



YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NEWS

Vol: 004 SPRING September 2011

Spring is here and the lovely rains we have all enjoyed have rejuvenated our parched landscape. After such a long drought, you really must go for a walk into our bushland areas to see our resilient wildflowers rejoicing with their colourful blooms.

Over 4300 native plant species, deriving from 132 plant families, are known in Victoria. Here is a very small sample of just some of our common wildflowers you are likely to encounter on your walk. Enjoy!



Main picture: Prickly Moses (*Acacia verticillata*); **Left from top:** Slender Rice Flower (*Pimelea linifolia*); Common Hovea (*Hovea linearis*); Showy Bossiaea (*Bossiaea cinerea*); Wax lip orchid (*Glossodia major*) **Right:** Common Correa (*Correa Reflexa*)

Inside

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Events Update | 2 |
| 26th Birthday | 3 |
| Around the Traps | 4 |
| Landcare Legends | 5 |
| Award Winner Profiles ... | 6-7 |
| Profiles | 8 |
| From the Office | 9 |
| Project Updates | 10-13 |
| Snippets | 14 |
| Partner Activity | 15 |



EVENTS UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

Newsletter production and design is driven by volunteers. If you would like to help with writing, photography or even have your very own column, please contact us. Alternatively, send contributions whenever the whimsy inspires you.

Editorial Team

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

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Deadlines

All contributions for the Summer edition must be received before 18th November, 2011.

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Tree Planting on Hedley Range Rd, Binginwarri on **Saturday September 3rd** and **Sunday September 18th** starting at **9.30am**- see 'Around the Traps' for details.

BBQ Lunch and Farm Walk, Tuesday 6th September (part of Landcare Week - see advert below) at Justin and Melissa Ainsworth's property, Stradbroke West. For more details contact Samantha Monks.

Merriman Creek Working Bee, 11th of September at 10.30am - see 'Around the Traps' for details.

Spatial Vision Interactive Mapper Workshop, Saturday 17th September. 10.30am at the Yarram Secondary College. To register contact Dan Garlick.

25 Year Landcare Grants, 30 September 2011 - up to \$5,000 for landcare groups to undertake a community event and on ground works. For more information contact Dan Garlick.

Coastcare Victoria's Community Grants, 30 September 2011. See page 15 for more detail.

Drought Tolerant Pasture Road Trip, Ararat, 5/6/7 October. For more detail contact Samantha Monks.

Blackberry Control Field Day, 25th October at Binginwarri Hall. For more detail contact Samantha Monks.

Binginwarri Walk, Talk and Gawk at Hazel Park Flora Reserve, Sunday 30th October

at **9.30am** - see 'Around the Traps' for details.

Healthy Soils Field Day, November 2011 (date TBC), at Brian and Jenny Nicholls property, for more details contact Samantha Monks

State Landcare Forum and Awards, November 15/16. For more detail contact Dan Garlick.

Merriman Creek Christmas Meeting, 27th of November at 5pm - see 'Around the Traps' for details.

Expressions of interest for Year 3 of the "Coastal Saltmarsh Protection Project" are still being sought. Funding incentives are available for fencing and revegetation of coastal saltmarsh from interested landholders between the Albert River and Reeves Beach area. Please help us protect our valuable coastal saltmarsh habitats.

Expressions of interest are also being sought for the YYLN/WGCM Erosion Control Project in the upper catchments of the Jack/ Albert River and Bruthen Creek areas. Priority will be given to areas at high risk of delivering sediments to Corner Inlet.

Please contact Samantha Monks (YYLN Project Officer) on 0419 371497 or 03 5175 7895 for further information by October 31, 2011.



25 Years
Landcare
Victoria 2011

Highlighting Sustainable Agriculture in Gippsland

Five great events across our region to celebrate Landcare Week from the 5th - 11th of September

| Date | Event | Location and Time |
|----------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 6 th September | Farm Walk Beefing up productivity and enhancing the environment | Stradbroke 12:00pm - 3:00pm |
| 7 th September | Farm Walk Boosting milk production by farming sustainably | Mardan 12:00pm - 3:00pm |
| 8 th September | Landcare Celebration Day Bus Tour and Book Launch | Maffra From 9:45am |
| 9 th September | Farm Walk Improving productivity through Pasture Cropping | Rosedale 12:00pm - 3:00pm |
| 10 th September | Landcare in Action Tree planting | Kilcunda 10:00am - 1:00pm |

Proudly supported by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
For more information visit www.wgcm.vic.gov.au
Lunch provided - RSVP for catering purposes by calling 1300 094 262

CONGRATULATIONS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Melissa Ainsworth

SIMPLY A NIGHT TO REMEMBER!

You couldn't have asked for a more perfect winter's day on July 2nd, 2011. The night ahead was even more memorable for the Merriman Creek Landcare Group's 26th birthday celebration.

The Stradbroke Hall was decorated with Wattle, Banksia, Callistemon and Hakea blooms for an anniversary event that included a Spit Roast Dinner.

About forty current and past members of the former Stradbroke-Woodside Farm Trees Group attended the event. Old and new friends reminisced about past achievements which were displayed on the wall with charts and photos.

MC, Brian Nicholls added a few formalities consisting of brief speeches from Network Co-ordinator Dan Garlick and Regional Landcare Facilitator Nick Dudley. Dan, on behalf of the Network, awarded the group with a Certificate in recognition of its milestone Anniversary. Life Certificate members, Peter Garlick and Ed Brand told a few humorous stories about past events, which added to the warm and friendly atmosphere.

Group President, Ann Coulson, did a fabulous job making the Birthday Cake which included the



Yarram Yarram Landcare Network Logo. The sides of the cake were surrounded by a flora and fauna frieze which was very fitting for the occasion.

