



North Central chat

NOVEMBER 2017

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

I have no idea how we got to November so fast, but alas here we are surviving through the spring hatchings, hay fever and harvest preparations.

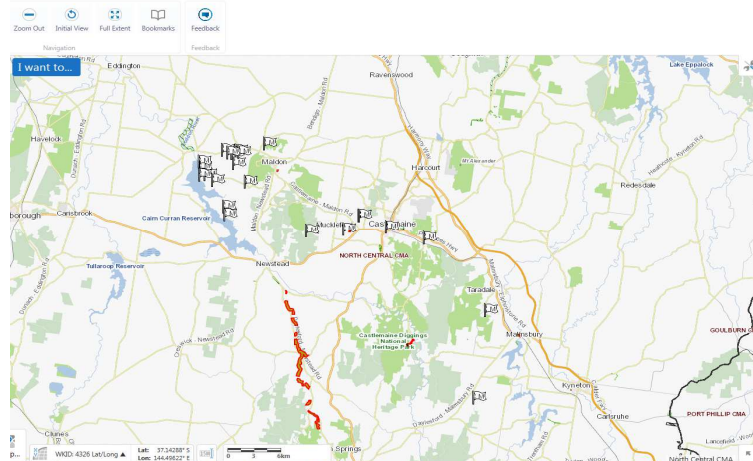
During October, I had the pleasure of getting out and about, attending the Landcare Victoria Inc. Forum and visiting Landcare group events. I thoroughly enjoyed the amazing schools learning day that Friends of Cornish Hill hosted, Margie Thomas has written a wonderful article about the day in this edition. It was such a great reminder of how important and lasting the environmental experiences are during primary years. Students were thrilled to see their previous planting days efforts had survived and were so engaged in new activities including bird nest building and insect artwork- creative play at its finest!

The 1080 online training course I advertised last month has been low on interest however it was a very useful process in understanding the need for more Chemical Users Courses. 1080 Training requires the participant to have already completed a chemical user course and hold a valid Agricultural Chemical Users Permit (ACUP). After several enquiries, I will be running Chemical Users Courses for those interested in 2018 to meet the needs and upskill new and emerging weed warriors.

Mapping workshops hosted with Connecting Country's Landcare Facilitator Asha Bannon were also great hands-on, practical sessions. Small groups allowed for individual needs to be addressed and users were able to identify issues, suggest improvements and map both their current community grant achievements and any other work that their Landcare group has undertaken. If you're interested in learning more about the NRM Historical Map which the CMA has created for Landcare use, please get in touch. You

This Month's Contents:

News	2
Events	8
Course & Resources	9
Funding News	10



can see the efforts of the last few years of entered data via iMap's Landcare layer:

<http://map.nccma.vic.gov.au/external/?viewer=public>

In this edition please note the '*Funding News*' section for information on Phase 2- National Landcare Program Small Grant opportunities which are open now and very applicable to landcare groups.

Enjoy the read,

Tess Grieves

Regional Landcare Coordinator

North Central Catchment Management Authority

Phone: 03 5448 7124

Email: tess.grieves@nccma.vic.gov.au



News...

Hitting the headlines

The Herald Sun (Sept. 28) featured a north central Victorian we know and love, the elusive Plains wanderer. Parks Victoria science manager Mark Antos discussed the recent sightings in the Terrick Terrick National Park.

Having not been seen in over a year of counts in the Terricks grasslands, it was reported that two males and a nest of four eggs were found during the survey, indicating successful breeding in 2017.

Northern Plains Conservation Management Network and Friends of Terrick Terrick National Park newsletters and updates have reported that future knowledge of the sites inhabitants will be aided by a \$48,000 Victorian Government funded Biodiversity On-ground Action Grant for managing land for Plains Wanderer. The project includes sound monitoring, using audio equipment to monitor for female Plains Wanderer birds.

“A recent ranking based on evolutionary uniqueness and level of threat listed this bird as number one in Australia and globally it is the fourth most endangered,” Mr Antos said.

Parks Victoria continue to work with landholders on the grazing regime and management of the grasslands, given the birds renowned ‘fussiness’ when it comes to the density of grassland habitat deemed suitable for breeding.

