



Yalukit Willam Nature Association
Annual Report
2023/24



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Introduction



YWNA Patron N'arwee't Carolyn Briggs, Natalie Davey (President) and Kuda

The Boonwurrung name for the First Nation Peoples of this area is the Yaluk-ut Weelam - which can be translated as People of the River or waterways. Waterways defined the boundaries of most of Melbourne's clans. Boonwurrung lands were mainly those with streams that flowed to the sea. The Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve is a much-needed restoration project for a small but significant part of the Elster Creek catchment. The work that YWNA, Bayside Council and other stakeholders are putting into restoring the health of waterways and wetland habitat will give much needed restorative care to a now very compromised urban creek and wetland area. It is a terrific privilege for this community association to be integral in connecting the broader community to this important project and active in supporting the realisation of the [Masterplan](#).



Plant Lab team 23/24- Sophie, Gio, Jo and Claire.



N'arwee't Carolyn, Alison Soutar (Palais grant) and Gio broadcast seeds in the Yarning Circle.

'No person achieves change on their own. It always happens as a collective group' Geoff Love- YWNA committee

Caring for Country

YWNA respectfully acknowledges that we are working and living on the unceded lands of the Boonwurrung people. The YWNR community has been incredibly fortunate to have N'arwee't Dr Carolyn Briggs's direct involvement and wisdom. This is both in the development of the reserve itself and with this organisation. N'arwee't Carolyn will fondly recall first walking over the then golf course with Neil Blake from the Ecocentre, being closely followed by some visiting water birds.

Prof Carolyn Briggs OM is a Boon Wurrung senior Elder and is the chairperson and founder of the Boon Wurrung Foundation and on the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council. A descendant of the First Peoples of Melbourne, the Yaluk-ut Weelam clan of the Boon Wurrung. She is the great-granddaughter of Louisa Briggs, a Boon Wurrung woman born near Melbourne in the 1830's. Carolyn has been involved in developing and supporting opportunities for Indigenous youth and Boon Wurrung culture for over 40 years. YWNA has worked with N'arwee't, the Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council and Bayside Council during the design and building phase of the meeting place in the Chain of Ponds. The entire Elwood Swamp of which this reserve seeks to in part regenerate, was a rich and sustaining place for the Yaluk-ut Weelam for many thousands of years. The restorative aspect involves returning plants that were common in pre-colonial days to thrive here and restore some health to this regenerated wetland. The plants and wetland scape will in turn offer refuge for many living creatures. The meeting/knowledge (Yulendji Djeembana) place in the Chain of Ponds will be home to cultural events and education and a place for reflection and connection to place. The Mudstone, a sedimentary rock used in the reserve as stepping stones, comes from nearby Boonwurrung Country.

The renaming in August 2022 to the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve reflects this ongoing engagement and reconciling place with the rightful ancient and ongoing connections to Country acknowledged. Australia's oldest flowers are 126-120 million years old. Some of the plants being reintroduced have been around for millions of years. Until we removed them. Now is the time for action. Now is the time to care for local waterways, reserves and learn to listen to the lessons of this ancient Country and Culture and the living



words of Elders and custodians. N'arwee't Carolyn had initially an informal role as a Principal Cultural Advisor and the committee has been enriched by Carolyn's role as Patron to the YWNA Association. The spelling of the Clan name has been standardised and our Association is using the same spelling used for the Reserve name by Bayside Council. For further reading I recommend N'arwee't's essay here in [Meanjin](#)



Melbourne Museum filming on Country with N'arwee't in the reserve.

HIGHLIGHTS

This year has been a productive, incredibly active and growing year for the Yalukit Willam Nature Association. Key moments have included:

- Held an historical walk in honour of Geoff Love, local waterways champion and founding member of YWNA (epa) with local historian Isaac Hermann
- Community celebration held in November 2023 in the Bowls Club
- Completing one year of the partnership agreement with Bayside Council (this milestone takes us into the next reporting year) : this has taken the form of monthly meetings with Council Officers Paul Gibbs and Tom Vercoe and the YWNR Project Lead Jarrod Fleming. YWNA President and Vice President meet monthly with Council Officers. There have been countless meetings on site- in particular between Gio Fitzpatrick (now YWNA VP) and Jarrod Fleming. Bayside is also moving to involve YWNA more in their Communications which next year's committee will develop.
- Gio Fitzpatrick nominated by YWNA committee to discuss Plant Lab needs with Jarrod and Officers. Gio also stepped into the Vice President role when Anna Rabinov due to illness stepped into an Ordinary Member role.
- N'arwee't Carolyn Briggs Principal Cultural Advisor became YWNA's Patron.
- A grant from the Palais Foundation continuing to enable us to record an oral project documenting the founding people involved in the YWNR and important stories connected to the place. The project has developed into a deep engagement between the plants, animals and language and will eventually be produced as a local seasonal calendar.
- Social Media policy developed- If any of the YWNA committee share something on FB, we agree to give context to the post (who we are speaking on behalf of, and the reason for the post).
- Plant Lab further established growing 25,000 plants and SPA (Seed Production Area) first season collected, counted and broadcast into the wildflower meadow. Ongoing management of plant nursery. Coordination and induction of new volunteers to continue working with more people on site.
- [Plant Lab Protocols](#) developed.
- Further enhancement and care of the YWNA shed garden initially planted in 2022. The shed gardens aim at showcasing forms, colours, function and habitat value of our Indigenous flora thus promoting use in home gardens to increase local habitat, designed by Claire Hudson.
- Many working bee hours dedicated to infill work in the Chain of Ponds, Yulendji Djeembana (Gathering Place) and Wildflower Meadow.
- 'Spring Encounters' Sept 23 hosted by Natalie Davey in the YWNA shed- "Spring Encounters: with(in) place 2023" as part of a series of activities organised by the [Alliance for Praxis Research \(APR\)](#), composed of artists, researchers and PhD candidates from Monash and RMIT.

- Sept 23 Initial discussions with Council water tanks for fish breeding on site in the YWNA shed area with the Melb Water Richard Akers and Tim Curmi from Native Fish Victoria. Tank installed in YWNA shed with Pygmy Perch in Winter 24. Permit received to release fish into the Chain of Ponds
- Terrific work by Claire Hudson and volunteers on extending the reserve's plants into and enhancing the Elwood Bowls Club.
- YWNA took part in the [Great Southern Bioblitz](#) for the second year in 2023. YWNA set up the Bayside Area with a focus on engaging people in the reserve. We took part again this year in 2024- with Gio Fitzpatrick and Dan Kurek leading a daylight bug bioblitz event.
- YWNA has completed the Volunteer and Supervisor Induction materials for our team leaders with Ecocentre staff and supported by Bayside Council. Formal volunteer inductions carried out and supervisor induction completed. (Thanks again to support from Ecocentre- Nadav in-kind support from Ecocentre- and we especially thank Nadav Zisin for his tireless work with us.)
- Monthly Working Bees- sometime twice a month when more work needed. Over 1,080 volunteer hours. New Working Bee Coordinator stepped up at the start of 2024 to replace Harry - Ebony Bain now leads.
- Ebony Bain Perkins, YWNA Working Bee coordinator, initiated a [YWNA Instagram](#) presence- and has been growing a new audience with her creative posting.
- Weekly Plant Lab/Shed volunteering (3 hourly)- maintenance of the SPA (Seed Production area)- seed collection completed for the wildflower meadow.
- Publication of our very own [Seed Cleaning Manual](#) - many thanks go to volunteer Julie Beatty for her countless hours of work ensuring we gave over a massive haul of seeds which were mixed into the general sowing of the Wildflower/grassy meadow by Melbourne Uni and Council contractors. YWNA volunteers broadcast seeds into the YWNR corner and Yarning circle.
- YWNA/ Love Our Streets- (coordinators Glen and Rowena) - Monthly meetings - to ensure the reserve is as free from rubbish as possible. Glen Adams has now moved from the role and we are looking for new coordinators for 2025.
- YWNA Waterwatch- monthly Waterwatch -
- Monthly bird surveys (when possible)- all surveys published on the website and shared to Facebook audience. New coordinator established (Hayley Pottenger) as Bob and Alyson are stepped down due to moving out of the area. We are very grateful for all their work with the Bird Survey team and wish them well in their new abode. Thank you Sue Forster for all your terrific reports and Tania Ireton for leading the surveys and sharing your knowledge with the community of bird watchers in the reserve.
- Meetings with the YWNR Advisory Committee with Bayside Council - 2023 two YWNA committee members on board- Alison Soutar and Tricia Wevill. In 2024, Natalie Davey attended each meeting held in this reporting period.
- Membership of 290 (last year 172) paid up members and 3321 (up from last year's 2200) Facebook group members.

- May 24 -Gio and Natalie took part in Living Links Conference connecting many environmental groups
- Sienna Cross as YWNA Youth Ambassador attended many Working Bees and Waterwatch events .
- Many many walks, events and tours over the Reserve - these include with Caufield Grammar, Headspace, ECAT leader Tracey Harvey, North Rd Girls School- Yr 8 students taken on a Water Walk, Ecocentre's Teacher PD, Melbourne Unis Walking Group, a local women's hiking group and many more guided tours taken by members of the Committee.
- Over \$15 million promised from Federal Labor to the reserve delivered to Bayside Council
- YWNA volunteer articles published in Bayside Banksia - [Magpie Geese and other sightings](#), [YWNR Beauties](#), Summer , [Adventures during early Bareep](#), Spring
- Newsletters, updates published onto our website [Autumn Newsletter](#), and [Beereen/Winter](#)
- YWNA committee member Gina Fiske ongoing work on Flood Committee- following up Melbourne Water's plans for the Diversion Drain
- Meeting up with like-minded groups to learn more about their organisations and ideas. Joined the VEFN (Friends of Environment Network), Ecocentre and learning from YWNA volunteers.
- Natalie Davey and N'arwee't Carolyn Briggs presented separately at an IPMEN conference in Canada in July 23. N'arwee't on Cultural protocols and Natalie on the community engagement with Water in the light of work in the Yalukit Willam Reserve and previous work at sea.

- 6 Committee meetings, 2 Strategy meetings and 6 Sub committee meetings , countless informal meetings.
- YWNA commissioned a A guide to the ecological restoration of the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve from YWNA Naturalist Gio Fitzpatrick - this is along the principles of..." It should be concerned with building as resilient an ecosystem as possible, comprised of as great a proportion of locally indigenous organisms as possible, while improving the population status of identified target fauna species. To realise the site's unique ecological potential, designers and managers must take advantage of key assets/opportunities while mitigating key challenges for biodiversity." It gives us an opportunity to define a 'best practice' for the reserve.

