

YARRA VALLEY

ecoss



ANNUAL
REPORT
2022

ABOUT YARRA VALLEY ECOSS

**We support the Yarra Ranges Council
Climate Emergency Declaration**

**With Sustainability at the CORE of everything
we do on site.**

Yarra Valley ECOSS acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional custodians of this land.

We pay respects to elders past, present and emerging.

We are committed to actively seeking ways in which to create a safe, inclusive hub, striving together for a thriving future for our First Nations families.



Yarra Valley ECOSS is an inclusive workplace, we invite all genders and nationalities to come together and work for a better future for this planet.



OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT IS—an environmental and educational not-for-profit organisation committed to showcasing best sustainable solutions.

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL GOAL IS—aimed at restoring natural capital in our environment:

—A rural recreational and training facility that demonstrates innovation and best practice in regenerative land-use, renewable energies and resources, and the local production of food.

OUR LEARNING GOAL IS—aimed at developing human capital in our people is:

—A program of activities that inspires and enables the acquisition of the knowledge and skills needed to develop sustainable lifestyles.

OUR SOCIAL CAPITAL IS—aimed at improving social capital in our community is:

—A cooperative enterprise that is owned by the community, managed by the community, for the community and expresses the community's spirit.

OUR FINANCIAL GOAL IS—aimed at building financial capital and financial security in our community:

—A range of integrated enterprises that provides local employment, stimulates the growth of the regional economy and provides income to support our operations.

—Care for the Earth, its life forms and ecological processes, as stewards for future generations

—Care for People, through respect and the provision of opportunity for everyone to reach their potential.

—A Fair Share of the Earth's renewable and non-renewable resources for all members of current and future populations.

OUR VALUES ARE—

- We foster a culture of respect for the environment and community
- We work with honesty and integrity in our interactions
- We are committed to modelling best environmental practices
- We approach every challenge with enthusiasm and humour
- We are innovative and relevant in our thinking and practices
- We work together, everyone gets heard and we do what we say we'll do
- We strive for cultural and social inclusiveness

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Front Cover Photo: ECOSS 'LIVING' Installation (Photo Credit: Five Tree Lane Photography - Christine Bauer)
Above Photo: Italian 'Taste of Culture' (Photo Credit: Umbra Media - Addison Woodland)

REPORTS

President's Report

Looking back over 2022 at ECOSS I am struck by the number of new programs, events, partnerships and contacts that have developed and emerged over the last 12 months. ECOSS has an amazing ability to continually expand its networks in very positive ways.

Our standout new program – UpCycles – funded by Sustainability Victoria and led by Damien Auton is creating a hub for people of all ages but particularly young people to learn bike maintenance skills and to bond through enthusiasm for bikes. It has also led to a new relationship with Box Hill Institute which initiated an 8 week Bike Maintenance course at ECOSS.

Similarly we now have a partnership with Earth Systems who are developing a Bio Char Facility in Lysterfield. ECOSS has been selected to market and promote the use of Bio Char through an education and research program.

Towards the end of the year a partnership with Upper Yarra Landcare saw the redevelopment of our native nursery with the aim of producing indigenous plants for the Council's Ribbons of Green program. Once again a new network has been formed.

Recently a Community Viticulture project was initiated at ECOSS with 2 community members and an ECOSS Committee of Management member developing a project to produce wine while experimenting with regenerative farming methods. In the same area a Pop Up Garlic Farmers course has been developed. The whole area, now deer fenced, is known as Pollination Place and it has a Management Plan produced by our Monash University Intern student, Chloe Bradsworth. It will expand to include other agricultural pursuits.

Two other significant new links which arose in 2022 are with Domain Chandon winery and the Traralgon Tiny House Village. These 2 organisations sought consultancy with ECOSS based on our significant community and environmental credentials. Chelsea, as ECOSS Executive Officer, has consulted with both organisations and has achieved valuable partnerships with both. The feedback has been impressive! There are several more new initiatives that I haven't mentioned.

All of this is occurring while the Yarra Ranges Council Planning Department is reviewing ECOSS' activities in the light of the Victorian Green Wedge A Planning Policy. We have employed a Planning Consultant to negotiate a revised Planning Permit for ECOSS as a Community Hub. It is a long and involved process.

We could not achieve what we do without our dedicated and very capable Committee of Management. They put in many voluntary hours and are responsible for all major decisions affecting ECOSS.

Thanks to Tom Neil, Joe Butler, Peter Preuss, Jaapadas Singh and particular thanks to Bernie Lobert who works tirelessly as our indispensable Treasurer.

Thanks also to our ex-officio Yarra Ranges Council Rep, Julian Guess, who has worked so positively to assist our efforts. Also thanks to Councillor Jim Child who has attended many of our Committee meetings. Sadly we farewelled 2 very valuable Committee members during the year. Many thanks to Kellie Gee and Karina Doughty for their wonderful contributions over many years.

That leaves the staff! It is difficult to put into words what they mean to ECOSS. We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated team. Our Executive Officer, Chelsea McNab, is the backbone of the team. She is the dynamic heart of ECOSS. Our other staff members are also incredibly enterprising and professional. They are: Leanne Hall (Events and Market), Mel Daymond (Crops for Community, Volunteers), Kylie Barnes (Earth Education and Crops for Community), Peter Lorback (Nursery), Damien Auton (UpCycles), Baya Litchfield (Caretaker).

I must also thank our wonderful volunteers – so many I can't name them all but we are so grateful for your contributions. Lastly, thank you to our community for your support and enthusiasm for what we do.

Ric Butler
President



REPORTS CONTINUED

Executive Officer's Report

Every year when we revisit our activities for the Annual Report we are all surprised about how much we have accomplished throughout the year. This last year was no exception.

This year we facilitated a Wedding, a Funeral, Xmas Parties, 40th, 50th and 1st B'day celebrations. As well as this we hosted 10 multicultural events including 'A Taste of Culture', 5 festivals including Ecotopia and Permaculture Week Regenerative Farming Seminar. Ngulu Festival, Bush Dance, Rhythms of the World, Ngulu 2 Soundscape openings.

We were pleased to be offered the opportunity to work in a Consultancy capacity for Domaine Chandon, and also with Domaine Chandon Landscape Architects. We also offered Consultancy for development of a new Tiny House Eco-Village.

We hosted 25 Education groups including local schools and community groups. We were very thrilled to have David & Sue Holmgren come and have a tour of ECOSS.

We began the process of addressing our Planning Amendment alongside Yarra Ranges Council. We employed St-Wise Consultancy's Mark Waldron to represent us through this process. As a result we were able to re-engage Jon Coe to assist us with our updated site plan. Thanks also to Sam Knight for assisting us with professional mapping.

We built new partnerships with Earth Systems signing our MOU to develop the Education Program for the Bio Char Facility. Farmer Incubator- Pop Up Garlic Farmers Course, Domaine Chandon, Tiny House Community, McClelland Gallery and Sculpture Park, YRC Partnership, and we met Warburton Adventure Hub regarding future partnerships.

We formalised our Partnership with Upper Yarra Landcare who are helping with the reinvigoration of our Nursery. We were extremely grateful to be the recipient of Four Pillars Gin 'Four Pillars of the Community' donation which enabled us to employ Peter Lorback to revitalise and grow the Native Nursery.

We finalised the Sustainability Victoria grant and held our grand opening of Upcycles. This included employing the wonderful Damian Auton as Upcycles manager who came with a wealth of experience and expertise in delivering the education component as well as the procurement of the right tools and equipment for the space.

This sparked our relationship between Box Hill Institute and ECOSS delivering the Introduction to Bike Maintenance pre accredited 8 week course through UpCycles.

We wish to thank Sustainability Victoria for their support and contribution in seeing this project to fruition.

We undertook many projects with Yarra Ranges Council including: Solar farm feasibility study, YRC Hands on Clay workshop, and Ribbons of Green.

We hosted our Monash University Intern Student Chloe Bradsworth undertaking her Masters in Environmental Science. Chloe developed a wonderful Management Plan for

our new project- Pollination Place. This included her mapping and including all the needs of Farmer Incubator, Community Viticulture Group, Silviculture Project and the BioChar test plots.

