

## ***Education at the Sanctuary***

Last year, the Advisory Committee extended a big thank you and best wishes to our first council-appointed Education Officer, Ms Caroline Edwards, who moved on to a position with Melbourne Water.

The volunteers, the backbone of the popular 27 year old program, kept it running smoothly under the capable guidance of Elaine, Peter and Anne. New appointee Jacquie Green is warmly welcomed and has moved into the role with enthusiasm, energy and great new ideas!

*Hello, my name is Jacquie Green and I'm lucky enough to be the new Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Education Program Officer. My enthusiasm for education and the environment has recently come together in the form of my dream job - to work with my local community in making a difference at a grass roots level.*

*I work alongside a dedicated group of volunteers who seek to enrich visitors' experiences of Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. Whether you are a Girl Guide investigating the link between urban waterway pollution and frog populations; a local history buff wanting to hear about the interesting past of the Sanctuary; or a parent who would like your children to have an appreciation of the Australian bush, the BLS Education Program is able to help you get more out of your visit to the Sanctuary. If you are interested in any of our programs please contact me on 9262 6211; at jacquie.green@whitehorse.vic.gov.au, or ask at the Visitor Centre.*

**If you are interested in making a difference in your local community  
why not become an Education Program volunteer?**

*Teaching experience is not essential and training is provided. We just ask that you have an interest in talking with people of all ages and helping them to enjoy and learn more about Blackburn Lake Sanctuary.*

*It is an extremely rewarding volunteer activity!*

*We hope to see you soon!*

Watch our website and notice boards for the exciting Tuesday programs that Jacquie and the volunteers will be offering this year, and the school holiday programs which have been greatly enjoyed by many!

**Don't forget to book with Jacquie!**

**Last October Whitehorse Council introduced a  
cat curfew**

**All cats must be confined between 8.00pm and  
6.00am, and are not permitted into  
bushland parks at any time.**



## **'Bushland News' Facts & Figures**

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## **Clean Up Australia Day was most successful!**

In the Creeklands and Sparks Reserve 34 people turned up to gather 25 big full bags of rubbish, and many bits of junk too big to bag. At Blackburn Lake Sanctuary 27 energetic people filled 21 bags.

**Well done everyone!**

## **Resignation**

*A big thank you to Philip Brentnall who was treasurer of the Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee for the past ten years. His contribution is greatly valued, and he will be missed.*

## **Recent Sightings in the Creeklands**

Water birds: A Darter at Laurel Grove Bridge, a pair of Nankeen Night Herons in the Kalang wetlands, and occasional Cormorants.

Also seen - a Little Lorikeet, Musk Lorikeets, Pied Currawongs, and a Black Faced Cuckoo Shrike.



*Pied Currawong ANBG*

**It's been a great season for dragonflies and butterflies!**

**★** A few good people have responded to the appeal for old and historic photographs of the Creeklands. Please search through your collections to see what you have. Contact Nicola Misso 9878 8848.



## Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee

Meetings are held at 7.30pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at the Blackburn Bowls Club, Pakenham St, Blackburn.

Visitors welcome!

**Working Bees:** From 9am onwards. Dates can be subject to change, so check the noticeboard and notices through the park.

All Creeklands enquiries to Nicola Misso 9878 8848

Website <http://blackburncreeklands.wordpress.com>

<b>April</b>	Sunday	03	<b>Working Bee</b>
	Tuesday	26	Monthly Meeting
<b>May</b>	Sunday	01	<b>Working Bee</b>
	Tuesday	24	Monthly Meeting
	Sunday	29	<b>Working Bee</b>
<b>June</b>	Tuesday	28	Monthly Meeting
<b>July</b>	Sunday	03	<b>Working Bee</b>
	Tuesday	26	Annual General Meeting & Monthly Meeting
	Sunday	31	<b>Working Bee</b>
<b>August</b>	Tuesday	23	Monthly Meeting
	Sunday	28	<b>Working Bee</b>
<b>September</b>	Sunday	25	<b>Working Bee</b>
	Tuesday	27	Monthly Meeting

### Extra Help Needed !

If Mondays suit you better than Sundays, come and join the small friendly weeding group which works in the Creeklands on most Monday mornings . Contact Mary Crouch on 9894 3025



**Indigenous Plants** propagated from local seed are available from:

**Bungalook Nursery** 83 Fulton Rd Blackburn Sth  
Open Friday 9.30am – 12.30, and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays  
10.00am – 1.00pm,  
&  
**Greenlink Nursery** 41 Wimmera St Box Hill Nth  
Open Tuesdays 9.00am - midday



# Blackburn Bushland News

April - September 2011



Peter Newton

### Tawny Frogmouth Family

## Vegetation at the Sanctuary

The Sanctuary supports large areas of high quality bushland, including a significant remnant of Valley Heathy Forest, a vegetation type that is now rare. City of Whitehorse and the BLS Advisory Committee strive to maintain these areas by careful location of paths and fencing to minimise traffic, and by weed control measures.

Around the Visitor Centre, some non-indigenous vegetation has been deliberately retained as a reminder of the history of this area as a residence, orchard and flower farm for the Adult Deaf Society in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This vegetation includes Palms and Pines, the Angophora beside the VC, some fruit trees and the flower farm remnant beds.

The Sanctuary has numerous other introduced species, some dating back many years, and some being garden escapees, while others were planted as "natives" before the concept of indigenous planting (using plants native to the local area) was clearly understood. Some of these introduced species are quite invasive and represent a threat to the overall quality of the BLS bushland.

