

banksia

bulletin

spring 2022

**Bayside
Community
Nursery
Final Gala Day 2022
1 October**

**Elsternwick Park
to be renamed
Yalukit Willam**

From the Mayor

Hello and welcome to the Spring edition of *Banksia Bulletin*.

Not only is September the start of spring but it also marks the beginning of Biodiversity Month, a great time to explore our local natural environment.

We have partnered with several neighbouring councils to hold a Biodiversity Blitz competition to see which council can record the most species.

All you need is a smart phone to join the Bayside City Council's Biodiversity Blitz team on the iNaturalist app before you start snapping away (more information on page 23).

Spring is a wonderful time to recognise and acknowledge the abundance of indigenous plants growing in our reserves and heathlands. If you turn to the back of this magazine, you'll find a very long list of Friends groups who coordinate working bees – some weekly and others monthly – ready to help you get involved in Biodiversity Month.

If you're thinking of creating an indigenous garden at home or planting the nature strip outside your house, there are just a few more weeks left to make your purchases at the Bayside Community Nursery. Our staff and knowledgeable volunteers are available to assist you until the final day of plant sales on Saturday 29 October. Our last Gala Day for the year will be held on Saturday 1 October between 9am and 2pm.

I recently had the great pleasure of officially opening the Chain of Ponds at Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve.

At the opening, we announced that Elsternwick Park will be renamed Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve to recognise the Traditional Owners of the land.

Boon Wurrung Elder, N'arweet Carolyn Briggs suggested the name and has guided Council on this project through storytelling and sharing her knowledge.

I encourage you to turn to page 6 to learn more about this exciting announcement and a story from Elsternwick Park Association President Natalie Davey about '*what's in a name?*'.

The Chain of Ponds is the first stage in the masterplan to transform the reserve into a unique oasis for people and nature.

These expanses of open water - ponds, a large billabong and two soaks - mimic the natural cycle, receding in summer and filling again in spring and winter. This creates a wonderful foraging and breeding habitat for many waterbirds, fish, reptiles, turtles, invertebrates and bats.

Council is investing \$9 million in the implementation of the \$24 million masterplan, with \$6 million committed to date from the Australian Government. We are also anticipating additional funding from the Australian Government pledged in the May 2022 federal election.



We're continuing to advocate for a further \$6 million from the Victorian Government for the continued transformation of the reserve and expansion of the wetlands.

If you haven't already, get out and explore the Chain of Ponds this spring and see how many indigenous species you can find- another great way to commemorate Biodiversity Month in Bayside.

Cr Alex del Porto

Mayor



Cover photo: Purple Coral Pea (*Hardenbergia violacea*) by Pauline Reynolds.

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ACKNOWLEDGES
TRADITIONAL OWNERS**



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Showy Bossiaea



Plants of Bayside

Words by Aaron Hurrell, Citywide Bushland Crew
Photos by Pauline Reynolds

Showy Bossiaea

Showy Bossiaea (*Bossiaea cinerea*) is an ornamental heathland plant that adapts to well drained moist soils with full sun to semi shade and can handle some coastal exposure and even light frost.

This dense shrub can grow low, spreading or erect up to 1-2m high and 1-2m wide and has stems covered in dense hairs.

Its ovate or triangular shaped leaves are stemless, growing 5-20mm long and 2-5mm wide. These leaves have a tiny spur at the base and can be whorled, paired or alternately placed along the branches and are dull green in colour.

Yellow and red flowers sit along a thread like stalk, blooming between 7 and 12mm long between August to December.

Source: Bull, Marilyn (1991) *Flora of Melbourne: A guide to the indigenous plants of the greater Melbourne area* Carlton Vic: Hyland House Publishing

Bayside Community Nursery



Gala Day: Saturday 1 October
Final retail sales for 2022:
Saturday 29 October



Photo by Pauline Reynolds

The 2022 public retail season for the Bayside Community Nursery will finish on Saturday 29 October with the final Gala Day to be held on Saturday 1 October between 9am and 2pm.

We would like to thank everyone who has visited us since April and look forward to the propagating season which starts as soon as the doors close to the public.

There is still time to visit the nursery at 315–317 Reserve Road in Cheltenham on Thursdays and Saturdays between 10am and 12pm to stock up on indigenous plants.

Speak to knowledgeable and passionate staff and volunteers for tips and tricks to planting your own indigenous garden, which makes a trip to the Bayside Community Nursery one to remember.

The nursery will reopen for public sales with a Gala Day in April 2023. Keep an eye out on the Bayside Nursery webpage for the date.

For more information visit Council's [website](#) or call 9583 8408.



Seals in Bayside

Story and photos by Kim Croker

When a family decides to visit the Bayside beaches, they hope to enjoy the marine environment, perhaps spotting a local Burruran dolphin or discovering some interesting shells along the foreshore.

For one lucky family, the marine life decided to get just a little bit closer recently.

Local volunteers were called to check on a young seal spotted swimming and lazing in the shallows just off Black Rock beach. The seal seemed happy enough to stay in the water while the family moved to play further down the beach.

As the sun started to set, the young seal made its way on to the sand, nestling itself amongst the family's towels and clothes.

Seals generally come on to the land for a reason – to rest or to moult. If you come across a seal on land, you should remain 30 metres away, or 50 metres if you have a dog with you. The only exception to this rule is if you need to move past a seal for safe passage.

It is best to pass a seal on the land side of the seal so it can head back into the Bay if it feels threatened. It is illegal to touch or feed a seal.

Wild seals are not “friendly” and can be very aggressive and bite if provoked and are best viewed from a safe distance. An average female Australian fur seal can weigh up to 120kg and measure 170cm whilst the male can get over 200cm and weigh over 300kgs.

So, on this day the family had to wait for the seal to move away.

Luckily, while volunteers were putting up a barrier around the seal, the hammering of the posts was enough to make the marine animal head back into the water, allowing the family to quickly retrieve their belongings.

The seal was seen again the next day outside Ricketts Point Café.

Where to get help

Melbourne Zoo Marine Response Unit (MRU) and local volunteers will check on any seal reported to them. Volunteers are often the first ones to help assess the health and wellbeing of seals that find themselves on Bayside beaches and provide updates to the team at the MRU. Volunteers also provide information to interested bystanders and most importantly try to keep both the seal and the public safe with the use of barriers and signs.

Please enjoy our wildlife but keep a safe distance for both you and their well-being.

If you come across a marine animal or bird that might need attention, please contact the Melbourne Zoo Marine Response Unit on 1300 245 MRU (1300 245 678) with the time and location.

