

## Chairman Report

The last few months have been busy for Landcare members with tree planting, field days and a great social night at Bunyip with the Bandicoots.

Labertouche has been planting their 4,000 Scent bark trees. This tree has been declining over the years in the district. If other groups have a tree or plant that is rare in their area, 'Caring for our Country' grants are a great way to get funding to acquire plants. Jindivick were successful last year with the Strzelecki tree.

It was great to have Doug Evans (Landcare and Community Outreach Manager, PPWCMA) come to our network meeting recently. The Soil Health report day was a great success with some 70 people attending.

The Soil Carbon project is progressing well with 40 properties being tested for soil carbon. This project is going to help us all learn about building carbon in our soils.

We are always looking for new social activities, if your group has an interesting project such as the social night at Bunyip with the Bandicoots give us a call.

Jim Armstrong – Chairman, WPCLN

## Bandicoot Stew at Bunyip

Early settlers in West Gippsland grew tired of eating bandicoot stew, but were grateful that catching and eating large numbers of the animals helped them to survive. "It tastes a bit like chicken", reported Nanette Balzary of Princess Street. This was one of many residents' stories told to visiting experts at Bunyip Landcare's Bandicoot Information night on 14 July.

The evening was planned as a two-way information-sharing event, and residents had been asked months in advance to collect photos of 'their' bandicoots, which they talked about on the night. One of the most important aspects of the night was to get as many as possible of the Bunyip bandicoots formally mapped, and to allow residents the chance to explain to the visitors how their bandicoots behave.

The significance of Bunyip in the bandicoot recovery plan was highlighted by the attendance of many experts in the field. Avoiding 'death by powerpoint', speakers were allocated five to ten minutes to talk about his or her area of expertise. Over 80 people learned about the life and times of a Southern Brown Bandicoot, the reason for their 'nationally endangered' sta-

tus, penalties for harming bandicoots, habitat, recovery plans and much more.

After the formal presentations and anecdotes from residents, the supper break featured immensely popular bandicoot shaped ginger-breads. (Sarah MacLagan's sister, Kate made the cutter. You can order your own via Rhiannon or Ian). At this stage there was lively interaction between residents and experts as sightings were mapped and recorded. As people finally left, they were invited to take free bandicoot habitat plants, paid for by Rob Jones of Cardinia Shire Council and grown by the CEC nursery.

Bunyip Landcare is grateful for the support of other groups and CEC members who also came to the bandicoot night.



Nanette Balzary talks about her ancestors

## CARDINIA ENVIRONMENT COALITION

Postal: PO Box 875, Pakenham 3810  
Office: 10 Main Street Pakenham  
Hours: 9am - 5pm  
Phone: (03) 5941 8446  
Fax: (03) 5940 4466  
email: cec@dcsi.net.au  
Website: www.cecinc.net.au

## IN THIS ISSUE

BANDICOOT STEW AT BUNYIP  
WOMBAT WARRIORS NEEDED  
WEED WATCH  
CHAIR REPORT  
CEC NURSERY NEWS  
LANDCARE & CEC MEMBER BENEFITS  
CEC SURVEY  
CARDINIA SUSTAINABILITY FESTIVAL  
MEMBER GROUP UPDATES  
INTRODUCING GEOFF LOCKWOOD

## Weed Watch – a tale of two terrors

There is always a lot of anticipation building up in the approach to each spring season – it's when life tends to kick off with great proliferation – new lambs, foals, calves, new crops and in a broad way new weeds as well. Weeds to look out for at this time include two particular trouble makers: Ragwort and Wild Watsonia.

**Ragwort** (*Senecio jacobaea*) has a notorious nature due to its ability to multiply rapidly and its toxicity to stock (containing pyrrolizidine alkaloids). Ragwort is listed as a Regionally Controlled Weed in both the Port Phillip/Westernport and West Gippsland catchments, which simply means that it is fairly extensive across both catchments and that it is the responsibility of all landholders to take 'reasonable steps to prevent the growth and spread of (these) weeds on their land'. Ragworts are technically recognised to only live for a two-year cycle (biennial), but due to their resilience in grow-



Ragwort at the Rosette stage

ing back when damaged they manage a way to live on indefinitely (ie. behave perennially). As a result while Ragworts pull out of the ground easily, especially when ground is wet, they will mostly leave root tubers behind that will sprout back at the first chance.

