

SUMMER 2011  
Newsletter No.27

# Newham & District Landcare Group

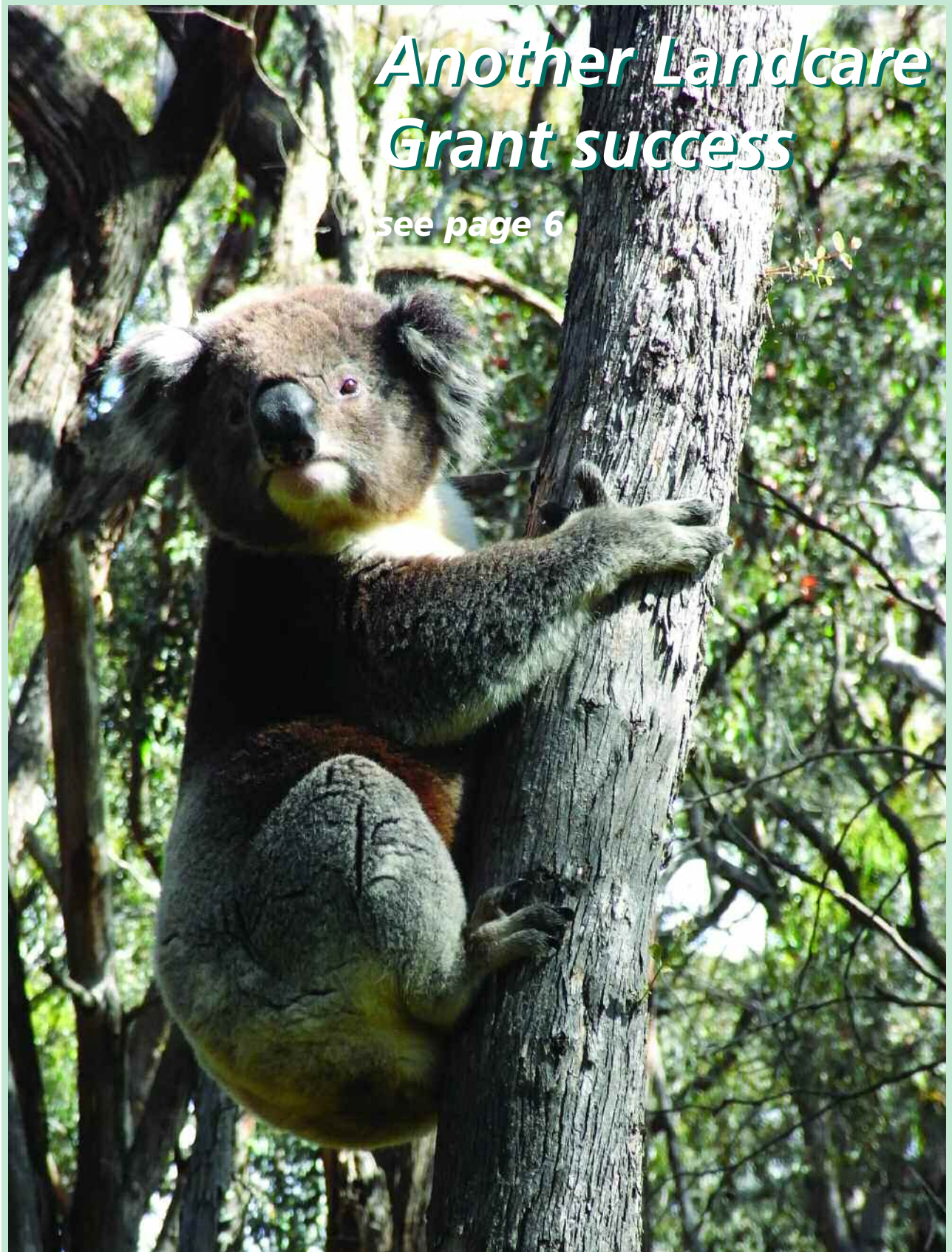


Working towards a  
healthier environment



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Melbourne Water's Community Grants Scheme

Address – PO Box 314, WOODEND, 3442



## Another Landcare Grant success

see page 6

## President's Message

Newham and District Landcare Group trusts you all had a very enjoyable Christmas with family and friends and particularly wishes everyone a very happy and prosperous new year.