New park name acknowledges traditional owners

Elsternwick Park will be renamed Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve to recognise the Traditional Owners of the land.

The new name was unveiled by Bayside Mayor Cr Alex Del Porto at the official opening of the reserve's Chain of Ponds in August.

The Chain of Ponds features seven new bodies of water and thousands of new indigenous plants to create a diverse habitat to attract wildlife.

The Yalukit Willam clan are the river people of Port Phillip and original owners of the reserve lands.

The new name was suggested by Boon Wurrung Elder Carolyn Briggs and approved by the Bunurong Land Council.

The Chain of Ponds opened to the public in late July and is the first stage in the \$24 million masterplan to transform the reserve into a unique oasis for people and nature just 10kms from the Melbourne CBD.

Bayside has earmarked \$9 million for the project, and the Australian Government has committed \$6 million to date, as well as making a further \$11.7 million election commitment for the reserve and Elster Creek.

Cr del Porto said Bayside is also advocating for the Victorian Government to support this significant project with regional benefits.

Council will now request Geographical Names Victoria to gazette and register Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve.



A sense of place – what’s in a name?

Storykeepers and Waterkeepers

The Elsternwick Park Association fully supports Bayside Council’s decision to name Elsternwick Park the **Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve**, which was also supported by the Bunurong Land Council. Our organisation will also change its name in due course.

Story by Natalie Davey
President Elsternwick Park Association

The **Elsternwick Park** Nature Reserve has come about through the work and vision of many local people, and community continues to play a guiding role in shaping and sharing this unique, evolving wetland. The naming of the reserve is a terrific signpost of reconciliation and respect.

But before you can understand why the change of name for Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve is so important for First Nations people (and you), you need to take a journey into the Aboriginal meaning of Country.



Left to right: Bayside Mayor Cr Alex del Porto, Boon Wurrung Elder N’arweet Carolyn Briggs, Bayside CEO Mike Cummins, Deputy Mayor Cr Hanna El Mouallem.

The following definition is a helpful guide:

‘Country’ as understood in Aboriginal English, is not only a common noun but also a proper noun. People talk about country in the same way they would talk about a person: they speak to country, sing to country, visit country, worry about country, feel sorry for country, and long for country. People say that country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, and is sorry or happy. Country is not a generalised or undifferentiated type of place, such as one might indicate with terms like ‘spending a day in the country’ or ‘going up the country’.

Rather, country is a living entity with a yesterday, today, and tomorrow, with a consciousness, and a will towards life. Because of this richness, country is home, and peace; nourishment for the body, mind, and spirit; heart’s ease.’

- D. Rose, quoted in Mulligan and Martin 1996, p. 237



Boon Wurrung Elder N’arweet Carolyn Briggs and Elsternwick Park Association President Natalie Davey.

Recently, Elsternwick Park, the place that local community lobbied to transform into a nature reserve, was renamed the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve.

Pronounced *Yaluk-ut Weelam*, it roughly translates as ‘People of waterways/ivers’.

The renaming is an important marker in the community’s understanding of people and place and was initially suggested by Boon Wurrung Elder, Professor N’arweet Carolyn Briggs. Elsternwick Park Association and many other groups and individuals supported the call.

In the early years of the colony, only 200 odd years ago, First Nations people were seen as expedient or even non-existent, as the legal framework described.

Except for an enlightened few people, every attempt was made to systemically deny, destroy and forget the existence of many, many cultures of a people who have been here for tens of thousands of years.

The devastation caused by racist policies, intergenerational trauma from forced removals of children and ongoing cultural ignorance is the lived experience of many Aboriginal people today.

But over my lifetime, I have witnessed an unstoppable shift. Over many years of working in Nairm (Port Phillip Bay) on marine projects, I was very fortunate to collaborate annually with Professor Briggs, one of many incredible Aboriginal activists, leaders and researchers whose work not only supports her own community but acts as a bridge to the broader population.

Professor Briggs works tirelessly to share and embed cultural knowledge

and practice, collaborating and working closely with young people who gravitate to her inclusive, incisive intelligence shared with humour and grace.

I met her working with young people at sea and she shared a story on board about the Time of Chaos, a time when sea levels suddenly rose (they actually rose twice; the second time, catastrophically) and Nairm (Port Phillip Bay) was formed.

I found it extraordinary to feel the ancient story as we sailed over the huge expanse of the Bay, imagining a time, 10,000 years ago, when N’arweet’s ancestors walked across a great, grassy plain, with a river snaking across and falling in a great waterfall at the heads.

This river is now known as the Yarra, its ancient pathways still used as the deeper channels for shipping and the waterfall is now underwater at the rip, where water surges in and out with great force every day.

It was only over the time we were working together that marine scientists started working on the deep time history of the bay through mapping and

discovered the Boon Wurrung story described these momentous changes.

The people lived through them and transmitted the oral knowledge for generations through story, song and dance. These coastal stories are now being listened to all around the continent; each a portal to an earlier time, with history and knowledge safely embedded.

We are living through another period of climate change and again having to deal with, amongst other impacts, sea level rises.

This time it is not due to the end of the Ice Age, it is due to our own activities, carbonising the atmosphere.

Many of the Indigenous stories that live with people and in Country are possibly going to help us all navigate through this challenging time by giving much-needed perspectives, knowledge and context.

Much of the custodial wisdom of caring for places (and people) is etched in these deep-time stories.

Our systems of knowledge have more in common than not, except ours are just slightly younger.



Imperial Jezebels

at Long Hollow Heathland

Story by Rob Saunders
Convenor, Friends of Long Hollow Heathland

A few years ago, Bayside resident, volunteer, and conservationist Michael Norris and I began experimenting with planting mistletoes after discovering Professor Dave Watson's pioneering research about their keystone ecological roles. Since then, Gio Fitzpatrick has well and truly eclipsed our efforts with his successful mistletoe plantings at Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve (soon to be known as Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve).

