Carwoola Website:  www.carwoola.org.au

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The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of its editors, the Carwoola Community Association, or of the Gazette’s advertisers.
Editorial

A smaller Gazette this month as many people are still enjoying their breaks from everything. A few things are happening however. One is that a major contributor to the Gazette, Martin Butterfield, is moving to the south coast. So we’re losing a prolific and very valuable contributor, and also the Widgiewa/Little Whiskers area is losing its Gazette deliverer. If you live in that area and would like to put your hand up to be the new Gazette deliverer, please email gazette@carwoola.org.au or ring 0417 488 723. And if you’d like to become the new weather correspondent, please get in touch also.

You’ll also notice we are finally the Carwoola Gazette. The CCA will provide a report on the results of the survey they conducted into the name of the Hall, and various things about the Gazette, but of 100 respondents, 89 were in favour of the name-change.

There were a number of thoughtful comments given in the survey and all will be included in the survey report so residents can see what others think, but in response to a few, the Gazette IS online! You can access back issues and the current issue at the Carwoola website, at www.carwoola.org.au There’s an archive of past years’ gazettes there. John Hodgson’s series of articles on internet technology and our options was evidently interesting to a number of people, and I’m trying to persuade him to follow up with some more such articles, and also the story of that poor old house on blocks you see from the Captains Flat Rd, near the Widgiewa Rd turnover.

And on that topic, articles or stories or poems or letters or experiences or ANYTHING are always eagerly sought for the Gazette. If you want to write a regular column, or just send in a one-off, it will be printed. We are always after stuff. Several people in the survey indicated that they’d be interested in contributing articles, so please drop me a line or just send them in, whichever you like. I can expand or shrink the Gazette to fit whatever has been provided for that month.

A few people have commented that it’s hard to know how to actually get started with weed spraying, so I’ve put a bit of info on the last page, and hopefully it’ll be useful. If you’d like to provide your own weed advice or comments, please send it in.

Anthea (editor)
Dear all

Almost exactly 12 years after we moved to Carwoola we find it is time to move on. Fences are done, sheds rebuilt and garden is growing again.

It has been a very interesting time to have lived here and we have met some excellent people in the area. We will miss them.

I have greatly enjoyed doing your monthly (and annual) bird and weather reports. The birding activities have generated quite a few published reports of events of scientific interest beyond the Carwoola area. I shall do my annual reports for 2018 and circulate them through the email and Facebook facilities. I hope that someone else will put their hand up to continue at least the weather reports, and would be happy to pass on past records as either Excel spreadsheets or an ACCESS data base to assist in this endeavour.

It’s good to see that the Gazette is to continue as this is an important part of the social fabric of the community. However I won’t be able to do my delivery run after January and I’d really hope that someone will put their hand up to do this. By car it only takes about an hour to pick the copies up from Radcliffe and deliver them. A bit longer on a bike!

In future we will be spending a proportion of our time in Canberra (the rest in Mallacoota) and I’ll certainly be dropping out from time to time to see how things are going.

Very best wishes

Martin and Frances
FLAME TIPS January 2019

Firecalls. Carwoola Brigade (and by extension the Carwoola community) has enjoyed several months now of virtually no callouts at all. With the New Year, let us hope it continues to be uneventful! But we haven’t been completely idle of course. Other than the usual training, we have:

- 2 November contributed a crew to the Pierces Creek fire in the ACT. Although the crew were despatched, eventually all the NSW units were not required and returned to station.
- 29 November sent a crew up to Queensland for three days to support the local crews in dealing with the bushfire emergency they had there.
- 24 December we also sent a crew to assist with the storm damage in Sydney.

Dryness. In the last Flame Tips column we talked about the KBDI dryness index and how it was MUCH higher than usual. Well, things changed dramatically when we had between 80-100mm of rain in a few days and the KBDI dropped to almost zero in places. We dodged a bullet as thankfully all that rain came just before this long hot period. If we had had the KBDI up where it had been, the risk level would have been so much higher.

Nevertheless, without any significant follow up rain, the dry heat will bring the KBDI back up again within weeks and by late January we will be back to our level of highest risk for the year so now is the time to be preparing your homes and families.

Community Fire Training Workshop. But how should you prepare? After the Carwoola fire in 2017 we offered a number of Fire Training Workshops to our community; interest was high, the workshops were filled quickly and seemed to be well received by the residents who attended.

