

North Central chat

MAY 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,

This month I went back to school – twice! On Friday 10 May I headed to Boort P-12 with Anthony Gallacher, Facilitator for the Loddon Plains Landcare Network. We worked together to host a ‘Trees for Mum’ event at the school. It has been a while since I have worked with school kids and to be honest little people can be quite nerve racking! It was great to have Anthony by my side, running the seven sessions so I could find my feet and discover that I do in fact have a teacher’s voice. Our lesson plan focused on trees and salinity with our take home message ‘Trees for Mum are Trees for Everyone’. We didn’t stop all day, teaching kids from prep to year seven - 140 children in total over seven classes. The day was well received by both the students and teachers and the day gave me the confidence and motivation for more forays into classrooms across the region. In fact it has ignited a passion to engage more with schools so they know about the great work you guys do as Landcarers.

A week later I received a call from a teacher at St Liborius Primary School in Eaglehawk. The school was looking for someone to talk about geography and environmental issues. Having survived Boort P-12, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, I said ‘sure, I can come and talk to the kids’. But then I had the realisation, what on earth am I going to talk about? I wanted the session to be interactive, so I put together a lesson around the theme of ‘catchment health’. I talked to the kids for 40 minutes about what a catchment is, what you would find in a catchment, a healthy catchment versus an unhealthy catchment, and salinity. The two sessions were great and the kids had some very interesting answers, especially when I asked them to name some introduced pest animals. I did get some rather creative responses including lion, raccoon and cheetah – I was more so thinking of rabbits and foxes.

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I put the responses down to the kids being avid David Attenborough fans!
Before I sign off I wanted to remind you that the Victorian Landcare awards are open and close on 30 June. If you need help completing a nomination let me know. Also the ‘Supporting Landcare in North Central Victoria 2013 survey’ is also still open. Just head to www.surveymonkey.com/s/2013NorthCentralLandcareSupportSurvey

Take care,

Jodie Odgers

Regional Landcare Coordinator
North Central Catchment Management Authority
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Phone: 03 5448 7124

Weed of the month...

Weeds Identification Guide - North Central Victoria.

Herb

AMSINCKIA

Amsinckia spp.



(Yellow Burr Weed, Buckthorn, Tar weed, Yellow Gromwell)

Description: An erect herb 20-70 cm tall.

Flowers: Bright yellow to orange in small 5 petal trumpets. Usually grouped in a curved spike 5-15 cm long. Flowers appear July to October.

Leaves: Up to 20 cm long and covered in hairy bristles. Rosette and base leaves on short stalks, upper leaves on short stalks, upper leaves clasp the stem.

Stems: Erect and sometimes branched. Covered with hairy bristles.

Note: Highly competitive and a prolific seeder which can significantly reduce cereal crop yields.

Regionally Controlled Weed

Annual



CONTROL OPTIONS



VECTOR OF SPREAD

J F M A* M* J J A S O N D

*Marginal treatment time *Optimum treatment time

News...

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.

For 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.

If you need help nominating a worthy recipient please let me know - I am happy to read over applications. Please send them to me via email jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au or give me a buzz if you would like to discuss a nomination over the phone 03 5440 1883.

Wildlife Exposed at Milloo Photo Workshop

Written by John Childs, Lockington Landcare

More than 20 participants attended the Lockington Family Landcare Group's Annual Photographic Workshop, at Milloo yesterday.

Wildlife photographer David Klienert presented an entertaining package of photographic information. A better understanding of speed/aperture settings; and depth of field technique, enables people to be more creative, rather than becoming programmed to simply use auto settings.



A visit to the nearby Milloo Nature Conservation Reserve yielded twenty different perspectives, of the one Red Gum riparian area. From bright macro views of a flowering Lilliputian world to a collage of desiccated insect corpses and bleached bones.

To see some of the photos taken by participants read about what else the Lockington Landcare group gets up to follow their blog: www.lockylandcare.wordpress.com.

Thanks a million!

National Volunteer Week is Australia's largest celebration of volunteers and volunteerism. Did you know that there are more than six million people volunteering annually in Australia?



