



## Contact Details:

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### Pasture Cropping

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## Important Dates and Events:

**4<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> March** Boho Fire Recovery – Calling volunteers!

**5<sup>th</sup> March** Pasture Cropping Workshop with Colin Seis

**13<sup>th</sup> March** Pasture Cropping Field Day, Goomalibee

**13<sup>th</sup> March** Gecko CLaN Network Meeting, Violet Town

**20<sup>th</sup> March** CFOC Community Landcare Grants close

**10<sup>th</sup> April** Gecko CLaN Executive Meeting

**16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> April** Pasture Cropping Bus Trip

**1<sup>st</sup> June** Environmental Film Festival at the Swanpool Cinema

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

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

## Chairman's Report

At long last there is some rain in the forecast but will it amount to much? Does 'areas of rain' include our place? According to my neighbour Jim, who has lived all his life in the Lima Valley, this is the longest dry spell in his memory. It does make it hard to plan when the climate throws up challenges we haven't been through before. We need to keep talking to our neighbours and offer support where we can.

That is especially the case where farmers, including our fellow Landcare members, have lost pasture and fences to bushfires. I hope that some of you are able to respond to the call put out for volunteers to help with fire recovery. Our sincere thanks to Alan Stafford and the Uniting Church for once again co-ordinating this effort. Alan is truly one of our local heroes.

We have quite a diversity of projects on the go at the moment across the groups – something for everyone. There is certainly plenty of opportunity to get out and learn and socialise. I must say I was pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm shown by groups to kill Indian Mynas (see article at right)!

Please keep the 1<sup>st</sup> June free to attend the Environmental Film Festival in my home village of Swanpool. The Gecko CLaN is a major sponsor of this event. The planning group comes from several like-minded organisations and they have come up with a great shortlist of films and speakers.

Hoping to see you at one of the many events that are on the Landcare calendar in 2013,  
Ian Herbert

## Indian Myna Project

The Gecko CLaN in partnership with the Yarrowonga Mulwala Men's Shed is undertaking an Indian Myna Project.

Through this project all Landcare groups within the Gecko CLaN are eligible to receive a free Indian Myna trap to use as a lending trap. The project aims to raise awareness about this major threat to birdlife and create action on the ground.

For more information about Indian Myna's contact John Shorten:

03 5744 1840

0438 533 289

[shorten@alphalink.com.au](mailto:shorten@alphalink.com.au)



Indian Myna



Noisy Miner

## PASTURE CROPPING ONE DAY WORKSHOP WITH COLIN SEIS

DATE: Tuesday 5th March 2013

TIME: 9:00am to 5:00pm

WHERE: Violet Town Community Centre, Supper Room

Topics covered:

- Management and function of grasslands and pastures (C3 and C4 plants, forbs and herbs)
- Profitability of "Pasture Cropping"
- Restoring ecological function
- Grazing management
- "Pasture Cropping" seeding machinery
- "Pasture Cropping" advantages including profit, grassland restoration, ecological function, soil health, increasing soil organic carbon.
- Soil health including how to build top soil, organic carbon, soil food web, water holding capacity, and increase soil nutrients.
- Day includes a paddock walk to look at grass and weed species and discuss management options.

## PASTURE CROPPING FIELD DAY

DATE: 13th March 2013

TIME: 10:00am

WHERE: Murray and Liz Chapman's

968 Tarnook Road Goomalibee [approximately 1 km north of Burness Rd] Vic Roads Ref: Map 47 F1

### ADAPTING MACHINERY FOR PASTURE CROPPING

By Tony Dillon of Allan Johns Machinery - Elmore

- Adapting what you have and how to make it work.
- Which tynes or discs to use.

### SOWING NATIVE GRASSES

By Tim Barden of Kowarra Native Grasses - Kerang

- Tim will explain his experiences with sowing of native grasses and will have his latest experimental machine.

### MINERAL SUPPLEMENTS

By Greg Ferrier DPI Rutherglen

- "What do they do and do I need them"

RSVP by 11th March for catering to Jacci Campbell

Lunch provided free of charge.

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN CHAIR

## PASTURE CROPPING BUS TRIP

DATE: Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2013

COST: The trip will cost approximately \$200pp for accommodation.

WHERE: The bus trip will visit Colin Seis, Danny Flannery and others.

To RSVP or for more information contact Jacci Campbell 5828 9274 or [office@campbellfarms.com.au](mailto:office@campbellfarms.com.au)

## Call for Volunteers! Boho Fire Recovery

Following the fires at Boho the Gecko CLaN has formed a partnership with the Uniting Church to help with recovery works. Equipment owned by the Uniting Church and the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network, that was used in the Black Saturday fire recovery is now available in Boho. Alan Stafford of the Uniting Church is coordinating the equipment and on ground works.

Kerri Robson toured the 10 affected landholders with Brad Costin from DPI and found that landholders had varying needs. Issues included stock feeding, erosion, water quality problems and fencing. Brad was able to provide advice and support for these issues, and the Gecko CLaN are now assisting landholders with fencing.

The Gecko CLaN is coordinating volunteers onto a roster to make the best use of the equipment. So far we have had a fantastic response with a steady flow of people involved, and we would like to thank all those who have given up their time and squeezed in a day to help out.

If you would like to help out with the recovery works please contact Melanie to be put on the roster. Alternatively if you have been affected by fire and would like assistance, please contact us.

