

# Reward for innovator

BY MATTHEW CAWOOD

IN THE natural world, the most diverse ecosystems also produce the most.

The winner of the 2014 Bob Hawke Landcare Award, farmer Col Seis, is exploring how that principle translates to a farming situation – specifically, the pasture cropping process he devised with Daryl Cluff in the early 1990s.

Pasture cropping involves growing crops in a living perennial pasture sward, rather than removing the pasture ahead of crop sowing as a conventional cropping system requires.

Crop yields might be lower in a pasture cropping system compared to a conventional crop, but the rewards are lower establishment costs (because the pasture sward doesn't have to be killed off) better soil health because the soil is never bared and biodiversity is retained, and the ability to graze pasture in a cropping paddock as soon as the crop is removed.

It was the co-invention of this system, and Mr Seis's subsequent years of taking the idea to other farmers, that earned him the \$50,000 Bob Hawke Landcare Award.

Mr Seis is investing his winnings in research into how pasture cropping responds to multi-species plantings.

"The award has given me the financial freedom to experiment with the system, and the encouragement to keep working with it and progressing it," Mr Seis said.

Retaining biodiversity in pasture has been a feature of pasture cropping from the beginning, but the crop itself has always been a single species.

On Mr Seis's farm at Gulgong, NSW, he

has chiefly used oats, a proven dual-purpose crop that works equally well for grazing and grain.

Multi-species planting seeks to add another layer of biodiversity by sowing a range of complementary species that provide a mixed browse for livestock, and broadens the effects of plant action on the soil.

(A mixed species cover crop is less suitable for harvesting, but Mr Seis still thinks there are some interesting prospects for harvesting such a crop for stock feed. The challenge will be coping with the different ripening times of different species.)

In his initial trials, Mr Seis has planted mixtures of oats, turnip, field pea, arrowleaf clover, vetch and daikon radish.

The daikon has a long, strong carrot-like root that punches down into the soil, opening up new soil horizons to the plants that follow. With the turnip, Mr Seis believes the radish will provide a form of tillage in the soil, breaking up hard areas without requiring diesel or steel.

The addition of flowering plants is designed to encourage insects, another boost to biodiversity and ecosystem stability.

In initial grazing trials, Mr Seis found that sheep selectively grazed on all the other species in preference to oats. That gave the oats a competitive advantage, so that towards the end of the growing season, it seemed likely that running a header through a planting would yield a high proportion of oats – ideal for stock feed.

Mr Seis has also taken some "before" soil tests, to establish a baseline on which he can measure the effect of multi-species planting on soil health.

Multi-species cover cropping by American farmers – which inspired Mr Seis's own work in this area – has shown that a diversity of plants in a cover crops has significant soil health benefits.

Mr Seis is hoping that the same applies to multi-species pasture cropping.

"We've got agriculture wrong" he said. "We should be looking at ways to farm that feed people, and generate a profit, but also regenerate the land. That's what I'm about, and that's what the Bob Hawke Landcare Award has allowed me to explore further."



## Lessons from the US led to inspiration

COL Seis's experiments with using multiple species in pasture cropping took its inspiration from American farmers he's met while teaching pasture cropping in the United States.

Gabe Brown, who farms 2100 hectares in a 16-inch (384mm) area of North Dakota, began investigating multi-species cover cropping as a way to restore his degraded farm.

Understanding that the root exudates from different plants feed different types of soil organism – the

engineers of soil health – Mr Brown began growing a diversity of crops and multi-species cover cropping.

A warm-season cover crop sown on Browns Ranch might include hybrid pearl millet, sorghum, soybeans, cowpeas, sunflowers, sunn hemp, radishes and turnips.

The crop is grazed by cattle, using Holistic Management principles, before a cool season crop is sown into soil rich with the residue of different plants and the soil life they encouraged.

Because the diversity of the cover crop is so effective at building fertility, Mr Brown doesn't use bought-in fertiliser. As a result, his gross margin returns on crops are reportedly considerably higher than the district average - up to 200 per cent higher.

