

**GIPPSLAND PLAINS
CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT NETWORK****NEWSLETTER
NO. 2 - 2016**

On the plains



President's Report

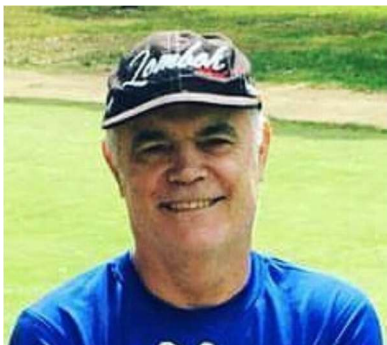
Welcome to the October 2016 edition of the GPCMN newsletter. This is our second fully electronic version of our newsletter.

Our group's facilitator Andy Booth, has continued his good work in supervising and reporting on existing on-ground projects, maintaining our community and media presence, and making new successful funding applications. Andy's role as facilitator has evolved and changed. We are now contracting new on-ground project work via external quotes and EOIs, allowing Andy to concentrate on community and landowner engagement tasks, volunteer recruitment, seeking new funding sources, developing new projects and general facilitation of GPCMN wider roles.

At present we have five active projects, one dormant project and a number of new project funding applications under consideration. Our financial position is good and with the continued support of the community, volunteers and other agencies and organisations, the GPCMN is well placed to continue the work we have been doing for many years.

I invite you all to attend our AGM to be held 6 pm, Tuesday November 8th at the Bairnsdale Sporting & Convention Centre. Our guest speaker is David Hollands, renowned local ornithologist. He will be discussing 'Owls of East Gippsland' after the AGM.

For further information on the AGM, our projects or for membership applications please contact Andy Booth: facilitator@gippslandplainscmn.org.au



GPCMN President – Andrew Livingston

Climbing Groundsel control at Sunset Cove



Successfully funded under the 2016 Coastcare Victoria Community Grants program is our new Paynesville foreshore Climbing Groundsel control project.

Climbing Groundsel, *Senecio angulatus*, is also commonly known as Cape Ivy or Mile-a-minute. This species will invade grassland, scrub, coastal vegetation, grassy woodland, dry forests, saline and brackish wetlands, roadsides and waste places.

The GPCMN is working at Sunset Cove to support the Paynesville Landcare Coastcare Group. The Landcare Coastcare group has an East Gippsland Shire Council approved management plan in place and is taking local responsibility for land and waterway protection through clearing of invasive weeds, revegetation and general development of a very popular strip of foreshore in Paynesville.

The 'CMN is also partnering with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC). GLaWAC is to implement the necessary work.

Salt-tolerant Phragmites for Newlands Arm foreshore



Working under the larger umbrella of "Care Groups Enhancing Biodiversity of the Gippsland Lakes", with funding secured and brokered by the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority from National sources, the GPCMN is harvesting seed from Common Reed *Phragmites australis*. Surviving populations on the Backwater are thought to be relatively salt tolerant. It is from these populations that new plants will be propagated by GLaWAC and planted along the salt affected Newlands Arm foreshore.

An important theme of this project, and common to the purpose of the GPCMN, is the building of partnerships with the various other "Care Groups" and land management agencies in the Region. With our involvement in foreshore revegetation and works that aim to improve the biodiversity and health of the Gippsland Lakes, links are also built to improve the sustainability of small pockets of Red Gum woodland around Paynesville on the margins of the Gippsland Plains.

Masked Owl project

The Masked Owl project continues, with three separate components being worked on.

Nest boxes are being installed on private property from Nowa Nowa to Iguana Creek.

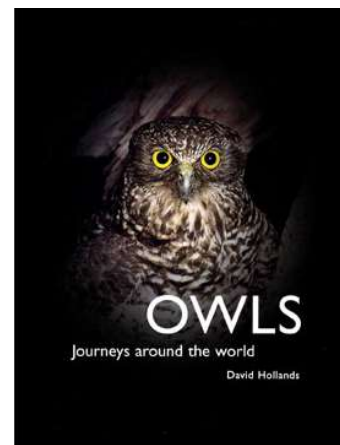
An information sheet on the Masked Owl is being finalised and should be available in time for the up-coming AGM.

As guest speaker, Renowned ornithologist, Dr David Hollands, will share with us his passion for owls at the AGM. He has authored, including his own photographs, books on birds of the night, raptors, king-fishers and kookaburras.

David's passion for birds and their photography began as a child in England. In 1961 he came to Australia and set up medical practice in Orbost in 1963. Besides being primarily involved in medicine, in 1984 David completed his first book "Eagles, Hawks and Falcons of Australia". Three of his books have won the Whitley Award, given by the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales for the best illustrated Australian natural history book of the year.

David's greatest passion is however owls and he has studied and photographed all of Australia's owl species.

Front cover of a book by David Hollands: He has travelled the world in pursuit of his passion.



Mapping Bridal Creeper in Moormung

As one of ninety-eight successful projects announced as recipients of round two of the State Government's Threatened Species Protection Initiative Community Volunteer Action Grants, the GPCMN has received funding to map the weed Bridal Creeper in Moormung Flora and Fauna Reserve.

The Threatened Species Protection Initiative aims to support immediate action on threatened species and habitat protection. The Community Volunteer Action grant stream of the Initiative is for small-scale, local threatened species projects that build community connections to the local environment. It recognises the value of grassroots community action in making change happen quickly.

The purpose of this mapping project is to establish the base-line presence of Bridal Creeper *Asparagus asparagoides*, throughout the Reserve and guide future control action. Bridal Creeper is

regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential to spread and economic and environmental impacts. Its climbing stems and foliage smother native plants, it forms a thick mat of underground tubers which impedes root growth of other plants and often prevents seedling establishment.

Moormung Reserve holds the largest remaining stand of Plains Grassy Woodlands in all of Gippsland. Liaison with Park Victoria staff identifies Bridal Creeper as a major threatening weed of the Reserve. The presence of Bridal Creeper is thought to have markedly increased over the past five years and if left unchecked it may transform this already under stress, highly significant, remnant bushland.

Working in partnership with Parks Victoria, volunteers from the 'CMN, Landcare network members and 'Forestec' (Federation Training TAFE) students will be trained in the use of GPS's and map the current distribution of Bridal Creeper. This project will identify the current locations of Bridal Creeper and will form the basis for a report and recommendations for priority treatment areas and control methods.



**Bridal Creeper transforming native bushland:
photo courtesy of CSIRO**

Thankyou Kate Simpson

Kate Simpson has let us know that she will be stepping aside from her long-term, active role on the GPCMN's committee. Kate has been a member of the GPCMN since its inception. Her commitment has been unrivalled and her contributions pivotal to the achievements of the 'CMN.

Kate, and husband Graham, will however not be stepping aside from their long-term commitment to protecting the Red Gum Plains through improving the sustainability of their own farming property. In Kate's own words, "There is still plenty more to do".

Thankyou Kate for all you have done, for those numerous years that you have been on the committee and for all those meetings you actively participated in. You leave the committee of the GPCMN at a high point that you have helped ensure, with the group currently having strong momentum and a clear focus for the future.