



Barrabool Hills Landcare Newsletter

June 2020

Young trees reaching for the skies at the ephemeral wetland afforestation site

barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

What's On.

- Barrabool Hills Landcare Group AGM – normally held in August has been rescheduled until November to combine with a post Covid-19 Christmas gathering and celebration.
- Replanting the 300 replacement trees and shrubs at the Mt Pollock ephemeral wetland to take place in June. Dates to be decided depending on availability of volunteers. The sites for planting have already been sprayed in preparation. If you would like to help contact Kaye Rodden and we will roster crews to minimise physical contact.

We recently received a lovely email from Amber Conron who won the BHLG photography competition for the cover photo of the 'Flora of the Hills' booklet published in 2017. Amber's passion for photography has taken off since winning our competition as you can see to the right.



AN UPDATE FROM AMBER CONRON

**THANK YOU
BARRABOOL HILLS
LANDCARE GROUP**

'YOU HAVE SPARKED MY PASSION FOR PHOTOGRAPHY'

Kindly printed and supported by

Libby Coker MP - Member for Corangamite

Libby.Coker.MP@aph.gov.au

"Funded from Parliamentary Budget"

Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium strictum*)

The Chocolate Lily is a small indigenous lily that's perfect for rockeries and small patches in the home garden. Plant 20 + in a large patch for an amazing scented display. It has mauve six-petal star-shaped flowers the size of a \$2 coin in spring.

The Chocolate Lily's flower colour and rich sweet scent is a magnet for native bees, moths and butterflies. It will also bring them into your home garden if you plant a patch.

You'll see it growing in native grasslands and open areas in woodlands and forest where there is full sunlight or dappled shade. It complements and enriches the ground habitat and is found with other lilies, native grasses, native herbs and orchids. We have a very rich and wonderful heritage in all these plants.



The Chocolate Lily (pictured above) is a member of the Asparagus family, which fits well with its use as a raw or roasted root vegetable used by the First Australians. Though it's not the root but its edible flower that has a chocolate scent.

I have a friend who was a child during the Second World War. At that time most things were in short supply, especially chocolate bars. She would stop on her way home from school in spring and smell the Chocolate Lilies growing on the roadside. She could imagine the wonderful taste of chocolate with each new drift of flowers.

Chocolate Lilies are widespread throughout Australia and their flowers appear from September through to January. In my home garden they flower well into April.

Most indigenous nurseries sell them, though they're easy to propagate at home. Simply push the small black seeds into seed sowing mix any time from spring through to late summer and their single leaf will appear within four weeks. When they are large enough to hold with your thumb and forefinger, transplant into pots to grow on for the garden.

Plant into your garden in late winter to early spring. It likes a sunny well drained position. Be prepared to be delighted for many months and of course children love the chocolate scent.

To read more about the Chocolate Lily follow this link

<https://www.recreatingthecountry.com.au/blog/chocolate-lily-connecting-with-nature-one-plant-at-a-time>

Stephen Murphy, Sustainable Biorich Landscapes

To read more interesting articles from Stephen Murphy check out his blog at

www.recreatingthecountry.com.au/blog

BHLG Executive Committee – 4th May.

Whilst most of our face-to-face activities have been put on hold, the Group is working hard to maintain connections across our community. In fact, instead of our usual 'eat and meet' the Executive met online via Zoom on Mon 4 May 20 to discuss activities and potential projects for 20/21.

One of the main items on the agenda was the timing of the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group AGM which is normally held in mid-August, a feature of our annual social calendar in "the Hills". This obviously could be impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions, and for this reason the Executive committee formally moved that the AGM be deferred for 3 months.... until mid-November. As the group is not currently incorporated in its own right, notifying Landcare Victoria Incorporated (LVI) is sufficient to make that change which has been completed.

Hopefully by then we may be able to hold our traditional AGM meeting and combine it with our end of year celebration and a relaxation of the physical isolation rules which now apply.

Heike Dunn, Secretary BHLG

Equipment for loan to members

The following equipment is owned by the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group and is available for use by members:

- 400 litre spray unit trailer mounted
 - 2 Kidney tree buckets
 - 1 Potti Putki Tree planter
 - 2 Hamilton Tree planters
 - 1 60 litre motorbike mounted spray unit
 - 1 Rabbit Smoker (for non-culinary purposes)
- Members are requested to return all equipment to Trevor promptly after use.
- Contact Trevor Jones on 0407 009 855.

Landcare Membership

This year more than ever before we are realising how important strong community values are to the physical and mental health of individuals both young and old and also to the landscape, we all live in.

