



# Brisbane Ranges Friends News



**JUNE 2012**

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## Upcoming Events

**Thursday 14 June 2012**

Platypus Talk with Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group - please RSVP for catering!



**Sunday 17 June 2012**

FoBR activities at Steiglitz Meet at 10am at Anakie Depot for car pooling or go straight to Steiglitz Church and have morning tea with us there

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## Waterwatch and our empty dam

At our May event we met in the depot and discussed the plan for the day. After we got organised we drove to Sutherlands Creek to do Waterwatch. We got all our stuff ready and started following the track. On our way to the site we unexpectedly met Barbara.

When we arrived at our spot we unpacked and got down to work, even though it was drizzling a bit. Carolyn, Wendy and I went to get samples. The water was lower than usual because of lack of rain, but we still got a reasonable amount. There was lots of algae and not as many interesting things as usual in the water, but it was still very exciting looking at all the things we found.

Next we drove to Stony Creek picnic ground for lunch and then walked up the track to the reservoir to look at it now it is empty. You could see the shape of the old valley with the hill in the middle and all the old tree stumps dotted around the place. There was a channel through the

bottom where the old creek used to run with a bit of water going through. There were lime coloured stripes around the top of the reservoir where the algae had been. (see photos bottom of page 4)

We walked back to Stony Creek and some people went home while the remainder went to Anakie Gorge to do more water testing. We walked down the track a bit and then off to look for some water. There was a small puddle but not enough to get samples. So we went further up the creek and found a small pool where we could get samples. I had brought a mattock and attacked a large inkweed, eventually succeeding in chopping it down. There was a larger one but I left it as it was too big.

We walked back to the picnic ground and got busy looking at our samples. Surprisingly we got a generous amount of critters and spent a while looking through them!

*Owen Cook*

## FoBR planning - YOUR input?

The year is disappearing so quickly and now even young people are commenting on how time flies! Everyone seems so busy.

With end of the financial year approaching we need to look back on the year and start planning for an exciting year ahead.

This coming year will see us celebrating our 30th birthday and hopefully being involved in many projects around our National Park as well as having fun socialising and learning.

Some of the ideas we are working on include -

- Joining with the Back to Steiglitz group for our October activity - doing a wildflower walk and having a FoBR stall at the event.
- Celebrating our 30th birthday one evening in November - ideas welcome.
- Getting more Friends involved in FoBR - some of you may prefer to be involved in specific activities and projects including some behind-the-scenes roles which will help us grow and improve our contribution to our park.
- The 2013 Wildflower Show planning will need to start soon so we are looking to 'spread the load' so more people are involved in its organisation

and not overloaded. - please put up your hand and tell us what YOU would like to do.

- With 53 people liking our FoBR Facebook page it shows this is another way that people can become aware of us and ideally get more involved.
- As we have mentioned in For Your Diary - we are aiming to offer a choice of monthly activities (if sufficient numbers) so that Friends can hopefully do what interests them. Joining up for morning tea and lunch would be ideal so everyone can get together for some very important socialising.
- We are doing a survey [see page 2] to try to find out what our Friends would prefer ... eg Sundays may not be the best time for some of our Friends to attend so how about some evenings with guest speaker/s or a Saturday activity?
- Do we need to provide more events? - 11 a year does not cover all the things we would like to do.
- Our History document is coming along - thank you to Colin Cook and Chris Worrall for important information - but we do NEED more—how about YOU? Anything to add?

*Caz Bartholomew*

# FoBR Activities Survey

We are hoping as many of you as possible will complete our short survey [only 10 questions] to help with our forward planning. This financial year is nearly finished and we are keen to make some "improvements" for the coming year. ALL your comments are very welcome so please add these too.

We are using a free survey through Survey Monkey and it is [online](#). Hope it is not confusing. Please complete this by **17 June** if possible. However if you would like a hard copy posted to you with reply envelope we would be pleased to send it to you - please email.

We will also have copies available at the 17 June activity. We would like to finalise the survey as soon as possible so would prefer these were completed on the day if possible.

