

VICTORIAN

# LANDCARE

Winter 2012 Issue 55

& CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT



RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS FEATURE

Yarrilinks – a multicultural success story

Connecting children with nature

Linking Landcare and business



# Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management

WINTER 2012 ISSUE 55

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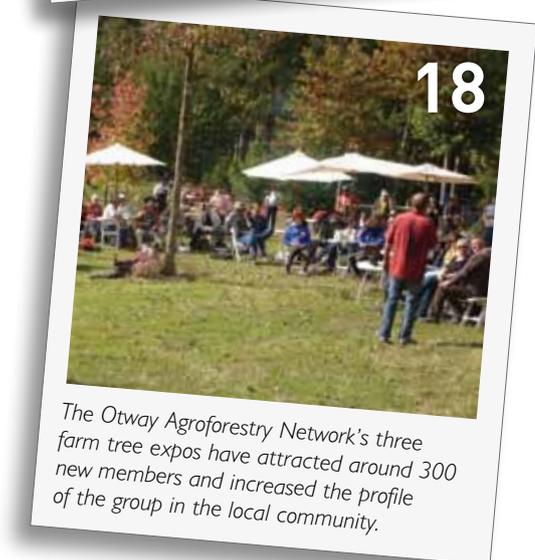
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Anna feels the texture of an urchin shell at a  
Bayside Enviro Kids activity, by Kerstin Begley.

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# Minister's foreword

The latest issue of the magazine has plenty of interesting stories and people who highlight just how much is being done in the Landcare space.

The focus on how groups and networks recruit and retain members and volunteers is particularly relevant as we are all looking at ways to achieve the best outcomes for the environment and community.

The stories really demonstrate the way Victoria's Landcare groups have used some creative approaches to getting people involved – speed planting for singles, music gigs, playgroups, walks, talks, expos, treasure hunts and mass planting days aimed at getting new migrants into the bush.

One of the projects I'm keen to share with you is the 2 Million Trees initiative, which I launched during National Volunteers Week. The Victorian Government is working with organisations throughout the state to

plant 1.5 million trees across parklands and other open public space in metropolitan Melbourne and half a million trees along waterways in regional Victoria.

The project is supporting tree planting projects run by councils, schools, community and Landcare groups and volunteers, committees of management and other public land managers.

I encourage you to visit [www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au) or email [2M.Trees@dse.vic.gov.au](mailto:2M.Trees@dse.vic.gov.au) for more information.

I've also heard some great feedback from the induction workshop for the 68 new local facilitators organised by DSE in partnership with the Victorian Landcare Council in June.

Close to 80 per cent of the facilitators attended, which was great. The two-day

workshop allowed the facilitators to get OH&S training, community engagement, partnership building, as well as funding and reporting information that will enable them to do their job in their local communities better.

The 2011 Victorian Landcare Award winners will be heading off to Sydney in early September for a national conference and the announcement of the 2012 National Landcare Awards. These sorts of networking opportunities are of great benefit for people working on the ground.

We wish our Victorian Landcarers the best of luck!

Ryan Smith  
Minister for Environment and  
Climate Change



Minister Smith (right) and Chris Jones Weatherly at the launch of 2 Million Trees at BRITE services nursery in Broadmeadows during National Volunteers Week in May.

# Yarrilinks recruits new friends to Landcare – from all over the world

By Joel Boyd

Last year Safa, a Sudanese/Australian girl, planted a yam daisy in the Wimmera sunshine as a mark of respect for the Indigenous people who once lived in the area. Yam daisies were a plentiful food plant pre-settlement, but these days they are rare. The yam daisies were planted on a Yarrilinks community planting weekend where people from Melbourne help local farmers to plant trees and restore the landscape.

Many of the men, women and children who have contributed to the planting of 300,000 seedlings on the intensely farmed Wimmera plains have been refugees from war-torn nations. The Yarrilinks community planting weekends have been underway since 1999 and have involved volunteers from 24 different cultures.

Every August, partner organisations including Adult Multicultural Education Services (AMES) and the Sudanese Australian Integrated Learning program (SAIL) help bus Melbourne-based refugee families to small towns in the Yarriambiack Shire region to stay with host families and plant side by side with local residents.

Last year Sudanese, Ethiopian and Karen people (from Burma) were among those to lend a helping hand on two sites at Murtoa (population 950). For many of them Yarrilinks provided their first taste of rural Australia and the Landcare movement.

The planting is just one aspect of the weekend. After planting on Saturday the volunteers enjoy an evening of local entertainment and a meal prepared by Melbourne's Lentil as Anything restaurant. On Sunday they are given a tour of the region before heading back to the city.

According to Minyip local and Yarrilinks Co-ordinator Rae Talbot many of the volunteers have developed close ongoing relationships with their host families.

"Some volunteers come back year after year to stay with the same families. They have a lovely time catching up on news and seeing the kids as they grow up."

Rae believes that it is important to always be mindful of how farmers, volunteers and communities will benefit from the revegetation projects.



From Sudan to Murtoa: Safa helps to plant yam daisies in the Wimmera.

"We do our best to promote the Wimmera as a place to settle and work and we've had some success in that area. Nhill in the northern Wimmera now benefits from the 100 Karen people who live in the town. Sixty Karen people work at the Luv-a-Duck facility thanks to the support of Luv-a-Duck manager John Millington. One family group has recently purchased a house in Nhill. The town has been very welcoming and it is wonderful to see them starting to put down roots."

For Rae and her Yarrilinks colleagues, Landcare is not just about caring for the

land; it's about caring for the people who tend the land.

"By strengthening communities and cultural experience we can achieve much-needed social and economic outcomes while we improve the environment. We've been culturally isolated in the Wimmera and it's been a privilege to meet new volunteers and hear amazing stories of survival and their dreams of a new life in their new country," Rae said.

