



## THE FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK



Healthy Parks  
Healthy People®



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**For the ongoing survival of the  
Friends Group & the many programs  
delivered Urgent Help Is Required**

**See the last page of this newsletter**

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



## 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 at 10.30 am (3 "C"s - Cuppa, Cake & Chat)

### GRASSLANDS

We have really been busy - a lot of weeding (bags & bags), mowing and planting of grasses mostly Danthonias & Themeda species.

It was a real picture in Spring - Choc Lillies, Burchardia & Caesia Pimelia & the Purple Diuris (over 100) and regeneration of our grasses.

Last Wednesday (last volunteer day) - coldest day, rain & hail. Lucky that we had morning tea to keep our hands warm - finished early at 10:30 am - TOO WET !!!

### MULCHING

Many mornings have been spent on our favourite - mowing & raking mulch ( after some weeding) in car-parks 5,6,7 & 8. Some of the team spent time helping with the chipper and others have been out & about with fence mapping.

### VISITORS CENTRE

A morning spent here weeding, mulching & general tidy up. Looks great.

### COMMUNITY GARDEN

Ernie away - A very productive morning spent clipping, pruning, weeding & mulching and also general maintenance of the area.

Great Job - well done to the team. Comments on the Open Day were that it all looked fantastic.

### SCHOOLS

Mentone Girls Grammar have completed their year of community involvement. They have been a tremendous help with seed cleaning, pot washing and helped in producing over 4,000 grasses for our grassland project. This has been very much appreciated.

Wednesday afternoons will continue 1 pm - 3 pm in the Friends Community Garden returning Wednesday 8th January, 2014 after the Xmas break.

### Resuming From Wednesday February 5th, 2014

Wednesdays 9 am - 12 noon

- meet at the Park Office

- morning tea provided

Help is needed for a variety of jobs - everyone is most welcome.

## Help Urgently Required:

**Are you interested in becoming the editor for the Friends Newsletter?**

**If so please call Margaret Hunter on the below number.**

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

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**Treasurer:** Bev Bancroft, 9551 4578

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

**This Edition of the Newsletter will provide a further insight into some of the groups that use our parks.**

### **Alpha Autism Southern Transitions Group.**



Alpha autism is an organisation specialising in the assistance of adults of all ages with ASD. From community centres and our own permanent sites in nearly all corners of Melbourne, we offer structured support with a focus on communication, social skills and other living skills.

Parks Victoria has joined us in providing a volunteer work program for a small local Alpha group known as Southern Transitions. It has been great

to see how readily this group have taken to learning skills around the work we are doing for Parks Victoria. Each individual has their own strengths and also faces their own challenges and while working with them this year, I was pleased to realise that each of these challenges, given the relevant planning and communication, can be met with specialised support. The program which involves learning the safe use of land care equipment for basic grounds



maintenance has been enjoyable for our small team and it has also highlighted the individuality of each person and the unique nature of their specific way of learning. They should be and are commended for their efforts so far. The support that our clients, and we as an organisation have been provided by Parks Victoria specifically Head Ranger Des Lucas, is an indication of what great potential exists within this partnership. Working in lovely scenery on meaningful activity in the park has been fantastic for the group and we look forward to continuing in this direction next year.

The Bus Tour of Dandenong's Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October 8.30 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.

By John Burns and Margaret Hunter

At 8:30 am John Prestt fired up the engine of the bus, and we departed on our Mystery tour of the Dandenong Ranges.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> stop was at **John's Hill Reserve** in the Shire of Yarra Ranges. There is a Trig Point at this location with wonderful views of the Yarra Valley, Port Philip & Western Port Bays, French Island, Cardinia Reservoir also the track to Emerald. Des Lucas mentioned that he was born in the Ferntree Gully Hospital and grew up in Emerald.

Next we stopped for morning tea at **Grants Picnic Ground** and as we prepared the food for morning tea, we were surrounded by a flock of Sulphur Crested Cockatoos and about four Crimson Rosellas. The rosellas landed on several peoples shoulder, and took great delight in eating the fruit cake out of that person's hand. This proves that Heather Lamond makes a very good fruit cake.

**Alfred Nicholas Gardens**

Alfred Nicholas Gardens are the original gardens of the historic "Burnham Beeches" estate.

