

WINTER 2013
Newsletter No.37

Newham & District Landcare Group



Working towards a
healthier environment



Address – PO Box 314, WOODEND, 3442



Purple Coral-pea 'Hardenbergia violacea'

DIARY OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

Sunday 13th. October Planting at Hanging Rock Reserve.

9.30am – 12.30, lunch to follow. Meet west of the entry drive along the creek. BYO gloves – all else provided. Bring a chair or picnic rug, as this time we will be picnicking on the main lawn to live music, accompanied by others who want to show their support for 'the Rock' as a place of wonder and natural beauty.

All welcome to picnic – but if you haven't been at the planting, bring your own picnic goodies and expect to pay your own way out.

RSVP: Penny <penroberts@bigpond.com> or 5427 0795.

NOVEMBER

Sunday 10th. November, Grasslands at 'Kolora'. Grasslands ecology, conservation and restoration management.

Presented by Paul Foreman of Blue Devil Consulting

9.30am – 12.30, lunch to follow.

279 Sheltons Rd., Newham.

RSVP: to Penny <penroberts@bigpond.com> 5427 0795.

DECEMBER

Saturday 7th. December.

End-of-year gathering at Wesley Park. Details to follow.

AGM Friday 9th August 2013

The AGM was duly held and Luke Spielvogel joined the unchanged team of Office Bearers as a member of the Committee.

President; Penny Roberts. Vice-President; Helen Scott. Secretary; Fran Spain.

Treasurer; Hilary Roberts

Committee members: Nick Massie, Karl Kny, Howard Stirling and Luke Spielvogel.

Congratulations to all.

Group contacts

President: Penny Roberts. **Vice President:** Helen Scott. **Treasurer:** Hilary Roberts.

Committee members: Howard Stirling, Karl Kny, Nick Massie and Luke Spielvogel.

Secretary: Fran Spain.

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!

WATERWAYS AS SOCIAL LANDSCAPES

Following the AGM, Dean Platt, a consultant with Melbourne Water on its Stream Frontage Program, filled in the balance of the night. His talk focussed on a research project he has undertaken, which looked at the different expectations and objectives of Melbourne Water and its Stream Frontage Program and the mismatch with the expectations and objectives of landholders signing up for the program.

Melbourne Water has some very well defined objectives that are scientifically based in terms of conservation and improvements in water quality, whilst landholders are much more likely to focus on just aesthetics, access to the creek and weed control. Landholders also valued the presence of birds, animals and frogs over macro-invertebrates present in the water.

The trick to be addressed is how to make sure that there is some common ground in terms of desired outcomes as well as recognizing differences that might exist, in order that these might be addressed early.

'Riparian' land refers to stream-sides, gullies, areas around dams and flood plains.

Vegetation in the riparian zone can provide several environmental "services"–

- to filter run-off from adjacent areas, reducing the nitrogen load delivered to the waterway from fertilizer or animal manure, thereby improving water quality for downstream users.
- to stabilize the banks and reduce rates of bank erosion and loss of valuable land.
- To provide a source of food and habitat for stream animals and stable conditions throughout the year. Compare a mixed native planting with deciduous exotics such as willows that drop all their foliage at the one time, resulting in dramatic fluctuations in water temperature and pH.
- To provide an area for wildlife conservation and movement through the landscape.
- To control nuisance aquatic plants through shading.

Melbourne Water, through its Stream Frontage Program, has been investing in rehabilitation of waterways for many years.

If you would like to participate in the program, details and an expression of interest form can be found at <www.melbournewater.com.au>



Willows and pasture to edge of creek.



Mix of species including Eucalypts and Acacias providing year round shade and Tall Tussock Grass stabilizing the banks.

Weedies at work

The Roadside Management Group, aka Weedies, spend a lot of time mapping roadsides for weeds (listing them by quadrants with percentage cover) and entering this data on the MRSC database for Council control. The latest road we mapped was Straw's Lane on 10 September, 2013, which took four members two and a half hours.

Periodically we decide to act on local infestations. Here are before and after photos of Rochford Road, where three of us took two hours to poison Blackberry on 18 October, 2011. The after photos were taken on 20 August 2013. We reckon our efforts make a difference to this weed of National Significance.



