

BARRABOOL HILLS LANDCARE

Barrabool Hills Landcare Group Newsletter. April 2024.

Geelong seen from the Barrabool Hills, Highett's Farm; Eugene von Guerard, 1859.



History of the Barrabool Hills.

Come to our first community meeting and learn about the place you love to live. by Christa Jones.

Our first BHLG Community Meeting will be held on Wednesday April 17th at the Barrabool Cricket Club Rooms in Ceres. Join us for a 6.30pm start.

A light supper will be provided. Our guest speaker is John (Johnny) Read. Johnny, his wife Beryl and ... (continued on page 2)

WHAT'S ON IN 2024?

APRIL

Dry Stone Walling Workshop.

Saturday 13th April 2024.

Wingeeel. 9.30am - 3pm.

For more information go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dry-stone-walling-workshop-tickets-844618475597>

BHLG Quarterly Meeting History of the Barrabool Hills.

Wednesday 17th April.

Speaker: Johnny Read.

Barrabool Cricket Club, Ceres.

AUGUST

Barrabool Hills Landcare Group AGM.

Date: TBA. August 2024.



Evert van Dreven. Antique Post Cards. Geelong - Queen's Bridge c1912.
Another view ... By H & B Aust. Printed Oz too. Very light green tinting just visible. Great overhead view, showing property gates, and quarry at right. Horse and cart coming down.

Rabbit baiting - Post baiting update.

By Heike Dunn

In February Barrabool Hills Landcare Group once again ran an annual rabbit baiting program for the community. 54 landholders took part this year in an area stretching from Inverleigh through to Waurin Ponds, ordering a total of 2,250 kg of bait which is a 35% increase from last year. There certainly seemed to be plenty of rabbits around, perhaps due to the wet spring/start to summer and many participants reported good uptake of bait.

In the next couple of weeks, the small committee of volunteers which organised the Barrabool Hills program will be having a "debrief", so if you have any constructive

comments, we would be keen to hear from you. Contact either Jim Seager on 0409 935 700, Heike Dunn on 0417 020 012 or email barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

Of course, annual baiting of rabbits is only a small part of the process to control these feral animals in the long term. To prevent immigrant rabbits from moving into the old warrens it is best to rip the warrens or fill them in, about two weeks after the last baiting.

It is also best to manage any sites that provide harbor for rabbits above the ground, such as wood piles, low growing trees and shrubs and stone

heaps. Those who have been part of the program for a number of years will know that the only way to really eradicate rabbits on your property is to maintain a year-round vigil and, where possible, enlist your neighbours to do the same.

Make sure you read Jennifer's follow up article on harbor destruction in this newsletter.



... (continued from page 1)

family were long time residents of the Barrabool Hills living at the family farm at Gnarwarre. He is a very engaging speaker with lots of humorous anecdotes of the area

and the people. We invite all BHLG members and friends for a fun evening of listening and learning about the history of the Barrabool Hills. The place we love to live. We

look forward to an exciting year of events and hope to see many members getting involved.



Geelong History
Mario Serra.
Mt. Moriac Flour
Mill, c.1880.

BHLG Quarterly meeting

Date: Wednesday April 17th.
Venue: Barrabool Cricket Club
Rooms, Ceres.
Time: 6.30 pm.
Guest Speaker: John Read.

Light refreshments will be
provided and catered by the
Barrabool CWA.

Please RSVP by email to
[barraboolhillslandcare@
gmail.com](mailto:barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com) or phone:
0408 342 403

Geelong Landcare Network Silver Jubilee Celebration 1999-2024

by Jim Seager

President Peter Spear welcomed guests to the Geelong Landcare Network celebration dinner at the Lethbridge Recreation Reserve. Our guest speaker was Tim D'Ombra from Western Region Ecological Network (WREN). Tim talked about

the great work they have been doing to help manage areas of indigenous vegetation and work that is being done to refine the classification of indigenous vegetation across the state. We enjoyed a great meal and listened to presentations from

landcare members and friends about the great work they have done over this time. It was also a great opportunity to catch up with other landcarers who have contributed a great amount of work over many years in the Geelong region.

Below: Peter Spear & Stuart McCallum presenting at the GLN Celebration Dinner.



The Leigh & District Landcare Group will host David Long, Master Waller, for an introductory workshop on the art of Dry Stone Walling.

