

# ground cover



**NORTH CENTRAL**  
Catchment Management Authority  
*Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People*

www.nccma.vic.gov.au

*Keeping you up-to-date with all the Landcare news*

August 10

## *Get your 'Ground Cover' direct*

The newsletter you are reading is for ALL members of Landcare and Friends groups in our region. If you would like to receive it directly, rather than via your group, jump on our direct email list. All you have to do is send an email request to [landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au) or phone reception on 03 5448 7124.

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## *A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator*

Hi everyone,

It has been a very busy couple of weeks in the office with the end of (and new) financial year and of course Second Generation Landcare Grants (SGLG)! This year we were significantly oversubscribed for the 2010-11 SGLG program. The total value of applications received was \$841,382. The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) was allocated \$300,000 by the State Government for the devolved grants program. It is great to see that there are so many Landcare groups throughout the region keen to do activities in their patch. Although not everyone will get funding, the sheer volume of applications means that we can highlight to the government the importance of the SGLG program and supporting community groups to achieve onground landscape changes – well done!

We received 34 Major Integrated Project applications, 30 Small Grant applications and 52 Group Maintenance Grant applications. It was extremely positive to see such a diverse range of interesting and innovative projects being proposed across the region. The quality of the applications was extremely high, which made the task of the Standing Grants Committee very challenging. All groups will be notified over the coming week regarding the outcomes.

Due to the program being substantially oversubscribed, there will be groups that unfortunately miss out on Second Generation Landcare funding. There are still funding opportunities available with other organisations and through Federal Government programs. In the **Funding News** section of *Groundcover* this month we have included a number of grants that are available and also provided some websites and resources that might be useful. So don't just shelve this year's SGLG application, you can use it to put together future funding applications.

Two funding programs that you may consider include the Caring for our Country community action grants which close on 31 August. Or if your group is trying to tackle Gorse you might consider the Victorian Gorse Taskforce community support grants which close on 20 August. For more information on these and other funding opportunities make sure you read **Funding News**.

We still wish to encourage everyone to continue contributing to Groundcover each month by emailing: [landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au) with 'Groundcover' in the subject line, or by calling our office on 03 5448 7124.

Until next time, warm regards!

*Jodie Odgers*

Regional Landcare Coordinator

North Central  
Catchment Management Authority  
PO Box 18 Huntly, VIC 3551  
Phone: 03 5448 7124  
Email: [jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au)

## NEWS

### *The Landcare team at North Central CMA is growing*

The Federal Government's Caring for our Country (CfoC) program recently announced that the North Central region has been successful in their funding application for a full time Landcare Facilitator for the next three years. The facilitator will work with groups in the North Central Region to promote sustainable farm and land management practices and conservation, as these aims align with CfoC targets. The facilitator will also help Landcare groups and Networks to access funding, partnerships, training and information.

This position will be filled within the next few months, and will be another vital resource for Landcare groups and networks to utilise in the region

### *Local Action Planning*

Does your Landcare group or network have a vision for action in your area? The Landcare support team from the North Central CMA will be available to assist groups by using maps of their local area to identify key assets and threats to develop an action plan for future works and projects. Local Action Plans can then form the basis of funding applications to allow you to take advantage of opportunities as they arise, rather than the last minute rush to pull bids together. Planning workshops will be held in late August and early September. If you are interested in finding out more, or would like to register your interest for receiving this assistance please contact our Regional Landcare Coordinator Jodie Odgers on 03 5440 1883, or by email: [jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au).

### *The report is in on Victorian Landcare*

The 2008-2009 Victorian Landcare Program Report Card is now available online. The report has been compiled to give the Landcare community a chance to reflect on their successes and build an understanding of the accomplishments of Landcare groups and networks throughout the state.

The first ever Second Generation Landcare Grants report card has also just been released online. The report outlines works completed throughout the state in 2008 as part of the Second Generation Landcare Grants program where 340 groups were supported to run 262 projects to improve the health of Victoria's land, biodiversity and waterways.

