



Tackling gorse  
takes effort, but  
doing nothing  
means it just gets  
worse



# Progress Report

2022-23



**VICTORIAN  
GORSE TASKFORCE**

## Our Vision:

*“All land managers, public and private, accept their responsibility for gorse control and the community is supported to take long-term action.”*

## Our Mission:

**The VGT’s mission is simple:** to empower community and land managers to better control gorse in the long term. We are doing this by building their knowledge and skills through education, engagement and development of best practice resources.

## The Challenge:

Managing gorse requires long-term commitment. Its seeds remain viable in the soil for decades so ongoing vigilance is required in areas where control efforts are undertaken to reduce the chances of reinfestation.

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## Gorse

Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) is native to Western Europe and was introduced into Australia around the mid 1800s as a cheap hedgerow. It has spread over 23 million hectares across Australia and has the capacity to advance even further.

Gorse is a declared weed under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*, which means landholders have an obligation to manage it. It is also a Weed of National Significance (WoNS).



### Acknowledgment of Country:

The VGT acknowledges the traditional owners of this land and pay our respects to their ancestors and elders, both past and present.

### Acknowledgements:

The VGT wishes to acknowledge the support received from the State Government of Victoria through the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action that has assisted in producing this document.

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The Victorian Gorse Taskforce, December 2023

### Designed by:

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### Disclaimer:

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is accurate. The Victorian Gorse Taskforce does not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence that may arise from relying on any information contained within.

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# Report from the Chair

It's with great pride that I present the 2022/2023 Victorian Gorse Taskforce progress report. The VGT has delivered some remarkable work and achievements in this past year and I hope communities have seen and felt our efforts in their areas.

I would like to thank our biggest supporter, Agriculture Victoria, for continuing to invest in the work we do across Victoria. It's also important to thank the other three Victorian Community Pest Management Groups: the **Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party**, **Victorian Rabbit Action Network** and **Victorian Blackberry Taskforce**. Your support and collaboration throughout this year has strengthened and we look forward to building stronger relationships. I would also like to thank those shires and councils that have partnered with the VGT, either through roadside control or by promoting our work. We look forward to forging deeper connections and new partnerships in the future.

In the last financial year, we committed to a range of projects focusing on ways to better support communities in managing gorse long term, including employing a new **Communications and Community Engagement Officer, Christina Boon**, in the second half of the year. Christina has shown the VGT can make a difference to communities battling gorse. We hope people will continue to recognise our efforts in their communities.

We continued to deliver our flagship project – the **VGT Community Grants program** – with twice as many groups becoming involved this year. Works got off to a slow start due to unseasonably wet weather, which has delayed some projects. The VGT is supporting 16 groups who collectively aim to control gorse on more than 162 hectares of land. The VGT invested \$45,602.27 to the program with landholders and community groups digging deep contributing around \$135,000. We know the communities where these grant projects were delivered will reap the benefits with less gorse flowering, seeding, and spreading to more areas. A grant condition is for landholders to sign up to a three-year voluntary Landholder Agreement. This encourages people to follow up on their gorse control to protect the financial investment.

The VGT and the other Community Pest Management Groups were humbled to be nominated by Agriculture Victoria for the **2022 Australian Biosecurity Awards**. The groups were thrilled to win the community award for recognition of our work and achievements through the Weeds and Rabbits project, a \$4.3 million initiative to improve the way established pest animals and weeds are managed in Victoria. We are so pleased our efforts in building community involvement through such innovative projects was recognised. I was fortunate to receive the award with the other CPMG Chairs in Canberra.



In 2023, we welcomed Christina Boon as our new Community Engagement Officer.

An advertisement for the Victorian Gorse Taskforce Small Community Grants program. It features a tractor spraying a field, a close-up of yellow gorse flowers, and text detailing the grant program. The text includes: 'NOW OPEN VICTORIAN GORSE TASKFORCE SMALL COMMUNITY GRANTS', 'Do you have gorse?', 'The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) is calling for grant applications for their 2022/2023 Small Community Grants Program.', 'The VGT are interested in supporting groups, starting from just two landholders, who are genuinely willing to control gorse and stay on top of it.', '\$5,000 IN GRANTS AVAILABLE', 'GRANTS OPEN 21 APRIL 2022', 'GRANTS CLOSE 28 MAY 2022', 'VGT Executive Officer 0417 592 250', and 'For more information visit: www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au'.

**NOW OPEN**  
VICTORIAN GORSE TASKFORCE  
SMALL COMMUNITY GRANTS

**Do you have gorse ?**

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) is calling for grant applications for their 2022/2023 Small Community Grants Program.

The VGT are interested in supporting groups, starting from just two landholders, who are genuinely willing to control gorse and stay on top of it.

**\$5,000 IN GRANTS AVAILABLE**

GRANTS OPEN  
21 APRIL 2022

GRANTS CLOSE  
28 MAY 2022

VGT Executive Officer  
0417 592 250

For more information visit:  
[www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au](http://www.vicgorsetaskforce.com.au)

The VGT is doing its best to understand community concerns. Last year we asked for feedback from landholders about the biggest barriers preventing gorse control. They listed **access, financial burden, lack of equipment, lack of time, scale of the problem** and **neighbours allowing gorse to spread**. The VGT committee aims to find ways we can help alleviate some of these barriers.

