

AUTUMN 2014
Newsletter No.40



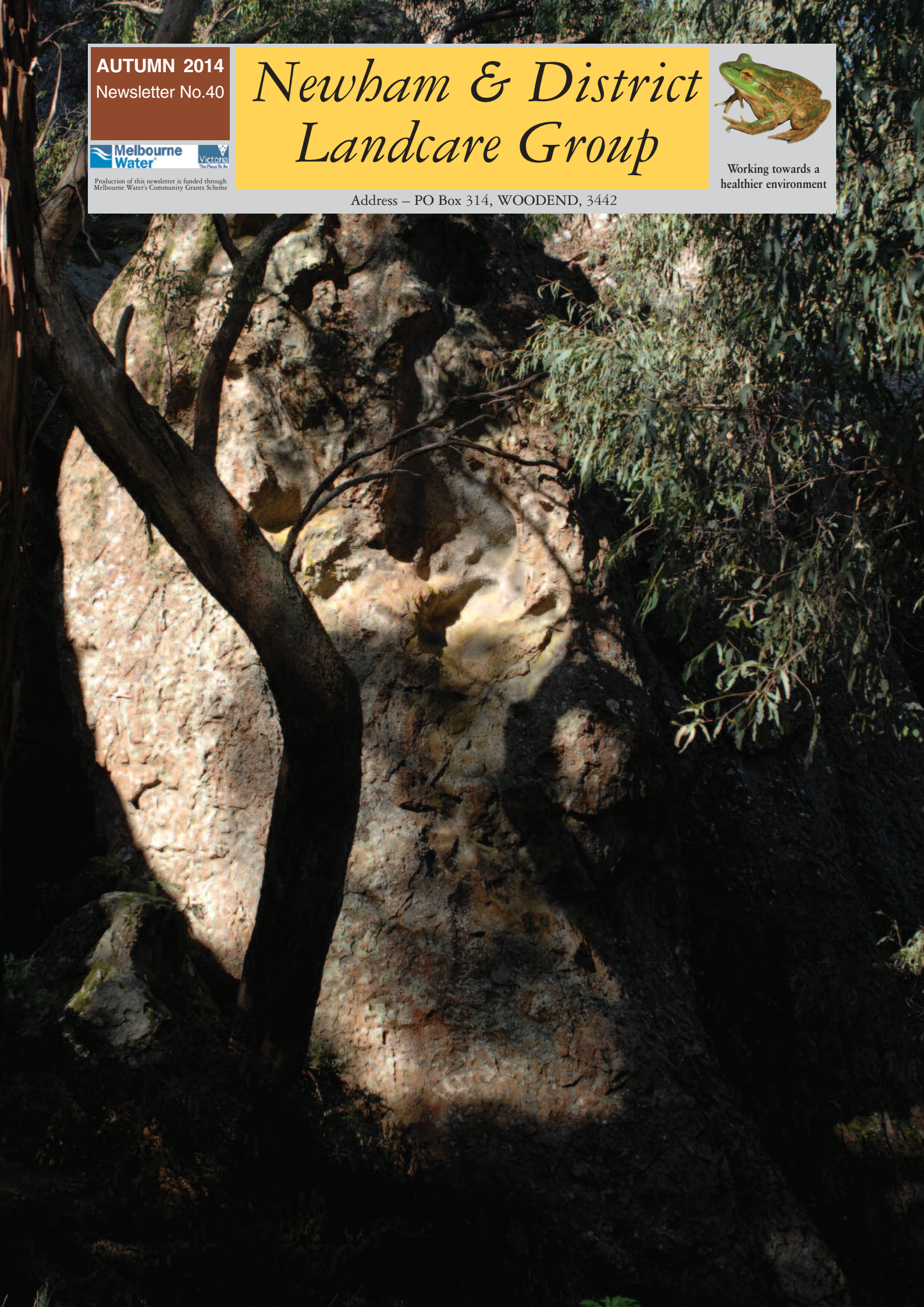
Production of this newsletter is funded through Melbourne Water's Community Grants Scheme

Newham & District Landcare Group



Working towards a
healthier environment

Address – PO Box 314, WOODEND, 3442



DIARY OF EVENTS

JUNE

Saturday 14th. NMI Trivia night in lieu of a Winter Dinner, Newham Hall.