Everyone present agreed

that we should not wait for another quarter of a century to get together to reflect on our groups accomplishments and to appreciate the friendships within our small humble group! ■

Top and left: A fabulous cake for a marvellous achievement. **Below:** Life Members, Peter Garlick, Pat Brand, Norma Garlick and Ed Brand cutting the cake.





AROUND THE TRAPS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

Albert River

The Albert River Landcare Group recently held a well attended Annual General Meeting. Members also enjoyed a fabulous BBQ at the home of David & Sue MacAulay. Geoff Charman was re-elected as President and David MacAulay re-elected as Secretary/Treasurer.

The next scheduled meeting was planned for the 21st of July. Thankfully this meeting was postponed as a precaution with heavy rain forecast. What was encountered was widespread flooding across the district! The new date for the meeting is to be decided. ■

Binginwarri

Binginwarri Landcare Group recently held their AGM and elected Kevin Heggen and John McClumpha as Chairmen and Jenny Wolswinkel as Minute Taker. Thank you for accepting your nominations!

We also held a bird-watching trip to White Woman's Waterhole in August. Although participant numbers were down, the birds rolled up in very reasonable numbers! One of the purposes of the trip, apart from educating people on how to birdwatch, was to find out if the Black Saturday fires had affected the bird population at this site. Unfortunately, our

group does not have many bird lists compiled **prior to the fires** to compare with. If you have visited WWWW prior to the big fires, and kept a bird list, it would be appreciated if a copy could be forwarded to Kaye Proudley at katbingi@hamboursat.com.au or ring her on 5185 1398. *Thank you!*

Our upcoming planned events include Tree Planting on Hedley Range Rd, Binginwarri on **Saturday September 3rd** and **Sunday September 18th** starting at **9.30am**. Just look for the "Workmen" signs displayed approx 5kms from the Tap Tap Rd corner. Everyone is invited to help us complete our corridors for wildlife! Tools supplied but BYO gloves if required. BYO plates, cutlery, drinks and chair for the supplied BBQ lunch. *Please note: If it is raining at 9am on any of these dates, then planting will not go ahead.*

On **Sunday 30th Oct at 9.30am** we will have a Walk, Talk and Gawk at Hazel Park Flora Reserve looking at plants and wildflowers. Meet at park entrance, off the Woorarra Rd near the Albert River Rd junction. The walk will be led by Jenny Wolswinkel. BYO stool/ chair, morning tea and drink, insect repellent and plant identification books, if you have them. RSVP's are required to Kaye Proudley please. ■

Merriman Creek

Our recent AGM saw the return of Ann Coulson as President and Melissa Ainsworth as Secretary. We thank our outgoing Vice President, Ian Wilson for his support over the past twelve months. Our new Vice President is David Matthews who is well known in the Landcare movement.

Back in 1987 our group established an Arboretum in the grounds of the Stradbroke Hall. After our recent successful application for a Small Landcare Grant, more work will be completed at this site.

A working bee is planned for the **11th of September at 10.30am** to erect a new fence and plant more shrubs, to commemorate the 25th year of Landcare in Victoria. A BBQ lunch will be provided so all members of our Landcare community are welcome to join us. Please RSVP for catering purposes to either 51468328 or 51464201.

Our Christmas meeting has been set for the **27th of November at 5pm**. President Ann Coulson has kindly offered to host the BBQ meeting at her property in Seaspray. BYO chair, salad and dessert to share. Meat will be provided.

All welcome! ■

Wonyip

In July 2010, the Spittle family hosted 30 scouts at their Wonyip property. While the city-based Scouts enjoyed exploring the Dingo Creek and plantation areas, they also spent a morning with Paul Martin (former WGCMA coordinator) learning about the local environment and its ecosystem, Corner Inlet, the plantations and native forest and pests and diseases. Several scouts have since returned to help plant trees on the Spittle property and it is envisaged that a troupe visit will take place every couple of years with the aim of engaging the next generation in Landcare activities

The Spittles have fenced and planted out a shelter-belt/wildlife corridor on their property which will eventually connect Dingo Creek to the Turton's Track/Woorarra Road section of the Quoll corridor. Approximately 500 trees and low canopy flora were planted and are still flourishing, despite heavy winds and the occasional wombat. The Spittle's intend to keep planting extensions to this shelter-belt in 2012 and to embark on an eradication program for blackberry in the Dingo Creek area. They will be seeking funding to undertake this ambitious project.

Wonyip Landcare Group

is currently enjoying their winter hibernation. Most members are city based and will return in Spring to re-activate the Group and their on ground projects. ■

Woodside

The Woodside Landcare Group held their AGM on August 25th. All serving office bearers stood again and were re-elected. The President Charles Meckiff reflected on our group's healthy position, both socially and financially, and urged us to reinvigorate our Landcare activities in the same manner that the rain has boosted our paddocks.

Our guest speaker was Shane Charles from Wulgunggo Ngalu Learning Place. He gave an entertaining and honest talk about his life, the path that led him to his current position as Programmes Manager and the work done at the learning place. He then graced us with a didgeridoo solo.

Our group is now busy planning a community day for our Balloong School Corner project and our Christmas breakup. ■

LOCAL LANDCARE LEGENDS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Melissa Ainsworth

A Dairy Farmer from Staceys Bridge

This Edition we focus on a "Local Landcare Legend" who also was the recent recipient of the YYLN "Individual Landcare Award".

David MacAulay is a dairy farmer from Staceys Bridge. He has had a long history of involvement with countless community organisations.

His passion for the environment is obvious when you look at some of the organisations in which he has been involved.

They include the Lands Department, Soil Conservation Authority, Corner Inlet Waterway Authority and Management Group, Gippsland Riparian Project, South Gippsland Bass Implementation Committee, Nooramunga Corner Inlet Project, YYLN JARR Project and the West Gippsland Catchment and Land Protection.

Most people would struggle to have time to dedicate to all of these worthy agencies, but for a dairy farmer, it can only be from sheer dedication.

