

# Environmental Volunteering Toolkit

A guide to  
environmental  
volunteering in  
the Geelong and  
Bellarine region



# ***Environmental Volunteering Toolkit*** **Bellarine Catchment Network, Victoria, 2022**

Published by Bellarine Catchment Network Inc.  
865 Swan Bay Road, Mannerim, Victoria, 3222  
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[www.bgevc.com](http://www.bgevc.com)

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Contact [info@bcn.org.au](mailto:info@bcn.org.au) for information.

This publication was supported by Coastcare Victoria and the Victorian Government.



## **Acknowledgement of Country**

We would like to acknowledge the Wadawurrung, the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work, live and volunteer, and pay our respects to their elders past, present and future.

The Wadawurrung are the Traditional Owners for the Country of Geelong, the Bellarine, Surf Coast and beyond. Learn about what the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) aim to achieve in their *Paleert Tjaara Dja* 'Let's make Country good together 2020 – 2030: Wadawurrung Country Plan'.

**Visit:** [www.wadawurrung.org.au](http://www.wadawurrung.org.au)



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# Introduction

## What is included in this Toolkit

This toolkit aims to help those who live, work or visit the Djilang (Geelong) and Bellawiyn (Bellarine) region to volunteer to help care for Dja, or Country.

worronkai(t)

### Volunteer Groups

A barrier to volunteering may be not knowing what groups or organisations to volunteer with, or what to do. This toolkit aims to showcase many of the environmental volunteering groups and organisations in the region including summary information and contact details to help build initial connections.

### Cultural Connections

Within this document are also words in Wadawurrung to help readers connect to the true cause of environmental volunteering; caring for Dja, or Country. Download the Wadawurrung language app to learn more.

### Case Studies

Hear from different volunteer groups via Case Studies and find out what volunteering opportunities they have, and what makes their members passionate and keen to dedicate their time to environmental causes.

### Quick Tips

Learn some essential ways to help build your own volunteering skills including how to apply for a Working With Children Check, what kind of Personal Protective Equipment you may need and what your rights are as a volunteer.

# Why volunteer?

Volunteering Australia defines volunteering as "time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain". Whether you are volunteering formally (i.e., through an organisation), there are many benefits and reasons why you may want to volunteer; from building a pathway to employment, giving back, meeting new people or learning new skills. Below are benefits and/or reasons why you may want to start, or continue, volunteering.

## To Care for Country

The Wadawurrung have a Connection to Culture and Country that continues to provide them with the strength to practice and pass on tens of thousands of years of knowledge. The Wadawurrung Traditional Owners live by Bundjil's lore to care for Country and all things living as their ancestors have always done. The Wadawurrung are connected to the land, skies, waterways and coastal areas. Dja, or Country, is more than a place. All of us can help to care for Dja in on way or another.

## Physical and mental wellbeing

In addition to the well known benefits of volunteering to physical health, a study by Volunteering Victoria indicated that volunteering is also associated with better perceived mental health and quality of life. Participants who volunteered noted that they had better self-esteem, happiness, and satisfaction with life.

## Social Connections

A strong sense of community and social connections can make working towards a common goal much more rewarding. Volunteering is a great way to build social connections in your local community, helping you to branch out to new people, find your place or get to know like-minded people or communities.

## Pathways to Employment

Volunteering is a great way to learn skills that can help build pathways to employment. From environmental management techniques, time management or simply working in a team environment, volunteering can help provide you with experiences and skills that can be transferred into a paid work environment.

Volunteering is also a great way to get to know environmental groups and organisations in the area that may offer employment opportunities. Volunteering for such group or organisation is also a good way to assess if they are the right fit for you as an employer.

# Wadawurrung Statement

The following statement was provided by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation:

Wadawurrung People have a deep personal connection to land, waterways, animals, environment, and landscape. Our stories tell of events in time, changes in landscape, and animal movements long before today and that knowledge has been passed down for thousands of generations.

Our Dja or country is not only what you can see but also what you can hear, taste, and feel, it is our identity, our language, our people, and culture. It is our stories, ceremonies, our laws, and customs.

With our Paleert Tjaarra Dja, Healthy Country Plan, we offer an insight and a guide for our values and threats to our Dja. We invite you all to walk alongside us to make Country healthy and thrive again for future generations to enjoy, from our inland mountain and grassy plains to our coastlines and wetlands.



**Wadawurrung**  
Traditional Owners  
Aboriginal Corporation

murnong

# Types of volunteering

There are many different types of groups, organisations and programs in the environmental volunteering sector. In this toolkit, we have collated similar groups, organisations or programs into the categories below.



**Coastcare Groups**



**Landcare Groups**



**'Friends of' Groups**



**Community Groups**



**Citizen Science**

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# Quick Tips Page

## Applying for a **Victorian Working With Children Check**

### **What is a Working With Children Check (WWCC)?**

A WWCC is a screening process for assessing people who volunteer and work with children in Victoria. The check looks at criminal history and relevant prior conduct to ensure that children are protected from sexual and physical harm.

