



Mid Loddon Landcare Network News

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



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MEETINGS & EVENTS – 2017

Combined Mid Loddon (Box Ironbark Forest) CMN & Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group meeting

To be held at **7.15pm on Tuesday 11th April 2017**
at the Lockwood South Primary School.

Note this meeting should be attended by USC
Landcare Group members and also West Marong
Landcare Group members who are interested in
the current and future management of the
Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve
(Wallaby).and any other wider community
members,. There will be representation and
information from COGB and CMA, Parks Vic., CFA
environmental officer, DELWP depts., Dja Dja
Wurrung and other Environmental Groups.

Agenda:

Vic Roads Engineers will attend and provide an
update on the Lockwood Crossing upgrade at
7.15pm.

There will be updates on the current landcare
projects including the continuing Save our Bush
Stone-curlew Program, the restoration projects in
planning for the east side of the Shelbourne
Forest and the burnt triangular section and the
clean-up of the rubbish dumps.

CFA environmental Officer,
Justine Leahy will provide a
brief overview of the planned
burn at the Mc Kenzie Road
Spiny Rice flower site. This
important site with a population of 6,000
endangered plants will hopefully be fenced
following the burn.

Gregg Muller from the
Latrobe Uni will provide a
summary of his Cherry Ballart
Phd project that he is working
on in the Shelbourne Nature
Conservation Reserve.



Members, Craig Mlldwater will share his new nest
box monitoring system and Frank will provide an
update on the Curlew program, including the new
additions to our garden curlews. Members will
have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss
current projects and new ideas.

West Marong Landcare Group –

Next Annual general meeting to be held at
8.00pm at the Woodstock Hall on Tuesday 18st
April 2017

Agenda: General meeting followed by a pictorial
presentation from Howard, about the state of our
waterways following our 2016 wet winter.
This report was missed at the previous meeting
due to time constraints.

Clean-up assistance at the Shelbourne Forest Organised by the Bendigo Bush Walking Group

Saturday 28th April at 9.00am. Meet at the Cnr.
Maryborough & Newbridge Roads. Bring your
own gloves, ute or trailer or just come to help
load up.

Ravenswood Valley Landcare Group

Next general meeting will be held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 31st May 2017 at the Harcourt North
Hall. Agenda: TBA

Baringhup Landcare Group

Next Annual and general meetings will be held at
7.30pm on Monday 1st May 2017.

Note change of date!

Nuggetty Land Protection Group.

The next general meeting will be at the Nuggetty
Vineyard at 7.30pm on Wednesday 3rd May 2017

Eddington Landcare Group- meet seasonally.

Next meeting will be held at the Eddington store
or in the Red Gum Forest to share morning tea
and current group activities. TBA

Words of Wisdom

We should always remember that, in matters of evolution, nature will select for the ability to adapt and survive, not for maximum convenience to mankind.

Events 2017

Ravenswood Valley Landcare Group Event

2nd Soil Pit Field Day with Christian Bannan has been **re-scheduled** to Wednesday April 19 at 9-12pm at Balmer's 58 Fogartys Gap Rd. So much was learnt at the first event and this time we will be investigating more farm production paddocks in preparation for the 2017 planting season.

Sorry there will be no exciting bogging examples as at the previous field day.

Wear strong shoes, hats and BYO water.

Morning tea will be provided.



Baringhup Landcare Group

Environmental Photography Training Day with

Alison Pouliot was a huge success with some intense training in the hall during the morning for the group members and visitors which was followed by lunch in the fresh air and then the group moved to the wonderful local riverside reserve, to put into practice what had been learnt earlier.

Everyone agreed it was a helpful experience with much appreciation for Alison's knowledge and teaching methods.



A group of our keen photographers.

Network Fungus Identification and Survey

Training Day in the Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve with Alison Pouliot
10.30am Wednesday 7th June.

The fungi of the Box and Ironbark forests of central-northern Victoria are virtually unknown. Only very scant and mostly anecdotal records exist. Fungi are an important part of these forests in creating and stabilising soils, nourishing and interconnecting plants, as a food supply for animals, recycling nutrients, retaining and filtering water, restoring environmental damage and essentially underpinning their health and resilience. Effective forest 'management' would ideally take into account soil health and the interconnectivities between species and thereby include fungi. An overview of the fungi of these forests would contribute important information to the greater understanding of their biodiversity and function.

