

North Central chat

MARCH 2018

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

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

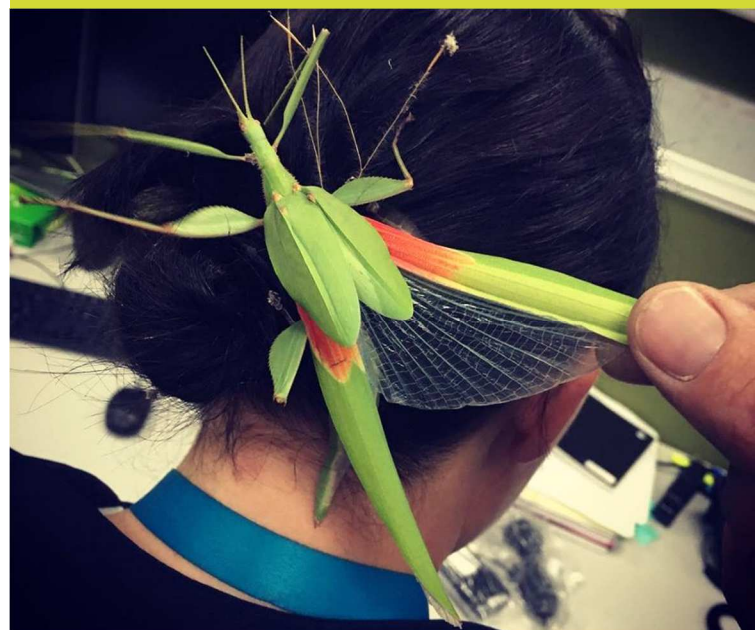
The seasons are shifting, and as we move into Autumn, the winds are picking up, temperatures are moving into a bearable range but the long-awaited rain break may still be a while off as Victoria experiences above average March to May temperatures.

The Future Farming Expo on February 21, hosted Climatologist Dr Andrew Watkins (BOM), who discussed the seasonal climate outlook. Andrew's summary indicated that summer temperatures were well above average across Australia, soil moisture has been below average in western Victoria and the autumn rainfall predications are average-dry across most of Victoria. The weak La Niña period is in decline, which is having little impact in Australia, as we transition into a neutral winter period. I am always amazed at how practical and useful the BOM presentations are at the annual expo, and encourage you to visit <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary/> for further information, climate outlook videos and data from your local area.

March sees the first of our 2018 Landcare Network meetings, with the Network Facilitators meeting on 20 March and the Network Chairs on 22 March. Discussions will focus on the changes to the coming round of grants, updating the Landcare Support Plan (2018-2023) and updates from the local Landcare scene.

I was very pleased to attend the Loddon Plains Landcare Network, Buloke Northern Grampians Landcare Network and Connecting Country Landcare meetings this past month to learn about local action, issues and planned activities for 2018. There is so much more than just fantastic tree planting happening in Landcare in our region. Community support and interest in new skills such as drone use, GIS mapping and ecological

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monitoring is so energizing.

And to finish, last week we were joined by this HUGE insect in the office... *any ideas on the species?*

Enjoy the read,

Tess Grieves

Regional Landcare Coordinator

North Central Catchment Management Authority

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News...

Have you got gorse?

RMCG and the Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) are running a community survey to understand how people are managing gorse and what support they need from the VGT.

The VGT uses government investment to establish and support community-led projects, which aim to eradicate gorse where possible across Victoria.

The purpose of this project is to gain an understanding of the types of support that communities need from VGT to manage gorse in their local areas. RM Consulting Group have been engaged by VGT to run the survey, which seeks information about work done on your property to control gorse

The results from this survey will help identify opportunities to provide better support to you or your networks.

The survey should not take any more than 5 to 10 minutes to complete and you can go in the draw to win 1 of 3 Woolworths vouchers. The survey can be accessed via this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VGTsurvey>

Biochar now included in the Carbon Farming Initiative

The biochar industry in Australia & New Zealand recently announced that the inclusion of biochar was made in the finalised method determination measurement of soil carbon sequestration in agricultural systems under the Federal Government's Carbon Farming Initiative.

Don Coyne (First Public Officer of ANZBI) explained in a recent article that "excluding tyres, rubber and sewerage this means farmers can now be paid to carry out ecosystem services on our behalf by applying biochar to their soils and managing carbon viably."

