

# North Central Chat

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



October 2024

## A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

October seems to be the month for Citizen Science activities. With Frogtober, Aussie Bird Count and the Great Aussie Fungi Hunt, there's plenty to get involved with. Check out how you can contribute in the News section of the Chat.

I was excited to visit Seeding Victoria's Seedbank in Creswick at the end of August. Three North Central Landcare facilitators also came along to learn all about what Seeding Victoria is up to and how we can all help build a bank of seed for the huge amount of revegetation works we need to do. We had a great discussion about how to work together and how Landcare groups can get involved. Stay tuned as there is more to come. We also visited the property of a local farmer to have a look at the banksias he had planted.

I also enjoyed attending the Central Victorian Biolinks Rewilding Symposium a few weeks ago. It was a very informative day with presentations on some fascinating projects that are focused on protecting biodiversity and reintroducing species into landscapes. The discussions around how we can bring back biodiversity in urban landscapes are always inspiring. There's lots of small actions we can all take including planting wildlife friendly gardens.

The 2023 Victorian Landcare Grant project acquittal reports are due at the end of November. The acquittal reports have been opened in Smartygrants ready to be completed. Remember, mapping your achievements in iMap is an important part of this process. I'll be setting up sessions around the region to help groups with this mapping task through October and November. Keep an eye on your inboxes for the dates and locations. Feel free to reach out to me for a chat about this process or for some assistance with iMap.

The 2024 Victorian Landcare Grant payments have started hitting bank accounts. If you've got questions about your grant, please give me a buzz. I'm looking



Checking out the banksia plantings near Creswick

forward to seeing these projects come to life. Please share progress stories as your project develops.

I'm heading out to enjoy some of this very changeable spring weather and hopefully to find some frogs, birds and fungi!

Happy reading,

Belinda Pritchard

Regional Landcare Coordinator  
North Central CMA

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## Connecting rivers, landscapes, people

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) acknowledges Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the region, their rich cultures, spiritual connection to Country.

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



## News...



### Get involved in the Aussie Bird Count 2024

October is the time to once again dust off the 'nocs, don a hat, and grab your phone to count Aussie birds. Simply spend 20 minutes in your favourite outdoor spot and note the birds you see in that time. Submit your results in the easy-to-use app or via the web form. There's a built-in bird finder tool to help you identify what you see and you can participate as many times as you like.

There's also great [resources](#) on the Aussie Bird Count website, including fun [kids activities](#), [teacher resources](#), and details of [how to attract native birds to your garden](#). You can also find step-by-step instructions on how to count and record the birds you see. [Find out more and register for the 2024 Aussie Bird Count here.](#)



### Help us save the Australasian bittern and volunteer for listening surveys

#### From the Wetland Birds team at Birdlife Australia

The Australasian bittern is a secretive and cryptic species, with a great deal yet to be discovered about its ecology. The elusive bird is listed as endangered globally and in Australia.

You can help identify important bittern habitats by participating in the bittern listening surveys. These surveys will take place during the breeding season, spring and summer, with their unique calls heard mostly around dawn and dusk.

Volunteers will be trained in listening survey techniques and deployed to a nearby wetland. The best time to undertake these surveys is on a still, clear night when

there is a full moon. Full moon dates during the breeding season are:

- 15 to 19 October
- 13 to 17 November
- 13 to 17 December

You can apply to take part in the Australasian bittern listening surveys by [filling out this form](#).



### Join the conversation on Stage One of the Murray River Adventure Trail

Parks Victoria is planning Stage One of the Murray River Adventure Trail, a new nature-based experience along the beautiful Murray River.

New canoe and kayak launches, pedestrian links and new facilities at several key visitor sites are proposed from Barmah National Park to Koondrook as part of Stage One of the trail. The trail will pass through Echuca, Murray River Reserve, Gunbower National Park and Lower Goulburn National Park.

Draft plans for Stage One are now available on the [Engage Victoria](#) project page and Parks Victoria invites people to take a survey to provide feedback on what's proposed.

Visit the [Engage Victoria project page](#) to see what's proposed and take the survey.

You can also attend a community pop up or information session to chat to a member of the project team – event details are also on Engage Victoria.

Join the conversation before consultation closes on Sunday, 6 October.

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/murray-river-adventure-trail>



## Facing tough conditions? Don't go through it alone

### Agriculture Victoria

Agriculture Victoria is encouraging farmers to take up ongoing support and assistance to help manage current difficult seasonal conditions.

Agriculture Victoria's Aimee McCutcheon said Agriculture Victoria continues to monitor conditions across the state.

"We know there's been below average rainfall across most of Victoria during autumn and winter and that it's a critical time for cropping, livestock and dairy production.

"It's important that farmers know that support is available to them to help make early and informed decisions.

Ms McCutcheon said the Agriculture Victoria website explains what support is available to farmers, including financial support and assistance, mental health and wellbeing support.

