



Barrabool Hills Landcare Newsletter

October 2019

Members of our group watching Neville Walsh's informative presentation at our AGM.

barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

What's On.

October 16th – Meeting at Barrabool Hills Uniting Church - Travis Turner - City of Greater Geelong “Restoring Rural Landscapes Program” (see flier inside)

November 2nd – Bannockburn Market Stall - Barrabool Hills hosting Landcare stall, come and visit

December 6th – End of year celebration - Christa and Trevor Jones’ – details next newsletter

17th, 20th & 24th February 2020 – Rabbit Baiting – Order form next newsletter

19th February – Woolshed Cinema Film Night – Documentary “2040” Book early



One of the many excellent groups of volunteers who assisted with the Barrabool Hills Ephemeral Wetland Project. Thanks to all who assisted us with this fantastic project.

Kindly printed and supported by

DARREN CHEESEMAN MP - Member for South Barwon

If you need help with a State Government matter please call me on 03 5243 5222 or email

Darren.Cheeseman@parliament.vic.gov.au

For community updates follow me on Facebook.

“Funded from Parliamentary Budget”



**NEXT MEETING
OCTOBER 16TH**

7.30pm Barrabool Uniting Church Hall,
Corner Barrabool and Andersons Roads.
Barrabool

**CITY OF GREATER GEELONG'S NEW
"RESTORING RURAL LANDSCAPES PROGRAM"**

**Travis Turner
Environment Projects Officer**



City of Greater Geelong are significant partners of our group, supporting our rabbit baiting program and managing pest plants and animals (PPA) on roadsides. Travis has been in this role for 12 months now and will be discussing, not only the PPA program, but also a new program which will focus on restoring and protecting environmental, community and agricultural assets in the City of Greater Geelong area. The program could also include a private land incentive/support component.

Please bring a plate to share for supper.

Making your native garden fire safe in the summer season

Native plants are hardy, beautiful and bring incredible wildlife into our home gardens. These are all 'must have' features of a house-garden if you're a self-confessed addict of Australian nature as I am. The downside is, and in summer it's a big one, there is a fire risk attached to having a native garden.

Native plants are flammable, some genera more than others. It's an evolutionary characteristic that helps them propagate and prosper. After a fire many plants spread their seeds into the fresh ash-bed where the chemicals from the smoke enhance germination. Plants like wattles and the smaller pea plants like the bright pink & red Parrot Peas, *Dillwynia* species and the egg & bacon coloured bush peas, *Eutaxia* species, need fire to soften their hard seed coats and promote germination. Some rare orchids lie dormant for decades just waiting for a fire to send up their spectacular flower.

Is it then possible to have a beautiful native garden in fire prone areas? The short answer is yes, if you do some spring maintenance.

Spring maintenance in a native garden involves removing dead wood, cutting back shrubs by one-third to encourage new growth and opening up spaces between plants so that a fire can't spread from plant to plant.



A small garden with a variety of fire safe species.

Planting leafy 'succulent' groundcovers as a living mulch also minimises the risk of woody mulches smouldering after a fire. Some that I like are the Cut-leaf Daisy, *Brachyscome multifida*; Common Everlasting, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*; Berry Saltbush, *Atriplex semibaccata*; Nodding Saltbush, *Einadia nutans* and Ruby Saltbush, *Enchylaena tomentosa*. The last four are indigenous plants of the Barrabool Hills.

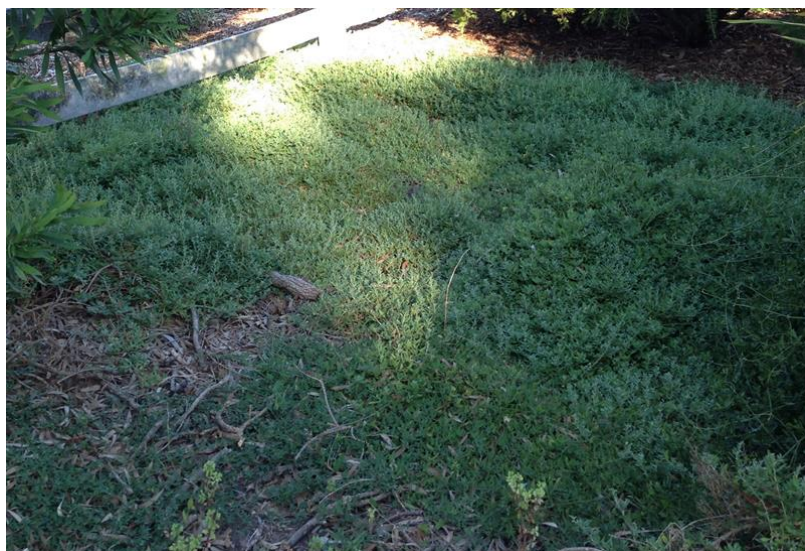
On a beautiful sunny spring day having a good reason to get into the garden with secateurs at-the-ready is an added bonus. Then you and your family can enjoy the spectacular wildlife and the unique beauty of Australian plants knowing the garden is fire-safe as well.

