



Heho Herald

Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater Newsletter

**Patron: Her Excellency Professor the Honourable
Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria**

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President's Report

Virginia Wallace



We have just held our Annual Wings of Hope **Give Now** campaign and are blown away with the generosity of our community! We know times are tough, and we are so deeply grateful to everyone who helped us raise over **\$17,000**. This will help us so much to continue our mission to save the Helmeted Honeyeater!



We are busily applying for grants to help us fund our Environmental Coordinator position. Unfortunately, we had to reduce our Coordinator's hours of work to two days a week due to the tough funding environment. While we have applied for a large grant for faunal emblems funding from the State Government to help us try to keep our Environmental Coordinator position, if we are not successful, funding for this staff position will cease at the end of June 2024. I don't want to be too gloomy, but the funding situation is as difficult as it has ever been, and we don't wish to hide the truth from our members and supporters. It really is a difficult time.

Funding for the Beyond Yellingbo position is fully exhausted and we are no longer able to continue this program with paid staff. A recent meeting of the BY Committee resulted in a number of positive actions, including kind pledges to donate compensation from the recent power outages to supplement any successful grant funding. We are hopeful that we may be successful with grant applications, and thanks must go to Dorothy Scott and Alan Clayton for their work in applying for these. Beyond Yellingbo is an exemplary program involving over 124 landholders, increasing the amount of private land that is contributing to habitat conservation for our critically endangered State emblems. Ecology and Ruby an Environmental Science graduate and currently studying to be an Ornithologist. We are very grateful! We are still looking for others to join us and help bring in new

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ideas. We'd love someone with accounting/bookkeeping experience so we can continue renewal. Please contact me if you are interested.

We were pleased to host the launch of the Nangana Landcare Network on 4 May. Thanks to Marita Hanigan from the Friends Group and Jenny Lyndon from the Nangana Landcare Network for organising. Many local councillors attended the event, along with the member for Monbulk, Daniela De Martino MP, who spoke passionately about the importance of conservation and what we do.

We are excited to have two new members join the Committee. Nicholas Pattison and Ruby Stone answered our recent call. Both are committed environmentalists, with Nicholas completing a PhD in

We recently received a grant from Australia Post to run a planting event, which we are looking forward to organising, and also from Highways and Byways for new Hamilton Planters and plants for our Ambassador Schools program. The Nursery continues to produce amazing plants and be a real hub for wonderful volunteers.



I hope you enjoy this edition of the HeHo Herald – Virginia

Local Landholders leading the way in habitat restoration: the Beyond Yellingbo initiative

By Dorothy Scott

In the beginning...

In 2017 the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater and Macclesfield, John's Hill and Monbulk Landcare groups came to together for a common purpose:

To engage local landholders along 7km of Woori Yallock Creek and extend habitat suitable for Helmeted Honeyeaters

The goal was of profound importance:

To create environmental corridors going out from the Yellingbo Nature Conservation Area and so reduce the risk of fire, drought and disease destroying the whole population of these critically endangered birds in this site.



The bonus was that a whole host of other threatened and endangered flora and fauna that share the habitat of the Helmeted Honeyeater might be protected at the same time.

Coffee and conversation in the Emerald Bakery one Saturday morning got us going. We needed to find the funds to pay a person who might reach out to landholders and help secure funds for work on their properties. Eureka! We received a three-year grant from the Helen McPherson Smith Trust and a two-year grant from the Australian Communities Foundation (the Quercus Fund).

We hit the ground running and were fortunate to appoint Gaye Gadsden OAM as our first Beyond Yellingbo facilitator working 12 hours a week. Gaye lived locally and had recently retired from Yarra Ranges Council, and she had been the very first Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater environmental

co-ordinator many years earlier! With the support of a steering committee which represented all four organisations, Gaye began engaging the owners of properties along Woori Yallock Creek. Members of the local Landcare groups played a pivotal role by inviting their neighbours for a morning tea chat on their porch. Over a cuppa and a chat people leaned over a large map that Gaye brought along, and landholders began to see the bigger ecological picture of which their properties were an important part.

