

North Central Chat

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



September 2021

A message from the Waterwatch and Citizen Science Project Officer

Hi everyone,

While Tess is focussing on some other tasks, I have taken the reins and will deliver your monthly Chat for the next few months.

By the time you are reading this, spring will have sprung. What a time of year! It's been a tough winter for so many reasons and in different ways for different people. I hope that the pandemic begins to ease, and restrictions are lifted in time for us all the enjoy the best spring has to offer together with family and friends.

I am lucky enough to have the Greater Bendigo National Park within my 5-kilometre radius and am in training for a multi-day hike at Wilsons Promontory later this year.

A daily bush walk, having something to look forward to (if all goes to plan!) and my delight in the ever-changing spring blooms keeps my wellbeing in check.

What contributes to your wellbeing?

The importance of self-care planning during Coronavirus

Self-care is often the first thing that gets sacrificed when life is busy and stressful, and people often think that taking time for themselves seems indulgent. But looking after your own wellbeing will help you get through this challenging time, and will help you to better care for others.

Amidst the confusion and constant stream of information due to COVID-19, a self-care plan can help you focus, make decisions, and stay healthy.

Self-care refers to the activities and practices that we deliberately choose to engage in on a regular basis to maintain and enhance our health and wellbeing.

For more information on making a self-care plan, check out [the importance of self-care planning during Coronavirus by the Black Dog Institute](#)



Take a moment to enjoy a relaxing video of these [Kyneton Wildflowers](#) (sound on to hear the birds and wind in the background).

Enjoy the read (and the wildflowers),

Britt Gregory

Project Officer – Waterwatch & Citizen Science
North Central CMA

Email: britt.gregory@nccma.vic.gov.au

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...

More Camping Opportunities for Victorians from September

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering on its election commitment to open new camping areas alongside Victoria's rivers with hundreds of new areas being investigated as possible camping sites.

Following extensive community consultation, the Government is finalising new regulations governing recreational use of Crown land river frontages that will give Victorians more options to enjoy the great outdoors from 1 September this year.

Up to 27 sites along the Goulburn, Broken, Ovens, Campaspe, Loddon and Murray Rivers are currently being assessed with hundreds more to follow. A rigorous assessment process has been applied to ensure all sites are suitable, with environmental, agricultural and Aboriginal cultural heritage impacts all considered.

More than 1,100 submissions were received during consultation on the draft regulations. The final regulations will reflect the expectations of the entire community, providing a fair balance for all users.

The public can already lawfully access licensed river frontages for recreation such as fishing, hiking and picnicking.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Victorian Fisheries Authority and Parks Victoria will enforce the regulations to ensure the protection of the environment and that users and adjoining landowners are considered.

A 24-hour hotline (13FISH) will be available for the public to report any illegal or antisocial behaviour.



National Landcare Conference and Awards

Earlier this month the 2021 National Landcare Conference and Awards were held online via the International Convention Centre in Sydney.

As soon as MC Costa Georgiadis' recognisable smile beamed across the screen, the conference mood was set and a fantastic two day Landcare-fest ensued. Sessions were held under four key themes: Sustainable Agriculture, Environment & Climate Change, Community Partnerships in Action and Landcare Impact.

Dotted throughout the program were very topical panel sessions which focused on Bushfire recovery, Wellbeing and Mental health, Landcare and farming and Cultural Land Management. I personally found the Cultural Land Management session so engaging and empowering. Facilitated by Doug Humann AM, the video featuring Barry Hunter and Victor Steffensen discussing integrating Indigenous perspectives for better land management, is so powerful and if you only have time to catch up on a few items from the conference, make this top of your list.

Don't worry if you have missed out on attending this year's online conference, the sessions were recorded and are now available to watch online.

[WATCH THE RECORDED SESSIONS HERE](#)

These resources will be available until the end of September. Landcare Australia encourages you to register for a free [Landcarer](#) account to access these resources long term.

Well done to Danny Pettingill (Loddon Plains Landcare Network facilitator) on a very comprehensive stream session discussing the on-farm value of biodiversity through sustainable agriculture practices.

Congratulations to [Newham Primary School](#), taking home the 2021 Woolworths Junior Landcare Team award and finally to Landcare Australia and all the sponsors for taking the conference online and running a seamless and professional event enjoyed by thousands across Australia and internationally.




WINNER!

