



Brisbane Ranges Friends News

JUNE 2014

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Upcoming Events

Sunday 15 June

Col Smithyman will lead a geology walk along Quarry Track (3rd Sunday due to long weekend). Meet at Anakie Depot at 10am

FoBR Membership Fees

Annual fees \$11 for single and \$22 for families are now due for the coming year. Pay straight into FoBR bank account - BSB: 633-000 A/c No. 115314882

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2014 Parks Victoria thanks volunteers

On Saturday 17 May Parks Victoria invited volunteers to a regional volunteer recognition event. The day went well with over 50 volunteers including Friends of Brisbane Ranges, Friends of Werribee Gorge & Long Forest Mallee, Friends of Macedon, Steiglitz Historical Society and Back to Steiglitz members attending.

All volunteers within the Western Basalt District (PV Management Areas: Bellarine, You Yangs/ Serendip, Bacchus Marsh, Macedon and Creswick) were invited to attend. Bernie Fox was staying in Melbourne and came along to join in too.

The venue was the Bert Boardman reserve, Steiglitz, and attendees were offered Morning tea on arrival. Once everyone had arrived and settled, Tony English, Western Basalt District Manager, presented volunteer awards for service to park management and spoke about the various achievements of the groups including our Judy Locke's volunteer contribution outside of work hours.

Following lunch, Col Smithyman lead a tour around the town, which was particularly interesting as all the historic buildings were open due to Steiglitz being involved with the Golden Plains Shire Heritage trail. Both Steiglitz volunteer groups were available in each venue to assist visitors with information.

Awards were presented to Friends of Werribee Gorge & Long Forest Mallee and Friends of Macedon for their many years of volunteer service .



We were delighted that our own Friend, Judy Locke was Nominated for an Award for Individual Achievement recognising outstanding voluntary contribution over and above her normal position.

New bit of park still a mystery!

Well we did plan an excellent and exciting walk - exploring the newest part of our Brisbane Ranges National Park but who would think that there would actually be rain overnight! Much as we need and love it - we would prefer not then!

Unfortunately we had to add a quick post on Facebook to postpone our special walk. The track can be a bit challenging in parts and it was now slippery as well. The rain of course stopped and it was all clear by the time some of us met at the "triangle" so 8 of us headed off for a walk along less challenging but enjoyable Nelson's Track instead. Bart demonstrated his

new Koala-spotting abilities on the way surprising a male Koala fairly low in a spindly tree sitting on a neat nest of leaves - very cosy until we arrived. The Koala was as surprised as the rest of us so we quietened down and headed off to let him settle again.

It was a very relaxing and enjoyable walk up to the lookout over Anakie Gorge and the park .. and back. There was a hint of more rain when we returned so we stopped for lunch and called it a day. The special Little River Gorge walk is being rescheduled and we will even try again after our AGM in August if the weather allows.

Annual General Meeting in August

Hard to believe it is approaching so quickly - but again we aim for slick and efficient! There are some formalities our organisation must follow - including the AGM. Please come along and have your say in the future direction and operation of FoBR.

We are delighted that **Trish Edwards** and **Mark Trengove**, local ecologist specializing in the indigenous flora of central and south-west Victoria are joining us and have agreed to share some knowledge and experiences with us. Hopefully we will then head off for Little River Gorge walk through their property. More details next month.

We are seeking nominations for office bearers, so if you have something to offer, there are plenty of opportunities - don't be shy, everyone is friendly and the current committee will continue to support those volunteering.

Please talk to Caz or email friends_br@yahoo.com.au to discuss.

Place: Anakie Community Centre Time: 10am on Sunday 10th August.

National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week was celebrated in mid-May and hopefully it is not too late to say THANK YOU to all our volunteers, past & present.

We are delighted that **Judy Locke** was nominated for the Kookaburra Award this year for her outstanding **personal** contribution. Many of us realise the passion and dedication that she has for the Brissies - way above and outside her role in Parks Victoria. My personal thanks Jude!!

FoBR, and all organisations like us, NEED the dedication of our volunteers and the past 30 years have seen some wonderful contributions by so many of you in so many different ways. Some help on the ground, others in the background - it is all valuable. Thank you again!

Caz Bartholomew



For your diary! Join us

Sunday 15 June

Local character Col Smithyman will lead a geology walk along Quarry Track (3rd Sunday due to long weekend). Col has a good knowledge of local geology and also the local history of the Steiglitz and surrounding area. Meet Anakie Depot 10am

Sunday 13 July

Event to be confirmed.

Sunday 10 August –

Annual General Meeting, Guest Speaker Mark Trengove and hopefully Trish Edwards, Little River Gorge walk if weather permits and Waterwatch,



Sunday 14 September

Watsonia removal at Ballan Road firebreak and a check for early wildflowers

Saturday 11 October

Phytophthora monitoring of our iconic grass trees - VNPA Naturewatch and FoBR and wildflower walk and talk.

Sunday 9 November

Phytophthora monitoring of our iconic grass trees at Switch Rd- VNPA Naturewatch and FoBR followed by Waterwatch

Saturday 6 or 13 December

evening end of year event venue tba

Also at a date to be announced monitoring mammals and/or reptiles with Colin Cook – can be midweek if you are interested – please let us know your thoughts at friends_br@yahoo.com.au

Your articles: We would love to publish your stories of bushwalking in the Brissies - send us your contributions friends_br@yahoo.com.au

Cats on the loose!

We recently received an email which provided a grizzly reminder of the pervasive threat that cats pose to our native fauna.

The photo [deliberately not included here] showed the gut contents of a cat found within the Grampians National Park. Enough said?

Hopefully all our cat-lover Friends will be keeping their furry friends enclosed [where I know from experience they are happy, healthier and safer]

What else is on?

