



# YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NEWS

Vol: 013 SUMMER 2013

## FEATURES

Project Planning  
Bird Monitoring  
Fire Planning



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# 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, Sally-Ann Henderson, Samantha Monks, Dina Monks and Warren the Wise.

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### Deadlines

All contributions for the Autumn edition must be received before Feb 14, 2014

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### Cover photo

Thanks to Alan Henderson for the stunning Christmas Beetle.

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### SNAKE SAFETY & AWARENESS WORKSHOP

**When:** 10 - 12am, December 9  
**Where:** DPI Offices, Bairnsdale  
**RSVP:** By December 5 - 51520680

### XMAS DINNER

Woodside Landcare Group  
**When:** December 7 at 7pm  
**Where:** WildFish, Port Albert - \$35 p/p  
**RSVP:** Kay on 51871270 by December 3  
**All Welcome!**

### XMAS BBQ

Binginwarri Landcare Group  
**When:** Dec. 15 at 12 noon  
**Where:** Binginwarri Hall  
**RSVP:** Kaye on 51851398 by December 10  
**All Welcome!**

### NEW YEAR'S EVE BASH

**When:** 6pm December 31  
**Where:** Wonyip Hall  
**RSVP:** John Kosta 5681 6286  
**All Welcome!**

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wonyip Landcare Group  
**When:** February 16  
**Where:** Wonyip Hall  
**RSVP:** John Kosta 5681 6286

### GENERAL MEETING

Woodside Landcare Group  
**When:** Feb 26, 2014 at 8pm  
**Where:** Woodside Hall

## Christmas Beetles - where are you?

By Melissa Ainsworth

Do you remember seeing Christmas Beetles buzzing around street lights and windows on certain summer evenings? They came in all sorts of colours from iridescent green, yellow-green to a bronzy pink shade. Perhaps my memory is failing me but I can't remember the last time I saw one!



Christmas Beetles are a type of scarab that belong to the *Anoplognathus* genus which includes dung beetles and chafers. Quite a large beetle (from 20-30mm in size), there are 36 species in the genus with all but one endemic to Australia.

Preferring open woodlands to forests adult Christmas beetles feed on eucalyptus leaves while the larvae feed on roots, usually grasses. Adults feeding in swarms can defoliate trees in a very short time making the

tree/s susceptible to dieback. Trees can also be killed if defoliation is repeated over several seasons.

Christmas beetles pupate from late spring to early summer in chambers near the soil surface. Rain helps moisten the soil to allow for beetles to dig their way out.

In drought periods beetles can perish in the soil whilst waiting for rains. Often spring rains can activate a mass emergence of adult beetles.

I wonder if the decline of native grasslands or maybe climate change is related to not seeing Christmas beetles in the large swarms that I recall as a child? ■



# FROM THE OFFICE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Sally-Ann Henderson



## Sally-Ann Says:

Hello and welcome to our summer newsletter. The theme for this edition's newsletter is all about planning for the future.

The approaching holiday season is an ideal time to consider future Landcare projects. The family comes together and it is a great time to include everyone's ideas in your discussions. Hopefully the tips in this

newsletter will assist you! You may determine the need for **shade and shelterbelts**. How about looking at areas that need **erosion control** works? This might be water channels that need protection, landslip areas which need stabilisation or simply slowing down the water so it has less energy by the time it gets to the problem area.

**Weed control** is one of those things where "the stitch in time, saves nine", truly applies. Why not plan a strategy for how to get on top of them? Start up-stream and work your way down or hit a smaller patch so you can revel in your success and be inspired to get to the next patch.

**Trees need to be ordered up to 12 months in advance** to allow for seed collection and growing by the nursery to a size suitable for planting out. It is very rare that you can just ring around and get the trees you need. Think about what you want and

order them now for planting in spring and autumn.

Just as you need to make plans for your property it is also essential for your Landcare group to make plans for works you would like to undertake. Regularly I get approached and asked "We want do this or that, what money is available to help us?" Unfortunately the days of us having a stockpile of cash to help support projects, no matter how worthy they are, is long over, if it ever existed.

All our money is linked to specific projects with clear aims, objects and geographical boundaries. The projects are the result of many hours of discussion and planning and working out the details. When funding grant opportunities are released it is vital that I know what sorts of things your group wants to achieve. That way I can make the connections and try to work with you to develop a project that fits the needs

of the group and the funder. **Have you ever wondered why some groups/areas, get all the funding?**

If your group undertakes a "brainstorming or wish-list" session, you can devise some clear plans and objectives ready to be tweaked to fit into a future funding grant. I am only too happy to assist you and your group as required.

Enjoy reading your newsletter and good luck with your future project plans!

Wishing you a Merry Christmas,.

P.S. I will be on holidays for all of February however the office will carry on much as normal. ■



## Indigenous beauty

By Melissa Ainsworth

The Cherry Ballart or Wild Cherry tree *Exocarpos cupressiformis* is an indigenous partly parasitic (hemiparasitic) tree which feeds on the roots of nearby plants.

The fruit is/was eaten by Aboriginals and many native birds such as silvereyes, mistletoe birds and parrots.

It flowers from December to May but the fruit that you see in this photo is visible from July to November before it hardens and changes colour from green to red.

The seed (the green bit at the end) is carried on the outside of the fruit, hence the name: exo (outside) carpus (fruit).

