



Ballarat to Barwon



Leigh Catchment Group

*An Opportunity to Fund Landcare
Beside and Along the Unique Leigh River*

Our Responsibility Our Future

The Ballarat to Barwon Project

Working together to achieve sustainable ecosystems, agriculture and communities.

A Very Special River

The Leigh River is unique in Victoria because it has a constant supply of water and therefore does not run dry. This allows wildlife to establish and survive in harsh conditions.

The Yarrowee changes its name midway to become known as the Leigh and this river is the backbone of the area from Ballarat to Inverleigh. Here it joins the Barwon River and then flows out at Barwon Heads, beyond Geelong.

Passing through urban, suburban, small semi-rural properties and large farms, it covers Ballarat's growth hinterland.

More than ten years ago, Landcare groups and individuals took on the uncompromising job of attempting to restore damaged landscapes. The results show that landholders, working together with the community and supported by government initiatives can deliver significant and manageable habitat change. The economic benefits of improved water quality, farm viability and air pollution control are apparent as well as benefits for wildlife conservation.



What this Project Will Achieve

The Ballarat to Barwon project is restoring the land so that it can help resist the changes that will eventuate from severe weather events:

We are doing this by:

- Revegetating areas such as creeklines and farm boundaries with indigenous species
- Fencing off remnant vegetation and wetland sites from livestock damage
- Identifying and reducing erosion
- Promoting weed and pest projects where possible

The Ballarat to Barwon project aims to pull together all the experiences of the past and uses the newly produced Leigh Catchment Plan as its scientific basis. The project is a set of interlinked projects to restore and improve the whole of the catchment for the benefit of it's residents, it's neighbours and the future of our children.

We need as many partners in this challenge as possible. We cannot do it alone.



Your Contribution

Your contribution will bring life to an incredible opportunity to restore, recreate and reconnect the natural habitats the region has to offer. By supporting this project your organisation will be:

- Contributing to **on-ground work** within the big picture of climate change and protecting the natural environment in south western Victoria.
- Assisting the **rural volunteer** community groups to foster habitat for local flora and fauna.
- Helping to improve the health of **significant waterways** and protecting them for future generations by planting trees and **sequestering carbon**, education programs and sustainable development.
- Directly assisting rural towns in the region towards **longer term sustainability** for agriculture and natural resource management.
- The beneficiary in the long term having contributed to a project that has been **developed from the ground up** and has come from us, the people in the region.
- Part of a **network** of organisations, institutions and companies caring for our country.

Right: Shelford Primary School students release their leaf hoppers.

Below: Scotsburn Primary School students collecting native tree seed to propagate in their nursery.

Why do we fund private landholders?

This project involves private land as well as public land, however nature knows no boundaries.

It is worth noting that:

All the private landholders contribute significantly to the environmental work on their property

Significant areas of land are allocated for biodiversity conservation from the farm's overall acreage.

Many of the projects on private land are adjacent to high conservation value public land, greatly enhancing the biodiversity potential of that area.

Funding that helps increase a farm's viability is important to the local economy.

Involving the Next Generation

Schools can become Junior Landcare Schools. Pupils are then involved in specific education programs and onground work.

One such project is growing bridal creeper leaf hoppers which feed and eventually destroy this smothering weed when released on the plant.



Donations From Your Family or Organisation

You can direct donations to the Leigh Catchment Group.

Even small donations are important and are warmly received as are in-kind donations!

All monies will fund a balance of on-ground work, project management and community capacity building.



Over the next five years, we aim to

- Establish 400,000 indigenous plants to revegetate cleared land and help alleviate climate change
- Erect 60 km of fencing to protect creeks from damage by livestock
- Protect 20 kilometres of waterway from erosion
- Protect 100 hectares of remnant vegetation
- Establish 250 hectares of habitat corridors for wildlife conservation
- Assist nine Landcare groups with strategies for community engagement and environmental education to schools.

***Leigh Catchment Group do the hard
work but we need your helping hand to
continue our biodiversity successes.***



Company Sponsorship Benefits

There are a range of negotiable benefits that can be tailored to your company.

