

North Central Chat

Keeping you up to date with all the Landcare and Waterwatch news



October 2020

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

I trust you have been taking advantage of the fresh spring air, sunny days, muddy puddles and eased restrictions in regional Victoria. I ventured slightly further afield and took a weekend wander on the Wombat Trail at Trentham. The sounds and smells of the forest over the 8km ramble were so refreshing. What a privilege it is to have these spaces, cared for by the Friends of Trentham Creeks and Reserves, so close by.

During September, Landcare support staff from across the Goulburn Broken, Corangamite and North Central CMA regions completed a Mentoring webinar series with Tamara Boyd. Across two sessions, we delved into the benefits of mentoring, formal vs informal mentors, what to ask of a mentor, and what to expect as a mentee. As a result, we have had strong interest in setting up a formal mentoring program trial for Landcare support staff, which we will shape up for launch in the new year.

At the September Landcare Facilitators meeting, we were delighted to have been joined by Landcare Victoria Inc. CEO Andrew McLean. Andrew discussed the role of LVI moving forward and the priority tasks such as advocating for the timely renewal of the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program. Andrew asks groups to get in contact to discuss what LVI can do for you. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our sincere thanks to outgoing LVI staffers Susi Johnson and Kelly Way. Their years of problem solving, data gathering and insurance interpretation among the many other tasks they coordinated, allowed Landcare Groups and Networks to be able to operate safely and legally in Victoria.

October is a huge month of activity, as you will note from this bumper edition of the Chat. Many events are continuing to be held online, as well as groups easing back into Spring planting activity and events in a COVID safe environment. Great soil moisture and sunny days are giving this year's revegetation programs every chance for success. Why not utilise those little hands on school holidays, and invite the families in your area to get engaged in a day of revegetation.



Avoca Landcare Group member John Quinn releasing 40 captive bred Southern Pygmy Perch (Avoca genetics) into the carp free Avoca Chinese Gardens wetland, August 2020.
Photo: Avoca Landcare Group c/o Marg Pilgrim

At the top of my to-do list this month is putting the final touches on the 2020 Chicks in the Sticks, which will take place on October 17. I encourage all the women of the region to send the invite out to colleagues, mothers, sisters, aunties, and neighbours for what is sure to be another fabulous event.

If you have Landcare news and photos over the coming weeks, please send them in or tag #northcentralcma on social media. We would love to see your group in action.

Enjoy the read,

Tess Grieves

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North Central CMA
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News...

Chicks in the Sticks- Register now!

We are well and truly in #chicksinthesticks spirit this month. North Central CMA Landcare are thrilled to be hosting the event online from 10:30 am on October 17.



The morning will begin with a Welcome to Country ceremony, followed by an uplifting personal and professional story from Dhehkunya Dja (Healing land) Land Management Board member, Rebecca Phillips.

Some of you may recall Bec had to postpone her attendance last year, as her little lady Nyalu just couldn't wait to arrive!

This event will inspire you, excite you and take your mind off all things 2020. We are also thrilled to be joined by:



Anna Carlile (creative director @ Viola Design, author of Grounded and Nature 365, hiker, mother of two and nature lover) and



Katrina Myers (Owner of Barham Avocados, mother of 4, wife, farmer, blogger, podcaster, businesswoman and passionate rural change maker)

Register early for your chance to win some gorgeous giveaways and be part of the 8th annual Chicks in the Sticks event, celebrating the achievements of rural women in agriculture and the environment.

Bookings via <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/2020-chicks-in-the-sticks-tickets-118116440453>



National Soils Advocate announced

The Prime Minister announced the Honourable Penelope Wensley AC as the new National Soils Advocate on 28 August 2020, succeeding Major General the Honourable Michael Jeffery, AC, AO (Mil), CVO, MC (Retd), who has occupied the role since December, 2012 - initially as National Advocate for Soil Health, and since July 2019, as National Soils Advocate.



A world-first in terms of elevating soil health to a level of national significance, the position of Advocate was established to raise awareness of the vital role soils play and to provide strong leadership and advocacy on the importance of conserving and improving the health of Australia's soils.

The position contributes to the national objective of protecting, restoring and maintaining the health of the Australian agricultural landscape, to enhance productivity, guarantee a food secure nation and sustainable farming communities.

Ms Wensley has held many leadership roles, including Patron of Soil Science Australia since 2010.

Ms Wensley has a long-held interest and substantial experience in natural resource management, environmental and sustainable development matters. She has achieved national and international recognition for her contribution to environmental policy development and for promoting environmental knowledge and awareness, including as State Governor for Queensland and Australia's Ambassador for the Environment.

