

# North Central Chat

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



February 2024

## A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

Welcome to 2024. I hope everyone had a restful break over the festive season. I enjoyed some time away camping on the NSW coast and around Mount Kosciuszko. It was wonderful to experience Australia's High Country, although the wildflowers were only just starting to appear. But it's always amazing what time in nature can do for one's wellbeing.

We're ramping up for a busy year ahead. This month is Rabbit Buster month and we have shared some information and opportunities in our Rabbit Buster feature in the coming pages. There are lots of resources, support, and information available to landholders to help them control rabbits on their property. Reach out to your local Landcare group, the Victorian Rabbit Action Network or Agriculture Victoria if you need further support.

In other exciting news, the Buloke Northern Grampians Landcare Network was recently announced as one of the first two participants of the New Futures for Victorian Landcare project. Congratulations to the team on this fantastic opportunity. We're looking forward to watching and learning as this project progresses. See a news article below for more information.

World Wetlands Day is coming up on 2 February. To celebrate, the North Central CMA is once again hosting Breakfast with the Birds at Lake Cullen on 4 February. Be sure to get along to this popular event to hear from Damien Cook and Darren Quinn. Book your ticket [here](#).

Finally, a reminder that the Landcare Awards are currently open for nominations and close on 1 March. Now in its 32<sup>nd</sup> year, the State and Territory Landcare Awards stand as a prestigious biennial national Landcare Awards program. According to Landcare Australia, "the objective is to honour individuals, groups and organisations that are making outstanding contributions to caring for the environment in their local communities for the benefit of all Australians today, and for

## World Wetlands Day 2 February 2024



## Wetlands and Human Wellbeing

generations to come". Nominating is easy and free. There are nine categories and an additional five Victorian-only categories. These include the Joan Kirner Landcare Award, which acknowledges an individual community Landcarer and includes a \$1000 award. With only a month to go before nominations close, make sure you nominate a Landcarer or group for these prestigious awards and give them the recognition they deserve.

Happy reading,

Belinda Pritchard

Regional Landcare Coordinator  
North Central CMA

Phone: 0408 342 593

Email: [Belinda.pritchard@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:Belinda.pritchard@nccma.vic.gov.au)

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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...

### Vale David Griffiths

#### Muckleford Catchment Landcare Group



David Griffiths. Photo provided by Beth Mellick, Muckleford Catchment Landcare Group.

David Griffiths was the Vice President of the Muckleford Catchment Landcare Group. He was also the owner of Geometree, a landscape restoration company. He was responsible for revegetating private land in central Victoria (and beyond) for most of his career. He was a wealth of knowledge and freely shared this information with our Landcare group. We know what we know because of Dave, and his death has us asking how we go forward from here.

Dave taught us about landscape restoration – he was a true believer in good ground preparation. He used a Yeoman's plough and he ripped deep. He didn't do weed control, he said that a good planting will out-compete the weeds. He planted with a pottiputki using a variety of native seedlings, but he also liked to use other tree species where appropriate. He gave landowners advice on how to restore their properties, on property design, and on how to make the best use of water in the landscape.

He once loaned me a book by Edna Walling called *The Australian Roadside* because he was passionate about protecting roadside vegetation and encouraged our group to look closely at our roadsides.

*"Before much more burning off and bashing of the roadside growth with earth-moving machinery takes*

*place we might awaken to the realisation that here on the roadsides are the most valuable and the most accessible natural reserves we have – reserves which make Australia the country we love – and that there is no more logical place for the presentation of our natural plants than along the roads we travel."* Edna Walling, 1952.

In honour of Dave, we will continue to restore landscapes in and around the Muckleford and Walmer areas, we will fight to save our roadside vegetation, we will think of him when we stop someone from clearing the roadsides or illegally taking firewood, and we will think of him every time we plant a tree. We miss you, Dave.

Contributed by Muckleford Catchment Landcare Group Secretary Beth Mellick. <https://mucklefordlandcare.org/>

## Have you heard about Birdly?

Birdly is BirdLife Australia's new bird ID app. It combines the strengths of traditional field guides with the power of AI technology. BirdLife Australia says Birdly is Australia's first bird identification guide specifically designed and built as an app only. It uses cutting-edge AI technology for bird image (700+ species) and sound recognition (60+ species) as well as 200 videos and 200 3D images.



Download the Birdly app from the Google Play store or Apple's App Store.

## Volunteering Naturally 2023

### DEECA Environmental Volunteering team

#### The latest annual snapshot of environmental volunteering across the state is now available.

More than 213,500 volunteers contributed about 1.92 million hours through 1955 groups and organisations across Victoria in 2022-23.

There was an increase of 23 per cent in volunteer hours and 18 per cent of active volunteers over the financial year.

This is clear evidence of the commitment and passion by everyday Victorians stepping up to care for nature.

The report is dedicated to the Victorians who volunteer their time and expertise to help protect Victoria's

precious environment and biodiversity. Through capturing your contributions, we seek to continue spotlighting the invaluable work you're undertaking for generations to come.

The full report, Volunteering Naturally 2023, is available on our [website](#)

## 2024 Victorian Landcare Forum – save the date

**Landcare Victoria's annual forum will be held in Bendigo on 8 - 10 May.**

The forum will run over three days:

- Wednesday 8 May: Professionals Day
- Thursday 9 May: Community Day
- Friday 10 May: Field trip and workshop

The Professionals Day program is looking very promising with relevant topics and great speakers. It will be free for professional Landcarers. Please note the program on May 9 and 10 is not free, but there will be tickets available for professionals as well.

More information to come.

