



# 2022-2023 Annual Report

2 November 2023



LATROBE CATCHMENT  
**LANDCARE**  
N E T W O R K





*Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network  
would like to acknowledge the  
Traditional Custodians of Country and  
recognise their continuing connection to  
land, sea, culture and community.*

*We pay our respects to Elders past,  
present and emerging.*



# Board Membership

Membership of the LCLN board is open to all adult Landcare members of LCLN

## Current Executive Board

Acting Chair: Daryl Marks  
Vice Chair: Peter Devonshire  
Treasurer: Phil Darton  
Secretary: Ian Hill

## Current Board Members

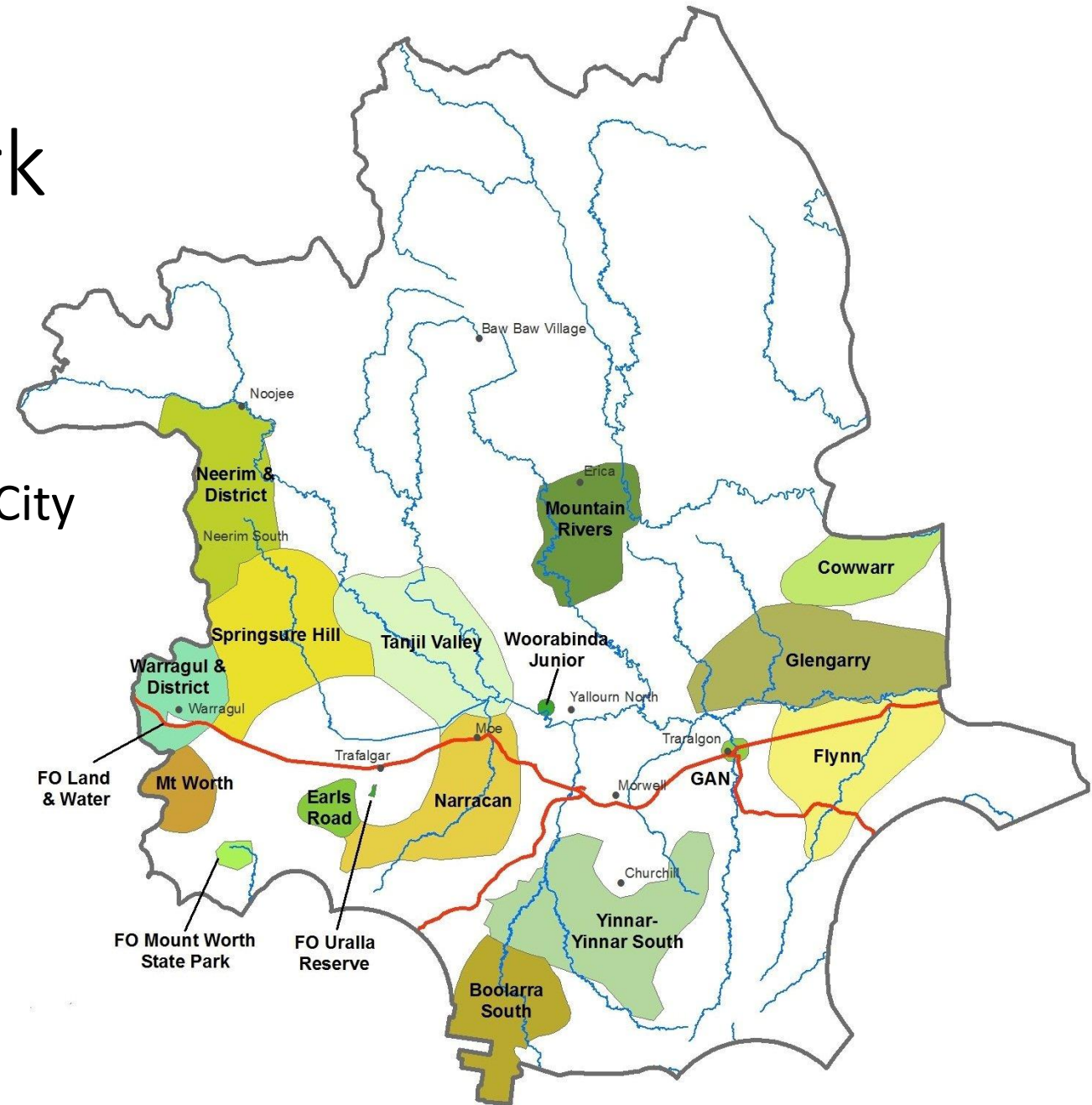
Alison Craven  
David Frances-Foreman  
John Cahill



WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN? LCLN's Board welcomes up to 12 members, with good representation from across LCLN's Groups and Independent members. Please let us know if you'd like to join.

