



**Western Port Catchment
Landcare Network**
Central Region

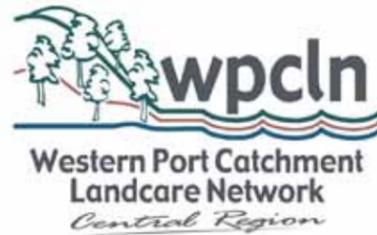
ANNUAL MAGAZINE / 2017



**Demonstrating
Sustainable**
FARM PRACTICES



CONTENTS



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PRESIDENTS REPORT /

Presidents Thoughts 4

STAFF REPORTS /

Peter Ronalds 5
Nicole Walsh 6
Bridgette Sullivan 8

DEMONSTRATING SUSTAINABLE FARM PRACTICES PROJECTS /

Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices - Project Overview 10

Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices - Discussion Groups Report 12

Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices - Multi Storey Farming Report 13

Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices - Farm Tour Report 14

FEATURE ARTICLE /
Vivien Clarke: Founding member of the Back Creek Landcare Group 15

LANDCARE GROUP REPORTS /

Back Creek/Deep Creek Landcare Group 18

Bunyip Landcare Group 19

Cannibal Creek Landcare Group 20

Jindivick Landcare Group 21

Labertouche Landcare & Sustainable Farming Group 22

Langwarrin Woodlands & Northern Westernport 23

Neerim & District Landcare Group 24

Toomuc Valley Landcare Group 26

Westernport Swamp Landcare Group 27



12



14



15

PRESIDENTS THOUGHTS...

Lao-Tze an ancient Chinese philosopher, who founded 'Taoism' said "Vision without action is but a dream. Action without vision is a waste of energy. But vision with action can move mountains." I am pleased to present this report on behalf of the 2017 WPCLN Committee, all of whom have put in many voluntary hours to ensure the continued growth, relevance and success of the Western Port Catchment Landcare Network. This has led to a strengthening of our commitment to keep focused on our key goal – the preservation and improvement of our natural environment.

It seems that there was rarely a week in the year when members of the Committee have not been active in attending Landcare meetings, functions and events during the year. I want to thank all the Committee members who have devoted much of their personal time to these activities, which has ensured the success of our Landcare Network.

Mariea Pacheco has been a sound support and backup as Vice President. She has worked on projects focusing on threatened species as well as researching the possible upgrade of the status of *Pittosporum undulatum* spp. to a Regionally Controlled Weed.

Treasurer Ian Maclagan has overseen the financial side of Network submissions, budgets and payment commitments and has consistently done this for many years. His upgraded accounting system is working very well and has provided support for the administration and salary payment of our staff.

Sadly, Sandra McPhee our secretary resigned earlier this year. Sandra was a dedicated and reliable Committee member who made herself readily available to assist with executive matters.

The other Committee members Jim Armstrong, Geoff Hudson, Susan Anderson, Mak Rai and Gerry Cunningham have provided ongoing support. I wish to recognise the personal "hands on" support at meetings and activities that have been part of the 2017 program. They have been reliable and dedicated to their elected roles and a wonderful support to the Chair.

I would like to thank our staff who have risen to the challenge of adapting to a constantly changing funding environment by successfully applying for grants. Our staff have worked hard to communicate with our members and the broader community on the activities of the Network through regular updates on our websites and other social media platforms as well as producing a monthly eNews.

Our new Landcare Group Facilitator, Nicole Walsh, has been very active in familiarising herself with her new role and has made huge inroads connecting with the Network groups and in getting her head around the various project she has inherited, particularly the Powerful Owl project.

I will leave our staff Peter Ronalds [Sustainable Agriculture Manager], Bridgette Sullivan [Projects Facilitator] and Nicole Walsh [Group Facilitator] to report their successes in this Annual Magazine, but I want to recognize the work completed in the many forms of community engagement, especially in:

- Identifying project grants and funding;
- Preparing grant applications;
- Project management and delivery;
- Attending a wide range of functions and meetings;
- Building community capacity;
- Building partnerships and community engagement;
- Assisting with planning and priority setting;
- Reporting and evaluation;
- Supporting other groups and stakeholders.

I would also like to thank our office manager Carol Hoskins who responds to public enquiries, manages our payments and



budgets as well as other important administrative tasks. She also makes sure that we [myself in particular] focus on urgent tasks. We are very appreciative of her expertise and diligence.

We have also moved to a new office on location at Koo Wee Rup with Melbourne Water office who are a key strategic partner. We have said goodbye to Kathleen Roberts, our previous Landcare Group Facilitator, and welcomed a new staff member into this role. Our collaboration with PPWCMA continues where the Network is about to sign off on a Partnership Agreement between our two organisations which will clarify our commitment to work together to enable our positive and productive relationship to continue.

It is important to note that it is the members and volunteers within Landcare that have gathered as they always do, to work on and complete a wide range of projects. While I continue to be greatly impressed by the dedication and knowledge of our staff and volunteer members, we still face challenges. We need to ensure that we effectively promote what we do to increase the recognition of Landcare to the broader community. We also remain focussed on our core business of facilitating the conservation of local flora and fauna within a unique landscape, the recovery of threatened species, ecological restoration and the management of remnant vegetation.

It is also important to note that for the Committee to plan for continuity and succession we encourage new members to take over the baton. New members on our Committee will have the opportunity to gain knowledge from the longer-term members during their first year. The Committee have also been working on the development of a Strategic Plan to guide the Network over the next three years.

2017 has been a year of considerable achievement. This has been the result of several factors, including the range of expertise on our Network Committee, capable and experienced staff, good partner relationships, well targeted projects in revegetation and education and generally a strong commitment to our goals. I look forward to further progress over the coming year as we meet the challenges of adapting to climate change, maintaining or increasing our financial strength through obtaining funding and expanding our operational role.

Marijke de Bever-Price
President
Western Port Catchment Landcare Network

PETER RONALDS – SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE MANAGER

I have now been delivering Landcare Projects in the Western Port Catchment for over 11.5 years and have just completed the fourth year of the "Demonstrating Sustainable Farming Practices" Project. This 'flagship' project continues to achieve great outcomes for farmers in the region. You can read more about this project in this magazine.

I love working with farmers and am continually inspired by their innovation, resilience and passion. Thanks to the hundreds of farmers I work with! Your friendship and generosity in opening up your farms for field days, discussion groups and farm tours is appreciated. Thanks especially to all those who were very brave and smiled for the cameras and talked into microphones, as well as promoting sustainable agriculture through their actions!

Many consumers are showing increased interest in the ways the food they purchase is produced and farmed, and want to know the story behind the food they eat. This provides a great opportunity for 'landcare' farmers who are prepared to tell their story about how their food is produced in a sustainable way by using landcare principles.

I continue to volunteer with 'Beyond Subsistence' which helps some of the poorest farmers in Africa with practical training. Beyond Subsistence has helped establish Junior Landcare programs in several more primary schools in Uganda this year. Thanks to the local landcare groups and individuals in WPCLN who supported this initiative. There has also been some significant improvements in productivity and farming practices in Zimbabwe with the farmers I trained there.

Finally, thanks to my family, Bridgette, Nicole, Carol and the WPCLN Committee for your support over the past year.

