

# Hawkweed Eradication Project

Volunteer Newsletter 2023/2024



## 2023/2024 Season Update

This newsletter has been prepared by the Hawkweed team at Parks Victoria to provide an update for volunteers interested in the Hawkweed Eradication project at Falls Creek.

The volunteer component of the Hawkweed program has been impacted over the past five seasons by COVID-19 for two summers, a landslide in 2022 that closed access to Falls Creek and the 2023/2024 season which saw the unavailability of the Accommodation Transfer Service building due to renovations by Falls Creek Alpine Resorts (FCAR). Future volunteer opportunities will be limited to day events, due to funding and capacity restrictions of the Parks Victoria team.

We appreciate all the efforts of the Hawkweed volunteers who have been involved in the project and acknowledge efforts of everyone involved.

## The Hawkweed Control Team

The Hawkweed Control team had two returning staff members this year Elise, and Nick, and three new staff members, Will, Milli and Jenny. The crew have been monitoring sites weekly as well as conducting line surveys and targeted delimiting surveillance.



*Milli removing flowers and stems*

## Volunteers

There were four one-day volunteer sessions held in January this season, some volunteers helped on multiple days. One group found a new Mouse-ear site and another group found a Mouse-ear plant at an existing site.

Future volunteer opportunities will be available through [ParkConnect](#).

## Falls Creek Alpine Resort

Emily (Environmental Officer at FCAR) has been helping the control team since the 12<sup>th</sup> of December and has been monitoring the mountain bike trails around Falls Creek.



