

INDIGENOTES

Managing risks to environmental values:

A summary of Melbourne Parks & Waterways Environmental Management System

1. Introduction

Risk characterises every aspect of human activity, from the choices we make in the face of uncertainty to events over which we have little control. Risk in the recreation business is no exception and managing risk to the environment presents one of the greatest challenges for park and open space managers today.

MPW has developed an Environmental Management System based on risk management which aims to provide 'just in time' information on the risks to environmental values and to assist in management decision making. Just as we require market research to better understand our customers, MPW has gathered information to improve its understanding of the environmental values of its parks and waterways.

Risk assessment and the development of risk management strategies focuses managers on the questions: What is at risk?, What is the nature of the risk? and Is the risk an external impact or a result of direct management actions?

The complexity of natural ecosystems means that a high degree of uncertainty will remain in many

management decisions. Risk management, however, explicitly addresses this uncertainty and contributes information that enables MPW to provide a diverse range of recreational experiences whilst protecting the environmental values of the parks and waterways of which it is custodian.

2. Assessing our environmental values

Environmental values are placed on our assets by government and the community. Value can also be measured in terms of ecological attributes such as biodiversity. MPW has undertaken a strategic assessment of the environmental value of its parks and waterways. The assessment focuses on four major components of environmental value. They are:

- + Environmental responsibility - the responsibilities that MPW has under international treaties, State and Commonwealth legislation and policies, eg, Ramsar Convention, Flora & Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.
- + Biodiversity - the broad range of flora and fauna present in a park or waterway, its rarity and the contribution of the park or waterway to maintaining

sustainable populations and communities of these species;

- + Condition - the condition of the natural features of the park or waterway which affect its environmental value, eg, weed infestation, fragmentation of natural vegetation;
- + Nature based use - the activities undertaken in the park or waterway which depend on its natural features, eg local conservation group activities, birdwatching, wildlife photography.

3. Risk management in the MPW business

MPW has a business process model which provides the context for management of our assets. MPW's environmental performance is managed principally at three key stages of the business process. Risk management questions are addressed at each stage.

3.1 Strategic risk management

MPW undertakes planning for each park of waterway setting (Setting Plans) which establish its strategic recreation and environmental management direction. In this planning process the key question is:

Are the current or future options for use of a setting consistent with its environmental value?

There are a number of potential risk management solutions which are utilised in the plan:

- + zoning
- + regulated visitor use
- + active visitor management
- + park marketing strategies

Example 1: Point Cook Coastal Park/ Cheetham Wetlands Strategy Plan

The vision for this coastal park: Point Cook Coastal Park and Cheetham Wetlands will become a model for sustainable management of internationally recognised wetlands in synergy with diverse recreational opportunities.

The Environmental Management Plan for Cheetham Wetlands supports the strategy, stating that MPW will promote and manage visitation at the wetlands as a unique, high value experience encouraging a sense of privilege and care. The marketing and development of the wetlands has focused on the creation of the wetlands experience for users of the Bay trail running along the edge of the site, whilst managing access into the site through guided tours. Bird hides and an observa-

tion tower will provide interpretative material and improved visual access to the site.

3.2 Development risk management

MPW allocates approximately \$7 million per annum to the development of recreation facilities. In the Capital planning process, the key risk management question is:

Which of the options for development will lead to the best environmental outcome for the site?

Potential risk management solutions :

- + development location
- + design
- + specifications and scheduling
- + contract performance indicators.

Example: Horseshoe Bend - Bridge and Trail Connections

The ~~Setting Plan for Brimbank Park and Horse~~shoe Bend Farm highlights the need to improve access between the Farm and Brimbank. As the two areas are separated by the Maribyrnong River a bridge has been proposed as a 1996/7 Capital Project. An Environmental Risk Assessment has been undertaken to identify the values and risks associated with this project:

Environmental Values

Riparian vegetation lining banks of Maribyrnong
Threatened flora/fauna species - Turkey Bush, Slender Club Sedge, 2 birds, 2 fish & 1 lizard
Highly fragmented vegetation.

Environmental Risks:

Option One - Access tracks require removal of 250m² of moderate quality vegetation. Steep grade of tracks - potential erosion problems

Option Two - No removal of remnant vegetation, 100m² loss of revegetation.

The assessment provided managers with information that identified Option Two as having lower environmental impact. The bridge design reduced the risk as there would be no disturbance of river bed and minimal disturbance of the bank.

3.3 Operational risk management

MPW operates its parks and waterways on the basis of excellence in both customer service and environmental management. The risk management question:

Where are park or waterway management resources directed to provide the greatest reduction in environmental risk?

Potential risk management solutions:

- † environmental management planning;
- † management and performance targets;
- † visitor education and interpretation;
- † monitoring impacts.

Example: Westerfolds Environmental Management Plan (EMP)

Westerfolds Park is located on the Yarra River in Templestowe. It forms part of the wildlife corridor created by the Yarra River, providing habitat for the FFC listed Powerful Owl, Regent Honeyeater, Great Egret and Swift Parrot.

The Plan assessed the extent and impact of sixteen risks including pest plants, pest animals and soil erosion. An integrated pest plant and revegetation program was developed as weeds are having the largest impact on values. Recurrent budgets were allocated and performance indicators developed.

4. Conclusion

MPW's business is conducted on the basis of excellence in environmental management. Understanding the environmental values of our parks and waterways is central to a risk management approach. It also provides a benchmark against which our efforts to protect and enhance these

values can be measured.

MPW's Environmental Management System supports management decision making and the continuous improvement of our environmental performance. The provision of 'just in time' information on the risks to environmental values, reduces the need to respond defensively to environmental risk.

For more information contact:

**Melbourne Parks & Waterways,
378 Cotham Road, Kew 3101
Phone (03) 9816 7000**

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Environment

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Kate Millar Environment Coordinator

Source: Seminar notes from a presentation of the Melbourne Parks & Waterways Environmental Management System, 25/9/1996.