"I gain great satisfaction when participating in projects which have a positive impact on the local environment...knowing that I have been able to make a significant contribution to the local landscape for many years into the future."
Greg Ralton, West Marong Landcare group, Landcare Volunteer Since 2000

The North Central CMA along with the other nine CMAs worked together on a marketing campaign to say thank you to the volunteers we work with.

During the week of 13-19 May 2013 North Central CMA profiled six community volunteers from north central Victoria who are involved with Landcare or Waterwatch. Cathy McCallum, Bill Twigg, Greg Ralton, Karolein Klein, Maurie Dynon and Rob Loats all featured on Twitter, Facebook and in print media throughout Volunteer Week, quoting why they volunteer.

The North Central CMA recognises the valuable contribution every volunteer makes across the region. We appreciate the time, effort and passion many of you commit to look after the environment in north central Victoria.



The following article about local farmer, Bill Twigg, featured in the Weekly Times during Volunteer Week.

Rewards from repairing the plains

Forty years ago Bill and Gwen Twigg inherited a treeless farm with declining productivity on the Loddon Plains.

They set about improving the land's condition after sensing that productivity and profitability could be increased by farming in accordance with the land's capability.

The land has been in the Twigg family for over 100 years. Bill now runs a mixed enterprise called Nil Desperandum (never despair), which includes lucerne, sheep and grains.

The largest area of the enterprise is located at Bears Lagoon and Serpentine close to the Loddon River and in recent years has undergone significant transformation. Bill's first challenge was to return perenniality to the landscape.

Bill is a pioneer of lucerne-based pastures; around 80 per cent of the farm is now lucerne-based pasture, mixed with other exotic pastures such as rye and sub-clover, and a variety of other 'palatable weeds'. Native species (mostly Wallaby grasses) comprise about 5 per cent of the pasture.



Bill contends this system, combined with relatively high stocking rates and rotational grazing, has proved successful, with consistently high primary productivity, reliable fodder in dry times, lower watertable, and improved ground cover and soil structure.

Bill and his manager, Russell Walker, fenced off the property on the Loddon River (see picture above) which has become an inspirational case study of how returning the riparian zone to its pre-settlement state can create an oasis for native plants and animals, as well as being enjoyed by countless people. A lot of the farm's revegetation has been done using seed Bill has collected himself.

Bill is known locally as a guru of sustainable farming and takes many opportunities to spread his knowledge and encourage use of sustainable farming practices to other farmers.



Bill regularly provides his time and property to host tours for Landcare groups, showing the positive results of the changes he has made on his farmland - including a self-made wetland (despite the ten years of drought).

Bill is an active member of the Loddon Plains Landcare Network and recently helped reinvigorate the East Loddon Landcare Group out of recess.

'Trees for Mum' a Macedon Ranges tradition

On Sunday 12 May the Macedon Ranges community was out and about celebrating their mums as part of Landcare's national series of Mother's Day tree planting events, ***Trees for Mum***.

Events were held in Woodend, Kyneton and Carlsruhe attracting close to 250 willing planters including families who had come from Melbourne for a family day trip.

Special thanks go to the local Landcarers who put in many long hours to get the planting sites ready for the events and helped on the day.



Three generations of the Raeburn/Doolan family plant at Trees for Mum.

These events were generously funded by the DEPI's Two Million Trees Project, the North Central CMA and the Upper Campaspe Landcare Network.

"Let's hope ***Trees for Mum*** becomes as much as a Mother's Day tradition as the Mother's Day Classic run," commented event organizer Angela Van Dam.

"Mother's Day falls on Sunday 11 May next year so mark it in your diary and join us on Facebook (Trees for Mum Woodend), to keep up with the news" she added.

For further information: www.treesformum.com

Snaps of the month!

On 4 May 2013 the remains of three Aboriginal ancestors were reburied on their home soil after decades in storage at the Museum of Melbourne.



Members of the Yung Balug clan, they died in the mid 19th century, and were handed over to white authorities when they were accidentally dug up near Boort in the 1970s.

