



# YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NEWS

Vol: 007 WINTER June 2012

## FEATURES

Official Opening of  
The Grand Strzelecki Track

Vale - Charles Meckiff

The Night of the Brandy Bottle



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Cover photo by Melissa Ainsworth



# EVENTS UPDATE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

Newsletter production and design is driven by volunteers on behalf of the Landcare Community. We look forward to your input.

### Editorial Team

Melissa Ainsworth, Helga Binder, Dan Garlick, Samantha Monks and Warren the Wise.

### Contributions

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### Deadlines

All contributions for the Spring edition must be received before 17th August, 2012

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#### YARRAM URBAN LCG MEETING

**When:** June 7th, 6.30pm  
**Where:** YYLN Office, Livingston St Yarram  
**Contact:** Trevor Colvin, 0417 307 098

#### SERRATED TUSSOCK WORKSHOPS

**When:** June 7th - 11am ~ 2pm  
**Where:** Seaspray area  
**When:** June 8th - 12 - 3pm  
**Where:** Stratford area  
**RSVP:** Sam Monks - 51757895 or 0419 371497

#### KOALA NIGHT

**When:** Wednesday 13th June - 6.30pm for a 7pm start  
**Where:** Alberton West Recreation Reserve, Lanes Rd, Alberton West  
**What:** Come along and hear about the unique Strzelecki Koala from guest speakers: Peter Menkhorst, Richard Appleton, Fiona Hogan and Colleen Wood.  
**RSVP:** Samantha Monks by Friday 8th June [samantham@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:samantham@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

#### HEALTHY SOILS FIELD DAY

**When:** Wednesday 21st June - 11am till 2.30pm  
**Where:** David and Joy McAninly's - "Corree" 166 Billy Creek Rd, Staceys Bridge  
**What:** Focus on soil carbon and pH, presenters include: Doug Crawford and Nick Dudley  
**RSVP:** RSVP Samantha Monks by Friday 15th June

#### BINGINWARRI LCG BIODIVERSITY STUDY PROJECT & AGM

**When:** 24th June - 9.30am  
**Where:** Binginwarri Hall  
**What:** Find out about this exciting project followed by a free BBQ lunch

**RSVP:** Kaye on 5185 1398 by Sunday 18 June, for catering purposes please

#### BIRD WATCHING

**When:** Sunday 8th July - 8.30am  
**Where:** Alberton West State Forest (meet at Nth Boundary Tk & Hedley Rd cnr.)  
**What:** Bird Watching morning - Bring Binoculars, repellent, boots, chair & thermos  
**RSVP:** Kaye on 5185 1398

#### DIRECT SEEDER TRAINING DAY

**When:** Wed. 11th July - 10.30am  
**Where:** "Brandonsea", Sth Gippy Hwy, Woodside  
**What:** Learn how to use the Seeder to create your own shelterbelts!  
**RSVP:** Essential for catering purposes, instruction manual & directions by Monday 9th of July to Bronwyn - 51757896 - [bronwynj@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:bronwynj@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

#### BINGINWARRI LCG - INFORMATION DAY

**When:** Sunday 15th July - 10am  
**Where:** Binginwarri Hall  
**What:** Hear John Hick (Trust for Nature) & Kylie Singleton (Land for Wildlife) explain about their organisations followed by a free BBQ (BYO drinks)  
**RSVP:** Kaye on 5185 1398 by Tuesday 9th of July, for catering purposes please

#### MERRIMAN CREEK LCG - AGM

**When:** Sat. 18th August - 11am  
**Where:** Stradbroke Hall, Sth Gippy Hwy, Stradbroke  
**What:** AGM and General Meeting followed by BBQ lunch  
**RSVP:** For catering purposes please! Call Melissa - 51468328

#### BINGINWARRI LCG - BIRD WATCHING MORNING

**When:** Sun. 19th August, 8.30am  
**Where:** May's Bush - meet at 59 Clark's Rd, Devon North  
**What:** Bird Watching followed by a BYO cuppa.  
**RSVP:** Kaye on 5185 1398 - bring Binoculars, chair, thermos & lunch

#### BINGINWARRI LCG - TREE PLANTING DAY & BBQ

**When:** Sun. 19th August, 9.30am  
**Where:** Hedley Range Road, Hedley  
**What:** Tree Planting Day and BBQ  
**RSVP:** Kaye on 5185 1398 by Monday 12th of August, for catering purposes please

#### HEDLEY LCG MEETING

**When:** Wed 22nd Aug, 7.30pm  
**Where:** Hedley Hall, Hedley  
**Contact:** Maree Avery, [maree@skymesh.com.au](mailto:maree@skymesh.com.au)

#### YYLN AGM

**When:** Friday August 31st - 7pm  
**Where:** Club Hotel, Yarram  
**What:** Guest speaker - Dr Tom Rich, Curator of Vertebrate Palaeontology at the Museum Victoria. There is a striking similarity between a fossil site in the Strzelecki Ranges and an incredibly rich fossil field in China that in the past two decades has yielded numerous specimens of feathered dinosaurs. Tom will provide an insight into the pre-historic world of the Strzelecki's and what once roamed in these parts.  
**COST:** \$30.00 a head includes a 3-course meal  
**RSVP:** Dan Garlick, 0400 075 085 or [dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

# The Grand STRZELECKI TRACK

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Melissa Ainsworth

*If you haven't heard of the Grand Strzelecki Track, well, you must be on another planet!*

In June 2010, following a meeting in April of two communities independently working to establish a walking track through the Eastern Strzelecki Ranges, the Grand Strzelecki Track was established and incorporated.

