



THE FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK NEWSLETTER

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Braeside Park
470 Lower Dandenong Road,
Braeside 3195
Melway Map 88 D8
Phone: 8427 2027

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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.

President's Report

It has begun.

The assault on Braeside Park began by bulldozing grasses and small bushes for construction workers' sheds. Road signs warning of traffic delays are on Lower Dandenong Road just beyond Howards Road. The next few weeks will see the destruction of the trees in the path of their Freeway.

At the same time, Dingley Village residents learnt that *"most of the grass at a former golf course caught in the five-year redevelopment battle has been chemically killed."* *The property fund giant ISPT [owned by the Australian Super] says it is part of regular maintenance."* (Moorabbin Leader, October 9 2019)

Parks Victoria will soon hold a meeting for our Committee and the Men's Shed about their Precinct Planning for Braeside Park – so we can be consulted about some new developments.

Who is standing up for Biodiversity?

The State Government and its agencies, Parks Victoria and VicRoads, and big business like ISPT have their agenda. Do we?

Is it any wonder that the Park's Eucalyptus trees are battered by Lerp insects? Many visitors are puzzled and worried by the "dying trees" along the drives. Lerp, jumping plant lice called Psyllids, are a common and diverse group of sap-sucking insects. Eucalyptus trees are prone to infestations of lerps and usually recover. The Park's invasion of lerps has been expanding over the past two years, about the time of Mordialloc Freeway, Parks Victoria's cut to our Rangers, and high-density schemes for the secretly sold Golf Course. The lerp pests are most common along the proposed Freeway's path.

It is not known why Lerp have suddenly exploded, but it has been recorded to happen mostly after a succession of unusually dry and/or wet conditions. Healthy vigorously growing eucalyptus can outgrow the damage, but the attack can be a sign of trees under stress. Stress caused by wind, root damage, compacted soil, salinity, drought and human's movements by cars, trucks etc. What our trees have endured and continue to endure.

What is our plan! Will we continue to be the polite community group ticked off and consulted? We could listen to the State Government and big business lie about how they care for the biodiversity and our views. Then, they systematically destroy habitats and then plant a token few banksias. "How good is Australia!"

By Judith Sise

Park Activities

ANNUAL SPRING WALK

On Sunday 13 October, sixteen people set off to explore the Heathland in the annual Spring Walk at Braeside Park.

Frank and Judith together led the walk but all the participants were invited to look for flowering plants. First, the wedding bush, *ricinocarpus pinifolius*, showy as usual, caught everyone's attention. Then a small pink fingers orchid, *caladenia carnea*, was found and later a fringe lily, *thysanotus tuberosus* – both petit and easily overlooked! Where were Long Purple Flags, Early Nancies, Donkey and Leopard Orchids, which I had seen before? Were we too late for these orchids?

Native correa, *Correa reflexa* and Common Heath, *Epacris impressa*, gear near or on the tracks. The yellow flowers of the Showy Bossiaea,



Prickly Guinea-



flower, and *Hibbertia acicularis*, and a couple of *senecio* species dotted the edges of the trails. Only the sharp-eyed spotted the Grass Tree, *Xanthorrhoea australis*, surrounded by the tiny blue flowers of the *dianellas* where a sleeping echidna tucked in a blanket of dried grass was enjoying an afternoon siesta.

The Cherry Ballart, *Exocarpos cupressiformis*, was establish in a few isolated places. Black wattle, *acacia mearnsii*, was in flower along with the common tea tree, *Leptospermum continentale*. Along the track beside the golf

course, clumps of Spiny-headed mat-rush, *lomandra longifolia*, *juncus*, and red-fruited saw sedge, *gahnia sieberianna*, grew amid a plethora of golf balls collected by a participant in a bucket found on the track.

Time seem suspended as the participants wandered, seeking, sharing discoveries and chatting on that sunny Sunday afternoon. Frank opened the gate and walked ahead to set up afternoon tea until the fifteen remaining people gathered near the first pond and idly watched the waterfowl going about their business.

It was around 3:30 pm before everyone refreshed with cups of tea or coffee, slices of cheesecake, biscuits and Elsie's Apple Slice of course, and of an afternoon spent discovering the awe and wonder of nature. *That is what our Parks are about!*

Judith Sise



Park Activities (cont.)

