

BEND of ISLANDS **CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION**

NEWSLETTER No. 29 JULY, 1993

WHAT NATIVE'S FLOWERING?

ACACIA DEALBATA SILVER WATTLE

A medium height open growing tree 6 metres high x 5 metres wide with grey green feathery foliage and fluffy yellow perfumed blossoms appearing July to October. It is called "Silver Wattle" because of the silver patches on the bark of mature trees.

It grows in heavy clay soils preferring shady moist situations and tolerating temporary flooding after heavy rain such as may occur beside rivers or dams. It is a quick grower, reaching maturity after 2 to 3 years.

Due to its open growth and strong root system the species can tolerate strong winds. So too with its binding root system it is a good plant to use to stabilise the soil on steep slopes. In its natural state it is a suckering plant forming new shoots from roots below the ground, providing dense thickets of saplings. Also the plant is regarded as a "fire retarder" i.e due to the composition of the leaves and wood it burns more slowly than other species such as the eucalypts.

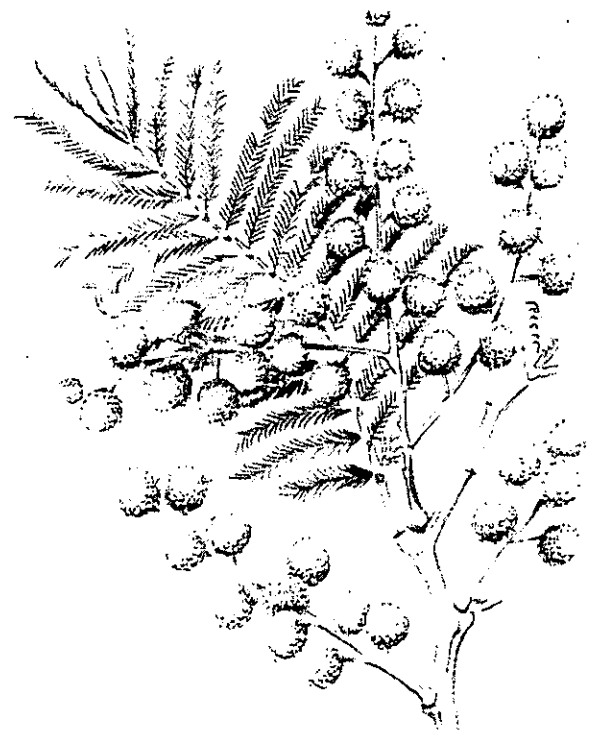
Silver Wattle attracts insects which, in turn, encourage birds which feed on the insects. In particular butterflies as well as their larvae are attracted to the plant as a source of food. The seeds of the plant are a useful source of food for the many large birds.

The seed, gum and wood of the species was used extensively by the aborigines as a source of food, for medicine and adhesives and to make implements and containers.

Propagation is by seed immersed in boiling water and soaked for 24 hours

In all this a useful species for embankments, windbreaks, screening and is a valuable source of food for many birds and insects.

CRIC H.



CREATING NEW "PEOPLE ECONOMIES" THE LETS WAY

Local Employment Trading Systems (LETS) is a radical new community bartering movement, boldly departing from economic conventions, and actually putting people first.

This article is about LETS, the Local Employment Trading System - particularly the Plenty Ranges LETS group in a rural community north of Melbourne which includes the areas of Kinglake, Hurstbridge, St Andrews, Flowerdale and Yea. Plenty Ranges phone numbers are - (057) 97 4434 (Chari) and (03) 718 2113 (Pat).

LETS provides an opportunity for local communities to develop an alternative economic system, on an extended bartering model. It is a system its participants claim puts people ahead of profit, providing goods and services without using conventional money.

According to

LETS people, LETS-System makes use of the true wealth of the community - the skills of people. To them, money itself does not represent wealth, but is simply a means of exchange. LETS-System enriches communities in many ways apart from material considerations.

Advantages of LETS-System are said to include: IMPROVING lifestyles and fighting poverty. GREATER

self-determination for individuals and communities. RELIEVING some of the pain and boredom of unemployment. STRENGTHENING local communities.

through co-operation and friendship. PERSONAL and skills development. FRIENDSHIP networks are built up - combats social isolation. BRINGS out the best in people. An opportunity for generosity and sharing.

