

## WHAT LOCAL PLANT IS FLOWERING?

**Botanical name:** *Pomaderris lanigera*  
**Common name:** Woolly Pomaderris  
**Family:** Rhamnaceae (Pomaderris family)  
**Flowering Period:** September to October  
**Sector:** Found in the Yarra Sector of the Bend of Islands.

An erect medium sized open shrub, up to 2 metres tall and 1-2 metres wide. Found in dry & valley sclerophyll forest habitats, it tolerates full sun but prefers moist, well drained soils.

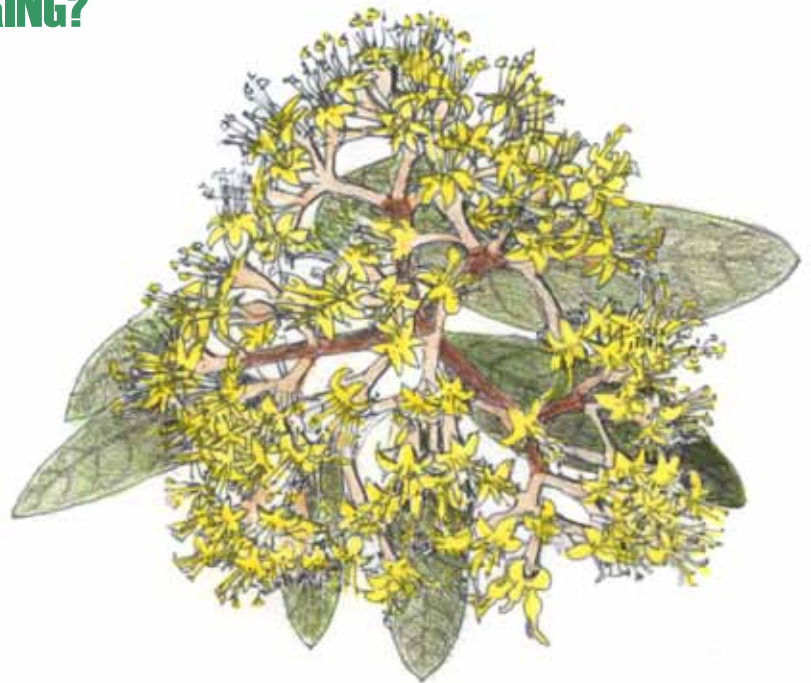
Leaves are lanceolate, i.e. lance-shaped, tapering at each end, up to 60mm long and 20mm wide. Leaves are covered with hairs laid flat against the surface appearing velvety & light green on the upper surface and woolly on the lower surface with longer, rusty brown coloured hairs on the veins & underside of leaf. Rusty coloured hairs on stems as well.

Flowers consist of many tiny, bright lemon flowers (up to 3-5mm long) in relatively large domed terminal flower clusters (to 10cm diameter), formed by many smaller hemispherical clusters on woolly rusty brown stalks.

An ornamental plant useful for stabilizing soils along streams & gullies.

Cric Henry

Photos by Frank Pierce  
Illustration by Ross Henry



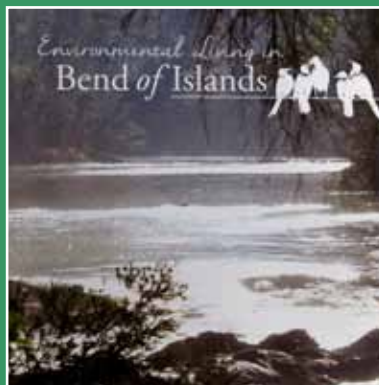


# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I have just returned to the Bend of Islands after being away for 4 months and I am delighted to find Greenhood Orchids galore and Spreading and Gold-dust Wattles as well as Red Box flowering profusely.

In my absence BICA has been in hyper-drive. There have been effective campaigns about the North East Link proposal, the Nillumbik Shire Council Plan 2017 – 2021, and motor bike usage on private land. In connection with these campaigns, we have hosted visits to the Bend of Islands by Nillumbik Shire Councillors and Council Officers including Mayor Peter Clarke, CEO Mark Stoermer, and Sugarloaf Councillor Jane Ashton, as well as councillors from other wards, North East Link Authority officers and planning consultants. Each had a personalised tour to identify particular issues and familiarising them with this precious and unique part of Nillumbik. We have been able to highlight the importance of the Bend of Islands Environmental Living Zone as a vital part of the Warrandyte Kinglake Habitat link, as well as the importance of the surrounding Green Wedge in sustaining the environmental values of our area. Thanks to all the Committee and in particular to members of the Planning Committee for dealing with these issues - Janet Mattiske, Frank Pierce, Carol and Alan Bonny.