The concept was to link two National Parks, Morwell National Park to the west and Tarra - Bulga National Park to the east. Five catchments lay between, including Mt. Tassie, which at 720 metres above sea level is the highest point in the range.

The Grand Strzelecki Track Committee was fortunate to attract Fire Recovery funding after the devastating bushfires of February 2009. Other financial supporters include the Wellington and Latrobe City Shires, HVP and Bendigo Bank.

*The total length of the track is 110 kilometres and incorporates shorter loop tracks. Two rest areas, each with composting toilets and picnic tables have been strategically built along the route and interpretative signs assist walkers in identifying the many wonders around them.*

The track showcases many vegetation communities that exist in privately managed commercial and native forests and public land. Observation points along the track, such as at Mt. Tassie offer 360 degree views north of the Latrobe Valley and Great Dividing Range, east towards Longford and the Ninety Mile Beach, south to Wilson's Promontory and Corner Inlet and west across the Traralgon Creek and ranges.



OFFICIAL TRACK LAUNCH BY DEPUTY PREMIER, PETER RYAN

The Track is set to become a major iconic feature of Gippsland for the 200,000 people who visit these two National Parks as well as the 190,000 Victorians and 12,000 International tourists who visit our region annually.

**The Track was officially opened at Balook on the 6th of May 2012.** Activities included a free Community Breakfast then a Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country by the Watbalimba Indigenous Dance Group. A free barbeque lunch was also on offer before Deputy Premier, Mr Peter Ryan, officially opened the track.

Many of the hundreds of local folk who attended the opening participated in one of several guided walks along sections of the track initially led by the Sale RSL Pipe Band.

The Grand Strzelecki Track has an up to date web site which provides lots of visitor information regarding track conditions, maps etc. Visit [www.grandstrzeleckitrack.org.au](http://www.grandstrzeleckitrack.org.au)

*The wonders of our "backyard" are now accessible for nature lovers to enjoy and appreciate. The added tourism to our area will soon spread the word that Gippsland, with all of its natural assets, really is the place to live!*



COMMENCEMENT OF THE SMOKING CEREMONY WITH ROD MARKS AND ALAN WILLIAMS OF THE WATBALIMBA DANCE GROUP.



CAMERON AND BROOKE AINSWORTH ON THE WALK TO MT TASSIE



# LOCAL LANDCARE LEGENDS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Melissa Ainsworth

“Tarrawarra” is a truly impressive and unique farm. Owned by Rob and Jenny Davies the property is located at Alberton West, approximately 18 kilometres south west of Yarram. The 140 hectare farm supports a commercial cow and calf operation and has two kilometres of frontage to the Albert River on its northern boundary. The absolute feature of the property is its eight hectare wetland, located in its centre.

In 1976 the Davies’ bought the western part of the property before purchasing the eastern half four years later.

With our former lack of knowledge and appreciation of wetland ecology we have a history of draining wetlands in our past. With the “Tarrawarra” wetland once lying between two former dairy properties it is most likely its physical location that prevented this possible fate.

When the wetland became under the Davies’ ownership in its entirety, it underwent protection works that have transformed it into the wetland sanctuary it is today. Over twenty years ago it was fenced to prevent cattle access. This action saw water quality improve as well as vegetation naturally regenerate. Birdlife has since flourished with a



...continued on next page

# LOCAL LANDCARE LEGENDS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Melissa Ainsworth

...continued from previous page



Pictures left and top: Tarrawarra wetland with Jenny and Bob Davies.

wide range of species present including Pelican, Black Swan, Grebes, Herons, Coots, Ducks and many woodland species. This fencing project not only increased wildlife habitat but has given increased protection for stock.

Back in the 80’s early signs of salinity were observed in an isolated paddock on the western side of the property. The Davies were quick to fence the area and they revegetated it with a mix of salt tolerant plant species.

Swamp Paperbark (*Melaleuca ericifolia*) was one of the first species to naturally regenerate as well as Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa*) and Swamp Gum

(*Eucalyptus ovata*). At the time, “Alcoa” was sponsoring saline affected sites by providing hybrid River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) tubestock, which was also added to the mix.

**Rob and Jenny are active members of the Albert River Landcare Group and have been since it’s inception over twenty five years ago.**

In 1987 the late John Crew organised the author of “*Wildlife in the Home Paddock*”, Roland Breckwoldt, to speak to their Landcare group. Members were inspired by his examples of practical wildlife conservation as part of productive farming and Jenny & Rob saw this as an opportunity to act upon.

They learnt further skills from completing a Whole Farm Planning course.

Since then Jenny has held both President and Secretary positions within the local Landcare group and for many years was on the YYLN Steering Committee. Her profession as a Teacher gave her a particular passion to encourage the YYLN to introduce support for environmental programs in local schools back in the 1990’s. In 2007 Jenny was recognised for her dedicated work to Landcare and the environment by receiving an “Individual Landcare Award” by the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network.

Whilst Rob and Jenny have completed an enormous

and significant project, they recognise that pest plant and pest animal control works are on-going. Removal or controlling Willows along their Albert River frontage is seen by them as being their biggest future challenge.

The Davies acknowledge the support and inspiration of their Landcare community and Government assistance. To date they have held several field days to hopefully inspire others to undertake protection and enhancement projects.

