



'Naturally Yours'

August 2011

President's Report



Welcome to Tamar NRM's inaugural Sustainability Month of August. It is okay if you are not sure what I am talking about. We only thought about it in February!! Sustainability Month is being driven in part by the members of the Sustainable Living Working Group in conjunction with the Tamar NRM staff. Our intention is to have a series of low key events that allow people to see real life examples of sustainability.

We are always thinking for ideas so if you have one or would like to showcase something you are doing, please contact the office on 6323-3310. To see what events are happening, check the 2011 Events Calendar on page 2 of this newsletter or go to our new website (www.tamarnrm.com.au) and look under 'What's On' for the calendar.

It is amazing how the time goes by - it is three months since my last report and a lot has happened. I am still not sure how or where the resources have come from to do the things we keep doing. Of course Craig Williams has been in the office as Executive Officer for three months and that has brought new dynamics and has somewhat lightened the load.

Some of you may have noticed some subtle colour changes during the last month. After a review of our corporate colours, business card, letterhead, logo and clothing, it was clear many in the NRM world had similar colours and this was, amongst other things, causing confusion with people in the community.

At the beginning of this year it was decided to change our colours so we had clear product differentiation and would stand out from the crowd. Our business card, letterhead and with compliments have been changed but our logo has remained the same with only slight variation on colour - it is still easily recognisable. The main change is our primary colour from dark blue to green (the shirt, t-shirt, cap and lanyard are different hues of green but they blend well). Be on the lookout at future events as there will be no mistaking the Tamar NRM staff now!

Another part of our corporate change was to revamp the Tamar NRM website which has been worked on since February. We have made the website much sharper, clearer (and greener). It has new technology embedded in it that will allow you to interact with us through forums and surveys etc. We will be developing a facebook page and this will be available on the website - keep your eyes glued for any updates - we say our website is a living organism, always moving along.

I would like to thank Amanda Bruce for designing our new business card, letterhead and with compliments as well as organising for the new clothing. Also thank you to Amanda for developing our new website in consultation with the consultants, SpareEgg. It has been a great achievement for Tamar NRM.

As the year goes on we will utilise this technology so we can all communicate and interact with each other. We intend to make the website a resource for the community. It will house reports, past and present, media releases, and an events calendar. For those that are daunted by technology let me assure you we will not be disbanding our traditional ways of communication i.e. quarterly newsletters, monthly eTamars and invitation flyers.

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Also as part of our information technology revamp we are in the process of revamping the Tamar Valley Weed website - this is still under construction but you will be able to gain access to it from the Tamar NRM website - they will be interconnected.

I urge you all to go and have a look at both websites (www.tamarnrm.com.au and www.weeds.tamarnrm.com.au). Please feel free to send your comments.

In my last report I made mention that Tamar NRM had made a submission to the Caring for Our Country Review and you can access our submission by going to <http://caringforourcountryreview.com.au>. Sadly in one way but pleasing in another our submission had plenty of consistency with most other community groups, productivity groups and Landcare groups around Australia. Recent formal analysis of all submissions confirmed what has been written. It is clear the present regional process needs some serious reviewing and adjustments to amongst other things its delivery process. To all those that have been in contact with Tamar NRM to express views and frustrations I hope we are voicing your concerns. It is important that you continue to voice your concerns but more importantly to voice your suggestions for positive improvements.

Congratulations need to go to the Australian Government for reviewing all its programs and delivery arrangements for the future, and making sure the community has the opportunity to input into that process. I urge the Australian Government to keep communicating with those on the ground - remember these are the people who do the work or directly manage the resources.

Anyway now to the future - the big ticket item for the next six months is going to be a full review of our Strategic Plan (SP). This will involve an enormous amount of community consultation - we need to get your thoughts and ideas to make sure what goes into the new SP is a true reflection from the community.

We are also mindful community consultation can be a pain - we have all been to the local hall on a wet and cold night, sat around watching boring powerpoint presentations, being facilitated, putting coloured dots on butchers paper and being assured your views have all been taken into account.

I can assure you Tamar NRM will not be replying altogether on these processes. We shall, instead, have a series of innovative, interactive and fun ways to get your views, wants, and wishes for the next ten years. However, what is important to remember is the SP has served us all very well. It has given us the opportunities to be innovative, proactive and importantly be able to deliver on-ground projects with significant community input.