Yarrilinks has benefited from strong partnerships with many organisations



*Many of the men, women and children who have contributed to the planting of 300,000 seedlings on the intensely farmed Wimmera plains have been refugees from war-torn nations.*



*Rae Talbot checks a patch of buloke on a property between Rupanyup and Minyip. Rae's passion for conserving the bulokes has brought her into contact with people from all over the world through the Yarrilinks community planting weekends.*

including the Wimmera CMA, DSE, Wimmera Landcare, Ace Radio, Greening Australia, Lentil as Anything, AMES, SAIL and Initiatives of Change. These partnerships have been crucial to the ongoing success of the project.

Rae, often accompanied by her husband Joe Talbot, is a passionate advocate for the project and has spread the word far and wide. Rae has spoken to other Landcare groups and networks across Victoria, politicians, corporations, social support organisations and corporations.

The Yarrilinks team is hopeful that the Yarriambiack Shire will continue to support the project as a model for integrating native vegetation protection and restoration works within Australia's highly developed grain producing region. The project will also benefit from a part-time facilitator funded through the 2012 State Government's Victorian Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative.

***Yarrilinks community plant-outs are held in Yarriambiack Shire on the first weekend of August each year. Host families are usually based in Rupanyup, Murtoa, Minyip, Warracknabeal and Horsham. For more information on Yarrilinks and advice for working with volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds contact Rae Talbot through the Wimmera CMA on 5382 1544.***

## Tips for working with volunteers

- The best way to enthuse and recruit people is through face-to-face communication
- Planning and organisation are crucial – make it easy for people to be involved
- Build relationships with well-organised support organisations that can provide access to potential volunteers
- Think carefully about how your activity might be interpreted and understood by someone from another culture
- Make sure volunteers fill roles that suit and benefit them – people need a sense of achievement
- Embrace people's differences
- Be patient, prepared to listen and to share lots of laughs



*A planting group at Sheep Hills takes a well-earned break.*

# Bringing Landcare and business together

By Karen Brisbane



St Joseph's Primary School students enjoyed a tree planting day funded by a local business.

I've been Victoria's Landcare Corporate Partnership Facilitator since 2009. My work involves encouraging businesses, corporations and philanthropic bodies to become involved with natural resource management through partnerships with community group projects.

There are many ways that corporations can get involved in Landcare type projects. Providing skills can be of great assistance. We've seen accounting firms support not-for-profit community groups with accounting issues and project audits. Donating equipment for on-ground works can also be very helpful to groups as well as volunteering time.

Volunteers have come from many walks of life – from scientists working for the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories to retirees who are members of Melbourne-based Rotary groups. Partnerships can also be forged at a local level with schools joining forces with local Friends groups to work on joint projects.

Financial support has been received from a range of environmental and community-

minded businesses and organisations. The Bunnings nest box project is a great success story. Twelve Bunnings stores are involved with the project and some stores are also assisting local community groups with National Tree Day.

In 2011 Darley horse stud supported South West Goulburn Landcare by helping them with junior Landcare educational projects based in the Nagambie and Broadford regions. Darley also sponsored the Hughes Creek Boggs and Bandicoots project in Ruffy and a walking track and signage project in Avenel.

The bikeTREES organisation – a self-funded, industry-based tree planting and reforestation program – is working with the Ovens Landcare Network on donating

plants to local community groups. The plants donated are part of a program aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of bike events including the Ausbike Bike Expo.

My role is to link organisations with local community natural resource management groups so they can join forces and collaborate on local projects. The connections created by the different projects are having a positive impact on the environment and providing multiple rewards for students, community members and corporate staff.

***If you have an idea that you would like support for from an alternative funding source or you know of a business that might like to support a project in their region contact Karen Brisbane on 5820 1134.***



*The connections created by the different projects are having a positive impact on the environment and providing multiple rewards for students, community members and corporate staff.*



Teachers from St Joseph's Primary School in Nagambie demonstrate tree planting techniques to students. Funds from Darley horse stud allowed the Nagambie Landcare Group to help revegetate the school's grounds.



Young Enviro Kids participants watch the ducklings at Basterfield Park.



*Enviro Kids is a way for families to be involved in their local environment without making a long-term commitment to volunteering.*



## Connecting children with nature

By Barbara Jakob

**Enviro Kids is a grassroots Friends group that operates in an urban area with a focus on young children, their parents, guardians and wider family members including grandparents. The kids are between three and nine years old. They take part in age-appropriate environmental educational activities and their parents are encouraged to participate.**

Enviro Kids is run as a family event on Sunday mornings. The focus is on local indigenous plants and wildlife. Activities include researching the living conditions for frogs in a local pond and learning about worms. Taking a closer look at the banksia trees leads to discovering how the Bunurong people used them.

In spring the children weave nests and admire the skills of birds. The varieties of seabirds on the foreshore are investigated and the children test what shape beaks suit different food. The subjects chosen are linked to the seasons and to the work of the local Friends groups who come along to share their knowledge. It is these interactive activities for children coupled with education that supports behaviour change towards sustainable living practices.

Children and their parents develop an understanding of the importance of bushland in urban areas. These families then become advocates for open spaces in the community.

Enviro Kids is a way for families to be involved in their local environment without making a long-term commitment to volunteering. It also links children and their parents to the work of the many local Friends groups and helps to strengthen relationships.

Enviro Kids is part of the Bayside Environment Friends Network. There are 17 Friends groups in the urban suburbs of Bayside. In 2010 the Friends groups decided to actively connect with young people and their parents in the municipality and Enviro Kids was formed.

Enviro Kids is advertised through a direct mailing list and on Facebook. There are plans to branch out into other suburbs. New facilitators are welcomed and Friends groups are encouraged to make contact.

**For further information contact Barbara Jakob by email at [BaysideFriends@gmail.com](mailto:BaysideFriends@gmail.com)**



Coastcare co-ordinator Hakan Dellal demonstrates the use of drippers for collecting seawater to research microbes.

