

North Central chat

JUNE 2018

Keeping you up to date with all the Landcare
and Waterwatch news

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

May has simply flown by in a whirlwind of budgeting, project planning and reporting, all the exciting things we love as landcarers.

Never the less, amongst it all I managed to get out in the field to revisit some beautiful properties in Sidonia which were a part of the recently completed Kyneton Woodlands project. A few years since the fencing and planting works were undertaken, farmers in the area are really pleased with the results of the revegetation and woodland protection fencing, which is excluding stock from the myriad of palatable plants regenerating the area including kangaroo apple, callistemon, wattles and orchids.

The surrounding hills, roadsides and remnant patches within the farmland are dotted with stunning remnant woodland trees like this cover-worthy, hollow bearing yellow box which adorns a farmer's driveway. I'm told that throughout its life this tree has been home to owls, possums, tuan, bats and bees.

National Volunteer Week saw North Central CMA undertake a social media campaign to promote volunteerism and celebrate the contribution Landcare and Waterwatch volunteers make to our community. We thank the incredible volunteers who contribute over \$1M in volunteer hours to landcare every year.

The announcement of the Victorian Landcare Grants opening on May 4 was exciting. We are really looking forward to seeing applications come in and are of course happy to assist with mapping your proposed project activities for assessment.

Looking ahead, we have a Landcare Network Facilitator meeting planned on June 26, where Darren and I will discuss the coming 12 months of regional Landcare activity and funding availability

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to support Landcare events and capacity building across the catchment.

Enjoy the read,

Tess Grieves

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North Central Catchment Management Authority

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News...

2018-19 Victorian Landcare Grants open

On May 4, the Victorian Government committed \$1.8 million for Victorian Landcare Grants in 2018-19 to support Landcare and other environmental volunteer groups to undertake projects that protect and restore the land and environment.

The process for submitting applications is online through SmartyGrants, however CMA's are utilising DELWP's SmartyGrants system, so you will note their logo when you enter the site.

Applications Close: Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 12 noon

Funding:

- **Project Grants of up to \$20,000** are available for on-ground works, education and capacity building projects to protect and restore Victoria's land and environment.
- **Support Grants of \$500** are available for existing groups/networks.
- **Start-up Grants of \$500** are available for new groups/networks.

A total pool of around \$180,000 is available for our region.

Who can apply? the 2018-19 Victorian Landcare Grants are open to all Victorian Landcare and environmental volunteer groups and networks that advance the Landcare ethic and care for the environment. These include, but are not limited to Coastcare groups, Conservation Management Networks, "Friends of" groups, and Landcare groups/networks.

Guidelines: before applying carefully read the Guidelines for 2018-19 Victorian Landcare Grants on the CMA's website - see links below.

Application Forms: the grant application form is online (via SmartyGrants). To apply, go to the North Central CMA's website www.nccma.vic.gov.au/grants or directly to the SmartyGrants site via: <https://delwp.smartygrants.com.au/northcentral1819VLG>



Reconciliation Week is happening across the Country between Sunday 27 May – Sunday 3 June, in recognition of two nation changing events; the 1967 Referendum and the historic Mabo decision. This year's theme is "Don't keep history a mystery - Learn. Share. Grow."

Reconciliation Victoria says, "National Reconciliation Week is an annual celebration and is a time for all Australians to reflect on our shared histories, and on the contributions and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples". The week is framed by two key events in Australia's history that provide strong symbols of the aspirations for reconciliation.

May 27 marks the anniversary of Australia's most successful referendum and a defining event in our nation's history. **The 1967 Referendum** saw over 90 per cent of Australians vote to give the Commonwealth the power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and recognise them in the national census.

June 3 is Mabo Day – On this day in 1992, the High Court of Australia delivered its landmark Mabo decision which overturned the notion of 'terra nullius' and legally recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' connection to their country, a connection that existed prior to colonisation and continues today. This recognition paved the way for the Native Title system.