The aim of the training day is to equip participants with the basic principles and protocols for surveying fungi in the field. These participants could then further develop their skills to become leaders in engaging the wider community to partake in fungus surveying. The training day would follow the guidelines as outlined by Fungimap in their publication *Guide to Surveying Fungi in Australia*.

Baringhup Landcare Group

Fungi Field Day with Alison Pouliot

The Fungi – An Introduction to a Curious Kingdom
10.30am Sunday 11th June

This workshop will introduce participants to the diversity, ecology and curiosities of the Kingdom Fungi, specific to fungi found in the region but also within a wider Australian context.

It will include an interactive and illustrated seminar on the major fungal groups, the basics of fungus identification, fungal ecology, and the natural and cultural history of fungi. Fungal specimens from the local area will be displayed, discussed and examined during the workshop. The importance of fungal conservation will also be discussed in the context of local ecosystems. Participants will also learn to recognise the various diagnostic characteristics used to identify fungi in the field.

Following the indoor session will be an exciting foray through various local habitat types to search for species of interest. Supplementary

notes will also be provided to reinforce principles covered in the workshop.

Websites worth researching

Brown's Ranch | "Regenerating Landscapes for a Sustainable Future"
brownsranch.us/

NatureShare – natureshare.org.au

A user friendly Citizen Science portal for recording flora and fauna observations by individuals and groups across Victoria. NatureShare. It was conceived, designed and implemented in 2009, with initial funding from the then DSE's 'Vision for Werribee Plains' project. It continues to develop in partnership with Riddells Creek Landcare and the Australian Plants Society Keilor Plains Group and Trust for Nature. NatureShare, and from James Booth.

Warning (natureshare.org.au) can be addictive

NatureShare is...

- a "citizen science" database for individuals and groups to document and share information about their local environment
- a free service (and always will be)
- primarily targeted at the state of Victoria, Australia
- open to everyone and can be used by anyone (individuals, groups, councils, companies, etc)
- "collection" based where anyone, or any group, can set up collections for their own property, for parks/reserves, for areas/towns, or for anything

Project Goals

- Not only share photo, video and audio but also accurately record species, location, date and time in a useful database
- Tag records in a useful way so that they can be grouped and searched
- Provide some useful search tools for species and observations
- Provide some useful mapping and graphing tools
- Provide groups and organisations with the ability to maintain and build their own collections
- Build a community around the idea that all information recorded in NatureShare should be as accurate as possible

Nest Boxes donated for local wildlife homes

The second batch of nest boxes creating homes for a range of birds and small mammals have been delivered from the Prison system with more to come. Many thanks to the staff who are organising this type of production. Thanks to the West Marong and Baringhup Landcare Groups who have donated funds for the purchase of green paint to complete the boxes already built from recycled pallets, and plywood to create another batch of small parrot boxes.



Members interested in installing nest boxes please Call .0428 506 525. Some may require minor adjustments.

Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve Nest Box Program

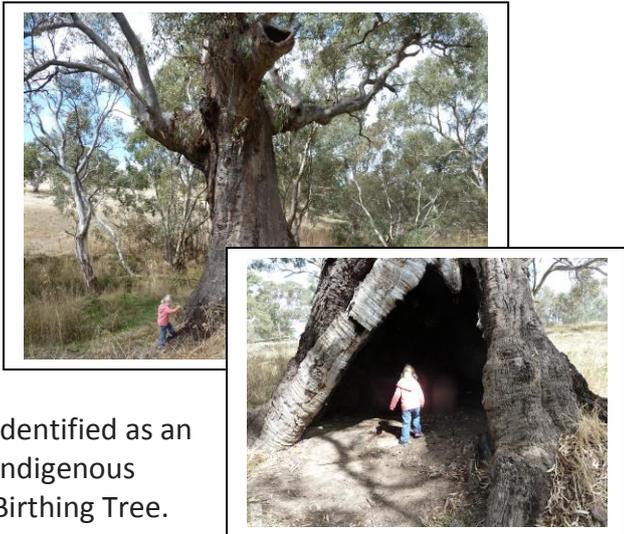
Our volunteer monitors Craig & Devi have checked all the boxes and found signs of Tuans and Antechinus all the information gathered is digitised and entered on the North Central CAMA mapping system. A great job for anyone who likes working in the forest environment and also using current technology.

