
Well done to everyone living in the City of Bayside who played a part in getting Victoria out of the COVID-19 crisis we found ourselves in this year. While it was certainly an interesting Council election campaign this year without the opportunity for a lot of face-to-face interaction with our community, I am very humbled to be returning to the City of Bayside as a Councillor for the next four years, and another term to serve as your Mayor.

As many of you would know, I am very passionate about our local environment, and I’m really pleased to see the work of our volunteers published in this magazine. They are greatly appreciated by all of our community.

I heard recently from Council’s Biodiversity and Conservation Planning Officer Amy Weir that she had received a thank you email from a reader located in the United Kingdom.

One of the biggest benefits of Banksia Bulletin going to a digital version is the reach it now has. The reader highlighted the learning opportunities Banksia Bulletin provided, and it even sparked a discussion at the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland’s Events & Communications Committee. Well done to everyone involved in making this happen.

It is fantastic to see our Friends groups coming together and ramping up their working bee schedules for next year, and well done to BRASCA for squeezing in two before the year ends.

Our Friends groups are very important to the combined efforts we all make in protecting our local flora and fauna, but they are also important for social connectivity. I hope you enjoy being back together and I look forward to seeing you in the new year.

On behalf of all my fellow Councillors, Merry Christmas Bayside,

Cr Laurence Evans
Mayor
Bayside City Council

Cover image: Musk Lorikeet
Photo: John Eichler

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Small Poranthera

Poranthera microphylla, also referred to as the Small Poranthera, is a small annual herb found in all states of Australia and New Zealand. It is a fleshy plant growing to roughly 15cm in diameter and about half that in height. It has greyish spoon or even egg-shaped leaves with a small point on the tip. It prefers well-drained soils and quite often appears after a fire. Despite the large range of this little herb it’s not a plant that we often come across in our days working in the heathlands.

Citywide first noticed it back in autumn and we were scratching our heads attempting to identify this unusual plant, searching our Flora of Melbourne hoping to come across some clues. It wasn’t until spring when the white flowers were very pronounced and we were able to officially welcome the small poranthera back to Balcombe Reserve. It had been previously recorded back in 2016 after a controlled burn and has popped up in similar circumstances after the 2019 burn. We are hoping to collect some seed from the Balcombe Reserve specimens and propagate the small poranthera at our Bayside Community Nursery.

Bushland team member Matthew Powell recently discovered some more small poranthera at Cheltenham Park.

The rediscovery of this plant has the bushland team searching for other small poranthera plants around Bayside. This has challenged us to further improve our plant identification skills.

Birdlife ID resources

Birdlife Australia has produced two booklets for citizen scientists involved in shorebird and waterbird monitoring.

The Wetland Birds of south eastern Australia Identification booklet can help you identify waterbirds found on the wetlands of south-eastern Australia. The booklet says, ‘Sadly many of these species and their habitats are subject to increasing threats. By monitoring their trends, we can identify conservation priorities and seek to halt declines.’

The Shorebirds Identification booklet, ‘covers all 54 shorebird species that occur regularly in Australia. For easier identification we have included ID tips for each species and maps of where you are most likely to encounter them.’

For more information on how to get involved visit the Birdlife Australia website.

The rise and fall of Chota Croton

An environmental success story

Words and photos by Sue Raverty
Convener Friends of Ricketts Point Landside

Chota Croton at 411 Beach Road in Beaumaris was built in the 1930s. The house was named after a mansion in Caulfield called Crotonhurst, which was demolished in 1937.

The marble fire place surround and plinth, stained glass windows, the Cornish entrance porch, chimney pots and possibly the gates were salvaged from Crotonhurst and installed at the new Chota Croton at Ricketts Point.

There was access to Beach Road through beautiful gates at the rear of the property. The land was tiered due to the steep slope of the block and the main access to the house was from Lang Street, not Beach Road.

In 1999, when the Friends of Ricketts Point Landside began working at the site, the access path was grassed and was wider than a normal driveway. In the 2000s we reclaimed a large area to the right of the track which was used as a turnaround and storage for a trailer.

Around 2014, we started to plant along the edges of the access road to narrow it. We continued to maintain and revegetate more of the sides of what had then become more like a track.

In March 2016, the house was put on the market. In July 2016, when the house was vacant, we prepared the site and planted out the rest of the grassy area.

