



Newsletter

A0031259R

ABN 40 416 107 108

No. 66

June 2018

Date	What's On!	Where/Time	Details
Wed June 13	Landcare Talk: Sugarloaf Produce	Arthurs Creek Hall	Tamara, 97148202
Wed July 25	Planet Ark Day – New Location!!	Arthurs Creek Primary	Tamara, 97148202

President's Report

Sarah Hunter

Welcome to this June Edition of the Arthurs Creek District Landcare Newsletter. After a dry and warm start to the season as we come into the last week of Autumn, the dry has well and truly broken and our district is looking lush and green. I'm hoping for full dams but not bog and slippery mud on our slopes!

Our second talk for the year, Peter Voutier on Fox Management, got a fantastic turnout. It was great to see a wide range of members including some entertaining youngsters. Peter was a great speaker. As well as discussing the impact that foxes can have on animals in the farm, garden, and native environment (with most in the audience having some kind of personal experience with this), he also outlined the ways that they are involved in the spread of weeds.

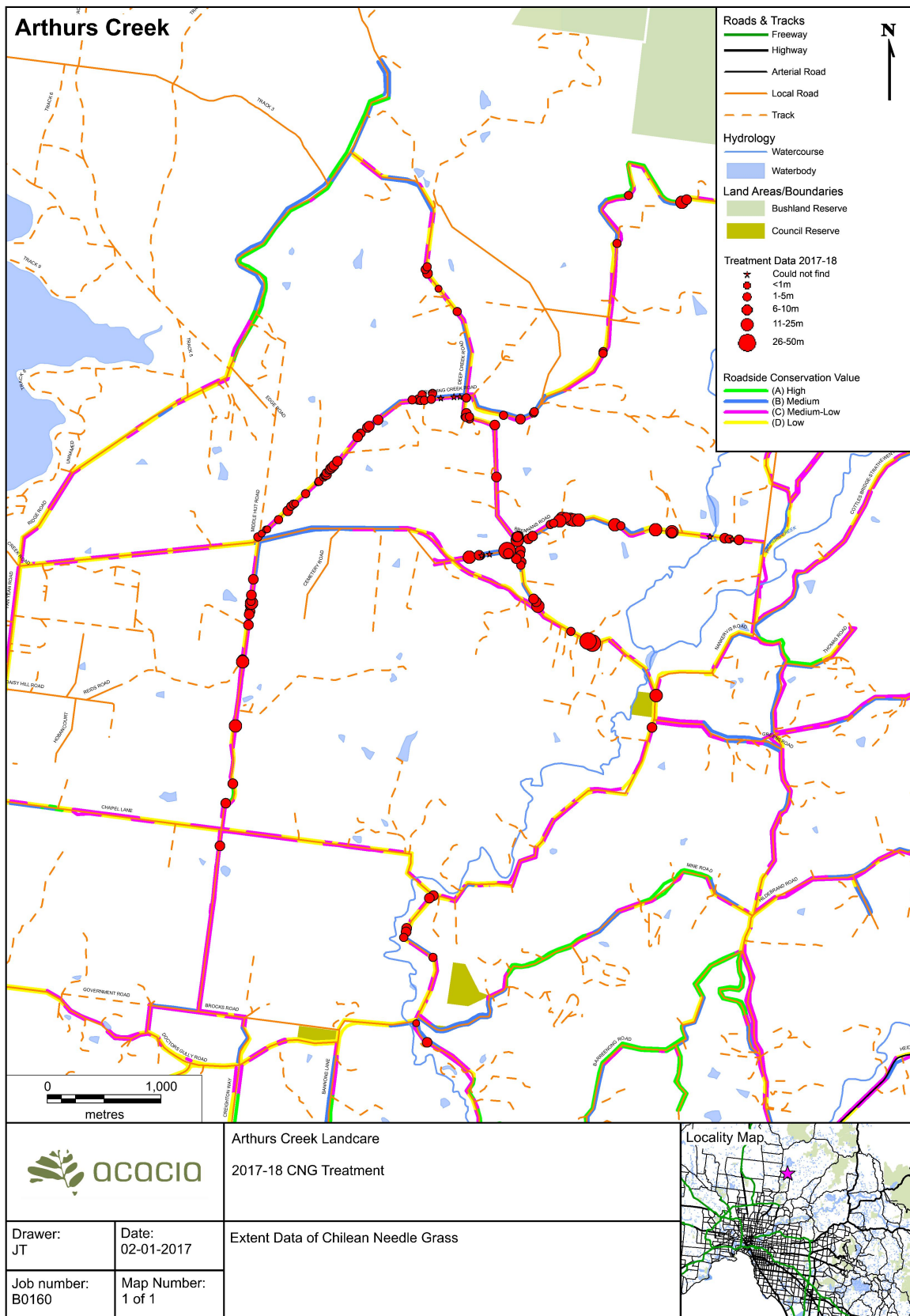
Since the Talk, the Executive has been looking at how we may be able to support a co-ordinated approach to foxes/invasive fauna across the district.