# A small biolink is a huge challenge

Despite its proximity to Melbourne and a reputation as the city's playground, the Mornington Peninsula retains significant areas of natural habitat – both in state and national parks and in pockets of uncleared private land. These areas provide habitat for a diverse array of flora and fauna.

However, the rising demand for weekender and lifestyle properties and the growth of vineyards and tourism enterprises increases the pressure on these pockets of natural habitat and there is a danger they can become isolated from each other.

The Manton and Stony Creeks Landcare Group works with the two creek systems that flow from the highlands of Arthur's Seat and Main Ridge down to Westernport Bay. Thanks to some good landowners and support from Melbourne Water the creeks are in good condition and provide natural wildlife corridors.

It looked easy on the map – a few well-placed biolinks could connect the area's isolated sites with each other and with several pockets of preserved bush on private land. Only a few kilometres of links were needed to create a matrix of connected habitats. Yet five years later the major strands of the link are only just being planted.

“

*Views are critical for lifestylers and weekenders. It is important to recognise where a planting may limit ocean or valley panoramas to which the landowner is attached.*

”

Our sponsors – power group Jemena, Port Phillip and Westernport CMA, Melbourne Water and Landcare Australia Limited – have every reason to be proud of what they have achieved. But it has required a great deal of patience from our sponsors and from our committee.

## **Working with lifestylers**

The first lesson we learnt is that landowners on lifestyle properties have different values to those involved in commercial farming.

Economic arguments can be used in commercial farming operations – giving up a strip of productive land for a shelterbelt can provide other economic benefits for the landholder with increased shade and shelter and improved soil fertility. Lifestylers and weekenders don't farm for profit and their barriers to getting involved in a biolink have more to do with their emotional relationship with the property.

The size and shape of properties was also an issue. Most properties are small (from 4 to 40 hectares), narrow and often run down to the creek. A 15-metre-wide biolink is a more obvious intrusion on these properties and can be quite close to the house.

Convincing people of the need to use our local flora was an issue as it isn't as eye-catching as the brighter blooming natives like grevilleas and callistemons. The local varieties are plainer and scrubby-looking.

Views are critical for lifestylers and weekenders. It is important to recognise where a planting may limit ocean or valley panoramas to which the landowner is attached.

None of these issues is insurmountable. The owners are generally sympathetic to environmental protection and with a bit of give and take agreement can be reached.

## **Fauna can convince**

All of the issues need to be thoroughly talked through. The Manton and Stony Creek Landcare Group President, David Maddocks, has spent hundreds of hours

in consultation and discussion with landowners working towards agreement.

Using a fauna consultant has also been successful. Our personable and expert local, Malcolm Legge, can brilliantly explain that wildlife includes not just koalas, wallabies or kangaroos, but lots of small, often nocturnal creatures, including tiny mouse-like dunnarts, bats, skinks and lizards.



David Maddocks and Ann-Heather White from the Manton and Stony Creek Landcare Group beside a fence installed to exclude cattle from a corridor to Stony Creek.

# on the Mornington Peninsula

By Ann-Heather White



David Maddocks and Ann-Heather White alongside Stony Creek. The creek's permanent water is critical for wildlife. The creek can now be reached through a biolink created across private properties and remnant bush.

## Group profile

The Manton and Stony Creek Landcare Group formed in 2003. It is made up of 52 families on about 310 properties. These properties range in size from 0.2 hectares to 110 hectares.

Properties in the area generally have some remnant bush and some grazing. There are a few remaining apple orchards and recent olive and grape plantings. The majority of group members are weekenders who are retired or semi-retired. Property management issues don't hold much interest, but building nest boxes, the biolink and community talks and slide-shows by a local fauna

expert have stimulated an interest in membership.

One of the group's biggest challenges is getting volunteer labour for projects due to the age of the members and the fact that they are weekenders.

The group communicates with the local community through a newsletter, articles in the local newspaper and emails to members. A stand at the Red Hill School annual carnival has been good at attracting interest. The group also has good links with the Mornington Peninsula Shire, the Red Hill Community Action Group and the Red Hill Consultative Group.

This is often a turning point for property owners. When they understand that corridors are not only for robust animals like kangaroos, but also for tinier creatures too vulnerable to cross open paddocks, they begin to appreciate that all fauna are part of a mutually sustaining ecosystem.

### Connecting the creeks and verges

Seven properties now provide a lengthy

biolink that connects both Manton and Stony Creeks and links up with some well-vegetated roadside verges. A link through one property at the headwaters of the system connects it with the extensive Main Ridge Reserve. The whole area incorporates approximately 70 square kilometres.

It has probably been a century or more since there was a continuous link across

these areas. We hope that the last remaining piece of the jigsaw will be a tunnel under Tucks Road, the only major obstacle to safe travel for small creatures.

*Ann-Heather White is secretary of the Manton and Stony Creek Landcare group. For further information email Ann-Heather at [gwa@hotmail.net.au](mailto:gwa@hotmail.net.au)*



Members of the Manton and Stony Creek Landcare Group at a planting day.

“

*One of the group's biggest challenges is getting volunteer labour for projects due to the age of the members and the fact that they are weekenders.*

”

# Hikers discover Landcare on Grand Strzelecki Track

The opening of an iconic 110-kilometre walking track through the Eastern Strzelecki Ranges in Gippsland has given the Merriman Creek Landcare Sub Group a chance to promote its work to a vast audience. The Grand Strzelecki Track traverses five catchments that connect two national parks and the highest point in the range, Mount Tassie, which stands 720 metres above sea level. The track is expected to become one of Victoria's premier bushwalking and camping destinations.

The Merriman Creek Landcare Sub Group has sponsored one of the interpretive signs located at the headwaters of Merriman Creek near Balook. One of the primary focuses of the group is to maintain and improve the health of Merriman Creek. With 250,000 visitors to the parks each year they saw the opportunity to sponsor the sign as a great way of promoting their group to an audience that values Victoria's natural assets.

