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Launching Destination Conservation Experiences
*A new way to experience Australia and New Zealand's
 natural wonders!*

For travelers who want to make a difference, Conservation Volunteers is offering 5-day and multi-week conservation experiences at stunning locations across Australia and New Zealand.

By joining a Destination Conservation Experience you will help protect and conserve wildlife habitat while exploring a variety of natural attractions in special places.

There are three experiences currently on offer:

- A unique road-trip along the World Heritage listed Great Ocean Road in Victoria, Australia
- Discover the tropical rainforests and ancient wildlife of the Cassowary Coast in Far North Queensland, Australia
- Explore Paparoa National Park in Punakaiki, on New Zealand's wild western coast

Purpose your travel plans and join Conservation Volunteers to protect and tour Australasia's most iconic and wild environments.

Contact us to find out more bookings@cva.org.au



www.conservationvolunteers.org Freecall 1800 032 501 (Australia)
info@conservationvolunteers.org Freecall 0800 567 686 (New Zealand)

Message from the CEO

Like a lot of people, I enjoy summer – but I also know it's a time when we can be brought face to face with some of our greatest environmental challenges, whether that be the continuing drought, bushfires or fish kills.

And as we enter another unseasonably hot autumn, I'm reminded of the on-going impact of a warming climate, the very real threats to unique environments such as the Great Barrier Reef and the multiple species whose very existence is in question.

How refreshing and encouraging it is then to know that so many people want to do something – and that we as an organisation have the opportunity and the capacity to help that happen!

In this newsletter we describe a small sample of our work and, in particular, the efforts of so many ordinary people who have given their time to make a positive difference for the environment.

I hope you are as encouraged as I am in reading it!



Phil Harrison
Chief Executive Officer
Conservation Volunteers Australia



Newsletter goes digital

To further reduce our environmental footprint, this newsletter has now gone digital and will be distributed through our website and e-news platforms.

If you need to update your contact details, get in touch with us at Supporters@cva.org.au

Regional offices now on Facebook

Although we're a national organisation, connecting with our supporters in their local area is a key part of what we do.

To improve our connections with the regions in which we operate we have begun to roll out Facebook pages for our regional offices. These pages are managed by staff in the regions, and are a great way to find out what's happening near you.

Check out the pages linked below, and give them a Like, Share and Follow!



CVA Mackay

fb.com/CVAMackay



CVA Melbourne

fb.com/CVAMelbourne



CVA Geelong

fb.com/CVAGeelong



CVA Adelaide

fb.com/CVAAdelaide



CVA Perth

fb.com/CVAPerth



CV NZ Christchurch

fb.com/ChristchurchCVNZ

And don't forget to Like our main pages:

fb.com/CVAustralia

fb.com/CVNewZealand

Conservation Study Tour, SA

In February the inaugural Conservation Study Tour took place in Adelaide. We hosted 14 Chinese international students on a 5-day ecosystems tour.

Through hands-on conservation activities, the group learned and experienced the importance of various ecosystems found close to human settlement.

The tour is a structured, hands-on learning experience where students can visit biodiversity hot spots and learn about healthy habitats, how all things are connected in ecosystems, and the importance of maintaining a healthy environmental balance.

The program received a 100% recommendation rate from participating students.



Wildlife encounters at Cleland Wildlife Park

Phil Harrison, CEO of Conservation Volunteers says *Environmental education provides important opportunities for students to become engaged in real world issues that transcend classroom walls. Conservation Volunteers is uniquely placed to provide environmental training that complements the practical skills developed on this program. Right now, preparing our children to be good environmental citizens is some of the most important work any of us can do.*

The program is currently available in South Australia and south east Queensland, Australia and the west coast of the South Island, New Zealand.

Contact us today to find out more and register your interest at bookings@cva.org.au

Community Flatback sea turtle Monitoring Report, WA

In November and December 2018 we ran our annual Flatback sea turtle monitoring program at Eco Beach, near Broome in north west Western Australia as part of our [Threatened Species/Wild Futures program](#).

This year saw a new round of eager volunteers collect valuable data on nesting turtles while experiencing once-in-a-lifetime encounters with these unique animals.

Flatback sea turtles (*Natator depressus*) are listed as Vulnerable in Australia and Data Deficient by the IUCN*. Data gathered by volunteers contributes information needed to determine the turtle's conservation status and management needs.



A female Flatback sea turtle comes ashore to nest

The report on the 2018 monitoring season is now available to [download from our website](#).

Volunteers come from around the world to participate in this program, which has been running since 2008. Working with researchers and professional ecologists, conservation actions include nightly patrols tagging turtles, measuring, taking DNA samples, installing nest temperature data loggers and conducting morning surveys of turtle tracks between the water and nesting sites.

