



Community Network News

Mid Loddon-CMN & West Marong, Upper Spring Creek, Ravenswood Valley,
Nuggetty, Barringhup, Eddington, Kangderaar/Murphy Creeks Landcare
Groups & other community friends



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MEETINGS & EVENTS- 2013

Lockwood South Primary School (supported by local landcare groups) will hold a 'Trees for Mum' event on Friday 10th at 9.30am. The children have been busy painting small pots which will contain eucalypts to take home and plant. The essence of Trees for Mum is to plant a tree to remember mums who are no longer living, however we also encourage those who are fortunate enough to still have their mums alive, to plant for her or even with her

Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group meeting at 7.00pm on Tuesday 14th May at the Lockwood South School: Speaker Alison Pouliot – wild life photography. Participants to bring a memory stick with 5-6 photos – all those difficult shots that didn't quite work or certainly wouldn't win a competition prize. Alison will show how to improve your use of your camera and how to set up a photo. (Please make sure your memory sticks do not have any virus contamination)

West Marong Landcare Group meeting will be held at 8.00pm Tuesday 20th June (3rd Tuesday, by-monthly) at the Woodstock Hall. Next meeting presenter - to be notified.

West Marong Landcare Group – Farming for Sustainable Soils project Workshop at 7.00pm on Thursday 16th at Laanecoorie Hall to receive Autumn biomass maps and document trials for this growing season. The satellite images have been printed for each farm with an additional farm area vegetation map.

Barringhup, Nuggetty & Ravenswood Valley Landcare Groups – Farming for Sustainable Soils Project Workshop at 7.00pm on Wednesday 15th May at the Baringhup Hall Supper Room, to receive Autumn biomass maps and document trials for this growing season. The satellite images have been printed for each farm with an additional farm area vegetation map.

Baringhup Landcare Group meets second Thursday of every second month at the Baringhup Hall Supper Room. Next meeting is at 8.00pm on the 13th June.

Ravenswood Valley Landcare Group- meets last Wednesday of every second month. Next meeting 29th May

Eddington Landcare Group- meet in the Red Gum Forest as needed.

Biodiversity Across the Borders Conference 2013 at the Mt Helen Campus of the University of Ballarat. All day conference on Friday 7th June 2013

Key note address – Professor David Lindenmayer, ANU Fenner School of Environment & Society

Other speakers – Professor Mike Clarke – La Trobe University & Professor Ian Lunt (Charles Stuart University)

For natural resource managers, it is an excellent opportunity to learn about new applied research outcomes and what they mean for you. For researchers it is a great way to communicate your work in a way that can make a real difference. 'Biodiversity Across the Borders' continues to build and strengthen collaborative networks so as to enhance both research and land management into the future. All attendees must register beforehand. There will be no registration fee for attending this conference. Morning tea, afternoon tea and lunch will be provided. A full itinerary will be published in the coming months.

Register by email (preferred)

s.florentine@ballarat.edu.au or 03/5327 9231

Landcare & Community News of the month:

Lockwood South Primary School Activities:

Kitchen Garden Working Bee held on Saturday 20th April was a great success. Please take time to view the re-invigorated Kitchen Garden and chook yard. Bendigo Rotary Group and Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group with help from two West Marong Landcare Group members completed an amazing amount of work. The team did an extremely good makeover of the chook yard. The garden beds were refilled, mixed and mulched and straw laid. At the peak time nineteen people were working on site with Rosemary Davies directing works. All were rewarded by a wonderful BBQ lunch supplied by the rotary ladies. Many thanks to all who assisted. The latest new additions to the school wildlife are eight small, multi-coloured chickens. Which will eventually reside in in the now fox proofed chicken shed and yard.



‘Trees for Mum’ Project:

The essence of Trees for Mum is to plant a tree to remember mums who are no longer living, however we also encourage those who are fortunate enough to still have their mums alive, to plant for her or even with her. The idea is to create a living legacy while nurturing the environment, and recognising the importance of our mums, on Mother’s Day.