More positively, we have heard from many gorse warriors who are successfully controlling gorse and we commend their efforts. The VGT acknowledges that keeping gorse in check is a long game and it often takes changing attitudes and behaviours to ensure real long-term investment for the best chance of success. **Even making a small start can make a difference but doing nothing will ensure the problem gets worse.**

Looking ahead to 2023/24, the VGT has some new and exciting projects in the pipeline. Thanks to generous grants from **Agriculture Victoria**, we will continue to fund our Communications and Community Engagement Officer, which will help the VGT cement partnerships with key stakeholders. We will also deliver two more demonstration days, which have been widely appreciated by Victorians in the past.

My time as Chair has been made much easier by the many people that volunteer their time. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the VGT's Senior Executive Committee, which puts in an incredible amount of work behind the scenes to ensure a high level of governance. To our new Communications and Community Engagement Officer, Christina Boon, we are forever grateful for the work you have accomplished in such a short time, which has propelled the VGT's reach to more communities across the state.

Finally, thank you to Community Pest Management Officer Nicole Garfi for your ability to manage the ever-increasing workload of the VGT and to ensure the VGT continues to operate efficiently.

**Ron Cosgrave**



**VGT stand at the Talbot Farmers Market**



**Left to right:** Senator the Hon Murray Watt, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. VGT Chair Ron Cosgrave, VRAN Chair Gerald Leach, VSTWP Chair Lance Jennison and VBT Chair Lyn Coulston



# Delivering on the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy 2021/26

## Key Outcome 1:

### Provide leadership in community-based invasive plant control

- Continued annual funding arrangements with Agriculture Victoria to implement the Community Grants Program
- Continued annual funding arrangements to ensure the VGT retains its Executive Officer (now Community Pest Management Officer) to support the VGT to deliver the goals of the VGCS 2021/26

## Key Outcome 2:

### Improve VGCS program design and delivery

- Reviewed and revised the current grants model to ensure higher level of public benefit

## Key Outcome 3:

### Prevent the spread of gorse into new areas of the state and achieve a reduction in the impact of gorse on natural resource assets across Victoria

- Supported multiple grant projects that identified high-priority natural resources for protection

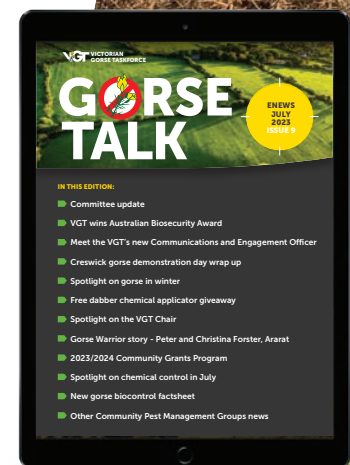
## Key Outcome 4:

### Promote Best Practice Management for gorse control in Victoria

- Distributed about 960 VGT hard-copy brochures to communities and key stakeholders
- Produced the VGT biocontrol factsheet for the Gorse Soft Shoot Moth
- Published one edition of Gorse Talk e-newsletter
- Distributed 12 large VGT metal signs to be displayed in prominent positions, encouraging landholders to manage gorse. Supporting hardware/farm supply stores in Daylesford have given the signs prime position in their shop front windows.
- Aired a community service announcement on the Lowdown segment on Main FM in Castlemaine
- Continued to promote gorse best-practice advice and messaging across multiple channels
- Continued to ensure the VGT website was up-to-date with the latest information

### Media Coverage

Wrote four media releases that were picked up by multiple outlets including: *The Winchelsea Star*, *The Weekly Times*, *The Local*, *Bairnsdale Advertiser*, *Colac Herald*, *Corryong Banner*, *Hamilton Spectator* and *Stock and Land*.



## Key Outcome 5:

### Increase the community's capacity to be actively engaged in long-term gorse control

- Contracted a Communications and Community Engagement Officer
- Promoted multiple gorse control success stories through social media
- Delivered a gorse control demonstration day in Creswick in collaboration with the Hepburn Shire. Three control contractors showcased different control methods to 35 residents, with 100% positive feedback
- Exhibited at the Seymour Alternate Farming Expo, engaging with about 40 people
- Stallholder at the Daylesford Farmers' Market, engaging with about 40 people
- Stallholder at the Talbot Farmers' Market, engaging with 37 people
- Continued to utilise social media to promote VGT activities and key gorse messaging

#### Impact online

##### Facebook:

- 772 Facebook followers (up by about 19%)
- 27,931 total Facebook reach
- 1252 total Facebook page visits

##### Instagram:

- 322 Instagram followers (up by 6.6%)
- 535 total Instagram reach
- 182 total Instagram page visits

##### Website:

- Traffic to the VGT website grew by 61.9% in 2022/23 from 2100 to 3400 users
- 268 subscribers



## Key Outcome 6:

### Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of the VGCS and its achievements

- Developed and delivered the 2021/2022 progress report



## Partnerships

We are only able to do what we do because of the connections and partnerships we have forged with incredible agencies that continue to support our work. We thank Agriculture Victoria for the vital funding it has provided. We continue to collaborate with other CPMGs, especially the **Serrated Tussock Working Party**, at field days. We thank our stakeholders who have helped promote and distribute VGT messaging and resources.

