

ground cover



NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority
Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People

www.nccma.vic.gov.au

May 2011

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

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is now calling for applications for the **2011-12 Victorian Landcare Grants**. The grants program, funded by the Victorian Government, allows local groups to undertake projects that will benefit the health of the region's land, water and biodiversity while focusing on local priorities.

There are two grant types available this year; *maintenance and start up grants* of up to \$1,000 and *project grants* of up to \$20,000. Project grants can fund projects that target onground works, capacity building activities, community engagement and innovation. The grant can fund a range of activities including revegetation, remnant protection, invasive plant and animal control, group action planning, workshops, field days, promotional materials, training and flora and fauna surveys.

The Maintenance and start up grants can fund activities such as incorporation fees, insurance, administration, meetings, newsletters and operational costs. When you are completing your application please make sure you...

1. Read the **Regional Guidelines** before starting your application form,
2. Submit a detailed map if you want to do onground works (*I can't emphasize this enough*) and,
3. Speak to and get approval from the appropriate authority/land manager where onground works are being proposed.

If you are unsure of something the best thing to do is to ask!

The key contacts for all of the Landcare, 'Friends of' and community natural resource management (NRM) groups on our database have been mailed a **Victorian Landcare Grants package**. If for any reason you have not received your package please contact me asap so that I can update our database with your correct postal and contact details. I am only ever a phone call or email away so please take steps to notify me of any changes as soon as you can so I can ensure you receive important information like this package.

I will be running five information sessions on the Victorian Landcare grants in conjunction with a community grants writing course. The sessions will be an opportunity for participants to learn more about the Victorian Landcare grants while receiving practical advice and guidance in grant writing from Kerry Anderson. Grant writing is a valuable skill that enables individuals and community groups to obtain funding from a wide variety of sources including government

THIS MONTH'S CONTENTS

NEWS	page 2
EVENTS	page 4
COURSES & RESOURCES	page 5
FUNDING NEWS	page 6

funding programs, philanthropic organisations or corporate businesses. The sessions will be held in Wedderburn, Kyneton, Castlemaine, Maryborough and Kerang. For more information read the article titled 'Community Grant Writing Workshops' in the **Courses and Resources** section of the newsletter.

Be sure to book in as we will be providing some sustenance (supper) at each session.

Before I sign off there is some great news in the north of the catchment with three groups coming out of recess - **Congratulations** to Lockington District Family Landcare Group, Gunbower Landcare Group and Echuca West Landcare Group for reforming. **Congratulations** also go to Friends of Campbells Creek Landcare Group, Wycheproof and District Landcare Group, Elphinstone Land Management Association, McKenzie Hill Action and Landcare Group, Mandurang Strathfieldsaye Landcare Network and Woodend Landcare Group on securing funding through the **State Governments Landcare Volunteer Action Project Grants - Well done guys!**

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

NEWS

Victorian State Budget Landcare News

The Victorian Government made several announcements that related to Landcare in the State Budget. The two main announcements included:

- \$20 million *Community Green Fund Grants Program* to provide grants of \$10,000 to \$150,000 for community-based and volunteer groups for onground action, including biodiversity conservation and preservation, elimination of feral pests, weed control, cleaning up waterways, revegetation and environmental awareness; and,
- \$12 million *Landcare support package* to provide part funding for 60 Landcare facilitator positions across Victoria;

For more information on the 2011-12 Victorian Budget head to the budget website at www.budget.vic.gov.au/budget.html.

Serrated tussock - a long-term commitment

Article courtesy DPI Agscene

North Central landholders are being urged to stop serrated tussock from taking over their property by making a long-term commitment to its control. Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Pest Management Officer, Larry Martin, warns there is no quick fix when it comes to controlling this highly invasive weed.

“Serrated tussock seed may be viable for up to twenty years in an ideal environment and landholders need to be prepared for an extended control program,” Mr Martin said.

“In the first instance, land managers should identify and map the extent of the plant on their property. A long-term plan is vital for control. Several factors should be considered when developing your long-term serrated tussock management plan,” continued Mr Martin.