Dicamba\* and metsulphuron methyl\* herbicides are listed to work effectively on Ragwort although only metsulphuron methyl is noted to be effective on Ragwort at all stages of its life-cycle, according to Forestry Tasmania (local conditions may impact and vary the result).

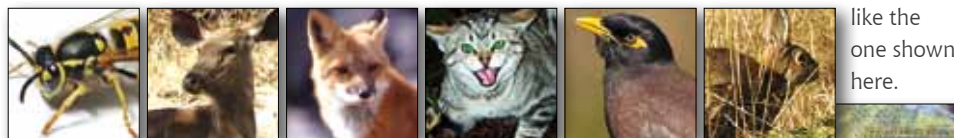
\*Please refer to the relevant herbicide labels and their respective safety requirements before using any chemicals for weed control.

**Wild Watsonia** (*Watsonia meriana* var. *bulbilifera*) is a declared noxious weed (Regionally Controlled) in both the Port Phillip/Westernport and West Gippsland catchments. It was originally introduced as a resilient garden ornamental during the 1850's. Unfortunately there are still some cultivars of Wild Watsonia that are sold in some nurseries which may have the potential to be just as invasive.

Wild Watsonia grows up to 2m in height with its sword shaped leaves and has a distinct

## Neerim and District Landcare Group Form "Pest" teams

The group is wrapping up our 'Transforming farm dams into Bio-islands' project. The project was originally scoped to deliver five farm dam transformations but interest was such that nine projects were supported. The



project was capped off with a farm-dams bus tour which was a great success with twenty people attending.

### WE ARE PUTTING PESTS ANIMALS IN THE FIRING LINE:

The next major activity for the group is to try and tackle pest animal management in a co-ordinated district wide approach. We will be holding an information evening to start to discuss approaches for controlling wild dogs, foxes, feral cats, deer, European wasps and Indian Myna birds.

The group has received a grant to implement a specific control program for controlling the rapidly growing numbers of Indian Myna birds. The grant will allow us to run a couple of field days and to build up to forty specialised traps

like the one shown here.



### WILDLIFE MONITORING:

The group has purchased four wildlife cameras for members to use to help them determine what wildlife they have on their properties. The cameras are also useful for determining the presence of pest animals. The cameras are easy to use and are proving popular with members wanting to know more about what is 'really' living on their properties.

## Labertouche Landcare

Time to plant- this has been the focus of our group over the last couple of months. Our *Eucalyptus fulgens* have arrived in stages and distributed amongst the community. Fences have been erected and it is time to plant, though the wet has been an obstacle for some. More plants still need to be distributed, the orders presently are greater than our supply. Some areas will need to wait for spring or the first part of next year. The president has been kept busy evaluating sites to be fenced and delivering the plants. The group also looks forward to supporting the local community in the revegetation of a region of the Labertouche Reserve. Over a 1000 plants were planted on Saturday 20th of August.

Tammy Evans – Secretary, Labertouche Landcare



## WOMBAT WARRIORS NEEDED – for the fight against the mange mite

Mange is a dreaded condition in wombats. It is not a disease but an infestation of the mange mite. Untreated the wombat will die a slow and agonizing death.

Sadly, "free living adult wombats" do not cope well in captivity and usually die within 24hrs. Many wombats live on private land and their health and well being is dependent on the land owner's interest. Until recently it was thought there was nothing could be done to help these wombats.

The Wombat Protection Society [www.wombatprotection.org.au](http://www.wombatprotection.org.au) has been working with a number of interested groups and individuals to eradicate mange throughout Australia. When the Society first investigated mange in wombats, little was known about how it spread or why wombats more so than any other animals were chronically affected by this mite infestation. Very little research had been conducted in general and even less on how wombat mange could be treated. This



photo: Jess Drake [www.soilduck.com](http://www.soilduck.com)

simple method we are outlining can be carried out by unskilled wombat handlers and without disturbing the wombat.

This is the best chance of keeping properties and areas clear of mange. The BURROW FLAP is a simple treatment method, as the flaps can be placed and monitored during daylight hours. The simple device can be made from an ice cream container lid and a bottle top.

