

# Nerrena / Tarwin Valley Landcare Group



---

## 2022 Group Report

The Nerrena/Tarwin Valley Landcare group acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Landcare group area and pays respect to their past present and emerging Elders.



# President's Report

Another year has flown by but that doesn't mean, that even with Covid 19 restrictions still in place for some of the year, we have sat on our hands. A quick guesstimate is we have done 480 plus volunteer hours for the year.

## PROJECTS

### **Regenerating the Farm; connecting soil, trees, water and people.**

Project runs from 1/10/2021 to 31/5/2023

In April we held a regeneration field day at Brad and Kathy Westaway's property that was attended by 43 people and have started organising the Carbon Farming / Regeneration field day which is to be held in October.

### **Blackspur Creek Wetlands Project**

We have continued to conduct bird monitoring activities this year and our findings can be found on the Birdlife Australia website. We have also regularly contact with Debbie McLees and staff from the Major Roads Projects Victoria in relation to the new highway at Koonwarra. Many of the group also attended the community day to walk along the new roadway before it was opened.

### **Linking the old and new South Gippsland Highways by restoring the Apple Tree Wetlands.**

Project runs 1/4/2022 to 30/6/2023

The funding for this project eventually arrived and we had several meetings with the Regional & Major Roads representatives, and Mark from Bass Coast Landcare Works Crew. The BCLWC have sprayed the weeds, cut down some of the Sweet Pittosporum and sprayed the blackberries on the Tarwin riverbank. We would also like to thank Matt Bowler and the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority for funding the spraying of the blackberries.

### **Update Action Plan 2022 -2027**

We have run a process of emailing out a survey to members to update our Action Plan which we use to obtain funding for our group. It wasn't the most popular item of business but we have, with heaps of time by Jill Vella, completed this plan.

During this year it was brought to our attention that we had not really considered access for all members and this caused a lack of equity for various people. We have now added Access and Equity as an objective to our Action Plan.

**The Friends of the Meeniyan Recreation Reserve Bushland** had their first meeting in late May, and the group facilitator is Robert Rainbow. This group has come under our Landcare umbrella and we welcome this new project.



We are currently making an application for funding through the Victorian Landcare Grants program which incorporates smaller projects as requested by our members.

### **GROUP ACTIVITIES**

Not a lot of meetings this year, although an enthusiastic group walked from Stony Creek on the Rail Trail to visit the Meeniyan bird hide, which was followed by dinner at the Meeniyan pub.

We held our AGM and August general meeting again this year via zoom as Covid was active in the community. It has also limited us calling other meetings or get togethers as we are concerned for members health.

### **COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP**

Our membership is now managed via the Landcare Portal which is supported by the West Gippsland Landcare Network and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority. This is an easier method of holding members records, payments and will officially commence on 1 January 2023. Thanks again Jill, for all the work you did setting up this system for our group.

We send out monthly email newsletters (but if anyone wants a hard copy mailed to them you only have to ask) and have recently incorporated our Black Spur Creek Wetlands Project newsletter into our club one.

As President I have attended several SGLN Presidents meetings, and a Great Southern Rail Trail discussion meeting. Jill and Coral attended Portal training at the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and Jill attended South Gippsland Shire organised volunteer seminars.

You can find our activities and interesting information on our social media (website and Facebook page).

Our group is thriving due to our fabulous secretary Jill Vella's incredible knowledge and hard work. She is hoping to reduce her workload and we are looking for an assistant Secretary to help out. Thanks also goes to our Treasurer Coral Hughes and to Kate Walsh, our Project Officer, who make up the group's executive.

We also welcome Robert Rainbow who has taken the lead for the Meeniyan subgroup.

Hopefully this coming year we can have more active meetings and get togethers.

*Susan Miles*

Landcare group president.





# Treasurer's Report 2021-22

Balance brought forward \$6,798.17 credit

## Income

West Gippsland CMA VLG grant	5,935.60
GTEP05 Restoring the Apple Tree Wetlands	24,231.77
Memberships	108.70
Monies paid to account wrongly	2000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$39,074.24</b>