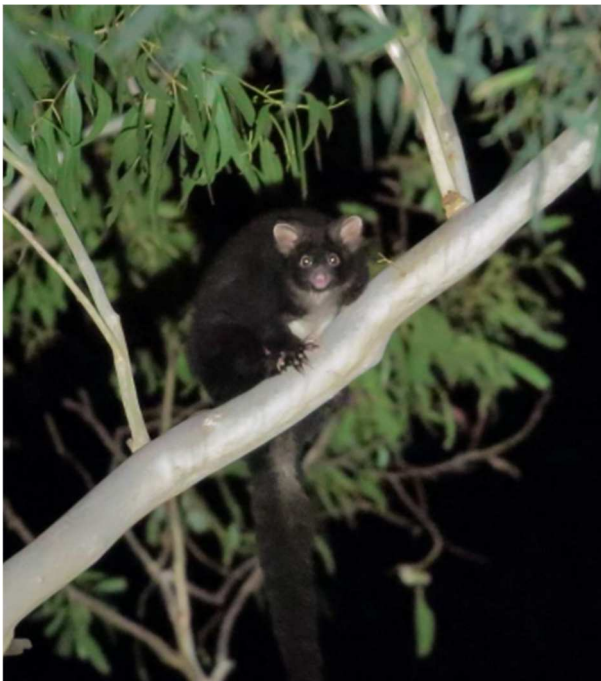
A range of events are planned around the region. To show your support for a local event please visit <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-reconciliation-week/nrw-events/>



Spotlight on Threatened Species

In a recent ABC radio interview, Upper Campaspe Landcare Network staff likened the greater glider to a "drunk fluffy cat up a tree". A wonderful descriptor to engage the imagination and interest of the general public, who like myself, have likely never seen one of these amazing creatures.

The UCLN, Macedon Ranges Shire Council and local landcare groups of the area are involved in a joint project to conduct citizen science surveys looking for three threatened species in the greater Wombat Forest area. The data collected from the surveys will be added to the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas to help protect these species and their habitat.



Like a koala, a diet of solely eucalypt leaves, makes the greater glider one of the more lethargic bushland characters. *Photo: Linda Wilson, Malmsbury Landcare Group.*

Spotlight walks, led by Threatened Species Officer Brad Blake, are planned throughout the year and what better way to spend a Saturday night with friend and family. Visit the UCLN website calendar of events to join in this wonderful program <http://www.uppercampaspelandcare.org.au/about-us/spotlight-on-species/>

Action Plan To Conserve Victoria's Wildlife

The Andrews Labor Government is managing the impacts of wildlife on Victorians and protecting and conserving our unique biodiversity.

The Living with Wildlife Action Plan aims to safeguard the conservation and protection of wildlife populations and wildlife welfare, and ensure the management of wildlife impacts is effective, sustainable and backed by science.

Victoria's native wildlife are a unique and valued part of our environment. It is critical they are managed in a way that ensures sustainable populations while protecting human health and safety, biodiversity, property and livelihoods.

The plan addresses community concerns relating to wildlife management issues, including wildlife becoming displaced or land-locked due to development and impacts of overabundant wildlife on biodiversity.

Victorians play an important role in conserving and caring for our wildlife, whether it be living alongside wildlife that live on or visit their property, or when they encounter wildlife in need of help.

The aim of the Living with Wildlife Action Plan is to ensure that:

1. Victoria's native wildlife populations are healthy and secure.
2. The management of wildlife is sustainable and underpinned by available scientific evidence and best practice.
3. All Victorians understand their roles and responsibilities relating to wildlife and are actively engaged in wildlife protection and conservation.
4. The Victorian community is confident in the government's actions to protect, conserve and manage wildlife

The plan includes reviewing the Authority to Control Wildlife System (ATCW) to ensure control methods are working effectively for land owners and the environment. Consultation on the ATCW review will start shortly.

For more information about the plan go to www.wildlife.vic.gov.au



The sounds of success for plains-wanderers

A song meter survey trial to find the elusive plains-wanderer (*Pedionomus torquatus*) in North-central Victoria has been a resounding success.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Natural Environment Program Officer, Bec James, said breeding females were recorded calling at 19 sites across Victoria's northern plains.

"Of the 19 sites, seven of them were already known to have birds in the area and six of them, according to our records, hadn't had plains-wanderers living there for three to eight years.

"The most exciting result for us was that at six of the sites we recorded, plains-wanderers had never been seen there before," Ms James said.



