

Woodlands and Wildlife

Newsletter of the Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee

December 2004

Vol.4. Number 2.

Snapshots

Sally Simson takes on Chair of the Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee.

•

Landcare Coordinators settle into Landcare support in the Mid Goulburn Broken catchment.

•

Peter Robinson and Jill Breadon retire from the Implementation Committee.

•

Current Recommended Practices for Water Quality CD now available.

•

Weed Society of Victoria will hold a Seminar titled "Policies for Weed management- Who has responsibility?" on 17 Feb 2005 at Monash University. Ph 9576 2949.

•

Chilean needle grass is about to be declared a noxious weed in Victoria.

•

Philip Island to be 'fox free' by 2010 after a 20 year fox control program.



Happy Christmas!

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Annual Reports completed

This years Annual Reports from the Implementation Committee and the Catchment Management Authority have been printed and are now available in hard copy or from the CMA website.

Hard copies of the Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee report are available on request, can be emailed in PDF format or downloaded from the CMA website at:
www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

The reports contain a comprehensive view of our achievements throughout the last year and also contain some graphs that show trends in natural resource management throughout the catchment.

Water Week

Several successful activities were conducted in the Mid Goulburn Broken catchment during Water Week. Children from local primary schools competed for medals in the Water Olympics at the showground and a very successful Twilight walk was conducted around the Benalla Lake Islands by Kate Stothers (DPI).

To cap it off, a local student from Benalla West Primary won the poster competition for the Goulburn Broken Catchment and is pictured at right with his prize—a new mountain bike.

The CMA and its Implementation Committees have enjoyed a really successful year with more waterway and revegetation works in the pipeline. We are receiving the best support from the media that we have ever had and we have been instrumental in securing the best possible levels of funding for Landcare and other environmental groups across the catchment.

For further information on obtaining reports please contact Poppe Davis on 5761 1540.



David Osborne with his new bike.

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

From the Executive Officers Desk



I can't believe it is nearly Christmas. Where has the year/s gone?

With the recent rain we are doing much on-ground work after many landholders have taken up Environmental Management Incentives and Waterways Grants. If you are interested in natural resource management incentives please give us a ring at the Benalla office on 57611691.

The White Paper on water has been announced and the Mid Goulburn Broken area has successfully applied for funding of \$940,000 for works on the Broken River. The paper also announced of the intended decommissioning of Lake Mokoan. I expect the Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee will engage the Mokoan community in the process as it is vital that all associated groups and individuals are represented

I am at present working on a project to source private investment to our Goulburn Broken catchment. We are very reliant on purely government funding and there are so many worthy projects in our region which could attract corporate or philanthropic funding.

By the way, I have some great news! The Granite Creeks Landcare consortium trialled a Weed Warrior program for bridal creeper using Second Generation Landcare funding. (See page 5)

Expressions of interest have been asked for by the CMA for funding opportunities throughout the catchment. I hope a large number of community groups have made applications throughout the Mid Goulburn Broken area. If you are in a group and are unsure of what to do to gain funding please give Megan McFarlane a ring at the CMA on 58222288.

In closing, I would like to say farewell to Russell Wealands, my counterpart in the UGIC. Russ has been a tremendous worker for his catchment and I have no doubt the catchment will be better off after all his efforts. Enjoy your well earned retirement Russ.

Phil Stevenson

Bush Returns program launched

The innovative Bush Returns program is underway in the area to the west of Euroa and Violet Town, where an official launch was recently conducted by Program manager Carla Miles.

The program seeks to encourage landholders to take part in a natural revegetation program that will create net benefits to the environment and a financial benefit to landholders.

benefits for biodiversity and threatened species in the Goulburn Broken catchment.

The program has been widely promoted in local press in the target area and interested landholders are asked to submit an expression of interest for an 'obligation free' site visit.

Contact 5761 1691 for information



Bush returns will bring about landscape change on a large scale, with enormous

Biodiversity Program Update

Biodiversity Action Planning (BAP) is nearing completion in the Mid Goulburn Region. BAP has produced some fantastic tools to assist extension officers, Landcare coordinators, landholders and anyone involved in planning and implementing biodiversity conservation activities.