There were 104 Coop Bookings by Community Members this year, offering small business opportunities to host their workshops etc.. such as Life drawing, Upper Yarra Wildlife Rescue, Live Music with Sean Kirk, Ei Yang- skinning and tanning, Warburton Environment AGM, Tenzin Choegyal concert, homeschool groups, Arthur Rich kids singing recording, Open Mic in the Coop, Vinod Indian music night, Yarra Valley Bee Group Meetings, meditation on the grass

Outreach events we presented at: EASL (Eastern Alliance for Sustainable Learning), spoke at Healesville Women for Women Event, and completed the Butterfly Garden at St Josephs.

In October we experienced big storms throughout the Yarra Ranges. This created flooding issues for Melganics, our Bottle Room, our Boardroom and we had to cancel some events. As a result we had to undertake major earthworks at ECOSS, including emergency plumbing and guttering works. This was a costly challenge to overcome.

We were fortunate to be successful in our application for a Community Kitchen renovation on the cottage. During this process with Yarra Ranges Council Planning we discovered that there was Asbestos in the wet areas of the cottage. We are awaiting resolution of this before undertaking the renovation.

We continued to roll with the waves of the highs and lows of operating on Grants. Whilst we experienced enough success to keep ECOSS functioning well we have not yet found significant sustainability through other avenues to reduce our reliance on grants.

We are looking forward to all the opportunities and challenges which 2023 will bring.

Chelsea McNab
Executive Officer



COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT



Left to right above:

Karina Doughty

**Committee Member
Warburton Environment Representative
Food Forest Sub Committee**

Joe Butler

**Secretary
Admin Sub Committee
Chair Community Engagement Committee
Food Forest Sub Committee**

Bernie Lobert

**Treasurer
Secretary/Chair Admin Committee**

Ric Butler

**President
Site Committee**

Peter Preuss

Committee Member

Cr Jim Child

**Yarra Ranges Council Representative
Mayor Yarra Ranges Council**

Julian Guess

**Yarra Ranges Council
Sustainability Project Officer**

Kellie Gee

**Vice President / Upper
Yarra Landcare Representative
Site Committee**

Tom Neil

**Silvertop Joinery Representative
Site Committee**

Joshua Tucker

**Site Committee
Silvertine Farm Representative
Food Forest Sub Committee**

Jaarp Adass

**Committee Member
Mount Toolebewong and Native Nursery
Liaison**



STAFF & VOLUNTEERS



Left to right: Kylie Barnes, Chelsea McNab, Melanie Daymond, Leanne Hall (Absent: John Christie, Damian Auton)

Staff Members

Chelsea McNab:
Executive Officer

Casual Staff

Kylie Barnes:
Earth Education Co-ordinator and Community Engagement

Leanne Hall:
Community Engagement, Market & Events Co-ordinator

Melanie Daymond:
All Abilities Volunteer Project Development Co-ordinator

John Christie:
Crops for Community Coordinator

Damian Auton:
Upcycles Coordinator

Staff 2022

After a year of John Christie Co-ordinating the Crops for Community Program alongside Melanie Daymond, we farewelled John in August. John was a wonderful addition to our team, building strong relationships with all the staff, committee members and volunteers. He is missed by us all.

We were very fortunate to have Alexandra Barton-Johnson join ECOSS in a Volunteer Capacity to help with our Marketing and Promotions.

We were very happy that we continued to have Baya Litchfield as our capable caretaker. Baya has the perfect skillset to be our caretaker and an eye for what needs to be done.

Leanne Hall continued working closely with the rest of the staff on grants, acquittals, and bringing lots of colour, multicultural celebrations and life to ECOSS throughout the year with the weekly ECOSS Valley Market, Festive Markets, Festivals and Events.

Melanie Daymond continued to facilitate the ECOSS Volunteers Program as well as the Crops for Community Program. Kylie Barnes stepped into John's position for 1 day per week whilst continuing to be the Earth Education Officer coordinating the visiting groups and facilitators onsite.

We welcomed Damian Auton to the Staff in the position of managing UpCycles. Damian managed the procurement of the tools and fit out as well as developing the education program for Saturdays, and working for Box Hill Institute delivering the Introduction to Bike Maintenance Course.

We were proud to be able to upskill the staff and committee with many training sessions and extensive networking throughout the year. This included: Child Safe Training, Conflict Resolution Training with Aladdin, Website training with Judd, Yarra Ranges Food Connections meetings, Hitting Corporate Partners Hot Spot, EASL Conference, Strengthening Food Systems Governance at a Local Level, Healesville Local Aboriginal Network (LAN) meetings, McClelland Gallery Visit, Opening of Alpine School, Youth Showcase- Jaydas EP Launch, Melbourne Water Regenerative Agriculture Course, Premiers Sustainability Award Attendance, Growing Edible Towns and Cities Conference at Angliss Restaurant, Yarra Ranges Council Awards Night.

SPECIAL THANKS

Special Thanks to our Volunteers, Supporters and Consultants

- Aunty Kim Wandin - Wurundjeri Elder- Cultural Inclusivity Advice
- Nikki Browne - Bidjara Artist- McClelland Gallery and Indigenous Arts
- Ganga Giri - Didgeridoo Australia
- Oonah Belonging Place - Oonah Tuckerbag Program
- Catherine Aulich of Upper Yarra Valley Bookkeeping
- Karina Doughty - Environmental Educator: Earth Education Program - Warburton Environment
- Judd Zekas of Yarra Valley Hosting Tech Support
- Graeme George of Yarra Valley Permaculture
- Peter Veeke - Yarra Valley Permaculture and Permaculture Week in The Yarra Valley
- Aladdin Jones - Psychologist, workplace wellbeing training
- Baya Litchfield - Caretaker, grounds maintenance
- Chloe Bradsworth - Monash Environmental Science Student - Pollination Place Management plan
- Mark Waldron - Planning Consultant from St-Wise
- Karen Garth - Mount Toolebewong Landcare
- Peter Lorback - Native Nursery Consultancy
- Sam Watson - graphic design Annual Report and general help around the place.
- Four Pillars Gin Distillery
- Domaine Chandon
- Healesville Music Festival
- Woody Clarke - festival support, grant writing and event videos.
- Peter and Luke who show up every week and perform countless tasks on-site.
- Karen Meuleman Festivals Support, Yarra Ranges Council
- Michael Goodrich - Yarra Ranges Council
- Little Yarra Steiner School for advertising support
- Mountain Views Mail
- 3VYV FM
- Brad Charman -Yarra Valley Signs for incredible generosity in signage support
- Julian Guess YRC - for generous support.

- Nadine Imber for her ongoing support and volunteering since 2019
- Peter Marshall and Luke Boissevian – our jack-of-all-trades tireless volunteers of 3 years
- Cailie Coney who has been volunteering twice a week since April 2019, sharing her joy with everyone
- Dan 'The Compost Man's for his constant dedication in collecting and delivering huge volumes of food scraps to ECOSS for building our compost.
- And to our wonderful Valley Market volunteers who turn up, and remain utterly dependable, particularly Jenny McTainsh.
- All Melba Support Services, Interchange Outer East and Recovery Options volunteers and support workers.
- UpCycles Supporters: Damian Auton, Sam Knight - Jigsaw Jumps, Jack McDonald - and Laycon Concrete, Tom Neil, Box Hill Institute, Grant the Mechanic - also for donation of Food Truck, Henry, Kane, Marc, John, Bodin

First Nations Indigenous Reconciliation Actions and Education

We continued to keep reconciliation in the forefront of our minds and activities at ECOSS, acknowledging the disadvantage that our First Nations communities continue to experience in this country, and working hard to make a difference. We ensure that we have a Welcome to Country at most ECOSS events and where it is not possible we always hold a meaningful acknowledgement.

We continued our relationship with Aunty Kim Wandin receiving cultural advice as well. We hosted 2 Ngulu Festivals this year adding to our Indigenous education onsite via the opening of the Soundscape and Mural, and via the festivals themselves.

We continued to grow our relationship with Didgeridoo Australia with Ganga Giri facilitating our Cultural Workshops for schools, community groups and at our events.

We also continued working with Bidjara woman Nikki Browne who facilitated our cultural arts workshops for our Education program.

We also continued to deliver freshly picked produce weekly through Crops for Community to the Oonah Tuckerbag Program. We have started approaching other businesses to join in the donations alongside ECOSS.

