

VICTORIAN

LANDCARE

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& CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT



VICTORIAN LANDCARE AWARDS FEATURE

Celebrating Victoria's Landcarers

Terry Hubbard wins Joan Kirner Award

Connecting Country takes out Landcare
Network Award



Victorian
Landcare
Program



State
Government

Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management

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Cover photograph

Students from Penbank Campus – Woodleigh School on the Mornington Peninsula with the 2017 Junior Landcare Team Award. From left, Leah Reaper, Henry Miller-Scott, teacher Matt Chambers, Molly Morgan and Charlie Farrell. Photograph by Tracey Koper.



From the Minister

Dear Landcarers

It was a great honour for me to attend the 2017 Victorian Landcare Awards ceremony at Government House on 1 September, along with so many outstanding Landcarers from across the state.

The awards were hosted by the Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, and celebrated the incredible efforts and valuable contributions of individuals, Landcare community groups, Friends groups, Coastcare groups, schools and organisations – all those who are working to protect and enhance the natural environment and improve sustainable agriculture.

Environmental volunteers, such as Landcarers, are some of the most inspiring and important people in our communities; promoting health and well-being by connecting with nature, while restoring and protecting Victoria's precious landscapes and natural assets.

You will get a great sense of their remarkable dedication, resilience, commitment and creativity as you read

the stories on the winners in this feature edition of the *Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management* magazine.

It is wonderful to see how the Landcare ethic has expanded to our urban areas and cities, reinforcing the connection between the built and natural environment to our health and well-being as well as the quality of our lives.

Liveable places support healthy, happy people. Sustainable, liveable cities provide confidence for businesses to invest and economies to grow.

That is why this year we introduced the Urban Landcare Award in recognition of those who are encouraging people in urban areas to improve their local environment. The winner of the Urban Landcare Award, Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society, is one of Victoria's oldest environment groups – established in 1959.

In many ways, the success of environmental volunteering has inspired the Victorian Government's plan for *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037*.

The Plan aims to encourage more Victorians to value and protect nature and help them to connect with and enjoy the natural environment; including the importance of connecting to Country – which Traditional Owners have long known and practised.

On behalf of the Andrews Labor Government, I thank and congratulate all award nominees in their respective categories and wish the winners of the nine national award categories well, as they go on to represent Victoria at the 2018 National Landcare Awards.

I also acknowledge the time, commitment and dedication of every single person acting to care for Victoria's natural environment, so that it is healthy for current and future generations.

Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

Minister for Suburban Development



The winners of the 2017 Victorian Landcare Awards with the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio, and Her Excellency The Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria.

Celebrating Victoria's Landcarers

The state's best and brightest Landcare advocates were acknowledged at the Victorian Landcare Awards ceremony hosted by Her Excellency The Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria, at Government House on 1 September 2017.

More than 350 people attended the ceremony held in the grand ballroom.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio presented the awards, which included a trophy made



(From left) Maria Parry from Austcover with Kathleen Brack, winner of the Austcover Young Landcare Leader Award and Minister D'Ambrosio.

of reclaimed Victorian blackwood, alongside the Governor of Victoria who is the Patron-In-Chief of Landcare in Victoria.

Minister D'Ambrosio said she felt privileged to be in the company of Victoria's finest environmental and agricultural advocates.

"It is fantastic to see such a diverse range of groups and individuals recognised for their significant contribution to the conservation of Victoria's biodiversity.

"We understand the important role Landcare plays getting communities involved in the protection of our unique environment," Minister D'Ambrosio said.

The Andrews Labor Government will invest \$86.3 million over four years for the continued preservation of Victoria's vital ecosystems, as well as an ongoing funding of \$20 million per year to deliver the Protecting Victoria's Environment program.

The Landcare Awards are an opportunity to showcase people and projects that are contributing to sustainable agriculture and the protection of Victoria's biodiversity.

This year's awards received significant interest from right across the state, with 85 nominations submitted across the 14 categories.

After the announcement of the awards the guests mingled and enjoyed refreshments in the ballroom, grand apartments and gardens of Government House.

David Berry, Chairman of the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society, attended the ceremony with other Society committee members to accept the Urban Landcare Award.

David Berry said the committee and members of the Society were honoured and humbled to win the award.

"We cannot stop smiling! And the opportunity to meet Her Excellency The Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria at Government House, was a real bonus," he said.

Guests also had an opportunity to view the historic Hanslow Cups that were presented to leading Victorian farmers for their efforts in soil conservation from 1940 until 1990.

“

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio presented the awards, which included a trophy made of reclaimed Victorian blackwood, alongside the Governor of Victoria who is the Patron-In-Chief of Landcare in Victoria.

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(From left) Minister D'Ambrosio with Ann Clayton and David Berry from the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society – winners of the Urban Landcare Award – with Governor Dessau.



(From left) Dale Tunstall from SureGro with Mike Irvine from Parks Victoria, Don Love and John Ariens from Friends of Beware Reef (winners of the SureGro Coastcare Award) and Minister D'Ambrosio.

It is the first time the Upper Goulburn, Lower Goulburn and Murray, Ovens and Upper Murray Districts Hanslow Cup has been on display as it has been missing for many years, and was only recently returned to the DELWP office at Benalla.



Hugh Mitchell, award judge and son of the late Heather Mitchell with Sandii Lewis, winner of the Victorian Farmers Federation/ Landcare Victoria Inc. Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship Award.

The historic Hanslow Cups that were presented to leading Victorian farmers for their efforts in soil conservation from 1940 were on display in the ballroom at Government House.

Commendations

Highly commended

Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award: Ian Grenda, Jim de Hennin and Kaye Rodden.

Australian Government Excellence in Sustainable Farm Practices Award: Simon Falkiner.

Rio Tinto Indigenous Land Management Award: Woka Walla Land Management Crew.

Urban Landcare Award: Friends of Lower Kororoit Creek Inc.

Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award: 3 Creeks Landcare Group.

Dr. Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award: Tony Gardner and Kate McWhinney.

Commended

Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award: Penny Roberts and Ann Robson.

Junior Landcare Team Award: Bass Coast Landcare Network's Environmental Detectives Team.

Rio Tinto Indigenous Land Management Award: Windamara Aboriginal Corporation.

Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award: Yarra Valley Equestrian Landcare Group.



Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award

Tarrangower Cactus Control Group



Over the last decade volunteers from the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group (TCCG) have formed an army of cactus warriors who have destroyed millions of wheel cactus plants in their local landscapes including many historic gold mining sites.

Wheel cactus is an extremely resilient plant. It is difficult to destroy due to its thick, waxy skin and because it reproduces both vegetatively and from seed. TCCG members have spent years researching different techniques to eradicate the plant and have developed a specific injection tool, which effectively delivers herbicide directly into the plant.

TCCG has developed a successful community-based approach to wheel cactus control. They have raised awareness of the weed within their community through newsletters, brochures, media releases and an informative website.

The group maintains its high profile by participating in the annual Maldon Easter Parade and through market stalls, sausage sizzles and selling cactus warrior t-shirts.

