



## Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network News

### February 2019 Edition



*Left: Koala in Woods Reserve  
photographed by Michael Mann*

Greetings Landcare members & associates,  
I hope everyone has enjoyed a relaxing summer break. I'm excited to be working closely with Dirk Jenson and other members of SWaMP Landcare on planning a koala mapping and protection project across the peninsula, following on from recent concern regarding declining koala numbers on the peninsula. We will be starting a koala mapping database so please email me if you have any recent (within 2 years) sightings of a koala not already reported on the "Mornington Peninsula Koala Tree Planting" Facebook page which now has 850 followers (well done Dirk!). I also encourage you to please contact Melbourne University Honours student Djarra Delany if you either participated in the Mornington Peninsula Shire's 'Our Peninsula 2021' feedback session in 2017 or if you would have participated but weren't able to (he is grateful for any assistance). Lastly, Enviro Week at the Briars is coming up again in March. If you would like to assist with the Landcare puppet show, please email me. I look forward to assisting all of our Landcare groups to achieve their ambitions for 2019.

Warm Regards,  
Jacqui Salter, Landcare Facilitator for MPLN [Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au)



Wood Ducks Landing

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## 1. Opportunities & News

### *Volunteer leadership training*

The PPWCMA is exploring the concept of putting on some leadership and governance training for volunteers. The completion of leadership and governance training would inform support stronger funding applications and decision making from among Landcare groups.

A survey has been set up to get some feedback and ensure the training meets your needs.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CDB2GPN>

Please fill it out to help us get the training we need.

### *Reminder! Like @mplandcare Facebook page*

Please ‘Like’ the Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network Facebook page(@mplandcare) and choose to receive notifications to keep up to date with Landcare-related news.

<https://www.facebook.com/Mornington-Peninsula-Landcare-Network-958968857459004/>

## Join a Victorian Water or Catchment Board

### Have you considered being on a Victorian Water or Catchment Board?



#### You can make your community a better place!

The Victorian Government is committed to community engagement and increasing diversity in water sector leadership. This will encourage new ideas and ensure we best reflect our diverse communities.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is:

- promoting board opportunities to talented candidates from all walks of life;
- increasing diversity on boards including the number of women and Aboriginal Victorians in the water and catchment sector; and
- encouraging and attracting talented candidates to apply in regional Victoria.

Expressions of Interest open February / March 2019



Environment,  
Land, Water  
and Planning

**Board Directors come from all walks of life, including farmers, small business owners, project managers and other professionals.**

If you have experience in one or more of the following disciplines, you should consider contributing your skills on a Water Corporation or Catchment Management Authority board:

- Financial and commercial management
- Community engagement
- Land and water management
- Climate change adaptation
- Strategy and business management
- Infrastructure and project management
- Primary production
- Public administration and governance
- Environmental or natural resources management.

[water.vic.gov.au/water-corporations](http://water.vic.gov.au/water-corporations)

[water.vic.gov.au/catchment-governance](http://water.vic.gov.au/catchment-governance)

Expressions of Interest open February / March 2019

If you are interested in being contacted when board appointments become available, please email your name and contact details: [waterandcatchments@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:waterandcatchments@delwp.vic.gov.au)

For further information, please contact:  
Vesna Kebakoska – 03 9938 6807

or [delwp.vic.gov.au/boards-and-governance/board-vacancies](http://delwp.vic.gov.au/boards-and-governance/board-vacancies)



Environment,  
Land, Water  
and Planning

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## 2. State of the Environment

### **Reminder: Have Your Say on the Shire Draft Biodiversity Conservation Plan**

*“The Mornington Peninsula is a unique place when it comes to biodiversity – it is home to an incredible range of plants and animals, including species and areas of regional, state, national and international significance.”*

The Shire has just released its draft Biodiversity Conservation Plan for public comment, and are inviting Landcare Groups to ‘Have Your Say’.

Significant research and consultation has been undertaken to develop the draft Plan, which establishes strategies and actions to help us achieve best practice management for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity on the Mornington Peninsula. The draft Plan is largely informed by our State of Biodiversity Report which, for the first time, brings together information on the peninsula’s biodiversity values – their extent, condition and threats. Drawing on data from scientific, government and community sources, this comprehensive report is essential reading for anyone interested in the peninsula’s natural environment. You can read more about the State of Biodiversity report at <https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Your-Property/Environment/Flora-Fauna-Biodiversity/State-of-Biodiversity-Report>.

