

BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Number 30



WHAT NATIVES FLOWERING?

Botanical Name: *Melaleuca ericifolia*.

Common Name: Swamp Paperbark.

Family: Myrtaceae (the same family to which Eucalypts belong).

Flowering Period: October - December

A fast growing erect to bushy shrub or small tree varying from 2 to 6 metres high by 3 metres wide. It grows in moist or wet fertile soils, tolerating dry conditions once it is established.

The leaves are narrow, dark green, to 15 mm long and hence the species name, "ericifolia" which refers to the heath-like appearance of the leaves.

The perfumed flowers are at the tips of the leafy stems and consist of short cream coloured brushes, about 20 mm long. As with the eucalypts, the dominant part of the flowers are the many stamens. The petals are quite insignificant.

Birds, especially honeyeaters, are attracted to the sweet nectar of the flowers. So too are many insects and the birds that in turn feed on them.

The trunk of this species is covered with pale papery bark which the Aborigines used in bark paintings. With age the trunks take on interesting forms.

Swamp Paperbark is a widespread species, common along rivers and in moist valleys. It is very hardy and a rampant grower, tending to sucker, forming a dense copse. It is a useful species to plant to control water erosion on slopes, in gullies or on river banks.

Don't forget the 1993 Annual General Meeting. It is at 2.00 pm on Sunday November 28th at the home of Irene and Bruce Adam, 309 Catani Bvde, close to the lower intersection with Henley Rd. Come early (12 noon) for a barbeque

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is the third newsletter for 1993 and it is an opportunity to discuss some of the BICA Committee activity and other issues that concern the community. One of the more apparent situations has been the spate of wombat deaths from collision with cars and this indicates a possible speeding problem which we are addressing.

It is pleasing to see the successful launch of NEBEC and because of its overview of matters that affect not just the ELZ it is a strong ally to the preservation of the ELZ and its support by Healesville Council. The ELZ has now been in existence some 20 years and we are fortunate to be participating in a concept which is now widely accepted and based on common sense. To optimise involvement in our organisation we recently distributed and personally collected a questionnaire for all residents and from this and the face to face communication we now have the feedback to plan the future.

Part of our structure has been the provision of sub-committees with conveners who seek participation from those who are interested in a particular activity and who have some time capacity. We welcome continuing interest and thank all those who participated this year.

The extent of the proposed changes to Victoria's planning system is still under review and the Planning Sub-committee is following a strategy to emphasise the uniqueness of the ELZ and its "benchmarking" status. Other sub-committees continue to be active in activities such as working bees, plant propagation, re-cycling, community involvement, landsales, fundraising, weed eradication, water monitoring, flora and fauna, a compendium and, of course, the newsletter.

The AGM is the normal venue for more detail of committee activity but I think that the Newsletter is an appropriate one in which to thank members of our committee for 1993 and invite you all to renew membership for 1994.

Michael Pelling

PARKCARE WORKSHOPS

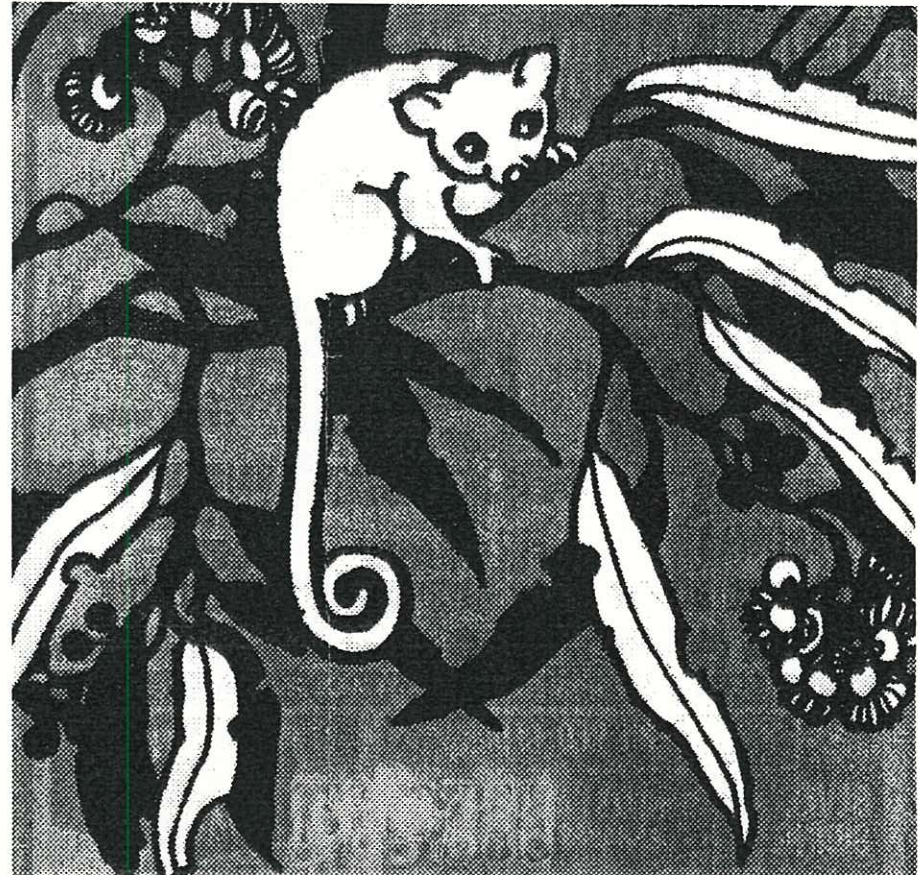
These are run by Melbourne Water and DCNR during November. Dates are as follows.

