



**CORANGAMITE  
LANDCARE**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
CARD**

**2014-2015**

# REGIONAL LANDCARE COORDINATOR PROJECT

The Victorian Government invested \$142,000 during 2014-15, to help meet the Victorian Landcare Program and Corangamite Landcare Support Plan's priorities.

Providing the funding for the Regional Landcare Coordinator to work with groups and networks to share information, develop promotional materials, discuss challenges, and help with decision making for on ground projects.



2015 Corangamite Landcare Recognition Awards at Inverleigh

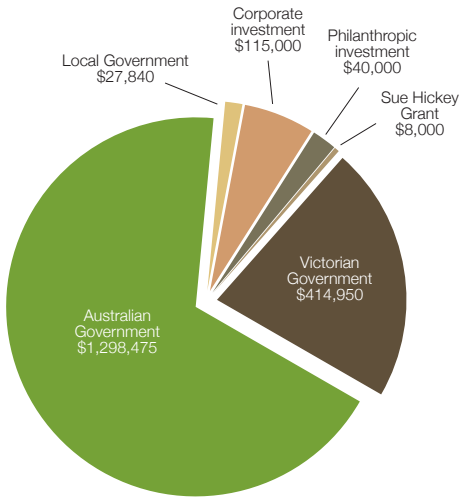
## ACHIEVEMENTS

- supporting eight Landcare coordinator group and network chairs' forums
- supporting the development of local network strategic plans and spatial mapping
- building strong partnerships with stakeholders to support Landcare
- regional community events on topics including soil health, land stewardship, emotional resilience, succession planning, rural women and planning for landscape-scale investment
- 262 participants involved in 17 community learning opportunities
- supporting six volunteers to attend 2015 National Landcare Conference and three field trips
- 60 volunteers attended Landcare and cultural awareness events with Wadawurrung
- celebrating Landcare's achievements at the Corangamite and Victorian Landcare awards
- telling our story through 28 publications including three YouTube films, regular e-news and increased exposure on social media.



## INVESTING IN LANDCARE

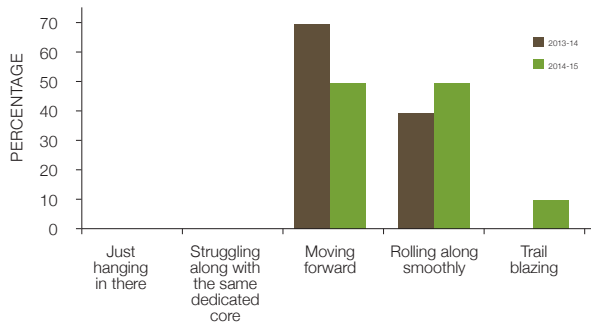
Building partnerships with the Victorian and Australian governments, local municipalities, water authorities, corporate investors and philanthropic sponsors has resulted in approximately \$1.9 million invested in Landcare initiatives.



## CORANGAMITE LANDCARE GROUP HEALTH SURVEY

Maintaining healthy, vibrant and effective groups and networks is fundamental to the long term success of Landcare. The group health survey is a self-assessment tool, describing the status of groups and networks.

The five point scale categorised as just hanging in there, struggling along with the same dedicated core, moving forward, rolling along smoothly and trail blazing. From the groups surveyed, results indicate positive and healthy groups.



The recently completed survey on the health of Landcare groups in Corangamite indicated a range of responses from 'moving forward' to 'trail blazing'



# VICTORIAN LANDCARE GRANTS IN CORANGAMITE

The Victorian Government supports on ground natural resource management (NRM) outcomes, and builds the Landcare movement's capacity through the Victorian Landcare Grants. The program encourages Landcare groups to undertake NRM activities, influence land management practices and build community volunteers' skills.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- \$204,000 invested through the Victorian Landcare Grants
- funding 11 landscape scale projects and 39 support grants
- treating 114 hectares of pest plant and animal affected areas
- revegetation of 75 hectares in terrestrial, riparian and coastal zones
- 39 kilometres fenced to protect revegetation, remnant and riparian sites
- providing approximately \$400,000 in-kind support for on ground works
- supporting 68 partnerships with key stakeholder organisations
- 1049 participants involved in engagement events such as field days, training and workshops
- producing 24 online and printed publications
- 125 assessments undertaken for ecological, social invasive species and property management needs.