This new method provides an opportunity for landholders and businesses to earn Australian Carbon Credit Units by an increase in soil organic carbon. The benefits associated with applying biochar could include higher crop yields, better pasture, reduced erosion and improved soil health. biochar is made by heating biomass in limited

oxygen by a process called pyrolysis.

Pyrolysis or carbonisation can create bioenergy, biochar, wood vinegar and bio oils, nothing is wasted from sustainable sources of underutilised biomass that would normally decompose or be burnt and return to atmosphere.

For more information on the new method visit; <https://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/government/emissions-reduction-fund/methods/measurement-of-soil-carbon-sequestration-in-agricultural-systems>

New App alert



Taungurung Clans now have a language app free for downloading from the Apple app store.

<http://taungurung.com.au/2017/taungurung-language-app/>

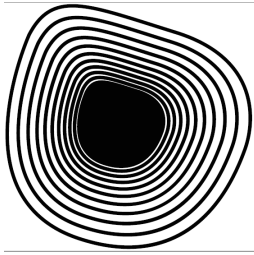
Have you been over the Green Bridge?



The concept of the green bridge is not new, however it did come up several times at the Expo in Donald, so I investigated further.

The prevalence of crop pests and virus carryover in cropping systems, which are commonly harbouring in the 'green bridge', is a hot topic of investigation by [GRDC](#). A green bridge consists of crop volunteers usually from last year's crop, and sometimes from crops grown one or two years before, plus weeds emerging from seeds set over many years, or from new windborne weed seeds

The viruses investigated are exclusively transmitted through aphid vectors, which I am now aware, hone in on the 'green bridges' like fighter pilots, as they fly above them, setting down to feed and in turn cause significant crop losses and damage during the growing season.



REGIONAL CENTRE FOR CULTURE

Article by Dominika Balwin (RCC)

Regional Centre for Culture in 2018 is an initiative of the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, in partnership with the Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Clans Corporation, Central Goldfields Shire, City of Greater Bendigo, Hepburn Shire and Mount Alexander Shire.

The year's activities have already kicked off with our official launch on Wednesday February 10 in Bendigo. The night's entertainment was drawn from all over the four participating municipalities, and drew couples, families and everyone else along for a party in Rosalind Park. The highlight of the evening was a moving ceremony of song and dance by Traditional Owners, the Dja Dja Wurrung and the announcement of YAPENYA, a celebratory event that will be taking place on November 17, 2018.

We are delighted to be working closely with both Visit Victoria and the ABC Central Victoria. You may have heard the ABC's live outside broadcast from Rosalind Park on February 14 during the afternoon drive program from 3pm to 4pm hosted by Fiona Parker. Visit Victoria has committed to promote four tourist itineraries around region in March, June, August and November. We are currently working to develop the communications for these itineraries (known as "Meander") which will be focused on encouraging visits to stay in the region for 3+ nights and to move across the region sampling its cultural activities of all kinds: food, arts activities, natural wonders and more.

Our website, www.rcc2018.com is now densely populated with performances, exhibitions, markets, festivals and more - it's genuinely awe-inspiring to be able to observe the wealth of activities taking place in this inaugural Victorian Regional Centre for Culture. **Greater Bendigo** is of course one of the huge drawcards in the RCC area. Upcoming events that are receiving the direct support of the RCC include Scots Day Out and the Bendigo Easter Festival.

In **Mount Alexander Shire**, 2018 got going with RCC-supported events Maldon Twilight Dinner and Newstead Live. The RCC is also directly supporting Harcourt's Applefest, the Taradale Mineral Springs Festival and Arts Open.

On March 3, one of the RCC's key community events will take place in Newstead. Entitled Water Hole, this event will feature a parade created by the local school children, a compliments caravan, performances by local and other artists and a performance of *In the Deep End* by Asking for Trouble who will perform in the Newstead and District Swimming Pool. The highlight is expected to be a community dance-off featuring the volunteer committees of Newstead.

One of the delights of working in **Central Goldfields** is the collaborative approach taken by the Dunolly Community. The Tiny Towns Trail organised from Dunolly will featured elements directly supported by the RCC including a recycled fashion parade, community art project on the theme of Red Dog that will be creating art for display in the windows along Broadway, an exhibition by artist Deborah Halpern and more. The RCC is promoting the Tiny Towns Trail with the National Trust Heritage Festival. The RCC is also presenting performances at the March Talbot Market and Dunolly Community Market on November 11.

