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Long-neck turtle

Working Together

Volume 43

SPRING EDITION 2015

Landcare

The Mid Murray LAP Committee have decided to have a name change to Mid Murray Landcare SA and the constitutional changes will be voted on at our upcoming Annual General meeting on the 12th of November, held at the Mannum Golf Club from 10-12pm, everyone welcome,

Landcare is a grassroots movement that harnesses individuals and groups to protect, restore and sustainably manage Australia's natural environment and its productivity. It had its genesis in initiatives to improve agricultural productivity through sustainable land management. The movement has grown from this to a broader focus on sustainable management of all of Australia's natural resource assets and now encompasses individuals and groups across the whole landscape from coastal to urban and remote areas of Australia.

With over 6000 Landcare and

Coastcare groups nationwide there is likely to be a group near you, possibly working on a project right under your nose. Volunteers range from kids to retirees, surfers to farmers and CEO's to students. United by a shared desire to create positive change in their communities, these individuals recognise that as a group their efforts have greater impact.

The success of the Landcare model is due in part to its bottom up philosophy. A Landcare group usually starts when community members with common objectives connect over their observations of a local environmental issue. For example, erosion of sand dunes due to mismanaged beach access or weeds affecting agricultural productivity. Groups set their own agenda, undertake work as often as they like and choose their own project sites. Groups may apply for funding from a variety of different sources to support their work

including local, state, federal government and Landcare Australia.

Generally, small group committees oversee operations, apply for project funding and organise communal activities like community workshops or tree planting. Most groups have one to six formal meetings annually. They may run discussion sessions, and short trips to other Landcare groups and other activities to gain and share knowledge. Some larger groups may have a paid coordinator providing part-time assistance, arranging meetings and activities and providing management guidance. Funds to pay these salaries mostly come from government. Increasingly, Landcare groups amalgamate into Landcare networks managed by community boards that take a more regional approach to environmental issues and coordinate activities to achieve catchment wide outcomes. Networks are now a major

Landcare *continued*

community link to all levels of government and industry for financial support and information.

The success of the Landcare bottom up model can be attributed to the inspiring contributions made by the passionate individuals who make up Australia's Landcare movement. Their sense of stewardship,

enduring commitment and deep appreciation for our natural environment is why Landcare exists today. Its people are its greatest asset.

Sources: http://www.landcareonline.com.au/?page_id=26

Mid Murray LAP AGM Mannum Golf Club 10-12pm

guest speaker **Gil Hollamby**
Butterfly Conservation SA Inc.

Attracting Butterflies to Your Garden

Aimee Linke 0427 590 344 or
midlap@internode.on.net
RSVP 9th November
www.midmurraylap.org.au/events

'A collapse in turtle numbers in any river would be a problem but in the 2,508km Murray River it could devastate the natural landscape and the economy ...'

Citizen scientists to help save Murray River turtles

Saving the turtles in the nation's biggest river, the Murray-Darling, requires a big effort – one that crosses the boundaries of universities and industry and scientists and citizens.

Zoologist Dr Ricky Spencer is leading a research project that brings together scientists, Traditional Owners, non-government organisations and local community groups across three states in a unique Australian Research Council funded project to arrest the decline in freshwater turtles.

"Turtles play an essential role in the Murray and other river systems eating algae, dead material and keeping feral carp in check. They help to maintain the clean water that other animals, including humans, need to survive," says Dr Spencer, from the Western Sydney University's School of Science and Health.

"A collapse in turtle numbers in any river would be a problem but in the 2,508km Murray River it could devastate the natural landscape and the economy of a vast area of South Eastern Australia."

Dr Spencer says the unique collaborative approach to save the Murray River turtles is necessary because of the sheer scale of the River, the complexity of the ecosystem and the variety of potential threats to turtles.

This is the first river-wide study of turtles, achieved by combining cutting-edge genetic and ecological techniques with a citizen science program.

