



## Historic orchard and fencing cleanup

A good turnout with 18 Friends braving the cold winters day. The weather turned out to be quite kind to us with rain only appearing just as we were heading back to the church for lunch and again as we were packing cars ready to leave.

After our meeting and morning tea in the church at Steiglitz, we headed off to the old Coopers Orchard which FoBR had worked on back in 2002. Some of the trees had succumbed to the drought and others needed some overdue TLC.

Paul Norquay explained the intricacies of pruning fruit trees and we even learned how to use the secateurs properly. We learnt to identify the good trees from less productive seedlings and sorted the desired grafted fruit trees from rampant rootstock suckers. With some help by the Back to Steiglitz group we are hoping these trees can survive for many more years.

Some members including our founding members Judith and Lance Lewis bent their backs to remove a large clump of agapanthus. These have established and been tough enough to survive the drought. Unfortunately we disturbed the home of a few frogs and spiders but we released them nearby.



To help with authenticity in the historic town another group worked on removing some wire fencing, cleaning up and weeding the area with Peter Sharp.  
*Allan (Bart) Bartholomew*

*Whistling tree frog and Common froglet. Photos Carolyn Edwards*

*Before fence work began...*



## JULY 2012

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### Upcoming Events

**Sunday 8 July 2012**

Weeding and cleaning up around Anakie Gorge where results of earlier flooding are still evident

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[FoBR Facebook](#)

ABN: 30 120 139 564 Reg No. A0032647M

# FoBR activities survey results

Results to date indicate -

- About half of responders attend more than 6 events a year
- Many are limited by being busy and having other events on Sundays
- Some Saturday activities would be popular
- Talks, walks, mammals and planting are most wanted activities
- Many want a choice of activity and may attend more than once a month

We are keeping the survey open a bit longer so we can get as much information as possible to assist our planning. To have your say, visit this link [online](#). If you would like a hard copy posted to you with reply envelope we would be happy to do so..



# Biolink funding for local projects

Two local projects have been successful in the first round of Biodiversity Fund grants announced by the Australian Government.

The Brisbane Ranges National Park to Werribee Gorge State Park Biolink will create a north to south biolink from the Werribee Gorge to the Brisbane Ranges. This new biolink joins two large, high quality parks via biodiverse plantings in fragmented remnant areas. Landscape scale revegetation on private land will protect and sustain biodiversity and provide resilience to climate change.

Port Phillip and Westernport CMA partners in this project include Moorabool Shire Council, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Landcare and landholders.

The Geelong Landcare Network has also received \$354k funding for linking and bridging remnant grassy woodlands to areas

of high conservation.

This project will establish new large scale biodiversity plantings across the landscape to improve connectivity. Brisbane Ranges, You Yangs, Port Phillip wetlands, Inverleigh Flora & Fauna Reserve, Bannockburn Bush and Dog Rock Sanctuary are important conservation sites - to enhance and build links that will bridge together these local, regional and state reserves. This includes the Mid Barwon and Lower Moorabool River catchments and their waterways to further widen the landscapes links to provide alternate routes for wildlife movement.

The project will engage 12 landholders with large scale sites who are already prepared to become part of major regional push to expand and join fragmented remnant landscapes.

More details on both these projects soon!

# FoBR now has cameras



Last month we purchased 3 great Scoutguard remote sensing cameras and accessories [www.scoutguard.com.au/](http://www.scoutguard.com.au/) so we could continue our mammal monitoring program. Previously we had to borrow equipment!

If YOU want to get involved in our mammal monitoring program or think you have seen some interesting critters please let us know at [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au) and we may be able to set up the monitoring cameras.

# Friends of Brisbane Ranges Planning

The June activity day started with a coffee and a planning meeting. We rushed through the meeting so we could get out to do some work - a big thank you everyone for your input.

Birthday celebrations discussed- see For Your Diary and more next month!

- History document to be on website before October – so input, old photos etc needed **NOW please!!**
- 2013 Wildflower Show – we will soon provide some information on what is required in each committee role as we are keen to get as many people involved

as possible to ensure this special event continues to grow!