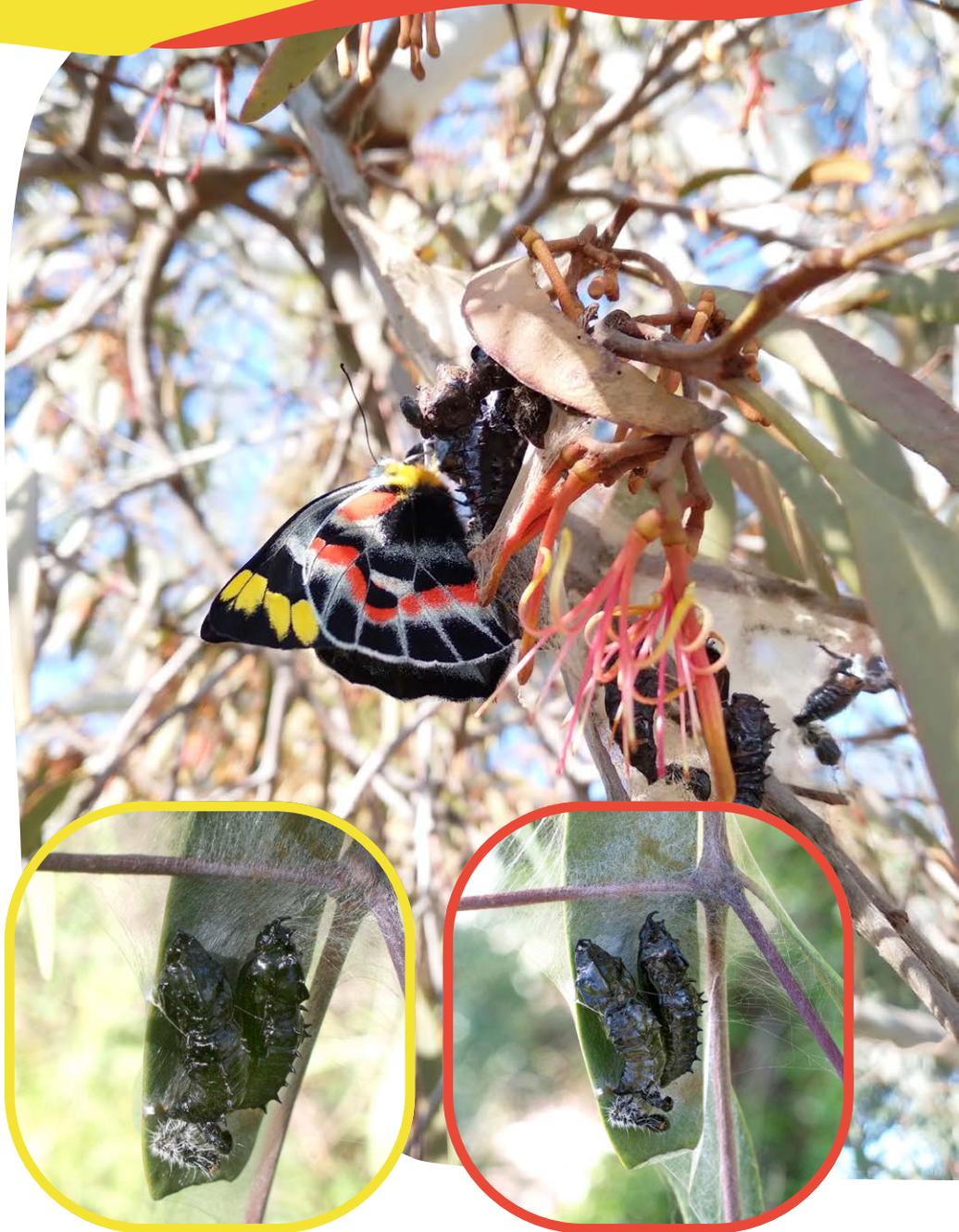
Others, including Pauline Reynolds, Co-convenor of George Street Reserve and regular story and photography contributor to *Banksia Bulletin*, and Cameron Arden from Citywide have also begun planting mistletoes. Bayside City Council has recently instituted a raft of measures to better protect and enhance our indigenous biodiversity.

But I still like to keep tabs on one mature Creeping Mistletoe we planted at Long Hollow in 2017. In early August this year I spotted something interesting and sent some grainy images from my phone to local field naturalist John Eichler. John quickly confirmed that we had something special:

"These are the pupae of the Imperial Jezebel butterfly, *Delias harplayce*. A great find – I haven't seen it locally for 20-30 years... the caterpillars feed exclusively on mistletoes, at least in Victoria."

John and Pauline have now both taken excellent photos of the pupae, and John has reported the observation on citizen science website iNaturalist.

The Environmental Friends Facebook page [Bushy Tales](#) also has some photographs taken by Ollie Sherlock at Cranbourne Botanic Gardens back in



August 2021, when a mass emergence of Imperial Jezebel butterflies was observed on a Drooping Mistletoe. It is interesting how these beautiful butterflies pupate in groups, scattered around a communal silken web.

John advises that the peak time for butterflies of this species is now (September) so we are waiting intently for a warm sunny day, when our two Imperial Jezebels should emerge (if they haven't already).

Global nature learnings

Hedgehog highways boost the UK's urban hedgehog population

Story by Olivia, [Flora and Fauna](#)

Urban sightings of Britain's favourite spiky, garden-dwelling mammal have increased due to the 'hedgehog highways' between residents' gardens.

Despite a worrying decline in hedgehog numbers across the UK in the past of couple decades, an unusual community-led phenomenon is being attributed as a key driver to their boost in numbers. Hedgehog highways allow hedgehogs to roam throughout Britain's urban green spaces.

These 'highways' are spaces where hedgehogs can pass through to another green habitat — often taking shape as holes or gaps in boundary fences or walls between properties.

Although hedgehogs are very small, their midnight travels can take them through 13 connected gardens to find food, water and shelter.

Hedgehog activity increases by 54%

We don't typically think of 'urban' areas as viable habitats for animals. But, in Great Britain, there's roughly 520 thousand hectares of residential garden space in urban areas. According to a report by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, connecting these urban green spaces is positively impacting hedgehog activity.

The Trust monitored hedgehog behaviour before and after making holes in people's garden fences.

Amazingly, they reported a 39 per cent increase in hedgehog sightings after the highways were created. A study conducted by the University of Reading found that 54 per cent of people noticed an increase in hedgehog activity after creating just one hole.

The fantastic part is that creating one or more hedgehog highways is easy – it's just a 13cm x 13cm hole to pass through.



Image: Piotr Łaskawski/Unsplash

Why did urban hedgehog populations decline?

From 2000, the population of Britain's hedgehogs declined by 30-75 per cent – making them 'vulnerable to extinction' on Britain's red list for mammals. It's assumed that habitat loss due to agricultural intensification, the use of pesticides, and the danger from cars have all played a part in their decline.

One of the biggest reasons, however, is the way that urban fences and walls are constructed. These impenetrable barriers reduce the amount of land that's available to hedgehogs, which reduces their chance of survival.



Image: People's Trust For Endangered Species

100+ communities work with Hedgehog Street campaign

It's estimated that more than 120,000 highways connecting around 240,000 gardens have been created in the UK – thanks to Hedgehog Street! This fantastic campaign has boosted awareness for the plight of the hedgehog and created more than 107,000+ Hedgehog Champions – people who have created hedgehog highways in their garden.