Gaye focussed on the species that landholders loved rather than rare ones they may never have seen, and she respected their visions and priorities for their own properties. After helping develop a property plan, it became clear what sort of jobs could be done to improve conservation values, including weed management, feral animal control, fencing off waterways or revegetation. Gaye helped access funds from bodies such as Melbourne Water and Yarra Ranges Council for such works and she oversaw contractors to make sure all went smoothly. Many landholders said that without this assistance, they would not have gone down this path. Satisfaction was very high with the program and word spread. Soon we were connecting with landholders along other creeks and tributaries in the district.

From Strength to Strength

By the end of 2020, 85 landholders in high priority areas were taking action to improve conservation values on their properties. In doing so, 309 hectares of high-quality habitat on private land were protected through revegetation and weed and pest animal control, 15.5 hectares of degraded habitat were restored and 7 hectares of new habitat on pastureland were created. This far exceeded our initial expectations. Gaye shared the success of the Beyond Yellingbo program at several national and state conferences and people were really impressed, including the federal Threatened Species Commissioner, Dr Sally Box. Without knowing it, we had created an innovative model of private landholder engagement in threatened species conservation.

Rising to the Challenges

By the beginning of 2021, Beyond Yellingbo was confronted by several challenges. One was Covid 19, making it impossible to do outreach during periods of restrictions. Another was that even after restrictions passed, prospective landholders seemed reluctant to become involved, and a “whatsapp” group of participating landholders that had flourished in 2020, began to fall away. When Gaye retired, Helen Corney was appointed to the position for one day a week, and despite the disruption of Covid, by the end of 2022 Helen had engaged the owners of an additional 19 new properties, bringing the total to 104 in the first five years of the project. Helen then secured a full-time position closer to home and resigned. She left us with a well-developed second Five Year Plan (2022 – 2027) for the Beyond Yellingbo initiative which gave a clear direction when the Environmental Co-ordinator of the Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater, Eliza Lamb, took over the role from Helen. By



early 2024 Eliza had brought on board the owners of another 20 properties, bringing the grand total involved in Beyond Yellingbo from its inception to an amazing 124 properties!

The new Five-Year Plan gives priority to reconnecting with existing landholders whose properties may need further work, as well as reaching out to new landholders moving into the district. An annual turnover of property ownership of between 5% and 10% represents both risks and opportunities. The risk is that the conservation efforts of the previous landholders may be undone by new landholders who lack conservation knowledge and who might see “the bush” as a fire hazard and embark on clearing natural vegetation, mostly illegally. The opportunities are that where we were not able to engage previous landholders, we may have an opportunity to engage new landholders if we approach them in a timely way.



Landowners and participants in *Beyond Yellingbo* connecting over a cuppa at a program planting event.

Image: D Scott

Project outcomes to date

124



Private properties involved

285



Hectares of habitat protected



553

Hectares of habitat restored

Where to From Here?

Beyond Yellingbo is now facing its biggest challenge and its future is uncertain as funding for the part-time facilitator position has come to an end. At a recent meeting of the four partnering organisations, ways of keeping this wonderful initiative going were explored. Several grant applications have now been submitted and we eagerly await the outcome. We hope that we will be able to build on the achievements of local landholders and support them to continue extending and restoring habitat. Beyond Yellingbo is an inspiring initiative in private landholder engagement and it demonstrates how, with relatively modest funding, small conservation groups can work together to secure the future of threatened species and at the same time build a stronger sense of community.

Further Contact

If you have any queries or think you may be able to help us, please contact us.

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Out in the Field

By Bruce Quin



2024 Release bird "Light Green/Dark Blue"; this young male hybrid has been particularly adventurous, pictured adjacent to Woori Yallock Creek in May.