After the house was demolished in 2019, the house block was cleared and has been left untouched since then. The plants in front of the gates have continued to grow and at the present time it is hard to find the access entrance and the gates can no longer be seen from Beach Road.

We are waiting to see what is built on the empty block and how it will impact the reserve. Fingers crossed it will be a good outcome.
Volunteers are back!

Words and photos by Pauline Reynolds

The first volunteer session since March took place at the Bayside Community Nursery on the morning of Tuesday 8 December 2020.

Council and Citywide have put in place their COVIDSafe Plans, and a maximum of 10 volunteers at each session are allowed. Citywide Bushland and Nursery Supervisor Jo Hurse and Bayside Nursery Coordinator Julie Valentine have worked out the safe set up and everyone was very happy to be working and helping again.

Since then, we have tubed many trays of Goodenia ovata, and we welcomed three new volunteers.

While a little out of practice, it didn’t take long to get the fingers going again. I hope we can continue to contribute to the propagation of the number of plants required for next year. There was a concern that in this disruptive year the plants that were ready for sale would not be sold. Amazingly, they were sold to wholesale customers including golf courses and schools that took advantage of the quiet time to do extra planting. All other environmental volunteers will be back doing work and contributing in the way they enjoy next year. BRASCA will squeeze in two working bees before 2020 is over.

I’m sure there were times this year when everyone, like me, thought we’d never be allowed out but here we are. Hopefully a vaccination early next year might see the end of this virus and fingers crossed the next one doesn’t come along too soon!

The story of a pair of Tawny Frogmouths

Story by Diana Pearce and Moira Longden

In the 2007 Summer/Autumn edition of Banksia Bulletin, Moira Longden wrote a wonderful article following the progress of a pair of Tawny Frogmouths, which had nested and roosted in our neighbouring trees for a couple of years. Since then, neighbours have taken an interest in where they may build a nest and shared news when we discovered a nest.

Sometimes, it was a surprise when the nest was on the top of a light pole near the Beaumaris school. Eventually they would return to our tree and show off the family (often right outside our back door). In hot weather, they would enjoy a family bath with a soft hose down.

Each year the pair has produced chicks and reared them until they were sent on their way, and then they would settle back to roost in our tree (Agonis flexuosa). We have had almost daily pleasure of knowing that they are present.

Earlier this year, we were hoping that the pair would mate again as all the signs seemed right.

Then, one day there was a dead Tawny hanging in the foliage of the tree. The other bird kept vigil for many days until finally I asked a neighbour to help me release the dead Tawny from the tree. To our surprise and pleasure, another Tawny Frogmouth turned up and we were hopeful that they might mate and continue the dynasty.

Just when we thought it wasn’t going to happen, the force of life showed its colours and they did!

It took a while to find where they had nested but finally Moira spotted the nest in her Casuarina tree. Friends around our area were reassured that they were still our Tawnies!

Fast forward a few weeks and as I write, two chicks are looking like they are ready to fledge.

It has been interesting to watch the fly-in-fly-out action as the parents take turns to look after the nest and feed the chicks – who look like wide-eyed fluffy toys making purring noises when the parents are busy hunting and feeding them.

Photo credit: Jarryd Linehan

Black Rock and Sandringham Conservation Association Inc volunteers, December 2020 working bee.
Insects as pollinators
– here, there and everywhere

Story by Elizabeth Walsh
Convenor FoNW Inc.

Friends of Native Wildlife Inc. hosted a zoom session, *Wild in Bayside*, featuring Luis Mata presenting an online talk *Pollinator Observatories* – a fun and engaging way of reconnecting people with nature in cities.

The addition of some of his personal macro photographs from various local heathland settings provided relevance and entertainment.

Luis recently moved back to Bayside after conducting a successful large-scale pollinator program at Westgate Park using citizen science and supported by RMIT, Melbourne University, Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub, Westgate Biodiversity: Bili Nursery & Landcare and the City of Melbourne.

During his talk, Luis talked about themes of pollination, invasion ecology, indigenous culture, plant-insect interactions and colour patterns.

One such flower example is the daisy-like flowers. Whether introduced or indigenous, daisies, with their bright yellow flowers, attract native bees and honey bees. Some wasps delight in finding their way down narrow flower trumpets, collecting pollen as they forage for sweet nectar. The many beetles, flies, bugs and butterflies also have their colour preferences.