### **How do I know if I need a WWCC?**

If your volunteering involves direct contact with children, (people under 18 years of age), you may need a WWCC. You can assess if you require a WWCC online. **Please note:** some volunteer managers will request that you acquire a WWCC, even if your contact with children is incidental (e.g., not planned). Note that employment WWCC are accepted for volunteering.

### **Is it free?**

All volunteer WWCC are free.

### **How do I apply?**

Visit [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au). If you aren't sure if you need a check, click the 'Do I need to apply for a check?' option. Otherwise, click 'Apply for a check' to begin.

### **The application process**

- Verify your identity online using items like a drivers licence or passport.
- Verify your identity in person at a participating Post Office.
- Complete the online process.
- Lodge your application at a participating Post Office.

Visit [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) to apply or find out more information!





# Quick Tips Page

## Safe volunteering with **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

### **What is 'Personal Protective Equipment'?**

Personal Protective Equipment or PPE are items of clothing or equipment that protect you from injury or harm when working or volunteering. Typical PPE items include:

- gloves (usually gardening gloves)
- safety glasses
- long sleeves and/or pants
- enclosed shoes (e.g., boots)
- ear muffs or plugs
- high visibility vest

### **Do I need to wear PPE?**

Almost all environmental volunteering has hazards that need to be managed. For example, weeding and tree planting can lead to cuts, scratches or splinters if gloves are not worn. Volunteer coordinators should either let you know what PPE to wear or bring, or provide it for you. PPE like long pants, long sleeved shirts or shoes are usually not provided by groups and may be your responsibility to purchase.

### **Where can I get PPE from?**

First look through your home or belongings to check if you have already have PPE items - gardening gloves and lab glasses are often acceptable for many volunteering activities. Most volunteer organisations will provide PPE for you, however if you are required to purchase your own, your local hardware or gardening store should stock common PPE items.



# Quick Tips Page

## **Knowing your rights** as a volunteer

### **Photos and videos**

Many volunteer groups and organisations may want to take photos or videos of you volunteering. You can either choose to give your consent, or choose not to. Note that photos that do not show identifiable features (e.g., a far away group photo, no faces) may not require your consent.

### **Safe and healthy environments**

As a volunteer, you have the right to work in a safe and healthy environment. If you feel that you are being asked to perform tasks that are unsafe or that would require training that you have not undertaken, you do not have to perform those tasks.

### **Sexual harassment**

Volunteers are protected from sexual harassment in the same way that paid workers are. This include sexual harassment from fellow volunteers, employers or staff and clients/customers.

### **Discrimination**

In most circumstances, as a volunteer you are protected from discrimination under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. This protects you from discrimination based on your gender, age, religion or race.

### **How to find get advice or support**

If you experience sexual harassment or discrimination while volunteering, contact the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission for advice.

### **Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission:**

[www.humanrights.vic.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au)



# Coastcare Groups

Caring for Coastal  
Dja (Coastal  
Country)

# Coastcare Groups .....

## Breamlea Coastcare

Breamlea Coastcare is an active group of volunteers and supporters who live or visit the small community of Breamlea. The group volunteers regularly to protect the unique environment of Breamlea which includes wetlands, saltmarsh, moonah woodlands, sand dunes and the estuary of Thompsons Creek.

**Email:** [coastcare@breamlea.com.au](mailto:coastcare@breamlea.com.au)

## Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare

Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare aims to educate and engage local community members in coastal preservation and enhancement. They focus on coastal and marine protection by participating in citizen science, educational walks and talks and more.

**Email:** [cscecoastcare@gmail.com](mailto:cscecoastcare@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** [@cliftonspringscurlewiscoastcare](https://www.facebook.com/cliftonspringscurlewiscoastcare)

## Ocean Grove Coastcare

Ocean Grove Coastcare has a passion for protecting our coastline. They work closely with land managers and the community to address environmental problems, organise community education days and regular weeding activities, as well as social events such as movie nights.

**Email:** [oceangrovecoastcare@gmail.com](mailto:oceangrovecoastcare@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** [@OceanGroveCoastcare](https://www.facebook.com/OceanGroveCoastcare)

**Website:** [www.oceangrovecoastcare.org.au](http://www.oceangrovecoastcare.org.au)

**Right:** Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare at a community event



# Landcare Groups

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Caring for Inland  
Dja (Country)

# Landcare Groups

## Barrabool Hills Landcare

Barrabool Hills Landcare is a group of volunteers who get involved in programs such as community networking, controlling rabbits and weeds and also creating resilient landscapes and healthy waterways.

