



Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network News

November 2018 Edition



Left: Representatives of MPLN with the newly appointed Regional Landcare Facilitator for the PPWCMA, Barry Kennedy. From Left: David Maddocks, Barry Kennedy, Chantal Kelly, Greg Holland, Jacqui Salter and Rob Nigro.

Greetings Landcare members & associates,

Spring has sprung and the peninsula is looking fantastic! I enjoyed a bushwalk in Mt Martha with the Natural Systems Team recently. The wildflowers, including milkmaids, chocolate lilies and love creeper, looked fabulous. This month, I had the privilege of interviewing some Moorooduc landholders who participated in the MPLN’s ‘Getting the Dirt on your Soil’ project along with Lindsay Hyde from the Department of Agriculture for a short video we are making to highlight the project’s success. I also enjoyed meeting the affable Barry Kennedy (above) from the PPWCMA.

Many thanks to Greg Holland for his content and editing. His assistance is very much appreciated.

Warm Regards,

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

ph: 5950 1279 or 0408 213 079. Please note I work Mon-Wed 9am – 3pm.

1. Opportunities & News.....	2
Free training for Coastcare/Landcare volunteers	2
Victorian government’s Environmental Volunteering Plan	2
Help for Injured Wildlife	3
Have you found a baby bird?.....	3
.....	4
Reminder! Like @mplandcare Facebook page.....	4
2. State of the Environment	4
Why do I live on the Peninsula?	4
Planning Minister fast tracks AGL Coal to Hydrogen Project	5
Why Build a Wetland?	5
3. Monthly Features.....	8

Weed of the Month: Sweet Pittosporum	8
4. Upcoming Events	9
5. Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network Grants Guide Nov 2018	11
6. Local Information.....	11
7. Contacts	12
8. Newsletter Feedback.....	12
9. Image at the end: Spring is Sprung the Snakes is Riz	13

1. Opportunities & News

Free training for Coastcare/Landcare volunteers

Coastcare are pleased to offer two training opportunities in Melbourne, at Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research, 123 Brown Street, Heidelberg

OPTION 1 : [Successful Grant Writing](#) - Heidelberg, Monday 3rd December 2018

Description : one day course for participants to get a hold on the grant writing process and how to write successful grant applications.

OPTION 2 : [Strategic Planning for Volunteer Groups](#) - Heidelberg, Tuesday 4th December 2018

Description : a one day course in strategic planning for volunteer groups. Assists groups in improving strategic focus, resource management and long-term planning.

Participants will leave the course with practical tools to take back and use within their own volunteer groups

The training will also be held at various locations across the state including Warrnambool, Geelong, Melbourne and Gippsland and in two blocks, November/December 2018 and March/April 2019. All the training is funded by Coastcare and there is funding available to assist you with travel and accommodation if required.

To find a course that suits you and to book go to the Coastcare website at the following address or please do not hesitate to contact me.

NB: Booking are essential via links above and 'Eventbrite'

Kind regards,

Phillip Wierzbowski, Coastcare Victoria Facilitator - Port Phillip and Western Port

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

phillip.wierzbowski@delwp.vic.gov.au

Victorian government's Environmental Volunteering Plan

Did you know that the number of Victorians volunteering in our natural environments is estimated at 100,000? To support the newly launched Environmental Volunteering Plan, Minister D'Ambrosio has announced \$2 million in funding for the new Caring for Our Local Environments initiative. The aim of the program is to connect Melbourne's communities with green spaces and biodiversity, as well as support the objectives of Protecting Victoria's Environment–Biodiversity 2037; particularly the 'Victorians Value Nature' goal.

Planning will commence in November 2018 and the program is expected to be up and running in early 2019.

https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/image/0034/394666/EVP-v9.jpg

Help for Injured Wildlife

The Victorian Government's new online tool, *Help for Injured Wildlife*, has also been released, making it easier to find help for injured native wildlife anywhere in Victoria.