You will hear about the history of these fascinating stone walls of the district and learn the basics of their construction. You will have the

opportunity to put your newly learnt skills into practice by helping to repair a historic dry stone wall.

The event will run from 9.30am to 3.00pm and will include a BBQ lunch and refreshments.

Bring a hat, sturdy shoes, sunscreen, windproof jacket and water.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, April 13 from 9:30am until 3pm at 1281 Wingeel Road, Wingeel.

For bookings please go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dry-stone-walling-workshop-tickets-844618475597>

Conversation and Commerce

Extracted from <https://www.recreatingthecountry.com.au/blog>
By Stephen Murphy.

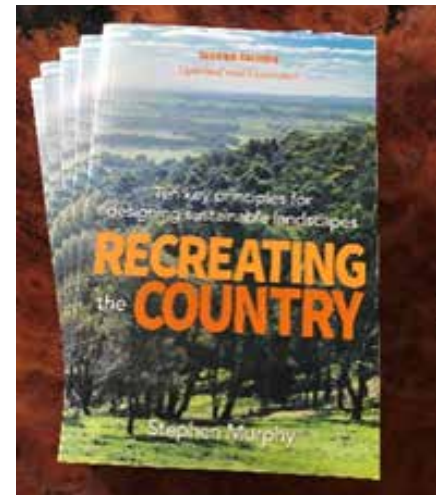
The world of commerce has been collided head-on with the world of conservation since Australia was first settled/invaded 250 years ago.

Bearing witness to this is our extraordinary loss of native flora and fauna, that appears to have been accepted as an unavoidable cost of the 'healthy' economic growth of a new nation.

PhD candidate Michelle Ward from Queensland University reminds us that we presently have 72 species of birds facing extinction. These include the Kangaroo Island Glossy Black Cockatoo, the Regent Honeyeater, and the Night Parrot which sadly has been reduced to only 150 birds.

Hopefully, we can prevent the names of these species from being added to the 29 birds known to have been lost since 1788.

It seems in the last two decades, governments at all levels have played down the urgency to protect our iconic plants and animals. The EPBC Act of 1999, Australia's main environmental law, has a woeful record of protecting our flora and fauna. As a conservationist, I'm hopeful that Labor's new environment protection laws will have sharp enough teeth to prevent any further extinctions, as has been promised by the Minister for the Environment, Tanya Plibersek.



RECREATING the COUNTRY
Ten key principles for designing sustainable landscapes. Second edition.

Fully updated and expanded with three new chapters: - 6 case studies; Biodiversity and profit = biorich; Landscape corridors and connectivity.

An index has been added for quick referencing.

\$35.00 plus postage. Discount prices are available. Visit recreatingthecountry.com.au to order.

What the experts are saying.

'Writing with passion, commitment and insight, Stephen Murphy emphasises the need to mimic nature and that working with nature requires a long-term perspective. It's an important reminder that the actions we take today will shape the country that future generations will inherit.'

Andrew Bennett, Emeritus professor in Ecology, La Trobe University.

'The sustainable biorich model is a way of 'breaking down the fence' between farmers and foresters.'

Geraint Richards, Head Forester for King Charles III.



The Regent Honeyeater, *Xanthomyza phrygia*, once numerous along the east coast, now number only 300 birds. Photo Tim Van Leeuwen

Farm planning check list. By Jim Seager.

April 2024

Whether you are running a lifestyle, hobby or broadacre farm, a good property plan for the months and years ahead can save you time and money. It can also help prevent problems, especially when running livestock and ensure you don't miss out if things are left to the last minute or forgotten.

Livestock.

- Drench lambs at weaning and adult sheep at the autumn break to reduce worm build up over wetter months. It's a good option to test sheep for worms to help decide when to drench especially after the recent wet summer.

- A clean and reliable water supply is essential for livestock over the warmer months. Make sure young lambs can reach water in troughs. Troughs are preferable over dams especially as water levels get lower.

- Assess the need for supplementary feed requirements. Feed testing hay or grain will help you determine if stock are getting what they need.

- Be sure to introduce grain feeding gradually to prevent deaths in livestock. High protein, mineral and trace element blocks can help stock on dry feed.

- All sheep in Victoria must be tagged with electronic ear tags. Contact department of Agriculture for orders.

-Prepare sheep and cattle for joining, increasing nutrition will result in better conception rates.