**Email:** barraboolhillslandcare@gmail.com

**Facebook:** @barraboolhillslandcare

**Website:** www.barraboolhillslandcare.org.au

## Batesford Fyansford Stonehaven Landcare Group

Batesford Fyansford Stonehaven Landcare Group are volunteers who come together regularly to advocate and care for the natural environment. They support efforts to protect the natural environment through submissions to government bodies and public presentations on issues.

**Email:** info@bfslandcare.org

**Website:** www.bfslandcare.org

## Bellarine Landcare

Bellarine Landcare aims to preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment of the Bellarine Peninsula. They manage the Bellarine Landcare and Bellarine Secondary College Nursery, have Grassland and Rabbit Action interest groups and host informative talks and weeding working bees.

**Email:** facilitator@bellarinelandcare.org.au

**Facebook:** @bellarinelandcare

**Website:** www.bellarinelandcare.org.au

**Instagram:** @bellarinelandcare

**Right:** Bellarine Landcare volunteers weeding along the Bellarine Rail Trail



# Landcare Groups



## Geelong Intrepid Landcare

Geelong Intrepid Landcare is a team of young adventurous volunteers (late teens to 30's) who travel around assisting different groups with adventure conservation projects. Join in on field trips, workshops and working bees.

**Email:** [geelongintrepid@gmail.com](mailto:geelongintrepid@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** @GeelongIntrepidLandcare

**Website:** [www.geelonglandcarenetwork.org.au/geelong-intrepid-landcare](http://www.geelonglandcarenetwork.org.au/geelong-intrepid-landcare)

## Geelong Landcare Network

Geelong Landcare Network is a networked community of Landcare and Friends groups encompassing an area to the west and north of Geelong. The GLN host many events including seed and nest box building workshops, informative talks and workshops and citizen science activities.

**Email:** [geelonglandcarenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:geelonglandcarenetwork@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** @GeelongLandcareNetwork

**Website:** [www.geelonglandcarenetwork.org.au](http://www.geelonglandcarenetwork.org.au)

## Little River Community Landcare

Little River Community Landcare aims include improving the health and accessibility of Little River and enhancing indigenous flora and fauna. Volunteer opportunities include working bees, promoting awareness of the environment and providing information and advice on environmental management. There are numerous roles to help with the administration of the group and promotion of activities.

**Email:** [littleriverlandcare@outlook.com](mailto:littleriverlandcare@outlook.com)

**Facebook:** @LittleRiverCommunityLandcare

**Website:** [www.littleriver.vic.au/little-river-community-landcare](http://www.littleriver.vic.au/little-river-community-landcare)

## Surf Coast Inland Plains Network

SCIPN is a Landcare Network operating along the Surf Coast from Barwon Heads to Anglesea and within the inland plains between Connewarre, Lake Modewarre to Winchelsea. SCIPN facilitate and are involved in a variety of projects; from platypus citizen science, tree planting in a variety of habitats, focus groups and more.

**Email:** [scipn@bigpond.com](mailto:scipn@bigpond.com)

**Website:** [www.scipn.com.au](http://www.scipn.com.au)

# 'Friends of' Groups



All of Country  
is connected



# 'Friends of' Groups .....

## Friends of the Barwon

Friends of the Barwon is a catchment wide network of groups and individuals working to protect and restore the long-term health of the Barwon River and its tributaries. Friends of the Barwon have volunteering opportunities in social media, administration and advocacy.

**Email:** [friendsofthebarwon@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthebarwon@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** @FriendsoftheBarwon

**Website:** [www.friendsofthebarwon.org.au](http://www.friendsofthebarwon.org.au)

## Friends of the Basin Reserve

The Friends of the Basin Reserve work to protect and enhance the Basin Reserve in Drysdale. The group meet at the Bellarine Landcare and Bellarine Secondary College Nursery each month to undertake weeding and citizen science activities.

**Email:** [facilitator@bellarinelandcare.org.au](mailto:facilitator@bellarinelandcare.org.au)

## Friends of Begola Wetlands

The Friends of Begola Wetlands is a community group that aims to protect and enhance the environmental values of Begola Wetlands in Ocean Grove.

**Email:** [info@bcn.org.au](mailto:info@bcn.org.au)



**Left:** The Basin Reserve, Drysdale

# 'Friends of' Groups

## Friends of the Bellarine Rail Trail

The Friends of the Bellarine Rail Trail are an incorporated environment group formed in April 2002. The group is committed to the indigenous revegetation of the 16-kilometre section of the Bellarine Rail Trail, between South Geelong and Drysdale Railway Stations.

**Email:** [friendsofbellarinerailtrail@hotmail.com](mailto:friendsofbellarinerailtrail@hotmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.sites.google.com/site/friendsbrt](http://www.sites.google.com/site/friendsbrt)

**Facebook:** @FriendsOfTheBellarineRailTrail

## Friends of the Bluff

Friends of the Bluff is a group of committed environmentalists providing support, education and awareness for the regeneration of natural vegetation and habitat of the Barwon Bluff area. They offer volunteering opportunities in social media, administration and community engagement.

