

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

News in Brief

Forests Update

We remain disappointed that there has been no progress with the federal government on the Leadbeater's Possum Recovery Plan. Nor has the Victorian Environment Minister responded to the request for an Interim Conservation Order to protect the forests of the Central Highlands. Meanwhile, of course, the rapacious logging continues. In the past month preliminary work has been conducted in a coupe called Floater, which abuts the popular Tanglefoot Picnic Ground and Carpark in Toolangi State Forest. Apart from its effect on visitors to the area this coupe will isolate Leadbeater's Possums recently discovered nearby by our citizen scientist friends from WOTCH (Wildlife of the Central Highlands).

Citizen scientists were also involved in surveying the White Hill area on the Acheron Way, where they found a large population of Greater Gliders, a species added to the Victorian Threatened Species List on 15 June, (Gazette notice below). A report was submitted to VicForests and DELWP but was ignored and the coupe clear felled. A subsequent visit to the site revealed the tragic evidence of destruction. The body of a Koala was found among the logging residue left on the ground. It is not yet known whether the Greater Gliders present in the coupe have survived. The story was published in The Sunday Age - <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/dead-koala-found-in-logging-coupe-reignites-push-for-new-protected-national-park-20170624-gwxvim.html>

Plastic Bag Free Healesville

After months of sewing and planning; walking and soliciting all shop keepers in Healesville to go 'plastic bag free'; designing and distributing their logo and searching for funding for the National Boomerang Bags that will carry the Healesville logo.....This dynamic group will launch their project on Saturday July 1, outside IGA Healesville from 10.30am

Watercolour – The Artistry of Nature

This ongoing program will concentrate on the detail of our native plants and animals. Create beautiful pencil or watercolour images on paper. No previous experience necessary. Cost: \$160.00 for 8 sessions with Malcolm Calder

Thursday July 20 9.30am – 12noon
H'ville Living and Learning Centre

We are maintaining the momentum of activities and advocacy yet again this month, with a new film and more planting on a small reserve that HEWI has practically rediscovered via our Grace Burn Project.

BEFORE THE FLOOD

This 2016 documentary film about climate change, (96min), has been made available by the National Geographic Channel and features Leonardo DiCaprio, who has written the following:

Before The Flood is the product of an incredible three-year journey that took place with my co-creator and director Fisher Stevens. We went to every corner of the globe to document the devastating impacts of climate change and questioned humanity's ability to reverse what may be the most catastrophic problem mankind has ever faced. All that we witnessed on this journey shows us that our world's climate is incredibly interconnected and that it is at urgent breaking point. ... We wanted to create a film that gave people a sense of urgency, that made them understand what particular things are going to solve this problem. We bring up the issue of a carbon tax, for example - basically, sway a capitalist economy to try to invest in renewables. ... We need to use our vote ... We cannot afford to have political leaders out there that do not believe in modern science or the scientific method or empirical truths.

With the assistance of our Yarra Ranges Council grant, we have booked the Memo again and look forward to another large audience. After the film, there will be an opportunity to continue discussion over refreshments from the Memo counter

> **Friday June 21, 7.15 – 9.30pm** **The Memo, Healesville**

NATIONAL TREE DAY

'Grace Burn Reserve' - between 45 & 47 Farnham Rd, Healesville

Our Grace Burn Project facilitator, Karen Garth, has organised tree planting for this Farnham Road Reserve on Sunday 30 July, from 10 am until noon. Join local residents and community members to revegetate the banks of the Grace Burn. Karen was alerted to this reserve by a resident who feared that young children might be in danger along the high banks adjacent to the creek. Melbourne Water has undertaken to halt the erosion and fencing was erected.

Karen will be contacting all residents along the Grace Burn to join this community activity to enhance their park but everyone is welcome to discover this virtually unknown reserve.

Council's Bushland team will provide tools, porta-loos and the plants, with the holes pre-dug by augers. HEWI will provide Morning Tea and donated gifts for all planters. BYO gloves, but no pets please. All welcome to this community activity.

> **Sunday July 30 July, 10.00am - 12noon**

YELLINGBO CONSERVATION AREA

Our June newsletter included a brief comment about this ongoing issue and the new website established by environmental volunteer groups. The convener of this website has submitted the following: The Yarra Ranges Conservation Alliance is seeking the support of HEWI members to have Haining Farm in Don Valley developed for the conservation of the Helmeted Honeyeater and the lowland Leadbeater's Possum. Already, Birds Australia, Environment Victoria, Zoos Victoria and the VNPA have pledged their support to Option 3 which represents the conservation preference.

