

North Central chat

JUNE 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,

As June draws to an end so does the financial year. This is always a busy time in terms of reporting but it is always a great opportunity to reflect on what we have been able to achieve and deliver in 2012-13. And looking back over the last twelve months, it has been a lot. We have covered lots of ground, presenting on a wide variety of topics and engaging people of all ages - thank you to everyone for your support and your attendance!

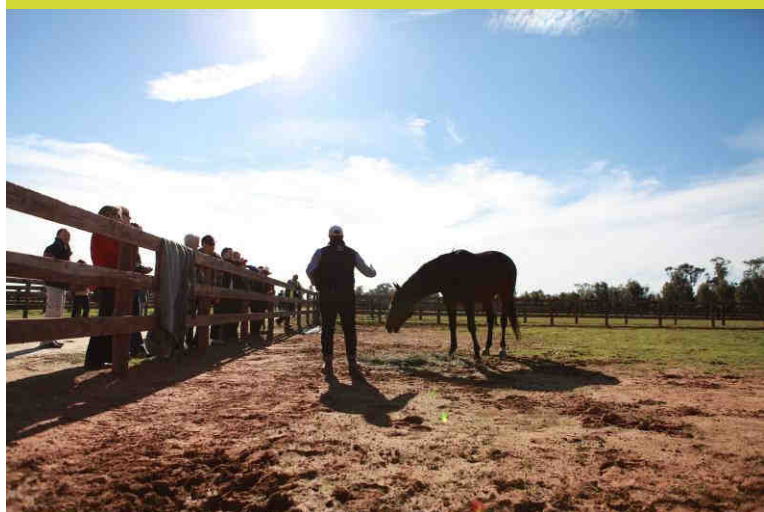
The last event for this financial year was training for the State Government funded Landcare Facilitators. We were put through our paces with Sue Downie in her 'Info out' workshop. The two-day media training workshop has been a great opportunity for the facilitators to hone their writing skills when it comes to flyers and media releases and practise radio interviews - not the easiest medium to master!

Last week I worked with Tess Grieves, Loddon Stressed River Project Officer, to host an Equine Property Planning Workshop in Eddington. Twenty five people participated in the one day workshop facilitated by Mariette van den Berg from MB Equine Services. The day was broken into three sections: a theory session on property planning, a site visit to Three Bridges Thoroughbreds Stud and a practical property planning exercise using maps where participants put into practice what they had learnt throughout the day.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognise an outstanding achievement by a Landcarer in our patch. Kate Redwood received a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the community of Victoria. Kate has been a board member for Mackillop Family Services, a director of State Trustees, a City of Melbourne and now Hepburn Shire councillor, as well as Executive

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Director of the Victorian Red Cross and the Director of Hepburn Wind. She is also a highly valued member of the Friends of Cornish Hill - Congratulations Kate!

Last but not least we are calling for applications for the 2013-14 Victorian Landcare Grants. More information can be found in the Funding News section of the newsletter. I am happy to discuss any project ideas - just make sure you do it soon. Applications close Monday 22 July 2013.

Take care,

Jodie Odgers

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



Weed of the month...

Weeds Identification Guide - North Central Victoria.

Herb

HOARY CRESS

Lepidium draba (formerly *Cardaria draba*)



(White Weed, Hoary Pepperwort, White Top, Whitlow Pepperwort)

Description: An erect herb 15-75 cm tall.

Flowers: White, 4-6 mm diameter and contains 4 petals. Clustered at the top of the plant. Appear September to November.

Leaves: Covered with fine hairs, lower leaves to 10 cm oval or wedge shaped and short stalked. Upper leaves smaller and stem clasping.

Stems: Erect, branched near top, covered with fine downy hairs. Longitudinally ridged.

Note: Can significantly reduce crop yields. Difficult to control and spreads by seed and root fragments.

Restricted Weed



CONTROL OFFICES:

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

Annual



VICTORIAN BREAD

News...

Join the search for Australia's finest feral photos!