# About the Network

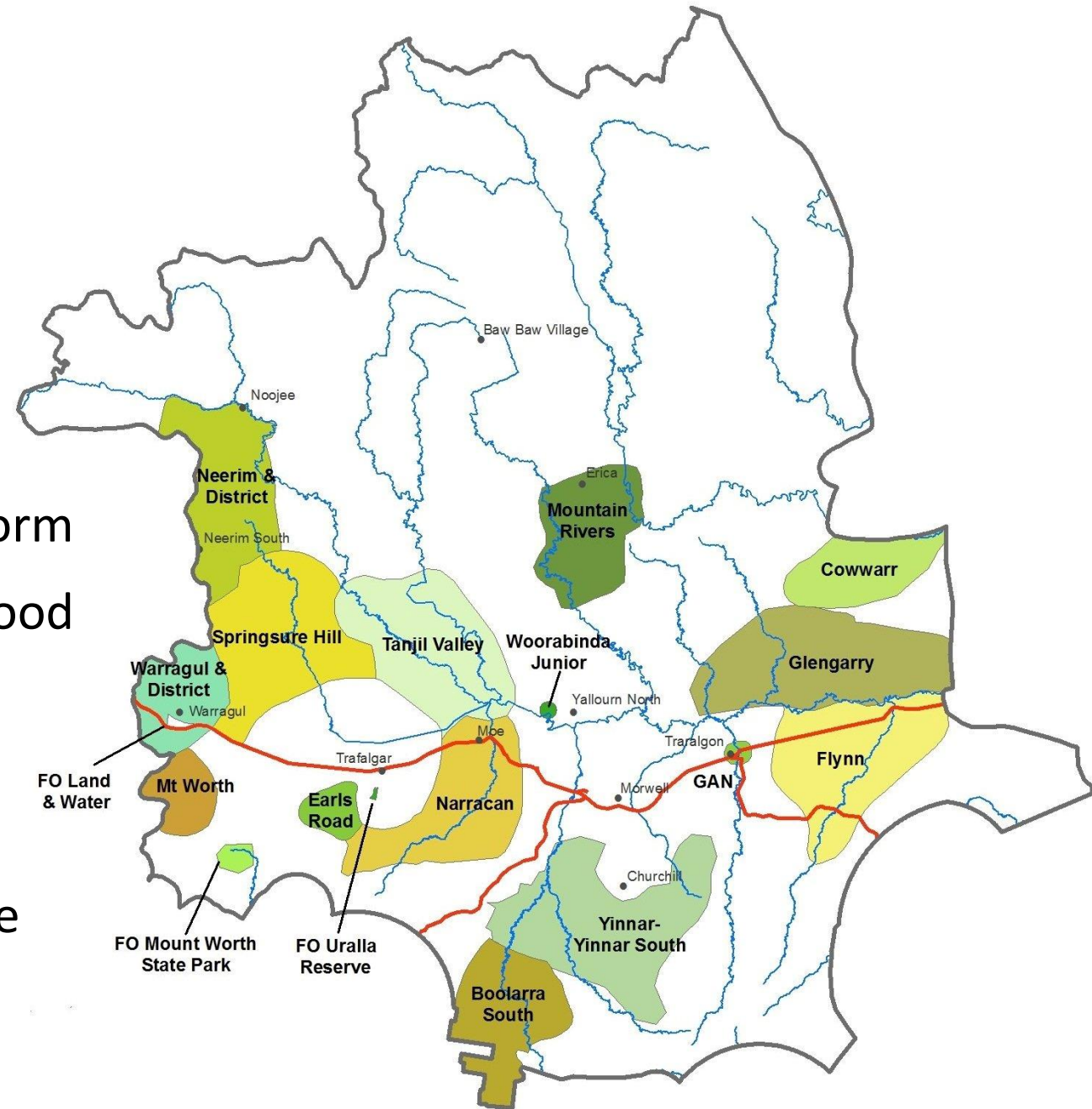
- First formed in 1999
- Services a large catchment
- Encompasses Baw Baw, Latrobe City and Wellington Shires
- Supports 21 local Landcare & Friends of Groups, as well as manages projects with local partners





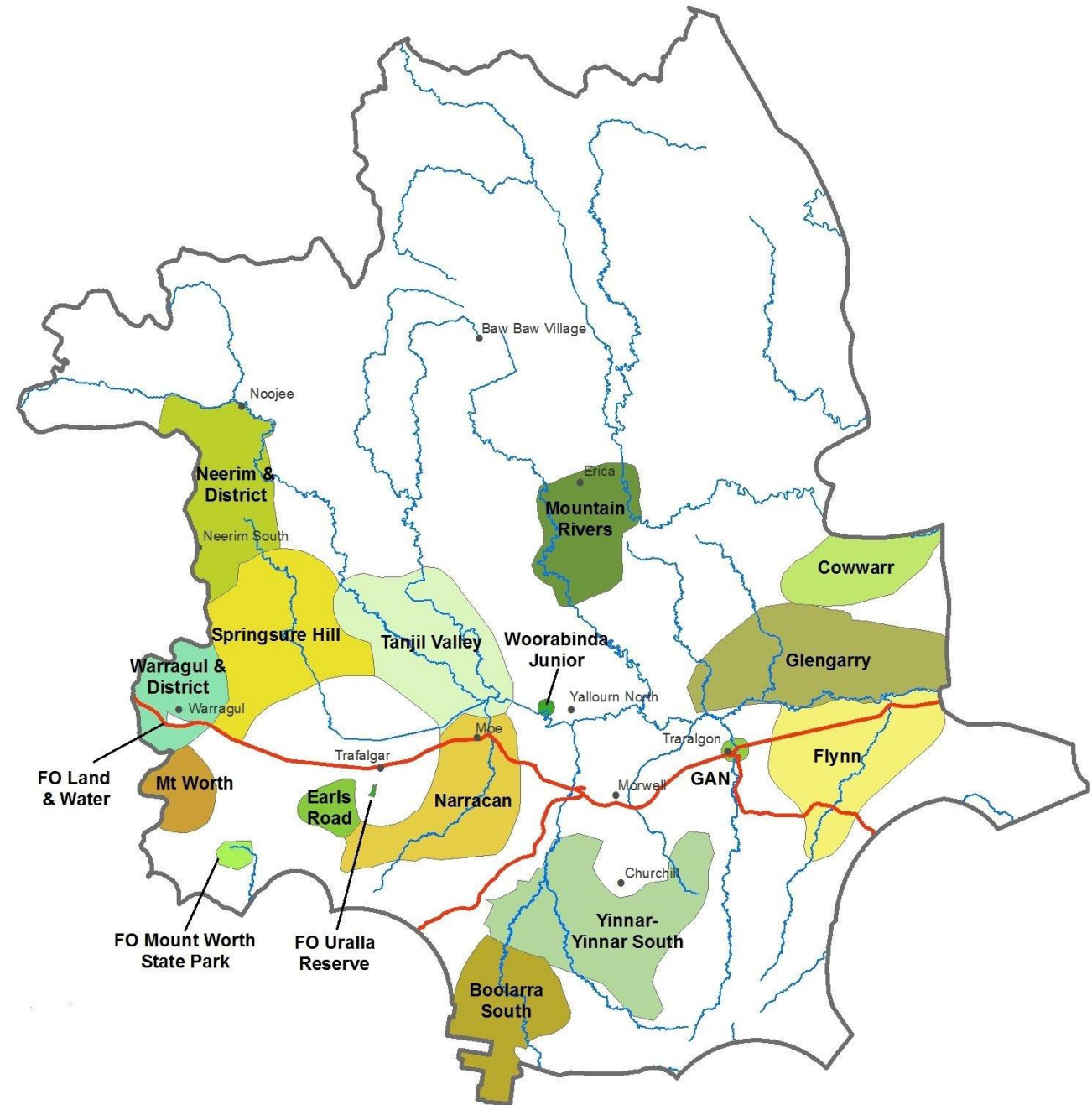
# About our area

- Home to many threatened or endangered species such as the Greater Glider, Powerful Owl and the Gippsland Giant Earthworm
- Heavily fragmented pockets of good quality habitat
- Passionate people and groups
- Highly diverse groups including urban and rural focus, and a wide range of environmental projects



# Our mission

- Aims to preserve and promote natural ecosystems in the Latrobe region
- Provide support to groups to enable them to achieve their objectives and goals
- Attract investment to preserve, promote and enhance our natural environment



# Statement of Purpose

Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network encourages community activities that support environmental and farming sustainability, and provides leadership and management for the Network to strengthen and build capacity in the catchment.

