



Warrenbayne/Boho Land Protection Group
Molyullah/Tatong Tree and Land Protection Group
Goomalibee Landcare Group
Sheep Pen Creek Land Management Group
Swanpool and Districts Land Protection Group
South Yarrowonga Landcare Group
Yarrowonga Urban Landcare Group
Dookie Land Management Group
Burrumine/Tungamah Land Management Group

Balmattum/Sheans Creek Landcare Group
Burnt Creek Landcare Group
Creightons Creek Landcare Group
Gooram Valley Landcare Group
Longwood East Landcare Group
Strathbogie Tablelands Landcare Group
Nagambie Landcare Group
Graytown/Costerfield Landcare Group

Contact Details:

Landcare Project Officer

Melanie Addinsall
PO Box 124
Benalla 3672
Ph: 5761 1560
Mob: 0439 040 955
landcare1@iinet.net.au

Landcare Project Officer

Kerri Robson
208 James Rd
Warrenbayne 3673
Ph: 5763 2465
Mob: 0418 140 710
landcare2@iinet.net.au

Gecko Clan Chairperson

Ian Herbert
Ph: 5768 2342
limaeaster@bigpond.com.au

Pasture Cropping

Project Chairperson

David Dore
Ph: 5762 4672
daviddore@optusnet.com.au

Pasture Cropping

Project Officer

Jacci Campbell
Ph: 5828 9274
office@campbellfarms.com.au

Manager Landcare & Communities

Tony Kubeil
Goulburn Broken CMA
Ph: 5761 1619
tonyk@ghcma.vic.gov.au

Regional Landcare Facilitator

Charlie Sexton
Goulburn Broken CMA
Ph: 5761 1506
charlies@ghcma.vic.gov.au



Important Dates and Events:

16th – 18th April Pasture Cropping Bus Trip

22nd April Indian Myna Information Session Benalla (page 3)

6th May Indian Myna Information Session,
Yarrowonga Community Hall, 7pm, contact: 0438 533 289

8th May Gecko CLaN Network meeting

8th May Community Environment Grants close (page 5)

1st June Environmental Film Festival – Swanpool Cinema (page 2)

For latest updates on Gecko CLaN activities and events go to:

<http://goulburnbroken.landcarevic.net.au/mgbclan>

Chairman's Report

The cooler weather is now upon us and the risk of fire has waned. It's time to gather in the firewood.

The attendance was down at Swanpool Landcare's last meeting on Thursday 21st of March due to a tornado! This traversed the whole length of one of our member's large property, north of Swanpool, shredding trees and destroying fences. It then headed on its way over into the Samaria and Tatong districts causing more damage. Fortunately it missed houses but the clean up task is immense with kilometres of fences flattened.

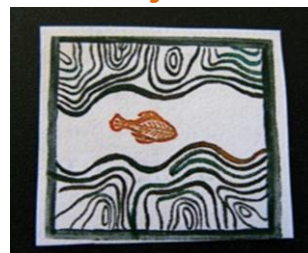
This was an event like no other before it here, at least in living memory. The force was enormous. So can we put this single event down to climate change? Probably not, but knowing that we can expect stronger and more frequent storms is not too comforting. This comes on top of another long, hot and dry summer.

So what can we as individuals do about it? You can come and hear the experts on the topic at a Film Festival on June 1st. Details are in this newsletter. Please book though as you may not get a seat if you just turn up on the day. We'd love to see you all there.

It's grant application time and we have submitted quite a few – at the Network level and helping out individual groups with their applications. Sustainable agriculture, grazing management and carbon sequestration are all covered as well as pest plants and animals. We face difficult times as NRM budgets are cut so hopefully some of these applications will be successful.

