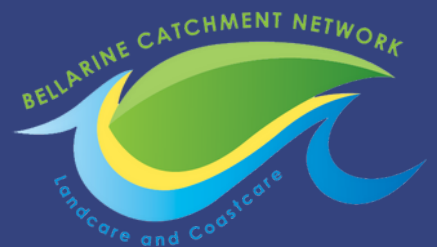


BELLARINE CATCHMENT NETWORK



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





Bellarine Catchment Network

ABN: 79 770 540 247

865 Swan Bay Road, Mannerim, Victoria, 3222

www.environmentbellarine.org.au

www.bgevc.com

Front cover image: Volunteers celebrating their efforts following a successful planting day at RipView in Point Lonsdale.

BBCdigital

► Making work flow.

Printed and supported by BBC Digital.

Acknowledgement of Country

Bellarine Catchment Network acknowledges Wadawurrung, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect regardless of their ability, cultural background, religion, ethnicity, gender identity, intersex status or sexual orientation.





Above: The Friends of Murrk
Ngubitj Yarram Yaluk

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BELLARINE CATCHMENT NETWORK.....	4
NETWORK MEMBERS.....	5
PRESIDENT’S REPORT.....	6-7
TREASURER’S REPORT.....	8-9
EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT.....	10-11
OUR TEAM.....	12
HIGHLIGHT - NATURE MENTORS.....	13
HIGHLIGHT - CORPORATE DAYS.....	14
HIGHLIGHT - NETWORK SUPPORT.....	15
OUTCOMES.....	16-17
SPONSORS.....	18
PARTNERS.....	19
GET IN TOUCH.....	20

BELLARINE CATCHMENT NETWORK

Bellarine Catchment Network (BCN) is a non-government organisation and registered charity that is governed by a volunteer committee of management.

The network is made up representatives from 45 key catchment and coastal organisations (both government and non-government) with an integrated catchment management focus. This includes 'Friends of' groups, Landcare and Coastcare groups, community organisations, government agencies, Councils and land managers.

BCN offers a variety of services to educational institutions, the wider community, other environmental organisations, businesses and government bodies. We run a number of programs and projects in Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula including volunteering programs, habitat restoration works and the facilitation of environment focused events and activities.

Our Vision is for 'Healthy, flourishing and diverse ecosystems cared for by an aware and engaged community.'

Our Mission is 'To be an integrated, inclusive and collaborative network that educates, facilitates, connects and empowers groups and individuals to care for the living things of the land and water of the Bellarine catchment.'

Our Goals

The following goals are derived from our 2023-2028 Strategic Plan.

1

Activate

Deliver evidence-based biodiversity and sustainability services that inspire action for the environment.

2

Engage

Foster an engaged, educated and diverse community who care for the land and water of the Bellarine catchment, and its flora and fauna.

3

Empower

Build and empower a collaborative network that delivers projects in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



Right: Biodiversity Officer Ash Baldwin at a revegetation day.

NETWORK MEMBERS

Our Network features a diverse range of local groups and organisations that are involved in environmental work. We consult with these groups to ensure that we are delivering community driven projects to protect and enhance the environmental values of the Bellarine.

Australian Parents 4 Climate Action
Barwon Coast Committee of Management
Barwon Estuary Project
Barwon Heads Association
Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management
Bellarine Landcare Group
Bellarine Peninsula Orange-bellied Parrot Regional Group
BirdLife Bellarine
Borough of Queenscliffe
Born Wild Community
Breamlea Coastcare
City of Greater Geelong
Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare
Coastcare Victoria
Conservation Volunteers Australia
Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
Drysdale Clifton Springs Curlewis Association
Friends of the Barwon
Friends of the Bluff Barwon Heads
Friends of Begola Wetlands

