

North Central chat

NOVEMBER 2013

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

A message from the Regional Landcare Coordinator

Hi everyone,

It's hard to believe it is almost the end of the year and dare I say it, Christmas time. There are still plenty of things on the Landcare 'to-do list' before the end of the year, including reporting! Unfortunately there is no escape from reporting. It is a requirement for all regional coordinators and the programs that we deliver. For the groups that haven't submitted their 2012-13 Victorian Landcare Grant final report please make sure you do so ASAP.

This year I will be mapping all Landcare grant projects in iMap 2.0 - our updated mapping program featured on the North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) website. Next year, I plan to run some training sessions with groups focused on mapping, in particular using the iMap 2.0 program. Please let me know if this of interest to you or your group.

Since the last newsletter we have run two native grass identification courses with Paul Foreman. This is the third consecutive year we have run this very popular course. This year we changed tack and went north to Kerang and west to St Arnaud and we were still oversubscribed. This highlights how keen you all are to develop your native grass identification skills. Given the success of the courses and the fantastic feedback provided by participants we will look to running the course again in 2014.

You might remember from the October edition of North Central chat there was a 'Stop the Press' article about a 'Chicks in the Sticks' event at Cohuna. Well I am pleased to say that the event was a huge success. If you were one of the 100 women who frocked up and sported gumboots for the evening I am sure you would agree it was a great evening. The event was a North Central CMA initiative and designed to bring rural women together to celebrate their achievements in agriculture and the environment. Guest speakers

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ABC presenter Libby Price, Barham avocado farmer Katrina Myers and respected Barapa Barapa elder Aunty Esther Kirby had the group enthralled as they talked about their personal tales of life on the land.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you on behalf of the Landcare community in Buloke and Northern Grampians area to Kevin Spence. Kevin has been the Landcare facilitator in the area for the past 11 years and his support, guidance and 'can do' attitude will no doubt be sorely missed by the Landcare community. I am happy to say that Kevin will continue to support the Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network in a volunteering capacity whilst working in his new role with the Northern Grampians Shire. All the best Kevin!

Until next time,

Jodie Odgers

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North Central Catchment Management Authority
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Weed of the month...

South African Weed Orchid, *Disa bracteata*.



This month a few people have called about this weed and it's not in the 'Weed Identification Guide - North Central Victoria'. So I thought it might be timely to feature it as **Weed of the month**.

Description: Orchid growing to 75 cm tall.

Leaves: in a rosette in early spring.

Seeds: dust-like.

Distinguishing features: Distinguished by spike of up to 50 small flowers that are brown, pink and white with a yellow tongue-like labellum; grows from tubers.

Dispersal: Spread by wind-dispersed seed and reemerges each year from a perennial tuber.

The species is self-pollinating. It forms dense colonies and replaces native ground flora where it occurs in Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria.

The information was sourced from www.weeds.org.au.



Photos provided by John Walter, Malmsbury District Landcare.

News...

North Central Waterway Management Strategy

Are you interested in your local waterways or wetlands? Then have your say!

The North Central Catchment Management Authority is seeking to work with all interested community members to develop the 2014 North Central Waterway Management Strategy.

What is the North Central Waterway Management Strategy?

The 2014 North Central Waterway Management Strategy (WMS) is the key strategic document to guide investment and works for the region's rivers and wetlands over the next eight years.

The North Central WMS will:

- Identify the region's waterways and wetlands of high environmental, social and economic values
- Determine priority waterways and wetlands
- Establish targets and goals for priority waterways and wetlands
- Set out an eight-year action plan that identifies management activities for priority waterways and wetlands
- Establish a monitoring and evaluation program.

Have you say...

Over the next six months, the North Central CMA is committed to working with local communities and partner agencies to accurately represent the region's highest priority waterways.

This strategy provides the opportunity for communities to have a say in the development of management actions for our region's priority waterways and wetlands over the next eight years.

The community will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft North Central Waterway Management Strategy during the public consultation phase in early 2014.



Review of the 2005 North Central River Health Strategy

A review of the North Central River Health Strategy developed in 2005 was undertaken to help inform the new regional Waterway Management Strategy. The River Health Strategy review found:

- Significant on-ground works were achieved across the region including:
 - Over 450 km of waterway fencing established
 - Over 2,700 ha of waterway vegetation protected
 - Over 680 ha of waterway revegetation established
 - Over 1,700 ha of wetland vegetation protected
 - Significant pest plant and animal control during waterway and wetland works
- Improved environmental flow planning and implementation
- Community engagement approaches used in projects - such as the Loddon Stressed River project - were effective in improving landholder's knowledge and skills.