Annual Seniors Walk 2019

Margaret with 24 happy and adventurous seniors including some from Monash Health, on 3 October, a 30 degree day enjoyed a morning in Braeside Park. This is an annual event and part of the Kingston Council Seniors Festival, with assistance from ranger staff Andrew and Amanda. After arriving at the Park Office and discussion the impact of the Mordialloc Freeway on this end of Braeside Park, we looked at the heritage listed Park Office, better known as the former MMBW Pumping Station. This is an impressive red brick building, with the lunch room, to make way for the Freeway Work is expected to commence in the near future. The Photo shows the park office in 1956 from the MMBW publication of the time.

Onwards to the wetlands area of Braeside Park, an area not visited by most of the group. On arrival at the bird hide we were greeted by the sight of a swan and 4-5 grey cygnets sitting outside the hide waiting for a photo opportunity. It was well taken by the group. The water levels are very high with coot and ducks as well in abundance. At the viewing platform, we were treated to the site of a group of larger cygnets on the bank and further birds in the heavily flooded Braeside wetlands, a welcome site.

There was evidence here of a busy rabbit population, echidna holes, and a pristine view of the Braeside wetlands without restriction to Governor Road. The wetlands are a paradise well worth visiting with the option, of group access also from the Red Gum Car Park which many vowed to take up.

While some of the group returned to the Park Office, the rest completed the park circuit of the red gum trail and Racecourse trail to the cypress drive to the Park office. Highlights included a number of stag trees, bush birds, evidence of bats, discussion of the ever present rabbit problem and a further highlight.

The racecourse dam is unique part of Braeside Park and the home of many ducks. Its unique shape and uses include a wildlife refuge, horse training facility and nature reserve area. We also examined the waterflows through the park and wondered at the isolation of the racetrack as a training in the time of Phar Lap – pristine bushland brimming with bio diversity of all sorts. Much treasured and valued. We marveled at the 'height' of Mt Braeside with a further opportunity to visit on another walk, with morning tea following the walk. Thank you to Andrew and Amanda, Parks Victoria rangers for your knowledge and assistance with this walk. We look forward to your attendance next year.

Margaret Hunter

Mordialloc freeway construction and update

The Federal Government in August 2019, approved the recommendations of the IAC Planning for the Mordialloc Freeway project which has been ongoing for 2 years. This will be monitored by environmental management programs to measure and record the impact on the environment.



Park Activities (cont.)

Mordialloc freeway construction and update (cont.)

The Friends of Braeside Park, have had several consultations with MRPV, and submitted to the IAC Planning Panel in March 2019. This submission is available from the secretary, and is online also at Engage Victoria site on the Mordialloc Freeway. The work ongoing in Woodlands Drive, is for the construction of the MRPV Depot for the freeway works and is well worth a look as you stop to go past this. It is the wish of the Friends, that the impact of the freeway on Braeside Park, its environs, bio diversity and buildings, trails and other parts are minimized. We will continue to have on going consultation with MRPV about this project and welcome comments from members of the friends/ communities about this to braesideparkfriends@gmail.com or to Margaret Hunter on 0417323460.



Margaret Hunter

Lerps

The Redgums throughout the Braeside Park have been attacked by Lerps an insect, this is the third year this has occurred with the population expanding each year. Please see the map for further details on the area covered in the park. It is hoped that as the weather warms that the trees will put out new growth. There is certainly the chance that some may die. Parks Victoria staff will continue to monitor the outbreak.

For further reading and lots of detail in relation to Lerps please go to the below link.

http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/390283/Psyllids-Insect-Pests-of-Eucalypts.pdf

Echidna Rescue

Park rangers received a call from a concerned resident near the corner of Howard Road and Lower Dandenong Road where an Echidna was trying to cross the road from the residential side to the park side. It appears this animal may have crossed the road when traffic conditions were low from the Park side. Parks Victoria staff Des Lucas and Rob Silverlock rescued the female Echidna and relocated it to the middle of the Park.

Des Lucas



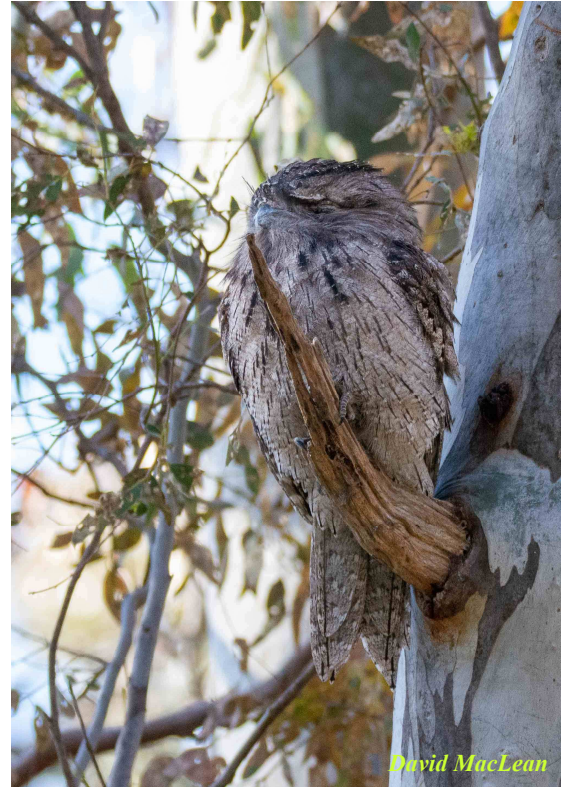
Park Activities (cont.)