The Invasive Animals CRC (IA CRC) is once again searching for your photographs of pest or 'feral' animals. They are looking for photos showing pest animals living in the wild, the damage caused by pest animals, and also photos that demonstrate the various methods that are available for pest monitoring and humane control.

Vertebrate pest animals occur in all parts of Australia, causing major damage to crops and agriculture, native wildlife, bushland, rivers and waterways, and even sporting fields and beaches. There are increasing reports of pest problems in urban zones especially due to foxes, rabbits and feral cats. This is the third year that Feral Photos has run, in an effort to raise community awareness about pest animals. Images from past competitions have been highly sought after for major publications and promotional material, as they help illustrate the damage pest animals cause across the country.

National NRM Facilitator for the IA CRC, Jessica Marsh, hopes the photo competition will remind landholders, environmental staff, volunteers and members of the public about the widespread presence of pests and the importance of keeping a record of pest animal sightings and damage. "I hope the competition encourages people to get out there and see what is happening in their environment and to get creative about how they can capture photographic evidence of pest animals in their area."





Entries into this year's competition can be submitted online via the Invasive Animals CRC website. There is a limit of five (5) photo entries per person and a range of great prizes will be on offer. Visit the website for more information: www.invasiveanimals.com/feral-photos. The competition closes on 30 September 2013.

For more information, contact Jessica Marsh at: jessica.marsh@dpi.nsw.gov.au or on 0400 586 060.

Subscribe to their newsletters: 'NRM Notes' (quarterly newsletter aimed at regional NRMs and pest managers) and 'FeralFlyer' (fortnightly e-newsletter of the Invasive Animals CRC) at: www.invasiveanimals.com/media-centre/subscribe/

A word from Bob from Bendigo about being a Conservation Volunteer

Conservation Volunteers (CV) is a not-for-profit organisation engaging over 10,000 volunteers each year throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Their mission is to attract and manage volunteers from the Australian and World communities to participate in projects that protect or enhance our environment and heritage.

On a local level, Conservation Volunteers Bendigo Office delivers weekly conservation projects throughout central Victoria, including tree planting, weed removal, fencing, track maintenance and flora and fauna surveying.

Local volunteer, Bob Kemp, 63, says *"I volunteer two days a week for CV and I love the fresh air, exercise and companionship it gives me. We get around visiting beautiful places you've never been before. The sites are not that far from Bendigo but without CV you'd never experience them."*

"It's a great way to spend a day, and there's only so much you can do around the house before you get bored. CV gives me lots and lots of laughs as well!"

CV enjoys some partnerships including with the North Central CMA, Parks Victoria, DEPI, the City of Greater Bendigo Council, Hepburn Shire Council, Coliban Water and Connecting Country.



So if you like the outdoors, want to put your good practical skills to use and like having a great time, CV would like to hear from you!

Please contact Adam Smolak at CV on 03 54440777 or 0427 507 004 or email Adam at asmolak@conservationvolunteers.com.au

Free transport departs 420 Hargreaves Street Bendigo at 8.15am and returns at 3.30pm Monday to Friday. Choose to volunteer for a day or as long as you like.

Codfather 4? - 'Cod Squad' puts the mighty Murray Cod on film

Department of Environment and Primary Industries Media Release, 18 June 2013

Researchers from the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI) are using video to assess the effectiveness of putting habitat for native fish back into rivers across Victoria.

ARI fish ecologist Jarod Lyon said: "In recent years catchment management authorities have been putting snags back into our waterways to assist our threatened native fish species including the iconic Murray Cod (*Maccullochella peelii peelii*)."

"We know that in-stream woody habitat is important for a range of native fish species but we want to assess how they are being used by the different species so we can provide better guidance to river managers on maintaining snags," Mr Lyon said.

“We are using underwater GoPro cameras to film fish species such as Murray Cod, Trout Cod (*Maccullochella macquariensis*), and Yellowbelly, when they are at the snags so we can learn more about their behaviour and their needs.”

“We know these big native fish species often hide, feed and breed around submerged logs, and the loss of this habitat through past management practices, including the removal of snags, has contributed to them becoming threatened right across their range.”