To achieve our core purpose, four key areas have been identified and these assist in guiding the activities undertaken by the Network annually.





# Deputy Chair's Report – Darryl Marks

2023 has been a tricky year for the Network of LCLN. Covid times took longer than expected to get back to full time, for both staff and members. The move to working under the umbrella of Latrobe City at Morwell office and GLAWAC natural resources group depot in Morwell East. created learnings and disruption for staff.

Staffing has changed, with Marnie returning to WGCMA as Landcare Coordinator and Kelsey moving to WGCMA as a Community Projects Officer.

New facilitator faces;

- Laura B.
- Caroline H.
- *And* Jodie K.

They have all picked up the workload on the run.

The detail within our Landcare community monthly newsletter is enormous. -thanks to the involvement of our staff.

A big thanks to Peter Devonshire for his Chairman role for the majority of the year.  
Great professional guidance Peter.

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An increase in our finances from grants and consolidation of past projects has assisted for future planning. Special thanks must go to our newly introduced commercial ‘bookkeeper’. Plus thanks to Treasurer Phil for his reporting of our ‘current standing’

The collaboration and planning within the wider region of Gippsland Landcare has given great confidence to our staff to go forward. The take up of seeing how other Landcare groups do their work has injected co-operation and ideas.

Great thanks to Marnie E. and Martin/WGCMA staff for organisational guidance and always sitting side-by-side. Special mention must go to Secretary **Ian** for his ‘gatekeeper’ involvement for Landcare, in the wider Gippsland area covering the business community around:

- Windfarms
- Mining industry – rehabilitation of open cuts
- New age Energy developments offshore and associated infrastructure.
- Strzelecki – Alpine Biolinks developments

Board member **Alison C.** has been active in reporting the Boolarra area activities of associated local groups watching Koala and Greater Glider research.

School tree planting developing ‘understanding nature’, has taken a lot of work for Caroline, and is providing great satisfaction to all involved.

Soil/pasture ‘digging deeper’ projects in the western sector have provided a host of soil information to farmers and is about to be result reported, with thanks to Peter Ronalds for the groundwork.

Shelterbelt farm tree planting with farmers in the network has continued, and will reactivate again after Summer.

Our workload seems to be enormous, and I would like to sincerely thank our board members for their tireless support. It would be desirable to increase our volunteer board numbers to provide wider input from the local community.

Regards – covering with LANDCARE

**Your Acting Chair – Darryl Marks.**

# Treasurer's Report – Phil Darton

This report is presented in conjunction with the unaudited 2022/2023 Financial Statements. The audited Financial Statements will be presented at a Special General Meeting when the audit is completed and available.

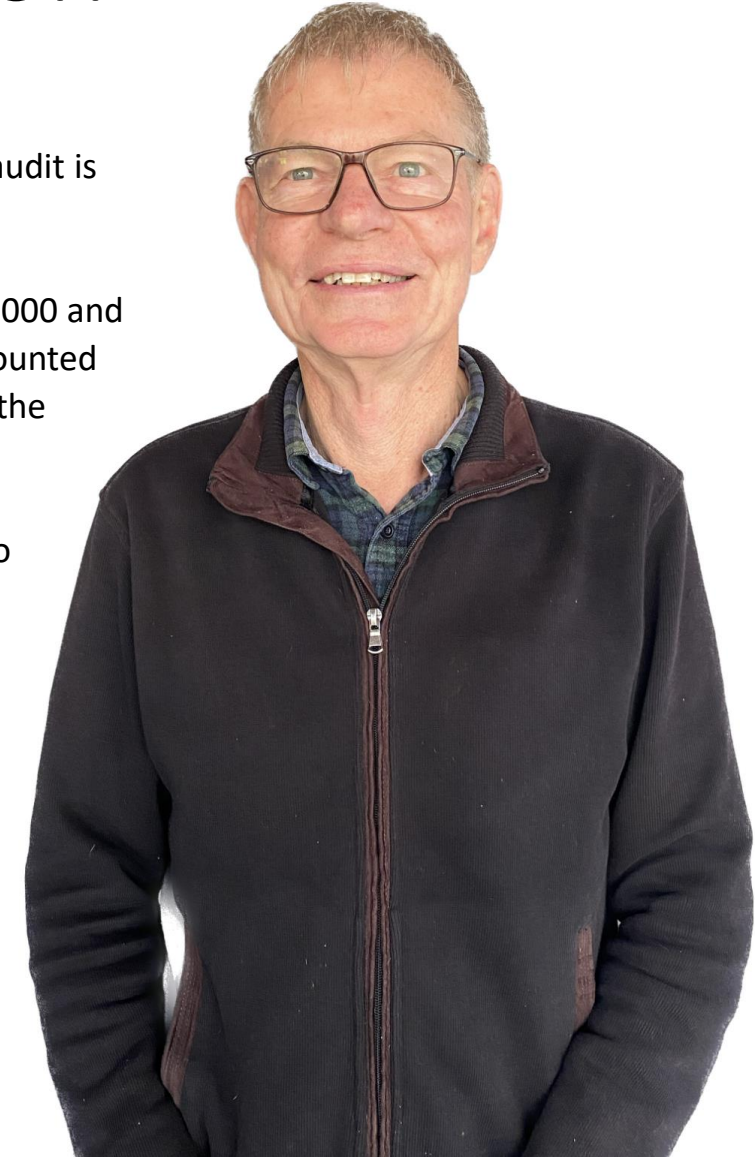
The Network is in a stronger financial position this year with its Total Equity up 70% to \$345,000 and Net profit back in black at \$140,000. After known commitments for current projects are accounted for, the Network has available discretionary funds of \$36,000 on top of \$39,000 set aside in the employment funding line for the rest of the current financial year.

