



THE GRANITE NEWS

28TH FEB. 2021

VOLUME 15

ISSUE 7

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

Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

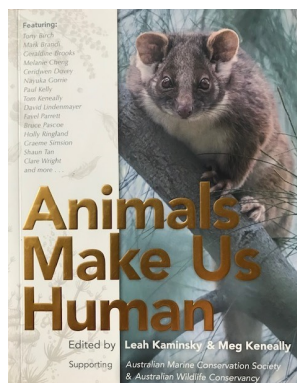
It appears that the Satin Bowerbird at Caveat hasn't finished constructing his bower quite just yet, with the addition of some yellow sulphur crested cockatoo feathers. (You will need to look closely) If possible we might keep track of Satin Sammy's efforts to woo any lady bowerbirds in the district with his artistic and optimistic efforts over the next few weeks.



Thanks to TGN readers, John and Lisa, copies of this beautiful book should be arriving in Renee and Cass's letterboxes this week.

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

And Kenny... was drawing readers' attention to advertising opportunities on the back page. See p.2 for more details and contact the Editor now if you would like to advertise your business and support The Granite News.



Feedback? - editor@tgn.org.au

or to subscribe on-line go to

www.highlands.org.au

"It is no use to make any other promise than that I will do my best."

Vida Goldstein (1869 - 1949)

**Australian suffragette & activist.
First woman in the Western world
to stand for a national parliament.**

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**

Highlands / Caveat CFA Annual General Meeting

THIS Wednesday 3rd March @ 7.30pm
@ Highlands Hall



Everyone is welcome.

All executive positions
need to be filled.

Interested?
Contact Scott
0427 969259

Let's
laugh

So I have to catch a mouse
with a mask??? 😬



Website of the Week

<https://strathbogierangesnatureview.wordpress.com>

Excellent local website featuring
ecology, landscape & natural
history of the Strathbogrie Ranges

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.

HCCC Membership so far
163 ... 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 & Classifieds

WHAT'S ON — March & April

March 3rd (Yea) & 4th (Shepparton) 9.30-3	INCREASING SOIL WATER HOLDING CAPACITY Venues @ Yea & Shepparton TBA These workshops are being supported by Landcare and GBCMA and presented by Walter Jehne from Regenerate Earth. Due to Covid, numbers are limited. For further details - Kirstie 0437 310840
Wednesday 3rd March @ 7.30pm	HIGHLANDS / CAVEAT CFA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at Highlands Hall All welcome. Executive positions to be filled. If interested please contact the Captain. Scott 5796 9259
Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th March 10 - 4	DARREN GILBERT'S OPEN STUDIO 2742 Highlands Rd, Highlands 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.
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 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.
Saturday 13th March 10.30 for 11am start	WILDERNESS .v. RICHMOND over 60 CRICKET MATCH at Ruffy Recreation Ground Cricket on the Tablelands is back!! Anyone wishing to play please contact Scott McKay 0427 969259 or David Sleight 0429 904301 Come along and enjoy 40 overs of entertaining cricketing expertise.
Friday 19th March @ 7.30pm	HUGHES CREEK CATCHMENT COLLABORATIVE MEETING at Highlands Hall The next meeting includes the AGM. All welcome. Enquiries? - contact Justus 0427 524473
Saturday 20th March 10am - 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
Thursday 25th March @ 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.
Saturday 3rd April (Easter Saturday)	THE GREAT TABLELANDS TOMATO CHALLENGE - Judging & Winners! All details to be advised closer to the date. Get your entries in tcccruddy@gmail.com & be there!!
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— March 10th & 24th & April 14th & 28th.
Every Monday @ 10 am	QIGONG AT RUFFY at Tablelands Community Centre Ruffy Vivien Watmough looks forward to welcoming you to this ancient well-being practice. For bookings and enquiries please call Vivien 0427 969259 or email: vivienwatmough@gmail.com
Every Thursday @ 7.30 (sharp) - 9pm	SWING DANCE CLASS at Euroa Uniting Church Hall Swing dances feature the Crazy Big Band music of the 1930s and 40s, and they are definitely all about having fun!! 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.

Coronacast is an accurate podcast that helps to answer your questions about coronavirus or COVID19. Listen for free on [ABC listen app](#), [Apple Podcasts](#) or [Google Podcasts](#).