A way to enjoy the New Year and the Newham Community is to be active in Landcare. Participation is an easy way to meet like minded people who can help you make the best out of your property and contribute to the natural environment.

In 2011 N&DLG is making a special effort to return to basics with a series of property planning seminars that will enable owners to improve soils, take advantage of natural landforms and drainage lines and long term enhance their properties. I urge everyone to get involved.

N&DLC is also assisting with a series of 'After Harvest Workshops' that promote sustainability and follow on from the Newham Sustainability event held last year. Those wishing to assist please contact Fran Spain on 5427 0661. Finally I thank everyone who attended the end of year BBQ in Wesley Park on 4th December. It again was a very well attended event and new and old members exchanged 'war' stories and marvelled on how children had grown since last year.

Everyone take care

**Nick Massie**

### Landcare group supports local primary school / propagating group

On alternate Thursday mornings a small group of Newham Primary school parents has joined Penny Roberts for propagating sessions at Newham. Plants of local provenance are being produced, to order, for Melbourne Water.

As this is a way to increase awareness of our local plants, the material costs are being covered by the Landcare group. All sales income goes to the school – in 2010 the group generated approximately \$2000!

In 2011 the group will be producing 5000 plants for Melbourne Water – a significant increase in numbers.

These sessions are an informal way to pick up some propagating skills and anyone is welcome to attend, including children. Any queries to Penny (5427 0795).

## Group contacts

**President:** Nick Massie. **Treasurer:** Hilary Roberts.

**Committee members:** Penny Roberts, Sue Massie, John Luckock. Marty Dillon, Melanie Roberts and Jenny Waugh have joined the committee for 2010 – 2011. We thank departing committee member Don Lang for his contribution over the past 2 years.

**New members, general queries:** Penny Roberts; 5427 0795.

**Roadsides:** Sue Massie; 5427 0065.

**Newham Primary:** Jenny Waugh; 5427 0408.

**Animal pests:** John Luckock; 5427 0909.

**Wesley Park:** Fran Spain; 5427 0661.

**Flora, library, small tools, grants:** Penny Roberts; 5427 0795.

**Spray trailer:** Chris Wiggett; 5423 5279.

The committee meets on the first Monday of the month (February to December) between 7.30 – 9pm in Newham. All members are welcome to attend the Committee meetings to become more involved or raise specific matters. Please advise a committee member if you wish to attend. Meetings start and finish on time... and we enjoy them!



# DIARY OF EVENTS

## FEBRUARY 2011

**Saturday 5th**

### ***Dinner on the Hill***

Social function for old and new members.

159 Dons Rd, from 6pm.

Please bring a contribution for the shared table, drinks, chair or picnic rug and preferred sporting equipment – soccer/footballs, quoits, whatever.

Provided: Meat / veggie BBQ options. Plates, cutlery, glassware. RSVP to Penny 54270795 or penroberts@bigpond.com

## MARCH

**Sunday 6th**

***Clean Up Australia Day*** Queries to Nick Massie

**Friday 11th**

***All you might ever want to know about underground water in the Macedon Ranges***

Evening. Guest speaker – Barry Mann, details tbc

## APRIL

**Saturday 2nd**

tba – 3-5ish pm (location)

Stephen Murphy, author of 'Recreating Country' (a guide to sustainable revegetation).

How to make your windbreak or revegetation planting self-sustaining in the long term.  
How to incorporate farm forestry without losing biodiversity and wildlife habitat value.

Presentation and discussion on a local property – details tbc

## Lancefield Show

On 17th October 2010 Newham and District Landcare Group, in conjunction with the upper Deep Creek Landcare Network, had a display at the Lancefield Show.

Visitor numbers may have been down but the level of excitement was still high, with 3000 people braving the cold to attend the Show. A significant number of these showing interest in the Landcare display and taking advantage of the plants that were for sale at a nominal price.

Due to the cold weather people arrived late, but it did brighten up in the afternoon and most of the plants and brochures were taken. A lot of people were from Melbourne but N&DLG managed to interest some locals as potential new members.

