

THE FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK

NEWSLETTER

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Braeside Park

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Friends of Braeside Park

PO Box 196, Dingley Village,



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

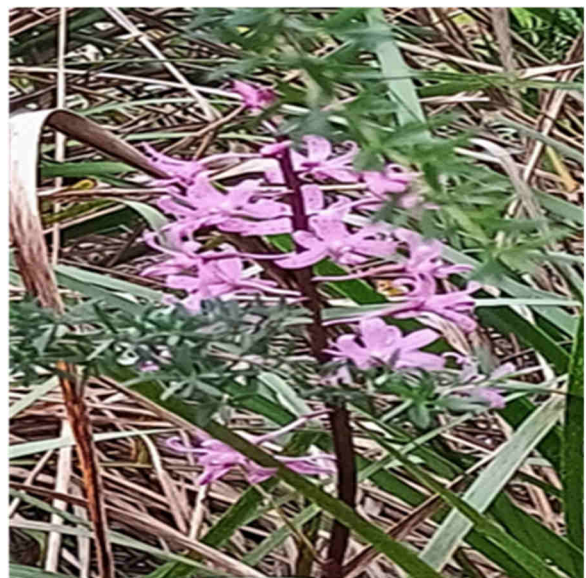
Sightings in early morning walks

Yellow Star *Hypoxis vaginata* var. is commonly called a Sheathing Yellow Star. It has hairless leaves and stem with one long sheathing leaf-like bract on the flower stem. It is perennial and found in grassland and woodland.



The *short-finned eel* (***Anguilla australis***) is widespread and common in coastal river systems in southern Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the larger Bass Strait islands. I found one in the early morning in a puddle on the Phar Lap Track made by the consequence of the overflow from the horses' swimming pool.

Dipodium roseum is a leafless, tuberous, perennial, mycoheterotrophic herb. Between fifteen and fifty pale pink flowers with small dark red spots and 20–30 mm (0.8–1 in) wide are borne on a green to dark reddish black flowering stem 40–100 cm (20–40 in) tall. The rosy hyacinth orchid grows in a range of habitats from dry woodland to wet forests. It grows in well drained soils, growing in close association with Eucalyptus. Being saprophytic, it is impossible to cultivate due to the inability to replicate its association with mycorrhizal fungi in a horticultural context.



Judith Sise

Entomologist Visit to Braeside Park

February 17 2024

A group of around 25 members of the Victorian Entomological Society of Victoria arrived for their first event for 2024.

It was a mixed group of genders and ages.

After a safety brief on possibility of snakes and rabbit burrows, the entomologists set off with cameras, small containers and white squares for shaking down small insects.

The roving Parks Victoria Ranger appeared slightly bewildered by the gathering and wished them good luck and when told that a list would be sent to Parks Victoria, thanked the member.

Communications had not obviously been circulated regarding this event.

The amateur entomologists returned around 5:30 pm to share their findings.

They were not given access to the keys and seemed to be happy to eat and work from the pavilion nearest to the Visitors' Centre.

Members I spoke to and had been emailing and had completed all the Parks Victoria processes in applying for the research permits for the year as all their field meetings are on Parks Victoria land. They said they had not received notification or a response from Parks Victoria for this event.

I could not find the activity on Parks Victoria and a member said he was not sure it was upgraded.

It was unclear whether I or Margaret could use our keys to access the Visitors' Centre or Heathland for this group. The group had not been given access to keys. The night hunt began about 9 am with around 5 small bed-size sheets set up with small lights.

It looked like a fairy land. There were also a avenue of smaller lights encased in nets along the path to the ponds. There was still around 20 people coming an going to the sheets photographing and identifying insects.

I left around 10 pm but my husband stayed till 11:30 pm and said he thought he saw a ranger vehicle come into the park. The boom gate was operating when I arrived around 8:40 pm. I think the group was disappointed by the lack of public attendance and insect population.

I will contact the society to see if we can get a report on the insects found.

