



Barrabool Hills Landcare Newsletter

December 2020

Our new awesome BHLG bumper stickers – we will be distributing these on the 11th

barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

What's On.

- Friday 11th December at 6.30pm - Barrabool Hills Landcare Group End of Year Get Together – More info overleaf - RSVP to barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com by 8th December.
- SAVE THE DATE - Rabbit baiting dates for 2021 - 15th, 18th and 22nd February – Baiting Note Page 7.



A photo from our AGM on the 18th showing the smiling faces of our community connecting via Zoom. Thanks to all who attended. It was great to catch up with locals despite the barriers imposed by Covid-19.

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Libby Coker MP - Member for Corangamite
Libby.Coker.MP@aph.gov.au
“Funded from Parliamentary Budget”

Making income from biodiversity - a 'win win'

Adding up to 20% 'useful' plants to biodiversity plantings makes a lot of sense. These useful plants can provide products for the landowner as well as a significant income. These same 'useful' plants also provide excellent habitat and food for wildlife. However, the greatest benefit of adding a measure of profit to biodiversity is that it makes much wider plantations possible.

Traditional farm shelterbelts are quite narrow. A plantation of mixed natives could be 10 – 25 meters wide. Yet ecologists have been saying for nearly two decades that most farm plantations are too narrow to provide the critical habitat needed by many of the 128 bird species on Victoria's threatened species list.

A well-designed biodiversity plantation that mimics the local bush can support a diversity of wildlife, though ecologists recommend wider plantations of 50m to provide habitat that is critical for threatened species.

Few landholders can justify biodiversity plantings of this width, yet agroforestry plantings for timber production of 10ha are considered a valuable addition to a farming enterprise. Therefore, the addition of some forestry to biodiversity plantings as blocks of trees for saw logs or clumps of selected shrubs for cut flowers can make wider biodiversity plantings both possible and appropriate.

Some 'useful' plants

Cut Flowers

Banksias species selected for their cut flowers provide good income plus opportunities for wildlife to feed on nectar and build nests. Cut flowers are a popular commodity at farmers markets and can be conveniently sold from the farm gate.

Timber production

'Box' eucalypts, stringybarks, ironbarks and bloodwoods like Spotted Gum, produce valuable timbers that can

be thinned for firewood, fence posts, and craft wood production. Some mixed farms now have small mobile timber mills for slabbing logs into planks for weatherboards, flooring and furniture. Turning trees into timber products is a very effective way of taking carbon out of the atmosphere for many decades.

Seed orchards

Indigenous plants are becoming very rare and can be planted in farm plantations as seed orchards. These plantings will be a critical (and potentially profitable) source of seed for future revegetation works. Planting in groups of fifty or more of the same species ensures good pollination and convenient harvest.

Adding useful plants to biodiversity actually makes larger plantations possible because they become much more than shelterbelts. They become important growth assets that return considerably more income than money sitting in the bank. Larger and wider plantations are also important carbon sinks and provide far better-quality habitat for wildlife than a standard 4 or 6 row plantation. Adding 'useful' plants is therefore a win for the landholder as well as a win for biodiversity.

Check out Stephen's blog for more great articles like this.

Stephen Murphy, Sustainable Biorich Landscapes

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

www.recreatingthecountry.com.au/blog

Below: A photo of Ironbarks pruned for forestry.





CHRISTMAS BREAKUP

Friday 11th DECEMBER

6.30pm

“Aldine”



1133 Hamilton Highway
Stonehaven Vic 3218

2.7 km East of Pollocksford Road or 2.4 km West of Merrawarp Road.

We are very excited to finally be able to invite our community to come and join us for our annual Christmas BBQ at Mark & Heike Dunns’ property. We are also thrilled that Janine Duffy, from the Koala Clancy Foundation will be attending and launching the koala biolinks program in the “Hills”, with the first site on the Dunn’s property.

Bring your own meat and drinks and a salad or desert to share.

Everything else provided!

To enable us to follow covid regulations and also for catering purposes, it is essential that you RSVP by 8th December to Heike on

barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

Koala: More trees please!

Koala Clancy Foundation planted 9000 koala trees from June to August 2020, the best year of tree planting yet. The koala food trees, shelter trees and shrubs have been planted on 5 sites from the You Yangs to the Moorabool River, west of Melbourne.