The Network, however and as always, will need to continue to attract new project funding to ensure its ongoing viability.

2022/2023 was a year of consolidation for the Network with the transition to our hosting arrangements at Latrobe City Council (LCC). LCC provides payroll and HR services, office accommodation and vehicle access. LCC is now the recipient of the Victorian Landcare Facilitator Program (VLFP) funds for the Network's two facilitators. LCLN pays an agreed annual fee to LCC for the services provided net the total VLFP funds received.

For the 2023 FY the payment to LCC was \$34,000. This payment was made to LCC in August 2023 and is not reported in the attached 2023 Financial Statements.

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The Network maintains independent control of its own bank accounts and financial management and to this end has engaged Elite Bookkeeping to provide bookkeeping services and Cardell Assurance and Audit for its audit service.

The network is indebted to our Manager, Laura Bowles, for strong oversight of our business and the practical day to day management of our finances.

**Phil Darton,  
Treasurer, LCLN**

## Balance Sheet - Unaudited

Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network

As at 30 June 2023

	30 JUN 2023	30 JUN 2022
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Bank</b>		
Debit Card Account	290.68	235.06
Operating Account	348,832.46	166,595.31
Sub Group Account	3,389.52	3,600.11
West Gipps Sub Account	1,132.00	177.00
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>353,644.66</b>	<b>170,607.48</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Accounts Receivable	-	38,500.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>38,500.00</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>353,644.66</b>	<b>209,107.48</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable	6,598.76	-
ATO Clearing	358.00	526.00
Credit card 6834	147.84	-
GST	0.17	3,499.80
Historical Adjustment	177.00	177.00
Loan to West Gippsland Sub Account	955.00	-
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>8,236.77</b>	<b>4,202.80</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>8,236.77</b>	<b>4,202.80</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>345,407.89</b>	<b>204,904.68</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Current Year Earnings	140,503.21	-
Retained Earnings	204,904.68	204,904.68
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>345,407.89</b>	<b>204,904.68</b>

<b>Profit and Loss - Unaudited</b>		
Latrobe Catchment Landcare Network		
For the year ended 30 June 2023		
Account	2023	2022
<b>Trading Income</b>		
Interest	119.46	20.53
Landcare Members	292.90	90.24
Miscellaneous Income	103,140.00	12,045.45
Participant Contribution	54.55	0.00
Recoverable Costs	162.73	0.00
Regional Contributions	166,263.48	115,914.35
Sponsorship Income	1,855.00	9,690.91
Rebates & Refunds	0.00	500.00
<b>Total Trading Income</b>	<b>271,888.12</b>	<b>138,261.48</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>271,888.12</b>	<b>138,261.48</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Accounting and Bookkeeping	3,298.05	0.00
Advertising	21.77	0.00
Audit Costs - External	1,285.00	1,614.55
Bank Fees & Charges	45.60	67.20
C&F Reimbursable Cost	(396.45)	0.00
Conference & Seminar	0.00	54.55
Consultants	17,232.38	1,090.91
Contractors	33,696.59	16,624.13
Education & Training	1,046.82	8,560.00
Fares & Accomodation	1,442.86	827.00
Feed & Soil Tests	360.00	0.00
Fencing	14,552.73	0.00
Incentives/Grants Paid	18,458.18	24,258.63
Insurance & Registrations	1,060.16	695.62
Materials	2,450.78	1,926.90
Meeting Expenses	1,393.70	2,994.55
Minor Equipment	436.35	0.00
Postage	0.00	22.73
Photocopying & Printing	95.09	0.00
Project Event Catering	2,481.23	0.00
Promotions & PR	886.36	0.00
Reimbursement of Project Funds BC	0.00	5,009.37
Publications/Subscriptions	791.36	951.49
Remuneration	17,469.87	73,063.56
Repairs & Maintenance	297.75	796.44
Stationery	206.05	164.23
Travel Reimbursement	215.16	0.00
Trees	11,927.51	14,676.50
Uniforms / Medicals	630.01	0.00
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>131,384.91</b>	<b>153,398.36</b>
<b>Net Profit (loss)</b>	<b>140,503.21</b>	<b>(15,136.88)</b>

# Managers Report – Laura Bowles

This has been a year of change and further evolution of LCLN. Within 12 months we sadly said farewell to Kelsey and Marnie. Both have since joined the WGCMA; Kelsey in an expanded project officer role which will see her cross paths with LCLN members frequently. Marnie has taken on the Network Co-ordinator role for all the Landcare Networks in the West Gippsland Catchment and we still work closely with her and access her valuable advice often.

Caroline joined us in February, I started in April, and Jo began in September so although we are all “new” faces we have been doing our best to visit all groups who have invited us along to AGMs and meetings. We’ve also made a concerted effort to attend field days and industry events so that we are out there on the ground, networking and ready to take up opportunities for more project collaboration with groups. Caroline is now full time with LCLN, taking on the project officer role in addition to the facilitator role. Jo has 3 days a week, and is primarily a facilitator. I am working 2 days a week officially but unofficially a lot more as a volunteer to ensure our organisation is running smoothly.



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We have continued to finish up some of the projects that had significant extensions over the Covid years, as well as begin new projects including the large Yinnar Bushfire Recovery Project that we are facilitating with Latrobe City Council. In the next 6-12 months, we aim to finish up some of the projects that have been on the books for some years. We also continue to work closely with local schools, with our Learning with Landcare program starting up this year. The Latrobe City and Baw Baw Shire council connections have been strengthened and we have done a number of joint partnership events with both Councils.

LCLN has also welcomed the West Gippsland Seed Bank as a network member, and is assisting with reinstating the Woorabinda Junior Landcare Group which was in recess for a number of years. Sadly some of our groups may go into recess over the next 12 months but this is not the end of those groups. In some cases, it only takes a new committee of passionate like-minded people to get together and the groups start anew. We are always happy to support and assist groups with these, and any other decisions or information they may need. We have a broad network of connections that we want to help all of our groups tap into.

