



THE GRANITE NEWS

10TH AUGUST
VOLUME 3
ISSUE 24

WHITEHEADS CREEK • TERIP TERIP • CAVEAT • RUFFY • HIGHLANDS • HUGHES CREEK

PEOPLE AND PLACES

WATCHING PLATYPUSES

A large dam on a creek near us is home to platypuses and we've found that the hour before dusk is a good time to sit and watch for them. We see them on about 70% of occasions but after several months of watching I'm not very good working out where they are underwater and where they will appear next.

A couple of times I have followed fast-moving zigzag lines of bubbles till a platypus has emerged, but more often what I've thought was such a line of bubbles has turned out to be an insect skimming across the surface of the water. And staring fixedly at bubbles rising from one spot has never resulted in a platypus.

When they do appear, they just suddenly and silently surface, creating a circular ripple a metre or more across, float there for a few seconds then just as silently disappear, (unless they're startled, in which case they'll disappear with a splash). Sometimes they resurface within a minute, other times it's 5 or 10 minutes before I see them again.

I find their low flat shape with the broad bill and tail unmistakable, though I've read that water rats can be mistaken for platypus. May be they can in a flowing creek or if they're splashing and diving.

I've scanned the bank for the burrow but haven't been able to find it or any signs of where they leave the water. The most I've seen at a time is two, but Peg Lade recalls seeing five during the daytime in this dam many years ago.

I don't know how common platypus are around Highlands, but I know of another dam on Woolshed creek where they can be found, and I wouldn't be surprised if there's quite a healthy population in the district. More information and a form for reporting sightings can be found at www.platypus.asn.au

By Louise Currie



NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Student of the Week

Bonnie Neicho: For a great game of maths Bingo. Well done Bonnie.



HAPPY HOME LEARNING AWARDS

Congratulations to the following:

Seniors: Imogen, Zac Juniors: James

Science Competition:

Three students participated in The University of NSW Science competition back in June. Congratulations to Imogen who received a Participation certificate and to John and Walter who both received Credit certificates.

A super effort!

Circus Skills & Music Day

Wow what a day!! We learned how to spin plates, juggle scarves, walk on stilts and ride little bikes. Phil was entertaining and so much fun. It was so lovely to see all students demonstrating persistence, encouraging each other and having an absolute ball. Hopefully Phil will be able to come back to HPS again.



WELCOME TO ISSUE 24

Please send all articles and community and personal notices to miranda@omnipotent.com.au

I am changing the cut off and printing days again to try and free up my weekends a little more. I will print on Fridays whenever possible and articles etc need to be in by 9am Friday morning to catch the press.

RECREATING THE COUNTRY

- A blueprint for the design of sustainable landscapes

Published by Australian Forest Growers on behalf of Ballarat Region Treegrowers, *Recreating the Country* challenges landholders and land managers in general to consider new ways of thinking about how we might reverse the inexorable decline and disappearance of Australian plants and animals from rural landscapes.

While integrating conservation and production has become the catchcry from foresters to dairy farmers, what can be practically done? This book provides the 'stretch goals' and the blueprint for ways of adding habitat and designing more 'wildlife-friendly' properties. It's set to become the 'bible' for a new form of revegetation - the 'biorich plantation.' Integrated with other forms of vegetation, these would aim to enrich habitat potential across rural landscapes, not just for a lifetime, but in perpetuity.

Author Stephen Murphy asserts we have to rethink our revegetation strategies to match the sophistication of natural design principles. Stephen, with his wife Lina, has run a successful native plants nursery in central Victoria for over 25 years. He believes that even the most well-intentioned shelterbelts, Landcare plantings or mixed species farm forests lack the features to make them rich in critical habitat for wildlife, let alone capable of self-perpetuation for centuries to come. Pale shadows of a natural grassland, woodland or forest, they are destined to fail as a wellspring for native plants and animals. At the heart of *Recreating the Country* are ten design principles, observed from nature, which set out to bridge the gap between farm forestry and environmental plantings and bring back the bush in rural landscapes.

Enquiries GibWettenhall@BallaratRegionTreegrowers 5334 4643
gib@netconnect.com.au

