

# Woodlands and Wildlife

## Newsletter of the Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee

April 2004

Vol.4. Number 1.

### Snapshots

Paddock trees are disappearing at a rate of .54%-2.5% annually which means they will all be gone in 40-185 years.

•

Changes are being made to the National Dryland Salinity Program, which will shortly introduce a new integrated communications initiative.

•

Windbreaks protect crops and can increase yields between 25% and 47% depending on the crop.

•

As much as 50% of crop pollination is carried by native insects that fly out from nearby bushland.

•

Soil acidity has become a bigger problem than salinity in Victoria, costing \$470million annually.

•

MasterFoods in NSW has developed an on site native wetlands to treat its industrial waste water.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Landcare Strategy	1
Landholder Forum	1
Bush Stone-curlew	2
Words from Phil	2
Environmental Grants	3
New Coordinators	3
Groundwater drilling	4

### Landcare Strategy coming soon

**Landcare Coordinators and Facilitators will contact Groups over the next few months to arrange discussions on the Community Landcare Support Strategy.**

Landcare members will have the opportunity to express their views and have important input into the document which will be the backbone of Landcare support in the Goulburn Broken catchment.

This document will sit as a sub-strategy of the Goulburn Broken RCS, which is the blueprint for all funding and natural resource management in the Goulburn Broken.

There are around 105 Landcare Groups representing at least 3,500 people in the

catchment, all of whom have had some responsibility for spending \$2 million of funding since Second Generation Landcare was formed.

The strategy forms part of the CMAs commitment to the Victorian Action Plan for Second Generation Landcare, which was launched in 2000.

Some issues have been addressed already. A Regional Landcare officer was appointed in 2003 and has been instrumental in facilitating appointment of three Landcare coordinators over the past three months.

### Benalla Forum

A special forum to look at environmental issues in the Benalla area will be held in June.

Guests are invited to attend and participate in a workshop to identify and prioritise local natural resource issues. A list of potential projects will be drawn up and plans implemented to address issues of concern. The forum is part of a series of discussions on local issues, which are being held periodically in the Mid Goulburn Broken catchment.

Invitations and promotional material will be distributed in May.

### NEWS BREAK

Your newsletter is now available in PDF format so all members of your group or organisation can receive it in colour.

If you have not already sent your primary email address please do so now so Woodlands & Wildlife can be distributed throughout your membership and staff simply by forwarding it to your email address list.

Contact [popped@gbcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:popped@gbcma.vic.gov.au)

### Special Forum & Workshop "Benalla in focus"

What is the most pressing issue for you as a 'local' on the land?  
How can the CMA help to get your issues onto the priority list?  
Work it out with Agency presenters and other landholders at

**Benalla Bowls Club**  
**June 9th. 2pm**

## From the Executive Officers Desk



Welcome to our April newsletter. Come on rain!

May I draw your attention to a very important community forum to be held on June 9 at the Benalla Bowls Club. Important local natural resource management issues will be discussed with the Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee and issues/concerns raised will be acted on promptly. If you can come and contribute please ring Lisa Lister on 57611675.

For a period of over 4 years, a group of people in the North-East and Goulburn Broken catchments have pushed for funding to attack the huge problem of soil acidity. Do you know that the estimated value of agricultural production lost due to soil acidity in Victoria is over \$470 million annually?

In contrast, the cost of salinity is estimated to be \$18 million per annum. Approximately 23% of the state's agricultural land is currently seriously affected by soil acidity. I am pleased to report that due to a number of efforts the state government has recently instituted a bi-partisan parliamentary inquiry into the impacts and trends of soil acidity, which involved research and interviews across the state. The inquiry has put forward 15 recommendations to combat this "hidden giant" and we are awaiting the government response. At the very least, something will happen and government is now aware of the dangers of this problem. I will keep you informed.

The Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee is currently advertising for applications for the bi-annual rotation of committee members, as 4 positions will shortly be declared vacant. Application information is available from Debra Todd at our Benalla office on 57611691.

All the best to all who read our newsletter.

*Phil Stevenson*

## Bush Stone-curlew protection program

The Bush Stone-curlew is the focus of a protection and retention program in the Goulburn Broken catchment.

A brochure has been designed to highlight the importance of this endangered little bird and will be distributed throughout the Broken Boosey area over the next month. Landowners are urged to become a part of the protection project and embark on a fox management program.

The Bush Stone-curlew is prone to fox predation due to its habit of nesting in the open. Look out for the new brochure, which will be delivered to your mailbox in the next few weeks and if you have heard, or have



*Young Curlew chick amongst the leaf litter.*

seen the Curlew in your area please contact Tony Kubeil on 5761 1557. (Conservation Management Network.)

## Fox proof fencing.

Now is the time for landholders to address their fox program. Fox control forms an important component of the Bush Stone-curlew protection program and incentives for participating landholders are being investigated.

Foxes were introduced into Australia 120 years ago and now occupy most areas except Tasmania, although that State is also now under threat from colonisation. In agricultural landscapes an average density of 4-8 foxes per square kilometre is common and females can produce in excess of 20 young over an average life span of 4 years.