Woolworths Junior Landcare Team Award

Newham Primary School

Seeking Contributions

Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management magazine

Stories are sought for the Summer 2022 (issue #83) issue of the *Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management* magazine which will be a feature on **biodiversity**.

www.landcarevic.org.au/landcare-magazine/

Magazine readers are keen to learn about the successes of biodiversity projects, as well as what hasn't worked, and your group's insights and reflections from the planning and delivery of its biodiversity projects. Please contact the editor with your story ideas and suggestions.

The Summer 2022 issue of the Landcare magazine will be published online in mid-late January 2022.

Contributions need to be sent to the editor by **Wednesday 3 November 2021**.

Note - the Landcare magazine fills up with stories very quickly, so please contact the editor 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



Communities Caring for Catchments

I think we all know by now, but Waterwatch volunteers are reminded that during COVID-19 restrictions, your monitoring activities are not one of the permitted reasons to leave home.

Thanks to those who have signed up for the Great Australian Platypus Search. This is a very exciting program to be a part of and I know many of you will be keen to be involved. Sites are being snapped up fast, so if you want to participate and haven't signed up yet, jump on board at <https://www.thegreataustralianplatypussearch.org/>

It's important to not only know where platypus (and other species) are located, but also where they are not; don't be afraid to grab a site or two where you wouldn't normally expect platypus to inhabit. At the time of writing, the following map shows which sites are still up for grabs in our region.

Britt Gregory

Project Officer - Waterwatch & Citizen Science
North Central CMA

Email: britt.gregory@nccma.vic.gov.au



Sites still available for you to get involved in [The Great Australian Platypus Search](#)

Water Storages Update

Region	Water Storage	% full at	% full at
		28 Jul	24 Aug
Murray Storages	Dartmouth Dam	66.87	↑72.69
	Hume Dam	76.82	↑91.83
	Third Lake	50.99	↓48.70
	Reedy/Middle Lk	93.63	↑96.81
	Kangaroo Lake	93.92	↑95.46
	Kow Swamp	88.06	↑92.63
	Lake Boga	68.75	↑73.62
	Lake Charm	86.38	↑92.99
Loddon Storages	Cairn Curran Res	49.14	↑59.05
	Tullaroop Res	49.81	↑64.12
	Laanecoorie Res	74.88	↑98.00

Bullarook Storages	Newlyn Res	101.44	↓100.88
	Hepburns Lagoon	103.82	↓102.91
Goulburn Storages	Lake Eildon	65.24	↑72.37
	Waranga Basin	82.01	↑92.41
Campaspe	Lake Eppalock	41.39	↑51.26
Coliban Water Storages	Upper Coliban Res	101.30	↓100.50
	Lauriston Res	96.30	↑96.80
	Malmsbury Res	108.2	↓103.60

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

www.coliban.com.au/about-us/reservoir-levels

Upcoming Events and Special Days



September	
National Biodiversity Month	
National Wattle Day	1 Sep
National Threatened Species Day	7 Sep
Bushcare's Major Day Out	11 Sep
National Bilby Day	12 Sep
National Organic Week	20-26 Sep
World Rivers Day	26 Sep
October	
Australian Wildlife Week	4-8 Oct
World Habitat Day	4 Oct
World Migratory Bird Day	9 Oct
Gone Fishing Day	17 Oct
National Bird Week	18-24 Oct
Aussie Backyard Bird Count	18-24 Oct
National Water Week	18-24 Oct

National Ride 2 Work Day	20 Oct
Enviroweek	20-26 Oct
Wombat Day	22 Oct
November	
Australian Pollinator Week	7-14 Nov
National Recycling Week	8-14 Nov
World Science Day for Peace and Development	10 Nov
National Agriculture Day	19 Nov
World Fisheries Day	21 Nov

Nominations for Victoria’s fossil emblem

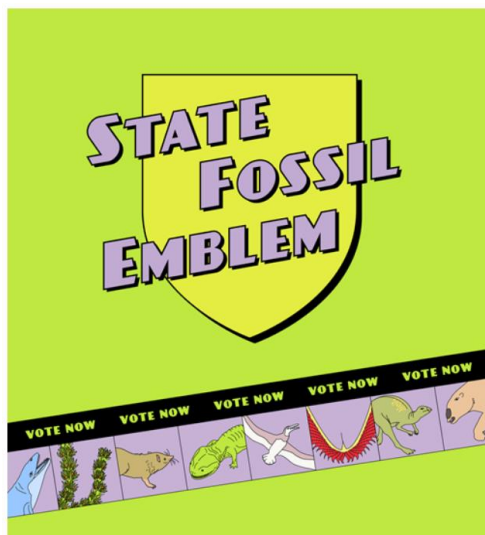
Museums Victoria is excited to invite the people of Victoria to cast their vote in selecting a candidate for a state fossil emblem.

