



YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NEWS

Vol: 29 Autumn/Winter 2019

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Mentoring Program

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FROM THE OFFICE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

Newsletter design and production is driven by volunteers on behalf of the Landcare Community. If you have any stories, questions or great photos we look forward to hearing from you.

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Deadlines

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Cover photo

Clancy the tiger.

Photo courtesy: Helga Binder

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OUR NEW PROJECT OFFICER

Hello, my name is Jason Pickering and I am the new Project Officer for the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network.

I live locally in Alberton with my wife and three children. I am a member of the Albert River group and served for a short period on the YYLN Board before beginning in my current role after the unexpected resignation of Caitlin Jackson.

I'm a passionate surfer and cyclist and have always held a strong connection to our

local area and its amazing environment, it's what helped bring me home after 14 years away.

Originally from a trade background, my career has afforded me the opportunity to gain experience in a diverse range of roles, primarily within the construction industry, both here locally within Gippsland, interstate and additionally in offshore construction.

Four years ago, I decided to transition my career to where my passion truly lay and enrolled in a Diploma of Conservation and Land



JASON PICKERING

Management course at Federation Training in Morwell. At the completion of this course my lecturer urged me to take the next step and I subsequently enrolled in the Degree of Environmental and Conservation Science with Federation University in Churchill. This will be completed later this year. At the time it was a daunting prospect to change my career, but it's one that I haven't regretted for a moment and I am really enjoying the opportunity to implement my skills both newly acquired and old into the new role.

I look forward to meeting you and all the members within our Network. ■

Support for pasture recovery

Grants of up to \$5000 are now available to help farmers to restore and protect drought affected pastures in Wellington and East Gippsland shires.

Contact Rural Finance to find out how to apply at www.ruralfinance.com.au or call 1800 260 425

For more information on available drought support visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or call 136 186.

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

FROM THE OFFICE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Scott Elliott

I would like to begin this column by offering my sincere thanks to all members of the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network for the warm welcome I have received since commencing in my role as Coordinator.

The diversity of landscapes, farming enterprises and environmental problems in our Network provides remarkable scope for Landcare projects, but the key challenge remains harnessing tight funding streams to realise these opportunities.

The upcoming Victorian Landcare Grants for 2019 provide one such opportunity. I encourage all groups to consider applying for up to \$20,000 to bankroll on-ground projects that pack a punch. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me to discuss your project ideas and any assistance you may require, as it may be possible to combine multiple ideas into one application. Project Officer Jason Pickering is also on-hand to provide specialist project advice.

Working with members of the Board, we are also developing a Prospectus of 'shovel-ready' projects to ensure we can pounce on new funding opportunities immediately as

they arise. Our priorities include a focus on water monitoring in the JARR project area, an expansion of the Mullungdung to Coast type project and sustainable agriculture initiatives – such as perennial pasture trials. Rest assured we will never lose sight of the core activities on which Landcare was founded: revegetation, weed control and protecting remnant vegetation and biodiversity.

Our commitment to future-proofing our agricultural systems and supporting farmers during drought won high praise from Federal MP Darren Chester during his recent visit to the YYLN offices. **The Minister was on-hand to announce**



SCOTT ELLIOTT

an additional \$200,000 for our Broadleaf Seagrass restoration project. Funded under the National Landcare Program, this grant paves the way for YYLN to deliver a world-first community led project. More details on our work to date are provided by Trevor Colvin in this edition (page 04 and also on page 16).

As the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network enters an exciting new phase, we are also seeking to forge closer relationships with key partners to ensure our work resonates beyond West Gippsland. There will be some names that you will have heard of and others that are new to the Landcare table, each with their own contribution to make.

I look forward to working closely with you and meeting with many more of you in person at upcoming Landcare events. *Keep fighting the good fight!* ■



Darren Chester discussing Broadleaf seagrass funding under the National Landcare Program with board member Michael Hobson, YYLN Coordinator Scott Elliott and YYLN Project Officer Jason Pickering.



SEAGRASS PLANTING

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Trevor Colvin



Planting grass underwater; now there is a novel idea.

We have all listened to talk-back gardening shows where callers ask for advice on how to get rid of black spot on their roses or the best time to plant celery; and they usually get expert answers.

But nobody has ever called in to ask how to grow seagrass and if they did, there is perhaps no one in the world who would have the answers.

So, faced with a great and urgent need to increase the devastated seagrass beds in Corner Inlet and no easy reference point and really

nowhere to turn for help, the clever people in your network had to find their own answers and in so doing, have become experts in the field of this emerging technology and knowhow.

Last summer, in a world first, we planted a two hectare 'test site' and from that came a \$200,000 grant from the Federal Government which will be used to plant a further 200 hectares over the next two years. This is ground breaking work by any measure and is a great example of creative Landcare in action.

The Problem

The seagrass beds in Corner Inlet have been ravaged in the past few years and reduced by thousands of acres. The major

culprit is a huge increase in the number of the native purple-spined sea urchin which loves to eat the seagrass and this has reduced much of the seagrass beds to a marine desert.

They are not the only contributor however; fire retardant runoff from the 2005 Wilsons Promontory fires and the inflow of nutrients and phosphates from farming, forestry and general human pollution formed a 'perfect storm' of destruction - and the seagrass lost.

Despite divers removing 57,000 urchins by hand in 2017 the problem persists, so a way had to be found to regenerate the broad-leafed seagrass species and it had to be found fast. But why is this important?

Economy

\$2.2 million dollars worth of fish is taken from Corner Inlet annually and without the broadleaf seagrass, fish and other marine creatures can not breed and prosper. As Australia imports more and more of its fish, the fresh, home-grown product is vitally important. This is the simple commercial economics of it, but seagrass is vital for many ecological reasons.

A vital ecosystem

Seagrass is a huge living ecosystem providing shelter and food for a wide range of creatures, from tiny invertebrates, to fish, turtles, dolphins, birds and many other creatures which feed on them



SUCH A HAPPY BUNCH OF VOLUNTEERS - TEDIOUS WORK BUT SO REWARDING. A BIG THANK YOU TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM

SEAGRASS PLANTING

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Trevor Colvin

and breed in them. Without seagrass, this whole natural system of dependency and codependency would not exist.

Carbon Capture

Seagrass plays a vital role in the health of the planet. While seagrass worldwide occupies only 0.1 percent of the total ocean floor it is estimated to be responsible for up to 11 percent of the carbon buried in the ocean.

One hectare of seagrass can capture up to 830 kilograms of carbon and that is the equivalent of the carbon emitted from a normal car travelling 15,300 kilometres. Seagrass is very fast at doing this, absorbing carbon 35 times faster than a rainforest. The world's seagrass meadows absorb and sequester eighty three million metric tonnes of carbon every year.

Oxygen

Seagrass is also a huge oxygen generator. One square metre of

seagrass can generate ten litres of oxygen each and every day.

Filter

Seagrass meadows slow the flow of incoming water by trapping sand and nutrients in their root systems and this can minimise the damage caused by flooding and provide cleaner water. Seagrass also reduces erosion thus protecting the shoreline.

Seagrass is one of the most productive ecosystems in the world and yet it receives little attention. But it is receiving a lot of attention from the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network.

A unique and exciting project with wide support

The WGCMA enthusiastically supports this project as does all of the YYLN board, with members from both these groups eagerly volunteering last summer to help get the project going.

Our coordinator Scott Elliott and Project Officer Jason Pickering are spearheading this project ably supported by fifth generation fisherman and board member Michael Hobson and professionally by marine



BAGS ONTO THE BOAT



CAREFUL PLACEMENT IN SEA

biologist Dr. John Ford from Melbourne University.

What we did and what we plan

Last summer local fisherman collected seagrass fruit (seeds) and these were quickly and carefully put into sandbags full of sand. Two different types of sand were used: one from dredge spoil and the other, brickies sand. Various densities of seed were planted into each bag because this is all largely experimental. Bags were colour coded, kept damp and transported quickly six kilometres out and carefully lowered to the seabed at low tide. Some remaining seed was hand planted by duck-diving volunteers.

In April a check showed around a 40% success rate and this is being more thoroughly checked and documented as this newsletter goes to press. (Here is a link to a short video on that

planting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6oE0F4NcpFY>)

The big project this year. 200 hectares is a lot of territory and four different methods will be used: a) the sandbag method; b) direct seeding; c) floating seed by hand (as nature does); and d) hand planting.

It will be a lot of work over a number of days and weeks with many volunteers needed, to support the professionals. Already, there is some interest from the Intrepid Landcare movement who are likely to be here next summer and dozens of Landcare and Coastcare volunteers will be helping.

The planning is already well underway and it is hoped to have a headquarters in Port Albert by August this year.