# REINING IN BLACKBERRY

A new Landcare network is one of a number of positive outcomes of a collective effort to fight weeds in the Otways.

The recently-established Central Otways Landcare Network (COLN) is bringing together community members from Barongarook, Gellibrand, Kawarren, Carlisle and Beech Forest to tackle blackberries.

The cross-boundary approach is increasing landholder confidence in addressing the frustrating job of tackling the prickly invasive plant; which has a significant impact on the region's highly productive agricultural land and biodiversity.



Central Otway Landcare members in

COLN has engaged landholders to address challenges through an incentive program that is helping with resources, sharing knowledge, labour, and weed management practices.

COLN facilitator Andrew Gray said the project's aim was to empower the community and combine landholders' efforts in targeted blackberry management. This coordinated planning and treatment has also resulted in engaging new landholders, with a high percentage interested in a chemical-free approach.

"We've been trialling a variety of methods such as slashing, grazing, fire, plant grubbing, herbicides, biological control and harvesting of fruit by confining plant size and preventing spread" he said.

The benefits of this approach include increased pasture, rehabilitated boundaries and wind breaks, increased property value and fence longevity, more productive on-farm biodiversity and effective long term blackberry control.

"We now have a model for integrated weed treatment, using a community-led approach that can be replicated for other pest issues in the Central Otways" Mr Gray said.

Project promotion included media, websites, newsletters, local events and door knocking. "We recognised the invaluable importance of face to face engagement with landholders, to learn and capture the whole story of each property."

Local farmer Brendon Scanlan said by working together we could better manage blackberry. "The project has provided support to people who often feel like they're on their own in tackling tough weeds," he said.

**The project has provided support to people who often feel like they're on their own in tackling tough weeds**



**Inspecting a blackberry treatment site at Elliminyt**

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- 35 hectares of weed control
- 19 assessments across six properties
- four field days with more than 57 participants including agency staff, community members and land managers
- developing the Central Otways Blackberry Management Plan
- launch of a 400L spray unit trailer for community groups to utilise

# REGIONAL LANDCARE FACILITATOR PROJECT



The Regional Landcare Facilitator is an Australian Government National Landcare Programme funded position, contributing \$162,000 to ensure communities are managing landscapes to sustain long-term economic and social benefits.

The role builds partnerships between a range of stakeholders including farming system and agricultural industry groups, government agencies and the Landcare community. It provides advice and support to encourage the adoption of new and sustainable approaches to NRM and agriculture.

The \$35,000 project budget has supported activities on cover cropping, integrated pest management for viticulture, stubble management, nutrient management for dairy farms, holistic farm planning, rural health, horse property grazing management and regenerative agriculture.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- 45 events with 947 participants involved
- 3,744 recipients of project written materials
- establishing the Corangamite Rural Women's Network
- six community and industry representatives involved in decision making on the RLF steering committee
- release of the film Generations of farming
- supported South West Soils Conference



# EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

The Corangamite Rural Women's Network brings women from diverse backgrounds together to strengthen rural networks and enhance community resilience.

Women play vital roles in our rural communities and wear many hats. The network was formed to support women who share common interests, to learn and socialise together.

During the past 18 months 107 women have participated in five farming and rural enterprise workshops and field days at Moriac, Warrambeen, St Leonards, Inverleigh and Simpson. And more than 50 percent of these women are new to Landcare, coming from a wide range of backgrounds including commercial farmers, lifestyle properties, agribusiness consultants and rural community members.

The event's discussions addressed dairy farming and sustainability, developing communication skills for farm succession, wine making, rural health and farmer nutrition.

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Simpson dairy farmer Linda Whiting has been involved in the women's network since its inception in 2014.

Mrs Whiting, a dairy farmer for 17 years, showed the group of women a taste of dairy farm life, discussing soil health, niche markets, and on-farm composting.

Mrs Whiting said the women's network is going well, with the women involved from all walks of life.

"The events are a bit outside the normal day-to-day and it takes you out of your comfort zone," she said.

