



JOIN US!



Harcourt Valley
LANDCARE



Our best asset – you

Central Victoria's Harcourt Valley has so much that makes living here beautiful – but our best natural asset is you.

Central Victoria's Harcourt Valley has an array of natural assets that make living here beautiful – but our best natural asset is you.

Harcourtians are skilled, creative people who care about our community and the place we've chosen for our home. We're made up of all sorts: new residents inspired to connect with nature by making a tree change, people whose families have been here for generations – and everything in between.

Among us we have a wonderful collection of skills, passion, networks, resources, ideas and energy.

The passion and energy of our members is what nurtures and drives Harcourt Valley Landcare. This energy sustained us through the first 25 years of caring for Harcourt Valley. Now we launch an exciting plan for 2020 – 2027.

Join us – we can't wait to see what you bring to our Landcare community.

"I am very keen to restore the balance between the built world and the natural world. Being a member of an organisation like Landcare gives me the confidence that I am being guided by the experts."

Ann Coffey, member



"Living near the bush-clad mountain, amid orchards and vineyards, it seems natural to pitch in with Landcare. I'm glad to play my part in enhancing the landscape and vegetation."

George Milford, member



A landscape worth loving

Like so much of Australia, Harcourt Valley has a fraction of the indigenous plants, animals and ecosystems that once thrived. What remains is precious: our towering, iconic Red Gums, our native animals, our vegetation communities, our waterways and our mountain. These features are part of a lifestyle that values connection with our environment, picturesque views, and nature-based activities. It's worth protecting.

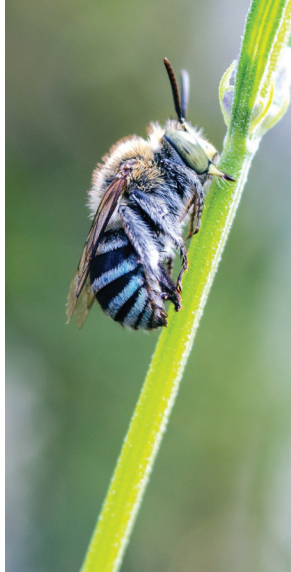
Watching silently over our valley is Leanganook (Mount Alexander), home to large, established trees, including Manna Gum, Messmate, Long-leaved Box and

Yellow Box woodlands. Trees aged over 100 years offer hollows, a critical and disappearing resource for Brush-tailed Phascogales, Sugar Gliders, Owlet Nightjars and many other species. Leanganook's large granitic outcrops, sheets and boulders, and views into the landscape make the mountain a much-loved playground for Harcourtians who like to bushwalk, camp, picnic, birdwatch or mountain-bike ride.

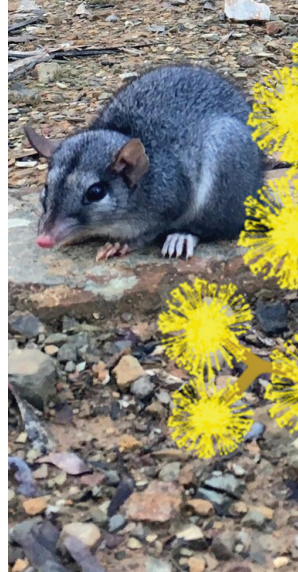




Eastern Yellow Robin



Blue-banded Bee



Brush-tailed Phascogale



The mountain's woodlands and grasslands provide homes to animals such as kangaroos, wallabies, echidnas, lizards and birds including members of the threatened temperate woodland bird community. Migratory bird species such as the Eastern Yellow Robin and Scarlet Robin come down from the mountain to the valley in winter. Leanganook's eastern flank is the only place in the world where the endangered Southern Shepherd's Purse can be found.

Meandering through the valley below is Barkers Creek. This creek is an important waterway that, together with the valley's floodplains and Barkers Creek Reservoir, supply the surrounding native habitat and agricultural land with critical hydration. Animals that rely directly on Barkers Creek include Eastern Long-necked Turtles, Rakalis (water rats) and Pacific Black Ducks.

While much of Harcourt's landscape is home to our flourishing orchard, horticultural and agricultural industries, many roadsides connecting the Harcourt Valley provide connecting habitat for native species. Sugar Gliders, Brush-tailed Phascogales and birds need to move between different areas in the changing seasons. These attractive roadside vegetation communities also offer a backdrop for the people of Harcourt, who know that exercising in nature improves our wellbeing.

Harcourt Valley is also home to the rich culture of the *Djaara* people, who cared for these lands for generations before us. Scar trees stand in many places in the valley, as a testament to the connection *Dja Dja Wurrung* have always had with these lands.



