



## COMMITTEE UPDATE

**The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) held their annual general meeting at the Ballarat Government Offices on Tuesday the 12th of November, where the incoming committee was elected with two fresh new faces.**

A big welcome to our newest committee members; Kylie Stafford from the Mount Alexander Shire Council and Rob Richardson from the Grassland Society of South Australia. We are excited to see what they will bring to the VGT committee in 2020. The VGT would also like to thank Paul Major from Agriculture Victoria who chaired the meeting for Peter Everist, who was an apology.

The new committee for 2019/2020 is made up of 8 members who are Kylie Stafford, Rob Richardson, Brian Rowe, Peter Forster, John Cable, Margaret Hatton, Matthew Menhennet and Ron Cosgrave. We are very happy to see so many faces remaining with the VGT to continue the great work being done.

This means that the VGT is losing Karen O'Keefe and the chair, Peter Everist. The VGT committee and Agriculture Victoria would like to thank Karen and Peter for their positive efforts and dedication over the years. It has been greatly appreciated and we wish them all the best for the future.

The VGT would like to thank everyone involved in the efforts to reduce gorse across Victoria through one of the VGT education programs throughout 2018/19. It's been a busy year and we look forward to what 2020 will bring. We encourage everyone to look out for the VGT tent at upcoming shows and expos in 2020 including Sungold Field Days, the Seymour Alternative Farming expo and Farm World.

**Finally, the VGT would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe New Year!**

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## TALKING GORSE AT SHEEPVENTION

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) attended the popular Sheepvention show in Hamilton in August, talking to residents and attendees about all aspects of gorse management.

The VGT Extension Officer, Brydie Murreihy, and voluntary committee member Karen O'Keefe talked to approximately 88 people across three days. This was a fantastic amount of people considering the final day produced poor weather. 57 Best Practice guides and 30 Glovebox Identification guides were handed out. The conversations often focused around best management practices, chemical recommendations and the history of gorse in the area.



*Brydie talking to concerned Hamilton residents about their gorse and showing them a Best Practice Guide*

## MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NICOLE GARFI

For the VGT, it's been another big year. Reflecting on 2019, I'm proud of all the committee has achieved.

With the employment of our Communications, Community Engagement and Extension officer, the VGT has been able to develop and deliver more resources, meet and engage more landholders and stakeholders in the community and raise the VGT profile through demonstration days, extension programs and growing social media platforms.

We are looking forward to another big year in 2020 with more exciting projects on the horizon.

I hope you all have a very happy and safe Christmas and New Year.



*Nicole Garfi pictured above.*

## CONTRACT EXTENSION FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EXTENSION ROLE

The VGT has obtained another 12 months funding from the third round of the White Paper program for the Communications, Community Engagement and Extension Officer role.

This will see the role continue until July 2020. The Extension Officer reports quarterly on the deliverables set out by the committee and this will allow current projects to develop throughout Victoria. Thanks to Brian Rowe, Nicole Garfi and Peter Everist on their great work in this space.



*Our Extension Officer, Brydie Murreihy, presenting at the demonstration day held in Daylesford earlier on in the year.*

## HELP OUR FIREFIGHTERS: THE IMPORTANCE OF GORSE REMOVAL

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) produced an educational flyer about the importance of gorse removal in relation to our firefighters safety.

Our Extension Officer, Brydie Murreihy and Lindsay Barry, the Operations Officer for the CFA worked together to create an educational flyer about the dangers that gorse can pose when there are bushfires. "People seemed to really respond to the fact that we had CFA representatives

### BIOLOGICAL CONTROLS: A WAY FORWARD FOR GORSE MANAGEMENT?

Brydie Murreihy, the VGT Extension Officer, represented the Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) at the biological control workshop held in Daylesford by the Hepburn Shire in October.

The workshop was run by Brian Bainbridge of the Hepburn Shire and Greg LaFoe from Agricultural Victoria. They talked about the progress of biological controls, such as moths or mites, for Cape Broom species and also Gorse.

"Although the Broom species have had greater success in this area, it was very interesting to learn about the Gorse soft shoot moth having success in Tasmania," Brydie recalls. Greg LaFoe explained in the workshop that these moths eat the soft shoots that would later normally become flowers on the gorse plants. There has been large success in Tasmania with these moths and scientists have released a population in Victoria but are waiting for the population to grow before they tell the public the release spot to protect the species from overharvesting.

"It's a promising space and something to look forward too in years to come!" says a happy VGT Extension officer, Brydie Murreihy.

at our demonstration days and didn't understand fully the dangers that gorse poses if it's burning," Brydie explains, "So I asked Lindsay to assist me in creating a resource that demonstrated gorse as a fire threat"

The flyer developed (below) was shared to the VGT social media accounts and was quickly shared throughout other public and private pages. It has reached over 5,000 people since it was published on the first of October.

In addition, the flyer was distributed to 13 Community Engagement Coordinators of the CFA who distributed it throughout the appropriate brigades. It has been taken to shows and community days run by the CFA and will be continued to be brought to similar events, run by both organisations, well into the future. If you would like an electronic copy, please contact Brydie on 0428 335 705.



### PREPARE FOR SUMMER DON'T LET GORSE BE A BARRIER FOR OUR FIREFIGHTERS

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) urge you to control your gorse before this fire season. Gorse poses a serious danger to our firefighters. It's high oil content makes it extremely flammable and ignites from sparks ahead of a bushfire. It gives off a large amount of radiant heat creating natural blockers for firefighters to access other fires. Gorse fires are difficult for firefighters to bring under control. So do your bit, control your gorse now and help our firefighters!



Get more info here: <https://www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au/>

This document has been created and is supported by the CFA



Above: the flyer produced with the support of the CFA about the importance of removing gorse in relation to fire

# EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST OPEN FOR HOSTING A DEMONSTRATION FIELD DAY IN 2020

Landcare groups can express their interest in assisting the VGT Extension Officer in hosting a demonstration field day in their town.

Expressions of interest are open until January the 5th 2020 and are completed via a short application. The demonstration field days are a convenient and friendly way for locals to learn best practice gorse management and network with local contractors and environmental representatives.

If you or your group are interested, check our website or contact Brydie Murrphy on 0428 335 705 for more information.



Left: John Baulch explaining how to EcoBlade works to attendees at the demonstration field day in Daylesford



Right: David McFee explaining his machinery to the attendees of the Bass Coast demonstration field day

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## Mailing list enquiries

Contact the VGT  
Phone: 0428 335 705  
Email: [info@vicgorsetaskforce.com.au](mailto:info@vicgorsetaskforce.com.au)

More information on gorse can be found on the Victorian Gorse Taskforce website: [www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au](http://www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au) or by contacting the DEDJTR Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

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Gorse Talk is published by the Victorian Gorse Taskforce.

## NEXT ISSUE

The next issue will be published in July 2020

To make a contribution, please submit by Friday 12th of June 2020.

Send contributions to:  
[info@vicgorsetaskforce.com.au](mailto:info@vicgorsetaskforce.com.au)

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