Demonstrating genuine stewardship values we are fortunate to have dedicated members such as the Davies’ family within our Landcare community. ■

By our Landcare Groups

## Binginwarri

The Bingi Group has scheduled lots of activities over the following months which are all open to anyone interested in attending. Activities range from Bird Watching to Tree Planting and lots in between. **Please see the "Events" page to see what is planned and when.**

Our group has been lucky to receive a "25th Anniversary Landcare Grant" with which we will purchase a digital camera and two motion-sensing cameras. This will allow us to record what we see and what we don't! It is all part of a major new project called the **"Binginwarri Landcare Group Biodiversity Study Project"**. Come along on the 24th June to find out more followed by a free BBQ lunch. Please RSVP Kaye on 51851398 by Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of August for catering purposes please. ■

## Woodside

**The Woodside Landcare Group has been deeply saddened by the passing of our President of the last 5 years, Charles Meckiff.**

Charles was a very active Chair and organised many an interesting guest speaker to enhance our meetings. Group members, friends and family attended his funeral in Traralgon in April. The group took a minute of silence at our last meeting to reflect on his long contribution to Landcare and the community. He will be sorely missed. Vice President, Gavin Missen will remain in the Chair until our A.G.M in August. ■

## Albert River

The Albert River Group held its AGM on the 12th April at the home of David & Sue MacAulay. The night commenced with a BBQ followed by the meeting. The election of office bearers was Chaired by Dan Garlick. **Geoff Charman has retained his position as President and David MacAulay retaining his role of Secretary/Treasurer.**

Our group undertook a working bee on Saturday 19th May on the track above the Hiawatha Falls. Despite some early morning showers a small band of intrepid workers arrived. The main tasks to be completed included the replacement of some broken and missing railings on the fence barricade along a fairly steep sided section of track. We also repaired a bridge that had a broken bearer and a missing fence barricade on one side, which has made it quite hazardous to walk on. We also replaced a bridge across a small gully almost at the end of the track.

All the timbers and tools had to be carried in by hand, which was quite a task, some of them being 8" x 3" and 3 metres long, and fairly heavy! Despite it being a little wet under foot and constantly fighting off hundreds of leeches, the railings and first bridge repair have been completed. Whilst all this was going on other members were cutting back vegetation to allow for access.

Despite the discomforts of the weather and the leeches everyone really enjoyed the day, especially the BBQ lunch prepared by David on the back of his ute. All members were



well satisfied with what was achieved on the day!

Another working bee will be undertaken soon in order to complete the last bridge and section of track. ■

## Yarram Urban Landcare Group

**YYLN's newest group, the Yarram Urban Landcare Group will hold their inaugural meeting on Thursday 7th June – everyone welcome.**

At the meeting we will discuss what the group intends to do, find out more about the YYLN and how to become a member. The group already has 8 members and will focus will on the Yarram Community Garden, the Tarra Trail, Indian Myna's, organising guest speakers and helping with any other Landcare groups on-ground projects. To find out more or to become a

member of the group contact Trevor Colvin on 0417 307 098.

## Carrajung Landcare Group

**The Carrajung and District Landcare Group held a farm walk and gawk at Graeme and Wendy Calway's on Sunday 27th May.**

Following the walk, talk and gawk around the Calway's property the group discussed the history of the Landcare group and interest in re-vitalising the group.

Anyone interested in getting involved can contact Dan Garlick on 0400 175 085. ■



## Merriman Creek

**The Merriman Creek LCG is proud to have sponsored an Interpretative sign on the Grand Strzelecki Track.** The sign is located at the

headwaters of Merriman Creek within the Merriman Rainforest section of the track. Members attended the launching of the sign and the recent opening of the track. It is hoped that the sign will serve to promote our group which considers the health of Merriman Creek being one of its primary concerns.

Our recent meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May comprised of a planning session facilitated by Dan Garlick. Together we

discussed our future priorities which included addressing local natural resource management issues, educational and social activities.

Our AGM is scheduled for 11am on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> of August at the Stradbroke Hall. With a BBQ lunch to follow, RSVP's are required please. All welcome.

## Wonyip



**The Wonyip Landcare Group has been working on a weed control and revegetation project on both sides of the Woorarra Rd, just past Turton's Track.** The project comprises of two areas that cover almost 10 hectares of land on the Webb's property and an area bordering

## Hedley Landcare Group



**The Hedley Landcare Group held their first meeting after many years of dormancy at the Hedley Hall on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

Over 15 people attended the meeting which was terrific. The meeting heard from existing members about past works the Hedley Landcare Group has undertaken.

The members are enthusiastic

about the revitalising of the group. The next meeting is scheduled for August 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Hedley Hall to look at works already done and what projects members want to undertake.

If you are interested in finding out more or getting involved contact Maree Avery – [maree@skymesh.com.au](mailto:maree@skymesh.com.au) or Dan Garlick on 0400 175 085. ■

the Spittles' that also includes some HVP land at the northern end.

The sprayed Blackberries are already dying back revealing quite a lot of healthy remnant ground cover. Along with the revegetation works this will

form an extension to the "WWF Quoll Corridor Project", linking it with cores and links land that extends up towards Ruyton Junction.

Dan Garlick assisted us with funding through the "25 Year Anniversary Grant" program.

Andrew Wolstenholme, Natural Resource Planner with the Wellington Shire Council, surveyed the site and was able to secure funding for revegetation of the area, courtesy of the "Environmental Grants Program".

