

VICTORIAN

# LANDCARE

Winter 2015 Issue 64

& CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT



## URBAN LANDCARE FEATURE

Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group turns 20  
Nectar plants connect biolinks in urban areas  
Landcare at the junction of city and country

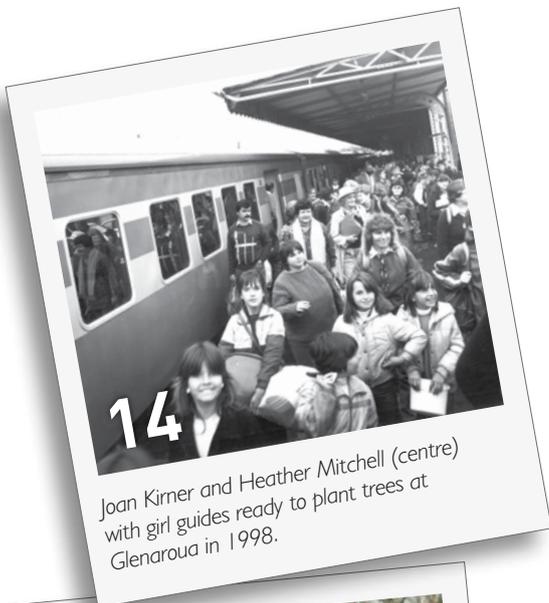


Landcare  
Victoria



# Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management

WINTER 2015 ISSUE 64



Joan Kirner and Heather Mitchell (centre) with girl guides ready to plant trees at Glenaroua in 1998.



A White-faced Heron at Westgate Park.



The Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve after the restoration thinning of forest trees.

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### Cover photograph

Students from Stawell Primary School on the Stawell Urban Landcare Group's Iron Bark Walk. Photograph by Aat Erkelens.



## From the Minister

The phenomenon of Landcare, within Australia and across the world, would not have been possible without the significant contribution the Honourable Joan Kirner AC made in bringing communities together to tackle local environmental issues. It's thanks to her vision, her belief in community action and her early stewardship of Landcare, that it grew into the phenomenon of today.

Joan's interest in Landcare continued right throughout her life. After reading the previous Aboriginal Landcare feature issue of this magazine Joan wrote to the editor to express her delight.

*"As an early participant in the creation of Landcare, I felt that I had to write and tell you how delighted I am with the program, its longevity, results and the new initiative in Indigenous Landcare. My former colleague, the late Heather Mitchell would be delighted too! Please pass on my congratulations to all Landcarers."*

Landcare may have started in the bush with a focus on improving agricultural productivity and the environment, but thanks to its flexible community building and partnerships model it has since become popular within cities, towns and along the coast.

The strength of Landcare lies in its ability to support local environmental action, whatever that may be. Environmental action seen in urban Landcare groups includes activities such as gardening, household sustainability and the restoration of historic sites. These activities not only help improve our valued natural environment but also deliver direct benefits, such as job creation, volunteering opportunities and improved health and well-being.

The Andrews Labor Government is focused on restoring the health of our environment to support a strong, productive economy and a liveable Victoria. To do this we need to enable and support environmental action across the state, which is why we are committed to reviewing our Victorian Landcare Program to develop the best possible long-term arrangements.

We recently announced the \$2 million 2015-16 Victorian Landcare Grants program, to help new and existing Landcare groups and networks address local environmental priorities. The grants are promoted and delivered through regional catchment management authorities, and further information is available on the Victorian Landcare Gateway website at [www.landcarevic.net.au](http://www.landcarevic.net.au)

During August and September we will also be asking you to provide your comments and ideas on the Victorian Government funded Facilitator Program and other aspects of the Landcare Support Program so we can make sure we are delivering the best possible support to Landcare. Look for further details on the Victorian Landcare Gateway website at [www.landcarevic.net.au](http://www.landcarevic.net.au)

I am proud to present this Urban Landcare Feature edition, which highlights the great work taking place to protect and enhance our natural environment in cities and towns across Victoria.

In this issue I enjoyed reading about one of Victoria's original Landcare groups, the Glenaroua Land Management Group in the Goulburn Broken. Their work, alongside the Manningham Rotary Club, to restore the steep hills around Glenaroua has increased environmental awareness in the urban community and forged some great friendships along the way.

I know that by working together we will ensure the legacy of Landcare will continue to drive community and environmental action around the world.

Hon. Lisa Neville MP  
Minister for Environment,  
Climate Change and Water

## 2015 Fire Awareness Awards

The Fire Awareness Awards are a community-focused awards program that acknowledges the great work of individuals, community groups and organisations who deliver projects that reduce the incidence and impact of fire in Victoria.

The Fire Awareness Awards are a collaborative venture between Victoria's fire agencies DELWP, CFA and MFB.

Victoria's fire agencies recognise that Landcare groups and networks make a significant contribution to prevention, preparedness and recovery from fire and encourages entries for the 2015 Fire Awareness Awards.

The RACV Insurance Award for Excellence provides a \$10,000 prize to the most outstanding project.

The award categories include: access and inclusion; community-led prevention and preparedness; innovation and design; and recovery.

**Entries close 30 September 2015.**  
**For further information go to**  
**[www.fireawarenessawards.com.au](http://www.fireawarenessawards.com.au)**

# Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group – 20 great years

By Adrian Twitt

Established in 1995, Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group was the first urban Landcare group in regional Victoria. Our showpiece has been the transformation of Kaluna Park, a formerly overgrown and almost impenetrable jungle of exotic growth into a beautiful bushland reserve.

Spearheaded by Helen and Peter Curtis, stalwarts of the Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group, Kaluna Park is now visited by admirers of bush regeneration as a demonstration of what can be achieved. It has featured in Tidy Town and Community Pride competitions and earned Wangaratta accolades for the work of its volunteers.

The five-hectare Kaluna Park is adjacent to the King River in the heart of Wangaratta, only 300 metres from the central business district. Back in 1995 the park was overgrown with woody weeds and exotic ground covers. The exception was the remnant River Red Gum, some of which are several hundred years old.

Difficulties with access had saved these old growth trees from timber cutters in past generations. Access difficulties also meant the reserve was rarely visited by members of the public due to the tangle

of blackberries, hawthorn, honey suckle, ash, privet and box elders that enveloped the area.

The initial work of the group focused on removing woody weeds. Chainsaws were used. Stump poisoning had to be immediate to prevent regrowth. When dry, the trunks and branches were burnt in the winter months.

As light began to penetrate to ground level there was an almost immediate regrowth of thousands of silver wattles and red gum seedlings.

### Massive ground cover challenge

Dealing with the exotic ground covers was the next challenge. The worst weed was *Tradescantia flumenensis*, also called wandering tradescantia.



Kaluna Park in 2001 after clearing away woody weeds.



The same site in 2015. Silver wattles and red gum saplings now dominate.

