

LOCAL INDIGENOUS NURSERIES



Bungalook Nursery

63 Fulton Road Blackburn South. Open Fridays 9.30 am – 12.30pm, and every 4th Sunday 10.00am – 1.00pm

Enquiries: wcipp@yahoo.com.au

Website: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~wcipp>



Greenlink Box Hill Nursery

41 Wimmera St, Box Hill North.

Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9:00 am - midday

Contact: 0479 121 653 or <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~greenlnk>



The Blackburn & District Environment Protection Fund

The Fund is a charitable organisation which provides money -

To protect and improve valuable bushland in the City of Whitehorse

To encourage retention of native vegetation and wildlife

To support and fund Community Groups working to protect and enhance bushland

The Fund has been a strong supporter of the Education Program at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary.

Tax deductible donations can be made via:

A cheque to BDEPF posted to PO Box 210 Blackburn VIC 3130, with personal details so we can send you a receipt.

A payment online. Follow the links at <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~badepf/>



Daphne Ford

NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEES

During 2012 the terms of office of all current bushland park Advisory Committee members will expire and new nominations will be invited. Whitehorse Council will appoint new committees to serve for a three year period.

It is extremely interesting and rewarding work, and a great way to make a positive and practical contribution to your local community. Many existing members are likely to re-nominate, but new people are also needed, and a wide range of skills are useful.

If you want to know more about what is involved, please contact one of the Advisory Committees and come along to a meeting - contact numbers elsewhere in this newsletter. You will be made very welcome.



Blackburn Bushland News



April – October 2012



Photograph: George Pergaminelis

Buff-banded Rail

There are breeding populations of Buff-banded Rails in Blackburn Lake Sanctuary and the Blackburn Creeklands.

Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee

Dates for April – October 2012

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

Meeting dates:

Visitors are welcome!

24 April 22 May 26 June,
24 July AGM ~ Speaker: **Megan Short – Researching Blackburn's Invertebrates**
28 August 25 September 23 October 27 November

Working bees:

- Sundays 9.00 am – midday, 3 June, 8 July, 29 July, 19 August
- Also most Monday mornings. Contact Mary Crouch on 9894 3025

For all other Creeklands enquiries ring Nicola Misso on 9878 8848



Soon to be celebrating **21 years** of environmental education in the very impressive, much-loved and appreciated Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Visitor Centre. You are invited to join them on July 8th for a trip down memory lane, and a peep into future plans. More details soon.

STOP PRESS! Just before Easter a bad infestation of Myrtle Rust was discovered in Blackburn South. Extra vigilance required!

Myrtle Rust,

Myrtle Rust is a devastating disease which attacks the Myrtaceae family including eucalypts, tea trees, and bottle brushes. Its recent arrival in Victoria has triggered major alarm. It is a fungal infection which exhibits a few different stages from a brown rust with a purple hue around it to yellow pollen balls on both sides of the leaf, and then the leaf begins to curl.

Please keep a sharp look out in gardens and parks. **Do not touch it** as it spreads very easily on hands and clothing, but immediately contact -

Department of Primary Industries on 1800 084 881

or email plant.protection@dpi.vic.gov.au, with a photograph, if possible.



Good News for the Bushland



Leunig

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee is immensely pleased with the huge response to **Clean Up Australia Day**. 85 volunteers resulted in 19 bags of rubbish collected by individuals, family groups, work groups, 11th Box Hill Cub Scouts and Sathya Sai Centre of Nunawading (who also generously brought morning tea for all). “There wasn’t a skerrick of rubbish left on the Lake edge; it was amazing” voiced a visitor.

Bad News for the Bushland

Most people dispose of their rubbish responsibly, but in several forms it remains a problem for the bushland parks.



Much litter is **water born**, especially **plastic**, which dropped in surrounding streets, washes into the Lake and on into the Creek (... then the Yarra and the Bay!).

Two little fledglings were found in Kalang Park, outside their nest, upside down, and dead; their tiny legs entangled in the blue plastic twine their parents had used for nest building.

Smokers who drop their butts!!

Hard to believe but true - the environment is stuck with that butt for up to **15 years** before it breaks down, meanwhile leaching nicotine and other toxic chemicals into the soil and water. It would be great if smokers would carry a personal ashtray to put their butts in, rather than dropping them where they stand.

Dumping garden waste in the parks . . .

Spreads invasive weeds which compete with indigenous plants

Suffocates the plants it's dumped on
Spreads diseases from prunings

Is unsightly

Pollutes water and promotes algal blooms as decaying vegetation is washed into the waterways

Can be a fire hazard

Piles of grass clippings heat up as they decay, nurturing damaging fungi and bacteria

It is very discouraging for the staff and volunteers who maintain the parks, as the rubbish has to be removed

Instead use . . .

Composting,
Mulching,
Worm farms, or the
Council Green Bin collection



Grasses Expert

Dr Graeme Lorimer

spent an informative and productive morning with members of the Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee in December, identifying grasses and plant communities in Blacks Walk, and advising about future management.

The Committee was delighted to learn the already highly valued stand of grass at the top of the hill is actually *Stipa rufa sub species australis*, which is classified as threatened. This patch is flourishing!

Near the Garie St playground Graeme identified patches of Matgrass *Hemarthria uncinata*, now rare in the eastern suburbs and this is thought to be some of the last remaining in Whitehorse.

Many areas re-vegetated in recent years have begun to regenerate themselves and become functioning ecosystems – always the goal in a bushland park.



Did you know?

The Magpie Lark, also known as a Mudlark and a Peewee is one of the most widespread species of bird in Australia. Mr Mudlark has a black face above his beak, and Ms Mudlark has a white face above her beak.

Male Magpie Lark Photo: Firoooz Take a close look at the next one you see.



