

# North Central chat

FEBRUARY 2018

## A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

Happy New Year! I trust you had a safe and relaxing summer welcoming in 2018. I spent the Christmas period over the ditch in New Zealand. Despite my best efforts to holiday, Landcare was never far away, and I found myself engrossed in the detail of dairying, water quality, riparian protection and sustainable farming on my sister's dairy farm on the North Island. Christmas Day was certainly a different feel in wellingtons and overalls!

Returning back to work in January is always refreshing and the regional Landcare program over the coming six months is certainly exciting. We hope you are keen to get involved in the upcoming events and training on offer. Firstly, we're again supporting the annual '**Breakfast with the Birds**' event at Hird Swamp, featuring ecologist and bird enthusiastic, Damien Cook and CMA Project Manager Adrian Martins, read more about this in the events section.

The **Future Farming Expo** will be held in Donald on February 21. Speakers have been locked in and we're really looking forward to exploring topics including investment for long term sustainability, virtual herding, spatial grazing, weather, soil moisture and reflecting on the past three months and most importantly hearing from three local farmers on their current practices during a panel session.

Looking further ahead, in March we will run a **Social Media training workshop** in Bendigo focusing on Facebook as a tool for connecting with community and sharing the value of landcare outside of the current circle. I would be very interested in your feedback on what you'd like to get out of the workshop, so please get in touch.

Finally, I encourage everyone to diarise the 2018

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**Farming for Sustainable Soils Conference**, March 8 & 9. Having secured '**Soils for Life**' Chairman and Founder, Australia's former Governor General, Major General The Honourable Michael Jeffery, AC AO(Mil) CVO MC (Retd) to deliver the keynote address, this is sure to be an inspiring and practical soils conference. *Book your ticket today!*

Darren and I look forward to hearing more about your group's events, projects and achievements throughout 2018, so please continue to keep us updated on all things Landcare.

Enjoy the read,

**Tess Grieves**

**Regional Landcare Coordinator**

North Central Catchment Management Authority  
Phone: 03 5448 7124

[tess.grieves@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:tess.grieves@nccma.vic.gov.au)



## News...

### 2016-17 Community Grants Achievements

**From July 2016 through to October 2017, Landcare Groups, Networks and individual landholders were busy undertaking 52 funded projects across the catchment.**

The landcare ethic is alive and well in North Central with the majority of projects achieving their planned targets and in many cases exceeding their goals. Overall, volunteers managed activities in partnership with local communities, schools, contractors and expert advisors to produce the following results:

- 1143 participants engaged in 53 events including training, field days, workshops and meetings
- 17 publications including newspaper articles, advertising, fact sheets, newsletters and brochures
- 3 management plans produced with a focus on habitat restoration and biolink establishment
- 15.9 km fencing installed
- 213 ha revegetation established or modified
- 43 ha under agricultural practice change trials
- 181 ha non-woody weed control
- 54.9 ha of woody weed control
- 15 ha pest animal control (fox and rabbit)



Darren and I wish to thank successful applicants for their time, energy, effort and skill in delivering these projects, which will have a lasting impact on local landscape and communities.



## Rabbit Buster Month

**February serves as a reminder month to review and re-energise your rabbit control measures. The dry conditions, limited green pick and lower water availability often means breeding has ceased and population numbers are at the lower end of the scale. Now is the time to strike!**

The time to implement your rabbit management plan will vary; however the recipe for success, as guided by John 'Rabbit Buster' Matthews (*Biosecurity Manager, Agriculture Victoria*) remains the same.

"The right time, using the right tools, to the correct standards will ensure your investment and effort into rabbit control results in long term control".

Key points of interest from John's *Rabbit Buster* presentations delivered annually in the region since 2015 include;

- **Know the threshold** you're trying to manage rabbits to e.g. Buloke woodland regeneration requires almost complete eradication whereas managing rabbits in a grazing system is more tolerant and can withstand some rabbit pressure before impacting productivity.
- **Collect baseline information** through pre and post spotlight counts and warren inspections. You need to know what the scale of your problem is before you go in and try to manage it. This data will also determine your success over time! You need to know what success looks like and you can't manage or measure what you can't monitor.
- **Support and peer-learning** is powerful. Rabbit control is nothing new, so if you're new to the game, take some time to learn from your neighbours, landcare peers and even local contractors. Success is heavily reliant on a committed and coordinated community working simultaneously at best practice with high rates of participation at a landscape scale.

