



IRAMOOZ NEWZ

IRAMOO SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY CENTRE



MOONDANI BALLUK

ISSUE 7

WINTER 2007



A word from Ranger Mel

Rain has thankfully arrived and the timing couldn't have been more perfect. Our grasslands are turning bright green, especially in the areas recently burnt. Fire is a very important tool in managing grasslands for several reasons as it: -

- Provides a mosaic of grassy habitats differing in age and structure, which helps to support a much greater diversity of grassland species.
- Opens up spaces between grass tussocks, leaving places for wildflowers to grow.
- Prevents grasses from overgrowing, becoming rank and losing their healthy vigour.
- Creates heat and the chemicals in smoke that help germinate the seed of some plants.
- Reduces the amount of herbicide used with new actively-growing weeds easier to kill, while decreasing the chance of accidentally damaging native plants.
- Improves safety for neighbours as lower fuel loads lessens the risk of uncontrolled fires.
- Replicates what indigenous people have done for thousands of years, shaping nature with the community of grassland plants and animals coming to rely on occasional fires.

Iramoo's annual burn regime is carefully organised, with the fire crew from the Department of Sustainability & Environment and Parks Victoria doing a thoroughly professional job. Before the burns, Rick also had fun driving around Iramoo's new (old) tractor - a grey Fergie Massey 135 for the machine buffs - and slasher putting in firebreaks. Two Yr 9 classes from St Albans Secondary College, along with other volunteers, will be helping with Iramoo's grassland monitoring program, including surveying for Striped Legless Lizard.

Even though rain is falling again, we still must be prepared as a community for tough water restrictions into the future. The recent Water Smart & Energy Smart Home Workshops provided many insights into the need to save water and energy, along with great ideas about how to do it. Iramoo gratefully acknowledges the support of Brimbank Council in funding these workshops and thanks Indy Lingam for presenting the topics so passionately. If the feedback received is any indication, Kathleen Kemp from Brimbank Council also got the message across in her Composting and Worm-farm Workshops, as people tell us they are now turning their green waste into garden goodies. Iramoo plans to run more of these sustainable living workshops in the future – watch this space!

It is with very mixed emotions, we say good-bye to Carol Venn, Iramoo's Community Sustainability Officer and editor of this newsletter, plus other roles. We will really miss her caring, friendly and helpful nature, along with her many skills at keeping people organised. Anyone who has ever met Carol, would join me in wishing her all the very best in an exciting new career opportunity as Coordinator of Community Development for Meadow Heights Learning Centre and Dallas Neighbourhood House. Thankfully, Carol has promised to still be around on a volunteer capacity and have her say at the Friends of Iramoo meetings (now being held on the first Tuesday of each month at 6.30pm in the Green Lab). Thanks for your dedication to Iramoo and all of your hard work!

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Pherio from Carol

Hi everyone,

*I would just like to say **Thankyou** to everyone who has supported Iramoo and myself over the last few years. I have been offered a position as Coordinator of Community Development in the Neighbourhood House Sector and hence I am moving on.*

I started here at Iramoo Sustainable Community Centre back in 2004 as a Student Volunteer, I was studying at Victoria University for my BA in Community Development. I was fortunate to pick up some paid employment after my placement. I have seen Iramoo come through some highs and lows and it is wonderful to see Iramoo is moving forward. A lot of the earlier issues that Iramoo faced with inconsistency, high staff turnover, the difficulty in organising Volunteers on the ground, lack of technology, lack of structure etc have all been overcome. Our luck certainly changed when our wonderful Ranger, Melissa Doherty, our fantastic handyman, Rick Van Keulan and our Friendly Brett McDonald joined the team. Together with all the golden Volunteers the time was right for Iramoo to go to the next level.

I have seen numerous of wonderful people come and go and when you consider how old Iramoo is, I guess I would be classed as a veteran behind Doctor Colin Hocking.

Iramoo has a dynamic lot of people who look after the grounds, the grasslands, the nursery, the animals and the administration, Volunteers and staff can not be overlooked, it is a real team effort.

It was not an easy decision for me to accept my new employment opportunity, it was with heavy heart that I decided to take up this new career path for myself. Why? Well I have grown to love Iramoo and the people that are here. When I first started I could not work out what the environment had to do with people, now I know we are part of the environment and we have a major impact on it in our daily lives, we need to take responsibility. We can all make some small contribution in our daily lives to helping to preserve the wonderful resources we have been given. I leave Iramoo as the Community Sustainability Officer, but I will remain a Volunteer with the Friends of Iramoo. I am leaving you in good hands with Helen and I am sure you will help to support her too. If you haven't been to Iramoo in a while I encourage you to come and visit, come and help me with the Friends Group. I now see myself as an advocate for Iramoo and all that it offers and I hope you do too.

Thank you again for your support and please keep involved with Iramoo, I look forward to crossing paths again at one of our meetings.