## Special 'Days' coming up

This week (5 June) World Environment Day is celebrated .... are you doing something special on this day? If so please let us know.

Other special dates coming up include -

- **1 - 8 July - NAIDOC Week** . - "Spirit of the Tent Embassy: 40 years on"
- **29th July - National Tree Day:** - perhaps we can organise something or you can get involved. <http://treeday.planetark.org/about/>
- **22nd to 28th August** - Keep Australia Beautiful Week: should we try cleaning up somewhere in our park or area? <http://www.kab.org.au/>

If we are linking an event to an official "Day" it can be registered with the appropriate organisation to maximise promotional opportunities.

## News for Members

### Warm Welcome to New Member Juli

Juli Atkinson of Nunawading has just joined the FoBR - Welcome! Juli is studying the *Grevillea chrysophaea* (Golden Grevillea) as part of her PhD and is President of the Naturalist Society of La Trobe University.

We welcome new members so please encourage anyone who may be interested. The membership fee covers the financial year and is only \$11 for singles and \$22 for families. Members joining early this calendar year will be financial until end June 2013. If unsure of whether YOUR fees are up to date please email [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au) and we will let you know.

## FoBR at Coopers Orchard 2002

Do you remember fruit tree planting at Coopers Orchard in 2002?



## For your diary!

### Thursday 14 June 7.30pm

Join BR Landcare group for special Platypus presentation at Balliang hall [see last newsletter]. RSVP required William 0418 596 179 or [wiliam.hogg@ppwcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:wiliam.hogg@ppwcma.vic.gov.au)

### • Sunday 17 June

Meet 10am sharp at Anakie Depot for car pooling or go straight to St Paul's Church of England, Regent Street, Steiglitz and have morning tea with us there. Please join the executive for a planning meeting until 11am if you can. Then we will all head out to the day's activities -

- \* Removing Clow Street fence wire [bring cutters, gloves etc if you have them]
- \* Pruning and hopefully replanting heritage fruit trees in the old Cooper's Orchard. (see 2002 photos below)

If sufficient numbers (OH&S reasons etc) you can choose which activity suits you best and we can all join up to spend lunch together at Bert Boardmans [weather permitting] or the church. The Back to Steiglitz group will join us and provide BBQ facilities so you may like to bring some bbq lunch.

### • Sunday 8 July

FoBR activity to be announced

### • Sunday 12 August

FoBR AGM and Waterwatch survey.

### • Sunday 9 September

FoBR activity to be announced

### • Sunday 14 October

Back to Steiglitz festival - FoBR stall and activity including Wild-flower Walk

### • Saturday evening 10 November

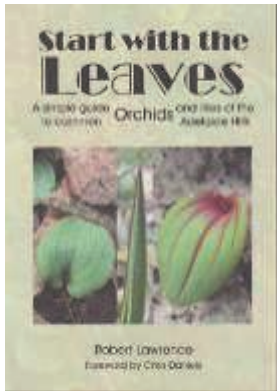
FoBR 30th birthday celebrations (date and time tentative)

## FoBR newsletter gets around!

We like our great newsletter [thank you Deirdre and everyone] however Bernie Fox just sent one back to us after it has done the rounds by being forwarded on. Please feel free to send it to interested people.

# Cathy's Column: Mother Nature—the little trickster!

I don't often do book reviews and usually don't suggest people buy specific books because I firmly believe that everyone has a reading material preference. I will make an exception this time and comment on a book that caught my interest – about orchids surprisingly. This is not a book to be left on the shelf if you are keen to learn how to identify orchids and especially when they are not in flower. The book I am talking about is *Start with the Leaves* by Robert Lawrence.



You might be a bit concerned about relevance because it is a simple guide to common orchids and lilies of the Adelaide Hills but rest assured that it is just as suitable for our area because of the 50 native orchid species covered in the book, at least half can be found in the Brisbane Ranges and many of the other species are very similar to ours. The unusual part of this book is the coverage of leaves for ID purposes and the similarity to lily leaves that many have. Now this leads me into the observation that even the book sometimes can be ignored by Mother Nature.

