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WINTER 2022

# Newham & District Landcare Group



Address – PO Box 314, WOODEND, 3442



***What is your favourite local Tree ?***

*(see page two for list of trees on cover)*



# ***AGM and a new committee***

**NDLG held our AGM on 24 August in Newham hall, chaired by outgoing president Howard Stirling. A new committee for 2022-23 was elected, details below.**

**It was followed by another dinner of 20 members sharing their varied and delicious dishes, with the national online Landcare awards as background on the big screen. We were a nominee for the national ACM Community Care Award after winning the Victorian one last November, but were beaten to it by Roper River Landcare Group.**

## **The new committee**

President – Penny Roberts, [penroberts@bigpond.com](mailto:penroberts@bigpond.com), 0418 396 837

Vice President – Howard Stirling, [howardjanine01@gmail.com](mailto:howardjanine01@gmail.com), 0432 809 314

Treasurer – Hilary Roberts has agreed to be interim Treasurer in the absence of a nomination.  
[hproberts@bigpond.com](mailto:hproberts@bigpond.com), 0407 343 256

Secretary – Kathy Mexted, [secretaryndlg@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryndlg@gmail.com), 0403 927 940

## **Committee:**

Paul Carter	<a href="mailto:millhouse@aussiebroadband.com.au">millhouse@aussiebroadband.com.au</a>	0407 271 199
Doug Dalgleish	<a href="mailto:dougdalgleish@hotmail.com">dougdalgleish@hotmail.com</a>	0428 571 465
Bruce Hedge	<a href="mailto:bruceahedge@gmail.com">bruceahedge@gmail.com</a>	0427 888 122
Karl Kny	<a href="mailto:karl@kolora.com">karl@kolora.com</a>	0409 543 061
Helen Scott	<a href="mailto:orseda@outlook.com">orseda@outlook.com</a>	0412 582 526
Luke Spielvogel	<a href="mailto:luke.spielvogel@gmail.com">luke.spielvogel@gmail.com</a>	0401 878 084

## **Other Contacts**

Roadside Management Group (the Weedies) - Sue Massie 5427 0065

Wesley Park and Jim road - Jane Trikojus 0413 499 252

Spray trailer and cameras - Howard Stirling 0432 809 314

**Website** <https://newhamlandcare.info> Keep checking it for Events, and other updates under What's New. Contact is Helen Scott.

## **Australia's favourite tree**

Did you tune in to ABC's Catalyst to Australia's favourite tree in August? <https://www.abc.net.au/catalyst/australias-favourite-tree-part-one/14021222> or catch it on iview at <https://iview.abc.net.au/show/australia-s-favourite-tree>

There are over 7,000 species of native tree and the 2 hourly episodes looked at a total of 8. The panel of judges chose the Mountain Ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*), assessed on 3 criteria: the role they play in the environment, the ecology and the science behind the tree, and their cultural importance. On the popular vote, the Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) won, with my favourite, the Snow Gum (*Eucalyptus pauciflora*), coming in second.

Cover Trees from L to R: Top: Alpine Ash (*Euc. delegatensis*), Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), Manna Gum (*E. viminalis*), Swamp Gum (*E. ovata*). Middle: Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*), Drooping Sheoak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*), River Red Gum (*E. camaldulensis*), Messmate (*E. obliqua*). Bottom: Candlebark (*E. rubida*), Black Gum (*E. aggregata*) endangered, Mountain Ash (*E. regnans*), Silver Banksia (*B. marginata*).

# **NDLG activities**

***Tubestock for Autumn 2023 ....still 50c per tube for financial members of NDLG***

***Yes... you need to think about this NOW or take your chances on species availability and numbers. Orders for 2023 need to be placed with growers in September!***

Once again the group will source plants from Western Plains Flora and TreeProject - depending on the species - but we are hoping that all our TreeProject plants will be grown by local growers. ***To achieve this we need local volunteers to register with TreeProject as growers and specify that they want to grow for Newham Landcare.*** <https://treeproject.org.au/grower-application/>

If you know what you want **let Penny know by September 14<sup>th</sup>** so she will have time to collate the order. If you are uncertain about what suits your property *indicate numbers required in each category* i.e. tall trees, understorey trees, large shrubs, small shrubs, creek/drainage line/dam, and the order will account for this. Otherwise ...the group order will be placed for about 4000 tubes with a wide range of species and these will be distributed on a first-in first-served basis after pre-orders have been separated out.

