



Brisbane Ranges Friends News

MARCH 2010

this issue

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FoBR gear up for some flora and fauna monitoring in 2010 and beyond

A member's yarn about Fridays experience

MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE

Upcoming Event

Monthly Activity

Sunday March 14th, 10am at Anakie Community Depot, Ballan Rd, Anakie

ACTIVITY

10am: Please bring a plate to share for morning tea

Annual General Meeting

Guest Speaker: Chris Lindorff, Trust for Nature

Afternoon: Tree Planting at Fridays Campground

BYO water, lunch, planting gloves & sturdy footwear

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A summer clean up of the Community Depot

By Helena Lindorff

Well, what can I say other than we started off the new year with an exciting activity—cleaning! I have to admit upfront that cleaning out the Community Depot shed was my idea and the more exciting task of sorting out the plants in the hothouse and potting up plants into larger pots for next year's wildflower show and as propagation stock, was Judy's idea. I know what I would be putting my hand up for. But as some of you know me, I can be a bit fanatical about tidying stuff up. So the above picture was my doing, but I was able to rope in some help from three other 'willing' members, one being my husband!

I wish we took a before photo so you could all appreciate the hard work that went into cleaning up. After a few hours of dragging stuff, banging into walls, lifting and sorting we all stood back and admired our hard work (see photo 1). If only Boxy was there to see it. He would have been proud.

You see this shed has all our Wildflower Show stuff! Wildflower plant display stands, display boards, signage and tools for other activities. Oh that reminds me, if anyone can find a home for our old timber wildflower display stands please drop me an email helenal@pacific.net.au.

Our next exciting **activity for March is our AGM**, with yummy cakes and biscuits, plenty of fun and laughter, a secret guest speaker and a walk in the park to top it off. I know AGM's sound boring but not ours. To continue our fantastic work in the park, we need your help in any shape or form. Happy to have help in the flesh or wirelessly. There are many tasks that could be done from home if you're not able to attend the monthly activities but would like to contribute in some form e.g. Newsletter contributor / editor, graphic design, media / promotions, website content.....

And then there's plenty of the traditional positions that are extremely important to make a group function e.g. President, Secretary, Treasurer. Did you know that our constitution only allows a person to sit in a position for no longer than three years! So it's important that we share the love around. See you all there.



Photo 1: Clean shed and it better stay that way



Photo 2: Room next door, anyone up for a challenge, includes renovating a caravan.



Photo 3: Judy and Melissa admiring their hard work.

Get involved with flora and fauna for 2010 and beyond

By Colin Cook, President

During last year we had success in obtaining funding for two projects. Firstly, funding from Parks Victoria to produce three interpretation signs for a new section of the Burchell Trail. Secondly, funding from the Australian Geographic Society for the development of flora and fauna data recording programs using PDAs, GPSs and CyberTracker software. Another project which we will be involved in is the new Parks Victoria initiative Signs of Healthy Parks, which aims to develop and implement comprehensive flora and fauna monitoring to enable better management of the park.

When you include the transfer of the Barwon Water land to the park and the activities that will flow on from this, it looks like it's going to be a busy 2010 and beyond. If we want these projects and our activities to be successful and fulfil our goal of helping the Brisbane Ranges, we all need to make a commitment to help out wherever we can. Whether it's turning up to Friends activities, helping out with monitoring programs or other projects, and especially helping out the committee, it all counts. Please make an effort to get to the AGM and put your hand up to help. If you can't make it to the AGM and want to volunteer for something, send me a semaphore message. Hope to see you there.

Adventures at Fridays Camp Ground—Part 1

By Wolf Passuer, FoBR member

About the writer: 30 years ago, I read an article about Stieglitz (I use the original spelling) and became curious. How come, such a place exists so close to Melbourne and is so unknown to the greater public? Well, after my experiences in the Brisbane Ranges I learned to be quiet about them in order to keep the secret. When I was asked, "What did you do over the weekend", my usual answer was "I went to visit the Ranges in Brisbane". "What, you went so far for a weekend?" "Yes."