A tremendous thank you to our fantastic, irrepressible and hardworking YWNA committee and sub-committees and the many, many incredible volunteers and community who have supported YWNA activities and the YWNR vision over the year. A grateful thank you to Bayside Councillors and Bayside Council officers, key contractors and YWNR Bayside Project lead Jarrod Fleming. Thank you to Bayside City Council for all their support of the Plant Lab and on-ground activities.

Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve Masterplan: History and Progress

The Elsternwick Park Association then called, through its membership of the EPNR Community Reference Panel, worked with Bayside Council officers and experts to develop the [EPNR Masterplan](#).

This masterplan was based on:

- Elsternwick Park Association (now YWNA) vision for the reserve (1)
- The Principle and Priorities document developed by the epa (YWNA) (2)
- Technical reports-these included a fauna strategy, as well as other very technical flood management and hydrology reports.
- A series of workshops attended by epa(Now YWNA) panel members as well as experts, Bayside officers and other stakeholders.

It is incredibly exciting to see the Chain of Ponds now finished, the Gathering Place (Yulendji Djeembana) opening up and the sowing of the wildflower meadow. The plantings in the Chain of Ponds are now well established and seem to be coping with the ravages of eager swamp hens and others. Many YWNA volunteers have spent a lot of time weeding and infilling with habitat planting. The Chain of Ponds will be the haven for the birds and animals when the next stage of the Masterplan wetland development begins. The planning for the Southern Wetlands is now in full swing and the incoming committee will have the opportunity to consult on the design hopefully very soon.

The completion of the Meeting Place (Djeembana Yulendji), and the establishment of the Wildflower/grassy meadow, frog hollows and woodland. Infrastructure nearing completion long the New St edge and it is great to see amenities now open for community use. The Gateway building design competition was held and YWNA had some opportunity to feed into the functional aspects as did the YWNR Advisory Committee.



YWNR Committee of Management (Now Advisory Committee)

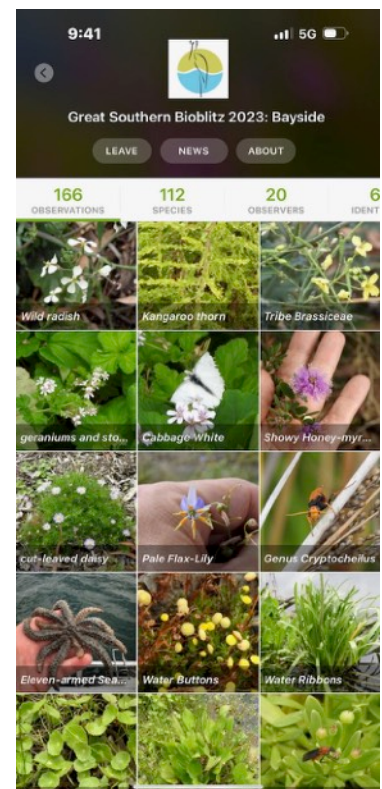
Meetings take place 6 times a year at the Bayside Brighton offices. The advisory committee is focusing on the development of a management plan for the YWNR. The meetings in the early part of the year included sharing the Gateway developments and Southern Wetland design. The advisory panel will hopefully play a role in bringing community oversight of the project and insuring all the Masterplan goals are met. It is a necessary forum for bringing in expertise and sharing best practice for this important project.

The appointments are made by Bayside Council following an expression of interest process calling out to residents, community representatives and technical experts that could represent a range of views and interests with experience that is relevant to the goals outlined in the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve Masterplan. This year when the terms were changed it allowed for different members of the YWNA Committee to join which allows us to pick the person with the most connection and capacity to contribute to the matters at hand.

Great Southern Bioblitz

Citizen Science Blitz! YWNA took part again in the Great Southern Bioblitz - and we claimed the whole of Bayside as you have to mark a larger territory than the reserve. It certainly celebrated the fact that we are all connected one way or another. Though many of our observations were in Reserve and we held a daytime bugblitz with Dan Kurek and Gio Fitzpatrick.

Check out the latest observations in the reserve here on [iNaturalist](#).



*“This tree holds the knowledge of the past,
the present and into tomorrow. It is related
to my people, the Yalukit Weelam of the
Boonwurrung I invite you to learn from it
with djil bruk (respect).”*

—N'Arweet Professor Carolyn Briggs AM



From exhibition held in Bunjilaka this year

YWNA activities 23-24

YWNA Plant Lab

The Plant Lab is our very own plant propagation facility and at the heart of much of YWNA's activities. 100% volunteer run, the Plant Lab plans to supply the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve with tens of thousands of plants per year. The Plant Lab endeavours to grow the rare, difficult or inconspicuous plant species, which are often forgotten in nurseries and revegetation projects. These will make all the difference in our aim to restore biodiversity and create suitable habitat for target species. Ongoing propagation will remain essential in maintaining populations even after the initial establishment of the reserve's plantings. It will give the plants the help they need to overcome impediments to natural regeneration such as weeds, climate change, missing pollinators, lack of fire etc. Many plants now flourishing in the reserve were locally extinct. For example the beautiful *Ranunculus lappaceus*/common buttercup and *papulentis*/ large river buttercup.

Jarrold Fleming, Bayside's Project Lead has remained a constant in his role liaising between Council and YWNA to help provide the Plant Lab with soil, gravel and other basics that allow the community to be supported in contributing so much to the reserve. We meet regularly with the Project Lead so that our plant lists and timing fit the projects' schedule and needs meanwhile informing Council of any plants that may be missing or overlooked. We appreciate Bayside City Council for their ongoing support and dialogue as part of our [partnership agreement](#).

Often not mentioned or celebrated is the Cultural understanding and knowledge of local plants and their uses and the reserve is a brilliant place to showcase and celebrate the wealth of stories and knowledge that comes from thousands of years of lived experience and stewardship of the Yalukit Willam people.



Plant Lab action

23/24 Plantlab report

The YWNA Plantlab is thriving as are the wonderful plants that are being propagated and planted out in the Reserve:

The leadership team is working well and is made up of Gio Fitzpatrick, Sophia Clarke, Claire Hudson and Jo Samuel-King all co-leading. This has enabled the Plantlab to be open and productive every Wednesday afternoon and for two monthly weekend sessions. Gio, Sophie and Jo are co-leading the Wednesday and Saturday afternoon sessions and Claire leads the Saturday morning sessions.

This has enabled the Plantlab to:

Update the Plantlab Vision, protocols and weed management strategy-[see here on Plant Lab Page](#).

Coordinate an estimated 150 volunteer hours per month (3 hours x 8 volunteer hours x 6 sessions per month).

Propagate an estimated 25,000 plants. This includes an estimated 50 different species and includes a number of rare or threatened species that are hard to grow, or source, have particular habitat features and/or cultural significance to Traditional Owners. Please see the [working plant inventory](#), for our current stock. All due to head out into the Reserve next year.

Plant around 15-20,000 plants out into the Reserve:

Grow, collect and clean, many thousands of wildflower seeds via the Seed Propagation Area. A special thanks to Dassi for work in seed harvesting and to Julie Beatty for her painstaking work in seed cleaning and the development of the [seed cleaning manual](#).



Weed-all of the tube stock, much of the nastiest weeds in the Reserve and start to get on top of the weeds in the Plantlab area, via varying sustainable weed management techniques. A special thanks to Nicole for her tireless work in this regard as well as many other volunteers, too many to name.



Bring some order to the YWNR shed: We are starting to see some order within the shed, thanks to the work of Brighton Men's shed and to Lois for taking the initiative in this regard.

Ongoing maintenance of the Shed Garden, which welcomes people as they enter the reserve and the YWNA Shed and Plantlab area. It has been created and maintained by Claire and volunteers and serves as an inspiration to gardeners who visit the reserve as to how beautiful an indigenous garden can be.

Establish Bowls club perimeter gardens- managed by Claire Hudson - planted out most of the two longer fence lines of the Bowls club – to again assist with weed management, to enhance views from and into the Bowls club and to expand the communities' knowledge and value of indigenous plants. Particular attention in the Bowls club has been to promote lots of flower colour throughout the year and to address some of the issues around weeds and dust coming into the Bowls club.

This project was begun out of gratitude to the Bowls Club who have assisted us with the use of their amenities. All decisions were made in consultation with the Bowls Club Committee by Claire.



Julie Beatty and Tricia Wevill seed cleaning

Establish our very own part of the Reserve, known fondly as the YWNA Corner. A sign of the trust and deepening working relationship developed between YWNA and Bayside City Council has been that an area of the Wildflower meadow has been set aside for YWNA to develop and plant out. Plantlab volunteers have had the great privilege of broadcast seeding the seeds grown in the Seed Propagation Area into this area and we look forward to seeing it develop into a very special part of the Wildflower Meadow.

Enhance the habitat in the Chain of Ponds: YWNA volunteers, most of the Plantlab volunteers, assisted in a number of habitat enhancement projects throughout the year, during and outside of Plantlab sessions.

This has included:

The Billabong habitat enhancement project



Billabong drying in process

This involved a team of volunteers, manning three, small pumps over a period of 4-6 weeks with a view to draining the two Billabongs, with a view to *Gambusia* management and to facilitate the establishment of aquatic vegetation. Following the *Gambusia* eradication, we have been working on Billabong 1 with the introduction of complex natural structures, such as branches, rocks and aquatic vegetation.

It's early days but the fact that we now have no signs of *Gambusia* in the two billabongs, aquatic vegetation, now established in Billabong 1. This is an incredibly exciting and rewarding project for all the volunteers to be involved in and marks a new phase in the Reserve development

We are hoping the next phase will be:

- Continued aquatic planting, protected by a combination of cages, and branches in the lower Billabong. Our hope is that we can get Billabong 2 up to Billabong 1 standards.
- Now that Growling Grass Frogs have appeared the habitat enhancement work is vital
- The drying out and possibly drainage of the central chain in order to continue with *Gambusia* management and ideally eradication.

We are all looking forward to expanding involvement of our membership in Plant Lab activities, including regular induction and supervisory training sessions so that more volunteers can take on

broader roles as part of YWNA. The Plant Lab now has 27 volunteers who alternate between shed and Plant work bi-weekly. Nearly all the plants that have been propagated on site have been planted

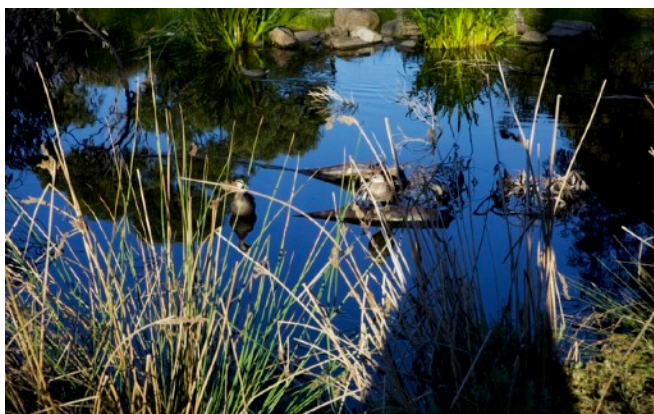


Billabong team

out by volunteers into the Chain of Ponds. Volunteers have contributed 3156 hours in the Plant Lab over this reporting year.