For full article and some gorgeous images visit: <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/near-extinct-plains-wanderer-bird-seen-for-the-first-time-in-more-than-a-year/news-story/03223ba3bb95293fc9c4e18aef004cfc>

Wirro-lo; the welcoming wetlands

North Central CMA’s Environmental Water Manager Louissa Rogers was thrilled to announce that growling grass frogs were heard this week at Wirra-Lo wetlands complex, located between Kerang and Swan Hill.

Wetland monitoring ecologist, Damien Cook, was camping at the Wirra-Lo wetland complex and recorded at least two male growling grass frog.

Louissa explains “We had feared that we had potentially lost the meta population of this

Landcare Victoria Inc forum

The Landcare Victoria Inc. North Central Founm was held October 6-8 in Stuart Mill, attended by 55 people who enjoyed visiting plenty of hidden gems along the way.

Friday was warm and welcoming, with guests arriving at Camp Seed, grabbing a bunk bed and a cuppa before getting to know their fellow Landcarers who had travelled from across the state to attend.

‘Listening Posts’ were set up, with pre-determined topics for facilitated discussion which people were able to join in as they arrived. Topics included; funding-thinking outside the square; Indigenous partnerships in Landcare and succession planning in Landcare.

A stunning Welcome to Country was then performed by Dja Dja Wurrung representative Rebecca Phillips, followed by dinner and guest speaker from Newham Landcare, Penny Roberts, discussing ‘Keeping Groups Vital -the social side of Landcare’.

Saturday morning was kicked off with LVI presentations focusing on the needs for ‘representativeness’ at all levels of Landcare which generated great discussion and awareness of LVI’s role and the upcoming opportunities for grass roots landcarers to get involved in the organisation.

Highlights from Saturday’s field trip included the Tottington Woolshed, Rob Yule’s blue mallee plantations, St Arnaud grey grass tree enclosures *and Trevor!*



Trevor (a rescued lost lamb) was a wonderful addition to what was a very enjoyable forum, which closed on Sunday morning with fantastic presentations about Landcare group projects. Speeches were complemented by a brilliant poster display in the hall, which was a feature of the weekend.

Well done to all involved in the organisation of this forum, it was great to be involved!



nationally endangered species known to have historically persisted in this area, with the last records being 2008. The primary ecological objective in the Wirra-Lo wetland complex environmental water management plan is to provide habitat to support this species in the hope that it would find its way back.”

Let's just hope there are some females to answer the males calls!

Learn more about these thriving private wetlands via <http://www.vewh.vic.gov.au/news-and-publications/stories/from-farmland-to-wetland> and remember you too can record your own wildlife sightings and hear frog calls by hoping onto the NatureBlitz app.



All creatures great and small

Article and Images by Margie Thomas

A sunny day with a light breeze and Smiths Creek in the foreground, Cornish Hill proved to be the perfect venue for a one day Habitat workshop aptly named 'All creatures great and small'.

On Tuesday 17 October, staff and students from Yandoit, Bullarto, Drummond and Daylesford Primary schools as well as students from the local Dharma school were invited to take part. Students were mixed into five groups with each group experiencing five different rotations, the aim was to understand that even the smallest

creature play an important role in maintaining a healthy environment.

We have always wanted to know what tiny terrestrial invertebrates, frogs and birds inhabit the Smiths Creek corridor on the reserve and what better way to find out than to invite the experts along.

John Caldow from Bugblitz Trust presented a hands on session during which students were introduced to a variety of spiders including a mountain huntsmen spider named 'Precious'. Spider evolution, morphology, behaviours and the roles spiders play in the balance of nature was discussed. Using the techniques of grass sweeping, tree tapping and bark peeling, students discovered over 40 different species of invertebrates. These were identified then photographed by John proving that the habitat on the reserve is very healthy. At a micro level, we are excited that we have such diversity.

Erin Nowak also from Bugblitz Trust introduced the students to the joys of bird watching along Smiths Creek corridor. A field guide and binoculars were used to find life-sized bird models of water birds which had been placed on a trail, in a local habitat. Bird calls from an app were played and matched to the models and threats to the species were discussed. As a safety precaution, the children wore gaiters, just in case there were any encounters with snakes!

