



# THE FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK

# NEWSLETTER

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**Help Help Help — The committee need your assistance**

**This call is to every member—if you are interested in being active in the management of the Friends then please come to the committee meetings on the Second Thursday of each month at the park office commencing at 7:00 pm**



### Braeside Park

Lower Dandenong Road,  
Braeside 3195  
Melway Map 88 D8

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

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# Friends Activities Report

By Judith Sise, President

## MENTONE CUBS NIGHT PROWL

Mentone Cubs enjoyed a night prowling at the park on 8<sup>th</sup> September. The night prowling allowed the cubs to complete their Environment Badges. The Cubs made a card to say thank you to the Group for the wonderful night walk.



## YOGA IN THE PARK

Karli’s friend Julia, a recently trained Yoga teacher, volunteered to provide free yoga sessions in the Park from Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October till 8<sup>th</sup> November between 9am and 10 am. It has proved to be a delightful activity for those of us who participated. On the first morning as I stretched upwards, I heard loud, distinctive “Kee-ow”, followed by harsh screeches and overhead flew a small group of

Yellow-Tailed Cockatoos. Later, lying down to practice deep breathing after some intricate balancing exercises, I watched a sextet of pelicans drifting across the park. How relaxing! Last week, as I drew a deep breath and twisted to the right, I saw an echidna on a log. I swear he had joined the group but when he was suddenly confronted by 10 faces looking at him, he got all shy and slipped off the log and disappeared. There are still a couple of Sundays left to join the Yoga Group. You won’t regret it! Thanks Karli and Julia for providing this lovely activity. Judith Sise President



**Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoo’s Perched in a dead tree along the Self Guided trail—Photographer—Des**

## Newsletter Contributions

Thank you to Judith Sise, Margaret Hunter, Bev Bancroft and park Staff for contributing to the November — December newsletter.

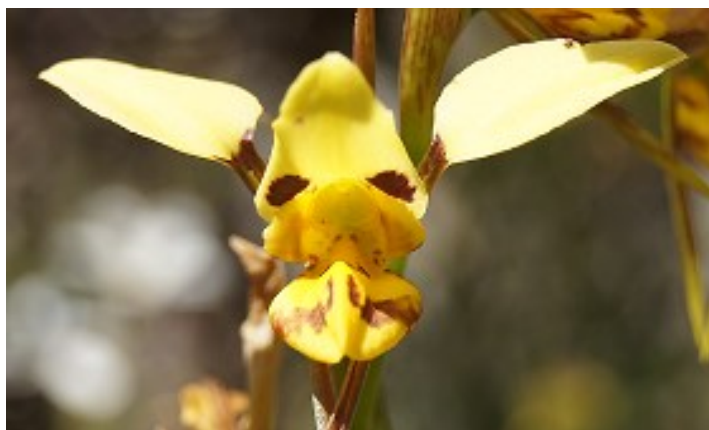
If you have an item to share in future editions of our newsletter or have any feedback in relation to the newsletter, please contact the editor at

harmonyfreya@gmail.com

**Deadline for January/February edition: 1st January 2016**

## A SPRING WALK

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October, a beautiful, sunny Spring afternoon, saw a small group of members and visitors followed Des Lucas down the paths to the Heathlands. The Wedding Bush was smothered with white flowers while petite Donkey Orchids emerged from the grasses on the path's edges.



Photo's this page by Des Lucas

Des mentioned some of the problems facing the part. The lovely Burgan is one plant that has outgrown its welcome in the Heathland while controlling the litter flowing into the park via the Dingley Drain (what an appropriate name) is also not welcomed. But getting on top of just these two problems is difficult. Standing under "the big tree" one is not only filled with awe but left speculating why there should only be this "one" ancient tree left! Now faced with another El Nina drought, I wonder how the younger trees are going to survive just the next ten years let alone the next 800 years! Walking down part of the old race track where the legendary Phar Lap pounded was a surprise to some walkers but soon visitors will be able to run, ride or stroll the entire track. This is a positive step to bring the Park's history back, as was surveying the revegetation of eucalyptus trees and native grasses in formerly grazed paddocks. The walk ended with an afternoon tea of scones and cream and a cup of tea and a big thanks to Des Lucas.