This has happened because the present SP was developed with and by the community. Remember - it is your SP delivered by Tamar NRM on your behalf. Management Committee are determined this is going to happen again so please make sure you, your friends and groups are involved in the process. We will keep you informed of the dates and venues when we begin our discussions.

As you may remember Tamar NRM has partnered with Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) who are helping the coastal communities from Bellingham to Bell Buoy Beach get on top of weed infestations, develop walking tracks, assist with revegetation and remove debris from certain areas. This has proven to be useful ongoing activities for these communities. Because of the success of the project we will be continuing this partnership for another six months - further value adding components will be weed mapping and condition assessments where the information will be transferred to both State and National databases. What is exciting - this is a first real life trial of this system.

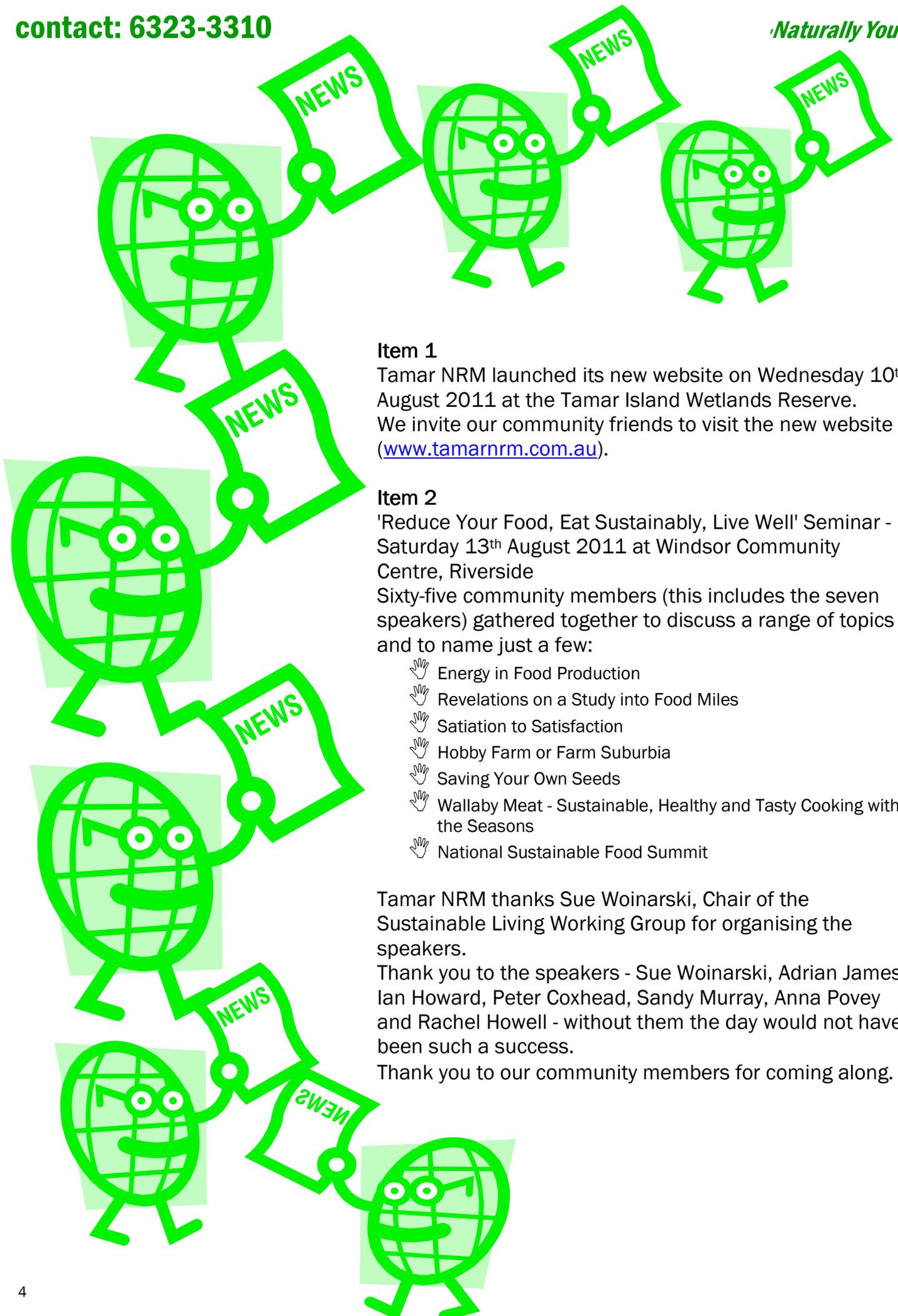
Another developing activity is Tamar NRM's involvement in research on "the next generation of rural landscape governance" being conducted by the Ag Law Centre of the University of New England. The AgLaw Centre (UNE) held their first workshop in June 2011 at the RDA Tasmania Launceston office.

