

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

News in Brief

SAVE SYLVIA!

July 4 is the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the Toolangi Forests campaign, when we became aware of VicForests plan to close Sylvia Creek Road from 18th July for the logging of Gun Barrel coupe. The blockade lasted to the end of August 2011, when MyEnvironment obtained a Supreme Court Injunction to halt logging. From local beginnings this movement has escalated into the Great Forest National Park campaign which may well become a reality before the next anniversary!

YRC PARTNERSHIP GRANT

Our application for three year funding (2015-2017) has been successful! We will receive \$15,000 over 3 years to assist with activities supporting "Healthy and vibrant habitation in Healesville". Our main focus will be to provide an experienced facilitator to assist property owners along the Grace Burn to benefit from Melbourne Water's streamside management funding. Protection of the Grace Burn and its healthy Platypus populations will also enhance these adjoining properties by eliminating environmental weeds and replacing these with indigenous vegetation protected by safety fencing. Another activity of our Grace Burn Project is our annual planting day in June. This year another 2,000 seedlings were planted along Wirrup Yaluk by HPS students, their Cummins buddies, HEWI and landcare members - a simply fabulous contribution from everyone including Council and Melbourne Water staff.

FABULOUS FUNGI AND FUNGIMAP

Fungal ecologist and the Fungimap Coordinator, Dr Sapphire McMullan-Fisher, will introduce you to fungi and the roles they play in keeping bushland healthy. You will also learn how to share information with Fungimap about the fungi you see. Bookings essential: 9840 9326

> **Wed 5 August 7.30 pm** Bull & Bush Room, Grand Hotel, Warrandyte

FIELD TRIP: Fabulous Fungi
This fungal walk, with Dr Sapphire McMullan-Fisher, provides the opportunity to search for fungi in the field, learn about their ecological roles and how to identify them.

> **Thursday 6 August**
9.30 am - 12.30 pm

ROD QUANTOCK AT THE MEMO!

HEWI has much pleasure in announcing that comedian and environmental activist Rod Quantock will be presenting his "LAST TIM TAM" performance on the stage of the Memo Hall in Healesville next month. We are most grateful to Rod for agreeing to support our group's advocacy work with his creative flair - raising the profile of the critical issues of peak oil and climate change in his own inimitable style.

This event is supported by the Sustainability and Community division of Yarra Ranges Council which encourages groups to find innovative ways to reach out to our local community.

Rod Quantock received the Medal of the Order of Australia in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours for his services to sustainability and conservation as well as the performing arts. He has been an activist on many local campaigns and supported our friends in Tecoma over the whole McDonald's debacle. Tickets \$20.00, con. \$15.00

Book: http://ach.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Whats_On/The_Last_Tim_Tam_By_Rod_Quantock#.VZJJKbSRVJ

> **Saturday August 22 7.30pm Memo Hall Healesville**

SIGNIFICANT SERVICE

Sincere *congratulations* to our Chairman, Steve Meacher, for this most recent recognition - the **National Emergency Medal** which is awarded for "service in the protection of lives and property, or in the service of interests, that are not their own, in direct response to the emergency, including support that enables or facilitates the emergency response."

Steve and four other community members of Toolangi were presented with this beautifully designed medal by the mayor of Murrumbidgee recently, for their exceptional organisation and assistance to local residents immediately following the 2009 fires which isolated Toolangi without power, phone or water for several days.

The medal is a stylised representation of Australia's national floral emblem, the wattle, with the details of the award and the recipient on the back face. The National Emergency Medal ribbon colours match the colours of the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal ribbon, gold and eucalyptus green. Gold symbolises the Australian sun, optimism and hope. Eucalyptus green complements the symbolism of the medal design. The seven gold coloured bands represent Australia's six states, with the seventh representing the territories. It was initiated in 2011 by the Australian government who wished to recognise the enormous contribution of community members as distinct from the serving officers who had already been recognised for their outstanding efforts in the emergency. There is a strict protocol about the wearing of the medals and ribbons, but I hope Steve will be able to share it at some event in the near future - *yay Steve!*

ACTIVITY REPORTS:

"From The Jolly Thing - Walked, Watched and Wondered with HEWI

As advertised in the last edition of TJT, on Saturday 30th May, Jane and Malcolm Calder led a group of appreciative bushwalkers from Tanglefoot car park to Wirrawilla. The walk had been organised by Healesville Environment Watch Inc, (HEWI). Following a cold start, walkers had their attention drawn to the many wonders to be found in the majestic multi-layered Mountain Ash forests, with their understoreys of Blackwood wattles, Myrtles and ferns (and much more). Evidence of a rarely seen orange-footed snail (*Victaphanta*) was also found along the way. Afternoon tea was provided on arrival at Wirrawilla, which was welcome in the cool weather conditions. Thank you to Jane and Malcolm for their shared knowledge and insights, and to HEWI for organising the day.

