



## PEOPLE AND PLACES

### WHAT LIES BENEATH IS IMPORTANT

Every farmer has them but not every farmer knows what goes on underneath them.

We are talking about pastures and particularly soils.

And while we can see what grows on top what lies beneath is often an unknown.

The Strathbogie Tableland Landcare Group, with the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and the DPI with funding from *Caring for Our Country* set out to address the question of "How Does My Pasture Grow" at a Soil Management Field Day held last week on David Hamilton's Bolarum property at Strathbogie.

Three soil pits have been excavated on the property down to a depth of nominally one metre to expose the soil profile in different positions to inform on how the soil structure and its management directly influences air, water and root penetration, affecting the pasture growth and productivity.

Three soil scientists from the DPI, David Rees, Cath Botta and Brad Costin along with consultant Peter Ockenden informed the forty or so attendees since the soil condition will be the single most important factor that determines how well pasture can grow in the Strathbogie Tablelands which are mainly granitic.

Most farmers when looking at or thinking about their soils focus only on the top 10cm, since that is the zone most able to be influenced through short term management issues.

The speakers noted "however the roots of the plant explore the soil at much greater depths and the health of the soil down the profile has a major impact on the thrift and long term survival of pastures".

At the Soil Management Field Day attendees looked at the soil profile, how it changes in position in the landscape (often determined by slopes and gradients) and the chemical and physical characteristics of the soil that affect plant growth.

Those present were given the opportunity to become proficient in a few simple soil tests to enable soils to be looked at in greater detail.

The simple tests were to identify the

soil characteristics including the elements of sand, silt and clay, soil texture, stability, colour and its pH.

A Rapid Soil Assessment Tool (RSAT Kit) was also provided so that farmers can determine and record their own soil conditions and in turn formulate appropriate responses which may include choice of grasses, additives of fertilisers or lime and cultivation.

So if you see a large excavator at work in your neighbour's paddock you can probably assume that the mysteries of soils and their constituents are under investigation!

A second project the Strathbogie Alternative Fertiliser Trial that is trialling all those commercial compounds that are frequently advertised in the rural pages is also underway on David Hamilton's farm.

Also being conducted by local farmers and the Strathbogie Tablelands Landcare Group it is scheduled to take three years to enable meaningful conclusions to be drawn.

A Field Day will be offered later in the year to both inform land owners and reveal some early results.

Watch for it if you have an interest in those mystical compounds some of which include seaweed, bioorganics and even worm juice!



DPI soil scientist David Rees explains the mysteries of Strathbogie Tablelands granitic soils to attendees at last week's Soil Management Field Day as revealed by one of the nominal one metre deep excavations on David Hamilton's farm.

**THANKS TO THE GOULBURN  
BROKEN CATCHMENT  
MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY AND  
THE HUGHES CREEK CATCHMENT  
COLLABORATIVE FOR HELPING TO  
FUND THIS NEWSLETTER**

## WELCOME TO ISSUE 16

Please send any news to me at [mirandayorston@bigpond.com](mailto:mirandayorston@bigpond.com) or ring 57969261.

If you would like to receive The Granite News by email [www.highlands.org.au](http://www.highlands.org.au) and just **subscribe, it is as easy as that!**

There will be no Granite News from the 17th June to the 8th July.

## NOTES FROM HIGHLANDS PRIMARY

### Funding:

At the end of last year I applied for some funding through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program. We were successful and have been granted a substantial amount of money over 3 years to employ a welfare person at HPS. I am currently in the process of meeting with key stakeholders to determine how the funding will work at our school.

### Mavis:

Mavis and Don visited on Monday. It was wonderful to see them and Mavis misses us all so much. We try and keep her up to date by sending the newsletter each week. Mavis presented the school with a fascinating reference book on Australian Birds.