Please keep inviting us to your events and never be afraid to call if you need advice or assistance.



# 2022-2023

# Regional Engagement

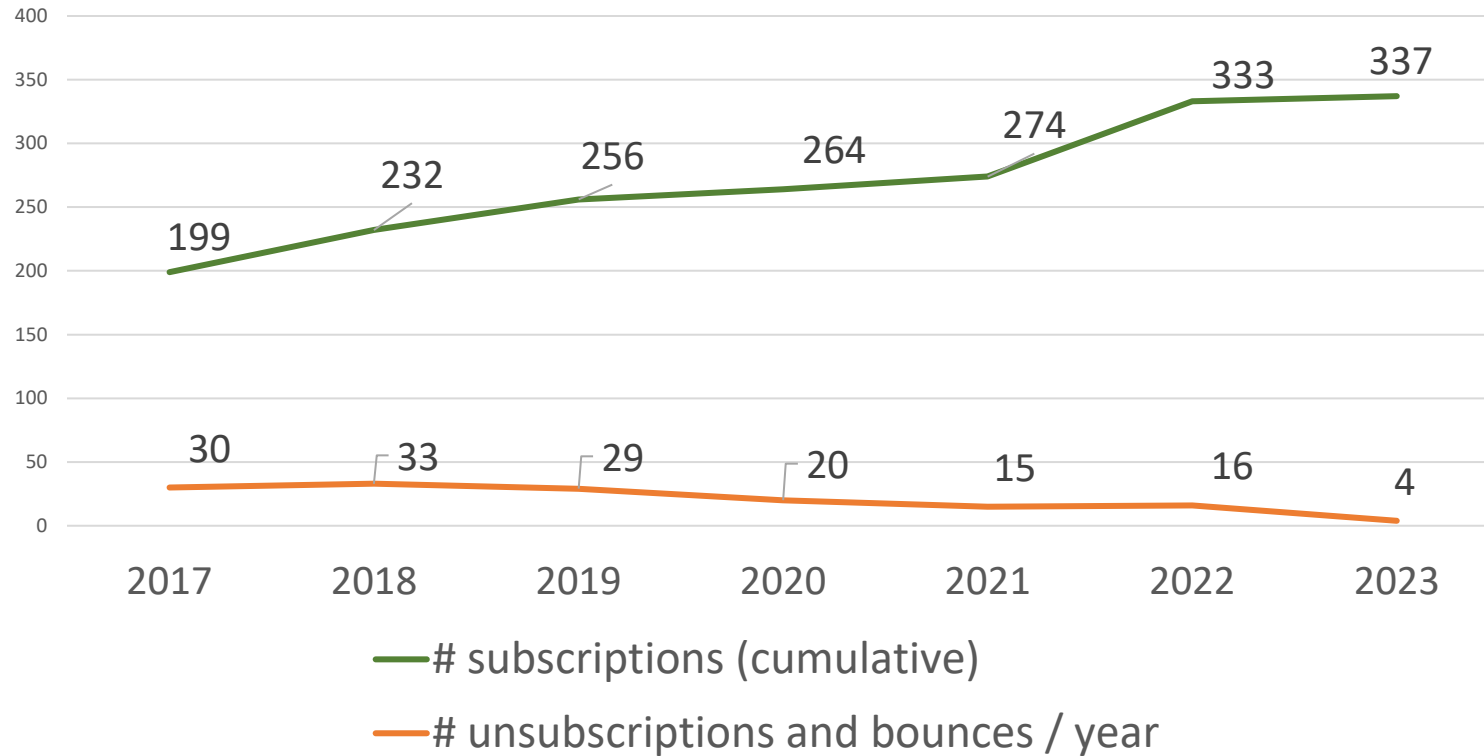


# eNewsletter



	Open Rate	Click Rate
2021-22	38.97%	3.86%
2022-23	41.80%	4.68%

Growth since inception to June 30, 2023







# Website

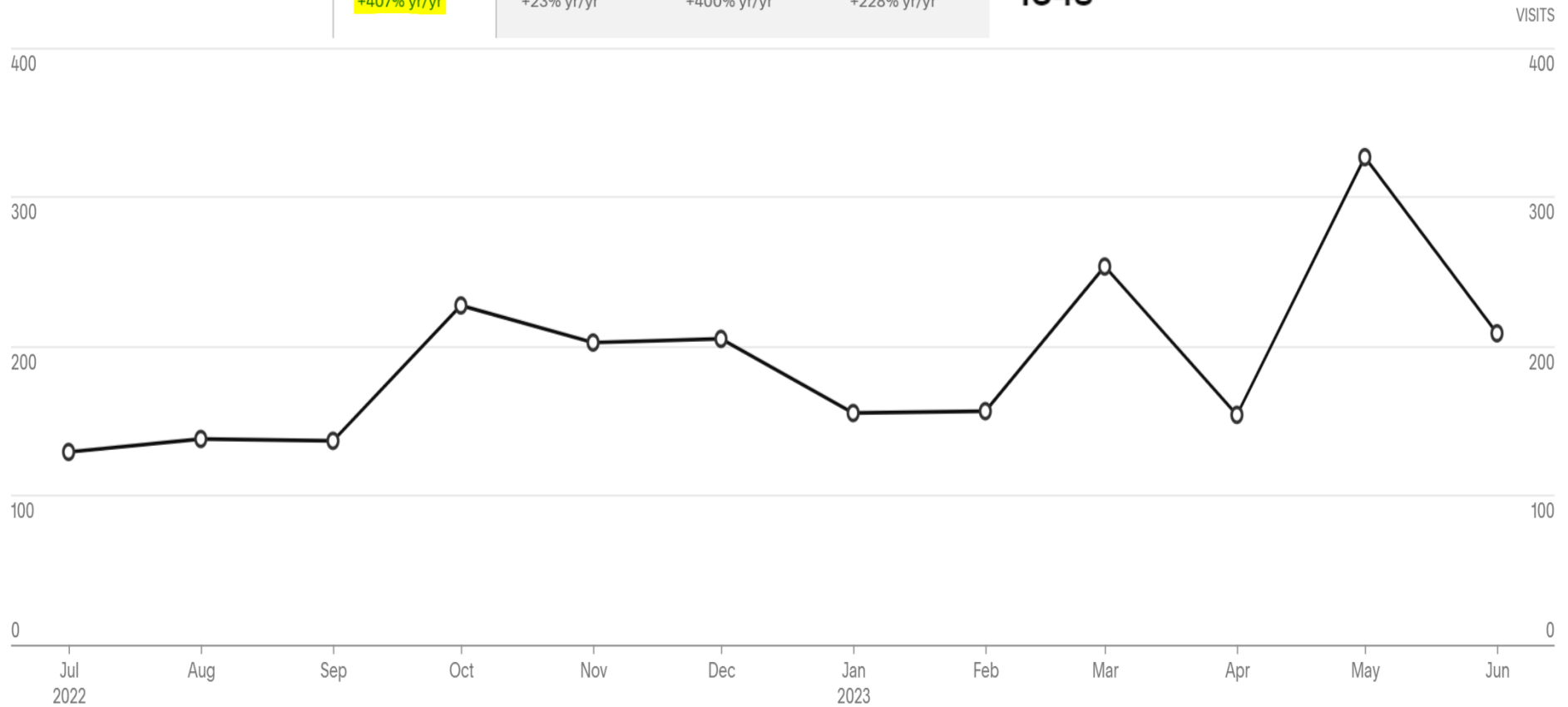
## Visits

Jul 1, 2022–Jun 30, 2023 • 2,292 Total

<u>VISITS</u> <b>2.3K</b> <b>+407% yr/yr</b>	<u>BOUNCE RATE</u> <b>57.81%</b> +23% yr/yr	<u>UNIQUE VISITORS</u> <b>1.6K</b> +400% yr/yr	<u>PAGEVIEWS</u> <b>4.4K</b> +228% yr/yr