Editor's Note:

I went along to the presentation where this paper was presented and got a better idea of the new environmental planning process at Melbourne Parks and Waterways. I was impressed with the process because it clearly has the support of the upper levels of management in the organisation. It also has the expressed goal of making the assessment of natural values and the evaluation of risks to them a normal and accepted institutional policy. It also links the priorities identified within plans to budget priorities.

One person at the presentation asked if this new planning process will address the "the pitiful lack of staff" at her local MPW park. The response was yes, possibly...because this environmental planning system will allow conscious evaluation of the assets of a park and what's needed to manage them. The person and the Friends group she represented was told that their involvement in the planning process would be encouraged and that they should ask to be involved in a general way at their specific park. The Friends group could also have a "watching brief" role; that once the priorities are identified they keep an eye on the process to make sure the budget gets put to the priorities.

So, if your involved in a local MPW park or waterway please ask about the EMS process and find out how your local park is implementing it and ask to be involved. It's an important planning process that has the potential to promote excellent land management and good conservation outcomes but it needs support and involvement.

Hostile Urban Aerodynamics and Cryptic Tree Loss

Recent storms at Frankston have prompted me to provide a contribution to the debate about cryptic tree loss. Simply, the aerodynamic environment of cities is unsuitable for most of our indigenous eucalypts.

Of course local storm damage has not been restricted to remnant native vegetation. Loss of major and minor branches has been the most obvious effect, but many large trees have been blown over. Damage often prompts the landowner to totally remove 'hazardous' vegetation. Loss of limbs opens up the tree to penetration by water, fungi and invertebrates involved in decay.

Trees grow to create a form that is relatively mechanically stable under the prevailing wind regime. But the aerodynamics of urban environments change rapidly and the form of the mature tree is largely fixed in earlier stages of development, allowing little potential for timely compensatory growth. Instead of wind cushions and filters of vegetation, our urban landscapes are full of walls and wind baffles with pockets of still air beside howling gales.

New buildings create turbulence effects and may completely alter the wind stresses to which a tree is subjected. Roads lined with houses act as wind tunnels, magnifying the effect of gales when wind and road directions correspond. Elementary considerations of the combined effects of changing drainage regimes and restrictions on root growth in the urban environment would suggest that the underground structures of trees must have the same kinds of problems in providing the necessary mechanical supports to maintain stability in an unstable aerodynamic environment. Most of our indigenous trees evolved in the relatively uniform shelter of forests, in turn protected from damaging winds by transitional vegetation. Our cities are hostile environments in which trees are mostly required to be isolated from others of their kind and from the protective effects of associated vegetation.

As Helen Moss has indicated (Indigenotes 9(8)), property speculators, and the real estate and building construction industries, have largely controlled the growth and planning of our urban environments, and such people, in my experience, have the greatest difficulty in understanding these sorts of environmental effects. Sensitive people who plant trees and seek to recreate natural

environments need to develop a more subtle understanding of the interactions between trees and air movement by more perceptive observation of nature. When planting and seeking to preserve trees we should anticipate the possible effects of winds.

These thoughts are heavily influenced by discussions with Dr. Noel Schleiger, a Melbourne mathematician and naturalist, a rare individual with an interest in and knowledge of winds and their effects on tree morphology. There is probably a literature on the subject, but all I can refer you to is Schleiger's Buttressed booyongs at Binna Burra, Mt Lamington Plateau Victorian Naturalist 108(5): 112-4, 1991.

**Ian Faithfull,
5/30-32 Finlay St,
Frankston 3199**

Alpine Ecology Course

The annual Alpine Ecology Course is now in its ninth year, and continues to attract a seemingly inexhaustible supply of people wanting to learn more about the unique alpine country of south-eastern Australia. Its success could lie in the rare learning opportunity it offers. To work with ecological experts in their research stamping ground is a privilege; to participate in collecting and evaluating data from Maisie Fawcett's 50 year old exclusion plots, is to be part of one of the longest running ecological scientific experiments anywhere. You can mix with people from many interest and professional backgrounds, some of whom are near experts themselves, all of whom are exhilarated by the experience and delighted to share their ideas and knowledge. For plant lovers it's an opportunity to gain new insight into the soil, climatic and faunal relationships that are part of the alpine system. And all of this happens in a superb natural setting at the best time of the year - the wildflower season.

For the last two years the course has been re-invigorated by a new location - Mount Hotham, but this year it returns to the Bogong High Plains. We expect to have about forty-eight Victorian and interstate participants from diverse backgrounds - community educators, National Park Rangers, Field Naturalists, ski resort staff and teachers.

The course is largely field based and emphasises the practical application of knowledge. The three areas of investigation undertaken during the week are soils and geomorphology, flora and fauna. During the first three days, everyone participates in introductory sessions on these three areas of field work, with an overview of each, key terms, techniques and tools.

As the week continues, participants are able to select one stream, either choosing their area of speciality or undertaking field work in a 'new' area. Some choices are to trap and monitor Mountain Pygmy possum (*Burramys parvus*); general fauna observation and monitoring; a day trip up the mountain from the valley to Mount Nelse, looking at changes in soils, vegetation and climatic conditions. Vegetation monitoring, re-vegetation and propagation and geomorphological investigation are also offered, with both theory and practice. In the evenings presenters cover topics such as the history of land use in the Alps, research into alpine flora, fauna and the scientific research on cattle grazing on the high plains. These sessions can open lively discussion. Some evening time is also devoted to bat trapping and other nocturnal fauna observation.

Groups work alongside experts and contribute to the ongoing fieldwork, research and reporting, so that although the knowledge base which participants bring to the course can range from beginner to expert, no-one has ever found the course too basic or too difficult - it is learning at its best, at your own pace and level. The opportunity to be part of worthwhile investigation is very rewarding, and most people finish the course with loads of ideas and resources plus a sense of renewal of the practical possibilities for 'making a difference'.

The course is socially interactive as there are many opportunities to reflect, relax and enjoy. The varied backgrounds, experience and viewpoints of participants create a springboard of ideas and discussion.

The Victorian Alps in January is a wonderful setting for a remarkable course.

From: Deirdre Slattery, Department of Outdoor Education, Latrobe University Bendigo, and Tarnya Kruger, DNRE Landcare Training Centre, Creswick.