Victoria Plains-wanderer Operation Group's Dr David Baker-Gabb said he installed 40 song meters across 13 sites on private and public land in September 2017 and collected the data in January 2018.

"The data was then analysed and a computer-based Plains-wanderer call recogniser was developed by Dr Karen Rowe of Museums of Victoria and David Bryant from the Arthur Rylah Institute.

"With the call recogniser, we were delighted to find that six of the 19 active sites had recordings of two calling female plains-wanderers.

"Monitoring has been taking place in north central Victoria since 2010 and sadly there has been a massive decline since then.

"Our next step will be refining the best times of the day and night to record calls and work out how to stop other birds from pecking holes in the wind socks covering the microphones," Dr Baker-Gabb said.

The song meter survey work is funded with the support of the Victorian Government and the nocturnal monitoring was supported by funding from the Australian Government.

The plains-wanderer is listed as Threatened under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and listed as critically endangered under the Australian Government's *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

A rush of brolga at Hird Swamp

Ecologist Damien Cook came across a magnificent treat during his recent wetland monitoring, sighting 11 brolga wading at Hird Swamp.



Hird Swamp, near Kerang, was the chosen location for the *2018 Breakfast with the Birds*. The site receives environmental water which regularly supports successful waterbird breeding events, including brolga.



Helping farmers cut the red tape

The Australian Government has announced a targeted independent review to reduce red-tape and find practical ways to help farmers meet the requirements of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act).

The review is being undertaken by Dr Wendy Craik. For review information and submission guidance visit

<http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/information-for/farmers/agriculture-review>

The review aims to deliver meaningful solutions and to identify actions that can be practically implemented in the short-term. It aims to improve regulatory clarity for farmers and to make sure the rules are sensible, with a particular focus on:

- Helping farmers understand when their activity does (or does not) require referral, assessment or approval under the *EPBC Act*.
- Ensuring environmental regulation is applied to farmers in a practical way, considering on-ground farming practices and minimising any duplication or conflict with state or local laws.
- Examining how farmers are informed and able to participate in the listing process for species and ecological communities, and the implications for them when a listing occurs.

Submissions will be received no later than **Friday 15 June 2018**. Written submissions are invited from farmers and any interested stakeholders, and can be emailed to Dr Craik via Aither Consultancy at: agreview@aither.com.au



The 2018 Victorian Senior of the Year Awards are now open for nomination.

These awards acknowledge seniors from 60 years and over who volunteer their time to assist, support and encourage others.

There are a number of categories under which you can nominate:

- Premier's Award for Victorian Senior of the Year
- Promotion of Multiculturalism Award
- Healthy and Active Living Award
- Veteran Community Award
- COTA Victoria Senior Achiever Awards
- Age-Friendly Victoria Award – for organisations or businesses that support and encourage older Victorians

To find out more about the awards please visit www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/festivalsandawards.

SAVE THE DATE



The 2018 Chicks In the Sticks event will be held in Echuca on Saturday 20 October 2018.

Registration details will be available in the coming weeks, so stay tuned ladies!

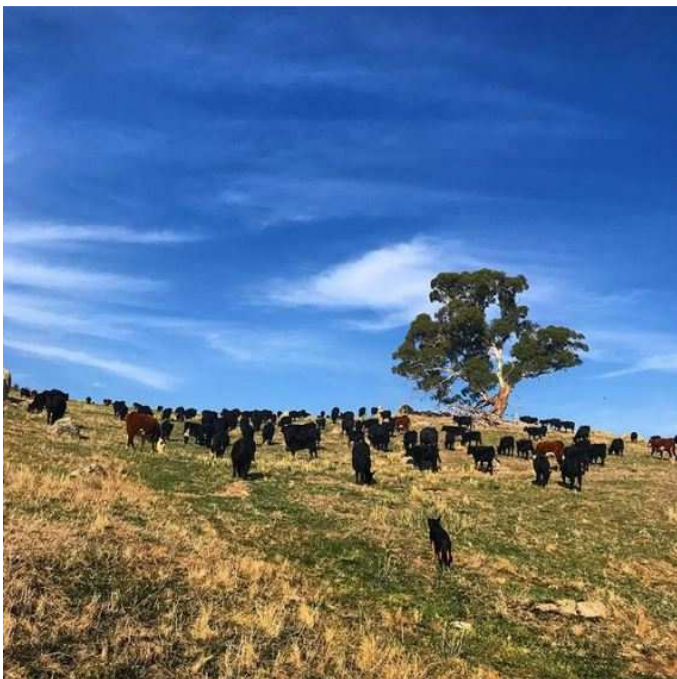


Sustainable Ag Snippet...

