

North Central chat

AUGUST 2018

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

A message from the Regional Waterwatch Coordinator

Hello everyone,

Welcome to the August edition of the North Central Chat, most of you will know me as Cass from the Waterwatch program. I will be bringing you the Chat news over the next few months as we reach for our winter woolly warmers – yes, it's still freezing cold, with Bendigo having one of its coldest days in July this year in more than 22 years.

Last week was busy for Waterwatch and Landcare as we celebrated 25 years of Waterwatch with our community volunteers and received wonderful news about the Victorian Landcare Grants.

The Victorian Government recently released the 2018-19 Victorian Landcare Grants; with 143 project grants, 218 support grants and two start-up grants funded across the state.

12 project grants were successful in the North Central CMA region, attracting \$134,750 in funding. Projects included:

- Barkers Creek wetland - educating through restoration (Harcourt Valley Landcare Group).
- Championing Bendigo Creek in a time of change (Northern Bendigo Landcare Group).
- Driving change on Cornish Hill (Friends of Cornish Hill).
- Restoring Malmsbury biodiversity with a common community approach (Malmsbury District Landcare Group).
- Across the North Central CMA region, 43 groups were also successful in receiving support grants.

To read the full list of successful projects [click here](#).

We have some wonderful events on the calendar including our own rural women's event, Chicks in the Sticks 2018.

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Where is Tess?	

Tess is soaking up the sunshine and swimming with the whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*) at the majestic Ningaloo National Park on the West Australian coast.



Ningaloo Whaleshark Swim

A partnership with Goulburn Broken CMA, Chicks in the Sticks will showcase a range of inspiring key note speakers.

Read more about this wonderful event along with other exciting news in this month's edition of the Chat.

Enjoy the read,

Cass Davis, On behalf of the Landcare and Waterwatch team

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News...

Endangered squirrel glider is a feature on the Rochester silos

Our very own Strathallan Family Landcare Group is making heads turn! Their love of the squirrel glider and the project supporting the gliders has been celebrated with a large mural of 'Allan from Strathallan' on the Rochester silos.



Image: Bendigo Advertiser

Veronica and John Groat told Campaspe News all about their group's passion, enclosures housing the gliders (which started with Allan and Strathy and has now grown to eight gliders), nesting boxes and their aim to get the little fellas back into the environment down by the Campaspe River. To read the story [click here](#).

People who would like to donate to the cause can do so via Strathallan Glider Sanctuary's account (BSB - 633 000 AC - 161 878 335).

Celebrating 25 years of Waterwatch event

Over the centuries, amateur scientists and volunteers made key contributions to the understanding of climate, evolution, geological processes, electricity, astronomy, and other phenomena. Before the internet and mobile devices, many naturalists, including Charles Darwin, contributed observations to museums and universities for researchers to study, we call this citizen science (Auerbach 2015).

Today, citizen science plays a major role almost in natural resource management, from monitoring birds in our backyards to squirrel gliders on the Campaspe River, native vegetation and monitoring the health of waterways.

North Central Waterwatch is one of Australia's longest running citizen science programs. Our dedicated team of Waterwatch volunteers are gathering information, sharing knowledge, and contributing to decisions about the future of our waterways and we wanted to say thank you.



On Tuesday 24 July, the Waterwatch team gathered at Star Cinema in Eaglehawk to celebrate 25 years of Waterwatch and the amazing contribution our volunteers make to monitoring the health of our region's waterways.

Brad Drust, North Central CMA CEO, awarded certificates to volunteers who had reached milestones for their years of contribution including, Ruth Penny for 20 years (who unfortunately couldn't attend), Mel and Aaron Watts and Geoff McLeod for 15 years and 11 volunteers received certificates for 10 years including Marion de Costa who is now hanging up her 'meter'.



Attendees enjoyed a private screening of Gurrumul and a delicious afternoon tea.



20 years of Waterwatch report

The 20 years of Waterwatch report was launched at the 25 years of Waterwatch events by Senior Aquatic Pollution Ecologist, David Tiller. He shared the story of Waterwatch and how citizen science plays an important role in understanding our catchment, we wouldn't know what we know without our communities getting involved.

David said Waterwatch will provide a lasting legacy of understanding in our regions as we move towards strengthening the programs involvement in monitoring the ecological condition of our waterways.