The new online site provides 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.

Visit the Help for Injured Wildlife Site for further information (<https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/injured-native-wildlife/help-for-injured-wildlife>).

Have you found a baby bird?

Spring has sprung and some of us will find a cute little baby bird on the ground with anxious parents fluttering around. In addition, there will be lots of fledglings around: ducklings with their mum travelling over land to get to the waterway; magpie and raven babies learning to fly after fledging the nest; and baby lorikeets (which have black beaks) squawking and threatening to remove a finger from the helping hand that is being offered.

It's really important that us humans don't interfere unless absolutely necessary.

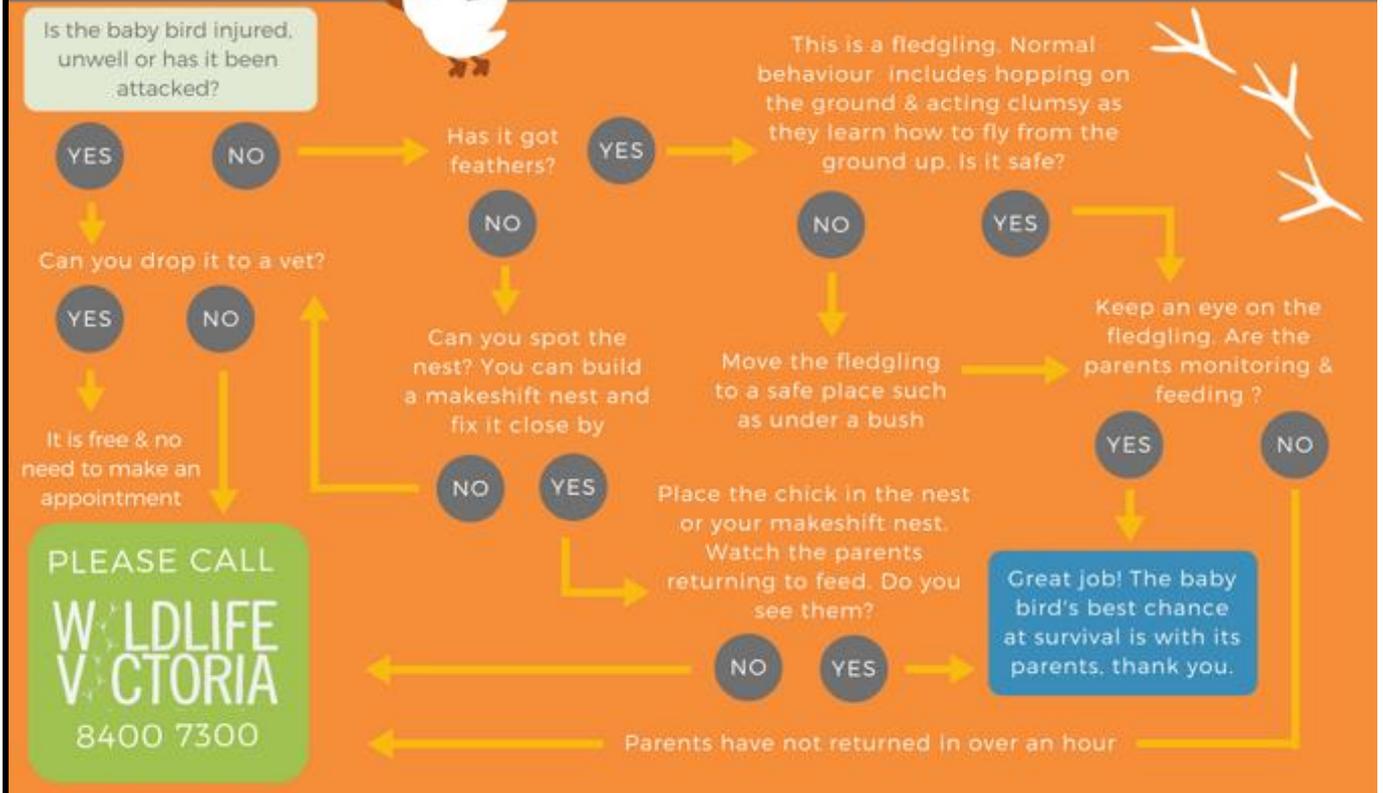
A fully feathered, uninjured baby bird with parents around will be protected and fed on the ground by them. This is an important development stage, and it won't take long before it learns to flutter up a tree. It just needs time to build its legs and chest muscles. By all means move them out of immediate danger, such as off the road, or perhaps make a small artificial nest out of a basket (or ice cream tub) and place it in a nearby bush. But most will soon fledge, so the latter is generally unnecessary.