Landcare may be 25 years old but David and wife Sue started caring for their land over 40 years ago.

Having grown up with a love for the bushland surrounding his families property, David wanted to find a balance between productive farming and the environment.

"I started thinking that some areas of the farm were better off being fenced off and preserved rather than being cleared".

Not concerned about "the last blade of grass" David wanted the benefits of his Landcare work balanced with the performance of his dairy farm.

Long before it was

common practice David was fencing off waterways, protecting native vegetation, using sustainable water use practices and managing the retention of soil and nutrients on his farm. Fencing his water frontages, David saw the immediate benefits with regard to stock management and water quality. The recent bushfires have seen the protected remnant vegetation on David and Sue's property flourish. More recent revegetation work have transformed

eroded river banks, which all adds to the satisfaction David receives from his hard work.

YYLN Coordinator, Dan Garlick, said that "David has been an inspiration and a shining example to many." Judges of this award commented that "David practices what he preaches, shares his knowledge, and actively contributes to environmental improvement and enhancement.

His winning of the *Individual Landcare*



Above: Over forty years of Landcare and David is still smiling! **Below:** Protected remnant vegetation flourishes on David and Sue's property.

Award is a worthy acknowledgement of a lifetime of effort". ■





AWARD WINNER PROFILE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Melissa Ainsworth

Primary Producer Award

The **Primary Producer** category was awarded to Elizabeth Balderstone of Darriman.

“Warrigal Creek” was one of Gippsland’s earliest pastoral runs taken up in 1845.

George Irving purchased some of the outer paddocks in 1890, followed by the homestead block in 1910. George’s son John, a keen tree planter, and his sons Fergus and Alistair, understood the need to protect the landscape and its remnant vegetation. The earliest revegetation projects started back in the ‘70’s and ‘80’s, before the first Government funded project by Greening Australia in 1991.

The larger family farming partnership was divided in 1995 with Elizabeth’s part of Warrigal Creek now consisting of 1378

hectares. She and her family and staff manage the property for the production of wool, beef, prime lambs and some grain. Since 1999 they have also produced irrigated lucerne hay.

In 1994 Libby worked in the Corangamite region as a Salinity Officer. This experience enabled her to observe more acutely the once treed landscapes deteriorating from the effects of erosion and salinity.

With strong revegetation goals now set, “Warrigal Creek” would see the protection of some of its stressed remnant areas and revegetation of cleared areas.

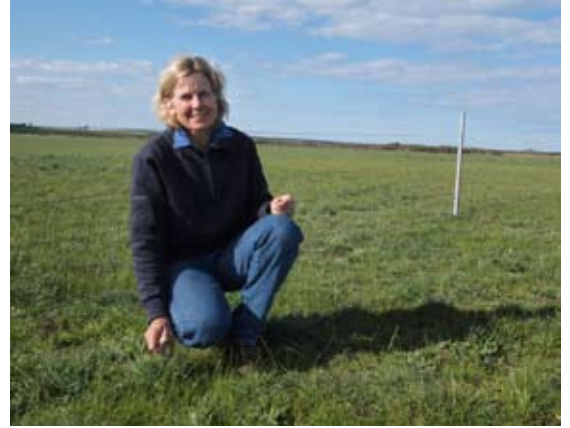
In 1999 approximately 49 hectares adjoining “Jack Smith Lake” was fenced and revegetated to form a wildlife area. In 2003 a “Trust for Nature” Covenant was placed

on approximately 87 hectares of the property with a further 32 hectares to be added shortly.

As Gippslanders, we all know too well that the past fifteen years has seen very difficult seasonal conditions. Until the recent rains, neighbouring “Jack Smith Lake” had not entirely filled since 1995, although historically it filled every three to five years.

During these years Libby has fenced out numerous areas and used direct seeding and tube stock planting methods to create and link up corridors and shelter belts across the property.

Libby has also been involved in a project focusing on sustainable grazing methods on saline lands, trialling different salt tolerant pastures and is a participant in the Drought



Tolerant Pastures project. Managing such a large property has meant that the control of pest plants and animals is an ongoing battle. As with other issues, Libby does not balk at doing her best to keep things under control.

History tells us that in 1843 a massacre took place along the banks of Warrigal Creek. The indigenous Gunai-Kurnai population within the area were virtually destroyed. This past event is of great concern to Libby.

In 2006 she was involved in forming and leading a loosely formed Yarram Yarram Cultural Group.

The aim of the group is to work towards reconciliation, and learn more about the local indigenous culture and traditional knowledge.

Managing such a large estate that has been in the family for over one hundred years, with limited resources, must be a daunting task. The fact that Libby and her team do this with due respect for the properties cultural, agricultural and natural values makes this award very well earned.

Congratulations Libby on your Primary Producer Award. You are an inspiration!



AWARD WINNER PROFILE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Melissa Ainsworth

Outstanding contribution to Landcare

As you will have read in our Winter Edition Newsletter, Leon Trembath was recently awarded an "Outstanding Contribution to Landcare" Award, at the recent YYLN

Awards Night. **This award is not given lightly and goes to someone who has contributed both on the ground and in a range of leadership roles to further the**

cause of Landcare. Leon is one of these people. He enjoyed a career with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade for 24 years and was a member of the Springvale Council

for 13 years, serving as Mayor and on the Senior Executive of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) before escaping to the Strzelecki Ranges in Madalya, where he and his wife Cathy reside on 35 hectares of covenanted bush.

As a member of the local Landcare group in Madalya since 1997, Leon served as Chairman of the YYLN from 2005 till 2010 and chaired GippsLandcare for two years.

On a state level he was instrumental in the creation of the Victorian Landcare Council, served as its inaugural Chair and was involved in the creation of the Australian National Network, representing Victoria.

Leon has been active at every level of Landcare as either a member or participant in a wide variety of Committees concerned with conservation, seed collection and landscape restoration.