Wombats suffering from severe mange can be seen grazing during the day. We need to know where these wombats live so we can set up BURROW FLAPS. These wombats will be treated with a pour on solution of Cydectin when leaving their burrow.

Anyone interested in helping can phone the Maryknoll Wildlife Shelter on Ph: 5942 8518 or contact your local Landcare Group. Your involvement can be as simple as letting us know when you see a wombat with mange or you might like to take an active role in monitoring a burrow.

## Planting Day at the Recreation Reserve

On Sunday 5th June many people from different organisations came together to plant 500 trees, shrubs and groundcovers to link remnant vegetation and a previous community planting on the south east side of the Maryknoll Recreation Reserve. This link will make it safer for birds and animals to move between the two different areas.

The weather was kind to us with sunny patches despite a cool day and in a wonderful location surrounded by bush and birds. Thank you to Red Energy in partnership with the Cardinia Environment Coalition for the funding to carry out this project as well as improving the health of our remnant vegetation by providing two days labour to remove environmental weeds along the creek.



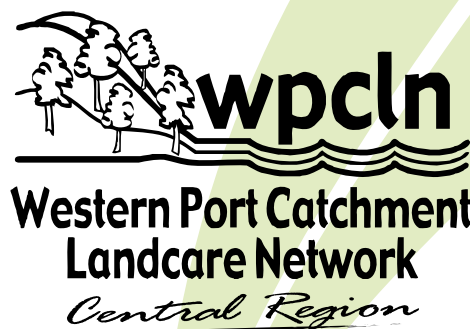
I would like to thank Shane Scanlon from PPWCMA on behalf of Red Energy and Geoff Boyes

from the Cardinia Environment Coalition plus Geoff Manson from the Maryknoll Recreation Reserve for organising this project. Thank you to Liz Dortmans for the wonderful hot lunch.

Also thank you to all the planting volunteers it was a great team effort. We had volunteers from Back Creek Landcare, Maryknoll Tracks and Reserves, Cardinia Environment Coalition, Maryknoll Tennis Club and the Maryknoll Recreation Reserve.

This vegetation will support our local birds, the swamp rat that we have found mounds of in the large community planting, the endangered bandicoot - the diggings have been spotted along a stretch of Back Creek and bring back the ringtail possum that was struggling two years ago in the drought.

Vivien Clarke - Secretary, Back Creek Landcare





## Cardinia Catchment Landcare – about to turn 10

Next year will be our 10th year of serving our local community with all sorts of activities all aimed at:

1. Halting the degradation of natural environments in the area of the Cardinia Creek Catchment;
2. The protection of waterways, remnant vegetation and wetlands;
3. The increase of biodiversity and habitat by means of revegetation, weeding, and fencing of remnant bushland and waterways;
4. Promoting community awareness and education of the above.

We have been busy recently thinking up a new name for our community nursery and broadening our services to include more sustainable practices. While we still love working on private land and encouraging old Landcarers to keep in touch, we are finding ourselves more often working with our local council's, Cardinia and City of Casey on projects on their land. Some members also showed interest in this years Land Stewardship program.

Two new exciting projects in our region under the Urban Fringe Weed Management Initiative offers some new opportunities for our members to embark on some weed management activities along our creeks.

We are continually active with Melbourne Water on a variety of community grants working on Cardinia, Grasmere and Waldsorf Creeks of which also engages us with Parks Victoria who are in the first stages of the Cardinia Parkland.



We have launched an awareness program thanks to Caring for Our Country funds to work with our local community called "Community Conservation of Platypus". This will be a great opportunity to work with a cross section of our community on ways to help protect the Platypus and promote landcare.

We are now in our 3rd month for our latest initiative: Cardinia Creek Kids! A club for kids specifically designed to protect Cardinia Creek. The kids have chosen the name, contributed to activities each month and are now designing their own T-Shirt.

As mentioned earlier we have changed our name for our community nursery. Still located at 1 Halford Road upper Beaconsfield, we are now known as Green Circle Plant Nursery. So many people have contributed to the establishment of the Upper Beaconsfield Community Nursery over the years but we felt it was time to share our services to a wider audience and begin our journey into the next 10 years of existence.

