

AUTUMN 2011 NEWSLETTER

Labertouche Landcare self sufficient

Our focus in 2011 is to plant 4,000 Eucalyptus Fulgens (Green scent barks). This project is the result of a grant from 'Caring for Our Country.' The plants are free to anyone who lives in the Labertouche and surrounding district. It has been an excellent way to promote Landcare in the district, many applications are from people who are not current Landcare members. Over the coming months we will be busy with this project.



Labertouche Group Trailer

Labertouche Landcare are also proud owners of a trailer, as a result of a grant from the Baw Baw Shire. This trailer will allow the group to keep all our tools safe and hopefully prevent them from being lost. For planting days, members will only need to

go and collect the trailer. We owe a big 'thanks' to the Baw Baw Shire. They have helped fund a water cart, planters and now the trailer. We are now very self sufficient!

CARDINIA ENVIRONMENT COALITION

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Bandicoot Corner - Hey we are still here!

In early February, Bandicoot Corner, Bayles, was soaked with one metre of floodwater from the Yallock Outfall Creek and surrounding drains. Of course, we all wondered how the bandicoots would fare.



During March our hopes were raised when we noticed some distinctive conical bandicoot diggings. We also saw rabbits, bushrats, copperheads, and a good variety of birds. Foxes are patrolling outside but no evidence inside.

Phil Burrell, our ecologist, installed a wildlife camera in a favoured location, and put out some honey oat peanut butter biscuits. To our joy, Phil has captured a photo of a southern brown bandicoot!

Yesterday a walk around reserve revealed hundreds of fresh little diggings indicating that at least several bandicoots are there.

To find out more about Bandicoot Corner or what you can do to help bandicoots on your own property, please go to the CEC website: www.cecinc.net.au

This little guy must have walked right up to the camera to let us know "we are still here at Bandicoot Corner!"

Cannibal Creek Landcare – more than just planting

Our first two activities for this year have (for a change) not involved tree planting as such. For our March activity we undertook to clean up a magnificent stand of native bush on the property of Ross and Tara Cheesewright, Sherwood Park on the highway at Bunyip.

Arrangements had already been made through Geoff Boyes, to have the area of about five acres of bush fenced off and protected for the future. The bush is in pretty good order but there was a smattering of invasive plants especially blackberry which needed to be taken care of. A group of five members of the Cannibal Creek Group armed with knapsacks gloves etc attacked the blackberries while another two members were engaged in cutting and painting the Sweet Pittosporum. One group member, Amy Evans, who is very skilled in identifying the local flora, did an inventory of the understory of the bush block.

The larger areas of blackberries were taken care of by a tractor and the group's own spray unit. By one o'clock the job was done and we enjoyed an excellent lunch provided by Ross and Tara.

For our April task we are helping to fence off an area of planting which we undertook last year at the property of Richard and Ann

Perry in Jefferson Road Garfield. The idea is to learn a bit about the art of fence construction from a couple of the group members who know a little about it.

We have plenty of trees to plant and we shall be planting many of them before the year is out but it is nice to do something different for a change. It also helps to maintain the interest and enthusiasm within the group.

Gerard Cunningham – President, Cannibal Creek Landcare Group



Wetland wonderland

Not sure what to do with that unproductive wet, boggy area? Alison Livemore and John Murphy had that dilemma, so they decided that they would turn that wet, boggy area into a wonderful wetland habitat.



These two photos were taken 12 months apart, what a difference in such a short time.

YOUR STORIES

If you have a project story that you would like to share please forward any details and photos to **Bridgette McCallum** on bmccallum_cec@dcsi.net.au

Nursery finally gets floored

The concrete floor for the nursery has finally been laid with a huge thanks to Paul, Duncan, Will and Daniel from Oricon who generously donated their time! Without support like this the nursery would still have a long way to go before we could make full use of it.

The shed is also workable too, so now we can start moving all the nursery equipment into it. Thanks to Ian and Elizabeth Fraser for the donation of a table and chairs. Other furniture would be welcome such as office equipment like benches, bookshelves, corner desk, chairs, cabinets, magazine rack, a sink with high back and much more.