NDLG is resurrecting our **propagation group** after a hiatus of several years, partly in response to the very patchy quality of TreeProject tubestock received this year. If you are interested in learning more or honing your skills about native plant propagation, please consider volunteering, either as a grower for our Landcare group, or to assist in propagating tasks on a one-off basis. There will be resources such as kits and potting mix – detailed information will be sent to those interested.



**Orders / queries about volunteering as a grower or plant species for your site to [penroberts@bigpond.com](mailto:penroberts@bigpond.com) or 0418 396837**



# Fire, Conservation and Land management

On the cold wintry afternoon of May 29th, 18 members of the Newham Landcare group attended an information session on fire and land management. David Cheal and Jess Szigethy ran the session in the absence of Jason McAinch, who was unable to discuss regenerative agriculture as planned due to Covid.

The talk included information about fire management practices used in Australia, a discussion of plants that minimise bushfire risk, and a look at the layout of Jess's farm on which we were meeting.

David Cheal is an ecologist and associate adjunct professor at Federation University in Ballarat. He is an Honourary Research Fellow with a focus on the plant and animal communities in disturbed, arid and semi-arid environments and in the past has worked and led fellow scientists in the study of fire ecology, fire research and agricultural landscapes amongst other topics. He has a special interest in fire and its direct impacts on biodiversity, and the conservation losses resulting from our fear of fire.



The talk was held on Jess's fifty-acre property in Newham. She had grown up on the land right next door. The fifty acres make up two big paddocks - about a third of their land is bush and a third grasslands, with a creek running through the property. When Jess and her family bought the land they built a house and started grazing sheep and horses. The family farm has fifty sheep, six alpacas, and six horses. Rotational grazing, where the animals are fenced into smaller paddocks and moved around the property to allow the vegetation to recover, is practised. The Shire's Private Land Conservation Officer, Jason McAinch has been to the property twice and helped implement these techniques. The horses are rotated by two people every three days. Native seed is harvested from the grasses and vegetation. Jess has been using a flail mower to cut the grass ten metres in from the boundary fence and uses this as hay and feed. The shorter grass helps reduce the bushfire risk and provides a feed source.

Jess asked David how she could plant vegetation for shelter for sheep in a way that wouldn't increase the bushfire risk. David discussed the importance of shelter belts as a wind break and to slow the preheating of vegetation. Blackwoods (*Acacia melanoxylon*) in particular are a good preheating shield, but it is important to differentiate between plant species. David quoted the American satirist H.L. Mencken - "For every complex question there is an answer that is clear, simple and wrong" and reminded us that you cannot remove bushfire risk, only reduce it.

David spoke about how fire management practices in Australia often damage species which help prevent and increase resilience to bushfires, stating "The more you burn the more accustomed the landscape becomes to fire". Fire prevention strategies around Australia are based on targets



of acreage burned, but David points out that this doesn't result in burns where they are needed. Unlike Indigenous burns, the scale of conventional fire management post-colonisation can result in burning plants that help lower fire risk during summer, animals being unable to escape the flames fast enough, and the soil baked from the heat.



The experience was informative and enjoyable, providing important insight into the impact of fire management practices in Australia and sparking discussion about various plants we can introduce or remove to improve the land's resilience to bushfires.

A walk around Jess's farm was a chance to see how nature and farming can be integrated together for the benefit of ecosystem health and biodiversity.

It was topped off by a splendid afternoon tea - thanks to Penny Roberts.



The CFA website has a large number of documents on their website –

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/about-us/publications/plan-and-prepare-publications/plan-and-prepare> - they cover a very broad range of topics including this list:

- Landscaping for Bushfire – garden design and plant selection
- A guide to retrofit your home for better protection from bushfires
- Your guide to property preparation
- Your Guide to Survival (Version 5)
- On the Land - Agricultural Fire Management Guidelines
- Farm Fire Safety Checklist
- Fires on the Farm
- Horses and Bushfires
- Private Bushfire Shelters in Victoria
- Grass Fires Fact Sheet – Rural

*Thanks to Olivia Hedge, Year 10 student at Kyneton High School for writing this article.*

# Regenerative and sustainable agriculture

Following from Olivia's article which noted that the regenerative agriculture segment by Jason McAinch had to be cancelled, here are some items that may be of interest.