Image: B Quin

@ Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve

2023/24 Helmeted Honeyeater Breeding Season

Final figures for the 2023/2024 breeding season for Helmeted Honeyeaters are 36 breeding pairs and 58 fledglings. 13 of the 36 breeding territories contained at least one genetic rescue bird and these pairs produced 20 of the 58 fledglings.

2024 release of birds from captivity

Eighteen birds were released from Zoos Victoria's captive population into part of Cockatoo Swamp, Yellingbo NCA on 19 April 2024 without any acclimatising in on-site aviaries ("hard released"). The release group comprised 10 Helmeted Honeyeaters and the genetic rescue birds, six hybrids and two Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. Extra supplementary feeding stations were installed to assist the assimilation of the 'new' birds into this neighbourhood of Helmeted Honeyeaters.

Twelve of the released birds were seen between 13–16 May, with a thirteenth seen on the 10 May. Hopefully, all 18 recently released birds are

still alive, but two have not been positively recorded since release day.

The next edition of HeHo Herald will provide an update on the 2024 release of Helmeted Honeyeaters and accompanying genetic rescue birds into Yellingbo. I hope the winter is kind to you.



Many thanks for your highly valued assistance! -Bruce

Translocation News

By Nick Bradsworth

@O'Shannassy Catchment Translocation Site, Yarra Ranges National Park

I hope everyone is enjoying this lovely autumn weather! I'll first begin with a quick recap of the 2023-24 breeding season at the O'Shannassy Catchment which resulted in 34 total nesting attempts from 11 breeding females. Of these, 33% of nests succeeded to at least one nestling fledging, which might sound low, but when I compared these results to that of other studies on wild bird nest failure rates, these figures are about on-par, i.e. wild birds have very high natural rates of nest failure. I'll continue to investigate options to protect nests from predators like tiger





A 2024 released HeHo at the
O'Shannassy Catchment
Image: N Bradsworth

snakes. There are still a number of fledglings on site which need to be leg-banded, hopefully we will catch these birds soon.

We have also had the annual releases of Healesville Sanctuary captive-bred birds into our wild sites, at both Yellingbo and O'Shannassy. The O'Shannassy Catchment received 12 birds and were housed in soft-release aviaries for a couple of hours. Post-release the activity faded quickly around the aviaries (probably due to the misty rain), but my colleague Bella and I were treated to "the show" with wild and new birds squabbling and flying over our heads after our guests left. Here's a nice picture I took during this time. Nine birds were fitted with VHF radio-transmitters but unfortunately, all tags have dropped so this has made determining if some individuals are still on site difficult. However, I do have the camera traps which are recording feeder visits. At last count we have 5-6 of the new release birds on-site per day, so there are quite a few birds (presumably) off exploring their new forest home.

Coordinator's Column

By Eliza Lamb



The FoHH education programs have been engaging community in conservation activities for over 30 years and are vital to the delivery of the Helmeted Honeyeater National Recovery Program, ensuring our state bird emblem thrives into the future.

Community engagement is essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability of conservation efforts.

It is not just a beneficial aspect of conservation for threatened species; it is a fundamental prerequisite for their success. From the outset, our organisation's education program has been immensely successful in raising awareness of the conservation effort for the Helmeted Honeyeater.

Our work not only assisted in filling an identified gap in the recovery plan for the species, it fostered increased habitat protection and revegetation work across the region, and continues to do so today.

The current economic climate and increases in the cost of living have been challenging for many people across the region. Families, individuals, businesses, and community organisations are all doing it tough, and I feel heartened to live in such a supportive local community that comes to each other's aid through these difficult times.

