

VICTORIAN

LANDCARE

Spring 2019 Issue 76

& CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT



VICTORIAN LANDCARE AWARDS FEATURE

Celebrating Victoria's Landcarers

Woka Walla Crew wins Indigenous
Land Management Award

Bass Coast wins Landcare Network Award



Victorian
Landcare
Program



Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management

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Cover photograph

From left, Woka Walla Land Management Crew members Graham Weston, Ryan Gilbert, Sharon Watkins and Ashton Cashion take a break from cultural burning at Upotipotpon in north east Victoria to celebrate winning the Indigenous Land Management Award at the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards. Photograph by Karen Forsyth.



From the Minister

It was a great honour for me to attend the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards ceremony at Government House on 30 August and to meet many of our outstanding Landcarers from across the state.

The awards were hosted by the Governor, Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AC, and were an opportunity to celebrate the valuable contributions of individuals, Landcare and community groups, schools and organisations – all working to protect and enhance the natural environment, deliver sustainable farming practices, or improve natural resource management.

Groups and individuals were recognised at the awards for projects that included revegetation, nest box installation, weed control, soil improvement and stabilisation works, fox and rabbit control, improving biodiversity corridors, events and education.

Environmental volunteers are some of the most inspiring and important people in our communities. This year we introduced a new award for an environmental volunteer group or individual working on public or private land who has made an outstanding contribution to protect, enhance or restore Victoria's environment through fostering increased participation and awareness.

The Environmental Volunteer Award was won by the Jallukar Landcare Group for its native grasslands project, which has seen a small community in the Wimmera band together to save areas of native grassland by growing indigenous seed in the group's nursery and planting the grasses out across the landscape. There is a deep commitment to the value of local flora and fauna within the group, which is dynamic, social and increasing in membership.

You will get a sense of the dedication, resilience, commitment and creativity of all of the award winners as you read the stories in this issue of the magazine.

Over the past four years, the Victorian Government has provided more than \$149 million to protect Victoria's biodiversity, supporting native and threatened species through a range of on-ground initiatives and funding.

The funding focuses on protecting and managing a range of native plants and animals, threatened species and habitats through collaborative planning, increased engagement and alignment of natural resources, scientific, educational and community sectors.

Landcare contributes to the vision and goals outlined within Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037; the Victorian Government's 20-year strategy to stop the decline of our native plants and animals and ensure the environment is healthy, valued and cared for.

Congratulations to all award nominees. The winners of the nine national award categories will now go on to represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards Conference and I wish them well.

Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

Minister for Solar Homes



From left, the late Heather Mitchell's son, Hugh Mitchell with Minister D'Ambrosio, Belinda Brennan, the winner of the VFF/Landcare Victoria Inc. Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship and Governor Dessau.

“

Groups and individuals were recognised at the awards for projects that included revegetation, nest box installation, weed control, soil improvement and stabilisation works, fox and rabbit control, improving biodiversity corridors, events and education.

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Victoria's Landcarers celebrated

Inspiring 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 30 August 2019.

More than 350 people travelled from all parts of the state to attend the awards ceremony held in the grand ballroom. The guests mingled before the awards and viewed the display of historic Hanslow Cups that were presented to leading Victorian farmers for their efforts in soil conservation from 1940 until 1990.

Governor Dessau opened the proceedings by acknowledging the first peoples of Australia who have cared for the land and water for millennia. She said she was a proud Patron-in-Chief of Landcare in Victoria.

"What a matter of joy and pride it is for me to see how swiftly Landcare has grown throughout Victoria, Australia and to more than 20 other countries around the world," Governor Dessau said.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and Minister for Solar Homes Lily D'Ambrosio congratulated all of the award nominees and noted that the biennial awards ceremony launched the start of National Landcare Week.

"With close to 600 Landcare groups and 500 Friends of Groups in Victoria, I am proud to support and celebrate the efforts of those who are on the frontline working to protect our land, water and wildlife.

"We can all do our bit to help care for and maintain our unique and biodiverse landscapes, and the Victorian Government is taking action to deliver on its Biodiversity

2037 strategy to improve our natural environment," Minister D'Ambrosio said.

Governor Dessau and Minister D'Ambrosio then presented the awards to the winners of the 15 awards categories, six Victorian-only categories and nine national categories.

The awards recognise the groups, networks and individuals in the Landcare community who make significant contributions to caring for the environment, sustainable farming practices and natural resource management.

More than 70 nominations for the awards were received. A panel of judges from community, government and sponsor representatives participated in the judging process. Fern Hames from DELWPs Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research was one of the judges in the Australian Government Partnerships for Landcare Award category.

"It was an absolute delight to be invited to judge the Landcare awards again. I am completely inspired by the fabulous work being done by so many terrific people and organisations," Fern said.

After the awards ceremony the guests had an opportunity to enjoy morning tea and tour the ballroom and grand apartments of Government House.

The nine national category award winners will now go on to represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



From left, Kathleen Brack from the West Gippsland CMA, Katharine Abbott from Austcover, Minister D'Ambrosio and Governor Dessau with Darcy Minahan, Jarryd Minahan and Sebastian Emanuel from Gippsland Intrepid Landcare accept the Austcover Young Landcare Leadership Award.



From left, Astrid Le Noury, Abbey Smith, Luke Robertson and Thorsten Perch-Neilsen from Newham Primary School with the Woolworths Junior Landcare Team Award.



From top left, Woka Walla Crew members Wade Morgan, Ashton Cashion and Ryan Gilbert with, from bottom left, Graham Weston, Monica Morgan (CEO of Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation) and Shanon Watkins display their Indigenous Land Management Award.



Members of the Jallukar Landcare Group accept the Environmental Volunteer Award. From left, Annette May, Anthea Nicholls, Minister D'Ambrosio, Governor Dessau, Ange Turrell, Jacquie Ridler and Terry May.



The awards were a great opportunity for the more than 350 members of the Victorian Landcare community to catch up and share their stories.

Australian Community Media Landcare Community Group Award

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Malmsbury District Landcare Group

The Malmsbury District Landcare Group (MDLG) covers land in the Hepburn, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander Shires and is an active member of the Upper Campaspe Landcare Network. The group has been operating since 1996 with a focus on gorse control, revegetation, and protecting local flora and fauna.

Two of the group's current projects are based within the Malmsbury township – Channel Reserve and the larger Malmsbury Common, both of which drain into the Coliban River. The Coliban River is also the focus of a gorse control and revegetation project near Lauriston, and a major biodiversity project on the river's main tributary in Kangaroo Creek valley.

MDLG has established more than 26,000 indigenous trees and shrubs on members' properties since 2009, with additional plants going into town-based projects including the Friends of Malmsbury Botanic Gardens arboretum and local primary schools.

Back in 2002 MDLG contributed to local shire biodiversity plans and lobbied for works to be done on the Malmsbury Common. Members prepared the first plan for the future of the site in 2008 and their early successes increased community interest leading to the preparation and adoption of a site master plan in conjunction with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council (MRSC) in 2018.

Collaboration has been key to MDLG's operations, working in partnership alongside MRSC, North Central CMA, DELWP and Coliban Water. In 2017 MDLG became a key stakeholder in the Healthy Coliban Catchment project, partnering with North Central CMA and Coliban Water to undertake riparian protection on members' and local properties.