-Sell any unproductive cows and dry ewes

-Vaccinate young calves to prevent losses to clostridial diseases

Pastures.

- Preparing paddocks for re-sowing to new pastures this autumn.

Order seed and contact contractors if required.

- Soil testing & spreading fertilizer is best done prior to autumn break.

- Check paddocks for Serrated Tussock and Chilean Needle Grass. Treating these weeds while they can be easily identified will reduce the need for control prior to seeding.

- Control summer weeds such as thistles and Bathurst burr to prevent seeding and impact on livestock.

- Plan any spraying which might be required after the autumn break such as capeweed control. Controlling weeds when they are small reduces cost and will significantly improve long term control.

- Spray woody weeds in the warmer months such as Gorse, Blackberries, Boxthorn, Galenia, Horehound etc. Using a selective herbicide will reduce off target damage to pastures which are needed to replace weeds.

General.

- The Barrabool Hills rabbit baiting program follow up. Plan to destroy rabbit warrens after baiting to avoid the same problem next year.

- Planning to establish some native plantations or need replacement trees for other plantations? Contact your nursery and order trees now.

-The Barrabool Hills Landcare spray unit is available for hire by BHLG members. Contact Trevor Jones on his mobile: 0407 009 855.

- This is a good time to service spray units and other equipment you will need to use when the autumn break comes.

- Organise any contract works such as fencing, sowing and spraying to make sure you don't miss out. Delays of 8-12 months are not uncommon with new fencing.

- Fencing off dams and watering stock from troughs will prevent losses from bogging and toxic algal blooms as water levels get lower.

-Don't forget to put the location of your pipes and other underground infrastructure on a farm map.

- Talk to your neighbours about joining the Landcare group where they can meet other landholders and find answers for many land management issues.

- Consider attending a field day, workshop or farm tour to improve your management skills.

Jim Seager.
Agricultural Consultant.
0409 935 700.



Message from the President.

March 2024. By Jim Seager.

Welcome to Autumn.

Well the weather changes keep on coming!

Summer arrived eventually with pastures drying off and now we are looking forward to the Autumn break sometime in the next few months. Fortunately the fire risk has reduced significantly with the recent cooler weather.

Members have been busy baiting rabbits, fencing, fertilizing pastures, ordering trees and feeding livestock. It is never a dull moment when running a farm.

The wet December and January germinated a lot of weeds so keep an eye out and control weeds while they are small. Once the autumn break comes you may need to organise some spraying to control broadleaf weeds such as capeweed in pastures.

Several of our members recently attended a dinner celebration for the Geelong Landcare network having been formed 25 years ago. It was a good opportunity to catch up with other long time landcarers and hear what other groups in our network have been doing.

Another successful rabbit baiting campaign is behind us, thanks

Heike for co-ordinating the baiting program.

We are looking forward to seeing members of the landcare group and the local community in April, at our next quarterly meeting, at the Barrabool Cricket Club in Ceres. Details in this newsletter.

Our Facebook and Instagram pages are up and running so feel free to make a contribution, comments and photos of the Barrabool Hills would be most welcome. Thanks to Jennifer and Joey for their great work. Unfortunately Joey has had to resign from our executive committee due to work commitments but we hope to still see you at upcoming events.

We are running our annual film night this autumn at 'Waterlands' on Wednesday 27th of March. The film is 'Rachel's Farm', should be a great night as usual.

We are planning our website upgrade this year, thanks to funding provided by the Surf Coast Shire, so keep an eye out for changes to the website later in 2024.

Thank you to our executive committee for their continued support and contribution.

Heike our treasurer, Christa -



Above: A local Koala spotted in Hendy Main road.

Secretary, Leah - newsletter & website, Joey and Jennifer-Instagram & Facebook and all those members who contribute to the running of the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group.

We are all volunteers, so any contribution to running the group would be appreciated. Let us know what events or workshops you think we should run. Maybe suggest a relevant guest speaker you would like to hear from or send in some photos of any relevant activities. Email us at barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

CALLING VOLUNTEERS!

Opportunities to get more involved with Barrabool Hills Landcare Group



Barrabool Hills Landcare Group (BHLG) is a Not-for-Profit organisation within the Surf Coast Shire, run entirely by volunteers. The BHLG committee conducts

informative and interesting events, committed to working towards positive environmental outcomes. We are always looking for new members. If you would like to

get involved, please email us at barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

We would love to hear from you!

