



**Nillumbik
Climate
Action
Team**

Newsletter June 2026

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1. Climate Cafe 2026



June 2026 Climate Cafe: Environmental and Climate Resilience Benefits of Cohousing



The **cohousing model** is not one that many Nillumbik residents are familiar with, but a small group of committed participants are preparing to launch into a new way of life when the Brougham St cohousing development is completed early in 2027.

Teresa Dominik, a member of the **Brougham St Cohousing community** who has a background in local government planning and is currently a Board member of [Cohousing Australia](#), took us through the story of the Brougham St project, and outlined the many advantages of this model of housing, including the significant opportunities to **strengthen climate adaptation and community resilience** through a design that intentionally fosters social connection and builds social capital and mutual support among residents.

A **summary of Teresa's presentation** can be found [here](#), and **presentation slides** can be found [here](#).

At the end of this month **Dr Rachel Busbridge** will present on the **concept of the Anthropocene** in a talk titled **How does the Anthropocene change how we think about society?** The term *Anthropocene* designates an **emerging geological epoch** where humans have taken on planetary powers in reshaping the Earth system, and is as influential as it is contentious. First proposed in the natural sciences, the **Anthropocene concept is now ubiquitous across the social sciences and humanities**, where it has initiated vibrant debates about unequal responsibility for the intertwined climate and ecological crises we face. In this talk, Rachel will explore the ways in which the Anthropocene changes how we think about society. Specifically, she reflects on how its basic premise – **that human activity has become a powerful geophysical force impacting natural processes** – upends conventional assumptions about human agency, human institutions, and the nature-society relationship. Seen as a conceptual lens, the Anthropocene highlights the **necessity of relational forms of thinking and systems change** for comprehending and confronting the planetary predicament in which we find ourselves.

Rachel Busbridge is an **Associate Professor of Sociology at the Australian Catholic University** in Melbourne, as well as an environmentalist and climate activist. She is a political sociologist who researches, writes, and teaches on cultural politics, local government, and the environment, amongst others.

The program until September **2026** is as follows:

June 25: How does the Anthropocene change how we think about society? - Dr Rachel Busbridge, Environmental Sociologist

July 30: Sustainable Gardens - Robyn and Paul Gale-Baker, Local Food Connect

August 27: Nurturing Local Biodiversity - Jill Kellow and Vicky Shukuroglou

September 24: Talking to Kids about Climate Change - Dr Aimee Maxwell

Where: Platform 3095 Cafe, 965 Main Rd, Eltham

When: 7:30pm last Thursday of the month February to November

As always, you are welcome to join us earlier for a meal from 6pm onwards if you can, or come at 7.30pm for the speaker event.

nillumbikclimateactionteam.org/ncat-climate-cafe/

2. Make Big Polluters Pay Campaign



Elizabeth and Mitzi gathering signatures outside the Eltham Bookshop with the help of a young Nillumbik resident.

The signatures for the Nillumbik petition to [Make Big Polluters Pay](#) campaign are now nearing **500!** The week of 18 to 24 May saw a nationwide 'week of action' as **Communities for Climate Compensation** teams from across the country got out into their communities to engage in conversations about polluters paying their fair share. You may have seen Nillumbik Climate Action Team volunteers with their clipboards in central Eltham chatting to locals and collecting signatures.

A huge **thank you** to all those who have already signed the Nillumbik petition.

If you have not already done so, please sign the Shire of Nillumbik petition to make big polluters pay their fair share. [Click here](#) to sign the petition.

Soon, we will be approaching Nillumbik Council to ask them to endorse a motion to make big polluters pay.

3. Victorian Election Climate Convergence



On Saturday 23 May about 200 people from community groups and climate and environment NGOs attended an event, **Climate Convergence**, organised by an alliance of **Environment Victoria, Friends of the Earth**, and other groups.

