

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Early Childhood & Pre-Prep

Minister for Environment



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HELPING VICTORIA'S VOLUNTEERS PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT

The Andrews Labor Government has awarded more than \$4.4 million worth of grants to Victorian youth and volunteer groups to further improve the state's natural environment.

Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt today announced the recipients of the \$3.98 million *2023 Victorian Landcare Grants* which will help volunteers protect and restore our landscapes.

More than 240 projects were allocated grants worth up to \$20,000 to further safeguard the state's biodiversity, while \$500 grants will be given to 269 environmental volunteer groups to assist with administration and running costs.

The funding will help to transform a wetland in Shepparton, expand habitat for Gang-gang Cockatoos around Apollo Bay and install a network of 100 nest boxes at Benalla for local wildlife.

The Labor Government is also backing Victoria's kindergartens, schools and other youth groups – distributing more than \$470,000 through the *2023 Victorian Junior Landcare and Biodiversity Grants*.

These grants will deliver hands-on projects and outdoor educational activities – giving thousands of children across the state the opportunity to learn more about our environment and biodiversity.

The funding will help Mernda Park Primary plant flowering gums to provide nesting habitat for the Swift Parrot, while Kongwak Primary School will be able to install wildlife nesting boxes and Lower Plenty Primary School will soon construct a frog pond.

The funding of volunteer groups is underpinned by the Andrews Labor Government's *Biodiversity 2037* strategy, a record investment of \$582 million since 2014 – the biggest investment into protecting biodiversity and environment in our state's history.

A full list of this year's Landcare and Biodiversity Grant recipients can be found at environment.vic.gov.au/grants.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt

"This funding is an important way that we're supporting volunteers and their communities to secure our environment for future generations."

"Our volunteers are invaluable, and these grants will allow them to continue to make a significant difference at a grassroots level."

"Encouraging children to get involved in projects like these can lead to a lifelong appreciation of nature and community."