

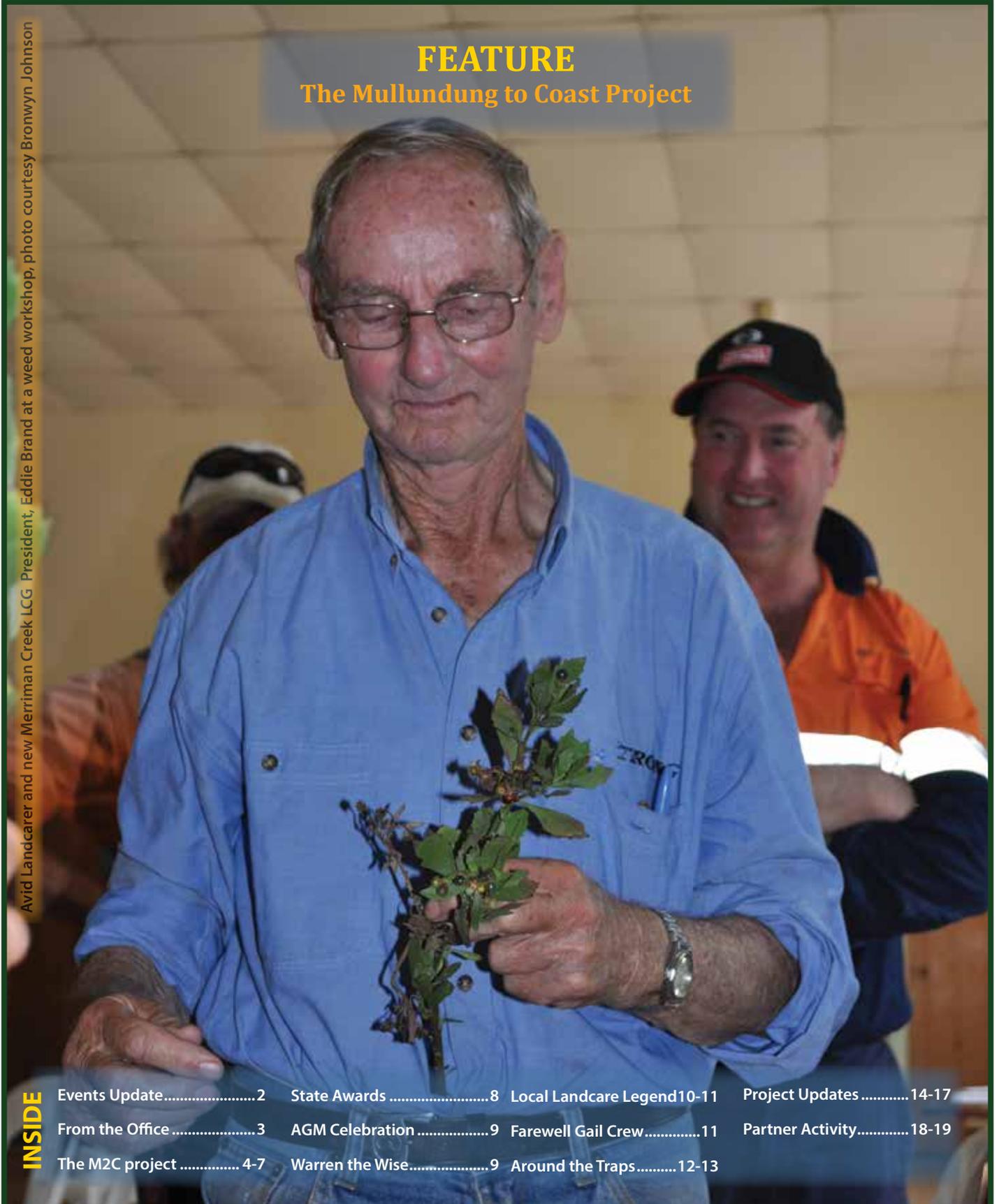


YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NEWS

Vol: 012 SPRING September 2013

Avid Landcarer and new Merriman Creek LCG President, Eddie Brand at a weed workshop, photo courtesy Bronwyn Johnson

FEATURE The Mullundung to Coast Project



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EVENTS UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



FROM THE OFFICE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Sally-Ann Henderson

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 Summer edition must be received before 25th October, 2013

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Printed on recycled paper, using non toxic inks and 100% solar power by Black Rainbow environmentally responsible printers (03) 5155 0221.

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YARRAM URBAN LCG MEETING

Where: YYLN Offices – Livingston St, Yarram
When: 6.15pm – 8th October 2013
Contact: Trevor – 0417 307 098

LFW/TFN INFORMATION DAY

Where: Peter Webb's property
When: 10am – 15th September 2013
Contact: Kaye – 51851398 by 10th September

TREEPLANTING

Where: TBC
When: 22nd September 2013
Contact: Kaye – 51851398

WOODSIDE LCG MEETING

Where: Woodside Hall
When: 8pm – 16th October 2013
Contact: Jane - 51871400

MERRIMAN CREEK WEED ID DAY

Where: Stradbroke Hall
When: 20th October 2013
Contact: Melissa - 51468328

FARM WALK

Where: Joan & Gary Wallis' property
When: 27th October 2013
Contact: Maree – 0421 222 242

MERRIMAN CREEK LCG CHRISTMAS BBQ MEETING

Where: Tarra Bulga National Park Picnic Area
When: 10th November 2013
Contact: Melissa - 51468328

Our annual visitors are set to arrive soon

The Bogong Moth (*Agrotis infusa*)

Each spring millions of these brown moths descend on the Victorian Alps. Flying at night and feeding on nectar along the way they arrive from Queensland, completing a 1,000 kilometre migration. Spending late spring and summer in the Victorian Alps they escape the northern summer heat only to return in autumn.

Common to south-eastern Australia they have a wingspan of up to 45mm. To stay cool during our Victorian summer they press their bodies against cool rock walls or crevices or congregated within cool caves. In places there are up to 17,000 moths per square metre.

Indigenous Australians relied heavily on a variety of bugs for

food and medicine. In south-eastern Australia the Bogong Moth was the most important, providing more fat and protein than any other summer food source.

In the past, at the time of the moths' arrival each year Indigenous Australians from different language groups came together to perform ceremonies, trade and share in a moth feast. Young men would climb steep cliffs to reach the moths, stunning them with smoke and they were caught in kangaroo skin bags or nets. The moths would either be cooked in hot ashes or ground into a paste. Rich in fat their average content is over 50% of the females bodyweight and over 60% in male moths. The Bogong Moth or Ngan Girra Festival is still celebrated today and people are treated

to cultural performances both traditional and contemporary.

