

# Newham & District Landcare Group



Working towards a  
healthier environment

Address – PO Box 314, WOODEND 3442

Newsletter Editors: Paul & Marie Marmara

## PRESIDENTS REPORT

### I write to you about a matter of concern for all landcarers.

Weeds and pests are a major problem for all rural land-holders. In fact the economic impact of weeds is huge! A recent study by researchers at the University of New England\* found that the annual cost of weeds to the Australian economy was in the order of \$4500 million!

Land in the Macedon Ranges Shire is particularly vulnerable to weed infestation because of the high proportion of small holdings and absentee or part-time landowners.

Yet at a time like this, when it is obvious that **more resources** need to be put into the fight against weeds, we have learned that in 5 regions across Victoria, a total of 13 Catchment Officer positions (with responsibilities for weed and pest control) have been abolished – including one in Kyneton.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment claims there is insufficient funding to maintain these positions.

We must make a loud protest to the Government about this short-sighted situation.



Please write to the relevant Ministers, the Premier and the media to protest strongly against the reduction in the number of Catchment Officers. We have enclosed addresses with this Newsletter (refer back page for list of State Government offices).

\* 'Economic Impact of Weeds in Australia' CRC for Australian Weed Management through the University of New England. Summarised in UNDER CONTROL Number 27, June 2004.

Jim Sansom  
President of Newham & District Landcare Group  
Phone 5427 0408



**Reminder** Membership fees for 2005 – 2006 are due now. Thank you to all members who have already returned the slip [ included in the last newsletter ] and payment.

## Winter Excursion on June 25th by Penny Roberts

Twenty four members took advantage of glorious weather and gathered for a stroll along Deep Creek from near its source at Newham. Over a 4 year period Neil Williams has made impressive progress in revegetating his section of the creek. The sides of the creek and several drainage gullies are quite steep and so present a real challenge, but early plantings are well established now, and look fantastic.

We continued on into Judy Dons section which was sprayed last Summer. It is now covered in dense broom seedlings which will be dealt with before planting goes ahead in Spring. Fish have been sighted here in the past month.

The third area we looked at is in 'original' state with heavy infestations of gorse, blackberry and willow – it brought home just how much Neil has achieved on his property!

After the walk we enjoyed a leisurely BBQ lunch, basking in the sunshine.



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## Roadside Vegetation by sue Massey Co-ordinator, Vegetation Action Plan



On 6 July 2005, members of the Roadside Vegetation Project (one of the 7 Action Plans of the Newham Landcare Group) met with Lachlan Milne, Environmental Resource Officer of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council for a very informative discussion of issues relating to our roadside vegetation, with particular reference to weed infestation.

Lachlan advised that a Macedon Ranges Shire Weed Management Strategy was now in place and gave members a copy of an aerial map of the Newham environs which detailed the location along roadsides, of weeds such as gorse, broom and blackberries.

He also stated that it was an objective of Council to include with landholder's rate notices, details of the weeds which may be present on the roadside under the landholder's responsibility and advice as to how to eradicate them.

Roadside Vegetation Project members are now evaluating ideas which came out of this meeting and are considering whether to apply to council for a \$1000 grant to assist with a project of selecting a prominent area in Newham to improve by weed removal and replacement planting with appropriate trees and mixed vegetation.

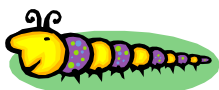


### LANDCARE EVENING

Wednesday 17th August  
7:45pm at Newham Hall

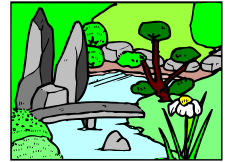
#### "Biodiversity in Newham"

- ◆ A convivial drink
  - ◆ Nibbles
  - ◆ Speakers: Dean Ingwersen (Biologist – Latrobe University)  
Lachlan Milne (Macedon Ranges Shire)
- Come along and enjoy the discussion for a better Newham!



## The Newham Deep Creek Project - Winter update by Jim Samson

Success in gaining funding for this project was announced in the last Newsletter



A comprehensive plan for works to stabilize bed and banks in conjunction with dealing with willows etc, is at present being developed. Roger Rugless and Jim Sansom are liaising with engineers from Melbourne Water and Maunsell Engineering.

Progress has been held up a little as Melbourne Water is preparing to take over the official management of the entire Maribryong catchment in August. From then on, all prospective works will have to be approved by this body.

An on-site preliminary meeting with a senior engineer from Melbourne Water is scheduled to take place early on August the 12<sup>th</sup>.

An initial biological survey along the creek from Rochford Road for approximately 3.5 km to Three Chain Road has now been completed. This was carried out by a team of 6 scientists from Latrobe University in February with much appreciated support from the Macedon Ranges Shire. We also received great help from Albert Golden, the well-known naturalist from the Macedon Ranges Conservation Society. Thank you Albert!

The Report has been received and can be borrowed from the Newham Landcare Library. (Ring Sally: 5427 0059)



A public discussion on the significance of this bio-survey will take place in the Newham Hall at 7.45 pm on Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup> of August when the leader of the survey team, Dean Ingwersen, will be present. Dean's Summary, reprinted from the Report, appears below.

Come along to the Meeting on August the 17<sup>th</sup> to find out more.

Jim Sansom, Co-ordinator of the NDC Project.

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## Free Weed Expo

*When:* 1000 – 1700, Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2005

*Where:* City of Whittlesea Council Offices, Ferres Boulevard, South Morang  
Booking essential – lunch is included.