Activities around Victoria

World Environment Day - 5 June

Learn more about global issues and visit <http://www.unep.org/wed/>

Wurdi Youang Tree Planting Day

Saturday 14 June 10.30am. - see page 4.

The Big Otway Tree Plant - 14 & 15 June

Cape Otway Centre for Conservation Ecology <http://www.conservationecologycentre.org/get-involved/the-big-otway-tree-plant/>

9th Annual Grow West Tree Planting -

930am-430pm Sunday 20 July 2014
Friends of Werribee Gorge & Long Forest Mallee and Port Phillip & Westernport CMA. Grow West was created to restore badly eroded landscapes in the Bacchus Marsh area. Help plant 6000 native seedlings on Yaloak Estate in the Rowsley Valley. It's a great day out. Victorian Mobile Landcare Group will provide transportation around the site. Registrations will be open in June <http://www.growwest.com.au>

Grow West information: Helena Lindorff helena.lindorff@ppwcma.vic.gov.au or phone 0437 195 511

Check out the FriendsNet newsletters

for information on what other Friends and similar groups are doing around the state.

There really is something for everyone's interests.

You can add your name to the mailing list by emailing our Friend Bernie Fox at hayburn@bigpond.com.

Also the network now has a new website on the VNPA site - so check it out at - <http://vnpa.org.au/page/volunteer/victorian-environment-friends-network>

Outside your door

One of the pleasures of observing nature is that interesting things can happen just outside your door, or even on it!

One night in late March, a few medium-sized furry brown moths were attracted to the lights they could see beyond the glass doors of our house. Next morning, some of the moths were still on the doors. Strangely, they appeared to have bald heads. Also on the door were small round patches of brown fur. From inside the glass, we could see thirty to one hundred or more tiny yellow circles beneath each patch of fur. The moths had laid eggs, and used the fur from their bodies to camouflage them! A closer inspection of the door showed scattered hairs on it. One moth had hairs caught on a hind foot, which it must have used to remove fur from its body. Although the clusters of eggs were easy to see on our doors, they would have been very well camouflaged on the rough bark of a gum tree. The following morning, the moths were gone.

We posted photos of the moths on BowerBird, a nature identification website hosted by Museum Victoria. Our moths were identified as Mottled Cup Moths. The caterpillars are commonly called Chinese Dragons or Ten-times Stingers. Their pupae look like small grey cups. A few months ago, these caterpillars were causing damage to gum trees several kilometres away. There were so many of them that they were eating the majority of the leaves on the trees. The trees have since recovered.

Eleven days after the eggs were laid, they started to hatch. The eggs were no longer yellow, but were white and empty. We saw no sign of the caterpillars, which on a tree, would have climbed up to find leaves. One month later, most of the eggs have hatched. The few that are left are brown, and probably won't hatch. The moth's fur and old eggs remain firmly attached to the door.

Another species of moth that has been appearing recently is the huge grey rain moth. Their larvae, known as Bardi grubs, live in the ground for many years. On autumn nights after rain, they leave brown cases at the entrances to their holes, and emerge as moths. They are attracted to lights, and can be heard fluttering outside windows. A few years ago, I found one on a garden gate, and transferred it to a nearby gum tree. It was surprisingly heavy. A while later, it started to lay eggs, just dropping them to the ground, in a stream from its abdomen. Three hours later, it was still dropping them! When it had finally finished, the moth was much lighter. It must have laid thousands of eggs, from which the larvae would hatch and burrow into the ground to feed on tree roots. In the meantime, there was a feast for predators.

Rain moths and cup moths are both plentiful, but have very different strategies for reproduction. The cup moths lay a small clump of eggs, and camouflage them, so they are not obvious to predators. The rain moths lay a huge number of eggs. Although many will be eaten, some will survive. Both strategies are successful.

One wet evening, I found a small brown frog on the doormat outside the back door. One wing and two antennae, possibly belonging to a cup moth, were protruding from its mouth. If you look, you'll find plenty of creatures going about their lives just outside your door.

Wendy Cook



Bardi moth

Rain Moth (*Trictena atripalpis*)

This photo was selected from the images in the Natureshare website accessed through the FoBR website

Moths of Victoria

Do you know your moths? Did you know there are now FIVE moth books published by the Entomological Society of Victoria?



The most recent book **Part 5 - Satin Moths & Allies** is by a friend of ours, **Marilyn Hewish** who you may remember helped us enjoy a special evening of moth viewing a couple of years ago. Some of the photos will be from the Brisbane Ranges and from Friends Cathy Powers and Trevor Pescott.

The book also includes a disk with over 400 additional pages of information - and only \$12.

The other four books are -

'Moths of Victoria - Part 1' deals with some of the larger moths that occur in the State, the Silk moths and their allies.

'Moths of Victoria - Part 2' deals with Tiger moths and their allies.

'Moths of Victoria - Part 3' deals with Waves and Carpets.

'Moths of Victoria - Part 4' deals with Emeralds and Allies.

There is also a book called 'Collecting and Sampling Insects' - the essential introduction for the amateur entomologist to collecting and sampling insects.



To order any (or all) of these publications please see their website <http://www.entsocvic.org.au/> for more details and ordering information - you can pay by direct debit, credit card, cheque or money order.

WURDI YOUANG TREE PLANTING DAY



We invite you to our planting day

Approx. 200 trees to plant.



A BBQ lunch will be supplied with eel for tasting.

Saturday 14th June

10.30 am

Weather dependant, we will have tours of the
Stone Arrangement, our native grasses seed bank
and kangaroo grass project.

PLEASE RSVP FOR CATERING

CONTACT REG: 5277 0044

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