Alpine Ecology Course Bogong High Plains 6 - 12 January 1997

Designed for rangers, alpine workers, teachers & conservationists

Six days of exhilarating field-based studies with expert instructors.

Accommodation is at Howman's Gap Alpine Centre, 5 km from Falls Creek.

Course Fee: \$595 includes accommodation, meals, instruction and course notes.

Enquiries & application forms:

Maria Bonfa (03) 9412 4175

Fax (03) 9412 4586

Warwick Papst (057) 311 212

Presented by:

Dept of Natural Resources & Environment

Snippets:

The Noisy Miner, bird diversity and eucalypt dieback

The Noisy Miner (*Manorina melanocephala*) is a large aggressive Australian Honeyeater which has almost certainly benefited from European settlement through clearing and fragmentation of native vegetation. Correlational evidence suggests that the remnant woodlots occupied by Noisy Miners have a lower bird diversity than woodlots without Noisy Miners. There is also some evidence to suggest that woodland birds have the potential to reduce insect populations. Therefore the presence of Noisy Miners may influence the level of insect induced dieback in a woodlot.

A study is being undertaken by Latrobe University in fifteen Box and Ironbark remnant woodlots in north eastern Victoria. In the first part of the study Noisy Miners were removed from three small Ironbark remnant woodlots. Each removal site was carefully matched with a control site so that any changes in the bird communities could be measured. In the first experiment a medium sized Noisy Miner colony was removed from a woodlot lacking understorey vegetation. There was an immediate invasion of small insectivorous birds and honeyeaters such as Yellow-rumped Thornbills and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. In the second experiment a substantial proportion of a large Noisy Miner colony was removed from a woodlot lacking understorey. Small insectivorous birds and honeyeaters also invaded this woodlot, but in lower numbers than at the first site. In the third experiment a small Noisy Miner colony was removed from a woodlot with understorey. Only normal seasonal changes in the populations of small birds at the woodlot were observed.

Twelve months later Noisy Miners had not reinvaded the removal sites and although the diversity and abundance of small birds had decreased, they were still higher than before the Noisy Miner removals. The Noisy Miner removal experiments have now been repeated in Grey Box woodland and long term monitoring is taking place at all sites to determine whether the invading small bird populations and tree health.

These experiments are the first to demonstrate that Noisy Miners affect bird diversity by aggressive exclusion of small birds. The experiments have already shown that small, degraded woodlots can support significant populations of some small insectivores and honeyeaters. If these invading

small-bird populations do have the ability to affect insect populations, they could assist the recovery of dieback woodlots.

After the Noisy Miner removals at one site, one of the reinvading species was the rare Regent Honeyeater. Large aggressive birds such as the Noisy Miner may be exerting added pressure on these and other species such as Grey-crowned Babbler, Buff-rumped Thornbill and Southern Whiteface, whose distribution and populations have been badly affected by loss of habitat.

For further information contact Marilyn Grey (03 9479 1672) or Mike Clarke (03 9479 2244) at Latrobe University.

From: Out of the Box: Flora and Fauna Conservation in the Box-Ironbark Region of Victoria No 3, August 1996

Money does grow on trees

To many farmers the remnant native vegetation on their blocks is just the patch that Dad didn't bother clearing because it was too marginal to be worth the effort. Now a Western Australian study has shown that what was a good decision then might be an even better one now.

In 1993 Save the Bush funded a set of case studies of sustainable uses of remnant vegetation on WA wheatbelt farms. The consultants, ACIL, looked for examples for which net cash operating returns could be measured. They came up with eight enterprises operating in wildflower production, ecotourism, timber products, brushwood, or native plant seed collection. They would have liked to include other candidate products such as tree fruits, essential oils, charcoal and tannins, but no quantifiable enterprises could be found at the time.

In their report, *Making Profits from Farm Bush*, ACIL compared the estimated 1992/93 returns from the remnant vegetation enterprises on the case study farms with their returns from cropping and sheep. They found that the wildflower producers made more per hectare from the flowers than they did from their sheep and nearly as much as they did from cropping. In a bad year for sheep, timber and brushwood could give comparable returns. Even basic ecotourism (caravan parking, guided walks) was found to generate at least as much net cash operating return per day as the other farm activities.

The report cautions that not all farms would be capable of getting such returns on a sustainable basis, but on the other side of the coin points out that any return from land unprofitable for agriculture is a bonus and bush farming can often take

place during the seasonal lulls in traditional agriculture. The consultants did not undertake detailed research on the positive environmental benefits of remnant bush on the rest of the property. Benefits can include stock and crop shelter, soil stabilisation, water conservation and salinity control, and natural pest control.

The consultants remind us that remnant vegetation improves resale value. 'Buyers build in a value for all the future possible financial returns and economic benefits that may flow from having remnant bush even if no economic use is currently being made of it', they say. They also invite us to regard well managed remnant bush as income insurance, providing an alternative source of cash returns and useful economic activity when returns from the main farm enterprises are depressed. Our attention is drawn to the endless global search for new materials and products being conducted by manufacturers. 'New products may be developed that require raw materials sourced from native plants, many of which may only be found in remnant bush on farms', the consultants remind us. 'The loss of these remnants could cut off future opportunities for making returns from the property.'

And just in case you conclude that there might be something in this for you, the consultants have thoughtfully provided do-it-yourself worksheets so that you can compare the net cash operating returns from your traditional farm enterprises with those of an existing or potential remnant bush enterprise. It is stressed, however, that longer term economics are dependent on the sustainable use of the bush, which will also maintain its nature conservation values, and off-site land and water conservation benefits into the future.

ACIL Economics and Policy Pty Ltd; Making Profits from Farm Bush; Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia, 1993 for the Australian Nature Conservation Agency.

From *Bushlines Newsletter No.8, September, 1996*

In defence of Silver Wattles

The Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) has been the subject of some bad press lately. I have heard it described as an opportunistic, a weedy and a troublesome plant that constantly falls into streams, creeks and rivers taking some of the riverbank with them and causing erosion, snags and restricting water flow.

