

Landchat

Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 111, July - September 2017



Southern
New England
Landcare

Our mission is to **lead, connect and enable** communities in the Armidale, Guyra, Uralla and Walcha areas to meet their sustainability goals.

Welcome

Welcome to Landchat 111. In this bumper issue, we report on some fantastic events and projects we have facilitated in the last several months.

Financial members should receive a full colour hard copy of this edition in the mail to enjoy at their leisure. Non-members are able to retrieve a copy from our website www.snelandcare.org.au under the news menu.

Remember, if you want regular updates on coming events, please sign up to our weekly eNews at the bottom left of our front page at www.snelandcare.org.au. You can also see what's coming by visiting the events listing at our site.

We welcome your feedback on Landchat, and we especially welcome articles from members who wish to tell their landcare story, and advertising from local businesses. Please contact us at the office on mail@snelandcare.org.au or on 02 6772 9123.

Diary Dates

NENW NLP Small Community Grants close	16 Oct
Frog Dreaming Conference.....	19-20 Oct
State Landcare & LLS Conference.....	25-27 Oct
Thunderbolt Festival Display	28 Oct
Black Gully Music Festival Display	11 Nov
Closing The Gap Field Day	25 Nov
Member Muster 'Renewable Energy'	30 Nov

No. 111, July-September 2017

New era begins with a new office

Members and friends of SNELandcare celebrated the launch of the new Landcare office on 31st August 2017.

Located at Suite 10 in Hanna's Arcade, 128 Beardy Street Armidale, the office offers new opportunities for members and friends.

Continued on page 2



Local Landcare Coordinators Karen Zirkler and Sara Schmude, pictured on the front page hanging the new sign, agree the move has already made the Landcare Resource Centre much more accessible to the community.

Staff are seeing more people drop in to visit get help with their ideas.

Board members are very excited about the new premises and wish to thank Hanna's Arcade for supporting their community-led not-for-profit organisation.

Members and friends are invited to drop in to say hello, or if planning to discuss a project or idea, please call ahead to ensure someone is available to help, on 02 6772 9123.

The launch event was part of the NSW Government's Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative, supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW.

Right top - Guests at the launch of the new SNElandcare office spilled out into Hanna's Arcade.

Right middle - Sara Schmude with Peter O'Donohue and David Mitchell.

Right bottom - L-R Kàren Zirkler, Ruth Trémont, and Shane Andrews (SNElandcare), work with Euan Belson and Phoebe Haslett (NTLLS) in the meeting space at the new office.



National Landcare Programme Funds Community Resilience

New England North West Landcare is offering organisations, groups and individuals the opportunity to apply for grants to support events, training or capacity building activities that increase community resilience.

“Grants of between \$2000 and \$8,000 are available to support events, training or capacity building activities,” said Regional Landcare Facilitator for the Northern Tablelands, Anneka Ferguson.

“Similarly to grants awarded last year, the focus of activities could be succession planning, governance, mentoring, planning sessions, leadership development, farmer to farmer peer mentoring, regenerating community groups, or partnership projects between community organisation, local government and or schools,” she said.

Successful applications in 2016 included projects to hold educational events teaching participants about

topics such as native bees, dung beetles, how to develop healthy soils, how to deliver community projects, alternative fertilisers, pasture and feed assessments, eucalypt identification and digital marketing.

Another tested the capability and effectiveness of methods to control Lantana in difficult to access areas where high volume spraying is not efficient, and Eco-Safari Workshops were also delivered in partnership with local schools.

Applicants must be located in the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services area, and activities will need to be consistent with the Resilient Adaptive Communities goal from the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services Regional Investment Plan.

“If you are an individual, local organisation, community group or network, or even just a group of neighbouring landholders who plan to work together on a project, you can

apply for this funding,” said Anneka Ferguson.

“Anyone wishing to apply is welcome to contact their local Landcare Network in Armidale, Glen Innes, Inverell or Tenterfield to obtain support – from filling in the application forms to support throughout their project if it is successful,” she said.

The closing date for submitting applications is Monday 16th October and more details on the application and assessment process, including guidelines and the application form can be found at <http://www.nenwlandcare.org.au/funding-opportunities.php>.

This project is supported by Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

Community Grants Now Open

National Landcare Programme (NLP) Community Grants to support capacity building activities that increase community resilience

Closing 5 pm Monday 16th October. Details at www.nenwlandcare.org.au.

If you are in the Armidale, Guyra, Uralla, Walcha areas, and you would like assistance to apply, please call SNELandcare on 6772 9123.



Member Musters Increase Community Resilience

During the last 12 months, SNElandcare held four community events in Uralla, Guyra, Walcha and Armidale as part of its Member Muster series.

Each event hosted local leaders and land managers who presented on a theme nominated for the event. Time was provided for interactive learning and discussion among participants.

These events attracted our usual audiences and many new participants. Short evaluation questionnaires revealed positive responses...

A high proportion of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the length of the events were just right, the information provided was pitched at an appropriate level, was clearly presented, that speakers were appropriate and knowledgeable and that handouts (if provided) were of good quality. So, running a 2 hour event in the early evening, and supporting good quality local and regional speakers with appropriate refreshments has worked well.

A high proportion of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they gained a better understanding of the topic, as well as practical and useful information for their situation, and that they would be reviewing their management practices or indeed implementing some of the ideas on their property in the near future.

Respondents listed numerous ways in which they plan on using their new knowledge, and noted that the events have changed the way in which they view their enterprise. So, the events were an effective way to share information and make progress towards change in our region.

Respondents enjoyed socialising with like-minded people, sharing

the latest thinking, the speakers, the food, meeting new people, new facilitation techniques, the skills and nature of the landcare staff, the size of the events for conversation and connections, being inspired, indoor and outdoor presentations, hearing about real experiences, and hearing open and honest sharing.

Respondents suggested the following to make the events more interesting/useful: could have been longer, could have been shorter, follow up workshop with more practical aspects, less sitting, more detail on some aspects.

