

# Landchat

*Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 108, April - June 2016*



Southern  
New England  
**Landcare**

Our **MISSION** is to lead, connect and enable our communities to achieve their sustainability goals.

Contact US by phone 02 6772 9123 or  
email [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au)

## August Member Meeting

All members of Landcare are invited, feel free to bring an interested friend.

6:30pm, Wednesday 17th August 2016 in  
**WALCHA.**

Venue to be confirmed - watch e-News and  
[www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au).

Please RSVP by  
Friday 12th August 2016  
for catering purposes  
Tel 6772 9123,  
[mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au)  
[www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au)



*Arding Landcare Group's Sunday Sausage Sizzle brought Arding locals together for some catch-up with their ketchup!*

## Arding Landcare is Good to Go Again

Congratulations to Arding Landcare Group Inc for getting up and re-inventing themselves. With new land owners in the area, a good sense of community and local issues needing attention Arding Landcare is happening again.

A wetland day at Little Llangothlin Lagoon back in February gave Chris and David Duncan, from near Thomas Lagoon at Arding, a chance to meet up with Southern New England Landcare (SNELC) and Northern Tablelands LLS staff to discuss getting Arding Landcare going and sort out 'what next for Thomas Lagoon'.

Thomas Lagoon has been the site for much work by the Arding Landcare Group in the past. So, since February the Group's new office bearers have dug out old management plans, photos and ideas for the Lagoon. In addition, the Group have been working with NTLLS staff who have gathered existing technical information together into a new working document to help guide future management of Thomas Lagoon.

Arding Landcare is incorporated in their own right but having ensured they are 'Affiliate Members' of SNELC they have been able to access assistance from SNELC staff. With the help of fliers for mail boxes and the Invergowrie store, new posters, a meeting ad and membership form the Group's executive have held a free sausage sizzle at the Invergowrie store and a group meeting at the Arding Church Hall.

Now, with some new group members and ideas for future social events and fundraisers, the Group is looking to continue their management of Thomas Lagoon and the upgrading of the local reserve to create Arding Park.

Well done to Arding Landcare and here's to steady progress! If you would like to join in somehow with the Arding Landcare Group's activities call Christine (6775 3285) or Brian (6775 3249). If you would like to get some other group together call the SNELC office on 6772 9123.

## Leo Apthorpe - a Landcare Legend

Sadly we say goodbye to a man who loved his trade. Leo, aged 69, died after a fatal accident whilst he was lopping a tree on Thursday 2nd June.

Leo was 69 and over the years involved many times in various Landcare projects including Uralla Rivercare Group, works for HiCub and other groups. Leo was a hard working man with a smile to remember. Leo will be surely missed.

Our thoughts go to his family Michelle & Bill Dexter, Jamie and their grandchildren.

We wish them comfort, peace, and many happy memories of Leo to get them through this difficult time.

## Landcare Adventure Rescheduled – SAVE THE DATE 4th & 5th May 2017

The New England North West Landcare Adventure has been rescheduled to run every second year. As a result the 2016 Landcare Adventure has been postponed until 4th & 5th May 2017. So save the date!

The 2017 Landcare Adventure will focus on the theme “Smart Tools, Smart Farm, Smart Town” and will offer something for everyone for the farm to the plate, paddock to town, old to new. Prepare to be inspired.

## Sustaining Landcare

Many of you may have read the introductory article on the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative in the last issue of Landchat. Under the NSW Government’s 2015-2019 Landcare Support Program (\$15 million funding) the NSW Government and Landcare NSW established three elements to underpin our long term future:

1. The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative - a network of 66 part-time Local Coordinators hosted by community organisations to support volunteer activity across NSW.
2. A ‘Community of Practice’ - providing community Landcare Coordinators and their host organisations with information, training and examples and support for best practice.
3. Sustaining Landcare – a project to develop an independent and sustainable funding model for long term support of the volunteer effort.

Landcarers now have an opportunity to contribute to part 3 – Sustaining Landcare. An independent and sustainable funding model is needed for the structures which support Landcare groups. This will enable volunteers to concentrate on carrying out activities that benefit the environment, agriculture and local communities: the reason they became involved in Landcare in the first place.

