

BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC. NEWSLETTER

President: Carol Bonny 9712 0648, C/- Post Office, Kangaroo Ground, Vic, 3097 - Editor, John McCallum 9712 0319

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WHAT LOCAL PLANT IS FLOWERING?

Botanical name: *Spyridium parvifolium*

Common name: Dusty Miller

Family: Rhamnaceae (Pomaderris family)

Flowering period: July to November

Spyridium parvifolium is a small to medium leafy shrub with an upright compact habit, 1- 2 metres high and 1-2 metres wide, growing in damp and valley sclerophyll forests.

The oval shaped, dark green, alternate leaves are up to 20 mm long with a notched end, the upper surface, sparsely hairy with indented veins, with the lower surface, pale green with dense, whitish hairs. One to several floral leaves (i.e. those near the flowers) are smaller, whitish grey and woolly, being particularly noticeable in spring when the plant is in flower.

Flat clusters of small whitish flowers, 10-12 mm diameter at the end of branchlets. The nectar of the flowers attracts insects which in turn provides food for the insect eating birds

An understorey shrub of well drained soils, tolerating dry, shady conditions, once established.

Difficult to grow from seed, preferably propagate from cuttings.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Progress on the Bonny residence has been even slower than usual over the last few months with Melbourne Water Land negotiations and meetings and many days spent in the city at VCAT hearings. To compensate we have taken advantage of our visits to the big smoke by partaking of a good movie or three.

Being late risers having to be on an 8 o'clock train at Eltham was a bit of a shock to our systems. We did enjoy, however, the spectacular scenery with the mists along the Yarra. One very icy morning as we drove up our drive the sun was just popping up over the hill and at Yanakie the grass was white with frost. Heading to the KG tower a magnificent golden full moon was sitting over the city. What a wonderful sight. Driving back into the Bend late at night was also a delight with the frosty red box leaves glowing in the headlight beam.

As well as the early rising another disadvantage travelling at these hours, as regular commuters must well know, is that the wildlife is at its most active. We had two encounters with kangaroos just out of the Bend with the animals bounding back into the safety of the bush. With no damage to our vehicle hopefully the little hoppers were not injured.

Even with the newly introduced 60kph speed limit, accidents and road kills are still occurring. Sadly as we drove out recently only metres apart were a dead wombat and phascogale. Not the way we wish to see our precious fauna! I find that there are only a couple of spots along Henley that I can safely drive at 60 k and within the Bend of Islands some stretches demand a maximum of 40 or 50. Please take care.

On a brighter note the sound of the fantailed cuckoo must herald the coming of warmer weather. It has been a little chilly of late

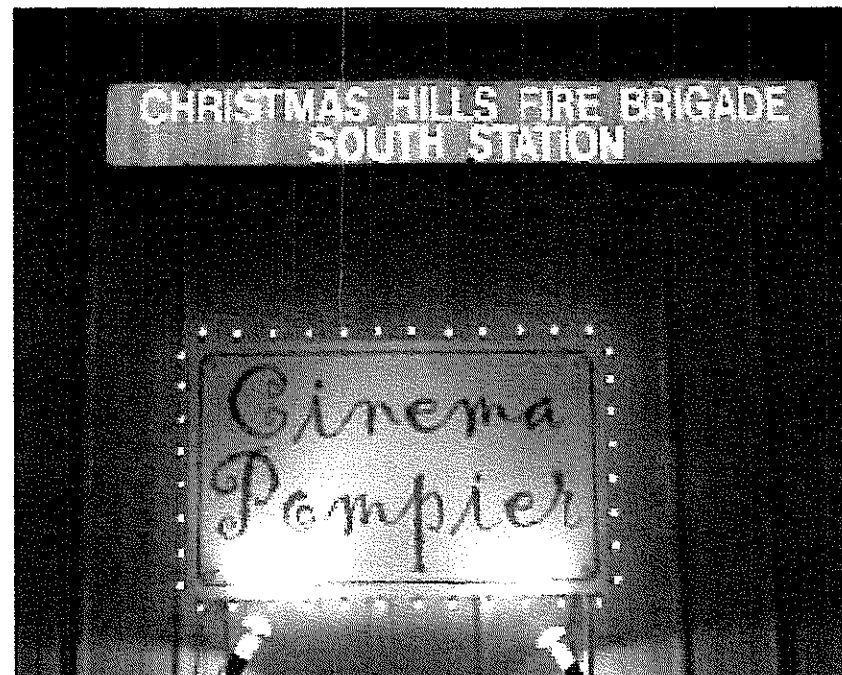
See you 'round.

