



FriendsNET

Newsletter of the Victorian Environment Friends Network

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See our [web site](#)

Friends gather to celebrate 2019 Best Friends

The 2019 Best Friend Award Ceremony was held in late August to acknowledge and celebrate the efforts of outstanding Friends.

The Best Friends were Lorraine Ratcliffe– Friends of Maribyrnong Valley; Joe van Beek - Friends of Tyers Park; Tony Flude & George Fotheringham - Westgate Biodiversity; Bili Nursery and Landcare.



Best Friend recipients from left – Leesa Riley (Parks Victoria) guest presenter, Tony Flude and George Fotheringham (Westgate Biodiversity), Lorraine Ratcliffe (Friends of Maribyrnong Valley) and Joe van Beek (Friends of Tyers Park)

Worthy of the title of Best Friend, the four awardees represent the many positive attributes of being a Friend, with long service, leadership, mentoring, engagement and partnerships just to name a few of the qualities.

Additionally, two nominees were also acknowledged as highly commended on the day. These were Margaret Hunter - Friends of Braeside Park and Marilyn McInnes - Friends of Edwards Point.



Marilyn McInnes, Friends of Edward Point on the left and Margaret Hunter, Friends of Braeside Park on the right.

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Suggestions for articles for FriendsNET are welcome. Please email to ecosystems@bigpond.com . If you want to include photos, please send as separate files in jpeg format, preferably in landscape.

Disclaimer: Content in this newsletter does not necessarily represent the views of the VEFN committee. Articles are the responsibility of authors as named. All other content is the responsibility of the editor, Stephen Derrick.

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Best Friend Awards 2019 continued

Paul Strickland, Convenor of the Victorian Environment Friends Network (VEFN) was the event MC welcoming all and highlighting the importance of the day and the recognition of so many wonderful contributors across Friends groups.

“I hardly need tell this audience that Friends groups provide a vital but too often unsung role in developing, protecting and promoting many precious samples of our unique environment, from small neighbourhood reserves to landscape wide promotion of species and environments.” he said.

“Today is part of dealing with that “unsung” statement. After all it has been wisely said that if you don’t blow your own trumpet no-body else will.”

Janet Bolitho (Chair of the Best Friend Award Panel) provided an inspiring introduction to the high regard of the award and worthiness of the individuals recognised. She noted that this year the panel were particularly impressed with the leadership qualities of nominees, and their efforts to bring others into their group.

Stanley Barker from the Friends of Herring Island outlined the site creation which is incredibly close to Melbourne along the Yarra River and its restoration story. The transformation of an industrial soil dump (with high salt content) into a fine green space and now arts park was inspirational. His passion and dedication shone through.

Following the ceremony friends had the opportunity to attend a 1-hour river tour departing from the city along the beautiful Yarra River.



Rod Taylor, Member, Best Friend Award Panel

Funding for environment groups

Almost \$1 million for Community Climate Change Adaptation (3CA) Grants

Sixteen (16) projects have shared almost \$1 million in funding under the 3CA grants program. No Friends groups were successful in gaining grants. There has been no announcement by the Minister for Energy, Environment & Climate Change, with a list appearing on the DELWP web site recently. The [list](#) of projects can be found on the DELWP web site [here](#). Several of the successful projects have been featured in DELWP Media Releases: [Maldon Neighbourhood Centre \\$30,000](#); [Birchip Community Forum \\$50,000](#); [Food Next Door Coop \\$69,000](#); [Barapa Land & Water \\$75,000](#).

\$2.8 million for Victorian Landcare Grants

Two hundred project grants totaling almost \$2.5 million were announced by the Minister for Energy, Environment & Climate Change on 12 September. You can read the Minister’s Media release [here](#). In addition, more than 300 groups received support grants of \$500 each. Funding for the program was originally set at \$1.7 million, but due to the high number of applications, an additional \$1 million was made available. Some groups received multiple grants for different projects. For example, Upper Hopkins Land Management Group received over \$54,000 for four different projects and Gazette Land Action Group received over \$52,000 for 3 projects.

Friends groups are poorly represented, with only 22 groups receiving an average of \$9,575 each, totaling around \$210,000 or less than 10% of overall funding.