I see them as colonising plant and the only tree that has managed to survive the land management practices of the last 150 years. They are the only plant that has managed to grow on the river's edge where the cattle cannot reach them and consequently have been the only plants providing any semblance of a corridor. Certainly they do fall in the rivers but I feel this is more of an indication of the state of our rivers and creeks due to clearing of native vegetation, urbanisation and soil and water erosion. They are not the only trees to fall into rivers. Many other species suffer the same fate as the Silver Wattle and those may include Manna Gums and Swamp Gums.

The Silver Wattle also provides much habitat value and food source for native fauna. As the wattles age they become infested with many borers and grubs that are much sought after by Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoo. Where there are large mature stage trees providing hollows for Sugar Gliders, the Silver Wattles provide a valuable food source for them with the gum that is exuded from the trunk and branches and with the many invertebrates that inhabit the tree. They are also a host to the Mistletoe plant and the many bird, insects and butterflies that in turn rely on the Mistletoe as food source. They also have glands that secrete nectar that is attractive to butterflies and many species of ants. Even when they do fall into the river they can still provide habitat for both platypus and native fish species.

I admire the Silver Wattle for its ability to survive under the most adverse of conditions and I feel it should be respected rather than condemned.

From *Yarra Valley Tree Group Newsletter May 1996*.

Indigenous Permaculture

For some time now I have been speaking to permies and vegetation restorationists about the positive potential of developing closer partnerships.

Through my conservation role at Frankston City Council I have had the privilege of working with numerous knowledgeable and dedicated groups and individuals of both 'persuasions'. Despite the enormous commonality of purpose, I was struck by the lack of interaction between the 'Permies' and 'Indigies'. Although there are an increasing number of individuals embracing both philosophies, essentially two separate cultures exist.

Opportunities are being missed. Permies designs are under utilising local plants and bush tucker foods. Indigies are working hard to restore local bush but rarely are they producing their own food. Indigies are disturbed by the promotion of environ-

Coming events

For IFFA events see back cover

Conferences/Workshops/Talks

Mon 21 October. 8pm. "Flora of the Bogong High Plains." An illustrated talk presented by Neville Walsh, Venue: either the Conference Room, Astronomer's Residence or the National Herbarium Hall, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra 3141. To check venue closer to the date contact Enid Bowman (03) 9882 5297.

Sat 26 October. "Improving your coastal plant ID skills" - a Greening Australia Victoria training session. This session aims to develop participants skills and experience in identification and recognition of coastal indigenous plants. For further information and bookings contact Gerard Clark (03) 9457 3024.

Sun 27 October. "Improving your heathland plant ID skills" - a Greening Australia Victoria training session. This session aims to develop participants skills and experience in identification and recognition of heathland indigenous plants. For further information and bookings contact Gerard Clark (03) 9457 3024.

27 - 31 October 13th Conference - Fire & Forest Meteorology - "International Perspectives on Landscape Fires". Organised by the American Meteorology Society and the Society of American Foresters. This 13th conference will be the first held outside of North America and will be at The Cumberland Resort Lorne, Victoria. Topic areas will include: fire ecology, fire management, fire disaster planning, media issues, smoke, meteorology/climatology, fire physics, modelling, and urban interface issues. Contact IAWF, PO Box 328, Fairfield, Washington, USA 99012.

Mon 28 October. "Environmental weeds for educators workshops." How can we make people more aware of the biggest threat to our bushland? For anyone involved in community education. Organised by the Weed Science Society of Victoria. 9.45am - registration. Workshop 10 am - 4 pm. To be held at the CFA Building, 678 Raglan Pde, Warrnambool. (VicMap 89 J8 & 240-241) Cost is \$20 which includes a light lunch and notes. For registrations contact (03) 9576 2949.

Fri 1 November. Springfever 4 - 'Endangered but fighting back'. A seminar presented by the Victorian Association of Environmental Education. The focus is on environmental education in our schools. This years venue is Werribee Park Zoo, and features several workshops on topics such as Creating a School Koorie Garden, Grassland Communities, and 'Operation Restoration'. For more information on program, costs and bookings contact VAEE (03) 9457 3024.

Wed 6 November. "Integrated Weed Management" - a Greening Australia Victoria Training Session. This session aims to provide participants with knowledge

and skills to develop a weed management program combining a range of control methods. For further information contact Gerard Clark on (03) 9457 3024.

Tues 19 November. "Catchment Management." A Greening Australia Victoria Training Session. This session aims to provide participants with information on, and discussions of, issues which impact on vegetation management in catchments; to consider the role of waterways in vegetation restoration and new approaches to the use of vegetation for catchment protection. For further information contact Gerard Clark on (03) 9457 3024.

Thur 21 November, 8pm. "Discoveries among Boronias." A talk presented in the Botany group meeting of the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria. Marco Duretto from the National Herbarium will discuss his travels in search of rare and interesting boronias. Venue: FNCV headquarters, 1 Gardenia Street, Blackburn. Contact John Eichler (03) 9598 9492.

Thur 28 - Fri 29 November 1996 "Sustainability & Local Environments - Myths, models & milestones." Environs Australia, the local government environment network, proudly presents its second National Conference, held in Sydney. Explore the cutting edge of sustainability practice in local communities. Contribute to the development of achievable goals for the 21st Century. It follows on from 1994 Conference - Local Government Responds to Rio. It is about the people who are in the field and making substantial, real changes, and who are able to share their practical experience. Contact Peter Lyon, Executive Officer, Environs Australia, Ph (03) 9654 1322, fax (03)9654 1625 or E-mail mcavic@peg.apc.org.

Sat 30 November 1996. "Creating and managing wetlands." A bus tour presented by Greening Australia Victoria. The tour aims to provide participants with the opportunity to visit and assess the techniques applied in successful wetland restoration projects. For further information contact Gerard Clark on (03) 9457 3024.

Sat 19th & Sun 20th April 1997 - "The Eighth Biennial Friends Conference to be held at the Lord Somers Camp." The conference will have a 'wetland' theme. If the area you care for has a wetland, learn more about protecting and preserving it. If it doesn't, learn the value of a wetland and how it can be established. The program is to be developed by the Conference Committee. For more information or suggestions contact The Friends Network News, c/o VNPA, 10 Parliament Place, East Melbourne 3002.

