

North Central Chat

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



September 2022

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

I am fresh off the plane from Sydney, having spent Tuesday 23 to Thursday 25 August immersed in all things Landcare. The 2022 National Landcare Conference was wonderful. The array of speakers, breadth of experience and diversity of backgrounds made choosing which 100 speakers from across four panel sessions and six plenary streams a genuine challenge.

One of the most entertaining and memorable moments was watching MC and Junior Landcare Ambassador Costa stroll out on stage in a pair of white undies, gifted to him from 'Soil your Undies' program manager and 2022 General Jeffery Soil Health Award winner, Dr. Oliver Knox (NSW).

Originally from Scotland, in 2014, Oliver reintroduced soil biology into the University of New England undergraduate syllabus, and since 2018 has driven the 'Soil Your Undies' soil health program in Australia – initially using it as an educational tool with farmers, but with COVID-19 restrictions, the program was adapted to a postal and online citizen science challenge. Coverage of the program has embedded the concept of soil health to an audience of more than half a million Australians and educated an estimated 12,000 school children in soil health. If you have five minutes spare, I encourage you to take a look at Oliver's video and acceptance speech from the [2022 National Landcare Awards](#) (*from 1.05 mark*). It will spark so much joy and energise you to take a closer look at your soil no matter the size of your patch or paddock.

Turning our attention back to the North Central CMA region, I'd like to sincerely thank and congratulate the 2022 Victorian Landcare Grant applicants. Our regional assessment panel commended the variety, quality and value of the projects put forward. We have now sent the recommendation list off to the Victorian Landcare Team.



The Victoria Nature Festival is planned for 12-25 September 2022. The theme is 'Connect. We need nature, and nature needs us'. We'd love all Victorians to get outdoors and take part in our first ever Great Vic Nature Walk!

During September we are hosting the third Landcare Network Chairs meeting of the year with a focussed discussion on Carbon Farming and the Emissions Reduction Fund and will meet with our Local Landcare Facilitators online to hear what's happening around the grounds.

Within the North Central CMA Landcare Team, we have some exciting changes taking place. I will be taking on three days a week as Project Manager of A Healthy Coliban Catchment and Tullaroop Catchment Restoration projects until March 2023. Darren and I welcome Kristie Smith (Eastern Bendigo Landcare Facilitator) who will backfill my Regional Landcare Coordinator role during until March next year.

Have a wonderful month, head into the fresh spring air and join in some of the local Victoria Nature Festival action.

Enjoy the read,

Tess Grieves

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North Central CMA
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Connecting rivers, landscapes, people

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) acknowledges Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the region, their rich cultures, spiritual connection to Country.

www.nccma.vic.gov.au



News...

Power Of Landcare | Shaping Our Future

More than 1,200 delegates and 140 speakers came together in person for the first time since 2018 for the 2022 National Landcare Conference at the ICC Sydney.

Darren and I attended alongside our Victorian colleagues from Goulburn Broken, Glenelg Hopkins, North East CMAs. We split up across plenary sessions to get the most out of the speakers and sessions on offer across the two days.

With the investment into hybrid conferences, more than 800 people were able to join as virtual delegates, making it the most well attended Landcare Conference to date.

A few highlights - I encourage you to check out the [Landcarer website](#), which will house all the keynote speakers, panel and plenary sessions including

- Keynote Speaker: [Prof. Mark Howden](#) Director of the Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions at The Australian National University
- [Indigenous Knowledge: The Health and Management of Soils](#)
- [Climate, Community and Connection: Landcare Transforming Australia](#) with Claire O'Rourke

There was something for everyone at this year's event. From a morning address from Senator the Hon. Tanya Plibersek Minister for the Environment and Water, the Landcare Farming panel session and grassroots Landcare project presentations, through to a powerful Landcare mindfulness session facilitated by Shelley McCardle. All masterfully MC'd by the one and only, Costa Georgiadis.



Congratulations to Landcare Australia for coordinating such a wonderful event with the strongest most diverse

representation of Landcarers from across every sector and state.

For all the content from the 2022 National Landcare Conference visit:

<https://www.landcarer.com.au/blogs/melanie-hartley/2022/08/18/landcareconf22-education-resources>.