Mr Martin said preventing serrated tussock from spreading further over your property is critical. “All plants should be treated prior to flowering to prevent the introduction of new seed”. He said various control options are available. “In many cases herbicide application or digging out individual plants, where they are in low densities are the best control options,” he said.

Land managers should consult with herbicide retailers to determine the most appropriate herbicide for their individual situation. Mr Martin said where paddocks have a large established seed bank, land managers should consider cropping rotations and pasture re-establishment to increase competition and maximise productivity. “Through persistence and an effective long-term control program, serrated tussock can be beaten.” Conclude Mr Martin.

For further information on invasive plants and animals please call the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

Chasing turtles

Article courtesy of Cass Davis, North Central CMA Regional Waterwatch Coordinator

In April, Kelly Dunn, Waterwatch facilitator, and myself had the opportunity to head up to Gunbower Island with Heidi Kleinhert, Kerang and Gunbower Wetlands Enhancement Program Project Officer. Once there, we met up with four volunteers from the Australian Freshwater Turtle Conservation and Research Association (AFTCRA) who were carrying out surveys on the Broad-shelled Turtle, *Chelodina expansa*.

The volunteers arrived on 25 March and stayed until April 18, spending ten days on site at Gunbower Island. The volunteers were amazing, taking their holidays from normal work life to coincide with the Broad-shelled Turtles nesting season. Their day involved monitoring known sites and identifying potentially new sites that needed to be protected from predation.

There is very little scientific information about the Broad-shelled Turtle. Identifying the age of a turtle for one is very difficult. More research needs to be done on the turtles; however, it can be difficult to obtain the appropriate permits to conduct detailed surveys involving tagging and or recording the turtles laying eggs. What is known is that their greatest threat is the fox; their nests are particularly vulnerable to predation by foxes and their hatchlings make easy prey.

In the ten days that the volunteers were at Gunbower Island they recorded seventy raided nests and protected a further thirteen nests with wire mesh to deter foxes from digging up the eggs. By collecting local knowledge and gaining support from the community, these dedicated volunteers are ensuring that there is a bright future for the turtles of Gunbower Island.



Broad-shelled Turtle, *Chelodina expansa*.
Photo: Courtesy David Kleinhert.

Friend or Foe? *Tamarix* species in the North Central region

North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) staff, along with colleagues from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) came together recently to learn about the ecology and potential threat to the environment posed by one of Australia's most significant weed species.

Commonly known as Athel Pine, *Tamarix aphylla* is one of three species which occurs throughout Australia, the other two being *T. ramossissima* (Salt Cedar) and *T. parviflora* (Small Leaf).

All species are considered a threat to the environment and agriculture on various parts of Australian mainland, including Tasmania. Although seed viability is low, seed is spread predominately by wind and water and if optimal conditions exist, germination can be rapid. Environments most at risk from colonisation are waterways and wetlands.

Athel Pine can damage infrastructure by blocking sewer lines and water pipes while the salt excreted from its leaves rusts metals objects and prevents other plants species from growing.

Athel Pine is known throughout the northern regions of the catchment as often occurring as a single tree or in small stands where it was traditionally planted for shade and shelter in paddocks, on roadsides, in public places such as golf courses and cemeteries and around old homesteads.

Despite its national status as a Weed of National Significance (WoNS), in the North Central region, Athel Pine, for the time being, doesn't display invasiveness unlike its occurrence in the drier regions of the Australian mainland.

However, it's the threat posed by the smaller *Tamarix ramossissima* (salt cedar) which has North Central authorities concerned. Like Athel Pine Salt Cedar occurs as individual specimens in gardens or is planted as a windbreak but it can often go unnoticed to the untrained eye.

Concerns about the threat of Salt Cedar were first raised by local people in the Kerang region about four years ago where it colonised and spread on the receding dry lake beds of Lake Meran, Little Lake Meran and Lake Murphy.

