



# Barrabool Hills Landcare Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2016

barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

If you have not ordered your rabbit bait do it today! Baiting is on 15<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> February.

## Forthcoming events.

### **17<sup>th</sup> February meeting.**

*Film night – A walk in the Woods.*

*(a small number of places are still available – contact Kaye Rodden: nidgee@reachnet.com.au or 52651241)*

*Ric and Sheila Walters @ 7.30.*

### **2016 Rabbit baiting**

*15<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.*

### **Barwon River Walk**

*16<sup>th</sup>-20th March 2016. More information later in this newsletter.*

### **20<sup>th</sup> April meeting**

*Identification and management of serrated tussock, Chilean needle grass and other Nasella species.*

*Ceres Cricket Club*

*6.00 start.*

*BBQ dinner, followed by speakers.*

*Supported by the Geelong Landcare Network, Surf Coast Shire and Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party.*

*See additional information later in the newsletter.*

**Tree Violet, *Melicytus dentatus* - as tenacious as a terrier**

Stephen Murphy

My most vivid memory of Tree Violets is of a drama that unfolded eight years ago in late summer while I was out collecting the small violet/cream coloured berries that grow on the Tree Violet bush. I was in the habit of taking my Jack Russel terrier to keep me company and I could always count on him giving a rabbit a good chase but that day I got more than I bargained for.



*Tree violet with berries*

I was picking berries and was so intent on avoiding the large thorns that grow along the branches that I didn't notice a fox quietly watching me from behind a Tree Violet just five meters away, but of course the terrier picked up its scent in a sniff.

Before I go any further I should mention that Tree Violet comes in three distinct sizes and each form is as tenacious as a terrier; The biggest of the Tree Violet forms grows to 3 - 4 meters tall and wide (can be confused with Boxthorn) and is often found along creeks and river banks under old River Red Gums.

The medium sized form grows to 1 - 2 meters and is often the only plant growing on a fence line where a perching bird has dropped the seed. The Third rarely gets to a meter tall and has 'doggedly' survived sheep grazing in open paddocks for over a century because its leaves grow behind its very sharp thorns, giving it the perfect in-built tree guard.



*Medium size Tree Violet in flower.*

All forms live over 150 years and suit the paddock planting as well as a landscaped garden. The two larger forms can be pruned into a hardy bird and insect attracting hedge that looks very like the privet hedge in classically designed gardens.

It was the largest of the Tree Violet forms that I was relieving of its berries and I can remember thinking, how useful this shrub would be as tough wind break with protected nesting sites for small birds, when a flash of white and brown cut across my peripheral vision and a cacophony of screams and howls ruined the perfect rural peace and quiet. The fox was a big animal and the terrier was only half its size but they were instantly locked together muzzle to muzzle in a fight of such ferocious intensity that I was convinced it couldn't end well for the terrier.

My next hour wasn't spent seed collecting but trying to separate the two animals. When I succeeded and the fox turned to run the terrier was straight after it and the battle was on again. Eventually the legendary tenacity of the terrier overcame the cunning of the fox and I can vividly remember an exhausted dog, bleeding and panting, sitting beside what appeared to be a dead fox.

The next day I went back to finish collecting berries from the same Tree violets but the fox was gone. The terrier on the other hand had a muzzle swollen to twice its normal size and was happy to rest in the back of the ute.



*Tree Violet with pale yellow flowers.*

My other vivid memory of the Tree Violet is the heady violet scent given off by the beautiful pale yellow pendant flowers in Spring. If the plants had been flowering and not fruiting the day before, it's likely I'd have no story to tell, as the sweet scent of the flowers would have easily masked the pungent odour of the nearby fox.

## BANNOCKBURN FARMER'S MARKET

### Landcare Stall. Volunteers needed

Over the last 12 months each Landcare group in the Geelong Landcare Network region has taken a turn to man the Landcare stall at the Golden Plains Farmers Market in Bannockburn.

The market takes place on the first Saturday of the month from 8.30am- 12-20am.

A roster has been prepared for 2016 and the Barrabool Hills Group is scheduled to showcase "our stuff" on the 5<sup>th</sup> March.

Last year, Brent Rodden, Ian Kelly, Stan and Debra Filipis and Jim Seager represented the group on the two occasions we participated and we are urgently calling for 2 volunteers for the 5<sup>th</sup> March it would be great to share this terrific experience around.

I have heard that it is great fun, we will provide you with all the resources you need, and what an opportunity not only to tell people about Landcare

in the Barrabool Hills but find out what is happening north of the river!!!

PLEASE contact Kaye Rodden if you can help.