To combat financial pressures, our organisation has needed to reduce the Environmental Coordinator hours to two days a week. Sadly, this means less service provision available for schools and local community groups. Our environmental education programs with schools and community groups foster lifelong habits and values that promote conservation behaviour, and we cannot risk losing them. Young people are the future stewards of our planet. By instilling a sense of responsibility and awareness about conservation issues from an early age, we empower the next generation to become advocates for threatened species and champions for environmental protection. I am fortunate and

blessed to witness these conservation champions in our FoHH Ambassador Program and through other school events.

When young people learn about the importance of biodiversity, the impacts of human activities on ecosystems, and the value of protecting threatened species, they are more likely to make environmentally conscious choices in their daily lives and advocate for conservation efforts in their communities. Our FoHH education programs are crucial in providing young people with a foundation in scientific literacy, helping them understand the underlying principles of ecology, biodiversity, and conservation biology. Knowledge that can equip them with critical thinking skills and the scientific understanding needed to evaluate environmental issues, engage in evidence-based decision-making, and contribute to informed discussions about conservation policies and practices.

We need to continue to support young people in conservation education to empower them to take action and make a positive difference in the world. Through our FoHH education and habitat restoration programs and citizen science events, young conservationists can play a meaningful role in protecting threatened species and preserving biodiversity in their local communities and beyond.

Now more than ever, we need your support to help us ensure our incredible education programs continue.

You can support us not only by becoming a member or renewing your membership with FoHH, but also through other activities such as

fundraising or booking your next volunteer work event with us. If you are collecting cans and bottles for the container deposit scheme, you can also donate funds via this program to our organisation.

Planting season

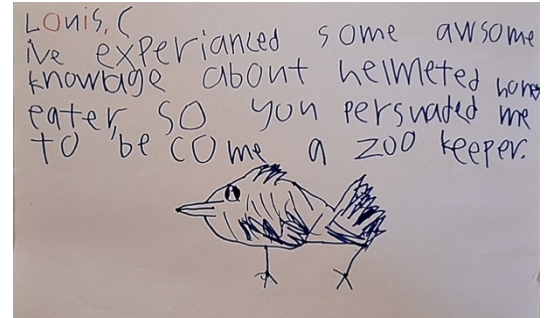
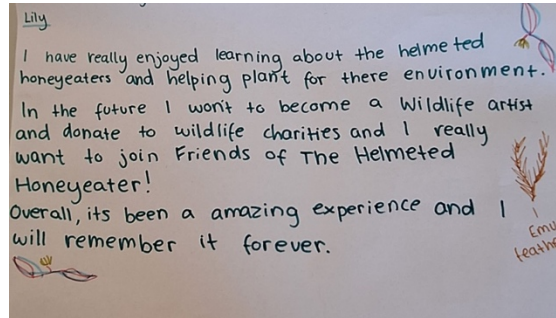
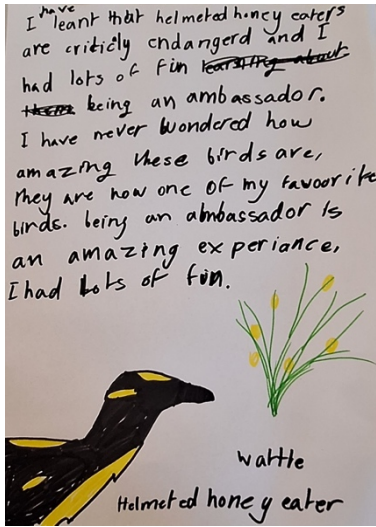
Our habitat restoration events are now underway within the YNCA. I had the pleasure of facilitating a session with a group of over 20 professionals on May 16th, many of whom had travelled from as far as Seymour and Leongatha to spend the day learning about the conservation effort and planting habitat for our faunal emblems. It was a beautifully sunny but crisp day out in the field, and many thanks to the team's enthusiastic energy along with Bruce Quin and Paula Nink from DEECA contributing their knowledge and experience to the discussion. We have upcoming sessions with Brunswick Scouts, Collingwood College and HERE Technology, who all return each year to work with us. It is a testament to the program's success, when groups are eager to return year on year!