All the best, Pete

Peter Ronalds
Sustainable Agriculture Manager
Western Port Catchment Landcare Network



"I love working with farmers and am continually inspired by their innovation, perseverance and passion".

NICOLE WALSH – LANDCARE GROUP FACILITATOR

“Some of the highlights for me so far have been participating in planting days run by Cannibal Creek on two of their member properties involved in the Powerful Owl Project around the Tonimbuk and Tynong North area”.

It's been a busy time for me since coming on board with the Network in July 2017. In this time, I've been endeavouring to get around to as many Landcare group events and meetings as possible. So far I've attended Cannibal Creek, Back Creek, Westernport Swamp, Neerim and District and Labertouche Sustainable Landcare group meetings, AGM's and events.

Some of the highlights for me so far have been participating in planting days run by Cannibal Creek on two of their member properties involved in the Powerful Owl Project around the Tonimbuk and Tynong North area. I also enjoyed helping out with a Network's Clyde Rail Southern Brown Bandicoot Project at Bayles.

I attended the Port Phillip and Western Port CMA Catchment Action Around Table Event in August and have been working with our President Marijke and Doug Evans of the PPWCMA to develop a Partnership Agreement between our two organisations. I also attended the Westernport Catchment Collaboration Workshop: Co-designing the Westernport Catchment as part of Melbourne Water's Healthy Waterways Strategy.

One of my key challenges will be a re-engagement with landholders in the Ripplebrook and Modella area. There was a Ripplebrook Landcare Group until 2014, however new people are moving into the area and we hope some of these may be interested in forming a new Landcare group in the area. Another idea is to set up Landcare Group clusters where three of four groups in the same geographic areas can get together to share ideas and information and collaborate on future projects.

THREATENED SPECIES PROTECTION INITIATIVE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER ACTION GRANT

In late 2016 the Network received funding for a grant to protect and restore habitat for the Powerful Owl through on-ground re-vegetation and conservation activities as well as education about the threatened species and its habitat. During 2017 landholders, volunteers and Landcare groups have been involved in the delivery of project. Eight project sites, three with fencing to protect native vegetation remnants and a total of 7,850 indigenous trees, shrubs and ground covers have been planted through this project.

Three education events were also organised as part of the project. These were a “Creatures of the Night” event at Ripplebrook Primary School in March 2017, Who Eats Who? at Neerim South Primary School in April 2017, this event was run in conjunction with the Neerim and District Landcare Group. A separate event wildlife monitoring training session was held in May 2017 to learn how to use motion sensor wildlife cameras.



CONNECTING POCKETS OF HABITAT AND IMPROVING BIODIVERSITY FOR NECTAR FEEDERS IN THE WESTERNPORT CATCHMENT

In September 2017, the Network was successful in gaining funding from the Biodiversity On-ground Action - Community and Volunteer Action Grants. This project aims to address the issue of depleting populations of nectar feeding bees, birds, butterflies and bats by planting a variety of indigenous nectar producing plants throughout the catchment in urban and rural gardens and along existing wildlife corridors. By planting the community will be creating habitat for bees, birds, butterflies and bats which will also result in an increase in pollination and natural regeneration of indigenous flora across the landscape.

Landholder, Landcare groups and the general community will participate in the delivery of this project. This project will run for three years and with ten project sites to be selected each year. In addition, one engagement event will be run each year to educate the community about the importance of provide food plants for nectar feeding species.

Many thanks to Kathleen Roberts, the former Landcare Group Facilitator with WPCLN, who applied for funding for these two projects.

Nicole Walsh
Landcare Group Facilitator
Western Port Catchment Landcare Network

BRIDGETTE SULLIVAN – LANDCARE PROJECTS FACILITATOR

Well it's been a very busy and interesting year since returning from maternity leave. I jumped straight back into things and worked alongside Peter Ronalds on the Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices Project by helping him with monitoring of trial sites. These trial sites on organic vegetable farms were really interesting and I enjoyed being outdoors and learning more about soil management on farms.

The Network was then granted funding for “Protection of Grasslands at Clyde Railway Precinct” and PPWCMA “Enhancing and Creating Habitat for Powerful Owls and other Threatened Species”, this allowed me to increase my work hours to 2 days per week. Over the past year I have also been undertaking Melbourne Water Stream Frontage assessments, these are for projects taking place on private land and there is always a steady interest for assistance for these projects.

During 2016/17 I also continued to undertake delivery of on-going projects for the Network.

CARDINIA SHIRE BIODIVERSITY PROJECT

We have worked with some inspiring landholders in the Cardinia Shire who are keen to participate in biodiversity projects on their properties such as restoring understorey within remnant areas, establishing wildlife corridors and revegetating wetland areas.

In 2016/17 the Cardinia Shire Biodiversity Project involved landholders who fenced off and re-vegetated areas to improve biodiversity on private land.

We have received further funding from Cardinia Shire to continue this program during 2017/18 and invite landholders to be looking forward to providing more opportunities for landholders in the Cardinia Shire to access funding. For more details please contact Bridgette Sullivan at bridgette@wpcln.org.au. Visit our website for an Expression of Interest form at <http://www.wpcln.org.au/projects/biodiversity-grants/>

MELBOURNE WATER STREAM FRONTAGE MANAGEMENT

We have partnered with Melbourne Water for many years to help deliver the Stream Frontage Management Program in Western Port Catchment. This program is designed to improve waterway health, increase biodiversity and improve farm productivity through fencing off waterways, planting locally indigenous vegetation and providing of stream stock water. We also visit and advise landholders of waterway management projects and run waterway focussed events.

Your eligibility for funding, and the amount of funding allocated to your project is determined after a site visit has been made by our river health assessor. Factors such as the amount of work you are willing to undertake, and the length and width of creek you wish to protect will also be considered. Eligible activities include fencing to exclude livestock from waterways, revegetation, weed control, off stream water points, header tanks and pipework.

For more information contact Bridgette Sullivan at bridgette@wpcln.org.au. Access to the Expression of Interest form and further information about the program is available at <http://www.melbournewater.com.au/getinvolved/appyforfunding/Pages/Stream-frontage-management-program.aspx>



CLYDE RAIL PROJECT

We received funding from Landcare Australia to run a project that targeted the protection of grasslands at Clyde Railway Precinct which included weed control and revegetation works. Landcare Australia via VicTrack have made a significant contribution to the protection of Maroon Leek orchids and provide habitat for Southern Brown Bandicoots through this project. We hope that this partnership will continue in the future.

We had a very interesting field day at Clyde Railway in May, with Jeff Yugovic, he gave a great talk about the importance of predator/prey interactions and how some of these roles have been lost due to the decline or extinction of native predators.

PORT PHILLIP AND WESTERNPORT CMA COMMUNITY GRANT

We received funding through the PPWCMA for a project entitled Enhancing and Creating Habitat for Powerful Owls and other Threatened Species. This project enabled the Network to work with private landholders to complete revegetation, remnant protection and weed control to provide habitat (including linking habitat) for threatened species such as Powerful Owl on private land and complemented funding that were also received through the Threatened Species Protection Initiative.

Working on these specific projects is really great as it allows changes to be tracked more easily. It is also nice to see projects that have a specific focus. As always there is more demand for assistance than there is funding available, if you have a project idea please tell one of the Landcare staff as we will put you on a list of landholders waiting for projects and then when it comes time for writing grants you will be top of the list (it also makes our case stronger when we can tell the funders that we have landholders ready to complete projects).

