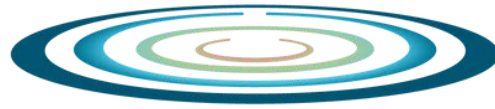


Glenelg Hopkins



CMA



IMAGE: Dave Nichols

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Glenelg Hopkins



CMA

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Meeting new faces and learning in Ararat

The CMA Board and management had the pleasure of holding their Board meeting in Ararat this month. It was a great chance to catch up with the Ararat community and partners and also talk about Landcare and Sustainable Agriculture. It was quite fitting to discuss these two topics as the Ararat region and community are well known for its strong Landcare following and participation in Sustainable Agriculture programs. Following on from COVID-19 lockdowns the CMA is making a conscious effort to hold more Board meetings in the region (outside of the main centres of Hamilton and Warrnambool) to enable the Board to reconnect with the community and hear about the main issues in the local areas. Over the coming months the CMA Board plans to also visit and meet with the community in Warrnambool, Beaufort, Balmoral, Portland/Nelson and Hamilton.

The Ararat Board meeting was also the first meeting for our two new Directors – Rowan Mackenzie and Kate Redwood. Kate is a farmer from Snake Valley and has had loads of experience working for local government and the health sector. Rowan has a background in NRM and has had previous roles working for local government, water and environment authorities. They will both be a great additions to the CMA team!

Adam Bester CEO Glenelg Hopkins CMA

CMA NEWS:

Growing Landcare capacity through training

Glenelg Hopkins CMA has funding through Victorian Government's Our Catchment, Our Communities program to support activities that build the capacity of catchment management stakeholders and community members to support natural resource and catchment management in the region. Through a survey of landcare and community groups, governance training and development was identified as a priority focus area.

Justice Connect and their team of expert not-for-profit lawyers delivered two, three hour workshops in Warrnambool and Hamilton covering the legal duties of not for profit committee members with a focus on real life examples from Landcare groups across Australia.

In total, 56 volunteers attended the two workshops with a further 14 watching the zoom recording that was available for a short time after the live workshops.

If you missed this training but want to know more, the Justice Connect website has a wealth of resources which can be found [HERE](#)



The next phase of capacity building training in the region is the Internationally renowned Partnership Broker course.

This 4 day course is a must for anyone that engages partners and collaborators in the delivery of their work. GHCMA has been able to secure this training at 75% the normal rate and provide it in the region.

**For more information contact
Bernadette Northeast
b.northeast@ghcma.vic.gov.au**

Sponsoring NRM leadership on the Great South Coast

Glenelg Hopkins CMA recently supported the Leadership Great South Coast October program day on the "Science of Climate Change", as part of the Our Catchments Our Communities Partnership and Capacity program. Leadership Great South Coast delivers an annual community leadership program for aspiring and emerging leadership drawn from all sectors of the Great South Coast Region. The October program day is one of 15 program days that the group participates in across the year. The current cohort of aspiring leaders spent the day learning first-hand about climate mitigation and adaptation.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA's Senior Biodiversity Manager Marty Gent spoke about what climate change means for our region, alongside other presenters from Southern Grampians Shire Council, local landholder and Nuffield scholar Johnny Gardner, and Sustainable Plastic Solutions.

Details about the Leadership Great South Coast Program can be found [HERE](#)

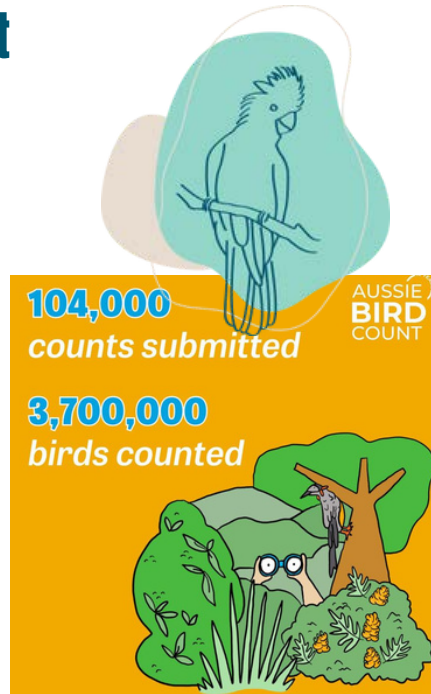


Attack on the wattle

In recent weeks large numbers of Black Wattles (*Acacia mearnsii*) have suffered a significant insect attack in the western parts of our catchment. From Harrow to Heywood and beyond, Black Wattles west of the Grampians have been under attack from Fireblight Beetle and their beetle larvae. This is the third spring in succession large numbers of Black Wattles have been affected in this area. Most trees are defoliated by the beetles with trees recovering as the spring turns to summer. However a small percentage of these trees will die in these episodes. This beetle is a native species and this is a naturally occurring event, the course of action in this case, is no action, and letting nature take its course.