## FREE TO AN INTERESTED GARDENER

Annette Radford is dividing up some plants as part of her winter tidy up and wondered if anyone was interested in *Miscanthus sinensis* 'gracillimus', a large, elegant grass with sterile seeds so it is safe to plant in the garden, (see photo below), *Nepeta* (Catmint) and *Sedum* 'Autumn Joy'. If you would like some, give her a ring on 57903252.



## COMMUNITY WHAT'S ON CALENDAR - JUNE/JULY 2012

Week beg 10th June	<i>Terip Terip Recreation Reserve Mowing Roster Tim &amp; Cindy Hayes Marcus Hill</i>
Tuesday 5th June	<b>Ruffy Rural Fire Brigade-Annual General Meeting</b> followed by general meeting at the Ruffy Hall, 8pm . All welcome.
Friday 8th June	<b>'Drinks on the Deck'</b> at Highlands Community Hall from 6.30pm. Bring food to share for a meal together and catch up with friends old and new. All welcome - especially new faces. Gold coin donation to cover power.
June 9 and 10	<b>EUROA COMMUNITY CINEMA</b> "The Lucky One" 105 mins (M) Drama 3.5 stars An American marine sergeant stationed in Iraq discovers the photo of the pretty girlfriend of one of his fallen comrades which seems to bring him luck during his remaining tour of duty. After he returns home he manages to track down the girl and there our movie takes off. Based on a book by the author of The Notebook
Tuesday 12th June	<b>'Ag Consultant for a Day'</b> with Lisa Warn from Melbourne University's Mackinnon Project Come along to discuss pasture establishment, management, composition and suitability for soil type/landscape and to interpret laboratory soil tests. Meet at 'Shenandoah', 2809 Yea-Whittlesea Rd, Hazeldene (Flowerdale) VICMAP Book: Maps 403 and 6365 (H1, H2) Time 10:00 am to 2.30 pm (lunch provided) 10 – 11:15: Farm walk 'Shenandoah', 2809 Yea - Whittlesea Rd, Hazeldene (Flowerdale) Landholders: Norm and Jane Berndt 11:30 – 12:45: Farm walk 2548 Broadford - Flowerdale Road, Strath Creek Landholders: David Ralph and Rosemary Simon-Ralph 1:00 – 2:30: Presentation and lunch Springvalley Recreational Reserve, Reserve Pavillion, Spring Valley Road, Flowerdale RSVP is essential. Please RSVP by Thursday 7th June 2012 to Claire Wade at DPI Broadford. Phone: 5784 0622 Mobile: 0408 132 749 Email: <a href="mailto:claire.n.wade@dpi.vic.gov.au">claire.n.wade@dpi.vic.gov.au</a>
Thursday 14th June	<b>Alexandra library</b> an essential part of your community! 5772 0349 Murrindindi Writers – all aspiring writers welcome 10 am
June 16 and 17	<b>EUROA COMMUNITY CINEMA</b> "The Five Year Engagement" 124 mins Comedy (MA) 4 stars This movie starts where most romantic comedies end! Tom, a chef, is engaged to Emily, a graduate. She gets the offer of a lifetime (in Michigan), just as he is about to get his own restaurant (in San Francisco). They decide to follow her career opportunities and we are embraced by all the characters that surround these two as they keep being tripped up on their way down the aisle.
Saturday 16th June.	<b>DETOX YOUR HOME</b> Are you wondering how to get rid of all the old chemicals you have lying around the home? We are encouraging all residents to take advantage of the 'Detox your Home' program which is coming at the Yea Saleyards . This free service allows you to safely dispose of old cleaning products, paint, dead batteries and even weed killer stored around the home without putting a strain on the environment. On the day, simply bring along your containers for disposal between 1.30pm – 4.30pm and you won't even need to leave your car. There will be instructions and directional signage at the site. Bring as few or as many products as you like but please ensure that the containers are no more than 20 litres or 20 kilograms. For a full listing of what is acceptable for disposal visit <a href="http://www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au">www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au</a> .
Sunday 17th June	<b>BIKE SERVICING</b> with Shannon Rademaker, All Terrain Cycles Get your bike serviced at the Yea Community House all day Bookings are essential! Yea and District Community House Phone: 03 5797 3070
Wednesday 20th June	<b>Alexandra library</b> an essential part of your community! 5772 0349 Women's Winter Solstice Dinner – Bookings Essential 7pm – 10pm
Thursday 21st June	<b>CARBON FARMING ROADSHOW- SHEPPARTON</b> Would you like to know more about the Carbon Farming Initiative? A free event is to be held in Shepparton where industry experts will discuss practical opportunities in Carbon Farming. RSVP is essential due to limited numbers by Monday 18th June. Please contact: Phone: GBCMA on 03) 5736 0100 Email: <a href="mailto:chris@gbcma.vic.gov.au">chris@gbcma.vic.gov.au</a>
Friday 22nd June	<b>Winter Solstice Celebration with a Difference:</b> Free Dinner at the Ruffy Hall from 6.00 pm. Everybody with an interest in Ruffy's future is invited to take part in this community engagement evening organised by the Ruffy Community Action Group. Over a delicious meal and drinks we will reflect on what makes Ruffy a great place to live in or to visit, and how we can make it an even better place. Look out for further details here or call Verena on 5790 4309!
Saturday 23rd June	<b>WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO BE DOING ON THE LONGEST AND COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR?</b> THE UPTON HILL FIRE BRIGADE AND THE BURNT CREEK LANDCARE GROUP INVITE YOU, YOUR FAMILY (AND KIDS) AND FRIENDS TO JOIN US FOR A MID WINTER DINNER AND BRIGADE PRESENTATION NIGHT Sandy MacKenzie (Brigade Treasurer) 5796 2088 <a href="mailto:sandymackenzie@ozemail.com.au">sandymackenzie@ozemail.com.au</a>
Thursday 28th June	<b>HIGHLANDS / CAVEAT Rural Fire Brigade</b> AGM (election of office bearers) @ 19:30 @ Highlands Fire Shed Office Everyone urged to attend the meeting so we have a quorum.
Saturday 14th July	<b>Terip Terip Annual Community Dinner</b> at the Recreation Reserve commencing at 6.30 pm, \$20 per head or \$50 per family. 50's and 60's Rock and Roll theme. Prizes for the best dressed female and male rockers. Everyone welcome. Come along and enjoy a yummy casserole dinner and wonderful company. Bring your dancing shoes and rock along to the great music provided by Jimmy Davidson.