CAROL BONNY

GOLD!

Carol Bonny

When you attend the GM in August, have a look at the re-vegetation plot at the top of the Bonny block next door. It has taken a while but plants are now starting to flourish after five years of struggling in the harsh Bend of Islands geology. Once a compacted road turnaround, the area was ripped and fenced with council assistance. A combination of direct seeding, planting and some tender loving care have resulted in an area that is now self-seeding with the acacias a blaze of yellow. With council Biodiversity grants there is an opportunity to do a similar project in other places.



The illuminated 'Cinema Pompier' sign on the fire shed sign invited us to enter and after a social gathering in the foyer the gong rang to get us to our seats. Through the velvet curtain the lolly vendor was on hand with a tray full of goodies and ice creams so we were able to stock up on the necessary provisions to get through a movie sitting.

The lights dimmed and a Bugs Bunny cartoon started the entertainment followed by the first feature "Toy Story". Although selected for the young in the audience the film was enjoyed by all.

Interval saw the audience back in the foyer for drinks, food and a chat until the gong had us back inside for the main feature. "The Commitments" is a tale about the forming and disintegration of an Irish Soul band. Some humor, some interesting dialogue, all backed up with a good dose of Wilson Pickett type music. Coffee and cake in the foyer to round off the night. Much enjoyed and thanks to the efforts of Barb Whiter, Alan Bluhm and Neil Harvey. See you at the next Cinema Pompier.

KITCHEN GARDEN AND TRANSPIRATION BEDS

Graham Peterson

Growing your own vegies has got to be the bloomin' best. Living in remnant bush land that is relatively weed-free is rare and a luxury many take for granted. Unfortunately in the Bend of Islands the most threatening weeds are coming from our kitchen gardens. This is a serious issue so I suggest if you can't manage to maintain the weeds in your garden then you shouldn't have a garden. Rip the fences away, get rid of the weeds, re-vegetate and stop polluting the bush we love.

If you are prepared to put the time into a kitchen garden here are a few tips to help you maintain your garden.

Identify your weeds

Some plants within your garden that you think are weeds may be indigenous. If you are unsure contact the flora and fauna sub-committee and we can help you to identify the plants. Some weeds are a higher priority than others; again the sub-committee can help with advice.

Investigate the source of the weeds

- Weeds can come in on soil, compost, manure, mulch, straw etc. and you should monitor products to pin-point the weed source.
- Composts also have the potential to have seepage of high nutrient causing another point for weed invasion. By containing the compost bins to areas that already have higher nutrient levels you will not be creating more areas that need management of weed invasion.
- Weeds may also come in from run-off from road

Plan the construction of your garden to make it easily maintainable

For the production of vegies, herbs etc it is recommended to completely enclose the production area. This is so that you are not only feeding resident wildlife but are also rewarded for your gardening labour.

While you want to prevent access by possums and rats (if possible) you still want to allow small birds access as they help control insects etc.

If these areas are fenced it is highly recommended to have a weed management plan in place because:

- once the grazing of animals is reduced it is highly likely that there will be explosion in weeds.
- the site has history of disturbance increasing likelihood of existing weeds

- the area has increased nutrient loads and more regular moisture

Fencing

Leave a space between the garden beds and the fence to allow access for weed control, as these are often difficult places to access creating an ideal opportunity for weeds.

Transpiration beds/ nutrient issues

Although transpiration beds are built with the best intentions, in time they are often forgotten and are no longer used. This leaves the area prone to weed invasion. The combination of good soil and constant moisture is going to favor the exotic species.

To avoid this scenario it is advised to plant out the transpiration beds with moisture tolerant species such as sedges, rushes and grasses.

The draining end of transpiration beds is also prone to weed invasion by species such as Panic Veldt-grass. Buy planting similar species as previously mentioned they will act as nutrient trap reducing the opportunity for weed invasion and spread.

BUDGET BREAKFAST

Carol Bonny

As BICA representatives Alan and I attended the Breakfast Budget Briefing in July. Mayor Johnstone and CEO Bill Forrest presented the budget in detail outlining the justifications for the proposed rise in rates. Yanakie Councillor Warwick Leeson attended Café Benders earlier in the month to give a briefing and answer questions about the draft budget.

Waste management is a contributing factor with unbudgeted costs for capping of the old Kangaroo Ground landfill site as well as ongoing costs for garbage collection and disposal. The list of services that council provides is comprehensive and the demography of Nillumbik means that we have a limited rate base to support the service requirements.

