



FoBR - Get Involved in 2012!

Welcome to another exciting year with your Friends of Brissies! We hope you have had chance for a relaxing break and a pleasant time with family and friends. The time certainly seems to keep going quicker each year.

We have lots on the calendar this year so we are keen to get as many people involved as possible. We know that some of you are very interested in the park and our activities but are not able to attend our monthly activities. Some of you may be interested in contributing and be involved in other ways so please let us know. We now have some newer "Friends" keeping up with our news on Facebook and many others are keeping an eye on our website too.

If you are interested in becoming a FoBR member you would be most welcome and if you know of someone interested, please pass on our newsletter to them. All you need to do is visit the member page <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~fobr/membership.html>

Monitoring Activities

As reported in our last newsletter, in early 2012 Barwon Water will start releasing water out of the Lower Stony Creek reservoir. Water will be released at a slow rate down through the Anakie gorge until all water has been removed from the reservoir allowing easy access to the release structures located at the base of the wall. Once Barwon Water have completed some much needed maintenance to the water release valves, they will refill the reservoir from Upper Stony Creek reservoirs.

Prior to the water release, Friends of Brisbane Ranges members and Waterwatch facilitators from Melbourne Water and Corangamite CMA carried out some water quality monitoring both in the reservoir and below the wall at two sites along Stony Creek in December and January. We plan to measure Stony Creek sites over several months as water is released from the dam.

If you are interested in getting involved in this important ongoing project with FoBR some special training is being planned - please talk to Caz or Deirdre. Friends who have the time to come and help would be very much appreciated. The date of the next scheduled monitoring session to be advised.



Lower picture (left to right): Lance, Marilyn, Judith, Rebecca and Judy [plus whole Cook family and Caz].

FEBRUARY 2012

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Upcoming Events

Sunday 12 February 2012

First FoBR event for the new year - Waterwatch at Sutherlands Creek. Plus removal of weed wattles. If there are enough people, the group will split and also cleanup depot nursery and garden too.

Sunday 18 March

FoBR activity - remove pine wildings near Lease Road

Reminder...

On days of **TOTAL FIRE BAN** there are no activities undertaken with the Friends of Brisbane Ranges. Stay cool and stay at home.

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FoBR End of Year Celebrations 2011

Moths of the Brisbane Ranges

FoBR celebrated the end of a busy year on Saturday 10th December 2011 with a presentation by guest speaker Marilyn Hewish on "Moths of the Brisbane Ranges"

Following threatening weather there were lots of phone calls during the afternoon. We decided to trust Mother Nature to look after us and NOT roll out the B Plan and she certainly was kind to us all. We had a great attendance for our end of year celebration with everyone putting their trust in the weather as well.

The barbeque at Stony Creek Picnic Ground was accompanied by lots of good food, drink, talk and laughter.

Then as the darkness approached Marilyn Hewish set up her special screen, lighting and gear and we awaited the arrival of the moths and other night insects. We continued to enjoy the evening while checking out the impressive moths who visited us.



For your diary!

...Join us

- **Sunday 12 February 2012**
First FoBR event for the new year - Waterwatch at Sutherlands Creek & Lower Stony Creek reservoir. Remove weed wattles.
- **Sunday 18 March**
FoBR activity - remove pine wildings near Lease Road
- **Sunday 15 April**
FoBR activity - Remove suckers along brick aqueduct
- **Sunday 13 May**
FoBR activity - Waterwatch Sutherland's Creek and reservoir. Planting and weed removal at Anakie Gorge
- **Sunday 17 June**
FoBR activity - Remove Clow Street fence and prune/replant fruit trees - Steiglitz
- **Sunday 8 July**
FoBR activity - Koala Survey with Janine Duffy
- **Sunday 12 August**
FoBR AGM and Waterwatch survey.



About the presenter...

Marilyn Hewish is preparing a book as part of the series Moths of Victoria. The first three books in the series were written by Peter Marriott and can be ordered through the website of the Entomological Society of Victoria <http://www.entsocvic.org.au/>. There are several volumes in preparation - with a goal of 12-15 in total. As Marilyn says "we're all working as fast as we can". The Moths of Victoria series is the only set of field guides in the whole of Australia with extensive species coverage.

