



LAND FOR WILDLIFE NEWS



Newsletter of the LAND FOR WILDLIFE scheme



Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria, Australia.
Print Post Approved PP381667/00072
DSE Publication Number 03-20-0400-2
ISSN 1323-2517

Volume 6 No. 1 Nov 2006

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Showy Parrot-pea (*Dillwynia sericea*) Photo: Miles Geldard



Editorial



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See page 16 for a list of Land for Wildlife Extension Officers and Contacts.

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Printed on recycled paper to conserve wildlife habitat.
Printer: GT Graphics, Collingwood, Tel: 9419 5799.
www.gtgraphics.com.au

Dear Land for Wildlifers,

I bring you happy news with the arrival of Morgan Samual Johnson in late June, weighing in at 9 pounds 9 ounces, exactly the same weight and height as his brother Hamish born three years earlier! Felicity and family are all doing well.



I hope all of you have had a wonderful winter season and that the ongoing dry conditions are not affecting your conservation efforts too much.

Happy 25th birthday! Congratulations to all those who have contributed to the Land for Wildlife scheme over the past 25 years. Land for Wildlife has been dubbed the most successful voluntary, non-binding model for nature conservation on private land in Australia. Let's see Land for Wildlife alive and well for another 25...at least. Look forward to the next newsletter where we will reflect on LfW's many successes and read about the experiences of past LfW members.

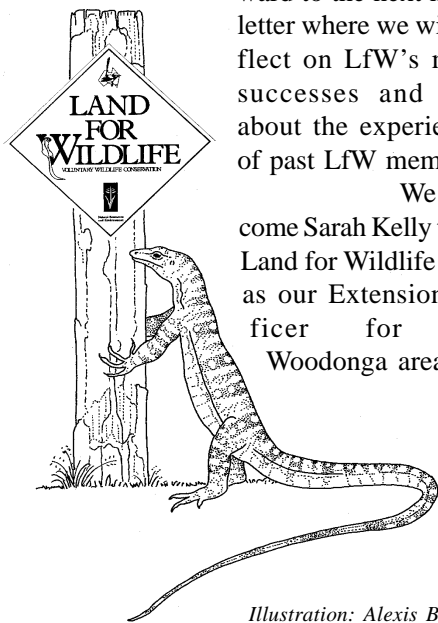


Illustration: Alexis Beckett

We welcome Sarah Kelly to the Land for Wildlife team as our Extension Officer for the Woodonga area and

DSE Customer Service
Phone the freecall number if you have any questions relating to natural resources and the environment

136 186

say "thank you" to Mary Titcum who has done a fine job during her time with us. Sarah is based in Wangaratta and is also working on Regent Honeyeater recovery and the Remnants Incentive Scheme.

This edition has some terrific articles including three inspirational property profiles. "Post-fire recovery" (p12) is from Barry Clugston (ex-LfW Extension Officer SW) and tells of the New Year's Eve fires, along with some sobering lessons.

Trust for Nature have submitted an article reminding us of the benefits of conservation covenants and how to obtain one. The government's 'New Approach to Native Vegetation' is explained together with BushBroker.

Following a successful trial period, BushTender is now available to Northern Victorian properties in the Victorian Riverina, Northern Inland Slopes, Murray Fans and part of the Murray-Mallee.

I will be holding the Land for Wildlife reins in Felicity's absence and look forward to my time as part of the Land for Wildlife team.

*Miles Geldard
A/Statewide Coordinator
Land for Wildlife Program*

*** NEW LINK ***
Visit
Land for Wildlife
online at
www.dse.vic.gov.au/landforwildlife

LFW MEMBERSHIP	PROPERTY AREA	RETAINED HABITAT	HABITAT UNDER RESTORATION	NEW PROPERTIES SINCE LAST EDITION
5,938	561,486 ha	145,156 ha	23,678 ha	77

Figures include reductions to areas due to de-registrations of properties. Current at 30th October 2006.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As to your reader with the termite problem (Land for Wildlife news 5_10) Meat Ants thrive on them so encourage them at all costs. Do not use any insecticides on your property. Once a year Meat Ants release females to form new nests. We now have Meat Ants all around the house which has mud brick. No more termites.

I Ramsay, LFWer, Shelbourne

Dear Editor (via email)


Re: Termite control in existing buildings. A helpful book is Robert Verkerk (1990) "*Building out termites: an Australian manual for environmentally responsible control*", Pluto Press Australia Ltd, Leichhardt, NSW.

Louise Shepperd, Natimuk

Dear Louise and I Ramsay,

Thank you for sharing your tremendous termite trivia. It seems there are alternative termite controls to toxic chemicals. Remember, termites are native animals and do play an important role in our natural environment. Amongst other things, they contribute to the nitrogen cycle, food chain and habitat formation. Similarly, Meat Ants are native and a vital member of our ecosystem. They are the 'janitors' of the forest floor, and a tasty snack for an Echidna, not to mention a control for our termite friends.

The Editor



murder in the dam. It was April 27th; the time 5 pm, and a dark and tragic event was unfolding. Peter had noticed waves and heard loud splashing from our large dam, about 50m from the house – it was much too loud to be the black ducks having their “bathtime”. Perhaps some dogs had found our secluded bush property; it had happened before. Investigation was needed, but he was unprepared for what he was to witness. Two wallabies (*Wallabia bicolor*) were desperately struggling with each other, each attempting to drown the other by holding its head under water. He couldn’t tell how long they had been fighting, but it was all over within minutes. One wallaby hopped out of the dam and sat at the edge looking exhausted and rather stunned. The other one was obviously distressed and was still floundering about in shoulder deep water, struggling to keep its head up, but eventually sinking below the surface. Peter ran for his waders, returning a couple of minutes later. The wallaby at the edge of the water bounded away into the bush. He pulled the lifeless body from the water, but it was beyond help. It was a mature male so we assume they had entered the dam in an attempt to establish territorial dominance.

