

A Word from Wandinong Sanctuary ~

The first of regular contributions from Wandinong

Wandinong Sanctuary is an area of remnant bush in Canterbury Road South Blackburn, which was bequeathed to the former City of Nunawading by Janet and Arthur Hooke in 1973. A plaque in the centre of the Sanctuary commemorates the house, which was built by the Hookes in 1914, and demolished soon after Council acquired the land. Wandinong Sanctuary was officially opened on 9th May 1976.

Nunawading Council appointed a Committee of Management in 1973, which has always included two representatives of the Blackburn & District Tree Preservation Society (a requirement of the Deed) and two representatives of the Hooke family, as well as local residents. It is now known as Wandinong Sanctuary Advisory Committee.

Wandinong Sanctuary Working Bees are held at 2 pm on the third Saturday of each month to carry out various tasks, according to the season. Everybody is welcome. On-the-job guidance provided!

Working Bees

Blackburn Lake Sanctuary and Blackburn Creeklands will both kick off with the **BIG Clean-Up Australia Day on Sunday 1st March**. Other scheduled working bees are listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Working bees are not *just* work, but an opportunity to chat and share interests, find out about indigenous plants that will suit your garden, and what pest plants to avoid. We also see some of the most amazing insects, and birds! Your help at any of our working bees will be greatly appreciated, and your work will make a difference to the bushland.

The Tuesday Weeders meet every Tuesday at 9.30am, at the Halley St entrance to **Blackburn Lake**, and would welcome some more help!

The Monday Morning Maintenance group in the **Creeklands**, would also love some extra hands. If you can help please contact Mary Crouch on 9894 3025.

★ **Vandalism has caused damage to the noticeboard and an arson attempt within the Creeklands recently.**

Please report any suspicious activity to police asap, to minimise potential damage.

Have you visited the *Blackburn Lake Sanctuary website lately?*
<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~blsac>

Committee member, Rod, has kindly donated his expertise and time to update and create an exciting new historical section. It includes a most interesting video interview and lots of photos tracing the history of the land and the Blackburn area from the early 1900's to today.

This newsletter is also available on the website.



WEEDS. . . .So what's the problem?

As residents living close to bushland areas like the Creeklands, Wandinong Sanctuary & Blackburn Lake Sanctuary, we need to be aware which plants growing in our gardens can escape to become major bushland weed problems. The Advisory Committees and Council Parkside staff are ever vigilant for outbreaks of major weeds such as the Chilean Needle Grass found recently (and removed) in Furness Park, and Water Hyacinth which can quickly infest our waterways.

Fluffy seeds from daisy-type flowers, thistles and grasses have evolved to be spread by the wind. Removing dead flower heads before they go to seed can prevent this spread. Birds are particularly good at distributing the berry-type seeds from cotoneaster, privet, and pittosporum to name just a few! Removing seeds from large trees is not a viable option, so replacement with an equivalent indigenous species may be the solution.

Many plants also take root easily from a just tiny fragment, and from little things, big things grow! The smallest piece of wandering creeper, ivy or blackberry can wash down the gutters or spill from the bin, take root elsewhere, and away they grow!



Some plants, like ivy, are multi-pests! Birds love their seeds, they fragment easily, their underground root system can be very extensive, and when it reaches a fence, wall or that beautiful old gum tree, up it goes, flowering out of reach, clinging tenaciously, and suckering on through the bark to get to the nutrients and moisture being transported up the outer living layer of the tree to the canopy! It is our equivalent of the tropical strangler fig! If left unchecked, it effectively ring-barks the tree, most certainly killing it in the end.

This is to the detriment of the bushland birds and wildlife which rely on the connecting corridors of canopy in our streets to move safely from one bushland habitat to another.

Regular monitoring of these weeds in suburban gardens will hopefully be an early intervention to minimise an otherwise major task for the bushland parks.



Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee Activities Calendar

Committee Meetings are held at 8pm on the
4th Tuesday of each month at the
Blackburn Bowls Club, Pakenham St, Blackburn.
Visitors welcome!

Working Bees: These dates and times are sometimes subject to change. Close to the date please check the noticeboard and notices through the park for location and to confirm details, or ring Philip.

January	Tuesday	27	Monthly Meeting
February	Tuesday	24	Monthly Meeting
March	Sunday	01	Clean Up Australia Day Meet at Scout Hall Pakenham Street 9.00 am
March	Tuesday	24	Monthly Meeting
April	Tuesday	28	Monthly Meeting
May	Sunday	03	Working Bee From 9.00am onwards
May	Tuesday	26	Monthly Meeting
June	Sunday	14	Working Bee From 9.00am onwards
June	Tuesday	23	Monthly Meeting
July	Sunday	19	Working Bee From 9.00am onwards
July	Tuesday	28	Annual General Meeting and Monthly Meeting
August	Sunday	02	Working Bee From 9.00am onwards



For all Creeklands enquiries ring Philip Brentnall on 9877 5445

Bungalook Nursery at 63 Fulton Rd, is a great place to buy local provenance plants, and get advice about what to grow where. Volunteers have been busy lately collecting summer grass seed from the parks for propagation.

Open Friday mornings 9.30 -12.30 & the 4th Sunday of every month - 10am - 1pm



Blackburn Lake Sanctuary

&

Blackburn Creeklands



Newsletter February 2009



**Common Brown Butterfly
and Caterpillar**

Artist Karina H McInnes
Reprinted by courtesy of Museum Victoria

Have you seen ?