The draft Plan is on public exhibition until 20 February 2019 and you can download a copy at: <https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Have-your-say/Have-Your-Say-Draft-Biodiversity-Conservation-Plan>.

The Natural Systems Team is also planning an information session on the draft Plan for our Friends and Landcare Groups in late January – so stay tuned, we’ll let you know the details via email.

### **Brown Marmorated Stinkbugs: A potential Major Environmental Pest**

The Brown marmorated stink bug (*Halyomorpha halys*), an exotic plant pest, has recently been found in a trap in Melbourne’s south-eastern suburbs.

These are an agricultural and nuisance pest that shelters inside homes and buildings, vehicles, machinery and sheds, producing a very unpleasant odour when it’s disturbed or squashed – hence the term ‘stink bug’. Originally from eastern Asia, this pest it is now widespread in North America and Europe.



Adults are between 12-17mm long with a distinctive brown shield-shaped body above image. The shield colour varies but is generally mottled with a reddish tinge. Notice the distinctive banding on its antennae and the outer edge of its abdomen. The young have a variety of instar stages including the bright red with black bands shown in the second image.

If you see any like these, please contact the hotline 1800 084 881. Action taken now will minimise its impact and spread and help stop future major issues. Or check <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/pest-insects-and-mites/brown-marmorated-stink-bug> for further information.

## Why is That There?

Wandering around our Peninsula, a range of features stand out: Arthur's Seat; Mount Martha; the Bay; the shallow waters of Westernport; the low, rolling hills of the Nepean Peninsula; our longest waterway down Main Creek; and the impressive Tootgarook Swamp – to name a few.

How did these come to be?

My geologist brother, Selwyn, was down for a holiday recently and some gentle ribbing on the infamy of having the nearby Selwyn Fault named after him<sup>1</sup> led to a pleasant few hours assessing how the various Peninsula features came to be (and consuming the odd glass of red along the way). Following is a summary of the broad conclusions, which focuses on the Peninsula region south of Mount Martha.

### Overview

Taking an overview perspective (Fig. 1, Latrobe Society, 2012), there are four major building systems: the sea, and three recent (by geological times) fault lines – Rowsley west of the Bay, Selwyn to its east, and Tyabb/Clyde along the Peninsula east coast (not shown).

To understand their importance, we first take a short lesson in geological processes.

Fault lines come in two main flavours: 1. Two land masses slide past each other (tear faults, such as the infamous Californian San Andreas Fault); and, 2. One block of land is subsiding and the other rising (sink/uplift faults such as those that generated the Great Rift Valley in Africa). If there are two roughly-parallel faults the result is to generate either a graben/sunkland, or a lifted ridge called a horst (Fig. 2, Class Zone, 2019).

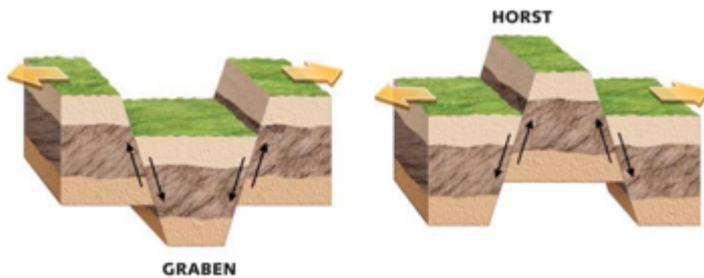


Fig. 2: Illustration of the Graben subsidence and Horst uplift processes between parallel fault lines.

In other words, Port Phillip occupies part of a sunkland valley that extends from the sea, between the Peninsula and west of Geelong, and up into the Yarra Valley.

### The Southern Peninsula

Zeroing in on the southern Peninsula shows that we live in a complex and interesting geological region – one with many intersecting fault lines and rock types (Fig. 3, Earth Resources 2019). These lead to frequent small earth tremors (19 in the past decade, of which most are undetectable), that collectively have shaped most of what we see.



Fig. 1: Illustration of the development of Port Phillip as a sunkland between two fault lines.

Consider Fig. 1 again. Subsidence between the Rowsley and Selwyn Faults created a large sunkland. The western side was partly filled by basaltic rock extruded up around 20 million years ago. On the eastern side, the sea flooded in to create Port Phillip<sup>2</sup> (see Holdgate et al 2011).

