

Six Shades of Fire-Lighters

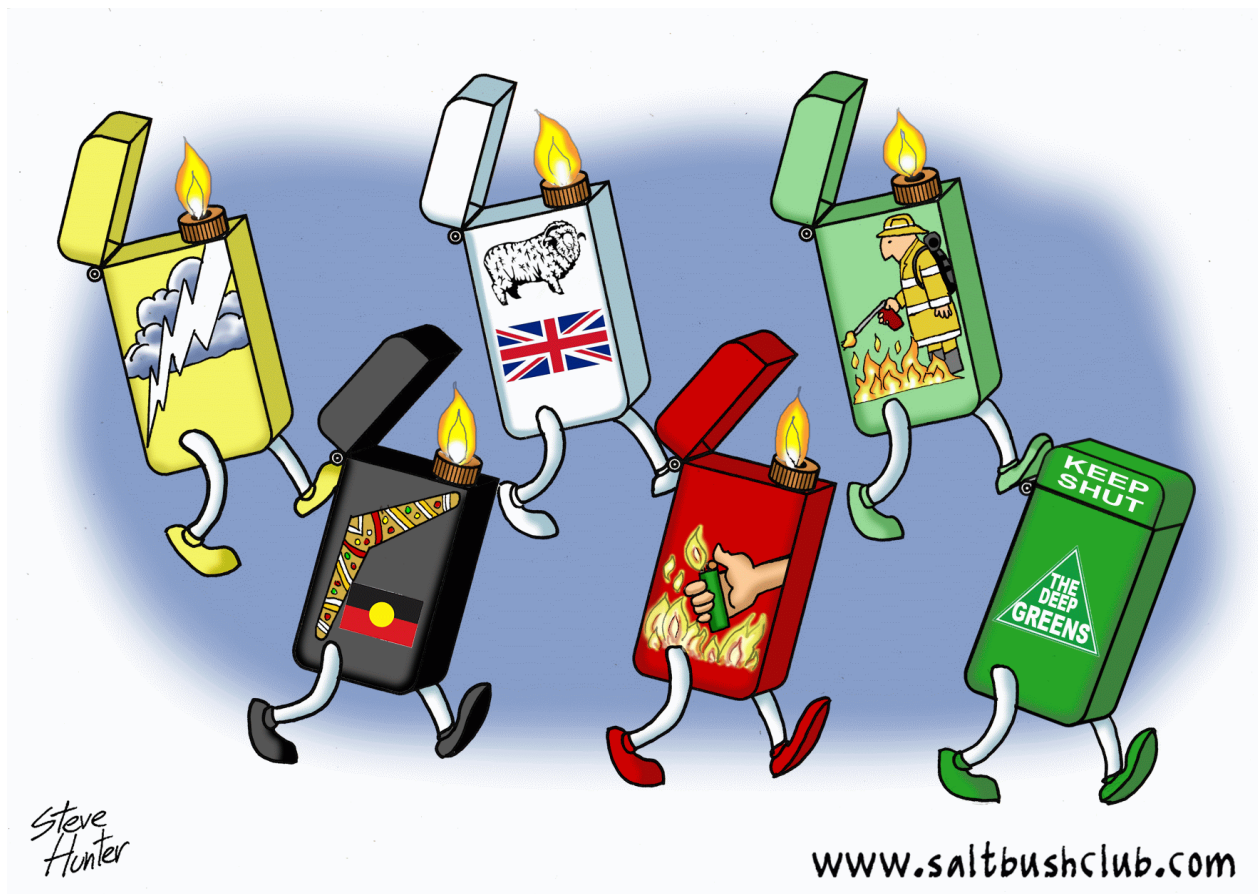
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<https://saltbushclub.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/fire-lighters.pdf>

Australian Fire-lighters come in six colours – yellow, black, white, blood red, dark green, and light green. All are relevant to bushfires and forest management.



“Yellow” is the Fire-lighter that has been with us forever. It is the yellow flash of lightning which has always ignited the Australian bush. We’re dreaming to think we can lock yellow fire out of parks, forests and heritage areas. But good forest management can reduce the ferocity and destruction of lightning-strike fires.

“Black” Fire-lighters came with the first Australians. Without matches or tinder boxes they probably captured the fire genie from a lightning fire. Or they carried it here on clay hearths on the floor of their canoes. They valued this magic tool for warmth, cooking, insect control, vegetation clearing, animal trapping and fighting enemies. Some also learned how to light fires using heat generated by friction, but this was a slow laborious process and it was far easier to preserve and carry fire in a burning fire-stick. To keep these sticks alight or to light a new one as they travelled, nomadic parties on the plains and deserts renewed them periodically by setting fire to a clump of dry vegetation. Then they moved on. They lit fires for many reasons, anywhere at any time. They tried to keep out of the way of fires, and were known to redirect mild grassland fires **but never tried to put them out**. This continual mosaic of small fires created the magnificent grasslands and open forests that Europeans admired when they first arrived. Aboriginal fire management followed **no central plan**, but it worked, making most lives and forests safer.

