

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

Our thanks to all those members who have renewed for 2018 – there will be another membership form attached with this newsletter for those who may have been on holidays earlier.

News in Brief

Unusual Ecological Phenomena Survey

Researchers at The University of Adelaide are inviting you to take part in a survey of observations of unusual ecological phenomena to help researchers understand what unusual ecological phenomena are being observed and how natural resource managers respond to them. This information will help to inform conservation planning and policy. Take the survey **before Monday 5th of March 2018** to report your observations. SA survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/unusualecolphenomena17VIC> Survey Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/unusualecologicalphenomenasurveyaus/>

Victorian Environment Friends Network

The AGM will be followed by a light lunch and a presentation by Jenny Gray, CEO of Zoos Victoria. This is a network of many groups allied with the Victorian National Parks Association, so these meetings provide a great opportunity to catch up with many other projects. If any HEWI member is attending, your feedback would be appreciated. Send your registration by email or text to The Secretary ecosystems@bigpond.com or 0417 326 860.

> **Feb. 24 from 12 noon The Hub in Docklands, 80 Harbour Esplanade**

Rubicon Forest Protection Group

Our neighbours have created a very powerful and effective video produced by Lea Jellinek, highlighting the effects of current forestry practices. <https://www.youtube.com/>

Vic Forests - HEWI Submissions

HEWI has strongly objected to the current Timber Release Plans proposals and also to the renewal of the Regional Forest Agreements, both of which would continue to decimate our already gravely depleted Mountain Ash ecological vegetation community and its totally dependant faunal species, such as Leadbeater's Possum, the Greater Glider and Powerful Owl.

First Aid Training

Free for environmental volunteers to give you the skills and knowledge required to provide a First Aid response, life support, management of casualty(s), in a range of situations, including home, workplace or community, until the arrival of medical or other assistance.

"ENVIRONMENT IS A WINNER"

How refreshing to see this headline across the top of page 3 in our local Mountain Views Mail two weeks ago, with a striking photo of Peter Hannaford and an article continued from page 1 which featured former Badger Creek resident Bob Anderson. Both these dedicated environmentalists were recognised by Yarra Ranges Council for their extensive work and leadership in quite different environmental fields, but which eventually led to a common objective.

Bob Anderson created the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater in 1989 and has been the driving force behind huge projects to secure the survival of this endangered bird population. Peter Hannaford later created the Judith Eardley Wildlife Organisation with a large shop in the middle of the Healesville retail precinct. This new 'op shop' was an immediate success, staffed only by volunteers, so all profits could be passed on to assisting environment groups and the purchase of many properties that would be managed to protect vulnerable flora and fauna.

It was inevitable that these two activists would share their vision through land purchases in the Yellingbo area which have allowed the extension of essential habitat for the slowly increasing numbers of Helmeted Honeyeaters.

HEWI members have enjoyed a long association with the activities of the Yellingbo Conservation Association - and even before that group was established. Bob has been an inspirational leader for all their conservation projects involving extensive fund raising, sheer dedication and persistence. Interestingly, both our groups were formed in 1989.

Peter Hannaford is another quiet achiever whose practical vision has literally conserved huge tracts of land for regeneration and revegetation. He provided HEWI with our first large grant and we were able to introduce him to Bob and Kieran Martin, YCA education officer at the time, and hey presto! - critical new additions to the Yellingbo conservation area were funded by the highly successful Wildlife shop.

ACTIVITY REMINDERS

* Clean Up Day 2018 – HEWI's 20th annual litter collection!

Our Waterwatch team will be recording monthly water quality data in the bbq rotunda from 9am so volunteers are welcome to collect a bag and gloves, 9-10am.

> **Friday March 02 10am – 11.30am Grace Burn, Queens Park**

* Environmental Volunteer Thank You Celebration

All members are invited to network with other group members and environment staff as well as enjoying the huge diversity of plants at Karwarra Gardens.