Although significant achievements have been made there are some key learnings that will feed into the development of the North Central Waterway Management Strategy, including:

- A robust monitoring and evaluation framework is required that sets measurable and feasible targets and is more responsive/adaptive to changing conditions and circumstances

- A targeted investment approach allows significant achievements to be made in priority areas
- Provide the broader community with useful knowledge and information that will support local action.

To find out how you can become involved please contact Rohan Hogan on 03 5448 7124 or rohan.hogan@nccma.vic.gov.au.

Have you been involved in the environmental market?

Trust for Nature, in conjunction with the Victoria Naturally Alliance, is leading a research project investigating landowner experiences and their involvement with environmental market schemes and associated legal dimensions.

They are looking for landowners who have been involved in tender arrangements or offsets schemes at a state or federal level, or other voluntary schemes, who would be available for interview about their experiences and perceptions. Interviews are expected to take about an hour.

If you are interested in participating, they would love to hear from you!

Please contact Bruce Lindsay, Senior Project Officer, Trust for Nature, on (03) 8631 5888 or 0439 035 277 or brucel@tfn.org.au

Position Vacant - Part-time Landcare Facilitator

The Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network is seeking to employ a suitably qualified and motivated person to provide Landcare support to member groups.

The successful applicant will possess a strong knowledge and skills in natural resource management, sustainable land practices and community engagement who is able to act as a key contact for Landcare groups. The facilitator must be able to maintain strong links and build trust with Landcare groups; foster a high level of community participation in natural resource management; provide support in capacity building, group development and project management; and ensure consistency between local actions and regional, State or commonwealth strategies and plans.

Position is part-time at 0.25 FTE (or 9.5 hrs per week).

Remuneration is based on a local government Band 5A position (\$52,722 per annum) paid on a pro-rata basis.

The successful applicant will be required to provide their own transport which will be reimbursed at applicable Australian Tax Office rates.

For further information and a copy of the Position Description and Key Selection Criteria contact Kevin Spence on 0408 353 966 or email bnglandcare@bigpond.com

Applicants should clearly address the Key Selection Criteria and include a current Curriculum Vitae.

Applications should be marked 'Confidential' and forwarded to

The Chairperson
Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network
PO Box 244
St Arnaud 3477

Applications close 5 pm Monday 16 December.



Snaps of the month!

Some of you may remember reading an article in the newsletter some months ago about 'Feral photos'? Well the Invasive Animals CRC Feral Photos Competition for 2013 has been finalised and they have some great winning photographs!

This year, there were more entries than ever and the judges stated that the images received were of a very high standard and the judging was extremely difficult! An online gallery of entries will soon be available at www.feral.org.au.

The following pics are some of the winners!

1st Prize and People's Choice Award went to Felicity Hatton from the Australian Capital Territory.

This is an amazing photo... I think the eagle was snacking on a dead roo which has then been chased off by a fox!



© Felicity Hatton

2nd Prize went to Dion Thompson from South Australia.

This photo shows how agile foxes really are. Getting through a ring lock fence comes with ease for this fox!



© Dion Thompson

Keep the pictures coming - email them to jodie.odgers@nccma.vic.gov.au



Hello everyone,

On Saturday 23 November, Waterwatch celebrated its 20th birthday at Newbridge Community Hall. Over 30 of our Waterwatch community monitors turned up to participate in the celebrations.

Uncle Graham Atkinson, Chair of Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and a respected leader in both the Aboriginal and wider community, joined us in the celebrations. We were very lucky to have Graham welcome us to his country.

Dr Amber Clarke (DEPI) gave a presentation on the important role Waterwatch and Estuarywatch will play in the new Victorian Waterway Management Strategy. A highlight of the event was definitely the Baringhup River Detectives who performed a wonderful show with the theme of keeping our waterways healthy.

All of the community monitors who attended were presented with a plaque recognising their significant contribution to the program and a Waterwatch umbrella as a gift to say thank you for all of their tireless hours of volunteering. A great day was had by all who attended!

Some other activities that have been bubbling away in the background include the work on the Waterwatch Data Management System, delivering the River Detectives program, working on the North Central Waterwatch Waterbirds Field Guide and co-hosting two National Water Week events.

Until next time,

Cass Davis

Regional Waterwatch Coordinator
North Central Catchment Management Authority
PO Box 18 Huntly, VIC 3551
Phone: 03 5448 7124

Meet the monitor: Glenys and Art

Glenys and Art joined the North Central Waterwatch program in 2011 to monitor a site on the Avoca River.



