



Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network News

April 2018 Edition



Left: Students from Woodleigh's Pembank School enjoy discovering their 'Habitat Project' has been successful! Students will head interstate later this year as nominees for the National Landcare Awards 'Junior Landcare' category for their participation in Balcombe Moorooduc Landcare Group's

Greetings Landcare members & associates,

What a month! Our stall at Red Hill Show attracted much interest, especially the weed display and 'guess how many seeds' competition. The 'Women on Farms' gathering was well attended, with around 200 delegates from across Victoria coming together on the Rosebud Foreshore to relax, share stories and experience some of the delights of the peninsula. Thanks again to Greg Holland for his excellent work on this newsletter.

Warm Regards,

Jacqui Salter, Landcare Facilitator for MPLN Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au

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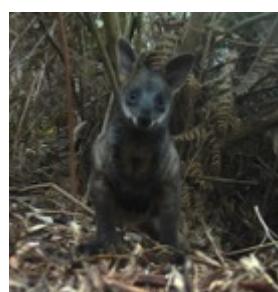
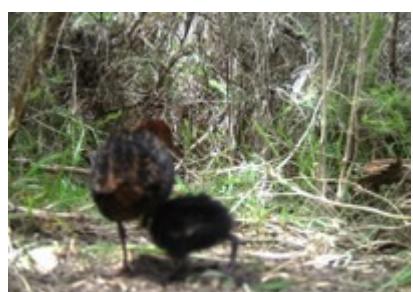
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1. Opportunities & News

Greens Bush to Arthurs Seat Biolink

The project is well underway, with planting beginning in May (as long as this rain continues!). We've got many local schools involved in revegetation, including Padua, Rosebud Secondary and Dromana Secondary as well as Rosebud Sea Scouts.

The second round of 1080 baiting in the Drum Drum Alloc catchment has just finished and we've had some great results. The photos below were taken near Drum Drum Alloc Creek by Lincoln McMahon on his property in Rosebud using his fauna camera.



Short-beaked Echidna, Lewin's Rail and chick and juvenile Swamp Wallaby caught on a fauna camera.

Due to concerns about potential dog poisoning, we haven't been able to bait in the Main Creek catchment area.



We've had many foxes caught on video in this area, including two young ones cavorting around their den on a Baldrys Road property. Check out this site for the clip: www.facebook.com/GB2AS/videos/1945357535780130/

Left: European fox caught on camera in a Main Ridge property part of the GB2AS project.

We are grateful to two local shooters who are undertaking a shooting program in this area. Additional eradication through fumigating known dens is occurring.

- Article by Jacqui Salter.

Update from the Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network

Our ‘Landcare’ stall at the Red Hill Show stall was a great success. Many people registered their interest with Landcare and the weed display and competition (‘Guess how many Karamu seeds on one small branch’) were popular as always. Many thanks to the volunteers who manned the stall: Bernie Schedvin, Michelle Stacey, David Maddocks, Peter Scott, Ron Tyrrell, Karen Sutherland, Greg Holland, Rob Nigro, Mel Zerbe, Adie Smith, Alice Greenberger.



Left: Bernie, Mel, Jacqui, Adie & Michelle at the stall before Peter kindly brought along a marquee. Right: Bernie assisting with the Karamu Competition. Images from Adie Smith

Thanks also to the wonderful volunteers for the Briars “Enviro week” puppet show on 21st and 22nd March – Pam Cairns, Anne Tyrrell, Michelle Sabto & Amanda Jane Breidahl.



Left: Anne Tyrrell (Watson Creek Catchment LG) with assistant Jesse in the puppet theatre. Right: Students at E-Week learning about native & feral animals through puppetry with Amanda Jane Breidahl.

Images: Jacqui Salter

Take Care on Fire Ban Days

When a total fire ban is declared, we all know not to burn off or light any outside fires, use welders in the fields, and etc. But many of us do not realise that use farm equipment such as tractors, mowers and chainsaws should only occur if essential. Hot exhausts and sparks from mower blades hitting rocks are just two examples of where devastating fires have been started.