Landholders are educated on how to treat wheel cactus infestations on their properties through regular community field days. The group then assists landholders

with free equipment loans and plant disposal.

Group President, Lee Mead, says the group owes a great deal to its passionate volunteers.

"There's a core group that's been working for at least 15 years now. The weed itself provides the motivation – it's such a horrendous weed and extremely invasive. We've been successful at educating the local community about the weed and the majority of our local landholders are chipping away at the problem on their own properties.

"The big challenge for us now are the absentee landholders. It's difficult to contact them as they come up to their properties so infrequently and they often ignore the problem," Lee said.

TCCG volunteers, in collaboration with Parks Victoria, have successfully treated wheel cactus infestations within the Maldon



Cactus warriors (from left) Cheryl Kane, Steve Templeton and Bridie O'Reilly educate the local community about wheel cactus at the annual Maldon – Barrington Agricultural Show.

Historic Reserve. Major infestations of mature wheel cactus plants at the Mt Tarrangower and Anzac Hill historic gold mining sites have also been controlled. This has restored the heritage and cultural value of these sites, allowing the community to enjoy them once again for leisure and recreation.

TCCG has a strategic action plan that is reviewed annually. The plan helps the group to manage its priorities and organise its many relationships with volunteers, landowners, work crews, tertiary students, scouts, contractors and other land managers such as Parks Victoria and Mount Alexander Shire.

The group has successfully involved work crews including the Green Army, and drought relief and Work for the Dole teams on cactus control projects. It has used grants to employ weed contractors to treat wheel cactus infestations along roadsides within the shire.

Lee Mead is hopeful a new bio control agent using the cochineal insect could help to win the war against wheel cactus.

"We are having some success with bio control. It's a slow process, it could take another couple of decades before we beat the weed, but whatever happens, we won't give up," Lee said.

The TCCG has been a positive force in the community. It has linked townsfolk with their rural neighbours and involved people of all ages, ability and experience in restoring their local environment.

Ian Grenda from the Tarrangower Cactus Control Group demonstrates the special wheel cactus injecting tool that the group developed.

SureGro Coastcare Award Friends of Beware Reef



The 220-hectare Beware Reef Marine Sanctuary is situated off Cape Conran in east Gippsland. The sanctuary encompasses a series of granite pinnacles rising 30 metres from the sea floor. The reef is rich in marine life and habitat, with a unique mix of warmer and cooler temperate species.

For the past 15 years the Friends of Beware Reef have made hundreds of boat trips to monitor and conduct underwater surveys of marine life at the reef and other sites in the sanctuary.

Their contribution to scientific knowledge has played an important role in assisting Parks Victoria to understand and better protect the reef and other marine environments.

The friends are citizen scientists, gathering high-quality data at scales impossible for other researchers to achieve. They share their knowledge through public lectures, videos and identification books and posters. All scientific data is submitted to Reef Life Survey; an international database that links volunteer divers, scientists and managers in marine research and conservation.

In recent years the friends have recorded the emergence of marine species generally found further north that are now appearing in eastern Bass Strait, possibly as a result of rising water temperatures. They have also discovered introduced marine pests along our waterways, including the seven-armed sea star and Northern Pacific sea star, and alerted Parks Victoria to a devastating population explosion of native sea urchins.

The offshore location of Beware Reef and other marine protected areas where the friends work pose many challenges. Eastern Bass Strait frequently experiences strong winds, large ocean swells, floods and algal blooms, sometimes resulting in poor visibility and limiting the number of days when boat trips and surveys can be conducted. Coupled with this is the expense of the long distances to be travelled and the technical knowledge needed to operate and maintain dive equipment to high safety standards.

The group's president, Don Love, became interested in Beware Reef because of its shipwreck history. Along with other members, Alan Wilkins and John Ariens, this small group of retirees have all been diving for more than 50 years.

"We are a small, hard-core group. And we're not youngsters. Water temperatures in the lakes in winter can get down to between seven and nine degrees – that's a real test of endurance," Don said.

"Curiosity is the driver for us. Once you are under the water it's amazing how much you don't know. I used to be always nagging people to identify something I'd seen.



Don Love surveying the south pinnacle of Beware Reef in 2008.

Now I have an extensive collection of underwater photographs on my computer and I'm the person doing the identifying."

Don is a former schoolteacher and, along with the other members of the group, he's always keen to share his knowledge.

"Many people will never get the opportunity to see what's under the water. When we show them our photographs and videos they are amazed at the diversity of what lives in the Southern Ocean – they think we are showing them the Great Barrier Reef."

The group uses its own vessels, dive equipment and cameras with members often travelling long distances to participate in monitoring and to give talks and presentations.

The Friends of Beware Reef are a small, high-achieving group of dedicated volunteers. Their commitment to the marine environment and the volume and scope of the work they have undertaken is truly outstanding.



John Ariens and Russell Martin from the Friends of Beware Reef heading out on a dive.

Rio Tinto Indigenous Land Management Award

Angela Jeffery

RioTinto



Angela Jeffery is a descendant of the northern Wiradjuri Nation of NSW, whose ancestral links stem from Peak Hill, Wellington and Dubbo. Wiradjuri people are river people. The area was known as the land of three rivers; Marrambidya/Murrumbidgee (Murrumbidgee River), Galari (Lachlan River) and Wambuul (Macquarie River).

When she was growing up Angela loved being on Country with her family. Camping at Wambuul and other surrounding waterways was a common pastime during the warmer months. This connection influenced Angela to undertake a Degree in Environmental Science, majoring in fisheries, later becoming the first Aboriginal trainee at Fisheries Victoria, based at Queenscliff.

During her traineeship Angela acquired funding from the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and produced two educational posters on Indigenous fishing methods. One of the posters was completed in partnership with Traditional Owners – the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation (Wadawurrung), and the other highlighted a number of traditional fishing practices from around Australia.

In 2014 Angela moved to Colac to take up the position of Indigenous Natural Resource Management Facilitator for the Corangamite CMA. In this role she has led a project assisting Wadawurrung and other members of the Aboriginal community within the region to participate in traditional fire practices for the health of Country and people. *Wiyin-murrup Yangarramela* means 'fire spirit comes back' in the Wadawurrung language.

The project is part of the Corangamite CMA Indigenous Participation Program (supported through the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme). It recognises the strong social and cultural needs of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people in Victoria to connect with Country through fire practice.

Angela Jeffery describes fire practice as a means of fulfilling cultural obligations to manage Country, as well as a way of maintaining wellbeing through traditions associated with the cleansing and healing of Country through fire.

"My job is very rewarding as it's such a connecting experience for people to get together on a burn. We share. We learn from each other and we honour Mother Earth," Angela said.

Angela has coordinated trial sites for traditional burns, complementing existing vegetation management plans, and in April 2017 she organised a demonstration of traditional and CFA burning techniques at Teesdale that was attended by more than 60 stakeholders.

