



HEALESVILLE * CHUMCREEK * YARRAGLEN * BADGERCREEK * STEELSCREEK * TARRAWARRA * TOOLANGI

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

*For many years, HEWI has designed interesting displays in the Healesville library over the month of JUNE, to celebrate World Environment Day, June 5. This year the theme of 2020 is **Time for Nature**:*

*So how timely has been the achievement of one small local group to legally attain logging bans on 66 coupes within our Central highlands, protecting the critically endangered Leadbeater's Possum and vulnerable Greater Glider? **AMAZING!!***

CONGRATULATIONS to FRIENDS OF LEADBEATER'S POSSUM!!!!!!!!!!

Here are a few links to this **MOMENTOUS WIN** for critical habitat by the cessation of logging across 66 coupes within our Central Highlands as delivered by Justice Mortimer online, 10am Wednesday May 2020.

The Court's Summary Judgment is available here: - <https://www.judgments.fedcourt.gov.au/judgments/Judgments/fca/single/2020/2020fca0704/summary/2020fca0704-summary>

And media coverage links: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/may/27/vicforests-breached-forestry-agreement-with-central-highlands-logging-court-rules>

<https://www.theage.com.au/environment/conservation/federal-court-says-vicforests-unlawfully-logged-rare-possum-habitat-20200527-p54wxt.html>

HEWI has enjoyed a close relationship with FLbP since our Vice-Chairperson, Sera Blair, started up the group. Fears for the Possum's survival were escalating due to research data being recorded within our local forests. Some years later, another HEWI Chairperson, Steve Meacher, also became President of FLbP and remains there (and also as a committee member with HEWI)!

Steve has been the inspirational driving force for this campaign to protect the magnificent habitat of the Central Highlands. Following the loss of the MyEnvironment court case on a 'technicality', Steve realised that any future case against Vic Forests must avoid similar pitfalls and hence there were preliminary hearings requested to decide whether "logging operations carried out under the existing Regional Forestry Agreement (RFA) are exempt from the Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (the EPBC Act)". *The Court ruled that existing RFAs are not exempt from the EPBC Act early 2018, and the case began in February 2019.*

Environmental Justice Australia (EJA) have assisted from the beginning of this long legal saga with expert lawyers to present the winning case. The decision sets a legal precedent in applying federal threatened species protection laws to the logging industry in Victoria, which for more than 20 years has operated under a special exemption.

This historic decision is the outcome of dedicated volunteers and the EJA legal team, supported by crowd funding and community donations, achieving

TIME FOR NATURE, 2020!

All parties were thanked by Justice Mortimer on Wednesday May 27 for their courtesy, flexibility, and respect during the extended hearings.

COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL VOLUNTEERS LIAISON TEAM

This bushland team produce regular newsletters and provide useful information as requested by their 70+ groups, including a huge **THANK YOU** on May 18, the start of National Volunteers Week, from Jen Ellison and Sarah Fowler "for all the numerous hours you put in to weeding, planting, community education & engagement".

Groups who wish to maintain their habitat projects under covid 1-19 restrictions, have been provided with a letter to cover these works 'on behalf of Yarra Ranges Council ', with another detailing all safety precautions that must be observed. Unfortunately, our annual June Planting was cancelled – but with assurances from Healesville Primary School and Cummins Filtration staff that they will be back in 2021!

Bushland coordinator, Melissa Carmody, has resigned to join a Melbourne Water project as Waterways and Land Officer within the Yering, Olinda Creek area. We have sent a formal letter of thanks for her commitment and supportive role over many years of our habitat restoration projects.

Note: as HEWI is also an advocacy group for other aspects of the environment, we are frustrated by the complete lack of community interaction from other sections under the Environment and Engineering directorate of Council.

MELBOURNE WATER FROG CENSUS GROUP ON FACEBOOK.

This community group is dedicated to the Frog Census and invites you to connect and share information and updates. You can also contribute and enquire to get answers directly from the Melbourne Water Waterwatch team.

If you would like to join the community follow this link

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MWFrogCensus/>

FACILITATED EVENTS RETURN!

Our facilitator Karen Garth, has re-timetabled our community events.

If restrictions are lifted, the following will be offered. You may wish to record these dates and we will confirm asap.

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| July | 26 | National Tree Day, Everard Park, Healesville |
| September | 19 | Family Waterbugs Workshop, HL&LC 10.00am – 12noon |
| September | 22 | Community Spotlight Walk Murrup Brarn, Yarra Glen |

MEETINGS WITH Cr Mc ALLISTER

We have applied for a resumption of our monthly meetings with our Ward Councillor and our agenda will include commercial developments within Healesville, the difficulty of obtaining information, the apparent lack of Yarra Ranges involvement in the current Yarra Strategic Plan Panel Inquiry and several others.

Many thanks to all those who have responded to Karen's 2020 membership reminder, the numbers are so vital for the continuation of our grant to run community events for a very reasonable fee. We are excited to hear from those who have moved away but have sent congratulatory messages on the successful case protecting local habitat.

