

# THE GRANITE NEWS



The Granite News - serving the communities of Caveat, Highlands, Hughes Creek, Ruffy, Tarcombe, Terip Terip & Whiteheads Creek.



3rd March 2024 | Volume 18 Issue 8

## Welcome, Wumindjika & G'day

Another bullet was fortunately dodged last Wednesday when the cool change arrived a little earlier than predicted and there were no dry lightning strikes, or kids toasting marshmallows, with their parents' permission, on a day with 40km winds.

As autumn officially arrived as of last Friday hopefully that is the last Total Fire Ban Day for the 2023-24 summer season...

On a more upbeat note, the membership of the HCCC (Hughes Creek Catchment Collective) has in recent weeks risen to **197!** Yes, that's just 3 members short of what seemed a HUGE ask a couple of years ago - 200 HCCC Landcare Members. Are there any more readers out there who would like to see the double ton become a reality, not just an aspirational goal? If so, please email [editor@tgn.org.au](mailto:editor@tgn.org.au) to join the happy team.

Remember there is no cost or impost to becoming a member, just an interest in supporting the Landcare work that HCCC does.

Please read on for another interesting issue, Pauline And Kenny? Was looking forward to the first ramble for 2024.

## Weeding out Invaders

A collaboration of state and federal organisations and government bodies funded by the National Landcare Program, has resulted in an Australina first - an app that can identify more than 450 priority invasive weeds country-wide, from Afghan melon to Yorkshire fog.

**Weedscan** harnesses AI (Artificial Intelligence) to identify weeds, then records your findings for you to use or share with the relevant authority.

Some 120,000 images were captured by the CSIRO weed botanists to train the AI algorithm, so that users can take photos of weeds on their phone and identify them from the app. This is a game changer for farmers, community groups or anyone interested in protecting and generating native habitat...and best of all it's **FREE!**



Download the app at [weedscan.org.au](http://weedscan.org.au)  
(Article from Gardening Australia - March 2024)

Feedback? [editor@tgn.org.au](mailto:editor@tgn.org.au)  
or to subscribe on-line go to  
[www.highlands.org.au](http://www.highlands.org.au)

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

"I tried running this morning, but I kept spilling my coffee."

Anon.



Month	Highlands	Ruffy	Terip
Feb.	11.3 mm	9 mm	N/A
2024 Total	206.7 mm	169 mm	N/A
Rainy Days	2 days	3 days	N/A

	NB: Fully vaccinated attendees are appreciated at all events.	What's On - March 2024
	<b>Fri. 8th March @ 6.30pm</b>	<b>DRINKS on the DECK</b> @ Highlands Community Hall Starts @ 6.30pm, bring food to share and catch up with friends old and new. All welcome, especially new faces. Gold coin donation to cover power. <b>Contact Paula 0419 551882</b>
	<b>Thurs. 14th March @ 7.30</b>	<b>HCCC MONTHLY MEETING</b> @ Caveat Church Everyone is welcome, put the date in your diary now. <b>Enquiries? Justus 0427 524473</b>
 <b>NB: Date change</b>	<b>Monday 18th March @ 11am</b>	<b>HIGHLANDS SPINNERS</b> @ 450 Caveat-Dropmore Rd The highland Spinning Club will get together at the same place and the same time with the same good company. BYO lunch and great tea & coffee will be provided. <b>Enquiries? Jan - 5790 4361</b>
<b>It's back in 2024</b>	<b>Sat. 23rd March @ 7pm</b>	<b>THE GREAT TERIP TRIVIA NIGHT</b> - see p.4 for more details - @ Terip Rec Reserve
<b>Details? See p.3</b>	<b>Wed. 27th March 9-4</b>	<b>FREE GRAZING WORKSHOP</b> @ HCCC VENUE TBC All welcome! <b>Enquiries? Vanessa - <a href="mailto:vanessa@hccclandcare.net.au">vanessa@hccclandcare.net.au</a></b>
	<b>Thurs. 28th March @ 5.30</b>	<b>SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS</b> @ Caveat Church All people in the district are welcome, pink note (\$5) donation towards BBQ, BYO & chat.
	<b>Thurs. 28th March 6-8pm</b>	<b>HIGHLANDS BOOK CLUB</b> @ Highlands Community Hall All welcome, BYO plate to share & preferred beverage. Gold coin donation. 'Thursday Murder Club' by Richard Osman & 'Food, Sex and Money' by Liz Byski are up for discussion. <b>Enquiries? Robyn 0409 528235</b>
	<b>Every Second Wednesday 10-30-12.30</b>	<b>MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE</b> @ Highlands Community Hall The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight. Why not pop in? <b>Forthcoming dates are 6th &amp; 20th March.</b>
	<b>Mon. 5th Feb @ 7pm</b>	<b>TABLE TENNIS MONDAYS</b> @TCC Ruffy Come along & have some fun! <b>Enquiries? 0427 690970 or <a href="mailto:tccruffy@gmail.com">tccruffy@gmail.com</a></b>
	<b>1st &amp; 3rd Tuesdays 1-3</b>	<b>DIGITAL &amp; ON-LINE LEARNING</b> @ TCC, 27 Nolans Rd, Ruffy 5th & 19th March <b>Enquiries? Bob - 0480 348788</b>
	<b>2nd &amp; 4th Sundays</b>	<b>ST DAVID'S UNITING CHURCH - TERIP RUFFY</b> 2nd Sunday 11.15am Pastor Scott Leslie / 4th Sunday 11am Morning tea & Study group
<b>NEW times!</b>	<b>Mon 8.45-9.45am Wed. 6.45-7.45pm</b>	<b>CUSTOM YOGA is BACK with Ingrid</b> at the Tablelands Community Centre \$25 per hour long class BYO mat and blanket <b>Enquiries? Ingrid <a href="mailto:ingstar.7@gmail.com">ingstar.7@gmail.com</a></b>
<b>Date for Diaries!</b>	<b>Thurs. 2nd May - all day!</b>	<b>SOIL HEALTH &amp; SUSTAINABLE FARMING WORKSHOP</b> @ Seymour Racecourse Come and hear Matthew Evans and other knowledgeable speakers on this vital topic!