Fran in fluoro, October 2011



Helen teeters



2013, Blackberry gone

On 6 August, 2013 and 24 September, 2013 a large regrowth of Paterson's Curse in Palmer Crescent met its nemesis in the guise of Sue Massie.

We have noticed large areas of *Vinca major* (Blue Periwinkle) on our mapping trips and whilst Macedon Ranges Council does not record this in the data base of weeds, it is an environmental weed and can be poisonous to cattle, horses and sheep if eaten.

The Weedies meet at 7.30pm bi-monthly at various members' homes. Newcomers will be made very welcome. All enquiries to Sue Massie 5427 0065.



Native Grassland Workshop

- Ecology
- Bushland Conservation
- Restoration Management
- Sunday, 10 November 2013

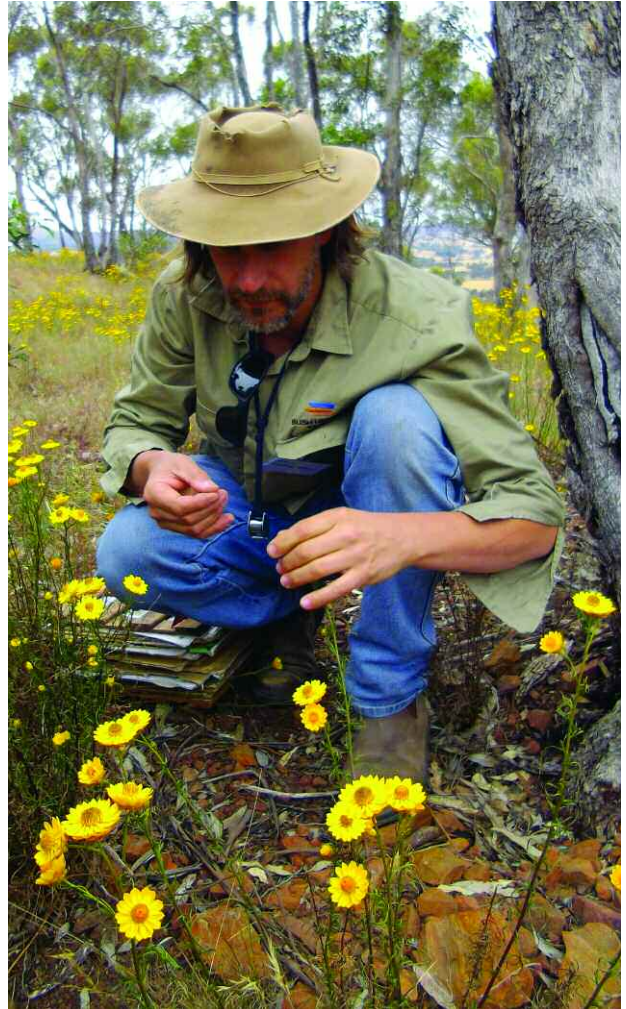
Presenter: Paul Foreman of Blue Devil Consulting
'Kolora', 279 Sheltons Road, Newham
9.30am start till lunch (provided).

Agenda:

Walk and talk reviewing

- * native grasslands
- * bushland conservation
- * revegetation

RSVP: Penny Roberts <penroberts@bigpond.com>
5427 0795.



Paul Foreman is a botanist and ecologist with over 22 years experience in land management and nature conservation throughout Australia. Paul has worked with: DEPI (its antecedents), Trust for Nature, Local Government and Bush Heritage Australia, and most recently has established Blue Devil Consulting based in Castlemaine. His particular skills are in vegetation science, grassland ecology, conservation management and plant/grass identification and he takes great pleasure in sharing this knowledge of the region's flora and discussing conservation management through the prism of 'Kolora' – a beautiful bushland property owned by the Kny family on Garden Hut Creek, between Newham and Lancefield.

If you are interested in learning more about local grass identification and going into more depth on the strategies, techniques and tools used for protecting and restoring bushland in the region, Paul would be willing to host a second field day – also based at 'Kolora'. Please advise Penny if you are interested in the more detailed full day course.



Junior Landcare Team Award

Newham Primary School has been recognised for its contribution to improving the local environment. In a ceremony at Government House, Newham was recognised with a commendation for its environmental programs including Waterwatch, Seed propagation and revegetation.

