



CRISP

Nursery News

17 Greenwood Ave,
Ringwood VIC 3134
Tel. (03) 9879 3911
ABN: 83189398124
email: crisp@melbpc.org.au
www.crispnursery.org.au



Pultenaea gunnii (Golden Bush-pea) photo by Ruth Jackson

Summer Nov - Dec 2017



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See map on back page

SALES AREA

Wednesday 9.30am - 12.30pm
Friday 9.30am - 12.30pm
Saturday 10.00am - 1pm
(March - Nov)

CRISP WEBSITE

www.crispnursery.org.au

Check out the full colour
version of the CRISP News
on-line

Management Team

Nursery Management	Annette O'Sullivan Stephanie Dean
Committee	
President	Lloyd Smiley
Vice President	Kathy Croft
Secretary	Judith Pinney
Treasurer	Helen O'Brien
Member	Magda Teeuwen
Newsletter Editor/design:	Linda Hibbs
Website manager/design:	Ken McInnes

Volunteers

Most of the work at CRISP is carried out by volunteers. These are people from within the community who give their time to help provide a large range of indigenous plants for the Maroondah region. If you care about your local environment and would like to help out at the nursery, join the friendly team. No experience needed. Learn the difference between our local native plants, learn to propagate and pot up the many seedlings.

Cover photo credits

Main cover photo
Pultenaea gunnii (Golden Bush-pea)
photo by Ruth Jackson

A Note from the Editor

We apologise for the late newsletter but hope your plants have been enjoying the recent rain after the long hot spell.

It was wonderful that despite the rain, so many braved the weather to attend the Christmas BBQ. The potting shed was cleared for the occasion, and with marquees and beach umbrellas it was still a BBQ even if half indoors.

The plants in the nursery seem to have flourished in the humidity in the past couple of weeks. But the downpours were welcome as the ground had started to dry out.

A few weeks back I observed a Koel bird in our property near Wombolano Park. It has been at least four years since I last heard this tropical bird (far from its usual home in NSW/QLD). This time it was not just flying through but landed in a tree and called continuously as the rain and thunder threatened. It has a magnificent, although somewhat mournful call. It is either still lost or perhaps with the recent humidity they are venturing further south.

The 'Wildlife Gardens - planting local (indigenous) plants in your garden' booklet is almost complete and will be available in the new year. It provides information for planting indigenous plants in your garden and how to attract wildlife, birds and insects. The photos all come from CRISP members, making this a special book that we hope inspires you all.

Enjoy this edition. Don't forget to fill those bird baths and keep a look out for distressed wildlife during any heat waves.

Have a restful and peaceful Christmas and see you all in the New Year.

Linda Hibbs



Koel

**WILDLIFE
VICTORIA**

For emergency
wildlife calls
(03)84007300

DISCLAIMER

CRISP Nursery Inc. does not hold itself responsible for statements made or opinions expressed in CRISP News. They may not necessarily reflect the opinions of the organisation but are merely printed to share information with those who are interested in the conservation of our local flora and related environmental concerns.

Report from the nursery

Stephanie Dean & Annette O'Sullivan

Over the past few months we have been busy with propagation for next year's sales and plantings. Seed trays that were planted in the spring are germinating well and providing many hours of pricking out and potting up for the volunteers. It is always rewarding to see seeds that have been carefully collected, prepared at seed cleaning evenings and then sown, germinate and with the careful potting up turn into plants that are ready for sale.

Spring is also a time for propagating plants from cuttings. The new spring growth provides good cutting material and the warmer brighter weather ensures that they establish roots quickly.

We have been involved in a few community events in the past couple of months, with a talk at the Ringwood Garden Club, a display at the REALM in Ringwood as part of the opening of the Edna Walling exhibition and a shared marquee at the Maroondah Festival with Council and Maroondah Bushlinks. All these events give us a good opportunity to promote the work of the nursery and introduce members of the community to the beauty of our local indigenous species.

It has been very valuable at these events to have a good range of the botanical illustrations by Ruth Jackson available to help engage people and begin conversations about plants and animals as they admire the intricate detail of the illustrations.