Of course, thanks to the many communities of gorse warriors that have participated and supported our projects this year. Your commitment and enthusiasm are greatly appreciated. We look forward to continuing our excellent work together.



VGT Communications and Community Engagement Officer Christina Boon at the Seymour Alternative Farming Expo with Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party (VSTWP) Chair Lance Jennison to her left and VSTWP Extension Officer Ivan Carter to her right.

## Our People

Member	Affiliation
Ron Cosgrave (Chair)	North Central Catchment Management Authority, Community Liaison Group
Peter Forster (Deputy Chair)	Upper Hopkins Land Management Group
Brian Rowe (Treasurer)	Blampied-Kooroocheang Landcare Group
Margaret Hatton	Sunday Creek / Sugarloaf Sub-Catchments Inc
Matthew Menhennet	Landmate and Agricultural Manager – Prison Industries, Corrections Victoria
Lisette Mill	Basalt to Bay Landcare Network
Brian Bainbridge	Hepburn Shire Council
Rod Sewell	Glenlyon Upper Loddon Landcare Group
Justin Rowe	Glenlyon Upper Loddon Landcare Group
Dale Tunstall	ENVU
David Miralles	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (Good Neighbour Program)
Christina Boon	VGT Communications and Community Engagement Officer
Nicole Garfi	VGT Community Pest Management Officer (Agriculture Victoria)

## Financial Summary 2022-23

### Expenses

Projects	\$45,602.00
Engagement Officer contract	\$18,720.00
Promotion/Education	\$13,908.00
Other	\$5,287.00
	<b>\$83,517.00</b>

### Income

Grants DJPR	\$110,000.00
Refunds	\$1,556.00
Interest	\$157.00
Other	\$1,333.00
	<b>\$113,046.00</b>



# Community Grants Program

## 2022-23



### Our Impact: Supporting Community Action

The Taskforce has again supported communities in developing their own gorse control projects through the Community Grants Program. The aim is to increase landholder awareness and ownership of the problem so that long-term control can be achieved.

The grants program encourages a community-led approach to managing this widespread pest. Concerned community members join forces to take action towards achieving successful control. Communities have formed small groups to guide the planning and implementation of these projects. The VGT has supported these projects by providing financial assistance and resources.

### Testimonial

“Gorse is one of those weeds that just can’t be dealt with by the average person. It requires professionals and that can be expensive.

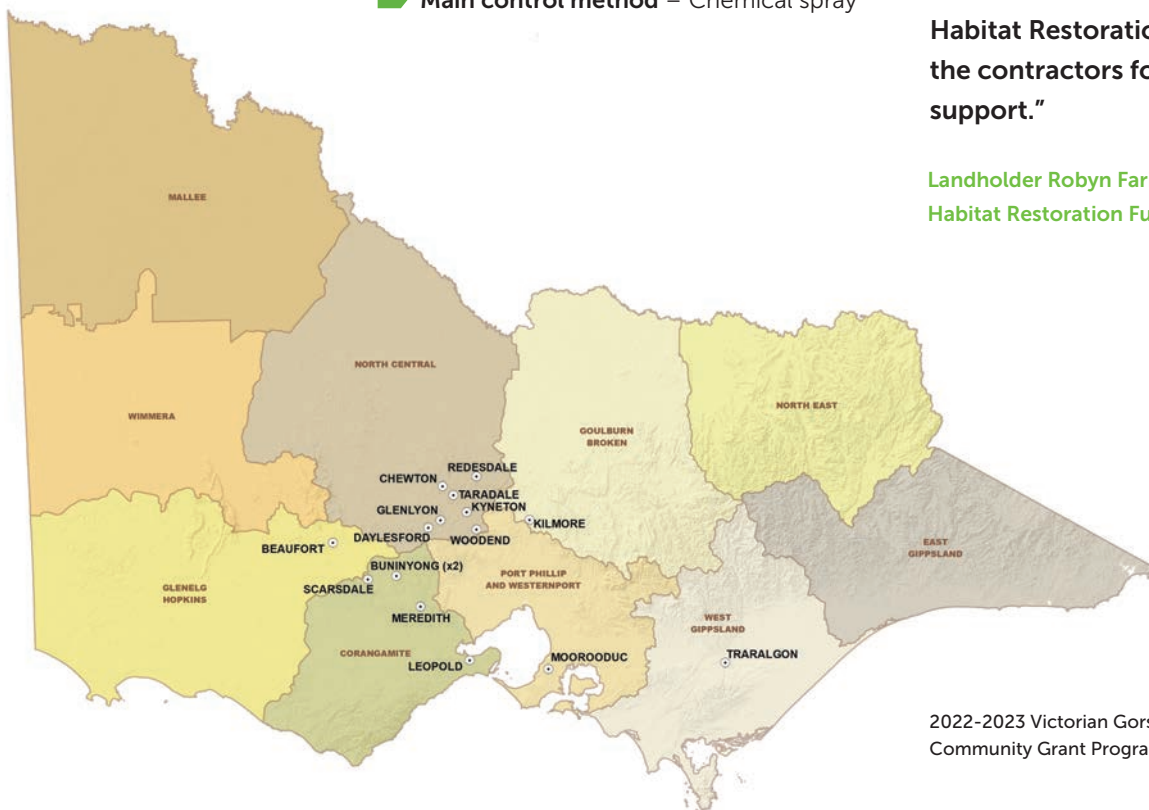
This program bridges that gap. I was most impressed by how much work was done by the contractors, which led me to find that extra money to extend the works.