Dusting off the data

Article by Phil Dyson (*Dr. Dirt*) North Central CMA.

Way back in 2011 the North Central CMA was approached by the Bureau of Rural Sciences asking if we would consider participating in the National DustWatch program.

DustWatch monitors the amount of soil and sediment moving across the landscape through wind erosion. We accepted the offer, purchased an instrument, signed up to the program, and with the blessing and support of the Northern United Forestry Group we installed the instrument within their salt land restoration program site at Kamarooka. Some ten years later we continue to participate in DustWatch with essential support from the comprising senior scientists within the Gunnedah Research Centre of the NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

More than forty instruments, managed by community groups and agencies, now operate throughout south-eastern Australia. Dustwatch worked so well for the North Central CMA in our efforts to assess soil lost through wind erosion that in 2015 we installed a second instrument at Wycheproof. Last year NSW DustWatch upgraded both of these instruments to the latest continuous recording technology. They continuously monitor the amount dust in the atmosphere. The network allows us to track soil loss occurs, the amount of soil in the atmosphere and its passage across our region and indeed the eastern states. This tells us about the effectiveness of our farming systems in managing wind erosion and warns us when soil loss is high.

DustWatch instruments record in real time and are linked back to the Gunnedah Research facility where data is automatically uploaded to the DustWatch website. This allows us to see and record all our numbers data as well as the dust generated by our neighbours in the Mallee, South Australia and NSW. The instruments tell us when atmospheric dust exceeds a threshold of 25 micrograms per cubic metre, a regular occurrence when arid conditions prevail throughout the northern croplands, conditions that see more than 90 tonnes per square kilometre moving across the land.

The scientists at Gunnedah produce a monthly report for DustWatch comparing the amount of atmospheric dust generated with the condition of the land, particularly ground cover (<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/land-and-soil/soil-degradation/wind-erosion/community-dustwatch/dustwatch-publications>). The Wycheproof and Loddon Plains (Kamarooka) instruments afford the most southerly records in the DustWatch program.



Stephan Heidenreich Senior Scientist, Climate and Atmospheric Scientist with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment installing the new Loddon Plains (Kamarooka) instrument last year.



Communities Caring for Catchments

Spring has sprung and there is lots happening over the next few months.

Our gardens, farms and bush blocks are abuzz with butterflies, flies, bees, bugs and beetles. And now we have a local publication, proudly produced by the Upper Campaspe Landcare Network, to help you identify these beneficial insects – [Your guide to the Insects of Central Victoria.](#)

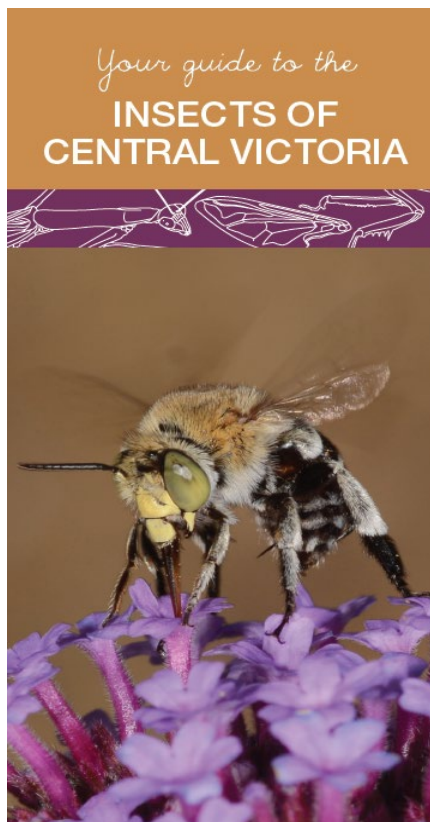
The guide features insects likely to be observed in your garden and nearby bushland – with a surprising number of native bee species, moths and native flies. These insects are much better adapted to pollinating our local flora than the introduced honeybee and do a great job in your garden as well.

