



## Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group

# Newsletter



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### Brisbane Ranges LandCare General Meeting

7-30pm Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2011  
Balliang Hall

### Guest Speaker Richard Boekel discusses the proposed Western Grassland Reserves



**Richard Boekel** is a Biodiversity Planning Officer with the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE). He has recently taken up the position of Grassland Engagement Officer with the Melbourne Strategic Assessment team, focussing on community engagement in the creation of new grassland reserves in the west of Melbourne.

Richard has worked with DSE (and predecessors) for over 20 years, mainly based in Geelong. For the past ten or so years he has provided biodiversity input into statutory planning cases in the western growth areas of Melbourne and Geelong including involvement with precinct planning, Melbourne 2030 and Melbourne@5 Million programs. He has had involvement in threatened species work and is part of recovery teams for Spiny Rice-flower, Orange-bellied Parrot and Hooded Plover. In 1996/97 he worked for the United States Forest Service in southern Oregon as a watershed restoration team leader. 2004 saw him part of a team awarded a United Nations World Environment Day award for response and community engagement work in the eradication of a marine pest (Northern Pacific Seastar) at Inverloch. Richard is also a Level 3 Planning Officer as part of DSE's fire response and preparation responsibilities.

## BRLCG News

We offer financial support for members' land management activities, with a generous subsidy of up to \$200 per member family towards costs of stakes and tree guards used for planting indigenous trees in the local area.

In addition we will continue to offer a subsidy of \$50 towards vermin control undertaken by members.

The Little River Revegetation Project is into its second year, with plans for further tree planting at sites on the Kerr, Bufton and Heath properties. BRLCG will run a working bee later in the year to remove guards from some established trees.

Our president, Andrew Prime, is part of the selection panel which is seeking a replacement for Sam Bayley whose enthusiasm and support for our group has helped in many ways, including winning some big grants.

## Western Grassland Reserves

The proposed grassland reserves will impact areas around Melton, Werribee and Little River. Several members have expressed interest and some concern about this proposal: for example the possibility of compulsory acquisition of privately owned land. Nobody is better placed to discuss

these important issues with us than our guest speaker **Richard Boekel**.

The Victorian Government Department of Sustainability and Environment website has a lot of information about this matter from which the following has been extracted.

"The Victorian Government is reserving 15,000 hectares of land to protect critically endangered grasslands, and to offset the ecological impact of urban growth in Melbourne's north and west."

## Where are the Reserves

"The reserves will cover two large areas, around Mt Cottrell, south east of Melton, and north of Little River, west of Werribee. Together, these grassland reserves will constitute the world's largest remaining concentration of Volcanic Plains Grasslands and will protect some of Victoria's most endangered ecosystems. They will also provide habitat for a number of listed rare or endangered species, including the Golden Sun Moth, Striped Legless lizard, Growling Grass Frog, Spiny Rice-flower, and Button Wrinklewort."

A larger version of the following map is available for download from the DSE website.