According to Tess Grieves, Regional Landcare Coordinator, North Central CMA, "MDLG has a reputation in the community for being reliable, compassionate and resolute and is willing to be the public face of willow removal – a highly contentious issue in the district."

MDLG public meetings cover local flora, fauna, fungi, geology and Aboriginal history. Local wildflower walks are popular along with field days, platypus education and greater glider spotlighting. Events are often

run in partnership with the Malmsbury Historical Society and the Friends of the Malmsbury Gardens and Environs.

The group is proud of its work with the local primary school. Members run a Waterwatch program that engages 20 students annually in eight monitoring days and provides plants for the students to plant out each year.

MDLG President John Walter believes securing funding for projects that will have lasting value is the key to the group's future.

"The group is a great example of a small community working together to

achieve results that are making a genuine difference. We have decades of runs on the board. Weeds and waterways have been our priorities, along with a real commitment to community education.

The strong membership base has also shown that it is possible to achieve renewal at the committee level.

"The resilience and commitment from our members are an asset to the region," John said.

Malmsbury District Landcare Group will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



A MDLG planting event at the property of Fred and Alison Baynes near Malmsbury in 2018.



A joint MDLG and Glenlyon Landcare wildflower walk near Irishtown attracted more than 50 participants.

Austcover Young Landcare Leadership Award

Gippsland Intrepid Landcare

Gippsland Intrepid Landcare has only been underway for two years but is already making a significant impact on the local environment through the efforts of an enthusiastic and dedicated group of young people.

The group was established in July 2017, after a Gippsland Intrepid Leadership Retreat codesigned by Intrepid Landcare Inc. and the West Gippsland CMA, that was held at Wilsons Promontory in May 2017. The retreat inspired and connected a small group of young people aged between 18 and 35 from Gippsland and wider Victoria. More than 70 per cent of the retreat participants expressed a desire to continue their involvement in Landcare.

Gippsland Intrepid Landcare has since attracted more than 300 young volunteers to 10 events. The group has planted 10,000 trees over two years on a property in the Bass Coast hills of Woolamai. A plant and dance event with camping and bands kicked off one of the plantings for this major revegetation project.

A willow management mapping project required kayaking along an inaccessible part of the Thomson River. The group has also undertaken coastal weed control at Sandy Point, removed more than 30 kilograms of marine debris off a Phillip Island beach, and mountain biked in the Colquhoun Regional Park while mapping noxious weeds. An environmental film night and photographic competition to inform and inspire young people to take environmental action was also popular.



Gippsland Intrepid Landcare members kayaked along an inaccessible part of the Thomson River to map willows for future management.

The group has 10 committee members who meet once a month to plan activities by teleconferencing. According to the group's chair, Jarryd Minahan, the committee aims to create events that are impactful and fun.

"Our members want to support environmental initiatives that are relevant and interesting to them. They also want to get outside, have fun and be adventurous. We support existing Landcare structures – operating like a Landcare pop-up. We can add value to current projects, work alongside the legends and learn from their experience," Jarryd said.

The group has already worked with more than 20 local organisations including Landcare groups and networks. They value working with Indigenous land managers and have included presentations from local Indigenous leaders at most of their events. They have nearly 1400 followers on Facebook and use Instagram and other social media outlets to promote their activities and communicate with each other.

Jarryd believes the group has an important social function for its young members.

"We create a space for young people to connect with one another. Our events always contain bonding time, usually around a campfire. We make the time to chat and form friendships. This gives the group a strong following, which means we are able to give a lot of energy and commitment to our environmental work."

Few of the group's members had experience with Landcare prior to joining. But a determination to listen to young people and design activities that are challenging, fun and meaningful, is proving to be a great attraction.

Gippsland Intrepid Landcare will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



Young volunteers preparing to revegetate steep country at a plant and dance event at Cape Woolamai where 3000 native trees were established.

Indigenous Land Management Award

Woka Walla Land Management Crew

The Woka Walla Land Management Crew is an Aboriginal business owned by the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (YYNAC) – a Registered Aboriginal Party.

Woka Walla has been operating for seven years across Yorta Yorta Country and more broadly in northern Victoria delivering land management works on public and private land. Woka Walla's works include revegetation, fencing to protect remnant vegetation, pest plant and animal control, seed collection, flora and fauna surveys, cultural heritage identification and protection, and cultural burning.

The five crew members of Woka Walla have an unbroken link to the land through their families and have responsibility for Caring for Country, which connects them to their ancestors, and provides a career path for the future. The crew have all completed Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management and through their work are bridging the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous land managers.

Woka Walla is involved in a significant project to build the resilience of the Barmah Forest. The crew has worked on pest plant and animal control doing ecological surveys and leaf litter

assessments for the University of Western Sydney. They have also been contracted to help deliver a sand ridge woodland restoration project, a linking landscapes and communities project, and a project to manage threats to nature reserves in the Longwood Plains.

Woka Walla Team Leader Graham Weston has been involved for seven years.

"I was working for a landscape gardening business. My boss took up a job at YYNAC and suggested I apply for the crew. I didn't really know what I was doing back then and I didn't have any skills or tickets, but I've always loved the bush and the river. I grew up fishing and camping. I think I was three the first time I went out camping with my family.

"I love everything about my job now. The training can be tough, but we work together to get through it as a team. We get to be on Country and near the river and do work that means something. I really recommend it as a career for young people," Graham said.



Woka Walla's Ashton Cashion (left) and Shanon Watkins (right) surveying birds at Balmattum Nature Conservation Reserve with Dan Pendavinghe from DELWP.

Woka Walla practice Traditional ecological knowledge in every aspect of their work by identifying plants and bird species, undertaking controlled patch burning, identifying and cooking bush tucker, planting sweet quandong for future cultural harvest, and recording cultural heritage artefacts and significant sites.

The crew attended the National Indigenous Fire Workshop at Barmah National Park in June 2019 where time in the field was invaluable for learning and practising cultural burning techniques in a modern context. They have also completed firefighter training with DELWP, which qualifies them to conduct burns on public land.

Woka Walla has developed many successful partnerships working alongside local Landcare groups and networks, Goulburn Broken CMA, Parks Victoria, Trust for Nature, DELWP, NSW Parks and Wildlife Service, Murray Local Land Services, Moira Shire Council, City of Greater Shepparton, CFA and local farmers.

Woka Walla is a great example of Traditional Owners observing spiritual connection to Country, creating employment and providing a path for future generations.

The Woka Walla Land Management Crew will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



Woka Walla crew members undertaking fuel reduction burning at Gobur Reserve during winter 2018.

Victorian Wader Study Group

When members of the Victorian Wader Study Group (VWSG) go out to conduct comprehensive studies of waders and terns throughout Victoria they face myriad logistical challenges. The group of 140 volunteers formed in 1975 and conducts 40 to 50 field excursions each year under the direction of recognised wader specialist Dr Clive Minton.

Each excursion requires planning around coastal tides, changeable weather, the varying migration patterns of the birds they study, the safety and welfare of birds and volunteers, boat transport, and the maintenance of special equipment subject to rust and corrosion.

Migrant and resident waders are captured by cannon-netting. VWSG volunteers go through extensive training to obtain the technical skills needed to safely capture, monitor and release each bird.