The structure of the tree is similar in appearance to a cypress but it belongs to the sandalwood family of plants and its foliage is toxic to stock. For this reason it has been largely removed from farmland and only exists in small pockets of remnant vegetation.

It is especially hard to propagate the Cherry Ballart due to its hemiparasitic growth. ■



# FIRE PLANNING

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

An extract from information supplied by the CFA

*There's so many things we need to know and do when it comes to bush and grass fire safety – it's easy to become overwhelmed.*

But because **Victoria is one of the most fire-prone regions in the world**, it's important to take heed of the key messages put out by the CFA and plan for what you are going to do as we come into the fire season.

**This season's biggest risk is grassfire.**

It's been wet and it will be a warm summer, meaning lots of vegetation growth and lots of fuel for fire, particularly grass fires. It only takes two weeks of hot, dry and windy weather to create dangerous fire conditions.

**Make sure you know what fire weather district you're in.** The YYLN area is in the "West and South Gippsland" region (District 10). Check the Fire Danger Rating and Total Fire Ban status for the district every day over summer. **Download the FireReady app** to your smart

phone so you can check for warnings and alerts any time, any place you have coverage.

**Fire Danger Ratings tell you how dangerous a fire would be if one started** – the higher the rating, the more dangerous the conditions. A Code Red Fire Danger Rating (a classification introduced since Black Saturday) is very rare and extremely serious. There has never been a Code Red issued for our region.

**Attend any CFA function, meeting or event that will help you plan for this summer.** Remember that there are a limited number of fire trucks and you can't rely on them being on your doorstep when fire threatens.

**Clean up your property:** trim trees; slash long grass and clear dead leaves from gutters, verandas and around your buildings. If you would like a free assessment of your property for fire risk call Rachel Allen from the Home Bushfire Advice Service on 0400 969 382.

**Talk to everyone you live with and your neighbours about your plans** so you all know what you'll do on a hot, dry, windy day. Write it down. It will

be easier to remember in the heat of the moment. The best way to stay safe is to leave the night before or on the morning of a Code Red day, or early in the morning on an Extreme or Severe day. Leaving early means just that, not when you can see smoke or flames.

Do you have family, friends or neighbours who might need your help leaving early before a bushfire? Don't put them at risk – decide what to do in advance.

**Pack an emergency kit with important documents, photos, medications, money and clothes** so you're ready to leave early. Hold a family fire drill and practise leaving so everyone knows what roles they have. Plan multiple escape routes to take into account where the fire(s) may be. Plan for all scenarios – what will you do if your car won't start, the wind changes direction, roads are blocked, someone is hurt or people aren't where you expect them to be?

Defending your home requires at least two fit and determined adults, at least 10,000 litres of water, protective clothing, and appropriate fire-fighting hoses

and pumps. Most homes in high-risk bushfire areas are not defensible on Code Red days. Your power may be the first thing that goes. Make sure you have alternative lighting – such as torches – handy, as well as a battery powered or wind-up radio so you can stay informed. Decide in advance what you'll do with your pets and livestock – people die during fires trying to save their animals.

**Don't rely on getting a warning** – it's your responsibility to know when to leave so stay aware of your surroundings over summer. For example, check for smoke in the air and listen for sirens. In strong winds, embers can travel up to 35 kilometres in front of a fire, starting new fires.

Remember that fires can happen when you are on holidays too. Know the fire weather districts you travel through and check for warnings.

**Check out CFA's website** – [cfa.vic.gov.au](http://cfa.vic.gov.au) – or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 for more information on how to stay safe this summer. **Call triple zero (000) to report a fire.** ■



# BIRD MONITORING

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Dallas Wyatt - Bird Monitoring Program coordinator and participating landholder

## Hedley/Nine Mile Creek Restoration Project- Bird Monitoring Program

Research by Birdlife Australia ([www.birdlife.org.au](http://www.birdlife.org.au)) has shown that bird populations are an indicator of the environmental health of any habitat.

A location that has a high diversity of bird species present will generally be associated with an environment that has a high diversity of plant species, reptiles, frogs and insects present, that is, the location has high biodiversity. Hence bird surveys are considered a reliable method of monitoring for changes in biodiversity.

Changes in the composition of the bird population at a particular site where, for example, onground works have been completed, can be compared to the baseline bird population for that site, over time.

The Hedley/ Nine Mile Creek Restoration Project consisted of

conservation works on the Nine Mile Creek. One property on the Hedley Range fenced and revegetated with 4000 tubestock that are similar species to the original Riparian Forest/Warm Temperate Rainforest mosaic EVC. Another property on the coast that has remnant healthy

woodland native vegetation is being enhanced through fencing to exclude stock and allow natural regeneration to occur.

Environmental stewardship programs such as the Hedley/Nine Mile Creek Restoration Project have been undertaken throughout the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network for many years, but little analysis has been done to determine if there are real benefits to our local flora and fauna. Monitoring of sites to determine if there are biodiversity benefits occurring due to the conservation works being carried out is required. This is being addressed through part of the Hedley/Nine Mile Creek Restoration

Project funding being used to establish a bird monitoring program (BMP) where regular bird surveys will be completed.