As a result of these events, participants have gained access to new resources, contacts and mentors, making them more resilient in the longer term. The Guyra Member Muster was reported in Landchat 110, and the final three events are reported here...

Art in the Landscape

How can art in rural landscapes engage, inform, educate, or enable us to thrive as a community?

This question was the focus of our Member Muster in Walcha on Wednesday 7th June 2017.

Guest presenters included Sandra Welsman, founder of 'LandArtFarm' near Armidale, and Mayor of Walcha Shire Eric Noakes who is also a long-time landcare member.

"The evening began with short presentations from each of our guest speakers," said Karen Zirkler, Coordinator with Southern New England Landcare.

"These presentations were then the inspiration for a session where guest speakers mixed it up with participants in a 'world

cafe' workshop setting designed to network, share, and harvest the learnings of the last 25 years in our region," she said.

Science in the Paddock

On Wednesday 26 July 2017, we hosted a Member Muster called Science in the Paddock at the Mike O'Keefe Woodland Centre in Armidale.

Participants from around the region explored how locally manufactured scientific instruments can be used to optimise plant water use and species selection.

Shane Andrews from SNElandcare said, "Like in many other industries, agriculture is moving fast when it comes to new technologies that are changing the way we work with plants and animals."

"Keeping abreast of these changes is essential if we are to continue being effective," he said.

Topics covered included plant function, water response and growth, impacts of soil condition on plant establishment, sap flow monitoring and psychrometry, and tree monitoring in practice.

Presenters from Armidale's ICT International included Dr Peter Cull and Dr Ben Umali.

"These instruments have applications in horticulture, viticulture, agroforestry and ground water dependent ecosystems," said Shane.

Farm-Based Tourism

Farmers wondering about how they might profit from sharing the beauty



or biology of their farm were the beneficiaries of a presentation and discussion held in Armidale on 23rd August 2017.

This Member Muster focussed on farm-based tourism, and hosted three guest speakers who shared their experiences and opened discussion on the topic with members and friends.

Our region is one of great beauty, and has also had one of the strongest Landcare networks in Australia for the last 30 years.

"It makes sense that visitors in our region, would want to experience that beauty and the great work that most farmers and graziers put into caring for their land," said Coordinator Karen Zirkler.

"For this event, we organised two landholders who are taking two quite different approaches to farm-based tourism, along with David Thompson, from Regional Development Australia," said Karen.

James Gresham, a grazier from the Glen Innes region, shared his experiences in setting up their property as a 'YouCamp' destination, while in contrast, Lucy Frizell and her family from the Wollomombi area talked about the farmstay experience they share with visitors.

Participants also heard from David Thompson from Regional Development Australia, who discussed some regional data on farm based tourism opportunities.

The evening rounded off with a question and answer session providing participants the opportunity to enquire more deeply into areas of interest.

This project was part of the \$25 million of National Landcare Programme investment to boost farm gate productivity and improve environmental health across NSW.

Left top - Murray Neilson's 'art in the landscape'. Photo: Murray Neilson.

Left middle - members and friends at the Science in the Paddock Member Muster at Armidale Tree Group.

Left bottom - participants at the Q&A session of the Farm Based Tourism Member Muster.



Jeff Pow on Regenerative Agriculture

Southern New England Landcare, in conjunction with Southern Blue Regenerative hosted Jeff Pow at a lunch time talk on Tuesday the 15th August 2017 at Rrafters, Guyra.

For many of us, where we find ourselves on any given day may not resemble where we thought we would be when we started out on our journey.

When Jeff Pow purchased Southampton Homestead in 2006, he started with a Bed and Breakfast and a weekend getaway. Today he and his wife Michelle run Western Australia's only vertically integrated pastured poultry business.

"The business has grown through boldness, resilience and hope," says Jeff.

After starting full-time farming in 2011, using regenerative farming principles and practices, the Southampton Farm is an amazing multi-enterprise farming business based on perennial pastures. All this was recovered from a pine plantation which had been cleared before Jeff bought the property.

In 2013 a massive bush fire tore through the Blackwood valley devastating the farm, destroying the historic homestead that was the centre of Southampton. Sheds, fences, water and infrastructure were

rebuilt, and the pastures were re-seeded and now Jeff and Michelle's business continues to grow.

But Jeff's passion extends beyond his life time. He recently began work to build a vision for Southampton that will last 500 years.

Regenerative agriculture is about longevity of our food systems, and Jeff is looking at a long timeframe to ensure the efforts that are going into the farm now will continue well into the future.

This amazing journey led Jeff to present at TEDx at the University of Western Australia, where he shared his vision for the farm for 500 years. Jeff went on to win the 2016 Australian Government Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices Award and 2016 National Landcare 'People's

Choice' Award at the National Landcare Conference last year.

This event is part of the NSW Government's Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative, supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW. The event was also supported by New England North West Landcare.



Below – Jeff and Michelle Pow with some of their chickens at Southampton in WA.



Sprouted Barley Creates Interest

More than fifty landholders, students and community members convened at Derek and Fiona Smith's property, 'Kenilworth', Guyra on Friday 25th August 2017 to inspect the new sprouted barley production shed.

The calling question that brought so many interested participants was 'Can sprouted barley enable landholders to increase their herd size, reduce environmental impacts, increase feed (and food) security and increase drought resilience?'

Technology users Derek and Fiona Smith, from Working with Nature and animal nutritionist Roger Hegarty from the University of New England (UNE) shared their thoughts and experience with local farmers, farming groups, and approximately 15 keen University of New England students.

Professor Roger Hegarty said, "Sprouted barley has a high degradation rate, so it is quickly absorbed and digested by the animals."

"The high digestibility of the barley sprouts helps fulfil the protein needs of growing young animals," he said.

Derek Smith discussed his personal experience in the set-up and running of this technology.

"We produce five kilograms of sprouted barley for every one kilogram of barley seed used and the whole operation requires about an hour of labour each day," he said.

"The technology used to produce sprouted barley 'biscuits' is more than just temperature control," said Mr Smith.

