



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

NOVEMBER UPDATE

Welcome to the Project Platypus *Down to Earth* Newsletter,

Our fortnightly newsletter is designed to provide you with an update on what's happening at Project Platypus, within Landcare, and regional agriculture more widely.

We hope you enjoy & welcome feedback

Events at a glance

Native Grassland Information Day, Woorndoo Recreation Reserve. Friday 17th November 9.30am - 2.30pm . RSVP davidfranklin@grasslandflora.com.au.

Biochar uses in Agriculture Wednesday 22nd November. Portland Bowling Club. 9.30am - 3.00pm. RSVP Gary Milich 0409 949 850.

Until 26 Nov Women of the Land Exhibition - Melbourne

Landcare roundup

Project Platypus IPA update:

The Project Platypus field crew has been working on several projects for invasive plants and animals.

As part of the WCMA Riparian IPA Control:

- A lot of work was carried out on Cape Tulip and Watsonia around Millers Creek.
- Mount William Creek had a second year of follow up on Sweet Briar, Blackberry, Gorse, St Johns and Watsonia.

- The Concongella Creek has had extensive works carried out throughout this year between Armstrong and the Stawell-Navarre Rd
- Follow up work along the Wimmera River at Elmhurst, Campbell's Bridge and Glenorchy for Gorse, Sweet Briar, Cape Tulip, Blackberry

At the moment we are seeing Patterson's Curse and African Orchids flowering, so people planning to treat need to get started. Chemical mix rates and other info can be found at

www.projectplatypus.org.au/weeds

St John's Wort is starting to come up, but seems to be a little off flowering at this stage.

The Biodiversity Hubs project is in its first year and mapping of the Deep Lead Conservation Nature Reserve (Ironbarks), Devil's Garden and the Ararat Hills Regional Reserve has begun. We hope to gain a better understanding of the condition of these reserves and treat invasive species as we find them. This project is working closely with Trust for Nature, the Royal Botanic Gardens, DELWP, Parks Vic and WCMA to protect biodiversity assets and covenanted land in the Grampians to Pyrenees (G2P) Biolnk area.

We have also begun work on the Northern Grampians Shire roadside invasive plant and animal program through until mid-December. Work on this will begin in the St Arnaud area over the next week.

Over the next week we will be winding up work in Halls Gap for the Landcare Group treating various escaped garden ornamentals (Arum Lily, flowering bulbs, Blackberry, Watsonia, English Ivy and Horehound)



Above: African Weed Orchid

A whole lot of rubbish – cleaning up the Ironbarks (Deep Lead Nature Conservation Reserve)

The rebate for tyres and mattresses has now FINISHED

Grant funds from the Victorian Governments Threatened Species Recovery Program has helped Project Platypus with a mattress and tyre rebate scheme. Approximately 119 tyres and 41 mattresses were collected at the Stawell Transfer Station during September/October.

Grant funding also enabled volunteers who used their vehicles and trailers to collect illegally dumped rubbish in the Ironbarks to dispose of the rubbish at no cost to themselves.

Success has been in the form of: awareness about the issue of illegal dumping; members of the public informing the office/shire/EPA of illegal dumping; volunteers helping care and clean up rubbish in the Ironbarks; Landmate cleaning up surveyed areas; awareness of threatened species such as the squirrel glider, Tawny spider orchid and Swifts parrot.

Ironbarks Family Day

Included within the same grant was a small allocation of funding to complete community education activities.

Studies suggest that frequent, unstructured experiences in nature are the most common influences on the development of lifelong conservation values. For this reason, Project Platypus delivered a Stawell Ironbarks Family Day to engage local families on Thursday 26th October. Working with Stawell Kindergartens & parents, approximately 60 kinder students explored the highly valuable and beautiful Stawell Ironbarks. Students were encouraged to be curious and ask questions as they explored aquatic macro-invertebrates as well as the many plants found in the Ironbarks. As an extra treat, students were also able to listen to Roberto the Tram Conductor, who spoke about the many threatened plants and animals found within the Ironbarks, also giving students corresponding swap cards to take home.

http://www.connies.com.au/about_us/



Roberto from The Connies with the Yam Daisy swap card.

We need your input!

- Phase one of the National Landcare Program (NLP) will cease at the end of this financial year. Phase one of this federally funded program has mainly concentrated on supporting and encouraging sustainable agricultural practices. Locally, NLP funds the Regional Landcare Facilitator position, and also supports a range of projects and activities carried out by organisations such as Wimmera Catchment Management Authority, Perennial Pasture Systems & Vic No-Till Farmers Association. After reviewing phase one of the NLP, the federal government has now released some details on how phase two of the National Landcare Program will look. Of particular importance to Project Platypus and our farm-based landcare groups will be the Smart Farms program. The Government is allocating \$134 million dollars to support the development and uptake of best practice management, tools and technologies that help farmers & regional communities improve the protection, resilience and productive capacity of our soils, water and vegetation, in turn supporting successful primary industries and regional communities. Access to the Smart Farms funding will be via a competitive process, so we need your ideas to help us build a relevant and meaningful bid that will help support you and your farm. Please email your ideas through to bronwyn@platypus.org.au
- Project Platypus is here to support you and your Landcare group. What workshops would you like delivered? Are you interested in seed collection, photography, or something else? Please pass your ideas onto us at <http://llf@platypus.org.au> so we can best support you.

IPM case studies

Project Platypus would like to support a mixture of local farm businesses interested in implementing Integrated Pest Management on their properties in order to develop local case studies. Interested in finding out more? Please contact bronwyn@platypus.org.au

Other news....

Wimmera Catchment Management Authority are currently seeking expressions of interest from landholders wanting to protect and enhance waterways on their properties. Funding is available for fencing and revegetation. Further details and the EOI form can be found at <http://www.wcma.vic.gov.au/news/news-detail/2017/08/29/funds-for-farmers-eoi>

Visit the **ParaBoss** website for the latest state outlooks and information on worm, lice and fly control. <https://www.paraboss.com.au/news/newsletters/1509021340.php>

Australian Wool Innovation has updated its flystrike research, development and extension communications, which are available at <http://www.wool.com/flystrikelatest>

Women of the Land exhibition 13 October–26 November 2017

[Melbourne Gallery, Melbourne Museum](#)

11 Nicholson St, Carlton, 3053

A collaboration between Her Place Women's Museum Australia and Museums Victoria's Invisible Farmer Project to celebrate rural women who work, protect and heal our land.

<https://herplacemuseum.com/about/exhibition-2/>

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