Judith Sise President



## Wednesdays with Ernie's 'A Team'

By Bev Bancroft, Treasurer

### WEDNESDAYS WITH ERNIE'S "A" TEAM:

#### FEDERATION

A new venue this month. Over 3 weeks the Volunteers weeded the area which hadn't been done for a long time. It is now looking refreshed and waiting to be mulched to complete the job.

#### GRASSLANDS

Had several visits to the grasslands - area has been mown & weeded. Some grasses and a few Dianella planted out. The area is very dry. Hooray for a little rain & so far the count for our special Orchid is 30+.

#### VISITORS' CENTRE

A general tidy up - weeding, pruning, removal of some guards & frames & edges of paths swept. Looks good.

#### COMMUNITY GARDEN

Again a general tidy up. Lots of weeding & pruning. Paths weeded & resurfaced. Some work done on the large heat bed. Removal of Perlite (which will be recycled with potting mix). Repair of the electrics & will be ready for the propagation of grasses etc for 2016 grants.

Join Ernie & the 'A' team

Wednesdays 9 am - 12 noon  
Meet at the lunch room - Park Office  
Morning tea provided

Wednesday afternoon continues 1-3pm  
Everyone most welcome



**Echidna—Photo by —Des Lucas**

*Join in the activities with Parks Victoria rangers every Wednesday  
Meet at the Park Office - Lunch Room from 9 am - 12 noon  
morning tea provided*

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

*Wednesday afternoons continue from 1 pm - 3 pm in the Friends Community Garden.*

## Park Report

As reported by Des Lucas, Ranger Team Leader

Two items highlighted in the Park report are rainfall figures and the Birdlife Australia monitoring undertaken in the park since April.

### Bird Monitoring.

Bird Life Australia have completed 6 sessions of monitoring. Below is the data from the first five sessions with 55 species of Birds recorded in the woodland and heathland portions of the park. The December session of monitor will not occur on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month but the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday. See rear page for location and time details.

	Heathland	Woodland	Heathland	Woodland	Heathland
	24/04/201	22/05/201	26/06/201	24/07/201	28/08/201
CommonName	5	5	5	5	5
Australian Wood Duck			P	P	P
Chestnut Teal	P		P	P	P
Pacific Black Duck	P	P	P	P	P
Australasian Grebe	P				P
Spotted Dove	P	P	P	P	P
Common Bronzewing				P	
Crested Pigeon	P				P
Tawny Frogmouth		P		P	P
Little Pied Cormorant				P	
Australian Pelican	P	P	P	P	P
Cattle Egret				P	
Australian White Ibis		P		P	P
Straw-necked Ibis	P			P	
Whistling Kite	P				
Swamp Harrier				P	
Little Eagle	P				
Purple Swamphen	P		P		P
Dusky Moorhen	P		P		P
Silver Gull	P			P	
Galah		P			P
Long-billed Corella			P		
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	P	P	P	P	P
Rainbow Lorikeet	P	P	P	P	P
Musk Lorikeet		P	P	P	