The group's current chair, Roger Standen, attended his first VWSG excursion at the Western Treatment Plant at Werribee in 1995.

"I was living north of the divide and found identifying waders pretty difficult. I thought actually seeing one in the hand might help.

We only caught a few golden plovers but the knowledge in the group and their absolute commitment to understanding and protecting the birds and their habitat was really compelling. I've been involved ever since," Roger said.

Roger says the group has banded more than 260,000 birds.

"We are in a unique position here in Australia to study birds that migrate to the Arctic Circle to breed. They land on our shores in the summer so we can monitor them and collect data about their breeding success and survival that can't be done anywhere else in the world."

VWSG research involves population monitoring (by counting and catching), mapping migration routes, biometrics of species and subpopulations, weight changes

due to migration, primary moult duration and mode, survival rates, reproductive rates, behavioural differences between adult and immature birds, and determining the age when species first breed.

Their records provide critical data for conservation programs and help to build a case for the protection of wader habitat both in Australia and internationally. VWSG data has provided the foundation for hundreds of scientific papers and 40 editions of the group's annual bulletin.

As well as the delight of handling birds such as red-necked stints, curlew sandpipers, red-necked avocets, double-banded plovers, bar-tailed godwits and pied oystercatchers, the volunteers spend thousands of hours each year maintaining, loading and unloading equipment and travelling to often remote and rugged capture sites.

“

VWSG volunteers go through extensive training to obtain the technical skills needed to safely capture, monitor and release each bird.

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A pied oystercatcher having a leg flag applied at Rhyll on Phillip Island in 2013. This bird was recorded again in 2014 and 2016.



A mixed flock of curlew sandpipers and red-necked stints being captured at Western Port for the application of geolocators to track the birds to and from their breeding grounds in the Arctic Circle.

The group has a long history of partnership with other programs and agencies including Coastcare, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, DELWP, Phillip Island Nature Parks, Birdlife Australia and many private landholders. VWSG is committed to talks and events that improve community knowledge and understanding of wader conservation. They reach out to young people, especially university students, and retirees, as potential volunteers.

VWSG volunteers demonstrate citizen science at its best. They have devoted decades to collecting vital data that contributes to international efforts to conserve migratory waders.

The Victorian Wader Study Group will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



From left, Clive Minton and Roger Standen applying leg flags to red-necked stints at the Werribee treatment plant in 2013.

“

Their records provide critical data for conservation programs and help to build a case for the protection of wader habitat both in Australia and internationally.

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Australian Government Partnerships for Landcare Award



Australian Landcare International

Australian Landcare International (ALI) was formed in 2008 by several experienced Victorian Landcarers keen to catalyse and support overseas natural resource management projects.

The community group has around 70 members. It seeks to work in partnership with other organisations to promote Landcare principles and to provide opportunities for Australian Landcarers to work overseas on short and medium-term projects.

Partner organisations have included the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, The Crawford Fund, Secretariat for International Landcare, Bank Australia, the Australian Agroforestry Foundation, Landcare Victoria Inc., the Japan-Australia Foundation, CSIRO and the Port Phillip EcoCentre, among many others.

ALI operates a fund that has supported more than 50 small Landcare projects in 19 countries. It has also helped to run training programs in Tonga, Fiji, Uganda, New Zealand, Malawi, Zambia, Jamaica, and St Kitts and Nevis. Many of these projects are run in collaboration with Australian Landcare groups and networks.

Deputy Chair Rob Youl is one of ALI's founding members. According to Rob the group has achieved a great deal and provided its members with a lot of satisfaction.

"Back in 2008 we recognised that Landcare had spread to 15–20 countries but there were opportunities for it to go much further.



A Landcare master class in Malawi discussing composting and soils.

ALI is a small organisation, but we are flexible and courageous – operating well outside our home base. Our resources are modest, so partners are essential for us to make progress," Rob said.

Rob sees ALI members as Landcare diplomats.

"We are not targeting specific natural resource issues in other countries, but trying to distill and adapt the Australian Landcare experience to overseas situations so that people can help themselves."

ALI's projects have included promoting regional soil and water conservation; assisting villages of smallholders facing soil, water and biodiversity challenges who are looking for extra income; promoting

agroforestry and wildlife corridors; helping to find ways of sequestering carbon; supporting junior Landcare activities; and helping communities prepare for and recover from natural disasters.

Examples of ALI's commitment to training include trips to Zambia in 2016 and Uganda in 2018 to assist in running courses on broadening smallholder enterprises through better logistics, new crops and marketing, and major project development. ALI found experienced Landcare specialists from Victoria and Western Australia who volunteered their time to go to Africa and raised funds to cover their expenses.

The challenges for ALI members are many – they are often working in remote areas with limited technology. Many members fund their own travel and continue to fundraise to support the overseas projects once they return home. A partnership with Bank Australia is very valuable as it helps with the complexity of sending money overseas.

ALI organised the first international Landcare conference outside of Australia, held in Nagoya, Japan, in 2017. The group also hosts international Landcare visitors to Australia and provides links to local groups and projects. For an organisation staffed entirely by volunteers ALI has made an impressive mark on Landcare around the globe.

Australian Landcare International will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



Clinton Muller from ALI (second from right) meets with the Ikamiro Community Landcare Group in Kabale, Uganda.

Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award



John Pye

John Pye has been contributing to Landcare and the Wimmera community for more than 35 years.

John is an educator. He was a science teacher and later head of science at Stawell Secondary College from the early 1980s through to his retirement in 2012. John is a leader in science and environmental education and has had an enormous positive impact on the young people of the region.

In 2004 John was one of the founding members of the Stawell Urban Landcare Group and he has been one of the stalwarts behind the very successful Project Platypus Landcare Network, which supports 11 Landcare groups across the Upper Wimmera Catchment. Project Platypus was established in 1994 to tackle large conservation issues that continue to threaten both the natural environment and social fabric of the region's communities.

John has also been very active in the local community outside of Landcare as an active member of the Stawell CFA, serving from 1990 to 2014, including as Captain for four years. He was awarded a National Emergency Medal for his involvement in the 2009 Victorian bushfires and was the Acting Divisional Commander during the 2014 Grampians/Black Range fires.

Retirement certainly hasn't slowed him down. In the last two years John's volunteer commitment to Project Platypus has been inspirational. Recent changes to funding left the network without a manager and caused a crisis of staff and volunteer morale. In 2017 John stepped in – volunteering as project manager for the group – averaging 50 hours a week and contributing around \$100,000 of in-kind labour.

John was determined to secure a sustainable financial position for the network, support the staff and the board, improve stakeholder relationships and reinvigorate communications.

Due to his tireless activity and dedication, a salaried project manager is now in place and new partnerships with the Geoff and Helen Handbury Foundation and the Ace Radio Foundation will ensure Project Platypus will continue to deliver on-ground Landcare outcomes into the future.



John Pye serves hot chocolate to students during a Project Platypus Landcare Network tree planting adventure in 2018.

John also maintained and enhanced productive partnerships with Northern Grampians Shire Council, Ararat City Council, Parks Victoria, Glenelg Hopkins and Wimmera CMAs, Central Victorian Biolinks, Australian Farmers Foundation, Trust for Nature, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, Grampians Community Health, many businesses and hundreds of volunteers. John was instrumental in the development of a new strategic plan for the network.

