



Healesville Environment Watch Inc Newsletter June 2015

Issue 191

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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 another issue crammed with activities and local issues.

News in Brief

VALE NAN EVANS

Nan was an active community worker for several environment groups, including Bushlink, the Greens and HEWI. There are many tall trees along waterways that will continue to bear witness to her legacy of caring for our natural heritage. We were privileged to award Nan our first life membership at our AGM in August 2003. She was then 80 years old and still living and gardening at her Chum Creek home in spite of a leg amputation six years before! Nan died peacefully last week.

SEMINAR: Avian Evolution

Spectacular finds from Asia have allowed palaeontologists to determine that birds evolved from small theropod dinosaurs. Monash University PhD candidate, Travis Pak, will provide an insight to evidence that reveals the amazing fact that dinosaurs are not extinct at all, but rather soar above our heads every day! Manningham Council activity.

> **Wednesday July 1 7.30pm**
Bull and Bush Room, Grand Hotel, Warrandyte

NAIDOC Week event at Badger Creek

Mt Toolebewong & District Landcare will host 25 students for planting and waterbug activities, with bush tucker provided. Anderson Reserve, Blue Gum Drive.

> **Thursday July 2 10.00am -2.00pm**

Solar installations on Council Buildings

HEWI wrote to Glenn Paterson, CEO, Yarra Ranges Council recently about progress with their Carbon Management Program that has processed the changeover street lighting that is estimated to save 45,000 tonnes CO2 emissions over 20 years. Council's next CMP stage will include solar installations on Council buildings and LED lighting upgrades, partly funded by the expected \$8,000,000 saved by the new street lighting. We look forward to their updates.

FRACKMAN

When this film was selected to provide an inspirational story for all involved in community campaigns on the diverse range of issues that we face in current times, we had no idea that the showing would coincide with a "NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR AN EXPLORATION LICENCE" (page 23 of our local paper, May 19 edition).

So our film evening for Environment Day will now also provide a preliminary community gathering for all those concerned about this highly controversial application focused on "discovering economic gold resources" across a huge swathe of land 2km south of Healesville township from west of the Yarra River to the east beyond Don Road abutting the Yarra Ranges National Park.

As with Dayne Pratzky, the 'accidental activist' featured in this Australian feature-length documentary film, we in Healesville are also discovering that residents "have no legal right to stop mining on their land". Dayne meets the people drawn into a battle that is crossing the ideological divide, bringing together an uncharacteristic alliance of farmers, activists and political conservatives. Hopefully, our community will also present a united front as we make our objections to this massive intrusion proposed across our rural landscape. This excellent film features interviews with people who understandably feel passionately about the loss of their homes, properties, livelihoods and landscapes. There is extensive strong language!

We look forward to seeing you there with the possibility of a brief discussion about a follow up community meeting.

> **Wednesday, June 3 Memo Hall, Healesville 7.30pm**

REVEGETATION of WIRRUP YALUK

Our annual planting day will return to provide infill vegetation along this waterway where some woody shrubs were removed when the large oval in Queens Park was declared a 'Neighbourhood Safer Place' for emergency use on Code Red days. So we are replacing the larger shrubs with smaller plants which include many flowering varieties and grasses to provide an attractive buffer zone between the creek and heavy traffic along Badger Creek Road.

With another 2,000 seedlings to be planted, staked and bagged, it will be a busy morning for our Year 3 volunteers from Healesville Primary School. Once again they will be joined by their 'buddies' from Cummins Filtration. Their joint efforts will certainly be appreciated by the Platypus that has been observed along this stretch of the creek.

(Wirrup Yaluk translates as 'Blackfish Creek' and although Blackfish may no longer be present, please note the report below!).