I have really enjoyed being back at work and I feel lucky to work with great partners and amazing landholders. I am looking forward to the next year and working with you all.

Bridgette Sullivan
Landcare Projects Facilitator
Western Port Catchment Landcare Network



DEMONSTRATING SUSTAINABLE FARM PRACTICES



“In 2016/17 the project team ran 64 activities/events with 1809 farmers participating! This is almost 1.5 events per week throughout the region”!



Field Day



DEMONSTRATING SUSTAINABLE FARM PRACTICES

PROJECT OVERVIEW

2016/17 has been another fabulous year for the “Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices” flagship project. The 5 year project is funded by the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program and the objective is to increase the uptake of sustainable farming practices to improve farmer’s productivity and our natural resources throughout the Western Port Catchment, Mornington Peninsula and parts of the Yarra Catchment.

The project continues to achieve high levels of engagement with farmers and this year was no exception. In 2016/17 the project team ran 64 activities/events with 1809 farmers participating. This is almost 1.5 events per week throughout the region!

The major activities for the past year included;

Discussion group and farm walks

Field days

Training courses:

- P-Tool
- iFarm
- FertSmart training courses for dairy farmers
- GrazFert training course for beef farmers

Steering Committee meetings

Multi Storey Farming Field days

Open farm - “Day on the Farm” events

3 day farm tour to the High Country

Hosted a delegation from Thailand to view organic farming methods

Hosted participants at the National Landcare Conference farm tour

Hosted scientists from the International Nitrogen Conference Tour

Hosted the ABC’s Gardening Australia’s Costa Georgiadis

Gippsland Growers and Makers Forum for farmers, marketers, buyers

We run many programs each week, but as we work with a diverse range of farmers and farm enterprises, we can tailor activities that are relevant to them.

The project is promoted through various media channels. We have received coverage on WIN TV, ABC, Weekly Times

newspaper and all local papers this year and appreciate their support. We also use our website and social media channels to promote the project. Our Instagram page @wpclnlandcare now has over 500 followers and Facebook has over 540 followers. Our YouTube channel has a number of videos which have created lots of interest.

The programs and activities that we run are generating significant interest in the community and the number of farmers we engage with is continually growing. The Multi Storey Farming field days created massive interest with over 200 people attending the three field days. I partnered with the Open Food Movement and Baw Baw Food Hub to run the first “Gippsland Growers and Makers” forum to promote local sustainably produced food and provide an opportunity for farmers to network with each other. Over 150 farmers attended this event with presentations recorded and placed on YouTube. This has been replicated and rolled out in other regions now.

We have many partners and they all play a specific and integral role in the project. Major partners include Bass Coast Landcare, South Gippsland Landcare, Mornington Peninsula Shire, AgVic, PPWCMA, GippsDairy, Baw Baw Food Movement and Melbourne Water. We also call on experienced consultants as required to add additional credibility and rigour to the services we provide.

Finally, a special thank you to the hundreds of farmers I work with! You are an amazing bunch of innovative, supportive, friendly and hospitable people. Thanks to each one of you who opened up your farms for field days, discussion groups, farm tours, hosted demonstration sites, smiled for the cameras and videos and were great sports with everything!

We look forward to another awesome year ahead! Don’t forget to follow wpclnlandcare on Instagram and Facebook and meet some of the farmers we work with and see some of the things we get up to!

Peter Ronalds
Sustainable Agriculture Manager
Western Port Catchment Landcare Network





DISCUSSION GROUP REPORT



Discussion Groups and farm walks are one of the key activities of the 'Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices' project. Discussion Groups provide significant benefit to farmers as they meet together in small groups to share ideas and experiences with each other. It is proven that farmers who participate in discussion groups are more open to new ideas and are able to contribute their ideas and learnings in a setting that is supportive and friendly. Some of our discussion groups also provide a mentoring service to newer farmers by more experienced farmers.

The project supports 8 farmer discussion groups in the region. All are well attended and we meet regularly. There are 2 discussion groups that I facilitate;

1. Organic Vegie/Fruit Growers Discussion Group is now in its third year and is the only vegie/fruit growing discussion group in Australia which specifically supports organic growers. The organic sector is growing rapidly and the group has a mix of

large and small vegetable and fruit growers. The group met 7 times this year and 20-30 growers regularly attend. We meet at a different farm each time and have a discussion and farm walk.

2. Sustainable Farming Discussion Group is in its fourth year. This group is primarily comprised of beef farmers. The group met 7 times this year and 15-35 farmers attend regularly. This group also meets on different farms and we always have a discussion and farm walk. A number of the farmers are also completing the GrazFert nutrient management training program.

If you follow wpclnlandcare on Instagram and wpcln on Facebook you will see lots of discussion group activities and view some of the things we get up to! If you would like to join a group, then please contact me.

Peter Ronalds
Sustainable Agriculture Manager
Western Port Catchment Landcare Network



DEMONSTRATING SUSTAINABLE FARM PRACTICES

Clinton & Ben Tepper

MULTI STOREY FARMING REPORT

As part of the 'Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices project' in 2013, the WPCLN asked farmers to submit ideas for unique and sustainable farming practices that would improve farm productivity whilst benefitting the natural resources. An expert panel of local farmers then selected the most promising applications, and the WPCLN supported the demonstrations by providing support and ongoing monitoring and research.

Clinton Tepper, a forester and farmer, submitted a proposal to trial a new design of tree planting. Clinton wanted to make his land more productive by planting trees further apart to allow cattle and crops to make use of the area around the trees. He calls the technique 'multi-storey farming', a term influenced by Clinton's career as a Forester that perfectly describes the different tiers of his design – the soils below, the crops growing on the surface, the cattle grazing, and the trees providing the upper storey. The farmer panel approved his application and the demonstration site was established in 2014.

Clinton and Michelle's field days were a sell-out as soon as it was promoted. The three field days attracted over 220 attendees and gave people the opportunity to ask questions and view the trial site. Clinton's idea was popular for many reasons, including its ability to make the land easier to manage and provide a more productive return whilst improving the environment. Attendees at the field day described the day as 'inspiring' with many attendees keen to replicate the multi-storey farming design on their own land. Clinton has already seen successful results and has recently established a second site using the same technique.

Clinton says 'the demonstration site has changed the direction of where they're going with the farm. They are grateful to the Western Port Catchment Landcare Network for all their support and look forward to updating them with the results of this work'.

The WPCLN encourages and supports different approaches to farming that can benefit the environment, the land and farm productivity. Peter Ronalds said 'I'm delighted with the support for Clinton's field day. It's always great to see farmers motivated to consider different uses for their land that improve productivity whilst simultaneously improving the natural resources'.



Multi Storey Planting

Clinton and Michelle Tepper are fourth generation farmers. They live on 110 acres on the outskirts of Warragul with their 4 children. Clinton studied Forest Science at university and worked as a Forester for 25 years before purchasing their farm.

For more information please contact Peter Ronalds.

Peter Ronalds
Sustainable Agriculture Manager
Western Port Catchment Landcare Network



FARM TOUR REPORT

Apple Orchard

HIGH COUNTRY HARVEST - GIPPSLANDERS INSPIRED BY INNOVATIVE HIGH COUNTRY FARMERS.

