



**FEBRUARY 2013**

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## Upcoming Events

**Saturday 10 Feb 2013**  
**Depot Day and Waterwatch**

Choose your favourite activity for the day: Working bee at Anakie depot or Waterwatch survey at Sutherlands Creek. When both activities are complete, Friends will get together to cook pizza at the depot.

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## A Busy Year

We wish all our Friends and friends a great 2013 and thank you for your involvement in 2012.

We are planning to provide a variety of opportunities for everyone to be involved and would love to see you attend our events during the year. We welcome new members and even our low membership fees help support us to carry out projects in the park. Following lots of rain in winter and almost none since, we have many projects which will help make the park healthier and better for visitors as well. Please join us!

We are really hoping for a safe summer and some rain would be great for the plants, birds and animals. Please remember we will need to cancel our events if there is a Total Fire Ban in our area.

2013 is a Wildflower Show year so please let us know how YOU can help with all the organising - the more people helping the better for our group and the show. For example - how about helping with the publicity??? We aim to have the biggest and best show yet and it is great to be part of it!

Our plants sales are a very popular part of the show so propagation and looking after our little plants will be an ongoing role - mostly midweek - so if you wish to help please let us know.

If you have any suggestions or queries PLEASE let us know

Look forward to seeing you  
Caz Bartholomew

## Kicking off 2013 with Friends

**Depot Day, Waterwatch and Pizza**  
**on Sunday 10th Feb**

Join us for a Special FoBR Depot working bee, Waterwatch survey and Pizza lunch - weather permitting

The Anakie "Depot" and FoBR home is in need of a spruce up ....including tidy up garden beds, install shelves, hooks or hangers for tools inside FoBR shed, tidy up kitchen area, cleanup the pond of excess sedge, remove dead or pot bound plants and plant up pot bound plants.

Thank you to Judy who has been planting seed for our Wildflower Show at home and giving them some TLC.

WaterWatch - meet at the Steiglitz Courthouse carpark promptly at 10 am to do monitoring and

head back to join everyone for pizza lunch. Please contact Dee on 0418 145 818 by Friday 9th Feb if you are coming straight to Steiglitz to help.

We also hope to check all our FoBR gear and have a talk and demo on our new remote sensing cameras.

You would be welcome at the Depot from 9am as we will be lighting the pizza oven early so lunch is not delayed.

Bring everything you need for lunch including your own pizza on a baking tray ready to cook in our brand new community pizza oven built on the site by locals with leadership by our own Chris Worrall.



## A Serendip End of Year

After a very hot spell, the cool change came just in time for thirty of us to relax and thoroughly enjoy our end of year celebrations at Serendip Sanctuary in Lara where we were lucky enough to have special after hours access. Thank you to Judy and the Parks Vic team at Serendip for this special privilege.

With help from Janine Duffy and Roger Smith who visit Serendip almost daily we took a walk around to see the abundant birdlife on and around the lake. Highlights were Nankeen Night Heron flying across the lake and later perched by one of the 'dams' and a Restless Flycatcher and Whistling Kite (coming in close). Due to the extreme heat earlier in the day we decided to leave the other animals to rest after their difficult day.

The BBQ, great company and lack of storms which were predicted, made for a very pleasant evening in the BBQ area.



## Brisbane Ranges Moths

### Checked out our Natureshare Moths collection lately?

<http://natureshare.org.au/collection/112/>

Cathy Powers (in particular) and Chris Lindorff have been keeping some very late nights lately, with very busy cameras .... and now there nearly 250 species of our local species are listed with photos on the website. This is an excellent achievement and very helpful so YOU can now check out any moths that you see, identify them and enter them as observations too if you wish.



*Orthoga thyrsalis*

## World Wetlands Day - booked out

World Wetlands Day is being celebrated at Werribee on **Saturday 2 February**

Did you know that as well as being a world leader in sewage treatment, the Western Treatment Plant is also one of Australia's most important wetlands for waterbirds, listed under the international Ramsar Convention (the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat)? It provides a haven for tens of thousands of birds and encom

passes a diverse and complex array of habitats, vegetation and wildlife.

Many people travel vast distances to visit the treatment plant every year so why not go check out what's on your doorstep... find out the positives of having this plant so close to your home rather than focusing on the negatives!

You can register online to be notified about future open days - [www.melbournewater.com.au](http://www.melbournewater.com.au)

## For your diary!

### • Sunday 10 February Kicking off 2013

Choose your favourite activity for the day: Working bee at Anakie depot commencing 9am or Waterwatch survey at Sutherlands Creek commencing 10am (meeting at Steiglitz Courthouse). When both activities are complete, Friends will get together to cook pizza at the depot first – full details on page 1.

