



# THE GRANITE NEWS

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

## Welcome, Wumindjika and G'day

Have you had a chance to check out the NEW HCCC website yet? Hope so. <https://www.hccclandcare.net.au/> Sue has done an excellent job of creating it and looks forward to adding relevant photos and articles of past events, whilst we continue to add in new workshops, up-to-date Landcare information and future issues of TGN. Stay tuned for further developments. Until the next issue of TGN... **Pauline**  
And Kenny Koala ... was enjoying lunch with attendees at the HCCC AGM

## HCCC News

### HCCC AGM—2021 President's Report

A huge thank you goes to my wonderful team of committee members and facilitators who have supported my role, and the work of the HCCC, through another challenging Covid year. Despite the ongoing difficulties, we managed to host a wonderful community lunch at which one of our Taungurung first nations' leaders gave us an insight into our local indigenous heritage. A very informative field day was run by the members of our Soil Carbon project and, during the long winter lockdowns, community members were able to plant their allocation of 'koala' trees supplied by the Euroa arboretum & supported by Janet & the HCCC.

A major achievement for 2021 has been to secure funding for our facilitators for the next 3 years. I cannot stress enough how important our facilitators are to the success of the projects undertaken by the HCCC. Thank you to Janet and Neil, and now Claire and Vanessa, for the amazing work you do for the HCCC and the wider community.

While driving around the paddocks recently, I was conscious of the stock, camped in the shade of mature trees and shelterbelts. The country was looking fabulous as I foraged for vegetation to use at a recent wedding. It made me reflect on how the local area looked in the early 80's. It was a very different landscape from the one we enjoy today.

In 1981, we built a small house on a bare ridge near the cattle yards. A Melbourne landscape designer was invited by a local garden group, to visit the area. He was absolutely sure that we would never be able to grow a garden there, because of the wind. The Kobyboyn Valley was largely open, with some remnant paddock trees and plenty of eroded gullies. Rabbits were plentiful and summer rains devastated the bare hilltops and sheep camps.

What a different landscape we live in now! One of the few benefits of old age, is the ability to reflect on the changes made in our lifetime.

Whiteheads Creek was the first Landcare group to be established in what is now the HCCC. Salinity, erosion and rabbits were top of the list of concerns in the early years. At that time, on departmental advice, thousands of willows were put into gullies to stabilise the eroded creek beds. **Continued on p.3 >>>**

**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](mailto:editor@tgn.org.au)  
or to subscribe on-line go to  
[www.highlands.org.au](http://www.highlands.org.au)

**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**

"The happiness of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts."  
**Marcus Aurelius (Philosopher & Roman Emperor 161-180 AD)**

## Let's laugh









## Did you know?

Following on from last week's stats on renewable power sources in various Australian states, (but not included due to a lack of space) the state whose power is actually 100% renewable is Tasmania, courtesy of their hydro—electricity system. Well done Tasi, but Vale Lake Pedder.

## Community Notices

**WHAT'S ON — March 2022** NB: COVID—double vaccinated will apply to all events

<b>Tues. 1st &amp; Wed. 2nd March</b>	<b>WINTON WETLANDS SCIENCE FORUM</b> <span style="float: right;">at Winton Wetlands</span> Like to find out more about the Wetlands environment? See p.5 for more details about this event.
 <b>Friday 4th March @ 6pm</b>	<b>FIRST FRIDAY of the MONTH BBQ</b> <span style="float: right;">at Tablelands Community Centre</span> It's time to put the FUN back into Friday nights! <span style="float: right; color: red;">Bookings: 0427 690970 or <a href="mailto:tccruffy@gmail.com">tccruffy@gmail.com</a></span>
<b>Saturday 5th &amp; Sunday 6th March 10-4</b>	<b>DARREN GILBERT's OPEN STUDIO</b> <span style="float: right;">2742 Highlands Rd, Highlands</span> 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.
<b>Sunday 6th March</b>	<b>CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY</b> <span style="float: right;">at various locations</span> Check out the CUAP website to find out where you can assist in this national, environmental activity.
 <b>Friday 11th March @ 6.30pm</b>	<b>DRINKS ON THE DECK</b> <span style="float: right;">at Highlands Community Hall</span> 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. <span style="float: right; color: red;">Contact Paula 0419 551882</span>
 <b>Monday 14th March @ 11am</b>	<b>HIGHLANDS SPINNING CLUB</b> The Highlands Spinning Club will get together in 2022 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. <span style="float: right; color: red;">Enquiries? - contact Jan 5790 4361</span>
<b>Friday 18th March @ 7.30pm</b>	<b>HUGHES CREEK CATCHMENT COLLABORATIVE MEETING</b> <span style="float: right;">at Whiteheads Creek Hall</span> Next meeting @ Whiteheads Creek commences at 7.30pm. All welcome. <span style="float: right; color: red;">Enquiries? Justus 0427 524473</span>
 <b>Saturday 19th March from 10-noon</b>	<b>HIGHLANDS BLACK MARKET</b> <span style="float: right;">at 94 Old Highlands Rd</span> Bring along your excess produce, buy local and learn from each other. <span style="float: right; color: red;">Enquiries? - Clare 0428 969366</span>
 <b>Sunday 27th March @10am</b>	<b>HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS</b> <span style="float: right;">meeting at Highlands Hall</span> Everyone is welcome to come rambling and discover our local district. <span style="float: right; color: red;">Enquires: Andrew Shaw 04372 49038 or Robyn Lingard 0409 528235</span>
<div style="background-color: yellow; display: inline-block; padding: 5px;"><b>Back for 2022</b></div>	
 <b>Every Thursday 6—7.30pm</b>	<b>YOUR SURYA YOGA CLASSES in 2022</b> <span style="float: right;">at Highlands Community Hall</span> Come along to Sandra's yoga classes in Highlands. Bookings essential via website <a href="http://www.yoursurya.com">www.yoursurya.com</a>
<b>Every second Wednesday 10.30-12.30</b>	<b>MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE</b> <span style="float: right;">at Highlands Community Hall</span> The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight. Why not pop in?? <span style="color: red;">YAY! The Mobile Library will be in Highlands on March 9th &amp; 23rd and April 6th &amp; 20th.</span>
<b>Every Monday @ 10 am</b>	<b>ONE TO ONE WELL-BEING CENTRE EUROA</b> <span style="float: right;">at Tablelands Community Centre</span> Qigong classes, Shiatsu Massage, Counselling and Psychotherapy. <span style="float: right; color: red;">For bookings or further info contact Vivien 5795 3349 or 0405 612400</span>

