

# Landchat # 109

## July – December 2016

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### Welcome

Welcome to Landchat #109, the first of our new format issues!

The new format enables us to publish Landchat using articles from our website and other sources, into an easy to read format for on-screen and digital use. Most people will now receive their Landchat via email or download it from [www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au), so with this format, you will be able to download and read on-screen, or print your own copy for the kitchen table! Those members who have elected to receive a hard copy will still do so via snail mail.

You will notice that Landchat no longer contains the bulk of upcoming events and opportunities. For that, you should sign up to our regular monthly e-newsletter at the bottom left of the website front page - <http://snelandcare.org.au/>.

We welcome your feedback, and we especially welcome articles from members who wish to tell their landcare story. Please contact us at the office on [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au) or on 02 6772 9123.

# Annual General Meeting Notices

All members and prospective members are invited to:

- The **AGM of Southern New England Landcare Coordinating Committee Inc (SNELCC)** which will be held at 5pm Wednesday 30th November 2016 at the Uralla Community Centre, 9 Hill St, Uralla. This is the final meeting in the winding up of SNELCC Inc, which was formed in 1994.
- The **AGM of Southern New England Landcare Ltd (SNELandcare)** will be held at 5.30pm Wednesday 30th November 2016 at the same venue. The SNELandcare AGM will review activities of the last 12 months and set the scene for the next year.

Please RSVP to [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au) or 6772 9123 by Friday 25th November.

Meeting notices have been sent via Australia Post to all current Southern New England Landcare Landcare Group representatives. To find out more about becoming a member who represents their group, gains voting rights and can be nominated to the board, please contact 02 6772 9123 or [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au) and ask about *Membership Class Guarantee*.

## Landcare Christmas Celebration Invitation

Members and friends are invited to the Southern New England Landcare Christmas Celebration  
**6.30 pm Wednesday 30th November 2016 following our AGM**  
at the Uralla Community Centre, 9 Hill St, Uralla.

Please join us to:

Celebrate the 2016 recipient of the John Winter-Irving Award

Congratulate the winner of the 2016 Coordinator's Choice Award

Hear about exciting opportunities Landcare supporters now have with Flight Centre Armidale

Share some Christmas cheer!

Please RSVP by Friday 25th November 2016 on phone 6772 9123 or [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au).



## Office Closure for the Christmas Break

As most staff will be taking annual leave for between 2-4 weeks during the Christmas School Holiday period, the SNELandcare office will be closed from Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December to Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January inclusive. Perhaps the best way to leave us a message during that time is to contact the answering machine on 02 6772 9123 or email us at [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au). These may be checked intermittently during the period.

*The team at Southern New England Landcare wish everyone a merry and safe Christmas, and a happy and prosperous 2017!*

## Membership Explained

By Kären Zirkler

With the winding up of SNELCC Inc, all members are transitioning their membership to Southern New England Landcare Ltd. Southern New England Landcare Ltd has two classes of Membership:

1. Membership Class Associate - This class of membership is open to anyone in our region. It has no voting rights and does not give a guarantee to contribute to the winding up costs of

the Company. These members gain all the benefits of membership. [Click here](#) to sign up as a new member or renew your existing membership.

2. **Membership Class Guarantee** - This class of membership has voting rights (1 vote per member) and gives a guarantee in the event of the Company being wound up, to contribute such an amount as may be required, not exceeding twenty dollars (\$20.00). The purpose of this class of membership is to allow each group in the Southern New England Landcare region to nominate one of their paid up members (Membership Class Associate) to represent them at Southern New England Landcare Ltd. This means that your Landcare Group can help decide how SNEL Ltd operates, or what Landcare issues receive focus in our region and how. We refer to these members as the Group Representatives and they also help steer the organisation towards its vision. [Click here](#) to contact our office to find out how to gain membership in this class.

All current Group Representatives (Membership Class Guarantee) should have received their nomination forms in the mail during the first week of November 2016. Please return nomination forms to the Secretary, PO Box 85 Armidale NSW 2350 as soon as possible.