<sup>1</sup> The Selwyn Fault is actually named after Victoria's Government Geologist in the mid 1800s.

<sup>2</sup> The correct name for our bay is Port Phillip (as named by Mathew Flinders), however 'Bay' is normally added, so I have gone with the mob and use either interchangeably.

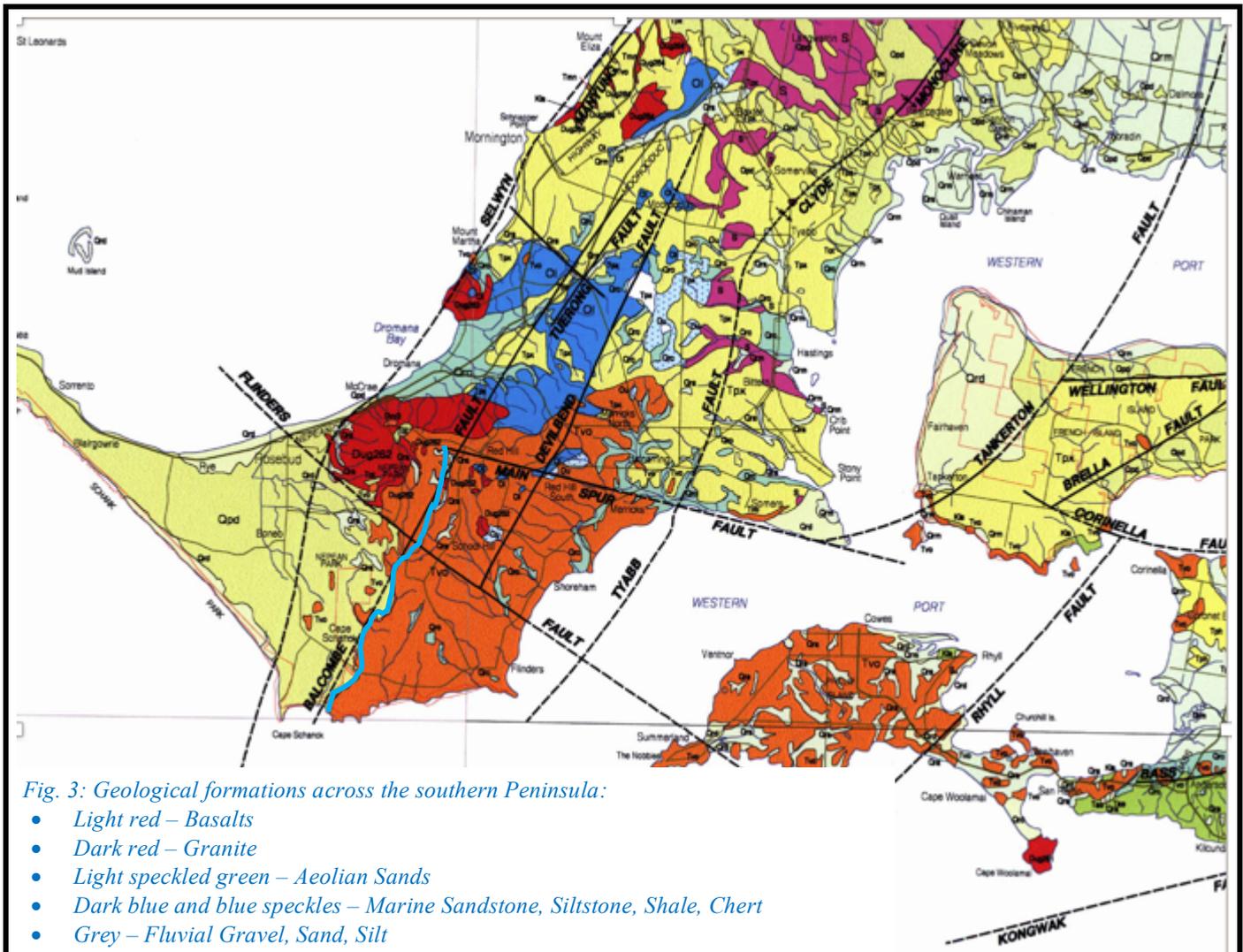


Fig. 3: Geological formations across the southern Peninsula:

- Light red – Basalts
- Dark red – Granite
- Light speckled green – Aeolian Sands
- Dark blue and blue speckles – Marine Sandstone, Siltstone, Shale, Chert
- Grey – Fluvial Gravel, Sand, Silt
- Thin Blue Line – Approximate path of Main Creek.

