



Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group

Newsletter



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Visit our website for latest news: <http://brlg.org.au>

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Have your say! Your chance to have input into a Council rabbit strategy for our area.



Tim Bloomfield began his distinguished career in pest animal management checking rabbit traps as he walked his way to school.

Now after forty years of professional experience in pest animal management at a catchment and State level, he is assisting the City of Greater Geelong to prepare their Rabbit Management Strategy.

He is keen to get our input into what would make the strategy truly effective for our area.



Tim will be able to answer any questions you have about rabbit control methods and the suite of viruses that are currently out in the field.

In addition, Tim will take the opportunity to tell us about one of the rising threats across the State: deer. Which deer species do you have? How do you know if you have a problem? And if you don't yet have a problem, rest assured they are soon coming to a paddock near you!

Hope to see you at the Balliang Hall on Thursday April 18th at 7:30pm for this informative and engaging session.

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For feedback, comments and letters to the editor: newsletter.brlg@gmail.com

Weed of the Month – Boxthorn

Boxthorn (*Lycium foerocissimum*) originated in South Africa and was initially introduced in Australia in the 1800s as a hedge plant for stock containment. It has flourished in Australian conditions to such a degree that it is a declared [Weed of National Significance](#) and one of the most problematic weeds across the southern half of the country.

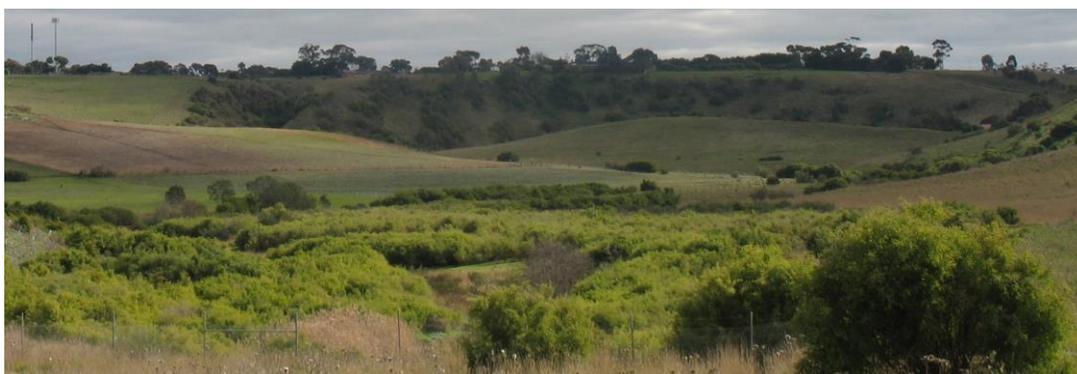
Boxthorn reproduces mostly by seeds that are commonly dispersed when the fruit are eaten by birds (why you see it growing under gum trees) and other animals (e.g. foxes). Seeds may also be spread by water, machinery and in dumped garden waste or contaminated soil. Seeds are viable in the landscape for up to six years.

Boxthorn and rabbits have also teamed up making a dastardly pact against our landscape. Rabbits disturb the soil creating ideal conditions for boxthorn seed to germinate whilst the prickly cover provided by boxthorn provides the safe harbour under which rabbits can safely dig their warren systems and breed.

Options for successfully treating boxthorn include:



Treatment option	Tips for success	Pros	Cons
Cut stem and paint with herbicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use undiluted glyphosate (Roundup) Paint stem within 30 seconds of cutting ensuring the entire cut face and edges of cut receive ample herbicide Dispose of boxthorn branches promptly – if left in a pile, rabbits and their grandchildren will love you. Will burn better when green than dry, particularly if compacted down. Follow up for any regrowth six months later. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheapest treatment option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be difficult with large boxthorn. May need to chainsaw to cut a path in to the central stem.
Spray with herbicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a cocktail of strong herbicides to effectively treat, particularly on established plants (eg, Grazon + Brush off + penetrant) Best undertaken in growing season; don't spray in dry conditions when leaves easily detach from plant Roundup will only temporarily remove leaves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be only option on steep slopes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care and appropriate training to use required herbicides
Mechanical removal with dozer or excavator + grab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut and paint root fragments left in ground Burn boxthorn immediately Follow up essential for regrowth & germinants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best option for large infestations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expensive unless you own machinery



Boxthorn bulldozed without follow-up...in time will result in a multi-stem impenetrable thicket. Aka: rabbit heaven

Planting for Bushfire Resilience

It has been a harsh dry summer which thankfully did not bring bushfires of significance to our area. You may now have one eye looking toward winter, the season best suited to planting and revegetation. Whilst Landcare advocates the planting of native plants indigenous to the area, we also appreciate that many native species are high on the flammability index. When plant selection relates to areas in close proximity to our homes, there is an apparent conflict between the commitment to indigenous species and fire risk reduction.