* **Pied Cormorants** foraging for yabbies and carp in the lake and creek, being harassed by the territorial and aggressive noisy miners!

* **Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoos** feeding in the pine trees bordering the Sanctuary, and in wattle trees near Blacks Walk bridge . . . and the resulting debris beneath?

* **The Kingfisher** diving in the lake, hopefully catching some of the many mosquito fish that infest it?

* **Any Red-Eared Slider Turtles** ~ (the bad guys) one caught, still some to go! Please report any sightings and locations to DSE Customer Service Centre on 136186 or BLSAC secretary Peter on 9878 6829

* **The splendid grassland on Blacks Walk hill** ~ Committee member Alan has worked there intensively for many years, removing woody weeds and exotic grasses, and it is a sight to behold! He says:



(Fred Duncan)

"The predominant indigenous grass is spear grass (Stipa), which has proved to be very adaptable to the site. It is pleasing to see that other grasses have appeared in more recent years - wallaby grass (Danthonia) and weeping grass (Microlaena) the most common, with a little kangaroo grass (Themeda). The diligent removal of weed in areas abutting the high concentration of indigenous grasses has seen these grassy areas expanding, and the recent dry years have demonstrated the ability of the indigenous grass to out-perform the exotic grass. Re-establishing the native grass areas has also created the opportunity for other native vegetation to reappear. A great time to observe these grasses on the hill is late afternoon as the sun sinks in the western sky."

Gould League



Cheerio to Jo-Anne Cardosi (former secretary), and Jim Greenwood (think Powerful Owls), who sadly have both moved away from Blackburn, and left the Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee. Thank you both for your respective contributions

New Councillors

Also thanks to retiring Whitehorse Central Ward Councillors Peter Allan and Hayley Clarke for their support and advocacy over many years. Welcome to new Councillors Bill Pemberton and Andrew Munroe, both very familiar with Blackburn Lake Sanctuary and the Blackburn Creeklands. We look forwards to working with them.

Good News for Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Education Program!

After many years of volunteer leadership, the Council has appointed an Education Officer, Ms Carolyn Edwards, to co-ordinate and lead the Education Program.

Carolyn has a Diploma of Conservation and Land Management, and teaching experience in primary schools, Healesville Sanctuary, Parks Victoria, and as a summer Ranger at Wilsons Promontory National Park. She is passionate about environmental education.

The Committee and the Education Program Volunteers look forward to working with Carolyn to further develop and present the program in 2009.

We gratefully acknowledge and thank Elaine Boucher for her most professional leadership and development of the program over the past seven years and we warmly welcome Carolyn.

NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEES

During 2009 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 four 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 Bowls Club Water Off-Take Update

All major infrastructure installation is complete, including the 145 kilolitre underground tank, which has been filled so far with water from the roof. The creek diversion is not yet connected but the suction pump and related hardware will be in place by late January, ready for testing. The Club is planning an official project opening around the end of March.



Coming up in 2009

All Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee Meetings are held on the 1st Thursday every month, 7.30pm, at the Visitor Centre, Central Rd, Blackburn, & interested park users are warmly invited to attend.

Month		Blackburn Lake Sanctuary		
February	Sunday	22	Bugs at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary! Hands-on kids fun, Come explore with Graeme Eames, from Holmesglen TAFE!	2 - 4 pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre Kids, bring mum or dad too, they'll enjoy it!
	Saturday	28	Water Testing - Like to join us? You're welcome! . Normally 1 st Sunday of every month, but we will be busy being MAD tomorrow!	8.30am Meet at VC Ring Su 9878 6829 for further information.
March	Sunday	1	Clean Up Australia Day Come along & be MAD with us, Make A Difference!	10- noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Saturday	21	Breakfast with the Birds...& Ian Moodie Barb Longmuir (BOCA) & Friends. Bring binoculars if you have them, & join us for raisin toast afterward! A regular bi-annual event!	7.15am for 7.30 start-10 Meet at the Visitor Centre
April	Saturday	18	Working Bee ~ Lots of helpers needed! Please join us! Tools and morning tea provided!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Sunday	26	Kids Activities fun & games. Details to follow, check our website or notice boards Don't forget to bring mum or dad too!	2 - 4 pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
May	Saturday	23	Working Bee ~ Preparing for our June Planting Day! See you there!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
June	Sunday	14	Fungal Foray with Paul from the Field Naturalists Club of Vic.	2 - 4pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Thursday	25	Schools Planting Day Support the Sanctuary! Get your school involved	Contact our new Education Officer Carolyn, 0458 968 804 carolyn.edwards@whitehorse.vic.gov.au
	Saturday	27	Community Planting day ~ it's finally here! Lots of plants to go in ground. Come & join us!	10-12 noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
July	Sunday	12	Kids Activities fun & games. Details to follow. Don't forget to bring mum or dad too!	2-4pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Saturday	18	Working Bee/Planting left-overs! Tools and morning tea provided, all welcome	10-12 noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Sunday	26	Basket Weaving workshop with Wendy Golden, from the Basket Makers Assoc ⁿ (some materials costs may be involved)	2-4pm Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre

NB: More Sunday events are being organised, but not finalised at time of printing.

Check our notice boards and posts for monthly reminders or

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

RSPCA: 9224 9222 Help for Wildlife: 0417 380 687 for your nearest wildlife carer

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

City of Whitehorse: 9262 6333, business and after-hours, 24/7.

For information, enquiries about anything concerning the Sanctuary, or to contact a Committee member, please ring **9877 9235** & leave your contact details.