Intro to regenerating home garden or bushland. Nov. 20, 2-5 pm.

Growing Natives from seed and cuttings. Nov 21, 2-5 pm.

Butterflies and other Insects. Nov 27, 2-4 pm.

Bookings: Parkcare, 844 2659, 9 - 4 30. \$5.00 per session.



RECYCLING - A NEW METHOD

Our monthly recycling service at the fire station closed on the weekend of 15/16 October. A new fortnightly service commenced on Monday 25th October. The Shire's contractor will pick up items for recycling left in the special bag which you should place on the roadside near your garbage bin.

There is a brochure with each bag explaining the recyclable articles, the dates of pick-up and other handy hints. Residents who have any problems or questions concerning the recycling service should phone Bob Williams at the Shire of Healesville, (059 57 1777).

Dates for the next few pick-ups are as follows

November 22

December 6, 20

January 3, 17, 31

February 14, 28

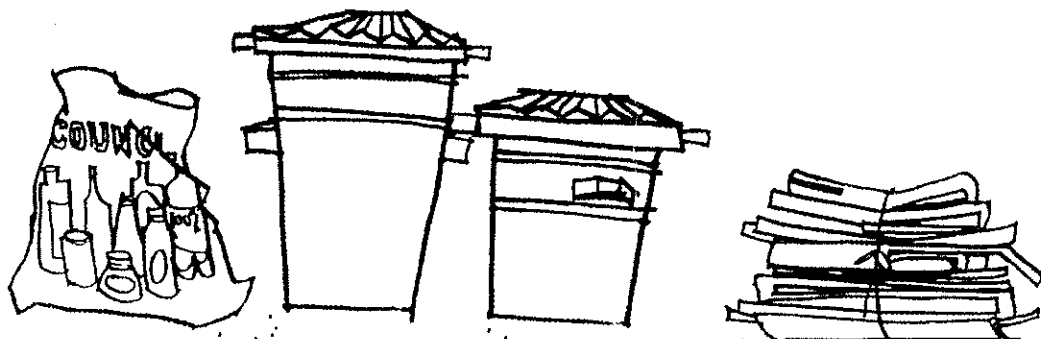
March 14, 28

I think that our monthly recycling worked very well. My thanks go to the ever reliable Wolfgang Krause for his help each time we set up the facility and to the best fire brigade in the Lower Yarra Group for allowing us to use the fire station as our depot. It was very pleasing to see how well and responsibly the recycling service was used.

Please support the fortnightly pick-ups with equal enthusiasm however to avoid bags of rubbish on the roadside for days on end put your bag out on the night before the pickup- it is quite early in the morning.

Make sure that you have the correct date- the collection is only fortnightly

Peter Gurney



WORKING BEE - 28/11/1993

It is intended to run a BICA Working Bee on Sunday 28th November 1993 starting at 10.30 am, to be followed by a barbecue and the BICA Annual General Meeting. The working bee will continue the good work done in September on weed eradication at Oxley Bridge, along with and attack on the thistles on the land behind where the bus parking bay is at the lower intersection of Catani Bvde and Henley Rd. Please come along and lend a hand on the day. Bring spades, leather gloves and whipper snipper if you have one. Meet at the lower intersection of Catani Bvde and Henley Rd and park in the bus park or along Catani.