To our west, the Selwyn Fault extends roughly north-south from King Island, crossing the Peninsula near Cape Schank to enter the Bay at McCrae, then following the coast until turning back inland near Seaford. To the east is the Tyabb Fault, which also lies roughly north south and connects to the Clyde Monocline<sup>3</sup>.

Between the Selwyn Fault and Tyabb/Clyde line lies the uplifted land, or horst, that comprises much of the Peninsula with Main Ridge along its centre in the south. East of the Tyabb/Clyde line lies another sunkland that comprises the Westernport region.

Extending northwest-southeast across the southern Peninsula is the Flinders Fault. Uplift on the northeast side of this fault has aided in the development of Main Ridge and Arthurs Seat – a massive granite block left over from ancient volcanic and tectonic upheavals around 400 million years ago. The same granite makes up Mt Martha, with an erosion valley separating the two.

Across the Bay lies the Bellarine Peninsula - another horst between the Bellarine Fault on its southeast coast and the Curlew's Monocline along the shores of Corio Bay (Fig. 1).

Overlying these tectonic shifts are a range of rock types combined with features arising from erosion and/or building by wind and water.

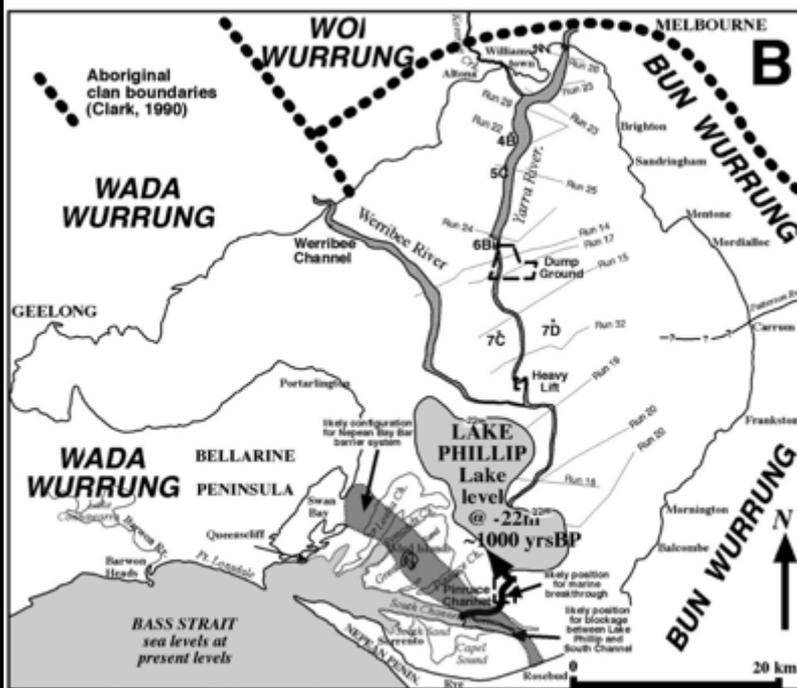
<sup>3</sup> A monocline is where the strata are bent sharply up or down, but have not fractured as occurs in a fault.

The Nepean Peninsula extending west of the Selwyn Fault to Point Nepean is actually part of the Port Phillip Sunkland, but it is now comprised largely of aeolian sand dunes formed around 100,000 years ago (the speckled green area in Fig. 3). This is a calciferous sand containing siliceous grains from eroded granite and especially quartz, to which has been added calcium carbonate from crushed sea shells and similar. Water dissolving the calcium carbonate has led to much of this region now being cemented together – and also provided the limestone for house building and cement firing that built the rapidly-growing Melbourne in the 1800s.

The prevailing westerly winds also have blown sand over and east of the Selwyn fault - hence the term ‘aeolian sands’.

### ***Our Disappearing Bay***

The emptying of the bay when the sea-level dropped during the last ice age is well known. A second event occurred during a dry period around 1-2 thousand years ago, when a sand dune extended across the heads and blocked off Port Phillip from the sea. Evaporation exceeded the water flowing from the Yarra and other streams, and the water level dropped by 22 m and the bay shrunk to a small, salty lake (Fig. 4, Holdgate et al 2011). This occurrence was originally documented from Koori verbal histories and subsequently confirmed by geological survey. Subsequent breaching of the dunes re-flooded the area to create what we see today.



