



ESsential News September 2021

E&S Committee:

Co Chairs: David Dippie, RC Keilor East
Donna Martin, RC Bacchus Marsh
d9800env.sust@gmail.com

Peter Berg, RC Melbourne

Lesley McCarthy, RC Flemington
Kensington

Rob Anderson, RC Canterbury

Fabienne Nichola, RC Camberwell

Ted Waghorne, RC Canterbury
ESRAG ANZPI Chair

Dates for your calendar:

ESRAG ANZPI Chapter Meeting
Tuesday 19 October 2021 at
7.30pm

Dr Jenn Loder, Australian Citizen
Science Association

Aussie Backyard Bird Count

31 October—12 November 2021

UN Climate Change Conference
<https://UKCOP26>

20th November
ESRAG Oceania COP26 Student
Writing Competition closes.

Climate & Peace Forum
Tuesday 16 November at 6pm AEST
<https://climateandpeace.com.au>
Drive to the Future—Electric Vehicles
and Transportation

Join ESRAG:

[https://www.esrag.org/
membership-form](https://www.esrag.org/membership-form)

US\$30 per year or
US\$125 for 5 years.
Just US\$15 per year for ages 17-25.

From our District Co Chairs:

A belated welcome to another Rotary year. Like most things in our world COVID-19 caused delays. The new co-chairs of the District 9800 Environmental Committee are Donna Martin, the Immediate Past President of Rotary Club of Bacchus Marsh and Past President David Dippie Rotary Club of Keilor East.



Donna has a strong passion for environmental issues and this role is a natural progression from the projects she has been involved in. Some of you may have had contact with David through Donations In Kind, one of our major Circular Economy / Recycling Projects.



Past President Lesley McCarthy, Rotary Club of Flemington Kensington is continuing as Communications Coordinator and Newsletter Editor.

Our major aim is “To help you and your Club to achieve your environmental sustainability goals”.

Our success will largely be determined by the number of people who are prepared to help the committee and to help Clubs to achieve their Protecting the Environment goals.

Please look at the committee “Situations Vacant” section and think about where you could make a contribution. We will find a role to match your interest and time available. We would love to have you as a member of our team.

Donna and David

Current district activities with which you can be involved:

1. **Nature strip gardens.** Peter Berg from Melbourne Rotary is working with Pam Dittmer at South Melbourne and Emma Cutting of the [Heart Garden Project](#). The plan is to create gardens on nature strips, verges and vacant land providing habitat and pollination spaces.
2. [Powerful Pollinator Planting Guides](#). Ted Waghorne of Canterbury Rotary has been working with the WHEEN Bee Foundation and a team to develop planting guides for all regions of Victoria. These guides list native plants which support pollinators.
3. RIMERN and WERN are our district emergency relief networks. They supply people in need with basic household goods at no cost through accredited agencies. See page 5.
4. [Donations in Kind](#) is our district's unsung hero when it comes to recycling and sustainability. Volunteer, donate, ship a container for one of your overseas projects.
5. ESRAG Ocean Youth Writing Project. Share the flier on page 6 with your schools.
6. **Plogging.** Take a bag and a glove with you on your walk and pick up the litter.

Protecting the Maribyrnong River Valley

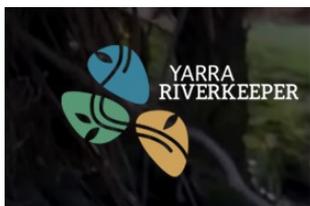
This is the type of Project Idea what your District Environmental Sustainability Committee will raise with Clubs.

Protecting and restoring rivers, is an area that the Rotary Foundation has asked us to focus on. Along the river, individual Clubs are taking some action. The Yarra Riverkeeper Association www.yarrariver.org.au also covers the Maribyrnong River and has identified a Coordinator, Dr Nicole Kowalczyk and there are excellent partnership opportunities available.