If you have any questions, please contact Peter Gurney on 712 408

STOP PRESS!!!!!!

Eleanor Fowler is able to direct clean steel cans (with labels removed) for re-cycling. As a trial, anyone who wishes to use this facility should collect their cans and leave them at Eleanor's gateway during the week leading up to December 1st

WINE RAFFLE

For those of you who thought it would never happen the latest BICA Wine Raffle was eventually drawn on August 22 1993 at the General Meeting. The prize winners were as follows

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1st Prize | Alan Bluhm | (Orange C66) |
| 2nd Prize | Alan Barry | (Orange C 80) |
| 3rd Prize | Michael Pelling | (Red A 42) |

LOVING THE BUSH

How often have you heard it? "I love the bush!" I know I have. I say it myself, countless times, to explain to myself and others why I bother to live in such an inconveniently distant spot involving hours of unwelcome travel time

Well recently I've been pondering over just what this simple sentence means to me, considering the bush is certainly not easy to live in. After some time I came to the conclusion that "loving the bush" is a bit like "loving the kids". You can't just say it and leave it at that, you actually have to do things to show it. In just the same way that loving the kids doesn't mean simply having them and then enjoying just seeing them about, loving the bush doesn't mean simply owning some and just having it around.

Both kids and the bush have needs. If they are to stay healthy, vibrant, lovable, intact and most important. to be there at all these needs must be met Both make demands on our time patience, energy, lifestyle, purse and brain. Thankfully, both have countless rewards to give us, providing we nurture and nourish them.

Here is my list of some of the things I need to do to "love the bush"

- 1 Care about it enough to leave as much of it as possible alone, because the more I disturb it the less likely it is to remain to a natural state and to provide a forest ecosystem which lets native plants and animals survive and flourish.
- 2 Keep my house and all the things I need to live my life like a shed, drive, recreation area and walkways as condensed as possible so I don't spread out all over my land and interfere with plants and animals and bird pathways, nesting sites and food sources.
- 3 Check that my tanks and downpipes and all my people-paraphernalia are not traps for unwary animals or birds.
- 4 Catch rats and mice in live traps so I can release native mice and rats if they're caught.
- 5 Go without pets so the native animals around my home are free from fear, harassment and death.
- 6 Grow local native plants in my garden so I provide food for native birds, butterflies, insects, and mammals.
- 7 Control weeds on my land so they don't spread and take over from native plants.
- 8 Drive slowly on local roads to avoid hitting native animals.

9 Think before I do anything about how it might affect the well-being of the bush or its non human inhabitants.

10 Recognize that the ELZ is a very special place, in a world which is fast running out them, and be glad that its rules will help to keep it that way

11 Do whatever I can, whenever I can to defend the bush from anything which might lead to its degradation or disappearance and hence its ability to sustain the plants and animals whose home it really is.

Here's my list of some of the ways the "bush" repays my love and care

- 1 With a beautiful springtime array of wildflowers and in autumn, amazingly coloured fungi, lichens and mosses.
- 2 With its own peaceful symphony of sounds - the rustle of leaves, the crackling of twigs and bursting seeds in summer, the calls of countless birds, the conversations of koalas and kangaroos in the gully
- 3 With its glistening, dew-laden spider webs in the early morning.
- 4 With the joy of sitting amongst Brushtails possums which trust me, watching the incredibly close and caring mothering of their babies and the mad joyful scampering of babies just off their mother's backs.
- 5 Gazing through my living room windows watching a giant screen filled with Sugar gliders, Tuans, and Possums cavorting or just hanging about in the bush just 5 feet away
- 6 With the heady smell of first wattle flowers and the crisp aroma of eucalyptus after rain .
- 7 With the colourful darts and flits of a myriad of small birds and the very humorous carryings on of the White winged choughs.
- 8 With the magnificent sight of two Wedge-tailed Eagles quietly sitting on my balcony watching me while I watch them.
- 9 With the pale and icy gleam of red box leaves lit by my headlights on very cold winter nights.
- 10 With a gentle, dark-eyed Swamp Wallaby quietly grazing outside my kitchen, watched lovingly by a tiny pink-nosed face from her pouch.
- 11 With the amazing good fortune of living amongst and regularly seeing birds and animals which are rare or endangered.