The full list of projects can be found [here](#).

Victorian Junior Landcare & Biodiversity Grants

The Victorian Government announced the successful recipients of the 2019 Victorian Junior Landcare and Biodiversity Grants were announced. These grants provide funding of up to \$5,000 for projects at Victorian Schools, kindergartens, childcare centres, Scouts/Guides and youth groups.

There are 128 projects that received funding, for a total of \$451,149.

The list of successful grant recipients can be found [here](#).

Nature stewardship course



New short course introducing nature science

Nature Stewards is an introductory adult education program where you will discover more about your local environment, where to get outdoors, meet others in your community, and learn how and where to volunteer for nature.

This 10-week program is being run in Manningham Council, City of Melbourne, and City of Melton this Spring from the 3rd October to 16th December (location and dates may vary slightly). The program spans introductions to geology, soils, plants, animals, waterways, climate, care for Country, the benefits of being in nature and ways to get active for nature through environmental volunteering. It comprises 10 weekly class sessions and four field sessions, with access to an expert facilitator, multiple guest presenters and local volunteering group showcases.

Nature Stewards is open to anyone (regardless of residence) over the age of 18 in Victoria, with a general interest in learning more about the Victorian and local environment, perhaps looking to change career, and wishing to find opportunities to make a positive difference through volunteering.



To find out more about the program & to APPLY see: <https://outdoorsvictoria.org.au/nature-stewards/> .

Got further questions about the program? Contact naturestewards@outdoorsvictoria.org.au .

As the program is available in a wider, area opportunities for more Friends Groups to be involved as presenters and program hosts will hopefully become available.

Binak workshop and cultural walks in Moorabool Shire

Binak (basket) weaving workshop and Cultural walks in Gordon



Tammy Gilson, local Wadawurrung woman, recently led a workshop to help people learn about traditional techniques of basket weaving. The workshop was attended by 27 people and was organised by the Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group in association with Friends of Paddock Creek Reserve, Gordon (a subcommittee of MCLG). The federal government provided funding towards the cost of the workshop as a part of its NAIDOC program.

Attendees learnt about the types of Indigenous materials that are used in basket weaving; the techniques involved and heard Tammy's stories about the uses of weaving baskets and dilly bags.



In the picture above, Tammy shows an eel trap which took

her about 4 months to make. Traditional eel traps use a clever design to catch mature eels but allow young eels (elvers) to escape through the narrow opening at the end of the trap

This activity is one of the many activities provided this year by Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group that has aimed to involve and educate the local community about Wadawurrung culture.

Upcoming cultural walks along Paddock Creek in Gordon



Paddock Creek in Paddock Creek Reserve, Gordon, July 2019

On Sunday 20th October, there will be two walks along sections of Paddock Creek lead by local Wadawurrung man, Barry Gilson. The Friends of Paddock Creek Gordon (FoPC) (a sub-committee of the Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group) are keen to see the community making more use of the Paddock Creek Reserve in a creative way. The walks will highlight the value of local waterways and creeks to the Wadawurrung people. Corangamite Catchment Management Authority has provided funding to support the walks.

Friends of Paddock Creek aims to get families and local people out into the environment so that they will feel connected to their landscape and to the community and gain a better understanding of the Indigenous history of the area. Participation in these activities will also improve their mental and physical health as part of the experience.

Two walks will be held. Walk #1 starts at 10am and will walk west along Paddock Creek to Kerrit Bareet. Walk #2 will start at 2pm and will head east along sections of Paddock Creek. Both walks will commence with a talk for about 30 minutes at Gordon Public Hall. Each walk will then take approximately 1 ½ hours. Jennifer Johnson (Landcare Coordinator) will also accompany Barry and provide identification of any wildflowers found on both walks.

You will need to register to attend the walks and there is a \$5 fee, refundable on the day if you attend, but non-refundable if you don't.

If you are interested in attending one of the walks, please contact: Stephen Derrick on: 0417 326 860 or email ecosystems@bigpond.com or contact Jennifer Johnson (Landcare Coordinator) on: 0497 770 075 or email: moorabool.landcare@gmail.com .