Alfred Nicholas purchased two ten acre selections in 1929 to build his home. The property was soon named "Burnham Beeches" after the original estate in Slough, England.



Alfred travelled to England where he met Mr. Percival Trevaskis who was employed at Kew Gardens. Percy was offered the position of head gardener at Burnham Beeches.

Percy set about designing the garden. The plan included rockeries, pools, waterfalls and an ornamental lake as the main features.

**Williams Nursery Site**

Upon entry we slipped, stumbled, and climbed over a fallen tree trunk, on route to a 100 year old Giant Redwood. The Girth of this tree is over 15 metres and it stands approximately 80 metres tall. This plant is truly a majestic specimen. The group was thankful that the new boardwalk had been constructed across the sassafrass creek otherwise access to this site would have been rather difficult.

Des Lucas's grandfather lived in this area, he was well served with an in ground swimming pool within a short distance from the house.

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### ***Sky High Lookout***

This was where the tour stopped for lunch, a wander around the Secret Garden, view from the lookout deck and a couple of us went to check out the G gauge train circling around the perimeter of the ceiling of the Maze Café.

### ***Kyeema Memorial Cairn***

A DC-2 Aircraft on route from Adelaide to Essendon Airport crashed here on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 1938 killing all 18 passengers on board.

### ***Bourke's Lookout Mount Corhanwarrabul***

Des Lucas led 15 people up a very steep track, which a mountain goat would think twice before proceeding. This climb was reminiscent of Hanging Rock, because only 13 arrived at the top! Where there was this wonderful level and wide track that led us back to the bus; one wonders why Des led us up this torturous track where one slip you could have rolled from 628 metres high down to Montrose.

The view as Des had promised was one of the best in the Dandenongs.

### ***R.J. Hammer***

There are 150 species of trees planted in large clumps, to make it easier to distinguish each variety . Because of the potential of rain, it was decided to drive through on the dirt track to the Silvan Reservoir. Where we did another drive through.

### ***Kalorama Lookout***

Once again the view was picturesque.

I think watching the two sheep dogs trying to outsmart each other in chasing and retrieving the ball that was thrown down the steep valley was the highlight of this location.

### ***Homeward Bound***

On arrival at Braeside Park the members of the tour thanked John for his excellent driving & Des for his excellent information and guidance.

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### WILD NATIVE FOOD PLANTS

By Joanne Cody

Indigenous Australian plants that were used by the traditional Koori peoples of this land as foods and are now popular gourmet cuisine food ingredients available in our supermarkets and on some restaurant menus. Organic wheat pasta flavoured with lemon myrtle, native mint or wattle seed; jars of Quandong compote, bush tomato chutney or Kakadu plum jelly can be used to give our food dishes a native Australian flavour.

Plants such as the wild spinach *Tetragonia tetragonoides* or Warrigal Greens which is found in all States except NT. The early botanist Joseph Banks took its seeds to grow back at Kew Gardens where it became popular English summer spinach and was available for sale in seed catalogues. It was eaten here in our early colonial days. It is a leafy ground cover to 1.5m wide. It prefers moist, free draining soil in part shade. Leaves are edible raw or cooked. Young leaves are less bitter, and an excellent spinach substitute.



The Kakadu green plum or billygoat plum *Terminalia ferdinandiana* in 1983 was discovered to contain 3150mg or vitamin C per 100g. This is the highest source of this vitamin in the world. The plum grows on a tree in the NT where this fruit has been eaten by the native aborigines for thousands of years. The tree also exudes an edible gum that was roasted and eaten. The plum is a small fruit the size of an olive. It has a sour taste with a mild apricot flavour. It is used in jellies, sauces and as a spread.

A native Australian nut that we are all familiar with is the macadamia from the tree *Macadamia integrifolia*. This nut was originally developed into a commercial crop by seeds shipped to Hawaii in the early 1900's by the Americans.

