



gecko

CLaN

Landcare News

Gecko CLaN Inc. (Catchment Landcare Network): Warrenbayne/Boho Land Protection Group, Molyullah/Tatong Tree and Land Protection Group, Goomalibee Landcare Group, Sheep Pen Creek Land Management Group, Swanpool Landcare Group, South Yarrowonga Landcare Group, Yarrowonga Urban Landcare Group, Dookie Land Management Group, Burramine/Tungamah Land Management Group, Granite Creeks Project, Balmattum/Sheans Creek Landcare Group, Burnt Creek Landcare Group, Creightons Creek Landcare Group, Goomal Valley Landcare Group, Longwood East Landcare Group, Strathbogie Tablelands Landcare Group, Nagambie Landcare Group, Warby Ranges Landcare Group, Benalla Indian Myna Action Group.

Important Dates and Events:

- 14th August Network Meeting
- 28th August Why are we burning by the Yorta Yorta
- 1st September making the most of the spring break
- 17th to 19th September National Landcare awards.
- 22nd September Workshop on Shelter belt design
- 30th September Intro course on Pasture cropping

Reversing the Dirt in Balmattum Sheans Creek



Balmattum Sheans Creek Landcare members gathered at Wendy and Dennis Nolan's property on Monday 19th May, for an erosion field day as part of the Gecko CLaN's 'Reverse the Dirt' project. Brad Costin, Kerry Goschnick and Bruce Gill of DEPI presented the day, and were able to provide personalised advice to landholders.

Topics covered on the day were salinity, gully erosion and tunnel erosion, and control methods available to address these problems. A major challenge for landholders is determining priorities for action when there are multiple problems. The day demonstrated how to create a plan of action when there are a variety of problems present.

15 people attended the day, and most were looking to address a salinity or tunnel erosion issue.

From the Chair

Hello fellow Landcarers,

Winter has finally arrived with a flourish. I hope everyone is able to keep warm enough to be comfortable.

In early June, the Gecko CLaN bid farewell to one of our facilitators, Melanie Addinsall. Working closely with Kerri, in the 2 years Melanie spent with us, she became a great asset and excellent manager of various projects. We thank Melanie for her valuable contribution and wish her well as she commences her new role with Bush Heritage in Melbourne. It is an unfortunate reality that as Landcare Facilitator roles cannot offer career advancement, bright young graduates will always be moving on with other challenges to expand their skills and knowledge.

We have been lucky to be able to replace Melanie with Libby Skilbeck. Libby is from the local area and brings to the position a wide range of experiences from her previous roles in the agricultural, environmental and social fields.

Libby will commence her facilitator role in mid-July and we look forward to her input to help keeping everything on track with projects and community engagement. Our community NRM Awards evening was held on Friday 27th June at the Swanpool Cinema. This important event gives recognition and acknowledgement to groups or individuals who have helped enhance the environment in which we live. Winner of the Hubert Miller Award was our very own Jacci Campbell who has been a long-time supporter of the Gecko CLaN and Project Officer of our Pasture Cropping Project - well done Jacci.

Doug James : Gecko Clan Chairperson

Log on to: www.geckoclan.com.au

For details of upcoming events, latest project updates and Landcare group information.



Resilient Sustainable Agriculture Project Update: Cattle & Sheep Workshop at Euroa.



The Cattle and Sheep work shop was held at John and Mary Kelly's property at Euroa with 85 people attending the day.

Our cattle presenter, Brian Cumming covered livestock handling, yards design, and transporting stock. Brian and Jim did a great job in the cattle yards with so many people around the rails asking questions. Back inside, our other presenter Dr Jim Walsh, the district Veterinary officer from DEPI, presented on animal health and sheep handling. He also covered OH&S within the shearing shed.

A big thank you goes to John and Mary Kelly and workers for allowing us to present the day at their property and also thank you the Euroa Rotary Club for a great morning tea and lunch.

The interest in the workshop took us by surprise and was well over – subscribed, but the feedback from the day was very positive and we plan to run another day soon . We look forward to seeing you at the next upcoming Gecko Clan event.

**To subscribe to receive your Gecko CLaN
newsletter via email please contact:
landcare1@iinet.net.au**

One day workshop with Fred Provenza

Fred Provenza inspired audiences with innovative concepts at the one day workshop, 'How Behavior Links Humans, Animals and Landscapes' at Swanpool Hall on Monday 12th May. Fred Provenza discussed the functional relationships and processes that occur between animals and their landscapes. The focus of the day was analyzing how the environment can be enhanced through grazing, and behavioral processes.

Fred spoke about a range of topics including trace element deficiencies in soil and in stock, the role of taste and feedback relationships, the role of weeds in an enterprise and re-evaluating their use, and nutrients availability and palatability. His publication, 'The Wisdom Body' details these concepts.

The presentation was followed by a visit to Bill Hill's Shrubs for Emissions Reduction and Carbon Sequestration (SERCS) trial site at Warrenbayne. The project is trialing the use of Australian native shrubs for grazing, and their impact on methane emissions and animal nutrition. The workshop was made possible with thanks to funding from the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.