- Framed certificate of appreciation and staff photo at a wildlife site.
- Invitation for your organisation's staff and families to join in working bees and celebration days as special guests of a local Landcare group.
- Your logo in any major print advertising.
- Prominent display of your organisation's banner at all public events.
- Negotiated onground signage at Landcare sites.
- Use of **Ballarat to Barwon** accomplishments in your organisation's promotion and reporting.



*Wedge-tailed Eagle photo courtesy of Martin Scuffins
Central Highlands Bird of Prey Shelter*





Leigh Catchment Group

Since the late 1980s, people from all walks of life have been getting together and forming **community Landcare groups** to help repair and protect Australia's fragile environment. They look after farmland, care for waterways, regenerate bushland, replant native species and run community education on landcare.

The following Landcare groups are members of the **Leigh Catchment Group**, an inspiring community network formed in 1997.

- Bamganie-Meredith Landcare Group.
- Garibaldi Environment Group
- Grenville Landcare Group
- Leigh Districts Landcare Group.
- Napoleons/Enfield Landcare Group.
- Ross Creek Landcare Group.
- Wattle Flat/Pootilla Landcare Group.
- South Ballarat Urban Landcare Group.
- Upper Williamson's Creek Landcare Group.

The Leigh Catchment Board consists of nine elected Landcare Members. The Landcare Coordinator manages projects and activities undertaken through the LCG and provides support to the Landcare Group members.

Our Partners:

Community Landcare works at the local through to the regional level with essential support from a range of partners, including:

- Local government
- Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
- State agencies (providing technical advice and data sets)
- Local service groups such as Rotary, Lions and Scouts
- Local business



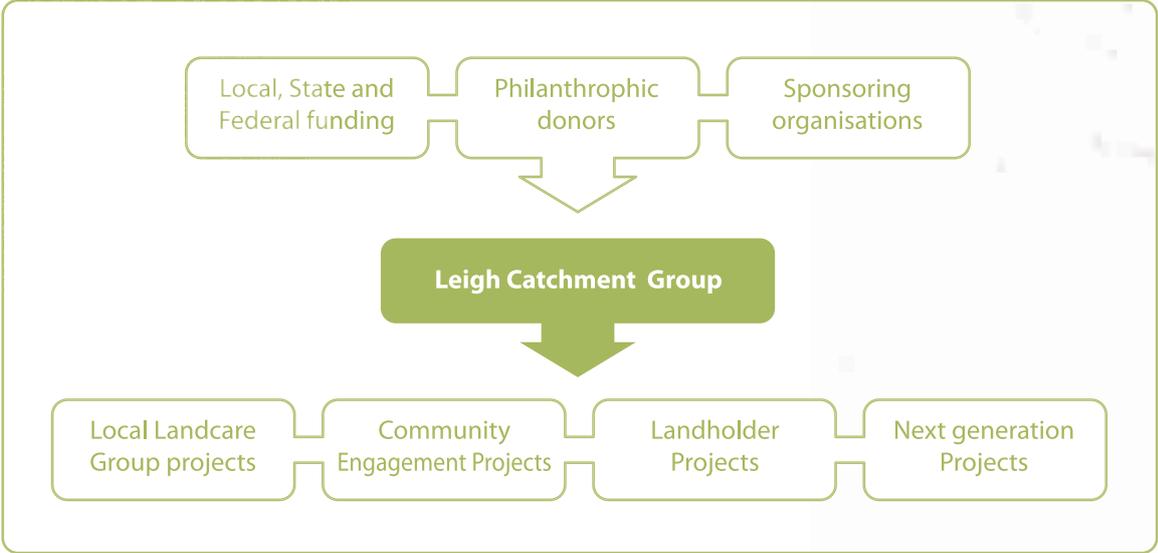
The Leigh/Yarrowee River and its tributaries form a permanently flowing connection from the Central Highlands down towards the coast, via Geelong and out at Barwon Heads to the Bass Strait. As the climates changes, there is an opportunity for flora and fauna to move along its length to find more suitable habitats for survival.

What has been achieved?

Many local people work with the Landcare Groups on special environment days such as National Tree Day. Here Upper Williamson's Creek Landcare Group and friends continue planting on the lower slopes of Mount Buninyong.



How does the Funding work?