- AGM on Sunday 12 August is being planned with a special event to follow so put the date in your diary and wait for more info.
- If you are interested in becoming more involved in a growing and vibrant FoBR and/or part of our great executive committee please contact me to discuss. 0418 125 836 or email [cazbarth@yahoo.com.au](mailto:cazbarth@yahoo.com.au)

*Caz Bartholomew, President*

# For your diary!

## •Sunday 8 July

Sunday 8 July Weeding and cleaning up around Anakie Gorge where results of earlier flooding are still evident

## •Sunday 12 August

AGM and a special event being planned. This is a must, so put the date in your diary NOW -more next month .

## •Sunday 9 September

FoBR activity to be announced

## •Sunday 14 October

Back to Steiglitz festival - FoBR stall and activity including Wildflower Walk

## •Saturday 10 November afternoon and evening

FoBR 30th birthday celebrations (date and time to be confirmed) back where FoBR began in Steiglitz. Presentation, guided tour, afternoon tea, bbq and more. Hoping to have ALL founding/ previous members attend at least part of this special occasion.

## And did you hear about...

- Capturing Flora: 300 years of Australian botanical art 25 September to 2 December 2012 [www.artgalleryofballarat.com.au/exhibitions](http://www.artgalleryofballarat.com.au/exhibitions)
- Native Orchid Show Mt Waverley Sat 29 September. For more information, go to [anosvic.org.au](http://anosvic.org.au)

## NAIDOC Week

1 - 8 July . - "Spirit of the Tent Embassy: 40 years on"

## National Tree Day

Sunday 29th July. Plant one or plant many! [treeday.planetark.org/](http://treeday.planetark.org/)

## National Science Week

11 - 19 August. Exercise your brain! [www.scienceweek.net.au/](http://www.scienceweek.net.au/)

## What's your news?

Send in your written pieces, funny photos or freaky facts and we can post them here. Email us at [Friends\\_email](mailto:Friends_email) with your name and we will do our best to include your contribution in the next newsletter



# Platypus evening with BRLG

A few Friends managed to find their way in the dark past the road blocks in Balliang to attend this great evening with the Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group. We learnt so much about the Platypus and also the Rakali (our native water rat). We finished the night with a chat over an amazing supper !

## Did you know?

- Plural of platypus is not platypi but platypus or platypuses
- They are land animals that feed in water – found in eastern Australia only
- They are not so shy and sensitive – they can live near humans
- They close their eyes, nose and ears under water
- They like many burrows at different heights in river banks (1–3m deep water).
- Their soft bill is very sensitive with electro receptive scanners
- They lay soft eggs and their very high fat milk oozes through pores of skin
- One of few venomous mammals - spurs on male's back legs
- Their fur is denser (not longer) than a Polar Bear's

*What can we do to help them? Keep our rivers healthy!*

- maintain a wide diversity of vegetation,

including overhanging vegetation, on river banks

- prevent erosion processes occurring as this will reduce sediment load in our rivers
- do not allow illegal or opera house nets and other objects like fishing line or hooks, rings, bracelets, fencing, wire left in water as these can ensnare the platypus
- Instal guards on inlets to pumps and turbines.

Rakali, our native water-rat is often mistaken for platypus as they can be in same areas, in burrows and eating same food. The rakali is about same size but has white tip on his tail and is more often seen feeding out of water eg on a rock.

Rakalis have teeth so they can eat larger food - aquatic insects, fish, crustaceans, mussels, snails, frogs, birds' eggs and water birds.

As they only live about 3 -4 years, long droughts can have big impact on the populations.

By the way - Some live in the city and also share the St Kilda breakwater with the penguins!! Keep an eye out – they are more likely to be seen around dawn or dusk in still

water and they will be breeding soon!

Please report any sightings and read more about both special creatures at <http://platypus.asn.au/>



# Anakie Gorge and the Lower Stony Creek Reservoir

On Sunday 8 July we plan to get back into Anakie Gorge Picnic Ground and see if we can clean it up a bit.

Way back in January 2011 there was flooding and damage across the state, however Anakie Gorge only suffered minor damage.