It was useful to be able to provide our beautiful new publication to the recent visiting councillors, officers and planners explaining the area – its history, *raison d'être*, planning provisions and illustrations of the area's intrinsic value. Thanks to Neil Kamminga for seeing this project through, as well as the long-suffering, and now temporarily resting, Publications Committee consisting of Liz Mildenhall, Deirdre Lucas and Phil Wierzbowski.



Thanks to Councillor Ashton who initiated and supported an amendment to local law governing motor bike riding in the Shire of Nillumbik. The amendment returns the situation to the way it has always been in the Bend of Islands – permits are required to ride a motor bike, and we are again excluded from the free-for-all that pertains in the rest of the Shire. All neighbours should be notified if there is an application for a permit, so please be alert and let BICA know if you become aware of any applications.

This year there is a most energetic BICA Committee in place working quietly and effectively behind the scenes organising all the events that help make this community tick. Barb Whiter, Sue Grad, Liz Mildenhall, Rodrigo Castellanos, Deirdre Lucas, Glennis Bibra, Jo Henry and Pam McMahon have done a great job and along with many people outside the Committee worked on important issues. We really appreciate the work of Luke Doyle coordinating Landcare; Neil Harvey running the Firehouse Cinema; Peter Mildenhall running (or should I say walking?) the Big walk; Rudi Pauli for the Trivia night; and Emma Rose hosting and running the Art Event – a spectacular celebration of creativity and talent in the Bend. Come and join us on some of the upcoming events celebrating the environment in the Bend of Islands.

**Robyn Duff**

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# BICA MATTERS

## BEND OF ISLANDS PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Over the years there has been a BICA Planning Sub-Committee bubbling along in the background to monitor and react to issues and events that impact on the Bend of Islands and the SUZ2 Planning Scheme.

With the election of the new Nillumbik Council the planning sub-committee invited the mayor and councillors to visit Bend of Islands to ensure that they knew about our special place.

A number of tour visits were conducted to introduce the councillors to our area and inform them of the important natural values that exist here and how the community works to maintain them. A cup of tea after the tour provided an opportunity to talk to the visitors. Discussed were issues including the values and threats to the Fauna and Flora, the SUZ2 planning scheme, community involvement, Fire management/ CFA, and the council role to support our area. Most councillors have visited and responded positively to the Bend and what we are doing.

The new council released a draft Nillumbik Council Plan which was made available for comment. BICA made a submission to support the Green Wedge and the environmental values present in Nillumbik. BICA requested residents to individually submit and this resulted in 28 submissions made by Bend of Island residents. BICA also presented the submission to Council on 13th June. The released final Council Plan was changed to contain references to the Green Wedge.

The new council also introduced a change to the by-law regarding use of 'toy' motor bikes in Nillumbik, allowing use without a permit for most daylight hours. This use is inconsistent with the Bend of Islands 'residential national park' concept that our Zone provides. The issue was raised with the Mayor and councillors during their visits to the Bend and BICA requested that the SUZ2 be exempted from this change. Council has responded and the by-law has been amended as we requested.

The SUZ2 does not allow keeping of domestic pets or animals. When the zoning was implemented a register was created listing all animals kept at Bend of Island properties. The Non-Conforming Use Register is maintained by the Shire to reflect any changes that occur. Members of the BICA Planning Sub-Committee met with council officers recently to review the NCUR and the current processes in place.

The major planning issue currently impacting the area is the North East Link project. The State Government created the North East Link Authority (NELA) to investigate options to connect the Western Ring Road to the Eastern Freeway. Four corridor options were proposed by NELA with an option D along the high tension power lines through the Bend.

BICA has responded with submissions and residents have been urged to also make a personal submission. Although the proposal is for a tunnel from Kangaroo Ground to the other side of the Yarra, BICA consider option D is not a viable route because of the negative impacts on the Nillumbik Green Wedge and the Kinglake/ Warrandyte State Park Link along with the intrusion on the Urban Growth Boundary. To date the evaluation by NELA has found that option D performs badly compared to the other three options. The consultation period ended on 18 September and we watch with interest the next stage of the evaluation process.

Alan Bonny (Secretary Planning Sub-committee).  
Janet Mattiske (Co-ordinator), Frank Pierce, Carol Bonny,  
Deirdre Lucas, Robyn Duff

## 2017 BICA CALENDAR

### October - December

- **October 1st**  
Flora Walk — focus will be on orchids;
- **October 29th**  
Pub Walk — always a great afternoon with a walk to one of the local pubs, followed by a meal – or if walking is not your “thing”, then just roll up to the pub to join the group for dinner;
- **November 18th**  
Night Event — a night to perform on stage for those who wish to, or be an audience member for what is always a terrific night of entertainment;
- **November 26th**  
BICA AGM — the AGM followed by another terrific talk – this time about Flying Foxes;
- **December 16th**  
Café Benders Christmas Evening — a fundraising event for the CFA - a BBQ, great company, and if we are lucky, possibly a visit from Santa (fingers crossed!).