So please be extra careful with all outdoor activities during fire danger periods and particularly on days of total fire ban.

More information is available at:

https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/documents/20143/80821/Can_I_or_Cant_I_brochure_nov_2016.pdf/5e14373f-e64d-3676-bb7b-2685a831a5f8

Womin Djeka Festival 2018



Celia Sexton and Liz Sarrailie from Merricks Coolart Catchment Landcare Group hosted a stall at the 'Womin Djeka' festival in Balnarring Beach last weekend. The Shire's planting guides were popular with residents wishing to plant more indigenous vegetation on their properties.

- Report and Image by Jacqui Salter

Women on Farms Gathering 2018 on the Mornington Peninsula

The gathering was a great success, with around 200 women farmers from across the state coming together to share, learn and enjoy the peninsula.

And although still under construction, you can now check out our website!
<https://mplandcare.org.au>

- Report by Jacqui Salter



Young Farmers Scholarships

Young farmers in Victoria (35 yr and under) can access scholarships of up to \$10,000 to help boost skills and implement new on-farm initiatives. This includes \$5,000 for study, backed by a further \$5,000 to invest on-farm or in professional development activities to help put new skills into practice.

The Victorian Government's Young Farmers Scholarship Program aims to support young farmers to build productive and profitable careers in agriculture. The Program recognises that in the future, young farmers will need a broad range of skills so they can embrace new technologies, respond to a range of challenges and capitalise on emerging opportunities.

Applications close: 24 April 2018

More info: visit vic.gov.au/youngfarmers

Applications: go to <http://www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance/young-farmers-scholarship-program>



Become a Wildlife Rescuer

Interested in understanding how to assess, rescue, capture and minister to native animals? Wildlife

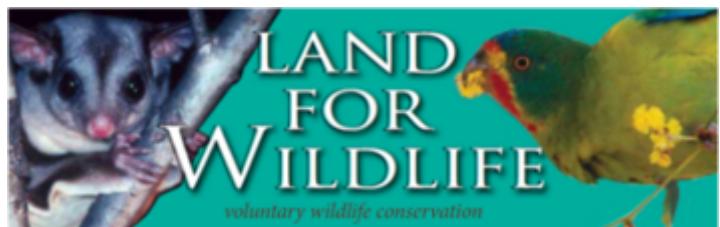


Rescue is a group of volunteers dedicated to the rescue, transport & rehabilitation of wildlife in Melbourne & surrounds - <http://wildliferescuers.org.au/>. In addition to potential participation as a voluntary rescuer, the group provides training in the basics of wildlife rescue that will almost certainly come in handy on our Peninsula with its high rate of wildlife losses on the roads.

Upcoming training sessions are listed under **Section 5: Upcoming Events**.

Land for Wildlife

When driving or walking around the Peninsula, signs prominently displayed on front gates or fences announce that the property is part of the Land for Wildlife voluntary wildlife conservation program.



If you wish to create or protect wildlife habitats on your property, then the Land for Wildlife scheme can offer advice and assistance no matter whether you manage a farm, a bush block, a council park or school ground.

Landholder participation is free. Membership doesn't alter the legal status of your property in any way. Over 12,500 people on 5000 properties (more than 530,000ha of private land) already participate throughout Victoria and make a significant contribution to native biodiversity conservation through their combined membership with Land for Wildlife. They are actively involved in protecting and/or restoring habitats on their own land. Ecosystems and habitats being managed in this way include forests, woodlands, heaths, grasslands and freshwater environments.

As we have indicated in previous newsletters, including wildlife habitat can have a number of positive impacts on properties as well as wildlife. It can:

- help manage erosion
- assist with salinity control
- control pests naturally
- nurture biodiversity for sustainable agriculture
- provide links between nature reserves, allowing for wildlife movement and genetic interchange.

Land for Wildlife operates hand in hand with Landcare and other related organisations. All understand the natural, social and economic importance of maintaining and even expanding habitat.

