



COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) had their Annual General meeting on Thursday the 26th November via Zoom. The incoming committee were selected with four new faces.

A warm welcome to our new members Michael Peck from the Ashbourne Landcare group, Brian Bainbridge from the Taradale Landcare group, Rod Sewell from the Glenlyon Upper Loddon Landcare group and Brydie Murrphy from Conservation Volunteers Australia. The VGT also has to say goodbye to Kylie Stafford and long time member of the committee, John Cable. We thank them for their dedication to the VGT and we wish them well.

Our Communications, Community Engagement and Extension Officer (CCEO) Brydie Murrphy has been busy delivering educational programs including the extension services program, launching online engagement through presentations and auditing the annual Community Grants program. All programs were delivered under COVID safe restrictions.

The 2019/2020 Progress Report has been released which has a message from our chair Ron Cosgrove, a snapshot of the finances and details the success of the grants program.

The VGT wants to warmly thank everyone who has been involved in a program during 2020. **Merry Christmas and bring on 2021!**

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Seed pods on gorse found during a property inspection on the Bellarine

VGT LAUNCHES ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

COVID-19 altered everything this year and the VGT programs and engagement were no exception. Tasked with engaging residents about effective gorse control, the VGT created two online presentations with one being delivered live over Zoom.

The 'Virtual Demonstration Field Day' replaced four field days scheduled to run across Victoria, aimed to educate residents new to gorse control and correct any miscommunications to those more experienced. This tool introduces you to the VGT, explains the 5 main components every gorse management plan should include, highlights commonly used control methods and details other likeminded stakeholders in the community available to assist.

'An Introduction to Gorse' was presented by the VGT Extension Officer, Brydie Murrhy, via a live Zoom meeting. Brydie discussed gorse information such as the possible legal implications, gorse biology, ecological impacts and tips for identifying gorse against other native lookalike species. The presentation finished with Q&A, this provided the VGT with better understanding of what landholders are interested in learning about and also gave participants the opportunity to share their good news stories.

EXTENSION SERVICES SUCCESS DESPITE COVID

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) were able to continue delivering the extension services program to the Ballarat and Pipers Creek areas. Abiding by the appropriate guidelines and practicing a safe social distance, 30 properties were visited by our Extension Officer, Brydie Murrhy, across 6 months.

Brydie and the landholder inspected the property for gorse. Once gorse was located it was assessed, mapped and photographed. Brydie then offered and discussed appropriate control method options for each location or circumstance with the landholder. Brydie also offered advice for follow up control to maintain the gorse in the following years. Using the information gathered an extensive gorse management plan was provided to the landholder shortly after the visit.

For some landholders, extra resources were given such as the Best Practice Guide and the Glovebox Identification Guide to give to their neighbours. "The range of gorse infestation types and circumstances were vast and it was very positive to see landholders who only had small

infestations wanting to treat it immediately," Brydie explains, "It was nice to be able to assist those with large infestations as well because we understand how daunting it can be to start."

The gorse management plans strategically planned out 3 years of control with the landholders needing to re-evaluate after that. The plans discussed the legal obligation of having gorse, the plants biology and ecological impacts, a map of the property's gorse, the treatment plan, and any additional necessary contacts such as local councils, Landcare groups and contractors.



Example of a map from the extension services program

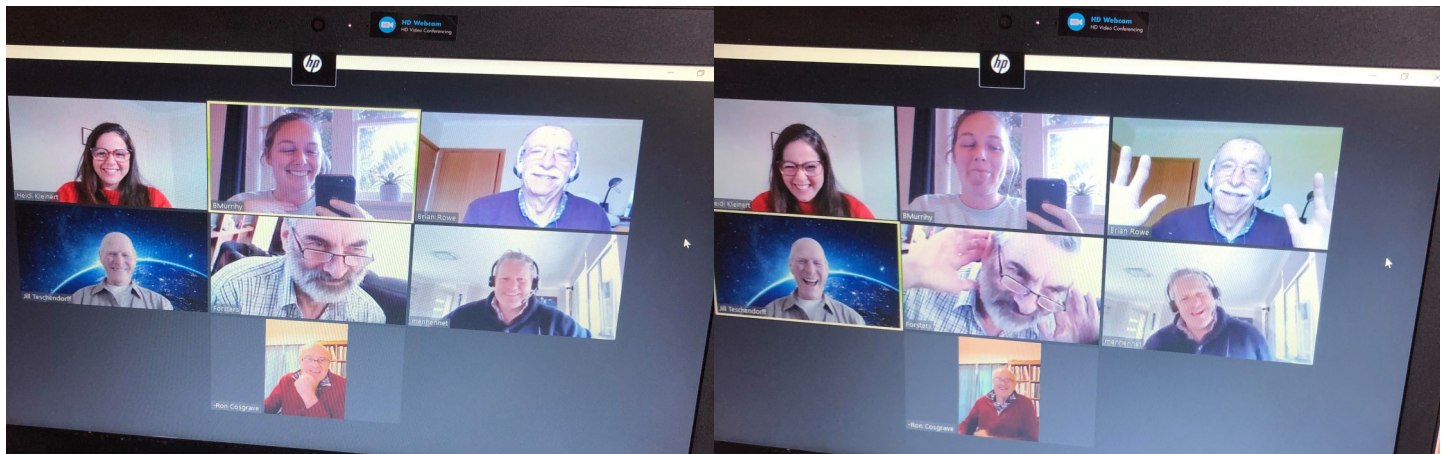
LATEST PROGRESS REPORT RELEASED

The 2019/2020 Progress Report has been released giving an update on all programs and financial placement of the VGT.

The report starts with the Chairperson's report from Ron Cosgrove which includes a tribute to the late Peter Everist, a community funding update, a CCEO update and how the VGT are looking ahead with an evaluation of the VGT being conducted by Malcolm Brown and Geoff Park.

The report also outlines the on-ground gorse control projects of 2019/2020 that resulted in 296 hectares of gorse controlled. The VGT has supported the implementation of these projects to help communities build successful control programs in their local areas. The report gives the contribution amounts for each project by the VGT and a short story about each.

The report also details the income and expenses of the VGT for the year and then finishes with a list of the members that contributed. Head to the website to read the full report: www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au



Above: the reality of COVID safe online meetings for the VGT. Left is a normal photo and if you couldn't guess, the right is a silly photo!

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More information on gorse can be found on the Victorian Gorse Taskforce website: www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au or by contacting the Agriculture Victoria 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 June 2021

To make a contribution, please submit by Friday 28th of May 2021.

Send contributions to:
info@vicgorsetaskforce.com.au

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This project is funded through the Established Pest Animals and Weeds initiative, part of the Australian Government's Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper, the government's plan for stronger farmers and a stronger economy.