

Blackburn Bushland News



Painting by Margaret Dacy

Wandinong Sanctuary

October 2009 – March 2010

A Word from Wandinong Sanctuary

In 2009 Wandinong has continued its regular program of weeding and general maintenance of the sanctuary. Besides the usual working bees and regular meetings of the Advisory Committee a special working bee on Saturday 18 April called on the wider community of friends and neighbours to held to clear away weeds. The planting day was held on 20 June to give grasses and native shrubs a chance to get started during the wetter months. This has been done bearing in mind the guidelines set forth in Bushland Vegetation Action Plan. For those interested in contributing, regular working bees for the remainder of 2009 are to be held on Saturday 19 September, 17 October and 21 November. Further special working bees drawing on wider community support are planned for 2010, at 2 pm on the third Saturday of each month to carry out various tasks, according to the season. Everybody is welcome.

A reminder that Wandinong will host
Christmas Carols in the sanctuary on December 18 (6- 8pm)

12noon, June 21st, Winter Solstice, 2009. International Year of Astronomy.

What better time to officially introduce the local community to the new Analemmatic Sunclock at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary?

And the sun even shone briefly to show how it works!

The sunclock, a joint project of the Whitehorse City Council and Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee, is situated next to the playground area in Central Rd, and has already proven to be quite a point of interest and intrigue to the many visitors to the sanctuary.



The analemma is the pattern that the sun makes in the sky when observed at the same time of the day, each day, throughout the year. This style of sunclock uses a person's body as the gnomon to cast a shadow onto the hour markers, and the positions of these have been calculated especially for our latitude and longitude. The person moves throughout the year, following a corresponding

analemmatic pattern marked out on the ground.

So whether you want to just sit on the beautiful local-stone wall and watch your children at play, ponder the heavenly intricacies of the seasons, sunrise and sunset, or delve into the fascinating mathematics of the Equation of Time, Blackburn Lake Sanctuary is definitely the place to be for some quality "time out"! For more information, pick up a brochure next time you visit, or check out our website <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~blsac>

Middleborough Road entrance to the Creeklands.

If you have entered or exited the Blackburn Creeklands at Middleborough Road recently you will have noticed big changes. After consultation with the Creeklands advisory committee, Parkswide staff and school-crossing supervisor, Council has completed some necessary engineering works and re-alignment of the entrance. The entrance and path are now much safer as they have been designed to slow both pedestrian and bike traffic entering and leaving the park. Planting and a gravel path upgrade has also taken place and will complement the revegetation works that the committee has been undertaking for the last couple of years in this very busy, highly visual area. The hardy mat rush *Lomandra* has been planted along the edge of the path to protect other plants. It is all a great improvement on what was originally one of the less attractive corners of the park.

We are always planning but not always planting.

Our Bushland Parks rarely plant now after late July due to the changed weather patterns and the lack of rainfall. So at this time of the year a lot of "head scratching" occurs as we work on our maintenance programs as well as forward planning for the 2010 autumn planting season. It is not an easy task to decide where and what to plant. There are many pockets of replanting needed. After areas have been revegetated, constant weeding is an absolute must, until such time as the new plants grow and spread enough to block out the weeds. In the Creeklands and the Sanctuary this is an arduous task as these parks are so big.

In the Creeklands alone this year, eight areas were returned to for fill-in planting with much of the maintenance being carried out on Monday mornings by the dedicated **Monday maintenance group**.

And at Blackburn Lake, the **Tuesday Weeders** continue to keep our best bushland areas as weed-free as possible. If you are keen to learn about working in the bushland & are willing to meet & work with a great group of people, you should consider joining one of these dedicated and knowledgeable groups.

Regular are held on Saturdays at the Sanctuary & the dates are always on the notice board, in this newsletter calendar & on the Sanctuary entrance posts.

Over the last 2 years the area between Central Road & Melaleuca Walk has been extensively cleared of weeds & new indigenous plants, provided through WCCIP (the Indigenous plant project at Whitehorse) planted by various school groups & volunteers. When next you walk down that area, take a note of the lush growth of grasses & young plants that are now making this a beautiful bushland area.



Remember, the Bushland needs YOU!

