

## FoBR monitoring for signs of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in Grasstrees

The grasstree monitoring project, run by VNPA, Deakin University and PV with assistance from the volunteer groups NPA Naturewatch and FoBR, "commemorates the work of Dr Gretna Weste, who carried out highly valuable research on *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, a disease that attacks plant roots, causing 'dieback' and often leading to the death of native plants.

"Dieback is often caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which is an introduced plant pathogen that infects the roots of plants, dissolving and feeding off them until it eventually kills the plant. Although *Phytophthora cinnamomi* was previously commonly known as Cinnamon Fungus, it is actually a water mould and not a fungi" (VNPA Naturewatch information Booklet).

FoBR members would be well aware that this plant disease is a serious problem within the Brisbane Ranges as well as many other native bushlands around Australia. The first evidence of this disease in the park was discovered in 1969 where it is suspected it was introduced by use of contaminated road materials on park roads.

NatureWatch volunteers and the Friends of Brisbane Ranges have monitored the health of the BRNP grasstrees over 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011 and 2012. Naturewatch volunteers are also now monitoring grasstrees in the Wilson promontory National Park.

For more information on the management of this devastating plant disease, please see [http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/103785/Phytophthora\\_cinnamomi\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/103785/Phytophthora_cinnamomi_Strategy.pdf)

Our day of monitoring started with blue skies and a gentle breeze (no severe winds as happened on Saturday!) so we headed off to the Switch road

monitoring site with good expectations that the day would be enjoyable and sunny. This is one of 6 sites within the park and is located on an exposed ridge just north of the Stony creek picnic ground. It is also the site one of Dr Weste's original plots, her stakes barely recognisable due to the 2006 wildfire. We located the 4 quadrants each identified by star pickets. Each quadrant contained grasstrees, stringybark eucs with healthy regrowth and some small herbaceous groundflora species.

We were fortunate that this site had only 4 quadrants and not 8 as per other sites which have 4 healthy and 4 diseased quadrants. The weather was ideal as was predicted and with the use of tape measures and graduated ropes, each grasstree in every quadrant was assessed for height and width and visually assessed for signs of *Phytophthora* ie yellow or loss of leaves, crown collapse, stem collapse or hole in ground where a grasstree had once existed. Photos and soil samples were also collected.

All information collected is returned to Caitlin, the project officer for VNPA, for future data collation. Results will be used to help with the management of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in Brisbane Ranges and other parks.

We finished the monitoring mid afternoon allowing for early home time and or a pleasant wander in the park to admire the early joys of springtime.

This is an important ongoing research project and FoBR's valuable contribution is greatly appreciated by the project partners. Thanks to those keen members who helped with the September monitoring and for those who missed out....there will be plenty other opportunities to assist.



Text Judy Locke & photos Owen Cook

### OCTOBER 2012

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#### Upcoming Events

Sunday 14 Oct 2012

Back to Steiglitz Festival  
10am to 3pm at Steiglitz township—  
gold coin donation.  
Visit the FoBR stall and enjoy the  
wildflower walk

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

Ph: 5366 0000

FoBR email [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au)

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

[FoBR Facebook](#)

ABN: 30 120 139 564 Reg No. A0032647M

## Anakie Gorge Update

Work on the Anakie Gorge walking track started on schedule as planned. Contractors met with PV staff at Anakie Gorge on the morning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September and were inducted into the site. Since that time work has predominately been around rebuilding the dry stone wall between crossings 1 and 2. (see photo attached). During this time PV staff salvaged the steel bridges which had been dislodged and are currently in the process of relocating them to the old Anakie Depot. Not being one to waste anything the steel bridges will be stored at Anakie for future use in other parts of the park.



Peter Box, Ranger in Charge

## Planning our 30th Birthday Celebration

### The first 30 years

Our history document is being edited and checked and edited and checked some more in hope that we will get most of it right! It is a celebration of the wonderful Friends who have made such a great contribution to our park and the group over the past 30 years. Many of our founding members are still involved and committed to helping. If you have ANY thing to contribute it needs to be sent to [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au) straight away PLEASE. Thank you to everyone who has already contributed.

**Do you know?** Anyone who has been involved as a member of FoBR in the past and may have moved away. We are keen to invite them to attend our 30<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations on Saturday 10 November to catch up with Friends past, current and future. Please ask them to contact us or forward the newsletter and invitation on to them. We are now trying to contact our past members, rangers and other supporters.

### Come celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> birthday with us on Saturday 10 November

Anytime from 3.30pm we would love you to join us and bring along other friends. We are going back to where FoBR began on 3 October 1982 in Steiglitz. So many memories and so much enthusiastic hard work was done – now is time to celebrate! We will announce and present to four new special Honorary Members, welcome early and new members, past rangers and everyone in between. Afternoon tea for those who prefer a daytime visit and catch and chat, an interesting talk and guided walk around the historic town of Steiglitz and – please join us or stay on for a BBQ, fun and possibly an evening walk.