Aboriginal Water Program

The Aboriginal Water Program aims to further include Aboriginal people in the way water is managed across Victoria and to reconnect communities to water for cultural, economic, customary and spiritual purposes.

On 22 June 2018, the Victorian Government announced the recipients of this year's Aboriginal Water Grants.

Eight projects were funded with three Traditional Owner groups across the North Central CMA region receiving funding:

- **Taungurung restoring water restoring country**, Taungurung -Restoring Water, Restoring Country
- **Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung) - Kapa Gatjin (To Know Water)**
- **North Central CMA - Barapa Barapa, Wemba Wemba Water for country**



Image: Water for Victoria website

To find out more about successful projects [click here](#)

New research: Victoria's inland wetlands store \$6 billion in carbon stocks

Victoria's inland wetlands lock away the annual emissions of 185,000 people, or roughly the population of Geelong, according to the state's first ever tally of the valuable environmental resources. Read more about the research gathered by Deakin School of Life and Environmental Sciences' Blue Carbon Lab that will increase understanding of how the environment helps to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. To find out more [click here](#)



Dr. Paul Carnell collecting soil cores from Victoria's inland wetlands



Water Storage - May update

So far it's been a long, cold and dry winter with not much rain fall across the catchment. According to the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) the August outlook shows most of Victoria, NSW and Queensland are likely to be drier than average. Water storage levels across the catchment seem to average around 80 -90% in the Murray storages while the Loddon storages on average are around 60%.

Region	Water Storage	% full at July 2018
Murray Storages	Torrumbarry Weir	94.54
	Third Lake	99.08
	Reedy/Middle Lake	92.88
	Kangaroo Lake	89.96
	Kow Swamp	75.55
	Lake Boga	74.15
	Lake Charm	91.37
Campaspe	Lake Eppalock	60.17
Loddon Storages	Cairn Curran Reservoir	51.81
	Tullaroop Reservoir	55.76
	Laanecoorie Reservoir	39.75
Bullarook Creek Storages	Newlyn Reservoir	54.18
	Hepburns Lagoon	

Update from Sophie, our River Detectives Project Officer (state coordinator)

I am finishing up as River Detectives Project Officer. I have had a fantastic time coordinating the expansion of the successful North Central CMA River Detectives program to three more regions across the state (and building a partnership with Melbourne Water).

During this time, I've had lots of fun setting up the new website, which links data collection to the Waterwatch database, coordinating monitoring kits

for schools across Victoria and experimenting with 'Ask the Expert' virtual learning sessions.

It has been a great experience supporting educators to inspire junior citizen scientists and connecting them to their local waterway.

Sophie has done a wonderful job leading our State-wide River Detectives Pilot program. The whole River Detectives/Waterwatch and North Central CMA team. We will miss her beautiful uplifting spirit and her can do attitude.

Sophie is off to begin her new role as a ResourceSmart Schools Facilitator and Waste Education Officer (just over the border) with the Grampians Central West Waste and Resource Recovery Group, and in this role will be closer to home, I wish her all the best on her new adventure.



Events.....

ResourceSmart Schools Energy Workshop

When: Tuesday, August 21 from 9.30am.

Where: St Marys primary School in Castlemaine.

RSVP: ResourceSmart Schools coordinator Ellen 0409013448 or resourcesmart@lmwrrg.vic.gov.au.

Sustainability Victoria's Energy Champions Challenge is open. ResourceSmart Schools can win a share of \$27,000 by reducing their energy use from 2017 to the end of 2018.

To help schools develop their energy efficiency campaigns there will be a workshop to learn about energy walk-through assessments; understanding energy bills and meters; using energy audit reports and building a better business case for energy actions.

If you are not already a ResourceSmart school, sign up now and become one [click here](#).



Chicks in the Sticks: Giving voice to a vision

Are you inspired by opportunity and the stories of others? Keen to meet like-minded women who share a connection to agriculture and the environment?

Don your favourite frock and add your own native flora accessory...it's time for the 2018 Chicks in the Sticks event, hosted by North Central and Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authorities.



When: Saturday October 20, 2018

Time: 10.00am - 2.30pm

Dress: Your favourite frock and native flora accessory (*Dressing up is fun, however please dress for the weather and your own comfort).