Two groups of farmers who completed a holistic management course at Tatura and Nagambie have decided to form a holistic management group. These farmers are incorporating the principles of holistic management to their properties.

The group meet on a regular basis and recently met at Sam and Miranda White's property at Sidonia. The aim of the meeting was to start the development of a holistic goal. The goal will interpret how the group will function as a whole and provide direction of what the group wants to achieve over time. To start the day there was a round table discussion on what's been happening in their district with the dry conditions a common theme throughout and everyone is 'rain ready'.

One comment that stuck in my mind was 'make decisions early and plan ahead' this is probably even more critical in times of little rain. Sam and Miranda run 500 head of cattle and their planned grazing techniques have got them through till now without hand feeding, which is amazing considering the dry conditions. Sam and Miranda still have a couple of paddocks ungrazed but it was time he needed to make some decisions regarding his cattle and the amount of feed he has in his paddocks.



This is where the group is very helpful in taking Sam and Miranda through three scenarios using the holistic managements seven testing questions,

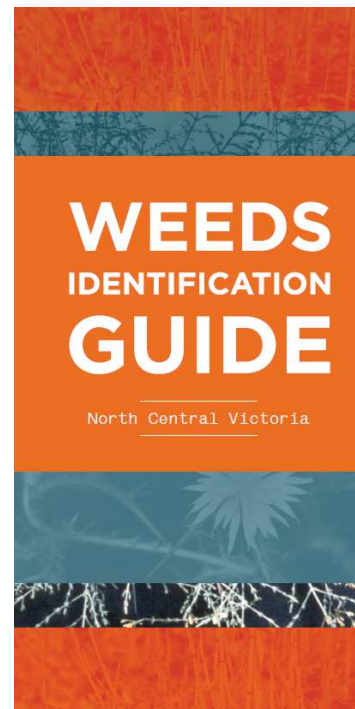
which will provide him with some direction on what his best options are. Ultimately Sam and Miranda will make the final decision once he has investigated the consequences of each option.

Since our meeting we have had some rain and Sam sent us all an email to say how good it is to get together 'It was great to host this meeting and see everyone here last Monday! It is always a boost to morale when we get together' and he also mentioned the rain 'Miranda and I got new perspectives from our discussions and also 22mm of lovely rain! Which is such a relief'. We are all looking forward to catching up again in June at Jim's property at Tatong, near Benalla, hopefully the group can provide similar support for Jim.

Update: Weeds Identification Guide- North Central Victoria

The ever-popular 'Weeds Identification Guide' has had an update.

The newest version does not include any new weeds however has updated information and departmental contacts. *Free copies will be available from June 30.*



Darren Bain

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Hi All,

During May there were many reasons to celebrate, particularly during 21 – 27 May with National Volunteer Week a key focus. We took the opportunity to say thank you to our volunteers through both Victorian Landcare program and the Victorian Waterwatch program on our social media channels.



Did you know, in North Central CMA region, over the past two years, we have estimated that the Waterwatch and Landcare programs have supported hundreds of volunteers and groups contributing over 100,000 hours of volunteer time to sustainably care for and manage land, water and biodiversity resources across our regions catchments and waterways!

Thank you to all our volunteers!



May also sees the annual Salinity Snapshot event take place across Victoria, celebrates World Turtle Day and end with the beginning of National Reconciliation Week.

In other breaking news, there have been some changes at a state level for the Victorian Waterwatch program. It's time to say goodbye, but not farewell to Deirdre, our state-wide Waterwatch Coordinator based at Corangamite CMA. As of June 30 2018, Deirdre will take on a new but similar role, Regional Citizen Science project officer. Deirdre has been leading the regional Waterwatch programs for the past five years and has played a fundamental role in creating and bringing to life the new Waterwatch Data Portal. She has been an amazing support for me personally and has always been there whenever I have needed guidance, expert advice or support in my role.