Plants at the nursery Photo Linda Hibbs

Over the past few months, our work with the Maroondah City Council gallery curators has resulted in an exhibition of over 90 of Ruth's original illustrations being held between January 19th and March 9th at the Maroondah Access Gallery, Maroondah Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Ave Ringwood.

The official opening will be on Thursday January 18th between 5.30 and 7pm.

If you are able to help publicise this event and would like some flyers to distribute, please pick some up from the nursery.

The nursery continues to operate over the Christmas Holiday period with the regular Wednesday and Friday volunteer sessions running as usual.

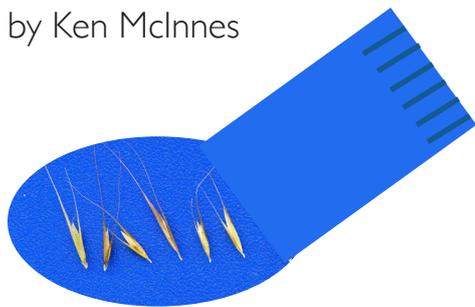
The sales area will still be open on those days and we will have a good selection of plants, cards and prints which would make ideal gifts for Christmas.



Maroondah's Bushland Treasures
Official Opening
Thursday January 18th, 5.30pm
 Come along and support Ruth and the nursery
 and see all the wonderful botanical illustrations
 on show in one place.

Summer Socks Guide to the Grasses of Melbourne

by Ken McInnes



It is the time of the year that wherever you go wandering in the bush, you come back with some annoying little native grass seeds that have buried themselves into the depths of your socks, and maybe even tried to burrow their way into your skin!

But rather than curse the time spent at home, or in the bush, removing them, with this little guide you might get to know these indigenous plants and perhaps even encourage them to grow in your garden.

Wallaby Grasses

This is a common name for a number of native species of grasses, but by far the most common is the *Rytidosperma* species. These are common perennial grasses of open plains and lightly forested slopes. You can easily identify these in your socks, as the seeds are usually small (10-15mm) and fluffy, usually light in colour, pointed with a characteristic arrangement of hairs in tufts or rows (all the better to burrow into your socks). They have a characteristic central awn, often angled slightly to one side, rising between two pointed lobes or awns. These differing characteristic aspects of the seeds often are the only way of determining the differences between species. (Just try telling the plants apart when they aren't in seed!)

The plants provide food for the caterpillars of many native butterflies, and most of the species only grow very low, forming a low maintenance lawn or grassland area around your house. (You only need to mow it once or twice a year, or not at all if you are happy with a low tufty grassland.) The grasses do not dry out in Summer

like most exotic grasses, and hence they are not as much a fire hazardous as the "foreigners". My front yard is mostly a grassland of *Danthonia* species and it is a veritable "butterfly house" in summer.



Kangaroo Grass

You probably won't get the seeds of these in your socks. If you do they are burrowing blighters not unlike the seeds of spear grass, but usually smaller (40mm long). However, it is worth describing the plant here. *Themeda triandra* is widespread in a wide diversity of drier forests and open grasslands. It was a major component of the native grasslands that once covered Victoria's Western Plains. It is easy to identify, because of its distinctive rusty coloured, clustered seed heads. Again it serves as a food plant for the caterpillars of native butterflies, and is an attractive garden plant that can often have a purplish-green hue. The aborigines used the stems and leaves for string and to make nets.



Spear Grass

Their botanical family is *Stipa*, but the common name says it all: the seeds of these grasses are capable of penetrating the skin, mouths, and eyes of cattle, so they are good at burrowing deep into a socks and pricking skin. The seed has a long (40-100mm) single, twisted and bent awn attached. It is designed to burrow into the ground when wet (or into a walker's socks when dampened with sweat). The plant can form a pleasant tussock as an accent in a native garden, particularly when the very long flower/seed stems are formed. The plants do well if trimmed to maintain their vigour. Caterpillars of native butterflies use them as a food plant.



(Please be aware if you are walking in the basalt plain areas west of Melbourne: a similar-looking introduced grass - *Nassella* aka Serrated tussock, Chilean weed - is extremely invasive and running rampant. So don't drop seeds of these weeds in your garden or the bush.)