Our fourth farm tour was focused on innovative farms in the High Country. A group of 30 or so keen Landcarers and Beefcheque Group members took a journey to and explored the beautiful high country in its autumnal beauty. We visited leading farmers who embrace sustainable systems to produce quality food and wines.

We visited Mclvor Farm with its free range pigs and regenerative farming, tasted biodynamic wines at Pennyweight Winery and stayed overnight at Beechworth. We explored Bright and its autumn colours visiting Nightingale Bros Alpine Produce Apples, Wandiful Produce for lunch with Megan Hughes and her chestnuts and hazelnuts as well as Pedricks Green Tea Plantation with a restful stay in Bright. Our return home consisted of visiting Dr Jason Trompf and Hannah Marriott who shared with us their leading research in how to manage climate variability to optimise lamb survival. It was then on to Milawa for lunch with a tempting taste of its local produce.

My insights and reflections on this trip was that when there is a desire to farm regeneratively, and grow biodynamic produce there needs to be a vision with a plan attached. To recognise that the beginning of the journey will be labour intensive, requires sacrifices and that work life balance might be out of wack for a while. That initial expectations might not be met yet there will be lovely insights and rewards along the way.

We discovered that using natural biodynamic and sustainable farming practices can reap greater production results per hectare than the old European practices. That value adding means researching modern day new and scientific approaches...BUT NOT ALWAYS. This type of farming often involves finding solutions and thinking on your feet. That there must be a lot of research and that specific regimes are needed for optimal results.

The highlight was the promise that primary industry in Australia is far from dead, and that there is a new generation of younger farmers who are value adding, developing new markets for their produce and farming in a way that is working more with nature and placing more emphasis on natural processes. The tour left many in overwhelm with the amount of valuable information that was obtained to plan for on our own properties with a better idea of how these plans could be approached.

This is an annual journey I would like to encourage all to experience as it is one you will not forget too quickly. It is one of camaraderie and fascination.

Marijke de Bever-Price
Participant in the Farm Tour 2017



Tour Fun



Green Tea

“We discovered that using natural biodynamic and sustainable farming practices can reap greater production results per hectare than the old European practices”.



Charlie & Vivien Clarke

FEATURE ARTICLE

VIVIEN CLARKE - ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE BACK CREEK LANDCARE GROUP

Where did you grow up?

In Box Hill North, we had a big garden on what was the outskirts of Melbourne at that time with lots of paddocks to explore. My younger sister and I had a free ranging childhood. The children in the neighbourhood would collect second hand materials from the families in the surrounding streets and build a bonfire and everyone would come and enjoy the fireworks. I would set up a stall at the bottom of our house and sell second hand belongings and raise funds for the Box Hill Hospital. We went to school in Box Hill North then Strathcona Baptist Girls Grammar in Canterbury which took an hour and a half to travel each way.

Where did your love of native plants and wildlife come from?

When I was 20 I joined the YHA and started going on various bushwalks: Wilsons Promontory, The Grampians and the Rubicon area. Then I went overseas for two years and travelled through Europe, North Africa, Israel and came home overland. When I came back to Australia, I joined the Victorian Field Naturalists and I remember a particular field trip around Warrandyte, where I was shown the most amazing native orchids. We also did walking trips into the Victorian High Country. One very memorable trip was walking The Razorback between Mount Hotham and Feathertop, which was very spectacular with amazing views and an array of alpine plants. My walks in the alpine areas of Victoria, NSW and Tasmania gave me an appreciation of Australian flora. My interest in native plants was piqued and I started buying field guides to learn their names. Between 1978-80 I went to Burnley Horticultural College and studied Horticulture specialising in plant propagation.

When did you arrive in Maryknoll?

My husband Charlie and I got married in 1978 and we moved to Maryknoll in 1982 where we had our three children; David, Rachel and Megan. As the kids were growing up, we had lots of camping holidays. The Grampians and Cape Conran were favourite holiday locations. We joined the Mammal Survey Group and did lots of camps where we trapped and spotlighted mammals, birdwatched and compiled plant lists. We were involved for roughly ten years and gained an enormous amount of knowledge. As the kids got older and developed their own

interests, I was looking for a new challenge.

When did you set up your native plant nursery, Maryknoll Indigenous Nursery?

My friend Jenny Dean and I established the Maryknoll Indigenous Nursery in 1996. We started small and supplied some of the local Landcare Groups, then as time went on we were asked to supply plants for Melbourne Water projects, City of Casey and Shire of Cardinia, local schools, friends groups, contractors and private individuals. Over the years I grew thousands of plants. I did heaps of site visits to ensure that the customer received the correct plant species for the site. I had a permit which enabled me to source all the seed locally and propagated from seed and cuttings. Over time Charlie built two shade houses, an igloo and lots of capillary benches to water the plants more efficiently, conserve water and work ergonomically. One bench could support roughly 3,000 plants.

What is your favourite native plant and why?

Banksia spinulosa, a beautiful bushy Banksia shrubs that produces lots of flowers and seed to attract honeyeaters and black cockatoos, which are magnificent birds.

When did you become involved in Back Creek Landcare Group and what was your motivation to join Landcare?

In 1997 we set up the Back Creek Landcare Group, Jenny Dean and I were two of the founding members. The Cannibal Creek Landcare Group was already established and we saw a need for our own local group to promote indigenous flora. Our first project was a roadside planting. The Council wanted to plant it out with exotic grass seed but we convinced them that it would be preferable to plant local indigenous plant species and mulch it instead. We did it!!

The Back Creek Landcare Group are celebrating their 20 year anniversary in November 2017. What do you think have been the key achievements of the group in that time?

Our group have planted thousands of plants into the local area which has benefited the local biodiversity. We encourage members to identify and control environmental weeds and to embrace indigenous species. We are a very social group, we have working bees on public and private land, meetings to discuss our projects, guest speakers, farm walks and our annual Christmas meal. We have worked on some difficult sites with salinity issues, steep slopes and on properties with no houses so we needed to supply everything. This year we worked with the Windana Centre

revegetating an area where Flax leaf Broom had been removed. Some members of the group were also involved in the Water Watch Program. We did training on taking samples and identifying macro-invertebrates. We monitored Back Creek four times a year for some years.

I was also involved in the Maryknoll Tracks and Reserves Group (TARG) for many years. I was one of the main organisers of this group for over five years where I gained heaps of skills. TARG liaises with Council and the community to maintain the walking tracks, remove environmental weeds and revegetate areas where required. Maryknoll has twelve public reserves that range in size from 2ha to 9.6 ha in size. I am the Custodian for the Sister Chanel Reserve which is close by.

One of our major achievements was to obtain funding in 2004 from the Envirofund program to employ a botanical consultant Rik Brown to undertake a botanical survey of the reserves around Maryknoll which identified a number of rare and threatened species, threats to species and strategies to protect our species. This document has been extremely useful in protecting the botanical values of our Reserves and Tracks.

What do you see as the key challenges for the group into the future?

Our members are getting older and the work can be physically demanding. We need to attract new people who have moved to the area and younger people with the energy to keep the group going. Couples generally both work and those with kids tend to be involved in weekend sport. It's important to address succession and make the group more accessible to people that are time poor.