The focus was on **working together across the environment movement on the Victorian state election** coming up in November. First up there was a “setting the context” introduction and a plenary session with panelists from **Sweltering Cities**, the **ACTU** and **Asians for Climate** and then we turned attention to thinking about strategy through sharing knowledge, discussing campaign plans and tactics and sharpening organisation skills through the many workshops on offer. Workshops included **telling the climate story we need, running a candidates forum and scorecard campaign** and **combatting mis- and disinformation**.

The **climate and environment policy platform** that has been put forward to strategise the election campaign as a basis for collaboration is [here](#). The three key pillars that we will be asking the next Victorian state government to deliver on are:

- continue with the renewable energy rollout
- make clean energy affordable
- prepare and protect communities.

There are policy asks under these pillars. Community groups will be able to engage with whatever they think will be suitable for the needs of their communities.

Nillumbik Climate Action Team will be developing a **candidate scorecard on environment and climate policies**, particularly around the renewable energy transition, electrification and protection of native forests. We would greatly welcome help with **distribution and community conversations**. If you would like to be involved, we would welcome a return email.

4. Meeting with Vicki Ward about securing permanent protection for Victoria's forests



Nillumbik Climate Action Team (NCAT) met with **Vicki Ward, MP for Eltham**, on 29 May to discuss ways in which **Victoria's forests could be permanently protected from all future industrial and commercial resource extraction**. This meeting was undertaken as part of a state-wide [Closing Logging Loopholes campaign](#).

While native forest logging officially ended at the beginning of 2024, there is mounting [evidence to indicate that timber harvesting continues to be carried out](#) under a number of different guises. Furthermore, a future government could reverse the decision of the Victorian government to officially end logging, as the legislation that enabled logging remains in place. High conservation forests that are vital for biodiversity protection and climate resilience remain vulnerable.

NCAT presented Vicki with a signed [letter](#) requesting that the Victorian Labor government:

- close the loopholes that continue to exist in legislation that could allow the recommencement of industrial scale native forest logging at any time,

- ensure that the industrial and commercial extractive activities that are currently permitted are excluded from State Forests,
- prioritise biodiversity protection, climate resilience, ecological restoration and support of Tradition Owner healing and caring for Country,
- review Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMV) activities and ensure ecological oversight of forest management,
- close private land logging loopholes.

Vicki undertook to pass on some of these requests to the **Environment Minister, Enver Erdogan**, but would not commit to those that she considered conflicted with current forest fire management practices.

Before the meeting concluded, Vicki was asked if she would be attending a **Parliament House screening of [Forest Country](#)** on 4 June, a short film directed by **Lewi Haskins** about the threats currently facing Victoria's tall forests. All Victorian MPs have been invited to attend this event.

Forest Country will also be screened in Hurstbridge on 12 August for a wider audience. Look for further information about this in an upcoming newsletter.

5. How will history judge us?



Natalie Kyriacou, environmentalist, social entrepreneur, and founder of My Green World, recently gave an excoriating speech at Conversations at the Crossroads' **Reclaiming Democracy launch** on 9 May. She began by posing a question to the audience - in 500 years, how would future humans or humanoids describe what the world looks like in 2026? How would we be judged?

"We were the only species that actively debated whether or not we should maintain the environmental conditions necessary for our own continued existence. Ensuring the health of things like the atmosphere, the oceans, forests, rivers and animals would presumably be an obvious priority for a species that relied entirely on these things to survive, something that we could all agree on. But no, we couldn't agree on that.

Children were starving en masse, and though we had the ability to stop that, we chose not to.

We have split the atom, cracked the genetic code and we have hurtled expensive metal objects into space, often with people inside, just to see if we could... **but when it comes to the questions of whether we should keep our own planet habitable and our own people alive we remain curiously undecided.**"

She went on to outline five **lessons that we could learn from the animal world**: functional societies share the burden, social systems collapse without trust and accountability, no single individual should own information, and more.

