

FRIENDS OF HODDLES CREEK NEWSLETTER

New habitat project for Hoddles Creek Primary School

Remember the pine plantation that used to be part of the primary school? Well, acknowledging the status of *Pinus radiata* as an environmental weed in the Shire, the school cleared these trees some time ago, leaving behind a rather unexciting bare paddock. Now, the School, supported by the Friends of Hoddles Creek, is about to replace this bare expanse (picture) with an exciting new development that should appeal to students and staff alike.

School councillor Jo Chambers had already organised significant earthworks and materials supply when she met with a group of FOHC members, led by president Peter Mauger, recently. Their plan for the site will provide a range of animal and bird habitats, and includes a range of trees and understorey plantings, paths, an amphitheatre for open air lessons, a 'secret' garden and a 'frog bog'.

Final earthworks, including ripping and topsoil distribution will be completed early this month, so that

planting can commence. Many people have helped to bring the project to this stage. We would especially like to thank Rob Dabal, Shire of Yarra Ranges, for the donation of trees and tree guards, Rod Parsons of Parson's Nursery for generous plant discounts and Rob Worley of Yarra Junction Garden Supplies for help with earthmoving and generous discounts on materials.

A planting bee, involving students, FOHC members and all other willing volunteers will be organised in May. Parents will hear more about the project from the School.

In speaking about the project, retired teacher and FOHC president, Peter Mauger, was enthusiastic. "This is a terrific project for the students. By helping to create their own native wildlife environment, they are sure to develop an increased appreciation of the need to look after all of the bushland areas in Hoddles Creek." We agree, Peter, and we will keep readers informed of the progress of the project in future Newsletters.



Thanks again to Jill the postie for delivering the FOHC Newsletter.

Thanks to Melbourne Water for the grant for this newsletter.



Come and see what a native garden can look like

We are all in favour of native gardens, but sometimes a bit of inspiration and a wander through a mature garden can help. So, why not join us at 10 am on Sunday May 25, at Katandra Gardens, 49 Hunter Road Wandin, to see just how beautiful they can really be?

Katandra Gardens (see picture below) is eight acres of delight, with around 75 different species of

acacias, banksias, grevilleas and other native species, including a stunning collection of correas. The property is a Land for Wildlife property and has featured on the ABC's Gardening Australia program.

Members of FOHC and non-members are all welcome. We'd be pleased to talk to you about the Friends of Hoddles Creek as well. Entry to Katandra Gardens is by gold coin donation.



ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

A warm welcome to Ms Caroline Carvalho, who has recently been appointed as Manager Environment Department at the Shire of Yarra Ranges. We really look forward to working with Caroline in maintaining and improving the Hoddles Creek environment.

FOHC News

The Friends of Hoddles Creek group was formed in 1999 and maintains a watching brief over local development projects, seeking to ensure that regulations related to environmental matters are adhered to. We also aim to increase awareness of general environmental issues and those of special interest to Hoddles Creek and have several 'hands on' projects.

General meetings are held bimonthly on Mondays, commencing at 7.30 pm. Please ring Graeme Jameson on 5967 4372 for the meeting location. Dates for the remaining 2003 meetings are as follows:

- **June 16**
- **August 18**
- **October 20**
- **December 15**

Come and join us

There is no age restriction, all that is required is an interest in helping to maintain the special environmental aspects of Hoddles Creek – your home. If you would like to join, or if you would like more information about the group, simply complete the details below and send to FOHC, PO Box 298 Yarra Junction, Vic 3797.

ANIMAL WATCH

Where are the bandicoots?

Some members of FOHC recall long-nosed bandicoots (picture) in the Hoddles Creek area, but these creatures appear to have vanished.



Land clearing and fragmentation of habitat is probably partly to blame, as are foxes, dogs and cats and bandicoots have also been mistaken for rats. Hopefully, the Shire's policy of protection for native vegetation is slowing their decline, but expanding human populations will continue to pose a significant threat. If you have sighted a bandicoot, or any other uncommon bird or animal, make a note of the details and send them to us. We'd be happy to feature your find in a future issue.

Yellowgum Road planting

For those of you thinking about planting indigenous species, it's worth taking a look at the planting on Yellowgum Road that formed the lead story in our last Newsletter. The trees have really come on, despite the hot dry summer (with no watering) and show just how rapidly planting the right species can improve your environment.

AUTUMN COMPETITION

This time around, we've made our competition a bit easier. All we ask you to do is to make as many words as you can from the letters that make up the words **Hoddles Creek**. The entry with the most words will win a \$20 gift voucher to spend at Kuranga Native Plant Nursery in Ringwood. Simply mail your entry to Friends of Hoddles Creek, PO Box 298 Yarra Junction, Victoria, 3797 by Friday June 6, 2003. The winner will be notified and the result will be published in our Winter Newsletter.

Name:.....

Address:

Phone:

Email:

I'd like to join Friends of Hoddles Creek.

I'd like more information. Please ring me.