New committees appointed

Earlier this year council called for nominations from interested people to serve on each of its advisory committees.

The Creeklands committee had the good fortune to have three new appointments: Andrea Ballinger, Jim Lambert and Jen Rutherford. Blackburn Lake also gained two new members, Denise and Mark. We welcome their fresh approach and enthusiasm and hope they find their involvement with the Creeklands, Blackburn Lake, and their committees long and fruitful.

Bird list expanding!

Like other bushland areas in the City of Whitehorse, we are seeing more Yellow-tailed Black cockatoos, King Parrots and Corellas as regular visitors in the park. The cockatoos particularly like to rip open the bark of the older Black wattles (*Acacia mearnsii*) searching for grubs. We assume they are likely to be "refugees" from areas devastated by bushfires earlier in the year. Our old friends the Tawny frogmouths should be starting to build their flimsy nests soon. Recently walking through the Creeklands, fifteen tawnies were counted.



Photo by Peter Newton. Tawny frogmouth parents with young in the Creeklands, late 2008

Some of the more unusual sightings at Blackburn Lake recently have been a Buff-banded Rail, Button Quail, Fantailed Cuckoo and an Oriole.

At our recent bi-annual bird census we counted 36 species. We saw none of the above that morning, but did notice the lack of water birds in the very turbid water. We will be keeping a close watch out for any Red-eared Slider

Turtles as the weather warms up. Please don't forget to report any sightings of these to DSE Service centre on 136 186

We continue to monitor the quality of the lake water on the 1st Sunday of each month. You are most welcome to stop by and helps us search for waterbugs.

Main Street pedestrian crossing

Earlier this year after much planning and consultation, a long awaited pedestrian crossing was completed at Main Street adjacent to Furness Park. The council has placed a wide median strip in the centre of Main street, which will not only encourage cars to slow down as they pass through the park but also make crossing the busy road safer. Feedback from park users has been very enthusiastic and we hope it will encourage even more to try walking or jogging through our beautiful park.



The Margaret Dacy Exhibition

Sunday 11th October, 2-4pm

Margaret Dacy was a dedicated and enthusiastic botanist, artist, photographer, wife and mother, jam maker, dressmaker and a teacher, just to name a few.

She was a great lover of nature and travelled extensively in Australia and overseas to explore the environment and captured it in many wonderful photographs, sketches, paintings and an extensive Herbarium collection.

She was born in Birchip 95 years ago, educated in Ballarat and then graduated from the University of Melbourne. She raised her family in Box Hill and she was a committed botanist.

Margaret Dacy published a beautiful book on 'Victorian Orchids in Habitat' which her family has kindly donated to Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. Copies are available at the Visitors Centre.

On Sunday 11th October, come and see the 'Margaret Dacy Wildflower Exhibition' where her daughter Frances will be opening the exhibition and speaking about her mother's fascinating life. Exhibition will be displayed for 3 weeks.

All welcome between 2 pm and 4 pm.

Other Passionate people!

As many of you know, the **Education program** at the Sanctuary has been an important part of the area for over 20 years. Carolyn Edwards, our new Education officer, is busy running programs for school & adult groups. She can only do this with the aid of our volunteers. Carolyn is running **training sessions** for interested people who would like to assist in the program & would be very keen to hear from anyone who thinks they would like to be involved. No qualifications are required, just a love of the environment, and a desire to share this with others. For more information, contact Carolyn on Mon, Tues or Wed on 9262 6222 or email her at Carolyn.Edwards@whitehorse.vic.gov.au

A green alternative to the gym!

Carry buckets of water and give our plants a good start! Some of the Creeklands committee have decided on this alternative to a gym membership, and it is definitely cheaper, fresher and more productive!!

Water is so necessary to keep recent plantings in all our parks going through the harsh summers that seem to be getting drier all the time. So often it seems that plants have died but it is sheer joy when the hard work pays off and they start to sprout new shoots and regain their vigour. It makes it even more worthwhile to see the little birds such as thornbills, spinebills and pardalotes returning, appreciative of some extra protection in developing thickets from the larger birds such as the pesky Noisy miners.