"We've had landholders contacting us about running trial plots on their properties



Angela Jeffery with Ngarigo Elder Uncle Rod Mason at a demonstration of traditional burning techniques.

using traditional burning techniques to improve natural resource management outcomes. In the future conducting traditional burns could be a good employment opportunity for Aboriginal people – and, of course, a way for them to continue to meet traditional obligations to manage Country," Angela said.

Angela's ability to bring together the scientific and cultural components of the traditional fire practices program, *Wiyin-murrup Yangarramela*, has been critical to its success.

Aboriginal people involved in the Indigenous Participation Program will have access to formal training in fire, flora and fauna identification, biodiversity monitoring techniques, experiential delivery of traditional burning practices and knowledge exchange between participants.

Uncle Byron Powell, a Wadawurrung – Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation Elder, said at the Teesdale traditional burning event: "We are breaking new ground, to see first-hand so many groups coming together to manage this land and heal Country together."



A traditional burning demonstration underway at Teesdale.



Jacqui Wandin and her son James from Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation planting trees at Coranderrk.

Australian Government Partnerships for Landcare Award Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation



Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation are the owners of the historic property Coranderrk in the Yarra Valley.

Coranderrk was an Aboriginal Reserve of almost 5000 acres between 1863 until its forced closure in 1924. In 1998 the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) purchased 80 hectares of the original property and handed it to Wandoon Estate. However, without funding for farm equipment and lacking the necessary land management skills, the property was leased and poorly managed for the past 20 years.

The restoration of Coranderrk has come about through the combined efforts of Wandoon Estate, volunteers from the local community, Yarra Ranges Council, and partnerships with organisations including Melbourne Water, the Port Philip and Westernport CMA, and the ILC. The goal is to rejuvenate Coranderrk as a working farm, providing important habitat for native fauna, and as a place to bring Wurundjeri people together on Country.

The partnership has introduced sustainable farming practices for productive beef cattle grazing, and conservation advice and expertise on habitat restoration and waterway management.

The partnership has enabled Wurundjeri people, through the Narrap land management team, to be employed to work on traditional Country while gaining new skills.

The partnership has fostered the development of positive relationships with eight different natural resource management organisations. Other outcomes include the participation of 100 volunteers in three planting days, the establishment of 10 hectares of revegetation involving 20,000 plants, the construction of five kilometres of fencing to protect waterways from stock and more than 27 hectares of weed control works.

The Caring for Coranderrk Country partnership has linked to other programs that are creating native vegetation links between existing parklands and reserves in the Yarra Valley and Yellingbo areas. These links will assist with the preservation of the threatened helmeted honeyeater and Leadbeater's possum.

A partnership with the Melbourne Water Stream Frontage Management Program will help to support work to protect and enhance Coranderrk's riverbanks through weed control, fencing and revegetation.

The Melbourne Water Rural Land Program will assist with works to keep soil and nutrients on the farm and out of waterways.

Jacqui Wandin, a director of Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation, says the partnership is an opportunity to honour and respect the ancestors who lived and worked at Coranderrk.

"Simon Wonga and his cousin William Barak led their people here in 1863. They worked very hard and transformed Coranderrk into a productive and self-sufficient village. Unfortunately this time of security and prosperity for our people was short lived.

"But here we are, starting again. Coranderrk gives us an opportunity to bring modern sustainable land management practices and Indigenous land management practices together. And we get to reconnect with Country."

The judges of the award were impressed by the innovative, powerful partnerships that the project has fostered. They judged the project to be an outstanding example of leadership in Indigenous natural resource management that is delivering tangible on-ground outcomes as well as social and economic value too.

“

Ian believes it's the stories we tell ourselves that create our sense of place and connection to nature.

”



Ian Higgins with a healthy echidna on the Campaspe River near Kyneton.

Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award Ian Higgins



Ian Higgins' early interest in native plants has continued through his life. He developed a remarkable knowledge of indigenous flora species, their propagation and revegetation, leading to a 30-year professional career during which he has contributed significantly to revegetation and environmental planning in Victoria, in both professional and voluntary capacities.

Ian's goal has long been to demonstrate how surrounding ourselves with diverse, healthy, productive and beautiful native vegetation leads us into a richer Australian life that builds a strong commitment to Country.

To that end, he was principal architect of, and major contributor to, VicVeg Online, the website that helps Victorians plan revegetation and restoration projects through understanding indigenous plant species and their relationship to local landscapes.

At the local level Ian, and like-minded volunteers in the mid-1980s, lobbied for funding to improve the condition of Castlemaine's creeks. In 1986 he led the first project of six people employed full-time to remove weeds and revegetate public land along Campbells Creek.

In 2000, Ian was an instigator of the Friends of Campbells Creek Landcare Group. With 72 financial members, the group is stronger than ever. Capitalising on Ian's early work and under his guidance, the group has

transformed Campbells Creek into a richly biodiverse community asset. Some of the best-restored areas are now used as venues for bird watching excursions and a local childcare centre holds bush kindergarten sessions in one of the 30-year-old revegetation patches that Ian established.

Ian's idea for a four kilometre paved walking trail alongside the creek to connect more of the community with nature received support from the local council, which now recognises the value of this urban woodland in the middle of the Castlemaine township.

Under Ian's leadership, the friends erected a series of innovative interpretive signs along the trail. The signs promote the group and the values of the creek-side environment. They explain the threats to its health and highlight how community members can help.

Ian believes it's the stories we tell ourselves that create our sense of place and connection to nature.

"For me, knowing the stories of the individual species we're working to retain, re-introduce or attract is what builds those feelings. I try to draw on the science to illustrate why we are doing our Landcare work. Even knowing just one story about a single species seems to strengthen people's appreciation of the natural environment."

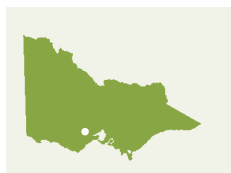
While Ian's long-term involvement allows him to appreciate the improvements over the decades, he says the commitment of the friends is his biggest reward.

"The group and its members are a great example of how the Landcare ethic can be spread and sustained through the community," he said.

Ian has been a huge part of the success of the friends group. His knowledge and passion for the environment and his keenness to share his knowledge and engage with others has brought many people together to further the cause.

Australian Government Innovation in Agricultural Land Management Award

Simon Falkiner



Australian Government

National
Landcare
Programme



Simon Falkiner manages a 240-hectare mixed enterprise family farm at Freshwater Creek near Geelong. The farm produces merino sheep (for meat), cereals and oilseed crops, as well as hosting several long-term trials focusing on soil acidification and soil biology and the manipulation of pastures to improve productivity and diversity.

Simon values biodiversity and integrates it into his farming system. Soil health, diverse mixed species pasture systems, integrated pest management along with crop and grazing management are all part of the mix. An 11-hectare site of critically endangered remnant plains grassland on the property is fenced and managed for biodiversity under the Victorian Volcanic Plains Tender program.

Simon is happy to challenge traditional farming systems and take his knowledge to a national scale. He has embarked on a program to introduce Angus (cattle) genetics into North Queensland's Brahman dominated herd, and has also researched and adopted innovative grazing management techniques.