### FOR SALE

Table made by Gary Male.

It is made of Jarrah and sits 12 comfortably. Designed so no one gets a leg.

Cost \$3500 to make will accept \$2000 or nearest offer. Contact Adele [adele@and.net.au](mailto:adele@and.net.au)





## HCCC President's Report - continued from p.1

We now know that they create as many problems as they solve. Hindsight is a wonderful thing!

Many of us experimented with Australian native species, but not necessarily those endemic to this area. Some failed, some surprised us and we have had some unexpected wins. *E. Nicholii* was being promoted as an ideal small tree, but we now know that they don't remain small! I also experimented with Omeo gums (*E. neglecta*), which retain their branches to ground level, and which sheltered our garden until it was established. Forty years on, they are succumbing to mistletoe.

A welcome surprise has been the success of two eucalypt species we planted 30 years ago, *E. crenulata* (Buxton Gum) and *E. pulverulenta* (Silver-Leaved Mountain Gum). They are both highly sought after by florists and have just featured at the recent wedding.

Our farming practices have also evolved over the years. Whole farm planning, strategic land-class fencing, and more considered agricultural practices, have led us recognise the potential of regenerative farming techniques and have improved our local environment. In the past, native pasture species such as *Microleucaena*, were sprayed out and replaced with 'improved', 'exotic' pasture species.

While pasture improvement is still an important part of agriculture today, we have recognised the value of some of our native species, not only for their ecological significance but also because they complement our productivity. Our Soil Carbon project, is set to further enlighten us on managing soils and grazing.

We were given a greater appreciation for our bogs and spring soaks following Fiona Coates' investigation, stretching over several years up to 2012. Her study helped to inform the management of these precious natural features which typify our landscape and safeguard our invaluable, consistent water supplies. However, while protecting our unique natural assets, the battle to control all pest plant and animal species continues.

Over the life of HCCC, there have been several remarkable, trail-blazing, local heroes and Peg Lade deserves a special mention. They were the innovators who, through demonstration and quiet persuasion, gradually changed perceptions and moved others to make changes.

Our earliest tree plantations only allowed for a single row of eucalypts and, although they still provide shade and shelter for the stock, we soon recognised that they were too small. The innovators were able to demonstrate the value of diverse plantings, generous shelter belts and >>>

## HCC President's Report continued....

protected waterways. Slowly mindsets have changed.

I can only hope that the next generations will reap the rewards of our learning journey, take note of past mistakes and continue to innovate, as they manage the challenges of the future, none more so than climate change. As the 'seniors' of the HCCC, it is incumbent upon us to develop a strong succession plan.

Our wonderful new website will be a new and valuable tool in our communications tool kit. We must welcome, engage and nurture a new generation into our organisation. They can draw on the benefit of our experience, grow stronger with our support and we can rejoice in the enthusiasm of youth and new ways of thinking.

Jenny Webb - HCCC President 2021 - 2022



Omeo  
Gum

Eucalyptus  
neglecta

## Good News !!

**Felt Making Workshop - Rescheduled Date!**  
**SATURDAY 12th MARCH**

**9.30 for 10am START**  
**RUFFY HALL,**  
**NOLANS ROAD, RUFFY**

**Contact** Pam Bannister  
**0411 217476**  
Double Vaccination  
required

**Fundraiser for the Ruffy Hall**



**Note NEW Contact details for Highlands Hall**

Paula Lade—0419 551882 [pelades7@gmail.com](mailto:pelades7@gmail.com)



## HCCC Landcare needs YOUR help

**Blackberry infestation is out of control. With the wet spring and cooler growing conditions blackberries are growing out of control in the Hughes Creek Catchment. This is not only a problem for individual landholders but for all our communities.**



These photographs show the extent of the problem in just one small area. This problem is not confined to the creeks and is problematic across many places in the catchment. This is now a growing problem in very many places. These plants are now in fruit and the problem will be spread by birds; action should be taken NOW to avoid a bigger problem next year.



