



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 Yarrawonga Landcare Group, Yarrawonga 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, Gooram Valley Landcare Group, Longwood East Landcare Group, Strathbogie Tablelands Landcare Group, Nagambie Landcare Group, Warby Ranges Landcare Group, Benalla Indian Myna Action Group.

## From the Chair

Hello fellow Landcarers,

It's been another busy year for Landcare across our region. The Gecko CLaN has again lead the way with various projects including working with local government on managing roadside weeds, providing field days and training for land managers on erosion and stock management, weed and pest control, pasture cropping and assessing farm water stores in the lead up to another dry summer. On top of the usual activities our facilitators, Kerri Robson and Libby Skilbeck, had a large input after the 3 fires which hit farming communities in the Goulburn Broken Catchment last December. Their co-ordination of post fire meetings and fodder donations certainly helped with the recovery of affected landowners. It's a pity this local knowledge, vital in times of emergency virtually goes unrecognised by those in the rarefied atmosphere of political power.



*Doug James – Chairman Gecko CLaN*

Congratulations to our Landcare Facilitator Kerri Robson on her well-deserved receipt of the "Hubert Miller Perpetual Trophy" in June of this year. This award recognises a member of the community who has shown outstanding commitment to community engagement in natural resource management activities. Well done Kerri!

Unfortunately due to increasing funding constraints we were unable to renew Libby's contract after the end of June. We hope we can still deliver enough projects under Kerri's guidance that will be useful and worthwhile.

Thank you to the board of the Gecko CLaN for your work over the last year and congratulations on your reappointment. It is still exciting to be part of Landcare and I encourage each of our Landcare members to participate in projects that are relevant to them.

Best wishes for the remainder of what has been a fairly patchy season and for the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

Doug James

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## Remember to check out our Website

Check out the new Gecko CLaN website at [www.geckoclan.com.au](http://www.geckoclan.com.au)

The website features information and updates about projects and other Gecko CLaN news. The website has a page for each Landcare group in the network, which will showcase their work and provide a strong online presence for new members and funders. Please forward group information and photos to [landcare1@iinet.net.au](mailto:landcare1@iinet.net.au)

## Upcoming Events

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2016**

### **Whole Farm Planning and iFarm mapping workshop series**

*Introductory workshop on developing Whole Farm Plans. Learn about land use categories, improving production, enhancing your farm environment and the iFarm mapping software.*

**To express your interest or find out more information contact Kerri Robson on 0418 140 710 or [landcare2@iinet.net.au](mailto:landcare2@iinet.net.au)**

### **Drones are coming...**

*Keep an eye out to see how drones are being used in agriculture and how they may benefit you.*

### **Your local Landcare group meeting**

*Come along to your local group meeting to find out what is happening in your area. Landcare groups are working on projects such as weeds and rabbit control, fruit fly control, whole farm planning, on-farm water security and pasture cropping to name a few.*

**To find your local group or for more information on all our events see our website <http://www.geckoclan.com.au/>**

## GBCMA Community Report Card Survey

Fill out the survey to assist the GBCMA in applying for funding for community NRM projects. The CMA will pay each group or network for their response. The survey closes on 1 December 2015. To complete the survey click [here](#).

## Community Grants now available

The Volunteer Grants enable small community not-for-profit organisations to apply for grants of \$1,000 to \$5,000 to purchase small equipment items to assist their volunteers. For more information click [here](#).

## Weed warning – Cape Tulip



Keep an eye out for the Cape Tulip. This plant **can kill livestock**, mainly cattle with as little as 1kg of fresh plant material being enough to kill them. See our [website](#) for more information.



## Water security on farms

Gecko CLaN has ran two field days this year to assist landholders manage water supplies on farms. Topics covered on these days included:

- how to calculate how much water you have on your farm;
- how to calculate how much water you need; and
- how to use new technologies such as solar pumps and remote sensing tank monitors to better manage your water supplies.

More water security on farms events are planned for 2016, so keep an eye on our website so you don't miss out.



## Sustainable Futures In Agriculture Schools Project

Following on from the success of this project schools within the Gecko CLaN region are being invited to participate in 2016. This project was been funded for two years and has proven to be very popular with the students. Two Benalla schools were involved incorporating 120 students. We have taken the students on three field days each to the National Environment in Thurgoona, Yarallah Lamb run by the Marriotts at Goomalibee and the Melbourne University at Dookie Robotic Dairy.



*The Organic farm at the National Environment Centre, Thurgoona. The farm runs African fat tailed sheep, pastured chickens for eggs, pastured pork and produces olive oil. Products are sold from a farm based retail outlet.*



*Yarallah Lamb, Goomalibee*



*Melbourne University, Dookie*

We will be applying for funding again for 2016 and hope that we will be able to continue this program with Benalla schools and beyond.



### Fruit Fly Field Day

A great training day was hosted by Warrenbayne Boho Land Protection Group on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

Cathy Mansfield of Horticulture Services Branch DEDJTR provided information on what fruit flies look like, what their life cycle is and what you can do to manage them. More information can be found at: [Advice for the home gardener](#)

Future events such as these can be found on our [website](#).