At present one of the ways that ACDLG is active in the environment locally is the completion of a roadside weed spray program under Sue's direction. Chilean needlegrass is a major focus of this program. I was not aware until I saw our 2017/18 treatment map of the proximity of CNG infestation to my own property, but the incidence of it across some of the major roads in district mean that it is something we should probably all be vigilant for. It is a nasty plant and difficult to eradicate once it establishes: "Chilean needle grass affects both sown pasture and native grasslands of southeastern Australia. It is relatively unpalatable and reduces farm productivity by displacing more desirable pasture species. Heavy infestations can decrease productivity by as much as 50% during summer. It also causes injury to stock and downgrades wool, skins and hides with its long, sharp seeds. As an environmental weed it reduces biodiversity in native grasslands, where it outcompetes indigenous species".

<https://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/publications/guidelines/wons/pubs/n-neesia.pdf> . (Please see attached map for illustration of where we treated this weed in 2017.)

On our own property we noticed a new infestation of Umbrella sedge *Cyperus eragrostis* which we think came from regularly parking a water tank that visited the taps at Arthurs Creek Primary. We have managed to hand weed it including the seed heads but this weed seems to be quick to establish... now that I know this pretty architectural plant is an invasive weed I seem to be spotting it a lot! Look down in the valley near St Andrews Market!

On a positive note, our autumn planting got off to a great start. Sourcing my own plants I got some beautiful plants from Stringybark Community Nursery that came with lovely conversations and on one lucky day a couple of Gayle's delicious home grown grapefruit.



I also revisited the indigenous nursery at Latrobe Wildlife Sanctuary who with no notice managed to supply over 1000 healthy tubes including a few tubes of unusual moisture loving indigenous species Elderberry *Panax Polyscias sambucifolia* and Muttonwood *Myrsine howittiana* for the shady riparian corridor. Although those are special, I'm also really excited about planting fast growing acacias

which do the pioneering work of shade establishment and soil holding on eroded creek banks, and Allocasuarinas which we will use to provide shade (and emergency fodder) for stock just outside our paddocks and which (like wattle) benefits the surrounding environment by fixing atmospheric nitrogen for use by other plants.

Hope to see you at our talk on June 13!

The Interconnectedness of It All

Jane Fitzpatrick

Sometimes, (often) I feel embarrassed about what I write in a Landcare Newsletter as Landcare has traditionally been about planting natives, creating wildlife corridors, eradicating weeds, saving endangered wildlife etc etc. It definitely has a very “native/bush” feel to it and I am in no way disputing that it is really, really, vitally important work. Then along comes me to chit chat about pigs and roosters and netting orchards. However, in all seriousness, I do feel very passionately that nothing stands alone and that we all do varying acts of land care with every choice that we make.

When we are in the supermarket doing our shopping, we are practicing our land care with every item that we put in our trolley. If we dare to look at where the item has come from, how many food miles it has travelled, who produced it, and how they produced it, we can make a fairly educated guess as to how much care was put into the land to produce this product. If it is the cheapest version on the shelf, one could be fairly sure that shortcuts will have been made along the way; the cynic in me says that these shortcuts won't have included lowering profit margins as a first option.

