

Congratulations Sue Lockwood AM – Member of the Order of Australia

Friends of the Lake and members of the Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee were thrilled to learn of the Australia Day AM award to Sue Lockwood.

Sue has been Whitehorse Citizen of the Year for 2007. The new award recognizes the outstanding contribution Sue has made in educating and inspiring others to preserve the bushland environment in the City of Whitehorse.

Over the years Sue has provided dedicated leadership in her passionate commitment to improving not only the environment at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary, but in the wider community. She has earned admiration and respect from all with whom she comes in contact. A powerful communicator, she has used her considerable knowledge of indigenous plants, understanding of revegetation issues and good bushland management techniques to assist the community in many local forums.

Sue's AM also honours her work for sufferers of breast cancer. In this field she has worked tirelessly and passionately to ensure that the consumer voice is represented in quality improvement to women's care in breast cancer and breast screening. With a microbiology and biochemistry background and experience as a scientific information specialist with CSIRO, Sue has been able to apply her scientific expertise in such a way that other women have gained the confidence and knowledge to become part of the advocacy movement in breast disease that Sue has been working at for so long. She has been an inspiration to all those who have worked with her.

We are delighted that Sue has been recognized for these outstanding achievements, and we offer her our warmest congratulations.

Especially for the kids! Sticky Beaks at Blackburn Lake!

Sticky Beaks, the Juniors Club of BOCA (Bird Observation and Conservation Australia) will be conducting lots of fun activities, games and walks at the Sanctuary during the year. (see calendar for dates) All kids are welcome, but mum or dad need to stick around too, there will be lots to interest them as well!

Bring binoculars if you have some, but not essential, and you might also like to join in our bird survey on April 12th.

And did you see???

The black swan visiting for a day in December, 4 Nankeen Night herons, 8 black cormorants, the kingfisher, and the pelican returning more regularly, bringing a mate? The water birds certainly seem to be appreciating the lake!

Bird sightings are being recorded monthly on a sheet on the Visitor Centre noticeboard, a great way to keep track of what to look for!



Ongoing Creek Cleanup

Creeklands Advisory Committee member Richard Bateman is frequently to be seen in his long protective waders scouring the lower levels of the banks from within the creek. He picks up the plastic bags, bottles, cans and miscellaneous other rubbish that is washed down with storm water, catches on branches and outcrops, and is very hard to reach from above. There is a tortoise in Furness Park, that regularly sits on a rock and watches him at work. It is a labour of love for Richard, and results in a much safer environment for the animals and birds that inhabit and feed in and around the water. For humans – so much nicer to look at without the disfiguring rubbish. Please remember that nearly everything dropped in the streets ends up in the waterways, and potentially causes disability and death to animals.

Maintenance Mondays

Another Creeklands Advisory Committee member, Mary Crouch, leads an informal week day working bee on most Mondays. These working bees concentrate on weeding in areas where careful discrimination is required to remove the weeds from amongst the indigenous species. In recent months walkers will notice the north side of the creek between Laurel Grove and Main St looking very much healthier for their efforts. Anyone willing to give a couple of hours of assistance, at an easy pace in pleasant company, please contact Mary on 9894 3025.

Chocolate Lilies

Chocolate Lilies are re-establishing in the Creeklands, and have been found on the hill in Blacks Walk, near the end of Garie Street, and in Furness Park. Some of these have been planted and others have re-generated by themselves.

It is of constant interest to watch the un-mown areas to see what will return of their own accord.

New Tools

The purchase of more tools has been approved to better equip volunteers attending working bees. The first working bee for 2008 is Clean Up Australia Day on March 02, followed by a regular working bee on April 13.

Come along and try out the new tools!



Chocolate Lily

Photo: www.anbg.gov.au

From Blackburn Lake to the Bay, via the Creeklands, Gardiners Ck, & the Yarra!

Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee

Dates for February - August 2008

Committee Meetings:

Are held at 8pm on the 4th Tuesday of each month (except for December) at the Blackburn Bowls Club, Packenham St, Blackburn.

Visitors welcome!

Working Bees:

These dates and times are sometimes subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. Close to the date please check the notice board and park notices, or ring Philip Brentnall on 9877 5445

February	Tuesday	26	Monthly Committee Meeting
March	Sunday	02	Clean Up Australia Day 10.00am - midday
	Tuesday	25	Monthly Committee Meeting
April	Sunday	13	Working Bee 10.00am - midday
	Tuesday	22	Monthly Committee Meeting
May	Sunday	04	Working Bee 10.00am - midday
	Sunday	25	Working Bee 10.00am - midday
	Tuesday	27	Monthly Committee Meeting
June	Sunday	22	Working Bee 10.00am - midday
	Tuesday	24	Monthly Committee Meeting
July	Sunday	06	Working Bee 10.00am - midday
	Tuesday	22	Annual General Meeting
	Sunday	27	National Tree Day Working Bee 10.00am - midday
August	Sunday	03	Working Bee 10.00am - midday



Blackburn Lake Sanctuary

and

Blackburn Creeklands



Newsletter

February ~ August 2008



© Jim Greenwood

Blackburn ~ a great place to grow up!

Photo: © Jim Greenwood, Sept 2007

A Big Thank you to Two Special Volunteers

In 2006 Blackburn Lake Sanctuary was fortunate to gain the services of two Deakin University Environmental Science students. **Katherine** quickly became a regular participant in monthly water testing at the Lake, and last year she presented an outstanding Sunday talk, describing her fieldwork with endangered frog species in NSW.

Katrina wants to teach about the natural environment, and has spent many hours with the BLS Education Program, guiding walks for both school and adult groups and always delighting visitors with her sound environmental knowledge and warm personality.

We have been privileged to work with these two girls and to be able to accredit their BLS volunteer work as part of their studies. We thank them most sincerely for their assistance to BLS and wish them every success in their careers.

The Advisory Committee welcomes and encourages any interested tertiary students to make use of the excellent learning environment and experiences that the Sanctuary, the Education program, and the Committee offers. Contact Elaine, 9877 5896, for more information.

And you don't need to be a student to join us in any of our activities!

Helping Powerful Owls.

The Powerful Owl is considered an endangered species and is listed as threatened. Only 500 pairs are thought to be present in Victoria. The biggest threats are reduction of habitat and the availability of suitable tree hollows for breeding. These birds require the largest hollows of all our native animals. Trees have to be over 300 years old to form hollows big enough. They are big birds measuring 660mm head to tail and the tree hollow has to hold 2 owlets, the adult female and the prey delivered by the male. Unfortunately in many areas pairs of owls display annual breeding behaviour but fail to breed due to lack of big hollows.

Powerful Owls have been recorded in Blackburn for many years. In 2005 a pair were trying to breed but without suitable hollows there was nowhere to lay eggs. However the problem was solved and for the first time in Australia Powerful Owls successively raised an owlet in an artificial nest box right here in Blackburn.

At 2pm, on 24th February at the Blackburn Lake Visitor Centre, Jim Greenwood, designer and builder of this box, will tell you all about Powerful Owls. Come and hear about a wonderful example of cooperative conservation involving community, Council, DSE, Melbourne Water and of course a pair of obliging owls.

New Meeting Venue for Creeklands Advisory Committee

The Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee is now meeting at the Blackburn Bowls Club in Pakenham Street. We are very appreciative of the warm welcome extended to us, after we became homeless with the closure of The Avenue Neighbourhood House. It seems appropriate to be meeting in a location in the heart of the Creeklands.

Bushland Parks Alert and Alarmed!