The sign is situated in cool temperate rainforest at the foot of one of the largest mountain ash trees in the area. The Merriman Creek is approximately 85 kilometres long and ends at Seaspray where it meets Bass Strait.

**For further information go to [www.grandstrzeleckitrack.org.au/](http://www.grandstrzeleckitrack.org.au/)**



## Reader survey – have your say

In 2001, 2006 and 2009 we asked readers to complete a survey to help us refine the magazine and make sure it meets the needs of the Landcare community.

The results told us that readers saw the magazine as a good source of practical and innovative advice about Landcare and a place to share and showcase Landcare stories.

The surveys have provided us with a huge number of suggestions from readers about the stories they wanted to see featured in the magazine and we have been working through these as we plan each issue.

It's time for a new survey. Please take a few minutes to tell us who you are and what you think of the magazine. We are really keen to get your feedback. Suggestions on topics that are interesting and relevant for us to follow up are very welcome.

In this survey we'd also like to find out if it is possible for us to further reduce the costs and resources involved in producing paper copies of the magazine by encouraging more readers to take up the option of reading the magazine online.

### Great prizes

If you complete the survey by 1 September 2012 you'll go into the draw to win one of the following prizes:

- \$500 from the DSE Victorian Landcare Program for your local group or other charity of choice.
- Six bottles of Tahbilk Marsanne donated by the Tahbilk Winery. Established in 1860 and located in the Nagambie Lakes region of Central Australia Tahbilk is one of Australia's most beautiful and historic wineries. Tahbilk is also committed to Landcare. Tahbilk manages the extensive wetlands on the property for their environmental values.



*Scientists are electronically tracking the endangered Freshwater Catfish in the Tahbilk billabongs.*

According to Tyson Stelzer of *Wine Taste Weekly* the 2011 Marsanne is a particularly outstanding vintage. "Fresher and zestier than ever and carrying a wonderfully persistent texture."

- A copy of *Birdscaping Australian Gardens – A Guide to Native Plants and the Garden Birds they attract* by George Adams

### The online survey is quick and easy

You have the choice of filling out the sheets opposite and using the reply paid envelope, or you can complete the survey online by logging on to [www.dse.vic.gov.au/victorianlandcaremagazine](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/victorianlandcaremagazine) and clicking on the reader survey link.

Completing the survey online is the most cost-effective method of participating as it saves on postage and automatically collates the results.

# Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management Magazine Reader Survey 2012

1. Please provide your name and a contact phone number or email if you want to go into the draw to win a prize. We will not pass your details on to any third party nor use this information for any other purpose.

Name

Phone number or email

2. What is your age and gender? (Optional)

Age

Gender

3. Which one of the following best describes you? (Tick box and comment if 'other'.)

Dryland farmer – broad-acre

Lifestyle or hobby farmer

Dryland farmer – intensive

Urban/town resident

Irrigation farmer

Other

4. Where do you live? (Tick one box only.)

Rural area

Urban/rural fringe (peri-urban)

Country town or regional city

Melbourne/Geelong

5. What is your interest in Landcare?

Member of a Landcare or similar group

Agribusiness person

Landcare co-ordinator/facilitator/support staff

Landcare sponsor

VFF member

Teacher/educator

Local government employee or councillor

Researcher

State or Federal Government employee

Other

CMA employee

6. Do other people read your copy of the magazine?

Yes. How many?

No

7. Rate the different types of stories in Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management magazine (1 – very interested, 2 – quite interested, 3 – not very interested, 4 – not interested).

News from Landcare groups and networks

Practical stories on innovative approaches, or how to achieve best practice

Individual farmer case studies

Lessons learned from past Landcare projects

New research findings

Revisiting case studies from past issues of the magazine

Regional roundup

'In brief' section

News from DSE/DPI and the FTLA

Minister's foreword

Comments

8. Rate the different topics explored in Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management magazine (1 – very interested, 2 – quite interested, 3 – not very interested, 4 – not interested).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity conservation                | <input type="checkbox"/> Soil health and soil carbon                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Food security and community gardens              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable agriculture                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Water and drought                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pest plants and animals                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Landcare Awards                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional and community development       | <input type="checkbox"/> Future Landcare and Landcare's changing audience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon management opportunities          | <input type="checkbox"/> Landcare planning                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous involvement in Landcare       | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm forestry                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eco-markets and market-based instruments | <input type="checkbox"/> Organic and biodynamic farming                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity conservation                | <input type="checkbox"/> Landcare conferences and seminars                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The social side of Landcare              | <input type="checkbox"/> Landcare group/individual profiles               |

9. What other topics are you interested in?

10. Currently we produce three editions of the magazine a year. Each edition is 24 pages long. What would you prefer?

Number of editions

- More    Fewer    Same

Number of pages

- More    Fewer    Same

11. Is there anything to prevent you from reading the magazine online?

- Please tick this box if you would prefer to receive the magazine via the online email alert

Email address:

12. Do you have any other feedback about the magazine? Are there other ways it could be improved for you?

13. What do you think are the current challenges for Landcare in Victoria?

# Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management Magazine

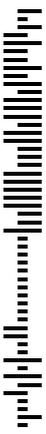
## Reader Survey 2012

# STOP!

Before you start this survey, did you know that you can complete it online?  
It's quick, easy, and saves us time and money.

**Delivery Address:**  
PO Box 500  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 8002

No stamp required  
if posted in Australia



Reader Survey  
Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management Magazine  
Department of Sustainability & Environment  
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Hard work and good fun: an ELMA community planting day at the Jimmy Ball Flora Reserve, Elphinstone.



