



THE GRANITE NEWS

3RD OCTOBER 2021

VOLUME 15

ISSUE 32

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

Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

Welcome back! Some things have changed in the wider world and some things are same, same but slightly different. At least we have a roadmap now that can assist with some forward planning. However the calendar of local events may be subject to number limits and ever changing state restrictions, so it's best to check with the nominated organisers to see if an event you are planning to attend is still able to happen.

Another thing we might also need to consider, for future public events, is the probability that such gatherings will require attendees to be doubly vaccinated. If you are still to take this step why not contact you local doctor, hospital or shire council to find out more, including the medical facts, the availability of appointments and closest vaccination centres. Until the next issue of TGN, take care and stay safe, **Pauline** And Kenny... was looking forward to the felting day at Ruffy.



Hughes Creek
Catchment
Collaborative
Landcare

Feedback? - editor@tgn.org.au

or to subscribe on-line go to

www.highlands.org.au

"Justice and humanity demand interference whenever the weak are being crushed by the strong."

Epitaph for James Scullin
(1876 - 1953)

9th Australian Prime Minister

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**

Important Message from the Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative (HCCC)

We need community support to control the spread of Blackberries.
Summer is approaching and it is time to think about Blackberries.
Please help us to get rid of this noxious weed.

With the wet spring and warmer months, the blackberries are growing in profusion. The problem can be worse along creeks and riverbanks. Large Blackberry infestation can harbour rabbit warrens with rabbits also being pest animals.

If you identify a problem area, please contact HCCC or your local shire for further action. HCCC is again subsidising the costs for chemicals for Blackberry spraying. Each landowner will be subsidised 50% for the cost of the weedicide, and wetting agent. Contact Neil van Buuren, in advance of any purchases, with your requirements ASAP.

This subsidy is for all properties in the Hughes Creek Catchment which covers Whiteheads Creek, Highlands, Caveat, Terip, Ruffy and Tarcombe. HCCC also have a range for sprayers that can be hired for a small donation to Landcare. (This helps pay for the maintenance of the units)

Contact Neil van Buuren for further information

Phone: 0417 503 472 Email: hughes.creek.fac@gmail.com.au

Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) is a Weed of National Significance.

It is regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential for spread, and economic & environmental impacts. Blackberry is declared noxious in all states and territories except the Northern Territory. **Landowners are required to control it.**

Check with your local council or state/ territory government agency about its requirements for blackberry control.



Let's laugh

COLDSTREAM VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE



Community Fire Association

Bridge Bank

Use it on Facebook

MESSAGE BOARD

THIS SUNDAY 3RD OCTOBER
CLOCKS GO "FORWARD"
ONE HOUR AT 2:00AM

If we had it our way, we'd go straight to year 2022 !!!

IN CASE OF
EMERGENCY
CALL
000



Month	Highlands	Ruffy
September	114.4 mm	114 mm
2021 Total	681.6 mm	789 mm
September Rain Days	14 Days	12 Days

NB: Highlands' rainfall is just above average despite some dry months

HCCC Membership so far
169 ... and counting

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

WHAT'S ON — October NB: All are subject to Covid variations!