The Tamar Region is one of three national case studies. The workshop participants included farmers; Tamar NRM staff and several Management Committee members; RDA Tasmania, Local Councils; Northern Regional Development; NRM North; Tasmanian Government and industry groups. This community based research aims to improve the sustainability performance of farming including conservation outcomes with reduced costs and more equitable sharing of both the costs and the benefits. The workshop identified the current governance challenges in the Tamar Region and the priorities for research for the next three years. The researchers will hold a further workshop in early October. For more information contact Jacky Williams: jacqueline.williams@une.edu.au

There have been many other projects that have been finished or are just starting. I am sure you can find information on them in the upcoming AGM report as well as mentioned before on our website. We are all entering an exciting time as we determine the priorities of Tamar NRM for the next ten plus years. I am hoping you will all contribute in some way.

I hope to see you at future events and at our AGM.

Ian Sauer



Item 1

Tamar NRM launched its new website on Wednesday 10th August 2011 at the Tamar Island Wetlands Reserve. We invite our community friends to visit the new website (www.tamarnrm.com.au).

Item 2

'Reduce Your Food, Eat Sustainably, Live Well' Seminar - Saturday 13th August 2011 at Windsor Community Centre, Riverside

Sixty-five community members (this includes the seven speakers) gathered together to discuss a range of topics and to name just a few:

-  Energy in Food Production
-  Revelations on a Study into Food Miles
-  Satiation to Satisfaction
-  Hobby Farm or Farm Suburbia
-  Saving Your Own Seeds
-  Wallaby Meat - Sustainable, Healthy and Tasty Cooking with the Seasons
-  National Sustainable Food Summit

Tamar NRM thanks Sue Woinarski, Chair of the Sustainable Living Working Group for organising the speakers.

Thank you to the speakers - Sue Woinarski, Adrian James, Ian Howard, Peter Coxhead, Sandy Murray, Anna Povey and Rachel Howell - without them the day would not have been such a success.

Thank you to our community members for coming along.

Future Focused with a Backward Glance

As Tamar NRM embarks on our Strategic Review process over the coming months we will all indulge in a bit of future gazing as we look to tomorrow and design our expectations for the region. It is natural that we take this focus.

In undertaking the Executive Officer role I commenced "future focused" with my gaze already planted on the path ahead. However, as I settled in to the role and have started to glean the nuances of the organisation I have quickly realised the vast distance that has been travelled to reach this point and the achievements that have been attained on the way. It will be important during the Strategic Review process to mark and celebrate those achievements and to build on past accomplishments with creativity and innovation. The wealth and breadth of knowledge and experience in the region is staggering. It will be through community focused programs that we can capture and utilise such skills on the ground. To labour the point as we undertake the Strategic Review it will be important to 'future gaze' through the lenses of our/your knowledge and experience.

However, we are living in unpredictable times where change is fast paced and the outside influences and pressures are vast and themselves ever changing. How do we facilitate development of a Strategy that will 'roll with the punches' and remain relevant within such a cycle of change? To state the obvious that will be THE CHALLENGE of the Strategic Review process and time will be the best judge of how well we perform in this task. I am confident that we will deliver a Tamar Natural Resource Management Strategy that is robust, resilient and responsive. I am confident because the Strategy will be supported through strategically aligning operations within Tamar NRM and through the embedded strategic focus of the Management Committee. Most importantly I am confident that we will attain a future focus that builds on the seeds already planted and the foundations that have been set over the past 12 years.

One of the most important phases of the Strategic Review will be the stakeholder and community consultations. The information, introspection, critical analysis and advice that YOU provide during the consultation process will be key to attaining a Strategy that is relevant to the community and the region. Information on upcoming opportunities and events will be forthcoming.