## Great day at the Euroa Show



*Project Officer Kerri Robson and Gecko CLaN apprentice*

A great day was had by all at the Euroa Show on Saturday 24 October. The Gecko CLaN and Landcare was represented by Kerri Robson. Kerri was able to share some of the extensive information available on the projects currently being ran in the region.

Popular topics on the day included: weed and pest management; estimating and securing farm water supplies; the benefits of multi-species pasture cropping and the training available through the 'Resilient Sustainable Agriculture' project. To obtain project information or brochures for you next event please contact Kerri on 0418 140 710 or [landcare2@iinet.net.au](mailto:landcare2@iinet.net.au)

## GPS MAPPING

Earlier this year Granite Creek held a training day on GPS mapping with Tony Kubeil from the GBCMA. Libby and Kerri attended to better understand the use of the Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and how we can use them to benefit our mapping programs. We look forward to being able to put this into practice in the field when it comes to project work with the local Landcare groups



*Who said new technology was anti-social?*

## Gecko CLaN Executive Committee

Congratulations to the Gecko CLaN Executive Committee who have been reappointed for another year. The Executive Committee is comprised of six representatives from Landcare groups across the Gecko CLaN, the project officer and two representatives from GBCMA who attend meetings as guests. Your committee member are:

**Doug James** – Chairman  
**Ian Herbert** – Vice-Chairman  
**Kevin Kennedy** – Treasurer  
**David Jamieson**  
**Alexandra Handley**  
**Jacci Campbell**  
**Kerri Robson** – Landcare Project Officer  
**Ashley Rogers** –Regional Landcare Facilitator  
 GBCMA (Guest)  
**Tony Kubeil** – Manager Landcare and  
 Communities GBCMA (Guest)

All Landcare members are invited to attend the executive committee meetings. Future meeting dates can be obtained from your local Landcare group.



## Projects Update



The aim of the project is to provide farmers with training on the latest innovations in sustainable agriculture. Field days cover topics such as stress free animal handling, stock yard design, the impact of extreme weather events on livestock and production, and assessing your farm water situation. The projects have been delivered in partnership with the Department of Economic Development and the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority. More details on each of these projects can be found on the Gecko CLaN website: <http://www.geckoclan.com.au/projects/>.

### On farm training a huge success

On farm training has proved to be very popular in the past 12 months with over 600 farmers attending events organised by the Gecko CLaN. The most popular event was the Animal Health and Stock Handling days hosted by John Kelly and Charlie Crocker



*Ash Peach from DEPI presenting on feed budgets and stock containment*



*Scales in cattle crush allow for better data collection, greater stock management and the right market for your stock*



*Yard design for greater safety proved a popular topic*



## Projects Update

### Fire Recovery

The Gecko CLaN's commitment to assisting farmers and affected communities with fire recovery has continued throughout 2015.



*Waste wire was stockpiled and collected for recycling*

The Gecko CLaN coordinated the supply of donated feed to farmers, fencing of waterways and demonstrated sediment control techniques to protect stock drinking water. The Gecko CLaN has demonstrated the benefits of involving Landcare as a grass roots organisation in the on-ground delivery of projects following events such as bushfires and will be a partner organisation in future planning of fire recovery efforts.



*Team effort in setting up a demonstration sedimentation trap to protect waterways and dams at Mark Radfords property at Creighton's Creek*

### Reverse the Dirt

Erosion management continues to be a priority for Landcare groups within the Gecko CLaN. This project assists landholders to solve different types of erosion problems through applying the latest technology and best expertise available.



*Before - Erosion head working through dispersive soils*



*After – A rock chute has been installed to prevent further erosion*

Landholders with erosion problems are encouraged to contact the Gecko CLaN to discuss options to manage erosion sites.

Keep an eye out for future field days in your region at: <http://www.geckoclan.com.au/events/>

## Contact Details:

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To subscribe to receive  
your Gecko CLaN  
newsletter via email please  
contact:  
[landcare1@iinet.net.au](mailto:landcare1@iinet.net.au)

Further information on all of the  
projects in this newsletter can be  
found on our website at  
<http://www.geckoclan.com.au/>

## Project Officer Report

It has been a very busy year for the Gecko CLaN and we have again seen some great work by our Landcare groups. This year we have again seen the delivery of great local events such as the Swanpool Environmental Film Festival, building soil carbon, green haystacks demonstration sites and multi-species pasture cropping field days. In addition to this we had the work associated with fires in our region.



*Installing sediment fencing on fire affected properties*

I have really enjoyed the Sustainable Agriculture in Schools project that has been running over the past year. It has been great to see young people across our region becoming passionate about agriculture. Let's hope that the enthusiasm translates into more students taking up agriculture as a career.

2016 is shaping up as another busy year. Some of the projects we having coming up include: Pasture cropping trials (continuing our work with the Euroa Grazing Group); Water Security for grazing enterprises; Rabbit control program (hosted by Granite Creek); Roadside weed and Pest management program with Shires; Extreme Weather event management and Shelter Design; and ongoing support to all of the Landcare groups within our region. I encourage you all to participate in our great field days and continue your support of Landcare.

Kerri