30 November - 5 December 1997. "Conservation in production environments: Managing the matrix." A conference to be held in Taupo, New Zealand. There are more production environments than reserves. Integrating conservation with development is essential for sustainability. This conference is a continuation of the theme oriented workshops held in Western Australia and published in the Surrey Beatty & Sons Conservation Series as: Nature Conservation 1: the role of remnants of native vegetation through to Nature Conservation 4: The role of networks. Five full day sessions are planned with invited speakers and structured workshops. For conference details and registration forms

contact, Nature Conservation 5: Conservation in production environments: Managing the matrix, School of Environmental and Marine Sciences, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland, New Zealand. Facsimile: 64 9 373 7042, Telephone: 64 9 373 7599 ext 6825, email: sems@auckland.ac.nz

Excursions and Field Trips

Platypus Behind the Scenes Tours. Includes an illustrated talk on the unique platypus by Conservancy researchers. Learn about platypus research techniques & try your skills at spotting wild platypus. Tours run until October. Tours commence at 3 pm and lasts until 5:30. Cost: Adults \$6.50, Children \$4.00, Family (2 adults, 2 kids) \$17.00. Friends of the platypus members free. Bookings essential. Contact Australian Platypus Conservancy, PO Box 84, Whittlesea 3757, Ph (03) 9716 1626.

Sat Oct. 12 to Sat. Oct. 26, 11 am to 5 pm daily. "Wild Wings" Colourful paintings of beautiful Australian Birds by Janet Flinn. Olinda Art Gallery, 1 Parsons Lane, Olinda (Melways 66 J7). Ph. (03) 9751 1812.

Sun 20 October, "Greenlink Oakleigh Open Day." Activities include: planting activity as part of two guided tours, soup and fresh bread for lunch, stalls & displays. For more information contact group secretary Doug Evans (03) 9568 4090 (AH), or on (03) 9556 4433 (BH). The nursery is located at the southern end of the grounds of the senior campus of South Oakleigh Secondary College, Bakers Road, South Oakleigh (enter via the carpark nearest Centre Road).

Sat 26 & Sun 27 October, 11 am - 4 pm. Creek Carnival. Part of the Mullum Mullum Festival. For these 2 days in Spring the Hillcrest Reserve and surrounding bushland will be the site to enjoy the environment, music and sharing knowledge. Activities include guided bush walks, flora and fauna displays, food stalls, local & home made produce, tree climbing, kids activities & environmental workshops. Saturday will feature acoustic and folk sounds. Sunday enjoy five live and fresh bands. Venue: Hillcrest Reserve, Mitcham, Melways 48 K5. For a complete festival program, write to the Festival Coordinator, 58 McIntyre Rd, Park Orchards 3114. Or call Cameron Taylor (03) 9264 1752 pager, or Felicity Lang (03) 9870 0903.

Sat 27 October, Blue Devil Day - an environmental and arts festival to be held at Yarra Bend Park. The festival committee are hoping to get 3000 to 5000 on the day. Some of the planned events include: planting 1400 plants on the banks of the river, Nature walks led by Greg Muller, or follow the sign posted nature trail along the river, Discovery tent - fun and educational display on the environment, mobile farm courtesy of Bundoora Park Children's farm, Landcare and environmental displays, food and drinks, live music, arts workshop, photography & botanical illustrations exhibition, sculpture,

indigenous plant sales, children's art activities, and much more!!! Free entry, \$1.00 environmental levy per vehicle for parking. Access via Yarra Bend Rd, and the site is on the riverbank (opposite Studley Park Boathouse). We also need volunteers on the day to help set up marquees, supervise planting and other activities. For more information, or if you wish to offer your services, please call Ralph Nischwitz on (04) 9482 4185 AH or Anna Murphy (03) 650 4175.

Sat 27 October, 1pm. "Bus Tour to Grasslands at Bald Hill." Organised by the Friends of Merri Creek. Grasslands experts, Vanessa Craigie and James Ross have offered to lead us on a half-day bus tour to the grasslands at Mt Ridley or Bald Hill. This will be the first opportunity for Friends to look at this endangered grassland sites. Bookings are essential but be fast! Prices: \$5 adults, children free. The bus will leave from the MCMC office, 2 Lee Street, Brunswick at 1 pm. and return at 5 pm. For more information and bookings contact the Merri Creek Management Committee office (03) 9380 8199.

Wed 30 October, 8pm - 10pm. "Frogwatch - join with the Riverlands Conservation Society at Banyule Billabong." The Frogwatch program is a community action program which is intended to be a systematic survey of frogs, their habitats and the factors that affect their survival. The project involves people looking and listening for frogs and recording any observations. By studying frogs we can obtain a clearer picture on how healthy our land and water are. Also included is a training session on how to identify frog calls prior to the field work. Bring a torch and wear gumboots. Meet at the end of Somerset Drive, Heidelberg (Melways 32 F2). For bookings and enquiries contact the Yarra Valley Parklands Office on (03) 9846 4499.

Sat 1 November, 1pm. "Environment Day at Badger Weir Park." Free entry. Walk and talk with the Ranger, and meet the guest speakers. Bob Anderson from the Helmeted Honeyeaters Club will be speaking about the features and markings of the Helmeted Honeyeater and species. Alma Mitchell from the Bird Observers Club will talk about the birds that live in the park and their mating, calling and communication sounds. Ann Tindall from the Melbourne Orchid Club will introduce you to the variety of orchids which grow in the park and surrounding areas. The Ranger will be leading an interpretive talk about the birds, animals and plants that live in a rainforest such as Badger Weir Park. You will book for the event. For enquiries or bookings contact the Park Office on (059) 62 6228 or 015 53 6550.

Wed 6 November 8.30pm. "Frogwatch." Join the Doncaster and Templestowe Conservation Society to record frogs in wetlands at Candlebark Park. Meet in the carpark on the east side of the Fitzsimons Lane Bridge that crosses the Yarra River (Melways 21 G12). Bring a torch and wear gumboots. Contact Judy Zimmerman (03) 9850 4116. For more information and bookings contact the Yarra Valley Parklands Office on (03) 9846 4499.

