



YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NEWS

Vol: 18 AUTUMN 2015

FEATURES

YYLN Awards night

Local Landcare Profile - Dave & Jane Smith

Understanding Mistletoe



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EVENTS UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

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

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Melissa Ainsworth, Helga Binder, Sally-Ann Henderson, Samantha Monks, Dina Monks and Warren the Wise.

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Deadlines

15 May 2015 is the deadline for the Winter issue contributions.

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Cover photo

The winners of the 2015 YYLN Landcare Awards.

Photograph courtesy of
Samantha Monks.

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BINGINWARRI LCG

When: Sun. 29th Mar 2015
leaving Bingi area at 8.45am:
What: Walk, Talk 'n Gawk with Jenny Wolswinkel to find and view the Gunyah Tree. BYO lunch, drinks, chair, insect repellent (leeches are possible!) camera, etc.

RSVP: Please call Kaye by Fri. 27th Mar on 5185 1398

'WASHED UP' EXHIBITION

When: Fri. 3 April 2015, 5.30pm to 7.30
What: Official opening of 'Washed Up' exhibition
Where: Yarram Courthouse Gallery, Commercial Rd. Yarram.

BINGINWARRI LCG

When: Sun 12th Apr 2015 (To be confirmed)
Working bee to prepare for ANZAC Commemoration & Dedication. See ANZAC Commemoration plan below for further details.

WOODSIDE GENERAL MEETING

When: 8pm – April 15
Where: Woodside Hall
RSVP: Jane - 51871400

BINGINWARRI - ANZAC COMMEMORATION & DEDICATION

When: Sat 25th Apr 2015 at 10am
Where: On the corner of School & Tap Tap Roads, Binginwarri. Date and time not yet confirmed but the planting of English Oak trees will go ahead as soon as possible as well as the laying of a foundation rock and its plaque to commemorate the men from this district who served in the First World War. Refreshments will be available in the Hall after the dedication ceremony.

RSVP: Please call Kaye ASAP if you know of any descendants of families from the Binginwarri area who served in the First World War, or even just lived here in the war era, who might like to be invited to this commemoration. Please also ring Kaye, on 5185 1398 to book for this 100th Anniversary special day.

FRIENDS OF TARRA BULGA N.P.

When: 9am – April 18
Where: Meet at Visitors Centre Tarra Bulga National Park
What: Weeding & planting site preparation
RSVP: David Akers – 0488 035314

MERRIMAN CREEK GENERAL MEETING

When: 1.30pm – April 19
Where: Stradbroke Hall
RSVP: Melissa - 51468328

BINGINWARRI LCG

When: Sun 19th Apr 2015 at 8.45am
What: Bird Watching at Jack Smith Lake. BYO lunch, drinks, snacks, chair or stool, binocs, wet-weather gear, etc
Where: Meet in Yarram in front of DEPI (now DELWP) office opposite the BP Service Station.
RSVP: Please call Kaye by FRI. 17th Apr on 5185 1398

BINGINWARRI LCG

When: Tues 21st Apr 2015 at 8.30am
What: Bird Survey at Bingi Wetlands.
RSVP: Regular survey crew ring Kaye on 5185 1398 if any problems.

FRIENDS OF TARRA BULGA N.P.

When: 9.30am – May 9
Where: Meet at Visitors Centre Tarra Bulga NP
What: Photo monitoring
RSVP: David Akers – 0488 035314

BINGINWARRI LCG

When: Sun 17th May 2015 at 9am –
What: Bird Survey The 1st survey at Werner & Turid Lange's property.
Where: Meet on-site at 1371 Woorarra Road Wonyip 3962.
RSVP: Please ring Kaye on 5185 1398 if any problems or if you want to join the bird survey crew.

BINGINWARRI LCG

When: Sat 23rd May 2015 at 9.30am
What: Fungi Foray with Faye Vyner & Kaye Proudley leading to Tarra & Bulga Parks. Searching for pretty, unusual or whatever fungi we can find. Come explore the fun-guys of the mushroom world!
Where: Meet at entrance to Tarra Park at 9.30am and bring morning tea (and lunch if you wish) a stool or chair and wet-weather gear. Don't forget the leech repellent, as there is usually lots of kneeling and leaning over!
RSVP: Please ring Kaye on 5185 1398 by Thurs 21st May to book.

FRIENDS OF TARRA BULGA N.P.

When: 6.15am – May 30
Where: Tarra Bulga N.P.
What: Lyrebird Survey.
RSVP: David Akers – 0488 035314 ■



FROM THE OFFICE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Sally-Ann Henderson



Sally-Ann Says:

Hello,

Here is another addition of the YYLN Landcare Newsletter for you to enjoy. It is the season for celebration with both the **YYLN Landcare Awards** and the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's Landcare **"Green Carpet Showcase"** both seeking to highlight the wonderful work of our members and partners.

Congratulations to all our YYLN Award's nominees who are all doing such great things in the

name of Landcare. Without exception the eight judges commented on what a horribly hard thing it was to have to pick a standout amongst such great nominees.

This year we had four categories so as to try to include all the various aspects of YYLN member groups and awards. Here is a listing of the winners and nominees in each category.

Individual Landcarer –

Helga Binder
Nominees: Clara Mandaletti, Greg Foat, Jeanné Browne, John Kosta and Trevor Colvin

Outstanding Landcare Group –

Woodside Landcare group for the Mullungdung to Coast Project
Nominees: Corner Inlet Blackberry Action Group, Mirridong Disability Services, Yarram Urban Landcare Group,

Sustainable Farming – Damian and Maria Moore

Nominees: David and Joy McAninly, Eddie and Pat Brand, Neil Collins

Sustainable Environment –

Kaye Proudley
Nominees: Anne and Peter Hill, Frankie and Graeme McLennan

Also recognised on the night was the contribution David and Joy McAninly have made to Landcare with them being awarded the **"Outstanding Landcare Leadership"** award for the many thousands of hours spent in leadership and advocacy for Landcare and the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network in particular.

In addition to the category winners we also have:

- HVP Plantations nominated in the Partner Category and
- Justin Foat in the Young Landcarer category

of the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's Landcare "Green Carpet Showcase".

This event is a celebration of Landcare right across West Gippsland with the five Networks coming together to

highlight the work going on by some of the thousands of Landcare volunteers.

Another excuse to pat ourselves and our partners on the back is the current exhibition at the Courthouse Gallery in Yarram.

Following on from last year's botanical art exhibition, Coastcare, Hedley Range Services, YYLN and the Gallery are hosting **"Washed Up - Art from beach litter"**.

It aims to inform people about the problems of ocean and beach litter as well as show the creativity of the Gippsland art community. Be sure to visit when you are in Yarram over April (closed Wednesdays).

Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria (KABV) Adopt a Roadside program aims to reduce litter on Victoria's roadsides to stop pollutants from entering local waterways, improves the quality of vegetation, and prevents soil degradation and erosion. It also promotes civic responsibility, community pride and fellowship.

Adopt a Roadside volunteers help remove roadside litter and/or undertake revegetation works including the removal of weeds within Victoria's arterial road network in regional Victoria.