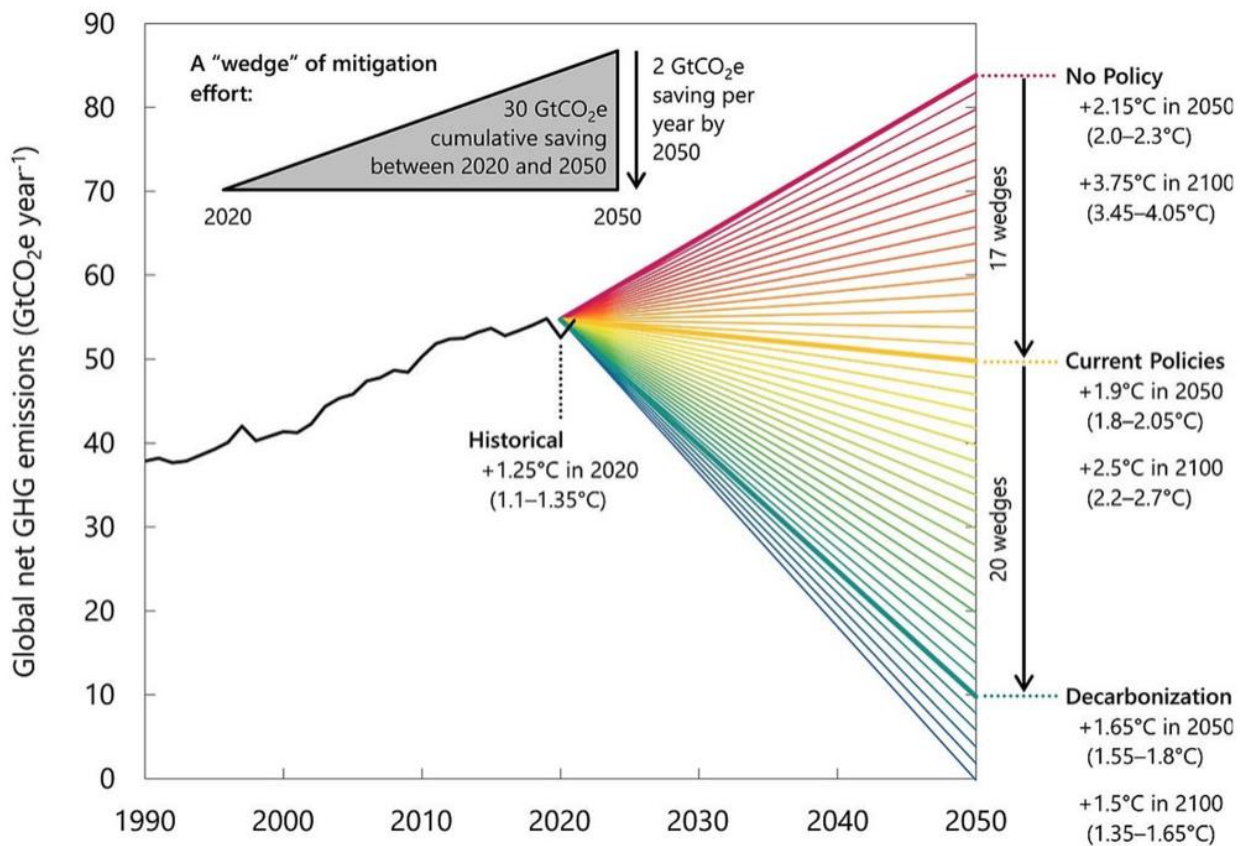
Natalie concluded with a powerful call to action. **"The world doesn't have to be this way.** We made it this way. We tolerate it. We endorse it. **And now we must unmake it."**

Click [here](#) to watch the recording of Natalie's speech.

To view the recording of the complete event, including memorable speeches by **John Keane** and **Gillian Triggs**, click [here](#).

Natalie is the author of **Nature's Last Dance: Tales of wonder in an Age of Extinction**.

6. A garden of climate solutions



A new paper in [Science](#) presents 36 strategies to solve climate change. If we implement 20 of them and keep up current climate policies, we can limit warming to 1.5°C.