We attend the Local Aboriginal Network meetings where possible.

ECOSS COMMUNITY

The ECOSS Community, Our Community, is an increasingly large group of people both local and beyond who share our vision of sustainability, food security and environmental protection.

Staff and Committee

Our 'closest' community is, of course, our Committee of Management and our staff. The Committee of Management consists of a group of committed individuals who work voluntarily to maintain and promote ECOSS as an organisation. We are very fortunate to have such united and congenial committee members and also to have our ex-officio Council Rep, Julian Guess, whose contribution to ECOSS' activities and programs has been outstanding. We are also grateful to Councillor Jim Child who attends many of our meetings and has assisted us in his capacity as a Councillor. Unfortunately we have lost 2 committee members during 2022; Kellie Gee and Karina Doughty have both moved to QLD. They will be sadly missed as they have been dedicated members of the committee

Our staff, all very part-time, are similarly dedicated and extremely professional members of our community. Chelsea McNab, our Executive Officer, continues to inspire and lead us in all sorts of exciting directions. Mel Daymond has continued to steer the Crops for Community program working creatively with the All Abilities volunteers who are the backbone of the program. Leanne Hall has continued her work as our dynamic Market and Events Manager. The range of events including indigenous and multicultural events has been remarkable with many visitors expressing delight at the variety and standard of the scheduled events. Kylie Barnes has successfully run and expanded the Earth Education program and has assisted in the Crops for Community program. John Christie was a vital part of the Crops for Community program working closely with the All Abilities volunteers in the Horticultural side of the program. His Horticultural knowledge made him an outstanding asset at ECOSS. He left ECOSS in August to pursue work in an indigenous community in the Northern Territory. Two additional staff members are now involved in new programs at ECOSS. Damien Auton is running the UpCycle program and Peter Lorback is redeveloping the Native Nursery to produce plants for the Council's Ribbons of Green initiative. Lastly Baya Litchfield is our highly valued caretaker who keeps the ECOSS site looking its best.

Volunteers

Another vital part of our community is our volunteers. Much of what we do would be impossible without our volunteers. They assist us at events, in the community garden, in the Food Forest, the nursery, the weekly market. There are also some schools now doing community service volunteering at ECOSS. We are particularly grateful to our dedicated 'regulars' – Luke, Peter, Nadine and Jenny - for all the work they do! We

have been fortunate towards the end of the year to gain the marketing skills of Alexandra Barton-Johnson who has assisted with the marketing of events as well as working on our website.

Co-locating Groups

Another important part of our ECOSS community is our group of tenants or co-locators. They all have similar values and environmental priorities as ECOSS and they contribute to the activities at ECOSS both directly and indirectly. We hope to welcome more tenants in the near future. We also have several partnering organisations which either contribute to our programs, use our facilities or participate in our events. These include Yarra Ranges Council, Warburton Environment, Upper Yarra Landcare, Permaculture Yarra Valley, Koha Community Café, Oonah Tuckerbag Program, The Dreaming Space Circus, Earth Systems, Kofi Kunkpa African Drumming, Yarra Valley Bee Group, Warburton Adventures, Pop Up Garlic and Beans and Bananas Food Co-op.

Local Engagement

Of course a big part of our ECOSS community is the local people and the local school students who support our markets, programs or events. Increasingly we are attracting people and schools from further afield which is very satisfying. They are a vital, committed and growing group. We often hear statements from attendees about how they value the special and unique activities and events at ECOSS. In fact one YRC Councillor was heard to say, "there is nowhere else in this LGA doing what ECOSS does". We intend to continue offering such programs and events into the future and we hope 'our community' will continue to grow.

Joe Butler
Secretary



ECOSS Twilight Market
(Photo Credit: Five Tree Lane Photography - Christine Bauer)

FESTIVALS, MARKETS & EVENTS

By Leanne Hall

What a year 2022 was, I am just stopping to catch a breath after 50 markets, 10 festive Markets and Festivals and additional music performances. It was a very BIG year for live music at ECOSS!

Throughout 2022 we managed to continue running The ECOSS Valley Market on a weekly basis. Thank you to our dedicated stall holders and community for continuing to support the Market.

We were very lucky to receive funding from the Vic Government JAM (Just Add Music) Program which enabled us to host monthly live music events in conjunction with The ECOSS Valley Market. We then received additional funding from Vic Health which enabled us to offer Taste of Culture. This wonderful program gave kids an insight into different Cultures, offering different Cultural food demonstrations and tastings as well as a kids performance each month.

Unfortunately it wasn't the greatest year for weather but we were lucky to be able to move our Festive Markets indoors and under cover without too much disturbance.

We kicked off the Year with Ecotopia Earth Festival in March with Ganga Giri headlining! This was part of Permaculture Week. We then hosted the Regenerative Farming Seminar the following day offering a day of informative talks.

April was Nature Play Week - with The Funky Monkeys performing for us on the Village Green!



The Funky Monkeys

In May we had The Indian themed Festive Market with a beautiful evening of classical Indian Music with Sarita McHarg and Vinod Prisanna followed by the Regenerate Australia Film Preview.

June was the Ngulu Festival and the official opening of the Creation Story Mural and Soundscape. It was a beautiful evening with a Call to Country from Chenile Chandler, Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony followed

by a performance with Pirritu. We then danced into the evening with Ganga Giri band who put on a great show with special surprise guest Afro Moses jumping on stage!

Thank you to Nikki Brown for her Artwork, Aunty Kim Wandin for her direction on the Mural and sharing the Creation Story with us, Ryan Tews for recording and co-creating the Sound Scape with Aunty Kim.

RMIT Industrial Design Students for Creating the Soundscape box and technical support.



The Creation Story Mural Team

June was a busy month with a very special performance from world renowned Tibetan artist- Tenzin Choegyal. This was a beautiful intimate evening that took all who attended on a journey and was accompanied by Tibetan food!

July was our Bush Dance Festive Market with Woody's World and Bush Wahzee!

August was our Youth Showcase and our first Taste of Culture from Italy.

We had a full line up of young artists with Jayda Jean and her band headlining. They all put on a great show.



Youth Showcase with Jayda Jean

FESTIVALS, MARKETS & EVENTS

September we hosted our first of what is to be an Annual event - Rhythms of The World. It took everyone on a musical journey around the world with a combination of live performances and workshops.

We began the afternoon with an Indian themed Taste of Culture bringing many flavours and colours of India for all to enjoy!

We had music from West Africa with an upbeat performance from Kofi Kunkpe and Yarra Valley Drummers! Followed by a Brazilian percussion workshop,

India Classical music with Sarita McHarg and guests, and performance from The Lamparina Trio from Brazil.



Brazilian Percussion Workshop

In October we hosted The Tall Trees Festival with Warburton Environment. This was a great night and was well attended despite the torrential rain with Nicky Bomba headlining!

Unfortunately we had to cancel our October Festive Market which was an African theme due to the storms, Warburton Hwy closure and power outage.

After missing out on Ngulu Festival for the previous 2 years due to Covid we decided to squeeze two in one year. November we had our second Ngulu Festival which was also Bunjil's Nest Opening created by Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Kim Wandin. I would like to take a moment to thank Aunty Kim for this beautiful creation that now lives at ECOSS for all to see.

Ngulu number 2 had a great line up with Carissa Nyalu, Madi Colville-Walker, Ganga Giri running a kids workshop as part of-Taste of Culture and wonderful storytelling from Fred Leone.

We were grateful to be able to hold this event outside by the mural.



Madi Colville-Walker and Bunjil's Nest

December brought the Christmas buzz with The Christmas Twilight Market!

We had Mexican Taste of Culture with Fernando and performances from Alejandro, Dr Jazz and Szara Fox and The Midnight Secrets. We had approx. 40 stalls attend and was a great way to cap off the year of events at ECOSS and bring the community together. The success of our events is always evident in the smiling faces on all who attend.



Alejandro - Mexican Music Man

Photo Credit: Five Tree Lane Photography - Christine Bauer

Other events hosted at ECOSS included- Sean Kirk, Poetry in the dome, open mic and a Wedding, I also attended the Premiers Sustainability Award on behalf of ECOSS.

The Community PA has had lots of use with many different groups and organisations hiring it for events. The Community PA is a valuable resource for the Upper Yarra Community.

