

Birrarrung



March to May 2020

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Newsletter of the Friends of the Yarra Valley Parks

Incorporating Manningham Conservation Society

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See the web-site for the newsletters in colour, and any updates to activities.

If you no longer wish to receive a printed newsletter please email us and we will notify you when newsletters are posted on the website.

ACTIVITIES – all welcome

Sunday Activities - **4th Sunday of the Month, 10 am to 12 Noon**, March to November.

WHAT TO BRING: *You will need old clothes and sturdy shoes, gardening gloves, a parka, or hat and sunscreen, and a water bottle. A cuppa is usually provided. You may also like to bring insect repellent. You don't have to stay for the entire session - even an hour of your time would make a valuable contribution to the Yarra Valley Park environment.*

Sunday 22 March – Sweeneys Flats, Eltham 10 am to 12 Noon (Mel 22 B11)

Maintenance of previous plantings. Checking and replacing tree guards. Some weeding around the plants. Bring a mattock or other weeding tool if you have one. If not, tools will be provided. Park at the end of Sweeneys Lane and follow the signs.

Thursday 23 April: Additional activity with Friends of Warrandyte State Park:

Woody weeds in Candlebark Park. Meet at the end of O'Briens Lane (Mel 33 J1) at 9.30 am

Sunday 26 April –Westerfolds grassland, Westerfolds Park, Templestowe 10am to 12 (Mel 33 F1)

Maintenance of indigenous planting/regeneration site. Plant banksias, fix fences, remove over-abundant *Cassinias*. Bring a mattock or other tool if you have one for weeding around the plants. Long grass, so wear long pants. Veer right after entering Westerfolds Park from Fitzsimons Lane, then follow signs to Red Gum car park. There will be signposts from there.

Sunday 24 May – Murundaka Park, Lower Plenty 10 am to 12 Noon (Mel 32 K2)

Maintenance of previous planting, and some new planting. Bring a mattock or other weeding tool if you have one. Long grass, so wear long pants. Follow Cleveland Ave all the way around past the Rosanna Golf Club (Mel 32 K2). Park near the Friends sign in Cleveland Ave. Walk through the nearby gate and follow additional signs down to the site.

The Plant Nursery is being maintained at this time of low demand, but no extra help is needed at present.

Committee meetings are usually **4th** Thursday at 7.30 pm in the Meeting Room at Westerfolds Park (Mel 33 F1). Next meetings are Thursdays: 26 March, 23 April, 28 May.

Coming activities

We will be working at Sweeneys Flats in Eltham on 22 March. One of our tasks will be to help plants like this *Goodenia* to grow beyond the top of the existing tree guards. They are being eaten, probably by wallabies and perhaps deer.

The plan is to replace the existing stakes with taller ones and then attach another guard above the bottom one that is already in place.



Ranger Cam Beardsell has propagated some interesting plants which are doing well at Murundaka Swamp, near where we will be working on 24 May. At left below is the tall club-sedge *Bolboschoenus fluviatilis*, described as ‘a very rare plant in Melbourne’.

On the right is Common nardoo *Marsilea drummondii*. It is reasonably common in northern Victoria and is now often planted around Melbourne, but ‘natural populations are disappearing’. This looks a bit like clover but is actually a fern. Its little spore-cases were ground into flour by Aboriginal people, then made into a paste and eaten raw or roasted.



Draft Yarra Strategic Plan

This document has been released for public consultation. Submissions must be in by 29 March. The following excerpts from p. 104-108 cover directions for our part of the river. We would wholeheartedly support most of them, but there are misgivings about opening up access to the wetlands at Murundaka which have become valuable refuges for birds and other wildlife. <https://engage.vic.gov.au/help-us-shape-final-10-year-strategic-plan-yarra-river>

Suburban reach – celebrating significant places

Warrandyte–Templestowe parklands This series of parklands between Warrandyte and Templestowe is of immense environmental, social, cultural and heritage value, with opportunities to deliver on each of the community’s priorities and values for the suburban reach. The natural bushland character present across most of these parklands supports local biodiversity and provides opportunities for the community to connect with nature. The Wurundjeri Woi wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation has nominated Laughing Waters as an area for priority protection due to the presence of historic eel traps which are actively maintained by the corporation with Parks Victoria.