To read more about bushfire safe native gardens [Click Here](#)

Stephen Murphy

Sustainable Biorich Landscapes

www.recreatingthecountry.com.au/blog



Berry Saltbush is an excellent living mulch.

Minimising the planting of the flammable Myrtles (Myrtaceae family) close to the house is also

Ephemeral Wetland Project Report

The Barrabool Hills Ephemeral Wetland has successfully been planted. Rather a little sentence for the mammoth undertaking that the project proved to be and the effort it required. Ten hectares and ten thousand plants are simply numbers written on a page until you arrive on the site and see an expanse of low-lying, muddy and waterlogged ground in front of you and seemingly endless trays of grasses. None of these factors demoralised the amazing friends, family, neighbours and very much-appreciated random extras, who braved the elements to contribute a huge 300 hours of volunteering.



Maddie Steel and Lucas Bell celebrating the last plants in the ground...finally finished!!

Logistically, the site provided some challenges. The original plan of access for volunteers via Mt Pollock Road became inaccessible due to bogging potential by the start of planting. The farm machinery sheds became the new meeting point, with a tractor and trailer transformed into a rather agricultural version of a 'mega-taxi'. Despite delaying the planting each Sunday with its slow (but safe) crawl to the other end of the property, the drive to the site and consequent mud splattering became a highlight every weekend.

Outside of the specific Sunday planting days, there was also the laborious hours of measuring and marking the tussock circles (a stake in the middle, followed by a piece of string 2.5m long circling the stake with spray paint, creating our 5m diameter circle), hand spraying the circle, as well as marking and spraying each individual red gum location to be planted in groups of 5 around the perimeter of the

site. With very few straight lines or expanses of sprayed areas, the preparation was labour intensive, often in howling winds and driving rain for Kaye, Jim, Trevor, Tim, and Maddie who completed these 'behind the scenes' preparation hours prior to the planting days.

With only one Sunday cancelled due to the arctic weather predictions, the weather was generally extremely kind when it most counted, and finally stacking the entirety of the planter boxes was incredibly satisfying. No doubt, all involved will eagerly follow the progress of the wetland growth, eventually being worth every minute, frozen finger and water soaked boot. *Maddie Steel*

Annual General Meeting – report

Our Barrabool Hills Landcare Group AGM was again held at the Gnarwarre Tennis Pavilion on 21st August, and thanks to the Gnarwarre CFA for once again making this venue available to us.

Over 40 community members attended the evening, which was preceded by our now traditional wine and cheese offering. Thank you to relatively new member Ken Harrison AM and Chair of the Royal Botanic Gardens of Victoria (RBGV), who organised for the Chief Conservation Botanist from the RBGV, Neville Walsh, to attend as our guest speaker.

Neville provided a fascinating insight into the threatened species recovery program at the gardens, from collecting and cataloguing samples from inland Australia on camel back, to trekking the Alpine National Park. The diversity of Australia's native flora was definitely the centre piece, but what was extraordinary was that in a time when we are always talking about extinctions, Neville is regularly discovering and identifying new species. Our sincere thanks to Neville for sharing his knowledge with our community.

The formalities of the AGM were presided over by the Chair of the Geelong Landcare Network, Peter Stray.

The newly elected Executive of the group are:

Kaye Rodden, President

Jim Seager, Vice President

Joan Anson, Secretary

Anthony Jones, Treasurer

Geelong Landcare Network representatives, Maddie Steel and Geoff Anson

Executive members, Heike Dunn, Ian Kelly, Tim Trottier, Christa and Trevor Jones and Judy Cohn Newsletter Editor, Tim Harte

Our sincere thanks to retiring executive member Sally Jones and welcome new member, Maddie Steel. *Kaye Rodden*

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 planters
- 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.