The North Central Waterwatch team would like to say a big thank you to Dierdre! I am certain we will still be seeing Deirdre around the traps as she roles out her new project working with citizen scientists across the Corangamite region.

I am excited to introduce Rose Herbern as the new Waterwatch Victoria Coordinator. Some of you may have met Rose a couple of years ago at the Water Citizen Science forum held in Bendigo, when she presented at the event on citizen science and working with Estuary Watch. We are looking forward to working with Rose sharing our stories and learning about her ideas for the future of Waterwatch!

While May has been full of events, June presents itself as some time to reflect. We will be focussing on project reporting and taking this opportunity to share our wonderful stories with our investors.

Upcoming events include 'Ask the Expert' webinars for schools.

Enjoy the read,

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? Have you done your water quality testing for April?



Water Storage - May update

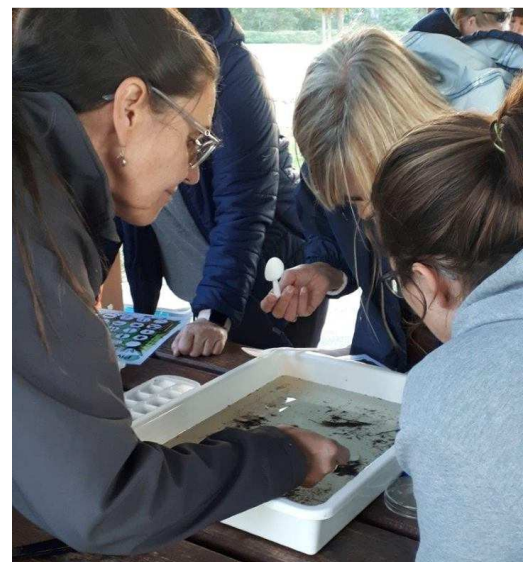
The table below indicates the current storage levels in our Water Storages and is updated daily, this information is taken from Goulburn Murray Water: www.g-mwater.com.au

Catchment	Storage name	% full May 2018
Campaspe	Lake Eppalock	62.16
	Waranga Basin	38.45
Loddon	Carin Curran Reservoir	54.67
	Tullaroop reservoir	56.92
	Laanecoorie Reservoir	37.13
	Newlyn	52.38
	Hepburn Lagoon	44.81

Water for me, water for all - Educator Workshop

North Central CMA partnered with Coliban Water and held a professional learning workshop for educators in early May. The workshop at Campbells Creek was attended by teachers from Castlemaine, Cohuna, Newlyn, Bullarto, Epsom and Elmore schools.

The teachers had a great time learning about the River Detectives program, and how to connect their students with their local waterway through monitoring. Coliban Water ran a fun activity discussing the different tastes of tap water.





Saltwatch

20 - 26 MAY 2018

During May each year we celebrate #SaltwatchWeek. Saltwatch week is an environmental monitoring program that helps communities understand the salinity problem in our waterways.

Saltwatch began in 1987, and is Australia's longest running community monitoring program.

During Saltwatch Week schools and community volunteers/groups from all over Victoria learn about the effects of salinity on water quality in their local catchment by collecting local water samples and testing with a salinity meter to determine salt content.

Saltwatch week coincided with Education Week in Victorian schools and we have encouraged all our River Detective schools to get involved. Useful resources for exploring salinity issues can be found under Saltwatch Salinity Snapshot here: http://www.vic.waterwatch.org.au/.../saltwatch_salinity_snaps

Snapshot monitoring provides a great opportunity to assess the condition of our waterways at a particular point in time.

The collaborative efforts of many registered groups create a picture of salinity across the state showing changes in salinity 'hot spots' over time, illustrating the effects of climatic changes such as the current drought, and can even pick up long term trends.

Results of our regions monitoring coming soon.



River Detectives - across the state

To celebrate World Turtle Day (23 May), River Detectives schools across the state were invited to join a virtual learning session, on Monday 21 May, from the comfort of their own classroom and 'Ask the Expert' questions on turtles.



