

# FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK NEWSLETTER



**BRAESIDE PARK**  
Phone 9265 7300  
Lower Dandenong Road  
Braeside 3195

[www.braesideparkfriends.org.au](http://www.braesideparkfriends.org.au)

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'A Team' activities	2
Nursery News	3
Allelopathy In Plants	4
Trees of Braeside Park	5
A Conversation About Lawns	7
Melbourne Water Grant	8
Bird Report	8
Newsletter Edition 1, 1990	9
Park Report	11
Activities calendar	12
Mystery Tour Flyer	13
Environmental Monitoring	14
National Volunteering Week BBQ	14

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



## Newsletter No 2—March/April 2013

### Wednesdays with Ernie's 'A Team'

By Bev Bancroft

Extra help is always needed for a variety of jobs: meet at the Park Office, Wednesdays 9 am - 12:00 noon with morning tea 10.30 am (3 "C"s - Cuppa, Cake & Chat)

#### MULCHING

Several mornings were spent distributing mulch in car parks 3,6,8, & lastly 1.

#### GRASSLANDS

Back to weeding & mowing & lots more to come.

#### PROPAGATION AREA

The group spent the morning removing some Goodenia bushes, relocating a lot of plants from the polyshed to the greenhouse & then greenhouse to the hardening off areas in readiness for community plantings.

Reticulation has been checked & cleaned. Heatbeds have been demossed & ready for a layer of Perlite.

Some Goodenia cuttings were done & many, many pots washed in preparation for a busy few weeks.

#### HEATHLAND - SEED COLLECTION

Several large bags of seed were collected in the Heathland. Some of this will be used for direct seeding & some for propagation of 4,000 - 5,000 plants needed for a September planting - part of the 2 million trees project.

#### BURGAN REMOVAL

The last few weeks have seen the group focus on the removal of Burgan near sheries bridge and also near Bent bridge see the below photographs.



#### CUMBUNGI

An effort has also been put into the hand removal of Cumbungi along the Dingley Waterway on the up stream side of Bent Bridge. This will improve access to collect water samples for the water quality monitoring group

#### SCHOOLS

A new group of girls from Mentone Girls Grammar have started the New Year with a orientation tour of the Park.

Then into maintenance of their garden, weeding, pruning & pricking out seedlings for community planting days. They will also be helping with the cleaning of the seed collected in the Heathland for the 2 million trees project.

More help is always needed for a variety of jobs - everyone is most welcome.

- meet at the Park Office, Wednesdays 9 am - 12 noon.

- morning tea provided

Wednesday afternoons are continuing 1 pm - 3 pm in the Friends Community Garden for anyone that may be keen to learn about propagation.

#### **Friends of Braeside Park Inc.**

Lower Dandenong Rd. Braeside 3195 (Melway Map 88 D8)

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**Treasurer:** Bev Bancroft, 9551 4578