On Sunday 20 January at the Community Hall we will be offering to our Carwoola residents this opportunity once again. If you are new to rural living or are not sure how best to prepare your family and your property for fire, this may be the just the thing for you with topics such as:

- What would it be like to stay & defend?
- Fire basics
- Rural fire fighting: Incident & Response Basics
- Personal Responsibility
- Individual Preparedness
- Property Preparedness
- Family Preparedness
- Animal Preparedness
- Street Preparedness
- Leaving Early/Making the decision to evacuate
- Evacuation Basics
- Staying & Defending
- Firefighting Basics
- Practical Activities – including how to operate your pump
- Warnings
- Bushfire Survival Plans

This will be a full day workshop with a number of practical activities.

**You will need to register please.** There will be 25 positions available and we are requesting that those interested in attending contact us directly at dhanzl67@gmail.com to reserve your position. If there isn’t sufficient interest, we will cancel it and let you know.

David Hanzl
Captain, Carwoola Rural Fire Brigade
0423 596 583

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Email: info@carwoolapestcontrol.com.au

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The Weed Patch
Diary of a dedicated non-poisoning weeder: Rose-Marie Johnson

How fortunate to have enough good rain to top up the soil moisture, tanks and dams, starting the creeks flowing. Enough rain to keep everything green and growing despite the large number of days with high heat (when I allow myself to have an early mark from my day’s weeding). The weeds are doing terribly well too, and it’s been quite a job to keep up with the most urgent ones.

When the weed numbers are very high like now, the best strategy is usually to deal with the largest patches of weeds in multiple passes, only getting the most urgent ones at each pass, then moving on to other areas and returning regularly as needed to keep ahead of seeding. For example on the first pass pulling only the seedy ones, the next pass including those with open flowers, the next those with buds, and in between working on other urgent weeds elsewhere. It can be a trap to get stuck on the idea of clearing the whole of a particular area, because weeds (perhaps worse ones) might be going to seed elsewhere, worsening future problems.

It’s particularly important to patrol the whole property every few weeks for the weeds that go to seed soon after flowering, mostly the ones with fluffy seeds like Skeleton Weed, Hawksbeard, Senecio species which are poisonous (including Groundsels and the noxious Fireweed), Dandelions, Goatsbeard, Salsify and Fleabane. On the other hand, for weeds that stock like eating (e.g. Fleabane) it doesn’t pay to get too far ahead in paddocks where they are grazing or where they’ll be put soon.

Compared with the above mentioned weeds, there’s more leeway before Centaury drops its seed. These weeds are worth controlling because they are quite invasive, and Centaury at least is quick and easy to simply pull up by the handful, especially when the soil isn’t baked dry and hard. It seems to me that pulling with thumb pointing down is more likely to get weeds up by the roots, with more snapping off if the thumb is pointing up. Wireweed is also very invasive, the seed contaminates wool and is hard to wash out, it’s
toxic to stock and its long wiry strands are a nuisance when caught up in farm machinery, so it’s worth controlling and is currently one of my main priorities. It seems to do well around stock camps, as well as in gravelly areas, making driveways look unsightly. Thank goodness my noxious weeds are reasonably under control, so I can afford the time for these others, considering the explosion in their numbers.

There’s an awful lot of St John’s Wort about and it needs to be hit hard now, before the seed heads become too advanced in their development, leaving plenty of viable seeds adding to the seed bank. It’s one of the hardest weeds to get rid of, especially if it is allowed to go to seed even one year. Because it’s difficult to dig out its deep roots thoroughly enough to prevent regrowth, the most efficient way to suppress dense patches without poison is to smother them with newspapers overlaid with cardboard held down by rocks. Although we were giving our horses plenty of supplementary feed, when the drought made the grass sparse the horses were disturbing my work so I put off smothering for a while. Since the recent rain has stimulated good grass growth and St John’s Wort flowers are developing seed, the time has come to smother them all again.

Paterson’s Curse also urgently needs to be pulled and solarized, since a lot of its seed is already ripe and some plants have already started browning off. Blackberries are already developing fruit so it’s urgent to at least cut off the old fruiting canes while the berries are immature. If left too long the fruit can mature on the cut canes before they dry out. The weedy grasses have become easy to recognize with the development of their seed heads: the noxious African Lovegrass and Serrated Tussock, the nasty Chilean Needle Grass and Barley Grass which have injurious seeds, Paspalum which can cause dermatitis, and Yorkshire Fog, unpalatable to stock. These are all easy to effectively chip out. (continued next page)
(Weeds) Of course there are many other weeds worth controlling too, most with ripe seed already: Scarlet Pimpernel and Black-berry Nightshade which are very toxic, Capeweed, Horehound, Thistles, Verbascum species (Aaron’s Rod and Green Mullein), Dock (Curled and Swamp), Amaranth, Wild Sage, Umbrella Sedge, Mallow, Dandelions, Sheep’s Burr, Pepper Cress, Fat Hen, Fennel, Willowherb, Sandspurry, Mustard Weed and Tolpis. Storksbills are worth controlling because their seeds can penetrate skin, causing injury, but they are very invasive and hard to keep under control. A lot of the Storksbills have already dried up and disappeared, but there are still plenty of green plants to find.