Ian Herbert

Granite Creeks Projects



Rabbit Control Program – Baiting, Ripping and Harbour Control program 2013-14

Open to all Landholders of the Landcare groups within the Granite Creeks Project Area:

Burnt Creek – Sandy

Mackenzie ph: 5796 2088

Balmattum/Sheans Creek –

John Gall ph: 5795 3138

Creighton's Creek – Barry Noye
ph: 5790 3223

Gooram Valley – Bethany

Devanny ph: 5795 2849

Longwood East – Jenny Wilson
ph: 0459 023 690

Strathbogie Tablelands – David Jamieson
ph: 5790 5236

SWANPOOL ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL

Saturday 1st June, 1.30 pm – 10pm
Swanpool Cinema

- FEATURING -

Speaker: Ray Thomas
Regent Honey Eater Project

Film: 'A Smarter Country'
(G) 55 mins. Australia 2012. Dir: Margaret Anne Smith
In a climate of uncertainty, green pioneers are pushing ahead with their visions of the future - renewable energy, sustainable farming, greener buildings and lifestyle changes.

Speaker: Barney Foran
Biophysical Scientist & Futures Specialist
Charles Sturt University

Film: 'Surviving Progress'
86 mins. Canada 2011. Dir: Mathieu Roy & Harold Crooks
Ronald Wright shows how past civilisations were destroyed by 'progress traps' - alluring technologies and beliefs that serve immediate needs, but ransom the future.

Speaker: Professor David Karoly
School of Earth Sciences
University of Melbourne

Film: 'Chasing Ice'
74 mins. USA 2012. Dir: Jeff Orlowski
Acclaimed National Geographic photographer James Balog was once a climate change sceptic but through his Extreme Ice Survey in the Arctic he discovers undeniable evidence of our changing planet.

The Gecko CLaN is teaming up with Swanpool Landcare, Swanpool Cinema, and Benalla Sustainable futures group to present the FIRST EVER Swanpool Environmental Film Festival.

The festival aims to raise awareness about society's impact on the environment and to motivate attendees to act. The festival will showcase three highly pertinent and thought provoking films together with expert guest speakers from Melbourne University, Charles Sturt University and our own Regent Honey Eater Project.

The festival will be presented at no cost to attendees and there will be a meal available for \$10.

Space is limited so BOOK NOW!
Contact Melanie on (03) 5761 1560 or
0439 040 955 landcare1@iinet.net.au



Sustainable Futures in Agriculture

Is there a future for Australian Agriculture? Will the industry be able to feed the population sustainably? With increasing numbers of young people leaving farms in search of higher paying city jobs, who will feed Australia in 2050?

The Gecko CLaN is trying to address these questions through its new project 'Sustainable Futures in Agriculture'. Through this project the Gecko CLaN is working with local secondary schools to enlighten students to the opportunities and possibilities in the agriculture industry, and to challenge the commonly held negative attitudes about agriculture as a career path.

The project will consist of a series of field trips to farms using innovative and sustainable techniques, and will feature a series of inspiring guest speakers. An environmental farm planning course will be delivered to Euroa Secondary students as part of this project. This course has previously been delivered to students at FCJ and Benalla Secondary.

We are currently looking for farmers that can be used as role models who are experimenting with ways to make their enterprise more sustainable. If you are interested in taking part or have any ideas on what the project could consist of, please contact us.

The 2013 Goulburn Broken Community Natural Resource Management Awards

Now seeking nominations for:

- Community Education Award
- Community Sustainable Farming Award
- Community Group Award
- Community Network Award
- Hubert Miller Perpetual Trophy

Nominations close Wednesday 1 May 2013.

Awards will be presented Friday 14 June 2013 at the Murchison Community Centre, Watson St Murchison, starting at 6.30pm.

Contact Karen Brisbane 5820 1134

Indian Myna Project

Populations of Indian Myna's in the Goulburn Broken are growing rapidly, posing a major threat to native birds. Named as one of the 'World's Worst 100 Invasive Species', the Indian Myna is responsible for driving away native birds, taking over their nests and throwing out their eggs and young from hollows.

Introduced in the late 1860's to control insects in market gardens, Indian Myna's have now spread to most of Eastern Australia and New Zealand. They are now a major problem in the Goulburn Broken especially in urban centres. They flourish wherever humans live, with large populations around tips, factories, schools and shopping centres.