Nominees to the Board of Directors are drawn from the Group Representatives (Membership Class Guarantee) of Southern New England Landcare Ltd.

Directors and subsequent Office Bearers of the Board make decisions about governance, regional projects and staffing. They may also represent our organisation at events or on significant issues, as well as on regional or state bodies relevant to landcare, sustainable agriculture and natural resource management.

Nominations for the board closed on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016 for consideration at the AGM, however nominations can be made any time during the year.

Have you got some great ideas about where Southern New England Landcare should be headed, or how it could operate better in our region? Would you like to be more involved in Landcare activities in our region? Then why not become a Member (Class Guarantee) for your group?

With a bit of spare time you could be part of some inspiring opportunities and make a significant contribution to the long-term viability of our region's productivity and ecological health by being nominated to our board of directors. There are many opportunities to contribute and we look forward to you helping us guide the organisation through 2016-17 and beyond.

## When Two Become One

By Kären Zirkler

In mid 2015, Southern New England Landcare almost wound up its operations. This was due to a number of factors: key staff had left the organisation, core funding was cut, project funding reduced, administrative burdens were at an all-time high, group activity was extremely low and volunteer board members were struggling to keep the organisation afloat. This article showcases how Southern New England Landcare is 're-birthing' to become a more relevant organisation for its members, the community and investors.

### The solution

For the past 15 years, Southern New England Landcare operated two individual organisations, Southern New England Landcare Coordinating Committee Inc and Southern New England Landcare Ltd. This duplication of administrative burden and other stressors listed above were the catalyst for a review of the organisations operations, leading to some difficult but critical changes to the organisation. These changes led to staff and membership restructures, a website overhaul, merger of two organisations, (ongoing process to follow due process), and the archiving of 15 years of hard copy documentation produced by these organisations.

## The impact

The above activities have enabled Southern New England Landcare to work within its mission: to *lead, connect and enable our communities to achieve their sustainable living goals*. To assist in serving our members we have actively sought new partnerships with local businesses and developed existing partnerships. Additional staffing has enabled the development and review of planning documents and as a result we are already starting to see our organisation increasing in its ability to source external funding. Key achievements include:

- Increased longer term staffing through the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative
- Increased voluntary Board membership and greater male/female balance
- Reduced administrative burden through merger of the two organisations
- New website with new online membership subscription process.



## Learnings

The review and adaptation process has taken some two years, but has enabled our organisation to reach a new equilibrium and aim for a new, prosperous future. There is a significant lag-time between rebuilding an organisation and adoption of services and support available to members. Once lost, the momentum of volunteers and groups is slow to recover.

## Key facts

- Planning for the future is critical to the success of our organisation.
- Non project-specific funds and staffing were essential to enable the necessary changes to the organisation.

*Pictured – Some of the current board members of Southern New England Landcare Ltd – from left to right: Jill Moore-Kashima (Soil Health Forum), Steve Harvey (Dangarsleigh Landcare Group), Bev Stubberfield (Uralla Rivercare Group), David Henderson (Guyra), Peter Metcalfe (Dumaresq Landcare Group, Armidale Tree Group). Absent are Bill Perrottet (Malpas Catchment Group) and Tim Wright (Balala-Brushgrove Landcare Group).*

## Arding Landcare Group Revitalised!

By Ruth Trémont

Arding Landcare was once a thriving group but activity levels have waned over the past 5 years as a result of various factors.

A wetland day at Little Llangothlin Lagoon in February 2016 gave new landholders, from near Thomas Lagoon at Arding, a chance to meet up with Southern New England Landcare and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services staff. The landholders wanted to discuss getting Arding Landcare Group activities going again and sort out 'what next for 'Thomas Lagoon' – an Endangered Ecological Community which has been a focus of many Arding Landcare Group activities in the past.