Above: The challenge of transforming an eroded weedy riverside wasteland into a patch of local bush, south of Buninyong attracted such wide community interest that a local group was formed.

Left: The nearly completed Walking Trail at South Durham bridge. This trail is planned to link up with Garibaldi Bridge reserve trail and provide open space and recreation opportunities to the community.

Why is supporting the Ballarat to Barwon Project

So Important?



We need to restore the land so that it is resilient ... so that we can survive and thrive, through severe weather events and other changes to the environment.



Above left: Garibaldi Environment Group revegetating the river bank sites along the Yarrowee, as it flows through the semi-rural areas out of Ballarat.

Above right: All help is welcome no matter what size you are.

Right: Having ongoing project areas enables the Leigh Catchment Group to offer skills training such as fencing to youth groups such as Greencorps teams.



Below: Getting out and exploring, Buninyong Primary School follows the Leigh River down to the sea with support from Landcare coordinators.



The Landcare Coordinators

The coordinators hold the show together. The administration, monitoring and record keeping tracks all contributing projects within the main project. Coordinators ensure that the projects are integrated and provide value for money.

The coordinators:

- Consult with the community for project development and take direction from the community elected Board
- Liaise with landholders and government agencies to plan projects for maximum benefit for the environment
- Coordinate project management including site visits, inspections, organising contractors, managing funding, monitoring success and project evaluation
- Organise and run community days such as field days, plantings days, information sessions and school events
- Advertise and promote the Ballarat to Barwon project through local media sources
- Liaise with corporate partners for feedback and reporting
- Provide regular updates on the Ballarat to Barwon project through the Leighway newsletter, Victorian Landcare magazine, local papers, various magazines and Leigh Catchment website
- Provide support to the local Landcare Groups



Community Events.

Landcare members are part of the local community and they tell the Landcare story to wider audiences through events, field days and fetes. It is also an opportunity to work with partner organisations.

Sustainable Agriculture Projects

The Dung Beetle project is just one of the many sustainable agriculture projects managed by LCG. The beetles were brought into the area and were offered to landholders to help digest their livestock excreta and help with soil improvement.



Educational Material

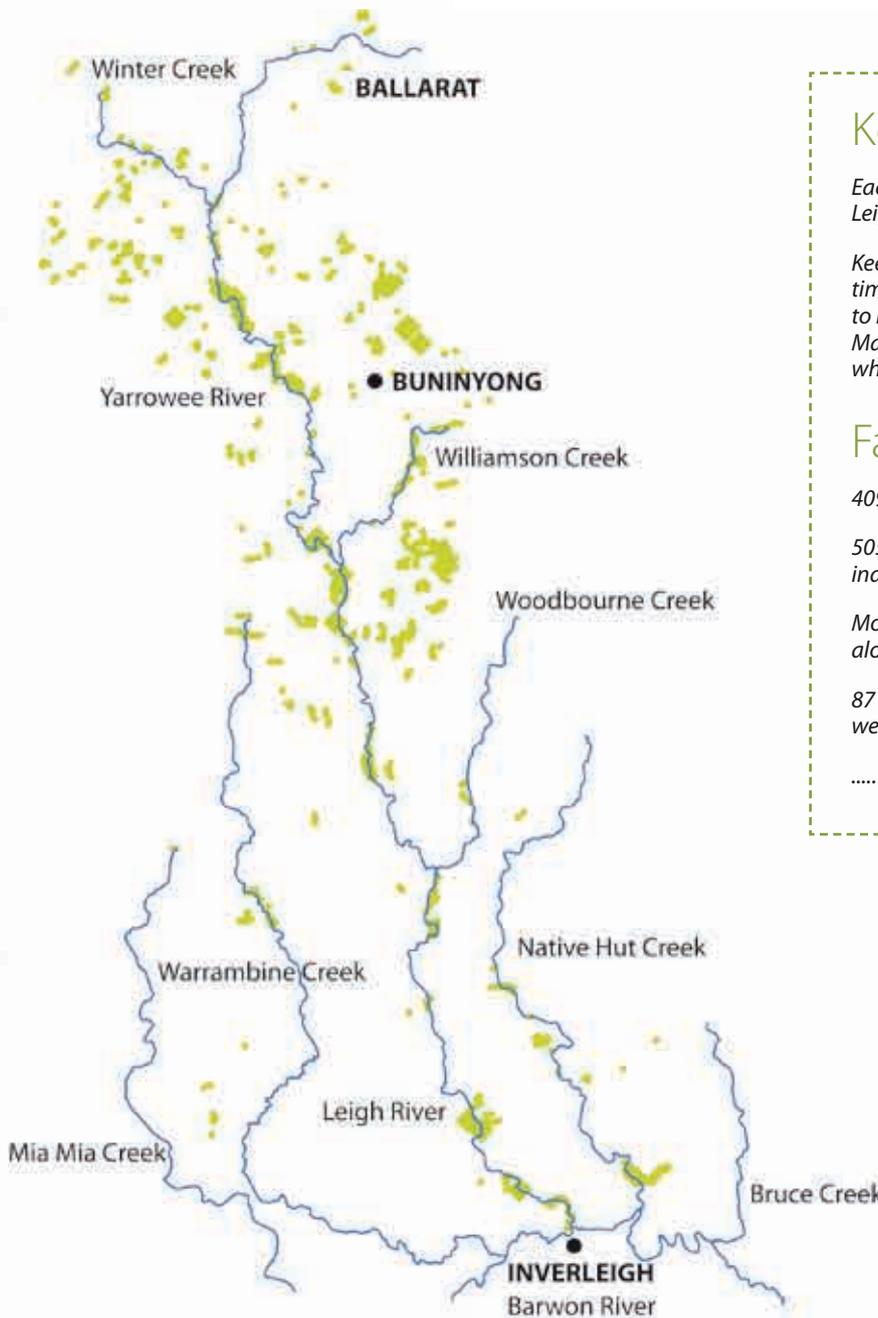
The format of the flora and fauna brochures produced by the Leigh Catchment Group has been copied all over the country. These brochures greatly assist in the accurate identification of local plants and animals as well as bringing their beauty to the attention of local people.