Just as Surf Life Saving, Rural Fire Service or State Emergency Service need professional support to allow them to focus on the important work they do as

volunteers, so too does Landcare. Sustaining Landcare recognises that the current NSW Government funding program is finite and that by 2019, a planned transition to a sustainable model to support the work of volunteer Landcare groups is necessary.

Landcare NSW has developed an information sheet, discussion guide and FAQs on the topic of Sustaining Landcare which I urge you all to look over. Your opinions, ideas and feedback are critical to the success of the Sustaining Landcare project.

<http://landcarensw.org.au/partnerships/sustaining-landcare/>

Ideas, suggestions, comments and feedback from the Landcare community are welcome. Please talk about the issues raised in this paper at your meetings, in your groups, amongst your friends and colleagues, and in your communities. You can convey your input via a number of means:

- Talk to your local Landcare NSW councillor. You can find who represents your area by visiting the Landcare NSW website <http://landcarensw.org.au/about-us/council-members-2/> In the SNE Landcare region, this is Steve Harvey of Dangarsleigh Landcare Group.

- Send an email with your responses and ideas to [sustaininglandcare@landcarensw.org.au](mailto:sustaininglandcare@landcarensw.org.au)

## 'All the Dirt III' delivers from the grass roots up

From classroom to paddock, woolshed to ute 'All the Dirt III' is helping land managers of the Malpas Catchment and Guyra areas to develop their understandings of local soils and the relationship between inputs, outputs, livestock management and overall productivity.

'All the Dirt III' is about building knowledge for resilient, sustainable soil management and began in Spring 2015 when 15 landholders met as a large group to get the low-down on the physical, chemical and biological properties of soils. Discussions on soil carbon, especially liquid and organic forms of carbon, and microbial bridges providing soil-plant nutrition followed on, as well as considerations of soil ameliorants, livestock management and production.

Small groups, led by Derek and Fiona Smith of Working for Nature, then visited individual participants' properties to collect soil, pasture and feed samples for analysis. With the results of these analyses and the generosity of course participants the landholders have recently completed visits to each others' properties where they have shared their working knowledge and approaches to and ideas on soil, pasture and stock management.

In small groups or between individuals there has been open, useful and inspirational sharing and learning. 'All the Dirt III' participants have been able to analyse their resource base, increase their knowledge and develop ideas to make management changes to improve their soils, pastures and animal production for the long-term.

Participants will reconvene as a large group to compare and share results of soil and plant analyses, and workshop experiences and learnings. Although the project concludes at the end of June 2016 it will have a continuing impact as participant's adjust their management practices and further develop their grazing production systems.

'All the Dirt III' has been a very worthwhile project under the Federal Government's 25th Anniversary of Landcare Grants 2014-15 Program.



*'All the Dirt III' participants shared and learnt from each other in many ways and different settings.*

## New England Agri-Woodlands Network Set to Continue

During 2015-16 a successful Master TreeGrowers course was run by SNELC, with funding from the Australian Agroforestry Foundation. In addition, a group of Peer Group Mentors (PGMs) were trained and have been supporting landholders developing plans to begin growing trees and other plant products commercially, or to look at strategic ways to manage woody vegetation.

Committed interest saw the establishment of The New England Agri-Woodlands Network (NEAWN), a group affiliated with SNELC, get established. Now, NEAWN is set to continue.

PGMs will continue to work with landholders who approach the Group for support to develop agri-woodland projects or activities. In addition, another Master Tree Growers course will begin after 30th June 2016.

### INTERESTED?

**Give the SNELC office a call on 6772 9123 or email us at [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au)**



# Are You Good For a Chat?

It seems as if we are all too busy just getting through the day and doing what needs to be done. But it doesn't have to be like that.

Southern New England Landcare's Stock 'n' Chat stands at the Guyra Saleyards have been welcomed by local sheep and lamb sale-goers, each month for the last four months. The free BBQ at each Stock 'n' Chat has provided opportunities for rural people to take a break and share conversation, information and support with each other.



*Guyra Sheep and Lamb Sale attendees take a Stock 'n' Chat break to socialise and support each other.*

Information was also available at each BBQ, 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.

