

We wish to acknowledge The Wurundjeri People, the traditional custodians of our region, and all Aboriginal Elders, past and present.

News in Brief

Our Wildlife Neighbours

John Harris will discuss the results of fauna surveys undertaken in Currawong Bush Park and 100 Acres Reserve in 2016. More than 70 species of wildlife were recorded during the brief survey including many birds, frogs, reptiles and ten species of mammals, including microbats.

> **Wednesday 5 April 7.20 pm Bush & Bull Room - Grand Hotel Warrandyte**

Follow up Field Trip: (Seminar attendees only)

John will lead a spotlight walk around 100 Acres Reserve, looking for some of our wildlife neighbours and in recognition of Australasian Bat Night, he will attempt to trap some microbats. Bookings: Bookings are essential: eeadmin@manningham.vic.gov.au

> **Sat 8 April 7.30 pm to 9.00pm**

Upcoming Training Sessions

Yarra Ranges Council offers the following courses for volunteers:

Community Advocacy 101 20 April 2017

A session supporting your group in using advocacy as a tool for bringing important issues to a range of audiences to stimulate change.

Project Management Essentials

This workshop will assist you in maximising your project's chance of success and avoiding common project management pitfalls. **16 May 2017**

Register with h.sarsons@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Spadoni's Billabong

Yarra Ranges Council has been working with Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria over the last year to revitalise Spadoni's Billabong and restore the ecosystem. HEWI congratulates all involved in this ecological project on the Yarra River. Access to the walking pathways within Spadoni's Reserve is from the northern end of Victoria Road Yering and a visit is highly recommended!

[See how the billabong has thrived since the works.](#)

HEWI Activity Reports

Films: We were delighted with the attendance at our film evening but disappointed that there was no time to allow discussion of the issues. We did submit a submission on the Adani mine as the committee is totally committed to ghg emissions reduction.

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A community group acting to protect and conserve important elements of our local environment

From our October 2016 newsletter:

"The World Passes 400 ppm Threshold. Permanently.

Closure of Hazelwood Power Station

*The media is reporting that Hazelwood's owners plan to announce that Australia's dirtiest coal plant will close in 2017! Exciting news for all those who have been campaigning - and marching! - for the last 10 years **to end pollution** from Australia's dirtiest power station."*

So how ironic is the current emotional media outpouring over a commercial decision to close a non-profitable power station in the same week that intense cyclonic activity was being created in Australia's north-east due to increased temperatures of the Pacific Ocean - temperatures that will continue to increase with increasing emissions; temperatures that are already causing bleaching of our Great Barrier Reef on an unprecedented scale.

*During the same period, the **Heyfield Timber mill** has been generating its own spin on its commercial failure and mainstream media has again responded with highly emotive - and irresponsible - articles about this proposed closure. Nick Legge, Rubicon Forest Protection Group has written a stirring reply:*

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/panicking-over-timber-jobs-is-not-a-sustainable-strategy-20170328-gv8qtx>

LEADBEATER'S POSSUM AWARENESS WEEK MAR 31 - APR 6

Congratulations to all Friends of Leadbeater's Possum who are celebrating the 150th year since this critically endangered species was formally named. This 5th annual awareness week also celebrates the anniversary of the date April 3 1961, when Leadbeater's Possum was re-discovered by Eric Wilkinson when spotlighting near Cambarville, Victoria. Previously, Leadbeater's Possum had been declared 'almost certainly' extinct (1960).

Leadbeater's Possum is the only mammal that is endemic to Victoria.

Its habitat is confined to the Central Highlands and alpine areas between Lake Mountain and Mt Baw Baw. There is a small Lowland species surviving in the Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve.

CORANDERRK PLANTINGS

HEWI and landcare members have previously planted with Greening Australia on the Worawa property (the north side of Barak Lane), where there is now a thriving bushland area as well as indigenous tree lots being monitored by University research teams. All previous grazing was phased out and there is now a complete ban on hard-hooved animals on Worawa land. HEWI committee members have accepted an invitation to support another revegetation project to implement a whole-farm plan which will restore and rejuvenate the Coranderrk land, on the south side of Barak Lane "creating and extending habitat for the *Helmeted Honeyeater* and *Leadbeater's Possum* by planting 20,000 seedlings across the property".

There will be information about Coranderrk's history and future plans as well as a bush tucker tasting available on site. HEWI has tentatively registered 10 participants for the second planting, Sunday May 7. We hope to offer an active team of supporters for this ambitious project. If you would like to be included in the HEWI team, with shared transport and some refreshments, please let Maureen know.