To ensure volunteers are



Adopt a Roadside

equipped to do their job, KABV provides:

- safety training and first aid kits
- public liability and personal

injury insurance

- permission from VicRoads to carry out volunteer work on the roadside.

VicRoads provides safety equipment including high visibility vests, gloves and workman ahead signs to ensure the volunteers are as safe as possible while working on the roadside.

There are 16 Landcare groups including Bruthen & District Landcare group, participating in the program which has 126 groups involved looking after over 570 km of Victoria's roads. Collectively the groups are removing an estimated 70 tonnes of rubbish from our roadsides each year. ■

By Gary Mogford



YYLN AWARDS NIGHT

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Melissa Ainsworth and Sally-Ann Henderson

Those who were unable to attend the Awards Night on Friday March 20 missed out on a wonderful evening!

The venue at the Yarram Golf Club was very popular, not only because of the excellent home cooked meals but it was also good to have the venue to ourselves. The view over the fairways was lovely and the Golf Club volunteers made for a very special evening.

Sixty members, judges, VIP's and sponsors attended the event, which is held every four years. Not having a guest speaker proved popular in that all members had the opportunity to mingle and get to know other members from other groups.

After our main meal the presentation of awards were announced with nominees in the four categories introduced.

Judging of some categories was so close that a Highly Commended award was given to nominees.

Another highlight of the evening was the presentation of two special awards. The late **Greg Foat was awarded an "Enduring Commitment to Landcare Award"** and was accepted by Greg's son Ryan. YYLN Board Chairman, **David McAninly was awarded an "Outstanding Landcare Leadership" Award** which was received with great surprise.

Congratulations to all the award nominees as they now go on to feature in the West Gippsland Landcare Celebration "Green Carpet Showcase" to be held on Friday April 24 at the Traralgon Winery.

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SALLY-ANN HENDERSON WITH VIP GUEST ALEX ARBUTHNOT



FROM LEFT: MELISSA AINSWORTH, BELINDA BRENNAN, DAMIAN MOORE, RICHARD APPLETON, JENNY WOLSWINKEL



THE FABULOUS VOLUNTEERS FROM THE YARRAM GOLF CLUB AND THEIR SCRUMPTIOUS PAVLOVA



FROM LEFT: DON BELCHER, KAYE BELCHER, PETER HULL, FRANKIE MACLENNAN, GRAEME MACLENNAN



FROM LEFT: SUSIE FOLETTA, CATHY TREMBATH, LEON TREMBATH, RAQUEL HARRIS



FROM LEFT: JACQUE & PAUL HARRISON, JENNY & BRIAN NICHOLLS, ANN COULSON, ED & PAT BRAND



YYLN AWARDS NIGHT

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

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Sustainable Farming Award **Damian and Maria Moore**

embrace best practice in sustainable agricultural production and have adopted technology to innovate their dairy farm business. The judges were impressed with his systematic approach to the farm business, layout & development. His consideration for soils, pastures and animals was evident; these were combined well with Landcare works.

In a relatively quick timeframe they have transformed a rundown property, tackling weeds, poor soils, neglected pastures and lack of shelter. Damian is actively involved in industry groups and has contributed to Landcare regionally as well as inspiring surrounding properties to undertake Landcare works post bush fires.

Neil Collins' attention to animal welfare and his pride in his products - fine wool and prime lambs, shines through. The farm layout with a central laneway, planned paddocks and multiple shelterbelts is exceptional. Remnant vegetation is fenced and protected including coastal saltmarsh. Neil has faced challenges of bush fire and regularly has local school groups to visit his property and assist with tree planting projects.

Eddie and Pat Brand have been committed to Landcare since its beginning and it is wonderful to see the impact of trees across the beef farm offering shade & shelter to stock, as well as habitat to many birds and animals. The creek is

protected and re-vegetated and Eddie has formed many partnerships over the years to help him along the way. It is commendable to see their involvement in soil carbon research and pasture trials and how neighbours have been inspired to plant shelterbelts.

David and Joy McAninly have spent a lifetime dedicated to improving their dairy property and the district with a passion for Landcare, trees and waterways. As a young farmer David left swathes of remnant bush as it was cleared to offer shade and shelter to his livestock. He has since planted 26 shelterbelts to provide shade and shelter and to stabilise areas prone to erosion from floods. Riparian works over decades have protected the waterways. David's drive over many years led to agriculture being taught at the Yarram Secondary school.

Outstanding Leadership Award

David McAninly has been a long-term leader in Landcare at both group and Network level. David's leadership and example over many years led to countless people taking up Landcare works throughout the community. David has a tremendous ability to work with people and make things happen. His leadership of the Yarram Yarram Landcare Network has led to many strong partnerships resulting in funding for on-ground action.

David is a true Landcare Legend in his contribution to the environment regionally. The judges were impressed



Outstanding Landcare Leadership Award: David McAninly and his wife Joy



Sustainable Farming Award: Winner, **Damian and Maria Moore.** From Left: Damian Moore, Neil Collins, Pat & Eddie Brand, Joy and David McAninly.

with his passion for the region and local people and his ability to recognise and encourage others Landcare efforts.

Outstanding Community Group

Woodside Landcare Group – Mullungdung to Coast Project resulted in 104 ha of corridor being established and remnant vegetation being protected, as well as workshops and field days. Woodside member,

Bronwyn Johnson, facilitated the project. The plantings were planned across property boundaries to create contiguous wildlife corridors across the coastal plain.

Most members are actively farming so the group has a strong focus on increasing farm productivity through sustainable pastures, salinity amelioration and pest plant and animal control. As a community they rely on each other and as

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YYLN AWARDS NIGHT

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

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a group they work together to care for the environment and improve the profitability and sustainability of agriculture in this district.

Corner Inlet Blackberry Action Group (CIBAG) formed in 2013 but has been in the YYLN for less than a year and already has 3 projects delivering blackberry control along waterways, roadsides and on private land. CIBAG accepted the challenge to educate Corner Inlet communities on the negative impacts of blackberry infestation, eradication methods and to recruit landowners to tackle blackberry on their properties. They have done this through developing partnership with government and business as well as employing a project officer who does one-on-one visits, and by using media and field days. CIBAG is making a difference.

Mirridong Services Inc. clients have been working with Landcare for two years. The program provides opportunities to be involved with the natural environment and develops skills such as using tree planting, guard removal, observation and creativity. This was aptly demonstrated in the

construction of the 2014 AGM table centre pieces. In addition the Mirridong Green Thumbs team are a constant fixture around Yarram looking after the gardens of many in the town. This included working hard and cheerfully to rid the Bicentennial Gardens of weeds and dead trees.

Yarram Urban Landcare Group is a welcoming group that has been going for just over two years. There is a great warmth to the group and a willingness to pass on new skills and have everyone do their bit. There is something for everyone with kids being just as valued for their contribution as the adults. They have a focus on community projects which have included the Tarra Festival and the Yarram Show. A primary focus is the restoration of the Bicentennial Gardens with about a 1000 plants growing happily in their new home and a vision for many more to come.