“However, details such as how much wood is required, what types of streams and which fish communities use the snags still require further investigation.”

“Some of the videos we have taken so far include close-ups of the fish swimming as well as a young prey fish swimming out of the mouth of a big Murray Cod after they had been held in a live-well waiting to be measured, weighed and tagged. Two of the videos can be viewed at www.flickr.com/photos/dsevictoria/sets/72157629325311825/

“We are also assessing the health of the native fish population at the sites we are visiting to add to our knowledge about the role played by snags in maintaining or enhancing fish numbers, particularly for large-bodied fish like the Murray Cod and Trout Cod.”

“Our native fish play a significant role in maintaining healthy ecosystems in our rivers and creeks so this work will increase our knowledge of these fish as well as contributing to a healthier waterway.”

The Victorian Government has a responsibility under the *Wildlife Act 1975* and the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* to protect threatened species. These animals and plants contribute significantly to the biodiversity of their ecosystems. The knowledge we acquire about these species helps us to then take the on-ground steps needed to ensure their survival.

Do You Have Members Aged Over 85?

The Farm Tree & Landcare Association (FTLA) has been in ongoing discussions with the insurance companies regarding the ages of members covered by the voluntary workers insurance. They are currently trying to extend the coverage to volunteers aged over 85 years but they need more information in order to negotiate effectively.

If your group is a member of the FTLA and has members aged over 85, please let Suzie at the FTLA know - ftla@vff.org.au

Letting them know that you have no members over 85 years of age is a helpful answer too!

It is time to renew your FTLA membership

The 2013/14 renewal notices have been sent out along with the 2012/13 membership lists for your amendment. Payment is due on 30 June to take effect 1 July 2013. Please let FTLA know if you haven't received your renewal notice.

If your Group intends to conduct Landcare activities during 2013/14 FTLA urges you to renew your membership. The FTLA insurance cover continues with the three important policies:

- Public & Product Liability Insurance
- Voluntary Workers Insurance
- Associations Liability Insurance (i.e. Office Bearers, Professional Indemnity etc)

Any alternative insurance arrangements made by groups should cover these three policies for the security of office bearers and members.

If you need electronic copies emailed to you, or if the group's contact details have changed please get in touch with Suzie at the FTLA ftla@vff.org.au.





Snap of the month!

Although this photo wasn't taken in north central Victoria I couldn't resist including it as 'snap of the month'. The photo was taken by Jim Greenwood, down Frankston way. The nesting boxes were put up in a reserve almost two years ago and are now home to this gorgeous little family of Boobooks – a great result!



The Southern Boobook is the smallest and most common owl in Australia. Like other owl species, it is nocturnal and often observed perched on an open branch or tree-top.

Boobooks feed on insects and small mammals. They normally nest in tree hollows (or a nest box-like the example above).

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

Events

Food Futures – Victoria 2020

The Centre for Rural Regional Law and Justice at Deakin University invites you to participate in a **free** rural law forum discussing the future of food production in Victoria on **Wednesday 3 July from 10:30 am to noon**.

This forum will be video-conferenced to 13 locations across Victoria with opportunities for comments and questions.

Hosted from Melbourne, this forum will be video-conferenced to locations in Geelong, Ballarat, Bairnsdale, Bendigo, Craigieburn, Dandenong, Horsham, Morwell, Portland, Rosebud, Shepparton, Swan Hill and Warrnambool.

Panel members include:

Graeme Ford, Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Farmers Federation

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is the largest state farmer organisation in Australia, representing over 10,000 members who live and work on more than 6,000 farm businesses situated across Victoria.

Kathy McConell, Food Alliance Coordinator, Population Health Strategic Research Centre

The Food Alliance is working to achieve a food system that ensures sustainable food security and healthy eating for the Victorian population.

Ron Prestidge, Executive Director - Future Farming Systems Research, Department of Environment & Primary Industries

Felicity Millner, Principal Solicitor, Environment Defenders Office

The Environment Defenders Office is an independent, not-for-profit, community legal service, specialising in public interest environmental law.