Breakfast with the Birds

At the time the Magna Carta was signed, some tiny eucalyptus shoots poked their heads up above ground in a place on the other side of the world. That faraway place was Australia and I have recently seen some of those trees in a park not far from my home – Braeside! If you want to touch ancient history, actually walk up to it and stretch your arms across it (because they won't go round it), the chance is not far away. Des, the park ranger, has cared for that place for a long time and loves to share his knowledge. He will take you to the place where you can hold history.

Braving the morning chill on a Sunday morning (quite a sacrifice), I headed down to Braeside a few weeks ago to have Breakfast with the Birds. I also had breakfast with the Friends of Braeside who pour their passion into the place and organized what was a lovely morning walk, with all sorts of treasures pointed out, followed by a barbecue breakfast and a hot cuppa. The sacrifice was well worth it.

I have a good and kindly friend who has been sharing her own knowledge of Braeside with me in recent weeks so I have become a little better at keeping my eyes and ears open. On this trip there was lots to see besides those beautiful old trees.



David MacLean



David MacLean

A highlight for me is always to see a Tawny Frogmouth, my favourite if truth be told, and that morning did not disappoint. I managed to find him or her with my binoculars and stood, lost in admiration for some of the best camouflage around. On that morning, another Friend spotted a White-faced heron up in a tree and I became absorbed in looking I nearly got left behind! This would have been a serious issue because it was nearly time for breakfast, fast becoming a focus for me.

There were gorgeous birds of colour too – the eastern Rosella and the Rainbow Lorikeet. We saw a swan carefully protecting her cygnets by ushering them out of sight (you've got to be quick!) and we saw my latest love – a Blue-billed duck. Now why did nature do that, I wonder? There are many more even I can now name. Loved it. Heard the frogs. And then there were the bunnies, not so welcome for some but adding to the fairy tale for me. Can't help it, I'm back in the Wind of the Willows.

And then round the corner to the smell of frying onions, sausages, bacon, eggs - a handful of good hot food and a cuppa in the warming spring sun. What could be better? Thanks, Friends!

Barbara Churcher

Park Activities (cont.)

Wetland

The western portion of the main wetland is full, with water now running into the smaller eastern portion. This portion last was full in 2011. It is hoped good spring rains will address the thistle issue within the wetland.

Nursery Management

Focus on production of lower storey species for planting in 2020.

Concern that resources are not available to produce plants for planting days in 2020.

Des Lucas

Friends of Braeside Park—Activity Calendar

Community Nursery is Open on the Third Sunday of the Month

10:00 am to 12:00 noon – Seedlings \$2.00 each.

"WEDNESDAYS - B TEAM"

More Volunteers are needed. Please come & join us.

Wednesdays 9 am - 12 noon

Meet at the lunch room - Park Office

Morning tea provided.

By Bev Bancroft

Committee Meeting:

2nd Thursday, monthly 7:00 to 9:00pm at the Visitors Centre.

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

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.

The sessions occur on the 4th Friday of each month from 8:00 am alternating between the following starting locations.

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: Rosemaree MacLean **Treasurer:** Bev Bancroft

Newsletter Editor: David MacLean **Webmaster:** Frank Russo

Publicity Officer: Vacant

Postal Address: PO Box 608 Braeside, Vic. 3195

Phone: 0417 323 460

Email: braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Web: www.braesideparkfriends.org.au

ACN: A 002 4027 B

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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/327955807288240/#>

Current Facebook Members = 118

Newsletter Contributions

Thank you to Judith Sise, Margaret Hunter, Bev Bancroft, Frank Russo, Barbara Churcher, David MacLean & Park Staff for contributions to this edition.

If you have an item to share in future editions or have any feedback in relation to the newsletter, please contact the editor at braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Friends of Braeside Park Activity Calendar 2019

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

Website www.braesideparkfriends.org.au

Email braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

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