Leon is an advocate always promoting the importance of community involvement and representation.

He has always had a passion to restore the landscape and to involve children in planting trees. Through Leon's vision the concept of the Jack & Albert River

Restoration Project (JARR) was devised and he was instrumental in creating the partnership we enjoy today with the Norman Wettenhall Foundation.

Leon is also particularly fond of birds and has been a member of the Bird Observers Club of Australia for twenty years and the Victorian Wader Study Group for fifteen years. This extensive experience has enabled him to lead monthly bird and natural history walks within Tarra Bulga National Park in a voluntary capacity.

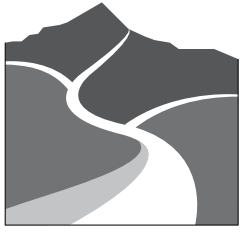
In retirement from Landcare, Leon has focussed on a brand new talent – the craft of creating all manner of objects with wood. Together with Cathy he continues tending to his bush property with weed control and revegetation projects.

To say we value Leon's contributions to Landcare and his commitment to the environment is an understatement. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated, experienced and knowledgeable member within our Landcare community. ■

Congratulations on your well deserved award Leon and on behalf of the YYLN we thank you!

Leon Trembath on his property in Madalya





PROFILES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Melissa Ainsworth

Board Member



Werner Lange – Secretary

Continuing with our Board Profile series, this edition we focus on Board Secretary, Werner Lange.

Werner has been the Secretary of the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network Board for three years. He is also a member of the Wonyip Landcare Group.

Werner was born in Palestine just before the outbreak of WW2 in the town of Haifa, known now as Israel.

His forefathers were Menonites who migrated from the Netherlands to East Prussia, then to Southern Russia and eventually to Palestine. The purpose of this migration was to join a free thinking Christian Community (called Templers). The Templers had started colonies in Palestine in the 1860's which were then the Ottoman Empire, to live a life as the early Christians had envisaged.

Exchanged with Jewish refugees in 1942, when Palestine was under the British Mandate,

The geese love paddling in the pond at Valley View



his family ended up in Germany until 1951. An opportunity arose to migrate to Australia. Some of his relatives had already been interned to Tatura in 1942/43, thanks to Arthur Caldwell the then Foreign Minister of Australia. He had arranged for German settlers in Palestine to be evacuated and to await the outcome of the war.

On arrival to Australia Werner lived in Boronia

until 1968. He then married Turid who was a Secondary School teacher. Together they lived at The Basin for 20 years, followed by Fitzroy North for a further 20 years. Werner and Turid have a son, Christian, who was born 1972 followed by a daughter, Fleur, born 1974.

Werner studied Mechanical Engineering and in 1960 worked with a company building Assembly

Plants for the Australian Automotive Industry. He then worked as an Engineering Manager in an Agro-Technical Company. Here he constructed Feed Milling and Fish Feed Plants in both Australia and abroad. In 1991 Werner started his own Consultant Project Management Company in the same field before retiring in 2004.

The connection Werner feels for the land stems

from his childhood. His father had a small farm in Palestine growing pigs, turkeys and chickens. In Germany he lived in a small village where carts were still pulled by cows and horses. Farmers worked in their fields from planting time to harvesting from morning to night.

In 1987 Turid and Werner purchased "Valley View" in Wonyip (Woorarra East). Here, Werner could feel the connection with the land again. Valley View comprises of thirty three acres. Twenty five years of working every weekend has seen the property convert from an overgrown and neglected piece of land to what is now their haven.

Werner believes that the idea of voluntary contribution and community spirit was fostered by the Templers. He finds that the Landcare movement practices these ideals. ■

From Valley View you can see all the way to Wilson's Prom.



FROM THE OFFICE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Dan Garlick



Dan's Desk

Yarram Yarram Landcare Network's AGM was held on Friday 26th August and it was a terrific night at the Club Hotel.

The 2010-11 Annual Report highlighted that it was a big year for the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network (YYLN) with a number of large projects delivered, coupled with major transition. A new Network Chair and Coordinator inevitably caused some challenges, however, due to the resilience and capacity of the YYLN community and strong platform left by my predecessor, YYLN continued to deliver significant on-ground outcomes. Transition is an important and exciting time for any organisation

particularly community based ones because it can provide new ideas, energy and people with different backgrounds and skills leading to new projects and opportunities.

Highlights for the year included: Stage 2 funding for JARR Project received from the Norman Wettenhall Foundation; launch and commencement of the Mullungdung to Coast Project; successful delivery of the Gippsland Plains Drought Tolerant Pastures Demonstration Project; 3500 Ha of Blackberry suppression in the upper Albert River Catchment area; delivering on the Victorian Gorse Taskforce's requirements by treating over 600 hectares of Gorse from the region over the last 2 years; 240ha of Coastal Saltmarsh protected; Recycling for Recovery Project: 5ha of wildlife corridors fenced and revegetated; YYLN/WSC Roadside Weeds & Rabbits program: weed control on 50 fire affected roads; two successful Healthy Soils Field Days; YYLN Events/Activities: terrific awards night, fantastic Annual BBQ at Binginwarri and the revitalisation of the YYLN Newsletter.

YYLN are well placed to have a solid 2011/12, building on the successes of this year. 2011/12 funding enables the retention of staff (though this remains a challenge for Network Coordinator position) and the ability to deliver a large number of on-ground projects. YYLN will continue to focus on supporting the community to deliver high quality environmental projects whilst developing aspects of the organization to help support and guide these projects.

Thanks to everyone who attended and those people who helped organise the night. Copies of the Annual Report are available from the YYLN Office.

More recently I have attended a number of Landcare Group AGM's recently. These meetings highlighted that groups have strong membership and well defined projects/priorities for the next 12-months.

Congratulations to David MacAulay, Libby Balderstone, Woodside Landcare Group, the Drought Tolerant Pastures Group and all the Landcare Honour Roll people who have been nominated for the State



Treasurer, Damian Moore presents his report at the AGM.