“

*Kaluna Park is now visited by admirers of bush regeneration as a demonstration of what can be achieved.*

”



*Kaluna Park was an impenetrable jungle of mainly exotic growth in 1999.*



*Over time, the results of our weekly working bees began to show excellent results.*



Hand weeding wasn't possible, as the weed covered hundreds of square metres of land to a depth of 50 centimetres or more, and resisted any attempts to control it. Black plastic sheets were spread across vast areas of the weed, but needed to be in place for a minimum of six months.

The black plastic blocked the light and cooked the plants during the hot summer months but was a problem in early spring when snow melt brought floodwaters from the King and nearby Ovens River into the park. Inundations, often more than a metre deep, lifted the heavily pegged sheets of plastic and washed them against trees or downstream into the main course of the river. The floods also brought invasions of dozens of other varieties of exotic weeds.

Over time, the results of our weekly working bees began to show excellent results. We augmented the remnant Callistemon, Melaleuca, and Poa grasses with selective plantings. Native grasses and herbs such as Microlaena and Persicaria began to spread and thrive.

To our great delight the National Herbarium confirmed the existence of a species of cudweed that was unknown in the Wangaratta area until it was discovered by Helen Curtis. Native birds have returned in numbers. In recent seasons we have been excited by the appearance of a pair of Barking Owls.

Walking tracks have been established, bridges built, and signage erected. The work in the Kaluna Park floodplain

is ongoing and the Rural City of Wangaratta has reassured volunteers that there will be ongoing support for maintenance of the area.

#### **Book a lasting legacy**

The Landcare group has also been involved in the publication of a book, *Floodplain Plants of North East Victoria*, authored by Helen and Peter Curtis. The book has become a valuable reference for identification of plants and treatment of environmental weeds for both amateurs and professionals. Helen Curtis passed away this year after a long illness, but her legacy lives on in the book which is widely used by individuals and environmental groups across the region.

The group has expanded its activities to other bushland reserves in Wangaratta. It recognises the need to diversify in order to encourage wider public interest and involvement. Recent projects have included nature walks, the publication of brochures on the natural assets of Wangaratta and platypus counts in several local streams.

Two photographic competitions featuring the many significant trees of Wangaratta have been a great success at heightening public awareness about our natural heritage and have increased interest in the activities of the group.

**For further information contact Adrian Twitt by email at [ahtwitt@gmail.com](mailto:ahtwitt@gmail.com)**



*Members of the Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group hand weeding in Kaluna Park.*

# Nectar plants help new life to flow through urban areas

By Elle Fox

The Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group (MCLG) has been working to connect large areas of remnant vegetation in the Moorabool region for more than 20 years. Recent funding from the 20 Million Trees Programme, which is part of the National Landcare Programme has made it possible for the MCLG to continue with its aim of connecting the bottom of the Wombat State Forest to the top of the Brisbane Ranges National Park. These biolinks will create critical corridors for native flora and fauna and provide many benefits for the community and across agricultural land.

Once the project was plotted on a map it became clear the township of Ballan created a barrier along the route. The group has many members who live in Ballan. These members regularly participated in large-scale plantings in the area, but many of them didn't have much native vegetation on their own house blocks.

The MCLG worked with the Moorabool Shire Council and came up with the idea of supplying nectar-producing, locally indigenous plants to MCLG members living in Ballan. The project would have a dual

benefit: helping to fill the gaps in the biolink, and encouraging urban members of the MCLG to participate in a large-scale environmental project in their own backyards.

Further funding from the R. E. Ross Trust has allowed the project to provide nest boxes for bats in local gardens.

The region's primary schools are also creating nectar gardens within their school grounds. Gordon Primary School students are helping locals to plant significant numbers of plants in their gardens and on nature strips. The MCLG provided local native wildflowers for Gordon Primary School students to take home for parents, and a weekend wild plant giveaway was organised for the town as part of the Trees For Mum Landcare Mother's Day Initiative.

The MCLG, Ballan Primary School and Moorabool Environment Group have also been collaborating to plant hundreds of plants along Ballan's nature strips. The plantings have provided a great opportunity to talk to students and community members about Landcare, the significance of wildlife corridors and the benefits of planting native plants in gardens.

Ballan is one of Victoria's fastest growing towns. The MCLG is also targeting land developers to provide native trees for new developments. Nectar project packages have been designed for real estate agents.



*Nectar producing plants ready for planting in local gardens in Ballan.*

The packages describe the project, outline the benefits of planting native plants and encourage new residents to join the group.

The pilot stages of the nectar project have been a great success with other towns keen to join in. Gordon and Mount Egerton now have a number of new biolinks being provided by house block planting of native nectar-producing plants. Plans are also underway to plant the road corridor of the Western Highway between Melton and Ballarat.

The MCLG is keen to introduce some new elements to the project. Next on the list after the installation of nest boxes are insect and bee hotels and possibly even beehives. The nectar project can be picked up by any Landcare or other community group. The MCLG would love to see it grow to include catchment or state scale projects.

**For further information email Elle Fox at [moorabool.landcare@gmail.com](mailto:moorabool.landcare@gmail.com)**



*The group has many members who live in Ballan. These members regularly participated in large-scale plantings in the area, but many of them didn't have much native vegetation on their own house blocks.*



*Ballan Primary School students get to work planting out one of Ballan's nature strips.*



From left: Bo the dog, Lily Reid, Margaret Burbidge, Aileen Banfield and Lionel Reid enjoy a day of tree planting on the outskirts of Ararat.



*This small but committed group is involved in protecting remnant vegetation, weed control, revegetation to provide habitat and passage for native birds, animals, reptiles and insects, and educating the community about the benefits of a healthy environment.*



## Restoring Cemetery Creek a major achievement for Ararat Landcare Group

By Keith Little

Members of Ararat Landcare Group work hard to protect the urban environment of Ararat. This small but committed group is involved in protecting remnant vegetation, weed control, revegetation to provide habitat and passage for native birds, animals, reptiles and insects, and educating the community about the benefits of a healthy environment.

Restoring Cemetery Creek, which runs along the northern boundary of Ararat, has been a major focus of the group for several years. When we first started the area was clogged with weeds, dumped garden waste and rubbish. After a great deal of work the group, in conjunction with the Ararat Regional Biolink Network and Ararat Rural City Council, has seen the area transformed into a healthy waterway fringed with native vegetation, including several species of orchids.

Weed control along the creek, especially tackling heavy infestations of gorse was a major challenge for the group. Erosion control and the planting of indigenous trees and shrubs has also been a feature of regular working bees attended by our members.

The group was also involved in building a walking and cycling track that follows the creek and links with footpaths and roads back into the centre of Ararat. The track is now very popular and gives walkers and cyclists a track to experience the bush away from busy roads.

Control of woody weeds at other sites in and around Ararat is a major task for the group. Gorse was once a major problem in the Ararat urban area, but is now mostly manageable with regular inspections and follow-up control.

The group's newest project is working on the Ararat Community Garden. The garden is located at Ararat's infamous J Ward, a prison that housed the criminally insane until it was closed in 1991. The garden has brought many new members to the group. Many locals have been keen to get involved in growing fruit and vegetables at the site using a variety of different techniques including no-dig and the use of wicking garden beds.