## Buloke Northern Grampians Landcare Network selected in New Futures for Victorian Landcare project

**Landcare Victoria Inc (LVI)**

### First pilot landscapes announced

New Futures for Victorian Landcare is an exciting project that aims to support the participation of the Landcare community in emerging green investment markets. These markets are already large and growing and seeking high quality landscape scale projects.

New Futures for Victorian Landcare will pursue solutions to important challenges faced by Landcare including the need to:

- Develop new pathways for investment beyond grant-based project funding
- Initiate planning processes that mobilise local knowledge and enable effective on-ground action by volunteer community Landcarers; and
- Establish systems for monitoring, evaluation and communication that demonstrate environmental impact and social change.

LVI has announced the first two pilot landscapes for the New Futures for Victorian Landcare project have been selected.

Congratulations to Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network and the Granite2Goulburn Group, led by Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative, on their selections.

The successful networks will undertake a landscape planning and stakeholder engagement process, including hosting a Landscape Impact Program (run by Regen Farmers Mutual) with 10 pilot landholders in their area to inform development of a Landscape Investment and Action Plan. Along with our other project delivery partners Landscape Finance Lab and ANU Sustainable Farms Initiative, we'll explore a model that enables Landcare to access other forms of funding to implement their plans.

We look forward to a process of discovery with the first two pilot landscapes in 2024.

For more information on this project, read more on the [LVI website](#) or contact Project Manager Anthony Gallacher.

Email: [anthony.gallacher@landcarevictoria.org.au](mailto:anthony.gallacher@landcarevictoria.org.au)

Phone: (03) 9043 1945

## Junior Landcarers in action

### Nominate a Junior Landcarer in Action

Junior Landcarers are taking action to tackle environmental issues in their local communities across the country. From volunteering with their local Landcare group to joining their school's green team, meet some of the children and young people who are making a difference in the world around them.

Do you know a young person or group making a change for the environment?

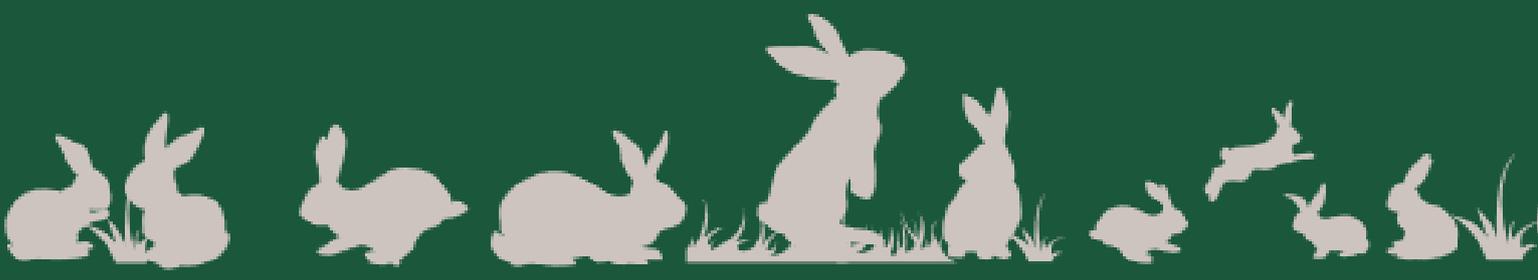
Email [enquiries@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:enquiries@landcareaustralia.com.au) and let us know what actions they're taking for a chance to have them featured on the [website](#) and in the Junior Landcare newsletter.

## Landcare Plan for Victoria

### Landcare Victoria Inc

Landcare Victoria has recently launched the Landcare Plan for Victoria which outlines the collective goals and priorities of the Landcare community and highlights the key actions and areas where support is needed to deliver on its vision.

[Download a copy of the plan on the LVI website.](#)



## Rabbit Buster Month feature

### It's time to prepare your rabbit-control plan

#### Agriculture Victoria

European rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) were first released in Australia in 1859 and have since become significant pests, resulting in a range of environmental, social, cultural, and agricultural impacts. It's estimated that rabbits cause more than \$200 million in agricultural losses per year in Australia. In Victoria, feral or wild populations of rabbits are declared as established pest animals under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act). Under the CaLP Act, landowners have a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of and, as far as possible, eradicate established pest animals from their land.

When designing your rabbit control plan, it's important to understand rabbit biology and how they behave. Rabbits are shy feeders and fear new things in their environment. They are also very picky eaters and will choose to eat plants with the highest nutritional value.

Rabbit numbers can go up very quickly as they can breed multiple times per year. This means the number of rabbits in an area can bounce back quickly after poor seasonal conditions, disease outbreak, and control efforts. **Two rabbits can breed to more than 184 rabbits in just 18 months!** Survival of young is greatly increased when rabbits have safe places to live, especially underground burrows and warrens. Rabbits also use warrens to protect themselves from predators and weather extremes.

The best way to control rabbits is to create and use a detailed rabbit-control plan that describes:

- Your rabbit-control goals
- How you will achieve your rabbit-control goals
- How you will continue to check rabbit numbers to determine success

The best results are achieved where neighbours work together on rabbit control across a landscape or district, rather than just working on a single property. Remember, just one warren entrance and a pair of rabbits can re-infest your property. Just one active warren entrance per two hectares can seriously impact the ability of pastures and sensitive plants to regenerate.