Finally I am pleased to announce that Tamar Natural Resource Management and Scotch Oakburn Environmental Association (SOCEA) have signed a School Landcare Partnership that will support the vision and focus of both organisations. The SOCEA was established in 2006 and not only supports the sustainability programs and initiatives within the school but is outwards focused on community and the region. We look forward to the exchange of knowledge and ideas between the partners and the participation of the SOCEA in associated projects.

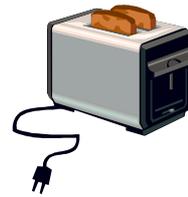
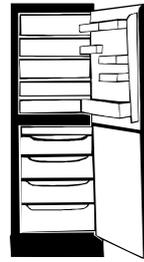
Craig Williams



Tamar NRM's Gambusia Project

Volunteers wanted for the Gambusia project to help with trapping and hand netting, native fish rescue, distribution survey - if interested, please contact the office on 6323-3310.

How much energy do you use?



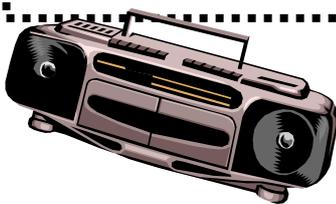
Can changing your power usage, change your life?

Tamar Natural Resource Management says, Yes...we can help. As power prices increase so does the pressure on households to economise. Tamar NRM has developed a project "Surge to Savings". This project will measure community support and action to reduce the use of residential power consumption.

Tamar NRM requests your last twelve months power bills and once our office has received them we will give you a 'Home Energy' booklet on how to reduce energy consumption. There are two booklets - one for homeowners and one for renters. An introductory letter explaining what we are trying to achieve will accompany the booklet. We will also request the energy bills for the twelve months during the project life and once ended will ask for an interview to determine how you used the advice in the booklet.

This project is an information gathering exercise and your details are kept strictly confidential. Throughout the project life, feel free to contact us and remove your name from the database - participation is voluntary.

If you would like more information about how you can help us and yourself at the same time, please contact the Tamar NRM office on 6323-3310.



Electric cars could produce higher emissions over their lifetimes than petrol equivalents because of the energy used in making the batteries, a study by the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership jointly funded by the British Government and the car industry has found - *The Australian*.

South Korea to withdraw printed textbooks from schools by 2015

The South Korean Ministry of Education has announced a ground-breaking plan to digitise all textbooks which are in use in Korean schools and completely phase out printed materials by 2015. The Korean Government's "Smart Education" scheme will see the creation of a cloud computing network in order to allow students to access digital textbooks and store their homework so it can be accessed via any internet-connected device including tablets, smartphones, PCs and smart TVs. The plan also includes introducing more online classes from 2013 so students who are sick or unable to attend school due to weather conditions will be able to participate in virtual classes.

...snippets...

News from the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) Gambusia science and management forum

The forum began with a review of what we know about Gambusia. This highlighted how widely studied Gambusia is. However, it also highlighted the lack of understanding we have of the impacts of Gambusia and Gambusia removal on native species and systems. There is a patent need to have clear research questions and well designed methodologies, particularly in the areas of quantifying the impacts of Gambusia and Gambusia removal on native species. The forum then moved through biology of Gambusia in its native range, genetic studies, impacts on native frogs and fish, dietary studies, impacts of climate and flow regimes on Gambusia, community engagement and trapping methods and their impacts in Gambusia control.

Key Learnings

Several key findings were gained from interaction with Gambusia managers and researchers from mainland Australia and from New Zealand. These researchers found catch rate in the day was much higher than at night, as Gambusia are inactive at night, so trap in day time if possible. Trap catch rates are highest in shallow areas with vegetation that offers lateral cover, but not overhead shade. Trout pellets were also found to increase catch rates. Use of seine netting and of clear plastic traps (made from recycled bottles) was also found to be effective. Clear plastic containers have the dual benefit of being open to the sun (Gambusia seek out sun and avoid shade) and of warming the water inside the traps. This is of particular significance, as all our current traps have mesh ceilings i.e. they are shady and cool inside. The warmth generated inside plastic traps has the potential to be a strong attractant for Gambusia, as they are a subtropical fish with a very strong preference for warm water. Some interesting research findings are: the main impacts of Gambusia appear to be on 'small bodied fish' (less than 10cm long) and on tadpoles; Gambusia can disperse into new areas in water as shallow as 5mm; Gambusia in West Australia have far fewer parasites than the native fish; native fish suffered much more from Gambusia attacks in degraded systems, particularly those lacking vegetation (shelter) in the water.