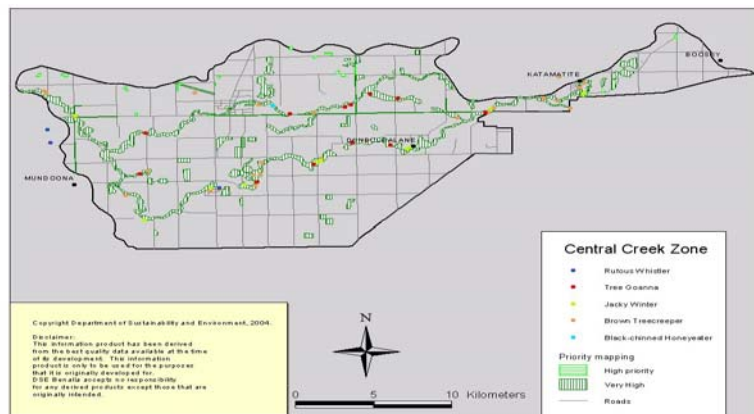
BAP has produced two main products, the BAP maps and the BAP Zones Conservation Plans, which will be of great use to extension officers in planning where biodiversity conservation activities should be targeted, the types of activities required, the importance of the activity and a explanation of why the work is important (e.g. providing or enhancing habitat for threatened species in that area.)

Over the next year several activities will be implemented to encourage the use of BAP in extension across the Mid Goulburn Region.

First, a BAP information session targeting people involved with Biodiversity Conservation will be held on the 23rd of November in Benalla. This information session will provide interested people with the information they require to use the tools developed by BAP.

A number of extension staff will soon have access to the BAP maps, which can be produced in a number of ways showing different biodiversity assets. These maps can be used in conjunction with existing Departmental corporate GIS layers or printed for people without access to corporate layers.

It is hoped that BAP will help to ensure that high value biodiversity assets are protected in the Goulburn Broken Dryland and assist in raising the awareness of the importance of protecting and enhancing high value biodiversity assets.



BAP maps will be a useful tool for identifying biodiversity

A Wildlife Guide for Landholders
in the plains and ironbark regions of the Goulburn Broken catchment.
NOW AVAILABLE
Ph 5761 1691

Your newsletter is available in PDF format from the GBCMA website www.gbcma.vic.gov.au or emailing popped@gbcma.vic.gov.au

Saving the Lima Stringy (SOS)

Janice Mentiplay-Smith, project Manager of the Lima Stringy Bark project conducted an excellent launch on November 8 at a private property near Swanpool.

The event was very well attended and was introduced by Bill O'Kane from the Goulburn Broken CMA. Other guest speakers included Julie Kirkwood from the Threatened Species Network, Wendy Beer a local landholder who has benefited from the program, and well known Author and botanist Leon Costermans .

The Swanpool Landcare Group was originally responsible for the project and is committed to ensuring the continuity of this rare species. The Lima Stringy Bark is only found within a 10 kilometre radius of Swanpool.

The Save Our Stringy (SOS) project has been in place throughout 2004 and has engaged 8 landholders who have the tree on their property.

Remnant stands have been fenced and understory has been planted to help protect existing and threatened Lima Stringys in the hope that they will naturally regenerate.



Leon Costermans—entertains the guests.

Farm Profits & Native vegetation

About 45 interested farmers and extension officers were recently shown the ins and outs of managing profits and native vegetation on their farms.

A farm walk along a fenced creek-line and through some well pastured paddocks, helped demonstrate how farmers could improve their farm profits and native vegetation through some simple changes in farm and grazing management, without sacrificing grazing area.

The field day presented research findings from a project being conducted on 8 properties in the Violet Town & Broadford regions, which is devising practical ways to improve the health of native vegetation and biodiversity in harmony with conducting a profitable farm business.

Removing stock from hill tops during summer months and allowing native grasses to seed,

will help encourage more deep rooted perennial plants to establish, reduce erosion and water run-off, and providing a better habitat for native flora and fauna.

The research team from the joint Land and Water Australia and DSE project, also described how to achieve cost effective shelter for stock at the same time as benefiting native flora and fauna. Natural regeneration of local native trees and shrubs is a low cost way of providing shelter benefits to livestock. Figures were produced to show that up to \$35 /ha per year in extra gross margin can be attributed to stock shelter from cold and hot conditions.

For more information, contact Jim Moll, DSE, Benalla on Ph:5761 1619.

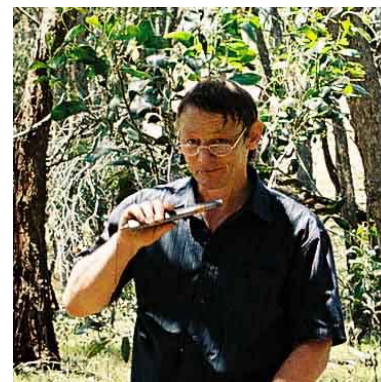
Wildlife Booklet Launched at Mt Piper

The long awaited Wildlife Guide for Landholders in the upper Goulburn catchment was launched by CMA Board Member Ailsa Fox last month.