FoHH Ambassador program

Our annual Ambassador program has commenced for the year. On 17 May I gave a presentation to 90 grade four students at Berwick Lodge Primary School. It was an absolute joy to hear from students who participated in 2023. They were beaming with pride in their achievements and enthusiasm for the program as they told their fellow students why they found being an ambassador so worthwhile! These students were also fortunate to attend parliament house to share their experiences with others at an event in 2023 and share they did! Assistant Principal, Sandra McCrum noted the students talked at length with politicians and other attendees about the Helmeted Honeyeater and

conservation. I am inspired by these young conservation champions and the continued actions they are taking for threatened species.

Students from 2023 share their thoughts of our wonderful Ambassador Program-



"You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them, and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect them."

~ Wangari Maathai, founder of the Green Belt Movement

Seeds and Weeds

By Richard Case

The end of Summer and the start of Autumn have seen us searching for lost areas and plants, admiring the bush.

In February, I had a little exploration planned. In 1991, a team of botanists found a patch of Narrowleaf Cumbungi growing in the Reserve at a place they named Quadrat 65. Thirty-two years later, I realised this was still the only record of it in the immediate area, although there are plenty of its cousin, the introduced Lesser Reed-mace, the "Bullrush" you see growing on farm dams. We went in where I thought it was but drifted North. Along the way, we collected Dogwood and tried, with the long loppers, for Mountain Swamp Gum but the seed branches were too high. Further South, we pushed in through the tall Swamp Paperbark shrubland, moving perceptibly downslope. The only tracks here belong to wallaby and wombat. After 34 years of visiting Yellingbo, I had only been here once before. As we went on, it became wetter underfoot and the Paperbark grew thicker, only to be replaced by Mountain Swamp Gum, then we broke out into a clearing and there it was: Q65 Swamp. Almost the first plant we saw was a swathe of Cumbungi but which species? There were some decrepit flowers from last year but no recent material. We searched and moved slowly forward but couldn't see any flowers. After lunch, we returned, approaching from a different side and with the sun on a slightly different angle, we saw flowers, light brown, more slender than Lesser Reed-mace, and with the male and female parts of the flower spike distinctly separated: Narrowleaf Cumbungi. We continued downstream past McColl's Swamp, seeing Jezabel species butterflies, Wedge-tailed



Eagles and either Wandering or Scarlet Percher dragonflies. We collected Twining Silkpod seed from pods which had just split open and looked at a Twining Glycine which had been damaged by the floods but didn't have anything on it.

By March, the mornings were cool and still, filled with the autumn carolling of Magpies and Grey Butcherbirds. We went to SE Cocky Swamp, where a group of Dusky Woodswallows greeted us. We pushed through the outer fringe and down into the swamp, collecting Scented Paperbark. Victorian Smooth Froglets called and a Yellow Robin came to watch our progress. Masses of interlocking plants surrounded us, Blackwood, Saw-sedge, Tree-fern, Mountain Swamp Gum and a Twining Silkpod with early-stage pods. What a fabulous little spot! Further on, we collected Woolly Tea-tree, then unsuccessfully searched for Prickly Geebung; it may have been covered by Coral-fern which is growing vigorously here. After lunch, we went to Woori Yallock Creek. A couple of big Manna Gum limbs had come down so we collected from that. Then we found seed on Victorian Christmas Bush in a sheltered area, although the exposed ones had finished.