If not on the 5<sup>th</sup> then maybe later in the year ( 2<sup>nd</sup> July or 3<sup>rd</sup> December)

Many thanks

## Barrabool Hills Landcare Executive Meeting

The executive met on 18<sup>th</sup> January. Issues discussed included:

- implementation of our new accounting and membership system
- finalization of the 2016 rabbit baiting program
- allocation of funds to cover warren destruction work in 2015
- representation at Bannockburn market
- options for funding of revegetation works
- proposed landfill site opposite Pollocksford Road and the impact rubbish from the site could have on the Barwon River
- finalization of the rabbit recipe book
- planning for the river walk
- forthcoming events program

Most importantly, we discussed our input to the forthcoming consideration by the Geelong Landcare Network executive on its operations and priorities in 2016. Priorities we identified for our representatives (Ian Kelly and Geoff Anson) to take to the meeting included:

- clarifying the primary role of the GLN as an umbrella group to support the work of local groups
- the need for the network to work with land owners through the Landcare groups, with the Landcare groups as the primary contact for landowners
- its role in helping build the capacity of local groups
- its role in coordination and representation for the groups on policy issues and funding applications
- improving communications with and between Landcare groups, including the need for a network newsletter and an updated GLN web site
- identifying opportunities to support the development of new groups where they do not exist and strengthen existing groups

## Great Barwon Walk 2016

### Program and bookings

This year's section of the Barwon River walk is shaping up to be a fascinating and unique experience. We expect a high level of interest, and as numbers need to be strictly limited, **it is essential if you are interested in coming to book now:**

1. for the full walk, or
2. for particular days, or
3. for an evening stroll at Sandy Cameron's on the Thursday evening.

Our daily planning is being finalised and at the moment we propose:

Day 1 Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March. Inverleigh to Barwonleigh (afternoon/evening only)  
Child friendly, short walk /Indigenous activities including "Welcome to Country" and smoking ceremony /William Buckley film after dinner /BBQ

Day 2 Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March. Barwonleigh to Sandy Cameron's.  
Full day challenging walk, including a crossing to the northern side of the river. Indigenous activities in the afternoon/evening.  
Members who cannot do a full day walk are welcome for a short early evening guided walk along the river.

Day 3 Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Sandy Cameron's to Pollocksford Bridge.  
Full day walk, canoeing section, Steven Murphy speaking in evening.

Day 4 Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March. Pollocksford Bridge to George's. Full day walk.

Day 5 Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March. George's property to Merriwarp Road.  
Half day walk, catered lunch at Barwon Ridge Winery (\$15.00) to celebrate the end of the walk/ handing on of the stick for the 2017 section through Geelong and on to the sea.

Evening meals will be catered. Breakfasts and lunch will be walker's responsibility. Lunch orders will be taken daily.

For bookings contact Mandy Baker on 0427 316 395 or [mandy@ubln.org.au](mailto:mandy@ubln.org.au)

**FEES – this year we are asking for a small walking fee each day (except Wednesday) to help with costs. We are also offering catering for dinner each day for around \$20 a head, with some delicious meals planned. There may be a small surcharge for canoe hire on Friday. Charges will be finalised shortly.**

### Farm planning check list

#### February 2016

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 baiting dates, February 15<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016. Plan to destroy rabbit warrens after baiting to avoid the same problem next year.

Are you planning to establish some native plantations or need some replacements for other plantations in 2016? The Barrabool Hills Landcare Group will be organising propagation sessions at the Geelong Community Nursery, contact Jim 0409935700.

The Barrabool Hills Landcare spray unit is available for hire, contact Neville Trotter 0428811009.

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.

Fencing off dams and watering stock from troughs will provide better quality water and prevent losses from bogging and toxic water as dam water levels get low. Don't forget to put the location of your pipes etc. 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  
0409935700

## February meeting

Take a break from rabbit baiting and join us for “A Walk in the Woods” at 7.30 on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February.

Once again Ric and Sheila Walters have kindly offered to host a film night for members in their “woolshed cinema”, at “Waterlands” on Barrabool Road. This will be the third year of our film nights which are becoming very popular. Numbers are limited to 20, so get in early and book your place

The film to be featured is the 2015 American adventure comedy, “A Walk in the Woods”.

It is a biographical film directed by Ken Kwapis, based on the 1998 book/memoir of the same name by Bill Bryson. The film stars **Robert Redford**, Nick Nolte and Emma Thompson. The film was released on September 2, 2015.

Please RSVP to Kaye Rodden on [nidgee@reachnet.com.au](mailto:nidgee@reachnet.com.au) or 52651241.



## April meeting

### Focussing on tussock!

After the dry come the invaders!!!

Land denuded due to drought and overgrazing is the perfect bed for germinating weeds once the rains

come. What better time to come and hear about how to manage some of these unwanted plants.

The April Barrabool Hills Landcare Group meeting will be a major event which will focus on the identification and management of weeds - serrated tussock, Chilean needle grass and other *Nasella* species.

The event will be held at the newly renovated Barrabool Hills Cricket Pavilion in Ceres and commence at 6pm.

The event is supported by the Geelong Landcare Network, Surf Coast Shire and Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party.

A BBQ dinner will be provided and there will be presentations from experts in identification and control of these weeds on public and private land.

Please RSVP to Kaye Rodden on [nidgee@reachnet.com.au](mailto:nidgee@reachnet.com.au) or 52651241.

## Geelong Landcare Network

**Serrated tussock.** Due to the ongoing difficulties in getting government attention on serrated tussock GLN will consider developing new strategy to pressure politicians, and increase public awareness. The network has been successful in getting DELWP to send contractors to spot spray tussock in public reserves.