A Koala up a tree in Gnarwarre – photo Tim Harte

But the wild koalas of the You Yangs & Brisbane Ranges need more trees. Koala Clancy Foundation are seeking interest for winter 2021 from property owners in the Little River, Balliang, Beremboke, Mount Wallace, Anakie, Maude, Lethbridge, Sutherlands Creek & Gheringhap areas.

Why do koalas need more trees? Existing forest in reserves is mostly on stony, hilly country of low fertility (Crowther 2009). As the climate dries out, trees on public land are not providing for koalas' nutritional and water needs. Heat waves and drought force them towards rivers and waterholes, which are often on farmland (McAlpine 2015). But most of our streams and rivers have reduced, patchy tree cover, a fraction of what they once had. Some streams and drainage lines have no fringing forest at all.

Farming land on the Western Plains has tremendous potential to provide habitat for koalas, without loss of productivity. River and stream frontages, if forested, are sought-after habitat for koalas and native trees help prevent erosion and improve water quality. River Red Gum *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* is the koala's favourite tree on the Western Plains (Duffy 2020).

Ideal sites for a Koala Clancy tree planting project include livestock or crop farms with a fenced-off river or creek frontage. Drainage lines, dams and floodplains protected from stock are also suitable. Large properties with the ability to take 600 or more

trees (min 1.5 hectares of new planting) are preferred.

Koala Clancy Foundation are a registered Landcare member, based in Staughton Vale. As a special-interest Landcare member, we regularly work in partnership with local Landcare groups.

More information:

<https://www.koalacancyfoundation.org.au/>

Article by Janine Duffy – President Koala Clancy Foundation Inc.

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E: president@koalacancyfoundation.org.au



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- Duffy, Janine (2020) You Yangs Koala Research Report <https://www.echidnawalkabout.com.au/you-yangs-koala-research-report-2018/>
- Crowther, M.S., McAlpine, C.A., Lunney, D., Shannon, I. and Bryant, J.V. (2009), Using broad-scale, community survey data to compare species conservation strategies across regions: A case study of the Koala in a set of adjacent 'catchments'. *Ecological Management & Restoration*, 10: S88-S96. doi:[10.1111/j.1442-8903.2009.00465.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1442-8903.2009.00465.x)
- Clive McAlpine, Daniel Lunney, Alistair Melzer, Peter Menkhorst, Stephen Phillips, David Phalen, William Ellis, William Foley, Greg Baxter, Deidre de Villiers, Rodney Kavanagh, Christine Adams-Hosking, Charles Todd, Desley Whisson, Robyn Molsher, Michele Walter, Ivan Lawler, Robert Close, (2015) Conserving koalas: A review of the contrasting regional trends, outlooks and policy challenges, *Biological Conservation*, Volume 192, 2015, Pages 226-236, ISSN 0006-3207, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2015.09.020>.

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.

Why Control Rabbits? Here's why...

The control of feral rabbits is quite pertinent to the community in the Hills as it is from close to here over 150 years ago that the Australian rabbit plague was launched!

In 1859 13 pairs of European rabbits were released at Barwon Park near Winchelsea for game hunting. Within 70 years these rabbits had dominated 2/3rds of the Australian continent, which is the fastest rate of any colonising mammal in the world. Feral rabbits are very suited to the Australian Mediterranean climate and under these conditions "procreate with uncontrollable velocity"! One pair of mating rabbits can produce 200 offspring in 18 months.

A picture of a rabbit damaged ecosystem in the Hills.

Wild European Rabbits are one of Australia's most serious pest animals. They:

- destroy pasture, crops and plant communities impacting on agriculture and the environment, costing the community 100's of millions of dollars a year.
- cause soil erosion and associated sedimentation of waterways;
- compete with native fauna for food and habitat; and
- directly impact on the survival of 304 threatened Australian Species.

Rabbit Control

Effective rabbit control is achieved by using a combination of control measures, not just one.

There is no one quick-fix solution. **Land owners must be more persistent than the rabbits!**

Effective rabbit management utilises all the available control measures that are feasible and available on a particular property. Every rabbit should be exposed to as many control measures as possible. The aim is to make the property a rabbit hostile environment.