The City of Greater Bendigo is launching the guide on Saturday 1 October from 10.30-11.30am at the Bendigo Library followed by a walk for anyone interested in learning how to use the guide and spot all the insects enjoying the spring flush of flowers. The guide is freely available at council offices, libraries and through local Landcare groups. [Book your spot at the launch here.](#)

There is also a fantastic program being delivered by the Victorian State Government, the Victoriana Nature Festival from 12-25 September. Get involved!

North Central Waterwatch, City of Greater Bendigo and Goldfields Libraries are partnering to launch a new aquarium currently being built in the Bendigo Library. This will showcase small-bodied native fish local to central Victoria and will be a fantastic drawcard and educational opportunity. The free public launch is planned on 14 September from 11.30 am. Be there to watch the grand unveiling, no registration required.

Tania MacLeod
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 North Central CMA
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Water Storages Update

Region	Water Storage	% full at 25 July	% full at 25 Aug
Murray Storages	Dartmouth Dam	95.35	↑98.67
	Hume Dam	93.00	↑96.00
	Third Lake	0.26	0.26
	Reedy/Middle Lk	91.25	↑97.55
	Kangaroo Lake	93.7	↑95.60
	Kow Swamp	62.18	↑90.37
	Lake Boga	79.47	↑79.38
	Lake Charm	93.72	↑93.44
Loddon Storages	Cairn Curran Res	54.43	↑71.97
	Tullaroop Res	60.72	↑78.60
	Laanecoorie Res	43.19	↑85.88
Bullarook Storages	Newlyn Res	83.66	↑101.89
	Hepburns Lagoon	74.76	↑105.63
Goulburn Storages	Lake Eildon	83.17	↑92.78
	Waranga Basin	78.01	↑93.07
Campaspe	Lake Eppalock	48.89	↑56.74
Coliban Water Storages	Upper Coliban Res	91.40	↑100.70
	Lauriston Res	82.00	↑95.40
	Malmsbury Res	57.60	↑108.40

www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/catchments/storage-levels

www.coliban.com.au/about-us/our-reservoirs

Upcoming Events and Special Days

September	
National Biodiversity Month	Sep
National Wattle Day	1 Sep
National Walk to Work Day	2 Sep
National Threatened Species Day	7 Sep
National Bilby Day	11 Sep
International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer	16 Sep
National Organic Week	12-18 Sep
World Rivers Day	25 Sep
International Day of Awareness on Food Loss and Waste Reduction	29 Sep
October	
Australian Wildlife Week	3-9 Oct
World Habitat Day	4 Oct
Elmore Field Days	4-6 Oct
World Migratory Bird Day	8 Oct
International Day of Rural Women	15 Oct
National Bird Week	17-23 Oct
Aussie Backyard Bird Count	17-23 Oct
National Water Week	18-24 Oct
National Ride-2-Work Day	19 Oct
Australian National Field Days	20-22 Oct
United Nations Day	24 Oct
November	
Pollinator Week	12-20 Nov
National Recycling Week	7-13 Nov
World Science Day for Peace and Development	10 Nov
World Fisheries Day	21 Nov

Sustainable Ag Snippet...

Soil Moisture conditions across the North Central Region

Dale Boyd, Season Risk Agronomist, Agriculture Victoria.

The soil moisture monitoring project, with the use of underground probes, provides real-time soil water content data to Victoria’s farmers.

Monitoring sites have been set up in cropping regions throughout the state by Agriculture Victoria.

The sites record soil water content at one source point from 30 centimetres down to one metre as a reference point for a paddock.

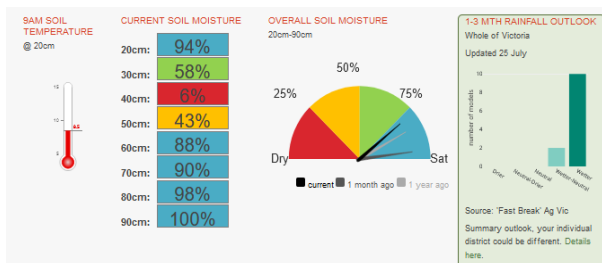
To access information provided in the graphs shown here, and many more, log onto the new [Agriculture Victoria soil moisture monitoring dashboard](#).

No login or passwords are required, and speedos are automatically updated and will represent the most recent rainfall.