The results from Westgate Park showed the greatest interactions were from bees down to flies, butterflies, then bugs, wasps, beetles and lastly, ants. It was interesting to note that 65 per cent of interactions were from native insect species and 35 per cent from non-native species.

Whether planting for ground cover, low or medium shrubs, understorey or canopy, insects of every shape and species can be found as part of the biodiversity of the natural environment.

These ecological networks across all types of plants support and link the health of our environment.

Pollination is carried out whilst insects feed on pollen or nectar or are fooled into attempting to mate because of the pheromones exuded from specialised plants, thus moving pollen from one plant to another. The leaves and buds provide food to foliage-eating insects, and those insects in turn become food for larger insects, birds and reptiles.

Luis explained how management actions could restructure the landscape of urban meta-networks, and the important of decision-makers fully understanding the impacts of biodiversity.

Find out more about Luis Mata at [https://luismataresearch.wordpress.com/about-me/](https://luismataresearch.wordpress.com/about-me/)

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It’s a wonder
Words and photo by Rob Saunders
Rare Plants Group

Bayside Community Nursery has recently propagated a plant that has been locally extinct for many years. Now known as the Anglesea Grevillea (*Grevillea infecunda*), it was collected by Baron von Mueller from “bushland near Brighton” in the 1850s.

As its Latin name implies, this species is infertile. It only spreads by suckering. This is a truly rare and fascinating plant. So few remain in the wild, it is listed under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999).

Because it is infertile, each plant is a clone, so it could be argued that this is Bayside’s only indigenous Grevillea.

It is fascinating that the same plant was able to spread from wherever it first evolved to Anglesea and Brighton. Assuming a growth rate of around 10cm per year, it would take at least 100,000 years to spread from a central point between those two locations.

So how did it cross Port Phillip Bay, you ask? Well, Port Phillip Bay only formed at the end of the last Ice Age. And how did it cross the Yarra River? The answer is that the Yarra River itself would have changed course many times over that period.

Plants such as this can be used in teaching a variety of subjects, from geography to history and even mathematics. But perhaps most importantly, they can teach a sense of wonder.
Why birds visit Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary

Why birds visit
Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary

Story by Sue Forster
Convenor Friends of Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary

When it comes to attracting birds, Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary lacks many of the advantages of nearby golf courses, particularly scale and a permanent water source.

Typical residents common to Bayside include dominant honeyeaters such as Noisy Miners, Red and Little Wattlebirds; larger predatory passerines such as Australian Magpies, Pied Currawongs and Little Ravens; and, lurking in denser shrubs, small Brown Thornbills and White-browed Scrubwrens. Grey Butcherbirds, Magpie Larks, Rainbow Lorikeets and Eastern Rosellas are frequent visitors and, on rare occasions, a Laughing Kookaburra may fly in from Sandringham Golf Course.

Although the Sanctuary is primarily conserved for its heathland vegetation, roving birds are most likely to seek out its Manna Gums or Black Wattles, for shelter or food. There is, of course, no shortage of insect life when the heathland is blooming – a bonus for the many omnivorous or insectivorous birds in the area.

Common Bronzewing in Black Wattle, Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary, 8 November 2020. Photo: John Eichler.

Musk Lorikeets are regular seasonal visitors, feeding on lerp and nectar from flowering Manna Gums in January and February. In a mixed lorikeet flock, they can be distinguished from Rainbow Lorikeets by their mainly green plumage, smaller size, shorter tail and high-pitched call. A red cheek patch differentiates them from the similar but less common Little Lorikeet.

Large Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos disperse to the lowlands after breeding in higher ranges between July and January. The last time I heard their plaintive whee-la call and registered the effects of their visit was in April 2020. They occasionally drop in to the Sanctuary to extract Cossid Moth and Longicorn Beetle larvae from under the bark of Black Wattles. Apparently, they can hear the larvae tunnelling around the cambium layer of the trunks. Black Cockatoos can cause considerable damage to saplings as their strong beaks pierce many centimetres into bark, shredding it during extraction.