John said it is unthinkable that Project Platypus could fold.

"The project has achieved so much – 1.1 million trees planted, more than 20,000 hectares treated for invasive plants and animals, and 1200 hectares of remnant vegetation protected.

"In the 2017 planting season we worked with schools, Landcare groups, farmers and nature lovers to prepare sites, get plants in the ground and protect them

despite tough, dry conditions. More than 300 volunteers were involved including participants from the Local Learning and Employment Network – young people disengaged from full-time education or employment.

"Partnering with Project Platypus gave these young people the opportunity to actively give back to their community through volunteering efforts. They learned that they were not only planting trees, but they were also planting insects, possums, sugar gliders and other natural wildlife. That's a project worth fighting for," John said.

John's commitment to Project Platypus helped prevent its demise and has placed the organisation in a secure position to keep delivering Landcare benefits into the future.

John Pye will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



John Pye (left) assists ecologist Josh Griffiths with platypus monitoring in McKenzie Creek in 2018.

Australian Government Innovation in Agriculture Land Management Award



Cundare Duverney Landcare Group

Established in 1994, the Cundare Duverney Landcare Group (CDLG) is located in the high rainfall zone of the western district of Victoria, within the catchments of Lake Corangamite and Lake Gnarpurt.

The group has 25 member properties – mainly family-run mixed cropping, fat lamb and wool enterprises. The group has a history of revegetation, weed control and waterway protection projects. With some younger active members, sustainable farming practices have come to the fore.

The group is part of the Corangamite Lakes Landcare Network (CLL) and has participated in CLL projects on soil characterisation and predictive soil modelling with the aim of better understanding local soils and soil constraints.

Continuous cropping is increasing in the area and CSIRO research shows that even under zero tillage systems soil carbon is declining in continuous cropping systems. This is a concern for soil health. There is also the question of what to do with high loads of cereal stubble. Stubble is generally burnt across much of the district, a practice that produces greenhouse gases.

CDLG members were keen to address these issues to prevent soil carbon and soil condition decline. Research by Clive Kirkby from CSIRO demonstrates that to increase

soil carbon levels the stubble must be incorporated into the soil, and, to ensure the stubble decomposes, key nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorous, sulfur and potassium) must be adequate in the soil or added to build the soil microbial population in sufficient levels to consume the tonnage of stubble present.

The stubble and additional nutrients need to be incorporated soon after harvest to ensure sufficient time for decomposition while temperatures are warm and when there is a better chance of some summer rainfall to stimulate soil microbial activity. Microbial action converts the organic matter to a more stable form of soil carbon, which increases the plant-available water holding capacity of the soil.

In 2017 CDLG obtained a grant from Landcare Australia Ltd to trial the practice at two sites. The project has been extended this year through a National Landcare Program Smart Farms Small Grants Round 1 grant and now includes 14 properties across the CLL area with sites covering more than 100 hectares.

According to CDLG President Justin Alexander the results are showing no productivity decline in comparison to the burnt areas and improvements in soil health and soil structure.

"Stubble incorporation using speed discs had been tried in the past by a number of

local farmers, with mixed results at best. The heavy clay soils and cold wet winters resulted in poor stubble decomposition leading to blockage of air seeders at sowing and increased slugs, snails and disease in the subsequent crop. Incorporation tended to happen later in autumn as soil temperatures dropped and microbial activity declined.

"When nutrients (principally nitrogen) were applied at sowing, or later at mid-season, the microbes used it before the crop, which robbed the crop and lead to yield loss. These issues became barriers to adoption and caused many farmers to abandon the practice and revert to stubble burning.

"By using speed discs and adding extra nutrients we've overcome these problems and there's been a strong uptake of the new techniques," Justin said.

The group has shared its research with field walks and discussions, newsletters and an article in the Spring 2018 Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management magazine.

A further research project to improve crop nitrogen use efficiency and reduce nitrogen losses into waterways and the RAMSAR listed Lake Corangamite is also planned.

Cundare Duverney Landcare Group will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



A Cundare Duverney Landcare Group field walk to assess stubble incorporation after sowing in 2017.



Fraser Pogue in a cover crop on his property at Ardmona.

Fraser is motivated by a strong desire to learn as much as he can about soil biology and the natural systems at work on his land.

Australian Government Landcare Farming Award



Fraser Pogue

Irrigated cropping farmer Fraser Pogue demonstrates excellence and leadership in sustainable farm practices on his 400-hectare property at Ardmona, near Shepparton. Fraser has been at the forefront of regenerative and innovative cropping practices as an early adopter of minimum tillage, multispecies cover cropping, sub-surface drip irrigation, little-to-no insecticide or fungicide use, and biological liquid fertilisers.

Fraser is motivated by a strong desire to learn as much as he can about soil biology and the natural systems at work on his land.

"I'm always keen to try something new. I'm looking at ways of producing healthy and productive landscapes from soils diminished by flood irrigation and continual cropping. I've recently reintroduced cattle on to the property to help manage high stubble loads," Fraser said.

Fraser's farming system involves growing irrigated corn, wheat and legume-cereal mixes in rotation with multispecies cover

crops and minimum tillage to maintain groundcover all year. This strategy also helps increase the diversity of plants and soil biology on and below his paddocks.

He is passionate about understanding the processes of soil microbes and how he can maintain an environment that helps these vital organisms do their jobs, namely cycling nutrients so the plants can access what is required for optimal growth.

Fraser continually investigates and trials different farming techniques on the property, all with the intention of increasing biomass and species diversity to limit disturbance and to maintain living roots and soil cover at all times. He believes in pulling apart what does and doesn't work and developing his own systems.

There have been some challenges along the way. The move to stubble retention has produced large crop residue loads he has been learning to manage. Dealing with waterlogging and seasonal variations also requires looking closely at which plants will survive these conditions.

Fraser credits a holistic management course in 2016 for helping him to take the emotion out of his decision making and be more flexible.

"It comes down to doing what's best for you, your soils and your farming future," Fraser said.

Fraser is generous with his time and knowledge by hosting field days, workshops and open days at his property. He is also involved with the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network, the Victorian No-Till Farmers Association and the Goulburn Broken CMA.

Fraser features in Damon Gameau's recently released feature documentary 2040, which focuses on solutions to climate change. Fraser talks about the importance of soil health in the documentary and explains how his cover crops are working to pump carbon into the soil.

Fraser Pogue will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



Newham Primary School students talk to students from Heskett Primary School on bug blitz day.

Woolworths Junior Landcare Team Award



Newham Primary School

This small school sits in the shadow of Hanging Rock, near Woodend. With just 140 students and eight staff, the school is achieving great results with its environmental and sustainability programs.

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A recent project has been the design and construction of a wetland to provide an alternative breeding ground for frogs.

”

Russel Dyer is a science teacher at the school. He believes that a partnership with the Newham and District Landcare Group that began in 2006, and a commitment to student-led projects, have been critical to the school's success.

“The major environmental issues in our area are habitat loss and fragmentation, weeds, and water quality. Our students have worked with the Landcare group collecting monthly Waterwatch data for more than 12 years. Each new cohort of students has quickly become skilled at the practical tasks of monitoring and recording data. They regularly report to the school community at assemblies and through Landcare group newsletters on water quality issues,” Russel said.