We had known, and experienced, that kangaroos will lure pursuing dogs into a dam and drown them this way (we had previously saved dogs from this fate; later regretted when they became serial offenders) but we had never heard of wallabies acting this way. We seem to

recall some years ago finding a dead wallaby in the dam with no sign of any injuries etc. and which had puzzled us at the time (we have seen wallabies swim across the dam several times); maybe this is not an uncommon tactic?

Peter & Joan Johnstone, LFWers, South Gippsland

Dear Peter & Joan,

I am very sorry to hear of your loss. In 1864 Herbert Spencer coined the phrase “survival of the fittest” when inspired by Charles Darwin’s theorem - Natural Selection. This unusual behaviour is an expression of evolution. Old rogue Wallabies can become disgruntled and display unusual behaviour. I think you are correct in assuming that this behaviour is linked to breeding activities. Our Wildlife Officer is not suprised by the behaviour and believes Wallabies use water, as do Kangaroos, as a tool to deal with predators.

The Editor

Dear Editor

Observations this year at our house have changed since we installed tinting on our west and north windows. As well as the little Blue Wrens pecking at the window, we now have a Yellow Robin and a pair of Scarlet Robins. Because of the tint the birds cannot see into the room so a very close inspection of the birds can be made. In the garden, which is very messy but mainly natives, I have seen a Rufous Whistler for the first time. We also have Magpies, Kookaburras, Cockatoos and various parrots and many honeyeaters during the year.

Gwenda & David Phillips, LfWers, Moorabool

Dear Gwenda & David

Thank you for your avian observations. How lucky you are to have so many wonderful birds visiting your home. Tinted windows are a tremendous way to observe our wildlife up ‘close and personal’ but they can also increase the risk of bird strike. Glass is simply invisible to birds and strikes can occur wherever birds and glass co-exist.

Birds Australia’s suggestions to minimise bird strike include: avoid large windows (>2m x 2m); allowing a film of dust to built up on the exterior of the window; screen the window with hanging baskets and pot plants; and use internal barriers so the birds do not see an apparent ‘flyway’ through the house to the other side. When birds collide with windows at speed, some are killed but some may only be concussed. Birds suffering concussion are vulnerable to predators (such as domestic cats) but they may recover within an hour or two, or overnight, if placed in a dark box.

The Editor

Restoration & Revegetation Guide for the North East catchment area.



Front cover of new Restoration & Revegetation Guide

The Department of Sustainability and Environment is preparing a new Restoration and Revegetation Guide for the North East catchment region. The existing Revegetation Guide written by Fleur Stelling (1994), which has served us well, is out of print, and many of you are demanding more detailed information. Natural Heritage Trust funding is enabling us to revise and update the guide.

A series of brochures will be produced that will contain lists of plant species that are locally native (indigenous) to 20 different sub-regions in the North East. The species will be grouped into lists for different parts of the landscape/topography, representing the different vegetation communities (Ecological Vegetation Classes - EVC) that occur there. The guide will provide lists for those EVCs predominantly occurring on private land and will not cover alpine or sub-alpine vegetation which are available in more detail in other guides.

The brochures will be available in digital and hard copy form, and ultimately on the DSE web site. The brochures

are being developed progressively over the next months, and have a completion date set for June 30, 2007.

Features of the new guide:

- Localised species lists for different parts of the landscape (taking into account aspect, steepness of slope etc.). These will be based on EVCs, which are mapped comprehensively and are the basis for landscape planning and priority setting for funding. Within these lists more detail in the shrub and ground layers will be included.
- Species that are more likely to be available from nurseries will be underlined. We did not wish to exclude species just because they are not commonly available in nurseries currently. The nursery industry is constantly learning new propagation techniques, some seed is becoming more available, and many plants can be grown if you order far enough in advance.
- Species which are common, form a critical component of the vegetation structure, or are pioneer species which occur in the early successional stage of regeneration of a community will be in bold.
- The lists will represent the regional standards in relation to Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Framework (DSE 2002). Companion brochures that provide a guide to planting density will be prepared to assist land managers to meet standards.
- The lists will be stored in a central database that can be easily updated.
- A table that summarises different attributes of the species in the lists (similar to the table in the Goulburn Broken Revegetation Guide) will ultimately be available on the DSE web site. These include site preference, rainfall, growth rate, tolerances, intolerances, if used in direct seeding, etc.
- Existing species descriptions will be included on the web site. Descriptions for additional species will be subject to further funding being available.
- We will provide links to Practical Information Notes (PINs), and prepare a limited number of new guides including approaches to enhancement and restoration of existing remnant vegetation.

If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this project or opportunities for input, please contact Sue Berwick or Mary Titcumb at DSE Wodonga (02) 6043 7900. For advice on revegetation standards contact your local Native Vegetation Officer - 136 186.

Bush Detective

Who made this?

Who did this?

? ? ? ?

Bark marks



Do you find this marking curious? It was not made by an animal or lightning. It is a mark left long ago by the Dja Dja Wurrung people living near Axe Creek. It is an Aboriginal scarred tree and it is so old the bark has almost grown across scar. Aboriginal people removed bark from trees to make canoes, containers and shields and to build temporary shelters.

Tree scars were also caused by European settlers (usually square cut for hut lining or triangular with survey number and date), by vehicles (usually beside road or track and below 2m), fire (triangular at ground level and charred), lightning (often long thin strips from top to bottom), storms, floods and animals (see 'Galah renovations' right).

Do you have a scarred tree near your home? It may be an Aboriginal scarred tree. To record its location contact:

Heritage Registrar, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

PO Box 2392V

Melbourne VIC 3001

www.dvc.vic.gov.au/aav.htm



Scarred trees at Broken Boosey State Park

Old brush-tailed brickie



Many years ago a Brushtailed Possum left imprints of its paws behind as it scampered across a freshly made brick near Faraday, Central Victoria. This particular brick may be over 100 years old.

Galah renovations



The Galah that lived here found this nesting box a little 'stuffy' and went about enlarging the entrance hole.

Galahs and Cockatoos also 'de-bark' trees. Some believe they are purposely damaging these trees in order to stimulate hollow formation. Does anyone have any further ideas about this curious behaviour? Send your ideas to The Editor, Land for Wildlife News.

