

# Tarwin Valley Landcare Group

## 2021 Group Report



Nerrena/  
Tarwin Valley  
**Landcare**



The Nerrena/Tarwin Valley Landcare group acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Landcare group area and pays respect to their past present and emerging Elders.





# President's Report

What a year it has been. This year's activity planning was difficult due to COVID-19 which restricted many of our meetings, bird monitoring activities, site visits and group plantings.

## MEETINGS

This year we held 4 meetings. The Annual General Meeting on the 20 September was via Zoom. Our next meeting was a restricted numbers meeting at Meeniyah together with a Zoom component. Dr Steven Poropat, a Palaeontologist and post-Doctoral researcher at Swinburne University of Technology was our guest speaker on fossils found in our local area. Many people tuned in after a Sentinel Times story of the event was published. Our next meeting on 5th March was a combined meeting with the Arawata Landcare group at Hamman's Bush, Leongatha North for a Pittosporum Control day. The final meeting on the 30 May was a joint meeting with the Tarwin Landcare Group looking at our Black Spur Creek Wetlands Project. Unfortunately a statewide lockdown occurred and this has been postponed to September 2021.

The executive have held several meetings to discuss funding applications, pay accounts and to update me in the groups projects.

## BLACK SPUR CREEK WETLANDS PROJECT

We have continued with our Black Spur Creek Wetlands Project (BSCW) with as many regular bird monitoring events as possible under Covid 19 regulations. The roadworks ramped up this year and there is a slight change in the number of birds sighted near the Apple Tree bridge but the numbers remain fairly similar to last year. We had 15 surveys taken at the Black Spur Wetlands, 6 surveys at Middle Bridge and 13 surveys taken at the Apple Tree Wetlands site from July 2020 to June 2021. In September 2020 members saw a platypus swimming down the Tarwin River at the Apple Tree bridge which is not a usual sighting.

Kate Walsh, our BSCW Project Co-Ordinator, has updated all interested people and organisations about the Black Spur Creek wetlands area with regular newsletters. One of our young members, Jacob Tumino, wrote an article on freshwater fish which was published in our October BSCW newsletter.

The group was invited to join a South Gippsland Highway Environmental group meeting on April 20th at the new highway site. Numbers were limited and two of our members attended.

## FUNDING

This year we have applied for funding through the Victorian Landcare Smarty Grants for an onsite project and training to assist members for onsite works.

We applied for funding for the Apple Tree Wetlands through the G.T.E.P. Pilot program (Transport) to remove weedy vegetation between the two highways (new and old at Koonwarra) and to revegetate it. This one year

project will enhance the works which will be carried out through the new roadworks revegetation program. The NTVLG offered members a small internal grant for revegetation, which was taken up by two members, a road enhancement project and a degraded farm area in the east branch of the Tarwin Valley.

We also completed our Landcare Health Survey 2021 which will give us running costs for the year.

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND AWARDS

Our Secretary Jill has sent out a variety of monthly newsletters and reminders (or cancellation notices) to our members and supporters throughout the year.

Our website and the website creator Jill Vella, were nominated and became finalists in the Rocketspark Website awards earlier this year. It was a wonderful recognition for all the hard work Jill puts into our keeping the community informed about our group.

We are also on Facebook and would welcome anybody who would like to assist Jill with the monitoring and updating of this. It is an important communication tool for our group.

The South Gippsland Landcare Network has held several Presidents get together's this year. Sue attended the Zoom forum and Kate stood in for Sue at the March event. We also thank Herb Wildes for being our member on the SGLN board.

#### MEMBERSHIP

We welcome the new members who have joined this year and thank all the other members (and friends) who have supported us through this upset of a year. We have 26 financial members for 2020-21 financial year.

#### THANKS

As most of you know I was diagnosed with Lymphoma cancer in December 2020 and the executive have supported me and the group throughout this time. Thank you so much everyone for your support and get well messages, it did help. I have completed my chemotherapy sessions and on the way to recovery.

A massive thanks to Jill for keeping everything going and for the many hours you have spent on the website, Facebook, applying for funding, bird monitoring and just keeping the group functioning.

Special thanks to Kate for her dedication to our major project and being the central point of contact between the group and the numerous organisations / people who are involved in the Highway Project.

Coral thank you so much for being our Treasurer, vegetation and bird expert and always ready to assist in any way.

We always welcome anyone who an idea or wants to offer any assistance.

*Susan Miles*

Landcare group president.



