

AUGUST 2010

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Upcoming Event

Monthly Activity

Sunday 8 August

Meet 10 am at Anakie
Community depot

Some replacement planting at
Anakie Gorge picnic area

After lunch, remove weed
wattles along Ballan Road
firebreak

Bring: lunch, water, gloves,
digging and cutting tools (only if
you prefer to use your own
tools)

Friends of Brisbane Ranges
C/- Post Office
Anakie VIC 3221

Ph: 5366 0000

Email:
helenal@pacific.net.au or
cazbarth@yahoo.com.au

Website:
<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~fobr/>

ABN: 30 120 139 564 Reg No. A0032647M



Brisbane Ranges plant display bed gets a face lift

On a beautiful and fairly mild mid winter day, 14 intrepid FoBR members crept through a side gate of the Geelong Botanic Gardens (GBG), where we were warmly welcomed by Phil and Julie: two of the GBG staff.

As a Geelong resident I've been to the Gardens on a number of occasions, but there was something very exciting about going as a FoBR member, with the kit which Judy brings to all our events in a magic container: boot cleansing, gloves, trowels, insect repellent, sunscreen First Aid kit and Owens favourite gadget: the mattock!

Phil and Julie showed us the fantastic job which the staff at the GBG had done to prepare the Brisbane Ranges plant display bed for a make over.



The two majestic grass trees remained, but most of the other plants had died during the drought, and perhaps also because the soil in this part of Geelong is unfamiliar to them. The newly prepared bed had some gravel included to create an environment which was more similar to the Brisbane Ranges park area.

It wasn't long before we were all enjoying the planting. Kristen and Bethany joined me as we put in the final plant: a small 10 year old grass tree. We had a little chat with it to introduce it to its new home, and then scampered off to see the glass houses.

Phil showed us the collection of over a 100 Correa cuttings which have been donated recently from a private property. One had leaves which smelt like coconut. Isn't nature full of fantastic surprises!



The adult ponderings became too much for the 4 young people, so I whisked them away to explore the many young plants which have been propagated by the Friends of GBG. We then rejoined the group for a close look at an impressive cactus collection. Charlotte enjoyed the very prickly ones!



I have to admit that my stomach led me towards the picnic tables at this point! We had a leisurely lunch overlooking the bay, before another stroll around the gardens.

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Cathy's Column

A few evenings ago, I looked out to the eastern horizon and saw the most magnificent moon. I knew it was going to happen because of the nights leading up to this; the cloudless skies presented an almost daylight experience. What does this have to do with the Brisbane Ranges you might ask? Well, not much really but it was a great opening statement, especially for those interested in the recent vampire craze.



Regardless, it is also a time for underground activity. I am sure that if you have been walking in the Ranges, you will have been noting some fungi. The reason I mention this is because what we see is not always the most important. In fact, the unseen fungi in the soil are really working overtime at the moment.



When I first started learning about terrestrial orchids, I thought the description of micorrhizal fungi referred to a particular type of fungi. It took some investigation to understand that micorrhizal actually referred to the partnership formed between two living organisms. I was very surprised to find out that most plants require this micorrhizal interaction with fungi for normal growth (especially in nutrient poor soils).

There are some noteworthy exceptions such as many genera of the *Proteaceae* and *Fabaceae* families.

More upcoming events -

The next FoBR/WaterWatch monitoring day is planned for Sunday 5 September - put it in your diary if interested. More details later.

So while all that activity is occurring in the soil, some of our winter flowering orchids are taking advantage of this.

Pterostylis nutans is one of the most prolific orchids in the Ranges and this could be attributed to the fact that unlike some orchids, the 'Nodding Greenhood' is not overly particular about which fungi it uses for uptake of nutrients.



P. Nutans *P. pendunculata* *P. curta*

There are other orchids starting to bud as well as some in flower.



P. Concinna *C. incurvus* *C. Reniformis*

Worth looking for, but much more difficult to see, are the helmet orchids. These tiny plants rely on fungus gnats for pollination so it is understandable that they would be flowering during the 'fungi' season. And of course, the 'Small Gnat' is starting to flower. If at ground level is not your thing, yellow is becoming the dominant colour with all the acacias getting into flowering mode.



Let's hope for more rain despite the discomfort. Happy 'nearly spring'.

Cathy Powers

BR plant display bed

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What I particularly enjoy about being part of the FoBR groups is the great wealth of knowledge many members have, plus generous support and enjoyment of one another's company across a wide age range, as we patiently regenerate and promote our beloved Brisbane Ranges national park.



Charlotte, Owen, Bethany & Kristen - proof that all ages can enjoy FoBR activities!

So....if you are a member and haven't come to an event for a while, please look at the [calendar of events on the website](#) or call Judy.

We will shortly be working on the 'new' part of the park, soon to be handed over from Barwon Water. Many adventures will be had!

Vicky Grosser

PS - Vicky would be pleased to hear from you if you would like a 'friend' to meet with at a FoBR event and to help you feel welcome email her on vicky.grosser@gmail.com or call 0402 932 207 to discuss.

If you are in Geelong - we recommend a visit to the Geelong Botanic Gardens and you can check out the Brisbane Ranges plant display bed as it grows.

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Back to Steiglitz Festival

will be held on Sunday 24 October 2010
The Festival is being planned as a bi-annual event on alternate years to the FoBR Wildflower show. An old fashioned family fun day with many activities, historical displays and demonstrations.

The Back to Steiglitz Festival brings together past residents and descendants of Steiglitz and visitors to enjoy the township's historic architecture, gold mining past and the historic park in which it is situated.

<http://www.trueblueford.com/steiglitz/>