Guided by **Castlemaine Ceramicist Ann Ferguson**, at the third rotation and by observing photographs of insects common to the area, students made their own insect. Natural materials such as sticks and seeds were used to make body parts of insects and paper clay connected the parts together. The finished products will be displayed as an exhibition in the local Daylesford Community Bank as part of Rotary's October Art celebration.





Nicole Howie has been working with us for some time now and in her session she introduced students to the magical world of bird nests, marveling the skill of our beautiful native birds. Using a variety of different materials and studying different techniques, individual nests were made and installed in the local habitat. Nicole brought along her own collection of nests which she had been collecting over many years and these proved to be a great source of inspiration as the students set about making their own.

The final rotation featured frogs and the session began with **Christina Renowden from Leap into Nature** discussing frogs with the students, their physical features, what habitat they require for breeding, shelter and finding food. Students learned that frogs are such an important component of many ecosystems, why many are threatened with extinction and what we can do to help protect frogs and their habitat. With its reedy banks providing shelter for both frogs and their prey, Smiths Creek was the perfect location for this activity.



There is no doubt that being able to engage passionate, well informed presenters was the key to the success of this event. With little free time between rotations, all the presenters still managed to mingle. Being able to meet other like-minded environmentally conscious people and sharing ideas was beneficial and also a great outcome. Our volunteers provided great back up too, making sure that the event ran smoothly, with some playing a key supporting role for the presenters. Already there is a call out from those involved for another event of this kind, perhaps in April 2018. Staff from the schools are also keen to meet with us to discuss what the topics could be and how they can become more involved.

These days, with staff work load and red tape, it is becoming less likely that schools will undertake excursions out of the classroom so thanks goes to the North Central CMA and Victorian Government for approving our application for this event, extra

thanks goes to Hepburn Shire and both the Daylesford Community Op shop and Bendigo Community Bank for agreeing to partner with us as well.

For more information check out the Friends at www.cornishhilldaylesford.com.au or like our discussion page at www.facebook.com/cornishhilldaylesford

LOOK OUT! November is 'Turtle Month'

In an effort to raise the profile of endangered and threatened freshwater turtle species, events and media across November feature turtles, during the most crucial time in their reproduction cycle.

North Central CMA, Turtles Australia and the University of Western Sydney (UWS) have been partnering since 2013 on a project to understand the rates of fox predation on turtle nests and turtle populations in the Gunbower Forest and along the Murray River.



As November is when many turtles are actively nesting and moving across the landscape, road accidents are extremely common for mature breeding age turtles. TurtleSat is an App used to monitor turtles, their nests and road mortality. The app is really easy to use and free!

Dr Ricky Spencer (UWS) said in a recent article "We've had 5000 sightings since we launched the app in 2015 and it shows a mass mortality on the roads, particularly of eastern long-necked turtles, which tend to wander over the land to find a suitable nesting spot".

Download TurtleSat and start recording turtle activity today! Visit <https://www.turtlesat.org.au/turtlesat/default.asp>



Sustainable Ag Snippet

Darren Bain- Regional Landcare Facilitator

Holistic Management Field Day at Sidonia

The North Central and Goulburn Broken CMAs held a Holistic Management field day at Sam White's family property at Sidonia on Friday November 13.

Perfect weather greeted the 53 participants who had travelled from South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria to this 'Open Gate' event. Sam told participants how he became involved in holistic management and the practices he has put in place to achieve his goals.

Sam runs 250 breeding cows on his property and has recently calved. All stock are managed in one mob and rotated through his paddocks. Sam said he has a 150 day rotation on his paddocks which gives them plenty of rest and time to rejuvenate pasture to be ready for the next grazing.



Our guest speaker on the day was Brian Wehlburg, who is a holistic management practitioner and farmer from the mid north coast of NSW. He is also a Director of 'Inside Outside' Management and coordinates holistic management training throughout Australia. Brian discussed the benefits of holistic grazing and provided practical examples of calculating how much pasture is available and the importance of early decision making.



Sam White discussing his farming operation

Sam organised for everyone to have lunch on top of the granite hills overlooking the property. Sam's wife Miranda cooked up some delicious home grown burgers, which were enjoyed by all, with a few people going back for seconds. The view was magnificent, looking over the whole property, what a terrific way to enjoy lunch.

