

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority

# Catchment snapshot



## Seasons greetings

It's been another big year in the catchment. From all of us, we wish you seasons greetings, thank you for your ongoing and highly valued support, and look forward to sharing more successes and working together in 2025.

**Our offices will close at 4.30pm on Thursday 19 December  
and reopen at 8.30am on Thursday 2 January 2025.**





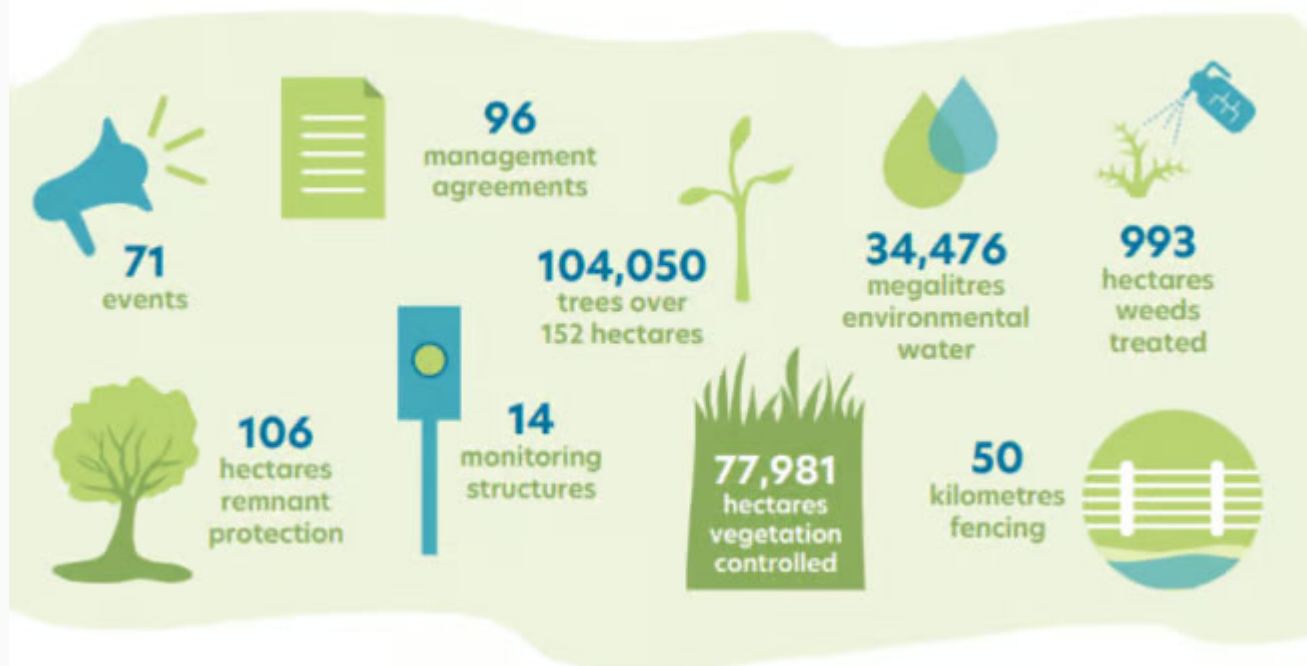
## 2024 Lyrebird Award winners announced

Five dedicated groups and individuals were recognised for their outstanding environmental stewardship of the region at the 2024 Lyrebird Awards last month.

The CMA presented the awards to Bass Coast Landcare Network, Bryan Watterson, Kate Mirams and Peter Neaves, Gippsland Intrepid Landcare and John Topp at a special award ceremony at Narkoojee Winery on 25 November.

Minister for Water, the Hon Harriet Shing MP kicked off the event, saying: "These awards are for community and partners who have gone above and beyond in their work and initiatives across the region. They represent, and are illustrative, of the ways CMAs intrinsically operate – together, in partnership with local communities, partners and the mighty movement of Landcare."

[Read more](#)



## Celebrating a year of catchment health

This was a busy fulfilling year as we concluded works delivered under the fifth round of the Environmental Contribution Levy (EC5) and Australian Government's National Landcare Program.



We thank everyone for their ongoing support and are proud of our efforts and achievements to make West Gippsland a better place for all who live and visit.

You can read our stories, partnerships and achievements in our [2024 Achievements brochure](#) and while you're here, download the [latest Annual Report](#) to see the impact of our work.



Watch a video of dairy farmer James Clyne talking about the irrigation technology trials on his farm

## Farmers share successful irrigation trials

Four farms in the Macalister Irrigation District have saved time, money, water and nutrients by trialing innovative irrigation technology that also benefits the region's waterways and environment.

The CMA in partnership with Agriculture Victoria is excited to share the results of the two-year Sustainable Irrigation Program Demonstration Trials and announce funding for another round, set to begin in 2025.