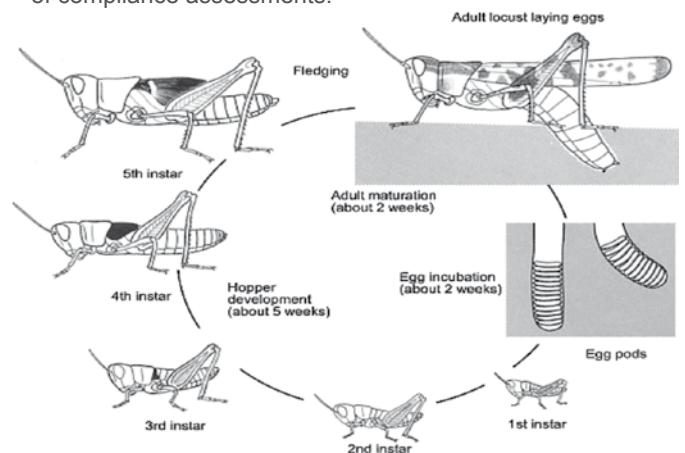
Both report cards are available through the Landcare Gateway at [www.landcarevic.net.au](http://www.landcarevic.net.au).

### *Wonderful wildflowers*

The Castlemaine Field Naturalists club has recently launched a new brochure titled Indigenous Plants of Castlemaine and Surrounds. The guide uses photography from local field naturalists and other observers to provide over 80 colourful pictures of indigenous plants in flower. The work was supported by the Norman Wettenhall Foundation, the North Central CMA, the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Mount Alexander Shire, Connecting Country, and Friends of Box-Ironbark Forests. The brochure is available from the Information Centre in Mostyn Street, Castlemaine and the Castlemaine Library.

### *The latest on locusts*

Locusts are unfortunately going to impact many farmers in our region this year with what has been described as one of the worst locust plagues in living memory. As highlighted in the media and the last edition of Groundcover, farmers will receive a 100 per cent rebate of the purchase price of registered chemicals used to treat locust hoppers on their properties during spring 2010. The Brumby Labor Government recognises that of the estimated area that could be affected by locusts, about one quarter is public land. With this in mind the Government has ordered \$4.2 million of locust-spraying chemicals for public land to help combat the plague. Agriculture Minister Joe Helper said the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) would need enough chemicals to treat an estimated 600,000 hectares of public land such as state parks. Mr Helper said three different chemicals had been ordered by the Government for spraying on public land, including: metarhizium, fenitrothion, and fipronil. DPI will monitor the environmental impact of spraying on private and public land as part of compliance assessments.



**The locust lifecycle:** Pictured above is a simple diagram of the locust lifecycle. There are three main stages of development – egg, nymph and adult. The nymph or hopper stage can be further divided into growth stages called instars. This diagram shows the lifecycle of the Australian plague locust which has five instars during the hopper stage. The times given for development are under optimum conditions during summer and are only approximate.

For monthly updates on locust activity visit [www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/locusts/bulletins](http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/locusts/bulletins).

To report locust activity or if you require further information call 1300 135 559.

## Locust Information Sessions for Small Landholders

In the coming weeks the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) will be running various information sessions in areas of the state that are likely to be affected by locusts as part of the Victorian Government's response to the serious locust threat facing the state in the coming months.

The DPI Small Landholder Information Service (SLIS) is playing a key role in community engagement and will be providing information and guidance specifically to meet the needs of small landholders.

The SLIS is currently planning to run a series of evening information sessions in the major rural towns which will inform small landholders on how best to treat locusts on their properties and what Government assistance is available to them.

Further to these events, any community group such as Landcare that is interested in learning more about locusts, and who would like someone from DPI to address their group, is encouraged to notify the Regional Landcare Coordinator or contact DPI direct to make the arrangements.

For further information, or to inquire about organising an information session, please contact David Stewart on 0419116759.

Please visit the DPI website to see more information such as fact sheets, frequently asked questions, information on chemical control options and an insecticide cost calculator – [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/locusts](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/locusts).

## Grey-crowned Babbler

Our understanding about the conservation and ecological requirements of the Grey-Crowned Babbler is continually being improved following the latest survey results of population groups in the lower Loddon region.