The Indian Myna is chocolate brown in colour, with yellow eye-patches that highlight its head appearance. The only known contender for the Indian Myna is the Australian Noisy Miner. People often confuse the two birds however the Indian Myna is from the starling family, while the Australian Miners are honeyeaters and grey in colour.

The Gecko CLaN in partnership with the Yarrawonga Mulwala Men's Shed and Benalla Rural City Council are on a mission to eradicate Indian Myna's. A project has been set up to raise awareness about Indian Myna's and each Landcare group within the Gecko CLaN will receive an Indian Myna trap for free trap to share amongst its members.

Benalla Rural City Council in partnership with the Gecko CLaN is hosting an information session in Benalla to raise awareness about the problem. The session will be held:

Monday 22nd April, 6pm
Benalla Performing Arts Centre
Please RSVP to Melanie on
(03) 5761 1560
landcare1@iinet.net.au

Indian Myna Trapping Tips

If you are trapping Indian Myna's here are some handy tips:

1. Always manage your trap in the most humane way possible and in accordance with animal ethics.
2. Don't let the Indian Myna birds see you attend to the trap! Best attend at night or when you know an Indian Myna is not watching.
3. Get the birds used to the trap and the luring baits. Set trap up and place a good amount of bait around the trap. Be patient and wait till the Indian Mynas are comfortably and confidently feeding near the trap. This may take days or week. Then when you think they are ready collect all bait from outside of the trap and only offer it to them inside the trap.
4. Clean up any bird seed, pet food, chook food or scraps as best you can in the trapping area. Make them want the bait.
5. Use only small pieces of bait - size of a wheat grain.
6. For bait use whatever they were already feeding on.
7. For baits try
 - Dog/cat biscuits
 - Strawberries and watermelon
 - Chook pellets
 - Left overs or cooked rice. It is proven that Indian Mynas are most attracted to bait that is red in colour. Try using food dye to colour your rice red.
 - A combination of mince meat and bread.
 - Sultanas – Potentially help minimise non target species such as the grain and meat eaters.
 - Small pieces of bread dipped in a prepared gravox mix. The bread goes hard after a few days so it does need replacing regularly.
 - DO NOT USE BIRD SEED – attracts too many native species.
8. Place mirrors inside the trap lined up with the entrance points so the birds can see their reflection when they go to enter the trap.
9. If it does not already, provide suitable shelter for the trapped birds. However it is important to not put the shelter directly ABOVE or ON TOP of the one way valve. Make sure the birds have a clear view of the sky when they move through the one way valve.
10. Be aware of extreme temperatures or distressing situations for trapped birds. They should never be exposed to stressful temperatures or environments.
11. Check trap daily, and as often as you can – preferably from a safe distance from their view.
12. You will mostly catch the birds early morning or late evening. Bait the trap at night so you have more chance of catching them first thing the following morning.
13. It is best to handle birds is at night as they are more docile.
14. You may try to use a caller bird. These are previously trapped Indian Myna birds that can act as a lure to untrapped birds.
15. Release non target species as soon as possible.
16. Be patient and don't move the trap around. It may take weeks to get the birds even used to the trap before you begin active baiting. If successful, most people generally trap 1 – 10 birds a month.
17. Make sure the trap is not interfered with by cats, dogs, rodents, kids, foxes or livestock.
18. Always wear gloves when handling birds.
19. September – February appears to be the time more likely to have a higher trapping success rate, with younger birds that are easier to trap.

For more information about Indian Myna's contact John Shorten: Phone 03 5744 1840
Mobile 0438 533 289 shorten@alphalink.com.au



Indian Myna



Noisy Myna

PASTURE CROPPING PROJECT UPDATE

Colin Seis delivered yet another highly successful one day course on Pasture Cropping on Tuesday 5th March at Violet Town. Colin guided 20 participants through the principles of Pasture Cropping and how this technique works to increase soil and landscape health whilst maintaining productivity. Reduction of nutrients in mass produced foods, crop disease, bacteria vs fungal dominated soils, and biodiversity of soil micro-organisms were all discussed during the course.

“Crop disease is only a symptom of how we are managing crops” says Colin, and that we will always battle using current high-input practices. Interest in Pasture Cropping is growing rapidly with 2500 farmers using the technique globally.