COME TO OUR NURSERY and become a member (\$20 for 5 years). Bring this newsletter and receive 20 free plants for your garden. Business Hours: Friday 9am–4pm Saturday 9am–12pm (Autumn/ Spring) or by appointment. Call Anita 0410 619 872



## CEC Nursery News

The nursery has had a bit of help recently with the CVA team on Tuesdays. Thank you to Ian Chisholm for organizing this. The work consists of cutting and painting Broom around the Tennis Courts, digging small drains around the nursery to allow water to drain, seed cleaning, and other nursery duties.

Some orders have not been picked up yet. There is still plenty of time left for planting; however we do realize that some areas are too wet at the moment. Spare stock is now available for sale.

Mary Cole (Agpath) analyzed the nursery plants and came to the conclusion that the nursery has had various mildew infestations because of the wet, humid conditions and a lack of nutrients due to constant leaching from rainfall. These problems are being experienced with many forms of crops this year. Suggestions such as lifting plant stock off the ground, putting under cover but in sun (if possible), watering every 10 days with Seasol and spraying immediately with fungicide can help improve growth.

Ian Fraser is welcomed aboard as a nursery volunteer. Ian's first task is to get Occ. Health & Safety up to a reasonable standard. Alison Chatfield is preparing an Emergency Strategy Plan.

A big Thank-you to Bridgette's mother in-law in obtaining 3 filing cabinets from a school. Thanks also to Jim Armstrong for fixing the plant trolley and donating an old fridge. We don't need any more fridges now!

The nursery is in desperate need of 'beautifying' such as landscaping. Any materials for use in landscaping would be welcome such as concrete sleepers.



Daracha and Jaime have been helping brighten up the CEC nursery with their wonderful chalk drawings

## Weed Watch – a tale of two terrors

From page 1

orange flower that grow on a long stem similar to Iris flowers. Wild Watsonia regularly comes into flowering during mid-late spring and while it can be hand pulled care needs to be taken to ensure that all of the corms (I am told that a corm is simply 'flatter' than a true bulb) are removed from the ground to prevent regrowth. Since



Wild watsonia: top. new growth before flowering bottom. 3 weeks after poisoning

Watsonia can spread very effectively by seed and its corms it is particularly noxious along waterways. Glyphosate is recognised to generally be effective on controlling Watsonia although in my own efforts I have

noticed some areas where there is a distinct resilience to this treatment, especially in moist areas, hence retreatment may be required.

To discuss any concerns about known/suspected occurrences of these weeds or any others that need treating on your property please feel free to give me a call.

Francis Jeon-Ellis. Field Services Manager, Yanggai Ecological Services Ph. 0408 896 083

## Member Survey FEEDBACK

Thank you to CEC members who responded to the questionnaire early in the year and contributed to discussions at the CEC general meeting and the Westernport Catchment Landcare Network meeting. There were many excellent suggestions and comments! We hope that you will notice some changes that you have suggested – ideas for newsletters and meetings in particular are receiving close attention other suggestions are being kept for funding opportunities.

One of the areas in which the CEC was lacking was effective communication with members. We are making efforts to rectify this. The CEC has had generous and competent voluntary assistance from Cindy Tomamichel in helping to design the CEC data base so that it is readily usable by all staff to assist with increased communication. Cindy has put in many hours of work on this and we appreciate this greatly.

Please also take a look at the CEC website which is much more user friendly and interesting.

Communication is a two way process between the sender and recipient so please take advantage of the resources the CEC is now able to provide on line!

Thank you to everyone for your suggestions and positive comments.

## Staff News – Introducing Geoff Lockwood

My position is within the area of Operations as the Public Land Coordinator. The key facets of my role with CEC will involve facilitating and finalising management plans for the public reserves; liaison and coordination of friends groups and contractors within the reserves. Another priority at the moment is applying for funding and grants, and the monitoring of and reporting associated with successful grants.