People are not the only ones who welcome the arrival of the Bogong Moth. Mountain Pygmy Possums rely on their arrival and they are also an important food source for spiders, lizards, birds and small mammals. ■



BOGONG MOTH



Sally-Ann Says:

Hello once again and welcome to the Network's wonderful "Spring 2013" newsletter.

What a busy few weeks it has been. In August alone, YYLN has had the Annual General Meetings for Woodside, Merriman Creek and YYLN, been to the MCG to celebrate receiving a Richmond Football Club Landcare Grant, proudly watched The Norman Wettenhall Foundation win at the State Landcare Awards, organised and participated in numerous on-ground works, launched the botanical art

competition, completed the Annual Report, worked with Wellington to help groups and individuals apply for grants, and hosted a visiting Landcare group from Victoria's Western District... and they are just the things outside the office. What a great job I have!

As promised, this edition has a feature on the Gippsland Plains side of our Network, in particular the Mullungdung to Coast project that has recently come to an end. It was a project that brought great benefit to the Network and the farmers involved.

Here in the office, Bron has been working with consultants to get the independent evaluation complete and the final report sent off to Canberra. By the time you read this, all will be finished.

Some of the highlights from the evaluation report include

21 landholders completed high quality remnant vegetation protection or enhancement works on 32 sites, covering 104 hectares.

70 per cent of participants noted some level of

coordination or cooperation with a neighbour.

Landholders who participated in the project were extremely positive about their experiences and the delivery of the project by YYLN, and Bronwyn Johnson's work in particular.

The scoring system was considered to be objective and fair by both the project managers and participants.

For almost every participating landholder, the work supported through this project represents another step in a long-term process of revegetating their landscape.

But there are also lessons to be learnt from the project which we hope will help us to shape better projects into the future, such as;

"Weed management in the current approach is strongly focussed on weeds like boxthorn and blackberry, with little recognition of the significant threat that transforming weeds like pasture grasses pose to sites. Management of grasses is

difficult and expensive so the level of threat it poses should be part of initial site assessments."

"The number of landholders engaged in the project was adequate to meet the project's targets but there would have been benefits from greater and more diverse engagement.... Landcare members only manage a relatively small proportion of the landscape in the project area. Long term success of the local biodiversity plan requires a wider audience to be engaged in biodiversity management."

I hope you appreciate the hard work of the editorial team to bring everything together to form our newsletter. It is such an interesting and professional publication. It continues to receive acclaim from so many sources. I am very proud of it and I want to offer my grateful thanks to all the team.

Enjoy "Spring 2013" ■

Sally Ann

Thank you to Eddie Brand of Stradbroke who sent in this unique photo of one of a pair of white magpies that were born last Spring.

This one has a slight brown section on the bottom of its tail but being pure white their sex is unknown.

It will be interesting when they too have off-spring as to what colour they will be!

Time will tell... ■



Thank you also to Carmel Kennedy for this beautiful picture of a Spotted Pardalote, taken at the top of the Albert River.





THE M2C PROJECT

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Bronwyn Johnson

Overview

The Mullungdung to the Coast project is now officially complete.

We planted over 30,000 seedlings in the ground along with 55 kg of directly sown seed. Landholders and contractors constructed 34 km of fencing to create 104 ha of wildlife corridors and protected remnant vegetation. We conducted 9 workshops and 4 field days attended by nearly 200 people. These are the facts of the matter.

But the heart and soul of a project is always more interesting.

Protecting and enhancing Biodiversity Conservation across the Giffard Plain – Mullungdung to the Coast began many years ago with Landcare groups deciding what was important to them in their landscape and what they could do to further protect it. From this, a Local Area Plan (LAP) was developed by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and released in 2009. Paul Martin, then co-ordinator of YYLN, spent a great deal of time developing an application based on the LAP and landholder input. The Australian Government's Caring for Our Country has been funding this project since 2010 through the WGCMA.

The objectives were straightforward. Ten landholders per year to be engaged to conduct on-ground works for the enhancement and connectivity of biodiversity assets across the Giffard Plain; at least 10 landholders involved in



2 YEAR OLD "MULLUNG DUNG TO THE COAST" PROJECT

training and events to increase knowledge and skills in natural resource management; 30.6ha of revegetation activities and 19km of fencing to be completed every year. Maybe the fencing was a bit ambitious. Landholders are quite frugal, carefully positioning fence lines

to make the most of existing gates, end assemblies and boundary fences, never wanting to take more than their fair share of the grant money. I've admired their conscientious use of taxpayer's money.

Ground rules were set,

Expressions of Interest were called for and site visits conducted. They were my favourite part. I've loved hearing about other people's ideas and ambitions for their property or remaining patch of bush. Ultimately the decision of which projects were

THE M2C PROJECT

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



funded lay in the hands of a carefully constructed equation. Fortunately, we were able to fund all applications that were inside the project boundary and met the criteria.

The original project boundary was based on the study area of the LAP. However, there was enough interest beyond this boundary to argue for a greater area of the Giffard Plain to be included in the second year. This increased the potential to connect not only the Mullungdung to the coast, but the Won Wron State Forest and Holey Plains State Park as well. The project covered over 67,000ha of the Giffard Plain.

I think what has struck me most is the spirit with which landholders have approached this project. They have persisted when the ground was too hard to ram fence posts, when the ground was too wet to get the tractor on site, waited patiently for seed to germinate and attended workshops whenever they could find the time. If things didn't work as planned, new plans were formulated. Always there was optimism.

This was no better exemplified than with the unexpected illness and sudden passing of Charles Meckiff. His neighbour and long time friend Libby Balderstone stepped in and assisted his family in completing his projects in the spirit which Charles had intended as her way of honouring his memory and commitment to Landcare.

This was my first job as a project officer so I had a lot to learn. I'd like to thank all the people who had the patience to teach me. Paul Martin, Dan Garlick and Sally-Ann Henderson

as Network Co-ordinators have all trained, nudged and enlightened me in so many ways. Chris Chambers, Shayne Haywood and Alan Hill at the WGCMA have done a brilliant job of negotiating the paperwork so that I can get on with the ground work. But the font of all knowledge would have to be Samantha Monks. She knows procedures and people, tricks of the trade, where everything is and how to laugh. I've discovered that these are all essential skills when navigating the practical end of a project. So, thank you Sam, and thank you to all the landholders, contractors and staff who've worked so conscientiously on this project over the last three years.