The grazing of grain crops to improve feed availability while minimising grain loss has had a huge impact on his farming system. The introduction of cover cropping has provided a method of capturing previously wasted summer rainfall events, allowing for increased livestock production and soil health benefits such as reduced soil temperatures.

"The key is to have a purpose for undertaking an activity. Farmers don't need extra jobs, we have lives to lead," Simon said.

Expanding the traditional role of fodder and pasture crops to help combat weeds is an example of this.

"Herbicide resistant weeds can and do reduce gross margins in crops. Fodder crops are a good option to clean up weedy paddocks while still generating income. A two-year fodder or pasture phase with grazing and fodder harvesting prior to weed seed set will remove over 90 per cent of annual ryegrass seeds from the seed bank," Simon said.

Simon has undertaken extensive riparian restoration works along Thompsons Creek to protect and enhance remnant vegetation and is involved in partnership projects to monitor and increase populations of the threatened Yarra pygmy perch and growling grass frog. This work has the downstream benefit of improving one of the last mainland habitats of the endangered orange-bellied parrot.

Simon is also the President of the Surf Coast Rabbit Action Network where he is committed to achieving a coordinated approach to rabbit control through engaging stakeholders and recruiting grass roots support. The formation of cluster groups, driven by interested locals, has seen a ground swell of support from government bodies looking to better target their rabbit control works.

As Chair of the Surf Coast and Inland Plains Landcare Network, Simon helped to establish the Beach to Bush biolink project. He is a Community Advisory Group member of the Corangamite CMA, has been a carbon farming adviser and mentors students from five different tertiary institutions. Simon is widely recognised as a leading farmer who is passionate about learning and supporting others.

The award judges commended Simon on his management of a complex farming and environmental system that is improving ecosystem functions, crop and livestock productivity per hectare, and business profitability while accommodating climate change. They were also impressed with his commitment to sharing his Landcare farming story with others, particularly students.



Simon Falkiner talking about the soil acidification, soil biology and cover cropping trials on his Freshwater Creek farm during a field trip at the 2014 National Landcare Conference.

“

Simon values biodiversity and integrates it into his farming system. Soil health, diverse mixed species pasture systems, integrated pest management along with crop and grazing management are all part of the mix.

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2017
VICTORIAN
LANDCARE AWARDS

NOMINEES



For names of all nominees go to <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/landcare-magazine/>

Junior Landcare Team Award

Penbank Campus – Woodleigh School



Students from Penbank Campus – Woodleigh School on the Mornington Peninsula have swapped the classroom for the creek, where primary school children are actively involved with a Balcombe Moorooduc Landcare Group habitat project.

A day at school can involve researching, designing and creating habitat for indigenous fauna along a section of the Balcombe Creek at Mt Martha. Students start by researching the habitat requirements of their chosen species. This knowledge is reinforced with hands-on learning through habitat creation. Habitats include frog bogs, lizard lounges, nestboxes for birds, possums and bats, logs for bush rats and bug hotels. The students work with different tools and materials to build habitats.

The wider school community, including parents, grandparents and siblings is encouraged to attend revegetation days, where students share their knowledge and parents can offer expertise, materials and a helping hand. The project is spreading awareness of the issue of habitat loss further into the community and providing the students at Penbank Campus with rich opportunities to improve their communication, problem solving and teamwork abilities.

According to teacher Matthew Chambers the project has provided positive experiences for the students involved.

"It is always a challenge to get children outside, away from screens and involved in authentic learning experiences. The habitat project provides a great way for children to connect to the outdoors."

In 2016 students from year four used the habitat project as their learning focus. They extended their knowledge about how to build habitats with excursions to the Cranbourne Botanic Gardens and Melbourne Aquarium.

The focus on habitats renewed the students' interest in monitoring and caring for the school's wetland, including planning and running several revegetation days. Students have also held a fundraiser to raise money for materials for their habitat projects and improve awareness of sustainability issues. They have sponsored endangered animals and undertaken habitat projects at home. Some parents who have been inspired by their children's interest



Students from Penbank Campus – Woodleigh School planting along the Balcombe Creek.

have contacted the local Landcare group for information and advice. Teachers have also noticed that students are now more likely to choose the environment as a project topic.

Matthew Chambers was keen to acknowledge the work of local Landcarer, Tony O'Connor, in supporting the project.

"Tony came up with the idea for the Balcombe Creek Nature Trail project and then approached our school to be a part of it.

"We begin each year at his property looking at what he has done to attract wildlife. He's involved in every session. Tony really is the heart and soul of the project," Matthew said.

At the heart of this habitat project is a partnership between a Landcare group and a local school. It has produced a practical, positive way for students to take action on environmental issues and helped to involve the whole community in protecting their local creek.

"I enjoyed working at Balcombe Creek. I planted so many plants I got blisters! I would like to become a politician because I would like to change Australia to make it a better place by protecting the environment." Leah Reaper (9 years old).

"I really loved building different habitats for native animals. I learnt what different native animals need to survive and how to attract them by building homes and planting indigenous plants." Emma Groves (10 years old).

"I enjoyed Balcombe Creek because we get to work in the environment. I liked creating the frog habitat by digging a

frog pond and planting native plants." Cate Fillipone (9 years old).

"The one thing I most enjoyed about Balcombe Creek is how to live with nature. I also enjoyed learning about animals, like what they like to eat and where they like to live. I also enjoyed learning about when animals are active, like how nocturnal animals are active at night." Chris Coombs (10 years old).

"Balcombe Creek Nature Trail was awesome! We learnt how to make homes for Australian animals. Connecting with the wildlife is amazing. I'm making a frog habitat!" Molly Morgan (9 years old).

Joan Kirner Landcare Award Terry Hubbard



Terry Hubbard lives Landcare. Terry is the chair of the National Landcare Network and Landcare Victoria Inc. He served as president of the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network for 12 years, is a former long serving president and an active member of the Strath Creek Landcare Group and an inaugural member of the Friends of Yea Wetlands.

Terry's Landcare journey began in 1989 when he and his wife Janet purchased their property, 'The Three Sisters' in Flowerdale. Terry and Janet embarked on a long-term and ongoing restoration plan that has seen the once cleared, eroded and weed-infested property become a model of best practice sustainable farming.

Terry credits Janet with helping to develop the Strath Creek Landcare Group and supporting him in his many Landcare roles.

"I'm fortunate to have a very supportive wife. Janet has been the quiet achiever behind the



Fencing and revegetation work undertaken by the Strath Creek Landcare Group along the King Parrot Creek.

Strath Creek Landcare Group as its secretary for many years. She's great at getting things done and also very patient with the impact Landcare has on my time," Terry said.

Terry's Landcare ethic is built on three critical elements; recognising the threat of land clearing, pollution and global warming, the value of Landcare for social connectivity, and an understanding of the importance of community partnerships.