Land for Wildlife offers:

- Expert advice on:
 - integrating wildlife habitat with other uses of private land to mutual benefit
 - managing wildlife habitat, the fauna in an area, its ecological role and its needs
 - other forms of assistance or incentives that are available
- Contact with like-minded landholders and a chance to share ideas and experiences through the scheme's publications, at field days and other activities

- Regular newsletters and a more detailed Notes series

A Land for Wildlife sign is provided free of charge to acknowledge the efforts being made for wildlife conservation

More info, contact: Peter Johnson Statewide Coordinator and Newsletter Editor Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Box 3100, Bendigo Delivery Centre Bendigo, 3554 Victoria, Australia Tel: (03) 5430 4358 Fax: (03) 5448 4982 peter.johnson@delwp.vic.gov.au
<https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/protecting-wildlife/land-for-wildlife>

2. State of the Environment

Weeds are Beneficial? Maybe!

New research indicates that a mixture of weeds and native plants may actually increase the native plant diversity in grassland ecosystems.

A collaboration between scientists at the National Museum of Natural Sciences in Madrid and the University of Adelaide (Martín-Forés et al 2017) has found that in the Mediterranean-type grasslands around the Mount Lofty Ranges, the presence of exotic weeds was typically associated with either neutral or positive impacts on the biodiversity of native plants, and that the largest positive benefit occurred in the cropped and pasture grasslands.



This finding can be compared to the official position of the Commonwealth Department of the Environment (<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/weeds/why/impact.html>): “Weeds are one of the major threats to the natural environment. They are destroying native habitats, threatening native plants and animals and choking our natural systems including rivers and forests.”

So should we race out and tell our grassland weeds that we love them after all and apologise for all those nasty efforts to eradicate them? Hold on a bit, as is often the case the devil is in the detail.

First, the authors were careful to differentiate between noxious and less impactful weeds. Author Dr Greg Guerin, from the University of Adelaide, stated that “*although a minority of weed species are having strong negative impacts on native plant biodiversity, these interactions can't be generalised across all weeds and ecosystems.*”

Second, although the authors were careful to account for factors such as climate and the nutrient status of the plots, those exotic/native species relationships that were statistically significant only explained 15-25% of the overall variance (in other words there is a lot of unexplained scatter). Further, the results were generally not significant for urban areas or native areas in conservation zones (those in the left and right

images above) – thus, another way of looking at the result in improved pastures is that these good quality lands can support a combination of native and exotic species.

Consideration of the wider evidence suggests that the complete removal of exotics actually will improve the richness of native species and that the presence of highly invasive weeds always has a negative impact on natives. So perhaps we should hold off on apologising to the exotics and regard this study as an important contribution in that it has raised doubts and will generate useful discussion. In particular, it points towards the news not being all bad in areas where a variety of exotic species already have been introduced.

As one of the authors, Professor Andy Lowe, also from the University of Adelaide, stated: “*...a more nuanced understanding to conservation is required*”.

Reference: Martín-Forés, I., Guerin, G.R., Lowe, A.J. (2017) Weed abundance is positively correlated with native plant diversity in grasslands of southern Australia. *PLOS ONE* 12: e0178681.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0178681>.

- *Summarised by Greg Holland, with thanks to Phil Jensen for pointing out the study. The grassland type-images are from the original paper and the quotes are from the press release at <http://tern.org.au/Newsletter-2017-Dec-Weeds-Biodiversity-pg32357.html>.*

New Environmental Laws Initiative

Birdlife Australia is calling for the existing Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 to be replaced by a new National Environmental Framework with four key features:

- National environment laws that genuinely protect Australia’s natural & cultural heritage
- An independent National Sustainability Commission
- An independent National Environmental Protection Authority
- Guaranteed community rights & participation in environmental decision making



The initiative is being coordinated in conjunction with the Places You Love Alliance (a collaboration amongst a number of environmental groups www.placesyoulove.org) and is aimed at fixing a number of issues that hamper action to turn around the decline in our natural heritage.