Workshops

The workshop program was designed to increase our knowledge of local biodiversity and the issues involved in its management and protection.

Four broad themes were identified early on in the project through the Community Engagement Plan. They were Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, Biodiversity Assets, Risk Management and Cross Property Biodiversity Conservation Planning.

The formal inclusion of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage component to this project was a first for our Landcare Network. Working with the WGCMA through their cultural heritage officers we were able to deliver two workshops on this theme which were particularly well attended.

continued on next page...



A FRESHWATER MIDDEN IN THE BANK OF A RIVER



CHECKING SEEDS AT WHITE WOMAN'S WATERHOLE



WORKSHOP AT WHITE WOMAN'S WATERHOLE



THE M2C PROJECT

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Bronwyn Johnson

...continued from previous page

The depth of biodiversity in the region was explored at a number of locations. We walked the Darriman Grassland Reserve with **Vanessa Craigie** and **Susan Taylor** (DEPI). Their collective knowledge of managing grasslands was enlightening to those of us accustomed to planting trees.

An entomological enthusiast by the name of **Ken Harris** opened our eyes to the vast world of insects living in our forests. Then **Jim Reside** of Wildlife Unlimited took us wandering in the Mullungdung State Forest looking for traces of the residents. Maybe next time we try that the weather will be warmer, the residents more active and we'll see more than one wary Koala.

There is some perception that increasing native biodiversity through revegetation comes with inherent risks, such as an increase in wildfire danger and providing habitat for invasive species. Addressing these perceptions and providing management options were topics covered by staff from DEPI (then DPI and DSE) and CFA through a number of sessions.

We covered major weed species, especially the Weeds of National Significance that are of concern across the Giffard Plain with **Daniel Joubert** (DEPI). Many of these threaten productive pasture and crops as well as native vegetation. **Andy Murray** (DEPI) outlined the efforts of the Southern Ark Project to control foxes in the far east of the State, demonstrating how permanent baiting had reduced fox numbers to levels where small native mammal populations were increasing and the

overall health of the ecosystem improving as a result.

The Seedbank got involved training landholders in the use of the Burford Direct Seeding machine. This enables them to hire the machine from the Seedbank and conduct their own revegetation.

Cross Property Biodiversity Conservation Planning is not something you can do (or say) quickly. Landholders may be unaccustomed to thinking of their property as part of a landscape, their remnant as a stepping stone and their corridors as part of a network, but these are exactly what they are to the wildlife that we live with.

Planning for biodiversity really does need to happen in the broader context and this is what these sessions aimed to bring to current and future planning.

We hope that the people who have attended these workshops have walked away with at least one new piece of useful information, one alternative perspective or one novel method to try out on their patch. And we hope they share that with someone. This project was about connecting and enhancing after all.

Aboriginal Scarred Trees and Axe-grinding Grooves

These artefacts are examples of the way Aboriginal people made use of the local resources in their day to day lives.

Bark was removed from trees to make canoes, containers, shields and temporary shelters. Often scarred trees are found near rivers, lakes and floodplains.



INTRODUCTORY ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE WORKSHOP

The scar is generally regular in shape with parallel sides and rounded ends, stopping above ground level. The tree will usually be over 200 years old and one that occurs naturally in the district. Box, stringybark and red gum were commonly used.

A great example of one of these trees is shown in the picture on the next page.

Axe-grinding grooves are oval-shaped indentations usually in sandstone outcrops almost always found along the edges of waterways and wetlands.

The fine-grained sandstone was

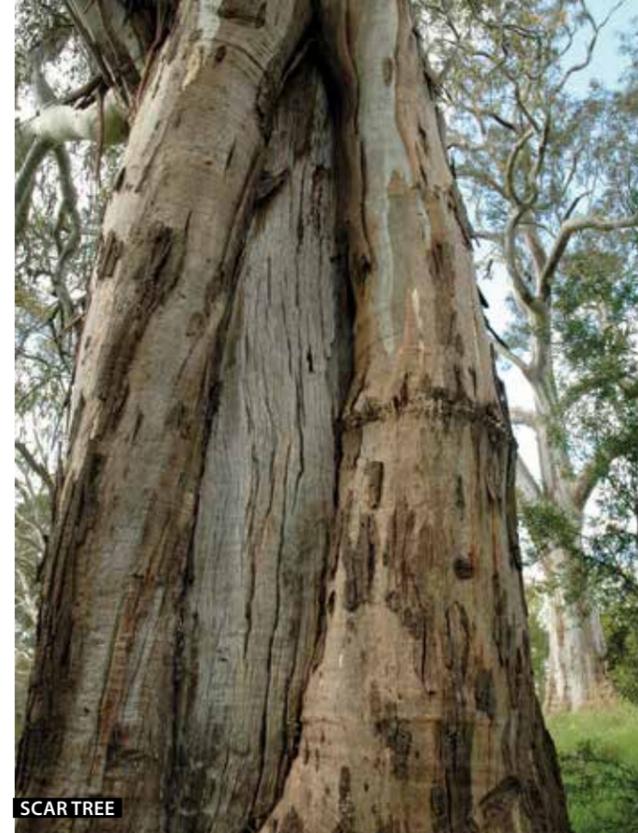


THE M2C PROJECT

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Mandy Leggett



SCAR TREE



AXE GRINDING/SHARPENING GROOVES

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in your region

The West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority is committed to working with Indigenous stakeholders in Natural Resource Management (NRM) in all aspects of its work throughout the West Gippsland Region.

The organisation is committed to developing and maintaining sound working relationships with Indigenous people and organisations based on mutual trust, respect and understanding. Traditional Land Owners historically travelled through the country from the mountains to the sea in this region, taking advantage of seasonal foods, conducting ceremonies and caring for the land. Traditional Ecological Knowledge can be combined with modern techniques and put into practice in land management of today.

The Traditional Land Owning Groups located within the West Gippsland Catchment Management region are: The Gunaikurnai, Bunurong, Boon Wurrung and the Wurundjeri peoples. Most of the Yarram Landcare network is located on Gunaikurnai country.

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) Board of Directors; the representative committee appointed under the Victorian Heritage Council to represent the Gunaikurnai communities of Gippsland. GLaWAC was appointed as a RAP (Registered Aboriginal Party) in 2007 and is responsible for cultural heritage matters within the RAP boundary.

The WGCMMA works closely with GLaWAC on all matters of Cultural Heritage, one project we are working on is to inform landholders about the types of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage which may be found on their property, and how to inform GLaWAC if they find anything. To date we have had a joint workshop at Giffard Plains, where Lloyd Hood from GLaWAC explained the types of objects and sites that can be found and the processes when GLaWAC comes on site to record the objects. This was a really interesting session and more will be held in the coming year.