After exchanging notes with Citywide bushland crew and local naturalist John Eichler, I discovered that, between July and November 2020, the Sanctuary had five visiting species that I had not
previously observed in this area. In the case of the Common Bronzewing, I was simply not in the right place at the right time. Michael Norris, former Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary Friends Convener, recorded 38 Common Bronzewing observations in the Sanctuary between 1996 and 2019. In late October this year, John Eichler initially spotted a Common Bronzewing in the south-west part of the reserve and a week later managed to obtain a photo of one in the stand of Black Wattle at the north-east corner. The timing of his observations, after the trees had finished flowering, is not surprising. Black Wattle seeds are a favourite food source for the not-so-surprising Black Wattle. It was either a juvenile or female as adult males have red heads as well as breasts. This was a first for the Sanctuary. These large, colourful parrots are usually found in or near wet Eucalypt forest, such as Sherbrooke Forest in the Dandenong Ranges, and Bayside is well beyond their usual range. King Parrots eat fruit, seeds, blossoms and insects. The Black Wattle blossom, which was in full bloom during September, may have attracted the visiting pair. Michael Norris previously recorded this species in the Sanctuary on only one occasion, back in 1986. Although the scapulated pattern of the bird’s feathers is highly distinctive, I emailed my photos to Birdlife Bayside president Tania Ireton and sent them to Melbourne Museum for identification. A Birdlife Bayside quiz taught me that Brown Goshawks and Collared Sparrowhawks are very difficult to tell apart; however, unlike Goshawks, Sparrowhawks have not been recorded around the Sanctuary. I believe this bird’s dark brown upper parts and heavily streaked chin, throat and breast were indicative of a juvenile bird; despite their common name, adult Brown Goshawks have a grey head, back and tail with a rufous collar. Goshawk prey includes small reptiles, birds and mammals – all found within the Sanctuary. As Goshawk hunting tactics include low concealed aerial approaches and ground stalking, this young bird may have misjudged safety distance around the road.

Surprise visitors are, of course, often spotted elsewhere in Bayside, as was the case for a pair of Australian King Parrots seen in the Sanctuary by Citywide crew on 16 September. Using his iPhone, Matt Powell managed to get a photo of one of them in a Black Wattle. It was either a juvenile or female as adult males have red heads as well as breasts. This was a first for the Sanctuary. These large, colourful parrots are usually found in or near wet Eucalypt forest, such as Sherbrooke Forest in the Dandenong Ranges, and Bayside is well beyond their usual range. King Parrots eat fruit, seeds, blossoms and insects. The Black Wattle blossom, which was in full bloom during September, may have attracted the visiting pair. Unfortunately, the two other novel birds were already dead when discovered. Their deaths may have been the result of inexperience as both were possibly juveniles. One of these, found near the viewing platform on 2 November, was a Bassian or Scaly Thrush. Like the King Parrot, it is more usually found feeding on insects and fruit in moist forests, but is hard to detect due to its well-camouflaged plumage and quiet skulking habits. Michael Norris previously recorded this species in the Sanctuary on only one occasion, back in 1986. Although the scapulated pattern of the bird’s feathers is highly distinctive, I emailed my photos to Birdlife Bayside president Tania Ireton and sent them to Melbourne Museum for identification. A Birdlife Bayside quiz taught me that Brown Goshawks and Collared Sparrowhawks are very difficult to tell apart; however, unlike Goshawks, Sparrowhawks have not been recorded around the Sanctuary. I believe this bird’s dark brown upper parts and heavily streaked chin, throat and breast were indicative of a juvenile bird; despite their common name, adult Brown Goshawks have a grey head, back and tail with a rufous collar. Goshawk prey includes small reptiles, birds and mammals – all found within the Sanctuary. As Goshawk hunting tactics include low concealed aerial approaches and ground stalking, this young bird may have misjudged safety distance around the road.

Just as I was finishing this article, I received a text message and photo from Citywide crewman Jarryd Linehan, who had found two Tawny Frogmouth feathers inside the Bay Road entrance. This was another previously unrecorded bird. A search revealed neither a roosting Tawny Frogmouth nor a corpse, so the bird was probably hunting for insects on the previous night and moved on. Our Sandringham bushland corridors provide vital food and shelter for roving bird visitors as well as local residents. It’s always exciting to find new bird species in this habitat, but, as these stories indicate, our suburban sanctuaries’ are not always safe havens for inexperienced juveniles far from home. Thank you to all the people mentioned above who contributed their photos, observations and expertise.