That the current legislation is not working properly is well evidenced by the accelerating decline we are observing in a wide range of individual species and biological diversity. Further information is at [https://www.actforbirds.org/resources](http://www.actforbirds.org/resources), which lists a number of failings of the current system, summarises the planned action, and seeks community support in making it happen.

- *Summarised by Greg Holland*

3. Monthly Features

Book of the Month: *Atlas of Living Australia - Recording our Biodiversity*

So you have been wandering around the bush or the farm and just got that long sought after image of a mole cricket. Or you have found an interesting plant, insect, or animal and then spent a pleasant time identifying it.

Now what?

Why not place your sighting in one of the community biodiversity archives that are providing a view of our diverse Australian biosphere at far greater detail and spread than could possibly be accomplished by professionals alone.



Last month I described the inclusion of frog sightings using the app at www.frogid.net.au/. And many of you will have participated in the popular Birds in Backyards census (<http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/>).

This month I complement this with the more comprehensive *Atlas of Living Australia* (ALA) (<https://www.ala.org.au/>).

ALA has been my go to site for identifying new species and recording those that I find. It operates through a friendly interface which provides users with a number of options.

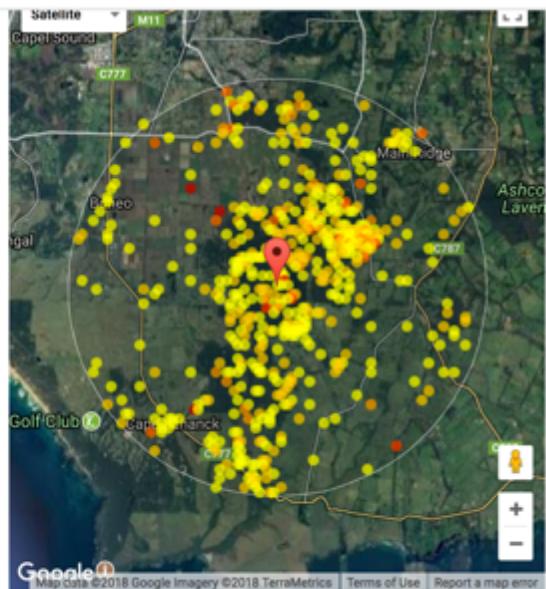
For a quick summary of Australian iconic species just click the relevant panel and up comes an extensive list with images - clicking on any image takes you straight to the full record.

Alternatively, entering the name, genus, family, etc of any species brings up a comprehensive description where you can check out general information, where they have been observed, all available images, the complete scientific classification, etc. The image shows us that our little mole cricket is a real find as it has been rarely observed across Australia.

Want to find out what is found in your area, no worries - clicking on 'Explore by Location' and entering an address brings up a map of all recorded sightings in the area. For example, here is Green's Bush.

A screenshot of the ALA species page for *Gryllotalpa brachyptera*. The page features a main image of the insect, a map showing its distribution across Australia and surrounding regions, and links to other data partners.

All Species	1196	
Animals	316	1. <i>Acacia aculeatissima</i>
Mammals	34	2. <i>Acacia implexa</i>
Birds	204	3. <i>Acacia longifolia</i> subsp. <i>sophorae</i>
Reptiles	20	4. <i>Acacia longifolia</i> : Sydney golden wattle
Amphibians	12	5. <i>Acacia mearnsii</i> : Black wattle
Fishes	2	6. <i>Acacia melanoxylon</i> : Blackwood
Molluscs	7	7. <i>Acacia mucronata</i> subsp. <i>longifolia</i>
Arthropods	35	8. <i>Acacia myrtifolia</i>
Crustaceans	1	9. <i>Acacia paradoxo</i> : Kangaroo acacia
Insects	25	10. <i>Acacia pycnantha</i>
Plants	672	11. <i>Acacia retinodes</i>
Bryophytes	20	12. <i>Acacia stricta</i> : Hop wattle
Gymnosperms	2	13. <i>Acacia suaveolens</i>
FernsAndAllies	41	14. <i>Acacia uncifolia</i> : Coast Wirlida
Angiosperms	590	15. <i>Acacia verticillata</i> subsp. <i>cephalantha</i>
Monocots	210	16. <i>Acacia verticillata</i> subsp. <i>ovaldea</i>
Dicots	380	17. <i>Acacia verticillata</i> subsp. <i>verticillata</i>
Fungi	180	18. <i>Acacia verticillata</i> : Prickly Moses
Chromista	0	19. <i>Acaena echinata</i>
Protozoa	0	20. <i>Acaena novae-zelandiae</i> : Red bidibid
Bacteria	0	21. <i>Acaena ovina</i>
Algae	0	22. <i>Acanthagenys rufogularis</i> : Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater
		23. <i>Acanthiza (Acanthiza) pusilla</i> : Brown Thornbill
		433