*Fig. 4: Lake Phillip 1,000 years ago. Also shown are the major Koori tribal grounds.*

The southeastern Peninsula is dominated by basalt extruded up from deep down around 10-20 million years ago. This basalt extends west to near the Selwyn Fault, but is partially covered in that region by aeolian sands (Fig. 3).

The Balcombe Fault crosses the south coast in Bushrangers Bay and extends northwards through the basaltic zone and along Main Ridge. This appears to be at least partially a tear fault arising from lateral movement of different blocks of land. Main Creek follows this fault from its source to the sea (the blue line added to Fig. 3). I have not been able to confirm this from published studies, but my working hypothesis is that Main Creek evolved by eroding through the fractured basalt along this fault line.

These are just a few examples, there are more. Take some time to look over Fig. 3. Notice the sharp changes between the Devilbend and Tuerong Faults. What does the Main Spur Fault tell you about the geography of Western Port?

### ***The Wandering Yarra***

Interestingly, our muddy old Yarra River also has had a quite diverse history. Nowadays it flows into the head of the Bay. During the Ice Age (~10 thousand years ago), the lowered sea level left Port Phillip empty and the Yarra flowed out past the heads. It has left its signature from these times in an underwater canyon that extends south across the Bay then along the edge of the Selwyn Fault and finally west past the blocking Nepean Peninsula to leave through The Rip (e.g. Bird 2019).

In more ancient times the Yarra has been successively blocked by development and movement of dunes, and uplift from the Selwyn Fault. As a result, at one time it entered the basin near Geelong and on another occasion it flowed down the Peninsula and out past Arthurs Seat (Gill, 1949). The Arthurs Seat Yarra exit region is now marked by extensive fluvial gravels, sand and silt extending around Dromana Bay and some distance inland (Fig. 3).

The story continues in the next Newsletter, where we shall look at the various soil types and their relationship to the above geological observations.

I emphasise that although this information is as accurate as possible and generally based on published studies, some of it is based on our inference and hypothesis. Any additions or corrections would be very welcome.

- *Article by Greg Holland with thanks to Selwyn Holland, figures and specific information and images derived from the listed references.*

**Note Added in Postscript:** The small (magnitude 2.7) earth tremor that shook parts of the Peninsula and eastern Melbourne on January 12<sup>th</sup> came from the intersection of the Main Spur and Tankerton Faults (Fig. 3).

## References

Bird, E., 2019: The Geology & Geomorphology – Series 8. Downloaded from:

<https://poi-australia.com.au/points-of-interest/australia/victoria/point-cook/port-phillip-bay-vic/>

Bowler, J.M., 1966: Port Phillip Survey 1957-1967 - The Geology and Geomorphology. *Mem. Nat Mus. Vtct.*, **27**, 19-67.

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Class Zone, 2019: [http://www.classzone.com/vpg\\_ebooks/ml\\_earthscience\\_na/accessibility/ml\\_earthscience\\_na/page\\_245.pdf](http://www.classzone.com/vpg_ebooks/ml_earthscience_na/accessibility/ml_earthscience_na/page_245.pdf).

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Holdgate, G.R., B. Wagstaff, and S. J. Gallagher, 2011: Did Port Phillip Bay nearly dry up between 2800 and 1000 cal. yr BP? Bay floor channelling evidence, seismic and core dating. *Aust. J. Earth Sci.*, **58**, 157–175.

<http://legacy.earthsci.unimelb.edu.au/basinstudies/Publications/Holdgate%20et%20al%202011port.pdf>.

Latrobe Society, 2012: <http://www.latrobesociety.org.au/LaTrobeana/LaTrobeanaV11n1.pdf>.

SPIFFA also has a number of interesting references at <http://www.spiffa.org/geology-and-groundwater-compilations.html>.



Morning Fog Carranya

### 3. Monthly Features

#### *Plant of the Month: Spirogyra*

Noticed a wiry, tangled mess full of bubbles that has taken over your dam or pond? You may have a growth of one of the spirogyra algae.

**Species name:** *Spirogyra* sp. Note that there are ~400 species globally, each of which requires special equipment to identify, so here we just treat the genus as a whole.