This project is supported by the Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group, with funding provided by the NCCMA. The children at the Lockwood South Primary School have been painting terracotta pots with indigenous designs. (as per picture)



Eucalyptus seedlings will be planted in the pots by the children this week and will be available for collection next Friday 10th May at 9.30am. Please support the children’s endeavours and call at the school for tea and cakes and collect your

memorial tree and make this Mother’s day a special tree planting event

Education Week Activities at Lockwood South School

Tuesday 21st May Prospective Parent Information Evening @ 6.00pm

- Literacy & Numeracy Program in Action-
Wednesday 22nd May, 9-11am –Morning tea provided. School tour with students.

Friday 24th May Mad Hatters Biggest Morning Tea Party @ 10.30am –donations to Australian Cancer Council.

For more Information contact Principal Sue Crothers – 5435 3293

The Lockwood South Hall Committee have been successful in gaining a \$9,000 grant to install a solar system.

Happy Jack Reserve Committee meeting will be held at the Reserve, Thursday 30th May, when an official Management Committee will be re-formed with support from COGB. We welcome previous and new members – Judy Crocker 5435 3412 & John Thompson.

Fox Baiting in the Lockwood South State Forest and the Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve has concluded until next spring and the signs will be removed in the next few weeks.

Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve’s restoration work has been delayed once again by a slow transit through the bureaucratic system to gain a thinning permit!

Good news for Curlew numbers: It has been reported that a pair of curlews have been sighted alive and well west of the Newbridge Road.

Disappearing Bees: Extract from ABC Story by Mary Gearin

The European Union is set to impose a two-year ban on three pesticides suspected of contributing to the global decline in the number of bees. Fifteen countries voted to allow the European Commission to restrict the use of the insecticides from December 1.

They failed to reach the weighted majority needed to adopt the ban outright, meaning the decision passed to the European Commission. ‘Since our proposal is based on a number of risks to bee health identified by the European Food Safety Authority, the Commission will go ahead with its text in the coming weeks,’ EU health

commissioner Tonio Borg said after the vote. “I pledge to do my utmost to ensure that our bees, which are so vital to our ecosystem and contribute over 22 billion euros annually to European agriculture, are protected.”

The insecticides – imidacloprid and clothianidin and thiamethoxam – are used to treat seeds and are applied to soil or sprayed on bee-attractive plants and cereals. IN recent years, bees numbers have plummeted in the Middle East, Europe, and the US by up to 85 per cent in some areas. Supporters of the ban argue the pesticides are harmful to bees, which account for 80 per cent of plant pollination by insects.

What are Neonicotinoids?

They are a class of neuro-active insecticides related to nicotine. The chemical poses a danger to both humans and insects

While they affect the central and peripheral nervous systems in mammals, they are limited to the central in insects. Low exposure causes nervous stimulation, high levels block the receptors causing paralysis and ultimately death. Pesticides made in this way are generally applied to the soil of a plant meaning they are ingested by the entire thing. As such the plant becomes completely poisonous with toxins present in the roots, leaves, stems and pollen.

Without bees, many crops would be unable to bear fruit or would have to be pollinated by hand.

The small things are proving to be very important!

Why do we need so many species anyway?

Especially since the majority are bugs, weeds and fungi? It is easy to dismiss the creepy-crawlies of the world, forgetting that less than a century ago.... Native birds and mammals around the world were treated with the same callous indifference. Now the value of the little things in the natural world has become compellingly clear. Recent experimental studies on whole ecosystems support what ecologists have long suspected: The more species that live in an ecosystem, the higher its productivity and the greater its ability to withstand drought, and other kinds of environmental stress. Since we depend on functioning ecosystems to cleanse our water, enrich our soil, and create the very air we breathe, biodiversity is clearly not something to discard carelessly.

Small Birds – Finches

Have you noticed a rise in the number of small birds in the area this season?

Watch out for Diamond Firetails and Red-Browed finches. These delightfully tiny birds move very

fast and often become obvious only when they are part of a flock.



Red-browed finch



Diamond firetail finch

The West Marong Landcare Group members were greatly impressed with Alison Pouliot’s fungi presentation at their April meeting. We all know that mushrooms and toadstools are common examples of visible local fungi and Alison certainly had a variety on display, including a giant species that was added to the display by Kerry Punton, but Alison’s knowledge on the role of eucalyptus fungi in our landscape provided everyone with much to consider and perhaps an interest to learn more. Alison will return again to Australia with more stories and information early in 2014.