Overall, it's been such a pleasure to work together with all of the Plant Lab team regularly and to have witnessed all that we have achieved this year. Thank you to all our amazing volunteers!

Jo, Claire, Gio and Sophie.



Special thanks to our champion weeder Nicole who also handles our incredibly heavy bins every week!



Shed life



You gotta love the YWNA crew



Billabong signage- Dassi



WORKING BEES

Harry Baxter handed over to Ebony Bain Perkins at the beginning of 2024.

All our activity leaders have shown great leadership and flexibility in dealing with all the changing elements of working with people in an extremely dynamic site. The biggest change this year in the planning for these events has been the introduction of Jarrod Fleming as Project Lead on Council. His role has been crucial in providing us with planting and plant information. Our Working Bees have been generally held on the last Saturday of the Month. Though we have often hosted two a month when required by work on the ground.

Working Bees are open for all to come along and learn new skills. They occur at least once a month. They are a great way to get involved in the reserve itself and actively contribute to the growing diverse habitat. Thanks to all those who come along and contribute and all the active members who help make these days happen smoothly.

Ebony Bain Perkin's Working Bee report



Ebony and Working Bee team

This year, our Saturday working bees continued as a tradition, with a new start time of 9:30 am. While the earlier mornings mean a few of us arrive a little “dusty”, the camaraderie and enthusiasm have kept spirits high—thank you to everyone for the laughs and dedication!

To boost volunteer engagement, we expanded our outreach efforts. In addition to long-standing methods, we ventured into new channels this year, posting in local Facebook community groups,



putting up posters around Ormond Road shops, and even experimenting with Instagram to connect with a young, hip and cool audience. These efforts have significantly increased our volunteer base, bringing fresh faces and energy to each session.

Project Highlights

- **Native Understory Restoration**
Under the guidance of Gio, we focused on filling in the native understory. The hours our volunteers put in have made a visible impact, supporting natural diversity and helping prevent invasive weeds from overtaking the grassy layer. This work is critical for long-term habitat resilience.
- **Bowls Club Native Garden**
Another highlight was our collaboration with Claire at the local bowls club, where we helped establish a new native garden. This partnership allowed us to extend our reach and bring ecological restoration to more parts of the community.
- **Seed Cleaning**
Towards the start of the year we worked with Julie to finish the mammoth seed cleaning efforts. These were seeds that were collected from the seed production area and will contribute to the wildflower meadow.

Looking Ahead

Our plans for 2025 include enhancing volunteer engagement with more community events.

Favourite Moment

One of the most heartwarming moments this year was a collaboration of efforts that showed the reach and impact of our growing community engagement. A family from Reservoir joined us for a working bee after seeing one of our posts on Instagram. When I asked how they had heard about Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve, they shared that they had first visited during a teacher professional development session held at the reserve.

Watching the children explore, engage, and learn about the reserve was truly inspiring. It was a joy to connect with them further over cake and tea during our afternoon break—a beautiful reminder of how these shared experiences build community and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.

The YWNA working bees have been a pleasure to run in 2023. I would like to acknowledge all the predecessors who have established a productive and enjoyably run day for everyone. I would like to show my appreciation to Adam Hoskin for his passing down of the events and his guidance until the handover at the March Working Bee. I would also like to thank YWNAs Assistance; Natalie, Claire, Gio, Sanja, Julie, Aly and my additional task leaders; Tricia and Tania.

The Working Bees built great support across the first half of 2023 with our April Working Bee welcoming the Elwood Primary Nature Ambassadors and an attendance of over 40 passionate volunteers. In May we saw over 900 plants planted on site and 1000 in July. The seed cleaning, propagation and shed area also developed greatly in this time also saw much productivity.

The Community support, passion, expertise and love for the YWNR makes it all possible so Thank you everyone!



Frog hollow creation - Natalie Davey

YWNA Waterwatch

135 cumulative volunteer hours has gone into caring for Elster Creek and ponds through our Waterwatch activities.

This program was started many moons ago by a young Gio Fitzpatrick and Kate Bulling. Kate passed the coordination role to me four years ago. The role entails keeping in contact with all the volunteers, care of all the equipment and ensuring everything is in date (not always easy). Making sure that everything needed to monitor is at the site. Collecting all data and putting it up on the Waterwatch website and keeping up a sound website for all the new sound recordings. It can also involve some partnership work but more later.

The Waterwatch volunteers are the people who help reimagine place and water- who see degraded waterscapes and imagine them thriving and back to some semblance of health. They are all wonderful allies in this shared process. Richard Akers has remained supportive of us developing new methodologies, so alongside testing of the water using parameters such as turbidity (how clear is the water?), water bugs, chemical testing etc, we have been taking sound samples over the last few years. Sound can potentially reveal more about the hidden life underwater.

If you are curious you can [listen here](#) to a sample from the soak in the Chain of Ponds.

We began talking to Richard Akers from MW about becoming involved in a **Native Fish breeding** program last year and our shed was accepted as an inaugural site to house a tank for a native fish breeding program with Native Fish Australia/ ANGFA and Melbourne Water as a partners. The Pygmy Perch have made their home in the shed since last Winter and are looking to potentially be released in the Yalukit Willam water bodies to mark our end of year celebration.



Julianne, David and Sienna on listening duty



Gio, Natalie, Tim Curmi (Pres) NFA and Greg Martin (Pres) from [ANGFA](#)

We participated for the third year in a [global listening event](#) (REVEIL 24+1 HOUR BROADCAST 2024) from the reserve bringing the dawn underwater sounds of the Yalukit soaks to a global audience.

Soak 2 testing in the Chain of Ponds well established The Masterplan has the goal to reduce the nitrogen load going in the Bay and we hope to be able to detect an increase in the health of the waterway by both the water testing and witnessing an increase in the water bug biodiversity in the creek and soak. We still plan to add another site soon- depending on volunteer power- to measure the water quality as it enters the reserve up near the New St bridge.

This activity is a for anyone to join in, especially if you want to learn more about the health our local waterway and how to monitor it. We are very happy to have a number of young science students joining in to support the citizen science effort. Waterwatch happens on the last Sunday of every month. Finally a big thank you to all our volunteers who make this process easy and help us keep a regular eye on our local waterway. You are all amazing! And a Big Thank you to our wonderful Melbourne Water Coordinator- Richard Akers.



LITTER SURVEYS



You never know what you will find in the creek?

Elsternwick Park Love Our Street is a BeachPatrol Australia inland group that operates in partnership with YWNA.

We would like to pass on a very sincere and warm thank you to all the volunteers who have contributed to removing rubbish from the YWNR at the monthly clean up events.

Our thanks is also extended to the community who visit the reserve and remove rubbish on their walks, the volunteers engaged in other activities within the YWNR who remove rubbish, the Elsternwick football club who have attended our events and have expressed their full support for maintaining a clean and healthy reserve and the Bayside City Council for their generous funding support.

- From the 1 July 2023 to the 30 June 2024 a total of 74 volunteers attended 8 events to remove 142 kg of rubbish from the YWNR.

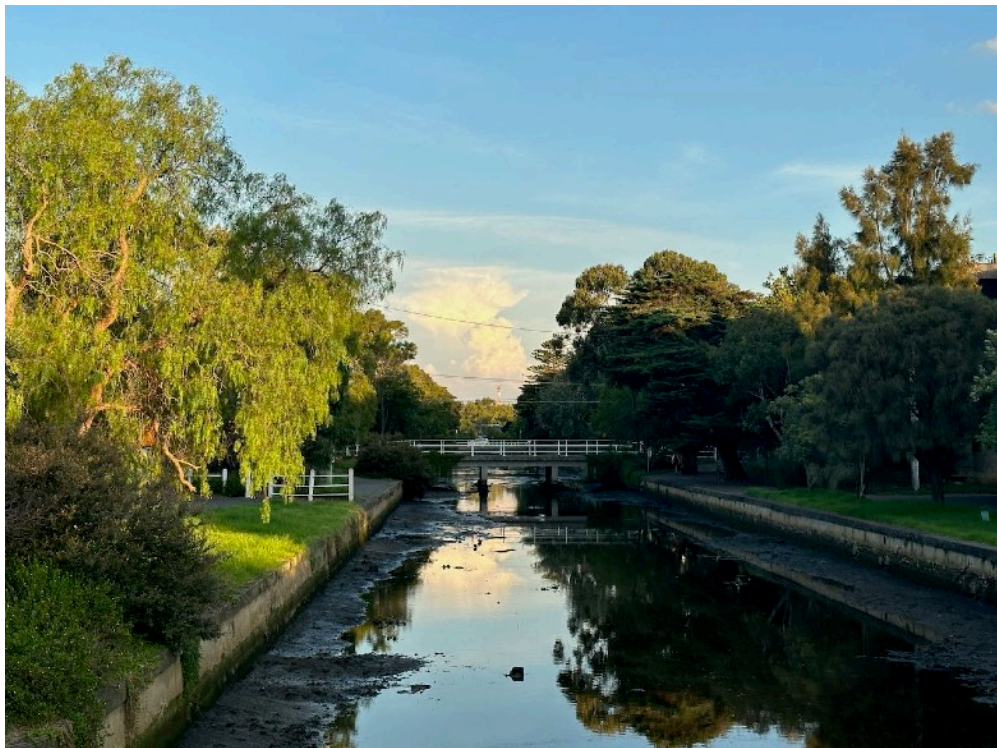
- Whilst the chain of ponds area has been relatively free of rubbish the area along the Elster Creek near New Street is still a

particularly problematic area due to its proximity to two stormwater drains which feed into the creek. This area continues to be a hot spot for hard and soft plastics of various sizes, polystyrene, building materials and waste organic matter. Interestingly this area can look free from rubbish at a distance and it is only on closer inspection that large amounts of rubbish have been found (for example grass has grown over hard plastics which crush under foot and soft plastic are embedded in soil and vegetation). Our volunteers have reported observations of birdlife curiously investigating smaller pieces of plastic as potential food sources and have noted a fallen birds nest composed of a variety of plastics. Within the YWNR along the corner of Glenhuntly Rd and Nepean Highway our volunteers typically find takeaway fast food rubbish and from time to time we discover private party zone areas within the trees and bushes in the area below the chain of ponds toward the Elster Creek.

