



Betty competing in the Megavalanche and on the podium in France

Mega effort for the win!

My name is Betty and this year I competed in the Megavalanche for the third year in a row. The Megavalanche is a famous mass-start downhill mountain bike race at Alpe d'Huez in France. The adults start 3330 metres above sea level at Pic Blanc and race the first 1-2 km on the glacier. The whole race is about 20 km long and finishes at Allemond at 720 metres above sea level. They also climb around 100 metres so it's not all descending!

The Megakids race starts lower down the mountain at 2700 metres and we finish at the village after 7.2 km and 25 metres of elevation. This is also the adults qualification course and said to be the hardest, most technical part of the whole Mega!

We had about a week before the race to train the course and I practiced with my Dad, his friend John and the Chauffin family, a french family with two boys my age who also raced. I got some good lines from John, Hubert, Felix and Victor and was looking forward to the race.

Race day came, and there was only one other girl in U17, her name was Eleanor and she was from England. We chatted a bit on the start line and I wasn't sure what sort of a rider she was, or if I could beat her. The start of the race was sketchy as usual, with all the boys jostling for places (the girls start with the boys in the Megakid). Eleanor did get in front of me in the top section out in the open but I got back in front just before the course narrowed into single track.

The first half of the Mega is steep with big stone slabs, dust and loose rocks but I managed to ride all my lines cleanly. The second half is just flowy corners and some climbing, which I can easily say is the hardest part. I beat Eleanor in the first race with a time of 19:31, but we still had to ride the second race and then our points from both races would be added together to determine our final result.

We had a couple hours before the next race so I grabbed some lunch and talked with Eleanor about the course and where she was from. I think it's always great to make friends with your competitors and meet more girls who ride!

Before we knew it, we were back on the start line for the second race and sprinting for positions! I had another clean run, no stacks, but when it came to the climbing I was so tired from the first race I couldn't push myself as hard. I finished with a slightly slower time of 20:25, but still beat Eleanor who had unfortunately crashed and got a flat.

I was really happy to get 1st given I got 3rd last year and the year before! We had podium and I was stoked to have had such an amazing day!

Former Forrest Primary School student and Forrest resident Betty Olle is a guest writer this week sharing her recent trip to the French Alps to compete in the Mega Kids downhill mtb race on Alpe d'Huez. Betty cut her teeth on our tracks and is now based in Mt Beauty - thanks for sharing your story, Betty!



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and waters around us, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We respect their cultural heritage and knowledge here in Forrest where the waters flow over Gadubanud and Gulidjan Country.

SAVE THE DATE: WOMEN OF THE OTWAYS GET TOGETHER AND CLOTHES SWAP - 30 AUG 2-5PM



Colac Otway Shire News

Council and Committee Meetings

Monthly Council meetings commence at 1pm (unless otherwise advertised) on the fourth Tuesday of the month (except December). All meetings will be at COPACC unless otherwise advertised.

Upcoming Council and Committee (Submissions and Planning) meetings for 2026 are listed on Council's website.

Meetings are livestreamed and members of the public can view meetings on Council's YouTube channel.

Submit a question for a Council meeting

Colac Otway Shire Council encourages questions from residents. There is thirty minutes of question time at the beginning of Council meetings. Questions to Council need to be short and direct (not statements or discussions). Each question asked/submitted must not be greater than three minutes in duration.

Ways to ask a question:

In writing – written questions are read out by the Chair of the meeting. Questions must be received no later than 5pm the Friday prior to the meeting.

Email: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

Post: PO Box 283, Colac VIC 3250

Online form: [Submit a Question for a Council Meeting - Colac Otway Shire](#)

Questions in writing must be clearly marked and include your name and address, organisation (if applicable), date of submission and your question.

Via video link – members of the public may join the meeting via MS Teams to ask a question.

In-person – register your intent to ask a question upon entering the gallery at a Council meeting.

For further information on Council meetings, agendas, minutes and submitting a question please visit [Council Meetings, Agendas & Minutes - Colac Otway Shire](#)

Have Your Say

Draft Council Committees Policy

Council is seeking your feedback on the Draft Council Committees Policy.

This policy provides a framework for assessing, establishing, managing and reviewing Committees formed by Colac Otway Shire and its representation on external Committees and appointments.

Submissions close at 5pm on Wednesday 5 August 2026

Draft Privacy Policy

Council is seeking your feedback on the Draft Privacy Policy.