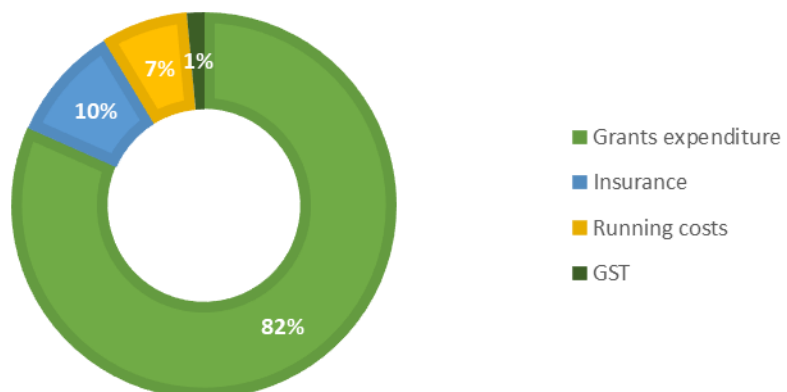
## Expenditure

LVI Membership - insurance, 2 payments 21/22 & 22/23	924.40
Grants, plants and fencing	6701.50
GST tax	138.00
Running of Group	694.47
ECO2 System deposit on speaker for October	1100.00
Return of monies paid into account wrongly	2000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,558.37</b>

---

**Balance at 30/06/2022 \$27,515.87**

### EXPENDITURE 2021/2022



# Secretary's Report

## OBJECTIVE 1: To promote and implement projects addressing priority natural resource management issues

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<b>NTVLC will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide training workshops and farm walks</li> <li>share information through the newsletter, web page and social media</li> <li>apply for grants and funding that reflect our members needs</li> <li>work with natural resource management bodies and aligned community organisations to identify and fund work to increase natural assets</li> <li>Provide support to members through peer to peer mentoring</li> </ul>	<p>We held a farm walk / field day on April 2 highlighting our VLG revegetation project on Brad and Kathy Westaway's property at Ruby. We looked at the project with a farm walk and expert speakers giving revegetation advice. The Westaway's have revegetated many areas of their properties over many years so it was an excellent opportunity to see age succession in plantings and the environmental benefits.</p> <p>This day was attended by over 40 people and was very successful. Our website was updated with revegetation information <a href="https://www.nerrenatarwinvalleylc.org.au/reveg-info/">https://www.nerrenatarwinvalleylc.org.au/reveg-info/</a></p> <p>We continued to hold regular monthly bird monitoring's when we could.</p>

## OBJECTIVE 2: To communicate and educate – community capacity building in natural resource management

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS
<b>NTVLC will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>publish a regular newsletter</li> <li>maintain a website and social media presence</li> <li>organise regular training workshops, meeting guest speakers and farm walks</li> <li>communicate through the local media where possible</li> <li>Members and participants will be canvassed for their ideas and suggestions as suitable opportunities arise</li> <li>Adapt to COVID-19 restrictions and work with the group to develop novel ways of communication and NRM actions that can be safely undertaken referring to Government directives.</li> </ul>	<p>We published 20 newsletters, with the Black Spur Project newsletter and the bird monitoring news being added to the one email.</p> <p>The web page and Facebook status were updated regularly with 54 social media posts to 159 people who follow our page.</p> <p>We held a Christmas rail trail walk and pub dinner in Dec.</p> <p>We adapted to COVID by holding meetings and bird walks when we could and using zoom to keep in touch.</p> <p>Our AGM was a face to face meeting in the Meeniyan pub.</p>

Each year the Threatened Species Commissioner holds the Threatened Species cake bakeoff, where people acknowledge the day by baking cakes in the shape of a threatened species that resonates with them. We enter most years and this year our cake represents a Strzelecki Burrowing Crayfish (SBC), which is a small species of burrowing crayfish that inhabits boggy seepages, springs and banks of shallow creeks in the ferny gullies of the high altitude regions of the Eastern Strzelecki Ranges. Due to the limited size of the area where SBC is known to occur, and the range of threats faced by the species, the SBC is at considerable risk of becoming extinct in the wild. We have members in the eastern part of group area who have Strzelecki Crayfish habitat on their properties and they have undertaken projects to protect them. Our SBC is seen emerging from its mud chimney hole on top of a chocolate mud cake. We were unable to meet and share this cake due to COVID restrictions.



### OBJECTIVE 3: To foster community partnerships

#### ACTIONS

##### NTVLC will engage and work with:

- South Gippsland Landcare Network
- Landcare Victoria Inc
- South Gippsland Shire Council
- Federal and State Government agencies
- Other Landcare groups and networks
- Community groups
- Local schools
- Landholders
- Agencies involved with and/or partnered with NTVLC will be invited to NTVLC organised activities
- NTVLC information (e.g. the newsletter) will be sent to representatives of these groups
- Where possible NTVLC representatives or committee members will attend special events when invited, and report back to or represent members at such events
- NTVLC will collaborate with relevant organisations to further common objectives

##### We worked with

- Rail Trail management – Shire and MRPV
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- South Gippsland Shire Council
- Major Roads Projects Victoria
- Bass Coast LC Network
- WGCMA

to prepare our Appletree wetland grant application, which was finally successful this financial year, but did require a bit of renegotiation due to the one year delay.