Friends of the Bellarine Rail Trail
Friends of Buckley Park
Friends of Edwards Point Reserve
Friends of the Hooded Plover Bellarine
Friends of Indented Head Woodland Nature Reserve
Friends of the Lobster Pot
Friends of Ocean Grove Nature Reserve
Friends of Pt Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve
Friends of Ramblers Road
Friends of the Red-capped Plovers
Friends of Yellow Gums
Geelong Environment Council
Geelong Field Naturalists Club
Geelong Gardens for Wildlife
Geelong Sustainability
Greening Australia
Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre
Ocean Grove Coastcare
Ocean Grove Rotary
Parks Victoria
Queenscliff Environment Forum
Southern Ocean Environment Link
SpringDale Neighbourhood Centre
St Leonards Community Care
Swan Bay Environment Association

Below: A Wildlife Walk for the Friends of Edwards Point Reserve in April 2025



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vicki Perrett



VICKI PERRETT
President

I'm delighted to report another successful year for Bellarine Catchment Network (BCN), delivering extensive community engagement, environmental education, bush regeneration and biodiversity services across the Bellarine and Greater Geelong. BCN remains firmly focused on activating, engaging and empowering people to care for the environment.

Our success reflects the strength of collaboration with our members and partners and our shared commitment to protecting the Bellarine.

Our Network

Membership continues to grow, reinforcing our collaborative model. As of June 2025, BCN has 45 member organisations: 36 groups and 9 associates. New members include Born Wild Community, Geelong Gardens for Wildlife, Ocean Grove Rotary, St Leonards Community Care and the Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre.

Members strongly supported the Nature Mentors program, which we hope to continue subject to funding. On behalf of the Committee, I thank all network members for their dedicated conservation work throughout the region.

Our Team and Centre

Building on a stronger financial position, BCN expanded its team to six (4.4 EFT). We welcomed Brooke McGovern (Community Engagement Officer), Ash Baldwin (Biodiversity Officer) and Diane Heafield (Administration Officer), who have all settled well under the guidance of Matt Crawley (Executive Officer) and Naomi Wells (Coastal and Biodiversity Program Leader). They join Daniel Morrison (Biodiversity Field Officer) and our regular casuals, who deliver quality on-ground services in often challenging conditions.

Our renovated Bellarine Environment Centre (BEC) has become a valued hub for staff, committee and members. Following an independent valuation, the Centre was added to BCN's fixed assets, strengthening our balance sheet.

Education and Engagement

BCN again delivered a strong program of community engagement, working with primary and secondary schools to inspire students to protect their local environment.

Over summer, we collaborated with land managers to deliver events for over 1,500 participants, supported by our dedicated network groups. Popular initiatives such as Twilight Walks attracted new audiences, while our Events Calendar website remained a key resource for promoting local environmental activities.

Our incredible volunteers remain at the heart of BCN, dedicating countless hours to bush regeneration and habitat restoration across the Bellarine.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vicki Perrett

Partnerships

Partnerships remain central to BCN's collaborative model, and we are now working alongside all public land managers on the Bellarine. This year, BCN delivered place-based environmental services for Barwon Water, Barwon Coast, Bellarine Bayside, Bellarine Community Health, Bendigo Bank, Borough of Queenscliffe, City of Greater Geelong, Coastcare Victoria, Corangamite CMA, Geelong Cemeteries Trust and Moremac.

We continued our valued collaboration with Corangamite CMA and Bellarine Landcare Group, especially with their facilitator Sophie Small. BCN also became an approved supplier for both the Borough of Queenscliffe and City of Greater Geelong, positioning us to quote for more environmental contracts. Before taking long service leave, Matt negotiated two exciting multi-year strategic partnerships with Barwon Water and Geelong Cemeteries Trust.

Governance

This year, the Committee and Leadership Team strengthened governance and accountability. Two sub-committees were established: 1) Finance Sub-committee – overseeing budgeting and reporting and 2) HR Sub-committee – managing policy, recruitment, compliance, performance and staff wellbeing. We held a combined committee and staff workshop in February, which confirmed we were fulfilling BCN's mission and strategic goals, while identifying opportunities for further growth. The Committee updated Matt's title to Executive Officer to reflect his leadership role. He successfully embraced our desire to expand our fee-for-service stream as this reduces our reliance on grant funding and enhances our resilience.