"It controls the moisture, humidity, amount and intensity of light and the

other necessary conditions required for optimal growth," he said.

The Smiths have been using the technology to grow sprouted barley and are very satisfied with the results in terms of profit and reduced labour.

The field day was hosted by SNElandcare and coordinated by six UNE Rural Science Students to fulfil part of their assessment requirements for their subject in Agricultural Extension.

This event was part of the NSW Government's Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative, supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW.

Below - The fodder shed owned by Derek and Fiona Smith of Working with Nature, at 'Kenilworth' Guyra. Photo: Melissa Edwards.





Urban Landcare Update

When people talk about Landcare, we often hear stories of planting trees, habitat restoration, connecting wildlife corridors, native vegetation conservation and increasingly more about regenerative agriculture.

Adding to this mix, we have an urban movement that embraces on-ground works and awareness-raising campaigns focussed on riparian and bushland restoration.

Further, in recent times the story has expanded to encompass ventures into education and local action for sustainability.

Although still taking form, recent actions and campaigns have generated significant interest from a broad audience, and include the following exciting activities:

- Armidale High School students

trialling Chilean Needle Grass controls - a collaboration involving John Winter Irving Bequest recipient Bec Smith with Dr Maarten Stapper and University of New England's Dr Kirsti Abbott.

- Resource sharing partnerships with the Armidale Tree Group (ATG), Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre and Armidale Regional Council (ARC) – Indian Myna traps, Dung Beetle traps and educational resources, Water Watch kits and a trailer full of planting equipment will be shared among these partners.
- School-based Landcare groups – just last week a group of TAS students started a campaign to raise funds for a 'Trees at School' project.
- A special mention of the Armidale High School Bushcare group BC² who have achieved finalist status

in the upcoming State Landcare Awards!

- Delivering the Armidale Urban Planting Maintenance program while at the same time developing our working relationship with Armidale Regional Council for sustainable environmental outcomes – a good example is the native revegetation of the works zone after stormwater drain renewal at the corner of Markham and Kirkwood Streets in Armidale.
- Guyra Golf Club revegetation project in collaboration with Armidale Tree Group and Armidale Regional Council, involving local schools and community groups in a day of planting, golf and bowls.
- People's Park Group, headed up by Helen Webb who is achieving great results in response to using methods



that promote natural regeneration along Dumaresq Creek.

- UNE Student River and Landcare group, headed up by Tom Fisher, is getting into the spring of things with regular working bees, maintaining (chemical free) our creekland biodiversity sites. They recently celebrated National Bike Week with a cycle along the Armidale creek lands culminating in an Armidale Urban Rivercare planting and working bee - extreme fun had by all!
- Membership on the Armidale Regional Council's Environmental Sustainability Committee and New England North West Regional Science Hub.
- Building collaborative affiliations with industry and community groups – New England TAFE, Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre, University of New England, Northern Inland Regional Waste, Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, Pathfinders, BackTrack, Robb College, ICT International, Armidale Flight Centre, Sustainable Living

Armidale and of course Armidale Tree Group to name a few!

- Building connections with UNE Smart Region Incubator and the NSW Government's AgTech Cluster initiative.

What is on the horizon ahead is no less impressive:

- Our 10th Frog Dreaming gathering – an outdoor environmental education program where 'kids teach kids' hosted at the base of Mt Duval in October.
- Slow Fashion Black Gully – a newly formed group flying the banner 'Landcare not Landfill' is providing a platform for the Armidale community to showcase initiatives focussed on reducing impacts of fast fashion. They will do this through workshops, clothes swaps and an upcycled fashion show at the upcoming Black Gully Music Festival at NERAM on 11 November.
- Applying for Citizen Science grants in collaboration with the Office of Environment and Heritage, UNE

School of Environment and Rural Science and the UNE Discovery Voyager program.

- PLC Community Week program - where students spend their days weeding, mulching and planting at biodiversity sites throughout Armidale's bushlands and creeklands... and yes they love it!
- Providing urban landcare groups in Guyra, Uralla and Walcha with support.
- Developing Facebook forums.



Left top – Armidale Regional Council Environmental Sustainability Committee meeting.

Far left – TAS students with Sara Schmude talking about their 'trees at school' project.

Left – Ruth Tremont inspecting planting sites at UNE's Newholme station in lead up to Frog Dreaming planting in October.

Right top - Slow fashion will be a theme at this year's Black Gully Music Festival on 11 November.

Right – Ant nest at Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre, a subterranean landscape revealed.

Below – UNE's Newholme station, the site of last year's Frog Dreaming planting and site preparations for this year's revegetation in October.



Armidale Urban Rivercare Group News

This update of progress on the Centennial Avenue Rehabilitation of Dumaesq Creek project, has been provided by Bruce Whan.

This project commenced in July 2016. As July and August are usually too cold and frosty for safe working along the creek we spent the first couple of months getting equipment ready for the project and planning the project.

In our risk assessment, we determined from long range weather forecasting that 2016-2017 was going to be a wetter year than average. This is an important consideration when planning riparian restoration projects.

Also, because a larger proportion of the funding occurred during the first year, we decided to tackle the eastern end of the project first, because this section had some of the greater challenges. This section of the creek was both deep and wide in section with no obvious crossing points and with very difficult access to the southern side of the creek. For this reason, we decided to purchase some agricultural floats to make access across the creek both possible and safer during higher water conditions. This has proved to be wise as we have recorded five flooding events where the creek has broken the banks and overland flooding has occurred!

During the year AURG members have contributed 640-person hours of voluntary work during working bees. This has resulted in clearing approximately 200m of creek of woody weeds and preparing four separate planting sites. Activities ranged from cutting and pasting small

woody weeds such as Privet, Robinia and Hawthorn, to plantings totalling over 3000 native plants. Our contractors have cut and stacked a wide range of woody weeds including Willow, Privet, Hawthorn, Robinia and blackberry resulting in approximately 45 truckloads of material being removed. It has also enabled woodworkers to collect both Robinia and large Privet for woodworking projects. We even had a boomerang maker collect bent pieces of Robinia for making boomerangs.