Jason will be back to talk about healthy landscapes and how to make them happen on 16<sup>th</sup> October- Details to come.

Howard Stirling is following the subject, with articles such as:  
Farmers from the Canberra region form a community around sustainable practices.



<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-11/farmers-around-canberra-embrace-sustainable-methods/101140320>

Natural asset farming e.g. Protecting farm dams, rocky outcrops and creeks good for biodiversity and bottom line - ABC News <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-05-30/farmers-protect-natural-assets-to-improve-productivity/101090810>

## Healthy Landscapes

Macedon Ranges Shire council has a partnership initiative called **Practical Regenerative Agricultural Communities**. The program aims to enhance the capacity of rural land owners to implement sustainable land management practices, including regenerative grazing techniques, which improve soil health, reduce exposure to climate risks and enhance biodiversity.

See it at <https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/Live-Work/Environment/Land-Management/Healthy-Landscapes> where you can

- sign up for their e-newsletter
- see lots of Resources and check out upcoming events such as Field days
- obtain individual, free, on-farm advice
- watch webinars and previous workshops and recordings
- access courses on Equine or Holistic Grazing Management
- Property Management Plans and more.

Contact is Jason McAinch, Private Land Conservation Officer on (03) 5422 0333 or email [jmcainch@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:jmcainch@mrsc.vic.gov.au)

## Other reading – a small sample by Penny Roberts

*English Pastoral: an Inheritance*, by James Rebanks. Allen Lane, 2020

*Dirt to Soil*, by Gabe Brown. Chelsea Green, 2018

*For the Love of Soil: Strategies to Regenerate our Food Production*, by Nicole Masters. Printable Reality, 2019

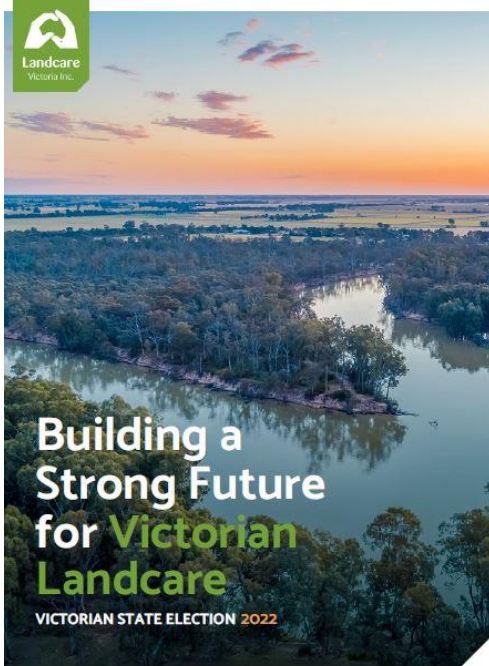
*Growing a Revolution: Bringing our Soil back to Life* David Montgomery. W. W. Norton Company, 2018

*Making Small Farms Work*, by Richard Perkins. Ridgedale, 2016

*Call of the Reed Warbler: a New Agriculture, a New Earth*, by Charles Massy. U Qld Press, 2017, rev. 2020.

*If you really want to know more, searching "regenerative agriculture Australia" will take you down lots of interesting rabbit holes!*

# Environmental politics



***We know that the volunteer landcare community delivers results that Government agencies are not resourced to achieve; it plays an invaluable role in securing and maintaining Victoria's environmental infrastructure and in contributing to community cohesion.***

We also know that Victoria's biodiversity continues to decline under the pressure of climate change, inappropriate management practices and habitat loss, as NDLG's survey response to the State Government's *Biodiversity 2037 Strategy* pointed out, while also noting DELWP's inaction. The Strategy recognises that private landholders manage two-thirds of the Victorian landscape, and therefore have a critical role to play in conserving biodiversity.