The Moonee Valley Council has an advanced environmental program, which includes tree planting and habitat restoration. Some Clubs have partnered with the Council already and are talking with other local environment action groups. We are encouraging all Clubs in this community to explore the options. [See Wildlife Habitat and Pollination Corridor Project.](#)



Native wildlife does not recognise our boundaries and they see the river valley as one habitat trail. We believe that there are opportunities for all of the Rotary Clubs with links to the Maribyrnong Valley to work together. Its up to Clubs to chose their own projects, but if you or your Club are interested in attending a forum to discuss the possibilities, please contact Lesley McCarthy at Lillico2009@gmail.com



The ESRAG Oceania speaker this month was Karin Traeger from Yarra Riverkeepers who spoke about the work on the Yarra and their research on litter and polystyrene which resulted in a Premier's Sustainability Award in 2020. Her talk focussed on polystyrene and the damage it does to our waterways and the environment.

During research undertaken by Yarra Riverkeepers in September-October 2019 and checked in January 2020, they have identified that polystyrene particularly EPS is the predominant polluter in the Yarra with both large pieces and microplastics. The Yarra River then feeds this litter into Port Phillip Bay.

It is estimated that 828 million items of litter enter the bay annually and over 74% of this is microplastics.. Polystyrene is more harmful than other plastics as it is composed of relatively hazardous chemicals which can leach into the soils.

So what can we do?

1. Reduce our use of polystyrene and plastics. Replace with recyclable/ reusable materials.
2. Recycle: take your polystyrene and plastics to a drop off/collection point for recycling.
3. Write to your MP asking for a ban on polystyrene and single use plastics.
4. Report the problem of litter, leaks into waterways via the EPA website or hotline 1300 372 842 or [EPA Interaction Portal](#)
5. Organise clean up events at your local river, creek, water way or at one of the many [litter hot spots beach/bay clean up](#) events. It doesn't stop the problem but it help to prevent further problems - and it makes volunteers feel good.
6. Communicate: spread the word and tell others about the problems with litter in our waterways.
7. Read the full report [here](#).
8. Join one of the Environment Friends' groups working in your local waterways. Gardiners Creek, Moonee Ponds Creek, Friends of the Barwon, Friends of Cherry Lake, Friends of Williamstown Wetlands. [Search here for more](#)

Yarra Riverkeepers hold regular river clean ups and planting events along the river. They are currently working on 10 new sites for tree and groundcover planting to restore river ecosystems.

They are also developing resources for children—Little Critters, Wildlife and Weeding toolkits and creating a Healthy Waterways toolkit in conjunction with Melbourne Water. [These resources are available here.](#)

[See Salvatore the Yarra Seal.](#)

Their work on the Yarra River is being replicated along the Maribyrnong River with the appointment of a leader, Dr Nicole Kowalczyk. Nicole is an ecologist and her PhD focussed on the St Kilda Little Penguin colony and the importance of the Yarra River in the predator/prey dynamics. She will be working with environment groups along ther Maribyrnong in coming months.

Melbourne City Rotaract have held monthly Clean Up the Yarra River events starting at Flinders Street Station.

Ludovic Grosjean is the contact for these events which will resume post lockdown.

cleanup@oceancleanx.com



The Rotary Club of Melbourne hosted Professor John Thwaites AM as a speaker this week. John is Chair of the Monash Sustainable Development Institute and ClimateWorks Australia, and is a Co-Chair of the Leadership Council of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network launched by the Secretary General of the United Nations to provide expert advice and support to the development and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. He is also the Chair of the SDSN Association, which operates the SDSN network around the world.



John was reporting on Australia's progress against the Sustainable Development Goals. The targets help us shift from short term to long term goals. They also mobilise action, crystalize priorities and hold us to account. Mid and longer term they provide a framework for thinking harder and thinking globally. The Transforming Australia 2020 goals were set in 2013 and revised in 2018. The report shows that Australia is performing well in health and education, but is failing to reduce CO2 emissions, waste and environmental degradation, and to address cost of living pressures and economic inequality.



