

Spring 2026



TREE TALK

A newsletter published by the
Upper Barwon Landcare Network

1/58 Main Street
Birregurra 3242

www.upperbarwonlandcare.com

IN THE FIELD with the *FASA* RESILIENT FARMING COURSE



The Upper Barwon Landcare Network works on the lands, waters and seas of the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin Nation and the Gulidjan and Gadubanud People of the Maar Nation and acknowledge them as the Traditional Owners. We pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge that the Traditional Custodians have been a part of this land for at least sixty-five millennia and that all Australians can learn from their stewardship.

We believe that the descendants of those Traditional Custodians should be consulted respectfully on matters that affect their culture and wellbeing



LANDCARE IN THE UPPER BARWON REGION

Supporting the areas of:

Bambra, Barwon Downs, Birregurra, Deans Marsh, Eurack, Forrest, Gerangamete, Gherang, Irrewarra, Murroon, Ombersley, Pennyroyal, Wurdale, Wensleydale, Winchelsea, Wurdiboluc and Yeodene



UPCOMING **SPRING** EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Victorian Landcare Awards

Thurs 15 Oct

1:30pm - 5:30pm

The Edge, Fed Square Melbourne

[Register here](#)

Mooramong Historic Precinct - Past Present & Future

International Day of Rural Women event

Corangamite & Glenelg Hopkins CMA Rural Womens Networks

Thurs 15 Oct

9:30am - 2:30pm

2851 Carngam-Streatham Rd, Carranballac

[Tickets here](#)

Friends of the Barwon (FOTB) AGM

Wed 25 Nov

6pm - 8pm

Jeff Sykes Rowing Centre

8 Barwon Terrace, South Geelong

Guest speaker - Cameron Steele of Concerned Waterway Alliance (CWA) and People for a Living Moorabool (PALM)

Film Festival - From the Ground Up - Landcare at 40

Thurs 15 Oct

5.15pm - 8pm

ACMI Cinemas, Melbourne

[Register here](#)

Barwon Platypus Detectives: A Citizen Science Adventure (eDNA)

Mon 26 Oct

9:45am - 12noon

Barwon Street, Birregurra

[Register here](#)

IN THE FIELD with the **FASA RESILIENT FARMING COURSE**

Andrea Montgomery & Ellen Whitten

Upper Barwon Landcare Network held Day 2 of it's Resilient Farming Course - a central element of the FASA Project on Thursday September 3.

The day involved being out in the field demonstrating soil test collection transects.

Visiting entomologist Pauline showed participants what bugs (beneficial and pests) she caught in the traps set up earlier in the week

We had a rainbow appear next to us which was pretty cool.

Thanks to Gavin and Sarah Brien for hosting us.

FASA - is shorthand for *Leading Farmer Adoption of Sustainable Agriculture for Climate Resilience*.

This project is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust.

The FASA project has 4 main aspects -

1. Grounded Festival - held in April earlier this year at Yan Yan Gurt West Farm, Deans Marsh. Podcast recordings are now available - [GROUNDED Podcast channel](#).

2. Resilient Farming Course which is a 5 day course that runs across 4 months in 4 neighbouring Landcare Network areas all within the Corangamite Catchment Management Area:

- Upper Barwon Landcare Network
- Central Otway Landcare Network
- Heytesbury & District Landcare Network
- Warrnambool Coast and Landcare Network

Each network area is delivering the course to 10 participants or farm enterprises - this is a total of 40 farms across the region!

3. Trainee Educator Program - 10 participants have signed up from across the Corangamite region - this program is tailored for and facilitated through each local Landcare Network.

4. Farmer Peer Groups - these are planned to occur bi-monthly beginning in February 2027 and continue through to April 2028 aimed at continuing the relationships built through the course and Trainee Educator Program to foster long-term retention of knowledge and practice and inform succession planning.

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“The strength of this program is building local farmer community relationships and shared contextual knowledge of our landscapes & a knowledge bank of resources (for) when we need to dig deeper into learning as we farm” says Kristy Jane Stewart.

The Resilient Farming Course and in particular the ROOTS framework of which the course is structured around has been thoughtfully developed by the Upper Barwon Landcare Network’s Project Manager, Kristy Jane Stewart with key contributors Jade Killoran, Tony Evans and Ivan Blacket as well as key support from Soil Land Food & Soils For Life.

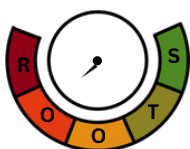
Soil Land Food is an independent agricultural consultancy that is passionate about supporting change in Australian rural landscapes, farming and food systems towards a more regenerative, ecological future who carry out extension, training and consultancy work across Australia.

Soils for Life is an independent, non-profit organisation that works to support Australian farmers to regenerate soils, for resilient people, communities, businesses and landscapes.

Kristy Jane, Jade and Tony are delivering the key parts of the course in each of the 4 Landcare network areas with project officers from each network contributing local context.

Photo credits: Andrea Montgomery (UBLN)

Image: ROOTS Framework visual, taken from ROOTS Framework Workbook. Copyright Kristy Jane Stewart, Upper Barwon Landcare Network



Each district and ultimately each farm will bring it’s unique perspective and will motivate these tireless advocates for regenerative agriculture to continue their delivery by interacting with the individual farms and farmers along the way.

The ROOTS framework which is a self assessment tool for identifying strengths and challenges in farm systems - with context at its core. While the elements of the ROOTS framework can be used anywhere how they are expressed and interact is always specific to each farm and can point to areas that need support and ways to do this. A detailed representation of the farm system is built guided by the framework through applying observation, testing, monitoring and self-reflection information to the framework. What emerges can inform and support farmers in improving the knowledge of their farm systems, productivity, profitability and on farm ecological health.

Thank you to everyone around the network who has been involved in developing and delivering the course - we are all very grateful and appreciative of the immense effort it takes bringing a project of this magnitude to life and hopeful and inspired for the ripple effect of resilience and trust it is sure to provide for our regions future. **tt**



LITTLE GALAXIAS FOUND IN THE WEST BARWON RIVER FOR THE FIRST TIME

Mikhaila Hunter (CCMA)

21 July 2026

A tiny threatened fish has made a big splash in the Upper Barwon catchment, with Little Galaxias (*Galaxiella toourtkoourt*) recorded in the West Barwon River for the first time.