Rabbits are persistent, that's why they're still active across the country. "*Rabbits are a wicked problem, and we have to be more persistent than the foe, or the rabbit wins*"



## K5 Calici virus update

John Matthews, Agriculture Victoria

**RHDV1 K5 was released at approximately 150 release sites in Victoria in the first week of March 2017. The release sites were selected from 350 Expressions of Interest (EOI) received from community members and groups throughout Victoria.**

Preliminary data indicates an impressive 42 per cent average reduction in wild rabbit numbers where RHDV1 K5 was released.

RHDV1 K5 has been successfully established at a number of Victorian release sites, rabbits are dying and the disease has spread to a number of non-release sites. The RHD Boost Project Team along with CSIRO, Agriculture Victoria and DPI NSW are currently evaluating the results of the release including spread and impact.

“Landholders should be supporting the release and making the most of any advantage that release has provided by implementing conventional control methods based on warren destruction. The time for intervention with conventional control techniques is now.”

Agriculture Victoria continues to encourage community to report dead rabbits via RabbitScan and where possible to submit a sample. This is the primary and only method that allows us to detect, track and monitor the spread and impact of RHDV1 K5 away from the release sites. A successful release is reliant on several factors, a rabbit population where a high proportion of the population is naive and vulnerable to K5; a rabbit population with minimum number of juvenile animals present at time of release; suitable vectors are present (blowflies and bush flies) and favourable climatic conditions that will aid spread.

Vials of RHDV1 K5 are now commercially available for purchase. A number of landcare groups, public land managers and Catchment Management Authorities have purchased K5 with the intention of supporting the release by re-releasing in autumn 2018.

In Victoria, it is very early days yet, but the initial results are most promising. Indications for future success and spread of K5 include;

- Establishment RHDV1 K5 at release sites
- RHDV1 K5 is killing rabbits and RHDV1 K5 has spread from release sites.

Agriculture Victoria will provide further detail and

more comprehensive results of rabbit monitoring and serological analysis as results become clearer.

## Thank you John

**On behalf of the North Central CMA, I would like to sincerely thank John Matthews for his dedication to the management of established pests in Victoria since 1978. In particular, his role in securing and delivering on robust policy, documenting rabbit management guidance and principles and most importantly his generosity in the provision of pragmatic, engaging advice.**

John has been planning his retirement for as long as I've known him, and 2018 marks the year Victoria will say farewell to one of the most charismatic, generous and informed Departmental staff members I've ever had the pleasure to work with.

John worked his way up through the Department from a field officer shooting rabbits in the 1980s through to leading Victoria's release of the K5 strain of Calici in March 2017. John can recite every site in Victoria's long term rabbit monitoring program and has told me on many occasions how proud he is of Victoria's commitment to rabbit monitoring, resulting in the longest continuing rabbit monitoring dataset in Australia!

Personally, John has been an incredible mentor, spokesperson for Landcare and his practical knowledge of rabbit management and community led program success is a driver for continuing to promote rabbit management through our Rabbit Buster Month campaign.

John's wisdom will certainly not be lost, as he plans on retaining a place on the Victorian Rabbit Action Network and his work is forever embedded in policy and the professional development of others, which we are incredibly grateful for.

*Best wishes for the future John, you will be missed.*



Photo: Caroline Potter, Victoria DEDJTR



## Feral Cats declared a pest in Victoria

**The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio has released the Victorian Government's response to a Parliamentary Inquiry into the control of invasive animals on Crown land.**

The government supported the recommendation to declare feral cats as established pest animals under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

Feral cats kill an estimated 75 million native animals every year in Australia. In Victoria, 43 *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* listed species are at risk of extinction from feral cats. It is proposed that feral cats will be declared as established pests **on public land only**. The declaration will not affect private land, nor place a control obligation on farmers or private landholders. Public consultation on the feral cat declaration will start early in 2018, with stakeholders and the community to ensure animal welfare objectives are met and responsible cat ownership remains respected and enshrined as a fundamental right for all Victorians.



Feral cats threaten wildlife such as these endangered squirrel gliders. Photo: Strathallan Family Landcare.