And, according to John Harper (wheat and sheep farmer from southern NSW) in his discussions on depression at Glen Innes, Inverell and Uralla, we can all make time for our mates. Look at them, listen to them and let someone know if they aren't doing OK. Don't wait for someone else to organise the BBQ!

The Guyra Stock 'n' Chats were funded through The Ascent Group, under the Australian Government's Drought Support Package. Special thanks also go to Mark Atkin and the combined agents, as well as Joy, Narelle and Errol for their support of this series of events.

And John Harper visited the New England region thanks to The Ascent Group and NSW Carers.



## Bringing creativity to your life and your business with BizreBoot

Are you one of the 5% of business owners (yes, that includes farmers and graziers) who devote regular time to letting your thoughts run wild and allow some creative thinking? What innovative ideas or creations have you come up with or even tried?

Do you give yourself regular opportunities to continue or pick up a hobby? Fishing, knitting, welding, walking in the bush, playing some music, woodwork? Expressing our own individual creativity provides for relaxation, recreation, more satisfaction (even happiness), inspiration and the chance for innovative ideas and techniques to be born.

Creativity and innovation are not only linked to satisfaction, inspiration and happiness but also to innovative marketing and business success. Isn't that what 'value adding' is all about?

Southern New England Landcare staff are currently involved in a series of 'BizreBoot' Innovation workshops, run by the Armidale Business Chamber's Series and sponsored by Armidale Regional Council.

You and your Landcare group are invited to develop your own ideas, creativity and innovative potential by utilising the opportunities and new skills offered to you through our Landcare Groups and Landcare-promoted events. If you want to kick-start your group but need some help with 'how', give us a call at the SNELC office on 6772 9123 or email us at [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au)



# Big changes to Southern New England Landcare

From 1st July 2016, Southern New England Landcare Coordinating Committee Inc will wind up as an organisation, and hand over management of all the affairs of landcare in our region to Southern New England Landcare Ltd. In some ways it's the end of an era, but it also heralds a fresh outlook for landcare in our region after several years of 'doing it tough'.

For anyone who has attended a quarterly SNELCC meeting over the last 12 months, you will have already been a part of the decision-making process about these changes.

Having one organisation instead of two will bring efficiencies to our bookkeeping, auditing process and administrative procedures. At the same time, we are updating our communications methods, our website and our membership subscriptions!

And, while the hard working team of SNELCC Inc group reps, executive members, board and staff are trying to make this process as seamless as possible, there will be a few changes we hope our members DO notice!

## **Membership distinctions**

The constitution of Southern New England Landcare Ltd allows for two classes of members:

1. Non-voting members – those who wish to join the organisation and get the benefits of membership e.g. insurance coverage, newsletters and more.
2. Voting members – those who identify with a particular landcare or interest group, and are endorsed by that group as a voting member of the organisation. The group will also be "ratified" as Southern New England Landcare group. Groups receive communications about choosing their voting member in the latter half of each year.

## **Membership subscriptions go online**

New and current member subscriptions will now be done online at our new website [www.snelandcare.org.au](http://www.snelandcare.org.au) where several types of membership package options are detailed and payments can be made through the very secure PayPal option.

Current members will receive one last membership renewal notice in the mail in the coming weeks with details about how to renew via the website. Once you renew online, you will be reminded by our website annually to renew your subscription.

If you experience any difficulties signing up or renewing your membership, please contact us for help on 6772 9123 or drop in and we'll help you do it online.

## **Member benefits**

Members now have access to a range of services to benefit them:

- Subsidised entry to Southern New England Landcare events
- Group support and co-ordination via one of our Landcare Coordinators
- Access to the Expression of Interest process to be in line to receive funding support for on-ground works
- Hire of landcare and field day equipment (e.g. mower, spray unit, planting tools) at cheap rates
- Free participation in Quarterly Member Meetings
- Free access to the Landcare Resource Centre with library, WiFi, meeting room, and kitchen (bookings required for the meeting room)
- Fee-for-Service opportunities such as vegetation assessment, farm planning, and digital mapping
- Participation in any offers that are made by our partners and sponsors

## **Group pages on website**

Groups will notice they have access to a page of their own on our new website! But we need a 'banner' picture to load up to make your page look good. Please send high resolution pictures to [karen.zirkler@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:karen.zirkler@snelandcare.org.au) and she will arrange to have them loaded.