Attempts to control it were implemented through mechanical evacuation and whilst successful some plants remained with a particularly large population at Lake Meran.

During the height of the drought when all three lakes were dry, staff from the North Central CMA, DPI and Parks Victoria initiated further control works resulting in 98 per cent elimination of the species.

Despite all three lakes now being full, as a result of recent flooding, concern still exists as to what germination may happen in other areas as a result of widespread inundation throughout the lower Loddon floodplain from other existing plants.

In the meantime, monitoring and follow up treatment of previously controlled areas will continue into the future, but the community is being called upon to identify known or historical populations or individual specimens of either Athel Pine or Salt Cedar and report them to DPI Kerang or the North Central CMA.

This will assist with better understanding of both species ecological requirements and future planning for control and treatment.



Trainees from the North West Indigenous Natural Resource Traineeship conducted a massive task of manually controlling *Tamarix Ramosissima* at Lake Meran: Photo Courtesy John Bye Department of Sustainability and Environment.

A report form can be downloaded from the North Central CMA website www.nccma.vic.gov.au and can be sent to info@nccma.vic.gov.au or posted to:

North Central CMA
PO Box 18 Huntly Vic 3551

Or

DPI Kerang
26 Wellington Street
Kerang Vic

For more information about Tamarix go to www.weeds.org.au/wons/athelpine.

EVENTS

Nice trees, shame about the...

North Central CMA is presenting an information session on Tuesday 24 May between 6.30pm to 8.00pm in the Reception Room at the City of Greater Bendigo Council Offices, on Lyttleton Terrace in Bendigo. The evening is aimed at lifestyle landholders who wish to find out more about protecting the natural values of their properties. Topics covered will include covenanting, incentives and available rebates, sources of funding, grazing regimes for small herds, and projects to help you improve your place.

David Stewart from the DPI Small Landholder Information Service will discuss grazing regimes suitable for small numbers of horses, sheep, cattle, alpacas or goats. David is trained in Farm Management and has worked and run grazing and grain properties since 1985. He is an experienced TAFE teacher and Chemical Standards Officer and currently manages the DPI Victorian Small Landholder Information Service (SLIS).

This event is funded through the Federal Government's Caring for Our Country initiative.

A light meal and children's activities will be provided during the information session. To RSVP or to find out more information contact the North Central CMA on 03 5448 7124 or email info@nccma.vic.gov.au.

RSVP's are required by Friday 20 May 2011.

Planting day at Newstead

Join Newstead Landcare on **World Environment Day**, Sunday 5 June 9.30am - 1.30pm, for a planting on the Loddon River at Newstead. Six hundred indigenous seedlings including grasses and understorey species will be planted on the eastern bank of the Loddon River from 'the ford' downstream to 'the island'. Please wear sturdy footwear and long trousers and if you can, bring gloves, spades, picks, mattocks, etc. A light lunch will be provided.

The project is supported by North Central CMA and BRIT's Faculty of Conservation and Land Management. To RSVP or for further information please ring Isabelle Canty on 0413 696 410 or email izzycy@gmail.com.

Capitalising on our Changing Climate - Community Forum

North Central CMA, in partnership with the Victorian Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF), is holding a free public forum in Swan Hill. Attendees will learn more about the implications of a changing climate, the weather patterns influencing agriculture in Victoria and strategies to manage climate variability on farm.



Guest speakers presenting at the forum include:

- Professor Tim Reeves sharing over 40 years of experience in agricultural research and extension.
- Neil Barr discussing the influence of climate variability on social demography and the subsequent effects on agriculture.
- Brian Kearns from the Victorian DPI will be describing the new and emerging agricultural markets.
- Senior Climate Scientists will highlight the tools that can be used to better understand and predict the weather patterns that influence agriculture on farm.

When: Tuesday 31 May 2011, 9.30 am – 3.30 pm

Where: The Grain Shed, 2-8 King Street, Swan Hill

RSVP by Thursday 26 May 2011 to the North Central CMA on 03 5448 7124 or email info@nccma.vic.gov.au.