I extend sincere thanks to my fellow volunteer committee members (featured below) for their dedication and support: Graeme O'Leary (Treasurer), Margot Busch (Secretary), Beth Ross (Vice President), Andrea Dennett, Jon Duthie and Graham Possingham (Finance SC).

Advocacy and Networking

BCN continues to advocate for First Peoples, climate action, the circular economy, clean energy and nature protection at all levels of government. While the G21 Regional Alliance remains suspended, there is continuing support for two Sustainability Pillar programs: the Clean Economy transition and Nature Positive.

BCN is a professional, resilient and community-driven organisation committed to growing conservation impacts, expanding public reach, building capacity and ensuring financial stability. Together with our members, partners and volunteers, we will continue to protect biodiversity and make Country healthy for future generations.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Graeme O'Leary



GRAEME O'LEARY
Treasurer

BCN recorded a Total trading income of \$561,782, comprising of Fee-for-Service Income (44%), Partnership Income (26%), Local, State Government and other Non-Government Grants (26%) and Auspice Income and sundry income sources such as donations, interest and reimbursements (4%).

BCN ended the financial 2024-25 FY with a loss of \$18.875. This was due primarily to Network Member grants, held in auspice, not being expended by the end of the 2024-25 Financial Year. This resulted in the funds which were recorded as Income in the Profit and Loss Statement being transferred to the Balance Sheet and held as a liability.

Careful financial management resulted in total operating expenses of \$580,655, of which employment costs represented the majority (76%). A review of fixed assets by the Finance Sub-committee led to a significant increase in value recorded on the 2024–25 balance sheet, totalling \$1,146,485. This included an independent valuation of the Bellarine Environment Centre (land and buildings) by WPB Group, assessed at \$725,000.

As a consequence of the Asset review, depreciation has been applied to all asset categories resulting in a downward adjustment to the FY 2023-24 Total Fixed Assets and Total Asset values. Depreciation has also been included in the P&L statement under operating expenses with a downward adjustment to the FY 2023-24 Profit. Liabilities increased by \$31,076 compared with the previous year, bringing total equity to \$962,307 which includes Retained Earnings of \$595,034 (an increase of \$307,917).

The Independent Auditor's Report confirmed that BCN's financial statements provide a true and fair view of the organisation's position as at 30 June 2025 and comply with Australian Accounting Standards. The committee has approved the audited financial statements.

Throughout the year, the Finance Sub-committee prioritised improving financial reporting and analysis, with greater focus on understanding cash flow variations, income streams, asset cycles and planning for significant future expenses. One outcome was the decision to increase insurance cover to ensure adequate protection of BCN's tangible assets.

The Sub-committee also reviewed leased vehicles and, following cost analysis and professional advice, recommended purchasing two work vehicles due for renewal.

Additional actions included:

- Joining Landcare Victoria's donation portal to access tax-deductible donations (DGR status).
- Establishing Terms of Reference for the Finance Sub-committee.
- Recommending the implementation of a Subcontractor Agreement.
- Actively identifying potential new income sources and cost-saving measures.

These improvements strengthen BCN's financial resilience and position us well for continued growth and delivery of our conservation mission.