With LETS-System, people offer their skills or goods to each other, exchanged on the basis of points recorded on a central accounting system (usually computerised).

It is based on the idea that everyone

has skills to offer to their community. Many skills are valuable in "people" terms but may not be recognised at this stage by mainstream society.

Many of the skills offered are of the "alternative lifestyle" variety.

The system works through negotiation of the value of a service or goods between two LETS members. There is no compulsion to trade. Take for example, Person A needs a haircut, so goes to Person B, who is credited with an agreed number of points which is deducted from Person A's account. Person B can then go to Person C for a massage or some home grown vegetables and use points to pay Person C.

While the system is similar to bartering, the important difference is that you don't have to exchange directly with the same person, but can trade with anyone in the system.

Each LETS-System produces directories of goods and services available from members. With Plenty Ranges LETS these range from massage

and vegetarian cooking, child minding and gardening, through to astrology, word processing or labouring.

The variety of skills offered is incredible. Some trading is for partly federal dollars, usually to cover materials.

Several participants are having house extension and repairs done through LETS points and another member rents a car for trips to the city, through LETS points.

Plenty Ranges LETS call their local currency "Favours" and each Favour is said to be roughly equivalent to a Federal dollar.

LETS originated in Canada with the work of Michael Linton, and has spread throughout Canada, the US and parts of Europe and Australia. There are LETS schemes springing up in Queensland, NSW, South Australia, Western Australia and Victoria. In Victoria there are LETS-Systems in the Dandenong Ranges, Yarraville, Plenty Ranges, Northcote and Watsonia with other groups starting in various locations. There are now about 100 local LETS-Systems in Aus-

tralia, with some 10,000 members according to research by Graeme Taylor of Dandenong Ranges LETS.

According to Michael Linton, writing in the Landsman Document, which expounds on LETS, the problem with conventional money is that it cannot be confined to a local community. Reliance on imports tends to drain money out of a community, with no guarantee it will return. Linton sees a LETS system as a more "organic" model, which forms a "skin" on a community, which can contain resources similar to membrane on an organism, which allows some substances free transfer and other substances to be retained.

He writes: "A community with its own currency has the capacity to adopt and maintain coherent and relevant directions of development, with minimal dislocation by external events." He defines LETS system as "...a self-regulating economic network which allows its members to issue and manage their own money supply with a bonded system."

Plenty Ranges LETS was started in August, 1991, with a public meeting at the Kinglake Community Centre, attended by about 35 people. The meeting was organised by the then local community worker, Jeannie Taylor. She had previously taken part in a CAE course for community workers on LETS, and thought it was a great idea for Kinglake and District which had higher than average unemployment and fairly well established community networks.

For this presentation, I interviewed Chari Jolly, the part-time co-ordinator of Plenty Ranges LETS, who is paid for her work in Favours. According to Chari, Jeannie Taylor organised the first meeting without the support of the committee which employed her. The meeting was a great success. I was there, being in Kinglake to visit a friend. We heard speakers from other LETS systems, including Dandenong Ranges LETS' Graeme Taylor, who co-wrote a good article about LETS in Community Quarterly journal.

There was some

scepticism. For some it seemed just too good to be true. Some people were worried about people "ripping off" the system, but various speakers made it clear that this was virtually unknown in LETS anywhere, because the LETS system tended to bring out the best in people and encourage community mindedness.

Chari told the meeting that LETS gave people an opportunity for generosity, they could not otherwise afford. She said she had recently moved into the Kinglake area from the Dandenong Ranges, where she participated in the local LETS. When she heard LETS was starting in the Plenty Ranges, she jumped in head first. Chari says some trading began right from the first night, with transactions recorded on the backs of envelopes.

The official opening was held in September 1991, officiated by State MP Mr Max McDonald, who complimented the scheme as a local initiative against unemployment and a vehicle for community co-operation.

Trading has fluctuated since the system began, and at the time of writing was fairly slow. The accounts work is done on a central computer, using software adapted from Dandenong Ranges by a friendly computer enthusiast.

According to Chari, Plenty Ranges LETS has about 130 members offering skills and has so far had trading in excess of 20,000 Favours. However, only a small proportion of the members regularly trade, and Chari is trying to encourage people to participate more. She says many people are busy with other things and some retain a "poverty mentality" thinking in terms of not being able to afford things, similar to conventional money thinking.

