

South Gippy

Landcare News

A newsletter for landcarers in the South Gippsland Landcare Network (SGLN)

SOUTH GIPPSLAND
LANDCARE NETWORK



Issue 1
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Autumn/Winter 2017

★ Ian and Gaye Cornthwaite from Allambee Community



★ Paul and Samantha Crock from Fish Creek



South Gippslanders
shine on the Green

Carpet

★ Nerrena Landcare Group



★ Jeff and Elvie Clark from Poowong



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Autumn is a beautiful season of the year,

cool crisp nights and mild sunny days, perfect weather to get outside and take part in the vast array of Landcare activities tree plantings, farm walks field days or whatever Landcare activity that takes your fancy. Now is the best time of the year to get out there and get involved. I know many groups are doing some amazing project that will be beneficial for land owners and the environment so I urge individuals to contact their local Landcare groups and become actively involved in this wonderful movement.

This is a good lead into the amazing 30th anniversary of Landcare Green Carpet awards. My wife, Jeannie and I travelled to the Heyfield wetlands for this prestigious event which was well hosted, brilliantly organized and the local produce of offer was astounding; a credit to the local producers involved and the chefs!

Now onto the awards! It was with great pride and a sense of awe that I witnessed the huge efforts of

all recipients nominated in a variety of Landcare categories. The SGLN members and groups who were nominated have done our network proud with their huge efforts, well done to these individuals who put in vast amounts of time and effort towards Landcare and ultimately the environment.

One final comment on this wonderful day was how beautiful the Heyfield wetland precinct was presented to us. The community project is a fine example of what can be achieved when community groups collaborate toward a project that benefits all the community and attracts visitors to the area, a win, win for everyone. To all Landcare members let's enjoy that autumn weather before that cold, wet South Gippsland winter sets in.

Yours in Landcare

Frank Dekker

Chair - South Gippsland Landcare Network



Photo top (from left)Anthony, Frank, Jeannie and Kathy at the green carpet celebration
Photo above :at the green carpet celebrations held at the Heyfield wetlands

Hi and welcome to this edition of *South Gipps Landcare News*

I have been Kate's maternity leave replacement for 5 months now and the time has just rocketed by! As I have chatted to you each month in Network Notes (our e-newsletter), you are probably aware of the great news about our latest Landcarer. Kate and her husband Rodney have added the cutest little girl, Isla Florence to their family.

Mumma and baby are doing just fine, and we have been excited and privileged to have a visit from them both to the office. Isla is just the cutest little thing, see the photo of her with Kate taken when Isla was about a week old.

This newsletter is full of pics of Landcare events. Please, if your Landcare group has a meeting or other get together, share the pics with me or on our Facebook page. It is a great way of sharing the good work you do and inspiring others to get out and get trees in the ground, hold a field day or some other equally awesome Landcare activity.

Now we are getting to the colder wetter months (and don't we need wetter?) the level of field day activity will lessen with it ramping up again in spring.

Don't forget groups and individuals have an opportunity to apply for grants to do on ground works as well at WGCMA Landcare Support Grants. These are funded through the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority. Grants are available to support Landcare Group or Network activities in the region such as community education events, citizen science, sustainable agriculture activities, group revegetation and remnant protection projects on public land, and training courses. A maximum of \$5000 per group is available. LSG projects must be completed by 30 September 2018.

Agnes River Landcare Group are thinking of applying for support for their in schools program, and Mardan Mirboo North are considering my suggestion that they offer some new landholder training in basic agricultural skills. Wildlife monitoring cameras, a tree planting at a local reserve, or skills training in social media use or photography are other things that may appeal to your Landcare group and help it communicate between members and attract new members.

An Intrepid Landcare leadership retreat for young Landcarers was held recently on Wilsons Prom. Twenty young people from all over Gippsland were involved. SGLN was able to sponsor one young person to attend. We believe that making Landcare relevant and accessible to young people, with trained leaders to inspire others, will insure the movement's future. In all four young people from the SGLN area attended, see the article on page 8. I was honoured to be asked to be one of the mentors during a project planning exercise and was excited by the passion the young leaders displayed as well as the fresh take on Landcare activities. I am sure it is the beginning of something wonderful for Landcare in this region.

I had forgotten how wonderful the Prom was, even on a dull day. It is many years since I have got any further than Yanakie when in the area. I shall have to make an effort to visit later in the year.

