



THE GRANITE NEWS

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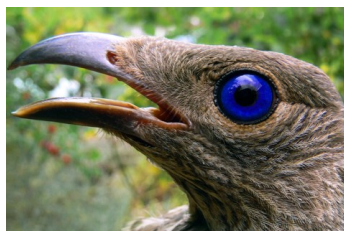
WHITEHEADS CREEK • TERIP TERIP • CAVEAT • RUFFY • HIGHLANDS • HUGHES CREEK

Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

Another lockdown done and dusted and a postponed lunch for HCCC readers now waiting to be rescheduled - just another week in 2021 I guess. We're becoming quite adept at 'going with the flow'.

Now last week when Jan emailed me the photo, that John had taken at Caveat, of our mystery object I really had no idea what it was, never having seen one myself. Well it's a dull day when you don't learn something new and obviously I could well be in the minority as 22 readers responded during the course of the week with the correct answer.

So thank you to Renee, Cass & James, Frank, Margaret-Anne, Jeannie, Ron & Pam, Sandy, Lyndall, Donna, Peter, Dr Peter, Jeremy, Rhonda, Patricia, Neil, Gaylene, Ann, Xersa, Jan and Helen, not to mention Jan & John for filling in this gap in my wildlife knowledge.



The mystery object was a male Satin Bowerbird's bower! Now I knew that bowerbirds like to collect blue objects as a way of attracting a female, but I always thought they just decorated the nest with the blue bits'n'bobs they collect. But not so - they actually build these creative structures on the ground, then line them with all sorts of blue items. As a female



bowerbird's eyes are bright blue she can't help but be impressed with all this effort. Thank you to Sandy for this week's pictures and thank you also to all those keen readers who entered.

So...the winner is, well actually there are 2 winners, because anyone who reads The Granite News upon waking and then

enters a competition at 6.40am and 6.41am respectively deserves to be rewarded.

Congratulations to Renee and Cass & James on your efforts & enthusiasm. Your prizes will be winging their way to you shortly.

Footnote: Jan cut up blue material and put out blue buttons for her active little bird to discover in case Caveat's environment is lacking in this colour.

Until the next issue of TGN stay safe and keep smiling, **Pauline**

And Kenny... was highlighting Tim From Terip's concerns for wildlife.



Hughes Creek
Catchment
Collaborative
Landcare

Feedback? - editor@tgn.org.au

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www.highlands.org.au

In relation to farming equipment

"If you can't fix it, don't touch it!"

Bernie Shaw - Caveat

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



Post Covid - Post Carbon

Every Australian uses an average of 320 litres of water every day & 10 minute showers use about 200 litres of water! That's a lot of water & energy.

HCCC Membership so far
163 ... and counting

HCCC Membership

Don't forget that membership of the Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative is ongoing and free! Just email editor@tgn.org.au to join.

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

WHAT'S ON — February / March

Monday 22nd February @ 7.30pm	RUFFY FIRE BRIGADE AGM & GENERAL MEETING All CFA members and interested locals are welcome.	at Ruffy Fire Station Contact Justus 0427 524473
Thursday 25th February @ 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
 Saturday 27th February 2 - 8pm	LONGWOOD BEER, WINE & CIDER FESTIVAL For the love of ale!! Tickets - Presale \$25, At the Gate \$30 (U18s=FREE) www.longwoodforthe love of ale.com.au	at Longwood Recreation Reserve
March 3rd (Yea) & 4th (Shepparton) 9.30-3	INCREASING SOIL WATER HOLDING CAPACITY These workshops are being supported by Landcare and GBCMA and presented by Walter Jehne from Regenerate Earth. Due to Covid, numbers are limited.	Venues @ Yea & Shepparton TBA For further details - Kirstie 0437 310840
Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th March 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
 Monday 8th March @ 11am	HIGHLANDS SPINNING CLUB The Highlands Spinning Club will get together in 2019 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
 Friday 12th March @ 6.30pm	DRINKS ON THE DECK 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.	at Highlands Community Hall
Saturday 13th March 10.30 for 11am start	WILDERNESS .v. RICHMOND over 60 CRICKET MATCH Cricket on the Tablelands is back!! Anyone wishing to play please contact Scott McKay 0427 969259 or David Sleigh 0429 904301 Come along and enjoy 40 overs of entertaining cricketing expertise.	at Ruffy Recreation Ground
Friday 19th March @ 7.30pm	HUGHES CREEK CATCHMENT COLLABORATIVE MEETING The next meeting includes the AGM. All welcome.	at Highlands Hall Enquiries? - contact Justus 0427 524473
 Saturday 20th March 10am - noon	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?? YAY! The Mobile Library will be back on the following dates— Feb . 24th, March 10th & 24th.	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 on 55... email: vivienwatmough@gmail.com	at Tablelands Community Centre Ruffy
Every Thursday @ 7.30 (sharp) - 9pm	SWING DANCE CLASSES Swing dances feature... and music of the 1930s and 40s, and they are definitely all about having fun!!	at Euroa Uniting Church Hall Enquiries? Ray 0467 951559

Don't Forget!