She points out that LETS system encourages and trusts people to go into credit - known as "commitment". This keeps the Favours revolving and is the way that new currency is issued. If people simply hoarded up favours it would harm the dynamics of LETS. So the message is spend, spend, spend!

Because some members earned many Favours, but were not big consumers, Plenty Ranges LETS has established a Community Chest, where Favours are donated to local community groups.

The Kinglake Youth Club is one to benefit, and uses LETS Favours for getting transport for outings and other work.

LETS Favours can also be spent on environmental actions, such as local "clean-up" days, which might otherwise have trouble getting volunteers.

There are many skills needed to make a successful LETS system.

Most important are the skills of the participants to be offered in trading. The co-ordination group needs organisational skills such as organising meetings or socials, publicity and publishing skills, basic accounting skills for keeping records of transactions, access to friendly computer enthusiasts can help in developing software. Organisers also need to be positive and encouraging to participants and be able to spread en-

thusiasm. Networking with other groups is also important. Tenacity is also needed particularly in the early stages, because much of the work tends to fall on very few people, and it takes time to build up a co-ordination team.

According to Chari Jolly, an important part of the overall strategy is the monthly newsletter and trading directory.

This helps people keep in touch and helps build enthusiasm to trade. Chari also inserts articles in the local community news-sheet, the Mountain Monthly, aimed at getting new members.

She says a very important strategy is to hold regular social gatherings which tend to bring in new members, stimulate trading, strengthen links between members and provides some enjoyment and fun.

In terms of what other strategies could be used, there have been suggestions that Plenty Ranges LETS contact local CES offices to find more unemployed people to join in. Currently, there is a shortage of unemployed people in the scheme.

According to Chari Jolly, LETS system is political by example and involvement, rather than doctrine. But she says involvement in LETS has a "gently radicalising effect" on people, in a way which political dogma or theory could not achieve.

I believe that the Plenty Ranges LETS is a prime example of community development in action. It aims to strengthen communities, empower people to have greater self-determination in their lifestyles, is a social and political practice aimed at social change, involves democratic participation and promotes consciousness raising.

It also breaks new ground in making economics fit "people" concerns and radically re-defines the question of what constitutes wealth in our lives, individually and collectively.

Allan Pinches is a Melbourne based writer specialising in Community Affairs.

**RE-NEW
YOUR BICA
MEMBERSHIP
NOW!**

WASTE RECYCLING IN THE BEND OF ISLANDS

At the time of writing we have had two recycling weekends whereby residents have been able to drop off their recyclables at the fire station. This service will become a monthly feature of living in the Bend of Islands area. On the third weekend of each month Mordialloc Bottle Depot, the contractors for recycling throughout Healesville Shire, will provide facilities for recycling glass bottles and jars, aluminium cans, plastic containers and paper and cardboard. They will pick up the recyclable material early the following week.

To remind you when the service will be operating I will put a sign up at the bridge during the week prior.

A few handy hints: please ensure that only recyclable plastics are left for collection. This includes the dimple based soft drink bottles and any other container marked with a triangle containing a number

on the base. Also, when leaving paper and cardboard please leave it in tied bundles or cardboard boxes for ease of collection. Loose paper can be left in the bale provided.

The Christmas Hills fire brigade is kindly letting us use the fire station as the collection point so please keep the place tidy and take home any non-recyclable rubbish with you.

Thanks for your support for this worthwhile service.

NATIONAL CLEAN-UP DAY 1993

Sunday the 7th of March was National Clean-up Day and more than 20 residents and friends tackled four sites in and near the ELZ and moved literally heaps of rubbish. There were two sites along Skyline Rd north of Yering Gorge and the other sites were on Henley Rd extension and also along Henley Rd from Oxley Bridge to Caldwell's Lane.

At the end of the day there were three huge piles of litter to be removed by the

Shire of Healesville. Included in that lot were four old car bodies which had been dragged out of the bush, one from 70m down the side of the Yarra escarpment. Harold Muir dragged this wreck up the slope with the winch on his four wheel drive vehicle and then dragged all the car bodies out to Skyline Rd from whence they were taken to the tip.

