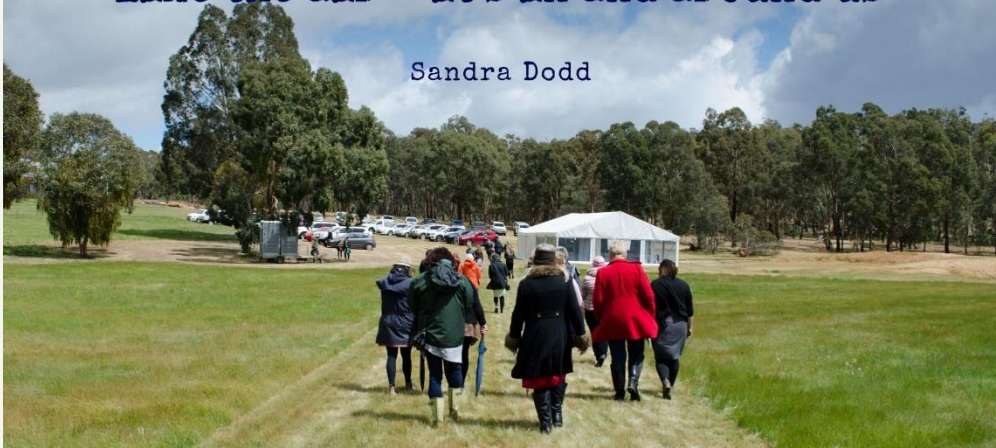


'Given a rich environment, learning becomes
like the air - it's in and around us'

Sandra Dodd



Project Platypus Upper Wimmera Landcare

MISSION

To work in partnership with the Landcare community to improve the environmental health of the Upper Wimmera Catchment while maintaining and improving productivity.



[DONATE NOW](#)

Find us:

[f](#) [FOLLOW on FACEBOOK](#)

[🔗](#) [VISIT our WEBSITE](#)

[✉](#) [EMAIL](#)

Contact us:

11 a Ararat Rd Stawell, Victoria
PO Box 838 Stawell 3380
ph 03 5358 4410

Down to Earth

NOVEMBER 2019 UPDATE

Welcome to our newsletter *Down to Earth*,

Here 'tis, November's e-newsletter. Project Platypus and associated Landcare groups have

been all action in the past few months, thus I am finding it hard to keep up with all of the news - what a great problem to have! Facebook and our website are other places to look for local Landcare news and events. Let me know if there is anything that could be added in future issues.

I hope you find this issue informative,

Cheers Andrea

Local Landcare Facilitator

NOVEMBER

Sun 10 Mystery bus tour, Jallukar Landcare

Thurs 14 Concongella Landcare AGM, 7.30 pm, Joel Joel hall

Thurs 21 Farmher dinner with guest speaker Cathy McGowan

Fri 29 Perennial Pasture Systems dinner

DECEMBER

In this issue:

[Wanted - single paddock trees](#)

[Christmas is coming - think local](#)

[Blow fly research in sheep](#)

[Chicks in the Sticks round-up](#)

[Concongella Landcare promote productive & regenerative farming with cover crops](#)

Local Landcare in the news:

[John Pye - part of something bigger](#) The Weekly Advertiser

[Platypus planters primed](#) The Weekly Advertiser

[Spring Victorian Landcare magazine](#) - our Landcare award winners are featured.

Useful links:

[Climate guide Wimmera region](#)

[BOM Climate Outlook Nov 2019 - Jan 2020](#)

[World Scientists' Warning of a Climate Emergency](#)

[Deer Scan - record deer in your local area](#)

Grants:

[National Landcare Program: Smart Farms Small Grants Round 3](#)

[Wimmera CMA vegetation grants](#)

[Reward - Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Nest Incentive Scheme](#)



Wanted- paddock trees

Through the federal government Smart Farms grant program, **Project Platypus** has funding to fence out **20 mature paddock trees** in the upper Wimmera. Paddock trees are highly valuable assets in the farming landscape, not only for the production benefits of providing shade and shelter for stock, and habitat for beneficial animals and insects, but also for their aesthetic value in a cleared landscape. Paddock trees also provide very important stepping stones across the landscape for the movement of animals and insects and are irreplaceable reservoirs for genetic diversity. The purpose of protecting paddock trees is to provide the conditions for the trees to be able to naturally recruit new seedlings through the exclusion of stock to the northern side of the tree. A 20 m x 20 m exclusion fence will be constructed with the majority of the fenced area on the northern side for the mature tree to allow stock to continue to shelter from the sun on the south side.