**Editor:** Des Lucas, 0418 173 228



Braeside Wetland—Sunrise in April 2013  
Photo by Des Lucas

## Nursery News

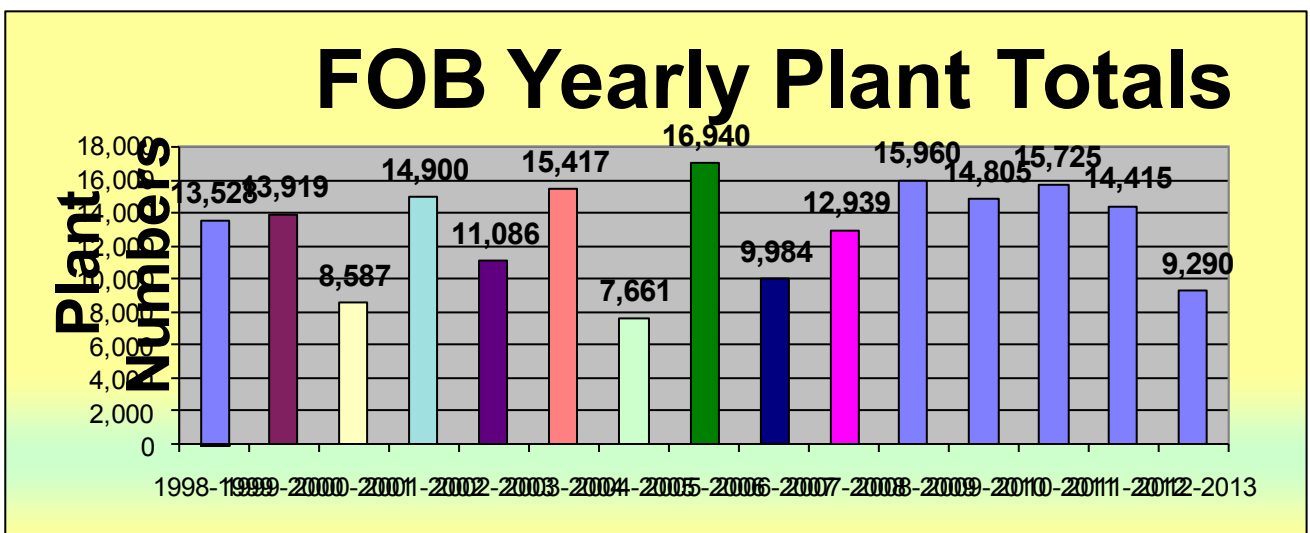
Propagation is underway to produce 2500 seedlings for the 2 Million Tree Project which is planned to be delivered later this year in September. Further details of this project will be in the next newsletter.

The Committee of the Friends have requested that an SOS be placed for members to become involved in the propagation group as numbers have now reduced to a critical level.

New people are required to assist with propagating some 10,000—15,000 plants for the coming planting season.

New active members will ensure the revegetation program continues in the park. The below graph provides an indication of the effort from volunteers, friends and staff over the last 15 years.

Please see the activity calendar on the back page for dates and times everyone is welcome.



## Allelopathy In Plants: By Nikki Phipps

Plant allelopathy is all around us; yet, many people have never even heard of this interesting phenomenon. Allelopathy can have an adverse effect in the garden, resulting in reduced seed germination and plant growth. On the other hand, allelopathic plants may also be considered Mother Nature's own weed killer.

### What is Allelopathy?

Allelopathy is a biological phenomenon where one plant inhibits the growth of another. How? Through the release of allelochemicals, certain plants can greatly affect the growth of other plants either in a good way or a bad one by leaching, decomposition, etc. In essence, plant allelopathy is used as a means of survival in nature, reducing competition from plants nearby.

### Plant Allelopathy

Various parts of plants can have these allelopathic properties, from the foliage and flowers to the roots, bark, soil, and mulch. Most all allelopathic plants store their protective chemicals within their leaves. As leaves drop to the ground and decompose, these toxins can affect nearby plants. Some plants also release toxins through their roots, which are then absorbed by other plants and trees.

Common plants with allelopathic properties can be seen in laurel, bearberry, sumac, rhododendrons, elderberry, forsythia, goldenrod aster, some types of fern, foxtail, perennial rye, tall fescue, and kentucky bluegrass.



Picture by Des Lucas - Allocasuarina showing allelopathic properties.

### Allelopathic Trees

Trees are great examples of allelopathy in plants. For instance, many trees use allelopathy to protect their space by using their roots to pull more water from the soil so other plants cannot thrive. Some use their allelochemicals to inhibit germination or impede development of nearby plant life. Most allelopathic trees release these chemicals through their leaves, which are toxic once absorbed by other plants.

Reference = <http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/info/allelopathic-plants.htm>

Other trees that are known to exhibit allelopathic tendencies include maple, pine, eucalyptus. The following local Eucalyptus species are known to have allelopathic properties, red gums, snow gums, coastal manna gums. Allocasuarina's also have allelopathic properties. Density of Soil impacts on allelopathy, in sandy soils the allelopathic affect is less whereas with heavy clay soils its stronger.

## Trees of Braeside Park:

Braeside Park has five species of eucalyptus trees being the coastal manna gum, narrow leafed peppermint, swamp gum, snow gum and the red gum. These trees dominant the landscape and play a large part in determining the local indigenous vegetation.

