

## NERRENA / TARWIN VALLEY LANDCARE GROUP

### PRESIDENTS REPORT FOR NERRENA LANDCARE GROUP

This year has been exciting with our BlackSpur Creek Wetlands project ramping up and an amalgamation of two groups – Nerrena and Tarwin Valley.

Following on from our meetings at the Meeniyan Hotel on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017 it was resolved that the Nerrena and Tarwin Valley Landcare Groups merge. This led to some administrative work to make sure that we could legally combine the two groups, which now covers most of the area around the middle of the Tarwin River catchment basin.

We did not have any meetings until the new year when we held a walk around Luke Biram & Melissa Ellis property near the Koonwarra Recreation ground and the Blackspur Creek Wetlands Project. Matt Bowler from West Gippsland CMA walked around with us and gave us valuable information about wetland restoration and assisted Mel and Luke with questions they had about their revegetation project.

As the days got shorter we had a walk down the South Gippsland Rail Trail from Meeniyan towards Leongatha followed by dinner at the Meeniyan Hotel. Sue Miles had organised a list of questions to be answered by members, which opened our eyes to what is contained in that walk. We found many weeds, birds, seeds and plants and information about the trail that many of us didn't know.

After dotting all the i's and crossing all the t's we held the Amalgamation Annual General Meeting in June. At this meeting we decided to call the Group Nerrena / Tarwin Valley Landcare Group.

Our Group applied for several grants this year. We were successful at obtaining funding for the Nerrena Cricket Club and Luke Biram & Melissa Ellis's revegetation projects from the SGLN Group Support Fund.

We also applied for funding through the Community Skills Development Grants Program for Citizens Science Workshops so that we could develop a monitoring program for the BlackSpur Creek Wetlands project. These workshops are to be held in October.

The BlackSpur Creek Wetlands project is connected to the upgrade of the South Gippsland Highway at Koonwarra and Kate Walsh, our Project Manager, and other members have attend many meetings around this event. We have also sent letters of support in relation to changes to the VicRoads project. Kate has sent our regular updates on the project to a large range of stakeholders and interested people.

Our group looks forward to a busy year as we start off our monitoring of our project and we see the commencement of the new section of the South Gippsland Highway which will impact on our area.

Thanks must go to all the previous office bearers of both Nerrena and Tarwin Valley Landcare Groups whose work help to enhance our area.

Thanks also goes to the group members who have given so much of their time to our project and will continue to do so.

Thanks to the SGLN staff for their support and assistance with funding and administrative support involved with the amalgamation. We do appreciate it.

Sue Miles President.