To view photos of the c. 435 flora, fungi and fauna species observed during 2020 in Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary visit https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/bay-road-healthland-sanctuary

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Beetle observations

Words and photos by John Eichler

The Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary is the smallest of Bayside’s natural reserves, being about the size of four house blocks. Despite its small size it supports a valuable, almost weed-free remnant of sand heathland vegetation. This vegetation in turn supports a range of fauna, including numerous invertebrates. The four spectacular insects shown here were observed during visits in October and November 2020. Based on available records and personal observations these insects are apparently uncommon to rare in Bayside. Finds like these help reinforce the importance of local natural reserves in providing a refuge for a variety of life forms.

Some impressive local insects

Jewel Beetle
Stigmodera macularia

Several of these large (30-35mm long) beetles were found feeding on Prickly Tea-tree flowers at the Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary this spring. This beetle is apparently rare locally, with no known records from other local natural reserves, although it was recorded from Chelsea in the early 1900s. The larvae of most Jewel Beetles are wood borers.

Jewel Bug
Scutiphora pedicellata

A colourful bug which is thought to feed on the fruit of native and introduced plants. Observed locally at Balcombe Park and Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary. The nymph (immature) stage of the bug (lower image) is quite different to the adult (left image) but is just as colourful.

Jewel Beetle
Castiarina flavopicta

This small (10mm long) beetle feeds on the nectar and pollen of various native flowers – in this case Prickly Tea-tree. It has been observed at Balcombe Park, Long Hollow Heathland Reserve, Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary and Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary. Approximately 100 species of Castiarina occur in Victoria. While there are historical records of several species from Bayside this is the only one recorded recently.

Golden Stag Beetle
Lamprima aurata

The larvae of this stunning, iridescent beetle feed on decaying wood. Golden Stag Beetles have been found at Gramatan Avenue Heathland Sanctuary and Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary. The individual shown here is a male, which has prominent mouthparts. The presence of large mouthparts on this group of beetle has led to them being called Stag Beetle.
Bayside City Council has been pruning the Coast Banksia trees around Ricketts Point to mitigate risk associated with some of the declining Banksia trees in this precinct.

The area has recently been surveyed for risk by independent arborists and several trees have been identified for canopy pruning. In some cases, dangerous dead (stag) Banksias have been removed. Trees identified as high risk are located within the Ricketts Point Teahouse garden area, Ricketts Point Landside and around the Beaumaris Life Saving Club.

All trees will be reassessed for habitat and/or nesting species and where possible, nesting hollows will be retained.

These works are part of Council’s ongoing tree maintenance program and as part of that program, Coast Banksia will be replanted in other appropriate areas of the foreshore around Ricketts Point.

For more information please contact Council’s arborist Mary Markowski via email mmarkowski@bayside.vic.gov.au

Wildlife-friendly regulations for household fruit netting

Attention all household gardeners who live in Victoria

Story by Animal Welfare Victoria

If you use netting to protect your fruit or vegetable harvest you will need to be aware of new provisions under Victoria’s Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019 (POCTA Regulations).

The regulations, being introduced in September 2021, relate to the sale and use of household fruit netting. They do not apply to commercial circumstances.

Fruit netting is commonly used by household gardeners to protect their trees and fruit from hungry wildlife.

Netting with a large mesh size is more likely to entangle birds, possums or flying foxes. Their subsequent struggling to free themselves may cause deep cuts and strangulation, often leading to death.

From 1 September 2021, any netting used to protect household fruit trees, vegetable gardens, or other fruiting plants must have a mesh size, when at full stretch, of no greater than 5mm x 5mm. Netting advertised or offered for sale for household use must also be compliant with these required mesh specifications.

If you are looking to purchase netting this year, it is highly recommended that you buy netting that meets these requirements for this harvest season. Any existing household fruit netting that does not meet these specifications must be replaced with appropriate netting before 1 September 2021.

An alternative to netting is the use of fruit bags that are placed over individual branches. These also reduce the risk of capturing animals while leaving excess fruit available for hungry wildlife.

Don’t forget that old netting, when discarded, can still become an entanglement risk. It helps to place old netting into a strong biodegradable bag before putting into landfill.

The use of appropriate mesh sized netting supports a productive harvest while also protecting wildlife.


Please direct any requests and questions you may have on this matter to the Animal Welfare Victoria team via email at animal.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au
How non-native plants are contributing to a global insect decline

The impact of introduced plants on native biodiversity has emerged as a hot-button issue in recent research. New evidence suggests that the displacement of native plant communities is a key cause of a collapse in insect populations and is affecting birds as well.