"One example is the Australian Government's Farm Household Allowance which is a fortnightly payment for eligible farmers.

"Our website also provides access to other organisations that can help, such as the free services from the Rural Financial Counselling Services and the National Centre for Farmer Health."

Ms McCutcheon said Agriculture Victoria offers extensive practical information, resources, tools and calculators to help farmers with forward planning, feed budgeting and livestock management.

"All these free resources are available online 24 hours a day, or you can speak with staff at your local office."

Visit the Agriculture Victoria website today – [agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au) for more information plus details of events coming up in your region or online.

For information on technical support, contact Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 or at [recovery@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery@agriculture.vic.gov.au)



## Landcare Event Calendar 2024 to 2028

Landcare Australia has created a critical path for Landcare Awards and Landcare Conferences from 2024 to 2028, including other activities like Landcare Week and Coastcare Week. You can access the calendar via the [Landcare Australia website here](#).

## Save the date. National Landcare Conference 2025

The 2025 National Landcare Conference and National Landcare Awards will be held from Sunday 21 to Wednesday 24 September 2025 at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre. Submit your ideas for content and speakers [here](#).

## Landcarer platform

Landcarer is a purpose-built free online community for individuals, groups, and organisations to share and discuss all things related to our common passion for conservation, sustainable land management, and agriculture in Australia.

The platform supports the Landcare community to:

- Build capacity for grassroots and community based groups
- Promote your work, events or outcomes
- Share experiences, ideas, knowledge and resources
- Collaborate with others, explore opportunities and ask questions.

Check it out and get involved [here](#).



## The great Aussie fungi hunt 2024

October is a big month for Citizen Science. The Aussie Bird Count and Frogtober are happening this month, but another citizen science project you can get involved in is the Great Aussie Fungi Hunt.

It doesn't matter where you live, you can contribute to our growing knowledge of fungi in Australia by uploading



photos and observations to the Fungi Hunt Australia iNaturalist project.

This year, the Hunt is being run in collaboration with [Planet Fungi](#).

For more information, visit the [FungiMap website](#).



## Assessing dam water levels

### Agriculture Victoria

Agriculture Victoria has a range of online tools available to assist farmers in assessing the volume of water in their dams and how long that water may last.

Agriculture Victoria Land Management Extension Officer Clem Sturmfels said assessing how much water there is in a dam can be difficult due to a dam's odd shape and formulas used to measure their volume.

"Farm dams generally hold less water than expected and in a dry year, it's important farmers have a good understanding of how much water is left in their dams and plan accordingly," he said.

"The volume of a dam is closely related to its length and width. A stable, well-built dam has gently sloping sides which nearly meet in the middle of the dam's base.

"For example, a rectangular dam measuring 33m by 22m has a depth of approximately 3m and volume of approximately 1 million litres or 1 megalitre. A triangular shaped dam with similar measurements has a volume of approximately half this amount.

"Evaporation will cause a loss of around 60 per cent of this volume leaving the dam with enough water to carry approximately 200 sheep or 20 cattle for one year.

"Many dams rely on a regular top-up of water during autumn or spring, however this year has seen dry seasonal conditions, making the chance of a top up less likely due to depleted soil moisture and less runoff."

Agriculture Victoria has several tools to help farmers calculate dam volumes based on shape, length, width and depth, including the [Farm Water Calculator](#) and the [Summer Water Calculator](#).

The Summer Water Calculator also helps to calculate how long the remaining water may last.

The depth of a dam can be measured using a depth sounder or fishing line measuring device.

An instructional video for making and using the fishing line measuring device is on the Agriculture Victoria website: [Measuring the depth of your dam](#).

Information on preparing your farm for dry seasonal conditions can be found on the Agriculture Victoria website at [agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au)



## Carbon farming outreach program

### Unlock the potential of carbon farming

The Carbon Farming Outreach Program assists Victorian farmers and land managers to understand and make informed decisions on carbon farming and how they can benefit from moving to a low-carbon future.

Access free and trusted training and information on carbon farming to understand:

- What is carbon farming
- Carbon farming benefits and risks
- Sources of emissions and options to reduce emissions and store carbon
- Calculating emissions and carbon storage for your property
- Planning carbon farming activities
- Understanding carbon credit markets and opportunities from carbon credits

Register your interest [here](#), or email [CFOP@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:CFOP@agriculture.vic.gov.au)

This project is delivered with funding support from the Commonwealth of Australia through the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water under the National Carbon Farming Outreach Program.

## Awakening of the sleeping giant?

If you lived in northern Victoria during the 1990s you will have heard of the sleeping giant. This was the name given to the abatement of the dreadful salinity issues that once plagued the northern plains over many decades. With financial support from the Victorian and Commonwealth governments, the development and implementation of regional management plans, assisted by the Millennium Drought and considerable restructuring of the irrigation industry, the northern plains slowly recovered from salinity as the water table above high salinity groundwater began to recede.

