



## *Newham & District Landcare Group*

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### **Presidents Report 2022 - 2023**

Our vision is to enhance biodiversity and natural ecosystems within the local environment.

2022-2023 has been an odd year.

Post-COVID, but with its shadow still affecting what we do and the willingness of people to gather together in larger groups.

Core interests have remained the same with our over-arching goal being to continue development of the Cobaw Biolink.

This goal encompasses all we do – roadside activities including the new Anderson Triangle project, propagation and distribution of indigenous plants to broadly increase native plant cover & diversity, riparian rehabilitation and water quality monitoring, availability of equipment and advice, involvement with local schools, events, and grant applications for projects.

The work we do to enhance the Cobaw Biolink, with our focus on waterways, roadsides, high ground and willing private landowner participants, aligns with the strategic plans of MRSC, Melbourne Water, NCCMA, & Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance, thus ensuring we have willing partners and access to ongoing funding. Funded projects have been managed by volunteers with any administrative component going to subsidize plant sales to members, cover event costs and support environmental education in local schools.

Our group has remained strong in numbers – the result, I believe, of continuing the Landcare tradition as a grass-roots organization, with a clear focus on an important goal.

We continue to add value to works done in our local area over almost 2 decades, in the knowledge that this is strategically important both within the Macedon Ranges and more broadly across Victoria as a whole.

This has been a quiet year for NDLG, similar to the covid (and post-covid) years before it.

**Special projects** continue, driven by the passion of the individuals/groups that initiated them:

- The roadside group, convened by Sue Massie, has continued its work: direct weed management on high value roadsides in Newham, advocating for the protection of roadside remnant vegetation and supporting others who have taken on smaller stretches of roadside.
- Jane Trikojus has continued working in Wesley Park and on the enhancement of roadside remnant in Jim Rd. Hopefully in future years the dominating exotic grasses and woody weeds will be replaced by proliferating wildflowers and native grasses.
- Karen Hunt, whose vision of the Anderson Rd triangle as a habitat hot-spot within the roadside network of the Cobaw biolink has enthused a cohort of our members and already involved Newham Primary School.
- The 2021 Victorian Landcare Grant activities have finally been completed - funded works on 3 properties along a tributary of Smokers Creek and a collection of events over 18 months. The last event was a field session in October 2022 on regenerative agriculture. Previous events included sessions on Platypus and their needs (presented by the Platypus

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Conservancy) at Braemar College and Newham Primary school, and a children's workshop ("Nature Play").

- Fran Spain has very ably produced the newsletter when David Bonsall was absent.
- Plant propagation was undertaken locally in 2023 to supplement plants purchased from Western Plains Flora. Growers were Rob Lawrence, Tina Mathewson, Barry Toll, Jane Trikojus, Howard Stirling, Wanda Moore and myself, with assistance from Helen Scott and Neil Werrett.

**Events** included **hands-on sessions** (roadsides, Anderson Rd triangle, member plantings, Clean Up Australia), **social** (Xmas BBQ, new members dinner), **educational** (2 events with Alison Pouliot - "Visualizing the Environment" photography workshop, and a launch of her fungi book "Underground Lovers"; a regenerative farming field session, and a native seedball workshop).

Don't forget that our website at <https://newhamlandcare.info/> continues to update all events and projects.

To members: Thank you for your continued support of the group and its activities. Know that your feedback and suggestions are always welcome and that if you wish to establish a project in line with Landcare objectives you will be supported.

A very special thanks to the committee of Helen Scott, Kathy Mexted, Howard Stirling, Paul Carter, Karl Kny, Bruce Hedge, Doug Dalgleish and Hilary Roberts for their ongoing input and enthusiasm.

Penny Roberts  
July 2023