European man in colonising the local area cleared many of the native trees and large shrubs from the park and in some cases replaced these with other plants.

In the thirties a number of plant species were planted in the park, some of these were introduced from overseas whilst others were introduced from throughout Australia. One of these plants happens to be the Kurrajong tree or the *Brachychiton* (brak-ee-KY-ton).



This plant is located on the left hand side as you enter the nursery gate and was planted as part of the beautification works for the old sewerage treatment plant. Below is some detail about this Australian native species.

# KURRAJONG

**SCIENTIFIC NAME** *Brachychiton populneus*  
**FAMILY** STERCULIACEAE  
**CATEGORY** NATIVE TREE

The name *Brachychiton* comes from the Greek *brachys*, meaning "short", and *chiton*, meaning "tunic". This refers to its loose seed coverings.

The **Kurrajong** (*Brachychiton populneus*) is a small to medium sized tree found naturally in Australia in a diversity of habitats from wetter coastal districts to semi-arid interiors of Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. The extended trunk is a water storage device for survival in a warm dry climate. The bell-shaped flowers are variable in colour (pale to pink) while the leaves vary considerably in shape. The leaves are either simple and pointed, or may be 3 - 9 lobed. Saplings grow from a drought and fire resistant tap-rooted tuber.

Kurrajong has multiple uses. Seeds are eaten by Aboriginal people after roasting. The soft spongy wood was used for making shields, and the bark as a fibre. The leaves are also used as emergency fodder for drought-affected animal stock.



## Newsletter No 2—March/April 2013

It has been introduced as an ornamental tree to south-western Australia, South Africa, Louisiana, California, Arizona and Mediterranean countries. In Western Australia it was observed to be invasive in disturbed areas.

Horticulturists have hybridised the Kurrajong with related *Brachychiton* species, including the Queensland bottle tree (*B. rupestris*) and Illawarra Flame Tree (*B. acerifolius*) to produce new garden ornamentals.

The specific name *populneus* pertains to a perceived similarity to genus *Populus*, the Poplars.

*Brachychiton populneus*, commonly called Kurrajong, is a native to eastern Australia with much value in cultivation. Plants are tolerant of dry conditions, easy to propagate and have many interesting features.

Naturally distributed from north-eastern Victoria to Townsville and from the coast through to the semi-arid inland, *B. populneus* inhabits various well-drained soil types, often occurring amongst rocky outcrops of granite or limestone and also thriving on deeper soils in some areas.

The species *Brachychiton populneus* has two subspecies that differ in adult leaf shape. Subspecies *trilobus* has a more northerly and inland distribution and displays leaves with 3, sometimes 5, narrow lobes. The adult leaves of subspecies *populneus* have reduced side lobes and appear more like those of poplars (*Populus* species).

Flowers are bell-shaped and whitish in colour with the inner flower tube streaked purple-brown. Cultivated hybrids involving *B. populneus* display pink or red flowers. Seeds are borne within

woody, boat-shaped fruit 1-7 cm long and are surrounded by fine hairs that can cause skin and eye irritation.

Juvenile plants, which display attractive lobed leaves and swollen taproots, make good pot-plants tolerant of dry and pot-bound conditions that respond well to pruning.

Trees are typically stout with glossy-green foliage and are widely used as street trees in Australia and overseas. Native populations on agricultural land are often retained to provide dense shade and drought fodder. Leaves lopped from branches are nutritious and desirable to stock, however consumption of the fruit may cause illness. The deep rooting trees have minimal impacts on cropping and also support honey production.

Ground-up seeds can be brewed into a coffee substitute or added to bread. The swollen, carrot-like taproot is a nutritious and agreeable vegetable and the gum exudate is also edible. Kurrajong fibre taken from the stem has been used in twine and netting manufacture.

Propagation is from seed or cutting. Seeds are readily germinated and immersion in warm-hot water then soaking for 12 hours enhances success. Care must be taken to avoid the irritating hairs surrounding the seeds. Cuttings from plants with desirable characteristics may be grafted onto seedling rootstock. Plants to 2 m respond well to transplantation if the swollen taproot is conserved and the branches trimmed to reduce water loss.