The variety and distinctive communities of **Hepburn Shire** have inspired the RCC team to develop a series of performances for markets in including the Daylesford Sunday Market and Glenlyon Village Market. We are also working on developing opportunities with the Booktown on Sundays series that takes place throughout 2018 in Clunes and the various tentacles of Words in Winter that create literary activities in Creswick, Trentham and Clunes.



Courses and Resources...

2016-17 Landcare Report Card

The latest North Central Landcare Report Card is now ready to roll out to your community.

The annual report card summaries the previous financial years' achievements including data from the annual Landcare survey, Community Grants outputs and regional Landcare investment from Australian and Victorian Government programs.



The report card is available online via: <http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/resources/publications/landcare-report-card-2016-17>

Fact sheet on tax incentives for establishing shelterbelt

The Australian Tax Office (ATO) has produced a fact sheet on the tax incentives for primary producers for establishing shelterbelts entitled "Establishing shelterbelts on land used in primary production business: Can I claim a tax deduction? What you need to know" (Dec. 2016).

The fact sheet was developed in a partnership between the ATO and the Basalt to Bay Landcare Network, and provides primary producers with useful information on the taxation, productivity and biodiversity benefits that can result from the establishment of shelterbelts.

The PDF of the fact sheet is available via <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/resources/tax-incentives-for-establishing-shelterbelts/>

Farm Chemical Users Course

Are you a Landcare member?

Do you want to upskill and undertake chemical use for pest and weed management?

The North Central CMA Landcare team is offering two Farm Chemical Users Courses in Glenlyon and Kyneton for Landcare members through Bendigo TAFE training providers.

Over this three-day course, (*two full days and a one hour competency test on Day 3*) participants will receive training in the basic skills and knowledge to select, purchase, transport, store, record and use agricultural and veterinary chemicals responsibly. Completion of this course is required before participants can be issued with an Agricultural Chemical Users Permit (ACUP) from Agriculture Victoria (**participants will apply for and fund their own ACUP permit*)

Attending and receiving accreditation for this course normally costs \$450.00, however the North Central CMA is offering this heavily subsidised course at **only \$100.00 for 20 Landcare members** in the North Central CMA region.

Two courses will run as follows:

BOOKED OUT Course 1: Glenlyon (near Daylesford): Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11 & Thursday 12 April

Course 2: Kyneton: Monday, 30th April, Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd May

Payment is required upon completion of the online EOI application. A maximum of 10 participants can be subsidised for each course.

Sign up ASAP to secure a limited place via: <https://landcarechemicaluserscourse.eventbrite.com.au>





Cesar PestNotes

Dr Sioban de Little, Sustainable Agriculture senior consultant at Melbourne based Cesar, recently spoke on all things aphids at the Future Farming Expo.

A highlight of her presentation was the service the Cesar provide, free to growers, agronomists and farm advisers, PestFacts. Subscribing to PestFacts south-eastern is one of the easiest ways you can stay informed about invertebrate pest threats in your region. A map service also provides insight into crop pests that have been reported through to Cesar since 2006.

Sioban stressed the importance of photographing your unknown crop pest well (e.g. photos of grubby hands and a tiny speck aren't ideal) and sending it through. This is vital information for understanding the pests within cropping systems and assisting growers to make informed decisions about spray selections, timing, and rotations to increase the beneficial insects within cropping systems and reduce resistance in pest populations.

Visit: <http://cesaraustralia.com/sustainable-agriculture/> for more information and be sure to check out the insect gallery, many of which you may recognise in their juvenile form if you are a part of the Waterwatch program.

Sustainable Ag Snippet...

2018 Future Farming Expo

A large crowd of almost 120 people turned out at Donald to attend the Future Farming Expo. This year the North Central Catchment Management Authority partnered with the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority to deliver this fantastic event. This is the sixth expo run by the North Central CMA, which are held in different locations around the north central region.

The Donald Recreation Reserve was the ideal location for this event being close the North Central and Wimmera CMA boundaries and right in the heart of the farming community. The Donald community was very supportive of this event with volunteers helping to set up the venue to make sure the day ran very smoothly.

On the day there were 12 presenters covering a variety of topics based around risk and opportunity. The first key note speaker, Phil Callaghan, set up the day taking on investment for long-term sustainability highlighting that

investment and growth in agriculture had done very well over the past 20 years.