Establishing hedgehog highways has also helped communities to grow closer and to form a bond over the much-loved, spiky animal.



Image: Hedgehog Street

Local habitat corridors underway

Bayside City Council has plans to create habitat corridors by enhancing and improving indigenous planting.

Small 'pocket parks' have been identified as key sites in priority habitat corridors in Beaumaris.

This initiative is part of Council's Park Improvement and Habitat Linkage Plan (PIHLP), which was adopted by Council in June.

Funding has also been allocated in this year's Council Budget to undertake planting at Elsternwick Park South.

This focus on increasing the diversity of indigenous and native plantings in Council-owned open space outside the conservation reserve system will strengthen the connections between natural areas and create additional habitat for native fauna.

As part of the PIHLP, Council will identify where further planting indigenous vegetation can be implemented or improved to provide habitat corridors, prioritise areas for short-term planting on Council's land and link areas of open space.

Through the PIHLP, Council also seeks to restore indigenous vegetation structure to the landscape, with recommendations to plant a variety of indigenous ground covers and low shrubby mid-storey species in addition to trees.

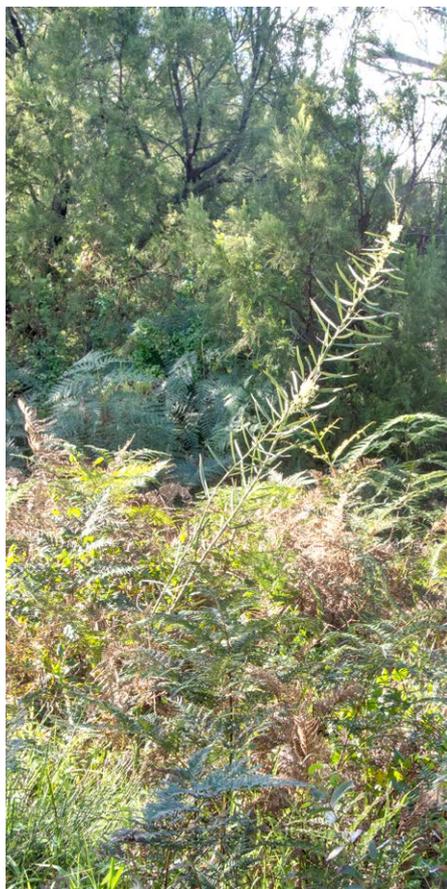
This will help restore habitat for smaller invertebrates, butterflies, small lizards and skinks, and other native species.



Planting started in August along the New Street side of Elsternwick Park South to create habitat linkages.



Persisting against bracken



Story by Rob Saunders, Convenor, Friends of Long Hollow Heathland
Photos by Pauline Reynolds, Co-convenor, Friends of George Street Reserve

In large, protected areas like national parks, fire and other natural processes tend to produce a mosaic pattern of vegetation. As a result, different natural communities, each with their own characteristic species, become distributed over time as well as space. If a protected area is large enough, a wide range of species can survive within the resulting mosaic. The full biodiversity of the ecosystem can continue over long periods of time.

In contrast, remnant bushland reserves in suburban Bayside are so tiny and isolated from each other that conscious efforts need to be made to retain our biodiversity. One of the challenges in managing remnant reserves is that some plant species can easily become dominant, to the detriment of overall biodiversity. Such is the case with bracken fern.

One of the first local attempts at ecological burning to regenerate indigenous species was carried out in the centre of Long Hollow Heathland in 1985, by the Melbourne Region of the (then) Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands. The idea of a trial burn came about partly because of the

amazing regeneration in George Street Reserve following an uncontrolled wildfire in 1984. Just as happened at George Street, the Long Hollow burn was successful in regenerating Wedding Bush (*Ricinocarpos pinifolius*) which had all but disappeared from Bayside. However, over the next few years the 1985 burn site was quickly swamped by a dense cover of bracken fern.

At Long Hollow, like all Bayside inland reserves, bracken fern is indigenous. But it can spread and become dominant, choking and out-competing other plants. It spreads by underground rhizomes, so each bracken plant can occupy a large area and distribute water and nutrients to fronds many metres away.



For nearly a decade, the Friends of Long Hollow made valiant efforts to control the bracken in the 1985 burn site, but the area was too large for us to cope with. Moira Longden and Ken Rendell then led a rear-guard effort to at least keep the bracken away from important small regenerating plants like Common Aotus (*Aotus ericoides*), Sweet Wattle (*Acacia suaveolens*), Showy Bossiaea (*Bossiaea cinerea*) and the highly prized Wedding Bush. Mature shrubs of each of these species can still be seen in the 1985 burn site today, surrounded by a sea of shoulder-high bracken.

A different approach was tried from 2001, when the area immediately north of the 1985 burn was regenerated by fire. This time, the Friends of Long Hollow decided to stop the bracken from invading into that pocket. A 50-metre length of path between the 1985 and 2001 burns became a boundary the bracken would not be allowed to cross. Any bracken fronds that appeared to the north of the path were removed. After 20 years we can report some qualified success and pass on a few insights and observations.

Firstly, it takes effort. Initially, bracken quickly invaded across the boundary path, through rhizomes growing underneath. When we first began to tackle it, we removed more than 1,000 fronds from the burn site each month. But within six months that effort was paying off, with the number of fronds reduced by half. And within a year it had become a relatively quick task – one person in half an hour could hunt out and remove the 50 or so fronds that had managed to emerge.

Secondly, it takes persistence. For the first few years we tackled the bracken every month. In spring we would also remove it from the south side of the path, pushing it back by two or three metres and liberating other plants such as Wedding Bush and Aotus in the process. We also planted small shrubs and wildflowers along that edge to compete with the bracken, but that was only marginally successful. It was the persistent effort of removal that did the trick.

Thirdly, success can easily be monitored. After a couple of years, the bracken fronds on the edge of the infestation showed signs they were running out of energy.

Fronds that emerged from the ground were small and weak, with thin stems that grew parallel to the ground. Pulling them up revealed clusters of vegetative buds that were not evident on the thick stems of the larger fronds we had pulled out previously. I even experimented by planting some of the weak fronds with vegetative buds into pots, and yes – they grew (eventually).

The situation now is best described as an uneasy truce. Two years of COVID-19 restrictions have meant the bracken has had a chance to make a run into the 2001 burn area. But interestingly, it has only done so tentatively. One or two rhizomes have travelled almost 10 metres into the burn area, but the number of fronds emerging is still quite low. At the last working bee we removed the 20 or 30 fronds that were evident, and we will probably have a go at pushing it back away from the path again before spring.