For this reason, we believe that community Landcare groups are becoming more relevant than ever. Our special places and species will need support and people will need to heal. Studies have shown that people thrive when they have an opportunity to socialise and be part of a team doing something worthwhile, especially when they can also immerse themselves in nature.

Our hope is that some people who previously didn't have time to get involved in caring for our environment may find ways to create space for this in their future. We have demonstrated that we have a greater chance of achieving things together as a group.

It is that time of the year when subscriptions are due for the Barrabool Hills community Landcare Group. For those who are renewing, thank you for your continued support, and for those who would like to join, or re-join, welcome to our community.

Whilst we do attempt to find resources from outside the community to support on-ground programs for rabbit and weed control and tree planting, your membership goes toward keeping our organisation viable.

Specifically, your membership fee provides insurance cover for you when we are conducting field activities and participating in community events. Peer to peer learning and hands-on involvement in projects are among the most highly valued elements of Landcare.

Other benefits of Membership include:

- Front gate sign
- Flora Book
- Barrabool Hills – Changing Landscapes booklet
- Bimonthly newsletter
- All Group announcements via email (if you wish)
- Access to hire of Group equipment
- Advice on revegetation and weed management
- Access to and assistance in applying for on-ground work grants

To pay your annual subscription of join (or re-join) the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group please go to our website <https://www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au/shop/> or, if you would like to chat, drop us a line at barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

Anthony Jones, Treasurer BHLG & Heike Dunn, Secretary BHLG

Value & importance of large old trees

For many years this magnificent Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) in Read's Rd Gnarwarre (pictured below) was strangled by barbed wire. It was used as part of a fence line, so in effect it was a huge strainer post.

Trees grow in thickness (outwards) through what is called secondary growth, during secondary growth the growing tissue of the tree, the vascular cambium and the cork cambium is situated around the inner core of heartwood. Due to the way trees grow they are vulnerable to objects such as wire that can literally cut off the transportation of food and water throughout the tree if they impinge on secondary growth.



The new farm owners wanted to save this tree and decided to free it from its barbed wire encirclement. The tree now has a new post and rail fence on either side (pictured below).

Long live this tree for many more years.

Christa Jones, BHLG Committee Member



Spare time on your hands? Landcare jobs to do right now!

More time on your hands because you're working from home? Weeds are loving the rainfall we have had in recent months and are celebrating release from their weather driven lockdown. Take some time to have a look around your property and put a stop to any of these villains taking unauthorised possession of your property.

Weed	Most Effective Control Methods	When	More info
Boxthorn 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cut main stem and paint with undiluted glyphosate (Roundup) within 30 seconds ensuring the entire cut face and edges of cut receive ample herbicide 2. Remove mechanically with a grab and then complete step 1 on all exposed roots. 	Anytime	Click here
Galenia, blanket weed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pull or chip it out ensuring you get the tap root. 2. Cut it off at the tap root and immediately paint the exposed root end with Roundup (glyphosate) 3. Spray plant with grazon or grazon extra. 	Now, whilst it is actively growing	Click here
Gorse 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cut it off at the tap root and immediately paint the exposed root end with Roundup (glyphosate) 2. Spray when plant is actively growing but not in flower with herbicide ensuring thorough coverage of all foliage to the point of run-off 3. Slashing or mulching must be followed with spraying of regrowth when it is knee high for effective control 4. Persistence. Gorse seed can remain viable for 50+ years 	Anytime (but depends on control method)	Click here
Serrated Tussock 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical removal, chip out with a mattock and up turn roots for most efficient removal. 2. Spray with a glyphosate (knockdown of existing plant) or fluproprinate (kills plant and prevent germination of seeds) based herbicide 3. Cultivation 	From now to October	Click here

Reproduced with permission from Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group Newsletter. Thanks to the Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group team for putting this resource together. Note: Ensure you follow all safety regulations, rules and have appropriate training before using agrichemicals (sprays etc.). Also ensure you abide by withholding periods of sprayed areas. Sometimes the good old-fashioned method of chipping out sporadic weeds gradually by taking a chipping tool (mattock) with you every time you check fences and water troughs is the most cost effective and least physically difficult and harmful method of weed removal as the work is done gradually thereby reducing potential harm from 'over doing it'. The advice above is generalised and may not be specific to your situation.

Junior Landcare Week In Uganda

I still have fond memories of my visit to the Barrabool Hills in 2015 when I was invited by your President Kaye Rodden to your AGM. My visit was purposeful, and I must say I learnt a lot that evening especially the way you organize and share roles. I recall sharing with you briefly the work of my organization. A lot has happened since my visit to Australia. I have also been privileged to keep in touch with your group through your newsletter, which I receive regularly (courtesy of Brent and Kaye Rodden). This has been a source of inspiration and I value that networking.