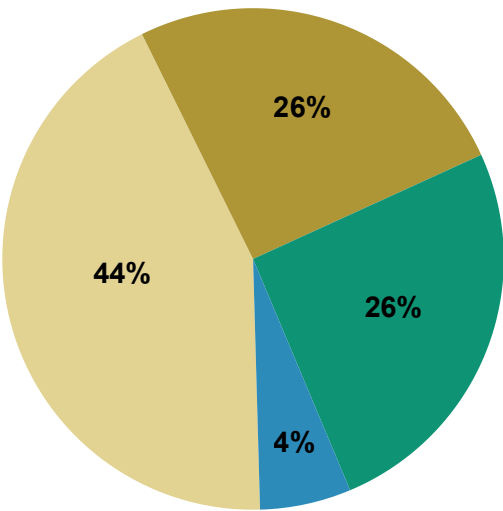
TREASURER’S REPORT

Graeme O'Leary

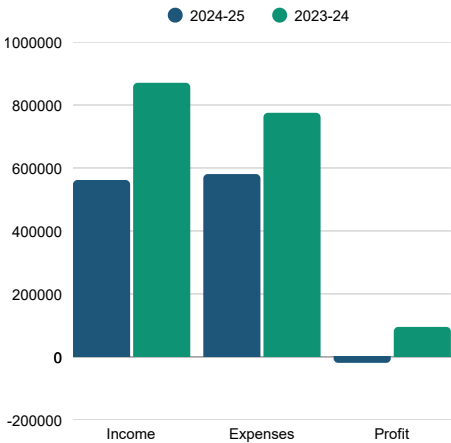
I would like to sincerely thank the Finance Sub-committee - Vicki Perrett (President), Graham Possingham (member rep) and Wayne Henderson (external adviser) for their prudent guidance, and acknowledge Matt Crawley and Naomi Wells for their financial leadership.

Thank you also Leanne Hamer and Davidsons for their support and financial administration.

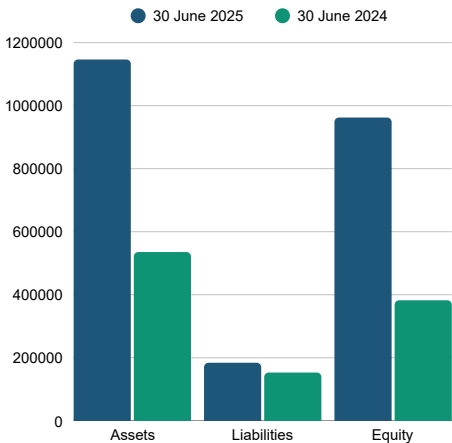
	Fee for Service
	Partnership
	Local, State Government and Other Non-Government Grants
	Donations, Auspice, Interest



Profit and Loss	2024-25	2023-24
Income	\$ 561,782	\$ 870,472
Expenses	\$ 580,655	\$ 775,200
Profit	\$ (18,873)	\$ 95,272



Balance Sheet	30 June 2025	30 June 2024
Total Assets	\$ 1,146,485	\$ 535,491
Total Liabilities	\$ 184,178	\$ 153,102
Total Equity	\$ 962,307	\$ 382,390



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

I am delighted to report on the project delivery for the 2024-25 year. Our team prides themselves on quality delivery, technical expertise and a professional service. Working for the environment and through the community is what inspires and motivates us.

Implementing projects across various landscapes, land tenures, with community groups and land managers provides a diversity of experience and deepens our knowledge of the Bellarine. Across our community and education programs the total number of events and activities we deliver continues to grow, with attendance rates also trending upwards. In short, this means more opportunities for the community to connect, learn and enjoy nature.



MATT CRAWLEY
Executive Officer

Under Naomi Wells guidance as the Coastal and Biodiversity Program Leader and supported ably by Brooke McGovern as the Community Engagement Officer and other team members, the Engagement Program continues to grow our presence and connection in environmental education. Consistent feedback from the community shows how valued this service is, the skills they implement and the high regard that the community hold them in. Complimentary to this is our observations through monitoring and evaluation of our bush regeneration sites. From the Bellarine Rail Trail Grassy Woodland, to the Rip View Coastal Moonah Woodland, from the Heathy Woodland of Murrk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk to the Coastal Saltmarsh of The Point, our team implement bush regeneration techniques that are demonstrating improved habitat and floristic quality benchmarks at these and other sites.

Our Biodiversity and On Ground Works team continue to implement a plethora of projects supporting community groups and land managers. Highlights include the Spiny Rush control program within the Borough of Queenscliffe and for Bellarine Landcare Group controlling this invasive triple threat weed. Another is the Bridal Creeper control program for the Borough of Queenscliffe at the Narrows, Rip View and Bunnywoods. This Weed of National Significance has had a significant impact on biodiversity. This project builds on from the biological control agents and applies a herbicide approach to target the energy rich corms that hide under the surface. Historically, a difficult weed to control we are starting to see a trend decreasing its representation in the EVC's of the Bellarine.

I would like to acknowledge Biodiversity Field Officer Daniel Morrison for his skilled and technical approach to controlling this and many other weeds in often difficult and challenging conditions. Alongside these works are the complimentary revegetation projects led by Biodiversity Officer Ash Baldwin and supported by a number of staff members and casuals.