Hope you’re managing to keep up with your worst weeds, so that future years will be easier for you. Listening to audio books or music while weeding put a lot of strain on my earphone leads until they eventually failed, so it was good to be given some hardy sports earphones for Christmas, especially since they stay in better.
Notes on birds December 2018

After last month’s spate of unusuals, December has been a bit more restrained. A Brush Cuckoo in the Molonglo Valley, male and female Koels in Radcliffe and an Australian Bushlark on the Plain have been the least common species reported to me. The Avocets and Stilts were at Foxlow Lagoon early in the month but disappeared when the lagoon reached capacity due to a downpour. The Banded Lapwings remain, with young chicks, on the Plain.

As with last month quite a few other species are breeding. The Masked and White-browed Woodswallows on the Plain which engaged in the early stages of the breeding cycle seem to have moved on without nesting. Several other species have been seen on nests.

Return migration is close to complete with about equal numbers of species on time and late. Few species were early. Except for Pallid Cuckoo, cuckoos in particular are thin in the air.

A full report will be posted to https://carwoolabirds.blogspot.com/2018/12/december-2018.html (and links circulated on the residents email list and Facebook pages) in early January. An annual report for 2018 will also be compiled but as we are moving on this will be the last monthly bird report.

NEW TO THE AREA?

The Carwoola Community Association has produced an Information Pack for new residents. It contains lots of information that will help you to adjust to rural life more readily, and tell you who to ring or where to go if you have a problem.

If you would like a copy, please phone Christine or Lynton Bond on 6238 2368.
Mobile Library Service - QPRC
The mobile library will be resuming its visits to the Carwoola Community Hall in February.
Hours are 10:30am to 11:30am, first & third Tuesdays of each month

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Carwoola Weather for December 2018 (Martin Butterfield)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperatures °C</th>
<th>(Jan 2010 to date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current year</td>
<td>Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past years (since 2010)</td>
<td>Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Months</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainfall (mm) (May 1984 to date)</td>
<td>Current year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>106.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual total</td>
<td>439.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A detailed report on the weather in December will be posted to my blog [http://franmart.blogspot.com.au/] early in January.
Controlling your own weeds (Anthea)

Let’s see how much info I can cram into this space. Landholders are required by law to control noxious and declared weeds on their land. Some hire professional weed people, others get spray equipment and do their own. Equipment you can easily handle yourself is the trusty 15 litre backpack sprayer, and if you are more ambitious or have a lot of weeds, you can get a 50 litre tank on wheels with a battery pump (and spray hose/ wand). You can get these from places like Bunnings, or from rural supply places, such as Bungendore Rural and Braidwood Rural.

Herbicides! The NSW DPI have some useful info on what herbicides to use for what weeds, although you sometimes have to comb through to find how much to mix up in your tank. I have done a quick ready reckoner that lives next to my bottles of herbicide for the main chemicals I use (dosages are for our usual weeds):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>15 litre tank</th>
<th>50 litre tank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metsulfuron (5g/100 litres) – great for most woody weeds: St Johns Wort, blackberry, briars, &amp; excellent for verbascum</td>
<td>1 or so grams</td>
<td>2.5 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glyphosate/ Roundup – Fast killer for most green things, but, it also kills the grass. Use for St Johns Wort, Serrated Tussock, thistles etc</td>
<td>75 mls</td>
<td>250 mls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazon (for St Johns Wort etc) – Woody things like St Johns, blackberry, briars. Cheaper generic available, called “Woody”.</td>
<td>75 mls</td>
<td>250 mls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCPA – Horehound, the mustards, thistle, capeweed, Pattersons Curse (I often mix it with dicamba).</td>
<td>40 mls</td>
<td>135 mls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dicamba – Wireweed, fleabane, fat hen, pattersons curse, horehound, mallows, thistles</td>
<td>20 mls</td>
<td>60 mls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Fluropanate is the main chemical for Serrated Tussock, but I haven’t mixed any of that up yet so don’t have a dosage handy). When you mix up your chemical with water, you also need to use a wetting agent, available from where you buy your chemicals, and also dye marker is useful. Places that sell all these include Gibbs in Queanbeyan, Bellchambers in Fyshwick, and Bungendore and Braidwood Rural. I’ve run out of space here, but will try to expand on this next edition.

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[Image of solar powered air conditioner]