## Grazing for Soil Health Workshop “Healthy Soils in the Hughes Creek Catchment” Landcare project

Vanessa Malandrin, HCCC Project Coordinator

Dear Readers,

Bookings have already started to come in for the workshop “Grazing for Soil Health” with Dr Judi Earl, planned for **Wednesday the 27th of March, from 9 am to 4 pm**, in the Hughes Creek Catchment.

To make sure this workshop is tailored to the participants’ needs, [we kindly invite you to complete a brief online survey at this link](#). And if you’d like to learn more about Judi’s approach to grazing, you’ll be able to find several videos and other resources at [this link](#)

Last year I had the chance to attend a presentation given by Judi in Nagambie, and I was impressed by her knowledge and her capacity to engage with the public. On that specific occasion, the focus was on horse health and grazing management, which I found very interesting. Therefore, if you have horses on your property and you didn’t think of soil health as an interest or a priority for you, I will invite you to reconsider that!

The subjects covered in the workshop ‘Grazing for Soil Health’ will include:

- The key biological, physical and chemical characteristics of a healthy soil.
- Why plants (grasses) are so important for soil health.
  - How plants respond to defoliation (grazing).
- How grazing management influences plant growth and production.
  - Assessing pastures and pasture growth.
  - Feed budgeting.
- Introduction to grazing planning and what tools are available out there.

If you live within the Hughes Creek Catchment area and you’d like to host this workshop, please feel free to get in touch with me at [vanessa@hccclandcare.net.au](mailto:vanessa@hccclandcare.net.au). To book your spot at the workshop, please RSVP at the same address. Thank you.



## FREE and ALMOST FREE

We will be shortly renovating our kitchen and have an island bench, corner bench and some walls cupboards available for reuse. Also a small gas fridge for sale at \$50. No cost for benches.

**Message Pauline (not the editor) if interested, 0407 684834**





# Terip's Tantalizingly Terrific

## TRIVIA *night* FUNDRAISER

**at the Terip Community Centre**

**Saturday, 23 March 2024, 7:00 for 7:30 pm Trivia kick-off**

**Tickets: Adults \$15, Children \$5**

*Supper provided*

**BYO Drinks and Nibbles**

*Teams of 6-8 can be entered or come long and join a team on the night!*

**RSVP by Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> March for catering to [teripterip3719@gmail.com](mailto:teripterip3719@gmail.com), message our Terip Community FB page or phone: Frances 0427 904 262 or Jenny 0448 833 875**

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Hi Everyone....