- We wish to pass on a delightful thanks to Jill Sokol. Jill has moved this year to the Peninsula so her familiar figure in all the local litter activities will be reduced and we as a community will miss her. What a legend and thank you for all the incredible ways you have contributed to the health of our local environment.
- We look forward to continuing these activities and extend a very warm and gracious invitation to all those who wish to come along on the first Sunday of each month.

YWNR is a magnificent place and we are grateful to everyone for all of their efforts to keep it free from litter. We would also like to mention the stellar efforts of The Elwood Canal Action Team led by Tracy Harvey has been doing an amazing job hauling over 2500 kg from Elster Creek upstream of the diversion/New St and raising awareness of the ongoing deluge of our waste that is still heading straight into the Bay.





And still glides the canal...

Fly by Night

prepared by Dassi Herszberg and Tania Splawa-Neyman

TEAM

The Fly by Night team leaders for the 2023/24 year were Dassi Herszberg and Tania Splawa-Neyman. Other core team members who have assisted with the running of the survey event are Pascale Jacq, Meg Foots and Jon Brown.

AIMS

There are three main aims of the Fly by Night surveys:

- To create a baseline survey of nocturnal invertebrates and other fauna for comparison with continued survey results as changes and improvements are made in the reserve.
- To gauge the health of the reserve by the number and variation of invertebrates and nocturnal fauna over time.
- To facilitate community engagement with the invertebrate life at the reserve and develop collaborative and collective skills in citizen science.

HOW

The Fly by Night surveys monitor and record a variety of invertebrate species using specialist equipment - multi spectrum lamps and moth sheets. This equipment was purchased using a Bayside SmartyGrants acquittal.

The equipment inventory includes:

- 5 x LepiLED lights
- 5 x portable power banks
- 4 x power chargers
- 5 x moth sheets
- 5 x cloth frames
- 2 x spotlight torches
- 5 x red light torches
- 5 x kit bags

Materials for the final moth sheet were purchased during the winter break and it has been sewn in preparation for the 2024/25 season when 5 stations will be set up. All components are working well, and charging units last the duration of each session, sometimes over six hours.



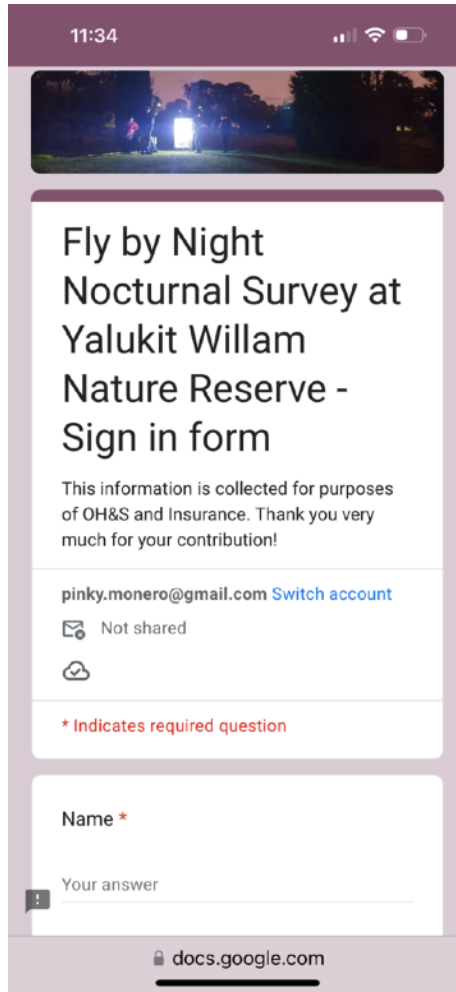
^ First Fly by Night Survey, 19/8/23.

Invertebrate species are observed and photographed by the Fly by Night team and volunteer participants. Images are then uploaded onto our iNaturalist project (<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/yalukit-willam-reserve-targeted-project>) to generate data for our ongoing biodiversity monitoring that will also contribute to citizen science.

For each survey a minimum of 2 stations in distinct areas of the reserve were set up, manned by at least 2 people at a time, with opportunity for movement between stations to observe the different invertebrate species across the reserve. During the final survey of the season on May 11th, four stations were set up without being manned, and the participants moved together as a group to make observations at each station. This was a very successful method, with the group experiencing great camaraderie and a better sense of safety when keeping together over the duration of the survey time. In the future we will continue to run the survey in this way, with the participants staying together.

The survey time for the invertebrate stations is approximately 4 hrs if the conditions are favourable.

For the 2023/24 season, we started using a google sign in form, with a linked QR code for participants to scan, which we have as an image on our phones. In addition to the usual sign-in information, we also ask if participants would like to be added to our email list, and if they would like a named attribute for their contribution to the project in any reports resulting from this event.



< QR code and sign in form used to collect Fly by Night participant's information.

enabled the team to collate accurate volunteer numbers, including the number of unique volunteers participating in the past year's series of events.

The information from the sign in form results has information on

SURVEY STATION LOCATIONS

The station locations are in areas of interest for gauging changes in biodiversity as the plant communities and vegetation structure develops over time in the reserve. Station one is a location in the chain of ponds close to billabong one. Station two is located on the southern side of the original water body on the reserve. Station three is located on a grassy patch close to the southern end of what will become the wildflower meadow. Station four is close to the Bent Ave side of the reserve, near the culvert that runs under the road. The future station five will be on a slope on the western/St Kilda St side of the reserve.



< Map of Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve with Fly by Night stations one, two, three, four and five marked.

SURVEY DETAILS AND VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTIONS

The number of surveys during 2023/24 was 10, with surveys conducted from August 2023 - May 2024. We take a break from surveys in winter when insects are considerably less present and active.

Across these surveys, the number of volunteers ranged from 4 to 17 with an average of 12. The hours of observation time across all surveys was 34 hrs 18 mins with an average of 3 hrs 24 mins for each survey. The total hours of volunteer time contributed was 404 hrs 48 mins with an average of 40 hrs 30 mins for each survey. The number of unique volunteers (different people who have attended) who participated in the past year's series of events was 70.

Other contributions that have not been accounted for in these figures are: the ongoing equipment maintenance and set up, social media engagement including setting up the facebook events and posting images of observations, the photography work of participants including photo processing, the uploading of observations into iNaturalist, and administration work to collate the volunteer and

survey stats. Other time has been contributed by the Fly by Night team, meeting to develop strategies for data extraction and management.

INVERTEBRATE OBSERVATIONS

Figures from iNaturalist regarding the observations made during the Fly by Night surveys are as follows:

- The number of observers for each survey - the number of participants who have contributed observations to the iNaturalist project, range from 3 to 11 with an average of 7.
- The number of iNaturalist observations across the ten surveys ranges from 80 to 259 with an average of 140 and a total of 1,403 during the period.
- The number of invertebrate species observed (Arachnida, Insecta and Mollusca categories) across the ten surveys ranges from 35 to 83 with an average of 54 and a total of 537* during the period. *This number includes duplicates of the same species as occurrences of the same species across multiple surveys are yet to be identified.

Survey Date	iNaturalist Observations	Species Numbers	iNaturalist Observers	Volunteer numbers	Survey time (mins)	Volunteer contribution (min)
19/08/2023	138	61	9	17	225	3825
16/09/2023	130	38	11	15	210	3150
14/10/2023	147	52	5	11	150	1650
11/11/2023	81	36	7	14	210	2940
16/12/2023	53	35	3	4	210	840
13/01/2024	132	49	8	11	210	2310
10/02/2024	140	56	9	9	180	1620
9/03/2024	243	82	4	10	210	2100
6/04/2024	259	83	8	13	210	2730
11/05/2024	80	45	7	13	240	3120
average	140	54	7	12	206	2,429
sum	1,403	537	71	117	2,055	24,285
average in hrs					3.4	40.5
sum in hrs					34.3	404.8

< Table 1:

iNaturalist observations and volunteer contributions



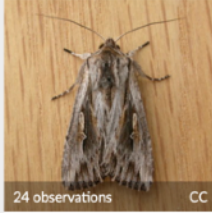




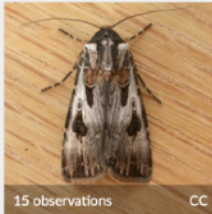


The top ten invertebrate species found at the reserve and recorded in the iNaturalist targeted project during the 2023/24 year were:

Proteuxoa sanguinipuncta, Cabbage White Butterfly, Southern Armyworm, Common Bluetail, Plantain Moth, Apple Looper, June Beetles, Brown Cutworm, Paropsisterna crocata, and Asian Paper Wasp.

Observations

Q Species Location Go Filters 6

The World 1,879 OBSERVATIONS 413 SPECIES 217 IDENTIFIERS 48 OBSERVERS

 <p>31 observations CC</p> <p><i>Proteuxoa sanguinipuncta</i></p>	 <p>24 observations CC</p> <p>Cabbage White (<i>Pieris rapae</i>)</p>	 <p>24 observations CC</p> <p>Southern Armyworm (<i>Persectania ewingii</i>)</p>	 <p>22 observations CC</p> <p>Common Bluetail (<i>Ischnura heterosticta</i>)</p>	 <p>20 observations CC</p> <p>Plantain Moth (<i>Scopula rubraria</i>)</p>
 <p>18 observations CC</p> <p>Apple Looper (<i>Phrissogonus laticostata</i>)</p>	 <p>16 observations CC</p> <p>June Beetles (Subfamily Melolonthinae)</p>	 <p>15 observations CC</p> <p>Brown Cutworm (<i>Agrotis munda</i>)</p>	 <p>15 observations CC</p> <p>Paropsisterna crocata</p>	 <p>14 observations CC</p> <p>Asian Paper Wasp (<i>Polistes chinensis</i>)</p>

[^] https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?d1=2023-08-19&d2=2024-05-11&project_id=yalukit-willam-reserve-targeted-project&subview=map&view=species&iconic_taxa=Arachnida,Insecta,Mollusca

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

The 2023/24 season was generally quiet for invertebrates, due to the cooler than normal summer. The most successful survey, in terms of species numbers was the one in March - the weather on the day leading up to this survey was the hottest of the 10 events, and this resulted in there being much more invertebrate activity on that evening, with clouds of insects buzzing around each moth sheet.

Highlights of the surveys are regularly contributed to the Yalukit Willam Nature Association Facebook page by Tania Splawa-Neyman and also Daniel Kurek - a member of the Entomological Society of Victoria, regular participant and core member of our project. Examples of these can be seen below, highlighting unusual and new species for the reserve found during the surveys. YWNA is now an Institutional member of the Entomological Society of Victoria.