The Aussie Bird Count



In the week of October 16th to the 22nd, bird enthusiasts across the land united to mark the spectacular 10th anniversary of the 2023 Aussie Bird Count.

During this milestone, a staggering **3.7 million** feathered friends were counted, unveiled through an astonishing **104,000 individual counts**.

CMA NEWS:

Mussel Ubers in captivity highlight beginning of breeding

ARI's (Arthur Rylah Institute) Timothy Fernando and Tarmo Raadik collected a small batch of mussels and 'host' fish from the Glenelg River system earlier this month to take into captivity to breed at the ARI aquarium.

Within a few days one of the female mussels started presenting a white strand of glochidia, which they were able to use to 'infect' a few host-fish.

The team now have dozens of fish (both pygmy perch and common galaxias) carrying the glochidia on their fins and gills which is a crucial first step in producing offspring!

Once the glochidia have dropped off the fish, the team will return the fish and mussels back to their homes in the Glenelg River system.

This activity was funded with support of the Victorian Government.

IMAGES: Arthur Rylah Institute



Frog count 2023

3rd -12th of November 2023

The annual Frog ID frog count is approaching!

The frog count aims to help the Frog ID team to better understand how frogs and their ecosystems are responding to a changing planet.

By using the free Frog ID app, you can record the frog callings around you and help count Australia's frogs!



For more information
[click here!](#)

Environmental DNA

A total of 38 sites along 140km of the rivers around Warrnambool have been tested as part of the Rivers of Warrnambool eDNA (Environmental DNA) project. Monitoring involves taking water samples to capture fragments of DNA left behind by animals that live in or near the water. From that, we can quickly and efficiently analyse the samples to give an indication of what's living along our rivers.

The results from this sampling helps prioritise decision-making, enhance further monitoring and inform future management strategies for the rivers.



Sit and Listen

As part of our school holiday program, the Windamara Junior Rangers and Tania from Nurture In Nature listened to a wonderful soundscape of river and wetland sounds, rain, storms and wind. They drew what they could hear and how it made them feel.

The Junior rangers also learnt about why plants and trees in our catchment and by our waterways are important for keeping the water clean, plus why keeping freshwater moving through our waterways helps to manage saltiness and low oxygen.



Tackling the pests on the importance Cultural Heritage Landscape

The key component of the *Protection of critical habitat values of the World Heritage listed Budj Bim Cultural Landscape* project has been addressing the threat of feral pigs, post-fire across the Budj Bim World Heritage area.

Over 100 feral pigs have been removed from the landscape equating to over 3000ha of control.

However, the bushfire also impacted the vegetation in the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape with weeds such as St John's Wort and African Honeybush (*Melianthus major*) thriving post-bushfire.

The unusually wet weather, the high density of the invasion and the difficult terrain has proved challenging for the project.

Working together with DEECA and GMTOAC the use of drones for herbicide application is being investigated to reduce the risk of injury due to working in difficult rocky terrain and the number of people working directly with chemicals.



African Honeybush (*Melianthus major*) infestation at Lake Gorrie - Budj Bim Cultural Landscape, showing initial die back after drone spraying.

Yarning on farm and on Country about indigenous artefacts

The most recent Yarns on Farms event was well attended with people gathering on a Stoneleigh sheep grazing farm to learn about Wadawurrung cultural heritage, the artifacts they may find on their own farm and sustainable wool production.

The event was attended by local farmers, a teacher and students from Beaufort school, Landcare Facilitators, and Wadawurrung Tradition Owners.

Nesting broilgas limited the farm walk, but there was still great discussion.



The Wadawurrung Yarn on Farms event on a Stoneleigh farm included a woolshed talk about what and how people identify artefacts.

Reinstating wetlands to support more natural cycles

As part of the Western Wetland and Rivers program, there are requirements to complete hydrological restoration of wetlands.