This study shows how much climate pollution each solution avoids, enabling apples-to-apples comparisons using “climate wedges”. One wedge reduces global emissions 4% by 2050.

Current policies represent 17 wedges; fully implemented, they get us about halfway to 1.5°C. The analysis shows these options have equivalent global climate benefits:

- **Reduce flying 70% =**
- **Replace 17% of fossil cars with electric vehicles =**
- **Replace 73% of current cookstoves with clean ones =**
- **Install heat pumps in 38% of global buildings =**
- **Reduce meat consumption 31% in over-consuming regions**

Less than half the wedges (17/36) appear in the IPCC database, which favours tech and power sector solutions, while under-representing solutions involving behaviour change, nature, and degrowth (reduced production and consumption).

The [Johnson and Staffell](#) analysis provides support for **effective nature-based and behavioural solutions** that current models overlook.

From [We Can Fix It](#) by **Kim Nicholas**

7. Outcomes from Santa Marta, Columbia

The Santa Marta summit on ending fossil fuels has **changed the landscape of global climate diplomacy**.

Co-hosted by **Columbia** and **The Netherlands**, the conference brought together almost 60 countries, representing about a third of the global economy. Together they launched a new international process to coordinate the phase-out of coal, oil and gas.

This brings us **closer to the end of the fossil fuel era**. It is clear climate diplomacy now has two operating speeds. The first speed is that of the UN climate talks, which are slower and anchored in consensus. They ensure legitimacy, universality and collective direction.

But what the Santa Marta conference shows is the existence of a **second, much faster speed** available to any country wanting to rapidly move to end the use of fossil fuels, once and for all.

From CANAchat, 8 May 2026.

See also [Much needed fresh air: 5 outcomes from the world's first summit on ending fossil fuels](#).

8. Webinar: Green fire-walls

How we chose the fire-wise plants on our list:

- Low oil content
- High moisture content
- Locally adapted, making them easier to maintain or more drought tolerant
- High salt content
- Smooth bark
- Don't lose large amounts of needles or leaves.

Blue olive berry (*Elaeocarpus reticulatis*)

Photo: [Degrowth is the Answer](#)

Bushfires seem a long way off now, but meteorologists warn us that we are heading for a [super El Nino event](#) in the coming months, which will significantly increase the risk of bushfire. One current strategy for bushfire mitigation is to conduct 'fuel reduction' burns. However, [research by fire behaviour ecologists](#) has shown that planned burns not only result in forests that are more flammable after a couple of years, a condition called 'disturbance-stimulated flammability', but cause devastation to wildlife and result in serious health impacts for humans.

There is another solution. Green fire-walls focus on using fire-wise garden design and native vegetation on farms and roadside reserves to **reduce the impact of bushfires on humans, wildlife and property**. While the green fire-walls project mainly concentrated on plants that grow in the Gippsland region, many of these are also indigenous to Nillumbik, and the critical features (e.g. high moisture content, smooth bark) can be used to select suitable local plants.

This webinar, hosted by [Victorian Forest Alliance](#) and presented by **Angelique Stefanatos**, describes how we can **construct green fire-walls using native vegetation**, and educate ourselves and others to better understand fire and forests.

To watch the webinar, click [here](#).

To access the Firewise Shelterbelt Design Brochure and the Firewise Garden Design Brochure, click [here](#).

9. Hurstbridge gets a community energy lifeline

Nillumbik Shire Council has installed a solar and battery system at the **Hurstbridge Football and Cricket Pavilion** — creating a **Community Energy Resilience Centre for local residents**.

