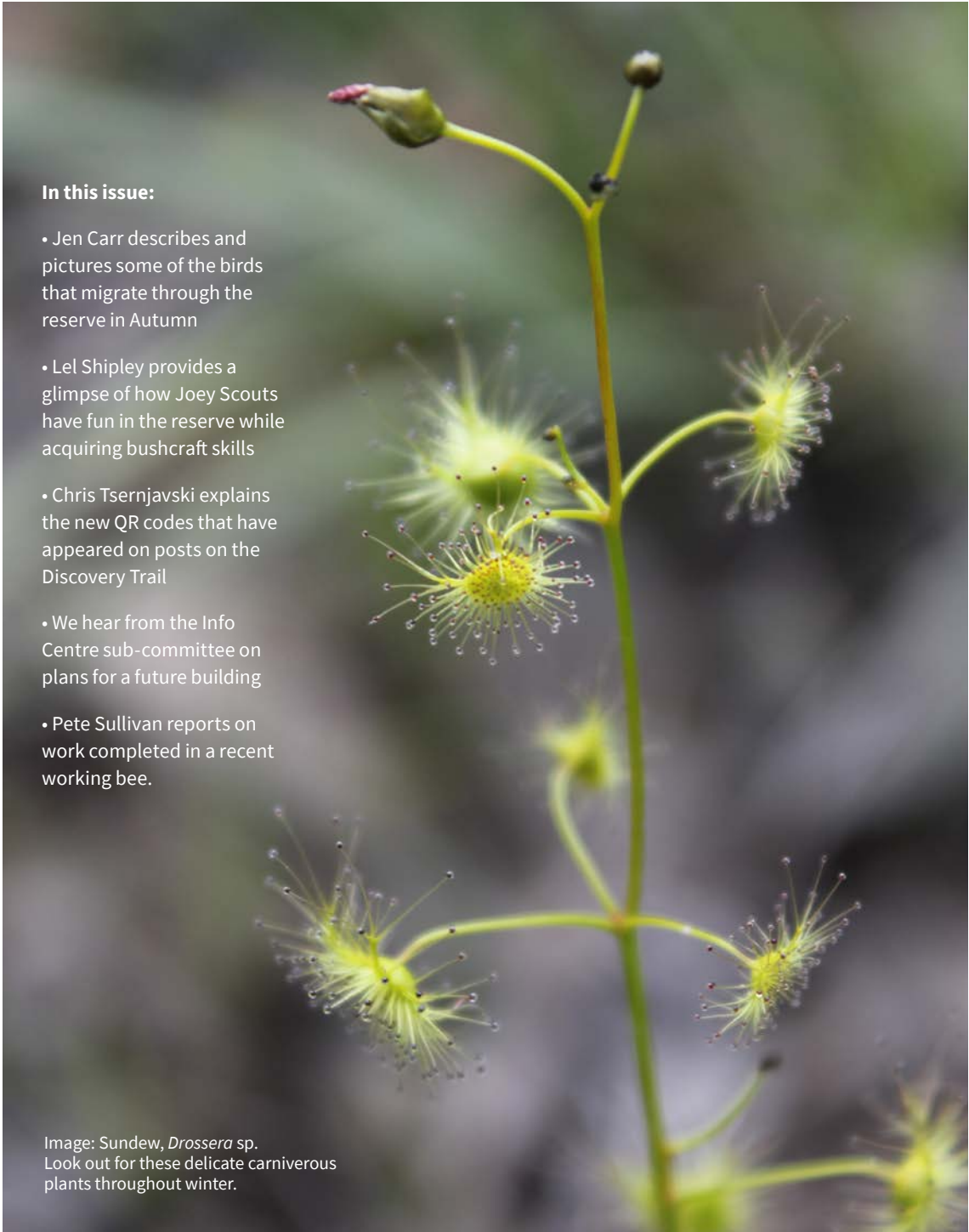




FRIENDS OF OCEAN GROVE NATURE RESERVE • APRIL 2024 • EDITION 79



In this issue:

- Jen Carr describes and pictures some of the birds that migrate through the reserve in Autumn
- Lel Shipley provides a glimpse of how Joey Scouts have fun in the reserve while acquiring bushcraft skills
- Chris Tsernjavski explains the new QR codes that have appeared on posts on the Discovery Trail
- We hear from the Info Centre sub-committee on plans for a future building
- Pete Sullivan reports on work completed in a recent working bee.

