

Barkers Creek
Landcare &
Wildlife Group

ACTION PLAN 2020–2024



YELLOW THORNBILL





PLANTING AT LITTLE RED APPLE



Introduction

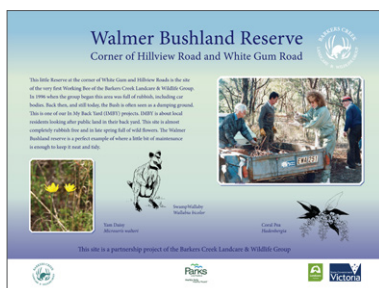
Barkers Creek Landcare and Wildlife Group would like to acknowledge the contribution of our members (and friends) in preparing this wonderful 5-year plan.

The plant photos were taken by Kirsten Hutchison and the bird photos by Mick Evans. We have included some of the six signs we now have across our sites. Robin Spicer (*Magic Mouse Graphics*) is our graphic designer and Russell Sargent

(*Astro Signs*) has printed them. Graphic design of the 5-year plan was done by Alison Davies (*Just North*).

Importantly, all the bird and plant photos in this 5-year plan were taken in our Natural Features (Harcourt) Bushland Reserve, one of our major projects where most of us feel we are making a difference.

Thanks to everyone and enjoy the report.



Welcome to Barker's Creek Landcare & Wildlife group – a group of local residents passionate about protecting and restoring our local environment on both public and private land. A group also committed to celebrating and building our sense of belonging to the Barkers Creek community in which we live.

That introduction is exactly how we started our 5-year plan for 2015 to 2019... which, though now complete, is still our Statement of Intent.

In order to create a new plan, it was proposed that in March (2020) we would have another facilitated gathering to put down priorities for the next 5 years. Covid-19 put an end to that... and so we did an online survey to gather everyone's feedback.

Results of that survey form the basis of our Barkers Creek Landcare and Wildlife Group Action Plan 2020 – 2024.

The survey had a range of questions which focused on what are the things that you enjoy most about your involvement with the group and what projects do you think are most valuable in restoring our environment.



NEW SITE SIGNAGE
BY ROBIN SPICER



PLANTING AT OLD TIP



BLUE WREN

2020 SURVEY RESULTS

- ☒ Working bees
- ☒ Bus tours
- ☒ Social gatherings
- ☒ Community wide events

2020 survey results

What was affirmed in the survey as everyone's number one priority (and most enjoyed activity) were the **Working Bees**.

Clearly, as well as sharing lovely morning teas and having great conversations with other locals, the best bit is getting our hands dirty and seeing the difference it is making to our environment.

"I admire the balance of activities the club undertakes and believe that mix is what makes the club so successful."

When it came to Promotional/ Educational activities, as much as a Rabbit Buster workshop (February 2020) really helped a lot of locals, having another **Bus Tour** (2 have been done in previous years) of all our current work sites was considered a valuable future addition... particularly for newer members. (NB. One is planned for February 2021)

"I didn't realise there have been any bus tours. Perhaps this was before I joined."

—
"Another bus tour would be helpful."

Of course we do like the occasional **Social Gathering** and the most popular continues to be our Christmas Break-up at the Taproom in Castlemaine. In 2019 we added our AGM which worked so well, we will continue this combination in the future.

"The Xmas breakup (at the Taproom) is a great occasion (and venue) for everyone to come together and reflect on what we have achieved."

—
"AGM & Christmas break-up works well."

Feedback also suggested that having another **Community Wide Event** could be beneficial. Such an event will be planned for around the beginning of Spring each year.



Our current & future projects

If we take a moment to look at the current state of our various projects/sites (Walmer Bushland Reserve; Barkers Creek – from Blackjack to McManus Roads; McManus Road Reserve; Little Red Apple; Roadside Weeds Program and the Natural Features (Harcourt) Bushland Reserve) all of them have reached, or have nearly reached, maintenance stage. By this we mean all the hard work has been done and now only regular follow-up is required to ensure that all those nasty weeds do not re-infest.

This clearly inspired one respondent to suggest that it was time for:

“Exploring the boundaries of Barkers Creek with our working bees.”



○ ONGOING

THE NATURAL FEATURES (HARCOURT) BUSHLAND RESERVE - 35.5 HA BETWEEN ADAMS AND PEELERS RDS.

RESTORING BARKERS CREEK

ROADSIDE WEED REMOVAL PROJECT - IN CONJUNCTION WITH MT ALEXANDER SHIRE COUNCIL.

RESTORATION OF THE 'OLD TIP' SITE, PEELERS RD - IN CONJUNCTION WITH MT ALEXANDER SHIRE COUNCIL

MCMANUS RD RESERVE

I.M.B.Y (IN MY BACK YARD) - WALMER BUSHLAND RESERVE.