I therefore thought I could share with you some of the recent achievements of Kabale Agroforestry Network (KAN) during the Uganda National Landcare Conference and Awards which took place in November 2019 in Kabale Uganda. This was the first time the Uganda Landcare Network (ULN), organised an event of that magnitude. ULN is an umbrella organization that brings together all Landcare Networks and platforms in Uganda. It would be the equivalent of your Landcare Victoria Inc., but its structure is different. KAN is a member of ULN and provided the Conference local organizing committee since it was hosting the event. KAN is privileged to have an office in Kabale town and therefore provided the secretariat for the Conference.

In order to show our visibility during this Conference KAN organized a pre-conference Junior Landcare Week aimed at showcasing our work but also to warm up the conference. During the week we engaged the partner schools in music, dance and drama competitions, poem recitals and painting competitions, all based on the theme of the conference. The Conference theme was "Towards Resilient Landscapes and Livelihood through Landcare Approach". There were also school garden competitions. At the close of the week KAN organised a Junior Landcare Day at one of the schools where our stakeholders and invited dignitaries converged. This was held one day before the opening of the Conference and so foreign participants from Australia, Germany, and Kenya who had arrived also attended.

The Junior Landcare Day started with a street walk through Kabale town with His Worship the Mayor of the town as Chief Walker/Guest. Accompanied by local leaders, participants to the conference, partner organizations, members of KAN, pupils and teachers, the street walk stopped the town as they marched with placards and banners with key Landcare

messages. The street walk ended at one of the junior Landcare schools, the venue of the event.



Guests in jovial mood during the street walk in jovial mood during the street walk.

Our guests started with a tour of the garden activities at the school, tree planting in the school compound, and a tour of the exhibitions by the 12 junior Landcare schools. The guests were impressed by the quality of materials exhibited by the pupils who guided them around the exhibitions.



Guests admire the work produced by the pupils as they tour the exhibitions.

After taking their seats the guests were treated to a music display and poem recitals by the 12 KAN partner schools and 2 other invited schools from Ntungamo Agroforestry Network from the nearby District. The guests were impressed by the quality of poems and some gave gifts to the pupils who excelled. The best poems and paintings were also exhibited at the Conference.

One of the pupils presenting a poem during the Junior Landcare Day.



The event was crowned by speeches and a Junior Landcare Awards ceremony. During the speeches the local leaders pledged to support junior Landcare activities in all the schools of Kabale area. KAN intends to make Junior Landcare Week an annual event if resources can permit. KAN plans to start a Newsletter that will help capture some of such milestones. This event has helped to increase KAN visibility locally but also internationally since the Conference was covered in the local media and has continued to appear in foreign publications.

Below: Participants at the Uganda National Conference and Awards.



In 2015 KAN was working with 5 primary schools but has since expanded to 12 schools. This year

Australian Landcare International (ALI) has given KAN a grant of AUD\$500 under its Overseas Landcare programme to help scale out to 2 more schools. KAN also works with 3 community Landcare groups grappling with revegetation of landscapes devastated by landslides. One of these groups, Ikamiro Landcare Association, has also received the AUD\$500 ALI grant under the same programme with KAN support. This support is a great boost to our work, and we cherish such partnerships.

Article by Jimmy Musiime

The Barrabool Hills Landcare Group supported Jimmy and the Kabale community through an Overseas Landcare Grant, the proceeds from our "red gum auction" at the Tree Expo in 2014.

Kaye Rodden

City Nature Challenge

Late in April community members living in Geelong and surrounds were invited to take part in a trial! A trial to see how many plant and animal species could be registered and documented on the iNaturalist site over a 4-day period, with a view to entering the City Nature Challenge as a serious competitor in 2021.

This is actually part of a fun international challenge competing with communities across the globe to see who can "capture" the most observations. Although this year because of the Covid-19 pandemic it was not a competition, rather focusing on the collaborative aspect of people around the globe connecting to and documenting nature however they could!

The capturing is easy... just download the iNaturalist App on your phone and take a photo... the erudite naturalists from across the world help you identify it and then you are off and running.

World-wide there were 815258 observations over the four-day period, 32600 species and 41165 people taking part. Geelong contributed 5949 observations from 135 observers, and there were 1384 different species. A Barrabool Hills Landcare member was a standout "observer" ... whereas yours truly managed only 20+... the problem was trying to keep birds still or even close enough to focus! Obviously, I am very much a novice, but it was enormous fun....

Have a try and get ready for the 2021 challenge!