*A local Landcare? member 'attacking a tree'!*



# Waterwatch in Newham

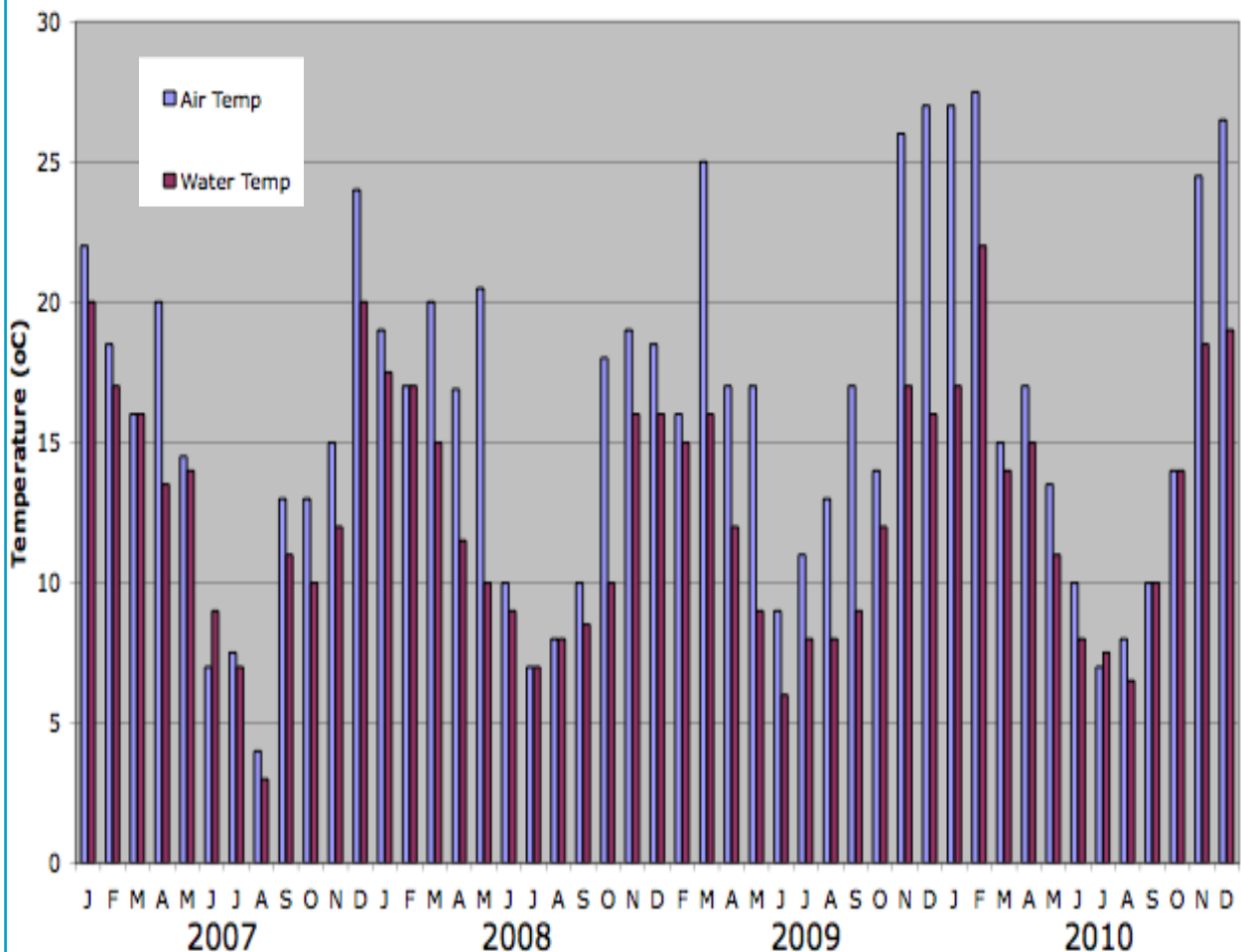
**Waterwatch is a program which involves sampling and testing water from the Deep Creek pond near the primary school. Grade 5 and 6 students have been doing this testing once a month for the last 4 years.**

In the previous issue of this newsletter we provided data on the amount of dissolved oxygen in the pond water. In this issue we show the results of testing the water and air temperature in the same location.

Temperature is important because it affects the rate of many biological and chemical processes in the waterway. The well-being of all aquatic life, from bacteria to fish and aquatic plants, depend on temperature. Each living thing has a range of temperatures that is best for its health, and a maximum temperature that it can tolerate before it dies or its growth and reproduction are severely affected.