Entomological Society of Victoria

March 10 · 🌐



An amazing "Fly By Night" last night with lots of different insects visiting the three moth sheets that were set up. We saw two new moths for our iNaturalist projectthe Rough Bollworm (*Earias huegeliana*) and *Armactica conchidia* (from the Tufted Moths family). A big thank you to [Dassi Herszberg](#), [Tania Spława-Neyman](#) & [Pascale Jacq](#) for another great night.



You, Krystyna Duszniak, Dan Kurek and 13 others

1 comment



Love



Comment



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Tania Sława-Neyman

November 13, 2023 · 🌐



Here's some of the amazing critters that we saw during the Fly by Night survey on Saturday evening. Thank you to [Dassi](#) for leading and the rest of the team and volunteers for contributing to the observations. I put a few of the white floof because it is so gorgeous - how is it even a real thing?!



Dassi Herszberg, Dan Kurek and 46 others

10 comments

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Tania Sława-Neyman

September 16, 2023 · 🌐



Lovely night for Fly by Night tonight! Lots of moths and lots of mozzies, bzzzzz!!!





  Krystyna Duszniak, Dan Kurek and 14 others

4 comments

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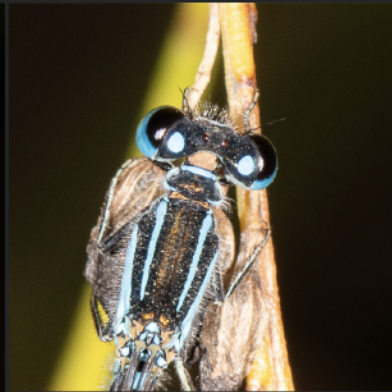


Tania Sława-Neyman

February 11 · 🌐



Here's a few more of the intriguing invertebrates that we saw at Fly by Night last night. Thank you to all of the fantastic volunteers that joined us and to [Dassi](#) for leading the team!



Dassi Herszberg, Dan Kurek and 21 others

3 comments

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Tania Sptawa-Neyman

April 1 · 🌐



The next Fly by Night is coming up on Saturday! Last month was absolutely buzzing, so hopefully there will be lots of insect friends about this month too. See the observations from the last survey here on iNaturalist: <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?on=2024-03-09...>



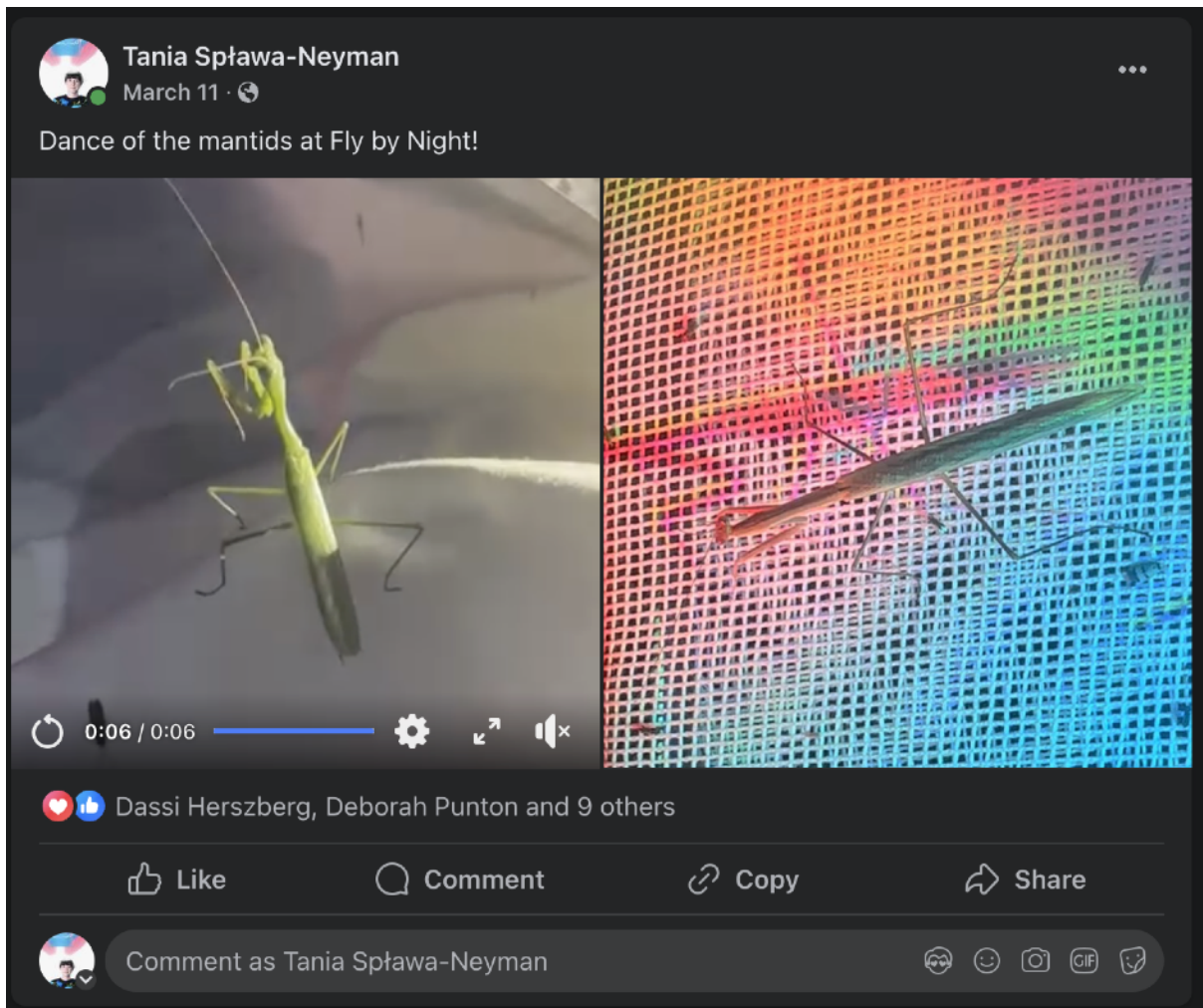
Danny Fog, Prudence Dread and 10 others

👍 Like

💬 Comment

🔗 Copy

➦ Share



PROMOTION

The main forms of promotion for the Fly by Night events has been through the Yalukit Willam Nature Association website, listed on the upcoming events, a Facebook event invite, and an email that is sent to a list of participants leading up to the event. Volunteers are added to the email list if they express interest on the sign-in form.

The ongoing communication and engagement with members of the Entomological Society of Victoria has been an important way to connect with the entomology community who have an avid interest in our project. The Entomological Society of Victoria has added the YWNR Fly by Night to their advertised calendar of events. YWNA is now a member of their Society too.



FUTURE NEEDS AND GOALS

There are a number of needs and goals that the Fly by Night team are hoping to work towards in the coming year:

Goals:

- Extend to include the fifth station location, which covers areas of the reserve yet to be developed in order to start collecting baseline data.
- Expand on the activities of the survey team to include a nocturnal survey of other fauna including frogs, bats and other mammals, fish and birds.
- Add an occasional daytime invertebrate survey to the yearly schedule, using nets and beating trays to search for species. A possible schedule could be one survey per season (Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter).
- Develop methods to extract the survey data from iNaturalist so that it is readable, usable and organised by station. A longer term goal is to start developing a database of plant and other ecological associations linking to the invertebrates that are present at the reserve.
- Extend Promotion to have a more prominent presence on the Yalukit Willam Nature Association website. This will involve producing a regular report following the Fly by Night surveys. Possible avenues for other promotion include the Port Phillip EcoCentre, other environmental groups and universities.

Equipment needs:

- Essential equipment is a set of walkie talkies that will assist the team with communication and safety.
- Safety goggles to offer participants *the website for the LepiLED lights has recently added a safety warning, recommending safety goggles to protect eyes against UV exposure of the lights when using them for extended durations.
- Bat detector equipment that has up to date software for identifying Australian microbat species.

Data extraction and organisation is a task that is currently beyond the capacity of the Fly by Night team and will need further ongoing support.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to the volunteers who have given their time and expertise in citizen science to assist with the data collection that has contributed to this project and was used to generate this report. We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Pascale Jacq, Jon Brown, Meg Fooks, Daniel Kurek, Ben Kurek, Claire Hudson, Susan Carden, Julian Druce, Gilbert Hennequin, Charles Richardson, Imogen Manins, Steve Kearney, , Belinda Kirsty McBean, Lexie, David Loakes, Fog, Josh van de Ven, Archer Benjamin Rhodes, Matt Gamsu, & Zachariah, Lyn Griffen, Renee Lee, Corentin Wild, Rachel Dewaal, Smitheram, Jonathan Neumann, and other participants who elected



Raymond, Karen Bennetts, Tammy Garcarczyk, Danny Callaway, Aidan Powell, Andrew Constantinou, Eric Katrine Lee, Tilden Skoble, Anther, Ali Mai, Claire Kim Colman, Jason Axford to remain anonymous.

I spy with my night eye...

Bird



Surveys

Yalukit Nature

Bird Surveyers- Danny Fog

Willam Reserve

monthly bird survey summary 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Why survey? From the volunteers:

“To see a nice little bit of planet Earth left inside planet human.” David.

“The perfect way to start the day.” Hayley.

“To reconnect with nature.” Tania.

Survey volunteers

Thirty-eight volunteers contributed a combined total of 347 hours to 12 monthly bird surveys in Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve. Observations and photography accounted for 227 hours. Coordination, data recording and report writing claimed an additional 110 hours.

The average number of volunteers per survey was 14, ranging from a minimum of 9 in December 2023 to 23 in August 2023.

Bob Tammick ably coordinated the surveys, which were led by Birdlife Bayside president Tania Ireton and Bob. In their absence, survey groups were led by Sue Forster, Stephen Machet and Laura Paterson.

Bob and Alyson Svenson and Tania Ireton recorded bird observations, posted data to Birdlife Australia’s Birddata website and maintained Excel spreadsheets. Sue Forster and Tania Ireton provided monthly reports for YWNA website, and Danny Fog, Susan Carden, Tania Splawa-Neyman, Jo Samuel-King and Sue Forster all contributed photos.

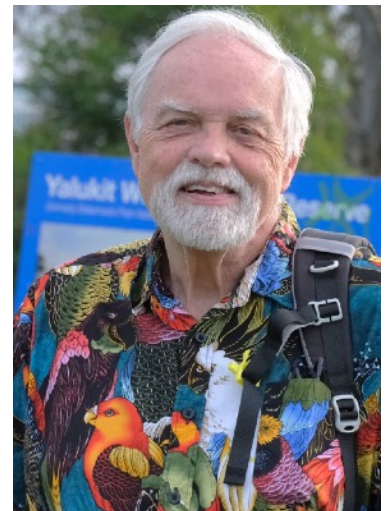
We were sad to see Bob and Alyson make their sea-change in June after 5 years of patiently and ably coordinating the group since its inception in 2019.