I would like to thank the Victorian Gorse Taskforce, Habitat Restoration Fund and the contractors for all their support.”

Landholder Robyn Faris from Habitat Restoration Fund program

### 2022-23 results include:

- 162ha of gorse controlled
- \$45,602.27 of VGT funding distributed
- 16 groups involved
- \$135,000 total program expenditure
- Main control method – Chemical spray



2022-2023 Victorian Gorse Taskforce Community Grant Program locations



# Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group

## Controlling gorse in the lower Moorabool catchment



### Main control method:

Chemical spraying, mulching, aerial spraying.

### Landholder Testimonial:

*"We have a considerable area of gorse on our property. About four years ago this was mulched, which removed the large bushes and clumps. The gorse grant has enabled us to enact an ongoing spray program that will enable us to control regrowth, with the future aim of eradicating gorse altogether from our property. As the spray chemicals are very expensive, it has been a great help to have grant funding. This has enabled us to spray affected areas regularly and thoroughly."*

### Project description and achievements:

The Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group (MCLG) personifies the long-term commitment required for managing gorse, having tackled the weed throughout its 30-year existence. Again, teaming up with the VGT, this year's funding enabled it to control more than 45 hectares of the weed using various methods including chemical spraying and mulching.

Each site presented its own challenges and varying degrees of infestation. The group encountered dense infestations along creek lines, scattered paddock infestations and isolated infestations that were barely accessible. The group was pleased with the success of this year's works and praised the collaboration between its members, landholders and the VGT.

The MCLG also obtained funding from Bendigo Bank for 5000 native plants for revegetation works, as well as \$10,520 from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's (now called the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) Community Action Grant to mulch gorse in the project area.

### Project title:

Controlling gorse in the lower Moorabool catchment

### Nearest town:

Meredith, Elaine, Morrisons

### Number of properties:

6

### Hectares of gorse controlled:

45.3

### VGT Funding:

\$4,781  
(received \$5,000)

### Landholder funding contribution:

\$10,175

### Other contributions:

\$19,020

### Total project expenditure:

\$33,976

### Landholder Agreements signed:

6



# Glenlyon Upper Loddon Landcare Group

## Gorse Management in Glenlyon greater area



### Main control method:

Chemical spraying.

### Landholder Testimonial:

*"I'm so happy to be making progress with getting rid of the gorse on our property rather than feeling stressed and guilty about it getting worse each year."*

### Project description and achievements:

Spring flooding delayed efforts by landholders to tackle gorse in the greater Glenlyon area. As water subsided and the ground firmed up in late 2022, three residents embarked on management works on private land with help from the Glenlyon Upper Loddon Landcare Group. The works were backed by VGT funding and residents' contributions.

Landholders predominantly used chemical-control methods to manage infestations, being mindful of wind conditions and wore personal protective equipment to ensure safe application. One person employed a contractor to carry out works over a larger area than what they could have managed on their own.

The three landholders have signed commitments with the VGT to continue to monitor gorse in the area.

### Project title:

Gorse Management in Glenlyon greater area

### Nearest town:

Glenlyon

### Number of properties:

3

### Hectares of gorse controlled:

12

### VGT Funding:

\$2,446.82

### Landholder funding contribution:

\$3,393.21

### Other contributions:

\$0

### Total project expenditure:

\$5,840.03

### Landholder Agreements signed:

3





## Ashbourne Landcare Group

### Ashbourne Landcare Group - Gorse Program 2022/2023



#### Main control method:

Chemical spraying and aerial spraying.

#### Landholder Testimonial:

*"For some landholders the VGT funding has been a significant incentive to undertake a gorse control project. For others the VGT funds are a very minor contribution to the on-going gorse-control issue that confronts them."*

#### Project description and achievements:

The Ashbourne Landcare Group has been working towards eradicating gorse for more than 10 years and continues to go from strength to strength. This year's collaboration with the VGT marks Stage 7 in the management program that began with the ALG's Weed Action Group in 2012.

A letter from Macedon Ranges Shire Council inspired six landholders to register in the 2022/23 Gorse Control Program and they exceeded their targets. They aimed to treat 22 hectares and managed 30 hectares, with most plants between one and two metres high.