More about - Eucalyptus Dieback is now widespread throughout Australia affecting many forests that are used for wood resources. The causes of eucalyptus dieback are currently unknown, but may be related to altered fire regimes and associated changes in the ecosystem, such as altered relationships with beneficial mycorrhizal fungi. The term dieback refers to a deterioration in tree canopy condition resulting in premature death. Systems include crown thinning, and death of branches beginning at the growing tips and spreading to the primary branches. Dieback has been observed in several species but is widespread amongst the genus Eucalyptus throughout Australia.

In most cases eucalypt dieback does not have one single cause but appears to be the result of complex interactions and alterations within an ecosystem. Changes in the pattern of nitrogen cycling has been identified as one possible causal agent of eucalypt decline.

Altered vegetation dynamics in the ectomycorrhizal fungal community is another. These fungi are critical for nutrient cycling, releasing and transferring nutrients through the ecosystem. Most forest trees, including eucalypts, form ectomycorrhizal associations that enhance plant nutrient uptake of nitrogen and phosphorus, and other inaccessible nutrients, especially in soils of low fertility. These fungi may also influence plant community structure. Some paddock trees may be affected by fertilizer and chemical use.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations - November, 1982

Man's demand for food from the natural resources that sustain his existence has increased enormously in recent years. FAO's projection in "Agriculture: Toward 2000" reveals that 50 per cent more food will have to be grown by the end of this century just to meet present nutritional levels; yet additional supplies will be needed to conquer famine and malnutrition. However, the ability of land to produce food is limited. The limits of production are set by soil and climatic conditions and by the management applied. Any mining of land beyond these limits will result in decreased productivity.

The World Soil Charter called for a commitment on the part of governments, international organizations and land users in general to manage the land for long-term advantage rather than for short-term expediency. Special attention is called to the need for land-use policies which create the incentives for people to participate in soil conservation work taking into account both the technical and socio-economic elements of effective land use.

In compliance with the World Soil Charter, FAO is pursuing an active programme on soil management and conservation, including those activities which are basic for the promotion of optimum land use: land resources inventories, assessment of degradation hazards, evaluation of production capacity, improvement of soil fertility, combating desertification, land reclamation, integrated land-use planning, training and institution building.

Principles 1 & 2

- Among the major resources available to man is land, comprising soil, water and associated plants and animals: the use of these resources should not cause their degradation or destruction because man's existence depends on their continued productivity.
- Recognizing the paramount importance of land resources for the survival and welfare of people and economic independence of countries, and also the rapidly increasing need for more food production, it is imperative to give high priority to promoting optimum land use, to maintaining and improving soil productivity and to conserving soil resources.
You can find the other eleven principles on the web.

Suggested activities:

- Soil management and fertilizers
 - maintain and improve soil fertility
 - promote the efficient use of fertilizers
 - promote the use of organic manures, biogas and nitrogen fixing practices
 - assessment and elimination of micro-nutrient deficiencies
 - soil and plant testing
 - promotion of integrated plant nutrition systems
 - improvement of tillage practices
 - improvement of production in shifting cultivation areas
 - training in the above fields of work

Have we achieved locally the actions that were planned globally in 1982????

Book of the Month –

Mineral Nutrition and Plant Disease - Lawrence E. Datnoff (Author, Editor), Wade H. Elmer (Editor), Don M. Huber (Editor) – available from Amazon Books

This comprehensive book examines how mineral nutrition affects plant disease. Minerals improve the overall quality and health of plants. Knowing how each individual mineral affects a plant is beneficial for efficiency in production and sustaining the ecosystem. From a plant pathology perspective, This book brings the discussion of plant disease diagnosis and management to a new level. Mineral nutrients are important in production agriculture and horticulture because they can often be the first line of defence against plant diseases. It is an area of knowledge that can be misunderstood or overlooked in the study of diseases and their diagnosis. This reference succeeds in organizing what we know and explaining the interactions at work. This is the first book to successfully combine two important plant science disciplines, nutrition and pathology, to provide current information on theoretical aspects of nutrition in disease physiology while contributing a wealth of basic practical information for obtaining immediate disease suppression with specific fertilizers.

Mother's Famous Wise Words....

No running in the house

Wait 'til your father gets home

You're grounded

Because I said so that's why

You'll do as I say

Stop picking at it or it won't heal

You'll poke your eye out!