Community What's On Calendar—August/September 2009

Fortnight beg 3rd August	Terip Terip mowing roster Both sides of Springs Road and all 4 courts	Tim and Frances Lawrence Bruce and Denise McLennan
9th - 15th Aug	WHITEHEADS CREEK- TARCOMBE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE TRUCK ROSTER David Freeman Anthony Wallis Neville Ford Michel Becks	
Thursday 13 August	LECTURE 1 - Rhythms of Earth's Climate. Speaker: Henrk Wahren Climate change is constantly in the news, but how does Earth's climate work? Is our climate changing? If so, how unusual are the changes? How has Earth's climate changed in the past and what caused these changes? Are the causes still operating today? Can we do anything about them? How rapidly can Earth's climate change? Should we be worried? The aim of this lecture is to explore some of these questions and provide the enough background information to help people interpret and assess the continuous flow of news, data and opinion about climate change. VENUE - Merton Hall, The Rudolph Steiner School, 91 Highett Street, Mansfield. TIME - 6.00 pm (40-50 minutes presentation followed by questions). AFTERWARDS - BYO drinks; nibbles provided. Gold coin donation to assist with hall hire and nibbles would be appreciated. For more information contact Peter Wiseman on wisemanpeter@bigpond.com.	
Friday 14th & Saturday 15th August	The Mad Hatters present THE EXHIBITION A light hearted look at the art world "Trust me darling!" Highlands Hall 7.30pm Tickets \$8.00 adult/\$5.00 child/ \$20.00 family For bookings contact Pauline 57969301 BYO Drinks & nibbles Tables available light refreshments provided	
16th - 22nd Aug	WHITEHEADS CREEK- TARCOMBE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE TRUCK ROSTER Ashley Waite Geoff Bond Peter Wales Richard Robinson	
23rd - 29th Aug	WHITEHEADS CREEK- TARCOMBE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE TRUCK ROSTER Chris Head Lindsay Heffer Tim Hayes Glenn Christensen	
Thursday 27th August	Secret Men's Business at the Caveat Church on the last Thursday of every month. Come along at 5.30pm and enjoy a snag and a chat by the fire. Everyone is welcome.	
Thursday 27th August	Highlands-Caveat Brigade - extraordinary meeting to be held at the Highlands Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. to discuss additional infrastructure for the brigade and to protect community assets.	
Saturday 29th August	"Welcome Strangers" 8 pm BYO drinks and nibbles. "Four consummate musicians present a show featuring tenderly collected versions of all but lost authentic traditional rural Australian fiddle tunes. Also some precious songs sung in sweet harmonies that permeated our culture via early immigration and some that were written right here on Aussie soil." Bookings with Glen 5790 4318.	
Sunday 30th August	Highlands Ramblers Highlands Hall 10.30 am Ring Peg 57969222 for more details	
Tuesday 1st September	Ruffy Bookclub 7.30pm venue to be decided Discussing 'Enduring Love' by Ian McEwan	
Saturday 12th September	OLD TIME DANCE at the Ruffy Hall at 8 PM Music supplied by the popular CD Admittance \$7.50 Please bring a plate of goodies to share Enquiries: Ph. 57 90 4318	
Thursday 24th September	Secret Men's Business at the Caveat Church on the last Thursday of every month. Come along at 5.30pm and enjoy a snag and a chat by the fire. Everyone is welcome.	
Friday 25th September	Broken Boosey Biodiversity Celebration Day 2009 With thanks to the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Parks Victoria, Moira Shire Council and the Department of Sustainability and Environment the Broken Boosey Conservation Management Network, Presents..... Come along and learn about some of the threatened fauna conservation and habitat restoration projects that have been happening in and around the Boosey Creek in the Tungamah area. A range of interesting presentations will take place in the morning session and participants will then go for a walk to see some of the habitat works that have occurred along the Boosey Creek in Tungamah in the afternoon. COME ALONG FOR A FREE ROAST LUNCH! Please RSVP by Wednesday 16th September to Jim Castles 58 201 141, 0427 053 700 or email jimc@gbcm.vic.gov.au Time: 9.30am - 3.00pm Location: Tungamah Football Club Rooms Bring: Hat, water bottle, sunscreen and a camera	

August Events Alexandra library

13	Murrindindi Writers – all aspiring writers welcome	10
13	4F food, fun & fiction Thursdays any one under 12	3.45 – 5
15	Jim Kinniburgh Inspire a love of reading @ any age	10 - 12
17	Vintage Readers grey power book discussion group	2 - 4
20	Storytime for under 3's , rhymes, stories, activities	11 – 12
21	Storytime for 3 – 5's stories, fun, activities & songs	11 – 12
24	Story Collecting Workshop with Arnold Zable	9.30 - 4
25	Blokes Night – drinks and a yarn with mates	6.30 – 8
27	4F food, fun & fiction Thursdays for under 12s	3.45 - 5

FOR SALE

Aus Silky Maltese cross pups - two males Very cute, lovely and fluffy, great pets and family dogs. Can view both parents.

Fully vaccinated and wormed.
12 wks - \$250

Helen McKenzie 03 5790 4211 AH

Classifieds & Community Notices

FROM GARDEN FORK TO TABLE FORK AT TALLAROOK

The Tallarook Mechanics Institute Committee of Management has long been renowned for unique initiatives in the district. Their latest endeavour is the Tallarook Farmer's Market to be held on the first Sunday of every month. The project was initially funded by the Victorian Government through a grant to the Mitchell Shire from Regional Development Victoria's Farmers' Market Program.