As for all plantings, bring hats, gloves, sensible shoes, BYO lunch and water. If you are responding separately, register at coranderrkreeplanting@gmail.com and include your preferred day (April 9 or May 7), your name, number of people attending, contact email or phone number.

> **Sunday 9 April Sunday 7 May, 19 Barak Lane, H'ville 9.30am - 3.30pm.**

April 02

Daylight saving ends

Friends of Leadbeater's PossumRediscovery Picnic at Cambarville
12 noon – 4.00pm**April 05**Yarra River forum
Abbotsford**April 09**Coranderrk planting
19 Barak Lane, from 9.00am**April 12**Playground meeting
Memo Hall
6.00-7.00pm**April 13****HEWI meeting**
HL&LC Room 1
7.00-9.00pm**April 14-17**

Easter

April 21

WaterWatch monitoring

April 22

Earth Day

April 22Convoy of Conservation
Belgrave-Yellingbo-Toolangi
9am details – jcrooka@gmail.com**May 07**Coranderrk planting
19 Barak Lane 9.00am**May 19**HEWI invertebrate ID count
HLLC Rm1 10.30am -12noon

News in Brief cont...**HEWI Activity Reports****Clean up:** The litter from our clean up day has been audited and the bar graphs will be part of our library display in June – thanks Julie!**Waterbugs with Healesville Primary School students:**

was a delight, with two new teachers and a record HEWI team of seven to assist with identification of a wide diversity of macro invertebrates from the healthy Grace Burn. Autumn count will be on May 19.

Warm welcome to new member Jeff and his practical assistance!**YARRA RIVER ACTION PLAN (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrn)**

Yarra Riverkeepers and Environment Justice Australia are hosting a meeting to consider the essential community vision for our river and a detailed Yarra Strategic Plan. Community participation will be central to the preparation of policy foundations for the drafting of a Yarra River Protection Bill. HEWI made a submission to the Action Plan and would encourage any member to attend this community forum.

'HEWI welcomes this initiative for a Yarra River Protection Plan but we would stress the absolute necessity for the total vision of a fully restored natural habitat of 30-50m corridors along both banks of the river, protected by legislative controls and community partnerships.

Priority action must be the establishment of a Great Forest National Park to fully protect the forests and quality water resources that they provide, with elimination of erosion from logging activities at the river's source.'

> Wednesday, April 5, 6pm to 8pm, The Linen Room, Abbotsford Convent, 1 St Heliers Street, Abbotsford. Bookings: yarraforum2.eventbrite.com.au

REVIEW OF THE FLORA AND FAUNA GUARANTEE ACT 1988

HEWI submitted a detailed response to the proposals outlined in this review – thanks Evelyn! – and we have exchanged copies with several other environment groups. Lack of recovery plans, enforcement, staff shortages, budget constraints and ad hoc reactions to pressure groups without scientific evidence were common issues. Examples included in our submission were: the ongoing logging practices of Vic Forests, contrary to all the scientific evidence of Mountain Ash habitat decline in the Central Highlands:

'The entire Mountain Ash forest was listed as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN) Red List of Ecosystems in 2015 but DELWP continue to allow clear-felling of this species.'

.....and the Ministerial intervention that favoured property owners of the Yarra Waterways Group over the recommendations of their own Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's recommendations:

'..... pressure groups such as the Yarra Waterways Group which has seriously compromised habitat restoration guidelines for the Lowland Leadbeater's Possum and the Helmeted Honeyeater previously approved by a VEAC Investigation process.'

YELLINGBO CONSERVATION AREA

Following the details provided in our February news, there have been concerted efforts by environment groups to have the categorical decision by Minister D'Ambrosio, to reduce waterways buffer zones to 10m, reversed. In the last sitting of the Victorian Parliament before the current recess, our very own Samantha Dunn MP, Member of the Legislative Council for the Eastern Metropolitan Region, raised this issue on our behalf:

Question for the Minister for Environment, Lily D'Ambrosio MP:

'On the 19th of January 2017, you announced a restriction on riparian revegetation in the Yellingbo Conservation area to 10 metres from a waterway.

What evidence base did you use to make this decision, and what consultations were held with local environment groups on this 10 metre restriction?'

We will look forward to this reply, presumably a more respectful one than that received in response to the HEWI submission which asked similar questions that were ignored and replaced with a paraphrased media release that had been available for some time.

On the local scene, we are planning our own celebration of 20years restoration plantings along Healesville's waterways and we have been invited to make a short presentation at the community meeting for the Queens Park Playground Upgrade on Wednesday April12.



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