Our valley needs you

The precious natural environment of Harcourt Valley offers us so much – but it can't be taken for granted. Climate change and habitat loss, including weed and feral animal invasion, threaten our native species and our way of life.

Australia has lost nearly 40% of its forests since colonisation and has the worst mammal extinction record in the world. In Central Victoria, 180 fauna species are listed as vulnerable to critically endangered. Much of the region's habitat was devastated during the 1850s gold rush. Harcourt's orchards and agricultural industries drawn here by the valley's rich soils, came at a cost to native species.

Hotter and drier temperatures resulting from climate change will make it harder for our waterways, precious roadside vegetation, and

the woodlands and grasslands of Leanganook to flourish – along with the native species that rely on them. The shade provided by our large, old trees (in Harcourt itself as well as its surrounds) will become even more important to the wellbeing of our community.

With large-scale growth planned for Harcourt in the next decade, under the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme, the creatures and the residents of Harcourt Valley have much to lose – and much to gain.

Our community must come together to ensure that what we have is here to stay. Through conservation activities, community engagement and advocacy, we can all contribute to ensuring that what we love about Harcourt remains.



Our solution

Harcourt's solution to these immense challenges is Harcourt Valley Landcare. We are a lively group of passionate and friendly folk who enjoy getting together for nature-based activities that heal and protect our landscape.

We're part of the broader Landcare network, a grassroots movement of groups and individuals across Australia with a shared vision to protect, enhance or restore the natural environment in their local community. We are part of the Mount Alexander Regional Landcare Network.

Landcare enables people to actively care for the natural environment in their community and create a love of and a sense of responsibility for our environment. We meet to plan and perform conservation activities, while enjoying the chance to catch up with local residents and make new friends.



Our 2022 – 2027 Action Plan

Vision

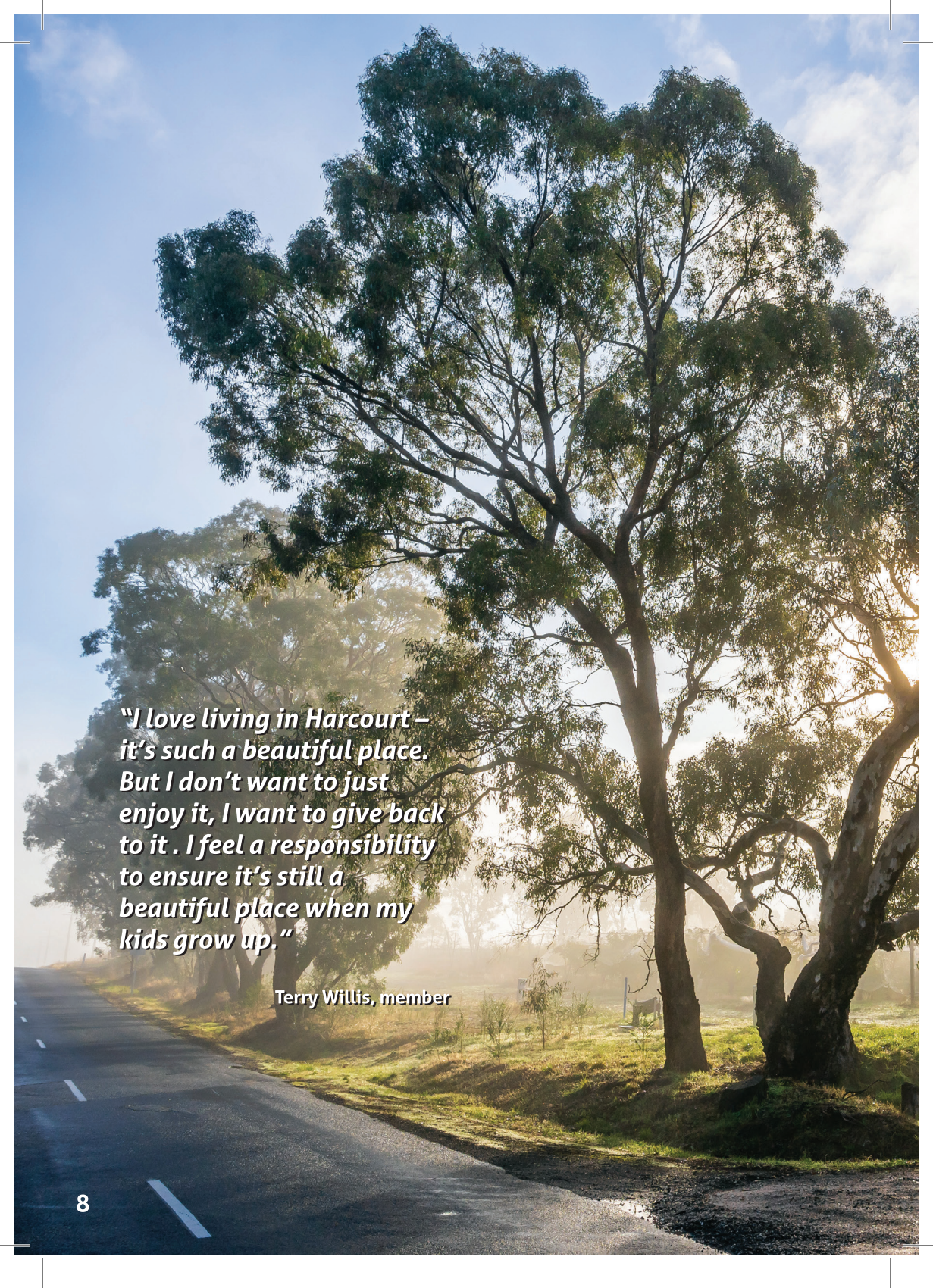
Harcourt Valley Landcare aims to inspire, inform and support the community to protect and enhance our local environment.