If you want to help, let us know as there are many roles to fill. But one thing seagrass doesn't need is mowing, so leave the Victa at home. ■



SEEDS IN SALT WATER



A PLANTED SEED

References

Australian Broadcasting Commission; The Smithsonian; West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority; World Seagrass Association



COMMUNITY CARE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Melissa Ainsworth

With a large part of our Network area into its third year of drought, the YYLN board are only to aware of the toll this is taking on our farming community.

The YYLN board decided that a community get-together would be a great family day out for drought affected farmers, from Willung to Dutson and Longford to Woodside with over 130 people attending. Face painting and a jumping castle were provided for the kids. Live entertainment, a lucky "gate" prize raffle and a lovely spit roast two-course dinner was provided.

Aware that the drought affects the broader community, funding was not sourced by our local retailers. Several companies supplied goods for the "health and safety" themed show bags and others provided essential resources, such as drought management books.

We were fortunate that Tim Lee, from the ABC Landline program, was only too willing to be our Master of Ceremonies for the event. Tim is known by many locals who may have schooled with him and know his family from the Bushy Park area.

Government drought relief funding has been a mine field to navigate and changes seem to be ever constant. With this in mind, we contacted the local Rural Financial Counselling Service and invited them to attend. As you can imagine, they are overwhelmed with consultations and requests for attending public events, but we were fortunate that Jenny

Mason was only too willing to attend.

One of the first groups of people eager and willing to volunteer their services were the musicians. Paul "Loophole" Savage, Don Cook and Bruce Morgan were sensational! Starting their music at 4pm they tirelessly continued to entertain the crowd and by dark they were still playing! It was great to see the young kids dancing around and one particular "tiger", Clancy, as featured on the cover of this newsletter, actually played with the band and added to the entertainment value. Paul is also a talented author of a children's book and thoughtfully donated a book, which was won by Clancy and his brothers and sisters.

We are grateful to our generous major sponsors who included the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, Turnbull Toyota, Sale Rotary Club and the Wellington Shire. Maffra Spit Roast Catering did a fabulous job. Spit roast beef and pork, salads galore and many varieties of dessert was available for all to enjoy, and that they did.

Whilst the drought continues, we hope all who attended the event enjoyed the opportunity to have some time away from the farm, enjoy great food, entertainment and the support of their community!

Sincere thanks to everyone who either volunteered their time, provided goods or monies and made this event a success. Surplus funds have since been donated to a local drought relief charity to enable them to continue their great work supporting farmers in our Network area. ■



TIM LEE AND JENNY MASON DISCUSSING FINANCE



BIG SMILES AND A BIT OF CAMERADERIE AMONGST THE MEN



CLANCY SHOWS THE PROFESSIONALS HOW IT IS DONE



Sent in by one of our members

Rain From Nowhere

by Murray Hartin

His cattle didn't get a bid, they were fairly bloody poor,
What was he going to do? He couldn't feed them anymore,
The dams were all but dry, hay was thirteen bucks a bale,
Last month's talk of rain was just a fairytale
His credit had run out, no chance to pay what's owed,
Bad thoughts ran through his head as he drove down Gully Road.

"Geez, great grandad bought the place back in 1898,
"Now I'm such a useless bastard, I'll have to shut the gate.
"Can't support my wife and kids, not like dad and those before,
"Crikey, Grandma kept it going while Pop fought in the war."
With depression now his master, he abandoned what was right,
There's no place in life for failures, he'd end it all tonight.

There were still some things to do, he'd have to shoot the cattle first,
Of all the jobs he'd ever done, that would be the worst.
He'd have a shower, watch the news, then they'd all sit down for tea
Read his kids a bedtime story, watch some more TV,
Kiss his wife goodnight, say he was off to shoot some roos
Then in a paddock far away he'd blow away the blues.

But he drove in the gate and stopped – as he always had
To check the roadside mailbox – and found a letter from his Dad.
Now his Dad was not a writer, Mum did all the cards and mail
But he knew the writing from the notebooks that he'd kept from cattle sales,
He sensed the nature of its contents, felt moisture in his eyes,
Just the fact his dad had written was enough to make him cry.

"Son, I know it's bloody tough, it's a cruel and twisted game,
"This life upon the land when you're screaming out for rain,
"There's no candle in the darkness, not a single speck of light
"But don't let the demon get you, you have to do what's right,
"I don't know what's in your head but push the bad thoughts well away
"See, you'll always have your family at the back end of the day

"You have to talk to someone, and yes I know I rarely did
"But you have to think about Fiona and think about the kids.
"I'm worried about you son, you haven't rung for quite a while,
"I know the road you're on 'cause I've walked every bloody mile.
"The date? December 7 back in 1983,
"Behind the shed I had the shotgun rested in the brigalow tree.

"See, I'd borrowed way too much to buy the Johnson place
"Then it didn't rain for years and we got bombed by interest rates,
"The bank was at the door, I didn't think I had a choice,
"I began to squeeze the trigger – that's when I heard your voice.
"You said 'Where are you Daddy? It's time to play our game'
"I've got Squatter all set up, we might get General Rain."

"It really was that close, you're the one that stopped me son,
"And you're the one that taught me there's no answer in a gun.
"Just remember people love you, good friends won't let you down.
"Look, you might have to swallow pride and take that job in town,
"Just 'til things come good, son, you've always got a choice
"And when you get this letter ring me, 'cause I'd love to hear your voice."

Well he cried and laughed and shook his head then put the truck in gear,
Shut his eyes and hugged his dad in a vision that was clear,
Dropped the cattle at the yards, put the truck away
Filled the troughs the best he could and fed his last ten bales of hay.
Then he strode towards the homestead, shoulders back and head held high,
He still knew the road was tough but there was purpose in his eye.

He called his wife and children, who'd lived through all his pain,
Hugs said more than words – he'd come back to them again,
They talked of silver linings, how good times always follow bad,
Then he walked towards the phone, picked it up and rang his Dad.
And while the kids set up the Squatter, he hugged his wife again,
Then they heard the roll of thunder and they smelt the smell of rain.

This widely publicised poem is both poignant and uplifting. It is such a succinct picture of the despair that can surround us when things are totally out of our control and the utter simplicity of remembering that life is about so much more. We hope it is meaningful for our wider Landcare community and that we all look out for each other in such difficult times.





LOCAL LANDCARE PROFILES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Helga Binder

Justin and Melissa Ainsworth were drawn to their property in the Stradbroke West area because of its location adjacent to Merriman Creek, its unique remnant vegetation and its natural assets.

It has not just one, but three different Ecological Vegetation Classes listed as vulnerable: Lowland Forest, Plains Grassy Forest and Riparian Scrub/ Riparian Forest Complex. Sweet *Bursaria Bursaria spinosa*, which has not been recorded anywhere else in the region, dominated the understory and the height of these trees is unusually greater than in other locations.

They had a vision of meshing both conservation and sustainable agricultural management practices on this site and purchased the property in 2005, naming it Merriman Park to reflect their vision.

Another thrilling feature is an ancient limestone gully that runs through the centre of the property and is over 30 metres deep. Deposits containing



MELISSA, BROOKE, JUSTIN AND CAMERON IN 2005



THE CENTRAL GULLY SYSTEM AFTER FENCING AND REVEGETATION

many different fossilised marine animals have been found over the years including ancient scallop shells dating from between six to 35 million years. The uniqueness of the natural assets on the property convinced the Ainsworths to protect them into perpetuity by having a Trust for Nature

covenant placed on 22 hectares of their land.

Interestingly, they purchased the property during a time of drought. This gave them many of the drought management skills they have called upon to make it through the current drought. It also allowed them time to develop a detailed Whole Farm Plan, working with Greening Australia, the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) and Trust for Nature to develop their vision.

A detailed flora survey was undertaken, along with a vegetation management plan. 10,000 tube stock plants were planted in the first year. Over five kilometres of fencing was

erected to protect the natural assets and designed to form corridors to link remnant vegetation to the gullies and the creek. This blueprint also worked to create shade and shelter for cattle and corridors for wildlife movement. This was also integrated into making laneways for the drafting of cattle and making paddocks smaller for better grazing management.

A further 10,000 plants have been planted in the corridors and topped up annually to fill in any gaps. Direct seeding has also been undertaken but they were not happy with the results, preferring to use tube stock.

In 2008 they joined the Merriman Creek Landcare group and in 2009 Melissa was elected Secretary. Ten years later, she is still in the job! She has also been on the YYLN Board of management since 2010 and gives freely of her time and organisational skills to help the region fulfil overall environmental management goals.

