

North Central chat

SEPTEMBER 2017

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

Spring is finally upon us! The sunshine is peeking through cloudy blue skies, the golden wattles are in full bloom and right on cue, the magpies are swooping. However the chill of winter certainly hasn't left us. Through the wonder of social media I get glimpses of weather across the catchment and over the weekend, saw lovely imagery of snow still falling on puzzled kangaroos around Daylesford, and heavy frosts on paddocks and gardens, which are certainly keeping me quite chilled on my morning ride to work.

September is a buzz with activity, in particular with the events and field work being done during National Landcare Week (Sept. 4-10). If you are looking for what's going on near you, or if you wish to register your event, visit the Landcare Australia website <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/>

The theme for 2017 is '*Get hands on with Landcare*'. National Landcare Week is a great opportunity for groups to think about how they might wish to invite people into Landcare, promote the exciting projects occurring in the area and of course to acknowledge and invigorate the current, active and amazing local volunteers.

In this month's Chat I have focussed an article on how we engage with different people within our community, drawing from recent event learnings and cross catchment peer experiences, which may be of interest and challenge the current trends.

Looking ahead, I am excited to read the incoming reports from the 2016-17 Community Grants projects (*due October 31st*). It is of such interest to know how projects progressed, challenges groups faced and the eventual success of a project. With such a variety of activity being undertaken on ground and through education/ knowledge building, it is wonderful to understand how things

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Get hands on with Landcare



eventuated.

Thank you to all the women who have shown interest in the 2017 Chicks in the Sticks (Sept. 10) and to those that have contacted me out of interest in a 10.80 Training Course. Please email me though your interest and location, should you wish to be apart up upcoming courses we will run.

I am off to Townsville from September 12-15 to co-present with Ashely Rogers (GBCMA) at the 2017 International APEN Conference. Our paper titled *Chicks in the Sticks – supporting rural women to lead in natural resource management* was recently accepted, so we're thrilled to share the message with an International audience.

Enjoy the read,

Tess Grieves

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News...

CONGRATULATIONS!

On Friday 1 September, 2017 North Central regional Landcare award nominees and guests travelled to Melbourne to attend Government House for the 2017 Victorian Landcare Awards ceremony.

I wish to congratulate the North Central winners:

Landcare Network Award

Winner: Connecting Country

Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award

Winner: Ian Higgins

Highly Commended: Ian Grenda

Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award

Winner: Tarrangower Cactus Control Group

The winners booklet has the wonderful stories about each category award winner:

<https://www.landcarevic.org.au/resources/victorian-landcare-awards-ipients/2017-victorian-landcare-awards-winners-booklet/>

Ian Higgins and the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group will go on to represent Victoria in the 2018 National Landcare awards! *Well done to all our nominees and winners.*



National School Trees Day planting on the Campaspe River

Article and images by Sandy Scheltema

Kyneton Secondary College students took part in National School Tree Day on July 28 to help the

Campaspe River and Land Management Group plant trees and shrubs on the Campaspe River.

Teacher Anwyn Chapman said: "It's a great opportunity for students to leave their desks, get outside and learn how to care for our environment. By taking part in activities such as this, they learn about the important role nature plays in the life of our planet and why we must protect it. As Albert Einstein said -Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."

More than 2,500 schools get involved in School Trees Day each year, Australia's largest tree planting and nature care event.



Jaimeson (with glasses) and Maela prepare for planting along the Campaspe River on National School Trees Day.

Planet Ark, which organises National School Trees day, has commissioned research which shows that students who take part in outdoor learning activities develop key skills like emotional intelligence, grit or resilience and problem solving. They also perform better in reading, writing, maths and science, with 77% of teachers reporting student improvement in standardised tests. The research also showed that time spent in nature helps reduce stress and enhances concentration and creativity.

President of Campaspe River Land Management group Peter Harding said "We are delighted to have students from Kyneton Secondary College again help us with our revegetation works along the Campaspe River. Our ongoing work along this river is helping restore the health of the Campaspe and bring back threatened species such as the hairy anchor plant."