It is the second in a series, the first being a similar publication for the plains and Box-Ironbark region of the Goulburn Broken catchment.

Mrs Fox said the booklet will be invaluable for assisting to identify native animals and birds throughout the foothills and upper regions of the catchment, and will not only be used by people on the land but will also be a valuable tool for schools and people simply interested in the wildlife around them.

Many people contributed to the development of the book including Steve Smith from the Dept of Sustainability and Environment, Alexandra, Kate Stothers and Debbie Colburne from DPI Benalla. The booklet has been published in a convenient DL format suitable for carrying in the glove box and is available from the CMA office in Yea and DPI offices in Mansfield, Benalla, Alexandra, Broadford and Seymour. For further information please call 5797 2001.



Steve Smith speaks about the importance of the wildlife booklet as a reference tool.

Get a better understanding of your soil and crop water requirements.

Expressions of interest are called from landholders who may wish to participate in Irrigation Management Courses in 2005.

This is the last opportunity for landholders to participate in Water for Growth courses and attendance is mandatory for access to incentives for irrigation change.

Central pivot or K Line systems can make real cost savings, extra crop production and save water and are a real option to flood irrigation. Soil moisture monitoring equipment will also save water and cost.

To register your interest for courses next year call:

Martin: 5731 1233 Mob: 0409 521 303

Wendy: 5731 2106

E: wendy.paglia@dse.vic.gov.au

In the Heartlands

Honeysuckle Creek Catchment in focus

A major conclusion of a project to determine the effects of land use practices on biodiversity in the Heartlands is that great biodiversity conservation benefits can be made with minimal alteration to farming practices.

The aim of the report was to identify the native biodiversity assets and ascertain the major farming practices of the Honeysuckle Creek, and with that knowledge, identify how biodiversity is affected by different farming practices.

Private land occupies 96.3% of the area and so it is landowners that can make the greatest impact on biodiversity. Biodiversity occurs because there are a range of niches within which different species can live, and species and ecosystem functions interact in complex ways to create 'variety'. Each species lives within slightly different ways, and so the greater the range

of different habitat types (eg fallen timber, shrubs, rocks, different plant species) the greater the number of species.

There are many critical processes associated with biodiversity such as the movement of water, soil accumulation, nutrient cycling, pollination and transpiration among many others. For example, restricting stock access to treed remnants, riparian areas and wetlands, employing rotational grazing and lambing and calving in spring, and buffering remnants and streams to ameliorate off-site effects of cropping, fertilisers and biocides, can have great benefits for biodiversity and move towards sustainable farming.



Heartlands participants are managing their properties to enhance biodiversity in the region.

Interest in Soils

Landholders in the Mid Goulburn Broken catchment (MGB) have indicated an interest in best practice management of soils, particularly on grazing properties.

Local Landcare Groups throughout the MGB catchment area have indicated they will seek funding for research into the effects of pasture improvement on soils and that they are also interested to assess what the drivers are for landholders changing soil management practices.

Land and soil management is an intrinsic component of Landcares focus on environmental best practice and it makes good sense for groups to share their resources to investigate better ways of understanding the relationship between adding nutrients to pasture and pasture improvement.

If interested groups are successful in their bid for funding this project, the outcomes will be of interest to landholders throughout the entire Goulburn Broken catchment. For further information contact :

David Dore in Benalla on Ph 5762 4672 or Allison Long, Landcare Coordinator, in Seymour on Ph 5735 4300.



Expressions of Interest Extended

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is trialling the new Bush Returns program, which offers landholders ongoing payments to manage large areas of land for regrowth and natural regeneration in the general Longwood and Violet Town districts.

Here is a great opportunity to increase tree cover and get paid for it!

Contact the CMA on 5761 1691 or visit the website:

www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

for an information kit, including an expression of interest form.

Forms should be returned to the CMA

by **December 21st, 2004**

to arrange an obligation free site visit.

Update in Brief - Barry Oswald, Heartlands

The Honeysuckle Creek Catchment has received \$50,000 from Commonwealth Games Tree Planting Program to establish 50 hectares of direct seeding during the coming season.