The first stage of revegetation was carried out by Kevin Heggen and an extensive blackberry spraying program by member John Kosta. ■



# FROM THE OFFICE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Dan Garlick



## Dan's Den

### Where do I start?

I have been out and about a lot lately, visiting properties, planning projects, checking out current projects etc... What has struck me is the amount of work that is going on, **not just through YYLN or Landcare Group projects but by individual landholders** who are just getting on with managing weeds, planting trees, fencing off waterways etc... **These people don't make a fuss, receive little or no help or funding but are achieving fantastic outcomes.**

One of the key priorities identified at the recent YYLN Strategic Planning Workshop was the need to establish or revitalise inactive Landcare groups. **Over the last couple of months we have run meetings in Hedley, Carrajung and Yarram and the response has been fantastic.** YYLN newest group has been established - the Yarram Urban Landcare Group and the Hedley and Carrajung groups have been reformed. This is really exciting for the YYLN and we look forward to supporting these groups becoming active.

The YYLN 2012/13 on-ground

works program has received a boost with the notification of a number of successful funding submissions. The new projects include:

**1. JARR Project:** funded through the Communities for Nature Program, this 4-year project will involve protecting, enhancing or connecting remnant vegetation; blackberry control and the establishment of a community fauna/flora monitoring program throughout the JARR area, focussing primarily on endangered/vulnerable EVC's and priority koala habitat

**2. Carbon Action on Ground Project:** funded through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry this project will enable the monitoring of pastures and carbon on the established Gippsland Plains Drought Tolerant Pasture Group trial

sites & also the establishment of 3 new trials aimed at increasing soil carbon.

More detail on these projects will be in the Spring Newsletter.

### Website

The YYLN website has been updated and is a good source of information and details of upcoming events - check out [www.yyln.org.au](http://www.yyln.org.au). Check out the upcoming events - there is a lot happening.

**Until next time, see you around the traps! ■**

Cheers,

Dan

### Subscription/YYLN Membership

A reminder Annual Landcare memberships are now due - either to your local Landcare group or YYLN. YYLN Network Membership is \$15.00. Please contact either your group secretary or Dan Garlick - [dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au) or 0400 175 085 to pay your 12/13 membership.

The National Landcare Awards are on in September and Libby Balderstone is up for the National Primary Producer Award

**GOOD LUCK LIBBY**

### Farm Plan 21 - Whole Farm Planning

Organised by the YYLN and the Department of Primary Industries a Whole Farm Planning Course has commenced in Yarram.

Ten landholders from all over the YYLN area are completing the 6-week course which is accredited through Gippsland Community College.

Participants receive aerial imagery of their property including easy-to-use computer software to help with planning. Topics covered and subsequent plans include: Paddock subdivision and access, Land capability, Pests and weed control, Shelter and animal health and Water supply, dams and water capture.



# FROM THE OFFICE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Dan Garlick

### YYLN Annual BBQ

Yarram Yarram Landcare Network held its 2012 Annual BBQ on Sunday April 15th at Woodside Recreation Reserve.

**Over 70 people came along and enjoyed the sunny day to catch up on all things Landcare.**

The day included three presentations on the Carbon Farming Initiative from: David Griffin, DPI, Policy Manager - Taking the Confusion out of Carbon; Tony Gardner, WGCMA, Healthy Soils - Sustainable Farms - Project Coordinator (pictured) and Kevin Heggen, Bingenwarri Landholder.



The aim of the presentations was to provide landholders with some information on the Carbon Farming Initiative. Those that attended enjoyed



the talks and opportunity to discuss these issues over a BBQ lunch. The presentations highlighted the complexity of the carbon market and the need

for landholders to be extremely cautious when considering participation. ■

## Newsletter Printing Costs

*As you would agree the YYLN Newsletter is a fantastic publication and plays an important communication role in keeping you up to date with upcoming events, activities, projects etc...*

To date, YYLN have been fortunate to receive grants to help cover the costs of printing the newsletter. Fortunately the design and contributions to each newsletter is provided by volunteers and staff - saving considerably on the cost of each edition.

**Unfortunately the grant money only allows YYLN to print one more edition (Spring 2012)** and we are looking for ways to reduce printing costs and raise money to keep the YYLN Newsletter

going in its current format. Therefore we have two requests:

**Fundraising ideas:** The Newsletter Committee thought there might be some enthusiastic, talented people out there that would be interested in organising an annual fundraiser eg. music night at a local hall etc... If so, please get in touch with Dan Garlick - 0400 175 085.

**Email only:** Would you prefer to receive the YYLN Newsletter electronically? If so, please email: [dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

### Circulation

The YYLN NEWS is distributed to all members, supporters and partners of the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network in both hard and electronic version. It is also distributed at field days, workshops, festivals and YYLN events. Around 1000 copies are circulated each edition.

## Spatial Vision Database Competition Results



The individual prize of this Lumix Digital Camera goes to **PAUL FAYOLLE** of Bingenwarri Landcare Group. The group prize goes to the **WONYIP LANDCARE GROUP**, thanks to the endeavours of Werner Lange. **CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH WINNERS.** Please contact Dan Garlick to organise prize collection.