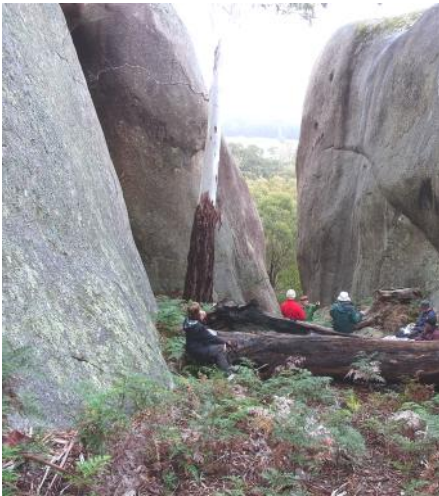
# Classifieds & Community Notices

## HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS' WALK

On a cold, overcast but fine day, the Ramblers travelled by car to the old Molesworth Cutting. From here, we walked north along the old road to the site of the Jeffreys' homestead. Very little remains of the house which was burnt to the ground in the 1950's. Two huge old pine trees which were nearly dead were nearby.

Heading east, we walked to the Rantin Robin Rocks where we enjoyed a rock scramble and lunch. These rocks are a jumble of huge granite boulders on top of a rise and great for exploring nooks and crannies! Onwards to a Pinniger cairn constructed in 1865. This particular cairn, one of many built by the original surveyor of the district, Thomas Pinniger, is unique as it is built on top of a large rock. Perhaps this saved the cairn from destruction over the years.

