



# TreeProject

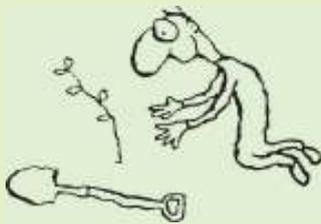
April 2011

Campaspe - Maribyrnong  
Headwaters Biolink

Wombat Trail  
A Wasteland Returns to Life

The Good, Bad and the Ugly  
Pests and Insects

Autumn-Spring planting calendar



## VOLUNTEERS

PUTTING TREES ON THE LAND

The world is hugged by the faithful arms of voluters.

~Terri Guillemets



2011

International Year of Forests

Become a Member

TreeProject recognises the valuable work all our volunteers do as an essential contribution to the body and fabric of TreeProject's vital regeneration work.

Your financial membership is the buttress upon which TreeProject depends to support your important work. Your annual membership is crucial to provide TreeProject with funds that are necessary to run the office. The office provides support to our volunteers, landholders and the general community who contact TreeProject for advice, referral and assistance.

**If you are not a financial member already, please consider becoming one today.**

Visit our webpage or contact TreeProject office. We would love to hear from you.

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'Seedling' cover image by:

Robert Metzke

**Thank you InpactDigital for sponsorship in the printing of this Newsletter**

# Hello From the Office

Hi everyone and welcome to your April issue of the TreeProject newsletter. We are thrilled to be putting together this newsletter which will focus on the achievements of our dedicated growers from this season. It has been a difficult season what with the cold temperatures and the high rainfall - thanks to the emergence of a well-developed La Niña event. However the forecast suggests that a return to neutral conditions is likely by winter 2011.

So it's farewell to the Year of Biodiversity and hello to the Year of the Forest. Here in Australia we have a variety of forest types - seven main groups - that cover much of the coastal regions of the country. So why not take the opportunity this year to as frequently as possible to go bush! This year visit a forest, whether it's eucalypt, rainforest or mangrove. Take a look at not only the plants, but the animals that so heavily rely on them and the amazing system of life that surrounds them. This year lets all see the forest for the trees.

## Training PriceWaterhouseCoopers



In February TreeProject trained eleven staff volunteers from PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to grow fire-regeneration native seedlings. Organised through a joint partnership with Landcare Australia, staff from PwC were trained by TreeProject's Manager De Grebner and Nursery Manager Lex Richards, to grow 500 trees of over five species, including Blackwood, Yellow Box, Red Stringybark, Messmate and Golden Wattle.

These seedlings that the PwC team will oversee for the next

6 months will be used to regenerate a fire ravaged area at King Lake. While undisturbed bushland areas will regenerate over time, many landowners want to revegetate their properties to help with land rehabilitation; wildlife corridors and habitat; erosion management and creating shelter for stock

The enthusiastic PwC team stays in touch about seedling progress by taking photos and sharing updates of their trials and tribulations with each other and the TreeProject Office. It is encouraging to see that 24 months after the fires, there are still so many volunteers and organisations willing to lend a hand to support landholders and assist with the ongoing recovery and environmental rejuvenation in the fire affected areas.

If you would like to involve your workplace in growing seedlings, or perhaps you have a community group that would like to be involved, please contact De at TreeProject

## Growing our Membership

As you all know, TreeProject is a not-for-profit community and environment organization. Only a small percentage of our income comes from foundation or government grants, which are not guaranteed. Staff work many hours writing submissions to acquire funding, which is always earmarked for specified projects. We rely on generous individuals and members to make up the difference and keep the office running.

TreeProject is striving to create a stronger membership program which will support our general operating costs. We need to create a membership program that inspires people to become involved by providing financial members something extra. We would like to provide something more beyond the satisfying glow that accompanies the knowledge that one's financial membership is assisting volunteers putting trees back on the land.

We are looking for people with innovative approaches and sterling ideas to help guide and develop our membership program. We need assistance with developing our membership goals, ways to recruit new members, new ideas for direct appeals and how to formulate interest from businesses to become members or to provide discounts or perks as incentives for people to become financial members. If you feel that this is your area of expertise or if you have ideas to share and would like to help, please contact us here in the TreeProject office to get on board.



# TreeProject Thanks All of You for 2011

## We truly are a TeamProject - Lyn Grocke—TreeProject President

As the 2010/11 Re-Tree Scheme begins to wind down for this season it is time to take stock of what has been achieved to date. First off we must extend a huge thank-you to those who are veterans of the Re-Tree Scheme; you make our environmental restoration work a reality. We would also like to welcome the new volunteers for this year. You have been part of the team responsible for growing over 73,000 indigenous plants for 45 individual Landholders as well as members of 7 landcare groups.

TreeProject and our volunteers coordinators have provided over 180 growers with guidance for the 2010/11 season and these growers are now responsible for the care of 218 kits. It has been a difficult season with the onslaught of cutworms, rain and too little sun and cold conditions. Very different to a typical Victorian Summer!

More than 300 volunteer hours have been spent in establishing our Re-Tree Scheme Kits. Our volunteers continually improve the Victorian landscape with their support and dedication to the natural environment. The importance of these people must never be underestimated. The Working Bee team has been responsible for packaging seed, sorting, sterilising and counting tubes. These wonderful volunteers have contributed by shovelling 17 cubic metres of sand as well as bagging a cubic metre of sand and 100 kilograms of fertiliser.

Many thanks to all of you for the time and effort which has given TreeProject another great result.



## Tribute to TreeProject Members

In fond memory and appreciation for two special people that have been long-term financial members and active growers for TreeProject for close to two decades.

Lindsay Patience, of Mornington, was one of TreeProject's first life members and growers, joining in 1994. Peg Cuthbertson, of Mount Eliza, was a member since 1996 and lead her Soroptimist Growers group. Lindsey and Peg's tremendous contributions have been an inspiration over many years and will be missed with their passing.



## TeamProject Hard at Work

This growing season has been one for the records. Most days in January through to March the temperature has been below 25 degrees and often in the high teens. Did we ever have summer? Well I'll tell you that the River Red Gum (*Euc. Camaldulensis*) didn't think so. The beautiful River Red is usually one of our most prolific species for germinating. However it requires 30 degrees and above to get the seeds sprouting. We've had some adventurous sprouts prepared to brave the cool elements but most of the River Red that germinated were sown when we did get a couple of hot days.

And what about the Acacias, have you ever seen them so reluctant to put their heads above ground? Despite the disinclination of our heat-seeking indigenous species, TreeProject growers have performed outstandingly. Thanks to Amanda for setting up the Google Docs spreadsheet from the office so that growers are now able to share their germination results with others. By comparing their seedlings in this way, growers are not isolated in thinking they are the only ones that have had slow results and been more patient.

Growers have been able to support each other by sharing extra seedlings that they have with growers that have had some shortage with germination. Nine eager volunteers teamed up at the Fairfield nursery in early March to transplant extra seedlings needed to back up the stock for the growers. Volunteers filled tubes to meet extra orders from the nursery and transplanted extra seedlings for growers in need of assistance.

This is why it's important for growers to give regular growing reports of their progress and seedling numbers, so that we can make sure that we can provide help if necessary. We are all part of a large project and depend on each others support.



Jane & Mark

TreeProject volunteers transplanting at the Fairfield nursery.



Gwen and Jenny

Thank you to our hardworking volunteers who support each other and make an important contribution to revegetating the Victorian landscape.



Paul



Tim and Andrew

# Supporting a Central Victorian Biolink

## TreeProject volunteers have helped to create an important 'biolink' between Mount Macedon and Cobaw Ranges adding to the habitat of the Pygmy Perch.

Many TreeProject volunteers have dedicated their time growing seedlings for landholder Penny Roberts from the Newham District Landcare group, who has been ordering TreeProject seedlings since 2002. Or perhaps as a grower you have grown seedlings for landholder Pat Toomey or David Blicblau from the Deep Creek Landcare Group, or Vikki Speeding from the Upper Maribyrnong Catchment Group. However not all growers would know the amazing project their seedlings have contributed to. With the vision and action of these TreeProject landholders, alongside Landcare coordinators and a team of motivated environmental champions, the 'Campaspe-Maribyrnong Headwaters Biolink' has been created.

Alternatively referred to as 'The Cobaw Biolink', this project creates a continuous network of native vegetation in the watershed catchment area linking Macedon Regional Park with Cobaw State Forest via the Hanging Rock Reserve. Past land clearing had resulted in a loss of habitat for local species, and left the area with extensive scattered remnants throughout



2009 planting at Newham

agricultural land. TreeProject seedlings, along with the vision of Landcare groups is contributing to rectifying this fragmented landscape.

The goal is to create a network of

native vegetation that improves biodiversity in the region, resilience in the populations of native animals that reside there and improve water quality downstream in the Melbourne catchment area.

The Upper Deep Creek, Newham and District and Upper Maribyrnong Landcare Groups brought landowners together to plan at a landscape level and to support the work that individual landowners are taking. TreeProject seedlings were distributed to over 97 Landcare members properties, which, according to Penny Roberts, 'TreeProject stock expedites the process by making large scale revegetation more likely.' Penny has been part of the Newham District Landcare Group's vision to develop a biolink project since its inception, and in 2008 was awarded the *Individual Caring for Private Landcare Award* for her amazing work. Penny states, 'we expect it will take several decades to connect all the remnant areas with vegetation'.

The biolink forms key links along waterways and across high ground. These "corridors" allow for escape, movement and expansion of fauna populations and plays an important role helping protect endangered species.

Revegetation has improved the health of the Deep Creek, according to Edward Tsyrlin, a Melbourne Water freshwater ecologist, Deep Creek now has great river health. This is good news for micro-invertebrates, the Southern Pygmy Perch, flat headed gudgeon, turtles and platypus.



Pygmy Perch

Since 2002 TreeProject growers have providing over 120,000 seedlings to the private properties that are connected to the biolink. 'TreeProject stock', says Penny Roberts, 'is important not only for the obvious extra native plants in the ground, but also for the opportunity it provides to give landowners information on native vegetation in all its complexity and how to maximize the habitat value for wildlife'.



John Blamey - Pygmy Perch habitat site

TreeProject growers are a breed unto themselves. They grow trees just for the satisfaction of knowing they've helped out the environment and a landowner by providing seedlings. Many growers establish firm friendships with their landholder, and support them year after year.

Thank you to our amazingly dedicated and creative TreeProject volunteers - through many hours of time, energy and vigilance you have contributed to the restoration many species' habitats. [Tess Toubourou](#)

## Need Help Getting Seed for Your Order?

For a landholder who is contemplating a revegetation project, be it large or small, the task can sometimes seem quite overwhelming and daunting. TreeProject believes that the task of revegetating this glorious state of ours should not be left to Landholders alone and the Re-Tree Scheme was designed to assist with these revegetation projects.

There are many points to consider when organising this important work, such as project planning and management; site preparation; fencing if needed and tree guards. Therefore if there is an area that TreeProject can further assist with then we will endeavour to try it out. Over the years it has been brought to our attention that the process of ordering your provenance based seed from the local seed banks can be one of those things that can add to the headache of placing an order with the Re-Tree Scheme. Seeing as TreeProject has a policy that "not any old seed will do" we would be happy to take away that one extra thing to think about and place the seed order for you.

For a minimal administration cost of \$25.00 plus the cost of the seed, TreeProject will place the order with your regional seed bank. You, the landholder, will still need to inform TreeProject what species you require in order for us to order the appropriate seed.

# Wombat Trail

A wasteland returns to life



Tree planting along Trentham's Stoney Creek Reserve

The Stoney Creek Reserve runs through the town of Trentham, 50 minutes north-east of Melbourne. For some time the Stoney Creek Reserve had become a wasteland of impenetrable blackberry, gorse and other weeds.

With the energy and commitment of some dedicated volunteers, the reserve's weeds are gradually being eradicated and the site is being revegetated with indigenous plants grown by TreeProject, including riparian plants along the creek. Over 4,000 indigenous plants including grasses, understory plants and trees were provided by TreeProject for the regeneration process.

Glenda Holmes, a Stoney Creek Reserve Committee of Management member, said "We hope this will return the reserve to its original beauty as a wetlands area and nature reserve to attract more native birds, frogs, insects and wildlife. Since tree planting began in January 2010 there is already evidence of this happening, including a resident family of kangaroos".

Current work on the reserve will form stage one of the proposed future Wombat Forest Trail. The long-term aim (10 years) is to create a walking track which links the Stoney Creek, Old Trentham Racecourse and Bath Street Reserves with the Wombat State Forest.

The Stoney Creek Reserve is protected by the Dept. of Sustainability and Environment and managed by a committee of local volunteer residents. The Wombat Forest is an important water catchment area for much of Victoria, being the headwaters of six major rivers - the Coliban, Loddon and Campaspe rivers flowing to the North and the Lerderderg, Moorabool and Werribee rivers flowing to the South.

Tess Toumbourou

## Horticultural Advisor — Wendy Probestl

Wendy is a qualified Horticulturalist who has worked in the industry for more than 20 years. Since graduating she has had an extensive range of experiences including the Saturday morning garden show for 3MP, articles for newspapers, landscaping, wholesale plant nurseries and retail plant sales. Never far away from the outdoors, Wendy takes great interest in the environment and all it has to offer.

As well as managing her own consultancy business, Wendy will be a regular advisory voice for TreeProject members needing guidance and encouragement for growing indigenous seedlings. TreeProject will be launching a Seedling Propagation Forum as part of our new web page which Wendy will be monitoring.

If you would like to employ Wendy for a personal consultation on any gardening or growing queries email [gardenbutterfly@westnet.com.au](mailto:gardenbutterfly@westnet.com.au) or contact 0408 175 661.



# Check the root

to be sure seedlings are ready for your landholder

It is important to keep an eye on the root development of the plants. Seedlings once planted out will not establish themselves if their root system is not

strong enough. Seedling with underdeveloped root systems will suffer planting shock, wilt and can not be saved. Plants that are root-bound can also have trouble but a little teasing of the root before planting and deep watering should overcome this problem.



A particularly wet and mild season means the foliage develops well but under the surface there is little root action. The tubes must not be allowed to become too saturated with water. If the soil is too wet the root growth slows down and though roots have developed they may rot.



The best way to check the progress of the roots is to choose several stages of development in the stock and gently knock the plants out. You must support the plant stem and base by placing two fingers around the stem and support the potting mix in your palm.

The roots should fan out from the stem at soil level through to the middle and along the sides of the tube. They should look white and fibrous with good branching otherwise there will not be sufficient



support for the foliage as it develops. Do not disturb the roots by repeatedly checking the same tube or the plant will suffer and fail.

Where roots are slow to develop and the potting mix seems too wet, bottom heat is recommended. Try a ledge that heats up during the day and retains heat overnight. Radiant heat is best as direct warmth may burn and do more harm than good. Wendy Probestl

# Earwigs the Good, Bad and the Ugly

The name earwig comes from its original name *earwing*, referring to their hardened wings which are rarely used. The superstition that they crawl into ears at night is nonsense. Earwigs do live in dark, moist spaces but not ears. They are renowned for their pincers but they are harmless to humans—they may attempt to pinch your finger if provoked but they do not sting and will cause no harm.

Earwigs hide in damp, protected places such as in decaying material, leaf litter, between leaves or other debris. They are nocturnal but are attracted to clear white lights. Earwigs feed on both plant and animal matter. Their preferred diet is decaying material and slow moving invertebrates.



Native Common Brown Earwig  
image: Museum Victoria

The native earwig, *Labidura truncate*, is considered a natural predator, feeding mostly on decaying material, aphids, slug eggs and insect larvae - even the codling moth egg. However, the most common species found in urban gardens is the introduced European earwig, *forficula auricularia* which is a useful predator also, but can build large populations and become

problematic by eating plant tips and soft foliage.

Earwigs are not usually an issue for native plants as the foliage is usually tough and full of oils. But, if you suspect earwigs may be attacking your seedlings the best prevention is to modify the environment. Take away rotting leaves, lawn clippings and soil or mulch that might have gathered.

To control earwigs use damp newspapers, rolled-up corrugated cardboard or a used sardine tin buried in the ground to the rim, as earwigs are attracted to fish oil and eliminate them by soaking in dishwashing water or spraying with a commercial product.

Placing birdbaths or feeders around the garden will encourage control by birds. Make sure that white lights are removed or not left on and use Boric acid powder sprinkled around the area where the earwigs are present. This can be purchased from your local chemist or health food store.

Note that the best form of control is not to create the problem in the first place. Keep your growing area free of rubbish, decaying material, leaf litter build-up, mulch overflow, weeds and especially aired and well drained so there is no damp refuge.

Wendy Proebsti



European earwigs  
image: Southern Farming Systems

# Cutworms flood them out

Usually when we think of worms we imagine lovely lush soil with happy worms creating great nutrients for plants with their castings. This article isn't about these friends, instead it is about our foes the cutworms that hide out during the day and pop out at night to eat our defenceless seedlings. Over the past few months in the nursery we have had a few troubles with cutworms. One minute there's a great looking box of seedlings, the next minute it looks like Gunn's has set up a logging coop leaving poor little seedlings wondering what on earth hit them.

## So what is happening?

Most cutworms pass winter as a partially grown larvae. A few species spend winter as pupae or hibernating moths. These cutworms become active and begin feeding as the weather warms in spring, remaining hidden under debris or in the soil and feeding at night. They climb out of the soil, cut the stem and then pop back down in the soil taking the severed seedling with them. This is why seedlings are cut down in the morning. They will move to another tube when food supply is scarce.

## What to do?

Some keen growers have been sneaking out at night with flashlights trying to catch the little buggers in the act. But this is a bit of an unrealistic task on a large scale. Thanks to the experimentation from a few of our growers and after our own trials at the nursery we have found a good solution - flood the buggers!

## Technique?

Simply find a large container that can fit your whole box or a smaller one. Put a few tubes in at a time. Submerge the tubes completely for about 5 mins **only** then check the top of the tubes for cutworms. Pick them out and feed them to your chooks or give them a good squash. Remove tubes from water and repeat for the rest of your



seedlings in case they are hiding in others and come back.

I would advise not to do this too often or soak them longer than 5 minutes, as it will leach the nutrients from the soil and is unnecessary. It would be a good idea to do before sending seedlings out for distribution.

Lex Richards, Nursery Manager



## Pests Encountered When Growing Native Plants

**Ants** can often co-exist without too much affect on the grower. Their presence is usually a sign that seedlings are too dry and warm. Ants are considered scavengers who prey on things for the liquid food which they feed to those in the nest. Where food or moisture is scarce they may enter houses or buildings looking for it. They are particularly attracted to dry, easily excavated sites so will settle in rotting wood, sand between bricks or paving as well as the base of pots and tubes.

Ants can generally be dealt with by pouring boiling water down the main nest entrance, disturbing the nest so they are forced to reestablish elsewhere. Other options are wetting the area or using ant dust on the common trail to and from the source.

Keep seedling tubes in the polystyrene boxes to keep moist. Make sure the whole tube is kept moist. Dry tubes will form air pockets or a crust on the surface and the ants will consider this a perfect location to create a colony.



# Out with the Rabbits

Upcoming tree planting day— June 12th

In the September 2010 edition of the TreeProject newsletter we introduced a new TreeProject planting by Parks Victoria that is now ready to begin. The area had been ravaged by rabbits over the years, so part of the task will be to complete a rabbit-proof fence.

This planting will link fragmented sections of bushland and provide habitat for native fauna. Stabilizing loose soil on unvegetated areas will improve water quality in the Yarra and Merri Creek. This area has high cultural and ecological significance and is in desperate need of some serious repair. Come along on the day to Corrie's Property, and meet amazing people, be involved in the environmental restoration of the area and have fun! See planting calendar on the right for further information.



