

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

September 10

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

I hope you have all had your winter woolies and wet weather gear on with the recent weather and managed to elude the dreaded winter cold. There have been some amazing rainfall records throughout the region and snow at Mt Macedon and Trentham reminding us what winter used to be like. The recent rainfall events have literally changed our landscape with rivers running, creeks flowing and lakes filling. Thank you to all that have sent in photos!

Since the last newsletter several Landcare group members and I went back to school, well TAFE actually, to participate in Victorian Landcare Gateway training. Tony Marsh, a member of the Baranduda Landcare Group in North East Victoria, ran the four hour workshop where we were put through our paces and had our IT skills tested! For those of you who aren't familiar with the Landcare Gateway it is a website that is dedicated to Landcare in Victoria - www.landcarevic.net.au. The Gateway allows individual groups to develop their own page where they can highlight group news, activities, post newsletters, share photos and display contact details. It is a great resource that can be used to promote your Landcare group to the wider community and can also act as a group website. Anyone can join the Landcare Gateway but it is always best to establish at least one member from each group who can update the site. To check out what is happening in this region, make sure you go to North Central's homepage, which can be found under the *regions* tab. If you or members of your Landcare group are keen to join the virtual world of the Gateway and unsure of where to start, let me know!

With this edition of the newsletter we are also posting out the *Community Grants Guide* – August 2010. The guide is a valuable tool for groups and has been revised to include several new grants. The *Community Grants Guide* is available electronically on the Landcare page of the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) website and also on the North Central page on the Victorian Landcare Gateway.

Before I go I just wanted to let you know that we have already had great interest in the free *Native Vegetation Identification* workshops being held throughout September, so be sure to RVSP quickly if you want to come!

We still wish to encourage everyone to continue contributing to *Groundcover* each month by emailing: 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

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Landcare Gateway Training

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

NEWS

It never rains... but it pours!

If you think the last few months have been the wettest you have seen in a long time, you are spot on! The recent rainfall has meant the region is on track to experience the wettest months on record. Our creeks and rivers are running with flows that are the strongest we have seen in years.

Captured in the amazing time-lapse series of photos below is a significant flow event that occurred in the Loddon River last month. Bridie Velik-Lord from the North Central CMA took these photos between Boort – Durham Ox Road and Canary Island – Leaghur road over a 27 minute period. This incredible series of photos are a great indication that our streams, creeks and rivers are starting to recover after many dry years without rainfall. But how does the rainfall this year compare to previous years? The below graph may be able to answer your question.

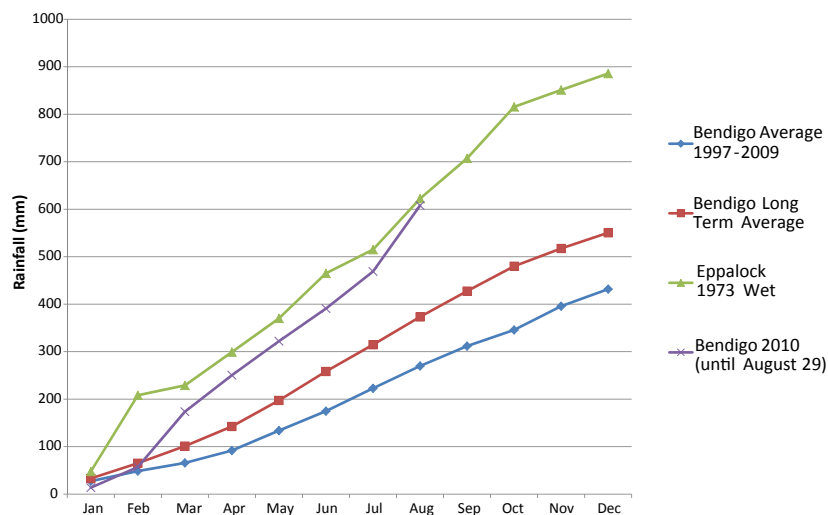
Phil Dyson from the North Central CMA has plotted the cumulative rainfall for Bendigo up until Sunday 29 August, along with: (a) the long term average (pre mid-1990s); (b) the average post 1996 (excluding this year); and (c) the 1973 record (wettest on record). Data from Eppalock was used because the Bureau of Meteorology website does not have data for Bendigo from that time.