The goal of a water table below about two metres was largely achieved by the early 2000s. Capillary action no longer brought saline groundwater to the soil surface and salt accumulation largely ceased. Why then the sleeping giant? Well farming communities and governments alike were aware they had not banished the problem. Instead, they had managed to successfully combat it through their actions and fundamental changes in the climatic regime.

Everything was generally OK until the end of the Millennium Drought in 2009. Thirteen years of dry seasonal conditions saw water tables fall by more than three metres. In 2010, however, things changed dramatically when more rainfall than had ever been recorded fell in a single year over northern Victoria, bringing with it the extensive sheet flooding of rivers and the northern plains. Groundwater bounced back to pre-drought levels and for a while it looked like the giant was awake once more.

But after the big wet years of 2010 and 2011, the climate went into another drying phase that lasted through to 2019, other than a big blip in the spring of 2016. Beyond 2019, we experienced the onset of a number of average-to-wet years inspired by at least three successive years of La Nina conditions, and possibly a fourth later this year. In October 2022, the three-or-four-year cycle once again delivered heavy rains and floods reminiscent of the 2010 flood year.

This produced a dramatic rise in saline groundwater throughout the plains with obvious implications for the return of salinity risk. Heavy rains in late 2023 and early 2024 added weight to this risk.

Over the past few years, one of the problems experienced in exploring the risk of salinity has been a general lack of monitoring and infrastructure. We all became somewhat complacent with salinity given the giant was sleeping.

Groundwater monitoring was reduced beyond 2012, and the bore network suffered from considerable decay.

However, over the past two years, the North Central CMA, aided by resources flowing from the Victorian Flood Recovery Program, has successfully restructured, repaired and improved the network. One hundred bores have been repaired with the installation of new headworks. You will now see these pretty blue bores as you drive through the northern plains. A further 30 bores are being drilled (as we speak) to fill in areas where there are information gaps.

Additionally, 30 bores are being fitted with electronic loggers programmed to record water-table depth at four-hourly intervals. The instrumented bores afford a considerable improvement in understanding the landscape water balance compared with traditional annual monitoring.

What does the data we have collected thus far tell us about the risk of salinity reappearing on the northern plains? Well, we are seeing shallow water tables above high-salinity groundwater occurring over very large areas of the plains. Water tables less than 1.5 metres are very common, and it seems almost certain in some areas that salinity will reappear as the weather warms up and salt is concentrated in surface soils over the summer months.

The work described herein is being completed by the North Central CMA's Reporting and Accounting for Salinity (RAS) program comprising Phil Dyson and Katrina Rast.

Phil and Katrina's normal day job is to make certain the CMA meets its statutory responsibilities under the Murray-Darling Basin Salinity Management 2030 program in estimating and reporting the amount of salt the North Central CMA region adds to the Murray River and the impact this has on the water quality of the river.

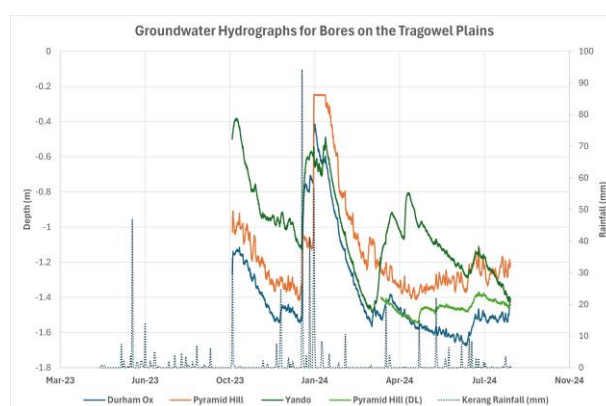
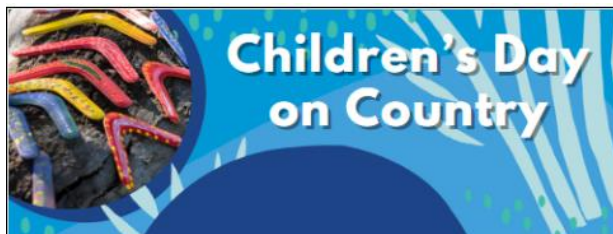


Figure 1 Electronic recording of groundwater levels illustrating shallow water tables in the Tragowel Plains region post the October 2022 floods