As a member of his local Strath Creek Landcare Group, Terry supported the development of partnerships between the Yea and District Community Bank and the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network, and was instrumental in sourcing funding to establish the position of Environmental Officer at the local Murrindindi Shire Council. As a result, the shire now has an entire environmental team that works closely with the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network on blackberry action programs, roadside vegetation management, farm planning workshops for landholders, and National Tree Day activities.

Following the 2009 Black Saturday fires, the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network delivered an effective fire relief program. Terry made sure the program was inclusive and community-driven. The program is now used as a model by other Landcare networks due to its success.

Terry has also been instrumental in coordinating weed control activities in his

local area, helping to establish the King Parrot Creek Blackberry Action Group and becoming a committee member of the Victorian Blackberry Action Taskforce.

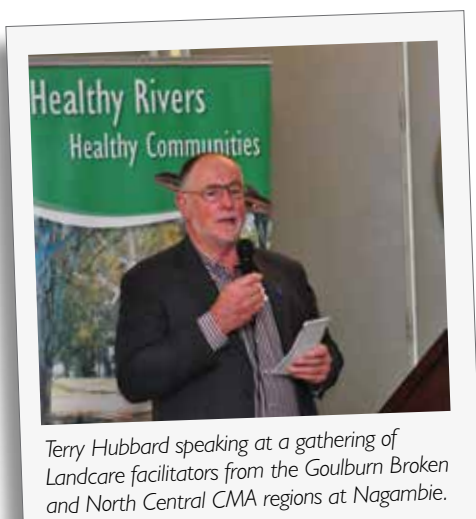
Terry puts a lot of value on the role of Landcare for increased social connectivity.

"Rural communities have a high rate of depression and suicide. We've certainly seen a lot of damaged people in this area since the 2009 fires. The closure of schools and other government services in rural areas has also caused a breakdown in important community bonds.

"Landcare provides a sense of purpose for people and a great opportunity for social interaction. Participating in a Landcare event is invigorating and it helps us to develop strong bonds with each other so we can be aware when someone is struggling. I think there are real mental health benefits to Landcare and they should be recognised at a government level," Terry said.

Terry believes that when you bring the community together there will be many desirable outcomes, not only for the environment, but also for the social life of the community. His passion for Landcare has been demonstrated at a local, regional, national and even international level; he inspires everyone he meets.

In 2016 Terry was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to conservation and the environment.



Terry Hubbard speaking at a gathering of Landcare facilitators from the Goulburn Broken and North Central CMA regions at Nagambie.

Dr Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award

Bret Ryan



Bret Ryan grew up in Colac and originally qualified as an aquatic scientist. He had a rewarding career in marine biology until a tree change called. A move to the small Otways town of Swan Marsh saw Bret instantly involved in the local community, including the Stoney Rises Landcare Group.

Bret now works as the Land Health Manager with the Corangamite CMA. He has 17 years experience as a professional scientist and project manager, having worked as a local government biodiversity officer, an environmental consultant and a Landcare facilitator.

Under Bret's management the Corangamite CMA Land Health Program has seen 204 farming entities adopting sustainable practice change across more than 75,000 hectares of land. In the area of soil acidity, 92 per cent of participants have indicated a change in management practice. The program's successes in soil health were acknowledged at the 2015 Asia Pacific Spatial Excellence Awards.

Bret attributes the success of the program to the use of local knowledge produced from local trial data. This means farmers

are able to closely relate to the soil types and farming systems under investigation.

Bret has demonstrated exceptional abilities in natural resource management, sustainable agriculture, project management, policy and planning, and government and community relationships. He works closely with a variety of different groups from federal agencies to industry bodies, Landcare groups and landholders.

"Helping farmers adopt better management practices is very satisfying work. The program is ultimately about land health, but really it is about people," Bret said.

Bret will use the Dr. Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award for a study tour of the Murray Darling Basin. He will look at the lessons learnt and innovations applied when trying to balance environmental,



Bret Ryan will use the Dr. Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award for a study tour of the Murray Darling Basin.

agricultural and social needs around water allocation and modernisation across the basin.

Bret aims to apply the knowledge and experience gained from the study tour to an innovative pilot project to modernise on-farm water capture and storage in dryland farming areas of the Corangamite region.

Bret believes changes in water management practice would help landholders in terms of water security for their farming businesses, in a changing climate, and provide benefits for waterways and water bodies.



Bret Ryan (holding the trophy) with members of the Corangamite CMA Land Health Program Steering Committee accepting the Environment and Sustainability Award at the 2015 Asia Pacific Spatial Excellence Awards.



Sandii Lewis will use her fellowship to undertake training in Natural Sequence Farming.

“Landcare group members are mainly ‘doers’. When they understand why they are being asked to do something and how to do it, they get on and get it done. Getting people working together rather than in isolation has also been really invigorating for groups.”

Victorian Farmers Federation/ Landcare Victoria Inc. Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship Award Sandii Lewis



Sandii Lewis works with the five Landcare groups in the Eastern Mallee Landcare Consortium. The groups she supports cover an area of approximately 500,000 hectares.

Sandii's first task when she took on the Landcare Facilitator role in 2014 was to find the areas where she could best help her Landcare groups. Sandii identified governance as a major issue so she developed a series of instructions and policies for each group and assisted them with implementation.

Sandii's highly developed skills as a Landcare facilitator helped her to identify individuals in each group and to assist them with the task of group rejuvenation by building their skills in grant writing, reporting and project management. This has led to all of the groups performing better and becoming more stable and confident when looking to the future.

Landcare in the Mallee has been challenged by an ageing population, declining volunteer numbers and farmers leaving the land, making it harder for groups to maintain enthusiasm and momentum.

Investors are also asking more of grant recipients when it comes to reporting and data collection, which has caused a further decline in membership as groups struggle with the increased level of administration and new compliance requirements.

Sandii has tackled these issues head on. She has changed the thinking around reporting and established standardised processes to streamline data collection.

“To my mind Landcare group members are mainly ‘doers’. When they understand why they are being asked to do something and how to do it, they get on and get it done. Getting people working together rather than in isolation has also been really invigorating for groups,” Sandii said.

Sandii has a proactive approach to environmental issues. She has assisted the Kooloonong-Natya Landcare Group with a project to tackle the invasive Hudson pear cacti, arranged for a recycling facility to collect used grain bags from farmers and ensured her groups are more successful when making grant applications by streamlining administration and compliance requirements.

Sandii is also the current president of Sustainable Living in the Mallee, a voluntary natural resource management group that works closely with local schools to facilitate studies in sustainability and environmental awareness, as well as engaging the urban community in sustainable living methods.

Sandii will use her fellowship to undertake training in Natural Sequence Farming (NSF). Climate change predictions for the Mallee are for warmer temperatures and less rainfall but increased risks of flooding, erosion and waterlogging.

Sandii believes that bringing the NSF model of managing water flows to the Mallee will provide farmers with a valuable tool for sustainable farm and environmental management.

Hugh Mitchell, award judge and son of the late Heather Mitchell, said Sandii's Landcare work in the Mallee showed a great spirit of purpose.