As the graph indicates, we are getting very close to a record wet year. This is quite remarkable given the lack of rainfall over the past 14 years. Phil Dyson notes that it is very interesting that this change in climate is occurring so rapidly, in the same way that arid conditions began in 1996. It would seem we still have a lot to learn about the things that control annual and seasonal rainfall in SE Australia.



Above: Loddon River
15 Aug 2010 (2:45pm - 3:12pm)
between Boort - Durham Ox
Road and Canary Island -
Leaghur Road)

Rainfall Comparison



Promising year for orchids

The wetter conditions could result in a good year for orchids, according to Geoff Nevill from the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Biodiversity Group. Our region is home to numerous endangered orchid species, and drought conditions are thought to be contributing to decline by reducing the incidence of flowering. We have two Spider Orchids (*Caladenia spp.*) in our region that are limited to only one or two plants worldwide, and are extremely susceptible to extinction. Finding new populations is an important way to ensure survival of these threatened species, and wet years are often when new populations are located. You can help by reporting any findings of unusual or uncommon orchids in your area. Geoff loves your photos of orchids (preferably taken from more than one angle) so if you're lucky enough to spot something a bit different, or that you haven't seen before please email them to geoff.nevill@dse.vic.gov.au along with the location of the orchid and your contact details. You could even be responsible for finding 'new' orchids with species still being discovered! Please contact Geoff on 03 5430 4361 if you'd like to know more.



Mclvor Spider Orchid (Photo: Garry Cheers, VicVeg Online www.vicveg.net.au)

Victorian Landcare Network Forum 2010

The 2010 Victorian Landcare Network (VLN) Forum is scheduled to be held at Halls Gap this year on 19-20 October. This year's theme is 'Empowering Communities' and will include guest speaker Dr Kate Auty, Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability along with cultural activities, workshops and much more. A detailed program and registration details will be available through the Landcare Gateway soon however if you have any enquiries please phone 03 5358 4410 or email admin@platypus.org.

Rural press focus on Landcare Week

Landcare Week has been featured in many rural press publications across the country this month. The 'Landcare in Focus' magazine was included in Victorian 'Stock and Land' newspaper, highlighting not only how to get involved in Landcare Week this month but also some of the great Landcare news stories from around the country.

If you missed it you can view it online from the Landcare Australia website at www.landcareonline.com.au.

Platypus information sessions

The North Central CMA hosted three community Platypus information sessions in August at Gunbower, Cohuna and Durham Ox. Despite the wild and woolly weather, there was quite a good turn-out, with community members fortunate enough to hear a very informative presentation from Dr Melody Serena and Geoff Williams from the Australian Platypus Conservancy (APC). They shared their passion and knowledge of the Platypus shedding some light on the mysterious and unique creature's biology, ecology and habitat requirements, along with the factors that threaten the species. Attendees were also given some tips on how to spot the elusive creatures in their local creeks and waterways. The Gunbower Creek and Loddon River system are both key conservation areas for the animal, and with September being an ideal time to spot Platypus, Dr Serena encouraged the community to assist in collecting vital information about sightings in the area in order to map the animal's current distribution and habitat hotspots. If you would like to know more about the Platypus or the APC, or would like to be involved with these vital monitoring efforts visit the APC website at www.platypus.asn.au, or contact them directly on 03 5157 5568 or at platypus.apc@westnet.com.au.

Australian Platypus Conservancy





Bushfires Royal Commission and Fuel reduction burn plans

The final report for the Bushfires Royal Commission was presented to the Governor of Victoria on the morning of 31 July. The report was then presented to the Premier and tabled in Parliament, making it available to the public. You can order copies from the Victorian Government by phoning 1800 463 684. Alternatively you can view the report online at www.royalcommission.vic.gov.au/Commission-Reports. The findings of the final report have implications for fuel reduction burns with the Brumby government announcing last month the biggest increase in fuel reduction burning in Victoria's history. Additional funding would be provided to more than double fuel reduction burning over the next four years as the State scales up to the new target of 385,000 hectares a year. To find out more about fuel reduction burn plans for this area, visit the 'Fire and other Emergencies' section of the DSE website at www.dse.vic.gov.au.