The project will be extended in Spring when we collect scats from nest boxes and at the base of trees with nest boxes and test them to establish just what may have been living in the nest boxes and what they have found to eat and if the forest restoration is beginning to provide enough food for our small mammals.



(Credit: Mitsuaki Iwago)

Another Ravenswood Valley Old Growth Tree So old, so special but struggling to survive.



Identified as an Indigenous Birthing Tree.

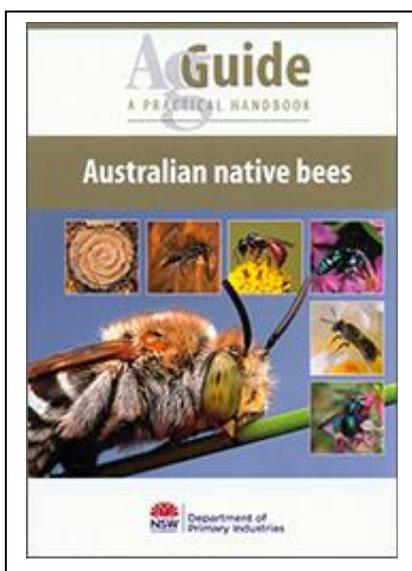
Even though it is well cared for with no stock access, how much longer will it survive beside the Bullock Creek which is so silted from the run-off from the local hills in the 2016 rain break following so many dry years, that many of the deep fresh water holes that existed in the past are now silted over or the rocky springs have become very salting as we found when we tested a rock pool near by.

Book of the Month.

A guide to Australian Native Bees.

Available from CSIRO Publishers

A guide to observing and keeping Australia's broad range of native bee species. Combining the substantial expertise of many of Australia's leading native bee researchers, this book is a guide to observing and keeping Australia's broad range of native bee species.



Australian native bees

Australia has over 1,600 species of native bees ranging from the spectacularly large 24 mm yellow and black carpenter bees down to the tiny 2 mm *Quasihesma* bees. With their wide array of shapes, sizes and behaviours, Australian native bees are important pollinators of our magnificent wildflowers.

The blue banded bee (*Amegilla*) is capable of a special type of pollination behaviour called 'buzz pollination'. In some plants, the pollen is trapped inside tiny capsules in the centre of the flower. The blue banded bee can curl her body around the flower and rapidly vibrate her flight muscles, causing the pollen to shoot out of the capsules. As she collects some pollen for her nest, she transfers some of the pollen to other flowers, successfully pollinating the flowers.

Only certain types of bees can perform buzz pollination. In Australia these include the blue banded bees and the carpenter bees. The introduced *Apis mellifera* (honey bees) are not able to buzz pollinate flowers.

Native stingless bees prefer to forage much closer to their hives than honey bees. This can be an advantage in a field crop where the native stingless bees will work the crop flowers close to their hive, rather than flying further afield in search of other types of flowers. This behaviour is also a great advantage for the pollination of crops inside greenhouses. Our native stingless bees adapt rapidly and well to the confinement of a greenhouse and have been trialed at the University of Western Sydney in the pollination of a range of greenhouse crops.

Australia's native stingless bees also produce a unique type of tangy honey called 'sugarbag'. Each hive can only produce up to one kilogram of honey per year, so they will never rival the far more productive *A. mellifera* honey bees for general honey production. However, like some honey from the honey bee, sugarbag honey has been shown to have substantial germ-killing properties. Sugarbag honey could be developed as a special niche honey product for Australia, not only for its delicious flavours but also for its medicinal properties.

Very few of our 1,600 Australian native bee species have been investigated so far for their potential contribution to Australian agriculture. More research into the use of our Australian native bees in agriculture is urgently needed.