In August 2020 we made a detailed submission to the *Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria*, (on NDLG website under Reports and submissions). The Environment and Planning Committee of the Victorian Legislative Council tabled their report in Parliament last December. Some of its findings are pretty obvious:

***FINDING 16:*** *The ongoing removal and degradation of native vegetation is a key driver of ecosystem decline and is threatening Victorian biodiversity.*

***FINDING 19:*** *The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning has not delivered the Western Grassland Reserve and the Grassy Eucalypt Woodlands Reserve by 2020, as specified in the Melbourne Strategic Assessment program.*

***FINDING 29:*** *The Victorian Government's biodiversity strategy, Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037, sets important goals around protecting and restoring threatened species in Victoria. However, the plan lacks the necessary funding for full implementation of its goals and actions.*

The Government had 6 months in which to consider the report and provide a response – nothing yet, and in the meantime continues to allow VicForests to continue native forest logging, for example on our own doorstep in the Wombat Forest which was in June declared as part of the new Wombat-Lerderderg National Park. Greater Glider populations have declined by between 50-80 per cent in landscapes directly impacted by native forest logging in Eastern Victoria (they have also disappeared from Hanging Rock). Our friends at Wombat Forestcare are tireless in their campaigning. <http://wombatforestcare.org.au/>



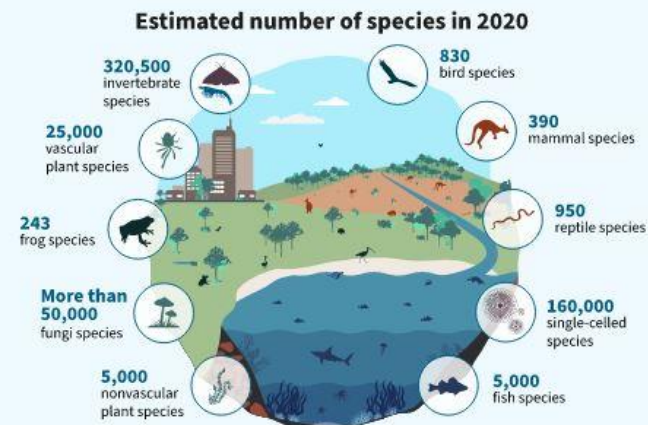
Landcare Victoria Inc, of which we are one of 600 group members, has released its policy recommendations for the upcoming Victorian State election in November.

<https://www.landcarevictoria.org.au/LVI/LVI/News-Events/Latest-News/2022/Building-a-Strong-Future-for-Victorian-Landcare.aspx>

## Australia's biodiversity is rich and unique – we have a lot to protect

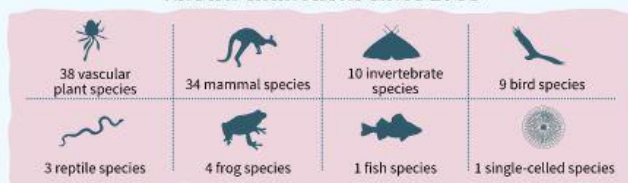
Our biodiversity is essential for human survival, wellbeing and economic prosperity.

However, we have only named and classified an estimated 30% of our species – there is so much more to learn.



We have recorded 100 endemic species as becoming extinct since 1788. With so much unknown, it's likely there are many more.

### Known extinctions since 1788



We can help prevent future extinctions by better understanding our unique species and limiting the pressures they face.

Nationally, the five-yearly **State of the Environment report 2021**, held back by the previous Government, was released in July. It is a massive and overwhelmingly sad report, comprising 13 chapters and can be accessed at <https://soe.dccew.gov.au/>.

It leaves no doubt as to the grave predicament facing Australia's precious natural assets.