**Words by Janet Marinelli**

Source: Yale 380, published by the Yale School of the Environment

**For years, Doug Tallamy sounded the alarm on the negative impacts of non-native plants introduced from abroad, but the concerns went largely unheeded.**

In a comprehensive study, Tallamy and his co-authors revealed that about 30 percent of North American birds (96 percent of them) depend on insects that are primarily adapted to eat non-native plants. Invasive plants have helped decimate insect species and the ornamentals we plant in our gardens around the world, they found that 69 percent of caterpillar species can develop on native plants and 48 percent of butterfly species can feed on them. Some 96 percent of North American plants are not native to their new lands via the horticulture trade. In part, they blame this on the lack of information about the negative impacts of non-native plants. And in plant communities invaded by non-native species, the study found, the abundance of butterflies and moths was significantly reduced.

**The issue of non-native plants has attracted little notice, and that more than half of the planet’s plants is devoted to production agriculture, and 60 percent of the plants in the Washington, D.C., suburbs are not native. They point out that a common “urban-adapted” bird like the Carolina chickadee is limited by the relative lack of food in a typical suburban landscape, it may be an even bigger problem for birds with more specialized diets. What’s more, some 96 percent of North America’s terrestrial birds rear their young on insects, rather than seeds or berries, when insects decline, they too decline.**

**Tallamy and his co-authors concede that critical gaps in our knowledge remain. But the evidence suggests a clear picture of the problem: introduced plants are bad.**

Tallamy and his co-authors write, “the widespread preference for non-native plants in landscaping, urban areas is rife with introduced species, and it’s estimated that these quickly growing areas could cover as much as 20 percent of the land in the United States.”

Some 96 percent of North American terrestrial birds rear their young on insects, as a new book by Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson suggests. Horticulture has been one of the primary proliferators of invasive non-native plants in southern Florida, for example. Scientists have found that, on average, 56 percent of the plants in the Washington, D.C., suburbs are not native. They point out that a common “urban-adapted” bird like the Carolina chickadee is limited by the relative lack of food in a typical suburban landscape, it may be an even bigger problem for birds with more specialized diets. What’s more, some 96 percent of North America’s terrestrial birds rear their young on insects, rather than seeds or berries, when insects decline, they too decline.

**Tragically, some plants are bad for the birds.**

Mark Davis, an ecologist at Macalester College, has a different view. He points out that even Tallamy and his co-authors concede that they can only extrapolate the impact of non-native plants on insect populations from short-term studies performed in the laboratory, because longer-term, landscape-scale studies have not yet been done. In other words, says Davis, “there is yet no evidence that non-native plants reduce insect abundance over the general landscape.”

According to researchers, the global insect decline began at the turn of the 20th century, accelerated during the 1950s and 1960s, and reached alarming proportions globally during the past two decades. A study in 2018 found that the biodiversity of flying insects over 27 years at protected areas in Germany catalyzed the plight of insects into the public consciousness.

**Researchers have found that non-native plants have helped decimate insect populations was based on decades of research showing that many insects, especially the phytophagous or plant-eating species that account for most insect species and the ornamentals we plant in our gardens around the world, they found that 69 percent of caterpillar species can develop on native plants and 48 percent of butterfly species can feed on them.**

Some 96 percent of North American terrestrial birds rear their young on insects, rather than seeds or berries, when insects decline, they too decline. Tallamy and his co-authors concede that critical gaps in our knowledge remain. But the evidence suggests a clear picture of the problem: introduced plants are bad. "A domestic version of Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson’s "Will of the Earth" project. If American highways are rife with introduced species, then what about protected areas in Germany?"

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For these reasons, Tallamy has proposed a domestic version of Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson’s “Will of the Earth” project. If American highways are rife with introduced species, then what about protected areas in Germany? In 2019, he launched a project to lure birds into yards with a “native plants” yard. Tallamy’s "Yard of the Year" contest, the first of its kind, was a major issue. Nearly half of the bird’s land is now in some form of agriculture. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 44 percent of the world’s plants’ forest includes non-native tree species, many have escaped from cultivation and now dominate nearby native forests.

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Assessing the conservation benefits of revegetation

Across Australia, landholders, non-government agencies and community groups are actively carrying out revegetation activities. Whether plantings are for shelterbelts, woodlots or along creeks to reduce erosion, revegetation can provide habitat for native plants and animals, particularly in landscapes that have otherwise been heavily cleared.