To read or download the final report on the Government's response to the committee's recommendations go to <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/invasive-plants-and-animals/invasive-animals-parliamentary-inquiry>

## Willows get the chop

**Greg Barber, CMA Project Manager**

**North Central CMA's Priority waterways project is working to improve the condition of the Upper Coliban catchment and Birch's Creek, a significant upper tributary of the Loddon River.**

Woody weed control, including the removal of Willows has been an important focus for the project and a significant milestone was achieved recently with the completion of a small willow removal project on Birch's creek at Andersons Mill, Smeaton.

The project has undertaken more than 5 km of willow removal along the creek with nearby landholders, but this was the first site completed on crown land.

*"We've done a lot of consultation with the community before commencing work on this site."*

*"It's a very popular site for visitors and its beautiful bluestone mill, bridges and features like the Oak forest are highly valued by the community."*

Since the project began, local people have been telling us how much the creek has changed. It used to be great for fishing and swimming, but now it's hard to even access the creek in many places due to the thick infestation of willows and other weeds. While not everyone was in favour of the willow removal, most of the community has been very supportive of the project.

Shortly after the work was completed in November, the project team hosted an 'open for inspection' on the site, inviting locals for morning tea and to provide feedback on the works. More than 30 community members attended the site visit.

Many locals were surprised and impressed to see the natural stone features of the site that had been hidden for so long by the willows, and they're keen to see the works continue along the creek. It could be the start of a range of exciting projects to reinvigorate the Mill site for the benefit of the creek and the community.

With strong community support for the works, further willow removal will be completed at the Mill in the near future. As for the recently completed site, early signs suggest the site is on the right track.

When we remove willows, we see changes start to happen very quickly. On the negative side we see



other weeds like blackberry respond and grow vigorously, requiring follow up control. Spraying of the blackberry has recently been completed and the site has been replanted with some native species.

Importantly though, we also start to see more desirable plants start to take advantage of the extra sunlight – species like the rushes along the water’s edge and water ribbons in the stream. These are important to stabilize the stream and to provide habitat for small invertebrates etc. which form the basis of the food chain.

Excitingly we found sites along Birch’s creek, that had willows removed only six months earlier were already showing more invertebrate diversity than sites infested by willows, so the future looks good for the creek.

North Central CMA’s priority waterways project is funded through the State Government’s Regional Riparian Action Plan which is a key feature of its \$222 million investment over four years to improve the health of waterways and catchments.



Heavy willow infestation along the creek before the start of works



Nearing completion of the willow removal, October 2017.

## Campaspe River fencing available Angela Gladman, CMA Project Manager

**The North Central CMA’s Caring for the Campaspe project is actively seeking interested landholders who are keen to explore the generous fencing, offstream watering, weed control and revegetation incentives on offer to landholders with river frontage.**

Project manager Angela Gladman says “Better protecting the health of waterways on farms has broader benefits for stock health and land value.”

Almost 70 landholders have realised the benefits of fencing the Campaspe River since 2012, resulting in the installation of 53 km of river fencing.

Reducing the impact of grazing stock on riverbanks is the key to river recovery. The Caring for the Campaspe project is keen to work with landholders to negotiate fencing styles, alignments and offstream watering options to ensure that the fencing enables better stock management and is resilient to the impacts of flooding.

The Caring for the Campaspe project is one of ten flagship waterway projects across the state, funded as part of the Victorian Government’s record \$222 million investment in waterways and catchments.

To get involved, contact Angela Gladman on 5440 1825 or [angela.gladman@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:angela.gladman@nccma.vic.gov.au)



Photo: Campaspe River fencing, Rochester



## Hello Waterwatchers!

I am back! I hope you've had a wonderful time over the Christmas and New Year's Eve break. I've been in and out of the office with lots of mini breaks in between, it's been really nice. Over the holidays I caught up on all those boring house cleaning jobs like window cleaning, dusting off cob webs and finally finished building my new veggie garden YAY – it is now ready for a productive winter crop!

I look forward to catching up with you all again this year at your site and through some of the exciting events we have planned.

To help you plan for 2018, I have sent out a calendar of events that are planned with most dates locked in however some may change. If you are not a Waterwatch Volunteer and would like to know how to get involved or what events are coming up, check out the North Central CMA website:

<http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/waterwatch>

Please block out some of these dates in your calendar, especially a site visit from me in March, Saltwatch Week in May and QAQC week in August.

