



HEALESVILLE \* CHUM CREEK \* YARRA GLEN \* BADGER CREEK \* STEELS CREEK \* TARRAWARRA \* TOOLANGI

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

*Welcome to 2019 - our 30<sup>th</sup> Year of continuous environmental advocacy across current issues and community activities to protect local waterways with indigenous vegetation.*

*A proud record to celebrate with HEWI members and friends, involving all ages from Prep to Seniors, whilst acknowledging our enduring partnerships for community engagement and support.*

[If you receive the Rotary Community Directory, please check page 159 for a free half page advertisement for HEWI! Community endorsement indeed!]

### MELBOURNE WATER GRANT

We have just received our 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive grant from Melbourne Water, \$1,100 towards our administration, room hire, equipment and catering expenses for which we are most grateful.

### GRACE BURN PROJECT

Last spring, our Grace Burn Project facilitator began a new engagement to lead local Guides and Scouts for Platypus surveys along Wirrup Yaluk and the Watts River, including ecological training of Platypus habitat and the vital necessity for unpolluted waterways. Negotiations with the remaining commercial properties for streamside management along the Grace Burn are continuing.

The summer rain has aided late plantings along the Grace Burn at the Healesville RSL, and our volunteers for this event were Healesville High/Woori Farm School Year 9 students. Riparian plantings like this have many benefits - they provide wildlife corridors, feeding and nesting sites, cool the water, and prevent erosion.

Two of the students involved this year, Noah Hamill and Aiden Hyde-Thomas, were awarded \$100 Student Landcare Awards, provided by the Mt Toolebewong & District Landcare Group. Our HEWI project has enabled students to demonstrate their practical and team building skills, which contributed to their nomination for these awards and completion of Certificate 1 in Landcare and Conservation Management. We look forward to planting at the RSL and other sites this Autumn with the next group of Year 9 students.

Note: In December, HEWI facilitator and Mt Toolebewong & District Landcare Treasurer, Karen Garth, received a Certificate of Recognition for her dedicated environmental and community volunteering over at least 3 decades within the Healesville region from the Hon. Tony Smith, MP Casey. *Congratulations Karen!*

[This award was also recognised by the Executive Officer, Yellingbo Conservation Area Coordinating Committee (YCACC) to highlight community contribution to biodiversity conservation.]

### FORESTS

There was a spectacular media release late 2018 when a DELWP policy document became available that revealed Department comments re logging old-growth forest: not environmental best practice, does not have the support of the Victorian community, and recommended it be stopped six months ago.

However, individual support must be continued and Future of our Forests is now live on Engage Victoria. at <https://engage.vic.gov.au/future-of-our-forests> DELWP, closing March 31

*"We urgently need to stop logging in these magnificent forests before there's nothing left to protect".  
Let's do this!*

## FRIENDS OF LEADBEATER'S POSSUM v VIC FORESTS

25 February 2019.

In late 2017 Friends of Leadbeater's Possum Inc. launched legal action in the Federal Court to try to ensure that logging in Leadbeater's Possum and Greater Glider habitat is subject to the Commonwealth EPBC Act, from which it is currently claimed to be exempt. This has resulted in the suspension of logging in a number of coupes, at least while the case is determined. Hearing of the case is scheduled to begin on 25 February and last for 3 weeks. In the past twelve months an enormous amount of work has gone into preparation for the hearing. Affidavits have been filed and Expert Witness reports researched and written. Together they form a powerful body of evidence. This case challenges logging under Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) and its significance was not lost on the Victorian and Federal Governments, which both applied to intervene in the preliminary hearing. A successful outcome could have implications for native forest logging across Australia. Hearings will be public and you are welcome to attend. You can also support the case by donating via the FLbP website - <https://www.leadbeaters.org.au/>

## WATERWATCH

Lou Sbalchiero is the convenor of this monthly activity by members of HEWI and Mt Toolebewong & District Landcare. Twice a year there are invertebrate counts, one shared with Healesville Primary Students and one with community Seniors. Melbourne Water provide brief training sessions and Lou would appreciate hearing from anyone who would be willing to assist with the monthly monitoring.

## HEALESVILLE CORE

Our local renewable energy group received exciting news late last year – their supporters from the Monash Net Zero Program were recognised in Poland at the COP24 (UN climate Change Conference) when they received the Momentum UNFCCC Award. This award is for "shining a light on climate ACTION".

HCoRE will have another Community Information Session on Monday 25 Feb. at the Memo with the launch of the *Healesville Community Solar & Battery Offering*. For background information: <https://mondo.com.au/community>

<https://onestepoffthegrid.com.au/farmers-tap-solar-battery-storage-latest-victoria-microgrid-trial/>

<https://onestepoffthegrid.com.au/yackandandah-swer-line-microgrid-wins-state-government-backing/>

## YARRA RANGES COUNCIL AND MULTIPLE TRAILS

These trails are currently our main local planning concern with protection of waterways and indigenous habitat our highest priority. We have been assured that Wurundjeri names will be recognised with signage. The Yarra River is Birrarung – Healing and the Yarra Flats Billabong is Murrup Brarn – Spirit Water. How beautiful.

*Enjoy this summer month and revitalise for the inevitable issues ahead - our combined energy and enthusiasm will achieve wonders! Congratulations to Tristan, young Grace Burn resident for being awarded Sustainability Leader of Badger Creek Primary in 2019!*