Our April event started with valley fog, clearing to a nice day. Heaps of Victorian Smooth Froglets were calling, the main species heard throughout the day. We were looking for Mountain Grey Gum along the Woori Yallock Loop East track. Common in the Dandenongs, it is very sparse in the Reserve. As soon as we started, we were off on a detour to look at some weeds. Also growing in a nearby gully was a Mountain Swamp Gum, which is often confined to the floodplains at Yellingbo. Returning to our purpose, we moved closer to the creek and tried to follow the upper line of the Manna Gums, below the Messmates and occasional Peppermint as we thought this the most likely place for Mountain Grey Gum. We didn't find them but our quest was enlivened by our passage through the dense scrub, tumbling over hidden branches or the occasional Wombat hole. As we went along, we examined the sub-species the Prickly Moses belonged to; removed a few Tree Tobacco and collected seed from some Bushy Needlewood. We came across one of those bush mysteries; a dead Striped Marsh Frog on the track with a hole punched in the back of its head by a powerful beak but otherwise uneaten. In the afternoon we set out and collected some Yellow Hakea. While there, we found a small Hawthorn which we removed. Probably arriving as seed in bird droppings, I don't remember seeing this weed in the Reserve before; anyway, it's on the list for follow up! Further on, we collected small amounts of Woolly Tea-tree and Red-fruited Saw-sedge. As we looked at a new patch of Twining Silkpod, Yellow Robins came down to bathe in a nearby puddle. A White-browed Scrubwren watched us and them. Clearly, we were in the way, so we quietly retraced our steps and let peace return.

Seeds & Weeds Dates

Sunday 16th June (not the second Sunday)

Sunday 14th July

Sunday 11th August

Sunday 8th September (watch out for Puffy Billy
Running Festival road closures in the Hills)

**We meet at the Nursery at 9.15am,
1217 Macclesfield Rd**

Events are automatically cancelled by weather events including wind gusts of 50 kph, thunderstorm, severe, extreme, catastrophic, and total fire ban days. Please check Yarra Glen forecast and Bureau of Meteorology warnings at 5pm the day before.

Nursery News

By Michelle Faram



Over the past few months, the nursery team has enjoyed some lovely Autumn weather and also some very chilly temperatures. We have made the most of the drier spell and have remained busy producing lots of cuttings and have also been propagating lots of new plants from seeds, which have particularly enjoyed the mild weather and are growing well. Lots of plants have been prepared and packed for orders and the plant orders are slowly leaving the nursery headed for lots of different revegetation projects, including our own projects within the Yellingbo Reserve. We have had many different projects underway, and it has been wonderful to finally tick some tasks off our list. The new seed storage facility is finally up and running with the power now on and most of our seed stocks has now been moved in, although there is still a lot of arranging to do. Another addition to predator proofing our propagation benches has also been installed. Our nursery garden is taking shape and two new planter boxes have been installed. To add a bit of sparkle to the area I asked Lisa, a now retired teacher from Emerald Secondary College if she would like to apply mosaic to boxes. The result is fabulous! We cannot thank her enough for the time put into creating these fabulous artworks.

We have had lots of visitors to the nursery in the past few months including Aaron Violi, the elected Liberal Party member for Casey and a visit from Daniela di Martino the current State Labor member for Monbulk. A couple of garden clubs have also visited including Steels Creek Garden Club. They enjoyed a tour of the nursery and a delicious morning tea, joined by our volunteers. A generous donation was presented to us at the end of the day.



Clockwise from top left, the final touches to the predator proof cage on the propagation bench, Lisa with her fabulous mosaic planter box creations, and pruning the shrubs on a lovely Autumn day.

Image: M Faram



Citizen Science Matters

By Amy Gregorovich



Our Youth Reference Group has been busy over the last few months, running events for people aged 18 to 31+ to gain meaningful volunteer experience in the environmental sector. At the end of March, we conducted our first Insect Survey within the YNCA, co-hosted by YRG member Nic who has a passion for insects. We searched high and low to find some fascinating creatures we would otherwise overlook. Our Youth activities have received interest from other organisations, with Melbourne Water reaching out to me to talk about Citizen Science in their 'Expert Connections' webinar to celebrate Citizen Science Month. We had a great turn out and some wholesome conversations about how meaningful participating in citizen science can be for creating social connections, getting out into nature, and alleviating that sneaky ecoanxiety. In April we joined the general volunteers on a Twilight Survey. Focusing on frogs, our Youth Reference Group recorded the calls of the Common Eastern Froglet and Eastern Smooth Froglet using the Frog ID app. We also spotted a few juvenile Striped Marsh Frogs, alongside multiple Brown Tree Frogs hiding in the leaf litter. At the end of their survey, we were fortunate enough to spot three to four Yellow Bellied Gliders feeding on a Manna Gum. A beautiful sight indeed!