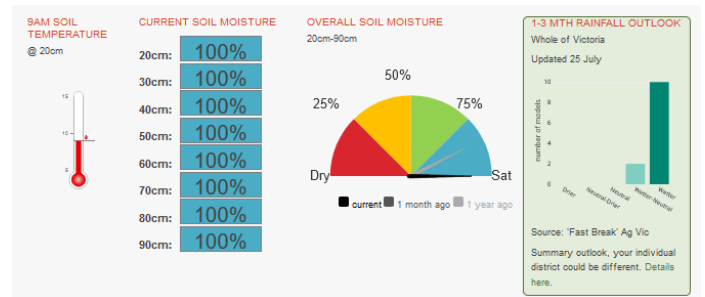
Central Victoria has high soil moisture conditions, with some areas having near perfect moisture conditions, and some low lying areas a bit too wet and showing effects of water logging around Mitiamo, Raywood and Serpentine/Bridgewater.

Patchy storms have passed over the region during August and it seems like each cloud has the possibility of depositing rain and maintaining a full or near full profile as we enter spring.

These are positive indicators for high yield potential and most crops have nutrition programs applied to almost meet their potential.

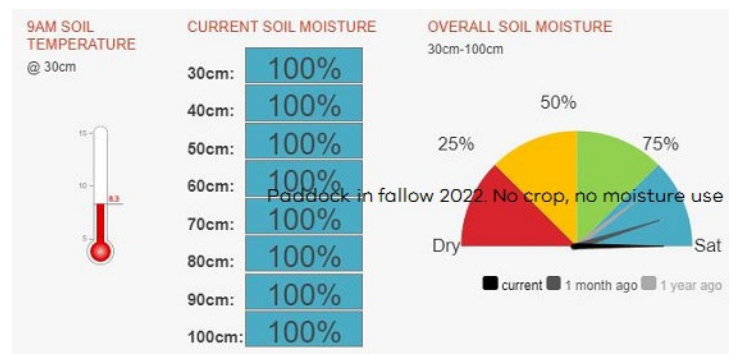


Ideal – West of Raywood with high yield potential wheat, rainfall outlook is still positive.



Neilborough – Wheat. Soil moisture status of field capacity since the break (5 inches in April)

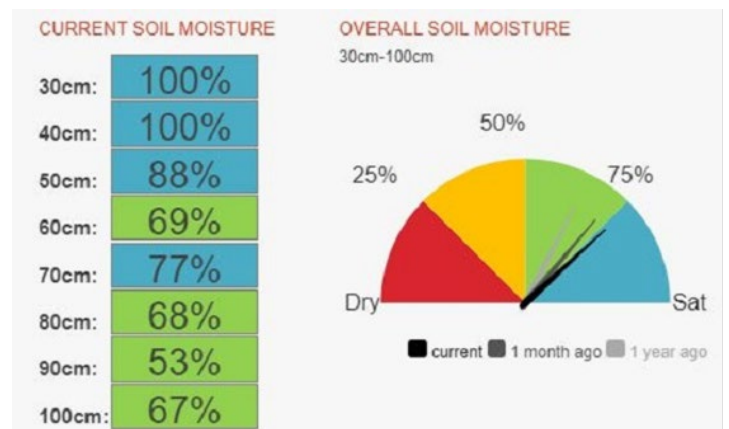
Coonoer Bridge soil moisture (30 – 100 cm)



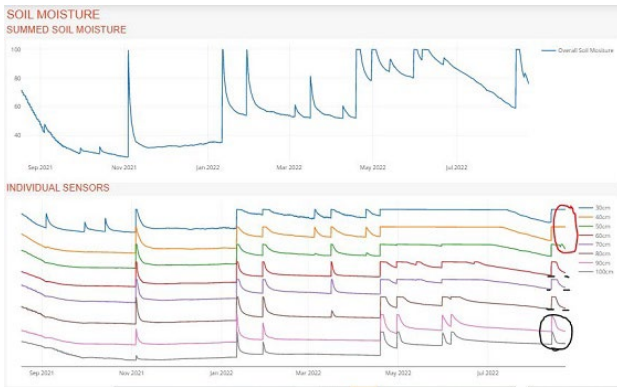
Note - this paddock is in fallow with no crop growing over winter. Additional moisture has been banked with August rain events.

