



Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

It's been a few decades since I attended my last protest rally but on Friday I briefly joined 10,000 of the next generation at the Student Rally Against Climate Change. Given the track record of Australia's various governments over the last few years it was quite refreshing to see so many students with their teachers, parents and grandparents listening attentively to what the speakers (average age about 16) were saying. Recycled boxes from supermarkets featured prominently as placards



and there was a respectful atmosphere amongst all present. These students weren't just skipping classes but genuinely interested in the future of **their** planet. I particularly liked the very succinct sign that said it all - **"What's the point of going to Biology if there's no more planet left to study?"**

Until next week, **Pauline**

And **Kenny?** - was looking forward to finding out about paddock trees.

Riparian Walk #3 - Hughes Creek to Tarcombe

Come along to the 3rd walk in this series of famous SRCMN Riparian Walks. After a few Bogie based walks, it's now time to revisit the stunning Hughes Creek.

The aim of these walks is to become better acquainted with our local waterways, and record some of their standout features along the way.

This walk is long (**5.5km/3.5hours**) and of moderate difficulty with several creek crossings and a lot of rock hopping. Hiking experience isn't necessary, but an average level of fitness and mobility will be required. Difficulty will increase drastically if wet weather precedes it, or if it's hot on the day.

Walkers will meet down at the **Ruffy CFA shed** before driving out to the starting point at Donovan Rd. From there, walkers will descend down the Hughes Creek, following it to Ponkeen Creek Rd. Walkers will then be driven back to their cars at the starting point.

Please note, as we'll be traversing private property on these walks, no dogs or other pets are allowed.

Time/Date: 8:45am to 12:30pm, **Saturday the 31st of March, 2019**

Meeting Location: Strathbogie CFA Shed – 1 Nolans Rd, Ruffy VIC 3666

Finishing Location: Ponkeen Creek Rd

Length: 5.5km

Difficulty: Moderate

RSVPs are essential, so please email us at strathbogierangescmn@gmail.com to register your interest.

Please note: Thursday evening is the deadline for inclusion in the following week's TGN although this will depend on space and time constraints—thanks



Hughes Creek
Catchment
Collaborative
Landcare

Feedback? - editor@tgn.org.au

or to subscribe on-line go to

www.highlands.org.au

"Just as we care for a child, so we should care for our environment. What the environment needs now is nurturing, which calls for perception and a commitment to long-term goals for the benefit of others." - Ita Buttrose AO OBE

The Granite News is an open but moderated community forum.

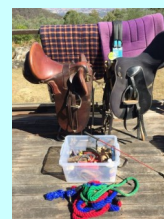
Readers are encouraged to contribute articles and we also encourage you to air your views on things that interest or concern you within our community.

We certainly welcome feedback from you, positive or otherwise on anything that is published in

The Granite News

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Keen job seeker

Our Italian cousin (30 YO, female) seeks short-term outdoor work (fruit/veg/garden or light farm work) in the local area. She is available until June 2019 & has a valid drivers licence, work visa and TFN). Contact Debbie Mauro on 5796 9363, palmanovaolives@outlook.com if you can help.

WEBSITE of the WEEK

<https://festivalofsmallhalls.com>

Self-explanatory website - enjoy

Community Notices & Classifieds

CALENDAR of EVENTS — March

Friday 22nd March 1 - 5pm	HEALTHY HECTARES #2 - Water on you Farm at Euroa Council Chambers Did you know farm dams can be wetlands and wildlife habitats as well as water storage? Come along to discover more. Bookings— www.healthyhectares.com.au \$25 per session or \$75 the series.
Friday 22nd March 6 - 8pm	UNDERSTANDING GROUNDWATER in the STRATHBOGIES at Strathbogie Hall Across the Strathbogies most properties rely on bores or spring fed dams for stock and domestic use. How viable is this water source in the 21stC? Come along & find out. See attachment for more details.
Saturday 23rd March 10 - 12 	HIGHLANDS BLACK MARKET at 94 Old Highlands Rd Bring along your excess produce, buy local and learn from each other. Enquiries? - Clare 57969366
Wednesday 27th March Doors open @ 6.30pm	MERTON MUSIC FESTIVAL at Merton Memorial Hall Come along to the Festival of Small Halls, see p. 3 and attachment for more Contact Marg 0409955809
Thursday 28th March @ 5.30pm	SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS at Caveat Church All people in the district are welcome, gold coin donation towards a BBQ, BYO and chat
Fri. 29th—Sun 31st March @ 8am	SEYMOUR WORKING DOG SHEEP TRIALS at Kings Park, Seymour The annual Working Dog Trials in Seymour are on again for 3 days with catering on site. Details? contact Di 57921089 or schrapeli@activ8.net.au
Saturday 30th March Preview 2 - 5pm	A MASS of LIFE - Dennis Spiteri's 2019 Exhibition at 94 Old Highlands Rd Dennis Spiteri's annual exhibition commences with a preview on March 30th and runs until April 28th. Bookings for the preview are essential contact Dennis on 57969373 or dennisspiteri@activ8.net.au
Saturday 30th March 6.30pm picnic then 8 - 9pm for stargazing	STARGAZING in YEA & celebrate EARTH HOUR at Yea Railway Reserve Cittaslow in Yea is holding an Earth Hour and Stargazing evening. BYO picnic dinner & binoculars & gold coin donation, chairs & telescopes provided. RSVP Facebook page - Cittaslow Yea in Murrindindi
Saturday 30th March 7 - 8.30pm	GREATER GLIDERS - Captured on Camera at Kinglake Community Centre Hall Although this is a little bit of a drive if these nocturnal, arboreal furry creatures appeal why not attend this FREE presentation and go spotlighting in the forest after. See attachment for further details.
Saturday 31st March	HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS first walk for 2019! Another date for you diary, more details to follow soon!
Sunday 31st March 8.45am - 12.30pm	RIPARIAN WALK #3 - Hughes Creek / Tarcombe Back by popular demand the Strathbogie Conservation Management Network will help you explore the local waterways while studying their unique qualities. See p.1 for further details of this walk and to RSVP or for further details email - strathbogierangescmn@gmail.com
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. Why not pop in? Term 1 dates for 2019 - March 27th and April 10th & 24th.
Every Monday @ 10 am	YOGA AT RUFFY at Tablelands Community Centre Ruffy Yoga with Kylie Penny is about to start. All welcome! Equipment provided, \$20 per class or \$153 per term paid upfront. (BYO water bottle) Any enquiries please call/SMS Kylie 0418 899966 or email kyliepenny@gmail.com Please note bookings are essential via SMS, phone or email.
Every Wednesday @ 7.30 (sharp) - 9pm	SWING DANCE CLASSES - Free! at Ruffy Hall Swing dances feature the jazzy Big Band music of the 1930s and 40s, and they are definitely all about having fun!! Enquiries? Ray 0467 951559