Recently a walk and talk was held at White Woman's Waterhole, by Annette Mullett from GLaWAC and Mandy Leggett from WGCMMA where participants learned some Cultural Heritage information and also some traditional plant uses. The interest shown in this session was great, with many people attending. More of these sessions will also be held across the region.

If you think you have found Cultural Heritage sites or objects in your region or on your property please contact GLaWAC as they are very keen to record and map new findings.

Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC)
197 Macleod Street, Bairnsdale VIC 3875 | PO Box 1699,
Bairnsdale VIC 3875

T 03 5152 5100 | F 03 5152 1666 | E admin@glawac.com.au



STATE AWARDS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Sally-Anne Henderson

YYLN was pleased and proud to have nominated two entries into the State Landcare Awards. The Norman Wettenhall Foundation (NWF) was nominated in the "Landcare Partnership Award" category and Helga Binder was nominated to the "Individual Landcarer Award".

Helga is a very deserving nominee, giving great swaths of her time and expertise to our Network in the form of serving on the Board, chairing the JARR Committee, being past Chair



Helga Binder, Beth Mellick, Sally-Ann Henderson and Geoff Park at the state awards

of the Employment Steering Committee and of course all the work she does for us using her graphic design skills. She is the reason our Network has such a professional look to all our publications. The Welcome Pack, JARR brochures, newsletters and annual reports are all designed by Helga. She was nominated

by Melissa Ainsworth our Publications Chair, a person who appreciates just what a dedicated and hard worker Helga is!

The NWF is a very important partner and supporter of YYLN's JARR area project. They have been a faithful donor to our Network; supporting us to get

the Communities For Nature JARR project and allowing us to develop the JARR Biodiversity Blueprint and JARR brochures. They also support a range of other Landcare groups across Victoria and Australia through their small grants program and their Landscape Restoration projects.

The Awards were held at Government House on the 28th August. **The Norman Wettenhall Foundation (NWF) was announced this year's winner of the Landcare Partnership Category.** Both Helga and Sally-Ann were thrilled to watch Beth Mellick and Geoff Park receive the award from the Governor on behalf of the Foundation. ■



MIRRIDONG'S LANDCARE TEAM HARD AT WORK MAKING TABLE DECORATIONS FOR THIS YEAR'S LANDCARE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

AGM CELEBRATION

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Sally-Anne Henderson

Once again we had a great time of feasting and fellowship at this year's Annual General Meeting Celebration. People travelled from far (Maffra) and close (a few doors down).

Members who had been in Landcare for a 1000 years joining with some that were coming to their first event. United in their passion of caring about our land everyone had a fabulous time with new friends and old.

This year's theme was Shipwrecks along our local

coastline. Don Love took us on a slide show adventure from Lakes Entrance to the other side of the Prom, with a wonderful collection of photographs of before and now. Combined with tales of convict escapees, goldfields' deserters and frightful storms, it made for a very interesting evening. Don is the author of a series of books covering the whole Victorian coastline and Eddie Brand was the lucky door prize winner of a signed copy of Don's Shipwrecks of South Gippsland book.

One of the first things to impress people this year were the amazing table decorations. Although they looked like we had spent a fortune on getting in professional party decorators

or local artists, they were in fact the work of Mirridong's very own Lindsay, Sue, Debbie and Drew. Mirridong have been running a Landcare elective on Monday mornings over term three. They have assisted us by removing old tree guards, tree planting, delivering stakes, weeding the recently planted Tarra Trail and of course making wonderful table decorations.

We were privileged to have Alex Arbuthnot AM join our gathering to share some of his insights and observations about Landcare at the broader level. Alex is on the Landcare Australia Board as well as the West Gippsland CMA Board. He also mentioned some potential new opportunities he was aware of

as part of a recent agribusiness delegation to Asia.

The actual AGM was very brief this year, as we had no elections – just simply the passing of the Chairman's Report, Treasurer's Report and Board Honorarium. These reports along with audit reports, and more importantly all the wonderful reports from groups and projects can be found in this year's Annual Report. The report is available to download from our website <http://westgippsland.landcarevic.net.au/yyln/newsletters/yyln-annual-report/view>

or request a copy from the office. ■

Warren the Wise



Dear Warren,

Please heeeeeeellpp! My plants are being eaten before I even get them in the ground. Something is eating the plants when I plant them from punnets into my garden. Is there anything I can do?

Beaten Gardener.

Dear Beaten, So your plants are being eaten! Isn't that the whole idea? All plants are fair game to all my relatives and friends like

possums, rabbits, wallabies, birds and.....even me!

Ha - I did have a chuckle at your letter – but then I realised that you are a human and have a very different viewpoint to me! Although I believe you humans do have plants you sometimes eat from a part of your gardens called Veggie Gardens.

You will always have trouble here in the Yarram area as my friends, relatives and I (and we are a very numerous mob!) have

a right to any food we can find we reckon, especially since so much of our country was taken over by you and your crops and animals.

There are a few places we can't gain much access to, though we can see into these structures and drool every night over the delicious looking food inside! I've been told that some of you humans have taken to building huge wire sheds over your plants so that we can no longer get in to eat. How selfish you all are!!

Fortunately for us, there is not much on your side in the way of deterrents to keep us off - the only thing I can think of is Quassia Chips which are revoltingly bitter to us, but fairly expensive to you.

It's a simple matter of spraying your plants with a much-diluted dose of Quassia water that needs to be reapplied after rain.

There is also another product

made with egg yolk which acts as a bit of a sticking agent. It sticks unpleasant bits onto plants to put us off eating newly planted shrubs and trees - it works, but once again is fairly expensive for you.

People have tried making dummies of themselves to scare us away but we quickly learn these dummies are not harmful to us - they can't chase us, nor shoot us or scare us. They do look funny though!

And as for hanging round shiny things in your trees to frighten us away, well even that only works for a short time till we see that those things aren't harming us at all.

I think if I were a human, I'd just grow twice as much as I needed and surely then you'd end up with a few feeds for yourselves as well as for us!! ■

Warren



LOCAL LANDCARE LEGENDS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Melissa Ainsworth

Who, over the past 30 or so years has lived on the Gippsland Plain and has actively instigated and participated in Landcare projects? To this day they remain active members of the Woodside Group and have served on the former YYLN Board as well as other Landcare Group Office Bearer roles? Well, that would be Nicki and Peter Jennings!