Baby birds are just doing what birds do when they fledge - the parents will do the rest.

There also is really no point in us trying to 'save' them from cats and foxes at night, other than making sure your cat or dog has been isolated. These young birds do generally survive. If we interfere, they miss out on an important learning stage and will not know to teach their chicks about predators when they grow up. For advice or help with sick, injured or orphaned wildlife please log into the Help for Injured Wildlife Site (previous article), or call Wildlife Victoria on 13000 945 35.

HOW TO HELP A BABY BIRD ON THE GROUND

www.wildlifevictoria.org.au



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/>

2. State of the Environment

Why do I live on the Peninsula?

It is six-thirty in the morning. The sky is passing orange through white as the sun fights the clouds for dominance.

The local heavy metal band is in full swing as cockies screech by from their roost in the gum trees, and the plum tree becomes a stage for daring acrobatic feats. One struts up to see if I have anything worth stealing, yellow feathers cocked high. Another hurtles towards me, veering at the last minute with a cheeky squawk.

Beside me the chucka-luk of a little wattle bird. Off in the distance magpies warble, a pair of grey shrike thrushes trill, a fantail cuckoo runs through the musical scales, and a magpie lark makes a plaintive attempt to be heard. A kookaburra makes a half-hearted attempt at a laugh, then appears to decide it is not worth the effort.

Two wood ducks shepherd their flock of ducklings past, with a watchful eye to make sure I remain where I am. Down on the pond, a pair of black ducks anxiously circles puffy little balls of feathers – something has worried them. Several straw-necked ibises spiral steeply down into the paddock to breakfast on the grubs and worms. Superb fairy wrens scamper past between the hedge and the garden that we affectionately call the jungle.

A raindrop, then two – the rumble of thunder in the distance. Packing up the breakfast remnants, I rush in to beat the rain, the very welcome rain.

That is why I live on the Peninsula.

- *Greg Holland*

Planning Minister fast tracks AGL Coal to Hydrogen Project

Victoria's planning minister has intervened to push forward a contentious project to convert the Latrobe Valley's vast brown coal reserves into liquid hydrogen and export it to Japan.

Richard Wynne has taken the rare step of calling in a key part of the energy project, the construction of a terminal at Hastings, bypassing local government planning rules on the basis that it is of state significance. He wrote to the mayor of the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Brian Payne, last week, to inform him he had used his ministerial powers to approve the construction of a hydrogen liquefaction and loading terminal at BlueScope Steel's terminal site at the Port of Hastings in Westernport Bay.

The project has economic benefits in the creation of jobs in the area. But it has been rushed through without proper environmental impact assessments and community comment. Locally, it will involve the construction of a major pipeline through existing nature reserves. Australia wide, brown coal also is one of the most polluting forms of energy development. It has a high water content, which means that a substantial amount of it is burnt just to evaporate this water. Yet, Australia continues to substantially exceed its greenhouse emissions targets.

https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/planning-minister-richard-wynne-fast-tracks-coal-to-hydrogen-project-20181025-p50bzn.html?fbclid=IwAR21y2XhnH1er1PU4Bd7A-7ldOo2ncXN6o_bEZ3gRlr5JyaH23EwN30KzUU

Why Build a Wetland?