Photos by Ken McInnes

Weeping Grass

Microleana stipoides has a very distinct weeping flower and seed head. It grows in a wide variety of habitats and can often be seen doing well in moister shaded areas. The seed, about 20mm long, is also distinctive with two awns, one slightly longer than the other. The seed can burrow very quickly into socks. It is one of the best indigenous lawn grasses, and will grow well in shaded sites. So sit outside under your favourite tree, in that bare patch of lawn, when you pull these seeds out of your socks.



Photo by Ken McInnes

Poa

Any list of grasses would be incomplete without mentioning the Poa or Tussock Grasses. You won't find many of these seeds in your socks because they are usually very small, and the seed heads are on

open panicles. Bushwalkers would be familiar with the tussock grasses in the wild - from the coast to the alps, from the desert to beside rivers. By their tussocky nature the grasses are impressive in gardens, either used formally or as an accent plant.



Poa labillardiera
Photos by Ruth Jackson

Bidgee Widgee

No "socks guide" would be complete without mentioning Bidgee Widgee. Not a grass, but a native herb, *Acaena novae-zelandiae* is widespread in damp and valley forests and riparian areas. It has distinctive brown ball seed heads, 25 mm diameter, with velcro-like spines that enable the seed to quickly attach to passing socks. Even when green, these seed heads appear to "leap off" the plant and onto passing socks. Fortunately the seeds don't burrow into your socks, but after walking through a small patch of Bidgee-Widgee the socks can become completely covered! Carefully remove the whole seed ball, otherwise you'll have an even bigger job getting all the little bits out later. The plant is useful in colonizing a bare clayey area that can



Acaena novae-zelandiae
Photo by Ruth Jackson

then be over-seeded with other native species.

(Once I had a fluffy baby Magpie wander into a patch of Bidgee-Widgees in my garden and it was covered in seed balls. It looked rather weird. The parents eventually cleaned up the chick, after I abandoned the job - their incessant dive bombing to protect the chick convinced me to leave them to it.)

Want to know more?

You can read up more about our native plants and grasses, through our plant and garden guides, and through reference s such as the "Flora of Melbourne".

Conclusions

Gradually over the years you will get to know all of the seeds in your socks, and begin to treat them as acquaintances, and perhaps as friends and future plants, rather than as enemies.

(This article is modified from an article by Ken published in MaroonDAH Bushwalking Club's newsletter "Footnotes" in 1997.

Cassinia success

by Ken McInnes

Following up on my article on Cassinias in the last newsletter, I think my plantings must be working! This year for the first time we have lots of White-browed Scrubwrens (*Sericornis frontalis*) nearly every day in our bushy garden in Ringwood North.



Our bush garden is 'layered' with lomandras, dianellas, poas, and microlaenas as the lower layer, then correas, spyridiums, pultenaeas, and goodenias as the next layer, then olearias, cassinias, pomaderris and prostantheras, with acacias and eucalypts overhead. The scrubwrens spend a lot of time on the ground, so

do not do well if there are predators such as cats in the neighbourhood.



White-browed Scrubwren
Photos by Laura Metcalfe (CRISP member)

The Grey Butcherbird

There are 117 bird species in Maroondah. One of them is the Grey Butcherbird, known for its beautiful song. You can hear them singing in the mornings and frequently during the day when they have young. They can be aggressive and territorial and may drive the smaller birds away but if you plant lots of different types of indigenous plants in your garden, you can encourage many different bird species, both large and small.



Description

The adult Grey Butcherbird has a black crown and face and a grey back, with a thin white collar. The wings are grey, with large areas of white and the underparts are white. The grey and black bill is large, with a small hook at the tip of the upper bill. The eye is dark brown and the legs and feet are dark grey. Both sexes are similar in plumage, but the females are slightly smaller than the males and males have more distinct black and white markings on the head. Young Grey Butcherbirds resemble adults, but have black areas replaced with olive-brown and a buff wash on the white areas. The bill is completely dark grey and often lacks an obvious hook. They are sometimes mistaken for small kingfishers.