Sun 10 November. Keilor Plains Society for Growing Australian Plants Spring Show. To be held at the

Brimbank Park Visitors Centre (Melways 14 H8). Plants for sale, information and books. Also guided walks on the native plant trail. For information contact Marilyn Anderson (03) 9336 7754.

Sun 10 November, from 10.30am. 'Land for Wildlife Neighbourhood Day' at Hatton Strathewen Property, Laanecoorie. In the morning we will explore a range of habitats and share experiences in restoration. Barbeque facilities and hot and cold drinks will be provided for lunch. Afternoon will include a short video on local orchids and other flora and an opportunity to discuss neighbourhood co-operation through a local network on biodiversity restoration. For directions or other queries please call LFW Robynn Bennison on (03) 9390 3623, or Don on (03) 9714 8613 in the evenings.

Wed 13 November, 8.30pm. "Frogwatch." Explore the wonderful wetland areas at Glynn's Rd, Warrandyte (Melways 22 K11). Bring a torch and wear gumboots. For more information and bookings contact the Yarra Valley Parklands Office on (03) 9846 4499.

Sat 16 November, 9.30 - 1pm. "Plains, Trains and Graveyards." A field trip presented by the Victorian Association for Environmental Education. The Werribee grasslands are home to some of Australia's most threatened creatures. See them in all their splendour! James Ross from the Victorian National Parks Association will lead participants to the Derrimut Grassland Reserve - home of the striped legless lizard, Trugania Cemetery for a peek at the button wrinklewort and the Manor Rail Reserve where the large-fruit groundsel awaits us. Grasslands once covered most of Victoria's Western volcanic plains. Today less than 0.2% remains. This is your chance to see not only the flora and fauna but also some history as well. Cost: \$18, VAAE members \$12, concession \$15. For bookings or information contact David Pace (03) 9285 9355.

Sat 16 November. "Stagwatch in Victoria's Central Highlands." Join the Fauna Survey Group of the Victorian Field Naturalists Club to stagwatch and spotlight for Leadbeater's Possum. Contact Ray Gibson (03) 9874 4408 AH.

Sun 17 November, 10 am. "Bike Ride to Central Creek Grasslands." Meet car park, Lake Grove Coburg. Organised by the Friends of Merri Creek. Repeating the success of last year's bike ride, Vanessa Craigie and Kat Pawley will lead a bike ride from Coburg Lake, alongside the Merri Creek, to see the wildflowers at Central Creek Grasslands. You'll be amazed at this endangered grasslands community still surviving in the suburbs. The ride which is undulating and about 20 km altogether, will return to the car park about 1pm. For more information contact the Merri Creek Management Committee office (03) 9380 8199.

Sun 17 November 2pm. "Wildflower Walk" organised by the Friends of the Evans Street Grassland, Sunbury. For more information contact Veronica Burgess on (03) 9744 4669.

Mon 18 November, 8pm. Native Plant Auction. Held by the Society for Growing Australian Plants - Victoria. May be held either in the Conference Room, Astronomer's Residence or in the National Herbarium Hall, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Avenue,

South Yarra. For exact venue details contact Enid Bowman on (03) 9882 5297 closer to the date.

Restoration Activities

Sat 26 October, 10am. Spring Planting Festival at Warramben Farm, via Rokewood (Vic rds 76) Planting tubestock. For further information contact Sarah or Richard at Greening Australia Victoria on (03) 9457 3024 or the Festival Hotline number on 1800 806 555.

Sun 27 October, 4pm. It's Twilight Time. A sociable planting and BBQ organised by the Friends of Warrandyte State Park. These long spring evenings are a perfect time for a barbeque and what better setting than Stane Brae. This secluded area of Warrandyte State Park is not often visited, but it offers so much - mighty Manna gums, koalas and of course the river. Before dinner there will be a few boxes of grasses to plant out first. As dusk descends we will scan the skies for bats and other silent creatures of the night. Just bring along food and drink for the barbeque and a chair to sit on. Meet at Stan Brae. Enter through the gate at the end of Stan Brae Crt and meet at the end of the track, Melway ref. map 24 C9) For further information contact Mike Coupar (03) 9903 9567, or Ron Taylor (03) 9844 4285.

Thu 31 October, 1.30 pm. Seed Bagging on The Common - Friends of Warrandyte State Park. Many of our seeds from the Pea family are released explosively and we are not there to catch them! So before they are ready we will be putting stockings over the seeds we want to collect. Meet at Haslams Track the first car park on the left (Melways ref. map 36 A4). Contact Pat Coupar (03) 9903 9567.

Regular Restoration Activities

1st Saturday of the month:

Green Link Box Hill - 10am. Also every Monday and Tuesday morning. 41 Wimmera St, Box Hill North. Contact Minette Russell-Young (03) 9898 1364.

FO Gellibrand Hill State Park - 9.45am. Mark Corr (03) 9557 2783

Loughies Bushland - Nth Ringwood 9.30 am. Meet cnr Kubis & Werac Drv. Carole Clarke (03) 9870 8126.

1st Sunday of the month:

FO Evans Street Grasslands - 9.30am. Helen Graesser (03) 9744 4097 (Mel 113 B10)

FO Fourth Hill - 10 am to 12 noon. Meeting place varies. Dave V. Bockel (03) 9844 2659.

Heathmont Bushlinks - works in 5 different areas 10 am - 1 pm. Roger Lord (03) 9870 5262.

Greenlink Oakleigh - 10am to 1pm, holds working bees every Sun (except on long weekends) at the nursery - southern end of South Oakleigh Secondary College, Bakers Rd. Doug Evans (03) 9579 4686 AH, (03) 9556 4433 BH.

Riverlands Conservation Society: Yarra Flats Park - 10 am (between May & Nov). Contact Yarra Valley Parklands (03) 9846 4499.

2nd Saturday of the month:

FO Timber Reserve - 2 - 3pm. Brian Phefley (03) 9844 2659 (Mel 35 G3)

FO French Island - Goeff Lacey (03) 9578 2873 or Francis Garner (03) 9783 4213

Tereddan Drive Reserve, Kilsythe - Graham Lorimer (03) 97285841.