In 2009 the Ainsworths won the WGCMA's "Sustainable Farming"



FOSSIL DISCOVERIES



MANTIS ORCHID

...continued on next page

LOCAL LANDCARE PROFILES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



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PLANTING A SHELTER BELT IN 2008



THE SAME BELT IN 2019



ONE OF THE MANY EMPTY DAMS 2019

Award and in 2011 they hosted a field day to launch the carbon bench-marking project as part of the National Landcare week celebrating 25 years of Landcare. They have been delighted to be recognised for their efforts and continue to give back to the community.

With Justin being raised on a sugar cane farm in Queensland he decided to undertake a four year course to help transition into beef production. This course, Beef Cheque, was vital to development of the farm as major pasture renovation was required. The building up of soil fertility is an ongoing task on the farm, severely hampered by the dry of the last few years.

They run an Angus cow and calf operation. Melissa is in charge of the herd management side and, in a "normal" season they run approximately 120 cows on the 350 acres, retained heifers and stud bulls. They are seeing repeat buyers purchasing their cattle, so figure they must be doing something right. Like many other farmers in the area the Ainsworths have had to find other solutions for the breeding herd they had spent 14 years developing.

They are, however, still active members of the Central Gippsland Beef Cheque group and often host open days where they can share their knowledge with other beef producers.

In 2018 they were one of several properties chosen by the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network to conduct a summer "Birds on Farm" survey. The results were exciting with 46 species being observed. These included the Scarlet Robin, Varied Sittella, Jacky Winter, White-throated

Treecreeper and Sacred Kingfisher. The result was very encouraging and reflects the many benefits of revegetating using local provenance species. Much to Melissa's delight, Birds Australia has since invited them to be involved with seasonal bird surveys.

The current drought, however, has taken its toll.

"With all the work that was achieved in pasture renovation and establishing shelter belts since we began," says Melissa, "We feel like we've come full circle being back in drought again. This time we have left more dry matter in the paddocks to prevent erosion and trap water on the farm when it does rain. We destocked early, through both selling stock and using agistment. Our remaining cattle are being fed in containment paddocks allowing the rest of the land to lay fallow until the next rains. This has minimised pasture damage and the containment paddocks being used will be renovated, which will make use of the accumulating nutrient."

"By being members of both Landcare and Beef Cheque we are fortunate to have access to all the subject matter experts and the latest science when it comes to adapting to climate change. We hope to continue to learn and adapt our management practices, whilst protecting our farms biodiversity values."

We are lucky to have such an excellent example of sustainable agriculture in our Network and congratulate Justin and Melissa on their efforts. ■



AROUND THE TRAPS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By our Landcare groups

Wonyip

The Wonyip Landcare group welcomes two new members to their group, Nick Clemann and Phoebe Burns. Nick works at the Victorian Government's Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research where he leads a team of scientists who work on threatened fauna (turtles, marsupials, reptiles and frogs – the latter two groups being his specialty).

He has always dreamed of having a little land of his own, and Wonyip is a dream-come-true. Phoebe is an independent wildlife consultant specialising in native rodents.

She recently completed her PhD thesis on New Holland Mice, much of which was written in Wonyip in between bouts of painting and renovating the old shearing shed. It is pleasing to see new people joining our group, including some who are living full time locally.

The group is planning to kick off some new activities up in the hills around Wonyip. Permaculture gardens are being

planned, fruit trees going in soon, composting material is being sourced from local dairy farmers, rice hulls from calf sheds and feed pads. *Stay tuned!*

Another project being developed is at the Dingo Creek Agnes River intersection. The project is called the Dingo Creek Agnes River Koala trail. It involves treating the blackberry infestation along the waterway, helping koala and other critters to traverse the river area. Manna gum and other koala friendly trees will be planted along the river system and back into the private property. This project would compliment the good work undertaken by our group when it fenced off eroded river banks and illegal 4WD tracks. This area backs onto the new Bratualung Forest Park formerly the Cores and Links area, consisting of cool temperate rain forest with superb deep gullies with giant tree ferns. HVP will harvest their hardwood plantations one last time in the new park before replanting with a mix of eucalypts suitable to the area. The WLG is in a fortunate position to have

this park right at their back door, a great springboard for future projects. ■

Woodside

Woodside Landcare group has continued to meet and attend events over the very dry spring, summer and autumn seasons. During summer members attended an informative Seed collection workshop held by local expert and Woodside Landcare member, Jenny Wolswinkel. Jenny demonstrated seed collection, cleaning and storage as well as talked about the ethics of seed collection and the need for genetic diversity. It was an interesting and valuable workshop.

Our first meeting of 2019 welcomed YYLN coordinator Scott Elliott as our guest speaker. Scott comes to the position with an excellent background and education in environmental management and Landcare. Woodside group member to the YYLN board Elizabeth Balderstone also gave a report on network events. Two Woodside members are also Catchment Management Board (CMA) members. Frankie MacLennan is on the East Gippsland CMA board and Peter Jennings is chair of the West Gippsland CMA. There are always interesting and relevant reports at our meetings.

Conditions in Giffard, Darriman and Woodside have steadily deteriorated as the drought



NICK AND PHOEBE ON THEIR NEW PROPERTY IN WONYP



JENNY INSTRUCTS PARTICIPANTS ON DIFFERENT TYPES OF SEED



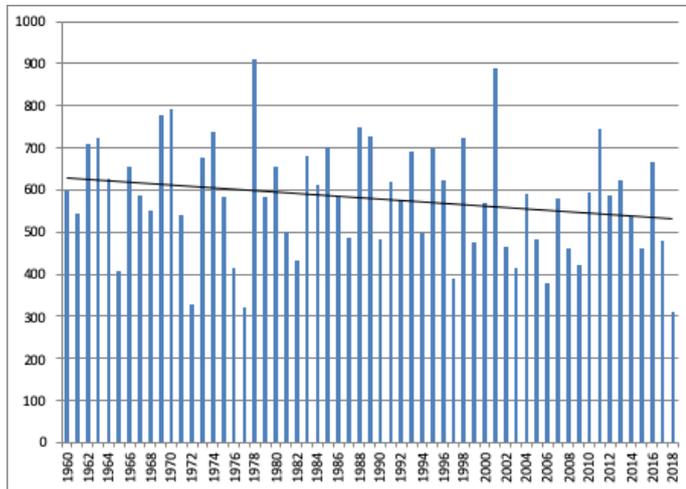
JENNY DEMONSTRATES HOW TO SEPARATE SEED FROM HUSKS

AROUND THE TRAPS

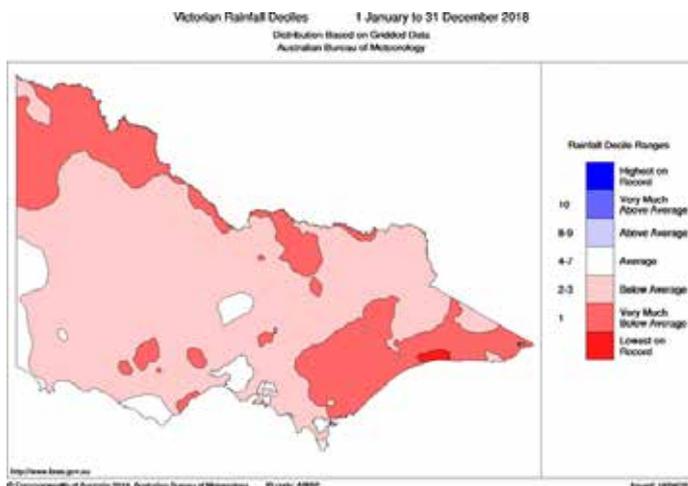
YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By our Landcare groups



Rainfall totals and trend at the Giffard Rain Station 1960-2018
(Data from the Bureau of Meteorology – recorded by Gooding and Anderson families)



continues to bite hard. Gale force winds in late March caused soil erosion on many farms where pasture was stressed and sparse. Local conditions attracted extensive media coverage including the front pages of local and state newspapers. The Victorian Agriculture Minister Jaclyn Symes and the Prime Minister Scott Morrison both visited Giffard farms and met with drought affected locals. Native vegetation and Landcare plantings have also been stressed by the extended dry spell and some old eucalypts

and banksias in the district are dying.

At our April meeting guest speaker and group member Peter Jennings gave a presentation on historical rainfall records and current weather patterns using the Bureau of Meteorology website. Members were surprised by the amount of information and resources held on the site. Peter displayed digital maps of Victoria showing rainfall totals over many years and members recalled years of both high and low rainfalls and could then see the relevant maps. He showed

tables and a graph of rainfall records from the official Rain Station at Giffard which have been recorded since 1906 by the Gooding and Anderson families. The records show an increasing trend from 1906 to 1959 and a decreasing trend since 1960. He also showed a graph of average global surface temperature which shows an increase of approximately 1°C over the last century.

