

Woodlands and Wildlife

Newsletter of the Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee

May 2005

Vol.5. Number 1

Snapshots

... *Bernie Ryan appointed to MGB Implementation Committee*

... *Do you have a personal history with the Goulburn River? Hear Stephanie Lavau of Melbourne University deliver the first stage of her PhD project titled "At home in the Australian Landscape: A history of the domestication of the Goulburn River". Thursday August 11, 2005, 6.00—7.00pm. Hotel Australia, Shepparton. Bookings through Kate Faram (03) 5823 6600 or email kfaram@unimelb.edu.au Limited spaces, light refreshments (drinks at bar prices).*

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A Wildlife Guide for Landholders

in the plains and ironbark regions of the Goulburn Broken catchment.

NOW AVAILABLE
Ph 5761 1691

Steering Committee for Lake Mokoan

The Lake Mokoan Future Land Use Steering Committee (LMFLUSC) has been convened and has already held 3 meetings at Benalla, including a Lake Mokoan Tour.

Sally Simson from Shepparton East has been elected as Chair and Chesney Vale farmer Russell Ellis has been appointed Deputy Chair of the Committee. The Committee will meet regularly to deliberate on options for future land use on the decommissioned site and will make its discussions and deliberations available to the community through regular news stories and a News Bulletin posted on the lake Mokoan website. The first Bulletin is



Sally Simson -
Chair

available on the web now at www.lakemokoan.com.au.

The website is an integral part of the LMFLUSC communication plan for transparency. The Committee will ensure that all up to date information is reported on the web and will also provide a special column for the community to interact with the Committee. Called "Have Your Say", the column invites comment and discussion from the public, and opens dialogue between the Committee, landholders and other stakeholders. Do take the opportunity to have a look at www.lakemokoan.com.au to keep in touch with new developments. *More on p2.*



Russell Ellis -
Deputy Chair

Regional Landcare Forum 7th-8th July

This years Regional Landcare Forum will be held in Seymour and is shaping up to be a great success.

Organisers have booked the Seymour Football Club and other sporting facilities and have arranged for a number of different displays from Landcare product and service suppliers. The Agenda for the two day event will include presentations and workshops and snapshots from the coal face.

Presentations will include biodiversity, soils, cultural heritage and landscape change, plus a regional bus tour on Friday to sample the landscape and tastes of the Highlands region. The Forum dinner on Thursday evening promises to be a great night, so all delegates will need to book early to take advantage of the raft of interesting events. For information and bookings, contact Katie Brown: 5797 2001.

REMINDER

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@qbcma.vic.gov.au

From the Executive Officers Desk



Welcome to our May Woodlands and Wildlife newsletter.

Firstly, let me mention a couple of important issues occupying our time at the moment.

The Lake Mokoan Future Land Use Steering Committee has been mentioned extensively throughout this newsletter. My role will be to work closely with the appointed consultants to thoroughly engage the community to develop options for the future land use of the present Lake Mokoan site. You will agree this issue is very sensitive, especially to the local community and current irrigation users of Lake Mokoan.

Landholders in the Goulburn Broken dryland can access Waterways Grants and Environmental Management Incentives. From July 1 this year a level 1 Whole Farm Plan will be introduced before these incentives can be offered. This is an excellent initiative as it means landholders will have the opportunity to plan their natural resource management activities based on excellent information. This information will include an aerial map, cadastre, recharge and discharge, ecological vegetation classes (pre 1750 and present), threatened species, contours and geology. Landholders will see all this information on a laptop computer and will be able to draw future natural resource management activities on the computer using up to date GPS systems.

I am extremely concerned about the lack of rain with many dryland farmers waiting to decide whether to put in crops or not. Things are looking pretty desperate and we can only hope for a break soon.

Bernie Ryan from Colbinabbin has recently been appointed to the Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation Committee. Bernie will be a great addition to our committee with his background in forestry, whole farm planning (Southcorp Winery) and as a present day dryland farmer.