Now considered to be one of the largest populations found along the lower Loddon River floodplain from south of Boort to the Murray River, the Boort-Loddon population consists of at least 100 groups and more than 500 birds. Surveys this year occurred in two 7,000 ha districts within this population area (preliminary results are shown below). In both districts, more birds and groups were found than previously, possibly because of greater survey effort this year. Average group size also continues to be high here, leading to better chances of groups raising young.

## Grey-crowned Babbler - Survey Results

	BOORT	LODDON
2006 groups	13	16
2010 groups	23	20
2006 birds	64	102
2010 birds	109	120
2006 Av group size	4.9	6.3
2010 Av group size	4.7	6.0

## Grey-crowned Babbler - New PhD project

In further news a new study on Grey-crowned Bblers is being undertaken by Deakin University PhD candidate, Kate Stevens, to uncover the impacts of habitat fragmentation on population and family group dynamics. Kate is working at a large regional scale, and plans to gather data across the species southern-most distribution in Victoria, ranging from Boort and Kerang in the west, to Violet Town, Lurg and Rutherglen in the east. If you would be interested in assisting Kate in her field work, which will involve both netting and observation of the birds, as well as habitat assessment over the next 18 months, please contact her by email [kpst@deakin.edu.au](mailto:kpst@deakin.edu.au) or telephone 0429 800 518.



Grey Crowned Babbler (Photo: Adrian Martins, North Central CMA)

## DPI Hugh McKay Future Farming award

Have you, or anyone you know developed an innovation that benefits farmers or rural communities? If so, you are eligible to enter a nomination for the DPI Hugh McKay Future Farming Award. The award is worth \$10 000 and nominations close on 23 August.

For more information about the 2010 DPI Science Awards call the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186, email [science.awards@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:science.awards@dpi.vic.gov.au) or visit the DPI website [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/scienceaward](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/scienceaward).





### *Bendigo Sustainability Group (BSG) - Biodiversity group*

The BSG Biodiversity Group has rekindled and has a few events coming up to get the community involved in their group to raise awareness of biodiversity in the area. The group will be participating in a planting day with the Northern United Forestry Group in Serpentine on 4 September. The group is also planning to have a stall at the Bendigo Farmers Market that will include kids biodiversity activities on 11 September. If you would like to be involved please email [kathfraser50@hotmail.com](mailto:kathfraser50@hotmail.com).

### *Next month in Groundcover...*

Next month we would like to celebrate one of the many fantastic landcarers out there, so if you believe someone you know is a 'Local Landcare Legend' please send through a short profile about them and the great work they have done in your community so we can share it with the region! Pictures also help tell stories, so feel free to send some in with your story.

If you or your groups have any other news articles we'd love to hear about it at [landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au).

## COURSES & RESOURCES

### *Native vegetation ID training*

The Landcare support team at North Central CMA will be organising some native vegetation ID training to be held across the across the region in September. The training will aim to cover the basics of identifying native vegetation in your area, with an introduction to plant families using a key and other simple techniques. Flyers will be sent out to all groups when dates and venues are finalised, however if you would like to register your interest for the training please do so at [landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au).

### *RegenAG Workshop in Woodend*

The RegenAG workshop series is aimed at farming families, land managers, consultants, permaculture designers, earthmovers, students or anyone with an interest in regenerating land and community. The workshops will cover a broad curriculum including grazing and farm management, as well as soil fertility and farm hydration. The RegenAG workshop series are also FarmReady approved (see 'Funding' section below for more details on the FarmReady program) so be quick to book your place.

BioFertile Farms with Paul Taylor & Eugenio Gras.  
13-15 September, Woodend.

Check the following website for further details  
[www.regenag.com/workshops/biofertility/](http://www.regenag.com/workshops/biofertility/).

### *Environmental Blog workshop*

A workshop demonstrating how to start up and maintain an environmental blog will be run by Geoff Park on 21 August with the Friends of Box-Ironbark Forests group. It will be held at the Castlemaine Continuing Education Centre. For further details visit the Friends of Box-Ironbark Forest Group website at [www.fobif.org.au](http://www.fobif.org.au) or call 03 5470 5161.