*Emily from FCAR removing an eradicated hawkweed site*

## Statistics

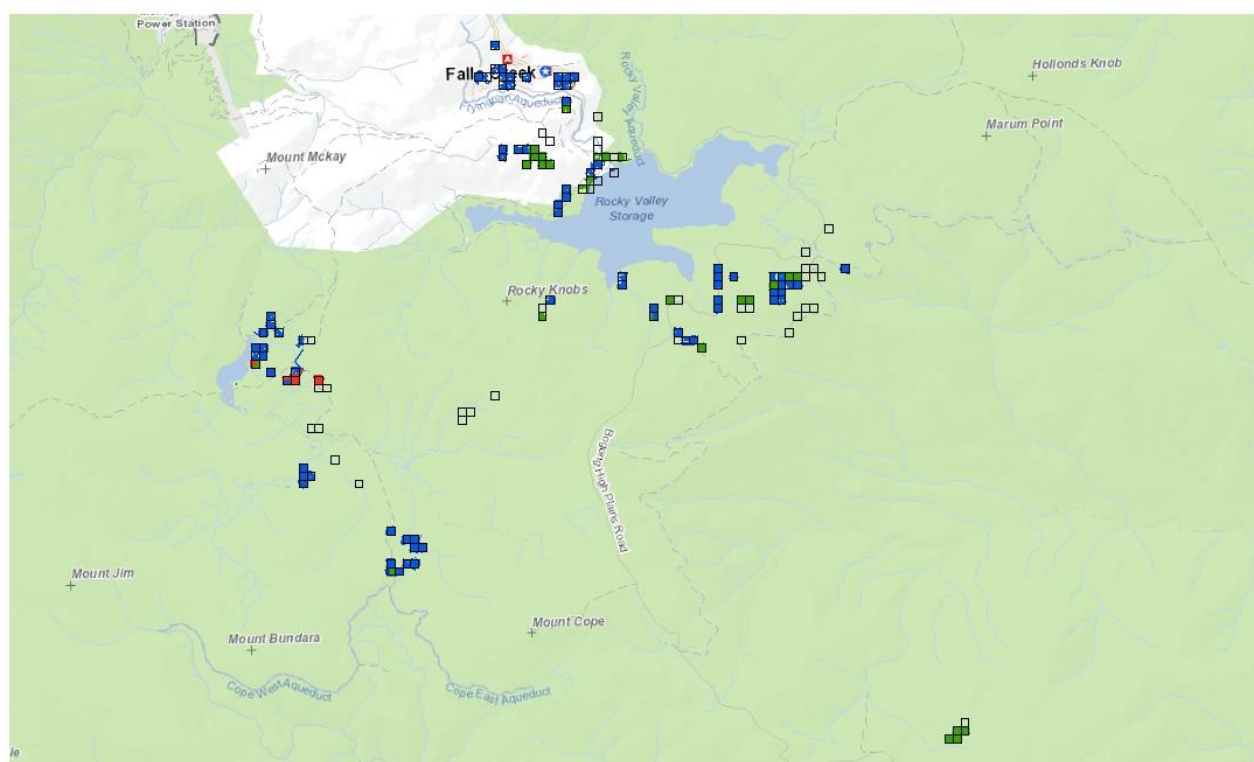
### New sites and re-emergents

There were 63 new hawkweed sites found this season (2023/2024). 37 King devil, 12 Mouse-ear and 14 Orange hawkweed. Unfortunately, one of the new sites was found at Buckety Plain many kilometres from any known site (out of the delimitation area). In comparison with 2022/2023 there were 23 new King devil sites, 7 new Orange hawkweed and 10 new Mouse-ear hawkweed sites.

There were 81 re-emergent sites this season. 53 King devil, 18 Mouse-ear and 10 Orange. In comparison with 2022/2023 there were 45 King devil, 10 Orange and 14 Mouse-ear re-emergent sites.

### Map of surveillance tracks 2023/2024

The map below shows where staff, contractors and volunteers surveyed in the 2023/2024 season as part of the surveillance plan. The grids at Buckety Plain site were added after the new Orange hawkweed site at Buckety Plain was found.



**Survey grids 2023 2024**

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55  
Projection: Transverse Mercator

0 1 2 4 km

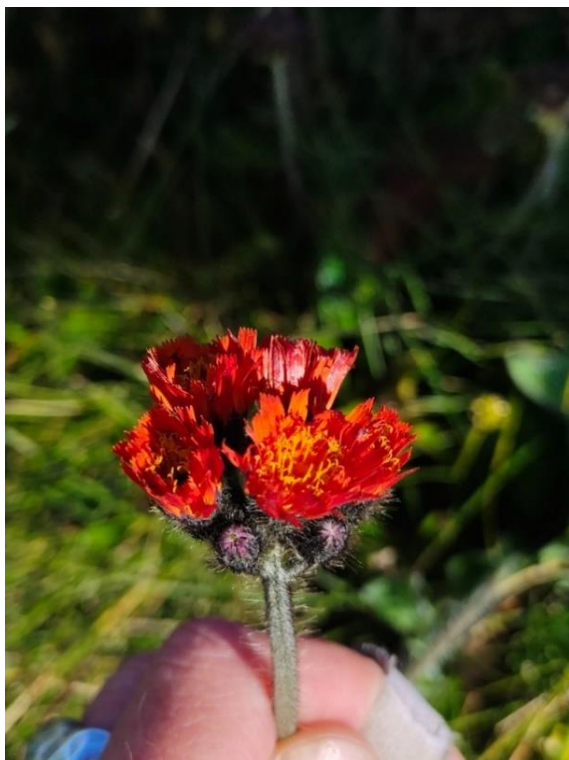
12/06/2024

Disclaimer: Parks Victoria does not guarantee that this data is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability which may arise from you relying on this information.  
Data source acknowledgements: State Digital Mapbase, The State of Victoria and the Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action.

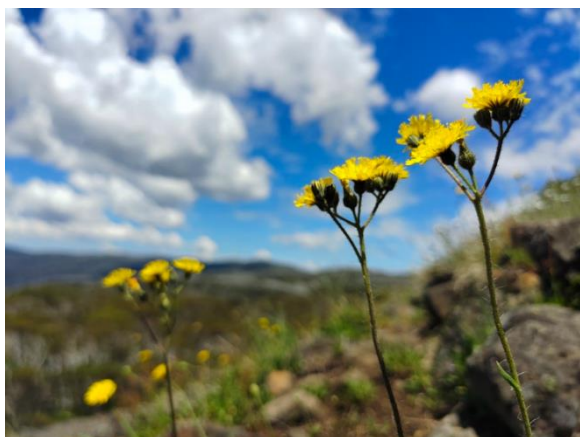
#### Legend

- volunteers 23 24
- PV staff 23 24
- contractors 23 24





*Orange Hawkweed flower*



*King Devil Hawkweed flower*



*Orange Hawkweed Flowering*

## Surveillance planning – article in Weed Spotters newsletter issue 23, November 2018

Here is some information from Agriculture Victoria on how the surveillance plan is created each year:

### *'Hawkweed surveillance planning at Falls Creek*

Hawkweeds are very successful at invading natural areas and agricultural land. Each plant can produce thousands of small seeds each year which can be carried long distances by the wind, or by hitching a ride with people, animals, vehicles or machinery.