Our expert was Graham Stockfeld from Turtles Australia. Graham introduced the students to the three turtles: eastern long neck, Murray river short neck and broad shell which are all found in Victoria showing them the turtles differences through the camera.

The students were asked to create cut outs of the turtles to show the difference in their sizes! The students asked great questions of Graham, ranging from turtle diet, to why he started the project, turtle predators and what the students could do to help the species. Thanks to Graham for his passion and expertise!

Next 'Ask the Expert' virtual learning session: Tuesday 5 June, with Tiana Preston (Melbourne Water) on platypus. More information www.riverdetectives.net.au/whats-happening/



Opera House Nets Banned in Victoria

From 1 July 2019, opera house nets will be banned in all public and private waters throughout Victoria, with reforms that will benefit native animals that live in and around waterways including platypus and turtles.

Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford said opera house nets in Victoria will be phased out with new open top lift nets now more readily available to replace them.

Up until now, many fishers purchased opera house nets to target yabbies unaware they couldn't be used in public waters in Victoria. Open top lift nets can be used in both public and private waters and are proven to be effective yabby catchers.

As part of the changes, a one-for-one trade-in is planned, whereby fishers can trade in their old opera house nets for free 'wildlife friendly' open top lift nets.

Trials have indicated that wildlife friendly gear such as open top lift nets and hoop nets can catch more yabbies than opera house nets when fished actively, so it'll be even easier to put yabbies on the table.

The Victorian Fisheries Authority will work with the fishing tackle sector, anglers and environmental groups on an awareness campaign around 'wildlife friendly' yabby gear leading up to 1 July next year.

Events...

WATER THE GREAT CONNECTOR Linking freshwater ecosystems at a time of climate change.

The Biolinks Alliance is hosting an upcoming symposium in Ararat on June 22 & 23, 2018.

The symposium will look at the special role of water as connector and those waterscapes and aquatic species in which connectivity plays an important role in maintaining their health. It will have a strong focus on central Victorian systems - the creeks, rivers and their headwaters, the small temporary wetlands and soaks that often get overlooked.

Four leading scientists will present their research and experience. Interactive workshops will engage participants in considering for themselves how they might begin to implement new approaches

to water in their landscapes

Followed by a workshop dinner with guest speaker

An optional field day will be held on 23 June, visiting spring soaks and a major wetland restoration project on a private property in Dunkeld.

When: 22 - 23 June 2018

Where: Gum San Great Hall 31-33 Lambert Street Ararat, VIC, 3377.

RSVP: Visit the CVBA website for further details <https://biolinksalliance.org.au/events/2018/6/22/2018-symposium>

Town Hall Crawl - concerts sung by the audience!

The Regional Centre for Culture is providing a rare treat for anyone who loves to join in a social singalong.

Over three Saturdays, members of the public will have the opportunity to visit nine of the most interesting public halls throughout the area - Baringhup, Bowenvale, Bullarto, Clunes, Creswick, Dunolly, Glenlyon, Lyonville and Talbot.

This unique event is part of the Regional Centre for Culture, an initiative of the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, in partnership with the Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Clans Corporation, Central Goldfields Shire, City of Greater Bendigo, Hepburn Shire and Mount Alexander Shire.

The iconic small halls will come to life with a series of free singing workshops culminating in a free concert on the final evening featuring the participants and tutors in a celebration of song, voice and community. Everyone's welcome to join all or just one of the sessions.





Between workshops, enjoy morning tea, lunch and a leisurely drive through Dja Dja Wurrung Country. The workshops will culminate in a combined concert at Maryborough Town Hall on June 30 at 7:00pm.

When: June 2, 16 & 30

Where: Various: visit the website for your nearest halls event

RSVP: Workshops and concert are free, but bookings are recommended. For more information and to register online go to <http://rcc2018.com/program-highlights/>



Registrations are now open for the 2018 National Landcare Conference and Awards, to be held at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre from 10-12 October 2018.

Themed 'Landcare – Building a Better Tomorrow', the 2018 National Landcare Conference and Awards is your opportunity to contribute to, engage with, and learn from your community and peers.

Held over three exciting days, the event will deliver an engaging program with keynote speakers, informative presentations, social events, and educational field trips within close proximity to Brisbane's CBD.