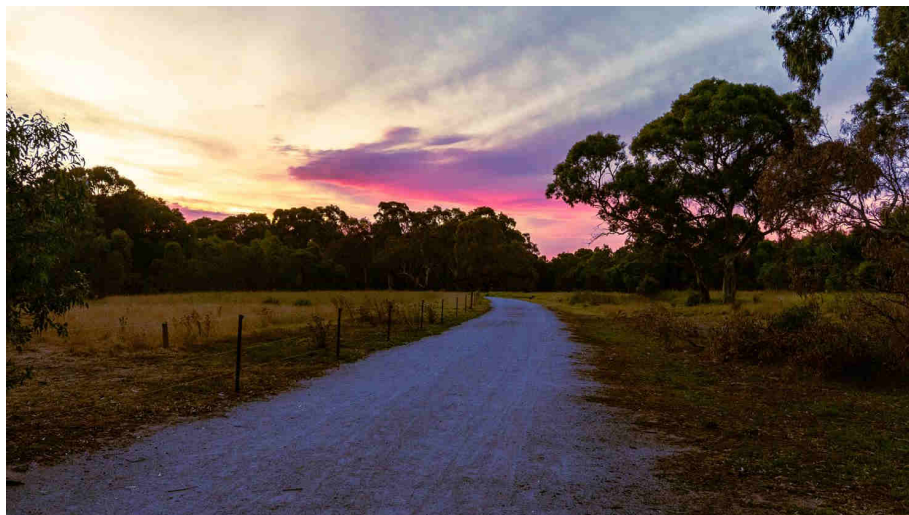
Judith Sise



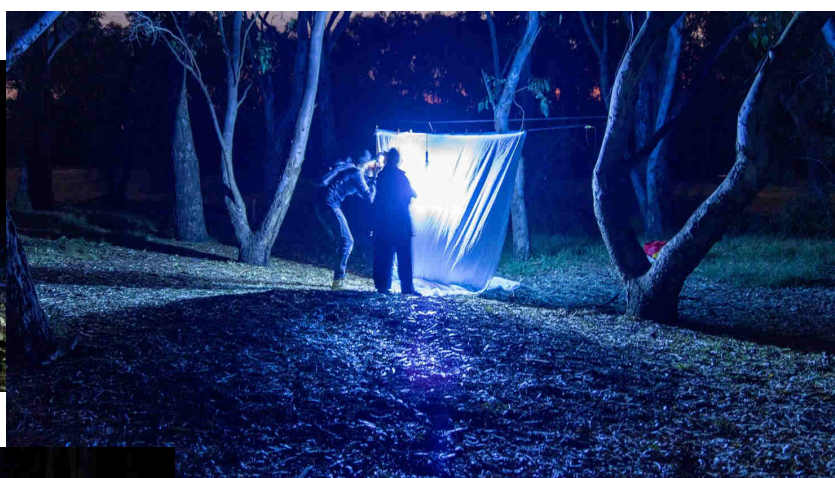
Entomologist Visit to Braeside Park

The night was warm and the wind was down. Almost perfect conditions for an entomologist.

We arrived at 8:00 and started with a pleasant walk as the experts were all busy putting up nets or setting up lights, tables, refreshments, etc.



After a very nice walk, we joined the groups looking at the insects that had now began to gather on the hung sheets. Some of the experts had incredible camera gear, very specifically set up for this type of thing. The following are a few pictures that I took with my compact pocket camera.



Entomologist Visit to Braeside Park



David MacLean

Field Naturalist Club Victoria

About Terrestrial Invertebrates Field Naturalist Club Victoria

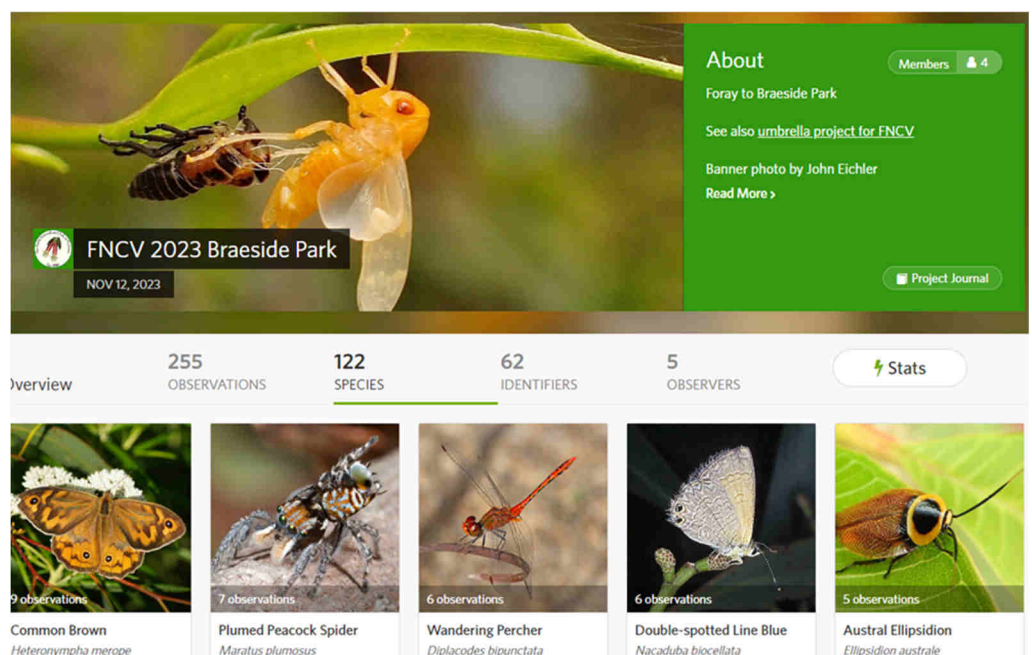
The invertebrates are, for the most part, the small animals that have pervaded the entire biosphere. Their diversity is extraordinary and they have adapted to every imaginable niche. Paul Tasch once referred to the arthropods alone as a "Phylum without Census". Invertebrates sit at the lower end of the food chain and are critical to the overall function of ecosystems by recycling nutrients and providing food for the higher levels.