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Time on Page  
**134s**


Monthly ▼




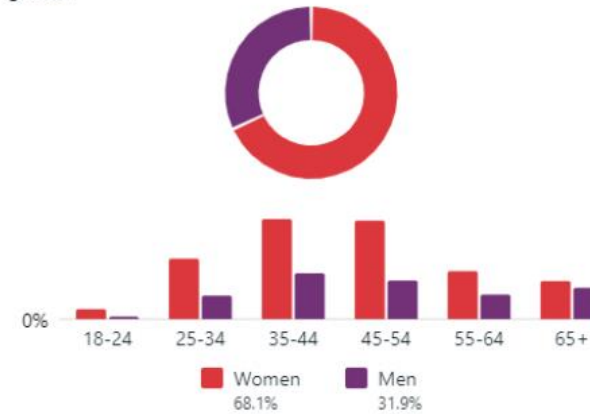
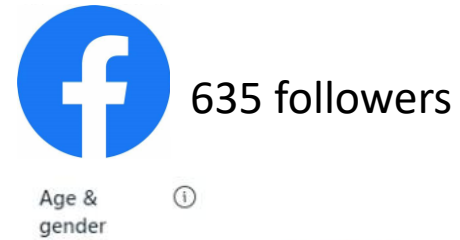
NB: The current website was established in April 2022, therefore the first year to year comparison will occur in 2023-24FY.

# Social media

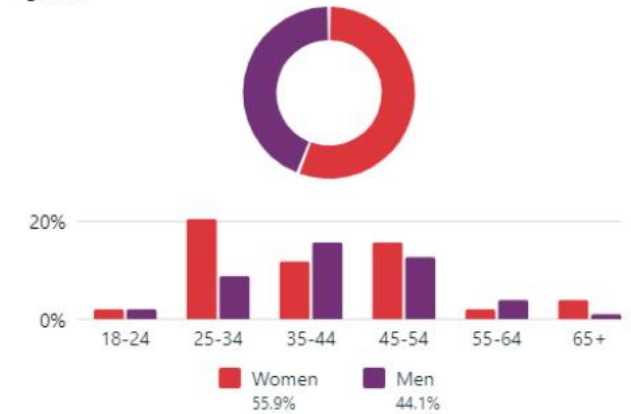
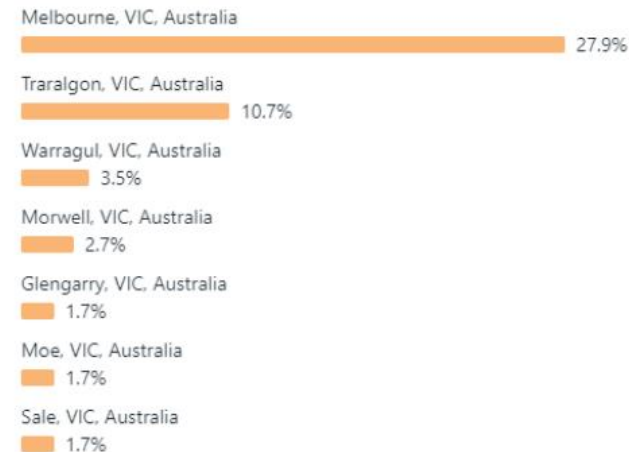
 new likes 69  
(up 23.6% from previous year)

 reach 13,108  
(up 692% from previous year)

 reach 495  
(up 117% from previous year)