Foxes consume approximately 375 grams of food in a single day. Given the above densities of 4 foxes per km<sup>2</sup>, this equates to over half a tonne of food consumed per year over a 100ha area. That consumption generally consists of small native animals and farm stock.

## New Biodiversity Program

Carla Miles has joined the Goulburn Broken CMA to develop a landscape restoration trial in the Mid Goulburn Broken catchment (MGB).

To address the CMAs desire for landscape change, the initial priority is development of guidelines for the delivery of landholder management payments where large-scale natural regeneration of native vegetation can be achieved.

The trial will concentrate on the MGB catchment and seek ways to change management practices to benefit biodiversity and improve viability of the land overall.

Carla is based at the Yea office and can be contacted on 5797 2001.

*Advertisements for Implementation Committee applications are currently appearing in regional newspapers .*

*Your newsletter is available in PDF format from the GBCMA website [www.gbcma.vic.gov.au](http://www.gbcma.vic.gov.au) or emailing [popped@gbcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:popped@gbcma.vic.gov.au)*

**A Wildlife Guide for Landholders**  
in the plains and ironbark regions of the Goulburn Broken catchment.

**NOW AVAILABLE**  
Ph 5761 1691

**WELCOME**

Kate Brunt has joined the Goulburn Broken CMA as Biodiversity Projects Coordinator.

Kate is responsible for implementing a project to ensure best practice revegetation in the Mid Goulburn Broken Catchment and will focus on direct seeding techniques as well as integrating new techniques in revegetation.

She comes from a background in habitat restoration and revegetation and has recently worked on management of threatened flora in the wheat belt of Western Australia .

Originally from Finley, Kate studied at Charles Sturt University .

## Landcare Facilitators appointed

### Landcare Coordinators have recently been appointed in the three Landcare regions of the Mid Goulburn Broken catchment (MGB)

Allison Long (left) is working in the Western region around Nagambie, Waranga and Granite Creeks. And will also assist with implementation of the Cornella Local Area Plan.

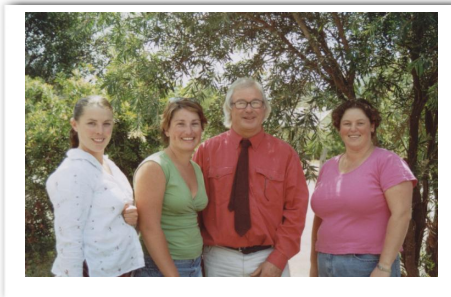
Allison has a farming background and lives on the family cattle farm near Broadford where she raises and shows her own Braunveigh stock. She is also Head Cattle Steward at the Seymour Show and is involved with her community.

Andrea Montgomery (second left) has returned with a larger portfolio which includes the Dookie area but adds the South Yarrawonga, Burramine/Tungamah, Peechalba/Wilby/Boomahnoomoonah, Devenish/Goorambat and the Warby Ranges Landcare Groups.

Andrea comes from a dryland cropping background and says she is very happy to

be in the area that she knows so well. Trevor Verlin is the third addition to the Landcare support team and lives with his family at Nalinga. He will look after the central region of the MGB which includes the Upper Broken near Mansfield, through Sheep Pen Creek and out to Goomalibee in the West. All three are well qualified for their positions and bring a great deal of experience to the catchment.

Heather Holder (right) was recently appointed Regional Landcare Coordinator.



Heather Holder and the new team.

## Environmental Management Grants Available

### Environmental management grants are still available in the Mid Goulburn Broken catchment.

Local farmers Chris and Doug Dunster recently received \$29,000 towards environmental revegetation works on their Upotipotpon property, Quendale.

The property has benefited from several grants for land management projects and Doug says it has been run along land care principles for over 40 years.

A creek that runs through the land and several neighbouring properties has had the benefit of a works program through the Goulburn Broken CMA Waterways team, with improvements to the bed and banks plus revegetation.

Doug Dunster believes this will make a huge difference to the behaviour of water during peak flows, when in the past the creek was impassable.

*Doug Dunster & "Fred" - a great believer in natural revegetation.*



Other works include fencing and revegetation of hilltops as well as a natural revegetation program in one paddock where stock was excluded.

"We were a little sceptical about that one", Doug said. "However the trees and native understory simply came up all by itself and thanks to Dr Doug Robinson at the CMA we now have a wonderful stand of native vegetation where previously the land was bare."

For information on Environmental Management Grants contact Debra Todd at the Benalla office on 57611691

## MANAGING TOXIC WASTE

### Most landholders in the Goulburn Broken dryland would be aware of State Government plans to find a rural site for the highly publicised Industrial Waste Facility.

The threat of a facility of this kind near Baddaginnie has galvanized the local community to action through the formation of an anti waste facility group. Barely a week goes by without publicity of some kind in the local and occasionally urban press.

It has been a particularly difficult prospect for landowners in the Heartlands area where a huge Murray Darling Basin Commission salinity and revegetation program has been in place for over three years.