There is plenty of detail with great commentary online – just a few examples:

- 3 report authors - <https://theconversation.com/this-is-australias-most-important-report-on-the-environments-deteriorating-health-we-present-its-grim-findings-186131>

• Invasive Species Council - <https://invasives.org.au/blog/last-weeks-state-of-the-environment-report-claims-good-invasive-species-management-is-currently-beyond-the-resources-available-we-disagree/>

• The Conversation - <https://theconversation.com/bad-and-getting-worse-labor-promises-law-reform-for-australias-environment-heres-what-you-need-to-know-186562>

• The Guardian - <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jul/19/labor-says-it-wont-put-head-in-the-sand-as-it-releases-shocking-environment-report>

• ACF - <https://www.acf.org.au/state-of-the-environment-2021>

• CSIRO expert commentary - <https://www.csiro.au/en/news/news-releases/2022/state-of-the-environment-2021-report-released>

*NDLG knows about the report's three critical environmental impacts - invasive species, habitat destruction and climate damage. We will continue to do what we do on habitat restoration and protection of our endangered species, by revegetation, weed and pest control, fauna monitoring, riparian repair, energy, and waste management, lobbying and community education.*

Helen Scott

Image courtesy of Sustainable Gardening Australia



Following the article on Shelterbelts in our Spring 2021 issue, no.64 (as an alternative to those beastly Cypress hedges in issue no.63!), Cardinia Shire Council on Melbourne's south-east fringe has published Shelterbelt design guidelines and research reports, comprehensive and with great illustrations. The objective was to develop guidelines to assist landholders in designing shelterbelts to be better suited to the future effects of climate change, in response to the Bunyip complex bushfires. They demonstrate that there are significant benefits to be gained from planting shelterbelts to help reduce local climate change impacts including higher temperatures, reduced rainfall, and more extreme weather events.

[https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/downloads/download/2524/shelterbelt\\_design\\_guidelines\\_and\\_research\\_report](https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/downloads/download/2524/shelterbelt_design_guidelines_and_research_report)

John Robinson alerted me to an article on '**Shelterbelts for Fire Protection**' written by Rod Bird that was published in a 2010 issue of the *Victorian Landcare magazine* (no.49). It includes an aerial image that shows how a shelterbelt of native vegetation on a property can impede the progress of a grass fire, on a property in the western district of Victoria immediately after the Ash Wednesday fires in 1982 - the fire went around, not through, the shelter belt. <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/assets/Uploads/VLCMM-Issue-49.pdf> (page 18)

Howard Stirling spotted this good news story on ABC about how a farmer turned his cleared dustbowl farm into a productive one. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-06-06/nsw-sheep-farmer-plants-15000-trees-on-property-/101123228>

Produced by the Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub at the University of Melbourne, the new '*Indigenous Plant Use*' booklet by Barkandji woman Zena Cumpston, explores the cultural, nutritional, technological and medicinal use of indigenous plants. The guide is based on plants from Kulin Country, which incorporates five different aboriginal groups from southern Victoria, and includes many plants that are found in Central Victoria and valued by Dja Dja Wurrung people.

You'll find information on more than 50 indigenous plant species displayed on labels that you can print and use in your own garden. These labels provide an opportunity for people to learn on Country and connect with Aboriginal knowledge of plant use.

Read more about Zena and download the free booklet at

<https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/illuminating-indigenous-culture-through-plants>

### *Indigenous plant use guide*

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## ***Take care who you kill !***

**Member Jane Trikojus points out that here in the Macedon Ranges we don't have moving carpets of rodents and most infestations can be eliminated by improved hygiene, maintenance and storage of animal feed etc. As an example, automatic chicken feeders make it impossible for rodents to access chook pellets.**

If these measures are not enough there are electronic and snap traps available which generally kill rodents instantly – but don't use outside. Cage traps baited with peanut butter seem irresistible and by immersing the whole cage in sufficient depth of water, rodents can be killed swiftly (cover water container with lid). Those squeamish about drowning rats and mice and who use poison baits instead need to consider the degree of suffering caused by the subsequent slow internal bleeding which takes up to seven days to kill the victims.

