

WHAT'S ON?

BERG Mt Martha's splendid new information board is now in place at the entrance to the reserve.

Funded by Bendigo Bank, it will be regularly up-dated to tell visitors about the reserves and BERG Mt Martha, what's on, what's in flower, and the like.



Top: The newly erected information board, from the entrance to the old Campground. Lower: the board now well populated. Photos Ros Crompton

FINDING OUT WHAT OUR MEMBERS WANT

Helping to preserve the ecology of the Balcombe Estuary is more than just pulling weeds. Thanks to members who completed our recent electronic survey and offered their skills in a range of areas. We will contact you soon.

For those who've not yet completed the survey, we'd much value your input. Could you consider helping us on a particular project, on a casual basis or more regularly? To complete our survey, go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DCVXYX2>, or access it via the BERG website.

BERG Mt Martha invites you to a Walk and Talk on Bushland Management at the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne

with **Bronwyn Merritt**,
Bushland Management
Coordinator at RBG Cranbourne
10am–12 noon, Friday 20th September

Bronwyn will take us through the Gardens' indigenous bushland and tell us about its management, including the flora, fauna, and fire.

Optional extras (let us know if you want to book for these):

- 12.15pm: Lunch – BYO or buy it at the café
- 2.00pm: Visit the Australian Garden, free if self-guided, or join a guided tour (\$5.50/person) – choose between:
 - 1) 'Plants for Your Place' – from Red Centre to the Eastern Seaboard, with expert tips to help you find the best Aussie plants for your place
 - OR
 - 2) 'Flora Australis' – discover how Australian plants have evolved and adapted over millions of years and how human interaction with plants has changed over time.

Getting there: We will try to carpool from Mt Martha. Meet at the entry shelter, main carpark (map and more info provided when you book).

Places are limited—RSVP by 6th Sept to info@berg.org.au or 0447 160 288

Cost: donation of \$5



Southern Brown Bandicoot in the bushland at RBG Cranbourne Photo Angela Kirsner

CONGRATULATIONS LIZ!

BERG Mt Martha's living treasure Liz Barraclough has been awarded a 2013 Members of Parliament Volunteer Award for her outstanding voluntary contribution to the Mt Martha as BERG Mt Martha's Field Officer over 15 years, since BERG's inception in 1997. The much deserved award was presented to Liz by Greg Hunt MP, himself a long-standing member of BERG, at the launch of the Yellow Robin Audio Trail (see below).



Greg Hunt MP presents Liz Barraclough with a 2013 Members of Parliament Volunteer Award Photo: Richard Kirsner

ON THE TRAIL!

Yellow Robins were out in force on t-shirts and paper flags, at the launch of BERG Mt Martha's Audio Nature Trail on Tuesday 11 June. It was opened in style by Greg Hunt MP with the help of Mt Martha Primary School's Grade 4C students.



The children planted a field of hand-coloured Yellow Robin flags, each with a pledge written on it about caring for the reserves written on it (see next page).

They then 'test piloted' the children's audio option, narrated by Wally the Wallaby. Through the nine audio stations, they found answers to

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questions like: How comfy is a paperbark bed? Why did the Aborigines burn the bush? What is a Pobblebonk? (A: a frog!) Who is the male Eastern Yellow Robin chatting to?

The audio trail was developed by Kylie Robertson and Trish Stewart of SEEDS Bushland Restoration & Environmental Education. Our thanks to 4c's teacher Jenny Spiridis, and the school parents who helped to make the day such a success.

If can't get to the reserves and their audio stations, you can listen to the audio tour on line at www.seedsbushland.com.au/balcombe-estuary.html – though it won't be the same as hearing it in the bushland itself!

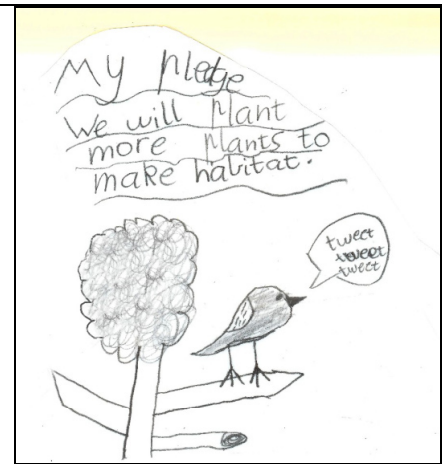
And what do walkers think of it?

By mid- July, there were 220 hits on the trail website – a fantastic result. And responses to the brief feedback survey at the end of the trail show it to be a resounding success.

