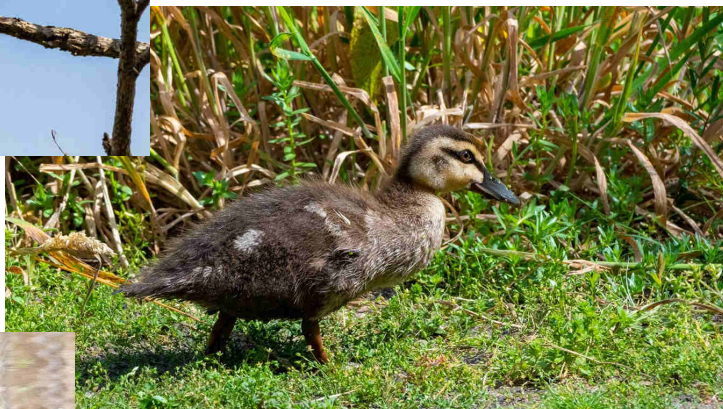


Residents (cont.)

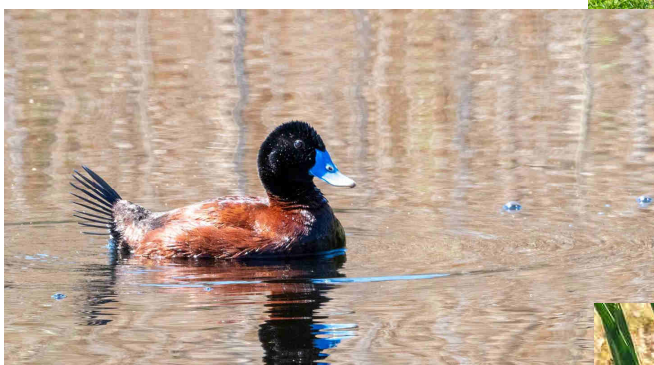
The tawny frogmouths have been busy nesting with a number of chicks spotted peeking out at the world. You can always find the mate sitting quietly nearby waiting for their turn on the nest.



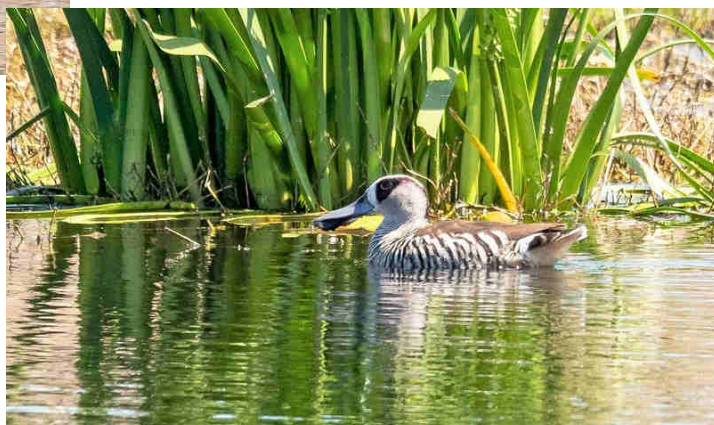
The shining bronze-cuckoo was a new sighting for the writer.



The blue-billed pictured was observed performing a mating dance for a not very impressed female. After all that effort I felt somewhat sorry for the little fella.



The pink eared duck - majestic as always, was in view in the ponds near the Birdhide.



David MacLean

Friends of Braeside Park Inc.

President: Judith Sise
Secretary: Margaret Hunter
Assistant Secretary: Rosemaree MacLean
Treasurer: Helen Russo
Newsletter Editor: David MacLean
Webmaster: Frank Russo
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Join us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/327955807288240/#>

Newsletter Contributions

Thank you to Judith Sise, Margaret Hunter and David MacLean for contributions to this edition.

If you have an item to share in future editions or have any feedback in relation to the newsletter, please contact the editor at braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Editor's Note

This newsletter is being distributed to all current, past and non financial members during this Covid-19 period of restrictions.

If you like this newsletter, and if you would like to support Friends of Braeside Park in their efforts to improve the park for the community and future generations, you can help by becoming a financial member.

For a family, membership (\$15) is cheaper than a meal at a fast food store, and for an individual (\$10) it is the same as coffee and a small burger.

But a membership lasts a full year and helps us continue the work of improving and maintaining the park for all.

So, please join us.

David MacLean

Friends of Braeside Park
ABN 72 959 503 118 INC NO A00242027B
Membership Renewal/Application Form:

I/We wish to become/renew our membership of the FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK INC
(No joining fee)

Membership types:

Corporate	\$20
Family	\$15
Ordinary Member	\$10
Student Member	\$5
Organisation Member	\$15
Concession/Pensioner	\$5

DONATION: \$.....

Personal Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Interests: _____

Membership Type: _____ Paid: _____

Payments can be made into our bank account –

CBA BSB: **063-144**

Account: **1008 3808** Include family name in description

Mail to: The Treasurer, Friends of Braeside Park. PO Box 608,
Braeside Victoria 3195

Or Email to: braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Further information on the Friends' activities are available on our website and Facebook page.
Secretary contact number **0417 323 460**

Friends of Braeside Park Renewal Membership form July 2020

Members receive by email our newsletter and other information on the work of the Friends. Our activity calendar is also available in Braeside Park and on our website. The Friends of Braeside Park use personal information only for Friends activities and the management of Braeside Park.

Helen Russo (Treasurer), Margaret Hunter (Secretary) Friends of Braeside Park 28/7/2020

The Purposes of the Friends of Braeside Park are as follows:

TO PROMOTE the use and enjoyment of the Park by the community

TO ENCOURAGE community awareness and understanding of the Park by education and direct hands on experiences

TO SUPPORT the protection, conservation, and environmentally sensitive development of the Park for the benefit of present and future generations

TO ASSIST Park staff in the enhancement of the environment and development of facilities

TO PUBLISH material for educational and informational purposes related to the features and environment of the Park

TO CO-OPERATE and undertake joint activities with other organisations with similar purposes

TO RAISE, MANAGE AND SPEND FUNDS for financing suitable projects in the Park

TO FORM specific activity groups within the Park to manage and organise specific projects

At present interest groups include:

Indigenous seed collection and seedling preparation

Bird observation and recording

Water Watch, water quality monitoring

Project days, focusing on an outcome

Ground water bore monitoring

Community (Indigenous Plant) Garden

Friends of Braeside Park Renewal Membership form July 2020