State emblems are a way of celebrating the unique and amazing natural heritage of our part of the world.

Victoria has these emblems already: helmeted honeyeater (bird), Leadbeater’s possum (animal), weedy seadragon (marine animal), common heath (flora) and gold (mineral) but does not yet have a fossil emblem.

Voting closes on 4 October, cast your vote here:

museums victoria.com.au/melbournemuseum/state-fossil-emblem/



Sustainable Ag Snippet...

New Regenerative Ag Groups in the North Central Region

The Regenerative Agriculture project has been running now for three years. The project has two more years to run, so Felicity and myself have been busy discussing the project with farmers interested in regenerative agriculture. We have run several community workshops with support from two of our Landcare facilitators Andrew Borg, Buloke and Norther Grampians Landcare Network and Danny Pettingill, Loddon Plains Landcare Network.

The groups discussed farming issues (past and present), soil and seasonal changes they have observed on their farms over the last decade and the main land management issues that they are dealing with. The groups had local community action plans developed, which will guide their activities over the next two years and assist them to address some of their land management issues. The farmers attending the workshops were quite excited about the project, with many attending farmers well underway on their regenerative agriculture journey.

The two new groups are now officially formed with the Kara Kara Regenerative Farmer group located around the St Arnaud district, facilitated by Andrew Borg and the Loddon Plains Future Farmers Regenerative and Sustainable Agriculture Group located around Inglewood, facilitated by Danny Pettingill.



Soil sampling

Courses & Resources...

The groups will shortly receive funding to support activities identified in their action plans. Some of these activities include soil sampling, which will provide a baseline measure and an understanding of the condition of soils in their district. The groups will conduct community events with expert speakers to broaden their knowledge and skills to support the adoption of new farming practices or systems. On-farm local demonstrations will also be a large part of the project. These demonstrations will provide farmers with opportunities to learn and provide a venue where all participants can learn from each other.

The groups will be active in their communities so keep an eye out for upcoming events or alternatively you can contact the facilitators directly where they will include you on their email list. Danny can be contacted on facilitator@lpln.org mobile 0490 412 430 and Andrew on bnglandcare@gmail.com mobile 0407 856 227



Cover crop grown by Raywood group member



Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar

The 24th Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar will focus on one of the most important actors in preservation and restoration of biodiversity in our region – our farmers.

As one of the principal custodians of much of the land across the region, farmers and their work in maintaining their land and environment are playing an increasingly important role.

This year's forum is again online. Speakers will be talking about a range of topics from the value of revegetation on farms to the need to tailor NRM programs to reach new participants. Tactics include discussions around the concepts of natural capital on farms, the role of indigenous farming, regenerative farming, agroecology and much more.

To find out more and get you tickets, search for the event on Eventbrite or [CLICK HERE](#)



The Healthy Landscapes Program provides a fantastic range of courses and webinars

Holistic Grazing Management Short Course

The Holistic Grazing Management Short Course forms part of the Healthy Landscapes - Practical Regenerative Agricultural Communities program which aims to raise

awareness about sustainable land management practices that improve soil health, reduce exposure to climate risk, enhance biodiversity and increase productivity.

The course has been designed to assist land managers to improve their skills and knowledge about grazing livestock, resulting in an increase in soil carbon and perennial pasture species, including native species.

Local farmer webinars and farm visits

7 September, 7-8pm Join Aaron Demeo from Raywood who manages meat and wool sheep, crops as well as dairy heifers.

Meet the farmers on their property after the webinars on September 3, 10 and 17.

For more information and to register for any of these Healthy Landscapes events, go to: www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/healthylandscapes

Events...

Leaky Landscape Symposium

From the ground up: Climate proofing our landscapes and biodiversity - Practical approaches to soil absorption and techniques for fixing desertified landscapes

This year's symposium will be looking at practical approaches to fixing the damaged landscapes of central Victoria, making them more absorbent (less leaky) and so more biologically productive and better able to withstand the impacts of climate change.



It will be a forum for researchers, conservation practitioners, landholders, land managers and interested community members. Participants will share information and experiences, form connections and develop collaborative and strategic approaches to ecosystem restoration that specifically aim to restore and climate-proof damaged landscapes. This will be achieved by rebuilding soil health and water holding capacity for carbon, hydrology, productivity and biodiversity benefits, thereby improving habitat and resources for threatened species.