Dr Spencer is calling on communities along the Murray to join the study.

'The Murray River project is another example of the growing importance of citizen science in turtle research.'

Citizen scientists to help save Murray River turtles *continued*

"No one knows the Murray better than the people in the river townships. Their local knowledge will be invaluable to the project. It's envisaged people will be able to join locally managed field expeditions to gather crucial information on turtle numbers, their breeding and behaviour."

The Murray River project is another example of the growing importance of citizen science in turtle research.

Earlier last year, Dr Spencer launched the TurtleSAT app, which gives everyone with a smart phone or tablet the ability make a meaningful contribution to turtle research. The simple app allows users to log turtle sightings anywhere in Australia. Researchers are using the data, including GPS locations, to build a complete picture of freshwater turtles in Australia.. The Murray River project lead by Dr Spencer Western Sydney University

is funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage grant and includes these research partner organisations: Winton Wetlands Committee of Management Incorporated, Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment, Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife, and Save Lake Bonney Group Inc.

'..a highly nomadic species, congregating in central Australia following flooding to exploit rich foraging grounds and breed.'

Pink-eared ducks by Gareth Oerman

The pink-eared duck is without a doubt one of Australia's most beautiful and interesting waterfowl species. As its name suggest, the pink-eared duck has a pink 'ear spot', however it's most distinguishing feature is its black and white stripes on their breast and belly. It is this bold patterning that has led to their in-formal yet better suited name of zebra duck.

In addition to their distinct marking, the pink-eared duck

has a uniquely shaped bill, which is both large and wide for a small duck. Their bill evolved to allow the species to filter feed. The pink-eared duck sucks up and strains water in their bill to feed on microinvertebrates. The strained water departs through grooves along the fringe of their bill known as lamellae. The pink-eared duck consumes mosquito larvae and other aquatic invertebrates, however they will also eat gastropods, crustaceans and

seeds.

The pink-eared duck is a highly nomadic species, congregating in central Australia following flooding to exploit rich foraging grounds and breed. They will nest over water, in either a hollow or atop a stump, and sometimes will even take over the old nests of other waterbirds. Clutches of three to 10 eggs are laid within the nest, which is solely lined with down. After 26 days, eggs begin to hatch, with

Pink-eared ducks *continued*

the young taken care of by both parents.

At present pink-eared ducks are down south and can commonly be found in the wetlands of the Lower River Murray, so get down to your local wetland and you will possibly see these beautiful birds before their next vacation north!

If you're interested in participating in waterbird surveys with Natural Resources South Australian Murray-Darling Basin please contact Wetlands Project Officer

Gareth Oerman.

Email:

gareth.oerman@sa.gov.au

Phone: 8532 9146



Photo source internet
20130413205217

Pollinators

The most recognised pollinators are the different bee species but there are also many other important insects that play this vital role like wasps, bee flies, butterflies, moths, beetles, midges, thrips and flies. Pollinators are vital to maintain ecosystem function for both natural and agricultural landscapes. The decline in our pollinators is something that needs to be taken serious, at least 80% of our world's crop species require pollination to set seed. Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pollinator>

'...at least 80% of our world's crop species require pollination to set seed'

Community Plan

Mid Murray Council wants to hear from its communities! In preparing the new Community Plan process, Council will be reaching out to its communities to hear what they are passionate about and what they see for the future of their towns and for the region.

Over the coming months we will be gathering information and ideas from residents, rate-payers, businesses and community organisations.

One of the key themes that we are seeking ideas on is the natural environment. In partnership with the Mid-Murray LAP and Eastern Hills & Murray Plains Catchment Group we are holding a Forum at the Sportsground at Cambrai on **Wednesday 2nd December 2015 at 6.00 – 8.00 pm** to explore the topics of:

- Agricultural Landscape
- Council Reserves
- Water Courses

If you would like to participate in the forum or receive further information then register your interest at the Cambrai office of Mid-Murray Council on 8564 6020 or email post-box@mid-murray.sa.gov.au by 26 November, 2015

Ps we are also sending out postcards to the community as another way of generating ideas and getting feedback. These will be made available on the night for you to complete.