Landcare will sponsor the cost of \$25 per person for members wishing to attend, *BUT* you must ring or email Fran: 54270661 or f.spain@latrobe.edu.au

6.30pm start. Bring a plate to share. No BYO drinks. (food and drinks for sale at the venue)

Friday 27th. AgVet Chemical Users Permit Refresher Course.

Newham Hall 1–5pm.

Saturday/Sunday 28/29th. AgVet Chemical Users Permit Course (spots still available).

Newham Landcare will be running the course between 8.30am and 4.30pm each day at the Newham Hall. It is nationally accredited and required by all land managers and farmers using AgVet chemicals. The \$100 fee, less than 30% of the actual cost per person, has been made possible because of the Communities for Nature Grant we received earlier this year.

Cost covers course and manual, lunches and am/pm refreshments.

JULY

Friday 4th. Fish for Farm Dams.

Newham Hall 7pm for 7.30 start. Supper to follow.

Andrew Clarke, Manager Aquaculture, Fisheries Victoria, will present on the opportunities to stock your farm dam with fish, both for environmental and harvesting outcomes.

AUGUST

Friday 8th. AGM. The Secret Lives of Deep and Garden Hut Creeks

Newham Hall 7pm drinks and nibbles, 7.30 AGM. 7.45 Brigitte Kny presentation.

Brigitte, who has informed and entertained us many times in the past, has agreed to do another presentation for us. Your Winter 2013 newsletter gives a taste of whats in store!

SEPTEMBER

Friday 19th. Soils. Details tbc.

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!

Hanging Rock No. 2 Grant – Funding from Department of Environment and Primary Industries (Communities for Nature)

Newham and District Landcare Group is pleased to announce the completion of Stage 2 of our grant (\$5,800 – totalling some \$11,000 for stages 1 and 2) to improve the environment and habitat of Smokers Creek which runs through the Hanging Rock Reserve. The area planted is on the northern side of the creek near the western boundary of the reserve. All are invited to visit and view the great vegetation and improvement in the available habitat. Since Landcare commenced this project over 2,400 plants (trees, grasses and understorey) have been planted and 4ha treated for weed removal and creek bank improvements. Over 20 Volunteers attended both plantings and a BBQ feast was provided. Hopefully Newham and District Landcare can be successful in optioning further grants.

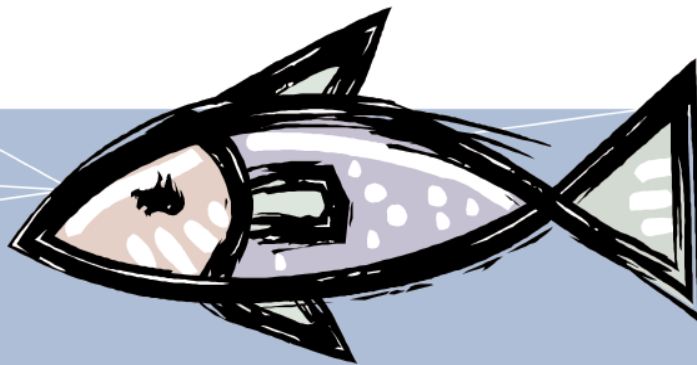


The *Weedies* aka Roadsides Management Group

Those of us with roadside weeds know how hard/frustrating it is to do our bit and thoroughly deal with them on our land. We constantly face reinvasion from a roadside that does not have follow-up treatments before the recurrent weeds set seed. So thanks to those who put companionable exercise ahead of a Sunday lie-in and came to cut and paint blackberries and broom outside the Scott's place in Waterworks Road on April 27.

We worked like navvies and followed up with morning tea on the Scott's new deck.





"FISH FOR FARM DAMS"

Andrew Clarke, Manager Aquaculture, Fisheries Victoria will present on the opportunities to stock your farm dam with fish both for environmental and harvesting outcomes.

Regulations control what fish can be farmed and what are appropriate for various size of dams. In addition how the farm dam is feed from local water sources is relevant.