Sustainable Living Award
Kaye Proudley is quiet, modest and active in many ways. She was not only instrumental in turning around Bingenwarri Landcare Group into a vibrant landcare hub that holds regular activities but she has selflessly



Sustainable Environment Award from Left: Winner, **Kaye Proudley**. Highly Commended Award, **Frankie and Graeme MacLennan** and **Anne and Peter Hill**.

given of her time to many additional projects including the production of educational materials produced by the JARR committee. Her knowledge of flora and fauna, seed collection, and propagation have been generously bestowed as have the results of her green thumb.

As one local put it, "the children were excited every time we went to Kaye and Roy's magical bush garden and were allowed to water the sections of garden bristling with thousands of tubes labelled with the names of various locals destined for planting in the bush and on farms. Now, when the children see a new wildflower or discover a weed, they ask to visit Kaye with a photo or a sample."

Kaye Proudley is the embodiment of the Landcare movement showing how much difference just one individual can make.

Graeme and Frankie MacLennan have built a home that is eco-friendly and requires no artificial heating in winter or cooling in summer. The structure is built of insulated concrete formwork. It is sited to capture the winter sun whose warmth is stored by thermal mass and in summer, shading controls the warming of the house and windows above the passage can be opened to vent warm air. Bedrooms are located on the cooler south side of the house. The shed adjoining the house has 6.5kw solar



Outstanding Community Group Award: Winner, Woodside Landcare Group for Mullungdung to Coast. Highly Commended Award to the Corner Inlet Blackberry Action Group. From Left: **Dan Boland, Gavin Missen, Fergus & Rosemary Irving, Libby Balderstone, Kaye and Don Belcher, Dave Smith, Raelene Bond, John Kosta, Werner Lange and Helga Binder.**

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YYLN AWARDS NIGHT

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

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panels. Graeme and Frankie have very generously shared their knowledge with others including hosting a Woodside Landcare meeting of which they are long term active members as evidenced on their grazing property.

Peter and Anne Hill have developed a home adapted to climate change. Their suburban garden includes chooks, veggie garden and orchard. Water tanks, solar panels and a grey water recycling system were all installed as a result of an audit they undertook. Despite having to maintain the integrity of a century old house they have made changes such as insulation and double glazing. They were committed to working with what they had and have managed to reduced their utility bills to enviable levels. They are active Landcarers working in an urban context including work on the Tarra Rail Trail and Yarram Bicentennial Gardens.

Individual Award

Greg Foat over the last 25 years has established a web of shelterbelts over the family farm. Initially he planted tubestock and protected the seedlings with old tyres. Subsequently Greg has used direct seeding. Greg has also fenced out blocks of remnant bush. Greg established impressive kikuyu and sub clover pasture on previously unproductive, very light, sandy soils. He was an individual landcarer who made a significant contribution to Woodside Landcare from the group's inception. The cumulative effect of his on-ground works has changed the landscape and the pasture trials he has undertaken provide an



**WHILE OTHERS HAVE FUN
DAVID MCANINLY KEEPS HIS
NOSE TO THE GRINDSTONE**

example for other landholders in the district.

Clara Mandaletti is a wonderful example of instilling the Landcare ethos into the next generation. Clara and her husband Paul have planted trees by the thousands at their Woodside and Yarram blocks and have actively involved their three daughters. Clara and the girls are willing workers for whatever needs to be done at the Bicentennial Garden working bees and Clara turns it into fun for them all. Her contribution to the Yarram Urban Group has been whole hearted since moving to Yarram.

Trevor Colvin is so committed to Landcare he has been instrumental in starting not one but two groups. While living in Wonyip he was an active passionate member of the Wonyip group and after moving to Yarram and not having a nearby group to be involved with, he established the Yarram Urban Landcare Group. Trevor served on the YYLN board for many years and his commitment to Landcare has seen him stay involved in many ways including helping to run the awards. He is a great one for networking and building links with other community groups and is the



Individual Landcare Award. Winner, **Helga Binder**. From Left: Clara Mandaletti and her children, Michaela, Lucia and Serena; Helga Binder, John Kosta, Ryan Foat, (on behalf of Greg Foat) Trevor Colvin absent Jeanné Browne.

lynch pin in the Yarram Urban Group.

Helga Binder is not afraid to get her hands dirty and is an active member of both the Albert River and Wonyip groups. However her real strength lies in her professional skills which she readily applies to Landcare's benefit. She is an active YYLN board member for almost 10 years, chairing the Jack and Albert River Restoration (JARR) Project committee as well as serving on the Employment and Publication Committees. She gives of her graphic design skills to produce high quality publications such as the JARR identification brochures, the YYLN newsletters and most recently two websites. She is abundantly generous with her time and talents and is a passionate advocate for landcare and the natural environment, not only in YYLN but right across the region.

Jeanné Browne lives in Melbourne but travels to her property in the Wonyip area many weekends to enjoy the country lifestyle and restore her bush block. Over 15 years she has germinated, grown and

planted riparian species along Dingo Creek and manually removed hundreds of meters of blackberry. Her persistent tackling of other weed problems such as ragwort have seen infestations dwindle to minor levels.

John Kosta is yet another member nominated who is active in two groups. Anyone who knows of John cannot fail to note his passion and keenness for action. He was instrumental in starting the Corner Inlet Blackberry Action Group and securing its first funding and he has continued to play a lead role in the group. He was Wonyip President until it became a sub-group and his commitment to Landcare, weed control and his local community can be seen by all. He cheerfully offers weed control advice, has recruited participants to landcare events and activities, and his love for the environment motivates him to organise bush walks and other activities so people can get out and explore. John's passion is legendary, heartfelt and very effective. ■



AROUND THE TRAPS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By our Landcare Groups

Wonyip

Wonyip has been fortunate in receiving funding this year and have engaged on a major project to reduce the blackberry infestations on the upper Dingo Creek and along the Agnes River area. We will also extend the Quoll Corridor on the watershed of the Dingo Creek and Agnes River.

With the help of HVP (Hancock Victoria Plantations) a section of the existing Quoll Corridor (funded by the World Wildlife Fund in 2007) will receive some repair and maintenance to give continued vegetation through to the Webb family property after removal of blackberry and replanting. The project is a link and continuation of the JARR project and will show worthwhile results to the environment in future years. Koalas have already migrated into the Quoll Corridor area and who knows, one day the Quoll's might show us their pretty spotted tails!

Hi there landcarers,

Ruth and I had a quick look at our top 8 to see how the reveg was progressing. Almost all of the trees



QUOLL CORRIDOR GROWTH

we planted have been grazed out of existence but the seed bank plants are thriving. Ruth and my blackberry control early on has been effective, very few b'berries now. The four or five mountain ash trees that we protected with wire mesh are now 2 - 3 metres tall! I was elated to see this.

The message is clear, plant a realistic number of canopy trees with good protection (not just bamboo stakes with cardboard tree guard). And manage the seed bank growth. Maybe later we can plant some understorey plants. Anyway, the whole area is doing well which is good news.