*Keep your eye out for regular emails from BICA, regarding up-to-date information*



## BICA GENERAL MEETING

The general meeting for BICA, chaired by Liz Mildenhall, was held at the McMahon house on Sunday 30th July with about 30 people attending. Good discussions occurred followed by a celebration with Liz Mildenhall providing the official launch of the BICA book *Environmental Living in Bend of Islands*. The booklet produced by the Committee is designed to provide information to new residents, estate agents and anyone interested in learning more about our special area. All households in the area will receive a copy.

The guest speaker for the General Meeting was Alex Maisey, a PhD student at La Trobe University, who spoke on Lyrebirds. Alex has studied Lyrebirds for most of his life and gave us information about the environmental influences on variation in nest characteristics which has been the focus of his long term study of the Superb Lyrebird *Menura Novaehollandia*. Amongst issues effecting the Lyrebird population is the increase in deer population which has caused significant damage to trees and waterways in the Sherbrooke Forest. Included in the slide show were early images of tall trees from the forest most of which have been destroyed by fire. Alex also played recordings of Lyrebirds including one which had a distinct human voice sound.

The presentation was videoed and recorded by James Armstrong and may soon be on the BICA Website.

Some websites for Alex Maisey:

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alex\\_Maisey](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alex_Maisey)

[http://sherbrookelyrebirdstudygroup.blogspot.com.au/p/blog-page\\_26.html](http://sherbrookelyrebirdstudygroup.blogspot.com.au/p/blog-page_26.html)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-22/lyrebird-survey-in-sherbrooke-forest/7852254>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-22/a-big-country-listening-out-for-the-superb-lyrebird/7867500>

Following this very enjoyable and informative event, Celebrations continued until dusk.

Glennis Bibra





## WORKING WITH OUR SHIRE

### Nillumbik Landcare Network Report from our NLN Representative Deirdre Lucas

The Nillumbik Landcare Network (NLN) is made up of representatives from Nillumbik Landcare and local Friends groups. The NLN facilitator is Colin Broughton who is hosted by NSC. The group aims to advocate as a representative voice on behalf of local Landcare groups and manage/oversee the delivery of Shire-wide projects.

At the moment these are projects which may be of interest to residents.

- The first is an ongoing Nillumbik-wide monitoring program which aims to measure the long-term health of two forest assets – dry forest and woodlands, and wet and damp forests.

Thirty random monitoring sites have been selected around the Shire, on both public and private land. Later this year sound recording equipment, as well as camera traps, will be left at these sites for a period of time. The data collected will be analysed using sound analysis software to determine the richness of sound at these sites. Photos will also be examined. This will then be repeated on a yearly basis into the future. Using the data retrieved, it is hoped to determine the health of the habitat based on the variety of sounds heard – i.e. birds, insects, frogs, man-made sounds etc.

If your property has been selected, you will be contacted by NLN/NSC asking for consent.

- One of the latest projects is the Conservation Futures project which has just received \$300 000+ over three years of state funding.

Conservation Futures promotes the preservation of biodiversity and threatened species habitat within the Northern Yarra Ranges region. The project seeks to have a cross-tenure approach by engaging the local community and public land managers through activities that protect biodiversity and foster a sense of connection, understanding and appreciation for natural areas.

Species targeted include: Common Dunnart, Eltham Copper Butterfly, Brush-tailed Phascogale, Round-leaf Pomaderris, Matted Flax-lily, Clover Glycine, Rosella Spider Orchid, Charming Spider Orchid and Wine-lipped Spider Orchid..

The project will specifically focus on achieving the following threat abatement works to help conserve these species for the future. These include weed control, exclusion fencing to reduce grazing pressure, pest animal control, small scale ecological burning to improve habitat and enhance planting to attract pollinators for threatened flora species.

Just announced Nillumbik Landcare Network has also been successful in securing funds from the Biodiversity On-ground Action Grant for two projects over the next three years

- \$50K for Charming Spider Orchid.  
**Recovery and conservation of the Charming Spider Orchid *Caladenia amoena***.  
The Charming Spider Orchid is



highly endemic and restricted in its extent to 3 sites only. Two natural populations occur at Plenty and Wattle Glen and one population has been re-established in Yarrambat. It is estimated that only 85 plants are surviving across the three populations.

The grant will be used to fund propagation and reintroduction of the orchid to help bolster numbers and increase genetic diversity of the populations. Grazing exclusion fencing around existing populations and reintroduction areas will be constructed, as well as weed and pest insect (Portuguese millipedes) control to improve habitat and reduce the impact they are having. Ongoing monitoring will be put in place too.