Three local farmers Adam Campbell, Jason Pymmer and Chad Frost were generous enough to give up their time and provide an insight in to their farming operations and the importance of family and community in rural regions. Each farmer had different farming enterprises from broad acre cropping, mixed farming and pigs. They all had challenges ranging from the traditional day to day management to sourcing of reliable labour. The common themes among the farmers were family and community, which are obviously an important part of farming and living in a rural area.

The concurrent sessions have been popular at previous events and it was no different at this one. There were three concurrent sessions, which gave participants a choice of six speakers to choose from. These sessions covered a variety of topics such as virtual fencing, which is still being developed but will provide great benefits for farmers once development is finalised. There was also the latest weather forecast from Andrew Watkins from the Bureau of Meteorology, which is always a popular topic with farmers.

This was followed by Dale Boyd (Agriculture Victoria) providing the latest soil moisture readings from around the region. There were also presentations on succession planning and business decision making, these topics were relevant to a lot of participants at the expo. "It was one of the best events I have been too - excellent speakers and well organised" one farmer said.

There were many businesses who took the opportunity to set up a display at the expo. These proved popular with participants and gave many local agricultural providers an opportunity to engage with farmers throughout the day.

It was great to see the Donald community supporting this event, the day was a huge success with many people commenting on the how pleased they were with the speakers and topics on the day.

Darren Bain

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Upcoming 'Days' in March

Clean Up Australia Day 2018

- Community - Sunday 4 March
- Schools/Youth Clean Up Day - Friday 2 March

Find your local site, or register one, at <https://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/search>

World Water Day- 22 March

In 2018, the theme is *THE ANSWER IS IN NATURE*

How can we reduce floods, droughts and water pollution by using the solutions we already find in nature.

Events, resources and stories are all online at: <http://worldwaterday.org/>

National Eucalypt Day- March 23

Events...

Launching a citizen science forum



Photo: Sandy Scheltema, UCLN Facilitator

The Upper Campaspe Landcare Network is launching the networks new Citizen Science Project.

Project Officer, Brad Blake said "You can become a valuable part of this project to gather data which will help protect iconic species including powerful owls, greater gliders and phascogales".

Come along to the forum to find out how you can join in the spotlighting and call-back surveys and be a part of the team that will be entering this

valuable threatened species data on the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas over the coming two years.

Speakers include powerful owl expert Dr Todd Soderquist gliders expert Dr Ross Goldingay and phascogale researcher Jess Lawson.

When: Saturday 10 March, 2.00-5.00pm

Where: Newham Hall, 1292 Rochford Road, Newham

RSVP: Contact 5421 9660, email environment@mrsc.vic.gov.au or register online via <http://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/Live-Work/Environment/Environment-Groups-Events/Environment-Events>

Farms for Wildlife – are the two compatible?

In autumn, the Kara Kara CMN will be hosting a free seminar with a program specifically designed for farmers, other broad-acre landholders and owners of lifestyle properties.

The seminar will be held on Sunday, March 18 at historic Tottington Woolshed. The attached flyer provides more information. The CMN would be grateful if you could please circulate it to other landholders whom you think may be interested.

This free event includes a light lunch. RSVPs would be welcomed for catering purposes.

When: Sunday 18 March from noon

Where: Historic Tottington Woolshed, Ararat-St Arnaud Road, Tottington

RSVP: For catering purposes to Deb on 0419 550 226, John on 0428 160 297 or by email to karakaracmn@gmail.com





Silver banksia of central Victoria

Silver banksias (*Banksia marginata*) once occurred in large areas across central Victoria, but are now limited to a few isolated locations. Are we at risk of losing this species from our landscape? Come along and find out.



The flower of the silver banksia – immature, and mature on the right. By JJ Harrison

Connecting Country is hosting a presentation by Dr Adam Miller (Senior Lecturer in Aquatic Ecology and Biodiversity at Deakin University).

Tea, coffee and a light supper will kindly be provided by the Wettenhall Environment Trust.

When: Monday 19 March at 7.30 pm

Where: ANA Hall, 7 High St, Harcourt

RSVP: Please RSVP to Bonnie by Thursday 15 of March. Email: bonnie@connectingcountry.org.au or phone: 5472 1594.