When I first constructed the wetland at our place I was met with a range of responses varying from wonderful to raised eyebrows and outright derision. Somewhat bemused I made further enquiries to find out that many people who build wetlands are actually 'hiding the construction of new dams'. Further, while wetlands are great for aesthetic and ecological reasons there appears to be view that they are a poor choice for farms.

So it was with some interest that I read an article passed on by Jacqui about Mara, Ralf and their family up Blampied way who have constructed a wetland instead of a dam. Started three years ago, their wetland is now just getting established.



So what is a wetland?

The generic term covers a wide range of ecosystems with the only commonality being the presence of slow-moving water for at least part of the year. Rivers and streams, tidal inlets, billabongs, dams, floodplains, marshes, swamps - even rice paddies and sewerage treatment plants all qualify.

A successful wetland has one or more of water, above and below ground with a mix of ponds, sumps, marshes and/or ephemeral wet areas. Each of these supports a remarkable variety of plants and animals.

Freshwater ponds are permanent expanses of water, except perhaps for the occasional drought. Tussocks, sedges, reeds, herbs and grasses around the edge benefit from the water table just below the surface. Eucalypts, acacias, melaleucas, hakeas, and callistemons provide the overstory. The deeper water supports ribbon grasses, tassles, algae, duckweeds and their kin. Shallow ponds dry out around the edge in summer and here we find knot rushes, fireweeds, water plantains, and knot weeds – to name just a few. Ponds with steep sides support other types of



sedges along with various ferns.



Swamp Crassula (*Crassula helmsii*)

Sumps dry completely during the summer. As this happens water ribbons and algae make way for tiny buttercups, and crassulas, followed by plantains, small sedges, and fireweeds.

Not to forget the animals: frogs croak and ‘bonk’ from cover; lizards scamper through the undergrowth; swamp rats and antechinus burrow into the ground and build little runways under cover; insects, beetles, shrimp, shellfish, and yabbies occupy the water – together with the larvae of march flies and similar. Snakes, especially tigers, grow fat on the frogs; kites perch on watch for rats and antechinus; rails, herons, and egrets dine along the verges; ducks feed off the water plants or graze the grasses; bees and wasps drop by for a drink or mud to build their nests; fish, dragonflies and robberflies compete with all for the invertebrates; and cormorants dive for the fish and the yabbies.

Mara and Ralf use their wetland to provide additional water for their gardens and pigs. Our wetland is our entire farm supply – with pumps providing the access for both. In both cases we have the advantage of clean water that has been filtered by the plants, albeit occasionally with a bit of tannin and alga to provide some taste. There is also a swimming pond - we leave ours to the wildlife.

Farms benefit in other ways as invertebrates, frogs, birds, and lizards remove unwanted bugs from surrounding areas. Evaporation from the wetlands provides a lovely cool and moist microclimate to counter our hot and parching summers.

A particular surprise is the number of plants that spontaneously appear, either from long-resident seeds or via the water-bird taxi. Well over 50% of the species in our wetland have arrived this way and include such interesting species as ruddy ground fern (*Hypolepis rugosula*), soft water fern (*Blechnum minus*), tangled coral fern (*Gleichenia microphylla*), and the rare floodplain fireweed (*Senecio campylocarpus*).

They are a lot of work to establish and fighting the weeds is a never-ending task, but wetlands provide all that farms dams do, and much more. Let's give Mara the last say "The sunset colour bleeds into the water's surface to create vast beauty. It is a joy to walk around the wetland to observe the changing colours of the aquatic plants—they go from a lush green to a fantastic copper colour—and to observe visiting birds and dragonflies and discover indigenous colonising wildflowers."

- Article and Images by Greg Holland and from an original article by Mara and Ralf Ripani.