In 2018, the school became a 5-star Resource Smart School – recognition

that it has adopted very high standards of sustainable practices. Sustainability projects are led by an enthusiastic group of year six students who apply to take on environmental roles. The students drive the school's revegetation, propagation, waste reduction, energy use reduction, and water monitoring projects.

The school's western boundary is a tributary of the Deep Creek which students have planted with indigenous vegetation creating a significant nature corridor for local wildlife that connects with the Cobaw Biolink.

The students decide on the projects they will undertake based on the specific environmental needs of the area and their own passions and interests. A biodiversity-auditing tool is used to set biodiversity goals and measure progress of on-ground activities.



The whole of the Newham Primary School community gathered to hear about the benefits of providing habitat and increasing biodiversity on frog bog day.

Environmental science is integrated into the classroom curriculum and also practical sessions where students receive specialist training in seed propagation, revegetation, environmental monitoring using species tallies and transects, collecting and identifying scats and tracks, and composting and worm farming in the school's kitchen garden.

A recent project has been the design and construction of a wetland to provide an alternative breeding ground for frogs. Funded by Newham and District Landcare Group, the frog bog is maintained by

students who were delighted to discover that 10 southern brown tree frogs now call the wetland their home.

Newham Primary School is a hub of local environmental activity in the area. It reaches out to the wider community and to other schools with its programs.

According to Russel one of the challenges to the program is the transient nature of school communities with a new batch of students, parents and sometimes staff starting and leaving each year.

"To combat this we have training days towards the end of the year where the senior students teach the incoming students what they know. This means all our projects can continue without delay or knowledge being lost," Russel said.

Newham Primary School demonstrates an outstanding commitment to sustainability and to inspiring the environmental leaders of the future.

Newham Primary School will represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.



Newham and District Landcare Group members share their propagation skills with students from Newham Primary School.

"I definitely like how we're making a difference to the waterways and it's fun to get your hands dirty. It's also important so that children learn about helping the earth and they can then teach others when they are older."

Astrid Le Noury, year six.

"We get to plant trees, check the creek and do experiments. It's important to protect the animals and the environment."

Luke Robertson, year six.

Environmental Volunteer Award

Jallukar Landcare Group

Jallukar Landcare Group's area covers the Mt William catchment in the Wimmera. The group is one of the 11 member groups under the umbrella of Project Platypus Upper Wimmera Landcare Network.

Revegetation has been a priority for the group with a major project to plant corridors of trees that link the Grampians to the Pyrenees. The group has also tackled rabbit baiting, weed control, and advocacy for their local landscape.

Their most inspiring recent project is a commitment to saving the area's native grasslands. In 2016 a meeting with the Wildlife Art Museum of Australia Foundation (WAMA), the Grampians branch of the Australian Plants Society, and Greening Australia, revealed the critical need for native seed in order to restore the region's grasslands.

The Jallukar Native Grasslands Project was created under the auspices of Jallukar Landcare Group. Members collect seeds from native grassland species and propagate these species in the group's nursery. The aim is to grow the seedlings in seed production areas and harvest the seed for larger grasslands projects.

The project philosophy of restoring native grasslands through building community capacity has rejuvenated the group and galvanized members. There is a deep commitment to the value of local flora and fauna within the group that is dynamic, social and increasing membership.

A nursery has been established along with one seed production area, and two further seed production sites are planned for 2019. Several workshops on seed collection and identification have been held and the group has hosted visits from local schools and other community groups.

According to the group's chair, Glenda Lewin, the project has really brought people together.

"It's such a positive story. The project is all about doing something active for the environment and it sparks joy for all involved," Glenda said.

"The seedbank project has inspired volunteers of all ages, although most of the regulars are semi-retired, tree changers or they own lifestyle blocks. We'd like to see younger people involved so we have made a deliberate effort to increase engagement through social media and links with schools, as well as those visiting the Grampians," Glenda said.



From left, Phil Bennett, Anthea Nicholls, Catherine Pye, Clive Carlyle and Phil Williams after Jallukar Landcare Group's first plant out of native grassland seedlings in Pomonal in 2018.

The group has developed strong links with the Grampians branch of the Australian Plants Society and WAMA and is partnering with Greening Australia.

Jallukar Landcare Group's native grassland restoration project is an outstanding example of volunteer achievement – both for the environment and for the spirits of the people involved.

“

There is a deep commitment to the value of local flora and fauna within the group that is dynamic, social and increasing membership.

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From left, Anthea Nicholls, Jennifer Penfold, Wendy Marriott and Jacquie Ridler hard at work during a Wednesday workshop at the The Jallukar Native Grasslands Project.

Landcare Network Award



Bass Coast Landcare Network

The Bass Coast Landcare Network (BCLN) was formed in 2003 as an affiliation of 10 Landcare groups in South Gippsland. BCLN has grown into a strong and creative network that drives innovation.

BCLN sees itself as an effective 'community of practice' with more than 80 per cent of landholders in the region involved in Landcare group or network activities. BCLN is proud of how its members are evolving into land stewards that understand their contribution to a sustainable, productive landscape – a landscape that supports healthy communities.

Over the past 10 years BCLN and its member groups have established more than two million indigenous plants. Staggering statistics are compiled each year on the number of individual landholder projects, hectares of remnant vegetation protected, and the hectares of weed control on private land and roadsides.

BCLN holds a series of sustainable agriculture field days each year and many training courses as well as supporting four farmer discussion groups that meet bimonthly.

BCLN Executive Officer and Landcare Facilitator David Bateman believes that communication and planning have been the cornerstones of the network's success.

"We've spent a lot of time working with our member groups and the local community to develop a highly innovative strategic plan. This was put together after an intensive community workshop and consultation process attended by more than 50 group and community representatives in November 2018. This plan will guide the direction of BCLN for the next seven years," David said.

The strategic plan has six main objectives: strong communities that are engaged and connected through Landcare; growing and protecting a connected biodiverse landscape; leading an innovative sustainable agricultural community; capitalising on carbon; ensuring best practice governance and safe, skillful operations; and delivering leading edge experiences, education and training.

These objectives guide which activities feature in annual operational plans. The plans are informed by the BCLN's educate-grow-feed values.

Recent projects have included an indigenous plant nursery run by volunteers;



A community consultation session held in 2017 on developing the river garden at Bass.

a works crew contracting service; training and education programs for landholders; and activities at a river garden established at the BCLN offices.

An extensive revegetation project at Karl and Rachael Russo's property in the Bass Hills has seen more than 60,000 plants established through multiple funding sources and partnerships. In 2018 a group of 200 year nine students planted 16,000 native plants in just one day on the property. A video of the planting days has attracted more than 12,500 views on Facebook.

BCLN has excellent relationships with its partners who include the West Gippsland and Port Phillip and Westernport CMAs, Westernport Water, Melbourne Water, South Gippsland Water, Phillip Island Nature Parks, Vic Roads, corporate partners and neighbouring Landcare networks.

David Bateman acknowledges that the on-ground success of BCLN in protecting, enhancing and restoring environments would not be possible without the massive volunteer effort.

"There is often a huge response to volunteer planting days – rain, hail or shine. People enjoy getting together, seeing new places, sharing ideas, meeting neighbours and chatting over a relaxed lunch.