Landcare Awards. Good Luck and well done to the nominators.

The wet conditions have been a challenge for many of our landholders and a blessing for others. The conditions have made on-ground works difficult with a number of fencing jobs delayed until the soil dries out.

There are many people who have contributed to the Network's continued success and support in the transition over the past 12 months; we thank you sincerely for your efforts and look forward to many more successful years of great environmental outcomes. ■



Above: David MacAninly addressing guests at the AGM **Right:** The happy crowd at the AGM dinner





PROJECT UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

YYLN Invasive Plants & Animals (IPA) Program

YYLN/Wellington Shire Council (WSC) / Department of Primary Industries (DPI)

With the onset of warmer spring weather following a wet winter, many of our weeds are already flourishing. Most of the main weed infestation areas are well known, but after several dry years of dormancy weeds are now appearing everywhere.

We are presently targeting Gorse and Broom which are now in full bloom and the bright yellow flowers are very easy to spot. Other grass weed species such as African Love Grass (ALG) are also coming up but can be harder to spot during the early growth stages. The WSC are working closely with the Merriman Creek Landcare Group to help target this highly invasive weed.

This financial year there are also new funding arrangements for our Roadside Weeds & Rabbit Program. We now have to apply for funding in a grant application which will offer support to the four Landcare Networks across the Wellington Shire. This program will be based on community needs for IPA control, so ***once again I need your input into problem weeds and infested areas.***

I would also like to welcome Andrew Wolstenholme who is the new WSC Natural Resource Planner, replacing Heather Cahill. Andrew is well known in Landcare after working in the Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network, as a Weeds and Pest Animals Project Officer.

There have been a number

of IPA meetings recently with representatives from DPI, WSC, YYLN staff and community members to discuss and plan future strategies for IPA management across the West Gippsland region. The main outcome from all the talks has been importance of community input into our invasive weed and animal programs.

Most importantly, YYLN will continue to work closely with our partnership agencies and local community in the control and educational awareness of invasive plants and animals

We have recently formed the YYLN Community Weed Action Group to help plan our future weed management strategies.

If your area has a particular IPA issue please contact me for advice, information and support.

Gippsland Coastal Plains Gorse Control Program (GCPGCP) – Yarram Landcare Leading the Way

The strong partnership between Yarram Landcare and the Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) has continued to grow. ***I am extremely pleased to announce our successful application for Year 3 of the "Gippsland Coastal Plains Gorse Control Program (GCPGCP)".*** This program provides further funding opportunities for the management of Gorse within our network. Our priority focus areas still centre around Yarram, Alberton, Port Albert, Tarraville, Woodside, Darriman and Seaspray.

The GCPGCP has continued to provide valuable community support and extension to our prior investment in Gorse

control across the YYLN area. This project has significantly increased community awareness, momentum and the willingness to remove and control Gorse. Since December 2009, the program has successfully treated over 600 Ha of Gorse infestations on private land throughout the Yarram region.

As in previous years eligible participants can receive an incentive grant of 50% towards the costs of physical and/or chemical removal of Gorse. In order to receive this grant, land owners/managers must sign a YYLN landholder agreement to carry out subsequent spraying or removal of Gorse regrowth for a period of three years to avoid reinfestation.

With the wetter conditions, new and old Gorse infestations are thriving so please contact me ASAP if you have Gorse or know of any Gorse in our Landcare Network area, or would like assistance or advice in Gorse control.

Serrated Tussock

During spring, a community survey will be conducted across the Seaspray area to help gauge awareness of Serrated



By Samantha Monks - YYLN Project Officer

Tussock, as part of our ST partnership program. Following this survey, a ST education and awareness program will be run. A community workshop will be held in the Seaspray area focusing on a range of invasive grass weeds including ALG.

Serrated Tussock (*Nassella trichotoma*) is listed as a Regionally Controlled Weed under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* in the West Gippsland Catchment Region. This means all landowners/managers have a legal requirement under this act to control serrated tussock on their property. As a Weed of National Significance it is also regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential for spread, economic and environmental impacts. ■



Caleb Barlow (work experience student) surrounded by Gorse near Yarram

PROJECT UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



Sustainable Agriculture Programs

Gippsland Plains Drought Tolerant Pastures Demonstration (GPDTPD)

As our three year sustainable agricultural project draws to an end we have gone from a decade of drought to flooding in some project areas. Some of our Year 3 pastures still can't be sown due to wet paddocks and limited access. One drought pasture participant told me he hadn't been able to get to his final demonstration site for six weeks. When he eventually got there he was shocked to see what he thought was a paddock covered in Cape Weed, but on closer inspection was delighted to find a mass of newly established sub clover.

The Drought Pastures group is heading off on a pastures tour to Ararat in early October. We will meet up with members of the Perennial Pasture Systems (PPS) group and visit several properties across the drier north central areas of Victoria. The PPS group was formed in 2007 and has a large membership of 65 farm businesses involved in prime lamb and mutton production.

The PPS group aims to promote the use of perennial pastures and



Drought pastures May 11 – Don Belcher and Samantha Monks

give members the best available information in pasture establishment and management. It is also involved in trial pasture demonstrations and has an EverGraze Supporting Site near Ararat. We look forward to this tour which will also give us an opportunity to share ideas and meet other farmers and Landcare members.

The GPDTPD group has also been nominated for the "Australian Government Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices Award" at the 2011 Victorian Landcare Awards. Winners will be announced at Government House in

November this year.

Healthy Soils – Sustainable Farms

Building carbon & Managing pH in West Gippsland

Two "Healthy Soils Field Days" are planned for 2011-2012. Flyers will be distributed when details are finalised.