The special event was held on Paul Haw's property on the eastern shore of Big Lake Boort. You can view a 2-minute video of the event that was aired on SBS World News Australia at:

www.sbs.com.au/news/video/29005379589/Indigenous-remains-return-home-to-Boort



These photos were taken by Mal Brown, who attended the event.

Don't forget to send me your snaps! Email them to jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au.

Events

World Environment Day - Community Fair

On Sunday 2 June, the Castlemaine Market Building will be full to bursting with stalls, displays and giveaways: everything you could imagine to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly.

There will also be plenty of fun and interactive activities for the young and old...and don't forget to stay on for the Castlemaine Farmers' Market next door in Victory Park.

Date: Sunday 2 June 2013
Time: 10.00 am to 12.30 pm
Venue: Market Building
 44 Mostyn Street, Castlemaine

For more information contact Jay Smith, Mount Alexander Shire Council, phone (03) 5471 1828 or email jay.smith@mountalexander.vic.gov.au

Regenerate pastures for profit - Free on-farm learning session

Landholders who are interested in learning how to regenerate pastures, improve land health and animal performance are encouraged to register for a free 'On-Farm Learning session' at Loddon Vale on Thursday 6 June 2013, 10 am-2 pm.



The day will feature Mr Graeme Hand, who believes that "learning how to develop trials that allow landholders to determine plant recovery and potential perennial grass species mix is part of modern day science for grazing management systems. The learning session will discuss the tools needed to design a low cost, low risk grazing enterprise."

Graeme is Chief Executive Officer of STIPA, Native Grasses Association Inc., and is one of seven Holistic Management Educators in Australia trained through the Savory Institute.

The session will also highlight the achievements of the North Central CMA's 'Loddon Stressed River' project. Mr Jon LeEVERS, North Central CMA Project Manager, said the ten year project is coming to an end and there is much to celebrate. "We are very proud of the project's achievements, which could not have happened without community support and involvement. The property at Loddon Vale is an ideal location to recognise the project's outcomes as the landholders have been part of the project for many years," said Jon.

More information can be found at www.nccma.vic.gov.au with RSVPs due to the North Central CMA on 03 5448 7124 or info@nccma.vic.gov.au by Tuesday 4 June.

Biodiversity Across The Borders - Enhancing ecosystem management and restoration

The fifth one-day *Biodiversity Across the Borders Conference* is on again. With the theme 'Enhancing Ecosystem Management and Restoration', this conference will provide an excellent opportunity for natural resource managers and researchers to learn about new applied research outcomes and ways to communicate your work.

Conference topics will include:

- Large-scale connectivity and biodiversity conservation
- Enhancing resilience; restoration and ecosystem management
- Role of private land and nature reserves in biodiversity conservation

Continued on next page...

The keynote address will be delivered by Professor David Lindenmayer, the Australian National University (ANU) Fenner School of Environment and Society. Additional guest speakers will include Professor Mike Clarke (La Trobe University) and Associate Professor Ian Lunt (Charles Stuart University).

Participants must register to attend. A full itinerary will be forwarded on registration.

Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will be provided.

The conference is jointly hosted by the University of Ballarat, La Trobe University, Deakin University, Victoria University, Charles Sturt University, University of Melbourne, Parks Victoria and other research partners.

Date: Friday 7 June

Time: to be advised on registration

Venue: Mt Helen Campus, University of Ballarat, Ballarat

Cost: Free

For more information or to RSVP contact Dr. S. K. Florentine, University of Ballarat, phone (03) 5327 9231 or email: s.florentine@ballarat.edu.au

Property planning for horse owners

The North Central CMA's Landcare team and the Loddon Stressed River project are teaming up to host a workshop with one of Australia's leading Equine property planners, Mariette van den Berg from MB Equine Services.

The full day workshop will include:

- Current problems in horse keeping & pasture management
- Tools to manage ecosystems
- Property planning and mapping

Whether you manage a few acres or you are an equine industry professional, this event cannot be missed. The workshop has limited places, so please register your interest.



Date: Thursday 20 June

Time: 8:30 am for 9:00 am start

Venue: Eddington Town Hall

Cost: Free

Please RSVP to the North Central CMA on 03 5448 7124 or info@nccma.vic.gov.au by Friday 14 June 2013.