Distribution

Grey Butcherbirds range from mid-eastern Queensland, through southern Australia, including Tasmania, to northern Western Australia. There is an isolated population in the Kimberley and the northernmost parts of the Northern Territory.

Habitat

Grey Butcherbirds are found in a range of wooded habitats, including suburban areas. In inland areas, the birds tend to favour the denser forests.

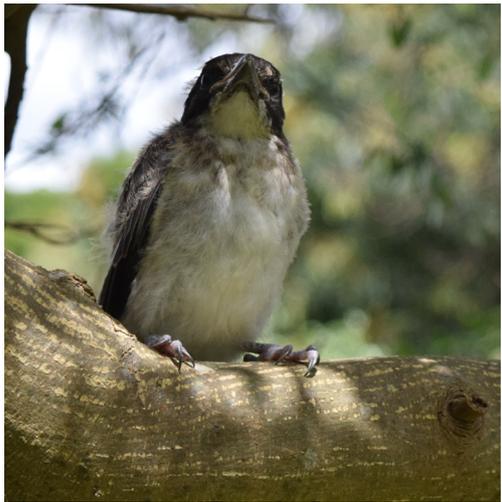
Feeding

Grey Butcherbirds feed on small animals, lizards and insects, as well as some fruits and seeds. Uneaten food may be stored in the fork or a branch or impaled. Grey Butcherbirds sit on an open perch searching for prey which, once sighted, they pounce on. Feeding normally takes place alone, in pairs or in small family groups.



Breeding

The Grey Butcherbird's nest is bowl-shaped, and is made of sticks and twigs, lined with grasses and other soft fibres. It is normally located within 10 m of the ground. The eggs are incubated by the female and the young birds are fed by both parents. The young birds will remain in the breeding territory for about a year, and help the parents raise the young of the following season.

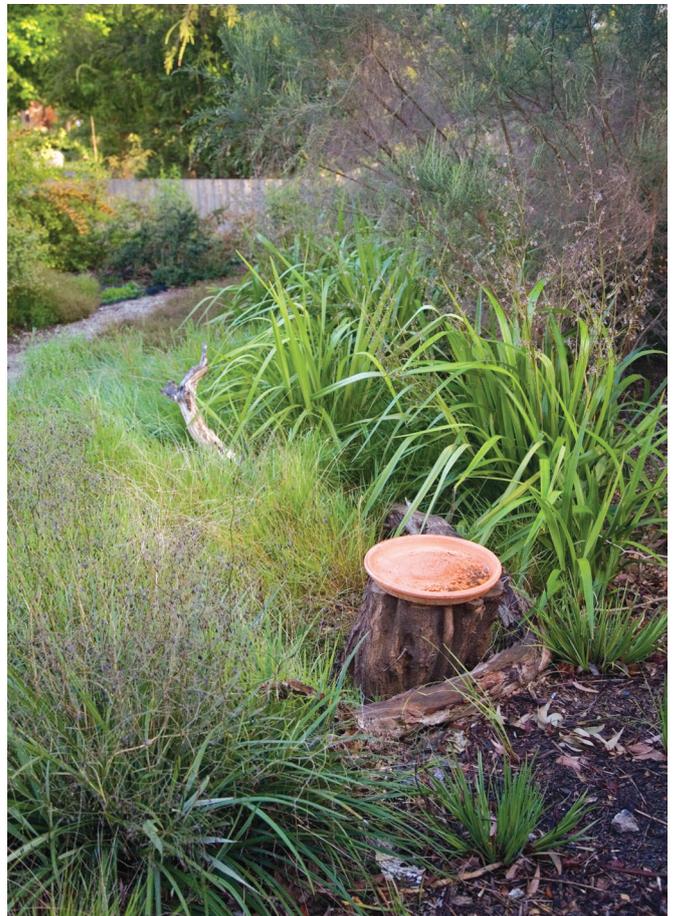


Opposite page
 Top: Adult Grey Butcherbird -photo by Olwyn Smiley
 Middle: Young chick: Photo by Julie Moore
 Bottom: Growing baby: Photo by Olwyn Smiley
 Top left and bottom: Some of the babies that fell out of the nest before they could fly - photo Linda Hibbs
 Above: The larder of the Grey Butcherbird - photo Olwyn Smiley