IMPORTANT NOTE >>> Friday 8th October @ 6.30pm		ALTHOUGH THESE EVENTS ARE LISTED AS HAPPENING ALL ARE SUBJECT TO GOVT. RESTRICTIONS, CHECK WITH THE NOMINATED ORGANISER PRIOR TO THE DATE FOR VIABILITY AND ANY LIMITS. DRINKS ON THE DECK at Highlands Community Hall Starts at 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. Contact Judy - 57969247
Monday 11th October @ 11am 		HIGHLANDS SPINNING CLUB The Highlands Spinning Club will get together in 2021 at the same place—450 Caveat-Dropmore Rd, the same time 11am and with the same good company! BYO lunch and great tea & coffee will be provided. Enquiries? - contact Jan 5790 4361
Thursday 21st October @ 7.30pm		HUGHES CREEK CATCHMENT COLLABORATIVE MEETING at Terip Rec Reserve Next meeting will be at Terip commencing at 7.30pm. All welcome. Enquiries? - Justus 0427 524473
Saturday 16th October 10 – noon 		HIGHLANDS BLACK MARKET at 94 Old Highlands Rd Bring along your excess produce, buy local and learn from each other. Enquiries? - Clare 0428 969366
Sunday 23rd October @ 10am 		HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS meeting at Highlands Hall Everyone is welcome to come rambling and discover our local district. Enquires: Andrew Shaw 04372 49038 or Robyn Lingard 0409 528235
Thursday 28th October @ 5.30pm		SECRET MEN'S BUSINESS at Caveat Church All people in the district are welcome, pink note (\$5) donation towards a BBQ, BYO and chat
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?? YAY! The Mobile Library will be at Highlands on these dates - Oct. 13th & 27th and Nov. 10th & 24th.
Every Monday @ 10 am		ONE TO ONE WELL-BEING CENTRE EUROPE at Tablelands Community Centre Qigong classes, Shiatsu Massage, Counselling <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> for further info contact Vivien 5795 3349 or 0405 612400

WARNING!

Stock attacks are continuing to happen!

Hi Pauline,
I have been having a lot of trouble over the last 6 weeks with dog attacks on sheep at Granite Hills.

I have lost around 40 sheep and have been unable to find the dogs responsible. Unsure if they are domestic or wild at this stage.

I am trying to track the dogs down and wondered if you would be able to put a notice in The Granite News warning everyone that this is happening and if they could please contact me if they know of any dogs who are roaming the area.

Kind Regards

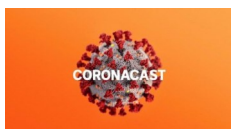
Jack Eastman
0428 823 633

* TGN Readers might recall a couple of weeks ago there were similar reports about dog and poultry attacks in the same area, so this appears to be ongoing. This locality is in Murrindindi Shire and if readers see any roaming dogs contact Council's Community Safety team on 5772 0333 BH or 0419 572425 AH

WANTED

A small to medium size second-hand washing machine. Would prefer a top loader but a front loader is fine.

Contact Angela—0438 969250 if you can assist.



Coronavirus 24hr Hotline

1800 020 080

Coronacast is an accurate podcast that helps to answer your questions about Covid 19. Listen for free on [ABC listen app](#), [Apple Podcasts](#) or [Google Podcasts](#)

Whiteheads Creek Bioblitz / Who calls Whiteheads Creek home?

A “Bioblitz” is being planned for Whiteheads Creek in Seymour. Many species of wildlife live along the creek, including Swamp Wallabies, Sugar Gliders & Platypus! A Bioblitz is an event which aims to identify the many species found within a specific area or region, while giving local people a chance to get involved.



Pic: Geoff Williams, Platypus Conservancy

This survey will collect as much information as possible about the flora and fauna along Whiteheads Creek. By collecting this information, we will be able to build up a picture of the biodiversity of the creek and inform future management of Whiteheads Creek.

Members of the Community have a chance to become involved in Citizen Science surveys along the creek.

Participants will gain skills and knowledge about our local environment, meet some wonderful people and hopefully have the opportunity to spot some amazing plants and animals!

The Whiteheads Creek Bioblitz project is for all ages and abilities. Information on how to survey will be provided through Webinars and in person events as covid restrictions ease. **This project is proudly sponsored by the Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative. If you would like to get involved & receive further updates, please email Clare at seymoururbanlandcare@gmail.com**

Supporting The Next Generation Of Farmers To Succeed

The Victorian Government is calling on young farmers to take their careers to the next level, with expressions of interest open for the 2022 Young Farmer and New Entrant Mentoring Program.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas has announced that eight positions are available in the 2022 program which pairs young farmers with experienced farmers in a mentorship, overseen by a skilled farm business consultant.

