

Chum Creek Landcare AGM August 5 2015

Present Bronwyn Isaac, Debbi Weaver, Evelyn Feller, Michael Feller, Susi Sheaffe, Linden Danks, Tom Whelan, Ellen Whelan, Nella Lithgow, Ken Lang, Mary Lang, David Blair, Ian McNees, Rhonda McNees, Phil Hipwell, Ann Nowland, Rob Crozier, Brett Chester, Aislinn Chester, Keith Wade, Ann Trembeart, Doug van Vliet, John Flynn, Dylan Wood

President's report

Membership

- Currently 89 members from 58 properties (20% increase from 2014)
- We are fully registered with Farm Tree & Landcare Association (FTLA), which also includes public liability insurance.
- Membership fees fully subsidised (by Northern Yarra Landcare Network) for 2014-2015
- CCLG Committee will fully subsidise membership for 2015-2016
- Expected membership fees (from August 2016) around \$20 per household per year

Communications

A variety of communication methods are being used – we are yet to settle on the best way to communicate with all our members. We are mainly using digital media (primarily email), with hard copies being distributed to those households without internet access.

- Email of key news and upcoming events to all members (chumcklandcare@gmail.com)
- Newsletter – initially produced by our group, but now likely to be now organised at the Network level
- Facebook (www.facebook.com/cclandcare)
- Static website (<http://chumcreeklandcare.weebly.com>)
- Local newspaper – very limited success in the Community Diary section

Educational seminars and workshops

Organised and conducted three events -

- Sustainable Gardening (October 2014) – a comprehensive presentation from Graeme George, sharing his extensive experience on sustainable gardening practices, with particular emphasis on growing your own food.
- Native seed collection and propagation (February 2015) – a hands-on workshop by Doerte Drews, on methods for collecting indigenous seeds, and how to then propagate those seeds to grow your own plants.
- Chum Creek habitat survey report (July 2015) – presentation by Tabitha Barclay and Coral Jeffs on their findings from a survey along a section of Chum Creek waterway.

Please do RSVP if you are coming to events – it helps us organise the catering!

Events in the planning phase include:

- Native seed collection (tentatively December 2015)
- Local weed identification and control advice – drop-in session

Volunteer's Program

- We are scaling back out secondary School volunteer program, partly due to a lack of demand from our members, and partly due to the excessive work required by our Committee for very little outcome.
- We will likely continue with one school, so let us know if you have work for a small group of hardworking teenagers.

Public events

- We participated in the Healesville 150th centenary events in November 2014 – both the street parade and the family day in Queens Park.
- Planning to participate in the Lilydale Show (as part of a Network display) in November 2015.

Projects underway:

Northern Yarra Blackberry Action Group (NYBAG):

NYBAG is a group operating under the Northern Yarra Landcare Network (of which we are a part), to help local landowners control and ultimately remove blackberry. NYBAG started in the Steels Creek

area, before moving to Dixons Creek, and now are focusing on Chum Creek, starting in our northern area. Assistance is available in the form of consultancy advice, funding for contractor works, or reimbursements for your own efforts. If you are eligible for NYBAG and haven't yet signed up for this **free** program, take a brochure!

Chum Creek catchment health:

We have completed the first stage of our ambitious project to improve the health of the Chum Creek waterway. A habitat survey has been completed for a 4km section of the creek, identifying areas of excellent habitat, and other areas requiring weed or erosion control. We have discussed our results with the relevant authorities, and presented our report to local landowners, and we believe several landowners are now working with Melbourne Water or NYBAG to improve their local site. Assistance is available through our group if required.

This is likely to be a major project over several years. Our next stage (dependent on funding) is to continue our survey upstream to the Toolangi State Forest.

Neighbourhood working bees:

We are hoping to organise a series of neighbourhood working bees, focussing on weed removal and replanting areas along roadsides and into private properties. This will require local members to help us identify areas of need and to assist in the local organisation. We can provide volunteers, a wide range of equipment, and help with liaison with other bodies (eg Shire), including organising a skip if required. If you have a group of neighbours who would like a working bee in your area, please let us know.

Landcare Facilitator

We have managed for the past year without the support of a Landcare Facilitator, due to the funding for our local facilitator running out at the end 2014. Other Landcare networks across the state have had their facilitator positions re-funded, but our area has missed out. Together with other Landcare groups in our Network, we continue to lobby for funding to continue this position.

Motion to accept the president's report: Moved - Michael Feller, Seconded - David Blair

Treasurer's Report:

Balance b/f 1/7/14		\$6,724.71	
Income			
Grants - Melbourne Water	\$7,100.00		
Membership rebate	\$1,040.00		
Bank Interest	\$76.99		
Total credits		\$8,216.99	
			\$14,941.70
Expenses			
Catering	\$407.69		
CCLG Polo tops	\$480.00		
Equipment	\$1,519.17		
Gift Vouchers for presenters	\$100.00		
Office supplies	\$66.00		
Postage	\$65.00		
Presenters' fee	\$100.00		
Membership/subscriptions	\$809.50		
Sundry			
Survey Report	\$4084.00		
Less expenses			\$7,631.36
Balance as per BB 30/6/15			\$7,310.34

Motion to accept the treasurer's report: Moved - Debbi Weaver, Seconded: Tom Whelan

Next AGM: Aug 2016

Elections

In his introduction to the elections Tom Whelan stressed the importance of continuity as well as obtaining new members.

The following members were elected to the committee:

Debbi Weaver, Michael Feller, Evelyn Feller, Susi Sheaffe, Tom Whelan, Linden Danks

Guest Speaker following the AGM (Dr. Bronwyn Isaac, Monash University)

Dr. Isaac presented very interesting information about powerful owls, supplemented with fascinating anecdotes and video clips of the owls. She started by addressing the question – why do some animals, but not others, live in urban environments. The answer included availability of food and shelter. She then discussed powerful owl morphology (the largest Australian owl), food (opportunistic carnivores feeding mainly on possums and gliders, but also taking some birds and flying foxes), distribution (from SE Queensland to the Victoria/SA border mainly on the east side of the divide, and conservation status (generally vulnerable or threatened).

Dr. Isaac also discussed arboreal marsupials and their habitat requirements, as they feature prominently in the powerful owl diet. Forested areas are likely to contain 6 species, while urban fringe areas are likely to have 3 species, whereas completely urban areas of Melbourne are likely to have only 2 species.

The powerful owl can live in urban areas as there can be sufficient food (possums) present, but there are generally few tree hollows present so nesting habitat is poor. Consequently urban areas can be ecological traps, drawing in owls for the food, but not providing them with nesting habitat and hence preventing them from breeding.

Modelling of good powerful owl habitat indicated that the owl prefers forested areas with hollow-containing trees and riparian vegetation.