In other news, the general Citizen Science team learnt how to collect data using a standardised flora survey method - using transects and quadrats. A group of 10 keen volunteers, including 2 new people, weren't daunted by the forecast showers and were rewarded with blue skies and warmth from the sun on our backs in a patch of beautiful Lowland Forest in Yellingbo Nature Conservation Area. Feedback over lunch was that doing the transects and quadrats helped you stop and notice species that may have been overlooked ordinarily, thinking it was "... just another..." Karin's observation of a Trailing Ground-berry proved that point, a species we hadn't recorded before!! An amazing few months with some incredible volunteers, with lots more to come in the next few months!



From left to right, Youth Reference Group joins the Twilight Survey, insect surveys making sure all creatures great and small get some attention, Citizen Science team using transect and quadrat surveys to collect data.

Image: A Gregorovich



Beyond Yellingbo

By Eliza Lamb



Private lands often contain unique ecosystems and habitats that are home to a diverse array of plant and animal species. By conserving these areas, landowners play a vital role in safeguarding biodiversity and preventing the loss of species, ensuring their sustainability for future generations. By adopting sustainable land management practices and integrating conservation into land-use planning, private landowners can help build a more resilient and ecologically healthy landscape for the future.

Many landowners feel a deep sense of responsibility for the land they own and a desire to pass it on to future generations in a healthy and sustainable condition. Conservation on private land allows individuals to fulfill this stewardship role, often through collaboration with local communities, conservation organisations, and government agencies. By working together, stakeholders can leverage their collective expertise and resources to achieve greater conservation outcomes and foster a sense of stewardship among community members.

At the beginning of 2023, I took on the role of Beyond Yellingbo Project Officer alongside the Environmental Coordinator role. This came at a time when our Beyond Yellingbo Five-Year Plan was finalised with a strategic direction for the years ahead. The plan for the next five years of the program identified a need to re-engage past participants, ensuring their continued involvement with the program. In addition to this objective, the plan also highlighted the importance of new participants. Between February 2023 to March 2024 we had 20 new properties join the program across the region. It was wonderful to see so many landholders join us to take action for wildlife, and a number of these were able to have support with weed control on their properties. The majority of weed control works for Beyond Yellingbo in 2023, were undertaken with the support of a Macclesfield Landcare grant. Additional properties were able to access funding for weed and pest animal control and habitat restoration activities through Melbourne Water and the Yarra Ranges Council. Beyond Yellingbo revegetation works in 2023 included over 7800 tubestock being planted at 6 properties, revegetating an area of 6 hectares and over 36 hectares of weed control works were undertaken across 15 properties.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time supporting local landholders with their conservation efforts over the last year and working alongside our knowledgeable and supportive steering committee. Recently, I made the difficult decision to step down from the Project Officer role, due to funding constraints for the position and the challenge of managing two roles with so few hours. Securing ongoing funding for our programs has been challenging in the current economic climate, but we are persevering and committed to doing everything we can to keep our core programs running into the future. While we look to secure funding, our Beyond Yellingbo program will be overseen by the Beyond Yellingbo Steering Committee. I want to take the time to thank our participants, Macclesfield, Monbulk and John's Hill Landcare groups, the steering committee, and our FoHH community for supporting me during my time in the role. I will continue to support the program through my work as Environmental

Coordinator, and now leave you with some of my favourite landholder champion stories from the last year, I wish there was room to include them all!