The list of rewards the "Bush" gives me could go on for much longer than the list of things I need to do to deserve them. And the great thing is, if I "love the bush" properly, it will go on and on rewarding me and coming generations. Seems like so small an effort for so great a reward.

Felicity Faris

WINTER DREAMS

I felt the frost dropping out of the sky last night and while tucked up in by warm, electrified bed, I couldn't help thinking about similar nights sixty years ago up here God, am I that old?

Though summer was a wondrous playing time for us kids, winter definitely had its own special flavour. Our houses being weekenders and not particularly palatial at that, they were mostly fibro on the outside and barely lined on the inside with plaster sheeting. There was an open fireplace in the lounge and, if you were lucky, a one fire stove in the kitchen. Forget such luxuries as bathrooms. Definitely the APC in front of the fire which wasn't bad if I remember

But it was in bed at night when the frost got to you. Beds in those days were notoriously uncomfortable and were generally piled with an eclectic assortment of old blankets long past their warmth, ancient greatcoats from a forgotten war and heaven knows what else. These things weighed a ton and didn't provide much warmth anyway. However there was a bed over at Grandma Oxley's house which we all had a turn at now and again. It not only had a feather mattress with lovely dips and soft bits in it but also a patchwork quilt. We would pick over this for hours trying to identify which dress this bit came from and where we'd seen that piece of velvet before. Another nice thing about this bedroom was a Scarlet Robin which used to turn up every morning at the window sill for a breadcrumb breakfast.

Mum was a good English Breakfast maker and used to perform miracles over the open fire on a couple of iron bars. A big iron frying pan filled with all those things which are very bad for you like black puddings, bacon, eggs and an evil concoction of raspberry jam sandwiches fried in the bacon fat. If you've never had those you haven't lived! Toast was done in a wire holder and Mum always banged her head on the mantelpiece when she came up for air

Then it was on with the gumboots and off with the cousins for the day's adventures. We loved the heavy frosts for I think that was the nearest we ever got to snow, and though it gave our chilblains hell (where have chilblains gone these days?), we couldn't wait to tramp across these paddocks. The bush seemed to sparkle and prisms of light dangled in the trees like diamonds. The big thing for us were our footprints in the frosty grass. "Say we're the first people to ever walk across these paddocks". "Say we look behind and think someone is following us". And so on. It depended on the fantasy of the day.

Then there were the bonfires. Being incendiaries at heart, winter was our special time. We could indulge in bigger fires and not get into too much trouble. We tried chestnuts and potatoes with not much success. Everything came out a uniform colour - black. We did have the knack of baking a good clay pie by the riverbank though.

Winter was Grandma's sock knitting time. As there were thirteen of us she never quite finished and I can still see the steel needles and the grey wool to this day. Does anyone knit socks these days?

Sheila Dixon



A BIRD FOR THE SEASON

Eastern Yellow Robin (*Eopsaltria australis*)

Of all the smaller birds around here the Eastern Yellow Robin has to be a favourite of mine ever since I can remember. With his large Robin eyes (all the better to see you with in the gloom) and his bright yellow chest. I'm sure he's familiar to all of you.

One thing that is noticeable is that he's not shy and once he has got his eye on a grub or a worm he puts up with your presence. He never perches much more than a couple of metres off the ground and that goes for the nest too. The nest is beautifully made with moss, spider webs, grasses and leaves. It seems hardly big enough to hold the female let alone the babies.

When I was a kid and digging for worms in the scrub they would often perch nearby and race us to the worms before we had a chance to grab them!

It was only last year that I finally identified their "chop chop" call in the evenings. I'd been wondering who made that sound for years. I haven't yet worked out its other call, the courtship whistle.

It is basically an eastern species, with a few forays into South Australia and extending as far north as Cooktown. Apparently it doesn't migrate so that the birds we see around here are permanent residents. I find that the best places to seek out Yellow Robins are the thick clumps of Burgan, especially where the ground beneath is covered with moss and leaf litter.

We did find a nest with a mum sitting on eggs down near the river at Abrahams' but stopped short of turfing her off to have a look at the eggs. We went to the book to check on their colour. They sound lovely; apple green with red splotches and dots.