### *Milking the Weather*

Are you tired of being a victim of the seasons? If you want to be proactive and manage your farm risk, instead of just reacting to the season as it unfolds, then get on board with a free subscription to the new Milking the Weather newsletter. It has been designed to provide you with information to help make strategic farming decisions earlier. Don't wait until it's old news, get the information you need to manage risk early.

The next issue of Milking the Weather will be available early spring. To avoid missing out on the latest seasonal information, email Zita Ritchie (DPI) at [zita.ritchie@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:zita.ritchie@dpi.vic.gov.au) or telephone 0428 313 742 for a free email subscription.

### *It's time to get crowdsourcing!*

Do you want to share your local flora and fauna sightings and data with other like minded people? Individuals and community groups are encouraged to use a new community web mapping tool, which provides an opportunity to record spatial information on flora and fauna that has been spotted in your area. But what does crowdsourcing mean? Crowdsourcing is a term which describes the process of having a community of people, particularly amateurs or volunteers contribute to the collection of information, via a website. Spatial Vision has developed the Community Web Mapping Portal (CWMP), based on Google Maps, to support the crowdsourcing of map-based information, especially in the area of natural resource management. The CWMP allows the entry and display of point sites which record the location and details of flora and fauna sightings, pest infestations, remnant vegetation, revegetation and other significant sites. You can also record your Landcare group on the map and provide contact details. To register and use the tool visit <http://cwmp.spatialvision.com.au/svcwmp/>.



### *Slashing Weed Spread*

The National Chilean Needle Grass (CNG) Program has released a DVD entitled Slashing Weed Spread. It outlines new technology developed for weed management slasher covers and fans, highlights the importance of vehicle hygiene and provides a guide to identifying CNG. To order a copy you can follow this link: [www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/Chileanneedlegrass/](http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/Chileanneedlegrass/).

## NETWORK NEWS

### *Loddon Plains Landcare Network*

The Loddon Plains Landcare Group held its AGM in Serpentine on Tuesday 20 July.

Congratulations to the newly elected committee members, who will no doubt continue supporting the fantastic work of the Loddon Plains Landcare Network.

- Mal Brown (Northern United Forestry Group) - *President*
- Penny Wall (North Central Landcare & Northern United Forestry Group) - *Vice President*
- Jean McClymont (Salisbury West Landcare) - *Treasurer*
- Michael Moore (Wedderburn Conservation Management Network (CMN) - *Secretary*
- Wendy Murphy (Wedderburn CMN, Friends of Kooyoora & Inglewood Landcare) - *Committee member*
- Bill Twigg (Salisbury West Landcare & East Loddon Landcare) - *Committee member*
- Dennis Demeo (North Central Landcare) - *Committee member*
- Laurie Maxted (Loddon Vale Landcare) - *Committee member*

## EVENTS

There is a lot happening in the region over the next few months, from planting weekends, to bake-offs... So be sure to mark them on your calendars!

### *Project Hindmarsh Annual planting weekend*

It is year 13 for the hugely successful Project Hindmarsh and the call is out for old and new volunteers and members to help

again with the changing landscapes community planting across the northern Wimmera. Whilst for many of you it is a long way to travel, it is definitely a fantastic weekend worth considering. It will be on the weekend of 14-15 August, 2010 based from Little Desert Lodge, Nhill. For more information contact Trevor Barker on 0429 006 936.

### *Big Barkers Creek Brew and Bake-off!*

Barkers Creek Landcare and Wildlife Group invite you to join them on their third Big Barkers Creek Brew and Bake-off. This will be a great opportunity for networking amongst local Landcare groups, whilst showcasing various activities to the wider public – not to mention the smorgasbord of mouth watering delights you will get to share and enjoy in the process! What better way to spend a Sunday?! All local Landcare groups are invited to get involved - whether that is to host a stall, or to just come along to be part of the fun. The fantastic event will be held on Sunday 5 September between 10.00am-2.00pm at the Ray Bradfield Rooms, Victoria Park, Castlemaine. For more information or if your Landcare group wants to get involved, contact group president Daryl Colless at [daryl.chalice@gmail.com](mailto:daryl.chalice@gmail.com) or telephone 0407 419 606. Alternatively, group secretary Wendy McClelland is contactable via [wendymcclelland@bigpond.com](mailto:wendymcclelland@bigpond.com).