## For your diary!

- **Sunday 14 October**  
Back to Steiglitz festival - FoBR stall and activity including Wildflower Walk
- **Saturday 10 November afternoon and evening**  
FoBR 30<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations 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.

### Can you help?

With the Back to Steiglitz on Sun 14 Oct and our birthday celebrations on Sat 10 Nov there are a few behind the scenes jobs to be done – so if you wish to help it would be great (please let Caz know). Some jobs include -

- setup before *Back to Steiglitz Festival* – marquee, stand, plants,
- setup up for our 30<sup>th</sup> – marquee, afternoon tea etc, tables, bbq
- stay for pack up afterwards – most Friends will help with this
- displays of photos for 30<sup>th</sup>
- help with printing/collating of history booklet
- and more

### And did you know about?

**Wildflower walks out West** Walks begin on 29<sup>th</sup> Sept and go until late November finishing with one at Mt Rothwell. Details to be found on the WMCN website.

## Invitation

Please join us in celebrating  
FoBR's 30th birthday

**Saturday 10 November 2012**  
from 3.30pm

at the historic Church of England,  
Regent Street, Steiglitz

Celebrate this special occasion, catchup with old Friends, and meet new ones.

Everyone is welcome to come for the full event or pop in for whatever time you can - but **please do join us!**

- Afternoon tea and meet the friends
- Honorary Members presentation
- Talk with Col Smithyman and Chris Worrall.... and guided walk around Steiglitz
- BBQ dinner (BYO meat, plate of salad/dessert to share, drinks, folding chair)

We are hoping to celebrate with all members and rangers who have been part of FoBR's 30 years. If you have any queries please contact us and **please RSVP** by Thursday 8 November to [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au)



## Cathy's Column Herbivores (rabbits, sheep & hares)

In mid September, Ron and I had the pleasure of escorting members of the Latrobe Australian Plants Society group around our ranges. We started at the north end and worked south (they were headed back to Geelong at the end of the day). Our stand-out *Grevillea steiglitziana* were in full flight and the plants looked more healthy than I have seen them in a long time. I grow a similar plant in my garden – *Grevillea aquifolium* (see below) and they can be difficult to tell apart unless you know the intricate details of each.



We admired the plants along Thompsons Road as we travelled slowly southward. The wattles were varying shades of yellow and until you see them all in flower at the same time, it is hard to describe the different yellow colours. There were many small plants in flower as well as orchids – such as the beautiful pink *Tetralochea ciliata*.



We finally found our way to the lesser known spider orchid spot and found one in flower with three buds. I took a few pictures and on the following Monday I returned to take a few more photos only to find **zero** flowers and two buds. The spider orchid that was in flower was totally gone, not even a leaf was there.

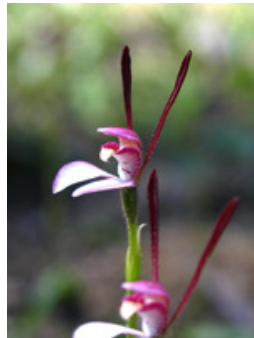


Four days later, I returned to see how the buds had fared. One bud down but one in full flower and surprise, surprise – a second flower we had not seen because it was discretely hidden in a remnant dead shrub. Because these were so exposed, I think the rabbits or wallabies ate them. Interesting that these spider orchids were found in the same area (probably the same species but colour variation – or maybe not).

The next herbivore I could write about is the hare but instead I will mention a different type of hare. You may recall last issue, I described the *Pyrochis nigricans* orchid and that it will be flowering soon. Well, my soon is obviously not the same as the orchid's soon because I suspect it will be a couple of weeks yet but lots of buds now. One other orchid that produces many plants, often in big colonies, is the Hare Orchid (*Leptoceras menziesii*). It, too, likes a fire event to promote flowering but it can be a bit deceitful because the plants often produce a false bud giving the impression that the colony will have lots of flowers.



The orchid plants along the fire break on the Ballan side of Furze track will have some flowers this year (provided they don't get munched).



There is only one species in the genus *Leptocerus*. It was previously caught up in the *Caladenia* group but was separated because of the broad leaf (which is nearly hairless) and densely glandular petals – that is the dark parts pointing straight up in the picture that give it the common name of Hare Orchid.

Lots of other flowers are starting to appear in nature's generous offering: This first plant belongs to *Stackhousiaceae* which is a small, predominantly Australian family. *Stackhousia* is the largest genus with 17 species of which 8 are in Victoria.