ARI in partnership with La Trobe University and several land managers, non-government agencies and community groups have completed research to understand how revegetation contributes to nature conservation. We asked:

• What are the features of revegetation plantings that most increase their value for animals?
• Which species benefit most from revegetation in rural landscapes?
• Does the conservation value of revegetation change over time as plantings age and mature?

To answer these questions, we examined bird and butterfly communities in a large field study undertaken in Glenelg Hopkins region of western Victoria during 2019 and 2020. The study repeated bird and habitat surveys at more than 250 of sites surveyed in 2006/07. We surveyed across a range of revegetation types to help us understanding of how the value of revegetation for birds has changed over time.

We found that all revegetation activities had broad landscape scale benefits for both birds and butterflies, increasing both the number of species and community complexity. Many benefits of revegetation are realised in the first 15 years after planting, however for some species, such as those that rely on formation of hollows, the benefits will take many more years to emerge.

This research is designed to improve the efficiency of future investment programs and help achieve better conservation outcomes for revegetation activities. This project was funded by the Victorian Government.

For more information contact: tim.obrien@delwp.vic.gov.au

Banksia Bulletin  |  Summer 2020-21

Bushfire response 2020 – impacts on reptiles and frogs

Surveys have helped determine the immediate impact of intense and extensive fires on reptiles and frogs

Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

The late 2019 – early 2020 ‘Black Summer’ fires were unprecedented in their impact and scale. Extensive tracts of the coastal side of the Great Diving Range in south-eastern Australia were affected, with significant impacts on biodiversity.

Most reptiles and frogs have small home ranges, and even the larger, more mobile species are unable to escape large, fast-moving fires. For many, including some threatened species, eastern Victoria represents a large, and often the most secure and continuous, proportion of their state distribution. Field assessments of fire impacts and threats immediately after fires like this allows us to understand the impacts of the fires, the most immediate threats, and quickly implement recovery management actions.

ARI conducted surveys within months of the fires, targeted at species particularly vulnerable to post-fire threats, such as those where:

• a large proportion of their known habitat was likely burnt (e.g. Gippsland Water Dragon)
• they were known to be in decline before these fires (e.g. Alpine Tree Frog)
• burnt areas were previously considered a stronghold of their distribution (e.g. Swamp Skink)
• they have specialised habitat preferences (e.g. Alpine She-oak Skink)
• they have ecological traits that may make them particularly susceptible to impacts from fires (e.g. Lace Monitor)

Immediate and short-term impacts of these fires on reptiles and frogs identified during our surveys include:

• mass incineration of populations
• loss of shelter and habitats used for thermoregulation, foraging and predator avoidance
• reduction in food sources e.g invertebrates
• increased exposure to predators, including foxes and feral cats
• individuals of some species, such as Swamp Skink, were found sheltering in burrows in burnt habitat (although these may represent a small fraction of the numbers in those areas before the fires)
• adjacent burnt and unburnt riparian habitat showed striking differences in the number of Water Dragons

Across Australia, landholders, non-government agencies and community groups and government agencies are actively carrying out revegetation activities. Whether plantings are for shelterbelts, woodlots or along creeks to reduce erosion, revegetation can provide habitat for native plants and animals, particularly in landscapes that have otherwise been heavily cleared.

Within Victoria, ARI in partnership with La Trobe University and several land managers, non-government agencies and community groups have completed research to understand how revegetation contributes to nature conservation. We asked:

• What are the features of revegetation plantings that most increase their value for animals?
• Which species benefit most from revegetation in rural landscapes?
• Does the conservation value of revegetation change over time as plantings age and mature?

To answer these questions, we examined bird and butterfly communities in a large field study undertaken in Glenelg Hopkins region of western Victoria during 2019 and 2020. The study repeated bird and habitat surveys at more than 250 of sites surveyed in 2006/07. We surveyed across a range of revegetation types to help us understanding of how the value of revegetation for birds has changed over time.