By looking at historical aerial photographs from 1945, we determined with a high degree of probability that the large forest of Robinia trees resulted from 3 Robinia trees planted before 1945. Robinia are commonly known as False Acacia and smaller plants have vicious 25 to 30 mm long thorns which make it very difficult to walk through them.

We have decided to retain the three large dead Robinia stumps and provide interpretive signage to warn of the dangers of planting inappropriate invasive

species. One of our members has aptly named them "The 3 ugly and prickly Robinia sisters".

After we cleared about half of the site, we realised we had a wide range of different planting sites to manage, ranging from high bank loamy sites to low swampy sites to rocky sites and a number of gullies with one low area where overland flow provides a short circuit for the creek to bypass a corner in the creek.

So, we decided to turn this site into a showcase planting area with paths and low bridges over gullies and mainly single species plantings to suit the wide range of planting sites available. We intend to match local provenance frost tolerant species to the range of sites. This site will be well signposted with botanical information about each of the species and members of the public encouraged to visit the site.

The Armidale Dumaesq Lions Club has offered to fund and help with laying concrete for a picnic site. One of our long-



Landchat - Landcare in Southern New England

term members, Angus Adair has donated a heavy hardwood picnic table and bench seats, and Armidale Duval Lions will provide and help lay gravel for the pathways. Our local Landfill manager is on the lookout for suitable materials for our bridges dumped at the landfill.

Armidale Urban Rivercare Group working bees are held every 3rd Sunday of the month – join our mailing list or find out more by contacting Bruce Whan 0407 456 169 or the SNE Landcare office on 67729123.

The work of AURG is supported by the NSW Environmental Trust and Armidale Regional Council.



Left - Armidale Urban Rivercare Group removed a forest of *Rubinia* to reveal the banks of Armidale's Dumaresq Creek. Revegetation has successfully sustained two flood events.

Right top - UNE Student River and Landcare group laying carpets of newspaper and mulch on a beautiful spring day at the creeklands.

Right middle - Armidale Urban Rivercare Group's map of newly proposed works along Dumaresq Creek, Armidale.

Right bottom – Welcome to Southern New England Landcare's newest members - Pathfinders at Tilbuster Station.



Rural Projects Gain Momentum

Great Outcomes as Koala & Quoll Project Wraps Up

The joint CWC-SNELandcare Quollity Koala Corridors and Questions project, funded by the NSW Environmental Trust for 2015-17 has wrapped up with some excellent outcomes.

This project engaged locals from the Armidale district in the conservation of Koalas and Spotted-tailed Quolls. The Koala and Eastern Spotted-tailed Quoll are iconic Australian native animals. From a local perspective, people might not be aware that our Koala and Quoll populations exist are under pressure from threats due to human activity, domestic animals and a warming climate but thanks to the Quollity Koala Corridors and Questions local landholders and the Armidale community have become valuable contributors to the survival of these native animals.

Twelve landholders revegetated new areas to enhance existing habitat corridors or protected and enhanced remnant areas to a combined total of 19 hectares of koala habitat. More than 13,000 seedlings were planted and 9 km of fencing constructed to protect habitat areas. And

well done to these landholders, given the drought conditions of the 2014-15 and 2015-16 growing seasons!

Two well-known local ecologists surveyed each of the 12 properties for koalas and quolls, to find that eight of the properties contained signs of koalas and that there was anecdotal evidence of a quoll on one property. So, that was great confirmation that the koala corridor that had been identified for the location of on-ground works was been utilized by the target species.

A series of awareness-raising events has also enabled more than 100 community members to be involved in "Citizen Science". Training and information were provided, to help people confidently survey for and report animal signs and sightings, at a much-enjoyed evening talk and spotlight walk based at UNE's new Zoology Museum.

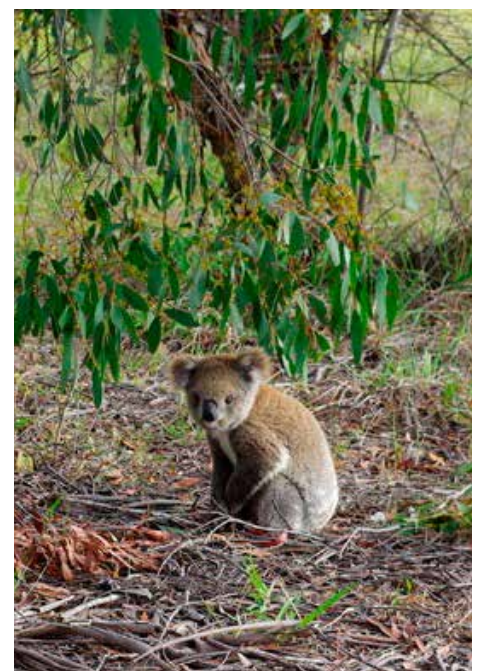
The 2016 Frog Dreaming Youth Conference gave local school students a trek, to the top of Mt Duval, through koala and glider habitat as well as the chance to plant koala food trees as part of an adjacent habitat buffer area on "Newholme".

Displays at local shows and community events, and a live radio interview also provided members of the general community with information on koalas and quolls. In addition, SNELandcare has

produced a brochure (available from our office) which includes ways you can increase the chances of koala survival in our area.

The project has brought opportunities to collaborate with leading organisations in our community, such as the University of New England, Armidale Regional Council, the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services and the Armidale Tree Group. Alliances have been strengthened and there are increasing opportunities for continuing work to support local koala populations. If you are interested in being involved in local activities to support koalas feel free to contact SNELandcare or any of the above organisations.

Below - A Koala utilises habitat on a property along Donald Road, within the wildlife corridor east of Armidale.



Functional habitat to help ‘Close the Gap’ between east & west



SNElandcare's latest project funded by the NSW Environmental Trust, to the tune of \$99,998, is now under way.