A selection of the children's pledges

- I will not destroy the habitat of the yellow robin. Stella
- I will not pick the leaves off the trees. Anisha
- I promise never to touch an egg in a nest for the yellow robins. Jaime

- I pledge to keep my dog on the lead in environmentally sensitive areas. Coen
- I pledge to keep my dog on the lead where he's meant to be; to watch where I walk; to not destroy the yellow robin's habitat. I will do these things for the yellow robin. Anais
- We will keep our dogs on their lead except in a leash free area for the yellow robin. Claire
- I will not kill arthropods for the yellow robin. Megan
- We can have water (bird baths) in our gardens for the yellow robins. Issy
- I will keep my dog on a lead when I am not in a leash free area for the environment and the yellow robin. Grace W
- I pledge to never litter or leave anything lying around like rubbish because it's bad for animals environment and especially the Yellow Robins!
- I pledge to never throw rocks at the yellow robin. Danny
- We will not disturb the bush including the leaf litter for the yellow robin. Kayla
- We will not disturb the bush including leaf litter. Ruby
- We won't destroy habitat for the yellow robin. Bella



Bryson's pledge. Photo Di Lewis

- I will pledge to keep my dog on a leash unless I am in a leash free area for the yellow robin. Flynn
- I pledge to put the dog on the lead except in leash free areas. Ella
- I pledge we will keep dogs on their leads except in a leash free area. Also we will not kill arthropods in my garden or other places. Elijah
- I pledge to watch where I am walking and not kill any arthropods for the yellow robin. Matt
- I pledge never, ever annoy a Yellow Robin's nest or knock a Yellow Robin's nest out of a tree. Heath
- I will not collect the eggs or the nests from the Yellow Robins. Jordan



Clockwise from top left: Greg Hunt & Liz Barradough cut the ribbon to open the Yellow Robin Trail (RK); a field of Yellow Robin pledges (LB); Mt Martha Primary students holding their pledges (RK); trail designers Kylie Robertson & Trish Stewart at the first audio station with students (LB); Liz & students listening on their tablet (LB); Walking to the next audio station (LB); Planting Yellow Robin pledges (AK); BERGers in Yellow Robin T-shirts – Jenny Rolleston, Liz Barradough, John Inchley, Di Lewis, Judy Hubbard, Jenny Selby, Sue Betheras (RK). Photos Liz Blackburn (LB), Richard Kirchner (RK), Angela Kirchner (AK)

FIELD NEWS

Field Officer Liz Barraclough reports

Sunday working bees

At the June working bee, we tackled the woody weeds (Pittosporum and Boneseed) sprinkled through one of our few intact areas of Grassy Woodland, the slope from the Augusta St firetrack up to Citation Oval. The work is part of the on-ground voluntary contribution required under our CAG12 grant.



BERG in action! – Liz's grandchildren help with morning tea at the June working bee

We would like to know the history of this patch of high quality bush. Was it ever cleared or grazed?

In July, with a fantastic turnout of 16, we teamed with the Hopetoun Creek Greenfield Reserve Group to plant 454 trees, shrubs and sedges along Hopetoun Creek below the Balcombe Preschool. The site was well prepared beforehand: Blackberries slashed and sprayed, small Pinetrees, Boneseed and Pittosporum removed, and grassy weeds sprayed. Rabbits are rife in this area, so we staked and guarded each plant.

We plan ongoing planting here to boost diversity, so that this part of Hopetoun Creek will match our very successful habitat restoration upstream along Greenfield Way – an area now alive with small woodland birds.

Tuesdays and Fridays

Poor weather plus members away on holiday curtailed Friday group activities over June, though we still removed some weeds and planted Poas round Uralla Bridge. With everyone back in July, plus some very welcome new faces, we weeded and tidied the plantings opposite the shops. Over the next month, we plan more planting in the quarry near Uralla Bridge, and hand-weeding in

the Hyacinth Orchid area and around the Maude St burn site.

The Tuesday group, working as always in the Bunyip, has continued to remove Teatree and Coastal Wattle seedlings which appeared after the mature plants were removed. Keeping the grassy weeds under control, particularly near the kindergarten, is a never-ending task.

Mary Stemp found it necessary to leap to the defence of a particularly vulnerable and lone Grasstree by the firetrack after an over-zealous mowing crew shaved it off a few weeks ago. With Jo Tetteroo's help briefing the crew and a few well positioned logs, we hope it won't happen again!

COME TO A
BURN SITE WORKSHOP
Friday 23rd August, 9.30 to ~12.30,
at Maude St burn site (opp. No 5)
Hear Gidja Walker, inspiring local ecologist, talk about management and monitoring following a control burn. She will cover:

- the vegetation pre and post burn, relating it to adjacent vegetation
- regeneration, expected and already occurring
- control burning methods, timing (season) & ongoing management.
- surveying and monitoring methods

Delicious morning-tea provided!
**RSVP to info@berg.org.au
or 0447 160 288**

Planning field work

In July, Sue Betheras, John Inchley and I met with Jo Tetteroo, from the Shire, and our Naturelinks contractors, to review recent work and set priorities. This was a preliminary to a management meeting with other stakeholders, including Melbourne Water.