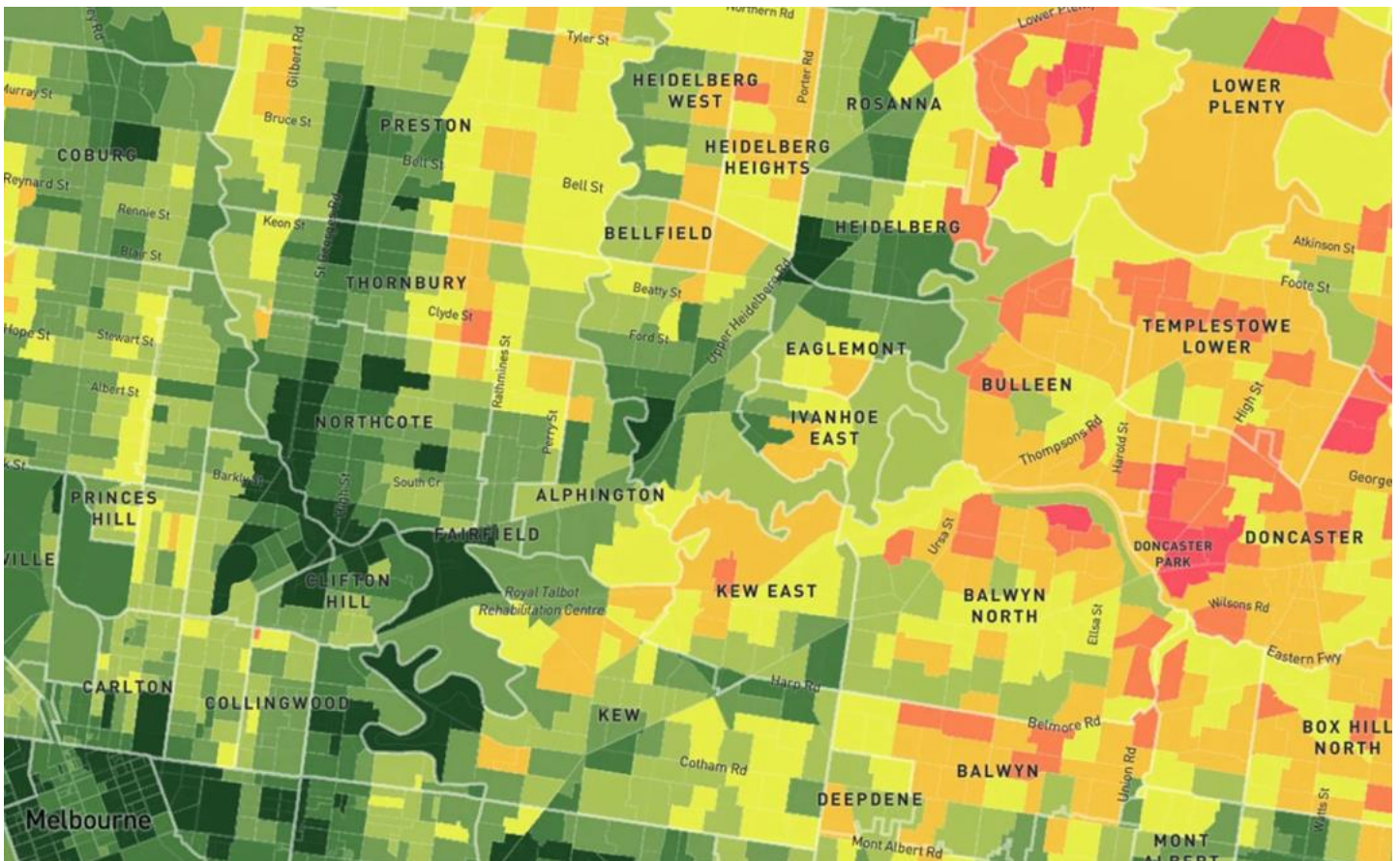
During power outages and heatwaves, the Centre can provide backup power for showers, refrigeration, device charging and more.

The back-up system was funded by the Victorian Government's 100 [Neighbourhood Batteries Program](#) and forms part of Council's commitment to climate resilience and clean energy.

If you're interested in learning more about solar and batteries for your home or club's building, book in to a [1:1 session](#) with the Council's Sustainability team.