Closing the Gap: functional habitat for threatened New England fauna aims to help close a key gap in habitat connectivity, between Armidale and Uralla, for threatened woodland birds and other fauna. This project is a part of SNElandcare's long-term commitment to work with other local organizations and landholders to restore, rehabilitate and re-connect woodland areas in priority locations across our region.



The project area extends from Gara Gorge and Dangars Falls in the east to Saumarez Ponds and Mt Butler in the west. This area represents a gap in habitat connectivity, of about 20km, which inhibits the movement of native fauna between eastern and western sides of the southern New England. Although the well-being of all native fauna is important to maintain healthy ecosystem functioning, the successful movement, dispersal and reproduction of threatened species including the Koala, Spotted-tailed Quoll and 13 threatened woodland bird species are targeted for this project.

A number of landholders in the project area have committed to protecting or restoring remnant woodland and planting new habitat corridors or stepping stones (at least 25-50m wide) totalling about 40 ha. More than 14,000 native tree and shrub seedlings will be planted and at least 6 km of fencing constructed.

Continued on page 14

Left top: Effective habitat – a mature tree planting between Armidale and Uralla. Photo: Des Andersen.

Left: On-ground works on a number of properties (triangles) will help close a habitat gap between Armidale and Uralla.

Malpas Catchment on the Radar

The future of the longstanding Malpas Catchment Project was strengthened in March when SNELandcare and Armidale Regional Council signed an MOU. The agreement commits Armidale Regional Councils financial support for at least another year.

Continued from page 13

These on-ground works will build on those of previous projects and implement and demonstrate approaches to habitat restoration and revegetation design which have proven to be effective.

Bird surveys are once again a project feature, as the group of birds present at a particular site are indicative of habitat quality – and can be used as a monitoring tool. Bird survey results, from this and previous projects, will be used as a basis for three field events. These field days will demonstrate effective approaches to habitat management; assist community members to observe and monitor the bird life (and hence ecological health) of different places in their locality or on their properties; and help land managers design and implement biodiverse and functional habitat restoration activities.

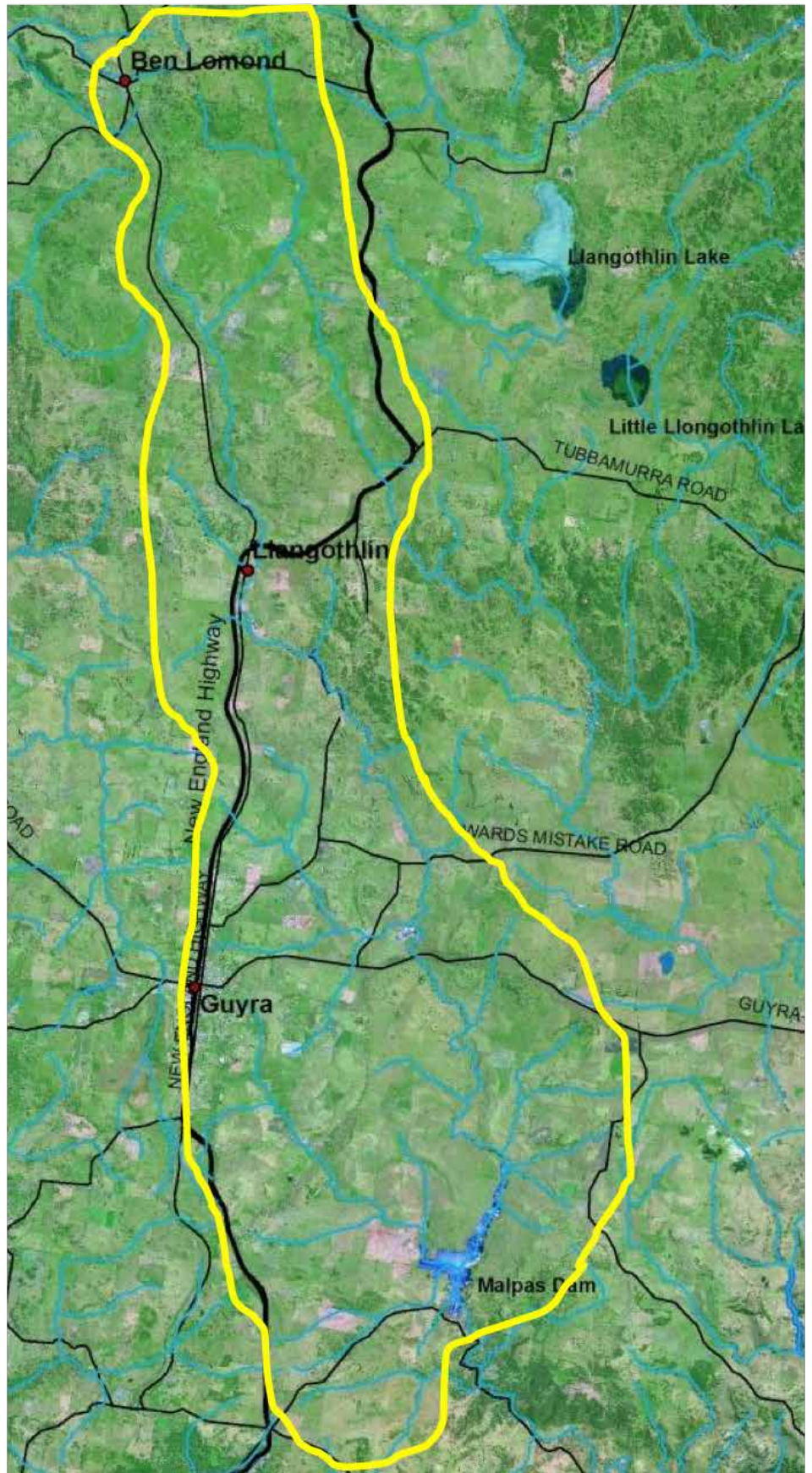
This is an exciting project which has the potential to give community members increased skills for planning, implementing and monitoring effective habitat restoration works.