The discovery is an exciting milestone for Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CMA), Barwon Water and project partners working to better understand and protect native fish populations through the [Barwon Flagship Waterway](#) project.

The finding follows an environmental DNA (eDNA) detection by citizen scientists near Gerangamete in 2024. While the DNA evidence suggested Little Galaxias were present in the catchment, subsequent targeted fish surveys in 2024 and 2025 were unable to locate the species.

That changed in April 2026 when aquatic ecologists from Austral Ecology surveying macroinvertebrates unexpectedly captured a Little Galaxias in the West Barwon River.

The result was later confirmed when researchers from the Arthur Rylah Institute (ARI) recorded a further three individuals during routine fish monitoring surveys in May and June.

Corangamite CMA Senior Project Officer — Water Infrastructure Anthony Byrne, said the discovery was an encouraging result for native fish conservation in the catchment.

“Finding Little Galaxias in the West Barwon River for the first time is an exciting result and highlights the value of long-term monitoring.”

“What makes this discovery particularly rewarding is that it confirms an environmental DNA detection made by some passionate citizen scientists. It shows how community involvement can help us find and protect threatened species.”

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Little Galaxias are listed as endangered in Victoria and are typically found in wetlands and slow-flowing waterways with dense aquatic vegetation.

Their small size and preference for complex habitats can make them difficult to detect during traditional fish surveys.

The confirmation of Little Galaxias in the West Barwon River provides valuable information about the species' distribution.

Corangamite CMA and Barwon Water have jointly funded several years of fish surveys in the Barwon catchment through the Barwon Flagship Waterway project. The monitoring helps build a better understanding of fish populations, informs environmental water management, supports threatened species recovery and guides on-ground waterway restoration works.

The latest ARI survey results also painted a positive picture for native fish in the catchment, with native species making up around 77 per cent of fish recorded during general surveys and strong populations of Southern Pygmy Perch and Ornate Galaxias detected across the Upper Barwon.

Corangamite CMA will continue to monitor the newly discovered West Barwon population and assess opportunities to protect and enhance suitable habitat for the species as part of broader threatened fish recovery efforts.

The discovery demonstrates the value of combining emerging technologies such as eDNA with traditional field surveys and highlights how community involvement can contribute to important conservation outcomes.

The Mid to Upper Barwon River Fish Monitoring Report 2026, prepared by the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research, is available here: [Corangamite CMA Knowledge Base - Upper and Mid Barwon River Fish Monitoring Program Report 2026](#). ††

Photos: 1 & 2 - Little Galaxias in West Barwon Reservoir; 3 - Anthony Byrne, Little Galaxias monitoring, Corangamite CMA



CORANGAMITE CMA OPPORTUNITIES



Event funding available

The Corangamite CMA have funding available for Sustainable Agriculture themed events/workshops for networks and groups as part of the Diverse Farms Resilient Catchments projects.

There is an Event Funding application form available, please get in touch with one of the contacts below if you would like one or if you have any ideas or questions.

Contact:

Andrea Montgomery, Landcare Facilitator UBLN
facilitator@upperbarwonlandcare.com

Sarah Brien, Senior Project Officer - Sustainable Agriculture CCMA
sarah.brien@ccma.vic.gov.au

Sponsorship opportunities

Sponsorship is available for farmers, landowners and Landcare members from the Corangamite CMA region as part of the Diverse Farms Resilient Catchments project to attend Sustainable Agriculture themed conferences and events.

There is a Sponsorship application form available, please get in touch with one of the contacts below if you would like one or need more information.

Barwon Platypus Detectives: A Citizen Science Adventure (eDNA)

Join Corangamite CMA, Barwon Water and the Upper Barwon Landcare Network for a hands-on citizen science event focused on monitoring one of Australia's most iconic and elusive species, the platypus.

When: **Monday 26 October 2026, 9:45am - 12pm**, Barwon Street, Birregurra



Using environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling techniques, participants will help collect valuable data from waterways across the Barwon River catchment. The information gathered will contribute to a growing dataset that helps scientists and land managers better understand platypus distribution and habitat use, while informing future waterway restoration, environmental water management and infrastructure planning.

Josh Griffiths from EnviroDNA will deliver a short presentation on platypus ecology and provide training in environmental DNA sampling techniques.

We would love to see you there, to find out more and to register please use the RSVP link:

<https://events.humanitix.com/barwon-platypus-detectives>



UBLN ATTEND CEC - OTWAYS ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH FORUM

Ellen Whitten

The Upper Barwon Landcare Network attended the Conservation Ecology Centre (CEC)'s *Otways Ecological Research Forum* on Tuesday 25 August at COPACC in Colac.

The forum shared Colac's centre stage with the Red Door Dance and Theatre Company's production of *Juliet* which is a re-imagined continuation of the infamous *Romeo and Juliet*. The story and themes of humour, heart and empowerment follow Juliet as she chooses her own future and discovers that life, love and adventure are far from over.

In many ways the ideas presented at the Ecological Research Forum echoed these themes as highlighted by Lizzie Cork OAM (CEC CEO and Founder) in her welcome.

Over the course of the day, we heard from CEC researchers supported by a number of universities, alongside representatives from Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation (EMAC), Corangamite CMA, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), and other organisations.

A common question threaded through the presentations was how can we keep learning from each other and working in all directions? How can we keep getting back out onto Country, across Land and Sea Country? How can volunteers and citizen scientists

connect more with government authorities? How can researchers, land managers, landholders and different organisations working alongside one another have more opportunities for collaboration?

The information presented raised important questions. How can science support First Nations knowledge? How can we work together more, rather than working in parallel? And how can we do this respectfully, responsibly and realistically?

At times, the conversations were confronting. Especially when the opportunity came to openly discuss the realities of the 2026 bushfires season that affected the Carlisle River and Gellibrand communities.

There is still a long way to go.

But perhaps most importantly, we are doing it.

We are having the conversations, asking the questions, learning from one another and finding different ways to listen and understand and deepen our connection with each other, the natural world and Country.

There was a strong sense that knowledge can take many forms, and that bringing those perspectives together has enormous value.

Among the words and ideas that stayed with us were:

"Country changed because of the need for change."

"If something doesn't sit right, sit with it."

