

# LANDCARE IN FOCUS

NOVEMBER 2024

**SPOTTING KOALAS  
THE WILDSEEK WAY**

**PLATYPUS,  
A HIDDEN TREASURE**

**THE CULTURE GARDEN  
A FIRST NATIONS  
LED PROJECT**

**HEALTHY RIVERS  
EBB & FLOW WITH  
BIODIVERSITY**



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Landcare Australia is proud to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which we live and work. We value and respect their deep and continued spiritual and cultural connections to the land, waters and seas, and pay our respects to their Ancestors, and Elders past, present and future.



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**Editorial Team:**  
Millie Webber, Eleanor Slade, Melissa Higgins  
– Landcare Australia

**Designer:**  
James Intal – Landcare Australia

**Digital Production:**  
Tatiana Pentes – Landcare Australia

**Cover and Above Photo:**  
Mornington Peninsula Intrepid Landcare  
volunteers. Photos by Annette Ruzicka.

**Contact Us:**  
We welcome content submission to  
Landcare in Focus! The next edition is May  
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email at [enquiries@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:enquiries@landcareaustralia.com.au)

## Message from the Hon. Tanya Plibersek, The Minister for the Environment and Water

**E**ndangered wildlife are thriving in a part of Western Australia that has been virtually untouched for more than 40 years.

The pristine Yampi Sound Training Area belongs to the Department of Defence. It's a refuge for wildlife that is found nowhere else in the world and home to species such as the Northern Quoll, Golden Bandicoot, Gouldian Finch, Western Partridge Pigeon and the Kimberley Brush-tailed Phascogale.

Defence has a long history of looking after Yampi Sound. For the past nine years Defence has partnered with the Australian Wildlife Conservancy and the traditional custodians of the land, the Dambimangari people, to conserve the land. AWC work with Dambimangari Rangers to properly manage fire and tackle land degradations and other threats to Yampi Sound - from feral cats, cane toads, cattle and feral pigs.

To protect nature for future generations, we are working to recognise Yampi Sound as Australia's first ever OECM (Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure) area.

This recognition is a guarantee that Yampi Sound will be managed in a way that protects and restores nature for the long term, and provides a model for other defence land, water catchments and other privately owned land to be managed to the highest conservation standards.

This international-recognition means we can count high-quality land, that is well-managed and protected long-term, in areas outside national parks, toward our national conservation goals.

Recognising Yampi Sound will help Australia meet our 30 by 30 target. About 150,000 hectares of Yampi Sound are being protected and managed for conservation, though it will still be used occasionally for defence training.

Our new OECM framework means landholders like Defence have clear guidance and a strong incentive to protect and manage land to an even higher standard.

We want to lift the standard for management of Defence and other land that has high environmental value. The OECM framework will empower the public, government and philanthropic organisations and businesses to contribute towards our 30 by 30 target and help build a nature positive Australia – protecting and repairing nature for our kids and grandkids.



## Message from the Hon. Julie Collins, The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

**S**ince becoming the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, I've been fortunate to travel around Australia and see for myself the strong commitments our farmers are making to sustainability practices.

Australia's farmers have an internationally enviable environmental record. When compared with their international counterparts, Australian farmers use less pesticides and fertilisers, their tillage practices are less disruptive to biodiversity, and their emissions are lower compared to most developed countries.

The role Landcare has played in encouraging environmental conservation, restoration and care is not to be understated. For decades huge amounts of land across Australia have been converted to nature conservation without sacrificing agricultural productivity, and Landcare has been instrumental in making this happen.

As a representative of dedicated land carers in my own electorate, I want to recognise the achievements of the Landcare community and the tireless efforts of our volunteers. Across Australia, there are more than 140,000 volunteers across over 6,000 groups who devote their time and energy to Landcare, and we are incredibly grateful to you all.

Supporting Landcare and fostering sustainable agriculture is a priority for the Albanese Labor Government. We know that the best environmental action happens at the community level, and it doesn't get more grassroots than Landcare.

We're investing at the national, regional, and local levels through the Government's \$302.1 million Climate-Smart Agriculture Program, funded through the Natural Heritage Trust. Running for five years from 2023-24, the program aims to drive agricultural sustainability, productivity and competitiveness through funding climate-smart agriculture initiatives.

We want to see our agriculture sector continue to move towards a sustainable future, and much of the groundwork has already been laid by the tireless efforts of Landcare volunteers. I want to thank you all for outcomes you have already achieved over the decades, and I know there is plenty more to come.





## Message from Landcare Australia CEO, Dr Shane Norrish

G'day everyone,

**It is a great pleasure to introduce the new look Landcare in Focus magazine to the landcare community. The online format is a bold evolution for our familiar and popular publication.**

Our roundup of articles includes news, interviews, features, and a focus on landcare group activities across the country. From urban restoration projects to precision agriculture and wetlands management, there is something of interest for everyone. Transforming Landcare in Focus

into a digital only magazine means we are providing an online publication that's freely accessible and reaches a much wider audience throughout Australia. We've made the content dynamic with videos and links to websites from the story contributors, enabling easier connection for readers.

Landcare In Focus magazine celebrates the heartbeat of the landcare movement – with lots of great stories about the passionate individuals, groups and organisations working tirelessly

to transform their local patch and increase biodiversity across Australia. This includes Landcarers like Bev Debrincat, who has shared valuable insights into generating community participation through her initiatives like the International Environmental Weed Foundation (IEWF) and the Habitat Network. In this issue, we look at innovative ecological restoration with the story Paradise Lost and Found where Tony and Cherie Townsend are transforming a former vineyard into a sanctuary for native flora and fauna. You can also read how landcare

groups in New South Wales and Queensland are using the latest technology to uncover the secret lives of platypuses and other species in Australian waterways.

Other stories are showing how Landcarers are fostering collaboration with First Nations communities and inspiring the next generation in landcare youth projects. Western Port Catchment Landcare Network has achieved a milestone by bringing together students and First Nations perspectives in their Caring for Country Landcare Connection program.

It was great to see future leaders with big ideas speaking at the Private Land Conservation Conference (PLC24). The successful

Future Leaders Forum hosted by Landcare Australia, was an energetic workshop with young leaders from Greater Sydney Landcare, Co-Exist Australia, Intrepid Landcare and the University of Sydney providing an inspiring insight into how the next generation of landcarers are approaching landcare.

I would like to thank the large number of volunteers, landcare groups and other community-led environmental groups, landcare organisations, Traditional Owners and First Nations organisations, government agencies, corporate partners, environmental NGOs, researchers and educators who all contributed to this edition – thank you for your great projects and your great content! For our next Landcare in Focus

edition in May 2025, I encourage you to please share with us information and photos about your projects, profiles on landcarers and your local news.

Finally, thank you to the Australian Government for making Landcare in Focus magazine possible, your support enables Landcare Australia to work with landcarers across the country to share innovations and celebrate landcare achievements.

Enjoy reading about the great work of landcare everyone!

Dr Shane Norrish  
CEO Landcare Australia

# 2025 National Landcare Conference

**Early Bird Registration opens December and will close Thursday 1 May, 2025**

**Call for Abstracts to be a speaker at the 2025 National Landcare Conference opens December and will close March 31, 2025**

For more information, please visit [www.nationallandcareconference.org.au](http://www.nationallandcareconference.org.au)



An aerial photograph of a river landscape. The river flows from the top left towards the bottom left. A prominent feature is a curved, green riparian zone that follows the river's path. To the right of this zone is a large, dark brown field, likely a floodplain or wetland. In the foreground, there are several trees and a small pond. The overall scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

# Healthy Rivers Flow with Biodiversity Benefits for Threatened Species

**The Murray-Darling Basin covers 14% of Australia's land mass and is home to over 120 native water bird species and over 50 fish species.** Its rivers are crucial water sources but have been impacted by land clearing and floods. The Namoi Catchment needs a helping hand to enhance biodiversity, especially in riparian areas, floodplains, and wetlands.



Since 2022, Landcare Australia has managed a large-scale landscape restoration project with funding from the Australian Government's Murray-Darling Healthy Rivers Program, in partnership with broadacre farmers, Fisheries NSW, Local Land Services, and OzFish to improve the natural assets of the Namoi River Catchment.

The Namoi catchment, like many river systems in the Murray Darling Basin, has suffered significant habitat loss due to past land clearing and severe flooding events. To enhance biodiversity, particularly in riparian areas, floodplains, and wetlands, this project focuses on three key locations: the Namoi River northeast of Gunnedah, Tambar Springs, and the Wallamore Anabranche of the Peel River in Tamworth.

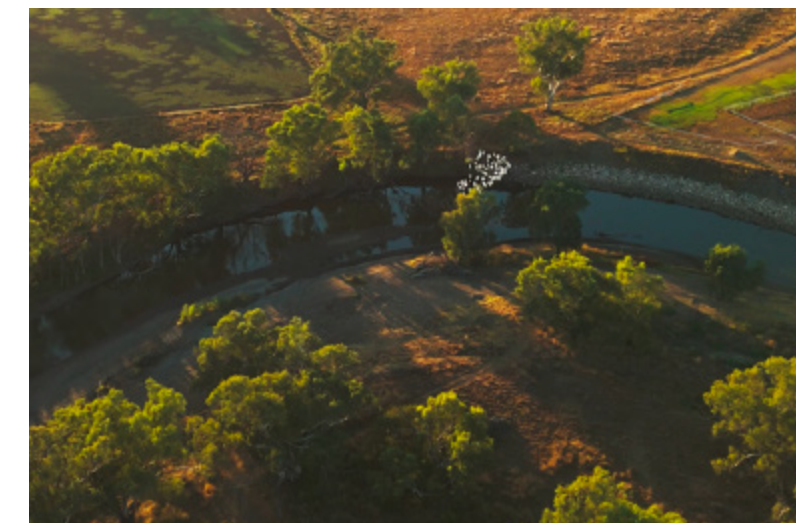
Landcare Australia engaged specialists to conduct a geomorphology review at these locations and implemented a range of improvements based on the findings. These include bank revetment, bank reprofiling, and major stabilisation, as well as the installation of rock and timber in-stream fish habitat structures. Additional efforts involved weed control in riparian zones, stock exclusion fencing, and the planting of 7,800 native seedlings to filter surface water, reduce erosion, and enhance local connectivity.

In collaboration with local bush regenerators and [Tamworth Regional Landcare Association](#), improved 65 hectares of degraded floodplain, riparian, and wetland habitats. A notable effort was the installation of 200 timber pins across the Wallamore Anabranche to slow water flow during heavy rains, capturing debris and sediment to prevent erosion and improve water quality.

These restoration activities are crucial for enhancing in-stream biodiversity by providing thermal refuges, shelters, and food sources for native aquatic species, including the threatened Murray cod and Silver perch.

“ Along the Namoi River, the banks were in a terrible state, with no remnant riparian vegetation, and they were migrating further back with each flow event. We've stopped a significant erosion problem and now have a stabilised bank where vegetation can be reestablished, benefiting both aquatic and terrestrial species like the endangered koala. ”

Angela Baker, Senior Land Services Officer at North West Local Land Services



Aerial of Gunnedah bank stabilisation site  
Aerial of Wallamore Anabranche, Tamworth

Together with Ozfish and Local Land Services, resulted in the bank stabilisation of approximately 2km of actively eroding river frontage. Working in the riparian zones on broadacre farms to enhance natural assets, the team assisted with the ecological restoration. Over time the project will provide habitat to small birds and other beneficiaries such as microbats, which will help local growers to control pest species and also their reliance on pesticides.

For more information, please visit [www.landcareaustralia.org.au/news/the-healthy-rivers-project](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au/news/the-healthy-rivers-project).

Words by Millie Webber | Landcare Australia



▶ Learn more about how Landcare Australia is helping the [Namoi River Catchment](#)



# Narrabri Farming Family Joins The Biodiversity Project

Words by Millie Webber | Landcare Australia for Country Road

Main Kevin Schwager with daughter Jessie and her two children  
Photos Landcare Australia team working on the Biodiversity Project

**N**estled beside the Namoi River, Wentworth, the 550-hectare dryland farm owned by Kevin and Mary-Ellen Schwager, is home to threatened species like the Murray Cod, koalas, and the Large-eared Pied Bat. Operating as a non-irrigated farm, the Schwager family grow food and fibre crops such as cotton, canola and wheat. Now, Wentworth has been welcomed as the fifth site to benefit from The Biodiversity Project, an expanding partnership between Country Road and Landcare Australia. This latest project will enhance biodiversity along 2.8 km of riparian and floodplain habitat by planting native shrubs, understory, and canopy species, providing vital protection for natural habitats and threatened species.

As with previous projects, this site has been identified as an area of interest for biodiversity enhancement for a range of threatened species in research findings from the report, 'Management of Biodiversity in the Cotton Landscape: Iconic and Threatened Species' developed by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC)



with support from the Australian Government's National Landcare Smart Farming Partnerships Initiative.

Since 2020, Landcare Australia and Country Road have worked together to support the restoration of Australian farmlands, with a focus on increasing biodiversity in cotton-growing regions. Since 2020, Country Road has provided over \$1 million of funding to the program, raised through brand contributions and sales of its famous Verified Australian Cotton Heritage Sweat.

Landcare Australia CEO Dr Shane Norrish said that this level of funding provides Landcare Australia with the means to deliver multiple biodiversity projects across local farming landscapes.

"Throughout our partnership with Country Road, Landcare Australia has worked with five Australian farming families to plant 18,300 seedlings along 14.4 km of riverbank in the Namoi Valley, rehabilitating a total of 102.6 hectares of native vegetation.

Together with Country Road, our work on The Biodiversity Project is achieving our shared vision to improve biodiversity and habitat connectivity, support threatened, vulnerable and iconic fauna species while also providing farming co-benefits."

Rob Porter, Environmental Projects Manager, Landcare Australia, explained that species such as small birds and microbats require lots of little protected spaces and hollows as they move through the landscape.

"Restoring the vegetation in the form of shrubs, understory and canopy species over time will help them move further, provide safe refuge and a larger variety of places to source food."



Kevin Schwager says being a part of The Biodiversity Project enables his family to play a part in making a meaningful, responsible impact on both the environment and community.

"Through The Biodiversity Project, we wish to demonstrate that we are responsible custodians of our land. We want to show that farming and the environment and young families can and do coexist.

"Our grandchildren are now the third generation on our farms. There is keen interest from our grandchildren about what we do on the farms. They love the crops, the machinery and the family barbecues by the river.

"Consumers are becoming more interested and discerning about where their food and clothes are coming from. As farmers, we wish to be outward looking and thinking, we need to respond to a changing marketplace. Being involved with The Biodiversity Project allows us to play a part in societal change."

The Schwager project involves planting 4000 native seedlings on 43 hectares. These locally sourced natives, including River Red Gums, casuarina species and shrubs such as Sweet bursaria, will increase habitat for wildlife along the riparian corridor.

**A mix of shrubs, understory and canopy species will be planted, specifically to:**

- ▶ Increase habitat for browsing and wildlife movement along the riparian corridor.
- ▶ Increase the presence of pollinators, small birds and micro bats in the area.
- ▶ Increase native vegetation and canopy cover across the riparian and floodplain zone at Wentworth to help support ecosystems in the Namoi River catchment.

# Meet the SAFs: Your Local Network for Sustainable Agriculture Across Australia

**A** network of Sustainable Agriculture Facilitators (SAF) is out and about, helping farmers and landholders access information and funding opportunities for climate-smart, sustainable agriculture.

The Australian Government has invested \$40.7 million in the network of SAFs, spread across 52 Natural Resource Management regions Australia-wide. Funded through the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program, SAFs provide one-on-one support for farmers and landholders to adopt climate-smart practices that are good for sustainable land management and business. They facilitate partnerships and connections among agricultural stakeholders and help connect stakeholders with sustainable agriculture projects in their region, enhancing the sustainability and productivity of the agriculture sector.

“The thing I enjoy most about working as a SAF is the diversity in my role. I love supporting landholders to access best-practice land management information and monitoring tools, facilitating field days and paddock-based information sessions, and working with researchers to support on-ground research that helps to foster regenerative land management practices.”

As a SAF for South Australian Arid Lands, Andrea Tschirner explains what her role involves.



“We understand there’s a lot of information out there and that support is needed on the ground to ensure everyone has access to the latest and most helpful information.”

Deputy Secretary at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Matt Lowe, said the network of SAFs ensures there is a designated point of contact for sustainable agriculture across farming communities.

SAFs will establish valuable connections with farmers, landholders, community groups and agriculture industries to identify the benefits of achieving climate-smart, sustainable agriculture outcomes in their region.

They will also work closely with the national network of Regional Soil Coordinators (RSCs), who are funded through the same Climate-Smart Agriculture Program to share innovative soil science and tools with farmers and landholders, supporting improved sustainable soil management practices.

Working together, the two networks will ensure farmers and landholders have access to the information they need and a network of support.

To find out how your local SAF may be able to assist you, please visit [www.agriculture.gov.au/sustainable-agriculture-facilitators](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/sustainable-agriculture-facilitators).

# Turning Small Block Dreams into Stewardship Action Plans



Over 150 small landholders in the Corangamite region now understand best-practice environmental management techniques and are receiving up to \$2000 to fund on-ground sustainable works on their properties, thanks to the Small Blocks Big Dreams (SBBB) project.

Delivered by Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) in partnership with local landcare networks, the project offered six rounds of workshops and property tours between early 2022 to April 2024 to assist owners of small rural properties to better care for their properties and the environment. Small Blocks Big Dreams was tailored for owners of smaller properties with varied land uses across the region – specifically small producers, lifestyle and bush block owners and horse and other livestock owners.

Following the workshop series and tours, Corangamite CMA and Landcare staff offered landholders site visits to set their land stewardship action plans into practice, and up to \$2000 to support delivery of on-ground works. CCMA’s Karen O’Keefe said:

“The feedback has been fantastic over the four years. People loved getting together, meeting local people with similar properties, who are facing similar challenges on their land.”



Andrea de Kaue, a Southern Otway Landcare Network Facilitator said,

“I think the most important thing that the program has brought to people is actually bringing them together in a room or in a space to learn. Sometimes you don’t know the questions to ask, and you don’t know the help you need.”

Christine Shurvell, who attended the Bush Block stream of the project said,

“There’s been such a depth and breadth of knowledge given so readily and freely and humbly and to see it in practice – not just in words or theory – has really inspired me.”

For more information, please visit [www.ccma.vic.gov.au](http://www.ccma.vic.gov.au).

Words by [Kristen Lees](#) | CCMA

Left Small Producers Workshop with the Bellarine Catchment Network

Right Stewardship Action Plan Workshops with the Central Otways Landcare Network



# Spotting Koalas From Above

The WildSeek Project collaborates with landcare groups, government agencies, not-for-profits, and landholders to fill the knowledge gap about koala populations in a region by using drones with infrared imagery.





Landcare Australia, WIRES, and Queensland University of Technology (QUT) have teamed up for the WildSeek Project: Community Wildlife Intelligence Hubs. Managed by Landcare Australia, WildSeek collaborates with landcare groups, government agencies, not-for-profits, and landholders to fill the knowledge gap about koala populations in a region by using drones with infrared imagery.

By establishing five Community Hubs across New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria, WildSeek is gathering crucial koala population data. This initiative offers insights into koalas in disaster-affected regions, including those devastated by the Black Summer bushfires, while also providing essential baseline information for at-risk habitats.

We spoke with Landcare Australia's Katie Selhorst, Head of Landscape Restoration and Chief Remote Pilot, to dive deeper into the WildSeek Project. Katie shares the intricacies of the planning involved, how to get involved if you know of a koala population in your area, and the challenges faced.

### Could you tell me more about why you use drones to find koalas?

We're using drones to detect koalas by identifying their heat signatures in the treetops. This is an innovative method that offers several advantages. Previously, detecting koalas was more labour intensive, involving trained dogs, using spotlights, and navigating steep terrain that is difficult to access. Drones allow us to cover much larger areas in a single survey, with better detection accuracy. Koalas are difficult to spot from the ground, when looking up into the tree limbs, leaves can obstruct seeing the koala.

Koalas are an endemic species to Australia, serving as an important flagship species. They provide insights into ecosystem structure, species composition and connectivity. The Australian government has recognised that the koala population are at risk in Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Because they are vulnerable and sensitive to human activities and climate change, there's a significant effort to protect them and ensure they do not become extinct.



Looking for koalas through the drone



Katie Selhorst delivering a presentation for Wild Koala Day

### What have you achieved so far?

As part of the WildSeek program, we've successfully identified koalas in areas where their presence was previously unknown. We've discovered new koala populations and corrected some population estimates, revealing that there were either more or fewer koalas. The data we've gathered so far is not only assisting in verifying existing information but also helping to fill in gaps that are crucial for protecting ecosystems and vegetation communities.

The Sydney hub, identified 42 koalas within the Sydney region. In the Hills-Hornsby region north of Sydney, we've been able to verify koala populations where there was only indicative data previously.

The data we collect is uploaded to the NSW Government's BioNet database. It can be used to inform management plans and policies related to koala populations. This information is also shared with the Rural Fire Service (RFS) to aid in fire management planning and implementation, as well as with WIRES to assist their personnel on the ground with rescue efforts and future disaster planning.

### What are the biggest challenges you've encountered?

One of our biggest challenges has been finding suitable and accessible land for conducting surveys that provide us with strategic views to locate koala populations. Flying the drone over hilly terrain with dense vegetation and undeveloped land presents its own set of hurdles. For example, many of the best take-off points are on private properties that we don't have access to, like backyards or paddocks.

We currently use fire trails, but some are well-maintained while others are not. By following CASA regulations, we need to maintain visual line of sight with the drone, but the terrain itself can sometimes reduce this aspect of flying. Navigating these challenges has been interesting, to say the least.



Above Image supplied by QUT

Below Drone image of koala provided by Noosa and District Landcare Group in Condoos QLD

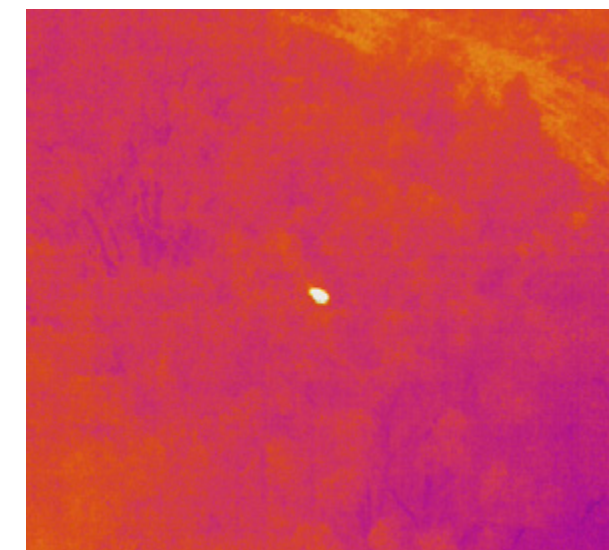
### How can the community get involved if they are aware of a koala population in their local area?

If you spot a koala, it's important to report the sighting to your state's registration system. This helps state and national governments, as well as organisations like WIRES, gather crucial data. The more information they have, the better they can track koala populations and address gaps in legislation and regulations.

You can also notify your local koala group about the sighting. This helps them identify target survey areas more effectively. I also recommend uploading your sighting to the Atlas of Living Australia. This platform is used by both government agencies and NGOs to monitor potential wildlife information.

*The WildSeek Project is being delivered by Community Hubs located in New England Region in NSW (Tamworth Regional Landcare Association); MidCoast NSW (Mid Coast 2 Tops Landcare); South East Queensland (Noosa & District Landcare Group Inc.); East Gippsland in Victoria (East Gippsland Conservation Management Network); and the Sydney Region in NSW (Landcare Australia).*

Words by Millie Webber | Landcare Australia



Thermal image Thermal image of a koala image supplied Noosa & District Landcare

# Australian Cotton's Focus on People, Planet and Paddock



**T**he environments in which cotton is grown, largely in NSW and Queensland, are some of the most fertile farming lands in Australia. From deep clay soils to ephemeral waterways, and an abundance of native vegetation, each aspect has a pivotal role in ensuring Australian cotton is grown sustainably.

The Australian cotton industry remains open and transparent about its cotton farming systems, sustainability progress and challenges. A Sustainability Update is released annually along with a comprehensive Sustainability Report every five years, analysing every aspect of cotton production including farm productivity, sustainability criteria and the wellbeing of the people involved.

In addition to the one-year trend report and the five-year analysis, the cotton industry was the first in agriculture to commission independent environmental assessments and that has continued every 10 years since 1991. The fourth Environmental Assessment report was released this year and shows substantial improvement across most areas.

## **It's strong, transparent reporting that helps the cotton industry continue to improve.**

The latest Sustainability Update, released in July 2024, demonstrates clear improvements in some areas as well as challenges in others, while reporting against the industry's sustainability targets and indicators, in line with its PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK Sustainability Framework.

The update highlights an ambitious and collaborative approach to better manage and measure vegetation at regional levels. On average, about 21% of the area of a cotton farm contains remnant native vegetation. The majority of this is grazing land, and some is actively managed for conservation where it is not cropped or traditionally grazed.

Cotton farmers follow two simple principles to support living organisms in healthy soils: provide them with food and shelter. Australian cotton farmers use practices such as low or no tillage, addition of organic compost, rotational crops, cover crops and optimising fertiliser applications to enhance soil health.



Understanding how farming practices impact soil properties is critical for farmers to make the best soil management decisions. In 2022, 98% of growers conserved crop residues, 86% of growers used minimum tillage and 54% used cover cropping – an increase of 9% on the previous year.

The Australian cotton industry is proud to be one of the first cotton industries in the world to undertake full environmental audits, highlighting where it started and the progression it has made.

For more information, visit [www.cottonaustralia.com.au](http://www.cottonaustralia.com.au).

Words by [Brooke Summers](#) | Cotton Australia

**Left** 45% of Australia's cotton is now certified under the myBMP (Best Management Practices) program, including one of the newest recruits – the Brimblecombe family based in Forest Hill, Queensland.

# Landcare Australia Funds First Nations-Led Project for Youth to Connect with Culture through Caring for Country

Landcare Australia has partnered with Point Pearce Aboriginal Corporation to establish the Point Pearce First Nations Culture Garden Project in South Australia's Wardang Island Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). Led by the Traditional Owners, the Narungga people, the project blends Cultural heritage, education, and conservation, empowering Indigenous youth with knowledge and skills in environmental stewardship and creating career pathways.



**Landcare Australia is proud to partner with Point Pearce Aboriginal Corporation in establishing a First Nations community-led conservation and education project. Located in South Australia's Point Pearce in the Wardang Island Indigenous Protected Area (IPA), the project is led by the Traditional Owners, the Narungga people, and aims to support Indigenous youth to learn about their Cultural heritage and knowledge that will lead to career and leadership pathways in environmental conservation.**

At the heart of this initiative is the Point Pearce First Nations Culture Garden, a space where Elders, First Nations Rangers, and Indigenous youth come together to bridge and transfer Cultural knowledge. Designed as a hands-on learning environment, it will inspire young people to explore environmental conservation, deepen their appreciation for the natural world and discover career pathways that utilise Cultural knowledge.

The Culture Garden will feature a medicinal and ceremonial plant area, native bush foods, water features to attract wildlife, sensory garden, and dedicated spaces for learning and Cultural practice. With a seedling propagation zone, a native seed cleaning station, a fruit and nut orchard, and interpretive walking trail. More than just a garden, it serves as a 'Cultural learning hub'—fostering pride and offering a comprehensive setting for community events, educational programs, and vocational training opportunities. With funding from One Tree Planted, the tree planting will also help restore native vegetation and improve habitat for threatened species including the Southern Hairy Nosed Wombat.



Aligned with the South Australian Department for Education's Aboriginal Education Strategy, the project aims to inspire engagement, Cultural pride, and environmental responsibility among First Nations students. It focuses on educational outcomes and how Cultural activities can play in enhancing social and academic competence among First Nations students.



Landcare Australia CEO Dr Shane Norrish, said **“This landcare collaboration with Point Pearce Aboriginal Corporation is truly inspiring – it highlights what can be achieved when community comes together. We hope it serves as a model, showing how Cultural connection links generations, builds resilience, and supports the health of land and people alike.”**

**Feature** Remnant of a substantive and ancient fish trap, which was constructed from the nearby rocky outcropping

**Top right** Point Pearce Primary School Students engaging with the Culture Garden Project

**Full right page** Terrestrial landscape that feeds into the fisheries sanctuary zone. The nutrient infall and wash downs, along with the sheltered and shallow seagrass beds are vital for the sustainability of the fisheries nursery in this cove

**Top right** Semi-arid limestone coastline that abuts the plethora of rocky outcroppings along the coastline

**Bottom right** View from 'Dollys Jetty' across to Goose Island  
Photography by Paul Heck

Narungga Elder, Mr Lyle Sansbury, said

**“Our land is our story, and this Cultural Garden is a way to share that story with everyone. It's about teaching our young ones, connecting with the community, and recognising our traditions. This project shows how we can come together to care for Country, pass on knowledge, and build something lasting for our future generations. We're happy and proud to work with Landcare Australia to make this dream a reality for Point Pearce.”**

Paul Heck, General Manager at Point Pearce Aboriginal Corporation, said **“As a community deeply connected to land and culture, the First Nations Culture Garden is an amazing initiative for Point Pearce. This project is a powerful opportunity for our youth to learn from our Elders, connect with our heritage, and build a future rooted in cultural pride and environmental stewardship.”**

**“With the vital support of Landcare Australia, we are creating a place where knowledge, culture, and sustainability come together—providing pathways for our young people to grow in their identity and to explore meaningful careers in conservation. This is about strengthening the community, preserving heritage, and nurturing the leaders of tomorrow.”**

For more information, please visit [www.landcareaustralia.org.au/our-programme/point-pearce-first-nations-culture-garden](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au/our-programme/point-pearce-first-nations-culture-garden).

Words by Millie Webber | Landcare Australia





## Landcare Agriculture Q&A with Angela Hammond

**T**he new Landcare Agriculture Program, delivered by Landcare Australia, has evolved out of the previous National Landcare Network and Landcare Australia partnership project - Landcare Farming. The learnings from the Landcare Farming program helped build this new and more broadly inclusive program and program title.

We recently caught up with Angela Hammond, who is the Project Manager for Landcare Agriculture, to hear what is in store for the program, her efforts to promote sustainable land management practices and inspire meaningful conversations around adapting traditional landcare activities for healthy and productive agricultural landscapes, communities and environments. We also got the inside scoop on what makes her a passionate and professional landcarer!

### What does your role at Landcare Australia involve?

I am the Landcare Agriculture Project Manager; I've been in this role since March 2022, when it was the Landcare Farming Program. The Landcare Agriculture Program aims to enhance the sustainability and resilience of Australian agriculture, by increasing primary producer and land manager literacy of natural capital and sustainable land management practices.

My brief is to help develop and share independent, scientifically-robust processes, information, resources and training to support the implementation and validation of practical, on-ground, climate-smart land management practices.

In this role, I'm lucky to be able to work with key industry experts and stakeholders – including First Nations Peoples, farmers, graziers, scientists, consultants and facilitators - to develop and deliver informed, effective responses to agriculture sector needs, whilst supporting the adoption of environmentally-sustainable practices which optimise agricultural productivity. Recently I worked with groups and projects at Charleville, Tamworth, Narrabri and Taroom – being out 'on the ground' helps us to really understand industry and producer needs and develop healthy industry relationships - an essential element of the work that we do.

### What led you to work for Landcare Australia?

I have always been an environmentalist in my outlook. As Dorothea Mackellar wrote in 'My Country' in 1908, "I love a sunburnt country, A land of sweeping plains, Of ragged mountain ranges, Of droughts and flooding rains." Whilst we love our wild country, it is a struggle to manage production landscapes in this highly variable climate. Of course, First Nations Peoples have been managing landscapes in Australia for many thousands of years, and now we are learning to lean into their knowledge and work collaboratively for mutual benefit.

The huge climatic variations we are subjected to in Australia particularly affect our rural communities and industries. I saw working with Landcare Australia as an opportunity to work in production agriculture, at a time when the sector is rapidly shifting its understanding of the importance of better managing productivity alongside healthier landscapes.

I really enjoy the work – I'm lucky to work with grassroots' land managers to investigate soil, pasture and livestock management systems, bringing people together to promote environmental health to ensure the long-term sustainability of the environment that we all depend on for food, fibre, health and happiness.

### Can you describe your typical day?

I'm not sure there is a typical day!

I do spend a considerable amount of time on a computer and in meetings, at workshops and on panels at conferences. But luckily, a lot of my time is spent working with producers and their advisors, being in the paddock with them, listening and understanding what issues and opportunities they face. We spend a lot of time solving puzzles really – working out how we can do what we do better - for the sake of people and landscapes.

It is a wonderful job – I can take their messages to the organisations we collaborate with and assist with designing effective strategies and programs for our industry.

### Give us an example of a farmer's positive outcomes through working with Landcare Agriculture?

A great example is the Benchmarking Soils Project with the [Bubbogullion 100 Landcare group](#) in the Tamworth region. We are working with farmers to use their soil data to establish baseline soil carbon levels which, when combined with farm greenhouse gas emissions and reduction information, will support improved landscape and business management and potential carbon and biodiversity market and reward program participation.

While farmers are building their knowledge on soil carbon and biodiversity, they are also learning the value of good data.

### What would you say to anyone who is thinking of a career in landcare?

Go for it!!! Landcare is so well received in both urban and rural areas and known across the land management industries – agriculture and environment are a natural fit, and so working in landcare gives you a great breadth of experiences – and you will find a welcoming community wherever your career takes you.

### What is the best lesson in landcare you have learnt?

That our industry is constantly seeking improvements in the way we manage our landscape - farmers and producers are incredible innovators – and we find that they reach out to Landcare a LOT in this space. We are a trusted source of information and known brand and we have a great opportunity to build on our great capacity for good.

### What do you think makes Landcare Agriculture unique?

It leverages the strength and reputation of traditional landcare activities and adapts programs of work that will enhance production ag landscapes. We're working with a range of organisations to develop innovative biodiversity measurement, monitoring and management tools, as well as training and education programs to enable people to track the progress of the environmental health simply and efficiently and to measure and manage for biodiversity improvements alongside traditional farm indicators.

### Where's your country? Where do you feel most connected to?

The country I was born into, and now live in again is Kamilaroi (also known as Gamilaroi, Gomeri, Kamillaroi) Country. It is a river landscape, and I grew up on the Culgoa, Briarie, the Ballandool and the Bokhara Rivers. My family has lived out in this country for around 150 years. I love this country and the people who traditionally live here. I am still in touch with many of my childhood Kamilaroi friends from Goodooga.

The wide skylines, the flat and open spaces, the trees, the smell and the red and black soils. It feels like home for me.

### What are you most looking forward to achieving through the Landcare Agriculture program?

The opportunity to work with some fabulous industry collaborators, to build the capacity and confidence of land managers to engage with new environmental market opportunities.

Landcare Agriculture's collaborative ethos means we will be partnering with many organisations to support producer-driven management (such as the Bubbogullion 100 Landcare Group) and with data specialists and scientists to develop innovative program design.

### Landcare Agriculture Webinars

Landcare Agriculture hosts an ongoing series of free webinars to build knowledge in the area of natural capital accounting and biodiversity. [Click here](#) for details.

For more information about the Landcare Agriculture program, please visit [www.landcareaustralia.org.au/landcareagriculture](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au/landcareagriculture).

Words by Eleanor Slade | Landcare Australia

# Inside Scoop on the General Jeffery Soil Health Award 2025

**S**oil matters! Healthy, well managed soil is a vital part of the sustainability and productivity of our agricultural sector and the natural environment. Since 2021, the General Jeffery Soil Health Award has encouraged new concepts of soil health and biodiversity through innovative practices.

Returning for its third round in 2025, this uniquely Australian Award champions soil health and improvements in the health of our agricultural landscape and shines spotlight on outstanding achievements and activities that protect, and improve soil health in Australia.

This prestigious award, with a prize of \$20,000 for a new soils project rewards the work of individuals, groups and organisations who care for soil health and are educating or inspiring others in the management of soil, water, animals and plants to the benefit of all Australians and our environment.

Nominations will open on 5 December 2024, please refer to the Landcare Australia website for more information. The 2025 General Jeffery Soil Health Award winner will be presented at the 2025 National Landcare Awards Ceremony on Tuesday 23 of September 2025.



## Who was General Jeffery?

The Late Major General Michael Jeffery AC, AO (Mil), CV, MC (Retd) was a proud Australian with a distinguished military career. He served as Western Australia's 27th Governor from 1993 until 2000. In 2003 he was sworn in as Australia's 24th Governor-General, a role he held for just over five years.

As Australia's first National Soils Advocate, General Jeffery championed soil health from Parliament House to the paddock. He successfully changed attitudes towards soil sustainability and energised change on farms right across Australia. He relentlessly pursued his focus on the importance of integrated management of soil, water, animals and plants to the benefit of all Australians and our environment.

By celebrating leadership in natural resource management and demonstrable commitment to sustainable land management to improve soil health Landcare Australia continues to honour General Jeffery's legacy of championing soil health and changing attitudes towards soil sustainability and energised change on farms right across Australia.

To read more about previous winners click here: [www.landcareaustralia.org.au/soilhealthaward](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au/soilhealthaward)

Words by Eleanor Slade | Landcare Australia

The 2025 General Jeffery Soil Health Award is funded by the Australian Government through the Natural Heritage Trust. Landcare Australia administers the Award on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).

# 2025 GENERAL JEFFERY SOIL HEALTH AWARD



Australian Government



**Nominations open  
December 5, 2024**

**Visit [landcareaustralia.org.au/soilhealthaward](http://landcareaustralia.org.au/soilhealthaward)  
for more information or to nominate**

# Conserving Wetlands with Precision Agriculture

In 2023, the Beyond Bolac Catchment Action Group (BBCAG) joined forces with neighbouring landcare networks - Panyyabyr Landcare Group, Upper Hopkins Land Management Group, and Upper Mount Emu Creek Landcare Network. Together, they embarked on an ambitious landscape scale initiative. Their joint effort focused on an on-farm trial to promote Precision Agriculture strategies among cropping farmers. The goal was to enhance productivity without compromising wetlands and was funded by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority through the 'Our Catchment Our Communities' program.

The trial unfolded across Western Victoria, a region known for high rainfall, where wetlands are at risk due to drainage and cropping activities. The loss of these biodiverse temporary wetlands prompted the need for conservation efforts. Four experienced cropping farmers from Skipton, Lake Bolac, Nerrin Nerrin, and Minnerera volunteered to participate in the trial. Each farmer allocated 200 hectares of cropping land, which included temporary wetlands. Precision Ag Pty Ltd, a leading provider of variable rate farming solutions, was enlisted for the initial phase. This stage involved understanding each farm's history, conducting grid soil sampling, and creating custom variable rate application maps while excluding wetland areas.

As the trial progressed, the participating farmers, alongside an agronomist and Precision Ag team, gained insights into wetlands' significance in the landscape and how variable rate technology could enhance crop yields while safeguarding wetlands.

A field day was held in June this year to share insights into implementing precision agriculture to conserve wetlands. Additional funding is necessary to continue monitoring yield outcomes in the upcoming season and assess the long-term impact of Precision Agriculture strategies on crop productivity while preserving wetlands.



For further information about the trial, please visit: [www.beyondbolac.org](http://www.beyondbolac.org).

Words by [Jileena Cole](#)  
Facilitator, Beyond Bolac Catchment Action Group

**Above** Meeting between Graeme Vallance, Geoff Ross (Precision Agriculture) and Meera Cameron (Precision Agriculture) to discuss how the precision agriculture journey can be tailored to suit his enterprise, Lake Bolac, South West Victoria

**Below** Dr Kirsten Barlow (Principal Scientist Precision Agriculture), Geoff Ross (Precision Agriculture) at the field day held in Lake Bolac, South West Victoria, presenting on the benefits of using a Precision Agriculture approach and how this can be used to conserve wetlands and boost crop yields

**Left** On site discussion with Nathan Blomeley, Josh Blomeley, Tim Hill (Beyond Bolac Catchment Action Group Chair), Geoff Ross (Precision Agriculture) & Meera Cameron (Precision Agriculture), in Nerrin Nerrin, South West Victoria

# Helping Woodland Birds on Rural Properties

Australian woodland birds are in a bit of a flap. Out of the 195 species reliant on Temperate Woodland habitat, at least 51 species (or sub-species) are either listed as threatened or in decline. The primary culprits? Habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation.

In south-eastern Australia, over 80% of the remaining woodlands are located on private property, making it essential for land managers and conservationists to work together and create healthy landscapes that can support productive agriculture and protect woodland birds.

BirdLife Australia's Birds on Farms program is partnering with rural landholders to improve the extent, condition and connectivity of woodland habitat on their property. They are currently operating in five locations across Australia: Victoria-wide, Yarra to Yea, southern NSW, ACT-Yass and central-west NSW.

They organise a bird monitoring program where volunteer birdwatchers visit rural properties and conduct regular bird surveys. These surveys provide information on the health of woodland bird populations on private property and the success of habitat restoration projects.



Birds on farm monitoring woodland birds



Birds on Farms working with landholders | Revegetation gate sign

Since starting in 2017, 350 landholders are now participating and have completed over 14,000 surveys and recorded 315 species, including a breeding event of the Critically Endangered Regent Honeyeater.

This data shows that private properties play a vital role in the conservation of woodland birds. We now work with landholders to develop habitat restoration plans for their property, so they can create healthy agriculturally productive properties that support biodiversity. This a free service.

Since 2020, the program has collaborated with 26 landholders, resulting in the protection and enhancement of 200 hectares of woodland habitat.

If you are interested in participating, please visit [www.birdlife.org.au/programs/birds-on-farms](http://www.birdlife.org.au/programs/birds-on-farms).

Words by [Rhonda Vile](#) | Bird Life Australia





2020 Bob Hawke  
Landcare Award Winner  
Andrew Stewart

## Landcare Australia Seeks Nominations for the 2025 Bob Hawke Landcare Award

**The legacy of Bob Hawke lives on, with nominations now open for the prestigious Bob Hawke Landcare Award.**

For the first time, The Bob Hawke Landcare Award criteria have expanded to include individuals, farming families, groups, and organisations, all eligible for the \$30,000 prize. Nominations close on December 31 2024, so now's the time to recognise those making a real difference in sustainable agriculture.

The Bob Hawke Landcare Award is a prestigious national honour that publicly recognises an individual, farming families group, or organisation championing landcare and inspiring others to take action on their property or in their community. This Award celebrates landcare and recognises excellence in sustainable agriculture.

The Award is dedicated to the late Australian Prime Minister, the Hon. Bob Hawke AC, in recognition of his pivotal role in transforming landcare from a grassroots community initiative into a national movement, securing unique bipartisan support.

Andrew Stewart, the 2020 Bob Hawke Landcare Award winner, shares his experience: "The Bob Hawke Landcare Award has broadened my contacts in landcare and agroforestry, leading to speaking opportunities, webinars, and interviews with diverse audiences. The award also raised the profile of the agroforestry network I coordinate and our family farm in Yan Yan Gurt West, where we've hosted farm tours for many years. Winning the award opened doors for travel opportunities, including a recent exchange visit to Japan for Landcare Agroforestry."

Dr Shane Norrish, CEO of Landcare Australia, reflects on Bob Hawke's integral role in establishing Landcare Australia as a national organisation 35 years ago and his commitment to the landcare movement across Australia.

"For over a decade, this award has paid tribute to the late Bob Hawke, whose contributions to landcare and environmental conservation have created a lasting legacy. Today, landcare is one of Australia's largest volunteer movements, bringing together thousands of individuals,

groups, and communities in addressing local environmental challenges.

"The decision to expand the Award criteria for the first time rightly reflects the growth of the landcare movement. There has been significant innovation and progress in sustainable land management across Australia, and I'm convinced that the calibre of applications will be outstanding and will certainly inspire landcarers."

The 2025 Bob Hawke Landcare Award winner will receive a \$30,000 prize and be announced at the 2025 National Landcare Awards Gala Dinner on Tuesday 23 September, 2025. Nominations for the Bob Hawke Landcare Award close December 31, 2024.

The Bob Hawke Landcare Award is funded by the Australian Government through the Natural Heritage Trust. Landcare Australia administers the Bob Hawke Landcare Award on behalf of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).

For more information, go to:  
[www.bobhawkelandcareaward.com.au](http://www.bobhawkelandcareaward.com.au)

Words by Millie Webber | Landcare Australia

# Celebrating Landcare and recognising excellence in sustainable agriculture.



Australian Government



**Hurry! Nominations close 31 December 2024**

**Visit [bobhawkelandcareaward.com.au](http://bobhawkelandcareaward.com.au) for more information or to nominate**

# Bushlink–The Spirit of Inclusion

**N**orthside Enterprise is a not-for-profit organisation that support people living with a disability. One of their programs is “Bushlink”, a social enterprise that is focused on bush regeneration in the Northern Beaches and northern suburbs of Sydney.



They focus on improving the resilience of the Australian bushland, enhancing natural areas and restoring natural habitats. They take virtually any unkempt natural area and create a wonderful usable outdoor space - from natural bushland to kitchen gardens.

The outcomes are two-fold, environmental work and inclusion and work opportunities for people living with disabilities. Their Schools Inclusion Program is innovative and highly relevant in today's outreach for disability inclusion as well as environmental importance. The program works with up to 30 primary and secondary schools in a year.

Working together with the students, Bushlink teams use their specialist environmental skills to transform specific areas of a school's grounds or an external site. This can include weeding, pruning, clearing, mulching and planting in bushland, kitchen gardens or school gardens.

Corporate volunteer days are also an excellent way of working with a wider audience – they run days where they introduce teams from local businesses to the beauty of working in nature, out of the office and meeting rooms and getting their hands dirty whilst at the same time working alongside people with disabilities.



“We find this direct contact with nature has a hugely positive physiological impact on everyone.”

Tarek and Abi

## Schools Inclusion Program

Their professional and devoted supervisors are experienced in conservation, land management and disability support. By supporting employees with disability, they ensure students experience incredible outcomes - the students learn practical bush regeneration skills as well as being educated about the importance of taking care of our land.

Abi Byrne is one of Bushlink's supervisors who has been working in the environmental sector for over 15 years, starting in Holistic Land Management, Horticulture and Bush regeneration – she says **“I have always loved having my hands in the dirt! Ecological restoration is so rewarding because the gains we made are obvious and can be enjoyed by everyone. Habitat restoration is obviously instrumental in**

**creating habitats for wildlife. Australian native plants are unique and quite frankly amazing.”**

Tarek Lazhar is key part of Abi's team – she describes him as her **‘right hand man!’**. Tarek has been with Bushlink for five years, joining the team straight from school – he now works four days every week. If you ask him what he likes best about working outside he says **“Watering plants and watching them grow, and planting. I get to work with my friends and I love cool days, it can be tough when it is too hot!”**

Bushlink environmental project teams work hard to improve our natural environment with bush regeneration whilst providing meaningful employment for their workers.

For further information visit [www.bushlink.org.au](http://www.bushlink.org.au).

Words by Eleanor Slade



NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2024 State Gathering Group Photo

# Highlights from the NSW Landcare Enabling Program State Gathering

**I**n August, over 160 landcarers came together at Manly's Q Station for the NSW Landcare Enabling Program State Gathering, hosted by Landcare NSW. The event, themed **‘Adaptation & Innovation’**, provided a platform for Regional and Local Landcare Coordinators, along with community partners, to share insights and strengthen connections.

A Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony, led by Aboriginal Partnerships Manager Den Barber and Aunty Leanne King, opened the gathering. Key speakers for the day included Roy Butler MP and Local Land Services Statewide Programs Director Gary Rodda. Regional Representatives followed with key learnings and innovative projects they deliver in their areas.



NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2024 State Gathering Smoking Ceremony

On day two, Adam Byrne (Garigal/Gadigal) from Bush to Bowl hosted a Q&A and showcased native Australian ingredients through a delicious morning tea. Workshops followed, covering a range of topics from digital landcare, branding, and reporting, to self-sustenance, partnerships, LNSW Statewide programs and governance. Paul Ryan from the Australian Resilience Centre led a reflective session on landcare as a social movement.

On the final day, Nioka Dupond and Annika Colenso (Murrumbidgee Landcare), Michael Kennedy (North Coast Regional Landcare), and Den Barber led a discussion on the pilot Aboriginal Landcare Coordinator roles, offering insights on creating culturally

safe workplaces. Brigette Keeble from the Natural Resources Commission gave an update on the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Improving (MERI) framework for the Landcare Enabling Program.

The Gathering concluded with a Cleansing Smoking Ceremony on Country.

This event was made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Landcare NSW and Local Land Services NSW, supported by the NSW Government.

For more information, please visit [www.landcarensw.org.au](http://www.landcarensw.org.au).

Words by Jodie Lovell and Kimberly Omodei Landcare NSW



NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2024 State Gathering Landcare NSW Chair Gareth Johnston  
NSW Landcare Enabling Program 2024 State Gathering Welcome to Country





# Introducing the 2024 State and Territory Landcare Award Winners

Now in its 32nd year, the State and Territory Landcare Awards celebrate individuals, groups and organisations making outstanding contributions to caring for the environment. The winners of the nine national Landcare Award categories will advance as finalists to the 2025 National Landcare Awards to be hosted on Tuesday 23 of September 2025.

In each state and territory, the Landcare Awards recognise the achievements that encompass climate action, environmental leadership, sustainable agriculture, First Nations, Women in landcare, Coastcare, youth and children.

In this edition of Landcare in Focus, we're shining the spotlight on the First Nations Landcare Collaboration Award, Women in Landcare Award, Coastcare Award, and NextGen Award. Congratulations to all our finalists—you make an incredible difference in your communities!

# NextGen Landcare Award

The NextGen Landcare Award acknowledges an individual or a youth group\* between the ages of 18 - 35 years who promote excellence in landcare through on-ground projects and/or awareness raising activities. The NextGen award celebrates an individual or youth group who can demonstrate their capacity to lead and encourage the wider community to engage and participate in managing the environment and natural resources in their local area.

\*The majority of the group's membership must be between the 18-35-year age range.

Feature image 'Waybali Murruway - Weaving Paths' a collaboration with the Wiradyuri community and The Wired Lab

Right Zoe McMahon, Landcare ACT NextGen winner

## VIC

### Bryce Watt-Parker

Bryce Watt-Parker is well known in the community as a young enthusiastic environmentalist who is passionate about flora and fauna! He has been involved with Friends of Mallacoota Landcare group for over 5 years. Bryce is passionate about the environment and has a soft spot for the local unique flora and the scaly critter of the area. Sharing the unique biodiversity with his community and wider audience is something Bryce takes great pride in as he believes if we don't know about the amazing biodiversity in our backyards, we are less likely to care for it.

## NSW

### Taylor Springett

Taylor Springett is a young and passionate longstanding member of the Penguin Warden volunteer group based out of Spring Cove, Manly NSW. The 30 members of the Penguin Wardens contribute tireless hours of work each year protecting the endangered population of little penguins. Taylor's long and outstanding dedication to the Manly little penguin population sets an example for others interested in threatened species conservation to aspire to.

## QLD

### Rosalinde Green-Brinkman

Rosalinde (Rose) is the CEO of Watergum Community Inc. She is a born leader with a great sense of humour, huge passion for Australian landscapes and incredible organisational skills who, over seven years, has grown Watergum into an organisation that directly engages over 10,000 people in carrying out hands on environmental and land management work. Rose's strength is identifying an environmental problem, engaging stakeholders, and partners to develop a solution and then finding a funding source, the successful TurtleWatch Program is a prime example.

## SA

### The Biology Society of South Australia

The student-run Biology Society of South Australia is a vibrant youth-led organization embedded within the University of Adelaide's School of Biological Sciences. The BSSA has evolved into a crucial platform for engaging young individuals in environmental science, conservation, and ecology. They exemplify the nexus between youthful energy and conservation efforts and show how to advance landcare through innovative communication, education, strategic partnerships, and fundraising. They have shown exceptional leadership in communicating environmental and natural resource management issues to a broad audience through innovative use of media, social media and educational outreach.

## NT

### Dr Cara Penton

Dr Cara Penton works in conservation biology, with a specific focus on the protection of threatened species and small mammal populations in northern Australia. Her pioneering research into tree hollow ecology for arboreal mammals on Melville Island has illuminated the habitat preferences of species like the brush-tailed rabbit-rat and the black-footed tree-rat but also their shared use of scarce resources, enhancing our understanding of species cohabitation and conservation needs. Cara exemplifies Indigenous-led conservation, integrating traditional knowledge with modern practices. Her advocacy, research, and leadership advance landcare, fostering biodiversity and community empowerment.

## ACT

### Zoe Stuart McMahon

Zoë McMahon is a land manager and educator with a strong and constant focus on sustainability, community engagement, program management and organic food production. Zoë lives and works on Ngunnawal / Ngambri Country, Canberra. In 2021 Zoë established her own chemical-free and regenerative market garden transforming a farm paddock and old building site in the Majura Valley into a commercial market garden that provides quality, fresh, local produce to the Canberra community and some of the best restaurants in the city. Using her imaginative social media and marketing skills, Zoë has captivated Canberrans and drawn considerable attention. Through her 'Farmer Zoë' social media channel, Zoë has produced educational and promotional videos and her social media platform is growing daily, while her videos, attract thousands of viewers.





# First Nations Landcare Collaboration Award

The **First Nations Landcare Collaboration Award** recognises a partnership between an Indigenous and a non-Indigenous community group or individuals who are working to integrate First Nations-led Cultural land, sea, and water management practices into mainstream landcare efforts, fostering a sustainable and inclusive approach to natural resource stewardship.

## ACT

### Bradley Bell

Bradley Bell is a recognised leader whose partnership with the Ngunnawal community integrates Cultural knowledge into environmental water management policies, advancing both governance and community involvement in the ACT.

## NSW

### 'Waybali Murruway - Weaving Paths' a collaboration with the Wiradyuri community and The Wired Lab

'Waybali Murruway - Weaving Paths' is a multi-year Wiradyuri and female-led project reflecting the interconnectedness of caring for Country to cultural resilience and community wellbeing. Over several years 'Waybali Murruway' has connected people across 4 generations and 6 Indigenous communities in the Wiradyuri Nation.

## QLD

### Woppaburra TUMRA Aboriginal Corporation

The Woppaburra People formed a seven-year Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement with the Reef Authority and Queensland Parks and Wildlife, empowering them to manage their Sea Country, integrate Cultural values into ecological management, and strengthen their connection to Country and culture.

## VIC

### Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation - Narrap Unit & Darebin Creek Management Committee

The Narrap Rangers, a natural resource management unit that has rapidly expanded since 2012, have developed a relationship of knowledge and skill exchange with the Darebin Creek Management Committee. Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation - Narrap Unit & Darebin Creek Management Committee are restoring Country through Nangak Tamboree, an authentic cross-cultural project that incorporates cultural fire and modern natural resource management techniques.

## SA

### Nipapanha Community Aboriginal Corporation

The Nipapanha Community Aboriginal Corporation represents the Nipapanha Community to manage and care for the Nantawarrina Indigenous Protected Area (IPA), established in 1998 and first of its kind in Australia. The development of this IPA involved collaboration between the Adnyamathanha people and local landholders to reclaim land and reinstate Traditional Caring for Country practices, a model that was then replicated around the country.

## WA

### Dampier Peninsula Fire Working Group

The Dampier Peninsula Fire Working Group is a cross-tenure collaboration blending Indigenous right-way fire practice with contemporary techniques to protect biodiversity, cultural and pastoral values. They use expert ecological knowledge and practical fire management experience of the Indigenous members to identify the cultural, ecological and economic assets on the Dampier Peninsula that are affected by large, intense wildfires and to determine the strategies for mitigating the fire-caused damage to these assets.

## TAS

### South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation in partnership with the Kingborough Council

The South East Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation, in partnership with the Kingborough Council, has not only offered a traineeship but has also facilitated knowledge sharing, best practice development, and the healing of Country and community. This collaboration includes walking on Country together, observing seasonal changes, sharing stories, and integrating Aboriginal land management practices, which has significantly enhanced the Council's understanding and fuel reduction programs.

**Left** Yawuru Country Managers (one of the Dampier Peninsula Fire Working Group First Nations member groups) on the job, implementing cool season patch burns and responding to emergencies as required

Photograph by Monica Edgar / Yawuru Country Managers

# Greyhound Coastcare Award

The **Greyhound Coastcare Award** recognises community groups or networks significantly improving coastal or marine environments. Coastcare activities are wide ranging and include sand dune restoration, protection of threatened species, removing invasive species that are impacting on native flora, plastics and waste removal, education and volunteer engagement.

## VIC

### Simon Davies

Simon Davies is a well-known 'local legend' and pivotal figure at the Whitecliffs Foreshore Reserve in Rye, VIC. Simon's journey with the foreshore began in 1975, picking up rubbish, mowing, weeding, and propagating plants such as *Aleria axillaris* and *Boobialla*. Simon's deep-rooted passion for conservation and expertise over the decades have made tangible improvements in preserving the coastal ecosystem. His willingness to educate others further has amplified his impact and fostered a more informed and engaged community.

## WA

### Care for Hedland Environmental Association

Port Hedland is 1,800km north of Perth, in the resource rich Pilbara region of Western Australia. Founded in 2023, the Care for Hedland Environmental Association is an all-round community group. It is commonly thought in the local community that there would be no Flatback turtles still nesting today, in Port Hedland, if it were not for the Association's efforts, intervention, continued ongoing monitoring, data collection, communication of findings and importantly wider public education.

## SA

### Kumarangk Hindmarsh Island Landcare Group

First formed in the late 1980's during the Decade of Landcare, by a group of local farmers, the Kumarangk Hindmarsh Island Landcare Group has focused on reconnecting a fragmented landscape using remnant saltmarsh and fresh waterways that connect properties, and using landscape rehabilitation as the method of reconnection. The project collects all of the seed needed from island sources, raising appropriate plants in our nursery and then planting out on sites across the island.

## NSW

### Wallabi Point Coastcare Group

Wallabi Point Coastcare (WPC), east of Taree, in the Mid North Coastal region faced a major challenge when the Black Summer bushfires of 2019, razed all local vegetation, including a 3.5 hectare stand of critically endangered littoral rainforest. The group, who meet weekly, was proactive in assessing damage, developing strategies and aiding the natural recovery which will take decades. The group's challenge was not knowing what species had been lost and how to aid restoration due to a lack of historical records. A knowledge base which references suitable local sites for identifying species indigenous to the area and 'jog the memory' of Coastcarers of what grew in the area prior to the fire is being implemented.

## TAS

### Kingston Beach Coastcare

Kingston Beach Coastcare with its healthy membership base has achieved incredible impact over 25 years. The core members of KBC are committed to actively healing the land and water of their coastal ecosystems. They encourage healthy habitats for native flora and fauna in this rich and highly significant coastal ecosystem. The group's area is extensive and ecologically diverse, covering Kingston Beach and its dune systems, Tyndall Beach and the bush track behind it, coastal cliff faces, the Alum Cliffs track and the riparian strip including saltmarsh wetlands.

## QLD

### Friends of Federation Walk

The formation of the Friends of Federation Walk over 24 years began when the community wanted to protect, conserve and enhance the Federation Walk Coastal Reserve, a 93-hectare area located at the Spit, Main Beach. Through landcare activities like tree planting, weed control, litter clean up, education and awareness has created a strong ongoing community connection to the land that remains today. Due to dedicated endless hours of lobbying by the Friends, the State Government gazetted the land in 2003 for the purpose of park, environmental, beach protection, coastal management to help protect it for

## NT

### Larrakia Rangers

The Larrakia Rangers are a long-running, urban-based Aboriginal ranger group working across Larrakia land and sea country, which comprises the greater Darwin region west across the Cox Peninsula and east to the Adelaide River. Larrakia Rangers have been project managing the Darwin Harbour Clean-up for 5 years. Over the last three years, with the help of 565 volunteers involved they removed an estimated 4.6 ton of waste and around 314 kilometres of coast/land has been cleaned. Many volunteers were Indigenous school students which drastically increases young people's awareness of the impacts of marine waste and the importance of caring for our environment through picking up our rubbish.



Right Kingston Beach Coastcare Tasmania



# Women in Landcare Award

The **Women in Landcare Award** acknowledges the substantial contributions of a woman in the field of landcare. The individual demonstrates a strong commitment to promoting sustainable and inclusive practices for natural resource stewardship.

## WA

### Catherine Williams

Catherine Williams is an outstanding Community Landcare Manager at Southeastern Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL) who provides invaluable support to volunteers and land managers. She promotes and enables the conservation, management, and protection of Perth's urban nature reserves and bushland. Catherine supports Friends Of and landcare groups, advocating for the community and assisting with a wide range of activities, from grant writing to on-ground work, publicity, and communication.

## VIC

### Elizabeth Ross

Beth Ross, Vice President of Bellarine Catchment Network, has dedicated her life to biodiversity conservation. With over 20 years of experience, she passionately supports numerous groups as a leader, educator, and hands-on practitioner. Her expertise spans species identification, land management, and volunteer education.

## NSW

### Nell Chaffey

Nell Chaffey is a dedicated landcare advocate, embodying a profound commitment to environmental stewardship and community engagement. Starting her journey four decades ago, Nell's dedication to inclusivity and sustainability in landcare exemplifies her passion for Australian ecosystems, biodiversity, and community education. Her proactive approach to promoting sustainable landcare initiatives reflects her strong commitment to responsible resource use. Nell's efforts benefit her farm and inspire others to adopt sustainable practices for the betterment of the environment.

## TAS

### Vivienne Anne Briggs

Vivienne Anne Briggs has worked with Australian wildlife for 25 years, focusing on platypus, penguins, and birds in Burnie. For the past 20 years, she has been instrumental in platypus conservation in Tasmania, both professionally and voluntarily. As the founder and coordinator of Friends of Fernglade since 2014, to help make Fernglade a renowned spot for viewing wild platypuses.

## QLD

### Janet Mangan

With exceptional energy and dedication, Janet Mangan is an active volunteer and dedicated leader for a number of bushcare groups in Local Councils, National Parks and Catchment groups across SE Qld and Greater Brisbane. Janet is involved in all aspects of bushcare and nursery activities, from carrying out the manual work of propagating, weeding and planting, to providing education and taking on decision-making roles in committees.

## ACT

### Sarah Sharp

Sarah Sharp, a highly regarded plant ecologist and environmentalist, is widely recognised for elevating environmental management standards in the ACT. She uses her extensive plant knowledge and scientific expertise to advocate, educate, and demonstrate how to work with and care for nature.

## SA

### Sarah Barrett

Chairperson of the Landcare Association of South Australia, Sarah Barrett, a leader in landcare for 30 years, inspires community engagement with her dedication and inclusivity. Thirty years ago, she co-founded a Landcare group with her neighbours. Under Sarah's guidance, volunteer groups expanded at Barossa Bushgardens to dedicated programs for young people, unemployed, people living with dementia and men's groups.

Left Sarah Sharp, ACT Winner

# Paradise Lost and Found!



**T**ony and Cherie Townsend, the custodians of Paradise Gully, are leading a transformative effort to restore their land to its natural state. Once home to extensive patch of Cabernet Sauvignon vines, Paradise Gully is now being revitalised as a sanctuary for native flora and fauna. The Townsends have made the impactful decision to remove the vineyard and reintroduce native vegetation, a critical step in restoring the local ecosystem.

Tony explains how the change came about “While sitting on a cliff top at Paradise Gully overlooking the Murray River, it was like the land said to me that, it’s had enough of providing, it now wants just to be what it was, natural!”

A key focus of this restoration is the protection of vulnerable species like the Regent Parrot, a bird native to the region that has been threatened by habitat loss. By reestablishing the natural vegetation, Tony and Cherie are creating an environment where the Regent Parrot and other wildlife can thrive. The carefully selected native plants will provide essential food and shelter, supporting the survival and resurgence of this striking bird species.

The restoration of Paradise Gully also brings broader environmental benefits, such as stabilising the soil, improving water quality, and creating a sustainable habitat that will endure for future generations. Recognising the cultural and social importance of this land, the Townsends have engaged with a wide range of local communities, including Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board, (RMMAC) River Murray Mallee Aboriginal Corporation and River Murray Youth Council to assist in the planting project.

Mel Burford, Threatened Species Ecologist from Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board said “Tony and Cherie Townsend’s vision is inspiring. It is motivated landholders like the Townsends that will play a crucial role in the recovery of the Regent Parrot. She goes on to say

“With the help from some very motivated and keen students from the River Murray Youth Council, and RMMAC rangers, we got more than 1,000 plants into the ground. The students had a fantastic day and it was great to engage them in a local restoration project.”

Tony also shared “This was a real highlight seeing the enthusiasm of these young people playing a role in regenerating their future”.

Through their dedication, Tony and Cherie Townsend are creating a legacy of ecological stewardship and community collaboration. Paradise Gully’s transformation is not just about returning the land to its natural state; it’s about providing a safe haven for species like the Regent Parrot and honouring the land’s diverse cultural history.

As the native vegetation flourishes and the Regent Parrot returns, Paradise Gully will stand as a vibrant example of renewal and harmony between nature and the many communities that cherish it.

If you’re interested in establishing habitat for Regent parrots on your property, contact Mel Burford on 8532 9100 or [melissa.burford@sa.gov.au](mailto:melissa.burford@sa.gov.au).

Words by Eleanor Slade | Landcare Australia



Photography by James Braund





alca Australian Land Conservation Alliance

PLC24  
Nature now

# Private Land Conservation Conference 2024



**T**he Australian Land Conservation Alliance (ALCA), the peak national body for private land conservation, convened its largest conference ever in Sydney this October, themed “Nature Now: Action for People and Planet.”

ALCA represents a sector dedicated to the conservation, management, and restoration of nature on private land. These efforts address critical conservation challenges in Australia, including safeguarding endangered ecosystems, expanding and connecting protected areas, controlling invasive species, mitigating climate change, and enhancing community and landscape resilience.



With 60% of Australia’s land privately managed, private land conservation presents a unique opportunity to help achieve national and global biodiversity and climate targets. The health of our natural environment is crucial for human well-being and economic stability and as nature declines, only urgent, collective action can reverse this trend.

The Nature Now Conference ran adjacent to the world’s first Global Nature Positive Summit, to amplify the role and impact of private land conservation in both national and international dialogues. The event grounded the Summit’s high-level policy and finance discussions in actionable strategies while showcasing a sector that is making a significant impact for people and the planet.

ALCA CEO Jody Gunn noted that the private land conservation conference continues to grow each year, attracting a diverse range of sectors. This increasing participation reflects the urgency and potential in halting and reversing nature loss, and underscores the need for a whole-of-society response.

“Private land conservation is vital for achieving many targets outlined in the Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as Australia’s national land protection and restoration goals. We must leverage our skills, expertise, and relationships to empower the private sector to take faster, more impactful nature action, and we must urge our government to strengthen and deliver laws, policies and investment that supports and scales private land conservation. A healthy, resilient future is within our reach, but we must act now—together.”

Jody Gunn, CEO ALCA

For more information please visit [www.alca.org.au](http://www.alca.org.au).

Words by [Monica Haynes](#) | ALCA

**Above** Speakers in Sydney at ALCA’s PLC24 Nature Now Conference  
**Images** Delegates gathering at ALCA’s PLC24 Nature Now Conference

## Book Review Corner: for Landcarers by Landcarers

Recreating the Country: Ten key principles for designing sustainable landscapes, by Stephen Murphy.

**H**elen Scott joined Newham & District Landcare in 2006. She was Secretary from 2016 until 2022 and remains on their Committee.

Helen has written this insightful book review on Stephen Murphy's book 'Recreating the Country: Ten key principles for designing sustainable landscapes':

The 2009 edition of this fabulous little book has been a bible for landowners and Landcare groups involved in revegetation and restoring natural landscapes. This updated, expanded second edition includes three new chapters and revisions based on another 15 years of the author's experience (adding to his original 25), and observations of nature in action.

University trained in Geology, Natural Resource Management and Ecology, Stephen Murphy, was a practising nurseryman for 30 years and now advises farmers, foresters and landcare groups.

Planting wider "bio-rich" plantations that mimic nature - more than the old shelterbelt methods - allows "useful" trees, shrubs and flowers to be integrated for harvest and provide a lifeline for flora, fungi and wildlife. Income generating species are detailed. In other words, biodiversity and profit = bio-rich. To achieve this, Murphy uses ten key principles in designing bio-rich plantations to restore bare farmland by revegetation and integrating forestry to benefit native flora and fauna that lead to a sustainable future.

If you want one book to cover any topic you care to choose on revegetation and sustainable landscape design for generations to come, this is it. Though packed with information and examples on every topic, it is easy to access as the nine chapters have clear, detailed subheadings. There are many excellent labelled photos, tables and diagrams. The text is well-referenced by chapter endnotes, plus an index. There are inspiring personal case studies. Frankly, it should be on every landcarer's bookshelf!



Stephen's Murphy's book is available for purchase via his website, and there is a special discount for landcare groups who order three or more copies. His website supports the design strategies discussed in the book and includes regular blogs which shine a light on all aspects of sustainable landcare and connecting with nature. Stephen explains

“ My principal objective in publishing the book was to change how government organisations and landcarers think about plantations, so that high quality habitats are being planted everywhere. This is the only way we will provide endangered wildlife with a critical lifeline. Most farm plantations are not adequate for this purpose as the experts have been reminding us for over 20 years. ”

For further information, visit [www.recreatingthecountry.com.au](http://www.recreatingthecountry.com.au) or [www.newhamlandcare.info](http://www.newhamlandcare.info).

Words by [Helen Scott](#) | Newham & District Landcare Group



Stephen Murphy with the Newham & District Landcare Group, May 2024

## A New Dawn for the Night Parrot: Turning a Cattle Station into a Wildlife Sanctuary

**F**or dedicated twitchers, few dreams are more enticing than the chance of spotting a Night Parrot in the wild. Believed extinct, with no confirmed sightings for 67 years, the elusive bird was miraculously photographed in western Queensland in 2013. Since then, the rediscovered Night Parrot has achieved cult-like status. Yet even today, sightings are extremely rare. The nocturnal, ground-dwelling bird, which may number only 15 in Queensland, has only been spotted in a handful of remote locations.

Now, thanks to a \$21 million donation to The Nature Conservancy, the Night Parrot's future - and that of countless other rare and significant plants and animals - looks brighter than ever. Donated anonymously, the funds were used by The Nature Conservancy to assist the Queensland Government to purchase Vergemont Station, a cattle property the

size of Yosemite National Park. This has secured more than 300,000 hectares of prime habitat in Queensland's Channel Country, creating a safe haven for wildlife, preserving vital water catchments and increasing the ecological connectivity of this globally significant landscape.

Now poised to become a vital wildlife sanctuary, the former cattle station is a testament to the tangible benefits of donating to conservation efforts. But the true impact of the purchase extends well beyond the station's 300,000 hectares. Vergemont adjoins other existing and recently acquired reserves, creating a protected area corridor that conserves nearly 1.5 million hectares of the precious Channel Country bioregion.

Although The Nature Conservancy will have to await confirmation of the Night Parrot's existence on the property, the prevalence of spinifex, the preferred habitat of the Night Parrot,

and the known presence of Night Parrots on nearby properties, is a promising sign.

The purchase isn't just good news for birdwatchers, either. Containing an astonishing 34 different ecosystems, Vergemont is a veritable Noah's Ark of biodiversity. The area is home to other threatened species like the Yellow-footed rock wallaby, and for a property of this size, the likelihood of finding new species is very high.

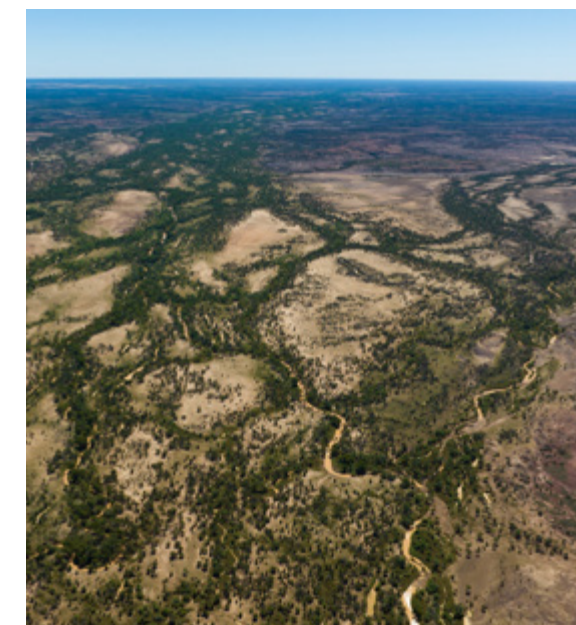
For further information, visit [www.natureaustralia.org.au](http://www.natureaustralia.org.au).

Words by [Chris Harrigan](#) | Fireside Agency

**Top** Yellow-footed rock wallabies. Credit: Lyn Brydon, QLD Government

**Right top** Aerial shot of Vergemont Station. Credit: Ian Wilkinson, QLD Government

**Right bottom** Aerial shot of Vergemont Station 2. Credit: Ian Wilkinson, QLD Government



# The Inaugural National Biosecurity Week - Building Resilience for a Stronger Tomorrow

**The inaugural National Biosecurity Week (NBW) was held 26-30 August 2024, to emphasize the importance of biosecurity in protecting the Australian environment, food supply and the economy.**

Australia's biosecurity system is a multi-layered system with prevention, preparedness, management and response activities undertaken overseas, at the border, and post-border.

Biosecurity is the management of risks to the economy, the environment, and the community, from new pests, diseases and weeds entering, establishing, and spreading in your area.

The organisers said "NBW is an opportunity to highlight the collaborative efforts of government, industry and the community in raising biosecurity awareness and promoting biosecurity practices that safeguards Australia".

Going forward, NBW aims to increase awareness and participation in our shared biosecurity culture by actively engaging all Australians in strengthening, integrating, and enhancing our biosecurity systems.

**“To protect our food supply, our agricultural industries, our environment, and our Australian way of life we all need to make biosecurity an everyday priority,** says Sarah Corcoran, CEO of Planet Health Australia. **”**

“Our biosecurity system is based on the principles of partnership, shared responsibility and interconnectedness to build a resilient and robust system, and we all have a role to play,” says Sarah.

Although Australia has robust biosecurity measures in place to mitigate biosecurity risks, exotic pests, diseases and harmful weeds can and do occasionally enter the country. The early detection of animal and plant pests, diseases and weeds support more timely, effective, and efficient responses to biosecurity incidents.

**“There has never been a more challenging environment for biosecurity in Australia, with the risk profile in our region escalating over the last five years. However, the effectiveness of our current responses highlights the power of collaboration,”** says Samantha Allan, CEO of Animal Health Australia.

Biosecurity is everyone's responsibility – community, business and government must work together to safeguard Australia from pests, diseases and harmful weeds.

If you spot anything unusual or find something you are unsure about, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881 or the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.

Words by **Eleanor Slade** | Landcare Australia

*NBW is a Decade of Biosecurity (DoB) initiative, funded by Plant Health Australia (PHA) and Animal Health Australia (AHA) and delivered by PHA.*

## Coastcare Victoria 30 Year Forum

**D**uring National Volunteer Week 2024, Coastcare Victoria celebrated its 30-year milestone with an extremely successful Forum that brought together over 100 attendees, both in person on Bunurong Country on the coast in Naarm (Port Melbourne), and online.

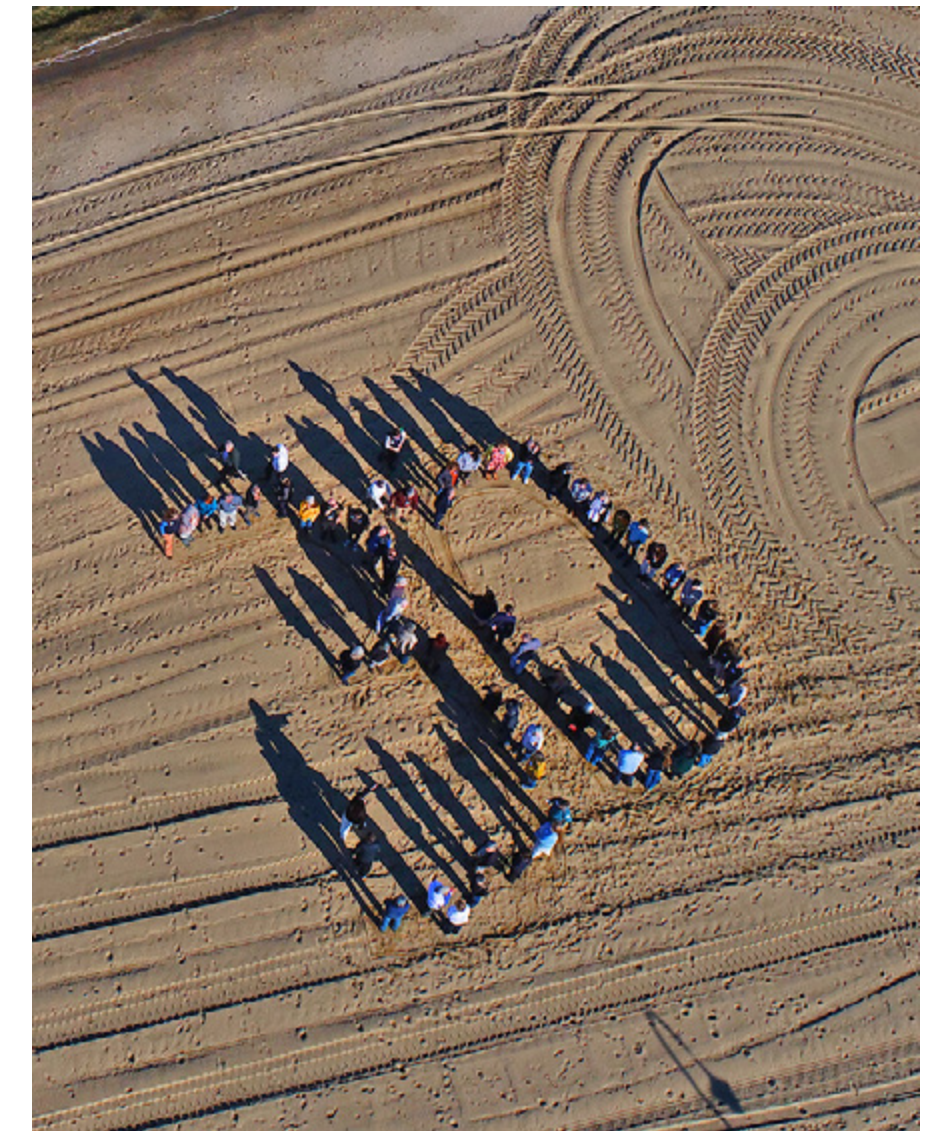
The event was a vibrant gathering of the Coastcare Victoria community, celebrating and honouring three decades of unwavering volunteer dedication to the protection and enhancement of Victoria's marine and coastal environments.

The forum not only celebrated the past but provided inspiration for future actions. Volunteers, community groups and organisations, Traditional Owners, agency partners, past Coastcare Victoria staff and expert presenters delivered a series of engaging presentations and workshops that highlighted the collective efforts, challenges and successes in preserving the natural beauty and health of our coastlines.

**Coastcare Victoria wants to deeply thank everyone who has been involved for the past 30 years, and we look forward to the future!**



**▶** A recap video of the day can be watched above or visit: [www.marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au/](http://www.marineandcoasts.vic.gov.au/)



### Topics included:

- ▶** Lessons learnt and story sharing from local Coastcare Victoria groups and grant projects, including Southern Ocean Environmental Link, Swan Bay Environment Association, Jan Juc Coast Action and White Tag
- ▶** Screening of Nyamat Mirring Sea Country – Evaluation Video, produced by the Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
- ▶** Keynote speech from Scott Breschkin, Oceans Project Coordinator at The Nature Conservancy, on restoring marine ecosystems
- ▶** Interactive workshop with Dr Lily Van Eeden on interdisciplinary approaches to conservation biology and human behaviour

For more information, visit [www.deeca.vic.gov.au](http://www.deeca.vic.gov.au).

Words by [Laura Town-Hopkinson](#) | Coastcare Victoria

# 'It's not the Whole Story Without the Understory'

**T**he Understorey Network (USN) in northern Hobart, Tasmania is a community organisation focused on propagating, preserving and promoting the value of Tasmanian understorey native plants. Their motto is **'It's not the whole story without the understory.'**

The network started in 1994 as a volunteer organisation with members growing native plants in their backyards to improve the biodiversity of revegetation sites. The Understorey Network now operates as a community nursery, run by a group of dedicated volunteers. The nursery grows a range of Tasmanian native plants for landcare projects and local councils.

USN is very proud of its flagship and unique Plant Database of Tasmanian Native Plants, which provides detailed information not found elsewhere on Tasmanian natives including growing conditions, seed collection and propagation.

Recently, volunteer Julie Ayre has led an overhaul of their website and database. Julie is now seeking people with specific knowledge of eucalypts, grasses, orchids and other Tasmanian native understorey plants to help her with the next phase of the project. All this whilst still volunteering each week at the nursery! Julie said

**“ I have been inspired by people who are so passionate about Tasmanian natives. Their efforts, contributing their time and knowledge to the development of the original database over 20 years ago, is the core of this redevelopment. Working with other volunteers on this project and at the nursery has connected me with people who are dedicated to protecting our natural environment. ”**



Simply but effectively designed, the database can be used in a variety of ways. Its functionality includes searching by plant name to find out more information on the species and how to propagate it. Or users might want to find plants suited to their location that will attract birds and other pollinators or create habitat for wildlife. It also has a great function for those with a vacant piece of ground who would like to know what native plants might grow there - they can choose the soil type and growing conditions and click away.

Due to the efforts of Julie and other volunteers at USN, the renewed database will have information on approximately 1900 plants. When the task is finished, landcarers all over Tasmania will have an up-to-date resource at their fingertips.

The Understorey Network website and database redevelopment has been made possible due to the Wettenhall Environment Trust, which provides grants to support projects that enhance and maintain the vitality and diversity of the Australian natural living environment.

For further information, please visit: [www.understorey-network.org.au](http://www.understorey-network.org.au)

Words by Eleanor Slade | Landcare Australia

## Turning a Vision into Action – a Q&A with Bev Debrincat

**B**ev Debrincat wears many hats: founding member and current Chair of Greater Sydney Landcare, bushland committee member for Ryde and Hunters Hill Councils, and a representative for the Landcare NSW State Advisory Council. Her initiatives, like the International Environmental Weed Foundation (IEWF) and the Habitat Network, illustrate how personal commitment can spark a community movement.



Bev Debrincat, holding a Hakea sericea, a small bird habitat plant

### Can you share how you got started in landcare?

I began my career in the computer industry. In the early 1990s, we purchased a 50-acre block of littoral rainforest and coastal wetlands in Crescent Head. At the same time, I started a TAFE course in bushland conservation and management, which required me to create a site plan and management strategy using my property as the project. Over the years, I've recorded 76 bird species on the land. We've been regenerating it for over 30 years now. After completing the course and desiring a career change, I volunteered for the National Trust and eventually moved into a paid position. Over time, I managed my own team and managed contracts with councils. Now, being a qualified bush regenerator, I mentor others in bushland management.

### How did you take this passion into your local community?

While living near a reserve that was overrun with weeds, I started a Bushcare team. I approached the council for support, and since they had no Bushcare officer, we initiated a program through a grant. This led to the council hiring its first part-time Bushcare officer, establishing a long-term position. I also founded the International Environmental Weed Foundation (IEWF) to educate the public about invasive plants, as resources were limited back in the late 1990s. We created a simple weed lookup on our website, featuring about 80 common weeds, it is still available online and people reach out to us for plant identification.

### What advice would you give someone with an idea for their community?

Find something you're passionate about and keep your message simple. Be clear about your goals. Offer easy tasks for others to help you achieve your goals to avoid complicating things. Many people feel overwhelmed by climate change. For instance, with Habitat Network, we focus on habitat corridors and encourage home gardeners to create small habitats. Initially, we didn't have brochures, which made it hard for people to visualise our ideas. Thankfully, Virginia Bear from Little Gecko Marketing helped us create simple visuals to communicate effectively. Celebrate small victories, it's incredibly rewarding. Most importantly, have fun! Not everyone wants to engage in serious discussions or lobbying. Many prefer to contribute quietly while feeling part of a larger story.

### How did you generate interest for the Habitat Network?

We realised we needed affordable plants, which led us to propose a community nursery. It took about five years of engagement with Ryde and Hunters Hill councils. We lobbied all 12 councillors in Ryde, found a location and eventually secured support for the nursery. We also developed a website and social media and talked to all of the neighbours along Shrimpton's Creek where the nursery is located and took them on the journey with us.

### How did your travels influence your work?

While travelling in South America, I networked with global conservationists. Upon returning, I applied for a grant from the Environmental Trust to fund a project focused on restoring natural capital. With the funding, we held workshops that used aerial photos to discuss what we had lost and how we could restore it. We identified three key issues: people knew about native plants but didn't know how to use them in their gardens, many recognised common weeds but lacked management strategies, and there was concern about declining small native birds. This inspired our focus on small native birds within the Habitat Network, connecting people and habitats for mutual benefit.

For more information, head to [www.habitatnetwork.org](http://www.habitatnetwork.org) and get in touch via [info@iewf.org](mailto:info@iewf.org).

# Understanding 'Greenspots' in Outback NSW

Australia, known as the land of droughts and flooding rains, has shaped the way animals in outback NSW survive and respond to extremes in weather. This could mean breeding rapidly during periods of high rainfall and shrinking to smaller numbers during droughts. These changes in animal populations are known as 'boom and bust' cycles. Some pockets in the landscape stay wetter during dry periods and may be important refuges for animals. These refuges, or 'greenspots,' can provide habitat for threatened species and support ecosystem resilience to climate change.

Scientists from the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water and the University of Sydney are using satellite imagery to locate greenspots within chenopod shrubland in far western NSW. The team has partnered with several private pastoral properties and are working with the local Aboriginal community to extend the research into Mutawintji National Park.

After finding these greenspots, the team uses a variety of techniques including camera traps, acoustic recorders, funnel traps and detailed vegetation and soil surveys to capture information on plants, soil and animals. The team has already recorded many species, including the threatened stripe-faced dunnart and fat-tailed gecko. Early results show greenspots are healthier than the surrounding landscape, and the team want to know if these greenspots also support more species, especially during drier times.

“ Little is known about the ecology of native species in western NSW, and much of their habitat is managed as pastoral land. Understanding where these areas of high conservation value are, and why they are important can help us look after threatened species and their habitat. Maintaining biodiversity has flow on effects to agriculture through better soil health, productivity and ecosystem function. ”  
- Greenspots team

The study is helping to build knowledge of arid zone ecology, and support conservation on pastoral land in western NSW. The Greenspots project offers landowners knowledge about biodiversity on their properties which may inform conservation efforts.

For further information, please email:  
SoS.ScienceResearch@environment.nsw.gov.au

Words by Shaina Russell | NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (NSW DCCEEW)



# Aquarius Park Landcare Group: Preserving Nimbin's Natural Beauty

Aquarius Park in Nimbin is more than just a green space; it's a living testament to the community's dedication to environmental guardianship. To support this effort, in May 2024 a group of volunteers formed the Aquarius Park Landcare Group under the Nimbin Community Centre. They are bringing together volunteers passionate about preserving and enhancing the park's natural beauty.

The group has collaborated with Hannah and Emily, hailing from [Lismore City Council](#) and the [Richmond Landcare Inc](#), who brought a wealth of knowledge in regeneration and bush vegetation.

The group's mission is to maintain the soon-to-be-completed Nimbin Rainbow Road Walking Track, which is a project that aims to construct a 750m concrete and boardwalk track for the active community of Nimbin and its visiting tourists. They will focus on weed control, habitat restoration and ongoing care for the park's diverse flora and fauna, making sure it remains a sustainable and enjoyable space for everyone. By engaging the community in these activities, they aim to protect this area for future generations while encouraging a deeper connection between people and the environment.

Rain Wickham, one of the group's founding members explains "as the group is still developing we will be offering unique opportunities for local residents in Nimbin and surrounding areas to and contribute to environmental conservation."

For more information, please visit:  
[www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofaquariuspark](http://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofaquariuspark)

Words by [Rain Wickham](#) | Nimbin Community Centre

Affiliation: Aquarius Park Landcare Group,  
Nimbin Community Centre, Richmond Landcare



“ We are encouraging everyone in Nimbin and surrounding areas to get involved. The time and effort given by volunteers can make a significant difference in preserving this cherished space, and inspire others to join us in this important work. ”

Hannah and Emily from Lismore City Council assess biodiversity along the Rainbow Walk, Aquarius Park



# Bringing Volunteers & Experts Together in one place.

The Landcarer website is a purpose built FREE online community for individuals, groups and organisations to share and discuss all things related to our common passion for conservation, sustainable land management and agriculture in Australia.



Build capacity for grassroots and community based groups



Promote your work, events or outcomes



Share ideas, experiences, knowledge and resources



Collaborate with others, explore opportunities and ask questions

[www.landcarer.com.au](http://www.landcarer.com.au)



WILI team photo taken by Eva Baxter - the Northern Leader

## Water in the Landscape Initiative: Shaping a Resilient Future for the Upper Namoi Catchment

**T**he slopes of the Upper Namoi, are a significant water catchment for the Murray-Darling system and are facing increasing pressures from changing rainfall patterns, rising temperatures, and shifting agricultural demands. The Water in the Landscape Initiative (WILI) aims to address these challenges through sustainable water management and community-driven strategies.

WILI is a collaborative effort between TRLA, Tamworth Regional Council, the

University of New England (UNE), and community organisations. Our mission is to build resilience by enhancing water availability, landscape rehydration, and fostering an informed and engaged community. Through education, research, and advocacy, WILI seeks to create a sustainable future for the Upper Namoi catchment.

The initiative focuses on key areas such as agricultural water use, urban water management, natural resource conservation, and cultural heritage. Our approach is grounded in the belief that community engagement is essential for effective water

management. By supporting local networks and providing educational opportunities, WILI empowers residents to participate in shaping the region's water future.

One of our core goals is to improve the management of "green" water—water held in soils, unregulated aquifers, and small storages. This often-overlooked resource is critical for maintaining the "blue" water in rivers and reservoirs. WILI will bring scientific rigor to the study of landscape management, ensuring that our efforts are data-driven and impactful.

**“WILI aims to serve as a model for other regions in the Murray-Darling Basin, demonstrating how local communities can take proactive steps to secure their water future in the face of climate variability.”**

For more information visit: [www.trla.org.au/what-we-do/wili-water-in-the-landscape-initiative](http://www.trla.org.au/what-we-do/wili-water-in-the-landscape-initiative)

Words by [Ninna Douglas](#) Tamworth Landcare Group



# Intrepid Landcare Gives Us Wings

**Intrepid, meaning fearless or adventurous, is a fitting name for the landcare organisation which has offered a platform for young people in the Australian conservation space for nearly 10 years. In the Hunter region of NSW, we are building upon the power Intrepid Landcare offers for our demographic. It is not simply a landcare group that welcomes those early in adulthood or incorporates adventure activities. It is space for connection, learning and inspiration.**

Community landcare groups have infinite value in their ageless approach to environmental conservation. It goes without saying. But in a world where we, those who will inherit custodianship of the land, have so little control over the rapid changes and developments that morph our landscapes, it is almost a relief to not be tied to a specific site. Intrepid Landcare gives us wings to lend our strength and passion where it is needed, from dense patches of weeds in our local wetlands or coastal dunes, habitat restoration for threatened frogs or shorebirds, or developing skills to identify and contribute to research – we practice the ebbs and flows of nature which are required for resilience.

And in this fluid approach to environmental conservation, we grow a space for connection.

We are diverse in our participants, not just students of environmental sustainability but anyone our age that wants to learn, have an excuse to be outdoors, do something good for their community or make new friends. While we value the inherent wisdom of those that came before us, there is a warming comfort in sharing ideas and passion with our peers.

We are catering for the needs of our generation by adapting to emerging trends. Opportunistic, event-based activities provide an environment where those that want to clean up rubbish and those that want to protect the coastline combine their efforts in a Sunday morning Clean Up Australia Day at Merewether. And they meet again, growing community, at a Bitou Bash where the clean-up is focussed on green rubbish – weeds - to allow the dunes to bounce back with native Acacia, Scaevola, Carpobrotus and more.

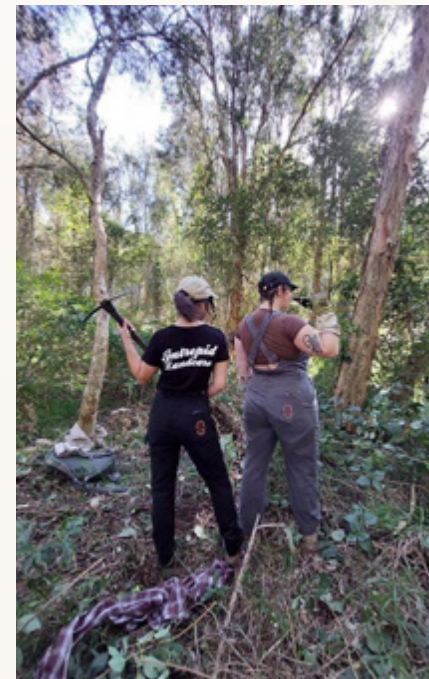
One of the biggest challenges we face as young adults is the tumultuous path to our forever homes (or forever roads for the more nomadic of us). Forced to move from family home, to study or work, or bouncing between rentals or share houses, it is difficult to promise commitment to one patch. You find a beautiful stretch of bushland a short walk around the corner, only to find yourself kilometres away in a matter

of months or quick years. Our site fidelity is limited. Goodbyes can be frequent and disappointing.

Hunter Intrepid Landcare's diverse and dispersed events allow our community to maintain a level of consistency in an ever-evolving period of life. No matter where we are. Those at the university among the tall trees and mosquitos or the TAFE campus under the shade cloth watching kangaroos pass by. The early career bush regenerators and ecologists or the young couples that wanted an active weekend activity. The late twenties to early thirties professionals that miss the freedom to make a difference outside of narrow corporate constraints. From Newcastle to Karuah to Weston and beyond, Hunter Intrepid gives us an avenue to return.

And while ice caps grow smaller and threatened species lists longer, we find respite in banding together to identify fungi in the Watagans or cruise the Hunter River at Tomago to reduce marine debris. We don't have to be saving the entire world just yet. We save ourselves and each other in fleeting moments of birdsong, sunshine and laughter.

We are like the seeds of great bushland trees, from artistic Spotted Gums to determined Ironbarks, holding with us the key to the next generation but using the wind and water to carry us to new horizons.



We experience the various landscapes and opportunities on offer from cool gullies, wind-blown dunes, swampy wetlands, dry woodland and dense forest. And one day in the distant future, when our young hands are weathered with experience, we may find the right spot to take root and inspire or inherit our own landcare sites and communities. But for now we are simply the seeds, enjoying the ride and being adventurous in our pursuit of knowledge. And we are so grateful to be provided the space to do so.

For more information, please visit [www.intrepidlandcare.org](http://www.intrepidlandcare.org).

Words by [Kate Mannell](#) | Intrepid Landcare

## Future Leaders, Big Ideas

**T**he Private Land Conservation Conference (PLC24), was abuzz with fresh ideas, discussions and exploring opportunities. The Future Leaders Forum, hosted by Landcare Australia was a dynamic workshop designed to inspire young leaders with real-world problem-solving and leadership skills.

Facilitated by Gabrielle Stacey from Landcare Australia and Hunter Landcare, the forum delivered a lineup of powerhouse speakers, including:



L-R Annette Cavanagh, Sophie Blair, Sanaa Shah, Kurt Jones

**Kurt Jones**, CEO of Co-Exist Australia, shared his journey from school project to leading a national conservation organisation.

**Sanaa Shah**, Honours student at the University of Sydney, provided research insights into conservation volunteering.

**Sophie Blair** from Wildventure and Greater Sydney Landcare explored how to engage young volunteers in environmental restoration.

**Annette Cavanagh**, Chair of Intrepid Landcare, dived into how to design volunteering experiences to create connections, collaborations, and career pathways.

We sat down with Gabrielle Stacey and Annette Cavanagh about their key learnings shared at the Future Leaders Forum.

Words by Millie Webber | Landcare Australia



Annette Cavanagh

### Why is collaboration important for young conservationists?

There are so many people out there with skills and knowledge that young people can learn from. We don't have to do everything on our own or reinvent the wheel. There are already existing resources and ideas that we can tap into. It's much easier and more beneficial to collaborate with others who are already doing similar things.

Volunteering and networking with different organisations opened up new opportunities for me. These connections are what led me to landcare and eventually to Intrepid Landcare.

It's important not to underestimate the value of the people you collaborate with. Connections don't have to be with big organisations – they can be as simple as working with a family member, like a project I did with my dad. Every connection can lead you down an unexpected path, and it's important to take advantage of those opportunities.

### What advice would you give to a young person who is passionate in conservation but unsure where to start?

I encourage young people to reach out to others, if you show them how important this is to you, they'll likely want to connect and get involved.

I suggest connecting with your local landcare group or facilitator. They can help you build momentum and guide you in starting projects. Local, on-ground community groups are filled with knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion, so they're great places to begin.

If you're at university or in an urban area, tap into existing networks like student clubs or societies. You can even put up flyers about your interests to bring people together and create a group with a shared goal. Even in smaller towns, these approaches can help you find others who share your passion and are willing to collaborate on conservation efforts.

Whether you're in a regional area or a larger city, the key is connecting with like-minded people to take action. If you already have an idea, reach out and start building that momentum!



Gabrielle Stacey

### What's a key takeaway from your experience at the Future Leaders Forum?

I've been in this space for about five years now, and after meeting with so many people and hearing their stories, I feel really reinvigorated and inspired. We had speakers and delegates from all over Australia, and as I reflect on the workshop, I noticed that the barriers and challenges to engaging young people were very similar across the board. Interestingly, the solutions we came up with independently were also quite alike.

### Which solution resonated most with you?

A solution that stood out for me was designing volunteer experiences to align with the trends that we see in youth volunteering. For example, we should focus on creating weekend opportunities instead of weekday ones, as young people tend to have busy schedules. It's essential to make these opportunities engaging, enjoyable, and educational, where participants learn something valuable and leave feeling inspired. Providing food is also a great way to show appreciation for their time and efforts. Additionally, we need to make these experiences episodic, considering the rapidly changing schedules and locations of young people.



# From School Project to National Youth Conservation Movement



**K**urt Jones, Founder and CEO of Co-Exist Australia, has turned a high school project into a nationwide movement, now securing \$500,000 funding boost from the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation to support operations for the next two years.

Kurt overcame personal challenges growing up by finding his passion and purpose for taking care of wildlife and wild places. This passion was evident in his high school years, where he volunteered extensively and took on leadership roles, including school captain, and led the development of an outdoor education and environment centre.

But it was a Year 11 business plan assignment that sparked the idea for Co-Exist Australia, a charity dedicated to getting young Australians involved in conservation. Fast forward two years later, Co-Exist Australia became a registered national charity, inspiring young people to take action.

With teams across the country that organise community clean-ups, tree plantings, recycling projects, leadership training, and school education programs.

In 2023 alone, Co-Exist Australia hosted 24 events. By mid-2024, that number had soared to 79, with events been attended over 800 times to date.

Co-Exist Australia now has 45 leaders and an expanding network of nine branches across the country, with plans to continue growing teams in more regions.



Above Beach clean up with the Co-Exist Australia Perth team

Left The Co-Exist The Co-Exist Australia Sunshine Coast team tree planting



Kurt Jones holding the Queensland Young Achiever - Connecting Communities Award

With help from Landcare Australia, who set up an interview with SBS Change Agents podcast, Kurt's story gained national media exposure that caught the attention of the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, resulting in a game-changing grant. This funding will allow Kurt to work full-time as CEO and expand Co-Exist Australia's mission of empowering future generations to protect the natural environment.

Kurt has received accolades for his achievements, including Queensland Young Achiever in the Connecting Communities category, Sunshine Coast Young Citizen of the Year, Highly Commended Award in the NextGen category of the 2024 Queensland Landcare Awards, and a nomination for the Young Australian of the Year, Queensland 2024.

To learn more about Co-Exist Australia, please visit [www.coexistaus.org](http://www.coexistaus.org).

Words by Millie Webber | Landcare Australia

# 'Pamoja' Means Together in Swahili

**B**reathe Easy Revegetation and the Pamoja Project – just how did two young Australians from South Australia find common ground and shared passion for the environment some 10,000 km from home?

Breathe Easy Revegetation Projects (Breathe Easy) is the brainchild of 28 year-old Gerry Bain and 21 year-old Aussie Redden, two young South Australians passionate about protecting and restoring native Australian bushland.

Breathe Easy applies the wonderful philosophy “**think globally, act locally**”, tackling important aspects of landcare whilst also having a strong focus on community connection and well-being – hence “**Breathe Easy**”!

Since 2022, Breathe Easy has built a team of volunteers to participate in land restoration activities, undertaking six major

projects, predominantly in Middleton, Kangaroo Island, the Adelaide Hills and Corny Point. Working with a suite of local businesses and organisations to facilitate revegetation projects along the South Australian coastline.

However, in March 2023, the Breathe Easy crew ventured much further afield, all the way to the north east region of Tanzania. They spent a little over five weeks in Tanzania, mostly in the northern part of the country in the Manyara and Arusha regions. They lived with Oscar Kikoti, a Tanzanian man living in Arusha city who works as a mountain guide on Mt Kilimanjaro whilst also being a farmer in the Manyara region. The farm is in an extremely isolated and rural part of Manyara. Oscar uses the farm as a source of food and income, whilst employing over a dozen local people from community. Oscar grows climate resilient marahage (beans)



Aussie Redden and Oscar Kikoti



Breathe Easy and Pamoja Project supporting local employment and food security

mahindi (maize) all sown by hand and harvested by hand along with some tree planting to keep animals out of the production area.

During their time with Oscar, Gerry and Aussie helped work on his farm with some the tree planting to help keep animals out of the production area. Aussie explained “**in welcoming us into his home and country Oscar opened a world of opportunity for Breathe Easy to help people and planet both in in Australia and Tanzania**”. He goes on to say “**The Pamoja project is our avenue to connect our two regions of the world, to advocate for the environment and to create a community that crosses borders and oceans.**”

Whilst on their travels, by pure chance Gerry and Aussie became acquainted with Omary and Yusuf, the founders of NGO Mtokijani

(‘In the Village’) Foundation, which is a NFP operating in Kijenge Juu, Arusha - They manage tree planting, native tree and fruit tree nurseries, river clean ups, artwork collaborations, Aquaponics research. Like Australia, Tanzania is home to some of the world’s most diverse and intact natural environments supporting rare and endangered ecosystems. And much like Australia, it is not exempt from land degradation and pollution.

This is where Mtokijani steps in to host community planting days to revegetate pockets of land in local urban areas. Engaging the community, through tree planting, setting up native tree and fruit tree nurseries, river clean ups, artwork collaborations and aquaponics research they share their knowledge and the importance of environmental protection.

Aussie and Gerry shared

“**To meet fellow young people on the other side of the world making a stand for the environment and engaging community revegetation was an incredible experience. To connect Breathe Easy and Mtokijani is an amazing opportunity for both of us to learn from each other and to work towards the common goal of environmental protection.**”

Mjokijani not only makes a direct impact on the local environment, but they are also shining the spotlight on the importance of environmental protection. Raising awareness and standing up for their public green spaces and water ways.

Mtokijani is still young and has many plans and ambitions ahead making it a no brainer to be a part of the Breathe Easy PAMOJA PROJECT. Aussie and Gerry are planning as part of bringing the Pamoja

Project back to the spotlight by sharing a short film of their travels later this year, detailing some of their experiences and information about Oscar. They are hoping to go back next year and continue to strengthen the friendships with all stakeholders in the Pamoja Project.

For further information: [www.breatheeasyrevegetation.com](http://www.breatheeasyrevegetation.com) or follow their instagram [breathe\\_easy\\_revegetation](https://www.instagram.com/breathe_easy_revegetation)

Words by **Eleanor Slade** | Landcare Australia

Manyara, north east region of Tanzania, March 2023



# Learning that Grows Curiosity

**I**t seems to me that if people are to take care of the environment, they first need to know it and love it in all its parts.

I am an artist who is supported by scientists to create biodiversity education opportunities with schools and communities throughout WA by forming partnerships with local and state government entities, community naturalist and conservation volunteer groups, research institutions and schools. At biodiversity festivals, the participants undertake site specific biodiversity surveys using both science and art methodologies to delight and inform children and the wider community.

The exhibitions of artworks created by participants are a sort of sparkling visual walk through biodiversity survey report. This is biology that people can do to grow to be curious and learn about nature in a structured way that is also fun.

The Leeming Primary School Wetlands Project was made possible with support from DLGSC and Lottery West through the Creative Schools grants program. This allowed me to be in a school for four weeks with ample time to collaborate with staff members to create educational experiences for children in

all learning levels. I planned a series of evening and weekend events to include the teaching staff as well as parents and the wider community. The family discovery morning at Piney Lakes was well attended and showcased the collaborative biodiversity artwork the years five and six students created as well offering visitors nature activities related to wetland systems. Parents and teachers joined me one evening to paint nature studies of the animals of the wetlands.

These events also provide opportunities to connect the general community with conservation volunteers, naturalist organisations and friendships with like-minded people. I love putting projects together to shine a light on our amazing environment. It is my hope that once people know and love the animals and plants of their own place then they will work together to conserve and protect them.

Recently I was awarded the Western Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award. This recognition will assist in forging partnerships for future biodiversity festivals with communities everywhere.

For further information: [www.angelarossen.com](http://www.angelarossen.com)

Words by [Angela Rossen](#)



**Main** Angela Rossen at Leeming Primary School  
**Bottom left** A Community Wetlands Project video

**Bottom middle** Making a video about the wetland system

**Bottom right** Talking about the Wetland system Leeming Primary School with Angela Rossen



## Sharyn Yelverton and Friends of Randalls Bay

“Landcare, one way or another, has always been a part of my life.”

**T**asmanian resident, Sharyn has been an extraordinary volunteer with landcare over many years, in the Northern Territory and Western Australia. Sharyn moved to Tasmania in 2014 and in her first week she joined the Friends of Randalls Bay Coastcare (FORB) where she is contributing to the protection and long-term conservation management of Tasmania's unique natural places, rare ecosystems and habitat for threatened plants and animals. Whether this is weeding on a TLC reserve or helping in the office with newsletter distribution, Sharyn's presence at volunteering and educational events infuses others with a spirit of camaraderie and shared purpose.

Sharyn is also a deeply valued contributor to the Tasmanian Land Conservancy and in 2021 was awarded the title of Honorary Life Member by its Chief Executive James Hattam. He said "Sharyn's infectious passion for the environment has a magnetic effect, inspiring others to get involved and make a difference. TLC is profoundly grateful for her contributions"

In 2021, Sharyn decided to focus on weed control, planting, and revegetating. Sharyn manages a subcommittee for the Friends of Randalls Bay Coastcare and coordinates a team of volunteers in the local native plant regeneration at Randalls Bay. Prior to this the group found, they were not retaining a number of the plantings, which was disappointing to all volunteers who gave their time.

The revegetated, rehabilitated areas are now flourishing with the loss of only one plant in the past year. Sharyn's knowledge and work to lead a team of volunteers to prepare the area using moisture retention material, adding nourishment to provide protection of the plantings, as well as regularly watering all new plantings until they are able to survive without additional care, has enabled the successful regeneration of the Randalls Bay Conservation areas.

This revegetation work has enabled volunteers to see the successful outcomes from the work they do. Sharyn also ran a number of Social Science programs in Echo Sugarloaf Reserve and The FORB Quarry Reserve for a local School.



“The Restoration of The Quarry Reserve” made with the support of Landcare Tasmania and Miro Digital

Sharyn's connection to landcare dates to the very beginning of the landcare movement in Australia. She was a founding member of The Rapid Creek Landcare Group, the first landcare group in NT, getting involved with the rehabilitation and replanting of the natural vine forest along the edge of Rapid Creek which was partially destroyed when the new Darwin airport was built.

Deeply concerned about the lack of planning that was occurring in Darwin and the destruction of many important ecological sites, Sharyn initiated the Darwin Urban Environment Action Group, successfully lobbying the then government to look more carefully at their approach to planning.

In 2007 she sold her home in Darwin and donated the proceeds to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society to help fund their successful campaign to prevent the logging of the Styx Rainforest but the forest is again under threat!

Sharyn was recently nominated by her peers in the Friends of Randalls Bay Coastcare group for a Tasmanian Women in Landcare Award in 2024.

For further information, visit [www.forb.com.au](http://www.forb.com.au). (Friends of Randalls Bay Coastcare)

Words by Eleanor Slade | Landcare Australia

## Landowners Embrace Community Groups to Drive Transformation on a Surf Coast Property

**I**n just five years, Mick Loughnan and Jacinta Halloran have transformed a four ha property on Victoria's Surf Coast from a totally denuded, weed-ridden horse-paddock to thriving habitat that native wildlife are returning to.

After getting involved in local community groups working to restore habitat, Mick and Jacinta began looking for a property at Airey's Inlet that they could rehabilitate and protect forever. They found the site along Painkalac Creek in 2019, and soon after began working on the property with groups like Angair and the Airey's Inlet and District Association, supported by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, Landcare, and Wild Otways.

“It's a community project. I have a strong belief that for environmental projects to work you need to involve community, because it inspires people and creates ownership. It's really enriched the project – it couldn't be done with one person alone.”

People have to have the confidence that the work would be protected, otherwise if it was sold it might be all for nothing. With so many terrible things going on in the environment it's great to feel that we can start repairing something. We're adding something back into nature.”

Since then, the Loughnans and the community have planted 70 species of local plants, all grown from locally sourced seed and wildlife followed. Swamp Rats are digging air and life into the compacted soils. Mick has now recorded over a hundred species of birds. Even vulnerable Swamp Antechinus have been seen.

Mick and Jacinta bought the property knowing they wanted to protect it through Trust for Nature with a conservation covenant, a permanent agreement that safeguards the property in perpetuity. Meeting and working with the Trust for Nature team has also encouraged Mick to become a generous supporter of the organisation.



Trust for Nature is a Victorian conservation organisation that works with landholders to protect habitat on private land forever. To date, they have protected over 110,000 ha of habitat for wildlife.

For more information, please visit [www.trustfornature.org.au](http://www.trustfornature.org.au).

Words by [James Whitmore](#) | Trust For Nature

**Top** Aerial view of Mick and Jacinta's property during planting in 2020.

**Middle** The same view of the property in 2024.

**Bottom** Mick planting seedlings on the Airey's Inlet property.

Images by Mick Loughnan

## Wominjeka Watayulyul Wonthalong Bunurong Bik Bik:

‘Welcome our Many Friends  
to Beautiful Bunurong Country.’

**T**hese words are from Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation’s Language and Educational Team. The Western Port Catchment Landcare Network were so happy to partner with the Bunurong Land Council to deliver ‘The Caring for Country Landcare Connection Program’ funded through a Parks Victoria Innovation fund, provided by the Victorian State Government.

This program was designed to provide an enriching cultural and environmental education experience for students of the Western Port Catchment. To inspire students - our future leaders - to build strong connections with the diverse environments of the catchment and increase opportunities for future generations to engage in volunteering, while enhancing and protecting their local environment.

The program involved a series of cultural and ecological focused excursions. For grade 5/6 students of the Western Port Catchment based on landcare related aspects such as Connecting Community, Connecting Species, Connecting Habitats, Connecting Landscapes, Connecting Ecosystems. The students were engaged in land-based activities including observing, monitoring, planting grasses, creating artificial habitats, GPS mapping and creative thinking exercises around land management such as Cultural cool burning concepts.

At the end of the project all 220 participating students and staff came together to enjoy a Caring for Country Landcare Connection Student Forum at Deep Creek in Pakenham. WPCLN and Bunurong Land Council hosted, WP Biosphere, Cardinia Environmental Coalition, Melbourne Water, Living Culture, Aboriginal Artist Kobi Sainty. Eco Educator Earthy Ellie provided engaging activities for the students.

For more information, please visit [www.wpcln.org.au](http://www.wpcln.org.au).

Words by [Sue Finley](#) | WPCLN Group Facilitator



**Above** Caring for Country Landcare Connection excursion one with Jindivick and Labertouche Primary Schools at Cannibal Creek Recreation Reserve - students looking at Janine Good’s artwork that depict ecological changes within the seven Kulin Nation Seasons

**Below** Welcome to Country Ceremony with Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation opening to the Caring for Country Landcare Connection Student Forum - Image by Lauren Williams

## If You Plant it, They will Come! Protecting Endangered Emu-wrens at Watchalunga

**W**atchalunga Nature Reserve is a 92-hectare low-lying Fleurieu Peninsula swamp on the lower Finniss River in Ngarrindjeri Country, owned and managed by Nature Foundation. Since its acquisition in 2014, Nature Foundation has been minimising threats to wildlife and revegetating critical habitat for the endangered Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren (*Stipiturus malachurus intermedius*).

The tiny Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren weighs around 7 grams and is named for its long emu-like tail feathers. This shy and elusive bird also savours its space, and so increasing habitat is essential to growing this precious population.

Since 2017, Nature Foundation has coordinated annual planting days, which have become popular with members and supporters. Through these planting days, over five hectares of land have been revegetated

with a variety of local native plants, creating thick shrub habitats that offer sanctuary and nesting opportunities.

“The Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren population is declining rapidly due to habitat loss. Watchalunga is now believed to be the largest known population of the subspecies. That comes with a lot of responsibility to not only take care of our birds but to grow the population and contribute to the wider region,” says Dr Lucy Clive, Science and Knowledge Program Officer at Nature Foundation.

In 2023-24, Nature Foundation undertook monthly Emu-wren surveys, with recent results showing encouraging impacts of revegetation efforts. Not only were more Emu-wrens sighted within Watchalunga Nature Reserve, but habitat connectivity to surrounding areas is strengthening breeding through varied genetics and enhancing the population across the region.

“Emu-wrens were first spotted in 2021 and have since then been regularly seen during surveys using this revegetated area,” says Dr Lucy Clive. “We have had a stable population for a few years; however, the growth following the 2022 floods is incredibly positive. We will monitor the birds on our reserve and in the wider region and how the revegetation supports the increased population and continued planting to create more habitat.”

Second Nature Conservancy has supported the revegetation at Watchalunga Nature Reserve. Planting days and bird surveys have also been supported through funding from organisations, including WIRES Australian Wildlife Rescue Organisation, the Disney Conservation Fund, and Planet Ark.

For more information about Nature Foundation, please visit [www.naturefoundation.org.au](http://www.naturefoundation.org.au)

Words by [Erica Stacey](#) | Nature Foundation



# Playtpus Protection Projects

With the help of eDNA, landcare and conservation groups are uncovering the secret lives of platypuses and other hidden species in Australia's waterways.





## Platypus Watch – Tracking A National Treasure!

**T**he platypus, a unique Australian monotreme, might be a regular feature on the 20-cent coin, but spotting one in the wild is a rare experience. These elusive creatures emerge from their hidden burrows on creeks banks, slow-moving rivers, lakes, and dams at dawn, quietly foraging for small macroinvertebrates, tadpoles, molluscs, and tiny shrimp. Their burrows, camouflaged among tree roots and thick vegetation just above the waterline, make them even harder to see.

Unfortunately, the platypus's habitat in Queensland has decreased by 27% over the past 30 years, and their population continues to decline. In 2003, Platypus Watch was created to become a central hub for

coordinating research into this fascinating species. In 2016, Wildlife Protection Society Queensland (WPSQ) launched "PlatyCount", the first statewide platypus distribution census since 2001.

Advances in scientific technology have been a breakthrough as researchers sample waterways and use environmental Deoxyribonucleic acid (eDNA) to analyse mucus, faeces, urine, and skin or fur cells. Although eDNA can be found almost anywhere, the easiest to detect is in aquatic environments, where biological material is preserved as a sort of 'DNA soup.' The samples can tell scientists if a platypus was swimming in the water up to 5 days before the water sample was taken. WPSQ commenced a Platypus

eDNA Project in 2016, to document and map platypus distribution and abundance in Southeast Queensland. While the samples can detect the presence of platypus it cannot determine how many platypus are inhabiting the waterway.

Landcare groups are playing a key role in monitoring platypus populations. Since 2022, Springfield Lakes Nature Care Inc has held annual Platypus Watch surveys to record sightings of platypus and their movements in the Opossum and Woogaroo Catchment. Participants have collected valuable data and even managed to capture some video footage of the monotremes searching for food.

This year's event, held during National Science Week on Sunday, August 11 had 14 dedicated participants brave the cold and gather at 4:30am. Late winter to early spring is a prime time for platypus spotting, as males are actively seeking mates.

The early start was worth it – not only were two platypuses spotted in one creek, but participants also had the thrill of a first-time sighting of two Rakali, Australia's native water rat, which closely resembles an otter.

For more information please visit [www.slnc.org.au](http://www.slnc.org.au).

Words by Luise Manning | Springfield Lakes Nature Care

## Discovering Waterways through eDNA: Central Tablelands Joins the Great Australian Wildlife Search

**T**he Central Tablelands Regional Landcare Network, in collaboration with the Odonata Foundation, recently took a deep dive into the Great Australian Wildlife Search, a project aimed at understanding the biodiversity in the region's waterways.

By collecting environmental DNA (eDNA) from water samples across 18 sites, they've been able to detect and analyse the presence of various species in streams, creeks, and rivers throughout the Central

Tablelands of New South Wales.

Thanks to funding from the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, which provided eDNA sampling kits, the team was able to gather water samples from 18 sites. The results were nothing short of remarkable. Platypus were detected in four key locations: the Fish River at Oberon, the Macquarie River in Bathurst at Ranken's Bridge Reserve, the Cudgegong River near Mudgee, and Lawson Creek in Rylstone. Rakali was also spotted in the Cudgegong River near Mudgee.



Central Tablelands team collecting samples in Bathurst



Environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling kits

Altogether, 29 native species were identified, including fish, turtles, frogs, waterbirds, and marsupials.

However, the data also revealed the widespread presence of invasive species, particularly the European carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), which remains a serious threat to local ecosystems. To combat this, many communities hold annual "Carp Blitzes," engaging residents to remove these invasive fish and help restore balance to our waterways.

The results of the Wildlife Search have provided invaluable data to help

understand the region's aquatic biodiversity. With this knowledge, several Landcare groups have already rolled up their sleeves, launching riparian restoration projects to improve native fish habitats and strengthen their local ecosystems.

For more information, please email Claudia Macleay, Central Tablelands Regional Landcare Network, at [rlc@ctregionallandcare.org](mailto:rlc@ctregionallandcare.org) or visit [www.ctregionallandcare.org](http://www.ctregionallandcare.org).

Words by Claudia Macleay | Central Tablelands Regional Landcare Coordinator

# A First of its Kind Approach to Repairing Box-Ironbark Forests

Central Victoria's Box-Ironbark Forests have been severely degraded by gold mining and forestry. A first of its kind, Biolinks Alliance's Spring Plains Watershed Repair project uses a unique combination of interventions to demonstrate how to restore hydrology and ecosystem function in these forests.

The reduction of unnaturally dense regrowth across more than 76 hectares of forest increases light penetration into the understorey, decreases competition for soil nutrients and water, and increases the growth rate of remaining trees. Vitality, all logs are retained for soil health, hydrology and habitat. These logs are laid along contours (where possible) to impede the flow of water and provide a buffer for organic material to build up.

Ripping along 71.6 km of contour lines to a depth of 30 cm, and direct sowing of native Wallaby-grasses (*Joycea pallida* and *Rytidosperma*

*spp.*) into rip-lines, enhances water infiltration into the soil (reducing run-off downslope) and creates areas with increased rates of seed germination.

The digging of 21 shallow 'ponds' throughout the gully, with leaky weirs constructed using timber from the thinning, increases moisture availability to the ecosystem, minimises the loss of top-soil and leaf litter to fast flowing water, and reduces erosion after heavy rains. Semi-aquatic rushes and grasses planted around these ponds promote stability and help to re-establish these species across the site.



Rip lines following the contours of the site | Photography by Cameron O'Mara

Biolinks Alliance completed these works in September 2023 and have already seen clearly reduced run-off of water and sediment following heavy rain in the treatment site compared with the control site. Ecological monitoring is ongoing, and Biolinks Alliance will quantify the responses of a suite of

indicators over the coming years to assess the efficacy of these interventions.

For more information, please visit [www.biolinksalliance.org.au](http://www.biolinksalliance.org.au).

Words by [Dr Chris Pocknee](#) | Biolinks Alliance Ecologist

# Guardians for a Green Tomorrow!

St Gerard Majella School is a co-educational Catholic primary school in the Cairns southern suburb of Woree. Its Garden Club has been running for 10 years, open during lunchtime throughout the week on a 'drop-in' basis for students from Grade One to Six.

Students learn a variety of skills throughout the year and have established several gardens around the school, including a bush tucker garden, butterfly sanctuary and several vegetable garden beds and fruit tree patches.

With help from small grants from local businesses and most recently, a 2024 Woolworths Junior Landcare Grant, they have been working on establishing an edible garden to supply school canteen with salad ingredients and prepare produce to enter the Cairns Show.

This year the students romped home at the regional Cairns Show, received first place for their scarecrow 'Scary Poppins' featuring all the Grade 2 students' drawings and paintings and materials recycled from the school.

Students have learned about caring for the gardens, seasonal planting, building a seed bank, natural fertilizers, and insect repellents, caring for local wildlife who use the gardens as a food supply. They also learnt about sustainable watering and by using a 'slow drip' watering



Checking on the new plants with a little mulch



Scary poppins the scarecrow

system, plants are given enough water to keep thriving during weekends and over the holidays.

Ann Blakeney, Year 2 Classroom teacher said, "Students find attending Garden Club rewarding and even in the hot Far North Queensland summer months, keep asking how many days until Garden Club". She goes on to say

"Gardening is a great pastime for young hands and minds to learn about the goodness of healthy food and caring for our environment. We encourage schools to consider establishing a Garden Club and help shape a green tomorrow!"

For more information, please visit [www.sgmcairns.qld.edu.au](http://www.sgmcairns.qld.edu.au).

Words by [Ann Blakeney](#) | St Gerard Majella School

# What a Day! Johns Road Tree Planting Day in North Creswick

A brisk, frosty, June Saturday morning welcomed a group of over fifty keen and dedicated volunteers to the recent Johns Road Tree Plant-out in North Creswick, Victoria. The Bald Hills Creswick Landcare group (BHCL), with generous support from Community Bank Creswick and District's Community Impact Grant, organised the plant-out of over 700 indigenous native trees, shrubs and grasses over a 2.5-acre crown land paddock.

Steve Hemphill, President of the BHCL, thanked the Joeys, Cubs and Scouts, parents and Leaders from the 1st Creswick Scout Group as well as Geocaching Victoria, with some of their members coming from Melbourne and Geelong, for their work on the morning. Steve explained that there were 33 different species among the over 700 plants, which had been started from local seed, months earlier by the BHCL volunteers, and cared for by Allendale Native and Habitat Plants.

It was a great opportunity for the Scout youth members to return a paddock to future bushland, and an opportunity for them to return over the years to see what they have created. Cub Scout Mia asked her Scout Leader, "Can we come back next year to see how much the trees have grown?"

With all the plants in the ground and protected by tree guards by 11:30 am, everyone joined in for a barbeque lunch cooked by the Creswick Lions Club as well as drinks and pumpkin soup provided by the landcare group.



Bald Hills Creswick Landcare volunteers celebrate after completing a plant-out of over 700 seedlings at Johns Rd, North Creswick, Vic. Photography by David Unwin.

For more information, please visit [Balds Hills Creswick Landcare](#).

Words by [Steve Hemphill](#) | Bald Hills Creswick Landcare

# Joondalup Shines on Global Stage with Dual Green City Awards

The City of Joondalup has claimed two major honours at the 2024

International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) World Green City Awards.

The City was announced as winner of the Living Green for Water category, ahead of Riyadh City – capital of Saudi Arabia – and another Saudi city, Unaizah. The award recognises Joondalup's commitment to building a more liveable and resilient City in the context of a changing climate.

The City was also announced as the inaugural AIPH Youth Award winner for its efforts to support, engage, collaborate with, and provide green urban environments creating opportunities for youth in social, recreational and sporting activities.

Managing and caring for nearly 400 parks, natural areas and public open spaces central to the wellbeing of its residents and the wider community, Joondalup focuses on improving water efficiency, ecological health and visual amenity, and creating places for the community to enjoy.

Joondalup Mayor Albert Jacob said these efforts have been celebrated on the global stage at the AIPH awards.

"For a decade now, Joondalup's Climate Change Strategy has guided our City's approach to mitigating the effects of climate change and increasing resilience," Mayor Jacob said.

"The City makes it a priority to increase our tree canopy cover, use water resources effectively and provide opportunities for our community to be more waterwise.



"Our initiatives are helping to create cooler, more inviting green urban spaces within the City.

"Other positive environmental effects include reduced ambient air temperature and cleaner air through absorption of polluting gases, reduced cooling energy consumption costs, and water savings through reduced evaporation rates.

"We have increased habitat for wildlife, more aesthetically pleasing streetscapes, improved community amenities including safer walking environments and shading, and improved community health and wellbeing."

The AIPH World Green City Awards showcase bold and inspiring urban greening initiatives by cities from around the world, all of whom are leading the way in shaping a greener urban future, with the next edition of the awards to be held in 2026.

For more information, please visit [www.joondalup.wa.gov.au](http://www.joondalup.wa.gov.au).

Words by [Daniel Davini](#) | City of Joondalup



# Three Invasive Ant Programs, One Core Message – Report Suspect Ants!

## Yellow crazy ants? Electric ants? Fire ants?

All three of these invasive ants are found in Queensland, and all three threaten the environment, agriculture and our outdoor lifestyle.

### Yellow crazy ants

Yellow crazy ant infestations are found in various locations in Queensland, including in Cairns, Townsville, the Whitsundays, Hervey Bay and several Brisbane suburbs.

Yellow crazy ants have very long legs and antennae and are roughly 4mm long. They are golden to brown in colour, with a brown abdomen.

Named after their erratic, 'crazy' movement when disturbed, these ants do not bite or sting but spray formic acid to subdue their prey, or when threatened.

### Electric ants

Electric ants are tiny, about 1 - 1.5mm long, and ginger to brown in colour. They are usually slow-moving and can deliver a painful, venomous sting.

So far, electric ants have only been found in Far North Queensland.

They are listed as Category 1 restricted matter under the Biosecurity Act 2014. You can't move carrier materials from an electric ant restricted zone without a permit.

### Red imported fire ants

Fire ants are between 2mm and 6mm in size, and a range of sizes are found within a nest.

Fire ants are a destructive pest that can destroy crops, damage electrical equipment and machinery, and render yards, parks, paddocks and farmland unusable.

Fire ants inflict a painful sting that can cause severe and potentially fatal allergic reactions in humans and animals.

They are listed as Category 1 restricted matter under the Biosecurity Act 2014. You can't move carrier materials from a red imported fire ant restricted zone without a permit.



## Who manages these invasive species?

Different organisations such as the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Biosecurity Queensland and local Councils manage invasive species through strategies like eradication programs, biosecurity measures, public education, research, and community support.

For more information, or to report suspect ants, please contact [yca@wtma.qld.gov.au](mailto:yca@wtma.qld.gov.au).

Words by [Elisabeth Rooks](#) | Wet Tropics Management Authority

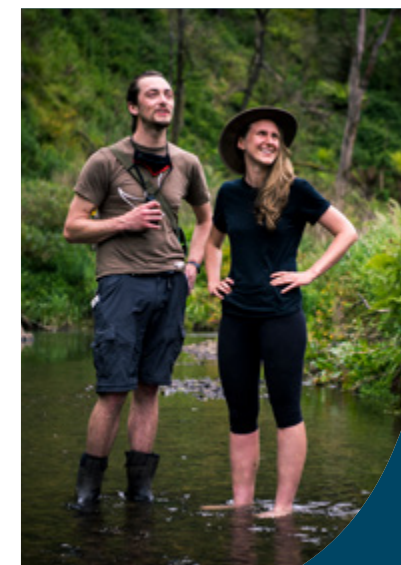
## The Landcare Australia team wish you all the very best for Christmas and the New Year!

The Landcare Australia office will be closed from Tuesday 24 December 2024 and open on Thursday 2 January, 2025.

If you have an urgent enquiry you can contact us at [enquiries@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:enquiries@landcareaustralia.com.au)

## Share your stories and photos with us!

We are always searching for great landcare stories and photos for our communications channels, from newsletters and social media, to this Landcare in Focus magazine. We welcome content contributions about your project, the impact and how people can learn from your experience. Send your content ideas to us at [enquires@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:enquires@landcareaustralia.com.au)



## Do you have a landcare photo in your collection?

Submit your photo for the Landcare in Focus photo gallery and your image could be the cover of the next edition of Landcare In Focus magazine. The quality needs to be a minimum of 300 dpi and include a caption that explains what the image is about, the location and the people involved. It is important that have copyright of the photos so that we can publish. Submit your photos here: [digital@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:digital@landcareaustralia.com.au)

## Tell us what you think!

Your feedback is important to us so that can continue to improve what we do for the landcare movement. You are welcome to share your thoughts on the Landcare in Focus magazine and other Landcare Australia activities via [our survey here](#).



## Coming up!

Like what you are reading so far? We invite content contributions for Landcare in Focus May 2025. The content deadline is March 1 2025, for more information about the content guidelines please visit: [www.landcareaustralia.org.au/resources/publications](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au/resources/publications)



## Stay Connected and subscribe to our newsletters

Landcare Australia's newsletters are jam-packed with the latest updates on grants, education resources, case studies, project updates, events, campaigns, partnerships, new programs and much more! Make sure you know what is happening by subscribing to all our online magazines and newsletters – Landcare in Focus, Landlink, Coastcarer, Junior Landcarer and Landcare Agriculture. It is free and easy to [subscribe here](#).



## Junior Landcare

Junior Landcare helps to bring sustainability and environmental education into homes, classrooms and communities across Australia so that children can experience hands-on learning on how they can care for the environment.

Explore the Junior Landcare website for resources in the classroom, at home or with a youth groups. From food production, biodiversity, waste management and First Nations perspectives, there is a useful resource for everyone. Watch the Junior Landcare Costa videos, download the Just for Kids activity sheets or access the resources in the Educator Hub.

Explore Junior Landcare today! [www.juniorlandcare.org.au](http://www.juniorlandcare.org.au)





# Landcare Australia Events Calendar

[www.landcareaustralia.org.au](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au)

## November 2024

Landcare in Focus magazine published

## December 2024

Launch National Landcare Conference Abstract Program and Early Bird Registrations

**December 2 to 8:** Coastcare Week 2024

**December 5:** Launch General Jeffery Soil Health Award for World Soil Day

**December 31:** Nominations for the Bob Hawke Landcare Award closes

## March 2025

**March 1:** Closing date for contributions to Landcare in Focus May edition

**March 3:** Clean Up Australia Day

**March 8:** International Women's Day

**March 31:** Nominations for the General Jeffery Soil Health Award closes

## April 2025

**April 22:** World Earth Day

## May 2025

Landcare in Focus magazine published

**May 19 to 25:** National Volunteer Week

**May 27 to June 3:** Reconciliation Week

## June 2025

**June 5:** World Environment Day

## July 2025

Plastic Free July

**July 6 to 13:** NAIDOC Week

**July 28:** National Tee Day

## August 2025

**August 4 to 10:** Landcare Week 2024

## September 2025

Biodiversity Month

**September 1:** Closing date for contributions to Landcare in Focus November edition

**2025 National Landcare Conference  
Sunday 21 to Wednesday 24  
September:**

**September 21:** First Nations Landcare Gathering and NextGen Landcare Summit

**September 21:** Plenary, Workshops and Evening Welcome Reception

**September 22:** Plenary, Workshops and Evening 2025 National Landcare Awards

**September 23:** Field Trip Program

## October 2025

**October 2:** World Habitat Day

**October 10:** World Mental Health Day

## November 2025

Landcare in Focus magazine published

## December 2025

**December 1 to 7:** Coastcare Week 2024

**December 5:** World Soil Day

## Coming Up

### 2025

**2025** National Landcare Conference

**2025** National Landcare Awards (with finalists from the 2023/2024 State & Territory Landcare Awards)

**2025** Bob Hawke Landcare Awards winner announced

**2025** General Jeffery Soil Health Award winner announced

### 2026

**2026** State & Territory Landcare Awards

### 2027

**2027** National Landcare Conference

**2027** National Landcare Awards (with finalists from the 2026 State & Territory Landcare Awards)

**2027** Bob Hawke Landcare Award

**2027** General Jeffery Soil Health Award

### 2028

**2028** State & Territory Landcare Awards