All targeted properties are in the upper catchment area of the Campaspe River with land ranging from steep undulations to flat pastures. The VGT provided \$4,167 of the \$61,448 cost, with the six landholders going above and beyond expectations by contributing tens of thousands of dollars to keep infestations from spreading.

Each landholder has signed a three-year follow-up gorse-control agreement, which maps infestations and identifies future works, particularly eradicating re-emerging seedlings.

More than 130 landholders have participated in this program, demonstrating to neighbours and the broader community the benefits of responsible gorse control. It continues to encourage others to get involved.

#### Project title:

Ashbourne Landcare Group - Gorse Program 2022/2023

#### Nearest town:

Woodend

#### Number of properties:

5

#### Hectares of gorse controlled:

30

#### VGT Funding:

\$4,167

#### Landholder funding contribution:

\$57,218

#### Other contributions:

\$0

#### Total project expenditure:

\$61,448

#### Landholder Agreements signed:

5



## Private Group - Fiery Creek

### Gorse eradication on the upper Fiery Creek



#### Main control method:

Weeding smaller seedlings by hand, hand-spraying of mid-sized plants and "cut-and-dab" for larger established plants.

#### Landholder Testimonial:

*"The funding helped in the purchase of herbicides and wetting agents."*

#### Project description and achievements:

Two neighbours have joined forces to control gorse along the upper Fiery Creek near Beaufort.

The farmers teamed up in 2019 to repair and revegetate the riparian areas along the creek and the tributaries that run through their properties. With financial help from Landcare, the two fenced about three kilometres of creek to keep stock out and planted native vegetation.

They requested VGT funding this year to support their previous land-improvement projects. Control works included cutting and dabbing larger gorse plants, spraying medium-sized plants and weeding seedlings.

While their gorse problem was not a major infestation, they are pleased their efforts are stopping the weed from proliferating downstream.

Wet weather caused some problems with the October 2022 floods making access difficult. Clearing debris became the priority to locate juvenile plants and seed beds.

The landholders are happy with their progress and are committed to further works



#### Project title:

Gorse eradication on the upper Fiery Creek

#### Nearest town:

Beaufort

#### Number of properties:

2

#### Hectares of gorse controlled:

4

#### VGT Funding:

\$1,000

#### Landholder funding contribution:

\$1,000

#### Other contributions:

\$0

#### Total project expenditure:

\$2,000

#### Landholder Agreements signed:

2



# Garibaldi Landcare Group

## Gorse removal on members' properties

### Main control method:

Chemical spraying and cut and paint.

### Landholder Testimonial:

*"Removal on these properties will stop these properties from becoming sources of further infestation."*

### Project description and achievements:

Two members of the Garibaldi Landcare Group have enlisted the help of the VGT to manage gorse on their properties.

The pair knew they would struggle to manage the weed without assistance so applied for VGT funding and have started initial control works on one of the properties.

One property is a conservation heritage property with significant vegetation and is registered with Land for Wildlife. Birds are largely responsible for spreading gorse seed, which has proliferated throughout native vegetation. Control works are due to start imminently, with follow-up monitoring proposed.

The second property is a former grazing block with a new dwelling, where the residents now live. The property is on a slope and gorse is prevalent around gullies and fence lines. The owners sprayed more than .375 hectares in February and will undertake follow-up spraying and cut and paint control methods.



### Project title:

Gorse removal on members' properties

### Nearest town:

Buninyong

### Number of properties:

2

### Hectares of gorse controlled:

0.375 to date

### VGT Funding:

\$800

### Landholder funding contribution:

\$400 to date  
(Expected \$800)

### Other contributions:

\$1,500

### Total project expenditure:

Expected \$3,100

### Landholder Agreements signed:

Expected 2

# Berringa Community Committee

## Making gorse an endangered species



### Main control method:

Chemical spraying and mechanical removal.

### Landholder Testimonial:

*"My property is situated on a hill and can be steep in places. The gorse was very large and thick and it would have been extremely difficult for me to get the same results without some external help. Without financial assistance, such as grants, this task would have not been achievable at all."*

### Project description and achievements:

The Berringa Community Committee concentrated on smatterings of gorse spreading in the Staffordshire Reef cemetery in Golden Plains Shire. Members sprayed about three hectares and are confident they have managed the gorse before it becomes too much of a problem. The committee also used VGT funding for three other control programs on private properties in Staffordshire Reef.

One project required mechanical removal of a thick impenetrable mass of gorse that had grown to more than 4 metres tall with trunks up to 15 centimetres in diameter. Another required mechanical removal of 2.5-metre-high gorse. Both properties have further infestations that will require long-term attention. Another Berringa Community Committee project involved spraying 7.5 hectares of scattered gorse on a private property.

Members praised the VGT for its financial assistance and said the grant would ensure the continuation of maintenance programs.

