

Coming together for a cleaner city

BY ROCHELLE KIRKHAM

ENVIRONMENTALLY conscious Ballarat residents will come together on Sunday to clean up the city's parks, waterways, streets and reserves.

More than 20 clean up events are registered in Ballarat for Clean Up Australia Day. Resident Col Palmer has hosted a Clean Up Australia Day event at the Yarrowee River in Redan for the past 10 years. While the amount of litter at the site is not improving, he said it was heartening to see more people join the clean up each year.

"The group of people coming each year is bigger, so there are more people participating in the clean up," he said. "But there is always litter and the amount of litter is not improving. Nothing has changed in that way."

Mr Palmer said plastic drink bottles was the most common item collected from the site in previous years,

followed by food packaging including cup lids, straws, packets and wrapping.

"It is bewildering. How can this happen? When will we ever learn?" he said.

"There is a small percentage of people that don't get the message or don't care... Ultimately it finishes up in the river and the sea."

Mr Palmer said he was hoping to see around 30 people get involved in the clean up at the Yarrowee River in Redan this year, including young people and Scout groups that had joined in previous years.

He said the number of clean ups registered in Ballarat and the number of people getting involved showed many people do care about reducing litter.

"They come down and they are really enthusiastic. People care and they participate," he said.

"I do hope one day I won't have to run this clean up,

but it is going to take a lot of change. I think we are going to have to change a whole lot of packaging requirements. It has to be stopped at the source. There is probably more opportunity for more litter traps too before it ends up in difficult to get places."

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews announced on Monday a container deposit scheme would be introduced in Victoria by 2023.

Many hope this would provide an incentive for the collection of bottles and cans and ultimately reduce litter in the environment.

Details of the scheme are yet to be announced. Refunds are given for the return of beverage containers to depots for recycling in schemes in other jurisdictions of Australia.

■ Visit cleanupaustaliaday.org.au/ for more information about how to get involved in Ballarat.



CLEAN-UP OPERATION: Billie, Harper, Mia, Winnie, Fletcher, Harper and Jack from St Alipius Parish School make the Ballarat Community Garden tidy. Picture: Adam Trafford.

Garden left in tip-top shape

DOZENS of schoolchildren from St Alipius Parish School swept up all rubbish in their path on a whistle-stop outing to Ballarat Community Garden on Friday.

Classes from the primary school went to the Ballarat East site as part of the nationwide Clean Up Australia Day.

The children also cleared the gutters and the footpath on their way to the garden

of any debris, filling rubbish bags as they went.

Other classes had gone to different areas around the school to carry out the same work, including at McKenzie Reserve on the other side of Victoria Street.

"We do a lot about sustainability and looking after the environment," said Allana Kane, a teacher at the school who was leading the children

on the tidying-up excursion to the garden.

"It's great connecting what we learn in the classroom with real life."

"This generation seems to be more conscious of sustainability - I am noticing a big change, which is awesome," observed Michael Marshall, a year 3/4 teacher at the school.

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