Cheers, Peter Webb and Ruth Williams. ■

Merriman Creek

Since our success in applying for a "Communities for Nature" grant, back in December, project work has been going full steam ahead! Twenty kilometres of creek frontage infested with blackberries and other woody weeds have been sprayed. Wellington Shire have supported our project by spraying roadside weeds from Gormandale to the South Gippsland Highway in Stradbroke, which runs parallel with Merriman Creek.

Our project partnership with Gippsland Water has allowed educational workshops with

the Seaspray Primary School to be devised. With the school situated on Merriman Creek, the school will be involved with water quality monitoring as well as assisting with revegetation works later in the year.

Merriman Creek Landcare group recently had an excursion to the Water Treatment Plant at Seaspray. Gippsland Water educated us about the process of extracting water from the creek and the method of treatment for supplying drinking water to the township of Seaspray.

Our next meeting is on April 19 at 1.30pm at the Stradbroke Hall. All welcome. ■



MERRIMAN CREEK GROUP IN FRONT OF THE GIPPSLAND WATER TREATMENT PLANT AT SEASPRAY



JOHN KOSTA AND LOCAL, PAUL CARDIN, INSPECTING FOLLOW UP WORK NEEDED ALONG THE QUOLL CORRIDOR

Woodside

Members gathered on February 26 for our first meeting of the year. We were very fortunate to have Sally-Ann Henderson join our meeting and she gave us a run down of recent events within Landcare and possible upcoming grants and projects.

Woodside group and some of our members are very happy to be nominated in the upcoming

Landcare Awards and will be dusting off our good going out clothes to attend the gala night of the year.

Our group continues to maintain a very healthy attendance at each meeting, with very enthusiastic members that are making a difference. *Our next meeting is scheduled for April 15 at 8pm at the Woodside Hall. All welcome.* ■

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AROUND THE TRAPS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By our Landcare Groups ...continued from page 8

Corner Inlet Blackberry Action group

Despite a late and difficult start to the season CIBAG have now made a start on a huge and exciting "Communities for Nature" funded project. Due to the good work of project officer Helga and in conjunction with Wonyip Landcare group, blackberries will be sprayed along the full length of Dingo Ck where it is accessible and a large section of the Agnes River. All up, around 20km of river banks will be sprayed from the stream side to 20m out. This mammoth task has been split up into 3 sections to enable spraying to happen, while it is still viable to spray the blackberries with a reasonable chance of success.

Landholders have been contacted and most have given their permission for their blackberries to be sprayed at no cost to them. "Before" photos have been taken,



BLACKBERRY INFESTATION ALONG DINGO CREEK

contractors have been shown over the sites and lodged their quotes. The three sections have been allocated to the winning contractors and all is set to go go go!

Wellington Shire have also agreed to donate spraying crews and chemicals to spray roadside infestations adjacent to participating properties in the shire area.

This is an exciting time for CIBAG and a major achievement when it comes off. We are waiting with bated breath to see the results and we will keep you informed. Hopefully next time we will have some photos with blackberries looking a lot less healthy. ■

Binginwarri

The Bingi group is keeping itself active with strenuous efforts at removing tree guards in steep country at Mack's Creek and conducting bird surveys at one of their project sites.

Kaye is putting the finishing touches on the calendar of events for the coming year and as always members of other groups are most welcome to come along to any of their activities.

The death of Margaret Ferguson in late December was a sad shock for the group and the Network as a whole. She had been working on a Centennial Memorial to the families of

Binginwarri who sent their men to fight in the First World War and will consist of a planting of Oak trees and the placing of a bronze plaque on a large granite rock near the Binginwarri Hall. The dedication ceremony will likely be held on the 25th April this year (further information will be sent out when known) with descendants and other interested people invited to be present at the dedication to remember the sacrifice these men and their families made. The group has now picked up this project in her honour as well." ■

Yarram Urban

The Yarram Urban group is delighted with the 83% survival rate of its October planting in the Bicentennial Gardens. This brings to an end the first stage in the garden's restoration. They also thrilled to have been nominated in the Outstanding Community Group Category for the YYLN awards with both Trevor and Clara nominated for the Individual Award. Trevor is a previous winner and a diligent worker for our group. He is stepping back from his leadership role for the time being and Anne Hill and Clara Mandaletti will share the job with Trevor there to mentor. ■



MEMBERS OF THE URBAN LANDCARE GROUP WEARING THEIR NEW T-SHIRTS



LOCAL LANDCARE PROFILES

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Helga Binder

Land carers come in all shapes and sizes and from all walks of life. Take Dave and Jane Smith, for example. Dave is a forester. He has worked for Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP) and its predecessors since 1988. Jane has raised a family and is now a hypnotherapist.

Jane's father arrived from Manchester as a 'Ten Pound Pom' in 1960. He bought a block of land at Alberton then learned how to bore for water, build windmills, construct fences and then build a hayshed. He raised poddy calves to survive and hand milked a jersey cow every morning for 'meditation'. Not bad for a man from an industrial hub.

At age 6 Jane's job was to keep the calf separate from the cow so he could milk. By 11 she kept the rabbits and the odd fox that lived in the boxthorn hedge that surrounded half the property under control with a .22 rifle. She ran around in bare feet and grew to love the natural environment – except for those pesky boxthorns that kept stabbing her if she got too close.

By the time she met Dave she had her heart set on a bit of land out of town with lots of trees. They found a place at Stacey's Bridge and called it 'Brackenridge' as it was high on a hill overlooking the Albert River valley and Hedley Range and covered in bracken... and ragwort... and blackberries, thistles and tussocks.



In the first year they broad-acre sprayed, getting rid of most of the infestations. They burned the tussocks and hoe, hoe, hoed and pull, pull, pulled the ragwort and thistles. Weed control these days is easily managed with a backpack spray one day per year for blackberries and more hoe, hoe, hoeing and pull, pull, pulling for the rest.

Under the guidance of Peter Kline from the Won Wron Native Nursery & Yarram Yarram Landcare they overcame gully erosion (exacerbated by burrowing rabbits) by planting many native trees and shrubs. These not only control erosion but offer shelter for cattle during cold windy or even hot weather. You will often see cows on the ground under a tree in the middle of summer or winter taking advantage of the shelter belts.

In the mid 1990's they received a Landcare grant for fencing and revegetating their driveway. This gave them another shelterbelt for cattle, a corridor for wildlife and a great home for copperheads and tiger snakes. Their children, Matt and Emily would just skirt around the

sunning snakes as they walked to the bus stop.

Dave and Jane joined the Albert River Landcare Group in the early 90's and have been involved ever since.

In his various roles with HVP Dave has learned much about the native species in the Strzelecki Ranges. He recognises and can name many of them, knows what grows where, what needs to be planted along river gullies and what combinations of trees attract the Strzelecki Koala. He doesn't see working in forestry and Landcare as a contradiction. After all, timber is the only truly sustainable building material and forestry with its 30 year cycle is much less damaging to steep fragile slopes and soils than some other uses with annual cultivation or intensive grazing by hard-hooved animals.

