

President's Report - Lee Mead

TCCG has had another very successful year during 2017.

Many thanks to our dedicated **committee members and volunteers** who have worked so hard to ensure that we continue to achieve our priorities of increasing **Wheel Cactus awareness, education & control, by**

- organising locations and catering for our **Community Field Days**
- preparing and maintaining **injector equipment** and herbicide
- maintaining funds and applying for **grants** to sustain our activities
- helping at **fundraising events**, such as Maldon Market
- organising and supervising work crews from Green Army and Drought Relief Program
- writing **media releases** in newspapers, local newsletters & environment magazines
- increasing volunteer safety with new signage, goggles & Child Safety Policy

Also **thank you** to all our valued **partners and supporters**

- **Parks Victoria** - resulting in very clean Maldon Historic Reserve, plus new chairs, signs & marque.
- **Mt. Alexander Shire** - funding a contractor, resulting in very clean roadsides.
- **Connecting Country** - networking opportunities such as workshops & Landcare Link-ups
- **North Central CMA** – providing mapping workshops and funding
- **Tarrangower Times** – for faithfully publishing our media releases
- **Wettenhall Environment Trust** – funding for recent mapping project

Other Regular Activities:

Funding:

- Treasurer Tony successfully applied for grants from Mt. Alex. Shire Council and North Central CMA to fund activities, e.g. Field Days, Equipment Loans, Student field trips, Free disposal at Maldon Tip.
- Recent fundraising events have led to the purchase of new promotional materials such as stickers, pens & mugs, plus our current project to redesign our Website.

Students:

- Ian hosted another field trip with a group of Monash University students for several days in July.
- Ian also assisted on a philanthropic project with Maldon Primary School students.

Increasing TCCG Profile:

- maintained our **Website and email** enquiries
- participated in **community events** Maldon Easter Parade & Maldon-Baringhup Agricultural Show
- participated on Maine FM radio interviews & Volunteer Week expo
- showcased in a Weekly Times article and photo
- Lee & Ian attended and presented update at Victorian Weed Society AGM in Melbourne in August.

Special Projects:

Venturer Scouts (Castlemaine)

-Performed a trial to test different concentrations herbicide aiming to reduce chemical used to inject cactus

Ward-specific Noxious Weed Brochures (MASC)

- Brochures will provide information to new property owners about common noxious weed & management

Mapping Wheel Cactus in Victoria (Wettenhall Trust)

-Mapped Wheel Cactus distribution in our state, increased awareness in neighbouring regions with field days, brochure mailouts and creating farm fence signs.

Introducing Bio-control

-Monitoring and reseeding Cochineal growth, set up trial nursery & produced a new information brochure.

-Visit from Bio-control scientist Greg LeFoe (LaTrobe University) in October.

Collaborations:

National Opuntia Cacti Best Practice Manual (with Matt Sheehan)

- Participated in a workshop and contributed to writing a chapter on Wheel Cactus control methods
- Provided local case studies of property owners
- TCCG is showcased in a case study for our community group approach to weed control

TCCG also had a particularly exciting year earning **New Awards:**

- Winner of **Parks Victoria Kookaburra award** – Conserving Special Places
- Winner of **Victorian Landcare Community Group 2017** award, now finalists in the national award.