

Friends of Brisbane Ranges

Incorporated

Reg. No. A0032647M ABN 30 120 139 564

President
Colin Cook; Colin.Cook@dpi.vic.gov.au

Newsletter; pbox@parks.vic.gov.au

September
2005



*Grevillea
steiglitziana*

Next Meeting

Sunday 11th September

Meet at;

Anakie Community Depot
(Ex Parks Vic Depot)

Activities;

Wildflower Show/Open day.
There will also be displays by other
Environmental groups. Anyone interested
in helping in the setting up can contact
Judy Locke on Mob. 0427 218 520.

What to bring;

All the usuals of course, enthusiasm, a
sense of humour, gloves and a chocolate
cake for the editor plus, (and this is a big
plus) all your friends. Tell as many people
as possible, remember the success of the
day is in your hands.

Next Month

Activity for October;

The long anticipated visit by Leon
Costermans. As you all will be aware
Leon will be presenting an interesting look
at the relationship between the geology of
an area and the flora you would expect to
find there. The day will consist of a
presentation at the Anakie Community
Depot followed by a bus trip for the "hands
on" part of the day. Morning and afternoon
tea will be supplied, but it is strictly BYO
lunch. **If you have not already booked a
seat please do so by the 9th September
or you will miss out, seats are limited.**
To book your seat contact Peter Box on 53
660 055 or E-Mail pbox@parks.vic.gov.au.

Upcoming Events

13th November;

Velvet Daisy Bush protection works.
Details to follow in next newsletter.

11th December;

Christmas break-up.
Ok, Ok, I know it is months away but next
thing you know we will be sitting down for
Christmas lunch, so keep it in mind and the
date free.

August Meeting

Well there we were, all standing around perusing the sad state of the once
much loved Anakie Depot, did I see a tear in the eye of some or was it in
mine? What to do? Where to start? Which way to turn? Where to from
here? Decisions, decisions!

Yes life is full of decisions, some good, some bad and some we just cannot
seem to make any sense of. Ok enough of that, otherwise we will be here
all day and nothing will get done.

The task – to return the now some what destitute Anakie Community Depot
back to some semblance of its once glorious past.

The other task – to put in place a plan for the upcoming wildflower
show/open day.

Now came the hard part, make a decision, yes that's right, a decision
needed to be made, **who** was going to be responsible for making the
decisions? What? Hang on a minute, did you say responsible? Don't we
have something to do with a Government Agency? Shouldn't we form a
committee or refer it to a consultant or something? Surely we can't just go
ahead and make decision of this magnitude on our own! Well ladies and
gentlemen we have broken all the rules, yes that's right, we as a group
made a decision and got on with the task at hand without any referrals or
assistance from outside or even a white board.

The outcome, well when you next visit the Anakie Community Depot it is
plain to see that an enthusiastic and committed group of people can make a
difference with no help from committees or consultants.

Now that's all well and good but what did they actually do you may ask. Ok
now let's see, there was raking, sweeping, dusting, pruning and the tidying
up and emptying of areas in preparation for the wildflower show. Even Chris
Worrall took the bull by the horns, well actually a brush cutter, and
proceeded to bring the surrounding grass areas back to some level of
respectability. All in all the entire depot was much better for the attention.

So what about the other task? No we didn't form a committee but we did
have a meeting to discuss and plan the big event and in true democratic
form the group as a whole suggested and agreed on a plan of
attack.



The Anakie Depot in its heyday

Beautiful rains make slippery tracks and dirty cars, but most importantly help our emerging wildflowers.

Things to lookout for.

After the Fuel Reduction Burns along Reid’s road last fire season the *Xanthorrhoea*’s are just starting to show signs of sending up flower spikes. This area will be well worth a visit within the next couple of months as the hundreds if not thousands of *Xanthorrhoea* flowers emerge.

Following the Butchers Rd wildfire in March 2000 (torched car) I spent a couple of hours at that site during early evening as well as during the daylight hours and was amazed, astounded and flabbergasted at what fed on these flowering scented spikes both day and night.

A good FoBR excursion in early October.

Many months later after a fire, you may find some of the old flower spikes have been ripped apart by cockies. You may wonder what the attraction is, perhaps the seed or maybe insect larvae.

There are various insects that call *Xanthorrhoea* their home at some stage in their life cycle.

Dissecting a grasstree spike down the middle (when it is completely finished) displays an amazing array of tunnels, excavations and preloved sawdust. The culprits include the larva of *Comodica acontistes* and *Hylaletis latro* as well as carpenter bees *Xylocopa lestes* (these are large robust hairy bees, black or metallic blue or green in colour).

The bees excavate their nesting chambers not only in *Xanthorrhoea* but dead wood and reeds. The bees start their excavations at the top of the *Xanthorrhoea* and burrow downward using fragments of pith and saliva. As the bee separates its tunnel into cells, it leaves a ball of pollen and an egg. When the larva hatches it lives on this “Bee Bread” and eventually pupates without the need for a cocoon.

Something to consider.

Does the cocky eat the seed or does it feed on different pupas?

Does the bee mentioned start at the top for a specific reason. Gravity?

What is the scientific name for the sawdust?



Back to School;

Both Chris and myself have been nominated and accepted to attend a four day course in the finer points of being a Supply/Facilities Officer at fires. This is just one of many fire related courses available to both Park staff and staff from DPI and DSE. Each financial year staff are nominated for such courses depending on their experience and the need to fill these roles. The need for accredited personnel in these roles is determined by DSE under the Standards of Cover for each region. The standards of cover relates to the number of personnel required for each specific fire role as well as the number and type of vehicles and equipment required in each region.

So what does this mean, well unfortunately it has come at a bad time as we will be away during the week leading up to the Wildflower Show. I am sure Judy will do a fine job in our absence, but you could always give her a ring and offer some assistance if required.

Another one joins the fold;

The backbone of the organisation, our Judy has been successful in gaining a positive outcome with her competency assessment. What does this mean? It means Judy is now remunerated in line with the outstanding and dedicated work she does for not only the Moorabool Park Management area but the You Yang’s as well. It also means Judy’s role has changed to BSO/Ranger, yes ranger which means she can now leave the office and enjoy some of the areas we manage. Congratulations Judy.

Brain Busters;

- Who is the RIC for Moorabool?
- What is RIC short for?
- Who is the FOBR secretary?
- What is next month’s activity?
- What is the correct spelling of fitofra?
- How many hectares are in the BRNP? (approx)
- What is the Parks Vic Info. phone number?
- How many plant species can be found in the Brisbane Ranges?
- What year was gold found in the Anakie hills?

Bonus question; Who wrote the article on grass trees?

Bring your answers along to the next activity day, you never know there may be some sort of recognition for the most correct answers.

Well that’s it for another edition of a highly riveting and informative newsletter. Stay tuned for further editions as the months fly by. Ok so how many people noticed? Noticed what some may ask, well I will leave that up to you to ponder.

If you have any articles of interest please feel free to forward them on to be included in forthcoming issues. Remember this is the “Friends” newsletter and is open to all for contributions.

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

LEON COSTERMANS is visiting the “Friends Group” for the October activity and giving an insight into the relationship between the geology and flora of different areas. If you wish to be part of this activity you must book a seat by the 9th September 05. Part of the day involves a field trip by bus so seats are limited. (see next months activity on page one)