The tale of six goanna’s

It was New Year’s Day 2016, sitting on the deck after lunch at the front of the house with a cold drink, we overlook the Woolshed Valley so it is always a pleasant outlook.

There was movement in the bird bath some 5 metres from us, the water was moving but there were no birds present, as we watched a Goanna surfaced and proceeded to climb out of the water and down the tree stump that the bird bath sit upon.

We were fascinated -we had known that goannas swim but had never seen it nor witnessed one in taking a bath on a hot day!

She proceeded to move over under one of the gums, we estimate her length from nose to tail to be about a metre long......we were astonished to see a much larger goanna amble out of the scrub towards her – based on its manner, size (at least twice the size of the female) and antics over the next short while we decided he was a male and the other still slightly damp one a female. He proceeded to display, by stiffening his legs thereby raising his body off the ground – pointing his nose skyward and puffing out his throat – the male spent much time following the female who finally found an appropriate site and there they mated.

This went on for at least an hour and after several mating sessions they each rested in the nearby trees. We estimate they coupled at least four times the initial meeting, but then as the day went on they moved apart and came back together again a couple more times.

It was after one of these sessions that we noticed the males body language change – he became much more alert and was tasting the air. Flicking his tongue out rapidly and raising his neck and front part of his body off the ground. As we looked on a larger male came into view over the granite and the two proceeded to square off and then moved into battle. The sound of the grunts, thumps of their bodies hitting the ground was very audible where we sat – meanwhile the female had climbed a nearby pine and watched on with interest.

The battle finally came to an end when the larger of the two pushed his opponent over the end of the granite – a drop of approx. 18 inches – we heard the thud and the loser hit the deck, the winner climbing down obviously to continue – however, the loser had decided that enough was enough and with one eye on the winner made his sore and sorry way into the scrub – we believe this was the initial male suitor!
GORSE CONTROL REBATE AVAILABLE - The Wooragee Landcare Group was successful in securing funding to support of the control and management of the noxious weed Gorse. This grant enables the group to offer rebates to Landcare Group members for expenses incurred in the management of Gorse. Wooragee Landcare is able to offer support, information, education and facilitation of a control program designed for your property where they can fund up to 50% of necessary control methods. Wooragee Landcare is asking for any Landholders who would like assistance with Gorse control to contact Cathryn Mahon.

If you require any further information or wish to be a part of this program please contact Cathryn Mahon on 0427 073 337 or email cathryn@southerncrossvermin.com

RABBIT CONTROL - PHOSTOXIN AVAILABLE

The group has some canisters of Phostoxin available to group members FREE for the control of rabbits. Now is the ideal time to fumigate rabbit warrens with numbers starting to increase again.

To arrange collection of the Phostoxin contact Cathryn Mahon on 0427 073 337 or email cathryn@southerncrossvermin.com

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The tale of six goanna’s continued........

The winner then started his advances on the female sniffing out her scent – initially climbing an adjacent gum and then realising his mistake - climbing back down and following her up the pine, she allowed him to come reasonably close and then descended the pine – again moving over to her preferred location with her new suitor following – they coupled under the same trees at least a couple of times, then moved to rest in the gum, it was very obvious to us that the male had sustained injuries from his fight, he has some puncture marks at the base of his tail and on his back, there was some bleeding and a mark on his right rear leg – he was a little stiff and appeared to be favouring a leg.

After an hour, they proceeded to saunter across the grass at the front of the house to another stand of trees.

By this time it was getting late in the day and we thought that they would wander off and that would be that, this proved to be a very large miscalculation.

As the day progressed to evening, we had these two goannas wandering around at the front of the house – making it very awkward to feed ourselves and our animals as we were never certain how close they were or whether they might get interested in the smell of the dog’s dinner!!!!

Next morning, we went to the veranda thinking it doubtful that we would see any activity – no one appeared until late morning – obviously requiring a few extra zzzz’ds after the previous day’s exertions.

At this stage, we thought we could recognise the large male as he was still walking stiffly and favouring a leg, she was no worse for wear, both took up their preferred positions under the trees near the birdbath – with the male going there for a drink.

There was movement at the edge of the scrub to the right of the house. As this was the direction the loser had taken the day previously, we thought it was him coming back for a second innings, then there was movement on the granite to the left of the house and then again to the right – we had extra visitors coming to the female – who had started playing hard to get with the large male and was interested in meeting the newcomers, the male was kept busy for at least 40 minutes chasing the others around. As he chased one – another would attempt to get to the female – at one point we believe we had 6 goannas, we are assuming 5 were male as they were all very interested in the female and at least one other managed to get lucky whilst the large male was bust chasing another!!!!

My goodness but they can move quickly, we would hate to have to outrun one!

Over the next couple of days, the number of goannas around the house dropped until we were left with the “original” female – who is still in residence in the tree to the left of the house some 5 metres away – we saw her several times – she was not bothered by us and came close to the garage and carport in her wanderings, she is still here this year obviously, the room with the view is still to her liking – so we wonder what New Year will bring for 2017.