This will be a very interesting presentation and all members and others are invited to attend.

Andrew will be assisted by John Mercer Aquaculture Policy Officer

YOUR SPEAKER: Andrew Clark/John Mercer

Contact to Register Attendance:

Hilary Roberts 5427 0120 or Nick Massie 5427 0065
Or email hroberts@bigpond.com - by 27th June or
massie@ozemail.com.au

Date: 4th July 2014

Time: 7:00 for 7:30 pm

SUPPER PROVIDED

Newham Mechanics Hall,
Newham




*FREE TO MEMBERS.
GOLD COIN TO NON
MEMBERS*

Native frog or exotic toad?

Exotic toads such as the cane toad (*Rhinella marina*) and the Asian black-spined toad (*Duttaphrynus melanostictus*) are often confused with native frog species and many people have difficulty telling them apart. In Victoria, many of the cane toad reports the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) receives are actually the native Eastern long-tong frog, also known as the Potorook (*Limnodynastes dorsalis*).

Before making your report use this information to check the features of the specimen you have sighted and compare the prominent identification characteristics that set native frogs apart from exotic toads.

If still in doubt, email photographs to DEPI at highrisk.invasivesanimals@depi.vic.gov.au or phone the customer service centre on 136 186 with details of the animal, and a member of staff will contact you.

Feature	native potorook frog	cane toad	Asian black-spined toad
Size	Average adult length 6–9cm. 	Average adult length 10–18cm. 	Average adult length 10–15cm. 
Colour markings	 The back ranges in colour from grey, olive-green, dark brown to black. The belly is smooth white or mottled. A pale stripe runs from under each eye to the arm.	 The back of a cane toad ranges from light yellow, brown, reddish brown to almost black in colour (never bright greens). The underside of an adult toad is usually a dirty cream colour.	 Usually greyish or reddish-brown, but can range from plain brick-red to almost black. The most common colour pattern is a pale yellow-brown marked boldly with dark or reddish-brown streaks and raised black warty spots.
Skin	Usually moist, smooth and slippery. Those with rougher skin do not have large raised 'warts'.	Dry, warty (bumpy) and leathery.	Dry, warty (bumpy) and leathery.
Face, head and horns	Rounded snout, no pointy tip. Never black stripe on lip or above eyes. 	Distinct pointy snout. 	Distinct pointy snout with prominent black rim on upper lip and on the bony ridges above the eyes. 
Eyes	Pupil shape is round and horizontal. Generally smooth round eye socket.	Has horizontal pupil. Eyes are set in warty, bony socket with prominent bony ridges over the eyes meeting at the nose.	Has horizontal pupil. Eyes are set in warty, bony socket with prominent bony ridges over the eyes meeting at the nose.
Toes	No webbing between hind toes.	Does not have webbing between front feet; has leathery webbing between toes of hind feet at least half length of toes.	Toes are black-tipped and hooked. No webbing on front toes, and only very small webbing on hind toes
Smells	Prominent glands on rear legs.	Has obvious, sometimes bulging paratoid gland on its shoulder area behind the external ear drum. Paratoid gland excretes a poisonous milky substance.	Has obvious, sometimes bulging paratoid gland on its shoulder area behind the external ear drum. Paratoid gland excretes a poisonous milky substance.

All sightings of exotic toads must be reported to DEPI immediately by phone: 136 186, or email: highrisk.invasivesanimals@depi.vic.gov.au

Reports are critical to DEPI's efforts to protect Victoria from the establishment of exotic toads.

www.depi.vic.gov.au/pestanimals

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Department of Environment and Primary Industries
State Government Victoria



Want to turn your bog-standard farm dam into a haven for wildlife?

On May 23rd Tania Begg (wildlife carer, waterways assessor and ecologist) gave an inspiring talk on the merits and ways of turning a standard farm dam into a wildlife oasis.