**Effective rabbit control is achieved by using a combination of control measures, not just one.**

Effective rabbit management uses an integrated approach, meaning multiple methods of control are used

which suit the property and circumstances. But remember, **the warren is the key to the rabbit's success** and destroying burrows and other harbour (other places that rabbits can hide such as dense, low-growing vegetation, logs, rubbish piles and weeds) is key for long term success. It is important to use control measures in the right order to increase the chances of success. Ideally you should follow this sequence of control:

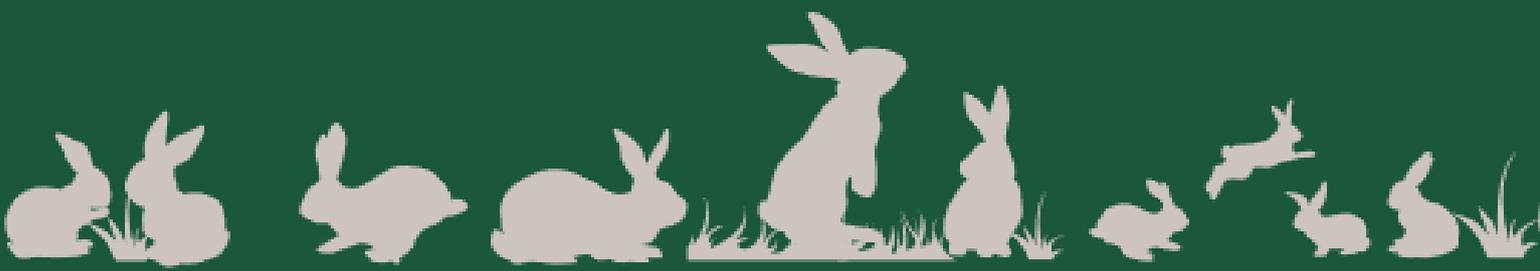
1. Reduce rabbit numbers: conduct a baiting program and allow biological control and natural mortality to reduce rabbit numbers.
2. Remove harbour that provides shelter above ground and destroy warrens (eg ripping).
3. Follow up with fumigation of difficult-to-reach warrens and further warren destruction where entrances have reopened.
4. Be persistent, remain vigilant, and monitor regularly. Review your plan and identify improvements for the future.



Ripping to destroy warrens. Photo: Agriculture Victoria

**Detailed information on integrated rabbit control, including directions for best practice warren destruction, can be found on the [Agriculture Victoria website](#). The [Victorian Rabbit Action Network](#) and the [Virtual Extension Officer](#) also provide useful information and resources.**

If you undertake rabbit control works that may disturb native vegetation, culturally significant areas, and/or waterways, you should contact the responsible authorities prior to doing the works. This may include your [local council](#), the [Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action \(DEECA\)](#), the [Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council](#) or your local [Registered Aboriginal Party](#), and your local [Catchment Management Authority](#).



If you're planning to use chemicals to treat rabbits, all applicable requirements of the *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1992* and *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Regulations 2007* must be met. This includes following the directions for use on the chemical label, keeping the relevant chemical use records and only using restricted-use chemicals if you hold the required Agricultural Chemical User Permit (ACUP) or other relevant permit. Chemical use record sheets and further information regarding agricultural chemical use can be found on the Ag Vic [Agricultural Chemical Use](#) page.



Trail baiting with a bait layer. Photo: Agriculture Victoria.



## Victorian Rabbit Action Network

### Stop rabbits eating your crops for decades

#### Victorian Rabbit Action Network

Australia has a long history with rabbits, and they are now recognised as our most destructive pest.

Rabbits cause soil erosion, destroy crops, compete with native animals for food and shelter, and stop the natural regeneration of native plant species.

After four consecutive wet years, rabbit numbers are booming across Victoria.

The rabbit issue in Kerang cannot be solved alone. Every land manager needs to do their part.

If you want to learn more about how to manage rabbits on your broadacre property please join North Central CMA, Landcare, and the Victorian Rabbit Action Network (VRAN) presenter, Tim Bloomfield for a free information session.

We will look at the simple control techniques that can be applied on your property and the technical side of effective rabbit control including:

- What makes the rabbit so successful?
- How big is the problem?
- How to knock down numbers effectively

**When:** 22 February 2024

**Time:** 5pm to 7pm

**Where:** Kerang Golf Club

**Tea, coffee and supper will be included**

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

### Interview with Tim Bloomfield

#### Victorian Rabbit Action Network

Tim has been working with the Victorian Rabbit Action Network as a mentor since the beginning of the initiative and has an incredible understanding of rabbit ecology, biology, and virus impacts.

Like many of the VRAN mentors, Tim has worked in both industry and government sectors and has contributed to scientific research on rabbit populations of Australia.

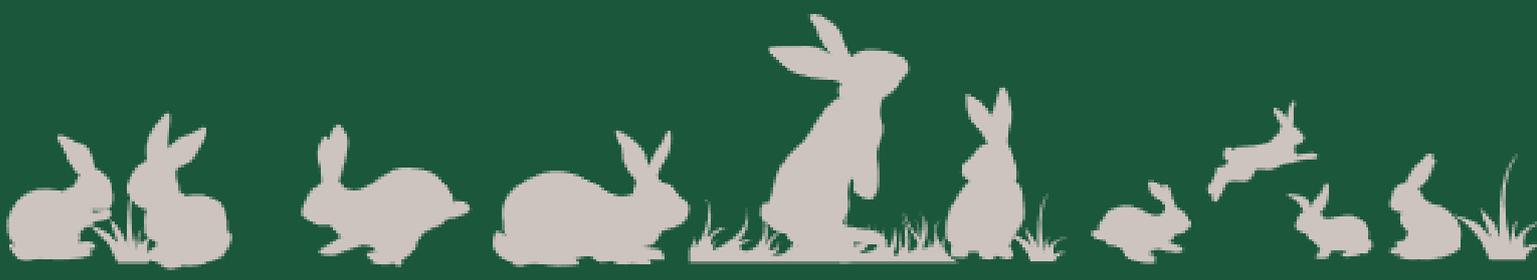
He has significant experience working with community groups and government to deliver effective rabbit management programs across Victoria and is passionate about sharing his knowledge to help others help the landscape.

