



**The Escarpment
Park Friend
March 2026**

Committed to Escarpment Park Care since 1994

www.fep.org.au

Welcome to March 2026 newsletter.

Please note that the minutes from FEP committee meetings are posted on our website on the member log-in page.

Ray Addison's 100th Birthday

Friends from FEP celebrated Ray's birthday with him on Thursday 22nd January at his beloved J E Duggan Park. Ray thanked us all very, very much for coming along, adding 'I don't think I deserve this.'

What's Ray's secret for a long and productive life?

'I got so much fun out of FEP, I suppose that's what kept me going (back) for the last 23 odd years, so I've had my reward. If you enjoy your work in the FEP as much as I did then you'll be very happy.'



Ray Addison. Duggan Park. Image: Liz Addie

Ray, alongside his late wife, Eunice, has been a pillar of the FEP, working tirelessly in the bushland parks as well as serving on the Committee for many years. Ray and Eunice migrated to Australia from England in 2003. They did not waste any time in becoming FEP members in 2004. Ray worked in no fewer than six bushland parks from then until 2018.

He became a committee member in 2006 and Treasurer in 2008, a position he held until quite recently when his eyesight started failing. That has not however stopped him from continuing to contribute to FEP activities, including the microforest planting. Eunice also contributed immensely as a bushland carer and as a committee member.



Image: Liz Addie



Image: Rob Brodribb



Image: Liz Addie

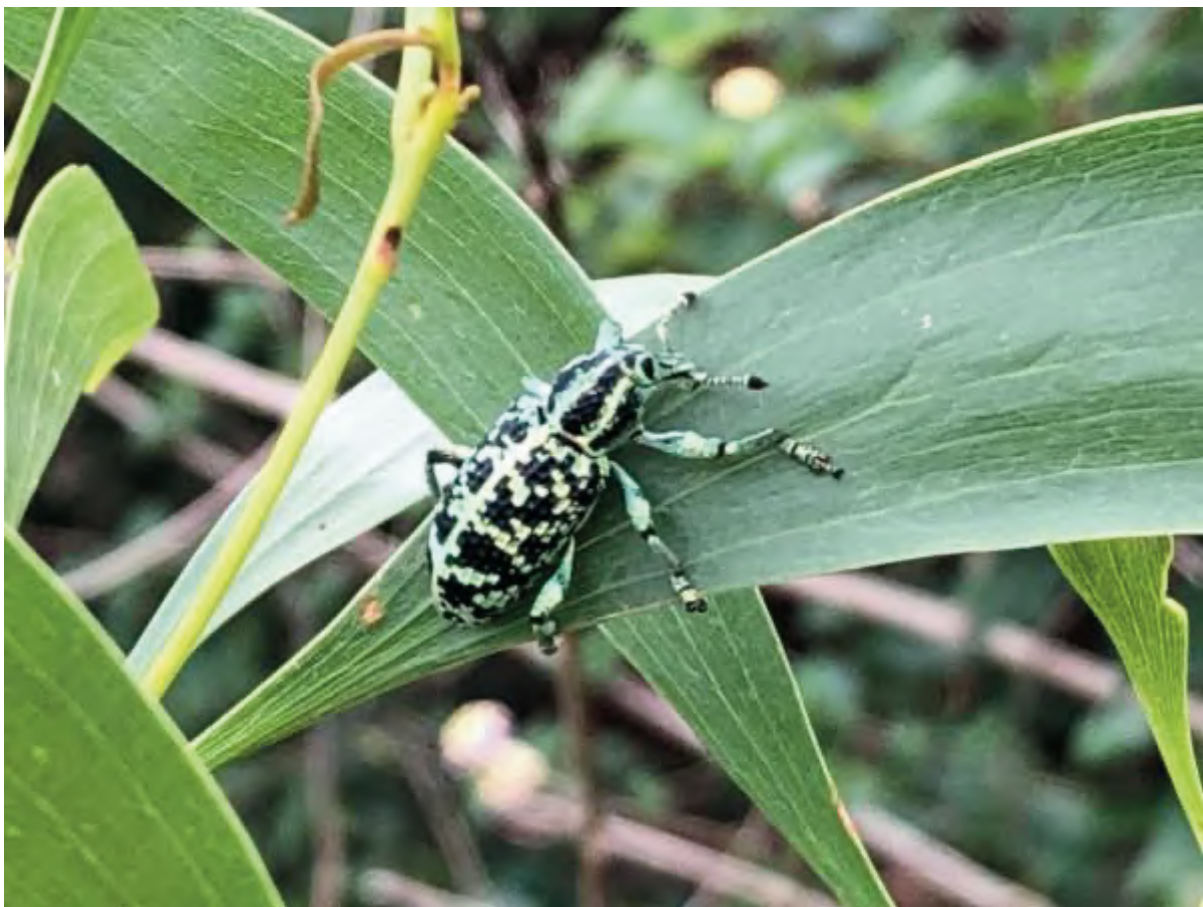
Botany Bay Diamond weevil found in Nielsen Park