Mr Seis hopes that multi-species pasture cropping can produce some of these results. His challenge is to find the crops, and the timing, to suit Australian conditions.

■ Visit <http://brownsranch.us>



**PASTURE CROPPER:** Col Seis has won the Bob Hawke Landcare Award for 2014.

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# Water flows back into agriculture sector

BY BARNABY JOYCE

Federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

I'M pleased to update you this month on a significant development for rural and regional Australia - the return of responsibility for water policy back to the agriculture portfolio.

I am also pleased Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull has appointed my former colleague South Australian Senator Anne Ruston as Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources.

Senator Ruston lives in the Murray-Darling Basin in South Australia, and brings with her a considerable knowledge of horticulture, wine and water issues in the Basin.

She takes the place of a very capable and hard-working colleague, Senator Richard Colbeck, who moves into the trade portfolio.

Richard's experience and expertise will be hard to replace.

In Senator Ruston however, we have another passionate advocate for agriculture who is based in regional Australia and also brings a wealth of knowledge and experience.

I have been Shadow Minister for Water and have had a long experience

with river politics—so I understand the challenges.

It's a job I am passionate about, and delivering the government's Murray-Darling Basin Plan will be a key priority for me.

Water is the most critical input to agriculture—which in turn, is arguably the most critical sector to our fundamental wellbeing as humans.

Agriculture feeds and clothes us.

It is logical for these two essential elements to be together, and when we plan for our water security, it is certainly logical that agriculture is at the heart of this decision-making.

That's not to say agriculture is the only consideration—the Australian Government's focus is, rightly, on achieving the best outcomes for the triple bottom lines of social, economic and environmental benefits.

Water is the lifeblood of our river ecosystems, which sustain Australia's unique flora and fauna.

And many communities across the country also rely on these river systems for their wellbeing and livelihoods.

I know that many of these communities are where the heart of

the Landcare movement lies, and our Landcarers know full-well the value of a sustainable water supply.

Water is the lifeblood of our river ecosystems, which are so important in sustaining Australia's unique flora and fauna

Weeds alone cost our growers more than \$3 billion every single year, and our farmers continue to strive to pass on their land to future generations, in a better condition than when they arrived.

If we're to care for our land together, the first step is to manage the water that underpins its health.

I also know Landcarers understand our farmers are some of the most dedicated conservationists and sustainable land managers in the world—and that they have the most incentive to manage their resources sustainably.

In Australia, farmers are custodians of 53 per cent of our total land mass and manage pests and weeds, often at their own cost, benefitting future generations of all Australians.



Weeds alone cost our growers more than \$3 billion every single year, and our farmers continue to strive to pass on their land to future generations, in a better condition than when they arrived.

As a water-scarce continent our producers have had to adapt to survive—for instance, cotton industry innovation and research over the past 15 years has improved water use efficiency by 40 per cent.

And it is with these important considerations in mind that the government will enact water policy.

To achieve outcomes for our economic, social and environmental wellbeing, we need the right infrastructure to manage our water supplies.

That's why we are investing in

modern water infrastructure projects – and the recently released Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper set aside \$500 million to set up a National Water Infrastructure Development Fund.

This will include \$450 million for infrastructure projects in partnership with state and territory governments and the private sector.

The remaining \$50 million will be allocated for the detailed planning necessary to inform these investment decisions – to make sure every dollar is spent wisely.

Water is a resource that, on the driest inhabited continent on earth, must be managed strategically – and it makes sense for agriculture to be at the centre of this decision-making.

# Our volunteers are essential

BY TESSA JAKSZEWCZ

Landcare Australia chief executive officer

ACROSS Australia, 100,000 people in over 6000 landcare groups are united in one common purpose: to protect, restore and sustain Australia's natural environment and its productivity for future generations.

Volunteers have always been the backbone of the landcare movement, and their involvement has helped revolutionise our national landscape.

Over the past few months, all Australian states and territories have held Landcare Awards to recognise the outstanding contribution local people and groups have made to their environmental sustainability and biodiversity, and we are proud to

profile those winners in this edition.

