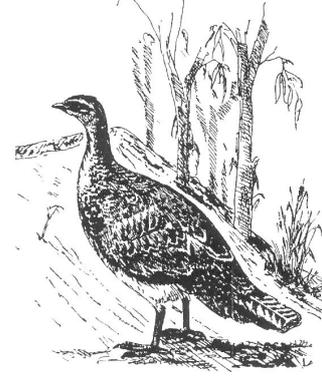




Network News



Newsletter of the Wedderburn Conservation Management Network – October 2010

Conserving Biodiversity

Spring wildflowers are everywhere

Wildflowers are abundant. There are so many plants flowering right now it is difficult to write about only a few. Orchids interest many people. Lots of varieties are flowering. The large Waxlip orchids are in huge numbers. You may also see lots of the much smaller but equally as attractive Blue Caladenias, and Pink Fingers. There are also plenty of yellow speckled Leopard orchids. We have seen Green Comb Spider orchids for the first time this year, in the areas we regularly visit. The beautiful and uncommon Northern Golden Moth orchids are also flowering. Greenhood orchids have almost finished.



The Friends of Kooyoora Wildflower Show was once again a wonderful event, full of examples of our local wildflowers and information about them. The huge display of wildflower specimens were collected with a special permit from Department of Sustainability and Environment. This is the best opportunity for the visitor, and locals to view such a comprehensive and locally relevant display.

This year, the spring wildflowers are certainly exhibiting a dazzling array of colours. Orchids that are pale pink, purple, green, yellow or white, pea bushes with flowers of yellow, red and orange, and even a variety with cream and brown flowers are in bloom. The bright yellow bulbine lilies are highly visible now, and soon the purple chocolate lilies will also be on show.

The construction of a bird's nest is a marvel of nature. White winged choughs build mud nests. We have observed one being built from scratch this month. It took only a week from the foundation layer to the birds sitting on the nest.

The pleasant spring weather is an ideal time to admire and appreciate the colours of nature found in the spring wildflower display. A walk in the bush almost anywhere this month will reward you with a great display.

Wedderburn Conservation Management Network "Observers"
Attached photo: Green Comb Spider Orchid

Loddon Plains Landcare Network appoints Project Officer

The Loddon Plains Landcare Network has appointed a new Project Officer to work with member groups to develop a biodiversity blueprint for the Network's area. The Loddon Plains Landcare Network comprises thirteen Landcare and other Environmental Groups (including the Wedderburn CMN) across the northern part of the Loddon Shire. The area stretches from Bridgewater and Wedderburn in the south, to Pyramid Hill in the north. Formed in late 2009 the Network has secured funding from the Norman Wettenhall Foundation – a Philanthropic Trust – to employ a Project Officer to help develop a biodiversity blueprint for the Network's area.



Mal Brown, Network President, said he was pleased to advise that Leah Cripps, from Bendigo, has been employed to lead this important project.

According to Mal, Leah will work with member groups within the Network to identify the important areas of native plants and habitat for native animals, map the work that member groups have already achieved, and document the member group's aspirations for future works.

Mal says. "the preparation of the blueprint will be overseen by a Committee of Management and all member groups will have input to the plan."

"One of the strengths of Network is that collaborative voice. We need a strategic plan to take to government, the corporate sector and philanthropic trusts, so that we can secure the kind of funding needed for groups to do the works they want to do, and to achieve the landscape change all groups envision for our part of the world."

"The biodiversity blueprint will be a foundation working document. Though considerable natural resource information is available from various sources, the information as yet is dispersed and uncoordinated. Part of the purpose of the blueprint is to organise and present this information in an accessible and practical form, based on a map format workable in GIS."

"Leah has extensive experience in working with farmer groups as well as great mapping skills. Her main role is to work with member groups and to help develop the strategic plan for the Network's area", says Mal.

The Network's Committee of Management members are Mal Brown (Leichardt), Penny Wall (Raywood), Michael Moore (Wedderburn), Jean McClymont (Salisbury West), Laurie Maxted (Boort), Bill Twigg (Bears Lagoon), Wendy Murphy (Inglewood/Wedderburn) and Dennis Demeo (Raywood).