**We would like to streamline our monitoring and recording processes in the JARR area. If you have any suggestions, comments or concerns please email them to Dan Garlick on [dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au)**

ANZ Burford **Direct Seeder Training Day**  
**Learn to use the Seeder and create your own shelterbelts!**  
 Wednesday **July 11th 2012** 10:30am start  
 'Brandonsea', 5th Gippy Hwy Woodside  
**Light lunch provided**  
 RSVP by Monday July 9th for catering, preparation of instruction manuals and site directions.  
 Bronwyn Johnson, Seedbank Officer  
 Ph: 5175 7896 Mobile: 0429 808 130  
[bronwynj@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:bronwynj@wgcm.vic.gov.au)



By Samantha Monks

## Vale Charles Meckiff – Our Landcare Legend

Dan Boland, of Darriman, writes:

**My earliest recollections of Charles were both of us starting school at Darriman State in 1956.** School was conducted in the supper room of the Darriman Hall for first term then we moved into the new school building in second term. There were only about 12 of us at the school, of which only half were boys, so organized games of football and cricket were a bit difficult.

We used to spend quite a lot of time at each other's houses playing war games and the like, where Charles always seemed to be the general and the rest of us mere soldiers. We didn't mind because he had the best strategies so we would always win. Charles' parents, Allan and Joan, were wonderful friends and neighbours and great assets to the district. They loved to include his friends in any activities and I have some very happy memories of those days.

Electricity didn't arrive in our district till 1965 so before that we all had generators. Most had the basic 32 volt ones but the Meckiffs, being great innovators, had a 240 volt one that would run a television. Our family had a standing invitation to come over for Joan's high tea and to watch the last quarter of the VFL match of the day on Saturdays which was the only telecast of footy in those days.

Charles loved his motor sport and was a foundation member of the Latrobe Valley Hill Climb Club. He loved sailing and his family had many happy holidays

*"Charles has been President for the last 4 years. The Group has enjoyed a variety of speakers under his watch. How many Landcare Groups have had a psychologist speak to them on "anger management"? On his farm Charles has fenced out 10 hectares of remnant bush, mainly stringybark, box and various peppermints; 2.5 km of waterways on the Four Mile Creek and Warrigal Creek have been fenced out, 2 km of shelter belts have been put in. They were direct seeded but the poor season produced a bad strike and Charles will seed the area again this year. Charles has a water course on his farm with 40 year old regenerated box – regenerated following clearing and burning in the 1960s but now fenced out."*

**Quote from book Woodside Landcare Group, 1989-2010, 21 Years**



at Loch Sport in their holiday house. He was a very active member of the Loch Sport Boat Club and was instrumental in getting it going. He was a very keen participant in the Marley Point Overnight Yacht Race every March long weekend. He was so keen that on one occasion in the early 70's he entered on a night when the weather was so rough he had to abandon ship and his yacht sank in the middle of Lake Victoria along with a few others.

**Charles was one of the most intelligent, knowledgeable and clever people I have ever known.** His passing is a very sad and premature end to a most productive life and we will all miss him.

Elizabeth Balderstone, of "Warrigal Creek", Darriman, writes:

**I first met Charles in the 70s when I started to be a frequent visitor to Darriman,** and from the beginning I remember his formal manner - his reserved nature, shyness and great politeness.

But I have mainly got to know Charles well the last 10 or so years since we started to lease large parts of his property, and our friendship has grown during that time. His strong sense of self was as a farmer/landholder/primary producer, and he cared for his land - which has been especially evident the last 10 or so years with his involvement

with Landcare - the last six as President of the Woodside Landcare Group, and also a stint on the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network Board.

In the last few years Charles was involved with the Drought Tolerant Pastures group, re-sowing over 30 hectares and participating actively in field days. An additional 2.7 km of fencing under the Mullungdung to Coast Project to protect additional remnant and waterway will be a lasting legacy to Charles' commitment to protecting and enhancing our local environment.

Many of us here shared many great social occasions with Charles over the years including many Christmas lunches and break ups... none of us will forget that special day at Balook last December not long before he became ill.

I miss Charles' calls, and the sight of him driving up our road and stopping for a chat. One always thinks these familiar, routine things will last forever and there is an emptiness looking over at Wedgewood now. I will miss Charles now on his Nuffield tractor till all hours...

**Charles has made a lasting impression on our district, and our local landscape, and our lives.** To quote Samantha Monks, Project Officer with the YYLN, in an email to me, "When I first met Charles, he told me all he wanted to do was retire from the land and go sailing! Maybe he has finally got his dream to come true!" I hope so. ■

Vale Charles.



By Samantha Monks

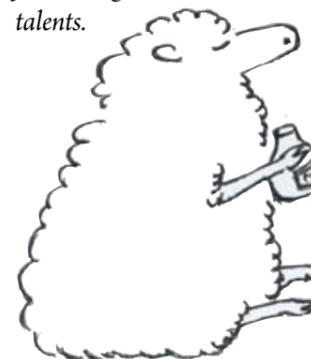
## The Night of the Brandy Bottle



Samantha Monks, YYLN Project Officer

*Although things continue to happen on the project front I thought the space could be better served with this memorial to Charles Meckiff and a lovely story by Trevor Missen. Landcare isn't just about projects and delivery, it is also about the human community in which we live and share.*

*A special thank you to Trevor, for sharing his story of 'The Night of the Brandy Bottle' and the Woodside Landcare Group, Dan Boland and Elizabeth Balderstone for their warm recollections of Charles Meckiff. Thanks also to Coral Rippon and Helga for sharing their artistic talents.*



**A special thank you to Trevor Missen, from Woodside, for sharing this story:**

It was March 1969 when Mother Nature decided to dump six inches of rain on us in 24 hours. We were only three weeks after shearing so the sheep were pretty vulnerable to cold weather.