Chrysolopus spectabilis only occurs on 28 acacia species including *acacia melanoxylon* where we found our specimen in Nielsen Pk 23rd November 2025.

According to Wikipedia, a recorded specimen was caught by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander at some time between April and August 1770, as part of James Cook's first voyage. It was one of only five insects collected during that expedition. Although it occurs around Sydney the specimen was probably collected at Cooktown as it is thought to be too cold in April for the weevil to be active and thereby collectable.

The weevil range is throughout coastal Queensland to Victoria and eastern South Australia.

Rob Brodribb



Chrysolopus spectabilis Image: Rob Brodribb

Highfields Falls group donation to Wildlife Rescue Charity

Story and images: Jane Butler

Highfields Falls FEP group donated \$309 to Trish (Wildlife Rescue Charity) at Murphy's Creek. The money was collected from the 10cent containers for change scheme from bottles and cans littering Highfields Falls as well as from personal donations from the group.

Trish said a big thankyou and promised to send photos of what she buys with it. There is a Web site about the charity. If you are interested, Trish is also looking for new members to maintain her charity status. At least 50 members are needed. It will be an annual fee of \$25.

<https://www.wildliferescueeducation.org/>

Wildlife Rescue, Rehabilitation and Education Association (WRREA), is a non-profit charity dedicated to protecting Australia's wildlife and educating communities on conservation. Our diverse members provide vital rescue resources while empowering volunteers to safeguard native species for future generations.

Trish at WRREA



Woody Weed



Viburnum odoratissimum Highfields Falls Bushland Park Image: Peter Macqueen

Viburnum odoratissimum, commonly known as sweet viburnum, is a shrub or small tree in the family Adoxaceae which has glossy elliptical leaves to 20 cm long. In spring it produces pyramid-shaped clusters of fragrant white flowers, followed by orange/red berries that age to black. It is native to Asia, and commonly cultivated as a garden ornamental elsewhere.

The photo of a *Viburnum odoratissimum* with fruit was taken at the creek in the NW corner of Highfields Falls Bushland Park.

Peter Macqueen, Greg Lukes

Bunya pollination (*Araucaria bidwillii*) Trish Gardner



Bunya Cone and nuts Carbalah Jan 2014 Photo; Trish Gardner

It is being a great year for Bunya nuts. Have you cooked any yet?

I found it interesting that one friend found the only cone on her lone tree to be disappointing. It had only 3 nuts in it, while other people usually find 30-60, or even, in one case, 90 nuts per cone.

Why the difference?

Well it is all about pollination, of course. No plant can produce seed unless the potential seeds have been pollinated, and in the case of Bunyas, this can be a little tricky.

There is a sharp division, in the plant world, between the plants that have evolved along with an animal partner of some kind - usually an insect - and those that use the wind to carry the pollen from the male to the female. The latter method sounds rather hit and miss, but given that Bunyas, one of the most ancient plant types in the world, are still thriving despite using wind pollination, it is obviously a very effective method indeed.

