

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Tuesday, 16 February 2021

BACKING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL VOLUNTEERS

The Andrews Labor Government is funding 20 new and innovative volunteer projects, including creative ideas to restore koala habitat and the use of new citizen science technologies, to inspire even more Victorians to volunteer for nature.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio today announced more than \$300,000 through Round One of the *Volunteering Innovation Fund*, which provided up to \$20,000 for each successful project.

The \$2 million Fund supports conservation projects by helping with the costs of training, delivery and equipment, making sure people from all walks of life are able to volunteer in our parks and forests.

Among the successful bids was a koala habitat restoration project in Dromana, which will get volunteers with the Mornington Peninsula Koala Conservation Landcare Group and local students planting a diverse range of mid-story and canopy species.

The Warrnambool Coastcare Landcare Network will be hosting volunteer groups from kayaking and boating clubs, fishing groups and schools – alongside scientists from the Nature Glenelg Trust – to collect data on the biodiversity of swamps within the Belfast Coastal Reserve.

Volunteers engaged in track cleaning activities on the Australian Alps Walking Track will be given a literary boost, with Bushwalking Victoria funded to host authors at a series of book readings in the Baw Baw National Park.

Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater will run a series of activities in the Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve informed by the Wurundjeri calendar. The activities for adults from recently arrived migrant backgrounds, families, vulnerable teens and tertiary students are aimed at connecting people and nature.

And a project to gather valuable marine data will be hosted by ReefWatch in a variety of coastal locations. Recreational anglers and underwater enthusiasts will be invited to marine bio-blitz events with professional snorkel instructors providing anglers with equipment, knowledge and skills to become marine citizen science volunteers.

For a full list of successful projects, visit parks.vic.gov.au/vif.

Groups keen to apply for Round Two of the Fund can visit parks.vic.gov.au/get-into-nature, with applications opening on Thursday, 11 March, with funding of up to \$50,000 available per project.

For Round Two, the public will be invited to vote for their favourite projects through Engage Victoria.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"Well done to all these organisations who are thinking of creative and innovative ways to get volunteers involved in environmental work – we look forward to seeing these projects come to life."

"After a year like no other, Victorians are more appreciative than ever of our parks, forests and open spaces – these grants are just another way we get the community involved in preserving and protecting our natural environment."

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