While sapling growth is often very slow, great improvements are possible through soil cultivation, watering and care. Plants have numerous pests and diseases but show resilience to defoliation. Internal infections are best avoided by application of anti-fungal treatments to open wounds. It should also be noted that kurrajongs may cause nuisance from their large woody fruit, deep roots that clog drains and potential for escape into native vegetation (e.g. near Perth). Other *Brachychi-*



## Newsletter No 2—March/April 2013

ton species in cultivation include *B. acerifolius* (Flame Tree), *B. discolor* (Lacebark), *B. rupestris* (Bottle Tree) and *B. gregorii* (Desert Kurrajong).

### References

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brachychiton\\_populneus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brachychiton_populneus)

<http://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/interns-2002/brachychiton-populneus.html>

### AN IMAGINERY CONVERSATION THE CREATOR MIGHT HAVE WITH ST. FRANCIS ABOUT LAWNS

This article comes from the Indigenous Flora and Fauna Newsletter and was printed in the Friends of Braeside Newsletter of March 2000.

“Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What on earth is going on down there? What happened to the tussocks and wildflowers and stuff that I start eons ago? I had a perfect, no maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blossoms attracted butterflies, honey bee and flocks of song birds. I expect to see a vast garden of colours by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.”

“It’s the tribes that settled here Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers weeds and went to great expense to kill them and replace them with grass.”

“Grass? But it’s so boring. It’s not colourful. It doesn’t attract butterflies, birds or bees, only grubs and sod worms. It’s temperamental with temperatures. Do the Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?”

“Apparently Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.”

“The spring rains and cool weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites really happy.”

“Apparently not Lord. As soon as it grows a little they cut it – sometimes twice a week.”

“They cut it? Do they bale it like hay?”

“Not exactly Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.”

“They bag it. Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?”

“No Sir, Just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.”

“Now let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow they cut it off and pay to throw it away.”

“Yes, sir.”

“These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.”

“You aren’t going to believe this Lord. When the grass stops growing fast they drag out their hoses and pay money to water it so they can continue to mow it and get rid of it.”

“What nonsense! At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. After awhile they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It’s natural circle of life.”

“You’d better sit down Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and have them hauled away.”

“No! What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots during winter and to keep the soil loose and moist?”

“After throwing away your leaves they go out and buy something called mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.”

“And where do they get this mulch?”

“They cut down trees and grind them up.”

“Enough! I don’t want to think about this anymore. Saint Catherine you’re in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?”

“Dumb and Dumber, Lord. It’s a real stupid movie about .....

“Never mind. I think I have just heard the whole story.”

## Newsletter No 2—March/April 2013

### Melbourne Water Grant

The Friends received \$7,040.00 from Melbourne Water River Incentives Program.

The proposed work will control weeds along the riparian zone as well as in fill planting between existing vegetation to improve the current environmental & habitat values of the Dingley Waterway.

The residential area to the north of the Park (Dingley Village) provides numerous weed species via the drainage/waterway system. This will continue to be an issue into the future. Weeds that are not controlled along the waterway present a risk to other important areas of Braeside Park and include the Heathland and Diuris areas.

The Friends also received \$990.00 Community Support Grant for administration, postage, advertising, stationary etc.

### **Bird Report — Bird Banding – Braeside Heathland**

When is a Pink Robin not pink?

Mark Antos is an Environmental Scientist – Fauna for Parks Victoria. He has worked for Parks Victoria for the last 6 years and prior to that 5 years at Birds Australia. Mark also was an active member of the Friends group some years ago.

Mark recently attended a bird banding session with Malcolm Browns group and sent the following email to the Parks Victoria Conservation Network. It is from here that it was picked up for the Friends Newsletter – So thank you Mark for your comments and photographs.



This juvenile Pink Robin was recently captured as part of a long term bird banding project at Braeside Park. The females and young lack the flamboyant colouring of adult males. It was a surprise to find one in an urban park. They usually breed in gloomy gullies in wet foothill forests but disperse to coastal scrubs and drier woodlands for the winter. This is a timely reminder that this time of year is great for bird watching as all sorts of passage migrants can turn up in unusual places and mixed species feeding flocks are starting to form.