Sheila Dixon



FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTMAS HILLS FIRE BRIGADE

The handcrafts and art fair held on Melbourne Cup day, 2/11/93 was by all reports, a very successful community event. 250 sausages were sizzled, 17½ dozen scones were piled high with jam and cream, many muffins were munched and copious quantities of real, filtered coffee were drunk during the course of a cold, blustery day. In spite of the nasty weather, an amount of \$1363 was raised for the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade to spend on equipment. Grateful thanks to all stallholders, committee members and Friends who put in much time and effort - the hall looked wonderful with so much creative ability gathered together. The next event will be Christmas Carols at the South Station commencing at 7.00 pm. Keep this evening free for another joyful gathering of families and friends.

ABOUT NAMES

Whilst most plant lovers are comfortable using scientific ("Latin") name of the plants that they discuss we usually stick to the "official" common name when talking about birds. It is worth reflecting on the meaning of the scientific names of animals and plants occasionally and our Yellow Robin is a good example. The genus name, *Eopsaltria*, means "the harper at dawn" and refers to the early rising habits of Yellow Robins. The second word of the name means "southern".

All scientific (Binomial, to give them their correct title) names are made up from two words, the first with a capital initial letter, is a noun and the second, is the specific epithet or adjective. The specific epithet never has a capital even if it refers to a place or somebody's name. The words are not necessarily Latin or Greek or any other language although they broadly follow the grammatical rules of Latin in their formation. The names are universal in that they are unique on a world wide basis, eg., only one kind of creature can carry the name "*Eopsaltria australis*". Further, all organisms of the same species must carry the same name. All Eastern Yellow Robins are "*Eopsaltria australis*".

The giving of binomial names is subject to a quite complex set of rules, agreed upon internationally by biologists, which ensure that the first binomial name ever given to a species is the one that holds. Research into the literature of plant and animal discovery or collections of specimens often unearths information that makes it necessary to change a familiar scientific name to one that was awarded long ago and subsequently lost or forgotten. Such changes often lead to frustration amongst amateur naturalists but in the long run generally clarify things. Further name changes can be brought about when biologists decide that an organism "should" be in a different genus than it currently is. This leads to a change in the genus name but can also mean an entirely new combination if the specific name was already used up in that genus.

It is interesting and rewarding to find out about names and it certainly makes them much easier to learn and remember if you understand a little about them, "The Dawn Harper from the South" has a nice ring to it, doesn't it? And, if you want to know why the Eastern Yellow Robin has "southern" for its specific epithet, that's another story. Ask me some time and I'll tell you!

John McCallum

MEETING ON SUNDAY 24/10/93

This was to follow up the visit to Warrandyte State Park and was held at Ed and Marita Car's place.

The general feeling from this meeting was that we would not be able to support an operation anything like as extensive as that run by FOWSP. The aim is to provide plants for the ELZ. The project is aimed at providing plants from the ELZ for rehabilitation projects, landscaping in the ELZ, improving the status of plants species that are not secure in the area and education of our local residents on the indigenous plants of the area.

The group will continue its investigation into the possibilities of BICA becoming involved in indigenous plant propagation. Issues include:

- o what human resources are available on a more or less permanent basis?
- o reviewing our knowledge of the local flora, updating the list.
- o costs of any materials needed.
- o the status of areas in need of regeneration.
- o a suitable regime of seed collection.

Information supplied by Alan Bonny

SEED COLLECTING WORKSHOP

Sunday 12th December - Edward Car - 712 0533 for details



VISIT TO WARRANDYTE STATE PARK

As the field day activity on Saturday October 16 a group of people from the Bend of Islands visited the propagation set-up operated by the Friends of Warrandyte State Park (FOWSP). The guided tour was conducted by the co-ordinator, Margaret Burke.

FOWSP inherited the propagation facilities that had been established by the Park rangers when funding cuts threatened the continuation of their scheme. The facilities survived the bushfires and have developed into a set-up that can provide up to 2000 plants, ranging from grasses to trees, a year.

The plants are provided to the Park for re-vegetation and other projects as well as to other selected organizations in the surrounding area on a non-commercial basis.

Their facility boasts "The Folly" (a community area for shelter and socializing), a covered work area with "proper" height work benches etc, poly walled "glass houses" and fenced hardening off areas.