David Allan"

Jane and Malcolm were presented with a recycled red gum garlic chopping board especially crafted by member Keith Wade.

Frackman

This was an absorbing and confronting film that revealed the absolute necessity for solidarity amongst community groups that are opposed to the destructive processes of giant corporations and conservative governments. We were delighted to welcome Samantha Dunn, MLC South Eastern Region who will serve on the Environment and Planning Committee inquiring into unconventional gas.

July 05-12

National NAIDOC week
National Aborigines and Islanders
Day Observance Committee
*We all Stand on Sacred Ground:
Learn, Respect and Celebrate*

July 17

Grace Burn Project
WaterWatch testing
Phys / Chem

July 26

National Tree day schools

July 28

National Tree day

July 29

WaterWatch Network Meeting
Blackburn Lake, 6.30-8pm

August 05

Fabulous Fungi and Fungimap
Grand Hotel Warrandyte
7.30pm

August 06

Fabulous Fungi
Field trip

August 14

Grace Burn Project
Waterwatch - Phys/Chem
- includes Wirrup Yaluk

August 22

Rod Quantock
The Last Tim Tam
Memo Hall, Healesville
7.30pm

August 22 & 23

Free Waterbug Workshop
Monash University
Free event, limited places

August 30

Spring into Waterwatch
Melbourne Museum

August 31 – September 13

Grace Burn Project
WaterWatch QA/QC

REGIONAL STRATEGY PLAN REVIEW:

Yarra Ranges Council is required by The Minister for Planning to prepare a Localised Planning Statement, a long-term policy for an area identified as having significance to the broader Victorian community. YRC currently has the equivalent of a Localised Planning Statement in the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan (<http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Lists/Policy-directory/Upper-Yarra-Valley-and-Dandenong-Ranges-Regional-Strategy-Plan>), which has its origins in similar statements of planning policy introduced by the Victorian Government back in the 1970's. This Regional Strategy Plan (RSP) is administered by the State Government under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Section 46F of the Act prohibits the Minister for Planning from approving any amendment to the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme which is inconsistent with the RSP. Local groups and individuals, including HEWI, have long relied on aspects of the RSP for environmental protection from some development proposals. At the completion of the process the RSP will be amended to be the same as the Localised Planning Statement and so continue to be recognized under the Planning and Environment Act.

Obviously any proposed changes to the RSP will require close scrutiny by community groups and individuals. HEWI is most grateful that Jean Edwards has offered to act as our representative on the Community Reference Group.

NATIVE VEGETATION PERMITTED CLEARING REGS.

This review has commenced and the terms of reference, information and updates on the review process will also be provided on: <http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/environment-and-wildlife/biodiversity/native-vegetation-permitted-clearing-regulations-review>. The stakeholder reference group includes representatives from local government, industry and environment groups. Evelyn Feller will be our contact person. (The Victorian Government has also initiated welcome reviews of the Biodiversity Strategy and Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act).

NATIVE FORESTS AS FUEL FOR ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION

Thanks to all supporters who contacted Senate members of Parliament re this critical biomass issue – most unfortunately without success. Australia now allows the liquidation of native forest trees in electricity furnaces, and, even worse, defines it as 'renewable energy'. David Lindemayer: "There is no way that emitting carbon through emissions this way can be regarded as renewable energy.... it's a long term carbon emission that has long term impacts on Australia's climate and on the world's climate. About 40 per cent of carbon emitted by burning trees stays in the atmosphere for 2,000 years – far longer than the 100 years used in most carbon calculations. He added that there are also economic implications.... the taxpayer has to subsidise the whole activity twice: once through below-cost logs; but then via the renewable energy target."

This regressive move means: forests can be incinerated as part of the RET, effectively adding a further reduction beyond the drop from 41,000 to 33,000 gigawatt hours of renewable energy to supply Australia's power needs by 2020, plus a limit on wind power's contribution to this target. With limited renewable credits, it also means if forest furnaces can claim them, it robs the true renewables like solar and wind from claiming that assistance.

FORESTS

The Victorian Government is in the process of establishing an industry taskforce to negotiate development of the proposed Great Forest National Park. Important progress is being made but it is too slow. Logging needs to be stopped sooner rather than later if the ecological values the park is intended to protect are to persist. The federal Threatened Species Scientific Committee has called for cessation of logging in the montane ash forests of the Central Highlands and is supported in this by Murrindindi Shire Council and Zoos Victoria. Yet VicForests has recently advertised a proposed amendment to the Timber Release Plan which would add almost 300 more coupes. No wonder they postponed their audit for certification by the FSC!

The early wattles are already flowering and 'our' Pomaderris vacciniifolia is developing promising buds. An active time ahead for the Water Watch team with several regional events as well as our monthly testing and the planning required for the expanded Grace Burn project.



ABN: 67 253 515 594 Reg. No. A0018935T

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