From here, we returned to the cars and then back to the Highlands Hall. Thanks to Andrew Shaw for leading the group and we look forward to the next ramble at the end of June.



## WANTED HOUSE/COTTAGE

To rent or caretake in Ruffy- Caveat area. I am locally employed  
PH 0403414444

## ARCHIBALD PRIZE 2012

See all 41 Archibald Prize finalists at TarraWarra Museum of Art.

Saturday 9th June- 8th July

Open Tuesday - Sunday, 9.30am to 5pm

Closed Mondays except Queen's Birthday holiday

We went last year and it was terrific but best to book tickets on line to save a long queue.- it was VERY busy!

## BITS OF BOTANY AND BIRDS



Thanks to Mavis Cook for this photo of a mother and baby in her garden. Mavis wonders if they are related to those released in the district in 1944.

## YOGA CLASSES

incorporating the Alexander Technique with Carol

6 week block starting Friday 1st June at 10.15am-11.15am \$12 per session (\$72 for 6 weeks).

Bring a yoga mat (if you have one), a blanket and a 5cm thick book.

Yea and District Community House  
15 The Semi Circle Yea  
Phone: 5797 3070 Mob: 0477 492 543

## BOOK REVIEW

### Stella by the Sea - Ruth Starke

Another entertaining Aussie Chomps title and one that was short-listed for the Australian CBC Awards in 2004.

Stella is forever moving house, as her mother is a high-flying real estate agent and her father one of those designers who blitzes backyards. So when Stella moves into her fifth residence in two years, a glass wall apartment several stories above the sea, she is more than a little bit sick of all the shifting around. What she really wants is a cubby house that she can call her own and luckily she finds an ad for one in the local paper.

Not only does she successfully negotiate to buy it from old Chester, she also asks him if she can leave it in his backyard, and come around to play at his place. The deal is done and she is thoroughly enjoying her new found freedom and friends when she discovers that not only her cubby house, but Chester's home, is up for redevelopment. Can she save the things that she loves? Read it and find out.

By Pauline Roberts

## FOX CONTROL

### Preventative control: integrating options

You need to approach the concept of fox control in the same manner used to successfully control rabbits. No single technique will provide effective long-term protection of your livestock. Programs should be planned in advance and wherever possible be integrated to include a variety of techniques such as poisoning, shooting and den fumigation. As foxes are very mobile, widely distributed with the ability to quickly move throughout an area, control is rarely effective if carried out in isolation. A group of landholders tackling the whole problem in a simultaneous and coordinated manner is likely to be more successful than isolated individuals tackling only part of the problem. These programs therefore should also be conducted on a co-ordinated landholder group or district wide basis in order to maximise long-term fox control.

### Husbandry methods

Small lambing paddocks should be used to allow easier monitoring of the flock and reduce the chances of young lambs being left unattended a long way from their mothers. Lambing paddocks sited close to the homestead are also easier to check frequently. Shed lambing can be a practical means of preventing fox predation on small flocks of valuable animals. Some producers have successfully used trained guard dogs (eg. Anatolian shepherds, Maremma sheep dogs) to protect their flocks from fox predation. Carcasses of stock/native animals must at all times of the year be removed and/or destroyed in accordance with the Directions for the Use of 1080 Pest Animal Bait Products in Victoria.

### Use of 1080 poison baits

The use of 1080 pest animal baits products, when implemented correctly, is an effective method of controlling foxes. 1080 pest animal bait products can only be purchased by authorised persons. Users of 1080 pest animal bait products must adhere to the requirements on the product label and the Directions for the Use of 1080 Pest Animal Bait Products in Victoria. For more information about purchasing and using 1080 pest animal bait products refer to [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/1080](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/1080)

Extract from Landcare Notes: Foxes: Integrated Fox Control Department of Primary Industries Updated: Dec 2007

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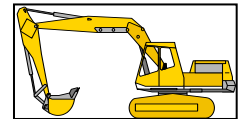
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