**For further information email Una Allender at [uallender@bigpoint.com](mailto:uallender@bigpoint.com)**



Members of the Ararat Landcare Group planting near Cemetery Creek on National Tree Day last year.

# Landcare at the junction of city and country

By Elissa Ashton-Smith, Helen Percy and Felicity Spear

The Batesford Fyansford Stonehaven Landcare Group (BFSLG), near Geelong, was formed 20 years ago by a group of broad-acre farmers to tackle the noxious weed serrated tussock. Looking very much like a native grass, serrated tussock had invaded the landscape before many realised the magnitude of the problem. Serrated tussock kept the BFSLG busy for many years.



Will Belcher and other volunteers pulling boneseed at Dog Rocks Flora and Fauna Sanctuary.



*The Geelong region is growing rapidly towards a population of half a million people. The influence of the sprawling city has transformed rural land from grazing country to peri-urban with residential subdivisions, light industry, quarrying, and part-time farms.*



The Geelong region is growing rapidly towards a population of half a million people. The influence of the sprawling city has transformed rural land from grazing country to peri-urban with residential subdivisions, light industry, quarrying, and part-time farms. These changes have impacted on Landcare at Geelong's fringe. Nowadays only three broad-acre farmers remain in the BFSLG area.

The group came close to folding in the late 1990s. Local farmer Bill Honey called a last gasp meeting offering to continue as president if a secretary could be found. Fortunately newcomers Rob and Helen Percy took up the challenge and with the involvement of other newcomers to the area the BFSLG is now one of the most vibrant and active groups in the region.

The heart of the BFSLG is the 83-hectare Dog Rocks Flora and Fauna Sanctuary, a Trust for Nature property on the Moorabool River, and two public reserves.

The sanctuary could have been subdivided for more houses, but owners George and Lit Belcher decided to place a Trust for Nature covenant on it.

### **Group manages local sanctuary**

"The family gave considerable thought as to what should become of the place ... and finally reached the conclusion that by a quirk of fate much of the area had never been cleared and represented a unique remnant of original bush only 10 kilometres from Geelong and therefore should be preserved," George Belcher said.

The BFSLG was appointed as the committee of management for the sanctuary. The Belchers' environmental custodianship has been a source of inspiration that has enlivened the local Landcare community. Locals feel a strong attachment to the sanctuary, having visited over the years to pull boneseed, watch birds and enjoy barbecues.



Helen Percy (holding papers) and George Belcher with Gordon TAFE staff and students touring the Dog Rocks Flora and Fauna Sanctuary.

With less than five percent of indigenous vegetation remaining in the Geelong region, the sanctuary is a precious remnant, and has conservation significance as a rare southern outlier of Granitic Hills Woodland.

### **Education in exchange for labour**

Urban encroachment has brought many land management challenges to the BFSLG area – traffic, pollution, clearing of native vegetation, weeds, cats, dogs and uncertainty about further urban subdivision.

However, the Group has taken advantage of the city’s proximity by developing partnerships with schools and businesses to provide education and outdoor experiences in exchange for labour. The small but dedicated BFSLG run a busy schedule of activities clearing weeds, planting and connecting people with the land.

As Bill Honey puts it, “the important thing is getting young people out into the environment to see this stuff and enjoy it and start to value it. If they don’t see it, they won’t understand or appreciate it.”

The program of activities in the sanctuary is guided by a vegetation management plan developed by ecological consultants. Weed control is the major focus.

In 2006 more than 30 percent of the sanctuary was smothered by dense infestations of mature boneseed.

By 2012 this had been reduced to 10 per cent. This wouldn’t have been achieved without the peri-urban community and the countless volunteer weed-pulling days they’ve organised. It’s a testament to the vibrancy and hospitality of BFSLG members that boneseed-pulling events consistently draw good numbers of volunteers.

Through fauna surveys conducted by the Geelong Field Naturalists and other citizen science activities, the BFSLG continues to build knowledge and share curiosity about the natural world.

While there’s a strong focus on the sanctuary, the group also endeavours to bring together all land managers in the broader landscape. Involvement in the local farmers’ market, a community rabbit control program and awareness raising about serrated tussock are all underway.

The BFSLG’s ideas for the future include a feral animal-proof fence around the sanctuary, and interpretative signs and brochures for the local area. The goal is to assist everyone in the diverse peri-urban community to share the joys of neighbouring healthy biodiverse bushland and to understand what it means to co-exist in an environmentally sensitive way alongside farms, bushland and urban development.

*For further information contact Elissa Ashton-Smith, Geelong Landcare Network Facilitator by email at [geelonglandcarenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:geelonglandcarenetwork@gmail.com) or Helen Percy, Secretary BFSLG at [helenkpercy@yahoo.com.au](mailto:helenkpercy@yahoo.com.au)*

*Elissa’s position is funded through the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program.*



*However, the Group has taken advantage of the city’s proximity by developing partnerships with schools and businesses to provide education and outdoor experience in exchange for labour.*



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*The group believes that information, education and knowledge are the best tools to tackle these problems.*

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*Students from Stawell Primary School enjoy a day out of the classroom on the Stawell Urban Landcare Group's Iron Bark Walk.*

## Stawell Urban Landcare Group – partnerships in the Ironbark

*By Bob Wallace*

The Stawell Urban Landcare Group has been operating for 11 years. The group is made up of a broad range of people from all walks of life with a common interest in nature and the local environment.

The Box-Ironbark forest on the outskirts of the town has been a major focus for the group. The forest is dotted with mineshafts, used as a dumping ground for rubbish and green waste, plundered for illegal firewood, and its rare orchids destroyed by illegal motorbike riding.

The group believes that information, education and knowledge are the best tools to tackle these problems. Our Iron Bark Walk and nest box projects have been developed to try to involve the community in the area and change community perception of it. The group has worked alongside Parks Victoria, Stawell Secondary College, Project Platypus and three local primary schools on the project.

The Mazda Foundation provided funding for nest boxes to be constructed to replace the valuable nesting hollows that were disappearing due to the illegal collection

of firewood. Local high school students built the nest boxes in woodwork classes. The students showed real initiative by recycling materials to keep costs down and increasing the longevity of the boxes with innovative construction.

The nest boxes were built from off cuts in the woodwork class scrap bin. Metal lid hinges that rust over time were substituted with old bicycle tyres and protected by roofing iron off cuts. The outstanding effort of the students has been a big part of the project's success.

The funding also provided the group with some passive infra-red trail cameras and a keyhole inspection camera.

According to Mandy Smith, president of the Stawell Urban Landcare Group, the cameras were set up to monitor the nest boxes for wildlife as well as any unwanted guests.

“We were aware that pest species like bees or introduced birds might decide to call this premium real estate home and we needed to monitor that so they can be evicted quickly. The nest boxes and cameras were installed by a local volunteer from the Stawell State Emergency Service.

All the boxes were mounted at a minimum height of four metres.”

Recent monitoring of the cameras showed some activity in one of the boxes that was later confirmed as a Feather Tail Glider – an exciting moment for all involved in the project.