But the following month there was more rain and this time there was extensive flooding and damage across BRNP with Anakie Gorge suffering significant impacts. Several bridges and crossings were either damaged, destroyed or washed away.

Barwon Water sought approval to drain Lower Stony Creek Reservoir to carry out maintenance works including replacement of old original scour valve.

Parks Victoria decided to hold repair work to

Anakie Gorge to minimise damage which could result from subsequent draw down of reservoir.

Draw down occurs as planned however winter rain events wash large amounts of sediments out of reservoir, blocking access to base of



concrete wall. With more heavy rains forecast Barwon Water closes scour valve to halt movement of sediment from reservoir – and reservoir refills. They temporarily retro-fit new valve to old valve which then can remain open with water levels in the reservoir being managed via the new valve.

Barwon Water will again empty the reservoir once the weather improves, probably around November or December this year and complete the valve replacement and other maintenance works.

In the meantime Parks Victoria is planning to go ahead with the respective repair works in Anakie Gorge as the increased water flows from the draw down did not adversely affect any of the walking track or remaining structures.

## Cathy's Column...

Cathy will be providing her usual enjoyable and informative next month.



## Wind Farms...

For the latest news and developments on the Westwind Moorabool and Lal Lal wind farm projects visit

[www.w-wind.com.au/News.html](http://www.w-wind.com.au/News.html)

## Indispensable!

Park Ranger Judy has been on leave and we understand that her boss said she would never get holidays again !

## Fledglings and Nestlings

Even though this information panel originates in the United States, there information is still relevant for our wildlife in Australia

**Fledglings jump...  
so they can learn to fly.**

**Every adult bird did it. I need to do it too.  
PLEASE don't 'rescue' me.**

**I didn't need your help, my mom was helping me**



**DO NOT 'RESCUE' A FLEDGLING, LET IT FLY!**

The process of fledging begins with jumping out of the nest. It then takes 1-3 days for them to learn to fly. During this time the parents care for them **ON THE GROUND.**

Well meaning people often 'rescue' these birds, however this is the time in their life when they are least likely to eat from humans and many don't survive captivity. Yes, there are dangers living in the wild, but growing up wild is a critical part of the learning process.

[www.nc-claws.org](http://www.nc-claws.org)

Courtesy of CLAWS, Inc. and PAWS, Inc.

## Kangaroos and roads

We know to drive slowly and avoid dawn and dusk in areas populated by kangaroos. Some other ideas have been suggested to reduce the risk of hitting a kangaroo or wallaby:

- Using roo whistles on your car – a cheap solution. Any comments?
- Put your car's interior light on when travelling through kangaroo country. The view from the side of road shows lights well ahead when the car is dark. Worth a try!

If you do hit or see injured native animals please call BADGAR 24/7 rescue 1300 223 427 or Wildlife Victoria 1300 094 535.

(By the way, if you have been curious about spray painted roadkill, wildlife carers check the pouches of dead animals and mark the body with spray paint when checked)



## Focus on Frogs

Cass Davies, Regional Waterwatch Coordinator North Central Region has released these links to 'youtube' videos taken from the North Central Waterwatch *Water Science Forum A Focus on Frogs 2012*, all the presentations are provided in the links below and go for about 40mins each. Presentations will also be available through the North Central CMA website

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DM4p3l7TaB4&feature=relmfu>

**Edward Tsyrlin** – *Food Chains*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vs1kog9uNsc&feature=relmfu>

**Elaine Bayes** – *Frogs identification and their calls*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4aaJ9itWSH4&feature=relmfu>

**Damien Cook** – *Frog Friendly habitats*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wp41vrxvSpA&feature=relmfu>

**Peter Johnson** – *Distribution and Status*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmAEtJWunHc&feature=relmfu>

**Ray Draper** - *Threats to frogs including the Chytrid Fungus*

These presentations by well known experts are extremely informative and interesting.

For those of you fascinated by frogs... Enjoy!

*(Editors note: I was particularly interested in Ray Draper's talk on Chytrid Fungus as I see parallels in the phytophthora control undertaken in the Brisbane Ranges. We all need to be mindful of pathogen transfer in the environments we love to visit)*