The Program is open to farmers aged 18 to 35 years to develop the skills they need to better manage their farm businesses, identify risks and develop strategies to build resilience and achieve their business goals.

During the 12-month program the mentor & mentee will meet regularly to assist the young farmer in building professional networks, utilising trusted sources of advice and information and setting business goals. Program participants are matched to ensure the mentor’s experience aligns with the mentee’s enterprise and personal development goals.



Samantha Mitchell, a mixed grain and sheep farmer from Watchupga in northern Victoria, took over the family business from her father this year. She is one of 12 mentees currently involved in the 2021 program. Samantha applied to the mentoring program to support the transition of her family business, build relationships in the industry and gain a better understanding of business operations, such as employing and managing staff. To quote Samantha, “My mentor was a fourth-generation mixed farmer and was able to give me so much knowledge about his personal experiences on farm. It was the best way to learn – from other people’s experiences, their mistakes and their successes.”

The Young Farmer and New Entrant Mentoring Program is funded by the Government’s \$20 million Smarter, Safer Farms initiative, which includes targeted training support to build capability in financial literacy, risk management, farm planning and adaption to climate change.

Expressions of interest for mentees for the 2022 Young Farmer and New Entrant Mentoring Program are now open. For more information and to apply visit vic.gov.au/youngfarmers

To hear more about Samantha’s story go to the latest podcast of ‘AgVic Talk’ agriculture.vic.gov.au/agvictalk

Use of fruit netting – harvesting without harm

Household fruit netting regulations – commenced 1 September 2021

From 1 September 2021, netting used to protect household fruit-trees, vegetable gardens, or other fruiting plants must have a mesh size, of 5mm x 5mm or less at full stretch.

If you use netting to protect your household fruit or vegetable harvest you will need to comply with this new mandatory requirement introduced under Victoria's Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019 (POCTA Regulations). Any existing household fruit netting that does not meet this specification must be replaced with appropriate netting from the 1 September 2021 commencement date.

Don't forget that old netting, when discarded, can still be an entanglement risk. If you plan to dispose of old netting to landfill it is recommended that you place it into a strong biodegradable bag first.

The regulation applies to both the sale and use of household fruit netting. It does not apply to sale or use of netting in commercial circumstances.

Failure to comply with this regulation could result in a fine under the POCTA Regulations. The maximum penalty for using fruit netting that does not comply or for advertising or offering non-compliant netting for sale for household fruiting plants is 15 penalty units (\$2726.10 as at 1 July 2021). Infringements of two penalty units (\$363.48) and four penalty units (\$726.96), as at 1 July 2021, can also be issued for use, or sale, of non-compliant netting, respectively.

Why has the regulation been introduced?

Fruit on household trees and plants is a tempting treat for hungry wildlife. Netting is a popular way to protect fruit, but inappropriate types of netting can kill or injure animals such as birds, possums or flying foxes.

Netting with a large mesh size is more likely to entangle animals and their struggling can cause deep cuts & strangulation, often leading to death. Reducing the mesh size of netting will greatly reduce the risk of animal entanglement.

What type of netting should be used?

Netting used on household fruiting trees or plants must have a mesh size of 5mm x 5mm or less at full stretch.

It is also recommended that household netting is:

- white in colour, making it easier for nocturnally active animals to see and avoid it at night
- made from material with a strand diameter thicker than 500 microns, or with a cross-weave design, to also help reduce injuries and fatalities.

The use of appropriate mesh sized netting will support a productive harvest while also protecting our vulnerable wildlife from harm.

Sometimes it can be easier to protect selected branches rather than netting the whole tree. A range of bags, sleeves and socks are available to protect fruit on individual branches.

How to use netting

When netting the whole tree:

- Pull netting tightly over the tree. Don't throw netting loosely over trees or allow netting to lie across the ground, where it can entangle reptiles and other animals

Fix netting tightly to the tree trunk – this will stop rats and birds from reaching fruit.