The Hedley/Nine Mile Creek Restoration Project Bird Monitoring Program commenced in April 2013 with the objective of establishing a baseline of data for the birds present at eight sites. The BMP will continue for the next two years

with bird surveys being completed at least seasonally. Some sites along the Nine Mile Creek have been surveyed regularly prior to April 2013 and this data will be included. The two properties involved in the BMP each have four sites being surveyed -

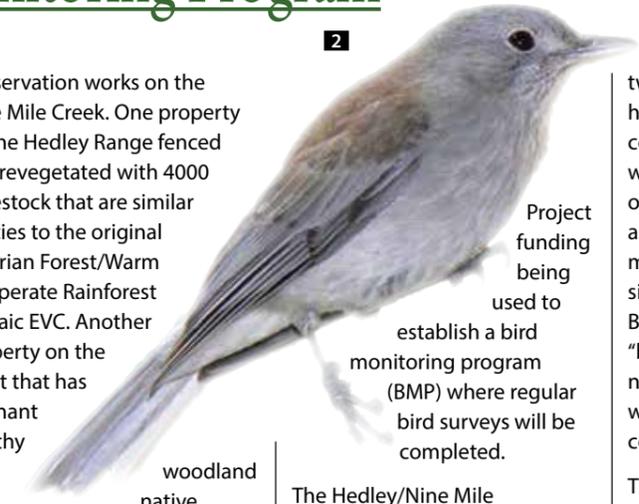
two sites having had conservation works completed on them, another site to be a control (no change to its management), and the fourth site is a benchmark site. Benchmark sites contain the "best" example of remnant native vegetation in the area with a similar EVC to the conservation work sites.

The survey method being used is the 20 minute 2 ha area search. The observer records the species present (species richness) and the number of individual birds for each species (abundance) during each survey.

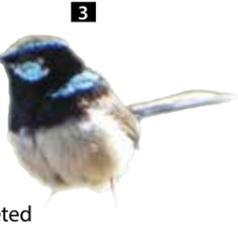
Birdlife Australia considers this the best method for woodland bird surveys as it is a repeatable survey over a set time within a defined area. The field data is then transferred onto Microsoft Excel spreadsheets after each survey. Each site will have its own spreadsheet that summarises the bird species present and their abundance. The first year of bird population survey data will be completed during the summer season. An interim report for the BMP will appear in the next issue. ■



1



2



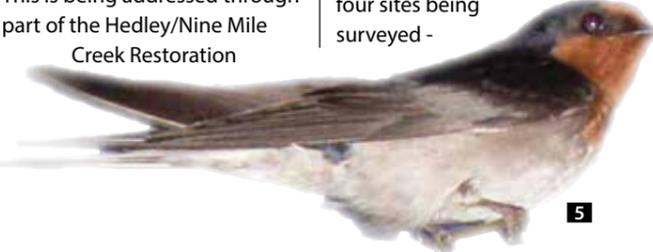
3



4



6



5

### BIRDS ON THIS PAGE:

1. Rufous Fantail
2. Grey Shrike Thrush
3. Blue Wren
4. Silvereye
5. Welcome Swallow
6. Red-browed Firetail.



# AROUND THE TRAPS

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By our Landcare Groups

### Hedley / Nine Mile Creek

A delightful day was held at Joan and Gary Wallis's Hedley property on October 27th. The weather was perfect, the rain finally stopped, a gentle breeze was present and there were no dreaded insects. Sally-Ann took a quick course in four wheel driving from her back seat drivers and the view to the Prom was magnificent. The wildlife was abundant with kangaroos bounding along the shoreline and the "twitchers" were kept busy identifying our feathered friends, with up to 40 identified.

Joan and Gary gave a short history of Landcare improvements and achievements with healthy shelter belts planted in 2006 and the importance of a covenant on the fragile coastal land. All in all everyone enjoyed themselves.

A big thank you to Joan and Gary for sharing their Landcare story with us. ■



**HEDLEY TREE PLANTING 2005 - 2006**

### Woodside

Members gathered on October 16<sup>th</sup> for our regular bi-monthly meeting and were treated to a very informative talk by our guest speaker Mr Andy Booth. Andy was representing the Gippsland Plains Conservation Management Network and spoke on his desire to improve local Redgum vegetation and Peregrine falcon habitat. All members were very interested in what Andy had to say and we are very grateful that he took the time to visit us.

After some discussion we have set our annual Christmas function to be held December 7<sup>th</sup> at WildFish in Port Albert. A wonderful time was had by all last Christmas at the same venue and we fully expect this year will not fail to please again. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to anyone who would like to attend and be part of our very social group which is sure to be a barrel of laughs!! Please RSVP Kay Belcher on 51871270 by December 3.

Our next regular meeting will be on February 26, 2014. ■

### Merriman Creek

It was unfortunate that our Christmas get-together was postponed due to forecast inclement weather, especially when the day turned out to be fine! A new date will be set soon.

Members have been busy with individual weed control and revegetation projects as well as doing preparation work for the upcoming fire season.

Our group has been successful in getting approval from VicRoads to have the Stradbroke wayside stop maintained. The site is very well frequented and without regular mowing we have observed rubbish being dumped in the long grass. Future works will hopefully eliminate this problem as well as enhancing the general appearance of the district centre. ■



### Albert River

**Albert River Landcare Group is greatly saddened at the passing of their President Geoff Charman on November 16. Our deepest sympathies go to Pam and his family. ■**

### Yarram Urban

Yarram Urban are thrilled that they successfully gained a \$5,000 grant for initial restoration of the Yarram Botanic Gardens, courtesy of the Wellington Shire Council Community Grant Funding Process. The project will involve the wider Yarram community and is precisely the type of project an urban Landcare group should be spearheading. It will involve people of all ages from outside Landcare and will do a lot to spread the Landcare message and help Landcare grow. See story on page 9 of this Newsletter. ■

# AROUND THE TRAPS

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By our Landcare Groups

### Wonyip

The Wonyip Landcare Group was proud to participate in a field day at the Webb's farm in Wonyip. It was organised by the Binginwarri Landcare Group and had a great turnout of around 30 people. Melissa and Peter Webb gave presentations on the property's history and conservation activities. This was followed by information on Trust for Nature presented by John Hick and on Land for Wildlife, by Kylie Singleton. John and Kylie led two interesting hikes through the 82 hectare property, discussing flora and fauna along the way. An extraordinarily good barbecue followed rounding off an interesting and inspiring day. Those Bingi Landcare folk sure know how to put on a great event.