"Collective impact."

"Re-emergence."

"Biocultural management."

"Opportunity in tragedy."

"Is this good for Country?"

"Is this good for community?"

The Upper Barwon Landcare Network is partnering with the Conservation Ecology Centre in the coordination and promotion of the CEC's Feral Pig Control Program in the northern Otways.

We are also supporting Gerangamete Forrest Landcare Group in delivering a *Resilient Otways Forests: Landcare and citizen science driving knowledge sharing and stewardship* project with the CEC - recently announced through the 2026 Victorian Landcare Grants Program. **tt**



LANDCARE VICTORIA FORUM 2026

Andrea Montgomery

In early September Kristy, Andrea and our President Mary Dracup attended the Landcare Victoria biannual forum which was held this year in West Gippsland region at Pakenham.

The forums provided a great opportunity for networking with other landcare group members and facilitators as well as giving us an insight into the myriad of projects happening across the state. A highlight of the program was the opening address from Jack Pascoe, who spoke about the ground parrot country in the Otways and it's cultural connection to Eastern Maar.

Another engaging session was a panel discussion with representative from organisations working with young people and getting them involved in environmental projects, there were some interesting perspectives about being inclusive and thinking about different ways the younger generation like to engage in volunteering.

Kristy and Andrea delivered a presentation on our Leading farmer adoption of sustainable agriculture project which was well received from an engaged audience, and we had plenty of follow up conversations with interested people.

We really enjoyed our 2 days of connecting and celebrating the amazing achievements from landcarers across the state. **tt**

Photos: Andrea Montgomery



Biocultural Vision for Ground Parrot Country



We are on Ground Parrot Country in 2045. There are patches of wet heath and patches of dry heathy woodland. In the wet heath we can see over the tops of the plants (most plants are under 1m tall) but a few taller trees and shrubs are scattered around. Some areas are more open and some are taller and thicker.

There is a good mix of plants that make seeds the Ground Parrot eats like Button Grass. The plants are thick enough for Ground Parrots to hide from foxes and other predators.

We washed our boots before we came in, there is no Phytophthora in this part of Country so we want to keep it out.

There are not many foxes or cats and their access to the best areas for Ground Parrot is blocked by cleverly designed bands of dense vegetation, for example along road edges. The tall shrubs that had taken over most of the area back in 2025 are just a memory.

Eastern Maar are fulfilling Cultural obligations on Country and the relationship between people and Ground Parrot Country is strong. People intimately know Ground Parrot Country and have a strong relationship with it.

All the people who work to care for Ground Parrot Country are connected to each other (no matter what uniform they wear) and are working together.

Everyone working to care for Ground Parrot Country is taking a biocultural approach that recognises the interconnection between ecosystems and human cultures.

Ground Parrot Country is ready for Ground Parrots again.



International Day of Rural Women event

Mooramong Historic Precinct – Past, present and future



Join the Glenelg Hopkins and
Corangamite Rural Women's Networks
at

Mooramong
Thursday, October 15, 2026

Enjoy a networking lunch in the garden,
walking tours of the historic precinct
and nature reserve.

Speakers from Wadawurrung
Traditional Owners Aboriginal
Corporation, National Heritage Trust
Australia (Victoria), Corangamite CMA
and Glenelg Hopkins CMA.

**Click
here
to RSVP**

RSVP essential
for catering
click the link or
scan the QR code



Thursday, October 15
9.30am–2.30pm
Mooramong Homestead

2851 Carngham–Streatham Road
Carranballac

\$30/head
Morning tea and lunch included



*This project is supported by Glenelg Hopkins CMA and Corangamite CMA through funding from the
Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate Smart Agriculture Program*



Invitation - FOTB AGM – 25th November

By Liz Hamilton

Friends of the Barwon invite you to our Annual General Meeting 2026.

Date and Time: 6 - 8pm, Wednesday 25th November 2026.

Venue: Jeff Sykes Rowing Centre, [8 Barwon Terrace, South Geelong](#).

Guest speaker: Cameron Steele, Convenor of the [Concerned Waterways Alliance](#) (CWA) and a founding member of the People for a Living Moorabool (PALM). Cameron has been involved in grassroots activism for many years and will provide an overview of:

- his broad experience with community engagement, activism, and advocacy and where community groups, their members and networks, can operate for the greatest impact, and
- the evolution of the CWA and the PALM and how the members of these organisations have worked together to bring positive changes to water management in Victorian and, in particular, the Barwon and Moorabool Rivers.



Image: 2025 AGM participants

LIVING WATERWAYS PROJECT

Expressions of Interest (EOI) open for restoration works along waterways within the Barwon Water Special Water Supply Catchment (SWSC) Area
See map for locations



Eligible activities:

waterway restoration on-ground works and maintenance including:

Stock-proof fencing
Revegetation
Weed control
Site visit to confirm eligibility

Where:

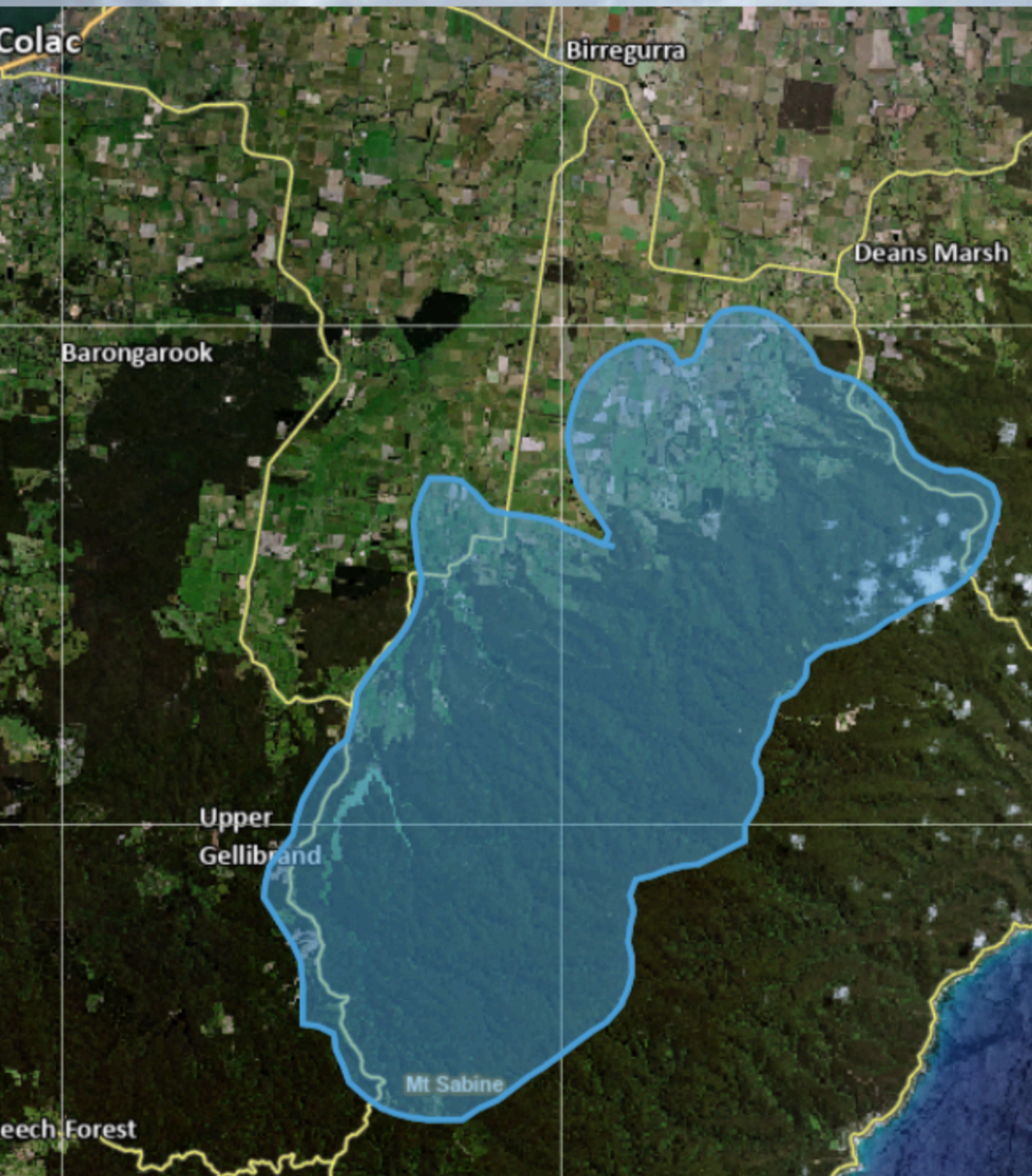
Pennyroyal Creek Catchment
Matthews Creek Catchment
Gosling Creek Catchment
Upper Barwon River Catchment

Enquiries:

Andrea Montgomery, *Landcare Facilitator*
e: facilitator@upperbarwonlandcare.com
m: 0407 552 663
Email to receive an EOI form

Properties must be located within the SWSC Area highlighted in blue on following page to be eligible to apply

Barwon Water Special Water Supply Catchment (SWSC) Area





2026 Victorian Landcare Awards

followed by...

40 years of Landcare celebration

15 October, 1.30pm - 5.30pm
THE EDGE, Fed Square, Melbourne

2026 Victorian Landcare Awards

Join us to celebrate the achievements of Landcare volunteers, groups and organisations across Victoria. Hosted by Costa Georgiadis, the Awards will recognise outstanding contributions across 14 categories.

- **Date:** Thursday, 15 October 2026
- **Venue:** The Edge, Fed Square, Melbourne
- **Arrival:** From 1.30pm
- **Event time:** 2.00pm to 5.30pm

This is a free event, but places are limited. Registrations are open from now until 5pm Friday, 9 October (or until sold out). Please register now to secure your place.

Register here:

<https://events.humanitix.com/vic-awards>

Film Festival - From the Ground Up - Landcare at 40

Join us and special guest and MC Costa Georgiadis at ACMI Cinemas to watch nine inspiring films followed by a panel session exploring the efforts of volunteers working in and for the environment as Landcare celebrates 40 years of effort and impact in Victoria.

The launch follows the Victorian Landcare Awards at the Edge at Federation Square.

This is a free event supported by Melbourne Water, Landcare and Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action.

- **Date:** Thursday, 15 October 2026
- **Venue:** ACMI Cinemas, Melbourne
- **Event time:** 5:15pm to 8pm

Register here:

<https://events.humanitix.com/film-festival-from-the-ground-up-landcare-at-40>



Film Festival



BIRREGURRA LANDCARE GROUP

Russell Garraway



July 2026

Recent Works

Landcare activities during recent weeks have been a little interrupted by the long awaited rain, however we have been busy, laying kindly donated weed mat and mulch on the steep bank below the southern end of the Heritage Trail. This is prior to planting our propagated flowering succulents in that area, once the slope is safe and less slippery.

Additionally, we have worked enthusiastically, pruning and weeding the Rose Garden at the Medical Centre, pruning roses below the Heritage Trail, and generally attacking the onslaught of weeds before the early appearance of early spring flowers.



Atkin Creek

A project that has received little mention of late, but nevertheless is very important, involves the area along Atkin Creek, from Roadnight St to the end of Scouller St. Those of us who access the transfer station will be very familiar with past views of Blackberry and Gorse and the improvement that has been made.

Initial removal of Gorse and Blackberry began in May 24 and revegetation began in October 24, with further planting mid 24. Further maintenance, planting and

weeding will continue through 2026/27.

Initial removal of Gorse and Blackberry began in May 24 and revegetation began in October 24, with further planting mid 24. Further maintenance, planting and weeding will continue through 2026/27.

This project in conjunction with the CCMA's recent Green Links project on the Barwon River is expected to improve water flows and reduce seasonal flooding.

Birregurra Landcare

Atkin Creek: From Roadnight Street to the end of Scouller Street



August 2026

Recent Works

Again, Landcare activities have been limited by wet and cold weather. Furthermore, a general exodus of some members to warmer adventures has periodically reduced our working teams. However, the enthusiastic remainder have soldiered on with more planting of succulents on steep slopes, additional roses below the Heritage Trail, Lomandra along the river, weeding prior to spring growth, and preparation for further planting.

At last, we see the first signs of spring with a good flush of Daffodils benefitting from our recent weeding. Also the recent mass succulent plantings have benefited from the mulch and rain, showing a healthy burst of growth. We look forward to spring weather before our next report.