Letters to the editor in the local papers have carried comments for and against. Basically you get what you pay for and our challenge as ratepayers is to ensure that we get value for our rates. BICA have requested and received support for the Bend of Islands in various forms by Councils past and present. We look forward to continue working with council to protect our Bend of Islands and Green Wedge Shire.

BIRD NOTES

Frank Pierce

The following events can be reported since last April.

- **Lyrebirds**- 9 further record reports for 2005 as listed in the table below.
- **Powerful Owls**- There have been several sightings reported.
- A pair of **Peregrine Falcons** was seen flying over the northern section of the Co-op on 3/06/05.
- A pair of **Spotted Quail-thrush** was seen in the northern section of the Co-op on 21 & 22/06/05.
- 3 **Bassian Thrushes** were seen together in the northern section of the Co-op on 25/06/05.
- The Ironbarks had a moderate flowering this year. No Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters or flying foxes were recorded.
- The **Gang-gang Cockatoos** have been more numerous than normal this year. On the August bird walk a flock of about 30 flew over our meeting place at 8.30 before we had moved off for our walk. On the walk we had excellent views of a **Boobook Owl**.
- The 'Harbinger of Spring', the **Fan-tailed Cuckoo**, has arrived back from its winter holidays. Its early morning calls were heard in 2 locations on the river on 14/8/05 and on the Coop on 16/8/05

Lyrebird Sightings

28 March	M Krause	Heard early am below house in gully
28 March	G&M Peterson	Heard near house towards north
29 March	M Krause	Heard early am and 12.30 pm below house in gully.
30 March	G&M Peterson	Heard near house towards north
10 April	B Whiter	Saw Female 4.40pm. moved n through property & crossed Henley Rd
28 April	F Pierce	Heard south of Skyline Rd just East of Coop early am
12 August	N Kamminga	8.50am Saw female crossing Skyline Rd just north of Henley Rd
29 March	M Krause	9am Heard below house in gully.
30 March	G&M Peterson	10.45am Saw small male displaying near house



This picture shows a Boobook Owl that the bird surveyors encountered during one of their Sunday morning rambles. Thanks to Frank Pierce for the photograph.

Could you please record the details of any unusual sightings you make and pass them on to Frank Pierce (97120237) or email – fpandjm@netspace.net.au especially Lyrebirds and Powerful Owls.

All are welcome to join us on the bird walks on the second Sunday of each month. Times are as per the BICA Calendar.

BEND OF ISLANDS ELDERS

Marg Woiwod

Bend of Islands Elders Support is alive and kicking! Recent outings have included delightful cruises of the Maribyrnong and Yarra rivers, a conducted tour of 'Como' and sightseeing trips to Badger Creek, the Dandenongs and other destinations. Our scheduled August outing is a conducted tour of parliament house, a picnic barbecue in its grounds (courtesy of Danielle Green MLA), plus a visit to the Gold Museum. Upcoming too, a conducted tour of National Trust listed Horatio Jones's kerosene-tin-bush-pole home at Tecoma.

Should anyone out there of any age be keen to join in of a fourth Tuesday of the month, here's the go: — forward your name and it'll be placed on a list of contenders for vacant seats on the shire 11-seater departing from the bus-stop above the fire station at 10:30 am for an approx. 4:00 pm return.

The shire has recently informed us that there is to be a second mobile library on the road later this year available for a fortnightly visit to Bend of Islands.

If anyone feels the need for an extra hand around the house, our group now has details of a couple of likely local lads in a position to help, and here's a tip worth noting: wet weather, timber decks and algae can be a dangerous combination for the not so young at heart; a single heavy fall can ruin a whole year! Remedy: a good scrub with bleach in hot water followed by a light dusting of sand (on the deck of course) beats costly insurance!

SUZ-2 AND YOU

Our Environmental Living Planning Scheme defines limitations to contain human impact on the bush. The aims of the zoning as stated in the scheme include:

"To provide for residential use of the land consistent with the need for protection of the native bushland environment."

"To limit the site coverage of the development or use, (Including kitchen garden) to a single envelope so that the landscape and environmental qualities of the area are maintained and enhanced."

To achieve these requirements there are provisions that clearly define the limitations and extent of our impact:

"A lot may be used for one dwelling only"

RESERVE THIS SPACE!