Thank you to Oliver DeVarga, our dedicated sound guy for providing professional sound, always being reliable and assisting with the management and upkeep of the PA. s

ECOSS EVENTS

THE VALLEY MARKET



ECOSS
Every Friday
3.30 pm - 6 pm
Yarra Valley ECOS
711 Old Warburton Rd
Wesburn

Warburton
First Sunday of the Month
11am - 3pm
Behind The Arts Centre
along the Yarra River
Warburton

www.valleymarket.com.au

Proudly Sponsored by



Yarra Valley ECOS & The Valley Market presents

ecotopia

Celebrating Sustainable Living, Regenerative Farming and Farmaculture

Friday 18th Nov. 2022 3.30pm - 6pm
Regenerative Farming Seminar
Saturday 19th Nov. 9am - 12pm 10am - 3pm

Featuring
Main stage: **Welcome to Country**
and **Monty**
Guests: **Kim Wandin**
on **Indigenous Food**
and **Dr. Kim Wandin**
on **Indigenous Food**

At the Market
The **Indigenous Food**
and **Dr. Kim Wandin**
on **Indigenous Food**

Presented by



NGULU
FESTIVE MARKET
FRI. 17TH JUNE 2022
WURUNDJERI CREATION STORY
MURAL & SOUNDScape OPENING
with Aunty Kim Wandin, Artist Nikki Browne,
Ryan Tews & RMIT Industrial Design Students
WELCOME TO COUNTRY & SMOKING CEREMONY
with local Elders & Nikki Modgwick as MC

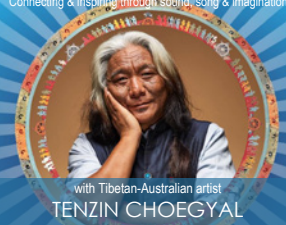
CHENILE CHANDLER
GANGA GIRI
PIRRITU

From 3.30pm - \$10/\$15 Yarra Valley ECOS
711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn
Fri: <https://events.bunil.com.au/ngulu-festival-market>

This Event is proudly funded by



BE THE MOUNTAIN
Connecting & Inspiring through sound, song & imagination



with Tibetan-Australian artist
TENZIN CHOEGYAL

Yarra Valley ECOS
Friday 24 June 7.00pm

PRE-BOOK: \$30 - Concession \$25
www.beyondbooking.com/8222
or ecotopastalls@ecos.org.au

AT THE DOOR: \$35 - Concession \$30

This project is supported by the Australian Government through
Regional Arts Australia, administered by Regional Arts Victoria
Australia Council for the Arts, its arts facilities and initiatives
Australian Council for the Arts

DRUMMING WITH KOFI
JOIN YARRA VALLEY DRUMMERS
@ YARRA VALLEY ECOS




Photo credit: Jo Armstrong

TERM 3 MONDAYS
5.30PM BEGINNERS
6.30PM INTERMEDIATE
JULY, 11TH-SEPT 12TH
COST: \$25 OR \$200 TERM
711 OLD WARBURTON RD
WESBURN

BOOKINGS: 0429 057 074
WESTAFRICANDRUMMING.COM.AU

Yarra Valley ECOS presents

The Festive Market

3rd Friday of the month
3.30pm onwards

- JULY 15 -
Mid Winter Bushdance
(with Bushdance and Woody)

Entry donations encouraged \$10/\$15 single or \$22 Family
711 Old Warburton Road, Wesburn, Victoria, 3799
More info www.valleymarket.com.au

FOOD STALLS PRODUCE ARTS CRAFT WINE



ECOSS PRESENTS
HILARIOUS HARVEST FOR KIDS



ECOSS FESTIVE MARKET
ITALIAN COOKING DEMO
WITH FRANCESCA RONALDS
AND CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE FROM
CHRIS MORANT
Friday 19th August
3.30pm till 8pm
Demo and Children's performance 4pm to 5pm: FREE
Followed by Female Youth Showcase in the Coop
Yarra Valley ECOS: 711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn

Sponsored by



ECOSS FESTIVE MARKET
AUGUST 19TH

CELEBRATING LOCAL FEMALE FRONTED YOUTH MUSIC
following the weekly ECOS market
Tix: \$5 youth | \$10/15 Adult | \$25 Family




ECOSS PRESENTS
RHYTHMS OF THE WORLD
BRINGING THE WORLD TO THE YARRA VALLEY



ECOSS FESTIVE MARKET
RHYTHMS FROM AFRICA BRAZIL INDIA
APPIAH ANNAN - KOFI KUNKPE & THE YARRA VALLEY DRUMMERS
MARACATU BAQUE VOADOR (BRAZILIAN PERCUSSION WISHP) & LAMPARINA TRIO

A TASTE OF CULTURE KIDS PROGRAM WITH
KIDS INDIAN COOKING DEMO, STORY & PERFORMANCE

Friday 16th September - 3.30pm till late
815 Family, 815 Adult, 815 Conc. 815 Child
Yarra Valley ECOS: 711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn
Tix: <https://events.bunil.com.au/rhythms-of-the-world>

Sponsored by



TICKETS ON SALE SOON

Yarra Valley ECOS & Warburton presents

TALL TREES FESTIVAL

LIVE EVENT FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER, 4-10 PM

MUSICIANS, ARTISTS, LEADERS, SCIENTISTS, SPEAKERS, DEFENDERS UNITE

WE ARE OUR BEST FUTURE TO THE FUTURE

711 Old Warburton Rd, Wesburn VIC 3799

LIVE EVENT

Yarra Valley ECOS presents

Festive Markets
A Taste of Culture
Live Music - Kids Cultural Cooking Demos
Stalls: Art - Craft - Produce - Food

African Twilight Market
Friday 28th October

NGULU
INDIGENOUS FESTIVAL
FRIDAY 18TH NOVEMBER

Christmas Twilight Market
MEXICAN THEME
FRIDAY 16TH DECEMBER

3.30pm to 9pm
Yarra Valley ECOS: 711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn
www.ecos.org.au

These Events are proudly funded by



ECOSS Festive Market & A Taste of Culture presents:

African Twilight Market
Friday 28th October - 3.30pm to 9pm

AFRO MOSES & BAND

Kunkpe & Yarra Valley Drummers

A Taste of Culture
African Cooking demo & Drum workshop

Stalls: Art - Craft - Produce - Food
Yarra Valley ECOS: 711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn
WWW.ECOS.ORG.AU

This Event is proudly funded by



ECOSS FESTIVE MARKET & A TASTE OF CULTURE PRESENTS:

NGULU FESTIVAL
FRI. 18TH NOV. 2022
BUNJIL'S NEST OPENING

WELCOME TO COUNTRY WITH AUNTY KIM WANDIN
KIDS INDIGENOUS COOKING DEMO WITH CHRIS HUME
& WORKSHOP WITH GANGA GIRI

Ceryssa Nyulu Fred Leone Madi Colville-Walker

From 3.30pm - \$10/\$15 Yarra Valley ECOS
711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn
Fri: <https://events.bunil.com.au/ngulu-festival-market>

This Event is proudly funded by



ECOSS Festive Market & A Taste of Culture presents:

Christmas Twilight Market
Friday 16th December - 3.30pm to 9pm

LIVE MUSIC

Loads of stalls
Art - Craft - Produce - Food

A Taste of Culture
MEXICAN THEME
KIDS COOKING DEMO & MEXICAN MUSIC MAN

Stalls: Art - Craft - Produce - Food
Yarra Valley ECOS: 711 Old Warburton Rd Wesburn
WWW.ECOS.ORG.AU

This Event is proudly funded by



KEY PROGRAMS

The number of key programs at ECOSS have increased again this year reaching more people both in the local community and beyond. The variety of initiatives have attracted diverse audiences via events, workshops, schools projects and celebrations.

Practical Earth Education Programs 2022 - Kylie Barnes

The ECOSS Practical Earth Education Program continued to grow in 2022 with over 25 school and community groups engaging in the education program either as workshops, excursions or incursions.

We were delighted to host our closest neighbouring school, Wesburn Primary for a whole school excursion where they learnt about Bees and Honey, had a school picnic on the village green and also helped to build the new Upcycles space at ECOSS. They worked hard mixing the earth render to coat the recycled bottles (which had been filled with soft plastics diverted from landfill), to help insulate the new walls. The school community has also joined in collecting the 'recycled bottle eco bricks' for donation towards this project. They have saved many soft plastics from heading off to landfill.