A panel discussion followed involving farmers involved in holistic management. To conclude the day local farmer and soil consultant, Lyn Kelson gave a practical demonstration on soil structure and water infiltration using the North Central CMA Soil Health Guide booklet.

At the end of the day most of the people slowly got back on their buses but there were a few people who stayed on to have a yarn about what they saw and learnt from the day.



RLF program- What's coming up?

- **Future Farming Expo-** Donald, February 2018
- **National Landcare Program Phase 2-** preparation and submission of funding bids for 2018-2023.



Birds on farms- volunteers needed

Birdlife Australia's Woodland Birds for Biodiversity Project team are looking for volunteers to help carry out woodland bird surveys on farms throughout Victoria, as part of our Birds on Farms project.

Birdlife Australia are hoping to start surveys in early – mid November 2017 (exact dates and times are flexible), with the aim to carry out surveys on farms on a seasonal basis (four times per year). Each of the participating farms in the project has 3 – 4 survey plots to carry out [2-hectare 20-minute surveys](#).

Project Officer Carline Wilson will take enquiries if you are interested or if you would like any further information. This project will look at changes in woodland bird communities on farms over time and in response to habitat works, and will inform the management of farms to benefit wildlife. Please feel free to pass this on to anyone else who might be interested. Birdlife are also looking to run some training workshops in key project areas in early December.

The farms are spread fairly widely across Victoria, but specifically help is being sought for the following areas; north-east Vic (Wangaratta, Euroa, Mansfield), western Vic (around Nhill), sw Vic (Warrnambool, Fort Fairy, Hamilton, Colac), west Gippsland and north central Vic (Kerang and Echuca).

**Contact Caroline via BirdLife Australia
Phone: 0408 668 070
Email: caroline.wilson@birdlife.org.au**



Waterwatchers; East Loddon P-12 School prepare for the Melbourne Water Kids Teaching Kids Conference



Hello everyone,

I hope you are enjoying the warmer weather that has greeted us in recent weeks along with some much needed sunshine.

Over the past month, Waterwatch has been out and about meeting with schools and delivering lots of great events. I met with the students from East Loddon P-12 School to prepare for the Melbourne Water 'Kids Teaching Kids' Conference.

We have hosted two work placement students from Bendigo TAFE who have worked on projects including the Campaspe Carp Catch, data entry for the Native Fish Recovery Plan (NFRP) project and research and data entry for the NatureBlitz App upgrade.

Sophie has been finalising information for the NatureBlitz App which we are hoping to make live over the coming weeks, so watch this space!

John Gooderham is currently in the region and helping deliver a bunch of workshops including:

- River Detectives online webinar (trial) – 'Ask the expert'
- Agreed Level Taxonomy (ALT) Waterbug Workshop – in partnership with Indigenous Partnerships Program (Barapa Barapa and Yorta Yorta)
- ALT Waterbug Workshops – RiverScan, in partnership with the NFRP project

Please note: We apologise for any inconvenience caused through the cancellation of the second ALT Waterbug workshop in Glenlyon.

Cass Davis

Regional Waterwatch Coordinator
(03) 5440 1863
0434 730 526
cass.davis@nccma.vic.gov.au



Campaspe Carp Catch 2017

'Caring for the Campaspe' Project Manager Angela Gladman and I were very pleased with the turn out for our annual Campaspe Carp Catch. The day was a huge success in terms of participant numbers and the number of carp caught.

With the event being held on 'National Gone Fishing day', over 540 participants turned up across six locations on the Campaspe River to cast their rods. In total, 107 carp were caught and removed from the Campaspe River in an attempt to raise community awareness about this invasive pest.



National Water Week 2017

School children from across north central Victoria welcomed National Water Week with a big splash. About 100 students from Eaglehawk Primary School, Boort District P-12 and Harcourt Valley Primary School took part in the celebrations at the Bendigo Botanic Gardens.

Students learnt all about water bugs with the North Central Waterwatch program, discovered the benefits of drinking water instead of soft drink with Coliban Water, learnt traditional cultural activities with Dja Dja Wurrung, and looked at water-wise gardening and irrigation with the City of Greater Bendigo.

It was an opportunity to show young people the value of water, and what that means for culture,

community and the environment to demonstrate its invaluable resource. We believe it is important young people have an understanding of where their water comes from, how it's managed and why it's so important to so many people.

