



THE GRANITE NEWS

4TH OCT. 2020

VOLUME 14

ISSUE 35

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

Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

Thanks once again to all those TGN readers who completed the Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative's short survey. The HCCC Executive Committee managed to meet, in person whilst socially distanced and masked, for the first time in many months last week. One of the topics discussed was the survey and your responses have provided valuable information and clarified priorities for future plans for the HCCC to undertake. As 4th October, today, is the final day for survey responses, stay tuned, in a future TGN issue, for a summary of the results and the top 10 Landcare and environmental issues for TGN's readers.

Many thanks also to the readers who have alerted me to the presence of Indian Mynas on 3 properties in the Highlands area. If anyone else has spotted any of these pests please email me the locations.

Until next issue continue to stay warm and safe, **Pauline And Kenny?** Was helping erect nesting boxes at Whiteheads Creek.

Euroa Arboretum is OPEN again

Our nursery is back open again to the public. We've updated our retail plant order form which includes all remaining stock. This plant selection is well suited to home gardeners and the weather conditions are perfect to continue planting.

This list includes both indigenous and native species. All prices are listed and shows trees, shrubs, groundcovers, grasses and wildflowers priced from \$1 to \$10.

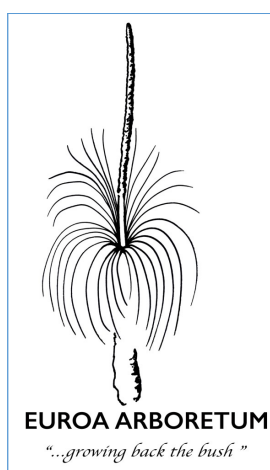
There's such a range and most have a link to view photos and suitable soils and conditions.

You can still make your orders from the website or email and we will organise contactless collection if preferred.

When visiting the nursery, please wear masks and remain at safe distances. Payment can be made by card.

It's a fantastic time to get digging and put something new into your garden. Stay safe and we welcome back to the nursery!

Euroa Arboretum Nursery
nursery@euroaarboretum.com.au



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

"Learn to enjoy things without owning them. Ownership is nothing, access is everything. Visit a library, a park or a museum."

Joshua Becker (1974 ...)
US author, writer & philanthropist

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**

Let's
laugh



"Yes, I'm positive the eggs have gone beyond their expiration date."

HCCC Membership so far
148 ... and counting

Month	Highlands	Ruffy
September	46.2 mm	70 mm
2020Total	752.2 mm	904 mm
September	12 Days	12 Days

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

Community Notices & Classifieds

CALENDAR of EVENTS — or something to look forward to...

Sat 7th & Sun 8th November from 10-4	DARREN GILBERT's OPEN STUDIO Darren's studio, with his creative works is now open on first weekend each month. An inspirational environment where both art and sculpture come to life in a beautiful scenic countryside of Highlands. 2742 Highlands Rd, Highlands
2nd Monday each month @ 11am 	HIGHLANDS SPINNING CLUB The Highlands Spinning Club will get together in 2019 at the same place Caveat-Dropmore Rd, the same time 11am and with the same good company! BYO lunch & coffee will be provided. contact Jan 5790 4361
2nd Wednesday each month @ 9.30am 	TERIP TERIP MORNING TEA This enjoyable social event is open to anyone who wants to enjoy a cuppa, swap any books or home-grown produce. Highlands Community Centre
2nd Friday each month @ 6.30pm 	DRINKS ON THE TABLE Starts at 6.30pm. A great way to meet up with friends old and new. All welcome, especially those who enjoy a drink. Highlands Community Hall
3rd Thursday or Friday each month	HUGHES CREATIVE COLLABORATIVE MEETING The next meeting will be in 2020 commencing at 7pm. All welcome. at ?????? Enquiries? - contact Justus 5790 4268
Last Thursday each month @ 5.30pm	SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS All people in the district are welcome, pink note (\$5) donation towards a BBQ, BYO and chat at Caveat Church
4th Saturday each month 10-12 or 12-2 	HIGHLANDS BLACK MARKET Bring along your excess produce, buy local and learn from each other. at 94 Old Highlands Rd Enquiries? - Clare 0428 969366
Every second Wednesday 10.30-12.30	MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight. Why not pop in?? Please note the Mobile Library Service is temporarily suspended until further notice!! at Highlands Community Hall
Every Monday @ 10 am	QIGONG AT RUFFY Vivien Watmough looks forward to welcoming you to the benefits of this ancient well-being practice. For bookings and enquiries please call Vivien 0428 951559 or email: vivienwatmough@gmail.com at Tablelands Community Centre Ruffy
Every Thursday @ 7.30 (sharp) - 9pm	SWING DANCE CLASS Swing dances featuring Big Band music of the 1930s and 40s, and they are definitely all about having fun!! at Euroa Uniting Church Hall Enquiries? Ray 0467 951559

Some of these activities could be reinstated soon so ... stay tuned!
Darren's Back, see above



Postponed until further notice

Seymour Rotary Club wants YOUR batteries



The Rotary Club in Seymour collects batteries as a fund source.