The proof is in the paddock at Wyche

Farming for Sustainable Soils project participant Gary Pollard was featured in the Weekly Times in August, discussing the cropping yields and innovations his farming business has made to crop and graze over the districts red, self-setting clay soils.

About 40 farms in the area are adversely affected to differing degrees, by levels of the subsoil limestone barrier, which was confirmed after soil pits were dug on each property as part of the North Central Catchment Authority's Farming for Sustainable Soils project about five years ago.

Gary said of the soil pit investigations that "Roots just won't go through that zone — it's too much of something they don't like — and there's nothing you can do. The trick is to get as much crop as you can off that half metre of ground you can use by improving its water-holding capacity."

Read more about the way Gary is farming in the full article:

<http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/agribusiness/farmer-of-the-year/gary-pollard-rises-to-challenge-of-cropping-in-victorias-mallee-region/news-story/12e11b47f861b32531f58e90be88a737>

If you're interested in the Farming for Sustainable Soils project, you can find more information on the CMA website:

<http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/projects/agriculture/#node-116>

Victorian Regional Achievement and Community Awards Finalist

Congratulations to the Northern Bendigo Landcare Group on reaching the semi-finals of the Parks Victoria Environmental Sustainability Award. The group were also nominated for the Urban Landcare Group award at the 2017 Victorian Landcare Awards.

K5 Calici virus update

Centre for Invasive Species Solutions

An impressive 42 per cent average reduction in wild rabbit numbers has been seen at sites where the new Korean strain of the rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus, RHDV1 K5, was released, according to NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) researchers.

NSW DPI scientist and research director for the

Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (previously the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre), John Tracey, said RHDV1 K5 has been confirmed to control rabbits across Australia following national release of the virus in the first week of March 2017.

"Laboratory tests showed 66 per cent of all samples collected from dead rabbits had the K5 strain, including samples from NSW, Victoria, ACT, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia," Dr Tracey said.

"An additional 37 per cent of samples were confirmed to have other RHDV strains.

"Samples and reports, recorded in RabbitScan, www.rabbitscan.org.au and via the free smartphone app are helping us monitor and track the virus.

"With early confirmation that RHDV1 K5 has already spread from at least one release site, we expect the virus to spread further, especially in the cooler, wetter areas of the country.

In August, the Victorian Rabbit Action Network (VRAN) released small grants to community groups to develop and lead rabbit management action plans to better establish K5 into the future. Keep up to date with those funding opportunities through the VRAN website:

<https://rabbitaction.com/about/>

Campaspe River fencing available

Through funding provided by the Victorian government's Regional Riparian Action Plan, the North Central CMA's Caring for the Campaspe project continues to offer fencing, offstream watering, weed control and revegetation incentives to landholders along the river's length through to June 2020.

Project manager Angela Gladman is proud of the outcomes achieved since the project began in 2012. "With the support of river landholders, community groups and other organisations the project has protected and enhanced almost 500ha of riverbank, including the installation of 50km of river fencing."

Without this project, the condition of the riparian land would have continued to degrade which impacts upon the quality of habitat the river ecosystem provides to fish, birds, reptiles and platypus. Without the natural filter a well-grassed riverbank provides, river water quality also suffers which impacts upon the community that depends upon it for their farming livelihood as well as



recreation and amenity values.

“Reducing the impact of grazing stock on riverbanks is the key to healthier waterways. The Caring for the Campaspe project is keen to work with landholders to negotiate fencing styles, alignments and offstream watering options to ensure that the fencing enables better stock management and is resilient to the impacts of flooding,” Ms Gladman explained.



For further information about the generous incentives available along the Campaspe River for a limited time, contact Angela Gladman on 5440 1825 or angela.gladman@nccma.vic.gov.au

FAQ: How can Landcare attract new people, and free up more time for our current, overworked members?