How did you become involved with the Windana Therapeutic Centre in Maryknoll?

We first got involved through Wendy Bell in 2005 when we collaborated our first combined planting. Wendy was a driving force behind many of the planting projects on the property. Now we are working with Richard Price and Matt Taylor and we have started to collaborate on some new projects. They got some funding through the Powerful Owl Project in 2017 and the residents have done some fantastic work removing weeds such as Flax-leaf Broom, Cotoneaster and Prunus sp. from a native vegetation remnant and replanted with 600 local indigenous species.

What do you see as the key benefits from this partnership?

Sharing of skills and knowledge by the group with residents, and being outside and in nature gives the residents an appreciation of the natural world. The physical effort required is really good as well. The Landcare group is making a connection with new people from different walks of life and different life experiences. Hopefully residents and group members can learn something from each other.

My Project Officer Work

In the last four years of my working life I have also been working as a Project Officer for Cardinia Catchment Landcare. I have been using the skills that I have obtained in my nursery life and volunteer work to work with property owners in supporting them with weed removal work and, where required, replanting with the local indigenous species. This has been enjoyable work.

You're closing your nursery business after 20 years, was this a difficult decision?

I've had twenty good years. I'm getting older and the physical demands of running a plant nursery are very constant. Watering, collecting seed, boxing up plants, moving plants in and out of structures, and doing site visits takes its toll on my energy reserves. Charlie and I are keen to start growing vegies for ourselves, our family, and friends. We are in the process of setting up a series of wicking beds to use minimum water and the igloo will be put to good use raising vegie seedlings. We're also looking forward to spending more time with our grandchildren. We've just had a new grand-daughter which is just wonderful.

“Our members are getting older and the work can be physically demanding. We need to attract new people who have moved to the area and younger people with the energy to keep the group going”.



Indigenous Nursery



With Rik Brown



Planting Supervisors



LANDCARE GROUP REPORTS

BACK CREEK LANDCARE GROUP



After Planting

In August 2016 we had a planting day at Rob and Raelene Newham's property to plant out an area close to the creek. 350 trees, shrubs and groundcovers were planted to encourage more birdlife onto their property.

On Saturday the 15th of October we planted on Neil and Louise Matthew's property to provide a wildlife corridor and 160 trees and shrubs were planted on their eastern boundary.

In October we had a guest speaker Matt Stephenson from the Victorian Weed Society that spoke about the weeds that we are having trouble controlling like capeweed, thistles, kikuyu. It was a very informative night and Matt was a great speaker.

Our end of year meal was at the Bunyip Top Pub in November. We had a great meal and catch up chat.

We started 2017 with a planting day at Kris Bernard's and Kieran Murphy's property where we planted 425 plants to encourage the Powerful Owl. This planting formed a linkage with remanent vegetation on Kris and Kieran's property and the Yarrabubba Reserve behind. Trees, shrubs and tufts were planted.

Raelene Newham
Back Creek Landcare



Before Planting



Powerful Owl Site

DEEP CREEK LANDCARE GROUP

Our group has not been active during the 2016/17 period and have not held any events or planting days. Our current membership is quite small with six financial members.

Pat Canty (President) is involved with the Cardinia Environment Coalition (CEC) and is working with the Golf Club and the Cardinia Council on the construction of the EcoCentre/Golf Club.

We are hoping that through our involvement in the proposed EcoCentre at Deep Creek that our group will be involved in planting projects around the grounds and along the creek as Deep Creek runs through the site.

Jenny Canty
Secretary
Deep Creek Landcare Group

BUNYIP LANDCARE GROUP



Chris & Russell

This has been a rest and recovery year for Bunyip Landcare due to ailing family members, accidents and travel amongst our committee members.

As we have only one planting day to share (a small streamside planting on Cannibal Creek), here are some photos and stories from our members about their involvement with Landcare and their plantings.

JAN AND ANDREW TROEDEL:

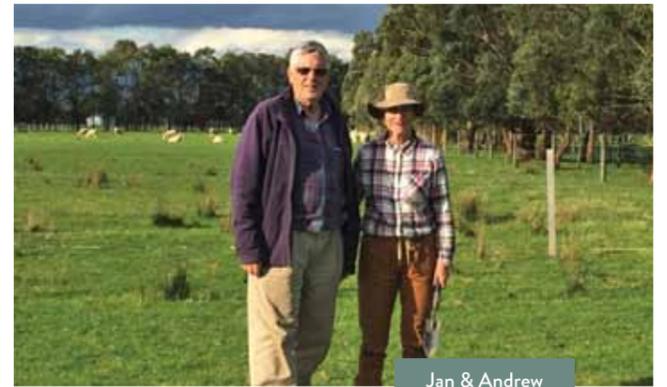
Plantation on right side of photo was hand planted 14 years ago by Landcare volunteers, and the plantation in the background was the demonstration planting of direct seeding by Greening Australia at about the same time. Over 15 years we have hand planted around 60,000 trees. Wattles have been planted on the outside of the plantations as they fix nitrogen out into the pastures, with eucalypts down the centre as they are generally taller and give an inverted V shape resulting in less wind turbulence. We carry between 28 and 40 DSE over the whole property indicating that the 20 metre wide plantations are effective in increasing production. Buneep Park is 883 acres in high rainfall West Gippsland, breeding Angus bred cattle and composite bred fat lambs.

CHRIS AND RUSSELL PENDLEBURY:

Over the last 5 years we have done several plantings at our property, Kellbury Park, in Bunyip. We have not had a lot of success so far. There have been two main reasons for that. The first reason has been the long, hot, dry summers. Most of our plantings struggled to survive the summer elements. They were difficult to water by hand and there was not enough moisture to sustain the plants over the summer period.

Our second reason is that we have tried to plant around existing treelines. When we moved to this property part of the existing infrastructure was treelines consisting of a single row of gums or pines (pinus radiata). We have had problems with trees blowing over during strong windstorms. Following Landcare guidelines, we tried to build a layered understory to help protect these trees. However, we have found that very few of these plantings have survived the summers. My guess is that the mature trees are taking the moisture from the ground for themselves and they are preventing rain from getting through to the new plants.

Our most successful plantings have been in areas where we created new treelines. Areas that tend to be wet and 'swampy' have done very well. There seems to be enough moisture in the ground in these areas to sustain the plants over the summer period. One of the best reasons to keep trying, apart from the environmental impact, is the camaraderie that we have with the members of Bunyip Landcare. Our plantings and the plantings of other members, become social events, which make the task a



Jan & Andrew



John & Sue

pleasant experience rather than a chore.

JOHN AND SUE ANDERSON:

With apologies for the ghastly selfie, this is our favourite windbreak. It was John's idea to leave a tractor width in these 20-metre wide, almost 3 year old shelterbelts. Easier to control weeds and inadvertently we have provided an extra 'rat run' for wildlife. We hope that in time (quite a long time) it will allow regeneration of eucalypt species.

We also want to thank Adele Richardson from Westernport Indigenous Nursery for great species advice and selection, which has given us a beautiful variety of flowering shrubs this spring. This photo was taken at the start of October on our section of Bunyip riverbank.