As his role grew in HVP so did his community liaison activities. He is active on the JARR committee and recently became the secretary of the Corner Inlet Blackberry Action Group (CIBAG) who recently received several grants to assist them

in controlling the blackberry infestations along the Agnes River, the Dingo and Nine Mile Creeks. For Dave his work with CIABAG takes him back to his childhood, when school holidays were spent battling blackberries along the creek on a small property owned by his parents along the Traralgon Creek at LeRoy.

Today Dave and Jane have embraced the concept of caring for the environment by installing solar hot water and electricity generating panels.

This not only reduces the power bill greatly but actually puts a little money in the bank and as a bonus minimises carbon emissions.

As with many carers for the land Dave and Jane are modest about their achievements. Their philosophy is quite simple. When asked if they had a message for the youth of today Jane said, "Get the dirt between your fingers and under your nails because connecting back to how life should be lived is the way to a sustainable life and planet".

How true. ■



IN REMEMBRANCE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

Vale - Greg Foat

Greg Foat, who was a foundation member of Woodside Landcare, passed away in October 2014. He was educated at Woodside State School and then matriculated from Yarram High School where he was a house captain. Greg was a great sportsman. He was a Woodside Football Club premiership player, coach and life member. He was also a president and life member of the Woodside Tennis Club.

After leaving school Greg qualified as a wool classer and worked in local sheds. He and his wife, Jenny, gradually acquired farming land and built up a quality flock of merino sheep.

Over the last 25 years Greg has established a web of shelterbelts over the family farm. Initially he planted tubestock and protected the seedlings with old tyres. Subsequently he used direct seeding. His windbreaks now provide valuable corridors for wildlife. Greg also fenced out blocks of remnant bush and he was a participant in the 'Coast to Mullungdung' project. Through his involvement in the 'Drought Tolerant Pasture' demonstration,



Greg established impressive kikuyu and sub clover pasture on previously unproductive, very light, sandy soils

The last field day held on the Foat farm was to look at the 'Action on the Ground Gippsland Plain Soil Carbon' trial. The soil organic carbon and pasture response to heavy applications of chicken litter was observed. Sadly, Greg was too ill to attend the field day.

Greg Foat was an individual landcarer who made a significant contribution to Woodside Landcare from the group's inception. The cumulative effect of his on ground works has changed the landscape and the pasture trials he has undertaken provide an example for other landholders in the district.

Greg is survived by his wife Jenny and children Megan, Carly, Stacey, Nicole, Laura and Ryan.

He will be missed. ■

Vale – Joan Wallis

Joan Wallis, known to many in the farming community across Gippsland passed away on the 24/10/2014, after a long battle with cancer.

Joan commenced working with what was the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands as a Tree Victoria Extension Officer at Yarram. Frankie MacLennan, a YYLN stalwart, commenced working with the department on the same day and although their work paths diverged they remained great friends.

Joan developed expertise in Whole Farm Planning, which became a subject of growing interest in the farming community in the early 90s. She was able to use her husband Gary's and her own experiences in developing and setting up their farm at Fish Creek to good use in providing examples for others in best management practice. Over the years hundreds of farmers went on to complete Whole Farm Planning, Enterprise Best Management and FarmPlan21 courses conducted across Gippsland by Joan. Through her role in the department as a leader in Farm Planning, working alongside Landcare and other community organisations, Joan has supported countless farmers across the region to remodel and improve the productivity and sustainability



of their properties.

Joan was a friend, colleague and mentor to Department and Environment and Primary Industries staff across Gippsland and throughout the State. We will all miss her positivity and her polite and gentle nature. Joan is survived by her husband Gary, also well known in farming and Landcare sectors, her children Shari and Chris and their partners and five grandchildren whom Joan absolutely adored.

Joan and Gary had a property at Fish Creek and one at Hedley. Joan was a keen member of both Landcare Groups and was quick to offer to help. A recent bird watching event and farm walk on their place at Little Dog Island showed what a great job had been done to encourage birdlife and biodiversity while still being an active farm enterprise. Not to mention the thermos and treats Joan had packed for everyone to share.

We will all miss Joan greatly.



UNDERSTANDING MISTLETOE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Ray Thomas and Chris Cobern

Mistletoe plants are native parasites that live by attaching their roots deep into the bark of a tree, and extracting nutrients from the host rather than the ground. They often cleverly camouflage with the host tree to escape leaf-eating predators, and there are dozens of different species across Australia. But they're not all bad!

In fact they play a valuable role in healthy ecosystems, providing nectar from their flowers, delicious fruits that many birds

need, and dense branches that birds love to nest in. They are spread almost exclusively by tiny Mistletoe Birds, which eat the fruits and then carefully excrete the sticky seeds onto tree branches where the seeds can germinate and take root into the bark.

Mistletoe and Tree Stress

Mistletoes are normally kept in balance by several natural processes, but once the understorey is gone, this balance is disturbed and mistletoe becomes a problem.

For example, the larvae of several butterfly species need mistletoes as their sole food supply, and whole mistletoe plants can be completely

defoliated by a colony of these caterpillars. However, in the typical rural landscape, the understorey shrubs and wildflowers have largely disappeared, and along with them the nectar source and protective cover for adult butterflies.

Without butterflies there will be no eggs, no caterpillars, and so the mistletoe proliferates unchecked.

And our common Brush-tailed and Ring-tailed Possums actually prefer mistletoe leaves to eucalyptus leaves! It appears that mistletoe is a very good parasite and concentrates nutrients in its own leaves at the expense of the host. So mistletoe leaves are more nutritious and a much better

meal than eucalypts, but lack of tree hollows and the isolation of paddock trees make it impossible for possums to do their control work.

In a healthy forest setting there is also a sizeable cohort of birds that eat mistletoe fruits, and most of them drop the seeds randomly on the forest floor where mistletoes can't grow. However, the lack of protective understorey shrubs in open farmland prevents most of these birds staying around.

This leaves the hardy little mistletoe birds without competition to spread the seeds very precisely, placing their droppings only on the tree branches where the seeds will grow. So again the mistletoe is advantaged.

Mistletoe plants also do better on forest edges where there is more light available. But in the typical rural situation, where trees are isolated, all the trees are on the 'forest edge'.

Once mistletoe has taken over a large proportion of a tree crown, it simply outcompetes its host for nutrients and water, and for trees that are already suffering other stresses, it is often "the straw that breaks the camel's back".

A typical case of severe mistletoe infestation in scattered paddock trees. Notice the complete lack of understorey shrubs that are needed to attract the butterflies, possums and birds that keep mistletoe in balance in healthy bushland.

Treating Mistletoe

In severe cases of mistletoe infestation, manual removal will almost certainly be needed

Continued on page 11...