If anyone has any batteries laying around on their farm and wants to get rid of them, Ron Halicki would be happy

to collect them. Why not give him a call on 0428 674006?

WANTED

Border Collie pup or young dog as a family pet. Prefer a female, but open to the right dog. Please ring Debbie on 0428 972710



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In these times of instant social media and 'fake news' Coronacast is an accurate podcast that helps to answer your questions about coronavirus or COVID19. The latest news and research is broken down to help you understand how the world is living through an epidemic.

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Coronavirus 24hr Hotline

1800 020 080

Aquatics Operations and Active Living Officer

Full time – Band 6

Are you passionate about supporting healthy, connected and inclusive communities?

Council is looking for someone to lead a dedicated team in the newly created role of Aquatics Operations and Active Living Officer.

The successful applicant will

- have extensive experience in community engagement and program development
- be experienced in the delivery of aquatic programs and services
- demonstrate passion and capability for strengthening community connection and physical wellbeing

For more information about this role and to view the position description, please visit our website murrindindi.vic.gov.au/jobs or call **Council's Coordinator Community Development, Stuart Collier on (03) 5772 0333**.

You can submit an application and any accompanying attachments:

On Council's website - you will receive an email notification confirming your application

By email to msc@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

Applications close Friday 23 October 2020.

AUSSIE BACKYARD BIRD COUNT 19-25 OCTOBER 2020

Save the date — the [Aussie Backyard Bird Count](http://aussiebirdcount.org.au) is back from 19-25 October 2020.

The **#AussieBirdCount** is a great way to connect with the birds in your backyard, no matter where your backyard might be — whether it's a suburban backyard, a local park, a patch of forest, a farm, down by the beach, or the main street of town.

All you need to take part is 20 minutes and your favourite outdoor space - you don't even have to leave home, making it the ultimate Covid-safe activity! As well as contributing to BirdLife Australia's knowledge of Aussie Birds, you will have the chance to win some great prizes (these will be revealed shortly)! Head to the website and register as a Counter today.

If you're a teacher, check out our Bird Count curriculum-based [lesson plans](http://aussiebirdcount.org.au) to get your students (or the whole school!) involved.

If you have questions about the Aussie Backyard Bird Count, please head to our website where you'll find more information about registering, participating & other questions you might have. https://aussiebirdcount.org.au

FIRE SEASON PREPARATION

Council has simplified its burning-off laws to make it easier for residents to maintain their properties in preparation for the summer fire season.

Residents may now burn off at any time (excluding the Fire Danger Period) without requiring a permit, providing they meet the following conditions:

- you must have adequate means available at all times to prevent the escape of fire and to extinguish the fire
- the burn area must be cleared of flammable material for a minimum radius of 3 m
- the fire must be extinguished if you are directed to do so by an authorised officer
- you must ensure all ashes are spread and thoroughly extinguished at the completion of the burn
- the smoke must not cause a nuisance
- the burn pile must not include damp or green materials. The materials to be burned must be suitably dry (cured)
- the fire must be adequately supervised, with an adult person present at all times

Additionally, if your land is less than one hectare, the burn pile must not exceed 1 m x 1 m.

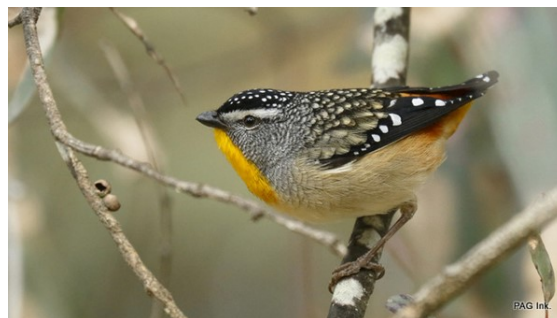
If your land is more than one hectare:

- the burn pile must be no more than 20 cubic meters
- the fire must not be lit if wind speed exceeds 15 kph
- the burn pile must not be located closer than 5 m to the property boundary or 5 m to any building

Any fire that does not meet these conditions will require a permit from Council. **Please ensure you register all burns with the CFA by contacting 1800 668 511 before lighting your fire.**

For more information about burning off (and about the free green waste disposal at Council's Resource Recovery Centres), please visit our website at murrindindi.vic.gov.au or give Council a call on 5772 0333.

Aussie Backyard Bird Count - Be in it!



10 Ways to improve the natural assets on a farm

The Australian National University has recently published a booklet that is an introduction to caring for on-farm natural assets, with a view to enhancing the unique bio-diversity of grassy, woodland ecosystems, as well as enhancing farm productivity. From time to time TGN will feature some of its suggestions that should assist readers care for their land.

Protecting paddock trees & growing new ones

“Scattered paddock trees are often the only large old trees remaining on farms and their numbers are declining due to clearing, salinity, dieback, chemical drift from spraying, fire, damage by livestock, soil compaction, browsing by insects & a lack of regeneration.



Paddock trees are important for livestock production because they provide shade in summer and protection from wind and cold in winter. They benefit adjacent crops by providing refuge for pollinators and predators of pest insects. Paddock trees also assist with water infiltration, salinity management & can improve the structure & quality of soils.