For more information contact manager of Project Platypus Al Stephens ph: 03 53584410 or email: manager@platypus.org.au

Concongella Landcare promote productive & regenerative farming with cover crops

During March and October this year, the Concongella Landcare group provided two information sessions for local farmers on how to increase farm productivity with the use of cover crops. Cover cropping is the planting of a crop in between cash crops for the protection and improvement of the soil. The sessions were delivered with the presentations

from Ms Jade Killoran from AGF seeds, who has studied cover crops at La Trobe University and has had several years of experience helping growers choose options that suit local conditions.

“Cover crops are gaining recognition from growers internationally as a strategy for rebuilding soils and reversing the effects of wind and rain erosion”. Says Mark McLean of the Concongella Landcare group who helped host the event.

“Cover crops can be used to help build soil and minimise exposure to the elements, especially during the dry, harsh summer months.”

Ms Killoran provided information on the use of crop options that can be sown outside the conventional autumn sowing times. For example, sorghum, millet and forage brassica can be sown in late spring to provide ground cover over summer and a good source of stock feed in late summer, when pastures are usually completely grazed.

The sessions were well attended with 15 to 20 people at each and are helping to promote the use of cover crops in the local area to improve farming productivity and advance sustainable farming. There is a wealth of information on Twitter as lots of farmers are trying cover crops and Jade has her own Twitter feed “Aus Cover Cropping” which she keeps populated with general cover crop information and results. The sessions were funded through the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority and were run with assistance from Project Platypus.

More information:

Andrea Mitchell Local Landcare Facilitator mob 0419 841 834

Mark McLean Concongella Landcare mob 0438 044 761

Jade Killoran AGF Seeds mob 0499 456 263



Jade Killoran, Mark McLean & workshop participants

Chicks in the Sticks round up

A Message from North Central Catchment Management Authority and Project Platypus:

THANK YOU... THANK YOU... THANK YOU...

Thank you for making the 2019 Chicks in the Sticks such a wonderful event on Saturday 26th of October at [Moonambel Gap Olives](#). The weather certainly made for an eventful day but in true 'Chicks' fashion, the gumboots came in handy and everyone managed to be smiling still at the end of the day.

Over eighty participants were inspired by young farming champion and guest speaker Emma Ayliffe of [Summit Agricultural Consulting](#). Emma is the owner of Summit Ag Agronomy and Research consultancy, vice-chair of the Youth Voices Leadership Team, farmer and visionary. The history of Moonambel was presented by Merri Hogan, an author, artist, local historian and conservationist and the master of ceremonies was Bronwyn Bant, Project Platypus board member, fabulous educator and ambassador for the environment. Unfortunately one guest speaker was an apology on the morning as she had gone into labour (apology accepted)! The event was made possible by the generous support of [North Central CMA](#), [Wimmera CMA](#) and Pyrenees Shire Council

A few follow up details for you all;

Bec Phillips had a little girl on Saturday! Everyone is well and happy at home.

Soils rock! The feedback showed much interest in more information on soils, so if you or your groups would like to tap into Rebecca Mitchell's expertise contact Project Platypus (Andrea is really keen to run an interactive soils workshop mob 0419 841 834 or llf@platypus.org.au)

Landcare is for everyone. The Landcare message was alive and well at the event, and we invite you to continue to keep in touch with the amazing organisations that support agriculture and the environment through restoration of the local landscapes we enjoy being a part of. Notable mentions go to the [Kara Kara Conservation Management Network](#), who hosted a fantastic information display and kindly donated gorgeous plants to everyone and to our co-hosts at [Project Platypus Upper Wimmera Landcare Network](#). The networks, information, skills and knowledge within these organisations is available to each and every one of you... For FREE!

