

Survey shows farmers learn with one another

THE adage "farmers learn from farmers" has another spin, "farmers learn with farmers", the 2013 National Landcare Survey suggests.

Conducted by telephone with 500 commercial farmers on behalf of National Landcare facilitator Brett de Hayr, the 2013 survey showed nearly

three-quarters of farmers are members of an agriculture-related group.

About a third of those who participated in groups belonged to Landcare or farming systems groups.

They told the survey this was the best way of getting information relat-

ed to local conditions, and of learning how new ideas were being applied by other farmers in their area.

Only three per cent cited access to funding as a reason for being part of a Landcare or farming systems group.

In an increasingly complicated world, it seems farmer groups are

becoming more specialised Mr de Hayr said.

Less than two per cent of survey respondents were members of more than two groups, and there was little crossover in group membership.

The most common ground lay between local Landcare or farming

systems groups and State farming and industry organisations, with a common membership of around 30pc.

Once people found a niche group that works for them, they tended to stay with it, Mr de Hayr said.

■ continued p5

Keeping soil care in sharp focus

BORN of farmers' natural interest in soil health, the special-interest Landcare group Soilcare has moved from strength to strength since forming eight years ago.

Soilcare was created out of the Tuckombil Landcare Group, on the NSW North Coast, which in 1998 recognised that its farmer members shared a common interest in understanding how their practices affected the soil.

In the subsequent Good Soil Project and the two Good Worm Projects that followed, Tuckombil Landcare attracted more than a million dollars in funding.

By 2004, preoccupation with soil health was pulling Tuckombil Landcare members away from other natural resource management tasks, according to Soilcare chairperson Bonnie Walker.

The following year, Soilcare was born to provide a specific focus on agriculture's relationship with the soil.

"Healthy soil is fundamental to the health of people and the planet," Ms

Walker said.

"We can't talk about the health of anything without referring to the soil."

Soilcare is primarily about education – helping farmers wanting to make the move from input-dependent farming to a more self-supporting biological farming approach.

On that front, funding from the Jaramas Foundation through its partnership with Landcare Australia enabled the group to produce an educational video on practical on-farm measurement of important soil properties.

The Group has also benefited enormously from the work of two Alstoneville TAFE teachers Dave Forrest and Alan Coates, who have been teaching sustainable agriculture for 30 years.

With the help of the two teachers, Soilcare has been able to host workshops that introduce farmers to the complex dynamics of soil health, and how to support a natural system that in turn imparts resilience to farming systems and lowers input costs.

The group also hosts international visitors. This year it was Bob Schaffer, a US agroecology agronomist; last year it was Gary Zimmer, the American author of *The Biological Farmer*.

Most of Soilcare's 280-odd members are on the North Coast within driving distance of the group's courses but membership is open to all and extends as far as Japan.

"Membership of Soilcare is a really good deal," Ms Walker said.

"Especially if you're young – for \$55 you get a lifetime membership." Courses are also open to all.

"We're doing this for the community," she said.

The group is facing some new challenges with the imminent retirement of Mr Forrest and Mr Coates and changes to the TAFE delivery model.

But farmer interest in soil health isn't fading, which has encouraged the group to consider mounting Australia's first major biological farming conference.

■ Visit www.soilcare.org

Driving productivity with integrity

FARMERS might think they drive their farming operations, but according to Henri Bader, in reality it all depends on the health of the ecosystem.

That understanding has got the NSW North Coast macadamia farmer and Soilcare member making changes on his own 6000-tree orchard to promote natural health in the soil and trees. The aim: more productivity, less outlay on inputs.

A typical macadamia orchard has a thick canopy that throws heavy shade across all the ground beneath the trees. The shade means little can grow on the orchard floor, leaving the soil prone to erosion and dependent on external inputs to feed the trees and soil organisms.

Mr Bader wants grass beneath his trees – the more varieties the better.

It is, he says, "about

maintaining the natural integrity of the orchard floor".

"Integrity" means groundcover to guard against erosion during increasingly frequent and large storms and biodiversity to help build the soil microbial community – essential for supporting fertility and protecting against soil-borne disease.

Improving the soil structure ensures better capture of rainfall in times of low rain, and less runoff of nutrient and leaching below the root zone in times of heavy rainfall.

It all adds up to lower-cost production while maintaining the health of the physical environment, Mr Bader said.

Against the industry trend, he has started pruning his trees to ensure sunlight reaches the ground. Not only that, he is embarking on an experiment that

will remove every second row of trees planted on the old 7x5 metre grid, so he is left with a 14x5 m grid.

The system will not only give him sunlight on the orchard floor to support vegetation and biological activity there, it also means the entire tree canopy receives sunlight, spreading productive capability across the canopy, Mr Bader said.

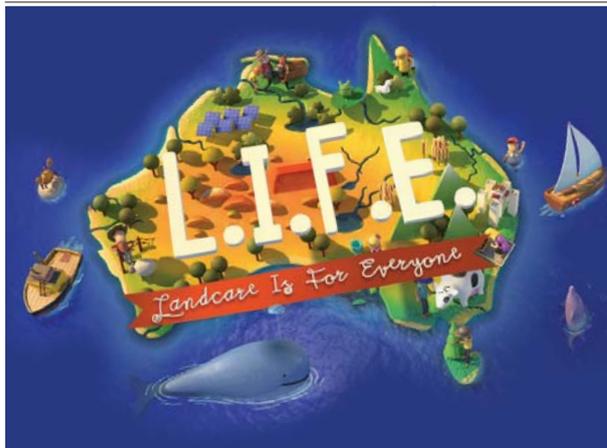
His open grid layout means if new, more productive macadamia cultivars become available, Mr Bader will be able to plant them in the old tree rows and cull existing trees as the new trees come into production.

As a relatively small macadamia producer, Mr Bader's returns depend on quality.

Sound environmental strategy coupled with an investment in a computer-controlled nut drier are vital elements in his operation.



Soilcare chairperson Bonnie Walker inspecting the health of the soil on her avocado farm at Tuckombil on the NSW North Coast.



2013
State & Territory
Landcare Awards



Congratulations to all 2013 Landcare Award Winners!

Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit a nomination and to our sponsors for your valued support.

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bankmecu joins students in planting 3000 trees on the Landbank

MORE than 30 school students from Victoria's Edenhope College joined representatives from bankmecu and Landcare to plant 3,000 trees in Ozenkadnook in the first week of September.

Coinciding with Landcare Week, the tree planting day at one of the five properties in bankmecu's Conservation Landbank was part of a bankmecu's reward for high performing staff.

Each year, bankmecu sends up to 10 staff to the Landbank for a day to reward them for their efforts in sustainability and increase their understanding of the Landbank – a valuable asset to the bank and its customers.

bankmecu Community Development Manager Simone Douglas, who participated in the tree planting day, was excited to be involved.

"The Conservation Landbank helps bankmecu offset carbon emissions from cars we finance as well as the loss of biodiversity resulting from the financing of new home constructions – all part of our commitment to create

a sustainable future."

"With the properties so far away from our head office in Kew, it's a privilege to be able to see the Landbank in person," Simone said.

bankmecu recognises the important role the local community plays in the success of the Landbank.

"It was wonderful to see so many children participating on the day – there is a strong level of community ownership of the project," Simone said.

"The ongoing support of local volunteers and school groups is critical in re-vegetation and restoration efforts at the Landbank. The initiative wouldn't be possible without their assistance."

Development of the bankmecu Conservation Landbank also owes thanks to the ongoing support of its customers who collectively own this magnificent asset.

Pictured are bankmecu staff and children from Edenhope College at the Conservation Landbank in September.



Planting a success for the community

THE 2013 planting season at bankmecu's Conservation Landbank in Victoria proved a great success for the local community with almost \$10,000 raised through tree planting which will be injected back into local community groups and projects.

Over eight days in August and September, 215 volunteers from across West Wimmera and bankmecu planted more than 20,000 trees across three of the five Conservation Landbank properties.

As each group receives funds based on the number of trees they planted, the planting days provide local community groups with a way of raising much needed funds for their clubs, schools and sporting groups.

This funding is used by the groups for a range of purposes including the purchase of new equipment and payment of annual insurance.

Edenhope College chose to use the funds they raised this year to provide birthing health kits for women in Africa.

As well as being a valuable source of

income for the groups it is also a great way for locals to learn more about the Conservation Landbank and the role it plays in their community.

The Conservation Landbank was established in 2008 as a way for bankmecu to offset carbon emissions from car loans financed and to offset biodiversity loss from the construction of new homes financed.

Since then, it has grown to encompass five properties across 928 hectares of land, with each property selected because of its significant biodiversity conservation value.

The properties are purchased by bankmecu, "deposited" into the Conservation Landbank and are protected against any future destruction of biodiversity or carbon loss by Trust for Nature Conservation Covenants.

Landcare Australia manages the Conservation Landbank with local Landcare group, Kowree Farm Tree Group, and by the end of the year, 80 hectares will have been revegetated by the community plantings and direct seeding.



Almost 25 years on and still passionate about Landcare

UPDATE

Tessa Jakszewicz
LAL chief executive



AS 2013 draws to a close, we can look back on a year where the State and Territory Landcare Awards recognised and celebrated Landcare achievements right across the country.

It has been a real privilege to be able to travel and witness firsthand the dedication and diversity of the movement through the Landcare Awards events.

I would like to congratulate everyone involved in making them a success.

The Landcare movement is undoubtedly a passionate community of people, and it is undertaking vital work to ensure the productivity and sustainability across all our landscapes. The Landcare Awards help us champion this work.

Next year Landcare Australia Limited will be celebrating its 25th anniversary.

Anniversaries are naturally times of reflection, and an opportunity to look to the future.

As we look forward, we are fortunate in having the guidance of Landcare Australia Limited's (LAL)

original objectives, which remain as relevant today as in 1989.

- Develop a landcare ethic amongst all Australians;
- Encourage and stimulate public awareness and participation;
- Encourage and facilitate education on landcare principles in schools and community, and
- Attract corporate funding and to distribute those funds across appropriate landcare projects.

Corporate and government funding plays a largely unseen, but vital role in helping the work Landcarers undertake on the ground.

It is heartening to report that in the 2013 financial year, LAL distributed more than \$2 million to

463 projects courtesy of our corporate partners.

Our aim is to build on this into the future.

annual report detailing in full our key achievements and highlights from the 2013 financial year.

I very much look forward to

It is very heartening to report that in the 2013 financial year, Landcare Australia Limited distributed over \$2 million of funding to 463 projects

– Landcare Australia chief executive
Tessa Jakszewicz

Landcare Australia also leverages government funds to undertake many activities to support and promote the landcare movement – for instance, the production of Landcare in Focus.

We will shortly be releasing our

working in partnership with the Landcare movement, our corporate and government partners, supporters and the Landcare Australia team to ensure that our 25th year is one of continued success for Landcarers everywhere.

Photo competition captures diversity

TO CELEBRATE Landcare Week 2013 we asked you to hit us with your best shot.

We encouraged people to send us a photograph that shows “what Landcare means to you”, and we weren’t disappointed.

More than 80 photographs from all corners of the country were entered, including a beautiful shot of the Condamine River in Queensland by Barbara-Louise Barbierato, a photo of a couple of mermaids relaxing by a pool in New South Wales by Malcolm Fisher, David Chesterfield’s shot of Junior Landcare in action in Wiripaang Public School as well as a variety of landscapes and creatures great and small.

The photos submitted painted a picture of a diverse and vibrant community of people who have realised the importance of caring for the land and the difference it makes. It showed a young generation learning on the ground and an older generation willing to teach.

Landcare Australia chief executive Tessa Jakszewicz and national Landcare facilitator Brett de Hayr judged the entries, and had the unenviable task of choosing the three photographs they felt best fit the brief of illustrating “what Landcare means to you”

“The entries showed the diversity of Landcare and the great pride people take in looking after the land,” Mr de Hayr said.

“The three winning pictures are not only great shots, but touch on related themes of farmland, wildlife and waterways and all three also had great descriptions which told the Landcare story behind the pictures and brought them to life.”

Ms Jakszewicz said the competition



One of the winning photographs from the “What Landcare means to you” photography competition. This photograph of the shy Southern Emu Wren came from Dion Thompson, near Coffin Bay, South Australia.

highlighted the differences in Landcare’s significance across the country. “Whether illustrating beautiful landscapes, wildlife or people at work, all photographs submitted really demonstrate how Landcare can

mean so many different things to different people, yet the theme of making a real difference remains a constant,” she said.

The three photographs chosen as winners show a community group at

work in Sydney, NSW, a wetland “teaming with life” in Henty, Victoria, and a reclusive and shy Southern Emu Wren near Coffin Bay, South Australia.

“Congratulations to the three win-

ning photographers, Malcolm Fisher, Chris Cooney and Dion Thompson,” Ms Jakszewicz said.

■ To see all the photos submitted, visit www.facebook.com/landcareaustralia

Awards recognise Landcare links

THE links formed between business, arts and the environment have been recognised in an award to Living Landscape, a major environmental project managed by Landcare Australia in partnership with the Bundanon Trust.

Landcare Australia’s Farming and Major Projects director Dr Shane Norrish accepted the Visy Environmental Sustainability Award at the 2013 NSW and ACT Creative Partnerships Australia Awards in Sydney on September 3.

“The award is wonderful recognition of an excellent partnership and a great project,” Dr Norrish said.

“I hope people take some time to visit Bundanon, and enjoy the

project’s achievements.”

Living Landscapes is a major four-year project intended to increase biodiversity and reconnect native habitat in the Shoalhaven River catchment of NSW on 1100 hectares of land uniquely gifted to the Australian people by artist Arthur Boyd and his family.

Landcare Australia, Bundanon Trust, Greening Australia, Southern Rivers CMA and SKM are the project’s partners.

It is funded through the Clean Energy Australia Biodiversity Fund and the Borland bequest, made to Landcare Australia from NSW businessman Raymond Borland to restore non-urban degraded

lands in New South Wales.

All winners from the NSW awards will go on to compete at the national awards to be held at Parliament House in Canberra on November 18.

The NSW and ACT Creative Partnerships Australia Awards recognise and celebrate outstanding relationships between business, arts and donors.

Creative Partnerships Australia is an amalgamation of the Australia Business Arts Foundation and Artsupport Australia.

RIGHT: Deborah Ely, Bundanon Trust; Jon Ward, Visy, and Shane Norrish, Landcare Australia.



Jemena brings energy to customers and communities across eastern Australia

Jemena has an electricity network that supplies 330,000 customers in northwest Melbourne. Jemena’s Eastern Gas Pipeline brings gas from Bass Strait to the major distribution network supplying gas to 1.1 million customers in Sydney and regional NSW. Further north, Jemena’s Queensland Gas Pipeline transports gas from Roma to major industrial customers in Rockhampton and Gladstone.

Over the past seven years, Jemena has partnered with Landcare Australia to help local communities care for the environment.

Together, we support Landcare groups safely undertaking on-ground environmental projects, without impacting underground infrastructure, by calling **Dial Before You Dig** on **0011** or visiting **0011.com.au** before work starts.

<< Jemena volunteers at Woodlands Historic Park, Greenvale, Friday 20 September 2013.



Jemena

The bequest bringing back the Big Scrub

TWO fragments of what was once the biggest sub-tropical lowland forest in Australia, the 900 square kilometre Big Scrub, are being conserved through a bequest managed by Landcare Australia.

The Big Scrub Rainforest Landcare Group used \$20,000 from the Raymond Borland Bequest to improve the ecological integrity of two high-value remnants of what remains of the Big Scrub – Booyong Flora Reserve and Mortons Scrub.

These habitats, on the NSW North Coast, are ranked as being critically endangered ecological community.

The project funded restoration works involving professional bush regenerators, landholders and the community who worked on the threat posed by damaging weed species that spread rapidly throughout the remnants.

These vigorously growing weeds smother native plants, seriously degrading the forest structure and arresting natural regeneration.

The most serious of the many weeds challenging the integrity of the Big Scrub remnants are Madeira Vine, large- and small-leaved Privet, Morning Glory and Wanderer.

The project employed professional bush regenerators to implement restoration works in line with existing Vegetation Restoration Plans for each site.

Restoration methods are regarded as best practice, and have been detailed in Big Scrub Landcare's Rainforest Weeds Manual and Rainforest Restoration Manual.

The project included one public site and one private site.

Active conservation is required on both public and private lands in order to contribute to landscape scale connectivity and sustainable biodiversity outcomes.

The project also included a promotional display at the Alstonville Show to raise community awareness and capacity in rainforest restoration.

Big Scrub Rainforest Day was held in September 2012.

This event included a number of workshops, walks and community engagement activities aimed at increasing skills and knowledge of Big Scrub rainforest restoration.

The group found that this project increased the awareness and understanding of the local community in conservation and landcare activities,



Controlling climbing asparagus as part of the Big Scrub restoration project on the NSW North Coast.

and strongly increased community action in conservation.

The project directly benefited more than 20 children and more

than 30 adults, in addition to the 80 community members who attended the Alstonville Show.

A sign installed at Booyong Flora

Reserve, near the start of the walking track, informs visitors of the support of the Raymond Borland Bequest and Landcare Australia.



LANDCARE in Focus is proudly supported by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and published by Landcare Australia Limited.

For more information or to submit an article, email enquiries@landcareaustralia.com.au.

Please note that due to space restrictions we cannot guarantee that all submissions will be included.

All submissions must adhere to the following guidelines and the deadlines below and must include:

- One article of no more than 300-600 words saved as a Microsoft Word document or a PDF.
- No more than 2 or 3 high resolution (must be at least 1MB in size) images that clearly illustrate the accompanying article.
- Full captions for each attached image that explain who is in the photos and/or what they illustrate.

Also, please ensure that we have permission from any people featured in the photos to use these photos in Landcare in Focus

● Contact information for more information if required
Dates for 2014 will be published on www.landcareonline.com.au in the near future.

Electromagnetic farming boosts wheat profits

NEW strategies are helping farmers in the low-rainfall wheatbelt of Western Australia take advantage of good seasons while protecting their soil resource base during dry years.

The strategies were developed as part of a project coordinated by North East Farming Futures (NEFF), a farmer group based in the north-eastern wheatbelt of Western Australia.

The project, called "Farming on the Edge", was supported by a \$165,000 Woolworths Fresh Food Future grant administered through Landcare Australia.

The project used electromagnetic induction (EM38) and radiometric technology to map soil variation and type across farms in the region, along with capacity to hold moisture. This information was then used to predict potential wheat yield as seasons unfolded and to match this potential to profitable fertiliser inputs.

During any decade, 80 per cent of cropping profits in the region come from just 20pc of seasons.

That means four out of five years generate only break-even or negative income, according to NEFF chief

executive Chris Wheatcroft.

"The secret is to conserve as much soil moisture as possible to optimise yield production, while also allocating inputs according to the seasonal outlook," Mr Wheatcroft said.

"In addition to rainfall, there are four drivers of crop yields in our area – soil moisture, nitrogen, potash and soil pH. "Nitrogen and potash input and soil pH can be controlled but soil moisture can only be conserved."

Soil maps are created through the technology-generated, paddock-level "input" zones, based on the four productivity drivers.

"The maps guide the amount of fertiliser, lime and seeding rate applied across a farm so that areas with higher soil moisture capacity and yield potential receive more fertiliser, and those with restrictive soil pH receive more lime."

By marrying variable rate technology with a crop simulation program called Yield Prophet, farmers are able to manage each season according to likely and actual rainfall.

The mapping pays for itself swiftly: the project established that the one-



Significant discussions occurred around the benefits of yield prophet predictions and nitrogen input for maximum water use efficiency linked to profitable yield.

off cost of about \$27 per hectare to develop the mapped input zones was recovered in the first year.

The project is not just about crops – wheat is the key profit driver in the NEFF region, but sheep are a major livestock enterprise.

Wool prices have been low for the past twenty years, and grain produces 95pc of farm revenue for the majority of NEFF farm businesses.

Many farmers have destocked in the past decade, most permanently.

Many of those who retain sheep are converting from a wool-based enterprise to one based more on meat.

"For our region we found meat sheep were more profitable and less labour intensive than a wool enterprise," Mr Wheatcroft said.

Buying in a flock for wool and meat production was estimated to generate a gross margin of \$34/ha or \$13 per animal.

Converting a current flock from wool to meat generated profits of \$72/ha, or \$29 per animal.

"Meat production was about 17pc more profitable per hectare than wool production according to the model used," Mr Wheatcroft said.

But to conserve much-needed soil moisture for the subsequent cropping phase, pasture rotations must be sprayed to stop weeds setting seed during winter and early spring.

"This causes a conflict between the crop and grazing enterprises, because it creates a fodder gap for the livestock between spring and harvest."

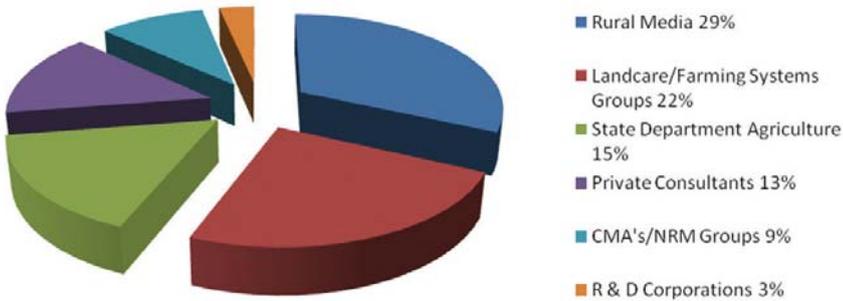
Grazing is only one of several non-cereal options for cropping land, and must be weighed against the benefits of fallow or alternative crops such as canola, chickpeas or lupins, which often prove more profitable and less labour-intensive.



LEFT: Efficient water use by crops on a large scale can effectively reduce water throughflow and saline recharge.

Linking up to learn together

Sources of Information that farmers rely on for Sustainable Agriculture/NRM



from p1

On the other hand, the stubborn survival of farmer groups against the ultimate information delivery mechanism, the internet, says much about people's desire for personal contact.

Interestingly, Mr de Hayr observed, getting individual farmers to link up and share information was not a problem.

"Getting institutions to do it is difficult," Mr de Hayr said.

"Institutions look out and see a

competitive field for their services.

"Farmers don't see it that way – they just want to get information in the most efficient and digestible form possible."

Organisations needed to recognise the diversity of interests out there, and that diversity presented some new challenges, Mr de Hayr said.

"How do you get your information across a lot of groups that have slightly different purposes, and avoid being trapped in some information silo? We lose efficiency if we start tar-

getting isolated groups."

The most efficient delivery model channels all information through a central hub that has the ability to direct specialised knowledge to smaller groups.

Not coincidentally, this happened to be the Landcare model, Mr de Hayr said.

Rural media remains the most important source of information delivery for farmers, with 29pc saying the print, online and broadcast media was central to their

Management key to economic viability

IT'S not surprising weeds and pests dominate the Landcare agenda: they represent billions of dollars of lost income to farmers, according to the 2013 National Landcare Survey.

The telephone survey of 500 commercial farmers found those contacted spend on average more than \$20,000 a year on controlling weeds and pests.

The survey sample reported an average annual outlay of \$15,756 on weeds and \$4884 on pests.

National Landcare facilitator Brett de Hayr extrapolated this spend over all of Australia's primary producers and arrived at \$2.38 billion.

"While \$20,000 averaged across landholders mightn't look so large, it all adds up to a huge amount of foregone

income and lost productivity," said Mr de Hayr (pictured).

"It explains why weeds and pests are the main Landcare issue, and also tells us something about the role farmers have in protecting the natural environment.

"Without this effort by Australian farmers and the support of Landcare groups as well as Commonwealth, State and Territory government investments, we'd see a very different agricultural landscape."

The survey found 89 per cent of farmers actively manage weeds, and 74pc work to control pests.

They don't do the work under threat of regulation, farmers told the survey – control is necessary because of the economic consequences of not undertaking it.

awareness and adoption of new knowledge.

Landcare and farming systems groups were important to 22pc of farmers surveyed, while State agriculture departments were still cited

as important by 15pc of farmers, despite the budgetary onslaught on these organisations.

Private consultants were a primary source of information for only 13pc of respondents.

Collaboration connecting conservation at Branch Creek

THE collaborative nature of Landcare is being shown at its best in the Branch Creek River Reach project in north eastern NSW where 12 landholders are working together to restore the ecological integrity of six kilometres of waterway.

The project's landscape guarantees that restoration is hard work.

Branch Creek flows between high, steep banks which, until the Landcarers got to work, carried a subtropical profusion of smothering weeds – lantana by the hectare, camphor laurel, ballon and madeira vine, to name a few.

In place of the weeds that have been sprayed and pulled out about 6000 native plants representing 60 species have been planted.

Despite some exceptionally wet years (and now a very dry one), survival rate has been about 85 per cent.

Whian Whian has pulled the project together and been a conduit for funding and according to Whian

Whian Landcare co-ordinator Emma Stone the collaboration between landholders along Branch Creek has been inspiring.

"Because they have an interest in the landscape beyond their own borders, the landholders are willing to work across different land uses and social boundaries," Ms Stone said.

The exercise began in 2009 as a River Reach project that united the riparian restoration efforts being undertaken by the owners of nine properties along Branch Creek.

As the landcarers tackled chunks of the weed-ridden creek and restored it bit by bit, they brought others on board to expand the project to 12 properties.

The site sits on top of its catchment. Its restoration has implications for water quality downstream, and for the spread and relocation of native species.

For the landholders, the restoration is a valuable aesthetic and – if they

sell – financial improvement to their properties.

For the region as a whole, it extends areas of high conservation value and the connectivity between remnant bushland.

Ms Stone said the financial outlay has been relatively modest: \$73,365 from Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority, and about \$50,000 in in-kind contributions of labour, trees and materials from the landholders and Whian Whian Landcare.

The project has had a staged approach, allowing landholders to come on board when they feel ready to do so, and ensuring that current work is properly consolidated before the next stage is begun.

Landholders received training that boosts the ability for landholders to self-diagnose and manage the riparian issues they confront, and lifts community awareness of the issues involved.



Branch Creek landholder Martin Novak with Whian Whian Landcare co-ordinator Emma Stone and daughter India on the Old Cream Road, part of the Branch Creek restoration project.



LANDCARE AUSTRALIA CELEBRATES 2,000 TELSTRA CORPORATE VOLUNTEERS!

From Sydney Harbour's iconic Goat Island to the beautiful coastline of Waterman's Bay in Perth, Telstra employees have contributed more than 2,000 volunteer days to Landcare groups across Australia, assisting the Landcare community to fulfil its pledge to help protect and repair Australia's precious environment.

Telstra employees understand that together with partners such as Landcare Australia, we can make a difference. In addition to participating in initiatives such as Landcare Australia's Corporate Environmental Volunteering Program, many are actively engaged in a Workplace Giving Program under which their donations to Landcare Australia are matched dollar for dollar by Telstra.

Volunteering - Sustainability in action at Telstra.



IT'S HOW WE CONNECT



In Brief

In safe hands: The federal Department of Agriculture is supporting Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) in a new In Safe Hands program in 2013 and 2014.

As part of this program, CVA is running a series of workshops based on the In Safe Hands Toolkit to help community groups, including Landcare, Coastcare and Bushcare groups properly manage safety as part of their conservation activities.

The kit and associated workshops are an opportunity for groups to learn more about and discuss the proper implementation of safety management and "duty of care".

■ To find out more, visit www.insafehands.org.au

Taylor's 10,000 trees: Taylors Wines recently celebrated the planting of its 10,000th tree with the latest release from its 100 per cent carbon neutral range, Eighty Acres.

Long-time supporters of Landcare Australia, Taylors Wines most recently donated prizes for the 2013 State and Territory Landcare Awards.

For the past five years, Taylors Wines has aligned with Australian not-for-profit organisation Carbon Neutral, to reduce and offset greenhouse gas emissions and support revegetation projects.

The planting of 10,000 trees through Carbon Neutral is one component of the organisation's Voluntary Emissions Reduction program.

The 2012 Eighty Acres Shiraz Viognier is the newest vintage in the Eighty Acres range.

Since the range's launch in 2009, 4,200 tonnes of carbon have been offset as a result of Taylors Eighty Acres carbon neutral commitment.

Sustainable school award:

Bentleigh Secondary College, recipients of a \$5000 grant through the Australian Home Heating Association (AHHA) and Landcare Australia partnership, has won the Education category in the Premier's Sustainability Awards 2013.

Recognised for its outstanding work in sustainability education, the school is involved in many sustainable projects including the Urban Forest, sponsored by the AHHA, a habitat restoration project to help educate youth about the necessity of sustainable forestry.

Now in their eleventh year, the Premier's Sustainability Awards celebrate efficient use of water, resources and energy, better waste management and recycling practices, the enhancement of the environment and effective, practical community action.

Overall winner, recipient of the Premier's Recognition Award, was a project by Moonee Valley City Council and Wingate Avenue Community Centre for introducing recycling to a community housing estate.



Mulched Chardonnay vines in South Australia's Riverland.

Mulching for grape success

SEQUENTIAL years of drought has prompted research on the use of mulch in South Australia's Riverland vineyards as a way of lowering water demand.

Partly funded by the Woolworths Fresh Food Future Program through Landcare Australia, the two-year project is exploring the economics and potential side-effects of mulch's well-documented ability to conserve soil moisture, suppress weed growth and increase soil fertility.

The Riverland, the largest wine growing region in Australia, has experienced several years of drought that has led to cuts in water allocations to grape growers.

One strategy growers have used to deal with drought is to buy in "temporary water" to top up annual water allocations.

When water prices are less than \$100 per megalitre, buying temporary water is economically viable, depending on grape prices and yield.

When water prices jump to \$600-\$1000/Ml, as they did in the drought, the practice becomes unsustainable.

The use of mulch on vines in the Riverland has been limited. That might be partly due to the cost of

mulching, but Ashley Ratcliff of Ricca Terra Farms, Barmera, compiled a report on the Landcare-supported mulch trial and said a lack of understanding about the benefits of mulching could also play a part.

A drip-irrigated Chardonnay vineyard in the Riverland was chosen as a trial site.

About 180 cubic meters of mulch was applied at a cost of about \$5,000.

can view the mulch's effects.

Mr Ratcliff reported mulch clearly conserved soil moisture, allowing the intervals between irrigations to be extended.

However, the impact mulch has on yield, wine quality, vine and soil health is still very much unknown, he said.

"More time is required to assess how the vineyard and the soil change

This reduces canopy growth, "but vineyard inspections of the lowest irrigation treatment have not caused any concerns regarding significant yield decline".

"If yield and vine health is not significantly impacted by the use of compost and mulch and the application of 2.3Ml/Ha/Yr then this strategy provides a real cost saving opportunity," Mr Ratcliff said.

The cost of the strategy in a 6.5Ha vineyard for four years would be \$37,390 (or \$47,859 after interest).

"The cost benefits associated with using mulch in a vineyard will be reduced irrigation demands, less pumping costs, less infrastructure wear and tear, and less reliance of water from the Murray Darling Basin," Mr Ratcliff said.

"If the use of mulch can be linked to better soil health, increase yields and the production of superior wines, then the use of mulch in vineyard should be further encouraged."

However, cost – particularly if mulch has to be transported from Adelaide – is a factor.

Mr Ratcliff said ideally mulch would be sourced closer to the Riverland.

The cost benefits associated with using mulch in a vineyard will be reduced irrigation demands, less pumping costs, less infrastructure wear and tear, and less reliance of water from the Murray Darling Basin

– Ashley Ratcliff, Ricca Terra Farms, Barmera, South Australia

Freight from Adelaide made up about a third of this cost.

At a rate of 90 cubic meters of mulch per hectare, or \$2,500/ha, the cost equates to 113 Ml/Ha of temporary water (calculated at a rate of \$22/Ml).

Six soil probes are being used to capture data from mulched and control areas every 15 minutes. The data is streamed live to a website, so growers and other interested parties

via the introduction of mulch," Mr Ratcliff said.

"There are some interesting differences in the soil analysis which will require further investigation."

He suggested a holistic approach to the use of mulch and considered several hypothetical strategies.

The one that delivered the biggest cost savings involved cutting irrigation rates by 55 per cent on mulched vines.





A Landcare Legacy

Mr Raymond Borland greatly valued Australia's landscape and the work Landcare groups do to repair it, so he made a significant bequest to Landcare Australia to help this valuable work continue. His bequest is funding two significant biodiversity projects, Living

Landscape and the Durness-Borland Landcare Corridor, and 13 local community projects across New South Wales. To read about other Landcare legacies, please visit www.landcareonline.com.au/bequest

Students clean up 'Poo Creek'

WHEN the creek behind your school is unaffectionately known as "Poo Creek", a job for Landcare beckons.

That was the case for Barrenjoey High School, which backs onto Careel Creek on Sydney's northern beaches – what was once a perennial stream draining natural run-off from Bilgola Plateau and Avalon into a Pittwater estuary.

Before the school's Go Green project started, Careel Creek looked more like a drain than a natural waterway.

With \$5000 in funding provided by Landcare Australia's corporate partner Staples the Careel Creek Plastics Cleanup Project was incorporated into students' fieldwork in the mandatory junior Geography and the Higher School Certificate (HSC) Geography courses.

Students have energetically taken on the "creekcare" role, adopting responsibility for the area and creating a "creekcare challenge" as an example to other regions dealing with similar problems of degradation.

To date, Barrenjoey students have

contributed more than 1200 hours to the project under the guidance of several hands-on teachers.

The students have collected, counted and removed a range of litter from this fragile estuarine ecosystem.

Benefits have accrued not just to the creeklands – teachers noted an evident change in students' perception of the value of the creek environment.

Students have been able to explore water quality and ecosystem impacts, taking on new activities that give an objective measure of their efforts.

The grant from Landcare Australia and Staples provided funding to purchase resources and support the students' actions.

For instance, a water station was installed at the school, and sales of bottled water stopped. Students have been encouraged to bring refillable bottles and use the water refilling station.

Local Bushcare volunteers and residents have been impressed with the student's efforts, including the removal of over 1000 litres of rubbish including plastic bags, food wrap-



Team leader Emily Whittaker removed this pile of dumped items from Careel Creek at low tide, which included bikes, scooters even an old turntable.

pings, dog droppings in plastic bags, along with several hundred plastic and glass bottles collected in the first six months of the project alone.

In co-ordination with the scheduled Local Council General Clean Up, students also removed from the creek bed five bikes, three scooters, two shopping trolleys as well as

numerous garden implements.

Local council workers helped students with plant identification and residents offered students drinks and verbal support for their efforts.

The teachers and students are now committed to ongoing weekly clean up of plastics – a twice-yearly removal of big items from the creek

to coincide with local council pick up, continued water testing, and data collection to measure water quality and native vegetation health.

Barrenjoey High is a co-educational, comprehensive secondary school of approximately 650 students, located on the Northern Beaches of Sydney.

Jiggi conservation project's corridors linking groups

THE first year of the six-year Rehabilitating High Conservation Habitats and Corridors project has been completed by the Jiggi Catchment Landcare Group Incorporated.

Funded by the NSW Environmental Trust, the project is using wildlife corridors to connect Landcare groups who have a shared vision of restoring natural vegetation and enhancing wildlife habitat on their properties.

The corridors link Mulvena Road Landcare, Nimbin Rocks Cooperative Landcare, Goolmangar School and Jiggi School Landcare groups and Jiggi Catchment Landcare.

Landowner Adrian George said it was good to be shoulder to shoulder with other regeneration enthusiasts.

"I really got a sense of the huge achievements being experienced by all stakeholders as a result of the work being conducted," Mr George said.

"Definitely inspiring – after the meeting we came home and immediately went out to do an hour of weed pulling before dark."

So far, professional bush regenerators working alongside Landcare group members have enhanced more than 7.5 hectares of high conserva-

tion value vegetation through weed control and planting.

These sites link key habitat for threatened species and form regional corridors for threatened species including koalas, squirrel gliders and the rose-crowned fruit dove.

The capacity of Landcare group members to manage environmental weeds on their sites is being strengthened through training in restoration techniques and by working alongside professional bush regenerators. They are tackling weeds like lantana, which degrading native plant communities and retard regeneration.

Some of the techniques utilised include cutting tracks in preparation for splatter gun/gas gun treatment of dense thickets of lantana, the "cut scrape and paint" technique for isolated lantana, vine weeds and other woody weeds, and selective spot spray to control ground cover weeds as well as stem injection of larger weed trees such as camphor laurel and privet.

The second year of the project will advance the development of habitat for threatened species.

There will be a field day on November 26, covering topics including the importance of native ground



Jiggi Catchment Landcare Group has launched a six-year rehabilitation habitats and corridors project, which will include splatter gun treatment of thickets of lantana.

cover, challenges associated with invasive pasture weed grasses, other weeds and weed control methods.

The day will involve speakers from the Northern Landcare Support Services and bush regenerators work-

ing on site from EnviTE Environment.

Other activities planned for Year 2 include a "water watch" and planting day with students from Jig School Landcare and a plant propagation workshop hosted by Friends of the

Koala for the Goolmangar School Landcare group.

■ For more information about the project contact Georgina Jones, (02) 6627 2844 or georginaj@envite.org.au



Workplace Giving Partners...Thank you!

Landcare Australia's corporate supporters and their employees understand that together we can make a positive difference to our natural environment.

Generous donations to Landcare Australia from workplace givers all around the country are pooled to maximise on-ground environmental benefits and support volunteers' efforts.

To find out more about Landcare Australia's Workplace Giving Program visit www.landcareonline.com.au/workplacegiving



Wildlife delights Holden volunteers

A CHEEKY nine-month-old wombat named Daisy stole the show at a recent Holden employee volunteering day held at Wildhaven Wildlife Shelter, located in St Andrews, Victoria.

Daisy scuttled, dodged and spun around employees and beckoned them into her new enclosure as they donned their gardening gloves and worked to weed the grounds, plant trees and spread gravel at the Shelter.

Following the devastating 2009 Black Saturday bushfires in Kinglake and St Andrews, Holden has provided a vehicle to help Alan and Stella Reid, owners of Wildhaven, as they rebuilt the shelter and continue to rescue and care for native animals of the region.

Forced to live in a shipping container for two years after the devastating fires, Alan and Stella believe that the support they have received through Holden's community partnership with Landcare Australia and the employee volunteering days has made a significant impact on the local wildlife and environment.

"The Captiva 7 donated by Holden is always in the bush with us. When we go out into the dark parts of Victoria to help animals, we know we always have a reliable car that is going to get us out no matter what the road looks like," Stella said.

"There is always plenty of room in the back for the kangaroos, wombats and koalas we collect and transport between locations."

Jenny Knox, Landcare Australia

Partnership Manager, said that Alan and Stella are inspiring people who care deeply for wildlife.

"The partnership between Holden and Landcare Australia is dedicated to raising public awareness of our unique environment and supporting those who dedicate their lives to caring for our wildlife, just like Alan and Stella," Jenny said.

This day was part of Holden's employee volunteering policy which entitles employees to one day of volunteering leave per annum.

RIGHT: Daisy the wombat delighted Holden volunteers at Wildhaven Wildlife Shelter at St Andrews, Victoria.



Wurega making connections to country for the future

ABORIGINAL elders and children came together to plant river red gums as part of Wurega Aboriginal Corporation's commemoration of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander Children's Day in August.

The theme for the day was "Right Here, Right Now: Our Rights Matter" – referring to ongoing concerns about human rights and special rights for Australia's indigenous children.

The donation of some red gum saplings to the corporation enabled the organisation to make an occasion in which children spent time with Elders on country and learned about caring for plants – part of their ongoing connection to country.

The day also provided an opportunity for a formal meeting to look at ways to improve the Wurega Art and healing Centre building.

The Wurega Aboriginal Corporation provides activities and healing programs for members who want to work for the benefit of the future generations.

As it becomes better established, it will also reach out to participation from the wider community.

Co-chairperson of the corporation Gail Harradine said it was a step toward ensuring the next generation

would pass on the indigenous culture and affiliation with the land.

"This activity reflects a huge step in our healing and to hold an event like this helps in reassuring our children they are our pride and joy – our next generation that will pass on culture and connection to country," Ms Harradine said.

"It is vital to us to provide opportunities for supporting our families to be part of the Dimboola community and to the Hindmarsh Shire Council in having access to the building to be able to put back into the country that we all share."

A future workshop will invite the broader Dimboola community to work together with Wurega members to learn about possum skin cloak making.

Further workshops are being planned around feather flower making, printing and weaving.



Local community members Sandy Hodge, Harper Harradine, Djarem Harradine, Yasmin Harradine, Tallula Harradine and Stuart Harradine.



LEFT: One of the many seedlings planted on the day.



Gardening at St Francis

A NEGLECTED weedy area has been transformed into a place attractive to native wildlife and a source of knowledge at St Francis of Assisi Primary School in Canberra.

Thanks to one of 259 Coles Junior Landcare grants handed out in 2013, the school brought students together with teachers, the wider school community, other schools and experts in indigenous natural resource management to build the sustainable traditional indigenous bush tucker and medicinal garden.

With guidance from ACT Indigenous Landcare facilitator Darren Chong, the Ngunnawal Know How Project allowed students to choose an assortment of native bush tucker and medicinal plants.

Year Six Environment Leaders and indigenous students led the planning, building, planting and continued care of the garden, during which they developed an understanding of the land from an indigenous perspective.

Previously prone to erosion and weed infestation, the area is now flourishing and includes a water tank to improve sustainability.

The project was overseen by a staff co-ordinating committee who encouraged the students to take ownership of the project and manage the garden tasks.

St Francis of Assisi is part of the Australian Sustainable School Program.

The garden now forms a practical part of the curriculum, teaching kids not only about indigenous bush tucker but also how to sustainably care for their local environment.

Coles Junior Landcare Garden Grants have enabled the establishment of many different garden projects, including bush tucker, indigenous, sensory and waterwise gardens and worm farms, recycling and composting projects.

The last Junior Landcare grant round for 2013 closed on August 2 and funded projects ranging from an Indoor Edible Garden in the Sydney CBD, a "Bees, Botany and Bush Tucker" garden in Cairns, a Milk Carton Greenhouse in Tasmania and a Native Butterfly Garden in Victoria.

■ For a full list of recipients, visit www.juniorlandcare.com.au

Powerful partnership boosting projects

CITIPOWER and Powercor are celebrating their 10 year partnership with Landcare Australia with a funding boost to Landcare groups they have supported across Victoria.

The partnership has funded a range of diverse projects over the last decade, including wildlife breeding programs, indigenous nurseries and numerous land rehabilitation and revegetation projects.

The partnership has also supported the Victorian State Landcare Awards, many regional Landcare awards and festivals and school environmental projects through the CitiPower Powercor Junior Landcare Powerful Partnerships Grants Program.

CitiPower and Powercor Sustainability co-ordinator Yvette Clifford said the funding boost aims to mark the achievements of the last 10 years and show the utilities' commitment to the ongoing partnership.

"Partnering with Landcare has enabled CitiPower and Powercor to support an amazing array of community-based environmental programs over the past 10 years," Ms Clifford said.

"Landcare's extensive network of community groups and volunteers has been a tremendous asset, helping to ensure the projects we support are

the projects that really matter to local communities."

One group to benefit from the extra funding is the Bellarine Catchment Network.

The network has received ongoing support since 2009 for the Catchment 4 Coasts – Community Engagement and On-ground works project.

Bellarine Catchment Network and Bellarine Landcare group program manager Matt Crawley said the funding has been crucial to the success of the project.

"The Bellarine Catchment Network has been delighted to partner with CitiPower and Powercor to deliver important projects on the Bellarine Peninsula," Mr Crawley said.

"In particular it has enabled us to support two Community Landcare Coastcare Nurseries to grow over 100,000 indigenous plants, rabbit proof fence a 2 km section of Port Phillip Bay Cliff face and conduct the Biodiversity in Your Backyard series, attracting more than 150 people to learn more about the biodiversity values of the area."

CitiPower and Powercor became involved in the Landcare Australia Partnerships Program as a way of offsetting the environmental impacts of their assets and operations and to



Powercor regional asset manager John Hardie with members of Yelta Landcare group.

support school and community environmental projects.

An allocation of \$2000 will be given to each region and distributed to groups through the Regional Asset

Managers from each of CitiPower and Powercor's seven regions.

■ For more information on CitiPower and Powercor environmental initiatives, visit

www.powercor.com.au/

■ Read more about Landcare Australia's partnership program at www.landcareonline.com.au/corporate-partners



For more information, please visit www.landcareonline.com.au/floatinglandcare

FLOATING LANDCARE

Protecting our urban waterways

This new initiative by Landcare Australia supports volunteer activities that help restore urban waterways, improve water quality, and engage more people in protecting the world's most precious natural resource....water.

Landcare Australia and a range of our corporate partners are committed to supporting projects that revitalise and regenerate coastal, freshwater and marine environments.

Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority and Landcare Australia are working together to deliver the Floating Landcare program in the Hawkesbury Estuary and Pittwater, NSW.



Happy volunteers at Habitat in Harmony community garden enjoying a barbecue after a planting day.

Youth grow in community garden

“YOUTH at risk” near Newcastle, NSW, are being supported in a program at the Habitat in Harmony Community Garden, funded through Landcare Australia and the Be Natural Grants Program.

During the last 12 months the “Greening n Growing” youth project has seen a strong partnership develop between Belmont Neighbourhood Centre, Belmont High School, Job Quest, Warners Bay Community Garden, Batabah Aboriginal Land Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Landcare group, Trees in Newcastle.

The youth-focused project came about in response to the neighbourhood centre and school staff witness-

ing a number of local children experiencing learning difficulties and disengagement from the school and local community.

In 2012, the consortium of community based organisations supported a group of young people from Belmont High School who were identified as being “at risk” and who would benefit from outdoor activities.

A core group of six young people who have been working in the community garden each Friday since February 2012 have continued to attend the regular workshops and working bees.

The high school is within walking distance of the garden.

Local volunteers have helped support

the kids, and local residents maintain the area during school holidays.

Habitat in Harmony Community Garden has a rich history of environmental, recreational and culturally significant projects.

The first committee for the garden formed 19 years ago.

The project was completed in 1995 and continues to be a highly utilised community asset to the Belmont community. The garden site is huge, designed using permaculture principles, including passive water collection and nutrient run-off management.

This group of young landcarers focused on rejuvenating a previously underutilised section of the community garden.

To turn a section of the garden grounds into a new native habitat area, the group designed the layout, and weeded, mulched and planted more than 400 native tube stock.

“We are so honored to be a recipient of a Be Natural Landcare grant,” said Belmont Neighbourhood Centre Manager Sheena Harvey.

“The vibrancy of youth has long been missing from our community garden and this project allowed us the opportunity to build a local relationship once again.”

A parent of one of the participants said their son had a noticeable lift in confidence after getting involved in the project – and that they had learned so much about plants that

the community garden was a second home.

The project partners and the local community celebrated the launch of the new space on October 18, sending out an open invitation to the community to visit the new native habitat and see what had already been achieved.

With the support of the Landcare Australia and Be Natural Grants program, this consortium of groups has helped young people create native habitat in a urbanised area while sending the message that they can positively contribute to this unique garden area, learn new things about the environment, and that their efforts are very much appreciated.

Rare rat species found in Queensland and Red Centre

A COLLABORATIVE project between the Papunya Rangers, Central Land Council, Territory Natural Resource Management and the Department of Land Resource Management (DLRM) has led to confirmation of the presence of the critically endangered central rock-rat at two sites at Mount Edwards, Queensland, and Haasts Bluff, Northern Territory.

Previously, the elusive species had only been known to exist in a few high altitude points in the West MacDonnell Ranges in the Northern Territory.

An intensive survey, which included using a helicopter to access the rugged face of Mt Edward and camera trappings was funded through Territory Natural Resource Management (TNRM) and carried out by the Central Land Council and DLRM.

The main aim of the survey was to find out if central rock rats were established in these areas and also to discover elements that were assisting the decline in numbers.

Research from the project indicated feral cat populations were a real threat to the endangered central rock rat, with remains such as bones and hair found in scat analysis. Peter McDonald from DLRM was

excited about the findings.

“Finding a new population of the central rock-rat outside of the West MacDonnell National Park is exciting and gives us hope for the future outlook for the species,” he said.

“However, it is clear that feral cats pose an immediate and severe risk to rock-rats and we may need to act soon to secure this population from predation.”

TNRM Regional Coordinator Heidi Groffen was also thrilled with the survey results and hoped to assist with further work.

“The site was thought to be a potentially suitable Rock Rat habitat,” Ms Groffen said.

“It’s always exciting to have an outcome like this from a project. TNRM are looking forward to further supporting the CLC and traditional owners in managing the area into the future.”

Central Land Council boss David Ross thanked TNRM which provided the funding for the survey.

“It’s a great boost for the ranger group out there,” he said.

“Rangers spend a lot of time on flora and fauna surveys for various agencies and to find a rare animal like this is unusual.”



Images of the rock-rat species found at Mount Edwards, Queensland, and Haasts Bluff, Northern Territory.

Big day out reclaims native bush

MORE THAN 130 groups took part in this year's Bushcare's Major Day Out (BMDO) which was sponsored by Landcare Australia as part of Landcare Week 2013.

Groups from every state and Territory in Australia except the Northern Territory took part in the BMDO, which is a celebration of the good work done by these groups and is designed to increase public awareness of the value of the Australian bush.

It provides an opportunity for people interested in finding out more about getting involved in bushcare and Landcare activities.

The main bushcare and bush regeneration activity is weeding as much of the Australian bush has been taken over by garden escapees and noxious weeds.

Across Australia in towns cities and the countryside there are bushcare groups who regularly weed parks and reserves to give the native plants a chance.

Native seeds can lay dormant in the ground for decades suppressed by weeds but once the weeds are removed these little Aussie battlers do all the work themselves.

Being native to the area means that they are adapted to conditions and survive well on sunshine and rain.

While predominantly a national weeding day, BMDO welcomes

groups who carry out other activities as well.

This year a bush photography workshop was held Mount Gravatt, Queensland.

The competition, as well as a bush fashion parade were well-attended.

The Sydney Bass Fishermans Club had a day of canoeing and restoring river banks and Willow Warriors paddled out to an island in Sydney Harbour to attack invasive weeds.

At McAuley Reserve in Sandy Bay, Tasmania, while the kids were enjoying activities and the adults sipping their mulled wine, Blue Belle the bandicoot made an appearance.

The Trees For Life group in South Australia organised a "Weed Front" with over 100 people forming a snaking line to push back an army of weed invaders.

At Cringan Bushland Reserve in Morwell, Victoria, volunteers climbed trees to paint nesting boxes.

There was also bird watching at Lake Claremont, Western Australia, where more than 80 species of birds delighted watchers and a group at Umbergong District Park, Latham, ACT, mapped native grasses and herbs.

Willoughby and North Sydney Councils restored habitat for native species and all of these groups spent part of the time socialising and enjoying a mixture of barbecues or sumptuous morning or afternoon teas.



Bushcare's Major Day Out event at Tunks Park, Cammeray in north Sydney. Photo: Matthew Keighery.

Celebrating corporate volunteers

A CORPORATE volunteer program with a strong Landcare component was recognised at the Keep Australia Beautiful NSW Sustainable Cities Awards Program.

Landcare Australia's (LAL) Corporate Environmental Volunteer (CEV) Sydney Harbour Program, run in partnership with the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife and the NSW Parks and Wildlife Service, picked up the Biodiversity Conservation Award.

The award acknowledges innovative and effective community projects that sustain and enhance biodiversity in urban environments; and projects which create, rehabilitate and restore biodiversity in urban environments.

LAL chief executive Tessa Jakszewicz said the CEV program has been highly successful and is gaining popularity.

"More than 1000 corporate volunteers from more than 50 companies have participated in the last financial

year alone, contributing over 7000 hours of conservation activities to help increase biodiversity in highly urbanised areas across Sydney Harbour," Ms Jakszewicz said.

"Landcare Australia's CEV program has been running for more than 20 years, bringing community, government and corporate sectors together to achieve positive conservation and improved biodiversity outcomes.

"In the last two years the consortium partnership with Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has seen the program grow at a rapid rate, while also raising funds for local volunteer projects and groups to undertake important environmental work in and around our beautiful Sydney Harbour."

The program aims to enhance habitat through weed eradication, plantings and by educating corporate volunteers on the importance of

protecting and restoring biodiversity and native habitat.

CEV days are held regularly at several different sites under the guidance of National Parks rangers and field staff, offering a unique conservation experience for corporates.

Indigenous rangers, regular park volunteers and field staff provide educational information on the Aboriginal history of the sites and information on native animals and indigenous plants local to the area.

The Keep Australia Beautiful Australian Sustainable Cities Awards encourage, motivate and celebrate the local sustainability achievements of urban communities across Australia. State and Territory finalists have been announced and the National winner will be announced this month.

■ For more information on how to get involved with LAL's Corporate Environmental Volunteering Program, visit www.landcareonline.com.au/



Corporate Environmental Volunteer Tessa Jakszewicz with awards host Costa Georgiadis and Keep Australia Beautiful NSW director Paul Akon.

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Celebrating Landcare awards

IT IS the nature of Landcare that it revolves around groups, not individual celebrities – but it is the dedication of many individuals that makes Landcare so effective.

Fittingly, the 2013 State and Territory Landcare Awards upheld the work of individuals and groups, the two interdependent building blocks of the Landcare movement.

The awards have produced a long list of outstanding finalists for the 2014 National Landcare Awards, that other biennial celebration of community-based environmental restoration.

The awards cover a range of excellence from individual Landcarers and facilitators to sustainable farming, innovative community groups and Junior Landcare teams.

They also cover the full gamut of Australia's diverse environments from the tropics to the heaths of Tasmania.

While all eyes are on celebrating the award finalists, these events perform another role: highlighting to business and community leaders the extent of the largely



Governor of Western Australia and Patron of Landcare WA Malcolm McCusker with winners of the Western Australia Landcare Awards and Landcare Australia representatives.

unsung environmental work being carried out by Landcarers.

In Victoria's Government House,

the State Ministers for Environment and Climate Change, and Agriculture and Food Security Ryan Smith and Peter Walsh were on hand to present awards.

Governor of Western Australia Malcolm McCusker hosted the State's ceremony in Perth's Government House, while Governor of Queensland Penelope Wensley presented at the State's event held in Warwick as part of the Queensland Landcare Conference.

In Canberra, a breakfast by the lake was the setting for the ACT Awards, with Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development Simon Corbell on hand to present

the ACT government awards.

The Tasmanian town of St Helens played host to the State's awards, which was part of a three day conference, while Newcastle was the venue for the NSW Landcare Awards held in conjunction with the State Landcare and Catchment Management Forum.

Awards categories were sponsored by Westpac Agribusiness and Qantas, long-time supporters of Landcare and partners of Landcare Australia.

Landcare Australia chief executive Tessa Jakszewicz travelled to a number of the events and was impressed by what she saw.

"It is fantastic to see the diversity and strength of the Landcare movement across the country as exhibited by all nominees and winners at this year's Landcare Awards," Ms Jakszewicz said.

"I very much look forward to welcoming the winners to next year's National Landcare Awards as we celebrate 25 years of the movement on a national level."

In the Landcare award ceremonies, all finalists are winners – but next year's National Awards will highlight a handful of Landcarers from the tens of thousands whose work is truly inspirational.



There were a host of achievements to celebrate at the early morning ACT Landcare Awards ceremony that took place during Landcare Week in Canberra's Boathouse on the Lake in September.

2013 State and Territory Landcare Award Winners

Individual Landcarer							
Greg Warburton	Western Australia	Clovelly Tasmania Pty Ltd	Tas	Jayne Shapter	Tas	Land Management Team	ACT
Chris Johns	Tasmania	Mike Harrison	Qld	Angela Calliess	ACT	Murries on Barwon	NSW
Russell Fry	Queensland	Majura Valley Free Range Eggs	ACT	Louise Hufton	NSW	Ken Stewart	Vic
Caroline Wenger	Australian Capital Territory	Fig Trees Organic Farms	NSW	Mandy Coulson	Vic		
Eric Hurn	New South Wales	Craig and Tanya Davis	Vic			Coastcare	
Peter Forster	Victoria					Tangaroa Blue Foundation	WA
						Wildcare Deslacs	Tas
Landcare Partnerships		Junior Landcare Team		Qantas Landcare Innovative Community Group		Mackay and District Turtle	Qld
Shire of Mundaring	WA	Esperance Bush Ranges	WA	RoyleyBushcare Inc	WA	Watch Association	Qld
Tasman Council	Tas	Lansdowne Crescent	Tas	North Burnett Landcare Group	Qld	Hughes Garran Woodlands Group	ACT
SunCoastFarmFLOW Project	Qld	Primary School	Tas	Hughes Garran Woodlands Group	ACT	Little River Landcare Group	NSW
Source Water Protection		Gordonvale State School	Qld	Little River Landcare Group	NSW	Penitland Hills Landcare Group	Vic
Program – ACTEW Water	ACT	Lanyon Cluster of Schools –					
High Country Urban Biodiversity Project	NSW	Giving to the Environment Project	ACT	Indigenous Land Management Award		Westpac Agribusiness Innovative Young Landcare Leader	
Norman Wettenhall Fondation	Vic	Frog Dreaming	NSW	Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre for Gowan Brae	Tas	Kate Spatore	WA
		Nagle College	Vic	Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee		Amanda Hosking	Tas
Innovation in sustainable farm practices				Aboriginal Corporation	Qld	Ashely Volz	Qld
North East Farming Futures	WA	Landcare facilitator or co-ordinator		Yurung Dhaura Aboriginal		Zhan Patterson	NSW
		Linda Anderson	WA			Ammie Jackson	Vic
		Glenys Bowtell	Qld				

Coles Junior Landcare Gardens

Since 2008, Coles have funded more than 1,700 garden grants of up to \$1,000, with the money used to help schools establish garden projects. The program encourages students to learn about the environment through outdoor learning and developing their own gardens.

Register for the Junior Landcarer e-newsletter to stay up-to-date with future grant announcements.

Visit www.juniorlandcare.com.au