Reprinted from [Nillumbik Environment and Sustainability enews](#) May 2026

10. The Climate Resilience Index



As the impacts of the climate crisis continue to evolve, **how are Melbourne's neighbourhoods addressing sustainability, vulnerability and resilience?**

The [Climate Resilience Index](#) developed by [Tract](#) and [OneMap](#) is a new and innovative tool that **evaluates the capacity of Melbourne's neighbourhoods to effectively address climate change.**

Climate resilient neighbourhoods include qualities such as compactness with proximate access to services and infrastructure, low vulnerability to climate change impacts, and active support of

biodiversity. The Index evaluates these characteristics via an online interactive map at various geographic scales. Parameters measured cover amenities, transport, biodiversity and hazard resilience.

To see where Nillumbik (and even your street address!) sits on the resilience scale, click [here](#).

11. Giant map reveals thousands of cities worldwide with successful green policies



City-level policies in Guangzhou, China have seen economic growth combined with falling fossil-fuel emissions. Photo:Edward Webb/Alamy

For most of modern history, **economic growth has been tightly coupled with the use of fossil fuels**. Cities now house [more than half of the world's population](#), and that urbanisation has come hand-in-hand with ecological degradation, air pollution and greenhouse-gas emissions.

But now, an assessment of 2,475 of the world's biggest cities has found that in 80% of them, **economic growth is no longer dependent on an increase in fossil-fuel-related emissions**. The study, published recently in *Nature Cities*, used satellite data to measure levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) emitted from cities, and compared these data with information on [gross domestic product](#) (GDP). The findings indicate that **almost 2,000 cities worldwide have implemented green policies that generated economic prosperity while reducing dependencies on fossil fuels**.

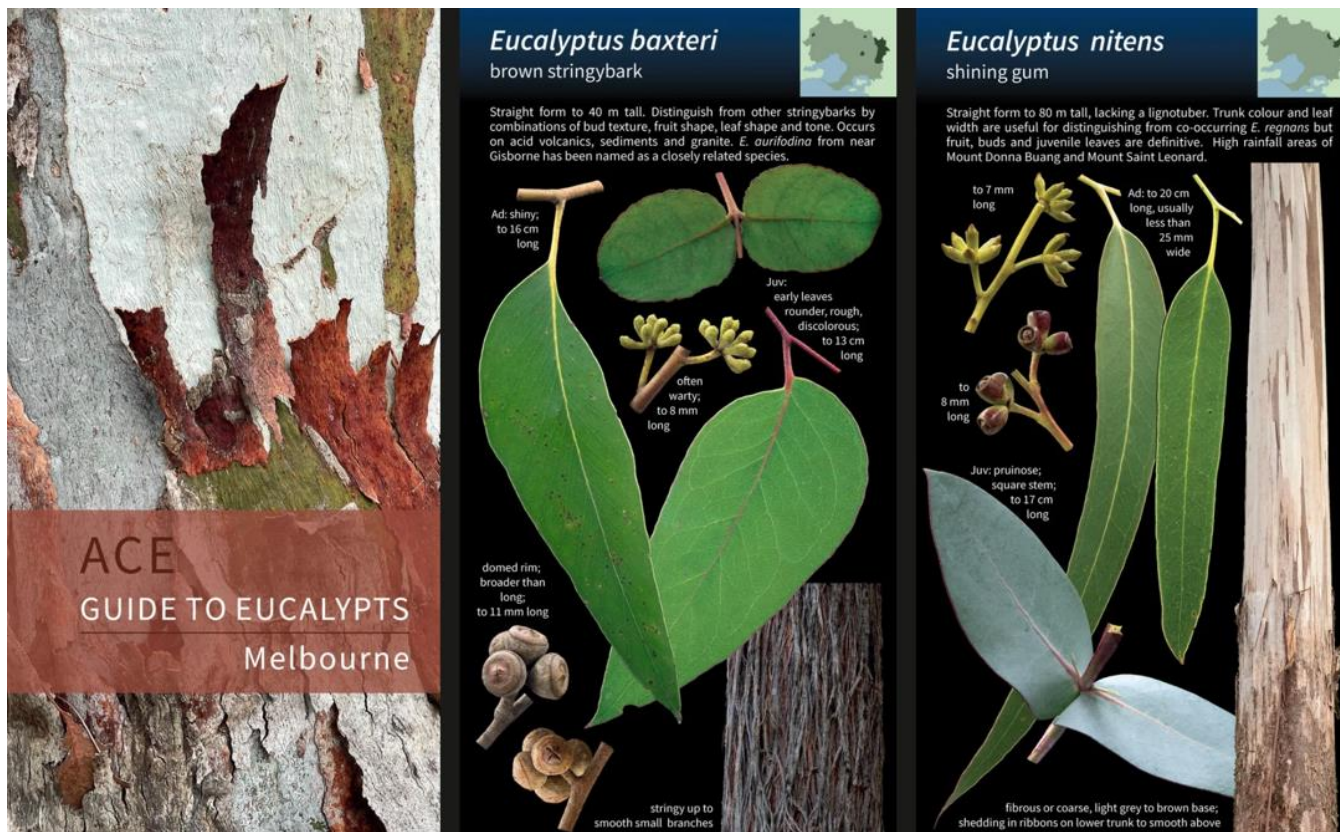
To read the full article from Nature, click [here](#).