The four organisations that came together, are confident that when the children go back to their schools, their homes and their communities, they are going back armed with knowledge and a lot of passion.

"Working with children is inspiring and National Water Week is an opportunity to remind ourselves we need to keep working together as we're doing and, most importantly, keep using water, this most precious resource, carefully and sustainably." Cass Davis, Regional Waterwatch Coordinator

North Central Waterwatch Annual Achievements Report 2016-17

I am pleased to announce the release of the North Central Waterwatch Annual Achievements Report 2016-17.

The report highlights events and activities from the 2016-17 year and demonstrates how we have worked with local volunteers so they have the knowledge and skills required to collect valuable information about the ecological health of the waterways in regional Victoria.

To view the report, visit the North Central CMA website or follow the link:

<http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/waterwatch#node-1686>

River Detectives going virtual

The first virtual session for the River Detectives program saw schools from across Victoria listen and ask questions as part of the 'Ask an Expert' session.

The expert was John Gooderham – the 'waterbug guy' (a freshwater ecologist who loves macroinvertebrates). John was engaging and shared lots of amazing facts and stories with the students.

He told students about different waterbugs mouthparts and how that allowed them to eat their prey. Everyone loved 'green death', the dragonfly nymph who they saw in a video quickly move and eat a water boatman. During the virtual session students were asked to draw from Johns' description what they thought his favourite waterbugs looked like – there were some great interpretations from students in all the classrooms.



The two waterbugs John described to the students, his favourites, were the water scorpion and the bleff. It was a great first virtual session for the River Detectives team and we hope to do more in the future.



River Detectives Program - Applications open soon!

Applications to be a part of the 2018 River Detectives program will open shortly.

We would love new schools and groups from across the region to apply online to be a part of the 2018 program. We would also require existing groups and schools who would like to continue on with the program to also submit an application for 2018. As always members of the community who would like to support a local school or group should contact us to find out how! Email: riverdetectives@nccma.vic.gov.au

Events...



THE BIG COHUNA FESTIVAL

03 - 07 NOVEMBER 2017

The 2017 Big Cohuna Festival is sure to be the best yet, with a full program of events taking place from November 3-7. North Central CMA

is hosting two festival activities on Nov 5- see below

North Central CMA Kids Catch-a-Carp Competition and Turtles Australia Display

Sunday 5 November 2017

Register from 9.30am on the day at the North Central CMA marquee in Garden Park to be eligible to win great prizes for:

- Most carp caught
- Biggest carp
- Smallest carp
- Most Interesting carp

Judging at 12.30 pm

Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Please wear closed shoes, BYO hat, water bottle, and fishing rod. Bait will be provided

Register early by phone: 03 5448 7124 or email info@nccma.vic.gov.au

North Central CMA Gunbower Forest Bus Tour

Sunday 5 November at 9.30am and 12.00pm

The North Central CMA is offering free bus tours into the forest to showcase conservation works and provide a greater understanding of this valuable ecosystem.

See firsthand how the forest and wetlands are responding to conservation works and environmental watering. Please wear enclosed shoes, bring a hat and water bottle.

Numbers are strictly limited. **RSVP essential** by phoning North Central CMA on 03 5448 7124 or email info@nccma.vic.gov.au

Full event program available online:

<http://www.cohuna.org.au/assets/tbcf-final.pdf>

Native pastures for grazing

A free event run by Upper Campaspe Landcare Network with Dr Paul Gibson-Roy, lead scientist with Greening Australia will be held on November 22 at Newham Mechanics Hall.

Dr Gibson explains that "by restoring native



grasslands people can help to preserve and manage that habitat for future generations. There is less than one percent of native grasslands habitat left in Victoria. That's why their restoration and conservation is so critical. By attending this workshop landowners will get an appreciation of the importance of native grasslands, and why it is so important not to let them disappear for good"



At this workshop landholders will learn about:

- creating native grasslands/ pasture from scratch
- the benefits of native pastures for biodiversity and grazing
- tipping the balance of your paddock to natives.