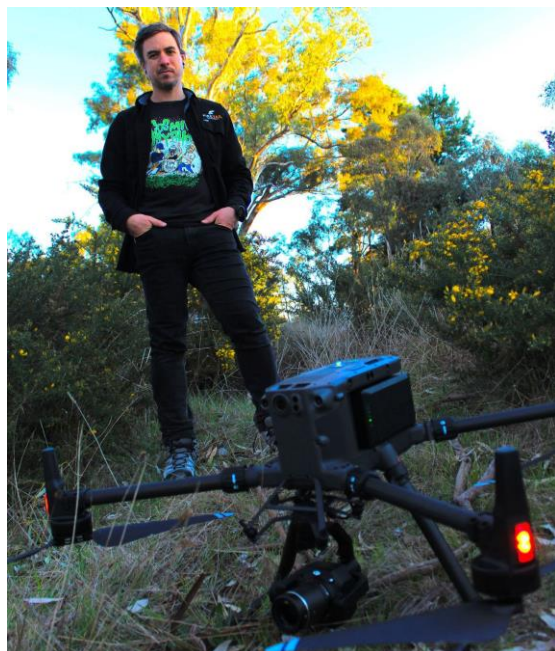
## Barapa Barapa Wamba Wemba (BBWW) Water for Country Project

The BBWW Water for Country Steering Committee organised a Childrens Day, Kids on Country, at Lake Boga during late September.

The aim of the event was to teach primary-school-aged students within the Swan Hill region about the cultural and ecological values of water. The day was divided into four activities, which included cultural connections, native animals, wetland birds, water bugs and a display of Aboriginal Cultural heritage artifacts.

Seventy children from four schools attended the event.

The weather was lovely, despite the wind, and it was great to have First Nations People and Traditional Owners out on Country, to teach the future generations about the importance of wetlands, waterways and continuing a cultural and spiritual connection to Country.



## Reach for the Sky: Drone-Powered Approach to Combat Weed Control

Castlemaine local and environmental drone specialist Dan Pettingill recently showcased Firetail Environments

at the Australasian Weeds Conference in Brisbane. His presentation – Utilising Drones in Weed Surveillance and Control – highlighted the growing role of drone technology in landscape management and agriculture.

Dan discussed how drone capabilities are transforming data collection, analysis and treatment processes in collaboration with organisations such as the North Central CMA, Coliban Water, Landcare networks, and local farmers across the region. Key projects across central Victoria include:

- Surveying horehound and pale yellow water lily.
- Conducting treatment trials along Gunbower Creek.
- Treating large infestations of blackberry in inaccessible areas around water storages.
- Delivering native seed for revegetation and restoration.
- Identifying crop health metrics and providing variable prescription herbicide treatments.
- Spreading seed for small horticulture and agriculture crops unsuitable for conventional sowing.

These initiatives showcase drones' critical role in plant health analysis, integrating Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and improving treatment efficiencies – reducing chemical use, providing alternative seeding options, and enhancing monitoring precision.

"The integration of drones into landscape management and farming offers significant benefits," Mr Pettingill said. "From enhanced data collection to effective treatment deployment, drones are transforming landscape restoration.

"We are also seeing significant benefits in agriculture by treating aerially.

"We had one instance in which a farming operation estimated aerial application treatments of a mature canola crop provided a significant financial benefit in savings made on fuel, a reduction in compaction, and preserving areas of crop that would otherwise be damaged by the machinery."

For more information, visit [www.firetailvic.au](http://www.firetailvic.au)



## Join our Victorian Waterways Management Strategy Collaborative Working Group

### Landcare Victoria Member's Council

We are looking for (up to) four landcare volunteers with an interest in waterways management to join our Victorian Waterways Management Strategy Collaborative Working Group (CWG).

The current Victorian Waterway Management Strategy (VWMS) was released by the Victorian Government in 2013 and has reached the end of its eight-year lifespan.

A new VWMS is being developed to ensure there continues to be strong policies in place for managing the health of Victoria's waterways.

Management themes in the existing strategy include: environmental water, estuaries, extreme events, recreational values, riparian management, river channel management, urban waterways, water quality and wetlands.

The draft VWMS is expected to be **released in late 2024** for public consultation.

The purpose/scope of the Victorian Waterways Strategy Engagement Collaborative Working Group is to:

- Inform the development of a Landcare Victoria organisational policy position on the draft VWMS, by engaging with the broader Victorian landcare community and in consultation with the Landcare Victoria Members Council and Board.

If you are interested in joining the CWG, please complete the EOI. If you are selected to join the CWG, we anticipate the first meeting of the group will be held in early October.



### Income tax requirements for landcare organisations

#### Landcare Victoria Inc.

If your organisation is one of the many environmental groups and networks trying to understand the recent changes to income tax

reporting for not-for-profits, or your role involves supporting landcare organisations through this issue, please read on.

With funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change (DEECA), Landcare

Victoria Inc is assisting Victorian landcare organisations to respond to the changes and meet their obligations.

This includes delivering information sessions and webinars, developing written resources, and providing support directly to the groups and networks who need it.