'Council will be reaching out to its communities to hear what they are passionate about and what they see for the future of their towns

Community Plan *continued*

For further information feel free to speak to:

Peter Graves, Mid Murray Council 8564 6020

Aimee Linke, Mid Murray LAP 8564 6044

Jo Clarke, Eastern Hills & Murray Plains Catchment Group 8531 2077



The LAP has been involved with projects at Meldanda since 2007 and one of the projects we have been involved with is the Fire Retardant Display Garden. This gar-

Meldanda

den will showcase some ideas that you can do in your garden at home and is supported by a brochure with a list of plant species that have low flammability properties. We need some specific help in this garden to finish of a fence, some lattice and a bench if anyone would like to be involved, please ring Aimee or join in at our regular Friends group on the first Friday of each month on site at Meldanda, Bundilla Rd Cambrai.

'...a brochure with a list of plant species that have low flammability properties.'

MID MURRAY LAP

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Committee Members

Chairman: Terry Franklin
Vice Chair: Glen Donnell
Executive: Ian Mann
Executive: Rose Laucke
Councilor: Brian Taylor
Don Webster
Elisabeth Wood
David Peake
Dawn Horton
Alan Brown
Council Advisor:
Peter Graves
Indigenous Advisor:
Isobelle Campbell

This newsletter is printed on
100% recycled paper,
Protecting our Trees and
Environment



Heath Goannas need our help

Goannas are the last remaining large native terrestrial predator in southern South Australia, and they need our help. Goannas are nature's pest controllers, taking rabbits, rats and mice. They also feed on carrion, other small mammals, small birds, insects, spiders, small reptiles and eggs. The Heath Goanna (*Varanus rosenbergi*) is the most threatened of the three large goanna

species of south-eastern Australia. The other two are the Sand Goanna (*Varanus gouldii*) and Lace Monitor (*Varanus varius*). The Heath Goanna is rated as vulnerable to extinction in South Australia.

How can you help

- Protect native vegetation and termite mounds on your property and in your local area

- Be a responsible pet owner by keeping pet cats indoors and dogs on a lead
 - Report sightings of goannas alive or dead at www.discoverycircle.org.au
- For further information please contact Luke Price, Threatened Fauna Ecologist at DEWNRThreatenedWildlife@sa.gov.au
Article source Small Talk (note extracts of article only)

Place Postage
Stamp here

- I wish to be added to the mailing list
- I wish to be taken off the mailing list
- I wish to become a social member
- I wish to become a volunteer

Return to:
Mid Murray LAP
PO Box 10
CAMBRAI SA 5353
Fax: 08 8564 5003
Email: midlap@internode.on.net

Name.....
Address.....
.....Postcode.....

Upcoming Events

Grass Identification Workshop

Natural Resources SAMDB and Mid Murray LAP are hosting a plant ID workshop at Meldanda, with a focus on grass identification.

The workshop will be run by Nicola Barnes, botanist with Natural Resources SAMDB. The workshop will include:
An introduction on the basics of grass identification, describing the main features required

A field component, with discussion on native and introduced grasses and key differences.

Details:
At Meldanda Campsite, Cambrai SA
10am – 2pm
Lunch provided
RSVP by 2 November on 0418 327 212 (Nicola) or 0427 590 344 (Aimee Linke)

Community Plan Forum

The Mid Murray Council is holding a forum to seek ideas and explore the topics of:

- Agricultural Landscape
- Council Reserves
- Water Courses

Cambrai Sportsground
Wednesday 2nd December

2015 at 6.00 – 8.00 pm
register your interest at the Cambrai office of Mid-Murray Council on 8564 6020 or email postbox@mid-murray.sa.gov.au by 26/11/15