Help something precious take root and flourish in your community

Be part of the country's biggest nature care initiative and tree planting and help Planet Ark reach their goal of planting 20 million seedlings.

You'll be joining thousands of green minded individuals, like yourselves, in making a difference, connecting people with nature, beautifying your neighbourhood and inspiring positive environmental change.

Dig in and register to run a tree planting site or nature-care activity near you. It can be at your local park, your child's school, your office or workplace, a nearby sports field, Scout or Guide Hall or place of worship. Branch out to your community and help nature thrive.

National Tree Day - Sunday 28 July 2013

Schools Tree Day - Friday 26 July 2013

Get Outside and Grow!

Visit www.treeday.planetark.org or call 1300 88 5000 to get started.



Hello and Happy Saltwatch Week Everyone!

Congratulations to Huntly Primary School! On Friday 17 May in Melbourne, the school won the 2013 Victorian Education Excellence Award in the category 'Partnerships with Families and Communities'. \$20,000 accompanies the award.

I am proud to boast that the North Central CMA has played a key role in this achievement through our strong partnership supporting Huntly Primary School and its students through our Waterwatch River Detectives Program and with Bambi Lees through our Indigenous Engagement Program.

Former NRMC member and Jaara Jaara Elder, Uncle Brien Nelson, also contributed to the cultural component of the community partnership. The other significant partners are Northern Bendigo Landcare Group and DEECD's Koorie Engagement Officer.



The following text is from the Education Department website re the announcement:

"Huntly Primary School is proud of its exciting partnership between the school, families, local businesses, Aboriginal people, North Central

Catchment Management Authority and the Northern Bendigo Landcare Group. Huntly has a large number of Aboriginal students and is a leader in sustainability education. The Landcare group involves the school in many revegetation, weed control, and rare plant species propagation projects. The biggest project involving Aboriginal studies is the restoration of Bendigo Creek. These projects have improved Huntly's Aboriginal student's connectedness to culture and school and improved their self-esteem. One of the greatest indicators of success is the engagement and well being of students."

Congratulations to all involved in this award winning partnership.

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

Watching the Water

When will it rain? This month I received an email from one of our dedicated monitors, Frank. Frank was heading off on holidays and was concerned about not being home to monitor his site for the month of May. I decided to go out and conduct the testing so Frank could relax and enjoy his holiday - no need to worry about missing a monthly test at the site.

Frank's site has been dry for a while now, but armed with my kit I headed off to Frank's three monitoring sites on Bullock Creek. As I approached the first, what did I find - no water, that's OK, maybe the next site will have some water. Nope no water at the second site either. Hmm, it's not looking good! No water to test, it would seem the lack of rain of late has left Frank's sites dry for yet another month.

This is a bit disappointing but it is just as important to collect this information. Why you might ask? Well in five years from now we might want to plant some trees along the creek. Before doing this though it is important to know what the flow of the river is doing. For example: is it a high flow, low flow, no flow or over bank flow? These are all important pieces of information.



Frank's monitoring of these sites, even when dry, can tell us about the historical patterns of the creek. These patterns can help to determine the types of plants we should be planting, where to plant them and of course when to plant them. So the moral of the story is even if your river or creek dries up, it is still really important collect this information and report it on the Waterwatch Data Management System.

River Detectives Get Wet

Saltwatch Week 6-12 May

It was a pleasure to travel around the region recently and visit our *River Detectives* schools again, this time to take a 'salinity snapshot' during Saltwatch Week.

Over 250 students from eight schools took part this year, many with fond memories of participating in previous years, and some excited to be participating for the first time.



The session started with a general chat about salinity and I was impressed with students' prior knowledge about the issue. It was great to realise that the *River Detectives* program is an integral part of a broader environmental education program in many of the *River Detectives* schools and students have a great understanding of a wide variety of environmental issues.

We then delved a little deeper into the salinity issue and ventured underground whilst watching the "Fresh and Salty" DVD, a very engaging animation that everyone enjoyed. Students were quick to grasp the reason why salinity was represented in the DVD by a salt monster,

explaining that both lurk in dark places, both try to cause harm and both can be deadly.