This creates a huge potentially infested area around Falls Creek where hawkweed could be lurking. To deal with this, Agriculture Victoria collaborated with University of Melbourne using a model to predict the most likely areas where hawkweed may be found.

The model uses multiple factors including wind direction, soil disturbance, type of vegetation and distance to known infestations, to predict where hawkweed seed may land and grow.

Figure 1 (see next page) shows the most likely location a seed may disperse from a known infestation (marked with a black dot). Seed is most likely to fall very close to the plant, so the closest surveillance grid receives a score of 0.9.

Seeds are less likely to fall further from the plant, so more distant grids receive a lower score (0.8, 0.7, 0.3).

Figure 2 (see next page) shows how wind scores are calculated when there are multiple sites with overlapping wind plumes. A similar set of scores is established for each factor that land managers consider important to hawkweed dispersal, and the model uses all this data to calculate where we should search for hawkweed.

The model is updated before the growing season each year, so it is based on the most current information. Researchers and land managers can prioritise areas they consider to be important based on their local knowledge of the area.

The model has been shown to be effective in predicting where hawkweed can be found, which is great news for the eradication program. It's good for volunteers and staff too as they want to make the best use of their time and effort by surveying the places where hawkweed is most likely to grow.'

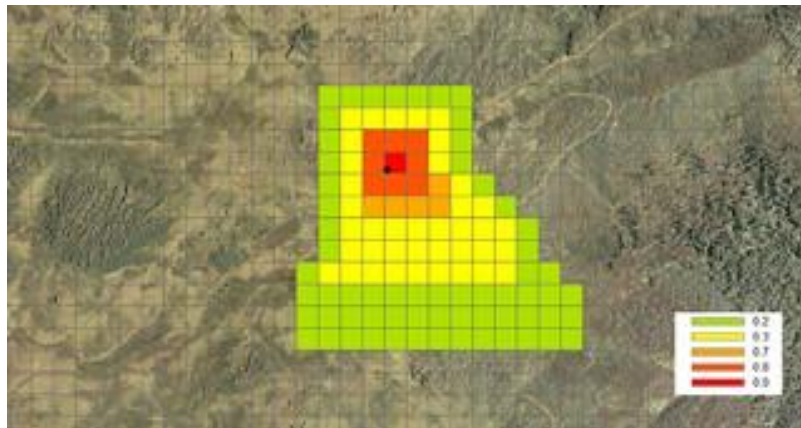


Figure 1. (From Weed Spotters article)

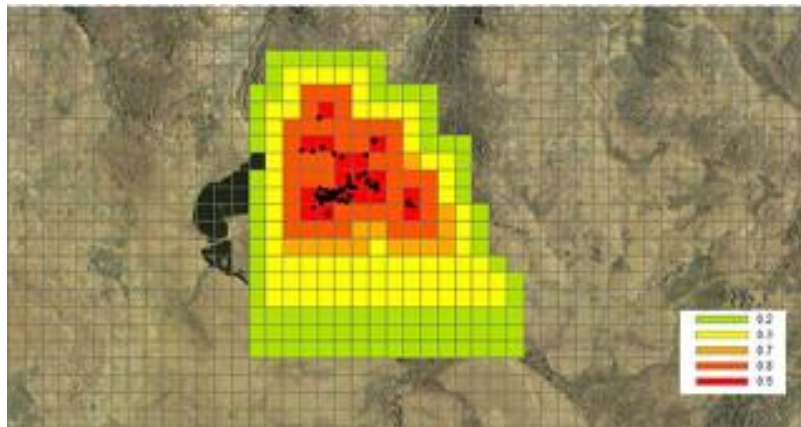


Figure 2. (From Weed Spotters article)

## Who are Weed Spotters?

[Weed Spotters](#) assist the Victorian Government by looking out for and reporting [State prohibited weeds](#), including hawkweed, which either do not occur in Victoria, or are present in small numbers and can reasonably be expected to be eradicated. These are a group of high-risk invasive plants that are declared under the Victorian [Invasive Plants Classifications](#) under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*.

Agriculture Victoria is responsible for the eradication of State prohibited weeds. The Weed Spotters program is for those who work in an industry or who are part of a group where they are likely to spend time in places where State prohibited weeds could be found.