Ferrero & Citation Reserves Masterplan update

We understand a meeting will be called in late August where the consultants will brief all the primary stakeholders on the 1st draft of the Management Plan, with time for discussion. BERG Mt Martha will be attending the meeting. The plan will then be released for public comment.

BALCOMBE NATURE TRAIL

Tony O'Connor reports

The Balcombe and Moorooduc Landcare Group has a DEPI Communities for Nature grant to create a wildlife nature trail beside Balcombe Creek in Mt Martha East.

The trail will meander through a range of habitats designed to attract specific indigenous fauna species, including reptiles, possums, bats, birds and insects.

It will be created in the grassy strip of reserve that runs along Balcombe Creek behind the properties on the east side of Century Drive.

The trail will form part of the wildlife corridor network that is planned to connect the Balcombe Estuary Reserves, The Briars, Devilbend Reservoir and beyond.

Landscaping will be underway by December in readiness for planting next autumn. There will be working bees and school activities as well as work done by contractors, and we will be using indigenous landscape materials including Mornington red rocks, logs and sand.



Red Mornington rocks waiting to be turned into lizard habitat Photo Tony O'Connor

Want to be involved?

If you or your community group are interested to be part of the project, we would be delighted to have you. In particular, schools will have the opportunity to research and create their own specific habitat, on their own patch of land, to attract their selected wildlife species.

Contact Tony O'Connor, Secretary of the Balcombe and Moorooduc Landcare Group, on 0404 951500.

We value your membership!
...but if you've not yet renewed,
this may be your last newsletter.

DOWN THE PIPELINE

South East Water is removing an old and deteriorating sewer pipe bridge that crosses over Balcombe Creek at the rear of Ferrero Reserve, together with the disused and decrepit electrical conduit bridge. The steel, cement-lined sewer bridge, built in 1961, was decommissioned in early July.

The boardwalk to be closed briefly between the Seppelt Ave and Ferrero Reserve entrances from late July (weather permitting). A small corridor of vegetation has to be removed for access, but the Shire will rehabilitate and revegetate the area.

Right: The old sewer bridge (above) and electrical conduit bridge (below) Photos: Angela Kirsner



Diary Date: the BERG Mt Martha AGM will be held on Saturday 26th October, 9.30 for 10.00 at Mt Martha House. Jarrod Ruch, ranger at The Briars, will speak on our indigenous fauna past and present, The Briars Wildlife Sanctuary and its place in rare species recovery, and managing our bushland to increase wildlife habitat.

BERG Mt Martha welcomes new members
Jill Morrison,
Garry and Anne Seal

BERG Mt Martha Working Bees	Other BERG Mt Martha activities	Other Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Monthly working bee: 3rd Sunday, between 9 & 12 am. Next are 18th August and 15th September. Meet at the Rotunda (Mel: 144 K11) or call Liz Barraclough on 0408 388 430 to find the work site. ❖ Tuesdays 9.30 to 11.30, meet in the Kinder carpark, Watson Rd. Call Mary Stemp, 5974 3996 ❖ Friday mornings. Call Sue Betheras, 0408 808 201. ❖ Hopetoun Creek Greenfield Reserve Call Hazel Athey, 0419 899 560 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Waterwatch testing: 4th Sunday (Aug 25th, Sept 22nd) at Augusta St Bridge. Call John Inchley, 5974 1095. ❖ BERG Committee meets 2nd Saturday each month at Mt Martha House, 9.30am. Next are 10th August, 14th September. All members welcome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Fairbairn Bushland Reserve Friends Group working bees. Call Judith Whittaker 5974 8174 or John Stoker, 5977 1397. ❖ BirdLife Mornington Peninsula bird-watching 2nd Wednesday and 3rd Sunday. Enquiries to Max Burrows 9789 0224, or mornington@birdlife.org.au, or www.birdlife.org.au/locations/birdlife-mornington-peninsula. ❖ SPIFFA 1st Monday, 7.30 pm, at Parks Vic, Hinton St, Rosebud. Enquiries 5988 6529, or www.spiffa.org.
<p>BERG MT MARTHA COMMITTEE PRESIDENT JOHN INCHLEY • VICE PRESIDENT GRAHAM HUBBARD • SECRETARY DI LEWIS • TREASURER RICHARD KIRSNER FIELD OFFICER LIZ BARRACLOUGH • NEWSLETTER ANGELA KIRSNER • SCHOOLS LIAISON JENNY SELBY • ROTARY CLUB LIAISON GEOFF KAYE • PUBLICITY BARBARA THRAVES & ROS CROMPTON • MICHAEL SANDERS HOPETOUN CREEK GREENFIELD RESERVE GROUP HAZEL ATHEY • CENTURY DVE HABITAT LINK GROUP TONY O'CONNOR</p>		
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THE CREEK

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 If undelivered, please return to:
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