Survey data

The total number of bird species recorded in surveys was 44 (22 wetland, 18 terrestrial, 4 pest/feral).

The most species recorded across all areas on a single survey date was 32 in February 2024; the least was 26 in July and August 2023 and June 2024.

The highest total for all 7 areas was 483 in April 2024; the lowest was 275 in June 2023. Average survey abundance was 390, an increase of 6% over the previous year.



Bob Tammick- Susan
Carden



Great Egret- Danny Fog



Australian Wood Duck duckling-Jo Samuel King

The largest number of birds recorded in any section was 103 in Area F, Chain of Ponds, in April 2024.

Unusual and rare bird survey visitors included a Hardhead (duck), a Brown Quail, 5 Gang-gang Cockatoos, a Baillon's Crane, a pair of Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes, a juvenile Nankeen Night-Heron, a Spotted Pardalote, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, and a Willie Wagtail that subsequently stayed.

Casual sightings of additional new species appeared on YWNA's Facebook page between surveys, including Buff-banded Rails. In early May, Gio Fitzpatrick listed Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Spiny-cheeked Honeyeaters, Mistletoebird, Spotted Pardalote, Little Eagle and Whistling Kite.

Many birds have made YWNR their home. Breeding activity, including nesting, nestlings, chicks and immature birds, was recorded among Chestnut Teals, Pacific Black Ducks, Australian Wood Ducks, Dusky Moorhens, Hoary-headed Grebes, Purple Swamphens, Magpie-larks, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Noisy Miners, Common Starlings, Australian Magpies, Eastern Rosellas, Rainbow Lorikeets, Little Ravens, Grey Butcherbirds, and Buff-banded Rails.

Bird species recorded in Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve monthly surveys 2023/24

Wetland (22)

Eurasian Coot, Little Black Cormorant, Little Pied Cormorant, Baillon's Crane, Australian Wood Duck, Pacific Black Duck, Little Grassbird, Australasian Grebe, Hoary-headed Grebe, Silver Gull, Hardhead, White-faced Heron, Nankeen Night-Heron, Australian White Ibis, Masked Lapwing, Brown Quail, Australian Reed-warbler, Welcome Swallow, Purple Swamphen, Chestnut Teal, Grey Teal.

Terrestrial (18)

Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, Grey Butcherbird, Gang-gang Cockatoo, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, Little Corella, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Pied Currawong, Galah, Musk Lorikeet, Rainbow Lorikeet, Australian Magpie, Magpie-lark, Spotted Pardalote, Red-rumped Parrot, Crested Pigeon, Little Raven, Eastern Rosella, Willie Wagtail, Red Wattlebird.

Pest/feral (4)

Rock Dove, Spotted Dove, Noisy Miner, Common Starling.

Report: Sue Forster

14 October 2024



Buff Banded Rail-Post Survey



Baillon's Crane-Post Survey-Tania Splawa-Neyman



YWNA's Website

YWNA launched our new website back in May 2022. This rather daunting task was taken on by YWNA member Andrew Julian who has trained a couple of us in Wordpress. He has given and continues to give countless hours of technical support on a regular basis. In fact YWNA has had a weekly standing meeting with Andrew over the last 2 years. We now have a relatively easy to use website with all the information needed about our volunteer activities within the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve and how you can be involved. But there is always a tweak or gremlin in the system!

We try to capture everything from upcoming events, to data collected in the reserve, to updates on the construction itself, stories, ideas and incredible photography from our keen-eyed supporters from the Reserve. We hope the website will make it easier for the community to engage with the wetland project and stay up to date. The new membership portal is automated and membership is dated from payment annually. We have tried to make the process transparent and recently worked hard to ensure it was easy to both start and end a subscription with us.

YWNA formed as an organisation representing the views and supporting contributions of the community to the formerly named Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve. Historically, it helped lead the campaign to transform the golf course into a wetland oasis, bringing together diverse community groups and individuals who shared the same goal. YWNA is keen to keep involving the community with this exciting project, to learn more about how to actively participate in transforming the former golf course. The website will strengthen our goal to strengthen our role to speak up for the ecological integrity of the unique natural world that is being created and the key principles of the masterplan itself. There is a need to update regularly and we hope to bring fresh perspectives to our community and activities through these pages. The website is also a terrific place to store the history of events and people involved.

What does the website mean for members?

The new website has an updated membership portal which will make it easier to manage your membership with YWNA. Membership now operates on a yearly direct debit basis, which is easy to cancel at any time. As a member of the association, you'll have opportunities for input into discussions, be active on the ground and hear first-hand about the masterplan stages, volunteering and exchange ideas for the nature reserve.

Members benefit from:

- Email newsletters – updates on the stages of progress of the Nature Reserve
- Volunteer opportunities- join groups to clean up, planting, flora and fauna, water surveys in the park
- Invite to the AGM & vote to elect YWNA committee members
- Share knowledge & learn about the local habitat, wetlands, cultural history, plantings and contribute your skills to create a unique community place

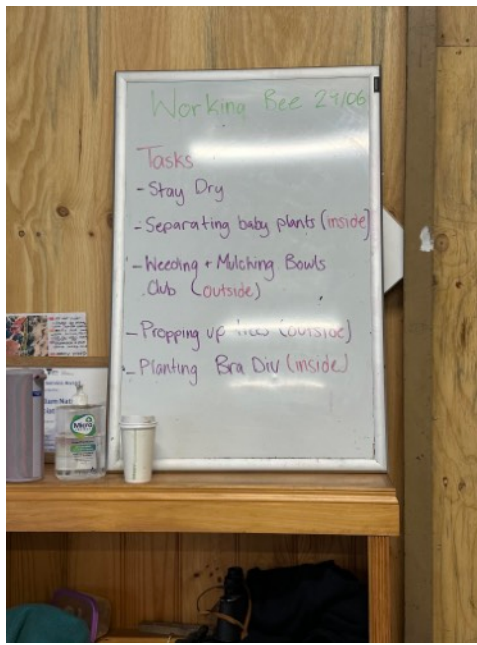
We look forward to supporting a flourishing community of active YWNA volunteers and members.

YWNA Partnership with Bayside City Council

We are now in our second year of our partnership with Bayside Council and we are grateful for all their support and consistent open line of communication. We will continue to engage strongly and advocate for the outcomes we are both working hard to attain. If you are considering becoming more involved with YWNA we encourage you to have a gander at our Partnership agreement. The President and Vice President meet regularly with officers to ensure we are all on the same page. This close and dynamic relationship enables us to involve the community in meaningful and coordinated ways, especially while the project is still under construction. YWNA has many members with important local ecological knowledge, Cultural knowledge and more and we work hard to ensure these critical perspectives are woven into the growing ecological restoration process.



N'arwee't Carolyn Briggs meeting with Jarrod, Tom and Fiona from Bayside Council.



YWNA Committee and Sub Committees

YWNA Committee for 2022/23

Patron-N'arwee't Carolyn Briggs AM

President- Natalie Davey

Vice President -Gio Fitzpatrick (formerly Anna Rabinov)

Secretary- Kath Pelletti

Treasurer- Sanja Blackburn

(Extra) Ordinary Members

Gina Fiske

Tania Splawa-Neyman

Rosie Grech

Dr Tricia Wevill

Annie Mumford

Anna Rabinov

Sub Committee

Plant Lab and SPA- Gio Fitzpatrick, Jo Samuel-King, Claire Hudson, Sophie Clarke

Fly by Night-Dassi Herszberg/ Tania Splawa-Neyman

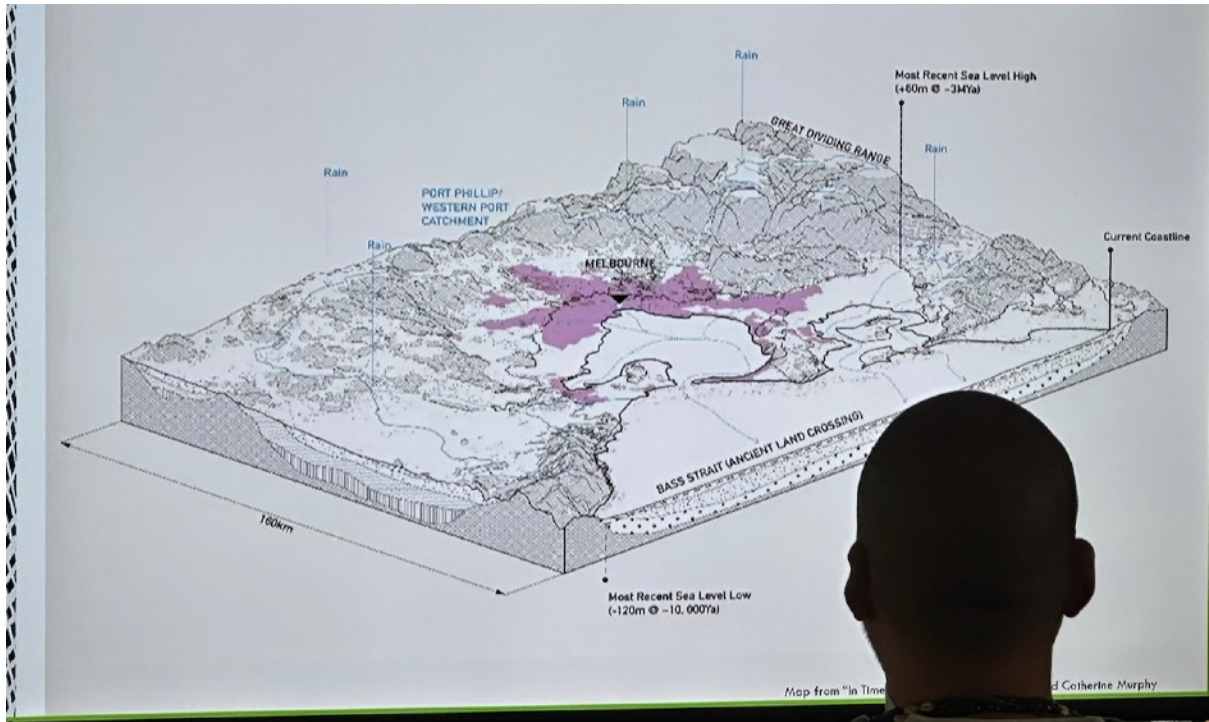
Bird Surveys- Bob Tammik/ Alyson Svenson (now Hayley Pottenger)