This policy guides Council's commitment to meeting community expectations in the responsible handling of personal information and to complying with its obligations under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001*.

Submissions close at 5pm on Wednesday 5 August 2026

Visit www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay to keep up to date with projects and initiatives on public exhibition for community feedback.

Colac Service Centre: 2- 6 Rae Street, Colac, Open: Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5pm   
Ph: 5232 9400 Email: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au or find us online: www.colacotway.vic.gov.au

Run Forrest: a local perspective

11 year old Aarli from Forrest ran the 6km race at Run Forrest and had this to say about the experience.

What made you decide to enter?
I just felt like doing it.

What was the best part?
The sprint at the end!

What would you tell other people about it?
It was really fun! It was really slippery and steep and that made it fun and funny. I slipped lots but didn't fall over. But I did see someone slide down the hill in the mud!

Would you do it again?
Yes!

Freya Bennett



Shakespeare's Insult for August

The FP is running a competition this month for readers to offer suggestions as to who this insult might apply to - it's a good one, along with being a masterclass in the use of apostrophes!

"Away you starvelling, you elf-skin, you dried neat's-tongue, bull's pizzle, you stock-fish!"

- Henry IV Part 1 (Act2, Scene 4).

Writers: Freya Bennett, , Mary Dracup, Barb Howard, Gillian Brew, Abigail Pakula, Adam Davies and Ian Fry.

Design: Gillian Brew **Printing:** Forrest Primary School

Proofreaders: Mike and Katrine Juleff, Rob Carghill, Amelia McBride Baker & Sarah Lane.

The Forrest Post is run by volunteers and auspiced by the Forrest Men's Shed. Every effort is made to remain current, accurate and non-partisan. Feedback, submissions and advertising are encouraged. Submissions may be edited. You can request an electronic version by email, find us on Facebook, online at forrestvictoria.com or via The State Library Victoria. Contact us at theforrestpost@gmail.com.

A bittersweet memoir with local flavour

Memoir of a Snail (2024) is another bittersweet claymation film made by Adam Elliot (who also made our beloved *Mary and Max*). Loosely following Elliot's life story as a lonely misfit growing up in Melbourne, it tends towards the dark side. However, the diverse characters make a surprising and funny mix and the innocent tone of the narration carries the viewer lightly through the crises the poor lead character Grace Pudel faces.

Characters include Grace's father, a former juggler but now a paraplegic alcoholic; neglectful foster parents Ian and Narelle; twin brother Gilbert, from whom she is separated in childhood; and Grace's kind, eccentric elderly woman friend Pinky. The plot includes a failed marriage to a microwave repairman with a fetish, obsessive hoarding, arson, attempted suicide and finally, thankfully, reunion. Hope triumphs and kindness provides the trump card.

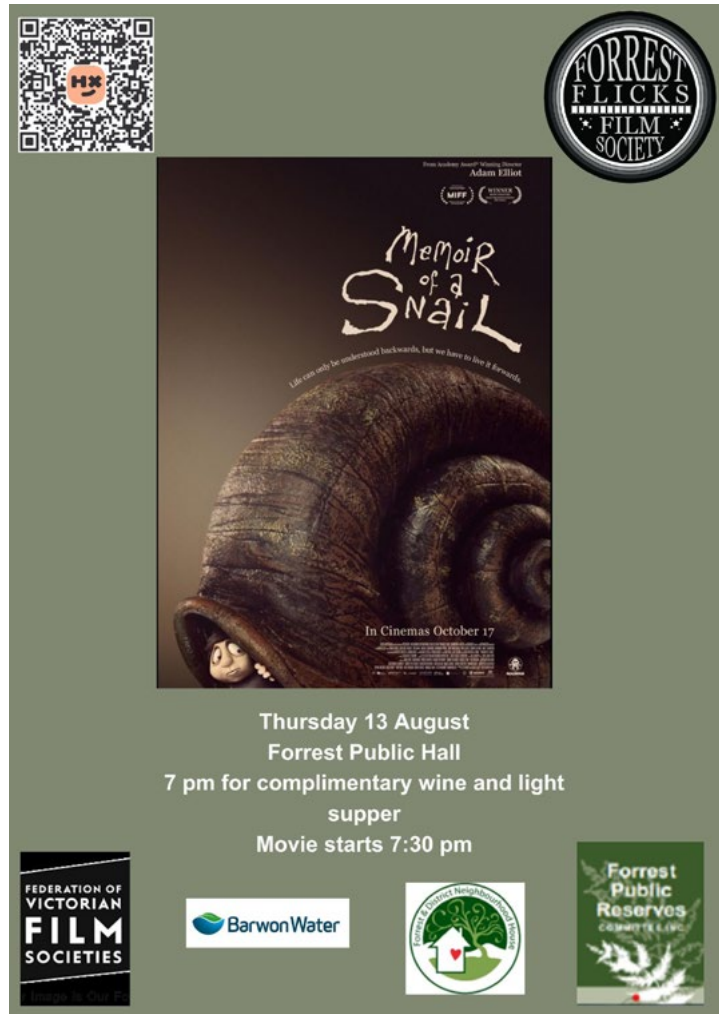
Once again, the audience will recognise the voices of Australian actors including Sarah Snook, Eric Bana, Magda Szubanski and Jacki Weaver. The poignant original score was composed by acclaimed Australian composer Elena Kats-Chernin. The movie has won numerous international awards, including best film, best actress and best animated feature.