## The solution

Following the wetland day the group's new office bearers dug out old management plans, photos and ideas for the Lagoon. They also worked with Northern Tablelands Local Land Services staff to gather existing technical information into a new working document to help guide future management of Thomas Lagoon. The next stage of this activity was a meeting, in September 2016, of stakeholders with interests in Thomas Lagoon.

## The impact

Arding Landcare Group are incorporated but are also affiliated as a member group of Southern New England Landcare Ltd. This means they have been able to access assistance from Landcare Coordinators to guide and support them in their efforts. With the help of fliers for mail boxes and the local store, new posters, a meeting advertisement and membership form, the group's executive held a free sausage sizzle at the local store and a meeting at the Arding Church Hall.

These get-togethers resulted in a very successful fund raiser stall and raffle at the Hall on Election Day in July 2016. Since then, Arding Landcare Group have advertised and held their own Annual General Meeting to elect office bearers and committee members, recruit a few more members and plan for a meeting to discuss another fund-raiser and potential group projects and direction - in addition to the Thomas Lagoon activities!

Coordinators from Southern New England Landcare and the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services continue to support and be involved in the progress around co-operative management of Thomas Lagoon and to facilitate group engagement, functioning and activities.

Arding Landcare's greatest achievements this year have been their willingness and ability to partner with Southern New England Landcare and the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, their positivity around get-togethers, their efforts to become financially viable and their successful recruitment of more members.

## Key facts

- Working collaboratively with the community and NRM agencies was key to reinvigorating the group and paving the way for significant change.
- Enthusiasm from a select few landholders fostered enthusiasm among neighbours and other interested individuals and organisations.

## Diversifying Income with Corporate Partnerships

By Charlie Carruthers

Southern New England Landcare has had or maintained partnerships with a few local businesses for some years. These partnerships have provided valuable but small financial contributions or other in-kind support to our core operations. However, through developing an annual Action Plan in mid 2016, and in a bid to diversify our funding sources, we identified an opportunity to boost our financial stability and long-term viability by partnering with corporate entities.

## The solution

Commencement of corporate partnership proposals was serendipitous. As a result of word of mouth and Southern New England Landcare's strong community presence, Armidale's branch of the multi-national company Flight Centre approached Southern New England Landcare to test our interest in developing a partnership. We were excited that one of Flight Centre Armidale's travel consultants has significant global experience in philanthropic fund raising for not-for-profit and non-government organisations. So, Southern New England Landcare has become Flight Centre Armidale's first philanthropic partner.

## The impact

The theory is simple, a percentage of money raised through referral or Landcare specific group travel is donated to Southern New England Landcare. This money will assist in covering the day to day expenses of running an organisation, allowing us to focus more effort on meeting the needs of our members and delivering on commitments to current projects; and capacity to invest time in securing additional resourcing through competitive grants.



## Learnings

While still in its infancy, planning is underway to offer domestic and international holiday options to the Southern New England community. We hope to include trips which support and learn from other Landcare interests and networks, such as the Hastings Landcare Farm Gate Tour on the nearby NSW mid-north coast. Our fledgling partnership with Flight Centre has helped us learn about corporate engagement techniques, opportunities, and the level of work involved in developing and maintaining such relationships. The process also prompted staff to consider utilising the professional experience of our Board, around the development of proposals, branding and realising our value to businesses.

## Key facts

- Establishing and maintaining partnerships takes time and commitment.
- Corporate partners need not be industry-related.

# All the Dirt III: Nutrient Management from Atmosphere to Production

By Ruth Trémont

Landholders involved in the Malpas-Guyra 'All the Dirt III' project reconvened as a large group in June, to compare and share results of soil and plant analyses, and workshop their experiences and learnings during the nine months of the project.

The area that participants probably learned most about was their ability to assess a soil/leaf/feed test and understand what the data means. All participants were excited about their ability to use this information to improve the soils/plants/animals on their own properties and to understand where the vast array of products fit (or otherwise) with their goals.

Participants were surprised that nutrient movements through soils, plants and animals have microbial symbionts that can enhance or reduce the effectiveness and production of a farm ecosystem.