Ultimately, your page can be accessed by a nominated group member so that the group has control over what gets published and your group can be regularly updated on activities. First of all, groups should nominate their member, and then call us to arrange a time to get them started. If you would prefer a team member at the office to update your page for you, please call us on 6772 9123.

## **Meetings**

The quarterly SNELCC Inc meetings of group representatives will transform to Quarterly Member Meetings of group reps (the voting members) *cont.*

*cont from previous page.*

and any other interested members.

The focus will be on learning, sharing, socialising, and informing the board on important issues of relevance to landcare in our region when necessary.

The Board will be elected, as usual, from the voting members at the AGM each year. The Board's role is decision-making, direction and management of the organisation, ensuring that administrative requirements are met, and participating at various activities as a representative of our organisation. Board members attend the Quarterly Member Meetings as well as several additional Board meetings each year.

### **Big changes to newsletters**

If you would like to begin or continue to receive our digital E-NEWS which is distributed monthly via email, you will need to sign up to it via the new website (bottom left of front page). You do not need to be a member to do this. E-news lists coming events and opportunities.

After 1st July 2016, the quarterly LANDCHAT will be produced in electronic format, and will only be available as a downloadable document to members and partners

of our organisation once logged in at the website. Hard copies of Landchat will no longer be mailed out after July 2016, unless you are a member and have made arrangements to receive a hard copy. Landchat will continue to showcase the wonderful achievements of our members and organisation.

These changes will mean fewer, regular, comprehensive newsletters meaning less clutter in your inbox and cost efficiencies for your member organisation.

These are big changes but they mean that Southern New England Landcare will be better able to assist those keen to develop or support sustainable production enterprises and ecological systems.

Please don't hesitate to contact or visit us if you have any questions or would like a Landcare Coordinator to help you use the website, sign up or renew your membership, or access any other member opportunities.

You can phone us on 6772 9123, email us at [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au) or visit the office at Level 1, 119 Beardy St (East Mall). It's best to make an appointment as we are only open 9am-3pm, Tuesday to Thursday and sometimes have field day commitments.

## **Ag 'n' Chat Launches at Walcha**

Southern New England Landcare's Ag 'n' Chat launched at Walcha on a nice rainy night at the end of May. And no one minded the sound of the rain over our guests' voices as we sat snug in the Walcha Bowling Club.

Donna and Lewis Perkins from Ballandean shared their family farming story with the 20 or so people who came along from Wollun, Yarrawitch-Tia, Walcha Road and Uralla. The Perkins family have been farming in the Ballandean-Stanthorpe area since the late 1800s and today their enterprises are supporting three generations concurrently.



*Ag 'n' Chat attendees enjoy inspiration from someone else's farm, a chat and time to relax.*

What do you do when a bush fire of 800°C destroys your orchards? How can you save \$1400 a day in freighting your produce to the markets? Why stay at school if you can take up useful training and grow top produce for Australian consumption? Who can match this family's success at attaining 5% carbon in the soils where they grow tomatoes and capsicums? Have you benefited from the great work ethic and marriage opportunities offered by overseas backpackers supporting Australian agriculture? And managing your business so there is space for business expansion and diversification as well as competitive sport, weekends away and time with your family.

The Ag 'n' Chat evening was filled with inspiration, a chance to catch up with friends, meet new people and not have to cook dinner. Getting our Ag 'n' Chat events begun has been possible thanks to funding provided by The Ascent Group, under the Australian Government's Drought Support Package.

