

MARCH 2011

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Upcoming Events

Sunday 20 March
Koala Research
with Janine Duffy

Meet at 10am at the old
Parks Victoria depot,
Don't forget to bring your lunch,
hat, drinking water, sturdy shoes,
sunblock, gloves, camera,
binoculars ...and your smile.

FoBR events usually run from
10am to 4pm-ish but if you can
only attend the part of the day
you are always welcome to join
in for whatever amount of time
you can.

Please see note on page 2 about
total fire ban days etc.

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Park News

We managed to track down Boxy, our very busy Acting Ranger in Charge for the latest lowdown on how our National Park is going particularly since the heavy rains recently. You may not be surprised to know -

Closures [current when we go to print]:

- Anakie Gorge Picnic Ground
- Anakie Gorge Walk
- Stony Creek Picnic Ground
- Switch Road
- Little River Picnic Ground
- McLeans Highway (between Marshalls Road and Thompsons Road)
- Lease Road (closed between Yankee Gully Rd and Banksia Track)
- Burchell Trail
- Little River Camp Ground
- Old Mill Camp Ground
- Lower Stony Creek Reservoir

Also BBQ in Stony Creek picnic area (Unit Stolen) and Bert Boardmans Recreation Reserve (bottles & fittings stolen) are currently out of service until further notice due to vandalism. Recently installed water tank at Stony Creek picnic area has also been illegally acquired by person or persons unknown.

Anakie Gorge Walk - some areas damaged however areas further downstream (below Nelsons Track intersection) were destroyed!! First five crossings were either totally or



predominantly gone. Dry stone wall covered in rock/silt or eroded. Severe washing/erosion of track surface. Most roads suffered varying degrees of scouring, blocked culverts and drainage lines. Some drainage lines along roads now up to a metre deep. McLeans Highway suffered the most with blocked culverts, eroded drainage lines, rock slips, scouring/erosion of surface material and narrowing of road due to slips and erosion.

Peter Box (Boxy)

Boxy was spotted in Staughton Vale near the Little River crossing the day after the rain.



When asked about how the Park was going he is reported as saying "it is all washed down here now".

Boxy's new nickname is Lucky Pete. Since he took over as Acting Ranger in Charge there have been four 'storm events' [floods], robbery of water tank and a Search and Rescue.



Hope things quieten down before he pulls out his very special beard.

Choice of activities worked very well

Our first meeting for the year and we had enough people to do 2 activities; propagation at the depot nursery and Waterwatch testing at Sutherlands creek, Steiglitz.



WaterWatch

Following our first two WaterWatch events in June and November 2010, we tested Sutherland Creek again in February. Unfortunately Stony Creek was not suitable this time.

A more diverse population of bugs was found, but not fish or tadpoles. Bugs included Beetles, Caddis-fly larvae, Chironomids, Dragonfly and Damselfly larvae Freshwater shrimp (Glass Shrimp), Snail, True Bugs (including backswimmers, water boatmen, and also treaders), Water mites, Yabby, Mosquito larvae, Amphipod and Long jawed spider. Next testing will be Sunday 8 May.

Propagation

A very successful day pricking out and cleaning/ tidying up the nursery with 6 people assisting with the tasks.

Plants, all indigenous to the Brisbane Ranges, are used for planting around the visitor areas within the park as well being an important sales and display item at our **Wildflower Show**.

The seeds have been collected, mostly by member Beverley Phillips, throughout the year; this year being great for collecting due to the wonderful wet season. While over the past few years, seed has been difficult to either find or collect in any numbers due to dry seasons, this year there has been an abundant supply.

While mentioning seed, the FoBR seed bank is now stored in a fridge generously donated by Peter Box - thanks Boxy! Seed stored in a constant cool temperature will improve its longevity and hence be available for future propagation.

During December and January, the seed collected were put into germination trays and it was these seedlings that we pricked out - nearly 300 tubes - wonderful! Those of us not pricking out, spent the time tidying up the garden from weeds and bark, trimming the garden plants, moving picnic tables under shady trees, and many other little jobs that generally get left behind when we only have a few people - thanks guys!

Over the next month, we will be taking cuttings to add to the numbers and diversity of tubestock species. Autumn is the best time to take cuttings whereby tip cuttings are placed into a free draining potting mix and then sat on a low temperature heat bed to promote root growth. But first we need a heat bed - Paul Norquay has very generously taken home the skeleton remains of an old heat bed, previously used some years ago, to try to restore it (thanks Paul for fitting our FoBR work into your busy schedule!)

For those who are interested, there should be the option of assisting with more propagation activities during the April and May meetings for those who may wish to help.

Judy Locke



Ed note— YOU too can also enjoy the fun of helping - particularly with our Wildflower Show coming up quickly. Contact us to volunteer.

Meet a Friend



This month we introduce **Janine Duffy** - Koala Researcher and Friend presenting at our next event.

Janine has been a regular visitor to the Brisbane Ranges National Park for about 20 years. She, and partner Roger, started visiting the Brissys after Roger's parents - Pat & Bernice Smith - bought a house in Beremboke. In time their love of the Bush and Australian wildlife led to the founding of one of Victoria's first ecotourism operations. Echidna Walkabout Nature Tours now takes international visitors all around Victoria, but most of their tours visit the Brissys, You Yangs and Serendip.

Janine began researching the Koalas in the Brisbane Ranges around 1998. She identifies them mostly by nose patterns and facial features. Due to difficulties finding koalas after the 2006 bushfires she has temporarily relocated the research program to the You Yangs. She is now very keen to see how the Brisbane Ranges Koalas are going five years later.