In summer and autumn Woodside Hall was the venue for two drought information sessions held by Agriculture Victoria and another was held at the Giffard West Hall. Many Woodside Landcare members attended these days for information on fodder, stock and pasture management as well as guidance on what government assistance is available to drought affected farmers. Members also attended the Community Get Together for Drought Affected Farmers at the Stradbroke Hall which was organised by the YYLN.

The Woodside Landcare group and membership list have been an effective way of disseminating information and invitations to events in this difficult time of drought. Woodside members have been active in supporting each other and their community to help ensure we come through this drought as best we can. ■

Merriman Creek

With the effects of the drought continuing to worsen within the district, it was no surprise to see the largest attendance at our

last meeting and to date. Both non Landcare members and members alike attended the meeting.

Tony Sanders and Luke Krupa from Southern Rural Water were invited to attend to clarify concerns raised at our December meeting. The presentation included an overview of the current condition of our major waterways in Gippsland.

The decline in shallow and deep water tables was also discussed as well as general information on drilling bores. It was interesting to hear about the mechanisms for halting irrigation water extraction to prioritise stock and domestic water consumption.

Each year in autumn our group purchases a quantity of locally indigenous trees, available for free to interested members to plant on their properties. With several recent rain events, many members have taken up the offer and are ready to replant gaps within their shelterbelts.

A good contingent of members attended the Community Get Together for Drought Affected Farmers event at the Stradbroke Hall in March. Thank you to all the members who assisted with the clean up of the event which was enjoyed by all and with several members winning a lucky gate prize.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday June 3 at 7.30pm at Norma & Peter Garlick's home. Our guest speaker will be our Network Coordinator, Scott Elliott. All are welcome to attend the meeting and supper. ■



AROUND THE TRAPS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By our Landcare groups

Albert River

The Albert River Landcare group held a morning tea on October 30 at the "John Crew Memorial Park", otherwise known as the Alberton Reserve wayside stop. Project partners such as Vic Roads and the WGCMA joined our group of truly committed locals, to celebrate the placement of new signage and the improved appearance of the reserve.

The 600m long reserve is very much used daily for picnics, lunch breaks, fishing, toilet stops and overnight camping, especially now with all the improvements and the attractiveness. Hopefully a cement boat ramp will not be too far away.

It was the initiative of the Albert River Landcare group, way back in 1994, to tackle the original reinvention of an overgrown, "neglected roadside" stop that had toilet facilities and some tables for use. However, long grass and weeds, plus constant damage to the vegetation from illegal fires created an all out effort from Albert River Landcare group to change the environment and rules. Firstly a gas BBQ was purchased and the vegetation was roped off and many signs were erected to encourage visitors to not damage the vegetation. Further work included the construction of two observation/fishing platforms.

The late John Crew was one of the inaugural members of the Albert River Landcare group (1985) and was an inspiration to all in the district with his farm tree planting program, but further to that,



POPULAR CAMPING SPOT - ANNIE GREENAWAY RESERVE IN HIAWATHA READY FOR AN UPGRADE



he was such an amazing man committed to enhancing our local environment. He was the person who fenced the reserve, hence the memorial plaque. John passed away at 48 years of age.

Once again lots of locals and even more distant travellers swamped the Minnie Ha Ha Falls at Hiawatha. Camp sites over the Christmas period and right through till Easter, overflowing and the traffic was hectic.

Recently our group met with Tim Rice, Wellington Shire

Council Environmental Officer, to outline the next five year Strategic Plan agreement.

Priority enhancement projects for the next two years have been agreed upon. High on the list is the purchase of big blue stone boulders to serve as bollards with shapes to provide seating and to protect campers and vehicles close to the falls and swimming area for the general public. The Albert River Landcare group will contribute funding towards this programme.

Wellington Shire Council's commitment this financial year is replacing old timber rails and fences. WGCMA have continued to spray the weeds and treat the willows, which will be removed when they have been poisoned.

When funding becomes available, the Wellington Shire's next major project at the site will be the construction of eco friendly toilets. ■

- 1 Teal
- 2 Absent
- 3 Computer
- 4 Keys
- 8 Breakfast
- 10 Unsolved
- 11 Tuesday
- Across**
- 5 Diamonds
- 6 May
- 7 Assistants
- 9 Popular
- 12 Thistle
- 13 especially
- 14 Isolated

Down

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ART EXHIBITION

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Jenny Davies

Nature & Art, Both Treasured

Keeping the environment in the spotlight, the fourth Annual YYLN /Yarram Courthouse Gallery's Art competition was held last November.

The judges, Sally Joyce, Kaye Proudley and Jenny Davies announced the awards to a full house at the official opening and commented on the generally high standard and variety of mediums and styles of the 20 works.

The artists had clearly thought about their responses to the theme "Nature is a treasure - keep it forever". Co-sponsored by Milno's Electrical the following prizes were awarded:

1st PRIZE NATURE'S WILD THINGS"- Free motion machine embroidery by Christine Beehag. This wonderfully skilful work shines a light on these small fungi, liverworts and lichens we tend to ignore but are vital to our ecosystems, without fungi we would all die. It reminds us there is an interdependence of all living things in the web of life. Pull one string and everything starts to unravel.

2nd PRIZE DECONSTRUCTED HABITAT"- Acrylic/Mixed Media by Kerryn Leak. On one level this work portrays a possum's anxiety at losing its habit but the artist leads us to consider the "big picture" of human greed and its impact on our natural world. Her use of \$ signs and a white collar & tie achieves this goal. The colour and texture in the work adds impact. The artist has pushed the work off the



CATHY TREMBATH AND KIM BAGGALEY HANGING THE EXHIBITION

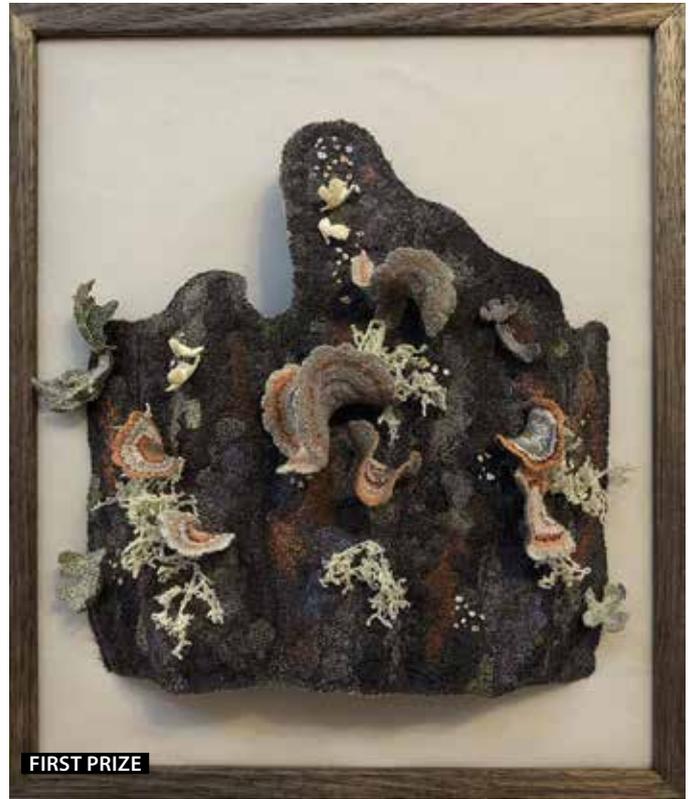
edge of the canvas causing us to think about how we humans have pushed the boundaries of the natural world.

Honorable Mention KUNZEA ERICOIDES - Watercolour by Sally Armfield.

A beautiful work of exceptional skill in botanical art style.

Honorable Mention PUT WIND FARMS OUT TO SEA - Pyrography/Watercolour by Kim Baggaley. This is a visually pleasing, well-balanced, emotional work in watercolour and particularly on-topic at present.

Honorable Mention A BIRD IN THE HAND IS WORTH TWO IN THE BUSH - Mixed media by Suzette Levette. This work invites us to look into it and the more we look the more we see the human effect on the world including wind farms, which are currently controversial.



FIRST PRIZE

Honorable Mention EARTH'S DUMPING GROUND - SAVE OUR SEAS - Mixed media by Karen Rogers. We enjoyed the layering in this well executed work. On the surface, the eye is drawn to the beauty of the seas but as each layer was explored one saw the impact humans are having including over-fishing, netting, plastics, pollutants, all a threat to this precious environment.

The JARR's working group goal in running these competitions has been to focus on the fragility of our environment under threat by habitat destruction and global warming. Artists were sent lists of local species as competition criteria and the works encouraged viewers to look again at what we have in our unique eco-system and to do what we can to preserve it. JARR brochures and YYLN promotion



SECOND PRIZE

were displayed during the month long exhibition and was well publicised by the Yarram Courthouse Gallery. ■



WORDS OF WISDOM

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

Cousin Wally



I have noticed there are not as many butterflies about my house as there used to be. Why is this?