“Sandii is a great candidate. Her enthusiasm and approach would have delighted my mother.”

Landcare Network Award

Connecting Country



Connecting Country is a community-led landscape restoration organisation that operates as an informal Landcare network across the Mount Alexander region of central Victoria.

Established in 2009, Connecting Country has a holistic approach to enhancing and restoring the natural environment and a commitment to biodiversity conservation. This is achieved through Landcare support, community education, citizen science and on-ground works. The Connecting Country Landcare Facilitator works to link the efforts of the 31 Landcare and Friends groups in the region.

Since 2010 Connecting Country has developed more than 240 land management plans with landholders and Landcare groups, protected 4336 hectares of remnant vegetation, revegetated an additional 1557 hectares and undertaken pest plant and animal control across 6183 hectares.

The network has also run 187 education events with 4833 participants and implemented a long-term scientific monitoring program.

Connecting Country works to a biodiversity blueprint produced by representatives from the Landcare community and government agencies to document the current health of the local landscape, and to guide its activities. A detailed strategic plan developed for 2014 – 2024 directs work plans and priorities.

According to the network's Co-Director, Krista Patterson-Majoor, it's the dedicated staff, passionate local community and focus on landscape-scale restoration that has made the organisation so successful.

"When we started up, ten years ago, we researched the health of our landscapes and used this as a guide for what needed to be done. Our first project focused on protecting Yellow Box woodlands and phascogales. More recently, woodland birds have been a priority. As a result, there's been an enormous groundswell of enthusiasm for bird monitoring in the area."

Connecting Country has formed many successful and fruitful partnerships with agencies, organisations and volunteer groups operating in the region, including the North Central CMA, the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, Trust for Nature, Parks Victoria and Mount Alexander Shire Council. The network has signed a memorandum of understanding with the council recognising their shared objectives in natural resource management. The council's environment officer attends and contributes to the network's steering group meetings.

Recent major projects include connecting landscapes across the Mount Alexander region, a reptile and frog monitoring program with 48 monitoring sites, a habitat restoration project for woodland birds and a project to boost bulokes and diamond firetails in Muckleford and surrounding areas.

The network has an active Facebook page, website and blog with more than 560 subscribers. The website is a hub for local news and events and provides resources where community members can learn more about landscape restoration and connect with others.

Connecting Country has produced guides on reptiles and frogs, indigenous plants, rabbit control, woodland birds and plants for central Victoria. A regular nature news series in the district newspaper written by local naturalists also attracts a lot of interest.

The judges of the award were impressed by the network's clear and enduring approach to planning. They praised the ten-year strategic plan as a way of future-proofing the direction of the network and the valuable association they have made with local government.

“

Established in 2009, Connecting Country has a holistic approach to enhancing and restoring the natural environment and a commitment to biodiversity conservation.

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Alex Schipperen and Vanessa Wigenraad restoring habitat at a Connecting Country Community Planting Day at Elphinstone.

Austcover Young Landcare Leader Award Kathleen Brack

Austcover
on your side



Kathleen Brack is the Regional Landcare Program Officer for the West Gippsland CMA. After just three years in the role Kathleen has changed the way the Landcare story is being told in the region. She has created new messages and found innovative ways of engaging with her community.



Kathleen Brack on the beach at Venus Bay, Gippsland.

Keen to attract more young people to Landcare, Kathleen ran an Intrepid Landcare Retreat at Wilsons Promontory for 20 people aged from 18 to 35. The participants learnt about Landcare and talked, hiked and worked with the local friends group. Retreat graduates have gone on to form the Gippsland Intrepid Landcare Group.

Kathleen has demonstrated how social media can benefit Landcare. In just a year as administrator of the Landcare in Victoria Facebook page she has increased its followers by 35 per cent. A podcast she produces that tells the stories of Landcare in West Gippsland was selected as a new and noteworthy podcast by iTunes Australia.

With the aim of explaining the social and community benefits of Landcare, Kathleen recently conducted a social return on investment study on a Merriman Creek Landcare Group project. This study found that for every dollar spent on a Landcare project there is at least a \$3.41 return in social value.

Kathleen has also driven the implementation of a new iPad mapping system for the five Landcare networks in Gippsland, and has organised a huge number of workshops, training courses and field days.

In Kathleen's previous position as a project officer for the South Gippsland Landcare Network, she was a driving force in the creation of the South Gippsland Equine Landcare Group. Kathleen consulted with the community on the type of support horse owners needed and supported the people that came forward to form the group. The group has more than 500 followers on their Facebook page and is an important contact point and information source for horse owners in Gippsland.

Her work in South Gippsland included developing the *South Gippsland Landcare Network Koala Habitat Preservation, Enhancement and Restoration Plan 2012–2015*. Kathleen was involved in biolink planning and community engagement as part of the plan. She developed a schools program about koalas in the Strzelecki Ranges and delivered it to primary schools in Poowong, Toora, Foster, Fish Creek and Tarwin Valley, and two Leongatha kindergartens.

Kathleen also designed a citizen science website, where people from across Gippsland could record their koala sightings. More than 150 sightings were logged over a four-year period.

Kathleen grew up in rural New South Wales and studied both environmental and social science at RMIT.

"Working in Landcare is really the perfect fit for me as it has a focus on healthy environments as well as healthy communities," Kathleen said.

"I was very fortunate to get my first break after university working in Landcare in Gippsland. I love it. It's awesome to see great projects underway and to work alongside such an inspiring and passionate group of community volunteers. It's been a privilege to be able to tell their stories."

Kathleen believes Landcare will change in the future and it's up to the next generation to create the right space for that to happen.

"There are many opportunities to get involved. It's just a matter of finding the right fit for people," she said.

Kathleen's energy and enthusiasm are infectious. She is an impressive role model and a true young Landcare leader.



Kathleen Brack (left) with Woodside Landcare Group member Nicki Jennings checking the results of a direct seeding project.

Australian Government Excellence in Sustainable Farm Practices Award

Woody Yaloak Catchment Group



The Woody Yaloak Catchment Group has a long history of planning, implementing and measuring sustainable farm practices across its 120,000-hectare area. The group was formed in 1993 out of a need to promote deep rooted perennial pastures to prevent wind erosion experienced in the 1983 drought, and to combat salinity.

Since then landholders have been supported in establishing perennial pastures, treating saline land and adopting minimal or no-till cropping systems. Underpinning the pasture and crop work is a desire for greater understanding of the soil. Discount soil testing was made available to members and skills sessions run on how to interpret and use the results, which are available on a digital platform.

The group is committed to integrated catchment management and revegetation, remnant vegetation protection, weed, pest, salinity and erosion control and waterway enhancement.

Since 1993 the group has supported the planting of 960,000 trees, 694 kilometres of fencing, 4680 hours of erosion and rabbit harbour removal works, and 4970 hours of weed control. Every project has been spatially mapped and recorded, some with time-lapse images.

The group also has conducted two ten-year outcome audits that show improvements in farm productivity and landscape condition.