We plan to continue Ag 'n' Chat within Southern New England, so if you have suggestions about what you would like to be inspired by give Ruth a call at the SNELC office on 6772 9123 or email us at [mail@snelandcare.org.au](mailto:mail@snelandcare.org.au)



# Urban Landcare Update

## A big congratulations to Armidale Urban Rivercare

The Armidale Rivercare Group has been successful in obtaining a grant valued at \$83,700 from the NSW Environmental Trust for the restoration and rehabilitation of Dumaresq Creek adjacent to Centennial Avenue in Armidale. The project will add significantly to the revegetation of riparian zones which in turn will add to the connectivity of wildlife corridors throughout Armidale. 'Native vegetation is almost non-existent in this section of the creeklands' say Bryan Johnson group spokesperson,

'but the project will link previously completed well established showcase plantings to the east with extensive stepping stone plantings towards the centre of Armidale'. The money will primarily be used to clear a thick infestation of weeds from 32,000m<sup>2</sup> of creekland and replant with a diverse mix of vegetation that has been used by Rivercare to transform other areas of the creek. The group is particularly happy to receive this amount as it is a reflection of the many years they have devoted to improving our urban waterways. Again congratulations & here's to the community getting behind the monthly working bees starting in August.

## The formation of 2 new groups has Urban Landcare excited about the prospects of new ideas & projects

**BC<sup>2</sup>** - Black Creek BushCare is a group of year 7-11 Armidale High School students keen to tackle the restoration of the riparian zone along Black Gully from Manna Gums reserve to Armidale Tree Group.

Only newly ratified within the SNEL network they have already developed an action plan & have undertaken a weed identification session. This Tuesday sees the group of 16 alongside members of their school community (teachers & parents included) engage in some serious weed removal – key species such as pyracantha, broom, privet, blackberry & poplars will be in the firing line!

A special thanks to Bec Smith for her dedication to engaging the students in works of great benefit to both the environment and our community. Future plans for the group entail a Landcare Australia funded revegetation project located below the Aboriginal Keeping Place and a series of activities with UNE's AgExtension students.

Success of their works will be showcased at the upcoming Frog Dreaming gathering in October.

**The People's Park Group** – a collective of community minded locals working together to maintain HiCub's biodiversity sites using chemical free methods.

The main focus of their activities are on a site known by many names including the Bowlo/Clontarf site, HiCub site 9, the Avellis Ellery site & the kidney bean! 'We have labelled it affectionately as the People's Park site in honour of the late Avellis Ellery who had a preference for remaining unrecognised for her enduring commitment to making the world a better place' says group spokesperson Helen Webb.

Over the past 2 months the group has primarily utilised paper and mulch to suppress weed emergence with great

results. They have found many helpers - from people passing by, to the Bowlo's Phil Wheaton & his group of Clontarf kids, to a regular commitment from the locals & their families.

Coupled with weed management the group have planted out over 850 (including donations from the Bowlo) species of lomandra, dianella, bursaria and leptospermum. Future plans include a provision for a 'what's coming up' sign & exploring the use of steam to control weeds on the mowline.

If anyone is interested in becoming involved in the group you could come by Helen or Bob just passing by the site which is located along the bike path adjacent to Dumaresq Ck on the corner of Douglas & Jeffrey St OR contact Sara at the landcare office / [sara.schmude@snelandcare.com.au](mailto:sara.schmude@snelandcare.com.au).

## Sheepdog training and Soil fertility workshops

29/06/16 | Glen Innes | 'Truro', Cnr of Strathbogie & Wellingrove Rd, Glen Innes

13/07/16 | Walcha | 'Miramoona', Thunderbolts Way, Walcha

20/07/16 | Guyra | 'Urandangie', Urandangie Road, Guyra

03/08/16 | Gravesend | 'Amarula', 196 Avon Downs Rd, Gravesend

10/08/16 | Barraba | 'Bareela', 1316 Trevallyn Road, Barraba

17/08/16 | Aberfoyle | 'Mt William', Aberfoyle Rd, Aberfoyle

# How Is Your Project Going?

The recent change in seasons have brought the first frosts, a sure sign that summer pastures are making way for cool season species. Recent rains have been welcome and provide a good opportunity to begin cool season jobs such as fencing, spraying and ripping in preparation for next spring's vegetation plantings.

It is always good to hear of the progress of these activities from landholders around the region. Some of our recently funding projects have had a slow start due to the especially dry conditions over Autumn and it is particularly pleasing to hear that many of these have now commenced. Both projects were funded by the NSW Environmental Trust.