Alan Bonny

In recent months the local papers carried an announcement by the Member for Yan Yean, Danielle Green, regarding the transfer of Melbourne Water (MW) land to the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) to create a Kinglake-Warrandyte State Park corridor. This will be the conclusion of a thirty year long debate regarding the fate of MW lands in and around the Bend of Islands that were originally acquired for the Yarra Brae Dam. The Land Conservation Council recommendation was that all of this land should be retained in public ownership and BICA has consistently supported this position.

At the "Cuppa with Duggo" event held to celebrate the life of Neil Douglas the possibility of a Neil Douglas reserve at the end of Gongflers Drive was raised by BICA President Carol with Danielle Green. On August 14th Danielle made an adjournment speech in the Victorian Parliament urging the Minister for Environment John Thwaites to provide a Neil Douglas reserve as part of this land resolution. The former member for Yan Yean, Andre Haermayer responded in support of the request. BICA will be pursuing this sanctuary reserve.

There are ongoing discussions with MW, DSE, Nillumbik Council and BICA to achieve the best possible resolution. We look forward to a celebration soon.

Alan Bonny

"Not more than 25 percent or 2000 square metres (whichever is the lesser area) of an allotment shall be cleared for the purpose of house, outbuildings, kitchen garden access and any other development"

"The above uses shall be grouped and arranged as close as possible into a defined site development envelope"

What this translates into is that for each property a single dwelling with outbuildings and all other developments including access ways and vehicle parking is permitted. All must be contained within a prescribed area to provide maximum undisturbed bushland for our flora and fauna.

Are you keeping within your design envelope?

FUEL REDUCTION AROUND HOUSES

Frank Pierce

In a News Sheet issued earlier this year BICA included an information kit with recommendations on fuel reduction around houses and how to meet permit requirements.

Spring will soon be on us and it is time for residents to start planning their particular requirements and documenting or reviewing their fuel reduction plan. If vegetation removal is required this plan will need to be submitted to Nillumbik Shire Council for a permit.

There has been feedback that some residents have experienced difficulties in measuring the slope of the land adjacent to their houses. There are many ways to determine the slope using varying degrees of sophistication in equipment or mathematics. To try and solve this problem I have developed a 'low-tech', basic clinometer that is simple for anyone to use. I am happy to lend this to any resident who may need it.

Nillumbik Shire Council is currently upgrading its GIS System. The existing map data on its website is not very good for our area, however Donna Stoddart, the Environmental Planning Coordinator at the Shire, can provide an aerial photo of any property that is to scale and which shows the property boundary and 1metre contours. Usually the buildings are quite clearly shown. The various fuel reduction zones could be drawn on the photo as an alternative to producing a drawing of the property for this purpose. Donna can be contacted on 94333216 by any resident who wants to take up this option.

There has not been a major fire in our area since 1962. Another fire is sure to occur sometime. To ensure adequate preparation for a bushfire in the area, BICA believes it is essential that each resident has a well thought-out and documented Fire Management Plan, specific to the individual needs of the property and its occupants. Part of this will be the Fuel Reduction Plan to manage the natural vegetation and fine fuels in the vicinity of the house.

If you did not receive a copy of the information kit, or if you have misplaced it, contact BICA for another copy.

A TRIVIAL ISSUE *Author's name withheld on bragging grounds.*

Old campaigners and novices gathered for the BICA Trivia Night to determine who is the most trivial. The Millingtons provided challenging and eclectic questions to ensure conflict and controversy with the adjudicators taking no favor (or bribes). An inspired last round saw the Kamminga / Bonny table in front at the end of the night. Thanks to Bob and Trish for another great night. Who will win next year???

NOTES FROM THE BONNYS

Meeting Report

On May 29th we attended the Mattiske/Pierce residence on the Co-op for the General Meeting. The formal part of the meeting included reports on a host of BICA activities and involvement with some discussion from the floor. The reports were so comprehensive that no new business was raised and we moved on to our guest speaker.

Mick Woiwod set the scene with some history about the aqueduct before introducing guest speaker Fred Sadlier. Fred spent his childhood at Yarra Glen and after the war worked as caretaker on the local section of the aqueduct for over 30 years. He has produced a booklet about his time on the aqueduct that can be obtained from Yarra Glen stores. His reflections and comments were most entertaining. The usual generous afternoon tea was available to finish the meeting.

Plant Rescue

We have been rescuing plants from a proposed house site on the Co-op. The fate of the plants would be bulldozing as construction takes place. The plants have been removed with a good sod of soil and replanted straight away at our place in a similar aspect. Being late winter I am confident of a high success rate. So far so good.