- The second project, \$27K for the Southern Toadlet:

#### **'Finding and saving Southern Toadlets and other frogs in Nillumbik'**

focuses on the conservation of the Southern Toadlet (Pseudophryne

semimarmorata) which is classified as vulnerable

in Victoria. This species has historically been recorded across the Shire but is suspected of being in a state of decline.

The project will engage with local communities, public land managers and private land owners across the Shire, through a series of events, raising awareness of toadlets, their habitat requirements and threats. A herpetologist will undertake targeted surveys on identified sites from Eltham through to Kinglake and develop a management plan and implementation actions. A number of community events are also planned for this project, so we'll let you know once dates are finalised.



If you have any questions, or would like further information, please contact Deirdre Lucas via the BICA Secretary – [bicacomm@gmail.com](mailto:bicacomm@gmail.com)

## SPECIAL CAFÉ BENDERS

10.30am SATURDAY October 21st

Nillumbik Seniors Festival

The Victorian Seniors Festival runs during October 2017, celebrating the valuable contribution older people make to our community.

BICA has arranged A Bus Tour and Morning Tea for a group of Seniors who have been invited to visit the Bend of Islands and meet the Community at Café Benders.

Do come and meet our visitors and tell them about the Bend, our achievements and what makes living here so special

Please bring a plate to share and join us for Morning tea at 10.30 am.



# Protecting the rare orchids in the Bend

A lot has happened over the last couple of years to protect the rare orchids that are known to occur in the Bend.

In **2015** BICA had 13 exclusion plots, to protect selected rare orchid species from grazing pressure, installed by a contractor (thanks Tserin). This was funded by a Grant from Nillumbik Shire Council (NSC). Most of these species grow at only one known location in the Bend; see the map and plot details below. At the time we thought we had this protection business done and dusted. How wrong we were!



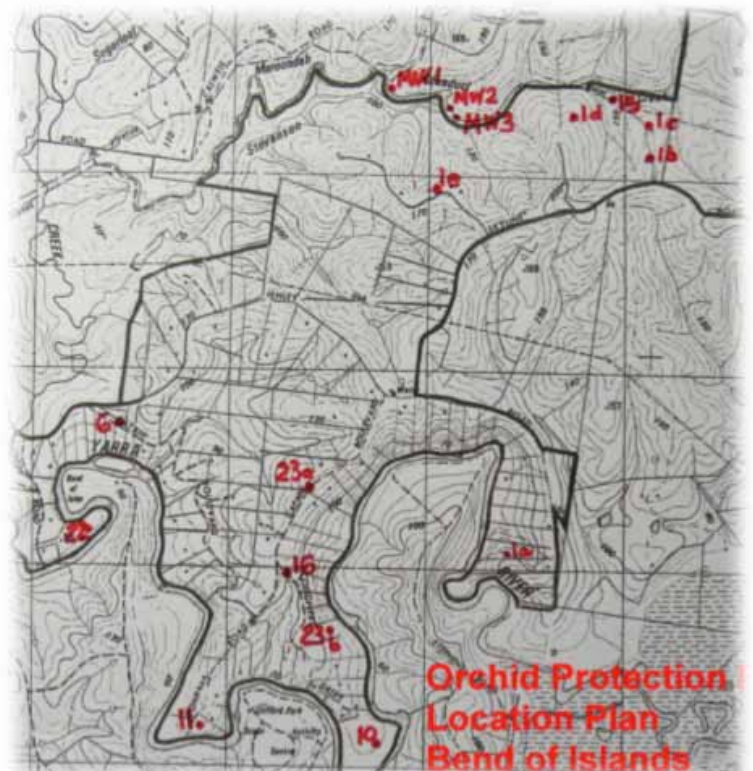
Later in **2015**, NSC engaged Karl Just, an ecologist with special orchid knowledge, to lead an Orchid Management Workshop and to provide a Report – Orchid Management Guidelines. The workshop and report highlighted the need for management of a wide range of issues in exclusion plots. For example, while the plots protect the orchids from grazing, the weeds and other native plants are also protected and this may lead to excessive growth that can smother the orchids.

In **2016** Melbourne Water (MW) installed 3 exclusion plots on the Aqueduct Reserve immediately north of the Co-op. Later in the year MW engaged Karl Just to provide specific management advice on the Aqueduct plots and, to provide a comparison, inspect some of the other plots in the Bend. This provided much clearer guidelines specifically related to our plots, so that they can be managed with more confidence into the future.

NSC, working with the Royal Botanic Gardens, has a project to reintroduce some of the more highly threatened species. As part of this, in **2017**, NSC has held two further Orchid Workshops.

Our thanks go to NSC and MW for the assistance we have received as outlined above. This has enabled us to 'get up the learning curve' and develop a comprehensive on-going management plan for the orchid plots.