Landholder Visits

New landholder factsheets have been produced by the coordinators. These help to reinforce environmental messages and information when they visit a landholder's property.

Landholder Projects



Key

Each green area represents a Leigh Catchment project.

Keeping records of all projects is time consuming but very important to monitor the changing landscape. Many projects are incorporated into whole farm plans over many years.

Fact File

409 projects to date.

505 hectares revegetated with indigenous plants.

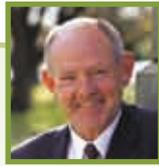
More than 55 kilometres of fencing along creeks to prevent erosion.

87 hectares of regionally controlled weeds have been removed.

..... so far



Message of Support



"On behalf of the above partners I congratulate the Leigh Catchment Group and their community based Landcare partners on the production of this document.

The Leigh Catchment Group is normally quite humble about their achievements but this publication clearly demonstrates that they are achievers who can complete large projects with minimal financial support, thanks to the voluntary efforts of their membership and many partners.

I am confident in saying that any potential investor would not be disappointed in forming a partnership with the Leigh Catchment Group."

Donald A Forsyth

Chief executive Officer

Corangamite Catchment Management Authority



Each landholder project is unique, requiring different approaches to achieve the same outcome – improved sustainable farming with biodiversity benefits. Some of these projects have been written up as **case studies** to add to future knowledge and planning. To obtain copies of case studies please contact Leigh Catchment Group.

Below: Landholders teaching other landholders.

Previous page: Native trees planted in rows in a revegetated area.



Above: Pimellea Curvifolia - Curved Rice Flower was one of the native wildflowers that reappeared under careful management.

Waterwatch

Right: Community members can participate in monitoring their local waterways to check for river quality, using Waterwatch kits and equipment. Training programs are provided for community members including school staff and students.



Below: Tree planting is a great job for all the family.





The Leigh Catchment Group is pleased to acknowledge the valued support from these organisations over the past ten years.



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



action
Salinity & Water
AUSTRALIA



GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE



To help fund the Ballarat to Barwon project through **donations** or **company sponsorship** please contact the Landcare Coordinator of the Leigh Catchment Group on Ph: 03 5341 2364 or by emailing: leighcg@ncable.net.au

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Leigh Catchment Group

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