These winners will contest the National Landcare Awards next year.

The awards always serve as a reminder that Landcare is a movement made up of local heroes that make a national difference.

To commemorate Landcare Australia's 25th anniversary a new publication, 'In Our Hands' has been released that celebrates both Landcare as a national initiative and the Landcarers that made it possible.

This special anniversary publication provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the many achievements of Landcare while honouring the invaluable contribution made by Australians from all walks of life in conserving our environmental and agricultural assets.

This publication showcases the stories of Landcare champions from around the country and across sustainable agriculture, environment, community, Junior Landcare, Coastcare and Indigenous projects.

It will act a lasting record of the vision, passion and commitment of the many Australians that created one of our most important grassroots initiatives.

The publication is available to be viewed or purchased online at [www.landcareonline.com.au](http://www.landcareonline.com.au).

While it is important to acknowledge the past achievements that have made Landcare the national force it is today, we must look to the future by fostering and encouraging a new generation of Landcarers.

As Landcarers, we know that getting

young people involved in Landcare can often be quite difficult.

Our youth, although passionate about the environment, are often time-poor and have a whole range of interests competing for their attention.

Finding a way to spark their interest in Landcare and engaging them has posed a challenge to groups looking to pass on their knowledge and skills.

Over the past year, we have been working with a number of National Young Landcare Ambassadors from across Australia to run youth engagement events and awareness raising activities.

Through these sessions it identified that there was a need to create resources to help existing Landcare groups engage with young people.

Alongside the inspirational National

Young Landcare Ambassador, Megan Rowlett, Landcare Australia has developed a 'Youth Engagement in Landcare How-to-Kit' that will act as a go-to guide for Landcare groups and other young Landcarers on how to engage with young people.

This just released handbook is designed to provide practical advice on how to engage young people in Landcare and will provide trainers and leaders with resources to assist in this process of engaging our youth.

It contains useful tips and guidelines on how to structure your approach to engaging the next generation of Landcarers.

Our youth are the future of the Landcare movement and through this resource we can secure the next generation of Landcarers.

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# Carbon in the Kimberley

OVER the last two years, the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) has been working with Indigenous land owners on the carbon farming project called Carbon Farming opportunities for Indigenous land-owners, which was recently completed this year.

KLC engaged with native title groups and pastoralists in the Kimberley region to provide regionally-relevant information on carbon farming and the Emission Reduction Fund (ERF) and identified an opportunity for local groups to participate.

The selected project focused on the Savanna Fire Management method, one of the available project options under the ERF.

This method allows Indigenous groups to manage fire in a traditional way by burning early in the dry season. This delivers many environmental benefits including:

- increasing biodiversity
- protecting the habitat of endangered species
- reducing and controlling weeds
- reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that would be released into the atmosphere from unmanaged and dangerous wildfires.

Indigenous people have proactively managed their landscapes for thousands of years and have extensive knowledge about prescribed burning.

KLC worked closely with four native

title groups, drawing on its strong relationships with Indigenous people in the region to talk about opportunities under the ERF to improve the health of country.

Through the extension activities, native title groups in the region have an improved understanding of carbon markets and the requirements of taking part in the ERF. The groups have also gained knowledge on how savanna burning projects have the potential to contribute to climate change solutions and improvements to the environment.

With appropriate support, savanna burning projects can generate revenue to support native title holder's management of country, strengthening connection to country and providing training and employment opportunities.

Previously, projects in the Kimberley sold 293 274 carbon credits into the compliance market (through the Carbon Farming Initiative) but are yet to participate in the ERF.

As part of this project, KLC produced a number of culturally appropriate resources to help Indigenous groups participate in the ERF in the future. This included developing a step-by-step guide, newsletters and informational videos and posters.

KLC's project also facilitated native title holders to present on savanna



**TRADITIONAL METHOD:** The Savanna Fire Management method allows Indigenous groups to manage fire in a traditional way by burning early in the dry season.

carbon projects at a number of forums including the Emission Reduction Summit, World Parks Congress and National Native Title Conference.