As generational farmers and educated teachers the Jennings' originated from Bombala (NSW) and settled at Giffard West in 1981. Both Nicki and Peter were concerned about the lack of vegetation across the plain especially with frequent seasonal dust storms blowing away vital topsoil.

The first of three properties the Jennings' would go on to farm had a sparse scattering of Cypress and Sugar Gum trees. From these early days, to date, the Jennings' have undertaken numerous revegetation projects including participation in the current "Mullungdung to Coast" program. Their first major project was to repair a drain that had potential to become a serious erosion issue. The site was fenced to remove stock and revegetated with species such as Swamp Paperbark (*Melaleuca ericifolia*). The Jennings' were surprised to see how well and quickly the vegetation established and scouring of the soil soon ceased.

Following this successful



PETER & THE DIRECT SEEDING MACHINE



NICKI AND A 20 YEAR OLD DIRECT SEEDING PROJECT



REMNANT PROTECTION PROJECT

project Nicki and Peter then decided to fence out a small patch of remnant vegetation. Showing declining health the stand of trees were vital for providing their sheep with shade from the hot summer sun and as shelter from the howling cold winds. Over time regeneration has been pleasing and supplementary endemic plantings has filled gaps and has helped add some diversity to the species present.

Other completed revegetation projects include both directly seeded and tube stock corridors. The Jennings' long term plan is to link all of these sites together. Not only will this create a fabulous windbreak and corridor for wildlife, it will have major benefits for both stock and soil health.

Nicki was the founding Secretary of the Stradbroke/Woodside Farm Trees Group, which evolved into several Landcare groups. Over the next 25 years individual farmers across the district saw the

continued on next page...

LOCAL LANDCARE LEGENDS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Melissa Ainsworth



EROSION PROJECT SITE (BEFORE) 1982



EROSION PROJECT SITE (TODAY) 2013

...continued from previous page

multiple benefits of planting trees and revegetation projects began commencing across the district. Nicki also volunteered several terms as Secretary/Treasurer and as a general Board Member of the former YYLN known as the Yarram Yarram

Catchment Network. Peter and Nicky were active members of the former Giffard-Darriman Landcare group before their current membership with the Woodside group. Having recently established a "Friends of the Darriman Reserve" group

the members conduct litter and pine wildling control works, a place special to many locals as the former site of the Darriman School.

Like most Landcare members the Jennings' are passionate about the health of the

environment. Shying away from any fanfare you have to admire their dedication - not only for their years of volunteering to Landcare but with what they have achieved on ground to date and their ongoing participation today. ■

Vale *By David McAninly*

Gayle Smith (Crew)



The YYLN Board and the broader Landcare community were saddened to learn of the premature passing of Gayle on August 4th. An inaugural member of the Albert River

Trees Group. Gayle and her late husband, John Crew were among the first members of the group which formed in 1985 (the 27th in the state). John acted as Secretary/Treasurer for 7 yrs.

Gayle and John set out to maximise their great knowledge and interest in the environment by planting prolonged stretches of native trees for shade and shelter belts right across their property on Lane's Road, Gelliondale. Some plantings with tube stock and also experimenting with direct drilling the seed. They were also active in salinity control and Waterwatch.

Over the years their farm became a showcase of Landcare in action. All the while Gayle was assisting as well as developing a magnificent garden.

With three children, Emma, Paul

and Andrew attending Alberton West Primary School, Gayle and John spent many hours working in the grounds, garden and play areas of the school. They never missed a working bee! They also contributed material to add to the renovation of the school/hall kitchen.

Always involved with the school at tree planting days at the local Recreation Reserve, roadside projects etc. These activities included the revegetation of the 7km Gelliondale Rail Trail and the Albert River Picnic Reserve (at Alberton Bridge) another local Landcare project which saw the vegetation fenced off, a gas BBQ installed and observation/fishing decks erected.

After John's premature passing at just 48, Gayle and family were present at the official opening

of the picnic site, appropriately named the "John Crew Memorial Park".

Gayle relocated with her young family to Inverloch where her great botanical knowledge came to the fore again when she established another lovely garden. She later married Bruce Smith, a former local dairy farmer and relocated to Murchison where once again she established a beautiful garden on the banks of the Goulburn River.

Upon retirement Gayle & Bruce travelled extensively and Gayle continued her great interest in the Australian Open Gardens precinct, with her own garden on display a couple of times over recent years.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Bruce, Emma, Paul and Andrew and families. ■



AROUND THE TRAPS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By our Landcare Groups

Hedley

The Hedley Landcare group recently undertook works as part of the Nine Mile Creek Restoration Project. Twelve people enjoyed a fine and sunny day to plant 1500 trees and shrubs along a two kilometre fenced section of the Nine Mile creek. The day was topped off with a delicious BBQ lunch.

The next group activity is a farm walk at Joan and Gary Wallis' property on Sunday October 27th.

Albert River

Members of the Albert River Landcare group have been busy participating in on ground works as part of the JARR project on their properties.

We have also been successful in receiving approval to retain native vegetation and some plantation area as koala habitat in the headwaters of the Little Albert River at Hiawatha. This area will add to a developing chain of habitat that will help in the preservation of our unique Strzelecki koalas.

Woodside

Woodside Landcare Group recently held their AGM with all retaining their positions with the exception of the President position. Gavin Missen has stepped down and Fergus Irving has now taken on the role. Gavin has done a wonderful job and the group is very thankful for his hard work during his term. Our group was treated to a very informative talk by renowned Lichen expert Simone

Louwhoff and we were very grateful to have her visit.

Our next meeting will be at the Woodside Hall on the 16th of October at 8pm.

Merriman Creek

Merriman Creek Landcare group recently held its AGM with Ed Brand elected as President, Ann Coulson and David Matthews as Vice Presidents and Melissa Ainsworth returned as Secretary. Our guest speaker was Andy Booth from the Gippsland Plains Conservation Management Network. We were also treated to a demonstration of the "Rodenator" machine. This is a new tool for pest animal control and may prove useful for treating both rabbit warrens and fox dens.

We are planning to host a Weed Identification day on Sunday 20th of October. The day will include information on identifying and treating weeds and pest animal control. We will also have the "Rodenator" available for demonstration. Please contact our group for more information.

Yarram Urban

The Yarram Urban group has recently made contact with the management committee of the Yarram Botanical Gardens. Constructed in 1988 as part of the bicentennial celebrations the gardens are a valuable and attractive asset to Yarram and are in need of some TLC. We

continued on next page...



Photos on these pages show the hard-at-work Hedley, Binginwarri and Wonyip Landcarers getting those plants into the ground... We wonder if they whistle while they work?