Attracting birds to your garden

Creating suitable habitat for birds brings interest and activity into your garden. By planting a variety of plant types and heights, you will attract both small and larger birds. Birds such as Eastern Rosellas, Gang-gang Cockatoos and Rainbow Lorikeets like to feed on the flowers and seed of the Eucalypts. Small birds such as the Spotted Pardalotes, Silveryeyes and Grey Fantails look for small insects and the Eastern Spinebill is attracted to the flowers of plants that produce lots of nectar.

- Have a safe reliable source of water
- Plant a variety of plants
- Include nectar plants for birds like the Eastern Spinebill and other honeyeaters
- Include dense bushes for smaller birds to hide from larger birds
- Vines and Creepers can provide habitat and a link between other plants
- Keep old trees with hollows for birds to nest
- Keep leaf litter and bark for birds to make nests
- Avoid pesticides as they can reduce the insects for birds to eat and enter the food chain.



A selection of Birds in Ma



Pardolote - male (Laura Metcalf)



Pardolote - female (Laura Metcalf)



Grey Fantail



Maroondah has
117 indigenous
bird species

King Parrot
(Ruth Jackson)



Baby Grey Butcherbird (Julie Moore)

Yellow Crested White Cockatoo (Ruth Jackson)

Galahs (Ruth Jackson)



Baby Powerful Owl
(Ken McInnes)



Rainbow Lorriquet
(Olwyn Smiley)



Wood-Duck
with ducklings
(Ruth Jackson)

roondah



Eastern Spinebill (Olwyn Smiley)



Silver-eye (Laura Metcalfe)



Kookaburra
(Ken McInnes)



Adult Grey
Butcherbird - female
(Olwyn Smiley)



Eastern Rosella
(Ruth Jackson)



Gang Gang Cockatoo (Olwyn Smiley)



Magpie (Ruth Jackson)



Yellow Tailed
Black Cockatoo
(Annette
O'Sullivan)



Red
Wattlebird
(Ruth Jackson)



Our Kurrajong

by Margaret Williams

About 30 years ago, the Melbourne Wildflower Show was held in July/August each year. I expect many of you remember the late eighties when the shows were open in the Ringwood Cultural Centre and the main hall there being filled with wonderful displays which were sent from every state in Australia.

The day before the opening all the flower boxes were opened and the contents identified and labelled before being arranged and on one occasion I remember so clearly the pleasure and excitement shown by Jean Galliot and Lola Mensch as they went through the boxes sent from different parts of WA. Their knowledge of Australian flora was memorable.

Apart from the flowers the huge variety in size and shape of their seed cases was fascinating and I was able to make a collection from that time, which I still have. Among them were some of the black pods from a Kurrajong tree.

When all the seed cases had been sorted and samples put in a display basket I put the extras on the compost heap. As a result some years later a seedling appeared and as it was in a suitable part of the garden and not knowing its identity, I let it grow. Now I have this magnificent kurrajong tree which can possibly reach 18 metres!! Even though it is not from this area it will stay of course offering shade and shelter and the beauty of its leaves and flowers.

Below: The seedpods of the Kurrajong and on the right, the Kurrajong tree that grew out of the compost heap.



Photo by Jennah Rose

Above: The collection of seeds collected by Margaret from the Melbourne Wildflower Shows.

Below: The flower of the Kurrajong. Photo by Jennah Rose



Photo by Jennah Rose



Photo by Jennah Rose

CHRISTMAS BBQ 2017



Top: L-R
Mike chatting with Ruth Jackson, Christian and Anata, Ian Gray with son William
Above: Viv and Andy, Jane, Ric, Lloyd, Paul, Annette and Anata



Above: L-R
Dianna and Gwenda, Nerida Gray, Judith, Viv (foreground), Janet, Rod and Mike

Left: Alan, Carol, Pam, Ric and Louise

It was the wettest December weekend on record - but many braved the elements to join in with end of year festivities.