2nd Sunday of the month:

Greenlink Camberwell - 3pm. Diana Burgess (03) 9809 2092 (Mel 60 E7)

URAGE - 1 to 3 pm. Bradley Curtis Ph (03) 9754 5640. Upwey, Cnr Morris Rd & Deans Rd. (Mel 74 K12)

Friends of the Yarra - 10am. Also Wednesdays. Judy Rutherford (03) 9347 2252 (Mel 2D D7)

FO Plenty River - 10am to noon. Alice & Kevin Ley (03) 9435 3840. (Various sites)

FO Yandell Reserve - Graeme Paterson (03) 9432 0163. (Mel 21 B1)

3rd Saturday of the month:

FO Bradshaw Park - 10am (9am in Nov & Dec). Dave Bainbridge (03) 9580 5992 (Mel 87 E10)

3rd Sunday of the month:

Men of the Trees - 10am. Planting at Yarra Bend Park. Minette Russell-Young (03) 9898 1364 (Mel 2D D6)

Meander (Menzies Creek & Emerald Tourist track) - 10am. Kate Forster (059) 685 828 (Mel 125 F12)

Brunswick Tree Group - 10am. Eric Ward (03) 9388 2123

FO One Tree Hill - Diane Silveri (03) 9710 1331

FO Wilson Reserve - 10am. Robert Bender (03) 9499 2413. (Mel 31 G10)

Osborne Peninsula Landcare - Margaret Dimech (03) 9844 3812 (Mel 23 J9)

FO Pigeon Bank Creek - 2pm. Linda Bromilow (03) 9844 2541 (Mel 23 J6)

Warrigal Conservation Society - 10am. Karen (03) 9458 4152. (Various sites around Banyule Flats)

FO Tindals Wildflower Reserve - 11am. Kim Docwra (03) 9876 3807 (Mel 35 A3)

Last Saturday of the month:

FO Sherbrooke Forest - 2pm (1pm in Winter). Vivien Freshwater (03) 9754 3093

FO Koolunga Bushland Reserve - 10am to noon. Gordon Carter (03) 9762 2117

FO Organ Pipes National Park - 10am. Carl Rayner (03) 9331 2810.

FO Valley Reserve, Glen Waverley - 1.30 to 4pm. Con-

tact Alf Salkin (03) 9802 6213.

Last Sunday of the month:

Friends of Royal Park West - 10am. Mick Arundell (03) 9380 8075 (Mel 29 C12)

FO the Helmeted Honeyeater - 11am. Nursery activities - Healesville. Jeff Dickinson (03) 9568 2768.

FO Pecks Dam, Montmorency - 10am. Trina (03) 9439 9642 (Mel 21 G7)

FO St Helena Bushland Reserve - 10.30 am. Lawrie Rigg (03) 9434 6685.

Week day activities:

Wurundjeri Garden - 1st Tuesday of the month from 10am to 12pm. Dorothy Sutherland (03) 9818 4706 (Mel 45 A11)

FO the Koornong - first Wednesday of the month at 10am. Cathy Willis (03) 9844 1841.

FO Sherbrooke Forest - 2nd Wednesdays, 9.30 am. Vivien Freshwater (03) 9754 3093.

Fred Rogers Reserve - Heathmont 12 am - 2 pm. Gwen Elliot (03) 9879 1427

FO the Koalas inc - Koala counts are held at the Koala Conservation Centre, Phillip Island, every 2nd Tuesday of the month. Contact (059) 522 407.

FO Stane Brae - second Wednesdays 10am. Ron Taylor (03) 9844 4285.

FO Warrandyte State Park nursery activities - every Thursday at 10am. Afternoon activities: walk, flora fauna park skills. Mike Coupar (03) 9844 1650.

For Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers activities, contact ATCV: (053) 33 1483

For Melbourne Parks & Waterways Parks Activities Program contact the Hotline on 13 1963.

For those interested in a range of volunteer activities run by the Royal Australasian Ornithologist Union please phone Michael Fendley at RAOU on (03) 9882 2622.

Visitors/participants are welcome to all events listed in Indigenotes.

Thank you to all the people who contact us regarding on-coming events their groups are organising. If you wish to have your events covered, or you can see corrections that need attention, please contact Elissa Kerassitis BH (03) 9457 3024 or through IFFA's mailing address.

Continued on next page...

Books and Resources:

Useful readings for off-park nature conservation

Bennett AF (1990). *Habitat Corridors - Their Role in Wildlife Management and Conservation*. Victorian Department of Conservation and Environment and Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research.

Breckwoldt, R. (1990). *Living Corridors*. Greening Australia Ltd, Canberra.

Buchanan, R. (1989). *Bush Regeneration*. TAFE Student Learning Publications, Sydney.

Cremer, K.W. *et al* (1990). *Trees for Rural Australia*. Inkata Press.

Cunningham, G.M. *et al* (1989). *Plants of Western New South Wales*. Soil Conservation Services of New South Wales, Sydney.

Davidson, R. & S. (1992). *Bushland on Farms, Do We have a Choice?* AGPS, Canberra.

Dorricott, K. & Roberts, B. (1993) *Conservation on Planned Properties*. USQ, Toowoomba.

Johnston, P.J.M. & Don, A. (1991) *Grow your own Wildlife*. Greening Australia Ltd, Canberra.

Hussey, B., Hobbs, R.J. & Saunders, D.A. (eds) (1989). *Guidelines for Bush Corridors*. Surrey Beatty & Sons, Chipping Norton.

Saunders, D.A., Hobbs, R.J. & Ehrlich, P. (eds) (1993). *Repairing a Damaged World*. Surrey Beatty & Sons, Chipping Norton.

Saunders, D.A. *et al* (in press). *Nature Conservation: The Role of Networks*. Surrey Beatty & Sons, Chipping Norton.

From Bushlines Newsletter No.8, September, 1996

Free copies of BUSH

Earlier this year, the Australian Nature Conservation Agency contributed to the second issue of Australian Farm Journal's BUSH. This magazine provides details of the innovative projects which won the 1996 National Landcare Australia awards, a state by state of property management planning, and case studies of successful sustainable farm practices.