Did you have honey on your toast for breakfast? If so I hope you savoured it because one day there may be no honey to taste at all. Why? Because the insect population around the world, including honey bees, is declining at a comparatively rapid rate.

Worldwide nearly one million different insects have been identified and many more have yet to be identified. The total weight of insects in the world is estimated at 17 times the weight of all the humans in the world. If my calculator is correct this is about 9.2 billion tons of insects inhabit the world! If you consider the weight of a butterfly as an example, how many butterflies would this be? Answer - Lots and lots and lots!

Some may say the decline in insects is a good thing it means fewer mozzie bites, not getting stung by bees, less disease spread by flies, fewer grubs eating our food crops, less bugs dirtying our windscreens.

But we need to think about what insects do for us.

They are crucial components

of our ecosystems, where they perform many important functions.

Soil aeration

Burrowing insects such as many grubs, crickets, etc. aerate the soil. Other burrowing insects such as ants and beetles produce tunnels providing channels for water. These actions greatly benefit plants and maintain a healthy soil ecosystem.

Pollination

Bees, wasps, butterflies and other insects are the main pollinators of 87% of the world's flowering plants which includes many of our food crops. So, without these pollinators many of our food crops would not mature and there would be very few flowering plants.

Recycling

Dung beetles break down animal droppings, some insects eat dead wood, other insects have other methods of breaking down waste matter including dead animals which recycles the nutrients that plants need for photosynthesis. Without these insects, plant and animal matter

would breakdown much more slowly and hence slow down the rate of development of plants.

Controlling pests

Many insects eat what we consider as pest insects. Without these insects the pest insects would flourish and further diminish our food crops and other plants.

Fertilisation

All insects fertilize the soil with the nutrients from their droppings.

Products

Insects produce products which we use such as honey, wax, resins, silk and even bait for our fishing hooks.

In some parts of the world, insects are used for food by humans. Insects are a rich source of protein, vitamins, and minerals, and are prized as delicacies in many third-world countries. In fact, it is difficult to find an insect that is not eaten in one form or another by people. Among the most popular are cicadas, locusts, mantises, grubs, caterpillars, crickets, ants, and wasps.

Insects are at the lower end of the biodiversity food chain. The majority of birds, lizards,

frogs, bats, small mammals, fish and even other insects depend upon insects as their food source. A decline in insect numbers results in a decline of those creatures further up the food chain. Birds are at the top of the insect food chains and recent studies indicate that 40% of the world bird population is in decline. Some of this is attributed to the decline in insect populations.

IN DANGER

Global research has shown that 41 per cent, on average, of all insect species that we know of are declining. Among those, a third of all the species are going into extinction. They are in danger right now. The rate of extinction in insects is about eight times higher than the rate of extinction of vertebrates. In some parts of the world long term studies have shown an average decline of 2.5% per annum in insect population indicating many insects will be extinct in these areas in 10-20 years time. Many insects have become extinct over the last 40 years and a large percentage are now endangered or vulnerable.

Research is indicating typical insect decline such as the population of butterflies has



ANYONE FOR A MEALY BUG COOKIE???

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BOARD PROFILE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



LIBBY BALDERSTONE, NEW MEMBER OF THE YYLN BOARD

1. How long have you been a part of landcare?

I have been involved with Landcare since its beginnings, firstly as a member of the Stradbroke Farm Trees group in the mid 1980s and then as an inaugural member of the Woodside Landcare group when it was established in 1989.

2. Have you served on the Board before?

Yes, many years ago in the mid 90s in the early days of the Network - I think it was called the Yarram Yarram Catchments

group initially - and we used to meet in the evenings at Board members homes around kitchen tables.

3. Give a brief description of your property.

Our property, Warrigal Creek, was one of the original runs taken up in 1845 soon after European settlement of Gippsland. Before that, for tens of thousands of years, it was the home of the Brataulung People of the Gunaikurnai nation. I often try and imagine the landscape- the healthy balance sustained for so long, by the Brataulung clan groups along the Ninety Mile Beach, in the wetlands behind, and through the forests and along the waterways of what we now know as such fragile Coastal Plains.

Tragically, Warrigal Creek, was the scene of one of Australia's worst massacres, and like many others in our area it is a passion of mine that the truth of this terrible event is told honestly and openly.

4. What is your greatest environmental concern?

Climate Change and all its ramifications is my biggest environmental concern - both it's huge effects environmentally and also the challenges it presents to sustainable farming practices.

5. What is the best thing about landcare for you?

I grew up in Melbourne and trained as a Social Worker, and first came to Darriman in 1974 when I met my late husband, Alistair Irving. With my city background, Alistair, and his father, John Irving, quickly taught me that a priority for our

Woodside/Darriman farms and landscapes was shelter belts and revegetation and protection of our precious remnants. Alistair died in 1987 and his father a few years later....I often think that they would be amazed by the altered farming landscapes since then, not just in our area, but across many parts of Australia - and that has largely been lead, driven and facilitated by Landcare in all its different forms and changing funding sources. It's easy to get bogged down by all the challenge still before us, but sometimes it's great to stand back and celebrate and appreciate all that has happened in just 30 or so years...

Another really significant aspect of Landcare that is not always acknowledged is its social value - for many of us in the Woodside district our bi monthly Landcare meetings keep us all connected.

7. Is there a message you would like to give to the landcare network?

The Network and a capable visionary Facilitator is vital to positive land management in our area and restoring some of the mistakes of past practices... the JARR Project is a fantastic example of local landholders and groups throughout a large Catchment working together to achieve fantastic outcomes. We should all be very proud of the Networks achievements over the last three decades, and continue to work hard to keep these successes going, including lobbying government on the vital role of Networks and coordinators - without them so many of these environmental successes would not have happened. ■

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decreased globally by 53%, bees by 46%, dragonflies by 37% over the past 10 years.

Not all insect species are declining. Some species are on the increase but they are not pollinators and some of these are dependant on insects which are in decline.

Research indicates that there were four significant factors influencing insect decline.

1. Habitat loss - loss of plants both dead and alive deprive insects of food sources, shelter and breeding environments
2. Pollution - insects are being killed by polluted environments
3. Pesticides and fertilisers - insects are poisoned by these. This is considered the major factor attributed to insect decline
4. Biological factors, including pathogens and introduced species; and climate change.

I cannot and I don't want to imagine a world without flowering plants, butterflies,

frogs and all the other beautiful creatures even if it means encountering the odd mosi bite or sharing some of my vegetable garden plants with plant eating insects.

What will you do to curb the decline in insects allowing us to continue having honey on your toast for breakfast and to maintain the butterfly population in your area?

Email your questions to mel.ainsworth@me.com and I will try to answer them for you. ■

Wally



The Feather-horned Beetle now rarely seen in our district.



PROJECT UPDATES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

by Scott Elliott and Jason Pickering

Biodiversity On-Ground Action – Woody Weed Control

This is an important collaborative weed eradication project targeting Blackberry, Gorse and Box Thorn within the Jack River, Albert River and Tarra River catchment areas.

Funding received from DELWP as part of the Biodiversity on the Ground Action program.

The project aim is to encourage whole neighbourhoods, including both private and public landholders to control weeds together, greatly reducing the chance of re-infestation and subsequent spread in following seasons.

The eradication of woody weeds throughout a habitat supports a cleaner, more attractive landscape and it helps to deliver a greater native fauna and flora diversity within the forest understory.

The presence of these weeds severely limits the ability of native fauna to move unhindered throughout their

natural range. This restriction can have serious consequences on access to their foraging and reproduction territories, which in time will adversely affect overall species dispersal.

Typically weed species are dominant competitors and as such, early colonisers of disturbed ground. Removing them will promote recovery and recolonisation of indigenous vegetation through the residual soil seedbank.

A further added benefit for woody weed removal will be a reduction in pest pressure as they provide a recognised habitat for invasive and destructive pests such as foxes and rabbits. This has obvious benefits in the form of reduced land degradation and interspecific competition for resources.

The project has been well received within our Network and from the number of signed agreements it is apparent that our local landholders have really appreciated the financial support available to control

their weed infestations.

Due to the impending cooler conditions, we are now seeing a shift away from Blackberry towards more Gorse and Boxthorn control they will not defoliate like the Blackberry will soon, so the control window is still well and truly open on them.

There are however still further opportunities to be involved in this important weed control project. We can provide you with a part payment of 50% of costs (not exceeding a total contribution of \$900 inc. GST per landholder). This can be used to fund herbicide, contractors or your own labour. Participation opportunities are now becoming limited and we are nearing project completion, so be quick to secure your spot.