### How you can help

If the problem is on your property, please start a program to eradicate the plants, this can be done by physical means, suitable for small areas, or start a spraying program. Spraying can be done until the first frost, normally in early May.

If you see an infestation on neighbouring properties, this would be a good opportunity to get all the affected landholders working together on an eradication programme. Why not start a conversation, organise a neighbourly meeting, assist each other to get on top of this problem before it becomes overwhelming and spreads to areas currently unaffected.

Some landholders may think that this is 'someone else's problem, it's not, **it is everyone's responsibility**, and needs to be attended to promptly. Please let HCCC know of any lack of interest/action or contact your local shire environment officer, or the bio security officer at the DEWLP offices in Seymour. If this year's spread looks impressive, next year's will be HUGE!

### How can the HCCC help

HCCC will subsidise the costs of chemicals by 50%, please contact the HCCC before purchasing chemicals to get approval for the subsidy

HCCC have spraying equipment to assist

We can put you in touch a company that that spray from a helicopter, only suitable for large problems over 15 Ha.

HCCC also have information on a new company that sprays from a Drone, the drone can target small areas in difficult to reach areas with a vehicle or tractor.

Can provide a list of commercial spraying companies.



### Impact of Blackberries

#### Impact on ecosystems and waterways

Blackberry is considered a serious environmental threat and is highly invasive. It can provide harbour and a food source for pest species, as well as serve to outcompete and eliminate other vegetation by excluding light from the soil surface.

In its early stages of infestation, blackberry will grow over, or occupy gaps in, native vegetation and, in later stages, can severely restrict regeneration in native forests.

#### Agricultural and economic impacts

Blackberry is an extremely serious agricultural threat, owing to its rapid growth and ability to reproduce through various methods. It is a highly invasive species that will readily establish on disturbed sites and infest large areas.

Once established it is expensive to manage and can even be a fire hazard due to large amounts of dead canes.

The plant's strong prickles make it hazardous and unpalatable to grazing animals (except browsing animals, such as goats and deer) and impenetrable thickets provide harbour and food for pest animals such as rabbits and foxes, starlings and blackbirds. It may also restrict access to watercourses in forestry operations and for grazing animals.

**Continued on p.5 >>>**





### The Tablelands Community Centre - **Pottery Project**

To build permanent outdoor furniture that will be covered with handmade ceramic tiles

If you would like to participate in this project and learn how to build your own outdoor furniture, make ceramic tiles, glaze tiles, apply tiles to finished furniture.

Please contact: [tccruffy@gmail.com](mailto:tccruffy@gmail.com) or 0427 690 970

This will be the start project for the permanent community pottery studio

## **BLACKBERRIES - Eradicate NOW!** From p.4

Blackberry may affect the establishment and growth of both softwood and hardwood seedlings in plantation forestry.

### **Social value and health impacts**

Blackberry can restrict access to and along water-courses which may affect recreational activities. It also produces strong prickles which make it objectionable to humans and in large infestations, may be a fire hazard due to large amounts of dead canes.

### **Management**

#### **Prescribed measures for the control of noxious weeds:**

- application of a registered herbicide
- physical removal
- mulching.

### **Contact information**

email [neil@hccclandcare.net.au](mailto:neil@hccclandcare.net.au)

<https://www.hccclandcare.net.au/>

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/search?query=weeds>

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds/prescribed-measures-for-the-control-of-noxious-weeds>



You are invited to a

**Garden Party at Parrindi**

24 Casey Crescent Broadford  
on

**Sunday 20 March at 2.00pm**

to

**celebrate Glen**

**to share stories and memories  
of a life well lived.**

RSVP Terry 0448043186



## **Why attract bees to your garden?**

As pollinators bees play an essential role in our gardens. They transfer pollen from one flower to another, fertilising plants so they may begin developing fruits and seeds. Most plants require the help of pollinators such as insects and birds to develop - 70 of the top 100 food crops are pollinated by bees and they pollinate 80% of all flowering plants on Earth!



Unfortunately bees and beneficial insects are under increasing threat due to pesticides, parasites and climate change - but we can help them by using organic gardening practices, planting flowers to attract them and providing them with shelter.

## **Winton Wetlands Science Forum**

For TGN readers interested in Wetlands the Winton Wetlands are offering a Science Forum on March 1st & 2nd, bringing together experts in the field of Wetlands Ecology Management. There is a cost to attend but for further information go to their website - <https://wintonwetlands.org.au> to book in.

## **Climate Change - your input required**

Murrindindi Shire Council is committed to fighting Climate Change and needs help to develop a Climate Action Plan. If you are interested in creating a roadmap that will help MSC achieve their goals and net-zero emissions by 2035 either ring **5772 0333** or complete this survey by **March 28th** [theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/climateaction](https://theloop.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/climateaction)

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