Image: Sundew, *Drosera* sp.
Look out for these delicate carnivorous plants throughout winter.

Autumn migrations

Jen Carr

At this time of year a few species of birds are known to move from mountainous areas to coastal areas that are not so cold, which is a process known as altitudinal migration. Some species of birds are also known to migrate away from Victoria to warmer northern areas. You may spot a few of these species in the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve.



Grey Fantail

Grey Fantail

Grey Fantails are commonly seen in the OGNR. It is the perfect habitat for them as they love areas with lots of trees for shelter, particularly dry woodlands. Trees also enable them to feed on flying insects, which they catch by chasing them from the edge of foliage. Grey fantails are small birds that are easily identified by the continually fanned tail, and agile flying skills. This species is quite inquisitive and will approach people quite closely, but will then retreat after checking the observer out! In the winter months they can be seen in small flocks of two or three individuals.

Both sexes are similar in appearance, being grey above, with a white eyebrow, throat, and tail edges. Many populations appear to undertake seasonal movements, with some migrating north during autumn and winter, and others moving to lower elevations during the cooler months. The Tasmanian form of this bird is darker on the breast region, and this form can be readily seen at the OGNR after they have flown across the Bass Strait.

Rufous Fantail

In the OGNR you might be lucky to spot a rufous fantail, and you might also be lucky enough to take a decent photo of one, as they are constantly on the move and inhabit the darkest and densest treed areas, so are almost impossible to photograph!

These beautiful small birds have a similar fanned tail to the grey fantail, and have reddish-brown plumage mixed with black and brown colours, with a white throat. These birds inhabit relatively moist and moderately dense woodland habitats.

Most of these birds exhibit strong migratory behaviour and have been shown to follow the same route year after year. They have regular departure and arrival times. For instance I know that if I visit the Geelong Botanical Gardens at the end of February I will see a rufous fantail. They migrate to south-eastern Australia in the spring to breed in September and then move north in the autumn during March and April. When they are migrating, they can be seen at the OGNR. I was lucky to see one on the West Track a few years ago and it was feeding out in the open which is something I have rarely seen them do.



Rufous Fantail

Flame Robin

Male Flame Robins have a bright orange breast and throat and are white on the lower belly and undertail. Their head and back are dark grey and there is a white stripe on the wing. The bill is black and the legs dark brown. The females are distinctly different from the males, as they are grey-brown with a pale wing stripe.

In winter, Flame Robins move to lower altitudes and more open areas, including gardens and farm paddocks, and some Tasmanian birds move to the mainland. They can be seen on the outer tracks of the reserve in the autumn and winter months.



Above: Male Flame Robin
Left: Female Flame Robin

Discovery Trail goes digital

Chris Tsernjavski

Thanks to the efforts of the Friends Group, visitors to the OGNR can now access information about the Discovery Trail via a QR code. Trail information has been updated, and a QR code has been placed on each numbered post giving access to the full Discovery Trail brochure. It's a convenient learning resource for anyone exploring this much loved area of the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve.



QR coded Discovery Trail posts



FOGMR members Terry and Pete replacing old posts on the Discovery Trail.

Scan the Discovery Trail QR code

Joey Scouts night out

Lel Shipley

Queenscliff and Ocean Grove Joey Scouts recently enjoyed a bushcraft night at the Nature Reserve.

Fiona Topolsanyi led a walk around the lake where the Joeys spent time learning about the reserve and its plants and animals. We introduced them to Fiona's Nature Tails program and made use of the Info Centre verandah and picnic table to run an activity in which each Joey received an individual Who Am I card to complete. Fiona explained how to use the the QR code.