Goulburn Broken NRM Award

L to R Chris Norman CEO of the CMA, Winner - Jacci Campbell and Murray Chapman chairman of the CMA board



Silver Grass in the Spotlight

On Friday 23rd May, Gecko CLaN hosted a field day on Silver Grass, as part of the new Silver Grass control project. Interested participants gathered at Crieghtons Creek Hall, as rain prevented the group from meeting in the paddock. Ashley Paech presented about the characteristics of Silver Grass, and was followed by Jim Shovelton who spoke about control options for the weed.

The Gecko CLaN is undertaking a project on Silver Grass after recognizing that it is of high concern for producers. This was highlighted at the MLA weeds forum hosted by Gecko CLaN earlier in the year. A trial site will be set up at Crieghtons Creek to test control options, and the Gecko CLaN will continue to share leanings from the trial.



Ashley Paech of DEPI presenting at the day.

Benalla Indian Myna Action Group now on Myna Scan

REPORT YOUR NUMBERS NOW!

The Benalla Indian Myna Action Group is now collecting its data of birds destroyed through the national Myna Scan website <http://www.feralscan.org.au/mynascan/>

The group has set up a Benalla page on the Myna Scan website where trappers can enter data.

Step 1: Register on Myna Scan.

Step 2: Email benallamynagroup@yahoo.com to be added to the Benalla Indian Myna Action Group page.

Step 3: Upload trapping data to Myna Scan.

The group held its first Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 11th June, at the CAL Community Farm where office bearers were elected. The group has recently received a grant from Benalla Rural City Council to deliver community education and awareness raising activities, and are looking for new members to assist with the delivery of this grant. If you are interested in becoming involved please contact (03) 5762 4564.

The Benalla Indian Myna Action group continue to meet on Wednesday afternoons for trap building at the old Men's Shed at CAL Community Farm, Sydney Rd. Traps are available for purchase direct from the CAL Community Farm or from Landmark, Peter Davis, North East Produce and Clarky's pet shop for \$50.

Rethinking the Australian Landscape with Bill Gammage

The revolutionary book 'The Biggest Estate on Earth' challenges previously accepted concepts of how the Australian Landscape functioned before European settlement. The author, Prof. Bill Gammage presented his findings on Thursday 8th May at the 'Managing Native Grasslands with Mosaic Burning', forum hosted by Gecko CLaN Landcare Network.

Gammage's book details how indigenous people lured game by creating and maintaining open grasslands in the landscape using burning. He spoke about how these grassland areas were burnt in a well-planned circuit that continued across generations. This kind of skillful burning allowed indigenous people to know where resources would be and when they could be utilized which assisted in their management.

He spoke about how the use of planned burning led to a reduction of bush fires, 'a fire a day keeps the bushfires away'. Dr Fred Cahir, author and indigenous studies coordinator at Federation University of Australia also spoke about the role of fire management in aboriginal culture. The day was introduced with a Welcome to Country address by Neville Atkinson, Indigenous facilitator.

The day was attended by 60 people and was funded by the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority. The forum will be followed by a field day on indigenous use of mosaic burning.



Gecko CLaN Vice-Chairman Ian Herbert, Landcare Project Officer Kerri Robson, GBCMA Indigenous Facilitator Neville Atkinson, Prof. Bill Gammage and Dr. Fred Cahir.

Follow up event to this project is –

"Why are we Burning by the Yorta Yorta" presented by Neville Atkinson and

Doug Frood Botanical Ecologist will discuss sites selected for our Mosaic burning trial sites.

Date: 28th August - 10.00am to 2.30pm

Venue: Benalla Lakeside Centre in the Red Gum room (show grounds)

Please RSVP for catering to Kerri Robson landcare2@iinet.net.au or 0418 140 710 by 26th August

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Sheep Pen Creek Land Management Group – OPEN GARDEN to be held at

Jacci & Robert Campbells 1.5ha Garden 193 Dorset Hill Rd, Earlston

Sunday October 12th, 10.00am – 4.30pm

Admission is \$5.00 per person – Children under 16 free

BBQ lunch, Devonshire Tea available all day, Plant sales & Mosaics for sale

Music provided by the Euroa Community Band and CFA demonstration and Fire prevention information – this project is to raise money for the Violet Town CFA light tanker. All welcome



The Open Food Network is an online marketplace for Australian food and farmers

The Open Food Network is an online marketplace for Australian food and farmers. It makes it easier for farmers to sell directly and/or find independent retailers and wholesalers to trade through, while still maintaining transparency in the supply chain. Co-founded by Serenity Hill (originally from Warrenbayne) and Kirsten Larsen, it's a not for profit project, currently fundraising to support its Australia-wide launch in March 2015. There are offers available for early adopter users to come on board from October (eg farmers' own online store or listing). www.openfoodnetwork.org



Finishing up – A note from Melanie

I have recently resigned from Gecko CLaN to take on a position with Bush Heritage, based in their head office in Melbourne. It will be two years since I began with Gecko CLaN and it has been a pleasure to work for Landcare. The role of Landcare Project Officer has been so varied and diverse, and although frantic at times, the role has been exciting as everyday has been different, with new opportunities, projects and people to be engaged with. Keep up the great work! Mel