*Landcare groups that are able to apply for funds towards interesting and innovative projects shouldn't be afraid to give it a go.*



## A challenging gig helps ELMA pull together

By Beth Mellick

Over the years I've noticed how important social functions can be for strengthening community and environmental groups. Being able to enjoy Landcare is integral to maintaining an active membership. Groups have run speed plantings, rave plantings, curry nights, Landcare bingo, and all sorts of dinners and lunches.

With this in mind, the Elphinstone Land Management Association (ELMA) applied for a grant to hold a gig at the local pub. The objective was to increase membership, share information, raise the profile of the group, and to show that Landcare could be great fun.

We managed to secure Australian singer-songwriter Shane Howard to act as our main attraction. Things were looking good, but a week before the gig the pub's kitchen burnt down. Then, on the day of the gig, it bucketed with rain. With only outside facilities available since the fire, we considered cancelling the show.

However, Shane was still willing to play and bookings had been made. We erected a number of gazebos and tents, put on our gumboots and rain jackets and pushed on.

In the end it was a fantastic night. More than 200 people attended the gig. We signed up new and lapsed members and promoted our Landcare projects.

Sometimes Landcare can experience some community dissatisfaction – ELMA went through that last year. Some locals were concerned our tree planting was increasing the fire risk for the town, cat lovers were unhappy about the trapping of feral cats, some locals disliked cape broom removal from their roadsides and we hadn't solved the rabbit problem. In spite of this the



Shane Howard played on at the Elphinstone pub despite heavy rain and a fire that burnt down the pub's kitchen.

### About ELMA

The Elphinstone Land Management Association is located in central Victoria. Major projects include the development of an indigenous arboretum, the establishment and care of a flora reserve, managing and restoring remnant vegetation, weed control adjoining a state forest, in-town plantings and help and advice for landholders on pest plant and animal control.

gig showed that ELMA members were able to pull together, kick up their heels, and put on a community shindig worth remembering.

I believe the Landcare movement is currently in transition. It needs big vision projects to make a real difference to species decline across the landscape. But it also has to cater for its members, both current and future. This may require some thinking outside the box, so Landcare groups that are able to apply for funds towards interesting and innovative projects shouldn't be afraid to give it a go.

**Beth Mellick is the Executive Director of the Norman Wettenhall Foundation and a member of ELMA. For further information go to [www.elphinstonelandmanagementgroup.com](http://www.elphinstonelandmanagementgroup.com)**

# Otway farm tree expo links friends and experts

By David Curry

**Multipurpose trees and shrubs can protect and enhance existing farm productivity, increase the diversity of farm products and improve the sustainability of natural resources.**

The Otway Agroforestry Network (OAN) was set up by farmers in 1993 to encourage and support other farmers to get involved in agroforestry.

The OAN uses peer group mentoring where long-term experienced farmers and tree-growers assist other farmers. The network has 20 mentors and more than 250 members.

For the past three years the OAN has run an annual farm tree expo. The first two expos were in Birregurra and the third was held on the Bambra Agroforestry Demonstration Farm owned by Rowan and Claire Reid. This expo was also the 25th anniversary of the Bambra farm since agroforestry was introduced. All three expos have attracted about 300 participants and brought us new members and volunteers.

The theme for our 2012 expo was bioenergy and included the potential for agroforestry to contribute to domestic heating and the production of electricity via gasification (greenhouse gas neutral energy). The theme also included information on sequestering carbon on farms using productive trees and soils. Biochar, a by-product of gasification, was also discussed.

Other activities at our expos have included lectures on wildlife conservation in productive systems; the risk of myrtle rust in Victoria; walnuts and truffles as part of a productive tree system; climate science and the environmental and commercial prospects of sandalwood.

We've had outdoor displays and talks on shiitake mushrooms grown on thinnings from hardwood plantings; cut flowers and foliage integrated into shelterbelts; native food products; honey from flowering trees and shrubs; nurseries; establishing trees on farms; productive tree management including pruning; firewood production; furniture making, musical instrument making, specialty wood master-craftsmen; and falling and milling timber with a mobile mill.



Alice Springs chef Athol Wark serving up some delicious morsels flavoured with native plants.



A farm walk on the Bambra Agroforestry Farm during the 2012 Otway Agroforestry Network farm tree expo.

The 2012 expo included a second day, primarily for interstate visitors but well attended by locals, on one of the older properties in the Deans Marsh district. Yan Yan Gurt West has established multipurpose trees and shrubs integrated into the existing system for optimum benefit. Yan Yan Gurt West is under the stewardship of the Stewart family and Andrew Stewart is the OAN Co-ordinator.

Food and music are important ingredients for the expos. The focus is on local talent and products. The success of the expos can be attributed to the range of activities and, more particularly, to the network's emphasis on learning, development and innovation. OAN mentors and members have a passion for landscape sustainability and the expos are a great way for them to share that passion.

A member recently suggested that OAN is more of a fellowship than a network. This gives an insight into the social bonds created. OAN also keeps in close contact with key stakeholders and experts. It is a group with a focus on people, their ideas, continual learning and innovation.

**For further information go to [www.oan.org.au](http://www.oan.org.au)**

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*Food and music are important ingredients for the expos. The focus is on local talent and products.*

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The first Landcare for Singles events run in the Yarra Valley were well attended. Participants said they were great fun and provided a good introduction to Landcare.

## Kit makes Landcare for Singles events easy

Landcare for Singles events provide an opportunity for environmentally conscious people on the lookout for someone special to try a unique form of speed dating, or in this case speed planting.

They are also a great way of attracting new volunteers and spreading the word about the work your group is doing for your local environment.

The first Landcare for Singles speed planting events were run by the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Landcare Network in 2011. Two hugely successful planting days attracted over 100 participants, 95 per cent of whom were completely new to Landcare. A party was also hosted afterwards to give the singles from both planting events the opportunity to come together and mingle.

Following on from the success of these events, Landcare Australia Limited, in

partnership with Kim Boswell of the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Network, has developed a project kit to assist groups to run Landcare for Singles and Coastcare for Singles events.

