



# CHUM CREEK LANDCARE NEWSLETTER

No. 12, Spring, 2017



Birds photographed in Chum Creek and the nearby Yarra Valley by your editor (clockwise from top left they are - Laughing Kookaburra, Crimson Rosella, Eastern Spinebill, Grey Currawong, and Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo). They all live in our area and are relatively common, but what else do they all have in common?

They are **declining** in this part of the world (SE Australia)! Are you concerned? If so, assist Birdlife Australia in collecting data about the species present in your backyard. Get involved in the **Aussie Backyard Bird Count** the week of 23 – 29 October, by visiting <https://aussiebirdcount.org.au/> (see below on P. 5).

### President's Report

Greetings from the Chum Creek fortress! At least that is what parts of our property look like. Our attackers are deer, wallabies and kangaroos. Up to 6-8 years ago we were able to revegetate successfully with minimal browsing from these animals. Now unless one protects seedlings with about 2 metre high fences, the seedlings will be browsed down to below the level of the seed screens. Our fences also have to be wombat proof since the wombats create openings that the deer can also use. This means more work and expense to revegetate. However, some funding can be obtained from either Melbourne Water or the Yarra Ranges Ribbons of Green Program to assist with fencing costs.

Is anything happening about the deer problem? I heard a disturbing estimate from a senior Parks Victoria scientist that there are over 800,000 feral deer in the state. At the state level a recent report 'Inquiry into the control of invasive animals on Crown land' by Victoria's Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee has been published by the Parliament. This report can be obtained from their website [www.parliament.vic.gov.au/enrrdc](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/enrrdc) and is worth reading. This report contains many recommendations for feral

animal control in the state. Among over 33 recommendations are ones that recommend getting a better understanding of the actual number of pest animals and to have a more science based, coordinated and adequately funded approach. Whether these recommendations will be implemented, remains to be seen. Recently over 70,000 deer have been culled in the Alps using different strategies and it is hoped the results from this program will provide direction for future work. A limited cull has also occurred in the Dandenongs. At the moment a Yarra Catchment Deer Forum has had a few meetings with the objective of developing best practices for deer management in the local area. In reality we can't expect any government action in our area in the near future to deal with one of our major pest problems.

As a quick reminder we still have some funding left that could be used for blackberry treatment and we would encourage members to make use of this opportunity. Please contact us for details if you are interested (email: [chumcklandcare@gmail.com](mailto:chumcklandcare@gmail.com), ph: 5962 5227).

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## Chum Creek Landcare news

### **Third Chum Creek Survey report will be available soon**

The report from last summer's survey of Chum Creek and its adjacent vegetation, from where it crosses Lowes Rd. down to near where it meets the Watts River, is currently being prepared. It will be available later this year.

### **Chum Creek Landcare Group may produce a brochure to assist bird identification in our area and wants your input!**

We would like to produce a colour brochure with photos and brief descriptions of birds known to occur in our area. This would be distributed free to Chum Creek Landcare members. This should assist bird identification and increase interest in local birds. We have applied for funding to produce the brochure and have been offered assistance by Birdlife Yarra Valley. We would like to know what birds do you think should be featured. Please let us know by email ([chumcklandcare@gmail.com](mailto:chumcklandcare@gmail.com)) or by normal mail (c/o 490 Chum Creek Rd., Chum Creek, Vic. 3777).

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## Featured Weeds – Red Cestrum and Loquat

### **Red Cestrum (*Cestrum elegans*)**

Red Cestrum is a medium-sized shrub, originally from Mexico, similar in appearance to a fuchsia. It has large dark green leaves which have a very unpleasant smell when crushed. Cestrum forms dense clusters of red trumpet-like flowers, drooping at the ends of branches. In late summer/early autumn it produces dark purple berries. It readily regenerates, invading cool moist bushland areas seriously impacting and threatening the indigenous plant life of the Yarra Ranges by outcompeting local species. Plants sucker to form dense thickets.



**Red Cestrum leaves and flowers.**

#### **It spreads**

- by birds which eat the red berries. Birds can then travel over vast areas depositing seeds in droppings allowing the plant to generate in new areas.
- by seeds or root suckers getting into waterways, with soil movement or on machinery.
- by dumping of garden waste in bushland, on roadsides and in waterways.
- by leaving cut branches laying on the ground, segments can take root and grow into a new plant.