The order in which control measures are implemented is important to maximise the effectiveness of the program, ideally follow this sequence of control:

- Allow biological control such as calicivirus and natural mortality to reduce the rabbit population.
- Bait to reduce numbers prior to warren destruction if numbers are still high
- Remove harbour and destroy warrens (i.e., Ripping, pictured below).



- Follow up with fumigation and further warren destruction.
- Be persistent, remain vigilant and monitor regularly.



In Victoria feral or wild populations of European rabbits (*Orytolagus cuniculus*) are declared as established pest animals under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

The Barrabool Hills rabbit baiting program is just one of a number of control measures that are recommended to help landholders fulfil **their legal responsibility “to take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of, and as far as possible eradicate, established pest animals from their land”**, as outlined in this Act.

For more information on rabbit management have a look at the Victorian Rabbit Action Network website and Facebook page.

<https://rabbitaction.com>

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

Article by Kaye Rodden

Living On The Verge



This spring the BHLG Newsletter Editor noticed what appeared to be asparagus like shoots popping up on the verge in front of his family’s farm. Luckily unlike the asparagus like shoots on Reads Road which

unfortunately turned out to be South African weed orchids (*Disa bracteate*) these shoots turned out to be a native orchid! More than 30 *Scented Sun Orchids* (*Thelymitra megalyptra*) flowered magnificently on the verge for a brief period of less than 72 hours. After the 72-hour period their leaves shrivelled up and all that was left was a thicker asparagus like shoot with what is presumed to be seeds developing.

Geophytes such as native orchids and lilies are perennial plants that reshoot annually from an underground organ such as a tuberous root or bulb. This habit of growth allows many orchids and lilies to survive the unfavourable conditions of summer as they are dormant during drought and have no above ground tissue when fire is most likely to occur in the peak of summer.

Tim Harte

Barrabool Hills Landcare Group was nominated for the Corangamite Landcare Volunteer Recognition Program 2020!

We recently received a certificate of recognition for the Corangamite Landcare Volunteer Recognition Program and \$200 prize to fund our community activities (*below*).





Rabbit Baiting 2021



**EASY PEASY – JUST ORDER VIA OUR WEBSITE instead of filling in this form.
You will be able to pay by direct bank transfer, credit card or PayPal ☺**

www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au/shop

BAITING DATES FOR 2021
15th, 18th and 22th February 2021

Orders are now being taken for the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group's annual rabbit baiting program. This successful program, now in its 16th year, is organized by volunteers for the community. Pindone is a cumulative poison. To be effective, rabbits need to ingest the baited carrots on **three** separate occasions over a one week period.

ORDERING AND PAYMENT

The minimum quantity that can be ordered is ¼ bag (approx. 5kg) x 3 costing \$78 (incl GST) in total. You will need to estimate how much bait you will need for each of the three baiting days ie ¼ bag, ½ bag or a full bag as per below. Please call our Hotline below if you need help estimating.

Options for ordering and payment methods are:
EITHER
1/ Order & pay via our website
<https://www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au/shop/>
Payment options are bank transfer, credit card or PayPal. You do not need to submit this order form but please keep it as a reminder for pick up dates etc.
OR
2/ Pay by cash or cheque at any **Bendigo Bank Branch** using the attached Deposit slip and your surname as the Reference. You will however need to mail your completed paper order form to: 1270 Barrabool Rd, Gnarwarre 3221. Or scan and email it to barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com
Note: Unfortunately we cannot directly accept cash or cheque payments in the current Covid-19 environment.
Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Orders and payments must be received by **5th February 2021**.
☹ Regrettably we are **unable to process any orders or payments received after this date**.
A Tax Invoice/Receipt will be emailed (where possible) after receipt of your payment. A paper copy will be provided upon request.

COLLECTION DEPOTS

Your entire order will comprise **three** separate allocations. These will be available for collection on the above **three** dates from only one of following two depots.

