

# LPLN News



LODDON PLAINS LANDCARE NETWORK



Issue 12. June 2014

A Rufous Whistler sighted whilst bird monitoring out at the Powlett Plains

## What's on...

### 20 June

The Norman Wettenhall Foundation film launch "Rediscovering the Country: a film journey into landscape restoration", Melbourne Museum 5pm.

### 2 July

Salisbury West Landcare Field Day, 10am-1pm

### 3 July

Loddon Plains Landcare Network Committee Meeting, 5pm Serpentine Shire Offices

### 5 August

NCCMA/DEPI Soils Health Workshop, Wedderburn

### 17 - 19 September

National Landcare Conference, Crown Conference Centre, Melbourne

*Securing healthy landscapes on the Loddon Plains*

## Facilitator Update

The months are motoring on past and the end of financial year is almost upon us. There have been plenty of things happening in the Network with plenty more to come.

2014-2015 Victorian Landcare Grant Applications will be opening in the not too distant future. If you require assistance with an application, let me know as soon as possible and we can get started!

There has been a lot of community interest in our bird monitoring project and I have had some great feedback from our volunteers from the autumn survey. I had the pleasure of surveying several sites and snapped a photo of a Rufous Whistler in a roadside corridor at Powlett Plains (see photo above).

Activity on our Nestboxes for Kids Program has been high during the last couple of months. I have had several visits to the Wedderburn College and East Loddon College as part of the project. It has been great to work with the enthusiastic youngsters keen to learn about the role of nestboxes for animals.

Lastly I will be on annual leave from the 14<sup>th</sup> of July until the 8<sup>th</sup> of August. Enquiries during this time can be directed to Michael Moore. See the contact page on our website.

Anthony Gallacher, Landcare Facilitator

# Nestboxes abound

## Wedderburn College

It has been a busy couple of months for the Networks Nestboxes for Kids program. The Wedderburn Men's Shed finished construction of approximately 40 nestboxes for various animals, so next up was time a coat of paint.

The Grades 3 – 6 students from the Wedderburn College painted the boxes following a presentation by Anthony Gallacher on the importance of nestboxes in conservation.

The Duke of Edinburgh Students from Year 9 have GPS-ed 20 suitable trees behind the school for nestbox mounting and a further 20 trees at the Hard Hills Reserve in Wedderburn.

## East Loddon College

The Grades 6 Woodwork class at East Loddon College have also been working on their nestboxes. Amongst learning how not “choke the chicken” when using a hammer and making sure the box sides are flush, the students have enjoyed the practical side to their project.

*Photos from top – Wedderburn College*

- *Nest boxes before painting*
- *Grades 3 – 6 answer questions during nest box presentation*
- *Students painting nest boxes.*
- *Painted nest boxes*
- *Grade 6 students undertake tree identification activity*

*Below left to right – East Loddon College*

- *Grade 6 students learn how to hammer nails*
- *Making sure the sides of the nestbox are flush*



This project was funded through a Loddon Shire Community Grant.



## Volunteers undertake autumn bird survey

The first volunteer survey as part of the Loddon Plains Community Bird Monitoring Project was undertaken in late May. 12 bird monitoring participants undertook surveys across 45 sites in the Network's area, ranging from the Sunday Morning Hills to the Terrick Terrick National Park.

All surveys are undertaken using the 2 ha 20 min survey technique used for the Bird Atlas of Australia. The data from the summer (benchmark) and autumn surveys are available on the LPLN website under the Community Bird Monitoring Project page.

Some of the more unusual sightings amongst the survey sites included a Diamond Firetail, Grey-crowned Babblers, Singing Honeyeaters and a Peregrine Falcon.

More volunteers will join the winter survey in August, with surveys continuing seasonally in order to build a picture of the bird biodiversity across the Network area.

If you are interested in joining the surveys or finding out more about the project, the sites, or the birds, please get in touch. For those wanting to learn birding skills there will be options to join the surveys and learn from experienced enthusiasts.

*Photos from survey by Greg Licence: Golden Whistler ♀ (top left), Willy Wagtail (bottom), Golden Headed Cisticola (top right).*



Project proudly supported by The Norman Wettenhall Foundation.

## Donations now tax deductible

The Loddon Plains Landcare Network has obtained tax deductible gift recipient (DGR) status. The Network and our public fund, the Loddon Plains Landcare Network Charity Fund have been entered into the Register of Environmental Organisations. Donations to the public fund over \$2 are now eligible for a tax deduction under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

If you would like to make a contribution to the public fund to support the Network's GOANNA Project, a donation page on our website and donation forms will be available shortly. Contributions will go towards GOANNA Project activities such as revegetation, remnant protection and bird monitoring data collection.

Many thanks to our Secretary Michael Moore for the tremendous amount of time and effort he put into obtaining the DGR status for the Network.

## RIP Bill Gallagher

The Northern United Forestry Group mourns the passing of valued life member and friend Bill Gallagher in New Zealand. Bill will be sadly missed and fondly remembered for his big smile, big heart, BBQ skills and ever enthusiastic contribution to the group. The Kamarooka Education Centre remains one legacy of Bill's skill and hard work. One of life's true gentlemen.

Photo: Member John Toll congratulates Bill on his life membership in October 2013.



## National Rabbit Facilitator visits Landcare near Kerang

The National Rabbit Facilitator Lisa Adams visited the Fairley Bael Bael Sandhill Lake Landcare group (FBBSLL) to gain a first-hand look at the “Rabbit Buster Program” and the challenges facing the group and other agencies in the Kerang area.

The visit was part of a larger tour and workshop series on community engagement being undertaken as part of the National Rabbit Facilitator program. Walt Whitmer from Penn State University hosted a community engagement workshop with local facilitators in Swan Hill looking at successful community engagement tools and techniques.

The visit provided valuable insights into the work being undertaken by Landcare groups on the front line in combating rabbits.

*Photo from left: Walt Whitmer (Penn State University), Colin Gitsham (FBBSLL President), Glenice Ficken (FBBSLL Secretary), Lisa Adams (National Rabbit Facilitator) at Reedy Lake near Kerang.*



## Biodiversity on farms seminar

15 participants immersed themselves in an afternoon learning about the benefits of biodiversity on farms on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June.

The community seminar at the Wedderburn Motel featured ecologist David Baker-Gabb, who outlined some of the statistical benefits of having native trees and shrubs on farm.

Local Landcare guru Bill Twigg provided an excellent first-hand experience of the benefits he has enjoyed from improving biodiversity outcomes on his property.

Attendees also heard from Nick Layne from the North Central CMA Kooyoora Connections Project and Michael Moore, WCMN President.

The seminar was run by the LPLN with funding from the Australian Government.

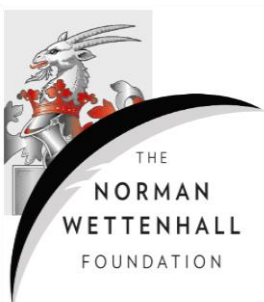
*Photo: David Baker-Gabb presents on some of the statistical benefits to biodiversity on farms.*



Subscribe your email via the LPLN website at [www.lpln.org](http://www.lpln.org) to receive notification of the latest news. For contributions for the next issue, send to Anthony Gallacher:

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