



**DEEP CREEK LANDCARE GROUP**  
Covering Lancefield-Romsey Districts



**Introduction of two endangered species of Flax-lily:**

Thanks to a Western Water, Frances' Environmental Grant, we will be introducing two endangered species of *Dianella* to the area with planting to start early next year. Initially we will be planting 300 plants of the species *Dianella amoena* & *Dianella tarda* with the hopes of establishing healthy and self-sustaining populations of both these species.

This project is also assisted by a research project run through La Trobe university. The research project will look into the types of habitat that these plants are most suitable for and what measures can be taken to improve the success at the planting stage.

*Dianella* are all Bird attracting species, so it hoped that this project will encourage more native birds in the area. The berries of most species are edible when ripe and are said to be slightly sweet in flavour. The Deep Creek Landcare Group hopes to make these two threatened species available to members in the near future.



*Dianella amoena* - Matted Flax-lily

- ❖ 40cm high & up to 5m wide
- ❖ Endangered within Victoria
- ❖ Pale purple flowers & blue to dark blue berries

*Dianella tarda* - Smooth Flax Lily

- ❖ Up to 80cm high & up to a metre wide
- ❖ Vulnerable in Victoria
- ❖ Purple flowers & dark blue/purple berries



[www.deepcreeklandcare.org.au](http://www.deepcreeklandcare.org.au)



## Bush Tucker blog:



Deep Creek Landcare Group supports the retention of indigenous values in the community by planting bush tucker food and fibre species of plants in the Anniversary of Landcare Garden at Lancefield Park. Species planted and their indigenous purposes include:

**Lomandra longifolia (Lomandra)** – fibre species used for weaving baskets, matting, and fish traps. The soft base of the leaf was edible.  
**Mentha australis (River mint)** – used to flavour food.

**Microseris lanceolata (Yam daisy)** – root was used for food and among the most important food in this part of Australia. It was a staple such as we utilize potatoes.

**Solanum laciniatum (Kangaroo apple)** – Fruit used in traditional medicines

**Tasmania lanceolatum (Mountain pepper)** – used to flavour foods.

**Themeda triandra (Kangaroo grass)** – Used the seed for grinding in with foods.

**Daviesia latifolia (Hop bitter pea)** – Used the seed for grinding in with other foods.

**Acacia implexa (Lightwood)** – Used the bark for medicinal purposes and used the sap/gum in making tools

**Poa morrissii (Velvet tussock grass)** – used the seeds and for building shelters and for fire carrying.

**Dianella tasmanica (Tasman Flax Lily)** – used for weaving and berries used for food and for dyeing fibres due to its purple colour.

**Banksia integrifolia (Costal Wattle)** – flowers used for sweetening drinks.

**Acacia melanoxylon (Blackwood)** – used seed to make flour.

\* Rare plants were also included in the planting in the garden such as:

**Kennedia prostrata (Running postman)**

**Dianella amoena (Matted flax lily)**



## Project & Group Updates:

Work on the Lancefield Park Anniversary garden has been completed, many thanks to those who attended the opening day.

The Sheehan's Crossing Project will begin stage two come spring and some warmer weather.

New projects are being proposed for the old tip site in Lancefield and the wetlands by the Lancefield Primary School / Men's Shed.

The research component of the endangered Flax-lily project is underway.

Our Library books are still available, if you are a member and wish to borrow one then please see the website for a complete book list and contact details.



## Mistletoe – Friend or Foe?

Many people are not aware that there are over 90 species of native mistletoe, and that no foreign species have been introduced. They inhabit the entire Australian continent, except for Tasmania. It has a bad reputation as an environmental vandal, killing precious trees and damaging animal habitats. But new research has found it also encourages some plants and animals. Two scientists have spent five years studying the plant's effects in rural New South Wales. They say local councils and Landcare groups should stop trying to cull the plant. The wiry red or yellow mistletoe is easily recognisable in the bush. Instead of roots, it extracts nutrients and water from a plant. It's native and is usually kept in check by possums or birds, or by fire. Most species of mistletoe are harmless but some are more aggressive and can choke and kill gum trees.

Associate professor David Watson from Charles Sturt University says that within three years of taking mistletoe away, doing nothing else just removing mistletoe plants from the canopy, they lost more than a third of the woodland dependant bird species. To do one small habitat manipulation and see such a dramatic and almost immediate effect is very strong evidence and shows that not just an indirect effect, mistletoe really does have a direct positive effect on biodiversity.



Mistletoe:

- ❖ Is a great nesting spot for Australian birds and mammals
- ❖ Encourages hollow formation on tree branches after the mistletoe dies
- ❖ Fruit is high in protein, carbohydrates and lipids. Often at a time when nothing else is available

However, mistletoe:

- ❖ Is now ten times more abundant in south-east Australia than 100 years ago
- ❖ Lowers a tree's defence and is more likely to infect unhealthy trees

Read more about Mistletoe at: [www.abc.net.au/science](http://www.abc.net.au/science)

## Plant of the Season:

The Red Ironbark (*Eucalyptus tricarpa*), is a large tree growing up to 35m in height. It is an important food source for the endangered swift parrot and other native birds. It produces cream coloured flowers in June through to February.

Red Ironbark is commonly used in bee-keeping as the honey produced with its nectar is very sweet.

It tolerates a wide range of harsh conditions from frosts to droughts, but will not tolerate waterlogged soils and should be planted on higher ground away from creeks and dams.

This species is not considered to be under threat, despite its value as high quality building timber and firewood.



## The Importance of Agriculture – Our Future:



Agriculture is one of Australia's most important industries, worth \$155 billion each year. With the global population now more than 7 billion people, agriculture is increasingly going to be an important part of our future. Yet with this industry being so important, why do so few rural and regional schools teach agriculture in their curriculum.

Agricultural and Horticultural Studies are excepted subjects for the VCE, yet most public schools do not offer these subjects at any year level which has resulted in a shortage of young people studying agriculture at university level.

The Victorian Association for Agriculture educators is also concerned about this trend, in a recent report they stated that "there is little understanding by the community in general and even more so by school students surrounding their knowledge of where their food and fibre comes from, how it is grown, processed and delivered into their home. All students should have an understanding of these basic processes."

Victoria has fallen behind other states such as NSW and QLD which actively encourage rural students to study agriculture, which translates into more students studying agriculture at university, which is an area finding itself with a current lack of students. This is a worrying trend for the industry, which is currently facing a shortage of trained professionals.

## Call for Submissions:

The Deep Creek Landcare Newsletter urgently needs submissions for the Spring Newsletter. If you are passionate about a topic you would like to share with the Landcare community or have a personal project you would like to tell us about then please send your article to [deepcreeklandcare@gmail.com](mailto:deepcreeklandcare@gmail.com) or mail it to: Deep Creek Landcare Newsletter, PO Box 99, Romsey, VIC, 3434.



Junior Landcare:

If you are 15 or younger than we would love to hear your thoughts about conservation or about your favourite plant or animal.



[www.deepcreeklandcare.org.au](http://www.deepcreeklandcare.org.au)