I think we can now prevent bracken from becoming a problem in the 2001 burn area by removing all the visible fronds three or four times a year.



Mutinus cartilagineus!

the phalloid fungus first found in Bayside

Mutinus cartilagineus ('egg') by John Eichler, 21 June 2022.

Dr Jim Willis (1910-1995) carried out many important surveys of Bayside's indigenous flora (see The Sandringham Environment Series) and held key roles at the National Herbarium of Victoria that included Botanist, Acting Director of the Gardens, and Acting Government Botanist. His *Handbook to Plants in Victoria* was the standard reference in its field for three decades. Fewer people remember today that he also published articles and books about Victorian fungi.

Story by Sue Forster, Convenor, Friends of Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary

Photos by John Eichler

Pauline Reynolds, Co-convenor of George Street Reserve, recently drew my attention to a paper on the phalloid stinkhorn *Mutinus cartilagineus* that he wrote in 1947 for *The Victorian Naturalist*. This immediately sparked my interest – I am currently an editor of this journal and have been on many fungi surveys with members of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria, which publishes it. I saw a *Mutinus cartilagineus* for the first time when local naturalist John Eichler showed me one during a Field Nats survey near Anglesea. He has found many others in Bayside reserves and kindly provided his records for this article.

The importance of Jim Willis's 1947 paper lies in its title: 'An Undescribed Victorian Phalloid Fungus'. This paper provided the first published description of *Mutinus cartilagineus* and Willis is recognised for naming the fungus, cited in scientific records as *Mutinus cartilagineus* J.H. Willis. More importantly for Bayside, the first collected specimens in Australia were found in tea-tree scrubland in Black Rock and heathland in West Cheltenham (at Morey Road, now in Beaumaris and misspelt in the paper as Morly's Road).

The Black Rock specimens were collected in May 1938, but key information was lost, and they went unreported in scientific literature until acknowledged in Willis's paper. It was not until May 1946 that further specimens were discovered at the south-west corner of Victoria Golf Club and brought to Willis's attention. Willis preserved and catalogued them for the National Herbarium as the specimen holotype (used for the first formal species description) and paratypes (collected simultaneously with the holotype as 'back up'). He also photographed the colony, showing three mature spore bodies and two 'eggs', and produced life-sized line drawings with a transverse section.

Mutinus cartilagineus grows in soil and its developing spore body is at first entirely covered with a whitish membrane. This breaks to form a volva or cup at its base. Rising out of this, the phalloid form of the fungus (the receptacle) can be up to 60mm in height. It has a firm rubbery texture with a depression or hole at its apex, that ruptures in maturity to expose the olivaceous gleba – its slimy spore-bearing tissue. In most stinkhorns, the gleba's smell and stickiness is highly attractive to flies, which feed on it and disperse any spores picked up on their bodies. 'Nomennudum', a regular local contributor to iNaturalist Australia database, recently likened its smell as that of naphthalene (moth balls).

Jim Willis noted that the Cheltenham specimens had been chewed by rabbits, evidenced by these animals' faeces in his photograph. His observation is of interest because stinkhorns generally emerge in the cold months between May and July when there may be few flies around. It suggests that *Mutinus cartilagineus* could also be palatable to mammals; a reasonable assumption given that introduced rabbits would have



***Mutinus cartilagineus* (mature specimen) by John Eichler, 21 June 2022.**

been preceded by fungi-eating Brown Bandicoots, antechinuses, and bush rats. Further, phalloid fungi are known to be eaten by humans in some parts of China.

Mutinus cartilagineus is still rarely recorded and is therefore uncommon in Australia. Unsurprising, I know of no 'common' name for it although John Eichler recalls Dumpy Stinkhorn Fungus, a reference to its low stature compared to other phalloid fungi.

Willis recorded its distribution as 'Victoria, Australia – in humus rich soil under shrubs.' In early August 2022, the Atlas of Living Australia database had a total of 45 records for the species: 37 in Victoria and eight in Tasmania.

John Eichler has found *Mutinus cartilagineus* in most Bayside reserves. His first record was from Balcombe Park, Beaumaris, in July 1999. He subsequently recorded the species elsewhere in Beaumaris: Long Hollow Heathland Reserve in June 2000 (John lodged this specimen at the National Herbarium) and July 2002 (an image of this specimen is included in an article on Bayside fungi John wrote for the Spring 2003 *Banksia Bulletin*); the foreshore reserve (date uncertain); and Donald Macdonald Reserve (July 2004, June 2005). He also found it at the Black Rock foreshore (August 2003) and,

more recently, in George Street Reserve, Sandringham, (27 June 2021).

In June 2022, John and 'Nomennudum' recorded a total of 20 in three locations in Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary, many still at the 'egg' stage. Cameron Arden (Citywide bushland crew) found another four at Gramatan Avenue Heathland Reserve on 15 July. Bayside 2021 and 2022 observations are documented in [iNaturalist Australia](#) along with sightings at Kingston Heath Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne Royal Botanic Gardens, Carrum Downs, Sandy Point and Mount Dorrin in 2020-2021, and Greens Bush (Main Ridge) in 2022. Recent Bayside specimens were growing under or close to Prickly Tea-tree (*Leptospermum continentale*), but their known distribution suggests that they grow in association with a variety of shrubs.

Willis also observed that the original specimens were found 'accompanied at both localities by the "Lattice Fungus" (*Clathrus gracilis*)'. Now known as the Basket or Smooth Cage Fungus (*Ileodictyon gracile*), this species is documented throughout Australia. It was found growing profusely in Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary as well as the South Road median strip and bay trail in 2020. However, except for a possible egg in BRHS, it has not been recorded locally in 2022.

Heathland fungi are not well-documented compared to those growing in wet forest and rainforest. We don't really know what the optimum weather conditions are for their growth or which fungi are symbiotic with heathland vegetation. They can easily be overlooked – stinkhorns don't always emerge from their egg-like membrane and their mature spore body may only last for a few days when they do. Please record any that you do see on a public database like [iNaturalist](#) to improve our understanding of Bayside's biodiversity.

References

- Willis JH, (1947) An Undescribed Victorian Phalloid Fungus. *The Victorian Naturalist*, Vol 63, No. 10, pp. 217–219.
[Atlas of Living Australia](#)
[iNaturalist Australia](#)



Mutinus cartilagineus sp. nov.
Group of plants *in situ*, on damp, sandy heathland at West Cheltenham, Vic.
(Note unexpanded "eggs" and presence of rabbit faeces.)

Photo.: R. D. Lee.