Pattersons Curse has recently been found in Furness park in the Creeklands, and in other bushland parks within Whitehorse, for the first time. This is a nasty invader which is not wanted! Patterson's Curse has hairy, dark green, broadly oval rosette leaves to 30cm long; the several seeding stems grow to 120cm in height and develop branches with age. Flowers develop in clusters; they are purple, tubular, and 2-3 cm long with 5 petals. It has a fleshy taproot with smaller laterals. It is not known how it has been introduced to Whitehorse.

Please, please, do not dump weeds or any refuse from gardens, in the parks.
Weeds spread very easily from seed, even if the plant is dead or decaying.
'One year's seed, makes for seven years weed!'

Furness Park Bridge

The Master Plan for the Creeklands contains a proposal for a bridge in Furness Park, so that a complete circuit can be made within the Creeklands' bounds. Initial funding was provided by Whitehorse Council to undertake a feasibility study. This led to development of a concept plan and proposal which will go to Council soon, for further funding approval. See the Pakenham St noticeboard for more detail.

Frog Bog Smudge

East of Pakenham Street, north of the creek, below the end of Myrtle Grove, is an area which retains water and becomes boggy when we have a wet season (remember them?). Not deep enough to be called excavation, a 'smudge' of soil has been removed to create more of a depression, which will hold the water for longer. Soon planting of sedges and other water friendly species will be done to complete the project. Hopefully then it will rain! Called an ephemeral wetland, it is expected that the frogs will be pleased.



.....Coming up in 2008



All Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee Meetings are held on the 1st Thursday every month, at 8pm, at the Visitor Centre, Central Rd, Blackburn, & interested park users are warmly invited to attend.

Working Bees are what make our bushland so magnificent, so, come along, meet new Friends and neighbours, learn lots of tips, & Make a Difference!

Month	Blackburn Lake Sanctuary			
February	Sunday	24	"Co-operative Conservation - Helping Powerful Owls" Dr Jim Greenwood	2 - 4 pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
March	Sunday	2	Clean Up Australia Day	10-12 noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
April	Sunday	6	Fungi Discovery Walk, get prepared for the Fungi season with Dr Bruce Fuhrer	2 - 4 pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Saturday	12	Breakfast with the Birds...& Ian Moodie & Barb Longmuir (BOCA) A regular bi-annual survey!	7.30 - 10am Bring binoculars if you have them, & join us for raisin toast afterward!
	Saturday	19	"Sustainable Living Week" Walk See some 'sustainable gardening' tips in action!	10.30-11.30 am Book with C of W, 9262 6159
	Saturday	19	Working Bee ~ preparing for our June Planting Day. Lots of helpers needed!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
May	Sunday	18	Sticky Beaks Club, BOCA & Friends Investigating Owls-Kids fun, games & activities	2 - 4 pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Saturday	24	Working Bee ~ still preparing for our June Planting Day! See you there!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
June	Sunday	1	World Environment Day Celebrations Waterbugs Exposed	2 - 4 pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Thursday	26	Schools Planting Day Support the Sanctuary! Get your school involved!	Contact Elaine on 9877 5896, or Peter on 9877 5716, to book
	Saturday	28	Community Planting day ~ it's finally here! Do come and join us!	10 - 12 noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
July	Sunday	13	Sticky Beaks Club BOCA & Friends Migrating birds-More Kids fun, games & activities	2 - 4pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Saturday	19	Working Bee/Planting left-overs!	10 - 12 noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Sunday	27	National Tree Day celebrations	Details to be announced

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

For information, enquiries, or to contact a Committee member, ring 9877 9235 & leave your contact details on the answering service.

Help for Wildlife: ring 0417 380 687 for your nearest wildlife carer

EPA Pollution Hotline: 9695 2777 or 1800 444 004 (both 24hrs)

Ring immediately you notice a problem, be specific with details such as what, when and where.

Sightings of Red-eared slider turtles: 136 186 DSE Customer Service

City of Whitehorse: Maintenance & Local-Law issues: Ring 9262 6333, business and after-hours