Sue Anderson
Bunyip Landcare Group

CANNIBAL CREEK LANDCARE GROUP



Morning Tea Time

It has been a relatively busy year for Cannibal Creek Landcare Group. We began our year's activity with a Ferreting Day at Sherwood Park Orchard. Four rabbits were caught and the group were shown how to net the holes, handle the ferrets and to humanely kill the rabbits and then skin and gut them for cooking.

This was followed by a well attended "Toadlets in Tynong" and "Chemicals to use near waterways" talk at Jeanette Cope and Greg Collins property in Tynong North. Richard Akers from Melbourne Water gave a very enthusiastic talk and inspired members to enter the Frog App on their phones or iPods after we learnt about the Toadlets. Nathan Taylor from Habitat Creations gave a very informative talk on appropriate chemicals to use.

Our third activity in April was to participate in a combined working be with the Cannibal Creek Reserve Committee. Six members our group participated in work to remove pittosporums and other weeds around Cannibal Creek. The equestrian groups continued the work in the afternoon.

Our project for May was postponed until June due to the inclement weather. This was to organise a "Clean Up Australia Day" along the stretch of the Old Princes Highway to the start of Minterm Road. A great amount of rubbish was gathered especially from the service road leading to Brew Road. This area has recently become a dump for domestic rubbish. We thank Cardinia Shire for removing the piles of rubbish collected. We also set out to remove weeds and exotic species – largely fruit trees, pines and pittosporums from the roadside in Brew Road. We had hoped to clear the area from the Quarry entrance to Cannibal Creek but the quantity of material to be cut down and poisoned meant that we could not complete the task in the time allocated. Our thanks to Mick Egan – Manager of Holcim Quarry for providing the refreshments on the day and to his crew removing the cut trees during the following week. Another clean up day next year will be needed to fully clean up the road.

In July and August we were involved in two big planting days at the properties of Alan and Angela Forte at Tonimbuk and Arthur and Lynn Thorpe at Tynong North. These plantings were part of a project to provide habitat for the Powerful Owl organised by the Westernport Catchment Landcare Network. The Tonimbuk planting was done in collaboration with Bunyip and Labertouche Landcare groups. We thank them and Nicole Walsh our new facilitator for their support. Two more plantings as part of this project are to be held at the same properties in September and October. To date over 1500 plants have been planted on these two properties

The Cannibal Creek Catchment Biodiversity Project has continued with our support over the last twelve months. Four members of our group Nicole, Jeanette, Alan and Pam planted 250 tube stock plants in tributaries of Cannibal Creek over the last three months. Under the very competent management of Geoff Lockwood from the CEC the project continues its work to clean up the creek and its environment. Weed spraying has been carried out from

"The Cannibal Creek Catchment Biodiversity Project has continued with our support over the last twelve months. Four members of our group Nicole, Jeanette, Alan and Pam planted 250 tube stock plants in tributaries of Cannibal Creek over the last three months".



Planting Day

Pooley Road to Garfield North Road during the last twelve months. Application are soon to be made to gain funds from Melbourne Water and the CMA to employ contractors to do more in the eradication of noxious weeds in the Catchment area.

Our Facebook page administrator Nicole Kuhnell has been busy all year tagging photos and comments on our various activities. Our special thanks to Nicole.

Our secretary Pam Cunningham attended the CART meeting in August. Since the CCCBP came out of a CART meeting Pam felt that our continued commitment to that project was sufficient for us at this moment.

On Friday 1st September six members of our group attended the presentation of the Victorian Landcare awards at Government House for which we among the nominees. Alas, we did not win an award but we did enjoy the day out dressed to the nines!!!

Pam Cunningham
Cannibal Creek Landcare

JINDIVICK LANDCARE GROUP



Our Group

Jindivick Landcare Group has had a productive and enjoyable year. A feature of our group is the great friendships that have been formed and the enjoyment we all have when we get together. We welcomed a number of new members to our group again this year. We have been successful in obtaining a number of grants this year, and we thank our partners which include Melbourne Water, PPWCMA, Baw Baw Shire, DSS and of course the WPCLN.

Over the past 12 months we have conducted a wide range of activities to cater for all our members. We kicked off the year with some remote sensor camera training. We received a grant to purchase a number of these cameras and Kathleen provided some training in how to set up and use the cameras to monitor local wildlife.

We then had a night focusing on alternative energy which was extremely well attended by the community. We heard about alternative ways that communities can work together to create their own green energy along with storage options. This night coincided with our AGM.

We had a Christmas breakup at Glen Cromie reserve on the Tarago and enjoyed a community bbq and games with lots of locals attending.

We kicked off 2017 with a fantastic night focusing on bees with Bill Ringin speaking. Bees are such an important part of the ecosystem and many of the fruit and vegetables we grow depend on them for pollination. Bill brought along a display hive with a Perspex wall so we were able to see the queen bee being fed by the other bees.

In May we hopped on a bus and experienced some of the natural beauty of Jindivick and Neerim areas on the Jindi Landcare Group bus tour of the Tarago Reservoir. Gavin Brock from Melbourne Water gave us a fascinating history of the reservoir and showed us some of the special places that are hidden in the bush to the north and west of the reservoir. We travelled up to the original Tarago Weir high up in the forest and then travelled down the limited access road and saw the old pumping station, the tunnel and the aqueduct and siphon systems. After popping out of the bush, we viewed a large willow removal project on the Tarago River and then finished at the Tarago treatment plant at Drouin West where we had a beautiful lunch supplied by the Jindi Caf. We learnt how the water was treated at the plant and then distributed to the community. A wonderful day was had by all and we say a special thanks to Melbourne Water for their support and local Ken Kercheval for driving the bus and only getting bogged once!!

"Jindivick Landcare Group has had a productive and enjoyable year. A feature of our group is the great friendships that have been formed and the enjoyment we all have when we get together".



Bus Tour

We also had our annual volunteer planting team visit us from NAB. Each year volunteers from the bank come out from the city to help out a Jindivick or Drouin West farmer to plant trees on their farm as part of their giving back to the community. This year a group of 20 volunteers planted over 1500 plants at Chris and Charmaine's dairy farm in a morning! The volunteers worked hard and also experienced a taste of farm life and some local hospitality! This initiative was started quite a few years ago by a Jindi Landcare member who works with the NAB. Thanks to all who came and helped!

Marijke de Bever-Price
President

LABERTOUCHE LANDCARE GROUP



Solar Pump

Our group has had a quiet year as many members have had a few health issues and others have been very busy with their work commitments. Our group, however; are in the process of planning and investigating new projects/ ideas for the local community.

We are working with Parks and the PPWCMA to get some fuel reduction burning in the Labertouche Reserve. Geoff and Jim are continuing to do the water watch and have changed the river. They are now investigating Wattle Creek on Old Telegraph Rd.

Our group is supporting the 'Healthy Soils, Healthy Food, Healthy People' workshop on the 21st September. Pest management is a big concern with the deer and other pests. Soil carbon sequestration is being investigated on farms in our area, with the aim of being paid for our good management and building soil carbon.

We are planning a workshop with Agrisolutions on composting and managing horse manure to hopefully attract the horse owners in the community.

We captured a deer on a camera we set up in the Labertouche Reserve to see what was destroying the plantings last year. They are a real problem in the area.

Geoff Hudson
Labertouche Landcare Group

"Our group, however; are in the process of planning and investigating new projects/ ideas for the local community".