Photograph of *Mutinus cartilagineus* in 'West Cheltenham' by RD Lee for JH Willis's 1947 paper *The Victorian Naturalist*, Vol 63, No. 10, pp. 217–219. Reproduced with permission from the editors of *The Victorian Naturalist*.

The crucial role of fungi in Bayside's biodiverse ecosystems

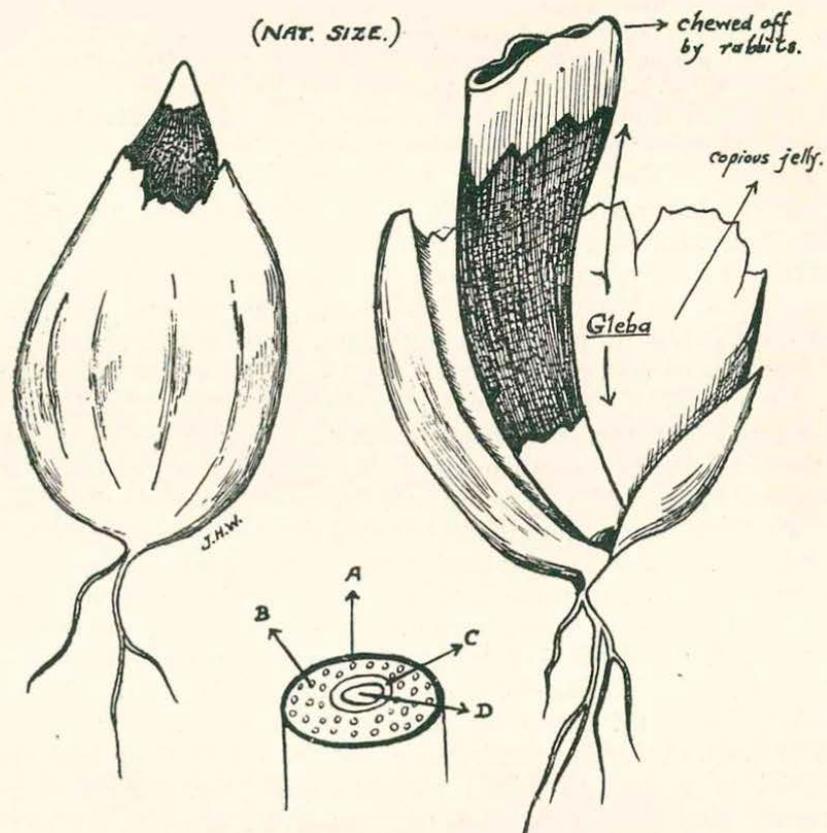
Story by Sue Forster
Convenor, Friends of Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary

The taxonomy of fungi has undergone huge changes since Jim Willis's paper on *Mutinus cartilagineus* was published in February 1947. Modern readers might be surprised to learn that Willis – an expert botanist and mycologist – referred to this phalloid fungus as a 'plant' throughout his paper. At that time fungi were divided into four classes in the Plantae subkingdom *Cryptogamia*.

Over the next decade, a distinct kingdom *Fungi* was gradually



PLATE XVI



Left: Receptacle emerging from peridial "egg."

Right: Peridium opened out to show narrow base of a mature flattened receptacle, apex of which has been eaten by rabbits.

Below: Transverse section of receptacle—

- A. Olive-brown sporogenous layer ($\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ mm.).
- B. White chambered pseudoparenchymatous layer (1-3 mm.) of loose rounded cells, 30-60 mic.
- C. Cartilaginous layer surrounding stuffed or hollow medulla (D.).

Line drawings of *Mutinus cartilagineus* by JH Willis (1947). *The Victorian Naturalist*, Vol 63, No. 10, pp. 217-219. Reproduced with permission from the editors of *The Victorian Naturalist*.

accepted in recognition of the following differences between plants and fungi:

- Plants get their nutrition by photosynthesising whereas fungi excrete digestive enzymes and absorb externally digested nutrients.
- Plant cell walls contain cellulose, whereas most fungal cell walls contain chitin.

The spore bodies observed by naturalists for databases such as

[iNaturalist Australia](#) fall into the phyla Ascomycota and Basidiomycota.

Although some fungi are feared as plant pathogens, a great many are symbiotic with plants and make an important contribution to plant health. The 'wood wide web' is now a popular term used to describe the role that fungal mycelium play in connecting plants and transmitting nutrients to them. Through their recycling of wood and leaf litter, fungi are also essential

for soil health and composition.

Given their vital ecosystem roles, fungi need to be recognised in Bayside Council's Biodiversity Action Plan. Flora and fauna form only part of our complex ecosystems: for a holistic understanding of how ecosystems work and can be preserved into the future, we must include the missing kingdoms, of which ancient and resilient fungi are arguably the most crucial.



Flightless Vandiemena Matchstick Grasshopper

In the summer 2021/2022 edition of *Banksia Bulletin* (page 12) there is a story about a flightless Vandiemena Matchstick Grasshopper by Professor Ary Hoffman and Professor Michael Kearney, researchers from the University of Melbourne, Biosciences Department.

Story and photos by Pauline Reynolds
Co-convenor, Friends of George Street Reserve

'Insects like grasshoppers play an important role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem and are an abundant food source for larger animals such as praying mantis, lizards, and birds.

The tiny, wingless critters thrive in habitats of everlasting daisies, native grasses, and ample sunlight, and in environments that are free from weeds and predators.

The Matchstick Grasshopper's population has dwindled in recent years due to a scarcity of suitable environments and an inability to relocate from one habitat to the next,' they said.

Fortunately, John Eichler had discovered a population at Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary and posted photographs on iNaturalist which the researchers spotted. After visiting Bayside

with permission during lockdown last year and collecting very few insects, they studied their genetics to ascertain whether somewhere in Bayside would be suitable to release a new population.

Ary Hoffman said:

'We have started to collect Matchstick Hoppers for translocations, and we are now wondering which of your reserves would be the most suitable for this purpose. We'd like to introduce 50 into two to three reserves each as a starting point following our earlier discussions.

Also, based on the genetic data we now have, we can report that the Bay Road reserve hoppers are not inbred, so there is little point in introducing new material into that site – we suspect that the population there is of a reasonable size and is moving well around the reserve to prevent inbreeding issues developing so far. So that is good news!

Also based on the genetic data we would like to use hoppers from Cranbourne or the Royal Melbourne Golf Course ... these are both genetically very similar to the Bayside populations.'

Last month two of the team members Hiromi Yagui (PhD candidate) and Dr Amy Liu visited four Bayside reserves and decided that George Street Reserve was the most promising location. They brought a sample population of 25 grasshoppers in a small travelling 'safe' and released them there but there will be a release of up to 50 more during the next few weeks.