A TYPICAL CASE OF SEVERE MISTLETOE INFESTATION





UNDERSTANDING MISTLETOE

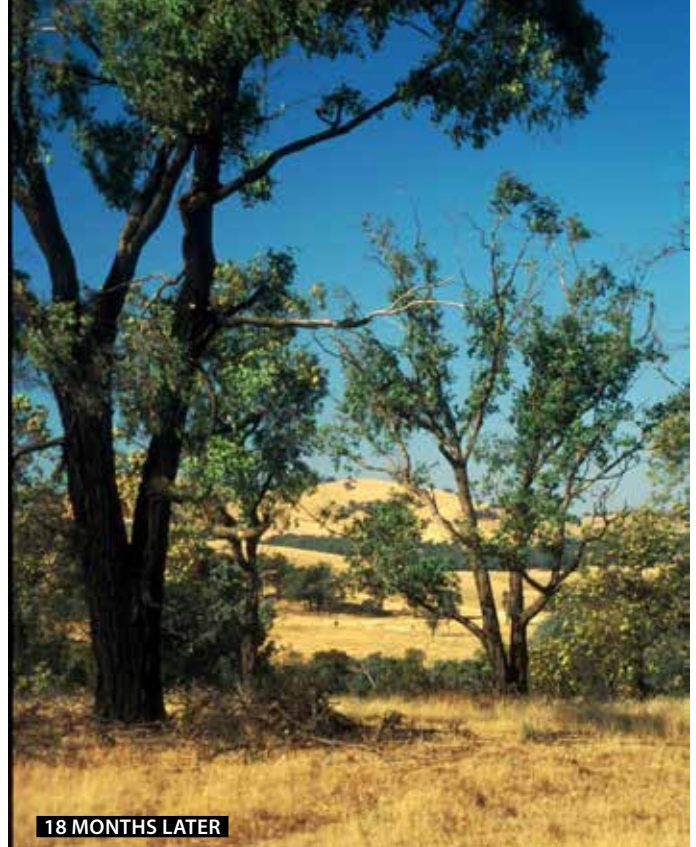
YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Ray Thomas and Chris Cobern

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MANUAL PRUNING OF MISTLETOE



18 MONTHS LATER

or the tree could die before the natural controls can take effect. We need both a short-term strategy, and a long-term strategy.

Pruning mistletoe allows the tree to feed itself, and the re-growth is phenomenal! But re-infestation can easily occur if the root causes of stress, isolation and lack of understorey are not addressed.

The best approach is to fence off the patch of trees to exclude stock and encourage natural regeneration, then re-plant the missing indigenous shrubs to attract the butterflies and birds. And if the trees are too young to have natural hollows, nest boxes could be placed to provide homes for the common possums as well.

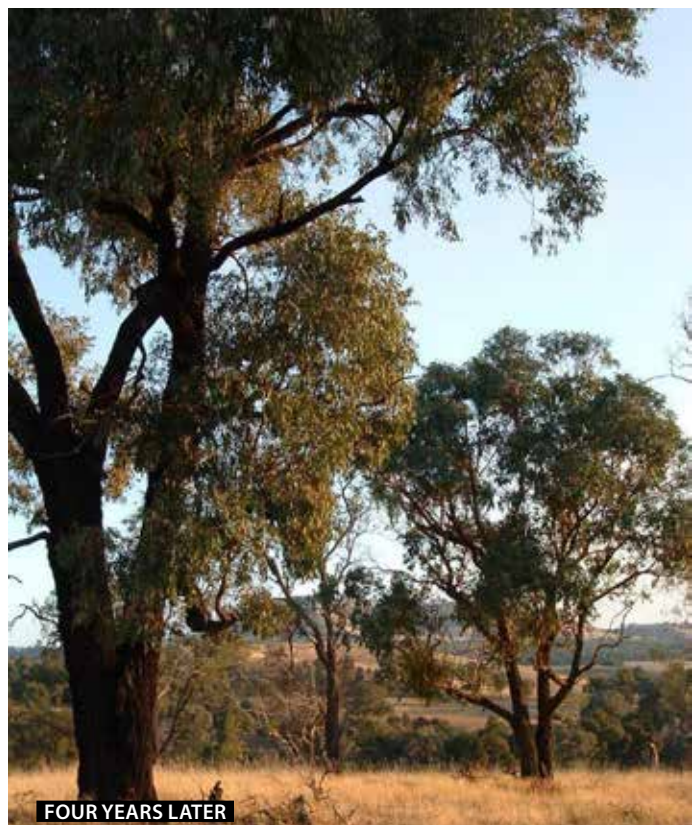
Manual removal of mistletoe

allows the tree to feed itself instead of the parasite, and therefore regain full vigour. The tree in the background was carefully pruned to remove most of the mistletoe, and subsequent growth was monitored closely.

Eighteen months later and the background tree was shooting vigorously.

Four years later and the tree was fully recovered. Since then we have planted understorey shrubs to provide homes for butterflies, possums and birds that will be the natural control agents in the long-term.

Ray Thomas
Regent Honeyeater Project
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FOUR YEARS LATER



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

We are currently embarking on the final stages of our AotG project which commenced in June 2012 and is funded by the Australian Government. YYLN has delivered this sustainable agricultural program since its commencement in 2008 with the establishment of the Gippsland Plains Drought Tolerant Pastures Demonstration.

After collecting numerous soil samples across the Giffard Plains last November, Nick Dudley and I drove the precious cargo to the State Government Soil Laboratory at McLeod in early December. We met up with Research Scientists George Croatta and Ron Walsh, unloaded the soil from large eskys onto trolleys and into the building. All samples were carefully collated before being packed into crates and sent off to the refrigerator.

George then kindly offered to give Nick and I a tour of the soil



GEORGE CROATTA & RON WALSH, RESEARCH SCIENTISTS AT MACLEOD WITH SOIL SAMPLES

lab which we happily agreed.

George showed us where the new soil samples get recorded, sorted and initially weighed, before being dried in large ovens at 40 degrees Celsius, weighed again, then ground down so the total carbon content can be measured.

The 2014 soil samples will then be compared with the original samples collected in December 2012 with an option to undertake further analysis. This data will be presented later this year providing us with a snapshot of soil carbon levels across the Giffard Plain helping us determine how soil carbon is influenced by agricultural management, climate and soil type.

Results will be published and presented later this year. A special thankyou once again to all project participants for your hard work, support and patience during this project.

Project partners include: Lisa Warn, Senior Agronomist from University of Melbourne's, Mackinnon Project and Nick Dudley, Team Leader – Meat &

Wool Services, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources and Tony Gardner, Healthy Soils Project Coordinator (WGCMA).

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

The past few months has seen strong community engagement and local support in the Year 3 Project area (See Year 3 map). On-ground project deliverables for Year 3 (2014-2015) are well underway and all project deliverables and targets are almost complete.

Note: The former Department of Sustainability and Environment (DEPI), is now Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP).

Year 4 Expressions Of Interest (EOI) will be sent out during July/August 2015. As in past years, future project sites will be prioritised in order of importance according to the following funding deed criteria:

1. Protect, enhance and/or connect remnant vegetation in priority Ecological Vegetation Communities (EVC's), which include Warm and Cool Temperate Rainforest, Lowland Forest and Damp Forest.
2. Reduce the impacts of Blackberry, a Weed of National Significance (WoNS) on biodiversity within the JARR area.
3. Protect, enhance or connect priority habitat for the South Gippsland Koala.