Memoir of a Snail will be showing on Thursday 13 August at the Forrest Hall. Doors open at 7pm with a free glass of wine and nibbles. The film starts at 7:30, followed by tea/coffee and a chance to chat about the film with your neighbours. Subtitles will be shown.

Forrest Flicks Film Society subscriptions for will be on sale at the door with cash, or online through Humanitix using the QR code in the picture. Subscription costs are:

- 3 films - \$25/\$20 concession
- 1 film trial - donation of \$10/\$8 concession or use this as a deposit on a 3-film subscription.

Mary Dracup



Movie poster for *Memoir of a Snail* (2024) by Adam Elliot. The poster features a large snail with a face inside its shell. Text on the poster includes "Memoir of a Snail", "Life can only be understood backwards, but we have to live it forwards.", and "In Cinemas October 17".

Thursday 13 August
Forrest Public Hall
7 pm for complimentary wine and light supper
Movie starts 7:30 pm

Logos: Federation of Victorian Film Societies, Barwon Water, Forrest Public Reserves.



Freyja Bennett, Nicky Howland, Simon and Aarli Hoey (and Mishka the dog).



Photo credits Dan Moriarty and Lee Komissarov

Cycling news

On a typically cold and wet Saturday in June, Forrest MTB Club was thrilled to welcome XC racing back to Yaughar in partnership with Geelong Mountain Bike Club (GMBC). The clubs teamed up to host a round of the GMBC No Frills race series in Forrest and about 30 brave riders turned out to race two enduro style loops with an untimed section in the middle. The first loop took in the legendary Grasstrees and Marriners Run, and the second loop combined Foxtail and J2 in reverse which evened out the field by removing the home ground advantage! Forrest was well represented with three riders competing, and of course the Club supporting the event and providing the post-race bbq.

Freyja Bennett



Forrest & District Neighbourhood House - AUGUST 2026



REGULAR ACTIVITIES AT THE F&DNH

MONDAYS - open 12pm-4pm
(incorporating youth group)

Youth group: 3.30-4.30pm over winter. Open to youth in grade 5 and up. Cost is \$20 per term or a gold coin each week.

TUESDAYS - open 8.30am-3.30pm

Playgroup: 10am-12pm. Gold coin weekly. Open to all families with young children.

Craft group: 2.30pm-4.30pm each week in winter. BYO craft project. Gold coin.

Seniors morning tea: First Tuesday each month, 10.30am-11.30am. Gold coin.

Book club: Now once a term 2nd Tuesday of each term 7.30pm. Gold coin

Weeding group: 4th Tuesday of the month 10am-12pm. Contact Susan Langridge for details 0498 592 364.

Pantry top up and food boxes: Please contact coordinator to arrange or visit the pantry after top up (from 12pm). Food available to all in the community.

WEDNESDAYS - open 8.30am-3.30pm

Yoga: 9.10-10.30am, \$15 per class

Forrest voices (singing for fun):

11am-12pm. Gold coin.

Studio Forrest art group:

1pm-5pm, \$200 per semester.

Peer led local art group.

Pantry top up: evening after 8pm. Food available to all the community.