Visit KLC's website [www.klc.org.au](http://www.klc.org.au)

to find out more about its work, or [agriculture.gov.au/erf](http://agriculture.gov.au/erf) for more information on the ERF.

This project was supported with funding from the Australian

Government's Extension and Outreach Programme to assist farmers and land managers reduce land sector greenhouse gas emissions and participate in the Carbon Farming Initiative.

## Tamar community takes on ragwort

TAMAR NRM has been inspiring the local community into action against ragwort with help from a Community Landcare Grant.

Ragwort is a noxious weed which is poisonous to livestock.

It has the potential to infest a large portion of Tasmania which could cost the grazing industry over \$2 million each year just through loss of pasture production.

The Tamar Natural Resources Management Strategy Reference Group (Tamar NRM) has been working hard to get ragwort under control.

Through the project, Tamar NRM was able to provide land managers with information on the latest methods available to control ragwort

as part of integrated land management programs.

Beyond biological control methods, Tamar NRM ran the hugely successful event, the Ragwort Raid. Nearly 50 community members rolled up their sleeves and got stuck into pulling out the weed from 1200 km worth of roadsides and properties.

Before the raid, Tamar NRM surveyed the areas infested with ragwort to help target the community's efforts and to find out how effective the biological methods have been. They found a significant reduction in ragwort since the first raids began 16 years ago, and these great results continue. The event was so successful that members of the

community continue to work on both public and private properties to remove the weed.

### Ragwort – the facts

RAGWORT seeds are spread by wind, water, animals, agricultural produce including hay, workers clothing and equipment.

Ragwort seeds can remain viable in the soil for 8-16 years.

Most seeds fall near the parent plant, but many become airborne and waterborne, therefore they can travel for long distances.

Ragwort is abundant in waste land, roadsides and grazing pastures.

It can grow in all cool and high rainfall areas.

to find out more about its work, or [agriculture.gov.au/erf](http://agriculture.gov.au/erf) for more information on the ERF.

This project was supported with funding from the Australian

Government's Extension and Outreach Programme to assist farmers and land managers reduce land sector greenhouse gas emissions and participate in the Carbon Farming Initiative.



**UNDER CONTROL:** Tamar NRM has implemented a strategy to get the noxious weed Ragwort under control.

The weed is usually found on heavy soils of moderate fertility.

Ragwort is common in poorly managed or degraded pastures.

The plant is also found in natural

areas, particularly near the coast.

The weed is tolerant of frost and has some tolerance to drought.

This project was funded through the National Landcare Programme.

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# Getting tough on lovegrass

BY ALISON MCLEOD  
ACT Regional Landcare Facilitator

THE spread of the invasive weed, 'African Lovegrass' throughout the ACT poses a threat to both the environment and to farm businesses.

As the cost of current control methods is high and the weed is easily spread by vehicles, animals and through seed and animal feed products, it has slowly and steadily moved across the landscape to the point where it now dominates many

roadsides and some river corridors, some pastures and is a major risk to nature reserves.

Instead of throwing up their hands and surrendering to this weed, the Southern ACT community have decided to combine forces and fight back by exploring a regional biosecurity approach to the problem. The threat of doing nothing was too great a risk to their future.

Instituted by a southern ACT rural landholder and his farm manager, and supported by the Livestock



While African lovegrass remains a biosecurity threat in the southern ACT, the local community is now informed, engaged and willing to prove it with a regional approach.

Biosecurity Network and the ACT Government, the Southern ACT community came together earlier this year for the 'Southern ACT Biosecurity Workshop'

The workshop brought together a variety of stakeholders with an interest in controlling this and other weeds, including rural landholders, the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and other areas of government, Landcare groups, industry and utility providers who worked through the problem and proposed some solutions.

The workshop provided those involved with an opportunity to share their concerns, which included controlling weeds before they go to seed and reducing the spread of weeds from contaminated to clean areas by stock and vehicles.