Cost: \$25.00 (includes ticket fees & GST) for women of central Victoria (drinks at bar prices).

Where: M.V Mary Ann, Riverboat Dock, Watson St, Echuca VIC 3564.

RSVP: Book online [here](#) OR contact the North Central Catchment Management Authority on (03) 5448 7124 for more information.

Bring along your best friend, mother, sister or colleague to what will be another incredible event. Your morning will begin on the dock beside the Murray River in historic Echuca, where you will be Welcomed to Country before boarding the MV Mary Ann Cruising Café boat for a 2.5hr cruise.

After boarding, keynote speaker Bon Blake will discuss her passion for writing, researching and sharing the stories of rural and remote women drawing on her experience of curating and editing 'Gulf Women, Voices from Remote North-West Queensland'. A delicious share plate lunch and drinks will follow as we travel up the river taking in the stunning panoramic views of the iconic river red gum forest.

There will be an opportunity to learn about improving your sleep and mental wellbeing with Royal Flying Doctor Service Senior Clinical Counsellor Cath Walker. Information displays of Landcare and Catchment Management Authority projects will also be showcased. The women who deliver these projects will be on hand to share the story of the connection between the regions rich environmental and agricultural values.

We welcome you and your friends to an event that focuses on the importance of storytelling, connection and the impact of increasing women's visibility. 2018 Chicks in the Sticks will delight you, inspire you and empower you to explore your own vision, and to seek out the stories within the landscapes and communities most important to you.

Quality Assurance and Quality Control Workshops - Waterwatch Volunteers

When: Monday 20 - Friday 24 August 2018.

Where: 3 workshops will be held (Castlemaine, Huntly and St.Arnaud).

RSVP: Cass Davis 03 54401863 or cass.davis@nccma.vic.gov.au.

North Central Waterwatch participates in Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC) events to ensure our community volunteers are meeting the state standard for water quality monitoring.

Each year, Waterwatch Victoria provides regional Waterwatch programs with the opportunity to test chemical mystery samples as a part of the annual Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC) event.

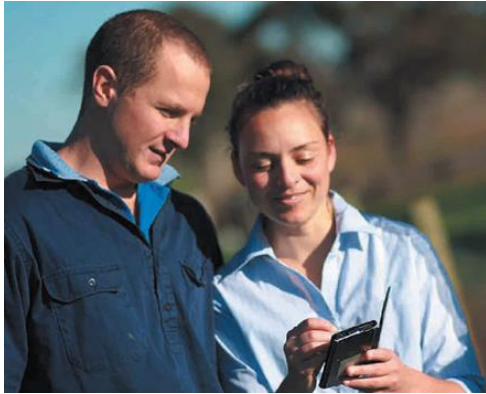
In the north central region, we offer QA/QC as part of our monitoring program to ensure all our volunteers' equipment, solutions and monitoring methods are meeting the state standard, so we can be confident the data being collected is usable and trusted.





Courses and Resources...

Free on-farm energy assessments



Agriculture Victoria is rolling out the first action in the Victorian Government's \$30 million Agriculture Energy Investment Plan: free on-farm energy assessments.

For more information [Click here](#).

Coliban Water - Incursions and Poster

Don't forget to get your entries ready for the National Water Week Poster Competition! Each year primary school students are asked to create a poster reflecting water related issues which are important and relevant to them and their local area.



Information, inspiration and prize details on Coliban Water's website (or your local water authority). Entries close 31 August, to get involved [click here](#).

Two free incursion choices in Term 3 for Coliban Water schools - Water Heroes and Kinetic Catchment. Book through their website, or alternatively, please email Alice, Education Officer, (communications@coliban.com.au) or call 1300 363 200.

Applications open: Master Class on Leadership for Community Engagement



The two-day intensive training program Masterclass for people wanting to lead positive change on community engagement in invasive species management. Find out more at weedsandrabbits.com/master-class/

When: Wednesday 12 – Thursday 13 September 2018, Macedon, Victoria

Applications close: 5 pm (AEST) Monday 6 August.

Funding News....

Recreational Fishing Grants



Small grants (up to \$5,000) are open all year round for projects that improve recreational fishing across Victoria. The funds are derived from the sale of recreational fishing licenses collected and invested into projects that improve recreational fishing across Victoria.

For more information [Click here](#).