AROUND THE TRAPS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By our Landcare Groups

continued from previous page...

have applied for a community grant with the Wellington Shire Council and if successful we will commence a long and

worthwhile project.

The Yarram Urban Landcare group is holding its next meeting at 6.15pm on the 8th



of October at the YYLN Offices, Livingston Street, Yarram.

Wonyip

Members of the Wonyip Landcare group have started a new project to remove weeds and to revegetate the public land surrounding the Wonyip Hall.

The Webb family have been busy with weed control on the extensions of the Quoll Corridor project. The Spittle family have continued to care for plantings on a shelterbelt along the Dingo Creek side of their property. In total, three kilometres of roadside weed removal has also been completed by the Lang family.

Binginwarri

The Binginwarri Landcare Group invited you to a special day on the 15th of September with three guest speakers; Kylie Singleton from "Land for Wildlife", John Hick from "Trust for Nature" and property owner Peter Webb.

The day included a fabulous walk in Wonyip's Strzelecki Country and a delicious free BBQ lunch courtesy of our group. They also had many varied displays on all sorts of nature subjects, free hand outs, a lucky door prize and the grand company of like minded individuals – all while learning about how to become a Land for Wild-lifer and how to covenant some, or all, of their land under Trust for Nature. It was such a big day that we will give a full rundown, with pictures, in the Summer Edition of this Newsletter. Congratulations to all who attended. ■



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

YYLN Hosts Lismore Land Protection Group

A group of Landcare members from the Lismore (Vic) Land Protection Group travelled to Gippsland in August. Several YYLN Landcare members met up with the group for lunch in Yarram before heading out to look at two pasture trials at Greg and Jenny Foats farm at Woodside.

Greg and Jenny participated in the Gippsland Plains Drought Tolerant Pasture Demonstration and are now part of the AotG



project. The Foats are trialling poultry litter to increase soil carbon on a recently established perennial pasture. This is being applied every year at six tonnes/ha over the next three years. There is a control paddock adjacent to the trial where normal management practices are maintained including fertiliser application and grazing.

Lismore Landcare Facilitator, Shari McConachy said her "group was very interested in the trials as both are very relevant to our area and several

members already use chook manure and grow lucerne." She also said "how much people enjoyed reading the YYLN newsletter and everyone was very impressed with the JARR flora and fauna brochures."

CfOC - Healthy Soils: Sustainable Farms - Building Carbon & Managing pH in West Gippsland

For the last four years, all five Landcare Networks within the WGCMA have been involved in the CfOC Healthy Soils project. A series of field days and

workshops have been run across the region.

In June, YYLN held a "Soils, Carbon & Compost Field Day" at Brian & Jenny Nicholls' sheep property at Stradbroke. Guest presenters included: Nick Dudley, Doug Crawford (DEPI), Peter Ronalds (WPCLN) and Slobodan Vujokic (Compost Victoria).

Topics included: Sustainable farming – building soil carbon through healthy soils using compost; local soil types, structure and texture. Activities included a demonstration of the Christies Hydraulic Soil Corer to collect soil cores and a farm walk to look at the new AotG pasture trial using compost.

As part of the Healthy Soils project YYLN is also producing a series of case studies on three local primary producers. The focus is "Healthy Soils – Sustainable Farms". These publications will be distributed to the farming community later this year.

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GREG FOAT WITH POULTRY LITTER



PROJECT UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Samantha Monks

...continued from previous page

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

Year 1 JARR Project Outcomes:

During 2012-13 selected projects occurred within areas of 'high priority' for protecting remaining habitat under the Department of Sustainability and Environment's (DSE's) "JARR Area EVC Bioregional Conservation Status" and are also part of the "Strzelecki Koala Linkage Strategy – South-East Strzelecki Corridor, Albert River Link".

1. Landscape scale biolinks:

3 large wildlife corridors created, connecting high quality remnant vegetation / primary koala habitat areas.

Locations: Hedley Range/ Alberton West State Forest to Hiawatha Hills. Wonyip Tiger Quoll Corridor - Partners: Hancock Victoria Plantations (HVP) / World Wildlife Fund (WWF)/YYLN.

Total Corridor Area: Approx. 30ha with 3km fencing – plain wire, no barbed wire

Vegetation: 10,000 locally indigenous tube stock planted across new biolinks.

2. Blackberry Suppression Works: JARR Catchment:

Blackberry treated across 30 properties from Binginwarri to Wonyip covering approx. 2000 ha. Focus on riparian areas linked to remnant forest to allow "koala movement". Includes Wonyip Tiger Quoll Corridor - HVP/WWF/YYLN.

A JARR Community Workshop was held during June 2013 at the Alberton West Recreation Reserve. We officially launched our latest JARR brochures: "Ferns, Lichens, Liverworts & Mosses" and "Mammals, Reptiles & Aquatic Fauna". This workshop also gave community members an opportunity to learn about current environmental projects across the JARR area and help prioritise future project areas.

Note: Expressions of Interest are now open 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): Erosion Control Program Outcomes 2012 - 13:

YYLN/ WGCMA/ DEPI Partnership:

Total Area Protected: Approx. 20ha, 3 km fencing - plain wire, no barbed wire.



SALTMARSH PROJECT NEAR REEVES BEACH

Vegetation: 10,000 locally indigenous tube stock planted in gully areas – Spring 2013.

Weed Control: Approx. 4ha blackberry treated in fenced off gully area.

2012-13: Final year of a four year program. Total 3 project sites / 3 properties / 3 Soil Erosion Management Plans (SEMP's). Fencing off, removing stock and revegetating actively eroding gully areas in the Albert River Catchment from Hedley Range to Hiawatha. Blackberry treated where necessary.

In the long term, these erosion control actions will directly reduce the potential of soil erosion, either land slips and/or tunnel erosion from occurring. This landscape-scale project will also improve farm productivity by minimising stock losses in gully areas, providing large shelterbelt areas and improved biodiversity through the re-establishment of vital wildlife biolinks in the JARR Catchments. (EVC 30:Wet Forest and EVC 16: Lowland Forest)

YYLN/WGCMA Coastal Saltmarsh Protection Project 2012-13:

Through the WGCMA's 'Regional

Growth Fund Flood Support Program, YYLN has received another round of funding to continue on-ground works to protect high priority coastal saltmarsh areas between Reeves Beach and Manns Beach.

A group of neighbouring landholders have worked collaboratively to protect a large section of coastal wetlands adjoining Nooramunga. Three kilometres of fencing has been erected to date, removing stock access from fragile saltmarsh communities where 10,000 locally indigenous tube stock will be planted this spring.