We had a number of successful planting days this financial year with some highlights including a partnership with Barwon Water at Black Rock revegetating Grassy Woodland species, multiple events for The Point including National Tree Day in Coastal Saltmarsh, and the Queenscliff Cemetery Community Planting Day, partnering with Geelong Cemeteries Trust. Thank you to all the staff who contributed to these successful revegetation days, and the efforts of the wonderful volunteers.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

We are lucky to partner with and support a number of projects with the Bellarine Landcare Group in collaboration with Landcare Facilitator Sophie Small. Sophie brings skill, dedication, passion and always a smile to her work and the team environment at the Bellarine Environment Centre. I would like to acknowledge all these and the many more attributes she brings to the Bellarine Landcare Group and our team-focused delivery.

Lastly, none of this work is possible without a vibrant and supportive Network and Committee. We are fortunate to have a Committee that supports the team, works with our strengths and improves the areas that require it. A supportive Committee is crucial to the success of BCN and underpins everything we do. We acknowledge and thank them for their time and dedication.

Delivering these projects for the Network is quite simply a joy. You inspire and motivate us to work for the environment and the community we serve. We look forward to many more shared outcomes in the years to come.

Below: Executive Officer Matt Crawley at the Black Rock community planting day in 2024.



OUR TEAM

We are very proud of our skilled, passionate and dedicated team. This year, our team grew and now includes Diane Heafield (Administration Officer), Biodiversity Officer (Ash Baldwin) and Brooke McGovern (Community Engagement Officer), as well as a number of casual staff members that provide support across the organisation including Elissa Aston-Smith, Kayla Bopp-Taylor, Sam Wright and Sally Hull.



Engagement Team



Biodiversity Team

Bellarine Landcare

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Nature Mentors

In 2024, Bellarine Catchment Network successfully received a grant from the City of Greater Geelong to help build the capacity of network groups. This project was named 'Nature Mentors' and aimed to deliver a range of workshops and cultural sessions with a specific focus on topics to engage and recruit volunteers. These workshops including the following:

- Group management (incorporation, insurance, safety, committees)
- Social media (Facebook, Instagram and BCN's Events Calendar Website)
- Graphic design (Canva and design principles)
- Weed identification and bush regeneration
- Indigenous plant identification
- 4 x cultural sessions with Wadawurrung at Curlewis, Ocean Grove, Drysdale and Geelong.

Some of the feedback from participants included:

"Bellarine Catchment Networks 'Group Management' workshop was beneficial not only because of the tailored information presented on, but also because of the real-life experiences they were able to share. It gave a realistic and tangible feel to the session - if BCN can do this, other environmental groups can too."

"A lot of great topics were covered in this session and at the end there wasn't a sense that any major focus areas had been missed. It was a perfect balance of enticing people in with Charity status freebies, to safety and policy."

In total, 75 people from network groups and the community attended workshops and sessions in the 2024-25 financial year. Thanks to all the volunteers and group leaders who attended these sessions.

Left: Network members at the graphic design workshop.

Right: Participants listening to Ash Skinner from Wadawurrung at the Ocean Grove cultural education session.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Corporate Days

This financial year, our fantastic team delivered multiple high-profile corporate days to connect some of Geelong's largest businesses with our local environment. At BCN, we see the value of providing these organisations with hands-on opportunities to learn, engage and protect what is in their backyard. Below is a summary of these corporate days.

KPMG

We worked collaboratively with the City of Greater Geelong to deliver a large-scale corporate day for this Melbourne and Geelong-based company. Over 260 staff joined us at the Geelong Botanic Gardens to learn about the local Flying Foxes and conduct a litter audit of waste they had collected from local Geelong beaches. A huge thanks goes to Brooke McGovern for coordinating an impactful and engaging litter audit session, as well as Ash and Elissa for assisting on the day.

GMHBA

We facilitated a hands-on corporate day for the Marketing Department of this Geelong-based company at Murrk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk. Participants enjoyed learning about the regeneration of this site and got their hands dirty removing Cat's Ears.