"We recognise the importance of Landcare in maintaining the social fabric of our communities," David said.



The Bass Coast Landcare Network's works crew is the contract arm of the network available for spraying, planting and land management works.

“

Lanie consistently comes up with innovative ways to share and spread the word whether it is working with multicultural arts projects or the local running club.

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Lanie Pearce shows students how to match animals to their tracks and scats at an environment day for Harston Landcare Group.

Joan Kirner Landcare Award



Lanie Pearce

Lanie Pearce has been involved in Landcare for around 20 years and is the Community Education Coordinator for the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network (GMLN). She works out of Shepparton where her deep knowledge of the community makes her a key contact for the region's many natural resource management projects.

Shepparton has a large Aboriginal population and Lanie's positive relationship with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation ensures that Indigenous knowledge is built into GMLN projects. Her talent for delivering quality environmental education to both children and adults is well recognised across the region.

Lanie's motto is: 'If it isn't fun, it won't work.' She develops targeted and appealing environmental messages. 'Who's come for dinner' looks at animal tracks and scats. 'Bonking in your backyard' involves learning about frogs and their importance in the ecosystem. She has designed numerous games for children based on the value of using story to engage and educate. The water quality dilemmas faced by 'Murray the fish' as it travels down the local waterways are now part of the minds and imaginations of hundreds of Goulburn Valley children.

Lanie consistently comes up with innovative ways to share and spread the word whether it is working with multicultural arts projects or the local running club. She has also contributed to the development and implementation of the Broken-Boosey State Park Management Plan and the management of the Lower Goulburn National Park. She is also an executive member of the GMLN where her background in banking administration is highly valued.

Lanie and her husband Peter farm at Picola close to Barmah National Park. Their land is managed for productivity and sustainability – waterways are fenced, remnant vegetation is protected, and water use is efficient. Lanie is a long-standing member of the Superb Parrot Project. She devotes many weekends to planting roadsides, riparian reserves and private land to increase the foraging and nesting habitat of this endangered bird.

The Regional Landcare Coordinator at the Goulburn Broken CMA, Tony Kubeil, describes Lanie as a true champion for natural resource management in the region.



Lanie Pearce demonstrates a recycling relay race at an environmental games day attended by 200 local students at Victoria Park Lake in Shepparton.

"Lanie is an individual who represents her community and is always there to help if needed. Through her commitment to environmental education she is building the skills and capacity of our next generation of land managers. Our region is so much better for what she has achieved," Tony said.

Urban Landcare Award



Wodonga Urban Landcare Network

Formed in 2012, the Wodonga Urban Landcare Network (WULN) is changing the face of one of Victoria's regional cities.

The network is restoring habitat in backyards and across landscapes, connecting diverse communities with nature and leading collaborative action by working with key authorities.

The network has grown quickly from three to 22 member groups. Since 2017 WULN has run 77 training events that have reached 2039 people.

According to chair Julie Hind WULN's broad and inclusive goals are part of its success.

"Our aim is to support, inspire and bring together stewardship groups to achieve a biodiverse, connected and sustainable landscape. Having an integrated community is a key part of this.

"By encouraging a broad view of Landcare, we reach out to different parts of the community. Our groups tap into diverse interests. The local Bhutanese community farm group enables local migrants to grow food and learn about the environment. The rail trail group has been critical to the

development of the local trail. There are lots of practical and experiential projects too, like citizen science, the nest box network, Gardens for Wildlife, and working with our schools," Julie said.

WULN predominantly works on public land managed by Wodonga Council and building a good working relationship with the council has been important. The group has achieved this by focusing on coordination, communication and collaboration.

One of WULN's major projects is to restore habitat linkages in key corridor sites in the municipality. This project is now in its second year and has removed woody weeds in priority sections of three key waterways. There have been 20 on-ground events where more than 6000 native plants have been established by schools and the community. The project has also inspired the formation of two new Friends groups that have their own restoration projects.



Dhuduroa Elder Uncle Alan Murray demonstrates the use of local natural resources at a Wodonga Urban Landcare Network walk and talk on McFarlanes Hill.

Working with young people and cultural experiences that connect people with Country are also priorities. WULN works with the Burraja Indigenous Cultural and Environmental Discovery Centre, supports two bush kindergartens and ran a youth enviro-ride.

WULN has developed effective partnerships with many local organisations and agencies including Gateway Health, Parklands Albury Wodonga and the Australian Native Plants Society.

In a significant partnership with the North East CMA and Wodonga Council, WULN facilitated the community consultation and development of the Wodonga Regional Waterway Action Plan 2018 – 2028. The plan has helped to secure funding to remove environmental weeds and restore native habitat on the House, Huon and Felltimber Creeks.

WULN has gathered many resources to assist its groups with their projects. They have a significant library in a cloud-sharing device, displays for use at field days and fairs, and produce a monthly bulletin for members and interested stakeholders.

The WULN community trailer is fully equipped with tools and a barbecue to assist groups during the planting season, when it is in constant use.

WULN has greatly increased awareness of natural resource management and environmental issues in the Wodonga urban area and, through its many diverse projects, generated tremendous enthusiasm and support for the network and its member groups.



Wodonga Urban Landcare Network partnered with Artspace Wodonga on a project where artist Susie Losch and Landcare volunteers designed and built a floating island out of recycled materials. The habitat garden was planted out with native vegetation and floated on Belvoir Park Lake over summer 2017.

Dr. Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award



Tony Gardner

Tony Gardner lives and breathes sustainable agriculture. He is currently the Partnership and Engagement Programs Coordinator for the West Gippsland CMA. His 25-year career has seen him run workshops on composting, build community gardens, work with the Green Corps, and teach conservation, land management and permaculture here and overseas.

Tony spent four years with the South Gippsland Landcare Network helping farmers to fence and revegetate eroded gullies and landslips in the steep Strzelecki hills. He then moved into roles addressing soil acidification and carbon, and in 2010 headed up the region's Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms Project.

Tony's leadership of the Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms Project has produced impressive results. Working closely with local Landcare Networks, Agriculture Victoria and industry, the project engaged more than 30 per cent of the region's farm businesses and built their capacity for taking up sustainable practices over eight years. More than 60 capacity building events were held involving more than 1000 participants across the region. The project established 13 demonstration sites trialing innovative land management. More than 150 farm



Tony Gardner leading discussion during a soil demonstration site field day at Buffalo in 2018.

management plans were prepared for individual properties, representing almost 37,500 hectares of agricultural land, with 78 per cent of farm businesses making management changes recommended in their plans.

Tony believes that measuring the impact of project activities, asking what barriers exist to making change, and using the findings to inform project delivery is critical.

"We need to build a meaningful picture of what we are doing. I'm committed to rigorous evaluation. It's the basis for breaking down the barriers to change," Tony said.

Tony displays an impressive ability to develop partnerships and foster relationships with stakeholders. His leadership in capacity building and the uptake of sustainable practices has made a substantial impact in the West Gippsland CMA region.

The Dr. Sidney Plowman Travel and Study Award is awarded to a staff member of DELWP, DJPR or the CMAs to undertake travel or study that will assist them in contributing to practice change among farmers.

Tony will use the award to attend the 7th National Natural Resource Management Knowledge Conference in Wodonga in November 2019. He is also planning to visit Holbrook and the Monaro region to look at advances in regenerative agriculture.