Planned actions

We are planning to trial several types of clear plastic traps. Traps made from recycled bottles, larger clear plastic containers and custom made fyke nets with flexible clear plastic tops and sides. We will also trial trout pellets. These trials will be conducted during the warmer months of the year (September to May), when Gambusia are more active. When fish are inactive it is likely no traps will perform very well and effective comparisons are unlikely to be possible. A scientific literature review of potential and actual impacts of Gambusia will be conducted. Existing literature will be used to inform us of likely niche overlap of Gambusia and native fish species. Research articles that have demonstrated impacts of Gambusia on native fish and frog species will also be compiled. The trials and literature review will help guide future Gambusia control efforts. The forum has given us new ideas and approaches to try. It has also given us a new expanded network of Gambusia researchers and managers. This network will enable us to rapidly share our ideas and work with Gambusia managers' interstate and internationally. We also have access to a large pool of expertise and new ideas. With this pooled knowledge, both our efforts and other Gambusia managers efforts will be greatly enhanced.

Grant Scurr
Gambusia Project Officer



Grant Scurr (above) holding his golden chocolate fish as thank you for being one of the presenters and (right) conference participants

Jayne's Wild Garden...

Have you ever thought of growing a correa in your garden? These are compact shrubs that have masses of bell-shaped flowers during autumn, winter and sometimes into spring.

The plants were named by Sir Joseph Banks for his friend José Francesco Correia da Serra, a botanist from Portugal. Several species are endemic to Tasmania.

Correa alba has round green leaves with starry white flowers and grows to about 1m.

Correa backhouseana is similar to *C. alba*, but the flowers are more bell-shaped. This plant will also tolerate coastal conditions.

Correa lawrenceana is a tree correa and can grow 3-5m high. The foliage can be variable and the flowers are green.

Correa reflexa is perhaps the best known of the correas. It grows to about 1m with tubular flowers which can vary from cream to green, pink or even red. It also has a very well known cultivar called 'Dusky Bells'.

Correas respond well to cultivation. They prefer a well-drained, fertile soil. If they are pruned lightly after flowering, the bush will keep a good dense shape. Propagate correas from cuttings. Correas also attract honeyeaters to your garden.

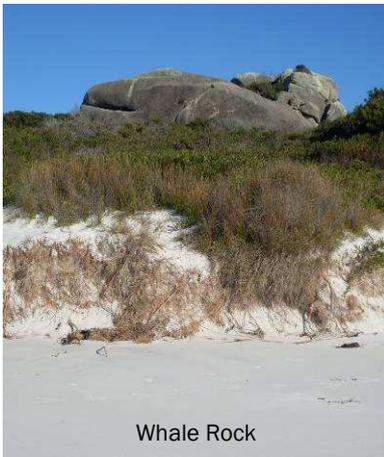
Jayne Shapter



Left to Right: Correa Reflexa, Correa alba, Correa lawrenceana

Photos: www.anpsa.org.au/APOL33/mar04-4.html

Walking & Talking with Patsy Cameron



Whale Rock



Dear Diary

It has been a while since I opened your pages but there was nothing of interest to write. Now I can tell you what has been happening over the last few months. During June we organised a walk and talk with Patsy Cameron. You know Patsy - I mentioned her before, well maybe I forgot! Patsy was born in Launceston and lived most of her young life on Flinders Island, she now lives at Tomahawk. I will fill you in on Patsy as I write.

What a glorious day Saturday 18th June became as we drove in the sunshine towards our destination at Boulder Beach, Mt William National Park. I know you know I have no car so my trips are solely through work and guess what another milestone was achieved - seen the north east of the state or at least part of it. One day will definitely circumnavigate this wonderful state and meet up with myself - ha, ha. Enough silliness...so twenty very enthusiastic community members arrived to join Grant Scurr (Tamar NRM's Gambusia Project Officer) and myself for the first walk & talk with Patsy. We were also joined by a fantastic volunteer for the day - Emma Williams. We three drove along singing (we tried, no we didn't!) and then we stopped and I for a brief moment saw Bridport. Then off again and onwards to meet Patsy at the Tomahawk turnoff.