If you would you like to support, or continue to support, The Granite News in 2021 why not take out an ad on the back page - at the incredibly reasonable price of **\$250 per annum that's just \$6.25 per issue**, please just email editor@tgn.org.au to find out more.

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Coronavirus 24hr Hotline
 1800 020 080



Postponed until further notice

Scholarship Winner follows her Dream

Each year the Seymour Agricultural and Pastoral Society offers a 12 month scholarship, worth \$3,000, to young people aged 17-25 in the Seymour region, who are studying or planning to study, at a tertiary level, in any agricultural or sustainable management resource. The selection committee is delighted to announce that the recipient for **2021 is Georgia Cronin from Avenel.**

Georgia has followed her passion to get involved in the agricultural industry. Initially she studied Nursing but after receiving her Bachelor of Nursing she then thought more about her career and decided to get involved in the agriculture industry. Realising the problems of the rapidly increasing world population, she wanted to help in the food producing industry to help feed the world. Since leaving her nursing career behind, Georgia has worked in various areas of farming from the hazelnut industry near Narrandera in NSW to cropping and lamb and beef production nearer to home in the Avenel - Nagambie area.

Georgia has commenced her studies at Marcus Oldham College in Victoria and is doing a course in AgriBusiness that will result in a Bachelor degree. She then hopes to work for a large Agribusiness firm. After gaining experience in the Industry, she would like to return to college and complete a Masters' degree.

The Seymour Agricultural Society is happy to encourage and financially help young people get into the Agricultural sector and wish Georgia all the best in her career.

John Dalziel



MISSING!!

Any one who has information regarding the missing keys to the Highlands Hall and also the missing fire fighting pump and pressure pump missing from the Highlands Hall shed...

Please contact Judy Cameron 0418 513 340.

HCCC News

HCCC meetings occur each month, everyone is welcome to attend. They are held in each of the different HCCC communities commencing 7.30pm. Here are some dates for your diaries if you would like to come along and participate in the Landcare directions for our local area and its environment. **The March meeting is at Highlands.**

Friday 19th March = AGM

Thursday 15th April

Friday 21st May

Thursday 17th June

Friday 16th July

Thursday 19th August

Venues will be advised closer to the dates the alternating nature of the roster should offer weekend residents the opportunity to attend. **Enquires? Justus 0427 524473**

NB: in order for weekend residents to attend the AGM the alternative order has been reversed from last TGN.

HOWZAT?! Cricket is Back!

What: Cricket

Where: Ruffy Recreation Ground

When: Saturday 13th March 2021

Time: 10.30 am for 11.00 Start - Lunch and BBQ after the game provided.

Overs: 40

Trophy: The Corona Cup

Cost: Your dignity and maybe a hamstring or two (the rest we'll work out as we go)

Anyone who wishes to play please contact

Scott McKay 0427969259

or **David Sleigh 0429904301.**



Keeping beauty alive

When we bought our 46 acre property in Highlands Victoria in 1997 the bulk of the acreage was cleared grazing land. There were many big trees near the house - mainly Eucalyptus radiata and cedars. But down in the lower paddocks I was astonished to find two magnificent Snow Gums (Eucalyptus pauciflora) growing side by side (see photo). They were enormous both in height and width. There was an old cattle yard nearby so I presume they were planted as shade trees for the cattle. I don't know how old they are. Whenever we have visitors I always take them down there – they're so majestic they take your breath away! What makes them even more special is that they are a species that are not common to this area.

Unfortunately one of them suddenly died last summer. I immediately collected the seed pods from the companion tree and have now managed to propagate 130 separate trees in 15cm. pots. I don't know how long the companion tree will survive but at least I now have the offspring. I can't possibly plant them all here so they're available for \$5 if anyone is interested. It would be good see them spread out through the area.

Phone: 57969373

Dennis Spiteri

Highlands



Australia Day ?????

I am ambivalent about Australia Day and rarely participate in the celebrations. Each year the same debates seem to occur. Some want to adhere to the traditional meaning with the arrival of Captain Philip and his boatloads of convicts. Others, including the Indigenous community, view it as Invasion Day.

It should not be forgotten that on the 26th January 1788 there was no Australia. It was an occasion to deal with two English problems; a place to dispose of surplus convicts and a way to secure territory in the southern hemisphere. We did not become a nation until 1st January 1901. This debate seems only to divide our nation.

