

# Friends of Brisbane Ranges

Incorporated

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*Grevillea  
steiglitziana*

March  
2007

## Next Meeting

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

### Meet at;

10am at the Anakie  
Community Depot

### Activities;

- AGM *so all please attend.*
- Caitlin Griffith VNPA ParkMates
- Flora of Brisbane Ranges (post fire) photo presentation by Cathy Powers
- Walk in the Park

**What to bring;** Plate to share for morning tea, ideas for future activities and... lunch, gloves, water & sunscreen

## Next Month

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April – next meeting has been amended to third Sunday due to Easter.**

Conduct survey for Velvet Daisy Bush

## In this Issue

- Last Time we Met.
- Yarns from December meeting
- Phascogale survey BRNP

## Up Coming Events

- 25 years FOBR Celebration
- October 2007 Wildflower Show

## Last Time We Met.

**Colin Cook**

THWACK!

Such is the pleasant sound of a mattock connecting with a thistle. In February a group of heavily armed Friends met at the Stony Creek picnic ground and proceeded along the Anakie Gorge walking path (this is starting to sound like a police report. I'd better relax a bit!). I'm not sure exactly what they got up to as I was doing some CFA training at the time, but when I met up with them just before lunch they had a fairly self satisfied look, so I assume the weeds had been given a hard time.

After lunch, we carried on up the walking path to the old dam. Thistles were the main target of the afternoon and many a THWACK was heard as we worked our way to the dam wall, where we stopped and had a wander. There was some pondering on the possibilities to be had when the dam and surrounding land is finally transferred to the park (if any DSE or Barwon water people are reading this: NUDGE NUDGE). Overall, a satisfying day.

## FoBR Festive Party Yarn around Ye Old Kitchen Table

**Chris Worrall**

This meeting was moved to the Anakie Parks Depot because of the TFB, so we were forced to sit around a table while we ate, drank and were merry as we chatted our way through several hours of informing discussion.

It was great to have Geoff Durham and other Friends from Werribee Gorge and Long Forest, sharing our table, which made thirteen happy souls, while we reminisced over the events of the last 12 months.

**Anne and Peter** reported on the "excellent breeding of the Mallee fowl this year despite the dry season".

**Wendy** was "amazed by the emergence of wildflowers and fungus" (especially bracket and white punk) and other changes in flora since the fire.

**Colin** still "trying to spark (not a good word for this area on a hot day) enthusiasm and \$ for monitoring work following the fires".

**Roger** was "amazed by the shapes of the emerging grasstrees".

**Geoff** explained that this was his "annual pilgrimage to the area" (including the Werribee Gorge area).

**Owen commented** on "the strange shapes of the grasstree spikes".

**Bob** considered "the publication by the FOWG & LF Birds of the Long Forest 1889-2005" and then the launch of the bird book by Trevor Pescott, then the distribution of 300 of these books within the Long Forest area".

"2007 brings up 100 yrs since Werribee Gorge was declared public land".

"Thank you to the FOBR for their support in the publication of Birds of Long Forest.

**Judy** included her highlights as the "Werribee river signs upgrade" and "rust release onto bridal creeper".

**Bernie** pontificated that "The Brisbane Ranges Fire is part of a huge cycle".

Felt amazed at the "The rallying of support for the park following the fire".

Enjoyed the display and friendship of "The Annual wildflower show". Is warmed by "The excitement as the Barwon Water land swap becomes closer".

**Judith** thought the best part was "the wildflower show".

**Lance** commented on "the lack of dollars, to support the BRNP following the wildfire and PC control".

**Bill** thought positively towards "Grow west, VNPA planting day".

After an afternoon around the old table, we finished up with our final, highlighted thoughts for the year and headed home.

