



The Greater  
Dandenong  
Environment  
Group Inc.

November 2000

Well, another busy month for us. The Spring Planting festival was a bit of a non-event. They sent us the publicity material a week before it was on. The fine weather that we ordered didn't come so it was windy and raining. Still, we managed to plant 30 of our larger trees and put stakes and guards around them, which is always a time consuming activity, so we achieved our purpose and got some trees in the ground.

A recent article in "Wild" magazine quoted a newspaper report stating that between 1997 and 1999 80 million trees were cleared in Queensland per year. It makes our efforts look rather small. The Queensland government introduced legislation to control land clearing but failed to enact it due to a tiff over compensation with the federal government. This enabled the farmers who should know better after the experiences of their compatriots down south with salinity to indulge in panic clearing.

Although we can't start feeling superior - we need only look at the current projects in our district. The United Nations Greenhouse Office says that we need to reduce greenhouse emissions to one third of current levels just to stabilise atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> at twice its usual level. The Federal government has signed the Kyoto Agreement limiting our increase in greenhouse emissions to 8.5% while our State government is proposing to fast-track planning regulations to build the Scoresby Freeway, which will increase greenhouse emissions by an estimated 18%. Despite the efforts to cure the hole in the ozone layer, this year has seen the biggest hole ever. The greenhouse problem will be a harder one to fix.

There are some signs of change on the horizon. The Environment Minister in the UK attributed the recent floods that have ravaged the country to the greenhouse effect and last week their Prime Minister's chief environmental adviser accused him of breaking his electoral promises on green issues. Perhaps that will catch on here.

The Australian Conservation Foundation's report, Natural Advantage: A Blueprint for a Sustainable Future, was launched this month by Sir William Dean, our Governor-General. In his speech he said: "We, as the custodians of our continent, owe a duty to our community, to our environment, to the world and to the future to achieve a sustainable Australia. To the extent that we fail to discharge that duty, we risk being justly condemned by future generations as vandals of our own time and despoilers of theirs." It's a shame he's not running the country.

A couple of us have been working at the new Earth Sanctuary at Little River. Most of the work entailed weeding with mattocks but we did start a bird list. The site is 1200 hectares. Eventually there will be tourist and backpackers accommodation. The 40 room bluestone house on the site will be renovated to provide VIP-standard hospitality. I'm intending to go as often as possible on Wednesdays. We leave my place at 9am and

return late afternoon. All help gratefully accepted. They do require you to join the Earth Sanctuaries Foundation for insurance reasons.

Brian and Dorothy went on the Field Nats Club trip to Glenburn. They visited the property of Alan Reid who is the President of the Gould League and a Radio person on environmental subjects. Dorothy said that they had a wonderful day and they were glad that they went.

The Field Nats trip to the Holey plains was wet and windy and not very productive. Two frogs and a water skink were caught and several interesting birds were seen. This contrasted with the last stag watch - there were Greater Gliders, Yellow-bellied Gliders, Sugar Gliders, Leadbeaters Possums and Sooty Owls seen. This was probably the most productive stag watch that I'd ever attended and the first in over a year when I had a clear view of a Leadbeaters Possum.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> we are hosting a social lunch at my place, with a few visitors from other groups coming. Please RSVP by the 10<sup>th</sup> if you wish to come, so that I have an idea of the numbers to cater for.

What's On:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Wed Lyndale Primary School planting all day
- 1<sup>st</sup> Wed GDEG meeting at 64 Fillmore Road Dandenong Nth 7-30pm
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs Nursery Greaves St, 10-00am to 1-00pm
- 4/7th Cup Weekend Victorian Field Naturalists Club Field Trip to Stawell
- 8<sup>th</sup> Wed Little River Sanctuary 9-00 am at 64 Fillmore Rd or 10-00am at Little River
- 9th Thurs Greens Rd assisting John Weisnewski and Lendlease Employees
- 14<sup>th</sup> Tues VFNC Fauna Survey Group talk Herbivorous South African Animals 8pm
- 16<sup>th</sup> Thurs Nursery Day 10-00am to 1-00pm
- 18<sup>th</sup> Sat Stagwatch and Spotlight walk at Poweltown
- 19<sup>th</sup> Sun Social Meeting at 64 Fillmore Rd 1pm
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Wed Little River Sanctuary
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Thurs Nursery Day 10-00am to 1-00pm
- 26<sup>th</sup> Sun Nursery Day 9-00am to 12-00pm
- 29<sup>th</sup> Wed Little River Sanctuary
- 30<sup>th</sup> Thurs Nursery day 10-00am to 1-00pm