**Project title:**  
Making gorse an endangered species

**Nearest town:**  
Scarsdale

**Number of properties:**  
4

**Hectares of gorse controlled:**  
12.25

**VGT Funding:**  
\$1,900

**Landholder funding contribution:**  
\$1,900

**Other contributions:**  
\$3,530 (in kind)

**Total project expenditure:**  
\$7,330

**Landholder Agreements signed:**  
3





## Private Group

### Gorse on the Campaspe

#### Main control method:

Chemical spraying.

#### Landholder Testimonial:

*"Removal of gorse should assist in limiting the spread and we thank the VGT for helping us achieve this goal."*

#### Project description and achievements:

A small group of landholders at Mia Mia near Redesdale have committed to removing gorse along a stretch of the Campaspe River.

Two to three residents applied for VGT funding, but wet weather has delayed works and they have requested an extension to their project.

The properties border the eastern side of the Campaspe at the intersection of Stone Jug Creek and the proposed works will cover just over one hectare. Landholders plan to spray small, isolated patches of gorse.

They hope to emulate the success of a similar project undertaken by the North Central Catchment Authority about six years ago.

Landcare is also contributing funding for the planting of native trees in the area.



#### Project title:

Gorse on the Campaspe

#### Nearest town:

Redesdale

#### Number of properties:

Expected 3  
(Not reported)

#### Hectares of gorse controlled:

1.2 (Not reported)

#### VGT Funding:

\$1,000

#### Landholder funding contribution:

Expected \$2,000  
(Not reported)

#### Other contributions:

Expected \$850  
(Not reported)

#### Total project expenditure:

Expected \$3,850  
(Not reported)

#### Landholder Agreements signed:

Expected 3  
(Not reported)

## Private Group

### Merindah - Gorse eradication

#### Main control method:

Mulching, cut and paint, chemical spraying.

#### Landholder Testimonial:

*"As a retiree and with assistance of a grant, every effort will be made to control and ultimately eradicate the gorse infestation."*

#### Project description and achievements:

A devastating fire followed by Covid lockdowns saw a gorse infestation take hold on properties at Durham Lead outside Ballarat.

One landholder, who runs an engineering business on the second property, said gorse was reasonably well controlled until the Scotsburn fires hit in December 2015. Losses sustained in that fire had a detrimental effect on his motivation to manage the property. Then Covid prevented him from getting help for works he would have liked to have done and the gorse got out of control. It has become so dense; he is unable to walk through sections of the land.

The landholder turned to the VGT for advice and funding to help achieve his goal of returning the land to its state before the fire.

He is targeting 10 hectares of gorse, primarily along the water course. The land is solely used for sheep grazing. As a retiree, he says he has the time and motivation to pursue an eradication program.



#### Project title:

Merindah - Gorse eradication

#### Nearest town:

Buninyong

#### Number of properties:

2

#### Hectares of gorse controlled:

Expected 10  
(Not reported)

#### VGT Funding:

\$2,000

#### Landholder funding contribution:

Expected \$8,500  
(Not reported)

#### Other contributions:

\$0 (Not reported)

#### Total project expenditure:

Expected \$10,500  
(Not reported)

#### Landholder Agreements signed:

2



# Golden Point Landcare Inc.

## Race Against Gorse

### Main control method:

Chemical spraying.

### Landholder Testimonial:

*"It has given me a lot of peace of mind that I'm not contributing to what is a substantial problem in the area and I'm part of the solution now. It has also potentially increased the value of the property given management of gorse provides a better aesthetic element and creates a better space for native species."*

### Project description and achievements:

Golden Point residents near Chewton are looking well into the future while planning their attacks on gorse.

Four landholders are benefitting from VGT funding this year and not even the prospect of moving away has deterred one resident from their dedication to the cause. Their property is on the market and a condition of sale is that the purchaser will allow follow-up gorse control spray works over the next two years – all funded by the current owner.

The agreement will be co-ordinated by Golden Point Landcare, encouraging the new owner to join the community's fight against the weed.

The four properties that received VGT funding this year share boundaries with the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park, Crown Land managed by Parks Victoria. They are on the western side of Forest Creek, a recovering goldfields landscape.

Almost seven hectares have been treated, targeting seedlings to mature plants. Landholders have embraced a 50-50 funding model with the VGT, which they say helps them manage extensive infestations.

Contractor works were completed by mid-summer 2022-23, despite some extremely wet weeks. Some of the areas were on creek beds, which made access difficult. Works have been completed on all nominated areas and more. Landholders will monitor regrowth and are planning revegetation projects.



### Project title:

Race Against Gorse

### Nearest town:

Chewton

### Number of properties:

4

### Hectares of gorse controlled:

6.88

### VGT Funding:

\$3,564.50

### Landholder funding contribution:

\$3,359.40

### Other contributions:

\$250

### Total project expenditure:

\$7,379.00

### Landholder Agreements signed:

4



# Pipers Creek Landcare Group

## Pipers Creek Landcare - Gorse Project at Loughmore farm



### Main control method:

Chemical spraying.