There are likely to be millions of new species waiting to be discovered and described.

A lifetime could be spent studying the invertebrates living in the leaf litter of a suburban garden. Most invertebrates are small enough to study with microscopes. There is an endless source of interest and fascination for anyone who takes the time to look for terrestrial invertebrates.

Aims and Activities

The aim of the Terrestrial Invertebrate Group (TIG) is to inform the public about the importance of terrestrial invertebrates to the ecosystem. This is done by promoting Community involvement; including with Schools and their students, where TIG members are able to provide valuable support for programs by carrying out locality surveys, validating sightings and preparing data.



Wendy Clark, the Field Naturalist Club Victoria's Terrestrial Invertebrate Group (TIG) Group Leader, has provided the *iNaturalists* link to the list of identified species that was observed on November 12th 2023 at Braeside Park. I have copied the list but without the photographs so do take a look at the beautiful insect photographs to appreciate a world of which many of us are unaware.

Visitors are welcome to attend these activities, but should let the contact person on the calendar know of their intention. Please note a small fee may apply to non-members on some group activities (for insurance purposes).

There are 122 species identified from 255 observations. This was from 5 people posting information. Others did not post their photos, but were most likely the same as the ones seen by all of us.

The link is <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/fncv-2023-braeside-park?tab=species>

Judith Sise

President/FNCV Committee

Water Watch

January 2024

TESTS	Bent Bridge	Sherry Bridge	Dingley Drain	Wetlands
Temperature				
Air	17	17	18	18
Water	19	19	19	19
pH	6.5	6.6	6.6	6.8
E.C.	410	880	740	480
Turbidly	15	15	15	30
Ammonium	0	0	0	0
Phosphorus	0.20	0.40	0.40	0.30
Oxygen	4	3	4	4

What does this mean?

Basically, Sherry Bridge (from Golf Course) and Dingley Drain have high saltiness, phosphorus and are slightly acidic. The Wetlands and Bent Bridge (waterfall creek) are similar with less salt and lower phosphorus. What you would expect. Hoping Melbourne Water Water Watch Co-ordinator will run a refresher soon. Creeks went from running streams to pools in a few days.

Judith Sise

VANDALISM

A few nincompoops with nothing to do at the end of the school holidays so maybe students, walked over the orange plastic pretend fence and smashed the glass window of the small shed and split open some bags of potting mix and threw it around and then went off to do some mindless damage to one of the bird hides. The time they spend doing this senseless action was but a few minutes, but the time volunteers and police have to do to record this took hours! Lesson learnt is the Nursery needs a proper lock up fence, potting mix will be stored in a locked-up space and THANK YOU to Vicky Smith and her husband for repairing the window.

Judith Sise

Bird Survey

Bird Survey – January 2024

Five volunteers attended the bird survey with four regulars on leave. Two young men well-versed in small birds attended for the first time and were very enthusiastic. Weather was good, sighted 26 species. The three species of cuckoos are not around this time of year. Golden Whistlers and Yellow Robins are rare too. Highlight was 4 Black-shouldered Kites hovering over the Woodlands. Also, Eurasian Coots and Dusky Moorhens have tiny chicks, located along the Dingley drain. Also, great interest on our Facebook page re the photo of a Wedge-tailed Eagle!



3:31

[← roger parker in Frien...](#)


Filters

Posts you've seen

Most r...

**Friends of Braeside Park**

Top Rodger Parker · 2 Feb ·

What an absolute thrill to have been in the presence of this amazing predator.

Australia's Wedge-tail Eagle.

They have a wing span that can reach up to 2.8 m and will stand up to 1 m tall.

They can weigh up to 5 kg, and can carry up to 5 kg of prey through the air.

The patterning and layering of the feathers is remarkable.