Nesting box damage like this can sometimes be repaired but may need replacment of the entire box. For a list of nesting box suppliers contact your Extension Officer (see back page).

Photos: Miles Geldard

Property profile

"Weekaway"

Among the properties registered with Land for Wildlife, I wonder how many boast a Wedge-tailed Eagle's nest, diverse wildflowers, extensive granite outcrops and a 9 hole golf course?

In early October I travelled to Benloch to assess the property 'Weekaway' with Miles Geldard, our Statewide LfW Coordinator and John Crutchfield, a local volunteer LfW assessor. 'Weekaway' is a 32 hectare property situated adjacent to Todds Creek, in the Great Dividing Range. About three-quarters of the property has natural vegetation cover, with Herb-rich Foothill Forest extending across areas other than the drainage lines where Swampy Riparian Woodland occurs.

'Weekaway' was established in 1979 as the first purpose built "school recreation camp" in Victoria. The property was first registered with Land for Wildlife in 1998 and for the past 2 years has been owned by Charlotte, Darren, Robert and Diane Burns. Since its establishment, children visiting 'Weekaway' have been able to experience the natural environment while participating in outdoor education activities.

With Charlotte leading the way, Miles, John and I walked through a variety of habitats as we explored the property. Under an open forest canopy of Messmate, Red Stringybark and Broad-leaf Peppermint, the herb-rich ground flora included Pink Bells, Austral Bears-ears, Common Apple-berry, Love Creeper, Black-anther Flax-lily, Pale Sundew, and the orchids Pink Fingers and Common Bird-orchid. As we passed between the gums and granite boulders of a north-facing slope we noted the many small hollows in the trees and the abundant rock crevices that provide valuable habitat for fauna on the property. Further up the slope however was the crowning



Wedge-tailed Eagle nest. Photo: John Hick



Habitat tree. Photo: John Hick

glory, a large, old stag with lots of hollows, a perfect tree for large, hollow-dependent birds. We trained our binoculars on each hollow and John searched the ground under the tree for signs of inhabitants, but all to no avail. We agreed it would be an ideal habitat tree to observe as darkness closed in and suggested to Charlotte that a 'stag watch' would be a fun and educational event for some older students staying at the property.

Passing by a large dam with abundant reeds and vocal frogs, Charlotte led us to a majestic Manna Gum growing above Todds Creek at the edge of the property. High in the upper branches was a Wedge-tailed Eagle's nest that may have been used by a family of 3 eagles that the Burns family have seen soaring

above the property. From there Charlotte took us along a bush track to a spot where she and Darren frequently saw large patches of "white-wash" on the ground. There was only a small amount of white-wash to be seen but it was evident that it was under a roosting site. Amongst the twigs and leaf litter on the ground were many large insect wings and a regurgitated pellet of hair and bones, including the lower jawbones of an Agile Antechinus. The Burns family and their visitors now have the challenge of observing which species of owl or other bird of prey frequents the roost.

'Weekaway' is once again registered with Land for Wildlife and Charlotte, Darren, Robert and Diane are to be congratulated for their efforts in integrating habitat conservation with the management of visitor activities at their recreation camp.

*John Hick, LfW Extension Officer,
Port Phillip Region*

Property Profile

Challenges are rewarding

Don Charles has been a part of the Land for Wildlife scheme for some time with his property near Linton. The property was cleared in the Gold Rush period in the early 1850s and remnants of an 1880s hut stone floor are still visible today. In more recent times the land was used for agricultural purposes.

Don's conservation effort is a hobby. "It's in the genes, I just wanted to do something associated with the land". It was a good transitional change from being an accountant. His biggest achievement is keeping the weeds off the property, and it has paid off. Everything is indigenous to the area now. Don never saw that it was possible to create such a diversity of plants and flowers, which are all indigenous to the Linton area.

Don has fundamentally aimed to establish an untouched diversity of the native vegetation. So in the beginning his contribution was moderate. In 1998 a bushfire burnt a large proportion of the property and took with it all the understorey plants and leaving a layer of fertile ash. "The 1998 fire was definitely my greatest challenge". Prior to the fire he had planted 500 plants, which were all affected by the fire. Thus post fire he undertook intensive planting of understorey indigenous plants across the property to assist with the natural regeneration and to accelerate soil stabilisation. He propagated the plants from the indigenous plants on the property so that he could keep the authenticity. In conjunction with this he nursed natural regrowth until it was strong enough to be self-reliant.

"We see a lot more kangaroos, wallabies and birds. I frequently check the property fences and loosen them so that the animals can move more freely between the property and the adjoining state forest. Some birds that we have recorded are: Willy Wagtails, thornbills, Wood Ducks, White-faced Herons, tree creepers, Choughs, Blue Wrens, ibis, Black Ducks, Magpies, Black Currawongs and rosellas".

The second largest project was to overcome the bareness of the dam wall. For years nothing seemed to grow on it and it was being subject to erosion. "I did my research and selected the *Poa sieberiana* plant and began to propagate it. I took a mature plant and broke it up into its component

shoots, then trimmed each shoot and put them into individual tubes, until they put out new shoots. Within approximately 3-4 months the new plants were ready for planting." The new plants were then planted along the dam wall approximately 3-4 feet apart and support logs were



Poa sieberiana planting near dam. Photo: Don Charles.

positioned on the wall to help stabilise the small plants. Within 9 months the entire dam wall was fully covered with the grass. For this endeavour several tussocks were used to propagate a few hundred new plants. Once the plants established on the wall they begin to set their own seed bank and the natural cycle was established.

Don's advice to new members to the Land for Wildlife scheme or just starting their conservation efforts, is to do your research before beginning any works. The things that you should research are:

- What are the indigenous plants in the area?
- Identify what weeds are on the property and how you would eradicate them in the best way for the environment?
- Plan to work with the ecosystem you have.
- The best way to get advice is to talk to the environmental experts and read lots of books.
- Plan your project layout on the property before beginning works, so you have a clear idea of what go where.
- Work out your time management.
- Be fully committed to achieving your objective.