	Scientific Name	Common Name	Size
1a	<i>Acianthus caudatus</i>	Mayfly Orchid	2x2
1b	<i>Acianthus caudatus</i>	Mayfly Orchid	3x3
1c	<i>Acianthus caudatus</i>	Mayfly Orchid	2x2
1d	<i>Acianthus caudatus</i> #	Mayfly Orchid#	2.5x5.5
1e	<i>Acianthus caudatus</i>	Mayfly Orchid	~3x4
6	<i>Caladenia vulgaris</i>	Slender Pink-fingers	3x6
10	<i>Chiloglottis reflexa</i>	Autumn Wasp-orchid	3.5x3.5
11	<i>Corybas fimbriatus</i>	Fringed Helmet-orchid	3x3
15	<i>Eriochilus cucullatus</i>	Parson's Bands	3x3.5
16	<i>Gastrodia sesamoides</i>	Cinnamon Bells	3x10
22	<i>Pterostylis sp. aff. Revoluta</i>	Large Autumn Greenhood	3x6
23a	<i>Pterostylis squamatus</i>	Common Ruddyhood	2.5x6.5
23b	<i>Pterostylis squamatus</i>	Common Ruddyhood	7x9
MW1	<i>Caladenia clavigera</i>	Plain-lipped Spider-O.	7x4
MW2	<i>Caladenia oenochila</i>	Wine-lipped Spider-O.	7x7
MW3	<i>Thelymitra flexuosa</i>	Twisted Sun-orchid	18x3





## Protecting the Rare Orchids in the Bend continued

The NSC workshops have highlighted the complexities and variability of the 'life strategies' of rare orchids and the dire straits that many of them are experiencing.

The aim of the protection and management is to ensure that as many plants as possible are pollinated. They can then set seed and hopefully the population will prosper and eventually spread to new areas.

The rare orchids have declined to critically low numbers. Many of them were quite common even 30 years ago.

- Orchid species have one of 3 different strategies to attract pollinators, and management varies for each of these.
  - o **Food Rewards** – the orchid attracts insects by providing food for it. The insect pollinates the orchid while getting this food. These orchids benefit from being in large numbers without the presence of other flowers.
  - o **Food Deception** - the orchid attracts insects with the promise of food for it, but doesn't actually supply any. The insect pollinates the orchid while looking for food. These orchids benefit from being in small numbers but in the presence of lots of other flowers.
  - o **Sexual Deception**- the orchid requires the presence of a particular species of wasp as its pollinator; the orchid has a flower that visually resembles the female and it also produces a scent that matches the pheromone produced by the flightless female of the wasp species. The wasp pollinates the orchid during its 'pseudocopulation'. These wasps, in turn, require the presence of specific host invertebrates, such as a scarab beetle, so that they can reproduce. (No doubt the beetle will also have specific requirements for its survival)

- The seeds produced by many orchids will only grow if there is a specific fungus present in the ground. No fungus – no new plants!

- Another problem for the orchids is that Portugese Millipedes eat them. These millipedes were first recorded in South Australia in the '70s. They have spread throughout the country and can be voracious feeders on the leaves and flowers of orchids. Exclusion plots don't stop them and so this is another issue that has to be managed within the plot.



- Leaf litter management is another issue, as it more readily builds up in a plot. Some species need lots of it; others are smothered if it is too thick. This of course effects moisture levels as well

A lot of this is pretty 'new' knowledge, from the last decade or so. It just goes to show how little we really know about the complexity of Nature. One thing that is clear is the importance of maintaining the biodiversity of the natural systems.

The **Plain-lipped Spider Orchid** is a local example of a species in trouble. Cam Beardsell suspects that its pollinator wasp has gone locally extinct. In the last decade he has only recorded pollination after he has 'hand pollinated' the flowers. This matched our experience with this orchid species at Plot MW1 on the Aqueduct in 2016.

There are obviously many links in an orchid's 'life- chain' and a population becomes non-viable if any one of these goes missing.

The plots can be a bit of a visual eye-sore but are a necessary evil as a last ditch effort to try to prevent these precious gems from going extinct. There are a number of species recorded in the 80's but not since. This is all too obvious if you find a rare orchid in flower but when you return the next day it is gone, grazed into oblivion, never to pollinate and contribute to the on-going viability of the species.



Orchid grazing by Choughs and other native animals will have always occurred and is part of the natural system; however with the demise of the rare orchids to critically low numbers, this too has to be prevented.