**If you must use poison take the time to learn which one is safer for birds of prey and other wildlife. The following articles suggest using first generation rodenticides like RATSAC DOUBLE STRENGTH or RACUMEN containing Warfarin or Coumatetralyl.**



**DO NOT use second generation poisons containing Brodifacoum (most Ratsak brands) Bromadiolone (some Ratsak products) and Difenacoum eg Talon, Mortein, Ratsak Fast Action, Pestoff Rodent Bait 20R and Klerat.**

<https://www.natureconservation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Rat-Control-Native-Wildlife-Information-Sheet-Final-2-.pdf> - this also links to a recipe for a homemade rat poison made using baking powder. <https://theconversation.com/how-to-control-invasive-rats-and-mice-at-home-without-harming-native-wildlife-180792>

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## ***It's time deer were declared a pest***

A new independent report from Frontier Economics for the Invasive Species Council warns that not controlling the impacts of feral deer in Victoria could cost the community between \$1.5 billion and \$2.2 billion over the next 30 years. This figure only considers the economic costs of feral deer caused through lost agricultural and forestry production, vehicle accidents and reductions to the recreational values of national and state parks, not the impacts on biodiversity, Indigenous cultural values and ecosystem services such as water purification.



Protecting feral deer as game for hunting under Victoria's Wildlife Act has been hindering effective control as the population has exploded. Read more at <https://invasives.org.au/media-releases/feral-deer-could-cost-victoria-over-2-billion/>



# Snow Gum report launched

**Council's collaborative Snow Gum monitoring project, highlighted in previous issues of our newsletter, has yielded some exciting results. A large gathering heard ecologists Karl Just and Tim D'Ombrain present their findings at a public talk on 17 June in Newham.**

Snow Gums are believed to be an ancient Eucalyptus species that evolved during the ice age. Recent dieback, particularly in the high country of Victoria and NSW, has raised alarm for some community members, who suspect climate change may be having a significant impact on the species.

The good news is that the project ecologists found that most populations are in relatively good health and there are plenty of young Snow Gums, which may help prepare the species for future impacts as the climate warms.

Following the field survey in late 2021, all 2,277 individual Snow Gum records were compared against a vegetation model designed by Tim D'Ombrain, here shown outlining how his model uses a combination of geological, floristic, digital elevation model and rainfall data to map all of the vegetation of Victoria into units that are at a much finer scale than the Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) units used by DELWP.



These fine-scale units have been named Floristic Map Units (FMUs) and should prove useful for local revegetation projects such as those run by Landcare groups.

Karl said Macedon Ranges Shire is considered to support the largest known concentrations of Snow Gum (*Eucalyptus pauciflora ssp pauciflora*) in Central and Western Victoria. “The largest population documented in the Newham area was distributed across five hectares at Hennerbergs Road, Saunders Road and Finchers Lane, where 697 trees were recorded. We believe this to be one of the largest populations of Snow Gum in the lowland areas of Victoria (i.e. below 800m elevation).”

“The Mount Macedon populations of Snow Gum are the highest within the shire, occurring between 900-1000m elevation. They are likely among the largest stands of Snow Gum outside of Eastern Victoria,” he said. These populations (plus 2 endangered herb species) are under threat from feral goat grazing, and should be excluded from fuel reduction burns, particularly as they have low fuel loads.

The report, with lovely photos, provides recommendations for future monitoring and management of Snow Gum populations across the region – particularly on roadsides, and an interesting idea for volunteer Snow Gum guardians to adopt special large old trees to keep an eye on. Suggestions for how local landowners can protect and enhance populations occurring on their properties include fencing from grazing stock, and revegetation using Snow Gum of local provenance.

Helen Scott was one of 25 community members who participated in the project and helped to provide data and locations of Snow Gums within the Macedon Ranges. She was pleased to launch the report, saying “Thanks to Karl and Tim for their great work on this project. Newham Landcare is just one of the Landcare groups that has been involved since June 2021, along with Ashbourne and Baynton Sidonia, plus the Arthur Rylah Institute. We are so fortunate to have talented and committed officers in our Council’s Environment Department – thank you all for your support and for involving us in project partnerships. May this report inspire many to recognise and protect our lowland Snow Gums.”



A musical performance before supper by Andy and Silvie Rigby highlighted the unique role the arts can play in environmental communication. Andy is one of Australia’s leading makers, teachers and players of the harp and had composed a piece on Snow Gums.

The report is available at <https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/live-amp-work/environment/biodiversity/snow-gum-report.pdf> and is also on the NDLG website under Projects.



These snow gums on the Campaspe should definitely be in the favourite tree category!