We have created a dedicated webpage where information and resources will be published as they become available, which you can visit at <https://landcarevictoria.org.au/taxsupport>

### Information and support sessions

Landcare Victoria Inc members were recently sent an update on this issue and invited to attend online Information Sessions or book an appointment to receive one-on-one support from us, if needed.

The response so far has been great, with around 30 groups/networks engaged in the first couple of weeks.

### Drop-in information sessions

These are short, small-scale webinars designed to bring landcare group/network representatives and other stakeholders up to speed with income tax reporting requirements for not-for-profit organisations.

If you're trying to quickly understand this issue and how it impacts a typical landcare organisation, attending an information session is a great place to start.

Upcoming dates:

- Tuesday 1 October at 5:30pm
- Wednesday 9 October at 4pm

[Register your attendance here](#). Please note, places are limited and bookings close 30 mins prior to each session. More dates coming soon!

### One-on-one support

One-on-one support sessions are an opportunity for a group/network to meet with Amanda Grace from LVI to ask questions and get tailored support/guidance.

Whether you are trying to assess an organisation's income tax status or preparing for charity registration, if you're feeling uncertain or confused, a support session may be just what you need.

To view available appointment times over the next few weeks, please visit [the booking site](#). If no suitable appointments are available, please check back soon.



## WaterWatch Victoria

### Small Actions, Big Impact

#### How you can help Victoria's frogs in October

Victorians are being invited to record their local frogs throughout October as part of Frog Month Victoria, using the Frog Census App, to contribute to vital conservation research.



The recordings will help protect local frog species including the threatened growling grass frog. They will also help researchers understand more about the eastern dwarf sedge frog, a small tree frog common along the Queensland and New South Wales coast and recently found in Victoria.

Professor Kirsten Paris from the University of Melbourne said that Frog Month Victoria has been designed with both citizen scientists and researchers in mind. "We're calling all frog and nature enthusiasts: kids, teens, adults, Landcare and environment groups, anyone who has an interest in our frog species to be involved."

"Through collaboration with researchers, citizen scientists, and Catchment Management Authorities across Victoria, the recordings will help to map the habitats of our threatened frogs. The more we can collect, the better we will understand the habitat of frog species across Victoria and tailor conservation strategies to protect them.

"Download the Frog Census App and head out at dusk to your garden pond or local waterway. Even if you don't hear a call, we still want to know! While our research will focus on threatened species, we are keen to receive recordings of all frogs calling around the state."

For more information head to the [Frog Month Victoria website](#).

[Download the app – Android](#)  
[Download the app - iOS](#)

### New WaterWatch Portal Coming Soon

#### Seeking Volunteer Input

WaterWatch Victoria is developing a new look data portal and is seeking input from users.

Do you use the WaterWatch portal to view or download data? Would you like to provide input and get a sneak peek? Statewide WaterWatch EstuaryWatch Facilitator Justine Holmes is holding an online session to hear from volunteers on Thursday 17 October at 10am.

If you would like to participate, contact her at:

[justine.holmes@ccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:justine.holmes@ccma.vic.gov.au) or 0457 007544.

### Welcome!

#### To our newest WaterWatch recruits

A warm welcome to our newest WaterWatch volunteers and thanks for getting on board.

**Thomas** – monitoring the Frog Ponds at No.7 Reservoir

**Clare** – monitoring the Bendigo Creek at Kangaroo Flat

**Mindy** – monitoring Shepherd's Hut Creek at Lauriston

**Sam** – monitoring the Campaspe River, Doaks Reserve at Axedale.

Thanks for helping to keep an eye on our precious waterways, we couldn't do without you 😊

Britt Gregory

Project Officer

Email: [britt.gregory@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:britt.gregory@nccma.vic.gov.au)





## Bendigo Water bug Sampling workshop open to all who work with young people!

**Water bug sampling is one of the most engaging, enjoyable, and educational activities in our program.**

Students of all ages love water bug sampling and teachers recognise how well it links to the science curriculum and beyond.

Diving into the world of water bugs connects students intimately with waterway and catchment health concepts and is do-able by River Detective and non-River Detective schools with easily accessible equipment.

The following session is open to all school staff (whether you are involved in River Detectives or not), early childhood staff, parent volunteers and passionate community/Landcare members:

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October, 4:30 to 6pm:** St Kilian's Primary School, 2 Havelock Street Bendigo.

Come along to:

- Find out what equipment is needed for water bug sampling and where to get it.
- Learn how to run a water bug session.
- Experience water bug sampling and enhance your knowledge and ID skills.
- Tap into useful resources.
- See what River Detectives is all about!

Rsvp to [riverdetectives@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:riverdetectives@nccma.vic.gov.au)

## National Water Week event

**This year's theme is Accelerating Action**

Join us after school from 4pm to 6:30pm on Friday 25 October for a celebration at the Bendigo Library. There is something for everyone.