Most of the group were unaware of the importance of the 'liquid carbon pathway' that produces most of the soil carbon sequestration potential as well as the labile carbon pathway and its role in feeding microbes and ultimately plants and animals. A lot of discussion was had on how photosynthesis is the real driver of plant growth and hence farm productivity. Ways of measuring and monitoring this process were also discussed.

As with most groups of graziers on the tablelands, phosphorus was a key focus. Of most interest were the various pools of phosphorus within our farm systems, how to make sure we have enough moving from soil to plant to animal, and the need to monitor our need for external phosphorus.

Grazing management techniques used by members of the group (and an external trial) were reviewed and discussed. This created a lot of debate. Three members of the group committed to doing a trial with high grazing densities and others are interested to push in that direction.

The funding provided by the *25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Landcare Grants 2015-16 Program* for 'All the Dirt III' allowed local consultants to understand and meet the needs of landholders, develop course material and farm visits to suit landholders and organise for soil, plant and feed tests. Overall, this increased graziers' confidence and understanding of the drivers of their businesses. The formation of a like-minded group who developed trust with each other and the potential for ongoing contact and problem solving was a vital ingredient.

This group decided to keep meeting to continue exploring their farm ecosystems and maximise the long-term effect of the changes they are implementing. Following on from successful reporting on this project an application has been submitted to the 2016 National Landcare Program Community Grants, to help continue group facilitation and soil testing.

If you are interested in this sort of thing for your grazing enterprises, call us on 02 6772 9123 at the SNElandcare office and we'll help get you up and running.



Pictured – All the Dirt III' participants regrouped to share and discuss 9 months of new learnings, and to begin on 'what next' for their own paddocks and group activities.

## Koala & Quoll Survey Yields Encouraging Results

By Des Andersen

In 2015, Southern New England Landcare commenced a project with landholders and the wider community to provide a helping hand for the conservation of two iconic local species.

"Quollity Koala Corridors and Questions" aims to provide a range of active and passive management tools that enable meaningful community involvement in the conservation of the Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) and Spotted tailed quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*). The project will enable us to better manage koala and quoll populations in terms of numbers and movements throughout corridors around Armidale.

To facilitate better management, a survey of 11 landholder properties was undertaken in the summer of 2015-16. The survey determined the presence of Koalas and Spotted-tailed Quolls at each site where the project is funding Koala and Quoll habitat restoration. The survey was undertaken by local ecologist Steve Debus. Sites were selected with the support of anecdotal evidence from landholders and fall within a wider movement corridor shown in the map.

Of the 11 properties surveyed, evidence of Koala presence occurred on 8 properties. The main body of evidence was provided through the identification of tree scratches and adjacent scats (droppings) indicating recent Koala presence on or near the individual tree. This accounted for 7 of the 11 sites surveyed. One response to Koala call playback from a loudspeaker occurred near one property.

Although spotlighting and infrared cameras failed to produce any sightings of live animals, anecdotal and photographic evidence from landholders indicated Koalas have been present on most properties. The picture above depicts a "live" sighting from a participating property in the Herbert Park area.