Keen amateur ecologists can drill down from an Australia-wide perspective to a single local observation that contains all the information on where the observation was taken.

Uploading to the atlas is relatively easy, set up a personal account then enter each observation through a pop up list. Once a personal account is established, it opens up a remarkable depth of opportunities

Images



Photographer: Greg Holland
Rights: Creative Commons Attribution Noncommercial
[View image details](#)

Date loaded: 2018-03-29
Date last processed: 2017-10-31

Scientific name	<i>Coracina (Coracina) novaehollandiae</i>
Taxon rank	Species
Common name	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Kingdom	Animalia
Phylum	Chordata
Class	Aves
Order	Passeriformes
Family	Cuculidae
Genus	<i>Coracina</i>
Species	<i>Coracina novaehollandiae</i>
Taxonomic issues	No issues
Name match metric	Taxon GUID match The match was based on the supplied taxon concept ID rather than the scientific name
Name parse type	UNKNOWN

screen and voila, up comes several pages of information.

ALA is great if there is a good idea of the species type, but searching for that weird insect can be time consuming and uploading new sightings does not take advantage of mobile phone technology. Prefer to use, e.g., the Frog Census or the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas? No worries, their data also are migrated across to the ALA.

The World Wide Web certainly brings Citizen Science to the fore in documenting our natural heritage.

- Article and mole cricket image by Greg Holland

extending from joining up with a range of Citizen Science groups to downloading data for science projects. It is easy to bring up any data that you have contributed, a few clicks on the interactive

Weed of the Month: Bulrush (Cattail or Exotic Cumbungi)

Species name: *Typha latifolia*

Family: Typhaceae

Origin: Europe, Eurasia, Africa and North and South America

Status: A weed of waterways, bulrushes are scattered through southeastern Australia, though identification difficulties mean it is probably more common.

Growth Habit: Tall, reed-like plants to 3-m with long, strap-like leaves and in season a cylinder of flowers and seeds on a long spike. Bulrushes are found only in the near vicinity or in water of up to 1 m deep.

Reproduction: Through seed and spreading underground rhizomes.

Dispersal: Rhizome dispersal occurs locally and can lead to dense stands. Seeds are dispersed by wind or water and can spread long distances downstream.

Why Control It: The bulrushes may form dense stands that inhibit stock watering, block waterways and reduce flow. They die back in winter leaving a mass of rotting vegetation that may affect water quality.



Control Methods: Cutting 50-150 mm below the waterline at flowering time and following up when minor regrowth occurs can be very effective and normally removes most infestations in one season. An excavator can be used for larger infestations. Chemical methods should be left to experts because of the danger of water contamination.

Similar Plants are the native broad-leaf cumbungi (*Typha orientalis*) and narrow-leaf Cumbungi (*Typha domingensis*). These important habitat species can be very difficult to differentiate from the bulrushes and may require expert analysis. In essence if it has dark brown flowers with the upper (male) component attached to the lower (female) component it is a bulrush. Note that the natives do not have a major impact on waterways.