This year we have had excellent results on direct seeding sites and believe me it's so much less strenuous and time consuming. If any landholders are interested in doing some direct seeding on their properties please contact me on 0407 214 180 and I can possibly arrange a grant for you.

The Department of Primary Industries (Land, Water & Wool) have also provided funding for research and development on sustainable grazing on saline soils. This trial is on Andrew & Kathy Gibb's property at Caniambo. We have planted 7500 salt bush seedlings during the first week in December and the day after when we were planing to water them in the water truck broke down so we lost a day. There will be replants to be planted prior to Christmas and during

Autumn next year we will plant salt tolerant pasture species between the rows.



Direct seeding at Caniambo

As Program Manager for the Heartlands Project I thank landholders for their support since the program began. It has been a delight working with landholders in the area and I look forward to a successful 2005 for Heartlands and all participating landholders.

Heartlands wishes you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous 2005.

Barry Oswald



Re-establishing native grass

Establishing Native Grasses at sites following works such as willow removal, bank stabilisation and fencing is a continuing challenge in the Waterways program. Since 2001 trials have been conducted using native grasses grown in Hiko cells. While the planted sites have been successful, a number of issues have been identified.

Thorough pre-planting weed control is needed which can delay immediately planting out a site to stabilize soils disturbed by works. Follow up weed control is usually necessary as well. This is a costly and time consuming activity.

This intensive restoration of native riparian grasses is best suited to the urban waterway bushland environments such as Lake Benalla and Seven Creeks in Euroa. It provides opportunities for community involvement and awareness as well as the biodiversity benefits of including grasses in revegetation projects.

In 2004/05 we will begin to trial the use of native grass seed for establishment at post works sites which we expect to be more cost and time effective. These sites will be monitored to ensure that we continue to improve our techniques and can share experiences around the catchment.



5000 native grasses planted across the

Weed Buster coup

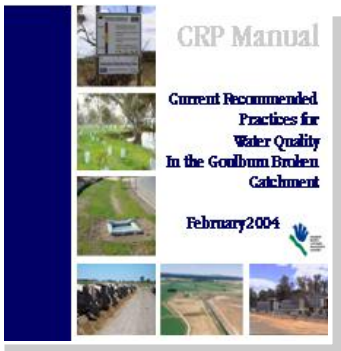
The Strathbogrie, Ruffy, Euroa, Avenel, Longwood primary schools, St Johns of Euroa and Euroa Secondary College have been involved in the Weed Warrior program.

The program won the state-wide Weed Buster award (they even beat Powercorp!) with their great initiative and ability to involve so many young students in a great communication/education program. Following is a photo of people from the Granite Creeks consortium who travelled to Melbourne to receive the award.



3rd from right: Scott McKay - Joint Winner Public Land award; Tom Bullen - Granite Creeks, Brian Sullivan - Powercorp. Front: Ashley Hall - Avenel Primary School, Kate Harcourt - Avenel Primary School, Emma Bell - Avenel Primary School

Current Recommended Practices for Water Quality



NOW AVAILABLE ON CDROM
And on the CMA website
www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

WELCOME

Tim Barlow has joined the CMA to take on the role of Biodiversity Manager, in the Shepparton Office. Tim replaces Kate Bell who is currently on maternity leave.

Tim grew up on the family farm at Rushworth and is familiar with both the nuances of dryland farming in the catchment, and indeed a number of the dryland farmers!

After completing a B Sc at LaTrobe Uni, he has held a variety of positions ranging from wildlife ranger in western Victoria, to environmental planner in north Queensland, and most recently as a consultant botanist. In between he has worked with Trust for Nature as the Conservation Programs Manager, and as the Grassy Ecosystems Project Officer for Bushcare.



A few words

From the Chair

(Excerpt from the Annual Report)

Despite the effects of recent drought and some late funding all six key projects delivered on expenditure and projected outputs. This can be contributed to the close working partnership with both the Department of Primary Industries and Goulburn Murray Water and I recognise their dedication and hard work to achieve these results.

The uptake of the Environment Management Grants (Environmental Incentive Scheme) was especially pleasing. The MGBIC spent most of available funds resulting in: 264ha of remnant vegetation protection, 330ha of revegetation, 572ha of Lucerne/perennial pasture establishment, 250ha of erosion stabilization.

Waterways Grants have been delivered totaling \$141,000 and delivering 79ha of protection for stream banks and 47 off stream watering points. Our waterways team has been supported by the Waterways Working Group, which has engaged local communities and provided a valuable connection between landholders and the CMA.

