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New Nature Fund projects announced

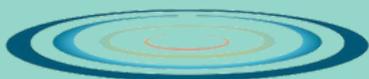
Welcome to the last edition of the Glenelg Hopkins CMA newsletter for 2022. We finished off the year with some great news under the Victorian Government's 'Nature Fund' that was launched in August 2022 to invest in high impact projects that delivered on the goals of Biodiversity 2037 and threatened species recovery. The CMA was successful with two projects under the Nature Fund.

The *Saving 17 Threatened Species on the Victorian Volcanic Plains* will establish a seed production area and re-introduction program, to improve the trajectory of 17 threatened and culturally significant species on the Victorian Volcanic Plain. The project aims to increase population numbers and improve the net condition of over 350 ha of Natural Temperate Grasslands of the Victorian Volcanic Plain. The project will work in partnership with the Woordoo-Chatsworth Landcare Group

The *Reversing Decline of the Critically Endangered Southern Bent-wing Bat* is a 3-year project based in the Greater Portland area, focusing on improving outcomes for the Southern Bent-wing Bat and other Critically Endangered Species. Financial pledges from project partners were provided by the Southwest Environment Alliance and Zoos Victoria as leverage to the project. Members of the Southern Bent-Wing Bat Recovery Team also provided input, and pledged ongoing support to the project.

A full list of successful Nature Fund projects can be found [HERE](#)

Adam Bester CEO Glenelg Hopkins CMA



CMA NEWS:

30 year old Bream caught in the Glenelg River

The importance of catch and release angling and fish tagging research has been demonstrated with a Black Bream caught in the Glenelg River with a research tag from 2012.

Black bream is a relatively slow-growing species and are highly prized by recreational anglers, but they are also an important research species, particularly in the Glenelg.

One such study carried out by a Deakin University Marine Biology student, tagged a number of fish 10 years ago, and in August this year, one of those fish was recaptured by an angler.

“What was remarkable was how slowly the fish has grown over the 10-year period,” Glenelg Hopkins CMA Senior Waterway Officer, Stephen Ryan, said.

The research tag information showed the fish was caught and tagged on 19 August 2012 in Taylors Straight, weighing 704 grams and measuring 38.6 centimetres in length.

When South Australian angler Patrick Byrne from Port MacDonnell happened to snag the tagged fish in the Glenelg in August this year, nearly 10 years to the day later, it had doubled in weight to 1.4kg but measured only 44cm in length.

“That is a growth rate of just over half a centimetre a year,” Mr Ryan said.

It is estimated that a bream takes approximately 9-to-10 years to reach the legal minimum length of 28cm to be taken by a recreational angler.

This means the bream that was caught is possibly over 30 years old and spawned sometime in the early 90’s.

Read more about the catch and why it's so important for research on our website [HERE](#)



Angler Patrick Byrne with his 44cm Bream

Recognition for long-serving staff members

At a recent whole of organisation integrated staff meeting, three staff members were recognised for their milestone years at the CMA.

Pictured (RIGHT) are People and Culture Advisor, Laura Hausler, (10 years), Senior Biodiveristy Officer, Jacinta Hendriks (15 years) and, Senior waterways Officer, Dave Nichols (20 years).



It's monitoring season - grasslands, birds and wetlands

Monitoring activities have been a focus of grasslands activities in recent weeks, with grassland, wetland and Button Wrinklewort monitoring and in-field discussion days. This has been undertaken by both CMA staff and community members.



These projects are undertaken by the Glenleg Hopkins CMA with funding through the Australian Government, and support from Regional Roads Victoria, La Trobe University, and private landholders.



CMA NEWS:

Sanderling return to our beaches for the summer

The Sanderlings are back! There have already been reports of very large flocks - up to 5000 birds - sighted on our beaches.

It included this one - a Sanderling (RIGHT and BELOW) which had a tracker fitted earlier this year - which means the data will be able to show where this Sanderling has been since it left our shores in May!

This bird was caught, had its tag checked, was measured and weighed, and back out with its flock in 15 minutes. The application of trackers and this project are completed under strict animal ethics regulations.

You can learn more about our Sanderling tracking project, and these trackers (which weigh less than 5 grams) [HERE](#)

How can you be part of this global project? There's information about that on our website, at the Sanderling tracking project page [HERE](#).



National soil judging competition held in Ballarat



The 10th Australian Soil Judging Competition was held by Soil Science Australia in Ballarat and surrounds 1-3 December.

This year's event includes participants from around Australia coming together to connect, learn and improve their understanding of soil. Soil judging competitions bring together experienced soil scientists with early career soil professionals and students to gain practical experience of soil in the landscape.

The Soil Judging Competition includes two training days and one competition day, leading to the announcement of the winners at the awards dinner, held at Sovereign Hill. Prizes were awarded for team and individual performances. More information on the competition is [HERE](#)

Wetland inspection with Traditional Owners

Heavy squalls and wet feet could not deter a trip out on Eastern Maar Country at Walker Swamp with colleagues from Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Nature Glenelg Trust to see how the recently high rainfalls are filling the area.

All this water in the landscape is bringing great ecological and cultural benefits to Walker Swamp and the wetlands and waterways across the region.

The activities at Walker Swamp are part of the Our Catchments, Our Communities On-ground Stewardship project.



ABOVE: Glenelg Hopkins CMA and Nature Glenelg Trust staff with members of Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation visiting the Walker Swamp to discuss the wetland (BELOW) and importance of water in the landscape .



The sneaky snipe - Australia's rarest breeding waterbird

They're Australia's rarest breeding waterbird. They're listed as nationally and globally Endangered. They skulk in shallow wetlands among waterplants and mud. Sadly, the strikingly beautiful Australian Painted-snipe is continuously relegated to the too hard basket for in-depth research.

With your help, for the first time ever, we will track the movements of these cryptic, near-mythical ghost birds, revealing their well-guarded secrets using the latest satellite and mobile phone tower technology.



[FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT HERE](#)

CMA NEWS:

CMA works crew begins cleaning up the aftermath of floods

Our works crew has begun getting out in the catchment assisting landholders with flood damage to fences. This work is largely around re-righting fences to ensure stock containment and removing debris to ensure landholders can have functional fences again. These images show examples of where the crew have been working and the kind of activities they complete

If you need assistance please get in touch with the CMA on ph: 03 55712526 or email: ghcma@ghcma.vic.gov.au



The Bitterns are back in town for the summer

Have you heard a low boom call and can't quite put your finger on what's making it? It might be an Australasian Bittern.

These booming beauties arrive to breed in wetlands in our area - let us know if you see/hear one!

These bitterns were seen soaring over wetlands in Portland by Jan Tonkin.



CMA NEWS:

Boat ramp works to begin on Glenelg River

The Sapling Creek Boat Launch project will begin in early December and replace the ageing and unsafe fixed downstream jetty on the Glenelg River estuary site with an all-abilities floating pontoon jetty.

Works are set to begin on Monday, December 5, and completed by the end of the week (Friday December 9), ready for summer and school holidays 2022.

While the works are being completed, the boat launch area will be closed to the public and alternate boat launching locations need to be sought. Upstream, this includes Pritchard's and Saunders Landing, while downstream sites include Simson's Landing and Nelson town boat ramps.



Boat launch area will be closed to the public for upgrade works to be completed. Re-opening Saturday, December 10 with newer, safer boat launch facilities ready for summer holidays!

More info @ ghema.vic.gov.au

Got rabbits around your wetlands?



We can help with that!

If you want to remove rabbits from around your wetlands, get in touch with one of these Landcare facilitators and find out how a new regional project can help you on your farm.

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