- Depot 1 – Barry & Glenys Harvey - 232 Hendy Main Road, Mt Moriac Ph 0407568292**
- Depot 2 – Brien & Judy Cohn - 25 Kingsbury Lane, Waurn Ponds Ph 0414835833**

Please specify on the order form from which depot you will be collecting your baited carrot and it is essential you include a contact phone number below for the person collecting the bait. Orders need to be collected from the depot between **4pm** and **6pm** on the specified dates

HOTLINE
For more information, contact
Kaye (0438 317 499) or Jim (0409 935 700)

It is the legal obligation of landholders to control rabbits on their property. One pair of rabbits can produce 180 offspring in 18 months and 12 rabbits eat as much as one sheep! Baiting, warren destruction and removal of areas where rabbits can hide are recognized as being essential components of an integrated rabbit control program

NAME

POSTAL ADDRESS

EMAIL **PHONE NO. OF PERSON COLLECTING BAIT**

ORDER – ENTER NUMBER OF BAGS on **each** of the three baiting days

¼ bag for each of 3 baiting days = \$ 78 x = \$

½ bag for each of 3 baiting days = \$ 123 x \$

1 bag for each of 3 baiting days = \$ 222 x \$

TOTAL PAYMENT MADE \$

Direct Credit Reference (ie SURNAME)

Collection Depot:

Waurn Ponds Mt Moriac

Geelong Landcare Network Update

In a typical year, the Geelong Landcare Network would have had its AGM already, but as many groups around the state have had to do, we have postponed it until the new year.

Even though this year has been harder to get out with volunteers and get our hands dirty, we were still able to complete a few waterways projects with the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, have a planting day with the Norlane West Scouts group and take a group of year 8 Geelong Grammar students out to see revegetated sites that were planted in 2005-2006.

In the coming months, GLN will be continuing to work with the CCMA on a Victorian Volcanic Plains Eucalypt Grassy Woodland program that spans our network. We will be planning and developing an eDNA platypus monitoring program that will have a large focus on community engagement. For this project will be working with a wide range of stakeholders like Upper Barwon Landcare Network, Moorabool Landcare Network, Golden Plains Shire, City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire and Barwon Water to name a few. This program will have a range of ways for volunteers to get involved.

Below: Geelong Grammar Year 8 students at the Commonwealth Tree Project site October 2020.



Above: Norlane West Scout Group at waterway planting on the Moorabool August 2020.

So keep your eyes out on our social media, website and our soon to be developed newsletter.

In 2021 GLN is also focusing on expanding our affiliated member groups. With the hope of a group forming in the Bannockburn and Bruce Creek Catchment area and the possibility of a Geelong Urban Landcare Group. So, if you live in these areas and are interested in helping establish a group or even just interested in joining a group, please get in touch with me.

Tim Trottier

Landcare Facilitator, Geelong Landcare Network

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<https://geelonglandcarenetwork.org.au/>

www.facebook.com/GeelongLandcareNetwork/

www.instagram.com/geelonglandcare



What bird is this?

The 'What Bird Is This' segment has been growing in popularity, with more and more responses, it has even been abbreviated to WBIT by bird identifiers. Amusingly the logistical question of how many new birds the newsletter editor has to find between issues is starting to become a challenging but very enjoyable task.

Judy Cohn, Ric Walter, Craig Michael, Tom Mackenzie, Jeremy Sager & Pom Mackenzie all identified the bird in the October BHLG newsletter correctly, well done to Judy, Ric, Craig, Tom, Jeremy and Pom. Shining/Golden Bronze-Cuckoo (*Calcites lucidus* spp. *plagosus*). Golden Bronze-Cuckoos feed on insects and their larvae, particularly hairy caterpillars, foraged from tree canopies. As a Cuckoo this species is known for being a nest parasite (laying their eggs in someone else's nest), they lay their eggs mostly between mid-October and mid-December but can lay them as early as July and as late as January. Usually, other bird's nests that are dome-shaped are preferred however open nests will be used occasionally, these nests usually belong to thornbills but can also belong to scrubwrens, fairy-wrens, honeyeaters and robins. If you see these beautiful birds around, make sure that you keep an eye out for the comical site of large Cuckoo babies being fed by much smaller foster parents as this is a rather hilarious but beautiful joy to behold.

This issue's mystery bird was observed feeding in a paddock in the Hills with its mate. It was observed feeding in the air and on the ground and took regular breaks to return to perch on a fence and shuffle its wings after landing. These birds' clear black colouring on their faces is a clue to their common name. 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

Contact us.

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GIS mapping	Geoff Anson	0418 324 632
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Equipment	Trevor Jones	0407 009 855
Email:	barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com	
Facebook:	barraboolhillslandcare	
Instagram:	barraboolhillslandcaregroup	
Website:	www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au	

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 16/01/21

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.