Please RSVP via this link www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/EVC2018

> **Sunday 4th March, 2.00-5.00pm Kawarra Native Gardens Kalorama**

* Healesville Community Renewable Energy

Solar Hot Water including Heat Pumps

Facilitated by local experts in the field and industry specialists. The focus will be on what households, community groups and businesses need to know about solar hot water before committing to buy a system. The session will include roof top, split systems and heat pump systems. Check website for venue

> **Saturday 24 Feb 10.30am – 12.30pm**

February: 1-28Sustainability Festival
Federation Square**February 24**HCoRE: Solar Hot Water
including Heat Pumps
10.30am-12.30pm - Venue tba**March 02****Waterwatch monitoring
Grace Burn
8.30am – 10.00am****March 02****CLEAN UP day
Queens Park waterways
9.00am – 11.30am****March 04**YRC Enviro Volunteer Day
Karwarra Gardens
2.00pm - 5.00pm**March 07**Healesville Safer Together
Bushfire workshop**March 07**POSSUM PALOOZA
Melbourne Bowls Club
Flagstaff Gardens
5.30pm-8.00pm**March 08****HEWI meeting, HL&LC
7.00pm****March 12**

Labour day holiday

March 23**Waterbugs with HPS
Grace Burn
9.30am – 11.30am****March 25**Ecotopia
Yarra Junction**March 30**

Good Friday

April 02

Easter Monday

News In Brief cont..**First Aid Training**

The course comprises both online pre-learning and face-to-face training hours. We can only offer training for one participant per group. If you'd like to take part please book your place asap by replying to this email: Jen Ellison: j.ellison@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

> **Saturday 14th April 9am – 4.30pm Monbulk Community Link**

Healesville Safer Together Bushfire Workshop

These local community workshops are organised by our regional officers from the department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), venue

> **Wed. March 7th, 2018. Check with Joy.Harte@delwp.vic.gov.au**

POSSUM PALOOZA: A FUNDRAISER FOR OUR FORESTS

[Friends of Leadbeater's Possum](#) and [Environmental Justice Australia](#) are fighting a landmark case to test the legality of the native forest logging exemption from federal environment laws. The outcome could bring the logging industry back within reach of Federal law and mark a shift away from the short-sighted logging that has pushed so many species to the brink. Possum Palooza will help raise funds to take cases like this to court and to push for stronger environment laws that truly protect nature.

Speakers include ecologist Professor David Lindenmayer (ANU), lawyer Danya Jacobs (EJA), and environmentalist Maggie Riddington. There'll be live music from the Legless Lizards, a silent auction (Friends of Leadbeater's Possum), finger food (Asylum Seekers Resource Centre) and drinks for purchase at the bar. Book now [Eventbrite](#)

> **Wednesday 7 March, 5.30-8.00 pm, City of Melbourne Bowls Club, Flagstaff Gardens**

AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGY FOR NATURE 2018-2030 - [website](#)

This draft document has been released for public consultation," to seek the views of the broader community" and we urge you to do so, as environmental groups everywhere have expressed absolute bewilderment about this banal 17page document, including those below:

...the federal government's latest strategy to protect Australian plants and animals facing extinction outlines three goals and 12 objectives but contains no measurable targets and scant detail of actions that will be taken by the states. The objectives underpinning those goals include statements such as "maximise the number of species secured in nature," but gives no details as to how this objective might be achieved. It is a complete contrast to the 102-page document released in 2010 to tackle the threats to Australia's biodiversity. This included a detailed action plan to boost awareness of the threats to endangered species, to tackle threats which included farming and fishing practices, pollution and climate change with a target to involve more Indigenous communities in managing the natural environment.

Australia has one of the [highest levels of extinction of species](#) and is among the top 10 countries for species that are endangered or threatened. More mammal and plant species have been lost over the past 200 years than any other country (but Australia also has one of the highest number of mammal species. Of the 273 Australian endemic land mammal species, there have been 29 extinctions, which equates to 11%). Major conservation groups have lodged strong objections to this "global embarrassment" and local groups will also submit our own. However, as it is a short document, we urge community individuals to lodge their own comments. It is easy to find under the title above, and open for public comment until **March 16, 2018**. Please note that there is also a separate cover note which must be filled with your comments sheet. <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/conservation/strategy/draft-revision>

AUSTRALIAN PANEL OF EXPERTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

In stark contrast to the above, [APEEL](#) has launched a blueprint for a new generation of environment laws and the creation of independent agencies with the power and authority to ensure they are enforced. The panel of 14 senior legal figures says this is motivated by the need to systematically address ecological challenges including falling biodiversity, the degradation of productive rural land, intensification of coastal and city development and the threat of climate change.

We are in the process of redesigning our facebook pages which will carry far more information and photos in the future to compliment this newsletter and our website. Thanks to Karen, Coral and Adrian for their respective roles with these.



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