When our boys were of walking age they joined in my hikes through the Ranges. Over the next 10 years we must have visited every square foot of them: the Sutherland Creek gorge, the hidden mine shafts, the secret orchid spots, the slate quarry, just to name a few.

They loved it. However, when they turned 16 they told me to stick the Brisbane Ranges and similar things. Now, 15 years later, they start planning to go back and let their born and yet unborn children experience this special spot.

We joined the Friends group and learned a lot from them about the park: it's geology, it's

history, it's bird and plant life, the mines, how to pull up invasive pine trees, blackberries and periwinkles. We restored old buildings, laid out tracks, counted Koalas and most of all enjoyed the friendship of the Friends group.

Then, my work took me away from the Ranges. However, I never forgot them. And, last year, after an absence of 15 years, I returned. When walking into the friends group there were still some of the old, familiar faces around. Now, in the sunset years of my life, I am back to the Brisbane Ranges. They have not lost their magic pull on me.

It is hard to describe this 'magic pull'. You will experience it yourself if you let the Ranges guide you.

The following story is about encounters during a recent trip to the Brisbane Ranges when I camped at 'Fridays', the new camping ground on Durdidwarrah Road. It is a true story; just the names of the people mentioned in it were changed.

Camping at 'Fridays'

Dusk was descending over Stieglitz on this early summer evening. The Trotters sheep were ambling across Regent Street. Otherwise, no living soul was to be seen. However, my imagination filled Regent Street with throngs of dusty miners returning from the diggings, a swaying paraffin lamp in front of the barber's and tantalizing whiffs of freshly baked pies drifting across from the Coffee Palace. There was light in the Mechanics Institute and the Cobb & Co coach was being piled high.

The spell vanished when I started the climb up Durdidwarrah Road. My mind went into lower gear. I arrived at 'Fridays', a brand new camping ground in the Brisbane Ranges. I had expected to see the place invaded by 'Grey Nomads' in Winnebagos. I was wrong. Except for one family, Fridays was empty...to be continued in the April edition.

Fungi Down Under

By Wendy Cook

I am a volunteer at the National Herbarium of Victoria, working on a project about fungi, called Fungimap. Over two years ago, Tom May, a mycologist (person who studies fungi) at the herbarium, asked me to collect fungi from the Brisbane Ranges, to be lodged as collections at the herbarium. Most collectors go to wetter places, where there are more fungi, so there are few collections from this area.

Due to the conditions on the collecting permit, a large population of fungi is needed before a collection can be made. At the last Friends meeting, on our walk along Wildflower and Teatree Tracks, there were hundreds of these small puffballs. It is the first time I have found enough fungi to make a collection.

I was assisted by Colin, Owen, Kristen, Charlotte and Bethany. We collected about twenty or thirty fungi in various stages of development.

Brush-tailed Phascogale Search

The Geelong Field Naturalists Club is to hold its annual search for Brush-tailed Phascogales in the Brisbane Ranges, using both Elliott traps and hair tubes.

Saturday 13th March
Meet at the Steiglitz Courthouse at 11.00am.

Sun 14th, Mon 15th & Tues 16th March
Meet at the Steiglitz Courthouse at 8.00am.

Members of the Friends are very welcome to join in at any of the sessions.

Trevor Pescott
GFNC, Convenor Fauna Survey Group.

Brisbane Ranges Sightings



Puff Ball

When they are young they are covered in little white warts, like the one in the photo. As they mature, the warts fall off, and a small hole appears in the top of the fungus. Touching the fungus will cause a puff of brown spores to fly out of the hole.

Tom May was pleased with the collection, but couldn't name it. He thinks it belongs to a genus of puffballs called *Lycoperdon*. The collection will be dried and stored at the herbarium. Eventually, someone making a study of puffballs will name it. Fungi are not nearly as well studied as animals and plants, especially in drier areas like the Brisbane Ranges. Most likely, there are many species to be found and named.