2019 Victorian Landcare Awards

These biennial awards were recently announced at a function at Government House, presided over by the Patron in Chief of Victorian Landcare, the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria and the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, the Honourable Lily D'Ambrosio MP.

Members of the executive of the group, nominated our president, Kaye Rodden for the *Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award*, and we are so pleased to announce that she was joint runner up for the award, **Highly Commended** for her work here in the Barrabool Hills and also with the regional, state and national Landcare organisations.

Congratulations Kaye.

The winner of this section was John Pye whose contribution to Landcare and specifically Project Platypus in the Wimmera over a 30 year span, is awe inspiring and so worth the accolades he received. Our congratulations to all the 73 nominees and of course the winners of the 15 awards presented at the event.

The winners of the major awards will represent Victoria at the National Awards Ceremony in 2020.

Barrabool Hills Revegetation Mapping Project

We are trying to create a Native Revegetation Map of the Barrabool Hills Landcare region and would like all members to contribute.

I have had many members mark the history of their revegetation on the region map that I have created.

If you have not yet added your prior plantings (shelter belts, plantations, wind breaks, natural regeneration sites, etc.) please contact me on 0426266149 or Tim.Trottier88@gmail.com to arrange a meeting. I will also be bringing the map to the October meeting. *Tim Trottier*

Serrated Tussock – be vigilant



Over 25 years ago our community in the Barrabool Hills came together to battle the spread of serrated tussock across our landscape. It was in effect the reason this Landcare group formed.

In the intervening time we have had considerable success in controlling and limiting the spread of this weed, which is deemed by the State Government as a weed to be “regionally controlled” in Corangamite. However, we have all learnt that we need to be vigilant. **Each SINGLE flowering plant can produce tens of thousands of wind born seeds, which catch in fences, gates and other plants, ready to germinate when the conditions are ripe.**

The photo above shows what was common 20 years ago, seed heads blowing across the landscape and contaminating everyone’s land.

Now is the time to spray or dig out your tussock, before it flowers.

All landholders need to take responsibility for controlling serrated tussock on their property and limit the spread of seed to neighbouring properties.

If you need help in identifying this weed or information about the best treatments, please contact one of the executive. *Kaye Rodden*
The many seeds produced shown below.



What bird is this?

Ric Walter guessed the identity of the bird in the August BHLG newsletter correctly, well done Ric. The bird was a Red-browed finch/firetail (*Neochmia temporalis*). The Red-browed finch inhabits grassy areas interspersed with dense understorey vegetation and mainly eats seeds and insects on the ground. Red-browed Finch's make a large domed nest with a side tunnel for an entrance from twigs and grass stems built in a dense shrub. Both parents share nest-building, incubation of the eggs and feeding of the young when they hatch.

This issues mystery bird is the 3rd smallest bird in Australia and one of the smallest in the world, it lives in eucalypt forests and woodlands, and nests in tunnels excavated in earth banks. The individual pictured is currently trying to build a nest in an old oven in a shed, has been observed having prolonged fights with its own reflection in a number of car mirrors in the Hills and enjoys perching on old clothes lines in the Hills on Mondays. 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.

President	Kaye Rodden	0438 317 499
	kathrynminette@gmail.com	
Vice President	Jim Seager	0409 935 700
	ejimseager@bigpond.com	
Secretary	Heike Dunn	0417 020 012
	barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com	

Subsequent to the AGM, Joan Anson has tended her resignation as Secretary, and at its last meeting on 9th September the executive unanimously agreed that Heike Dunn would fill this role, and she has accepted.

On behalf of the group we thank Joan for her contributions over the last 3 years and look forward to her ongoing participation as a member of the executive.

Treasurer	Anthony Jones	0419 894 098
	anthony@bjc.id.au	
Newsletter	Tim Harte	0431 601 529
	balletcadet@gmail.com	
GIS mapping	Geoff Anson	0418 324 632
	geoffanson@mac.com	
Equipment	Trevor Jones	0407 009 855
Email:	barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com	
Facebook:	barraboolhillslandcare	
Instagram:	barraboolhillslandcaregroup	
Web site:	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 16/11/19

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.