Landchat

Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 102, October - December 2014

Southern New England Landcare...

Our VISION is for a vibrant, socially and economically healthy community existing in a healthy, productive and biodiverse environment.

Our MISSION is to foster community participation in sustainable natural resource management.

Contact US by phone 02 6772 9123 or email mail@snelcc.org.au



Diary Dates

SNELCC Inc and SNEL Ltd General Meeting	
and AGM19 Nov	
Trees on Farms, Demonstration and field day"	
@ "Eastlake", Gostwyck21 Nov	
PLC Urban Landcare week along Armidale	
creeklands24-28 Nov	
Trees on Farms, Demonstration and field day"	
@ "Olmo", Boorolong Field Day25 Nov	
Master Tree Growers Course continues.	
Venue TBC26-27 Nov	
25 year Landcare celebration and Christmas Party	
4pm @ Black Gully NERAM28 Nov	
Kentucky Pest Animal Field Day3 Dec	
Georges Creek Pest Animal and Tropical	
Soda Apple Field Day4 Dec	
Fauna and Bird I.D. @ "Suncrest",	
Invergowrie5 Dec	
Black Gully Music Festival @ NERAM14Dec	
SNELCC Inc Meeting15 Feb 201	5

THE FUTURE OF FROG DREAMING

Frog Dreaming is one of those valuable community programs that nurtures an interest in Landcare values. This year we were able to pull it together with a



shoe string budget and the generosity of lots of beautiful volunteers, however with an acute funds shortage for projects across the board Frog has become an endangered program.

Therefore we need the help of our members to keep this 'awesome' community asset alive.

Go to http://www.pozible.com/project/186294 to donate as little as \$25 (& get a tree planted in your name + bag of red frogs) or as much as \$2000 - we have 10 days left to make this happen - & please pass on to your friends, especially those that value a wholesome, enriching outdoor approach to educating our future land managers and decision makers.

Thanks for your time and here's to the power of community action.

Christmas Period Office Hours

The office of Southern New England Landcare (3/119 Beardy Street) will be closed on Monday 15th December and re-open on Monday 12 January 2015 with staff on leave over the Christmas New Year period.

For urgent matters please leave a message on the answering machine as it will be checked from time to time.

We wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas and wish you a safe and happy 2014. We look forward to working with you all in the New Year.

POSITIVE PROGRESS WITH NTLLS PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Nineteen landholders are participating in revegetation, riparian protection or remnant protection as part of SNELCC's two partnership projects with the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services (NTLLS).

Landholders in the Greater Malpas, Tenterden and Balala-Uralla and Uralla-Walcha areas are preparing ground for planting – knowing that it WILL rain and a long fallow is ideal – and looking to begin on-ground works to fence remnant vegetation and riparian areas.

SNELCC and NTLLS Project Officers are working well together, with good ideas from both organisations proving that "two heads are better than one".

Approaches to 'On-farm Native Vegetation Management' will be the subject of two field events in November. The first event will be on Friday 21st November at "Eastlake", via Uralla; and the second day will be at "Olmo", Boorolong on Tuesday 25th November.



A tree corridor from here will link across basalt country to existing wooded areas

Native trees and shrubs at this site will replace aging trees and link small remnants

2014/15 MEMBERSHIPS

Readers will have received their invitations to renew their membership of SNELCC Inc for the 2014/15 year.

We take this opportunity to say thank you to those who have recently supported your local Landcare organisation. In doing so you help us to serve the community in its endeavour to create a sustainable community and environment in the Southern New England Region.

Many group members will recall that in 2007 most of SNELCC's groups elected to come under the umbrella of SNELCC Inc to relieve the financial and administrative burden from groups and to ensure a smoother audit for SNELCC Inc. SNELCC Inc continues to manage each group's funds in accordance with the arrangements made at that time.

In the new year anyone from a group who is identified as either a group representative, financial signatory, SNEL Ltd representative, or membership coordinator will be contacted to ensure that we have our records up to date.