Recreating the Country

The Ballarat Region Treegrowers is hosting 'Recreating the Country' Field Day on Friday 3 June 2011, at the ImLal Biorich Demonstration site. *Recreating the Country* is a new model of revegetation that integrates conservation with production. Challenging traditional designs of shelterbelts and Landcare plantings, this new model aims to enrich habitat potential across rural Landscapes, not just for a lifetime, but for centuries to come. The field day will involve talks and site tours by conservation and farm forestry experts.

When: Friday 3 June 2011, 10.00 am – 4.15 pm

Where: ImLal Biorich Demonstration Site, Lal Lal, Victoria Vic Roads Country Directory, Map 77 Ref B4.

The North Central CMA is planning on organising a bus from Bendigo to the field day site, **if there is sufficient interest from community members**. For further information or to register your interest in attending the field day please contact Ashley Beven, Regional Landcare Facilitator, by Friday 27 May on 03 5448 7124 or by emailing ashley.beven@nccma.vic.gov.au.



**INTERNATIONAL YEAR
OF FORESTS • 2011**

World Environment Day in Castlemaine

The theme for this year's **World Environment Day** is *Forests: Nature at your Service*. To celebrate, Connecting Country is taking part in a family friendly event on Sunday 5 June at the Market Building in Castlemaine from 2-4pm. There will be information on Connecting Country, Landcare, Trust for Nature, Mount Alexander Sustainability Group. But most importantly, with the help of 'Little Makers', there will be a range of exciting children's activities. **A great day for families!**

COURSES & RESOURCES

Community Grant Writing Workshops

The 2011-12 Victorian Landcare Grants deadline of 27 June 2011 will be here before you know it! These grants are available to incorporated community groups that want to improve the condition of their local environment.

North Central CMA is providing free Community Grants Workshops throughout the catchment in May and June.

The workshop which will cover the Victorian Landcare Grants will also include a Community Grant Writing course. The course, run by a professional writer, Kerry Anderson, will provide participants with practical advice and guidance in writing and developing funding applications. Grant writing is a valuable skill that enables community groups to obtain funding from a wide variety of sources.

Wedderburn

Date: Thursday 26 May

Time: 9am – 12noon (including morning tea)

Venue: Wedderburn Community Centre, 24 Wilson Street, Wedderburn

Kyneton

Date: Tuesday 31 May

Time: 9.30am – 12.30pm (including morning tea)

Venue: Kyneton Bowling Club, Junction on the Green, Mollison Street, Kyneton

Castlemaine

Date: Tuesday 31 May

Time: 6pm – 9pm (including supper)

Venue: Ray Bradfield Rooms, Victory Park, Castlemaine

Maryborough

Date: Wednesday 1 June

Time: 6pm – 9pm (including supper)

Venue: Highlands Society, 35 High Street, Maryborough

Kerang

Date: Thursday 2 June

Time: 6pm – 9pm (including supper)

Venue: Kerang Learning Centre, 11 Scoresby Street, Kerang

North Central CMA will coordinate the distribution of the Victorian Government's Landcare Grants. These funds will be provided for Landcare and community groups to undertake projects that will benefit the health of the region's land, water and biodiversity.

Further information regarding the Victorian Landcare Grants, including guidelines, can be found on www.nccma.vic.gov.au.

To attend one of the community meetings RSVP to the North Central CMA on 03 5448 7124.



Connecting Country 2011 Ecology Program

Explore the mysteries of soils. Discover our woodland environments. Consider our important waterways. You can find out about these things and more through Connecting Country's extensive 2011 Ecology Program.

Connecting Country's three fascinating **field days** will explore:

- 29 May Our geology and soils
- 5 June Yellow Box Woodland
- 26 June Rivers and streams

Held on Sundays from 9.00 am to 1.30 pm, participants will be transported by mini bus from the Ray Bradfield Rooms in Castlemaine to various sites of interest around the Mount Alexander Shire, gaining insight from local experts. The cost for each field day is \$10 and **bookings are essential as numbers are strictly limited.**

Connecting Country will also host three **evening talks**; all are free and open to the public.