Photograph – Leah Cripps, newly appointed Project Officer of the LPLN
Article and Photograph by Mal Brown

Wedderburn CMN Planning Day

The Wedderburn CMN planning day was held this year at Parks Victoria Inglewood on the 15th of October with seventeen people attending. Alison Jeavons chaired the meeting as we first went through highlights of the year followed by a discussion of our annual review document and our DSE Service Agreement. The main topics under consideration were those associated with:

Environmental Threats /Issues and the WCMN's *Responses* to these perceived threats such as pest animals and plants, the fragmentation of habitat, the degradation of habitat, protection of threatened species and monitoring of changes. Responses to threats included such aspects as habitat building, habitat expansion, creation of biolinks, fox control, spraying of weeds etc

Education and Involvement of the General Community such as presentations, bustrips, newsletters, newspaper articles and websites etc

Administration Aspects of the CMN such as networking, funding and governance etc.

High on the priority list was the management of the \$577,000 which the WCMN has obtained over a three year period from the Federal Government's Caring for our Country scheme for use in our Box – Gum Grassy Woodlands Project which was mentioned in the last newsletter. After much discussion we all headed off for a pub lunch at one of the local pubs before returning to more discussion which was periodically interrupted by water leaking through the roof of the Parks Vic building onto the table – hence the assortment of buckets and various other containers seen in the photograph. Overall, the day was a productive one.

Michael Moore



Volunteers can take part in important research.

For the past few months we, and a few other WCMN members, as well as some TAFE students have been assisting with monitoring and recording vegetation data at a number of sites adjacent to Mallee fowl mounds in the Wychitella Nature Conservation Reserve. This work is a follow up from data collected in 2008 and is important work to study changes in the vegetation surrounding Mallee fowl mounds

There is still a significant amount of this work still to be completed, not only the vegetation surveys, but also the kangaroo exclosure plots as well as 50 metre transects of all the EVC types in the Wychitella Nature Conservation Reserve.

The vegetation surveys can be very time consuming, but we have found that even one extra volunteer to help makes a huge difference in the time taken to do the work. Sometimes it requires a bit of a bushwalk to get to the site, sometimes the site is heavily vegetated and requires some gymnastic activity to carry out the counts, so a reasonable level of fitness and flexibility is no doubt an advantage. Some sites will be a lot less physically challenging than others.



It would be really helpful to have more volunteers to help get this important work completed before the weather gets too hot to make it pleasant.

Participating in the surveys is a fantastic way to become more familiar with the local native plant species. When you count every single plant in a 10 metre square you can learn a great deal. It's a great way to experience different areas of the Wychitella Nature Conservation Reserve, while doing something useful and worthwhile. A knowledge of plants is not necessary as the surveys are an excellent learning exercise. To get involved call Wendy on 0438384053 or email wendy.murphy@dse.vic.gov.au

Photograph – volunteers working on vegetation surveys
Annette Robertson and Lynton Schriever

The Friends of Kooyoora Wildflower Show

The WCMN had a stand at the successful Friends of Kooyoora Wildflower Show held at Rheola over the weekend of September 18th & 19th. The group again sponsored the U18 & U12 sections of the photographic competition, which saw 5 young and upcoming photographers enter. Judging was done by popular choice with all participants receiving a prize. Participants were Madison Holt, Jarvis Holt, Rhordan Holt, Lauchlan Roberts and Jemma Parker. Congratulations to all. The photograph shows Wendy Murphy presenting an award to a participant flanked by Ranger in charge Inglewood and Friends of Kooyoora Member Roberta Foster.