Written by Tess Grieves

I speak to community and Landcare volunteers about this issue weekly and it is of particular presence in the annual Landcare Health survey results.

Workshops and engagement events I have co-hosted recently have been exploring the concepts of ‘strengthening your volunteer base’ and ‘building group capacity’. Whilst these might just seem like trendy buzzwords, the power of these concepts being practiced at a group and networks scale is invaluable.

Some key points and trends that I feel are relatable for conversations with Landcare groups include:

Short-term volunteering is the new trend

Young people, baby boomers, people with family commitments and those of working age are decreasingly interested in formal activities that are not directly related to the delivery of volunteer

services. Therefore meetings and activities need to be well structured, with clear agendas and run on time.

A few questions to ask of your Landcare Group:

- Do our group activities appeal to families?
- Are we able to provide short-term, project based (not member based) opportunities for volunteers?
- Are we inviting people into a non-committal setting, before approaching them about membership?
- Is committed, long-term membership essential?

Recent example: Spontaneous volunteering

In 2015, Barkers Creek Landcare Group ran an [online campaign](#) through social media channels complemented with traditional printed media, to promote their ‘40,000 Trees’ event. The planting event drew 1000 participants from as far as Melbourne and Ballarat, completing the equivalent of approx. 10 years of local Landcare work in a single day for this little group.

Rethinking the model of Landcare

There are so many ways in which people are able to volunteer such as traditional volunteering, project based volunteering, episodic/seasonal volunteering, corporate volunteering and community partnership, spontaneous volunteering, micro volunteering, e-volunteering, e-registration, e-clubs, the list goes on.

Landcare is overwhelmingly run in a traditional volunteering capacity across the state and retaining those volunteers relies on the ability to understand their needs and be flexible.

One thing I often find myself asking when I’m meeting with Landcare groups is; “Why would I join your group?” and “What are you offering me?” Whilst this may sound individualistic, knowing the motives of a volunteer and capitalising on their interest in Landcare is the key to supporting the overall goal of improving our landscapes and sustainable production through social connectivity.

A few questions to ask of your Landcare Group

- Do we know what skills and interests our current members have?
- Is there interest within the group to move toward a central exec committee and

utilising other group volunteers as 'Project Managers' to deliver funded projects?

- Is there a diversity of activity on offer within your group to attract new audiences/interests?
- Are your group meetings welcoming and inviting for new local people who aren't familiar with Landcare? Do you have too many meetings? Are they well structured?
- If you're seeking younger people, what is on offer for them? How are you trying to engage with them?
- For membership based groups, are member roles and commitment requirements (exec and non-exec) clear and understood?

Recent examples/ideas:

- **Digital Landcare Meetings:** Kiewa Catchment Landcare Groups have moved to include online meetings into their group to relieve their members of night travel, lack of attendance and meetings running overtime. The group use Google Drive (requiring a Gmail account). The online process has been written up into a [case study](#) for all Landcare Group to access as a resource.
- **Intrepid Landcare:** After the first Intrepid Landcare program was run recently in the West Gippsland CMA area, 20 young leaders have formed Victoria's first [Intrepid Landcare Group](#). Projects and meetings are managed online via basecamp.com and the new group attracted over 40 people, never before involved in Landcare, to their first tree planting event. A monthly meeting is run online for 1 hour and everyone shares tasks and roles for the group. The group runs traditional Landcare activities like planting and weed control but the 'packaging' is totally different. It's run by younger people for younger people, most of who are not in a position to own or manage land but have a passion for the environment.

Hopefully this is a conversation starter if your group is one in the majority of those interested in attracting new and/or younger generations of people into Landcare. Being open to new opportunities is key, perhaps embracing a new concept of what Landcare is going forward, as volunteer motives change across generations.



Hello everyone,

Well it's certainly been a busy month in August, and a wet one. I bet you are all looking forward to spring time and feeling the sunshine on your faces.

