

Winter 2023

"Landcare for Everyone"

The Glider Gazette



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HDLN Office Bearers

President : Dave Smurthwaite
Vice President: Andrew Irvine
Secretary: Regina Mudge
Treasurer: Adam Nash



Our Staff

Michelle Leech (Coordinator)
Lyndell Driscoll (Resource Centre)
Kate Leslie (Project Officer)



Volunteers

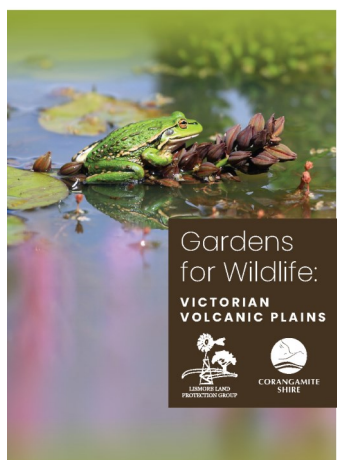
Students, local farmers,
landholders, schools- you and
fellow community members!



Gardening For Wildlife: here's how!



HDLN's booklets launched recently in Timboon and Camperdown with seedling and seed giveaways, BBQ, bat box sales and more. Biodiversity is declining every year. You can help turn this tide of decline by planting local plants in your garden. With the advice in these booklets, you'll be a force for change creating a haven for our unique wildlife. View the booklets online at our project's webpage or pick up a hardcopy from our Timboon office. Published with the support of Corangamite Shire Council.



Bitterns on Farms



This strange bird is the threatened Australasian bittern.

We are helping Birdlife Australia make contact with landholders with wetlands. This approach is yielding new sites of bittern habitat. Check out the first newsletter on our project's webpage.

Hello Landcarers,

What a privilege to work with communities and landholders at Heytesbury District Landcare Network as the new Landcare Coordinator. Since I was a teenager in South Africa, I planned to work to benefit the natural environment. I've experienced farm life; rearing dairy calves, helping with stock and managing weeds. My science degree focused in on the things I'm interested in, like environmental management, catchment health and communications. I was working for Dairy Australia just before joining Landcare. So this role is returning to the field I studied in and it feels like a natural fit. I like the opportunity to deal with the community, making a difference.

There is so much happening in the Regenerative Agriculture team at HDLN. I hope you'll enjoy reading about it overleaf.

The cold winter winds are another good time to observe your land. Is there a paddock where stock would benefit from more shade and shelter? A properly designed shelterbelt can increase total pasture growth for your stock. If you would welcome a bit of help with acquiring seedlings, that's what our Biofund programme is for! Contact us for more information.

We are a not-for-profit community organisation answerable to the community via a committee. Our recent AGM resulted in some changes. We welcomed new members Adam Nash and Chris Hibburt and appreciate the service of outgoing members Lisa Togni and Doug Trigg.

I can be contacted on the Landcare Coordinator's mobile number 0427 983 755 or michelle@heytesburylandcare.org.au.

Stay warm, Michelle Leech

Congratulations

Helen Langley has been honoured by the Timboon Field Naturalists with a Life Membership, in a first for the Club. Helen is also a great contributor to the Elingamite-Cobrico Landcare Group.



Our Sustainable Agriculture Projects update

Sustainable Ag Project Team Contributors

Includes Jade Killoran, Tony Evans, Jane Stanley, Max Kelly, Tim Tutt & Kirsty Hawkes with Gabriel Hakim & John Cutler.

A bit of history explains the multi-species focus

Our first Sustainable Ag project was 'Keeping Carbon on the Farm'. Then came trials on 10 farms through 'Increasing Soil Carbon'. 'Activating Soil Biology' added another 4 farms.

These local trials by HDLN showed multi-species fodder crops:

- ✓ Increased on-farm grown feed,
- ✓ reduced reliance on fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides and
- ✓ increased soil nutrients and water holding capacity.

However there were mixed results in getting that first successful multi-species crop.

So our **Cultivation Calculator** was developed in the next project. It's a decision-making tool, providing guidance as to suitable paddock preparation, helping de-risk the change for farmers.

Climate Resilient Farmers

30 landholders were given the chance to roll out initiatives of their preference through this project; multi-species was a popular choice. A project page has been developed for the Cultivation Calculator and other resources .

What next? Online Toolkit for Decision Making

The online decision making Toolkit to help farmers reduce their carbon emissions, funded by AgriFutures, has begun. Our survey found that farmers prefer bite-sized pieces of information, especially in a video format. Based on the survey we have developed a prioritised list to focus on when developing new tools like the Cultivation Calculator, as follows -

Priority Areas for Future Tool Development

* Multi-species forage crops * Livestock rotations * Revegetation and shelterbelts * Dung beetle activation * Water management * On-farm energy management.

Jade Killoran's Top 3 Strategies

Jade was our guest speaker at our AGM in June. She has been the supporting agronomist for HDLN on our on-farm trials for the past four years. She shared her top picks for regenerative agriculture strategies which are relatively easy for farm businesses to implement and deliver positive results, both for farm businesses and the environment. It was recorded so you can watch it at your leisure on our project webpage; screenshot below.



Chocolyn Trials

Power Harrow? Rotor Strip Till? SoilKee?

Pushing the limits in establishing multi-species fodder crops on a very challenging heavy clay site.



A field day was held in May to look at how the crops were establishing. At that stage all plots had established and looked set to provide good winter feed. Potentially the power harrow plot was ahead in biomass but individual plants were looking more robust, with better root systems, in the rotor strip till and SoilKee plots.

At the end of the trial Jade will host a Zoom session with the results. Supported by DemoDAIRY and Corangamite Shire Council.

Climate Resilient Farmers in Simpson



At the culmination of our Climate Resilient Farms program, about 40 landholders gathered in Simpson in April.

Jane gave an overview of the project. Jade presented the mixed results of multispecies fodder crops, she and Tony spoke to the Cultivation Calculator, and John spoke to energy use on farm and identified the big wins possible for farmers. A great discussion followed. Topics included ways to establish farm baselines of carbon emissions and the benefits and limitations of multi-species forage crops.



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