How to proceed? What are the best plants to select? Below you will find a few links to help you navigate these decisions.

The first link below contains some interesting pictorial case studies of properties that have faced bushfires and how the vegetation affected fire behaviour. Note that it is published by a business that sells deciduous trees.

<http://www.smalltreefarm.com.au/Case-Studies.pdf>

In the recent fires in west Gippsland, blackwoods (acacia melanoxylon) were noted to have proved more resistant to the effects of fire, particularly in shelterbelts.

The CFA offers some great resources. *Landscaping for Bushfire – Garden Design and Plant Selection* is one of them:

https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/documents/20143/72271/landscaping_for_bushfire.pdf

The Australian Plant Society (Victoria) includes a list of fire resistant and fire retarding plants which may also be useful:

<https://apsvic.org.au/fire-resistant-and-retardant-plants/>

Comments are welcome and will be published in the next newsletter. Happy garden design and plant selection!

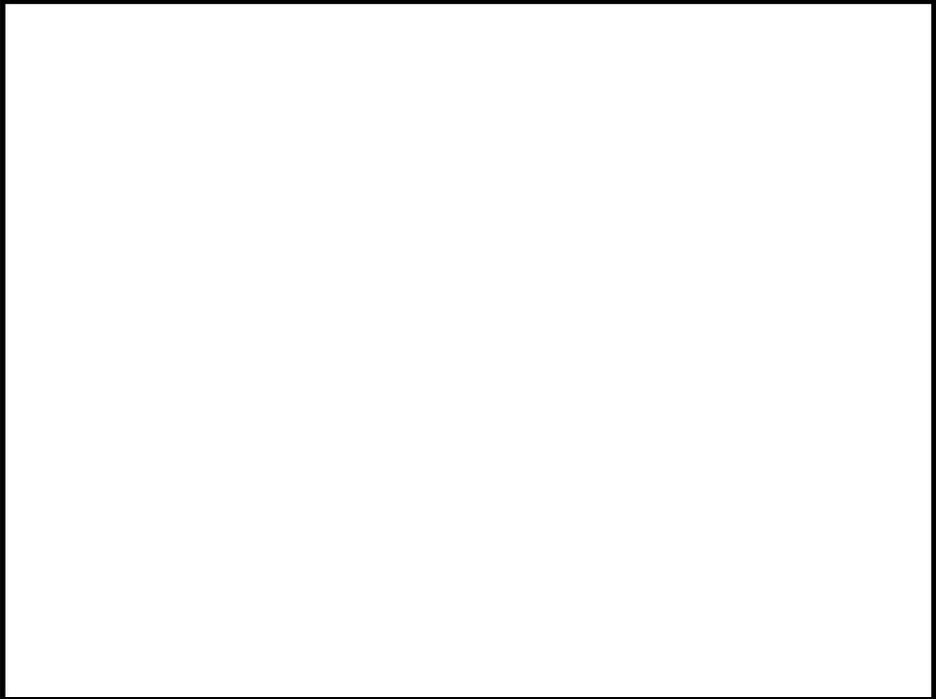
BRLG Working Bee – Sunday 19th May

Thanks to all that came along to our first working bee last month at the Triangle. Hopefully you have driven past and seen our good work. The next one on Sunday 19th May will continue on with this local community project. Meet from 9am and we will run through to a BBQ lunch. Please come along and bring loppers, gloves and if you have one, a small chainsaw. Many hands make light work!



BRLG Calendar 2020

Here's a sneak preview of the first page of our 2020 calendar! Place your orders now. Multiple copies recommended. I'm sure you will agree that it will make a great Christmas gift or...



January 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

The Missing Mind (http://www.missingmind.com)

...not if we don't have any images! Send your brilliant images to our calendar production company at fly2nina@gmail.com

Get those cameras out! Agricultural, landscape, people – anything connected to our area. We want your images ☺

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Landcare Opportunities, Information and Wine of the Month!