### President

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### Secretary

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## Brush-tailed Phascogale Survey

*This has been placed in local Anakie and Meredith newsletters – if you have any further suggestions where it can be advertised, please contact Colin.*

As part of a Geelong Field Naturalists Club and Gordon Institute project, in cooperation with DSE, we are gathering records of Brush-tailed Phascogale around the Geelong region, not just in parks and reserves. There is an information sheet and record form available for download from Friends of Brisbane Ranges website <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~fobr/> or you can contact me directly if you need a copy mailed to you. If you have seen a Brush-tailed Phascogale, either recently or a while ago, please take the time to fill out and return survey form to help guide future monitoring studies. Colin; 5286 1252 AH.

The Brush-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale tapoatafa*), also known as the Tuan, is a small nocturnal arboreal carnivorous marsupial about the size of a rat. It is a uniform deep grey on the head, back and flanks, light grey to pale cream underneath with large naked ears and a conspicuous, black "brushy" tail.

The Brush-tailed Phascogale is now recognised as a rare, vulnerable and/or threatened species on a State and National level.

A predominately carnivorous species, its diet consists largely of invertebrates which it gathers by using its claws to tear away and search under tree bark (most commonly rough-barked eucalypts). These include cockroaches, beetles, bull ants and centipedes. They are also known at times to predate upon small vertebrates, and given the opportunity they will attack domestic poultry. Indeed, there have been numerous recordings of chicken snatching behaviour throughout the Geelong region in recent times. Nectar also plays an important part in their diet, with flowering eucalypts, particularly boxes and ironbarks, providing a bountiful resource in the right season. Brush-tailed Phascogales in turn assist in pollinating the trees.

## PV Staff

Our intrepid ranger & co coordinator, Mr Peter Box, has been seconded to Mansfield, for approx 8 weeks; to assist with the rehabilitation of the fire affected areas in NE Victoria. He only agreed to go if he could take the Blonde! So, special dog friendly accommodation has been provided and his dog has gone with him to keep him company.

Peter will be coordinating on ground works with commercial tour operators who have agreed to assist with the park rehab. Little bit different to the Brissies - few more tracks to get lost on and names to learn but I am sure he will have lots of tales to tell on his return!

## Brisbane Ranges search for Brush-tailed Phascogales - Trevor Pescott, Melanie Costanzo for Geelong Field Naturalists Club

Following receipt of a number of sightings over the last few months from the Meredith-Sheoaks-Steiglitz area, we decided to undertake a small search for Brush-tailed Phascogales on public land. Most of the sightings are from freehold, and we wanted to locate the animals in a more secure environment.

Initially we thought of the Brisbane Ranges National Park and Meredith State Forest (or Education area), but settled on two sites in the NP. Following suggestions from Mark Urquhart of Parks Vic, we selected Native Youth Track between Hut Road and the creek (600m long) and Box Track for 700m sth of Graham's Ck Rd. At each site we set 10 Elliott traps on wooden brackets nailed onto tree trunks, average 1.6m above the ground. Bait used was peanut butter, honey and oatmeal. The traps were set on the afternoon of 5 Feb and checked morning and afternoon, then removed on the morning of 10 Feb, i.e. 100trap-nights. On the afternoons of 5th and 7th we sprayed "honey-water" around the tree bases and trunks.

The results along Box Track were disappointing with only 2 Agile Antechinus caught. However along Native Youth Track on 8 Feb we caught 3 BTPs (1male, 2females) and on 9 Feb 1 young female BTP as well as a Sugar Glider. On 10 Feb we caught 1 Sugar Glider and 1 Agile Antechinus. The main differences we could see between the sites was that the Native Youth Track had a better diversity of eucalypts with Red Box, Yellow Gum, Brown Stringybark - perhaps others - while Box Track was stringybark and another rough-barked gum we are yet to identify. We are also convinced that laying a honey-water trail across the ground and to the trap is very important. We have one other site to check - Kangaroo/Lt River Tracks further into the park. We will do this early in April if possible.

Our thanks to Mark Urquhart, Donna Burns and in particular to Andy Arnold for his support.



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