The group is also actively involved in education in the forest with the aim of trying to get as many young people from the area out into the bush. Group members host students on an interpretive walk and talk through the forest. The primary school students are shown the plants, insects, amphibians, reptiles and mammals that call the forest home. The aim is to influence the next generation of Landcarers who will be responsible for the forest.

The group credits the projects many partners with the success of the Iron Bark Walk and nest box project. It is a good example of the great work that can be done when a community is united for a common cause.

**For further information contact Bob Wallace by email at [bob@platypus.org.au](mailto:bob@platypus.org.au)**

# Bridging the gap in North Warrandyte

By Ruth Rankin

**The Osborne Landcare Group in North Warrandyte works on land across the Warrandyte State Park, local government public land, roadside reserves and private properties.**

Most properties on the Osborne Peninsula are directly adjacent to the Warrandyte State Park and form a habitat corridor along the Yarra River. The group's aim is to improve the quality and biodiversity of the habitat across all of the land in the area to support threatened native species.

With so many land managers involved and complex access issues it has been critical for the group to maintain good working relationships with private landowners, park rangers, local council officers and Melbourne Water.

The group has recently completed works at Windmill Creek, on the north-eastern bank of the Yarra River and along a popular walking track. Windmill Creek is a natural gully that runs after good rain, but had become degraded as runoff cut through large areas of the creek's bank.

The wooden plank footbridge across Windmill Creek that had provided a simple form of access for many years finally collapsed, which meant that Parks Victoria declared the gully a hazard and closed the track.

After attending a River First Aid course run by Melbourne Water and Greening Australia, group members identified the gully as needing urgent attention. The group organised an on-site meeting attended by all the relevant agencies and a plan was made to rehabilitate the site.

Melbourne Water funded more than 100 metres of rock which was placed in the gully to combat erosion. A Parks Victoria grant funded a new six metre footbridge to provide a level walkway across the gully.

There was concern that transporting major earth moving equipment to the site would



*Members of the Osborne Landcare Group planting near the new footbridge.*

threaten surrounding remnant native vegetation until a resident offered to cut his fence to allow contractors access through his property.

The group has regenerated the bush on either side of the gully and the building of the new footbridge means that we now have safe, easy access across the gully so our volunteers can continue their work in other areas of Warrandyte State Park. The new footbridge has quickly become part of a popular walk for residents who can meander through the bush along the river and enjoy the local environment.

***For further information contact Ruth Rankin by email at [ruth@rankindesign.com.au](mailto:ruth@rankindesign.com.au)***



*A new footbridge across Windmill Creek is opening up the Warrandyte State Park for walkers and further Landcare works.*

# Wildlife monitoring captures the Christmas Hills community

By Doug Evans

Since 2012 the motion-sensing camera component of a community fauna monitoring program has been the primary way the Christmas Hills Landcare Group (CHLG) engages local people in caring for our local environment.

CHLG is a neighbourly network of private landholders in the north east of Melbourne. Group members include small-scale farmers, horse owners, rural lifestylers and conservation block owners.

The group's area includes high-quality remnant native vegetation that, along with the adjacent Warrandyte-Kinglake Nature Conservation Reserve, forms a critical habitat corridor linking Kinglake National Park to Warrandyte State Park through the Watsons Creek catchment.

cameras are exchanged between landholders every three to five weeks, camera locations are marked using a GPS, batteries are charged and SD cards are changed over. During a single year, cameras are typically set up in 60 different locations.

## Local coordinators critical to program success

Currently there are 18 motion-sensing cameras being circulated through 30 properties in the group's area. Five volunteer local coordinators ensure

Christmas Hills landholders have recorded the Brush-tailed Phascogale, a marsupial listed as vulnerable in Victoria, along with 11 other native mammal species, seven introduced mammal species, 22 bird species (one introduced), and three different species of reptiles.



A typical setup of a camera and scent lure holder on a fallen log.



Christmas Hills Landcare Group committee member Sally Corrigan with the camera that recorded a Superb Lyrebird on her property.

“

The group's end-of-year presentation with maps and videos of what the cameras have caught is an eagerly anticipated and popular event.

”



*A Lace Monitor captured on camera on a private property at Christmas Hills.*

The group's end-of-year presentation with maps and videos of what the cameras have caught is an eagerly anticipated and popular event. A selection of videos have also been uploaded to YouTube which has helped with getting expert identification of some of the rarer species.

The local coordinators are critical to the program's success and have had to deal with people forgetting to put the SD card in, turn the camera on, or even to put the camera out. Wombats have knocked cameras over, and a few older cameras have either continually triggered, or stopped working all together.

Experience has shown that some setup arrangements are better than others. Up against a tree with hollows, or along a fallen log is good for the smaller mammals. Near a dam, or even a tub of water, has been effective during summer. The absence of long grass is a must. Thousands of images of waving grass have had to be deleted.

The cameras used in the project were purchased with funding from the State Government's Victorian Landcare Program through the Port Phillip and Westernport CMA's Community Grants Program, and the Nillumbik Shire Council's Land Management Incentive Program.

### **Cameras provide an exciting visual record**

CHLG committee member Sally Corrigan said the motion sensing cameras were what first got her excited about Landcare.

"Topics of discussion with my neighbours had centred around the bird calls we had heard coming from different spots. By joining Landcare and getting help to set up a motion-sensor camera we were able to record a lyrebird, also a lot of close ups of our favourite Swamp Wallaby and a shot of a phascogale. I'm now part of the committee and my neighbours have joined the group."

Fran Jennings, another CHLG member, has enjoyed finding out what fauna is in the area.

"We installed one of the nesting boxes in trees a couple of years ago and have checked it and seen babies in the nest on several occasions. It would be good to have a camera located there so we could see which animals were actually using it as we're not sure if they were Sugar Gliders or phascogale babies. Just knowing what we have is important and then trying to provide a habitat that will keep them is something we can strive for."

The CHLG has also hosted cameras for the Nillumbik Conservation Corridors project (funded by the Communities for Nature program). The group worked together to negotiate with Melbourne Water to see what species could be recorded on the many Melbourne Water properties in Christmas Hills that are managed for conservation. This resulted in the filming of a Common Dunnart, a first for the CHLG, and exciting evidence that this species is using suitable habitat outside of a known population in the nearby

Warrandyte-Kinglake Nature Conservation Reserve.

*Doug Evans is the Chair of the Christmas Hills Landcare Group. For further information email [welcometoCHLG@landcarevic.net.au](mailto:welcometoCHLG@landcarevic.net.au) For further information on the Nillumbik Conservation Corridors project contact Meg Cullen by email at [Meg.Cullen@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:Meg.Cullen@nillumbik.vic.gov.au)*



*Just knowing what we have is important and then trying to provide a habitat that will keep them is something we can strive for.*



# Urban and rural connections in the south west Goulburn

By Brad Costin

Urban communities working with rural landholders to improve the health of the land has been a feature of the south west Goulburn catchment for more than 25 years. Catchment issues, in particular salinity, soil erosion and flash flooding provided a catalyst for mustering broad community support.