One of several images from this mornings outing.

Bird Survey – February 2024

Five volunteers attended the bird survey, three regulars were absent. A new volunteer joined the survey as part of a volunteering opportunity provided by her employer. She expressed interest in the FOBP activities, especially in the bird survey. She seemed to fit easily into the group and mingled with everyone as well as contributing to the work of the group. Weather was cool at 8am but gradually warmed by 11am.

We sighted 23 species which is lower than usual. Some water birds have hatched new chicks in the Dingley pond area including Dusky Moorhens, Pacific Wood Ducks, Eurasian Coots and Purple Swamphens. We spotted large numbers of Noisy Min-



ers, Rainbow Lorikeets, Red Wattlebirds and Superb Fairy-wrens. The numbers of Magpie Larks and Little Wattlebirds have improved on previous months. Grey-Fantails were in still low in numbers on this survey. The highlight was identifying the call of the Golden Whistler in Heathland zone 1. It's always a thrill to find out you have learnt a new bird call.

Rosemaree MacLean



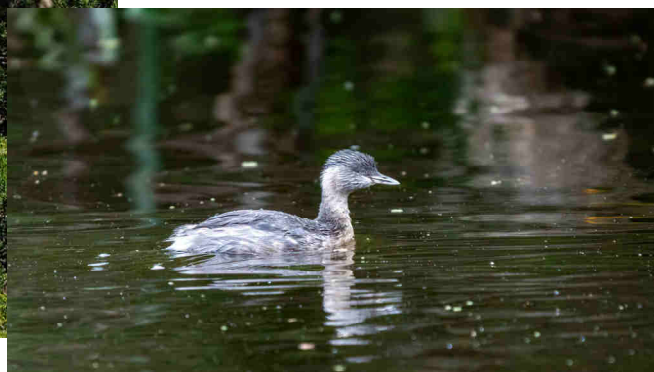
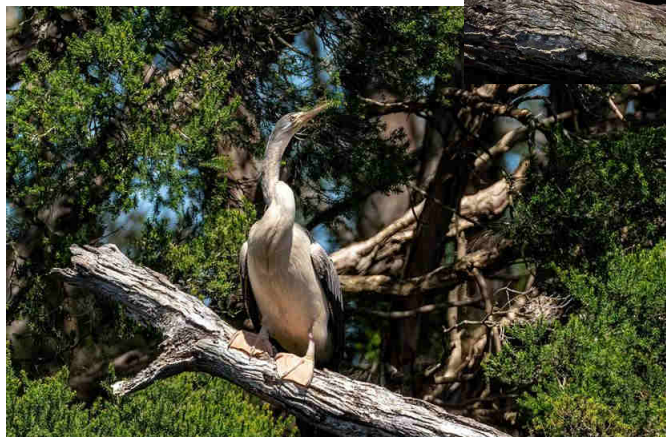
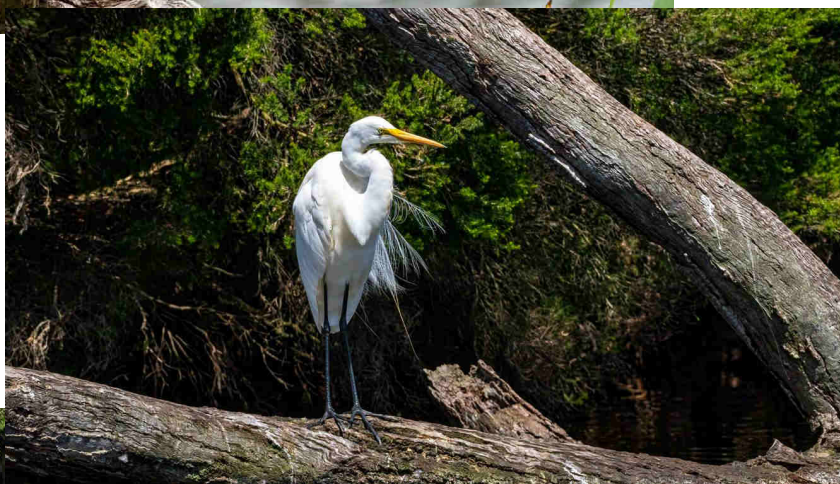
Birds of the Park

It always amazes me how lucky we are to be able to go to one of the many parks in Victoria and safely observe the local wildlife.