MEMBER SERVICES

SNELCC has made it a priority in 2015 to support member access to information relating to Landcare groups and to assist groups in easier internal contact, correspondence and planning activities. We are looking at an option to develop online information services for Landcare and/or interest based groups to provide member only forums to opt in for discussion and information exchanges. We hope that this will improve the efficiency in our response to group issues and assist in pursuing funding to meet your group requirements.

Funding is available to groups for planning projects and activities. This may support engaging current and new members. Your group might like to hire a venue (such as a community centre or RFS shed) and put on a BBQ for dinner and a chat. You can also invite SNELCC to attend and assist these meetings, we are more than happy to hear from you and what your groups priorities are.

SNELCC is always happy to hear from group representatives; even if you "check in" with an occasional phone call (many groups already do this. Lastly we would like to see as many group reps and members attend the quarterly meetings at the Uralla Community Centre (the next one is the AGM at 6.30pm, Wednesday November 19). We look forward to bringing you more information in 2015.

PEST ANIMAL DAY - BALDERSLEIGH

Twenty people attended the Baldersleigh pest animal field day at Lynne & Wal Chapman's "Milani" property on 24th October.

Participants enjoyed the "hands on" practical demonstration of pest animal control. Speakers for the day included Brett Cameron NTLLS, Peter Frizell NTLLS and contract trapper Mark Lamb.

Lynne Chapman said "It was fascinating even for some of the more experienced farmers. Many attendees went away with some new ideas to try and the consensus for the day was that it was very worthwhile attending."

Bait preparation and placement, lures, bait type, identifying signs, tracks and scats and where to look for signs were some of the topics cover during the day.

The Baldersleigh pest animal group formed in late May 2014, due to predation problems caused by wild dogs, wild pigs and fox problems in the area.

Mark Lamb, contract trapper said "Working as a group not only gives them strength but also helps the group to conduct pest animal control on a broad scale, coordinated and cooperative programs increase the programs effectiveness."

Mahri Koch, regional pest animal project officer, emphasised the hands on practical aspect of the day. Mahri believes "Mark Lamb is a successful pest animal trapper with a long experience, passion and knowledge of pest animal control out in the paddock and how you do it."

The next hands on practical day will be held at "Bimbi Vale", Kentucky on 3rd December from 9.00am – 2.30pm. For more information or to register your interest please contact Kristy Youman 02 6772 9123 or kristy@snelcc.org.au.



Discussing baits for pigs



Discussing different tracks



Identifying scats



FROG DREAMING

People, Place, Storytelling

A L-day inspirational journey for children into sustainable land management

FROG 2014 OVERVIEW;

This year we have had many successes with frog, starting with national recognition as a finalist in the National Landcare Awards then topped off with 85 smiling faces at the conference held in October at 'The Hill' Kentucky.

The 7th Frog Dreaming conference welcomed students & mentors from Uralla, Waldorf, Drummond and Armidale High School.

There were many highlights; the Little Miss Landcare project demo, the solar duck idea for generating electricity, sustainable action at Drummond & insect hotels at Waldorf.. The outstanding tribal performances led by our student mentors and their gurus....The bonfire & fire twirling 'Emu in the Sky' dreaming story with Dan...Bec Smith beating the earth drum beat Friends of Waldorf's excellent service & nourishing menu the fun had by all camping by the light of the moon Biodiversity walkabout .. Insect hotels with Chris Riley

"The expression 'It takes a village to raise a child' comes to life at Frog Dreaming - it takes a community to embrace children and guide them to the rich, full life that is possible for them. This was evident in the passion the adult leaders brought to the event, both in the supportive role of developing leadership in the mentors, which the event provides; and in inspiring the younger students to work together in thinking smartly about earing for the environment, facing challenges, being respectful and using common sense to manage behaviour."