REMINDER: Facebook 101~Social Media Training for Landcare Groups

The North Central Landcare team is hosting a Facebook 101 workshop to enable participants to both upskill and produce an implementation plan for social media, on Wednesday 21 March in Bendigo.

Professionally facilitated by the delightful team from Friendly Savage Communications Consultants, this **Facebook focused** workshop will be presented in three bite-sized sessions. You can choose your preferred workshop or stay all day! **LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE**

WORKSHOP DETAILS

- Each session will run for two hours, including question time.
- Attendees can attend one or all the workshops.
- Participants should have an existing Facebook profile and a basic knowledge of their phone or computer
- **Participants will be expected to bring a device with them to actively participate in the session.**
- Session notes will be provided.

When: Wednesday 21 March, 2018, 9.00am start

Where: Rifle Brigade Hotel, Bendigo

RSVP: Places are limited. Further event details and RSVP is available via

<https://facebook101forlandcare.eventbrite.com.au>

or

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

Connecting wildspaces so people and nature can thrive

Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance Inc is excited to be hosting Dr Gary Tabor for an evening in central Victoria when he visits Australia next month.

Gary, renowned conservation biologist and wildlife veterinarian, is a world leading expert on connectivity conservation. He co-founded the trailblazing Yellowstone to Yukon conservation initiative, established the Kibale National Park in Uganda and established the World Banks Mountain Gorilla Conservation Trust. He is currently the Executive Director of the Centre for Large Landscape Conservation, in the United States.

Gary will speak about the priorities and opportunities for 21st Century conservation practice.

Come and be inspired and hear how we all need to be, and can be, part of the solution in central Victoria.

When: Tuesday 20 March, 2018 (doors open at 5.30, drinks available) 6pm-7pm

Where: Kyneton Mechanics Institute – 81 Mollison



St Kyneton

Tickets: Free to Biolinks Alliance members, \$10 for non-members.

<https://biolinksalliance.org.au/gary-tabor-talk>

Stock up: a practical guide to biosecurity - Echuca

The Victorian Farmers Federation is hosting an upcoming event which will give producers the opportunity to catch up with other local producers and hear from industry experts on LPA, Bluetongue virus, nutrition tips + hear one local producer's take on biosecurity.

Hear about:

- What do the LPA changes mean for your livestock enterprise?
- Lessons from Bluetongue virus: the importance of traceability.
- A producer's take on using biosecurity to keep their business profitable.
- Nutrition tips for healthy calves and lambs.

When: Thursday 22 March 2018

Where: Echuca Racing Club

Cost: FREE

Register: Online via

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/livestock-health-amp-biosecurity-victoria-13721417245> or call 1300

020 163 or email lhbv@vff.org.au



The North Central CMA invites the community along to an informative event about the Campaspe River and the Aboriginal cultural

heritage of the area.

Guest presenters will be sure to captivate the audience, including:

- A talk on cultural heritage by a Yorta Yorta Traditional Owner
- Geoff Williams, Australian Platypus Conservancy

When: Tuesday 27 March 2018, 4.30pm-6pm

Where: Mercure Port of Echuca, 465 High St Echuca

RSVP: Call the North Central CMA on 5448 7124 or email info@nccma.vic.gov.au by Friday 23 March

This event is funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Program and the Victorian Government's \$222 million investment over four years to improve the health of waterways and catchments.

Demonstration field day - Innovations to improve and monitor soil health

The GV Food Co-op in partnership with Bendigo TAFE and industry leaders across AgTechnologies and Soil Improvement Solutions to host a demonstration field day based on Innovations to Improve Monitor Soil Health.

Event organiser Will Dalgliesh says "It's essential to bring home the message that agriculture and our food production can only be as healthy as the soils we utilise."

Attendees will get to have a general inspection of this world class, organically certified, composting site together with some in-depth research analysis of on-paddock compost spreading rates. The field day AgTech demonstration will showcase the devices and software services of Metos ANZ. Instruments such as; weather station, dataloggers - moisture probes and the EM38 Topsoil Mapper.

When: Wednesday 18 April from 10am – 2pm

Where: BioMix Pty Ltd. 980 Two Tree Road Stanhope.

RSVP: Will Dalgliesh on 0427743166 or email wdalgliesh@bendigotafe.edu.au

Funding opportunities...