Stunning happy snaps can be found online via [Project Platypus Facebook](#) page.

Chicks in the Sticks moves around the catchment each and every year, so keep on the look out for the 2020 event this time next year!

Keep in touch with your achievements in agriculture and the environment, we'd love to hear them.

Until next time, Tess Grieves (North Central CMA) and Andrea Mitchell (Project Platypus)



Andrea Mitchell, Bron Bant



Bryana Bissett (WCMA), Tess Grieves



Rebecca Mitchell (DELWP)

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS locally...think outside the box

"Have you noticed the 'stuff' stocking the shelves and people stockpiling gifts ready for Christmas? Here are some awesome ideas for pressies that are actually useful, don't make even more waste and support local businesses.

Christmas 2019 Birth of a new Australian tradition (or any other country, for that matter!)

As the holidays approach, factories are kicking into high gear to provide Australians with monstrous piles of cheaply produced stuff. Make this year different. This year let's give the gift of genuine concern for our local communities. There is no longer an excuse that, at gift giving time, nothing can be found locally. Yes there is!

It's time to think outside the box, people. Who says a gift needs to be wrapped in a box? Everyone, yes EVERYONE gets their hair cut. How about gift certificates from your local hair salon or barber? Gym membership or local pool pass? They're appropriate for all ages who are thinking about health improvement. A remedial massage or pedicure or beard

trim. Who wouldn't appreciate having their car detailed? Small business owners such as detailers and car washes would love to sell you a gift certificate or a book of gift certificates. Are you one of those extravagant givers who like to spend big? Perhaps that grateful gift receiver would like their lawn mowed for the summer, or games at the local golf course or a treat at one of the local tourist ventures.

There are local owner-run restaurants, all offering gift certificates. And, if your intended isn't the fancy eatery sort, what about a half dozen breakfasts at the local cafe. Remember, this is about supporting your home town with their financial lives on the line to keep their doors open.

How many people would love an oil change for their car or motorcycle, done by the local mechanic.

Thinking about a heartfelt gift for mum or dad? They would LOVE the help of the local cleaning service for a day, a massage, pamper session or some time with you at a local event.

My computer could use a tune-up, and I KNOW I can find some young person who is struggling to get his repair business up and running.

OK, you are looking for something more personal. Local crafts people or artists could be the go. They make jewellery, pottery and other beautiful bespoke goods, visit your local weekend markets.

Plan your holiday outings at local, owner operated restaurants and wineries and how about going out to see a play or ballet at your hometown theatre. Musicians need the love too, so find a venue showcasing local bands and buy some tickets.

Honestly, do you REALLY need to buy throw away stuff? Another great idea is donation certificates to the many charities that struggle to meet the demands on their services at this time of the year. Support a drought affected farmer and buy a bale in someone's honour, or a water donation.

You see, Christmas could be giving in a different way. This Christmas support local small businesses to keep the shop-fronts full and the community thriving. When we care about our communities the benefits come back to us in ways we couldn't imagine. THIS is the new Christmas tradition.

This is a revolution of caring about each other, and isn't that what Christmas is about?"

(Author unknown)



BLOW FLY RESEARCH IN SHEEP

Get involved in Australian sheep blowfly research by submitting samples of maggots and/or flies during the upcoming flystrike season to two **Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI)** funded projects. By participating in this research and providing live maggot samples, you'll receive results for your property which show the chemical groups that are most effective for your flock.

1. [FREE INSECTICIDE RESISTANCE TESTING](#) - For information or to request a postage paid maggot collection kit contact Narelle at DPI NSW email: narelle.sales@dpi.nsw.gov.au or ph (02) 4640 6446
2. [WE WANT YOUR FLIES](#) - For further details or to sign up with this study contact Trent, Clare or Vern at University of Melbourne email: blowfly-collection@unimelb.edu.au or ph (03) 8344 2362



Copyright © 2017. Project Platypus Organisation Incorporated. All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

PO Box 838, Stawell, Victoria 3380

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

This email was sent to LLF@platypus.org.au

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Project Platypus · 11a Ararat Rd · Stawell, Vic 3380 · Australia