THURSDAYS - coordinator at the hall

Community lunch: Take away or dine in. Order on Wednesdays through Facebook or text 0493105502, pick up from the hall at 12.30pm on the day. \$8. Return containers each week!

FRIDAYS - CLOSED

Community Gym (at the rec reserve):

memberships available, contact coordinator for more info. Gym access 6am-10pm daily.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES & EVENTS:**SAVE THE DATE:**

**Women of the Otways Spring
Get Together and Clothes Swap
Sunday 30th August 2-5pm.**

**Bring something to swap and find
some treasures of your own.**

BYO refreshments.



WE ALSO HAVE: Free WiFi • Printing services • Room hire • Community spaces • Reading room • Food share • Clothes swap • Forrest & District Historical Society display and library • Treatment/massage room for hire • Office space • Computers and more!

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM FOR UP TO DATE INFO AND EVENTS!

Mon 12-4pm, Tue, Wed 8.30am-3.30pm Thu - at the hall, 8.30am-3.30pm

Office hours may change or be limited if coordinator or volunteers are unavailable.

Please phone ahead if required **Ph: 0493 105 502**

E: forrest.nh@gmail.com A: Forrest Community Hub - 47 Grant Street, Forrest 3236



**Colac Otway
SHIRE**

Open to Colac Otway Shire Youth aged 12-25

2026 YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

FOCUS:
LOOKING THROUGH MY LENS

Enter now! Showcase your photography skills for a chance to win prizes!

Submit your entry:
colacotway.vic.gov.au/2026YouthPhotoComp
or scan the QR code

Look through the lens**2026 Youth Photography Competition**

Entries are now open for the 2026 Youth Photography Competition providing an opportunity for young people to get behind the lens and showcase their creativity.

Now in its fourth year, the 2026 competition theme is 'Focus: Looking Through My Lens', with aspiring photographers from across the shire encouraged to share their perspective. Youth Engagement Project Officer Chelsea Sharp encouraged young people aged 12 to 25 to enter the competition.

"Whether you're right into photography or just love snapping pics on your phone, this competition is about celebrating creativity," Ms Sharp said.

Standout entries from the 2026 Youth Photography Competition will be professionally printed and exhibited to the public at COPACC (14 September to 4 October 2026). All photographs will also feature in an online exhibition.

Community members will be able to vote for their favourite photo online, at COPACC and via social media as part of the People's Choice Award.

Previous entrants have had their photographs included in Council's 2024-25 Annual Report. The competition is open to all young people aged 12 – 25 who live, work and/or study in Colac Otway Shire.

To find out further information and submit an entry, visit Council's website: www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/2026YouthPhotoComp

Entries close at midnight on Friday 4 September 2026.

Entries Close:
Friday 4 September at 11:59pm



New CFA Ultralight for Forrest

Forrest CFA is pleased to announce the arrival of a new ultralight firefighting vehicle, designed to give our community faster initial response to fires, especially in hard-to-access areas. This agile appliance will help our volunteers tackle small fires and spot fires quickly, reducing the chance they grow into larger, more dangerous incidents.

The new ultralight vehicle is part of the Country Fire Authority's broader move to provide smaller, more maneuverable tankers that can reach places our larger trucks cannot, such as farm paddocks, bush tracks and steep or narrow terrain. Based at Forrest CFA and crewed by local volunteers, it will strengthen our ability to respond rapidly to grass fires and bushfires in and around the district.

The vehicle carries a compact water tank of about 400-450 litres, along with a dedicated firefighting pump, allowing crews to deliver a strong, targeted stream of water where it is needed most. It is equipped with lightweight hose and modern stowage so firefighters can get water on a fire quickly, even in tight or difficult locations.

With its smaller size and four-wheel-drive capability, the ultralight is designed to operate where traditional tankers may struggle, including forest tracks, narrow driveways and uneven rural properties. This makes it particularly useful for dealing with spot fires and flare-ups, and for supporting larger tankers by working closer to the fire edge.

The Forrest and District Lions Club and the Community Group both pledged \$5,000 when the idea of an ultralight was first raised. Forrest CFA would like to sincerely thank everyone in



Forrest CFA captain Bob Brooks with the new ultralight vehicle

the local community who contributed to the cost of the new vehicle, whether through donations, fundraising events or in-kind support. Your generosity has helped ensure our brigade has the right tools to protect lives, property and the environment, and demonstrates the strong community spirit that underpins local fire protection.

