

NEWHAM & DISTRICT LANDCARE GROUP



2014 - 2015 Activities report

Over the past 11 years we have made a huge impact on the district in which we live. We continue to build on the activities of previous years and are justifiably proud of our achievements - the visible changes to the landscape, knowledge acquired and shared, the sense of community built and our strong association with the Primary School.

Emphasis has been on activities that support our major strategic goal of improving biodiversity within the Campaspe-Maribyrnong Headwaters Biolink area or environmental education at Newham Primary School.

Membership has continued to sit at over 100 households.

Highlights of the year

Hanging Rock Reserve, as one of the few areas of public land within 'our patch', has been a continuing focus. The current C4N (Communities for Nature) grant, running for 2 years from April 2014, has made significant change possible within the reserve. Macedon Ranges Shire has matched the funding obtained by Newham Landcare so that major weed and rabbit management works were undertaken in 2014-2015.

Spring and Autumn group planting days were again held at the reserve, with a total of 3,228 indigenous native tubestock being planted in the riparian zone, most of them towards the western end of the creek.

Through our current Communities for Nature grant we have run an ACUP course, two Grasslands events and 20 landowners have received financial support for environmental activities on private land. Activities build on previous works to protect /enhance remnant vegetation, build connectivity between remnant patches and deal with pest species in the area between Macedon Regional Park and Cobaw State Forest.

Roadside management group has remained active and enthusiastic. Roadside weeds will continue to be a key part of their activities but their interests have expanded to include remnant roadside vegetation and the general management of roadsides.

Newham Primary School Propagating group has continued to grow plants to order for local Melbourne Water Stream Frontage program recipients and projects managed by our Landcare group. Organized by Newham Landcare, with parents and grand-parents from Newham Primary school providing manpower alongside Landcare members, this group has been developing propagating and plant ID skills since 2010, and has raised \$48,000 for the school in the process.

Supply of cheap indigenous native plants to members

These were grown by the propagating group and several members who had previously been TreeProject volunteers.

Clean Up Australia Day efforts, organized by Nick Massie, was again well supported by our members.

Educational activities

Speaker evenings:

- Secret Lives of Deep & Garden Hut creeks (Brigitte Kny)
- Agriculture & Climate change – Beef or Beans? (Paul Mahony)
- Fish for Farm Dams (Fisheries Dept.)
- Healthy farms for healthy waterways (Adam Logan from Melbourne Water)
- Understanding Environmental history – lessons from Victoria’s grassy ecosystems (Paul Foreman)
- Soils (Jim Sansom)

Field days / workshops

- Grasslands and their management (Paul Foreman)
- Horse property seminar (Stuart Myers)
- ACUP course and refresher (Bob Currie)

Newham Primary school environmental education program was again given considerable support, in two forms – volunteer time & expertise and financial.

Jenny Waugh has continued to conduct Waterwatch and other science based activities on a monthly basis.

We will continue to cover the cost of environmental activities, whether these are ‘whole school’ or at year level camps. This year, for the first time, we funded presentations by Adam Laurence as part of the kitchen garden program at the school. Adam, a magician and teacher, was very well received and so we have agreed to fund up to 4 sessions a year in the future.

Science teacher Sam Harrison was funded, through the upper Deep Creek Landcare network, to provide an additional 3 days of environmental education for NPS.

Our group also supported a LLEGS grant (Local Landscape Enhancement Grant) obtained by the school this year. Additional native planting adjacent to the creek within the school grounds will provide habitat for birds and other wildlife. The installation of outdoor furniture, a permanent BBQ, some paving and a bird-hide will make the area around the multi-purpose court much more attractive to its users. The project will provide many new opportunities for the school and its students – for both learning and play and enhance the area as a community asset.

Social and Communication

- **End-of-year BBQ.** This very special Newham event was supported by over 100 attendees as usual. Great food, Wellie throw and egg toss fantastic fun as always.
- **New(& old) members BBQ in late February, *reviving a past tradition***
- **Newsletter** produced quarterly by David Bonsall

- **Updates** and reminders irregularly from Penny to keep members informed of events, ours and others of interest
- **Website** has been maintained by Helen Scott

Committee

Thanks to our 2014-2015 committee for its initiative and drive to accomplish goals and provide organisation necessary to deliver a broad array of activities [Karl Kny, Nick Massie, Helen Scott, Fran Spain, Luke Spielvogel, Howard Stirling, Hilary Roberts and Penny Roberts] with special thanks to David Bonsall for continuing to put our newsletters together.

Thanks also to the two Landcare facilitators that support our activities – Sandy Scheltema (Upper Campaspe Landcare Network) and Grant Godden (Upper Deep Creek Network) – and the Macedon Ranges environmental staff, Michelle Wyatt, Michelle Patrick and William Terry. Their encouragement and cooperation is important in enabling the delivery of much of our program.

Above all thanks to our members for their participation and support, feedback and friendship – keeping our group vibrant, interesting and one we can be justifiably proud of for its community and conservation achievements over an extended period of time.