Of the 56 indicators examined in this report, only 12 are assessed as on track to meet the 2030 targets. 23 indicators are assessed as off track, 11 are classified as breakthrough needed and 10 need improvement. The report also shows COVID-19 has exacerbated trends, including higher levels of unemployment, poverty and psychological distress that were emerging before COVID-19, and that could fracture Australian society.

* We are strong in health and education but wealth inequality has increased significantly—we are becoming a have/have not society. Net disposable income has risen from 2000 → 2019 although has stabilised in recent years.

* Investing for the future with Research & Development is declining: from 2.2% of GDP to 1.8% to well below world leaders and the main lag is in the private sector.

* Obesity is increasing and while indigenous life expectancy is improving it still remains well below the national average.

* Energy productivity is improving but slowly. We are not doing well on Diversity & Equity.

** Environmental findings: greenhouse gas emissions have declined only marginally since 2000 and little progress has been made since 2013. Australia is well off track to meet a 2030 emissions target that is consistent with the Paris Agreement to keep global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius. Emissions need to halve every year for the next 10years to meet the target.

Our per capita material footprint is one of the highest in the world — more than 70% above the OECD average — and rising. Hard coral cover on the Great Barrier Reef has declined and the trend for threatened species has worsened since 2000. Total forest area has increased steadily since 2008 after a period of decline, but research by ClimateWorks Australia indicates that 5 million more hectares of plantings are needed by 2030 to reach climate targets [MSDI_TA2020_Summary.pdf \(sdgtransformingaustralia.com\)](#)

The Rotary Club of Essendon's guest speaker this week was Lara Panjikov, daughter of member Andrew. Lara has experience working in the renewable energy sector including with as a Climate Change Policy intern at DEWLP, 2 years with TESLA as an Energy Operations Analyst, as a research analyst at Bloomberg and now with Fluence.

She presented on Australia's historical energy use and needs and discussed how our energy production is changing away from coal to renewables. She displayed graphs of world energy use, spoke on the costs associated with all forms of energy, and how our existing coal fired power plants are rapidly reaching their 'use by' dates. Lana also spoke briefly on electric vehicles.

This was a very interesting presentation and we thank President Sunil Pereira for the opportunity to participate. Clubs sharing speaker invitations is a great way to visit another club and participate in sharing of information and ideas.

Please give me something to look forward to:

I'm over lockdown and I need something positive to look forward to. I want to be outside, doing something constructive with my Rotary mates. Come on Clubs, give me the opportunity. I don't care what it is, but it would be nice to plant a tree. We know gardening is therapeutic and creating new life after lockdown would be symbolic. I am happy to tidy up a park. I am so desperate I would enjoy collecting rubbish or cleaning up a river.

If you are planning a project that has a connection with nature or the environment, please let us know and we will promote it. Contact David Dippie Solatube@bigpond.com



Spring Cleaning – Something positive to do during lockdown.

Looking for something positive to do during lockdown?

It's a good time to Spring Clean and to identify the reusable items you no longer require. Many of us will go on a shopping spree when it becomes possible, but what are you going to do with the items you are replacing? Winter is over, what will you not wear next year? How about your new Spring and Summer wardrobe? Where possible **support your local Rotary Op-Shop.**

Rotary can provide a great home for your surplus furniture and household item.

The [Western Emergency Relief Network \(WERN\)](#) has a new home and would appreciate any donations. They would love to have some new volunteers.

The [Rotary Inner Melbourne Emergency Relief Network \(RIMERN\)](#) is the new kid on the block. They are in the team building phase and need more volunteers, can you help? They are also looking to build up their stock.

Both of these group provide a vital service and there is a great demand for their assistance as a result of COVID19.

Now is the time for "People of Action" to have a cleanout and prepare increasing freedom. At the same time this Recycling and Repurposing activity will help to Protect the Environment" and people in need.

A fundraising opportunity for your club—and support the Its Time Foundation.

Paradise Taveuni Resort is giving you the chance to win a holiday of a lifetime on the beautiful island of Taveuni, Fiji. The Fijian people will make you feel welcome like no other.