All project sites must occur within areas of high priority for protecting remaining habitat under the "JARR Area

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JARR BLACKBERRY SUPPRESSION PROGRAM

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

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JARR TREE FERN - MUCH PRETTIER THAN BLACKBERRY

EVC Bioregional Conservation Status" and are also part of the "Strzelecki Koala Linkage Strategy – South-East Strzelecki Corridor, Albert River Link". Priority is also given to projects mapped on the JARR Biodiversity Blueprint.

YYLN / JARR PROJECT OUTCOMES –Communities for Nature Round 1 - 2014-2015:

LANDSCAPE SCALE BIOLINKS

Four wildlife corridors were created, connecting high quality remnant vegetation / primary koala habitat areas.

Locations: Albert & Jack River

catchment areas. Biolinks across private land in the JARR catchment area – Stacey's Bridge, Binginwarri, Alberton West and Wonyip.

Corridors: Approx. 3 Ha

Corridor & Remnant Vegetation: Approx. 60 ha

Remnant Vegetation: approx. 30 Ha

Fencing: Approx. 5km fencing – plain wire, no barbed wire

Vegetation: Approx. 10,000 locally indigenous tube stock to be planted July/August.

Total Area of Protection: **Approx. 90-100 ha**



JARR - WILLOW REMOVAL

YYLN BLACKBERRY SUPPRESSION WORKS: JARR CATCHMENT - YEAR 3 AREA

Blackberry treated across 20+ properties from Billy Creek (Stacey's Bridge) along the Albert River to Alberton. Focus on riparian links to existing remnant vegetation and shelterbelts. 15 landholder management plans signed to date.

JARR PARTNERSHIPS PROJECT OUTCOMES:

WGCMA/YYLN/ Binginwarri's "Friends of Biodiversity":
– **Billy Creek & Wetlands, Stacey's Bridge:** Billy Creek - Willow removal 2.1km, fencing approx.4.5 km. Wetlands approx.



TASMAN FLAX LILY IN JARR

area 7ha – Willow removal, fencing riparian remnants approx. 3km. Tubestock – approx. 8000.

WGCMA/YYLN – Year 3 Area: Albert River, Stacey's Bridge. Blackberry treated along Albert River reach between Billy Creek junction and Millers Hill Rd. Approx. 7km

WSC/YYLN Roadside Weeds - Year 3 Area: Blackberry treated along Year 3 Shire roadsides from Stacey's Bridge to Alberton.

WGCMA - Lower Jack River : Boxthorn & willow removal 1.7km, area 5.6 ha; fencing – approx.3km. Tubestock – approx. 3000

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JARR - KOALA CORRIDOR PROTECTING SWAMP GUM



JARR - KOALA CORRIDOR AT ALBERT RIVER

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PROJECT UPDATE

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Samantha Monks

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WGCMA - Jack River Fire

Recovery: Jack River - Willow removal 0.5km, debris removal, fencing 1km; Stacey's Bridge wildlife corridor -fencing 0.2km,

WGCMA - Mack's Creek/Tarra

River: Willow removal 0.6km, fencing 1.2 km

Protecting the Corner Inlet Coastal Hotspot Program -

Corner Inlet Connections (CIC): YYLN/WGCMA Coastal Saltmarsh Protection Project 2012-2014:

DISCOVER CORNER INLET DAYS

Saltmarsh, seagrass, birds and fish

Nearly 50 people attended the Corner Inlet Discovery Day at Port Welshpool in early February

to learn about the importance of protecting the unique waters of Corner Inlet and Nooramunga.

The day was organised through the Yarram Yarram and South Gippsland Landcare Networks partnership as part of the Corner Inlet Connections program, via funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program (NLP).

After a quick and delicious morning tea the indoor presentations began. Guest speakers included Dan Weller from Birdlife Australia, John Ford, Marine Research Fellow from Melbourne University and Paul Boon, Wetland Ecologist from Victoria University.

Dan Weller is the Shorebirds 2020 Project Officer and during his presentation explained why Corner Inlet is arguably the most important site for shorebirds in Victoria. "Corner Inlet has a



PAUL BOON AND FIELD DAY ATTENDEES AT PORT WELSHPOOL



KATE WILLIAMS AND JOHN FORD



STEVE COULSONS HANDLES A WHITE-LIPPED SNAKE

unique combination of expanses of suitable foraging and roosting habitats and importantly is also an area of relatively low human disturbance. More migratory

shorebirds choose to overwinter here than anywhere else in Victoria, making Corner Inlet an area of international conservation significance."

John Ford discussed the importance of seagrass meadows. "Corner Inlet produces some of the most valuable fish in Victoria. The seagrasses here provide an important habitat and feeding and breeding grounds for many marine organisms, particularly juvenile and newly hatched fish." John said, "With an extensive network of roots, seagrass meadows also play a role in stabilising mudflats and sediment within the wetland system, which keeps the Inlet healthy."

John continued, "While many people may not be concerned with the health of the seagrass meadows, it could impact them through less local fish being available. This could lead to an increase in imports or more expensive Australian caught fish and chips."

Paul's presentation covered the importance of promoting 'ecosystem services' to engage the community in protecting and rehabilitating saltmarsh and mangroves. Paul explained how, "climate change and sea level rise will have an impact on mangrove and coastal saltmarsh vegetation in temperate Australia, with conditions favourable to the growth of mangroves over saltmarsh."

Ann Coulson from Seaspray (Merrimans Creek Landcare Group) provided the following report: "On the 12th February I was privileged to attend a most informative forum – the saltmarsh information day 'Discover Corner Inlet', organized by Landcare Project Officers,

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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

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PAUL BOON'S SALTMARSH PRESENTATION

"An example of the fauna of the area was encountered when some members of the group discovered a small (dead) brown snake, which Steve Coulson was able to identify as a white lipped snake – a species of which many of us had

never heard."

NOTE: The Corner Inlet Connections Program supports activities that aim to reduce the flow of sediment and nutrients. Activities include fencing and revegetation of local waterways and terrestrial areas, saltmarsh protection, erosion control in steep gully areas to prevent stock access, waterway bed and bank stabilisation works, Waterwatch monitoring and the removal of fish barriers.

Shorebirds 2020 volunteers survey over 320 important Shorebird Areas across the nation on at least a biannual basis, so no matter where you live, especially if it is near our coastline, chances are good that there is a Shorebird Area near you. To join Shorebirds 2020 and be updated on volunteer opportunities, training workshops and fieldwork contact shorebirds@birdlife.org.au

If you are a farmer or fisher in the Corner Inlet area and are interested in heading out with local fishers and visiting a dairy property on Friday 8 May, please contact the South Gippsland Landcare Network on 5662 5759 or email sgln@landcare.net.au or myself. ■

Samantha Monks (YYLN) and Kate Williams (SGLN).

"Dan Weller gave us an insight into the extraordinary journeys undertaken by many of our shorebirds and through his presentation we were able to identify many that were familiar to us. Seagrass was the focus of John's presentation and it was fascinating to learn how important these plants are to the whole marine ecosystem, and in turn how important the health of the land ecosystem is to the survival of seagrass.

"Paul referred to his studies of the coastal wetlands of South East Australia, explaining how previously they have been covered by just one Ecological Vegetation Class – EVC 9 Coastal Saltmarsh Aggregate, but that he and his colleagues have identified seven new EVC's. Paul also discussed the threats posed by agriculture and urban development to these areas.