Joanne Lowe-Waldorf School teacher



Our beloved totem rocks with Bec.... Wildlife at 'The Hill' with NTLLS Marty Dillon Fighting Ferals with Tim Collinsworm farms with Tracey Carr from NIRW and who could forget native revegetation with Michael Taylor, who also shared with us his amazing family property/playground to explore, create, wonder and have fun in.

This year our returning mentors were awesome—they were an active and keen part in creating meaningful connections with & between the students—thank you Georgie, Zia, Fitz, Grace, Aziz, Ellis, Bonnie, Francesca & Bella— you are all beautiful people.

A special mention and a big thank you goes to the Gurus (the same inspiring people that volunteer their time year after year) - they are Matt McKenzie (Thalgarrah), Tim Collins (Armidale Tree Group), Carina Johnson (NT LLS), Ruth Tremont (SNEL), Helen Schwarz (Herbert Park Landcare), Chris Riley (flora & fauna guru) and Bec Smith (AHS Ag teacher & frog founder).

And lastly we could not have done it without the on-going support of our sponsors (logos below).. Especially Uralla Shire Council & Northern Inland Regional Waste.

Photos at

www.facebook.com/pages/Frog-Dreaming/345505065515650?ref=hl

FROG CALENDAR 2015

- Frog Dreaming 15-16 October
- Armidale Autumn Parade & Thunderbolts Festival
- National Tree Day & Black Gully planting/workshop activities



CONTACT:

Sara Schmude Community Landcare Coordinator sara@snelcc.org.au

























YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

What's happened with the Expression of Interest form I sent in?

- The information from your form has been entered into the SNELCC database.
- If you haven't heard anything from us then your Expression of Interest (EOI) is still current and active feel free to ring and check if you want to be sure. In September this year, letters were sent to people who had submitted an EOI to bring them up to date with the progress of their EOI.
- Where relevant funding programs have been available SNELCC has applied for money to fund your and similar projects. Before we applied for funding we would have contacted you to see if you were still interested. If we are successful or unsuccessful with our funding bid we will let you know. If you haven't heard from us since we spoke to you about applying for money, then the funding application is still being processed.
- The time between your submitting an EOI and getting funding can be a long time, sometimes years. Two of the main reasons are that grants suitable for your project are not always available and that it can take a long time (months) for funding bodies to announce successful applications. Your patience is appreciated.
- If you have lodged an EOI with us and your circumstances have changed (e.g. you commenced the work in the meantime or you no longer wish to keep your proposal on file) then please take a moment to let us know
- Whilst we do everything we can to support your project proposal, submitting an EOI is no guarantee of obtaining funding.

What should we do about our tree planting next month if it doesn't rain?

- Wait until there is good soil moisture before planting.
- Check in with SNELCC so we can ensure there is a variation applied to your funding agreement.
- Also, you need to check with the plant nursery, that it's OK for them to hold your seedling order.

Where do I find out what native tree species suit my location?

- If you are doing a native planting as part of a SNELCC project, species selection should be discussed at the initial site visit for your project and a species list can be included in your Land Management Agreement.
- If you are not part of a funded SNELCC project, information can be obtained from the SNELCC office, native plant nurseries (e.g. Armidale Tree Group, Black Mountain Nursery, Cedar Nursery, Field's Native Nursery, Kentucky Tree Nursery, Mole Station Nursery) or private consultants (e.g. Dave Carr, Peter Metcalfe, Ruth Trémont).

Southern New England Landcare and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services Community Forum

Thank you to group representatives who attended the August SNELCC Inc meeting and provided input for the planning of an upcoming community forum to be held later in the year.

This forum represents an opportunity for community networks, groups, individuals, government and non-government organisations to come together to hear from one another, to celebrate 25 years of Landcare and to build relationships and a foundation for improved service delivery in our region.

Due to the numerous activities and engagements of members and organisations at this time of year, the forum has been postponed with a date to be announced early next year. Stay tuned for more news in 2015.