This restoration should mean that the wetting and drying cycles of the wetland are returned to something close to what would have occurred prior to drainage implementation.

A drainage plug has recently been constructed on a seasonal herbaceous/sedgy wetland. The site was located just north of Heywood. The wetland is approximately 8 hectares in size. Levels were run using a self-leveling survey to estimate the appropriate height of the drainage bund so as not to inundate the commercial tree plantation.

Following the construction completion, the wetland filled within two weeks and the final bund level was found to be accurate. This wetland should now stay wet for an additional number of weeks, allowing a range of fauna species to utilise the habitat and ensure a higher chance of completed life cycles.



Glenelg Hopkins CMA's Tim Covey assessing the wetland bund during construction

Do you have nesting dancers on your farm? Brolga banding call out

To better understand how the endangered Victorian brolga population is fairing, local DEECA staff will be banding brolga chicks this season.

Resightings of banded birds will, over time, give better estimates of how many brolgas there are in Victoria and where brolgas move to during seasons.

A previous Federation University project showed that banding brolga chicks was safe with the chicks unaffected, and proved that the information coming from having banded brolgas is invaluable as they grow.

Landholders who have a pair of brolgas currently nesting and who are prepared to allow the chicks to be banded, please email DEECA at bsw.environment@delwp.vic.gov.au



CMA NEWS:

Curling around the wetlands of the southwest

This is the wetland plant known as Curly Sedge (*Carex tasmanica*).

This endangered plant was found by our team wading around in wetlands in southwestern Vic as part of our Western Wetlands and River Project which is identifying wetland areas and helping landowners protect them.

Funding in the 2023-2024 financial year is available for landholders who have wetlands on their property for assistance with:

- Fencing
- Revegetation
- Pest plant + animal control
- Hydrological restoration (blocking or partially blocking existing drainage lines)

Location of funding: broadly the western part of our CMA region. Any areas west of the Grampians (Gariwerd) can be considered, but areas being targeted are those towards the Glenelg River.

Get in touch with Tim Covey at the CMA for more information about funding t.covey@ghcma.vic.gov.au.



Compensation flows

Are you a landholder with property on the Glenelg River?

The Glenelg Hopkins CMA would love to know if you know about compensation flows - the water that's available to landholders to make sure they have the water they need for stock and domestic use.

There's a super quick survey the CMA would really appreciate people filling in relating to these flows to make sure that with the predicted drier summer there is water for the farmers and the community.

**You can find the survey
[here!](#)**

Or access via the QR code

**Landholders along the Glenelg River
Do you know about compensation flows?**



We would like to know what you need to know about these flows to make sure we give you the information you need as a landholder along the waterway.



Complete the online survey:





EXPRESSION OF INTEREST ON FARM-TRIAL PRECISION AG

Are you interested in giving Precision Ag Strategies a try?

Beyond Bolac CAG have engaged Precision Agriculture to complete an on-farm trial to demonstrate how PA strategies can improve productivity and profitability while also protecting swamps.

The trial will include an initial consultation, the development of PA strategies, initial sampling and analysis, development of variable rate amelioration strategies and analysis of the first year's yield data following amelioration.

Two cropping farmers will be selected through an Expression of Interest process to work with Precision Agriculture throughout the trial & develop a customised PA journey depending on their key soil constraints and their farming systems.

Expression of Interest



SCAN ME!

If interested in being involved, please complete the Expression of Interest form by scanning the QR code, visiting www.beyondbolac.org or contacting Jileena Cole by Monday 13 Nov, 2023.

Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the trial, you need to meet the following:

- Have 200ha of land that includes swampy areas available for the trial and be willing to work with Precision Agriculture to determine & implement appropriate PA strategies
- Be willing to protect & manage natural assets (such as swamps, rivers, and grasslands) on your property
- Be willing to promote the project and hold an on-site workshop to demonstrate your PA journey to others.
- Your property is mainly a cropping enterprise & located within the Beyond Bolac, Upper Hopkins, Upper Mt Emu Creek or Panyabyr Landcare areas.
- Be available to participate in the trial from Dec 2023 through to June 2024

All cost (valued at over \$10,000 per farm) will be covered by funding received through Glenelg Hopkins CMA's Our Catchment Our Communities program.

GET IN TOUCH

Further information about the project, including a map of the project area, can be found at www.beyondbolac.org or contact BBCAG's Facilitator Jileena Cole