BARWON WATER

Thanks to funding from the City of Greater Geelong, we were able to facilitate a corporate day for Barwon Water at Black Rock. Both Barwon Water staff and local community groups were able to revegetate 1500 indigenous plants at this site and also learnt about the unique environmental value through a flora and fauna walk and talk.

Thank you to all our corporate partners for engaging in environmental conservation through our corporate volunteering program.

Left: KPMG staff undertaking a litter audit with litter collected from multiple Geelong beaches.

Right: GMHBA staff in the Narrows following a successful weeding activity.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Network Support

Each year, Bellarine Catchment Network supports our Network groups in a number of ways. Some of this support is intangible or minimal, but over a whole year our support to the network adds up significantly. This year we developed a processes to capture all of this support, from physical resources borrowed, provision of Letters of Support and providing advice.

BCN staff and committee started recording this support from March 2025 to June 2025 and in total, over 33 hours of staff and committee time was contributed to the following:

- Advocacy and submissions - *3 submissions*
- Assistance at external events or functions - *9 events*
- Bellarine Environment Centre Room Bookings - *4 meetings*
- Equipment Borrowed - *375 resources*
- General advice - *15 instances*
- Grant writing support - *2 instances*
- Incidental support - *3 instances*
- IT support including printing - *17 instances*
- Letters of Support - *11 letters*
- Presentations - *3 presentations*
- Sharing of online resources - *8 instances*
- Support with emails - *5 instances*
- Volunteer contributions (after hours) - *4 instances*

This year, BCN also supported a number of Network groups by acting as an auspice for grants, allowing them to apply for funding and deliver projects. We are thrilled to see these projects thriving with our support which included:

- Barwon Water - *Black Rock Revegetation*
- Bellarine Bicycle Users Group - *Active Travel Website*
- Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare - *Equipment Grant*
- Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare - *Revegetation Project*
- Geelong Gardens for Wildlife - *Environmental Project*

Left: Geelong Gardens for Wildlife volunteers at their 'design a garden' event.

Right: Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare volunteers.



OUTCOMES

The below outcomes reflect the broad reach that Bellarine Catchment Network has, from engagement at festivals and school environment days, to resources provided to partners and grant outcomes. We would like to thank our network members, partners, funders, volunteers and supporters for helping us achieve these outstanding outcomes.

Thank you to all the volunteers, students and participants for joining us this year.

5,000+

people engaged

180+

community events

26

school events

84,765

metres squared of weeds removed by community

2,500

plants revegetated

9,000+

resources distributed



OUTCOMES



SPONSORS

This financial year, we established relationships with local businesses who graciously decided to donate goods or services to Bellarine Catchment Network to help support more environmental outcomes. Below is a summary of each sponsor and how they have contributed to our organisation.

Their contribution allows us to continue focusing on community and environment outcomes and shows their commitment to the local community and environment.



Always There Automotive

This locally owned mechanic business operates from Ocean Grove, Anglesea, Geelong and Brisbane. They support BCN through assistance with servicing of work vehicles.



BBC Digital

This award winning office equipment and business solutions specialist supports BCN through an annual donation and provision of free printing including this report.



Bunnings Warehouse

The Leopold store supports BCN with annual donations of tools and equipment used by our team and volunteers for bush restoration outcomes.



Davidsons

This Geelong-based Accounting and Book-keeping company donates book-keeping services to BCN and offers support to staff and the committee.



GravIT

This Geelong-based company supports BCN through the provision of IT services and support.



Officeworks Geelong

The Geelong store supports BCN through the provision of goods including office equipment, stationery and printing via their community donations program.

PARTNERS

Thank you to all our funders, project partners and supporters for helping us achieve such great outcomes in the 2024-25 financial year. Your continuing support is vital to help us fulfil our mission of preserving and protecting our environment.



Below: BCN with Bellarine Railway at a revegetation day funded by Landcare Australia and VicTrack.





@bellarinecatchmentnetwork

MORE INFORMATION

Visit www.environmentbellarine.org.au

www.bgevc.com

info@bcn.org.au