September 2026

Bereavement

We are saddened by the passing of our immediate past treasurer, Ian Court. Ian was an active and valuable member of ours and a number of important Birre Community groups and we will miss his valuable skills while supporting us. Our love and condolences to our recent president, Sue Walpole and their families.

Activities

Similar, to past reports, a lot of weeding, particularly along the Heritage Trail and the slopes below Niagara. Some planting to fill gaps of kindly donated Succulents and Dianella. A bit of weeding and tidying at the back of the Heritage Centre, the home of our Nursery, improved the outlook.

Before the end of September, we expect to work on a

project with Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) to plant environmentally appropriate native plants at the Eastern Entrance to our town, adjacent to the river. These will be generally low level shrubs, trees and grasses. Preparation by CCMA has already begun. **tt**

Photos: Russell Garraway



GERANGAMETE FORREST LANDCARE GROUP

Mary Dracup



An inspiring 'mini - Grounded' experience at Dalpura farm.

Gerangamete and Forrest Landcarers had their own mini-Grounded Festival experience in early July, with a visit to what turned out to be a melting pot of integrated farming ideas at Dalpura farm in Gherang.

The 140-acre property was once a sheep farm with severely depleted soils, especially where topsoil had been scraped away during logging operations. Its transformation to a regenerative agroforestry farm began 30 years ago, and it was heartwarming to see the healthy stands of trees and understorey plants, planted in keylines to maximise moisture capture and minimise erosion.

Ivan Blackett, our guide, explained how owner George Howson seems to be exploring new meanings for the term 'holistic farming' on the property, capitalising on the whole lifecycle of timber production while enriching the farm ecosystem:

- The farm nursery grows the trees from its own seed, and also grows to order for commercial customers.
- Trees and understorey plants are planted close together to protect each other as they grow, and their prunings are dropped on the ground to improve and shade the soil.
- Cows will soon be grazing on the understorey and further improving the soil.

- Compost made from wood chips from thinnings and an organic café's food waste is made into tea to fertilise not only new plantings and the market garden but also struggling plants in the natural bush that is also being nurtured to better health.
- Trees are milled on site and timber is sold for value-adding at the Birregurra sawmill, as well as firewood. The portable mill is available for hire.
- Staff also make farm timber into wicking beds, furniture and tiny houses.
- Offcuts are slow-combusted into high quality biochar, which is also used onsite to boost plantings
- Products at every stage are available for sale.

Tree species include a wide variety of eucalypts, acacias, nuts and oaks, with numerous different grasses and native shrubs to maximise biodiversity. The trees are pruned to a lollypop shape to develop a straight trunk, leaving space for access and a healthy understorey underneath.

It was an inspiring afternoon's tour, producing much food for thought for Landcarers developing ideas about ways to use their land more intentionally for biodiversity, ecological health and return. ††

Photo: Dalpura setting sun, Mary Dracup



MURROON LANDCARE GROUP

Peter Greig & Josh McGoldrick



Murroon Bushland Reserve

“Every Landcare group needs a spiritual home,” said **James Maund**, architect, creator of the Deans Marsh Arboretum and member of East Otways Landcare Group. He was speaking to Murroon Landcare members before a working bee at Murroon Bushland Reserve, on the corner of James and Creamery Roads, Murroon, which may become a practical focus for regular working bees and shared care of the reserve.

The reserve’s grassland, woodland and wetland areas support local biodiversity, including Yarra Gum, *Eucalyptus yarraensis*. Its small size, invasive weeds and limited resources mean it needs active, practical care from both Parks Victoria and the local community.

James suggested four simple steps that could help turn the reserve into a regular gathering place:

1. Create a walking track;
2. Identify a “glamour spot”;
3. Build a fireplace; and
4. Have regular working bees.

The idea gave the morning a wider purpose: exploring the reserve, identifying where people might gather, and adding local effort to Parks Victoria’s weed control

and longer-term maintenance.

An early walking track was identified and marked with white tape so the group of nine could explore the reserve. James pointed out possible sites for the “glamour spot” and fireplace. The glamour spot was chosen because it showed many of the reserve’s special features, including Yarra Gum.

The fireplace site offered a clearing and slope suitable for a group campfire — always a good way to bring people together.

Thus inspired, the group began the working bee, by clearing obstacles from the walking track, and pulling up clumps of ensiform (sword-shaped) leaved plants with stubborn corms, or ‘bulbs’. The culprit was identified as an African cornflag iris (*Chasmanthe floribunda*).

Over morning tea the group reflected that the Reserve could indeed become its spiritual home, with four working bees a year, creating an opportunity for community-building.

Continued next page



Parks Victoria also has a role in the reserve's maintenance through the Good Neighbour program, which has already helped control the extensive blackberry infestations. Murroon Landcare can build on that work by removing invasive plants, watching for weed regrowth and helping more people become familiar with the reserve.

Most of the group having gravitated to Murroon from other places, were interested to learn that the Reserve had been set aside by early settlers (1860s?) to protect a waterhole for community use, before their own dams and tanks were created.

Later, a creamery was constructed nearby, served by a dam fed by the same waterhole. The creamery is long gone, but is remembered by the access road bearing the same name.

Looking ahead, regular working bees can turn the group's enthusiasm into practical care, building both ecological health and community connection. ††

Photos: Josh McGoldrick & Peter Greig

Find out more about Murroon Landcare's iNaturalist Project on the next page ...





Murroon Landcare iNaturalist project

iNaturalist is an online platform that allows citizen scientists to identify and record sightings of all kinds of species including insects, birds, mammals, reptiles, plants, sea life, coral and fungi.

Species that are identified and verified are added to a central database and are also shared with the [Atlas of Living Australia](#).

Recording data is an important part of conservation management. It helps us monitor changes in the species in our Landcare area over time. It's also a great way for members to learn how to identify species and get more familiar with our local environment.

We have set up a project in iNaturalist that covers the Murroon Parish area. Any sightings made in this locality will automatically be added to the project. We will be able to report on this at future meetings.

