

SOUTHERN NEWS

14/5/2010



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Living with Lovegrass

Southern ACT Catchment Group will host ‘Living with Lovegrass - *Learning from each other on how to manage African Lovegrass.*’ The workshop will be held on Saturday 22nd May at Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa, commencing at 9am and finishing with a barbecue lunch. For more information or to book a place contact Steve Welch on 6296 6400 or email info@sactcg.org.au

Share your views on Canberra Nature Park

The Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment is undertaking an investigation into the Canberra Nature Park (nature reserves); the Molonglo River Corridor (nature reserves) and Googong Foreshores.

You are invited to attend one of three meetings:

- *Wednesday May 19, 5.30-8.30pm, Burns Club of Canberra, 8 Kett St, Kambah*
or
 - *Monday May 24, 5.30-8.30pm, Belconnen Library, 12 Chandler St, Belconnen*
or
 - *Wednesday May 26, 5.30-8.30pm, Ainslie Football Club 52 Wakefield Ave,*
Ainslie www.envcomm.act.gov.au
- RSVP: 6207 2626 or envcomm@act.gov.au

2010-2011 ACT Environment Grants – Call for Applications

The ACT Environment Grants provides financial assistance to community-based, 'not-for-profit' environmental projects in the ACT.

Applications are invited from individuals, community organisations and groups. Information and application forms can be obtained by phoning 6205 2989 or by visiting the Department of Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water website at www.environment.gov.au

Applications close 5 pm on 30 May 2010.

To assist in developing applications, an information session will be held by Department of the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water at the Reception Room in the ACT Legislative Assembly, Civic from 5.30pm to 7pm on Tuesday, 11 May. To reserve a place, please email esther.duffy@act.gov.au or phone 6205 2913 by the close of business on Monday, 10 May.

Southern ACT Catchment Group will be applying for funds to assist weed control.

Lower Molonglo Corridor – Walk and Talk 16 May

It's not often that we get an opportunity to learn about a little known part of the Molonglo Valley – the Lower Molonglo River Corridor, the section of the Molonglo River just above where it joins the Murrumbidgee. It is precious because it contains rare flora and fauna, and significant geological features; it is also rare for raptors to nest in an area so close to a large city. And yet an entirely new urban development is planned upstream. Join a Parks Conservation and Lands Ranger for a walk along part of the lower Molonglo River Corridor. Learn about current river management issues along this section of the Molonglo, including weeds, native vegetation, threatened species and water quality. The walk will require a moderate level of fitness. Morning tea provided. Bookings are essential. Contact Molonglo Catchment Coordinator, Andy Westcott coordinator@molonglocatchment.com.au or 6299 2119

PCL Volunteer Survey

Rebecca Blundell is seeking our input in putting together a Community Partnerships Plan for Parks Conservation and Lands (PCL). The purpose of the plan is to help set a strategic framework for community involvement in the management and use of PCL managed lands. The plan reviews existing community partnerships and considers new strategic partnerships with community groups, volunteers sector, not for profit groups and non commercial recreation groups. As part of the plan Parks Conservation and Lands would greatly appreciate your feedback. This is an opportunity to tell us how we can work better to meet our common goals, so please take the time to complete this quick survey and pass it on to your members or others that you know who volunteer their time to work with Parks Conservation and Lands. To complete your questionnaire electronically, simply select your answer by clicking on the corresponding box or type your answer in the space provided. Once completed, please return the questionnaire as an attachment to your email message. This survey will close on **MONDAY 24th MAY 2010**.

Options to return the questionnaire (attached) are:

- by email to: research.mars@ozemail.com.au
- by fax to: 02-9525 3656
- or post to: MARS, PO Box 214, MIRANDA NSW 2228
- by phone: Ring Rebecca Blundell 62072193 on Thursday or Friday and she will fill in the survey for you over the phone.

International Biodiversity Day event: Bird Biodiversity in the Bush and the ‘Burbs’ - Winners and Losers

Sat 22 May, 1 pm – 3 pm: Greening Australia Capital Region’s Nicki Taws will talk about the Birdwatch project, which began monitoring birds in revegetation sites on farms in the ACT region in 2000. Nicki will compare this with results from other long term bird monitoring projects. The talk will be followed by a guided bird walk through the Gardens. Free event, walk numbers limited, bookings required 6250 9540.

The Future - K2C Landholders – Links - Landscapes Expo

Sunday, 10th Oct 2010 at Bredbo Village

Over 25 stalls to field your questions and offer options for you on your land.

Key Presenter, Sam Archer - Cattle and Crop Farmer, MLA Nuffield Scholar

- Calling on all landholders in a 100km radius to head to Bredbo Village for this exciting event.
- 10 K2C Partners + many more industry and community groups will be there to discuss all types of land matters with you.
- Discover a range of sustainable land uses that can yield profits while enriching landscape health.
- Come on a visit to the Bush Heritage “Scottsdale” Property, listen and talk to presenters on land use, birds, reptiles, weeds, wattles and much more.
- Celebrate 2010 — Year of Biodiversity

Contact Lauren Van Dyke—K2C Project Facilitator facilitator@k2c.org.au

www.k2c.org.au

World Environment Day Trivia Fundraising Night

The Conservation Council invites you to join their World Environment Day Trivia Fundraising Night, on Saturday 5 June at the Majura Hall in Dickson.

All proceeds from the evening will go towards the Molongo Biodiversity Fund to raise money to hire a dedicated Biodiversity Campaigner. The trivia night will include 10 rounds of questions, mostly environmental, a silent auction, raffle prizes as well as some games. Some light refreshments (coffee, tea and cakes) will be provided. Please feel free to bring BYO alcohol, food and drink.