Coronavirus 24hr Hotline
1800 020 080



Postponed until further notice

You are invited to a viewing of

Recent Paintings

by

Dennis Spiteri

Exhibition runs from Sunday 11 April to Sunday 9 May.

Opening preview: Sunday 11 April from 2 – 5pm.

(Official opening at 3pm)

Please RSVP if attending the preview.

Telephone (03) 5796 9373

Email: dennisspiteri@activ8.net.au

Hillcrest Gallery 33 Old Highlands Road, Highlands, Victoria.

Opening times: 10am – 4pm daily for the duration of the exhibition.

A heads up for this annual treat in the HCCC area. Dennis Spiteri will once again be opening his impressive gallery, with its stunning view outside and even more amazing artwork inside, for 4 weeks this year. **RSVPs for the Opening Preview on Sunday 11th April are essential**, see details above, attendance will assure you of a visual feast. Book in NOW!

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.**



Murnong or Yam Daisy - growing and transplanting a cultural and commercial crop

A research project in East Gippsland has achieved significant results in increasing survival of Murnong in restoration plantings. The results are encouraging for the production of this culturally significant species as a commercial crop. Murnong or Yam Daisy (*Microseris walteri*), is a flavoursome, highly nutritious, summer-dormant, tuberous perennial herb. Under Aboriginal management Murnong was widespread across grasslands and grassy woodlands of southern Australia, providing a staple food crop. The introduction of grazing from livestock, rabbits and soil compaction due to western agriculture decimated Murnong. It is now vulnerable and confined to small remnants. Bruce Pascoe's book *Dark Emu* is a good source of information on the cultivation of Murnong by Aboriginal people.

In 2015-2017 Annette Peisley and Rebecca Peisley conducted an independent research project that aimed to determine protocols for producing large, healthy Murnong tubers in nursery conditions; identify the most suitable over-summer storage method of these tubers; and determine if transplanting Murnong tubers could increase survival compared to field-sowing seeds. They found that dry-air after-ripened Murnong seeds need to be sown in the nursery in autumn (March-April) to produce tubers. This is important to allow the plants enough time to complete flowering by early December before entering summer dormancy to prevent heat stress and allow tuber survival underground.

Applying fertiliser that contains phosphorous during seed sowing significantly increased tuber size and resulted in more flower seed heads per plant. The positive response of

Murnong to increased soil nutrition demonstrates how hand-tillage and fire under Aboriginal management increased nutrient cycling and provided nutrient flushes into the soil resulting in better Murnong crops.

It also suggests that Murnong can survive in reclaimed agricultural restoration sites with permanently elevated levels of phosphorus. The most successful over-summer storage method was storing dormant tubers in-situ in potting mix.



Murnong cultivation...continued

These tubers had the highest regeneration percentage once transplanted into a restoration plot the following autumn, and went on to flower, produce seeds and survive to transition into summer dormancy. These new tubers can result in new plants the following year and are an important part of reproduction and local spread of this species.

Transplanting dormant tubers was much more successful than field-sowing seeds. Significantly more tubers regenerated than seeds germinated in the restoration sites. The tubers also produced more leaves more quickly than seedlings, which made them better at competing with weeds. Most tubers flowered, produced healthy seeds and survived to transition into summer dormancy while all seedlings died before flowering.

Being able to produce large, healthy tubers makes Murnong an attractive species for the emerging bushfood industry. The white tubers are nutritious and sweet tasting. They can be eaten raw or baked, mixed with other vegetables or turned into a paste for desserts. The leaves can also be used in salads. The methods from this study can be reproduced using containers in home vegetable gardens, or scaled up for production on farms.

Dr Rebecca Peisley is a lecturer in the School of Environmental Sciences at Charles Sturt University. Annette Peisley has spent the last 15 years studying native plant foods in East Gippsland. For more information email apeisley@skymesh.com.au

First published in Victorian Landcare Magazine, Summer 2021, Issue 80

NB: Euroa Arboretum sells Murnong but stocks are exhausted this season.

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 **0408 246308** to find out more.