I concentrated on the stock in the open country by driving them around every 2-3 hours to keep them warm. It was around 5pm when I thought I would check on the shorn lambs on the way home. These sheep had a lot of fern scrub to shelter in so I thought they would be alright. Boy. Was I in for a shock. They were down everywhere. Frozen stiff and barely alive!

I rang the Alberton Shire to get permission to light windrows of timber as the restrictions were still on. I heard the receptionist

burst into tears when I told her the situation. She then put me through to the then Fire Officer, the late Ben Rendell, who proceeded to tell me that I couldn't light any fires and at that point I think I must have sworn at Ben because he said: "Hang on Trev. Settle down."

He asked me if I had a totally enclosed shed - which I did - and told me to cover the floor with hay. He told us to stack the lambs in rows like sardines in a tin. Apparently even a frozen lamb still retains some warmth.

So we proceeded to pick up the frozen lambs and soon had two FC Holden utes piled right up. As an additional source of warmth I decided to go to the Woodside pub and get the biggest bottle of brandy available and I tipped a fair quantity of this into buckets of hot water.

With the long spout of a cattle drenching gun, each lamb copped a dose of this mixture straight into the stomach. They were then stacked into rows, head to head, and covered with loose hay.

At around 10pm, I thought I would have one last look for the night and as I opened the door I was hit with a blast of brandy fumes. On closer inspection a lot of them were sitting up but their heads kept rolling around in circles. I left the door open and went home.

Arriving back next morning, 100 head had got up and were down the paddock grazing. Only four didn't make it.

Throughout her lifetime, Mum would have saved hundreds of lambs with a quarter teaspoon of brandy and a warm up in the woodstove. ■



# PROJECT UPDATE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Samantha Monks

### Protecting the Corner Inlet Coastal Hotspot Program

#### Coastal Saltmarsh Protection Project

Through the Corner Inlet Connections partnership, the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) and YYLN have been working closely with landowners since 2009 to protect coastal saltmarsh in the Nooramunga area. Now approximately 600ha of coastal saltmarsh has been fenced and protected from stock on freehold farm land through the three-year project funded through the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country program.

YYLN on-ground works for the final year of this project are well underway in high priority saltmarsh areas between McLoughlins Beach and Manns Beach. Over four kilometres of fencing is being erected to protect one hundred hectares of coastal saltmarsh from stock. 8000 locally indigenous tube stock will be planted this spring.

#### Erosion Control Program 2011 -'12

On the steep slopes of Hedley Range over 3 kilometres of

fencing has been completed covering more than 9 hectares of actively eroding gully areas. To help stabilise these sites, locally indigenous vegetation will be restored and stock will be excluded. 10,000 tube stock will be planted out in spring.

As the erosion areas are not constrained by property boundaries, neighbouring landholders have worked collaboratively to manage the problem areas. In the long term, this landscape-scale project will improve farm productivity by minimising stock losses in gully areas, providing large shelterbelt areas and improved biodiversity through the reestablishment of vital wildlife corridors. ■

**NOTE: Expressions of Interest are now open for the final year of the Erosion Control Program (2012-'13). Please contact me before July 31<sup>st</sup> if you are interested in participating. For further information please contact: Samantha Monks, YYLN Project Officer - Ph. 0351 757895, Mob. 0419371497 or Email [samantham@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:samantham@wgcm.vic.gov.au)**



EROSION SITE AT HEDLEY RANGE

#### Myrtle Rust Update (Source DPI)

Several myrtle rust detections were made outside the metropolitan Melbourne area in recent weeks – at Ballarat, Shepparton, Tynong North and East Gippsland. As of 11 May, there were 60 detections in Victoria and the disease has recently been found on several additional species.

It is expected that fewer detections will be made during the coming winter months, but there is a potential for the disease to flourish during spring. The focus of the myrtle rust program remains on management and monitoring to minimise its spread and impact.

(For further information including map of sites and 'Affected species' list visit: [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/myrtlerust](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/myrtlerust) ).

Any suspected myrtle rust detection should be reported to DPI by phoning the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881 (toll-free), or emailing photos of the suspect material, together with a contact phone number and the plant's location, to [plant.protection@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:plant.protection@dpi.vic.gov.au) To avoid spreading the disease, samples of suspect plants should not be touched, moved or collected.

#### Gippsland Coastal Plains Gorse Control Program (GCPGCP)

##### – Yarram Landcare Leading the Way

We are almost at the end of our three year Gorse control program. However, there are still limited funding opportunities available for affected landholders around Yarram, Alberton, Port Albert, Tarraville, Woodside, Darriman and Seaspray. Please contact Samantha Monks, YYLN Project Officer - Ph. 0351 757895, Mob. 0419371497 or Email [samantham@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:samantham@wgcm.vic.gov.au) ASAP if you have Gorse or know of any Gorse in our Landcare Network area, or would like assistance or advice in Gorse control.

SALTMARSH AT MCLOUGHLINS BEACH



# PROJECT UPDATE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Bronwyn Johnson

### Mullungdung to Coast Project

**Whilst our project participants have been busily trying to fence out and prepare their revegetation sites, we've been working on developing our workshop program.**

After planting the seeds of Cross Property Biodiversity Conservation Planning in our first workshop in April we are following up with another to cement any ideas that have flowed from the first. We are hoping everyone who attended the first workshop has had a think about their plans and how they link with other biodiversity assets at a landscape scale. Some of you may not have had to alter your plans at all as they already link with other areas of remnant vegetation or your neighbours revegetation activities. Some of you may have been considering changing your priorities to ensure this can happen or have been talking with your neighbours about how together you can make a bigger difference.