[Read the full announcement here.](#) To contact the Office of the National Soils Advocate: NationalSoilsAdvocate@pmc.gov.au

Avoc-ing opportunity for Southern Pygmy Perch

The North Central CMA Native Fish Recovery Plan Project Team, Dr. Peter Rose and Tracey Harbridge met with Avoca Landcare Group members to scope out the potential for pygmy perch habitat in the Avoca Chinese Gardens wetland.

What's a Pygmy Perch? Well, Southern pygmy perch (*Nannoperca australis*) are a threatened small-bodied (up to 85 mm length) fish endemic to south-eastern Australia. After the Millennium drought, only four naturally occurring populations remained in Victoria. The fish is short-lived (three to five years) and inhabits still or slow-flowing waters in streams, lakes and wetlands. Spawning occurs from September to January, with rising water temperatures and flow pulses acting as cues. (*Finterest, 2020*).

Peter Rose explained that “The Avoca Landcare Group got in contact regarding removing carp from the wetland in the gardens, which are believed to have got in during a flood. The group wanted to know if there was a suitable native fish species to put back into the wetland, so after inspection, we determined the Chinese Gardens site would be suitable habitat for pygmy perch.

“The group drained the wetland and removed the carp, ready for the pygmy perch. Last month, 40 captive bred Southern Pygmy Perch (Avoca genetics) were released.”



A pygmy perch at Middle Creek Farm in spawning condition.

The wetland will act as a surrogate habitat, support this additional population and possibly a 'natural hatchery' for the species, which is otherwise in serious decline across the southern Murray Darling Basin. The North Central CMA Native Fish Recovery Project team are planning to monitor survival and recruitment early in 2021.



Let's Pivot has launched

Let's Pivot is an online community and professional development program supporting community leaders, organisations and individuals to change their strategy without changing their vision.

Let's Pivot is a free online initiative, set up to support you and your community to adapt to our current times.

Community and professional development will be delivered free of charge and provided entirely online from October 1st 2020 to March 31st 2021. It will be delivering inspiration, information, digital connectivity, adaptation ideas, and real time support to wherever you work best.

The North Central CMA Landcare program is sponsoring this initiative, as many of our volunteers and committees need support and encouragement to keep going. Let's Pivot will help Landcare Groupsto adapt and learn new online based skills and create solutions for capacity gaps arising from the disruption to the face-to face nature of Landcare activity.

All are invited to participate in any way that suits; info-mailers, zoom discussions, online community, resource toolkit and more. To join simply subscribe now at: <https://bit.ly/join-lets-pivot>



This program is made possible thanks to the generous support of City of Greater Bendigo, Gannawarra Shire, Loddon Shire, Ballarat City Council, Coliban Water, North Central Catchment Management Authority, The Bushfire Foundation and Bendigo Bank.

It's Spring Survey Time!

Article from Birdlife Australia

It's spring! See the magpies swoop and chase. Tell us who is visiting your place. Daylight hours are increasing, the temperature will soon be warming up and breeding season for many birds is well and truly underway

Our [Spring backyard birds surveys](#) are here and they will be running through October. Did you know that you can record breeding bird activity in our Birds in Backyards surveys? We want to hear about the birds nesting at your place. Find the survey instructions, including new web and app pdfs as well as survey FAQ's [here](#).



What if I don't know much about birds?

If you are unsure where or how to start, or even feel like you don't know the first thing about birds except you love to see them, then fear not! The Birdata web portal and app automatically gives you a list of 30 birds from your region to get you started.

Annual Competition

Don't forget our major prize for the year - if you complete at least one survey per season (that's Summer 2019/20, Autumn 2020, Winter 2020 & Spring 2020) you will go into the draw to win a pair of brand new Nikon binoculars (worth \$249) to take with you on all your birding adventures!

Bob Hawke Landcare Award - new closing date Monday 12 October, 2020

Due to the new date for the 2021 National Landcare Conference now held in Sydney on August 4-6, we have taken this opportunity to extend the deadline for the Bob Hawke Landcare Award nominations.

The 2020 Bob Hawke Landcare Award deadline for nominations has been extended to Monday 12 October.

This year the award has a new judging panel and a reinvigorated process for reviewing the submissions. The 2020 Bob Hawke Landcare Award recognises leadership and commitment in natural resource management and sustainable agriculture. The award recipient will be an individual who is involved in Landcare, and can demonstrate an outstanding commitment to local communities and drive community activity.

For more information or to submit a nomination, visit the Bob Hawke Landcare Award website <https://bobhawkelandcareaward.com.au/>

Flying Han Solo

Dr Heather McGinness (CSIRO Senior Research Scientist) recently alerted the North Central CMA to the return of a well-travelled Straw Necked Ibis from the area, named 'Han Solo'.

'Han Solo' was fitted with a satellite transmitter at Kow Swamp in January 2020. He flew to Newcastle in February, where he spent the winter. He flew back south again in August, and after checking out Barmah-Millewa Forest, the Kerang Lakes and a few other places has now returned to Kow Swamp and is nesting there. Below are two maps showing his extensive travels.