National Landcare Program - Environment Small Grants

The National Landcare Program will provide a total of up to \$5 million in grants in 2017-18 to community, environment, and other groups to undertake eligible natural resource management activities that improve the quality of the local environment.

The program will support projects that address the following National Landcare Program objective:

- to protect and conserve Australia's water, plants and animals and the ecosystems in which they live and interact, in partnership with local communities.

The intended outcomes of the program are an:

- increase in the protection, rehabilitation and restoration of environmental assets
- increase in the natural resource management community delivering biodiversity and natural resources practice.

Grants are available for between \$5,000 and \$50,000. The maximum grant period is 12 months.

To assess your groups eligibility, access grant guidelines and merit criteria follow this link: <https://www.business.gov.au/Assistance/National-Landcare-Program-Environment-Small-Grants>

Applications close: 19 March 2018 5:00 pm.

Biodiversity On-ground Action - 2018 Community & Volunteer Action grants

Funding of \$2 million is available for the Biodiversity On-ground Action - 2018 Community & Volunteer Action grants.

The 2018 Community & Volunteer Action grants: are offering funding for projects between \$5,000 and \$50,000, including the option of single or multi-year projects, and have a broad biodiversity focus.

Community groups and not-for-profit organisations primarily focused on environmental projects, such as biodiversity conservation or habitat protection and restoration projects, are encouraged to apply. Projects can be on either public or private land.

Applications close: midnight Tuesday 3 April 2018.

For more information including a link to the application form visit <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/community-action>

2018 Crowdfunding for Threatened Species & Biodiversity Action

The Victorian Government has committed \$116,000 to crowdfunding projects in 2018 to support threatened species and biodiversity conservation campaigns.

Crowdfunding will offer community groups and organisations a unique opportunity to raise funds for threatened species and biodiversity action, while having their fundraising efforts matched by government, with funding up to \$25,000 per successful campaign.

Workshops will be available for interested groups to learn more about running successful crowdfunding campaigns.

To register your interest in developing a crowdfunding campaign in 2018, apply online before **5pm Friday 16 March 2018.**

For more information visit

<https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/crowdfunding>

Happy Easter everyone!






Please consider the '[Save the Bilby](#)' fund this Easter, and look out for the green swing tags on your chocolate Bilby purchases to ensure your donations get to right place.




2016-17 Snapshot

*Data is taken from 72 "Supporting Landcare in North Central" Group Health surveys

HIGHEST PRIORITIES FOR LANDCARE GROUPS

- Pest and weed control** 
- Revegetation** 
- Repairing land degradation (e.g. erosion, salinity)** 
- Threatened species management** 
- Capacity building** 



- 83% of groups using a NRM plan to guide activity
- 37% of groups using social media

LANDCARE SUPPORT INVESTMENT IN NORTH CENTRAL REGION

OVER **\$759,000**



MEMBERSHIPS

- 35 average members per group
- 83% of Landcare activity is powered by volunteers
- 10 Supported by 10 Local Landcare Facilitators

GROUP ACTIVITY RATING



67% of groups are more active than 5 years ago

49428

ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS

Most significant challenge facing Landcare Groups is the lack of available funding for priority on ground works.

157

NUMBER OF LANDCARE AND COMMUNITY NRM GROUPS

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY GRANTS

- 44 PROJECT GRANTS
- 33 MAINTENANCE GRANTS
- 8 LANDCARE NETWORK GRANTS

PERCENTAGE OF GROUP HEALTH RATINGS

- 10% TRAIL BLAZERS**
Our group has its own identity and strives for excellence. We are clear on what we are trying to achieve and our role in achieving it.
- 14% SURVIVING**
Our meetings are irregular and only a few core members come. There are little or no onground works happening.
- 22% THRIVING**
We are very motivated and have an action plan that we actively work towards. We have good geographic representation from our local area.
- 5% STRUGGLING A LITTLE**
Our activities are often prompted by a funding round or a call from the support person. Our group feels like it is dwindling in interest and numbers.
- 31% ROLLING ALONG**
Our group has an action plan or plans to develop one. We feel we are making progress and are working within our current capabilities.
- 0% BARELY HANGING ON**
We have effectively stalled. We meet rarely (or have chosen to be in recess) and are not currently undertaking any group activities or projects.
- 19% STABLE**
Our group is in a stable situation and achieving what it needs to.