Lisa Cain, Active Living Officer, Heart Foundation

Lisa works with local government to introduce the principles of food-sensitive planning and urban design and healthy by design.

To book:

www.eventbrite.com.au/event/6852751765#

For further information: <http://ow.ly/IWyaG>

Come along to this interactive Q & A style panel discussion. Questions will be welcome from all sites during the forum. You are encouraged to let the organisers know in advance if you have a specific question you would like to ask by emailing: crrlj@deakin.edu.au.

Pull out your trusty shovel - it's time for National Tree Day

On Sunday 28 July, 2013 enthusiastic community members all over Australia will be slipping on a pair of gloves and pulling out their trusty shovel to head along to their local National Tree Day site.

Longlea and District Landcare Group is hosting a National Tree Day site at the Longlea Recreation Reserve, Longlea. Over 400 native grasses, shrubs and trees will be supplied to revegetate an area along Axe Creek, an important watercourse that feeds into the Campaspe River. This revegetation will not only help compete with encroaching introduced pasture grasses, improve biodiversity and beautify the surrounding landscape; it will also enhance past revegetation and weed control works the group has previously undertaken.

Anyone is welcome to come along on the day. Meet at the Longlea Recreation Reserve at 10:00am and walk down to the revegetation site at the back of the oval. Whilst planting the group will be chatting about the local flora and fauna and answering any questions that you may have about the environment and/or your properties. Following the planting activity, the day will conclude with a BBQ lunch and presentation.

When: Sunday 28 July 2013.
Where: Longlea Recreation Reserve, Longlea Lane
Time: 10 am to 12 noon
What to bring: Drinking water, gloves, shovel/mattock, appropriate footwear, clothing for working outdoors and plenty of enthusiasm.
Please RSVP for catering purposes. Register your interest at:
<http://treeday.planetark.org/site/10000051>

Or contact the Secretary Paul Somerville - write to c/- Post Office Junortoun 3551 or email ps.kh@bigpond.com

Longlea & District Landcare Group offers any new or existing members a free property visit to listen, discuss and offer recommendations with any environmental enquiries you may have. The group consists of expertise in a range of fields and can offer advice on gardening, dangerous trees, pest flora and fauna identification, control and eradication, fencing off waterways or areas of significance, native animal identification and revegetating with local native species.

Landcare Groups and the Law

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and the Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH) are coming to Bendigo.

Session 1: ACNC (free)

The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) is holding a free forum in Bendigo during August titled 'What does it mean for my charity?'

The ACNC is the new independent national regulator of charities, which opened its doors in December 2012. Come along to a detailed information session to find out what the new regulator means for your charity. This session is intended to help you understand in more detail: Why the ACNC and what will it do for your charity?; the key things you need to know to comply with the new ACNC Act; and how you can get more help for your charity.

Date: Tuesday 6 August
Time: 9:30pm - 12:30pm
Venue: Latrobe Visual Arts Centre
 121 View Street
 Bendigo VIC 3550

Session 2: PILCH Training session (\$50 per organisation)

PilchConnect lawyers with extensive experience in advising not-for-profit community groups will run a training session on the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* - a legal update.

The *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* commenced on 26 November 2012 and affects all Victorian Incorporated Associations. In plain language and with practical examples relevant to your organisation, the training session will explain what the changes are, how they will affect your organisation and what, practically, your organisation needs to know and do to respond to the changes.

Date: Tuesday 6 August
Time: 12:30pm - 3:30pm
Venue: Latrobe Visual Arts Centre
 121 View Street
 Bendigo VIC 3550

Lunch is included in the PILCH session



Hello Everyone!

On Wednesday 19 June 2013, I had the opportunity to head out to Eaglehawk North Primary School (ENPS) with Bambi Lees, Indigenous Facilitator at the North Central CMA. Bambi was invited to come and talk about native plant foods – Bush Tucker.



The 80 grade 3-4 students were all captivated by Bambi as she talked passionately about the Kulin nation (language groups of Victoria) and a word that is commonly used for language groups 'Wurrung' explaining that this means 'of the lips', Bambi also discussed with the students how Indigenous people communicated to understand the land, yourself and each other; "knowledge was passed on through dance, art (rock paintings) and telling stories," she explained.