One of the first examples occurred in the 1990s when the then Environment Minister Joan Kirner and VFF President Heather Mitchell visited the Glenaroua Land Management Group with more than 300 girl guides to plant trees on two farms in the district.

In 1999 the Rotary Club of Northcote (whose members moved on to the Rotary Club of Manningham) visited a member's property in Glenaroua and learnt about the damaging impact of salinity. The visit prompted the Rotary club members to forge friendships with farmers from the Glenaroua Land Management Group, and with the assistance of Natural Heritage Trust funding, a project to control salinity on local properties was implemented.

Thornbury Darebin Secondary College also got involved in the project and incorporated it into its science curriculum. Visits to the Glenaroua area saw students and Rotarians propagating plants and carrying out major planting days to help farmers revegetate salinity control sites.

The reach of the project kept growing. It expanded to include other Rotary districts, banks and community groups. Thousands of urban volunteer have now been involved helping local farmers to establish more than 100,000 indigenous plants in the area.



Joan Kirner and Heather Mitchell (centre) with girl guides ready to plant trees at Glenaroua in 1998.

More recently, the South West Goulburn Landcare Network created the FarmBlitz program, which encourages rural residential and small landholders to get involved in Landcare.

According to Sonia Sharkey, South West Goulburn Landcare Facilitator and the initiator of FarmBlitz, the program includes activities such as composting, worm farming, animal health, growing your own fruit and vegetables, preserving and cheese making.

"FarmBlitz activities have fostered a great sense of community and helped to spread the Landcare ethic," Sonia said.

Recovery from several large fires in the area has been greatly assisted by connections with urban communities.

After the 2014 Mickleham-Kilmore fires teams of volunteers from various corporations visited the area to help with fencing and fire recovery works. What would have taken years of effort locally was completed in months because of their assistance.

Sonia Sharkey said the volunteers showed impressive commitment.

"We've found that these volunteers don't just want to come out to a site once, but many are choosing to come back to continue works to see the work finished. They are forging personal connections with landholders, Landcare, and the local area and it's clear to them what a difference they are making within a community."

**For further information email Brad Costin at [brad.costin@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:brad.costin@ecodev.vic.gov.au)**



Members of the Rotary Club of Northcote (now Manningham), the Glenaroua Land Management Group and volunteers from the City of Darebin's Iraqi community at a planting day in 2004.



The Living Links Committee with partners and other guests at Churchill National Park, an important node along two Living Links corridors.

## Linking open space across Melbourne's south east

By Sarah Mclagan

Green open spaces in urban areas offer the greatest opportunities for the majority of people to connect with nature on a regular basis. Living Links is an environmental and social project working to retain and protect natural open spaces in Melbourne's south east, between the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges and Port Phillip Bay.

The aim is to create a world-class urban ecosystem and open space network by improving the connections between existing parks, reserves, open spaces, coasts, beaches, pathways, rivers, creeks and wetlands. As well as protecting key environmental and cultural features, Living Links seeks to connect people to these areas by improving access through a network of linked trails.

Efforts are being focused on new and improved links across 16 corridors. Collaboration is a key aspect of the project. It is coordinated by Port Phillip and Westernport CMA and involves representatives from 10 local councils, state government agencies and community groups working together on a committee.

Living Links began in 2004. To date, more than 100 projects are underway or have been completed. These include improvements to recreational facilities such as filling gaps in the shared trail network, creating new environmentally themed playgrounds, interpretive signs and art works.

The environmental values of the project areas have also been enhanced with revegetation, pest plant and animal control, wetland construction, the fencing of sensitive areas and waterway restoration.

The project's next key challenge is to secure significant investment to carry out the next suite of projects and promote the project to potential investors and the community through activities such as an online photographic competition.

**Go to [www.livinglinks.com.au](http://www.livinglinks.com.au) to view an interactive map of Living Links projects and for information on the photographic competition. For further information contact Sarah Mclagan by email at [sarah.mclagan@ppwcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:sarah.mclagan@ppwcma.vic.gov.au)**

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*Living Links is an environmental and social project working to retain and protect natural open spaces in Melbourne's south east, between the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges and Port Phillip Bay.*

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*Westgate Park is a manufactured urban park. Over the past thirteen years FoWP has used locally indigenous plants to transform what was formerly a wasteland and tip into a bushland threaded with paths and tracks and dotted with billabongs.*



*A White-faced Heron next to the shadow of a pylon from Westgate Bridge.*

## Westgate Park – an oasis of green alongside

**Next time you drive over the Westgate Bridge towards the city of Melbourne, look to your left. You'll see a pink salt lake, beyond it a dark freshwater lake dotted with birds, and in between the gently waving canopies of young native trees interspersed with grasses and flowering plants. This is Westgate Park.**

North of the park the factories and warehouses of Fishermans Bend are visible. The area east of the park is earmarked for a major urban renewal project to create a high and medium density employment and residential precinct. To the right of the bridge is Webb Dock, the site of a new container terminal and motor vehicle warehousing.

These developments have created opportunities and challenges for the Friends of Westgate Park (FoWP) who manage the park under the direction of Parks Victoria.

Westgate Park is a manufactured urban park. Over the past 13 years FoWP has used locally indigenous plants to transform what was formerly a wasteland and tip into a bushland threaded with paths and tracks and dotted with billabongs. The group has also planted out to the banks of the Yarra

River and upstream as far as Pier 35 where the riverside docks start.

FoWP President George Fotheringham said: "We believe that apart from preserving the local biodiversity and providing public open space, the park has a role to play in keeping Melbourne green and providing wildlife corridors to other parks."

An average of 20,000 seedlings are being planted each year, and FoWP draws on local groups and schools and the corporate sector to revegetate and maintain the park.

According to Tony Flude from FoWP the work wouldn't have been possible without the support of the corporate sector.

"Banks, financial institutions, our neighbours, and other businesses wanting to make an environmental contribution

have been essential. They have contributed about 85 per cent of the labour and cost of planting for the park," Tony said.

The group has experienced many challenges. Local plant communities had to be researched by historical investigation and looking at nearby pockets of remnant vegetation. A program of heavy and regular mulching has been needed to improve the poor quality of the soil dumped on the site when the park was originally created in the late 1980s. The drought was also a difficult time with seedlings being hand watered from a small tanker that brought water from nearby Albert Park Lake.

On the upside, the Port of Melbourne will plant a wide corridor of trees on the dock boundary with Todd Road, providing a green link from Westgate Park to beachside parkland, and a screen of plants on the Webb Dock boundary with the park.



Volunteers from the corporate sector have made a huge contribution to Westgate Park.



*The group has experienced many challenges. Local plant communities had to be researched by historical investigation and looking at nearby pockets of remnant vegetation.*



## industry and urban renewal

By Jenny Norvick

FoWP were also able to remove the salt marsh and grassland plants from the Webb Dock site to be replanted near the salt lake.

In the future the group hopes that it will be able to continue planting right down to the mouth of Yarra River to create another green link similar to the one in Newport on the other side of the river.

Tony Flude believes Westgate Park will also have an important role to play in the redevelopment of Fishermans Bend.