1. Brian & Jenny Nicholls property at Stradbroke during November 2011 – Focus: Soil pH and lime, farm walks to inspect drought tolerant perennial pastures Year 1-3
2. Jack River area - Autumn 2012 – Focus: Soil Carbon

CFOC / WGCMA / YYLN

Protecting the Corner Inlet Coastal Hotspot Program

Coastal Saltmarsh Protection Project

The Corner Inlet and Nooramunga Marine & Coastal Parks are internationally recognised as significant coastal wetlands, containing the most extensive areas of intertidal mudflats in Victoria. Areas of saltmarsh, mangroves, seagrass beds, sub-tidal reefs and deep channels are part of this unique coastal environment.

Corner Inlet also contains the world's most southerly occurrence of the White Mangrove (*Avicenna marina*) and is the only area in southern Australia where extensive beds of broad-leafed seagrass (*Posidonia australis*) grow. The Corner Inlet Ramsar Sites provide important habitat to large numbers of migratory waders and other threatened bird species.

Why do we need to protect our coastal saltmarsh areas?

Coastal saltmarshes are complex communities of plants and animals occurring in the swampy intertidal zone of sheltered shores. Saltmarshes are found above the mudflats and are often fringed by mangroves. Saltmarshes are dominated by a small variety of salt-tolerant plants including saltbush, glassworts, sedges and grasses. The mangroves are important as nursery habitat for many fish and crustacean species as well as trapping large amounts of silt and building up mudflats.

These coastal areas are periodically flooded by seawater and are highly saline. Saltmarsh and mangrove communities provide an important buffer zone from nutrients

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White Mangrove (Avicenna marina) growing near Manns Beach



PROJECT UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

...continued from previous page

entering the wetlands from farmland and importantly they help prevent erosion and flooding.

Since European settlement our coastal saltmarsh areas have been extensively cleared and drained for farming, housing estates and other land use. This has resulted in significant habitat loss for birds, reptiles and invertebrates. Until recently, saltmarsh and mangrove habitats were often viewed as muddy, smelly wastelands full of mosquitoes.

During the Second World War supplies of glass from overseas were difficult to obtain, so alternatives were sought. Glassworts (a dominant saltmarsh plant) containing high amounts of Potassium were burnt to produce potash used in glassmaking. This resulted in large areas of saltmarsh being cleared.

Glassworts have small succulent leaves that store water. Lower leaves are filled with salts and turn reddish as plants mature and fall off the plant, removing excess salt.

Saltmarshes provide vitally important habitat for a diverse range of animals including the critically endangered Orange-bellied Parrot (OBP). OBPs depend on saltmarsh plants for food during their winter visits to Victoria from Tasmania. The parrots feed on a range of plants including four types of glasswort, Rounded Noon Flower

(pigface), Sea Rocket and Southern Sea Heath.

It is now estimated that less than 50 wild individuals exist. During the 2011 winter survey, sightings of 6 individual OBPs were recorded. The next survey will occur during September. OBPs are dependent on saltmarsh habitat for food during their winter visits to southern Australia.

Contact Samantha Monks for further information. ■

Orange-bellied Parrot
(*Neophema chrysogaster*)



Beaded Glasswort
(*Sarcocornia quinqueflora*)



Seedbank Report



By Bronwyn Johnson,
Seedbank and Mullundung to
Coast Project Officer.

If you are planning for a year, plant rice
If you are planning for a decade, plant trees
If you are planning for a lifetime, educate people
Chinese proverb

I came across this proverb the other day whilst educating myself about a plant and quite liked it, though I feel a bit sorry for the Chinese if they only expect to get 10 years out of their trees. Nevertheless, it speaks to the heart of Landcare for me. Whilst many of us are looking to the future, attempting to leave the land in better nick than we found it, the greatest

legacy we can leave is the lessons we learn along the way.

So it prompted me to ask one individual about his revegetation experiments and what he'd learnt over the years.

Brian and Jen Nicholls own Warrawidgee, a fine merino property in Stradbroke. It has been in the family for some time and revegetation works started back in 1957 in the grand old days of pine and cypress belts. It wasn't too long before Brian's father started experimenting with natives. In the 60's and 70's most people were happy to call a plant 'native' if it came from anywhere in Australia, but it was still a step in the right direction.

By the 1980's local seed was being collected, grown and planted out on the property in a series of shelterbelts developing a network across the paddocks. In 2006, Brian moved to direct seeding using the Burford Seeder,

a machine particularly suited to the flatter country and lighter soils.

Some of this work was funded and carried out by Gippslandcare and co-ordinated by the Seedbank. Dry seasons resulted in some failures and caused Brian to ask how he could improve survival rates.

Preparation, preparation, preparation. Brian is always preparing next seasons planting whilst finishing off the preparation for this year. He's already got the spray equipment out doing the final spray for the patch whose seed was ordered last year, so why not start on the next patch at the same time?

Yes, I know it requires a bit of planning – actually, quite a lot of planning, but once you've done the first major step of deciding all the areas you want to revegetate, the rest is like eating an elephant: one piece at a time.

So each year about this time, Brian chats to me to let me know how much he is planning to seed

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National Tree Day, July 31st 2011, and an informal farm walk on Brian's property (with Brian on the far left) with members of Merriman Creek and Woodside Landcare groups.

PROJECT UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



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next year. That way I can look at what I've got and what I need to get before the seeding season. This absolutely increases the chances that I can get the right sort and amount of seed to meet his requirements.

And if you are thinking of doing some seeding, this is exactly what you should be doing too. Planning, ordering seed, spraying, cuppa and a biscuit on the back porch to reflect on how very organised you are. In the next newsletter, I'll go into more detail on Brian's ground preparations. In the meantime, if you'd like to tell me about the lessons you've learnt over the years, I'd love to hear them and pass them on to others. After all, it is kind of the point. ■

Mullungdung to Coast Project

The first year of the project is progressing in spite of all the wet paddocks.