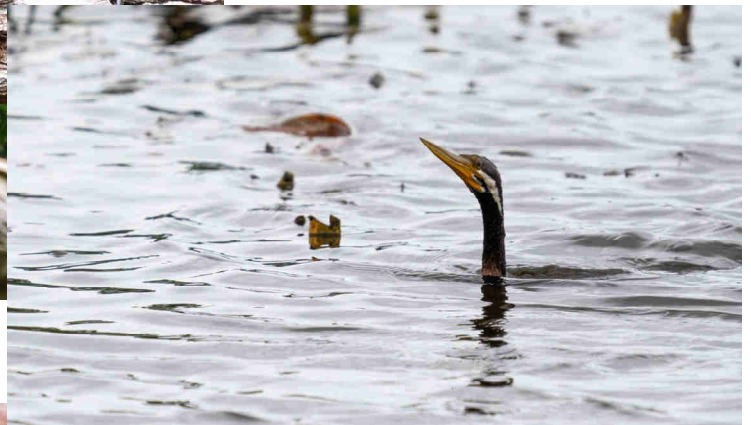
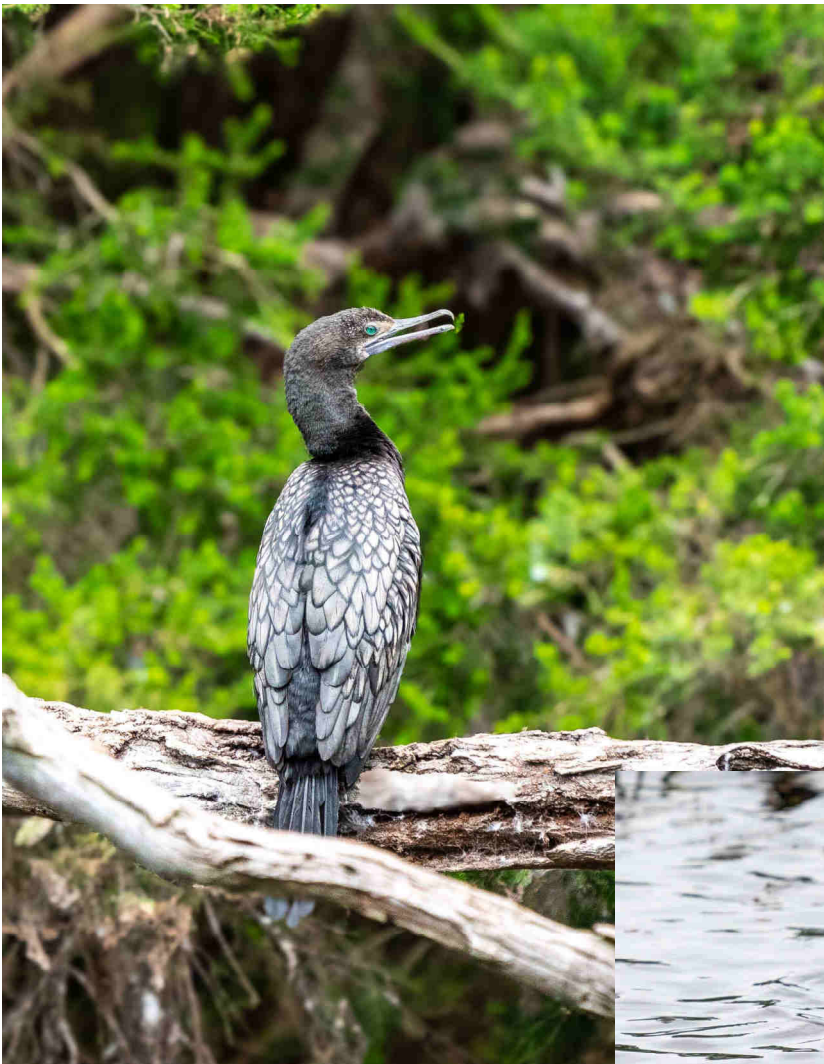
I almost always carry a camera as I have discovered when I don't that I should have - if you know what I mean.

Opportunities to photograph, observe and hear birds abound in Braeside Park. It would be a very strange day that I leave without a new treasure.

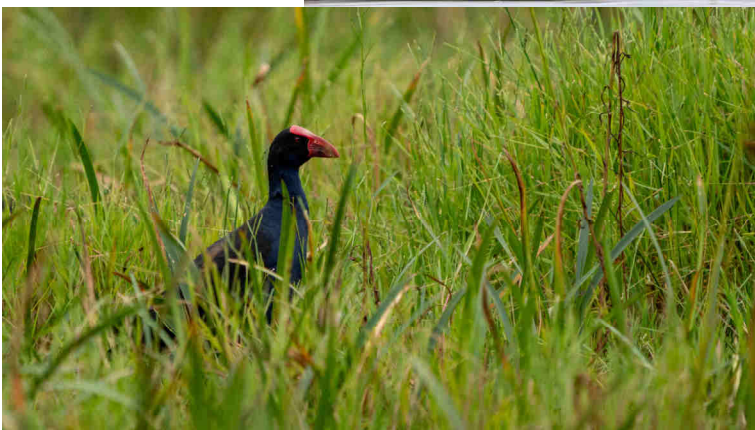
The following are a few that I took on short walk late in February.