We were to hold a joint meeting with Tarwin Landcare Group but that was postponed several times due to lockdowns and group meeting restrictions.

Please see the Presidents report for more info on our meetings with stakeholders.

We have welcomed a new project group, the friends of the Meeniyan Bicentennial walk, a group facilitated by Robert Rainbow.

Our threatened species day meeting was cancelled due to COVID restrictions

### OBJECTIVE 4: To maintain the NTVLC membership

#### ACTIONS

- The Group Secretary will with the Treasurer maintain an up to date membership list that will be shared with the South Gippsland Landcare Network and Landcare Victoria Inc, as required
- membership fees will be reviewed at the group AGM
- Community members are encouraged to become members by the group members
- Activities are widely advertised

We transitioned to the new Landcare membership portal this FY and have 33 members. We are extending membership to financial people to the end of the calendar year to enable a smooth transition to the new system.

Our limited group activities were widely advertised on social media, by direct email to members and supporters and via our webpage.

Kate Walsh, Jill Vella, Coral Hughes and Sue Miles, NTVLC current committee, August bird monitoring







# BSCW Project Report

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this area, the Gunaikurnai and the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung. I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and future.

I am very grateful to the NTV Landcare Executive who have led the BSCW project to this exciting point. In my absence, they have run with the project and allowed me to comfortably withdraw as project coordinator and concentrate more on family in Melbourne. I will continue to take great interest and will be attending our wonderful Landcare events and helping whenever possible. Thankyou.

After heavy rains in the Tarwin catchment, the Black Spur Wetlands were performing their functions in a spectacular fashion yesterday as we undertook the monthly bird monitoring. The glorious yellow of Silver Wattle was beautiful and by the river a Strzelecki Gum bloomed more discretely.

The walk encouraged me to reflect once again on the extraordinary natural assets we have within this 100 acres of public land. Waters from the creek and wetlands flow into the Tarwin River and on to Andersons Inlet (a wetland of National Importance). We have rich soils capable of supporting a diversity of life such as Strzelecki Gum woodlands, swamp scrub and (potentially) deep freshwater marsh providing habitat for a wide range of birds and animals. There are towering trees, threatened Australian Grayling fish, koalas, platypus, echidnas, and sugar gliders. Lace Monitors are seen nearby. Those recent catastrophic bushfires in East Gippsland highlighted the importance of even small wildlife refuges.

Geologists have been fascinated by the interesting landforms and complex folds and faults at this junction of Lowland, Foothill and Damp/Wetland Forest vegetation communities. If you haven't already, visit Museum Victoria or search online to see 115 million year old Koonwarra fossils that were discovered here. These fossils provide insights into primitive fish, insects, plants and feathered dinosaurs when Australia was still part of Gondwana.

The wetlands are at the confluence of the Black Spur Creek and Tarwin River West Branch. Early European settlers remarked on abundant Black Fish in the stream and many lyrebirds cultivating the forest floor. Today, the Tarwin River provides water for Meenyan township and the wetlands provide a range of services including flood mitigation and water quality.





I also reflected on the changes since we developed our plan seven years ago. Traffic is now accessing the newly completed highway well away from the wetlands and the old highway is silent, soon to be revegetated. This will join with our Landcare project already underway to restore the Apple Tree Wetlands. Along the rail trail we've established three bird observing sites which are now live on Birdlife Australia's BIRDATA APP. The Major Roads Project Authority is responsible for maintenance and restoration of the wetlands for some years yet.

Our landscape will be linked by rail trail and river with Meeniyan where the community has mobilised to also remove invasive plants and nurture their precious bushland.

Last night I happened to listen to a podcast (\* see below) and some thoughts of Professor Fiona Dyer resonated with me.

Fiona spoke of the critical importance of rivers, flood plains and wetlands.

" .....Rivers are really about people.....It's about engagement of people ...their appreciation and activities around rivers ..... our opportunities and our challenges."

She emphasised the need for ongoing management of riverscapes and landscapes. They have been managed for tens of thousands of years by Aboriginal people and now, with intensification of human pressures, weeds and pollutants, require maintenance more than ever. People say "Somebody should ....." but that somebody is them !

Everyone can make some small contribution to river health. Nerrena Tarwin Valley Landcare Group is stepping up to the challenge.

(\* ARRC Australian River Restoration Centre. Take Me to the River. Episode 18: Why Science and People Matter for Australian Rivers. Guest speaker - Professor Fiona Dyer, University of Canberra)

Kate Walsh 18/8/2022