Photo by Linda Hibbs

Exhibition by Ruth Jackson



**MAROONDAH'S
BUSHLAND TREASURES**
*An exhibition of original watercolours
by Botanical Illustrator Ruth Jackson*

EXHIBITION DATES:
Friday January 19th to
Friday March 9th 2018

OFFICIAL OPENING:
Thursday January 18th
5:30PM - 7:00PM

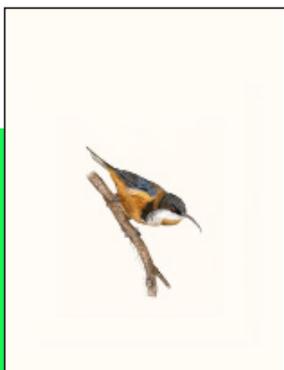
**MAROONDAH
ACCESS GALLERY**
Maroondah Federation Estate
32 Greenwood Ave Ringwood

Ruth is a Botanical Illustrator who has lived most of her life in the Maroondah area. As she is legally blind and thus unable to drive a car, she has spent many hours walking around the municipality exploring out of the way places and lesser known reserves. All that time in the bush has led to a great understanding of the bushland and how the natural elements interact and how important it is to retain and protect the little remnant areas that we have remaining. For more than twenty years Ruth has worked as an environmental activist and uses her paintings to help people become interested in the local plants. She has found that she can engage people with 'pretty pictures'. As the illustrations are explained, people get an introduction to the intricate beauty of the natural world around them.

Since being diagnosed in 2014 with Inclusion Body Myositis, and the consequent insidious loss of the use of her legs, lower arms and hands, painting is becoming increasingly difficult for Ruth. Ruth is happiest when in the bush observing the natural world and recording its beauty through painting and will continue this work for as long as she can.

A number of her original works have been acquired by the State Botanical Collection, Maroondah City Council and private collectors. This exhibition brings together a large number of Ruth's original Illustrations, depicting Maroondah's bushland species for the first time.

'The Natural History of Maroondah Series' Cards available to purchase from the nursery
Over 50 species/ illustrations available exclusively through CRISP nursery.



Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris
Eastern Spinebill



Banksia Marginata
Silver Banksia

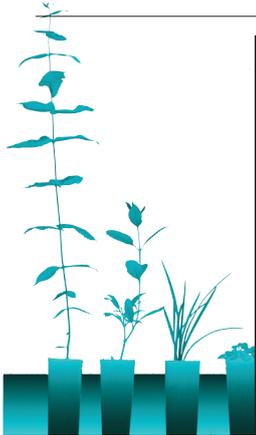


Xerochrysum palustre
Swamp Everlasting

Many new illustrations available including
Drosera species, orchids, mistletoe and an eastern spinebill

What's on

Dates for the diary



CRISP SALES DAYS

The sales area is open on Wednesdays and Fridays during our volunteer sessions from 9.30am until 12.30pm. During summer our sales area is closed on a Saturday but will re-open on Saturday 3rd March.

Please note our prices. Tubestock: \$1.50 for members & \$2.00 non-members
140mm pots: \$4.00 for members & \$5.50 non-members

All sales are cash only unless by prior arrangement







Sustainable Living Foundation

Thursday, 1 February 2018 - 9:00am to Wednesday, 28 February 2018 - 5:00pm
Melbourne CBD and surrounds
www.slf.org.au

Maroondah Biodiversity Analysis

Dr Graeme Lorimer has the contract for a 'Biodiversity Analysis' project for Maroondah City Council. In the period until about March, the project is investigating all aspects of biodiversity in Maroondah, including an update of the information in the 1997 report, 'Sites of Biological Significance in Maroondah'. The project is also investigating the habitat role of areas other than sites of biological significance, such as eucalypts in backyards and on nature strips.

Graeme would appreciate any information you may have about unusual observations of flora or fauna. His phone number is 9876 6415. In the case of rare plants, he would like to see them to authenticate their identity, presence and quantity. For many species, he will need to be notified prior to the completion of flowering. Photographs of unusual butterflies or of lizards (particularly the head) would be greatly appreciated, accompanied by details of exactly where and when the photograph was taken and how many of the animals were observed.