Birds of the Park (cont.)



Birds of the Park (cont.)



David MacLean

The benefits of the birds of Braeside

Have you noticed the birdlife while at Braeside Park? Perhaps you visit because you love searching for, watching or even photographing the birds at Braeside? There may be more benefits than you think!

Birdlife at Braeside Park

Braeside Park is well known for its diverse nature, including resident and migratory birdlife. Indeed, Birddata figures indicate just over 300 bird species have been observed and reported there. This is more than either of the Victorian Royal Botanic Gardens; Braeside Park has much to offer the most casual or serious bird watcher.

Benefits of birdwatching

While many may be seeking a crystal-clear photo of a favourite or rare bird, birdwatching also can bring improvements in individuals' mental health and wellbeing. Research supports what you may have experienced yourself – spending time in nature and observing the birdlife can reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and negative moods and increase the experience of emotions such as joy, happiness, feeling calm or curious, and even awe.

These positive emotions promote your psychological wellbeing. It may be the colours of their plumage, the profile silhouette on a bare branch, or the sounds of their calls. I delight in spotting the tawny frogmouths or watching the antics of the rainbow lorikeets. Hearing bird song also has benefits with people reporting reductions in their stress levels, reducing anxiety and improvements in their ability to pay attention. The sounds of kookaburras “laughing”, the warble of a magpie or even sounds of unknown birds, always make me pause and smile.

Specifically observing, photographing or following birds in flight are all ways of actively engaging with nature. Nature engagement activities have been reported to increase people's wellbeing and connections to nature. There are many benefits of nature connection including feelings of being part of the wider natural environment. The curiosity that comes with wanting to identify a bird or to observe behaviours of a familiar or favourite species increases knowledge. While being focused on the birds, you may experience flow – a psychological state when focused on a task so much so that you are unaware of time passing – that can result in good moods. The research also suggests that when out birdwatching, noticing the emotions you are experiencing can enhance the psychological benefits for you.

Benefits are also associated with citizen science activities. Regular bird surveys provide important information about diversity. Registering bird sightings on apps such as Birddata or iNaturalist contribute to our understanding of avian behaviours. These provide opportunities for observing details or patterns, and gaining new knowledge. In addition, contributions can provide social connections – either out in the field with shared birding experiences or engaging with others through posting in on-line platforms or social media.

Of course, some visits may feel like you leave empty-handed – their camouflage too good, photos blurred or only regular species present. Even so, it is likely that you will have experienced physical (improved immunity, reduced blood pressure) or psychological (lower stress, better thinking) benefits from your time out in nature, regardless of the season. I delight in walking in the dappled light, smelling the scent of pine or eucalypts, seeing damselflies or jewel spiders, finding signs of echidnas or new blooms, watching the fog lift or the raindrops sparkle. The list is endless.

The benefits of the birds of Braeside (cont.)

Why so many benefits?

One explanation for the benefits associated with bird watching is that it is an activity in a restorative environment. Restorative environments provide an opportunity for us to refresh mentally, emotionally and cognitively. Bird watching means we get away from the usual activities and demands of everyday life, there are a lot of details that draw us in, the park and pathways support us doing things we want to do, such as being in 'out there' and noticing birdlife, and we are totally surrounded by nature allowing us to feel like we are in a whole other world. All features of a restorative environment.

How to start birdwatching?