Over the past month, I attended the State Waterwatch Coordinators meeting in Melbourne where I presented the Annual River Health Snapshot Report (2016) to the team. I presented the year that has been and spoke about what's in store for the next 12 months for Waterwatch and the River Detectives program.

I delivered two River Detectives professional development training workshops that focussed on waterbugs. Sophie has been working on our very first version of an online workshop which I hope to send out to teachers this week. If you haven't registered please get in contact with us so we can send you the links.

I have also been out across the catchment running our annual quality assurance and quality control events with our wonderful Waterwatch volunteers. QAQC is an opportunity to test the skills and equipment of the region's citizen scientists to ensure the data being collected is reliable and meets the state standards data confidence framework. Thank you to everyone who attended the workshops, it was great to see you all again! It looks like we are all on track and our equipment is standing the test of time!

Planning is well underway for upcoming events including:

- Campaspe Carp Catch: 15 October 2017 (free event for the whole family – see flyer attached)
- National Water Week event at the Bendigo Botanic Gardens: 17 October 2017 (invite only)
- ALT Waterbug accredited training workshops with John Gooderham: 23 – 28 October 2017 (you will need to register, limited places available see Events page for more details).

There are lots of other great events coming up in September including:



- National Biodiversity Month
- 1 September - National Wattle Day
- 7 September - National Threatened Species Day
- 10 September - National Bilby Day
- 22 September - World Car Free day

How will you get to school or work on World Car Free day?

Enjoy the read!

Cass Davis

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National Water Week Primary Schools Poster Competition - there's still time to enter!

There's still time to take part in the National Water Week Primary Schools Poster Competition! There are great prizes for students and schools, and every student who enters receives a certificate. Entries close Friday 1 September.



All students have to do is create an A3 poster reflecting water-related issues that are important and relevant to them.

The 2017 National Water Week theme is 'Water, the Heart of our Culture'.

Students can use paint, pencils, photos, felt pens, collage materials or computer graphics.

Entries are invited in four categories:

- Prep / Foundation
- Grade 1 & 2
- Grade 3 & 4
- Grade 5 & 6

Join Cool Australia in celebrating Enviroweek – September 10-16

Register now to take part in Enviroweek celebrations from September 10-16 2017. More than 325,000 Australian students have participated so far. It's a great way for your students to see the instant impact that positive, everyday choices can have on themselves and the environment. To top it off, Enviroweek activities can be taught as part of your current curriculum!



Preparing for Melbourne Water's Kids Teaching Kids 2017

Students from East Loddon P-12 are preparing for the upcoming Melbourne Water's MWKTK2017 event in October. The students are off to Melbourne to present their learnings from the River Detectives program while teaching other kids about water quality and why it is so important to farming communities and to the environment. The students will teach other students how to do the tests they have learnt as part of their involvement in the River detectives program.

Kids Teaching Kids is an education model that uses local environmental issues as a theme for learning. Kids Teaching Kids starts in the classroom and extends into the community through the Kids Teaching Kids Learning Model and Program. We know kids are prepared to take up the challenges of saving our environment when we give them responsibility to manage their own learning through the Kids Teaching Kids Learning Model.



The students of East Loddon P-12 are keeping a watchful eye on the Loddon River.



**Do you have an interest in river health?
Are you looking for something a little
different?**

**Why not register now for one of our upcoming
waterbug monitoring workshops!**

We are looking for citizen scientists to take part in ALT waterbug survey's and other activities across the region. We will be hosting two training days with John Gooderham from the Waterbug Company.

John is best known for co-authoring "The Waterbug Book" with Edward Tsyrlin. He is a freshwater ecologist with a thing for bugs. Recently his enthusiasm has been directed at work in the tropics, spending much of his time in Papua New Guinea, but his first love is still the waterbugs of temperate Australia (the cold bits).



The ALT workshops aim to arm community volunteers with the skills in macroinvertebrate identification so they can become skilled volunteers who can monitor sites as part of the North Central Waterwatch community monitoring program. Macroinvertebrate monitoring usually occurs twice per year (autumn and spring).