We followed Patsy to Boulder Beach and after unpacking the ute we made a cuppa, ate a few biscuits and fruit cake and then everyone was looking forward to moving off along the beach. While we were all assembled for morning tea, Patsy gave the traditional welcome to the area. I have to say - the day, the sun, the group, Patsy, Grant and Emma all made the day very enjoyable. What a fabulous beach - the waves lapping along the foreshore and the sun shimmering on the horizon. It made you feel very happy just to be there.

Sorry dear Diary, I digress so back to the day...Patsy walked us along the beach stopping from time to time to talk about specific locations and their significance to the Aboriginal culture such as Whale Rock - a beautifully formed rock on the hill overlooking the water. It certainly looked like the whale I drew at school with its humped head and tail flapping along its back. I did take a few hundred photos so can show you what it looked like - Patsy said this was a sacred place for Aboriginal men and they would come together to talk and dance while Whale Rock watched them benevolently.

Forgot to mention - before we left the BBQ area we ground up ochre and Patsy made it into a paste. All the women had a quarter moon (like a backward C) painted on the back of one hand - this is very significant to the women in Aboriginal culture. Patsy painted this on our hands. The boys painted themselves by taking the paste and making any marks they liked over their faces. Then we had a cleansing ceremony - specific leaves were put into a hollowed out bowl and then lit. One person walked around the group leaving a vapour of cleansing smoke. I needed a lot so dived in for two goes. It made my usually clouded brain very clear!

So dear Diary back to the beach...I have mentioned before my impossible knees and we had to climb over several clumps of boulders (now I know why it's called 'Boulder Beach'). It was fun to feel like a mountain goat for a day but my mind was always wondering if the knees would hold up - they did and I survived the mountaineering.

We wandered along to the end of the beach and rested for a few minutes while Patsy gave us information about how this beach comprised some of the largest cultural living places accessible to the community in Tasmania. Patsy advised the word 'middens' should be removed from common language as it suggests a rubbish dumping area rather than a living place. 'Middens' are areas where the local Aboriginal group would leave large deposits of shells and bones. I learnt Patsy would like 'middens' to be referred to as Aboriginal cultural living areas. Learning something new every day - I love it.

Hey dear Diary, here is something I bet you don't know about Patsy - in 2006 she was inducted onto the Tasmanian Women's Honour Roll for her work in Aboriginal education and contribution to her community. This year Patsy wrote her first book 'Grease and Ochre: the Blending of Two Cultures at the Colonial Sea Frontier' (published by Fullers). I was struck with a brilliant idea (if I say so myself) - Tamar NRM bought Patsy's book and we held a lucky dip at the walk & talk - Patsy very kindly signed the book for the lucky winner.

OK, back to the end of the beach - Emma and I left the group early to walk back and start the BBQ. Grant was left to hold the Tamar NRM torch and walked up the sand dune while Patsy showed the group stone and shell flints used as tools by her ancestors. Patsy requested if anyone picked up a stone or shell tool to place it back in the same place as it was found - they were not souvenirs but living heritage.

So we (i.e. Emma and I) waited for the group to return to gorge on sausages, potato salad and coleslaw - yum it made your mouth water. Should I let you know (probably not) but I visited my first 'drop toilet' - yes, it was a big deal. I'm not the 'go behind a bush' person so it seemed quite traumatic but dear Diary it all turned out for the best without me falling into the hole!! Another milestone - ho, hum.

While we munched lunch, Patsy talked about how she and twenty other Aboriginal women had revived Tasmanian traditional basket weaving techniques. Patsy also showed us her shell necklaces which her mother taught her how to string together. They were beautiful and so light to the touch.

As the day drew to a close our group were happy and contented and fingers crossed they had enjoyed coming along. I certainly had a fabulous time - out and about from the office and on a Saturday - yeah...such a pleasant and relaxed day with good company, good food, good weather and lastly the inspiration of Patsy.

Now dear Diary I am signing off and will fill you in on the next walk & talk with Patsy Cameron at Tomahawk.

day 2...

Dear Diary

Well day two of our walk & talk with Patsy has arrived but it's a Friday (22nd July) not a Saturday so it rounded off the week wonderfully. Today Mike Poole (Tamar NRM's Facilitator) was accompanying me - I had a good idea where Tomahawk was as we had met Patsy at the turn off the previous time but the office uses manuals and I am a devotee of automatics!! Anyway it's always good to have friends along and Mike's son Alec also joined us.