We have the legendary John Gooderham booked in for ALT waterbug accreditation workshops this year in February and I would love to see you there.

After a huge success in 2017 our Campaspe Carp Catch will be on again this year. We are hosting the event in October to align with National Gone Fishing Day.

### This year we are:

**Celebrating 25 Years of Waterwatch – a huge milestone.** I'm planning something special along with presentations recognising volunteer contribution to natural resource management.

AND we will also be launching the **National Waterbug Blitz program**, which I am hoping to get some of you involved in as we are aiming to collect as much waterbug data as we can to contribute to the national database. I will send

more information about this program as it comes closer to the date.

Take care for now,

### Cass Davis

Regional Waterwatch Coordinator  
(03) 5440 1863  
0434 730 526  
[cass.davis@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:cass.davis@nccma.vic.gov.au)

## Events...



### RiverScan 2018 – Waterbug info session and training day in Kerang

**Over two days, North Central CMA is holding a waterbug information session with keynote speaker John Gooderham followed by a 'hands on' waterbug and water quality training session in Kerang.**

The *Native Fish Recovery Plan - Gunbower and lower Loddon* is an ambitious project aiming to restore river health, fisheries, and tourism in over 200km of waterways throughout the Torrumbarry irrigation area. Through *RiverScan*, community members have the opportunity to become citizen scientists and help us track the response of waterbugs and water quality to actions like environmental flows, re-snagging, and riparian restoration as the Recovery Plan is implemented.

Macroinvertebrates are an excellent indicator of river health and can measure the success of works undertaken to improve fish populations and ecosystem health.

The information session will be held on 22 February, followed by a practical training event on 23 February. These events will give community members the skills to undertake monitoring in spring 2018, and data collected will be used for the annual *RiverScan* snapshot Report. The report tracks the health of these waterways using Citizen Science data so the community are kept informed about the impacts of the program.

**When:** Thursday 22nd & Friday 23rd February 2018

**Where:** Kerang (venue TBC)

**RSVP:** Phone: (03) 5448 7124 or email: [info@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@nccma.vic.gov.au)



**The North Central CMA invites you to the 2018 community-based Farming for Sustainable Soils (FSS) conference March 8 & 9, 2018.**

This is the fourth time the FSS Project has convened the event in the past eight years, and many of you have participated in previous conferences.

Day one (8 March) will feature a pre-conference tour to Dunluce northwest of Maryborough, followed by a dinner at the Capital Theatre, Bendigo with a regenerative agriculture theme. The evening will include a 'warts and all' presentation from Suzanne Lewis, regenerative farmer from Werneth in south west Victoria.

Day two is the formal part of the conference which will feature keynote addresses from Major General the Honourable Michael Jeffery followed and Grant Sims, the 2015 'Weekly Times Farmer of the Year'.

In the afternoon, attendees will then hear from the three FSS communities currently participating in the program who will discuss the outcomes of their work.

The conference is an excellent opportunity to see and hear first-hand the work of farmers participating in the FSS program, to hear from a statesman committed to soil health in Australia, and to listen to a farmer committed to achieving soil health in northern Victoria.

**When:** March 8 & 9, 2018

**Where:** Capital Theatre Bendigo

**RSVP:** by Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February via <https://soils.eventbrite.com.au/> or contact the North Central CMA on (03) 5448 7124

## Help us find them; Citizen Science Forum



Photo: Sandy Scheltema, UCLN Facilitator

**The Upper Campaspe Landcare Network is launching the networks new Citizen Science Project.**

Project Officer, Brad Blake says that "You can become a valuable part of this project to gather data which will help protect iconic species including powerful owls, greater gliders and phascogales."

Come along to the forum to find out how you can join in the spotlighting and call-back surveys and be a part of the team that will be entering this valuable threatened species data on the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas over the coming two years.

Speakers include powerful owl expert Dr Todd Soderquist Gliders expert Dr. Ross Goldingay and Phascogale researcher, Jess Lawson.

**When:** Saturday 10 March, 2.00-5.00pm

**Where:** Newham Hall, 1292 Rochford Road, Newham

**RSVP:** Contact 5421 9660, email [environment@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:environment@mrsc.vic.gov.au) or register online via <http://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/Live-Work/Environment/Environment-Groups-Events/Environment-Events>

## Growing Veggies in Glenlyon

**Five veggie growing gurus are opening their gardens to the public on Saturday 10 February from 10am-4.00pm.**

Collect tickets from the Glenlyon Hall, keep updated via [www.glenlyon.vic.au](http://www.glenlyon.vic.au) or call (03) 5348 7542.