Community Planting



Water Watch

LANGWARRIN WOODLANDS GROUP

The second half of 2016 the Langwarrin Woodlands and Northern Westernport Landcare Group were kept busy blitzing rabbits and foxes as part of a Port Phillip and Westernport CMA grant to undertake an extensive rabbit and fox control program and assisted regeneration across 41+ member properties; as well as community capacity building workshops to learn the skills to better manage our land to prevent reinfestation. The ultimate goal is to see Southern Brown Bandicoots re-establish populations in the region.

RABBIT CONTROL

To date, 41 properties have been visited by our contractors to fumigate warrens and flush areas with ferrets where fumigation wasn't suitable. Properties are being monitored for re-entry with appropriate follow-up, and selective Pindone baiting will be taken where deemed appropriate, to best practice standards to prevent off target damage.

FOX CONTROL

Following successful reduction in rabbit number, fox control commenced in May 2016. Control methods currently being implemented are with soft hold leg traps through several local contractors, all with approvals for humane methods.

During 2017 a handful of group members have been doing fauna monitoring and have discovered wombats in Langwarrin which is exciting. President of the Langwarrin group Ella Boyen has spoken to Field Naturalists and Rotary about the activities of the groups.

The Landcare Group has run some terrific workshops during the 2016/17 period including seed collection at Cranbourne Botanic Gardens.

In May 2017 the group organised a Bush Tucker walk and talk at Baldry's Crossing, Main Ridge which was hosted by Lionel Launch of Lionel Launch Living Culture and the Langwarrin Landcare group. In June 2017 we ran a plant identification walk and talk with Gidja Walker on private land at Somerville Gidja has extensive knowledge of the local ecology on the Mornington Peninsula.

At our June 2017 meeting our guest speaker was Leon Costermans, author and vegetation expert.

Ella Boyen
President
Langwarrin Woodlands

"During 2017 a handful of group members have been doing fauna monitoring and have discovered wombats in Langwarrin which is exciting".



Gidja Walker



Barry Goldsmith



Rabbit Burrow



Red Hill Creek Planting

Neerim District Landcare has had another busy year both with its two major projects - Tarago Catchment Sustainable Farms Project and the Red Hill Creek Restoration Project - as well as a range of community engagement activities and landholder events.

TARAGO CATCHMENT PROJECT

After a review and audit of the project this year, Melbourne Water has confirmed ongoing funding and has already lodged funds towards projects for the next twelve months.

The funding agreement for 2017-18 provides total funding of \$186,000 and the action plan for the year was finalised last month and submitted to Melbourne Water.

There are continuing works with several property owners around the reservoir catchment and there were several expressions of interest for the current year.

Our aim is to continue to engage farmers who have not previously undertaken any works as part of the Tarago project.

RED HILL CREEK PROJECT

As members would have seen from the aerial video of the project, our target area along Red Hill Creek is extensive but we have already made significant inroads over the past few years.

Stage two included wide-ranging creek bank renovation and protection works including weed and willow removal, replanting native vegetation, fencing of sensitive areas, and supporting works, in conjunction with farmers along the creek.

About six hectares of weeds have been sprayed and eradicated, more than 1.7km of fencing has been completed and approximately 1,600 native plants are now in the ground.

We are almost at the end of stage two and will apply for further funding to go into a third stage of habitat restoration along the creek in the next twelve months.

PROJECT FUNDING

We are fortunate that our activities have been underpinned, to a degree, by ongoing funding for the Tarago Catchment

Sustainable Farms Project.

However, we still look to other sources for additional projects that benefit our community and surrounding environment.

An example is the Red Hill Creek Project which was funded by a State Government threatened species grant for stage two. We anticipate that the most likely source of funding to go into a third stage is state government, although we constantly monitor a variety of sources of environmental and farming grants.

VicForests again provided a grant for the Frog Festival, and in fact has made a commitment for the next three years. West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority has also provided funding and Baw Baw Shire is currently considering a community event grant, but we won't know the outcome for a few weeks.

EVENTS

NDLG continued to provide a range of community engagement activities including public events, farm days, information sessions, workshops and local school activities.

We are becoming more focused in our program to engage the local community and the Wild Foods Dinner and Feral Animals Presentation is becoming an expected part of the local calendar of annual events.

Thanks to Phil Darton, Jenny Komsky and Sandra MacPhee for their efforts in creating such a successful night and I'm sure it will be even bigger in 2018.

We are also running our second Family Frog Day at the wetlands on the second Sunday in November after last year's successful trial.

We are incorporating a larger range of environmental education activities and displays in 2017 and thanks to Mike Haughton and Intrepid Landcarer Ebony Loveland for their assistance in putting this year's event together.

NETWORK COLLABORATION

We have been engaging more with the surrounding Landcare groups – both through Latrobe Network and Westernport



Fungus Day



Red Hill Creek

“I think the Landcarers in Neerim District are a diverse, friendly, and welcoming bunch – so I encourage you to encourage your friends and neighbours to join us in our activities in the year ahead”.



Different Fungus Types

Network, and with neighbouring groups, such as Springsure Hill in Crossover and Rokeby.

We are also inviting the Friends of Drouin Trees – which includes Drouin Landcare – to talk to us in November about their initiative to develop a significant tree register. We look forward to inviting interest for a similar project in Neerim District.

I was pleased to attend the Landcare 30th Anniversary celebration at Heyfield Wetlands and watch as Mike Haughton was given an award for his contribution to the environment in West Gippsland.

Of course, the achievements most highlighted were the Neerim South Wetlands and the Tarago Catchment Sustainable Farms Project.

As much as I enjoy these events, I can't get to all of them and I thank Phil Darton for making the effort to attend the Presidents and Secretaries night in Trafalgar recently, and for his decision to nominate for the Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network Board.

I also want to thank Westernport Landcare Network for referring Intrepid Landcare volunteer Ebony Loveland who is very enthusiastic about her involvement with NDLG and especially the 2017 Neerim Frog festival.

DIRECTION IN THE YEAR AHEAD

The committee held a strategy workshop in July to discuss our focus and future opportunities.

As a follow-up, Ian Maclagan prepared an excellent discussion paper for us based on the Landcare Australia L.I.F.E campaign – Landcare Is For Everyone.

The LIFE campaign aims to broaden awareness of Landcare beyond the traditional target of farmers and rural property owners.

We already have more than a hundred registered Landcarers in the district and hope to point to them as an example to others of why there are good reasons to get involved with Landcare:

- More profitable farming
- Learning how to manage land better
- Improving the environment & natural biodiversity
- Reducing pest plants and feral animals
- Getting involved and becoming more involved with the local community

I think the Landcarers in Neerim District are a diverse, friendly, and welcoming bunch – so I encourage you to encourage your friends and neighbours to join us in our activities in the year ahead.

Sean Dignum
President
Neerim and District Landcare Group

TOOMUC VALLEY LANDCARE GROUP



Toomuc Creek Planting

Our group has continued with our usual relatively small scale activities during 2016/2017.