Kaye Rodden

Geelong Intrepid Landcare

Geelong Intrepid Landcare is Landcare for young folks, this group normally meets online so has been relatively unaffected by Covid-19.

The group has two meetings coming up:

Thursday June 25th & Thursday July 30th – Geelong Intrepid Landcare Online Meetings, everyone welcome for Q&A session with guest speaker (first 45 minutes), meeting after for young folks.

For more information check the groups Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/GeelongIntrepidLandcare/>

A Bit Of A ‘Catty’ Conversation



Above: one of the three formidable looking feral felines that were photographed.

A BHLG member recently had issues with their motion activated wildlife camera which they mostly use to get rather amusing photos of their sheep playing. The camera issue was resolved when it was plugged into a mains socket, so they plugged it in and positioned it near one of their sheds. Much to their surprise they found their shed was a hive of activity during the night with 3 feral cats coming every night! Normally the camera only photographed 1 feral cat/year when positioned in treelines and paddocks, clearly the shed was far more popular with the local feline crowd than paddocks and tree lines.

In July 2018, feral cats were declared an established pest animal on specified Crown land in Victoria under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994, however feral

cats have not been declared an established pest on private land, meaning farmers and other private landholders are not legally required to control feral cats.

Management of feral cats in peri urban areas is not easy, they are seldom seen, when they are, they run very fast and they are smart, so often won't walk into humane capture cage traps. However, the impacts of free roaming pet cats are relatively simple to reduce. Pet cats can be kept inside all the time without detriment to their health which can prevent them killing 109 native animals per year (59% of 186), RSPCA has a great guide on how to keep your cat healthy and happy at home see the link below.

<https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/03-community/pets-and-animals/rspca-australia-guide-to-keeping-your-cat-safe-and-happy-at-home.pdf>

Feral and free roaming domestic cats in Australia cause much destruction to native wildlife. This infographic from a Conversation article below shows just how big the problem is.

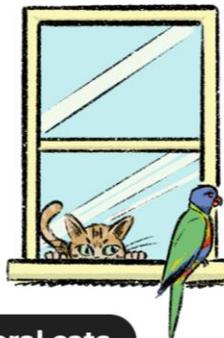
Infographic from: <https://theconversation.com/one-cat-one-year-110-native-animals-lock-up-your-pet-its-a-killing-machine-138412>

Article by Tim Harte

Cats and Australian wildlife by the numbers

Pet cats

There are 3.8 million pet cats in Australia, of which:



- Roaming pet cats **kill 390 million animals** collectively per year in Australia
- An individual roaming pet cat **kills 186 reptiles, birds and mammals per year**, most of them (59%) native species
- A study found **39% of cats** brought in at night **snuck out** for nocturnal roaming and hunting
- Pet cats bring home only 15% of what they hunt.

Feral cats

- The average feral cat **kills 748 reptiles, birds and mammals** a year
- In the bush there is **one feral cat per 3 to 4km²**, versus **40 to 70 pet cats per km²** around towns
- **Pet cats kill 30-50 times more animals per km²** around towns than feral cats do in the bush.



What bird is this?

The bird in the April BHLG newsletter was a female Superb fairywren (*Malurus cyaneus*). The male Superb fairywren is more easily recognised with its gleaming, velvety blue-and-black plumage, the females do seem to be far more talkative and can be heard peeping away and seen bobbing along the ground in most gardens in our area. Superb fairywren's have a bit of a risqué love life as the contents of these birds' untidy nests, a clutch of three or four eggs, are not necessarily the progeny of the 'coloured' male, as there is much infidelity among female fairy-wrens, with many eggs resulting from extra-pair liaisons. Superb Fairy-wrens feed in small social groups on insects on the ground and in low bushes. Superb Fairy-wrens live in areas where suitable dense cover and low shrubs occur, and their nests are often found in overgrown dense grass clumps.

This issues mystery bird has been very allusive to photograph due to its shy nature. As a result of this the photo's that I took were adequate to identify it but not very good quality, so I have included one from Google. You can probably guess that this birds name has 'yellow' in it due to its amazingly vibrant yellow colouration. Email the newsletter editor with your 'what bird is this?' answer, the first person to answer correctly will have their name published in the next newsletter.

Tim Harte

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Let your fellow members know what is happening in the Barrabool Hills. Contributions to the newsletter are welcomed. Send articles and photos to Tim Harte (balletcadet@gmail.com), deadline for next issue is 16/07/20

Members are able to advertise their Barrabool Hills business in the newsletter @ \$30 per issue (space allowing). Ads. are approximately 50 mm x 70 mm, and will be printed provided there is space

A special thanks goes to the Leigh family for distributing the newsletter.