Although groups such as HEWI represent our members when voting, groups are only recognised as one vote, so we urge members to vote on conservation issues individually whenever possible and send to your social networks as well.

Up Coming Events

July 01
Plastic Bag Free Launch
Healesville IGA

July 02
Haining Farm
Concept 3 votes due

July 02
HEWI grant report due

July 13
HEWI meeting
HL&LC
7.00-9.00pm

July 20
Watercolour – the artistry of Nature
Malcolm Calder
HL&LC Course Guide
9.30am – 12noon

July 21
HEWI film
Before The Flood
The Memo Healesville
7.15pm – 9.30pm

July 26
Meeting with Bushland
Healesville
12.30pm – 1.30pm

July 29
Waterwatch monitoring
Grace Burn
9.30am – 10.30am

We are most grateful to recent membership renewals and will send electronic receipts.

Community Environment News

All options are clearly set out at <https://engage.vic.gov.au/yellingboconservationarea> and there is a short survey to register your vote or alternative methods for posting.

> **Due date for your vote (Option 3!) Sunday July 2**

YARRA RIVER PROTECTION (WILIP-GIN BIRRARUNG MURRON) BILL 2017

The second reading was passed last week in the Victorian Parliament and 'is expected' to be passed by the Upper House before the end of this year "The Bill is important as it acknowledges the role of the traditional owners in 'Caring for Country' — in caring for the river and its parklands and riparian corridor as one living, integrated natural entity, and uses this lens to protect the river for all the people of the Yarra This is innovative, landmark legislation that establishes principles for sustainability and river management and then gives those principles teeth through auditing and public reporting. It includes both First Peoples and the community in the management of the river." Andrew Kelly, Riverkeeper.

HEWI has congratulated Environmental Justice Australia and Yarra Riverkeepers for their years of intense focus that has led to this all-encompassing legislation.

ANNUAL REVEGETATION - WIRRUP YALUK 2017

We celebrated our own achievement of 20 years protection of local waterways with another 18,000 seedlings planted by our amazing Primary students and their Cummins Filtration buddies last week. We were delighted to welcome Nikki from Healesville Indigenous Services to open the day and Cameron Heath, Principal Healesville Primary School, to make the well-deserved presentations after lunch. Every participant received an Acacia mucronata, Narrow Leaf Wattle, a brilliant flowering shrub in spring and Cameron was presented with a large Correa reflexa, for the school garden.

Another aspect to our Platypus protection role is to provide support for a group that receives Council grants for designing and presenting activities and games to increase student awareness of waterways habitat. And thanks to our VP for the following article:

Interested in Knowing More about Platypus?

An excellent August 2016 publication 'Understanding the environmental water requirements of platypus' (Jacobs, Australian Platypus Conservancy and Cesar, Melbourne Water), reviews key water requirements for platypus and related recommendations for Melbourne Water to better manage streams with platypus. The authors document many aspects of platypus life and breeding.

1. Platypus can live up to 21 years.
2. Platypus mating generally occurs in spring with young hatching about 25-32 days later.
3. Optimum platypus foraging conditions are streams with cobbles, overhanging riparian vegetation and medium to large native trees.
4. The main causes of mortality are predation by dogs and foxes, entanglements in litter and poor water quality for food such as invertebrates.
5. Environmental flows should be maintained to ensure adequate flows for food and to protect platypus from predation. Low flows make platypus more vulnerable.
6. Dams, billabongs and backwaters become important platypus refuges in dry seasons and it is important to maintain plant cover around these refuges.
7. Sadly, healthy platypus populations in the lower areas of the Yarra Catchment have declined due to the impact of urbanization and the millennium drought. It is vitally important to protect these headwater catchments. This report certainly vindicates the importance of work by environmental groups and Landcare to fence off riparian areas from stock, replant adequate stream buffers and remove large water-consuming willows. Well worth reading.

And for more Platypus – have you seen the amazing rock sculptures, one outside the Memo and another within the Coronation Park revegetation? HEWI wishes to acknowledge Julie Hanman, our Communities for Platypus officer at Yarra Ranges Council for all her initiatives and support.



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