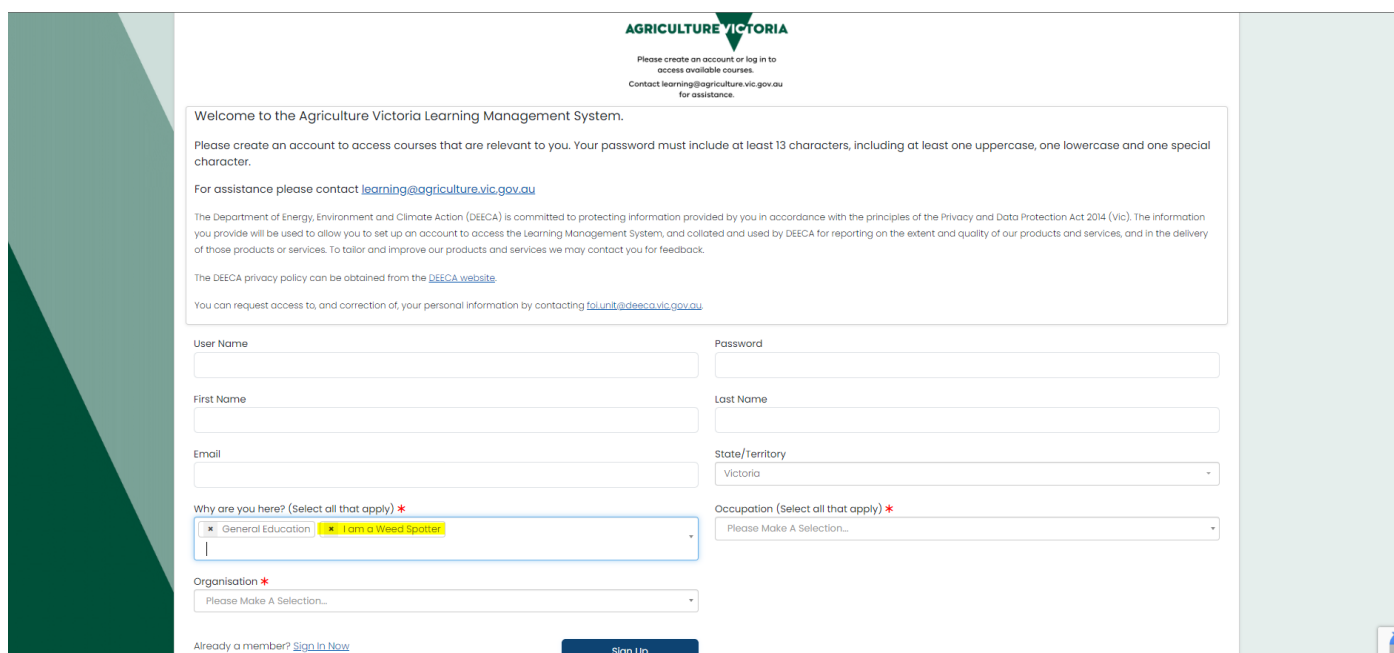
## Become a Weed Spotter

If you would like to learn more about identification of State prohibited weeds and learn how to report them to keep Victoria safe from these high-risk invasive plants, Weed Spotter training is available online! The online training module mirrors face to face training and was created from the face-to-face format and materials. It includes photos and videos of State prohibited weeds so that Weed Spotters can become more familiar with these plants. It also describes how to report a State prohibited weed and has interactive quizzes and exercises to help you learn.

The course takes about an hour to complete but could be shorter or longer depending on how much time you choose to spend reading the material provided. The course can be paused and recommenced at any time, without losing your place. All Weed Spotters who complete Weed Spotter training receive a set of State prohibited weed identification cards.

To access the training go to <https://learning.agriculture.vic.gov.au/home> and create a log in for the site by clicking 'sign up'.

When creating a new account, make sure you select '**I am a Weed Spotter**' in the 'Why are you here?' drop down menu.



