

MITTA VALLEY LANDCARE NEWSLETTER June 2022

NEXT MEETING – MITTA VALLEY LANDCARE INC.

ESKDALE HALL June 15th, 7 PM ALL WELCOME



Healthy Rivers Projects

Mitta Valley Landcare Committee members have been busy visiting properties who have been successful under the Healthy Rivers Grant Program. Seven properties have been funded in the valley in the last round. We have appointed 2 new Project Workers to work with property owners to implement the improvements to their properties which includes willow removal, fencing off streams and wetlands, and revegetation of these areas. The successful Project Workers are Libbe Paton and Audrey Beard, both residents of Mitta Valley who have experience working with landholders on environmental projects. We wish them well and hope that future funding rounds will provide ongoing employment for them.

Farm Visits and Assessments

Our Landcare facilitator **Simon Felli** is working across the M2M region and can visit Landcare members on site to look at possible projects for future funding. If you would like Simon to visit to review an old project or look at a new area, please ring him on **0438 190 999**.

Expression of Interest “Doing it with Dung”

Spring Active Dung Beetle Breeders wanted!

Mitta Valley Landcare is offering Landcare members from the M2M groups the opportunity to be involved with this project breeding *Bubus Bubalus* Dung beetles.

We need people willing to look after Dung Beetle Nurseries for about 12 months breeding and documenting results. Closes June 15th 2022.

Please contact Irene Lewis for more information or register interest

lewgi2018@outlook.com or 0400775919



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National
Landcare
Program



SHOP- Presenter: Greg Dalton - Dung beetle breeder from South Australia

This is an important opportunity to learn about dung beetles and the spring active beetles we are trying to establish in our region. Greg will be supplying *Bubus Bubalus* to us in spring and there is an opportunity to join the Mitta Valley Landcare breeding program and raise some of these beetles for release on your farm.

WHEN: FRIDAY 1ST JULY 9.30 am-12.30 WHERE: Judy and Alec Cardwell's 1317 Mitta North Rd, Mitta Mitta Light refreshments provided RSVP Judy Cardwell 0400 014 074

BIRDS OF THE MITTA VALLEY

Australian Shelduck –Tadorna Tadornoids Anatid



by Marie Condon

There have been several sightings of these birds in the northeast. I was with some other U3A birders a week ago when we saw two pairs at the Sandy Creek Reserve. Leonie Smith -Jackson also saw a pair of them at Mark Smith's property along Yabba Road a couple of weeks ago.

Description

The Australian Shelducks have an upright stance and dark head, contrasting with the white neck ring. It's a large rusty brown and black duck with extensive white in wings, with a small head and bill. The females have a distinct white ring around the eye and base of its bill, while the male has an all-black head and neck slightly tinged green. This species is also known as the chestnut breasted Shelduck, Mountain Duck and Sheldrake.

Preferred Habitat

The Australian Shelduck's primary habitat is lakes in open country. It also likes freshwater swamps, farm dams and enjoys gathering on large, deep wetlands. They like to graze on green grass, insects and seeds. They will occasionally feed on algae and molluscs. The nest of the shelduck is usually in a large tree hollow, well lined with down. They have also been known to breed in rabbit burrows and in large hollows on cliff faces.

Status and distribution

The Australian shelduck mainly breeds in southern Australia and Tasmania. After breeding, they migrate long distances to large wetlands such as Lake George in the Australian Capital Territory and the Coorong in South Australia to moult their flight and tail feathers. They are protected under the national parks and wildlife act.

Life History

Breeding season is between July and December. Only the female incubates the eggs while the male defends the broad territory. It lays eight to fifteen eggs, and these are incubated between thirty and thirty-three days. This group is monogamous, and some birds are known to create permanent pairs bonds. Within days of hatching the young are led to their nursery water by both parents or other adults. This could be 2 or 3 km away. These young are with several young from other parents and are under the care of one or more adults. The nursery group varies in size (20-40 individuals) and age range. Scientists believe the nursery supervisors are failed breeders or non-breeders.

Call/Flight

They communicate with honks, grunts, or whistles. Australian Shelduck flocks fly in long lines or in 'V' formations. Shelducks are not diving birds, but they are able to dive if necessary.