**Name:** Tim Bloomfield

**Where do you live:** Anglesea and Sunbury

**Occupation:** Pest Animal Consultant with Environment First





### **What experience do you have in rabbit management:**

My rabbit journey started in Balmoral, aged five, when I released a baby rabbit. Twenty years on, I have done lots of trapping, shooting, and annual baiting programs.

I witnessed first-hand high rabbit numbers and the damage of the Bellarine in the 1970s to the explosive 250-plus rabbits per kilometre near Piangil in the 1980s – it made it look like the rabbit was in charge.

I have also seen the benefits of ripping programs and how Calicivirus in the 1990s gave everyone the chance to make up for the missed opportunity of the myxo virus.

Now I have learnt how to apply best-practice rabbit management and help others make the difference in the landscape.

### **Why did you become a VRAN Mentor?**

I have been lucky enough to participate in old rabbit killing methods, to see those failures and to learn about and apply best-practice. I am aware that failure in effective long-term rabbit control is available to all of us.

There is also the knowledge and evidence of success in managing rabbits to create a landscape where the rabbit is no longer in charge of what grows and what doesn't.

I became aware, in the 1990s, that together we can help shape a new landscape (e.g. through the Rabbit Buster Program) and I want to share that knowledge.

### **What you love about being a VRAN Mentor?**

I love helping people. Being part of a team that is striving to help other practitioners in land management. To both understand and apply what we have and what we are learning together is part of being a VRAN mentor for me.

Whenever a participant in a bootcamp, using their knowledge and what is provided by VRAN, is helping landholders and the land to be rid of the impacts of rabbits, we have done a good thing.

For me, helping others to gain the tools to make a landscape that is more representative of country before the onslaught of invasive species is very rewarding.

## **Bait Program**

### **North Central CMA**

February is Rabbit Buster Month, where agencies and land managers across the state focus on promoting rabbit control strategies and practical action.

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) has been coordinating an annual one-for-one bait purchase and collection day to reduce rabbit numbers on

private and public land that adjoins the Kerang Wetlands Ramsar sites.

The buy-one-get-one free opportunity includes Pindone oat bait, 1080 oat or carrot bait and sterilised free feed products and will be available for Agricultural Chemical Users Permit (ACUP) holders.

If you live in the Kerang Lakes region and you would like to place a bulk bait order or would like to know if you are eligible for this initiative, contact the North Central CMA on 03 5448 7124 or contact Kayla Archibald via email at [kayla.archibald@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:kayla.archibald@nccma.vic.gov.au) or phone 0460 814 000. This event is supported by funding from the Victorian Government.



## **Virtual Extension Officer tool**

**A new interactive tool to help you manage three of Victoria's worst invasive species – gorse, serrated tussock, and rabbits.**

The Virtual Extension Officer explores different ways to control three of Victoria's most invasive species: gorse, serrated tussock and rabbits. The virtual landscape has been developed so you can access information anytime and customise the information to suit your situation. Share this tool with your neighbours and encourage them to make a plan to start taking action.

Check out the tool at <https://virtualextensionofficer.com.au>

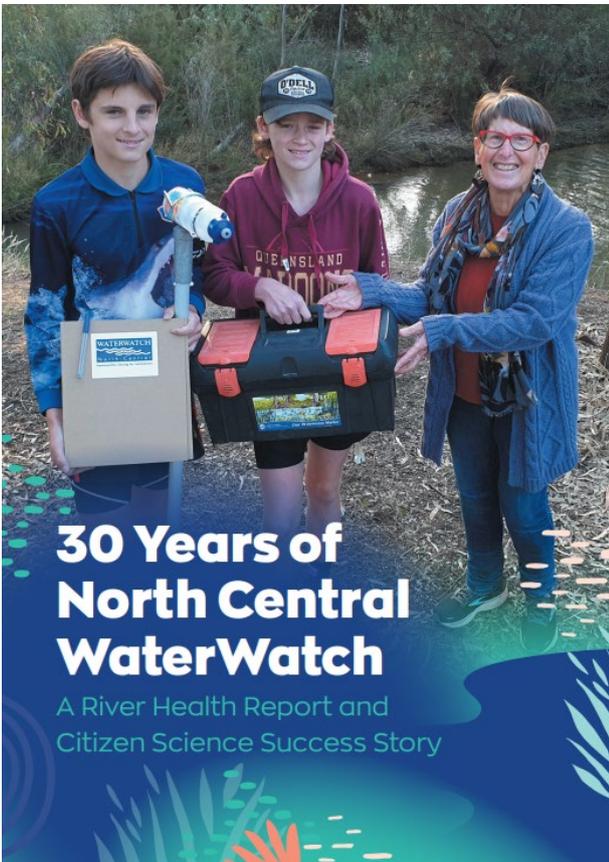




# WaterWatch Victoria

## Showcasing 30-years of WaterWatch data

To acknowledge WaterWatch’s 30-year anniversary, the Citizen Science team is proud to present 30 Years of North Central WaterWatch – A River Health Report and Citizen Science Success Story. This report details the remarkable journey undertaken by the North Central’s WaterWatch program to capture water quality data over the past three decades and celebrates past and present volunteers. Enjoy the read and explore 30 years of water quality data collected across the North Central region.



## Welcome to Aunty Marilyne Nicholls

We are ever so pleased to welcome Aunty Marilyne Nicholls to the Citizen Science team as our new Cultural Education Officer.

Aunt has multiple clan connections to both saltwater and freshwater peoples including Dja Dja Wurrung in central Bendigo. She has nearly 40 years’ experience in the Aboriginal health and wellbeing sector and has more recently turned towards environmental issues relating to caring for Country as a Traditional Owner.