Locust hatching and development dates

The Australian Plague Locust Commission has recently published predicted locust hatching and development dates which are listed in the table below. These dates are only to be used as a guide as the exact timing will depend on local climatic conditions.

LOCATION - VICTORIA	EGG LAYING	HATCHING	MID-INSTAR	FLEDGING
Mildura-Ouyen	16 April	25 Sept	10 Oct	31 Oct
Swan Hill-Boort	16 April	6 Oct	19 Oct	10 Nov
Echuca-Bendigo	16 April	14 Oct	27 Oct	15 Nov
Shepparton-Tungamah	16 April	10 Oct	29 Oct	22 Nov
Nhill-Warracknabeal	16 April	16 Oct	1 Nov	19 Nov
Horsham-Stawell	16 April	21 Oct	3 Nov	22 Nov

For further information visit www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/locusts.

Landcare Australia wants you!

Landcare Australia Limited (LAL) and National Landcare Facilitator Brett deHayr are seeking the help of landcarers from across the country in collecting the knowledge that has been built by Landcare and related groups since the inception of Landcare to create the Landcare Knowledge Archive. The aim of the archive is to capture both electronic and printed knowledge to be made publicly accessible in one central location. PDF copies of material can be submitted to Brett deHayr at landcarearchive@nrm.gov.au along with an email which gives approval of the author or responsible entity for it to be made available to the public via the LAL website. The material being sought for the archive includes books, guides, fact sheets, and any other information which has been produced by Landcare communities across the country.

Sustainability Film Challenge

The call is out for young Victorian landcarers and like-minded people to enter this year's *Future Shots* Sustainability Film Challenge. The competition is open to all young Victorians up to the age of 25 and involves creating a short film under three minutes to address the theme of sustainability. You could film a drama, documentary, animation, music video, advertisement, a blend of these, or even a new genre altogether! You might even like to make a film with one of the major prize entry categories in mind: 'water-smart cities', 'waste-free Victoria' or 'smart energy'. There is over \$9,000 in cash and prizes to be won across 10 categories. This year's film entry deadline is 15 November, so now is the time to start conjuring, storyboarding and filming your best ideas. For more information go to the Future Shots website at www.futureshots.com.au.

Do you have news...?

What has been happening in your local area with all the rainfall? Do you have any news or a story to tell? Do you have some amazing photos that you would like to share? Is there anything that is missing from *Groundcover* that you would like to know more about? Please send through your stories, thoughts, ideas, and feedback to landcare@nccma.vic.gov.au. Your feedback is essential to making *Groundcover* a success for you – the Landcare community!

COURSES & RESOURCES

Landcare Volunteer Resource Manual

The *Landcare Volunteer Resource Manual* is now available online. The manual, developed by the State Landcare team as part of the Volunteer Action Project, gives Landcare groups some practical tips and guidelines on how to effectively recruit, retain and manage volunteers.

The manual is available through the Landcare Gateway at: www.landcarevic.net.au/vri/volunteer-action.

Locust newsletter and insecticide cost calculator

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has recently developed a new set of web-based resources to help inform farmers of the latest news on the locust plague and also tools to assist farmers to make informed decisions on the best use of chemicals in the war on locusts this spring. To subscribe to regular email newsletter and SMS updates register your details on the DPI Locust page at www.new.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/plague-locusts. Find out more about a new tool to calculate your insecticide cost at www.new.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/plague-locusts/Insecticide-Cost-Calculator. This tool is provided to assist farmers and land managers to complete the Locust Insecticide Rebate Application Form.

Community Landcare: a key player in building social-ecological resilience networks?

The State Landcare Team, in partnership with the University of Melbourne, has developed a discussion paper on the role of Landcare in building social-ecological resilience in regional and rural networks. The paper discusses community resilience in the face of socio-demographic change, agricultural restructuring and changes natural resource management (NRM) policy directives. The paper is available through the Landcare Gateway website at www.landcarevic.net.au/resources/publications.