By Amanda Williams & Jessica Annear, LfWers

Permanent Protection For Your Bushland

So, you are fortunate enough to have your own special piece of bushland, or your serene and picturesque wetland. It is a place that you protect and nurture. A place that you can go to and spend time in. A source of great tranquility; peaceful, yet humming with the dynamism of the untold many and complex plant and animal interactions that occur within nature. It is a little world of seemingly endless interest and wonder that, on top of it all, gives you the constant satisfaction of knowing that you have protected this wonderful example of nature's creation, and that it will be there far into the future. But will it? How strongly is your piece of bushland protected? How can you ensure that it will continue to be protected after you have moved on? What is the strongest protection that you can give it?



Photo: Trust for Nature

Have you heard of Trust for Nature? Trust for Nature is a not-for-profit conservation organisation (formerly known as the Victorian Conservation Trust) that was formed in 1972 through an Act of Victorian Parliament (appropriately, the *Victorian Conservation Trust Act 1972!*). The Trust was purposely designed not to be a government department or a statutory authority. The Premier at the time, the late Dick Hamer, wanted to create a trust that could accept bequests, or financial and land donations; and be able to purchase and conserve into the future important natural areas on private land. He felt that to achieve this goal it was important that the organisation work independently of the Government and so created the Trust. An amendment to the Victorian Conservation Trust Act in the late 1970s enabled 'conservation covenants' to be placed on significant privately owned natural areas; the Trust's covenanting program is now the focus of the organisation's work.

So what is a 'conservation covenant'? A conservation covenant is a legally binding, yet voluntary, agreement between Trust for Nature and a private land owner that protects the natural features of the site from adverse development, land clearing, or subdivision. It is one of the most

effective forms of conservation on private land, as the covenant sits on the property title and so stays with the land, even after the property has been sold. Once a site has been covenanted, it is permanently protected. As well as the legal protection afforded by a conservation covenant, when you sign up with the Trust to a conservation covenant on your special area, you also enlist the knowledge and resources of the Trust and its staff. Each of the catchments across Victoria has a regional manager, and most have a 'Stewardship Officer'. The Stewardship Officer is the person that visits your covenanted area with you to talk about the special values of the land, and formulate a management plan to help you protect and enhance the values of the land. He or she is there to assist you in whichever way they can. Also, covenanted areas are eligible for higher government subsidies for fencing and revegetation works, and many shires or councils across Victoria give rate rebates or special grants for covenanted land.

So what sort of land can be covenanted? Your own bit of bush that you call your backyard or that patch of bush in the corner of the back paddock. Or it can be all of your 'bush block' (if necessary, with a 'domestic area' excluded from the covenant, for your house or weekender, etc.). Or, again, it can be your special wetland area.

From 3 staff members in 1972, Trust for Nature now has a staff of about 35 people; about a third of which work in 'head office' in Melbourne – the rest are located across Victoria in each of the State's 10 water catchments areas.

The Trust also produces a tri-annual Conservation Bulletin, with news and information, and holds open days on other covenanted properties. And, if one day you come to sell your covenanted area, the Trust can assist in this by advertising your property on the Trust's website or in the Conservation Bulletin.

So, when you next marvel at the beauty and complexity of your special remnant of bush, or your wetland, think of how you might ensure that it can remain that way in perpetuity.

Want to know more about conservation covenants? Please don't hesitate to contact Trust for Nature in Melbourne (ph. 03 9670 9933, or toll free 1800 99 99 33) for more information about the Trust's work, conservation covenants or to connect you with your local Trust for Nature representative. Also visit www.tfn.org.au

Lance Williams

Stewardship Officer, Goulburn Broken Catchment

Trust for Nature

Little Land for Wildlifers

Possum poem

If you have a little garden
And you grow some native plants
You may have Pygmy Possums,
Their cousins and their aunts.

They are only very tiny,
Like a mouse with big round eyes,
And if one sits upon your hand
Just leave your fingers out



These little possums do no harm
And they build a leaf nest to keep them warm
For breakfast, lunch and tea
They eat the shiny pearl of nectar
Hanging off a flower
And the many insects living in the bower.



Franz was in the shed one day
When he found fresh gum leaves on the floor
And up above a possum nest
In the 'Singer' drawer.
Very Quietly had a little peep
And there inside was a mother possum sound asleep.

Its tail will curl right 'round about.
Gently he closed the drawer,
So as not to spoil her dreams
Of Banksia blossoms and other possums
And to wonder if a possum life is what it seems...

*Margaret Windisch, LfWer, Walkerville
(Drawings by Sally Schaffer)*



Help for Wildlife

Help for Wildlife is a 24 Hour State-wide Wildlife Emergency Service which is a voluntary, community based, non-profit, non-political organization established in 1995 to assist with distressed wildlife on all levels. Help for Wildlife serves to encourage greater understanding and respect for the needs of wildlife and actively seeks solutions to wildlife problems.



- Offers a 24 hour, direct, Statewide, emergency information service to members of the public who seek advice and information on matters relating to wildlife. All operators are highly trained and are familiar with emergency situations. Help for Wildlife is the largest single provider of wildlife help within Victoria handling over 18,000 calls for assistance annually.

- Established the first 'wildlife emergency' road signs throughout a greater part of Victoria advising motorists of the direct 24-hour wildlife emergency contact number. Currently there are over 400 signs erected with an ongoing program continuously being carried out. These signs were the first road signs of this type established in Victoria and over the years have been instrumental in saving many wildlife lives and minimising a great deal of suffering for injured wildlife whilst also raising public awareness for wildlife safety.



Wildlife response unit Photo: Help for Wildlife

- Manages a fully equipped Wildlife Rescue Unit, which is the only one of its kind in this State. The Rescue Unit is on constant standby to attend to wildlife emergencies such as Bushfires, Oil Spills, Floods, etc. and is the principal Veterinary Unit that attends the opening of the Duck Shooting Season. This commitment has now been in place for 14 years. A specialised team of veterinarians, vet nurses, first aid personnel and wildlife nurses specifically trained to deal with emergencies staff this Rescue Unit.
- Attends to after hour wildlife calls for the Healesville Sanctuary and a number of Veterinarians, Shires, Councils and Government Departments.
- Has a strong professional working relationship with the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Primary Industries, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Parks Victoria, VicPol, CFA, Shires, Councils, Welfare Agencies, Zoos and other

relevant Government Departments and agencies.