The Quollity Koala Corridors and Questions (ET QKC) is one such project with 12 participants engaged in property enhancement works such as fencing remnant vegetation, planting new vegetation areas, and introducing new management systems for livestock grazing. The project is due for completion in June, 2017 so participants have a good planting window from October to March, weather dependent of course.

Another revegetation and Farm Biodiversity project is the "Moths, Magpies and Marsupials" (ET MMM) project due for completion in June this year. The project has to date established 13860 seedlings, 17.4 hectares of key revegetated plant communities, 305 hectares of managed remnant vegetation and 9.85 kilometres of new fencing. With a couple of projects still to be completed, the "Moths, Magpies and Marsupials" project has provided great results for revegetation in southern New England.

SNELCC are always keen to hear from participants and are more than happy to answer any questions and provide technical advice for your projects and project proposals. Remember the best way to get a project underway is to contact us with an Expression of Interest, available from the [www.snelandcare.com.au](http://www.snelandcare.com.au) website or at our office; 3/119 Beardy street Armidale (opposite Hanna's). Also, send in any photos of proposed project sites and site works (and keep copies for your own records). Not only is this important for project progress recording but it also helps us in providing assistance if asked and 'keeps us in the loop'.



*ET MMM Remnant vegetation area, Enmore.*



*ET MMM Revegetation project, Dumaresq.*



## Angophora Bushland Reserve an Outdoor Classroom

Congratulations to Friends of Angophora Bushland Reserve on the success of their application, via Armidale Dumaresq Council, for the reserve at the corner of Burgess Street and Bona Vista Road to be officially named Angophora Bushland Reserve, as of 20th May 2016. Well done for initiating and persevering with the Group's goals of returning this area to native grassy woodland.

And not only have Friends of Angophora Bushland been attending to paper work but their native vegetation restoration efforts continue to be good enough for senior high school students from the Coffs Harbour Education Campus to visit as part of their Environmental Science course. A group visited in May 2015 and a second group spent time in the Reserve on 3rd June 2016.

Student groups heard about the goals and work of the Friends of

Angophora Bushland Reserve, direct from Group members. The students then looked around the Reserve to see for themselves how the Group has been removing woody weeds, re-establishing native trees and shrubs and is reducing the biomass of competitive introduced pasture grasses.

There was time to appreciate the long-term nature of bushland restoration work and to appreciate that some things just haven't been tried before. So experiments do happen 'for real', and not just in laboratories, and adaptive management is not just a lot of jargon.

*Senior students from Coffs Harbour Education Campus participate in hands-on learning and native vegetation restoration work at Angophora Bushland Reserve, Armidale.*

To top off their morning the students revealed their interest and focus by putting in half an hour of restoration work, somewhat akin to the Bradley Method they had been studying.

Thanks go to Matt Mackenzie from Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre for facilitating these student visits and encouraging the Friends of Angophora Reserve in their ongoing efforts.



*Landchat - Landcare in Southern New England*



# Southern New England Landcare Lands \$183,700 for Local Projects

Media Release, Adam Marshall MP

31 May 2016

AFTER some financial turbulence over the last two years, Southern New England Landcare (SNEL) has bounced back in 2016 with the receipt of around \$230,000 in grants in the past few weeks.

The organisation heard late last week that two of its projects, relating to the environmental restoration of farmland and Armidale's Dumaresq Creek, have been awarded a combined \$183,700 by the State Government's NSW Environmental Trust.

SNEL chief executive Karen Zirkler said the funds have given the grassroots organisation some clear air to operate in over the next 18 months.

Northern Tablelands MP Adam Marshall announced the funding and applauded the news that SNEL was financially back on its feet.

"Landcare is as much about community as it is about environment, and governments need to support the viability of both," Mr Marshall said.

"Landcare has evolved to be a highly diverse, community-based, hands-on environmental movement that represents a terrific investment for government money.

"Every taxpayer dollar invested in Landcare typically attracts many more dollars in donated capital and in-kind work from landholders and the army of volunteers that supports the Landcare enterprise.

"SNEL's farmland restoration project is likely to cost between \$400,000 and \$500,000, of which the government has only had to contribute \$99,998 to get the ball rolling."

Mr Marshall acknowledged the NSW Environmental Trust, which has been an important source of funding for SNEL.