Please contact me on 57611673 if you have any queries regarding natural resource management in the Mid Goulburn Broken area and I will attempt to give you an answer or direct you to the most appropriate person. Regards

Phil Stevenson

Bush Returns Program Expands

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has extended the new Bush Returns program, to all of the Goulburn Broken catchment.

The program offers landholders ongoing payments to manage large areas of land for regrowth and natural regeneration, particularly land that is largely unimproved.

Landowners across the catchment will now be able to apply for a special grant to return some of their land to its natural state.

A pilot program in the Heartlands area around Violet Town and Euroa has been successful with 160ha of land being funded for a returned to natural regeneration.

Program manager, Carla Miles, says that she is more than happy with progress so far

and believes that the Bush Returns program will be the catalyst to encourage landholders in sustainable land management.

"We have come up with an idea that is so easy for landholders to be a part of and the response so far has been excellent," she said.

Applications for the current roll out of Bush Returns are available on the web at www.gbcma.vic.gov.au.



Trees regenerate naturally if protected.

Lake MOKOAN Committee formed

The Lake Mokoan Future land use Steering Committee has been formed to formulate a vision for the present site, which includes possible future land uses.

Members of the committee representing the community include Sally Simson (Chair), Russell Ellis (Deputy Chair), Doug Bain, Mike Burston, Paul Dahlenburg, Charles Jones, and Huw Davies, all of whom are well credentialed for the position, with years of cumulative experience in business, natural resources and land management. Additional appointees include John Brownstein (Mayor) and Cr Lynn Tanner from Benalla Rural City; David Jeffery, Director Mokoan Project; Kevin Ritchie, Manager North East Region DSE; and Wayne Tennant, Manager Riverine

Strategies Adaptive Research, Goulburn Broken CMA.

A Project Management Team comprising Tony Long, Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Project Manager; Brett Spicer, DSE, responsibility for Consultants; Phil Stevenson, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA), responsible for community engagement; is in place to assist and support the committee.

The Committee has met several times already and a Charter has been devised for the Steering Committee as well as Terms of Reference for its activities.

A communication strategy is in place to ensure that the community is kept informed of the Committee's progress and that interested parties can be involved in the vision forming process. The website www.lakemokoan.com.au will be regularly updated to keep the community informed.



Lake Mokoan Future land Use Steering Committee and Agency observers at their first meeting.

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 Regent Honeyeater

Fire certainly can be a friend or a foe in different circumstances, but we probably hear more about the disadvantages than the benefits. The Regent Honeyeater Project and volunteers from several local CFA crews, are setting out to demonstrate some of the benefits.

Our local ecosystems have evolved with fire and indeed need a fire to be at their best. We all know that seeds of many bush plants only germinate after fire and the plants are often fairly short-lived. So after several decades without fire, the shrubs die of old age without replacing themselves, and the bush can get quite sparse. For wildlife who live out in the bush all year round, it means the food supply gets poorer.

Several threatened species like Regent Honeyeaters, Squirrel Gliders and Brush Tailed Phascogales are still surviving in bush patches, on farmland and roadsides in the

Lurg Hills. There is very little habitat left, and it has been deteriorating for decades. There is an urgent need to create more good quality living space as fast as possible.

Planting is one way to do this and burning is another. Having burnt several grassy plots near some big old ironbarks, the local group will experiment with scraping, scarifying and herbicide to provide a weed-free seed bed.

Following this more burning will take place in nearby areas as a cheap and efficient way to provide natural regrowth and habitat for threatened species. The burn will also create open areas where

indigenous canopy trees can be planted. The heat and smoke will certainly assist those wonderful little Australians we don't see much of any more, and restore a spectacular wildflower display that has been declining for half a century. It will also reduce excess fuel loads and assist weed eradication through follow-up spraying. For further information on this project please contact Ray Thomas Ph 5761 1611.



Burning off to restore natural habitat for threatened species

Out Foxed in Boosey campaign

A fox control program in the Broken Boosey area has resulted in a 75% success rate according to Tony Kubeil, Program Coordinator of the Broken Boosey Conservation Management Network.