- Conducts workshops, lectures and field days on the care and handling of Australian wildlife.
- Has a deep commitment to the education and welfare of Australian wildlife and supports wherever possible those in the community who rehabilitate and care for sick, injured, orphaned and distressed wildlife.

Were very involved with bushfire rescue in Victoria's North East, Glenarua and other fires which occurred across the State. Help for Wildlife was recently recognised by the International Fund for Animal Welfare for its involvement in rescuing and caring for burnt and distressed wildlife which were a result of these fires.

Becoming a carer

Caring for all protected wildlife in Victoria requires a permit to do so which is issued by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. For those wishing to learn how to operate as fully licensed wildlife shelter they will need to contact an existing licensed wildlife shelter and be apprenticed to them for a minimum of 12 months. This system is called 'fostering'.

During this initial training period, the licensed wildlife shelter is responsible for all training and guidance – all wildlife held by the foster carer is registered to the licensed shelter and remains the responsibility of that shelter until the period of training is completed.

There is wildlife carer training offered by a number of providers within Victoria, although not mandatory and from time to time there are specific lectures on particular species available. Why not go along to one of these and meet some of your shelters and broaden your knowledge of the diversity and needs of wildlife. However, the ultimate responsibility for training lies with the licensed shelter. The work can be tiring, stressful, very full on, heartbreaking but so very rewarding.

There are over 260 registered wildlife shelters scattered throughout Victoria

CARE FOR AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE IN DISTRESS
24 Hour State-wide Wildlife Emergency Service – 0417 380 687 Postal: PO Box 181, Coldstream. 3770. Victoria.
helpforwildlife@bigpond.com

A New Approach to Managing Native Vegetation in Victoria



Photo: DSE

Native Vegetation – Sustaining a Living Landscape
Improving the quality and amount of native vegetation in Victoria is critical to achieving a healthy and productive natural environment for all.

While landholders have made a great start to the long-term task of recovering native vegetation, the government recognises that we need to further support and strengthen these efforts.

Victoria's Native Vegetation Management Framework
Victoria's Native Vegetation Management – A Framework for Action establishes the strategic direction for the protection, enhancement and revegetation of native vegetation across Victoria.

The goal is '...to achieve a reversal, across the entire landscape of the long term decline in the extent and quality of native vegetation, leading to a net gain.'

Net gain is the outcome for native vegetation and habitat where overall gains are greater than overall losses and individual losses are avoided where possible.

The three steps to applying the net gain approach to protection and clearance decisions are:

1. Avoid the removal of native vegetation
2. Minimise the removal of native vegetation through appropriate planning and design
3. Appropriately offset the loss of native vegetation

A New Strategic 'Whole-of-Landscape' Approach
The new strategic 'whole of landscape' approach focuses on the need to restore the health of the environment while at the same time building a sustainable and competitive economy.

Strategic and regional planning. The new approach

focuses on achieving the objectives of the Framework at a regional level through the use of several new tools.

One such tool is property vegetation plans. Landholders can develop a property vegetation plan that identifies any native vegetation that may be removed and offset arrangements over a ten year period.

BushBroker

In most cases the clearing of any native vegetation that requires planning approval must be offset by a gain in the extent and/or quality of native vegetation.

Offsets can often be generated on the permit applicant's own property, but there are situations where this is not possible. (For example, where there is no suitable site on the property.)

BushBroker, Victoria's native vegetation credit registration and trading system, enables offsets to be located on a different property to where the native vegetation is being cleared.

A native vegetation credit is a gain in the quality and/or quantity of native vegetation that is subject to a secure and ongoing agreement. Native vegetation credits are listed on the BushBroker register and these can be bought by another party and subsequently used as an offset for the approved clearing of native vegetation.

BushBroker offers landholders an opportunity to improve biodiversity on their property as well as a potential new income stream.

Further Information

For more information on native vegetation management and BushBroker, please call the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or visit www.dse.vic.gov.au/nativevegetation.

Property Profile

Post-fire recovery

Our farm and bushland was caught up in the New Year's Eve bushfire of 2005. I was able to defend the house with the help of a mate who volunteered to come over and help and without that help I would have lost the battle. My farm has a few hectares of regrowth bush across the northern boundary after the gold times of the 1860s and the Illawarra forest adjacent to the southern boundary. The enterprise on this farm has been cut flowers and growing acacias for seed to supply the food industry.

Fire has always been a consideration in any planning and design with tracks, house, sheds and edges. This fire approached from directly west as a wind change pushed the eastern flank out to our place. There were good firebreaks across that face with slashed and mowed areas breaking the approach.

An unused road with mature trees and understorey vegetation crowned with flames reaching a great height then the embers blew all around as the fire dropped back to the ground. As it steamed across the paddock it flared through each plantation line of hakeas, thryptomene and other species but continued through the low grass breaks at speed. It was a day of 46°C with wind of 50-60km/h and almost nil humidity, so a blade of grass in the middle of a tennis court would have burnt.

We saved the house, the sheds and machinery but almost nothing else. The first fire trucks arrived just on 17 hours later. All the fences, plantations, dripper pipes, mulch, tree lines and natural vegetation are gone.

Now since the fire another person who was burnt out and I started a discussion on biodiversity recovery

and this has been well picked up by the agencies and support groups from the shire down. People outside the fire area have built many nest boxes of varying size and design and brought in some useful hollow logs. There is a real emphasis on fox control and weed eradication.

Once the trees were burnt many just stood there with forlorn appearance but then the leaves started to fall. This

gave a useful ground cover. Epicormic leaves started to appear within days on the eucalypts, some only from the base if the bark layers were too badly burnt. Native grasses popped out of the ground about five days afterwards. After about two months many of the trees started to shed bark and this helped the ground cover. There was almost no ground cover in the forest so all the leaves and bark helped absorb the impact of the few showers of rain

that fell and now there is a nice ground cover with some green shoots starting to emerge.