In addition to fencing the Gecko CLaN aims to provide advice and support to landholders with erosion and revegetation issues.

## CFOC Community Landcare Grants NOW OPEN!

Strategic objectives include:

- Sustainable production of food
- Innovation in Australian agriculture and fisheries practices
- Reduced impact of weeds and pests on agriculture
- Improved management of agriculture and fisheries and the natural resource base
- Skilled and capable Landcare community

Applications close 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013

<http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding/agriculture/clg/index.html>

## North California Researcher visits Gecko CLaN

On Friday 25th January Yvonne Everett, an Associate Professor from Humboldt State University in California visited the Gecko CLaN. She is currently undertaking a sabbatical, taking time to study Landcare in Australia, and similar movements in other countries including Sri Lanka, Germany and the US.

Yvonne is focusing her research on successful examples of how land managers have collaborated across private property boundaries to achieve mutually beneficial goals at a larger landscape scale. Yvonne was highly interested in the social structures around Landcare and how it developed as a bottom up grass roots movement.

First we visited Pasture Cropping trial sites at Doug James' and Russel Ellis' properties, which was followed by a tour of Swanpool and Warrenbayne in the afternoon visiting the Holmes' and Saddler's properties, where we looked at various plantings and restoration work.



Karen Brisbane, Yvonne Everett and Russel Ellis at Russel's Pasture Cropping trial site.



Karen Brisbane, Debbie Holmes and Melanie at the Holmes' direct seeding plantings at Swanpool.

## Molyullah-Tatong Soil Carbon Project Kicks Off

Cathy Botta and Don Cook from Farmright Technical Services presented on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January at an information evening to kick off the Molyullah-Tatong Tree and Land Protection group's new Soil Carbon project. The project involves a series of demonstration sites where different methods of increasing soil carbon will be attempted. These methods include alternative fertilisers such as Charlie Carp, humates, composted hay, composted animal manure, Seasol, and other methods such as growing deep rooted perennials and deep ripping.

Cathy Botta focused on how organic carbon and organic matter are critical for healthy farming systems, influencing the main physical, biological and chemical properties of soil. She spoke about the important role organic matter has in terms of maintaining the friability of soil and spoke about some of the techniques that will be used in the Soil Carbon project.

Initial soil tests of all demonstration sites for the project have been taken, and Don Cook helped the group to interpret them. He analysed what would be needed in each test in terms of fertiliser and other applications, and touched on how certain alternative fertilisers would meet these needs.

Overall it was a highly informative evening which has generated a lot of interest from the broader community about the project.

## 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



## Landcare crucial in Strathbogrie Shire roadside pest and weed program

Strathbogrie Shire is working with Landcare to implement its Roadside Pest and Weed program after recently receiving Victorian Government funding. Following a meeting with the Gecko CLaN, the shire arranged to work with Landcare groups to deliver the program. This kind of delivery in partnership with Landcare is a first for the region and all Landcare groups in the Shire were eager to be involved.

Under the program, funding will be split evenly between all Landcare groups within the Shire. The Landcare groups are then able to expend the funding on Strathbogrie Shire managed roads according to local priorities.

The process involves the Landcare groups identifying the major weeds in their Landcare area, mapping these weeds and mapping rabbit infestations. The Landcare group is then responsible for liaising with the contractor, and checking that the works have been completed satisfactorily when the contractor has finished. Greg Wood from DPI has been working closely with Strathbogrie Shire Council and Landcare groups to ensure weeds targeted are in line with state priorities.

Landcare's involvement in the program will ensure that the money is spent according to local community priorities over the next three years.

Landcare groups are currently in the process of identifying priority weeds.



Please submit  
newsletter items to:  
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Benalla, VICTORIA,  
3672  
Email:  
[landcare1@iinet.net](mailto:landcare1@iinet.net)

For all Gecko CLaN & Pasture Cropping information:

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

## From the Project Officer's

**Melanie Addinsall & Kerri Robson**

Our new project, 'The Landscape Restoration Trial' is in full swing this year with several passionate landholders involved. The Gecko CLaN is delivering the Landscape Restoration Trial in partnership with the Goulburn Broken CMA and Deakin University. The aim of the project is to identify the response of fauna (birds in particular) to landscape scale restoration activities.

The Gecko CLaN is working with landholders to increase vegetation levels in four 10km x 10km squares. Initial bird surveys have been completed and Deakin University aims to continue these surveys for 20 years. This project is the first of its kind to be carried out in Australia (the landscape scale has not previously been attempted) and we are excited to be involved.

I helped to man the Landcare tent at the Sustainable Living Festival last weekend which was a fantastic event. Those visiting the tent were mainly Melbourne locals wanting to know how to get involved but there were also several people who owned properties outside Melbourne who wanted to work with local Landcare groups to restore the health of their property and to meet new people.



The Landcare tent at the Sustainable Living Festival at Federation Square.

The CFOC Community Action Grants are now open for applications (closes 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013) and we are busy applying for grants including Chilean needle grass, Blackberries, fire recovery and erosion, and several group projects. For assistance with grants writing and building your project ideas please contact me.

After the fires at Boho, we are calling for volunteers to help with the clean-up and fencing. We are rostering people on to make the most of the Uniting Church equipment that we have available and I urge you all to spend a day helping. (We were lucky enough to get on the front page of the Benalla Ensign and Euroa Gazette!)

I hope to see you at an event or meeting soon!  
Melanie