## ***Environment Team at Macedon Ranges Shire Council***

### **• Krista Patterson-Majoor – Environment Coordinator**

o [kpmajoor@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:kpmajoor@mrsc.vic.gov.au)

### **• Simon Purves – Conservation Reserves Officer**

o Environmental management of Hanging Rock and Council's small conservation reserves and waterways

o [spurves@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:spurves@mrsc.vic.gov.au)

### **• Martin Roberts – Bushland Reserves Officer**

o Environmental management of larger Council managed bushland reserves such as Bald Hill, Black Hill, Woodend Grassland, Barringo Reserve, Mt Gisborne and many more!

o [mroberts@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:mroberts@mrsc.vic.gov.au)

### **• Darren Tinker – Environment Programs and Engagement Officer**

o Environment events, environment eNews, citizen science activities, school engagement and more.

o Landcare and Friends Group Support Grants

o [dtinker@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:dtinker@mrsc.vic.gov.au)

### **• Stephanie Grylls – Environmental Planner**

o Assessment of the environmental impacts of development proposals and provision of environmental advice to planning permit applicants, particularly relating to native vegetation removal.

o [sgrylls@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:sgrylls@mrsc.vic.gov.au)

### **• Tanya Loos – Biodiversity Projects Officer**

o Various projects associated with implementation of Council's Biodiversity Strategy – e.g. Roadside Conservation Management Plan, biolinks planning, Aboriginal cultural heritage assessments, Landcare Network Partnership Program.

o Implementation of biodiversity monitoring program

o Currently working on: Woodend Five Mile Creek Master Plan, Deer of the West Project

o [tloos@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:tloos@mrsc.vic.gov.au) (Tues-Friday)

### **• Jason McAinch – Private Land Conservation Officer**

o Delivery of the Healthy Landscapes for Healthy Livestock project, including individual on-farm advice, land management workshops and events, facilitation of farmer discussion groups etc

o More info: <https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/Live-Work/Environment/Land-Management/Healthy-Landscapes>

o [jmcainch@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:jmcainch@mrsc.vic.gov.au) (Part time)

### **• Josh Gomez - Roadside Conservation Officer**

o Implementation of Council's roadside weed program and other roadside conservation works and initiatives.

o [jgomez@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:jgomez@mrsc.vic.gov.au) (Monday to Thursday)

### **• Silvana Predebon – Environmental Policy and Sustainability Officer**

o Climate change policies and planning, sustainability initiatives etc.

o Development of Council's response to the Declaration of Climate Emergency

o Development and implementation of Council's Zero Net Emission Plan and energy efficient building upgrades

o [spredebon@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:spredebon@mrsc.vic.gov.au) (Tuesdays to Thursdays)

### **• Justin Walsh - Sustainability Officer**

o Support for community climate action including EV charging stations.

o Delivery of Cool Changes (local community climate change action plans) – currently targeting Macedon/Mt Macedon and Kyneton

o Bridging the divide project

o Development of Council's response to the Declaration of Climate Emergency

o [juwalsh@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:juwalsh@mrsc.vic.gov.au)

# May-July rainfall report

By Bruce Hedge

Our wet April gave way to a slightly below average May, with 40.2mm on 14 days. In June, the total came in at 71mm on 18 days, which was confirmed by the gloomy days dragging on and on.

I recorded my lowest ever monthly solar output from my 5kw array at only 168 kilowatt hours exported in the whole month. My average for June over the 7 years we've had the panels has been above 200 Kwh, but I wonder whether I should give them a bit of a clean?? August 2022 near the end of the month is also well down on previous Augusts at well below 300Kwh going into the grid. Just as a comparison, our best ever month was January 2019 at 815 Kwh. The feed-in tariff is not much right now, but it's reassuring to think they've been paid off and are now in positive territory.

On to July, and it was back to somewhere around average rainfall at 52.6mm on 12 days. Both Elders and BOM's long range forecasts are for a wetter than average period through until 1 April next year, so we may have another benign fire season. Fingers crossed. I see a rain station near Nelson, NZ had over a metre of rain in 4 days in mid August after an East Coast Low swung south from near Sydney and gathered huge quantities of water as it crossed the Tasman. That's comparable to the Lismore floods here, but much further south. Scary.



*Upper Coliban Reservoir August 2022*