**Email:** [info@barwonbluff.com.au](mailto:info@barwonbluff.com.au)  
**Website:** [www.barwonbluff.com.au](http://www.barwonbluff.com.au)

**Facebook:** @FriendsoftheBluffBarwonHeads

## Friends of the Brisbane Ranges

The Friends of Brisbane Ranges is an active group which began in 1982. They provide opportunities for people to meet socially and learn about the environment, ecology, flora, fauna, and history of the Brisbane Ranges National Park and Steiglitz Historic Park in Victoria.

**Email:** [friends.brisbane.ranges@gmail.com](mailto:friends.brisbane.ranges@gmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.fobr.org.au](http://www.fobr.org.au)

**Facebook:** @fobrnp

**Right:** The Bluff,  
Barwon Heads



# 'Friends of' Groups

## Friends of Buckley Falls

The Friends of Buckley Falls group are involved in revegetation and weeding on both sides of the Barwon River (Fyansford, Highton and Wandana), including Redgum Island between the Barwon and Moorabool Rivers. Follow the group on Facebook to find out about their regular working bees.

**Facebook Group:** Friends of Buckley Falls

## Friends of the Buckley Park

The Friends of Buckley Park are a community group that works in the coastal reserve between Ocean Grove and Point Lonsdale. Projects include education and awareness of the local community, weed control and revegetation projects.

**Email:** [admin@inheritearth.com.au](mailto:admin@inheritearth.com.au)

## Friends of Cowies Creek

The Friends of Cowies Creek is a community group in Norlane that foster care for Cowies Creek by connecting with the local community to protect and regenerate the creek and its native biodiversity. They host clean-ups, plantings and other creekly events with the local community.

**Email:** [friendsofcowiescreek@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofcowiescreek@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** @Cowiescreek

**Website:** [www.northerlyaspects.org.au/friends-of-cowies-creek/](http://www.northerlyaspects.org.au/friends-of-cowies-creek/)



**Left:** Buckley Falls, Geelong

# 'Friends of' Groups

## Friends of Edwards Point

The Friends of Edwards Point aim to protect the last remaining stand of coastal woodland on the Bellarine Peninsula. From coastal woodlands to a magnificent coastline, the reserve is home to a vast array of indigenous plants and animals.

**Email:** [friends.edwardspoint@gmail.com](mailto:friends.edwardspoint@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** [@friendsofedwardspointwildlifereserve](https://www.facebook.com/@friendsofedwardspointwildlifereserve)

## Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens

The Friends of the Geelong Botanic Gardens have been an integral part of the Geelong Botanic Gardens for 29 years and offer an array volunteering opportunities including gardening, maintaining the nursery, helping with the library or as a volunteer guide.

**Email:** [info@friendsgbg.org.au](mailto:info@friendsgbg.org.au)

**Facebook:** [@FriendsoftheGeelongBotanicGardens](https://www.facebook.com/@FriendsoftheGeelongBotanicGardens)

**Website:** [www.friendsgbg.org.au](http://www.friendsgbg.org.au)

**Instagram:** [friendsgeelongbotanicgardens](https://www.instagram.com/friendsgeelongbotanicgardens)

## Friends of Indented Head Woodland Nature Reserve

The Friends of Indented Head Woodland Nature Reserve began in 2019 and they have worked closely with the City of Greater Geelong's Nature Reserves Team. The group meet for working bees on the 1st Friday and 3rd Wednesday of the month and last for about two hours.

**Email:** [inovo@bigpond.net.au](mailto:inovo@bigpond.net.au)

## Friends of the Hooded Plover Bellarine

The Friends of the Hooded Plover Bellarine are a group of volunteers who work in partnership with Birdlife Australia throughout the year to raise awareness and protection for this threatened bird. Their area stretches from Point Lonsdale to the Point Impossible estuary. They work with Friends groups on the Bellarine and the Surf Coast Shire, as Hooded Plovers are found on surf beaches right along our coast.

**Email:** [fohp\\_bellarine@birdlife.org.au](mailto:fohp_bellarine@birdlife.org.au)

**Website:** [www.birdlife.org.au/projects/beach-nesting-birds](http://www.birdlife.org.au/projects/beach-nesting-birds)

# 'Friends of' Groups .....

## Friends of the Lobster Pot

The Friends of the Lobster Pot are located along the Barwon estuary in Barwon Heads and they work together to manage the educational material in the Barwon Estuary Heritage Centre, also known as the Lobster Pot.

**Email:** martin@barwonheads.net

## Friends of MurrK Ngubitj Yarram Yaluk

This group works to protect and conserve the environmental and cultural values of the Murrk Ngubitj Yarram Yaluk reserve in Wallington. The group meet on the first Wednesday of each month to conduct weeding, revegetation, citizen science and educational activities.