### *National Farmers Federation (NFF) Congress*

The NFF Congress this year will be held from 5-7 September in Melbourne. The theme this year is 'Responding and adapting to change', which will focus on the ever-changing nature of modern farming. It brings together farmers, agribusiness, agricultural teachers and students, Federal Government and senior departmental officials, whole-of-chain participants and leading experts, providing a great opportunity to debate the issues, challenges and opportunities for Australian agriculture. To find out more information or to register to attend visit [www.congress.nff.org.au](http://www.congress.nff.org.au).

### *Landcare Week*

Landcare week is fast approaching so it is time to start thinking about what activities you might like to run in your area. The focus of Landcare Week this year (6-13 September) is climate change, and Landcare Australia Ltd is encouraging everyone to become a citizen scientist or ClimateWatch monitor to collect and record data that will help shape the country's scientific response to climate change. To find out more about ClimateWatch or to register for a Landcare Week activity kit visit [www.landcareonline.com.au](http://www.landcareonline.com.au) and click on the Landcare Week icon.



## *Naturally Loddon Festival*

In its inaugural year, the Naturally Loddon – a wonderland in Spring festival aims to bring together key local environmental events to highlight the biodiversity, natural assets, and cultural heritage of the Loddon Shire. The event will be held from 4 September to 3 October 2010. For a brochure or further information, including a full program of events, visit [www.loddon.vic.gov.au](http://www.loddon.vic.gov.au) or telephone the Loddon Visitor Information Centre on 03 5494 3489.

## *WISEwaterways - a workshop in stream management principles and practices*

If you would like to know more about waterway management, stream assessment techniques and environmental flows, this is the workshop for you. The workshop will run over four days from 25-29 October, at LaTrobe University Beechworth. For further information and to register visit [www.nccma.vic.gov.au/WhatsOn/](http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/WhatsOn/) and click on the link to the Wise Water Ways 2010 flyer.

## *Platypus Information Sessions*

Are there Platypus in your local creeks? Would you like to know more about them? Can you help gather information about sightings? Dr Melody Serena, conservation biologist with the Australian Platypus Conservancy will be the guest speaker at a number of free Platypus information sessions being held in Gunbower, Cohuna and Durham Ox. Dr Serena is working with the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) to map the current distribution and status of platypus in the Gunbower and Serpentine creeks including collecting sighting reports from local community members.

### **GUNBOWER:**

Date: Wednesday 18 August  
Time: 7.00pm–8.30pm (including a light supper)  
Venue: Gunbower Football Clubrooms,  
Gunbower Island Road, Gunbower

### **COHUNA:**

Date: Thursday 19 August  
Time: 7.00pm–8.30pm (including a light supper)  
Venue: Council Chambers, 23-25 King Edward Street,  
Cohuna

### **DURHAM OX:**

Date: Friday 20 August  
Time: 6.30pm–8.00pm (including a light supper)  
Venue: Durham Ox Memorial Hall, Durham Ox

RSVP by 5.00pm Monday 16 August 2010 to [info@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@nccma.vic.gov.au) or telephone 03 5448 7124, indicating which session you will be attending and any dietary requirements. The information nights are part of the North Central CMA's 'Enhancing the values of the Gunbower Ramsar site' and the 'Loddon Stressed river' projects.

## FUNDING NEWS

### *Community Grants - guides and directories*

For those groups who were unfortunate enough to miss out on their preferred Second Generation Landcare Grants this year - don't fret! There are plenty of grants available to community groups that may be able to assist in covering the cost of your project. Some of these grants are listed below. Also, the North Central CMA Landcare team has reviewed and updated the Community Grants Guide. This handy resource outlines Federal, State and Local Government grants, along with philanthropic and corporate grants programs that are available for community and environmental groups. Hardcopies of the guide will be sent out to groups soon but in the meantime you can check the guide out online at the North Central CMA website at [www.nccma.vic.gov.au](http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au).