Jill Vella

**Network Coordinator- South Gippsland Landcare Network
(Maternity Leave replacement)**



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Float your boat - a canoe tour of the Agnes River

Where the River Meets the Sea - Our Precious Mangroves by Elizabeth Collins

Who doesn't enjoy the views across Corner Inlet to the Prom? The hills and the roads across the ridges provide great places to see it all laid out below us. Corner Inlet is indeed precious – it's a listed Ramsar site - but it's also under attack. Oversupply of nutrient runoff slips into our gullies, creeks and rivers and pours in through our waterways.

Just how the mangroves, mudflats and marine life struggle to cope with this was passionately explained by a visiting mangrove specialist, Professor Paul Boon. Early on a recent Saturday morning, as part of the Seachange Festival, over 30 curious Gippslanders met near the mouth of the Agnes River for a kayak tour of the lower Agnes. Gently, each kayak was eased through the deep fine mud into the broad river – a military style operation meticulously organized and supported by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA), Corner Inlet Connections and South Gippsland Landcare, with proceedings expertly recorded by members of the South Gippsland Camera Club.

With kayaks clumped together, floating happily in the morning sun, Paul explained the science of the plants and grasses lining the river and the incredible interconnection between the whole catchment and the quality of water entering the Inlet. He praised the landholders who had fenced off river frontages, steep eroded

gullies and slopes. All of this works to prevent nutrient runoff.

As the health of the estuary is linked to management actions on the farms and properties upstream, we later travelled to Agnes Gorge, where Elisha Keogh from the WGCMA talked about river bank restoration and how it helps river water quality. The Agnes is rich in native fish and platypus and the Agnes River Landcare group is passionate about the river and the local environment. Garry Ardley from the Group outlined what the Landcare group was doing to restore the riparian environment.

Working together to restore the Agnes River Catchment to a healthy system is a task in which everyone can take part. The spinoff for the creatures that live in and beside the river, cattle seeking shelter and fish survival and breeding is significant. And surely, as our children see and take part in creating a healthier catchment they will gain a much needed dose of hope.

The Canoe tour was part of the Corner Inlet Connections project and is supported by the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.



Photo above; See, the sun did eventually shine! Photo thanks to Gary Wallis, a last minute attendee who contributed lots of good geological information when we got to the Agnes Falls. Thanks heaps, Gary! That's Gary in the photo on the right, below, and the falls on the left below.



Photo far left middle; On the banks of the Agnes River, all life jacketed up and raring to go! Safety briefing from First Track Adventures, who led the canoe tour. Photo far leftbottom; up the Agnes Gorge looking at the good works the WGCMA and the Agnes River Landcare Group, represented by Garry Ardley and Bryan Watterson.

Its all happening in Mardan-Mirboo North

Sustainable Farm Days Achievements

June 2016 to April 2017, contributed by Libby Anthony

What does a past Governor General, a popular TV Gardening presenter and Psychologist-turned-Soil Scientist have in common? They are all passionate about healthy soils and have been Keynote Speakers at the recent series of Sustainable Farms Day workshops put on by Mardan-Mirboo North Landcare Group in partnership with the South Gippsland Landcare Network. In June 2016, we received a Commonwealth Sustainable Agriculture Grant to deliver three on-farm workshops covering Hill Farms, Small Commercial Farms and Lifestyle Farms in the Strzelecki Hills. Landcare volunteers got work planning the workshops before the ink was even dry on the contract. Our workshops went off without a hitch! And while a large amount of work went on behind the scenes, workshop participants were impressed with the smooth running of the farm days, the professionalism of the presenters and the high quality of farming information provided. Below is a list of some of the achievements of the project:

*3 on-farm workshops delivered covering Hill Farms, Small Commercial Farms and Lifestyle Farms

*3 high profile speakers – one for each workshop – Major General Michael Jeffery, Graeme Sait and Tino Carnevale

*4 local expert presenters – Nick Dudley, Emma Germano, Benita

Kelsall, David Stewart

*11 farming topics covered

*8 farm tours conducted

*160 farmers and prospective farmers participated

*21 members of M&MN Landcare volunteered across the three Farm Days

*A website was created www.sustainablefarmdays.org.au with 527 users, 838 sessions and 2,080 page views

*A Facebook page was created for M&MN Landcare Group and extensive promotion undertaken through social media and networks including SGLN News

