

A Growing Concern

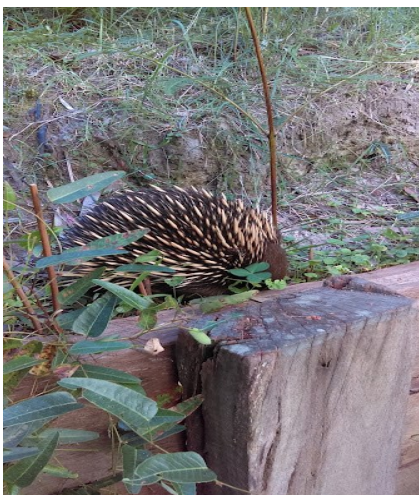
Candlebark Community Nursery



A Lovely Surprise

My home is a lovely piece of bush in North Croydon and has suburbia encroaching on three boundaries. The small bush reserve on the northern side provides sanctuary for local and fellow travellers and I was the beneficiary of that sanctuary with the arrival of an echidna wandering in my bush again this summer.

Last year I had a small and larger echidna around the area for quite a few weeks however this year the large one in the photograph has been enjoying frequent visits to the water bowl just outside my kitchen. Undisturbed he will remain in the water for a minute or so before trundling into the bush.



Establishing water containers at varying heights around the garden gives the wildlife a welcome these hot days and pleasure for me



A visitor that I had 5 years ago stayed around for about half an hour searching around the damp area near the water bowl, no doubt looking for beetles, earthworms or small insects.

I would like to think this echidna will be around my patch of bush for a little time but from my reading on the species, echidnas are solitary animals and are not territorial. I remembered the baby echidna is called a puggle. Not very much knowledge to hand on the echidna and with only the occasional visit during the last few years, I did some research.

Echidnas are monotreme, an egg laying mammal. The egg remains in the female reproductive tract until it is about the size of a grape. The baby echidna will hatch from the egg by using its egg tooth and then pulls its way along the mother's hair into the pouch. The puggle starts to grow spikes at about 50 days when she will remove it from the pouch, leaving it in the nursery burrow consisting of a long tunnel with a large chamber at the end, returning to the burrow every few days to suckle her young one. At about 200 days the mother will bring the puggle to the entrance of the burrow, she will feed it and leaves avoiding any contact.

Details about the echidna was found on Wildcare Australia website

Gretta

A Growing Concern

March 2022

President

Bernie Heinze

Secretary

Julie Wangman

Treasurer

Samnang Robbins

General Committee

Carol Wind

Giselle Gelman

Gretta Fuller

Joy Pearson

Kimberly Cassidy

Philip Heading

Rebecca O'Dwyer

Nursery Supervisor

Jamin Walker

Nursery Assistant

Keith McCallum

Office Admin

Judy Richardson

Editor

Gwen & Ken Whitney

Candlebark Hours

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

9.00am to 12.00 noon

Sunday 10.00am to 12.00 noon

Nursery Contacts

Phone

9727 0594

CONTENTS

A Lovely Surprise	1
Committee Profiles	2
Frog Bogs	4
Dandenong Creek Revisited	5
A Call For Volunteers	6

Committee Profiles

Next few issues we're going to profile some of the people around the nursery. This month we meet the committee members. Watch out for profiles on our paid workers and long-standing volunteers, the lifeblood of the nursery.

Kimberley Cassidy-Member

Kimberley joined Candlebark as a volunteer in 2018 and likes nature in all its forms. She wants to improve the environment for native flora and fauna, and encourage people to plant more natives.



Gretta Fuller-Member/Co-founder

As one of the two founding members, Gretta's involvement with the nursery exceeds 30 years and stems from her passion for conservation of bushland environment. She's lived in Croydon for 65 years and is a keen gardener and observer of wildlife in her own backyard. Fun fact: Gretta knows what baby echidnas are called!