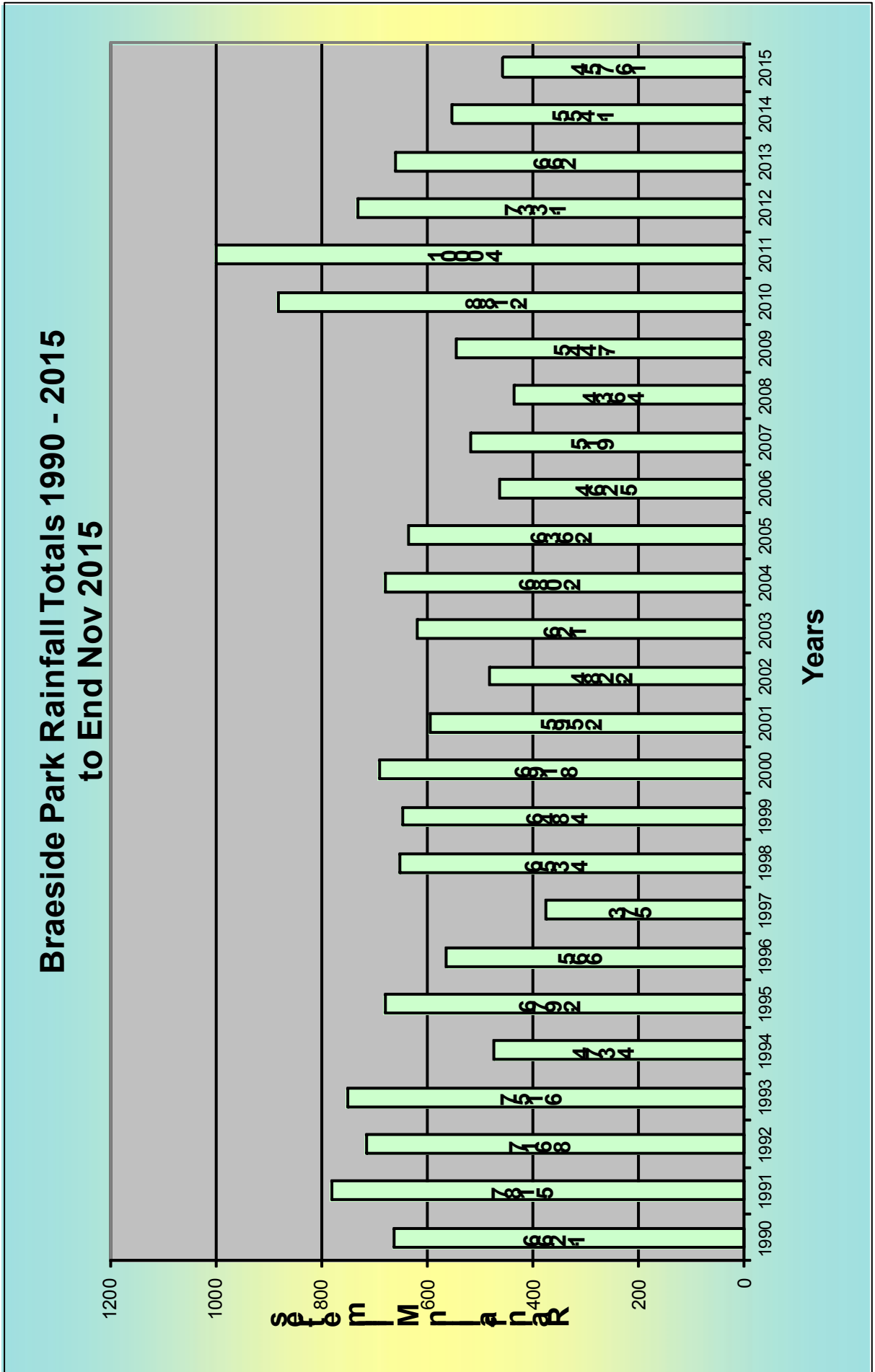


Eastern Rosella	P	P	P	P	P
Red-rumped Parrot		P		P	
Fan-tailed Cuckoo			P		
Laughing Kookaburra		P	P	P	
Superb Fairy-wren	P	P	P		P
White-browed Scrubwren			P		
Striated Thornbill	P				
Brown Thornbill		P	P		P
Spotted Pardalote	P	P	P	P	P
Striated Pardalote	P		P	P	
Eastern Spinebill	P				
Yellow-faced Honeyeater			P		
White-eared Honeyeater					P
White-plumed Honeyeater	P	P	P		P
Noisy Miner	P	P	P	P	P
Little Wattlebird	P		P		P
Red Wattlebird	P		P	P	P
New Holland Honeyeater	P				
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	P		P	P	
Golden Whistler	P		P		P
Grey Shrike-thrush	P		P		P
Grey Butcherbird	P	P	P	P	P
Australian Magpie	P	P	P	P	P
Pied Currawong					P
Grey Fantail	P		P	P	P
Little Raven	P	P	P	P	P
Magpie-lark	P	P	P	P	P
Eastern Yellow Robin					P
Welcome Swallow	P	P		P	P
Common Blackbird	P	P	P	P	P
Common Starling	P		P	P	P
Common Myna	P	P	P	P	P
Mistletoebird	P				

### Weather Conditions.

Rainfall has fallen each year since a peak in 2011 (1000.4 mm) It is certainly taking shape for drought conditions and an extremely hot and dry summer. This may affect many of the plantings undertaken in the last 12 months as the roots will not have had the time to form to a level which would sustain the plant through extremely dry periods. We'll just have to wait and see.

See the rainfall table on the following page.