Our Trivia night is back by popular demand! After a great night last year, it's time to gather your friends for a fun and challenging night. A team from Ruffy are still the reigning champions! Will they have what it takes to be the champions again!

If you have any new neighbours in Terip that may not be on our email list, please pass this on to them.

More details on the above flyer. Hoping to see you there!

HIGHLANDS / CAVEAT RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

BRIGADE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Please see below for the Brigade Management Structure indicating positions available for nomination at our next AGM.

This will be held at the **Highlands Hall on Thursday 11th April 2024 commencing at 7.30pm.**

Nominations can be made on the night of the meeting, or prior to by phoning David Webb on **0417 150 113**. If there is more than 1 person nominated for a position the decision will be made by a show of hands.

Please note, you must be a CFA member to enable you to vote.

Scott McKay - HCRFB Captain

Captain	VFBV Delegates x 2
1st Lieutenant	Yea Group Delegates x 2
2nd Lieutenant	Brigade Training
3rd Lieutenant	Training Co-ordinator
4th Lieutenant	Asset Maintenance
Communications Officer	Catering
Community Safety Co-ordinator	Brigade Chairperson
Secretary	Brigade Support
Treasurer	

Thanks for your interest and support.



Look closely...  
and just make sure all your Boots are clean and free of Summer leftovers.  
With thanks to Roger for finding this little gem.

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ADVANCE NOTICE – SAVE THE DATE

2nd May 2024 at the Seymour Racecourse

The HCCC is organising a workshop on Soil Health and Sustainable Farming.

We have just secured our Keynote speaker

Matthew Evans

Food Writer, Farmer, Television Broadcaster and Chef

Stay tuned for more details and further speakers

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What's so special about...  
March 8th

it's  
International Women's Day

International Women's Day (IWD) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.

The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

Significant activity is witnessed worldwide as groups come together to celebrate women's achievements or rally for women's equality.

As women make up more than half the population of Australia this is recognition on a significant scale.

So make IWD your day and do what you can, in your own way, to help forge a gender equal world, as well as acknowledge all the special women in your life for their valuable contributions.

## Nature Glenelg Trust works to clear blue gum plantation from Walker Swamp

**This article was taken from the ABC's news website and is indicative of what can go wrong when plants are not suited to the local environment and how restoring the correct trees can then encourage other suitable species to grow and create a more complex environment for plants and creatures alike.**

Blue gums have degraded Victoria's native wetlands. Red gums are now restoring them.

Walker Swamp in south-west Victoria was a healthy wetland, home to populations of platypus, native frogs, and a dazzling array of waterbirds, along with countless less charismatic but equally vital invertebrate and fish species. However, over two centuries it was flooded, then drained for agriculture, cropped, and ultimately replanted with Tasmanian blue gums for timber harvesting.

Now the blue gums are being removed, replaced by red gums and other plant species indigenous to the area.

About 400 hectares of commercial blue gum plantation was bought by not-for-profit organisation Nature Glenelg Trust (NGT) about five years ago with a view to returning Walker Swamp to its natural state.

"It's not just the fact they are Tasmanian blue gums, it's how they were grown here," NGT senior ecologist Greg Kerr said, "The blue gums were grown as a crop, so you've got a monoculture."

He said it was missing a complexity of species spread across the landscape.

"In a [healthy] forest, you have a ground layer, there are wattles and other things growing in a middle layer, and then you've got the eucalyptus and things like she-oaks growing in an upper layer. That complexity of habitat means a huge range of birds and mammals and reptiles use different elements of the habitat, different components of what's there."

In contrast to the plantations, natural blue gum forests — such as those in Gippsland and the Otway Ranges in Victoria, and throughout Tasmania — have as much or more biological diversity as open woodland. But the blue gums are not an indigenous nor a healthy addition to those wetland environments. They occur naturally in higher rainfall areas and do not thrive in a flood plain environment.

"When [plantations] were established across this site, they planted blue gums right across all of the wetlands, as well as all the dry areas," Dr Kerr said. That meant that many of the trees that had been planted died when the wetlands filled periodically in the first few years."

Mounds and furrows which raised the blue gums seedlings about 15 to 20 cms were built in long rows about 5m apart.

**(See remnants of remaining trees in photo >>> both in the water and at the bottom RH corner)**

"A difference of a centimetre or two can make a big difference to what's inundated and has huge impacts on the functioning of the wetland," Dr Kerr said.