Most sites have already been fenced and seeded and the work will continue over the spring as the ground dries out a bit.

A huge effort has been put in by all the landholders involved to get the on ground works to this stage, despite the short timetable for works and the unexpectedly wet conditions.

Any landholders who would like to become involved with the second year of this project should contact the project officer for more information or to



PHOTO FROM DSE HARVEY PERKINS
Chesnut-rumped Heathwren
(*Calamanthus pyrrhopygius*)

register their interest now. You have until September 30th to fill in a formal Expression of Interest which will be available from the YYLN office.

Contact Bronwyn (Seedbank & Mullungdung to Coast Project Officer) on 0429 808 130 for further information.

This small threatened species of bird has been found in the Mullungdung State Forest and is one of the many species of plants and animals that could benefit from protecting and enhancing biodiversity across the Giffard Plain.

They prefer to stay in or near dense understory vegetation for protection, eating insects and spiders but not venturing too far out in the open.

They require at least 10ha of vegetated area to survive but have been known to use corridors with dense understory to travel to larger areas.

They build their dome shaped nests on or close to the ground in bushes or tussocks.

The habitat requirements of this species highlight the importance of protecting remnants and expanding them wherever practical, either through increasing their size or connecting them to larger patches through vegetated corridors. It also emphasizes the relevance of understory plants in the landscape. They may seem prickly, scrubby and insignificant to us, especially compared to trees. However, to this bird, they are home, safety and a supermarket all in one. ■

WHO IS BRONWYN JOHNSON?



Born and raised in the outer suburbs of Melbourne, I guess it took me a while to notice I was only really happy clomping around in a pair of gumboots, garden spade in my dirty hands, merrily nestling small plants wherever there was a bit of space. It took the birth of my first child for me to decide

it was time to get out of all the noise and frantic wanting that seems to drive suburbia. We started looking for space to run. I didn't even know Yarram existed then. Upon looking at what was to become our place, I realised the only thing Yarram was really missing was a dentist – not bad going for a small town. A year later we bought our property in Woodside and dove headlong into the biggest challenge of our lives.

Not long after, I joined the Woodside Landcare Group as a way of meeting people who I figured would have some idea of how to farm down here. I was right. Great bunch of farmers, loads of advice

and a supper that was hard to go past. Soon I got suckered into the secretary's job, which is not such a bad thing.

Then Jenny Wolswinkel came to a meeting and was talking about the Seedbank and seed collecting. We had a few plants on our place that I wanted to learn about and it seemed like the right place to start. Next thing I know I'm off doing a professional development course for seed collectors run by Florabank and on the Seedbank Committee. Then Jenny announced she was leaving and the Seedbank needed someone to run it for one day a week. Suspicious

minds would imagine I was being groomed, but I'm not complaining. One day was a bit of extra money and fitted in nicely with small people and kindergarten.

A couple of years later, Paul says he thinks I'd be able to handle a project officers job. It's always a nice feeling when people express confidence in you. **What gave me the confidence to accept the idea was the amazing way that people in Landcare are prepared to teach.** And the wonderful thing about that idea is that even if funding for a position runs out, the knowledge is not wasted.

I have no real qualifications to work in this sector (at least not the usual ones). I have a science degree in Genetics, completed courses in Plant Tissue Culture, Seed Collection; and have done lots of work on checkouts –ie: lots of customer service stuff - the rest of it is all on the job learning as I go.

I'm excited by the Mullungdung to Coast project - getting more seed in the ground and learning much more about understory as a result.

My favourite colour? Green!

Bronwyn



SNIPPETS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

Dear Warren, (if I may call you that... I find Mr. Wombat so formal),
My neighbours up the road have a truly gorgeous frog that, together with his family, provide them with what would have to be the frog equivalent to Beethoven's Fifth every time it rains. I WANT THAT NOISE IN MY SWAMP!!! They refuse to give me little tadpoles of my own to raise, saying, "they will not survive". What can I do????
Yours affectionately,
Frog-music lover.

Dear Frog-music lover,

Your problem is not unique. Many people still think they can take tadpoles (or frogs) from puddles, dams and swamps to raise their own "mini-orchestra's".

Your neighbours are right to refuse your understandable but misguided request.

Apart from the fact that **they may well be right** in that these tadpoles may not survive at your place, these days **it is just too risky** to move populations of frogs from one place to another. Doing so can possibly endanger all frog populations by introducing all sorts of bacteria and diseases that can kill off my friends, the frogs.

However, if you are determined to have that music in your swamp, there is another way!

Look at what your neighbour has at his swamp. He probably has plenty of aquatic plants for

Warren the Wise



Expect the unexpected when you ask for advice from Warren - our newest volunteer on the Editorial Team. Warren looks forward to assisting you in all matters Landcare (or not) so ring, write or email soon.

frogs and babies to hide beneath and to feed the insects they like to eat - and lots of clumping plants like Poa (Tussock Grass,) Austrostipa (Spear Grass,) Lomandra (Spiny-headed Mat-rush,) and perhaps some Dianella species (Grass Lilies) and small bushes like Goodenia (Hop Bush) around the edges for his frogs to live in. **Did you know that frogs don't, on the whole, live in the water?** But they do need it to breed and raise their baby tadpoles in.

Your neighbour may also have a few old logs and rocks tumbled around his swamp (hollow logs are even better) to help provide luxury accommodation. He probably doesn't tidy around his swamp too much either as frogs find it hard to hide from predators with no long grass or other places to escape to.

Your neighbour probably doesn't use chemicals like weedkillers and pesticides - these are deadly to all frog species.

And you might wonder how those frogs will cover the distance between your place and his - well they are pretty good at moving around with those strong,

back, hopping legs they have. And if all else fails, they just may hitchhike! **Yes, frogs do hitchhike** as eggs they may stick to the legs or feathers of ducks or other water birds and when the bird goes from swamp to swamp, eggs may fall off and hatch into tadpoles that may become your Beethoven Frogs.

