

North Central chat

APRIL 2013

*Keeping you up-to-date with all the Landcare news
with a splash of Waterwatch*

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

It is Monday 22 April and I am sitting here in the office writing the newsletter on Earth Day... very fitting I think! Earth day is held every year on 22 April and highlights green issues all around the world. The first Earth Day was held in 1970 and today planting trees is the most common way people support the day each year worldwide.

There has been some pretty significant news about the industry we work and volunteer in since the last newsletter. In case you missed it, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Department of Primary Industries have amalgamated to form one organisation, the Department of Environment and Primary Industries. I have included the media release from the State Government in the News section so you can get up to speed.

This month I have been to two fantastic events. The first was Connecting Country's event, 'Designing a Wildlife Corridor: What Works & Why?' at the Elphinstone Community Hall. Dr Rodney Van der Ree, ecologist and senior researcher at the University of Melbourne, spoke about designing effective wildlife corridors, particularly for use by Tuans and Sugar Gliders. Then Sue Logie and Philippa Schapper presented their community project that provides habitat for the Superb Parrot in northern Victoria. Make sure you read Max Schlachter's article in the News section.

The other event I was fortunate enough to attend was the first of two Loddon Stressed River celebrations at Newbridge. We spent a glorious afternoon at Hedley Price's property, one of the landholders involved in the project. We looked at some of the works that had been carried out but mostly listened to the farmer talking about his experience with the project and what he believed were its greatest achievements.

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After the farm visit we were treated to a presentation by Ross Hardie, Director of Alluvium Consulting, at the Newbridge Hall. He talked about his experiences of river restoration and dealing with erosion over a 20-year period. Ross then interviewed Rob Hooke, Bill Twigg and Ian Penny - all landholders involved in the Loddon Stressed River project. What great advocates for the Loddon River they are. It was refreshing to listen to three landholders talk about their experiences and hear their passion for waterway health.

Take care,

Jodie Odgers

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North Central Catchment Management Authority
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Phone: 03 5448 7124



Weed of the month...

Weeds Identification Guide - North Central Victoria.

Do you know your Scotch Thistle from your Spear Thistle?



Which one is which?



If you need help identifying weeds contact the North Central Catchment Management Authority for your FREE copy of the *Weeds Identification Guide - North Central Victoria*. We have done another print run! Phone (03) 5448 7124

News...

Banking on success - Protecting and enhancing remnant grassy woodlands in the Kyneton region

Adrian Martins - Program Manager, Campaspe Catchments, North Central Catchment Management Authority

To the layperson, it would hardly seem significant in the scheme of things. Just some small plants located on the edge of a farm dam. But were it not for Ian Higgins' observant eye and passion for native plant species, the second ever Victorian recording of *Isolepis cernua* var. *setiformis*, or Bristle Club Sedge (pictured below) as it is commonly known, may never have occurred.

Ian is employed as a Project Officer by the North Central Catchment Management Authority which is responsible for delivering a range of outcomes to protect, link and enhance priority Grassy Woodland remnants in a 24,000 ha area situated north-east of Kyneton. There are many stakeholders involved in the project including pro-active freehold landholders, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, schools and Landcare groups.

Funding for the project is being delivered over the next five years through the Australian Government's Clean Energy Future Biodiversity Fund.





As far as plant species go, Bristle Club Sedge is hardly likely to attract a crowd. But what it lacks in physical and aesthetic stature, it duly compensates as a botanical symbol for the conservation of an 'ecosystem' that has rapidly reduced in size and structure following the spread of European settlement.

At a national level grassy woodlands are considered threatened as a result of native vegetation clearance, soil disturbance and pest plant and animal invasion. In Victoria, the level of impact is often more intensified due to higher population density and associated development.

Ironically, despite the threatened status, grassy woodlands often resonate and positively appeal with public consciousness. Social evidence suggests we are attracted to wide open landscapes that are interspersed with large old trees. The problem though is old trees will eventually die and are not being replaced. And the bulk of the remaining part of its structure, the understorey consisting of a suite of native grasses and small to medium herbs, is generally suffering at the hands of neglect and lack of knowledge.

"In the case of discovering Bristle Club Sedge, this shows how important it is to know what plants you have on your property before you make management decisions," stated Ian. "Our plan to revegetate this site will now take great care to avoid impact on the habitat of this species."