Dr McGinness is also interested in tracking the movements of other waterbird species, including Royal Spoonbills and Australasian Bitterns. She asks that "if you hear of any Royal Spoonbills or Australasian Bitterns nesting, I'd be grateful if you could let me know."

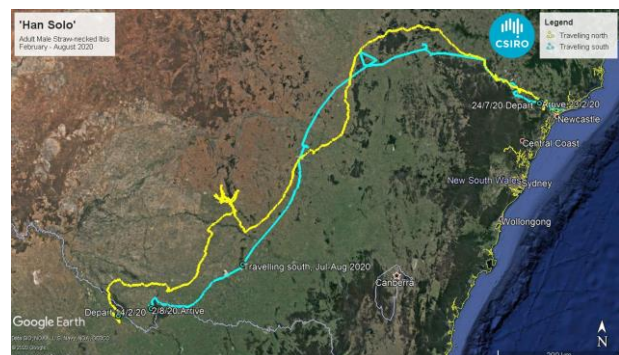
Heather's email address is

Heather.McGinness@csiro.au. You can see maps for other tracked birds on the project website:

<https://research.csiro.au/ewkrwaterbirds/>, or on

Facebook: Waterbirds Australia, Twitter:

@AusWaterbirds, or Instagram: @Waterbirds_Australia.



Taradale Landcare control Gorse in Kangaroo Creek Valley

Article from Jacqui Slingo, Connecting Country

Taradale Landcare with support from Connecting Country and local contractors have been busy controlling Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) around Taradale.

With restrictions preventing Taradale Landcare's regular working bees from taking place, group members have been busy working on their own properties. Fourteen landholders were able to participate in the project that was made possible with a community grant from the Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT).

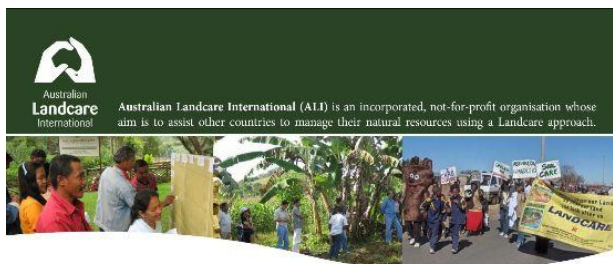
The grant co-funded treatment of over 11 hectares of Gorse on private land in Taradale, mostly on the (northern) Kangaroo Creek, but some also on Dearden Creek and the Coliban River. Landholders implemented approved methods including manual, mechanical and chemical treatments. The works were enabled via a rebate to landholders of 50% of the gorse treatment using local contractors, up to a limit of \$1000 per property. Landholders committed via a voluntary agreement to maintain the effort on Gorse in future years.

Taradale Landcare, Connecting Country and contractors have all assisted landholders to design ongoing treatments and, in some cases, revegetation advice. Alana Robinson, a participating landholder noted, 'The grant helped us to bite the bullet and get started with tackling the Gorse. We would have done it eventually on our own, but this way we've been able to get it done now before the problem gets any worse.'

While a new round of this grant has not been offered by the VGT in 2020, Taradale Landcare would be interested in hearing from Taradale landholders who would like to register their interest in any future submission. Please contact Brian at Taradale Landcare taradalelandcare@gmail.com



Grooming in action near the Kangaroo Creek in Taradale. This dramatic treatment immediately removes fuel hazard and makes it possible to access and treat regrowth in coming months. Photos courtesy Tracey Whiteside.



Australian Landcare International, soon to be renamed Global Landcare at the upcoming Annual General Meeting.

The AGM for Australian Landcare International Incorporated will be held via Zoom on October 23, 2020, 4.00 pm AEST.

Learn more about the role of ALI, and join up as a member, [via their newsletter](#).

Meet the next generation of Aboriginal north central Victorian land managers.

Ruby, Chase and Annalise have spent a year with Traditional Owners, North Central CMA and Parks Victoria completing a School Based Apprenticeship and Trainee program.



The Cert II in Horticulture was coordinated by CVGT and Bendigo TAFE. The students shared their journey over the last year, with shots taken before COVID, and we're glad we can share it with you now. Hear them tell their story of learning and confidence building – we're proud of their achievements, and reckon you will be too.

Click on the video above to watch the team in action.

RCS Renewal - the next round!

Article by North Central CMA Project Manager Nina Cunningham

North Central Chat will know that the CMA is in the process of renewing the North Central Regional Catchment Strategy for 2021-27.

The renewal of the RCS is a great opportunity for us all to think about the challenges we are facing and decide where to focus our efforts to make a difference.

Earlier this year, after Regional Roundtables were cancelled due to COVID-19, we asked the regional community to provide input to RCS renewal via an online survey and interactive map on our Engage Victoria webpage. A summary of outcomes from the survey and map are now available to review on the Engage Victoria webpage.