Further reading: The pamphlet at http://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/Documents/weeds_cumbungi.pdf provides a nice summary, including a simple identification guide.

- Article and image by Greg Holland, with thanks to Gidja Walker for the information on differentiating the native from the exotic species.

4. Newsletter Feedback

Do you have a story to tell? Is there a weed that you want to know about? Have you identified a new, rare, or interesting species? Or a good book? Please contact greg@carranya.net for it to be featured in the newsletter.

5. Upcoming Events

Description	Time & Date	Location	RSVP date	Contact
Planting Working Bee	Sat 7 th April 9.00am to noon	James and Jackie Everett's property, 323 Myers Road, Merricks North.	Malcolm Allchin: allchinm@gmail.com	Malcolm Allchin: allchinm@gmail.com
Public meeting – remove the “Public Acquisition Overlay” that runs across Tootgarook Swamp and Rye	Sat 21 April 5pm onwards	Rye Civic Hall, 12 Napier St Rye	N/A	spiffa.secretary@gmail.com
Frog Night <i>See flyer below</i>	Sat 21 April	Near Devilbend Reservoir	See below	legendarytales@bigpond.com
Clearing and Planting Working Bee	Sat 21 st April 9.00am to noon	Michele Sabto's property, 7 Kentucky Road, Merricks North	Malcolm Allchin: allchinm@gmail.com	Malcolm Allchin: allchinm@gmail.com
2018 Mornington Peninsula Food Forum <i>see flyer below</i>	Tues 24 April 9.30am to 4pm	Balnarring Community Hall	N/A	Sarah Saxton: sarah.saxton@mornpen.vic.gov.au
Clean Up and Replanting Working Bee	Sat 19 th May 9.00am to noon	Mechanics Reserve, Balnarring Road, Balnarring	Malcolm Allchin: allchinm@gmail.com	Malcolm Allchin: allchinm@gmail.com
Advanced Macropod, Koala and Wombat Rescue Training	Sat 26 May/17 Nov	Thornbury	N/A	Contact http://wildliferescuers.org.au/contact-us/
Basic Wildlife Rescue and Transport Training	Sat 28 July/ 22 Sep/ 1 Dec	Thornbury	N/A	http://wildliferescuers.org.au/training-registration-28-july/
2018 Mornington Peninsula Food Forum Key themes: - Agritourism - Food Distribution - New ideas for a changing environment	Tues 24 April from 09:30	Balnarring Community Hall	peter@wpcln.org.au	https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/mornington-peninsula-food-forum-tickets-43118440416

Coming Attractions

Balnarring
Mornington Peninsula
April 24 | 2018

2018 Mornington Peninsula Food Forum

Building a resilient, agile food economy on the Mornington Peninsula.

Tuesday 24 April 2018 | 9:30 am – 4:00 pm
Balnarring Community Hall
3041 Frankston - Flinders Road, Balnarring, VIC 3926

This one day forum will bring together local food growers, makers and advocates to tackle key issues and opportunities around food production on the Mornington Peninsula.
Agri-tourism | Food distribution | New ideas in a changing landscape

Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea included.
For ticket sales click [here](#)
General Admission \$40-gst | MPP registered Producers \$20-gst

For more information contact Sarah Sexton at: sarah.sexton@mornpen.vic.gov.au

This event is being run by the Mornington Peninsula Shire Food Industry Advisory Body (FIAB) with a Ripe For Change grant and financial support from the Waterfront Centres Landscape Network.



Melbourne Water

invite you to our

FROG NIGHT TUEPONG APRIL 21ST 2018

As part of Melbourne Water's ongoing *Healthy Waterways* project we will visit a property near Devilbend Reservoir. We will be recording frog calls, with a mission to identify and locate which frogs exist there – and if any are rare or threatened species.



**BBQ STARTS AT 4.00pm
TALK & WALK 5.15pm-8pm**

Numbers are limited.
Address supplied to respondents.
Please RSVP by April 16th:
legendarytales@bigpond.com
stating number of attendees, and phone number.
No dogs please.
Children over 7 welcome.