Before Christmas last year I also removed plants from the same area. These plants were left in pots and with a bit of tender loving care they survived the summer heat and are still doing extremely well. I'm looking forward to planting these out soon.

Species gathered include Nodding Greenhood and Waxlip Orchids, Pimelea, Leucopogon, Acrotriche, Lomandra, Joycea, Dianella, Dillwynia and Pultenea. Some of the Nodding Greenhood Orchids that I have just rescued and are in styrene boxes are shooting up flower spikes. It would be a pity to waste such a great plant resource.

Pub Walk

A cold and rainy morning threatened a wet walk to the pub this year but as the brave crew gathered at the fire shed the moisture ceased. By the time we had car-pooled to the start of the trek the sun was shining through and an easy and pleasant walk from Strathewen to Hurstbridge was enjoyed by the smaller than usual group. We were joined by others at Bridges for a celebratory drink and dinner.

The walks always allow us to enjoy a bit of Nillumbik that we would otherwise not see. This year the last leg of the walk through the back of Hurstbridge along the creek and wetlands was the treasure of the day for us. Bigger and better than we thought with good vegetation and water birds. Worth a visit.

Thanks to Tony Summers for a very pleasant route and new dinner venue and to all who participated for their company.

WHICH GREVILLEA?

Dylan Osler

The Rosemary Grevillea (*Grevillea rosmarinifolia*) saga continues. For those that aren't overly botanically minded, let me bring you up to speed.

Within our area there are a number of species that occur locally, but are also available from nurseries as cultivars. Some examples of this are Purple Coral-pea (*Hardenbergia violacea*), Kidney weed (*Dichondra repens*), Correa (*Correa reflexa*) and also our beloved Grevilleas.

The problem with nursery cultivars is that they are not sourced from local plants and there is a lot of variation between many of these species within wild populations, none more so than Grevilleas.

In the 70's, 80's, 90's and even now an "Australian native garden" is not complete without some West Australian species and a *Grevillea rosmarinifolia* from somewhere else than here.

When these nursery cultivars are planted in the vicinity of remnant bushland where wild populations occur, there is the potential for these plants to hybridise, therefore creating genetic pollution and undermining the genetic integrity of these local populations. This process will eventually result in the loss of these local forms.

So the imperative is on us to source local plants to prevent this genetic pollution and consequent problems.

After a number of discussions with Cam Beardsell and others I now have a basic understanding of the local forms and how to identify them.

Within our broader area there are three forms of *Grevillea rosmarinifolia*. They are:

- the Warrandyte Gorge form, obviously found along the gorge between here and Warrandyte.
- the Mountain Form, found on the aqueduct behind the Co-op
- the Hurstbridge Form, which is not found in the B.O.I

One of the key characteristics of all these local forms is that the style (dangly bit of a grevillea flower) will not have any hairs except for a small Hitler moustache right at the base of the style. Its general form and where it is growing will let us understand which of the forms that it is.

A number of people have already asked for me to identify plants for them, which I am happy to do. So far there have been a number of plants that have been sourced locally. For some, the property owners had a story about someone growing them for them after

getting cuttings from the aqueduct. These have actually turned out to be non-local, some being just straight nursery cultivars.

Friends of Warrandyte State Park see this as such an important issue that they have said if landowners are prepared to destroy any plants identified as being non-local, they will replace them with the local form.

In discussions with a number of people, they have used the birds as their excuse for not being prepared to get rid of their plants. They didn't want to upset the feeding habits of their feathered friends.

When we first moved to Sippy's house there were a number of these nursery cultivars of both Grevilleas and Correas, and there were large numbers of Eastern Spinebills and Honey Eaters that would frequent them daily. When we removed these plants these birds didn't come around as often, but I certainly don't think they were detrimentally affected (well I didn't find any dead ones).

If anything it would have restored some balance returning these critters feeding habits back to more natural flowering regimes where eucalypts may flower, then the Correas on the escarpments and then the Grevilleas. Just like us they need to have a well rounded diet.

I believe the greater issue is maintaining the integrity of our bushland whether that is tackling weed invasion, loss of species or genetic integrity of our local forms.

If any one would like their grevilleas identified please contact us.

VCAT NEWS

Alan Bonny

Two planning applications on which BICA made submissions were referred to VCAT for determination. BICA attended and participated at both hearings.