Although the threats to grassy woodland values are generally well documented, the confidence we possess in knowing about all the characteristics of its makeup and management requirements is open to question.

According to Ian there are many other 'visible' components of the native vegetation in the project area which are not well documented. Victoria records its wild plant distributions in the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA). But Ian has 'discovered' around 60 indigenous species in and around the project area that are so far not recorded in this central database.

Undoubtedly, some of these are already known by Landcare group members who exist in the Baynton-Sidonia area. These include Sweet Bursaria, Dogwood (*Cassinia aculeata*) Prickly Tea-tree (*Leptospermum continentale*) and Snow Gum.

On another assessment outing Ian was surprised and delighted to find a population of Black She-oak (*Allocasuarina littoralis*) on freehold property near Baynton and wonders if other populations exist in the district (pictured below). Black She-oak differs most noticeably from the better known Drooping She-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) in the shape of its seed cones and by having a more erect form.



Like several small tree species of the district such as *Bursaria spinosa* and *Banksia marginata*, She-oaks have declined to low numbers in the district. Luckily Drooping She-oak has been a popular choice for revegetation for many years. Now Ian plans to include Black She-oak in future revegetation activities as well.

Good observance, an actively engaged community and a passion for remnant landscape protection and enhancement are the keys to ensuring the value of grassy woodlands in the Kyneton region remain uncompromised into the future.

The North Central Catchment Management Authority is interested in hearing from private landholders and or managers in the area north and east of Kyneton who believe they might have grassy woodland habitat and are interested in protection and enhancement incentives. For more information contact Ian Higgins via email: ian.higgins@nccma.vic.gov.au or phone (03) 5440 1821, mobile 0418 539 670.

One stop shop for environment and primary industries

Minister for Agriculture, Food Security and Water Peter Walsh and Minister for Environment and Climate Change Ryan Smith have welcomed Premier Denis Naphthine's announcement of the new Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI).

Mr Walsh said the new department would provide a better and more efficient management approach for public and private land, and water for the people of Victoria.

"A clear objective of this merger of the departments of Environment and Sustainability and Primary Industries, by the Victorian Coalition Government, is to boost service delivery to regional areas," Mr Walsh said.

"We believe decisions that affect local communities are best made by locally-based decision makers, not people who are behind a desk hundreds of kilometres away in the city.

"We want to provide communities with one-stop shops for land and water management issues.

"Integrating DPI and DSE into a single department will enable more practical management of land and water on both public and private land, and in turn the new DEPI will be able to provide streamlined and responsive services to our stakeholders.

"There will be a more mobile, flexible workforce with greater capacity to respond to emergencies such as fires, floods or biosecurity incursions and to seasonal programs such as prescribed burning and compliance actions across the range of department portfolios," Mr Walsh said.

Mr Smith said the amalgamation would build on work already underway to ensure improved coordination of key efforts to preserve public land and waterways across Victoria.

"This builds on the important environmental works we already see in rural areas being carried out by groups such as Landcare and catchment management authorities," Mr Smith said.

"Some of the biggest challenges our environment faces, such as bushfires, floods, threatened species and pest plants and animals don't discriminate between what is public and private property and it makes sense to manage and protect all land in a co-ordinated way."

Mr Walsh and Mr Smith both look forward to working with DSE and DPI staff, and the newly appointed Secretary Adam Fennessy, as DEPI prepares to open for business from 1 July this year.

Both Ministers recognised and thanked Secretary of the Department of Sustainability and Environment Greg Wilson and Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries Jeff Rosewarne for their dedicated service in their respective roles.

Hunting down Poverty weed - Help eradicate Poverty weed from Victoria

Article featured in AgScene Wednesday 3 April 2013

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is aiming to eradicate the remaining infestations of the potentially devastating Poverty weed (*Iva axillaris Pursh*), which is a State prohibited weed in Victoria.

DPI Biosecurity Area Leader Greg Wood said that chemicals in the roots of the weed inhibit the growth of other plants. The plant is unpalatable to livestock and large root reserves enable the plant to thrive, even in drought conditions.

"Poverty weed is a significant problem in North America, and Australia is the only other continent with an infestation," Mr Wood said.



So far, the weed has infested the Clare region of South Australia and the Quambatook and Dingwall areas of Victoria.