#### **It can be removed by hand or herbicide.**

**Hand removal** is recommended for small seedlings where practical. This may be by simply cutting the tree down or by ringbarking plants below living branches or foliage. This can take anything up to 2 years. To kill the tree faster, use a small amount of a glyphosate-based herbicide in the cut. Dead trees need to be cut down.

**Drill & Fill with herbicide:** Drill shallow holes (20mm) in the trunk as close to the root zone as possible. Fill each hole immediately with an undiluted glyphosate-based product. The tree will then slowly die and may need to be removed later.

More information is available at -

[https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/webdocuments/environment-engineering/parks-environment/environment-parks-environment/red\\_cestrum\\_web.pdf](https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/webdocuments/environment-engineering/parks-environment/environment-parks-environment/red_cestrum_web.pdf)

#### **Loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*)**

Loquat is a large evergreen shrub or small tree, originally from China, with a rounded crown, short trunk and woolly new twigs. The tree can grow to 5–10 metres tall, but is often smaller, about 3–4 metres. The leaves are alternate, simple, 10–25 cm long, dark green, tough and leathery in texture, with a serrated margin, and densely velvety-hairy below with thick yellow-brown pubescence; the young leaves are also densely pubescent above, but this soon rubs off.

Loquats are unusual among fruit trees in that the flowers appear in the autumn or early winter, and the fruits are ripe at any time from early spring to early summer. The flowers are 2 cm in diameter, white, with five petals, and produced in stiff panicles of three to ten flowers. The flowers have a sweet, heady aroma that can be smelled from a distance. Loquat fruits, growing in clusters, are oval, rounded or pear-shaped, 3–5 cm long, with a smooth or downy, yellow or orange, sometimes red-blushed skin.



**Loquat leaves and fruit.**

Like most related plants, the seeds (pips) and young leaves of the plant are slightly poisonous, containing small amounts of cyanogenic glycosides which release cyanide when digested, though the low concentration and bitter flavour normally prevent enough being eaten to cause harm.

Fruit are spread by birds, other animals and humans. Loquat is a weed of riparian vegetation, forest gaps and margins, roadsides, urban bushland, open woodlands, disturbed sites and waste areas.

**Control** is similar to that for Red Cestrum – either by hand removal/digging up of smaller plants or drilling and filling shallow holes in the trunk with undiluted glyphosate-based herbicide.

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## **Weed Wipeout**

Did you know that you are eligible to receive 4 free tipping vouchers from the Yarra Ranges Shire to dispose of invasive weeds, such as Agapanthus, Arum Lilies, English Ivy, Japanese Honeysuckle, Montbretia, Periwinkle, Tree Tobacco, and Wandering Trad?

You can take up to one cubic metre or the contents of a 2-wheel trailer to the nearest waste disposal facility in Coldstream. Vouchers are available at the Healesville Community Link or at the Shire offices in Lilydale.

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## **Events of interest**



**Friends of Leadbeaters Possum AGM with guest speakers. Toolangi Forest Discovery Centre, Toolangi. Friday, 27 October, 6:30 - 10:30 pm**

Arrive at 6:30pm for light refreshments and to spend some time enjoying the Toolangi Forest Discovery Centre. For more information, visit <http://leadbeaters.org.au/event/annual-general-meeting-2017/>

**Healthy Land, Happy Horses - One day Equiculture Workshop by Yarra Valley Equestrian Landcare Group. Saturday, 18 November 10am - 4pm, Registration from 9.30am.**

**Macclesfield Hall – Macclesfield Rd, Macclesfield**

Cost \$20 (lunch, morning & afternoon tea provided).

The course is aimed at horse owners who either own their own land, lease land or agist horses. Learn how you can make changes to your horse management regime that will improve welfare, reduce costs, reduce your workload AND be good for the land all at the same time.

Enquiries Marianne 0425740891. For further information, visit

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/healthy-land-happy-horses-one-day-equiculture-workshop-tickets-39079315284?aff=eivtefrnd>

**Aussie Backyard Bird Count – Monday, 23 October to Sunday, 29 October**



[www.aussiebirdcount.org.au](http://www.aussiebirdcount.org.au)

BirdLife Australia and the Birds in Backyards team have come together to bring you the Aussie Backyard Bird Count, one of Australia's biggest citizen science events!

You can celebrate National Bird Week by taking part in the Aussie Backyard Bird Count — you will be joining thousands of people from across the country who will be heading out into their backyards, local parks or favourite outdoor spaces to take part.