Restoring the natural, flatter landscape base has been a slow, expensive process, costing up to \$3,700 per hectare and that it's going to take 10 to 15 years to get rid of the remainder of the stumps and kill off regrowth.



It's a community effort as NGT has worked with researchers, Friends of the Forgotten Woodland volunteers and students from several Victorian Western District schools to make improvements and monitor the health of red gum plantings since 2022. They have planted trees, designed a walking track and researched the plants and animals living there.

**CREDIT - Gavin McGrath - ABC Ballarat News**

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## Eucalyptus varieties - following on from the Walkers' Swamp restoration...

The differing impacts red gums and blue gums have on a wetland illustrate how diverse the eucalypt family is.

**There are nearly 1,000 different varieties according to the CSIRO, and not all are "gum trees": a term which usually refers to those eucalypts with smooth bark.**

ABC gardening presenter and horticulturist Rob Pelletier said identifying eucalypt varieties was challenging due to their similarity in appearance, but also hybridisation between species.

These are a dozen of his most significant varieties.

**River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camalduldensis*)** – one of the widest distributed, longest lived, largest, and most stately of eucalyptus trees. Often found along waterways.

**Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*)** – commonly known as Tasmanian blue gum, naturally occurs in Victoria such as in the Otways. Juvenile blue gum leaves are broad and roundish with a bluish colour.

**Grey Box/Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus macrocarpa/melliodora*)** – yellow box is famous for it's honey. Similar range but yellow box tends to be in slightly wetter areas.

**Red box (*Eucalyptus polyanthemos*)** – smaller than other box trees and naturally occurs in NSW tablelands and tolerates poor soils. Juvenile foliage is grey but adult foliage is green.

**Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*)** – leaves are food source for koalas, and gum is a source of sweetness. Endemic to south-eastern Australia. Varies greatly in height depending on environment. Bark is stringy and peels off.

**Sugar Gum (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*)** – important firewood and shelter species, widely planted by European settlers. Tall with a smooth multicoloured bark, and less dense foliage than other gum trees.

**Peppermint Gum (*Eucalyptus dives/radiata/nicholii*)** – several species named for aromatic, menthol-scented foliage.

**Lemon-scented Gum (*Corymbia citriodora*)** – smooth and white trunk and can grow very large. Named for its long, narrow, citrus-scented foliage.

**Snow Gum (*Eucalyptus pauciflora*)** – an elegant tree, endangered by livestock and brumbies. Usually the last tree going up in elevation. Smaller at higher elevation than at lower. Smooth bark tree with striations of grey, white and other colours.

**Ghost Gum (*Corymbia aparrerinja*)** – the iconic outback tree with "ghostly" white bark, painted by great Australian artists. Formerly classified as *Eucalyptus papuana*.

**Stringybark (*Eucalyptus oblonga, obliqua* and related species)** – a problem in fire-prone areas as their loose, fibrous bark is flammable and creates embers. **Messmate (*Eucalyptis obliqua*)** is a variety of stringybark.

**Red-flowering Gum (*Corymbia ficifolia*)** – widely cultivate and bred by horticulturalists. Easily identified by spectacular flowers ranging from salmon pink to rich red.



**River Red Gums  
on left**

**Southern Blue  
Gums on right**

**Article Credit:  
Gavin McGrath -  
ABC Ballarat News**

**Photo Credits:  
Mark Bachmann  
&  
Peter Rowland  
Photography**

## Highlands Book Club.

The next **THURSDAY night Bookclub at Highlands Hall** is scheduled for **28th March from 6-8pm**

We are reading 'Thursday Murder Club' by Richard Osman & 'Food, Sex and Money' by Liz Byski.

Other books read and suggestions are also shared.  
BYO plate to share, refreshments & gold coin donation.

🌸 **ALL WELCOME** 🌸

Are you interested in adding to the **iNaturalist's** environmental knowledge base of the local HCCC area?

If **YES** then download the App now, follow the instructions for use in **TGN 30/7/23**, and start recording our unique natural wonders of both fauna and flora. It's an incredibly valuable resource.