MASTER TREEGROWER UPDATE

A practical program with a diverse group of people, a range of knowledge, and great networking opportunities is just some of the feedback received so far from the Master TreeGrower (MTG) program.

The MTG program has been well received with over 20 people registered for the program.

One of the highlights of the course so far has been tour of Gabe Staat's mushroom farm. Gabe one of the MTG course participants grows shiitake, king oyster and pearl mushrooms at Glenore Cottage on the Baldersleigh Road.

Participants have also had the opportunity to look at markets for tree and forest products, trees on farms for conservation, agriculture and profit and non timber products including truffles at the Guy Fawkes Truffle Company, Ebor.

In the most recent session MTG participants received their tape measures and have been busy measuring trees for basal area, diameter and height.

Simon White, landholder from Little Brandy Hill, Hunter Valley and MTG participant said "An informative, relaxed educational program conducted in a friendly setting, with other like-minded people. The level of experience is wide and varied, which allows many different contributions to be had."

"Although it does require some commitment and coordination from attendee's, due to the length, it is well worthwhile and represents a real opportunity to gain new skills and knowledge to assist with Farm Forestry endeavours."



Louise & Jim Williams' Truffle Company discussing truffles with MTG group at Ebor

MTG participants measuring tree height at Kàren & Craig Zirkler's property"Bimbi Vale"

THUNDERBOLT'S FESTIVAL

In 2014, Southern New England Landcare was keen to return to Thunderbolt's Festival, Uralla after a resounding success in 2013. The event occurs on the last Saturday of October each year at the scenic Alma Park site on Rocky Creek in the heart of Uralla.

The 2014 event again broke attendance records with festival organiser Bev Stubberfield estimating over 3000 people visited the site on the day. As always the festival kicked into gear with a street festival moving through Bridge Street (the main street) before culminating at Alma Park.

The parade brings together a diversity of interesting items from historic machinery to modern day motorcycles, classic cars, floats for schools and community groups and even an 8 foot hopping kangaroo which bore some remarkable human like qualities. Thunderbolt and his horse were back again to lead the parade to its final destination.

Despite the hot weather, many people stayed on to kick back and listen to a great line-up of local bands and visit the many displays. The Alma Park site hosts many stalls from around the region and even as far as the mid north coast and Hunter Valley. The stalls display a range of items from local products and information to historic items including Thunderbolt memorabilia and gem stones as well as a host of food and drink tents.

This part of the day provides SNELCC with a great opportunity to meet with local people and visitors to discuss current and potential projects, current interests and issues relating to farming and the local community and even just for catch-up and chat. As with 2013, SNELCC is confident that we finished the day with a few more friends and supporters once again.



L - R Kristy Yeoman (SNELCC), Steve Harvey (Board Chairperson SNEL Ltd) and Des Andersen (SNELCC)





Armidale Office

02 6774 8400

enquiries@rm.net.au

www.rm.net.au

Christmas is only just around the

corner and for the last edition of

Lanchat for 2014, Roberts & Morrow

would like to wish all the readers & subscibers a very merry festive season!

IS COMPOST THE FERTILISER OF THE FUTURE?

A five year project at Wongwibinda has concluded, producing interesting results for the local primary producers involved.

With increases in fertiliser prices and a perceived reduction in response to traditional products, producers in the region wanted to examine alternate ways to increase soil fertility and optimise pasture production and maximise profitability.

"These interests were co-incident with an increased awareness by producers of the importance of soil organic carbon and microbial processes that lead to improved soil health and increased nutrient availability to pastures," said Dr Lewis Kahn, (Project Consultant – Agricultural Information and Monitoring Services).

Compost is an organic treatment that is claimed to increase soil health and nutrient availability to pastures. At the commencement of this project in 2009, there were no data available from well designed and replicated experiments to confirm these claims in broad acre grazing situations.

The objective of this project was to contrast the effects on pasture performance of compost and superphosphate. The project included a replicated plot experiment established on the property "Wongwibinda", east of Armidale. The site was used to determine the effects of different rates of compost and superphosphate on pasture production when compared to an untreated control.