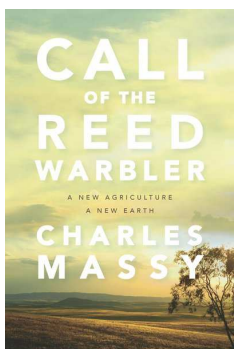
When: Wednesday 22 November

Where: Newham Mechanics Hall, Newham

Time: 10am to 3pm (lunch provided)

RSVP: To book for the workshop email environment@mrsc.vic.gov.au or call 5421 9660

Courses and Resources...



New Book: Call of the Reed Warbler

A guest speaker at the North Central CMA's 2015 Future Farming Expo, Charles Massey has recently published a new book concerning regenerative agriculture.

Using his personal experience as a touchstone, from an unknowing, chemical-using farmer with dead soils to a radical ecologist farmer carefully regenerating a 2,000-hectare property to a state

of natural health, Charles Massey tells the real story behind industrial agriculture and the global profit-obsessed corporations driving it. He shows, through evocative stories, how innovative farmers are finding a new way and interweaves his own local landscape, its seasons and biological richness. Look out for Call of the Reed Warbler in bookstores and online.



Favourite follow @savory.global

The Savory Institute, a non-profit Holistic Management organisation in Boulder, Colorado has gained my attention on social media with really useful articles and interesting posts from across the globe focusing on regenerative agriculture, grazing management, soil health and greening/ revegetation which I'm really enjoying reading. You may too, follow the Savory Institute on Twitter and Facebook via @savory.global



Birdlife Australia update; Aussie Backyard Bird Count complete!

With over 2 million birds counted, the #AussieBirdCount is over for another year - thank you for making every bird count!

Then the next steps are to vet and analyse the data, and with so many records this is going to be a big job! Birdlife hope to have the results out in late November.



Funding news...

Phase 2- National Landcare Program - Smart Farms Small Grants

The Australian Government is inviting applications via an open process for entities to deliver services under the National Landcare Program Smart Farms Small Grants.

Grants are available to support local on-ground projects across Australia that increase the knowledge and capacity of farmers and fishers and facilitate the adoption of tools, technologies and improved land management practices to effectively, sustainably and productively manage Australia's natural resources and adapt to significant changes in climate, weather and markets.

Smart Farms Small Grants is an open competitive grants opportunity, offering up to \$50 million over six years (2017-18 to 2022-23) to fund short-term (up to two years) projects to support farming communities to increase awareness, knowledge, skills and capacity of adoption of best management practices. Six annual rounds of funding are expected: this initial 2017-18 round (\$5 million), followed by five subsequent annual calls for applicants to 2022-23.

Applications are invited for grants, the value of which range from a minimum of \$5 000 to a maximum of \$100 000 (GST exclusive).

Projects will be considered under two tiers:

- Tier 1 for those between \$5,000 and \$50,000; and
- Tier 2 for those between \$50,001 and \$100,000.

Under this grant round the Australian Government is seeking applications for projects that will be completed by 30 April 2020.

Grants close 7 December 2017 at 2.00pm

For all the information, guidelines and application forms visit:

<https://www.communitygrants.gov.au/grants/national-landcare-program-smart-farms-small-grants>



Climate Change Innovation Grants

Applications are currently open for the Climate Change Innovation Grants. \$3.8m in competitive funding is available for innovative projects that address climate change challenges.

The grants will provide between \$50,000 – \$300,000 in funding support to innovative projects and promote local action on climate change as we work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Climate Change Innovation Grants are part of the Victorian Government's \$5.6 million investment in the Virtual Centre for Climate Change Innovation Program.

The application form is now live <https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/virtual-centre-for-climate-change-innovation/virtual-centre-for-climate-change-innovation>

*To sign in or register for the system click the "Next Page" button (It's a bit counter intuitive!)

Applications for the Climate Change Innovation Grants close at midnight on **Thursday, 30 November 2017**. Applications must be submitted via DELWP Grants Online. For more information visit <http://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au>

Coming up...

Environment Small Grants (Department of the Environment and Energy)

The Australian Government is providing \$5 million in small grants to community, landcare, environment and other natural resource management groups to deliver natural resource management activities that improve the quality of the local environment.

The small grants will be allocated through a one-off grant round in the 2017-18 financial year. This website: <http://www.nrm.gov.au/national-landcare-program> will continue to be updated as more information becomes available.