Paul, Duncan, Will, and Daniel from Oricon very generously donated their time to lay the floor at the nursery.

A huge thanks to Alison Chatfield who has put an enormous amount of time and energy into the planning and building permits, ordering of the shed and helping build the soil bay with her son, Kete. Jim is organizing the holes to be dug and concreted.

The nursery plants survived a good soak during the flood, no damage occurred except the poly boxes floating a few meters to line up against the fence. The lack of sunlight this year has the plants growing slowly; hopefully they will have an autumn growth spurt.

Thanks also to nursery volunteers Jackie Holland and Julie Kidd for their ongoing "hands on" support with propagation.

Volunteers Welcome – call **Adele** on 0417 373 690

Healthy Soils - Linking Soil Carbon and Soil Acidification with Farm Management Practices

This project is proving very popular with landholders. It is a joint project encompassing 4 Landcare Network areas.

(Tarago, Westernport, Bass Coast and South Gippsland).

DPI is also supporting & participating in the project.

The project was oversubscribed with 40 landholders accepted to participate in year 1, and a number of landholders are on the waiting list for year 2. There are

a wide range of different farming enterprises participating. These include, beef, dairy, olives, goats, apples, truffles and sheep.

All landholders have received their first farm

"There are a wide range of different farming enterprises participating. These include, beef, dairy, olives, goats, apples, truffles and sheep."



Soil corer—this will take soil samples to 30cms

visit. This visit obtained background information on the farm, and specifically on the paddock that each landholder is going to focus on. The second farm visits will take place in May. The Soil Sampling will take place on this visit, and samples will be sent off to CSIRO to determine the soil carbon breakdown at different depths. A standard soil test will also be conducted to determine pH and nutrient analysis. A couple of field days will be conducted in May/June along with soil courses which will be led by Chris Alenson. These courses will provide information to each landholder and help them prioritise their management actions that they will implement. These actions will be focused towards improving Soil Carbon & pH levels.

Soil is proving to be a very topical discussion point at the moment and everyone is looking forward to the results that will come out of this project.

For more information please contact **Peter Ronalds** on pronalds_cec@dcsi.net.au or 0402 650 382

Events & Training Calendar

SOIL HEALTH COURSE (\$220 INCL. GST)

SMALLER LANDHOLDERS – 21, 28 & 29 MAY

LARGER/COMMERCIAL FARMERS – 24, 30 & 31 MAY

HEALTHY SOILS, STOCK AND PASTURE PROJECT - WRAP UP

PROJECT FINAL PRESENTATION & CONCLUSION. GARFIELD GOLF CLUB ROOMS
10AM-12NOON 15 JUNE 9.40AM REGISTRATIONS & TEA & COFFEE
A LIGHT LUNCH TO FOLLOW PRESENTATION,
RSVP TO PETER 0402 650 382.

IFARM

COMPUTER BASED PROPERTY PLANNING PROGRAM JULY 2011

WHOLE PROPERTY PLANNING

6 SESSIONS FROM 23 JULY 2011

PLEASE NOTE: MANY OF THESE EVENTS ARE MENTIONED WITHIN THE NEWSLETTER. FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER YOUR EVENT IN THE CALENDAR PLEASE CONTACT THE CEC OFFICE.



Controlling the Caped Crusaders

With the approach of winter it is coming into the season of active growth of a number of weeds, particularly those that can be known perversely as the Caped Crusading Invaders – Capeweed (*Arctotheca calendula*), Cape Broom (*Genista monspesulana*) and Cape Ivy (*Delaria oderata*).

For any areas of large weed infestations chemical control is generally regarded as the most cost effective means of treatment and the optimal time for spraying weeds with specifically suited herbicides is during the active growth period.

Cape Ivy has already started its active growth, whereas Capeweed and Cape Broom start their active growth spurts around July and September respectively.



Cape Broom (left) Cape Ivy (right)

Cape Ivy (originating from South Africa) is a climbing weed that looks very similar to English Ivy except that its leaf is most often a brighter green. As with its English counterpart Cape Ivy often forms a prolific growth that covers any vegetation upon which it grows.