What is meant by household netting?

Generally, 'household' fruit-trees, vegetable gardens, or other fruiting plants are those grown:

- at residential premises in an urban or suburban area, or at residential premises in a semi-rural or rural area, primarily for personal use (even if some excess produce is shared or sold).

'Household' fruit-trees, vegetable gardens, or other fruiting plants would not generally include those grown:

- at commercial orchards, or at vineyards, or for a fruit and/or vegetable produce business, or where the objective is a commercial harvest for sale and profit.

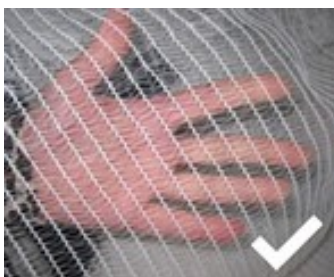


Photo Credits: Denise Wade - compliance & non-compliance netting

Lawrence Pope - Netting fruit & whole tree

Mitchell Shire Acknowledges a Climate Emergency

At the Mitchell Shire Council meeting (Sept 20th 2021), councillors voted 7-1 to **Acknowledge a Climate Emergency**, and to work with the community to develop a Climate Emergency Action Plan CEAP, and to allocate \$110,000 in next year's budget for this process.

This decision comes 7 months after the BEAM Mitchell Environment Group made an impassioned presentation to Council to acknowledge overwhelming the climate science, to create local actions to mitigate climate change impacts in our region, and to build a resilience in our community to accommodate a changing climate as we slowly but steadily draw down carbon and cool our planet. This is an emergency, and substantial progress must be made THIS decade to 2030.

Over 30 of the 79 Local Government Councils in Victoria have already acknowledged or declared a **climate emergency**. Mitchell is not alone in being forthright on our climate challenges.

BEAM had invited Council to DECLARE a Climate Emergency but to ACKNOWLEDGE is a good second best. So, whether an Acknowledgement or a Declaration, it matters not. What is important is that Mitchell Shire Council joins the local government leaders in acknowledging a clear role and responsibility for local government to step up and address climate change challenges and reduce our emissions.



Rooftop PVs for shade can become commonplace and also charge electric vehicles simultaneously—the technology is already here!

Mitchell Shire needs YOU!

Well your opinion anyway.

If you are a resident of Mitchell Shire you might be interested in the new, just released, four-year plan. This plan aims to show how Mitchell Shire Council will support the community and deliver on key commitments identified in the Mitchell 2050 conversations from earlier this year. It is now available for community comment.

Submissions close 9am, Tuesday 12th October and can be made at www.engagingmitchellshire.com

Downpipe slide valve & gutter filling tap

As we head again into another fire season, now is the time to better prepare for and protect our houses and sheds.

When you leave early on an extreme fire day, and certainly you should on a code red day, you would want to have your assets as well protected as possible. There are numerous measures promoted such as ember screens on windows, under-eave wall sprays, expanded steel mesh barriers under sundecks and so on.

Having filled roof gutters is also an essential preparation - but doing so is a safety risk and near impossible on two story structures. People use tennis balls, commercially available blocks in various shapes and sizes and even nappies. Keeping leaves out of gutters is an expensive option and a recently advertised hose wand is useless and will most likely only block the downpipes.

When I presented at the 2020 bushfire royal commission in Tumbaramba, no person present, including the "RFS experts", had heard of or seen a commercially available downpipe slide valve. With its associated T junction and tap, gutters can be backfilled with a hose or runoff diverted to another tank or pool. Both can be operated from, or near, ground level.

In my travels, and time as a brigade Community Safety Coordinator, I have seen the burnt out remains of so many houses in 2020, and also after Black Saturday 2009, which might have been saved by \$60 investments on these innovative inventions.

Sandy MacKenzie - Upton



The sliding valve and gutter filling tap being retro-fitted to connect both rear and front downpipes.

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Strathbogie Granite Project

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