### 2013 Calendar

**Tentative program for 2013 FoBR activities with a focus on projects to improve our park.**

Our wish list includes additional activities (as per the December newsletter) and we are hoping to finalise dates and details soon so please keep an eye on the website and newsletters.

- Sat 16 Mar Plant propagation and Anakie Gorge weed removal and walk
- Sun 14 Apr Barrier plantings at Anakie Gorge picnic ground (pending rainfall)
- Sun 28 Apr Geelong Heritage Festival and FoBR Lower Stony Creek - Walk To Australia's First Mass Concrete Dam Wall – 1pm Free but you need to book Colin 5286 1252 or 0417 770 765.
- Sat 11 May Waterwatch and Weeding at Lower Stony Creek with Boroondara Bushwalking Club
- Sat/Sun 15/16 June TBC Burchell trail – walk a section/check accessibility and track markers
- Sun 14 July Lower Stony Creek – remove suckers from Aqueduct and/or Boneseed
- Sun 11 Aug Waterwatch – Sutherlands Creek and Anakie Gorge
- Sat/Sun 7/8 Sep Prepare plants for WFS & Watsonia removal Ballan Rd
- Sun 13 Oct FoBR WILDFLOWER SHOW**
- Sun 10 Nov Waterwatch – Sutherlands Creek and Anakie Gorge
- Sat 14 Dec FoBR year end evening event

## Bellarine Peninsula 2013 Orange-bellied Parrot Surveys

Craig Morley, count coordinator for the Bellarine Peninsula, is surveying for Orange-bellied Parrots and Blue-winged Parrots. Surveys will be the week-ends of 18 & 19 May, 27 & 28 July and 14 & 15 September 2013.

With a wild population of less than 50, it's not surprising that scientists, twitchers and ordinary community are interested in the survival of the Orange-bellied Parrot (*Neophema chrysogaster*). Surveys of the Blue Winged Parrot, a close relative of the Orange-bellied Parrots, will also occur.

Information: Craig Morley [craigmorley5@bigpond.com](mailto:craigmorley5@bigpond.com)

## Take a Walk on the Wild Side

### Snakes with Colin Cook

It's the time of year when you might meet up with one of these creatures, so I'll give a brief overview. It's not a common thing to come across snakes while out walking around the park. In the 11 years that I've been wandering around the Brisbane Ranges I can only recall three encounters with snakes. That doesn't mean that they haven't been there, it just means that I've only seen three! One of these was on a recent walk along Ridge Track in the northern area of the park. There was a fine looking Eastern Brown Snake (*Pseudonaja textilis*) sunning itself on one side of the track. The interesting thing is that Wendy and Owen had walked down this track a few minutes previously and would have walked right past the snake. The snake was interested in our presence, but wasn't disturbed by us at all. We left it to its sunbaking.

Snakes play an important role in the ecology. They are an important middle-order predator, with diets consisting of frogs, small reptiles, insects and small mammals. They are also a food source for other predatory reptiles, mammals and birds. As well as Brown Snakes, the Brisbane Ranges is home to Lowland Copperheads, Mainland Tiger Snakes, Red-bellied Black Snakes, Little Whip Snakes, Eastern Small-eyed Snakes and White-lipped Snakes. Only the Little

Whip and White-lipped snakes are regarded as non-dangerous. Official records of sightings are very few and mostly old, so any sightings are worth recording, but do not attempt to chase, pick up or handle any snake to identify it. Photos with a zoom lens are your best option.

We are planning to set up some tile grids in the park later this year to conduct some reptile monitoring. The roof tiles provide a suitable habitat for many small reptiles and occupancy can be recorded when the tiles are lifted (probably 2-3 times per year). Any snakes resident will be identified as best as possible without handling. Some of the snakes, particularly Brown and Tiger Snakes, are often labelled as aggressive, but the true definition should be "aggressive when severely provoked", as their usual priorities are to lay low and remain unseen or try to escape. While treatment with antivenom is effective, prevention is always better than cure and the best preventative action is "Leave snakes alone".

*Photo: The Eastern Brown Snake can easily be confused with a Copperhead. The colours and patterns of brown snakes are highly variable. Sometimes they are striped and can be confused with Tiger Snakes. Photographed on Ridge Track, Brisbane Ranges National Park by Colin Cook*



### Fire Danger Days

Please note that if the FoBR event day is declared a Total Fire Ban Day, the FoBR 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, park visitors will be strongly advised not to enter 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.

### Globe At Night

The GLOBE AT NIGHT program is an international citizen-science campaign to raise public awareness of the impact of light pollution by inviting citizen-scientists to measure their night sky brightness and submit their observations to a website from a computer or smart phone. Light pollution threatens not only our "right to starlight", but can affect energy consumption, wildlife and health. People in 115 countries contributed over 83,000 measurements during the campaigns each winter/spring over the last 7 years, making GLOBE at Night the most successful light pollution awareness campaign to date.