Our knowledge of nature's complexity is ever increasing. For more details on *Chiloglottis reflexa*, the Autumn Wasp-orchid (in our Plot No.10), see

[http://www.hermonslade.org.au/projects/HSF\\_99\\_8/hsf\\_99\\_8.htm](http://www.hermonslade.org.au/projects/HSF_99_8/hsf_99_8.htm)

Our area's biodiversity is continually under attack on many fronts. The SUZ2 Planning Scheme is designed to protect the local vegetation by limiting the destruction of indigenous species and preventing the introduction of non-indigenous species. The elephant in the room here is the detrimental effects of the ever increasing grassy weed infestations. At the BICA 40th celebration in 2016, John McCallum noted that the biggest change he had seen to the area since the early '70s was the massive increase in grassy weeds. These can crowd out the native species and severely reduce the biodiversity. The grassy weed infestation is insidious and its gradual spread often goes unnoticed.

We have a comprehensive Land Management Plan for the Bend of Islands. This points us in the right direction to preserve and maximize the biodiversity of the Bend. Our challenge now is to effectively implement its recommendations and that requires urgent action by all of us lucky enough to reside in the Bend.

Frank Pierce



## BICA community involvement

Being involved in the local community with like-minded neighbours is what makes living in the Bend special. All activities that BICA coordinate and/or help to organise, are relaxed and informal – a great place to meet others, share information and enjoy the wonderful environment in which we live. Since our last newsletter, many community activities have taken place – such as:

- A Kid's Event, with an afternoon of songs, games and stories for the younger members of the community;
- Two nights of movies with Firehouse Cinema;
- The Big Walk – a long walk to warm up on a very chilly day at the end of May;
- The BICA General Meeting with a fascinating talk about lyrebirds;
- Trivia night – a fun, relaxed night of testing our general knowledge;
- BICA Art Event – a great afternoon of sharing the artistic talent of locals with an art exhibition, some music, great food, mulled wine and terrific company.

Many have also enjoyed the monthly bird walks and participation in Landcare to look after the environment in the Bend.

Thank-you again to all of the people who have volunteered their time, energy and often their homes to host and organise events.

More events are to come for the last few months of the year – Keep your eye out for regular emails from BICA, regarding up-to-date information and **get involved**.

**We will soon be starting to put together the calendar of events for 2018, and are looking for some fresh, new ideas and activities. So if you have any feedback about current events or ideas about things that you think we could add, change or delete from our list of events, please contact Sue or Pam – we welcome your feedback and thoughts!!**

Sue Grad – [suegrad@yahoo.com](mailto:suegrad@yahoo.com) or 0439 101 962

Pam McMahon – [apmcmahon@inet.net.au](mailto:apmcmahon@inet.net.au) or 0409 233 422

## BICA Art Event

Sunday 10th September  
At the Home of Emma and Felicity Rose

Thanks to everyone who attended and participated in our annual art event, hosted by Emma and Felicity Rose. The day was a roaring success, enhanced by the sun finally making an appearance 10 minutes prior to the start. This year we were lucky to have 12 artists exhibiting and the mediums used were diverse, from traditional oil painting and acrylic, to watercolour, charcoal, sculpture, ceramics, leather work and poetry. Artists who contributed were Lynne Johnstone, Syd and Ona, Rudi Pauli, Tim Read, Graham Dorrington, J.D., Jess Jarvie, Mia Stevenson, Mia Pullen, Luke Doyle, Felicity Rose and Emma Rose. Some were brave enough to be exhibiting for the first time! The ambience was enriched by the music generously provided by Luke Doyle and his entourage (Frank Stanley and Kathryn). This, coupled with a fire pit, mulled wine on tap and fabulous food made for a great afternoon.  
Emma Rose







The River © Ona Henderson

## YARRA STORIES

### The River Yarra

Our iconic southern border of the ELZ has been an integral part of Syd's and my arts practice since 1979.

This painting of 'The River' came out of 10 years of walking daily a river path that we cut with secateurs from blackberry incursion.

This is painted near the islands in the river bend many years ago.

Ona Henderson

Note; Thanks Ona for your response to a call for Yarra Stories to publish in our Newsletter. Melbourne Water is currently developing a fifty-year community vision for the Yarra River, a cornerstone to a new Strategic Plan for the Yarra. Check your emails from the Secretary of BICA to find out more about the process involving the community.

The Editor

### Oxley Bridge, a bit of history ...

Over the years Oxley Bridge has had many incarnations.

The early original bridge was built of huge yellow box from our Creek House Studios block (where the ELZ sign is today).

Many years ago a car careered through the railing, & teetered on the concrete edging, the car was like a see-saw balancing up & down.

We rescued the driver & spent hours calming her with cuppas all afternoon, while the Fire Brigade rescued the car.

On the 1st Dec. 2009 these photos were taken when a very tall 80 foot tree approx. (maybe even 20 meters) candlebark gum came crashing down blocking all traffic. Syd Tunn chain-sawed the trunk into chunks, while Peter Rae gave him support. It was a dangerous mission.