PLEASE BRING: gum boots, torch, cushion or chair, drinking water and mosquito repellent.
Before arriving download **Melbourne Water Frog Census App** @ www.melbournewater.com.au or from the App store.

6. Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network Grants Guide March 2018

Name of Grant	Date due	Amount	Details
Norman Wettenhall Foundation	Open 20 th March (also: 19 June, 18 Sept, 11 Dec)	\$5,000 or \$5,000-\$25,000.	https://wettenhall.org.au/grants/small-environmental-grants/
Biodiversity On-ground Action - 2018 Community & Volunteer Action Grants	3 rd April	\$5,000 to \$50,000	www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/community-action
Ian Potter Foundation	20 th April	\$500 and \$5,000	http://www.ianpotter.org.au/funding-rounds/
Australian ethical community grants	TBA upon registration	TBA upon registration	https://www.australianethical.com.au/community-grants/
MP Shire Flexigrant	All year	Up to \$1000	http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/our_shire/community_grants
FNCV Environment Fund	TBA upon registration	Up to \$1000	http://www.fncv.org.au/environment-fund/

RACV	All year	Up to \$2000	https://www.racv.com.au/about-racv/our-business/community-involvement/community-support.html
Ross Trust	All year	Up to \$20,000	http://www.rosstrust.org.au/grants/apply-for-a-grant/
EPA Inspiring Environmental Solutions community funding program	All year	Around \$25,000 to \$100,000.	http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/programs/inspiring-environmental-solutions
John T Reid Charitable Trust	All year	Not specified	http://www.johntreidtrusts.com.au/whatwefund
Melbourne Water Stream Frontage Grant	All year	Variable	https://www.melbournewater.com.au/
Canon Oceana Environmental Grants	Ongoing	\$11,000	https://www.canon.com.au/about-canon/community/environmental-grants
Sidney Myer Foundation	Ongoing	Not specified	http://myerfoundation.org.au/grants/sustainability-environment/
Colonial Foundation	Ongoing	Not specified	http://www.colonialfoundation.org.au/4330926/colonial-foundation-trust-grant-program.htm
Greenfleet	Ongoing	Can be substantial	https://www.greenfleet.com.au/

7. Local Information

Shire Nursery

Open Wed/Thurs/Fri 9.00am – 3.00pm and first Saturday each month 9.00am-1.00pm. The Shire Nursery specialises in indigenous and native plants. Ph: 5974-8417, email nursery@mornpen.vic.gov.au

Eco Living Display Centre

Open: Fridays 1-4pm & first Saturday each month 9.00am-1.00pm. For activities and workshops visit www.mornpen.vic.gov.au or contact the Renewable Resources department on 5950-1259.

Home Harvest exchange

Too many lemons and not enough parsley? Why not take part in a Home Harvest Exchange? This community initiative allows people to bring their own excess produce and go home with someone else's for free! Bring home grown edibles, eggs, preserved produce, honey, seeds and seedlings. No minimum amount and no money changes hands.



Mornington 3 rd Sat of the month; 2pm - 3pm Dig It, Mornington Community Garden, Mitchell St, Mornington. (Melways Reference: 145 D3)	Rosebud Last Saturday of the month; 2-3pm Rosebud Community Garden, Lawson Park, Leon Av, Rosebud. (Melways Reference: 170 F2)	Mount Martha First Saturday each month 3-4pm The Briars, 450 Nepean Hwy, Mt Martha.
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StopPitt

The StopPitt Program is dedicated to reducing the high impact of pittosporum on our bushlands. Information can be found at <http://www.stoppitt.org.au/about-pittosporum.html> and <https://www.facebook.com/stoppittosporum/>

Ben O'Leary, StopPitt Program Chairman at benjamin.oleary@monash.edu.