Invasive Plants and Animals (IPA) Program:

Gippsland Coastal Plains Gorse Control Program (GCPGCP)

– Yarram Landcare Leading the Way

This is the final year of our highly successful community program aimed at removing Gorse across the Giffard coastal plain from Hedley to Seaspray. The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) has supported this program since 2009, providing

continued on next page...

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



PROJECT UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Samantha Monks

...continued from previous page

initiatives to landholders to control this persistent and highly invasive weed.

Throughout the Gorse program there has been a strong inter-agency partnership between YYLN, VGT, WGCMA, DEPI, WSC and VicRoads. But most importantly the GCPGCP has provided valuable community support and extension in Yarram Landcare's efforts to control Gorse.

Serrated Tussock (*Nassella trichotoma*) in WGCMA

It is also the final year of a three year project funded by the Federal Government's Caring for Our Country program, aimed at controlling Serrated Tussock (ST) across West Gippsland. Through this project the "Seaspray ST Containment Zone" was established covering 14,000 ha. or a 5km radius around known ST infestations near Seaspray.

A ST education campaign targeted over 100 landholders across the containment zone. Two community surveys were also conducted across the containment zone to help capture and establish a baseline of community awareness of ST. Three paddock demonstrations

have also been established using integrated ST control through best practice pasture management.

A feature of this project has been the strong inter-agency partnership between YYLN, WGCMA, DEPI and local landholders. **NOTE:** A Weed of National Significance (WoNS), ST is regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential for spread, economic and environmental impacts.

Invasive Plants and Animal partnership with Wellington Shire Council and Department of Environment & Primary Industries.

For several years, YYLN has provided advice and support to the local community and partnership agencies on IPA matters. Through our IPA projects we have delivered large sections of on-ground works across our Landcare network. In 2012-13 main target weeds included: Blackberry, Broom, Gorse and Serrated Tussock. YYLN has also provided support to the Woodside Landcare Group through the new Woodside Rabbit Buster Program. ■



THANKS TO MARTYN DICKIE FOR THIS FOXY PHOTO

By Bronwyn Johnson



Bronwyn Johnson, Seedbank and Mullundung to Coast Project Officer.

Seedbank

Recently, the Seedbank was successful in receiving a Wellington Shire Community Assistance Grant for the production of an online revegetation guide for our area.

Currently, plant species selection for a site is based on lists compiled over many years from various sources. I know these lists are somewhat generic, a good foundation has been laid, but there are gaps in the knowledge. I am hoping to fill many of those gaps. I'm not aiming to write an exhaustive botanical treatise on the indigenous species of the YYLN area (I'll leave that to Kay Proudley!) but I do want to make the information that is available to some of us more readily available to anyone in the Network in as simple and accurate a format as possible.

In order to update the existing lists before we launch them on the web, I have a request to make. Please, please, please;

email, write, call, drop into the office, stop me in the street or welcome me to your group meetings and let me know what glaring omissions or errors require rectifying. I will be attending at least one meeting of every group with lists and maps to which you can contribute your vast and valuable knowledge. This is an opportunity for community members to help improve the quality of the revegetation work carried out by all of us, now and into the future.

To begin with, I'll be focusing on the species that we are able to use in revegetation projects, so unless you've come up with a sure-fire way to grow endangered orchids, I probably won't be including them on the lists at this stage. But, online documents are more readily updateable than printed ones, so who knows what we'll be able to add at some later date.

Now, I often find drawings of plants to be far more useful for identification purposes than photos, so in order to furnish our guide with descriptive pictures we are running a competition and exhibition for botanical illustration at Yarram's Courthouse Gallery in February of next year. Anyone with a love of plants and a willingness to try depicting them is quite welcome to enter. Hedley Range Services are generously sponsoring the competition with a prize pool of \$1000. Entry forms are available from the Courthouse or by contacting myself.

Courthouse Gallery

<http://www.yarramchgallery.blogspot.com.au/search/label/Forms> ■

PROJECT UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



By Bronwyn Johnson

Tree Health Decline – Another Perspective

Previously we outlined possible causes of dieback and decline in the health of our native trees. However, it may be that these 'causes' are in fact symptoms of more complex interactions that began earlier than the first noticeable effects. In some parts of Australia where dieback had been blamed on bird, insect or koala defoliation, removal of the offenders did not result in the recovery of the trees. Makes you wonder why not?

One theory proposed by Vic Jurskis states that 'chronic abiotic stress causes tree decline when the function of roots is impaired by changes in soils'. Pests and pathogens take advantage of the stressed tree, impairing its ability to recover and extreme climatic events such as drought can accelerate the process.

So, what is happening in the soil to cause this stress and how is it different to the last 5000 years in which eucalypt forests have come to dominate our landscape? The answer appears to be increased soil nitrogen. This can occur by:- adding it directly as fertiliser; farming animals which excrete it; growing nitrogen fixing plants such as clovers, or not burning organic matter and leaving it to rot. All these actions have increased since European settlement.

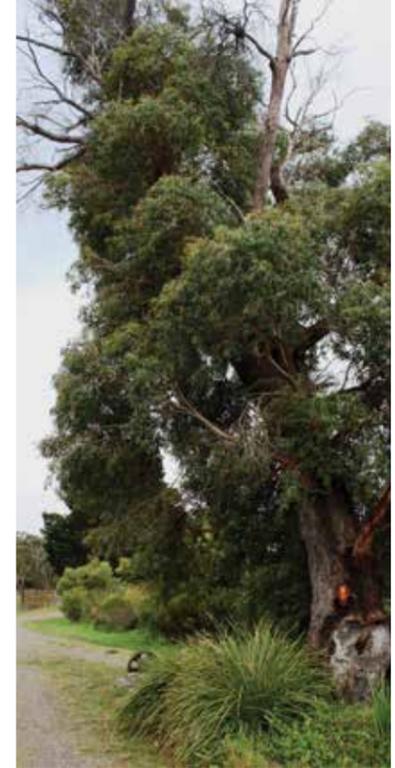
Much of the decline is in grassy, open eucalypt forests. These evolved in dry, nutrient poor soils which experienced

periodic low intensity burning. Fires prevented the build up of decaying plant matter and exposed soils to the drying effects of the sun. Without burning, mulch levels increase, releasing more nitrogen into the soil simultaneously shielding it. This creates moist, cool, fertile conditions which encourage a dense, shrubby understory to develop. The shrubs further shade the soil and create more mulch, raising nitrogen levels even higher. These vigorously growing shrubs often out-compete the already stressed trees.