Bambi then went on to discuss bush tucker, talking about different berries that you can and can't eat and different animals that can be eaten. She spoke about how food was preserved using smoking techniques and how it was the women's job to take children and teach them about the

food collection and preparation. ENPS students asked Bambi lots of great questions about bush tucker and were excited to learn that Bambi might come back later in the year to walk them through the Greater Bendigo National Park and teach them more about bush tucker!

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 in north central Victoria

Waterwatch plays a role in understanding the balance of ecological functions in natural resource management (NRM). Providing scientific information about the patterns of our waterways, the health of the water and provides an insight into changes long-term.

Water quality health is dependent on the surrounding catchment land use, poor water quality can be a result of long-term irrigation leaching nutrients and phosphorus into waterways, and it can come from direct stock access to waterways or from urbanization, where runoff from our streets directly impacts on our waterways.

It is always a little bit dangerous in the scientific world to categorise isolated data as being 'good', 'bad' or 'average'. Ideally, you need to build up a comprehensive long-term data set in order to make assessments on what's happening within an aquatic system. Therefore, it is recommended that assumptions for water quality should not be made based on any one particular data 'grab'.

Some general guidelines have been developed as they relate to each parameter. This can help to identify where long-term data sits in terms of general water quality. These guidelines have been developed by North Central Waterwatch and are based on:

- State Environment Protection Policies Waters of Victoria (SEPP WoV), Environmental Protection Authority, Victoria.

- Australian & New Zealand Environment Conservation Council (ANZECC) Water Quality Guidelines (1992).
- Historical water quality data in the North Central region, developed by North Central Waterwatch.

Due to the diversity of environmental conditions, even within north central Victoria, the SEPP *WoV* and ANZECC have deliberately assessed waterways in segments. For example the upper catchments are separated from the lower catchments and are broken into these segments for the purpose data analysis in our region.

For more information about water quality or how to access data please call the North Central CMA on 03 5448 7124.



Frogging around in cold...

You may be wondering ‘*where have all the frogs gone?*’ It’s so cold outside!

Well some ‘froggy’ detective work has led us to believe that most frogs from all around the world will go into a state of *torpor* during winter. Torpor is a state of decreased physiological activity in an animal, usually by a reduced body temperature and the rate of metabolism (source: Wikipedia).

It seems that frogs will go into this state in areas where they are protected from the elements of our extremely cold weather patterns and hide out underground, under debris and if you’re lucky enough you might even find them in your compost just waiting for the warmth of the spring sun to shine.

Frogs that you might be lucky enough to see or hear croaking around your garden during July include: Common Froglets, Common Spadefoot Toads, Pobblebonks, Southern Brown Tree Frogs, Spotted Marsh Frogs, Striped Marsh Frogs and Whistling Tree Frogs.

If you hear these frogs it’s a great idea to try and keep a record of what you are hearing and when. Try recording their calls on your phone and matching the calls up with the calls that are available on our website to identify the frog. Pretty soon you will find yourself discovering the wonderful world of frogs, and you too will be a ‘froggy’ detective!

For more information go to:
www.nccma.vic.gov.au

Coliban Water gets schools water efficient

Written by Rob Krober

The Department of Environment and Primary Industries is currently rolling out the second phase of a Schools Water Efficiency Program (SWEP) - a water saving initiative for Victorian schools.

A water audit and installation of water efficient appliances was the focus of the first phase of this program which was completed two years ago.

The second phase aims to provide schools with data loggers which monitor water use on a day-to-day basis. The data is converted to graphs which visualise consumption trends during the course of each day.

Undetected water leaks have been identified in several schools currently participating in the program resulting in preventing unnecessary water wastage and making significant cost savings for the schools.

A curriculum package has also been developed to guide teachers utilising the data in the classroom.

An event was recently conducted at Big Hill Primary School in Bendigo to formally launch SWEP in regional Victoria. By the end June 2013 more than 15 schools in the region serviced by Coliban Water had already registered for the program.