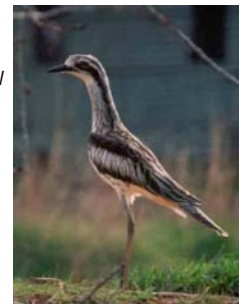
The campaign aims to remove foxes from an area known to be a breeding ground for the Bush-Stone Curlew and with the assistance of over 50 local landholders fox baiting has been carried out on approximately 19,000ha of private land.

Fox baiting and monitoring has taken place for four weeks reducing fox numbers in the target area by two thirds, which will have a positive impact on breeding pairs of the Curlew this season.

Landholders who took part in the program also took the opportunity to complete the Farm Chemical Users Course as a precursor to the baiting program. The Broken Boosey CMN provided funding for the course and subsequent Australian Chemical Users Permit (ACUP).

Baits were provided free of charge as part of the program.

The program will be ongoing with the view that a reduction in predators will enable the Bush-Stone Curlew to survive in Victoria.



The Bush-stone Curlew

REGIONAL LANDCARE FORUM

July 7th and 8th
Seymour Football Club
Tallarook St, Seymour.

*Trade exhibits!
Forum Dinner!
Discussion!
Presentations!
Networking!*

See, hear and be a part of the ongoing work that Landcare is doing in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

To book call

Katie Brown : 5797 2001 or Mob 0400 197 299

Two days of discussion, learning, teaching, and networking with other Landcarers

A Tale of Tuans and Gliders

Words and photos—Helen Repacholi

The Warrenbayne Boho Threatened Species Project launch in March was a wonderful afternoon with perfect weather, shared poetry and information about two threatened animals in this area.

Rodney van der Ree, Research Ecologist at Melbourne University, unveiled one of the 25 nest boxes constructed by members of the Warrenbayne Boho Land Protection Group. Rodney introduced the onlookers to the fascinating lives of the Brush-tailed Phascogale (Tuan) and the Squirrel Glider.

The conservation project was funded by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Authority in October last year with the aim of extending and enhancing existing corridors that link the Reef Hills State Park with the Warrenbayne Creek. On-ground works of fencing and revegetation will assist to enhance existing habitat and allow for greater dispersal of these animals, providing long term protection of both species.

The project has been a tremendous success. Members of the community have produced a colour brochure on the habitat needs and threats to the survival of these animals and have assisted with Rodney's research program (trapping and spotlighting activities). Signage has been displayed in the project area and the Warrenbayne Primary School students have painted the nest boxes and written poems about the threatened animals. A presentation of their poetry and drawings was a highlight of the afternoon.



Other guests at the launch included Julie Flack from Parks Victoria, local member Bill Sykes and the Benalla Rural City Forest officer, Mal Miles.

Both the Warrenbayne Land Protection Group and their Catchment Management Officer, Helen Repacholi (Department of Primary Industries) will continue to work with the community towards the conservation of these special animals.



Rodney van der Ree with examples.

Horticulture NRM initiative

HAL is a key strategic marketing and research partner to the Horticulture sector and a partner of the Horticulture for Tomorrow program (please see website at www.horticulturefortomorrow.com.au). HAL is currently seeking **expressions of interest** for participation in the Horticulture NRM Initiative for regional pilot groups. The **closing date is 17th June 2005**. For further information on the pilots, criteria for expressions of interest and application details, please contact Alison Turnbull at HAL Ph: 02 8295-2300 or Alison.turnbull@horticulture.com.au

Landcare Council.

The Hon. Warren Truss, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has announced the appointment of Roberta (Bobbie) Brazil as the new Chair of the Australian Landcare Council (ALC). Bobbie has been a member of the ALC since 2000 and is currently the Chair of Land & Water Australia and a board member of the Condamine Alliance regional NRM body in Qld. Congratulations on your new role Bobbie. For further information please see media release at www.affa.gov.au/ministers/truss/releases/home_wt_releases.html



Extended to all Goulburn Broken Landholders

The Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has extended the new Bush Returns program, to all of the Goulburn Broken catchment.

The program offers landholders ongoing payments to manage large areas of land for regrowth and natural regeneration throughout the Goulburn Broken catchment.