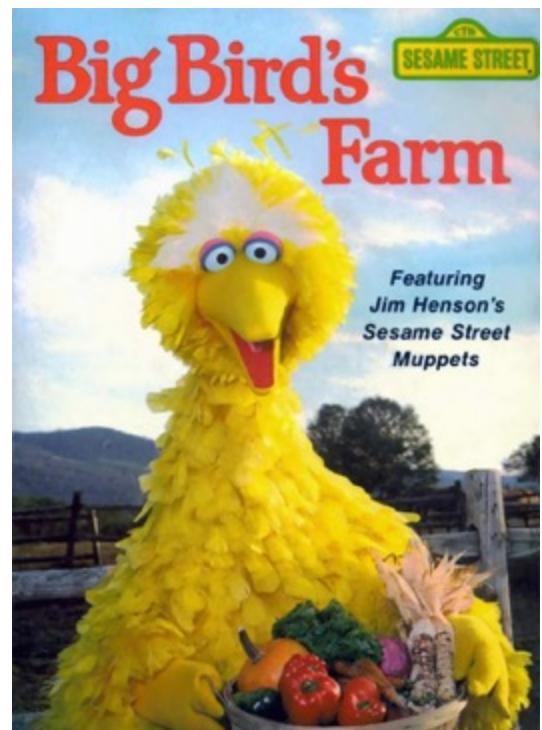
Advice on Removing Native Vegetation

For assistance and advice in relation to the removal of native vegetation, please contact nativevegetation.support@delwp.vic.gov.au

Birds on Farms

Birds on farms is an initiative of Birdlife Australia who work with a number of regional partners, local branches and Landcare groups to survey birds on farms and engage the community in conservation. They are looking for landowners prepared to host surveys, which can be done by the farmer with Birdlife Australia help, or by trained volunteers. In addition to bird surveys, outcomes will include evaluations of the ecological condition of farms, information for identifying priority sites for conservation, guidelines for increasing bird diversity in rural areas. Findings will be shared with participating landowners and volunteers.

Further information, please contact the Project Officer, Caroline Wilson at woodlandbirds@birdlife.org.au. Electronic copies of the *Birds on Farms: Ecological Management for Agricultural Sustainability* publication can be obtained at <http://birdlife.org.au/documents/OTHPUB-BirdsOnFarms.pdf>



8. Contacts

- **Jacqui Salter**, Landcare Facilitator, MPLN and project coordinator for Greens Bush to Arthurs Seat Biolink Project: Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au ph: 0408 213 079
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- **Briars Nursery**, Nepean Hwy Mt. Martha, Tel. 5974 8417 Email nursery@mornpen.vic.gov.au
- **Wildlife Help on the Mornington Peninsula** (WHOMP) All hours 0417 380 687 0417 395 883
- **Animalia Shelter**, 0435 822 699 All hours www.animaliawildlife.org.au
- **Crystal Ocean Wildlife Shelter** (Rye) - crystal_ocean2003@yahoo.com.au 0407 787 770

9. Image at the End

A while back down at Tootgarook we had just finished an interesting field lecture that included a description of the endangered swamp skink that was making a comeback in the area.

Casually glancing around, I saw a nankeen kestrel (*Falco cenchroides*) suddenly plummet earthwards, then to rise back up and pass right overhead - complete with a swamp skink in its talons!



Kestrels evolved some 2.5 million years ago in Africa and then spread throughout the world, undergoing speciation across the New World and Australasia along the way. Nowadays, an observant traveller will notice their characteristic fluttering as they hover overhead almost anywhere on earth.

Our own little Aussie species, the nankeen kestrel, is a common sight around the Peninsula and pretty well all of Australia.

I have spent a pleasant hour or two watching them hunting, especially over the grasslands east of Cape Schanck. Kestrels characteristically hover with rapidly fluttering wings until movement below announces a possible target. If yes, they execute a lovely wingover into a suicide dive, pulling out just centimetres from destruction, legs extended to grab the unlucky dinner.

This dive is quite different to that of the kites: kestrels come head down, wings in a tight V; kites descend with their body horizontal to the ground and wings arched above like an adjustable parachute.

- Article and images by Greg Holland.