Also found by John Denyer and Guy Gurney was a newly stolen and dumped car which was reported to the police and subsequently recovered by the owner. The Shire has requested that Melbourne Water place a gate on the particular track down which these vehicles had been dumped and this will probably prevent further dumping in that location.

Good work was done at the other sites with rubbish dumped up to 30 years ago being removed from the site on Henley Rd extension. The perenial bottles and cans were cleaned up beyond the bridge and Wolfgang and Marie Krause and Cara Gurney tackled another favourite dumping

place for household rubbish on Skyline Rd. This is the second year in a row that they have cleaned up that site.

How do we stop people dumping loads of house hold litter in the bush? As recently as 2nd May Wolfgang, Marie, Alan Bonny and I cleaned up a dumped trailer load of garden cuttings containing chestnut seeds, ivy, hydrangea, geranium and lawn clippings from near Musso's paddock. Luckily the next day was the hard rubbish collection day so the 14 bags of rubbish were removed by the contractor that day.

Please keep vigilant against rubbish dumping and if you find a dumping site please advise the Shire of Healesville and me or Dave Bradley. If the Shire does not remove the rubbish we will put it on our list of clean-up sites for next year. Next year's sites already include removing the dumped car from the bush next to Watsons Creek just off Westering Rd and certain stretches of the Yarra bank, and I am sure there will be more rubbish to tackle by next March. We will

need your help again so please be prepared to lend a hand.

Peter Gurney,
5th May 1993.

ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDS

The checklist of environmental weeds we have included' really only gives the names of the worst species. There are over 100 others listed and many that have not been investigated. If you are interested, [and I hope you are] ring the URVDRA on 7353888 and they will send you more information.

Some of these plants are capable of completely degrading an ecosystem. This is not just an alarmist postulation of a purist greeny. It has happened. Boneseed has taken over parts of the Mornington Penninsular, the You Yongs and extensive areas of the Adelaide hills. It is also thriving in Christmas Hills North which is becoming a "weed disaster area". Boneseed is a prolific seeder and the seeds are readily carried by birds and mammals which digest the fruit but not the hard seeds.

Not so long ago we pleaded with the then MMBW not to plant exotic natives around Sugarloaf Dam. Our request at the time contravened their planting policy so many inappropriate natives were planted including Sallow Wattle. (Acacia longifolia) which is now spreading at an alarming rate right through the Bend. To their credit Melbourne Water has recently removed a large number and will cooperate with us to remove more. This wattle will be a tremendous problem in the future which could have been avoided.

In the early sixties we battled really hard to have a "natives only" policy at Monash. There is now a wonderful display of plants from all parts of Australia. However this is not a balanced ecosystem, it is an exotic garden inhabited by exotic birds and with a lower number of native bird species than can be found in a patch of nearby scruffy red stringy bark bush.

If we allow certain exotic plants to flourish and penetrate our bush it will become degraded and encour-

age the invasion of aggressive birds such as Indian mynahs, sparrows, starlings etc. which may displace our own bird species. The policy against environmental weeds in favour of indigenous species is not just a cranky greeny notion. It is practical and reasonable IF we are serious about protecting our own wildlife and wildflowers.

What should we do? The environmental weeds on the list must be eliminated although many are very attractive such as Cootamundra Wattle. They really are a threat. What about other exotic trees and shrubs on your property? If you hate to remove them, make very certain that they are not germinating seeds. [Some hybrid grevilleas for instance don't produce viable seeds, but others seed prolifically and the seeds germinate].

If you want more information contact John McCallum, Terry O'Brian, Hillary Jackman or Janet Matfiske. Find out about the Weed Strategy for the E.L.Z. Read the report by Carr and Yugovic and the Eltham Shire booklets.

NOTE: If you want help to cut down or poison environmental weeds, ring Tim [7120347] or Peter Noe [7120408].

1. You can get your copy from Tim when he is finished typing it up.

FENCES

The fewer fences we have in the area the better because they can impede the passage of large wildlife and may even injure some. Some people such as Dave Bradley and Peter Bernard mutually agreed some time ago not to repair the fence between their properties but to remove the rusting remains of the old fence. Such actions are most commendable.

