

# Acheron Valley Watch - Newsletter April 2008

Dear Acheron Valley Watchers and Friends,

We hope you had a wonderful and relaxing Easter break, and you enjoy the cooler weather with the recent rainfalls. First up – there is a wonderful opportunity coming up to enjoy the cooler temperatures with:

## **A Walk & Talk with Georgina Beach at the “Kingbilli Wildlife Rescue”**

Have you ever wondered how a baby wombat looks like, what it likes to eat, and how it likes to play? Then join in and meet cheeky little “Tinkerbell” and all the other boarders of Georgina’s paradise!



### **On Sunday, April 13, at 2 p.m.**

we meet at the gate of Kingbilli (279 Cathedral Lane) and after a brief introduction, we will stroll through the Wildlife Rescue Centre discovering how it functions and who all lives there. We finish around 4 pm with a question and answer session over a cup of tea.

Please bring along some biscuits or cakes to share – or else we have to join “Blossom” and start munching Eucalypt leaves ...

For catering purposes please RSVP with Georgina (5774 7242, [georgina@kingbilli.com.au](mailto:georgina@kingbilli.com.au)) or Rita (5773 7617, [rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au](mailto:rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au)).

All Welcome!

## **Recent AVW submissions to the Victorian Government**

On a more sombre note, February and March was a hectic time for AVW board members, as we had to prepare submissions on the North Victorian Sustainable Water Strategy draft discussion paper and on the Sugarloaf Pipeline Project Impact Assessment (PIA) reports.

Especially the Sugarloaf PIA reports were a challenge because of their sheer length of over a thousand pages and thirteen appendices covering many different aspects of the construction itself and of its environmental, social, socio-economic, visual and greenhouse impacts.

Along with other community groups and individual submitters, AVW has been invited to appear before the panel of independent expert advisors on April 10<sup>th</sup> to make a 20-minute presentation. The independent expert advisors were appointed by the Planning Minister Justin Madden, and their role is to examine the Project Impact Assessment of the Sugarloaf Pipeline and to study all the submissions made by individuals and organizations. Their conclusions will form a report with recommendations to the Minister.

The AVW submissions on the North Victorian Sustainable Water Strategy and the Sugarloaf PIA can be downloaded from the AVW website ([www.acheronvalleywatch.org.au](http://www.acheronvalleywatch.org.au) and follow the links).

On a much more up-lifting note, AVW also made a submission to the Murrindindi Shire Council, congratulating them for their Environment Policy draft. We found this to be an excellent strategic document that will help to foster concrete actions in many different aspects of sustainability - energy, waste management, sustainable land management, greenhouse gas emissions, to name just a few areas. The draft Environment Policy is now in Council for discussion.

## **“My Farm – Our Landscape” course in April/May 2008 – Expression of Interest**

The presentation of Sarah Challis (DPI) on the “My Farm – Our Landscape” (MyFOL) course has generated great interest amongst AVW members. We now have a group of landholders who signed up for the course to be held in April/May.

Over the past weeks, Sarah Challis has been working hard to put together a very interesting course program that fits our interests as small and medium landholders. She was also able to secure a number of excellent guest speakers that will cover different topics during the course, namely

- Kerri Goshnick DPI Alexandra = land degradation (April 12)
- Cathy Olive DPI Alexandra = landscape ecology (April 26)
- Peter Mitchell DPI Broadford = native grasses and pasture management (April 26)
- Alex Caughey CFA = fire management (April 26)
- Cathy Botta, The Regional Development Company, Benalla = soil science, soil carbon (May 3)
- Traci Griffin DPI = greenhouse gas emissions and carbon calculator (May 3)
- Dr. Ian Mansergh DSE, Kate Stothers DPI = effects of climate change on biodiversity (May 10)
- Realene Kwong DPI Frankston = biological control of weeds (May 10)

If you are interested to come on board of the MyFOL course, there are still very few places left (contact Rita on 5774 7617 or email [rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au](mailto:rita.seethaler@tuti.com.au)).

For those of you that are interested to attend specific presentations only, there is the possibility to book in for single events and to pay a fee of \$5. If you are interested in hearing any of these speakers, please book in advance in order to ensure that you are notified of eventual program changes (Sarah Challis 57 611 573 or Rita Seethaler 57 74 7 617).

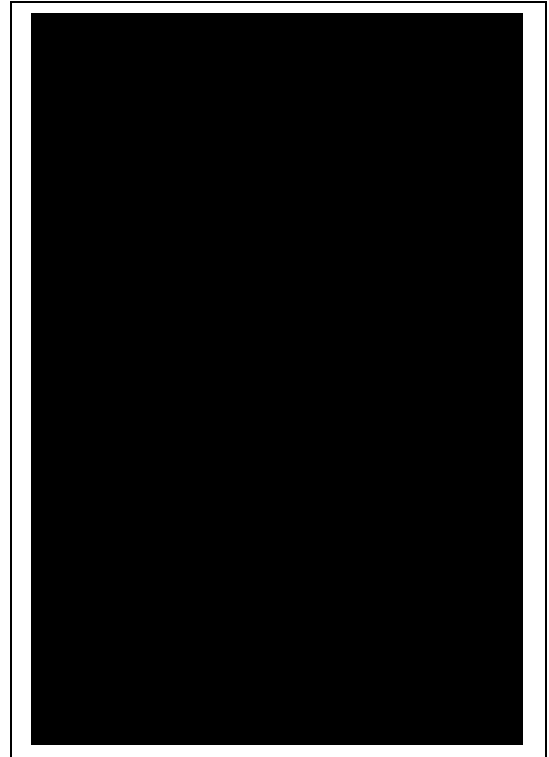
## **First Sustainability Expo in Murrindindi coming soon!**

On Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup> the first Sustainability Expo for Murrindindi will be held at the Yea Town Hall. Some 25 local and regional exhibitors will present their environmental technologies and services and throughout the day a number of presentations will be offered on renewable energy grants, green building design and retrofitting, carbon offsetting for revege and farm forestry and vegetation management of hill country. This event is a joint project of the Strath Creek Landcare group and the Murrindindi Climate Network.

For your information, we include the flyer in our newsletter. Look out for details of the Sustainability Expo on posters and ads in the local newspapers.

We hope to see you at one or the other upcoming events!

With kind regards,  
Rita Seethaler (chair)



The AVW committee will meet again in early January to continue the preparation of 2007 activities. In the meantime, we would like to invite you to renew your annual membership (see attached form) and to let us know of any ideas you might have for interesting / fun activities in the future. The next AVW News Letter will appear in early February 2006 to inform you about any upcoming events. In the meantime, the AVW committee members wish you a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year!