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 to arrange an obligation free site visit.

DPI Soil Microbial Health Days

Research Scientists from the Soil Biology Team at DPI Rutherglen Centre will conduct a number of Field Days to explain the role of micro-organisms in soil health, and why they are so important to successful vegetation.

“The Missing Link”

Nalinga—June 1: 10.30—12 noon

To book or for further information contact Dr Pauline Mele or Dr Lesley Mutch (02) 6030 4500

Check out the Landcare Gateway website www.landcare.net.au

International River Health Conference

The Goulburn Broken CMA is sponsoring selected schools from across the catchment to participate in this years International River Health Conference, to be held at Mildura in October

The Conference encourages students from years 5 to 11 to be a part of an International Forum of "kids teaching kids" in an environment where they feel comfortable performing in front of their peers. Conference organisers, Firestarter Communications run by Aaron Wood, have prepared a fabulous schedule of events for the delegates who will come from all over Australia and overseas. It is anticipated that as many as 500 students will converge on the Murray River at Mildura for the three day event.



Landholders property prepared for Heartlands revegetation program in the Violet Town, Caniamba region.

Community Landcare Support Strategy

The Goulburn Broken Community Landcare Support Strategy will be launched at Arcadia on May 25th.

Regional Landcare Coordinator Heather Holder has worked with Landcare Coordinators and Landcare Groups to complete this strategy, which outlines the support structure for Landcare volunteers and support staff for the next 5 years.

For information on the Strategy please contact Heather Holder on Ph 5761 1654

A touring coach will collect between 30 and 45 students and teachers from selected points throughout the Goulburn Broken catchment. Schools have already been asked to submit expressions of interest and show their commitment to natural resource management to go into the selection process for sponsorship.



The Conference is held every two years and provides students with enormous insight into environmental conditions in Australia and overseas, and provides teachers with environmental education tools for ongoing curriculum development.

Contact Poppe Davis 5761 1540

BAP delivers catchment biodiversity outcomes

Biodiversity Action Planning (BAP) is a tool that helps identify key areas to implement biodiversity works and provides detailed information on key natural assets.

Revegetation Links Officer Janice Mentiplay-Smith uses the BAP information to achieve positive biodiversity outcomes in the Mid Goulburn Broken catchment.

Janice, together with the Warby Ranges Landcare Group and other stakeholders has developed the Carpet Python Project to provide better delivery of the catchment's biodiversity objectives.

The project is supported by Parks Victoria, the Landcare Group, DPI's Environmental Management Incentives Scheme, DSE, Land for Wildlife and the Trust for Nature using the BAP information as a key planning tool.

Detailed mapping that identifies key hot spots has been completed for most areas in the Mid Goulburn Broken Catchment and is currently underway in others. BAP mapping will be available for the whole Goulburn Broken Catchment in the near future.

For information on BAP please contact Kate Brunt on 5761 1693

Landcare Briefs

A Landcare Information night will be held on Tuesday 24th May at Rafferty's Reception Centre in Benalla.

Items of interest will include:

Being Investor ready -

Most Landcare Groups rely solely on government based grants to fund their projects. Being Investor ready is a toolkit produced by the State Coordinating Team to assist all Landcare Groups seek investment from local businesses and private organisations.

Presented by Heather Holder, Regional Landcare Coordinator and member of the State Coordinating Team.

Landcare gateway Website -

This is a quick introduction to the Landcare gateway website, which has been specifically designed and built by the State Coordinating team for Landcare Groups in Victoria. The Landcare gateway will enable all Landcare Groups to have their own website.

Presented by Heather Holder, Regional Landcare Coordinator and member of the State Coordinating Team.

Fire management on your Property -

For the safety of your property, stock, loved ones and neighbours it is important that all landholders are aware of fire management. With information on general fire behaviour and an introduction to vegetation management in respect of fire hazard, this is an important information session that landholders should not miss.

Presented by Ruth Brooks, CFA Community Education Coordinator, North East Region & Kylie Scanlon, Community Engagement Officer, DSE.