Cape Broom is an evergreen shrub that can grow up to a maximum height of 3m although more often is limited to 1-2 m. The Cape Broom flower carries the distinct 'pea' flower shape and is yellow, similar to that of Gorse. A hybrid cultivar of Cape Broom has become naturalized around Langwarrin. To treat Cape Broom prior to its active growth season

the cut/paint method is the most effective, although as is commonly the case with most weeds due diligence is required to treat any areas that have gone to seed. Cape Broom seed stock is generally viable for between 3-5 years. Capeweed is a problematic pasture weed that responds well to broadleaf herbicides, however consideration should be taken when treating with herbicides in paddocks that are grazed by stock. Capeweed is naturally toxic to stock and as a result is generally left alone while untreated. However when sprayed with herbicides, Capeweed will respond by generat-



ing more sugars, whereby they become more palatable to grazing stock. As such a common control method employed by many farmers is that of spray grazing. On a NuFarm website, though, it is advised that spray grazing is only worth doing in situations where broadleaf weeds exceed 30% and where there are at least an average of 150 pasture legumes per square metre. Stock should naturally be kept off any land that has been sprayed with herbicides for at least 7-10 days.

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



Back Creek Landcare Group

Our first meeting of the year was dynamic and everyone was motivated and refreshed after the Christmas Break.



The wetland on Alison Livermore and John Murphy's property was an inland lake thanks to the heavy rain in February

We have 6 plantings for members to complete over the next few months on a variety of projects from shelter belts to wetlands to revegetating creeks.

Our May meeting is proposed to be at a local winery, more of a social meeting really, as we will have determined our planting calendar, and have already had the Weather Seminar, which was very well supported, and the first of 3 in the district.

Back Creek Landcare Group keeps welcoming new members and is looking to branch into an Indian Myna Eradication programme, a promotional drive, and is of course continuing to enjoy guest speakers at the meetings.

Please contact **Alison Livermore** 5942 9061 for any enquiries.

MEMBER SURVEY

The CEC recently posted out surveys to its member groups to assist in the re-evaluation of the value of the coalition to its members. We encourage all of the groups who received this survey fill it out as the more feedback the CEC receives the better the services will be to the groups.

To those members that have already responded thank you so much for your considered thoughts. Your comments will go a long way to ensuring that the CEC continues to provide a valuable service.

If you would like to participate in this survey please visit the www.cecinc.net.au and follow the link.

Staff News

Bridgette McCallum is continuing to work on the Targeted Land Stewardship project. This project encourages landholders to undertake training in whole property planning and soil health as well as completing on-ground work. The funding available through this project is for revegetation, remnant protection and enhancement and soil health improvement. If you would like further information or to participate in the project please contact Bridgette on 5941 8446.

STAFF CONTACTS

Bridgette McCallum
– Landcare Project Officer

Geoff Boyes
– NRM Project Officer

Peter Ronalds
– Sustainable Agriculture
Project Officer

Francis Jeon-Ellis
– Yanggai Field Services
Manager

Carol Hoskins
– Bookkeeper (Tue, Thu, Fri)

Alison Livermore
– Admin (Mon & Wed)

All staff can be contacted on
5941 8446

Geoff Boyes is busy conducting property visits and offering advice to landholders about their waterways and also managing remnant vegetation. Geoff has also been working hard on trying to secure funding to protect and enhance habitat for Southern Brown Bandicoot, Helmeted Honeyeater and Leadbeater's Possum.

Carolyn Schroen is on maternity leave after giving birth to a healthy baby girl, Ella, in late January. Congratulations to Carolyn, Paul and Tameka.

Snake Handlers Wanted

The Neerim & District Landcare Group (NDLG) committee have been busy in recent times, and have joined up with the Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network to run a Living With Snakes field day which was aimed at helping people understand the important role that snakes have in the natural environment, and what we can do to preserve that role.