A Helicopter landing pad in Wonga Park across the river from the Bend of Islands was approved after a long and intensive hearing. Residents, councils and environmental groups from both sides of the Yarra opposed the application. It was a disappointing result with the amenity of all being impacted on by the convenience of one. The hearing result did apply limitations on the use of the facility to one return flight a day during daylight hours with a maximum of five flights a week with the flight path directed away from the Bend. This result made the attendance worthwhile.

An application for a re-subdivision of six lots at 488 Skyline Rd has been heard over five days including a site visit. Council, DSE, CFA, Green wedge Group and BICA participated. Complex issues of planning and environmental values were evident and a determination is yet to be made.

VALE, STEVE

Supplied by Val Himmelreich

Steve was a huge supporter of Land for Wildlife and had a large input into the 1989/1990 review of the scheme, which resulted in the employment of the first team of Land for Wildlife Extension Officers. His enthusiasm as a Land for Wildlife assessor helped support a large network of Land for Wildlife members in the Port Phillip area, particularly in the hills surrounding Melbourne.

The following is part of a piece written by Mark Winfield, Manager Flora and Fauna, Port Phillip Region, DSE in 2004 in honour of Steve Craig.

"It is with great sadness that we report the untimely death of one of our most respected staff members, Steve Craig. Steve died on Wednesday 23 June after a relentless fight against cancer spanning four years.

A graduate fellowship will be introduced in Steve's honour. The Stephen A. Craig Fellowship Graduate Program will be awarded every two years. It will be a Regional Services Division, Port Phillip Region position, running for a minimum of 10 years. The fellowship will work towards the acquisition of knowledge and skills, and imparting this knowledge to improve outcomes in the built and natural environment.

Steve's career in the field of biological and ecological sciences began in the early 1970s at Melbourne University as a junior technical assistant. He subsequently joined the Ministry of Conservation and for the next 31 years developed his knowledge and technical expertise in an extraordinarily diverse range of specialised areas within the biodiversity discipline.

Steve epitomised one of the most important tenets of the public service ethos by providing free and frank advice to anybody who would listen, especially when it came to informing decisions made by state and local governments. A very serious and intense person with a particular gleam in his eye when he was amused, Steve also had a rich sense of humour about himself.

His dedication to the conservation community was constant, and best expressed by his home in the alternative environmental living zone at Christmas Hills. Steve's commitments to conservation and community were inseparable. Knowledge gained and imparted was his ethos; he believed that biodiversity protection was achieved by empowering people with knowledge and information.

Steve's work history is extensive and included research into animal disease, Australian fur seals, potoroos, peregrine falcons, forest habitat, and conducting pre-logging flora fauna surveys. More recently, and despite serious illness, he continued his role in the monitoring of powerful owls.

Fearing that his government department job might limit his effectiveness, Steve organised a temporary secondment to Whittlesea Council as a Conservation Officer to influence its environmental performance.

It is no surprise that Steve readily earned the respect of his friends, colleagues, field naturalists, researchers and the conservation-minded community. Steve's personal and professional convictions, tenacity and commitment to sharing his expansive biodiversity knowledge and passion with all people during his short but remarkable life created a wonderful legacy."

Source of quote: Inform, DSE, 5th July 2004.

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SAVE THE ROOS AND YOUR VEHICLE REPAIR COSTS

Frank Pierce

The 4WD shop in Bolton St Eltham (Shop 5 at No. 266) sells **Sonic Animal Guard** for \$6 a pair.

My experience is that they are effective in deterring animals such as kangaroos and wallabies from approaching vehicles.

They are two small plastic whistles that adhere to the front bumper, or a similar location. When the car is travelling at 30 kph or more they emit a noise inaudible to us but heard by the animals.

In the five years that I've had them fitted I've travelled more than 150,000 km in the bush and around the Bend of Islands. In that time I've hit two 'roos and in both cases they did not have an escape route away from the road and, at the last moment, they panicked and jumped in front of the car

In an effort to reduce the road-kills on the approaches to and within our area, I recommend that all residents fit these to their cars. The small outlay of \$6 is worth it, even if they are only partially effective in deterring the animals and thus avoiding injury to them and damage to your vehicle.

ADVICE ON SEPTIC TANKS

To reduce sludge building up in the tank:

- Scrape all dishes to remove tea leaves, fats, grease etc before washing
- Use a sink strainer to restrict food scraps entering the septic system
- Don't use a garbage disposal unit
- Don't put sanitary napkins, disposable nappies and other hygiene products into the system

To keep bacteria working in the tank:

- Use soapy water to clean toilets & other fixtures
- Use detergents that have low phosphorus, alkaline salts & chlorine levels
- Use detergents in the recommended quantities
- Don't use bleaches, whiteners, nappy soakers, spot removers, degreasers and disinfectants
- Don't put chemicals or paint down the drain

To reduce volume of effluent requiring disposal:

- Install water conservation fittings
- Take showers instead of baths
- Only wash clothes when there is a full load
- Only use the dishwasher when there is a full load
- Spread water use as evenly as possible throughout the week. The septic system is unable to cope with large volumes of water over short periods.