## Highlands Ramblers

will be restarting in March, after all the HOT summer weather (which is yet to arrive) finishes

So the next Date for your Diary is

**Sunday 31st March @ 10am**

from outside the Highlands Hall



## FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Lounge suite - 2 years old,

As New

2 Recliners & 3 seater lounge including recliners

**Contact Judy**  
**0418 513 340**



## Did YOU know?

Indian Mynas can breed between 1 and 3 times a year

AND

have a lifespan of 4 years!

Time to make/buy some traps and contact Andrew on

[tablelandmynaproject@myyahoo.com](mailto:tablelandmynaproject@myyahoo.com)

**Cycle Dindi**   
over the hills and not so far away

**SATURDAY 16 MARCH 2024**

**A charity bicycle event along the Great Victorian Rail Trail**

Registrations open January 2024  
E: [cycledindi24@gmail.com](mailto:cycledindi24@gmail.com)

The event on the Great Victorian Rail Trail will be centred on the lovely townships of Yea and Alexandra. There will be a choice of 3 starting points, all converging on the banks of the Goulburn River at Cathkin for lunch. This event is a fund raiser for Rotary Youth Projects.

**Rotary**  
Clubs of Alexandra and Yea and the Friends of the GVRT

**What do I get for my money?**

- Billy tea, damper and BBQ lunch at Cathkin
- Free admission to Nutfield a working farm, with free Devonshire Tea in the shearing shed, sheep dog demonstration and trailer ride.

**CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE**

DISTANCE	
Yea to Merton (return)	93 kms
Merton to Yea (return)	93 kms
Merton to Cathkin (return)	51 kms
Yea to Cathkin (return)	42 kms
Yea to Alexandra (return)	68 kms
Alexandra to Yea (return)	68 kms
Alexandra to Cathkin (return)	26 kms

**Interested?**  
contact Melinda (Alexandra) 0418 378 806  
Julie (Yea) 0447 762 557  
or Ross (Mansfield) 0439 046 199  
[www.rotaryalexandra.org.au](http://www.rotaryalexandra.org.au)  
[www.yearotary.org.au](http://www.yearotary.org.au)

**How Much?**

Adult	\$50
Senior	\$40
Student	\$10

• Under school age free  
• SNR - relevant Seniors' card must be held  
• Group discount available on request

<https://www.trybooking.com/CMRGJ>



Cindy McEISH MP  
State Member for ELSDON



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 <p><b>Murrindindi Shire Council</b></p> <p><b>Cr John Walsh</b> Koriella Ward Murrindindi Shire Council <a href="mailto:jwalsh@murrindindi.vic.gov.au">jwalsh@murrindindi.vic.gov.au</a></p> <p><b>0437 835 586</b></p>	<p><b>Tablelands Community Centre</b></p> <p>Upgraded facilities &amp; playground</p> <p>Ideal for Private or Community gatherings</p> <p>Meetings, Workshops</p> <p>Very reasonable rates</p> <p>Hosts 1<sup>st</sup> Friday BBQs</p> <p>Contact <a href="mailto:tccruffy@gmail.com">tccruffy@gmail.com</a> Ph 0404 833 388</p>	 <p>For All your Aerial Spraying or Spreading Needs. Specialising in Blackberries, Broadleaf, Thistles, Spreading lime/fertilizer &amp; More</p> <p>Call 0484108854 48 Magills Lane Maindample 3723</p>	<p>Donated by supporters of our local koala population</p> 
<p>Donation from supporters of our local Gang Gangs</p> 	<p><b>HIGHLANDS GROVE</b></p> <p>Australian, locally produced premium extra virgin olive oil.</p> <p>Farm gate pick up or delivery available.</p> <p><b>0417 018 070</b> <a href="mailto:enquiries@highlandsgrove.com.au">enquiries@highlandsgrove.com.au</a> <a href="http://highlandsgrove.com.au">highlandsgrove.com.au</a></p>	 <p><b>HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY HALL</b></p> <p>Meeting Room and/or Hall available for hire</p> <p>MEETINGS FUNCTIONS WORKSHOPS PARTIES WEDDINGS</p> <p>Reasonable Rates Contact Paula Lade 0419 551 882</p>	<p>Donated by friends of the Long Leafed Box Trees</p> 
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The Granite News is usually created on the lands of the Taungurung clans - First people of the Rivers and Mountains.

We thank the Taungurung ancestors and elders who, for millennia, have cared for this country on which we now live, work, play and grow.

May the current generations of Taungurung, HCCC residents & landowners continue this important custodianship into the future.