The pea family is diverse in plant size, leaf shape and flower colour. This next plant can be found scattered on dry ridges and slopes in our open forest.

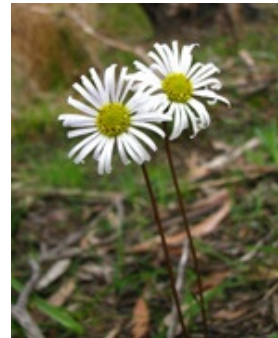


*Stackhousia monogyna*  
Creamy  
Candles



*Bossiaea obcordata*  
Spiny  
Bossiaea

This species was renamed to *Allittia uliginosa* and now there is a study to be done at the National Herbarium of Victoria to determine if this and *Allittia cardiocarpa* should be returned to the former genus *Brachyscome*. Don't change your name tags just yet, the study is to be funded and conducted in the 2012/13 year.



*Brachyscome uliginosa*  
Small Swamp  
Daisy

One last bit of information: If you have not logged on to NatureShare you are missing a lot of information about what is found in our area. I have been recording moths of our region and have over 150 species identified. Two that I photographed just recently are



The first moth *Euchaetis rhizobola* is fairly common but the *Alucita phricodes* is more unique. If you have moth pictures and want them added to the list started on NatureShare, just log on and follow the directions. If you need help, let me know and I will do my best to assist.

So, if you see lights shining on the eastern slopes of the Brisbane Ranges late at night (even after midnight) it is not a UFO but instead a moth addict. Spring has sprung – have a good time in our Ranges.



# 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



## Back to Steiglitz Festival

We have a great relationship with the group and are keen to support them as well as have a great time. We will need some volunteers to help on our FoBR stand where we will have some plant bargains and books etc to raise funds for FoBR. Help setting up would be most welcome too.

A wildflower walk is planned for 1.30pm so come along and join in and/or help us with the identifications along the walk. Invite friends and family too—it will be a great day!

## FoBR events calendar

We are off to a flying start with much planning on the go.

The calendar is being organised although some dates will have to be finalised later depending upon guest speakers' availability etc. Your comments on the proposed activities for YOUR FoBR are welcome please. We are aiming to combine some project work to improve our park as well as some fun and walks wherever possible.

FoBR members are a great group with individual interests and reasons for joining in as confirmed in our survey, so we hope to provide something for everyone. There will be more activities planned for Saturdays and as interesting speakers are identified we may even add some midweek events as well.

Some Friends are working hard in the background and others are only available for shorter periods on event days. You are always welcome to come along, say hello and join us for part of the day.

Activities we are hoping to organise in the coming year include -

- End of year celebration at Serendip Sanctuary
- Koala talk and guided walk
- Plant propagation at Anakie community nursery
- Barrier plantings at Anakie Gorge picnic ground
- Acacia longifolia removal – Lower Stony creek
- Sucker removal – aqueduct Lower Stony Creek
- Boneseed removal – Lower Stony Creek
- Weed removal along aqueduct upstream from the storage tank / Anakie basin
- Evening walks/talks
- Watsonia removal – Ballan road firebreak and Marshals road
- Monitoring projects – mammals, birds, reptiles – midweek perhaps
- Burchell trail – check accessibility and orange triangle track markers
- Weed removal – Anakie Gorge and Stony creek walks
- Replant Steiglitz orchard with heritage fruit trees (combined project with Back to Steiglitz group)
- Check walking trails/management vehicle tracks off South Steiglitz road
- Guest speakers for geological and gold mining history walks
- Remove barb wire from the Lower Stony Creek fenceline
- Guided walks in park with bird and mammal enthusiasts
- Revisit slate quarries with a geological expert

## Monitoring Programs

Thank you to Elle Fox, Sarah and Francis King and Carolyn Edwards who have offered to be part of our monitoring programs. Also thanks to our friend Trevor Pescott who is always a great source of support, advice and knowledge. Colin has organised some terracotta tiles that need a cleanup and can then be set up for reptile monitoring when we have sorted out suitable sites with Parks Victoria.

### Do you have a spot YOU want to monitor?

If you are a current financial member of FoBR and think you have some interesting wildlife you want to capture a photo or video of, we can usually lend you one of our FoBR remote sensing cameras for a short time to set up on your property or in the park near you. (You may like to use your own 4gb or 8gb SD card to keep your photos). The Scoutmaster cameras are easy to use - just try not to include leaves that move and set off the camera way too many times. And of course we want you to send us any interesting pics! We are very interested in wildlife in and adjoining our national park in particular. Please email if you are interested [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au).

*Next month... Update on Waterwatch water quality and macro-invertebrate monitoring at Sutherlands Creek*