



## Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group



# Newsletter August, 2016

Chair: James Bufton  
5284-1344

Treasurer: Chris Winfield  
5369-4214

Secretary: Allan Bartholomew  
5369-4197

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### ***Next Meeting: What's happening in the Western Grasslands Reserve?***

Mr Mike Forsyth, Western Grasslands Coordinator, Parks Victoria

Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 **1900h**,

Balliang Hall

Balliang-Bacchus Marsh Road (opposite CFA)

(Note early starting time to allow 30 minutes for Annual General Meeting)

One of the most significant developments in park establishment in Victoria is the creation of a new 15,000 ha Western Grasslands reserve to the North and East of the Brisbane Ranges Landcare area of Balliang. This long-term project has been established to offset the environmental impacts due to the expansion of Melbourne's Urban Growth Boundary. It is projected that the Reserve will become the largest consolidated area of Natural Temperate Grassland in the State. In previous meetings there has been great interest in the new Grasslands Reserve, and how it will impact on our locality. For our next meeting, we have been very fortunate to secure an excellent and highly expert speaker on this important local topic.



Mike Forsyth has been a Ranger and Parks Planner with Parks Victoria (and its variously named predecessors) for 25 years. In these positions Mike has gained extensive fire management experience through wildfire suppression and the conduct of planned burns. Mike has detailed local knowledge going back a long way, having divided most of his career between Bacchus Marsh and the You Yangs. He has a long history of hands-on management of the You Yangs Regional Park and the Brisbane

Ranges National Park.

Mike commenced his current role as the Western Grasslands Coordinator in June 2015 and he has overall responsibility for management of the land acquired by Department of

Environment, Land Water and Planning and assigned to Parks Victoria for ongoing management. Mike will tell us about the progress and outlook for the development of the Grasslands Reserve, and discuss the likely role of the Park in our locality. After the excellent cooperation established between Landcare and the Brisbane Ranges National Park over many years, we will also ask Mike to tell us about any likely role for local Landcare groups in the future of the new Grasslands Reserve.



Mike will be joined by Ranger, James Neil who joined the Grasslands Management team in February 2016. After completing his Bachelor of Environmental Science at Deakin Uni, he commenced his working career with Goldfields Weed Management providing advice on weed management in grasslands across Victoria. He commenced his career with Parks Victoria in 2014 on the seasonal fire crew program then gaining ongoing employment with the Western Grasslands project.

### About the Western Grassland Reserve:



Planning documents from Department of Environment from 2009 provide details of the proposed Western Grassland Reserve:

“Unavoidable clearing of grassland will be offset by the proposed new Western Grassland Reserves. These grassland reserves will be formally established outside the Urban Growth Boundary and a Public Acquisition Overlay will be gazetted at the same time as new Urban Growth Boundary. This will trigger commencement of a formal acquisition process. These reserves are in two core areas and total more than 15,000ha in size. They contain the largest consolidated area of Natural Temperate Grassland remaining on the Victorian Volcanic Plain, support several nationally threatened plant and animal species and provide potential habitat for a range of other nationally threatened species. The grassland reserves will be acquired within ten years.”

Department of Environment, *Delivering Melbourne's newest Sustainable Communities – Strategic Impact Assessment Report* page 7

[http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/309166/Strategic-Impact-Assessment-Report-Oct-2009-PART-A.pdf](http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/309166/Strategic-Impact-Assessment-Report-Oct-2009-PART-A.pdf)

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's AGM and election of officer bearers will be held from 1900h and take about 30 minutes and, prior to our speaker.

### Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group: Elections

Elections will be held at this Annual General Meeting. Nominations are invited for all positions on the BRLG Executive for the coming year. Some nominations have been received, but more are required! Nominations can be accepted at the AGM. Members who have not served on the Executive are urged to nominate. Newly joined members are especially welcome! Turnover of executive membership keeps local groups alive!!!