Self-pollination, though - the pollination of female cones/flowers by males from the same plant, is not particularly desirable. When it does occur, the resulting seeds may produce weaker plants, so a great many plants have developed defences against it. Evolution, as usual, has produced a wonderful variety of methods so it is not surprising that Bunyas (and their *Araucaria* relatives) have evolved a technique of their own to reduce self-fertilisation to a minimum. Their female cones are on their upper branches, and males on the branches below them. This means that the wind is more likely to lift the pollen from one tree to another (or away to somewhere where it is never used) than to lift it straight up to the female cones of the same tree. The 3-nut cone came from an isolated tree, and the 90-nut cone from a grove of half a dozen of them. The larger the population of Bunya trees in close proximity, the higher the chances of a good fertilisation rate. Obviously, also a group of six will be more fertile than an avenue of six trees planted in a single row.

Bunya nuts are probably Australia's most nutritious bushfood. If you are considering planting some for their nuts, do consider pollination.

Araucaria bidwillii male cones
Photo; Trish Gardner



Views of a Volunteer

My name is Ken Smith, and I am a volunteer at Highfields Falls Bushland Reserve.

After reading a sign at the Dau Road entrance and making a telephone call, my journey into the 'unknown' world of Landcare commenced. That was about 2½ years ago, and Tuesday mornings in the Reserve have become a permanent fixture in my weekly routine.

Despite being totally deficient in all things botanical, I was warmly welcomed into the group. Almost immediately my skills at dispatching Privet, Lantana, and Asparagus Vine became finely tuned. Apart from the obvious benefits of regeneration, other benefits have emerged. Fitness, fresh air, and friendships all add to the mix.

In total, we are 10 in number (See photo, next page). However, and for a variety of reasons, our actual daily attendance is lower. Conversely, and regardless of numbers, progress is achieved to best of our abilities and resources.

Personally, and due to its physical size, I can't see our intrepid team ever winning the war. However, I do feel that our efforts are making a big difference to the landscape. This can be physically seen in the existing vegetation, growth of our native plantings, and increasing birdlife population.

In stating the above, I now must ask the following. ***"Is it worth considering what better progress could be made with more volunteers"?***

We live in area that is the second biggest inland Australian city which, as we know, is expanding at an ever-increasing rate. The average age of my group is probably atypical of all other FEP sub-units and forever increasing. Without adding to our ranks, there can only be one outcome as time has its willful way.

As an organization, is it possible to give serious consideration to some form of recruitment to fill our ranks and make a bigger difference? There are newspapers, publications, social media, public announcements on local radio, possible school visits, roadside signage, and countless shopping centers that can be outlets for the dissemination of information.

As we already know, there is a plethora of housing developments and secure lifestyle units completed or under construction. One can only wonder how many of these able-bodied occupants would leap at the chance to join such a worthwhile environmental group! Like myself, the only impediment to joining earlier was lack of knowledge of being able to help.

Regardless of the outcome, the worst scenario is that nothing changes. This is apart from our collective ages, of course! Food for thought, and thanks for reading this small note