**Family:** Zygnemataceae.



**Origin:** Global – note comment on species.

**Status:** Common in their range, especially through spring.

**Growth Habit:** A tangled mess of green strands that will appear hair-like to the eye, but are actually tiny, connected cells each <math><100\ \mu\text{m}</math> thick but several cm long. Within these cells are helical spirals containing the green chloroplasts that convert carbon dioxide to carbon for the plant. They overwinter underwater, then in spring oxygen bubbles are generated and brings a mass of the algae to the surface. This mass can become so thick as to be impenetrable to small aquatic creatures.



**Reproduction:** By both sexual development and vegetative processes. Sexual reproduction is quite complex, vegetative reproduction simply involves plants splitting apart.

**Weed Status:** These may rapidly reproduce to completely dominate a still water body.

**Dispersal:** Probably by water-bird taxi and also by floods.

**Toxicity:** No known toxic effects.

**Control Methods:** Short term by removing the plants from the water. They also will disappear naturally as the season progresses, particularly if unseasonal heavy rain occurs. Long-term control may be possible by removing sources of nitrogen entering the water.

**Similar Plants:** None.

**Further reading:** <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirogyra>.

- Article and images by Greg Holland; distribution from Atlas of Living Australia.

## 4. Upcoming Events

| Description   | Time & Date               | Location  | RSVP date            | Contact  |
|---|---------------------------|---|----------------------|--|
| Detox your home – Annual free chemical disposal through Frankston City Council                                  | Sat 2 Feb 9am – 3pm       | Skye – Site address provided upon registration                      | <i>Not specified</i> | To register: <a href="https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/detoxyourhome">https://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/detoxyourhome</a><br>Or call 1300 363 744.            |
| Compost under the vines at Crittenden’s Winery – Free event   | Sat 9 Feb 2.30pm – 4.30pm | 25 Harrisons Rd, Dromana  | Friday 8 Feb         | RSVP essential: <a href="mailto:Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au">Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au</a>   |
| Sheepwash Creek working bee at Arthurs Seat   | Sun 24 Feb 9:30 - 11:30   | Meet opposite from 451 Arthurs Seat Rd, Red Hill                    | <i>N/A</i>           |  |
| Gardens for wildlife - Free workshop through Frankston City Council. Learn how to create habitat in your garden | Sat 23 March 10am – 12pm  | Karingal PLACE Neighbourhood Centre, 103 Ashleigh Avenue, Frankston | <i>Not specified</i> | To register: <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/gardens-for-wildlife-tickets-54687914023">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/gardens-for-wildlife-tickets-54687914023</a> |



# SAVE THE DATE

NEXT LANDCARE VICTORIA INC BIENNIAL FORUM

**29 – 31 MARCH 2019**

LANDCAREVIC.ORG.AU

**Landcare Victoria Inc. Biannual Forum - 29-31 March 2019**

Further details coming soon!

**Southern Peninsula Flora & Fauna Association (SPIFFA)  
presents:**

## The Common Myna – An urban biodiversity threat to Eastern Australia



**Date:**  
Mon 4<sup>th</sup> February 2019

**Time:**  
7.30pm

**Where:**  
Seawinds Community  
Hub, 11a Allambi Ave,  
Capel Sound

RSVPs essential.

Please email  
[Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au) to register your  
interest.

Have you noticed these little brown and yellow birds popping up in places where they weren't before?

The Common or Indian Myna was named "Australia's most important pest/problem", yet it has not been declared as an invasive species in Victoria or NSW.

Senior Darebin Parklands Ranger Peter Wiltshire will be drawing from 33 years of experience to share his insight into Myna's origin, history, behaviour, habitats, effects on biodiversity and trapping methods in an entertaining video presentation, with assistance from Michael Mann.

## Crittenden Estate – How a local winery abandoned the use of artificial fertilisers in favour of their own generated compost

In 2007, Crittenden family wines on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula decided to abandon the use of artificial fertilisers in their vineyard.

You are invited to a tour of and discussion about the compost heap with Garry Crittenden followed by a tasting of a range of the family's wines.