Once a month direct from the farmer's garden fork will be freshly grown local produce and goods. A range of goods including fruit, vegetables, wine, meat, eggs and bread will be available – from producers such as Yellow Box Road Organics, the Mayor's Garden, Chapman Hill Olive Oil, Pyalong Tomatoes, Clonbinane Belted Galloway Beef and Avenel Honey.

Learn about the provenance of your food as well as adding to the social and economic health of your community as you shop.

The Farmers Market movement is growing, with 120 across the country and rising. Exciting passions for fresh vibrant food that is homegrown and homemade. So keep out of the supermarket from 9am till 1pm on Sunday August 2nd and come and join us for a rollicking fresh time.

For more information contact Ellise Rickard 0427801633 or elliselouise@gmail.com

RUFFY BOOK CLUB

Ruffy Book club met last week to discuss Kim Edward's book 'The Memory Keeper's Daughter'. It was an excellent discussion and covered quite challenging topics such as "Can you ever imagine a circumstance when it might be the right choice to shield those closest to you from the truth?" The book is an exploration of grief and loss and a meditation on the power of love, well worth reading. The writing is beautiful and the characters feel totally real.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 1st September. We are discussing Ian McEwan's novel "Enduring Love" This was a Year 12 book two years ago and is a novel of love, faith, and suspense, and of how life can change in an instant.

Join us and enjoy a glass of wine and a stimulating and thought provoking discussion.

VICTORIAN WATERWAY SURVEY

We believe many Victorians have a deep-seated interest in the health of Victoria's waterways. The Department of Sustainability and Environment (Victorian Government), the Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) and Melbourne Water want to make sure you know about an important survey that is being conducted State-wide. This world first survey is open to all Victorians, and we particularly need your opinion. The online survey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/myvicwaterway>) takes only 15 minutes to complete, and we would greatly value your participation. So far we have approximately 2500 responses to the email survey and we need an additional 3500 internet responses by mid August.

Victoria is the national leader in monitoring the physical health of their waterways but until now, not much has been known about their social importance. This project fills in the gaps, and aims to provide Victorian waterway managers with knowledge they haven't had before, including a comprehensive understanding of community expectations, attitudes, and behaviours towards waterway management. Among other questions, the survey asks you what you use rivers and other waterways for, what you think makes a waterway healthy, and who is responsible for waterway health. The findings will inform management practices and policy, including the Victorian Strategy for the Health of Rivers, Estuaries and Wetlands, currently being renewed under the climate change outlook programme. Professor John Cary and Anne Pisarski are running the survey on behalf of the DSE, CMA and Melbourne Water. A public report on the findings is expected next year.

More on Corporate Volunteers

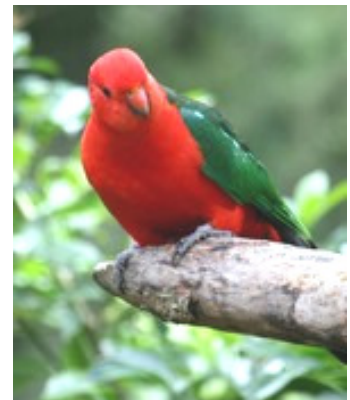
I am the Business & Community Partnerships Manager for Volunteering Victoria. I am currently sourcing opportunities for employee volunteers 2009. If you have any Volunteer roles available that do not involve direct fundraising, please email these to me and they will be posted on our calendar. Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss possible opportunities or the employee volunteering program in general; I am always happy to chat.

Marisa Nowak 9934 0504

BITS OF BOTANY AND BIRDS

KING PARROT

King Parrots are not permanent residents of Highlands, but they do appear from time to time. They are bigger than Rosellas and have a different call, they are supposed to be very destructive in orchards, but they are very beautiful. They are the only parrot with a completely red head, the female has a dark green head and upper breast. They disperse to lower country in the autumn and winter, and like all parrots, they nest in hollows in trees.



MOWER ROSTER FOR HIGHLANDS ARBORETUM

Highlands Landcare, in conjunction with the Highlands Hall and Highlands Caveat CFA, has purchased a JD Ztrac Outfront mower. This should make it much easier to maintain the Highlands hall, arboretum, stone circle and the CFA precinct.

Volunteers are needed for the mowing roster. The more people who help, the less often we will all have to do it. If you would like to volunteer please contact Scott McKay on 57969259. This is a great way to contribute to your community and help keep our community assets safe in the summer. Are you feeling inspired ?!

Rocky
Passes



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1590 Highlands Rd

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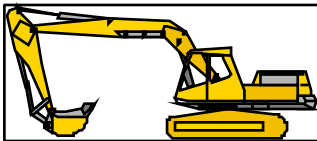
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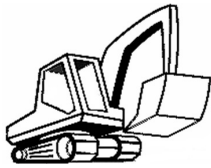
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