Opportunities for future projects and alignment:

1. Fill gaps in the parklands and recreational trail network to provide a continuous open space corridor. Investigate opportunities for cross-river connections that will facilitate improved links to the Yarra River from local recreational trail networks. A key initiative is the current Manningham City Council project to extend the Main Yarra Trail from Tikalara Park to Warrandyte.
 2. Provide safe access to the heritage-rich landscapes within Warrandyte State Park. Identify and manage all mine shafts, create new recreational trails and deliver interpretative signage to connect visitors with the mining heritage of the region.
 3. Protect and upgrade significant buildings and sites (e.g. Pontville Homestead, Pettys Orchard and Laughing Waters precinct). Investigate options for sensitive reuse to help fund restoration projects in line with the future directions plan and community expectations.
 4. Improve camping opportunities at Longridge Park.
- In partnership with the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, investigate ways to protect the cultural values associated with Laughing Waters.

Lower Plenty–Eltham Parklands This section of the suburban reach includes a network of parklands and conservation areas with high environmental and cultural value. Connected via the Main Yarra Trail, the parklands are an important recreational asset, offering a great range of Yarra River experiences. There is great potential to improve recreational trails and access, establish new habitat and offer new experiences for community enjoyment of the Yarra River and nature-based recreation.

Opportunities for future projects and alignment:

1. Improve connections to and between parklands, and improve access and visual connection to the Yarra River.
2. Investigate potential for a bridge crossing near Birrarung Park to create a circuit trail between the Finns Reserve and Banksia Street bridges.
3. Protect the significant environmental, cultural and landscape values of the Plenty River and its confluence with the Yarra River, located within the Rosanna Golf Club site.
4. Develop a masterplan for Murundaka and Montpellier wetlands to coordinate work across both sites. Enable the broader community to access and enjoy these sites through the establishment of basic visitor facilities. Work with the community to support and expand their stewardship role.
5. Rehabilitate land at the Yarra River access point at Bonds Road. Remove weeds, revegetate the banks of the Yarra River and create access or viewing opportunities.
6. Implement proposals for the Westerfolds recreational and paddle sports hub.
7. Implement initiatives identified in Nillumbik Shire Council’s Eltham Lower Park Masterplan Review.

Bulleen Precinct The Bulleen Precinct comprises the stretch of the Yarra River through Lower Templestowe, Heidelberg and Bulleen which is home to parklands and distinctive places of natural and cultural value. The Victorian Government is currently preparing the Yarra River – Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan to outline a vision and principles to guide land use over the long term. The Yarra Strategic Plan has identified areas for future projects and investment in this precinct:

- Yarra Flats: protection of environmental and cultural values of the Yarra Flats and improved visitor facilities for the Heidelberg Artists’ Trail.
- Banyule Flats: protection of environmental and cultural values.
- Bolin Bolin Billabong: protection of environmental and cultural values. Continued program of restoring natural water flow regimes into the billabong.

Friends membership

If you haven't already joined as a paid-up Friend of the Yarra Valley Parks, please consider it - \$20 annually (\$10 concession) or \$75 for five years. Our application form is on our [website](#).

Other organisations we support – check them out

[Yarra Riverkeeper Association](#) 'The Yarra Riverkeeper Association has become the primary 'voice of the river'. We monitor the Yarra's health, and keep track of the many activities affecting it.'

[Environment Victoria](#) 'is an independent and not-for-profit group campaigning for a safe climate, healthy rivers and sustainable living.'

[Environmental Justice Australia](#) 'is nature's legal team. We use our technical expertise and practical understanding of the law to protect nature and defend communities' rights to a healthy environment.'

We are also affiliated with [Victorian Environment Friends network](#)

Parkconnect

If you register with Parks Victoria's website <https://www.parkconnect.vic.gov.au>, you can sign up to attend our activities so we have an idea of how many participants to expect. You can also sign up to attend any others in the vast array of volunteer opportunities in Victoria's parks.

Parks Victoria's 'Nature First Supporters' group

Have a look at <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/get-into-nature/supporters> and see if you'd like to become involved.