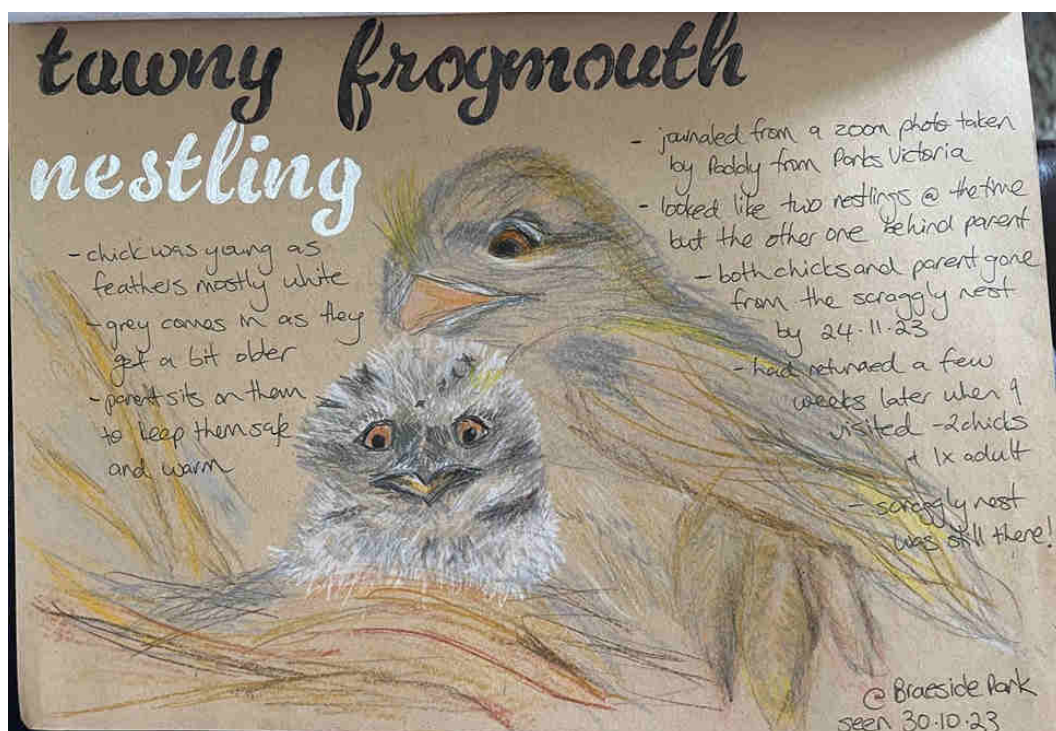
When in Braeside, look up into the canopies, or visit the bird huts or viewing platform at the wetlands. The Braeside Park Committee provides a number of opportunities to observe the birdlife, including Breakfast with the Birds, regular Bird Surveys and even the inaugural (and sold out) 2024 calendar featured many birds of Braeside. See the Friends of Braeside Park website for details

<http://www.braesideparkfriends.org.au/>

Perhaps without specifically realising it, bird watching may be your restorative activity and Braeside Park your restorative environment. As such, a visit to Braeside Park may be bringing you many more benefits than a great photo or outing.

Kathleen Bagot

Kathleen is a Friend of Braeside Park, a Parks Victoria licenced tour operator, and a certified Forest Therapy guide. She has a PhD in environmental psychology and guides nature-based wellbeing sessions for adults and families.



The Last Night Walks for 2023

Twenty participants signed on for Friday September 1st & eleven participants signed on for Friday September 15th for our social night walk with five FOBP guides for both September night walks.

The August night walk was cancelled for safety due to the bad weather & windy conditions.

We all met inside the visitor's centre, received a safety briefing by the FOBP, and learned the history of Braeside Park.

We went on different walking trails around Braeside Park depending on the number of participants. We had FOBP guides on both nights.

Which Nocturnal animals we will see depends on the night, as on some night walks we see a lot and sometimes not many.

For our last night walk for 2023, and our social night walk we saw Tawny Frogmouths, Common Ringtail & Brushtail possums, Foxes, Scorpions, Noisy Miners, Frogs & A White – Faced Heron.

The birds we saw sleeping at night in the Gum and Cypress trees were Noisy Miners. Some were sometimes within hand's reach. Not that we would disturb them in their sleep.

We left from the Visitor centre at 7 pm sharp for 1 hour 30-minute walk and returned to the visitor centre at the conclusion of the night walk to sign off. We received thanks from the participants that came on the night walk and they said that they would like come again with friends and family.

The FOBP can put on night walks at Braeside Park for families, friends and other groups on other alternate Friday nights from April thru to September as long it is booked in advance so that our FOBP guides are available.

Bookings are Essential and Numbers are limited for Safety via email:

braesideparkfriends@gmail.com or contact Margaret Hunter on 0417323460.

www.braesideparkfriends.org.au for more information.

David Boldiston

Get to know our Committee members

Spotlight on Heather Markland

What is your role with FOBP committee?

I am involved with marketing and PR for the FOBP, and I also like to assist with the bird surveys, and guided walks through the park..

How long have you been on the committee?

About 12 months.

Why did you join the committee?

To make a difference in my local urban environment and to help maintain a voice for the park into the future.. I have enjoyed walking in the park for many years, and you will see my photographs on the noticeboards around the park, as I am a keen amateur photographer..

Is there anything you want to achieve while a committee member?

To assist when I have time in any activities where assistance is required.

What is it about Braeside Park that makes you return regularly?