Copies of the magazine can be obtained free of charge from the Community Landcare Conservation Unit on 1800 671 717.

From Bushlines Newsletter No.8, September, 1996

Stop Press:

Aquaculture... What's the Catch?

Sunday October 27, 1996

10am - 4.15pm

Port Melbourne Community Centre
Cnr Liardet & Nott St, Port Melbourne
Melways Map 2J E4

A community information forum concerning the potential issues, proposals and processes associated with proposed aquaculture developments for the State. Speakers from VNPA, DNRE, EPA and Marine & Coastal Community Network.

Understanding Our Native Grasslands

Wednesday 13 November

9.30am - 4pm

Warramben Landcare Centre

An introduction to Western District Grasslands including ecology and values of native grassland, identification of grassland species and management on private and public land.

Register with Claire Dennis, Greening Australia Victoria by 8/11/96 on (052) 362 399 business or after hours.

Grasslands of the Golden Plains- A Bus Tour

Saturday 16 November

9.30am - 5.30pm

Meet at Warramben Landcare Centre - bus leaves at 10am sharp.

A bus tour of native grassland sites in the Golden Plains Shire with opportunities for plant ID and discussion at each site.

Register with Claire Dennis, Greening Australia Victoria by 13/11/96 on (052) 362 399 business or after hours.

IFFA on the World Wide Web

IFFA is on the World Wide Web. The site resides on the Vicnet server, an initiative of the Victorian Government and RMIT, an Internet resource available for community access. Although a pre-release version of IFFA's material has been available since August last year, the site has only recently been developed sufficiently for open public access.

Amongst the features available are:
a sample issue of INDIGENOTES
general information about IFFA
membership details
contact information for IFFA office bearers
a list of indigenous nurseries for the Melbourne Region (sourced from the INN pamphlets of 1994)
information about Point Lillias with links to RAMSAR sites

Although the site has not been publicised, quite a few people have come across it and responded by email. Most of these people have been those who have found their nurseries on the site and have offered feedback/corrections to their information.

To allay the fears of those who do not have access to the Internet, the IFFA Web site is not intended to replace any of our current functions. Rather, it is aimed at improving our ability to disseminate information, and to open up more opportunities for IFFA and its members to contact those with similar interests, whether in Australia or overseas.

One initiative we would like to build on, is the list of indigenous nurseries, which is classified by area and bio-region. To do this we would like to obtain updated information on indigenous nurseries. At the moment we have Melbourne nurseries on line. That information needs to be updated and improved. We would also like to include information on nurseries in country Victoria and elsewhere in Australia.

To this end, IFFA will contact as many indigenous nurseries in Victoria as possible, to obtain up-to-date information. Nurseries that are IFFA members are also offered the opportunity to have their own home page linked to the general list. This home page would contain information describing their region of operation, general stocklist, summary of plants available, contact information and so on. At present, text is reasonably easy to incorporate if sent in. Diagrams are a little more difficult - the job is much easier if location maps, logos etc are sent in as digitised images.

Summary information gathered during the next few months will be used to construct a new set of pamphlets similar to those released by the Indig-

enous Nurseries Network. These were very successful, and always walked out the door at displays. Nurseries are welcome to contact me by email or mail if they wish to update their current information (especially if they know their info has changed from the INN pamphlets).

Another initiative is the inclusion of past issues of INDIGENOTES. This will proceed as issues can be marked up for the HTML language that the WWW uses. How this will be done has not yet been decided. Short-term articles may be omitted and the more general articles included. All will be accessed in an index with links allowing people to find information by subject.

We encourage you to have a look at the site and offer feedback. Any help regarding the organisation of the pages on the web would be appreciated. Remember that IFFA is not government funded, nor do we have any grants to create Internet magic. Despite this, I reckon the IFFA pages are not too bad.

The URL is:

<http://www.vicnet.net.au/~iffa/welcome.htm>

Enjoy!

Roger Jones
106 Patterson St
Bonbeach 3197
roger.jones@dar.csiro.au

Nursery information required:

Short list: Name, Address, Telephone (inc. fax & email if available), Personal Contact (optional)

Longer list: As above, Region of operation, Major Bioregions serviced (eg. Tertiary basalt, Older sediments, wetlands), Sales type (eg. retail, wholesale, advanced stock), Species (number, major species types), Price range (eg. wholesale p.r., retail p.r.), Hours of opening. Images - location map, logo (Preferably on disk, we can't promise to scan images promptly)

Each nursery page will be about the size of a full screen on a typical Web browser, so keep your information concise. Participating nurseries are expected to obey the normal rules of seed collecting, are expected to maintain correct provenance, and if not wholly indigenous, avoid the sale of environmental weeds, undoing all your good work in providing indigenous plants in the first place.

IFFA activities:

IFFA (Vic)

Sorry, there's no meeting for October but we really need your attendance and involvement at our November Meeting:

IFFA

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday

November 26, 1996

7:30 PM

Astronomer's Residence

at the Botanic Gardens, South Yarra
(Melways 44 A12).

Please come along to review last year, make some plans for next year and volunteer to be on the committee or get involved.

Committee meeting:

The Committee meeting is now the second Monday of every month.

SPIFFA

Public meetings are on the first Monday of every month at 7:30 pm at the Waterfall Gully Community Centre, corner of Bayview Rd. and Nixon St., Rosebud.

Contact Jon Greening (059) 855561.

Membership

IFFA membership costs
\$40 for non-profit organizations,
\$50 for corporations,
\$25 for individuals and families,
or \$20 concession.

Membership includes
11 issues of *Indigenotes* per year.

*Memberships should be sent to the
Membership Secretary.*

*Include your name,
address and phone numbers,
and a bit about yourself.*

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Elissa Kerassitis (03) 9379 1116 (ah).

Contributions to *Indigenotes* should be sent to the editors — the deadline for the next issue will be November 9th. Contributions can be typed or hand written but computer disk copies on IBM-compatible format is preferred.

The views expressed in Indigenotes are not necessarily those of the Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association.