For further information or to discuss your eligibility in this rewarding project, contact:

Jason Pickering, Project Officer at YYLN Mobile: 0429 775 875 Email: jasonp@wgcm.vic.gov.au ■

Broadleaf Seagrass Project - Monitoring report

Stage one of this program has been funded by DELWP as part of the Biodiversity on the Ground Action program.

On the 9th of March, Mick Green from Drift Media and Jason were able to visit our Seagrass planting site for the first time since the deployment of the Broadleaf Seagrass (*Posidonia australis*) sandbags in January.

The primary aim for the day was to venture to pinpoint and geotag the location of the sandbags via drone imagery. The drone very effectively flew a grid pattern over our site, recording around 340 images in total. These images were successfully locked to location, but unfortunately the conditions faced on the day restricted them from getting much more than that. A quickly rising tide meant they were getting some refraction from the increasing depth of water. The low tide that day was around 1.0m when ideally, from



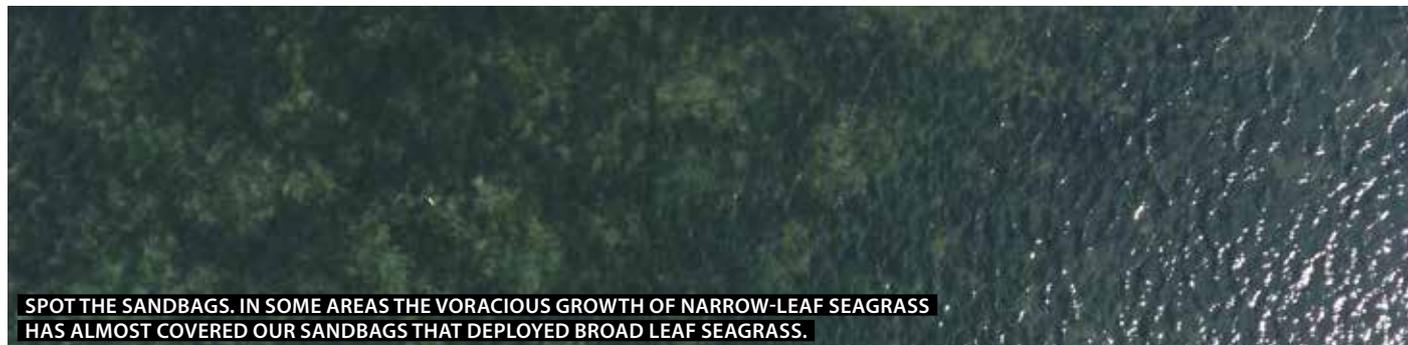
SUCCESSFUL BLACKBERRY CONTROL ON PRIVATE PROPERTIES IN MADALYA - BEFORE AND AFTER

PROJECT UPDATES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



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SPOT THE SANDBAGS. IN SOME AREAS THE VORACIOUS GROWTH OF NARROW-LEAF SEAGRASS HAS ALMOST COVERED OUR SANDBAGS THAT DEPLOYED BROAD LEAF SEAGRASS.



VOLUNTEERS PAINSTAKINGLY 'PLANTING' SEED IN SANDBAGS



'PLANTING' SEED

a flight perspective a 0.4-0.6m low tide is needed to effectively “see through” the water without too much distortion. Reduced visibility was exacerbated by a freshening wind, which created just enough surface disturbance to catch the reflection of the sun and add glare to the images.

This experience posed management questions regarding further drone flights for this project.

Although it was now getting late in the day and we were facing a fast running incoming tide, they decided to get in the water for a look around one of the marking pegs. It

was pleasing to see that in the limited available time, 8 out of 9 bags deployed at that individual marker were located and, except one, had actively growing Broadleaf Seagrass plants.

The growth rate ranged from 50-100 mm in length and around 10mm in width. This was a far cry from the hair like seedlings that we had gently planted into hessian sand bags only 3 months earlier.

One unexpected finding from the monitoring session was the apparent explosion of Fineleaf Seagrass (*Zostera nigra*) at our planting site. This was not present at deployment but had

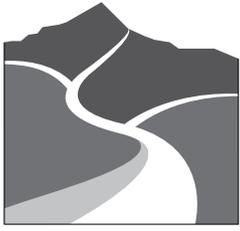
now populated our site and was growing to a length of around 20-30cm. The Fineleaf species is like a runner grass and grows quickly, enabling it to colonise new areas.

Halted by time and deepening water, the team headed back to Port Albert. The voyage home became a brainstorming session about how we best proceed with the monitoring of this and future Seagrass planting sites. The conclusion was that volunteers on the ground (or in this case in the water!) with waterproof GPS enabled cameras will be required to monitor our seedlings.

A big thank you must go Wynne Hobson who offered both his time and services to supply and pilot the vessel we used to get to location. We have a wonderful community of volunteers who continue to support our Network and whose contributions are very much valued.

If you would like to offer your services as a volunteer for our next round of planting, please contact either Scott Elliott - YYLN Network Coordinator or Jason Pickering - YYLN Project Officer to register your interest.





PROJECT UPDATES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

by Scott Elliott and Jason Pickering

Reedy Creek

The Reedy Creek project is an important biodiversity initiative to protect the habitat of the Martin's Toadlet at Alison Livermore's property at Woodside North.

The second phase of the project has involved the removal of a significant stand of willows along the Reedy Creek, followed by fencing and revegetation work.

With the assistance of botanist Jenny Wolswinkel we undertook a final round of direct seeding at a 3ha site on the property during March. Given the nature of the terrain and the hard ground following summer, sowing lines were scalped to remove the top layer of soil and associated grass roots, weeds and seeds using a Bobcat with a front scoop. This was completed in the days leading up to sowing and the native seed was bulked up with sawdust and hand sown directly into the lines.

A mixture of species including: silver wattle, cassinia, blackwood, Victorian Christmas-bush, Strzelecki Gum and Manna Gum were planted on the day and we are hopeful, after the recent rains, that the direct seeding will be a major success. Although direct seeding is often overlooked in favour of tubestock planting, the method can be more effective for establishing vegetation quickly. We will be seeking to incorporate direct seeding into future projects more regularly, to make better use of our Burford seeder.



REEDY CREEK AFTER WILLOW REMOVAL



TUBESTOCK READY TO GO

The final project activity will involve the installation of owl and glider boxes in established trees on the property. ■

Victorian Landcare Grants

We are on-track to deliver the remaining projects as part of the Victorian Landcare Grants program this year. Dry weather forced a delay to several of our revegetation projects but recent autumn rain has provided a perfect window for plantings at Carrajung, Wonyip and Binginwarri.

An additional round of direct seeding is also planned for a property in the Woodside area to make the most of the rain.

To date, we have planted 7.8 hectares of native vegetation across the Network, controlled 1.8 hectares of weeds and subsidised more than 5 kilometres of fencing via this program. In some cases, landholders who planted their trees during 2018 have gone above and beyond the call of duty to water trees during the



FENCING AT REEDY CREEK TO PRESERVE MARTIN'S TOADLET HABITAT



JACK RIVER SHELTER BELT FENCING

For further information on any of these projects or Invasive Plant & Animal matters please contact: Jason Pickering, YYLN Project Officer - Mob. 0429 775 875 or Email jasonp@wgca.vic.gov.au

PROJECT UPDATES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



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long, dry summer and keep them alive until the recent autumn break.

An additional highlight of the program was that over 3ha of remnant vegetation, in the coastal plain region of our Network, was protected by fencing and stock control measures. These projects further contribute to the fantastic work that was achieved via the Mullundung to Coast program. In spite of the program's early challenges, we are on-track to deliver outputs that exceed our initial obligations for fencing, tree planting and remnant vegetation protection.

Anyone with a project idea should feel free to contact Scott or myself to discuss your plans, as you may be eligible for funding as part of the 2019 round of the Victorian Landcare Grants. ■

Training grants

Special training, funded by DELWP's Community Skills Development program went ahead over the last few months.

Seed collection and storage took place in the summer and was attended by ten participants, including representatives from Woodside Landcare group and a couple all of the way from the United States.

Conducted by local seed expert, Jenny Wolswinkelt the training covered:

- Genetic considerations, including provenance
- Safety considerations
- Possible impacts of climate

change on selecting suitable plants and seeds

- The necessary collection permits and permissions

It also touched very briefly on how to go about accurately identifying plants and finding current botanical names using VicFlora online.

In the words of one participant, *"Jenny was fantastic and we learned so much."*

We are pleased that the training was of benefit and look forward to stories from our members about their own propagation experiences.

