Urban Ripple Project

2024-2026

Restoring the Yarrowee River and its Little Creeks

Victorian Government's Green Links Grants Program Round 1: $701,584
Project Reach: 9.8 km of waterways | Sites Restored: 13 sites | Area Improved: 45.5 ha

Site 5
Soapys Dam

Friends of Canadian Corridor



Site map: Site 5 is located beside Elsworth Street East, Canadian in Ballarat.

The Challenge

Soapys Dam (Site 1), a former quarry dam named after the soap and candle factory that operated nearby in the 1890s, was heavily degraded, with extensive weed infestation, limited native vegetation, and little appeal for community use.

Site 2 was identified in the City of Ballarat Trail Strategy and, with its remnant native vegetation, presented an opportunity to enhance habitat and create a future ecological and recreational link between the Canadian Creek and Woowookarung Regional Park.

Ecological Target

Native plant species historically occurring at this site were identified using a vegetation mapping tool based on Floristic Mapping Units (FMUs). Mapping indicates that the site previously supported **FMU 23753: Colluvium Transitional Plains Damp Forest**, a vegetation community characterised by eucalypts, grasses, sedges, and a diverse range of native groundcovers. This information has been used to guide ecological management, revegetation, and restoration activities at the site.

Project Aims

- Improve the local natural amenity
- Control and reduce weeds over the site
- Enhance and restore existing remnant vegetation

The Restoration

Site Budget

Green Links Funding	In-kind contribution	Total
$21,830	**$38,220***	**$60,050**

*In-kind contribution based on $30 per 1274 volunteer hours

Site Preparation

Ballarat Garden Supplies, located adjacent to Soapys Dam, assisted with site preparation and rubbish removal ahead of revegetation works around the dam. At Site 2, the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Caring for Country Team undertook weed control, while the City of Ballarat supported site preparation by reducing mowing in selected areas.

Plant Supply

- Indigenous seedlings were supplied by Wadawurrung Indigenous Nursery.

Murnong, also known as Yam Daisy is a culturally significant plant and was once abundant across Wadawurrung Country. A small area of Murnong was planted at Site 2 as a trial.

"Once mowing stopped, we discovered far more native plants than we ever expected."
Jeff Rootes, Friends of Canadian Corridor

Project outcomes

Seedlings Planted	Area Restored	Volunteers Engaged	Events Held
3200	**4.48 ha**	**579**	**23**

Community Impact

This project was a true community effort, bringing together five local schools, a scout group, Friends of Canadian Corridor volunteers, local businesses, Traditional Owners and environmental partners to restore the site. Ballarat Garden Supplies assisted with site preparation, while the City of Ballarat and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation helped prepare the site for planting.

The Wendouree Breakfast Rotary Club supported planting days with volunteer assistance and community BBQs, creating a welcoming environment for participants. Together, these partnerships have helped begin the transformation of the site.



Community volunteer planting day.



Community volunteers spreading mulch.

Project Highlights

- Collaboration with the adjacent business, Ballarat Garden Supplies
- Identifying possible future trail upgrades to link to Woowookurrung Regional Park
- Myrnong (Yam Daisy) planting trial
- Five school groups helped deliver the planting program

Future Opportunities

SHORT TERM	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
• Weed control • Seedling maintenance • Install fencing between the reserve and the private lot on Davies Road • Complete the removal of gorse along the Soapys Creek • Establish photo points	• Weed control • Undertake Spring surveys for native plant species • Continue tree planting along the creek • Work with the City of Ballarat to upgrade walk/cycle trail along Soapys Creek.	• Weed control • Plant tussocky vegetation along stream banks to control erosion and provide habitat

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Before and After



After weed removal and before planting



Post planting

Project Partners

Friends of Canadian Corridor • Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation • City of Ballarat • Ballarat Garden Supplies • Damascas College • Mount Clear College • Mount Rowan College • Woodmans Hill College • Wendouree Breakfast Rotary Club • First Mount Clear Scouts • Victorian Government Green Links Grant Program

A partnership project between the Bunanyung Landscape Alliance and the Yarrowee Leigh Catchment Group.