Working Bees-Ebony Bain Perkins (prev Harry Baxter)

Litter Surveys- Glen Adams/Rowena Moore (partnership activity with Love our Streets)

Waterwatch- Natalie Davey

Youth Ambassador- Sienna Cross



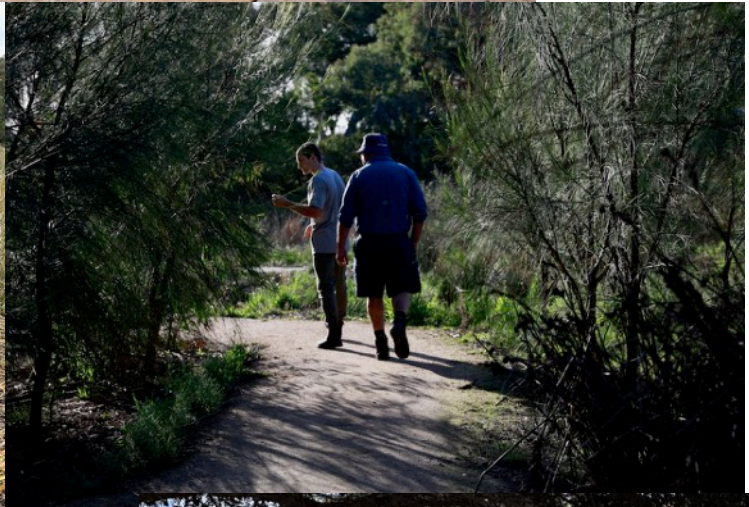
We are part of a rather large catchment. Slide from N'arwee't Carolyn's keynote with Ana Lara Heyns at IPMEN 23



Billabong just before the fences came down

Tours and Educational Outreach

YWNA Committee have been very active in sharing the reserve love with other groups interested in how the project is progressing and sharing the work of our Association. The tours provide an excellent opportunity for knowledge sharing and networking., as well as taking in all the latest in the reserve.





YWNA with Melb Uni team and Jarrod Fleming during a Wildflower meadow meeting

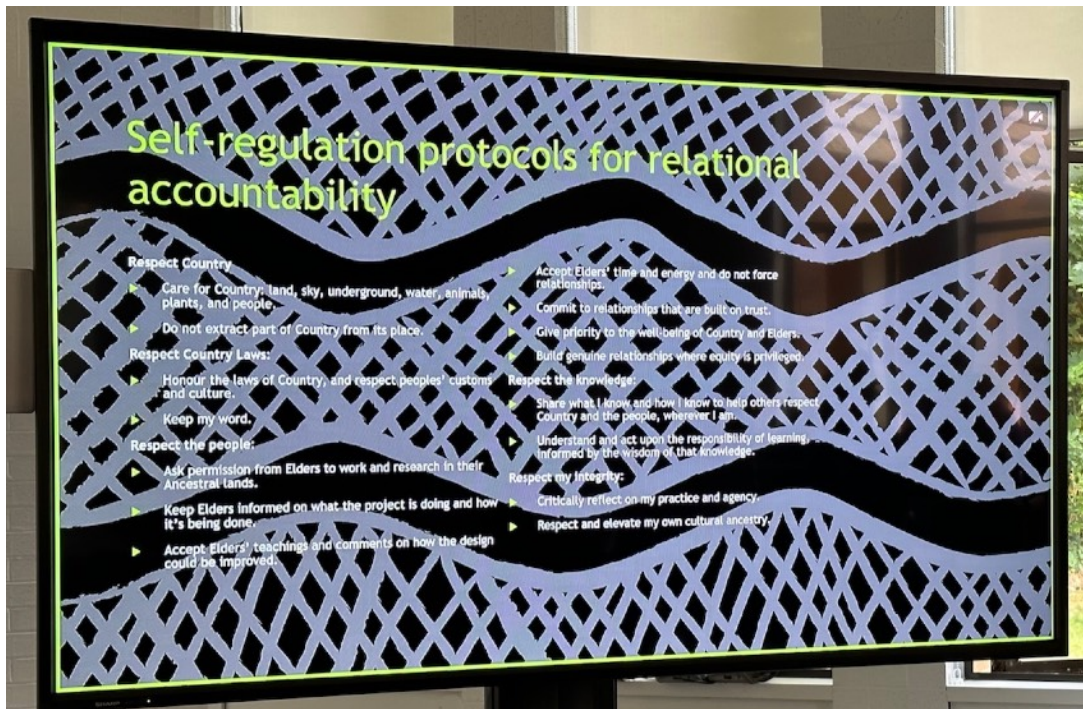
Masterplan Developments and YWNA

The chain of ponds in the North East Corner of the reserve was the first stage of the masterplan implementation and the area has been open to the public for nearly two years. Central to this created wetland is the Yalukit Willam Knowledge Sharing (Yulendji Djeembana) space which is now open to the public. The ponds have three clear objectives:

- Amenity
- Habitat Creation- in particular frog habitats.
- To provide alternative habitat for wildlife, during the disturbance to existing wetlands which will occur as the next phase of the Masterplan in the Southern wetlands takes off next year.

The creation of frog habitats has many challenges. In particular, *Gambusia* (known as mosquito fish) infest most waterways in Australia, eat tadpoles and therefore prevent the successful reintroduction of frogs into waterways. This can be overcome but it takes some very clever design to manage. With this in mind, the chain of ponds has some very interesting features:

- It will essentially be an “offline” wetland system-i.e. it will be separated from the current Elster Creek by a series of filters and barriers. This limits opportunities for *Gambusia* to enter the chain of ponds. Unfortunately this design ‘idea’ was compromised during a flood event earlier in last year and we now know that *Gambusia* has entered the C of P system.
- It has water-bodies that collect water from alternate water sources-i.e. the roofs of surrounding buildings. These water sources will be free of *Gambusia*.
- A number of the ponds will be ephemeral -i.e. they will dry out in summer. Native fish and frogs thrive in ephemeral wetlands, whereas *Gambusia* do not.
- The water levels of the ponds will be able to be controlled. This will allow for drainage of wetlands and clearance of *Gambusia* on an as needed basis.
- Construction started on the 1st September 2020 and was completed in June 2022.



From N'arwee't's Carolyn and Ana's presentation in Canada- love the theme of relational accountability

- YWNA has been working hard over this year to infill planting where needed to develop a more biodiverse habitat. This has also included adding some logs to the area (with permission). YWNA volunteers worked actively in Billabong 1 during the draining process that was started when Bayside began to allow the billabong to dry out at the beginning of 2024 by turning off the pumps. The proof that this method is effective has been the incredible natural recruitment results around the billabong edge. This had followed Jarrod Fleming joining Bayside City Council as Project Lead who had much experience in the creation of wetlands- and the advice from YWNA's Naturalist Gio finally being heeded.

Gateway Building



'Bayside City Council awarded the lead design consultant contract for the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve gateway building to Canvas Projects at the [December 2023 meeting](#).

After extensive community engagement to plan the reserve's future, the [Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve Masterplan](#) incorporates the gateway building, located at the reserve's northeast corner. At the September 2020 meeting, Councillors supported a design competition to award the Head Consultant contract and expressions of interest opened in July 2023. Council received 12 submissions and four consultant teams were shortlisted to submit a design response as part of a formal tender.

Canvas Projects' design responded to two key themes of the [masterplan](#); ecology and connection. The distinct "three-pebbles" design integrates into the surrounding flora and fauna and includes public amenities, multi-purpose community and exhibition spaces, a café, and a viewing deck. The design provides a welcoming and engaging place for visitors, and focuses on themes of learning, engagement, and repair to connect community to country.'

Since this announcement Natalie and Gio have been able to meet with some of the Canvas Project designers and we hope that this engagement can continue over the next period before the build. YWNA were also able to feed into the functionality of the design through representation on the YWNR Advisory Committee.

Membership

Our membership stands at 295 members.

We have had a small, skilled and dedicated communications and membership team and look forward to sharing further regular updates and news between the committee, sub-committees, our membership and the wider community. YWNA members have told us they highly value and are passionate about our vision and plans to be part of creating this unique nature reserve.. We hope that our YWNA website helps you keep in contact with our activities and we use our Facebook for regular communications on progress, notice of events and stories. Facebook had become an open place for members to share their nature experiences in the reserve. This also requires the oversight of moderation. We now have an Instagram account to help us reach new people and share events with our members. Our volunteer activities are planned and organised to engage active members in planting, bird surveys, social events, water quality surveys, education of native species and Cultural education of Country- so everyone can find something that suits them to engage with the Nature Reserve.

Our Facebook Group membership has grown rapidly this year and has now reached over 2700 members. We have a wide range of interesting and pictures posted daily relating to the reserve from different members, as well as updates to keep everyone informed on the progress and activities in the park.

We are looking forward to being able to share and celebrate the opportunity to strengthen the communities' stewardship of this precious wetland home.



Affiliated Membership

Yalukit Willam Association encourages affiliation with other groups and not for profit organisations who support our vision for the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve, share common interests and are involved in environmental activities and community engagement. We value learning and sharing ideas, discussing issues and creating opportunities for collaboration with partners.

Groups can apply to become an Affiliated Member and partner will benefit from:

- Sharing knowledge and information
- Networking meetings, forums and social events to share
- News on current plans, projects and resources
- Voting at the AGM meeting
- Cross Promotion of events and call out for volunteer and community activities.



Our Affiliated Members:

Port Phillip EcoCentre

The EcoCentre actively builds relationships, educates and demonstrates sustainable environmental practice and strengthen people's connection to the natural world. YWNA and the EcoCentre share knowledge and resources, forums, educational projects and is supported by them to plan and progress YWNR activities. We also thank them for the use over the year of their temporary home for meetings and can't wait to see their new home!

Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network (PECAN)

PECAN aims to create and sustain a strong climate action movement in Port Phillip to address the climate crisis. A Plan sets out actions necessary to mitigate our local impact on the environment. The EPA shares knowledge, support for projects, forums and education events to promote its common goals such as flood mitigation and water sensitive design to develop an environmental sustainable nature reserve.

Love Our Street

Love Our Street 3184 is a local group in Elwood committed to keeping our community beautiful and promoting litter awareness. It holds monthly Street Clean days with volunteers to clean up litter in streets, parks and shopping centres. YWNA has formed a partnership with 3186 Elsternwick Park

Love our Street Group which meets monthly in the park for litter collection to protect the wildlife from hazards and litter entering Elster Creek and flow into Port Phillip Bay.

