Revegetation

Revegetation increases or restores habitat. It creates habitat for wildlife and can help connect other existing areas of habitat, along with many other benefits. Sites can be revegetated using seed or planting small trees, shrubs and groundcovers. Choose method depending on the site and resources available. This resource provides information on considerations for revegetation.

Location and habitat

This information is relevant across Victoria. Revegetation is very location specific; consult local experts, community groups and your Trust for Nature manager for further advice. Many region-specific guides are available.

General information

- Prioritise protecting existing habitat and encouraging natural regeneration
- Apart from increasing habitat for wildlife, benefits of revegetation include:
  - Shade and shelter for livestock
  - Improved water quality
  - Soil stabilisation and erosion control
  - Weed management
  - Increased carbon stored in vegetation and soil
- Develop a plan for revegetation that considers your site, neighbouring properties, and wider landscape
- Prepare site for planting at least 12 months before revegetation
- Monitor revegetation after planting
- Many funding opportunities for assistance with revegetation exist. Discuss with your Trust for Nature manager

Methods

Planning

- Consider area for revegetation and how it connects to areas of existing habitat. Suitable sites for revegetation may include:
  - Along and around waterways
  - Around existing habitat
  - Along fencelines
  - Corridors that connect existing habitat
  - Corners of paddocks
  - Degraded habitat where key species have been reduced or lost
- Choose plants that already exist or would likely have existed in habitat on your property
- Build a species list of plants for revegetation:
  - Identify plants already growing on your property
  - Use tools such as local plant guides and NatureKit
- Choose plants specific to areas of your property such as wet gullies or dry ridges
- Aim for diversity of structure and species, including a mix of trees, shrubs and groundcovers
- Plan revegetation in stages. Consider planting a mix of trees and understorey vegetation first
- Consider non-living elements of habitat such as rocks and logs

Preparation

- Start preparing revegetation site at least 12 months before planting
- Control weeds and pest animals, especially rabbits and other herbivores
- Consider if soil preparation techniques are needed to improve soil aeration and moisture such as ripping or mounding

Planting

- There are two main methods for revegetation:
  - Direct seeding involves placing plant seeds directly into soil
  - Planting involves placing young plants in soil
- Choose method of revegetation based on site and resources. In general, direct seeding by machine is cheaper and planting by hand is more resource-intensive
- Quantities of plants or seeds required are specific to type of habitat
- Time planting or seeding for growing season when temperatures and moisture are suitable (usually autumn, winter and spring in Victoria)
- Aim for a patchy revegetation rather than rows or stands of one species

Methods (cont'd)

- Watering (or hydrogel crystals) at planting can be useful, but in general water and fertiliser are not required after planting or seeding
- Fence revegetated areas to manage grazing and introduced animals such as rabbits
- Use tree guards where necessary, but these can be costly and resource-intensive

Maintenance and monitoring

- Monitor revegetation and record survival of plants at regular intervals
- Revegetation takes time – don't be disheartened by slow results
- Control weeds and pest animals as required
- Replace dead plants as needed
- Thin seedlings and young plants if necessary
- Take photos before and after revegetation to monitor changes
- Record species of animals and plants
- Coordinate revegetation with other landholders and community to increase impact across landscape

Further information

If you have a conservation covenant, please consult with your Trust for Nature regional staff member to ensure land management activities are in line with your covenant deed.

For further advice and support, please contact Trust for Nature.

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Safety

Always wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when undertaking land management. Follow all label instructions on equipment and local regulations. Be mindful of weather conditions. Do not conduct land management on days of extreme or catastrophic fire danger or total fire ban.

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