Holding a Certificate IV in Cultural Heritage Management, she is often engaged in Cultural Heritage management decisions regarding Aboriginal Heritage site protection and cultural interpretation of heritage materials.

Aunty Marilyne is an appointed board member of the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans and Dheulkunya Dja Land Management Board (DDLMB), progressing and monitoring Dja Dja Wurrung’s Recognition Settlement Agreement (RSA) and is working part-time with Djandak Enterprises.

She volunteers with the management of the historic Tyntynder Homestead on Watti Watti Country and is a master weaver practitioner and teacher of traditional weaving methods. Aunt is a keeper of traditional ecological knowledge and understanding of weaving plants within waterways of traditional significance. Other keen interests include landscape development, community development, ways to heal Country, cultural fire, native seed collecting, and understanding natural hydrology flows across country.

Aunt’s extensive knowledge, skills and connections will enable dialogue with the right mob in the right way to incorporate cultural education into the River Detectives program in a self-determined and collaborative way. She will be with us three days each fortnight, working alongside Asha to prepare a plan for the ongoing delivery of a cultural component to the River Detectives program.



We are very fortunate to have Aunt on the team.

Tania MacLeod  
Citizen Science Coordinator  
North Central CMA  
Phone: 03 5440 1845  
Email: [tania.macleod@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:tania.macleod@nccma.vic.gov.au)



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

**A time of reflection and renewal**

**Celebrating 2023 achievements**

2023 was a big year of engagement and learning for River Detectives coordinators, teachers and students across the five Victorian regions the program is offered. We've put together a short video to show you all the fun.

You can view the video [here](#) or go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4PYGQUTr4Q>



**Gearing up for another year**

Registrations are open to schools and youth groups for the 2024 River Detectives program but they are closing soon so get in quick before 14 February. Training is offered to parents, community members, Landcare groups, etc looking to support a school's involvement.

Reach out to your local school, offer your support and encourage them to sign up at [www.riverdetectives.net.au](http://www.riverdetectives.net.au)

As a free, fun, flexible, educational, and collaborative sustainability program there are many many reasons why schools value the program.

Schools find that embedding the program in school life has benefits not only for students and staff but for families, the broader community and the local environment.

Be inspired by how our program could fit into your educational setting by reading about Daylesford Dharma School's River Detectives journey.

You can read the short story [here](#) or go to: <https://www.riverdetectives.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Dharma-School-Story-Of-Change-2023.pdf>



As always, please reach out if you would like to discuss the program and how it might work for you.

Nicole Howie  
 River Detectives Project Officer  
 North Central CMA  
 Phone: 03 5440 1839  
 Email: [nicole.howie@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:nicole.howie@nccma.vic.gov.au)

*"This is such a great program. It provides an opening to talk about so many issues in the environment from water quality to land management to history of land use and so much more."*

Serena Everill, teacher at Chewton Primary School

**Water Storages Update**

Region	Water Storage	% full 18 Jan 2023	% full 18 Jan 2024
Murray Storages	Dartmouth Dam	99.60	97.67
	Hume Dam	NA	86.29
	Reedy/Middle Lk	93.81	95.00
	Kangaroo Lake	92.08	84.98
	Ghow (Kow) Swamp	84.12	105.76
	Lake Boga	88.18	88.15

	Lake Charm	89.96	97.33
Loddon Storages	Cairn Curran Res	98.48	88.48
	Tullaroop Res	99.77	96.06
	Laanecoorie Res	90.13	83.13
Bullarook Storages	Newlyn Res	96.04	87.32
	Hepburns Lagoon	92.47	82.03
Goulburn Storages	Lake Eildon	99.08	98.76
	Waranga Basin	88.90	96.09
Campaspe	Lake Eppalock	98.31	102.26
Coliban Water Storages	Upper Coliban Res	99.4	96.8
	Lauriston Res	95.7	93.1
	Malmsbury Res	86.4	67.6

Source:

<https://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-operations/storage-levels>

<https://coliban.com.au/water-storage-data-and-information>

### Upcoming Events and Special Days

February	
<a href="#">World Wetlands Day</a>	2 Feb
<a href="#">World Pulses Day</a>	10 Feb
<a href="#">Australian Agronomy Conference</a>	6-10 Feb
<a href="#">International Day of Women &amp; Girls in Science</a>	10-11 Feb
March	
<a href="#">World Wildlife Day</a>	3 March
<a href="#">Clean Up Australia Day</a>	6 March
<a href="#">International Day of Forests</a>	21 March
<a href="#">World Water Day</a>	22 March
<a href="#">National Eucalypt Day</a>	23 March
<a href="#">Earth Hour</a>	26 March

## Sustainable Ag Snippet...

### Name Change for the Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator (RALF)

The Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator commonly known as a RALF has had a name change to Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator (SAF). The new name doesn't change what we do but there will be more of a focus on climate smart sustainable agriculture practices, – including best practice natural resource management, biodiversity and carbon markets, and practices that support emissions reduction and build climate resilience on-farm – to help achieve climate-smart sustainable agriculture outcomes.

The RALF has supported farmers, community, Landcare, industry, and other government organisations over the past five years. Under the new SAF name, the support will be the same.

I am looking forward to working with new and current groups and individuals over the next five years, contributing to building knowledge and capacity in the climate, carbon, and biodiversity space.

There will be further updates about the project, these will be communicated in The Chat newsletter as well as the SAF Report, which goes out at the start of each month. If you would like to discuss any of the details above, please send me an email to Darren Bain at [darren.bain@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:darren.bain@nccma.vic.gov.au).

The project is supported through funding from the Australian Government through the National Heritage Trust (NHT).