Many large trees fell because they were so badly burned internally. An enormous amount of hollows were lost but some were recreated by the burning. But whole populations of antechinus and small mammals were destroyed. I

have many bats in the walls of the house and they generally survived and are back at work. There were two families of White-browed Babblers and now only about seven birds. I have seen Stumpy-tail Lizards including a very young animal about 12cm long. There are still a few skinks emerging from under steel heaps and a few birds of the blue wren family. Bush stone curlews called a few days after the fire but now



Aerial photo of Barry Clugston's farm at Stawell Photo: Barry Clugston



Charred boundary fence Photo: Barry Clugston

Continued next page

Economic Benefits of Biodiversity

A new BushTender – Northern Victoria 2006–07

Following a successful trial period, the Victorian Government is expanding its native vegetation management program with the implementation of a BushTender project in northern Victoria. Under BushTender, landholders bid for the funding they need to better protect and improve their native vegetation. Contracts are then awarded to successful bidders on the basis of 'best value for money'. Management actions include activities such as weed control, fencing and native vegetation rehabilitation.

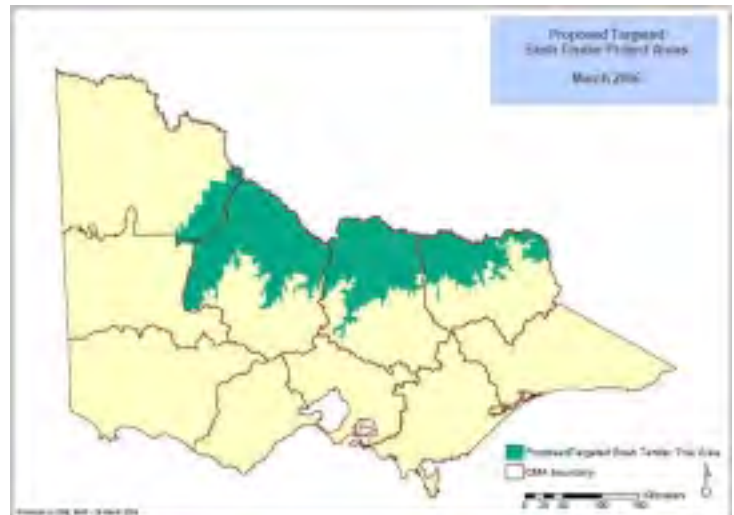
BushTender is being conducted across selected parts of northern and central Victoria encompassing four bioregions: the Victorian Riverina, Northern Inland Slopes, Murray Fans and part of the Murray-Mallee (see below). These bioregions occur across four CMA regions: North East, North Central, Goulburn-Broken and Mallee.

Landholders in the project area with native vegetation on their property are invited to register an Expression of Interest to participate in the new BushTender by calling the Department of Sustainability and Environment on 136 186. Landholders are encouraged to register their EOI as early as possible as places are limited.

Further information is available on the DSE website: www.dse.vic.gov.au/nativevegetation



Photo: DSE



Post-fire recovery (cont')

seemed to have gone well into the forest because it has so little ground cover but there are many fallen trees that were not there before.

Rabbits survived well and are active, so restoring the rabbit fences has been a priority because the warrens on the neighbour's farm have remained. It will take many years even decades for the biodiversity to return but the early signs are encouraging. The forestry people believe it was just on 100 years since a fire was recorded in this immediate area.

I am planning to restore many of the plantations that provided a lot of cover and support for many invertebrates and bird groups. Now I have bare paddocks with not even stumps left and the animals are struggling.

gling.

There are a number of lessons to be learnt.

- Do not rely on the fire brigade to arrive and save the place in the nick of time. I have been a brigade member for 45 years and still they did not arrive.
- Do fire breaks before summer hits and maintain them during the course of the year.
- Even gold plated preparations can fail at a crucial time.
- Stay and defend the house and assets if you can withstand the embers, smoke and noise.
- But preferably have good help if you choose to stay.
- On fire risk days have tanks and water containers full, even think about hot and cold drinking water containers ready to go.
- Dress for a fire attack not summer holidays.
- Get advice from experienced people during cold part of the year and see which applies to your property.
- If you do not want to stay and defend go early. Get good insurance.

**For more information call
Victorian Bushfire Information Line
1800 240 667**

*Barry Clugston, Stawell
Former LfW Extension Officer*

Recent Publications

Australian Seeds - A guide to their collection, identification and biology

(2006) L. Sweedman & D Merritt. This is the first complete guide to the collection, processing and storage of wild collected seed. While the main focus is on Australian seeds, the procedures and protocols described within the book are of international standard and apply to users throughout the world.

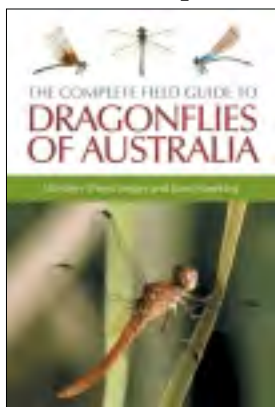


The book provides a basic understanding to seed biology, evolution and morphology, and includes chapters on all aspects of harvesting, processing and storage of seeds. This will enable users to collect, process and store seed more efficiently, thus reducing loss of seed viability during the storage process with potentially huge savings in time, effort and expense in the rehabilitation and restoration industries.

With a strong emphasis on the species-rich Western Australian region, Australian Seeds features photographs of more than 1200 species showing clearly their size and shape. Comprehensive seed germination data enables users to know how long to allow for germination times and whether some form of pre-germination treatment is required and what this should be. This is of major importance to horticulturists and agriculturists planning crop and weed control programmes. It will also be a valuable resource to anyone interested in Australian flora. Available from some retail outlets or CSIRO Publishing (03) 9662 7666 or www.publish.csiro.au

A complete field guide to Dragonflies of Australia

(2006) G. Theischinger & J. Hawking. Dragonflies and damselflies are conspicuous insects. Here for the first time is a comprehensive guide to the Australian dragonfly fauna.