All have automatic watering systems and appropriate drainage FOWSP have a primarily "environmentally friendly" approach with minimum use of "chemicals" and much experimenting with growing media that don't rip off the environment (eg, no quarried materials or peat moss)

The group is involved in the total process from seed collection to planting and maintenance of plants. We rounded off the day by moving down to the public area of the Park for a cuppa and a chat to review the visit.

Some Points to Note

Seed collection.- Collection of seed in the Park is generally prohibited but FOWSP are permitted to collect under supervision. If our community decides to become involved to any significant extent seed collection would need to be co-ordinated so as not to cause any social or environmental problems.

Water run-off:- The run off from their propagation area created a bog that caused concern. Their solution was to turn the area into a place for endangered water plants. This is something to be aware of when setting up a watering system.

Hands on Experience - FOWSP are always looking for volunteers to be involved in their Thursday propagation activities. If you are interested contact Margaret Burke 1060

NOTES ON PROPAGATING NATIVE PLANTS

(LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVES)

Some years ago, for one of its field days, BICA invited Glen Jamieson from Warrandyte to speak to us about propagating local species of plants. His talk and demonstration was very lively and easy to understand. The following article from the succeeding BICA newsletter was based on Glen's talk.

A: Propagating by cuttings.

Time to Collect Material.

This is after " growth flushes" in Autumn or Spring OR when new growth has hardened.

Where to Collect from Plant

Material for cuttings should be from the semi-hard part of the plant. It should not be taut and able to snap nor should it be able to bend a lot.

Don't allow material to be exposed to full sunlight. Carry it in a moist plastic bag after collecting

How to Prepare Cuttings.

Cut below a leaf at the bottom and above a leaf at the top Cut a piece roughly 100 mm long and with a razor blade, remove the lower leaves so that only 3 or 4 leaves remain on the cutting. Moisten the bottom of the cutting a apply "Seradix" or some other Rooting Hormone powder to its base to stimulate the establishment of roots.

How to Plant.

In a small (100mm) pot place cutting mixture, moisten and place cutting into mixture deeply

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

(Cutting Mixture: 2 parts coarse river sand and 1 part peatmoss.)

Then place the pots into a cold frame. *See diagram below*

Keep the cuttings in a moist (NOT WET) environment. Place the cold frame in the shade, not full sunlight, say on the east side of your house in winter and the south side in summer. When the cuttings have developed roots, remove them from the cold frame and pull out individual cuttings gently and re-pot into larger pot containing repotting mixture.

(Re-Potting Mixture: 2 parts sand, 1 part peatmoss, 2 parts loam 1 part compost or broken down leaf mould.)

Return pots to the cold frame. Once cuttings have "struck", take them out of the frame and place them in a shady sheltered position for two weeks to harden them off then they're ready to go out.

B: Propagating by Seed.

How to Plant.

Determine first whether seeds are big or small because they are treated differently. Any seed smaller than a poppyseed is placed ON TOP OF the seed mix. Any seed larger than a poppyseed is planted UNDER the seed mix at a depth 3 times the width of the seed.

(Seed Mixture: 2 parts peatmoss, 2 parts sand-not builders! half a part loam.) Before planting on or in this mix, ensure that it is moist.

Small Seeds: Sprinkle over the soil mix on the surface, keeping the soil moist. To avoid losing small seeds and keep moist, water from below

Large Seeds: Bury seeds at 3 times width and keep moist. Cover seeds lightly, don't pack the soil mix.

Hard Seeds: All Acacia and Pea Family seeds need heat treatment before planting. Place in a container and pour boiling water over them. Allow the seeds to soak for at least six hours. When the seed has swollen it is ready to plant. Repeat the treatment for seeds that do not swell the first time.

When the seeds are in their pots place the pots in a cold frame for germination. When the plant is 10 -12 mm high, repot in a slightly bigger pot.