Landholders are supported to build skills and confidence in more sustainable and profitable practices through on-farm trialling, technical support, demonstrations, study tours and peer-to-peer learning.

Current initiatives include: limes and alternative fertiliser trials, ways of increasing soil carbon, cover cropping, precision agriculture and a women on farms program. All past and future activities conducted by the group are recorded on a geographic information system developed in partnership with Federation University and the Corangamite CMA.

The less measurable, but equally important, outcomes are an increase in the skills and confidence of landholders. The group has brought people together and created a strong sense of shared purpose and achievement.

Group project manager, Cam Nicholson, believes the key to the group's success and longevity is its operational model.

"We respond directly to what our members want. Every five years an independent facilitator comes in and we canvas the views of 100-150 members across the catchment. We find out what interests them and what they are passionate about and then go out and source the funds to make it happen.

"The group also charges a membership levy of \$50-\$200 depending on property size which helps with operational costs. People will only continue to pay if they feel they are getting value for money," Cam said.

The award judges were impressed by the leadership the group has shown at a catchment scale, and its long history and commitment to sustainable farming practices.

The judges noted that all improvements in native vegetation, biodiversity, riparian health, groundcover, perennial pastures, soil health including soil carbon and pest management have been made without loss to agricultural productivity.



Soil conditions are investigated at a women on farms workshop run by the Woody Yaloak Catchment Group.



A working bee organised by the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society in 1963.

“The Society has promoted indigenous plants, opposed the destruction of trees through inappropriate development, published newsletters, plant guide booklets and indigenous plant posters, and most recently a book on the Society’s work going back to 1959.”

Urban Landcare Award



Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society

The Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society is one of Victoria’s oldest environmental groups. The society has been fighting for the trees since the 1950s when residents of Blackburn, in Melbourne’s east, questioned the over-clearing of indigenous bushland for residential development.

Residents in Blackburn, then in the City of Nunawading (now the City of Whitehorse), believed that community action, political lobbying and perseverance was required to protect and enhance the environment. The first meeting of the Society in 1959 attracted 123 members.

The Society has promoted indigenous plants, opposed the destruction of trees through inappropriate development, published newsletters, plant guide booklets and indigenous plant posters, and most recently a book on the Society’s work going back to 1959.

The Society lobbied for the first Victorian government and council-sanctioned tree controls, that were introduced in the 1980s. These controls have now become overlays in the City of Whitehorse Planning Scheme for significant landscapes, environmental significance and vegetation protection. The Society also lobbied for the election of community councillors,

a conservation officer and tree education officer.

More recently the Society supported the establishment of Community Parkland Advisory Committees that are unique to the City of Whitehorse.

From 2012 to 2016 the Society battled alongside other community groups to save the Healesville Freeway Reserve in the Forest Hill and Vermont South areas as open space rather than residential development. The reserve contains important habitat and biolink values and shares borders with the Bellbird Dell Bushland Park. The fight was won and the proposed park will be the largest bushland park within the City of Whitehorse.

The current Chairman of the Society, David Berry, has been involved with the group for almost 30 years. David says as soon as one environmental issue is resolved in the area there’s another one to tackle.

“The constant need to monitor and engage with what’s happening in our local environment has refreshed and regenerated the Society over the years.

“Most recently we saw the removal of 500 trees due to level crossing removal works in Blackburn and Heatherdale. We advocated for large-scale offset planting

within Whitehorse and won, so that’s a boost for the Society and encourages us to keep going.”

David recalls a journalist criticising the Society in the past for putting trees before people.

“To my mind if there are no trees, there are no people. Our challenge for the future is that the core group of the Society is getting older. There are new, younger people moving into the area, but they don’t necessarily have the environmental memory of this special place. The work of educating new residents on tree preservation is constant.

“Whenever I see a native tree go down in a residential garden I make a mental note to put three back into our local park,” David said.

A recent satellite photograph showing Melbourne’s metropolitan area taken at more than 100 kilometres altitude shows the suburbs of Nunawading, Blackburn North, Blackburn South and Forest Hill as bright patches of green surrounded by grey.

The energy, tenacity and perseverance of the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society has paid off.

Around the State – News from the Regional

Glenelg Hopkins

The South West has had a cold, wet winter and spring, which has meant some excellent revegetation projects have been completed across the catchment. Many of these projects have been funded through the Victorian Landcare Grants program. The recent allocation of the 2017/18 grants is now seeing groups planning and undertaking their next round of activities.

A number of groups in the region have made good use of the 30 Years of Landcare Grants. The Lyne Camp Creek Land Management Group, Gazette Land Action Group, Friends of the Great West Walk, Culla Pigeon Ponds Land Management Group and Upper Mt Emu Creek Landcare Network have been in operation for most of the last 30 years. It was wonderful to see photographs of these groups' achievements and reconnect with old friends at the celebration events.

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

Mallee

Congratulations to the Mallee's 2017 Victorian Landcare Award winner, Sandii Lewis. Sandii has been a dynamo for Landcare in the eastern Mallee, re-invigorating a number of Landcare groups in the area.

Sandii's friendly, enthusiastic, can-do approach has won her much admiration in the community and we are looking forward to her study of Peter Andrews' Natural Sequence Farming.

The recognition of Indigenous culture is gaining momentum in the southern Mallee. The Birchip Landcare Group is developing a series of information boards and a permanent display of artefacts in Birchip. This display will link directly with proposed works highlighting Indigenous culture around Lake Tyrell and the surrounding wetlands and will help raise the awareness of tourists who visit the area.

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

North East

Congratulations to all the North East Landcare representatives who were finalists in the Victorian Landcare Awards. Particular congratulations to Jim de Hennin who was highly commended in the Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award.

The North East Community Natural Resource Management Plan has been released after community feedback.

This plan will provide the priorities for the CMA to support local community natural resource management groups.

A new Landcare Facilitator (supported by the Victorian Government's Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program) has been appointed to support the Benambra, Dinner Plain, Omeo Landcare Group and Swifts Creek Ensay Landcare Group until June 2019.

The CMA has called for expressions of interest from landholders, Landcare and other groups for the incentives and community grants.

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

East Gippsland

It's been a period of celebration for Landcare in East Gippsland with the recent Regional Landcare Awards held in Lakes Entrance leading up to the Victorian Landcare Awards in Melbourne in September. Congratulations to all of our nominees.

A soils workshop held in Bairnsdale in July gave participants an opportunity to learn about soil basics and to determine what type of soil they have. Students from Buchan and Newmerella Primary Schools enjoyed recent activities learning about their local rivers and planting seedlings.

Landcare groups have been active completing their funded projects and as well as gaining new funding for projects that involve partnerships with other groups.

*For further information contact
Carolyn Cameron on 5150 3582.*

Corangamite

The region celebrated 30 years of Landcare at Barwon Park in Winchelsea in July. Despite the cold weather more than 130 people explored the property and historic buildings. The event was a chance to thank all of the volunteers who have been involved in the local Landcare movement since 1986 and have made it into the success it is today.