It was a great thrill to watch the tiny hoppers settle on a Common Beard Heath (*Leucopogon virgatus*) and start eating immediately. I do hope they make the reserve their home and that we can be instrumental in helping to rescue a threatened species.



Left to right: PhD candidate Hironi Yagui and Dr Amy Liu from University of Melbourne releasing the grasshoppers into their new heathland home.



Birds in focus

As part of Biodiversity Month (September), Council is calling on bird watchers of all ages to share their sightings by posting photographs and descriptions including the #BirdWatchingBayside on our [Facebook page](#).

Don't stop there, keep sharing your bird sightings as we head into October as part of the annual [Aussie Bird Count – registrations are open now!](#)

This is a great way to connect with birds in your backyard, local park, reserve or heathland, the foreshore or any of Bayside's local streets.

Count as many times as you like during the week, keeping each count to 20 minutes.

Last year, 106,707 people across Australia participated in the Aussie Bird Count.

In Victoria, 1,435,720 birds were counted with the most popular sightings being the Rainbow Lorikeet, Australian Magpie and Noisy Miner.

The data collected from the Aussie Bird Count is used to fill a knowledge gap particularly on urban bird species and gives experts access to areas they wouldn't normally get – like backyards!

For more help identifying birds, information about the count and how to do it go to <https://aussiebirdcount.org.au/>

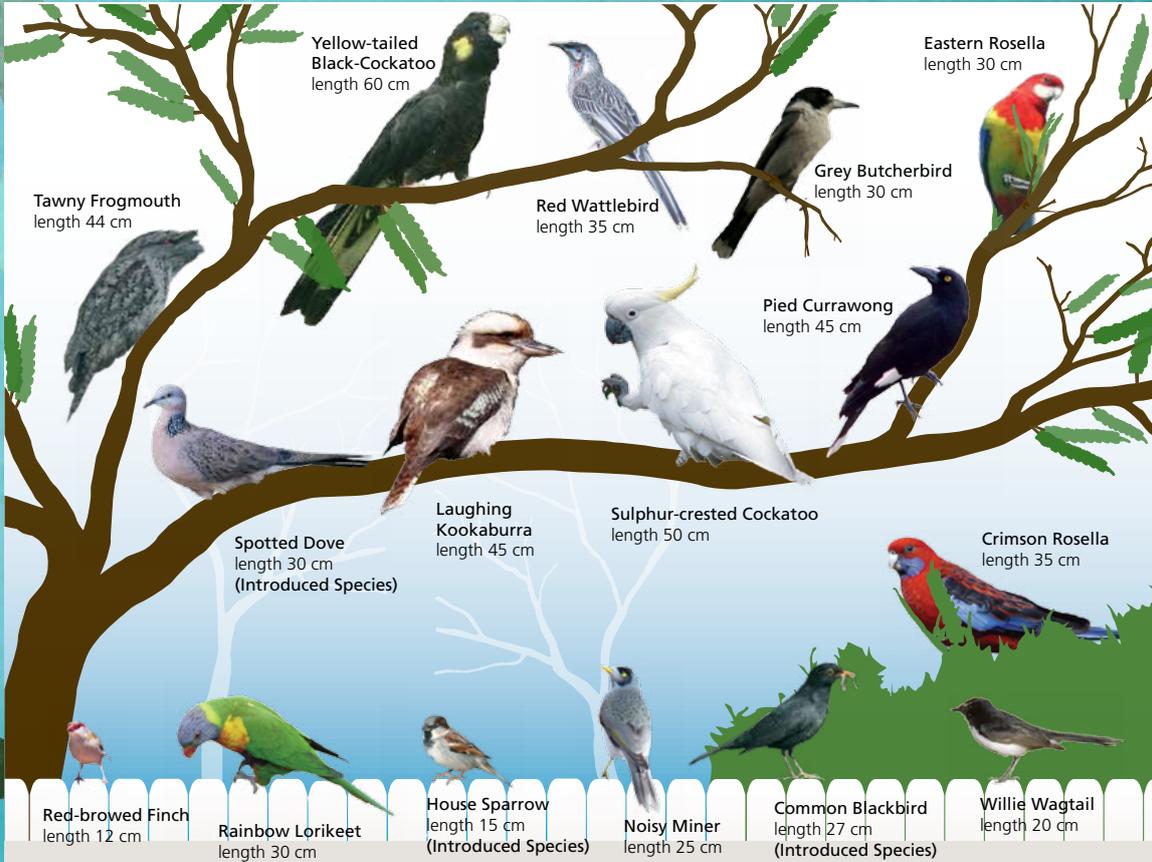
WIN!

For your chance to win this incredible prize, all you need to do is submit a count during the Aussie Backyard Bird Count. Good Luck!

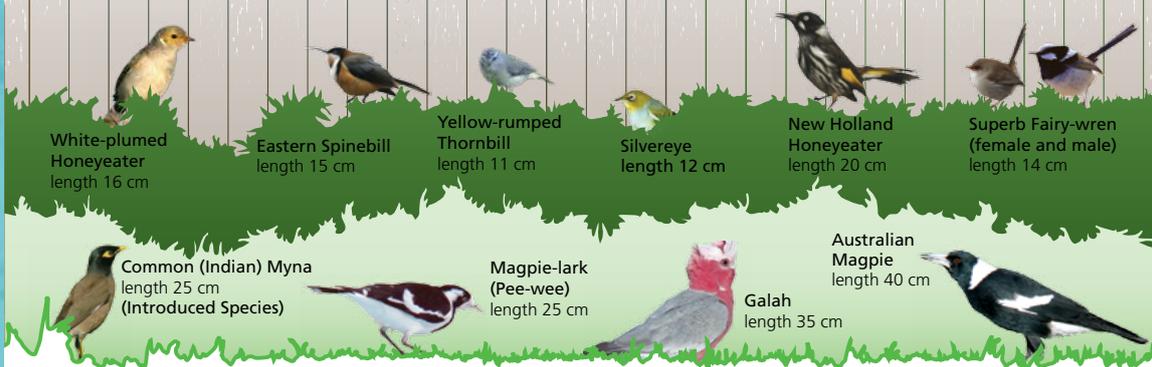
Swarovski Optik NL Pure 8x32 Binoculars



Common backyard bird sightings



backyard birds OF VICTORIA



For inquiries about birds and domestic gardens, contact:

BIRDS IN BACKYARDS

www.birdsinbackyards.net

t (02) 9647 1875

BIRDLIFE AUSTRALIA

www.birdlife.org.au

t 1300 730 075



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Friends Groups

Friends of Balcombe Park

Convenor: Ian O'Loughlin
Mobile: 0412 432 618 **Email:** ianoloughlin@optusnet.com.au
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Sep 25, Oct 30, Nov 27 **Time:** 10am-12pm

Friends of Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary

Convenor: Sue Forster
Phone: 0431 688 606 **Email:** sue.forster@optusnet.com.au
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Oct 8, Nov 12 **Time:** 10am-12pm

Friends of Bayside Roads

Contact: Derek Jones
Phone: 0417 360 747 **Email:** derekhjones36@gmail.com

Friends of Beaumaris Reserve

Convenor: Chris Sutton
Phone: 0438 327 924 **Email:** sutc@bigpond.com

Black Rock and Sandringham Conservation Association Inc.