Today I found many orchid leaves preparing for the winter and spring flower show. Two species that are very similar in leaf shape, colour and locale are the *Nemacianthus (Acianthus) caudatus* known as the Mayfly Orchid and the *Acianthus pusillus* known as the Small Mosquito Orchid. Both have leaves described as heart-shaped, green above and maroon underneath. They are very similar in size and grow in similar habitat.



*Acianthus pusillus*



*Nemacianthus caudatus*

The way to tell the difference at this stage is to look at the flower bud. The *A pusillus* has many flower buds on the flower stem and the *N caudatus* has fewer forming flowers which are maroon in colour. Mother Nature can then throw in a challenge such as the following leaf. It is still one of the Mayfly Orchid but is almost 5 times larger.



The one greenhood Ron found in flower was the *Pterostylis concinna*. For me, it was a little early but then again some of my images were taken in June (2005 & 2006) so perhaps not by much. Many plants were in bud and getting ready to show their flowers soon.



Once you start looking above the ground level, the most obvious plant is the *Spyridium parvifolium* (Dusty Miller). It is just about ready to have the flowers burst out. It is a dense upright shrub with dark green leaves that have paler green undersides. The flowers grow in clusters surrounded by the dusty-white floral leaves.



It gets its common name because when the bush is in full flower (winter through spring) it looks like it has been dusted in flour.

This is also the time of the year to look for fungi. Today there were lots of different types of 'gilled' fungi that have been inspired to produce their fruiting body now that we had a good drop of rain.



Of course Mother Nature is not to be outdone by ordinary and produces some really weird looking things.



The one fungus I have not found in the Ranges (yet) but am almost certain it is here – that being either the Dark or Fawn Vegetable Caterpillar which develop from a parasitised moth larva. By the time you see the fungal fruiting body, the larva (buried deep in the soil) has been killed and mummified by the fungus.



In SE Australia, the most common species parasitises the larvae of Ghost Moths. One such type of Ghost Moth found in the Brisbane Ranges is *Trictena atripalpis*.



The larvae of this moth feed on *Eucalypt* species and one of the common names for this moth is 'Rain Moth' because the adults often emerge after rain, typically autumn, early winter. I bet you didn't think I would get all my hobbies covered in one article but then nature is actually all inter-related. When you are involved in one type, it just naturally leads to more.

Winter is upon us but nothing should stop you from walking out your door and enjoying the trickster 'Mother Nature'. You never know what you might find if you don't look. Enjoy the cooler months. Cathy



## BACK TO STEIGLITZ FESTIVAL

Held every 2 years - Next festival:  
14th October 2012  
10am – 3pm

An old fashioned family fun day with many  
activities & displays such as:

- Kids activities,
- Barbeque,
- Devonshire Tea,
- Steiglitz Historical Society Display
- Historical Buildings open to public
- Blacksmithing demonstrations
- Lace making demonstrations
- Gold panning
- Market stalls
- Cake Stalls
- Stationary Engines
- Billy Cart Races - Entry forms available on  
our website  
[www.trueblueford.com/steiglitz](http://www.trueblueford.com/steiglitz)

Entry to the festival is free!

Though some events are via gold coin donation



Healthy Parks  
Healthy People



## Ferals and Foxes...

This is a visual reminder of the feral pests in and near our BR national park. These 74 foxes and two black feral cats were displayed on a fence near Staughton Vale. One image has the BRNP in the background and one shows the size of a black feral cat in the middle.

Earlier this year Melbourne's fox population was estimated to be up to 10 per square kilometre, a population density that is higher than in country Victoria where foxes prey on lambs, rabbits, poultry as well as our vulnerable native animals.

In country Victoria generally the fox population is estimated at four per square kilometre and no doubt rising quickly.

Our smaller native animals are under great threat from the foxes as well as the other introduced animals wandering our parks - cats, rabbits, goats, deer and roaming dogs.



## The Lower Stony Creek Dam Drawdown

The Lower Stony creek reservoir drawdown is completed. In the May newsletter we saw this picture (near right) of the dam photographed 30th May. On the day we did our Waterwatch observations, 12th May (far right), it was even emptier.