Moisture has moved down to 100 centimetres this season, but other district sites with crop growing could be drier.

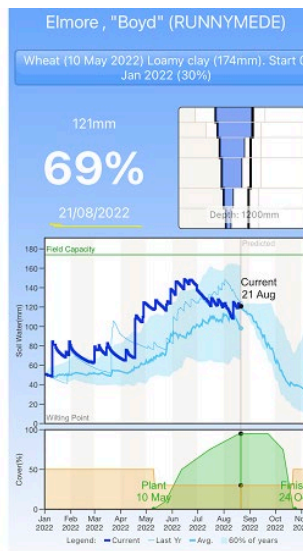
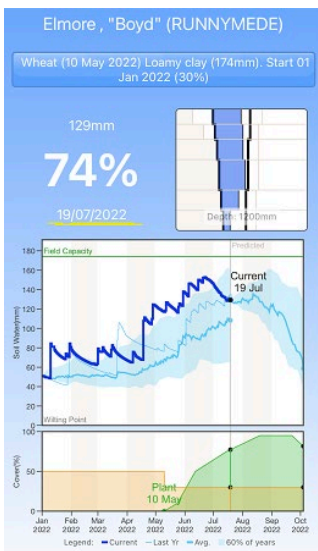
Elmore soil moisture (30 – 100 cm)



After a dry July where the wheat crop had started to deplete some deep soil moisture reserves, August has been wet. Interpretation of soil moisture data can be challenging, and Elmore commonly has preferential flow down the side of the probe with large rain events.



Total moisture has improved by 15 per cent from 60 per cent on 10 August.



Modelled soil moisture at Elmore with the soilwater app compared to moisture probe data, indicate similar line trend changes associated with rainfall and moisture changes with the developing biomass of the wheat crop.

The two screen shots (above) from the soilwater app model are from 19 July and current conditions. They reflect the mid profile moisture being used by the wheat crop. Conditions are now wet after frequent rain events.



Photos from recent August fieldwork show wet barley and the optimum conditions for wheat (Serpentine) in the district.



Courses & Resources...

Landcare Australia YouTube Channel

The Landcare Australia YouTube channel not only boasts a tonne of great webinars, expert speakers and Junior Landcare resources, it's also your one stop shop for accessing session of this year's conference.



If you're a visual learner, couldn't make it to Sydney, had a friend or colleague presenting, or simply prefer to digest information when it suits you, head over to the LAL YouTube channel as see what takes your fancy.

Wise Waterways

A Workshop in Rural and Urban Stream Management Principles and Practices

Vision

To provide a forum for a comprehensive overview of rural and urban stream rehabilitation and management principles and practices.

Aims

To provide an integrated approach to stream management including hydrology, water quality, ecology, riparian vegetation, geomorphology and rehabilitation techniques.

To provide extensive "hands on" experience through on ground group assignments.

On completion of the workshop and a short assessment task, students may be eligible to receive 8 points credit towards the Charles Sturt University's Master of Environmental Management (with specialisations).

For more information go [Wise Water Ways – 24-28 October 2022, Beechworth Victoria](#)

When: 24 to 28 October
Where: Beechworth

Cost: *Course Fees:* \$1265 inc ~ Full Workshop Fee includes morning teas, lunches, dinners (excluding Wed), annual subscription to RBMS

Accommodation: A special rate of \$190 per room per night (single occupancy) has been organised. This includes a buffet breakfast.

Register: before October 3.

Indigenous Plant Use Booklet

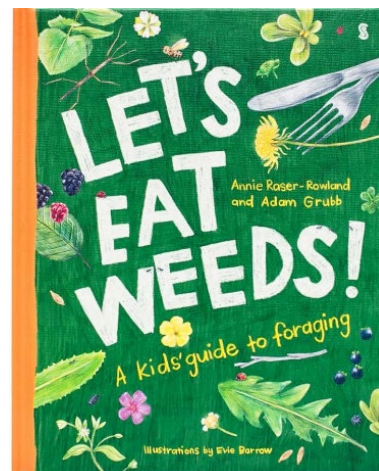
Zena Cumpston, a Barkandji woman, and Melbourne University research fellow, has authored the [Indigenous plants use: A booklet on the medicinal, nutritional and technological use of indigenous plants](#) (The University of Melbourne, 2020).