Moth list, Stony Creek Picnic Ground, Brisbane Ranges, 10th Dec, 2011

Arctiidae *Halone sejuncta* Variable Halone
 Arctiidae *Phaeophlebosia furcifera* Forked Footman
 Arctiidae *Termessa gratiosa* Favoured Footman
 Carposinidae *Sosineura mimica*
 Cosmopterigidae *Macrobathra platychroa*
 Crambidae *Nomophila corticalis*
 Geometridae *Chlorocoma dichloraria*
 Geometridae *Epicyme rubropunctaria* Red-spotted Delicate
 Geometridae *Epyaxa sodaliata* Sodaliata Moth
 Geometridae *Melanodes anthracitaria* Black Geometrid
 Geometridae *Microdes squamulata* Dark Grey Carpet
 Geometridae *Poecilasthena anthodes* Orange-grounded Delicate
 Geometridae *Xanthorhoe anaspila* Dark-patch Carpet
 Hypertrophidae *Hypertropha chlaenota*
 Limacodidae *Pseudanapaea transvestita*
 Lymantriidae *Urocoma marginalis* Margined Brown-tail Moth
 Noctuidae *Crioa hades*
 Oecophoridae *Garrha repandula*
 Saturniidae *Opodiphthera eucalypti* Emperor Gum Moth
 Tineidae *Moerarchis inconcisella*



Please Note: These activities are proposed only and are subject to change.

On Notice! FoBR will be celebrating our 30th birthday in October so you will be hearing more about how we plan to celebrate this occasion.

Cathy's Column: Potential Disaster?

Last newsletter I made a mention of *Phytophthora* and this issue I am highlighting another potential problem for our native flora. Not that the media has said very much but myrtle rust (*Uredo rangellii*), which is in the Guava/Eucalypt rust complex, has already been found in at least 17 locations within Victoria.

I attended a session conducted by David Smith (DPI Forest Biosecurity Officer) mid January. Rather than go into detail about what it is, how to ID and how to stop the spread I take this opportunity to highlight some facts.

The indicator plant in Victoria is *Lophomyrtus* X (Black Stallion). If you have this plant and myrtle rust is present – it will always be infected.



The rust loves the following conditions and produces spores readily:

- 15 - 25°C night time temperature
- 8 – 10 hours dark (night time)
- High humidity

It is identified by the yellow spores and no other pathogen produces yellow spores on the *Myrtaceae* plant group.



Of the 1608 species of *Myrtaceae* in Australia, there are 150 species in Victoria. Only members of this group can be host plants. Other Australian plant groups like grevilleas, banksias and hakeas are not hosts to this pathogen. However, in the host group eucalypts are susceptible and we have lots of these in the Brisbane Ranges.



Infected leaf of *Eucalyptus obliqua*

What does it do?

It attacks young, soft, actively growing leaves, shoot tips and young stems as well as fruits and flower parts of susceptible plants.

The first signs of myrtle rust infection are tiny raised spots that are brown to grey, often with red-purple haloes. Up to 14 days after

tion, the spots produce masses of distinctive yellow/orange spores. The other indicator of its presence is the leaf curl which the rust uses to protect its spores from light.

What can we do?

Under current law it is a Notifiable Disease

- DO NOT TOUCH
- Take a photo
- DO NOT MOVE MATERIAL
- Do not go to another site until and only if you DECONTAMINATE

We already use a mix of 70% metho and 30% water to clean our footwear. This also works to kill the rust spores. You can use any alcohol based wipe to remove spores from your skin, glasses, cameras, GPS, etc if you come into contact with the rust. Water and detergent for clothing is sufficient.

For more information, log on to the DPI website and follow the links to Myrtle Rust. www.dpi.vic.gov.au/ It is updated frequently and has a good image library to assist you.

On a happier note, I was originally going to do my article on the beauty of our eucalypts during the summer. It is a time when the old bark is shed and the new bark shines, visually standing out amongst the grey tones.



We have a dam on our property and now we also have a pair of *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae* (Little Grebe).



They are in their breeding plumage and have a nest. The nest is a little raft-like structure composed of aquatic plants and the sitting bird covers the eggs with vegetation when leaving the nest. No wonder I could not see any eggs using binoculars. When the babies are hatched,

the ride on the back of the adult grebe. Now I will have to pay close attention to get a photo of this.



Before Christmas, I am sure you all had a great time discovering the moths that come to our area and I had a visitor (actually two) the other day.



This is the Broad-margined Azure Butterfly (*Ogyris olane*) and not to be outdone, this little caterpillar sporting a Mohawk hair design tolerated being carried (on a leaf) up the hill to where my camera was located.



OK, so now I have my wish for warmer weather and unfortunately it comes with dry conditions. What is really good about this time of the year is that we can now get ready for the autumn flowering orchids. Already things are stirring beneath the surface. Time to dust off the camera lens and put leather protection on the boots.

Keep in mind that other creatures share our environment and it is a timely reminder that snakes can be active in this nice warm weather.



Until next issue, start this year with a resolution (not photo) by making a promise to yourself to get out in our Ranges, enjoy the tranquillity and do all you can to keep yourself safe.