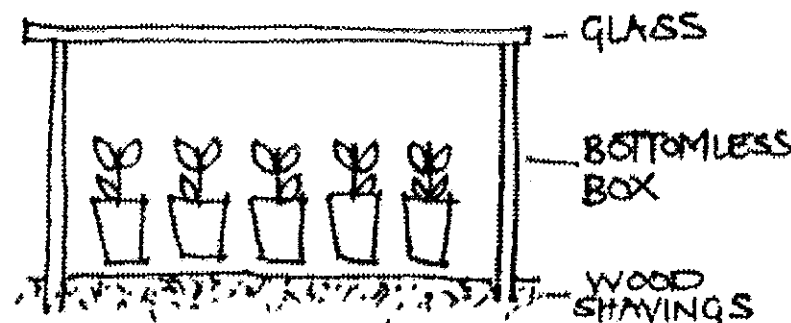
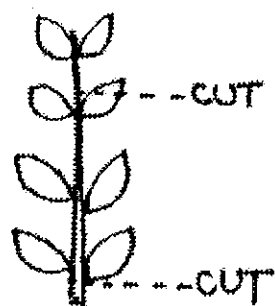
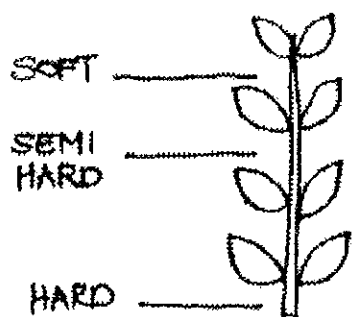
Planting Out:

To assist the plants when placing in the garden, first dig a hole twice the width of the pot and break up the clay in it. Add two handfuls of gypsum and mix it with the soil from the hole. Add blood and bone and then plant your seedling. Surround the plant with a mulch of leaf mould.

Collecting Seeds and Cuttings.

If every resident collected too many seeds/cuttings from the forest, this would affect the ability of a plant to make more of its own in its natural habitat. Take only a few at first to experiment and then only enough for your own needs. Ideally you'll eventually take seeds and cuttings from plants you've already grown. Only take material from strong, healthy well established plants in the forest.

Re-print of an article in BICA Newsletter. October 85. probably written by Cric Henry



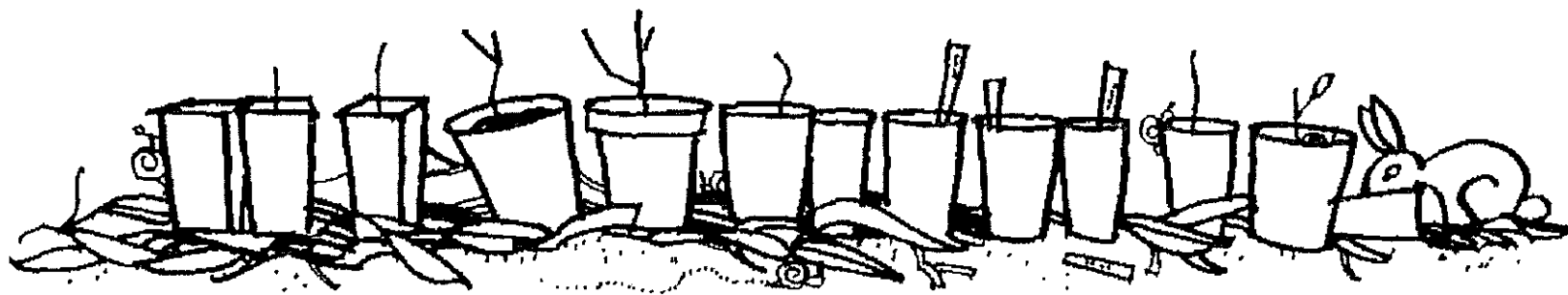
TWO USEFUL REFERENCES

These two books contain much useful information about propagating native species. Rodgers and Elliot has been around for a few years now and is in a number of volumes. Volume I is the most useful because it gives an overview of the Australian flora, methods of propagating and diseases. Succeeding volumes treat individual species in alphabetical order and give cultivation and propagation notes for each one.

Flora of Melbourne is produced by the Society for Growing Australian Plants. It contains much interesting and useful information about the local flora and includes a lot about propagating and raising native plants.

Elliot, W R. and D.L. Jones, Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants suitable for cultivation. Lothian, 1981-

Society for Growing Australian Plants, Maroondah Group, Flora of Melbourne, a guide to the indigenous plants of the greater Melbourne area. SGAP, Maroondah, 1991



A CAUTIONARY TALE OF PLANT PROPAGATION!