Giselle Gelman-Member

After a long career in the Victorian Public Service (policy and administration), Giselle is now a Registered Nurse working in palliative care. She recently moved to Croydon with her husband and looks forward to helping Candlebark and getting her hands dirty.



Phil Heading-Member

Phil joined Candlebark in 2019 as a volunteer and Committee member to learn about indigenous plants and 'will be ever learning'. He worked as a public accountant, tax consultant and investment advisor but is now "working as long and as hard as before" in semi-retirement. Phil is director of a charitable company involved in soil improvement and growing trees to counter climate change.



Bernie Heinze-President

Bernie has been associated with Candlebark for over 10 years and held the position of President several times. A beekeeper since age 14, he has an encyclopaedic knowledge of bees, as well as a rich knowledge of indigenous plants that he is keen to share.

Committee Profiles

Rebecca O'Dwyer-Member

After a former life as a corporate writer for various IT companies, Rebecca had a dramatic career change by studying horticulture (Certificate 111). She also spends huge amounts of time converting her old English-style garden to an indigenous haven, particularly for insects and reptiles.



Samnang Robbins –Treasurer

Samnang joined Candlebark in 2019 as a volunteer member, sharing her bookkeeping talents as Candlebark's Treasurer. She loves gardening and the natural environment and is keen on growing native plants for the birds and animals that create our beautiful environment.

Julie Wagman-Secretary

Julie is an IT Project Manager for a global technology company, and joined Candlebark in March 2021 as a volunteer and committee member. She brings a great enthusiasm for preserving and improving the natural environment.



Joy Pearson—Member

Welcome to our new member



Carol Wind—Member

Even as a small child, Carol collected wildflowers, then enjoyed family bush camping in the Victorian High Country over many years. She has volunteered at Candlebark for 17 years, including as Secretary until recently, and has enjoyed seeing the nursery grown to the productive place it is today.

Frog bogs: Build it and they will come!

Have you heard our resident frog at the nursery? Just months after the bog was completed in January 2018, frogs moved in and have lived there ever since. According to this video filmed soon after construction, the original frog was an Eastern Banjo Frog. Recent recordings show that the new resident is an Eastern Common Froglet. These froglets are small (2-3cm) with skin of various shades of brown, and their low-pitched croak is common around Melbourne throughout the year.

How to create your own bog

To attract frogs to your garden, you can easily build your own frog pond..

1. Choose a location protected from hot sun and large amounts of falling leaves.
2. Dig your hole and place in a liner or manufactured shell.
3. Place sand or gravel in the bottom of the pond to help beneficial bacteria and secure your plants.
4. Add rocks around the side of the pond to enable frogs to access your pond.
5. Add plants to the pond. This can be done by placing weighted pots into the pond, or planting them in the pond's gravel or soil. If planting them in the pond without pots, you'll need to weigh them down with rocks or logs so they stay anchored.
6. Plant plenty of plants around the pond, as well as placing mulch, logs, and rocks for a cool, shaded area for frogs to hide.
7. Fill your pond with water and wait for frogs to arrive!



Created January 2018

Maintaining your frog bog

Maintain your pond by removing fallen leaves and other debris, topping up water, and ensuring plants only take up one-quarter of the pond area.

Indigenous is best

Indigenous plants are best as they are preferred by local frogs. Use plants such as rushes, grasses and sedges. Other suitable plants include groundcovers or herbaceous plants, such as *Desmodium gunnii* (Slender Tick Trefoil), *Craspedia variabilis* (Common Billy Buttons), *Dichondra repens* (Kidney Weed), *Eryngium vesiculosum* (Prickfoot), and many others.

Come in and see us for advice about the best plants for your new friends!

Rebecca ODwyer



Current today at Candlebark Nursery

This is the Frog Pond that was created by teachers and students at a local Primary School as part of our Environmental Program in past years. Plants supplied by Candlebark Nursery.