Darren Bain  
Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator  
Phone: 5440 1893  
M: 0419 560 348  
[darren.bain@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:darren.bain@nccma.vic.gov.au)

## Courses & Resources...



### Discover the world around you

**Are you keen to connect with nature and meet other like-minded friends? Why not take a Nature Stewards course.**

Learn more about your local and Victorian environment.

Explore new employment opportunities.

Hear from experts spanning Traditional Owners, council, CSIRO, volunteering and industry.

Find ways to connect with and care for nature.

#### Details

- Six classes, 9.30am to 12.30pm.
- Four to six field sessions, 1.30 to 4.30pm

**When:** Saturdays, 13 April to 18 May 2024

**Where:** Bendigo Library

**Cost:** \$250 full fee / \$65 concession\*

\*Full-time students, health care and pensioner card holders

#### Applications now open!

For more information and to apply go to [vnpa.org.au/naturestewards](http://vnpa.org.au/naturestewards)



### Farm business resilience workshop series: Rochester / Elmore

**Want to build a stronger, more production farm business?**

Agriculture Victoria has the workshop series to help you build more resilience in your farm business.

You will leave each workshop with new skills and an action plan to achieve your business goals.

As a bonus, if you attend three or more workshops you will secure a one-on-one business planning session with Senior Agribusiness Consultant Jane Foster at the end of the workshop series.

The workshops are free and include lunch.

#### Location:

Pine Grove Fire Station, 2691 Whinfield Road, Lockington

#### Workshop One – Planning for success

Friday 8 March, 9.30am to 12pm

#### Workshop Two – Business success

Thursday 14 March, 9am to 12.30pm

#### Workshop Three – People success

Thursday 21 March, 9am to 12.30pm

#### Workshop Four – Climate risk and natural resource management

Tuesday 26 March, 9am to 12.30pm

To secure your place, complete the registration form by clicking on the link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/m0VJ8i426m>

or scanning the QR code:



*Please register for catering purposes.*

For more information about the workshop series, contact Elizabeth Alsop on 0457 838 537 or email [Elizabeth.alsop@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:Elizabeth.alsop@deeca.vic.gov.au)

### RuralBiz Training – Farmers and Landcare growing together

RuralBiz Training is thrilled to extend an invitation to agricultural workers and Landcare Professionals working in regional and rural agricultural communities across Victoria. This is an incredible opportunity to enhance your skills and contribute more effectively to the well-being of your community.

- Build your skills with training tailored to meet your individual goals
- Flexible, online and self-paced learning that is based on your own farm or Landcare group
- Nationally accredited training
- Subsidised by the Victorian Government's Agriculture TAFE and Training Fund & supported by Landcare Victoria Inc.
- Participant fee - \$480 per skillset. These skillsets are usually valued between \$2,000 - \$6,000.

- Choose the Community coordination skillset for Landcarers or the production and business skillsets for farmers.

*Places are strictly limited and subject to availability.*

**Enrol by 31 March 2024**

Further information can be found on the [RuralBiz Training website](#).

## Events...



INSTITUTE OF  
COMMUNITY DIRECTORS  
AUSTRALIA  
+ Knowledge + Connections + Credentials



An enterprise of  
**ourcommunity.com.au**  
Where not-for-profits go for help

### Webinar: Changes to model rules for incorporated associations in Victoria and the ACT

#### Institute of Community Directors / Our Community

Changes to the model rules for incorporated associations have recently come into effect in Victoria (November 18, 2023). The changes cover financial reporting thresholds, changes to fee structures, conflict of interest and grievance procedures, virtual meeting attendance rules, clarification of committee member roles, and guidance on delegation authority within a committee or board's membership.

This webinar will provide a broad overview of the changes, suggest a plan of action to ensure compliance, and direct participants to useful resources. Participants will have the opportunity to ask ICDA's expert trainer their own questions about the changes.

**When:** 1 February 2024, 12.30 to 1pm

**Where:** Online

**Cost:** Free

**What to bring:** Join online with your laptop / tablet / mobile device

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

### Managing stubbles in a soil-building system

#### In the paddock with VicNoTill

Featuring the latest research, industry representatives and on-farm experience, these in-paddock events will look at different stubble management options in farming systems ranging from conventional to strip 'n' disc to multi-species to biological.

**When:** Friday 2 February 2024, 8am to 12pm

**Where:** Kyabram

**Cost:** VicNoTill members free / \$20 non-members

**Register** at [www.trybooking.com/COJPD](http://www.trybooking.com/COJPD)

### Breakfast with the birds

**The very popular event is on again this year.**

**When:** Sunday 4 February 2024

**Where:** Lake Cullen

**Cost:** Free

**What to bring:** appropriate clothing and shoes, chair, torch, camera

Register [here](#).



### Farming fundamentals for small landholders

#### Hosted by City of Greater Bendigo

Are you dreaming of a tree change to a farm? Have you recently bought a property in the Bendigo region? Are you planning to buy and manage livestock on your property in the future?

Join us for a practical and hands-on day on the fundamentals of farming! This workshop is designed to ensure you are providing a safe and healthy environment for not only yourself and the animals you care for, but anyone who visits your farm.

Admission is FREE. Food will be provided so registration is essential.

The workshop is a collaboration between the City of Greater Bendigo, and the Victorian Farmers Federation programs, Stock Sense and Making our Farms Safer.

**When:** Friday 9 February 2024, 8.45am to 3pm

**Where:** Sedgwick Hall, Sedgwick VIC 3551

**Cost:** Free

**What to bring:** Sun protection

**RSVP** [and register online](#)

## Introduction to Cultural Awareness training for environmental volunteers

### DEECA

Registrations are **NOW OPEN** for another free, on-line workshop *Introduction to Indigenous Cultural Awareness for Environmental Volunteers* delivered by Yuin man Jamie Williamson, a Traditional Owner engagement specialist and founder of Dawaray Business Services.