Places are limited, so BOOK EARLY and get a discount off the ticket price.

Tickets purchased before 23 May will be \$20. Tickets after this date will be \$25.

How Member Groups can be involved:

- Book a table of 8 for your members?
- Sponsor a round of questions for \$50 and receive:

Free advertising for your group on the answer sheets and during our slideshow presentation.

o Announcement by the MC during the round

This Trivia Night is open to Member Groups, EcoActivists and their friends and family. It will be open to the general public, depending on the number of remaining places available after Mother’s Day, 9th May.

To book your table or purchase tickets, please call Susanna on 6229 3208 or email: communications@consact.org.au

Namadgi Feral Pig Control

From the morning of Thursday the 6th of May until the end of Friday the 21st May 2010, Namadgi National Park will be conducting its annual Feral Pig - Poison Baiting Program. Depending on animal activity, the program may be extended until Friday to 28th May in selected areas of the park.

This program has been run every year for the last 15 years and in the past has been highly successful in reducing pig numbers and the ecological damage they cause within the park.

The continued success of the program depends largely on areas of operation being relatively undisturbed so that pigs in the area feel comfortable enough to approach bait stations and take the offered poisoned baits.

In response to this, a notification of closure was released earlier this week giving notice that without consultation with Namadgi National Park, vehicle access to all non public roads and fire trails within the park would be restricted to essential services and park staff for the duration of the program.

The notification also advises people of the presence of toxic baits within the park and the danger to humans and domestic animals of these baits. All baits will be removed at the end of operations.

Areas of operation will be clearly marked at each end with conspicuous red on white "1080 Poison" signs. The green, cylindrical shaped baits will be placed under red plastic tubs anchored to the ground in such a way that will prevent animals other than pigs accessing the baits. The program will have minimal negative impact on visitor access within the park and all fire and management trails will remain open to bushwalkers and recreation groups.

For further information or vehicle access to areas of operation, please contact the Namadgi Visitor Centre on 6207 2900 or the program coordinator, Mike Rawnsley on 6207 2903 or 0418 548 957.

'the bidgee from behind the lens' –

a photographic competition about valuing natural heritage

The Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority (MCMA) has announced the opening of 'The Bidgee from Behind the Lens' photographic competition to celebrate the Murrumbidgee catchment's natural assets. The Murrumbidgee catchment has one of the most diverse climates in NSW – from alpine areas of Kosciuszko National Park, through to the rich grazing belts of the South-West Slopes and grasslands of the semi-arid western Riverina. The MCMA would like to capture the diversity, beauty and sustainable management of the Murrumbidgee catchment and invites entries that may include, but are not limited to, images of wildlife, flora, landscapes, wetlands and rivers, sustainable farming practices and communities living in and caring for the catchment.

There are four categories – Primary Student; Secondary Student; Open Amateur; and Open Professional. Photographs can be historic or recent, black and white or colour – but they must be from the Murrumbidgee catchment. Only digital entries will be accepted.

Cash prizes of \$250 will be offered for first place and \$100 for runner up in each category.

Entries close 5 pm, Friday 18 June 2010.

For more information visit www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au or contact Sue Buik, Murrumbidgee CMA on (02) 6940 2942.

Volunteers have an eye for platypus

ACT Waterwatch is looking for volunteers to join the Platypus Count effort through-out Canberra and the region. Organised by ACT Waterwatch and the Australian Platypus Conservancy, the work helps researchers keep tabs on how platypus and water-rats are faring in the ACT.

“With the recent deaths of two platypus in illegal nets, and animals being discovered in Queanbeyan entangled in rubbish, monitoring populations is essential. Aquatic animals are quite vulnerable as climate change, drought and human activity chew away at their fragile habitat. The more we know about them, the better we can protect them and the other animals that share their habitat”
Tanya Rucosky Noakes, ACT Waterwatch Facilitator said.

“The *Platypus Count* project is a great way to volunteer for your community and can easily be combined with your routine walk, jog or cycle ride, so the time commitment is not great,” said Ms Rucosky Noakes.

ACT Waterwatch will be hosting information sessions (details below) about the platypus program at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Centre and at the Michelago Community Hall. Dr Melody Serena from the Australian Platypus Conservancy will give an illustrated talk about the platypus’s unusual biological features and describe the *ACT Region Platypus Count* program for those who may wish to become involved.

Spotting a platypus in the wild remains a long-cherished ambition of many people. Thus, Dr. Serena will lead a dawn platypus walk along the Queanbeyan River (a local platypus hot spot).

Local platypus monitor and Queanbeyan resident, Corrie van Sebille-Ellis, says observing the world’s strangest animal in its natural habitat has become almost a matter of routine. Since joining the *ACT Platypus Count* monitoring project last year, Corrie has made numerous sightings of the supposedly-shy monotreme in the Queanbeyan River. “I saw the most adorable baby only a few days ago!” said Corrie. “I usually see two to three every time I go out looking for them, now”

With her local knowledge, Corrie will join the dawn hike and demonstrate how spending just a few minutes scanning the water at a number of spots as she walks has rewarded her with lots of great views of platypus and Australian water-rats, another fascinating native species.

Platypus Dawn Walk:

Saturday 22 May, 6:45am : Q Performing Arts Centre Parking Lot, Queanbeyan
Information sessions:

Saturday 22 May, 2.00pm Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Cultural Centre

Lady Denham Drive

Sunday 23 May, 2.30 pm Michelago Community Hall, Michelago, NSW

Further information: ACT Waterwatch Facilitator, Tanya Rucosky Noakes
6207 2246 0413995292 tanya.rucoskynoakes@act.gov.au