“White” Fire-lighters were introduced by the next wave of settlers – the British, bringing matches, flints and tinder boxes. They marvelled at the grasslands and open forests they found. Soon the sheep and cattle of the squatters were flourishing on the fresh nutritious pastures of frequently burned land. They

soon learned about bushfires as the “Yellow” and “Black” Fire-lighters were still operating. The squatters soon learned two new skills to protect their pastures, flocks, herds, stock-yards, wool sheds and homesteads. Firstly, reduce fire loads and encourage new grass using cool season burning. And secondly, when faced with invading fires, fight fire with fire – back burn from station tracks, freshly burned bush or creeks towards the invading fire. We need to relearn these valuable lessons.

“Blood-Red” Fire-lighters are carried by the fire vandals – the arsonists. And the greater the fire danger, and the more headlines it creates, the more active are these pyro-maniacs.

“Light-Green” Fire-lighters were developed in the 1960’s and 1970’s for professional foresters to protect forests with prescribed burning. These marvellous tools were banned by political fools, and are hard to procure today.

Finally Australia was inflicted with the “Dark-Green” Fire-lighter – an imported tool that almost never works. Deep Greens keep their lighters permanently in their pockets and NEVER light anything except for token fires in small areas and to light tofu-burger barbecues or their pretentious Earth Day candles. Their attempt to lock out all fire creates a huge load of forest fuel, with dead wood, leaves, bark and weeds on the ground and vines and suckers between the trees. And neighbours living in fear of the inevitable fire-storm.

What should we do?

First, ban the defective Dark-Green Fire-lighters, jail arsonists caught using Blood-Red Fire-lighters for thrills or malevolence, and learn to live with Yellow lightning strike fires.

Second, mandate the use of the Light-Green Fire-lighter – an improved version of the Black & White models used by aboriginals and Squatters. Use them to remove fuel load with cool season burning. And when fire comes, use them to fight fire with fire.

Give Light-Green Lighters to all practical foresters, landowners, fire wardens and local bushfire managers - they will safely abolish the Dark-Green nightmare of massive wildfires with the power of patchwork burning.

With so much land burnt, now is the perfect time to make sure it does not happen again in those areas. Kick out the bureaucrats and the Deep Greens and put rangers, foresters, property owners and local fire wardens in charge.

Have a burn plan and stick to it.

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This is the view from the deck of a resident of Dalmeny on the far south coast of NSW showing the extent of forest within, and on the edge of this subdivision. It was spared this fire season but helpless residents live in fear, “waiting for the Red Steer to arrive”. For more Information on this planned disaster see: <https://saltbushclub.com/2020/01/21/nsw-fires-in-review/>

Viv Forbes

Viv Forbes has been an explorer, pastoralist and weather-watcher in Queensland and NT for most of his life. He has lit fires (accidentally and deliberately), and he and his wife have fought fires with branches, rakes and knapsacks and had their camps, fences and pastures wiped out by fires. They were both members of local bush fire brigades for over 25 years. (Judy even had formal training and her own uniform).

For most of that time they have watched Northern grasslands and open forests being invaded by eucalypt weeds. In their misguided youth they were infected with the green bug, never allowed grass fires on their property and encouraged eucalypt tree suckers and seedlings to spread (even foolishly built tree guards around some of these weeds.) They eventually learned that this greatly increased the risk of a major fire and degraded the grasslands. They were suddenly alarmed when the green state government (without warning or consultation) introduced vegetation protection orders on parts of their freehold property - that grassland was lost to the invading eucalypts and became a real fire hazard. From that moment on, they tried (unsuccessfully) to ensure that no seedling or sucker of eucalypt was allowed to reach adulthood on that property.

"Stick to exotic trees - they can be removed if they becomes a nuisance."

Reading:

Using Climate Change as an excuse for forest mismanagement:

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/01/18/regional-forest-manager-politicians-are-using-climate-change-to-deflect-blame-for-bushfires/>

The Real Reason Australia is Burning:

<https://quadrant.org.au/opinion/doomed-planet/2019/12/the-real-reason-australia-is-burning/>

We are getting through – and getting BANNED:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wP1AH-jGIO4&feature=youtu.be>

The Power of Patchwork Burning:

https://www.ted.com/talks/mark_bezos_a_life_lesson_from_a_volunteer_firefighter