The Flatback sea turtle monitoring program will run again from 21st November – 5th December 2019. If you would like to be involved you can register your interest and find out more by contacting our Perth office on (08) 9335 2777 or perth@cva.org.au

*IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature



Coastal Appeal

We'd like to say **thank you** to all our supporters. With you, we are achieving outstanding environmental improvements and engaging thousands of eager volunteers around the country.

Whilst results for our environment and community are priceless, the cost of getting our wonderful volunteers on-ground remains our biggest challenge.

So today we are asking for your donation.

The time for action is now!

CVA has a lean operating model, with the vast majority of our resources embedded in regional communities across Australia - so you can be sure that your donation dollars will be used where they are needed most.

We are currently fundraising to support our work protecting and restoring coastal habitats.

From projects monitoring Flatback sea turtles in WA, to restoring Shorebird habitat in Adelaide and clearing Marine Debris in Mackay - just to name a few - we are engaging volunteers in vital environmental restoration and citizen science actions that are making a real difference to Australia's environmental health now and for the future.

You know that CVA can make a difference as you have been a part of that yourself.

Please support us by donating to our Coastal Appeal today.

You can donate via our website at cva.org.au/donate or call us on **freecall 1800 032 501**.

We know that the real heroes of our work are those ordinary people who volunteer their time and effort to make a difference.

So many of those people tell us that they themselves have benefited from the experience in that they are healthier and more engaged in their community, they have learned new skills and they understand and appreciate so much more about the natural environment.

On behalf of all those environments and all those people who we have helped – **thank you.**

Yours sincerely,

Phil Harrison
Chief Executive Officer
Conservation Volunteers Australia

Wellbeing in Nature in the Northern Rivers, NSW

We all know that spending time outdoors and connecting with our local environment and community can make us feel better. This is the core concept behind Green Gym, a program developed in the UK by The Conservation Volunteer and delivered in Australia by Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA).

CVA has been delivering a Green Gym for Carers program in the Northern Rivers region of NSW since September 2018, expanding this year to a Wellbeing in Nature program, open for anyone to join and feel the benefits of caring for themselves and their local environment. The program is running in three areas in the Northern Rivers: Ballina/Byron Bay, Pottsville and Lismore.

We recently caught up with participants at Flat Rock Beach in Ballina to hear their experiences of the program.

Kylie, who attends the Ballina and Pottsville sessions, joined in 2018 after being referred to the program by her local neighbourhood centre.

It's been a while since I've had something that's my own, or for me, so this has been really good. It's the one thing in the week that I go to and I love conservation, I'm a massive plant nerd.

I haven't thought of doing anything like this before but it's really awesome as it's helping me with a purpose. I find it grounding and I'm enjoying identifying different weeds and removing them and finding out about native plants.

Does she feel her wellbeing has improved?

Yeah definitely. I've been experiencing high anxiety so coming to a program where you can share with people – or not - and do something together has been really beneficial, as well as connecting back into the community and meeting new lovely people.

Rose has also been coming to Green Gym since 2018, and volunteers on other CVA projects.

My husband and I moved to Ballina a year and couple of months ago, to be closer to one of our boys. I'm not working, which is why I'm doing volunteer work. I just like being outdoors. I have been previously involved in Landcare controlling bitou bush. Here we're doing asparagus fern and bitou bush. Sometimes we'll do that, and other times we'll go around and pick up rubbish near the park where we have our morning tea.



From left: Jan, Rose, Kylie

Rose has noticed benefits from being involved with Green Gym.

I think just getting out, getting out with a purpose. I rode my bike here today, I try to ride every day, and I think getting out to do something, that makes it even better.

Team Leader Jan Kotevski gives an overview of the program.

Green Gym has been a great success in conservation outcomes and social and mental health benefits for the participants, who tell me they have thoroughly enjoyed the social aspects - meeting new people, some in similar life circumstances as carers, and learning new skills like weed control methods and flora and fauna ID.

Active outdoor engagement is a big drawcard. A typical session begins with light warm up stretches, followed by field work and ending with a healthy morning tea. Participants can see conservation outcomes they have achieved in aesthetic and ecological improvements at program sites.

Green Gym for Carers – Wellbeing in Nature is hosted by CVA, with funding from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services. Partner organisations include Ballina Shire Council, Tweed Shire Council, Lismore City Council, Friends of Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens and Jali LALC.

If you would like to join the Green Gym for Carers – Wellbeing in Nature program, contact the CVA Ballina office on 02 6681 6169 or ballina@cva.org.au