This ultralight tanker adds another important tool to Forrest CFA's firefighting fleet, complementing our existing tanker and equipment. It will improve our ability to respond quickly to local incidents and to support neighbouring brigades as part of the wider CFA network.

Residents can continue to support their brigade by keeping property access clear for emergency vehicles, having a fire plan in place, and staying informed about local fire danger ratings and warnings. For more information about Forrest CFA or to enquire about volunteering, please contact the brigade through your local CFA District Office or visit the CFA website.

Barb Howard, Forrest CFA Community Safety Co-ordinator.

Planning, understanding and collaboration is key to resilience

While the 2026 Otway Complex summer fires can feel like an age ago, communities, organisations, agencies and businesses are still working through the complexities of the recovery process, finding the challenges and looking for ways to work together to improve outcomes in future.

The FLARE (Forrest Leadership And Resilience Engagement) project, is community led and funds were raised for a 2 year community engagement program in Forrest and district. It was timely that FLARE delivered a local community emergency plan to help people understand what was needed to stay safe in an emergency before the 2026 Otway fires hit. Forrest safely evacuated the majority of our township and has been praised by the agencies for working together and coordinating with the emergency services to ensure our people stayed safe during one of the worst fire danger threats to our town in recent times. With a township wide evacuation under our belts and learning from the aftermath of the fire impacts on neighbouring communities, there is work to do and we need to update our community emergency plan to take into account these experiences.

The Colac Otway Shire Recovery Team headed by George O'Dwyer is funding a series of Community Emergency Resilience Planning (CERP) workshops to help communities develop and update their community emergency plans, and invites representatives across the Otways to come together to learn from each other and the agencies.

The first workshop will be held on 15 August in Gellibrand.

Please get in contact if you want more information on the CERP series or would like to find out more about FLARE.

Gillian Brew - FLARE volunteer - flare3236@gmail.com

The environment has been severely impacted by the fires and the Otways is home to some of the most ecologically diverse and sensitive areas in Victoria, a haven for numerous endangered animals and plant species.

The Otways Ecological Research Forum (OERF) is an annual forum that brings together scientific researchers, public and private land managers, and the community to discuss findings, innovations and challenges in ecology and conservation science, as well as landscape-scale management, across the Otway Ranges and beyond.

It's a vital bridge between cutting-edge science and practice: connecting researchers with on-ground land managers to share how their work can shape best-practice land management, while bringing land management considerations/practicalities directly to those doing the ecological research.

The forum is also a place for community to interact directly with scientists and land managers and be involved in discussions about environmental programs, successes, and concerns.

It's a knowledge-sharing and networking hub for everyone involved and interested in Otways landscapes. The 2026 forum will focus on the impact and management of bushfires.

2026 Otways Ecological Research Forum

Tue, 25 Aug, 8:30am - 5pm AEST

COPACC - Colac Otway Performing Arts & Cultural Centre

Tickets: <https://events.humanitix.com/2026oerf>

For more info go to www.conservationecologycentre.org/otways-ecological-research-forum

An inspiring 'mini-Grounded' experience at Dalpura farm

Gerangamete and Forrest Landcarers had their own mini-Grounded Festival experience in early July, with a visit to what turned out to be a melting pot of integrated farming ideas at Dalpura farm in Gherang.

The 140-acre property was once a sheep farm with severely depleted soils, especially where topsoil had been scraped away during logging operations. Its transformation to a regenerative agroforestry farm began 30 years ago, and it was heartwarming to see the healthy stands of trees and understorey plants, planted in keylines to maximise moisture capture and minimise erosion.



Ivan Blacket, our guide, explained how owner George Howson seems to be exploring new meanings for the term 'wholistic farming' on the property, capitalising on the whole lifecycle of timber production while enriching the farm ecosystem:

- The farm nursery grows the trees from its own seed, and also grows to order for commercial customers.
- Trees and understorey plants are planted close together to protect each other as they grow, and their prunings are dropped on the ground to improve and shade the soil.
- Cows will soon be grazing on the understorey and further improving the soil.
- Compost made from wood chips from thinnings and an organic café's food waste is made into tea to fertilise not only new plantings and the market garden but also struggling plants in the natural bush that is also being nurtured to better health.