Then I took over, running Joey-level bushcraft skills activities with a fellow Geelong Region Scout Fellowship member, Phil. We taught the Joeys how to stay safe and together on a bush walk and how to gather tinder, dry twigs and leaves to build a campfire. Phil and I focused on fire safety, demonstrating how to set and build a campfire making use of the BBQs in the picnic area where there was water handy and a safe concreted area to meet the called-for area of cleared ground. No fires were actually lit due to the dry conditions at the time, but their leaders were keen to bring them back in the cooler months so we can teach them to actually light a camp fire safely and cook some damper!

It was a great night and we all had lots of fun.



Joey Scouts learning how to make a campfire.



Walking on the Discovery Trail.



FOGNR members enjoying a break at the weeding working bee.

Working bee report

Pete Sullivan

Last years ecological burn stimulated some excellent regeneration of indigenous plant species, however it also stimulated the germination of several weed species. In February a group of dedicated volunteers had a very productive morning of weeding in this area. Our main focus was removing Boneseed, Scotch Thistle and Coastal Tea-tree with the objective of removing the weeds before they set seed. We made an impressive impact and will focus on this area over the coming months.



FOGNR members weeding in last years burn area.

Local MP visit

Pete Sullivan

In mid February our local member of parliament Alison Marchant visited the reserve for an on-site meeting with six FOGNR committee members.

Alison was very interested to hear about what was going on in the reserve and how she could assist us with current projects and future goals. The meeting was timed perfectly with the completion of the updated Discovery Trail so we were able to demonstrate how it worked with the new QR codes.

It was a great opportunity for constructive discussion and we were appreciative of her support and interest.



Alison Marchant and Lel Shipley using the QR codes on the Discovery Trail.



Information Centre update - April 2024

Information Centre sub-committee

The Information Centre sub-committee presented design options for the repurposing of the existing Information Centre building to FOGNR Committee at its January meeting.

The design chosen by FOGNR committee to move forward with in future discussions with Parks Victoria would enable the existing exterior structure to be retained, while the main repurposing work would be centered on removal of: the northern wall with two roller doors; the western wall with one roller door; and the eastern wall with access door (all from the front section of the building), thereby enabling access to the front of the building at all times. This would enable the Centre to be utilized as a shelter, meeting point etc. The existing internal rooms with one secure access point would be retained for usage by FOGNR and Parks Victoria staff.

It is envisaged that along with the main repurposing work, additional work would be undertaken including: creating internal wall surfaces to affix all-weather information display panels; replacing the access door to Friends/Parks Vic rooms with a security door; and installation of security mesh grilles to existing windows. Additional general repairs and maintenance would also be undertaken including the lining of the ceiling, removal of the roof skylight and repair of roof, painting etc.

The sub-committee is currently seeking budget costings for the proposed works which will inform further discussions with Parks Victoria.

Nature reserve visitors

Barbara Spiller

Around midday on a fine but overcast Thursday in April I met Claire, a first-time visitor to the reserve. Claire, who lives in Grovedale, is a regular gym user and is on her feet all day as a barista but is relatively new to bush walking. At the moment she is attempting a new bush walk of around 5 to 10km every day. On the weekend she and her boyfriend walked the waterfall loop near Lorne in the Otways. Today she drove to Ocean Grove especially to walk in the reserve. When I met her she was on her way to the Wallaby Track near the Grubb Rd entrance.



Claire; first time visitor

Working bees

Working bees are now held at 9am on the 4th Sunday of each month. Meet at 9am at the Info Centre and check on Park Connect for latest information. Our working bees are generally focused on planting or weeding and are structured to suit a range of abilities.

Prior to each working bee, members will receive a notification email outlining the activity details.

Registration for working bees are through **ParkConnect**. <https://www.parkconnect.vic.gov.au>

Contacts

Email: friends.oceangrove.naturereserve@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/34794023030/>

Web: <https://fognr.wordpress.com/friends>

Mail: Friends of Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, PO Box 313, Ocean Grove 3226

This newsletter is produced by the Friends of Ocean Grove Nature Reserve and co-edited by Barbara Spiller and Chris Tsernjavski.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of Wadawurrung country and pay our respects to their elders and people, past and present, as we do to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people everywhere.