WLG president John Kosta has been active in the Blackberry Task Force investigating organic herbicides with reduced environmental impact. We are all concerned about "collateral damage" caused by traditional herbicides and a safer alternative would be welcome. ■

*As seen by the photos on this page, Bingi and Wonyip certainly know how to put on a bash. The Land for Wildlife/Trust for Nature day had excellent presentations, fabulous food and a riveting guided tour of the Webb property.*



### Binginwarri

The Bingi Group was proud to have run a successful day for the Land for Wildlife and Trust for Nature agencies - and to further the cause of looking after our land and animals. We'd especially like to thank our speakers - John travelling down from near Melbourne and Kylie from Traralgon; the Webb and Williams families for providing such a spectacular 'barn' for our venue - historic and beautiful as it was, as well as the talk, with slides, on their property's history - most interesting, and for letting us appreciate their lovely views. Thanks as well to all the people who attended for their interest, we hope you enjoyed it and learnt something on the day. Lastly, may I thank our Bingi members for their hard work and dedication to the cause - you excelled yourselves!

As a result of the day, it looks like one new Trust for Nature property may have been signed up and at least one Land for Wildlife property has been declared. Our congratulations to the people concerned. ■





By Trevor Colvin – Yarram Urban LCG

## Council provides \$5,000 for Yarram Botanic Gardens

*If you don't know where the Yarram Botanic Gardens are you are certainly not alone. A straw poll by the Yarram Urban Landcare group some months ago found that most people didn't know about the gardens and many of those who did, had no idea where they are.*

The gardens were formed as part of Australia's bi-centennial celebrations in 1988 and the Nightingale Society members have been keeping an eye on them ever since.

Yarram Urban Landcare Group is thrilled that \$5,000 of Community Grant Funding is on its way to the group from Wellington Council. "This is terrific news," said Trevor Colvin, "Because it allows us to do work immediately on restoring

and improving the gardens and making them available to the public." Yarram Urban members Sally-Ann Henderson and Trevor Colvin put together an application for the funds in double-quick time against a tight deadline and were successful.

Yarram Urban want to make this project a true community exercise and have secured involvement from Mirridong Services and the schools. Members are working to involve the Yarram Garden Club, Yarram SES, the 4WD Club, the Blokes & Banter Group, the Men's Shed, Scouts & Guides and the service clubs.

A public meeting will be held in February to bring all the groups together and to start the initial cleanup restoration process, which will also involve some fun, with music in the gardens, BBQ's and so on planned.

\$5,000 will be used fairly quickly, but will provide the removal of dangerous old trees, pest plants, restoration of paths,



signage, seats, entrance gates and similar. More funds will be needed at a later date, but the money provided by Wellington Shire Council is a terrific start.

So where are these mysterious gardens? Right next to the Nightingale Retirement Home

on the north side of the road as you head out of town toward Sale. They are close to Mirridong, The Hospital and Medical Centre and will provide a terrific environment for anyone down that end of town. ■

## Mirradong goes on an environmental adventure

*Today we went to White Woman's Waterhole in Won Wron. We went for a walk and we took photos. There were people camping, and we saw birds. We went for a walk around the waterhole. It was my first time there and I felt great in the Australian bush.*

By Deb.

*Won Wron, White Woman's Waterhole. We went for a walk around the waterhole, the reflections on the water were beautiful. It looks as if there were fish in it as bubbles were coming to the surface. There were a lot of people camping near the waterhole. They looked like they were enjoying themselves as they had fires going in special places. They*

*had their water boiling to make a cup of tea and they were seated around the fire eating as well.*

*We saw some lovely purple orchids out in flower also some little white flowers in a cluster. I saw my Gunn Clan Flower, the "Scottish Thistle". It was lovely to see it with a purple flower on top. I felt*

*it was lovely and soft. We saw a common rice flower, tall sedge, the musk daisy bush and flax lily. We saw a beautiful red parrot eating seeds in the tree just near us. It wasn't a bit frightened. Some of the people were packing up to leave when we were leaving to go back to Mirridong.*

By Mary. ■

## Warren the Wise



Dear Warren,

After reading the JARR brochures most carefully and appreciating all the information and beautiful photos, I got to wondering what your Latin name means. Can you please explain?

**Puzzled Yarramite**

**Dear Puzzled Yarramite,**

Good question for a Wombat!

It is a name given to me by man to distinguish me from every other animal on earth... that only I, and members of my family, carry this strange name - *Vombatus ursinus*.

*Vombatus* is simply the Latinised English version of Wombat. Man got it slightly wrong when he gave me my second name *ursinus* though as that name means 'uncommon bear', which they must have thought I resembled but am most clearly not!