There are many benefits to undertaking a multi-property project including increased efficiencies through shared workloads and expenses. Other advantages can exist such as protecting an entire area of remnant vegetation as opposed

to the patch on your land while the remainder slowly degrades. There is also the possibility of neighbouring landholders undertaking 15m wide revegetation on either side of a fence which in turn creates a 30m wide revegetation corridor. Hopefully at the upcoming workshop we will see some of these plans coming to life ready for submission as a potential project in next years funding process.

One local resident in the Mullungdung project area that appreciates the efforts of landholders to protect remnant vegetation and undertake revegetation is the Lace Monitor or Tree Goanna (*Varanus varius*). It is sensitive to gaps in woodlands and forests that are greater than 1km. Whilst it has been known to use vegetated corridors along roadsides and on farmland to disperse and hunt, it is unlikely to use



Bronwyn Johnson, Seedbank and Mullungdung to Coast Project Officer.

corridors less than 20m in width. It requires a home range of at least 60ha, containing hollow bearing trees and logs for shelter and active termite mounds for incubating its eggs. Increasing the size of protected remnants, maintaining hollows, controlling foxes and creating well vegetated corridors will greatly enhance the survival of this vulnerable creature.

This project is being delivered by the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network with support from the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority through

funding from the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country. ■



A fine example of the Lace Monitor

Photo credit: Paul Koch

### Seedbank Report

**A Seeding we will go!**  
*I have a new baby to take care of, but this one happily goes wherever I take it, sits quietly and sleeps all night!*

With GippsLandCare in recess, the Yarram Seedbank has taken over the management of the ANZ Burford Direct Seeder. This particular machine is ideally suited to direct seeding operations on the lighter soils in our district, and as our Network frequently utilises the machine, it makes sense for us to ensure it is properly managed.

Over summer the machine has been fully serviced by the Chair of the Seedbank Committee and Mechanic, Brian Nicholls, and is raring to go for this season. We are taking it out for a spin on July 11th and are inviting anyone interested in learning how to use this simple revegetation aide to join us.

The workshop will be held in Woodside. Since Brian is now intimately familiar with the mechanical and practical operation of the machine he will provide instruction in its correct set up and use. Everyone can have a go at setting up, calibrating and driving the machine

around. There is plenty of room on site to practice (and it's hardly a ploughing competition!). The machine is as easy to operate as a direct drill, with a few adaptations for use with native seed. It is lightweight and can be towed by a ute or tractor.

I will explain how to plan your revegetation project from site selection and preparation to choice of seed mix. Weather permitting we can explore the neighbouring flora reserve to see what a mature patch of vegetation could end up looking like.

The Direct Seeder is available for YYLN members to hire from the Yarram Seedbank for \$30 per day (higher for private contractors). A refundable cash deposit of \$25 is required. To ensure the appropriate use of the machine we will require proof of familiarity with its operation, either a GippsLandCare certificate from a previous workshop or by attending this workshop in July. (Oh, and sighting a driver's licence before I let you tow my baby away!) Bookings are essential. Details of our hire fees, terms and conditions can be obtained from the Yarram Seedbank. ■

**See Page 9 for full Direct Seeder Training Day details.**



# PROFILE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

### Board Member - Trevor Colvin



Trevor left a small country town to gain an Advertising diploma at RMIT and work in the Melbourne advertising agency industry. He also studied photography at RMIT.

He joined 'The Age' newspaper, moving up the corporate ladder and then spent five years based in Hong Kong taking over an Asia-

wide English-language magazine publishing operation owned by 'The Age'. Inheriting one monthly magazine and one annual directory, he built the division to nine titles. Trevor also spent a lot of time in China, working directly with the Chinese Government, to set up that country's first ever English-language national daily newspaper.

Returning to Australia, he moved into senior positions, but after thirty years, had tired of the corporate world. Susie and Trevor started a business that failed dismally and then started a publishing software business from home and the products they produced are now in

all the major US and Canadian daily papers and throughout Australia and New Zealand, beating back similar systems from much larger and well-established software publishing houses in Europe and the US. Trevor sees this as a classic David and Goliath process where his first-hand extensive knowledge of the newspaper publishing industry allowed them to develop superior systems, beating all contenders.

Trevor and Susie formed the Wonyip Landcare Group in 2007 with the purpose of providing habitat for the endangered Tiger Quoll and obtaining funding from the WWF, the group

executed a three-year extensive corridor program, mainly through HVP Plantations holdings. Trevor was the instigator for the first-ever Landcare Expo in Melbourne which was held at Caulfield Racecourse in 2009 and which has now become part of the annual Sustainable Living Festival.

Just recently Trevor formed the Yarram Urban Landcare Group and is also keen to extend the Quoll corridors from Wonyip to Wilson's Promontory and is working with SGLN and YYLN to have this occur.

He is also involved in community work, being a Director of 'Gro' Strengthening

Community Inc., a Yarram based 'not for profit' organisation and was founder of the 'Blokes & Banter' group which performs work for YYLN on occasion.

Trevor is delighted that he doesn't spend half his life on aeroplanes and living out of a suitcase any more and can focus on their local consulting business. Susie and Trevor are also developing a new internet based support business for home-based entrepreneurs, which promises to be a world first.