We have:

- Undertaken our yearly Chambers Reserve Lyrebird Survey, rising before dawn on a midwinter morning to cross reference the waking male Lyrebird territory establishment calls. (Thank you Don for the fantastic hot breakfast BBQ). Unfortunately the number of Lyrebirds seem to have decreased, therefore:
- We have continued to undertake local fox control i.e. shooting in surrounding areas and planning for baiting in the Reserve itself (Thank you Barry).
- We continue to maintain the two Reserves we have established, the Toomuc Creek Reserve and the Toomuc Valley Nature Reserve. We have applications in place to extend the re-vegetation of the latter.
- We organise the supply of herbicide to those members who need to eradicate weeds on their own properties, particularly Garlon for Blackberries, but also Tordon for Ragwort. (Thank you Marianne, Weeds Officer for Cardinia Shire). We also loan out our Spray Unit to members.
- We make equipment available to fellow members for planting - mats, bamboo stakes, plastic covers and the loan of Hamilton planters.
- We liaise with Melbourne Water on weed control along Toomuc Creek. Many thanks to Melbourne Water. They do a wonderful and necessary job.

As you can see, it has been business as usual. I am particularly pleased that our membership has been maintained at approximately fifty-five families. Thanks to Simon for his support as President, and to Kathleen, the past facilitator for WPCLN, for her active work and support.

Joy Carberry
Toomuc Landcare

“We continue to maintain the two Reserves we have established, the Toomuc Creek Reserve and the Toomuc Valley Nature Reserve. We have applications in place to extend the re-vegetation of the latter”.

WP SWAMP LANDCARE GROUP



Lang Lang Primary Students

WESTERNPORT SWAMP LANDCARE GROUP

LANG LANG PRIMARY SCHOOL ARBORETUM

Westernport Swamp Landcare's main project for the year has been the Lang Lang Primary School Arboretum. The group has worked hard to create an environmental asset for the community and schools. The reserve, on Westernport Road, is a few hundred metres up from the school, has a wide range of flora and fauna. Working bees were held to remove pittosporum, make walking tracks, paint shed, plant natives, clear picnic area, saw fallen trees. A grant from Origin Energy was used to buy plant signage, table settings, plumbing, wash basins, posts for gateway, skylight for shed, wildlife camera and bird boxes - built by the Koo Wee Rup Scouts. A wine and cheese evening was held with the teachers on site who were so impressed, that in the following term all classes had visited the reserve for a great outdoor learning experience.

The camera deployed in the reserve, has revealed a swamp wallaby with joey, fox, wombat, echidna, brush tailed possum, rabbit. Over 30 bird species, as well as orchids and fungi have been identified by Peter Ware, wildlife volunteer.

SOUTHERN BROWN BANDICOOT

The Koo Wee Rup Swamp is home to the endangered Southern Brown Bandicoot, and another of the group's ongoing projects is to promote the bandicoot and its habitat. David Nicholls has carried out surveys to determine their dispersal across the swamp.

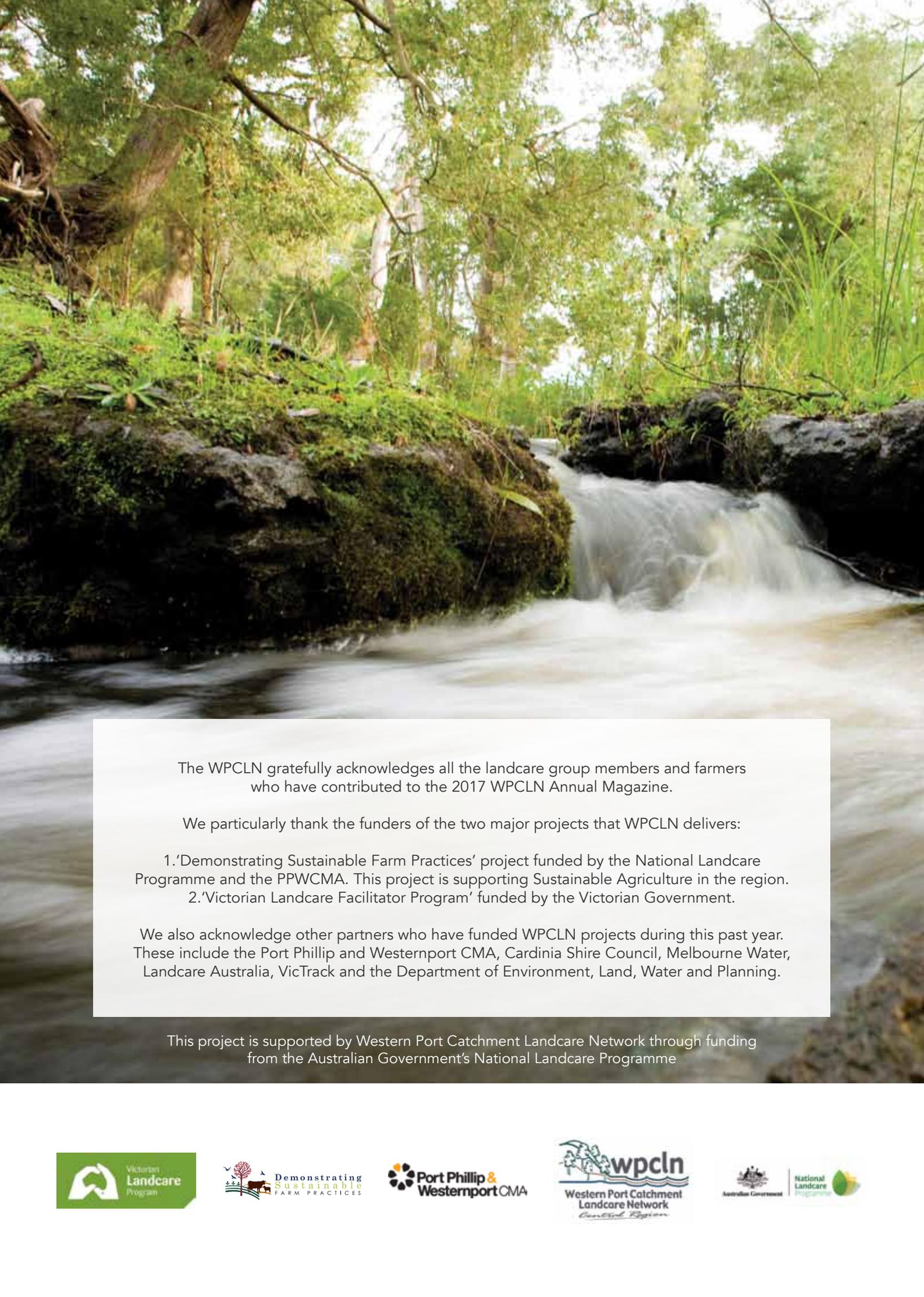
Susan Davies
Westernport Swamp Landcare



Teacher Evening at Arboretum



Southern Brown Bandicoot



The WPCLN gratefully acknowledges all the landcare group members and farmers who have contributed to the 2017 WPCLN Annual Magazine.

We particularly thank the funders of the two major projects that WPCLN delivers:

1. 'Demonstrating Sustainable Farm Practices' project funded by the National Landcare Programme and the PPWCMA. This project is supporting Sustainable Agriculture in the region.
2. 'Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program' funded by the Victorian Government.

We also acknowledge other partners who have funded WPCLN projects during this past year. These include the Port Phillip and Westernport CMA, Cardinia Shire Council, Melbourne Water, Landcare Australia, VicTrack and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

This project is supported by Western Port Catchment Landcare Network through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme

