

Ramble through local red gums

Do you want to know more about the Red Gum Plains? Interested in checking out the wildflowers of East Gippsland? Want to get out and discover some of the critters that live in our corner of the world?

East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority invites you on a tour around the Red Gum Plains next Wednesday, November 1.

Together with Greening Australia, Trust for Nature, Gunaikurnai Land and Water Aboriginal Corporation, Parks Vic, Gippsland Plains Conservation Management Network and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, the CMA will visit the sites of a number of projects funded by state and federal governments.

You will hear about their cultural history, flora and ecological significance. The buses will tour properties in

Skull Creek and Bengworden before stopping for a picnic lunch at Wattle Point.

The afternoon will include a visit to an area of remnant forest protected under a Trust for Nature covenant in Forge Creek.

They'll be on the lookout for the endangered clustered everlasting, bluegrass lily and sun orchid and hope to spot a few feathered friends along the way too.

This is a free event with buses departing from the DELWP building at 9am and returning by 3pm. Lunch is provided and participants should take walking shoes, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, and water.

Please note that numbers are limited and the event is subject to weather conditions. To register your interest visit the EGCMA website.



Learn more about the Red Gum Plains with a field trip next Wednesday. (PS)



Chris Power explained the work of the Bairnsdale Friends of Timor Leste group to Sunrise Rotarians recently. (PS)

Changing lives in Timor

Chris Power, from the Bairnsdale Friends of Timor Leste, spoke to Bairnsdale Sunrise Rotary Club about the outstanding work a dedicated group of Bairnsdale volunteers have achieved in Timor-Leste.

The journey began back in 2003 with an association through the Salesians. Three teachers from Nagle College - Frank Brown Graham, Dan Crowe and Kim Ellis - spent a month teaching English at St Antonio's Secondary School in Baucau. On their return the group was formed.

Since then many volunteers have made visits to St Antonio's in Timor, teaching English, other subjects, provided vocational guidance for senior students and contributed to their welfare needs and joined in extra-curricular activities.

They have assisted with the cost of English - Tetum Dictionaries; paid school fees for poor students and paid expenses for a Salesian Youth Group in Baucau.

Plus, they have fully and partially supported many Tertiary students attending various institutes in Timor and Indonesia - all now graduated.

Each week they currently provide nutritious lunches three days per week to 130 year 12

students.

In monetary value it's estimated they have contributed over \$600,000 since 2003.

HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT

In Timor Leste, unemployment runs as high as 80 per cent and to assist, Chris explained how they have opened the doors to local jobs in Lindenow during the peak harvest periods, 25 people during winter and up to 40 East Timorese workers in the summer months.

The East Timorese are very grateful for the opportunity to be able to contribute and make a difference to their families' future. Bairnsdale Friends of Timor Leste also offers

pastoral care to the locally employed East Timorese horticulture seasonal workers at Lindenow.

Chris stated that the workers live in five houses around the town and their support involves helping them to settle into the local community; setting up the houses with suitable furniture; giving guidance on the use of 'western' conveniences; if necessary, how to access our health system and having their company cars serviced. We also provide social opportunities such as barbecues.

For more information you can contact Chris Power at St Mary's Parish Bairnsdale.



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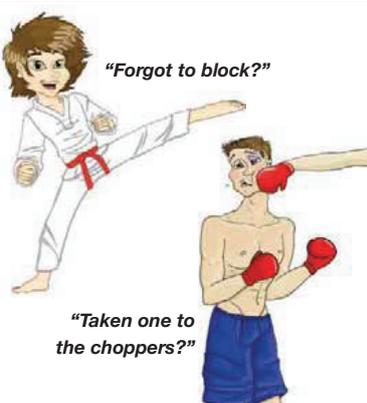


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