## Top cities



## Top cities

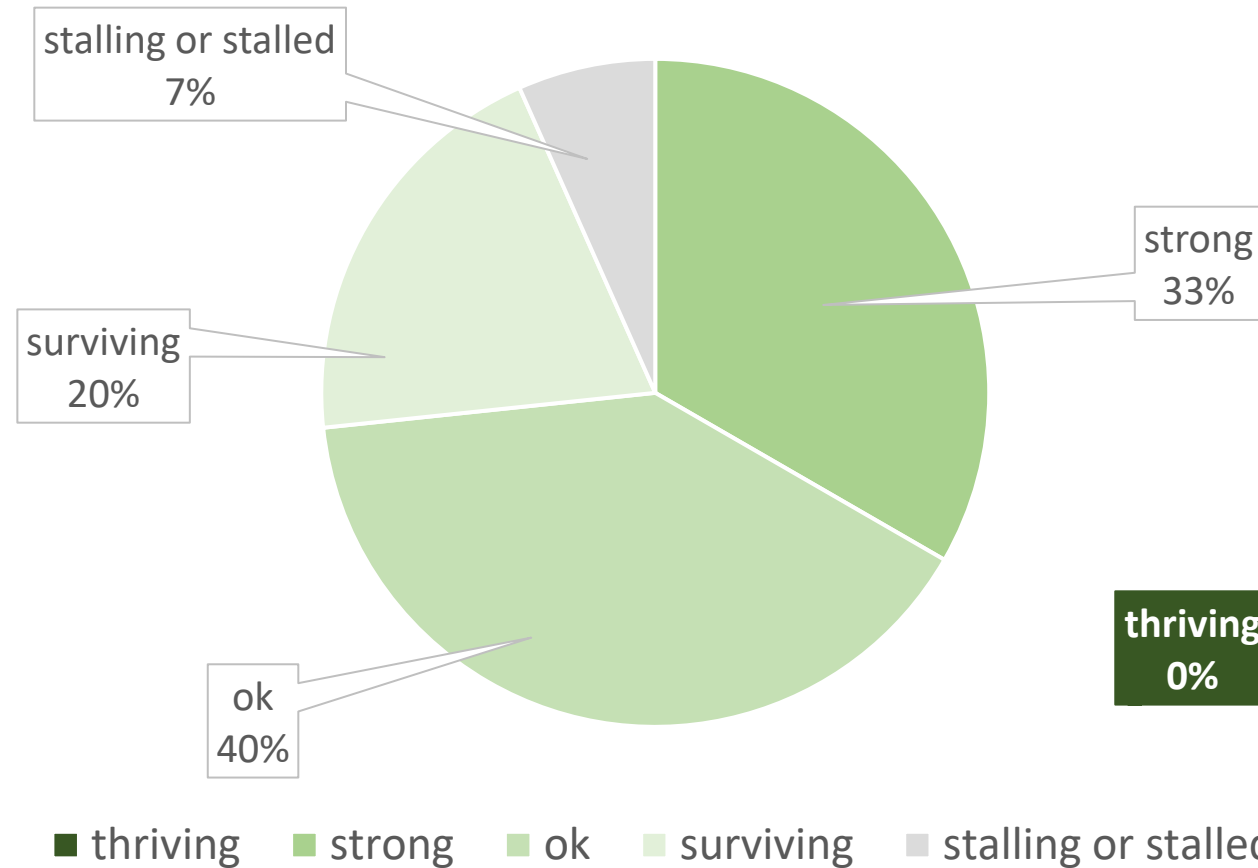




# 2022-2023 Groups Report



# 2022/2023 Group Health Snapshot\*



\*This information was collected from 15 groups from the Victorian Landcare Gateway Support Grant – Health Surveys. Groups who participated in the Health Surveys received \$500 to go towards their operating costs.

# 2022/2023 LCLN group activities\*

- **286** active volunteers
- **426** Landcare members (43 new)
- **8,266** volunteer hours onground (2,997 admin, learning and promotion)
- **241** non-Landcare members volunteered and/or participated in activities
- **69.7ha** revegetation
- **75.14ha** remnant vegetation protection
- **628ha** weed control
- **7ha** pest animal control
- **4** field days
- **41** workshops
- **2** training events



\*This information was collected from 15 groups from the Victorian Landcare Gateway Support Grant – Health Surveys. Groups who participated in the Health Surveys received \$500 to go towards their operating costs.



# 2022-2023 Group Highlights

# Boolarra South Landcare Group

Boolarra South has continued work at Apex Park and Morwell River Falls this year, with Christmas celebrations planned to round out 2023.

Despite the lingering effects of Covid and the flu, members are looking forward to continuing improvements along Morwell River including work to facilitate a sustainable fish population (brown trout and black fish). Fingers are crossed for milder and better weather.

Financial members: 40



Construction and installation of nest boxes for the community continues to be a focus for Boolarra South.



# Friends of Land and Water (Warragul)

This year has seen the group continue maintenance of their site in Warragul despite significant challenges posed by inclement weather and ageing members.

The provision of a new zero-turn mower provided by *Lifestyle Warragul* has been a highlight for the group and they look forward to recruiting new members and continuing maintenance in the coming year.

Financial members: 36

Active members: 14



Friends of Land and Water maintain a site next to the M1 freeway, including a small wetland.

# Friends of Mt Worth

Despite the challenges posed by weather conditions, this year volunteers completed 35m of raised walkway along Gardiners Mill track. Carrying more than 2tonne of materials by hand (via an 800m access track), this makes a considerable improvement to the 12km of track the group caretakes.

Next year the group aims to produce simple plant and bird identification brochures and interpretive signs to increase visitor awareness and appreciation of the area.

Financial members: 26

Active members: 21



Protecting giant tree ferns, this walkway was made possible by a \$15k Victorian Landcare grant.



# Gippsland Agroforestry Network (GAN)

GAN has taken a little while to recover from the lingering effects of Covid lockdowns, however the Network has managed to re-establish itself and hold several field days and information sessions for members during 2022-23. These have included the 2022 Christmas get together at Knob Reserve where the group was able to discuss local custodian's indigenous management of the reserve.

Other activities have included tree inventory sessions contributing data to the Farm Forestry Toolbox, and operating the Lucas portable sawmill.



GAN organises field days to learn about management, timber production and biodiversity firsthand from landholders and industry partners.

# Gippsland Plains Rail Trail Mgt Committee

Revegetation and weed control work along much of the Trail has continued in 2023 with many thanks to partnering groups for financial and volunteer support - Glengarry, Cowwarr, Maffra District Landcare groups, Peter Needham's and Bob Tuits Mental Health Group.

The committee is keen to continue unfinished sections of the trail in 2023-24, estimating another 3,000 trees will be required for the section running westward from Don Langs Drive.

Financial members: 26

Active members: 15



Funds for revegetating and maintaining the Gippsland Rail Trail have come from multiple sources which runs between Maffra and Traralgon.



# Mt Worth & District Landcare Group

Reinvigorating the group, securing funding for revegetation works, and continuing the strong relationship with Warragul Specialist School have been major highlights for this year.

