

Loch Nyora Landcare Group

NEWSLETTER



Victorian
Landcare
Program



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2026

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FROM THE PRESIDENT: FLUTTER BY

Whilst I spend a lot of my time speaking about native birds, mammals and reptiles, I also have an interest in native insects. Especially one Butterfly known as the Swordgrass Brown Butterfly (*Tisiphone abeona*).

Whilst this butterfly is not endangered and has a large range, in our area of Victoria it is uncommon. Sometimes butterflies walk the tight rope of conservation due many of them relying on one particular food plant.

The Swordgrass Brown Butterfly relies on Red-fruit saw-sedge (*Gahnia sieberiana*) on which it's caterpillar feeds: https://anpsa.org.au/plant_profiles/gahnia-sieberiana/

Red-fruit saw-sedge is not the most attractive plant, but it is vital to the Swordgrass Brown Butterfly. It's easy to be grown and would do well in an existing shelter belt or plantation. A few scattered around your property would ensure the conservation of this species of butterfly. I have done this at my property and around every Melbourne Cup Day, I see Swordgrass Brown Butterflies fluttering by.



To help conserve this species, I'm giving away Red-fruit saw-sedge for free. If you would like some free Red-fruit saw-sedge, contact me on **0403 997 831**.

Malcolm Brown
President, Loch-Nyora Landcare



Swordgrass Brown Butterfly, photographed in Lang Lang by @moshanmary, via [iNaturalist](#)

WHAT'S ON

Sunday 26th July 2026 – Pedal and Plant Day at the rail trail in Nyora to celebrate National Tree Day. We have 1,500 plants to get into the ground and we need your help! More details in the flyer to right.

Sunday 1st August 2026 – Koala Tree Planting in Nyora. Help us create Koala Habitat at 30 Brolga Court, Nyora. Contact Mal Brown, 0403 997 831.



PEDAL & PLANT

26.07.2026

10.30 AM - 12.30 PM
FOLLOWED BY LUNCH

GREAT SOUTHERN RAIL TRAIL NYORA

Help plant **1500 plants** on National Tree Day! Open to all, you can cycle, walk or run to this free community event on the Rail Trail

SCAN HERE

Or visit www.sgln.net.au for more information
This event it brought to you by

SGLN Landcare Victoria South Gippsland Seed Bank Melbourne Water

Loch-Nyora Landcare Group's 30th Birthday Report

Exactly 30 years to the day on Sunday May 3rd and returning to Henrys Creek Sanctuary LNLG celebrated 30 years since its inaugural meeting. Hosts Steve Morrison and Bonita May welcomed us back to the bird-hide where CWA scones were enjoyed along with birthday cake. Special guest Joan Henry and the Henry family described the history of the sanctuary and Gordon's vision to protect an area of untouched bush land. President Mal Brown and part-time twitcher took note of the variety of bird species and their calls and recommended a return visit in Spring.

See a YouTube of the history of the Sanctuary by clicking this link: [Sanctuary history](#)

Steve Morrison, Bonita May and Joan Henry cut the birthday cake



Korumburra Landcare Group Plant Nursery

Just out of Bena and run by Jim and volunteers from the Korumburra Landcare Group. If people are interested in revegetation projects and planting our local plant species please contact Jim by email for plant list, availability and price klgplantnursery@gmail.com.



FEATURE SPECIES: BLACK-SHOULDERED KITES BY CHRISTINE CONNELLY

Masters of the Hover

Have you ever seen a white bird hovering above farmland and wondered what it was, and how it manages to stay in one place, mid-air?

This extraordinary skill is a feature of the remarkable Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus axillaris*). On windy days, you may spot one of these birds, apparently suspended in mid-air above a paddock, wings beating rapidly while its head remains perfectly still. While they are relatively small raptors, their hunting abilities make them very special.

Black-shouldered Kites can hover because they have long, broad wings that generate enough lift to balance their body weight while facing into a headwind, allowing them to remain almost stationary in the air. By constantly adjusting their wingbeats and tail position, they maintain stability while keeping their head locked on prey below.



Black shouldered kites. Photo by Andrew Keir from Woodleigh.

The hovering ability of the Black-shouldered Kite allows the bird to scan the ground for movement, searching for mice, insects and other small prey hidden among the grass. Unlike most birds of prey that rely on soaring or perching to hunt, Black-shouldered Kites are among Australia's most accomplished hovering hunters, often remaining stationary for extended periods before suddenly dropping from the sky with astonishing precision.