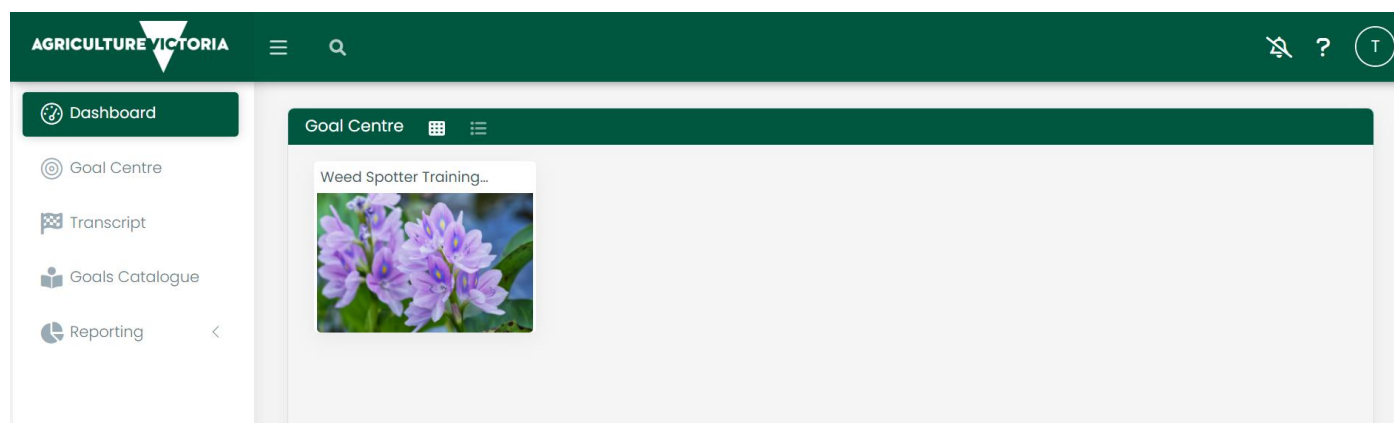
The screenshot shows the sign-up page for the Agriculture Victoria Learning Management System. At the top, the Agriculture Victoria logo is displayed with the text "Please create an account or log in to access available courses. Contact [learning@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:learning@agriculture.vic.gov.au) for assistance." Below this, a welcome message states: "Welcome to the Agriculture Victoria Learning Management System. Please create an account to access courses that are relevant to you. Your password must include at least 13 characters, including at least one uppercase, one lowercase and one special character. For assistance please contact [learning@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:learning@agriculture.vic.gov.au)". A privacy notice follows: "The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is committed to protecting information provided by you in accordance with the principles of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic). The information you provide will be used to allow you to set up an account to access the Learning Management System, and collected and used by DEECA for reporting on the extent and quality of our products and services, and in the delivery of those products or services. To tailor and improve our products and services we may contact you for feedback. The DEECA privacy policy can be obtained from the [DEECA website](#). You can request access to, and correction of, your personal information by contacting [foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:foi.unit@deeca.vic.gov.au)".

The sign-up form includes the following fields:

- User Name
- Password
- First Name
- Last Name
- Email
- State/Territory (dropdown menu with "Victoria" selected)
- Why are you here? (Select all that apply) \* (checkboxes for "General Education" and "I am a Weed Spotter", with "I am a Weed Spotter" selected)
- Occupation (Select all that apply) \* (dropdown menu with "Please Make A Selection..." selected)
- Organisation \* (dropdown menu with "Please Make A Selection..." selected)

At the bottom, there is a link "Already a member? [Sign In Now](#)" and a blue "Sign Up" button.

Once you have created an account, you can select Weed Spotter training.



Make sure that you navigate right to the end of the training so that it triggers the completion notification. You will then receive a set of State prohibited weed cards.

Weed Spotters can also download an attendance certificate at the end of the training if they wish.

Recent trainees have said:

- “The Weed Spotter training was really useful and well set out, I enjoyed completing it.”
- “I thought the online training was really good. It didn’t take too long to complete, and the content was meaningful and provided a good introduction to the main issues for Weed Spotters to be aware of.”
- “Loved the course!”
- “It was a pleasure and very enlightening.”
- “Thank you for providing access to the Weed Spotter training – I thought the course was terrific. It was clear, informative, and easy to follow.”
- “I look forward to spruiking the online training to our local volunteer groups, it is very well set up.”

## Other Useful websites

[Partnerships Against Pests grants program](#): The Partnerships Against Pests grants help community groups plan and deliver education and training programs that provide local and long-term solutions.

[Weed Spotter Newsletter](#): The Weed Spotter newsletter keeps registered Weed Spotters up to date on the latest news in the Agriculture Victoria High Risk Invasive Plants program.

***Thank-you to all the volunteers who assisted with survey this season.***