They now live near Yarram. Trevor joined the YYLN Board in 2010 and is active on a number of committees. ■

## Warren the Wise



Dear Warren, Last Sunday I attended the opening of the Grand Strzelecki Track. During the day I came across a patch of awesome mushrooms! I was wondering if you could identify them. Keen Photographer.

Dear Keen Photographer, The Fly Agaric or Amanita muscaria - that beautiful



on one another) with the roots of all these trees, forming a mutually beneficial relationship.

Fly Agaric is neither a plant nor an animal. Like all fungi it lives in its own kingdom. Fungi rely on other living or dead plants, other fungi or animals, for their nutrient needs which they take up through hyphae - a network of threadlike roots. They cannot produce food through

photosynthesis, as other plants do. The attractive part of the fungus we see above ground is the fruiting body. It lasts perhaps a few days, much like a peach on a tree - when the peach dies or is picked, the tree lives on. The same goes for the fungi. The fruiting body disappears but the roots (hyphae or mycelium) live on - from a few weeks to hundreds of years, whilst some may be up to thousands of years old!

They are also used by about five orders of flies and some beetles as feeding and breeding sites. Humans have used them as not only a fly-attraction but as an insecticidal-killing agent, which is where it gets its common name from.

Whilst it is known to be hallucinogenic and highly toxic some traditional cultures ate this fungi. It seems they knew the way to avoid its deadly properties.

As wise as I am, I don't know the secret! So be warned.... no matter what you heard, don't try Fly Agaric! ■

*Warren the Wise*

#### Editor's Note:

Warren the Wise is at risk of becoming Warren the Smarty Pants... see if you can catch him out with a really hard question. He can be contacted through the YYLN Publication Committee.

# PARTNER ACTIVITY

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Bruce Atkin, Coastcare Victoria's South Gippsland Facilitator

## Coastal Ecology and Management Workshop



In late April nearly fifty Gippsland volunteer Landcarers and Coastcarers including YYLN's Melissa Ainsworth and Helga Binder, participated in the annual Coastal Ecology and Management workshop. This year the venue was the Cape Paterson Surf Life Saving Club, with its spectacular view over Bass Strait.

Regular presenter, Parks Victoria's Mark Rodrigue, set the scene with an overview of Victoria's Marine and Coastal life and the factors that have contributed to its evolution. Internationally famous coastal Geomorphologist Neville Rosengren gave an overview

NEVILLE ROSENGREN SHARES HIS KNOWLEDGE WITH AN ENTRANCED AUDIENCE



of the factors that have shaped Victoria's coastline. Other speakers presented on revegetation projects, coastal weed control, rivers and riparian zones and coastal wildlife - topics all chosen for

their relevance to the work of volunteers.

These presentations were enhanced by excursions to look at the real world - the geology of the neighbouring coast, revegetation and weed control,

and volunteer monitoring of marine life on the rock platform at the base of the Cape Paterson cliffs.

Workshops like this are designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of the people who contribute so much voluntary time to the management of our coasts and are also a way of saying thank you for their hard work. You might wonder why this is relevant to Landcare; the answer is that everything we do in the catchments can have an effect on the big sink at the lower end of our streams.

The date and venue for next year's event will be announced later this year.

For further information contact Coastcare facilitator Bruce Atkin at DSE on 5183 9116. ■



MARK RODRIGUE EDUCATES PARTICIPANTS IN THE ROLE OF MARINE MONITORING

# Yarram Yarram Landcare Network AGM

Friday August 31st – 7pm, Club Hotel, Yarram

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

*There is a striking similarity between a fossil site in the Strzelecki Ranges and an incredibly rich fossil field in China that in the past two decades has yielded numerous specimens of feathered dinosaurs.*

**Our guest speaker, Dr Tom Rich, Curator of Vertebrate Palaeontology at the Museum Victoria will provide an insight into the pre-historic world of the Strzelecki's and what once roamed in these parts.**

COST: \$30.00 a head includes a 3-course meal RSVP: Dan Garlick, 0400 075 085 or [dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

## Contacts for Individual Active Landcare Groups

### Albert River Landcare Group

Contact: Geoff Charman  
Telephone: 5184 1117  
Email: [geoffc@wideband.net.au](mailto:geoffc@wideband.net.au)

### Carrajung and District LG

Contact: Dan Garlick  
Telephone: 0400 175 085 or 5175 7893  
Email: [dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:dang@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

### Woodside Landcare Group

Contact: Bronwyn Johnston  
Telephone: 5187 1087  
Email: [ajdoyle@keypoint.com.au](mailto:ajdoyle@keypoint.com.au)

### Wonyip Landcare Group

Contact: Werner Lange  
Telephone: 0418 302575  
Email: [longiewl@optusnet.com.au](mailto:longiewl@optusnet.com.au)

### Binginwarri Landcare Group

Contact: Kaye Proudley  
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Email: [katbingi@harboursat.com.au](mailto:katbingi@harboursat.com.au)

### Merriman Creek Landcare Group

Contact: Melissa Ainsworth  
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Email: [ainsworths@activ8.net.au](mailto:ainsworths@activ8.net.au)

### Won Wron Devon North LG

Contact: Bill Bodman  
Telephone: 5189 1243  
Email: [bjbodman@wideband.net.au](mailto:bjbodman@wideband.net.au)

### Hedley/Nine Mile Creek LG

Contact: Maree Avery  
Telephone: 0421 222 242  
Email: [maree@skymesh.com.au](mailto:maree@skymesh.com.au)

### Yarram Urban Landcare Group

Contact: Dan Garlick  
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