Increased nitrogen also alters the habitat for species of soil mycorrhiza that co-evolved to assist eucalypts in utilising the normally scant nitrogen resources. Many die and are replaced with other, pathogenic species that thrive in the higher nitrogen levels.

These changes lead to root stress and the first outward signs of decline- defoliation, followed by epicormic growth. New growth is high in nitrogen and generally tastier to folivores (animals that eat foliage) than older leaves. Repeated cycles of defoliation and reshooting can then occur, often dramatically increasing the populations of the folivores making them appear to be the primary cause of the problem. Dieback becomes the obvious sign of decline that gets our attention.

According to this theory tree decline may be reversible with the reintroduction of low intensity burns. This should be a carefully considered option. Anyone wanting to conduct a



Interestingly, here is a tree in the driveway of Bronwyn Johnson's place.

When she moved to the property it was showing all the classic signs of dieback, as shown by the dead outer canopy.

About 5 years ago she underplanted around the trunk with *Lomandra*, *Dianella*, *Arthropodium* and *Bulbine*. The tree is now showing obvious signs of improved health even though she continues to drive past it every day. As many of the surface roots are now protected it appears their function has returned to normal. Last year Bronwyn noticed that even a Jacky Lizard had moved into her little habitat!

vegetation management burn can contact Mike McStephen at the CFA on 0409 116 915 or m.mcstephen@cfa.vic.gov.au for expert advice on how to go about this.

Parks and DEPI have been implementing a burn plan at the Darriman Grassland Reserve to restore this grassy ecosystem. Hopefully the woodland areas of the reserve will also benefit from this action.

Lone paddock trees are often subject to these soil changes to a greater degree than forest trees as a result of stock camps. They also suffer from soil compaction and surface root damage. Burning around paddock trees is hardly practical; fencing them out from stock is the most obvious way to protect

them. Ideally the fence should encompass the drip line as this ensures the fine surface roots are protected from damage. Plant native grasses and small shrubs under the tree to help restore the soil functionality. Better still; incorporate lone trees into blocks of vegetation or wildlife corridors.

If you have thoughts or observations about this theory please share them with us. This problem affects whole landscapes and so probably requires whole communities to tackle it.

Jurskis, Vic. *Eucalypt decline in Australia, and a general concept of tree decline and dieback.*

Forest Ecology and Management 215 (2005) 1-20 ■

For further information on Mullundung to Coast or Seedbank please contact: Bronwyn Johnson, YYLN Project Officer - Ph. 03 5175 7895, Mob. 0429 808 130 or Email bronwynj@wgcma.vic.gov.au



PARTNER ACTIVITY

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Samantha Monks

Richmond Football Club Landcare Grant 2013

I am really happy to announce that Yarram Yarram Landcare Network (YYLN) and local partners are the recipients of the 2013 Richmond Football Club (RFC) Landcare Grant!

YYLN has been awarded \$5,000 for the project to achieve positive outcomes for sustainable landscapes, healthy waterways and connected communities. The 'Roaring for the Environment' project will engage local schools and Landcare groups and will link wildlife corridors by restoring habitat, using local indigenous vegetation at Yarram Secondary College (YSC).

Key on-ground works will include landscaping and construction of wildlife corridors including garden beds, benches and nesting boxes. A footy clinic and tree planting day will be held at YSC early next year.

On a cold August morning, Trevor Colvin (Yarram Urban Landcare Group), myself, YSC VCAL students and staff Russell Mitchell and John Rojo, travelled to Melbourne on the school mini bus. After a tour of the MCG we went to the RFC where we met up the rest of the Landcare team, Phil McGarry, Sally-Ann and Dan Garlick. Wayne Chester (YSC Principal) was presented with the group award by Richmond CEO Brendon Gale and Richmond midfielder, Nathan Foley at the ME Bank Centre at the Punt Road Oval. ■

Here is an account of the visit written by: Shawn Vening and Tim Franke – Yarram Secondary College Year 11 VCAL

On 20th of August the Year 11 VCAL students went down to Melbourne to receive a \$5000 grant through Landcare and the Richmond Football Club. In the morning we arrived to school as normal and then we left for Melbourne via Morwell. We even saw snow on the side of the road!

We arrived at the MCG early so we had a kick in the park before we went on the tour of the MCG. We all learnt a lot from the tour, our guide Helen kept getting cranky at Russ and Rojo for falling behind. When we finished the tour we went back to the bus and drove 1 and a ½ kms down the road to Punt Road. We were again early so we kicked the football in the park for ½ an hour.

We then went into the new Richmond Club Rooms and had a tour, then went into a room where we were presented the grant by Nathan Foley the Landcare Ambassador for Richmond Football Club. We then all went down to the front of the new rooms and planted a Blackwood Wattle. Then we went back in and had lunch and interviewed Nathan. After that we headed home. We stopped at Officer to fill up with diesel and also to eat Macca's and KFC. It was a good drive back to school and a good day all over. ■

A HAPPY GROUP AT THE RICHMOND FOOTBALL CLUB



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PARTNER ACTIVITY

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK



L to R: Wayne Chester (YSC Principal), Phil McGarry (Regional Landcare Coordinator – WGCMA), Nathan Foley (RFC) and Brendan Gale (RFC – CEO)

Below: Students helping Nathan Foley plant a tree.



A special thank you to Natalie Zaibak (RFC) for showing us around the inner sanctum!

Indigenous Plant Exhibition

In an inventive new partnership with the Yarram Courthouse Gallery, the YYLN has come up with a great way to utilise our vast reservoir of local community talent. The Indigenous Plant exhibition, planned for early next year, will showcase local artistic skills and collect resources for future YYLN publications.

Sponsored by Hedley Range Services, there will be first, second and third place prizes awarded to the value of \$1,000. Selected art works will be used by the Yarram Seedbank to illustrate its new on-line guide for revegetation projects within Gippsland.

If you are interested in contributing an artwork, Entry forms, species lists and exhibition requirements are available from Bronwyn Johnson or Yarram Courthouse Gallery. Closing date for artwork is Friday 31st of January 2014 and the Opening Night will be FRIDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2014.

There is already a lot of enthusiasm around this project so jump on board and get those coloured pencils working.

The Yarram Courthouse Gallery invites you to enter

OUR NATIVE PLANTS ILLUSTRATED

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

27 FEB – 25 MARCH 2014

Proudly Sponsored by Hedley Range Services



Contacts for Individual Active Landcare Groups

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Carrajung and District LG

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