## **Friends Activities Report**      *By Margaret Hunter, Secretary*

### **August night walk – 7 August**

The Friends night walk was held on Friday 7 August with a full attendance – it was very fully booked. We had four leaders – Margaret, Judith, Frank and Kalli, and two groups who used an alternative route, meeting around the duck pond area/ near Bent Bridge. Our major group participating was the Dingley Scouts, who were enthusiastic and interested in observing the nocturnal animals of Braeside who obliged by being seen and heard in the usual and other spots. Aside from the usual possums in the trees, we saw a tawny frog mouth, a possum sitting contentedly on the ground, walking with the group for some time and enjoying the company! This was the highlight for the scouts, who thought all possums lived largely in trees. We visited the ducks at the duck pond, with many possums sighted, sulphur crested cockatoos, and rabbits to complete the evenings sightings.

We also travelled on phar laps race track, and the red gum trail, seeing many stags and open areas around the race track area. The story of Phar Lap was told, along with some of the other aspects of the development of Braeside Park. The flash lights spotted many animals, as well as echidna holes/burrowings in the park which are tallied and recorded for park records.

The Dingley scouts enjoyed the walk on a mild evening, and the experience of being outdoors in nature with other sounds of frogs, and the bird sounds enjoyed by all. Thanks to all who participated, and led the walk.

### **Friends Annual General Meeting 9 August 2015**

The Friends of Braeside Park held their Annual General Meeting on Sunday 9 August 2015 at the Visitor Centre, with a good attendance, of members, friends, and members of the community with a long and active interest in Braeside Park.

The usual formalities were held with the committee for 2015-2016 being elected including Judith Sise, Margaret Hunter, Bev Bancroft, Frank Russo and Kalli Saint Germain. The committee can co-opt other members as required during the year, if you are interested in being involved. There was discussion of the work of the friends over the last 12 months, with the highlights being the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, and the achievement of winning the Kingston Council community group of the year award on Australia Day 2015. The night walks, plantings, community garden, and other activities were also popular, with publicity for the upcoming Wattle Day celebrations on 30 August at the nursery/community garden area.

The guest speaker, Bill Nixon OAM, spoke to an interested audience about horse racing personalities, aspects of the development of the park from the MMBW days of the 1980's, Tommy Woodcock and his work with Reckless – the children would be able to ride him before a race he was so relaxed as was Tommy, an icon of the racing industry. Bill also spoke about the impact of horseracing on the area, and the other historical aspects of Braeside Park. He spoke about the large racing establishment at Braeside with houses, outbuildings, stables, and the employment it provided to the youth of the district. He stressed that this is related to the history of Epsom Racecourse in Mordialloc, now a housing estate, but a racecourse from 1889 to 1998. It closed for racing when the grandstand burnt down in 1938, but was retained as a training track until April 1998, when the VRC sold the track for housing to the Urban Land Corporation. Not many people know that there was also a racetrack at Mentone.



He spoke passionately about a topic close to his heart/interests, as he has lived and breathed horse racing in the sandbelt area for many years, and maintains his community involvement with the former racing identities today. Thank you Bill for an interesting talk, and a good introduction to further development of the Phar Lap project at Braeside Park in the future.

It was pleasing also to see Eric and Merle Mitchell attend the annual general meeting, as they have made a major contribution to the work of the friends in the past.

Following this afternoon tea was enjoyed, with much chatter, and interest in the topic of Phar Lap and horse racing. Thanks to all who helped set up the day, and took part in the annual general meeting this year.

### Landcare awards 2015

The Friends of Braeside Park were nominated for the Landcare group award and the secretary, Margaret Hunter was also nominated for the individual award, which cover the state of Victoria, and are an important award nomination.

The committee nominated, through the President, Judith Sise, the group award to represent 26 years of work in Braeside Park by the friends group. The friends activities have included a wide range of activities over the years, from the frolics in the park in the 1990's, to assisting with the many and varied activities of the Wednesday – weeding, planting, fencing, propagation, and other jobs that Ernie's A team complete. We have arranged community events including a train ride around the park, seniors walks, night walks, day walks with groups, work on the Dingley drain, and also children's activities. These have included snake handlers, animal displays, and one of the most popular Dean Smith from the Melbourne Museum with his stuffed animals, and dioramas. I remember the old dioramas at the Melbourne Museum in Russell Street and wonder at the new displays at the current display in Carlton. One of the most popular--- displays is still Phar Lap.

