



Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

As mentioned in Issue #12 of TGN Neil van Buuren, HCCC's Pest Plant & Animal Facilitator, is keen to tackle the perennial problem of weeds. Read on to find out more. Until next week, **Pauline And Kenny?** - was exploring our local waterways.

HCCC News

Weeds, pests and biosecurity

Recently HCCC organised a helicopter spraying of Paterson's Curse at a total cost of around \$14,300 with landowners contributing over \$10,000. So, what is Paterson's Curse?

Paterson's curse (*Echium plantagineum*) is in the borage family, It's an annual plant native to the Mediterranean region. With its purple flowers, it is one of the most conspicuous weeds of pastures. It is a classic 'garden thug' having been introduced via mail order gardening catalogues, then rapidly invading agricultural land. It is supposedly named after the Paterson family of Cumberoona, New South Wales, who planted it in their garden in the 1880s. **Paterson's curse is now a declared noxious weed** and is also a target for biological control.

Why Paterson's curse matters

Paterson's curse now covers millions of hectares of land in southern Australia (from WA to northern New South Wales) and is estimated to cost Australian sheep and cattle producers \$250 million annually through lost productivity in pastures, control costs, and wool contamination.

It is highly competitive in pastures, replacing desirable plants without contributing to forage value. Paterson's Curse contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids, which are toxic to livestock, particularly horses, though sheep can graze it for a time. Prolonged grazing of Paterson's Curse is harmful, even to sheep, because the alkaloids eventually cause liver damage, especially if stock consume large amounts in winter & spring & then graze on common heliotrope over summer.

Although several landowners have been spraying over several years to control and eradicate it, it persists, this is in part due to other landowners that allow the weed to grow. The seeds are then spread by animals and the problem continues. This problem is not just confined to Paterson's, but nearly all weeds and pest animals.

All Governments are now taking a new approach: -

They are moving away from a traditional, heavy reliance on enforcement to manage the impacts of established pests and weeds. Enforcement is seen as an option of last resort.

And placing a greater emphasis on community to better manage the impacts themselves.

There needs to be a better way, we cannot depend totally on government agencies solving this problem.

As all community members have a responsibility to control declared pests and weeds on their land, becoming involved will aid in being well informed and support what is required as individual landholders. However, a community coordinated approach can only apply where there is clear community concern about the control of established weeds and pest animals.

Feedback? - contact editor@tgn.org.au or to subscribe on-line go to www.highlands.org.au

"It isn't the men I mind. I can easily replace the men at once, but I can't replace the shells so easily."
Lord Kitchener (1850-1916)
Reflecting on the problems of war.

The Granite News is an open but moderated community forum. Readers are encouraged to contribute articles and we also encourage you to air your views on things that interest or concern you within our community. We certainly welcome feedback from you, positive or otherwise on anything that is published in **The Granite News**

SELL IT—BUY IT

Some MORE ads are required!

Buy, sell, rent, acquire, free to good homes, jobs, anything of this nature to fill this space. Send to—editor@tgn.org.au

Wanted

Paterson's Curse - DEAD, cactus, killed off, exterminated & mort!



WEBSITE of the WEEK

www.farmingsecrets.com/

Scroll down to find the incredible blueprint that is Peter Andrews vision for sustainable farming.