Incidentally, these would become a new species for Australia, as they are currently not listed anywhere in this country!!

Best wishes in your quest for the gorgeous Beethoven Frogs,

Warren Wombat

Dear Warren,
Can you help me identify what has eaten large patches of bark off this tree please? Given the remoteness of the location these marks are not made by mechanical nor human means.

Why would this have happened? Will the trees be killed? Some of my other Box trees have also

MOBILE POSSUMS

By Kaye Proudley

At Bingenwarri we have an abundance of Brush-tail Possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*) perhaps not quite as numerous as they are in New Zealand but not far short of that either.

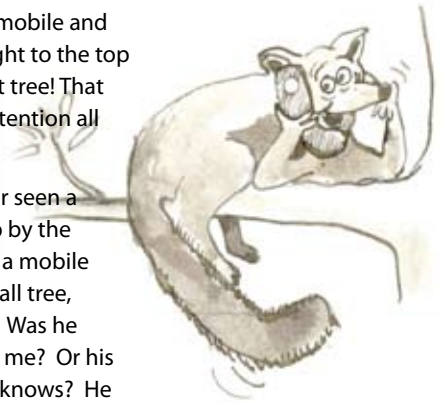
Once again I was outside at night, making a phone call on the verandah using the cordless phone, with my mobile resting on the rail beside me, when down came a 'brushy' and strolled up to me - nothing terribly unusual so far, as they usually come close - but not right up to, and I wasn't paying much attention...till it grabbed my mobile and headed straight to the top of the nearest tree! That caught my attention all right!

Have you ever seen a possum lit up by the touch-pad of a mobile phone, up a tall tree, out of reach? Was he trying to ring me? Or his mates? Who knows? He

certainly was lighting it up repeatedly - till I found a broom and poked his rear end whereupon he dropped the phone to the deck! Darn it, was it now shattered? Or un-useable? My luck was in as always...it worked!

I just need to think now of a plausible way to explain all the bite marks over the case of the phone lest I have to take it in for repair!

Moral - always keep your mobile in your pocket, or it just might get mobile on you. ■



been eaten in a "ring bark" style around the trunks. Will this kill the trees?

Puzzled!

If you have any ideas on the answer to this question, please write in and see what Warren thinks of your answers in the next issue!



PARTNER ACTIVITY

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Bruce Atkin



New Coastcare name and logo

It's now official – the former clumsy Coast Action/Coastcare name is dead in the water and the program is now officially *Coastcare Victoria*.

Tarra River Revegetation Project

Kayla Groombridge and the Robertsons Beach and Tarraville Community Consultative Committee (CCC) have had another win, with the completion in June of a small revegetation project on the Tarra River near Kayla's home. It is hoped the work will help



control erosion of the river bank at a site less than a kilometre from the entrance of the river into Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Park. The land is managed by Parks Victoria and although authorities often regard erosion processes as natural, Kayla was concerned that it was being exacerbated by visitor pressure, particularly by those who chose to drive right to the very edge of the bank. Accelerating erosion of the banks, if left unchecked, could eventually remove the riparian reserve and ultimately threaten the adjoining road to Robertsons Beach.

Kayla is Vice-President of the CCC and it is uncommon for a person in their teens to be involved in this type of environmental work, let alone providing leadership. Her attitude is that if she can see something that needs

doing, she just wants to get on and do it. She loves to be outside doing 'hands-on' work and is annoyed with others who want something done, but won't take any action themselves.

The CCC successfully applied last year for a Coastcare Victoria grant of around \$3500. This provided funds to purchase plants and erect a low barrier fence to prevent vehicle access to the river. Kayla said the greatest challenge in the process was working to find a solution that majority of people were happy with. Recently, after the planting was completed, she received complaints that the work had ruined a good fishing spot!

Despite the complexity of dealing with the various agencies and individuals to achieve her aims, Kayla is undeterred and still hopes to go on to a career in the environmental field.

Left: Kayla hard at work. **Below:** The planting volunteers and the results of their hard labour.



Coastcare Victoria Community Grants now open

Funding is now available through the Coastcare Victoria Community Grants Program. Grants of between \$2,000 and \$25,000 will be provided to successful applicants for works on conservation projects along the Victorian coast.

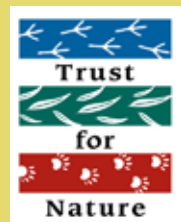
To discuss your project ideas, or for assistance

with preparing an application (it's very simple) please contact Coastcare facilitator Bruce Atkin at DSE Yarram on 51839116, email: bruce.atkin@dse.vic.gov.au. Bruce is also happy to deliver a short presentation on the Coastcare program at your group meeting.

Grant forms and guidelines are available at www.dse.vic.gov.au/coasts. ■

What is a Conservation Covenant?

I'm sure you have probably heard of a Conservation Covenant, but do you know what one is or how you would go about getting one?



Do you have an area on your private property that you feel is so special and unique that you want it to be protected, forever? You may have a patch of bush, special because of its plants and wildlife. If you are passionate about protecting that site, long after you have passed on, you may wish to consider having a Conservation Covenant placed upon it.

Trust for Nature, a not-for-profit organisation, was established in 1972 to assist with the conservation of native flora and fauna on private property. In 1978 Trust for Nature was given statutory power to enter into legally binding, voluntary covenants with landholders. Across Victoria 1000 Conservation Covenants currently exist, protecting 43,000 hectares of private land.

After a Conservation Covenant is placed on an area of land, Trust for Nature provides on-going stewardship support, to protect and enhance your sites natural values. With two thirds of Victoria consisting of private property we need to safe guard our natural assets.

Perhaps you would like to contribute to private land conservation? For more information visit www.trustfornature.org.au or call John Hick in the West Gippsland Region on 9754 7851.



YARRAM YARRAM
LANDCARE NETWORK

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