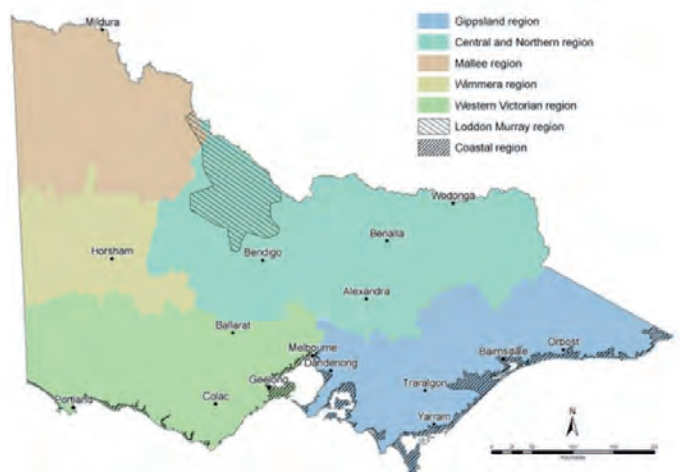
Box Ironbark Ecology course

The DSE is convening the popular Box Ironbark Ecology Course this October at Nagambie for the thirteenth consecutive year. This field-based course will emphasise ecological understanding and teach field techniques that improve observation and data collection skills, focusing particularly on the relationship between soils, plants and animals in box ironbark landscapes. Thirty places are available in the Box Ironbark Ecology Course which will take place over five days between 4-8 October at the Nagambie Lakes Leisure Park in Nagambie. For bookings or further information on the Box Ironbark Ecology Course and associated course fees please contact the DSE Benalla office on 03 5761 1611.

Salinity indicator plants - a guide to 'spotting' soil spotting

Developed by the DPI, this website provides information using photos and descriptive text to guide you in recognising plants associated with groundwater, soil salting and salt-spray environments. It describes a range of Victoria's most common plants found growing on saline sites. It is divided into major regions across Victoria where the same or a similar range of plant species exhibiting a consistent response to salinity might occur. Note that not all listed plants for your region may be found in your particular district. Other factors, such as soil type, climate, topography, flooding frequency and duration, and land management and history will have a role in determining which species grow where. To find out more visit www.new.dpi.vic.gov.au/dpi/vro.

Below is an example of the clickable map you will find on their website. When you click on the legend or region on map you will find information for that region.





EVENTS

Free Native Vegetation ID Workshops

The results of the *Supporting Your Group* survey completed earlier this year indicated that many groups in the region are after a greater understanding of how to identify the native vegetation in their area. The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) Landcare team is holding four native vegetation ID workshops across the North Central CMA region in September. The workshops will give participants practical advice on how to recognise common plant families as well as using field guides and basic keys to properly identify species. Participants will be introduced to the classification and naming of vegetation along with vegetation survey techniques.

One session has already been held in Rochester, and there are three more planned. Unfortunately the Castlemaine session is booked out however please call to claim your spot on a waiting list should any spots become available. Given that there has been such a great response we will endeavour to host similar workshops in the future – we will keep you updated.

Castlemaine – Session full

Date: Monday 20 September 2010
Time: 6:00pm – 9:00pm
Venue: BRIT Castlemaine Campus, Room 3,
Templeton Street, Castlemaine

Inglewood

Date: Wednesday 22 September 2010
Time: 6:00pm – 9:00pm
Venue: Community Sports Centre, Inglewood

St Arnaud

Date: Thursday 23 September 2010
Time: 6:00pm – 9:00pm
Venue: St Arnaud Town Hall,
Community Meeting Room, St Arnaud

Bookings are essential

All sessions are free and a light supper will be provided. RSVP to reception@nccma.vic.gov.au or telephone 03 5448 7124 at least two days prior to the workshop, indicating which venue you will be attending and any dietary requirements.