Health and Safety Reminder

Please consider your health and wellbeing when selecting which activities to join in. Many activities around the nursery involve lifting, bending or standing for long periods.

Some activities can be adjusted where required and CRISP management are keen to discuss any ideas you may have to reduce any potential Health and Safety issues that you identify.

**CRISP polo shirts
designed by Jamie Holyoake
Buy now from the nursery
Only \$10**



Artwork by Maroondah artist, Joanne Percy

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year



Your help needed

Many local residents are working to improve the habitat and connectivity of our reserves. If you are interested in getting involved, either join with one of the existing groups (see below) or start your own in your local reserve. If you are interested in starting work in your local reserve contact the Bushland Team at Maroonah City Council and discuss how your effort and enthusiasm can be best directed.

LOCAL ENVIRONMENT/FRIENDS GROUPS

Group Name	Contact
Heathmont Bushcare Working bees held 1st Sunday of the month http://heathmontbushcare.wordpress.com	Roger: 9876 6762
Loughies Bushland Working bees held 1st Saturday of the month 9.30-12.30pm. Meet in Kubis Drv at the Main Entrance.	Carol: 9870 8126
First Friends of Dandenong Creek website: https://www.landcarevic.org.au/groups/portphillipwesternport/ffdc/ or visit our Facebook site: @FirstFriendsofDandenongCreek ffdc1999@gmail.com	Charlie Miller 0417 125 677
Mullum Mullum Creek Bushcare Group	Alan: 98761319 0417541483
FJC Rogers Reserve	Don Dower: 9736 2309
Friends of Wombolano Working bees held 3rd Sunday of the month	Andy: 0414999491 Merrilyn : 0410073514
Friends of Ringwood Lake Working bees held first Monday of the month Meet at the Sound Shell at 10.00am	Des: 9879 4176
Friends of Andersons Creek	Richard: 9876 5382
Bungalook Conservation Reserve Second Sat of the month fom 9.30am	Graeme: 0403 229 862
Ringwood Field Naturalist Club	Peter: 9801 6946
Croydon Conservation Society	Keith: 9723 1806
Warranwood Reserve	Margaret: 9876 3094
Warrien Reserve www.warrien.org	David 9725 3163
Yanggai Barring, Warranwood	Pat Black: 9723 0036

Subscriptions

Due on July 1st each year

(For Members joining after March, your next subscription falls due the following year.)

What does your membership mean for you?

Apart from helping support your local indigenous plant nursery (run by volunteers), all plants are available to you at reduced rates (eg. tube stock will cost \$1.50 instead of \$2.00 and 140mm pots cost \$4.00 instead of \$5.50.)

You are also helping to keep Maroondah's local flora and fauna alive.

Support CRISP and help your local environment.

Pay now (cheque, direct debit) or drop into the nursery. **THANK YOU**

Direct deposit to renew membership

Can't get to the nursery to pay cash?
Don't have a cheque book? We are making it easier for you to
renew by direct deposit.

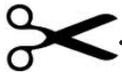
BSB 033 044

Account No: 149422

**Ensure you put your name in the details section so we can
update your membership**



Sending an email to the nursery when you make the deposit will ensure that your membership information is updated correctly.



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP



MEMBERSHIP

(Please circle)

SINGLE	\$10 per annum
FAMILY	\$15 per annum
GROUP:	\$20 per annum

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact: Tel: _____ Email: _____



PLEASE TICK ✓
NEWSLETTER OPTIONS:

I wish to continue receiving the newsletter by snail mail

OR

I wish to read the newsletter on the website

Please forward payment to:

The Treasurer
CRISP Nursery Inc.
PO Box 706
Heathmont, VIC 3135



17 Greenwood Av.
Ringwood, VIC 3134
Tel (03) 9879 3911
email: crisp@melbpc.org.au



Website: www.crispnursery.org.au



Common Brown Butterflies (*Heteronympha merope*) - mating and flying co-joined. On a grevillea, Ringwood North, late Nov 2017
Photo by Ken McInnes

Summer Nov - Dec 2017

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