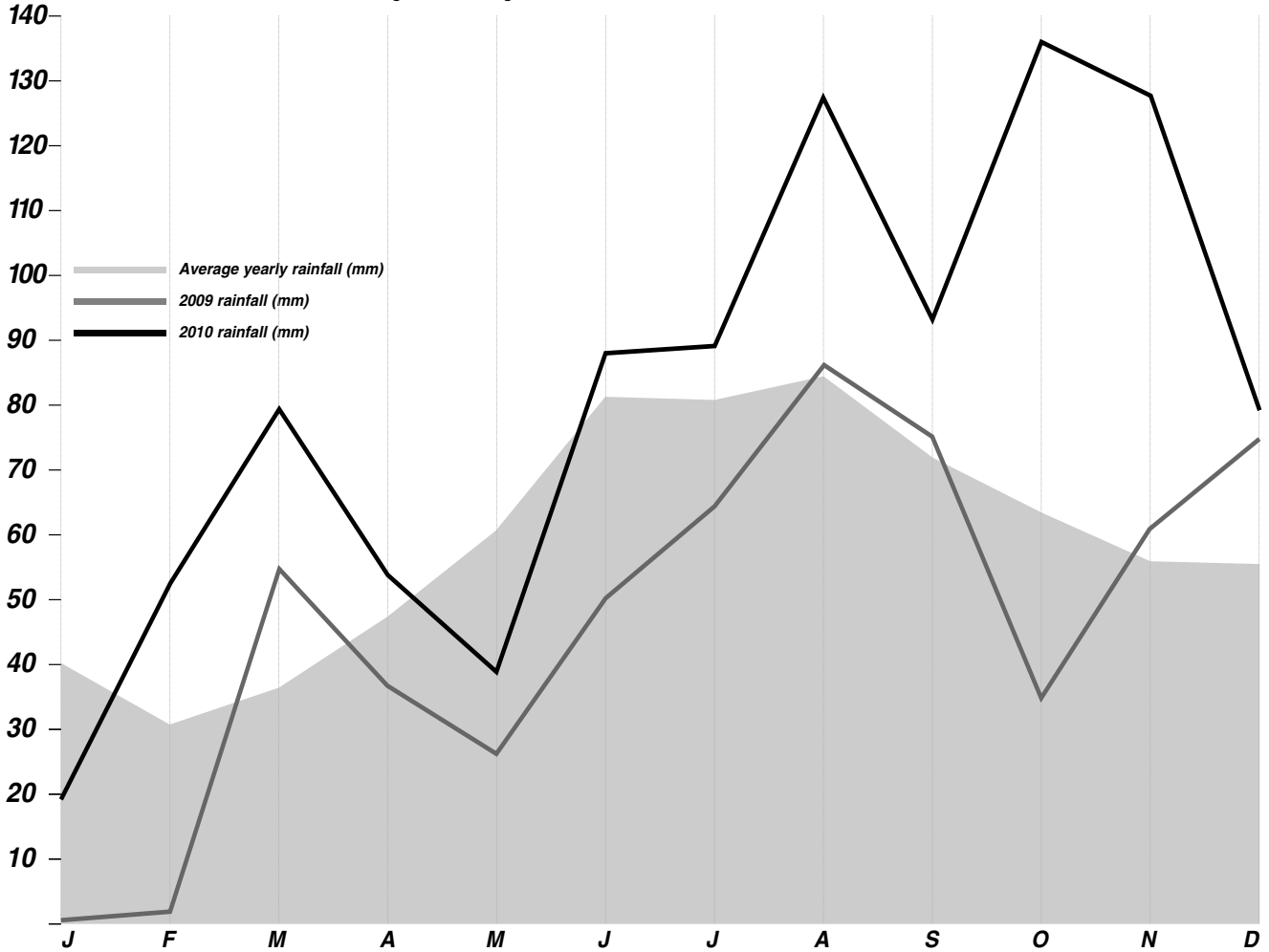
The amount of oxygen gas that will dissolve in the water is also affected by temperature – the colder the water, the greater the amount of oxygen that can dissolve in it. So the warm waters of the Great Barrier Reef, for example, cannot hold as much oxygen as the colder waters of Tasmania.