### Upper Campaspe Landcare Network is hosting a field day highlighting the techniques to restore riparian areas.

Ecologists Damien Cook and Elaine Bayes will discuss what drives river ecology, restoration and revegetation techniques. Participants will take a walk along a 2km stretch of the Campaspe River with CMA Project Manager Angela Gladman, experienced landcarers Brendan Smith and Steve Marriott.

**When:** Sunday 18 March 2018. 10.00am-4.00pm inc. lunch

**Where:** Degraives Mill, 688 Cobb and Co Road, Carlsruhe

**RSVP:** Contact 5421 9660, email [environment@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:environment@mrsc.vic.gov.au) or register online via <http://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/See-Do/Events/Events-Activities/River-restoration-and-biolinks>

### LAST CHANCE: Breakfast with the Birds

North Central CMA's annual 'Breakfast with the Birds' event will be hosted on Sunday February 4, 2018 at Hirds Swamp.



As part of this year's event, we will be holding a photo competition for event participants. Photos submitted must have been taken during the 2018 Breakfast with the Birds event at Hird Swamp.

Why not download our citizen science app in

preparation for this event? Look for NatureBlitz in your app store, or go to:

[www.nccma.vic.gov.au/natureblitz-app](http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/natureblitz-app)

**Cost:** This is a FREE EVENT. Coffee, tea and a light breakfast will be provided.

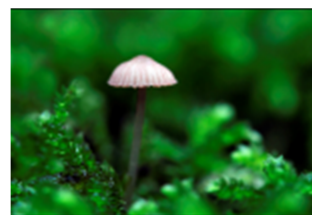
**Where:** The event will be held at Hird Swamp, Macorna North. Due to limited car parking space at the event location, enter Hird Swamp at the southern end from Borella Road and follow the signs to the carpark. Participants will be transferred by bus from the car park to the event location.

**RSVP:** Registration is essential and places are limited. Please RSVP via Eventbrite (search Breakfast with the Birds 2018) or by contacting the NCCMA on 5448 7124 or [info@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@nccma.vic.gov.au)

**Bring:** Bring a hat, water bottle, chair if required, binoculars & camera (optional). **Please dress for the weather including long pants and enclosed footwear.** There will be a coffee van on site; please bring your own travel mug if you have one to help reduce waste. Please contact the North Central CMA if you have any dietary requirements.

In the event of extreme weather conditions, the event may be cancelled.

You can self-register via <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/breakfast-with-the-birds-2018-tickets-41446371212> or contact the North Central CMA on (03) 5448 7124.



### Environmental photography workshops

Renowned local ecologist and environmental photographer, Alison Pouliot is delivering photography workshops around the catchment in the coming months.

Workshops are extremely low cost (some only \$5!) and explore fungi, tree photography, wildlife and landscapes through stunning imagery captured by Alison.

Trentham, Lockwood South, Creswick and Woodend are upcoming locations for Alison's events. All the details can be found at: <https://alisonpouliot.com/workshops-events/>





**The North Central CMA invites the community along to an informative event about the Campaspe River and the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area.**

Guest presenters will be sure to captivate the audience, including:

- A talk on cultural heritage by a Yorta Yorta Traditional Owner
- Geoff Williams, Australian Platypus Conservancy

**When:** Tuesday 27 March 2018, 4.30pm-6pm

**Where:** Mercure Port of Echuca, 465 High St Echuca

**RSVP:** Call the North Central CMA on 5448 7124 or email [info@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@nccma.vic.gov.au) by Friday 23 March

This event is funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Program and the Victorian Government's \$222 million investment over four years to improve the health of waterways and catchments.

## Facebook 101-Social Media Training for Landcare Groups

In response to the annual *'Supporting Landcare in North Central'* survey, the North Central Landcare team is hosting a Facebook 101 workshop to enable participants to both upskill and produce an implementation plan for social media, on Wednesday 21 March in Bendigo.