Speaking of cheeky and funny names - some scientists and taxonomists have unusual senses of humour: did you know that two new Indonesian lobsters were named *Uroptychus*

*cyrano* and *U. pinocchio* for their long noses?

Someone was clearly dazzled by an Indonesian octopus when they called it *Wunderpus photogenicus*.

There is even a horsefly named after Beyonce because of its golden bottom!

Lastly, there was a clam with the marvellous name of *Abra cadabra* until some spoil-sport shifted it into another genus and is now called *Theora cadabra* - it somehow has lost the magic don't you think?

If you'd like to look up some more funny Latin names, one of my friends at the newsletter office has told me about this link (which of course, being a wombat, I cannot look up as I don't have electricity or even a computer!) <http://www.curioustaxonomy.net/puns/puns.html>

A question for you Puzzled Yarramite...are you any relation to Vegemite? ■

Warren the Wise

The Yarram Courthouse Gallery invites you to attend  
**OUR NATIVE PLANTS ILLUSTRATED**



A competition & exhibition to illustrate the indigenous flora of Gippsland.

**27 FEB – 25 MARCH 2014**

**Opening night, February 28, 2014**

Proudly Sponsored by  
Hedley Range Services



YARRAM YARRAM  
LANDCARE NETWORK



Illustration of Yellow stringybark and Clematis by Lyn Hughes



# PROJECT UPDATE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Samantha Monks



Samantha Monks, YYLN Project Officer

### Action on the Ground (AotG) – Gippsland plains soil carbon trials – productivity & climate change responses

In early November, over 100 people gathered at Dutson Downs for the Grand Opening of Gibson's Revive Recycled Compost. Farmers participating in YYLN's AotG project, along with other local Landcare members were invited to Dutson Downs to tour the facility and learn more about the recycled compost produced at Gippsland Water's Soil and Organic Recycling Facility (SORF). This product is being used at an AotG soil carbon trial at Stradbroke.

### Communities for Nature Grant: Round 1 - Jack and Albert River Restoration (JARR) Project

#### Blackberry Suppression Works - JARR Catchment:

#### Long term management planning pays off!

Blackberry is a highly invasive and aggressive noxious weed that has huge environmental and economic impacts threatening both agricultural and natural assets. In Australia, it is a declared "Weed of National Significance" (WoNS). In West Gippsland it is classed as a "Regionally Controlled Weed" (RCW), meaning it is widespread and requires continual control

measures. In Victoria, under the Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP) Act, landholders have a legal responsibility, "to take all reasonable steps to prevent the growth and spread of Regionally Controlled Weeds on their land". (Declared Noxious Weeds - DPI, Feb 2011)

The first recorded plantings of blackberry in Australia was during the 1830's. They were highly valued for fruit, stream stabilisation and as botanical exhibits. By 1894 blackberry was declared a noxious weed in Victoria.

The high rainfall and humidity of the Strzelecki and Otway Ranges provide the perfect environment for blackberry to flourish. For many decades concerned communities across

the ranges have attempted to control blackberry with little or no success. Today, large areas have been completely inundated by this aggressive invader.

Blackberry control can be physically and mentally challenging especially when the infestations are so large you don't know where to start. Capable of infesting large areas in a short time, blackberry control needs careful long term planning to be successful. Very steep terrain and limited access is a major inhibiting factor for blackberry control as well as a range of socio-economic factors.

In 2009 Yarram Yarram Landcare Network in close consultation with local community members

*continued on next page...*



WINDROW TURNER DEMONSTRATION



DON BELCHER, ED BRAND AND GAVIN MISSEN TOUR SORF



TONY MCNEILLY, SPIN, DAN BOLAND AND JACK WITH THE WINDROW TURNER

# PROJECT UPDATE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



*...continued from previous page*

developed a 2-year blackberry Suppression Program aimed at reducing the overall biomass of blackberry in high priority reaches of the Jack and Albert Catchment. The WGCMA supported this program through Federal Government funding via a four year CFCO project, "Protecting the Corner Inlet Ramsar Site and Coastal Hotspot".

In 2012, YYLN was successful in gaining further funding to support its Blackberry Suppression Works through the DEPI's 'Communities for Nature Program.' This four-year project has a large focus on removing blackberry from remnant vegetation to allow koala movement. In total we have now received 6 years of funding to assist our efforts in reducing local blackberry infestations from the JARR catchment.

Long term management planning is essential in controlling blackberry. This can be done at an individual landholder level, with neighbours or as a community group:

- Map/identify distribution of blackberry infestations
- Determine high priority areas for management
- What commitment will you make to blackberry control?
- Develop a long term integrated management plan. Set realistic and achievable goals
- What control methods will be used? E.g. hand and/or mechanical removal, chemical and biological control
- Make blackberry management a financially viable part of your whole



AGGRESSIVE BLACKBERRY INFESTATION IN JARR AREA



BLACKBERRY RUST - BIOLOGICAL CONTROL

farm/property plan.

Ongoing follow-up is an essential factor in any blackberry control plan

**Note: A community-led blackberry control program is most effective because it involves everyone working together across a specific target area enabling blackberry to be managed more effectively over time.**

**Weed Facts: Blackberry *Rubus fruticosus* spp. agg.**

**Status:** Weed of National Significance / Regionally

controlled (West Gippsland) / noxious

**Family:** Rosaceae

**Background:** A highly aggressive invader, originating from Europe. Widespread across Australia it grows in most habitats. It thrives in high rainfall areas above 700mm, forming dense thickets, eliminating other vegetation. In Australia, at least 15 related taxa of blackberry occur. As a group they can be referred as *Rubus fruticosus* species aggregate. The Strzelecki Ranges are particularly prone to highly prolific and resistant types of blackberry.