The kit provides a comprehensive guide on how to run a Landcare for Singles event and includes posters, registration forms, tickets, banners, flyers, name badges, invitations and feedback forms. To download the kit go to [www.landcareonline.com.au](http://www.landcareonline.com.au)

Landcare Australia Limited is keen to keep track of how many Landcare for Singles events are taking place. Please email event details to [events@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:events@landcareaustralia.com.au)

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*The kit provides a comprehensive guide on how to run a Landcare for Singles event and includes posters, registration forms, tickets, banners, flyers, name badges, invitations and feedback forms.*

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*I knew we were on to something that would be positive and emotionally satisfying, but I have to admit I had no idea how much of an impact it would have on so many people*

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The Macedon Ranges community celebrated their mums at the Trees for Mum planting event organised by the Woodend Landcare Group.

## Woodend residents honour their mums with trees

By Angela Van Dam

**The inaugural Woodend Trees for Mum event took place on Mother's Day in May with more than 150 people planting 120 native trees and grasses at Five Mile Creek Reserve in Woodend.**

The event was a huge success and even the forecast rain held off until the last tree was planted.

"It was a wonderful morning out. What a great way to celebrate Mother's Day," said local mum Liesl Frankenberg.

The Trees for Mum initiative was started by two friends and work colleagues from Sydney in 2002. Deena Raphael and Lauren Adlam had both lost their mothers to cancer and they came up with the concept as a way of paying tribute to their special mums.

Interest has grown in the event since then and Trees for Mum days have been run in many states across Australia with more than 20,000 people planting trees as tributes to mothers who have passed away, or to celebrate those who are still alive.

According to co-creator Lauren Adlam support for the idea has been unequivocal.

"I knew we were on to something that would be positive and emotionally satisfying, but I have to admit I had no idea how much of an impact it would have on so many people," Lauren said.

Woodend and Mildura hosted Trees for Mum events for 2012. The Woodend event was made possible due to generous funding from the North Central CMA and the enthusiastic support of the Woodend Landcare crew.

The event was a rewarding experience for everyone involved. It gave people an opportunity to create a living legacy on Mother's Day and made the day less painful for many who were remembering mothers who have died.



Rowena Glenister gets a hand with tree planting on Mother's Day from Bella and Lachlan.

Participant Sarah Adair said the event was enjoyable and had personal resonance.

"Thanks to the Woodend Trees for Mum team we had a special moment planting trees for two very special mums, who have now become grandmas, but are no longer with us," Sarah said.

Given the positive feedback from the local community the Landcare team are planning towards a Trees for Mum event in 2013.

**If you are interested in attending next year email Angela Van Dam at [TreesForMumWoodend@gmail.com](mailto:TreesForMumWoodend@gmail.com) or visit the [Trees for Mum Woodend Facebook page](#). For further information about Woodend Landcare sign up for Landcare blog at [www.woodendlandcare.wordpress.com/](http://www.woodendlandcare.wordpress.com/) or call Peter Yates on 5427 3221.**

# Giving and gaining – working with disabled volunteers

By Lisette Mill

Harris-on-Merri is a parcel of Crown reserve adjoining the Merri River in Warrnambool City. Once a rubbish dump, it has been carefully rehabilitated over the past seven years by members of the Warrnambool Coastcare Landcare Group with support from Warrnambool City Council.

Where rubble and garden waste once cascaded down the bank onto the estuarine saltmarsh, now sheoaks and correa cloak the rises. Poa and kennedia edge the Port Fairy to Warrnambool Rail Trail that runs through the reserve.

The reserve was recently the site for a pilot project encouraging Landcare to engage with disability support groups.

The Warrnambool Coastcare Landcare Group, funded by the Basalt to Bay Landcare Network and in partnership with Karingal Community Living, an organisation that offers support services to people with a

disability in south west Victoria, held a planting day at the reserve for members of the groups and local residents.

Twenty-nine people turned out to help extend some existing areas of vegetation as well as fill in the gaps with extra cover. All capacities were catered for. I worked alongside the Karingal volunteers. We shared knowledge about using a tree planter, how to make tree guards, how to step out the gaps between plants, how to use a stake pusher and how to stay hydrated. The Karingal volunteers helped us with a steady supply of guards and kept us motivated with stories and jokes.

In my years of experience with Landcare in Australia and New Zealand I have worked alongside many people with different attitudes and abilities. I thoroughly enjoyed the curiosity, enthusiasm and fun my crew brought along with them on our social inclusion day.



The Harris-on-Merri Crown Reserve in Warrnambool benefited from revegetation works undertaken during a recent social inclusion day.

I encourage all Landcare groups to consider not just what we can gain from volunteers, but what we can give. The Basalt to Bay Landcare Network is seeking to extend this program to other community agencies in the future. We hope to spread the positive experience of Landcare as widely as possible.

For further information email Lisette Mill at [basalttobay@gmail.com](mailto:basalttobay@gmail.com)

## FTLA update

By Susi Johnson

More than 60 members and guests attended the 2012 Farm Tree & Landcare Association (FTLA) forum and annual general meeting in February, with almost half of the participants attending for the first time. FTLA President David Clark greeted the attendees, welcomed the new Landcare Facilitator funding as well as the opportunity to contribute to the State Government's Victorian Landcare Program Strategic Plan. David also spoke of changes to the Incorporated Associations Act which will affect some groups, and reported that the process of bringing the occupational health and safety laws of the different states into line has been delayed.

Attendees benefited from presentations on the biodiversity fund, carbon farming and from DSE on state government investment in Landcare. A number of

attendees stayed on to participate in the Landcare employment forum.

The 2012–13 FTLA committee is: President David Clark, Vice President Karen Alexander, Treasurer Peter Berrisford, Secretary Artur Muchow and Ordinary Members Richard Jamieson, Alex Arbuthnot, Terry Hubbard and Melanie Husada. The Immediate Past President is Susan Campbell. Aurel Dessewffy was thanked for his service and Melanie Husada was welcomed to the committee.