Photograph: Ian Moodie – *Epacris impressa*



Photograph: Robin Guthrie

Late last year Furness Park was home to this spectacular beehive constructed on the outside of a dead tree.



Volunteers at work in the Visitor Centre

Birds in the Bush

The birdlife at the Sanctuary, in the Creeklands, and surrounding gardens has been enjoying the lush recovery after many years of drought. Visitors to both bushland parks have been delighted to glimpse pairs of Buff-banded Rails with young, creeping quietly through the undergrowth; the first sightings of this species for decades!

Other special sightings have been two Little Lorikeets, and a Yellow-faced Honeyeater, neither recorded since 1974; the Scarlet Robin is visiting again, and another Yellow Rosella has been spotted after a five year absence (looks just like a Crimson Rosella, but is yellow). The Powerful Owl was seen near the Lake just before Easter, and the handsome, raucous Gang Gangs are back, en masse. Also King Parrots and Long-billed Corellas are being seen.

Some species have bred extremely well this season ~ 15 Nankeen Night Herons (all at one time), 30 Wood Ducks grazing on the lawns, 24 Eurasian Coots bobbing along in the lake, and the Black Ducks and Chestnut Teals were seen with large broods in tow. Superb Fairy Wrens and acrobatic Eastern Spinebills are being seen in greater numbers and in more locations.

Wow! If this sparks your interest in our local birds, why not join us for the

- **ANNUAL AUTUMN BIRD SURVEY** – meet at **Blackburn Lake Sanctuary** Visitor Centre on Saturday April 21st at 7.30am. OR
- The **FIRST EVER BIRD SURVEY** in the **Blackburn Creeklands**, on Saturday April 28th at 7.30 am, meeting outside the Scout Hall in Pakenham Street.

Not good at identifying birds? Doesn't matter – your help is needed to spot them, not necessarily identify them. The surveys are beginner friendly.



Parasol Fungi. From now on keep your eyes peeled for these delicate gems as it is approaching fungi time of the year.

Photograph: Ian Moodie



Photograph: Ian Moodie
Nankeen Night Heron



Coming up April – November, 2012

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee Meetings are 7.30pm,

1st Thursday of every month, at the Visitor Centre.

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

Visit our website for more information or to contact a committee member:

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~blsac>

Month	Day & date	Events & times @ Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Visitor Centre	
APRIL	<i>Friday</i> 13	Spotlighting for possums and other night creatures! Bring a torch with red cellophane.	6.30 – 8.30pm. Meet at VC.
	<i>Saturday</i> 14	The Need to Weed! It's still here, we'd love some help, please come and join us!	10 - 12noon Meet at VC. Tools provided, BYO gloves
	<i>Sunday</i> 15	Identifying birds – a training session with Birdlife Australia , getting ready for Autumn Survey next week	10 – 12 noon, at VC, bring binoculars if you have some.
	<i>Saturday</i> 21	Breakfast with the birds ~ Join Ian, Jenny and the Friends on our bi-annual bird survey, & stay on after for a cuppa and raisin toast.	7.30am, at the VC. Bring binoculars if you have them.
MAY	<i>Saturday</i> 12	Getting the bush ready for the Planting days next month!	10 – 12 am Meet at VC. Tools provided, BYO gloves
	<i>Sunday</i> 20	Attracting Birds to your Backyard , lots of hints and ideas from Birdlife Australia volunteers.	2 – 4pm at the VC All Welcome!
JUNE	<i>Thursday</i> 28	Schools Planting day	Contact the Education Officer on 9262 6211
	<i>Saturday</i> 30	Community Planting Day – Everyone welcome!	10 – 12 am Meet at VC.
JULY	<i>Sunday</i> 8	Celebrating 21 years of our wonderful Visitor Centre. Join us for a trip down memory lane!	2 – 4 pm at the VC All Welcome! Details to come
AUGUST	<i>Saturday</i> 18	We've planted, but we still Need to Weed!	10 – 12 am Meet at VC.
	<i>Sunday</i> 19	"How to take good pic-chewers, a bit of trial and a lot of error" , presented by our wonderful "Wildlife of Whitehorse" photographer, Ian Moodie	2 - 4 pm at VC. All Welcome!
SEPTEMBER	<i>Sunday</i> 9	Zoos Victoria – Fighting Extinction! A Zoos Vic volunteer talks about Conservation of Endangered species!	2 – 4 pm at the VC. All welcome!
	<i>Saturday</i> 15	Working bee amongst the wildflowers!	10 – 12noon Meet at VC.
	<i>Saturday</i> 29	Spotting Birds again! Who's visiting the Sanctuary this Spring? Stay on for raisin toast & a cuppa!	7.30am, at the VC. Bring binoculars if you have them.
OCTOBER	<i>Every Saturday of this month!</i> 6, 13, 20, 27	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, gloves, etc
NOVEMBER	<i>Sunday</i> 11	Chasing Butterflies! With keen enthusiast, Lois, who will show us some of her great photos, and what butterflies like what plants, and when to see them!	2 – 4pm. Meet at the VC
	<i>Thursday</i> 15	Twilight Working Bee –Last one for the year! Help us tidy up, and celebrate a good year's work. Join us for a light snack afterwards	6 – 8pm. Meet at the VC Tools provided, BYO gloves

To sign up for our monthly **"What's on"** e-newsletter, with all the latest events, additional to above, including school holiday programs, and **"Open Tuesday"** activities, or for information, bookings or enquiries about the BLS Education Program, contact the Education Officer on 9262 6211, or 0458 968 804



These activities are extremely popular, FREE, but booking ahead is essential to ensure that everyone has a quality experience! 24 hr cancellation notice is appreciated, so others can take your place!

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