The iNaturalist project can be found here

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/murroon-landcare-biodiversity-project>

Murroon Landcare Biodiversity Project

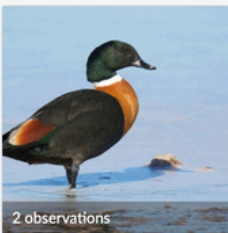
About Members 1

We are a Landcare group in the small rural locality of Murroon in SW Victoria. We want to encourage members and others to identify and record the plants, fungi, animals, insects and birds in our area. Over time we hope to see biodiversity increase as a result of our Landcare work. This project will list all

[Read More >](#) [Your Membership](#)

[Edit Project](#) [Project Journal](#)

Overview **132** OBSERVATIONS **87** SPECIES **68** IDENTIFIERS **27** OBSERVERS [Stats](#)

 4 observations Brolga <i>Antigone rubicunda</i>	 3 observations Tree Everlasting <i>Ozothamnus ferrugineus</i>	 2 observations Brown Falcon <i>Falco berigora</i>	 2 observations White-necked Heron <i>Ardea pacifica</i>	 2 observations Wedge-tailed Eagle <i>Aquila audax</i>
 2 observations Australian Shelduck	 2 observations Short-beaked Echidna	 2 observations Buttercups	 2 observations Meadow-Grasses	 2 observations Common Cotula



The easiest way to use iNaturalist is to download the app to your phone (from Apple or Google). It can also be accessed with your browser at [iNaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org).

Have you ever struggled to identify a bird or insect? You can upload photos to the app and iNaturalist will provide suggestions to help identify species.

For more info, contact Deb McSephney 0437 609 427

WINCHELSEA LAND & RIVERCARE GROUP

Stewart Mathison



Barwon River, Winchelsea

Winchelsea Land and Rivercare has completed another planting season on the river in Winchelsea. The reveg work commenced 30 years ago near the bridge and has extended to the riverbank below the golfcourse. The group is particularly proud of the planting right next to the bridge on a difficult site. It was planted only 3 years ago and shows the benefit of a good mulch layer before planting.

Preparation of areas to be planted is started in the previous spring and orders for plants have to be with the nurseries by December. This year 2000 plants were ordered and when we were notified of surplus stock available from Kui Nursery another 500 were planted. Three group members also took advantage of the offer and took over 1000 of the surplus stock. Thanks Barwon Water!



Photos: From September working bee, Stewart Mathison

Mt Rothwell Visit

September 25th with the sun setting and a near full moon rising, on a perfect spring evening we had 20 assembled at Mt Rothwell Safe Haven for the spotlight tour. Included with Winchelsea members were 6 from Wurdale group and one ecology student from Warrnambool who was on her way home from the grand final parade.

After an introductory video about the species which are being protected in this predator free safe haven, it is out for a walk with the guide to view some of the nocturnal animals in their natural habitat and hear about the breeding programs. This was a private group tour which was booked 3 months in advance. Regular public tours are available and must be booked through the Mt Rothwell website. ††

WURDALE LANDCARE GROUP

Ellen Whitten



Wurdale Landcare Group AGM

We had a diverse turnout at the Wurdale Landcare Group AGM on a Tuesday evening in late July 2026 at the Wurdale Hall. It was really encouraging to see some local faces and feel the support from Winchelsea Land & Rivercare and Friends of Lake Modewarre (FOLM).

Special thanks to the retiring office bearers President - Glenn Casey and Secretary Philip Clarke both of you you have dedicated lots of time and energy - a sincere thank you for what you have given the group over the past few years.

We elected a new committee - with myself (Ellen Whitten) as the new president, Rhys Hart - Secretary and Bronwyn Walker as Treasurer. An enthusiastic mix of locals makes up the remainder of the committee and they have opted to share the Upper Barwon Landcare Network Delegate depending on availability.

We also held a short workshop brainstorming what Landcare means to each individual and had a fun time coming up with different opportunities and challenges beginning with the letters of W U R D A L E that are specific to our area.

Lucy Allinson a young Geelong based Acoustic Sound Ecologist & Artist presented her study and artistic interpretation of nature sounds and how they are impacted by human induced noise in her study areas of the Barwon River in Geelong, the Yarra River in Melbourne and the Otways at Lorne. The next step in her research is identifying the different species of wildlife on her recordings - something we are hoping to help her with.

Weed and Wildflower Walk

Some of the new Wurdale Landcare Group committee and their families went for an informal weed and wildflower on a Friday morning in late September in the Otway Forest Park along Wormbete Station Road and the bush track that runs parallel to it - specifically targeting some established Boneseed plants, we also found and grubbed (pulled out) Bluebell Creeper and Sweet Pittosporum, we also bagged and disposed of half a big black garbage bag of litter.

Have a look at some photos taken by the kids of what

we found on our walk...

Boneseed (yellow daisy flowers, fleshy large, bright green leaves), some of the bushes were flowering and even turning to seed, these were bagged and removed from site, while the smaller non-flowering seedlings were left in situ to breakdown.

Boneseed or *Chrysanthemoides monilifera* subsp. *monilifera* is a 'Weed of National Significance' - one of 32 species listed nationally based on their invasiveness, potential for spread and environmental, social and economic impacts. It is a prolific seeder and the seeds can remain viable in the soil for 10 years, it can quickly take over more sensitive environments if not controlled. The plants we found were isolated and it felt like for a small effort we significantly helped slow the spread of these invasive plants in our sensitive bushland.

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We also found and pulled out a small number of Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) and Bluebell Creeper (*Billardiera fusiformis*) that are also classed as environmental weeds in our area.

What was really special though was the rainbow of colours displayed on the forest floor by the spring native wildflowers, bright yellow wattles, guinea flowers, peas and goodenia's, purple love creeper and waxlip orchids and red running postman, white creamy candles and emerging milkmaid lilies, pink bells and pink sundews. We also did have to share the bush with some very friendly mosquito's too.

As the new committee we hope to continue to re-establish the group with the priorities of understanding and fulfilling our governance responsibilities and getting to know each other and where are strengths and passions lie by regularly getting together to do simple yet meaningful things that make a positive difference to the landscape we share. ††

Photos: Ellen Whitten

Photo: Boneseed or *Chrysanthemoides monilifera* subsp. *monilifera*



INTRODUCING ‘OTWAY SEED GROWERS’

The Otway Seed Growers are a group of market gardeners who grow and share locally-adapted seed for our region.