Gwen Whitney

Dandenong Creek Revisited

In April 2018 Gwen and I were invited by Melbourne Water to join a walk-through visit with the Maroondah City Council to view the proposed re-imaging of the creek. For many years the water flow in the Dandenong Creek had been diverted into underground pipes as a scheme to prevent flooding in the rapidly expanding residential areas along the creek valley. The new proposal was to restore the creek to a natural looking waterway with a series of pondage areas connected by above ground waterways and rocky cascades. Unfortunately, due to residential development over many years, the project could not include restoration of the original billabong areas. The project also included mass plantings of native trees and shrubs and grasses found in the area. The walking and cycle paths were also to be upgraded.

It has been amazing to watch the project develop to completion and the transformation from a storm drain overflow area to a vibrant water filled running creek with bird life enjoying the permanent water in the creek. The attached photos show the transformation of the creek from 2018 to March 2022 at three sites along the creek. Over the past two years Melbourne Water and Maroondah City Council have been undertaking a similar re-engineering of the Tarralla Creek behind the Croydon library and Town Park. This project is creating a wet land and above ground creek with new pathways and bird observation points. It also involves mass planting of indigenous plants.

We hope that you will find the time to visit both areas and see what can be done to improve our creeks and open spaces. Re-engineering of waterways will in the future have a substantial effect on the local bio-environment, during climate change, for people, flora and fauna particularly, as the density of urban development increases.

Gwen and Ken Whitney



April 2018



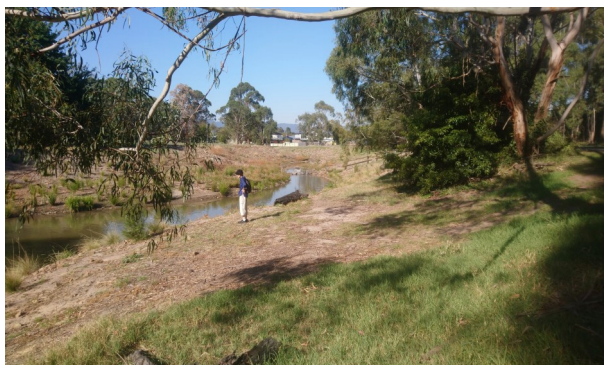
February 2022



April 2019



February 2022



April 2019



February 2022

A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Joining Candlebark could be for you – Become a volunteer!

- Help your natural environment
- Preserve endangered species
- Help native wildlife thrive
- Learn new skills
- Meet new and exciting people
- Make a difference by helping to preserve Australia's heritage (a little at a time)

Candlebark Community Nursery in Mooroolbark is strongly supported by a volunteer program that enables plant propagation and running of the nursery.

Volunteering is an excellent way to gain practical horticultural experience and develop your plant knowledge in a relaxed and comfortable environment.

Whether it's a day or even a few hours a week, come and meet a group of dedicated, friendly people, and do your bit to preserve our natural environment.

There are many ways in which volunteers can support our work:

- Pricking out seedlings and potting up
- Propagating plants from cuttings or sowing seed
- Collecting indigenous seed or cuttings from local reserves
- Seed cleaning in preparation for sowing
- Watering the nursery and shade/propagation houses
- General cleaning to reduce the spread of plant diseases
- Weeding and maintaining gardens inside and around the nursery
- General nursery maintenance and repairs

Prior experience is not required – just an enthusiasm to help!

Currently we'd prefer volunteers for Wednesday, Friday, and/or Sunday morning. The nursery is not open on Monday or Saturday, and Tuesday is already a little crowded. Even a couple of hours would be helpful!

Volunteers must be double-vaccinated and all covid protocols are being followed at Candlebark to ensure safety of all staff and customers.

We'd also love anyone with any building skills for some repairs or building maintenance as well. There is much to do around the nursery for someone with these skills, either ongoing or even on an ad hoc basis.

Contact us for more information and to organise a time for you to drop in.



Photo Ken Whitney

The Committee of Management would like to extend a warm welcome to all new members since the last newsletter.