Naturally Loddon: A Wonderland in Spring festival

The Loddon Shire, in collaboration with local partner agencies, is driving the inaugural Loddon Nature Tourism Festival entitled *Naturally Loddon: A Wonderland in Spring*, to be held throughout September-October this year. The event kicked off last weekend and a variety of events will be held until 3 October. The festival aims to bring more people to the area, and to pull together new and existing key environmental events to market under the one umbrella, with many local events occur during the spring.

Agencies running events include the North Central CMA, Parks Victoria, local Landcare groups (including Salisbury West Landcare Group and Loddon Plains Landcare Network) and environmental networks, various government departments, and community organisations such as the YMCA. The festival is aimed at all age groups and incorporates the popular annual Kooyoora Wildflower show, along with a variety of fun, interactive and educational events such as bushwalking, tree planting, bird watching, photography, canoeing and bike riding – as well as highlighting areas of Indigenous and European cultural significance – all showcasing the great Loddon outdoors.

The official inaugural launch will be held on Friday 10 September at the Loddon Visitor Information Centre. For a brochure or further information, including a full program of events, visit www.loddon.vic.gov.au or telephone the Loddon Visitor Information Centre on 03 5494 3489. A brochure is also available online at the North Central CMA website www.nccma.vic.gov.au.

North Central CMA Landcare has kindly assisted with sponsorship towards buses for numerous festival tours and events. Details for the North Central CMA's *River Rambling* riverwalk, to be held around Bridgewater on 22 September, will be uploaded to www.nccma.vic.gov.au soon.

Friends of Terrick Terrick National Park - annual open weekend

The Friends of Terrick Terrick National Park would like to invite you to their annual open weekend. Starting on Friday 1 October at 3pm and finishing on Sunday 3 October. The weekend involves some great guest speakers, wildflower walks, fauna surveys and hands-on activities. The open weekend is the final event held for the *Naturally Loddon* festival (as above). For more information contact Fred Belli on 03 5455 7410.



Campaspe Landcare bus tour

Campaspe Landcarers are invited to come along and enjoy a free day's tour on Friday 10 September to interesting Landcare group and environmental projects in the Violet Town and Benalla areas. Lunch, morning and afternoon tea provided. The bus will depart from Rochester and Kyabram. To RSVP contact Rhonda Day on 0429 968 917.

Bael Bael and Wanderers Plains Grassland launch

Trust for Nature, the Australian Government and the DSE will launch the largest of the multi-tenure grassland conservation networks in Victoria – the Bael Bael and Wanderers Plains Grasslands. The launch will be held at Wanderers Plains on 17 September. RSVP by Friday 10 September to Trust for Nature, 03 8631 5888 or email trustfornature@tfn.org.au.

Free soil health seminar - Kyabram Fauna Park

Hear up-to-date information on the latest techniques for soil health improvements from leading experts in the industry. Meet with Western Composting Technology representatives to learn more about their processing technology and range of composted products. This seminar will demonstrate the needs and opportunities for recycled organic usage in the broad acre and intensive agriculture sectors. The seminar will be held at Kyabram Fauna Park, Lake Road, Kyabram on Wednesday 15 September. For further information on the day, please contact Andrea Montgomery on 0447 321 140 or Rhonda Day on 0429 968 917

Climate, sustainability and society lecture series

La Trobe University will be hosting a fascinating lecture series titled Climate, Sustainability and Society. The lectures will draw on environmental, social and economic perspectives to address and discuss issues surrounding climate change and sustainability. Details regarding the lectures in Bendigo are listed below:

Sir John Quick Lecture – 23 September, 6.00-7.00pm
Presented by Professor Ross Garnaut

Live from McKay Lecture Theatre in Bendigo, La Trobe University Bendigo Campus, Edwards Road, Bendigo

Jonathan Mann Lecture – 14 October, 6.00-7.00pm
Presented by Professor Tim Flannery

Live from Main Lecture Theatre in Albury-Wodonga, Video-conferencing to McKay Lecture Theatre, La Trobe University Bendigo Campus, Edwards Road, Bendigo

For lecture bookings and enquiries contact Sam Hawkins, Marketing and Events Officer from La Trobe University on 03 5444 7374, or by email bendigo-events@latrobe.edu.au.