The recently formed group hopes to grow into an established network of gardeners who can share seeds, develop their skills and expertise as seed growers through workshops and farm visits.

Their aim is to promote a sustainable, resilient food system in our region and to improve our collective access to high-quality, locally adapted seed.

With the support of the Upper Barwon Landcare Network and Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA), the group is presenting a program of field trips, gatherings, and workshops into 2027.

Otway Seed Growers are currently operating under the Upper Barwon Landcare Network’s wing as a sub-group allowing events and activities to take place that bring the people with the right mix of skills and knowledge together with the aim of establishing as a group in their own right in time.

Follow Otway Seed Growers on Instagram
https://www.instagram.com/otway_seed_growers/



OTWAY SEED GROWERS

Field Trip to Useful Seeds 6th September 2026

Jo Lawson

The first gathering of the Otway Seed Growers was an expedition to the Bendigo area to visit Gregg Muller and his project Useful Seeds. Gregg is a vegetable breeder and seed grower, working within the somewhat unusual framework of encouraging genetic diversity for resilience and adaptation to climate and geography.

Rather than attempting to maintain established heirloom varieties, or breed for uniformity and stable genetics, Gregg is actively encouraging crosses and developing hybrid swarms that can draw on their diverse genetics to fast-track adaptation to his local environment.

His project is also unique because of its scale; he is on a large suburban block and is growing out surprisingly small populations of most of his seed crops. He is selling seed commercially, but it's evident his real passion is in the breeding and seed-saving process.

Around thirty seed enthusiasts joined us for a full day with Gregg at the home he shares with his partner Andrea. There were market gardeners from all over the state, several restaurant growers, a couple of educators, and even some horticulture students.

Some of the participants are already saving seed, and familiar with the challenges small-scale and organic market growers face in Australia.

We started the day with introductions, and Gregg shared some seed saving basics, including discussion around the ethics of growing and sharing open-pollinated seeds in a world where so much seed is restricted by patents and commercial interests. A garden walk followed. We looked at his growing set-up and the various early-spring crops in production, and discussed breeding goals and

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selection. After lunch we got into seed cleaning and processing, and Gregg demonstrated some of the small-scale-appropriate equipment he uses to thresh and winnow seed.

As a fledgling group, we are delighted that our first event was so well attended, and that such an interesting and engaged group of people made the trek to Bendigo to join us.

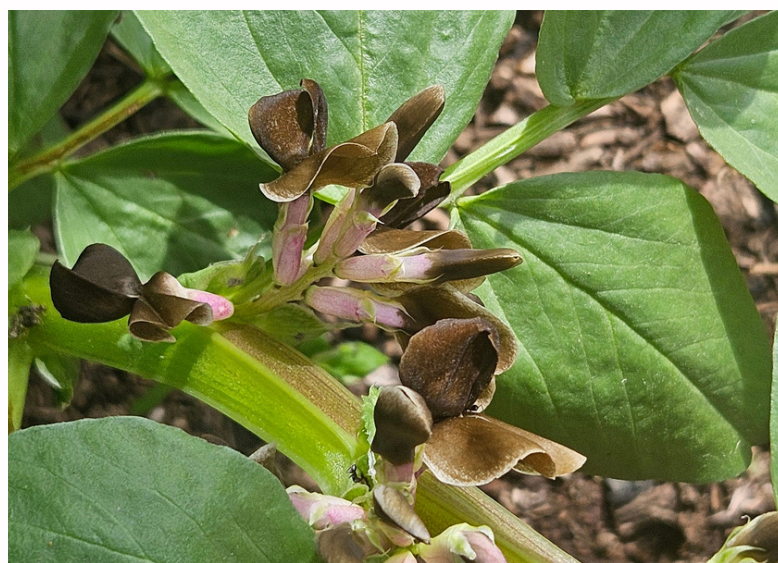
Gregg's iconoclastic approach to seed breeding and growing has shifted the dial on some of our assumptions about what is possible, and even what is desirable in a vegetable seed crop.

We went home with new connections, pockets full of seeds, and a promise to report our gardening results back to Gregg in twelve months.

Our next gathering will be a farm visit to a biodynamic farmer and seed grower near Forrest. A little closer to home for those of us in the Otways. ††

Photos: Jo Lawson

~ Jo Lawson has also written a more in depth article reflecting on the field trip available on her Substack - ["Adaption and Diversity at Useful Seeds"](#)



This field trip was made possible through the Corangamite CMA's Diverse Farms Resilient Catchments project which is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.

Ekidna Tree Guards - available



ekidnaTM
TREE GUARD

A pallet full of these spiky metal mesh paddock tree guards are available for purchase through the UBLN at a wholesale cost for Landcare members.

Ekidna Tree Guard is based in the Hunter Valley, NSW and have proven to be a simple to install and economic way to protect paddock trees as they establish while the paddocks are stocked.

They come in 2 sizes, large (for cattle) and small (for sheep) and can be purchased from us at a rate of \$29/large and \$22/small.

Contact us if you are interested in purchasing some and trying them out.

More information including specifications can be found in the [brochure](#)



A collection of Ekidna Tree Guards (sheep size) doing their job guarding Red Gum seedlings from her flock of crossbred ewes on Andrea's property in Paraparap