We also welcomed the Maroondah Bushwalking group who visited ECOSS and had a tour and learnt about the Great Forests National Park. Cire Community school also bought some middle school classes for an ECOSS discovery Tour. We also had homeschool groups using the firepit space regularly.

We ran a number of Indigenous Workshops with Bidjara Artist Nikki Browne and Ganga Giri, Didgeridoo Australia.

Hoddles Creek Primary visited a number of times and participated in the Sustainable Gardening sessions and Indigenous workshop as well as Hands on Clay and Farming. Wandin Yallock Primary School also visited for a Tour and some Upcycling Nature Art.

Yarra Ranges Council funded some school holiday programs for the community including Hands on Clay workshops which completely were booked out and well loved.

ECOSS also hosted many Upcycles bicycle workshops and programs as part of the new Upcycles program. These were enthusiastically attended by the community with people coming from far and wide. ECOSS also partnered with Box Hill Institute to run some 8 week Bike Maintenance Courses.

ECOSS was part of Nature Play week, hosting some activities for children to enjoy at the Autumn Festive market where children loved collecting from nature and creating leaf drawings.

Edmund Rice Camp Victoria bought students of all ages for some Nature Art Upcycling Sessions as part of some school holidays programs. We also hosted numerous kindergarten classes, some VCE Outdoor Education and Environmental Science students and Warburton Adventure Company teachers.

The Melbourne Adventure Hub brought groups of Year 9 students from some schools from the city as part of their camp program. The students participated in a discovery tour, sustainable earth building project as well as learning about Melbourne's water catchments in Tall Trees.

ECOSS also hosted a film Screening of Regenerating Australia which was well attended by the community and very inspiring.

On July 31st ECOSS hosted a National Tree Day planting event together with Mt Toolebewong Landcare with plants supplied by Ribbons of Green. The day had over 30 volunteers and they planted over 300 plants around the site.

ECOSS had an information stall at the Learning for Sustainability conference run by the Eastern Alliance for Sustainable Learning. This was a great day and a wonderful opportunity to network with other sustainability educators.

The Butterfly Garden at St Joseph's Primary school in Yarra Junction, supported in partnership with the Yarra Ranges Council, was completed. It was lovely to see the children planting and preparing the space they co-designed and created in collaboration with YRC, and ECOSS facilitators Kylie and Jane.



Sustainable Building - making earth render

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Clay Play with Wesburn Primary

ECOSS also partnered with CAWRS, Community Alliance for Waste Reduction and Sustainability. This network of local environment organisations has been actively reducing waste to landfill, hosting workshops and networking widely. ECOSS has partnered with them to build a community compost hub in the ECOSS community garden as well as facilitating some educational workshops including Upcycling bicycle workshops in Upcycles and composting.

Internship - Chloe Bradsworth

We were very fortunate to have Chloe Bradsworth undertake her internship for her Masters of Environmental Science at Monash. Chloe undertook the massive task of creating a Management Plan for our new project called Pollination Place.

This required Chloe to plan for plumbing, planting spaces for multiple stakeholders, deer fencing, costings, MOU's and more. We thank Chloe for this invaluable work.



Hands in the mud

We were grateful that the Yarra Ranges Council extended their grant to support the education program as it was unable to run to its full potential during the pandemic. This meant that the remainder of the funds could be used in 2022 to offer a discount to school and community group excursions and education programs.

We continued to collect bottle lids that would otherwise end up in landfill to donate to our partner, Re-think Recycling Co-op, to repurpose into innovative recycled plastic products. We have established a bottle lid collection point at ECOSS for the community to contribute to creating more recycling opportunities and reducing problem waste in landfill. The community has collected over 3,000 lids so far, which have been diverted from landfill.



Tree planting

KEY PROGRAMS CONTINUED

Crops for Community- Mel Daymond

Throughout 2022 Crops for Community (CFC) program has made significant progress in accomplishing its stated goals.

The program continued to donate produce grown by volunteers in the community garden to Oonah Tucker bag and Koha cafe with approximately 50 boxes to each organisation. The community garden has undergone an expansion with the addition of new fencing, which has created an extra third of garden space. And the volunteers have made a number of new garden beds.

We have continued to receive food scraps from Woori Yallock Vipassana centre and in collaboration with CAWRS, we have repositioned our compost beds and begun rebuilding them in a more accessible place to help process the compost.

Our core group of Crops for Community volunteers has grown to around 35 regular volunteers and their support workers. Our 2022 participants survey feedback highlights that our volunteers and organisations - Melba Support Services and Interchange Outer East - value the advantages of being part of an inclusive, supportive and dynamic environment that supports local food relief, the opportunities for skill building and reaching wellbeing goals.

Throughout 2022 Domaine Chandon, along with local organic farms Silvertine and Timbarra have supported CFC by donating produce to the Oonah Tucker bag program on our behalf, enhancing CFC's distribution.

We established a Facebook group specifically for volunteers and their families where we share photos and stay up-to-date on the progress of the garden and site happenings.



Crops for Community Veggie Box



Planting in the ECOSS Community Garden

The social enterprise side of the program, ECOSS retail nursery, has been developing further under the guidance of Nursery manager, Peter Lorback. The honesty box system works well, and the nursery benefits from the passing traffic of the EcoSS Friday night market. Our objective to increase the financial independence of the crops program and continue to build on nursery sales with the aim of minimising the program's reliance on grants is still a work in progress. We have formed a working relationship with Upper Yarra Landcare volunteers who now grow tubestock on site for their reveg projects with some of that tubestock being donated back to the retail nursery.

The social impact aspect of Crops has been highly successful yet again this year. We will continue to concentrate on further improvements, enhancing our yield in the garden and working to ensure the program's financial sustainability, as we move forward.

I would also like to acknowledge our Crops for Community grant providers: Yarra Ranges Council, FRRR, ANZ, NAB. And a big thanks to all our volunteers for their hard work and dedication.



Harvesting raspberries in the ECOSS Community Garden

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

Our commitment to sustainability, demonstrating and showcasing innovation in this area, has continued.

Each year we are pleased to increase our educative signage and site projects. They continue to make ECOSS a great place to visit and learn about the environment. Not only does ECOSS offer information but our tenants and user groups also contribute knowledge. For example:

- Yarra Valley Bee Group Meetings monthly in the Coop
- ECOSS manages Wash Against Waste and lends it to other groups such as Healesville Music Festival. Usage of Wash Against Waste has decreased this year due to Covid issues.
- We still offer the Smoothycycle hire, which offers fundraising opportunities to other groups.
- We partnered with Community Alliance Waste Reduction and Sustainability to become one of 8 composting hubs in the Outer Eastern Region. This initiative was funded by Sustainability Victoria.
- Regenerative Agriculture Day, sponsored by Melbourne Water as part of Permaculture Week with Permaculture Yarra Valley. Inspiring speakers and great day
- We collected 3055 drink bottle lids for Rethink Recycling.
- We collected Plastic Bottles full of Soft Plastics. Thanks to Wesburn Primary School for helping us put them in the walls of Upcycles, this co-incided with Red Cycle ceasing to collect Soft Plastics. We were proud to model an alternative usage for them whilst insulating our building.
- A huge Sustainability project we opened was UpCycles - see report.
- We secured funding to finally undertake the excavations for the Food Forest to begin.
- Food Donations- we donated 50 boxes of ECOSS produce to Oonah Tuckerbag Program and 40 boxes to Koha Community Cafe.
- We boosted our Native Nursery Sales including seed collecting onsite. We employed Peter Lorback to help alongside Upper Yarra Landcare.
- We hosted a National Tree Day event in partnership with Upper Yarra Landcare, Yarra Ranges Council and Mt Toolebewong Landcare. Planting all around ECOSS site.
- Beans and Bananas Food Coop continued to pack and distribute their boxes fortnightly at ECOSS.
- We hosted a viewing of Damon Gameo's Regenerate Australia Film.
- Bunjils Nest installation, - RMIT Students with Aunty Kim
- Warburton Environment Tall Trees Festival



Permaculture Yarra Valley Working Bee

Upcycles

This year we were thrilled to finalise the building of the UpCycles workshop and we initiated the procurement process. We are incredibly grateful for all the volunteers that helped to build the workshop weekly. We are also grateful for the businesses that supported the building including Laycon Concrete, JigSaw Jumps, Bicycle Parts Wholesale and of course Sustainability Victoria.