"It's good to hear stories from other women. We all have the same sort of challenges in around about way."

The success of the network has been due to the support of volunteers, staff at the Corangamite CMA and the National Landcare Programme.



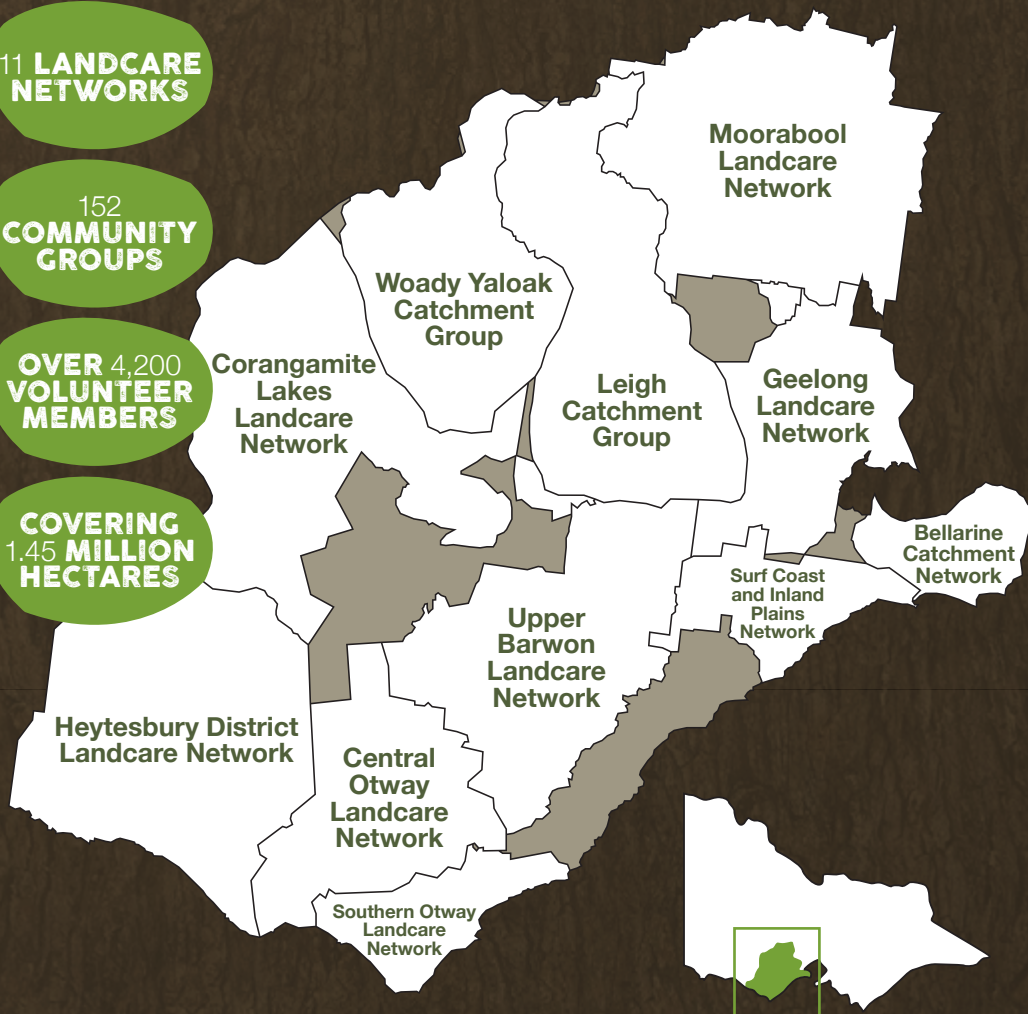
Corangamite Rural Women's Network  
inaugural field day at Warrambeen  
February 2014

**11 LANDCARE  
NETWORKS**

**152  
COMMUNITY  
GROUPS**

**OVER 4,200  
VOLUNTEER  
MEMBERS**

**COVERING  
1.45 MILLION  
HECTARES**



This report only reflects the activities undertaken by Landcare networks and their associated groups. Additional work undertaken by volunteers, individuals and other community groups is extensive and beyond the scope of this report.

Data is based on final project reports for 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015.

Contact the Corangamite Landcare team for further information  
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