Below - A Diamond Firetail, representing one of the threatened species targeted for support. Photo: Andrew Huggett.



During the last year of the project, a new plan was developed to identify, prioritise and guide the Malpas catchment project. The five-year plan identifies high priority actions and supporting

cooperative initiatives to improve water quality outcomes in the greater Malpas catchment. Over the next 12 months, SNELandcare seeks to work with groups or individual landholders



throughout the project area to improve catchment health and water quality.

How we manage our land directly influences the health of our waterways. Through changes in land management and on-ground works such as stock exclusion fencing and riparian (riverside) revegetation we can reduce erosion, nutrient and sediment input into streams. This in turn protects productive land from erosion, reduces the frequency and severity of algal blooms and improves stock management.

While one of the overarching objectives of the project is to improve water quality in creeks, rivers and dams, there are also significant biodiversity and production benefits to be gained. Protecting our waterways and revegetating riparian areas also improves habitat for fish, platypus and water birds and the aquatic organisms they feed on. Riparian corridors provide habitat and movement pathways for many species of native fauna and provide windbreaks and shelter for livestock.

Interested landholders from the Malpas Catchment area are encouraged to contact SNElandcare Administration Officer Struan Ferguson on 6779123 or mail@snelandcare.org.au to register their interest in attending future workshops or meetings.

Expression of interest forms for on-ground works such as stock exclusion fencing, riparian revegetation and weed control, off-stream watering and erosion control are also available from Struan or our website <https://snelandcare.org.au/resources/funding-assistance.html>.

Left - Malpas catchment is marked by the yellow border.

Right top and bottom - The Arding Church Hall was the venue for a 'full house' of participants planning for trees on small farms.

Trees on Small Farms

Native vegetation provides significant benefits for domestic livestock, native wildlife and ecosystem health... even on small farms.

SNElandcare is currently funding landholders on smaller (<200ha) properties in the Armidale, Guyra, Uralla and Walcha areas to plan and undertake revegetation projects that suit their individual needs, thanks to a partnership project with the Northern Tablelands LLS.

Successful applicants will:

- Revegetate using local provenance seed.
- Plant shelter belts or wind breaks with native trees and/or shrubs.
- Subsidise fencing to protect native vegetation.
- Connect remnant vegetation.
- Protect paddock trees and clump plantings.
- Plant scattered vegetation to form

landscape linkages.

- Plant wildlife corridors and riparian buffers.
- Improve habitat for threatened species.

SNElandcare and NT LLS staff recently ran a workshop for prospective applicants, where participants were provided with an updated farm map to help them plan their projects. Participants were also coached and mentored through the application process. Applications closed on 22nd September and will be assessed by late October 2017.

Successful applicants will be allocated one of our Agroforestry Peer Group Mentors to help them through their project over the next 18 months.

This project is part of the \$26.5 million of Catchment Action NSW investment that Local Land Services is delivering to enable better management of our water, soil, vegetation, biodiversity and cultural heritage.



Help with trees on farms

Need a sounding board or some help to support your revegetation ideas and goals?

The New England Agri-Woodland Network (NEAWN) - a subgroup of Southern New England Landcare, has a project where local experienced farmers and tree-growers are available to mentor other farmers on any aspect of growing trees on farms.

To date, more than a dozen New England landholders have taken advantage of the service, and here's what some of them have had to say:

"I now feel that I have a way forward and can develop a plan that will contribute to sustainability in ways that are aesthetically pleasing, adding value to the property, benefiting the environment, improving productivity and the flexibility to diversify". Silvia Danielli, "Boolaan Burra", Thalgarrah.

"The suggestions and guidance of what species to try, planting locations, when and in what season to plant, as well as planting designs have all been of tremendous value". Helen Hine and David Menzies, "Castlebrook", Salisbury Plains.

"The mentors passed on valuable insights about the diversity in my forest and helped me see it as a whole ecosystem. They also provided useful practical tips which filled out much of my own opinions on where to go with

its management." Rob Laurie, "Brigadoon", Nowendoc.

How it works

A key part of the service is the site visit where 2 or 3 local mentors visit a landholder's property. The visit focusses on your goals and how trees and shrubs (native or exotic) can be integrated to achieve those goals. A comprehensive

discussion usually results in many different and often innovative ideas.

A site report is then produced by the mentors reflecting the options and discussion that took place during the visit. A process for ongoing support is then established. The purpose of the mentor is to help ensure that any projects implemented by the landholder have the best

PEER GROUP MENTORING SERVICE FOR AGROFORESTRY

FARMER TO FARMER EXTENSION
FOR FARMERS MANAGING TREES FOR REASONS THAT MATTER TO THEM!

WHO ARE THE MENTORS?

- LOCAL EXPERIENCED TREE GROWERS
- MASTER TREEGROWER PROGRAM GRADUATES
- TRAINED MENTORS

WHAT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?

- FARM VISITS SUPPORT YOUR IDEAS & GOALS
- TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AND INFORMATION
- SITE REPORTS

WHAT TOPICS CAN BE COVERED?

- Shade and shelter
- Farm aesthetics
- Natives or exotics
- Tree establishment
- Habitat
- Farm tree planning
- Native forest management
- Species identification
- Trees for timber

HOW DO WE KNOW IT WORKS?

Most significant change techniques tell the story...

The suggestions and guidance of what species to try, planting locations, when and in what season to plant, as well as planting designs have all been of tremendous value. Helen Hine & David Menzies, Castlebrook, Thalia.

The mentors passed on valuable insights about the diversity in my forest and helped me see it as a whole ecosystem. They also provided useful practical tips which filled out much of my own opinions on where to go with its management. Rob Laurie, Brigadoon, Nowendoc.

WWW.SNELANDCARE.ORG.AU

A group of the New England Agri-woodland Network (NEAWN), a subgroup of Southern New England Landcare Ltd. This project is supported with funding from the Australian Government, and is also co-funded by the Australian Agri-woodland Foundation.

Logos: Master Treegrower, Australian Government, National Landcare, Southern New England Landcare, Australian Agri-woodland Foundation.

chance of success.