"I thank the Environment Minister for providing the continuity of funding that means SNEL can pursue multi-year projects. Continuity is absolutely vital for building environmental and community capital," he said.

The Trust awarded \$99,998 to SNEL's "Closing the Gap" project, which aims to build native vegetation corridors across the 25 km between Dangars Falls and Mount Butler.

The work will link the Eastern Falls forest with the woodlands running down the western spine of the Great Divide.

SNEL project officer Ruth Tremont said the corridors will be designed to support movement by 15 important indicator bird species, koalas and the spotted quoll.

Another \$83,700 was awarded to the Armidale Urban Rivercare Group to continue its work of transforming the city's central creeklands from what Ms Tremont called a "grass desert" to a richly biodiverse living waterway.

The fund will be used to clear a thick infestation of weeds from 32,000 square metres of creekland near Douglas Street, and replant it with the diverse mix of vegetation that has been used to transform other areas of the creek.

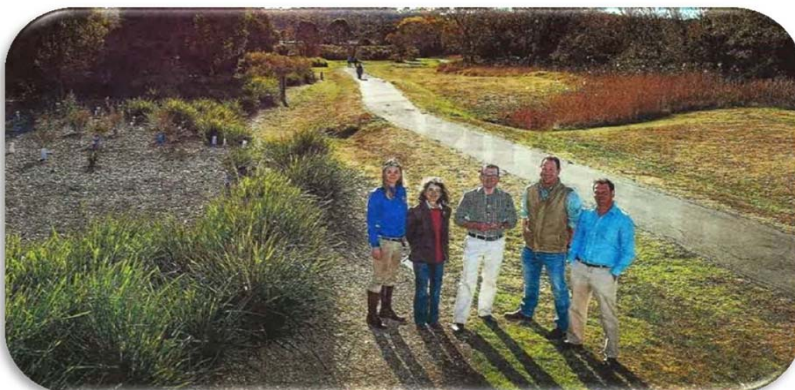
Ms Tremont acknowledged the essential work of volunteers, who have put in thousands of unpaid hours to manage the creekland plantings and keep them free of weeds.

SNEL was also recently awarded \$54,982 from the Federal Government for a second round of its Master Treegrowers agroforestry project.

The project will be followed by further development of the Peer Group Mentoring program started in the first round. Peer-to-peer education is part of SNEL's ongoing re-invention of itself.

Last year's financial crisis provoked an internal examination of the organisation, Ms Zirkler said, and how it functions in a world where funding models are shifting and "community" is no longer defined merely by geography.

Its success to date in the 2016 funding rounds, and a resurgence of interest in Landcare from its grassroots base, are promising signs that SNEL's new direction will bear fruit.



*Southern New England Landcare (SNEL) co-ordinator Sara Schmude, left, SNEL senior co-ordinator Ruth Tremont, Northern Tablelands MP Adam Marshall, SNEL project officer Des Andersen and SNEL rural co-ordinator Charlie Carruthers discuss the before-and-after rehabilitation work on Armidale's Dumaresq Creek.*

# Icy weather doesn't deter keen landholders for Woodland Bird Tour

May 27th 2016 saw an Antarctic welcome to Stage 1 of the 2016 Woodland Bird Tour. After an auspicious start with early sun and relative warmth, the weather quickly turned bitter with icy winds picking up from the south west and enough force to ensure woodland birds mostly stayed secured in woodland habitat.

Despite the uninspiring weather, 20 keen landholders turned up and were interested to learn more from Dr Andrew Huggett, an ornithologist and the day's facilitator. Andrew has extensive expertise in the habitats, behaviours and ultimately the survival of woodland birds and has worked with Landcare networks and the Local Land Services. The Woodland Bird Tour focussed on building the knowledge of landholders to assist them plan their farm revegetation. Emphasis was given to ensuring managed vegetation has both the extent and structural qualities for woodland birds to survive. The group toured a number of private properties in the Uralla district to sample various planted and remnant vegetation areas. During the tour our facilitator led discussions on the critical functions of woodland vegetation as determined by the size, composition and design of timbered areas, to benefit both agriculture and woodland birds as habitat users.