### Secrets to successful groups – training

The FTLA is running its Secrets to Successful Groups Training Program again in 2012. DSE is supporting ten sessions across Victoria to assist Landcarers improve the capacity and health of their groups and networks. The training is part of the State Government's Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative.

Topics will include employment and employer responsibilities, group succession planning, member recruitment and retention, management and occupational health and safety responsibilities for staff and volunteers, managing finances, keeping annual and project accounts and managing acquittals, legal obligations of committees of management and office bearer roles and duties.

### Renewal reminder

Renewal notices were issued in early June and were due 30 June 2012. If you are unsure whether your group has renewed call the FTLA on 9207 5527 or email [ftla@vff.org.au](mailto:ftla@vff.org.au). In the past some groups have assumed they were covered by the FTLA insurance and subsequently discovered they were non-financial.

# Around the State – News from the

## **Corangamite**

After months of hard work compiling project applications, several Landcare groups and networks have received long-term funding through the Victorian Government's Communities for Nature program and the Australian Government Biodiversity Fund.

The Landcare community has played a vital role in the development of the new Regional Catchment Strategy which will shape the future of natural resource management in the region.

More than 125 landholders, students and staff attended two workshops on farming healthy soils with Dr Maarten Stapper. The workshops covered topics on landscapes, farming, food quality and food security.

*For further information contact Tracey McRae on 5232 9100.*

## **North Central**

It has been a busy quarter in the North Central CMA region. Applications for the 2012–13 Victorian Landcare Grants have closed and once again we've been inundated with submissions, reflecting a Landcare community keen to undertake projects.

In April the Regional Landcare Co-ordinator and the Regional Waterwatch Co-ordinator held the first of three Annual Water Science Forums in Newstead. More than 100 people travelled from across the region to learn about frogs, frog diets and how to create frog-friendly habitats. The 2013 Forum will focus on native fish.

The inaugural Woodend Trees for Mum event took place on Mother's Day in May. More than 150 people planted 120 native trees and grasses at Five Mile Creek Reserve in Woodend. The event, supported by the CMA, was a huge success due largely to the enthusiasm of the Woodend Landcare crew.

*For further information contact Jodie Odgers on 5440 1883.*

## **West Gippsland**

During 2010–2011 Landcare work across the region saw 217,000 trees planted, 62 hectares of revegetation established, 77 kilometres of fencing built, 82 farm and soil management plans completed, 373 hectares of remnant vegetation protected, 8880 hectares of weeds suppressed, 57 field days, workshops



*Dr Maarten Stapper (centre) with Colin Hacking (left) and Hayden Findlay from Surf Coast and Inland Plains Network at a farming healthy soils workshop.*

and courses held, 500 hectares of drought affected pasture renovated, 250 hectares of saltmarsh protected and seven strategies revised and produced.

Our networks have been conducting a series of soil field days across the region as part of the Healthy Soils Program. This year Landcare has delivered ten field days on diverse topics including determining the need for lime and farm scale composting.

Landholder interest has been very positive with 375 people participating in the soil field days. Soils are a hot topic in the region and Landcare is right in there getting people's hands dirty!

Landcare continues to develop partnerships with landholders, agencies, schools, corporates, local business and government at all levels across the region.

*For further information contact Phillip McGarry on 1300 094 262.*

## **Mallee**

The State Government's Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative is having a positive impact on group activity right across the Mallee. Groups are focusing on strategic planning for the next three to five years by revisiting previous plans, reassessing priorities and identifying new areas of interest or concern.

Pest plants and animals are still at the top of the list for most groups, but others are now working on remnant areas of native vegetation and existing waterways and

wetlands that have come back to life after the last couple of favourable seasons.

There are many reports of the return of threatened flora, such as chariot wheels and fauna such as the carpet python, regent parrot and bush stone curlew. Growling grass frogs are back after they were thought to be lost forever after such a prolonged drought. These positive sightings are injecting renewed enthusiasm back into the Mallee Landcare community which augurs well for a flurry of local activities in the months to come.

*For further information contact Kevin Chaplin on 5051 4344.*

## **Wimmera**

Wimmera Landcare is delighted that Yarrilinks has been supported through the Victorian Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative. A terrific Landcare support team has taken shape in the region with all Landcare positions working well together.

Winter is community plant-out season in the Wimmera. This year's program includes 15th anniversary celebrations for Project Hindmarsh, the flagship project of the Hindmarsh Landcare Network. The Hindmarsh Landcare Network pioneered the concept of bringing city folk to the country to form friendships and partnerships that benefit communities and the environment. The network will launch a number of exciting initiatives at the August 18–19 event.

# Regional Landcare Co-ordinators

Local groups have wrapped up their successful 2011–2012 Victorian Landcare Grants projects. It is an exciting time in the region with many good projects underway and strong community input into the development of our Regional Catchment Strategy.

*For further information contact  
Joel Boyd on 5382 1544.*

## **North East**

Congratulations to the Upper Murray Landcare Network and the Mid Ovens Landcare Groups for gaining funding through the Victorian Local Landcare Facilitators Initiative. Six Landcare and related community groups were also successful in gaining over \$704,000 in funding from the State Government's Communities for Nature grants.

A new Wodonga Urban Landcare Network is forming, with a large number of community groups interested in joining. The North East Landcare Consortium has been running a range of events in the region including an energy expo, sustainability tours, landlinks and short courses.

The Baranduda Landcare Group is using recently acquired pole cameras for nest box monitoring. The group has installed 200 nest boxes for a range of species on roadsides and reserves. The cameras will simplify the monitoring and recording of the box dwellers. For information, images and videos go to [www.landcarevic.net.au/northeast/baranduda](http://www.landcarevic.net.au/northeast/baranduda).