While the proportionately large eye in relation to the head is a clear adaptation to the dark conditions where these birds live, just why it should have such bright yellow soles on otherwise black legs remains a mystery to me (I asked an evolutionary biologist but he just shrugged his shoulders).

### **Newsletters**

Over the coming editions of this newsletter there will be entire newsletters printed from the Friends Archives. The first of these is the very first edition of January 1990. These newsletters provide a link to the excellent work that friends members have been undertaking for over 23 years. Please enjoy your read.



## Newsletter No 2—March/April 2013

### FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE METROPOLITAN PARK.

NEWSLETTER NO. 1.

This is the first newsletter from the Friends of Braeside Metropolitan Park. I hope that regular newsletters will be available from now on. The people who indicated on the "Open Day" that they were interested in forming a friends group came from a wide <sup>area</sup> of the south eastern suburbs. It will not be possible to regularly ensure information will be included in local newspapers and I would appreciate it if word of mouth became a regular source of communication for our group. It is surprising how many people do not know of Braeside Park and its wonderful setting. Please talk to your friends.

The friends group is for families. The activities are planned so all family members can participate. The "Frolics" will happen during the day or early evening and several meetings each year will be planned so all family members can join in. It is planned that the March meeting will be "open" and the anticipated topic will be about the fauna to be found in the park. Watch the visitors centre notice board for details about the date and time.

Should you have received information about the next frolic and working bee make sure that you note the dates published with this newsheet. We have put the functions back a week from an earlier notice you may have received.

FROLIC SUNDAY 18th February 1990 2.P.M.

WORKING BEE SUNDAY MARCH 4th 1990 10 A.M. to 1P.M.

### FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP.

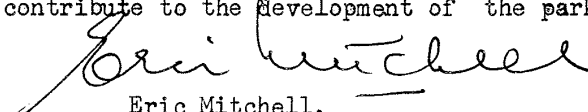
Enclosed with this newsletter is an application form for membership of the group. Please consider joining us.

The Friends Group would like families to become involved in the working bees that are planned from time to time. Pick an activity that your family can join in and enjoy. The working bees are planned by park staff and are part of the planned development of the park.

If you and your family help on these occasions you will have a real feeling of ownership of the park. Many of the activities are labour intensive such as hand weeding in special areas or on some occasions tree planting.

Your help frees the park staff for other special duties.

Hoping you will feel you can contribute to the development of the park,



Eric Mitchell.  
President Friends Group.

Newsletter No 2—March/April 2013

FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE METROPOLITAN PARK.

OPEN DAY.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 18th 1990.

STARTING TIME 2 P.M.

WALK THE NEW TRACK TO THE WETLANDS.....

Environmental activities are planned to participate in along the way.

Billy tea and damper for afternoon tea on your return....

PLAN YOUR DAY TO INCLUDE A BBQ. LUNCH IN THE PARK OR PERHAPS FOR THE EVENING MEAL OR BOTH.

WORKING BEE.

SUNDAY 4th MARCH 1990

TIME 10 A.M. to 1P.M.

Activity 1..... Building nesting platforms in the wetlands for the IBIS.

Activity 2..... Prepare beach areas in the wetlands for wading birds.

Activity 3..... Specialised weeding on the islands in the wetland area.

PLEASE WEAR SUITABLE CLOTHING ..... ESPECIALLY FOOTWEAR.