**Email:** info@bcn.org.au

## Friends of the Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre

The Friends of the Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre is a group of people dedicated to promoting and supporting the Marine Discovery Centre as an environmental learning centre of local, national and international significance.

**Email:** membership@friendsofmdc.org

**Facebook:** @marinediscoverycentrefriends



**Left:** The 'Friends of Murrk Ngubitj Yarram Yaluk group after a weeding session

# 'Friends of' Groups

## Friends of the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve

The Friends of Ocean Grove Nature Reserve work to educate the public about the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve's fauna, flora and habitat and assist in weed control, planting, protection of vulnerable plants and maintenance of the visitor centre.

**Email:** [fognr@gmail.com](mailto:fognr@gmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.fognr.wordpress.com](http://www.fognr.wordpress.com)

**Facebook:** @FriendsoftheOceanGroveNatureReserve

## Friends of Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve

The FoPR help protect and restore the biodiversity of Point Richards which features ephemeral wetlands and a wide diversity of coastal woodlands and wetland bird species. The group meet every Tuesday morning at 10 am for a 2-hour working bee and are supported by Bellarine Bayside.

**Email:** [contactus@bellarinebayside.com.au](mailto:contactus@bellarinebayside.com.au)

**Facebook:** @FriendsofPtRichards

## Friends of Ramblers Road

Friends of Ramblers Road are involved in community and social functions. The group has weeding days, is involved in Clean Up Australia Day and has so far planted approximately 300 small shrubs on the Ramblers Road foreshore area.

**Email:** [friendsoframblersroad@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoframblersroad@gmail.com)

**Right:** Growling Grass Frog found at Point Richards



# 'Friends of' Groups .....

## Friends of Waurn Ponds Creek

The Friends of Waurn Ponds Creek gather together to care for Waurn Ponds Creek from Colac Road to Barwon Heads Road. They facilitate activities including revegetation, maintenance and clean ups.

**Email:** fofwpc@y7mail.com

**Website:** [www.friendsofwaurnpondscreek.org.au](http://www.friendsofwaurnpondscreek.org.au)

**Facebook:** @friendsofwaurnpondscreek

## Friends of Yellow Gums Reserve

The Friends of the Yellow Gums Reserve is a newly forming community group that aims to raise awareness about threatened Bellarine Yellow Gums. Events may include flora and fauna walks, revegetation days and private land conservation education and advice.

**Email:** [info@bcn.org.au](mailto:info@bcn.org.au)



**Left:** The threatened Bellarine Yellow Gum, Ocean Grove

# Case Study

## Friends of the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve committee member Beth Ross



### What draws people to your group?

Many photographers and birdwatchers come to enjoy the large reserve of pristine woodland. It is quite accessible being in the centre of Ocean Grove and features many types of walks. Visitors can see lots of wildlife - from wallabies, echidnas and birds. The friends group is very welcoming and includes a lot of members with high expertise that others can learn from.

### What volunteering opportunities do you offer?

FoOGNR facilitate activities including revegetation, weeding and specialised projects like the new Bellarine Nature Search website. Volunteers can also help with the newsletter, social media, plant sales, community engagement, as well as volunteering to be a committee member.

### What skills do volunteers need?

No specialised skills are needed - the group are able to find a role or activity for everybody. Volunteers do need a Working With Children Check.

### How can they best get in touch?

Email us at [fognr@gmail.com](mailto:fognr@gmail.com). If you sign up as a member, you receive the quarterly newsletter. Visit the website at [www.fognr.wordpress.com](http://www.fognr.wordpress.com) for more info.

### When do you meet?

The group meet for regular working bees on the second last Friday each month at 9am-11:30am. Register via [ParkConnect](#) or contact the group directly.

Friends of Ocean Grove members - Image by Lel Shipley





# Community Groups

Koling wada-ngal  
Let's walk  
together

# Community Groups .....

## 100% Clean Bellarine

100% Clean Bellarine are a local action group with the ambitious goal to create a pathway to 100% renewable energy for the Bellarine Peninsula. They facilitate projects around solar power and community engagement.

**Email:** [100cleanbellarine@gmail.com](mailto:100cleanbellarine@gmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.100cleanbellarine.org](http://www.100cleanbellarine.org)

**Facebook:** @100CleanBellarine

## Australian Parents for Climate Action - Geelong and Bellarine

The Geelong and Bellarine AP4CA group are on a mission to empower parents, carers, families and everyone who cares about kids, to advocate for urgent action on climate. They plan family-friendly activities that engage communities, engage politicians in climate solutions, and amplify positive stories.

**Email:** [bellarine@ap4ca.org](mailto:bellarine@ap4ca.org)  
**Website:** [www.ap4ca.org/geelong\\_Bellarine](http://www.ap4ca.org/geelong_Bellarine)

**Facebook:** ap4cageelongbellarine

## Barwon Estuary Project

The Barwon Estuary Project aim to increase community knowledge, appreciation and our community capacity to care for the Barwon Estuary. They facilitate a customized diary, run workshops, guided walks and expert talks, or volunteers can join the working group.