We learnt the importance of:

- fencing to exclude livestock and protect the waterway... stock cause erosion and foul the waterway.
- provision of physical habitat in the form of fallen timber/logs and rocks. These provide roosting sites. An island additionally provides safety from predators such as foxes and cats.
- the creation/increase of shallow wetlands and edges. Shallow, long and irregular (where possible) edges on the dam are most conducive to wildlife development. Shallow water allows waterbirds to climb up the banks to find food and nesting areas. Slopes too steep will also hinder the growth of vegetation that provides protection for small fish and insects as well as large quantities of food for various species.
- local plant species and their use in revegetating to create habitat security for wildlife. Trees, shrubs, ground-covers and aquatic plants provide habitat for fish, frogs, birds and other wildlife. Native trees shade the water, helping regulate water temperature, and have minor leaf fall all year round, maintaining relatively constant nitrogen levels in the water. *Contrast this with Willows which drop all their leaves at*

once – causing marked fluctuations in water temperature, pH and nitrogen levels.

A healthy dam is an important resource for supplying water for livestock, irrigation, gardens and fire management, providing valuable wildlife habitat and increasing farm productivity and property values.

Wildlife friendly dams have additional benefits:

- improved water quality
- shade and shelter for livestock in adjacent paddock
- birds provide natural pest control that is continuous and free
- aesthetic appeal (which can increase property value)

Tania talked about the 3 distinct zones to be considered when planting – aquatic, dry land and the in-between bit – and showed a selection of plants suitable for our area.

- Water Ribbons (*Triglochin sp.*), Cumbungi (*Typha sp.*), Rushes (*Juncus sp.*)
- Tall Sedge (*Carex apressa*), Spiny Mat-rush (*Lomandra longifolia*),
- Hop Goodenia (*Goodenia ovata*), Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa*), Prickly Moses (*Acacia verticillata*), River Bottlebrush (*Callistemon seiberii*), Woolly Tea-tree (*Leptospermum lanigerum*).

Most of these are available from the Landcare group – queries to Penny – or you can grow

your own with assistance from the propagating group that meets most Thursdays mornings during the warmer months.



River Bottlebrush (*Callistemon sieberi*) is a fast-growing, hardy and adaptable shrub or small tree growing 2–4m with narrow leaves and pinkish new growth. Its branches are flexible, sometimes drooping, with silky young leaves that become stiffer and sharp-pointed as they age. Flower spikes, appearing mainly in November – January, are 3–5cm long, cream or pale yellow, rarely pink. It is widespread along watercourses, dry rocky streambeds and drainage gullies and tolerates severe seasonal inundation, waterlogging, poor drainage and dry periods as well as infertile and acidic soils. It is useful for stabilising stream banks due to its fibrous root system. Good nectar source for native birds, moths, butterflies and other insects.



Tall Sedge (*Carex appressa*) forms large (to 1m) grassy-looking clumps along creeks and on seasonally wet ground. Flowers form a long, elongated spike held well above the foliage. Seeds are yellow-brown.

It is fairly drought tolerant, but also copes well with water-logged ground. This is not a plant for the side of a path – the leaf edges are rasp-like.

Dense stands may form important habitat features in a landscape, providing nesting and foraging sites for waterbirds and harbour for small mammals.



The Australian Wood Duck (*Chenonetta jubata*) has benefited from agriculture developments and the creation of dams and pools – numbers are stable and it is not threatened. A medium sized duck with goose-like shape and feeding habits, the underparts have mid-brown spots whilst the upper parts are grey with black and white plumes. The males are distinguished by a rich brown head with a black 'mane'. It is classified as game bird, and killed by hunters. This duck nests in a tree cavity laying 9–11 cream-white eggs. The female incubates them while the male stands guard. Once the ducklings are ready to leave the nest, the female flies to the ground and the duckling will leap to the ground and follow their parents. Their diet consists of grasses, clover and other herbs, and occasionally insects. It is rarely seen on open water, preferring to forage by dabbling in shallow water, or in grasslands and crops.



The first N&DLG planting of nearly 10 years ago begins to show rewards on the Telbach's property.



NEWHAM AND DISTRICT LANDCARE GROUP–

Highlights of its first ten years

Jim Sansom

Just over ten years ago (2nd May 2004) 61 people gathered in Templeton's (now Ford's) large sitting room to initiate our landcare group. The foundation committee consisted of; Alice Aird, Amanda Cole, Philip Flanagan, Marie Mamara, Penny Roberts (Vice Pres), Hilary Roberts (Treas), Roger Rugless (Sec.), Jim Sansom (Pres.) and Sally Stabback.