The Avoca River runs through the local park behind Glenys and Art's backyard, they are very interested in the water quality for environmental health and are keen to support the longitudinal monitoring in partnership with Ken and Elaine who also monitor a site on the Avoca River downstream.

To view the data collected by Waterwatch volunteers go to: www.vic.waterwatch.org.au. Simply search for the site for which you would like to see data.

Our River Detectives Get Wet with Macroinvertebrates

In September each year eight schools across north central Victoria get involved in our macroinvertebrate studies.

What is a macroinvertebrate?

A macroinvertebrate is a small animal without a backbone (invertebrate). They are a diverse group of animals including worms, snails, mites, bugs, beetles, dragonflies and freshwater crayfish.

Most freshwater macroinvertebrates are very small but many can still be seen with the naked eye. Macroinvertebrates inhabit all types of waters including rivers, streams, creeks, dams and ponds.



Why study macroinvertebrates?

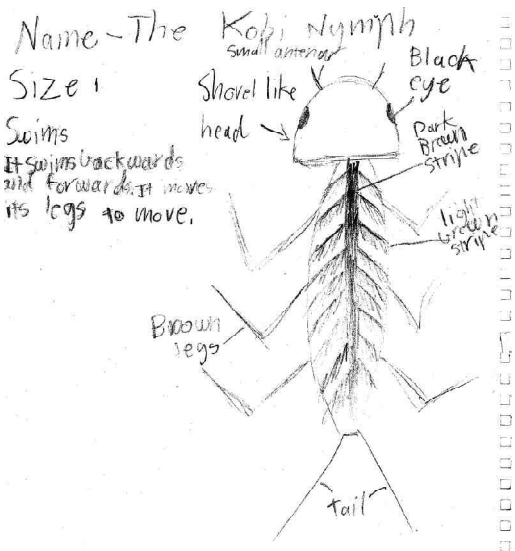
Gathering information about our rivers and creeks contributes to a bigger picture of our waterway health and to the community's broad understanding of our natural environment.

Studying macroinvertebrates by sampling and identification, raises awareness about the macroinvertebrate communities in local waterways with students. It helps students to understand the story of a river and promotes a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the health of your waterway.

Here are some samples of macroinvertebrates that were found in the Loddon River by the Baringhup Primary School Students.



2013 Duon



Students participating in the program in 2013 each received a new River Detectives bucket hat to recognise their contribution to monitoring and reporting information to the Waterwatch program. Below is a picture of some River Detectives wearing their '20 Years of Waterwatch' hats.



By participating in the River Detectives program, students help to keep our local rivers, streams, creeks and wetlands healthy.

Each month students complete tests on water quality and enter their results into the online Waterwatch Victoria Database, found at <https://vicdata.waterwatch.org.au>

National Water Week (NWW) 2013 a huge success

North Central Waterwatch and the Indigenous Facilitator program's Bambi Lees partnered with the City of Greater Bendigo and Coliban Water to deliver a range of activities at the Bendigo Botanic Gardens celebrating NWW 2013.



The event was fantastic, engaging 100 primary school students from three schools across the region in water related activities and delivering this year's NWW message of sustainable water use!



The highlight for me was the little preppy from St. Josephs (Rochester) Primary School who ran back to me when we had finished our session and gave me a BIG hug (I will never forget that!!).



Colin Smith, representing North Central CMA's Natural Resource Management Committee, opened the event. As NWW becomes a little bigger every year, it is important to us that we take the opportunity to have someone special open this regular NWW event each year.

The 'Caring for the Campaspe River' and the 'Campaspe Environmental Flows team' also partnered with North Central Waterwatch and Goulburn-Murray Water this year to host a range of activities at the Lake Eppalock spillway.

Thus was another fantastic event engaging 82 students from two local primary schools. The students had a great time learning about what habitat is and why it is so important, as well as looking at water bugs and how they relate to water quality.



The students also received a talk from Goulburn-Murray Water on the history of Lake Eppalock and learnt the importance of Environmental Flows in the Campaspe River.

A big thank you to everyone involved. I look forward to celebrating NWW again in 2014!

Thank you Fosterville Gold Mine!

The North Central Waterwatch program would like to thank Fosterville Gold Mine for their contribution to the River Detectives program. Waterwatch and the Caring for the Campaspe River project applied for a community grant from the organisation to deliver the River Detectives program to Axedale Primary School. Angela Gladman, Project Manager with the North Central CMA, attended the ceremony on 9 November to accept the successful grant on behalf of the North Central CMA.