Tony will give a presentation at the conference and will bring his knowledge from the trip back to the West Gippsland CMA to improve the sustainable agriculture program.



Tony Gardner presenting at a forum on the agriculture of Indigenous Australians at Traralgon in 2016.

“

Tony believes that measuring the impact of project activities, asking what barriers exist to making change, and using the findings to inform project delivery is critical.

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Belinda Brennan presents Landcare facilitator training as part of an ALI delegation in Manafwa, Uganda.

Belinda will use her Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship to fund her attendance at the Uganda National Landcare Conference in November 2019.

VFF/Landcare Victoria Inc. Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship Award



Belinda Brennan

Belinda Brennan's Landcare journey has seen her active at a local, regional, state, national and international level.

Belinda volunteers as the secretary of Australian Landcare International (ALI), and has been on the committee of Landcare Victoria Inc., Landcare's peak state body in Victoria.

She has extensive experience in Landcare facilitation, support, strategic planning, community engagement and consultation. Belinda has been part of the Landcare community for nearly 30 years, working both in Western Australia and Victoria. She is currently the Partnerships and Engagement Team Leader at West Gippsland CMA.

Belinda is very well known in Gippsland where she was the South Gippsland Landcare Network (SGLN) Coordinator from 2007-2013.

In that role her patch covered 4000 square kilometres, involved 18 local groups, and took in townships from Loch and Nyora to Mirboo North and Wilsons Promontory.

The network was innovative in the way it engaged the many sea and tree changers who had moved into the area.

Belinda partnered with local real estate agents to create a welcome pack and started a new landholder program providing \$500 to kick start environmental works.

In 2011 Belinda won the Australian Government Local Landcare Facilitator/Coordinator Award at the Victorian Landcare Awards. Her work on raising awareness of the habitat needs of koalas in the Strzeleckis was praised for its creativity and commitment to community participation.

During her time at SGLN Belinda was involved in successfully developing and implementing projects valued at more than \$3 million. In 2017 she undertook a Diploma of Business in Governance to better serve the Landcare and rural community.

But it was travelling to Uganda in 2018 to deliver facilitation training as part of an ALI delegation that Belinda found truly life changing.

"To work with people who have so little

and to have such a big impact was so inspiring," Belinda said.

Since her return Belinda has presented to a number of Victorian Landcare groups with the aim of connecting them to small community Landcare projects overseas.

"I'm hoping we can share information, provide funding support and showcase the benefits of the Landcare movement and its knowledge to others around the world," Belinda said.

Belinda will use her Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship to fund her attendance at the Uganda National Landcare Conference in November 2019. She will give a presentation on Landcare in Victoria and investigate opportunities for sharing information across the globe. Field trips to Kabale and Kamapala to connect with the Uganda Landcare Network are also planned.

The Heather Mitchell Memorial Fellowship seeks to reward an individual for their outstanding achievements in Landcare with assistance for travel, study or professional development. Belinda Brennan's commitment to Landcare is exceptional.

Around the State – News from the Regional

Aboriginal Landcare Facilitator

Congratulations to all of the winners of the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards. Each recipient was a deserving winner for their amazing work in addressing the environmental challenges to keep our Country healthy.

A very special congratulation to the Woka Walla Land Management Crew representing the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation who received the Indigenous Land Management Award. This is a huge achievement for the community and is a fantastic example of how to bring together Aboriginal people to manage Country, whilst also creating pathways for education and employment to help achieve Aboriginal self-determination.

Woka Walla are one of many Aboriginal land management crews around Victoria offering services across both public and private land, applying a combination of Traditional ecological knowledge and contemporary land management practices to protect and preserve Country and natural resources.

Good luck to the winners who will now represent Victoria at the 2020 National Landcare Awards.

For more information email
jackson.chatfield@delwp.vic.gov.au
or call Jackson on 0419 504 451.

Corangamite

We extend our congratulations to the nominees and winners of the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards and thank all our hard-working volunteers for their incredible contribution to the health of our lands and waterways.

Cundare Duverney Landcare Group won the Australian Government Innovation in Agriculture Land Management Award; Dr Kaye Rodden was highly commended in the Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award; and Dick Simonsen and Bob Beveridge together were commended in the Australian Government Landcare Farming Award.

Heytesbury District Landcare Group led a post fire family day out at Brucknell and a field trip to Gippsland to learn more about building soil carbon and biology during National Landcare Week.

The region's Landcarers hosted 'From the Ground Up: Growing Regenerative Agriculture in Corangamite' conference in September. This popular conference saw national and regional practitioners discussing key technical, economic and social practices in improving soil health, biodiversity and other environmental outcomes.



From left, Tommy Cunningham and Layla Onderwater enjoy the chance to get dirty and help the environment at a National Tree Day celebration in Hamilton.

Welcome to Elisia Dowling who starts as the CMA's new Landcare and Volunteer Coordinator at the end of October.

For more information visit
www.ccma.vic.gov.au (What we do/
Community Landcare) or contact
Elisia Dowling on 5232 9100.

East Gippsland

Landcarers from the region have been taking time out from their usual activities to acknowledge and celebrate their achievements. A regional celebration dinner held at Lakes Entrance in June was attended by more than 130 people. The highlight of the event was the showing of nine locally produced videos on Landcare people, passion and projects.

Swifts Creek Ensay Landcare Group's video tells the story of their Poet's Walk project in Swifts Creek township. The group has partnered with multiple agencies and other community groups to transform the overgrown area into a valuable community asset. The group was rewarded for their hard work by receiving a highly commended acknowledgement in the Landcare Community Group Award category at the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards.

For more information visit www.egcma.com.au (What we do/Landcare) or contact
Carolyn Cameron on 5150 3682.

Glenelg Hopkins

Farmers from across the region gathered in Hamilton for Sheepvention in early August. The show had a focus on innovation, with the Smart Farm demonstration partnership project being a centrepiece of the new Innovation Hub. A presentation on the demonstration

trials was officially introduced by the Hon. Dan Tehan, MP, Federal Minister for Education, who was enthusiastic about the collaborative project which has engaged many young farmers across the region.

A National Tree Day celebration in July saw 150 people gather to plant more than 1100 trees along the Grange Burn River in Hamilton. The day was held in partnership with Southern Grampians Shire Council, Wannon Water and a local Toyota dealer. Families enjoyed planting a native seedling, face painting, a native animal zoo and a barbecue lunch.

For more information visit www.ghcma.vic.gov.au (Get involved/Landcare) or contact
Kellie Nilsson Osmond on 5571 2526.

Goulburn Broken

It was great to see the hard work and dedication of Lanie Pearce recognised as the Joan Kirner Landcare Award winner at the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards. Congratulations also to the Woka Walla Land Management Crew and Fraser Pogue.

New Landcare facilitators are joining the Goulburn Murray Landcare Network and Upper Goulburn Landcare Network. The region's groups and networks are grateful for the support from this year's Victorian Landcare Grants – 24 project grants and 21 support grants have been funded from our regional allocation.

The recent release of the Victorian Landcare Program's Victorian Landcare 2017-2018 Achievements Report highlights the impressive extent of work that Landcare delivers across the state and our region. The Upper Goulburn Landcare Network's 'Kids Teaching Kids' forum in Yea was a good example of this.