Ken Smith

26 November 2025



Some of the Highfields Falls FEP group (Ken, at left end). Photo, Jane Butler

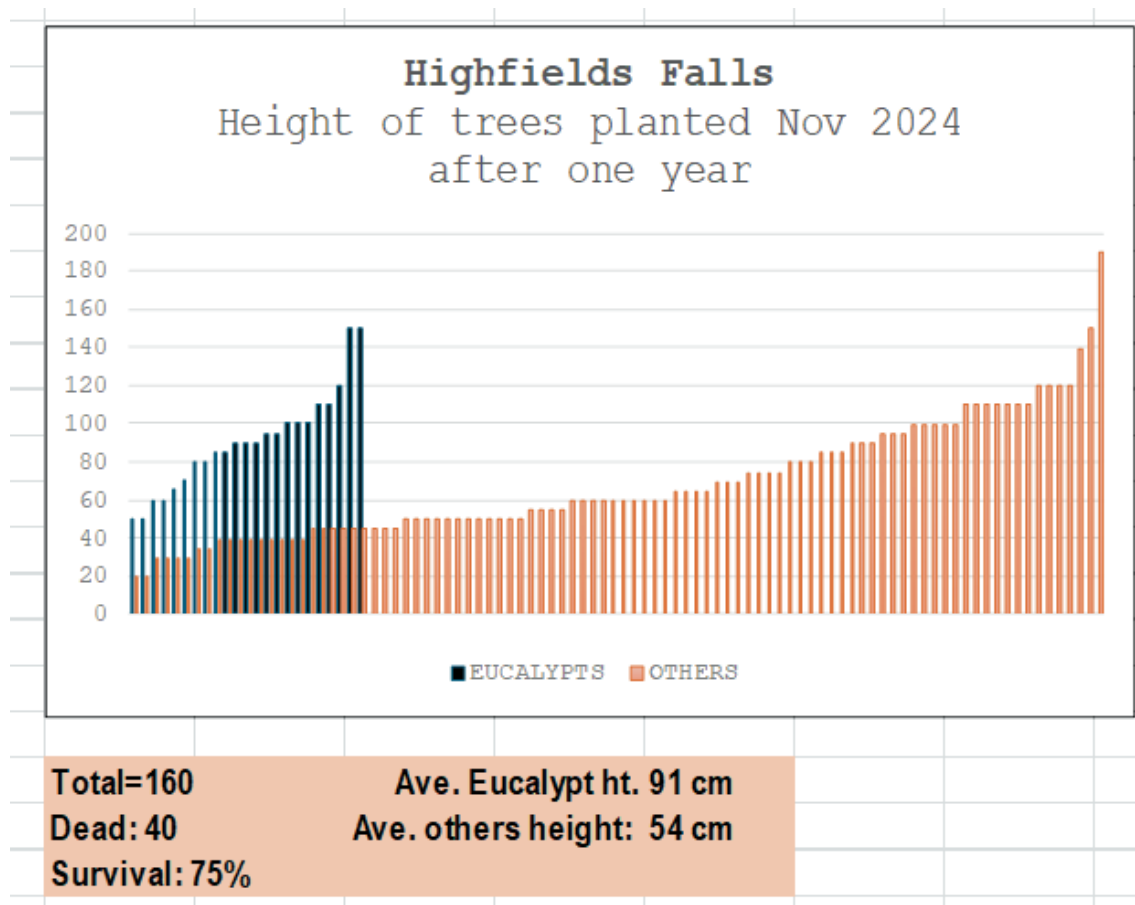


Pigea Stellarioides Spade Flower Photo; P McGowan

Planting Survival Study at Highfields Falls Bushland Park
Warwick Easdown

Good survival of trees planted at Highfields Falls Bushland Park

Back in November 2024 our Highfields Falls team had two great planting days with high schoolers from Toowoomba Christian College in Highfields. About 300 trees, shrubs and grasses were planted. About 12 months after I did a quick count of the survival rate and sizes of the trees to get some idea of how successful we'd been. There were 160 trees identified in the area where we'd planted and a count of the total tree covers left (with and without trees) showed an impressive survival rate of around 75%. The average height of the Eucalyptus was 91 cm and the average height of the other species was 54 cm, with a few species doing particularly well. It appeared that the survival of Eucalypts in particular was higher further up the slope, as there was more insect and critter damage to the trees in the gully. Notably absent were many Acacias, which is quite different to the natural regeneration we are seeing in other areas of the park. More detailed analysis over coming months of the best performing species may be a useful guide for future plantings.





Carissa ovata Photo; P. McGowan

Carissa Ovata

The leaves are glossy green, opposite, narrow ovate to lanceolate and 1–5 cm in length. The branches bear thorns of 1–3 cm length. White, star-shaped flowers about 1 cm across are followed by ovate green berries, 1–2 cm in length, which turn black or dark purple when ripe. Its leaves provide food for butterflies (e.g. Australian crow, *Euploea core*) and moths (e.g. some hawkmoths). *Carissa Ovata* is a shrub of the dogbane family (Apocynaceae) and its milky sap in the stems is toxic.

It is a native but not endemic to Australia, where it is also called *currant bush* or *native currant* or even *black currant*. It is, however, neither closely related to plums (*Prunus*) nor to true currants (*Ribes*).

Description of the plant was published in Prodr. Fl. Nov. Holland.: 468 (1810), this name (*Ovata*) is a synonym of *Carissa spinarum*; named by Carl Linnaeus in his 1771 *Mantissa Plantarum*.