This reminds us how important the access is into the ELZ.

Ona Henderson



### But You Still Have Your Grass

Tread light, Little One  
Take no more than you need  
Honour our Mother  
Return her to seed

Set roots in her soil  
Lift face to the breeze  
Breathe inspiration  
Be nurtured, at ease

Be the might of the Roo  
The flow of the water  
One with all, Spirit  
They're you, little daughter

Sentinels screech  
Underground thunder!  
Terror! Torture!  
Flee!

They rape Mother Earth!  
Choke Father Sky!  
Bore through our heart  
where Ancestors lie!

You slice through our web  
where our power would course  
We are nothing in bits  
cut off from our source

But we're protecting the land  
A respectful underpass  
Yet you don't understand  
you still have your grass

© Vicki Rock August 2017



## From the FIRE BRIGADE



### Christmas Hills Fire Brigade

As the summer approaches and we look forward to some warmer weather it is, however, time to reflect on how prepared we are for the fire season. All indications are that the fire season may arrive a little earlier this year

There are a number of ways that you can pursue to help you prepare for the summer ahead.

Attending a Fireguard meeting is an excellent way of meeting neighbors, exchanging ideas and gathering knowledge. The Bend of Islands area is well served by several very active Fireguard groups.

I have recently subscribed to the CFA YouTube channel and discovered a wealth of information as well as providing me with a better understanding of the work of the CFA.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/cfavic>

The Christmas Hills Fire Brigade has its own Facebook page and you can become a Facebook friend by locating the Facebook page, simply search Christmas Hills Fire Brigade in Facebook. The Christmas Hills Fire Brigade Facebook page delivers timely information as well as providing information about Brigade activities.

<https://www.facebook.com/ChristmasHillsFireBrigade>

The CFA provides the community with a wealth of information. You can access much of this information on the CFA web page. <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/>

Hard copies of this information can be obtained from the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade.

Send an email to [chfbsec@gmail.com](mailto:chfbsec@gmail.com) and ask for the Community Safety Officer to contact you about securing the publication you want. Don't forget to leave contact details.

The Christmas Hills Fire Brigade is always on the lookout for new recruits. We currently have five new recruits in training and we look forward to them becoming operational. If you are interested in joining the Brigade then do not hesitate to forward an email to [chfbsec@gmail.com](mailto:chfbsec@gmail.com) asking to be contacted by a Brigade member.

We also have non-operational members who assist with many brigade functions and if you are interested a participating as a non-operational member please email the Brigade Secretary at [chfbsec@gmail.com](mailto:chfbsec@gmail.com)

The Christmas Hills Fire Brigade is very appreciative of the support it receives from the local community. The Saturday morning 'Benders Café is a great community event which raises important funds for the Brigade. We can also announce that the Brigade has secured funding from the Bendigo Community Bank (Yarra Glen) for a new roller door at the South Station.

Brigade members practice their skills on Sunday mornings so that they are ready for call-outs when they occur. It may be a motor vehicle accident, house fire or a bush fire; the CHFB is ready to respond.

Thank you for your support and we all look forward to a quiet summer, fingers crossed.

Be prepared!

Jeff Walters

Community Safety Officer

Christmas Hills Fire Brigade.

### Bend of Islands Organic Fruit and Vegetable Co-operative



Join the locals each Monday Evening, 7.00pm at the Fire Station.  
\$40 will buy you a great box of fruit and veg for the week  
Biodynamic milk and free range eggs also available  
New families welcome  
Please come and look or Contact Luke to place your order on 0409 610 934



## BIRD NOTES

The following can be reported since April 2017.

### Lyrebird Records

6 new Lyrebird records have been reported. Ross Henry heard birds near Sugarloaf Gate 3 on Skyline Rd and near Mt Graham, Liz Mildenhall and Neil Taylor both heard birds in the Gully north of Henley Rd and Frank Pierce twice heard birds calling north of the Co-op.

The details of all 294 Lyrebird records reported since July 2000 can be found on the BICA Website.

Please pass on details of any 'encounters' you are lucky enough to have with these iconic birds. The records are valuable as they form concrete evidence that the Warrandyte-Kinglake Habitat Corridor is working and that Stevenson Creek is an important part of this link.

### Bird Survey Highlights



In April, on Heritage Golf Course, a pair of **Nankeen Kestrel** was observed on the ground (which is unusual) having a 'stand-off' with a pair of **Magpies** (aka Ground Butcherbirds!). A **Peregrine Falcon** was also seen on the walk.

In September we were lucky to see a pair of **Varied Sittella** attending their nest, a perfectly camouflaged cone built into a vertical fork of a tree. On this walk we recorded 8 honeyeaters, (6 with Honeyeater in their common name)

### Other Interesting Observations

A **Red-capped Robin** was seen on the Co-op on 22/9/17. This is the 4th record for the ELZ and a 1st for the Co-op.