**When:** Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2.30pm – 4.30pm

**Where:** Crittenden Estate, 25 Harrisons Rd, Dromana

For more information, check out:

Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/277598439>

Garry Crittenden YouTube Channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/edit?o=U&ar=2&video\\_id=mmQqT1kWnn8](https://www.youtube.com/edit?o=U&ar=2&video_id=mmQqT1kWnn8)

**RSVP essential** – limited to 30 places: [Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au](mailto:Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au)

## 5. Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network Grants Guide Dec 2018

| Name of Grant   | Date due              | Amount                        | Details   |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 3CA Adapting to climate change                                  | 31 March              | \$25,000 - \$75,000           | <a href="https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/adapting-to-climate-change-impacts/community-climate-change-adaptation-3ca-grants-program">https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/adapting-to-climate-change-impacts/community-climate-change-adaptation-3ca-grants-program</a> |
| Australian ethical community grants                             | TBA upon registration | TBA upon registration         | <a href="https://www.australianethical.com.au/community-grants/">https://www.australianethical.com.au/community-grants/</a>   |
| MP Shire Flexigrant   | All year              | Up to \$1000                  | <a href="http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/our_shire/community_grants">http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/our_shire/community_grants</a>   |
| FNCV Environment Fund   | TBA upon registration | Up to \$1000                  | <a href="http://www.fncv.org.au/environment-fund/">http://www.fncv.org.au/environment-fund/</a>   |
| RACV  | All year              | Up to \$2000                  | <a href="https://www.racv.com.au/about-racv/our-business/community-involvement/community-support.html">https://www.racv.com.au/about-racv/our-business/community-involvement/community-support.html</a>   |
| Ross Trust  | All year              | Up to \$20,000                | <a href="http://www.rosstrust.org.au/grants/apply-for-a-grant/">http://www.rosstrust.org.au/grants/apply-for-a-grant/</a>   |
| EPA Inspiring Environmental Solutions community funding program | All year              | Around \$25,000 to \$100,000. | <a href="http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/programs/inspiring-environmental-solutions">http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/programs/inspiring-environmental-solutions</a>   |
| John T Reid Charitable Trust                                    | All year              | Not specified                 | <a href="http://www.johntreidtrusts.com.au/whatwefund">http://www.johntreidtrusts.com.au/whatwefund</a>   |
| Melbourne Water Stream Frontage Grant                           | All year              | Variable                      | <a href="https://www.melbournewater.com.au/">https://www.melbournewater.com.au/</a>   |
| Canon Oceana Environmental Grants                               | Ongoing               | \$11,000                      | <a href="https://www.canon.com.au/about-canon/community/environmental-grants">https://www.canon.com.au/about-canon/community/environmental-grants</a>   |
| Sidney Myer Foundation  | Ongoing               | Not specified                 | <a href="http://myerfoundation.org.au/grants/sustainability-environment/">http://myerfoundation.org.au/grants/sustainability-environment/</a>   |
| Colonial Foundation   | Ongoing               | Not specified                 | <a href="http://www.colonialfoundation.org.au/4330926/colonial-foundation-trust-grant-program.htm">http://www.colonialfoundation.org.au/4330926/colonial-foundation-trust-grant-program.htm</a>   |
| Greenfleet  | Ongoing               | Can be substantial            | <a href="https://www.greenfleet.com.au/">https://www.greenfleet.com.au/</a>   |

## 6. Local Information

**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.

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

**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](http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au) or contact the Renewable Resources department on 5950-1259.

## Help and Advice for Native Fauna and Flora

**Wildlife Contact Information** about wildlife rehabilitators, rescue organisations and veterinarians in your local area who can care for the type of animal in need of help, such as a kangaroo or koala. It is smartphone compatible and includes advice for first responders according to the type of wildlife and the injury it appears to have sustained. (<https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/injured-native-wildlife/help-for-injured-wildlife>).

**Snake Catcher:** <https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Your-Property/Animals-Pets/Pest-Nuisance-Animals/Snakes>.

**Wildlife Help on the Mornington Peninsula** (WHOMP): All hours 0417 380 687 or 0417 395 883.

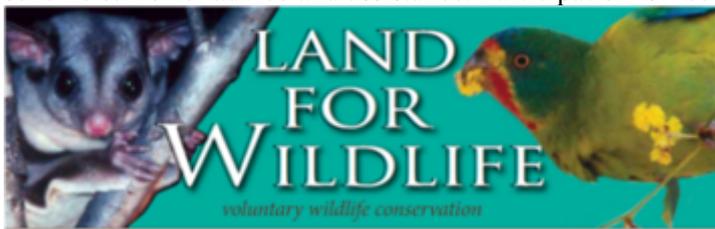
**Animalia Shelter:** 0435 822 699 All hours [www.animaliawildlife.org.au](http://www.animaliawildlife.org.au)