This forum showcases the 21st Century strategies and practical case studies that have been largely missing from policy debates about local environment climate change mitigation. There is so much more that needs to be done and can be done if we work together effectively to make it happen.

8 October – On-line via Zoom (Keynote speakers include Dr David Tongway, Professor David Watson and Dr Jon Fawcett with more to come)

9 October - Outdoor field visits, Bendigo region

Register by visiting:

<https://biolinksalliance.org.au/leaky-landscapes-symposium>

Campaspe Carp Catch Sunday 10 October 2021 National Gone Fishing Day 12 noon – 3.00pm

The invasive carp. Photo: Gunther Schmida

Registration Hubs:

- Echuca**: Lions Park, Ogilvie Ave
- Rochester**: Campaspe River Reserve beside water tower
- Kyneton**: Pig Shed, Kyneton Botanic Gardens
- Strathallan**: Strathallan Community Hall, Strathallan Rd
- Elmore**: Aysons Reserve, 799 Burnewang Rd
- Axedale**: Axedale River Reserve (access via William St)

Prizes for the Best Catch and Biggest Bag.

At each hub:

- BBQ lunch provided at 12 noon
- Judging at 3.00pm

Register on EventBrite or contact the North Central CMA on 5448 7124

Fishing methods are to comply with Victorian legal requirements (children under 18yo do not require a licence).

This is a COVID-safe and alcohol-free event

To register, go to: www.eventbrite.com.au/e/campaspe-carp-catch-tickets-166757856237

Funding opportunities...

Kids to Ag aims to increase primary school students' understanding of where their food and fibre comes from, and to raise awareness of the career opportunities within the agricultural sector.

Grants are available for primary school students to visit to primary production sites and farms across Victoria – providing students with hands on, practical experiences in agriculture.

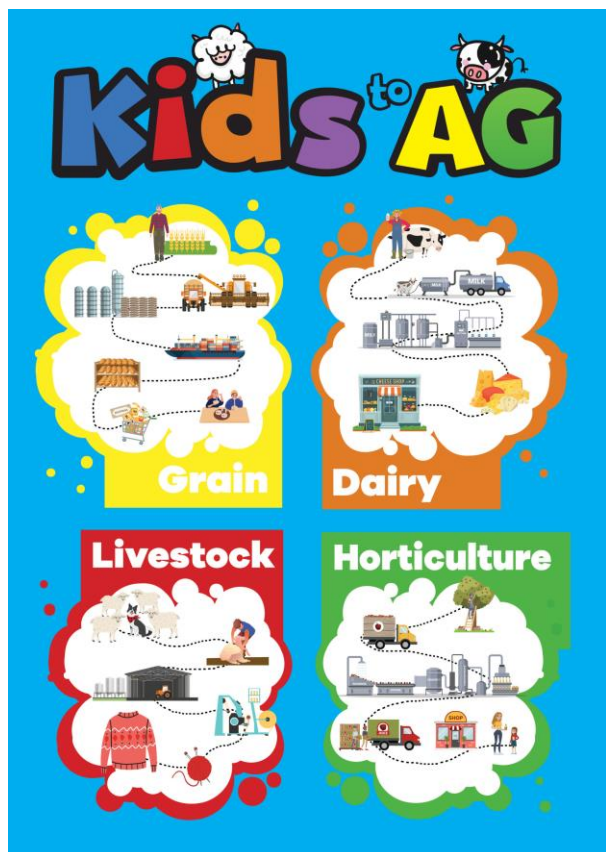
Who can apply?

Anyone who wishes to take primary school students on a learning adventure:

- Primary Schools from across the state of Victoria
- Primary production worksites
- Farmers
- Educators

Find out more here:

<http://www.vff.org.au/project/kidstoag>



A new AgriFutures Australia program, developed to foster growth and development in women involved in Australia's rural and emerging industries, businesses, and communities.

AgriFutures has introduced a new program called the AgriFutures Rural Women's Acceleration Grant program. It will run separately, however it will complement the Rural Women's Award process, aiming to provide a leadership and development opportunity to women who are not quite ready to apply for the Award.

Seven Australian women each year will be granted with a learning and development bursary (not cash) of up to \$7,000 for professional development to enable them to bring their idea, cause or vision to life.

The Rural Women's Acceleration Grant is one of many AgriFutures Australia initiatives ensuring our rural industries prosper now, and into the future.

Applications close 8 October 2021

Find out more here: www.agrifutures.com.au/people-leadership/acceleration-grant/