Including identification keys not only for adults but also for their larvae, commonly known as 'mud eyes' and often used as bait for freshwater fish. With stunning full-colour images and distribution maps, the book

covers all 30 families, 110 genera and 324 species found in Australia.

Dragonflies are valuable indicators of environmental well-being. A detailed knowledge of the dragonfly fauna and its changes is therefore an important basis for decisions about environmental protection and management. Their extraordinary diversity will interest entomologists and amateur naturalists alike. Available from CSIRO Publishing (03) 9662 7666 or www.publish.csiro.au

Melbourne's Wildlife - a field guide to the fauna of Greater Melbourne

(2006) Museum Victoria. The bushland, parks, gardens and waters of Greater Melbourne support an amazing diversity of animals, including many rare and endangered species. From albatrosses and antechinuses to wombats and worms, the number of species is remarkable.



Melbourne's Wildlife contains stunning colour photographs of over 700 animals, with descriptions of each species, information about behaviour and habitat, distribution maps, and informative and thought-provoking essays about the wildlife in this wonderful city. Available from some retail outlets or CSIRO Publishing (03) 9662 7666 or www.publish.csiro.au

Wild Orchids of Victoria (2006).

Jeffrey Jeanes & Gary Backhouse. Victoria has a wonderful, varied orchid flora of over 360 species in the world for terrestrial orchids. In Victoria orchids can be found from the coast to the highest mountains from deserts to swamps. This guide presents all of Victoria's wild orchids, in over 1400 beautiful detailed photographs. Available from Bloomings Books (03) 9427 1234 hb 280 x 205 mm 316pp RRP\$99.95



Field Guide to Australian Birdsong - CD9 (2006).

Bird Observers Club of Australia (BOCA) presents the revised edition to the series covering the monarchs and flycatchers, fantails, cuckoo-shrikes, trillers, orioles, woodswallows, butcherbirds, currawongs, corvids, riflebirds and bowerbirds and includes the



Apostlebird & White-winged Chough. **Please take care!** Playing recorded calls in the field should be avoided as it may cause distress or put birds at risk, particularly in the breeding season. Available from BOCA (03) 9877 5342 1300 305 342 (regional) Price \$25.00 (members \$22.00) + \$6.50 p&p. Full set 9 CDs \$200.00

Conservation Properties for Sale

Contact the Editor if you would like to advertise your Land for Wildlife property for sale in this section. It is a free service to members.

Mirboo North. The influential and creative architectural works of renowned environmental builder, Alistair Knox, can be found hidden among the ancient eucalypt trees and forests of the beautiful Strzelecki Ranges on Dickies Hill Road, Mirboo North. 48 acres of secluded bliss (partly cleared) with sensational views and established native gardens. Visiting lyrebirds and abundant wildlife. Property is fully fenced is registered Trust for Nature property and of course LfW and has a dam Environmentally responsible vendors have made extensive use of recycled timbers throughout their home, including large oregon beams from the old Sigma building (Collins Street, Melbourne) and massive uprights re-milled from the Turpentine timber piles of the former Nelson Pier at Williamstown. Constructed of mud brick the home offers a stylish kitchen, all electric, with dishwasher and timber benches, open meals/lounge area and slate floors. The two large bedrooms with ensuite bathroom. Additional visitors cottage/studio with 360-degree fully enclosed upper observation room. Ample shedding. Income generating plantation of more than 70 mature chestnut, walnut and hazelnut trees. Rare opportunity, lovingly established and cared for by same owners for 27 years. Contact: property@grosvenorperry.com.au (see below)



Paradise Beach (Gippsland Lakes) Very reluctantly for sale to someone with environmental credentials. I have 5 blocks of intact bush plus a dwelling Gippsland Lakes, and the Ninety Mile Beach, about 250 K's east of Melbourne. There is a great variety of indigenous plants & I have increased the number, propagating from plant material gathered from the area. The bush is predominantly coastal Banksia dune. A list of plants (not complete) is available from the owner. It includes a number of orchids. Wildlife includes kangaroos, wombats, possums, bandicoots, koalas & swamp wallabies. Bird life is prolific including rosellas, lorikeets, wrens, finches, emus etc. Registered as Land for Wildlife. It is very close to the Lakes Coastal Park and there are many walks in the area through unspoiled bush. Five minutes from the beach. Neat 3 bedroom house, solar HWS, septic tank, rain water tank, power, phone line etc. Enquiries R West (03)98536512 (before 7 PM) or rwest@alphalink.com.au

Thinking of selling your Land for Wildlife property?

If you sell your Land for Wildlife property, please inform the Extension Officer or Statewide Coordinator. We can then alter the database and invite the new owners to join. **The Land for Wildlife sign is the property of DSE and needs to be returned or picked up.** Advertising your property here is free to Land for Wildlife members.

Cranbourne South A Rare Find. 14.5 hectare of bush close enough to town for convenience and far enough away for peace and quiet. Escape to your own piece of paradise where you can enjoy native and indigenous plants, watch swamp wallabies and study a variety of birds and other species. Design your own home to blend with the surroundings. \$524,950. Enquiries Stockdale & Leggo Langwarrin 9775 7500 or Maureen Gillham 0418 558 777

South Gippsland Just 35 minutes from the LaTrobe Valley. A unique opportunity exists for nature lovers to purchase 104 acres of pristine, National Park quality, forest. The property abuts 500 acres of a proposed Regional Park. Improvements include a 3 bedroom B.V. home built in 1993. There is an en-suite bathroom to the main bedroom, a well-appointed kitchen with a large W.I. pantry, study and ample storage. Outbuildings include a brick double garage and workshop, and a 12m x 7.2m machinery shed. The finish of this lovely home is of the best quality. The property also features a large dam supplied by small spring-fed creeks. There is approx. 2km of dirt roads. Walking tracks showcase the beautiful fern gullies, Blackwood and hazel areas, while a diverse range of eucalypt species dominates other parts. The abundant wildlife includes koalas, sugar gliders, echidnas, wallabies etc. The bird list features 90 species. Flora and fauna lists are available. There is scope for Ecotourism based activities to be undertaken. \$540,000 Ph. 5668 2035 A.H.

