



Project Platypus Upper Wimmera Landcare

MISSION

Find us:

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

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PLATYPUS**
UPPER WIMMERA LANDCARE

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Down to Earth

OCTOBER UPDATE

Welcome to our newsletter *Down to Earth*,

Three quarters of the way through 2018 and Project Platypus has had its running shoes on for the best part of that time.

Time to take a breather with the long weekend.

Hope you have time for a bit of a read



Is it the magpie or the eagle that will soar through the sky this weekend?

Ciao for now, Andrea (Local Landcare Facilitator)

October

Thurs 4 [Concongella Landcare AGM](#)

Tue 9 Meeting with Sarah De Santis, Labour candidate - [Stawell Urban Landcare](#)

10 - 12 National Landcare Conference

10 [Community Forum](#): Securing Renewable Energy, Jobs and Investment, Ararat

Sun 14 [Run](#) for Farmer health

Sat 20 Chicks in the Sticks M.V. Mary Ann Cruising Restaurant, Echuca, GBCMA & NCCMA

Sat 27 Stawell Show with Landcare display

November

26 -28 National Rural Womens Coalition - [Leadership Program](#)

2019 March

29-31 Grampians Landcare Forum, Halls Gap

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Project Platypus Chair's AGM REPORT Michael Greene

Where we have come from

As I look back and reflect on the last twenty years, I conclude we have had great highs and more recently some lows, not in on ground works but in trying to remain a significant, viable organisation in the Upper Wimmera Catchment. The one common thread through out our years of operation is that of the volunteer, for without this, Landcare wouldn't exist, and that means Project Platypus.

With diminishing enthusiasm and motivation in our local Landcare groups, the work of Project Platypus has become essential in supporting these groups, making sure Landcare remains relevant in our region so that the environment continues to benefit.

The Now

The challenge, in order to get things heading in a direction that is sustainable for our organisation we have had to examine various aspects of Project Platypus such as; our strategic plan, and a review of funding with greater emphases on sponsorship for roles that don't attract funding. Ongoing review of staffing arrangements, our overheads and running costs, vehicle requirements, and so on. Action has been taken in these areas, not all complete, though they are well on the way. This rebuilding phase of Project Platypus is looking at ways to better deliver services and remain viable. With constraints and reduced funding from Government sources it has become a focus on trying to reinvent ourselves.

The major area of concern is that of the Managers role, which is a significant area of expense. When faced without a manager, some good fortune and people in the know, John Pye came to mind he accepted this role on a voluntary basis and has performed at an extraordinary level, thank you John. This voluntary position comes to an end at this meeting where we will again operate with a paid Manager, we are assured that John will be around during the transition.

Over the last eighteen months we have maintained a full work program. With the normal run of community plantouts, continuing fee for service work, attending to and supporting Landcare group activities, dealing with grant applications for new works, managing staff, dealing with administrative and financial management, and continuing partnership development. There are many other activities which John has been involved in, a foot in every camp.

The Future

My report is very much about the future of Project Platypus and in a broader sense Landcare, its direction and where we might be heading as it is about reporting on the past year. In order to go forward, we need to embrace change and not to dwell on the past, but to assess the successes and failures to meet the challenges of the future.

The strategic plan review and understanding the meaning of our activities and the outcomes, has become more necessary and it is essential that we commit to and follow the plan. Whilst we still see a vital role for environmental work, with much more to be done, such as dealing with invasive plants and animals, tree planting, protecting remnant vegetation, addressing erosion and salinity, protection of water ways, and so on. There is a growing emphasis and development in sustainable agriculture. This has long been recognized by landholders but has now been taken up by Governments with funding attached. A real change in direction.

It is my belief that with commitment and input from the Board, and input from the Manager and staff we will continue to be a significant environmental force with continued good outcomes in the Upper Wimmera Catchment Region. In conclusion, I thank the Board for your support and belief in Project

Platypus and embarking on a rebuilding period, to all staff for your confidence and in particular John, and your army of volunteers.



Thank you.

Michael Greene

Concongella Annual General Meeting

Thursday October 4th

Joel Joel Hall

7 PM

Main topic for discussion "**Cover Cropping Trial**". Concongella Landcare have recently been awarded a grant to trial cover cropping. There has been recent regional interest in using this strategy to have 100% soil cover throughout the year. A discussion will be had on the best way forward. There is also a possibility to partner with seed wholesalers.