Guest presenter Catherine Marriott shared her story and her passion for keeping rural Australia vibrant, successful and progressive. Twenty-four local Landcarers were acknowledged for their contributions to the community. A film outlining their achievements is available on the CMA website through the Faces of Landcare project.

Congratulations to the members of the Corangamite Landcare community who were acknowledged at the recent Victorian Landcare Awards.

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

North Central

Grant application fever has hit the region in recent months. The 2017/18 North Central Community Grants program received more than 100 applications from Landcare groups and networks.



From left, Tracey McRae, Alice Knight, Thomas Austin, Catherine Marriott, Elizabeth Austin and Karen O'Keefe celebrate 30 years of Landcare at Barwon Park, Winchelsea, in July.

Landcare Coordinators



More than 350 members of the Landcare community attended the Victorian Landcare Awards at Government House in September.

Our newly appointed Landcare Facilitator Kristy Scalora, based in Nyah, has been actively engaging with Landcare groups in the northern catchment to understand support needs, group priorities and promote future funding opportunities.

The region's annual Chicks in the Sticks event, held at Walkers Lake in the Avon Plains on September 10, was a great success. Local Landcare members hosted a lakeside walk and guest speakers discussed rural community mentoring, branding and marketing farm produce.

Congratulations to the region's Victorian Landcare Award nominees and winners.

For further information contact
Tess Grieves on 5440 1890.

Port Phillip and Western Port

Congratulations to Wandooon Estate Aboriginal Corporation, Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society and Penbank Campus – Woodleigh School for winning a 2017 Victorian Landcare Award. Friends of Lower Kororoit Creek were highly commended and Bass Coast Landcare Network's Environmental Detectives Team, Penny Roberts and Yarra Valley Equestrian Landcare Group were acknowledged with commendations.

Representatives from 43 Landcare and other groups, and seven Landcare networks, participated in six Catchment Action Round Tables to share their project plans. The process is aimed at strengthening relationships and facilitating collaboration in natural resource management projects across the region.

The CMA has started a Facebook page to encourage the sharing of Landcare activities and news across the region. Go to Facebook and search for PPWCMAlovesLandcare. Please like us!

For further information contact
Doug Evans on 8781 7920.

Wimmera

Congratulations to the Wimmera Landcarers who represented our region at the Victorian Landcare Awards. After winning their regional award categories earlier in the year, Kaniva District Landcare Group, Horsham Urban Landcare Group, the West Wimmera Women on Farms Gathering 2017, Jamie Saines and Jessica Kuhne were nominated for Victorian Landcare Awards. We are very proud of these deserving nominees.

The Wimmera Landcare community celebrated the 20th anniversary of the annual Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar at Horsham Town Hall in September, with special guests Rob Youl, Neil Murray and Costa Georgiadis. The event showcased some of the great achievements of Landcare in the region over this period.

For further information contact
Joel Boyd on 5382 1544.

West Gippsland

The region has experienced a fairly dry and frosty winter. All of our Landcare networks and groups have been busy coordinating tree planting days and other works projects.

We welcome new Landcare Facilitator, Marnie Ellis, to the Latrobe Catchment

Landcare Network. Marnie runs a mixed farming business at Glengarry West and has a great understanding of sustainable agriculture. Marnie will focus on groups at the western edge of the network area.

Groups and networks received a recent boost with the announcement of close to \$100,000 of CMA grants. These 25 small grants will fund a range of Landcare activities including bird monitoring training at Wonthaggi, a frog festival at Neerim South, a small landholder expo at Stratford, sweet pittosporum control at Hammans Bush and a student film festival at Yarram.

For further information contact
Kathleen Brack on 5613 5966.

Goulburn Broken

Congratulations to all the nominees and winners of the recent Victorian Landcare Awards. We are very proud of Terry Hubbard's many years of work for the advancement of Landcare and delighted to see his efforts acknowledged with the Joan Kirner Landcare Award.

Planning is underway for potential funding sources for Landcare projects in 2018 and beyond. Community groups are currently formulating their ideas for National Landcare Programme grants that involve large landscape scale projects.

Groups have also been working on 2017/18 Victorian Landcare Grants applications for projects that focus on biodiversity and volunteer capacity building.

For further information contact
Tony Kubeil on 5761 1619.

In brief

Competition for a Victorian Landcare Gateway homepage photograph

The Victorian Landcare Program at DELWP is running a competition for a great Landcare photograph to feature on the Victorian Landcare Gateway homepage. The photograph should showcase an aspect of community Landcare in Victoria, and ideally feature people. The winning submission will feature as the Gateway homepage header for 12 months, from early 2018.

Photographs will be credited to the photographer. DELWP reserves the right to use any photographs submitted for departmental communications purposes.

Photographs should be submitted in the following format:

- Landscape orientation, with an aspect of roughly 1:2. This means the width should be approximately double the height. For example, a photograph that is 2300 pixels wide will be around 1150 pixels high.
- High-resolution. Submit your largest, original file. There's no need to resize or edit your photograph.
- Keep the edges of the photograph clear. The photograph may need to be cropped when resized, so make sure people or objects are not too close to the edge.
- The focus of the photograph should be to the right of the frame as the left will be covered by text. If there are people in the photograph make sure they are at the right of the frame and that the left is clear of people.



The current Victorian Landcare Gateway homepage photograph by Sandy Scheltema. This image shows William Terry, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, and Carolyn Robb, President Friends of Bald Hill Reserve, walking in Bald Hill Reserve near Kyneton.

- Be aware that too much detail will make the header text, *Landcare brings people together*, harder to read.
- Make sure the photograph isn't too dark, or too light.
- Obtain the permission of anyone who is recognisable in the photograph. Photograph consent forms are available by emailing us (see below).

The winner will receive a \$250 voucher from Officeworks or Readings Books.

For further information, to submit your entries or for photograph consent forms email landcare@delwp.vic.gov.au

Include your name, contact details and a brief description of the photograph including where it was taken and who is in the photograph. The competition closes 31 January 2018.

Next issue

The next issue of the magazine, to be published in Summer 2018, will feature stories about water. This issue is already fully subscribed. The Winter 2018 issue will feature stories about Landcare and research. If your group has a story to tell about research – from small scale local projects to landscape scale research, we would like to hear from you.

Our readers are keen to learn about the successes of different projects, as well as what hasn't worked, and the insights and reflections of your group or network along the way. Please contact the editor with your story ideas.

Contributions to the Landcare and research issue should be sent to the editor by Thursday 29 March 2018.

Carrie Tiffany, editor
Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management Magazine

Email: editorviclandcare@gmail.com

The Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management magazine is published by the Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and distributed in partnership with Landcare Victoria Incorporated 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 Landcare Victoria Incorporated

Phone: 9207 5527 Fax: 9207 5500 Email: info@lvi.org.au

Read the magazine online

To access the Victorian Landcare & Catchment Management magazine online (as web pages or pdfs) go to www.landcarevic.org.au/landcare-magazine/

Back issues of the magazine can be accessed online as pdfs.



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