Wesburn Primary school students helped to collect plastic bottles full of soft plastics and placed them into a wall for insulation. The rest of the insulation was salvaged polystyrene from a building site.



Recycled wall insulation

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY CONTINUED

We advertised for the UpCycles Coordinator position and were very happy to welcome Damian Auton into the role. Damian came with a wealth of experience having previously owned bike cafes and having taught for years. Damian's skills and connections created a synergy with Box Hill Institute, in which we were able to facilitate the 'Introduction to Bike Maintenance' course in UpCycles.

Damian undertook the installation and procurement of tools for UpCycles making it a functional and comfortable space to work in. The membership process is working with regular new members and sales and donations of bikes into the community.

Damian's skill set extended into the introduction of a coffee machine and DJ space. We really appreciate the extra mile that Damian has taken to make this space warm and welcoming.



Damian Auton in the UpCycles Workshop

Food Forest Report

The Food Forest originated as a project arising from a Certificate course in Permaculture Design that was taught at ECOSS by Graeme George in 2019. The course involved a final assessment which required students to design a Food Forest on the ECOSS site consisting entirely of edible plants. The students came up with some amazing designs which were delivered to the ECOSS Committee of Management as possible future ECOSS projects. Permaculture Yarra Valley and several design students indicated that they would partner with ECOSS to create a Food Forest; however before the project got underway COVID intervened and the project was put on hold.

Over the next 2 years the Food Forest remained as just a possible idea but some planning was still happening behind the scenes. In 2022 there was enough impetus to take the first real steps.



Site preparation for the Food Forest

Unfortunately many of the original Permaculture students had moved on so a new group of participants was needed. Step one was to build a deer and rabbit fence around the designated site which volunteers from ECOSS and Permaculture Yarra Valley achieved in early 2022. Then Graeme George adapted the designs of his former students and a working plan was formulated. Graeme George, Karina Doughty, Joe Butler, Peter Veeken and others then organised a series of working bees and some planting of edible plants was done in the Winter and Spring of that year. Unfortunately the very dry 2022 summer caused a lot of the early plantings to die as a watering system had not been established. In the future however, with the help of students from the Alpine School and volunteers from the public there will be significant working bees and plantings with the aim of developing the Food Forest to the point where it is entirely covered with edible plants in the next 4 – 5 years. A new resident in the area with huge Permaculture experience, Leafy, has taken on moving the Food Forest into the next stage and there are plans to continue improving the soil, maintaining the current plantings and putting in more edible plants at regular working bees.



Beginning planting for the Food Forest

A NOTE FROM OUR CO-LOCATORS

Silvertine Farm

At Silvertine Farm things are growing well. We are forever finding new ways to grow better veggies, ways to extend our season and of course make things easier with each season hopefully. We are often getting help from many people making the journey more enjoyable and rewarding. One aim we have now is to provide vegetables for a longer period at the Valley market. This has been a great way to sell to our local community. Thankyou.

Tobias, Josh and Clancy.

Vines at ECOSS

The Roohoodler grapevines at ECOSS have settled in well and even produced a small crop this year. The wine should be ready for drinking by August. There are still plenty of rooted cuttings for those who would like to plant this unique, disease resistant variety in their own backyards...just talk to Peter and Janet at any Friday Markets. The vines are to be extended into the new project, Pollination Place, where the new Community Viticulture group is establishing more vines. variety in their own backyards... just talk to Peter and Janet at any Friday Markets.

Melganics

The Melganics store had a very successful 2022 year and in July we celebrated our 2nd birthday since the business started with a handful of fruit & veg boxes on a few trestle tables back in July 2020. The community has continued to support the little shop and The Valley Market ECOSS with great enthusiasm and consistent commitment. The heavy rains and long periods of flooding throughout much of 2022 provided some significant challenges as the shop & market are set up partly outdoors and we battled some intense flash flooding and sandbagging at times to protect the store and make it still accessible for customers but with the support of ECOSS it was managed well in the end. Overall there is much to celebrate and Melganics is continuing to build as a permanent business at ECOSS and looks forward to many more community birthday parties!



Melganics Shop

Permaculture Yarra Valley

The long standing association between Permaculture Yarra Valley and ECOSS has continued over the last 12 months with events at ECOSS. This year Permaculture Week in the Yarra Valley was held to coincide with the Ecotopia festival.

PYV is also partnering with ECOSS to establish the Food Forest on site with significant earthworks, paths and fencing being constructed to date. A number of workshops have been held and planting has commenced. This is a long term project that will bring the food forest from concept to reality.

PYV sees ECOSS as a community that promotes the permaculture way of life in the Yarra Valley and plans to continue our association into the foreseeable future.

Community Pottery Studio

2022 was a busy year for the Pottery Studio at ECOSS.

We were focussing on reinvigorating classes after two years of lockdowns, bringing the therapeutic modality of clay work to our community again.

Lucy and Phoebe spent many weeks working on several major grant applications in June, July and August. The Committee are delighted to announce that Yarra Valley Community Pottery Studio was the recipient of a Community Recovery Grant from Yarra Ranges Council via the Upper Yarra Community Recovery Committee (to the value of approximately \$9000) and a VicHealth JUMPStart! Grant (to the value of \$10,000), and a generous \$2000 donation from the local Yarra Junction OpShop. These generous funds made the following projects able to happen in 2023:

- ReEarth & Re-Kindle community clay project - An arts based wellbeing program to be delivered in 2023;
- Renovations - a major revamp to our old chicken shed with the installation of insulation and a ceiling in 2023 to make it into a warm and welcoming hub for all community members to come and access clay and ceramics workshops;
- New Kiln - The purchase of a high quality second hand kiln which will make the delivery of pottery services to our community more streamlined and sustainable.

The end of the year sadly saw our head Pottery Teacher and volunteer Studio Manager Lucy Pierce step down from her position. This decision made the Committee re-evaluate the spread of the load of responsibility in managing and delivering our small NFP organisation and has excitingly given us the opportunity to all take more leadership and responsibility so as to reduce burnout in our members and volunteers.

An exciting new frontier awaits us in the year ahead as we prepare to deliver our projects and revamp our old building, ready to welcome the community back to being in their body, hands in the clay by mid-year 2023.

Blessings,

The Yarra Valley Community Pottery Studio Committee

CO-LOCATORS CONTINUED

Tonantzin Chocolate

Tonantzin Chocolate has continued to grow. Making tacos for the weekly market every Friday, as well as the traditional hot cacao and handmade chocolates. This has become a popular spot to hang out during the market with Mexican tunes and great company.

Fernando has also continued sharing culture through Sweat lodges and Cacao ceremonies over the year. A very special addition to the Tonantzin family arrived this year - Tlaso Tonalí

The Dreaming Space

The Dreaming Space offers a space for the community to step into their potential through creativity. We hold classes for circus, dance, aerial acrobatics and magic. We also offer space for Women's groups, Poetry exploration nights, Chanting and tai chi. We assist at Festivals with space for library shows and offer Dreaming Space artists, performances and free play.



The Dreaming Space (Photo Credit: Angela Rivas)

Kofi Kunkpe African Drumming Class

Kofi Kunkpe is running weekly African drumming classes at ECOSS on a Monday evening. This evolved after Kofi and The Yarra Valley Drummers performed at Ecotopia. The class is expanding with new beginners joining to create more performance opportunities at local community events. They are open to more participants joining them.

Upper Yarra Landcare

Upper Yarra Landcare has reinvigorated this year and they have stepped in to the Native Nursery as a group. They continue the wonderful work in revegetation in the Upper Yarra Valley. We intend to grow our connection in 2023 in the Native Nursery and supply the plants for future revegetation.

Bushwood Creations

Shlomit Moria, local chainsaw artist, loves creating in her space at ECOSS and feels so grateful to be able to come into such a beautiful place everyday and be part of the lovely community. She held an open studio in December which was a wonderful experience and opportunity to share her work with the community. She has been busy working on commissions for various councils and other projects.