**Email:** [membership@friendsofmdc.org](mailto:membership@friendsofmdc.org)  
**Website:** [www.barwonestuaryproject.wordpress.com](http://www.barwonestuaryproject.wordpress.com)

**Facebook:** @barwonestuaryproject  
**Instagram:** @barwonestuaryproject



# Community Groups .....

## Beach Patrol Geelong

Beach Patrol Geelong is a volunteer group dedicated to protecting our marine environment by keeping Corio Bay beaches free of plastic and rubbish!

**Email:** [3220@beachpatrol.com.au](mailto:3220@beachpatrol.com.au)  
**Website:** [www.beachpatrol.com.au](http://www.beachpatrol.com.au)

**Facebook:** @3220beachpatrol

## Bellarine Catchment Network

Bellarine Catchment Network is an incorporated community organisation bringing 32+ groups and organisations together to deliver on-ground works, education and community engagement. Bellarine Catchment Network offers multiple volunteering opportunities; from regular weeding, erosion monitoring, marine debris surveys and some committee member positions.

**Email:** [info@bcn.org.au](mailto:info@bcn.org.au)  
**Website:** [www.environmentbellarine.org.au](http://www.environmentbellarine.org.au)

**Facebook:** @bellarinecatchmentnetwork  
**Instagram:** @bellarinecatchmentnetwork

## Bellarine Peninsula Orange-bellied Parrot Regional Group

The Bellarine Peninsula Orange-bellied Parrot Regional Group helps protect the critically endangered OBP through winter surveys on the Bellarine Peninsula, community engagement and more. Anybody can immediately report Orange-bellied Parrot sightings on the Bellarine Peninsula via the email below.

**Email:** [craig.morley@birdlife.org.au](mailto:craig.morley@birdlife.org.au)

## BirdLife Bellarine Peninsula

BirdLife Bellarine are a small group of bird enthusiasts dedicated to observing birds. The group draws its membership primarily from the Bellarine Peninsula and Geelong as well as further afield. The group participates in regular outings, campouts and surveying birds such as the Orange-bellied Parrot.

**Website:** [www.birdlife.org.au/groups/birdlife-bellarine](http://www.birdlife.org.au/groups/birdlife-bellarine)



# Community Groups .....

## Buckley Park Weekday Weeders

Buckley Park Weekday Weeders includes members of the community and the City of Greater Geelong's Environment Team, all working together to improve the natural asset of Buckley Park, Ocean Grove.

**Email:** [morrowjane5@gmail.com](mailto:morrowjane5@gmail.com) | [dbird@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:dbird@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)

## Drysdale Clifton Springs Curlewis Association

Drysdale Clifton Springs Curlewis Association aims to improve local people's well-being and our natural, social and built environments. They discuss changes to the community, work with other groups and represent locals' views to outside organisations.

**Email:** [dryclifton@gmail.com](mailto:dryclifton@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** @DCSCA

**Website:** [www.sites.google.com/view/drysdalecliftonspringscurlewis](http://www.sites.google.com/view/drysdalecliftonspringscurlewis)

## Feed Me Bellarine

Feed Me Bellarine turns leftover food into nutritious meals and delivers to people in need across the Bellarine Peninsula. Their mission is to save food from landfill and to help those that need a hand. Volunteers are needed in the market, the farm, for deliveries and more.

**Email:** [feedmebellarine@gmail.com](mailto:feedmebellarine@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** [feedmebellarinegeelongsurfcoast](https://www.facebook.com/feedmebellarinegeelongsurfcoast)

**Website:** [www.feedme.org.au](http://www.feedme.org.au)

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**Right:** *Polygala myrtifolia*, a common weed on the Bellarine Peninsula



# Community Groups .....

## Geelong Environment Council

The Geelong Environment Council was formed in 1972 to assist in the protection of the environment in and around Geelong. GEC is one of Australia's earliest established, continuously running, independently incorporated community-based environmental organisations.

**Email:** [gecinc@bigpond.com](mailto:gecinc@bigpond.com)

**Website:** [www.geelongenvironment.org.au](http://www.geelongenvironment.org.au)

**Facebook:** @GlongEnviroInc

## Geelong Field Naturalists Club

The Geelong Field Naturalists Club is for anyone interested in wildlife, plants, or conservation in the Geelong region. The club holds monthly meetings and excursions and facilitate volunteer Boneseeding weeding days at the YouYangs, as well as fauna surveys and citizen science challenges.

**Email:** [info@gfnc.org.au](mailto:info@gfnc.org.au)

**Website:** [www.gfnc.org.au](http://www.gfnc.org.au)

**Facebook:** @geelongfnc

**Instagram:** @geelongfieldnaturalists

## Geelong Sustainability

Geelong Sustainability is a dynamic and passionate community group focused on sharing information, building community resilience, advocating for the environment and supporting effective action. Their mission is to inform, inspire and connect communities to create a sustainable future and to protect our natural environment.