**Jenny Waugh** (Waterwatch Co-ordinator)

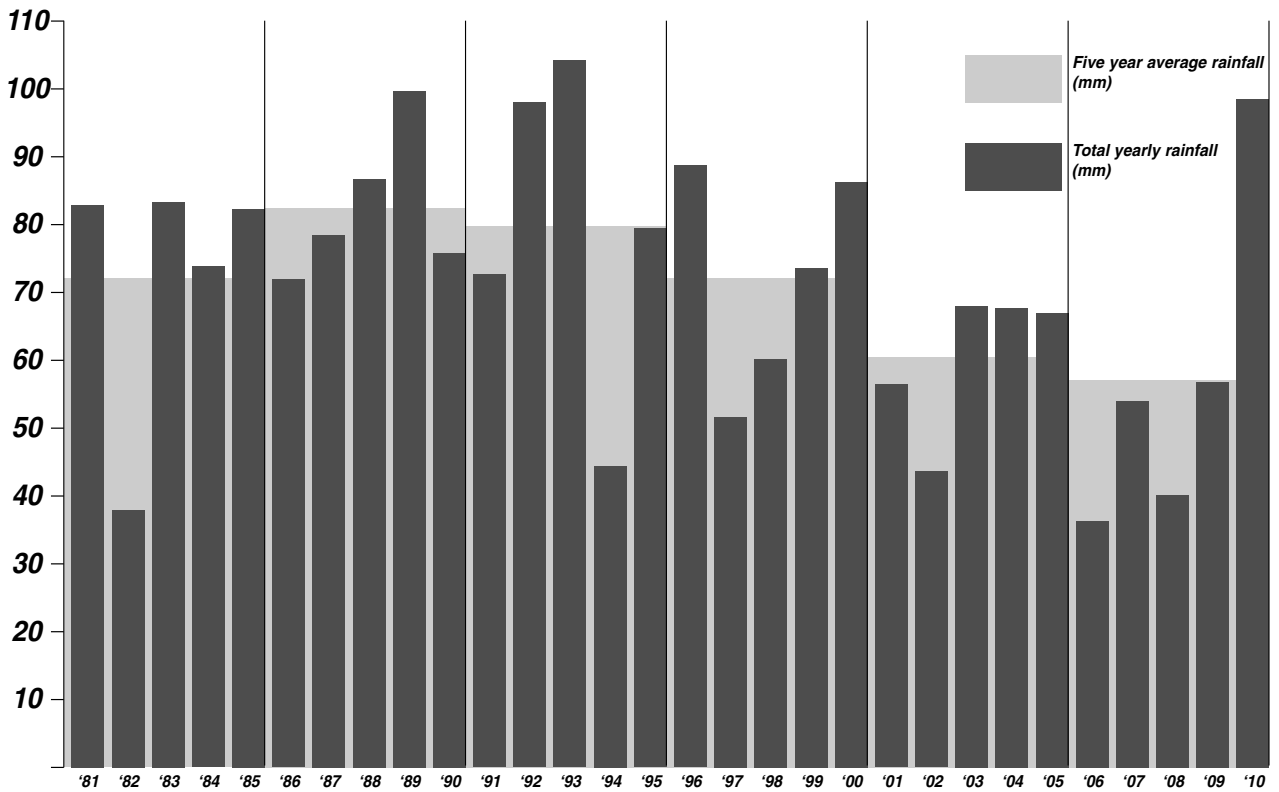


# Rainfall statistics

Thanks to Ken Sweaney, (Carinya Farm, 37° 17.111' S 144° 35.597' E) for this data



**2010: 3rd wettest year on record. Wettest October and November in 30 years**  
**But: Last 20 year averages have declined**



## Another Landcare Grant success



This fine looking fellow was spotted last week at the Northern end of the Newham district on one of 5 properties to benefit from State funding support, delivered through Port Phillip & Westernport CMA.

Through the 2010-2011 2nd Generation Landcare Grants Newham & District Landcare Group has received \$38,000 for works to protect and improve biodiversity. This amount represents 10% of the total funds available for the whole of the PPW catchment area. A fantastic result, and indicative of the importance of the environmental works that we do.