### Landholder Testimonial:

*"The funding enabled us to spray a much larger area of gorse than if we didn't have the funding."*

### Project description and achievements:

Two residents of Pipers Creek have teamed up with the VGT to manage gorse along the creek. The creek forms part of the boundary at Loughmore farm.

They completed works in December 2022, using chemical spray on one hectare.

The landholders would have liked to have tackled more but were restricted by funding constraints. They have developed a 10-year plan to control gorse and reduce its spread in the area.

Other long-term goals include preventing erosion along the creek and erecting fences on the boundary of the creek and properties.

Pipers Creek Landcare Group has earmarked funding for planting native trees on the two properties.



### Project title:

Pipers Creek Landcare - Gorse Project at Loughmore farm

### Nearest town:

Kyneton

### Number of properties:

2

### Hectares of gorse controlled:

1

### VGT Funding:

\$2,000

### Landholder funding contribution:

\$1,000

### Other contributions:

\$0

### Total project expenditure:

\$3,000

### Landholder Agreements signed:

1



# Habitat Restoration Fund

## Eradicating gorse from Moorooduc, Victoria



### Main control method:

Chemical spraying.

### Landholder Testimonial:

*"Gorse is one of those weeds that just can't be dealt with by the average person. It requires professionals and that can be expensive. This program bridges that gap. I was most impressed by how much work was done by the contractors, which led me to find that extra money to extend the works. I would like to thank the Victorian Gorse Taskforce, Habitat Restoration Fund and the contractors for all their support."*

### Project description and achievements:

Gorse is not particularly widespread on the Mornington Peninsula but the Moorooduc plain is the exception. Habitat Restoration Fund welcomed assistance from the VGT to help four Moorooduc landholders manage the weed. Not only will their efforts benefit the local community, the works will go towards protecting the Peninsula from future invasion.

Gorse has a well-deserved reputation of being hard to control and many landowners find the works daunting. The four involved in this project had undertaken individual projects but found gorse difficult to eradicate and requested help. VGT funding enabled HRF to not only undertake weed control but impart its knowledge on how to best go about it.

Despite high rainfall delaying works, the project was a great success. One landholder treated all mature gorse on their property, while another contributed further funding towards spraying her gorse once she realised the initial control was working so well.

HRF contractors concentrated on spraying large stubborn patches of gorse that would have been the most difficult for landholders to deal with. HRF contractors also sprayed gorse among existing vegetation with specialised equipment and training, ensuring off-target damage was negligible.

Three out of the four landholders have signed agreements for further works. The fourth has put their property on the market so was not part of the commitment.



### Project title:

Eradicating gorse from Moorooduc, Victoria

### Nearest town:

Moorooduc

### Number of properties:

4

### Hectares of gorse controlled:

15

### VGT Funding:

\$4,000

### Landholder funding contribution:

\$4,000

### Other contributions:

\$1,750

### Total project expenditure:

\$9,750

### Landholder Agreements signed:

3



## Taradale Landcare Group

### Consolidating Gorse control around Taradale



#### Main control method:

Chemical spraying.

#### Landholder Testimonial:

*"Gorse control in this area protects production values of the properties, including a vineyard working towards organic certification and two cattle grazing properties."*

#### Project description and achievements:

The success of previous collaborations between the VGT and Taradale Landcare Group has inspired a new group of residents to tackle gorse on their properties.

Four landholders have embarked on projects to control 74 hectares of gorse along creeks and paddocks and among remnant trees. They have targeted more than 22 hectares to date.

These works build on the efforts of neighbouring properties treated under two earlier VGT grants as well as recent and ongoing works by adjacent public land managers and the Landcare group. The VGT provided a Large Gorse Grant as part of a joint project with Connecting Country, a community organisation working to restore landscapes in central Victoria, in 2019-20 with 15 landholders engaged.

Gorse control in this area protects production values of properties, including a vineyard aiming for organic certification and two cattle farms. It reduces fire hazards for residents living along Fryerstown Road and the wider township, reduces risks to the biodiversity of the adjacent Fryers Ranges Conservation Reserve and Taradale Streamside Reserve and will aid restoration of the Kangaroo and Back creeks.

The work supports gorse control efforts by other agencies including Coliban Water, Mount Alexander Shire, Taradale Landcare and the Committee of Management of Barkly Park (Taradale Streamside Reserve).

#### Project title:

Consolidating Gorse control around Taradale

#### Nearest town:

Taradale

#### Number of properties:

4

#### Hectares of gorse controlled:

Expected 22.5  
(Not reported)

#### VGT Funding:

\$3,167.54

#### Landholder funding contribution:

Expected \$4,554.54  
(Not reported)

#### Other contributions:

Expected \$1,000  
(Not reported)

#### Total project expenditure:

Expected \$8,722.08  
(Not reported)

#### Landholder

#### Agreements signed:

Expected 4  
(Not reported)

# South West Goulburn Landcare Network

## Expanding gorse management in the neighbourhood

### Main control method:

Chemical spraying.