★ NEW (PENDING)

I.M.B.Y PROJECTS- BLACKJACK & ADAMS RDS; AND WHITE GUM RD & KOCH LN.

RESTORATION OF THE HERITAGE DIGGINGS PARK - IN CONJUNCTION WITH PARKS VICTORIA.

BIKE/WALK PATH BETWEEN CASTLEMAINE AND HARCOURT (VIA VARIOUS BC PROJECT SITES E.G. BUSHLAND RESERVES).

CLEAN-UP MIDLAND HIGHWAY - IN CONJUNCTION WITH VIC ROADS.



New project priorities 2020–24

*Clean up
Midland Highway*

*Heritage Diggings
Park restoration
works*

*Bike/walking path
connection through
Barkers Creek*

More I.M.B.Y projects

More members

Whilst our Roadside Weeds Removal Program and The Old Tip Restoration Project (both in conjunction with and funded by Mt Alexander Shire Council) and the Bushland Reserve are central to our 'ongoing' activities, here are some other future projects –

1. Cleaning up Midland Highway

(which will require an agreement with Vic Roads).

2. The Heritage Diggings Park in Specimen Gully Road.

We know that Noel Muller from Parks Vic has received a 'Good Neighbour' grant (late 2019) and a 'Heritage Preservation' grant (early 2020). We are maintaining contact with Noel and continue to be hopeful that some works will be done.

3. A bike/walking path connection through Barkers Creek.

This is becoming increasingly desirable with more people coming to Castlemaine and Harcourt. NB. It was actually mentioned in our last five year plan but not much has happened... so this time we'll get on to it.

This also fed into a desire to instigate more I.M.B.Y projects... and to assist active members on their properties.

However, in the survey, it was clear that there was some confusion and a number of people didn't really know what I.M.B.Y was. Some felt it literally meant working in my 'own' back yard... which of course we have done in the past and are planning to do more (1–2 times each year). More specifically, though, it relates to working in small local areas of 'Public Land' close to where we live i.e. small projects like the Walmer Bushland Reserve, where it is a piece a public land that needs to be cared for but doesn't require a full working bee to maintain the site. We want to establish a couple more IMBY's on public land... and we've already started at the corner of White Gum Road & Koch Lane, and the corner of Blackjack & Adams Road. The plan is to develop both these little sites more.



We love morning tea time!

Renewing the group

One piece of common feedback, was that some people didn't know what some of the activities referred to in the survey were? This is probably because nearly 50% of the current group were not around 5 years ago.

This leads to a really important component to continue to push – **we always want new members**, and a number of respondents reaffirmed that point, ... so keep inviting you friends and neighbours. It is so important that we constantly expand our group. Whilst people will move into our area... they will also move out, or circumstances will change with regards to health etc.

"Be part of a community that cares for our local environment."

Summary

Everyone wants to keep doing what we are doing ... with more members.

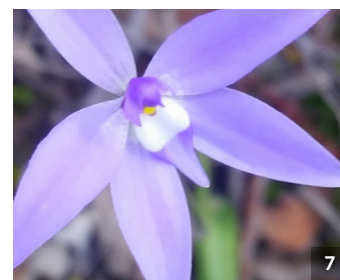
Once again, the survey really affirms how much people love living in Barkers Creek and how committed they are to restoring our local environment whether that be on public land or private property.

We encourage people to explore our group's Landcare website – www.barkerscreeklandcare.org.au and join our group... and let's see what we can achieve in the next 5 years.

"It is really important because Barkers Creek is a 'Community' ... it's not just the bit of ground between Harcourt and Castlemaine where it has been dug up, chopped down or dumped on."

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. SUCCESSFUL BROOM REMOVAL – CORNER OF BLACKJACK & ADAMS RDS | 5. CLEARING GORSE ALONG SPECIMEN GULLY RD |
| 2. INSTALLING STAR PICKETS FOR OUR PLANT PODS | 6. YAM DAISY |
| 3. SCARLET ROBIN | 7. WAXLIP ORCHARD |
| 4. TWO FINISHED PODS READY TO PROTECT OUR PLANTS | 8. CHRIS AND PETER CLEARING BROOM AT MCMANUS ROAD RESERVE (REFER NOTE BELOW) |

NOTE: **Thank you and Farewell.** Chris Downing (member 8 years) and Peter Legge (member 5 years) have been two of our most consistent Landcare participants over recent years. Best mates, they could always be seen working together. Sadly, Chris passed away in late 2019, and Peter and wife Rachel have moved closer to family. We will miss them.





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