## Grower Tips

### Five things I learnt in my first year of growing

1. Four eyes are better than two. We had a caterpillar infestation. I'd go through and pick the caterpillars out first thing in the morning then my partner would go through later and find all the ones I missed.
2. If you are not getting the results you are looking for ask the other growers in your group for advice. One of our fellow growers suggested more sunshine and it worked a treat.
3. When you transplant seedlings to another tube a chopstick is a useful tool to get the roots in straight.
4. Move your boxes when you mow the lawn otherwise you will spend quite some time picking out weeds.
5. Have an area where you can place plants which aren't doing so well. This will allow you to give them a bit more TLC and prevent the problem spreading to other plants.



Siska Waddington

**Tea-Tree Web Moth** or Webbing Caterpillars are grubs that encase themselves in a web-like structure consisting of foliage and droppings and can cause severe defoliation. *Leptospermum* and *Melaleuca* are plants that are most affected by these insects.

The caterpillars build a cocoon around themselves pulling the stems and leaves together to form a sac that looks very much like the sawdust made by a borer. The caterpillars can totally strip the foliage, resulting in complete skeletonizing of the plant. A plant weakened in this way will not survive once planted out.

# Planting Calendar

## Yarra Bend Autumn-Spring, 2011

10.00am - 4.00pm Bring gloves, hat and wear sturdy shoes  
BBQ lunch — Vegos and vegans will be provided for

### 01 May Yarra Bend Road, Dog Friendly Park

**Location:** Yarra Bend Rd, Fairfield. Mel Ref. 2D F1-3  
**Access:** Heidelberg Rd, Fairfield. Park in Yarra Bend Rd near Park Office. **Purpose:** Plant Yarra Bend Rd to separate dogs & traffic.

### 29 May Old Ropes Course Site

**Location:** Yarra River Slopes near Park Dep. Fairfield. Mel. Ref. 2DG4 **Access:** Yarra Bend Rd, Fairfield to Depot Rd (First rd on left south of Eastern Freeway). Park in Depot Rd near signage **Purpose:** Continue restoration of degraded area of Riverine Escarpment Scrub.

### 12 June Corrie's Property, Lower Plenty

**Location:** South end of Bond's Rd, Lower Plenty. Mel Ref. 33 A4. **Access:** Via Old Eltham Rd, Lower Plenty. Park in Yarra Yarra Blvd. Park in Bonds Rd at Main Yarra Trail car park follow flags **Purpose:** Erect rabbit-proof fence - plant area of Yarra Floodplain.

### 26 June Collins Slopes

**Location:** Bordering Yarra Blvd, Kew, adjacent to Collins Dog-off-lead zone near F. A. Andrews Res. Mel Ref. 2DB11 **Access:** Via Yarra Blvd, Kew. Park in Yarra Blvd near the Hairpin Bend. **Purpose:** Restore indigenous vegetation bordering Yarra Blvd keeping scenic drive status.

### 31 July Yarra Bend Road, Dog Friendly Park

**Location:** Beside Yarra Bend Rd, Fairfield. Mel Ref. 2D F1-3 **Access:** From Heidelberg Rd, Fairfield. Park in Yarra Bend Rd near Park Office. **Purpose:** Plant Yarra Bend Rd to separate dogs & traffic.

### 28 Aug Yarra Flats - Studley Park Road, Kew *Intrepid Travel Planting—call to book if attending*

**Location:** River bank & slopes in Kew between south of Studley Park Rd, Kew. Mel.Ref. 2D D8 **Access:** Studley Park Rd, Kew. Park in Reserve on opposite side of Studley Park Rd, Mel. Ref. 2D D8, follow flags to site, walk under bridge. **Purpose:** establish indigenous vegetation on banks of Yarra River, replace removed exotics.

### 25 Sept Fairlea Woodland and River Bank

**Location:** Woodland between NMIT Fairfield campus and Yarra River. Mel. Ref. 2D HI. **Access:** Yarra Road to Fairlea Road. Park in car park at Flycasting pools, then follow flags. **Purpose:** Strengthen Yarra River habitat corridor / screen visual impact of and excessive light at night from NMIT campus & nearby hospital.



Removal of the sac by hand and elimination of the caterpillar and sac in a manner of your choice is the best form of control. However, if the infestation is severe and extensive, then chemical control with Carbaryl may be needed. A natural spray such as Dipel may be used but the results are not always as successful.

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