[Read more](#)





## Partnership to save plovers from extinction

The CMA is pleased to announce a new \$1.5 million project aimed at saving one of our region's much-loved native birds from extinction.

Eastern Hooded Plovers — affectionally known as 'Hoodies' — are tiny shorebirds that nest along the Victorian coastline where the adults, their eggs and chicks are highly vulnerable to disturbance by humans, coastal weeds, rough weather, off-lead dogs and their number one predator – foxes.

[Read more](#)



## Dynamic estuaries

Estuary closures are natural events that provide many environmental benefits for birds, fish and the surrounding saltmarsh and wetlands. However, they also pose risks to surrounding assets by inundating farmland, cultural assets, roads and recreational infrastructure.

Both Bourne Creek and Powlett River/Kugerungmome estuaries near Kilcunda closed naturally to the ocean in Spring after large swells deposited sand across the entrance and caused water levels to rise. The CMA approved openings of the estuaries to reduce flood risk to surrounding communities.

It's a careful balance when deciding to approve an artificial opening as the natural process of estuary closures are vital for the health of surrounding wetlands and fish species.

"We'll continue to work with landholders and partners to enable the natural opening and closing of estuaries with minimal impact to roads and other important assets," said West Gippsland CMA CEO Martin Fuller.

[Read more](#)



## Reimagining Durt'Yowan (Latrobe River)

Through our Latrobe Transformation project, we're working with Traditional Owners, government, community groups and partner organisations to continue the long process of restoring Durt'Yowan from a working river to a river that works again.

This partnership offers an exciting opportunity to reimagine the water future of the Durt'Yowan for the benefit of the whole Gippsland community and environment.

As we enter this next chapter for the river, discover some of its challenges and be inspired by the transformations that are already underway.



[Read more](#)



Corner Inlet is home to migratory shorebirds like the Far Eastern Curlew

## Corner Inlet crucial for migratory birds

Corner Inlet became an internationally renowned wetland through the [Ramsar convention](#) in 1982. The inlet's extensive intertidal mudflats provide food for migratory species.

"The consistent and sustained effort to protect and enhance Corner Inlet by the CMA and partners is definitely paying off," said Tanya Cowell, Waterways Project Officer for West Gippsland CMA.

The first of a five-year Corner Inlet Connections project is now being delivered in partnership with Parks Victoria, GLaWAC, Trust for Nature and BirdLife Australia.

In this first year, the focus has been to protect the Ramsar values of the area with summer and winter shorebird counts providing crucial information to ensure the Ramsar values and levels of acceptable change for key species are maintained based on international Ramsar guidelines.

"Ongoing bird monitoring will also help to raise community awareness of the birds' plight so we can work together as a community to protect these special species," Tanya said.

[Read more](#)



## Celebrating the Amazing Agnes

In October we celebrated the Amazing Agnes and all the inspiring people who've been involved in restoring the river and protecting Corner Inlet - a truly amazing story that we're proud to be part of.

A highlight of the event was watching the short films and photos submitted by locals about what the river means to them and how it's changed over the years.

Click play on the above video to watch the films or [read more about the event](#)



*A year of Landcare achievements across West Gippsland*

# West Gippsland Landcare shines in 2024

Across the catchment from Sale to Archie's Creek, dedicated Landcare groups are doing amazing work enhancing Gippsland's natural environment and inspiring communities to protect their patch.

Made up of five Landcare networks that support 75 Landcare groups, they are a committed and motivated grassroots community that have delivered best practice natural resource management for more than 30 years.

[Check-out some of the inspiring stories from 2024](#)



*Migratory birds like the Common Greenshank rely on Gippsland Lakes for habitat*

## New Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Plan

Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site is one of twelve wetlands listed under the Ramsar Convention in Victoria and one of 64 wetlands areas in Australia, listed as a Wetland of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention). The site is primarily managed by [East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority](#) (CMA) with West Gippsland CMA looking after Lake Wellington and Sale Common at the western end.

East Gippsland CMA is proud to release the [Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan 2024](#) to maintain and improve the unique ecological



character of the Gippsland Lakes through the promotion of conservation and wise use.



Water plants like the *Salicornia quinqueflora* (Beaded Glasswort) will be featured in a new pocket guide