Best Wishes to All,

Carolynne Venn

2007

*P.S. My intention at present is to continue with my role of completing the quarterly newsletter of **IRAMOOZ NEWZ**. If you have any stories to go into the next newsletter (due in September) please make sure you pass it on to the staff at Iramoo. As a true community newsletter we are dependant on everyone passing on their stories. Thanking you in anticipation.*

Carol



PLANT OF THE SEASON— BASALT DAISY



Botanical name: *Brachyscome basaltica var. gracilis*

Description: Perennial daisy forming a small tuft of thin, upright stems with long, narrow light green leaves.

What location does it like? Open position in permanently moist, poorly-drained soil; full sun. accepts semi shade. Does not like permanent dry soil and is drought sensitive.

Garden use: Great groundcover for edges of ponds and bog gardens. Very effective when planted in groups.

Other uses: It provides nectar for butterflies.

Information is sourced from Plants of the Merri Merri .



I was privileged enough to attend the excellent Water-smart workshop in April at Iramoo. I made an investment and bought a rubber duck shower timer. One of my 17 year old sons enjoyed the pleasure of having his shower with the duck timer. After 4 minutes the duck made a noise, my son asked why was it making the noise, I told him the duck was telling him to get out of the shower—he did! My son actually turned off the water and got out. What a win for us, he would normally try and have a 20 minute shower if I let him get away with it (needless to say it did not happen too often!)

MAKE A SMART INVESTMENT—BUY A SHOWER TIMER, IT MAY HELP TO REDUCE YOUR SHOWERS TOO.

Cheers Carol

Insulation in your home will help with keeping the warmth in winter. It will also assist in keeping your heatings bills low.

SUSTAINABILITY



Invest in a couple of clothes racks (horses) to dry your clothes over winter. Although your clothes will take longer to dry it is far cheaper to use a clothes rack instead of the dryer. Just think of the duo role your heater plays—not only in keeping you warm, your clothes will dry too!

PROFILE OF OUR VIP.

Name: Jack Sheridan

Age: 76

Occupation: Retired Professional Firefighter.

Favourite Hobbies: Golf, History (Local, State & Australia wide) and keeping an eye on how our Council treats local Issues.

How did you get involved with Iramoo? I attended one of Iramoo's Festivals and got "Shanghaied" by Colin Hocking.

What is it about Iramoo that keeps you involved? A great chance to get involved in some small way to increase community awareness in the importance of a sustainable environment.

What is your vision for Iramoo? To see Iramoo becoming accepted by Local and surrounding communities as "theirs".



Dates to Remember

Iramoo will be open on the following weekend dates.

Time: **10-00am to 2-30pm** (3pm close)

You can come for the morning, or for the day,
it's your choice.

BYO lunch, gloves and smile.

30th June 2007—Community Garden

28th July 2007—National Plant Day

25th August 2007—Water Watch Activity

29th September 2007—Striped Legless Lizard Survey

27th October 2007—Spring Grassland Tour

24th November 2007—Sustainable Gardening Workshop

PLEASE NOTE THE SATURDAYS ARE TENTATIVE DATES. PLEASE RING AND BOOK ATTENDANCE DURING THE WEEK PRIOR. IF WE HAVE NO PRIOR BOOKINGS, WE WILL CANCEL THE DAY.

PLEASE PHONE **9919 2815** AND LEAVE YOUR MESSAGE, THANKYOU.

**EVERY TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY ARE
VOLUNTEER DAYS AT IRAMOO
TIME: 10-00 AM TO 3-00 PM**



OTHER DATES

3rd July 2007 (1st Tues. of each month except for Nov.)

7th August 2007

4th September 2007

2nd October 2007

8th November 2007

4th December 2007

FRIENDS OF IRAMOO Meeting

6-30 pm Green Lab,

Iramoo Sustainable Community Centre.

Brim BUGS meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in the Green Lab, Iramoo Sustainable Community Centre, 7pm.



**COMMUNITY GARDEN
WORKING BEES**

Working Bees will usually be held on the last Saturday of each month. If you are interested in getting involved make sure you pass your details on to Helen or Brett on 9919 2815.

Imagine taking home the veges for tonights tea knowing you assisted in growing them yourself. You couldn't get anything more fresh! YUM.

**For more information on any of the above,
please contact us.**

Iramoo Sustainable Community Centre is home to the Striped Legless Lizard, (Delma impar), Mr Curly Sedge and the Button Wrinkleworts. It is a unique place that offers sanctuary to many endangered species within the heart of St Albans. Iramoo offers educational programs to show people how they can preserve the habitat for our special animals and plants.

By participating in our activities people see that the loss of habitat is the primary reason for the loss of many species and we now have a chance of reversing the damage.

Friends of Iramoo

meet on the

*1st Tuesday of each
month in the Green Lab*

Time 6-30pm

Membership—\$5 a year

*Contact us at Iramoo
for more information.*

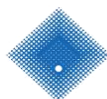
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THOUGHT**

iramoo@vu
Vibrant, sustainable culture in the West