Recognising the hard work and innovation of the Landcare community, the Landcare Awards gala dinner is a chance to let your hair down and celebrate the achievements of peers with the announcement of the National Landcare category winners and the People's Choice Award winner.

Landcare Australia officially welcome you to join what promises to be the leading, knowledge-sharing event for the Landcare movement in 2018.

Register now for your early bird discount and save.

When: 10-12 October 2018

Where: Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

RSVP via:
<http://www.nationallandcareconference.org.au/#about>

Community Two Day Registration

- Early Bird Registrations (by July 31) **\$300/guest**
- Regular registration **\$450/guest**

Professional Two Day Registration

- Early Bird Registrations (by July 31) **\$800/guest**
- Regular registration: **\$900/guest**

Gala dinner ticket: \$85.00/guest

The North Central CMA Landcare Team is pleased to offer sponsorship of up to \$500 (including GST) for community members and volunteers to attend the 2018 National Landcare Conference and National Landcare Awards Gala Dinner.

Sponsorship is available to community members and volunteers from the North Central CMA region who can demonstrate their dedicated involvement in natural resource management activities in the region over the past two years.

To obtain sponsorship, you are encouraged to submit an [abstract](#) or a poster presentation for the conference, as the 2018 National Landcare Conference and Awards is your opportunity to contribute to, engage with, and learn from your community and peers.

To submit an expression of interest (EOI) for sponsorship, please email tess.grieves@nccma.vic.gov.au and answer the questionnaire below.

1. Briefly explain why you would like to attend the conference and what your main areas of interest are.
2. How will you share the knowledge gained from the conference with your group and/or local community?
3. Are you a member, volunteer or Facilitator of a community NRM group in the North Central CMA region? What is the group's name and your position in the group (if applicable)?
4. Please attach a copy of your abstract or outline your abstract or poster topic.

EOI's to be submitted by June 21



Funding opportunities....

Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) Grants

The VGT Community Grants Program Community Grants is open until Tuesday 5 June. Groups of landowners or local Landcare Groups can attract up to \$30,000 in grants to help combat gorse in their local area.

The VGT will support groups, starting from just two landholders, who are genuinely willing to control gorse. You can find the guidelines and application forms for download on the website - <https://www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au/community-grants/>.

The Victorian Gorse taskforce launched their Facebook page earlier this year, so you can visit <https://www.facebook.com/VictorianGorseTaskforce/> for updates and news from the VGT program.

Horticulture Innovation Fund



The Victorian Government is encouraging innovation and collaboration in the horticulture sector with a new fund available for research and development projects that will help the sector remain profitable and sustainable into the future.

The Horticulture Innovation Fund (HIF) supports industry to partner with research organisations on projects that use new technologies and techniques for improving overall economic performance.

Through the HIF, the Victorian Government seeks to support a horticulture sector that is innovative, collaborative and well informed.

Grants of up to \$50,000 (excluding GST) are available for applied research and development

projects that contribute to a more productive and profitable horticulture sector. The program is open until 2019 and is administered by the Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR).

What will be funded?

Projects eligible for assistance from the HIF include:

- Applied horticultural research and development that is innovative and likely to improve farm performance, and/or
- Research that will improve market access and business diversification activities as applied to the horticulture sector.

Preference will be given to projects that are mid to late stage research, where adoption, piloting and/or trialling in Victoria is required.

All grant recipients will be required to share the results of the research through the Horticulture Centre of Excellence to facilitate learning across the sector and to encourage continued collaboration between industries.

Who can apply?

The HIF is open to individuals and organisations associated with the Victorian horticulture sector, including:

Individual horticultural businesses – e.g. producers, coolstore/packhouse businesses, wineries.

Not for profit organisations that are an incorporated body, co-operative or association. e.g. industry bodies and associations.

Research organisations – a higher education institution or a registered research organisation

To apply visit:

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture/horticulture-innovation-fund>

Victorian Landcare Grants

OPEN UNTIL NOON JUNE 12

<https://delwp.smartygrants.com.au/northcentral1819VLG>

Next month's feature...

**National Schools Tree Day (July 27) and
National Tree Day (July 29)**