

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Early Childhood & Pre-Prep
Minister for Environment



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FUND SET TO DRIVE INNOVATIVE GREEN VOLUNTEERING PROJECTS

The Andrews Labor Government is encouraging Victorians to create new ways to protect the state's precious environment and biodiversity as part of the Volunteering Innovation Fund.

Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt today announced \$812,000 across thirty volunteer groups, including nine youth focused organisations to bring their creative conservation ideas to life.

The Volunteering Innovation Fund is designed to boost volunteering on public land and support community led environment projects.

Threatened Species Conservancy received this year's Minister's Award, which recognises applications of particular merit. Through support of the Fund, the group has developed a plan to recruit young volunteers to survey rare and threatened native butterflies in Broadford and Morandring.

The survey will engage young people to aid in future conservation efforts of the endangered bronze ant-blue, the critically endangered small ant-blue and the vulnerable Fiery Jewel butterflies, all of which are known to nest with or near coconut ant nests, by looking for them and cataloguing their populations.

The Wonyip Landcare Group's plan for an extensive biodiversity survey of the Strzelecki Ranges, utilising both expert advice and citizen science, was the runner up for the award.

Other successful projects include new citizen science activities, monitoring of Spider Crabs and Australia's rarest fungus, engaging migrant and First Nations communities in volunteering, and revegetation of indigenous trees and plants in urban areas.

To date, 75 volunteer groups have been selected to receive a share of \$2 million through the Volunteering Innovation Fund.

For more information and a full list of recipients visit parks.vic.gov.au/volunteering-innovation-fund.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt

"Our dedicated volunteers do incredible work all across the state to help conserve our precious environment and ensure it's thriving for future generations."

"These grants will help inspire more people in the community to get involved and begin new projects that protect and reinvigorate their local green spaces and wildlife."