A machinery field day was held on Wednesday 13th March at Murray and Liz Chapmans, Goomalibee. The day featured several machines that had been adapted for Pasture Cropping. Tony Dillon of Allan Jones Machinery, Elmore talked about how to adapt your machine for Pasture Cropping to ensure cost efficiency. Tim Barden of Kowarra Native Grasses, Kerang demonstrated his experimental machine, and Greg Ferrier of DPI Rutherglen, presented the latest information on mineral supplements.

This week Pasture Croppers are now off on a bus trip to Col Seis' property Winona at Gulgong. They will also be stopping off at Graham Strong's property at Boree Creek and Danny Flannery's property at Galong. Danny Flannery won the National Rural Press Primary Producer of the Year 2012 award at the National Landcare Awards in Sydney last September.

“If someone created a machine that slashed and mulched at the same time, it would cost a fortune. This is called a cow”.



Tony Dillon Demonstrating a seeder used for Pasture Cropping to the group.



Tim Barden of Kowarra Native Grasses addressing the group.



Tim Barden demonstrating his native grass sowing machine.



Greg Ferrier of DPI presenting to the group.

Boho Fire Recovery

The Gecko CLaN would like to thank all those who participated in the Boho fire recovery. Extra special thanks go to the Foster family who travelled up to Violet town, stayed in the Violet Town caravan park and worked with Alan Stafford for a week. The Fosters had been burnt out in the Black Saturday fires when they received help from Alan Stafford and his fencing crew, and now wished to return the favour.

Alan Stafford and his crew have also been working closely with the Durrungile prisoners.

We have now wrapped up our operations in Boho and we would like to thank Alan Stafford for coordinating the on-ground works, the Uniting Church and the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network for the use of their machinery and equipment. The Gecko CLaN would also like to thank Warrenbayne-Boho Land Protection Group for their generous donation towards the recovery works.



Melanie, Dru Green, John Hawkes, Alan Stafford and Alan O'Connor whilst fencing at 'Honeysuckle'.

CFOC Community Environment Grants NOW OPEN!

Grants of between \$5000 and \$50,000 are available to help community groups and organisations to contribute to the sustainable management of Australia's environment.

Strategic objectives:

- Maintenance of ecosystem services, including ecological and cultural values, now and into the future
- Protection of our conservation estate
- Enhanced capacity of Indigenous communities to conserve and protect natural resources

<http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/environment/ceg/index.html>

Applications close Wednesday 8th May 2013

From the Project Officer's

Melanie & Kerri

It has been a very busy couple of months yet again with grant applications, pasture cropping workshops and field days, Boho fire recovery works, the Indian Myna project, facilitator training, in addition to getting a few of our new projects off the ground.

The Landscape Restoration Trial is going well with all landholders booked up until the end of this financial year. We have some high quality sites being planted out which will create good connectivity between remnant blocks of vegetation.

I recently did a talk at FCJ College about Landcare and sustainable production to kick-start our Sustainable Futures in Agriculture project. We are really excited about this project and are looking for assistance in the form of innovative ideas and techniques that will inspire students.

Interest in Indian Myna's is growing and I encourage all those interested to come to our information session in Benalla on the 22nd April. Another session will be held in Yarrawonga on the 6th May. Through this project all Landcare groups within the Gecko CLaN will receive a free Indian Myna trap to share. If your group has not yet received a trap and would like one please contact Kerri or I.

We are excited to be a partner in the Swanpool Environmental Film Festival. We hope that the high calibre speakers and films will attract large numbers so book early to secure your seats as places are limited.

There are a number of funding opportunities currently open for applications. If you have any project ideas and would like assistance in developing these and applications please contact Kerri or myself.

Melanie



Please submit
newsletter items to:
Melanie Addinsall
PO BOX 124,
Benalla, VICTORIA,
3672
Email:
landcare1@iinet.net.au

For all Gecko CLaN & Pasture Cropping information:

<http://goulburnbroken.landcarevic.net.au/mgbclan>