- A Special Storytime at 5pm. Kids can meet the Coliban Water mascot, Tap, and see what type of mischief he gets up to.
- Join the North Central CMA's River Detectives program to explore the fascinating world of water bugs: how they fuel the rest of the food chain, how

they tell us if waterways are healthy, and how we can keep them healthy by keeping our stormwater clean.

- Enjoy the huge fish tank display and learn about our endangered native small-bodied fish.
- Join Coliban Water for fun activities and arts and crafts. The National Water Week Poster Competition winning posters will be on display.
- Learn about the Bendigo Creek Project with City of Greater Bendigo Environment staff.
- Help the team from Smile4Miles with Magi Dragon. Plus, free home dental health kits as well as some fun activities!
- Join Swamps Rivers and Ranges Inc to learn about frogs and their importance for wetland ecosystems and join in some froggy games and challenges.

We'd love to see you there!



Nicole Howie  
River Detectives Project Officer  
North Central CMA  
Phone: 0413 974 074  
Email: [nicole.howie@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:nicole.howie@nccma.vic.gov.au)

## Water Storages Update

Region	Water Storage	% full at 23 Sep	% full October 2023
Murray Storages	Dartmouth Dam	95.83	96.85
	Hume Dam	70.38	97.37
	Reedy/Middle Lk	99.57	97.65
	Kangaroo Lake	92.17	92.64
	Ghow Swamp	81.65	89.34
	Lake Boga	81.09	94.78
	Lake Charm	92.75	96.53
Loddon Storages	Cairn Curran Res	66.96	99.37
	Tullaroop Res	74.53	100.65
	Laanecoorie Res	25.75	59.88
Bullarook Storages	Newlyn Res	51.32	100.54
	Hepburns Lagoon	51.79	101.79
Goulburn Storages	Lake Eildon	89.23	97.18
	Waranga Basin	70.48	93.42
Campaspe	Lake Eppalock	86.53	99.37
Coliban Water Storages	Upper Coliban Res	85	100
	Lauriston Res	82	99
	Malmsbury Res	44	104

Source:

<https://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-operations/storage-levels>  
<https://coliban.com.au/about-us/our-reservoirs>

## Upcoming Events and Special Days

October	
Frog Census Month - FROGTOBER	October
<u>Buy Nothing New Month</u>	October
<u>World Habitat Day</u>	2 Oct
<u>World Migratory Bird Day</u>	12 Oct
<u>National Ride 2 Work Day</u>	16 Oct

<u>Aussie Backyard Bird Count</u>	18-24 Oct
<u>National Water Week</u>	21-27 Oct
November	
<u>National Recycling Week</u>	11-17 Nov
<u>World Science Day for Peace and Development</u>	10 Nov
<u>Pollinator Week</u>	9-17 Nov
<u>World Fisheries Day</u>	21 Nov
December	
<u>World Soil Day</u>	5 Dec
<u>International Volunteer Day</u>	5 Dec
<u>Coastcare Week</u>	2-8 Dec
<u>International Mountain Day</u>	11 Dec

## Events...



## Bendigo's birds

## City of Greater Bendigo

Discover the diversity of Bendigo's birdlife on this morning walk through Crusoe Reservoir. Join an expert birder to learn about the calls, ecology and characteristics of some of our local species that thrive in both our wetland and woodland environments.

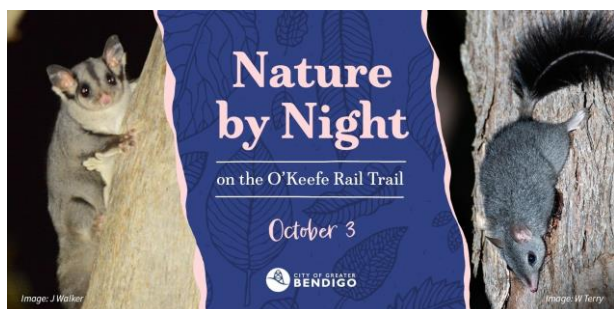
**When:** Wednesday 2 October 7.30am to 9.30am

**Where:** Crusoe Reservoir carpark off Crusoe Road, Kangaroo Flat

**Cost:** Free

**What to bring:** Wear enclosed comfortable shoes and weather-appropriate clothing. Bring binoculars if you have them, otherwise there will be a few to borrow.

**RSVP** [Register here.](#)



## Nature by night on the O'Keefe Rail Trail

### City of Greater Bendigo

Come and join us on a nocturnal wildlife wander along the O'Keefe Rail Trail to look for mammals and birds. Learn about the ecology and calls of some of Bendigo's nighttime creatures. We will use spotlights and a thermal camera to detect and view animals that emerge once the sun goes down - possums, gliders, antechinus, insects and owls!

There will be plenty of opportunities to ask the local Rangers and Biodiversity team lots of questions.

This event is suitable for all ages. Kids encouraged.