Professionally facilitated by the delightful team from Friendly Savage Communications Consultants, this Facebook focused workshop will be presented in three bite-sized sessions. You can choose your preferred workshop or stay all day! **LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE**

### WORKSHOP DETAILS

- Each session will be two hours in duration, including question time.
- Attendees can attend one or all of the workshops, they are not required to attend a full day.
- Participants should have an existing Facebook profile and a basic knowledge of their phone or computer
- **Participants will be expected to bring a device with them to actively participate in the session.**
- Session notes will be provided.

### Workshop topics include:

- Social media networking and customer service.
- How to create engaging video.
- Content planning and best practice.
- Facebook Groups.
- Facebook Overview.
- Social Media Tools.

**When:** Wednesday 21 March, 2018

**Where:** Rifle Brigade Hotel, Bendigo

**RSVP:** Places are limited. Further event details and RSVP is available via <https://facebook101forlandcare.eventbrite.com.au> or Email: [tess.grievess@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:tess.grievess@nccma.vic.gov.au)



## Courses and Resources...



### Victorian Rabbit Action Network

#### Rabbit Management Tools

The Victorian Rabbit Action Network has developed a series of short videos to share learnings from their collaborative, community-led approaches to rabbit management. Aspects of this project were initially funded through the Invasive Animals CRC and it is great to see the project continuing.

Topics include peri-urban rabbits, building on a lifetime of rabbit knowledge and connecting government with communities to build capacity

<https://rabbitaction.com/stories/>

Results from Victoria's long term rabbit monitoring program show that rabbit control targeting the destruction of rabbit warrens can result in managing and maintaining rabbits at extremely low levels, low costs and effort for up to 20 years post control effort. The use and reliance of any control effort used in isolation will not result in long term control.

**Further information and guidance on rabbit management in Victoria can be found through the Agriculture Victoria website**

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/pest-animals/invasive-animal-management/established-invasive-animals/integrated-rabbit-control-for-rural-and-natural-landscapes>

#### Bring your Landcare story to life

**Would you or your Landcare group like a free, professional video to raise awareness of the fantastic work you're doing to educate our next generation of Landcarers?**

Landcare Australia Ltd (LAL) introduces Landcare Video Storytellers. Just follow the quick and simple guide to upload pictures and video, and we'll do the rest! LAL will create a free 40 second professional video clip that will help you tell your very own Landcare story, and can easily be shared

on your social media platforms. Go to <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/about-landcare-video-storytellers>

#### North Central Landcare Support Plan

**Didn't know we had one? Wondering what this plan means for your group?**

The North Central Landcare Support Plan 2014-2018 outlines CMA's role through the Regional Landcare Coordinator (Tess) and the Regional Landcare Facilitator (Darren), paired with the Community Grants program, plays in supporting Landcare across the catchment.

The plan demonstrates strategic alignment with CMA, state and federal government policy as well as targeted support through adoption of the 'Five Functions of Landcare' as outlined in the 2012 *Victorian Landcare Program Strategic Plan*. A table of detailed support actions also exists within the plan demonstrating the breadth of activity the two regional Landcare roles undertake to support Landcare effectively.



The current plan is undergoing review and updating, and we welcome your feedback about the current plan to ensure the Landcare Support Plan 2018-2023, meets the future needs of Landcare.

Consultation will occur through the Landcare Network Facilitators quarterly meetings and Landcare Network Chairs meeting in March.

For a copy of the plan (PDF) visit: <http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/landcare#node-29>



## Waterway Management Twinning Program - application period extended

The Waterway Management Twinning Program Team have extended the close of applications for the 2018 Program until Friday 16 February 2018.

Details about the program and information about applications can be found at [www.twinningiswinning.com.au/get-involved](http://www.twinningiswinning.com.au/get-involved)

Our very own James Nelsson (Loddon Plains Landcare Network) and his mentor Adrian Martins (North Central CMA) completed last year's program, to find out about their experience, view their video at: <http://www.twinningiswinning.com.au/2017-twinning-story-james-and-adrian-kamarooka-wetlands>

Fully funded scholarships are available for mentees from Landcare, Traditional Owner groups and the River Basin Management Society.

Any queries can be directed to program co-ordinator Lucy Cameron [l.cameron@ghcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:l.cameron@ghcma.vic.gov.au) (03)5571 2526 or Siwan Lovett [siwan.lovett@arrc.com.au](mailto:siwan.lovett@arrc.com.au)



James Nelsson and Panda receiving their certificate of completion at the Waterway Management Twinning Program graduation.