Students were asked to bring along a sample of water from home for the Saltwatch session and we had a great variety of samples to test; from dams, rivers, creeks, bores, channels, tanks and taps. Students got busy with EC meters and soon detected the salinity reading of their sample. Within ten minutes we had developed a snapshot of salinity in their area, most students glad to discover their sample had either a low or moderate salinity reading.

To enable students to put themselves in the shoes of our flora and fauna, we did some salt testing. Four mystery samples were provided and students dipped cotton buds to taste each one, given the challenge of ordering the samples from least salty to most salty. Interesting sound effects were a feature of this part of the session as students reacted to some of the saltier samples – some vying for a Logie award with their rendition of a dying frog or fish!

This activity helped make the issue 'real' for students and a quick reflection of the session revealed that students had developed some important understandings; that salt is a natural part of our environment, that when our environment is healthy salinity isn't a problem, that upsetting the balance (removing vegetation or over-watering) causes salinity issues with many knock-on effects and most importantly, that we can all play a valuable part in preventing salinity.

Thanks to the *River Detectives* schools for their ongoing enthusiasm for the program. It's been great working with you!

One of the many faces of Waterwatch

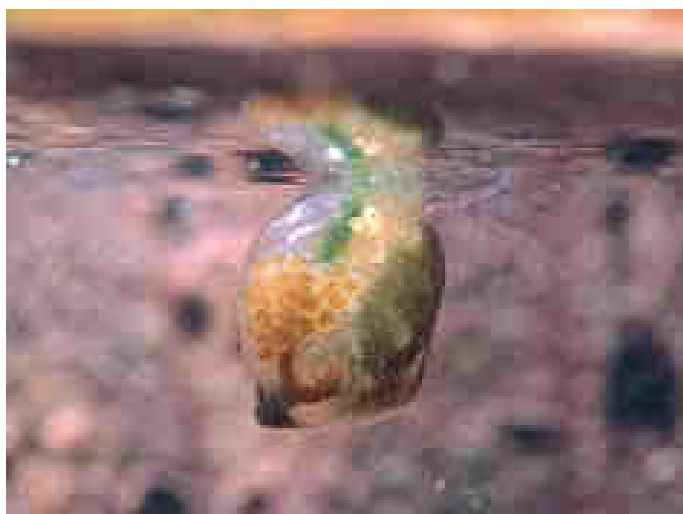


8th Waterbug Workshop - 10-12 July 2013

This course is an introduction to the taxonomic identification of freshwater invertebrates. The water bug guys running the workshop say it is for people who are Bug-nerds!

But of course community volunteers, natural resource managers, prospective and new Honours and PhD students, trained professionals in need of a refresher course, environmental health officers, EPA officers, naturalists, and fishermen who would like to find out more about this fascinating group of animals are also welcome.

The workshop will take place at the Zoology Laboratories Monash University in Melbourne. Course material will be provided although it is asked that you bring your own bugs.



And if that isn't enough bugging around...

Try 'Death by Bugs' on Tuesday 9 July 2013 - a day of intense bug-learning. Bring bugs you are struggling to identify and the experts will help you with them. Death by Bugs is the quickest way to get your bug knowledge back in shape (if you haven't had practise for a while), or to capitalise on expert knowledge if you have a back-log of unknown beasts in a draw in the lab ...and you really want names for them.

...you can do both the Waterbug workshop *and* Death by Bugs.

For more information and how to register check the www.waterbug.net

Courses and resources

Talented Tiny Towns presents *Thinking Differently about our Communities*

A Training Workshop for Voluntary Community Groups and Associations will be held on Tuesday 11 June at The Capital theatre, View Street, Bendigo.

This workshop is designed for Small Town and Neighbourhood Plan Groups and, other volunteer community groups. It will provide the opportunity for participants to recognise and build the talents in their community and inspire them to bring others on board and make their ideas a reality.

This innovative workshop will be conducted by mother and daughter team, Jan and Lisa Smith.

Spread the wisdom, share the learning and skills. Bring a team from your community!

