



Project Platypus Upper Wimmera Landcare

MISSION

Support and empower community. Improve environmental health of Upper Wimmera Catchment. Maintain and improve productivity.



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Down to Earth

SEPTEMBER UPDATE

Welcome to our newsletter *Down to Earth*,

Project Platypus invites you to our Annual General Meeting with fabulous thought provoking guest speakers, soulful entertainment and a salubrious meal. Guaranteed to be a fabulous night and get together with all of the Upper Wimmera Landcare community. Read below for more information.

Our current issue has plenty of information on happenings around the traps, grants, climate and weather and much more.

Hope you enjoy

Andrea Local Landcare Facilitator

September

Tue 11 Stawell Urban Landcare AGM, 6 PM, Project Platypus office

Wed 12 [Perennial Pasture Systems 10th Annual Conference](#)

Wed 19 Ironbarks walk with Connies and school children - Stawell Urban Landcare

Fri 21 Project Platypus AGM

October

Thurs 4 [Concongella Landcare AGM](#)

10 - 12 [National Landcare Conference](#)

Sat 20 [Chicks in the Sticks](#) M.V. Mary Ann Cruising Restaurant, Echuca, GBCMA & NCCMA

Sat 27 Stawell Show with Landcare display

IN THIS ISSUE...

[Weather forecasts](#)

[Tree Giveaway](#)

[Lambing and maintaining ewe reproduction during dry times](#)

[Landmate](#)

[Project platypus revegetation and IPA](#) written by Lachlan McIntyre

[Birds, bush & beyond](#) - summary of workshop with Chris Tzaros

[2018 Victorian Rural Women's Forum](#) written by Gilda McKechnie

[Plantout with LLEN](#) written by Jasmine

GRANTS...

[Community Grants Program](#) Northern Grampians Shire, close Sept 28

[Volunteer Grants](#) Community Grants Hub, Australian Government, close Sept 18

Project Platypus Annual General Meeting

Friday 21st September 2018

5.45 pm for 6.15pm start

[Macks @ Magdala](#), 3149 Western Hwy, Stawell

RSVP Mon 17th Sept : ph 5358 4410 or email llf@platypus.org.au

Pay at the door **\$28 - 2 course meal (set menu) + tea & coffee**. Please inform of particular dietary requirements.

Jenny O'Sullivan is the main guest speaker.

Jenny is well known for her role in promoting sustainable agriculture, particularly in Gippsland where

she and her husband run a 680ha beef and sheep property. Jenny was placed on the Gippsland Women's Honour Roll for her work to advance agriculture and protect and enhance Gippsland's natural resources. Here are a few links:

<http://www.gippslandfoodadventures.com.au/jenny.html>

<http://www.target100.com.au/Farmer-stories/Paul-Jenny-OSullivan>

<https://www.gippslandnatural.com.au/pages/jenny-and-paul-o-sullivan>

Corey Watts is the 1st speaker representing Farmers for Climate Action. An interdisciplinarian by nature, Corey is passionate about the natural sciences, especially conservation and ecology—the 'subversive science'. He is equally keen to apply insights and tools from anthropology, history, economics, and other social sciences to environmental questions. (All environmental problems are human problems, after all.) He is inspired by scientists, farmers, environmentalists, businesspeople, policymakers, and others striving to make a better way in an increasingly hot and crowded world. Below are further links:

https://www.farmersforclimateaction.org.au/corey_watts

<https://www.brightwater.earth/>

Landcarer, **Jacqui Ridler**, will be entertaining us with guitar and song. Looking forward to a stimulating, fun and social night.



MLA's One for the lamb producers - [Doing it better in dry times](#)

BOM's Climate and weather outlook - [September to November 2018](#)

Rural Bank & Jane Bunn's [weather forecast](#)

Landmate works in partnership with environmental organisations to provide low cost labour on eligible projects throughout regional areas in Victoria. The service is delivered by Corrections Victoria. Project Platypus have had an excellent working relationship with Landmate and you are welcome to chat and find out if you are eligible. Support works include: weeding, spraying, tree planting, fencing etc.

Project Platypus **LANDCARE WEEK** tree giveaway - call John 03 5358 4410



Perennial Pasture Systems 10th Annual Conference

PPS 10 years on, looking back and moving forward.....Lifting farm profitability through productive pastures and management systems. A range of speakers and presentations will be given discussing these topics. The conference bus tour to Rosevale Ridge - Sean & Leila McDougall's farm will take place in the afternoon. The annual dinner and meeting will follow on at the Chalambar Golf Club.

Wednesday 12 September 2018 at 8:45am

Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre, Great Hall, 31-33 Lambert Street, Ararat, Victoria 3377

Bookings click on the link: [Trybooking](#)

Further info PPS Project Manager Rob Shea 0438 521 357

Concongella Landcare AGM

7.30 PM

Joel Joel hall

Concongella will be hosting their AGM and will also be discussing:

1. Revegetation Project 2019

2. Cover Cropping Trial 2018/19

For more details contact secretary Mark McLean mismclean777@gmail.com

Project Platypus making the visible invisible

Written by Lachlan McIntyre (Project Platypus Project Manager and Invasive Plants & Animals Coordinator)

Over the past month Project Platypus have been switching between revegetation work and Invasive Plants and Animals (IPA). Crews are busy chasing bridal creeper for the local shires treating their roadsides. Bridal creeper is starting to 'brown off' in some locations, but is still treatable.