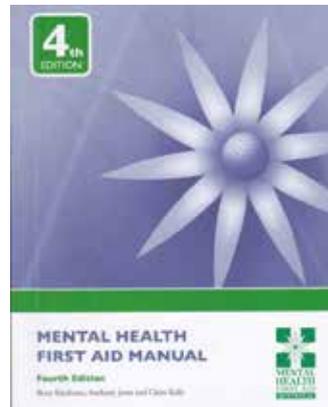
Governance training was delivered to a large group of participants including board members from Yarram Yarram and South Gippsland Landcare networks, individual group contact officers and interested community members.

The training session was designed to deliver practical knowledge and skills in governance and risk management that can be readily applied to Landcare networks and groups.

Training was provided by Justice Connect, Not-for-profit Law.

Mental Health First Aid Training (by Nicki Jennings, attendee at the training)

The YYLN recently held a two day accredited Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training course in response to the difficult times many Landcarers and community members are experiencing with the ongoing drought. This excellent and practical course run by Mental Health First Aid Australia has



trained over 500,000 people.

Local MHFA Instructor Diane Robinson ably guided the participants through the set course work which offered insight into many mental health problems. Participants learnt how as family members, friends, and community members we can learn to assist and support people who may be experiencing mental health issues. Many people have received standard first aid training and it is good that now there is an equivalent opportunity with Mental Health First Aid.

The course examined mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, psychosis and substance abuse and provided initial first aid response strategies for participants who may encounter these. Many conditions are very prevalent in our population. The course emphasised the importance of early intervention, the use of professional medical and psychological care and the ongoing support of family, friends and community.

The two day training wasn't all hard work and concentration. Participants enjoyed chatting

over coffee and lunch accompanied with Diane's homemade soup, cake and scones. Participants received a Certificate of Completion and had the option to complete an online quiz to gain the Mental Health First Aid Certificate which is valid for 3 years. A 180 page comprehensive Mental Health First Aid Manual was also given to each participant. It is definitely a worthwhile course to consider completing. ■

Mentoring Program

One of the ideas coming from the New Horizons workshop held by YYLN last year was to run a program that matched experienced farmers with those who were new to the game and wanted assistance in developing farm management plans.

The first phase of the program was supported through Victorian Landcare Grant funding. Its aim was to match farmers with suitable local mentors who could provide advice and assistance in developing all types of different farm management plans and it is being trialled through the South Gippsland and Yarram Yarram Landcare Networks.

As well as working with their individual mentors and visiting each other's properties the group gets together regularly to share information.

The eight mentoring partnerships include farms based in Tarwin Lower, Mirboo and Mirboo North, Port Albert, Heath Hill, Devon North, Koonwarra, Fish Creek, Torwood and Woodside.

...continued on next page

For further information on any of these projects or Invasive Plant & Animal matters please contact: Jason Pickering, YYLN Project Officer - Mob. 0429 775 875 or Email jasonp@wgcma.vic.gov.au



PROJECT UPDATES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

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The second phase of the mentoring program was rolled out in March. With an expansion on traditional approaches looking at permaculture and alternative ways to improve properties, so they get better biodiversity and production outcomes. Port Albert farmers, Sandy and Saul Stainer, have Fish Creek's Gary Wallis as a mentor and says the program is already yielding benefits.

"It's excellent to hear other people's stories and to see how Gary has implemented his ideas. It's great to meet like-minded people.

"Gary gave us some great ideas and showed his enthusiasm for property conservation."

The couple said their next step was to develop a whole farm plan.

Other participants said the opportunity to meet other property owners, improve their knowledge and being able to ask questions in a safe environment was important.

The mentoring program is an extension of the traditional Landcare focus, where like-minded property owners

come together to work on revegetation projects.

It is hoped that similar projects could be rolled out through other Landcare Networks in the future.

Permaculture Workshop

(by Marnie Ellis)

Funded by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority through the Our Catchment Our Community program, permaculture was in the spotlight at the mentoring workshop day recently organised by the Yarram Yarram and South Gippsland Landcare Networks.

Fourteen people involved in the Networks' Mentoring program visited Bob Tatnell's *Garden Farm*, nestled in the foothills of the Strzelecki Ranges in Hiawatha, on Saturday, 30th March.

The aim of the workshop was to get an insight into permaculture and its effectiveness at ameliorating the impact of adverse climate conditions.

Bob's highly productive farm has been built completely on the permaculture principles



MYSTEE FASCINATES ATTENDEES AT PERMACULTURE TRAINING

he believes in. He runs a highly successful free range egg business, has a healthy and expanding orchard and vegetable garden and ensures his other livestock is healthy and productive.

The day included presentations by Mystee Unwin – a permaculture teacher, Bob and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's Regional Landcare Facilitator, Marnie Ellis.

A video by grandfather of permaculture, Bill Mollison on the vital role of trees in creating precipitation was shown and

Bob's pumpkin soup, home baked bread, blackberries, hot apple pie and whipped cream rounded out the day's activities.

Around the table the participants heard about projects and future dreams for the land.

"The training day looked at the differences between Landcare and permaculture," said Scott Elliot, Yarram Yarram Landcare Network Coordinator.

"Participants were particularly interested in water systems, including dams, plowing/ripping techniques and ways to conserve water.



WHAT WAS A FAIRLY BARREN, LIMITED USE FARM HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED OVER THE LAST 12 YEARS USING PERMACULTURE PRINCIPLES



PROJECT UPDATES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



...continued from previous page

"Many of those who took part are at the start of their farming journey and own small properties of less than 30 acres. Some of them are hoping to establish niche industries on their properties, including duck meat, eggs or fruit and vegetables."

All three presenters brought their own personal experience to the presentations.

"Marnie runs her own property, **Applebox Farm**, according to permaculture principles, and obviously we were able to see Bob's approach up close during the farm visit," Scott said.

"Mystee's presentation focused on her property near Rokewood and she went through the principles of constructing your own tiny house and super adobe structure.

"She also talked about establishing garden beds, using small animal systems to dig, fertilise and aerate soils, as well as explaining permaculture design techniques."

Scott said there were plans to organise a bus trip later this year, to show participants in the mentoring program some of the leading examples of Landcare in West Gippsland.

More information about Landcare programs in West Gippsland is available at <https://www.wgma.vic.gov.au/landcare-2> ■

Climate Risk in Agriculture 2019



**What does climate change mean for farmers?
What are the risks?
What are the opportunities?
What can farmers do?**

Come along to this one-day event to listen to expert presenters and be part of the discussion about climate forecasts, practical actions to build farm resilience, carbon farming opportunities, legal and financial risks and more.

When: Thursday, 20th June 2019
Where: West Gippsland Arts Centre, Warragul.
How much: \$35

Book your ticket now: www.trybooking.com/BAUZZ

For more information about attending this event, or if you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact Sam Shannon – Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator on sams@wgma.vic.gov.au or 0409 944 114.

Event partners:



This project is supported by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DUE NOW

For \$30 per family per annum, membership in the YYLN gives access to funding opportunities, support, ideas and community events



KIDS PAGE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

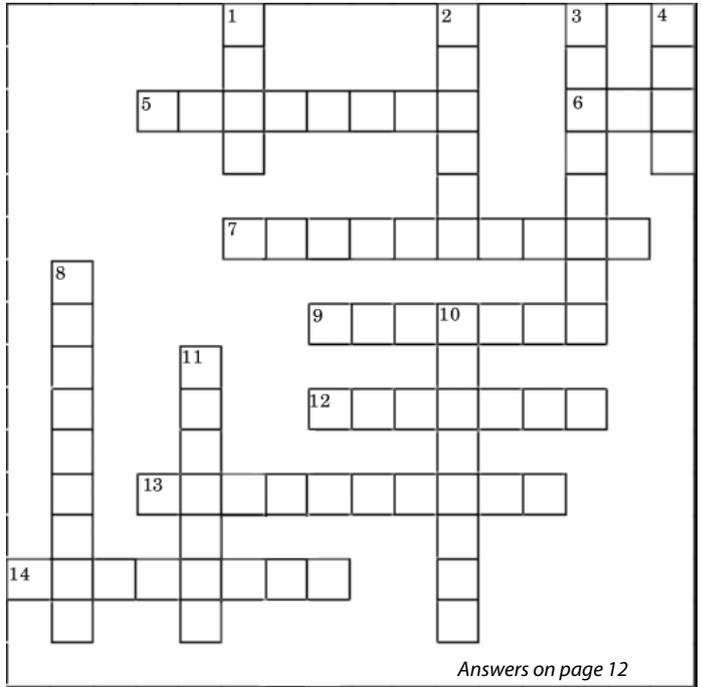
By Michaela Mandaletti (our youngest Landcare contributor)

Down

- 1 A shade of green starting with T
- 2 Not present
- 3 An electronic device starting with C
- 4 Things you use to unlock your house.
- 8 First meal of the day
- 10 Not solved
- 11 Second day of the week