If the Community Grants Guide isn't enough information for you then you should also have a look through the GrantsLINK directory. The GrantsLINK directory contains information about Local, State, and Federal Government funding and grants programs that may be of some use to your local community. The directory covers the areas of agriculture, community and society, culture and heritage, and environment and nature. To find a grant that your Landcare group or local community may be able to apply for, visit [www.grantslink.gov.au/](http://www.grantslink.gov.au/).

### *Caring for our Country Community Action grants - last call!*

This is a reminder that applications for the CfoC Community Action Grants close at 5pm, 31 August. Project grants of between \$5,000 to \$20,000 are available for community groups to help them take action to protect and revitalise the Australian landscape. The application guidelines and form are available from the CfoC website at [www.nrm.gov.au](http://www.nrm.gov.au), or by calling 1800 552 008.

North Central CMA can offer assistance to community groups preparing their community action grant applications. Contact the Landcare team on 03 5448 7124 or email [landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au) for further information.



### *Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) Community Support Grants Project - now taking proposals*

The VGT Community Support Grants Project is now open for business in 2010-11. Proposals are being sought from community-based organisations that can demonstrate alignment to the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy project guidelines, and can demonstrate a community-led commitment to long term gorse control.

Proposals will be accepted up until 20 August.

For more information go to [www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au](http://www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au).

### *Norman Wettenhall Foundation grants*

The objectives of the Norman Wettenhall Foundation include:

- building capacity in local communities to effect long-term beneficial change in the natural environment; and
- supporting and encouraging research, monitoring and knowledge sharing relating to all aspects of Australia's natural environment.

Applications close 30 September, however before submitting an application you must email a small summary to the Executive Officer for pre-approval.

Further information regarding the foundation and application criteria can be found at: [www.nwf.org.au](http://www.nwf.org.au) or by contacting Ms Elizabeth (Beth) Mellick, Executive Officer at [beth@nwf.org.au](mailto:beth@nwf.org.au) or by telephone 03 5472 1316.

### *Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands Remnant protection*

The North Central CMA will soon be offering grants to landholders in the mid Loddon region to protect remnants of the nationally endangered Yellow Box, or White Box Grassy Woodland communities (known as Box-Gum grassy Woodlands). Remnants can include derived grasslands, which are areas that have been cleared of these trees but still retain native understorey species such as herbs and grasses. Funds are available to eligible landholders through the Federal Government's CfoC natural resource initiative to implement onground works such as fencing and revegetation. For further information please contact Project Officer Robyn McKay on 03 5440 1876 or 0448 578 086.

### *The Mullum Trust*

The Mullum Trust provides grants to support projects which have significant and ongoing environmental outcomes. Projects with specific localised environmental outcomes are preferred although projects which are locally based but have far reaching impacts are also encouraged. Funding provided is between \$100 to \$10,000. For further information on the trust and application criteria contact Mr Ryan Neoh at [rneoh@deloitte.com.au](mailto:rneoh@deloitte.com.au) or by phone 03 9671 6658.

### *Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) - Small Grants for Rural Communities*

The Small Grants for Rural Communities program benefits people in rural and remote communities. Not-for-profit organisations can apply for projects and activities that offer clear public benefit for communities living in small rural and remote locations in Australia, contributing to development in social and community welfare, economic, environmental, health, education or cultural areas. Applications close 30 September. For further information visit [www.frrr.org.au/programsDetail.asp?ProgramID=4](http://www.frrr.org.au/programsDetail.asp?ProgramID=4).

### *FarmReady Reimbursement Grants*

FarmReady Reimbursement Grants of up to \$1,500 per year are available to assist primary producers and Indigenous land managers to attend approved training courses that are aimed at improving their capacity to adapt to climate change, and increase self-reliance and preparedness. To be eligible for reimbursement the courses need to have been completed prior to 30 May 2012. Application forms need to be lodged and approved prior to attending courses, followed by submitting the claim for reimbursement (up to 30 days after the completion of the course). Further information and application/claim forms can be accessed at [www.farmready.gov.au](http://www.farmready.gov.au) or by phoning 1800 087 670.