The friends have also contributed funds to developments in the park including water tanks, a ride on mower, the famous tree sculptures in the cypress drive (which I am told can be seen from space). There are on our website for those interested. If I have left any activities out of this list, please feel free as a reader of this newsletter to write to use and let us know some information about these to [braesideparkfriends@gmail.com](mailto:braesideparkfriends@gmail.com). Or snail mail to PO Box 608 Braeside 3195.

The award will be displayed in the Visitor Centre, and has a handsome wooden frame. It was a thrill to be at government house that day, and have the opportunity to meet other nominees from across Victoria. The winners will represent Victoria at the national Landcare awards in 2016.

The Victorian Landcare website is well worth a look for Landcare Information and further information will be in the next edition of the Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management newsletter.



Photo - Margaret with Landcare Award certificate

### **Macro Invertebrate training at Belgrave South**

On receiving an email from Des about waterwatch training on Saturday 26 September 2015, at Birdsland at Belgrave South, I booked into this activity with Yvonne from Melbourne Water.

After trip on Eastlink and Wellington Road, I drove five-ten minutes from Belgrave South to the Birdsland Reserve, and nursery, being delayed by an overturned four wheel drive on a narrow dirt track that was being pulleyed back onto the road by passers by. It was a good day for a chat, as it was the only way in and out of the venue. After this interruption, we enjoyed a session with Yvonne, the Waterwatch Co-ordinator from Melbourne Water. We had a theory session about the waterbugs program, how to classify our samples using the ALT method, and an opportunity to take part in an actual sampling activity in the nearby creek and wetland.

We walked through the surrounds of the reserve to a fast flowing stream with a high bank as one site, a rocky fast flowing area, and the wetland area with the usual soft bottom and phragmites in abundance. On arrival you are aware of safety requirements, have a team of people in and out of the water, and do various samples to test the macro invertebrates in the water. This can be a sweeping or a alternative motion, even touching rocks to sample. It is important also to clean the sample. I waded into the wetland, and with one swish we managed to gain a good sample. It was actually fun as the waders were good, as they were the right size foot.

The identification is done using a information sheet, over the three sites (of different habitats), and reported to Melbourne Water and the EPA. I had a great day and really enjoyed this activity, learning a lot on the day about waterwatch.

Thanks to Yvonne from Melbourne Water for organising this free activity in a wonderful bush environment that I might return to in the future.



Photo by Des Lucas—Wedding Bush

## **From the Committee**

**Wishing everyone a safe and happy Christmas  
and New Year—We look forward to seeing  
Friends in the Park attending activities  
throughout the year.**

**Year End Break Up**

**16th December 2015**

**The year end break up will be held from the Park  
Office Lunch Room at 9:00 am  
A short walk will take place with a  
lunch from 11:30 am**



## **Message from the Editor**

*By Kathryn Lucas*

Any contributions or special notes you would like to add for future Friends of Braeside Park News letters, can be emailed to me at [harmonyfreya@gmail.com](mailto:harmonyfreya@gmail.com). Please note the cut off date for any articles you would like placed in the next newsletter must be received no later than the 1st January 2016.

## Friends of Braeside Park - Activity Calendar

### 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 from 9:30 am to 12:00 Noon.  
A short meeting followed by various garden and nursery activities.

### Nursery - Plant Propagation:

1st Saturday and 3rd Sunday from 10:00 am to 12:00 Noon and  
Every Wednesday 1pm to 3pm  
Undertaking a variety of propagation activities.

### Committee Meeting:

2nd Thursday, monthly at 7.00 pm at the Park Office.  
The Committee meets to make decisions about the running of the group.

### Water Quality Monitoring:

3rd Tuesday, monthly at 9:00 am 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 part of this program.

### Birds Australia Monitoring Program:

10 bird monitoring transects are monitored in this program with 5 completed one month and the other 5 the next month.  
These sessions occur on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of each month from 8:00 am alternating between the following starting locations.

Robin Car Park - December—This session will be on the Third Friday.

Park Office	January, March, May, July, September, November
Robin Car Park	February, April, June, August, October, December

### Friends of Braeside Park Inc.

**President:** Judith Sise

**Secretary:** Margaret Hunter, **Assistant Secretary:** currently vacant

**Treasurer:** Bev Bancroft **Newsletter Editor:** Kathryn Lucas **Webmaster:** Frank Russo

**Publicity Officer:** Currently vacant

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