In this session you will learn about:

- The importance of Acknowledgements
- Connection to Country
- Understanding self-determination
- The benefits of engagement

It is an introductory session for volunteers or volunteer managers working for the environment who would like to learn more about Indigenous Australia. Please note numbers are limited.

**When:** Tuesday 13 February 2024, 4.30 pm to 6pm

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Cost:** Free

**Register** via this link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/grn64Gtb2m>

## Stock Sense farming essentials webinar series

### Victorian Farmers Federation

Join this six-part webinar series on the essential elements of farm ownership. Each session offers practical insights and expert advice to empower you on your farming journey. Don't miss out on this opportunity to set the foundation for a successful, rewarding, and sustainable farming experience.

Come along for the ride to enjoying the farming lifestyle while protecting your animals and community. We'll be inviting special guests for each part and all of this for free!

**When:** 14, 21, 28 February, 6,13, 20 March at 6pm

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Cost:** Free

**Register and more info on VFF's website**

## Landcare professionals training with RuralBiz – webinar

An amazing opportunity for Professional Landcarers and farmers develop their skills with training tailored to their needs. This training program offers a skillset specifically designed for Landcare facilitators, to develop community

coordination and facilitation skills, and a skillset for farmers, to improve farm production and management skills.

Learn about the RuralBiz *Farmers and Landcare - Growing Together* training program at this webinar. Registrations now open.

For more information on the program, please visit the RuralBiz website.

**When:** Wednesday 14 February 1.30pm to 2.15pm

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP / registrations via the RuralBiz website.**

## Container deposit scheme (CDS) in Victoria for Landcare organisations - webinar

### Landcare Victoria Inc

Victorians use more than three billion drink containers per year. Sadly, many of these are not recycled and end up in landfill, hurting the environment we love.

We're excited to partner with Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme (CDS Vic), a new recycling initiative that aims to change this.

While reducing litter on our lands, the scheme also provides our community with a new way to fundraise.

Join us for a free online webinar on Tuesday, February 20 to hear from CDS Vic about what the initiative means for our environment and how to get involved.

**When:** February 20, 5.30pm to 6.30pm

**Where:** Online

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP Register online**

## Farm connectivity program and Farmbot demo - webinar

### Landcare Farming

Farmbot is a tool used by thousands of graziers to remotely monitor their water assets, providing crucial visibility and management of this essential input.

Farmbot's range of monitors, sensors, and easy-to-use platform – My Farmbot – provides users with near real-time alerts of water levels and trends (via SMS and email). This enables farmers to save time and money on driving to check water and provides peace of mind to know what is happening with their water from anywhere, anytime.

Join our upcoming webinar to learn how you can save up to 50 per cent off Farmbot with the Federal Government's On Farm Connectivity Program and see a demonstration of Farmbot Monitors.

What we'll cover:

- Who is eligible for the On Farm Connectivity Program
- The simple process it takes to apply
- The true return on investment of remote water monitoring
- How producers are using water level reporting, flow rates, pump control and rainfall data to improve long-term planning
- How remote monitoring is the cheapest insurance you can buy for animal welfare
- Capital improvements you can implement to prepare for drought

**When:** 26 February 2024, 11am to 11.30am

**Where:** Online

**Cost:** Free

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

## Media engagement for Landcare and environmental organisations – part 1

### Landcare Victoria Inc.

Jacqui Street and Emily Watkins of the Climate Media Centre will be sharing their top tips and experience on why and how to engage with the media.

Don't miss this opportunity to find out more on how your group can share a message, event, or vision with the media and how to respond to media enquiries.

Registrations opening soon. Check out Landcare Victoria Inc's website for more information.

**When:** 27 February 2024, 5.30pm to 7pm

**Where:** Online

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP / Registrations** via [Landcare Victoria](#)

## Media engagement for Landcare and environmental organisations – part two

### Landcare Victoria Inc.

Do you write stories about your events to the local paper? Have you been asked by the media to write a piece about a particular species or a particular patch that your groups is trying to protect?

If you want to find out more on successful and engaging ways to get your message across, this webinar is for you. Jacqui Street and Emily Watkins of the Climate Media Centre will be sharing their top tips and experience on

how to tell your story to the media. Registrations opening soon.

**When:** 5 March 2024, 5.30pm to 7pm

**Where:** Online1

**Cost:** Free

**RSVP / Registrations** via [Landcare Victoria](#)



## Celebrating Women in Conservation breakfast

**Trust for Nature and Bush Heritage Australia invite you to join the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Celebrating Women in Conservation breakfast on Friday 1 March 2024 at the Glasshouse, Melbourne.**

Book your tickets to attend in person below. Or save the date for a special event in Bendigo where we will livestream the Melbourne event and enjoy the company of local women in conservation over breakfast.

**When:** Friday 1 March 2024 7.30am to 10.30am

**Where:** Melbourne (Bendigo details still to come)

**Cost:** \$108 in Melbourne / \$10 online

**RSVP:** online ticket sales close 29 February. [Book here](#).



## Bendigo Sustainability Festival

Bendigo Sustainability Group is celebrating the 10th festival this year, and you are invited to the sustainable garden party.

This annual event aims to showcase the absolute best in sustainable living products, programs, goods, and services that are active here in Central Victoria.

Highlights include **Craig Reucassel**, best known for his work with The Chaser, The War on Waste, CNNNN and The Chaser's War on Everything.