Note Date Change !



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For fire risk reduction & to meet climate targets, 300 scientists want stronger land clearing laws

Australia's high rates of forest loss and weakening land clearing laws are increasing bushfire risk, and undermining our ability to meet national targets aimed at curbing climate change. This dire situation is why more than 300 scientists and practitioners have signed a declaration calling for governments to restore, or better strengthen regulations to protect native vegetation. Land clearing laws have been contentious in several states for years. New South Wales relaxed its land clearing controls in 2017, triggering concerns over irreversible environmental damage. Although it is too early to know the impact of those changes, a recent analysis found that land clearing has increased sharply in some areas since the laws changed. The Queensland Labor government's 2018 strengthening of land clearing laws came after years of systematic weakening of these protections. Yet the issue has remained politically divisive.

While discussing a federal inquiry into the impact of these policies on farmers, federal agriculture minister David Littleproud suggested that the strengthening of regulations may have worsened Queensland's December bushfires.

They argue such an assertion is at odds with scientific evidence. And, while the conservation issues associated with widespread land clearing are generally well understood by the public, the consequences for farmers and fire risks are much less so.

Tree loss can increase fire risk

During December's heatwave in northern Queensland, some regions were at "catastrophic" bushfire risk for the first time since ratings began. Even normally wet rainforests, such as at Eungella National Park inland from Mackay, sustained burns in some areas during "unprecedented" fire conditions.

There is no evidence to support the suggestion that 2018's land clearing law changes contributed to the fires. No changes were made to how vegetation can be managed to reduce fire risk. This is governed under separate laws, which remained unaltered.

In fact, shortly after the fires, Queensland's land clearing figures were released. They showed that in the three years to June 2018, an area equivalent to roughly 570,000 Melbourne Cricket Grounds (1,138,000 hectares) of bushland was cleared, including 284,000 hectares of remnant (old-growth) ecosystems.

Tree clearing can worsen fire risk in several ways. It can affect the regional climate. In parts of eastern Australia, tree cover reductions are estimated to have increased summer surface temperatures by up to 2°C and southwest Western Australia by 0.4–0.8°C, reduced rainfall in south-east Australia, and made droughts hotter and longer.

This article, taken from "Conversation", was submitted by Lesley Dalziel. Part 2 will conclude it next week.

Dennis Spiteri - A Mass of Life

Anyone who has ever visited an exhibition of Dennis Spiteri's artwork, at his very impressive Hillcrest Gallery in Highlands, will have come away in awe at not only the size of the majority of his paintings, but also the musical inspiration that imbues all his work.

Luckily for our local community Dennis is about to open his annual exhibition, this year entitled - **A**

Mass of Life. The opening preview will be **Saturday 30th March from 2-5,**

however if you can't make this date the exhibition will run from **March 30th -**

April 28th from 10-4 daily.

For anyone who wishes to

attend the opening preview **RSVPs are essential**

please ring email dennisspiteri@activ8.net.au or ring 57969373. See attachment & calendar for more.



Celebrate Earth Hour & Stargaze in Yea

Feel like a spot of energy conservation and checking out the stars above? Cittaslow in Yea is holding an evening to do just that at the Yea Railway Reserve. If you can't make it 8.30pm is switch off time!!



Letter to the Editor

I'm hoping that you may have already heard about the music festival coming to Merton. I'd like to ask if you might be happy to help us spread the word about our Festival that's coming up soon. We have recently completed a renovation and modernisation of our hall and we're keen to have the community come together to enjoy the facility, each other's company and give each other support. We have a local group to open our show and then an Australian artist - John Flanagan and a Canadian trio - The Once, who come to us straight from the Port Fairy Folk Festival. It should be a fun night and we'll have food and drinks available at bar prices.

Thanks, Margaret FitzGerald

Seymour Working Dog Sheep Trials

The annual Working Dog Trials in Seymour are on again. Starting at 8am on 29-31 March with catering on site. For more details

Contact Di 57921089 or schrapel@activ8.net.au



During the warmer months, consider alternative methods to burning off vegetation to reduce risks from escaping fires. These include disposing of green waste at a waste transfer station, mulching and chipping.

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