However some misguided enthusiast has ripped away the electric fence on Abrahams' land and made four large gaps in the main fence. Luckily the cattle have not yet exploited these gaps and forced their way out. If they do they will end up on properties in the ELZ. Apart from what they eat and apart from what other damage they may do, recaptur-

ing them is a problem. Men on horses with dogs have to hunt them out of the bush and that in itself can cause damage. Furthermore damaging other peoples' property is a criminal offence and does not help community relations.

It should be noted that it is the policy of Mr. Abrahams' and his overseer to leave the holes made by wombats to allow access to native animals which cannot jump the fences. There is no need to enlarge these gaps.

Note about regeneration burning.

I would be grateful if anyone who has carried out burns could let me know so that I could check out what plants have regenerated.

Tim Ealey

**THIS SPACE IS
AVAILABLE FOR
YOUR ARTICLE**



ACACIA BAILEYANA
COOTAMUNDRA WATTLE



ACACIA LONGIFOLIA
SALLOW WATTLE

LET THE SUN SHINE IN

Most people today are aware that there are now many alternatives to the S.E.C.'s brown coal for generating power.

As concern about the pollution level of brown coal and loss of valuable land courtesy of damming for hydro-electricity has increased, so has the diversity and availability of alternative power systems. Although in today's economic climate ecological concerns often take second place to those of the hip pocket, for many people an efficient system has proven to be more than a conscientious move to aid our ailing environment but also financially viable.

This is what spurred my family on to invest in a solar power system. As the S.E.C. proposed to channel the power for our house in underground while destroying as much bushland as possible (all at great expense to us), we decided solar power was the way to go. We were initially all very excited about the idea, pioneering a newly developed system while being able

to claim we were doing our bit to reduce pollution. This enthusiasm ran a little sour when we had a few teething problems with the prototype system. I won't go into the technicalities of the problems but I'll put it this way - we're no strangers to dinner by candle light.

Despite this we took it all very well, managing to retain our good spirits, believing we had seen the last of our problems with the system. Boy were we wrong!

While the solar technology in the system works wonderfully, the generator has shown itself to be very temperamental - always at the most inconvenient times. It has the uncanny knack of knowing when: (i) You have just typed a 1000 word essay and neglected to save it at regular intervals. (ii) You're running late for school/work. (iii) It is the week my father has taken off work to build more of our unfinished house or (iv) There's something really good on television.

As you can imagine we breathed a collective sigh of relief now the problems ap-

pear to be resolved - or at the very least we know what they are. We are presently still happy with the system and have benefited by becoming more aware of the amount of electricity we are using and by still being able to admire the trees in our gully.

Being the adventurers (or suckers for punishment) that we are, we are now investigating the possibility of supplementing our solar system with a wind generator. We certainly get enough wind but if the first system is any indication of what to expect, it may be a while before we can boast of trouble free power.

Despite the difficulties we have experienced (these were largely because it was a prototype system) we remain sure that we made the right decision to use an alternative decision to use an alternative source of power and there is no chance we would change it.

Janine Taylor

THE CRADLE MOUNTAIN TO LAKE ST.

CLAIR WALK - APRIL 1993

The crew: From the Bend of Islands - George & Lyn Winter, Marie & Wolfgang Krause, Harold Muir, Carol & Alan Bonny, Norm Linton-Smith and others - Brian Trembarth & Bob Tompson.

Norm conceived the trip and the group was assembled to walk the overland track from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair.

Day 1 saw us up at the unreasonable hour of 5 to gather the crew and head to the airport for an 8.30 flight. Met our guide Bob and other traveller Brian at the departure lounge.

Weather overcast as we flew above the clouds to Tasmania.

Norm, George and Lyn, had taken their vehicles to Tassy by boat and were waiting with the bus at Devonport. During the bus ride to the mountains Bob discovered that George had walked the overland trail before so he retired, declare George as leader and took the next transport home. We were off like a headless chook. We were met by lots of

Bennets wallabies at Waldheim Chalet. A large wombat lumbered across the hill in front of us. We registered for the trek as "The Round the Bend Walking Group" and we were away on our big walkies. First stop, the Scout Hut. Well set up with gas for heating cooking and lighting and running water with a flush toilet. Not indicative of what is ahead. Filled the day with a walk round Crater Lake without the heavy backpacks. Soon got used to the instant foods. Just add water, close eyes and swallow. Wolfgang rounded off the evening by producing some port.