We have also been working at several locations to treat cape tulip as we are expecting this warmer weather to send this weed to flower very soon, so it's best to get onto it now if you have any.

Gorse is being controlled in the south and east of the Ararat Shire area. Crews have found some of the biggest infestations we have ever seen on roadsides, so we are working closely with the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources DEDJTR to gather data on heavily infested sites and working with stakeholders to get the best outcome.

Some hand fumigation on rabbit warrens was coordinated with landholders and [Landmate](#) as part of the Greater Grampians Threatened Flora project and we hope to continue this work onto many other properties seen as a priority. We have also been working on some specific locations to treat weedy grasses threatening the reintroduction of native orchids.

Info on locally found weeds and treatment options can be found on our website: [common weed species](#)
Or please contact us on 53584410 if you want to discuss any particular invasive plant and animal issues

Birds, Bush and Beyond

The bird paparazzi (of the flying kind) were out and ready to shoot when Chris Tzaros, ecologist and photographer called in a Weebill (Australia's smallest bird) at Deep Lead Nature Reserve recently. Project Platypus' event "Birds, Bush & Beyond + Photography Class" proved very enjoyable at the seminar and out in the field with photography. Many expert photographers, keen environmentalists, farmers and others listened to Tzaros speak. He covered diverse topics such as Yellow box and Grey box woodlands, the value of remnants and mistletoe, habitat for birds and elements required for good bird photography. He discussed how ecologists use photography as documentary observation and by way of example showed an image of a finch eating charcoal to help digest ingested seed - something that had not been seen before, captured in a multiple of zoomed in shots. Tzaros said photographic imagery has an important role to play in engaging people and is a way of storytelling - science crossing with art and technology.

A key message at the event was that birds are driven by floristic composition and structural elements; the

more complex and diverse a landscape is the better the habitat it is. In complex habitats there will tree creepers, gerigones, wrens, thornbills all living together specialising on different aspects of the same habitat. For instance the brown tree creeper will feast on decorticating bark. Simplified birds, such as the noisy miner, and other animals live in simple landscapes.

Local Landcare Facilitator, Andrea Mitchell said the best outcome of the day was when one participant mentioned he would no longer be clearing around his eucalypt trees or cutting mistletoe after learning from Tzaros. Grant funding from Eucalypt Australia helped make this event possible. Many thanks to the volunteer help on the day.



2018 Victorian Rural Women's Forum - Creswick, Vic

Written by Gilda McKechnie

I had the privilege of attending this wonderful forum on Thursday 2 and Friday 3 August, where I learnt a lot about what is going on for women in mostly rural areas, and I also learnt a lot from the exceptional workshops that were run over the 2 days.

The keynote address with given by Sallie Jones from [Gippsland Jersey](#) who told the rather sad story of how she managed to promote Gippsland Jersey after the untimely suicide of her father. Sallie and supporters found another way to keep milk production going in their area, by creating a milk brand that would help create a social change and to smash the stigma of mental health, and pay farmers a fair price for a fair day's work. A very moving story.

This was followed by a "Speed Dating" networking session – getting to know each other. So many women with so many skills and stories, but one that stood out to me was around the drought, culminating in the financial crises and stress that so many farming and rural families were feeling. There were also wonderful stories about the coping mechanisms that women were putting in place to support

their families and communities.

There were 4 workshops presented over the 2 days- Leadership, Social media, Financial literacy and Wellbeing. I was blown away by the quality of the presenters in these workshops and the input by the participants. Valuable information was shared throughout these workshops resulting in everyone learning something new that could benefit their everyday lives.

There was a wonderful dinner with Jaala Pulford – Minister for Agriculture speaking, and a keynote address from Anna and Henry Terry (brother and sister) who own [Tasmanian Truffles](#) with their parents; such vibrant and amazing young people who shared heaps of information about the growing, harvesting and promotion of their truffles throughout the world.

Everyone woman I spoke to felt that the [Victorian Rural Women's Forum](#) was very timely. They learnt a lot and had a great time and most importantly it provided them with a bit of a break and some terrific networking. The venue was wonderful and we are grateful to the [Victorian Rural Women's Network](#) for organising the forum and Minister for Agriculture, Hon. Jaala Pulford for providing funding.

Plantout with LLEN

Posted JUNE 26, 2018 by JASMINE

On Tuesday 19 June, Central Grampians [LLEN's](#) Thursdays program partnered with Project Platypus to take part in the Plantout project. Funding was provided by [Helen Macpherson Smith Trust](#). A group of seven volunteers from *Thursdays* committed their time to plant trees in at Lake Fyans, near Pomonal. The Plantout project enables regeneration of habitats in the region. John Pye and assistant Riley Morris explained to the [Thursdays](#) group that they were not only planting trees, but they are also planting insects, possums, sugar gliders and other natural wildlife. Regenerating habitats encourages local wildlife to flourish in the region, which in turn contributes to positive ecosystems. *Thursdays* is a safety net for young people who are disengaged from full-time education or employment. By partnering with Project Platypus, *Thursdays* encouraged young people to actively give back to their community through volunteering efforts. This volunteering exercise also allowed for young people to connect with professionals on a local level, develop new skills and create contacts who may be used as referees in future job, education or training prospects. The group planted a total of 540 trees across the area. The project taught them about the value of caring for the environment. This physically demanding effort also tested the participants' resilience in an environment of hard work. The participants all passed the 'test' with flying colours.



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