Patsy was so well organised by the time we arrived at the Tomahawk BBQ - the table was weighed down with items of shell necklaces, digging sticks and water containers made out of dried seaweed. The kettle was bubbling away so after saying Hi to our group we got down to the serious work of making our cuppas and munching the morning tea.

Enough was enough dear Diary - we had to get even more serious - we could have stayed, talked and eaten for the remainder of the day but we had information to gather so with Patsy leading the way we moved on to see her favourite place - Tomahawk.

We moved off in twos and threes stopping to say hi to Patsy's home and dog, Ebony (a black Labrador) who decided our walk was far more interesting so joined us. Patsy showed us how to find wild cranberries and bidgi widgi (this is used to cleanse the blood) - I just love the name.



Patsy Cameron at Tomahawk

Using the Tomahawk Coastal Management map as a guide Patsy walked through the Crown Reserve to the Leengteena Lookout Hill. Patsy advised she had not been able to find out about the lookout's current name but it was once called Du Cane after a Lieutenant Governor but long before this the clanspeople name for the river was Leengteena.

Our group stood on the lookout hill and I did feel a bit larger than life surveying the surrounding area. Patsy pointed out the important geographic landmarks and cultural placescapes such as *Warekalener* (Mt William), *lalewongener*, *poonerluttener*, *leenertercutteler* (South Cameron Range), Mt Victoria Range, *konewaringenner* (Mt Horror) and *tangumroun* (Waterhouse Point).

If you closed your eyes dear Diary you could imagine the inhabitants of the area were still there with the clanswomen looking for native pigface which is good for insect bites or wandering the shoreline to find seaweed for drinking cups and possibly the clansmen would be hunting for native emus (unfortunately now extinct). Does all this make me sound intelligent dear Diary, I hope so, but I was also writing furious notes and Patsy gave us handouts - have you lost respect for my intelligence with this admission (I have!!).

All I know is we have a wonderful person in Patsy to give us the history of this area by putting into words a graphic account of how the Aboriginal people lived so comfortably with their surroundings.

After further wandering and hoping no leeches attached themselves to my legs, we moved back towards the BBQ area stopping only briefing for Patsy to show us where she now finds native foods to use at days like ours.

While we waited for our sausages to cook, I made string from grass - it took me a few minutes to practice the technique but with twisting it this way and that way I made a very strong, pliable and useful string to tie the cat up at home - look out cat!!

Again we munched our food and drank more cuppas to keep the chill out (it was slightly overcast but luck was with us and the rain stayed away). Patsy has a wealth of knowledge and wants you to know her heritage. Again we 'lucky dipped' for a copy of her book - 'Grease and Ochre: the Blending of Two Cultures at the Colonial Sea Frontier' (published by Fullers) and again Patsy signed it for the winner.

So the day was drawing to a close - we packed the ute and began our farewells to the group. I say goodbye dear Diary for it is time for me to finish my chat with you. Looking forward to writing to you again on other activities.

AB 



Thank you from Tamar NRM

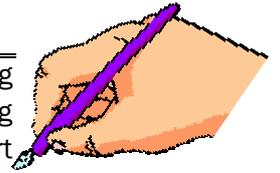
We would like to thank Patsy Cameron for being such a wonderful story teller of her culture and being available to join us on our two project walks & talks. I personally would like to say thank you to Patsy having given so generously of her time, not only for the walks but as a guest presenter at the earlier Coastal Community Forum in April 2011. I also want to say thanks to our community members for coming along and supporting our days. See you at future Tamar NRM events.

AB 



TAMAR NRM newsletters can be found on our website www.tamarnrm.com.au

Would you like to contribute an article to our newsletters – we are always interested in receiving news of completed projects funded by Tamar NRM and how they are progressing and being maintained by the landholder or community group. If you have always wanted to write a short story, then grab pen and paper (or as we all now use a computer) and start writing about your project. Please email any article (preferably with an after photo but if you have a before photo of the site, this would be fabulous) to amanda.bruce@launceston.tas.gov.au. It would be great to see how a project started and how it has developed over time.



Next 'Naturally Yours' edition due: November 2011

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