Day 2 saw a wet and miserable day that had turned the path to the hut into a small stream. We declared a lay day and enjoyed the comfort of the hut. The theory was to wait overnight and hope for a let-up. We realised why Bob had deserted us. He must have known the weather forecast. On with the wet weather tear and down thru the beech forest remnants to Crater Lake. Beautiful with the rain producing a good flow along the creek.

Day 3 South along the Horse Trail towards Crater Peak (1270m) and on to Kitchen Hut for a welcome break.

All into the small hut to escape from the drizzle. Continued into deteriorating conditions. Past Cradle Mountain, its peak hidden amongst rain clouds and over Little Plateau with wind gusts almost blowing us off the duckboards. We all squeezed into Waterfall Hut and soon had the place looking like a chinese laundry with wet gear hanging from every available hook and beam.

Wallabies outside were undeterred by our comings and goings.

Norm tried to attract the girls by parading in his sexy white lurex lookjohns. Harold's gumboots were in big demand.

Anyone with a size 6 or less took advantage of the gumboots for the flooded loo track. Others with OS hooves had to barefoot it and returned with their toes cold and blue. With space limited the top bunk occupants lived and cooked on their bunks, very cosy and efficient. Also amused by

Harold's hot water bottle.

Day 4 and a bit of snow overnight gave us some white peaks on the mounts around us. Squally wet conditions again for the walk to Windamere Hut. The big dry on again with we gear draped everywhere.

Day 5. Good Friday so an easter egg for all before we set off with weather good and the track muddy. A break just before Forth Gorge lookout then into an enchanted forest of Beech trees, Pandanus palms, and lots of colourful fungi's lots of photos. Back out onto the moorlands for lunch. Mt Oakleigh to the east (1280m) and Mt Pelion to the west (1433m). The gaiters proved their worth as we plunged into the ankle deep sludge. Old Pelion hut for the night with a short dip in the creek for the brave. The water was bloody cold.

Day 6 and George, Lyn and Norm decide to stay over for a rest day and will walk out Tuesday (they hope). Waved goodbye to the remaining trio and set off past New Pelion Hut in superb conditions. Great views of

Mt Ossa, Mt Massif and The Cathedral. A short rest at Kia Ora Hut then continued on to Du Cane hut for the night. Du Cane is a historic old hut circa 1908 leaning at all angles and restored to original with rough split timber.

Day 7, another top day, sunshine and scenery. Into rainforest with lots more wonderful fungi to photograph. We climbed Du Cane Gap, a quick look at Windy Ridge hut then down hill all the way to Narcissus Hut and the end of the walk. Radioed the boat from the hut and registered 6 of the Round the Bend group off the overland tack. Down to the jetty for the Idaclair to take us down the lake to the waiting bus for Bronte Lodge and civilisation. Hot showers, a change of clothes, flush toilets, chairs, a cooked meal, a glass of wine, a hot fire and a bed with a pillow.

Day 8 didn't sleep too well, too quiet, no snoring, coughing or farting or hissing of lilos as bodies moved around. A drive across Tassy passing though Tasmania's Christmas Hills to Devonport airport for the

quick flight across Bass Strait.

Great views of Sugarloaf Reservoir with Mt Lofty easily discernible. Soon home in the Hills and as we dropped Harold off he was asked how the trip was. "It was hell" he said with his usual grin".

Lasting impressions:-

The pain of lugging a pack on my back.

Harold's gumboots and hot water bottle.

Carol's ear plugs to block out the coughs and snores at night.

Norm swaggering around the huts in his long johns.

Lyn and George losing something every night only to find it in the morning.

Norm's determination and spirit as he plugged on with his stock.

Pulling on cold wet socks and boots in the mornings.

Carol not cooking any meals and me realising it.

Lots of fun, great company and lots more.

A phone call advised us that the rest of the crew wandered out on Wednesday safe and sound.

Thanks to Norm for conceiving the event and making it happen.

Alan Bonny

ONE FOR THE ROAD

by Wendi Henderson & Syd Tunn

7.30 am Thursday 3rd June. The Creek House.