A key point from the tour was that interconnected woodland areas are critical for woodland birds to move about and forage in for food. In fact, many of our local woodland birds require specific and varied habitat such as dense and closely linked vegetation areas for refuge, shrubs for shelter and foraging (robins, thornbills and wrens), flowering trees (honeyeaters) or mature trees for browsing (brown treecreepers). The size (vegetation corridors need to be at least 5 rows wide) and distance between vegetation (<200m) are also critical in providing shelter for smaller birds moving between larger remnant areas and other woodland vegetation without predation.

The day concluded with a cold but happy group of humans seeking shelter in their respective habitats. There was much appreciation expressed for the contributions of Andrew Huggett, Tim Bower, Greg Munsie and Gordon and Wendy Williams, and the NTLLS.

A second Woodland Bird Tour is planned for warmer weather in November or December, 'watch this space' for more details to come.



*Andrew Huggett outlines the day's objectives.*



*Gordon Williams shares his experience planting trees on Eastlake.*



*The Tour began at CSIRO with Andrew Eichorn providing a history of tree plantings on the property.*



# Choppers, landholders and GPS collars in wild dog campaign

## Media Release

Department of Primary Industries and Local Land Services, 6th June 2016

More than 100,000 baits have been dropped by helicopter and landholders have laid 10,000 ground baits as part of the 2016 annual Wild Dog Aerial and Ground Baiting Campaign across the Walcha, Armidale, Glen Innes and Tenterfield districts.

New GPS technology supports the local management campaign by tracking wild dogs with daily uploads of movement data available online to provide solid insights into wild dog behaviour.

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services worked with government agencies, including State Forests and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, contracting helicopters to drop baits along strategically planned lines on private and public land.

The first baits were delivered at the end of April in the Red Range and Pinkett areas and continued in late May in coordination with neighbouring Hunter and North West Local Land Services.

An integral part of the campaign has been the work of 23 landholder groups laying baits on private property. The ground baiting compounds the impact of the aerial bait drops to effectively target dogs.

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services is working in partnership with the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) on a GPS collar trial coordinated by DPI scientist, Guy Ballard, as part of the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre Wild Canids in Agri-Ecosystems project.

A total of six dogs were trapped, collared and released east of Armidale earlier this year as the research project records information about dog behaviour to improve local wild dog management.

"In the past we had to retrieve the collars to get all the data back, now these new collars allow us to upload information daily," Dr Ballard said.

"Local landholders have been involved in this trial and they've been logging on every day to see where the dogs are moving.

The way the dogs move around their territory is far less predictable than people expected. Some dogs don't have an obvious pattern to their movements and they don't necessarily respect the territory of other dogs."

"Through this research we're able to monitor dog behaviour and will be able to see what changes occur this winter as a result of the coordinated baiting programs organised by Northern Tablelands Local Land Services. "

"We expect that some of the collared dogs will take baits. We want to find out what happens to any surviving dogs following baiting and whether they relocate to new areas."

The collars are programmed to automatically unlock and drop off the surviving dogs in late winter, when they will be collected by researchers.

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services runs Pindone and 1080 bait handling courses regularly for landholders who need chemical accreditation to take part in baiting programs.

For further information about coordinated wild dog baiting contact  
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*Loading the helicopter with bait*



# Landchat

*Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 108, April - June 2016*

SNELCC 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.

Landchat presents a forum for the expression of a range of opinions. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent those of Southern New England Landcare or its employees.

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.

**Armidale**  
Regional Council

new england **mutual**



**NSW** **Local Land Services**  
GOVERNMENT Northern Tablelands



## Diary Dates

BizReBoot Seminar 1.....	28 June
BizReBoot Seminar 2.....	26 July
BizReBoot Seminar 3.....	23 Aug
Member meeting .....	17 Aug
<b>"Sheepdog training and Soil fertility workshops"</b>	
Glen Innes 'Truro', .....	29 June
Walcha 'Miramoona', .....	13 July
Guyra 'Urandangie', .....	20 July
Gravesend 'Amarula', .....	3 Aug
Barraba 'Bareela', .....	10 Aug
Aberfoyle 'Mt William', .....	17 Aug