“We would like the park to be part of the City of Melbourne’s urban forest plan. It’s clear the park will be very important in providing public open space for those living and working in the new development,” Tony said.

The group still has many plans to improve and expand the park. As well as the practical issues of natural resource management at the site there is much to do in advocacy and education.

**For further information contact Tony Flude by email at [friends@westgatepark.org](mailto:friends@westgatepark.org)**



Friends of Westgate Park and volunteers from the St Kilda Indigenous Nursery Cooperative gathering plants from the salt marsh – about to become part of the expanded Webb Dock – for replanting in Westgate Park.

# Maldon Urban Landcare Group – repairing mining sites a long-term commitment

By Barry Murfett and Bev Phillips

**The Central Victorian town of Maldon was established in 1853 during the gold rush. Widespread alluvial surface mining led to the land and creek beds being turned over. This was followed by deep shaft mines that left mullock heaps and extensive ore processing sites. Most trees within five kilometres of the town were felled for mineshafts and boiler fuel.**

Once the mines closed the town slowly depopulated, leaving vacant blocks and large areas of crown land. This left a palette of weed infested lowland and hills covered with gravel heaps, poor topsoil, relatively young regrowth trees and little understorey. Maldon was an ideal town to start a Landcare group.

The Maldon Urban Landcare Group (MULGA) was established in 1992, making it one of Victoria's pioneer urban Landcare groups. The early priorities were education, revegetation, and rabbit, salinity and erosion control. We now focus on weed control and indigenous revegetation. Roadsides are also a priority with one section treated for blackberry in 2001 being re-treated in 2014.

One of the first activities was to have a joint information table with Nuggetty Landcare Group at the Maldon Agricultural Show. The minutes from the group's early meetings show that grant applications were a priority and this hasn't changed.

Our first large project was the 20-hectare South German Mine site, which included a processing plant, a three-hectare dam and mullock heaps of processed quartz. The Maldon Land Protection Association started revegetation work at the site in 1990 with two large areas of ripping and the planting of indigenous trees and understorey.

MULGA took up the project in 2000, grooming gorse and blackberry from the dam wall and planting 100 shrubs on National Tree Day. Work continued over the next 10 years with weed control, planting days and the creation of several rabbit-proof enclosures. A recent site visit revealed the emergence and spread of native grasses, cranberry heath and other small native species in the enclosures.

Our current large-scale project site runs along Long Gully, which is part of the Maldon Historic Reserve. MULGA's



*The South German mine site following a MULGA planting day in 2004.*



*In 2015 the same site is a native forest, which is now ready for some maintenance.*

work at this site has stimulated positive community interest because of its high profile. The site is alongside the main road into town and we have uncovered some significant historic mining infrastructure. Weed control has been a priority with blackberries, gorse, and elm suckers produced from street trees, requiring attention. The next stage will be clump planting of trees, shrubs and grasses.

These major projects have involved working closely with both Parks Victoria

and community heritage groups. Today MULGA is a small group with 10 active members. With assistance from Landmate crews from Corrections Victoria, along with contractors engaged through grant funds and our monthly working bees, we have been able to continue our work at repairing the local environment of Maldon.

**For further information email Barry Murfett on [bmurfett@gmail.com](mailto:bmurfett@gmail.com)**

# Restoring Old Mill improves wellbeing of Boolarra community

By Kathleen Bartlett

**Community spirits were low in Boolarra in 2009 after fires swept through the area destroying 30 houses. The Boolarra South Landcare Group decided to take action with a project to rejuvenate the local Old Mill on the edge of the town.**

The site was derelict and infested with weeds, rubbish and scrap metal. Working together to restore the site has been a positive experience for the recovery and wellbeing of the community.

In the six years since the beginning of the project the two-hectare site has been completely restored through a range of innovative techniques that have improved the soil biology, removed weeds and restored the vegetation.

The majority of the work has been undertaken by Boolarra South Landcare Group members, a Green Army team and members of the community who had not previously worked with Landcare.

Boolarra South Landcare Group secretary Linda Minter said the project has allowed more people to participate in Landcare activities.

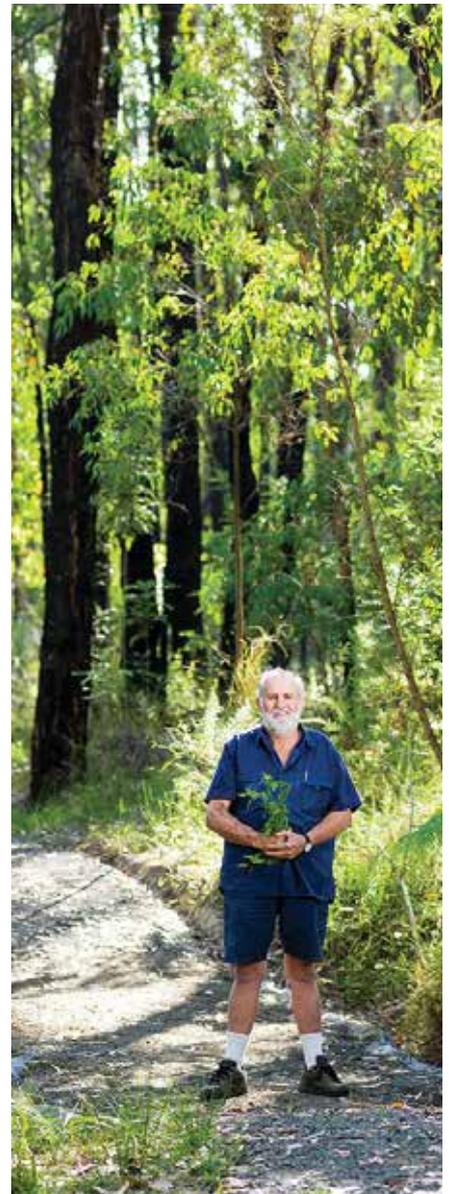
"We've hosted over 40 education days at the site covering a wide range of topics such as surveying bird populations, scat collecting and plant identification," Linda said.

"The education days have attracted a lot of the locals who weren't associated with Landcare or who had not previously been involved in natural resource management activities. It's been great for locals to connect to their environment as well as get a taste for what Landcare is all about."

The site has also become an important retreat for the local community.

According to Linda there were a lot of people affected by the bushfires and some are still recovering from the impact of the fires.

"The Mill has definitely been a very positive experience for the community,



*Volunteer Mick Schiller at the Old Mill site. Its restoration has created an important retreat for the local community.*



*Linda and Tony Minter and Denise and Mick Schiller on the bridge built at the Old Mill site.*

enabling people to use the park for peaceful walks and its gazebo and arboretum provide a place to sit and think.

"Other people have found it very therapeutic to help restore the site, whether it be tree planting or building bridges. Work is still happening; our next project is to restore the historic boiler site and to show some of the history of the early settlers."

The Old Mill Site in Boolarra was a recipient of the Landcare in West Gippsland Green Carpet Showcase Award for their inspiring work restoring the site for the community.