My background has been farm management with a focus on sustainable agriculture and NRM on farming properties. My last position was managing a large property in Gippsland that was fortunate to still retain extensive areas of remnant vegetation and diverse array of native fauna. Part of my role involved the rehabilitation of remnant areas and establishment of new vegetation areas, (trialled various techniques including fire and direct seeding); pest

and weed control. Personal interests include bushwalking and photography; which are combined with a passion for native flora and fauna. I have established a reptile removal service around Warragul and West Gippsland which I am looking to expand to include educational demonstrations for schools etc. Volunteer activities mostly seem to include rescue of some form; being a member of the Warragul SES unit and also a wildlife rescuer with WRAP and Wildlife Victoria. While a lot of wildlife rescues involve euthanizing the animal; a number of the snake rescues have had good outcomes. This is all combined with going back to university following a 'reverse tree-change' in September last year when we moved off the farm and into Warragul.



## Land Care at the Cardinia Shire Sustainability Festival June 2011

Volunteers from four Land Care groups (Deep Ck, Cardinia Ck, Bunyip and Westernport) together with a dedicated CEC volunteer assisted in spreading the word about biodiversity and the importance of native habitat at Cardinia Shire's Sustainability Festival in June.



The two day festival showcased organisations intent on a sustainable future. There were 80 or so stands providing information on such topics as the Transition town movement, cleaning without chemicals, wise use of water and recycling.

The first day was primarily for students and teachers from local schools. Glenn McMillan from Cardinia Land Care did a great job dressed as a huge platypus. He engaged the children in his audience with soft toys of both native and introduced animals. Anita from the Cardinia Land Care nursery gave out native plants and had laminated pictures and information about the plants to show the children.

It was an informative and enjoyable day for both volunteers and the public.

## Benefits as Landcare group or CEC members

We have just begun a library to assist landholders in identifying plants, birds, scats, fungi and a whole range of other topics. These books are kept at the CEC office and members can come in and use them during office hours. Also we have a range of equipment for members to borrow. Due to the cost of equipment a deposit is required. Deposit is refunded when the equipment is returned on time, in good order and condition. Equipment is listed below.

ITEM	NO.	DESCRIPTION	DEPOSIT	
Water cart/trailer	x1	500 Litre water container with pump and 20 metre hose for watering plants at new or established planting sites	Deposit for cart	\$50
Landcare trailer. Contains the following planting equipment:	x1	Large covered trailer with range of planting equipment for use at tree planting days.	Deposit for trailer (includes listed planting equipment)	\$100
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buckets</li> <li>Mallets</li> <li>Hamilton tree planters</li> <li>Pottiputki tree planters</li> <li>Shovels</li> <li>Safety vests</li> <li>Measuring wheel</li> </ul>	x10 x12 x2 x2 x2 x2 x6	Planting equipment can be borrowed separately – see deposit fees	Deposit for: Mallet Tree planter Tree planter Shovel Safety vest Measuring wheel	\$5ea \$25ea \$25ea \$10ea \$5ea \$10ea
Soil corer	x1		Deposit for soil corer	\$25
Penetrometer	x1		Deposit for penetrometer	\$25
Motion detecting infra red cameras	x4	Day/night cameras used to photograph wildlife species	Deposit on Camera	\$200ea
Attachment straps for cameras	x4	Used to secure cameras to trees/stakes etc	Deposit for strap	\$25ea
Bandicoot/Wildlife Monitoring Kits. Contains the following equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring/recording sheets</li> <li>Hair Tubes</li> <li>Metal pegs</li> <li>Camera bait containers</li> <li>Bait (oats, peanut butter, honey)</li> <li>Roll of fluorescent tape</li> <li>Roll of baking paper</li> </ul>	x4 x1 x1 x2 x1 x1 x1	Kits for detecting and monitoring wildlife species eg Southern Brown Bandicoot. Monitoring kit hire fee includes listed equipment for 4 weeks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hair tubes collect hair samples</li> <li>Pegs secure baits and hair tubes</li> <li>Bait attracts animal to camera/hair tube site</li> <li>Tape to marks camera/tube sites</li> <li>Paper for bait containers</li> </ul> Instruction manual included	Deposit for Monitoring Kit	\$50
Data projector	x1		Deposit for projector	\$50
Projection screen	x1		Deposit for screen	\$50
Information, Books and CD's	lots	For use only at the CEC/WPCLN Office	N/A	NIL