When new plantings are established around existing paddock trees, these two natural assets complement each other to provide higher quality and more complex habitat for native wildlife.

Scattered paddock trees have many ecological roles. These include acting as stepping stones to promote the movement of animals through landscapes, supplying hollows for animals to shelter and breed, providing a source of food (because they are often prolific flowerers) and providing habitat for animals such as tree-dwelling geckos and skinks that live in bark crevices. Large old paddock trees with huge canopies of leaves are also important for long-term carbon storage.

To protect paddock trees and enable the growth of new ones, consider the following -

- Avoid clearing paddock trees where possible. It can take hundreds of years for a recently cleared large old tree to be replaced.
- Paddock trees tend to be in better condition when they are surrounded by plantings or areas of natural regrowth. Mid-storey vegetation around paddock trees will not only help protect them, but provide added benefits for birds and beneficial insects.
- Try to identify the cause of poor condition in paddock trees and manage accordingly. For example, excessive trampling by livestock or a build up of manure around the tree's base.
- Fence an area around paddock trees to reduce soil compaction, erosion and root damage.
- Fencing with the existing tree in the corner of the fenced area enables livestock to continue to utilise the tree's shade, while helping to protect the trees roots and providing a fenced area within which to regenerate vegetation.

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to let residents of Koriella Ward in Murrindindi Shire know that I am again standing for Council. I still have the farm at Yarck which we purchased after I had been an Army Officer for 17 years and then running a project and risk management company in Melbourne.

At the start of this election cycle I was campaigning to have candidates stand to avoid uncontested elections which has been a problem in the Shire. Then, with the longer term challenges of COVID looming, the CEO announced he was departing and five Councillors would not stand again.

Having been a Councillor from 2008 to 2016, with two years as Mayor, when the Shire had to deal with both the GFC and 2009 fires, I felt compelled to offer my experience to assist and to ensure the issues of our smaller communities and the



environment are not overlooked when addressing the immediate needs of employment, tourism and retail operations in the larger towns.

As a Councillor I had the pleasure of working with most of our dispersed community groups to gain employment generating grants to improve facilities and streetscapes. I will be looking for such opportunities again. I will also continue to strive for better roads and a fairer rating system together with improved education opportunities and a broadening of our economic base. Please contact me on 0408 013237 or via email: glenfield145@me.com

John Walsh
Yarck

Authorised by John C Walsh, 145 Middle Creek Rd, Yarck 3719

- Incorporating existing old paddock trees into areas of new plantings will give these plantings a 150 year head start, attracting species which require older, established trees.
- Limit prescribed burning around paddock trees. The decayed wood and hollows they contain make them vulnerable to fire.
- Planting young trees and fencing them individually until they reach maturity enables re-establishment of spatial patterns of paddock trees on the farm, without taking areas of land out of production as can happen with larger fenced plantings.” **ANU**

Southern Boobook Owl - (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*)

Although widespread throughout Australia, the Southern Boobook is often overlooked because of its nocturnal habits. If the species is seen during the day, it is usually roosting among dense foliage, being scolded by various small birds. At night, boobooks hunt insects, small mammals and small birds at roost, usually by pouncing onto prey from a perch, or by sallying on fluttering wings. The most well-known aspect of the Southern Boobook is its characteristic call, generally rendered as boobook or morepork, sometimes repeated incessantly, occasionally for hours on end.

The Southern Boobook is the smallest and most common owl in Australia. It is identified by its plumage, which is dark chocolate-brown above and rufous-brown below, heavily streaked and spotted with white. The bill is grey with a darker tip, and the feet are grey or yellow. The facial disc is chocolate brown and the eyes are large and yellowish. Tasmanian birds are smaller and more heavily spotted with white, while birds of the Cape York rainforests are slightly larger and darker. Young Southern Boobooks are almost entirely buff-white below, with conspicuous dark brown facial discs. Like other owl species, the Southern Boobook is nocturnal. Birds are often observed perched on an open branch or tree-top. It is also known as the 'Mopoke' due to its call.

Southern Boobooks are found throughout mainland Australia and Tasmania, and on some coastal islands. Closely related species are found in New Zealand, New Guinea and Indonesia. Southern Boobooks are seen in a variety of habitats from dense forest to open desert.

The Southern Boobook feeds on insects, small mammals such as mice and other small animal species. Feeding takes place mostly at night but some afternoon and morning activity may occur, especially on dull days. Most prey is detected by listening and watching from a suitable tall perch. Once detected, flying prey, such as moths and small bats, are seized in mid-air, while ground-dwelling prey animals are pounced upon.

The Southern Boobook's nest is normally a tree hollow, which is usually sparsely lined with wood shavings, leaves and small twigs, but may be left bare. The female alone incubates the eggs, but both sexes, and sometimes a second female helper, feed the young.

Text: Birdlife Australia

Photo: NSW National Parks / Canberra Birds.



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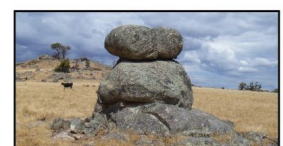
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