*For further information contact  
Tom Croft on (02) 6024 9107.*

## **Goulburn Broken**

The Landcare team was busy talking Landcare with the Minister for Environment and Climate Change in June. Landcare staff and network chairs were given an opportunity to show Minister Smith a range of different projects during his two-day visit to the catchment.

There have been a number of changes of Landcare staff in recent months. We will be working with networks to ensure good support and training are provided during the transition. Some of the region's Conservation Management Networks and environment groups had good results with their recent State Government Communities for Nature and Australian Government Biodiversity Fund grant applications. We look forward to these

projects moving ahead over the coming four years.

*For further information contact  
Tony Kubeil on 5761 1619.*

## **East Gippsland**

A number of events were held across the region in autumn. The topics included pasture cropping, resources for isolated rural women, rabbit control, CloverCheque, revegetation strategies for threatened ecological vegetation classes and breeding stock for profit.

More than 90 entries were received for the East Gippsland Landcare Network Amateur Photographic Competition. The winning photograph will be published in the next edition of the magazine.

The Carbon Farming Initiative Roadshow is continuing to provide information and clarity on this complex topic. The Far East Victoria Landcare Network was nominated for a Sustainable Communities Award at the Sustainability Expo in Orbost.

In partnership with Fishcare, Waterwatch, Coastcare, the CMA and Land for Wildlife, the region's volunteers were recognised for their efforts with a Care Day on the Mitchell River.

Upcoming events include an integrated pest management workshop at Lindenow on August 15–16, a wildflower identification weekend at Cape Conran on October 13–14, courses on managing horses on small properties at Stratford, Bairnsdale and Orbost from November 24 to 28 and the Environmental Film Festival Melbourne in Orbost from November 9–10.

*For further information contact  
Amanda Bartkowski on 5150 3851.*

## **Port Phillip and Westernport**

A number of successful Landcare events have been run in the region.

In February, 53 people representing 30 different community groups and networks, and five agencies, gathered at the Melbourne Museum for a workshop on revitalising Landcare groups. Representatives from the Pentland Hills and Three Creeks Landcare Groups shared their landholder engagement success stories and Les Robinson of Enabling Change led the audience through his seven steps for creating an inspiring pitch to invite landholders to take action.

In late March two community seminars were run in Pakenham and Ringwood East. The seminars, 'Give me some credit: climate change and the local person on the land,' featured speakers from CSIRO, DPI, and local farmers. More than 100 people including full-time farmers, part-time farmers and landowners with rural lifestyle properties attended the seminars. The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive.

*For further information contact  
Doug Evans on 9712 2296.*

## **Glenelg Hopkins**

Groups have been busy finalising their applications for the 2012–2013 Victorian Landcare Grants Program. Our best wishes go to representatives from Friends of the Great South West Walk and the Panyyabyr Landcare Group who will be attending the National Landcare Awards in Sydney on 4 September.

The Glenelg Hopkins Landcare Conference will also be held during September. This event will provide an opportunity for groups to meet key stakeholders and farm service providers. The conference will feature presentations from groups in the region and a variety of guest speakers.

*For further information contact  
Tony Lithgow on 5571 2526.*

*The Hindmarsh Landcare Network pioneered the concept of bringing city folk to the country to form friendships and partnerships that benefit communities and the environment.*

# In brief

## Vale Ruth Henshall

Ruth Henshall, who was working in one of the new Victorian Landcare Facilitator Initiative positions at the Upper Mount Emu Creek Landcare Network, was tragically killed in a car crash at Peshurst on 14 July 2012.

Ruth and her young daughter Emily had become a feature at many kitchen tables during her short time with the Network. Never short of an idea, or an opinion, Ruth's warm and engaging manner was bolstered by a huge heart and a commitment to what Landcare is all about; improving landscapes and building strong communities.

Ruth's colleague David Clark from the Lexton Landcare Group said she had described her new position as her dream job.

"She was a treasure of ideas and had the right attitude to get stuff done. We will all miss her terribly," David said.

Ruth spent time volunteering for Parks Victoria in the Ballarat and Warrnambool areas, participated as a Landcare volunteer in Warrnambool and worked with Local Government climate adaptation programs.

The Network has been receiving donations from friends and family in honour of Ruth and will undertake a project in her memory in the coming planting season.

## National Landcare Conference

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry is hosting the 2012 National Landcare Conference to be held from 3 to 5 September at the National Convention and Exhibition Centre in Sydney.

The conference theme is 'Landcare – the future in our hands'. The conference will bring together people who are interested in creating sustainable landscapes for the 21st century. This includes Landcare and community groups, land managers and farmers, industry, regional bodies and government representatives from across Australia.

**For further information go to [www.daff.gov.au/landcareconference](http://www.daff.gov.au/landcareconference)**

## 2012 Victorian Landcare Forum

The Victorian Landcare Council is running a Victorian Landcare Forum, hosted by the Corangamite CMA. The theme of the forum is 'Landcare – living and learning together'.

The forum will provide a professional development opportunity for Landcare facilitators, co-ordinators and group members. The forum will be held in Geelong from Monday 29 October to Wednesday 31 October 2012.

**For further information contact Tracey McRae on 5232 9100.**



**Atem from Sudan (front) and Albert from India (rear) having a lot of fun at a Yarrilinks community planting weekend at Murtoa last year. See the story about Yarrilinks on pages 4 and 5.**

The Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management magazine is published by the Victorian Government Department of Sustainability and Environment and distributed in partnership with the Farm Tree & Landcare Association and the Victorian Catchment Management Council. The magazine aims to raise awareness of Landcare and natural resource management among Victorian farmers, landholders, the Victorian Landcare community and the wider community.



### Mailing list enquiries

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### Read the magazine online

Back issues of the Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management magazine can be found at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/victorianlandcaremagazine](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/victorianlandcaremagazine)  
The print size of the magazine can be enlarged online for easier reading.