"The weed was eradicated in the Clare region many years ago, leaving the only known Australian infestations in Victoria, which DPI is working to eradicate."

DPI staff have surveyed properties in the vicinity of known infestations in the Quambatook and Dingwall areas over the past two summers to determine the extent of the weed's growth.

The most recent work has been in the Dingwall area, where 60 properties were inspected, and no new infestations were found.

Poverty weed is a perennial herb which grows up to 40 cm high and reproduces from creeping roots and from seed. Poverty weed is a strong competitor and is often the only species present in dense infestations. Its roots produce aerial shoots each spring and these shoots flower and seed before the aerial growth dies in autumn.

Mr Wood said that if farmers suspect they have Poverty weed on their property, they should contact the local DPI office for verification.

"Farmers should not treat the weed themselves. Treatment of State prohibited weeds is a DPI responsibility and the department covers all treatment costs," Mr Wood said.

"With such a small number of infestations all occurring in one locality, eradication of Poverty weed is achievable. There are very few other weed species in this category.

For further information regarding Poverty weed contact the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

Landscape Connectivity - Be Strategic and Think Outside the Corridor

Written by Max Schlachter, Landcare Facilitator, Connecting Country

Over 60 people attended a talk titled 'Designing a Wildlife Corridor: What Works & Why?' at the Elphinstone Community Hall on Wednesday 10 April. The night was jointly presented and supported by Connecting Country and the North Central CMA.

The first speaker, Dr Rodney van der Ree, wasted no time in subverting the title of the evening to reflect his thoughts on designing wildlife corridors - changing the title of his talk from 'Designing a Wildlife Corridor...' to Designing a Connected Landscape...! Rodney's point was that

what we are aiming for when we create wildlife corridors is really 'landscape connectivity' - and wildlife corridors are only one part of this. Other landscape features such as patches of remnant vegetation, paddock trees, small clumps of vegetation, scattered trees and stags can all form part of a connected landscape.

His talk went on to detail many ways by which the effectiveness of a corridor can be maximised, including trying to incorporate established vegetation into a corridor; making use of linear landscape features such as roads and creeks; designing with a particular animal or group of animals in mind and planning strategically - look at a map!

The second part of Rodney's talk was about his research into the effectiveness of wildlife crossings over the Hume and Calder freeways. Rodney showed a number of photographs from cameras placed at the entrances to wildlife underpasses. They had captured all sorts of animals, including echidnas, koalas, kangaroos, foxes - and a dirt bike rider. Photographs from the arboreal rope bridges were also fascinating and included one quite unexpected tight rope-walker making its way over the Hume Freeway - a goanna!

Despite the great images of animals using the crossings, Rodney's data (which began from the beginning of construction) showed that there was an overall and continuing population decline in numbers of arboreal marsupials living adjacent to the new freeway over time.



The second speakers were from the Superb Parrot Project - a landscape-scale revegetation project which has been helping landholders to create wildlife corridors in the Picola area of northern Victoria for over 20 years - with great benefits to the Superb Parrot and other wildlife in the area. Sue Logie, who coordinated the project for 13 years, said that the project has maintained its momentum because they "do things"; in a farming area people weren't too interested in

coming to meetings but they were great at getting out there and planting trees – especially if there was a piece of machinery to tinker with. The group was even lucky enough to include an engineer who designed a special tree planting machine for the work.

The story of the Superb Parrot Project was a real inspiration and showed how much can be achieved when people really get behind an idea.

On Sunday 17 November this year there is an opportunity for everyone to help the Superb Parrot Project by taking part in the Annual Superb Parrot Count. Contact Sue Logie (03) 5868 3317 or sue.logie@cma.nsw.gov.au to register.

Caring for the Campaspe

The Minister for Water Peter Walsh officially launched the 'Caring for the Campaspe' project at Rochester on 15 March 2013. This is the first large scale on-ground works project for the entire Campaspe River to protect and enhance its important riparian vegetation. The four-year \$3.73M project will be led by the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and is funded by the Victorian Government's Securing Priority Waterways program.

Together with the additional 22.3 gigalitres of environmental water now available for the river downstream of Lake Eppalock, the on-ground works project forms part of an integrated and holistic approach to improving river health which will benefit local urban communities and visiting recreational users who enjoy fishing, boating and camping.