Across

- 5 Clear precious stones
- 6 Fifth month of the year
- 7 Plural of assistant
- 9 Liked and well known by many people
- 12 A common weed with a purple flower
- 13 Another word meaning particularly
- 14 Far away from other places



Answers on page 12

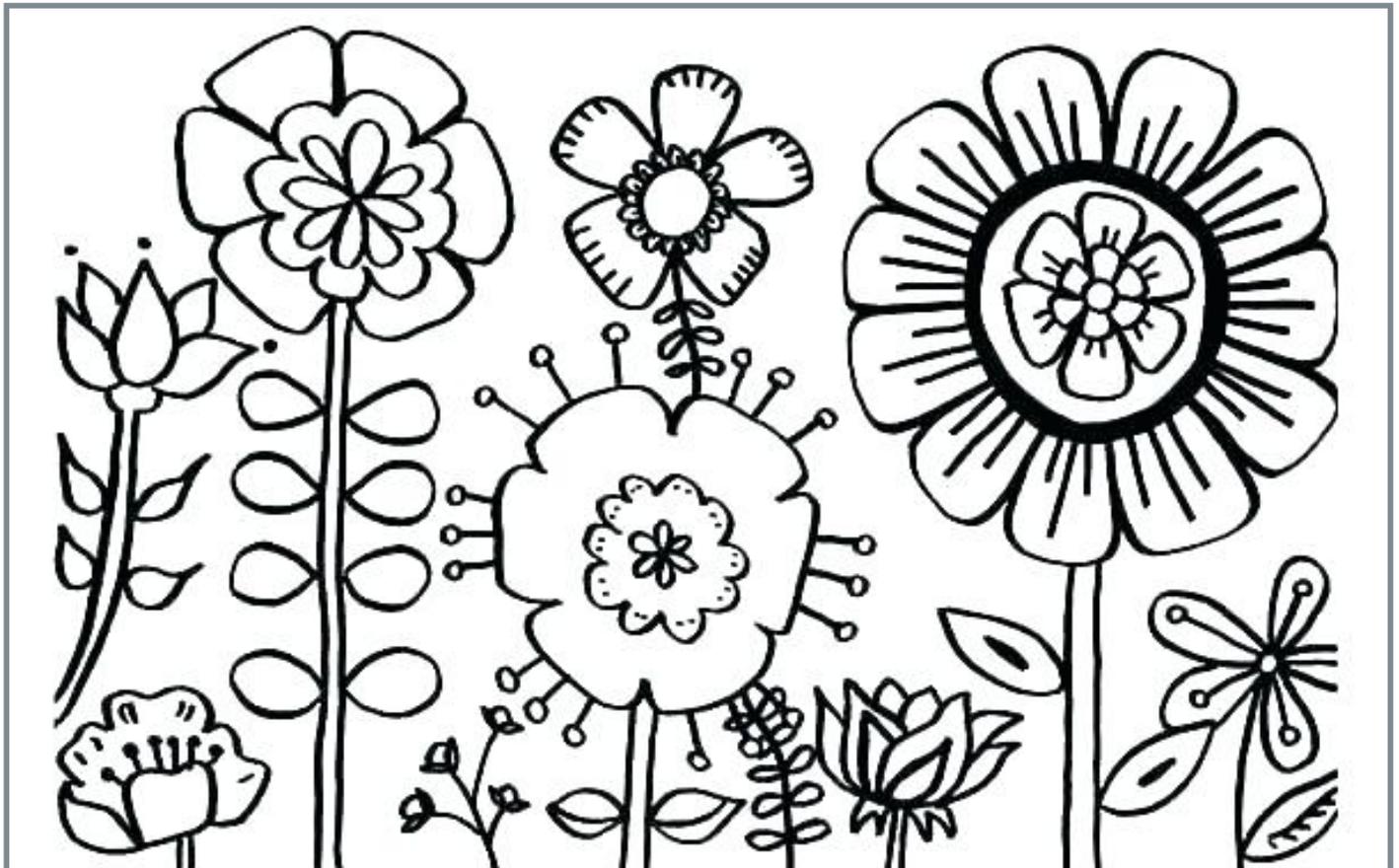
Can you guess the answers?

1. What belongs to you but is used more by others?
2. What kind of dress can never be worn?
3. What word is always spelt incorrectly?
4. What sort of ring is always square?

Answers are below the flowers

A big thank you to Michaela Mandaletti for creating this children's page.

Colour these flowers to bring them to life



PARTNER ACTIVITY

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Beth Mellick, Executive director, Wettenhall Environment Trust



Wettenhall

ENVIRONMENT TRUST

The Norman Wettenhall Foundation recently changed its name to Wettenhall Environment Trust – new name, new logo, but same focus.

Wettenhall funds biodiversity conservation projects all around Australia under its Small Environmental Grants Scheme. This program has the support of donors and other philanthropic organisations.

We also fund landscape restoration in Victoria under a separate grants program that is not open for application.

Our landscape restoration program supports seven projects around the state. We are committed to these projects,

including the JARR Project, some of which have been receiving support for many years.

We give non-financial support to workers and committees with things like governance, training, and grant writing, as well as financial support in the form of grants for capacity, community education and research and monitoring.

Last year we gave a \$30,000 grant to the YYLN to help out the JARR project, making sure a worker can be employed. This grant represents the sixth grant made since 2008.

Our interest lies in supporting the people it takes to keep these projects alive.

We've taken the JARR journey with you, all the way from

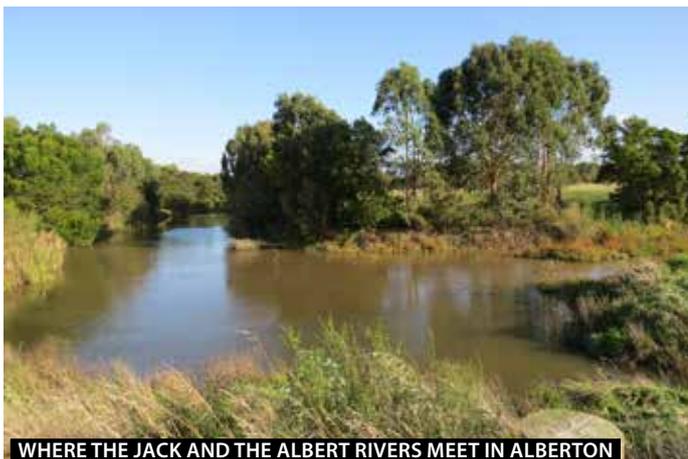


BETH MELLICK ON ONE OF HER MANY VISITS TO THE JARR PROJECT

employee Paul Martin, and are very keen to stay involved wherever possible.

I like to come out on bus tours to visit JARR projects, and I try to come to a meeting now and again and touch base with people," says Beth who is always happy to hear from people about potential projects.

We are happy to look at other projects in the YYLN area that are about flora and fauna conservation. The small biodiversity grants can be about training, education, research, monitoring etc. We are also happy to invest in trials, and new ideas, especially if the outcomes can benefit the JARR project. ■



WHERE THE JACK AND THE ALBERT RIVERS MEET IN ALBERTON



THE LUSH DAIRY-FARMING LAND THAT IS PART OF JARR

CAN YOU SPOT THE BROADLEAF SEAGRASS SPROUTING IN THE HESSIAN SACKS ON THE SEABED FLOOR?

Your local contacts within the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network

ALBERT RIVER LANDCARE GROUP

Contact: Craig Moore
Phone: 0437 357 121
Email: craigmdirect@gmail.com

WOODSIDE LANDCARE GROUP

Contact: Nicki Jennings
Phone: 0429 464 212
Email: pnjjennings@gmail.com

WONYIP LANDCARE GROUP

Contact: John Kosta
Phone: 5681 6286
Email: john.kosta@activ8.net.au

BINGINWARRI LANDCARE GROUP

Contact: John McClumpha
Phone: 5185 1455
Email: jd@incitegraphics.com.au

MERRIMAN CREEK LANDCARE GROUP

Contact: Melissa Ainsworth
Phone: 5146 8328
Email: mel.ainsworth@me.com

WON WRON DEVON NORTH LG

Contact: Yarram Yarram Landcare Network
Phone: 1300 094 262
Email: yyln@wgcm.vic.gov.au

HEDLEY/NINE MILE CREEK LG

Contact: Maree Avery
Phone: 0421 222 242
Email: maree@skymesh.com.au

YARRAM URBAN LANDCARE GROUP

Contact: Peter Hill
Phone: N/A
Email: hilly52@gmail.com

ALBERTON JUNIOR LANDCARE GROUP

Contact: Yarram Yarram Landcare Network
Phone: 1300 094 262
Email: yyln@wgcm.vic.gov.au



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