The prize is fully donated, so the \$20AUD per ticket is split:
50% of sales go to the Rotary Club you select to spend on their community projects. [Register your club here.](#)

40% of sales goes to the "Its Time Foundation for their solar schools projects & 10% to Plastic Free Oceans (an initiative of Its Time Foundation).

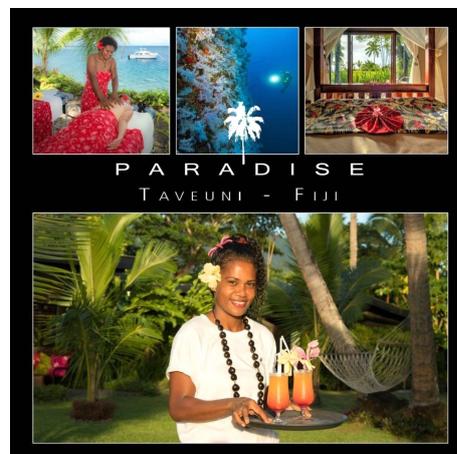
After the prize is drawn you will get an update showing the school you helped.

Its Time Foundation installs solar panels on school roofs in Fiji and the Pacific Islands. To date 20 schools have been supported. [See the reports here.](#)

Installing solar panels on schools reduces carbon emissions, stops the use and reliance on diesel fuels, helps the economy and reduces the carbon footprint. The side by side education on cleaning up the beaches through the Plastic Free Oceans component and teaches about climate change and sustainability.

[Buy a ticket](#) and share this offer with your members, friends and family.

The [Its Time Foundation](#) is led by Rob Edwards, OAM, a member of the Rotary Club of Corrimal, and a member of the ESRAG Oceania Executive Team. He is also one of the Rotarians behind the Climate & Peace Seminars organised by the Rotary Clubs of Sydney.



The Climate and Peace Forums are an initiative of the Rotary Clubs of Sydney and bring you world leading voices in climate and peace.

<https://climateandpeace.com.au>

Drive to the Future: Join the EV revolution



The Earthshot Prize

The Earthshot Prize is the most ambitious and prestigious of its kind – designed to incentivise change and help to repair our planet over the next ten years. It is centred around five 'Earthshots' – simple but ambitious goals for our planet which, if achieved by 2030, will improve life for us all, for generations to come.



Protect and restore nature

Clean our air

Revive our oceans

Build a waste free world

Fix our climate

Prince William this week announced the [first-ever shortlist of 15 Finalists](#), each with a chance of winning £1million to support their innovative environmental solutions to the greatest challenges facing the planet.

These 15 innovators, leaders, and visionaries are the first ever Finalists for The Earthshot Prize: they are working with the urgency required in this decisive decade for life on Earth and will inspire all of us with their optimism in our ability to rise to the greatest challenges in human history.”

Each of the Finalist’s solutions excelled in the rigorous screening process and were assessed on their potential to create game-changing impact around the world, their ability to help us reach our Earthshot goals while also positively impacting people, communities and the natural world. [The winners will be announced on 17 October in London.](#)

[Read about these 15 amazing ideas/opportunities and see how we can all be part of supporting and protecting the environment.](#)

Are You a Young Aspiring Journalist?

Would you like to share your environmental perspective?

Imagine you are a journalist at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November 2021 and write your report for us!

We are looking for entries from those in year 7-10

UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE UK 2021

ESRAG Oceania Young Journalist Competition

(ESRAG is Rotary's Action Group for the Environment)

TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST
<https://esraganzpi.org/cop26-competition>

PRIZES
The winning entry will be awarded AUD \$100
Runner up will be awarded AUD \$50
Winning entries will be published in the ESRAG Oceania Newsletter, on the website and in other Rotary publications.

Rotary ESRAG OCEANIA

Please share this flier with all your members and your school contacts.

This is an amazing opportunity for teachers to connect science, environment, writing and action—[curriculum links](#).

[VCSSU](#) [PETAA Teaching the language of climate science](#)

It is an opportunity for students in years 7-10 to contribute to climate action—and be published widely through ESRAG Oceania.

Contact Fabienne Nichola at Camberwell Rotary for more information.