Project manager Angela Gladman says "the works will complement recent flood recovery activity, the great work our Landcare groups do along the river and the ongoing delivery of environmental flows."

"A 12-member project reference group will guide the North Central CMA in the planning of community engagement activities and prioritisation of on-ground works throughout the life of the project to June 2016.

Given the broad geographic area through which the river winds, the project reference group has attracted representatives from community groups, Indigenous groups, local governments and Goulburn-Murray Water," she said.

For landholders interested in participating in the project, further information about the incentives on offer will be communicated via direct mail in April/May 2013 and at local events in the coming months. The on-ground roll-out of 80km of fencing, weed control and revegetation incentives will commence in July 2013 for up to three years.

For enquiries about the project, please contact Angela Gladman on (03) 5440 1825 or angela.gladman@nccma.vic.gov.au.

Landcare Awards - nominations open

Nominations for the 2013 Victorian Landcare Awards are now open until 30 June 2013.

There are 12 Landcare Awards' categories in Victoria in 2013, which are:

1. Individual Landcarer Award
2. Landcare Facilitator or Coordinator Award
3. Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices Award (plus 10 regional Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices Awards – i.e. one Award for each CMA region)
4. Partnerships with Landcare Award
5. Junior Landcare Team Award
6. Westpac Agribusiness Innovative Young Landcare Leader Award
7. Indigenous Land Management Award
8. Coastcare Award

9. **Qantas Landcare Innovative Community Group Award**
10. **Landcare Network Award** (VIC category only)
11. **Dr. Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award** (VIC category only)
12. **Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship** (VIC category only)

Winners of the nine national award categories will go forward as Victoria's nominees at the biennial National Landcare Awards, which will take place in 2014.

The Victorian Landcare Awards are a great opportunity for individual Landcarers, groups, networks, and schools to gain recognition for their hard work - we should celebrate our achievements and recognise the efforts of many for what is often a thankless but very rewarding job!



All nominees are required to fill in the entry form for the Awards and must address ALL the selection criteria for their nominated category.

Note - nominations are limited to 1,500 words.

For more information please visit www.landcarevic.net.au or contact the 2013 Victorian Landcare Awards Coordinator on 03 9637 9956 or email cel.hub@dse.vic.gov.au.

Congratulations!!!

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Ryan Smith, last month announced the 80 projects receiving funding through Communities for Nature program.

More than 260 applications were received for this round of small grants, and the high quality of those applications reflects the significant environmental works being carried out by community groups throughout Victoria.

Congratulations to the groups in our region that were successful - 18 of the 80 the projects funded were from this region. It is fantastic so many projects from this region were funded and it reflects the capacity and enthusiasm of groups in the north central region of Victoria to undertake environmental projects- **Well done!**

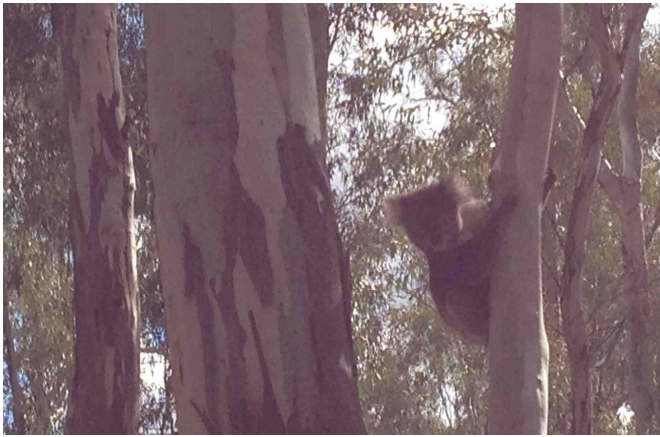
The successful groups were:

- Ashbourne Landcare Group (2 projects)
- Wedderburn Conservation Management Network
- Mid Loddon Sub-Catchment Management Group
- Friends of Box-Ironbark Forest Inc. (Mount Alexander Region)
- Baynton Sidonia Landcare Group
- Sutton Grange Landcare Group
- Wedderburn P-12 College
- Bendigo Mountain Bike Club
- Axe Creek Landcare Group
- Newham and District Landcare Group
- Post Office Hill Landcare Group
- Wattle Flat-Pootilla Landcare Group
- McKenzie's Hill Action and Landcare Group
- Northern Plains Conservation Management Network
- East Loddon Landcare Group
- Newstead Landcare Group Inc.
- Leitchville Landcare Group

Snaps of the month!