Jim's Story

Sharing knowledge is a powerful act that fosters growth, collaboration and empowerment among individuals and communities. In 2023, Jim, one of our new Beyond Yellingbo Program participants, shared the knowledge of Warramate Hills Nature Conservation Area and its walking tracks with me, after being supported with weed control works on their property. Jim's firsthand insights about specific spots within the reserve are gems that contribute significantly to appreciating the beauty, biodiversity and significance of these areas.

Jim had support with controlling a large infestation of Spanish Heath on his property in 2023. This infestation was contributing to break out infestations of the problematic weed in the conservation area, where a Helmeted Honeyeater population is present along Woori Yallock Creek. Jim's family has owned property along this section of the reserve since the early 1900s, so it wonderful to see him join the program!



Charlie's Story

Charlie joined our Beyond Yellingbo program early in 2023, wanting to contribute to conservation and find out whether his two abutting properties with high-quality Mountain Grey Gum Forest could serve as potential release sites for our state faunal emblems in the future. Several visits took place in 2023, with suggestions provided by Beyond Yellingbo and its associated Landcare groups regarding how Charlie can continue to manage weeds and pest animal species. Bruce Quin joined our a visit to inspect habitat late in 2023, and while this site may not have the necessary requirements for Helmeted Honeyeaters to thrive, it has potential to support Leadbeater's Possum. Charlie has been a pleasure to work with. His reflections on the experience are captured in his comments-

"I really loved walking around this place with Bruce and yourself, (it) completely filled my cup! I just wanted to keep soaking in that immense amount of knowledge you both have, you've given me the boost I needed to strive for the best outcome. I'm looking forward to working with you to make a difference."

Cathy's Story

Cathy is a long-time member of the Beyond Yellingbo Program and had several visits in 2023. These visits focused on further developing areas for conservation on her property. We explored an area of her property together and located a site that had potential as a frog bog and identified plant species for in-fill planting. Cathy was able to secure a Yarra Ranges Council 'Ribbons of Green' grant for revegetation (to be undertaken in 2024) with the support of the Beyond Yellingbo Project officer.



Great CEO Plantout

We're excited to announce that together with the support of a grant from Australia Post's *People of Post* program, we are planning a community planting event called the Great CEO Plantout! To be held on **Wednesday 4 September**, we are inviting Victorian-based CEOs to help us plant up to 5000 plants and raise money to help us do the work we do in saving the Helmeted Honeyeater! Please keep this date in your diary as we want you to join us too, and we will bring you further information as the date gets closer.



Heho Supporters

Donations are very important to us and help support the variety of conservation activities FoHH undertakes for our special bird.

Our thanks go to the generosity of..

**Jonathan McConchie Peta Kowalski Virginia Wallace Peter Cranston
Christine Duncan Robin Young Bettina Terry Marley Warham Natasha
Sinclair**



If you shop at IGA, you can nominate FoHH on your **Community Benefits Card** and 0.5% of your shopping docket will be directed to us.



Are you considering leaving a gift to the Friends in your will? Use the QR code to find all the relevant information you'll need on FoHH website.



You can donate your refunds from **Container Deposit Scheme** to FoHH by selecting us as the registered donor using charity ID - C2000009578 or the barcode above.



FoHH would like to acknowledge the ongoing support from Yarra Ranges Shire for printing and distribution of the Heho Herald.

Helping a Heho

Donate

Donations can be made through our website on a new donation platform

Give Now

Scan to donate



Purchase

You can also support our work by choosing gifts from our beautiful new online shop.

Scan to shop



In need of some supplies to warm your winter? Visit our online shop!

Heho Beanie



Heho Bookmark



Hilton Hunts for a Home



Activity Book



Bone China Mug



A Reserve for a Bird



Contacts

Image: M Serong

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FoHH respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri People as the Traditional Custodians of the lands known as Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and wildlife and pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.