Likewise when we are buying clothes: nowadays even materials are far more complicated than they used to be. Nowadays, plain old cotton undies may have been sprayed, dipped and impregnated with all sorts of weird things from “antibacterial doo-dah” (“doo-dah” is my unofficial term for chemical conglomerations), to aloe vera skin softener and always with the ubiquitous formaldehyde to keep them wrinkle free and attractive for sale. The land may, or may not, have been cared for as the merinos grazed to produce the wool that resulted in our thermal garments. How would we know?

There are other daily choices we make; from the brand and types of cleaning products, pens and paper, to our toiletries and toilet paper. Every item we buy will have a history of how much land care was done in the producing of that product. It is up to us to check out that history and make our choice accordingly. Every time we spend money we are practising our land care. Yes, we are delegating it, but delegating to a worthy recipient may actually result in better land care than we could have done ourselves.

I often smile if people dare to apologise for the cost of organic (or biodynamic) produce that I may be purchasing. I try to grow stuff. It is hard work to do it continuously, to have successional plantings happening and to always be harvesting something. It is hard work to fend off slugs and bugs and birds and rabbits and chooks and wayward footballs, not to mention celery eating peacocks (yes they do!). I am delighted that somebody else has taken the time and trouble and succeeded in growing something that is edible to help keep my family fed and healthy. I am even more delighted if they have gone to the extra effort to practise their land care. I am happy to pay appropriately for that.

Land care is hard work. It requires effort. But then so does any type of growth or improvement. Natural selection and evolutionary improvement didn't happen because the biggest and fastest and cleverest hid in the back of a cave.

We can also practice our land care by turning off unneeded lights, installing solar panels and making less trips in the car. We can practice our land care by consuming less. It is now fairly common knowledge as to how to be ecologically savvy. We all know to turn off lights and use the car less but maybe we need to extrapolate the concept and look at, and realise, that the everyday choices we make in the supermarket and shops are also a form of land care.

Another way I practice my land care is by multiplying my actions by six billion. Actually I have no idea what the current estimates are for the world population but it helps me to make better choices (and there are some that are far, far from perfect (sad face)) when I think of the consequences of my actions mimicked by the rest of the world's population (which I have arbitrarily put at six billion).

We can also practice our land care by caring for those who live on the land: animal or human. Nothing stands alone. The biggest bit of land that we have, is Earth. Right now I feel that she could do with all the land care we can manage, with every little choice that we make. The hard work and effort will be worth it, as it ensures a home for our grandchildren's grandchildren.

(I do feel like I may be preaching to the converted). Choose wisely.

The Bakewell Family's Nest Boxes on Shaws Road

Jo Bakewell

As you may know, we have 20 or so hand made, Phascogale and Sugar Glider nest boxes on our property. It's a remanant bush property that has no stock and no fences. These boxes are dispersed over the 20 acres. We dedicate the property to conservation and wildlife where we can. Some of you have visited our property and enjoyed being able to monitor them first hand on the various field days we have held here.



We normally check them between six months to a year, every year and have done so for over 18 years. Generally all the boxes are either full of fresh, green, eucalyptus leaves or have Sugar Glider families living in them. We checked them recently with some friends in March 2018. I thought the numbers were particularly down. We found one empty nest that had clearly been used by a Phascogale and one small family of Sugar Gliders. By Small, I mean 2-3 in the box. (Sometimes there have been 5-6 all snuggled up together!) We are not sure why we had only one family this year.

Maybe the boxes are tired or they have found other dwellings? We have six more boxes to put up in the next couple of weeks so hopefully this will provide even more options and habitat for these beautiful creatures.

Our Talk by Peter Voutier

Sue Apted



Our April meeting was a talk on foxes presented by Peter Voutier from Feralx Pest Control. Peter talked about predators in the landscape and how they fitted into the scheme of things. Peter then went on explain how trapping can be used to catch foxes and took the assembled participants through the steps in siting, setting and preparing a trap for use. The use of lures to entice a fox to the trap was particularly interesting as were some of the smells emanating from the range of bottles Peter keeps in his trapping kit. Peter explained how a trap bought off the shelf needs to be modified in order to have the best

chance of trapping a fox. He also went through his trapping kit explaining what items he carries and their use. Peter has had many years of experience in trapping and has acquired a vast range of knowledge in how to trap these very cunning and destructive animals. We thank Peter very

sincerely for an interesting and informative talk. The subject obviously resonates with many people in the area as we had over forty members come along to listen.