Their diet consists mainly of rodents, particularly house mice, making them valuable allies for farmers and landholders. Kite numbers often increase following mouse outbreaks, when abundant food allows more birds to breed successfully. They can frequently be seen hunting over pasture, roadside reserves and recently slashed paddocks, where their hovering flight provides one of the most memorable wildlife spectacles in the region. By controlling rodent populations and serving as indicators of healthy rural

ecosystems, Black-shouldered Kites provide valuable natural pest control while adding to the biodiversity of South Gippsland's farming landscapes.

These elegant birds of prey are instantly recognisable by their snowy white plumage, striking red eyes and bold black shoulder patches. While Black-shouldered Kites are not uncommon and have in fact benefited from some agricultural practices, they are not immune to habitat loss, the removal of nesting trees, declining landscape connectivity, and the risks posed by rodent poisons. There are several practical actions landholders and Landcare groups can take to support them:

Reduce secondary poisoning risk

One of the biggest ways landholders can help raptors is by minimising the use of rodenticides, particularly **second-generation anticoagulant baits** (SGARs), such as is found in common rat and mouse poisons. Kites (and other raptors and owls) feeding on poisoned rodents can be exposed to toxins that accumulate in their bodies and cause them to die. For safer alternatives, see: <https://birdlife.org.au/a-guide-to-rat-poison-alternatives/>

Retain scattered trees and perches

Black-shouldered Kites nest in isolated trees, shelterbelts and woodland remnants. Retaining mature paddock trees, roadside vegetation and shelterbelts provides nesting opportunities and hunting perches.

Restore native vegetation

Protecting and restoring native vegetation benefits the entire food web. While Black-shouldered Kites hunt in open country, they also rely on nearby trees for nesting and roosting. Well-designed revegetation projects that combine shelterbelts, scattered trees and open foraging areas are particularly valuable.

Report sightings

Landcare members can contribute observations to [BirdLife Australia's Birdata](#), eBird or [iNaturalist.org](#). Recording nesting activity is especially useful because it helps improve understanding of breeding distribution and habitat use.



Black shouldered kite in nest with chicks. Photo by Ian R McCann via Museums Victoria.

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

If you're new to LNLG or are due to renew your LNLG membership, please fill in the form below and post or email to our Treasurer, Gary along with your payment. Or join online:

<https://www.lochnyoralandcare.org.au/membership/>

Loch/Nyora Landcare Group Incorporated

ABN: 46 721 158 006

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I/We, _____ wish to become members of the
Loch/Nyora Landcare Group at \$30/year.

Postal Address: _____

Email: _____

Mobile Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If paying via direct deposit (EFT) please use the following bank details:

Account Name: Landcare Victoria Inc Loch-Nyora
BSB: 633000
Account Number: 229828926

Please use your name as the reference.

Please email this application to: garymartin@attar.com.au

If paying by cheque please post this application and cheque to:

Gary Martin (Honorary Treasurer)
122 Jeetho West Road
JEETHO VIC 3945

FREE PLANT OFFER

As part of your yearly membership we have a relationship with Melaleuca Nursery to supply **10 free tube stock plants** to all financial members. Instructions to pick up your 10 free plants:

1. Ensure your membership payment is up to date.
2. Email our Treasurer Gary garymartin@attar.com.au who will provide you with a code to take to Melaleuca Nursery and redeem for your plants.

The offer expires **31 December 2026**.

Melaleuca Nursery
INDIGENOUS & NATIVE PLANT FARM
"Native plants, because they're beautiful" 

Equipment available for LNLG members' use

The following weed management equipment is available for use by Loch-Nyora Landcare members. Tree guards and stakes are also available. Phone Rosemary 0409 594 312 for collection or drop off.

- 3, 5 and 15 litre sprayers
- Hamilton tree planters
- Hoes
- Spray dye
- Granular weed dispenser

GET IN TOUCH

Loch-Nyora Landcare – <https://www.lochnyoralandcare.org.au/>

South Gippsland Landcare Network (SGLN) - <https://www.sgln.net.au/>

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Mal Brown	President	0403 997 831 seawish@aapt.net.au
Rosemary Knox	Vice President	rosemaryknox@hotmail.com
Bruce Freeman	Secretary	lochnyoralandcare@gmail.com
Gary Martin (honorary)	Treasurer	garymartin@attar.com.au
Daryl Smith, Steve McTaggart, Dallas Handley and John Morten	Committee members	

SGLN CONTACTS

Jane Mckenzie-Smith	Landcare Facilitator, Strategy and Governance	Mon, Tue, Thu	jane@sgln.net.au
Morgan Stevens	Landcare Facilitator, Community Engagement	Mon, Tue, Wed	morgan@sgln.net.au
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Peter Debreceeny	Secretary, SGLN Volunteer Board		secretary@sgln.net.au