*1,700 flyers letterbox dropped

*Numerous advertisements and post workshop media coverage in The Weekly Times, The Gippslander, Traf News, Great Southern Star, The Sentinel Times, Mirboo North Times, Foster Mirror, Dumbalk Newsletter

*22 videos created of the presentation from the Sustainable Farm Days

*M&MN Landcare Group profile raised in the community resulting in 4 new memberships [5 new members]



Photo above; Dave Stewart demonstrating a soil sampler

Photo above left; Major General Michael Jeffery with the Hill Farm workshop team

Photo bottom left; Tino Carnivale with the Mardan Mirboo North group team

Photo below, Tino Carnivale demonastrating apple tree pruning



By Kate Walsh, Nerrena Landcare Group project Chair

It's exciting to see the Indigenous Designs crew (on behalf of the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority) working at poisoning willows in the Black Spur Wetlands Confluence and the Apple Tree Wetlands. Great work! And thanks to the WGCMA and to the Great Southern Rail Trail (GSRT) Committee for providing access.

It is also apparent that the GSRT Committee has had the blackberries sprayed. This complements the work on neighbouring private properties and provides a good base from which we can gradually implement our plan of replacing environmental weeds with indigenous vegetation.

The trunks of the Strzelecki Gums have their late summer/autumn orange colouring, there are rusty seed pods on Sweet Bursaria, and Kangaroo Apple fruit are ripening. In the bush, Kangaroo Apple is a useful coloniser of bare areas, providing a temporary and open canopy. Less pleasing, I saw a mass of what I assume were European Carp in the river, more noticeable now that water levels are down.

Nerrena Landcare Group appreciates the commitment that South Gippsland Shire council, WGCMA, Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning, and VicRoads have made to support our project. We understand that a contractor for VicRoads will commence work on the South Gippsland Highway realignment in early to mid 2018 and subsequent offset requirements could complement and contribute to our plan for the wetlands. We look forward to meeting Vic Roads in the coming months to learn more and clarify how this will work.

Next time you're walking along the Rail Trail near the Black Spur Creek Wetlands (BSCW), take a look at the small patch of young forest with a sign on the fence:

Friends of the Great Southern Rail Trail
High Value Conservation Reservation Site
Eucalyptus strzeleckii woodland
Parks Victoria

It's a good example of revegetation and I know at least two members of Nerrena Landcare Group, Zoe and Richard Baillie, participated in the planting. Further work was postponed until there was some certainty about the highway re-alignment.

Restoration of wetlands, weed control, and revegetation are priorities for the Blackspur Creek Wetlands Project and, with help from Jill Vella (currently South Gippsland Landcare Network Coordinator), we have been applying for more funding to assist. At least one adjoining landowner will be taking the opportunity to exclude their stock from riverbanks and wetlands by fencing and revegetation.

Our group has met twice with Vic Roads engineers, horticulturalist and landscape architect to discuss the very complicated highway realignment project. We have appreciated the opportunity to gain insights, share knowledge and have input into the planning and design process.

VicRoads (with Melbourne Museum) has been undertaking geological and biological surveys including mapping of E. Strzelecki. Because some significant trees will be removed, they are waiting for approval from the Federal Environment Department before putting the highway realignment out to tender. Implementation might commence in late 2018. We have asked that, as well as using local seed and plant material for propagation, they retain the wood and debris from any felled tree for habitat and to slow water run-off – plus it could help keep some of the carbon in the soil instead of the atmosphere!.



Tarwin Lower Primary receives a Landcare Australia Powerful Youth Projects Grant

Tarwin Lower Primary School have received \$1000 to be used to develop a Bush Tucker garden. The students and our gardener will be working together with other community organisation to create the garden.

It will bring our Indigenous Education unit to life with hands on, practical learning and will also be used in conjunction with our current Kitchen Garden and Cooking program.

Students regularly undertake gardening and cooking and enjoy seeing the journey from seed to plate.

Powerful Youth Projects are funded by Momentum Energy through its partnership with Junior Landcare. The program offered 200 grants of \$1000 for projects in Victoria.



Ian and Helen Hasty's Tree Bee 21 May 2017 **Sunday had clear blue skies with lots of sunshine** **and not too hot. Perfect for planting trees!**

A happy crew of 11 Landcare members plus an invited friend showed up at the Hasty's farm at 10am. After signing in, we marched over the hill and got stuck into planting from the top of the hill moving down the slope.

Both Ian and Helen demonstrated their tunnel erosion problem by jumping into some of the holes to point out why we were planting [see below].