Newsletter Survey

After the initial flood of mail I continue to receive a trickle of completed forms as a result of the survey which was sent out with the last newsletter. The survey has resulted in the acquisition of very useful information which will now be acted upon. A return of greater than 60% has been realised so far with approximately 84% wishing to continue to receive the newsletter. Of this number approximately 30% wished to have the information sent to them by email instead of the usual post. The new arrangements for delivery will hopefully be in place for the December issue of the newsletter. Unfortunately some returned forms, although indicating their preferences, did not have details of name and address filled in so if you find that your preferences have not been acknowledged can you please contact me via the contact information at the end of the newsletter.

Michael Moore

Open Day at Bush Heritage Australia

We had our open day as part of the Loddon festival last weekend. It was booked out with 19 visitors, coming from Melbourne and Ballarat. All had a great time and were impressed with our conservation efforts at the Nardoo Hills. They saw a lot of *Diuris protena* which is now at its peak of flowering. The locations on the reserve where this species is now occurring has increased again compared to last year. Two new plants

were recorded on the reserve, *Xerochrysum bracteatum* and *Pheladenia deformis*, both common species but not seen there before. I have included a few photographs including one of a brown falcon, taken by Greg Hargreaves of Wedderburn.

Jeroen Van Veen

Korong Bushland Reserve Planting Day

Six members of the Wedderburn CMN braved the wet weather conditions to take part in the rescheduled Loddon Plains Landcare Network planting day at the Korong Bushland Reserve on October 13th. Approximately 600 shrubs and grasses were planted on the day.



Presentations

The Wedderburn CMN has been involved with a number of presentations over the past few months, spreading the word of the good works the group does.

In August I attended the Northern Grampians and Buloke Shire Landcare Network information day held at Charlton to talk on the importance of roadside reserves. The Wedderburn CMN have found and protected several endangered plant species on roadsides including the Velvet Daisy Bush and the Spiny Rice Flower. Roadside vegetation is also often the only linking vegetation remaining in many areas, providing important habitat for birds and animals.

Also in August members of the WCMN went on a bus trip showing new work sites and areas of interest. The tour took in works done on private property and crown land and discussed issues such as roadside weeds before stopping for lunch at the Mt Korong picnic area. It was a good way for members of the CMN to see what works have been occurring and enabling them to pass on information to the public. A tour designed for members of the public will be organised for November or December. More information will be provided at a later date or people can leave their names with me to be contacted directly.

In September I was invited to speak at the inaugural meeting of the Kara Kara CMN at St Arnaud. I made a PowerPoint presentation about the history of the Wedderburn CMN and works that have been done. It was very well received and generated several discussions about how the Kara Kara CMN could do similar works. It proved to them that much work can come from small concepts.

Wendy Murphy

What is the Wedderburn Conservation Management Network?

The WCMN is a network including interested individuals, both public and private land managers who come together to promote a shared aim. That shared aim is to work with the community in general to promote profitable, productive and sustainable human enterprises while conserving and indeed enhancing the biodiversity of their area of interest.

For further information concerning any items in this newsletter or other aspects of the WCMN contact

WCMN ranger, Wendy Murphy - 0438384053

WCMN Secretary, Michael Moore – 54943542

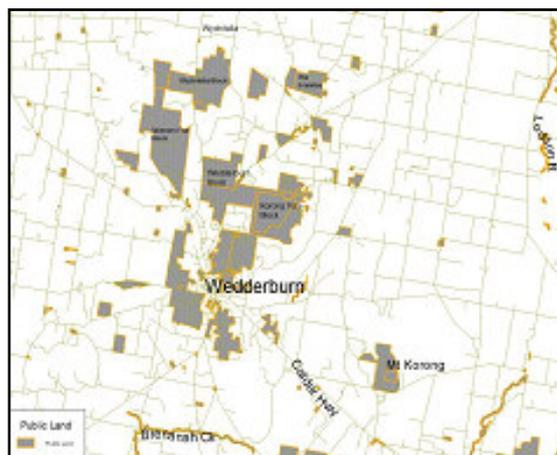
Website addresses

<http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/january/web/index.html>

<http://wedderburncmnnews.blogspot.com/>

<http://lplnnews.blogspot.com/>

LPLN- Loddon Plains Landcare Network



The WCMN Area of Interest