



## Sword Grass Brown Butterfly Project – benefits of CARTs

Representatives of the Poowong Landcare Group attended the PPWCMA Catchment Action Round Tables in September 2015 and August 2016. Jeff Clarke, secretary of Poowong LC said it was “good value, with newer members being able to see what is going on with other groups, where they're applying for funding and how they're going about it”. At the CARTs Poowong Landcare was able to get together and collaborate with members of the South Gippsland Landcare Network on it's Sword Grass Brown Butterfly project.

Four Port Phillip groups (Nyora, Triholm, Poowong and Mt Lyall) have come together to fund and trial this project to increase the understanding of native animal survival, using the relationship between a rare native butterfly and indigenous plant species. It is hoped that this will demonstrate the need of indigenous vegetation to maintain native fauna. This partnership focusses on their shared environmental asset, the endangered Sword Grass Brown Butterfly caterpillar, which is totally dependent on Red Fruit Saw Sedge, *Gahnia sieberiana*.

Clearing for agriculture was identified as a key threat to the Sword Grass Brown Butterfly, with the Red Fruit Saw Sedge dramatically reduced from most of its former range in the southern and western Gippsland region. In addition, in the past, indigenous nurseries had found growing the Red Fruit Saw Sedge difficult, but in recent years, the propagation of the plant has been more successful. This has allowed the Red Fruit Saw Sedge to be planted in specific areas to encourage the natural recolonising of the Sword Grass Brown Butterfly.

Poowong Landcare Group members, along with members from Nyora, Triholm and Mt Lyall LC) were able to attend a field day in November 2016 to learn more about butterflies and their ecological needs. This project was led by Malcom Brown of adjoining Nyora Land Care Group, with support from Nicole Walsh of South Gippsland Landcare Network.

In partnering with South Gippsland Landcare Network, Poowong Landcare members have been able to access a proportion of 200 Red Fruit Saw Sedge tube stock, that have been given free to 100 voluntary Landcare members with suitable wet areas. Along with the Red Fruit Saw Sedge, the land owners were also provided with two species of Olearia to provide food for the adult butterfly.

**Sword Grass Brown Butterfly Field Session**



The Sword Grass Brown Butterfly caterpillar is totally dependent on the Red Fruited Saw Sedge (*Gahnia sieberiana*) to complete its life cycle. Come along and spend some time learning about this butterfly and how you can help to ensure their survival from butterfly expert and breeder Eddie Tsyrlin of Butterfly Adventures. Enjoy a walk around the Henrys Creek Sanctuary.

**When:** Sunday, 6th November at 10.30am - 12.30pm

**Where:** Henrys Creek Sanctuary, Henrys Road, Loch, South Gippsland (look for the Landcare Hand signs)

**To register:** <https://register.eventarc.com/35995/sword-grass-brown-butterfly-field-session> or ring 5662 5759 (leave a message)

Lunch is provided

Please BYO chair, hat and suitable footwear



Special thanks to Malcolm Brown and members of the Mt Lyall, Loch Nyora, Triholm and Poowong Landcare Groups whose support of this project made this field session possible.



Butterfly expert Eddie Tsyrlin & Malcolm Brown next to the host plant for the Sword Grass Brown Butterfly. Photo credit: SGLN Facebook page