Our ACDLG Library

Tamara Slabon

Over the years we have found that our members don't borrow books anymore, I suppose due to the ease with which they can find out whatever they need via the internet. (I for one still buy books all the time; those of you who've seen the inside of my home will attest to that!) Consequently, we have downsized what we keep available for your use, so here is the current list of our borrowing library. Just email me at any time if you wish to borrow something. We don't bring them to Talks any more; we were finding we were carting books around for no real reason!

A FIELD GUIDE TO AUSTRALIAN FUNGI	BRUCE FUHRER
A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA 5TH ED 1996	SIMPSON & DAY
A FIELD GUIDE TO VICTORIA'S NATIVE GRASSLANDS	NATIONAL TRUST
A FIELD GUIDE TO WEEDS IN AUSTRALIA	LAMP AND COLLET
ACDLG - CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN (#1)	N. OATES
ACDLG - CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN (#2)	N. OATES
BEGINNERS GUIDE TO WETLAND BIRD IDENTIFICATION	MELBOURNE WATER
EUCALYPTUS AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO IDENT.	BROOKER & KLEINIG
FLORA OF MELBOURNE	ED. M. GARY & J. KNIGHT
GRASSLAND PLANTS OF SOUTH-EASTERN AUSTRALIA	MARRIOT, NEIL & JANE
GROW YOUR OWN WILDLIFE	PETER JOHNSTON, ALAN DON
IDENT. HANDBOOK OF NATIVE GRASSES IN VICTORIA	MEREDITH MITCHELL
NATIVE PLANTS OF MELBOURNE	D&B JONES
NOW AND THEN - A COLLECTION OF ... INVERTEBRATES	VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS
SITES OF FAUNAL & HABIT SIGNIFICANCE + NEROC REPORT DVD	NILLUMBIK SHIRE
STOCK AND WATERWAYS A MANAGERS GUIDE	LAND & WATER AUSTRALIA
TANGIBLE BENEFITS OF NATIVE VEGETATION	C. CROUCH
THEY ALL RAN WILD - THE STORY OF PESTS ON THE LAND IN AUST	ERIC ROLLS
TREES OF VIC AND ADJOINING AREAS	COSTERMANS
WEED NOTES: LANDCARE, DNRE, COUNCILS, GOVT, PAPERS	MISC
WEEDeck	NAT. WEEDS STRATEGY EX. COM.

Stringybark Community Nursery

Gayle Corr



Our Nursery grows local provenance indigenous plants and has been operating now for seven years. We sell to the public at \$1 per tube. You can find us off School Road in St Andrews, behind the Community Centre. Our stock is constantly changing so call us or arrange a visit, to see what we have. For more information please contact the

Nursery Coordinator Vron Curmi - her mobile number is 0435 405 575 – text messages preferred please. Our winter hours will remain at 3-5.00pm on a Tuesday and 9.30-11.30am on the second Sunday of the month.



ARTHURS CREEK DISTRICT LANDCARE GROUP LANDCARE TALK

8pm Wednesday June 13, 2018

Arthurs Creek Mechanics Institute Hall

We would like to welcome all our members to a winter treat for the Arthurs Creek District Landcare Group.

Our guest speaker is Isabella Amouzandeh from Sugarloaf Produce. They grow fruit and vegetables in the heart of Strathewen at the foothills of Mt Sugarloaf.

Isabella will be talking to us about her non-certified organic farm and her principles in growing local produce. It sounds fascinating & I'm sure we'll all learn something from hearing her talk.

Please do try to join us; even though the nights are cooler for venturing out, the beautiful Hall is heated and there will as always be a delicious supper & hot drinks!

Everyone is welcome!!

The logo for Sugarloaf Produce features a simple line drawing of a mountain peak above the text "SUGARLOAF" in a large, outlined, sans-serif font. Below "SUGARLOAF" is the word "PRODUCE" in a smaller, spaced-out, sans-serif font.

SUGARLOAF
PRODUCE