- 26 May: Alison Pouliot, local environmental scientist, presents Fungi: *The Forgotten Kingdom*;
- 25 August: Arn Tolsma, senior scientist in fire ecology from the Arthur Rylah Institute, will discuss the *role of fire in the landscape*;
- 8 September: Robin Ballinger will give us part two of her fascinating talk about the *local landscape of squatters, miners, selectors and conservationists*.

The evening talks will be held at the Campbells Creek Community Centre (Elizabeth St) with doors opening at 6.30pm for a pre-talk supper and talks commencing at 7.00pm. Please RSVP for catering purposes.

A full program and application form is attached and also available at www.connectingcountry.org.au. Alternatively, for more information, call the Connecting Country office on 03 5472 1594 or email krista@connectingcountry.org.au.



FUNDING NEWS

Victorian Landcare Grants - Call for applications

The North Central CMA is calling for applications for the next round of the State Government's Victorian Landcare Grants program for (incorporated) community groups to undertake natural resource management (NRM) projects in 2011-12.

The Victorian Landcare Grants Program, previously referred to as the Second Generation Landcare Program, continues to have an emphasis on community capacity building. It is designed to fund projects that enable NRM community groups, networks and their volunteers to undertake effective onground works to increase ecosystem resilience and contribute to sustainable landscapes.

The grants program will fund activities that align to the categories of:

- Supporting community volunteers and leveraging community action,
- Positively influencing the management practices of private landholders; and,
- Building the skills and capacity of the community to undertake NRM activities.

There are two grant types available:

- Project grants (up to \$20,000)
- Maintenance and start up grants (up to \$1,000)

Applications close 5pm Monday 27 June 2011

For further information or to download the application forms and guidelines, visit the North Central CMA website: www.nccma.vic.gov.au. Alternatively please contact Jodie Odgers, Regional Landcare Coordinator on 03 5440 1883 or email jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au.

RACV Community Grants

The RACV Community Grants are now open. To be eligible groups need to be endorsed as a 'deductible gift recipient'. Grants of up to \$10,000 are available for projects that fall under the category of environmental sustainability. Applications close 1 July 2011. For more information or to apply, go to the RACV website (www.racv.com.au).



Caring for our Country- Community Action Grants opening soon

It is expected that in the next few weeks the Federal Government will call for applications for its 2011-12 Community Action Grants which are the small grants component of the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative. \$5 million has been allocated to the Community Action Grants to support conservation of the Australian landscape and help rural, urban and indigenous community groups across the country protect the environment and adopt sustainable land management practices.

The Community Action Grants are for between \$5000 and \$20,000 (GST exclusive). Individuals are not eligible for Community Action Grants and projects must be completed within 18 months. Importantly the Community Action Grants can be used for on ground works or capacity building within the community. This gives groups greater flexibility in developing a project that best meets the needs of their local group/community.

For more information on current Community Action Grants or on how to apply for the current round of funding go to www.nrm.gov.au.

New Sustainable Agriculture Grants - Applications close 30 May 2011

Landcare Australia and Woolworths have recently launched the 'Woolworths Fresh Food Future' program. As part of this program, Woolworths is providing \$150,000 of funding towards a grants program to help farming groups develop or implement sustainable farming practices.

Projects that support farmers in the adoption of technology or practices that improve water use efficiency, nutrient management and their carbon footprint will be targeted. The grants will be awarded to farming groups and each grant can be up to a maximum of \$10,000 to implement a project, which addresses one of these key areas.

Applications close on Monday 30 May 2011. For further information visit the Landcare Australia website www.landcareonline.com.au.

Botanic Guardians

The Botanic Guardians aim to help conserve Victoria's rare and threatened native plant species and vegetation communities on public and private land. Funding is awarded up to \$3,000.

Contact Adrian Moorrees on 03 9412 4232 or email adrian.moorrees@dse.vic.gov.au. They accept applications anytime.

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.



NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority
Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People