"There is a great opportunity to use tried and tested plant species in new ways to cover/fodder crop reasonably cheaply while building profit, increasing soil health and improving sustainability." Jade Killoran, AGF Seeds, Sales and Research Agronomist. Here is a link to [research](#)

Annual membership fee of \$10

For more information contact Mark Mclean email: msmclean777@gmail.com

Stawell Urban Landcare General meeting

Tuesday October 9

Project Platypus Office, 11A Ararat Rd, Stawell

6 pm

GUEST SPEAKER: Sarah De Santis - Labour candidate for

Ripon <https://www.viclabor.com.au/>

Stawell Urban Landcare have invited Sarah De Santis to speak on Labour policies that are relevant to concerns in relation to Landcare in the region. Come along to listen and also have your questions answered on issues that affect the Upper Wimmera.

All welcome

Community Forum: Securing Renewable Energy, Jobs and Investment

organised by Friends of the Earth and Environment Victoria.

Wednesday October 10

St Andrews Uniting Church, Barkly St Ararat

6.30 pm

The Ararat region and Northern Grampians are on the frontline of Victoria's renewable energy boom. New wind farm projects are bringing jobs and investment to the region.

What's the current status of wind farms now under construction? And what's needed to maintain the momentum and secure renewable energy jobs and investment?

Special guest speakers will provide a status update of current projects, detail the economic benefits they bring to the region, and outline ways for the government to build on the momentum.

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Lily Dambrosio - Minister for Climate and Energy

- * Mayor Gwenda Allgood - Ararat Rural City
- * Mayor Tony Driscoll - Northern Grampians
- * Aaron Watts - AP Earthmoving
- * Linda Kennedy, Tarnagulla Alternative Energy Group

All are welcome. Drinks and snacks will be available.

BOOKINGS



Friends of the Earth Melbourne
16 mins · 🌐

We're pleased to announce that Minister for Climate Change & Energy Lily D'Ambrosio MP will be a special guest speaker at our upcoming community forum in Ararat.

Join us on Wednesday October 10 for a discussion on how Victoria can secure renewable energy jobs and investment.

Get your FREE ticket here > eventbrite.com/e/community-forum-securing-renewable-energy

Event presented by Friends of the Earth Melbourne + Environment Victoria

Leadership Program for Women

November 26th - 28th 2018

The 2018 [National Rural Womens Coalition](#) (NRWC) RRR Canberra Muster is a leadership development program specifically for rural, remote and regional (RRR) women aged between 25 - 40.

What's included?

3 days in Canberra

Accommodation, meals and training all included

Come away with fabulous skills and a promise to run your own project in your local community for women.

Project Platypus would love to support someone in the Upper Wimmera in their endeavour. Let us know if you or someone you know would be interested?

[Applications](#) close October 26th

'Creating Community Resilience and Wellness through Women's Leadership'

Why Run 4 Farmer Health?

Run 4 Farmer Health is back for its 5th consecutive year!

Sunday October 14th - running for farmer health at the Melbourne Marathon. JOIN and show your support for the unique work of the [National Centre for Farmer Health](#) and programs delivered in

regional communities. There are different distance runs and a walk to choose from and they all finish with a lap of the MCG to cheers from supporters, family and friends.

Meat & Livestock Australia - [Putting the precision into lambing](#) Tim and his wife Georgie collect significant data on their lambing mobs, which they provided to the MLA-funded lambing density research project. They farm on 1,530ha at Pigeon Ponds in south-west Victoria and run 7,500 breeding ewes in a 600mm rainfall zone.

Charles Sturt University Research: [\\$23 million project to put dung beetles to work](#) CSU will lead a national research effort to develop producer knowledge and capacity to enable **dung beetles** to deliver on-farm benefits.

National Centre for Farmer Health - [SMART](#) **Goal setting**. The volume of tasks required to maintain a successful farming business can be significant. Maintaining your own health and wellbeing—equally, if not more important—can also be challenging. During tough times this can seem overwhelming. Setting goals can make things more achievable. Form a clear picture of what could improve your life. Set [SMART](#) goals to help achieve this.



Perennial Pasture Systems 10th annual conference

Fantastic array of guest speakers talking on all things agricultural.

The evening dinner with Ken Solly was a stand out. Ken spoke of resilience in farming and good mental health. Here is a link to a [GRDC](#) he contributed to.

Science & Innovation Grants

[Grant applications](#) are now open for the 2019 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. **If you're 18-35**, this is your chance to apply for a grant of **up to \$22,000** to fund your **project on an innovative or emerging scientific issue that will benefit Australia's primary industries**. The Science Awards encourage young scientists, researchers, innovators and others active in the agriculture sector who have an original project that will contribute to the ongoing success and sustainability of Australia's agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries.

Applications close 12th October 2018



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