Engagement and support of Landcare Groups is a vital component of the Implementation Committees' role and this year has seen the development of several new initiatives. A Community Landcare Support Strategy, has been developed by our Regional Landcare Coordinator, Heather Holder, and is now ready for release. Landcare groups, Agencies and the wider community were involved with in the process of developing this strategy which will act as a guide and support for the Landcare movement in the future.

While we are pleased with our past years' achievements we are constantly challenged. The decision to decommission Lake Mokoan, release of the White Paper, and greater communication within communities will require sound planning and dedication to ensure the best possible outcomes for future generations. The decommissioning of Lake Mokoan, means we need to position ourselves to attract funding and resources to rehabilitate this area. Our Implementation Committee will be involved with other agencies in the negotiating process with government.

Thanks for your support this year. On behalf of the Implementation Committee I wish you a very happy and safe Christmas.

Sally Simson

Get to know... Phil Stevenson Executive Officer, Benalla

Main job. Executive Officer—
GBCMA

Where. Mid Goulburn Broken
Catchment—Benalla office.

**How did you get involved with
NRM.** I took part in a Fairley
Leadership program. The best day
was sponsored by the Goulburn
Broken CMA. This position was
advertised shortly afterwards and I was lucky enough to win it.



Favourite colour. Not sure –colour blind I think.

Favourite food. I love Italian food.

Reading at the moment . 3rd Degree—James Patterson.

Like listening to. MP3's. I download from the internet.

Best band/singer ever. The Big O—Roy Orbison

How do you see the environment in 10 years time. Much
better. The environment is on everyones lips and consciousness.
We are making a difference.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years time. Retired but still
involved in community projects (footy, St Vincent de Paul).

Do you have a pet and what is its name. Yep. Stinga—a lovely
little bitza—my mate out in the shed.

Hobbies. Gardening, cycling, listening to music.

Ever been overseas. Yep. **Where.** Fiji

What is your favourite destination. Much further than Fiji one
day.

**Have you observed environmental issues we could learn
from.** Soil acidity is my pet issue. It is unfortunate that we cannot
get Government funding to alleviate the problem.

**If you had the chance what would you do to make a
difference.** I would make our program more client focused
instead of agency– client focused. It may be the death of me yet.
**What do you think of our progress with natural resource
management.** Catchment targeting, prioritizing and
implementation is the way to go forward.

Where will you holiday this year. Royal Bunbartha Golf Club

Do you support any sport. Oh yeah. Footy, tennis, cycling.

Where were you when terrorists hit the Twin Towers. I was
home asleep and couldn't believe my eyes in the morning when I
woke to the news on TV.

WOODLANDS AND WILDLIFE

Published for the
Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation
Committee

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New Fox Control Program

A fox control program is being developed by the Broken Boosey
Conservation Network (BBCN) for implementation in the Broken
Boosey catchment.

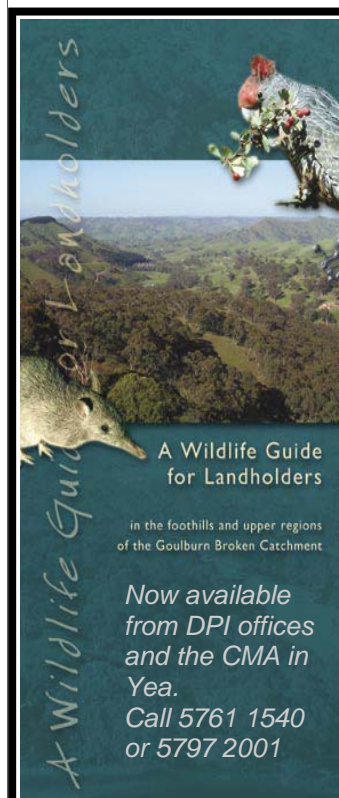
Proposed control measures will be undertaken to coincide with
Autumn lambing, Bush Stone-Curlew fledging and annual Broilga
migration to the area.

The Conservation Network will consult with landowners, Agency
Managers and the Moira Shire to develop a landscape scale
program that will have a positive impact on reducing fox
numbers.

The CMA's Tony Kubeil who manages the BBCN program, said
that foxes have a home range of up to 4 square kilometres in an
agricultural landscape and at a density of up to 4 animals in a
square kilometre it is possible that a farmer could have around
300 foxes within a 5 kilometre radius of his home.

The program is currently planned for the St James, Devenish
and Tungamah regions.

Landowners should contact Tony Kubeil on Ph 5761 1557.



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