*As adequate is available please notify  
Andrew Graystone 551-1640  
Eric Marchill 546-6656  
if attending this working bee.*

# Newsletter No 2—March/April 2013

## Park Report

### Rabbits:

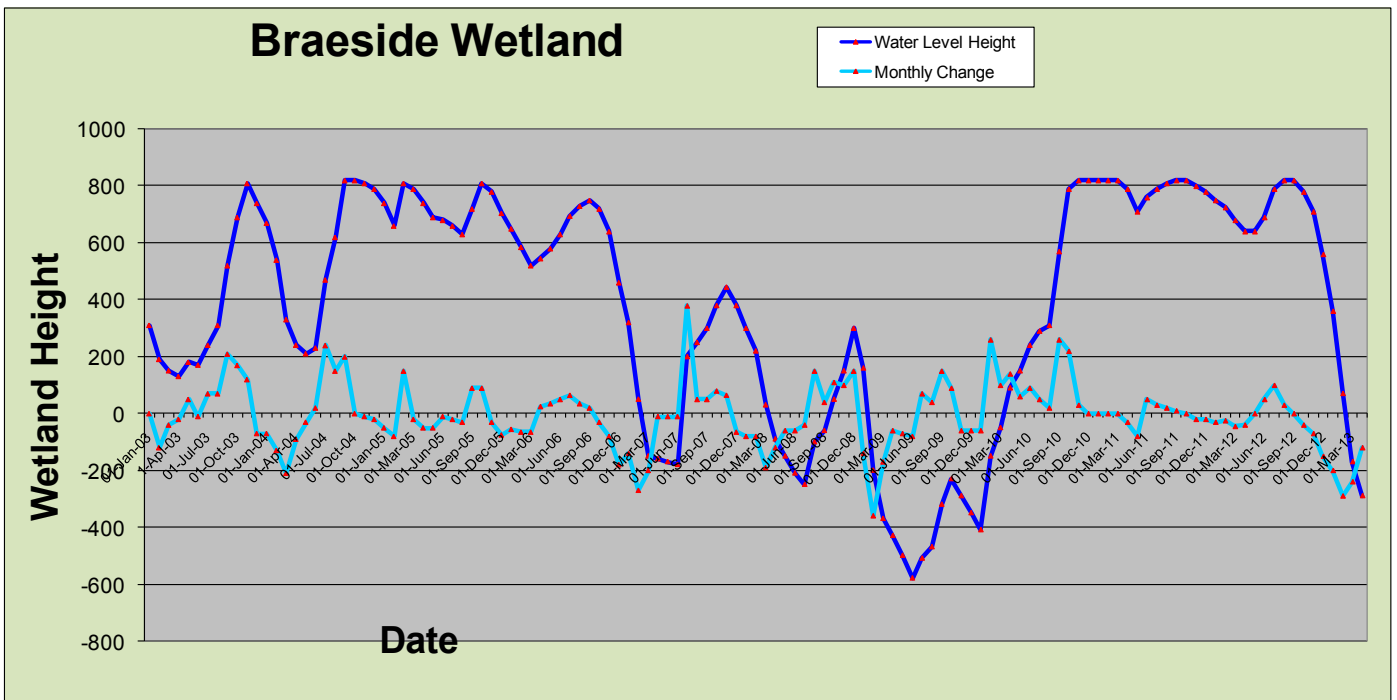
During March a bating program was delivered to reduce the rabbit population. This program was delivered using Pindone carrots and was complete prior to the school holiday period.

Monitoring has identified there is a few hot spots where there is still a healthy number of rabbit being recorded. These areas will receive a follow-up program during May.

Following this fumigations and ripping of warrens will occur along with fencing and harbour removal.

### Wetland:

The summer period has been rather hot and with little significant rainfall. This has caused the wetland water levels to reduce progressively. The below graph provides an indication of how things have changes since 2003.



You can see that the last three years have been great in maintaining the water level but there has been a decline since September of last year.

### Litter:

The amount if litter picked up by Park staff is steadily increasing. This litter includes litter from home improvement projects or old beds and house hold furniture including white goods.

### Telford Picnic Area:

Progressively over the last 5 years works have been undertaken to improve the picnic area. These works include the replacement of the barbecues, retopping the trails, mulching underneath the plantations, new plastic seating and uplifting of the vegetative canopy to increase the visual amenity of the picnic area.

Des Lucas—Ranger in Charge.

## Activity Calendar 2013:

### **Weekday Project:**

Every Wednesday with Ranger staff commencing at 9:00 am from the Park Office. Activities can include, weeding, mowing weeds, mulching, planting, fencing etc.