This booklet has been produced to help individuals, schools and community groups in Victoria grow and appreciate indigenous plants. It contains information on more than 50 indigenous plant species, including their uses by Aboriginal people.

Let's Eat Weeds! A Kids' Guide to Foraging

From salads to main dishes, edible weeds are delicious!

Find out how to identify them, where and when to find them, and how to cook them



Ever thought weeds were just pesky plants to pull out and throw away? Think again! This informative, funny, and beautiful book will show you just how great edible weeds can taste. Learn to smell your way to an angled onion, bake weeds 'n' cheese pie, and safely harvest the juicy fruits of a prickly pear.

This is the ultimate companion for the young urban or rural forager. Once you've read it, you'll start to see food all around you, every time you go for a walk.

Written by Annie Raser-Rowland and Adam Grubb and illustrated by Evie Barrow, this wonderful book was released in September 2021 and has been a hit with Junior Landcarers and budding chefs across Australia.

Events...

Wedderburn Regional Roundtable, Monday 5 September

The new [North Central Regional Catchment Strategy](#) has been launched and we are hitting the road to talk with local communities about putting it into action!

Do you live or work in/around Wedderburn?
Are you interested in land, water and biodiversity management?

Come along to hear about current natural resource management (NRM) projects and discuss priorities and opportunities to work together in the future.

When: Monday 5 September from 5.45pm-8pm

Where: Wedderburn Neighbourhood House
24 Wilson St, Wedderburn

Cost: FREE

RSVP: and advise of any dietary requirements via info@nccma.vic.gov.au or (03) 5448 7124.

Victoria Nature Festival 2022

With more than 50 events and experiences, there's heaps of fun ways to connect with and act for nature at the Victoria Nature Festival.

Wherever you live in Victoria, you can get involved. We're hosting events from the Mallee region, around Metropolitan Melbourne to the hills of the Yarra Valley and down to Phillip Island. And we've got something for people of all ages, abilities and interests.

The full program is now available: [Victoria Nature Festival 2022 program | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Local events in the North Central CMA region include:

- [Wandering the plains: plains-wanderer grasslands springtime walk ~ Terrick Terrick](#)
September 14
- [Great Vic Nature Walk Kyneton ~ Connect with the Campaspe River](#)
September 18, 10:00 to 12:00 pm
- [Guided audio walk in Castlemaine: Djaara First Nations stories ~ Kalimna Park Castlemaine](#)
September 18, 2:00 to 3:30 pm

For all your Victoria Nature Festival 2022 links, online resources and other materials visit the [Victoria Nature Festival Hub](#).



Chicks in the Sticks 2022

There is still time to secure your tickets for the October 8 Chicks in the Sticks event at Camp David Farm.

New speaker and event details are being updated regularly via [Chicks in the Sticks Ticket website](#). We are thrilled to announce that alongside our brilliant line-up of local speakers, the wonderful Millie Ross is joining in the celebrations.

Millie is a professional horticulturist, garden designer, writer and presenter on ABCTV Gardening Australia. An innovative gardener with an unconventional approach, Millie specialises in creative construction, sourcing local, low-cost materials and using plants in unusual ways.

Bring along your best friend, mother, sister or colleague to what will be another incredible event.

Saving the Southern Sandalwoods

The Echuca -Moama Landcare Group invite volunteers to come help plant out some more Murray pines and acacias on the Sandhills.

See tree necklacing in action. Be serenaded by Bella Acapella and come join our feast. Catch up with likeminded nature lovers and save an endangered species.

When: Sunday October 9 2022 from 10 am- 2 pm

Where: 2 Baillieu Rd, Torrumbarry

Contact: event host Tuesday Browell via tuesdaybrowell@bigpond.com





Harcourt Valley Landcare is celebrating 25 Years

You're invited to join the celebrations from 10 am at Leanganook on Mount Alexander to recognise and celebrate the 25 years of Landcare in Harcourt.