Wild bush tomatoes *Solanum chippendale* & *S. ellipticum* are high in minerals of potassium & calcium, vitamins B and C. The explorer Captain Charles Sturt survived severe scurvy from being fed a large pot of small acid berries that were probably a species of this bush tomato. Deaths from scurvy were a common problem on the convict ships and in the early colonial days. Apparently those that regularly ate wild foods such as desert limes, currant bush *Leptomeria acida*, gums and "scurvy grass" which was a cress called *Lepidium oleraceum* may have ingested enough vitamin C to prevent this disease. As Captain Cook encouraged his crew to eat leafy wild plants which included the wild spinach which they had previously discovered in NZ he was awarded on his return to England the Royal Society's medal for his victory over scurvy. The green fruits grow on small shrubs with purple flowers in the outback. The fruit in the heat of the sun would often shrivel up to form a "raison" which the aborigines regarded as a precious food. It could be ground to a paste with water, then covered with red ochre and dried in the sun to be stored for use later. Bush tomato has a strong flavour of tamarillo and caramel. A ground powder and chutney is available to add to your salads, sauces and salsas.

Quandong fruits from *Santalum acuminatum* are high in potassium and Vitamin C. They grow as shrubs or small trees and were used by our early settlers in puddings and preserves. The oily seeds are also edible and were gathered by the aborigines during the drought for their high (25%) protein content. The bright crimson red round fruits are sour/tart with an apricot/peach flavour. They can be made into jams, pies and as a sauce for game meats.

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### WILD NATIVE FOOD PLANTS, cont....

Lemon myrtle *Backhousia citriodora* is a rainforest tree. The leaf has an aroma like lemongrass and lime. I have been using the dried leaves for a refreshing tea and in fruit punches. It is available as oil and in soaps and hair shampoos. Use dry leaves or powder products with fish, chicken, biscuits and cheese cake.

*Hibiscus heterophyllus* (Native Rosella) grows in Qld and NSW. It is an attractive, rounded shrub which grows to 2 metres. It needs well moist, drained soil and partial shade. The leaves and flower calyx has quite a sour and acidic taste, hence it is also known as native sorrel. This plant is still a useful food for Aborigines of the tropical north. Buds can be cooked and made into rosella jam. Buds can be eaten raw in salads or boiled as a vegetable. Petals can be eaten in salad or made into a tea.

There is also a Wild Rosella plant *Hibiscus sabdariffa* that was introduced from early fishermen from Indonesia and now grown in Queensland. It has a tart flavour but with a more fruity palatable taste.

*Tasmannia lanceolata* (Mountain Pepper) grows in TAS, Vic & NSW. It is a not related to the true pepper but is a bushy shrub or tree to 3m but needs deep rich soil and some shade. Protect the plant from wind. The bark has been used as a remedy for scurvy as well and was used by the Europeans in the nineteenth century as a herbal remedy known as winter's bark. J.H. Maiden a former director of the Sydney Botanical Gardens mentioned this tree with potential as a pepper or allspice substitute. The essential oil is used as a flavouring in confectionary and some trials are been carried out to widen its use. The leaves and berry are both edible as a very hot, spicy & biting flavour. Can be used fresh or dried. Great for seasoning meat and casseroles.



*Prosanthera ovalifolia* and *P.rotundifolia* (Native Mint Bush) grows in Qld, Vic, NSW & SA. It is a dense, rounded shrub to 2m. It likes moist & well drained soils in sun to part shade. Leaves have a delightful mint aroma which is excellent in jams, jellies and as a tea. The leavers contain aromatic oils and *P. Rotundifolia* or round leaved mint bush was used as a patented medicine for stomach flatulent disorders in colonial days.



*Viola hederacea* (Native Violet) grows in Vic, Qld, NSW, TAS, & SA. It is a creeping, mat forming groundcover but needs a moist spot, and some shade. It has delicate white and purple flowers which are edible, and make salads look amazing or add to your summer punches. This plant is available from our Community nursery to buy for your garden.

*Trachymen anisocarpa* (Wild Parsnip) has an edible tap root that I tasted at the recent spring heath land walk. It is a leafy annual or biennial plant with spectacular flowers that can grow up to 1m. It can grow readily from seed and likes a moist sandy soil in the sun to part shade.

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### WILD NATIVE FOOD PLANTS, cont....

And now to tempt your palate for the taste of true native flavours here are a couple of recipes:-

**ORIENTAL MYRTLE DRESSING**-1 tspn soya sauce or tamari, 6 leaves of lemon myrtle ground or use powder, 6 tbspn of macadamia oil or substitute with another nut oil or olive , 2 tspn rice wine vinegar (or white wine vinegar) and lemon juice to taste. Blend all ingredients together in a jar and pour over a salad which may include warrigal greens or weed greens such as chickweed or dandelion. Toss in some native violet or heartsease flowers for colour.