> **Friday June 19 10-12noon, Badger Creek Road, Queens Park**

AUTUMN INVERTEBRATES

The Grace Burn Waterwatch team were delighted to discover the rare Mountain Galaxias, *Galaxias olidus*, in the sample collected within Queens Park last week. It was detected by Arthur and quickly returned to a large container for its safe return to the Grace Burn. Both samples from our usual test sites, Wallace Parade and near the rotunda in Queens Park, revealed an exceptionally large range of portable containers for Caddis Fly larvae. These were composed of small sticks, smaller stems, leaves and gravel. There was also an abundance of May Flies in these samples.

Up Coming Events

May 27 – June 3

National Reconciliation Week

May 30

Walk, Watch & Wonder
Toolangi forest
11am – 4pm

June 03

"Frackman" Free film
The Memo, Healesville
7.30pm

June 03-04

Geoscience and Geoheritage
Warrandyte

June 05

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

June 19

Revegetation
Wirrup Yaluk
9.30am – 1.00pm

July 01

Avian Evolution
Warrandyte

July 02

Naidoc Week
Badger Creek waterbugs
Landcare and students

July 04

4th anniversary
Save Sylvia campaign

July 05-12

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

July 26

National Tree day for schools

July 28

National Tree day

Community Environment News

BUSHFIRE FUEL MANAGEMENT on Public Land

HEWI made an extensive submission (thanks Laurence!) to this Victorian government Review of Performance Targets by the Inspector-General for Emergency Management who made four recommendations for the way forward in Victoria's fuel management, including a welcome shift away from a hectare-based fuel reduction target to a risk-reduction target, an essential step to reduce the loss of rare species in remote areas.

Government will now begin consultation with communities and stakeholders, including fire management agencies, before making a decision on the recommendations later this year and HEWI members will continue to be involved.

But ironically, the federal government has found another way to trash our forests with changes to the Renewable Energy Target into Parliament that would allow the burning of our native forests to count as 'renewable energy'

(Which follows the previous deal last week agreeing to a further 20% cut to the target).

See: www.dontburnforests.com.

Environment Inquiry into the Register of Environmental Organisations

HEWI made another detailed submission (thanks Steve!) to this Inquiry in support of our larger environmental groups who have Deductible Gift Recipient status. As even HEWI has received large gifts in the past, your committee will discuss suitable changes to our Constitution that would also enable us to be registered for DGR which must not be taken away from advocacy groups – on which government departments often depend for our local experience and factual information.

FOREST NEWS

Progress is being made towards the establishment of a forest industry taskforce to resolve issues around creation of the Great Forest National Park. The first taskforce meeting should take place soon and one of the first issues to consider will be the protection of a number of coupes of high conservation value that are currently at risk of being logged. The urgency of a 'moratorium' has increased following the uplisting of Leadbeater's Possum to 'Critically endangered' in April.

The change in the possum's conservation status has had other results that could not have been predicted. Murrindindi Shire Council has passed a motion commending the announcement and seeking prioritisation of increased protection. VicForests has announced that "under the circumstances, it would be premature" to proceed with the planned audit for certification by the Forest Stewardship Council. The process has been postponed.

In a separate story on ABC radio (<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/vicforests-losing-millions-keen-to-burn/6502840>), it has emerged that a VicForests business plan has been leaked revealing "multi-million dollar taxpayer losses" and also exposing considering of burning native forest 'waste' for power under the federal government's new Renewable Energy Target (RET).

HEWI members will remember the controversial logging last year of 'Rusty' coupe on Sylvia Creek Road, Toolangi. The coupe contained over 100 hollow-bearing trees and a population of gliders and possums, many of which survived the logging due to intense pressure from the community. We recently learned it was planned to conduct a coupe burn on the site within 24 hours. We immediately engaged supporters on email and social media and telephoned Minister Neville's office. The burn was deferred for 24 hours, then reconsidered and finally cancelled. The coupe will now be mechanically disturbed prior to replanting with mixed species. The gliders will sleep safe in their hollows for the foreseeable future. **Once again, this incident has shown the power of community and what can be achieved, even at short notice, when we all work together!**



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