**Description:** Prickly, perennial plant with trailing canes. Leaves – alternate, 3 or 5 leaflets, serrated margins, dark green above, light green below; canes – young growth green and soft, older growth dark green to purple, woody, covered in long, sharp prickles; flowers – white or pink, 5 petals, 2-3 cm, late spring/summer; fruit / seeds –

an edible berry, consisting of an aggregate of small drupelets, 1 seed/druplet, small, hard and green berry maturing to red then purple-black over summer/early autumn; roots – established plants have thick woody crowns, covering wide areas, to depths of 50 cm or more.

**Dispersal:** Seeds are spread by birds, foxes, livestock including goats and deer, and water.

Can reproduce via stem-tip rooting, root suckers and vegetative fragments.

**Control Measures:**

**Hand methods:** Seedlings can be hand pulled or dug out, when soils are moist.

**Mechanical methods:** Large thickets can be initially removed by deep scalping with a bulldozer or tractor blade.

**Chemical methods:** Cut-Paint methods can be applied to small infestations. The cane is cut down to a few centimetres,

*continued on next page...*



# PROJECT UPDATE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

...continued from previous page

then scraped down the side. Herbicide is applied to both surfaces; Drill-Fill methods can be applied by removing the canes and drilling directly into the crown; foliar spray methods can be applied using non-selective herbicides on young plants, and selected herbicides on established plants. Best applied in warm, humid conditions at vigorous growth stage. Follow-up spraying is essential.

**Note: Expressions of Interest have closed for Year 2 of the Communities for Nature program. Previous applications will be considered as part of this process. Please contact Samantha Monks for further information.**

### Protecting the Corner Inlet Coastal Hotspot Program - Corner Inlet Connections (CIC): YYLN/WGCMA Coastal Saltmarsh Protection Project 2012-2014:

Cross property planning has enabled a group of neighbouring landholders to complete over eight kilometres of fencing, with all stock access removed from fragile saltmarsh communities in the high priority coastal saltmarsh areas between Manns Beach and Reeves Beach. 10,000 locally indigenous tubestock were planted out in July/August.

This landscape scale project has been funded through the WGCMA's Regional Growth Fund Flood Support Program'

and has helped complete a long term plan to protect another large section of coastal wetlands adjoining Nooramunga.

Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Park covers an area of 30,170 hectares consisting of shallow bays, estuaries, intertidal mudflats and a series of sand islands. Thousands of migratory wading birds use this unique area as an important food resource some travelling vast distances from around the world.

Following good spring rains, large flocks of migratory wading birds have been observed on intertidal mudflats and flooded farmlands adjoining coastal saltmarsh areas. These include: Far Eastern Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit, Royal Spoonbill, Eastern Great Egret and the less commonly sighted Latham's Snipe.

I would like to thank Kaye Proudley for writing the following article about Latham's Snipe.... ■



LATHAM'S SNIPE - FLUSHED BY ALISON KUITER

## LATHAM'S SNIPE: *Gallinago hardwickii* By Kaye Proudley

This is a cryptic bird, freezing when danger comes near, making it hard to find, until flushed from underfoot, scaring the walker with their sudden rush to take to the air with a grating squawk and zig-zagging evasive flight. They are a medium-sized short-legged wader, on average 240 mm long from tip of bill to tip of tail, with very long bills about 68 mm in length that they use to probe deep into the mud for earthworms and insect larvae, but are also known to eat seeds. They are rather beautifully plumaged birds – mottled and barred richly with black, reddish brown and buff and a distinctive buff stripe above the eye from the forehead to the back of their crown.

Latham's Snipe are also widely known as Japanese or Australian Snipe as they occur in both countries – they breed in the islands of Japan from May to July, mostly in the drier country of grassy hillsides and clearings in forests and often some distance from water, and migrate to Australia to spend the northern winter in our sunnier climes. Snipe start arriving in August, mostly via Taiwan and Papua New Guinea through Queensland, moving down the east coast to the more southerly areas of mid-NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, the latter being their stronghold.

Once out of the breeding season, snipe look for the boggy

places they are so well known for here in Australia to skulk around in, freezing when danger comes near – flooded pastures, seasonal wetlands, tussock bogs in the high country, freshwater swamps and other suitable areas in the southern highlands. In Tasmania they can be found in a larger variety of wet areas including, but not limited to heathlands and tea-tree swamps.

There are two other species of snipe that occur in Australia (Swinhoe's and Pin-tailed Snipe) and can only be reliably separated from each other in the hand – and not always then as some museum specimens are still unidentified because of their almost identical similarities to each other. But it is an almost

certain bet that if you find a snipe on the eastern coast it will be a Latham's – named by John Latham from a Tasmanian specimen. That was back when these snipe used to be found in large flocks but hunters and wetland drainage and river damming have taken their toll.