**MACADAMIA & KAKADU PLUM ICE CREAM**-3 ½ cups natural yoghurt (Lemon myrtle honey and Bush honey yoghurts are now available to use as an alternative), 1 tbspn honey (omit if using honey yoghurt), 2 tbspn thick cream, 2 tbspn lemon or lime juice, 50g macadamia nuts coarsely chopped, 2 heaped tbspn Kakadu plum spread (use dark plum or Damson jam etc instead). Beat the yoghurt, plum spread and honey until smooth. Fold in the cream, add lemon juice & stir. Pour into a bowl and place in freezer. Remove and beat mixture every 15 minutes during the first hour of freezing. Serve with berries as a summer option and garnish with native violet flowers.

References:- Sustainable Gardening Australia website. CERES website Bush Foods Catalogue. Book Wild Lime Cooking from the bush food garden by Juleigh Robins 1996. Book Bush Medicine by Tim Low 1990. Book Australian Medicinal Plants by E.V. Lassak & Tim Mc Carthy 1983.

November Sunrise—Braeside Park Wetland—Photo Des Lucas





**Portraits of Braeside Park—Poems by Jill Dawson:**

**The Wetland Birds**

The wetlands serve our environment's needs,  
performing a number of special deeds;  
enticement of birdlife is matter of fact,  
in this most diverse of all habitats.

You can watch birds bask as well as perform  
from atop the wetland's viewing platform;  
many a habit may discover  
as they paddle and play, glide or hover.

Of course you'll witness the water waders,  
local like heron, spoonbill and ibis;  
permanent water ensures they'll be found,  
wading in shallows all year round.

The highly amusing white pelican,  
contrasts with the more majestic black swan;  
together they form an impressive sight,  
quite colourful rather than black and white.

Wanderers such as the Japanese snipe,  
visit us with the sharp-tailed sandpiper,  
migrating from the northern hemisphere,  
when winter is there and summer is here.

We've acquired a wealth of worldly wisdom  
about wetlands as an ecosystem,  
we should feel proud that we have such a place,  
where so many birds choose to call home base.



## Park Report:

### Dingley Village Men's Shed:



#### Tree Works:

The large botryiodes tree has been removed from between the two sheds, it was presenting a double risk to the building. Firstly through the root system upsetting the long term structure of the building and secondly through limbs falling onto the roof.

The above photo's show the tree before the works commence and again after the works were completed.

The stump has been left at about 12 feet which will allow for further sculpting work in the future.

#### Minister Ryan Smith Visit for Men's Shed Announcement:

The Minister for Environment Ryan Smith attending the Park on the 18th of November to announce the granting of a lease to the Men's Shed Group.

#### Shed Clean up:

The shed since early October have been cleaned up substantially with overall 4 13 metre bins of hard rubbish being removed. During the clean-up asbestos was found in a portion of the old art shed—this has been removed via an approved asbestos contractor. The big task of refurbishing both sheds has commenced but there is still further cleaning required to remove the possum poo and urine stains.

#### Risk Trees:

A further Cypress Tree has been removed from the upper portion of the Cypress Drive following a wind storm which cracked the main trunk. It's a shame these trees are beginning to break down with extreme weather events but it does present the opportunity to further enhance the park with sculpted art work. There is now another stump which requires the attention of a sculptor.

Des Lucas, Ranger in Charge.

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Photo's by Linda Atkins:



### Bird Report:

Steve McDonald has reporting observing the following interesting bird species, Pink Eared Duck, Freckled Duck, Spotted Harrier, Musk Duck in the woodlands wetlands, Rufous Fantail and Scared King Fisher.

Staff have observed Latham's Snipe, Wedge Tailed Eagle x 2

Margaret and Ian Langdon have completed a survey of the Wetlands recording 64 species and 935 birds.

## Activity Calendar 2014

### 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 from 10:00 am to 12:00 Noon.  
Undertaking a variety of propagation activities. To confirm your attendance call 9551 4578.

### 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.

### 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.**

Join us on Facebook



Newsletter contributions from, Bev Bancroft, John Burns, Joanne Cody, Margaret and Ian Langdon, Steve McDonald and Park Staff

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

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