Community Notices & Classifieds

COMMUNITY "WHAT'S ON" CALENDAR — November & December 2018

Monday 12th November @ 7.30pm	RUFFY CFA Pre-Season Meeting	at Ruffy Fire Shed Enquiries - contact J Hagen 0427 524473
 Tuesday 13th Nov. @ 7.30pm	HIGHLANDS/CAVEAT CFA TRAINING NB - DATE CHANGE!!	at Highlands Fire Shed Enquiries? Callum 0437 182223
Wednesday 14th November @ 7.45pm	RUFFY COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP AGM	at Tablelands Community Centre Enquiries? Melissa McDowell 04027 833388
Thursday 15th November 5.30-7.30pm	RURAL & SMALL TOWNS FORUM - It's hard being a farmer & marketer	See articles & attachments in previous TGNs for details. RSVPs essential by 10am on Tuesday 13th Nov.
Friday 16th November 6pm—HCCC AGM followed by Fox on the Run presentations	HCCC Meeting / AGM & FOX on the RUN presentation night	at Tablelands Comm. Centre The HCCC Monthly meeting and the AGM will be held prior to the Fox on the Run presentations. All welcome.  Enquiries - contact Justus 5790 4268
Saturday 17th Nov. @8pm Doors open @ 7.30pm	RUFFARTZ "Café Culturè Series"	at Ruffy Community Hall Bollywood: a joyous, beautiful and vibrant celebration of Indian Culture. Join us for the final fabulous show of 2018! Tickets \$25, BYO drinks & nibbles. Please book early to ensure your seat. Bookings: Christine 0419 561 386 email: ruffartztickets@gmail.com
Saturday 17th Nov. @8pm	THE 8 BALL at the YARCK HALL - Old Fashioned Supper Dance	at Yarck Hall Come along to this community event and help celebrate the old hall's 130th birthday! BYO and bring a plate and dance to all the Old-time favourites. See attachment for more details. Tickets - \$20 at Yarck General Store
 Saturday 24th Nov. @ 12 - 2	HIGHLANDS BLACK MARKET	at 94 Old Highlands Rd Enquiries? - Candi 57969366
 Sunday 2th Nov. @ 10.30 am	HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS	at Highlands Community Hall Our next walk will commence at 10.30 from the Highlands Hall - more details to come. Stay tuned. Enquiries? Andrew 0427 969297 or ajshaw577@hotmail.com
Thursday 29th Nov. @ 5,30 pm	SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS	at Caveat Church All people in the district are welcome, gold coin donation towards a BBQ, BYO and chat
Friday 30th November 9 - 11 am	UGLN - RAIL TRAIL NATURE WALK	meet @ Cheviot Tunnel Car Park, Cheviot Rd, Limestone This event is part of Bird Life Australia's Challenge Bird Count and walkers will record all bird species and numbers observed. See attachment for further details. Enquiries? Chris 0413 855490 - ugln.projects@ugln.net
Friday 30th November BBQ @ 6.30 pm	HIGHLANDS END of YEAR GET TOGETHER	at Highlands Community Hall BBQ snags & hamburgers provided BYO salad to share. As this is a community event ALL local community groups are & community members are invited to attend. See attachment for further details
Saturday & Sunday 1st & 2nd December 10 - 4	DARREN GILBERT's OPEN STUDIO	2742 Highlands Rd, Highlands Darren's studio, with his stunning, creative works is now open to the public on the first weekend each month. Quality art in the local community and not too far to travel to enjoy it.
Saturday 8th December @ 6.30pm	RUFFY COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY	Further details to come, but Save the Date!!
Every second Wednesday 10.30-12.30	MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE	at Highlands Community Hall The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight - Nov 21st and Dec 5th & 19th Don't forget the cake and coffee a bargain @ \$4!
Every Monday 10 am	YOGA AT RUFFY	at Tablelands Community Centre Ruffy Yoga with Kylie Penny is in full swing. All welcome! Equipment provided, \$15 per class. (BYO water bottle) Any enquiries please call/SMS Kylie 0418899966 or email kyliepenny@gmail.com

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The role and limitations of nest boxes

Continuing this series of articles on Nesting Box Habitat

Loss of natural tree hollows is a major concern for the protection of Victoria's hollow-dependent wildlife. Nest boxes have been proposed as a potential solution to this problem in some situations, particularly where natural hollows have been depleted by humans. A number of studies have contributed to our knowledge of nest box design, use by wildlife and contribution to conservation outcomes but there remains a great deal to learn. Hence, it is difficult to be definitive about many aspects of nest box design and their use as a management tool. Nest boxes are not a long-term substitute for natural hollows. They typically last around ten years compared to a tree hollow that may exist for over 100 years. Nest boxes have been shown to be a useful technique for surveying some species, such as Brush-tailed Phascogale and Feathertail Glider.



Fox on the Run Winners

Congratulations to Shaun Green (45), Darren Metcalf (50) and Deegan Noye (56) who between them took out 151 foxes in our local area. Why not come along and congratulate them on their efforts at the HCCC's AGM this coming Friday night (16/11) at the Tablelands Community Centre at 6pm.



Some more info about the Lace Monitor

Young Lace Monitors have broad yellow and blue-black stripes along the length of the body and tail, with scattered yellow, white or cream-coloured blotches. There are black bands across the snout, chin and throat.

As the lizard ages, the pattern of banding fades on the body, and just the paler spots remain. This varied colouration provides good camouflage when they're on a leafy tree branch.

The Lace Monitor is the second largest lizard in Australia. A large male can reach a maximum recorded length of more than 2 metres (6 1/2 feet) overall! An average adult length is about 1.5 m (4.8 ft). Females are smaller than males. The tail is strong and very long— about 1.8 times as long as the head and body!

Lace Monitors eat insects, mammals, reptiles (including snakes), eggs and nestling birds. Using their long, sharp claws, they can easily climb trees, even those with very smooth straight trunks. They will then dive into a nesting hole of a bird such as a lorikeet to take the young birds. Their presence in a tree is often heralded by the harsh squawking not only of the parents but of other birds.

The teeth are long, sharp and curved backwards. This makes it very difficult for a captured prey animal to escape. The bite from a monitor lizard causes swelling and bleeding in humans. This is mainly caused by toxic bacteria in the lizard's mouth. Recent work by Brian Fry at the University of Melbourne shows that monitors actually produce a mild venom similar to



rattlesnake venom. While this toxin has only a slight effect on people, it may help subdue small prey animals.

The food is swallowed whole or in pieces, after being torn apart by the teeth and front claws.

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, 100 years ago today, the guns of the Great War fell silent.

LEST WE FORGET



Reduce, Re-use, Recycle & Refuse Tips #6

Black plastic/foam trays are used by supermarkets to package meat & other foods. Black plastic contains carbon black pigments which do not reflect light. This means that they can't be sorted as recyclable objects, because the scanners can't pick up the black, so they end up in landfill. Why not refuse to buy items on black plastic (other colours are available) and tell the supermarket why. There is nothing like a "no sale" to change practices.

Spring still has a month to go...

and Seymour is still celebrating, so why not check out the **Seymour in Spring** website and see what is still to happen - www.seymouris.com.au



Understand your risk & plan ahead. Know what to do on hot, dry, windy days & plan for all situations. Talk to your family & friends about how you'll know when to leave, where you will go and how you will get there.

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