For further information contact:
Andrea Montgomery
Ph 0427 349 725

Allison Long
Ph 0418 140 704

Trevor Verlin
Ph 0439 040 599

Get to know... **Kate Brunt**
Biodiversity Projects Coordinator

Main job: *Biodiversity Projects Coordinator*

Where: *Benalla*

How did you get involved with NRM:

Always been interested in NRM from a young age growing up on a farm – I wanted to be a Park Ranger like Kate Raison on A Country Practice.



Favourite colour: *Red*

Favourite food: *Does not matter what it is as long as someone else has cooked it and someone else is doing the dishes.*

Reading at the moment: *Wedding Magazines*

Do you have a pet and what is its name: *Flash – German Shorthaired Pointer and Hannah - Beagle*

Hobbies: *Netball, Basketball and Snow Skiing*

Ever been overseas: *Yes*

Where: *Parts of Asia and some Pacific Islands*

What is your favourite destination: *Ho Chi Minh City and the Cook Islands*

Have you observed environmental issues we could learn from; *Yes – everyday, there is so much to learn*

If you had the chance what would you do to make a difference: *Increase the understanding of the general public.*

Where will you holiday this year? *Skiing in NZ.*

WOODLANDS AND WILDLIFE

Published for the
**Mid Goulburn Broken Implementation
 Committee**

by
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Wiggly Sticks

The carpet Python Project, run by Janice Mentiplay-Smith (DPI) has been initiated in response to sightings of the reptile in the Chesney region.

Funding is available to participate in the project which aims to protect the Carpet Python by protecting its habitat; fencing and revegetation, creating vegetation corridors etc.

Interested landholders should contact Janice Mentiplay-Smith at DPI on 5761 1644.



Exotic vegetation control in Strathbogie

The Mid Goulburn Broken Waterways team began an exotic weed control program on a unique section of public land in the Strathbogie township last March.

The extensive program involves removal of blackberries, willows and poplars and the great escapee, English Ivy. Using mechanical means was the only way the team could access the dense outcrops and a long reach excavator was called in to remove the infestations throughout the township area.

Weeds have been identified as a major environmental problem in the upper reaches on the Seven Creeks and Spring Creek where their density was such that access to the streams were completely blocked. Control of weeds in the Strathbogie will be achieved with assistance from the local community, Department of Crown Lands and the Goulburn Broken CMA. Ongoing works will continue with support from adjacent landowners who have made an enormous commitment to the project with fencing and future revegetation.

In all the project will cost over \$25,000 when revegetation is taken into account. And it is anticipated that the project will be completed during 2007—2008.

For details of the program contact Geoff Brennan 5761 1585 or 0407 357 354.



English Ivy strangles native vegetation in the Strathbogie's

Paddock TREES

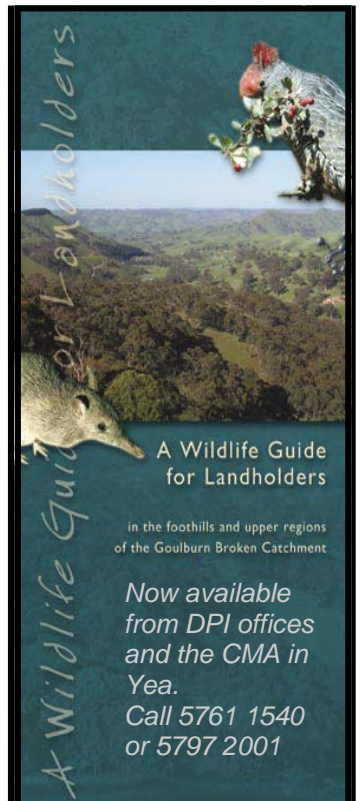


Information brochure available on saving the grand sentinels of farm paddocks across the country.

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

For your information brochure please contact the CMA on

5761 1540



A Wildlife Guide for Landholders

A Wildlife Guide for Landholders

in the foothills and upper regions of the Goulburn Broken Catchment

Now available from DPI offices and the CMA in Yea.

Call 5761 1540 or 5797 2001