### **Community Garden:**

3rd Sunday monthly 9:30 am to 12:00 Noon.

A short meeting followed by various garden and nursery activities.

### **Nursery—Plant Propagation:**

1st Saturday, 1st Monday and 3rd Sunday fro 10:00 am to 12:00 Noon.

Undertaking a variety of propagation activities.

### **Committee Meeting**

The 4th Monday, monthly at 1:00 pm at the Visitor Centre.

The Committee meets to make decisions about the running of the group.

### **Water Quality Monitoring:**

The 3rd Tuesday, monthly at 9:00 from the Park Office.

Water Samples are taken and monitored from the Dingley Waterway and Wetland.

### **Bird Observations:**

A set bird observation is completed monthly around the main wetland.

Call Ranger Glen Oliphant on 9265 7300 to become park of this program.

### **Weekend Activities:**

**Mystery Walk:** Sunday 19th May 2013, 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm.

Commencing from the Visitor Centre with Ranger Staff. Afternoon Tea Supplied.

RSVP to 9265 7300.

**Tree Planting:** Sunday 2nd June 2013, 9:00 am to 12:00 noon.

Entering the Park from Lower Dandenong Road follow the signs to the planting location.

### **Special Activities:**

Nightwalks are offered from April through to September. Gold Coin Donation. For details and bookings please call 9551 4578.

**Community Nursery is Open on the Third Sunday of the Month 10:00 to 12:00 noon – Seedlings \$2.00 each.**

### **S O S Seeking Your Support**

#### **Do you have spare time**

**are interested in the environment,**

**like learning and broadening your life experiences,**

**like meeting like meeting and socialising with like minded people,**

**get enjoyment from achieving a task or project,**

**sharing knowledge and experiences with others,**

**like leaving a leaving an everlasting legacy and like parks and what they offer to the community?**

**If so then please consider becoming actively involved with the Friends Activities especially the propagation group where the numbers have been reduced by three.**

# **The Friends of Braeside Park**

**Invite you to Mystery Tour.**

**Ranger Staff will be leading a tour of Braeside Park.**

**Come and discover the park whilst learning about its hidden secrets and hear how things have changed within the park over time.**

**When: Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013**

**Where: Braeside Visitor Centre**

**Melway Reference = 88 – D8**

**Enter the Park from Lower Dandenong Road**

**Time: 2:00 pm till 4:00 pm**

**Please Bring: Water bottle, snacks, binoculars, camera  
sturdy footwear, clothing to suit weather conditions of  
the day, insect repellent and camera.**

**Cost: Free – Afternoon Tea Provided**

## Newsletter No 2—March/April 2013

### Environmental Monitoring Program

Over the last few months environmental rangers across the following group of Parks in South Eastern Melbourne (Braeside & Karkarook, Dandenong Valley Parklands, Berwick Parklands) have identified that there is a large gap in current environmental information.

Once this was identified the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria was approached and agreed to becoming a partner in developing and delivering a monitoring program over the next few years.

The project has now progressed to a stage where additional participants are being requested.

This is a great opportunity to become involved in and gaining knowledge, experience and meeting new people whilst recording data which will help to develop key environmental management decisions for the future?

If interested in this program please call the park office on 9265 7300 and provide details as per the table.

The below table provides details of what you can become involved in.

Details			What you would like to be involved in?					Where?				
Name	Telephone	Email	B a t s	B i r d s	C a m e r a	F r o g s	R e p t i l e s	S p o t t i n g	S a n d b e l t	C a r d i n i a	D a n d e n o n g V a l l e y	L y s t e r f i e l d

### National Volunteer Week 13—19th May 2013

To celebrate National Volunteer Week a thank you barbecue will be provided for volunteers.

When: Wednesday 15th May 2013 at 12:00 Noon

Where: The Park Office

RSVP: To the Park Office on 9265 7300.

Contributions from, Mark Antos, Bev Bancroft, Summer Ranger John Patykowski & Park Staff.

Contact us via email on [information@braesideparkfriends.org.au](mailto:information@braesideparkfriends.org.au)

Postal Address — PO Box 608, Braeside, Victoria. 3195

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