***The Old Mill Site is located in Boolarra and can be visited any time. For further information about the Boolarra South Landcare Group contact Linda Minter by email at [boolarraslandcare@bigpond.com](mailto:boolarraslandcare@bigpond.com)***

# A handful of Bush Stone-curlews inspires a major forest restoration project outside Bendigo

By Judy Crocker

A joint effort by the West Marong Landcare Group (a rural-based group) and the peri-urban Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group is driving the restoration of the Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve on the outskirts of Bendigo.

The groups have been working together since 2001 to restore biodiversity values and corridor connections to increase the flow of native fauna from the park westward to the Loddon River. The current restoration project began in 2007 when a small remnant population of Bush Stone-curlews was discovered struggling to survive on the farmland and small blocks around the edge of the degraded reserve.

The reserve was comprised of thick stands of young, multi-stemmed Box-Ironbark. Few large old hollow trees existed and the understorey and groundcover was sparse. This meant minimal habitat for wildlife and erosion problems as unchecked stormwater created eroded gullies.

The main goal of the groups was to restore the reserve as a biodiversity haven for all threatened and endangered species. This included the small and diminishing populations of tuans, Sugar Gliders, antechinus, dunnarts and wallabies, the annually visiting Swift Parrots and the four to six remaining Bush Stone-curlews which are soon to be supplemented through a captive breeding and release program.

Funding from a Communities for Nature grant was obtained and in partnership with Parks Victoria the restoration thinning of 106-hectares of the reserve was completed in 2014. Contractors

and trained volunteers were involved in the works with all the cut logs retained on site and placed on the contour to assist in retaining rainfall on site and encourage understorey and groundcover regeneration.

Landcare group members and Conservation and Land Management students from Bendigo TAFE are involved in an extensive monitoring program at the reserve. Six soil and vegetation transects were established and monitored before the project and are being followed up annually following restoration thinning. Photo points have been installed to monitor tree health and growth, bird monitoring is underway and the nest boxes installed by the TAFE students are also being checked by them.

By March 2015, only eight months after the first stage of restoration thinning, positive results were already being seen. No stormwater flowed from the site during a major rainstorm. Soil and forest litter have been retained on site. Understorey and groundcover plants are regenerating. Sugar Gliders and Phascogales have begun breeding in the nest boxes and a flock of Swift Parrots were monitored feeding on Yellow Gum blossom nectar.

It was interesting to note the damage the rainstorm caused on the eastern side of the reserve that hasn't been thinned.



Community volunteers monitor leaf litter after restoration thinning at the Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve.

The forest leaf litter was swept away by the water and new erosion gullies caused. The boundary fence was also flattened by soil and litter that washed onto the paddock of an adjoining farm.

The Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve is an integral part of the Mid Loddon Landcare Network's public land restoration plan. Works on the reserve complement previous works completed over many years on private lifestyle and agricultural properties to protect woodlands, waterways and corridors. The project is an exciting example of very visible and community driven landscape change.

**For further information contact Judy Crocker by email at [jcroc22@gmail.com](mailto:jcroc22@gmail.com)**

**Judy's position with the Mid-Loddon Sub-Catchment Management Group is funded by the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program.**



One of the four to six remaining Bush Stone-curlews in the Shelbourne Nature Conservation Reserve captured by a wildlife monitoring camera.



A Merri magical morning biodiversity event in Northcote started with the Djirri Djirri Dancers acknowledging Wurundjeri country.

## Community learning in urban areas

By Angela Foley

Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) is a not-for-profit organisation involved in creek side and grassland restoration in the Merri Creek catchment. MCMC has been working in partnership with the local community through planting, weeding and ecological monitoring for 25 years.

Alongside this restoration work, we are also involved with community outreach and education. Our programs are resourced through a mix of local, state and federal government funds as well as philanthropic grants.

We work with all age groups, people from different cultures and different languages. Our experience and skills in these areas has led to partnerships with six local governments, Parks Victoria, the Environment Protection Authority, Melbourne Water, Wurundjeri Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council and a variety of community groups such as the Turkish Women's Recreation Group.

In 2014 MCMC engaged in activities with more than 5600 people. Approximately 650 of these people attended community-planting events involving weeding, planting, mulching and surveys for threatened plant species. Close to 5000 people attended education programs. The programs were delivered in work places, neighbourhood settings, kindergartens and schools as well as in the active classrooms of our

grasslands, valleys and wetlands.

People have many different reasons for seeking assistance from the group. Last year the ABC made contact during pre-production for the filming of the television series *The Secret River*, based on Kate Grenville's novel.

Schools ask us for help to develop indigenous gardens in their grounds and to present flora, fauna and waterway education. We've also worked in industrial precincts on programs that focus on creek pollution and have been able to assist people to get close to nature in places that may seem out of bounds.

We often meet people on our programs who can name creeks, rivers, plants and animals from far away, but can't name one local waterway or nearby indigenous plant or animal. The MCMC is committed to helping people engage with the local environment using the most up-to-date and creative methods. Programs involving photography and botanic drawing are a great way for people to spend time in the environment and experience it from a different perspective.

The group is keen to ensure that conservation isn't just the preserve of dedicated conservationists, but part of the lives of the whole community.

**For further information contact  
Angela Foley by email at  
Angela@mcmc.org.au**



Sweet *Bursaria* on the skin: painting native plants is a way of looking at them closely.



A primary school group from Fawkner draw indigenous plants and learn their names between the bike path and the Merri Creek.

# Around the State – News from the Regional



*Moonlight cinema for North Central Landcarers at Anderson's Mill was part of a volunteer recognition event for North Central Landcarers in May.*

## **Wimmera**

Wimmera groups and networks have been busy completing another series of large-scale community plantings. Congratulations to all involved in these successful events.

The 2015 Wimmera Regional Landcare Awards were held in partnership with Volunteering Western Victoria's Volunteering Recognition Awards. Congratulations to these regional winners who represented the Wimmera at the Victorian Landcare Awards: Callum Nicholson in the Young Landcare Leader Award, Laharum Landcare Group in the Landcare Community Group Award and Mark McKew in the Individual Landcarer Award.

The Horsham Urban Landcare Group was launched recently thanks to support from Local Landcare Facilitator Wendy McInnes and Horsham Rural City Council. Members of this new group will be involved in a Wimmera Community Landcare Celebration in Horsham in September looking at monotremes with echidna specialist Peggy Rismiller and platypus expert Josh Griffiths.

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

## **North Central**

The CMA and the Blampied Kooroocheang Landcare Group hosted a volunteer recognition event at Anderson's Mill in Smeaton during May. More than 60 attendees celebrated the achievements of Waterwatch and Landcare in the region with a field trip, picnic and moonlight cinema.

A recent workshop on grant writing and reinvigorating your group was well received. Some of the key messages were that short, catchy project summaries are important in funding applications. A good summary sets the scene, explains why the project is important and reminds grant assessors what your project is about. Also fixed timeframes for executive positions within groups encourages new people to get involved as they don't feel trapped in a role.

These events were made possible through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and the State Government's Victorian Landcare Program.