The young buck 'roo was trying to drag itself out of danger, off Henley Road, when Peter and Guy came across it in the grey morning light. They took pity on the injured animal and lifted onto a tarp then into the back of their car. A hit and run driver had not had the time, sense or compassion to help this young, injured Eastern Grey Kangaroo.

Peter and Guy brought the animal to us, as it had been injured just nearby. We were left with the decision of what course of action to take. We rang Chris Andrews, a caring local vet in Hurstbridge. He suggested if we left the 'roo for a couple of hours well covered and warm it may recover from the shock

of the accident, and the trauma of being handled by humans and it may be able to get itself mobile.

The eyes were bright, ears twitching, but it became obvious that it was not able to move. Chris was able to come over at mid-day to help. The first useful lesson we learned was that when approaching an injured animal to hold a blanket or tarp in front of you, because the animal sees only two curious feet, a large square (the blanket or tarp) and a head. This combination of objects and shapes is not recognizable as the "dreaded human". This way you can check the animal more closely, after covering it with the blanket.

Chris felt the limbs through the blanket. The pelvis was fractured. No hope. A large syringe, a quick painless injection and that was the end of an eighteen-month-old life.

Chris treats injured wildlife regularly. He doesn't charge for this service. Unfortunately though, some people ring him, then leave the scene leaving the animal to fend for itself and making it sometimes very diffi-

cult for Chris to find the animal.

Would you spend a few minutes to call into the nearest house? Would you ensure that the animal and vet connect? Would you remember to check the pouch for young?

Only three weeks earlier Peter was phoned to shoot another young 'roo. The hind leg was so badly fractured that it was nearly severed. It had also been left in agony during the night by another hit and run driver.

If you happen to discover a badly injured animal Peter, for one, is prepared to put down the animal quickly. Phone Peter Gurney 712 0408.

In cases where the animal may survive please call Chris Andrews 718 1515, or the Wildlife Care Network on their pager phone 016 373 931. This is also a voluntary service which will put you in touch with one of its members and assist you in locating the nearest wildlife shelter.

If you ever think you may have hit an animal with your car please stop and look. You may save the animal hours of agony.

"START EARLY -
DRIVE SLOWLY -
ARRIVE SAFELY"

Sid and Wendy

NEW STREET NUMBERS

New reflective street numbers were installed by the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade late last year. These numbers are part of the RRNS or RURAL ROAD NUMBERING SCHEME which is being introduced throughout the State. The numbers are not Fire Brigade numbers!!

The Fire Brigade kindly provided the labour required to install the numbers.

The number is based on the distance from the main gateway or entrance of a property to the "main" end of the road and provides a ready reference for anyone looking for an address.

Land owners should remove all references to Lot numbers and the old street numbering system that was in place in some parts of rural Christmas Hills.

The RRNS is the only system in use now in the rural parts

of Healesville Shire.

It is not a 'Fire Brigade' only system.

Remove all other numbers as soon as possible.

Any queries can be directed to the Engineer's Office, Shire of Healesville.

John McCallum.

FREEDOM FOR BIRDS INC.

Our group is asking you to write to politicians. According to the new Wildlife Regulations 1992, a much wider range of wildlife can now be kept in captivity. For some animals a permit is required. If you wish to check if an animal owner has a permit, ring 450 8600 and ask for Selena Peters of D.C.& E.

A trader who sells wildlife from a shop or market is now required to hold a \$600 licence and in some cases a \$1500 licence. Signs must be displayed at all entrances to the premises or at stalls stating the following words:

(a) "The wildlife on these premises are possessed under a

licence issued by the Director-General of Conservation and Environment"; and (b) "Wildlife may not be taken from the wild".

A royalty of \$5 must be paid for each bird trapped and a mark (legband) supplied by the Director-General placed on all birds to prove acquisition. Hopefully these new rules will discourage some traders and trappers. Please speak to traders about the new regulations.

Write to the Hon Mark Birrell, MLC and object to the captivity and sales of wildlife, especially at markets. Before the new Regulations were legislated, 1700 submissions were sent in by aviculturists, traders, trappers and people who exploit animals. Three hundred submissions were from other people including a handful of welfare groups. We are lagging well behind, and it is up to each and everyone of us to demand amendments to the Regulations to reduce the animals, reptiles and birds kept in captivity. Write to the Hon Mark Birrell MLC, Minister for Conservation and Environment,

240 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne, Vic. 3002.