This month's photo is pretty special! Clayton Sharp was lucky enough to spot and photograph a koala on Gunbower Island. Why is this so special you ask? Well the last sighting of a koala on the island was almost 30 years ago.

An interesting fact you might not know about koalas is that they are inactive for 20 hours day – they sure do get plenty of time to rest and relax!



Our other snap of the month was sent in by Graham from Langley Landcare. He discovered this plant growing near a house and he knew it was an invasive weed as it was spreading quickly! After looking through the Weed Guide and a few other reference books, Ian Higgins identified it as Pampas Lily-of-the-Valley, *Salpichroa origanifolia*.

Pampas Lily-of-the-Valley is a perennial herb that dies in autumn with new growth developing in late winter and spring. The weed reproduces from the roots and seeds. Roots are dispersed by mechanical cultivation, road graders and people dumping garden refuse. While seeds can be spread by contaminated equipment, clothing, mud, animals and birds eating the fruit. Each plant produces roughly 100 berries per plant with 20 seeds contained in each berry - that's at least 2,000 seeds per plant! More information about this invasive weed can be found on the Department of Environment and Primary Industries webpage on Pests, Diseases and Weeds (www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds).



Keep the photos coming - if it is interesting send it in! It doesn't have to be of a plant or an animal - it could be a landscape shot. All snaps can be emailed to jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au.

Events

Celebrating the Loddon

You are invited to join a celebration of the North Central CMA's Loddon Stressed River project and the people, who have supported us over the years.

Come along, sit back and relax with inspiring guest speaker Ross Hardie, Director of Alluvium Consulting, after a local farm visit and a short river walk.





Also enjoy a magnificent buffet dinner, local produce stalls, live music and a chance to win a fantastic raffle!

When: Friday 3 May

Time: 3:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Where: Kerang Football Clubrooms, Wyndham Street, Kerang

RSVP is essential – please contact North Central CMA on (03) 5448 7124.

Come to the Bendigo Creek Walk 'n' Talk

After two years of Victorian Landcare Grant-funded restoration works, this event will be both social and educational, providing an opportunity for participants to spend time on this often misunderstood waterway.



Participants are to meet at the **Bendigo Botanic Gardens, White Hills, at 9:30 am on Sunday 5 May**. Car transfers will enable the walk to begin at Leans Rd Huntly through the group's past, present and future restoration areas to Howard St Epsom where participants will join the Bendigo Creek Linear Park recreation trail through to the Bendigo Botanic Gardens.

Participants will be joined by flora, fauna and river health experts who will lead discussion throughout the walk to highlight the many threats and assets of the Bendigo Creek. At the conclusion of the walk, members of the Friends of Bendigo Botanic Gardens will provide information about the redevelopment of the Gardens and their historical link with the Bendigo Creek.

Please note this walk will require a reasonable fitness / endurance level entailing a walk of several kilometres over mildly challenging terrain. The walk will take approximately 2.5 hrs.

This is a free event supported by a grant through the State Government's Victorian Landcare Grants Program.

Please bring your own snacks, water bottle, sunscreen, hat, camera, binoculars, notebook, etc, and wear suitable clothing / footwear.

Lunch will be provided at the Bendigo Botanic Gardens. Bookings essential. Please RSVP before Wednesday 1 May to Nicole Howie, (03) 5448 8244 or dnhowie@bigpond.com.

Trees for Mum

The Macedon Ranges community is once again invited to plant native trees and honour their mums this Mother's Day, Sunday 12 May, at four tree planting events across the region. The day is one of a national series of Trees for Mum events and is open to all members of the community who want to plant a tree for their mothers or take part in the day with their mums, while also doing something to help the environment.



