



CASE STUDY

GOAL: PLANTING 3,000 INSECTARY PLANTS AT CENTARE VINEYARDS, YARRA VALLEY, VIC

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GOAL: PLANTING 3,000 NATIVE INSECTARY PLANTS

Background

Centare Vineyard (CV) is located at 160 Healesville - Koweerup Rd, Healesville. The property is approximately 20 ha in size, with 10 ha planted to grapevines - 5.8 ha of original (1998) plantings known as 'Old Block' with an even split of Chardonnay, Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon; and approximately 4.15 ha of high density (1.2 m x 0.9 m or 9,250 vines/ha) Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, referred to as the 'New Block', planted in 2020 and 2021. T

The site is located at the base of the Warramate Hills just outside the township of Healesville and on the edge of the 'Golden Mile' of iconic Yarra Valley vineyards. The property has a heritage overlay, being the village site of the historic Coranderrk Reserve between 1863 and 1924.

Centare have extensive re-vegetation plans underway and plan to access funding through EcoVineyards and the local Shire Ribbons of Green grants to re-vegetate areas with over 3,000 plants for insectary and biodiversity benefits.

The broad-toothed rat has recently been discovered in a conservation reserve across the road from the vineyard and there are also plans for the release of helmeted honeyeaters in this area in the future. Appropriate habitat for these threatened species is necessary to ensure their survival.



Figure 1: Centare biodiversity action areas, August 2023 [Image: NatureKit].

What were you hoping to achieve and why?

The vineyard wanted to re-vegetate areas as insectary plantings as well as trial native ground covers in the mid-row where waterlogging and compaction problems persist. The vineyard also wanted to trial native grasses and forbs in problem mid-row areas where it can get waterlogged, as well as a native 'meadow'. The re-vegetation was a higher priority and became the focus of the EcoVineyards demonstration site.

What did you do and when?

The vineyard planted 1,000 trees with a community planting day in 2024 and planted an additional 247 EcoVineyard shrubs and grasses to enhance a dam area with species happy to be in a wetter area as well as providing an insectary benefit.

In addition to the plants already in establishment, a further 3,000 ground cover, shrubs and trees are scheduled to be planted in 2025.

By chance, a Birdlife Australia volunteer was also conducting a bird survey on the neighbouring property and asked if Centare was also interested so a bird survey has also been completed, finding a diverse range of species across the vineyard.



Insights

With the dry conditions in spring/summer 2024-25, there has been some plant losses, although the planting alongside the dam is continuing to grow well. It is a bit more sheltered with a pump shed on one side and the dam close by.

Trying to do large scale re-vegetation as well as time to prepare the midrow for a groundcover trial was challenging with contractor availability and seasonal conditions. The vineyard pursued the re-vegetation as a priority and still plan to establish a wildflower meadow in future.

"The EcoVineyard initiative has been great for us. We are well on our way to achieving our goal of 3,000 new plants in the ground and knowing what can be achieved with a little support and direction has sharpened our focus on ignited enthusiasm for further restoration and biodiversity projects across the property. We are only just getting started."

Nicole Esdaile, Centare Vineyard



Figure 2: A selection of shrubs growing [Photo: Melbourne Water].



Figure 3: Planting area A insectary [Photo: Melbourne Water].



Figure 4: Planting Area D one side dam planted [Photo: Melbourne Water].



Figure 5: Installing chorus detector for microbat echolocation signal monitoring [Photo: Melbourne Water].

Pitfalls to avoid

A challenge with community tree planting days is that holding them during the week, when vineyard staff are working, restricts the availability of volunteers to assist. Conversely, weekend events are harder for working staff with overtime requirements to be considered.

The vineyard found the cheaper supplied guards from their other grants did not withstand the first winter and so they moved to the EcoVineyard corflute guards which have done much better.

Where to from here?

In 2025 the vineyard will continue their planting schedule and continue to participate in a neighbourhood of farmers that are wanting to join up their individual property re-vegetation projects to create complete habitat bio-links for future releases of the helmeted honeyeater, a threatened species.

The vineyard will experiment further with native wildflower meadows and native cover crops between the rows

Plant lists

Insectary area adjacent to dam

- *Carex fascicularis*, tassel sedge
- *Dianella tasmanica*, Tasmanian flax-lily
- *Gaudium myrsinoides* (syn. *Leptospermum myrsinoides*), silky tea-tree
- *Hardenbergia violacea*, native lilac
- *Juncus pallidus*, hollow rush
- *Lomandra longifolia*, spiny-headed mat-rush
- *Myoporum parvifolium*, creeping boobialla
- *Poa labillardieri*, common tussock-grass
- *Pelargonium australe*, Austral stork's bill
- *Shoenus* sp. sedge sp.
- *Themeda triandra*, kangaroo grass

Ribbons of Green re-vegetation areas :

- *Correa reflexa* var. *lobatus*, common correa
- *Dianella admixta*, black-anther flax-lily
- *Dianella amoena*, matted flax-lily
- *Epacris impressa*, common heath
- *Eucalyptus fulgens*, green scentbark
- *Eucalyptus ovata*, swamp gum
- *Eucalyptus viminalis*, manna gum
- *Goodenia ovata*, hop goodenia
- *Goodia lotifolia*, golden-tip
- *Grevillea alpina*, mountain grevillea
- *Hardenbergia violacea*, native lilac
- *Juncus australis*, Austral rush
- *Juncus gregiflorus*, green rush
- *Juncus subsecundus*, finger rush
- *Kennedia prostrata*, running postman
- *Leptospermum continentale*, prickly tea-tree
- *Lomandra longifolia*, spiny-headed mat-rush
- *Melaleuca ericifolia*, swamp paperbark
- *Melaleuca squarrosa*, scented paperbark
- *Olearia lirata*, snowy daisy-bush
- *Patersonia occidentalis*, long purple-flag
- *Prostanthera lasiantha*, Victorian Christmas bush
- *Pultenaea gunnii*, golden bush-pea
- *Solanum laciniatum*, large kangaroo-apple
- *Solanum aviculare*, kangaroo apple
- *Spyridium parvifolium*, dusty miller
- *Tetralochea ciliata*, pink-bells
- *Themeda triandra*, kangaroo grass

Costs

Item	Number of plants	EcoVineyards costs (ex GST)	Co-contribution (grant and landholder contribution)	In-kind contribution (time)
Re-vegetation	247	\$562	\$7,500	25 hrs
Tree guards and stakes	1,000	\$3,438		10 hrs
Total	1,247	\$4,000	\$7,500	35 hrs



Disclaimer

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

EcoVineyards proudly acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and their ongoing cultural and spiritual connection to this ancient land on which we work and live.

As the Traditional Custodians of this land, we recognise their wealth of ecological knowledge and the importance of caring for Country.

We pay our respects to elders past and present and extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.