### Landholder Testimonial:

*"I am 90 years old and on a pension. This grant has allowed me to purchase chemicals so my son can get out there and spray the gorse. Watching it brown off is a wonderful feeling and knowing my property will be in a better condition when it's time for me to pass it on gives me great comfort, knowing I'm doing the right thing".*

### Project description and achievements:

Age is no barrier when it comes to tackling gorse and one 90-year-old is testament to that. The nonagenarian is one of the recipients of VGT funding via the South West Goulburn Landcare Network and has enlisted the help of her son to spray chemicals to control the weed on her property.

She is one of six landholders inspired to get involved in management programs this year, following the lead of neighbours in Kilmore and High Camp who received VGT funding the previous year. Most have been conducting works along Kurkurac Creek or incoming tributaries. Each have undertaken all or more management works than originally proposed, generally using their own spray equipment or hiring it from Landcare groups. The VGT funding has enabled them to do more work than planned.

Mitchell Shire Council supports the Landcare group's efforts and will treat gorse on roadsides bordering these properties to increase the area being managed.

South West Goulburn Landcare has also been working with Agriculture Victoria Biocontrol Hub, which has undertaken a biological release of Gorse Soft Shoot Moth for gorse management in hard-to-reach places along Broadhurst Creek. About 7000 moths and larvae were released in 2017-18 along a 300-metre section of waterway. They are breeding successfully and help in areas where access for machinery or people is difficult.



### Project title:

Expanding gorse management in the neighbourhood

### Nearest town:

Kilmore

### Number of properties:

6

### Hectares of gorse controlled:

11

### VGT Funding:

\$5,000

### Landholder funding contribution:

\$10,200

### Other contributions:

\$9,750

### Total project expenditure:

\$24,950

### Landholder Agreements signed:

6

## Private Group - Leopold

### Gorse Control

#### Main control method:

Chemical spraying.

#### Landholder Testimonial:

*"With the VGT information provided, we have information and the best techniques to use for our land. By working together as neighbours, we will hopefully be able to reduce the amount of gorse and its spread."*

#### Project description and achievements:

Two neighbours who live on Lake Connewarre in Leopold, Greater Geelong, have come together in an effort to eradicate gorse on their properties. The majority of the gorse is at the bottom of a sloped hill, with access proving difficult. That coupled with wet weather has meant the project is taking longer than expected.

The landholders have previously used chemical spray with some success and hope matched funding from the VGT will improve efficacy in other areas this time. They are also planning mechanical removal, mulching and spraying the roots. Fire is another option being considered. The VGT advises burning is useful for removing dead gorse treated by herbicide to improve access for follow-up treatment. It warns fire can regenerate gorse seeds in soil, so such measures are vital.

The Leopold residents hope managing gorse will result in fewer fox dens and rabbit warrens, thereby improving biodiversity. It will also reduce fire danger and increase opportunities to run stock.



#### Project title:

Gorse control

#### Nearest town:

Leopold

#### Number of properties:

2

#### Hectares of gorse controlled:

Expected 5.5  
(Not reported)

#### VGT Funding:

\$2,000

#### Landholder funding contribution:

Expected \$3,000  
(Not reported)

#### Other contributions:

Expected \$0  
(Not reported)

#### Total project expenditure:

Expected \$5,000  
(Not reported)

#### Landholder Agreements signed:

Expected 2  
(Not reported)



# Private Group - Musk Vale

Gorse Control, Dwans Lane, Musk Vale



## Main control method:

Chemical spraying, hand-weeding and mechanical removal.

## Landholder Testimonial:

*“The kind financial support from the VGT was instrumental in promoting a proven and sustainable approach to address our growing gorse problem.”*

## Project description and achievements:

Patience and perseverance have paid off for two Musk Vale residents who have spent the past 12 months clearing gorse on their properties. Their small farms abut the Wombat State Forest and gorse is starting to encroach onto the forest, threatening indigenous vegetation, grassland and native wildlife. The pair have embraced various control methods, including chemical spraying and mechanical removal.

They started by mowing flat areas to a height of two to three centimetres to promote growth and competition from native grasses. They removed gorse bushes along fence lines using brush-cutter blades and processing them to a fine mulch. A tractor-mounted mulcher was used in accessible areas with some success. Manual extraction using stump pullers, long handled pruners and a weed-removal tool proved effective around immature native trees.

Spraying herbicides around property boundaries was completed in February 2023, with meticulous planning to ensure rain and wind didn't impact effectiveness. The landholders said it was frustrating to wait for three months after spraying to begin to see the positive effects but were thrilled with the results.

They said VGT support was instrumental in promoting a proven and sustainable approach to managing gorse. They have signed Landholder Agreements committing to controlling re-growth and seedling germination. The landholders have prepared areas to plant native gums, wattles and apple trees.

## Project title:

Pipers Creek Landcare - Gorse Project at Loughmore farm

## Nearest town:

Kyneton

## Number of properties:

2

## Hectares of gorse controlled:

1

## VGT Funding:

\$2,000

## Landholder funding contribution:

\$1,000

## Other contributions:

\$0

## Total project expenditure:

\$3,000

## Landholder Agreements signed:

1





**VICTORIAN  
GORSE TASKFORCE**