Kyneton
Cnr Langley Street &
Franklin Place
(outside Scout Hut)
10am to midday



Carlsruhe
156 Carlsruhe Station Road
10am to 2pm



Carlsruhe
"Allameade"
289 Three Chain Road
10am to 2pm



Woodend
Ruby Mackenzie Park
Access via Anne Road
9.30am to midday



Plant a Tree for Mum this Mother's Day
Sunday, 12 May 2013. Contact us at:
treesformumwoodend@gmail.com or
Tel: 0409 373 010 or 5427 3931





Biological Farming Information Days

Come and learn more about:

- Production benefits of bio-farming
- Making & Applying Compost Tea
- Beneficial Biology
- Managing Soil Health

There will be two information days:

- Kerang - Tuesday 7 May
- Echuca West - Tuesday 21 May

Register your interest with the North Central CMA on (03) 5448 7124 or email info@nccma.vic.gov.au

Future Farming - Landscapes Field Day

A field day focusing on the Future Farming Landscapes project being undertaken by Kilter Pty Ltd on behalf of VicSuper will be held on 16 May near Lake Boga.



Come and see firsthand:

- sub surface drip irrigation
- gravity irrigation development
- direct seeding programs
- agroforestry demonstration

Register your interest with the North Central CMA on (03) 5448 7124 or email: info@nccma.vic.gov.au



Communities Caring for Catchments

Hello everyone,

North Central Waterwatch has received over 20 water samples for the month of April to date, and hopes to receive a further 40 from those with water at their monitoring sites. Sometimes water is not available to test at monitor's sites, however these sites are still recorded as dry in our system, this allows for monitoring trends of flow over a period of time and identifying when, where and why water is absent or present at a site.



On Friday 19 April, I also attended the Loddon Stressed River celebration. It was a great event and good to catch up with some of the regions Waterwatch monitors. In the evening, after listening to Ross Hardie and the River Advocates I launched the River Detectives manual giving a brief presentation as to 'what it's all about'. Tess Grieves, Loddon Stressed River Project Officer, also launched some of the resources that have been developed as a part of the project.

I hope you enjoy reading this Waterwatch update!

Until next time,

Cass Davis

Regional Waterwatch Coordinator
North Central Catchment Management Authority
PO Box 18 Huntly, VIC 3551
Phone: 03 5448 7124



Saltwatch Week 6-12 May

Saltwatch is a very important program that aims to explore the location and amount of salt in our waterways. Saltwatch began in 1987, and is Australia's longest running community monitoring program.

During Saltwatch Week, schools and community water quality monitoring groups from all over Victoria can learn about the effects of salinity on water quality in their local catchment by collecting local water sources and testing the water with a salinity meter to determine the salt content, this is called 'snapshot monitoring'.

'Snapshot monitoring' provides a terrific opportunity to assess the condition of our waterways at a particular point in time. The collaborative efforts of many registered groups creating a picture of salinity across the state can show changes in salinity 'hot spots' over time, illustrate the effects of climatic changes such as drought or floods, and may even pick up long-term trends.

The results collected from over 60 community water quality monitors and River Detective schools in north central Victoria will be entered into the Victorian state-wide database found at: www.vic.waterwatch.org.au

Meet John and Jan Dods

Jan and John both grew up in suburban surroundings and have spent many years bouncing around outback Oz on isolated 4WD trips. When it came time to retire, the couple made a major decision to buy an isolated twenty acre block just north of St. Arnaud.

Jan and John built their solar-powered home with their very own two hands!

"No services come onto or leave our property - that's just how it has to be" says John.

When Jan and John moved to their property they started to join and help many local organisations, finding the most friendly one with similar interests to their own was that of the local Waterwatch group. At the time Mel Barrot (now Mel Watts) was the Waterwatch facilitator for the area. "Mel is probably one of the most congenial young ladies we have ever met and was certainly chosen for the right job," John said.



Right from the start, she ensured that everything ran just smoothly, no-one was left in doubt about anything. They began to look forward to the friendly dinner meetings and QA/QC tests, which reassured them that their results were accurate, despite the fact that there was often little water to see, let alone measure at their sites.

Being a part of Waterwatch gave Jan and John a sense of 'belonging' to the local area, and probably more importantly, contributing something to help declining natural resources.

Jan and John took a break from testing but are now back on board and have noticed the change. "Unfortunately reduced staffing over the last few years means that our lovely and vital co-ordinator is now more than an hour's drive away, making spontaneous visits to chat about possible local problems a rare event."

"Waterwatch is very obviously vital if we are to continue using the ground to make food and ensure many species don't become extinct. The salinity measurements provide an accurate guide as to which land might suffer from future irrigation and just where the problem might originate," John Said.