With a focus on member recruitment and administration this year, next year the group looks forward to implementing a coordinated deer control program, more farm walks and more waterway protection and restoration works.

Financial members: 40

Active members: 25



Funding this year has allowed 4 landholders to plant more than 1100 tubestock to enhance biodiversity and protect soil.

# Springsure Hill Landcare Group

Despite peoples' increasingly busy lifestyles, Springsure Hill continues to host regular gatherings that focus and extend on members' diverse interests. This year the group also completed one of their biggest projects in years under a \$30k Victorian Landcare Grant, and successfully completed three smaller grant-funded projects.

Next year the group looks forward to increasing youth engagement, promoting and developing biolinks, and complimenting the work done by local councils on public land.

Financial members: 75

Active members: 40



Springsure's plant and bird identification day in September was well attended by young and old alike.



# Tanjil Valley Landcare Group

Funded by Baw Baw Shire Council, a key highlight of 2023 was Tanjil's Environmental Festival at Blue Rock Lake. Boasting more than 20 displays and activities by groups including Bug Blitz and Kids Nature Play, entertainment and catering was provided by local community.

In addition to maintaining existing plantings, the group is looking forward to further embracing diversity and strengthening their relationships with local community to increase membership.

Financial members: 26

Active members: 14



Funding from When Bee Group and National Tree Day saw over 600 plants added to the walking track around Blue Rock Lake this year, with help from local primary students and the Scouts Group.

# West Gippsland Seedbank

Upskilling in First Aid, establishing a new user-friendly website, installing shade for seed cleaning activities and sprucing up their seed storage container have been the focus for West Gippsland Seedbank volunteers this year.

While finding viable and accessible seed collection sites, and keeping vermin out of seed stores remain ever-present challenges, the group looks forward to expanding the species diversity they collect in future.

Financial members: 14



Volunteers spent more than 450hrs collecting and cleaning native seed in 2022-23, and in the off season searched for more sites and undertook educational field trips.





# 2022-2023 Project Highlights

# Farmers Digging Deeper

Supporting 315 farmers across 5 networks to increase their knowledge of soil health and to better understand the links between soil health, farm productivity and profitability. This project is proving to be a great area of interest to Landcarers in our region.

Across the LCLN network:

- 14 farmers completed Intro to Soil Health program
- 1 multi species site was developed and intensively sampled

**YET TO COME:** 50 participants from LCLN and WPCLN registered for final workshop



# Protecting Platypus in Narracan Creek and Morwell River

3 main landholders are participating in the project, 2 have unfortunately withdrawn so funds are being redirected to new sites.

This project will achieve:

- 1,272m creek line fencing
- 2,000 plantings in 2023
- 2,800 trees to be planted in 2024

Engagement with a new landholder has begun and follow-up with current landholders is underway.

**YET TO COME:** Project reporting is due in December 2023 with completion of project due January 2024. A small extension may be sought.





# Creating biodiversity linkages in the Landscape

This project aims to revegetate drainage areas flowing into the Latrobe river, helping to reduce sediment runoff and increase water quality.

This project has resulted in:

- 1,785m of fencing
- 3,000 trees planted
- Increase of bird species visible at one site

**YET TO COME:** Information to support landholders to conduct Bug and Bird surveys beyond the projects completion.

Second round of planting will happen on properties in 2024.



Fencing and reveg. of drainage area. Connecting neighbouring plantations with the Latrobe River – before photo.



# West Gippsland Dung Beetle Project

In partnership with Maffra District Landcare, this project engages and involves community to increase their capacity to monitor and protect existing dung beetle populations in West Gippsland.

- 35 EOI's received
- 16 landholders engaged

**YET TO COME:** Distribute test kits and present workshop by Dr Russ Barrow.

Set up a beetle exchange program which involves swapping beetle species that are abundant in one location but uncommon in another.



# Learning with Landcare

Originally a Covid fuelled National Tree Day planting project, this funding stream has expanded to include activities and plantings within local schools.

- 7 schools with potential projects
- Project ideas include:
  - pollinator gardens
  - Bushfood gardens
  - Gardens for habitat

**YET TO COME:** Funding to be allocated to successful school projects, plants ordered and activity plans developed.



This is just one of the potential school gardens which will be reinvigorated into a Bush Food Garden.



# Flynns Creek Restoration Project

First year of a two-year project which aims to rehabilitate the waterways which eventually run into the Gippsland Lakes by fencing and revegetating crucial waterway systems.

- 2,800 trees planted to date
- 3,450 trees to be planted in 2024
- 4,358m fencing erected
- Lots of weed control

**YET TO COME:** Continuing to support our busy farmers in the region with their commitment to these projects.

Organise a field day which showcases the project work in this area.



# Shade and Shelterbelts

First year of a 3 year project saw 4 landholders from east of Glengarry and 1 landholder from Boolarra install:

- 2450m of fencing
- 4,100 trees planted

With funding confirmed for the second year of Shade and Shelterbelts, there are 3 new landholders from the Willow Grove/Shady Creek area and continuation of projects on farms in Glengarry and Boolarra which will see a further:

- 2150m of fencing
- 3,910 trees planted

This is a very worthwhile project and we and Energy Australia look forward to watching the development on each property.





# Yinnar 2019 Bushfire Recovery Project

We are now well underway with this project with 8 site visits conducted from EOI's that were received through the Latrobe City Council.

Potential projects stats:

- 2,951m of fencing
- 5,910 trees to be planted

Working closely with local contractors, quotes are in and recommendations will soon be taken to our Projects Committee for approval.

Project is to be completed by June 2024.



# National Tree Day

A number of our groups held NTD plantings which involved their local communities and schools. Groups who held planting included:

- Callignee
- Cowwarr
- Tanjil Valley
- Springsure Hill
- Neerim South

LCLN held 3 schools day plantings:

- Grey St Primary | 200 trees | Traralgon Railway Recreation Reserve
- Glengarry Primary School | 300 trees | Eaglehawk Creek along the Gippsland Plains Rail Trail
- Latrobe Special Development School and Liddiard Rd Primary School

This is a day that we always look forward to each year. Next year, we will be working more closely with our local councils to support their revegetation efforts.







Thank you  
for your continued support...



National  
Landcare  
Program