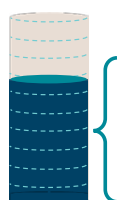
- Trees are milled on site and timber is sold for value-adding at the Birregurra sawmill, as well as firewood. The portable mill is available for hire.
- Staff also make farm timber into wicking beds, furniture and tiny houses.
- Offcuts are slow-combusted into high quality biochar, which is also used onsite to boost plantings.
- Products at every stage are available for sale.

Tree species include a wide variety of eucalypts, acacias, nuts and oaks, with numerous different grasses and native shrubs to maximise biodiversity. The trees are pruned to a lollypop shape to develop a straight trunk, leaving space for access and a healthy understorey underneath.

It was an inspiring afternoon's tour, producing much food for thought for Landcarers developing ideas about ways to use their land more intentionally for biodiversity, ecological health and return.

Mary Dracup

Barwon Water Updates



66.8%

22 July 2026
West
Barwon
Reservoir



66.8%

22 July 2026
Wurdee
Boluc
Reservoir



4ML

Current
minimum daily
passing flow at
West Barwon

Forrest Wastewater project update

Over the previous months we've engaged extensively across the Forrest township to understand your views on the Forrest Wastewater project and associated initial connection costs for Forrest property owners.

We have also continued to refine the project's business case and economic assessment and will take this to the Board in September.

If the project is considered viable and we receive approval to proceed, our focus will turn to developing detailed designs of the sewer network and water recycling facility. We'll continue to keep you posted with any updates.

For more information on the project, property owner costs, or to read the Winter Update, head to www.yoursay.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/forrest-hub-forrest-wastewater.

2027 Urban Water Strategy

Our Urban Water Strategy survey will be open until Friday 14 August, and we want to know if you've got a big, bold idea to help improve our water security?

You do?!!

Head on over to

www.yoursay.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/urban-water-strategy-2027 or at the QR code below.



Forrest Acoustic Music Jam 4th Sunday of the Month

Join in easy 2-3 chord, old timey style songs, or bring a song to share.

Beginners welcome and encouraged

Forrest Historical Society - Shed 9
Forrest Community Hub - 47 Grant St
for more information call John on 0407 630 303

NEXT JAM - 23 AUGUST 1-3PM

MATHEW SILVEY PLUMBING

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- Motorised drain cleaning
- Hot & cold water services
- 1.5t excavator hire
- Spouting & downpipes
- Solar hot water installation
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- Roofing

Mobile: 0417 342 531

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FMS

FREE WIFI AT THE SHED



Forrest Men's Shed - 6 Blundy St, Forrest
email fdms3236@gmail.com to request
a username & password

Woodwork lathe machines - table saw
- mitre saw - metal welding

THE FORREST POPUP OP SHOP

OPEN WHEN THE SIGNS ARE OUT

We are currently unable to take donations due to lack of space. For information contact Marita 0429 883 909
ST JAMES ANGLICAN CHURCH - 18 GRANT STREET FORREST

ADVERTISE WITH US! Reach local customers and visitors and support your local volunteer run news sheet. Proceeds go to the Forrest Primary School or Neighbourhood House for printing costs and to support the Forrest Men's Shed.
CONTACT US: theforrestpost@gmail.com
for more information.