Advice on Maintenance:

Septic tank:

- De-sludge the septic tank at least every three years or when the scum and sludge occupy 2/3 of the volume of the tank
- Protect the tank from vehicles
- Have any grease trap cleaned out regularly
- Keep the vent and/or access cover of the septic tank exposed
- Have any outlet filter inspected and cleaned
- If there are offensive odours coming from the system, flushing garden lime through the toilet often corrects the problem

- Treatment plants must be serviced in accordance with the permit conditions

Land application area:

- Spray or drip irrigation areas are not play areas for children and access should be restricted
- No vehicles or stock should be allowed on trenches or transpiration beds
- Suitable plants should be planted over the drainage field. A list of plants can be obtained from Nillumbik Council.
- Deep rooting trees or shrubs should not be grown over absorption trenches or pipes.
- Keep surface water diversion drains above and around the land application area clean to reduce absorption of rainwater into trenches or beds
- Evapo-transpiration and irrigation areas should have their grass mowed and plants maintained to ensure that these areas take up nutrients with maximum efficiency
- Warning signs for surface irrigation areas should always be visible
- No building works can extend over the effluent trenches or septic tank
- Rotary hoeing can damage effluent trenches
- Do not cover area with clay, plastic sheeting or fill
- Do not construct sheds, swimming pools etc over the area
- Do not construct paths or sealed surfaces over the area

Equipment:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintaining and cleaning pumps, filters etc
- Flush drip irrigation lines periodically to scour out any accumulated sediment
- Check pumps, alarms and pits for proper function on a regular basis
- Do not turn the pump off while the system is in use
- Check operation of mechanical treatment plants after power failures and do not turn off power when going on holidays as continuous operation is essential

Advice on Operating Problems:

Problems can occur if systems are not maintained. Warning signs to look for are:

- Absorption field is wet or soggy with wastewater pooling on the surface
- Smell of "sewage" near the septic tank or absorption area
- Drains and toilets run slowly
- Water backing up in sink
- Grease trap is full or blocked

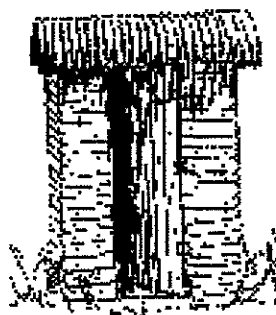
Advice on the Consequences of Failure:

- Spread of infectious diseases
- Breeding of mosquitoes and attraction of flies and rodents
- Nuisance and unpleasantness
- Pollution of waterways
- Contamination of bores, wells and groundwater
- Alteration of the local ecology

Advice on Owner/Occupier Responsibilities:

Home owners and occupiers are legally responsible to keep their on-site wastewater system in good working order. If any of the warning signs are evident, the owner or occupier should contact a plumber or the Council's Environmental Health Services Unit. A permit must be obtained from Council's Environmental Health Services Unit prior to any alteration or upgrade of the septic system.

NILLUMBIK SHIRE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: 9433 3340



ANOTHER LOCAL FERN

John McCallum

Screw Fern (*Lindsaea linearis*) gets its name from the erect fertile fronds in which the pinnae (leaflets) are twisted, giving the frond a screw-like appearance.

The fronds are simple and are from 10 to 40 mm long, the fertile fronds being taller and more erect than the barren ones. The stipe (stem) is shiny slender and reddish brown to almost black in colour. The leaflets are fan-shaped, smooth, dark green and have branching veins. Sori are on the outer margin of the fertile leaflets and are protected by a thin membrane.

The rhizome (underground stem) is creeping and often deeply buried. It is covered with coarse, pale brown, narrow scales.

L. linearis is often found in association with sedges and other moisture loving plants growing in poorer soils. It is common in coastal heathlands. In the Bend of Islands it is found on the sandy soils in gully lines such as are found in parts of the Co-op.