# Treasurer's Report 2020-21

Opening Balance \$5,280.67 credit

## Income

West Gippsland CMA	3,300.00
Australian Tax Office BAS	169.00
Memberships, 8 full and part	312.00
Donation	200.00
	3,981.00

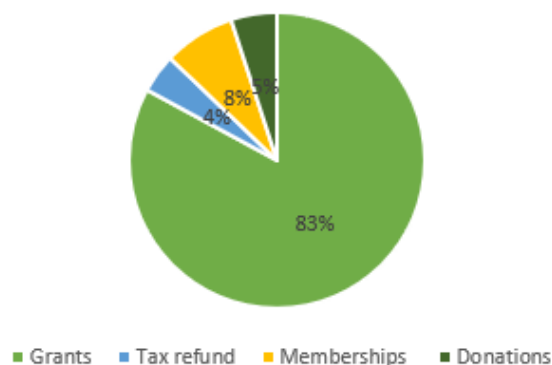
\$9,261.67

## Expenditure

Balance of grant to B & K Westaway	1,056.00
Balance of grant to C & J Smit	780.00
Rocket Spark for website	215.00
South Gippsland Landcare Network	55.00
Landcare Victoria membership	357.50
	2,463.50

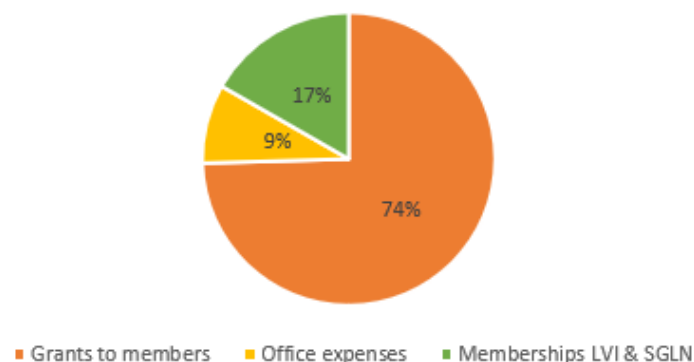
Balance at 30/6/2021 \$6,798.17 credit

Income of \$ 3,981.00



**Note;** No Victorian Landcare grants or group support grants were awarded last year; and the GTEP grant that was supposed to be awarded last financial year is apparently still on the Ministers desk.

Expenses of \$2,463.50





# Secretary's Report

## OBJECTIVE 1: To promote and implement projects addressing priority natural resource management issues

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p><b>NTVLC will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide training workshops and farm walks</li> <li>share information through the newsletter, web page and social media</li> <li>apply for grants and funding that reflect our members needs</li> <li>work with natural resource management bodies and aligned community organisations to identify and fund work to increase natural assets</li> <li>Provide support to members through peer to peer mentoring</li> </ul>	<p>Farm walks were reduced as we were constrained by COVID 19. Whilst meeting in public outdoor areas was still possible at times; visits of large numbers of people to homes and farms was not allowed. We published a virtual farm walk video that was a compilation of members tree planting efforts. There were 13 families who were represented, showcasing their projects in photos and phone videos. 14 of our members planted on their properties during this project.</p> <p>We published 11 regular newsletters, 5 BSCW project updates and 2 Bird monitoring newsletters during the year. The web page and were updated regularly with 46 social media posts to 104 people who like our page.</p> <p>Sue and Kate attended SGLN meetings on behalf of the group.</p> <p>There were no Landcare Victoria grants available in 2020, however an ~\$10,000 application for the 2021/22 round was made in June. We also applied for a \$25,000 Gippsland Transport Environmental Projects (GTEP) Pilot Program to control weeds and revegetate the Apple Tree wetlands. Although this grants should have been awarded in the 2020/21 financial year, delays mean it has not been announced.</p>

## OBJECTIVE 2: To communicate and educate – community capacity building in natural resource management

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<p><b>NTVLC will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>publish a regular newsletter</li> <li>maintain a website and social media presence</li> <li>organise regular training workshops, meeting guest speakers and farm walks</li> <li>communicate through the local media where possible</li> <li>Members and participants will be canvassed for their ideas and suggestions as suitable opportunities arise</li> <li>Adapt to COVID-19 restrictions and work with the group to develop novel ways of communication and NRM actions that can be safely undertaken referring to Government directives.</li> </ul>	<p>We published 11 regular newsletters, 5 BSCW project updates and 2 Bird monitoring newsletters during the year. We have 94 newsletter subscribers. The web page and were updated regularly with 46 social media posts to 104 people who like our page.</p> <p>We held a hybrid zoom /10 people in an outdoor space meeting with a presentation from palaeontologist Dr Stephen Poropat about the Koonwarra Fossil beds. People zoomed in from all over Australia and one from England.</p> <p>Two media articles about the group were published in the local paper.</p> <p>We adapted to COVID by holding meetings and bird walks when we could and using zoom to keep in touch.</p>