3. Monthly Features

Weed of the Month: Sweet Pittosporum

Sweet Pittosporum (aka Australian daphne) is one of the major weed invaders of native bushland in our region.

Species name: *Pittosporum undulatum*; **Family:** Pittosporaceae.

Origin: A native of eastern NSW and Victoria, sweet pittosporum has escaped from gardens to spread across much of southern Victoria.



Status: See figure – Common along coastal Australia from southern Queensland to Adelaide, and also in far southwest Western Australia.



Growth Habit: Sweet pittosporum grows to 8 m, but is more commonly around 3-5 m, with a spread of over 15 m recorded. It prefers moist soil but is able to survive and spread in a wide variety of soil and moisture conditions. Establishment is rapid and the plants spread a dense canopy that shades the ground below and starves native species of light, nutrients, and water. They also drop leaves with a chemical inhibitor that prevents native plants from germinating. As an understory plant it will first inhibit all native understory, then compete with and often kill off major overstory plants.



Reproduction and Dispersal: Female plants produce copious numbers of orange berries that are a desirable bird, possum and fox food. The seeds are then distributed widely in droppings. A secondary method is by incorrect disposal of garden waste.

The spread can occur at astonishing rates. In the Dandenongs, the sweet pittosporum invasion from a single plant has spread outward at 80 to over 200 m per year. The weed is now present in 50% of all reserves and is second only to blackberries in the area impacted

(<http://www.stoppitt.org.au/assets/Jeff%27s%20original%20Pittosporum%20Booklet%20.pdf>).

Weed Status: This is one of the major weed problems for remnant native bushland on the Peninsula, including both Green's Bush and Arthurs Seat. Sweet pittosporum also is highly flammable and thus poses a considerable fire hazard.

Toxicity: No known toxic effects

Control Methods: Pulling of juvenile plants can be effective, provided the roots are also removed. For larger plants cut and dab with glyphosate and/or drilling holes and filling them with glyphosate are quite successful. If there are many plants, hit the females first (they will have flowers and/or fruit).

Similar Native Plants: Muttonwood (*Myrsine howittiana*) is a lovely indigenous plant that has quite similar foliage to sweet pittosporum. If in doubt wait for flowering, which occurs along the stem and is followed by purple berries. Another indigenous plant that could be mistaken is rough coprosma (*Coprosma hirtella*). This one has light green flowers with long stamens and bright red berries.

Further reading: The Stoppitt website has useful information (www.stoppitt.org.au)

- Article by Greg Holland with advice from several Landcare folks; the plant image is from www.austplants.com.au; the distribution from Atlas of Living Australia.



Morning Fog December 2016

4. Upcoming Events

Description	Time & Date	Location	RSVP date	Contact
'Replas' Circular Economy Movie	<i>See Flyer</i>			
'Fire Control Around the Farm' talk by CFA for Landcare members	Sun 18 Nov 11.45am (11am for AGM, 1pm for BBQ lunch)	Moorooduc Fire Station	Not listed	Laura Huish (Balcombe Moorooduc Landcare)
Building & Maintaining a Vibrant Landcare Committee and Group	Thurs 29 Nov 9am – 3.15pm	Seawinds Community Hub, 11A Allambi Ave, Capel Sound	28/11/18	https://vibrantcommittee.eventbrite.com.au
'DELWP's Nestbox Study Findings Revealed! Talk by Phoebe Macak for Spiffa Christmas BBQ and AGM	Mon 3 Dec 6.30pm onwards. BYO BBQ meat, salad, drinks avail for purchase (speaker around 8pm)	Hickinbotham Winery, 94 Nepean Hwy, Dromana	N/A	Spiffa.secretary@gmail.com

REPLAS EVENT - FILM SCREENING



CLOSING THE LOOP
A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT THE
CIRCULAR ECONOMY REVOLUTION

Join us for a screening of *Closing the Loop*, the world's first feature-length documentary on the circular economy. The film is directed by two-time Telly® Award and Emmy® Award winning filmmaker Graham Sheldon and presented by global sustainability expert, Prof. Dr Wayne Visser. And despite its dire warnings – John Elkington, famous for coining the “triple bottom line” of sustainability says in the film: “if we continue with the linear economy if we’re to use a technical term totally screwed” – it is an optimistic film about innovative solutions.