Following a lot of local interest we also recently decided to ask locals for information about Koala sightings and photos to help with the research program. We are hoping for hear about lots of healthy Koalas back in the area. Janine will lead a practical session and a Koala 'spotting' walk - looking for koalas, but also looking for the signs that koalas leave, suitable food trees and what makes a good koala habitat.

For your diary! Join us

All Friends please be reminded that if the event day is declared a Total Fire Ban Day, the activity will be cancelled. This is in line with Parks Victoria's Emergency Management guidelines where on days of extreme or severe fire weather conditions, the park visitor will be strongly advised not to enter or to leave the park.

On days deemed "Code Red", under the National Fire Rating System and issued by the Bureau of Meteorology, all of Parks Victoria's estate will be closed to public access.



Sunday 20 March

[week later than usual]

Koala research with Janine Duffy

Sunday 27 March

Blokes Week - Breakfast with the Birds, with Ruth in the Brisbane Ranges. 9am to 11am. Breakfast provided. Free event [not just for blokes] but bookings essential - call Serendip Sanctuary on 5283 8000 or for info see [website](#) or Parks Victoria 131963.

Fungal Ecology Workshops below**



Sunday 10 April

Propagation plusmore information to come.



Saturday 16 April

Special National Trust and FoBR Heritage Water Works Walk - see page 17 of program www.natrust.com.au/heritage_festival_2011. Anakie Gorge from 2pm. No charge



Sunday 8 May

WaterWatch - hopefully Stony Creek this time too OR Propagation

Saturday 21 May

APS - Australian Native Plant Sale, Bacchus Marsh 9am to 1pm.



Sunday 9 October

Brisbane Ranges

Wildflower Show

YOU can get involved.

**** Fungal Ecology workshops** are on again this Autumn on Saturdays and Sundays from 23 April to 29 May - from 11am until 5pm at Daylesford, Woodend, Creswick, Trentham, and Wedderburn. \$70. Seminars are being held at Daylesford on Thursday 21 May and Castlemaine on 28 May. See [website](#) or email Alison alison@alisonpouliot.com or call 0439 764 344 for details.

If you have ideas of activities for FoBR for this year please [email](#) to let us know as we want Friends activities to be relevant and of interest to all of you.

Cathy's Column

Time waits for no man – and neither do the wildflowers.

We are in a strange period at the moment, still officially summer but feeling like autumn and that is probably why some of the orchids are flowering now in the early part of their documented flowering time. We found three species today and this is the earliest I have seen them in flower since tramping the ranges.



Corunastylis ciliata *Corunastylis morrisii*

We found Fringed Midge Orchids (*C ciliata*) and Bearded Midge Orchids (*C morrisii*) as well as Leafless Parson's Bands (*Eriochilus cucullatus*).

The Parson's Bands are easy to see once they have flowers but kind of tricky before then because the single ground-hugging leaf is under-developed at the time of flowering and appears when the flower is finished.



When I was in High School, our sporting teams were known as the Watertown Arrows and our school colours were Purple & Gold. Whenever I am walking in the Ranges, I am amazed at how resilient the colour of yellow (or gold) is because there is always a yellow flower to be seen. Today was no exception and then I found purple to go with it so I felt much younger (but not high school young!)



These plants are (clockwise top left) – *Goodenia geniculata* (Bent Goodenia), *Hibbertia riparia* (Upright Guinea-flower), *Tricoryne elatior* (Yellow Rush-lily), and *Arthropodium strictum* (Chocolate Lily).

Why all these images?

Well it is to inspire you to get out and use the camera! The **Brisbane Ranges Wildflower Show** is this October and we would love to have contributions by all members of the Friends.

Our intent is to put up displays of images – no larger than A4 finished product – not framed but matted (surrounded by a mat).

If you don't have a digital camera that takes satisfactory images for reproduction A4 size contact Colin Colin.Cook@dpi.vic.gov.au. I am sure he would be more than happy to provide access to the Canon camera owned by the Friends group.

My opening statement provides you with the reason to start now.

With all the moisture we have had this spring and summer, plants are already starting with flowering so you don't want to miss out. Besides it is a fun time to be in the bush with lots of bugs, spiders, snakes, mossies, frogs, birds, and more.

Just to kick off my ideas – the following are a few images that are not orchids but are on my list for re-production and display. Of course, I will have to try to identify them first.



And last but not least, the wonderful Cranberry Heath (*Astroloma humifusum*) which always reminds me of a coral in the Great Barrier Reef.



Come on and join in – lets show the visitors of our Wildflower Show what they are missing by not visiting year around.

Oh yeah, if you have problems with getting a mat around your photo, let me know. I have a contact who is willing to help with this.

Don't be discouraged by the end of Daylight Savings time in March – instead get out and shoot (with a camera!). 'til next time - Cathy

Brisbane Ranges Wildflower Show 2011

Help please!

This is OUR opportunity to show off our wonderful local wildflowers with a great display, workshops and tours in October.

This Wildflower Show has been growing in popularity each event and with more than 500 people attending in 2009 from all around Victoria we are anticipating a large crowd this year. Hopefully Cathy's column has already inspired you to take some photos.

We are looking for some help NOW please. Promotion is important in lead up to the show - and YOU can help us get the messages out effectively.

We need people to volunteer to work with our team to help get regular correspondence to local papers about Show plans and we also hope lots of people can volunteer to help with hand delivery of posters/leaflets in their streets, work areas etc. If we have lots of helpers the distribution areas will be smaller.

Please contact Beverley at bevjp@westnet.com.au, Vicky at vicky.grosser@gmail.com or Helena at helenal@pacific.net.au or call Judy at 5366 0000 for more contact information.