**Email:** [info@geelongsustainability.org.au](mailto:info@geelongsustainability.org.au)

**Website:** [www.geelongsustainability.org.au](http://www.geelongsustainability.org.au)

**Facebook:** @geelongsustainability

**Instagram:** @geelongsustainability



**Left:** Geelong Field Naturalist Club members on an excursion

# Community Groups .....

## Southern Ocean Environment Link

Southern Ocean Environmental Link are a non for profit organisation dedicated to protecting our marine environments and its inhabitants. They offer volunteering opportunities covering a range of tasks and will provide training to any new volunteers.

**Website:** [info@soel.org.au](mailto:info@soel.org.au)

**Email:** [www.soel.org.au](http://www.soel.org.au)

**Facebook:** @southernoceanenvirolink

**Instagram:** @southernoceanenvirolink

## SpringDale Neighbourhood Centre

SpringDale Neighbourhood Centre is a community based and a not for profit organisation located in Drysdale. They provide a community focus and meets the needs of many locals. The centre have many roles for volunteers, from committee positions, administration, or help with breakfasts.

**Website:** [www.home.springdale.org.au](http://www.home.springdale.org.au)

**Facebook:** @SpringDaleNeighbourhoodCentreInc

## Swan Bay Environment Association

The Swan Bay Environment Association is a group of volunteers who recognise the importance of Swan Bay as a wetland of national and international importance and is actively working to ensure the area remains in a natural and unspoilt state.

**Email:** [queenscliffeindigenousnursery@yahoo.com](mailto:queenscliffeindigenousnursery@yahoo.com)

**Website:** [www.swanbayenvironment.org.au](http://www.swanbayenvironment.org.au)

**Facebook:** @swanbayenvironment

**Right:** The Swan Bay Environment Indigenous Nursery



# Community Groups .....

## Queenscliff Climate Action Network

QCAN are a volunteer-based, apolitical group made up of local residents united to discuss their growing concern about the increasing impacts of the world's climate crisis on our local community and natural environment.

**Email:** queenscliffeclimateaction@gmail.com

**Website:** www.queenscliffeclimateaction.org

**Facebook Group:** @queenscliffclimateaction

**Instagram:** @queenscliffclimateaction

## Queenscliff Environment Forum

The Queenscliff Environment Forum are committed to improving environmental outcomes and minimising the impacts of development on our coastal areas. QEF engages with other groups to lobby for better environmental and heritage outcomes.

**Email:** info@bcn.org.au

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**Right:** The Queenscliff Climate Action Network



# Citizen Science





# Citizen Science

## BeachWatch

This program is facilitated by Bellarine Bayside and aims to engage the community in monitoring changes along the northern Bellarine coastline. Using survey equipment, volunteers measure sand losses and gains along the northern Bellarine coast every 2 months.

**Email:** [contactus@bellarinebayside.com.au](mailto:contactus@bellarinebayside.com.au)

**Facebook:** @FriendsofPtRichards

**Website:** [www.bellarinebayside.com.au/coastal-management/volunteers/](http://www.bellarinebayside.com.au/coastal-management/volunteers/)

## EstuaryWatch

EstuaryWatch supports community members to actively participate in estuary health monitoring and provides a pathway for community members to increase their knowledge about estuaries through regular seminars, information days and training.

**Email:** [ghcma@ghcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:ghcma@ghcma.vic.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.estuarywatch.org.au](http://www.estuarywatch.org.au)

**Facebook:** @EstuaryWatchWaterwatchVic

## Greater Geelong Plastic Pollution Survey

Join the world's largest plastic pollution citizen science survey lead by the prestigious CSIRO Marine Debris Team and facilitated by Bellarine Catchment Network across Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula. This program helps us better understand the sources, movement, distribution and impacts our waste can have.

**Email:** [info@bcn.org.au](mailto:info@bcn.org.au)

**Facebook:** @bellarinecatchmentnetwork

**Website:** [www.environmentbellarine.org.au](http://www.environmentbellarine.org.au)



**Right:** Bellarine Catchment Network volunteers learning how to participate in the Greater Geelong Plastic Pollution Survey

# Citizen Science

## Great Victorian Fish Count

The Great Victorian Fish Count is facilitated by the Victorian National Parks Associations and runs every November and December and hundreds of divers and snorkelers plunge contribute to this exciting citizen science event. Volunteers record species on a dive slate and this data helps us understand more about Victoria's marine species.

**Email:** [vnpa@vnpa.org.au](mailto:vnpa@vnpa.org.au)

**Facebook:** @thegreatvictorianfishcount

**Website:** [www.vnpa.org.au/programs/great-victorian-fish-count](http://www.vnpa.org.au/programs/great-victorian-fish-count)

## Point Lonsdale Sand Monitoring Program

Learn how to monitor sand erosion and accretion at Point Lonsdale front beach. Volunteer at your own pace and as frequently as you wish, using equipment that is stored at a shared location for ease. All volunteers will be trained in sand monitoring techniques and will operate as a group.