The information provided through the survey and map has informed development of RCS discussion papers and a revision of RCS Local Areas, which will form the basis of the new RCS.

Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, we have launched another round of online engagement – to build on what we have heard so far. This time we are asking:

- For feedback on the discussion papers, and
- About land, water and biodiversity management priorities.

All the details, including a summary of discussion papers, can be found on the Engage Victoria webpage <https://engage.vic.gov.au/north-central-regional-catchment-strategy-2021-27>

You can choose one or more of the following ways to provide feedback:

- Participate in the online workshop, 7 - 9 pm Thursday 8th October - click here to register via Eventbrite and we will email the link to join.

Via the Engage Victoria webpage, up until the 21 October, you can:

- Provide feedback on the RCS discussion papers via survey form
- Join the online conversation and tell us about land, water and biodiversity management priorities for action in your local area

Your local knowledge, priorities and ideas will help shape this new RCS. We value your input and hope you can participate in this next round of engagement.



Communities Caring for Catchments

Hi folks,

How wonderful to have the coronavirus restrictions eased a little. I hope everyone is enjoying some of this gorgeous spring weather together with loved ones (outdoors of course, unless they are in your household bubble!).

With a wet Spring forecast, I have been busy in my native garden filling some gaps with new plants and mulching heavily to retain moisture in the soil. Not to mention the never-ending weeding! I feel like I finish at one end of the block before having to start back at the other end again, but so nice to have some regular rainfall. I'm also rejuvenating some veggie beds hoping for a bumper year.

In regional Victoria we are now at the third step, meaning there are no restrictions on reasons to leave home so Waterwatch monitoring can now be undertaken again! I hope to see lots of data flooding in ready for me to review over the coming weeks.

See the following guidelines, but please stay up to date with the changing restrictions and ensure your volunteering activities always adhere to the Department of Health and Human Services recommendations at the time.

Enjoy the read.

Britt Gregory

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North Central CMA
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Email: britt.gregory@nccma.vic.gov.au

Regional Victoria Coronavirus Update - Environmental Volunteering Guidance from DELWP (as of 21 September 2020)

Regional Victoria has now moved to the Third Step.

There are no restrictions on the reasons to leave home.

Stay safe by washing your hands regularly, wearing a face covering when you leave home, coughing and sneezing into your elbow, and keeping at least 1.5 metres from others.

Keep your friends and family safe by meeting outdoors. There is a lower risk of spreading coronavirus (COVID-19) between people if you are outdoors. Groups of up to 10 people will be able to meet outdoors.

Environmental volunteering can be done within these restrictions if the following are observed:

- Please adhere to any program specific safety requirements
- Activities must operate with local regionally based volunteers only, participants from Metropolitan Melbourne cannot join
- Keep an attendance record on site with name and phone numbers of all volunteers
- Follow the maximum participation numbers
- Adhere to wearing face coverings, physical distancing and good hygiene practices as per DHHS guidelines.

More information on these restrictions for regional Victoria can be found at:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-reopening-roadmap-regional-victoria>

We ask that you check and follow the most up-to-date advice when doing your volunteering activities.



Revamped River Detectives website

A myriad of new resources are now available, not just for schools but Waterwatchers and Landcarers too

We may not have been able to connect in our usual ways with River Detectives schools this year but have been incredibly busy behind the scenes revamping the River Detectives website.

www.riverdetectives.net.au

The goal of the website is to be a 'one-stop-shop' to support teachers implement engaging cross-curricular river health activities with their students.



The website is dynamic and ever-evolving but we are really pleased with the recent updates. After listening to user feedback we have made changes to the Resource River Bank tab adding;

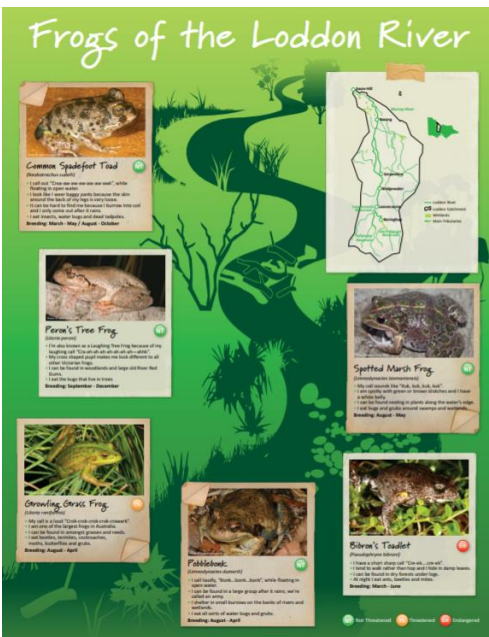
- Lots of new content; maps, posters, videos, stories, games, lesson plans, activity sheets, links to other websites / organisations and fact sheets.
- More regionally specific content (you can search resources by topic, type, suitable age group or region).