More information can be found on the website
www.myswep.com.au

Courses and resources

Bowerbird

BowerBird is a social, web-based, biological sandpit - where everyone can come and play.

You can add your own sightings and have the sighting information integrated with national and international databases (www.bowerbird.org.au). The site is a great resource through Museum Victoria, CSIRO and Atlas of Living Australia.

Bowerbird is a socially networked, web-based, community, biodiversity workspace for Australia, and anyone is welcome to participate. It is hoped that it will be used by individuals, citizen scientists, amateur and professional science-based Organisations and Societies and Field Naturalists clubs. Its strength will be a single point of entry for biological communication and sharing.

The primary aims of BowerBird are:

- To share and deliver biological sightings to a broad audience
- To allow individuals, local, state or national groups to form, manage and develop their own workspaces
- To encourage comment and forum discussions on sightings or topics
- To aggregate a minimum dataset (eg. Name, location, latitude/longitude) that will allow sightings to be shared nationally and internationally (ALA, GBIF, EOL etc)
- To become the community's eyes for Biosecurity that will detect or monitor invasive species.

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 pm - 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.

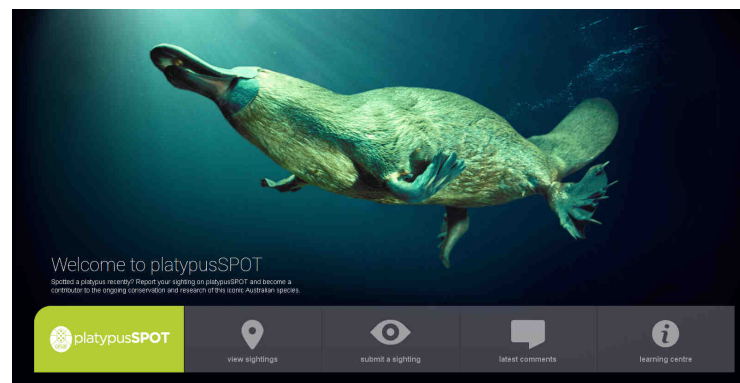
E-newsletters 101 - use free online programs to create eye-catching newsletters, monitor their effectiveness and manage your contact lists 31 July and 7 August

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 and Community Development and the Mount Alexander Shire Council.

platypusSPOT

Spotted a platypus recently? Report your sighting on platypusSPOT (www.platypusspot.org) and become a contributor to the ongoing conservation and research of this iconic Australian species.



Platypuses, like most Australian wildlife, are potentially impacted by a range of human-induced changes to their environment. Although protected in Australia, platypuses are currently regarded as 'a species of least concern' by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. This is largely because the overall distribution of platypuses has not changed significantly since the European settlement of Australia. However, anecdotal evidence indicates there have been some localised declines and extinctions, but empirical data is poor due the difficulties in conducting surveys and the lack of long-term studies on platypus populations.

Why your help is important

Understanding the occurrence and distribution of a species is essential for effective management and conservation. Local knowledge is an invaluable source of information, which is often overlooked in ecological studies. Many potentially useful observations of platypuses are made by local residents, workers, tourists, fishermen, campers, hikers/bushwalkers and general outdoor recreationists. platypusSPOT offers wildlife enthusiasts an opportunity to contribute to a community-driven database on platypus distribution, post photos and videos, view platypus sightings in your area, and interact with other 'platypusSPOTters'. This information can then be used to help assess the status of platypuses and develop appropriate conservation strategies.

Funding news

Victorian Landcare Grants 2013-14 - 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 2013-14.

The Victorian Landcare Grants Program continues to have an emphasis on building community capacity. The program is designed to fund projects that enable NRM community groups, networks and their volunteers to undertake effective on-ground works to protect and restore the Victorian landscape.

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

- Mobilise community volunteers and encourage community action
- Positively influence the management practices of private landholders
- Build 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 22 July 2013

For further information or to download the application forms and guidelines, visit the Landcare page on the North Central CMA website:

www.nccma.vic.gov.au/Land/Landcare/Grants/index.aspx.

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.