The Heartlands program has spent around \$3million in the Sheep Pen Creek area, including research work by CSIRO and the aerial geophysics program from the Bureau of Rural Sciences in Canberra.

Barry Oswald, Manager of the Heartlands Program in the Goulburn Broken has provided available background information to Landcare Groups and Community Action Groups regarding water table, salinity levels and other environmental issues in the area earmarked for a possible industrial waste facility.

It is hoped that this information will assist the groups in preparation of their submissions regarding the Baddaginnie site.

**2003 River Health Conference video is now available from Firestarter Communications . Order from**

[www.riverhealth.com.au](http://www.riverhealth.com.au)

## Get to know... Jim Castles Biodiversity Officer

Main job. **Biodiversity Projects Coordinator**

Where. **Benalla and Shepparton**

How did you get involved with NRM? **I've always loved the outdoors and decided to go to University in 1998 to study NRM after years of doing a range of different jobs.**

Favourite colour **Blue**

Favourite food. **Ham, mushroom, avocado, spring onions, tomato and cheese grilled on Bakers Delight bread..**

Reading at the moment. **I'm not a real novel reader. I always look forward to reading the Sunday Sun with a coffee.**

Like listening to. **Not fussy really -**

**Robbie Williams at the moment and favorites are Fleetwood Mac (especially Stevie Nicks), Neil Young and Bob Dylan.**

Best band/singer ever. **Too hard!**

How do you see the environment in 10 years time? **Hopefully there will be more areas set aside for nature conservation and we'll have salinity and species/vegetation community decline pretty well under control. I think we are moving in the right direction and I've seen some major improvements in the way landholders manage their properties in the last 10 - 15 years.**

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time. **I have no idea! I'm pretty happy where I am but I'll just go with the flow. Jay (my son) will be 18 so life will be whole lot more "interesting!" I'll probably get out a bit more and go clubbing with him. (In your dreams . Ed.)**

Do you have a pet and what is its name. **A Boxer - Duke.**

Hobbies. **Socializing, cycling (not competitive), walking, fishing, shooting and camping. I don't mind a beer either!**

Ever been overseas. **Yes - for the first time last year. I haven't caught the overseas travel bug yet - I plan on having a look around when the nest is empty!**

Where. **Fiji.**

What is your favourite destination. **Fiji was great and I also love the Murray River and the hills around Tatong and Whitfield.**

Have you observed environmental issues we could learn from? **Yes - almost everyday!**

If you had the chance what would you do to make a difference? **I'd have to put a bit of thought into that - there are so many things that need changing.**

How do you see CMA progress in NRM? **It's a huge job but I think we're having a good go at it. I think we're all dedicated so that's a pretty good start.**

Where will you holiday this year? **Fiji again and hopefully Grooyte Island (I'll need a pay rise to do both though Bill!). (In your dreams again-Ed.)**

Do you support any sport? **Yep - I love all sports. Cycling would be a favorite and I love watching the footy and cricket.**

Where were you when the Planes crashed into the Twin Towers in New York? **I was working with the Conservation Volunteers doing some tree planting and they were sent back to the caravan park in Nathalia because of insurance concerns. For some reason I was up earlier than usual that morning (well before 8!) and I couldn't believe my eyes when I turned the TV on.**



## WOODLANDS AND WILDLIFE

Published for the  
Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation  
Committee

by  
Poppe Davis  
Ph: 5761 1540  
Mob: 0427 866 328  
Email: popped@gbcma.vic.gov.au

## Groundwater drilling

Promotion of the Goulburn Broken Dryland Pumping Incentive Scheme is currently focussed on the Dookie and Mount Camel areas.

The program is managed by Goulburn-Murray Water and designed to identify the best location for groundwater pumps on private land. It offers financial assistance for successful investigations and after operating for around 8 years has already helped many farmers to locate additional irrigation water. The added benefit is that successful landholders have noticed considerable improvements to salinity levels.

Properties must be in the priority salinity area identified by the GBCMA and conditions do apply.

The offer only applies to commercial irrigation enterprises and at this stage there is no similar scheme for stock and domestic use. A new brochure to promote the scheme will be delivered to properties in the target areas in the next few weeks.

For further information please contact:  
Sudath Herath or Stephen Feiss at Goulburn-Murray Water  
Ph 5833 5527 or 5833 5680

### SALT WEEK activities

This year Salt Week will be celebrated in the Goulburn Broken catchment from 9th to 15th May.

Activities include:

**Salty Sports -**  
Longwood Hall May 10  
Various School classroom presentations throughout the week.

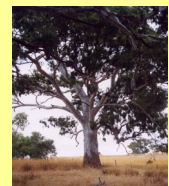
**Salty Sports-**  
St Patricks Kilmore May 17

Water testing for salinity at various locations throughout the catchment.

For more information or to register your school for Salt Week contact

**Andrea Montgomery**  
Ph 5833 9270

### Paddock TREES



Information brochure available on saving the grand sentinels of farm paddocks across the country.

Paddock trees are disappearing fast due to clearing for subdivision and natural attrition.

For your information brochure please contact the  
CMA on

**5761 1540**