ALT Waterbug Workshop # 1 - Waterwatch and Native Fish Recover Plan's RiverScan

Waterwatch and the Native Fish Recovery Plan are teaming up to support community volunteers to help monitor the response of waterbugs and water quality in the Box-Pyramid and Gunbower creeks and the lower Loddon and Little Murray rivers.

When: Thursday, 26 October 2017

Time: 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Where: Cohuna/Kerang (details tbc)

Details: Join Waterwatch and John Gooderham from the Waterbug Company to advance your waterbug identification skills. Previous experience with waterbug monitoring for Waterwatch is not required.

Registrations: Free event, places are limited. Register via email to Cass Davis at cass.davis@nccma.vic.gov.au

All participants will receive an accredited certificate of participation!

ALT Waterbug Workshop # 2 - Become a community macroinvertebrate volunteer

North Central Waterwatch will be hosting a workshop where participants will have the opportunity to learn how to collect waterbugs, explore their different characteristics, identify them (in field) and learn how to group waterbugs.



When: Saturday 28 October 2017

Time: 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Where: Meet at the Glenlyon General Store, 63 Barkly Street, Glenlyon, VIC 3461

Details: Join Waterwatch and John Gooderham from the Waterbug Company to gain waterbug identification skills. Previous experience with waterbug monitoring for Waterwatch is recommended but not a requirement.

Registrations: Free event, places are limited. Register via email to Cass Davis at cass.davis@nccma.vic.gov.au

All participants will receive an accredited certificate of participation.

Courses and Resources...



Wetland Ecology and Training Courses, October 2017 - March 2018

Registrations are now filling for our upcoming wetland courses commencing October 2017 - March 2018, presented by SERA 2016 award winning ecologist Damien Cook and Elaine Bayes.

Don't hold off as these NEW courses may be a once off depending on level of attendance. Also it is the last time the Wetland Plant ID will be run in the North Central.

Each course can be done as an individual unit or as a complete package (ask Elaine about discounts).

UNIT 1: The Wonderful Wetland Ecology Bus Tour, 12 & 13 Oct 2017 (\$660 plus GST)

UNIT 2: Wetland Restoration and Management, 16 & 17 Nov 2017 (\$545 plus GST)

Register for both units and pay \$1100 plus GST, *instead of \$1205 (plus GST)*

There are limited places (23-26) so get in early. These units can be done together or separately. Course location varies depending on where the best wetlands are for the training needs.

All of Rakalis' Education and Training program

details can be found online at:

<http://rakali.com.au/education-and-training-2/>

Funding opportunities...

\$22,000 for Young Agriculture Innovators

Applications are now open for the 2018 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

People aged 18-35 can apply for a grant of up to \$22,000 to fund a project on an innovative or emerging scientific issue that will benefit Australia's primary industries. There are 11 categories: cotton; dairy; established, new and emerging rural industries; fisheries and aquaculture; grains; health and biosecurity; meat and livestock; pork; red meat processing; viticulture and oenology and wool.

Winners of the industry category are then invited to apply for the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources' Award, which provides additional funding for an extended research project. For more information email scienceawards@agriculture.gov.au or phone 02 6272 2303

Interested? Nominations close 13 October and information and application forms are online at <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/conference-s-events/scienceawards>



NOW OPEN: Small Environmental Grant Scheme

The Small Environmental Grant Scheme will provide support for people undertaking projects that will make a positive difference to the natural living environment, in land, sea or air, rural or urban.

The application forms, guidelines and data required for applying can be found online at: <http://nwf.org.au/grants/small-environmental-grants/>

Events...



Livestock Health and Biosecurity Victoria are hosting a free event for all livestock producers around Newstead on Wednesday 20th September 2017.

