

Mmmm, can you smell the freshly baked muffins? This next bunch are all about sit down and have a cup of tea and chat. They're the data from the online communities and they would love you to join them. Don't be fooled by their benign appearance however, as they can really pack a punch online when they want to.

Community building

- Creation of online communities
- Support for activists
- Share ideas and information
- Easy contact point for people and environmental organisations

Earth Garden online forum

<http://www.earthgarden.com.au/portal/forum/index.php>

Online Forums or bulletin boards are probably the richest source for making connections and sharing specific information and online resources. You can ask questions, share photos and experiences in a low tech manner. There aren't many around as they need constant monitoring. Much better to start a new 'room' in an existing one than to start one from scratch. How to spot a forum.



Geoff Park's blog

<http://geoffpark.wordpress.com/>

Web logs or blogs are great ways to have an online presence where you can put in text and images and publish it to the world. Readers can subscribe to these blogs and the news is delivered straight to your inbox. Blogs perform a vital role for information dissemination. Often these stories get picked up by news aggregators and in some cases the mainstream media.



How to tell a blog.

Note: leave a comment button

You can leave a comment on a blog entry and others can then comment on your comment and so on.

These days there's an assumption that you would like a web presence however don't have a lot of web skills. Sites like Myspace, Facebook, Blogspot and Ning don't need a lot of expertise to master.

Daylesford Hepburn exchange

Ning is another type of online forum. There are lots of different groups on Ning, I picked this one because it's local. You can use them to exchange information and publicise events to group members.

<http://daylesford-hepburn-noticeboard.ning.com/>



Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/Senator.Bob.Brown>

Social networking sites like facebook are being used to create online communities of like minded people and are heavily used by environmental groups. They're a quick, cheap and easy way to mass communicate. People can browse through the information when and where they get time. A lot of people do this on their iphones or laptops on the train, at home, at work or during the school lunch break. These sites can send update alerts to your inbox if you prefer.



Friends of Bushy park

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~fbpw/>

You don't have to be web gurus to put together a site that others will find really useful. Enthusiast sites are usually content rich little gems. They're also a great way to connect with the people that are often up to their necks in research or causes. In my experience simple is often best as it cuts down on the need for maintenance and is more resistant to looking dated because of changes in e-fashion.



Field naturalists of Victoria

<http://www.fncv.org.au/>

Places like the Neighbourhood Houses run classes in basic web design using packages that are user friendly. You can create and maintain your own site or often someone knows someone who will be able to help.



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The FNCV Environment Fund has the following purposes:

- To support and finance environmental research, in particular research into the biodiversity of Victoria.
- To support and finance dissemination of information on the natural environment by any legitimate means, including public lectures, seminars, field trips, courses and publications.
- To support and finance practical projects aimed at preserving and enhancing the biodiversity of Victoria.

The Committee calls for applications for the next round of funding from the FNCV Environment Fund.

Requests for projects between \$200 and \$1000 will be considered.

Applications for this round of funding close Friday 16 April 2010. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

Donations can be made to the Environment Fund. Click [HERE](#) for more details.

The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria (FNCV) is Victoria's oldest conservation group. The FNCV was founded in 1880, and continues as a vigorous and practical advocate of conservation and the study of natural history to this day. The Club has close to 1000 members and publishes the bimonthly journal 'The Victorian Naturalist'. Early Club members for two decades successfully worked towards reservation of Wilsons Promontory as a national park. The FNCV continues to thrive to this day. We are a very active club with a diverse calendar of events.

The huge range of interests within the club have seen the development of