There was a great deal of competition in the Junior Landcare Team category and Newham was the only primary school to gain recognition in these awards.

A great strength of Newham Primary School is its close ties with the local community and the school would not have been able to achieve this award if it were not for the ongoing help of parents, friends and members of Landcare and Waterwatch. The school extends its sincere thanks to all who have helped over the years.

The commendation now hangs proudly on the wall at reception.

Newham Primary School Newsletter. 11 September 2013.

Feature creepers

Purple Coral-pea ***Hardenbergia violacea***

The local form of this lovely plant can be seen flowering along roadsides. It tends to sprawl across the ground, covering an area of 2-3 square metres. Flowers, massed on the plant in early Spring, can be purple, pink or rarely white. The attractive leaves are large and deep green. Unlike the cultivars developed for garden use by the nursery industry, rarely will it be seen climbing.



Running Postman ***Kennedia prostrata***

This trailing ground-cover flowers in mid-late Spring – flowers being large and red with a yellow centre. Leaves are dull green and clover-shaped. It prefers dry, disturbed or rocky sites.

The secret Life of Garden Hut Creek and Deep Creek – chapter 2

As the grade 5 and 6 young rural scientists from Newham Primary School can easily tell you the water quality of Deep Creek and Garden Hut Creek can vary immensely from month to month. Turbidity, salinity and all those other scientific readings fluctuate between seasons and climate conditions. Put a few man-made chemicals into that mix and some of the inhabitants of our creeks start struggling.

It is incredible relaxing, sitting near water on a balmy evening (maybe even with a glass of Chardy) and watch various types of what we commonly call dragonflies zip back and forth, land on reeds and generally look remarkable busy.

But what flitters, zooms and buzzes above our wetlands and creeks are huge diverse families of Stoneflies, Caddis flies, Dragonflies and Damselflies that rely on the health of our creeks as they all start their early days – from egg to larvae – underwater.

Dragonfly and Damselfly larvae can sort of cope with slight pollution while Caddis Fly larva and especially Stonefly larvae grapple with human-made unclean waterways.

Life under water is pretty competitive and nearly everybody preys on everybody else. To protect themselves from being eaten while hunting others these larvae have developed all sorts of different strategies.

The dragonfly larvae for example look just big, brutish and exude 'don't-mess-with-me' vibes. Some larvae are camouflaged, some are pretty fast and some have fierce looking horns, fangs or pincers.

The Caddis fly larvae have taken personal protection to another level. From debris like tiny sticks, leaves, sand, silk and other materials they build their own little houses to protect their tender bodies.

French artist Hubert Duprat was so impressed with their design abilities that he offered a group of Caddis fly larvae various other materials not that commonly found in our creeks: tiny bits of gold, opals, turquoise and beads. The resulting caddis fly casings are an incredible piece of art.

Brigitte Kny





Living' in the 70s

They came from afar, they came for Peace, Love and mung beans. Those hardy souls seeking to revisit their long past days of glory. Yes, the NDLC winter dinner was here, themed for the wonderful 70s.

To those marvelous folk who came in what can only be described as the most remarkable 'costumes', we can only sit back and admire their inventiveness and style.

There was a wonderful 'vibe' in the Hall throughout the night, with people actively engaged in our theme. The photos taken on the night certainly provide some insight into everyone's contribution to what was a sensational evening.

We enjoyed the marvelous 1972 *Sunbury Rock Festival*, featuring Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, along with many other wonderful Australian music acts of the time. The Sunbury ethos – to have a good time – was evident all night.

The music kept us in the mood, with many reminiscing their days of youth, with some even admitting they were old enough to have actually attended the *Sunbury Rock Festival* as young, youthful and perhaps under aged!!!

The organised dancing program saw Janine 'Jane Fonda' Stirling, leading us in the *Nutbush*, *Bus Stop*, *YMCA* and would you believe, the *Rocky Horror* of it all – great fun for all.

Prizes were provided for the best dressed and the 'quiz' containing a few questions obviously beyond our endangered memories these days.

Many thanks to all who attended, making this a great night and let's aim to get a lot more along to our next gig.