RESOURCES UBLN Office LIBRARY

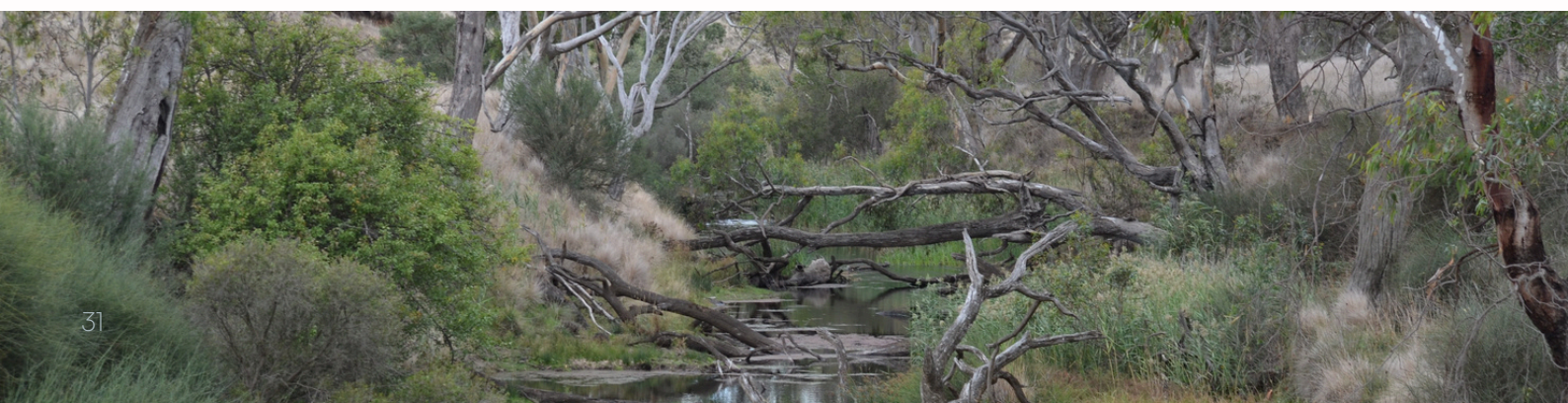
- A Field Companion to Australian Fungi; *Bruce Fuhrer*
- A Field Guide to the Mammals of Australia; *P Menkhorst, F Knight*
- [Australia's Agricultural Identity - An Aboriginal yarn; Joshua Gilbert - NEW !!!](#)
- Call of the Reed Warbler; *Charles Massey*
- Connect — Practical ways to grow and prepare sustainable food; *Kylie Treble*
- Farm Dams — Planning, Construction & Maintenance; *Barry Lewis*
- Flora of the Otway Plain & Ranges 1: Orchids, Irises, Lilies, Grasstrees, Mat-rushes and Other Petaloid Monocotyledons; *Enid Mayfield*
- Forest Trees of Australia; *Hall, Johnston & Chippendale*
- From Seeds to Leaves; *Doug & Robin Stewart*
- Geelong Bird Report 2013-2016; *a publication of the Geelong Field Naturalists Club Inc.*
- Geelong's Changing Landscape - Ecology, Development and Conservation; *David S. Jones and Phillip B. Roös*
- Grasses of Temperate Australia — A Field Guide; *Lamp, Forbes & Cade*
- Growing Trees on Australian Farms; *Alan Brown & Norman Hall*
- Heartwood; *Rowan Reid*
- Integrated Pest Management for Crops and Pastures; *P Horne, J Page*
- Last Child in the Woods; *Richard Louv*
- Log-Grown Shiitake Mushrooms - An Australian grower's manual; *Parsuram Sharma-Luitai & Rowan Reid*
- Native Trees and Shrubs of South Eastern Australia; *Leon Costermans*

- 
- Noxious Weeds of Australia; *WT Parsons & EG Cuthbertson*
 - Milk - The truth, the lies and the unbelievable story of the original superfood; *Matthew Evans* - **NEW !!!**
 - Reconnected - A community builder's handbook; *Andrew Leigh & Nick Terrell*
 - Second Nature; *Michael Pollan*
 - Sufficient For The Day; *Geoff Lacey*
 - Taking Care of Yourself and Family; *J Ashfield*
 - Talking to My Country; *Stan Grant*
 - The Allure of Fungi; *Alison Pouliot*
 - The Biggest Estate on Earth; *Bill Gammage*
 - The Farmers Forest - Multipurpose Forestry for Australian Farmers; *Rowan Reid & Peter Stephen*
 - The House on the Hill: The Transformation of Australia's Farming Communities; *Neil Barr*
 - The Man Who Climbs Trees; *James Aldred*
 - The Nature of Survival; *Doug Lang*
 - The New Nature; *Tim Low*
 - The Omnivore's Dilemma; *Michael Pollan*
 - The Real Food Companion: Fully revised and updated; *Matthew Evans* - **NEW !!!**
 - The Resilient Farmer; *Doug Avery*
 - The Vanished Land: Disappearing dynasties of Victoria's Western District; *Richard Zachariah*
 - Tracks, Scats & Other Traces: A Field Guide to Australian Mammals; *Barbara Triggs*
 - Trees & Biodiversity: A guide for Australian farm forestry; *D Salt, D Lindenmayer, R Hobbs*
 - Trees of Victoria and Adjoining Areas; *Leon Costermans*

- Understanding aquifers through groundwater stories: A collection of writing from a fieldwork day on the Barwon Downs borefield; *Edited by Deborah Wardle* - **NEW !!!**
- Upper Barwon River System — Mt Sabine to Winchelsea; *Trevor & Pam Jennings*
- Walking the Barwon River from Source to Sea; *Jennifer Morrow and Peter Greig*
- Warncoort & Mt Gellibrand History; *Birregurra & District Historical Society*
- Water for Every Farm - Yeomans Keyline Plan; *P. A. Yeomans*
- Weeds of the South West: An Identification Guide for Australia; *FJ & RG Richardson & RCH Shepherd*
- Where Song Began; *Tim Low*
- Whole Farm Planning - Principals & Options; *Brian Garrett*
- Wild Places of Greater Melbourne; *Robin Taylor*
- Wild Mushrooming - A guide for foragers; *Alison Pouliot & Tom May*
- Wildlife on Farms — How to conserve native animals; *D Lindenmayer, A Claridge, D Hazell, D Michael, M Crane, C MacGregor, R Cunningham*

Marquee available for use

Thanks to a community grant from Acciona, UBLN have a marquee 3 x 4.5 m in size available for use by our Landcare groups. Please contact the office if you would like to use it.



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Murroon Landcare: Josh McGoldrick, Deb McSephney

Irrewarra Farmcare: Bruce Bilney, Justine McCarthy

Otway AgroForestry Network: Deb McSephney

Otway Seed Growers: Caitlin Tacey

Winchelsea Land and River Care: Jane Bartier, Steve Wade

Wurdale Landcare: Carrissa Wiseman

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*Please note new email addresses. We are transitioning over to new ones so if you could check and change our email addresses in your email contacts settings that would be great! We will still be able to access emails at the gmail account as we transition

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Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@UpperBarwonLandcareNetwork>

GROUPS & PARTNERS



TREE MANAGEMENT SERVICES



SUSTAINABLE FARMS



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



Australian Government

National
Landcare
Program



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