Mandy Coulson’s position with Vic Serrated Tussock Working Party has not yet been replaced.

**Grants.** We have been successful in getting a 20 Million Trees Grant and have also with our other partners, secured 3 weeks of Green Army help for local projects.

CCMA has changed the way the River Health program operates. Landcare Networks weren’t consulted and it has been a struggle to get info from CCMA. Ensuring timely information on future grants is being pursued.

**GLN Strategic Plan and priorities.** Will be developed by the whole of the executive.

**Victorian Facilitator Funding program.** The whole program is under review, including the Facilitator funding, the publication of the landcare magazine and other things.

**Communications.** The development of a stand-alone GLN website be put on the agenda of the Communications & Education subcommittee for 2016.

## Rabbits

Release of new strain of calicivirus 'K5' has been deferred pending granting of approvals.

**Education.** Sites on local properties are being identified that will be used by next year's TAFE Diploma students.

A bats and birds event was run jointly with Greening Australia and formed part of our Communities For Nature Bruce's Creek project.

Cultural heritage assessment was undertaken at a River Health project site. To be used as a case study by CCMA – they will run a workshop for landcare coordinators in early 2016 based on this case study.

## Christmas Celebration for Landcare in the Barrabool Hills

Over 50 landcare members, friends and family celebrated the great year for our group at a BBQ at the Barwon Ridge Winery on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

It was a balmy evening and a great opportunity to sample some of the fare from the new recipe book we are producing, "Feral Feast".

Our local Surf Coast Shire councillor, Heather Wellington, launched the prototype of the book to wide acclaim, and we are all looking forward to its release very soon.

Watch this space.

Many thanks to Geoff and Joan Anson for hosting the evening, perfect venue.

## RABBIT BAITING 2016



It is too late to order your bait for the Barrabool Hills Landcare Group's pindone carrot rabbit baiting program, which commences on 15<sup>th</sup> February, but don't despair!

As in previous years, the Landcare Network to our south, SCIPN, has scheduled their baiting program to follow ours and below are the details if you wish to order through them.

### Modewarre

Dates: **23rd Feb, 26th Feb and 29th Feb** (pindone carrots to be collected between 12 and 1pm)

Collection point: Modewarre Hall, 910 Cape Otway Rd

Orders due by: 16th February

Contact: Jacinta Langdon at [jacinta@bwpc.net](mailto:jacinta@bwpc.net) or 0429 418 819

### Freshwater Creek

Dates: **1st March, 4th March and 7th March**

(pindone carrots to be collected between 12 and 1pm)

Collection point: Freshwater Creek Hall, Dickens Rd, Freshwater Ck

Orders due by: 22nd Feb

Contact: Jacinta Langdon at [jacinta@bwpc.net](mailto:jacinta@bwpc.net) or 0429 418 819

Remember – rabbit poisoning is an important part of controlling rabbits but it's not the only part. For maximum impact and cost-effectiveness, it's important to follow up by removing rabbit harbour destroying warrens and mending/installing rabbit-proof fencing where appropriate.

## Barrabool Hills Landcare donation to Tonga

Remember back in the October 2014 Newsletter we announced that some of the money we raised for Overseas Landcare was allocated to a project in Tonga?

Entitled "*Child Centered Climate Change Adaptation Program*", this was part of an international Rotary program.

We provided \$500 to help support children in a Government Primary School of Popua to grow a vegetable garden, fruit trees, medicinal trees and also traditional fragrant trees on the school ground. The school is not fenced properly and the animals are free to roam and destroy all the hardwork of the children. The funds helped fence off the Popua primary school to ensure the safety of their work and also to achieve the goals the children are working towards.

Well here are some of the results 12 months on.



programs, maintain member's equipment, communicate, provide seedlings and provide advice.

Annual membership costs just \$15 per family. Pay by cheque or direct credit. Support us so that we can keep offering the best for the Barrabool Hills community.

**PAYMENT OPTIONS:**

**By Cheque:**

Please make cheques payable to: **Barrabool Hills Landcare Group**, and post with this form to:

BHLG Treasurer, 33 Ballanlea Road , Barrabool Vic. 3221

**By Direct Deposit:**

Bank Account details: Barrabool Hills Landcare Group,

National Australia Bank

BSB: 083 537

Account Number: 650 230 924

**Please include your surname and initials as a reference & email your renewal or new application to: [barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com](mailto:barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com)**

**Barrabool Hills Landcare Group**

President	Kaye Rodden	52651241
Vice President	Jim Seager	0409 935 700
Secretary	Joan Anson	0407305966
Treasurer	Anthony Jones	5249 6912
Newsletter	Geoff Anson	0418324632
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e: <a href="mailto:barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com">barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com</a>		

**Subscriptions.**

The Group depends on your support to help manage the rabbit baiting campaign, negotiate Government grants on behalf of members, run community

Let your fellow members know what is happening in the Barrabool Hills. Contributions to the newsletter are welcomed. Send articles and photos to [geoffanson@mac.com](mailto:geoffanson@mac.com).

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

The newsletter is printed through the generosity of Andrew Katos, State Member for South Barwon and is distributed through the efforts of the Leigh family.