The peaceful environment and the photographic opportunities..

What changes to the park have you seen over the years?

I have seen changes in park rangers, and also changes in the fauna and flora of the park.

What activities in the park are you interested in doing ?

Conservation, walks, bird surveys..

Are there any activities you would like to see commenced?

I have plenty of ideas...stay tuned!

What is your vision of Braeside Park in 100 years 2124?

For it to be the same- and thriving..

What is your profession outside of Braeside Park?

I am a health care professional working full time during the week..

Vicky Paraskevas



FOBP Committee

Rear - David Boldiston, Frank Russo, Simon Flemming, David MacLean

Front - Margaret Hunter, Heather Markland, Vicky Paraskevas, Judith Sise, Rosemaree MacLean

Friends of Braeside Park Inc.

President:	Judith Sise
Vice President:	Frank Russo
Secretary:	Margaret Hunter
Assistant Secretary:	Rosemaree MacLean
Treasurer:	Vicky Paraskevas
Newsletter Editor:	David MacLean
Committee members:	David Boldiston, Simon Flemming, Heather Markland , Sophie Mills

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Join us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/327955807288240/#>

Newsletter Contributions

Thank you to all you wonderful people who have contributed to this newsletter. Your effort is appreciated.

Your articles are treated with respect and not changed in content or grammar unless authorised by you or required by law.

This newsletter is produced bi-monthly for all financial, honorary and Life members of the Friends group who have provided an email address.

Memberships are due on 1st July each year.

If you have an item to share in future editions or have any feedback in relation to this newsletter, please contact the editor at

maclean.david@gmail.com

Community Night Walks for 2024



Friends of
Braeside Park

**The Friends of Braeside Park invite
you to attend a night walk to view
the nocturnal animals of the park**

On Friday Nights at 7pm

from April thru to September

**on the 12th April, 3rd May, 7th June,
5th July, 2nd August & 6th September**

Meet at the Visitors Centre

Braeside Park, enter @ Lower Dandenong Rd, Braeside

Cost: A Gold Coin Donation per person


Numbers Limited - Bookings Are Essential

Via email: braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

or contact Margaret Hunter on 0417323460

www.braesideparkfriends.org.au for more info

The Friends of Braeside Park Activity Calendar for 2024

Activity	Time/Day	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Committee Meeting	7pm - 9pm 2nd Thursday at the Visitor's Centre	*	8	14	11	9	13	11	8	12	10	14	12
Community Projects Weekday - "The A Team"	9am - 12pm Wednesdays at the Park Office	*	7 14 21 28	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	6 13 20 27	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 *
Nursery open for plant sales	10am - 12pm 3rd Sunday	*	18	17	21	19	16	21	18	22	20	17	22
Plant Propagation Community Nursery	10am - 12pm 1st Saturday & 3rd Sunday	*	3 18	2 17	6 21	4 19	1 16	6 21	3 18	7 22	5 20	2 17	7 22
Community Waterwatch Program	9:30am - 12pm 2nd Saturday Visitors Centre	*	10	9	13	11	8	13	10	14	12	9	14
Bird Observations	8am - 11am 4th Friday Red Gum Car Park	28	23	22	26	24	28	26	23	27	25	22	27
Nightwalks	From Visitor's Centre 7pm	Nightwalks offered from April through to September. Gold Coin Donation per head Bookings Essential 0417323460				12	3	7	5	2	6	Nightwalks offered from April through to September. Gold Coin Donation per head Bookings Essential 0417323460	
Community Projects Weekends	9am - 12pm, follow the signs	*	*	*	*	*	World Environment Day Planting Sunday 2nd 9am-12pm	National Tree Planting Day Saturday 27th 9am- 12pm	*	*	*	*	*
Special Friends Group Activities are held throughout the year at various times. You must register on Park Connect for these Activities.		*		Clean Up Australia Day Sunday 3rd Meet at Visitor Centre 10am - 12pm	*	Autumn Discovery/ Walk Sunday/ 15th May, 2pm-4pm with afternoon tea	*	*	AGM Sunday 11th 2pm - 4pm with afternoon tea	Spring Discovery/ Walk Sunday/ 15th Sept, 2pm-4pm with afternoon tea	Breakfast with birds Sunday 13th Red Gum Picnic Area 7am - 9:30am	Frog Discovery Night 18th November, 7:30pm - 9pm @ Visitors	End of Year Breakup Thursday 12th @ Visitors Centre 7pm

Website www.braesideparkfriends.org.au

Email braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Community Nursery is Open on the Third Sunday of the Month 10:00am to 12:00 noon – Seedlings are \$3.00 each.