Birregurra Pharmacy

Peter Mikaeil B.Pharm M.P.S

Monday - Friday
9:00am - 5:30pm
Saturday
9:00am - 12:00pm

40 Main Street
Birregurra, VIC 3242
Ph: (03) 5236 2288
Fax: (03) 5236 2280

Email: birrepharmacy@hotmail.com



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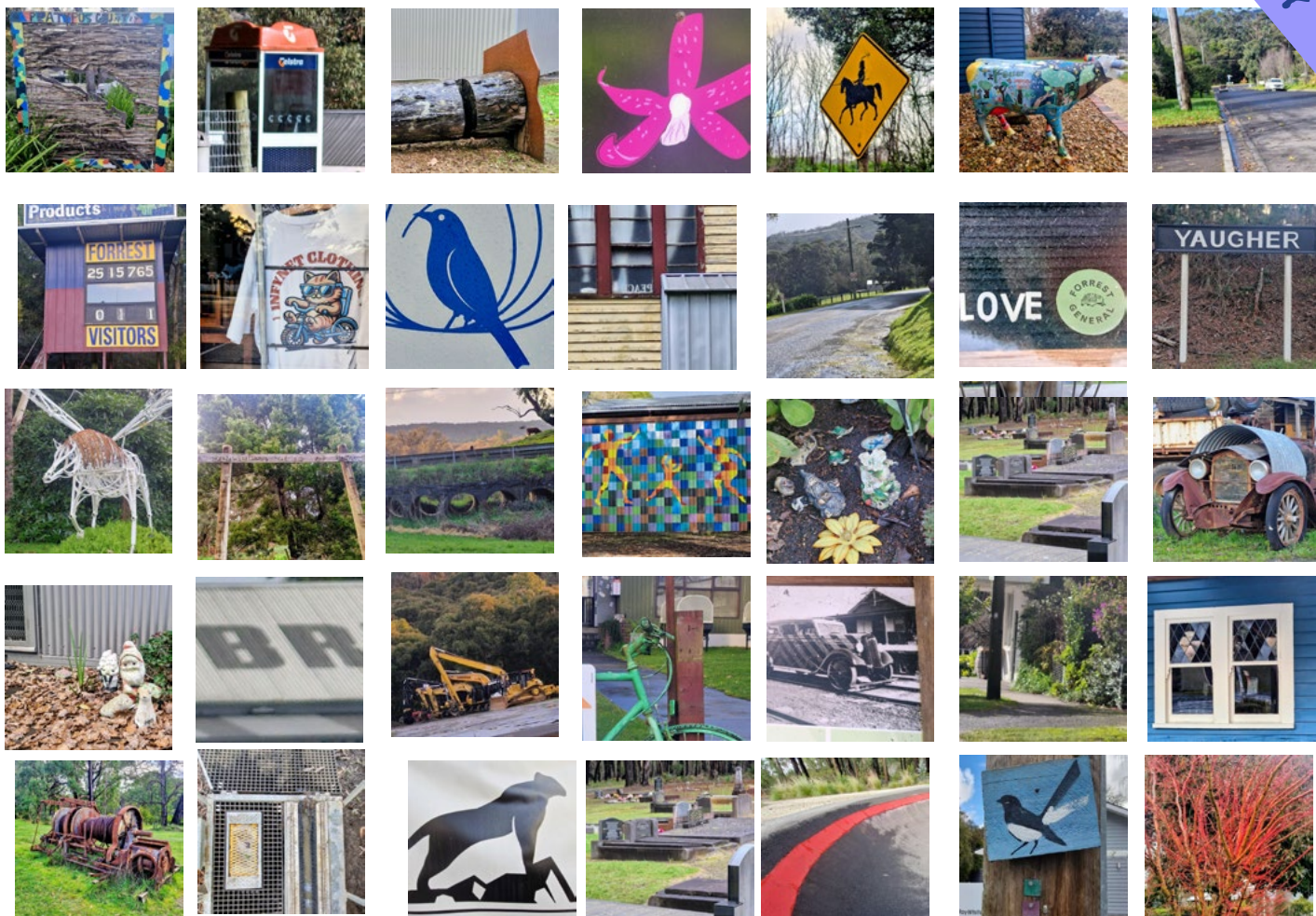


Skie Maddern
Reception

03 5231 3288
info@colactocoast.com.au
colactocoast.com.au
77 Dennis Street,
Colac VIC 3250

Guess where these pictures were taken around Forrest.

Photos supplied by Abigail Pakula

Kids
Corner

BIRDS OF THE OTWAYS

SPONSORED BY



White-eared Honeyeater

The white-eared Honeyeater is a fairly widespread species, found in a broad band from central Qld, most of NSW and Victoria, Southern SA and WA. It is a locally common resident in a wide range of habitats including dry forests, woodland, mallee and southern heathlands. They tend to avoid agricultural and urban areas. It can be found around Forrest and in most of the district's habitats. Lake Elizabeth is also a good area to find them. It is a medium sized (about 18cm long) rather attractive bird, with a dark head and prominent white eye and ear patch.

It is usually seen singly, or in pairs, where this primarily insectivorous honeyeater forages under bark, limbs and foliage. It also eats nectar and fruit when available. It can also be rather aggressive in its territorial defense.

The White-eared Honeyeater builds a deep cup constructed from bark and grass usually around a horizontal branch, where it lays 2-3 spotted reddish eggs.

They are always great to find when out in the bush.

Ian Davies and Adam Fry



Visit Forrest online at www.forrestvictoria.com