Everyone has heard the word 'sniper' but did you know that it was coined to mean 'a man who could shoot snipe'? Snipe, with their initial burst of zig-zag flight then dropping quickly into deep cover again, are a difficult species for sporting shooters to bag, I'm sorry to say! Sorry to report that they are shot at that is, not sorry that they are hard to shoot. So.... if you do see one, please don't shoot it! ■

For further information on any of these projects or Invasive Plants & Animals matters please contact: Samantha Monks, YYLN Project Officer - Ph. 03 5175 7895, Mob. 0419 371 497 or Email [samantham@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:samantham@wgcm.vic.gov.au)



# PROJECT UPDATE

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Bronwyn Johnson

## Planning A Revegetation Project? Plan For Seed collection.

*The most important aspect of preparing for any revegetation project is also the one most usually neglected, until the last minute – seed collection.*

At the YYLN we try to maintain a good selection of seed in our seedbank. Timely planning gives us all the opportunity to do the best job possible.

The first step in planning any project is to give yourself about a two year timeline. I find a wet and miserable winters day is a good time to start, but a hot northerly wind can also be a great trigger. Ask yourself these questions: WHAT do I want to achieve? How big an area can I realistically tackle in one go? Tubestock or direct seeding? Your answers will guide your future actions.

The very next step is to organise either seed or plants. It has to be the next step. When you work backwards from your preferred planting time for tube stock you need at least eight months of growing time, preferably 12 (for the difficult ones). Assume seed needs to be collected because we don't stock everything and add in that time along with any after ripening period (which can be a few months for some species). Then account for the actual seeding time of the various species, which is usually anywhere from about August



to March. You'll find that at least 18 months is required, slightly less for direct seeding. Either way, getting this step in motion at the beginning still leaves more than enough time to get the ground preparation done. Handing this step to someone else leaves you free to work on the fences etc, but you can collect the seed yourself.

Seed collection requires another bit of planning. You need to know what you plan to collect. Make a species list and note when flowering and seed set occur for the different species. Find out if you are allowed to collect seed from that species, some are protected by law.

Find out if you can collect from your desired location. Public land requires permits to collect from and some is completely off limits. You can check with DEPI, your local council or contact our seedbank. Generally, it is okay to collect seed from private property without a permit as long as you don't take more than 30% of the vegetation from any one plant. This includes seed, pods, leaves and branches. Permits are still required for protected species regardless of tenure.

Locate healthy populations, which generally have more than 100 individuals. Only collect 10% of the seed available from



Bronwyn Johnson, Seedbank Project Officer.

any one plant and sample the whole population to try and capture as much of the available genetic diversity. You may need to collect from multiple populations to obtain enough seed. Try to match the soil type, aspect, altitude and rainfall of these populations to your revegetation site as much as possible.

You'll have to dry, extract and store the seed. It will need to be protected from moisture to prevent rotting, prolonged heat/sun exposure to prevent ageing, and predation from ants, birds and small mammals. Storage requires a stable temperature to maintain seed viability. A fridge is fine, just don't freeze the seed.

When you think about all of that, it's no wonder the network maintains a seedbank to make the job easier on the landholder. With a bit of planning, the seedbank can help you get the right seed from the beginning. I am also happy to provide advice as to what is the right seed for your project.

*Now, if I could just get it to rain at the right time..... ■*

For further information on Seedbank please contact: Bronwyn Johnson, YYLN Project Officer - Ph. 03 5175 7895, Mob. 0429 808 130 or Email [bronwynj@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:bronwynj@wgcm.vic.gov.au)



# PROJECT PLANNING

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Bronwyn Johnson

### Cross Property Planning

*The concept of Cross Property Planning was introduced to me through the Mullungdung to Coast Project. Whilst the focus of that project was enhancing biodiversity, the idea has wider applications. Many of you have been doing it for years because it makes good Landcare sense.*

**At the basic level, it is planning without regard for property titles.**

This requires cooperation between neighbouring landholders with the aim to coordinate activities on an individual property to complement those being undertaken by a neighbour.

Revegetation seems the most obvious application, joining protection works along the length of a waterway or butting shelterbelts end to end for example. It works equally well with invasive plant and animal control as well as asset protection and ecological burning. The spread of infectious stock diseases can also be minimised when neighbours work together.

Developing a whole farm plan for your property is the best place to start. This focuses your attention on your vision for the property. It helps you define what your priority areas are and what activities are important

to you. It is important to clarify these things for yourself whilst understanding that your plans may have broader implications and could therefore require some adapting.

The next step is helped by maps that put you somewhere in the middle of the bigger picture. The type that require a whole kitchen table and books to hold them down are good. Laminated ones are even better. You can simply grab some whiteboard markers, nut out a plan and if it doesn't work; wipe it off and start again.

Look at the whole landscape and examine how well your plans fit. If you are creating wildlife corridors, do they connect to any existing vegetation such as roadsides, reserves or remnants? Could you shift or extend them so that they do? If you share a patch of native vegetation with your neighbours, chances are they are also wondering if it poses a fire risk. Where does the water run, which way do the prevailing winds go? How does the landscape shape my property? How could my actions impact on the landscape?