Elwood Flood Action Group(eFlag)

EFlag aims to inform the community about the impact of flooding on homes, shopping centres, open spaces and amenities. Elster Creek flows downstream through EPNR and in severe weather events has caused floods. Local people learn about how to prepare for and respond to future floods and advocate to government about mitigating flood events. The YWNA shared knowledge, plans and participates in forums to improve policy and plans for flood mitigation. Geoff Love was the Convenor a previous YWNA treasured committee member.

Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council (Aboriginal Corporation)

PO Box 2125, St Kilda West- info@boonwurrung.org.au

Friends of Elster Creek(FoEC)

FoEC is a local group of community volunteers who want to protect, improve and expand areas of habitat for indigenous flora and fauna along Elster Creek, generate educational opportunities for the public regarding biodiversity and conservation, reduce pollution flowing into Port Phillip Bay and improve the aesthetic appeal of Elster Creek. YWNA shares ideas, knowledge, volunteer activities such as bird surveys, nest box installation and revegetation to enhance Elster Creek, including EPNR.

Bayside Climate Change Action Group (BCCCAG)

BCCCAG are a non-profit community organisation that works to reduce the impact of climate change and promote sustainability by creating and delivering information, education, plans and facilitating action and influencing decision-makers. YWNA shares information and group promotes activities.

Bayside Friends Environment Network (BEFN)

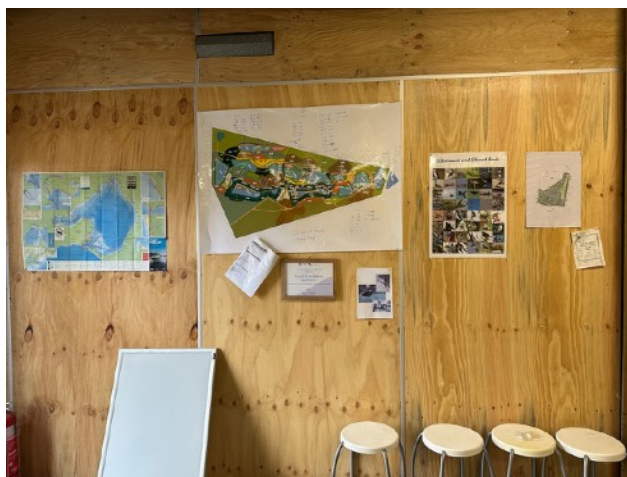
BEFN helps people care for the environment by helping them establish a knowledgeable and caring relationship and provides a forum for environmental volunteers to exchange ideas, skills and experiences to network with others beyond bayside and runs working bees and education for the community. YWNA exchanges information and ideas.

Friends of Native Wildlife as part of BEFN affiliation

Friends of Native Wildlife are Bayside (Melbourne, Australia) residents active in conserving local native fauna. They promote conservation of our wildlife through education and engagement, surveys, advising local authorities, and working to improve habitat.

The Climate Change Alliance of Botanic Gardens

The world's botanic gardens are custodians of critically needed scientific and horticultural knowledge, and their landscapes a source of inspiration, learning and a place for positive social change. The Climate Change Alliance of Botanic Gardens brings together botanic organisations and friends to take action to protect and enable adaptation of botanic landscapes in a changing climate.



By working together, we can protect our treasured botanic landscapes. The time for working together is now.

YWNA is also now a member of the [Victorian Environment Friends Network VEFN](#). Their motto-

'Friends groups come in all manner of shapes and sizes. Some dedicate themselves to restoring native grasslands in suburban Melbourne, others work in forested landscapes like Bunyip State Park. But no matter where they work they all have amazing stories to tell.'

VEFN are currently supporting us in the process of becoming registered as a charitable organisation.

Flood Mitigation

One of the four pillars of the masterplan for the reserve is flood mitigation. Two YWNA members Julie Beatty and Gina Fiske have been actively working on committees or with local groups to keep the community voice strong as Melbourne Water moves forward on its plans to build a [diversion drain](#).

Although flooding can occur at any time, historical records show that high intensity and short duration rainfall events can cause flash flooding in and around Elwood, and prolonged rainfall can cause the Elwood Canal to flood. It generally affects small areas but damage can be severe. Elwood floods have often happened from November to February. To be prepared, know if you live in a flood area and be safe, go to Elwood Local Flood Guide map and information on this [link](#). Though flooding cannot be eliminated entirely, increasing the capacity of the existing drainage network aims to reduce the impacts of flooding for Elwood and surrounding suburbs.

Gina Fiske, Roger Burns and April Seymore all contributed a brilliant summary of the community work into flooding in this catchment in the recent Parliamentary inquiry. The investigative work Melbourne Water is doing on the site has meant that the Southern Wetlands design was in a slight holding pattern until they understood exactly what the expected water volumes coming through the reserve will be. They finally gave the Council go ahead and the plans for the Southern Wetland are now in full swing.

YWNA has had many meetings late last year with Josh Burns MP- who has recently announced the funding from Federal Government for the [Creek Collaboration](#) - Federal funding is being met with supportive funds from Port Phillip Council of 1.4 million. I still remember Tony Burke announcing these funds in the previous election cycle so let's hope this project gets cracking. YWNA reps will hopefully be able to play a role and help with the habitat improvement with their knowledge gained from the reserve and experts on committee.

'The planting plan will establish and improve the quality of the habitat along the banks of lower Elster Creek through targeted vegetation management and plantings while the stormwater harvesting plan aims to improve water quality by reducing damaging stormwater flows.'

Lets see if we can grow the YWNA thinking...

2024/2025 The year ahead: We look forward to...

- Beginning the development of the Southern Wetlands and having the opportunity to consult with the new Project manager there.
- Working with Prof N'arwee't Carolyn Briggs on Cultural and social priorities
- Completion of A guide to the ecological restoration of the Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve from YWNA Naturalist Gio Fitzpatrick
- Strengthening the partnership with Bayside City Council. Regular meetings with Project Lead and Officers to ensure the local knowledge/ our activities and expertise are tuned to the



YWNA shed home

habitat creation and ecologic functions we are all aiming for in the Master Plan. We are now in Year 2 of our two year partnership agreement.

- Working with the Bayside communications team.
- Participating in the creation of the forest next to the grassy wildflower meadow and ongoing development of the SPA and Plant Lab. Participating in the ecological framework for the Southern Wetlands and ephemeral wetlands around the Gateway Building.
- Participation on the Bayside YWNR Advisory Committee to maintain community voice for nature and supporting in the ongoing efforts to keep the aims of the Masterplan on track
- Increase in our membership to support the growing range of YWNA activities and support needs of increased seasonal work (ie- seed collecting)
- Applying for grants to strengthen and illuminate our understanding of the reserve such as fish (eel) surveys and development of educational materials and more.
- Completing our Seasonal Calendar
- Strengthening our Sub Committees (setting a meeting agenda for the year)
- Reinvigorating survey methodologies to reflect the changing shape of the reserve-and improving our data management
- Improved communications with members and the wider community- continuing to digitise our volunteering so that we can keep accurate measures of the incredible community input into the project
- Development of a schools program/ educational resources- supporting local schools educational engagement with the reserve.
- Strengthening partnerships with schools and other interested groups.
- Plant Lab and SPA going from strength to strength- learning from our past seasons.
- Empowering community stewardship of the reserve
- Completion of shed fit out and infrastructure development in the Plant Lab
- Hosting community events to advance the collaborative impact of shared partnerships and share knowledge
- Possible deepening of involvement in the native Fish recovery project
- Supporting internships for a growing body of research connected to the reserve, including health and well being outcomes.
- Capturing through Citizen Science the changes in the reserve over the year. (iNaturalist).
- Becoming a registered charitable organisation



Our currency - seeds! And wonderful volunteers. Photo:
Natalie Davey

TREASURER'S REPORT

I'm proud to share the financial report for YWNA for FY24 and thank all our members for their expertise, generosity and supporting the ecological outcomes of the reserve.

In FY24 income came predominantly from membership fees (\$3,897) and grants (\$4,000).

Membership income remains important to cover recurrent expenses such as shed rental, insurance, the running of the website, newsletters and unexpected expenses such as a water pump, which was used to drain billabong 1 and eradicate gambusia.

Grants were gratefully received from: Bendigo Bank (\$1,500) to support habitat creation and community engagement; the Federal Government (\$2,000) for equipment to support volunteers work; and from the City of Glen Eira (\$500) for a projector screen.

During FY24 we also made steps to further diversify income by:

- registering with the Victorian Container Deposit Scheme as a Donation Partner (ID:C2000022606); and
- starting the registration process with the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission with the intent to seek Deductible Gift Recipient status from the Australian Taxation Office.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Association and Reserve.

Sanja Blackburn

Treasurer



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Science and Resources



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

YWNA Finance Report 2023/24			
Cash at bank 30th June 2023			\$7,527
Income to 30th June 24			
<u>Recurrent Income</u>			
Membership income	\$3,897		
Interest income	\$111		
		\$4,007	
<u>Non-recurrent Income</u>			
<i>Grant-Related</i>			
Grant income	\$4,000		
<i>Non-Grant Related</i>			
Go Fund Me income			
Income from talks	\$550		
Private donations income	\$62		
		\$4,612	
Total Income			\$8,619
Expenses to 30th June 24			
<u>Recurrent Expenses</u>			
Insurance	\$1,135		
Shed lease	\$438		
Dues & Subscriptions	\$799		
Merchant fees and bank charges	\$8		
Consumer affairs statement	\$111		
		\$2,491	
<u>Non-recurrent Expenses</u>			
<i>Grant-Related</i>			
Food & Bev	\$258		

Equipment/Supplies	\$1,825		
Consultancy Services	\$4,100		
<i>Non-Grant Related</i>			
Plants	\$90		
Food & Bev	\$1,935		
Equipment/Supplies	\$947		
Miscellaneous	\$0		
Refund	\$15		
		\$9,170	
Total Expenses to 30th June 24			\$11,661
Cash at bank 30th June 2024			\$4,485

Sanja Blackburn- Treasurer



Mother Swamphehen- Danny Fog



Citizen Science is one of the keys to YWNA's capacity to connect community with the local regeneration project.

I am very proud to present the 23/24 report to the YWNA

community of members. Thank you does not do justice to all individuals who make up the incredible and hardworking YWNA committee, Patron, sub committee members and the wonderful people that have had a hand in this report. Many people have contributed to the collective outcome of our work as a very active Community Association this year. I, on behalf of the YWNA committee, wish the 24/25 YWNA committee all strength to their collective bow. A massive thank you to the broader community for all their volunteer hours invested in this wonderful sanctuary. This will be my last report as YWNA President. Looking back over all our collective achievements over the last four years I am amazed by where we have all managed to get to and I am sure it will be even more astonishing over the next years. Hope to see you in the soup.

Natalie Davey, YWNA President (2020-24)

