



## **Community Network News**

*Mid Loddon-CMN & West Marong, Upper Spring Creek,  
Ravenswood Valley, Nuggetty, Baringhup, Eddington  
Landcare Groups & other community friends*



**NEWSLETTER VOL.20 . No. 6 July 2014 - Incorporation No: A0011936S**

**Contact information : c/- Secretary, PO Box 2197 Bendigo DC. Victoria**

### **MEETINGS & EVENTS - 2014**

#### **Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group**

**Celebration meeting** to be held at 6.00pm for socialising and 6.30pm Dinner on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July at the Marong Hotel

#### **Agenda:**

Bring-a-long a story-or-poem.

**West Marong Landcare Group** meeting to be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> August at the Woodstock Hall. Agenda: to be announced

#### **Baringhup Landcare Group - Special meeting**

At the Baringhup Hall Supper room at 7.30pm on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July – Speaker Phil Dyson - local landscape geology  
Next general meeting will be held at 7.30pm, Monday 4<sup>th</sup> August at the Baringhup Hall supper room. Speaker – to be notified.

**Nuggetty Landcare Group** next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> August at the winery meeting room.

**Eddington Landcare Group**- meet in the Red Gum Forest seasonally. The Spring meeting date is to be announced

#### **Ravenswood Valley Landcare Group.**

Next meeting to be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> July

#### **Mid Loddon Landcare Network Management**

**Committee** The next meeting will be a General meeting and held at the Lockwood South Primary School at 7.30pm. Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

#### **Bush Stone-curlew Annual Australian Summit:**

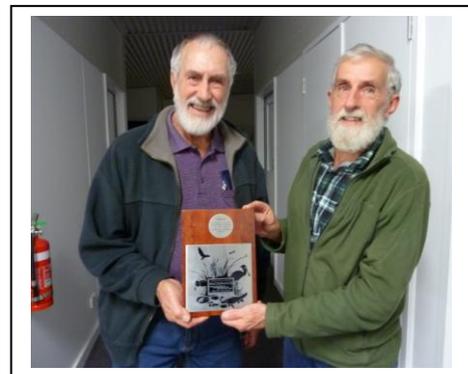
This year to be held in Albury on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> and on the morning of Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August. Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group & CMN members and all interested in the survival of the Bush Stone-curlew, have been invited to attend We will be providing a presentation about our local 'Save our Bush Stone-curlews' project.

#### **Meetings planned for 2015:**

Alison Pouliot will return again next year to talk further with our Network groups about the importance of fungi in our forests and private properties. There will also be more Fungi Field Forays in both the Shelbourne & Lockwood forests

#### **WaterWatch update:**

Waterwatch began operating in North Central Victoria in 1993 and so this year it celebrated 21 years of monitoring waterways in the district. As part of that celebration, the current managers for this district, the NCCMA (North Central Catchment Management Authority) presented a plaque to all Waterwatch monitors to acknowledge the hours of work that they have contributed over those years. Max Stevens, from the Upper Spring Creek Landcare group, was one of the founding members of the Waterwatch program and his long record of service was recognised when this special plaque was handed over to him from the current Waterwatch monitor Frank Steele, at a recent landcare meeting.



Max's work has now been taken over by Frank as the water watch monitor for Bullock Creek and Liz & Graham who monitor Spring Creek conditions.

## Continuing Upper Spring Creeks environmental educational support at the Lockwood South Primary School (the home of our local landcare group)

### ***Why Teach Environmental Education?***

Environmental education based on life experiences should begin during the very earliest years of life. Such experiences play a critical role in shaping lifelong attitudes, values, and patterns of behaviour toward natural environments.

Because young children learn about the environment by interacting with it, it's important that educators and other adults provide the frequency, nature, and quality of child-environment interactions during the early years. Many young children have limited opportunities for these experiences. In fact, regardless of where they live, young children spend most of their time in settings or doing activities that keep them essentially isolated from the natural world.

As part of Lockwood SOUTH Primary School's 'Sustainability Program' and its wonderful partnership with the Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group, students are given many opportunities to connect with nature. In the last two weeks of Term 2 students were involved in four activities to increase their knowledge and understanding of Woodland Birds with Nicole Howie an Environmental Education Consultant as part of a Landcare Project.

Students participated in a Bird Watching Treasure Hunt, a 'Bird Call Bingo', a Nest Building Challenge and a 'Beak to Belly' activity where they got to experience firsthand how different types of beaks pick up various objects.

Students learnt how to tune in their observation skills and take note of the birds' colours, size, shape and features. As they ticked the birds off their list a mystery sentence appeared; *Natures flying rainbows.*

Listening to their different calls was challenging as bird calls are very similar and often they have two different calls such as the Willy Wagtail's chirpy and distressed call.

Using natural materials found in the school's beautiful natural environment students made a nest that was cosy and comfortable and strong enough to hold four gold balls. Students could not believe how birds could build such complex objects using just their beaks.

Students are fortunate to be able to view some of the woodland birds in their school grounds and thanks to programs such as this start to build an understanding of the importance of protecting our birdlife and their woodland habitats. Lockwood SOUTH Primary School: *Growing Together, Learning Forever.*

A BIG thank you to Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group for providing this wonderful learning opportunity for our students.

Sue Crothers, Principal



### **Not only a good season for fungi !**

A great range of spiders are very busy in our forests and gardens. This little guy had been very busy



Check out our blog for more amazing fungi photos and there is room for more - [uslandcare.org.au](http://uslandcare.org.au)

**Book of the Month:** 'Flooded Forest and Desert Creek - Ecology and History of the River Red Gum' by Matthew Colloff CSIRO Ecosystem Sciences.