"After lunch we walked along the Port Welshpool foreshore to look at the saltmarsh and mangrove plant communities. Dan brought his spotting scope along but unfortunately because the tide was so far out there was a distinct shortage of birdlife, though there was a little seagrass visible!

Invasive Plants & Animals (IPA) Program

The war on weeds continues not only in our patch but throughout our region. The latest weed calendar identifying the current batch on our hit list and when and how to control them. This poster is available free from our Landcare Office.



WEED - QUEEN ANN LACE



KATE WILLIAMS FROM SGLN AND THE NEW WEEDS CALENDAR



WEED - MONTBRETIA



WEED - RAGWORT

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



TREE GUARDS

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

Warren the Wise



Hi everyone, I'm off doing wombatty things in my burrow but thought you might be interested in this email exchange between Kate Williams from Sth Gippy Landcare and Dan Holmes from Wonyip Landcare discussing the issue of tree guards.

Hi Kate,

I was interested to read your article in the recent newsletter about tree guards, as I have been thinking about and experimenting with the best option for making guards suitable for wallaby protection.

Price point for a reasonably effective and durable guard is a major issue for me as I am sure it is for many others who are battling wallabies in their project sites. The general rule being seedlings less than around 100m from existing vegetation will be attacked and require wallaby measures. Further than 100m or in generally "exposed" locations wallabies generally won't get to.

This planting season my design will likely be 1200 mm high, 400 diameter, made from a 150 x 150 mm square x 2mm steel wire mesh - formed into a cylinder, with a plastic tube outside layer, pegged to the ground with 4 bamboo stakes. The cost of this design will be around \$4 each, and I will be hoping to re-use them after two

years, which will effectively halve the cost if I get two uses from them. I will let you know how they go, and I am interested others' designs, including cost vs success rate.

Deer and / or wallaby proof perimeter fencing would be quite expensive for most sites, especially in our typical hilly terrain, and when the wombats push under the fence, the wallabies will follow them through. For this reason I think an economical form of individual guarding is the most practical option in many cases, even if the losses are a high percentage, the cost per tree established will still be better. In some situations making use of "natural protection" inside sprayed blackberry thickets or within thick natural regrowth of pioneer species like daisy bush and fireweed, can help the survival of planted trees whether guarded or not.

Regards,
Dan.



Hi Dan,

Thanks for your email.

I was hoping that our article would generate some discussion, (I recognise that people like yourself have had a great deal of experience) so I'm really glad that you've provided feedback.

Yes, that is a good point about the placement in relation to existing vegetation. I have observed that also.

Yes by all means let me know how your design goes this season, I'd be very interested to hear.

In terms of others designs, I've heard of a design being used by an agroforester in the Otways (Rowan Reid), he says they're pretty good for protection from wallabies, roos, sheep and cattle. See photo above FYI.

Essentially, they consist of a plastic sleeve ~10cm in diameter (made for the viticulture industry), which is cut into approx. 1.5m lengths. This is cable-tied to a

stake or in this case a piece of 20mm conduit, which is used as the support (because the conduit is flexible, it bends and springs back rather than being pushed over by rubbing animals). A 5-10cm gap is left at the base of the guard to allow airflow up the tube. As the air inside the tube warms, it pulls fresh air in through the gap keeping the plant well ventilated.

The plants stay in the guard until they have grown to a height/age that they are no longer palatable to browsing animals (several years if required). The guard doesn't affect growth or form at all and Rowan told me he has great success with them – and as a forester, he's pretty fussy about his tree growth!

Rowan is more than happy for people to use his design and pass it on to our landholders. The tricky part is the plastic sleeve isn't a common item. It comes from a supplier in Coburg who sells bulk rolls (about 270 guards per roll) in packs of 10. You can get them for around \$88 each if you buy a 10 pack (Rowan is happy to pass on the contact - perhaps see how your design does this season?).

Re deer/wallaby proof perimeter fencing, yes and I think it comes back to managing the deer rather than just fencing them out. I hadn't thought to include the suggestion of 'natural protection' but this is a proven method in plant protection.

A follow up article may be required, would you mind if I included some of the advice you have provided below? I will send you a draft copy for your review prior to printing it.

Kind regards,

Kate ■



PARTNER ACTIVITY

YARRAM YARRAM LANDCARE NETWORK

By Gippsland Water and Sally-Ann Henderson

Partners are a valuable way for YYLN to increase their reach and influence and our newest partner is Gippsland Water. They have given their support to the Merriman Creek Landcare Group in their latest project to improve the health of Merriman Creek, which supplies water to the township of Seaspray.

The state funded project through the "Communities for Nature" program is focusing on a number of activities along 20 kilometres of creek frontage.

These activities include the removal of blackberries and other woody weeds combined with revegetation works to reduce the area of exposed creek banks and associated erosion.

A large proportion of this



GIPPSLAND WATER'S TREATMENT PLANT LABORATORY

treatment area has previously been fenced to restrict access by stock.

The water supply catchment will benefit from these works through greater riparian species diversity and reduced sediment and nutrient loads entering Merriman Creek.

To further understand the links between catchment health and drinking water quality, members of the Merriman Creek Landcare Group visited the Seaspray Water Treatment Plant in late February as guests of Gippsland Water.

Questions from the group were plentiful and varied and the group was able to learn more about the process of cleaning and storing drinking water and the business of their local water authority.

"Sometimes we don't connect the water that flows through our taps with the water that runs through our properties," said Fiona Pfeil, Catchment Scientific Officer with Gippsland Water.

"Merriman Creek is the primary water source for the township of Seaspray and the work carried out by the Merriman Creek Landcare

Group will not only increase the biodiversity of the target area, it will also benefit the water supply," continued Miss Pfeil.

The Landcare group have been working hard to improve the health of Merriman Creek from west of Stradbroke through to Seaspray since 2006. Previous weed removal and revegetation works carried out by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and the group have provided many positive benefits to the area and reduced a number of challenges the catchment has presented to Gippsland Water.

As part of this latest project, Merriman Creek Landcare group have teamed up with a number of organisations and local community members to ensure activities extend beyond the immediate watercourse.

Gippsland Water and students from Seaspray Primary School will undertake water sampling and monitoring and revegetation works. Wellington Shire has committed to focussing some of their annual weed control efforts on shire roadside areas adjacent to the creek.

"The creek is a community asset that has environmental, agricultural, social and economic benefits for the district, and we must all do our bit to protect it," said Melissa Ainsworth, Contact Officer for Merriman Creek Landcare group.

Anyone wanting to participate in this program or would like further information please contact Sally-Ann Henderson, YYLN Coordinator on 5175 7897. ■



MERRIMAN CREEK GROUP TOURING THROUGH THE GIPPSLAND WATER TREATMENT PLANT AT SEASPRAY



QUEEN ANNE LACE WAS VERY ATTRACTIVE FOR THIS LITTLE LADYBIRD

Contacts for Individual Active Landcare Groups

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A huge thank you to our sponsors for the 2015 YYLN Landcare Awards.