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For more information contact: tim.obrien@delwp.vic.gov.au
**Volunteer Groups**

### Friends of Balcombe Park
Convenor: Ian O’Loughlin  
Mobile: 0412 432 618 Email: ianoloughlin@optusnet.com.au

### Friends of Bay Road Heathland Sanctuary
Convenor: Sue Forster  
Phone: 0431 689 608 Email: sue.forster@optusnet.com.au

### Friends of Bayside Roads
Contact: Derek Jones  
Phone: 0417 360 747 Email: derek.jones31@gmail.com

### Bayside Environmental Friends Network
Convenor: Erica Breeden  
Phone: 9583 9408 Email: friend@bayside.vic.gov.au

### Friends of Beaumaris Reserve
Convenor: Chris Sutton  
Phone: 0408 527 924 Email: autodet@bigpond.com

### Friends of Brighton Dunes
Convenor: Jenny Talbot  
Phone: 0409 592 233

### Friends of Cheltenham Park
Convenor: Valerie Tyers  
Phone: 03 9588 0107 Email: valeriatyers@hotmail.com

### Friends of Donald MacDonald Reserve
Convenor: Kim Croker  
Phone: 03 9589 2443 Email: kcroker@bigpond.net.au

### Friends of George Street Reserve
Convenors: Pauline Raynolds & Val Tarrant  
Phone: 03 9584 6368 Email: pauline.raynolds.au@gmail.com

### Friends of Gramatan Avenue Heathland
Convenor: Ken Randall  
Phone: 03 9589 4452

### Friends of Long Hollow Heathland
Convenor: Rob Saunders  
Phone: 03 9515 3383 Email: srede4u@hotmail.com

### Friends of Merindah Park & Urban Forest
Convenor: John de Cruz Douglas  
Phone: 0417 386 408 Email: placid4lan@interodns.on.net

### Friends of Mother Stock Areas
Convenors: Pauline Raynolds and Rob Saunders  
Phone: 03 9584 6368 Email: pauline.raynolds.au@gmail.com  
Phone: 03 9515 3383 Email: srede4u@hotmail.com

### Friends of Native Wildlife
Convenors: Anne Jessel & Elizabeth Walsh  
Phone: 0412 545 441 Email: info@bayside.vic.gov.au  
Website: www.bayside.vic.gov.au

### Friend of Picnic Point Sandringham
Convenor: Terry Raynolds  
Phone: 03 9598 2978 Email: raynolds_tamy@hotmail.com

### Friends of Ricketts Point
Convenor: Diana Pearce  
Phone: 0448 573 256 Email: dpearea@bigblue.com

### Friends of Ricketts Point Landside
Convenor: Sue Rawlly  
Phone: 03 9589 2103 Email: srawlly@westnet.com.au

### Friends of Table Rock
Convenor: Ken Reidell  
Phone: 03 9589 4452

### Friends of Elster Creek
Convenor: Karen Jone  
Phone: 9525 3102 Email: karen@recreationcentre.com  
Meeting point: Elwood Canal, Glen Huntly Road Bridge

### Environment Groups

**Bayside Earth Sciences Society Inc.**  
President: Murray Orr  
Email: baysideboss@gmail.com  
Website: www.beauamarnatissi.org

**Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc**  
President: Greg Mar  
Contact: PO Box 7016, Beaumaris 3190 Email: info@bcs.asn.au  
Website: www.bcs.asn.au

**Black Rock and Sandringham Conservation Association Inc**  
President: Craig Brunnen  
Phone: 0488 303 887 Email: brunnanc@gmail.com  
Secretary: John Nove  
Phone: 0479 196 260 Email: johnnove1962@gmail.com

**Elsternwick Park Association**  
Email: ElsternwickParkAssociation@gmail.com

**Marine Care Ricketts Point Inc**  
President: Elizabeth Jensen  
Phone: 0419 354 938 Email: elizabeth.jensen@outlook.com  
Website: www.marinecare.org.au

**Sandringham Foreshore Association**  
President: Dr Vicci Karalis  
Email: sandyshore@optusnet.com.au  
Website: sandringhamforeshore.tumblr.com

### School Groups

**Firbank Girls Grammar**  
Contact: Mary-Ellen Johnson  
Phone: 03 9591 5188 Email: mjohansson@firbank.vic.edu.au

**St Leonard’s College Conservation Group**  
Contact: Simon Daniels  
Phone: 03 9909 9300 Email: simon.daniels@slc.edu.au

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**Friends group convenors will be in touch will all volunteers with information about resuming working bees. Volunteers will be required to adhere to a COVIDSafe Plan, developed specifically for their program. Stay tuned for further information from your group conveners and volunteer leaders.**

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**For more information contact Jo Hurse at Jo.Hurse@citywide.com.au**
Do you want to know more about Bayside and the Banksia Bulletin? Please refer to our website www.bayside.vic.gov.au