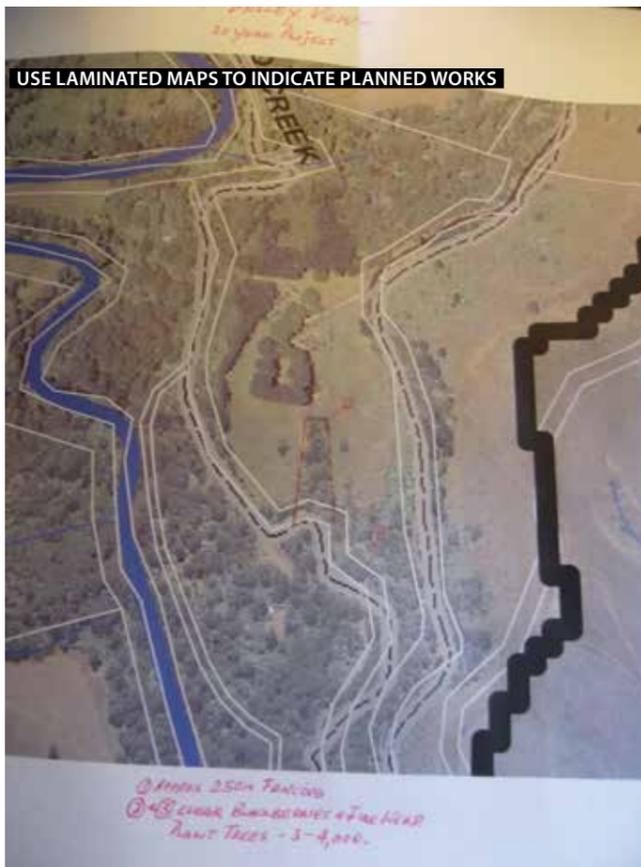
This is an ideal time to invite the neighbours over for a cuppa. They may have been grappling with similar questions but weren't too sure where to begin. They may have come up with novel solutions, had previous experience that taught them valuable lessons. They may be completely uninterested. If you never ask, you'll never know. The point is to attempt the conversation. And if all else fails,

keep planning as if maybe, one day, they'll change their mind (or move!).

Weeds, rabbits, foxes and other pests have no regard for boundaries and this is where cooperation is particularly useful. Many Landcare groups have successfully run coordinated rabbit programs in the past. With more people doing the work at the same time, a larger area can be targeted. This is more effective than one landholder working constantly to only protect their property, a bit like a castle under siege. This is not to say you should stop your

pest control efforts if your neighbours are less enthused. Exactly the opposite. Being able to demonstrate the benefits of effective pest control to the health of their land and business is probably the best way to encourage them. A bit of time spent hanging over the fence one afternoon may be the most productive time of all.

Many of the Landcare groups have large aerial maps. Maybe your group could plan a meeting around a particular pest species or building a biodiversity linkage and explore the broader benefits of working across properties, not just on them. ■



USE LAMINATED MAPS TO INDICATE PLANNED WORKS



# PARTNER ACTIVITY

## YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Bruce Atkin

### Coastcare Victoria/Parks Victoria Summer by the Sea program

#### MARINE PARKS DISPLAY

Port Welshpool January 4 and 5. Come and celebrate the sea at the Port Welshpool Sea Days Festival. Marine Rangers will be on hand, displaying live marine animals in touch tanks, answering all your questions and introducing you to some of Corner Inlet's aquatic locals.

#### SEAGRASS DISCOVERY

Port Albert Jan 21<sup>st</sup>: 12.30 – 2.00pm Explore the secrets of seagrass meadows. Join a Parks Victoria Marine Ranger to explore the life within the seagrass meadows of Nooramunga Marine & Coastal Park. Book on [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au) Enquiries: 56839000

#### BEACHCOMBING DISCOVERY

Seaspray / Ninety Mile Beach Marine National Park Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 2.00 – 3.30pm. Beaches are like a window to the sea. Find out what lies beyond the breakers by discovering what lies on the beach with a Parks Victoria Ranger. Book on [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au) Enquiries: 56839000

Many more activities further afield: check out the full program on [www.depi.vic.gov.au](http://www.depi.vic.gov.au) or [www.parks.vic.gov.au](http://www.parks.vic.gov.au) ■



### Sicilian Sea Lavender: an emerging coastal weed

By Bruce Atkin, DEPI and Kate Williams, SGLN

**An emerging coastal weed threat, Sicilian Sea Lavender (*Limonium hyblaenum*) poses a significant threat to saltmarsh areas.**

Dr Robin Adair, from Australia Biology, presenting at a forum at Phillip Island last year warned that the weed has the potential to spread rapidly along the Victorian coastline. At that stage it had been found at eight locations west of Melbourne. Unfortunately, recently Sicilian Sea Lavender was found in the Phillip Island Nature Reserve; the first record east of Melbourne. This highlights the importance of remaining vigilant.

Sicilian Sea Lavender can decimate saltmarsh vegetation by excluding native species and preventing regeneration. It poses a major threat to the endangered Orange-bellied Parrot.

Early detection is crucial as hand removal is the most effective means of eradicating the weed.

Identification: Sicilian Sea

Lavender is a cushion-forming perennial with a dense canopy, broad fleshy leaves and woody rootstock. Purple and white flowers appear from November.

If you find it:

- Correctly identify, at [www.australisbiological.com.au](http://www.australisbiological.com.au)
- Record location and size of the infestation
- Report immediately to Penny Gillespie, Weed and Pest

Program Coordinator: penny.a.gillespie@depi.vic.gov.au or to Bruce Atkin: bruce.atkin@dse.vic.gov.au

Dr Adair's presentation can be seen at: <http://www.australisbiological.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Limonium-presentation-Phillip-Island-12-September-2012.pdf>

Photos: Sicilian Sea Lavender, courtesy Dr Robin Adair ■





## Contacts for Individual Active Landcare Groups

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### Carrajung and District LG

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### Woodside Landcare Group

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### Wonyip Landcare Group

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### Binginwarri Landcare Group

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### Merriman Creek Landcare Group

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### Hedley/Nine Mile Creek LG

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### Yarram Urban Landcare Group

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