I do have a dream that down the line we might consider renaming the Day as 'Treaty Day' or 'Makarrata Day'. I am not sure whether this has been considered by anyone, particularly our First Nation people. This is only a dream, because we still haven't made a treaty, something our Indigenous people have been seeking for years, more recently in the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

My sadness is that our current Government is resisting not only the Uluru Statement but also any idea of a treaty. The time has surely arrived for us to listen to our Indigenous brothers and sisters and take seriously the real history of the effect of that invasion and rejoice in the resilience of our First Nation people.

My preference is for 'Makarrata'; it has a more profound meaning than just treaty. It is a Yolngu word meaning; 'coming together after struggle facing the facts of wrong and living in peace.'

I can only hope that one day soon our government, and we the people, will act courageously and heal these long standing wounds.

Stuart Reid

Highlands

Clean Up Australia Day - Sunday 7th March



Did you know? Every year each Australian sends approximately 2.5 tonnes of rubbish to landfill. **That's 2.5 tonnes per person!**

Of course not all of our rubbish actually makes it to landfill as can be seen by the litter that lines our roadsides, waterways and other communal places. Not only is it an eyesore, but it is incredibly dangerous for wildlife that try to eat it, or worse, become trapped by it.

In 1986/87 Ian Kiernan AO, a keen yachtsman, sailed solo around the world in the BOC Challenge Yacht Race and was appalled at the amount of rubbish drifting around the world's oceans. In 1989 he organised the first Clean Up Australia Day and it has been a part of our national calendar ever since. **Sunday 7th March** sees it all happening again and whilst individual efforts can certainly make a mark community groups, in the Shire of Murrindindi, are encouraged to register at cleanup.org.au Council will be assisting such groups by either collecting the rubbish from a pre-designated point or providing FREE tickets for disposal at the Resource Recovery Centres (tips). Registered community groups will also be reimbursed to the value of \$100 for provision of drinks and snacks to volunteers.

NB: For those wishing to be involved but not organise their own clean-up, Peter Roberts is holding a clean-up in the beautiful Yea Wetlands. Ring **0422 217904** to find out more.

Satin Bowerbird - *Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*

Satin Bowerbirds are renowned for decorating their bowers with all manner of blue objects collected from the vicinity of the bower and sometimes from farther afield. These odds and ends may comprise feathers from parrots, flowers, seed-pods and fruits, butterfly wings and artificial items such as ball-point pens, matchboxes, string, marbles and pieces of glass. Occasionally objects of different colours, especially greenish-yellow, are also used where blue items are difficult to procure. These are carefully arranged around the bower to assist the male to attract a mate.

Satin Bowerbirds are medium-sized birds. The adult male has striking glossy blue-black plumage, a pale bluish white bill and a violet-blue iris. Younger males and females are similar in colour to each other, and are collectively referred to as 'green' birds. They are olive-green above, off-white with dark scalloping below and have brown wings and tail. The bill is browner in colour. Young males may begin to acquire their adult plumage in their fifth year and are not fully 'attired' until they are seven.

Satin Bowerbirds are found along most of the eastern and south-eastern coast of Australia, they prefer the wetter forests and woodlands, and nearby open areas. They feed mostly on fruits throughout the year. During summer (breeding season) the diet is supplemented with a large number of insects, while leaves are often eaten during winter months.

The male Satin Bowerbird is perhaps the best known and well documented of all the bowerbirds in Australia. This fame partially stems from its practice of building and decorating a bower to attract females. This consists of two parallel walls of sticks, is built on the ground, and is used as a courtship arena during the breeding season. The male decorates it with bright blue coloured objects that it collects; blue clothes pegs, drinking straws and bottle tops are among the favourite stolen items, while bright blue parrot feathers, flowers and brown snail shells, make up the majority of decorations away from human habitation. A mixture of chewed vegetable matter and saliva is used to paint the walls of the bower. The bower owner meticulously maintains it throughout the year. The breeding season runs from August to January, and both mature and immature males build bowers and display to prospective females.

On the arrival of a female, the male Satin Bowerbird leaps into a ritualised display of exaggerated movements, such as strutting and bowing, with wings outstretched and quivering, and accompanied by a variety of mechanical-sounding calls, such as buzzing and rattling interspersed with mimicry. One of the bower decorations is usually carried in the male's bill. If impressed, the female moves into the bower avenue for mating and then leaves to perform the nesting duties on her own, while the male readies himself for courting more prospective females.

The female places a loose nest of sticks in a tree or bush, up to 30 m – 35 m above the ground.

The bird's conservation status in Victoria is secure.



Text & photos - Birdlife Australia



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