The best news to share is that the website and Resource River Bank tab is accessible by anyone in the community.

We have chosen top quality resources that convey information in engaging, clear, bite-sized ways. The resources are not only useful for students but are valuable tools for individuals with a thirst for learning and Landcare/Friends Of groups wanting to engage and share information with their local community (adults or students).

Feel free to explore to your hearts content [here](#) but we thought we would showcase some of the excellent regional posters in this edition of the Chat;

Frogs of the Loddon River



[Waterbirds](#) and [Fish](#) of the Loddon River also available.

The Campaspe River's Journey (upper and lower reach posters)



Journeys of the [Coliban](#), [Loddon](#), [Avoca](#) and [Richardson](#) also available.

The value of snags in waterways



Next month we'll showcase some of the best regional videos on the website.

We continue to adapt the website to make it as user-friendly and relevant as possible. We welcome content suggestions anytime via riverdetectives@nccma.vic.gov.au

National Water Week Online Learning Festival



Every third week of October, National Water Week inspires individuals, communities and organisations to build awareness around the value of water.

Reimagining our Water Future is the 2020 theme. As our population grows, this will put more stress on our water resources, so how can we reimagine the way we use and reuse water to ensure there's enough of it in the future? How can we rethink our current water practices to help conserve valuable water resources? What can we do as individuals and as communities to inspire a more sustainable water future?

Join students and communities across Victoria to learn about water at the Online Learning Festival.

Check out this [video](#) from our friends at Coliban Water.

Preview of events (keep an eye out for the full program in early October):

- Video announcement of state winners of the water poster competition!
- Eaton Gorge Theatre Company will be performing a 30 minute water show online for use in classrooms or remote learning. Perfect for: Kindergarten – Grade 4
- Curious Creatures, Wild Minds Book Week interview with award winning author and illustrator Meg Humphrys talking about her book, *When Water Lost Her Way*. Suitable for Upper Primary.

What else can you expect?

- There will be water-themed storytimes, experiments and mindfulness videos from amazing educators from across Victoria
- A Reimagining Our Water Future matrix with a variety of activities for students of all ages, all learning styles and across multiple curriculum areas
- Sessions that are suitable for secondary students or the general community

All activities are free of charge and the links will remain available after the festival. Some sessions will be live broadcasts.

For more information contact us at riverdetectives@nccma.vic.gov.au or your nearest urban water corporation.



Water Storages update

Region	Water Storage	% full at 26 Aug	% full at 21 Sep
Murray Storages	Dartmouth Dam	54.67	↑56.04
	Hume Dam	59.19	↑65.04
	Torrumbarry Weir	100.02	100.02
	Third Lake	95.29	↓92.93
	Reedy/Middle Lk	95.10	↑96.88
	Kangaroo Lake	96.54	↑ 96.59
	Kow Swamp	93.01	↓ 88.43
	Lake Boga	79.79	↑83.08
Loddon Storages	Lake Charm	96.36	↓ 95.09
	Cairn Curran Res	44.93	↑ 46.48
	Tullaroop Res	60.55	↑ 61.96
Bullarook Storages	Laanecoore Res	39.50	↓ 39.13
	Newlyn Res	94.31	↑ 100.31
Goulburn Storages	Hepburns Lagoon	80.31	↑ 94.24
	Lake Eildon	55.11	↑ 58.69
Campaspe	Waranga Basin	95.93	↓ 91.55
	Lake Eppalock	43.27	↓ 41.97
Coliban Water Storages	Upper Coliban Res	98.40	↓ 94.30
	Lauriston Res	91.30	↓90.60
	Malmsbury Res	37.40	↑53.90

Sources:
www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/catchments/storage-levels
www.coliban.com.au/about-us/reservoir-levels

Upcoming events and special days

October	
Australian Wildlife Week	5-11 Oct
World Habitat Day	7 Oct
National Ride 2 Work Day	21 Oct
Aussie Backyard Bird Count	19-25 Oct
National Water Week	19-25 Oct
All Energy 2020 conference	21-22 Oct
November	
Pollinator Week	8-15 Nov
National Recycling Week	9-15 Nov
World Fisheries Day	21 Nov
December	
International Volunteer Day	5 Dec
World Soil Day	5 Dec

Sustainable Ag Snippet...

Dung beetle nurseries

The Mount Alexander Regenerative Agriculture group have recently received their dung beetles and dung beetle nurseries to start up their own breeding program with the aim to establish a good population of dung beetles throughout the district.

Five nurseries were purchased, these will be set up on five properties, each landholder will be provided training to manage the nurseries to ensure the breeding program is successful. The dung beetles and nurseries are being supplied by Greg Dalton from South Australia. Greg recently gave a webinar presentation to the group outlining the species, site suitability, management, maintenance and feeding requirements.