Replas will be hosting a screening of ‘Closing the Loop’ at the largest recycled plastic showroom in the southern hemisphere during National Recycling Week. Guests will enjoy the movie in the iconic Replas ‘Bag Cave’, have the chance to explore the showroom and see first hand Replas’ involvement in the Circular Economy. You don’t want to miss this exclusive event!

PROUD PARTICIPANTS OF NRW:



DETAILS:

12th - 16th of November
2 showtimes daily, 3pm & 5.30pm
Sessions dependant on numbers

LOCATION:

Replas Environmental Centre
27 Titan Drive, Carrum Downs
VIC 3201

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/closing-the-loop-screening-at-replas-tickets-51052716048>

5. Mornington Peninsula Landcare Network Grants Guide Nov 2018

Name of Grant	Date due	Amount	Details
Norman Wettenhall Foundation	Open: 11 Dec	\$5,000 or \$5,000-\$25,000.	https://wettenhall.org.au/grants/small-environmental-grants/
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/

6. 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

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

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

grown edibles, eggs, preserved produce, honey, seeds and seedlings. No minimum amount and no money changes hands.

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 no matter whether you manage a farm, a bush block, a council park or school ground.

Landholder 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



- **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>

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

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.

Snake Catcher

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

7. Contacts

- **Jacqui Salter**, Landcare Facilitator, MPLN Jacqueline.salter@mornpen.vic.gov.au ph: 0408 213 079
- **Greg Holland:** Newsletter Editor greg@carranya.net
- **David Maddocks**, President of MPLN david.maddocks@bigpond.com ph: 0429 990 518
- **Michele Sabto**, Project Coordinator for 'Linking the Mornington Peninsula Landscape' project linkingmlandscape@yahoo.com.au
- **Chantal Kelly**, Project Coordinator for 'Greens Bush to Arthurs Seat Biolink' project: chantalkelly77@gmail.com
- **Sarah Saxton**, MP Shire Agribusiness & Food Industry Officer, sarah.saxton@mornpen.vic.gov.au
- **Lizzie Younger**, Melbourne Water River Health Officer, lizzie.younger@melbournewater.com.au
- **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

8. 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 for it to be featured in the newsletter.

9. Image at the end: Spring is Sprung the Snakes is Riz

With plenty of sunshine and warming air, the snakes are coming out of hibernation and this is their most active time as they are hungry, mating, and moving to new habitats or just to find warm spots.

While snakes have their favourite prey, anything edible and catchable may be on the table, even other snakes. This is demonstrated by the accompanying image of a lowland copperhead (*Austrelaps superbus*, top) in the long process of swallowing and consuming a tiger snake (*Notechis scutatus*, bottom).



These are the two poisonous snakes most commonly encountered on the Peninsula.

Copperheads are endemic to the coastal zone of SE Australia including Tasmania and prefer to be in the vicinity of water, where their prey typically includes a range of frogs, lizards and smaller snakes. Tigers are found in the same zone and also around the southwest of Western

Australia. They also prefer habitats near water and have a strong preference for preying on frogs, so it is not surprising that they cross paths with copperheads.

Interestingly, other snakes rank with birds of prey and humans as the main cause of mortality amongst tiger snakes!

People also are out and about in spring, bushwalking, gardening, clearing out weeds, etc. Occasionally they blunder into snakes with unfortunate outcomes. Several people have been admitted to hospital in recent weeks, and a recent report found 35 people had died from snakebite in Victoria between 2000 and 2016, with the majority of these occurring in late spring.