There was much talk about fencing techniques as we admired the Hasty's newly installed fence. And numerous tales were told of rescuing cattle, calves and sheep from erosion tunnels in the



Photo above: Helen has found the perfect spot for a tree



Photo above: Ian demonstrates an erosion hole

Strzelecki Hills.

At the end of nearly two hours, the crew had planted about 1,000 of the 2,000 plants. As the Hasty's had already planted 500, that left only 500 plants to go.

The morning ended with an enjoyable BBQ lunch and lots of lovely treats. Two hours of planting and two hours of eating/chatting, not a bad sort of Sunday to have...



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Intrepid Landcare Retreat

Environmentally-minded young people from across Gippsland congregated at Wilsons Prom on the 13th and 14th of May as part of Victoria's first Intrepid Landcare Retreat.

The retreat brought together 20 young people to hike, work with the 'Friends of the Prom' and participate in activities to inspire and empower them to take further work in the Landcare space. Attendees came from all of Gippsland including Yarram, Sale, the Latrobe Valley, Phillip Island, Inverloch, Mirboo North, Moe and Leongatha, as well as several people from outside Gippsland.

Kathleen Brack from the West Gippsland CMA said the retreat was a great success:

"There is a lot of talk that Landcare needs to connect with young people to ensure the movement continues for years to come, and to do this we need to make sure Landcare is relevant, accessible and appealing.

"This retreat brought incredibly bright and passionate people together and worked through tools to help them step up and lead on issues that are important to them and the local community.

"They learnt more about Landcare and how it can be a critical way of harnessing the community to get stuff done."

Participants experienced a cultural hike lead by Parks Ranger Luke Johnson, environmental activities with the Friends of the Prom, and sunrise Oberon walk, combined with unique self-discovery and leadership training which will contribute to their growth as local leaders in the environment space.

Attendees were also supported by a range of mentors including Gippsland Unwrapped's Tammy Logan, long-time Landcare legend Paul Speirs, South Gippsland Landcare Network's Jill Vella and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's Tanya Cowell.

Although the retreat was the first of its kind in Victoria, it is one of a series of Intrepid Retreats that have been run across the country in partnership with over 40 different groups and organisations.

"It is an awesome way to bring like-minded young people together around purpose," explains co-founder of Intrepid Landcare Megan Rowlatt.

"We now have six other Intrepid Landcare networks across four states and territories driving change."

"Intrepid Landcare projects provide an outlet for young people to have outdoor adventures and give something back to the local environment at the same time, and they get to create what this looks like."

"Landcare is underrated as a volunteer opportunity, I can't explain how rewarding the journey has been for our volunteers. There's no better way to give back and meet new people if nature is your thing."

Intrepid Landcare is a program that aims to connect people between the ages of 18 to 35 to Landcare by running events that appeal and inspire this age-group.

This Retreat was hosted by West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority with support from Victorian Landcare Program, Farms Trees and Landcare Association, Victorian Landcare Council, Bass Coast Landcare Network, South Gippsland Landcare Network, Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network and Yarram Yarram Landcare Network.

Attendees were:

Katherine Olive	Inverloch
Kelsey Tong	Woolamai
Derek Snowden	Dalyston
Madeline Watts	Perry Bridge
Sarah Matthews	Timboon
Harriet Spittle	Hampton/Wonyip
Annemieke Enter	Stony Creek
Sarah Van Stokrom	Inverloch
Jordan Rowand	Sale
Jem Milkins	Leongatha North
Lucy Simnett	Inverloch
Kelsey Fraser	Mirboo North
Shannen Hayes	Newborough
Jemma Woodhouse	St Kilda East
Hannah Buys	Yarram
Shantal Kelly	Boolarra
Brita Jobling	Wattle Bank
Jason Good	Phillip Island



Koalas and Lyrebirds in South Gippsland: Asking for Your Help!

Koalas and lyrebirds in South Gippsland are asking for your help!

The South Gippsland Landcare Network Charitable Fund is seeking a donation from you to extend habitat corridors to support the unique Strzelecki koala and South Gippsland lyrebirds. We don't want to lose these iconic native animals from our region.

Providing more habitat corridors is the key to protecting them and will allow them to find suitable forage and breeding partners. If we can give them safe, attractive movement corridors, it will help get them off the roads – making it safer for everyone. No one wants to see a dead koala on the roadside or be traumatised by hitting one.