*For further information contact Tess Grieves on 5440 1890.*

## **Port Phillip and Westernport**

Leaders from eleven of the region's thirteen Landcare networks gathered in Melbourne recently for the second

Port Phillip and Western Port Landcare Network Leaders Forum.

With Rod Taylor from DELWP as forum guest, the discussion focused on the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program and the review of the wider Victorian Landcare Program of support, grants and products.

This forum was convened by the CMA to strengthen Landcare connections and cooperation and achieve the best outcomes for the region's environment and Landcare community.

On behalf of all the people involved in caring for land, water and biodiversity across the Port Phillip region, the CMA wishes to acknowledge the profound legacy of the late Joan Kirner in creating the Landcare movement. Vale Joan Kirner.

*For further information contact Doug Evans on 8781 7920.*

## **Corangamite**

More than 90 people enjoyed a great day at the Corangamite Landcare Recognition Awards held in June to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of volunteers and groups. The day included a farm tour of the Campbell family's Barwonleigh property, near Inverleigh.

# Landcare Coordinators

In July, Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Uncle Byron Powel led a group of 60 Landcare members on a journey across the "big mountain in the middle of a plain." The cultural awareness day at the You Yangs included stories on the history of the region, stone artefacts, rocks wells, scatters and identification of significant cultural sites.

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

## North East

The Green Army Project in the Upper Kiewa, hosted by the CMA and working with Alpine Shire, Kiewa Catchment Landcare, Parks Victoria, and Falls Creek Resort was completed in early July. The project involved weed control and revegetation on public reserves and willow control in Alpine bogs near Falls Creek. A new series of Green Army projects are now underway near Wangaratta.

The CMA Landcare mapping portal was launched in July. The portal enables Landcare groups and partners to directly map their grants works and proposals onto the CMA system for reporting.

A North East Carp Forum held in July brought together experts in the field, Landcare, CMA and interested community members to learn about the range of carp management options. The region's dung beetle monitoring project recently became part of the national collection on the Atlas of Living Australia. Go to northeast.landcarevic.net.au/dungbeetle

The Atlas of Living Australia makes biodiversity data available online and is keen to hear from other groups with monitoring data. Go to [www.ala.org.au](http://www.ala.org.au)

**For further information contact Tom Croft on (02) 6043 7648.**

## East Gippsland

More than 90 Landcare volunteers gathered at the Mechanics Hall Institute in Lakes Entrance in May to recognise the outstanding achievements of Landcare in the region at the People's Choice Landcare Awards.

The Awards celebrated the enormous amount of work the region's Landcarers contribute. In just 12 months they have planted more than 83,000 seedlings, controlled 805 hectares of weeds and controlled pest animals on more than 5000 hectares and held more than 670 group activities. The evening also featured the wonderful produce available in the region with delicious food created from locally produced and foraged ingredients.

**For further information contact Amanda Bartkowski on 5150 3581.**

## Glenelg Hopkins

The 2015 South West Landcare Gathering, co-hosted by the Basalt to Bay Landcare Network and Glenelg Hopkins CMA, was held at Hawkesdale recently.

The 60 participants included Landcare group members, Landcare support staff and partner organisations. Participants were able to discuss their challenges and successes. Celebrity chef Mark Olive was the keynote speaker. Mark provided a bush tucker themed morning tea and spoke about indigenous foods that are now commercially available.

The event was well received with positive feedback from participants. The CMA is committed to conducting another event in a different part of the catchment in 2016.

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

## West Gippsland

150 people attended the Landcare in West Gippsland Green Carpet Showcase. The event celebrated 25 groups and individuals involved in Landcare across the region.

The recent Corner Inlet Farmer and Fisherman Field Day was a successful event. Local farmers went into Corner Inlet with local fisherman to look at sea grass beds and learn about their role in sustainable fisheries. The farmers shared their knowledge of modern dairy practices and the importance of keeping nutrients on the farm.

Landcare staff from the region recently participated in an overnight workshop and tour with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation.

**For further information contact Kathleen Bartlett on 5613 5966.**

## Mallee

Despite dry conditions many of the region's groups are busy implementing projects.

Groups have declared war on an emerging weed that poses a threat to local biodiversity and agriculture. Hudson Pear (*Cylindropuntia rosea*) is an invasive cactus with 40-millimetre sabre like spines. It is currently only found in small numbers in the Mallee, but Landcare groups have been vigilant in identifying and controlling it.

With assistance from their local Landcare facilitator, the Sunraysia Wildlife Carers Group has developed a smart phone app to provide information on how to safely manage injured native wildlife. The app concentrates on what to do in the critical time between finding the animal and getting it to professional care.

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

## Broken Goulburn

The region's Community Natural Resource Management Awards were held in June and were a great opportunity to celebrate the efforts of some exceptional individuals.

Charlie Sexton, our Regional Landcare Facilitator, recently left us for a role with the State Emergency Service. We wish Charlie well in this role and know that we will still be in touch. Ashley Rogers has been appointed as the new Regional Landcare Facilitator and we welcome her to the team.

Several of our Landcare networks are looking to attract funding to involve the Green Army in a number of regional projects.

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



The East Gippsland Landcare Team (L to R), Penny Gray, Paul Harvey, Natalie Jenkins, Amanda Bartkowski, Mark Chaplin and Emma Orgill at the People's Choice Landcare Awards held in May.

# In brief

## Vale Joan Kirner

Landcare in Victoria pays tribute to one of its founders, the Honourable Joan Kirner AC, who passed away on 1 June 2015.

In the 1980s Joan Kirner, as Minister for Conservation, Forests and Lands joined forces with VFF President Heather Mitchell OBE, AM, to develop an integrated program to tackle the degradation of Victoria's farmland, public land and waterways.

Landcare was launched by Joan and Heather on 25 November 1986 at Winjallock, near St Arnaud. Joan's background with grassroots community activism underscored the new initiative. She knew that for Landcare to be successful it had to be a partnership between rural communities and the Government.

It is thanks to Joan's vision, her belief in community action and her early stewardship of Landcare, that it has grown into the successful international movement of today. There are now

more than 600 Landcare groups and networks operating around Victoria, over 5000 groups in Australia, and worldwide more than 20 countries are involved.

Speaking at a celebration to mark the tenth anniversary of Landcare, Joan said: "When people ask me if I enjoyed being in politics I'd have to say that I'm just so proud of Landcare. And it shows that, across political lines, you can get things done – if you believe in community, and if you believe in the future."

An inspiration to many, Joan Kirner's Landcare legacy will continue to drive community environmental action around the world.

## Next issue – Victorian Landcare Awards

The next issue of the magazine will feature stories from the 2015 Victorian Landcare Awards.

Carrie Tiffany, editor  
Victorian Landcare and Catchment  
Management Magazine

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*Joan Kirner speaking at the International Landcare Conference held in Melbourne in 2000.*

The Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management magazine is published by the Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 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 and to receive your copy via email alert

Contact Farm Tree & Landcare Association  
Phone: 9207 5527 Fax: 9207 5500 Email: [ftla@landcarevic.net.au](mailto:ftla@landcarevic.net.au)

## Read the magazine online

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



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