OBJECTIVE 3: To foster community partnerships	
ACTIONS	
<p><b>NTVLC will engage and work with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Gippsland Landcare Network</li> <li>• Landcare Victoria Inc</li> <li>• South Gippsland Shire Council</li> <li>• Federal and State Government agencies</li> <li>• Other Landcare groups and networks</li> <li>• Community groups</li> <li>• Local schools</li> <li>• Landholders</li> <li>• Agencies involved with and/or partnered with NTVLC will be invited to NTVLC organised activities</li> <li>• NTVLC information (e.g. the newsletter) will be sent to representatives of these groups</li> <li>• Where possible NTVLC representatives or committee members will attend special events when invited, and report back to or represent members at such events</li> <li>• NTVLC will collaborate with relevant organisations to further common objectives</li> </ul>	<p>We worked with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rail Trail management – Shire and MRPV</li> <li>• Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning</li> <li>• South Gippsland Shire Council</li> <li>• Major Roads Projects Victoria</li> <li>• Bass Coast LC Network</li> <li>• WGCMA</li> </ul> <p>to prepare our Appletree wetland grant application.</p> <p>We held a join meeting with the Arawata Landcare Group in Hamman's Bush helping with and seeing how their pittosporum control project was going.</p> <p>Sue and Kate contributed to meetings with the South Gippsland Landcare Network.</p> <p>Coral and Kevin Hughes worked with the WGCMA to produce a podcast on the revegetation of their farm</p> <p>Jill undertook Group revitalisation and Grant writing training with the Shire of South Gippsland.</p> <p>We have agreed to develop a close working relationship with the Meeniyen Community garden.</p> <p>South Gippsland Highway Environmental update meeting with Major Roads and the contractors and other stakeholders.</p>
OBJECTIVE 4: To maintain the NTVLC membership	
ACTIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Group Secretary will with the Treasurer maintain an up to date membership list that will be shared with the South Gippsland Landcare Network and Landcare Victoria Inc, as required</li> <li>• membership fees will be reviewed at the group AGM</li> <li>• Community members are encouraged to become members by the group members</li> <li>• Activities are widely advertised</li> </ul>	<p>We welcomed 6 new member families to the Landcare Group in the last year.</p> <p>Our limited group activities were widely advertised on social media, by direct email to members and supporters and via our webpage.</p>







# BSCW Project Report

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this area, the Gunaikurnai and the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung. I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and future.

Despite extensive excavations on the South Gippsland Highway reconstruction and periodic lockdowns for COVID virus control, Nerrena Tarwin Valley Landcare Group continued with monthly bird monitoring whenever possible. A bonus sighting was a platypus, now officially listed as vulnerable in Victoria. The pandemic prevented some activities including a planned walk with Tarwin Landcare Group.

Updates were distributed every 2 months except for June 2021. We were delighted with Jacob Tumino's contribution – "Trout – the freshwater foxes."

We continue to liaise with other stakeholders including Major Road Projects Victoria and CPB contractors. With them we viewed the road works and erosion control measures during April. We also appreciate their efforts to keep the Rail Trail open as much as possible.

Indigenous Designs has undertaken some weed control along the Rail Trail and Coral Hughes, with the South Gippsland Seedbank, collected seed from the magnificent old Blue Gum which was felled to make way for the highway. Some logs from the land clearing were taken to the offset site for habitat.

Steve Poropat's zoom presentation on "The Koonwarra Fossil Bed" attracted wide interest. It confirmed the outstanding significance of these fossils in Australia and globally.

Our major undertaking this year was to plan and apply for funding for "Linking the Old and the New South Gippsland Highways by Restoring the Appletree Wetlands." This project would complete an important component of our "Black Spur Creek Wetland Project Plan" and complement restorative work being done by Major Road Projects Victoria and adjoining landowners.

An enormous effort, with tight timelines, was put in by our Nerrena Tarwin Valley Landcare executive especially Jill Vella, our supporters such as Major Road Projects Victoria, DELWP, South Gippsland Shire, and South Gippsland Landcare Network as well as the contractors from Bass Coast Landcare who quoted to undertake work.

We applied to the Victorian Department of Transport who advertised a Gippsland Transport Environmental Projects (GTEP) Pilot Program. Despite a commitment to notify us of results by the end of May, we have had no feed back since.

Kate Walsh BSCW Project Officer



# Our year in pictures

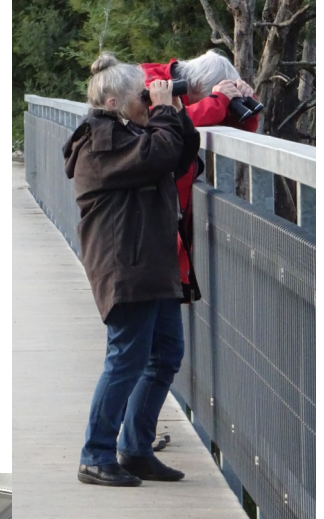


July

August

September

October



November

December



January

February

March

April

May

June