One thing that was not mentioned in the article reprinted from the old newsletter but which is well known to the FOWSP was brought to my attention many years ago. At about the time of the visit by Glen, before or after, I can't remember, I thought that I would have a go at raising some local native plants. I don't recall having much success with cuttings on the first attempt but the seeds all germinated beautifully. Acacias and Hardenbergias all responded to the heat treatment and Eucalypt and Casuarinas came up all of their own accord. I was able to re-pot the seedlings and I had several dozen of six or seven species. They were all doing very well sitting on a concrete slab under the shelter of the eaves on the south-east side of the house. One morning I went out to admire my handiwork and was dismayed to find that all of it had simply been to feed the rabbits! Not a leaf remained! I hadn't the heart to turn around and start again.

Two lessons. Firstly that it IS easy to germinate seeds and establish native plants. Secondly that such young plants need adequate protection against predation. If you have snails and/or slugs this includes them too.

At Warrandyte the FOWSP use an appropriate commercial preparation against snails and slugs.

Their set-up has all outside areas surrounded by carefully constructed fences against the rabbits. Here, we need protection against other mammals as well. Possums and wallabies are not deterred by a 900 mm high fence!

John McCallum

GERMINATION OF SEEDS- SOME PRACTICAL NOTES

Recently I submitted a science project on the germination of seeds. When I read all of my information on germinating I discovered many procedures which I could use. My final decision was to use four of these procedures on three different types of seeds.

My three types of seeds were

Woolly Wattle

Clematis microphylla

Twisted Parrot Pea

To add to this I used two different types of soil, sand and peat moss germination soil and some local soil. The four procedures were to boil them, bake them, cut them and to leave them at room temperature.

The steps I had to follow to Boil them were

Have punnets sterilized and soil free from weeds, then

- 1 Boil some water in a saucepan.
2. When boiling add seeds to boil for one minute
- 3 Take seeds out and let them cool for three hours.
- 4 Then with the least amount of handling of seeds place them onto the surface of the soil so that they are spread about a cm apart.
- 5 Cover the punnet with a millimetre of soil.

The steps for Baking were

- 1 Pre-heat the oven and get tray and silver foil ready
- 2 Categorize seeds on tray and bake for one minute.
- 3 Take seeds out of oven and let them cool for one hour
- 4 Carefully place seeds onto surface of the soil.
5. Cover punnet with a millimetre of soil.

The steps for Cutting were

- 1 First you categorize the seeds.
- 2 Then you look at the ends of the seeds to make sure you don't cut off the end of the seed with a colour faded spot.
3. Cut a millimetre square off

The reasons for these procedures were that some seeds have to be in a bushfire to germinate. They are hard coated seeds. This is where boiling and baking come in. Other seeds have to be chipped to germinate. This is why the seeds were cut. Others need no special treatment. My experiment produced results with two procedures, cutting and no treatment. The types of seeds that were most productive were Woolly Wattle and Clematis microphylla.

Jessie Parfitt.

Jessie is a Year 7 student and the project that she has described should show that it is possible to germinate seeds at home very easily. Of the species that she used, two are native to this area and the third, Woolly Wattle, is native to parts of the Shire of Eltham. The seeds that Jessie used were from Research.

BICA SURVEY

The survey that was carried out recently produced a return of about 33% which is average in such cases. The response was encouraging and informative, with most respondents eager to see the meetings, field days, working bees and newsletter continue. It is clear that ELZ residents are keen to learn more about their environment and are willing to participate in a variety of activities to further this.

There were a number of suggestions about ways in which activities could be altered. These have been taken on board by the committee and first moves to accommodate some of the ideas are reflected in the calendar of events for 1994.

A NOTE FROM THE "EDITOR"

In compiling this edition of the BICA Newsletter we have used all material that was given to us. There is a fairly obvious theme to much of the material and this is both because of the recent interest and activity in the area of propagation of indigenous species of native plants, and the fact that now is the time to be getting ready for collection of material. Seeds will be ready from about December and much cutting material is ready from then on as well.

For future editions of our newsletter it would be good to have some input about the kinds of articles that you would want to see. The BICA survey gave us some idea of this and it was interesting to note that the topics that have been popular in the past are still of interest. The main thrust of BICA, which has been more or less formalized in the provisions of the Shire of Healesville Planning Scheme through the establishment of the Environmental Living Zone, is to support the concept of living in the Bend of Islands with minimum impact on the wild life. I would like to see our newsletter continue to help people in this area to know more about the plants and animals of the area and to better understand how they can continue live here in some degree of harmony with them.