Here on the Peninsula, we obviously have copperheads and tigers – add to this the eastern brown (*Pseudonaja textilis*) and rare occurrences of the red-bellied black snake (*Pseudechis porphyriacus*). All are poisonous, but the brown and tiger easily top the list. Both of these rank in the top five most deadly snakes on earth and the brown is responsible for most Victorian deaths in recent times.

Tigers used to be the prime killer. As wetlands have disappeared and frogs become scarce, the tiger population has declined. But the browns have increased as their favourite food, rodents, has multiplied thanks to us.

Suddenly meeting a snake while strolling down a bush track, or working in the garden can be one of those heart-stopping moments, particularly if the snake has adopted a threatening posture.

What to do?



First is to remember that the snake is at least as scared as you are and is sitting on a very fine dividing-line between 'fight and fright'. If you scream, jump up and down, suddenly turn to run away, or even just wave 'shoo', the snake is likely to misinterpret this as an attack and immediately strike back. I meet snakes regularly and my approach is as follows:

- Stand perfectly still for a while, calm down and work out a strategy – for example, have children move slowly back behind you, try to have your dog sit or come to heel - speak softly
- If the snake turns to move away, remain still and let it go - if it holds its ground, slowly back off while keeping it in eyesight
- Wait until the snake has moved off and proceed, or take another route – generally, the snake will not bother you a second time, provided you do not leave the path - if you are in deep grass, turn back.

If bitten, there are three, and only three things you *must* do:

- Try to remain where you are and stay as calm as possible – becoming agitated, or running home increases blood flow and spreads the poison faster
- Apply pressure directly to the bite area, a pressure bandage is best if one is available – *do not* wash the wound, use a tourniquet, cut the wound, or try so suck out the poison (these will just make matters worse)
- Call 000 and arrange for an antivenin as soon as possible.

Please do not kill the snake. Aside from being illegal, snakes are an important component of the ecosystem and the encounter was not its fault. In particular, a dead snake is no longer needed to select the appropriate antivenin. If it is near the house or likely to be a future danger, arrange for a snake catcher to take it away.

If you see a snake and are in a safe location, watch it carefully. Notice the forked tongue darting in and out. It is 'tasting' the air for aromas of prey or predators. The fork in the tongue helps it work out the direction that the aroma came from and how far away it originated. Many snakes, including the tiger have poor eyesight and depend almost entirely on scent. Browns, however, have excellent eyesight and use this as their primary hunting tool.

My experience is that tiger snakes are highly territorial and possibly remember previous encounters. Not long after we installed the wetlands, we were walking along when the little mutt, Missy, suddenly turned across the path and stared at us with a body language of 'don't go there'. A large tiger of over 1.5 m rose up behind her in the classical S-shape, flattened head about a metre high, hissing loudly. As I moved forward to bring Missy back it became even more agitated and made several feints in my direction. I quietly ordered missy to sit then stood still and waited until it turned and slithered away into the undergrowth.

The interesting thing is that I have seen the same tiger several times over subsequent weeks and years and it merely lifts its head up, tastes the air, seems to recognize me, and moves calmly into the undergrowth with no attempt at a threat posture. I could easily be wrong, but the logical conclusion is that the snake has remembered that I posed no threat in our previous encounters.

- *Article by Greg Holland, Image by Rob Nigro, Cartoon from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCbrsXMfOaU>.*

References:

- Australian museum: Tiger Snake - <https://australianmuseum.net.au/tiger-snake>; Eastern Brown Snake - <https://australianmuseum.net.au/eastern-brown-snake>; Lowland Copperhead - <https://australianmuseum.net.au/copperhead>.
- Snake catchers, call any of the licenced catchers at <https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Your-Property/Animals-Pets/Pest-Nuisance-Animals/Snakes>.
- Recent snake news and information: <https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/what-to-do-if-you-see-a-snake-and-here-s-how-to-avoid-them-20181022-p50b6q.html>