Each nursery is about the size of a small raised garden bed and needs to be located away from tree drip lines to minimise moisture loss and fenced off, so stock do not interfere with the enclosure. Fresh dung needs to be placed in the nursery prior to releasing the dung beetle and they need to be fed every five to seven days depending on activity. They also need a good supply of fresh dung during these active periods.

There have been 53 dung beetle species introduced to Australia since 1968, but only 23 species have established in the field. The group will be receiving two species of dung beetles *Onthophagus vacca* and *Bubas bubalus*, which are mainly active in spring and summer.

The group are really excited about their breeding program and are looking forward to many years of

breeding and sharing dung beetles and the nurseries with other group participants.



Example of a Dung beetle nursery within a chosen paddock setting, protected from stock and machinery.

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 Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator
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Valuing your Farm Natural Capital

Birchip Cropping Group Senior Research and Extension Officer, Alison Frischke is calling for growers to participate in the development of farm natural capital accounts.

Natural Capital Accounting enables farmers to account for the natural capital on their farm, both in physical as well as monetary terms. Like financial accounting, it is guided by an agreed set of standards and is quantifiable.

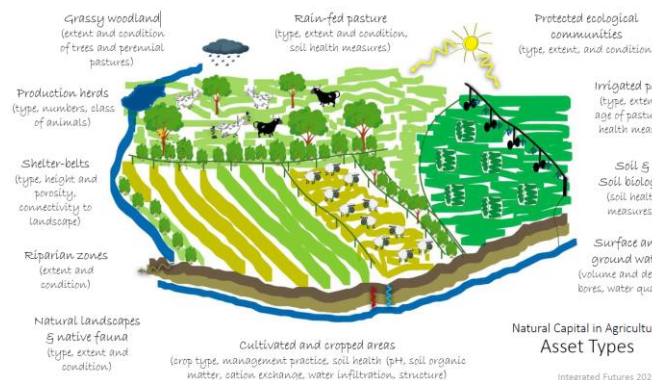
“The Farm-scale Natural Capital Accounting project is a three-year (2020-2023) project jointly funded through the Australian Government’s Smart Farming Partnership program, La Trobe University and Odonata, collaborating with another seven organisations including BCG.

“We’d like to hear from a range of farm businesses across the northern Victoria in the medium rainfall region.”

Natural capital includes all elements of the natural environment. On a farm, this includes:

- the soil and soil biota (microbes, fungi, invertebrates)
- water resources (ground and surface water)

- grasses, forbs and sedges (native and introduced) that make up pastures and understory
- different hay and grain crops, and livestock
- shrubs and trees (remnants, re-planted and agroforestry), and
- native animals.



The project will develop user-friendly accounts by collating farm data, maps of natural assets and their condition, and take detailed biodiversity assessments, soil sampling and ecosystem service measurements. The accounts will present a range of metrics that describe your farm and can be used for monitoring over time to improve production and environmental outcomes.

Would you like to be able to measure and value what your practices mean for your farm natural assets and business? If this is you, BCG is very interested to hear from you.

Please contact Alison: 0429 922 787 or alison@bcg.org.au to find out more.

Landcare, small farms and food production

Stories are being sought for the Summer 2020 (issue #80) issue of the *Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management* magazine. This issue of the Landcare magazine will be a feature on Landcare, small farms and food production.

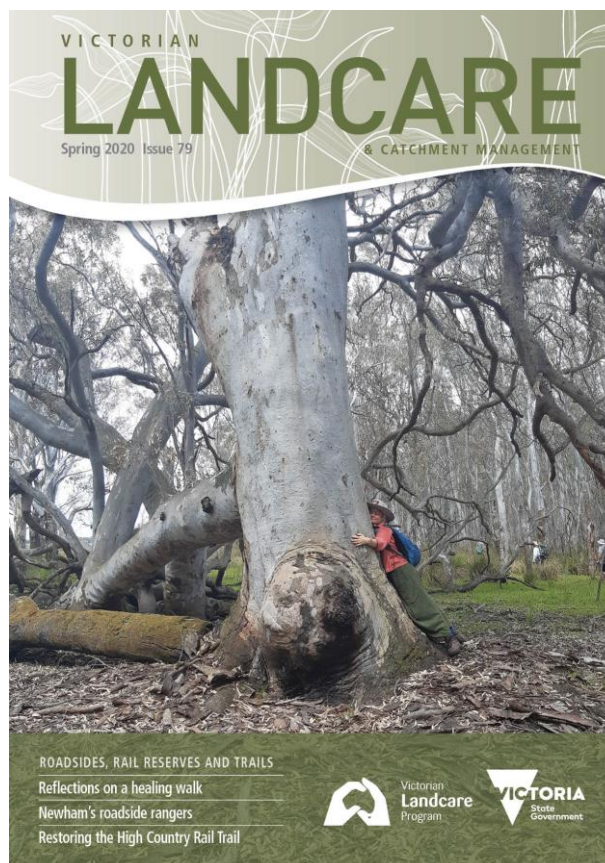
Landcare magazine is seeking stories about how Landcare groups and networks are supporting their members in planning and managing small farms and with the sustainability issues around food production – both at a household and an agricultural scale.