Based on our research – she will have laid eggs within a couple of weeks of mating – these eggs will likely have been buried within a termite mound not far away to incubate and hatch some 90 days later – we haven sighted any small ones!!!!
OLN – COMMUNITY DISCUSSION SERIES
FARM MENTORING IN ETHIOPIA

Simon and Phillipa Noble share their experience volunteering as Farm Mentors for two years in Ethiopia.

DATE: Sun. 13 November 2016
TIME: 5:00pm - 7:30pm
ADDRESS: The Centre, Chisholm St. Wangaratta
COST: $5:00 – Pizza, light supper
RSVP: Gayle South 0448 983 109 ovenslandcare.llf@gmail.com

Simon and Phillipa Noble, Rutherglen farmers, spent two years living as volunteers on a farm in a remote area in the highlands of Ethiopia, 150 kms west of the capital city Addis Ababa, as part of the Australian Government Aid program - Australian Volunteers International Development (AVID).

The farm was owned by the Abebech Gobena Child Support Organization which focusses on supporting orphaned children with relatives or foster parents in the community. Apart from two primary schools and a large child and maternity hospital, the organization supports around 16,000 children in the community.

Simon and Phillipa will outline work and life around the farm and talk a little about Ethiopia as a whole, what makes Ethiopia so unique from a Western/developed world perspective, and the challenges of introducing "new innovation" onto a farm currently using techniques well established in Biblical days.

We have a slide/video show of about 25 minutes of activities of our work and life around the farm and will show the video as we talk a little about Ethiopia as a whole, what makes Ethiopia so unique from a Western/developed world perspective, and the challenges of introducing "new innovation" onto a farm currently using techniques well established in Biblical days.
WANGARATTA COMMUNITY

nature day

@ APEX PARK
SUNDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2016
10.30AM - 2.30PM

FREE EVENT - EVERYONE WELCOME!

CARP MUSTER - RESULTS & PRIZES, BBQ LUNCH PROVIDED
LOTS OF KIDS ACTIVITIES & GAMES, DEMONSTRATIONS & WALKS
INFORMATION SESSIONS & DISPLAYS

SPONSORED BY WANGARATTA URBAN LANDCARE GROUP
& WANGARATTA SUSTAINABILITY NETWORK.
SUPPORTED BY THE RURAL CITY OF WANGARATTA.
Frog information night

Bring the family and join us for dinner when we learn about our local frogs, their habitat needs and threats.

Oxley Recreation Reserve

Friday 11th November

Dinner served from 6pm
Frog session 7pm.

RSVP for catering ONLINE or Ph 0448983109
BEECHWORTH FOOD CO-OP &
BEECHWORTH URBAN LANDCARE & SUSTAINABILITY PRESENTS

PATCH TO PATCH
a day of backyard gardening inspiration

Some of Beechworth’s most inspiring backyard veggie gardens & fruit orchards open to the public. Ride from patch to patch, gather a clutch of knowledge, galvanise your green thumb & be inspired to grow your own food.

SATURDAY 12 NOVEMBER 9AM - 3PM

PATCH TO PATCH PRECINCT

Located at the Old Railway Station, Railway Parade Beechworth. Come on down and join in the green-thumb good times.

Patch to Patch Ride ticket sales, event check in and pick up your map before you get pedalling!

Garden State Pop Up Café will be serving delicious delights, with ingredients sourced from the Beechworth Food Co-op & locally.

Prisoners of the Run veggie seedling sales - get your patch off to a thriving good start this summer.

Grab a bag of Ontario picked trail mix and learn more about the awesomeness that is the Beechworth Food Co-op.

Drop into the Landcare tent brimming with native veg advice and membership information.

ENTRY TO THE PRECINCT IS FREE

PATCH TO PATCH RIDE

Cycle at your leisure to Beechworth’s most inspiring backyard veggie gardens and orchards - and meet their creators.

Scoot up and down and around the Rail Trail, and pop into these inspiring local gardens. Have a chin wag and learn some secrets from these compost loving, melching mad Beechworth locals.

We encourage people to ride however you don’t actually have to ride to join in. For those who are mobility impaired or unable to ride you can drive, the map will be annotated with those gardens that have no capacity for car parking.

Tickets and ride map can be purchased on the day at Patch to Patch Precinct located at the Railway Station.

$20 FAMILIES, $10 ADULTS, $5 CHILDREN
(10% DISCOUNT FOR CO-OP AND HLLS MEMBERS)

BEECHWORTHFOODCOOP.ORG.AU/PATCHTOPATCH
Do you have an interesting story, web site or advertisement you would like to place in the Wooragee Landcare Newsletter?

IMPORTANT NOTICE
Due to the rising costs of printing and postage the Wooragee Landcare Community Newsletter will be sent 4 times a year to all Non-Landcare members in Wooragee and Woolshed that currently receive the newsletter via the post.

Wooragee Landcare Group
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