The Campaspe-Maribyrnong Headwaters Biolink is an ongoing major project to create a network of native vegetation between Mount Macedon and the Cobaw State Forest that will 'tie-in' Hanging Rock Reserve and other areas of remnant vegetation. This will be an important regional resource to provide a better living environment – for wildlife... and for you.

### **Driving principles in this task are to:**

1. protect remnants of native vegetation, especially streamsides and scarce types of vegetation
2. enhance and enlarge existing vegetation
3. increase the 'connectivity' of the landscape through revegetation of cleared land
4. eliminate pest plants and animals

Small mammals in particular, find it difficult to cope with human impact on the environment – land clearing, housing development, pets (as if foxes weren't enough to contend with) – and koalas are just one of many species affected.

Funding support will be used for weed control, fencing and 5500 plants with protective guards.

A number of educational events will be held as part of our contribution to the project, along with a flora survey within covenanted remnant.



## Plant Profile: Veronica family. . .

### ***flowering now, somewhere near you***

There are 3 species of *Veronica* or Speedwell in our area – all common, but not well known.

All are small plants (20-30cm high) that have 0.5-1.5cm blue flowers in mid-Spring to Summer.

They trail across the ground and tend to make additional roots where they rest on the ground. They will happily co-exist with other small plants and grasses, as seen beside Five Mile Creek in Woodend and on the Southern face of the Cobaws and seem to prefer some shade, but will grow in more exposed positions.

*Veronica gracilis* or Slender Speedwell has flowers 1-1.5cm across and has made it into the nursery trade, so you might have encountered it. The leaves are at least 3 times longer than wide – compare this with the leaves of *Veronica plebeia* (Trailing Speedwell), shown right, which are rounded with toothed margins. *Veronica calycina* (Hairy Speedwell) is similar to *V. plebeia* but with lots of fine hairs and larger flowers. All are easily propagated by division of an existing plant.



## **Weed evening**

On Friday 8th October the 'Weedies' subgroup of the Newham & District Landcare Group and Department of Primary Industry (DPI) presented 'It looks lovely, pity it's a weed!'

The guest speaker was Emma Lipianin from the DPI and the topics discussed were weeds in domestic gardens, weeds on sale at local markets and regional weeds. Her talk was very informative and well received.

Penny Roberts then talked about some local weeds to be aware of (and brought examples). Chris Wiggett explained the work that the Weedies group do mapping roadside weeds for the council, and dealing with areas of weeds near our hamlet.

And one thing to remember from the night – it is illegal to buy, sell or possess for sale, deposit onto land, bring into or transport around Victoria all declared noxious weeds.

Free native plants were provided to all who participated in this successful evening!

Springtime will be an important weed control time as weeds will have been distributed widely through the flood waters. Good luck with your efforts.

**FRAN SPAIN**



## Five years on

In 2005 Newham and District Landcare, as part of a program of property rehabilitation, held a community planting along the banks of Monument Creek. This was done at Horst and Julianne Tellbach's property at 669 Monument Road, Lancefield.

The aim of the planting was to stabilise the banks of Monument Creek and re-introduce native species in areas that had suffered degradation from the effects of uncontrolled access to the creek and banks by livestock.

Some 5 years later members returned to see what improvements had taken place. Following a very pleasant walk along the banks of Monument Creek we all tucked into cakes and drinks provide by Julianne. Very tasty.

The visit took place only a couple of weeks after the recent heavy rain that saw Boundary Road cut by water. While some trees had been lost, it was plain to see the benefit of the plantings in reducing what would have been extremely heavy erosion.



*Horst standing by some of the 5 year old plantings.*



*Part of the creek with plantings.*



*Members in an area with grasses and trees.*



The Newham and District Landcare Group Christmas BBQ was enjoyed by all. Approximately 65 adults and 30 children turned up for the annual event, which is well known for its infamous Welly Toss and Egg Tossing competitions. Highlights of the evening included the food (of course), and the discovery of a new egg tossing technique which minimised impact, and therefore breakage of the egg!

The Welly Toss prize this year went to new member Jamie Worm and Peter and Declan Zaroni survived unbroken, to win the Egg Toss!

Many thanks to all the organisers and well done to everyone for a fantastic spread. Happy New Year!





