

Birrarrung



March to May 2024

Issue 1/2024

Newsletter of the Friends of the Yarra Valley Parks

Incorporating Manningham Conservation Society

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

If you no longer wish to receive a printed newsletter please email us and we'll send your newsletter by email.

ACTIVITIES – all welcome

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

WHAT TO BRING:

We prefer that you sign in for each activity on the Parkconnect website

<https://www.parkconnect.vic.gov.au/> Morning tea will not be provided – please bring your own. Bring your own gloves. Some tools can be provided and sanitiser will be available. You will need old clothes and sturdy shoes, gardening gloves, a parka, or hat and sunscreen, and a water bottle. Wear long pants.

Sunday 24 March – 10 am to 12 Noon - Westerfolds Park (Mel 33 E1)

'What-3-words' location is <https://w3w.co/door.simply.storm>

We will be removing woven plastic weed mats left after planting decades ago. Enter Westerfolds Park from Fitzsimons Lane. Veer right and continue past the Park office then turn left at the roundabout. Follow signs to Manna Gum car park. (It's as far as you can drive.) Then follow temporary signs across the creek and then left. A mattock and box cutter/Stanley knife would be handy, but tools will be provided.

Sunday 28 April – 10 am to 12 Noon – Murundaka, Bonds Rd. Lower Plenty (Mel 33 A2)

'What-3-words' location is <https://w3w.co/guess.knee.before>

Maintenance around plants put in during recent years. Checking and refurbishing tree guards. Some weeding around the plants. Enter the site via a gate on the west side of Bonds Road, just after you go under the power line. You can park on the verge nearby if it's dry, or go back to the small parking area at the turn-off to Montpelier Drive.

Sunday 26 May – 10 am to 12 Noon - Westerfolds Park (Mel 33 F1)

'What-3-words' location is <https://w3w.co/moon.task.flank>

New planting – mid-storey plants. Enter Westerfolds Park from Fitzsimons Lane. Veer right and park at the car park opposite the Park office. Then cross the road to the planting site. Bring your favorite planting tool if you have one. If not, tools will be provided.

You will be able to sign in for the activities above when they go up on ParkConnect soon.

Committee meetings are at 7.30 pm in the Meeting Room at Westerfolds Park (Mel 33 F1). Next meetings are Thursdays: 28 March, 25 April, 23 May.

Upcoming activities

Sunday 24 March, Westerfolds

Our mission to remove plastic woven weed mats from decades ago continues at Westerfolds. This time we'll be on part of the 'Homeshow Trail', now looking a bit unloved. Some of the signs might strike a chord with anyone looking for housing in 2024! (We'll bring some cleaning equipment.)



Weed mats beside the trail



'Homeshow Trail'

Sunday 28 April, Bonds Road

Many of the plants put in two years ago are thriving, but some of the tree guards need a second storey. Some plants are ready to have their guards removed.

Dozens of kangaroos greeted me at the site last week. They make me wonder how many of our plants survive, but they do.



Sunday 26 May, Westerfolds



Our planting site was suggested by Parks Ranger John Williams. It is an example of the many places in our parks where there were mass plantings of trees decades ago. What is missing? Mid-storey and under-storey plants, which are vital for many birds, insects and other small animals. The trees make it difficult for new smaller plants to get enough sunlight and water, so we have to find the emptier patches among the trees.

Visits to sites where we have worked in the past

Some of us joined the Friends of Warrandyte State Park in March. Under the guidance of Ranger Cam Beardsell, we did some work at Pauline Toner Reserve in Eltham, then visited the site of an ancient eel trap on the Yarra, recently made visible by low water level.



Eltham copper butterfly thriving at Pauline Toner Reserve (Photo: Joy Hick)



Eels are steered towards the opening at bottom right, where they can be captured

Yarra Riverkeeper Association (YRKA)

The Yarra Riverkeepers will join us for a couple of our activities this year, as they have done in previous years. The following extract from their website <https://yarrariver.org.au> explains what they do.

The Yarra Riverkeeper Association is made for and by the community. We tackle important ecological risks that could have a devastating impact on the Yarra, Birrarung – and the countless people, animals and plants who depend on it. Access to nature has never been more important for a healthy mind and body. However, it's rapidly becoming polluted and uninhabitable.

We tell the river's "story", highlighting its wonders and its challenges. We monitor its health and activities affecting it. We run educational events, river tours and give informative presentations to schools, community groups, the authorities and businesses. We work closely with numerous government bodies and NGO's and advocate directly and through the news media for river care.

We regularly deliver speeches and presentations to school classes, tertiary education groups, community groups, service clubs, business associations, and at seminars, workshops and conferences. They are delivered either beside the river or in venues where we can show colourful images of the river. The goal is to inform and engage audiences about the wonders of the Yarra River and related topics such as the river's history, its wonderful wildlife, up-to-date commentary on urban water issues, and how people can help.

Yarra billabongs

If you have access to *The Age* of 10 March 2024, this interesting item describes progress in rehabilitating the Yarra billabongs between Bolin Bolin and Montpelier: <https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/in-the-shadow-of-roadworks-preserving-the-last-remaining-billabongs-in-melbourne-20240304-p5f9op.html>

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