Campaspe Valley Landcare

Campaspe Valley Landcare is hosting a community day on Sunday 3 October between 11.00am and 3.00pm. The day, to be held at the Barfold Hall, will focus on local Landcare issues including revegetation strategies and pest plant and animal management. There will be a BBQ lunch and everyone that attends will receive a free native plant! For more information or to RSVP contact: Phillip Don 03 5423 4182; John Noonan 03 5423 4153; or Marg Dack 0407 505 423.

The Lurg Hills Threatened Woodland Bird Search - it's on again!

Are you interested in putting your bird-watching prowess to good use by helping *Birds Australia* increase their understanding of threatened woodland birds? And are you keen to see birds nesting in revegetation which is less than 10 years old? If so, why not head to Lurg Hills to help with the threatened woodland bird search! Species which may be encountered on the surveys include the endangered and striking Regent Honeyeater, as well other woodland jewels such as Painted Honeyeaters, Diamond Firetails, Hooded Robins and Grey-crowned Babblers. The bird search will be on Saturday 9 October and Sunday 10 October, meeting at Old Lurg School, Lurg. For more information about the event contact Dean Ingwersen or Chris Tzaros from *Birds Australia* by phone 03 9347 0757 or via email d.ingwersen@birdsaustralia.com.au or c.tzaros@birdsaustralia.com.au.

The Buloke Family Fun Day - Scarecrow Competition!

Whilst it is a fair way off yet, we thought we should give you plenty of notice to prepare for the Buloke Family Fun day's Scarecrow Competition! On 25 February 2011 the competition will have the following categories:

- Children Pre-school
- Children Primary Age
- Secondary School Age
- Open Adult
- Family
- Community Organisation/Group

If you are in the Wycheproof area, you can get your application form and further information from the August Wycheproof community newsletter from www.wycheproof.vic.au.



FUNDING NEWS

Don't forget to refer to your Community Grants Guide (included with this edition of *Groundcover*) for more information about upcoming grants and funding programs. You can also access to Community Grants Guide online at www.nccma.vic.gov.au.

NEW SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM - The Bjarne K Dahl Trust

A new philanthropic fund, The Bjarne K Dahl Trust, has been established to encourage the community to protect and value our eucalypt trees. Through the small grants program the Trust will provide support to the community to assist in participating in eucalyptus education, promotion, cultivation, establishment and conservation. Grants of up to \$15,000 are available, and round one of the grants program closes on 8 October. For further information about The Bjarne K Dahl trust or the small grant program, visit the website at www.dahltrust.org.au/grants.

City of Greater Bendigo Community Grants

The City of Greater Bendigo Community Grants Program is now open. The program aims to promote projects that strengthen the community, particularly those that align with the future direction of the City of Greater Bendigo as outlined in the Greater Bendigo Community Plan (Bendigo +25), Small Township Strategy and the Community Access Plan. The program provides funding in the following areas:

- Cultural Grants
- Environmental Sustainability Grants
- Recreation Grants
- Community event Grants
- Community Assistance Grants

The grants close on 10 September. For grant guidelines and application details go to the City of Greater Bendigo website at www.bendigo.vic.gov.au and navigate to the 'grants' section.

NETWORK NEWS

Loddon Plains Landcare Network and Northern United Forestry Group (NUFG)

The Loddon Plains Landcare Network and Northern United Forestry Group (NUFG) will host a special event called 'Last Child in the woods – reconnecting children with nature' as part of the *Naturally Loddon* Festival on Sunday 26 September. As the title suggests, the focus of the event will be on reconnecting children with nature in a fun way. The day's activities will include a children's nature trail activity, guided tours and a sausage sizzle. A free bus will depart at 9.00am from the City of Greater Bendigo Council offices in Lyttleton Terrace, Bendigo, and return, departing Kamarooka at 12 noon. Bookings are essential. To make a booking or find out more contact Mal Brown on 03 54352588 or by email at brown.mal@bigpond.com.



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 or phone reception on 03 5448 7124.



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