"helping people understand the important role that snakes have in the natural environment, and what we can do to preserve that role"

It was a highly successful event with over 50 people attending! In fact, after the event 9 people stepped up to the challenge set by Ian MacLagan, President NDLG, to undertake training to become accredited Snake Handlers! Commenced discussions with both the Neerim South Primary School and the Neerim District Secondary College, exploring opportunities to introduce a "landcare component" into their respective curricula. These opportunities will revolve around educating our youth (the next generation of landcarers) on such topics as bio-diversity, sustainable living and the value of water. Two ideas which have created



The beautiful Helmeted Honeyeater.
Photo – Courtesy Lindsay McNaught

great interest amongst those involved in the discussions include the establishment of a Pond Garden at the primary school and the establishment of a Nursery at the high school (which

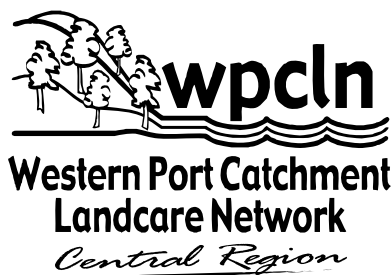
can then be used to grow plants for the new Neerim South Wetlands, for example). Studies will be developed around these two pieces of infrastructure, so that the Theory and Practice are combined. More detail will arise as discussion continues, so Watch This Space! Started planning for an Integrated Pest Management education forum, which may include a Field Day or two and the establishment of "special interest groups" in the district looking at specific pests including wild dogs, foxes and Indian Mynahs. Wild dogs are, for our friends



Neerim locals getting up close and personal with local wildlife

living in, and adjacent to, forested areas a very serious problem, with the threat to the safety of livestock, wildlife, pet animals and humans very, very real indeed. Indian Mynahs are a threat to bio-diversity and, like wild dogs, their numbers are increasing. Foxes too continue to threaten local wildlife, and because of recent seasonal conditions, are increasing their numbers. Further announcements will be made in the near future as to what events and activities will be held on these topics and on the broader topic of integrated pest management.

Mike Haughton – Secretary, Neerim & District Landcare Group



LANDHOLDER FUNDING

CEC/WPCLN has recently received funding from DAFF (Federal Government) & Melbourne Water to continue to encourage landholders to become active in Landcare through workshops, field days and other promotional activities. Staff can direct landholders to the most appropriate funding for on-ground works that the CEC/WPCLN has available.

From the Committee

Community Participation

Late summer and autumn are busy times in Cardinia Shire with community events. These are a wonderful opportunity for the CEC and Landcare Groups to present their message to the wider community. It is also fun! I have enjoyed the support of members of several Landcare Groups as well as CEC volunteers including staff who have put in the extra time for the community.

We have been pleased to have excellent positions at both the Cardinia Shire Australia Day gathering, the Pakenham Centenary Show and FarmWorld. We are grateful to both the Cardinia Shire and the Pakenham Gazette and Show Committee for these opportunities to display our banners and materials. In addition we have helped these organisations by giving out native plants for newcomers to the municipality and plants for 500 children and families on the Wally Wombat Trail.

The Westernport Catchment Council and Melbourne Water also invited us to have a stand at the Westernport Science Review day which was thoroughly informative and a great initiative. At this point we look forward to another opportunity on Sunday 10th April in the lovely Kurth Kiln bush reserve for their open day.

These days provide us with an opportunity not only to talk about the work that is happening through the CEC and Westernport Landcare relationship but to invite interested people to join us in working for the environment.

Reviewing the value of the CEC

I would like to express our very grateful thanks to those people from the Landcare Groups and Friends groups who attended the Westernport Landcare Network meeting and the CEC General meeting when we discussed points of satisfaction and concern about the role of the CEC.

We have also appreciated the return of evaluation questionnaires from many members. We are currently putting the ideas together and hope they will help us focus our efforts as a coalition.

Many thanks and keep up the great work everyone does for our precious environment!

Elizabeth Fraser – Vice President, CEC

Thank you to everyone that contributed to this newsletter.

Your articles and pictures are appreciated. If you would like to contribute to the next edition of this newsletter please send your articles and pictures **Bridgette McCallum** on bmccallum_cec@dcsi.net.au