To get involved all you need is 20 minutes, your favourite outdoor space (this doesn't have to be your actual backyard), and some keen eyesight. And it doesn't matter if you're a novice or an expert — Birdlife Australia will be there to help you out. Simply record the birds you know and look up those you don't on Birdlife's 'Aussie Bird Count' app or their website ([www.aussiebirdcount.org.au](http://www.aussiebirdcount.org.au)). You'll instantly see live statistics and information on how many people are taking part near you and the number of birds and species counted in your neighbourhood and the whole of Australia!

Not only will you get to know your feathered neighbours, but you'll be contributing to a vital pool of information from across the nation that will help Birdlife determine how Australian birds are faring.



# Environmental Project Mapping Workshop

*A re-run of the popular session held in July this year*

- Using Google Maps and Android phone  
GPS

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> November  
2017**

**9.30am – 1pm**

**Venue: Yarra Ranges Council  
Conference Room,  
15 Anderson St., Lilydale**

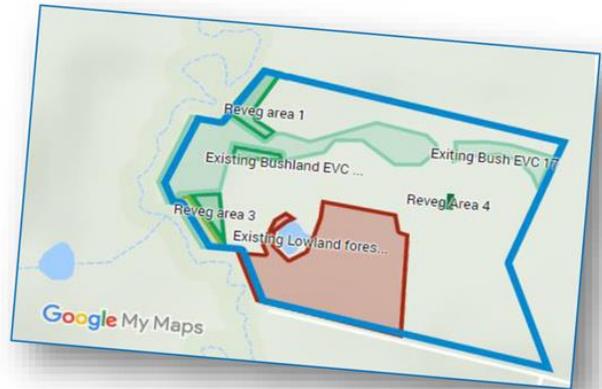
**A Free event.**

**Morning tea & lunch provided**

**Places limited.**

**To Register:** [Link to registration](#)

**Registrations close Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**



## Learn how to:

- Access google mapping tools
- Set-up a digital project map
- Draw property boundaries, shapes, lines and points
- Format and label shapes lines and points
- Measure distances and areas
- Access project from Android phone
- Use Android phone to mark weeds and environmental assets
- Map on-ground areas for weed treatment or revegetation
- Embed maps into documents such as grant applications and reports
- Save, share and submit electronic maps to granting bodies

## What to bring:

Each student/couple to BYO laptop and android phone with GPS

## Course Outcomes:

By conclusion of this workshop, each participant/couple will have prepared two project maps.

- Both maps will be compliant with PPWCMA submission standards.
- A least one map will contain points, lines and shapes entered from android phone GPS
- Participants own equipment will be set up and used during this workshop so will be ready for further use.

*This workshop is supported by the Port Phillip & Westernport CMA, Yarra Ranges Council, and Yarra Ranges Landcare Network, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.*



# Introducing Backyard Bees

European & native bees

Bees in the suburbs

How a hive works

Clothing & Equipment

Obtaining bees

Establishing a hive

Seasonal bee keeping

Extracting Honey

Pests & diseases

When: Sunday 19 November 9 AM - 12 PM

Where: Yarra Ranges Birdland Environment Centre  
271 Mount Morton Rd Belgrave Heights

Cost: \$25 (Pay by cash on day to Birdland Bee Farm)

Led by local beekeeper: David Moncrieff

Bookings: email [moncrieffhome@ozemail.com.au](mailto:moncrieffhome@ozemail.com.au)

Supporters: Southern Dandenongs Community Nursery  
Yarra Ranges Council

Share morning tea with us & a free indigenous plant



**Manningham Environment Seminars (Warrandyte) – The brighter side of night: the ecological consequences of artificial night lighting, by Dr Theresa Jones. Wednesday, 6 December, 7.30 - 9 pm.**

Until very recently one of the constancies for life on earth has been the presence of a bright day and a dark night. Since the advent of electrical night lighting, this has changed: nights are becoming increasingly bright and many species living in urban areas never experience a true dark night. Accumulating evidence indicates that this dramatic shift in the night-time photic environment in urban areas has a range of (largely negative) ecological consequences. Dr Theresa Jones explores the biological effect of artificial night lighting for physiology, behaviour and life-history traits using vertebrate and invertebrate models in the field and laboratory.

Seminars are conducted at River View Room, Grand Hotel, 110 Yarra St., Warrandyte.  
For information: phone 03 9840 9326 or email [csadmin@manningham.vic.gov.au](mailto:csadmin@manningham.vic.gov.au)