Rabbits, Rabbits, Rabbits!

By Jennifer Hallowes

This is a brief article on rabbit control following our very successful pindone carrot baiting program in February.

Congratulations to all the participants for the time and the effort they put in to collecting and spreading the baits.

Special thanks go to Barry and Glenys Harvey, also Brien and Judy Cohn for the collating and distribution of the carrots.

Rabbit control is an all year round multifaceted job. It requires persistence and patience. They are everyones problem so enlisting the neighbours to get involved as well, when possible, is part of the story in achieving some control.

History

The history of Rabbits in the Barrabool Hills, and their subsequent spread around Australia is a sorry tale.

24 Rabbits were first released at Barwon park in the Barrabool Hills in 1859

By 1866 14,253 rabbits were shot at Barwon park.

By 1945 there were 10 billion rabbits in Australia

1953- After the introduction of myxomatosis the numbers fell to 1 million rabbits- The virus achieved a 99.9% kill.

In 1956 the numbers had built up again to 450 million

1994- calicivirus was released there were 600 million rabbits

2010- 200 million rabbits, 20 million in Victoria.

While virus control has been a great help, the virus naturally evolves to be less lethal. The longer a rabbit lives with myxo or calicivirus, and the less seriously ill it is, the more it can pass the milder virus around to fellow rabbits. They then survive with a long term immunity and breed lots of baby bunnies!

Rabbit Control

First control as many of the rabbits in your environment as you can through baiting and fumigation of warrens.

Second we need to control rabbit harbour. Boxthorn and gorse removal are part of this

Third we need to destroy the warrens.

Otherwise our repeated elimination attempts are just exercises in annual rabbit harvesting.

Deep rip warrens where possible. Excavators and bulldozers are often required for effective warren destruction. Unfortunately this is an expensive exercise.

The upsides are

1.The ground after deep ripping or bull dozing is easy ground to work

for crops, re establishment of trees etc.

2. You will achieve long term control of rabbit numbers.

3. Three km between rabbit warrens reduces their ability to recolonise areas.

Some Considerations

When baiting rabbits be aware of consequences. Bag and dispose of any seen carcasses quickly.

Monitor baiting drops for good uptake and change drop areas if uptake is poor.

Beware baiting where native species such as wallabies and kangaroos might take the bait.

While destruction of harbour is beneficial having no understorey plantings on our farms destroys the habitats of small bush birds.

We will never eradicate the rabbit problem in Australia but we can aim to keep the numbers suppressed.

Acknowledgement

Reference source : Rabbit Management Guide compiled by Roger MacRaild 2014



BECOME A MEMBER.

Join our vibrant Barrabool Hills Landcare community and help support our projects and events? Only \$30 annually per family.

Go to our website for all the details on how to join www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au or email us at barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR NEWSLETTER.

Contributions to the newsletter are most welcome. Let your fellow community and members know what is happening in the Barrabool Hills.

Send articles and photos to barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com. Deadline for next issue is 16/05/24.

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.

CONTACT US

PRESIDENT

Jim Seager.

Telephone: 0409 935 700. Email: ejimseager@bigpond.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Ian Kelly.

Telephone: 0427 577 601. Email: kellyian1951@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Christa Jones.

Telephone: 0408 342 403. Email: barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

TREASURER

Heike Dunn.

Telephone: 0417 020 012. Email: barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER

Leah Carr.

Email: ermsservices@bigpond.com.au

GIS MAPPING

Geoff Anson.

Telephone: 0418 324 632. Email: geoffanson@mac.com

EQUIPMENT

Trevor Jones.

Telephone: 0407 009 855. Email: barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BarraboolHillsLandcare/

Website: www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au

Instagram: [@barraboolhillslandcare](https://www.instagram.com/barraboolhillslandcare)

Become a member of BHLG! Join, renew or update your membership now.

Annual memberships are due in July each year. But you can join at any time.

If you provide updated details including emails, you will get the latest information on upcoming events, such as community planting days & catchment bus tours. You will also be eligible for our small grants program and be able to access our equipment to

help with vital projects including tree planting, weed and pest control. Additionally there are often larger regional projects which you can benefit from for weed control and re-vegetation. Our members have a broad range of experience and may be able to provide advice

on weed identification and control, preparation for tree planting and indigenous plant lists.

To join, renew or update information: www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au or email us at barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com