Beans and Bananas

The co-op operates fortnightly onsite- providing community members the opportunity to get involved in packing wholesale (onsite, local and otherwise) organic, food boxes and receiving affordable produce in return.

Warburton Environment

Thank you ECOSS for your continued support. It is wonderful to work alongside such staunch folk with strong community values. WE is very grateful to be able to use the main building for all our meetings. A few highlights for us this year were:

On the first Sunday of the month in Warburton township 11am-3pm the Valley Market is held. We feel grateful to Leanne for organising this and also to Chris and Greg who monthly setup the WE stall.

The Tall Trees Festival 2022 on the 21 October 2022 at ECOSS was a wild one. Our first festival in person was a lot of fun and we were very fortunate to have The Coop as our wet weather option (we needed it). The wonderful performers included Loren Kate, our very own Sooty Owls, Harmony Byrne, Climate Choirs United, Kee'ahn and Nicky Bomba who entertained us and Janet Rice inspired us to make a difference at the 2022 State election!

We had a great win this year, winning a Supreme Court Case against VicForests. On 25 October 2022, HH Justice Garde found in favour of Warburton Environment Inc and increased protection for the endangered Tree Geebung, thus setting a precedent for endangered flora species in Victoria. Thank you everyone, and let's see what we can achieve together this coming year!

Nic Fox - WE president 2022

WE acknowledge that the work WE do occurs on the unceded, stolen land of the Wurundjeri. Our deepest respect extends to all First Nations Elders, past & present and our gratitude for the care and management of Country for tens of thousands of years.

Yarra Valley Bee Group

The popular local group has continued to meet on a monthly basis. They also run educational sessions and attend ECOSS events, offering important information about bees.

Unfortunately this year they had to remove the hives from ECOSS; however, they still remain valuable partners of the ECOSS site and community.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Annual Financial Report for the year ending 31st December 2022

The Treasurer and Committee of Management members submit the financial report of Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc. for the financial year ended 31 December 2022.

This financial year we were able to build upon various community programs started in the previous year. Both Crops for Community and UpCycles were funded till the end of 2022 by significant grant funding from a few philanthropic organisations, along with the Victorian State Government, and our local Yarra Ranges Council. Both of these initiatives have been extremely successful in allowing us to connect with our local community. We also received generous funding from both Creative Victoria and Vic Health, to provide monthly music and cultural activities at our markets across much of 2022, and continuing into 2023. In addition, we secured funding from Yarra Ranges Council for another festival event - Rhythms of the World, which will take place in the latter half of 2023.

With COVID support funding ceasing in 2021, 2022 marked the opportunity to emerge from the effects of lock down, and some financial supports received during the pandemic were utilised to support ECOSS in re-building and reconnecting with our community.

While our financial outcome for the 2022 year amounted to a loss of -\$47K, it's important to take into account several factors when interpreting this result. The previous two financial years (2019-20 & 2021) reported a combined net profit of just under \$127K. Being a not for profit, profits are not distributed to members or shareholders, they are carried forward to be invested and expended in future financial periods. 2022 marked a year of investing back into our organisation, but also saw us address some significant cost increases which will need to be considered in our future operational budgets.

We are extremely grateful for the generous support from Yarra Ranges Council and the Victorian State government. This support has meant that Yarra Valley ECOSS can continue with various projects, continue to expand our activities, and to support our community.

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year have not altered.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The profit (loss) for 2022: (\$-47,551). In 2021: \$84,144.

Income from Grants, Partnerships, Sponsorships & Donations

In the 12-month period ending 31st December 2022, Yarra Valley ECOSS were successful in securing \$203,130 in grants and \$18,187 in donations and sponsorships from various sources. We also continue to receive considerable ongoing support from our partner organisations, especially Yarra Ranges Council. They have again been extremely generous in providing us with numerous grants including the renewal of the annual Connected & Healthy Communities partnership agreement funding until 2023 and the annual Creative Communities partnership agreement for our Ecotopia Festival until 2023. We also received funding from Council to again hold the Ngulu Festival that honours our First Nations people. We ran two events, as the 2021 Ngulu festival had been cancelled due the CoVid-19 pandemic, one in June which celebrated the opening of the Dreamtime Story Soundscape. A further event was held in November which celebrated the opening of the Bunjil's Nest project. Yarra Ranges Council also funded a number of smaller grants to provide various music and children's activities at our weekly market.

We were fortunate to receive two large grants, both from the State Government. The first was a Creative Victoria, Just Add Music (JAM) grant to present music at our monthly market. The second was a Vic Health Jump Start grant to present a series of "Taste of Culture" events that focused on young people and was a blend of a particular type of food demonstration with accompanying music.

Our Crops for Community program received a Community grant from Yarra Ranges Council, which will allow the program to continue to the middle of 2023.

We were fortunate to receive a grant from Sustainability Victoria through the Recycling Victoria Communities program to set up a ReCycle Repair Hub refurbishment and maintenance program for used and discarded bicycles, which we have branded as UpCycles. It paid for the set up of the space with shelving, various tools and parts needed to set up a workshop, as well as to employ someone in a part time position to set up the workshop, run it on a regular basis and provide bicycle education workshops.

We applied for many grants in 2022, although funding opportunities were harder to source, and even harder to receive approval for. We were successful in obtaining a small handful of the applications of the many that we submitted. Thank you to the hard work and dedication of all our staff in finding funding opportunities and in writing these grants.

TREASURER'S REPORT CONTINUED

Highlights:

- Jan 2022: Vic Health – Crops for Community (\$10,000)
- Mar 2022: Creative Victoria – Just Add Music (JAM) [for monthly music at the market] (\$39,958)
- Mar 2022: Highways & Byways – Small Grants Program [for the Food Forest] (\$3,000)
- Apr 2022: Melbourne Water – Sponsorship – Regenerative Agriculture Workshop (\$1,800)
- Jun 2022: Vic Health – Jump Start Grant [for monthly Taste of Culture food & music] (\$33,720)
- Sep 2022: Yarra Ranges Council – Connected & Healthy Communities Partnership agreement funding 2022-23 (\$15,000)
- Sep 2022: Yarra Ranges Council – Festival & Events Partnership funding 2022-2023 Ecotopia (\$12,000)
- Nov 2022: Yarra Ranges Council – Arts & Heritage funding [for Rhythms of the World 2023] (\$10,000)
- Nov 2022: Yarra Ranges Council – Grants for Community [for Crops for Community] (\$10,000)

Rental income

Silvertine Farm, Yarra Valley Community Pottery Studio, Shlomit Moria from Bushwood Creations, Fernando Ramirez from Tonantzin Chocolate House & Café, Melganics, an organic fruit & vegetable supplier and Tiny House 2 Go, continued as co-locators. In 2022, we welcomed The Dreaming Space, who run circus and children's activities, as well some short term site users.

Regular users of our site were the Yarra Valley Bee Group, Permaculture Yarra Valley, Beans & Bananas Co-Op, Kofi Kunpke African Drumming and Tipi Ceremony. Our bookings for The Coop, our large multi-purpose space and our Schools program were steady after having been restricted by the Covid-19 pandemic in the previous two years.

Our rental and school program activities in 2022 brought in a combined income \$41,786, on par with the result from the 2021 financial year.

Auspicing

We were able to again auspice the following grants. This helped community organisations to obtain funds to undertake community and sustainability projects and to run various activities and events.

- Aug 2022: Yarra Ranges Council – Quick Grant (\$1,000) for Jayda Clark Album Launch)

Future income

The ongoing financial aim of Yarra Valley ECOSS has always been to become financially sustainable. We aim to generate sufficient income from all our various activities to be able to pay our ongoing wages and operational expenses and undertake further projects and activities for the benefit of our community.

Our focus for the coming financial year will again be to keep increasing our site rental income by attracting new tenants and undertaking innovative programs and activities. We will continue to apply for grants, which together with our rental income will allow us to keep providing opportunities for the community to engage with and be part of Yarra Valley ECOSS.

Thank you again as always, to Catherine Aulich our bookkeeper, who has worked tirelessly and provided invaluable support throughout the year.

Bernie Lobert
Treasurer

Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc.