Objectives

1. Harcourt Valley Landcare has a robust, active and sustainable membership base including young people.
2. The ecological values of Harcourt Valley region are protected and enhanced through conservation activities and advocacy.
3. The Harcourt community engages in healthy social activities that inspire a love of nature, a sense of responsibility to the local environment and a produce-growing lifestyle.

For a full copy of the 2022 – 2027 Harcourt Valley Landcare Action Plan, including activities, tasks and projects, go to harcourvalleylandcare.org





"I love living in Harcourt – it's such a beautiful place. But I don't want to just enjoy it, I want to give back to it. I feel a responsibility to ensure it's still a beautiful place when my kids grow up."

Terry Willis, member



Our projects

Roadside vegetation

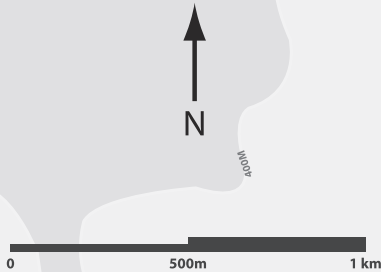
- Planting indigenous species such as Late-flowered Flax-Lily to improve habitat for the indigenous Blue-banded Bee
- Removing wild, unmanaged fruit trees that threaten native vegetation communities
- Removing Hawthorn, Broom, Gorse, Tree Lucerne and Blackberry weeds

Barkers Creek restoration

- Regular planting of a variety of Wattles, Bottlebrushes, She-oaks, sedges, herbs and grasses
- Ongoing removal of weed species
- Ongoing maintenance of plantings

Binghams Road Flora Reserve

- Working with Harcourt Valley Primary School to manage the reserve
- Removing Blackberry, Gorse, Briar Rose and Broom weeds
- Installation of nesting boxes for mammals and birds





The map shows the Mount Alexander Regional Park area, including Barkers Creek Reservoir, various roads (North Harcourt Rd, Harcourt-Sutton Grange Rd, Coopers Rd, Douglas Lane, Dannels Rd, Joseph Young Drive), and landmarks like Langs Lookout, Shepherds Flat Lookout, and Summit 746M. A green arrow points from the 'Southern Shepherd's Purse' box to a specific location on the map.

Southern Shepherd's Purse

Seed for the critically endangered Southern Shepherd's Purse (*Ballantinia antipoda*) collected for planting into new habitat in the Victorian Pyrenees, by the Threatened Species Conservancy
Mapping and monitoring of populations

Pippin Court revegetation

Planting of over 2000 native shrubs, herbs and grasses to enhance the natural surroundings for Pippin Court residents, support local fauna and increase the health of Picnic Gully Creek

Queensland Fruit Fly prevention

Community information sessions at local events
A fruit fly prevention strategy developed and executed
Incursions managed and eliminated on five properties

JOIN US!

If you love meeting fellow Harcourtians in the outdoors or you want to learn more about the natural beauty of our lovely valley, get in touch – we'd love to meet you.

You can get your hands dirty at an event or working bee, approach us to lead a project you're passionate about or help us to grow and inspire our member base.



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Harcourt Valley Landcare thanks the Mt Alexander Shire Council's 2020 Community Grants Program for the funding of this brochure.

Harcourt Valley Landcare acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands on which we live and work as Dja Dja Wurrung and their Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the ongoing connection that *Djaara* (Dja Dja Wurrung people) have to their *djandak* (Country) and recognise them as the original custodians of this land.



Photography by: Richard Baxter (cover and back cover), Jacqui Slingo and Connecting Country (bottom page 3), Terry Willis (page 4), Geoff Park (Yellow Robin p5), Jess Lawton (Phascogale p5), Gary Chapman (p8)