“ Do you have pasture, a bush block, or a creek being invaded by weeds? If so come along and listen to expert presenters, view a range of exhibits and talk to local display holders about weed control options and techniques for bushland, pasture and garden and pest animals. Afternoon session will include a bus tour covering weed ID and integrated control options, demonstrations on the range of equipment, and safety options.”

*For further info. and bookings:* contact Julia Vanderoord at Whittlesea Civic Centre, 9217 2471 or Fax : 9217 2394 or Email : [Julia.Vanderoord@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:Julia.Vanderoord@whittlesea.vic.gov.au)





## Where was your dog last night? by Jim Samson



There have been a couple of cases recently of dogs molesting live-stock. Attacks are mostly on sheep but in the not too distant past there was a case where a just born calf was ripped apart and the cow was injured.

These are not wild dogs. They are domestic animals which have not been properly restrained at night. Dogs have an ancient instinct to hunt in packs given the opportunity.

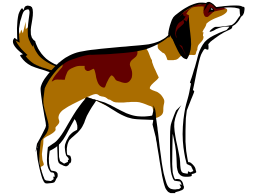
It's no good believing that our wonderful pet the family dog, could not possibly be involved in bothering stock! Remember the ancient instinct!

Play it safe! If your dog lives outside in a kennel, be certain it is securely chained at night and on those occasions when you are not around during the day. Fences are OK if you are absolutely sure they are dog-secure. Leads and leather straps can be chewed through too easily.

It is in the dog's own interests too. Currently, in some parts of our Landcare district, there are fox baiting programs in place.



Secure your dog and enjoy its company.



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## Calendar 2005

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|--|---|--|
| <b>August 1<sup>st</sup></b>           | <b>- Committee Meeting.</b>   |  |
| <b>17<sup>th</sup></b>                 | <b>- Landcare Evening</b> (see page 2 for details)                            |  |
| <b>September 5<sup>th</sup></b>        | <b>- Committee Meeting.</b>   |  |
| <b>17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>- Spring Planting. Venue to be announced.</b>                              |  |
| <b>October 3<sup>rd</sup></b>          | <b>- Committee Meeting.</b>   |  |
| <b>9<sup>th</sup></b>                  | <b>- BBQ lunch, Social gathering and AGM 12.30 pm Newham Hall.</b>            |  |
| <b>29<sup>th</sup>.</b>                | <b>- (Copy due to Editor for Spring Newsletter).</b>                          |  |
| <b>November 7<sup>th</sup>.</b>        | <b>- Committee Meeting.</b>   |  |
| <b>December 2<sup>nd</sup></b>         | <b>- Wildflower walks) Details to come.</b>                                   |  |
|  | <b>- Friday Evening BBQ and Social Gathering; 6.00 pm at the Newham Hall.</b> |  |
|  | <b>- Games and Treasure Hunt for children.</b>                                |  |
| <b>5<sup>th</sup></b>                  | <b>- Committee Meeting.</b>   |  |

## Woodend & Five Mile Creek Landcare group planting dates for 2005

September 11, October 2 and October 16. They are hoping to get 7500 plants in the ground over the 3 days, so could do with all the help they can get! Plantings are along the cycle/ walking trail in Woodend. Details available via Penny Roberts [54270795]

## District Rabbit Control by Penny Roberts.



Rabbit numbers in our district have noticeably increased over the last few years. Steep, rocky areas on the Jim Jim, that are difficult to access and impossible to rip, have the potential to provide 'safe harbour' and a focus for an increasing infestation in the surrounding area - which could well reach the proportions seen at Mt. William in the 1990's.



John Blamey of the Lancefield Deep Creek Landcare Group spoke about the Mt William Rabbit Eradication Program prior to our May committee meeting.

He spoke in detail about the problem and the Mt. William solution.



He emphasized the importance of a group endeavour to create a 'rabbit hostile' environment through the co-ordinated use of a number of killing techniques, removal of 'rabbit harbour' and destruction of warrens by ripping.



'District Rabbit Control - a guide for co-ordinators and leaders' is now available on loan

from our library. This booklet was commissioned by two neighbouring Landcare groups and covers organisational requirements of a group scheme, the history of rabbits and their control, the biology of the rabbit, the nature of the rabbit problem today, what 'control' really means, assessing rabbit numbers and control effectiveness, techniques of control - poisoning, fumigating, ripping and fencing, the status of myxomatosis and other biological controls, as well as including technical data on poisons and fumigants and their safe use!



To establish such a program in our area would be wonderful indeed - if anybody feels inspired to provide leadership to a group of interested members would they please step forward!



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## Tree Planting - Thank You By Amanda & Tim



Many thanks to all who attended the tree planting at Tim and Amanda's property, 210 Dons Road, on 15 May 2005. Between the seventeen of us, we planted 290 trees, shrubs and grasses in a small, now fenced off triangle, cut through by a tributary to Deep Creek. The area was becoming increasingly eroded, and this planting will have turned the process back, reducing sediment build up & silting downstream in Deep Creek.

The plants and weed control are to be funded by the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority. We finished the morning with a hearty minestrone followed by chocolate fruit cake and a chance to deepen the acquaintances we had made while planting. Three weeks of dry weather followed, requiring applications of wetting agent and several hand waterings of the many plants. There was a huge sigh of relief when the rains set in! Thanks again to all for a great day.

### Note

If you would like to host one of our twice yearly 'hands-on' days, please contact a committee member. Basic requirements are that you have a task to do [ we have planted at the Tellbach and Cole properties, but it does not have to be planting] and that you provide lunch for the members who volunteer.