Some of the more invasive species include: Sallow, Cootamundra & Gosford ("Golden Rain") wattles, Agapanthus, Angled Onion, English Ivy, Quaking Grass, and Watsonia. The Advisory Committee regularly cooperates with Council to control smaller weed species through hand weeding or spraying, and our monthly working bees. The Committee supports Council's program of targeted removal of invasive tree species, designated as "woody weeds". Once the invaders are removed, it is heartening to see how the indigenous plants quickly re-colonise the area, and the return of many long-gone species.

## Research at the Sanctuary

The bushland at the sanctuary is highly valued by the local and wider community as significant habitat, not only for our indigenous flora, but local fauna as well, and is currently the venue for some exciting research projects.

One study is on microbats, in particular the Gould's wattled bats, *Chalinolobus gouldii*, which weigh in at about 15gms, and they share the sanctuary with 5-6 other microbat species, some as tiny as 5gms!

Caroline will present the progress on her research on **Sunday May 15<sup>th</sup> 2-4pm**



**Wetlands Week 21<sup>st</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> August** is the perfect time to celebrate 10 years since our wetlands were established! Danielle has been studying the colony of turtles that have lived in the lake for many years as part of a wider urban study and will present her findings on **Sunday August 21<sup>st</sup> 2 - 4pm**.

Both these talks will give fascinating insights into some of the fauna who call the sanctuary and surrounding bushland and waterways home. **All welcome!**

## Blackburn Creeklands Jottings

 There has been a massive surge of growth in vegetation generally, resulting in the park looking lush and green again after the long dry conditions. This has in turn produced good breeding conditions for birds and other animals. Some birds such as the Tawny Frogmouths were observed to have two nestings this year, and one clutch of 17 ducklings appears to have survived to adulthood. Most years foxes and cats reduce this number considerably, sometimes to zero, so this is quite exciting.

★ **Watch out for animals crossing Blackburn Road between Kalang and Furness Parks. Families of ducks frequently cross there, and turtles from the creek have been noticed on the move, especially in spring. They are likely to be females looking for new nesting areas. Young turtles have been seen in the creek, and one picked up while attempting a road crossing is now resident in the Kalang Park Frog Bog.**

★ Recent rain has seen higher than usual levels of water in the creek over summer. Due largely to the major erosion control works undertaken by Melbourne Water five years ago this has not caused any significant problems, although there are some pre-existing concerns in the Blacks Walk section. The rain has resulted in the happy event of the **billabongs** south of the creek in the Kalang section being full of water, and staying that way for some weeks - much enjoyed by four ducks in particular.

## Plants in the Creeklands

Several plants of the noxious weed Pattersons Curse have been found in Furness Park.

The war on weeds is never-ending, but do be sure it is a weed before giving it a yank. One often pulled out by mistake is the Kangaroo Apple (*Solanum*), which is a fast growing indigenous plant with a distinctive shaped leaf.

The attack on mature woody weeds continues gradually with the removal last year of pine trees in Kalang Park, and one soon to go from Furness Park. Some revegetation will follow while keeping in mind the need for open space and pleasing sightlines to the creek itself.

Wherever areas are left un-mown for a while interesting indigenous plants appear. Recent finds include creeping bossiaea (*Bossiaea prostrata*) and broad-leaf stinkweed (*Opercularia ovata*).



**Kangaroo Apple**

John Broomfield



# Coming up in 2011

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee Meetings are  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month, at the Visitor Centre.

Interested park users are warmly invited to attend any of our meetings and events below.

Month		Blackburn Lake Sanctuary	
APRIL	Saturday	9	Working bee
	Saturday	16	Autumn Bird census. Brekky with the birds (and Friends!) after our bi-annual survey, checking on species decline.
MAY	Saturday	14	Working bee
	Sunday	15	Micro bats @ Blackie Lake - report from pH D study by Caroline Wilson
JUNE	Saturday	4	Working bee
	Thursday	30	Schools Planting day
JULY	Saturday	2	Community Planting Day
	Sunday	3	NAIDOC week! Closing the Gap. Author Gary Presland will talk about his new book "First People" of the Eastern Kulin Nation
AUGUST	Saturday	6	Working bee
	Sunday	21	Celebrating Wetlands Week. Danielle Stokeld will present her report on her turtle study being undertaken at the Sanctuary.
SEPTEMBER	Friday	9	Night-walk spotting possums & other night creatures. Bring a torch with red cellophane.
	Saturday	10	Working bee amongst the wildflowers!
	Saturday	24	Counting Birds again! Who's visiting the Sanctuary this Spring? Join a Twitchers Team & see who can count the most species! Bring binoculars if you have them.
OCTOBER	Every Saturday of this month!	1,8 15 22 29	WeedBusters month at the Sanctuary. We will make a difference! Your help will make sure of that! Weeds! Watch out!
			10 - 12 noon, meet at VC Tools, morning tea, provided BYO hat, insect repellent, sunscreen, etc

Visit our website for more information: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~blsac>

The Visitor Centre is open Sundays 2-4.30pm by volunteers and every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday 10-12noon every month by the Education Program volunteers. For information or enquiries about Blackburn Lake Sanctuary, contact a committee member by email via our website, or ring the VC on 9877 9235, leave your name, contact number and a short message.

For information or enquiries about the BLS Education Program, contact the Education Officer: Ms Jacquie Green, contact 9262 6211, or 0458 968 804.

Sign up for our new monthly "What's On" e-newsletter, with all the latest events!

School holiday and Tuesday activities are extremely popular, free, but booking ahead is essential to ensure that everyone has a quality experience!

Contact Jacquie to register your interest and email address, privacy ensured.