Please donate what you can spare. If you donate \$2 or more you can receive a receipt which can be used for a tax deduction. Donations can be made through a cheque sent to South Gippsland Landcare Network Fund, PO Box 419, Leongatha, VIC 3953 or through

<https://www.givenow.com.au/landcaretrees>

Please be sure to include your name, address and contact details for a receipt. Thank you in advance for your generosity.



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“Hedley Range Services has now become HVP’s preferred contractor for projects calling for a high degree of environmental care” - Richard Appleton HVP Plantations

iFarm; dividing the farm mapping course

SGLN recently held an iFarm course in Korumburra.

iFarm is a farm mapping and planning program utilising the latest aerial imagery of your property and GIS software. Course participants learn how to map paddocks, infrastructure, waterways, tracks, native vegetation, pipelines, fencing and more.

SGLN in partnership with Bass Coast Landcare Network funded by the Port Phillip and Westernport CMA recently held an iFarm course over three Thursday nights.

We were under the capable guidance of Nick Dudley of Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

Nick led participants through the use of the program and the high resolution aerial imagery which is provided as part of the course.

The iFarm program enables the user to provide exact measurements and sizes for all paddocks and areas of their farm. Users can also print out the aerial maps or convert them into a PDF document with paddocks or proposed works outlined for contractors or staff. Some of the things we learned were -

- how to calculate areas and distances, including paddocks, fence lines, roads etc
- how to identify land classes to help us create management zones. how to use contours which help when planning drainage and dams.
- how to provide farm maps for contract workers, for grant submissions or for planning applications

This project is supported by Bass Coast Landcare Network and South Gippsland Landcare Network through funding from the Australian Government's

National Landcare Programme and PPWCMA.



ABOVE -Nick Dudley leads participants through iFarm training at Korumburra



Demonstrating
Sustainable
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Shopping for Landcare

Michael's SUPA IGA in Leongatha and Korumburra supports South Gippsland Landcare

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At SGLN we would encourage you to join this program, if you haven't already, and donate some of your points to the Network.!

Sign up in-store with one of the staff. If you do not wish to commit to this program here is a bar coded ticket that you can use to donate points on a one-off basis.

Your support is very much appreciated.



"Shop locally and you will help us support our community"



Photos above; the Leptospermum Honey field day held in January was a great success.



Photo above; Burke Brandon showing people the sheep milking shed during the "a Day on the Farm" field day earlier this year

Photo below: on the farm walk during "a Day on the Farm" at Prom Country Cheese



Photos above; Great day at Jean-Paul Prunetti and Johanna Bails' farm at Stamp Road, Fish Creek. We had a huge range of farmers and Landcarers attend. It was fascinating to see what Jean-Paul and Joh have achieved in 10 years with significant improvements in infrastructure, with new fences, improved tracks, and many new shelter belts for stock and habitat for wildlife. They have had a big focus on improving the pasture and soil health. They purchased a soilkee and have been working the paddocks to improve aeration and get locked up nutrients cycling. Also great to see the fruit and vegetable garden. The highlight was the amazing afternoon tea with beautiful tarts and cakes with French wines!! This field day was held as part of the Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms Project.



Photos; Trish Fleming, Linda French from Origin Energy, teacher Jane Taylor and John Fleming discussing the new grant in the School grounds

Our new Junior Landcare group, Nyora Primary School, has obtained a grant from Origin Energy to run their Biodiversity Blitz program.

Nyora Primary School is currently working with the Loch Nyora Landcare group and South Gippsland Landcare Network to complete the Biodiversity Module of the ResourceSmart Schools program (administered by Sustainability Victoria). The support of Origin Energy will enable the school to reach its biodiversity targets as part of the program, and foster greater community engagement in environmentally smart behavior.

The Biodiversity Blitz will protect and improve the land (school grounds), the local ecosystem, and plant and animal habitats through revegetation using indigenous species and weed control. Student learning outcomes on threatened species local to the area such as the Southern Brown Bandicoot and Giant Gippsland Earthworm will be part of the project. Curriculum activities will engage students in learning and taking action to conserve and increase biodiversity.

This project will engage the community in environmentally smart behavior by involving the Nyora community, local government, Bass Gas employees, and biodiversity networks in 'tree-bee' tree planting working bee activities.



Photo above: One of the areas on the school grounds which to be planted with understory plant species as part of the community planting day in Winter 2017