Topics include:

- Find out about the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program requirements
- Help manage risk on your property by developing a biosecurity plan
- Get the latest nutrition and disease management tips and tools for thriving lambs and calves
- Hear the latest on the Johne's Beef Assurance Score (JBAS) tool

Where: Newstead Community Centre

When: Wednesday 20 September

Time: 9.30am - 12.30 (lunch included)

Cost: FREE

RSVP to LHBV on 1300 020 163, online at www.lhbv.org.au or email lhbv@vff.org.au

This event can be viewed on Facebook or you can also register for this workshop and others at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/livestock-health-amp-biosecurity-victoria-13721417245>.

Talking about soils and productivity restraints

Timor West Landcare Group in partnership with the North Central CMA's Farming for Sustainable Soils project are hosting a free field day.

The Field day involves a tour of Dunluce demonstration farm followed by discussion with soil experts: Peter Sale, Phil Dyson and Christian Bannan.

WHEN: 10am Friday 22 September, 2017

WHERE: 215 Bealiba South Road (off Dunolly/Avoca road)

Please RSVP by the 20th September 2017 - for catering purposes.

For more information:

Merron Ipsen: 0488 666 249

Dianne Mullins: 0448 614 004

Ken Calder: 0429 431 216

Sidonia Beef.Naturally Open Gate Event

Come and see first-hand how Sidonia beef farmer Sam White is using holistic management principles to plan rotational grazing, improve soil health, grow more grass and boost animal performance.

As well as a farm tour the day will include interactive sessions on the following topics:

- Tips and strategies for handling large mobs of cattle
- Assessing pasture growth and recovery
- Benefits of planned grazing, including grazing plans and feed budgets
- Visual soil assessments
- Q&A session with innovative farmers using holistic management in a variety of agricultural enterprises.

WHEN: Friday 20 October 2017

TIME: 10.30 am to 3 pm *Buses running from



Benalla & Bendigo (from 8.30 am) with stops along the way.

WHERE Sidonia, Victoria

COST \$20 per person (includes morning tea, lunch and bus travel)

RSVP Places are strictly limited. To apply please complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) Form available at www.qbcma.vic.gov.au. **EOIs should be submitted by 10 am Monday 25 September 2017.**



Develop Livestock Feeding Plans

Dairy Australia is running a two-day short course which encourages farmers to maximise pasture consumption and then address feed gaps as cost efficiently and effectively as possible using supplements.

There are three course dates are

- Rochester area; Tuesday 10 & 17 October
- Kyabram area; Thursday 2 & 9 Nov
- Cobram area; Wednesday 8 & 15 Nov

All days commence at 10am and will finish at 3pm. Lunch provided. This free course is an accredited unit of Certificate IV in Agriculture and run in conjunction with GoTafe.

Places are **limited** to a maximum of 18 people per course. Please call **Murray Dairy on (03) 5833 5312** to secure your place.



North Central hosts the LVI Forum *Camp Seed, Stuart Mill 6-8 October 2017*

Landcare Victoria Inc. is hosting their inaugural annual forum as a newly formed organisation in Stuart Mill in October.

The theme for 2017 is “Sharing the Landcare Story”.

An enthusiastic band of North Central landcare members have worked with LVI to organise two full days of sharing and learning. The event will feature a poster display and discussion of landcare activities from across the region and state, and the option to join a bus trip on the Saturday afternoon.

If you wish to share your landcare stories as part of the poster display you can too! Just go to the registration site for more details.

You will also find out how you can help LVI build a policy platform and advocate at state and federal levels to increase recognition of landcare’s important role in the health of our communities, the economy and of course the environment.

Accommodation will be available at Camp Seed, where there is a range sleeping options, including dormitories, and camping

The event is fully catered for and is free for landcare members and their partners. Please BYO drinks. Registrations close September 21.

Register and view the event programme via: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Z55Y236>

Contact Kaye Rodden (LVI – Dep Chair) at nidgee@reachnet.com.au for more information.



NORTH CENTRAL
Catchment Management Authority
Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People