Workshop Program - There are a lot of talented people in our communities who can make real change happen if they have the skills to generate ideas and to turn them into realities. This session will include:

- How to have ideas
- How to work together to turn ideas into actions
- How to engage the community at large
- An open sharing of ideas, knowledge and skills

Workshop Goals - To equip participants with:

- The skills to work together and think differently
- To develop connections across the community to help each other
- To see our own communities from a different perspective
- To develop new ideas own communities from a different perspective and have some new ideas

There will be two session times:

Session 1 - Tuesday 11 June 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Session 2 - Tuesday 11 June 7:00pm – 9:00 pm

For further information or to register contact Lyn Talbot on (03) 5434 6148 or email strategyunit@bendigo.vic.gov.au

Mount Alexander Volunteer Network - Marketing Tools 101

Help strengthen your marketing plan by gaining skills in key design and promotion tools. Learn how basic graphic design, website design, using Facebook and creating e-newsletters can help spread the word about your community group, cause or event. Basic computer skills required. Training is customised for the community sector and includes tips, templates and pointers in how to maximise your marketing results.

Two sessions per topic with hands-on homework will allow you to put your newly acquired skills to test. You can pick and choose individual topics.

Wednesdays from 6:00 - 8:30 pm at Continuing Education, Templeton Street, Castlemaine. Cost is \$25 for two sessions with light supper provided. To book please email: mavn@outlook.com.

Facebook for marketing 101 - includes creating ads, events, increasing your audience and exposure and building an on-line community 3 July and 10 July.

Graphic Design 101 - learn basic skills in designing posters, brochures and flyers including how to find and use online templates and resources 17 July and 24 July.

E-newsletters 101 - use free online programs to create eye-catching newsletters, monitor their effectiveness and manage your contact lists 31 July and 7 August

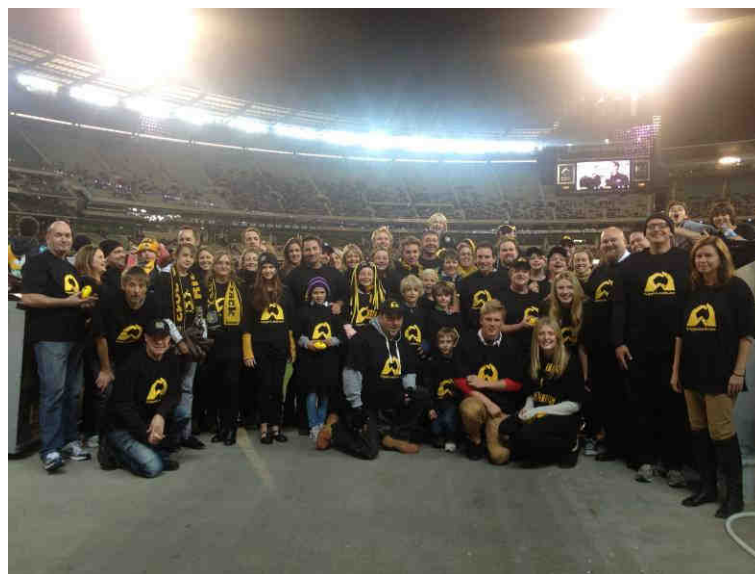
Websites 101 - learn how to create your own website and understand the basics of good online design and content 14 August and 21 August

The Community Training Program is funded by the Department of Planning & Community Development and the Mount Alexander Shire Council.

Funding news

Richmond FC Landcare grant now available

Richmond Football Club and Landcare are once again offering a grant to support Landcare groups to achieve positive outcomes for sustainable landscapes, healthy waterways and connected communities.



The grant of up to \$5000 (+GST) is available to a Landcare group or Landcare Network operating in Victoria, or an organisation that is linked or sponsored by Landcare.

This is a great opportunity to get a meaningful project off the ground, and to also engage young people who are the next generation of Landcarers.

To find out more about the grant, or to check if you're eligible, view the guidelines and application forms on the Richmond Football Club website: www.richmondfc.com.au/news/2013-05-15/richmond-landcare-grant-available

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 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.