Landcare Coordinators

For more information visit www.gbcm.vic.gov.au (Community natural resource management) or contact Tony Kubeil on 5761 1619.

Mallee

As always, the Mallee has had variable rainfall for 2019. Farmers in the southern part of the region had a fantastic autumn break and were feeding out nutrient to what looks to be a bumper crop while farmers in the northern cropping region of the Millewa are facing severe drought conditions.

Landcare groups continue to do a great job despite the conditions, submitting 26 applications for the 2019-20 Victorian Landcare Grants – a 36 per cent increase from last year. Most applications involved rabbit control; however, track works, ecological surveys, habitat creation and revegetation were also proposed. Thanks to all of the local Landcare facilitators for their hard work on the applications.

Congratulations to the five nominations from the Mallee at the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards: Donald Cooper, Peter Hogan, Lachlan Considine, Nullawil Landcare Group, Millewa-Carwarp Landcare Group and Millewa Advisory Committee.

For more information visit www.malleecma.vic.gov.au (Get involved/Landcare) or contact James Walker on 5051 4377.

North Central

Congratulations to all the nominees and highly commended and commended Landcarers at the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards, and to Malmsbury District Landcare Group which won the Australian Community Media Landcare Community Group Award. What a wonderful achievement.

The North Central CMA has partnered with Wimmera CMA, the Pyrenees Shire and Project Platypus (Upper Wimmera Landcare Network) for 2019 Chicks in the Sticks rural women's event to be held in October at Moonambel. Now in its seventh year, last year's event sold out within days of ticket sales opening.

We welcomed the Intrepid Landcare crew to the Mount Alexander region in August. Twenty-five young people came together over a weekend to grow their Landcare ideas and gather new skills in leadership. The group was very inspired by our local Landcare legends dinner. They are now connected on social media and are committed to getting involved in Landcare projects in the region.

For more information visit www.nccma.vic.gov.au (Landcare) or contact Tess Grieves on 5440 1893.

North East

Congratulations to the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards nominees Jim de Hennin, Mitta to Murray Blackberry Action Group and Sally Day. Huge congratulations to Wodonga Urban Landcare Network (WULN), winners of the Urban Landcare Award.

WULN launched the Wodonga Regional Waterway Action Plan in August with its partners, Wodonga Council and North East CMA. The plan provides guidance for restoring and managing local waterways and catchments and gives a health overview with a creek-by-creek summary. It is believed to be the first plan led by a community group. To see the plan, go to www.wodongalandcare.org.au

For more information visit www.necma.vic.gov.au (Landcare and community projects) or contact Tom Croft on 0427 325 889.

Port Phillip and Western Port

Landcare and other volunteer environmental groups in the region presented their aspirations for on ground projects and other collaborative concepts as part of the annual Victorian Landcare Grants process in June. More than \$1 million worth of support, start-up and project proposals were submitted to the CMA's regional assessment panel.

The recent Yarra Ranges Intrepid Landcare Leadership retreat was inspiring for the young people involved and the passionate Landcare volunteers who supported the event. Wurundjeri Traditional Owners and Healesville Sanctuary also contributed expertise to the event.

The CMA will share some outcomes from the event at the upcoming NRM Knowledge Conference in November while a new Intrepid Landcare group is in the process of forming in the Yarra Ranges.

Congratulations to all nominees and winners at the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards, three of whom were based in the Port Phillip and Western Port region.

For more information visit ppwcma.vic.gov.au (Landcare and Sustainable Agriculture) or contact Barry Kennedy on 9971 6506.

West Gippsland

The region has been experiencing contrasting weather conditions, with lots of rain in the south, whereas the eastern parts are remaining dry and are still in drought,

providing tricky conditions for planting and direct seeding. Several Landcare groups, such as the Merrimans Creek and Woodside Landcare groups, have run hugely successful events to support farmers during this tough period.

Maffra and District Landcare Network welcomed Nicola Hair to the role of coordinator. Nicky has extensive experience in working as a farm consultant, supporting irrigation and whole farm planning services to farmers in the Macalister Irrigation District and Gippsland region.

It's been a great tree planting season, with a special mention to Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network's blockbuster National Tree Day events where more than 800 people including students from 13 different schools, Landcare and community members planted more than 10,000 trees at 20 different sites from Neerim to Rosedale.

For more information visit wgcm.vic.gov.au (Getting involved/Landcare) or contact Kathleen Brack on 5613 5966.

Wimmera

Congratulations and thank you to those representing the Wimmera at the 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards. Wimmera Landcarers are well aware of John Pye's outstanding effort over the last couple of years in particular, and it was pleasing to see his story shared and celebrated with others across the state. Congratulations to Jallukar Landcare Group, Mirinda Thorpe, Horsham Urban Landcare Group and all the other award winners and nominees.

The annual Wimmera Biodiversity Seminar was held at Rupanyup on 5 September 2019 as part of National Landcare week. Author Tim Low joined a line-up of thought-provoking presenters and more than 100 local community members to examine the theme, 'A Climate for Change.' This was the 22nd seminar and it remains a much-loved tradition in the Wimmera.

The 2019-2020 Victorian Landcare Grants projects in the Wimmera will achieve an exciting mix of on-ground and capacity building outcomes for the community. We look forward to supporting groups through the delivery of these projects and helping to celebrate their successes.

For more information visit wcma.vic.gov.au (Get involved/Landcare) or contact Joel Boyd on 5382 9919.

In brief



DELWP's Victorian Landcare Program has produced a Landcare promotional video. Guests at the recent 2019 Victorian Landcare Awards ceremony were asked why they volunteer for nature. A number of responses were then compiled into a short *Show How You Care* video that captures the spirit of environmental volunteers and Landcare values. The video is part of a new Landcare promotional campaign – *I care, We care, Landcare*.

Watch the video on the DELWP YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/be/z/FnCD2Lrx4>

The *I care, We care, Landcare* animated graphic (GIF) can be downloaded from the Landcare Gateway at www.landcarevic.org.au/resources/

2019 Victorian Landcare Awards commendations

Highly commended

Joan Kirner Landcare Award:

- Martin Stone

Environmental Volunteer Award:

- Gippsland Intrepid Landcare
- Samantha Mac Cuaig

Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award:

- Ian Grenda
- Dr Kaye Rodden

Austcover Young Landcare Leadership Award:

- Mirinda Thorpe

Australian Community Media Landcare Community Group Award:

- Swifts Creek Ensay Landcare Group
- Harcourt Valley Landcare

Commended

Australian Government Partnerships for Landcare Award:

- Strathallan Family Landcare
- Mitta to Murray Blackberry Action Group

Australian Government Landcare Farming Award:

- Dick Simonsen and Bob Beveridge

Environmental Volunteer Award:

- Lily Irwin

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.

Next issue

Our Summer 2020 issue will be a feature on Landcare and community engagement. This issue has a full allocation of interesting stories.

The Winter 2020 issue will feature stories on Landcare and emergency recovery. We are interested in hearing how Landcare groups and networks have planned for and responded to environmental and social emergencies in their communities. 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.

The magazine fills up very quickly so please get in touch well before the contribution deadline.

Contributions for the Winter 2020 issue should be sent to the editor by Friday 20 March 2020.

Carrie Tiffany, editor

Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management Magazine

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