The 1889 book 'The Useful Native Plants of Australia' records the plant under the name *Carissa Ovata*.

iNaturalist Network using material from the Wikipedia article "*Carissa spinarum*", which is released under the Creative Commons Attribution- <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/334776-Carissa-ovata>

Combined Clean-Up Australia and FEP weeding Green panic grass at Stenner St Park 28 Feb 2026
Photos: Rob Sanderson



FEP Bush care groups are volunteers carrying out bush regeneration activities in our local bushland parks. Bring your gloves, hat and water. Other details are available on <https://fep.org.au/volunteer/park-care/>

FEP Bush Care Parks and Groups

Name of Park	Locality	Coordinator Contact Details	Schedule
Charles and Motee Rogers Reserve Highfields	Highfields	Dougal phone number: 0409 920 399.	9am on first and fourth Fridays of the month
Duggan Park (Leslie & Collier Streets, Rangeville)	Rangeville	Kaye 0402 183 087 kwoodriley@gmail.com	Second Saturday of the month From 8 am
Echo Valley South Park (Ramsay St)	421 Ramsay St Middle Ridge	Greg 0428 288 077 glukes@bigpond.com	Second and fifth Saturday & First, third and fifth Wednesday at 9 am
Hancock St Park	Rangeville	Shirley 04 1774 0887	Every Thursday Summer: 7 am – 10:30 am Autumn – Spring: 7 am – 11 am
Hancock St Park Microforest Group	Rangeville	Elizabeth Addie, president@fep.org.au	We meet as required.
Hartmann Bushland Reserve	Rangeville	Greg 0428 288 077 glukes@bigpond.com	Second and fourth Wednesday From 9 am
Highfields Falls Bushland	James Byrne Rd, Highfields	Bob 04 0764 9086 harveybob13@gmail.com	Every Tuesday 9 am – 12 pm
Leopard Ash Bushland Park, Kleinton (Near Highfields)	Kleinton	Russell 04 376 11306	First Saturday 9am – 12pm Meet at container on the western side of the park.

Panorama Crescent Park	Prince Henry Heights	David panorama.crescent.park@outlook.com	Third Saturday 9 am – 12 pm
Nielsen Park	Middle Ridge Meet at Colman Drive entrance	Rob 0407 124 863	First and fourth Saturday 9 am – 11 am
Redwood Park	Toowoomba Range	Eduarda van Klinken 04 0942 1545 eduardavk@bigpond.com Turn left at 100km sign to the signposted car park area & picnic ground	Every Monday and Friday Summer: 7 am – 9:30 am. Autumn and Spring: 7:30 am – 10:30 am Winter: 8 am – 10:30 am
Redwood Park Prince Henry Drive FEP Group	Prince Henry Heights	Tom 0438 441 188 tom@tomesplin.com	Every Tuesday 7:30 am to 10:30 am
Skyline Drive Escarpment Park	Blue Mountain Height The worksite is from the end of Rangeview Rd, Blue Mountain Heights	Christel 0448 329 008	First Sunday 8 am – 9 am
Stenner Street Park	Middle Ridge	Claudia Claudia.stephenson@bigpond.com	We meet as required
Williams Park	Cecil Crescent, Highfields QLD	Karen Sams samskaren31@gmail.com mob: 0419 101 555	Monday mornings 10am – 12pm. Meet at Mavis Court.
Tobruk Memorial Drive Park	Rangeville	Deb on 04 0330 7234 or Michael on 04 0711 3249	1st and 3rd Friday of the month 8.30 – 11 am . Meet at the Rainforest Gully Trailhead sign on the right, down Tobruk Memorial Drive

FEP Key Contacts

FEP President – Elizabeth Addie president@fep.org.au

FEP Secretary – Sue Sheppard secretary@fep.org.au

FEP Treasurer - treasurer@fep.org.au

FEP Facebook – shirdunsdon@hotmail.com

Thank you to our contributors;

**Please send newsletter contributions to Penny McGowan:
editorfep@gmail.com**

Please note that the minutes from FEP committee meetings are posted on our website on the member log-in page.

Friends of the Escarpment Parks Toowoomba Inc. acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this region, including the Jagera people, the Giabal people and the Jarowair people, whose song lines traverse this land on which we work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present



Jubilee Park, Toowoomba escarpment Photo; B McGowan