Cathy

NatureShare Observation Database

NatureShare is a database for individuals and groups to document and share information about their local environment. Everything you put into NatureShare (photos, locations, biological attributes) is shared in a real and functional way with everyone across Victoria.

NatureShare is free to everyone and can be used by anyone (individuals, groups, councils, companies, etc). Anyone, or any group, can set up species 'collections' for their own property, for parks/reserves, for areas/towns, for anything, anywhere. For example, Cathy Powers of FoBR has contributed to the butterfly database. If we all share, we all benefit.

Collections that need more 'members', observations and pics are -
Birds <http://natureshare.org.au/collection/175/>
Butterflies <http://natureshare.org.au/collection/206/>
Moths <http://natureshare.org.au/collection/112/>
Plants <http://natureshare.org.au/collection/99/>
Reptiles and amphibians <http://natureshare.org.au/collection/114/>

Click on these links for a look!

Summer Holiday Reading

Are you still in holiday mode? Here are some great websites on biodiversity for you to explore

Wildlife Finder

Visually stunning guide to where animals live and their ways of life through habitats and ecozones. Lots of information on animals including video, images and quality external links <http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/wildlife>

ABC Environment

Local coverage of all Australian environmental issues. Hundreds of topics that include food, waste, going green and climate change. News, opinion, video and a blog complete the website. <http://www.abc.net.au/environment/>

Feral Focus

"Define, understand and manage" This site shows how to deal with the Australian feral problem. This informative site is targeted to educate at a number of levels. <http://www.feralfocus.org.au/>



Get up to date...

New grant for signage

Thanks to Colin Cook's great work, FoBR has been successful with our application for grant to produce some interpretative signage on the history of the Stony Creek dam wall. This \$800 grant is a Parks Victoria Healthy Parks Healthy People grant for Community Groups. Not long to get this grant finalised so it will need to be an early priority for us.

Door Prize

Remember our wonderful Wildflower Show in October? About time we announced the winner of our Door Prize - congratulations Phyllis Perry from Melton. It was her first time at the show but has been in the BRNP before. Thank you to Cathy Powers for the great photo.

Grass and Sedge Display

Newport Lakes Native Nursery is currently holding an Indigenous Grass and Sedge Display until 29 February 2012. Ph: 9391 0044. 15/12/11 to 29/02/12. 2 Lakes Drive, Newport.

More than 45 species of Grasses, Sedges & Flowers on display. FREE entry. Get to know the plants of your local area. Over 45 species of indigenous grasses, sedges and threatened herbs in full seed/flower will be on display. Many other plants indigenous to the Western Basalt Plains of Victoria will also be on display including several critically endangered species. FREE entry. Email: staff@gagin.com.au

Did you hear?

In January, FoBR president Caz Bartholomew was invited by Apple FM community radio in Bacchus Marsh to talk about the Brisbane Ranges. During her interview, she encouraged listeners to visit their local National Park and get involved with our Friends Group.

Some more information on myrtle rust...

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) advises that the exotic plant disease myrtle rust has now been identified in nine commercial nursery premises, mainly in the metropolitan region of Melbourne and one on the Mornington Peninsula. As yet there have been no detections in the natural environment.

Myrtle rust, which is now widespread in NSW and QLD, is of significant concern because it potentially affects all members of the Myrtaceae plant family, including Australian native species such as lilly pillies, bottlebrushes, tea trees and eucalypts. Over 100 known myrtaceous hosts have been identified within the natural environment, but the full host range is not yet known.

DPI has developed a response plan to deal with the incursion of myrtle rust into Victoria. Because myrtle rust is currently contained on commercial premises, DPI asks people to keep an eye out for the disease and report suspected detections, particularly in the Port Phillip/Westernport region.

To improve the chances of slowing the spread to the natural environment, the disease must be detected very early, before the spores have had the opportunity to disperse. It is therefore recommended that you:

- identify high-risk plants (e.g. rare or valuable Myrtaceae species) prior to the disease reaching the environment
- ensure a high standard of awareness of the disease
- provide on-site diagnostic information for staff
- train staff about disease identification and good hygiene practices (DPI can assist you with this)
- regularly monitor highly susceptible species in locations frequently visited by the public
- report any suspected symptoms to DPI on 1800 084 881 or email plant.protection@dpi.vic.gov.au

A self-paced training package has been developed to assist in identifying myrtle rust and minimising its spread. Factsheets included with the package provide information about myrtle rust, including what it looks like, how it spreads and what to do if you see it. DPI is collecting host species data and mapping disease distribution to inform the community and to assist research into the full host range of myrtle rust and long-term solutions for management.

Further information can be found on the DPI website www.dpi.vic.gov.au/myrtlerust. The response plan or training package can be obtained by emailing plant.protection@dpi.vic.gov.au