Magazine readers are keen to learn about the successes of different approaches and projects, as well as what hasn't worked, and the insights and reflections of your group or network along the way.

Contribution deadline

Contributions for the Spring 2020 issue need to be sent to the editor by **Friday 6 November 2020**.

Note - the Landcare magazine fills up with stories very quickly so please get in touch with the editor (Carrie Tiffany) well before the contribution deadline if you want to submit a story.



Where to send contributions

Carrie Tiffany, Editor - *Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management* magazine
 Email: editorviclandcare@gmail.com

The Spring 2020 issue of the *Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management* magazine which is a feature on roadsides, rail reserves and trails has been published online and is available via <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/landcare-magazine/spring-2020>

Courses & Resources...

Find inspiration. Bring nature into your home.

Parks Victoria are finding ways for you to experience the beauty of nature and Victoria's parks from the comfort of your home. Immerse yourself in these beautiful landscapes with this selection of 360 degree time-lapse videos or download one of our stunning backdrops for your next online meeting.



360 degree videos: if using a laptop or desktop computer, use your mouse-pad to explore all around. If using a phone or tablet device, just move your device around to see the landscape. Stay tuned for more ideas on how to experience nature across our digital channels.

Explore these incredible places from the comfort of your home and be inspired to start planning your next nature-based adventures in Victoria's parks when the current situation eases. Visit <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/find-inspiration>

Final Call: Women in Leadership's Scholarship Program Extended

Women have a final opportunity to register their interest in a scholarship worth up to \$5,000. The scholarship supports participation in an accredited leadership development program.

Participants will learn the key triggers and mechanisms of exceptional performance, behaviours and mindsets. The courses are also specifically designed for women to form connections and collaborate.

Due to COVID-19, many individuals have asked for more time to determine if the opportunity is right for them. The deadline has been extended until October 9 but will not be extended again. Find out more and register your interest by completing the Expression of Interest form prior to 5pm on October 9.

Visit the [Women and Leadership Australia website](#) today.

Applications are now open for the Victorian Climate-Smart Agriculture Fellowship

The Victorian Climate-Smart Agriculture Fellowship is aimed at current and emerging industry leaders who are committed to the sustainability of the agricultural sector. It is designed to build capacity to manage climate risk, while supporting business and industry resilience.

This year the fellowship will take place via a mix of online and offline meetings between October 2020 and March 2021, including a mentoring program to support the adoption of climate smart practices and a two-day conference in March 2021.

The fellowship is a unique opportunity for you to learn from experts in climate and agriculture, as well as other Victorian farmers who are leading the way on climate resilience. You'll join a strong and supportive network of leading farmers across Australia, receive extensive training in key skills (including media and advocacy), and develop a platform to create lasting resilience in Victorian agriculture. The fellowship is free of charge to the successful applicants.

The course has a three part structure, including an extensive online learning program across October. Read more about the course and application process on the [Farmers for Climate Action website](#).

**Note the date for applications closing is stated as 5pm Monday 28 September 2020, however the project team advised this can be flexible.*



Photo: Avon Plains Landcare Group visit the Horsham Grain Innovation Park. A team of experts working to harness biodiversity to support plant breeding for crop protection and adaptation to changing climates lead the tour.

Events...

Biological Control Workshop - a powerful weed management tool

Biological Control Workshop
– a powerful weed management tool

Dispel the myths and learn the benefits of biocontrol in weed management

Biological control is a reliable, cost-effective and well researched method of managing some of Victoria's most environmentally destructive weeds.

Register for our online workshop & learn how biocontrols are helping us fight invasive weeds

As part of the Connecting Communities series, Natural Environment Programs Loddon Mallee in partnership with DELWP's Weeds at the Early Stage of Invasion (WESI) project, Connecting Country and the Weed Society of Victoria are running a free online workshop all about Biological Control.

Dr Raelene Kwong and Greg Lefoe, Senior Research Scientists from Agriculture Victoria's Research Division will explain the ins and outs of what is involved with Biocontrol and how you can be involved in your patch.

There is also another special guest, Lee Mead, President of the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group who will provide an exciting community case study of the use of biological control on Wheel cactus (*Opuntia robusta*) in north central Victoria.

An optional addition to this event is at 11:30, where you are welcome to join in the Weed Society of Victoria's Annual General Meeting.