**Crystal Ocean Wildlife Shelter** (Rye): [crystal\\_ocean2003@yahoo.com.au](mailto:crystal_ocean2003@yahoo.com.au) 0407 787 770

**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](mailto:nativevegetation.support@delwp.vic.gov.au)

**Shire Nursery at Briars:** 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](mailto:nursery@mornpen.vic.gov.au)

**Land for Wildlife:** If you wish to create or protect wildlife habitats on your property, then the Land for Wildlife scheme can offer advice and assistance. Participation is free and membership doesn't alter the legal status of your property in any way. A Land for Wildlife sign is provided free of charge to acknowledge the efforts being made for wildlife conservation. 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](mailto:peter.johnson@delwp.vic.gov.au) <https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/protecting-wildlife/land-for-wildlife>

## Landcare and Related Contacts

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- **Greg Holland:** Newsletter Editor [greg@carranya.net](mailto:greg@carranya.net)
- **David Maddocks**, President of MPLN [david.maddocks@bigpond.com](mailto:david.maddocks@bigpond.com) ph: 0429 990 518
- **Michele Sabto**, Project Coordinator for 'Linking the Mornington Peninsula Landscape' project [linkingmlandscape@yahoo.com.au](mailto:linkingmlandscape@yahoo.com.au)
- **Chantal Kelly**, Project Coordinator for 'Greens Bush to Arthurs Seat Biolink' project: [chantalkelly77@gmail.com](mailto:chantalkelly77@gmail.com)
- **Sarah Saxton**, MP Shire Agribusiness & Food Industry Officer, [sarah.saxton@mornpen.vic.gov.au](mailto:sarah.saxton@mornpen.vic.gov.au)
- **Lizzie Younger**, Melbourne Water River Health Officer, [lizzie.younger@melbournewater.com.au](mailto:lizzie.younger@melbournewater.com.au)

## Newsletter Feedback

Do you have a story to tell? Is there a weed, plant, fungus, slime mould, or animal that you want to know about? Have you identified a new, rare, or interesting species? Or a good book? Please contact [greg@carranya.net](mailto:greg@carranya.net) for it to be featured in the newsletter.

## 7. Image at the end: The Devils Fingers

Your pleasant stroll through the pristine bush is brought to a rapid halt by a pungent smell of putrid flesh. Or your new hardwood mulch bed suddenly sprouts brightly-coloured tentacles that eerily reach up towards you before spreading out to emit the smell of hell itself. A hole in the centre appears to draw you down into the depths of the underworld.

No it is not the devil rising to suck you down. It is a Devil's Fingers, or Octopus Stinkhorn (*Clathrus archeri*).

The one in the image was seen by Virginia Carter in Greens Bush after the heavy rain and fog of late December. It belongs to the stinkhorns, so-called because of their foul smell – offensive to us, but a wonderful evolutionary adaption.

Birds and butterflies had not arrived when these fungi evolved, so they developed an odour similar to rotting flesh to attract flies and carrion beetles to their slimy tentacles – a process called “sapromyophily”. The tentacles are covered with spores, which are dutifully eaten by the interlopers for later distribution far and wide.

In their new location, the spores first attach themselves to some rotting timber or leaf litter – usually underground. They digest parts of the timber to grow and as a by-product convert it into food for the local plant life. When the time comes to propagate, the fungus builds a large ‘egg’ near the surface, which erupts upwards to extend 4-7 bright pink-red fingers skywards. The fingers spread out into the classic shape shown in the image. The plant emits that unforgettable smell. And the cycle starts all over again.

All in all, this is a mutually beneficial relationship with the fungus improving the soil for its neighbours and feeding the insects and beetles in return for their favours.

Unfortunately, that smell is rather a turn off to us humans. One can even find gardening guides on the web that suggest smashing them with a shovel, or simply stamping on them. For myself, I would be ecstatic if I found one in the back garden.

*Clathrus archeri* is a cosmopolitan species found around much of the temperate world wherever there is a plentiful supply of leaf litter and dead hardwood. These and their kin belong to a widespread group of colourful fungi in the Phallaceae family – so called because of the distinctive shape of some of its members.



Can you eat Devil's Fingers? Apparently, yes. They are not known to be poisonous, and the eggs are reported to be edible - but the taste is reputedly as foul as the smell. Not recommended unless you are really famished.

- Article by Greg Holland, image by Virginia Carter, distribution map from ALA.