Check out the web application data submission process. The website is easy to use, comprehensive and holds abundant background information. The database is usable for comparisons with a variety of other databases, like how light pollution affects the foraging habits of bats.

Go to <http://www.globeatnight.org/> to find out more.

### Litter and suspicious activity

Isn't it time we started dobbing in suspicious characters and litterers? See the EPA website <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/reportlitter> for ways to report litterers, including anyone throwing butts out of vehicles.

Also a reminder to report anything suspicious in and around our park .... particularly during this dry summer when grass and bushfires are being deliberately lit and people in our park are lighting and leaving camp fires. Please do not approach people directly but call **000** if there is an emergency or Parks Victoria on **13 1963**.

## And another word on monitoring...

This is a recent article in 'The Conversation' on the value of Community monitoring data - you might be interested to read it. Please contact us if you would like a printed copy of the article

The Friends of Brisbane Ranges enjoy participating in monitoring programs, and organisers ensure that the monitoring groups are well equipped, trained and coordinated. These steps are important in order to generate quality data. In addition, community monitoring projects promote education, bringing science and society together and getting involved in nature .

Here is a link to the article <http://theconversation.edu.au/citizen-science-can-produce-reliable-data-10815>



## Got any old boots?



This is a great idea – thanks for the tip Marilyn. All they need is a few holes in the toes! If you have any old boots you could put them up in tree yourself or bring to the depot as some of us would love to add some extra “hollows” for our birds and critters. Please call Caz 0418 125 836 or email [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au) if you want them picked up

## A good summer read

The history booklet *Friends of Brisbane Ranges The first 30 years* is now a free pdf download for everyone from the website. <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~fobr/fobrhistry.html>

We can send out a printed copy to our financial members if you prefer so please email [friends\\_br@yahoo.com.au](mailto:friends_br@yahoo.com.au) or let us know.



## Vale Gwen McDowell

Nola Haines has let us know that just three weeks after joining the Friends for our 30th Birthday Party at Steiglitz, Gwen McDowell, aged 91 “started her walk in the great big National Park - in the sky”. Gwen was a very sociable person, and loved walking and Friends Groups. Thanks for being a Good Friend Gwen.

## VEAC Investigation into Additional Prospecting Areas in Parks

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) has been asked to carry out an investigation into additional prospecting areas in parks. The purpose of the investigation is to make recommendations on which areas in the following parks could be made available for recreational prospecting: Alpine, Baw Baw, Croajingolong, Errinundra, Lake Eildon, Lind, Mitchell River and Yarra Ranges NPs and Lerderderg SP.

In addition, Council must take into consideration the **overall objective of the investigation is to increase the number of parks where prospecting may be permitted.** The Minister’s request, including full terms of reference, is available from [www.veac.vic.gov.au](http://www.veac.vic.gov.au) or by calling 1800 134 803 (toll-free).

The investigation will include a single submission period with final report to be provided to the Minister by 30 April 2013. Written submissions are invited from interested groups and individuals for consideration in the development of the final report. You may make an online submission at [www.veac.vic.gov.au](http://www.veac.vic.gov.au) or send your written submission by post or by email: Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, PO Box 500, East Melbourne 3002 [prospect-ing.investigation@veac.vic.gov.au](mailto:prospect-ing.investigation@veac.vic.gov.au)

Submissions close Monday 18 February 2013. If you do not wish to make a submission you can still register your interest online or by calling VEAC and you will be kept informed of progress of the investigation.

## 2013 Connecting Country Education Program

Connecting Country's 2013 Education Program **between February and April** has the theme “learning from experience & learning from each other”. It is a diverse and interesting program and that is enjoyable, inspiring and, of course, educational.

Event program includes:

Sunday 10 February 2013 Local Reptiles - From the Backyard to the Bush - *Castlemaine*

Sundays 17 February & 24 February 2013 - Forest Soils Workshop: The Science, Management & History of our Local Soils.

Friday 1 March 2013 - Nature Discovery Afternoon for Kids - *Vaughan Springs*

Wednesday 13 March 2013 (tbc) Weeds: Where to From Here? *Maldon*

Wednesday 10 April 2013(tbc) Designing a Wildlife Corridor: What Works & Why? *Elphinstone*

Sunday 28 April - Connecting Country Bus Tour: What Does Successful Landscape Restoration Look Like?

Keep watch on Connecting Country website for further details about times, locations and speakers plus registration for those events, go to <http://connectingcountry.org.au/12/the-connecting-country-education-program-is-on-again/>