LIFE WITH SEX

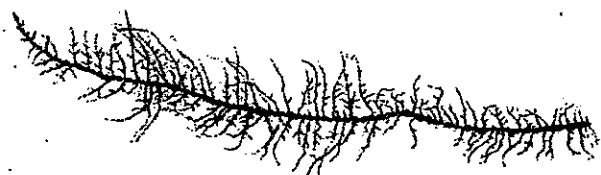
John McCallum

With the recent wetter weather we have seen a great display of mosses, lichens and liverworts. These cryptogamic ("hidden marriage"), plants, so called because of their rather difficult to follow reproductive cycles, tend to survive dry periods in a dormant, shrivelled up state. When it rains they freshen up, grow and reproduce. This year's display seems to be better than usual, or maybe that's because I am noticing them more as potential subjects for photography! There is a good web site to introduce you to these interesting components of our flora. It is called Life With Sex and the URL is:

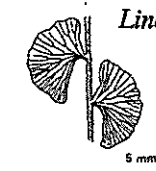
<http://www.anbg.gov.au/cryptogams/underworld/panel-5/index.html>

Bruce Fuhrer and David Meagher have produced the Field Guide to the Mosses and Allied Plants of Southern Australia. It is number 20 in the Flora of Australia Supplementary Series and forms a good introduction to this group of plants.

Get down on your hands and knees and have a good look at the miniature gardens that make up the very important ground cover in our bush.

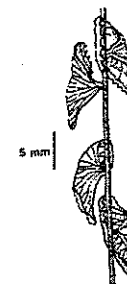


Thuidiopsis furfurosa is the yellowish-green, multi branched moss that covers much of our ground, especially under shrubs such as Burgan



Lindsaea linearis sterile pinnae

Lindsaea linearis part of fertile frond showing twisted pinnae



Lindsaea linearis base of pinna showing decurrent attachment to stipe

Lindsaea linearis rhizome scales



NEXT GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 28th August 2 pm

At the home of Jo Henry and Dylan Osler, 800 Henley Rd. Bend of Islands.

Please don't park in the bush.

Guest Speaker: Conservation into the future – Australian Bush Heritage Fund

BEND OF ISLANDS

Jessie Bull

My great-great-grandparents in 1841 secured the first squatting license east of the Diamond Creek, and they and my great-grandparents, and my grandparents, and my parents, all owned different farms on the Kangaroo Grounds. I remember my mother telling me that her brothers used to hunt deer on the land now known as Bend of Islands.

About 1922 my parents bought the 320 acres with three miles of river frontage to the Yarra which my brother Neville named Bend of Islands. Father subdivided the land in 1925 into approximately five acre blocks, each with a river frontage. Later they bought land one and a half miles upstream which my father named 'Tall-woods' (Henley Road Extension).

The original corrugated iron two storey house and land were burnt in the 1926 fires. Depression years followed, but we enjoyed a great deal of time there. It was towards the end of the 1930s before more than one block had been sold. Our father had a man working for him named Jack Kennedy who lived in a tent nearby. He had a plough and horses to make roads and tracks. He cut the trees where necessary and made culverts for running off rainwater. A great deal of work was done by pick and shovel and I remember my father doing a great deal of this work. Neville and Joan Haughton built their cottage, the "Three Bears" in 1936. They managed to keep out the 1939 bushfires and also the 1962 fires.

By the end of the 1940s practically all blocks were sold, at about £50 per block. I remember Dad gave one to the Scouts. My brother showed me an old map indicating that James Page ... owned all of the Bend of Islands in 1885. Our father had ambitions of the centre blocks with no river frontage being made into a golf course. Also he hoped that one day the Boulevard would reach out from the City of Melbourne through Kew along the River Yarra to Bend of Islands.

There seems to be very little change in the appearance of the land today apart from the river water which is not as clean. Some would say we have been lucky with the types of buyers, but really it was the beautiful country that selected a majority of people of taste and appreciation for just what it is in its secluded natural state.



Photo of James Page's "Yarra Dell" weekender

Members and friends of the Haughton family outside their two storey holiday home in Bend of Islands, c. 1924. Ned Haughton (seated beside water-tank), nursing daughter, Jessie (Bull). The home (on today's Lot 26 Gongflers Drive) was built by James Page in 1885 when his 320 bush acres was known as 'Yarra Dell'.

Jessie Bull (nee Haughton), now a resident of Mt Martha, wrote the above item in the late 1980s and has recently given permission for it to be reproduced in this newsletter.

Remains of the old home are still in evidence on Lot 26 Gongflers

General Meeting: Sun 28 August
Wattle Walk: Sun 11 September
Garden Walk: Sun 2 October
Field Day: Sun 6 November

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