To register, follow the link below

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/biological-control-a-powerful-weed-management-tool-explained-tickets-118237913783>

When: Tuesday 6 October 2020

Where: Online- link provided after registration

Contact: [Bec James](#) | Natural Environment Program Officer | Loddon Mallee

Aussie Backyard Bird Count – 19-25 October 2020



The #AussieBirdCount is a great way to connect with the birds in your backyard, no matter where your backyard might be — whether it's a suburban backyard, a local park, a patch of forest, a farm, down by the beach, or the main street of town.

All you need to take part is 20 minutes and your favourite outdoor space - you don't even have to leave home, making it the ultimate Covid-safe activity! As well as contributing to BirdLife Australia's knowledge of Aussie Birds, you will have the chance to win some great prizes (we'll be revealing those shortly)! [Head to the website](#) and register as a Counter today.

Climate change and the horse property – what you can do to reduce your impact and increase the resilience of your horse property?

Upper Campaspe Landcare Network is proud and excited to host this two part webinar series – Climate Change and the Horse Property with Annemaree Docking of Plan it Rural.

Join Annemaree over two consecutive Saturdays - October 3 and October 10 from 11am ONLINE via ZOOM as she delves into the steps you can take to create resilience on your horse property.

During her two webinars and through the conversations that follow, Annemaree will discuss:

- Methane production and manure management
- Soil management to retain carbon, soil structure and increase productivity
- Carbon stocks, vegetation sinks and biodiversity management
- Efficiency of farm operations and reducing dependency on external inputs
- Choosing and maintaining farm equipment, and
- Property design for an effective, functional system

These workshops are being delivered with the support of Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

SWIFFT Seminar: Native Grasslands

Register now for this free online SWIFFT Seminar to learn about things we can do to increase biodiversity in our native grasslands.

The 2.5 hour seminar will cover the following:

Is disturbance switching a useful restoration tool?

Dr John Morgan, Associate Professor, Department of Ecology, Environment and Evolution at La Trobe University.

Two ways of knowing natural temperate grasslands of the Victorian Volcanic Plain

Dr Brad Farmilo - Senior Scientist & Plant ecologist, Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research (DELWP); and Chase Aghan - Project Officer (Forest, Fire and Parks) for Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

Djandak Wi, returning Djaara to Djandak

Nathan Wong, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation; and Amos Atkinson, Project Officer with Dja Dja Wurrung - bringing back traditional ecological knowledge to landscapes to heal country and heal the people using fire.

Fat-tailed Dunnarts of the Victorian grasslands

Emily (Millie) Scicluna - PhD Candidate, La Trobe University

When: Thursday 22 October 2020 9:45am - 12:15p

Where: [Register here](#)



Landcare Australia webinar series

There is quite a while until the conference kicks off in August next year, so to whet your appetite, we've put together a series of National Landcare Conference webinars.

LAL has joined up with some fantastic Landcarers from around the country and put together a series of webinars based on the four conference themes: Sustainable agriculture; Environment & Climate Change; Community Partnerships in Action, and Landcare Impact.

So, don't wait until August 2021 to tap into the expertise of the Landcare community. [Register today](#) for the first National Landcare Conference webinar – **Recruiting and Engaging Volunteers!**

Our National Landcare Conference webinar series will be run through the Landcarer online community platform.

Check out www.landcarer.com.au for more information and to join the online community.

Funding opportunities...

Round 4 of the Smart Farms Small Grants closing soon

The Australian Government is inviting applications for projects to deliver services under the National Landcare Program – Smart Farms Small Grants Round 4.

Smart Farms Small Grants is an open, competitive, grant opportunity to support projects to increase farming, forestry and fishing communities' awareness, knowledge, skills and capacity to adopt best practice sustainable agriculture.

The purpose of Smart Farms Small Grants is to support land manager practice change that will deliver more sustainable, productive and profitable food, fibre and forestry business while protecting Australia's biodiversity; protecting and improving the condition of natural resources; and assisting Australia meet its international obligations.

The purpose will be achieved by supporting projects that contribute to achieving one or both of the program outcomes outlined below:

- Outcome 1 – Increased adoption of best practice sustainable agriculture
- Outcome 2 – Increase the capacity of land managers to adopt best practice sustainable agriculture

[Application details can be found here.](#) Applications close at 11:00 pm AEDT, 9 October 2020.

If you would like to discuss your project idea please contact Darren Bain, Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator darren.bain@nccma.vic.gov.au

NRM Drought Resilience Program Grants launched

The Australian Government Natural Resource Management Drought Resilience Program - Grants is about supporting organisations, farmer groups and individuals build the drought resilience on agricultural landscapes.

Grants between \$20,000 to a maximum of \$200,000 are available for successful applicants to deliver on-ground activities that build drought resilience on agricultural landscapes.

For more information please refer to the Community Grants hub Q&A [document online](#).