Thanks Jan and John for your ongoing contribution to the Waterwatch program! It's great to have you both on board!

Courses and resources

Landcare Notes – all of your questions answered!

In case you don't already know, there are 49 Landcare (information) Notes available as pdfs online via the Victorian Landcare Gateway website. These Landcare Notes cover topics such as establishing Landcare groups, planning, communication, project management, committee function and roles, keeping and managing financial records, and recruiting and retaining volunteers. The vast majority of these Notes were finalised in 2010.

See the link on the Landcare Gateway for all the Landcare Notes:

www.landcarevic.net.au/resources/for-groups/notes

TECH savvy farmers can now access information about feral animals through a new smartphone app.

The new Field Guide to Pest Animals of Australia app is the first of its kind and allows users to access the latest information about 31 of Australia's worst pest animals.

Farmers, land managers, local councils, pest controllers and the general public can use the app to control pests such as wild dogs, mice, rabbits, foxes, carp, feral pigs, cane toads, and myna birds.

The Invasive Animals CRC created the tool, which includes descriptions, photo galleries, maps, control techniques and quick links to useful pest control measures.

Other resources available through the app include PestSmart tool kits, FeralScan webmapping, and the feral.org.au website.

NSW Department of Primary Industries project manager Peter West said the app also contained audio calls and photos of footprints, tracks, and droppings, making it a lot easier to quickly identify pest animals in your local area as well as learn about some of the emerging pest animals threatening to agriculture.

Invasive Animals CRC chief executive Andreas Glanznig said Australia had 56 vertebrate pest species costing the economy at least \$1 billion annually.

For more information, email contact@invasiveanimals.com or call (02) 6201 2890.

Funding news

Grants to help communities help the environment

Community Environment Grants of between \$5,000 and \$50,000 are now available from the Australian Government to community groups working to achieve an environment that is healthier, better protected, well managed and resilient. Funding is available to established and emerging groups currently operating in the environmental sector, including Indigenous organisations.

Individuals are not eligible to apply for Community Environment Grants.

Community Environment Grants will assist community-based organisations to contribute to three strategic objectives, under the Sustainable Environment Stream of Caring for our Country:

- Maintenance of ecosystem services, including ecological and cultural values, now and into the future
- Protection of our conservation estate
- Enhanced capacity of Indigenous communities to conserve and protect natural resources

Applications close on Wednesday 8 May 2013

More information: on the Community Environment Grants is available at the Caring for our Country website: www.nrm.gov.au.



2013 Coles Junior Landcare Garden Grants

Since 2008 the Coles Junior Landcare Garden Grants program has been providing grants of up to \$1,000 to schools and youth groups to help create gardens in their grounds or community, such as bush tucker gardens, water wise gardens or veggie gardens.

These programs encourage students to learn about the environment through “outdoor learning” and interaction in developing their own school gardens.

- Round 1: Closed
- Round 2: Friday 10 May, 5pm (AEST)
- Round 3: Friday 2 August, 5pm (AEST)

Please note all applicants will be notified about the outcome of their application via email one month after the round closing date.

To download the application form, guidelines and criteria go to www.juniorlandcare.com.au/grants-2/coles-grant.

All schools, kindergartens, daycare centres, and youth groups (e.g. Scouts) are eligible to apply for a Coles Junior Landcare Garden grant.

Shire of Campaspe Community Grants Program

The first round of Council’s 2013-14 Community Grants program is open now. Applications can be made in the following categories; Assistance; Events; Environment (up to \$2 000); Recreation; Heritage and Culture. Applications close on Friday 10 May 2013. Application forms are available at www.campaspe.vic.gov.au or from Customer Service Centres at Echuca, Rochester, Tongala, Kyabram and Rushworth. If you need assistance with completing the application form contact Allison on 1300 666 535.



The Ian Potter Foundation

The Environment and Conservation program area aims to support Australian urban and regional communities to live sustainably and to preserve biodiversity, in the face of challenges such as land degradation, limited water resources and climate change. There are two streams of grants:

- small grants, up to \$20 000,
- large grants, \$100 000 and over.

The current round of funding closes on Tuesday 28 May 2013. For further information go to www.ianpotter.org.au.