Profit and Loss January - December 2022

	TOTAL		
	JAN. - DEC. 2022	JAN. - DEC. 2021 (PY)	CHANGE
Income			
Bank Interest Income	564	68	495
Consulting Income	250		250
ECOSS Shop			
Shop - Misc Sales	781	-706	1,487
Shop - Native Plants	862	994	-131
Total ECOSS Shop	1,643	287	1,356
Event Income			
Event - Income	14,164	8,608	5,556
Event - Stallholder Income	5,168	5,797	-628
Total Event Income	19,333	14,405	4,928
Grants / Sponsorships			
81200 Grants - General	12,268	25,155	-12,888
82023 Grant - YV Produce Market (Auspiced)		470	-470
82030 Grants - Crops For Community	67,042	68,058	-1,016
82031 GRANT - Taste Of Culture	6,563		6,563
82033 Grant - Rhythms	1,500		1,500
82034 Grant - JAM	27,844		27,844
82054 Grant - FRRR Bee Happy		3,590	-3,590
82071 Grant - Community PA Auspiced	2,383	6,858	-4,475
82074 Grant - Jayda Holman (Auspice)	1,000		1,000
82200 Sponsorships	10,200	2,800	7,400
82300 Donations	7,987	4,347	3,640
Government Income			
81011 Grant - YRC School Hub Income	3,592	0	3,592
82021 Grant - YRC Ngulu & Dreamtime	16,789	4,175	12,614
82024 Grant - YRC COVID		2,488	-2,488
82035 Grant - Sustainability VIC UpCycles	48,418		48,418
Grant - AU ATO JobKeeper		19,500	-19,500
Grant - VIC Bus Victoria COVID		50,400	-50,400
Grant - YRC Partnerships		45,636	-45,636
Other Grants - Government	15,732		15,732
Total Government Income	84,530	122,199	-37,669
Total Grants / Sponsorships	221,317	233,478	-12,161
Membership Income	100		100
Misc. Income eg. utilities contributions	2,207	4,270	-2,063
Rental Income			
Rental - Community PA	709		709
Rental - Coop	2,286	2,175	112
Rental - Site	32,979	32,375	604
Rental - Smooth Cycle	136		136
Total Rental Income	36,111	34,549	1,561
Schools Income	5,675	7,473	-1,797
Upcycles Bike & Membership Sales	777		777
Total Income	A\$287,977	A\$294,530	A\$ -6,554
GROSS PROFIT	A\$287,977	A\$294,530	A\$ -6,554
Other Income			
Accrued Income	-14,372	14,372	-28,745
Total Other Income	A\$ -14,372	A\$14,372	A\$ -28,745
Expenses			
Amenities eg. milk/tea/toilet paper	1,920	1,420	500
Audit Expenses	550	550	0
Bank Fees	350	130	220
Bank Fees Merchant	115		115
Bookkeeping	15,934	16,044	-110

Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc.

Profit and Loss January - December 2022

	TOTAL		
	JAN. - DEC. 2022	JAN. - DEC. 2021 (PY)	CHANGE
Communications eg phone/internet	1,433	1,260	172
Community Engagement eg. volllie catering / planter boxes	721	683	38
Compliance & Registrations ie. CAV fee / trailer rego		46	-46
Computers/Software	255	177	78
Cost of sales			
less Stock on hand at year end		1,544	-1,544
Total Cost of sales		1,544	-1,544
Depreciation of assets (refer balance sheet)	18,432	2,275	16,157
Employment Expenses			
Annual Leave Expense	-62	513	-575
Other Employer Expenses	1,462	1,209	253
Subcontractors - Misc	218		218
Superannuation	13,246	11,120	2,127
Wage expenses	129,535	117,291	12,244
Total Employment Expenses	144,399	130,133	14,266
Event - Coordination	4,430	0	4,430
Event - General Expenses	7,140	1,848	5,292
Event - Performers	23,915	3,050	20,865
Event - Signage/Marketing	1,976	1,533	443
Grants Expenses			
91011 YRC School Hub Expenses	2,821	757	2,063
92021 Grant - YRC Ngulu & Dreamtime Expenses		5,394	-5,394
92022 Grant YRC Practical Earth Education	2,415	3,887	-1,472
92024 Grant - YRC COVID		2,500	-2,500
92030 Grant - Crops For Community Expenses	3,313	2,870	443
92054 Ausp Bee Happy Expenses		3,608	-3,608
92071 Grant - Community PA Auspiced	1,572	6,858	-5,286
94000 Small Grants/Donations Spent	1,658	1,450	208
Upcycles Expenses	37,309		37,309
Total Grants Expenses	49,088	27,324	21,764
Insurance	2,658	1,882	776
Legal Costs	4,061	2,329	1,732
Marketing eg. signage / printing	2,498	2,958	-460
Miscellaneous	317		317
Office/Stationery Supplies	859	884	-25
Postage	173	128	45
Schools Program Expenses	1,990	2,645	-655
Site - Maintenance & Repairs	16,070	13,105	2,966
Materials	396		396
Total Site - Maintenance & Repairs	16,467	13,105	3,362
Subscriptions/Memberships	311	270	41
Travel Expenses	822		822
UTILITIES			
Electricity	6,823	6,082	740
Electricity solar credits	-74	-621	547
Total Electricity	6,748	5,461	1,287
Gas	360	682	-322
Water	2,879	1,993	885
Total UTILITIES	9,987	8,136	1,851
Volunteer Expenses	4,670	729	3,941
WorkCover Insurance	3,216	1,663	1,553
Workshop Expenses	1,395	600	795
YRC Council Fees	912	1,414	-502
Total Expenses	A\$320,991	A\$224,759	A\$96,232

Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc.

Profit and Loss January - December 2022

	TOTAL		
	JAN. - DEC. 2022	JAN. - DEC. 2021 (PY)	CHANGE
Other Expenses			
Bad Debts	164		164
BAS Roundoff Gain or Loss	1	-1	1
Total Other Expenses	A\$164	A\$ -1	A\$165
NET PROFIT / (LOSS)	A\$ -47,551	A\$84,144	A\$ -131,695

Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc.

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2022

	TOTAL	
	AS OF DEC. 31, 2022	AS OF DEC. 31, 2021 (PY)
Assets		
Current Assets		
Accounts receivable	A\$1,160	A\$3,816
Total Cash On Hand	186,557	237,737
Inventory	1,615	1,615
Total Current Assets	A\$189,331	A\$243,168
Long-term assets		
Leasehold Improvements	90,824	105,197
Nursery Plant/Equip	1,447	1,447
Office Equipment / Furniture	4,218	2,653
Tractor / Farm Equipment	3,149	3,149
Total long-term assets	99,638	112,445
Total Assets	A\$288,969	A\$355,613
Liabilities and shareholder's equity		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	A\$7,306	A\$3,698
ATO Liabilities	5,418	5,352
Payroll Liabilities	7,792	7,402
Total current liabilities	A\$20,516	A\$16,453
Non-current liabilities:		
Grants in advance	109,179	132,335
Total non-current liabilities	A\$109,179	A\$132,335
Shareholders' equity:		
Net Income	-47,551	84,144
Equity	7,685	7,685
Retained Earnings	199,140	114,996
Total shareholders' equity	A\$159,275	A\$206,825
Total liabilities and equity	A\$288,969	A\$355,613

31 May 2023

**AUDITORS REPORT
YARRA VALLEY ECOSS INC**

To the Members

Scope

We have audited the attached special purpose financial reports in respect of the Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc for the year ended 31 December, 2022 consisting of statement of receipts and payments. The Committee is responsible for the information contained therein and have determined that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit on the financial reports in order to express an opinion on them to the members. No opinion is expressed as to whether the basis of accounting is used is appropriate to the needs of the members.

The special purpose financial reports have been prepared for the distribution to the members of the entity for the purpose of fulfilling the Committee's accountability requirements. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial reports to which it relates, to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial reports, and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether in all material respects, the financial reports are presented fairly.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

AUDIT OPINION

In my opinion the financial reports of the Yarra Valley ECOSS Inc presents fairly the receipts and payments of the entity for the year ended 31 December, 2022.

Yours faithfully



TROY SHORTIS
BBUS FIPA
SVS MANAGEMENT GROUP PTY LTD

WITH APPRECIATION TO OUR SPONSORS & PARTNERS



And thanks to The Yarra Valley Community Op Shop, Beans and Bananas and Laycon Concrete

Annual Report Produced by

Leanne Hall

Designed by

Sam Watson