Within a month we held a public seminar at the Woodend Community Centre, on weed control, and our first planting day took place at Telbach's in September of the first year (see photos opposite).

A one-off grant of \$80,000 from Melbourne Water to clear out invading willows and re-plant along Deep Creek from the primary school down to Yungaburra, really got us going!

Since then some \$600,000 of money from various grants has been used by the Group for plantings of indigenous species along creeks and on 26 properties to date in our area. This of course does not include the hundreds of 'person-hours' of volunteer labour contributed over the years.

Recent focus has been on several working-bees to plant thousands of trees and other species in the Hanging Rock Reserve.

Newham Primary School has been a centre of Landcare activity with parents, pupils and staff involved in plantings and educational activities. I will never forget the children lining up to operate the pump to water new plants!

A cherished vision of the Group is to establish a bio-link or habitat corridor connecting the Cobaws, over the top of the Jim-Jim, through Hanging Rock Reserve to Mount Macedon. Much has been achieved, but there is still much more to do!

Evening meetings have been organized and have included talks by specialists on; wild flowers of the area, aboriginal edible plants, property management, wildlife protection, biological surveys, local geology and soils, fungi, farm forestry, energy efficient retrofitting of houses, and honey bees, to name but a few.

Several subgroups are very active, each with a particular focus; Roadside weed management – The Weedies; The Water Watch program, largely with Jenny Waugh and students at the Primary School and through Karl and Brigita Kny along Monument Creek; and the propagating group of Newham Primary parents and grand-parents, led by Landcare members. [a group that meets weekly for half the year].

The annual Winter Dinners at the Hall and the end of year BBQs have always been popular.

We have about 100 member property/families now, so let's look ahead and see what can be achieved in the next 10 years!

Garden thugs present in the reserve!

Garden escapees Valerian, yellow Alstromeria, Ivy, Arum Lily, European Elderberry, Holly and Portugese Laurel are all present in the reserve now. And possibly other species.

When Blue Periwinkle (*Vinca major*) was chosen to feature in the Summer newsletter it was because of its presence along roadsides around Newham – we discovered on May 11 that it has also found its way into Hanging Rock Reserve.

The single specimen in the image below shows the way it freely 'layers', forming roots wherever it touches the ground.



Don't forget it's not too late to have your say on planning policy for our area of the Macedon Ranges – *this is so very important*. MRSC has a most unimpressive record when it comes to protecting the natural environment and investing in its care.

This Localized Planning Statement (initiated by the State Government because of the recognized special nature of the Macedon Ranges) will become part of the planning process for the Macedon Ranges Shire.

This is a unique opportunity for you to guide future planning policy for Council in the areas of tourism, agriculture and conservation for our area of the Macedon Ranges.

Take the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/planning-statement-survey> and contribute your views.

Newham and District Landcare Group has a new website address or URL. Please alter your bookmarks from the old Vicnet address to: www.newhamlandcare.info

Helen and Matthew plan to revamp the website soon.



Planting at Hanging Rock on Mothers Day

May 11th provided another wonderfully satisfying morning of planting along the riparian zone of Smokers Creek. Landcare members were joined by members of the Friends of Hanging Rock group for a session that took us further westward from our last planting, extending almost to the perimeter fence.

Once again we were planting under-storey species to supplement the existing canopy of Swamp Gums and Blackwoods. 27 adults and a giggle of children managed 710 plants-in-the-ground. A fantastic effort!

Our third Communities for Nature grant (providing \$157,000 over 2 years) paid for the indigenous native tubestock, plant hardware and site



preparation. It was encouraging to see that previous plantings have done extremely well – a very high survival rate and good growth, despite pruning by kangaroos.

A big thank you to the DEPI, Hubert Weisrock from the Friends group who was photographer on the day and all the other volunteers who gave a hand, especially those who assisted but headed elsewhere for their Mothers Day luncheon and so didn't make it into the groupie shot above.