**When:** Sunday 17 March 2024, 10am to 3.30pm

**Where:** Gardens for the Future, White Hills, VIC 3550

**Cost:** Free

**Further information** can be found on the [Bendigo Sustainability Group's website](#).

## Funding opportunities...

### Partnerships Against Pests Grants

Funding worth \$500,000 will help community groups deliver workshops and resources including fact sheets and videos, showcasing best practice management tips.

This will support the newly launched Victorian Biosecurity Strategy.

Grants worth between \$10,000 and \$50,000 are available to a wide range of agricultural and environmental volunteering groups and organisations.

These grants are not for on-ground work but focus on capacity building, education, partnerships, and collaboration.

More information is available at [agriculture.vic.gov.au/support-and-resources/funds-grants-programs/partnerships-against-pests-round-2,-stream-2](https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/support-and-resources/funds-grants-programs/partnerships-against-pests-round-2,-stream-2)

Applications close 19 February 2024.

### Norman Wettenhall Small Grants Environmental Scheme

The Norman Wettenhall Small Grants Environmental Scheme are open for projects that will make a direct positive change to biodiversity conservation. Community groups and individuals are eligible for grants between \$2,000 and \$15,000.

Applications close: multiple grant rounds available (see website for dates)

More information and guidelines: [here](#)

## Landcare Australia

### State and Territory Landcare Awards

Nominations for the 2023-24 State and Territory Landcare Awards are closing 1 March 2024. Nominating is free and easy.

#### 2023-24 Landcare Awards Categories:

- Australian Government Climate Innovation Award
- Australian Government Sustainable Agriculture Landcare Award
- Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award
- Australian Government Community Partnerships Landcare Award
- Coastcare Award

- First Nations Landcare Collaboration Award
- Women in Landcare Award
- Woolworths Junior Landcare Award
- NextGen Landcare Award

#### Victoria has additional Award Categories:

- Joan Kirner Landcare Award
- Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship
- Dr Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award
- Landcare and Environmental Volunteer Group Award
- Landcare and Environmental Volunteer Network Award

For further information and to start a nomination head to [Landcare Australia's Landcare Awards webpage](#).

## Other grants available:

### Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, Rural Finance

*On-farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme - VIC*

Closes 30/06/2024

[Emergency water infrastructure rebate - Dataset - Publications | Queensland Government](#)

Eligible to businesses and individuals

Funding: Amount (max): \$25,000, total pool: \$100,000,000

### LaunchVic, Agriculture Victoria

*AgTech Grants Program*

Closes 30/6/2024

[Grants | Funding for your startup | LaunchVic](#)

Eligible to businesses, individuals, not-for-Profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$50,000,

### Agriculture Victoria

*Vic Grown - Regional Activation Grants Program*

Closes 16/2/2024

[Vic Grown regional activation grants | Funds, grants and programs | Support and resources | Agriculture Victoria](#)

Eligible to not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$70,000, total pool: \$1,000,000

### **Hepburn Shire Council**

*Community Grants*

Closes 12/2/2024

[Grants Hepburn Shire Council](#)

Eligible to unincorporated groups and not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$5,000, total pool: \$85,000

### **Murray River Council (MRC)**

*Community Grants*

Closes 3/4/2024

[Community Grants Program Murray River Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Eligible to unincorporated groups and not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$3,000.

### **Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)**

*Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought Initiative - Small Networks Grants Stream*

Closes 26/3/2024

[Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought Initiative – Small Network Grants | FRRR](#)

Eligible to not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$20,000, total pool: \$600,000

### **Macedon Ranges Shire Council**

*Small Project Grants*

Closes 30/6/2024

[Small Project Grants - Macedon Ranges Shire Council \(mrsc.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Eligible to schools, unincorporated groups, and not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$3,000, total pool: \$30,000

### **Murray River Council (MRC)**

*Quick Response Grants*

Closes 7/6/2024

[Quick Response \(QR\) Grants Program Murray River Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Eligible to unincorporated groups & not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$2,500.

### **Community Enterprise Foundation**

*Community Bank Inglewood and District Grants Program VIC*

31/12/2024

[Grant - Foundation \(communityenterprisefoundation.com.au\)](#)

Eligible to TAFEs, state/territory governments, schools, unincorporated groups, universities, not-for-profits, and local governments

### **Northern Grampians Shire Council**

*Minor Grants*

Closes 30/6/2024

[Minor Grants \(ngshire.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Eligible to businesses, unincorporated groups, individuals, and not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$1,000.

### **Northern Grampians Shire Council**

*Community Events Grants Program*

Closes 30/6/2024

[Community Events Grants \(ngshire.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Eligible to not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$3,000.

**City of Greater Bendigo**

*Community Group Essentials grants*

Closes 30/6/2024

[Community grants | City of Greater Bendigo](#)

Eligible to unincorporated groups, not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$2,000.

**The Ian Potter Foundation**

*Sustainable - Environment Funding*

Closes 6/6/2024

[Environment | The Ian Potter Foundation](#)

Eligible to unincorporated groups, universities, and not-for-profits

Limitations: DGR Status is required

Funding: Amount: \$100,000 to undisclosed.

**Australian Communities Foundation**

*Hamer Sprout Fund*

Closes 30/9/2024

[Apply for Funding — The Hamer Sprout Fund](#)

Eligible to unincorporated groups, individuals, and not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): 10,000, total pool: \$25,000

**City of Greater Bendigo**

*Small grants*

Closes 30/6/2024

[Grant categories and provisions | City of Greater Bendigo](#)

Eligible to unincorporated groups, individuals, and not-for-profits

Funding: Amount (max): \$2,000.

**James N Kirby Foundation**

*Small Grants*

Closes 29/2/2024

[How to Apply - Prod Kirby Foundation - Applications](#)

Eligible to universities and not-for-profits

Limitations: DGR Status is required

Funding: Amount: \$3,000 to \$15,000.