All mentors are local landholders who have been fully trained in the peer mentoring approach. They are also graduates of the Master Tree Grower Program and some have additional professional qualifications in various fields of NRM.

This approach was pioneered by the Otway Agroforestry Network who has been of great assistance to NEAWN. Its goal is to maximise farm productivity and diversity; increase knowledge and confidence in natural resource management; increase

community networking and continuous learning; increase the adoption of a “biological Infrastructure” on farms for expressed farm benefit; and retain long term local knowledge in farming systems.

More information

Anyone interested should contact Shane Andrews, the Agroforestry Project Coordinator, on 0427 753 808.

This project is supported with funding from the Australian Government, and in-kind contributions from the Australian Agroforestry Foundation.

Farm Tree Advisory Service

Would you like some help designing or establishing trees and shrubs for your property? Don't know where to start? What to plant? How to do it?

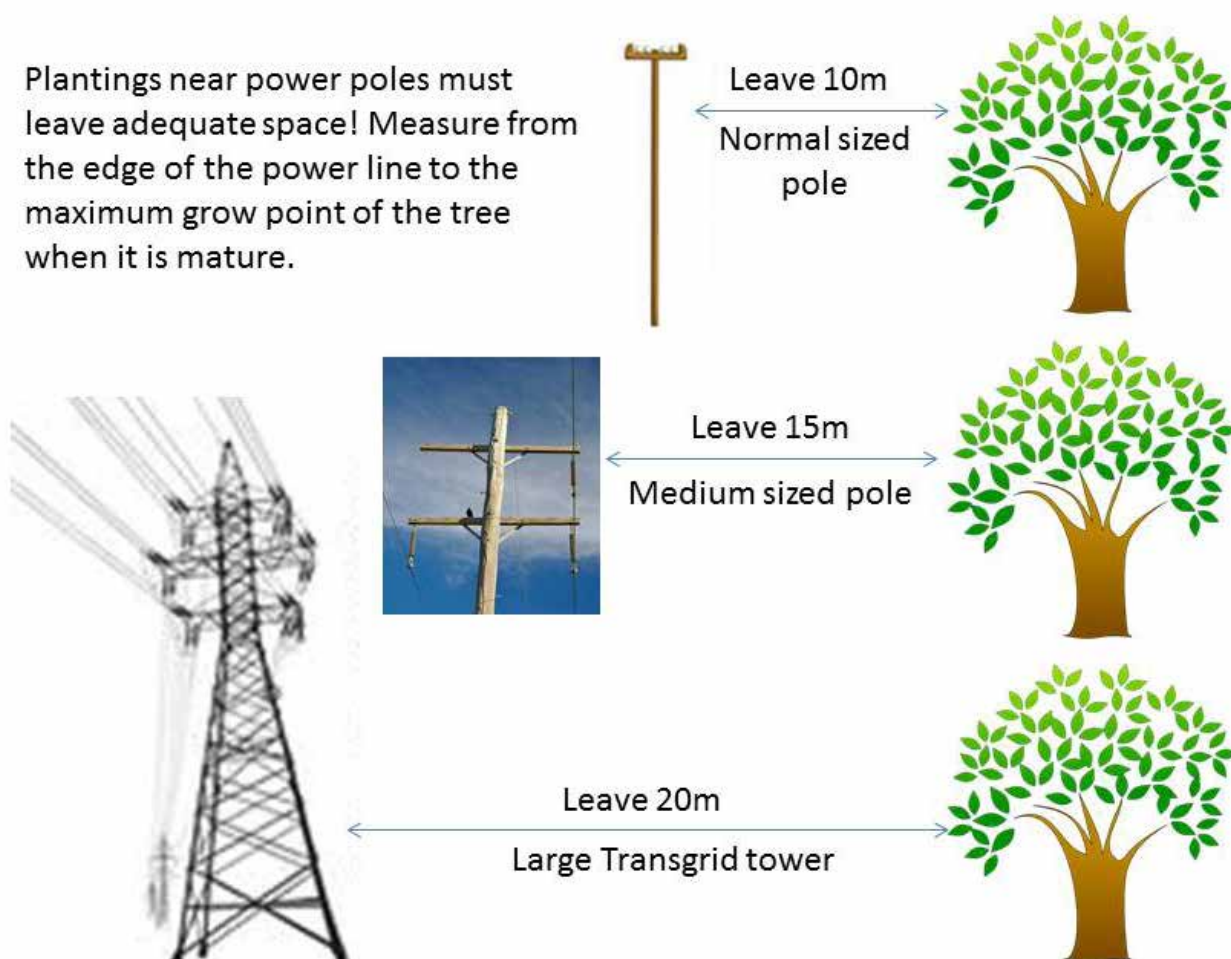
We can provide you with very experienced landholders and technical experts to assist you with your ideas and goals.

This service is available for a small fee as the project is heavily subsidised by the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

Beware power poles when planting!

Southern New England Landcare has had a friendly reminder from Essential Energy recently, regarding the distances required between landcare plantings and power lines. We have put together this diagram to illustrate to our members as a reminder! Note the distances required for different types of poles.

Plantings near power poles must leave adequate space! Measure from the edge of the power line to the maximum grow point of the tree when it is mature.



Opportunities for members

Beyond 2019: The future of Landcare in NSW

Landcare NSW is preparing a policy regarding how the NSW Government can support the growth and development of Landcare in NSW.

The policy will be presented to the Parliamentary Friends of Landcare on 14 November 2017 and inform discussions with the NSW Government about the future of the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative (LLCI), in partnership with Local Land Services.

Consultation Process Now Open

LNSW Council Members are invited to comment and discuss the policy in their communities. All feedback is welcome as LNSW wishes to ensure all Landcarer's opinions are heard. Our local LNSW Council Member is Steve Harvey, Dangarsleigh Landcare Group member, and Board member of SNELandcare.