The river red gum has the most widespread natural distribution of *Eucalyptus* in Australia, forming extensive forests and woodlands in south-eastern Australia and providing the structural and functional elements of important floodplain and wetland ecosystems. Along ephemeral creeks in the arid Centre it exists as narrow corridors, providing vital refugia for biodiversity.

The tree has played a central role in the tension between economy, society and environment and has been the subject of enquiries over its conservation, use and management. Despite this, we know remarkably little about the ecology and life history of the river red gum: its longevity; how deep its roots go; what proportion of its seedlings survive to adulthood; and the diversity of organisms associated with it. More recently we have begun to move from a culture of exploitation of river red gum forests and woodlands to one of conservation and sustainable use. In *Flooded Forest and Desert Creek*, the author traces this shift through the rise of a collective environmental consciousness, in part articulated through the depiction of river red gums and inland floodplains in art, literature and the media.

#### **A message from Clean-Up Australia:**

*When it comes to rubbish, prevention is better than cure: You can help:*

Each year hundreds and thousands of Australia's unique and precious creatures are killed by rubbish in our environment.

Clean Up Australia Day volunteers report that nearly 405 items of rubbish they remove from our environment is beverage related. Plastic, glass and metal containers, together with their associated caps and lids, are hiding in grasses, under bushes, are buried in sand and float in our waterways.

Along the way they attract wildlife such as burrowing lizards which go for the liquid. These lizards are used to furrowing for water, so they stick their heads into open cans and get caught. The result is a slow and painful death.

On Clean-Up Australia Day 2013, a blue tongue lizard nearly became another victim. While foraging for food he/she became trapped in a plastic bottle. Saved by a volunteer, this example of the evolution of the dinosaur was nursed back to health before being released.

On Lord Howe Island, shearwater chicks are starving in their nests, fed plastic scraps by parent birds that mistake the small pieces as food.

Clean Up has declared war on beverage containers and their associated rubbish. We have been working with communities to stop containers getting into the environment with a call for the national adoption of a container deposit scheme. Our aim is to turn every bottle and can into a ten cent piece – changing what is now waste into a resource and saving our wildlife.

It's been a decade long fight – but it's one we are

determined to win. And we are closer to an outcome now than ever before.

**West Marong & Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group members** completed a marvellous clean up along the Newbridge Road verges last March and its disappointing to see a build up of rubbish returning.

**One for the kids:** Google it and sing along. . . .

#### **EARTH PROMISE SONG**

The Earth is my home  
I promise to keep it  
Healthy and beautiful

I will love the land,  
The air, the water  
And all living creatures

I will be a defender of my planet  
United with friends, I will save the Earth

(altos) United with friends,  
(tenors and sopranos) I promise to keep it  
(altos) United with friends,  
(tenors and sopranos) I will love the land  
(altos) United with friends,  
(tenors and sopranos) I'll be a defender  
(everyone) I will save the Earth

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## Happy Jack Reserve:

I suggest a visit to the Happy Jack Reserve Picnic area to observe the upgrades just completed. New fencing surrounds with an enlarged parking and turn around area should make parking easier for locals and sporting teams. Travellers with caravans should now be able to drive in and out with ease and there should be less fence mending required. The next stage of the upgrade will be a clean and repaint of the picnic tables.

## Soils:

Soil characteristics have a major influence on the productivity and profitability of a crop or pasture enterprise. Failure to match crops and pasture to land type results in sub-optimal input use and increases the risk of financial loss.

## Why graze crops?

Both cereals and canola can be grazed by livestock and, with careful management, go on to produce acceptable yields. Studies have shown that on mixed farms, utilising crops for grazing can potentially lead to a whole farm increase in gross margins.

At the break of season, most crops germinate and produce a larger amount of biomass more quickly than pastures. This biomass can be used for grazing livestock whilst the crop plants are still in their vegetative state. Pasture paddocks will benefit when livestock are removed as pasture will have time to germinate and establish without being grazed. Pastures can be left to grow and develop a 'feed wedge' to use for feed during winter when livestock are removed from the

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Early sowing is recommended to maximise biomass production for grazing. Seasonal conditions, such as a late break, can limit the potential of utilising crops for grazing. Stock should be introduced to the crop only when the plants are securely anchored in the ground and there is enough biomass available for the desired stocking rate. Any withholding periods on seed treatments should also be observed.

Stocking rates should be calculated to ensure enough grazing pressure to achieve an even grazing of the crop so that subsequent recovery and plant maturation remains even across the paddock.

To ensure limited effect of grazing on crop yield, stock should be removed by the beginning of stem elongation (growth stage Z30) or the beginning of bud formation in canola. Post grazing biomass, subsequent rainfall and growing season length can all affect crop recovery. Crops should be grazed to a level allowing enough residual biomass for plant recovery. The harder the plant is grazed, the longer it will take to recover.

Flowering times can be delayed by grazing. This can be advantageous as it may move flowering out of a frost window. However, if flowering is delayed too long this may push grain fill into a period of increasing temperatures and reduced moisture, affecting yield.

Reducing early biomass of plants through grazing can also mean ground water is reserved as less is needed to support biomass. The plant may be able to utilise this reserved ground water at grain fill improving grain quality.

Some compromise may be required when considering application of chemicals for the control of pests or weeds on the crops as withholding periods for stock need to be observed. Any nitrogen applications should be applied after stock are removed.

Reprint from Dept Agriculture and Food WA.

**Wise Words:** "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed."  
*Mahatma Gandhi*