.....Events for 2009 - 2010

All Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee Meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of every month, at 7.30pm,

Interested park users are warmly invited to attend any of our meetings and events below.

Month			Blackburn Lake Sanctuary	
Sept	Friday	18	On the prowl for Possums & other night critters!	6.30 -8.30pm Meet at V.C. Bring a torch & red cellophane
October	Saturday	3	Working bee each Saturday in October We'd love to see you!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Saturday	10	Working bee each Saturday in October It's great to have your help. Thank you!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Sunday	11	<i>Wildflower Art Exhibition</i> <i>A tribute to a wonderfully passionate lady, Mrs Margaret Dacy</i>	2 - 4 pm at the Visitor Centre Everyone welcome.
	Saturday	17	Working bee each Saturday in October Still more work to be done!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Sunday	18	Whitehorse Spring Festival	10am-4pm at Civic Centre
	Saturday	24	Working bee each Saturday in October Wow! It's looking Great! Let's keep it going!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
	Sunday	25	It's Bird Week! More Kids fun & games with the Sticky Beaks & BOCA <i>Margaret Dacy Exhibition still on display for those who missed it last week.</i>	2 - 4 pm at the Visitor Centre Everyone welcome! Children, please bring mum, dad or gran along, they'll have fun too!
	Saturday	31	Working bee! Last one for October! Terrific work! Well done everyone!	10 - noon Everyone Welcome Meet at the Visitor Centre
November	Thursday	12	Twilight Working Bee & Bar-b-que Thanks for your help! Now celebrate!	6-8 pm at the Visitor Centre Everyone Welcome
	Sunday	15	Snake Safety and Identification of Vics most common & venomous species, with the incredible Fred Rossignoli! Pythons for cuddling if you wish!	2 - 4 pm at the Visitor Centre Please note, no late entry to this session, for safety reasons. Gold Coin donation /person required please
	Sunday	22	Basket Weaving Workshop, which had to be cancelled last time due to unforeseen circumstances, will be held this month	2 - 4 pm at the Visitor Centre Some materials costs may be involved so please come prepared!
December	Recess		Visitor Centre closed over the Christmas / New year period	Please still come and enjoy the Sanctuary!
January			Children's School Holiday Activities	Check website for details
February	Sunday	21	Yarra River Keepers. Come & meet the Crusaders of our waterways!	2 - 4 pm at the Visitor Centre Everyone welcome!
March	Sunday	7	Clean Up Australia day Come & make a Difference!	10am - 12 noon.

Visit our website for more information: <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~blsac>

City of Whitehorse: All enquiries or reports: Ring 9262 6333, bus & AH.

Help for Wildlife: ring 0417 380 687, RSPCA: 9224 2222

EPA Pollution Hotline: 9695 2777 or 1800 444 004 (both 24hrs)

For information or enquiries about Blackburn Lake Sanctuary,

or to contact a Committee member, please ring Secretary on 9878 6829





Blackburn Creeklands Advisory Committee Activities Calendar Dates for October 2009- March 2010

Committee Meetings are held at 8pm on the
4th Tuesday of each month at the
Blackburn Bowls Club, Pakenham St, Blackburn.
Visitors welcome!

Working Bees: These dates and times are sometimes subject to change. Close to the date please check the noticeboard and notices through the park for location, and to confirm details, or ring Philip.

October	Sunday	11	Working Bee From 9.00am onwards
	Tuesday	27	Monthly Meeting
November	Tuesday	24	Monthly Meeting
December			No meeting this month
January	Tuesday	19	Monthly Meeting <small>Date change due to Australia Day public holiday</small>
February	Tuesday	23	Monthly Meeting
March	Sunday	07	Clean Up Australia Day Meet at Scout Hall Pakenham Street 9.00 am
March	Tuesday	23	Monthly Meeting



For all Creeklands enquiries ring Philip Brentnall on 9877 5445

Bungalook Nursery at 63 Fulton Rd, is a great place to buy local provenance plants for your garden, and advice about what to grow where. Volunteers at the Nursery have been very busy throughout the year propagating plants from seed collected locally last summer.

Open:

Friday mornings 9.30 -12.30 & 4th Sunday of every month – 10am – 1pm.