The policy is broad and aims to make a case for continued NSW Government support for Landcare. Detailed changes to the next iteration of the LLCI are being worked out and there will be further discussion with Council about these, noting that we need to ensure future funding is allocated in the 2018 State Budget. Sonia Williams is working on this proposal in her State Landcare role.

Find the draft policy statement at <http://landcarensw.org.au/representation/consultation/>. Please feel free to discuss the contents with Steve Harvey, greenway@bluepin.net.au. You can submit your comments on the draft to Leigh McLaughlin on lmclaughlin@landcarensw.org.au.

State Landcare Conference subsidies available

SNELandcare has made available three subsidies to the value of \$550 (the cost of conference registration) to the first three Southern New England Landcare members who would like to attend the State Landcare and LLS Conference and Awards in Albury from 25-27 October 2017.

Conference details can be found at <http://nswlandcareconference.com.au/>. Keep up to date at the Conference Facebook page.

To take advantage of the subsidy, members must contact our office as soon as possible to express their interest, phone 02 6772 9123. First in first served. We will arrange and pay for your conference registration once we have all your details. You will be responsible for the cost of your travel and accommodation.

Locals we know of who are already registered to attend include SNELandcare president David Henderson from Guyra, SNELandcare Local Landcare Coordinators Karen Zirkler (Kentucky) and Sara Schmude (Armidale), as well as Bec Smith (Guyra) who will also be representing Award Finalists, Armidale High School's Black Creek Bush Care group BC², at the Awards Dinner.

Why not join us for some fun-filled days connecting, learning and sharing?

**FLIGHT
CENTRE®**

**Book with Sylvia Hobbs to
sponsor SNELandcare valued at
1% of your booking!**

02 6771 5474

sylvia.hobbs@flightcentre.com.au

Digital Mastery workshop a winner

Southern New England Landcare recently hosted Greg Alder, master of digital marketing and social media to run a workshop in Uralla.

The workshop provided community groups, board members, business owners and the community in general with an opportunity skill-up in new ways to innovate, communicate, learn and share. The workshop also helped participants better-connect with their members and customers.

"We targeted members of landcare, sports or other community groups, as well as local businesses, to attend," said Karen Zirkler, Executive Officer with Southern New England Landcare.

"Participants found out how they could improve their online and social media profile, and increase their confidence using these platforms to better engage with their audiences," she said.

Do I need social media? Why do some social media posts go viral? What are Facebook ads and how do I create one? How do I get more fans? Is Facebook good for business? How do I handle negative comments? What should I share on social media?

Participants got hands-on with these aspects of social media and digital marketing.

Greg Alder has handled brand communications for famous brands around the world. His company manages more than 50 social media profiles for clients.

Anyone wishing to do a similar workshop should register their interest at our office on 6772 9123.

Young farm planners from O'Connor awarded at AgQuip

The future of agriculture is bright with the enthusiasm and vision of young Northern Tablelands agriculture students, recognised for their innovation at the 2017 Local Land Services Schools Property Planning Competition awards presentation at AgQuip today.

NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Lands and Water, The Hon. Niall Blair congratulated and presented awards to the winners of the school-based competition, celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

The Local Land Services Schools Property Planning Competition gives high school agriculture students first-hand experience in investigating the real-life challenges faced by local farmers. It provides an avenue for the youth of our region to develop practical skills in agriculture and encourages students to pursue a career in agriculture.

The Northern Tablelands competition field day attracted over 100 students from eight regional schools to the Turnham family's property 'Waratah' at Guyra in March. Students assessed soils, pastures, biosecurity, biodiversity and water quality.

Participating schools sent in their two best property plans for the final judging, which considered improvements to natural resources balanced with a productive, profitable business.

The Grand Champion for the North West and Northern Tablelands region and winner of the Wallaroi Perpetual Shield was the team of Josh Liepens and Charlie Shadwell of Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, Tamworth. They were supported by teacher Laura Tolley.

O'Connor Catholic College student team of Brody Hoffman, Charlotte Wade, Mitchell Jones and Lachlan Patricks received honours as the Northern Tablelands Region Champion and Winner of the Leanne Savage Perpetual Shield, with support from teacher Janet Price.

Fellow O'Connor College classmate Nicholas Graham earned Runner-Up for the Northern Tablelands Region.

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services Senior Land Services Officer - Farm Planning, Kim Deans said it was rewarding to see the students make the connection between a healthy natural resource

base and a productive, profitable farm business.

"That's our farm planning course key focus, and that's what we look for in their entries," said Kim.

"Winning entries are innovative, but realistic as well. It really does stretch the students to apply farm planning principles to an actual working farm, and it gives them real world skills so it's a valuable thing for them to do", said Kim.

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services wishes to thank the University of New England, Regional Development Australia – Northern Inland and the NSW Department of Primary Industries Schools Program for their support of the 2017 Schools Property Planning Competition.

Below L-R - Laiton Turnham from Waratah, Guyra, winning students from O'Connor Catholic College Brody Hoffman, Lachlan Patricks, O'Connor Catholic College Ag teacher Janet Price, Mitchell Jones and Charlotte Wade, NSW Minister for Primary Industries Niall Blair, Sally Strelitz from UNE and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services board member Tim Norton.



If undeliverable return to Southern New England Landcare,
Suite 10, 128 Beardy Street, PO Box 85, Armidale 2350.
Tel 02 6772 9123, mail@snelandcare.org.au.

Landchat
Print Post Approved
PP 255003/09214



Southern
New England
Landcare

PRINT
POST

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

Landchat

Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 111, July - September 2017



Southern
New England
Landcare



Australian Government

National
Landcare
Programme



Acknowledgements

Southern New England Landcare is supported by: the NSW Government's Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative, supported through the partnership of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW; 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; Flight Centre Armidale; 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.



Need Insurance

for your farm, equipment, car or household?

We recommend Wesfarmers Federation Insurance, 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 SNElandcare to support projects!
Contact David de Ferranti on 02 6722 1755.



Local Land
Services
Northern Tablelands



ARMIDALE
Regional Council

regionalaustraliabank