**Email:** [info@bcn.org.au](mailto:info@bcn.org.au)

**Facebook:** @bellarinecatchmentnetwork

**Website:** [www.environmentbellarine.org.au](http://www.environmentbellarine.org.au)

## Sea Search

The Sea Search program is facilitated by Parks Victoria and is a great way to learn and explore the marine environment while collecting important information on its health and condition. The information collected by Sea Searchers aids the management of marine parks. There are a range of activities to suit all experience levels. Sea Search activities occur both on shore and in the water.

**Email:** [seasearch@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:seasearch@parks.vic.gov.au)

**Left:** Point Lonsdale Sand Monitoring volunteers measuring sand height at Point Lonsdale front beach.



# Citizen Science

## Sea Slug Census

The Sea Slug Census group was established by the Victorian National Parks Association to allow participants in the Sea Slug Census program to add images of their finds and view those made by other divers. There is usually a spring census that volunteers can participate in, whether you are on the rockpools, snorkelling or diving.

**Email:** [nicole@vnpa.org.au](mailto:nicole@vnpa.org.au)

**Website:** [www.vnpa.org.au/programs/sea-slug-census](http://www.vnpa.org.au/programs/sea-slug-census)

**Facebook:** @seaslugcensus

## Victorian Coastal Monitoring Program

Deakin University are working with motivated citizen science groups to use aerial drones to monitor shorelines across Victoria. They monitor changes in the volume, topography and extent of beach sands and foreshore morphology and all data is available to the community.

**Email:** [vcmp@deakin.edu.au](mailto:vcmp@deakin.edu.au)

**Website:** [www.marinemapping.org/vcmp-citizen-science](http://www.marinemapping.org/vcmp-citizen-science)

## Waterwatch

Waterwatch Victoria in the Geelong and Bellarine region is facilitated by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, and is a citizen science program that monitors waterway health. They also collect data through surveys and observations on local waterway quality and health.

**Email:** [vicwaterwatchestuarieswatch@ccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:vicwaterwatchestuarieswatch@ccma.vic.gov.au)

**Facebook:** @EstuaryWatchWaterwatchVic

**Website:** [www.vic.waterwatch.org.au](http://www.vic.waterwatch.org.au)



**Right:**  
Waterwatch monitors water quality at lakes, rivers and other water ways across Victoria.

# Case Study

## Geelong Field Naturalists Club

member Rod Lowther

### What citizen science programs are the GFNC involved in?

We are involved in the 'Global Big Day' a twice-yearly bird surveying challenge that users complete via the [eBird](#) app.

Using the [iNaturalist](#) app, we participate in the City Nature Challenge in autumn, an international competition that helps define Geelong biodiversity by observing life during the four-day event. In spring, we participate in the Great Southern BioBlitz which has the same format as above but is for southern hemisphere cities only. For all events, anybody can join in, you just need to use the appropriate citizen science app.

While eBird is for bird observations only, iNaturalist can record observations from all species - plants, birds, insects, shells. When recording nature using these apps, you can do so with a friend or with a group. These citizen science projects involve both collaboration and competition and are a good way to give you a snapshot of nature in your local area. If you join as a GFNC member, the club also participates in summer and winter wader counts including Latham's Snipe count in summer, as well as regular fauna surveys.



### Why are these programs important?

These programs give people a chance to start observing and becoming aware of what's around them, leading to a better understanding and appreciating of nature. The data collected adds to our overall knowledge of biodiversity which can influence the decision-making processes around land management and species protection.

### What skills do volunteers need?

You don't need to be an expert at all. In the case of iNaturalist, it has inbuilt Artificial Intelligence backed up with the support of specialists who will assist with identification. It's a great learning tool and the GFNC has several species guides for common species in the area that you can use to learn more - visit our ['BioBlitz'](#) page to have a look.

### How can people participate?

When using eBird, all you need to do is create an account and enter your bird observations. For iNaturalist simply create an account, join specific projects if you would like, such as the GFNC BioBlitz project. Join the GFNC as a member or follow the GFNC Facebook for events at [@geelongfnc](#). Members can join in on citizen science excursions and activities. Other apps that allow you to contribute to citizen science include [FrogID](#), [Butterflies Australia](#) and [FeralScan](#).

The [Vic Field Guide](#) is a good app to help you identify animals.

# Credits

Published by Bellarine Catchment Network in 2022 in consultation with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC), the Friends of Ocean Grove Nature Reserve and the Geelong Field Naturalists Club.

Graphic Design by Bellarine Catchment Network.

This publication was supported by Coastcare Victoria and the Victorian Government.

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Take care