## Farewell Panda

Another farewell from the North Central CMA, this time we wish Adrian 'Panda' Martins all the best with the move down the road.

Panda has taken on a new role as Program Manager, Natural Environment at DELWP. Having spent the best part of 15 years at North Central CMA, Panda will be greatly missed within our organisation.

With a keen interest in photography paired with his biodiversity, landscapes and fauna knowledge, Panda has worked across every inch of the catchment capturing beautiful images whilst implementing projects including riparian restoration, Ramsar wetland rehabilitation, threatened species management, drought and flood employment crews and natural disaster relief programs after the 2010-11 floods.

Many incredible things have happened since Panda started in the 2000s, some of the stories I have loved hearing include his first encounter with a Quoll captured in Campbells Forest, the reintroduction of threatened flora stiff groundsel (*Sencio behrianus*) and ridged water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum porcatum*) in the Gunbower Forest and the countless hours spent in the wee early hours of the morning looking for creatures great and small, be it frogs, turtles, foxes, owls, brolog or bittern.



*Panda, you will be missed... and I might even miss our trips to Lake Tutchewop!*

A very sincere THANK YOU and best wishes from all your friends here at North Central CMA. Thank you for the support and advice provided to staff, Landcare and the wider community. We hope you continue to look around the catchment and take pride in the amazing difference you have made not only to our regions landscapes, but to the people you have mentored and supported, we are so lucky to have worked alongside you.



## Funding opportunities...

### Fruit Fly Regional Grants Round 2

To support the Managing Fruit Fly in Victoria Action Plan: 2015-2020, the Victorian Government has allocated funding to the Managing Fruit Fly – Regional Grants Program to raise awareness and strengthen the coordination and collaboration of fruit fly management activities across the state.

Groups are invited to apply for the community grants of the Queensland Fruit Fly Regional Grants. Funding between \$2,000 to \$5,000 (excluding GST) to successful groups or organisations to support fruit fly management in regional Victoria is available.

Community grant activities that may be funded:

- Projects that encourage community or industry to build awareness and increase control of fruit fly (such as workshops, seminars, displays and DIY trap building).
- Projects that support community wide action to manage fruit fly (such as fruit fly trapping, netting, host tree removal and hygiene).

Information regarding the grants and the application process are available online, <http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/qff-grants>.

**Applications must be submitted by Friday 2 March 2018.**

### Victorian Fisheries Authority Grants Small Grants Program

The Small Grants Program from Victorian Fisheries Authority is for grants up to \$5,000 for small recreational fishing projects which benefit public recreational fishing in Victoria.

The Program will provide funding to:

- Implement or upgrade existing recreational fishing facilities such as installation of solar lighting about fishing platforms, fish cleaning facilities, directional and information signage for fishing locations, construction of fishing platforms or construction of fishing platforms, access paths, stair and/or walkways to popular fishing locations.
- Conduct an event/program to promote responsible recreational fishing practices, improve angling skills and knowledge

amongst participants and/or increase participation in recreational fishing.

For application forms, program guidelines and conditions, refer to Victorian Fisheries website, <https://vfa.vic.gov.au/recreational-fishing/recreationalfishing-grants-program/small-grants-program>.

Recreational Fishing Grants on (03) 8392 6872 or email [rec.fishinggrants@vfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:rec.fishinggrants@vfa.vic.gov.au)

### Large Grants Program

Every year the Victorian Government, through the Recreational Fishing Licence Trust Account, disperses revenue derived from the sale of Recreational Fishing Licences to projects that will improve recreational fishing in Victoria.

Funding is available of \$5,001 - \$100,000 for projects that benefit public recreational fishing in Victoria in the following categories:

- Recreational fishing access and facilities;
- Recreational fisheries sustainability and habitat improvement;
- Recreational fishing-related education, information and training; and
- Recreational fisheries research.

For application forms, program guidelines and conditions, refer to Fisheries Victoria website, <https://vfa.vic.gov.au/recreational-fishing/recreationalfishing-grants-program/large-grants-program>

**Applications close Wednesday 28 February 2018.**



*Photo finish:* St Arnaud Secondary College helped the Buloke & Northern Grampians Landcare Network plant out a Winjallock hillside.