Events

Soil carbon and management for land managers

The Upper Loddon and Avoca Landcare Network, in conjunction with the Amphitheatre Landcare Group, will present 'Soil Carbon and Management for Land Managers' in Amphitheatre on Thursday, 5 December 2013. The presentations will discuss the first principles of soil management and the significant role carbon plays in soils for improved production and efficiency.

Land managers are searching to improve the management of soils and their land for more production, better profits and to mitigate for climate variability. Carbon plays a pivotal role in soil functions and must be understood as a key driver in reaching these goals. Soil health is an outcome we can improve as a farm management strategy with a focus on carbon.

Guests will learn about carbon in soils, its role in soil health and farm productivity. Topics to be covered include:

- First principles of soil management - essential knowledge
- Soil Chemistry
- Soil Physics
- Soil Biology
- Soil Analysis
- How can I increase carbon in my soils, and should I?
- Soil health and the role of carbon
- Measuring Soil Carbon

Where: Amphitheatre Hall

When: Thursday 5 December

Time: 6.00pm – 9.30pm

Cost: Gold coin donation

RSVP by Saturday 30 November to Chris Pollock on 0421 372 545 or amphilc@gmail.com

Come and meet Costa!

Costa, the Gardening Guru from ABC TV, will be visiting Wedderburn. While there he will be opening the the Wedderburn Community Garden and also be running a workshop and answering your gardening queries. This is a unique opportunity for gardening enthusiasts.



Where: The Wedderburn Community Centre

When: Sunday 8 December

Time: 11:30 am

It will be a great day and there will even be a free sausage sizzle.

For more information call the Wedderburn Community House on 03 54943489.

Courses and resources

Do you want to make your passion your day job, and help the environment?

The Bendigo TAFE Diploma in Conservation and Land Management provides students with the opportunity to undertake a blend of classroom based study with participation in a range of industry projects and field trips as part of their training.

You may wish to focus on part-time study, looking at vegetation or river management.

Do any of the following apply to you?

- Completed previous studies, or
- Relevant industry skills and experience, or
- Just about to finish your undergraduate degree.

If so you can apply directly for the second year. Vet-fee help is available. They also deliver Certificate 3, 4, Pest Management specialisations and the Diploma in Community Coordination (new in 2014).

Please phone Terri Williams on 03 5434 1743 to discuss these opportunities further.

Visit their Blog

The blog has been successful in providing contemporary information about natural resource management. It has good information on TAFE projects and vocational outcomes: www.btpi.wordpress.com/

All the dirt on soil management

A Better Soils Management course designed to give the agronomist the skills and confidence to become a valued and productive member of any agronomy team and business is being held in Bendigo on 20-21 November.

The course is aimed at advisors and agronomists with an industry-related tertiary qualification or a minimum of two years' experience in the field of fertilisers and fertiliser recommendations. Suitable applicants are looking for a course that covers the in-depth knowledge in soils, plant nutrition and fertiliser/soil amendment technology.

Topics covered include:

- Fundamental soil properties soil health and the role of fertilisers and soil amendments
- Principles of plant nutrition/physiology
- Properties of key products
- How to take soil, water and plant tissue samples and identify analysis required
- Key calculations for application
- Interpretation process for soil and plant analysis results
- Making competent fertiliser recommendations from soil tests.

The course cost is \$990 and consists of an online portion and two days of classroom learning. To enquire, contact Cheryl Else, phone 07 3821 3577 or email training@backpaddock.com.au. Further information on the course can be found at www.backpaddock.com.au.

Funding

The R E Ross Trust Grants

These grants work around four impact areas. For Landcare groups the most relevant area is impact area D; the protection and preservation of Australian Flora and Fauna.

Impact Area D: Protection and preservation of Australian flora and fauna

The Ross Trust prioritises applications that:

- Demonstrate conservation value
- Provide scientific (biological and/or botanical) evidence to support the request.

If the proposal is to purchase land; the proponent must demonstrate:

- High conservation values of the land
- How the land will be managed in the future to protect those values
- How the proposed action will contribute to a broader landscape scale approach.

Please note: *It is unlikely that applications for environmental education will be successful.*

Organisations must first submit an Expression of Interest for consideration by the Trustees. They may then be invited to submit a full application.

Applications are considered all year round.

Eligibility

The Ross Trust can only consider requests from organisations that:

- Operate in Victoria, or who will use the grant for the benefit of Victorians
- Have an ABN (Australian Business Number)
- Are incorporated.

Applicants are NOT required to be a:

- Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR)
- Tax Concession Charity (TCC).

For more information on the RE Ross Trust and funding opportunities visit their website : www.rosstrust.org.au/