12. Quote of the Month

"Here is a truth that those in power have never quite figured out how to deal with: change doesn't start at the top. It starts at the fringes. It starts with people who have the least and stand to lose the most. And eventually, it ends up in the halls of power."

— Louise Morris, Advocate at The Australia Institute, from the First Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels in Santa Marta, Colombia

13. ACE Guide to Eucalypts Melbourne



Local author and convenor of [Nillumbio](#), **Vicky Shukuroglou**, has co-authored a pocket field guide to Melbourne's eucalypt species - the [ACE Guide to Eucalypts Melbourne](#). This book makes identification a breeze. **36 eucalypt species** - 32 indigenous and 4 introduced - of greater Melbourne are beautifully photographed by Vicky in intimate detail, identified by bark, fruit, bud and leaf.

This book is really first class. The text is so well written and covers all the important topics that are often overlooked, like evolution, habitat values, and uses by First Peoples. The photos are beautiful, diagnostic, and very useful for identification.

— Karl Just, Ecologist

Buy online [here](#). \$30 plus \$7.50 postage and handling.

14. Petition: End destructive bottom trawling in Australia's marine parks



If you saw the recent David Attenborough film **Ocean**, with its graphic footage of the annihilation of complex marine ecosystems on the ocean floor through destructive bottom trawling, you will be rushing to sign the **Australian Marine Conservation Society's petition** to stop bottom trawling, if you haven't already.

Destructive bottom trawling is an **intensive fishing method** that ploughs heavy gear across the seabed, removing target species while damaging entire marine communities that can take generations to recover.

Yet bottom trawling is still permitted in about 13 million hectares of our offshore Australian Marine Parks – that's an area almost twice the size of Tasmania!

Click [here](#) to sign the petition.

13. Climate Fiction

The [Books List](#) has compiled a **top 20 list of fiction to inspire climate action**, put together by guest contributor **Denise Baden**. Unlike fiction which focuses on apocalyptic messages of negativity and doom, this list emphasises what we can *do*. It includes young adult fiction, fiction which targets mainstream readers, and fiction set in the near future which maps a pathway to a sustainable society.

16. Friends Groups in Nillumbik - - Friends of Diamond Valley by Sue Dyet



Friends of the Diamond Creek (Eltham Lower Park) started in 1991 after a public meeting run by Eltham Council where over 90 people gave their names as interested.

Initially we organised weeding working bees at a number of sites along the creek but quickly sanity prevailed and we found a home working in Eltham Lower Park. Since then, Friends of the Diamond Creek (Hurstbridge) has formed and also the Friends of Edendale group who work along the Diamond Creek around Edendale.