**When:** Thursday 3 October 7pm to 9pm

**Where:** O'Keefe Rail Trail at Wilkie Road, between McIvor Hwy and Trotting Terrace. Parking is available next to the trail.

**Cost:** Free

**What to bring:** Wear enclosed shoes and weather-appropriate clothing. Bring a torch or head torch, and binoculars if you have them.

**RSVP** [Register here](#)

## Social media and the law

### Virtual workshop presented by Justice Connect

Social media can be an invaluable tool in promoting the work of your organisation, but if not properly managed it has the potential to cause damage to your organisation, clients, employees or volunteers.

After this three-hour training session, you'll understand the legal implications and risks of using social media in your not-for-profit organisation.

You'll learn about:

- Social media and its key legal risks
- Managing social media use
- Addressing inappropriate workplace behaviour

- How to deal with misconduct on social media
- Top tips for developing social media policies.

We'll also give you additional resources to help you in the future.

**When:** Wednesday 9 October 10am to 1pm

**Where:** online

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP** by 2 October to [bvrchub@bgovolunteers.org.au](mailto:bvrchub@bgovolunteers.org.au)

**RSVP** by 2 October to [bvrchub@bgovolunteers.org.au](mailto:bvrchub@bgovolunteers.org.au)



## Rural and regional energy summit

### Farmers for Climate Action

Do you want to see meaningful investments in your regional and rural energy infrastructure?

Farmers for Climate Action (FCA) is partnering with the region's energy wholesaler, Powercor, to bring together a range of Powercor customers and their representative organisations for a full day of discussion and activity that will inform Powercor's 2026-2031 Regulatory Reset proposal across four pillars including:

- Affordability and equity
- Reliability and resilience
- Energy transformation
- Customer experience

FCA will also host a panel discussion on Regional Energy Success: Building Resilience and Opportunity

The 2023 Rural and Regional Summit report can be found [HERE](#). 2024 summit program to follow.

### Who should attend?

All Powercor customers and their representatives are encouraged to attend (not just farmers). It is critical energy infrastructure for regional and rural communities is fit for purpose and supports thriving communities and regional economies.

If you are a farmer and need assistance to support your attendance, please email us at [info@farmersforclimateaction.org.au](mailto:info@farmersforclimateaction.org.au) with the subject 'Rural and Regional Summit'.



**When:** Thursday 10 October 8am to 5pm

**Where:** All Seasons Resort Hotel, Strathdale

**RSVP** [Register here](#)

## Precision soil mapping on central Victorian pastures

### Agriculture Victoria

Beef and sheep producers are invited to join Agriculture Victoria and Precision Agriculture at a field day on precision soil mapping and variable rate fertiliser use in the livestock industry.

The four demonstration sites are on properties owned by members of the Smeaton and Pyrenees BestWool/BestLamb groups. Results and insights from the three-year demonstration will be presented.

Workshop topics include:

- Visit one of the project demonstration sites and discuss in field variability of soils and some of the drivers of that variability
- Soil variation at the paddock scale
- Variable rate spreading
- Soil testing and fertility
- Economics of precision soil testing and variable rate spreading.

**When:** Friday 11 October 9.30am to 12pm

**Where:**

9:30 – 1504 Amphitheatre Road, Mount Lonarch

10:30 – Amphitheatre Rec Reserve, School Street, Amphitheatre

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP:** Contact Neil James on 0417 353 929 or at [neil.james@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:neil.james@agriculture.vic.gov.au)



## Weed ID and control workshop

Join experienced and knowledgeable natural resource management practitioners and local contractors for an informative workshop that will cover the fundamentals of local weed identification and control techniques.

The first part of the day will be held in the Taradale Hall for a classroom session. In this session we will focus on the identification tips for local noxious and environmental weeds and best practice control techniques.

This will be followed by a demonstration of an Eco Blade which can be used for heavily infested areas of woody weeds such as Gorse and Blackberry.

A show bag of resources will be provided to all participants. Free lunch provided!

This event is supported by the Victorian Government through the Partnerships Against Pests program and the North Central CMA.

**When:** Sunday 13 October 10am to 1pm

**Where:** Taradale Hall

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP** [Register here.](#)

## Income tax for environmental organisations webinar

Following on from our first successful webinar on income tax for environmental organisations held in May with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC), Landcare Victoria will present another webinar. In case you

missed the first one, you can [click here to watch the recording](#).



In the upcoming webinar, we will go through the income tax issue in detail to explain the impact on Landcare organisations and what they need to do to be endorsed as income tax exempt, answer some common questions and provide the latest updates. More information coming soon.

**When:** Tuesday 15 October 5.30pm

**Where:** Online

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP** More information coming soon, check [LVI's website](#).



## Deep nature connection: Caring for nature in crisis

### Trust For Nature

Nature needs us more than ever – and we need nature. As we face the increasing biodiversity crisis fuelled by environmental destruction and climate change, deepening our connection with nature is vital. By deepening our understanding of nature, we can better protect it.