The Wombat (*Vombatus Ursinus*)

Wombats are gorgeous creatures. They're mainly nocturnal and are generally quite solitary and territorial. They also like digging. A lot. And they are very determined, so what can you do to protect your property if you have a wombat insisting on burrowing under your house?

All native wildlife is protected in Victoria. It is an offence to kill, take, control or harm wildlife under the Wildlife Act 1975. It is also an offence to use poisons to kill, destroy or take wildlife. Severe penalties (including imprisonment and fines) apply to those found guilty of an offence under the Wildlife Act.

Wombats are protected and relocating one is illegal. A relocated wombat will most likely be killed by predators or other wombats protecting their territory. Wombats are highly territorial so if you do remove one, another will soon move into its burrow. If you destroy a burrow, the wombat will build a new one, possibly in a more problematic location.

In more extreme cases, permits to destroy the animal can be obtained from wildlife.vic.gov.au but this is discouraged and should only be used as a last resort.

If a wombat is digging under your house

Contacting your local wildlife shelter can be a good start. They can't remove the wombat, but they can provide advice. Shelley from Narbeview Wildlife Shelter suggested that people wait until the wombat is out of the burrow when it gets dark and then close up the entrance. They have had good results from this method.

Many wildlife shelters, including Narbeview, will put a camera down the burrow to get an idea of the wombat's habits, to get a better idea of when they have left the burrow. You can call **Narbeview Wildlife Shelter on 0419 584 099**.

There are also a variety of home remedies you can try.

Wombats have poor eyesight, but they compensate for this through having good senses of smell and hearing.

Wildlife Victoria suggests that if the wombat is digging a burrow under your property the simplest step would be to 'dirty up' their living space. Wombats are very clean animals and do not enjoy a dirty home.

Try putting mothballs down the burrow, or sprinkling a blood and bone mix around the entrance. Dog poo or chicken manure is also a known deterrent. Wombats hate the smell of urine, so some people have trained their dog to wee on an old sheet then after a while put the sheet down the burrow. Human male urine is also known to deter them.

If these don't work, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) says that "wombat access to spaces under buildings can be prevented by erecting heavy gauge reinforcing mesh or the two-wire electric fence. The mesh can also be used to prevent wombats from burrowing in dam walls."

They add, "To exclude wombats from an area, electric fencing can be erected. A proven design is a two-wire electric fence, with the live wires at 15 and 30 cm above the ground, this is most effective when constructed on the outside (30 cm out) of an existing boundary fence."

Preventing fence damage

Wildlife Victoria says, "Wombats will either push through or burrow underneath fencing. A heavy flap (think of a wombat version of a cat flap) placed in the fence aligned with the wombat's trail is the best option to keep the fence intact. The wombat will be able to push through the heavy flap while other animals will not have the strength."

DELWP goes into more detail on this and advises that wombats like to follow the same pathway to a preferred feeding area. The installation of swing gates at existing wombat runways can be used as a long-term solution to continual fence repairing. This solution will not exclude the wombats, but it can create a path that only they can use. Select two or three well used wombat holes in a fence and repair any other holes within a few hundred metres. Check and repair these holes daily to ensure the chosen holes are used. After about a month the wombats should be using only the selected holes. After this, the frame for the gate should be erected around the hole and left for the wombats to become accustomed to it before the gate is hung. When the gate is then put in place, it should be left partly open so that the wombats passing through must lift it only slightly. After another week or two, the gate can be allowed to hang vertically, allowing the wombats to pass through. Such a gate will reduce greatly the incidence of fresh wombat holes being made in fences. The gate must be light enough for a wombat to push through but also sturdy and sufficiently heavy to deter other species, such as rabbits or wallabies. The gate should be constructed of mesh so that the wombat is able to see through it. Star pickets can be used as the frame for the gate. Ongoing maintenance of the gate is required to ensure that the gate remains functional.



Wombat mange

Mange is an infection of the mange mite. The mites burrow under the skin and lay eggs, causing discomfort. Over time, scabs and ridges form on the wombat's skin. These can become dry and split open, becoming infected as a result. Unless treated, wombats can die from this infection.

If you see a wombat with mange, you can contact Mange Management by emailing info@mangemanagement.org.au or through contacting local wildlife carers, and volunteers will install burrow flaps to help treat the animal.

Free mange management kits are also available through this organisation.

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