All are working on restoring and enhancing the vegetation on the slopes and banks along the riparian zone of the creek with the aim of improving the biodiversity on land and within the waterway.

Most friends' groups meet monthly with the possible exemptions of December and January. Friends of the Diamond Creek (ELP) meet on the last Sunday of the month from 10 to midday. We are prompt in packing up as we are aware that many people have Sunday lunches and other commitments! There have been paths, both formal and informal, in the park since the 1800s – did you know the park was the town race course? However nowhere in the park could you walk along the creek, so we created a short nature trail, with information signs. It starts near the Butterfly playground and is ideal for families to try while at the playground or waiting for the train. It ends near the new dog park.

Because the slope of the banks of the creek have become a challenge for some of us, with the agreement of Council, last year we started revegetating a flat area as part of the park, as well as maintaining along the path. Over the years we have undertaken working in the park in a number of areas – including the loop of the road just past the Butterfly playground.

We would be delighted to see new people at our planting days this year. Turn left at the park entrance, drive as far as you can, and you will see our green and white banner where we are working, between the new dog park and the internal road.

Sundays 31 May - 28 June - 26 July, 10am-12pm. Wear appropriate clothing for the day, long pants and sleeves, and bring your own gloves. For more information, email elthamvictoria@hotmail.com.

17. NCAT membership

We warmly invite you to become a **member of Nillumbik Climate Action Team**. Members and supporters participate in and help with various events, activities, and public actions according to ability and interest. If you would like to become more actively involved there is also the possibility of joining our monthly planning meetings.

NCAT Membership is free. If you wish to become a member, please fill in the [membership form](#) and return to info@nillumbikclimateactionteam.org.

15. Upcoming Events

REthink Nillumbik 2026 program

The REthink Nillumbik Program is a series of fun, interactive workshops designed to create a more sustainable and liveable Nillumbik. Sessions include a range of activities to help local residents reimagine our collective approach to energy and waste.

REthink events are collaborative, hands-on, and can help people take small actions that can lead to serious, positive change. They include practical demonstrations, creative activities, and simple ideas for rethinking everyday choices and behaviours.

Click [here](#) for more information about upcoming REthink Nillumbik events for 2026.

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Panton Hill Fungi Foray, Saturday 20 June 10am-12pm, Bunjil Reserve Panton Hill

Interested in learning more about Nillumbik's amazing fungi? Learn to ID the mushrooms you see in our local parks or bushland. Join Melvin Xu, a local expert on fungi, for a talk and walk in Bunjil Reserve.

Click [here](#) to register.

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Is an Electric Vehicle right for me? Saturday 20 June 1.30-3pm, Edendale Farm

A practical information session from EV expert **Bryce Gaton**! It'll cover topics like what to look for when choosing an EV, how range and charging infrastructure work in practice, and common myths you might have heard.

Click [here](#) to register.

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Energy and Sustainable Living Advice

Nillumbik Council offers a personalised advisory service for Nillumbik residents and businesses on how to navigate the confusing world of energy and sustainable living.

Click here [here](#) for more information.

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Edendale Community Environment Farm events calendar

Click [here](#) to view the wide range of events on offer from Edendale Farm, including Waterwise wicking beds, Basic bike maintenance, Repair, restore and upcycle furniture, Edendale repair cafe, Food, fibre and medicine plants of the local area, and many more.

Support us

[Nillumbik Climate Action Team \(NCAT\)](#) is a small volunteer organisation.
We rely on donations to support our work.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to date.
We couldn't do it without you!

If you are able to [support us](#), even in a small way, we'd be very grateful.

[DONATE to NCAT](#)



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Owners of Nillumbik and its environs, and that this land was never ceded. We thank them for their custodianship of the land over millennia.

We acknowledge that we are in a climate emergency; there can be no climate justice without First Nations justice.

We support First Nations peoples in their striving for complete recognition, truth-telling, treaty and justice, and we are sorry for the hurt and injustice we have caused.

nillumbikclimateactionteam.org