Participants determined a range of key actions to contain the spread of African Lovegrass throughout Southern ACT, including the establishment of a Southern ACT Biosecurity Group and investigating the possibility and viability of constructing a wash down facility in the region to reduce the spread of weeds by vehicles.

The workshop kick-started a regional approach to reducing the spread of African Lovegrass with the group now also looking into developing hygiene protocols or codes of practice to



**PRESENTATION:** Attendees listen to a talk at the workshop.

minimise the introduction and spread of new pests, and encourage their adoption at property, catchment and regional levels.

The workshop was hosted by the Livestock Biosecurity Network, the ACT Government (ACT NRM), Paddy's River Landcare, the ACT Regional Landcare Facilitator and supported by the federal

government's National Landcare Programme.

African Lovegrass still constitutes a serious biosecurity threat to the Southern parts of the ACT, but the local community is informed, engaged and willing to prove that by working together and taking a regional approach – they are in with a fighting chance!

## Fences keep the dogs out at 'Lower Lansdowne'

ACROSS Australia, landcarers and producers have come to acknowledge the important role that durable and strategic fencing plays in weed and pest control and eradication.

While the primary role of fencing has been to control grazing and restrict land degradation from livestock, good fencing is increasingly being seen by landholders as a way of protecting their livelihood from the impacts of pests, such as wild dogs.

To combat the threat of wild dogs, landholders across Australia are coming together to implement measures such as fencing around the perimeter of multiple properties in order to keep dogs out and save on fencing costs.

Across Queensland's Tambo region – once the economic powerhouse of the State, thanks to the wool industry – local graziers have been under increasing pressure from wild dogs, with one group cleaning up around 600 dogs in three years, and others being forced out of sheep altogether.

With the help of South-West NRM, the property owners have joined forces to fence off almost 300,000 hectares around Tambo, with the main aim to control the movement of dogs.

This huge infrastructure project has a built-in maintenance plan, which includes every participant – including

**“**The destruction is just horrific – most of the time they'll kill, but sometimes they just go for the kidneys and the sheep are still walking around.

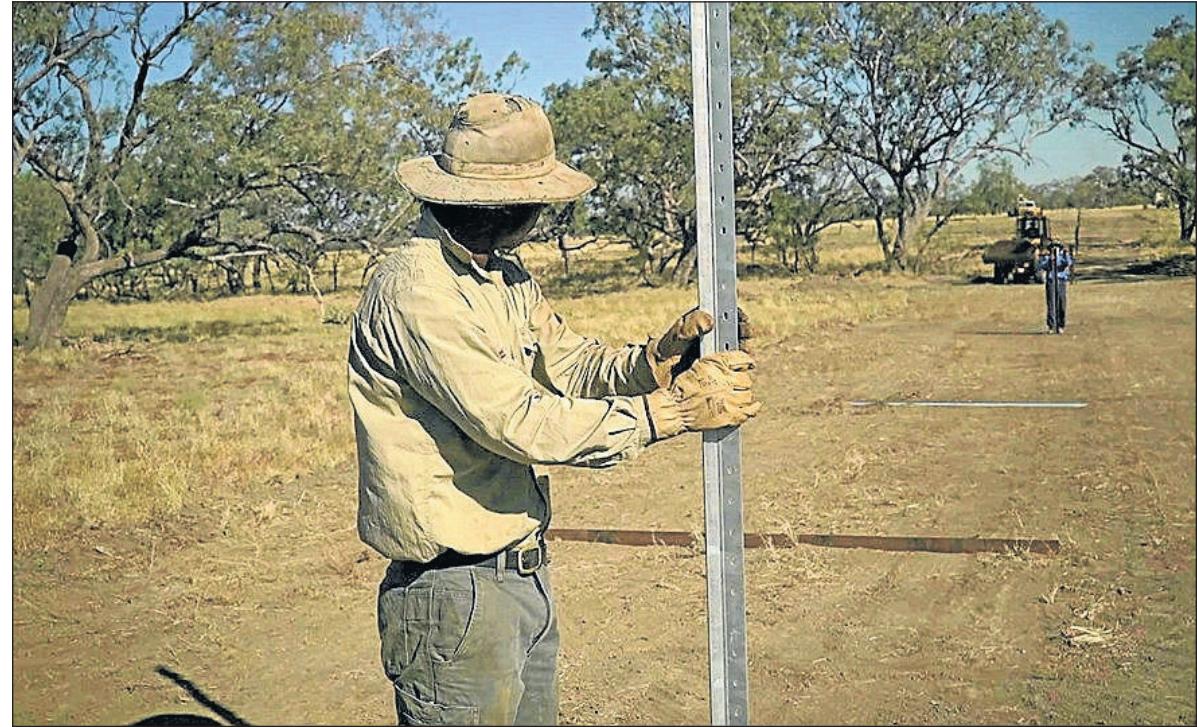
those without part of the fence on their land – contributing into the future.

Benefits are already starting to show, and once the remaining dogs inside the 300 kilometres fence are controlled, graziers are hoping to see lambing rates increase ten-fold.

Central West Queensland grazier Andrew Turnbull said boundary fencing had become the key form of protection against wild dogs on his property, "Lower Lansdowne".

"The whole area has been completely decimated by dogs," Mr Turnbull said.

"The destruction is just horrific – most of the time they'll kill, but sometimes they just go for the kidneys, and the sheep are still walking around.



**PROTECTION:** Central West Queensland grazier Andrew Turnbull says boundary fences is the key form of protection against wild dogs.

"Thirty or 40 years ago we still had the old boundary fences, but we let them go, and the dogs have come back.

"Back then, this was mainly sheep country, and there would have been 300,000 sheep in the region. Today it's probably 30,000 if you're lucky."

As well as dogs, kangaroos have become a major issue, with grazing pressure from large mobs having a huge impact on feed.

However, Mr Turnbull is optimistic new fencing will help manage this.

"The group next door put up a fence,

and at first I was sceptical about how effective it would be," Mr Turnbull said.

"But having gone and had a look, you could notice the difference straight away. They had more feed, they were controlling roo numbers and they had more sheep."

## Proactive approach by farmers

AUSTRALIAN farmers spend over \$20,000 each on pest and weed control every year, which equates to \$2.38 billion nationally.

A National Landcare Survey undertaken in 2013 showed weed and pest control continues to be a key priority for Australian farmers, not only due to the cost of their control, but also in the context of lost production and reduced export opportunity.

The expenditure invested by landholders annually demonstrates the impact weeds and pests can have on farm profitability as well as the role farmers have in protecting Australia's natural environment.

The survey found 89 per cent of farmers actively managed weeds and 74 per cent worked to control pests.

More than 70 per cent of farmers are part of an agriculture-related group.

Importantly, regulation was not the main driver of weed and pest control.

Only one per cent of farmers cited this as their main reason for controlling pests and weeds.

Between 80 and 90 per cent of respondents stated the economic impact of weeds and pests on their farms was the key motivator.

# A howling success

## Tuckombil gets wild dogs under control

WHEN Richmond Landcare Network treasurer Tony Walker awoke one night to the howling of two wild dogs on his doorstep, he knew a new problem had arrived in the region.

"Up until that point there hadn't really been a problem with wild dogs in the area.



The slowdown we have seen really comes down to the success we had with the program early on and continual follow up baiting

"But we soon realised there definitely was a wild dog population in the region," Mr Walker said.

Through Tuckombil Landcare and with the help of local landholders and the North Coast Local Land Services (LLS), the Tuckombil wild dog control group formed and started a baiting program in April of last year.

The baiting program initiated by the group has seen wild dog numbers

reduced dramatically throughout the region.

"We started in April last year and by December we had poisoned 70 dogs.

"This year it has slowed down significantly and we now regularly go two to three weeks without a dog taking bait," Mr Walker said.

"The slowdown we have seen really comes down to the success we had with the program early on and continual follow up baiting."

Mr Walker said the group also had nine cameras operating throughout the region, which act as an early warning system for landholders and allow them to put in place immediate and targeted management strategies.

The group uses the Feral Scan website ([www.feralscan.org.au](http://www.feralscan.org.au)) to record activity such as wild dog sightings, camera trap recording, howling and predation of stock, native wildlife and domestic pets.

It is estimated wild dogs cost the agricultural sector as much as \$66m a year through disease transmission, livestock losses and control costs.

■ Visit [www.tuckombillandcare.org.au](http://www.tuckombillandcare.org.au)

**RIGHT:** Wild dogs caught by surveillance cameras as part of the Tuckombil control group.



# Better tracking helps fight feline menace

THE race to save the estimated 100 native species under threat from the explosion of feral cat numbers across Australia has seen the introduction of innovative measures to combat the problem.

Australia faces one of the highest wildlife extinction rates of any country in the world, which has been made significantly worse since the increase in numbers of feral cats in habitats across Australia.

It is estimated there are between 15 and 23 million feral cats in Australia, with each cat responsible for the deaths of between five to 30 native animals every day.

At the forefront of the push to reduce the impact feral cats have on Australia's native wildlife is a project launched by the Invasive Animals CRC and Australian Government Department of the Environment. FeralCatScan is a community and

landholder resource which allows people to record sightings or evidence of feral cats in their local area, as well as the damage that feral cats cause.

Invasive Animals CRC project officer Peter West said the app could be used to view or print a local feral cat map, upload photos of feral cats in your local area, access information about feral cat control and connect with local people to take action.

"The purpose of FeralCatScan is to

provide the community and land managers with a tool for real-time reporting of feral cats, any management activities undertaken, photos of impacts and, most importantly, using that collective information to identify practical solutions to the feral cat problem," Mr West said.

"Feral cats are a nationwide issue needing collective approach.

"We are never going to eradicate cats, but we can reduce the impacts on wildlife by ensuring management is done efficiently, effectively and humanely in areas where feral cats are having the most impact on wildlife.

"Anyone can use the app or website to record feral cat activity and it is really easy to use."

■ Visit [www.feralscan.org.au/feralcatscan/](http://www.feralscan.org.au/feralcatscan/)

**The Australian Home Heating Association is a long-time supporter of Landcare Australia and represents manufacturers committed to creating wood heaters that are as environmentally responsible as possible.**

We are proud to contribute to Landcare's farm forestry and regeneration projects that encourage the planting of native trees to improve soil and provide sustainably-harvested firewood to the community and are committed to educating the community on the best ways to use wood heating.

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To find out more about the Australian Home Heating Association visit [www.homeheat.com.au](http://www.homeheat.com.au)



# Celebrating the community heroes

**Fairfax Media Landcare Community Group Award:** This award is made to an outstanding community group that is working towards sustainable land use and/or is undertaking on-ground action to protect, enhance or restore an area on behalf of the community.

## Tasman Landcare Group, TAS

SINCE the group's formation in 1996, the Tasman Landcare Group has displayed a commitment to promoting holistic and sustainable land and water management for primary production, recreation and conservation.

The activities undertaken by the group over the past two decades have been identified and implemented to maximise environmental and social benefits to the community and include coastal and riparian management, pasture productivity, shelterbelts and farm forestry, wildlife management and cultural heritage conservation.

In the weeks following the 2013 fire in the Dunalley area, the group facilitated a number of forums and workshops to develop strategies to meet the needs of affected property owners.

This included weed control, garden re-establishment and rehabilitating shelter plantings and fencing. A post fire revegetation booklet was published by the group with practical tips for landowners.

## Glen Innes Natural Resources Advisory Committee, NSW

DURING the recent one-in-50-year drought through the Glen Innes region, GLENRAC placed an emphasis on providing information and support for landholders across a range of topics including mental health, demonstrating that GLENRAC is about not just caring for the land but also caring for our people and our community.

GLENRAC has been in operation

since 1989 servicing the natural resource management needs of land managers of the Glen Innes community.

GLENRAC is one of the longest running Landcare networks in NSW and has gone from strength to strength in more recent years.

GLENRAC has not only delivered a diversity of on-ground projects with both private and public land holders, but has worked to build the capacity and resilience of our members and community.

Keys to GLENRAC's success as a Landcare network include having strategic plan which is current and well utilised; a diverse committee structure; sound communication techniques; good connections with our community and a commitment to develop and maintain partnerships to further our community and the GLENRAC organisation.

## Blackwood Basin Group, WA

WITH a core mission to inspire the sustainable community management of the Blackwood River Catchment's resources for the benefit of current and future generations through co-ordination and education, the Blackwood Basin Group has a long record of achievements for innovation in community-led action.

The group has been co-ordinating community managed Landcare projects across the Blackwood Catchment for over two decades, working with 54 catchment groups, assisting over 500 farming families and delivering more than \$16 million of Landcare activities in this time.

The strength of their work comes

from the partnerships they established with industry, government and the community.

## Nerang Riverkeepers, QLD

NERANG Riverkeepers is a leading community catchment care group with big dreams, inspiring ideas and great outcomes.

The group's predominant focus is on restoring degraded riparian areas by undertaking environmental weed management and planting along the Nerang River.

Where a local environmental issue exists they have collaborated with the right partners and inspired community action, evident in the success of programs such as the restoration of Kirkendale Environmental Park on the Gold Coast through extensive weed removal and the planting of 3000 native plants.

## Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group, VIC

THE Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group has strived to establish and advance new partnerships and projects, providing knowledge, skills, training and opportunities for members, as well as sustainable environmental and agricultural outcomes for the region.

The group has developed new Landcare initiatives such as the Moorabool Nectar Project, which provides nectar producing plants and nest boxes in urban and peri-urban neighbourhoods to create linkages for native species and to encourage them safely back into urban areas.

They have developed strong partnerships with the CCMA,



**COMMUNITY CHAMPION:** Landcare chief executive Tessa Jakszewicz presents the award to Guy Dobner from Tasman Landcare Group.

participating in river health and land health initiatives, contributing to weed strategies, attending information sessions and volunteering on projects.

## Mount Taylor ParkCare Group, ACT

A COMBINATION of consistency, enthusiasm, science and local knowledge has seen the Mt Taylor ParkCare group transform the Mt Taylor reserve with the removal of approximately 48,000 woody weeds, growing and planting approximately 1000 plants and 500 shrubs native to Mt Taylor, and regular monitoring and protection of rare plants.

Tapping into the knowledge of local ecologists, botanists and ornithologists, the group has compiled detailed botanical records and bird sightings, and they communicate their passion with other reserve users through annual wildflower walks, school engagement and Facebook.

Mt Taylor has also developed strong partnerships with other groups in the region including other ParkCare groups, Greening Australia, the Southern ACT Catchment Group and researchers

at the University of Canberra and Australian National University.

## Finniss Reynolds Catchment Group, NT

DESPITE the challenge of working in remote areas and parts of the NT difficult to access during the wet season, the Finniss Reynolds Catchment Group is successfully dealing with landscape scale issues.

The Finniss Reynolds Catchment Group (FRCG) project is a collaboration focused on control of feral pigs and the invasive prickly floodplain weed Mimosa pigra across the high biodiversity value sites of the Finniss River and Anson Bay catchments, south-west of Darwin.

The 5500km<sup>2</sup> catchment area is occupied by 900 land parcels and presents a mix of Indigenous land, pastoral properties, national parks, crown land and residential blocks.

To date the FRCG has successfully identified and mapped the Mimosa pigra infestation in the catchment, used an annual aerial spray program to treat large scale mimosa infestations each wet season, collected baseline data on feral pig density by aerial survey and performed aerial culling.

## 2015 STATE & TERRITORY LANDCARE AWARDS

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**CONGRATULATING all winners and nominees of this years awards, and their inspirational work for the land and water that sustain us all.**