Gather to remember and recognise our past achievements and look to the future with our new action plan. There will be awards for long serving members and past members, photo displays, good company and a delicious morning tea.

For more information on the group visit [Harcourt Valley Landcare Group](#)

When: Sunday 25 September 2022

Where: Leanganook Campground on Mount Alexander

Cost: FREE

RSVP: By September 16 to

info@harcourtvalleylandcare.org

RSVP Landcare Forum in October - Save the date!

The North East Region landcare community will host the Victorian Landcare Forum in Wangaratta from Thursday 13 (evening) to Saturday 15 October.

An exciting forum program is in the late stages of planning, and Landcarers and supporters will soon be invited to register their attendance.

Please keep a look out for your invitation and be sure to register early to secure your spot and help our planning. This will be a fantastic opportunity to share Landcare knowledge and experience from around the state – and to see first-hand the achievements of landcare in the North East.

When: October 13-15, 2022

Where: Wangaratta

Cost: TBD

RSVP: via Landcare Victoria Inc- sign up to the e-news to ensure you receive your invitation.

November 2022 - Gunbower Island turtle nest protection project

Turtles Australia will be on site for the nesting of the Murray River turtles, they nest during November/December.

Volunteers will be checking out known nesting sites and searching to identify previously unknown sites.

This will involve visiting farms and bushland and doing a lot of walking. You do not need to commit to the whole time and are welcome to come for anything from a single day, weekend whatever time you can give will be most appreciated.

Accommodation will be near Gunbower, details will be forwarded to after you register.

When: Sunday November 6, 2022

Where: Gunbower Island

RSVP: via [Turtles Australia Inc - November 2022 - Gunbower Island turtle nest protection project](#).



Funding opportunities...



Grants are now open

Community Events, Minor Grants, and Sponsorship and Contributions grants are open!

The grant program names may be familiar to other grants however significant changes have been made to ensure that applying for a grant is simple and equitable.

The major changes to the grants program include;

- The ability for groups/organisations to apply for more than one grant per year.
- Groups and organisations can apply if they are outside of the shire providing, they can prove the project/initiative benefits residents in the NGS.
- Groups that are not a registered entity with an ABN can be auspiced by a group/organisation that does have an ABN. The auspice organisation will not be penalised because they have accessed a grant on behalf of another entity.
- Grant priorities are more explicit and clearer.
- What the grants can be used for is clearer.
- Minor grants funding has been increased to \$1000.

You can find detailed information about each of the grants on the NGSC [Grants webpage](#)

Parks Victoria's Youth Volunteering for Nature Fund



Applications close: Monday 3 October 2022

Funding available: up to \$2,000 (individuals) or \$5000 (groups) to help fund your idea

Express your interest in the Youth Volunteer for Nature Fund by [register your details](#)

Guidelines: <https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/get-into-nature/volunteering/volunteering-innovation-fund>

Online information session: 16 September 2022: Volunteering Innovation Fund and Youth Volunteering for Nature Information Session [Register to attend](#).

Further information: contact Parks Victoria via phone [13 19 63](tel:131963) or email: volunteer@parks.vic.gov.au

Nature Fund

Leveraging private and philanthropic investment to protect our natural environment



The Nature Fund has been established by the Victorian Government to support high impact projects that deliver on the goals of **Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037** (Biodiversity 2037), the Government's plan to stop the decline of native plants and animals and improve the state's natural environment.

The Nature Fund encourages collaboration and partnerships between government, business, philanthropy and the community to deliver high impact projects that contribute to improving Victoria's biodiversity.

Guidelines and Common Questions: please read the Nature Fund's [guidelines](#) and the [commons questions](#) before submitting an EOI.

Information Sessions: two information sessions will be run on the Nature Fund on Thursday 01 September at 10.30 am OR Tuesday 06 September at 2.30 pm. To register please email the Nature Fund program team naturefund@delwp.vic.gov.au.

More information: <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/nature-fund>

Contact: if you have questions about the Nature Fund, email the Nature Fund program team naturefund@delwp.vic.gov.au