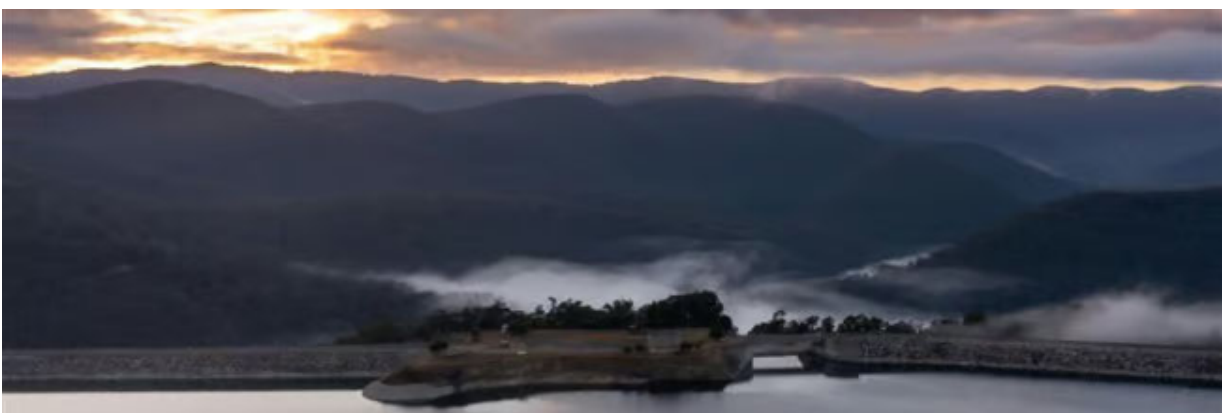
## Calling photographers, botanists and nature lovers!

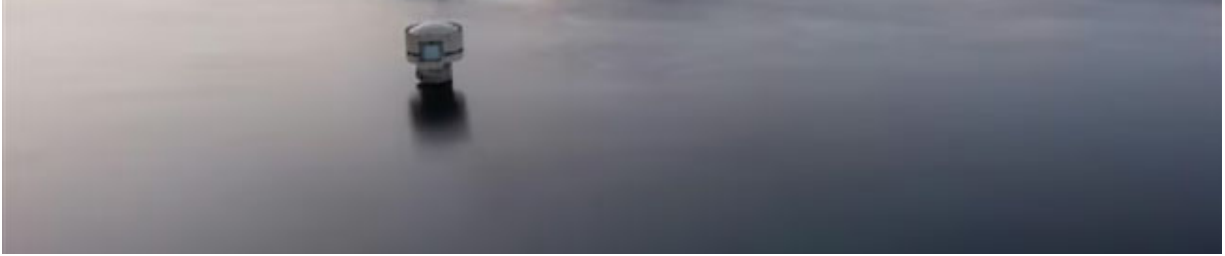
We're seeking contributions for our new 'Water Plants in West Gippsland' pocket guide, a free resource for landholders and gardeners across West Gippsland.

The booklet will feature common plants (native and introduced) found in and around local rivers, dams and wetlands, including including herbs, grasses, rushes, reeds, floating and submerged plants.

We need close-up photographs of flowers or other notable features for each plant, plus one photograph clearly capturing the larger plant.

To contribute to this project, please email Tash at [eflows@wgcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:eflows@wgcma.vic.gov.au) for the full list of plants we are seeking.





## Our next Regional Waterway Strategy

Caring for West Gippsland's rivers, wetlands and estuaries is a complex job. The Regional Waterway Strategy 21014-2022 is an eight year action plan to guide investment in waterway management in one single, regional planning document and is a subset of the [West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy](#).

We are reviewing the current strategy and developing the next to guide how we will work together with partners and community to manage West Gippsland's waterways for the next eight years. There will be opportunities to provide feedback and contribute to the next plan in 2025 – stay tuned to our socials and website for how you can be involved.



### Listen to the latest podcast episodes

For [episode 73](#) we spoke to Jillian and Jenny about their grand plans to restore the entire Tarwin catchment through their community-driven 'I Love the Tarwin' project.

In [episode 74](#) We took a journey down the Agnes River to hear about the decades-long partnership between the CMA and local landholders and the inspiring efforts to restore the river and protect Corner Inlet.

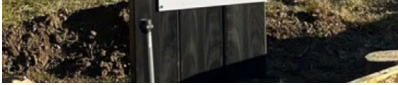
### [Discover the latest Gippslandscapes podcasts](#)



### Tell tale signs at Heyfield Wetlands

Visitors to Heyfield Wetlands can now learn about the wetlands rich history and the essential role they play in the environment thanks to the installation of two new visual storyboards.

Complete with stunning before and after aerial photos, the signs also delve into what environmental water is



and why it's so vital for our wetlands. Check them out when you next visit!



## GEA Annual Report

Gippsland Environmental Agencies (GEA) brings together 14 member-agencies to improve the management of land, water and biodiversity resources across Gippsland.

Their latest [Annual Report](#) outlines the work of this partnership and highlights of the 2023-24 year.

You subscribed to receive updates. If you no longer wish to be notified, [unsubscribe here](#). West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, 16 Hotham Street, Traralgon Victoria 3844, Australia

## Follow us



*We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Owners of the region, the Gunaikurnai, the Bunurong, the Boonwurrung and the Wurundjeri Peoples, their rich culture and spiritual connection to Country. We also acknowledge the contribution and interest of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples and organisations in natural resource management and pay respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.*