 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Sep 20, Oct 4, 18, Nov 1, 15 **Time:** 10am-12pm

Friends of Brighton Dunes

Convenor: George Leighfield
Phone: 0432 465 707 **Email:** gleighfi@gmail.com
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Sep 20, Oct 4, 18, Nov 1, 15 **Time:** 8am-9.30am

Friends of Cheltenham Park

Convenor: Valerie Tyers
Phone: (03) 9588 0107 **Email:** valerietyers@hotmail.com
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Oct 2, Nov 6 **Time:** 10am-12pm

Friends of Donald MacDonald Reserve

Convenor: Kim Croker
Phone: (03) 9589 2443 **Email:** kcroker@bigpond.net.au
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Oct 5, Nov 2 **Time:** 9am-11am

Friends of Elster Creek

President: Thijs Honningh
Secretary: Anubhooti Jaiswal
Email: friendsofelstercreek@gmail.com
Meeting point: Elwood Canal, Glen Huntly Road Bridge

Friends of George Street Reserve

Convenors: Pauline Reynolds & Val Tarrant
Phone: (03) 9598 6368 **Email:** pauline.reynolds.au@gmail.com
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Oct 16, Nov 20 **Time:** 10am-12pm

Friends of Gramatan Avenue Heathland

Convenor: Jo Hurse
Phone: (03) 9283 2052
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Oct 2, Nov 6 **Time:** 1pm-3pm

Friends of Long Hollow Heathland

Convenor: Rob Saunders
Phone: (03) 9515 3383 **Email:** srednuas@hotmail.com
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Sep 25, Oct 30, Nov 27 **Time:** 1pm-3pm

Friends of Merindah Park & Urban Forest

Convenor: John de Cruz Douglas
Phone: 0417 386 408 **Email:** jdecdouglas@internode.on.net

Friends of Mother Stock Areas

Convenors: Pauline Reynolds and Rob Saunders
Phone: (03) 9598 6368 **Email:** pauline.reynolds.au@gmail.com
Phone: (03) 9515 3383 **Email:** srednuas@hotmail.com

Friends of Native Wildlife

Convenors: Anne Jessel & Elizabeth Walsh
Phone: 0412 545 441 **Email:** info@bayfonw.org.au
Website: www.bayfonw.org.au

Friend of Picnic Point Sandringham

Convenor: Terry Reynolds
Phone: (03) 9598 2978 **Email:** reynolds_family@hotmail.com

Friends of Ricketts Point

Convenor: Diana Pearce
Phone: 0448 573 256 **Email:** dipearce39@icloud.com
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Oct 12, Nov 9 **Time:** 9.30am-11.30am

Friends of Ricketts Point Landside

Convenor: Sue Raverty
Phone: (03) 9589 2103 **Email:** sraverty@westnet.com.au
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Sep 20, Oct 18, Nov 15 **Time:** 1pm-3pm

Friends of Table Rock

Convenor: Ken Rendell
Phone: (03) 9589 4452
 **Upcoming working bees:**
Dates: Sep 27, Oct 25, Nov 29 **Time:** 10am-12pm

Do you want to know
more about Bayside and
the Banksia Bulletin?

Please refer to our website
www.bayside.vic.gov.au



Biodiversity Blitz 2022

As part of Biodiversity month, Bayside has joined neighbouring councils for a friendly competition on who can record the most species via the iNaturalist app.

Until 30 September, you can take photos of Bayside's flora and fauna and upload them as part of a citizen science project to learn more about our local biodiversity while showcasing to the world the plants and animals that call Bayside home.

[Find out more](#) about downloading the app and sharing your photos

[View a 'how to' video](#) by Yarra Ranges Council.



Environment Groups

Bayside Earth Sciences Society Inc.

President: Murray Orr

Email: baysidefossils@gmail.com

Website: www.beaumarisfossils.org

Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc.

President: Caroline Lawton

Contact: PO Box 7016, Beaumaris 3193

Email: pre@bcs.asn.au

Website: www.bcs.asn.au

Black Rock and Sandringham Conservation Association Inc

President: Craig Brunnen

Phone: 0488 303 887 **Email:** brunnencc@gmail.com

Secretary: John Neve

Phone: 0479 196 260 **Email:** jneve@ozemail.com.au

Elsternwick Park Association

President: Natalie Davey

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Marine Care Ricketts Point Inc

President: Elizabeth Jensen

Phone: 0419 354 998 **Email:** elizabethjensen@outlook.com

Website: www.marinecare.org.au

Sandringham Foreshore Association

President: Dr Vicki Karalis

Email: sandyforeshore@optusnet.com.au

Website: sandringhamforeshore.tumblr.com

School Groups

St Leonard's College Conservation Group

Contact: Simon Daniels

Phone: (03) 9909 9300 **Email:** simon.daniels@stleonards.vic.edu.au



Editorial Policy

The purpose of publishing the Banksia Bulletin is to circulate information, report on events, and to profile relevant environmental issues important to our community. The Bulletin is also published to support the network of people involved in enjoying and protecting our local environment.

Bayside City Council encourages people from our local community groups to submit articles of interest, share experiences and news about any upcoming events. All articles are reviewed prior to publication and Council reserves the right to omit or edit submissions.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the people who have contributed to this issue of Banksia Bulletin.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in the Banksia Bulletin are not necessarily those of Bayside City Council nor its representatives.

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Please send articles and photos to banksia@bayside.vic.gov.au

Copy deadlines

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If you would like to be added to the Banksia Bulletin mailing list, please contact Bayside City Council on 9599 4444 or email: banksia@bayside.vic.gov.au Please indicate whether you would prefer to receive your Banksia Bulletin by email or via post.

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Upright Maroon Hood (*Pterostylis pedunculata*)
By Pauline Reynolds