How do we encourage more people to connect with nature? How do we inspire people to care? And how does this relate to private land conservation and restoration efforts across Victoria and Australia?

Join us for a free webinar on Zoom to hear from three experts whose work focuses on human-nature connection.

The John Paul Memorial Lecture is made possible thanks to the continued support and generosity of the Paul Family Foundation.

**When:** Thursday 17 October 7pm to 9pm

**Where:** online via Zoom

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP** [Please register here.](#)



## Livestock nutrition workshop

### Get ready for summer

Prepare your livestock for the summer season with expert advice from experienced ruminant nutritionist Jess Revell. Enjoy morning tea and lunch while gaining valuable insights tailored to sheep and goat owners.

The presentation will go for one hour, with time afterwards dedicated for 1:1 tailored advice for sheep, cattle and goat owners.

Key topics include:

- Nutritional requirements of livestock coming into summer
- Supplementary feed options, including the best types of hay
- Essential minerals for the summer period
- Nutritional value of onion grass and how to balance the diet

This is your chance to bring your questions and get tailored advice directly from Jess. Don't miss this opportunity to optimise your livestock's nutrition and ensure a successful season.

Registration essential. For more information contact Stock Sense at [stocksense@vff.org.au](mailto:stocksense@vff.org.au)

**When:** Saturday 26 October 2024, 10am to 12pm

**Where:** Heathcote

**Registration essential:** [Stock Sense Workshop | Heathcote \(zohopublic.com\)](#)



## Cohuna carp catch

The North Central CMA invites you to a family day of free activities.

Register on the day. Bait supplied and bank fishing only. HEAPS OF PRIZES.

- ✓ Welcome to Country
- ✓ Turtles Australia and native fish displays
- ✓ Free lunch
- ✓ Ask me about Waterbugs with WaterWatch
- ✓ Kids' colouring tent
- ✓ Hear about our Native Fish Recovery Project and what we're doing to bring back native fish
- ✓ ...and lots more!

**When:** Sunday 27 October 10am to 1pm

**Where:** Garden Park, Cohuna (Gateway Information Centre end)



## Gorse Grief in Pipers Creek

### Gorse control demonstration day

Join Pipers Creek Landcare, supported by the Victorian Gorse Taskforce, for demonstrations of best practice gorse removal and control.

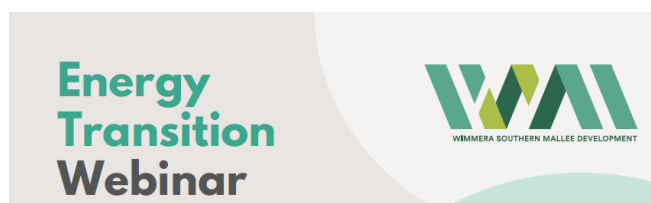
See the EcoBlade, Green Climber, mulcher and cut 'n' paste in action.

All participants will be provided with a take home information package, including your very own cut 'n' paste dabber.

**When:** Saturday 2 November 10am to 12.30pm

**Where:** McPhersons Lane (off Pipers Creek Road), Pipers Creek

**RSVP** by 30 October to [piperscreeklandcare@gmail.com](mailto:piperscreeklandcare@gmail.com)



## Energy transition webinar

### Examining the effects of energy infrastructure on agriculture technologies

Adrian Roles from JMAJ Precision has launched an independent report about interactions between ag-tech and telecommunications with high voltage transmission lines. He will be presenting his findings at a public webinar on Wednesday 6 November.

This event will be hosted by Wimmera Southern Mallee Development to share independent information around renewable energy infrastructure in response to community questions.

**When:** Wednesday 6 November 11am to 12pm

**Where:** Online

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP** [Please register here](#)

## Funding opportunities...

### Partnerships Against Pests

#### Agriculture Victoria

The Partnerships Against Pests grants help community groups plan and deliver education and training programs that provide local and long-term solutions.

Round three of the Partnerships Against Pests grants program is now open. Applications for stream two are open until 11.59pm Friday 11 October 2024.

We hosted a webinar at 11am on Monday 9 September 2024 to introduce round three of the grants program. The webinar recording and slides are available on the [applying for a grant](#) page.

### North Central CMA grants portal

The North Central CMA **Business Development** team presents our free public access grants portal.

You will find more than 270 grants from more than 150 providers suitable for environmental works, regional events, climate solutions, science and indigenous support.

Use the portal to easily find and apply for grants that match projects and priorities.

Over the next few months, most grants available for our volunteers and their work will be released. We encourage you to use the portal to explore and secure funding from a wider range of sources, helping us collectively enhance our impact in the region.

**Link:** [www.nccma.vic.gov.au/resources/grants-search/](http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/resources/grants-search/)