In the last week of September, Gavin & Mal recorded **Scarlet Honeyeater** in what looks like the start of a local irruption of this species. This last happened in 2009 and they stayed for about a year.



Weebill, which has been recorded rarely in the past few years is now being regularly recorded in the south end of the Bend as well as in other areas through to the Co-op.

As per the article in this Newsletter, a Brown Gerygone was recorded in July.

**Eastern Rosellas** bred next to Frank & Janet's house last season, but most chicks were killed by a Sugar Glider (full story in the last Newsletter). Well, in mid September, they have started visiting the nest again.

The **spring arrivals** have been happening just like clockwork; **Cuckoos, Cuckoo-Shrike, Orioles, Woodswallows** and so it rolls on. This includes large flocks of **White-browed Woodswallow** on the warm days with northerly winds, often with a few **Masked Woodswallow**; a relatively rare occurrence in the Bend.

The **Birds Section of the BICA Website** has lots of information about the birds of our area, as well as an up to date summary of our on-going bird survey to the end of 2016.

Could you please record the details of any unusual sightings you make and pass them on to Frank Pierce, (97120237), or email – [jmandfp@bigpond.com](mailto:jmandfp@bigpond.com) - especially Lyrebirds.

All are welcome on the bird survey walks on the 2nd Sunday of each month. See the BICA Calendar for start times; we meet at the top corner of Henley and Catani.

Frank Pierce



## Another new bird in Bend of Islands

Each year in the Bend we seem to be able to add one or two new birds to our area list. This year, for the first time we recorded the Brown Gerygone.



*Brown Gerygone 01/07/2017*

One of the hardest groups of birds for the backyard birder to identify are the LBJ's. The Little Brown Jobs! They are all very similar in colour, fast moving and active and often high in the trees. In The Bend these are mostly Thornbills, with four or five species commonly seen. Thanks to Frank P. we have a great guide on the website on how to tell them apart.

<https://bendofislands.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/thornbills.pdf>

Closely related to the Thornbills are the Gerygones. Generally they replace Thornbills in the more wetter and northern areas of Australia. Although one species, the Western Gerygone (*Gerygone fusca*) is found from Victoria in dry woodland areas across to Western Australia.

Gerygones are often even smaller than Thornbills. They feed by fluttering outside the leaves at the end of branches, picking insects. Many, unlike thornbills, have white feathers in their tails. The most notable difference however, is in their voices. Gerygones are named for their songs which is based on Greek as "the children of song". Their calls are distinctive and melodic, "like a falling leaf".

<http://www.xeno-canto.org/species/Gerygone-olivacea?view=3>

<http://www.xeno-canto.org/species/Gerygone-fusca?view=2>

Gerygones are very uncommon in Bend of Islands. To date we have recorded just two species, the White-throated Gerygone (*Gerygone olivacea*), which has been recorded twice, and this year, the Brown Gerygone (*Gerygone mouki*).

Both of these birds are migrants. The White-throated comes in spring, rarely making it to Southern Victoria. The Brown Gerygone is resident in the wet forests of Eastern Victoria and moves to drier areas and lower altitudes in the winter. It was seen here in July in a mixed flock of Thornbills which simplified and complicated identification at the same time!

The call of the Brown Gerygone is not musical so it is not immediately identifiable as different from Thornbills.

<http://www.xeno-canto.org/species/Gerygone-mouki>



*Yellow-throated Gerygone 12/10/2014*

It is quite possible that we will eventually record the Western Gerygone in The Bend as it has been seen in both Bundoora (in the last month) and Park Orchards. So it pays to keep your eyes and ears peeled as, despite it becoming an ever more difficult task, new birds continue to be discovered in our Bend.

Gavin Masters



## WELCOME TO THE BEND

Welcome to NEW BICA MEMBERS, we hope you enjoy participating in our community.

Zainil and Michael Dempsey

Vicki and Hayden Rock

## CONTACT BICA:

Secretary BICA Committee: [bicacomm@gmail.com](mailto:bicacomm@gmail.com)

BICA Website: [www.bendofislands.wordpress.com](http://www.bendofislands.wordpress.com)

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Or call 9433 3316

Thank you to all who have contributed to this Newsletter

Keep sending in your articles and photos of the Bend of Islands  
[jmandfp@bigpond.com](mailto:jmandfp@bigpond.com)

Editor: Janet Mattiske  
Design and Layout; Greg Phillips

## CAFE BENDERS

Come and join us for Coffee and Cake at Café Benders held every third Saturday, starting at 10.00 am until 12 noon at the South Fire Station, 6 Catani Bv, Bend of Islands.

All proceeds go to the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade