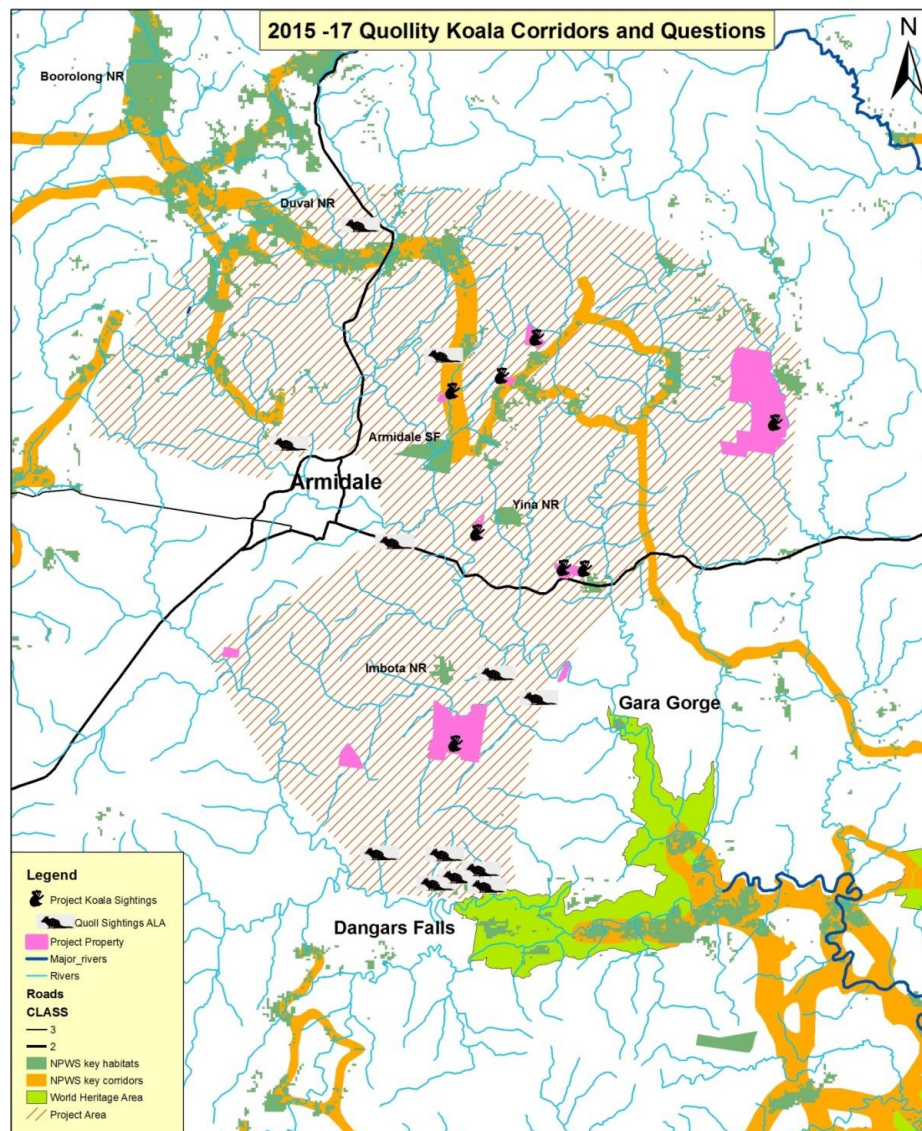
Surveying for Quolls across the same sites unfortunately did not produce any evidence of recent Quoll movements, perhaps due to the increased difficulty in determining their presence. Quolls are by nature more transient than Koalas and do not leave evidence such as scratches. Again, anecdotal evidence from participating landholders provided some evidence of Quolls in the survey area, in particular from landholders who have noted Quoll interest in their chicken coops!

In NSW, the Koala and Spotted tailed Quoll are listed as endangered and vulnerable species respectively. The future management of our local Koala and Quoll populations relies heavily on the assistance of the community in both rural and urban areas to help reduce Key Threatening Processes (KTPs). In urban areas, KTP's include vehicle strikes and predation by dogs, impediments to movement (such as metal fencing) and lack of cover, while in rural areas the main threat is posed by diminishing habitat and connecting corridors.

The project offers a range of management tools to address KTP's by preserving and revegetating 37 hectares of critical habitat within key movement corridors on rural land. The project will fund a number of community events later in 2016 and in early 2017 with the purpose of raising awareness and providing easily accessible tools to assist Koala and Quoll conservation.

Conservation strategies include providing Koala-friendly fences and ropes between trees to assist Koala movement in urban areas and using online platforms to report Koala and Quoll sightings via the Armidale Regional Council website. Field days will be conducted on site in known wildlife corridors and include training from specialist wildlife ecologists eager to share some helpful Koala and Quoll identification skills.

"Quollity Koala Corridors and Questions" is funded through the NSW Environmental Trust.



# Drought Support Partnership a Success

By Ruth Tremont

During 2015 New England North West Landcare successfully obtained funding, through a partnership with The Ascent Group, to deliver information, services and events as part of the Australian Government's Drought Support Package.

The funding was passed on to Southern New England Landcare, as well as GLENRAC, GWYMAC and Granite Borders Landcare, to deliver local community engagement activities and events to increase awareness of mental health issues and link people to appropriate supports and services in our drought-affected communities of a year ago.

This project allowed Southern New England Landcare to run a number of 'chat' events in our local centres.

Four 'Stock 'n' Chat' events at Guyra Sheep and Lamb sales provided a free barbecue for sale attendees to enjoy. The barbecues were great opportunities for people to stop and chat for a few minutes. And there were a good few conversations around having to bring weaners, then ewes and rams to sell, rather than start or keep feeding. Amazing reassurance when you find you're not the only one having to make tough decisions!

An 'Ag 'n' Chat' evening at Walcha provided inspiration for people from Yarrowitch, Wollun and Walcha as they heard the story of a couple from Stanthorpe and how a devastating fire provided the impetus to change from orcharding to horticulture. The discussion also explored how African Lovegrass helped raise soil carbon levels prior to cropping, how the family transport business offset costs of transport to market, how backpackers provided a reliable base of workers, and how three generations are living and working to make this family farming enterprise succeed in every way. The business even allows for family members to play away for football and everyone to have a holiday most years.

In addition, John Harper (a wheat and sheep farmer from southern NSW) provided some very real and down-to-earth tips on making time for our mates. Very simply he suggested we 'look at our mates, 'listen to' our mates and 'let someone know' if they aren't doing OK. No need to wait for someone else to organise an event!

Information was also available all these events, in an informal way, on internal parasites of sheep, pasture and forage crop varieties, feed supplements, weeds and stock health, sustainable land management, drought support and referral services. Some of our locals were able to be put in touch with technical and financial support which really made a difference.

*Pictured – Southern New England Landcare's "Ascent Group Drought Support Project" helped make doing it tough just a little bit easier.*



## Farewell and Good Luck, Angus Adair!

Angus Adair, long-time member of Armidale Urban Rivercare Group, and his family have left Armidale for greener pastures near Canberra.

Angus Adair enrolled in a Bachelor of Natural Resources at UNE in 1987 and graduated with Honours in 1990, specialising in water, soils and wildlife. He gained an affinity with Dumaresq Creek during his time at UNE and also met Bruce Whan, a Technical Officer in Natural Resources at the time.

On graduating, Angus worked in crocodile research in Darwin. Then, 1991 to 1993, he worked with the NSW Soil Conservation Service in Coffs Harbour, from where he was transferred to Sydney to manage a state wide program for the assignment of protected Fauna on protected lands. In 1995 he started working with the EPA in Armidale commencing a Masters Degree of Environmental Local Government Law which he completed in 2000.

Angus started planting trees at Charleston Willows in 1997. He then joined Herbert Park Landcare Group, helping to run that group with Greg Roberts. Bruce Whan started the Armidale Urban Rivercare Group (AURG) in 2000 and Angus in 2002, playing a significant role as AURG Coordinator until early 2016. In 2008 he was awarded the SNELC Landcare Adventurer award. Angus and Bruce make a terrific team.

Bruce is always chuffed to tell the story of one of the field assignments set for students by Professor John Burton, Foundation Professor of Natural Resources, during Angus' days as student at UNE.

"The assignment was a creek crossing just below the goat track bridge, where the creek is about eight metres wide, and where AURG has completed a number of successful plantings in recent years," said Bruce.

"This was a team event and the various teams built bridges, boats, gantries, flying foxes etc. to achieve the aim of getting from one side of Dumaresq creek to the other without getting any team member wet. One of the Rules of the event was that all the apparatus for the bridge crossing had to fit in a box 2 metres x 0.5 metres x 0.5 metres. I was acting as scrutineer for the event and had built the box.

"Angus's team did well in the event with their flying fox apparatus, but Prof. Burton, who always had good intelligence on the students, knew that Angus had been practising with his own 'special apparatus' individually. At the end of the event Prof. Burton asked Angus to demonstrate his 'apparatus'. Angus was, in fact, the apparatus itself! So he lay in the box and then hopped out, paced back about 20 metres, ran to the edge of the creek and leapt across only getting one heel wet.

"Angus has also been responsible for writing a number of AURG policy documents, keeping our records up to date and looking after our creature comfort equipment such as a marquee, chairs, tables etc. as well as providing a trailer to store and transport this equipment. Angus has very generously donated all of this gear including trailer to AURG."

"AURG members learned to appreciate Angus for his extensive knowledge of legislative and environmental issues, his instant recognition of bird and frog calls and for being a thoroughly decent, friendly, approachable person. We will miss Angus very much, but are glad that he will remain in touch through our mailing list. We wish Angus and Roh great happiness in their new straw-bale house near Canberra and AURG is going to contribute to the planting scheme for their large rural block."

## National Landcare Conference Roundup

By Jodie Kelehear and Kàren Zirkler

September 2016 saw Landcarers from all over Australia coming together in Melbourne for our biggest knowledge sharing and networking event of the year: the 2016 National Landcare Conference and Awards. There was a strong New England North West NSW contingent, including four of the Regional

Landcare Facilitators: Jodi Kelehear and Felicity Steel from the North West and Christine Davis and Karen Zirkler from the New England.

This year's theme was collaborative communities. It was a fantastic three days jam-packed with presentations, information sharing, discussions, field trips, networking and catching up with peers from near and far, covering everywhere from Bourke to Hobart to outback Western Australia.

We were also very proud to be supporting a whopping FOUR National Landcare Award finalists who hail from the New England North West region. A huge congratulations to Glenn Morris from "Billabong" Inverell, the Watsons from "Kilmarnock" Boggabri, all the team at GLENRAC, Glen Innes and to Amy Hammond from Tamworth's Galala Rivercare.

Another proud local moment came during Costa Georgiadis' address to the conference, with Bingara's Orange Festival and Living Classroom heralded as specific examples of inspiring community projects.

During the conference we had the opportunity to hear from more than 50 speakers who shared their insights, case studies and new ideas on community engagement, collaboration, innovation and responding to landscape challenges and climate change. There were discussions around the future direction of Landcare and calls for a national soils policy. The speakers included scientists, academics, Landcare pioneers and leaders, politicians, government representatives and environment, climate and biodiversity experts. In addition, field trips gave us the chance to venture into the countryside beyond Melbourne, meet local Landcarers and see some Landcare projects in action.

Landcare's next generation was represented by the Intrepid Landcarers, who brought great energy to the Conference. Intrepid Landcare is all about bringing together young, adventurous like-minded people in conservation projects and fun activities like kayaking, surfing and camping. It was great to hear about their experiences and success in getting young people involved.

The event was a great opportunity to network and to share ideas, knowledge and experiences with other Landcarers and Regional Landcare Facilitators. We were blown away by the passion and infectious enthusiasm of all involved and it was hugely inspiring to hear about different projects happening right across the country. The diversity of projects talked about was testament to just how flexible the Landcare structure is to adapt to the specific issues and needs of each region, while still meeting common goals.

In all, it was an action and information-packed three days and we left invigorated with new ideas, knowledge and inspiration to take back to our Landcare networks, as well as contacts and connections that will allow the networking and information sharing to continue. There's a lot planned between now and then, but we are already looking forward to the 2018 instalment!

*Pictured – Local revellers at the National Landcare Conference Awards night in Melbourne. From left to right: Stephanie Cameron (Tamworth), Jodi Kelehear (Bingara), Lucy Faithfull (Glen Innes), Felicity Steele (Tamworth), Jennie Coldham (Deepwater), Kylie Falconer (Glen Innes), Karen Zirkler (Armidale) and Costa Georgiadis of Gardening Australia fame.*



## National climate dogs let off the leash!

Australia's climate drivers are now explained through creative sheepdog animation videos!

Meet Ridgy, Enso, Indy, and Sam – the four new national climatedogs that explain the latest science behind the key climate drivers bringing wetter and drier years to Australia's farms. And while they may look cute, these dogs round up our biggest droughts and floods.



Launched recently on the [Climate Kelpie website \(www.climatekelpie.com.au\)](http://www.climatekelpie.com.au), this playful litter of animated sheepdogs help farmers and anyone reliant on the weather understand what influences the variation in Australia's seasons.

The new national climatedog video animation series was funded by the Managing Climate Variability (MCV) program and builds on the local climatedogs concept initiated by Agriculture Victoria.

"The climatedogs have been redone to be relevant to all regions of Australia," says climate specialist Graeme Anderson, with Agriculture Victoria.

The videos have also been updated with the Bureau of Meteorology's latest science through research funded by MCV.

"They explain how each climate driver operates, how they affect our seasons and how some of the dogs are starting to behave a bit differently," Anderson says.

"In the last few years, Ridgy has been playing around with southern Australia's weather. And Indy, who rounds up moisture from the warm north-east Indian Ocean across to south-eastern Australia, is looking a bit hot under the collar at the moment.

"It's Indy who has been the dog bringing our current wetter weather conditions to the south-east."

Dr Tom Davison from Meat & Livestock Australia, who manage the MCV program, says the climatedogs are an important tool to help the program to communicate its research.

"These animations are a small part of the wider work we are doing to better understand what drives the variability in our climate," he says. "This understanding allows us to manage that variability into the future, and assist farmers in running more profitable, sustainable and competitive businesses."

The kennel of national climatedogs includes:

- Ridgy – Subtropical Ridge – a major driver of southern Australia's seasons
- Enso – El Nino Southern Oscillation – influences seasonal variability across Australia
- Indy – Indian Ocean Dipole – delivers spring rainfall to southeast and central Australia
- Sam – Southern Annular Mode – brings cold fronts from the Southern Ocean

The national dogs join two local climatedogs developed for Victoria and NSW:

- Eastie – East Coast Lows – key weather systems in the south-east
- Mojo – Madden-Julian Oscillation – influences weather systems in northern Australia.

Watch all the climatedogs in action at <http://climatekelpie.com.au/understand-climate/climatedogs>.

[Managing Climate Variability](#) is Australia's research and development program on climate variability. MCV provides climate knowledge to primary producers and natural resource managers. MCV is funded by Meat & Livestock Australia, the Grains Research and Development Corporation, the Cotton Research & Development Corporation, the Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation and Sugar Research Australia.

### Key Facts and Figures

Examples of how the climatedogs have affected Australians:

- Some of our bigger drought events like 2006 saw Enso, Indy and Sam all at the drier end of their range at the same time.
- The wet 2010 for south-eastern Australia was when Enso and Indy both teamed up at the wetter end of the scale, so these dogs are worth keeping track of.

Climate drivers basically set up pre-cursor conditions for wetter or drier years. The climatedogs might only get 'off the leash' once every few years, but when they do it's worth knowing what mood they are in.

The climatedogs have varying impacts across Australia, so it's important to know how and when each one affects your district. The MCV program focuses on new research to help better understand and explain the drivers to improve people's use of seasonal forecasts.

## Acknowledgements

Southern New England Landcare is supported by the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services through funding from the NSW Government's Catchment Action NSW and the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme; Armidale Regional Council, Regional Australia Bank, and Wesfarmers Federation Insurance.

Landchat presents a forum for the expression of a range of opinions. While every effort is made to publish accurate information, Southern New England Landcare and its employees do not accept responsibility for statements made and opinions expressed in this newsletter.



If you need a farm, car, household or other insurance policy – we recommend insuring with WFI, proud supporters of Landcare.

Mention you are a member of Southern New England Landcare, and 3% of the value of your premium is returned to our organisation!