Tax Rebates for Landcare Works

Primary producers are eligible for a number of tax rebates for undertaking landcare works. Thanks to the [Basalt to Bay Landcare Network](#) who have been working closely with the ATO, there are now a selection of simple, easy to read guides to help farmers get the rebates they are entitled to for doing landcare works. Click on the links below to learn about claiming deductions for:

- [Fire preparedness and prevention](#)
- [Establishing shelterbelts](#)
- [Landcare and similar expenses](#)
- [Tree farming and forestry](#)

Waterways of the West – have your say!

The Victorian Government has appointed a Ministerial Advisory Committee to make recommendations on how best to protect the health, amenity, access and community values of waterways in the West of Melbourne. The Waterways of the West committee will investigate issues affecting rivers and creeks, such as the Werribee and Maribyrnong Rivers and Kororoit and Skeleton Creeks. Recommendations may include changes to land use planning controls, responsibilities for land and water management and better ways to involve and work with community and Traditional Owners to protect these waterways. Help shape future decision making for the Waterways of the West [by providing feedback on the pressures and opportunities facing these waterways.](#)

Communities Environment Program

The recent Federal budget included \$22.7 million in 2019-20 for small-scale, [community-led projects](#) nominated by the local Member of Parliament in consultation with the community which will focus on environmental priorities such as:

- waste and litter reduction
- protecting native animals, including our threatened species
- addressing weeds and pest animals
- restoring and improving coasts, wetlands, riverbanks and waterways.

Funding for individual projects can range from \$2,500 to \$20,000 and up to \$150,000 is available to each electorate. Proposals can be submitted to your local Member now, although guidelines and application forms are not expected to be available until mid-year. It is not known whether a possible, future Labour government will support this program or not, but let the Exec know if you have an idea for which you think we should pitch.

Protecting Melbourne's Strategic Agricultural Land Consultation

DELWP has developed draft criteria to identify strategic agricultural land, and has also identified potential locations of strategic agricultural land in Melbourne's green wedge and peri-urban areas, for further investigation. Go to: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/protecting-melbournes-ag-land>. Consultation closes: 23 April 2019.

State Of Environment Report 2018 - Victoria

The State of Environment 2018 report has just been released, and it tells Victorians about the health of our environment – our land, our water, our air, and our ecosystems.

For more information: <https://www.ces.vic.gov.au/reports/state-environment-2018>

Deer Scan

New Community Deer Monitoring Tool Launched – Deer Scan
More information: <https://www.feralscan.org.au/deerscan/>

Wine of the Month

Invoke the autumn rains with a pinot by the fire:
Coldstream Hills
2017 Pinot Noir
Yarra Valley



Landcare Resources

I want to know about...	Here is a good place to start...
Aboriginal cultural heritage location mapping	https://www.vic.gov.au/aboriginalvictoria/heritage/heritage-tools-and-publications/heritage-tools.html then select "online map tool"
Biodiversity mapping and recording	http://maps.biodiversity.vic.gov.au/viewer/?viewer=NatureKit http://natureshare.org.au/ http://avh.chah.org.au/
Boxthorn	http://weeds.ala.org.au/WoNS/africanboxthorn/docs/African_boxthorn-national_best_practice_manual.pdf
Chilean needle grass	https://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/publications/guidelines/wons/pubs/n-neesiana.pdf
Feral goat control	https://www.pestsmart.org.au/pest-animal-species/feral-goat/
Fox control	https://www.pestsmart.org.au/pest-animal-species/european-fox/
Gorse	https://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/publications/guidelines/wons/pubs/u-europaeus.pdf
Landcare networks	Moorabool Landcare Network Geelong Landcare Network
Melbourne Water Stream Frontage Grants	https://www.melbournewater.com.au/community-and-education/apply-funding/stream-frontage-management-program
Rabbit management	http://www.mln.org.au/images/PDFS/rabbitactionguide.pdf https://www.pestsmart.org.au/pest-animal-species/european-rabbit/
Serrated tussock	https://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/publications/guidelines/wons/pubs/n-trichotoma.pdf
Weeds - identification and control	http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/weeds/a-z-of-weeds
Weed status in Victoria	http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/weeds/invasive-plant-classifications http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/protecting-victoria-from-pest-animals-and-weeds/legislation-policy-and-permits/declared-noxious-weeds-and-pest-animals-in-victoria

Last Laugh

Wicked problems sometimes just need you to think laterally and join the dots...