Strathbogie Ranges 65 acres of high quality forest, managed for conservation for decades. Herb-rich Foothill Forest (Peppermints, Yellow Box, Blue-gum) on steep Silurian slopes and Grassy Dry Forest (Long-leaf Box) on ridges. Includes two room cedar weatherboard cabin nestled in the forest overlooking permanent Brankeet Creek (with fringing ferns, Blackwood and Christmas Bush and occasional platypus sightings). Large plant list, high diversity of groundflora (orchids, lilies, daisies, etc). Abundant wildlife (koalas, wombats, echidnas, antechinus, Greater Glider, many forest birds including Powerful Owl, skinks, frogs....) Secluded and tranquil spot, only two hours from Melbourne. Trust for Nature covenant in process. Contact Fiona: 0419 116803.

Looking to buy or sell a conservation property? www.conservationbroker.net.au

Land for Wildlife
Extension Officers
and contacts are at
the following
Department of
Sustainability and
Environment
Offices:

Alexandra
Mike Kopanica
- (03) 5772 0257
Bairnsdale
Lucy Clausen
- (03) 5152 0400

Ballarat
Elspeth Swan
- (03) 5336 6722

Bendigo
Shaun Burke
- (03) 5430 4368
**Central and West
Gippsland**
Kylie Singleton
- (03) 5172 2123

Colac
Kelly Dufty
- (03) 5565 4417
- 040965 4425

Geelong
John Hick
- (03) 9785 0134

**Melbourne area &
Port Phillip East**
John Hick
- (03) 9785 0134

Portland
Kelly Dufty
- (03) 5565 4417
- 040965 4425

Swan Hill/Mildura
Murray Rohde
- (03) 5036 4824

Wodonga
Sarah Kelly
- (03) 5723 8659
- 0427 619 962

**A/Statewide
Coordinator**
Miles Geldard
- (03) 5430 4363
Bendigo

**Bird Observers
Club of Australia**
PO Box 185,
Nunawading, 3131
(03) 9877 5342 or
1300 305 342
(country callers).

Courses/Field Days/Information Sessions

Oct/Feb. Seed Workshop. Introduction to seed collection and informal introduction to all facets of seed collection. Sessions will be held at:

- Ballarat, Apollo Bay, Geelong, Inverleigh and at locations in the North Central Region of Victoria, Oct. to Dec. 2006 Contact: Anne Ovington, 5345 2200, anne.ovington@dpi.vic.gov.au
- South Gippsland, Dec. 2006. Contact: Drew Liepa, 5662 5201, DewL@wgcma.vic.gov.au
- Yarram region, Mullungdung Flora and Fauna Reserve, 20th Nov. 2006. Contact: Martin Potts, 5147 0954, mpotts.gav@dcsi.net.au

Seeds to success is a five day accredited course designed for people with an interest in collecting seed from native vegetation, including data collection, extraction, cleaning, storage and propagation. Courses will be held at the Victorian Landcare Centre, Creswick, Nov-Dec 2006 and Jan-Feb 2007. Contact: Anne Ovington, 5345 2200, anne.ovington@dpi.vic.gov.au

26 Nov. Challenge bird count. Echuca and District Branch of the Bird Observers Club of Australia. The aim is to observe, on the day, as many birds and as many species as possible within a 40km of a central point (e.g. Echuca Post office). Co-ordinator: Peter Allan 03 5484 1576. Helpers good at identifying birds are welcome.

26th Nov. Owls and Possums at Blackburn. Juniors' Group Excursion. FNCV Contact: Wendy Clark - AH 9877 9266

Dec. Ecology of Otway Freshwater Streams. This course will address a range of topics including:

- an awareness of native fish species found in the Otways and their habitat requirements
 - principles of waterway management
 - the impact of introduced species such as carp & redfin
 - An understanding of the rare and threatened species in the area
 - What links exist between streamside vegetation and the health of the native fish population
- Location: Colac Otway Shire or Surf Coast Shire, Cost: Free, Contact + Registration: John Rees - 5231 6913 or jr.westernlakes@bigpond.com

3 Dec. Superb Parrot Count. In 2005 285 Superb Parrots were observed in the Picola area and about 100 others were observed on or near Gulpa Island. Assist locals count the number of Superb Parrots on Gulpa Island. Register with Peter Allan 03 5484 1576. Website: http://users.mcmmedia.com.au/~stocky/boca_echuca.html

4 Dec Fungi Group (FNCV) Towards a critical checklist of Australian Macrofungi. A talk by Dr Tom May, Senior Mycologist RBG Melbourne. Contact: Geoff Lay AH 9898 4816

21 Dec Fauna Survey Group (FNCV) Stagwatch in the Central Highlands. Join us as we look for Leadbeater's Possum and other nocturnal wildlife. Contact: Ray Gibson AH 9874 4408

14 Jan. Geology Group Excursion (FNCV) Mount Hickey and the Trawool Plateau. Leader: Dr Noel Schleiger. All-day trip in Seymour area. Details in FNN. Contact: Rob Hamson AH 9557 5215, BH 9925 4924, rob.hamson@rmit.edu.au

Nov/Jan Just Add Water Schemes and Dreams for a Sunburnt Country, A National Archives of Australia touring exhibition explores how we have used and managed this vital source over the last 100 years and what we will do in the future. In an exciting and interactive space, people will engage with the topic on a social, scientific and ecological level, as well as an emotional one. Contact Melbourne Museum: (03) 8341 7777. Website: <http://melbourne.museum.vic.gov.au/>

16-18 February 2007 Sustainable Living Festival Federation Square. The Sustainable Living Festival is a celebration and showcase of leading examples of sustainable living in Australia, drawing together a wide variety of displays, exhibits, artworks, performances, demonstrations and workshops to inspire a sustainable culture. FREE ENTRY Contact: (03) 9249 1888 www.slf.org.au/festival/