BAN THE EXPORT OF NATIVE BIRDS.

The W.A. Farmers Federation want the Commonwealth ban on the export of Australian birds to be lifted. Please write to: Hon Ros Kelly, Minister for Environment, Parliament House, Canberra. Ask her to maintain the ban on export of birds from Australia.

The legitimate export of common birds would immediately cause a drop in their value without affecting the demand of protected species and would provide a camouflage operation to be exploited by innovative smugglers. As it is, Australian parrots have been dyed and had their tails docked to make them less conspicuous in a crate of homing pigeons moving offshore on a legitimate racing schedule. There are many other reasons against export.

Margaret Berryman
(898 8230)

Hill bent on construction

It's with quite some amusement that I recall encounters with many of the local residents over the last five years. Not the ravings of fanatics, nor the apathy of the disinterested bore. But the simple humour and concern of empathic individuals.

During my time here I have met many varied and interesting people, with an incredible diversity of experiences. All these personalities have a desire to co-exist here with the environment, and share this most wonderful of nature's retreats called the Environmental Living Zone.

Folk law, stories, history, and sometimes pure fairy tales that Hans Christian Andersen would have been proud of have been retold to me and others. However it's the gossip that holds the greatest potential for destroying or preventing our dreams and hopes in the area. These half truths, half heard, totally embellished and fourth hand related stories cause unnecessary unrest and unwarranted concern.

Did you know that we stole our Land for wild Life sign? At least that's what the officers told us had been related to them. We applied the same as everyone else.

Did you know that Musso's Land (Cnr Skyline and Henley Rds) was going to be purchased and have a food store and tourist information point built on it? Yes, the land is for sale, and one day someone will probably buy it, and do what they want - within the ELZ conditions.

Yes, well neither of these ridiculous pieces of gossip have a basis in truth.

So I'm really saying that this wondrous place will be far more comfortable if we communicate better.

Just talk to each other, not about each other.

Stephen Hill.
ELZ - Land developer, Logging contractor and Tourism promoter.
(just joking).

DID YOU KNOW?

There are plans to re-cycle milk and fruit juice cartons according to the ALC

(Association of Liquidpaperboard Carton Manufacturers).

Re-cycling bins are already available at selected retail outlets such as Food Plus.

The cartons can be picked up from the kerbside if suitably prepared and if such as scheme is operating in your area. I suppose you could contact the Shire or ALC themselves to see about starting a recycling scheme.

They claim that no native trees are used in the manufacturing of cartons. Of course, the 'special plantations' probably take up space that was once native forest though the brochure is careful to avoid this issue.

Are cartons preferable to other storage containers?

PROPAGATION

Mick Woiwod is still collecting names of helpers who can donate a few hours every month to run our propagation program. Contact Mick if you can spare some time to help. Only a few more people are required to enable the project to take off soon!

ARTICLES

If you would like to write articles for this newsletter we welcome submissions of local interest and relevance. If you do want to write an article doing so on computer really really really helps. Doing so in a suitable format also helps. See the last issue for details of disk formats and capacities.

I do not know when the next issue will be available as I am not able to organize it. My time has decreased due to other recent commitments and hopefully some others can take over collecting articles and setting them out in some sort of readable form. Thanks to Jennifer Shepherd who typed up several long articles for this issue.

The lack of time has prevented me from including the usual drawings and so forth.

Bill Donaldson

MEMBERSHIP

Have you remembered to re-new your BICA membership?

Write a cheque now and keep in touch with your community.

A PRAYER FOR THE TREES

Ye who pass by and would raise a hand against us,

*We are the fuel for your fires on cold nights,
the friendly shade protecting you from the fierce sun;*

*And our fruits are the refreshment to quench your thirst and
cheer you as you journey onwards.*

*We are the rafters for your roofs and bodies of your boats,
The seats of your schools and the boards of your beds.*

*We are the handles of your hoes, the gates of your homes,
the wood of your cradles and the shells of your coffins.*

*We are the saviours of your soils from loss by rain and wind,
and to your soil we give richness and life for the benefit of all mankind.*

We are the bread of kindness and the flower of beauty.

Ye who pass by, listen to our prayer and harm us not.

Portuguese poem to the trees, author unknown.

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