This project has demonstrated that pasture production and quality responded to superphosphate which provided plant limiting nutrients but did not respond to compost which did not provide adequate levels of these nutrients.

Soil concentrations of phosphorus and sulphur were increased by the use of superphosphate but addition of compost did not alter the level of these nutrients from untreated control plots. Soil pH was unaffected by fertiliser type, even at the highest level of superphosphate treatment. Soil biology was highly variable between years and there were no consistent differences associated with fertiliser treatment. Concentrations of fungi and bacteria did not increase in response to compost. Taken together the soil chemistry and biology results indicated that superphosphate increased soil concentrations of major nutrients required by plants.

Pasture production did not respond to fertiliser application until the third year of the trial when favourable seasonal conditions supported an almost doubling of pasture growth. At the same time, white clover increased from negligible levels and particularly in superphosphate plots. Taken together over the five year period of the trial, herbage production from superphosphate and compost plots was 5.8 t DM/ha and 1.8 t DM/ha greater than from untreated control plots respectively.

There were large differences in feed quality of the pasture. Pasture grown from superphosphate treatments contained higher crude protein, metabolisable energy, magnesium, phosphorus and sulphur. Entry of this pasture quality data from superphosphate and compost plots into the GrazFeed computer program, assuming the same level of herbage mass, predicted steers (300 kg) would grow at least 200 g/day faster when grazing pasture fertilised with superphosphate.

Extra pasture was most cost-effectively produced with superphosphate and the least cost was \$51/tonne. At this cost, the extra herbage will be profitable for a farm business, assuming that livestock convert herbage to gain at the ratio of 10:1 or better. If this was achieved, then an extra tonne of pasture could give rise to at least an extra 100 kg live weight. If the net return (i.e. less cost of production) from the sale of a kilogram of (say) yearling beef cattle was \$0.90/kg (and therefore \$90/tonne pasture) then the expected benefits would be profitable. The improvement to pasture quality as measured for crude protein, metabolisable energy and phosphorus from superphosphate will also add to the profitability of the extra herbage.

Simon Wright, cattle producer and one of five participating landholders, saw the experiment as timely for his business.

"We had the opportunity to make compost on farm with waste materials from a pig feeding enterprise, and we had heard a lot of positive discussion on results from compost use so we thought compost may provide an innovative and sustainable tool for our pasture and soil management. Put simply, the outcomes were too small to warrant the cost of production and application on the scale that we were looking for."

Lock Rogers, cattle producer, enjoyed being a part of the Wongwibinda PDS trial and found it to be well worth the time he invested.

"While I was surprised and somewhat disappointed at the outcomes, I was pleased to see the results of the fertiliser trial and this has already had an influence on how I make better management decisions in regard to fertiliser applications. I gained new skills along the way which included pasture monitoring, feed budgeting and learning how to create a grazing plan. All of which I have found invaluable and I am still using as a part of my every day management."





Acknowledgments

The interest, involvement and work of the producers who took part in this project in order to better understand the role of compost and super phosphate in their businesses is gratefully acknowledged. The project group also acknowledge the contribution of Sally Wright and Southern New England Landcare Ltd for co-ordinating the project and Edward Wright for maintaining the plot site over the five years of the trial. Profound thanks go to Lewis Kahn (Agricultural Information and Monitoring Services) for his professional, knowledgeable and reliable management of the trial.

Funding for this project was received by Meat & Livestock Australia through the Producer Demonstration Site program and the project team thank MLA for this support.





'WATERWAYS, WEEDS AND WHAT TO PLANT WHERE' A SUCCESS

September 14th saw three children plant their first native seedlings, about 60 people access information on weeds, feral animals, native birdlife and learn something about what to plant where in riparian areas. What's more some seasoned tree planters got just over 300 native seedlings into the ground on the eastern side of Tilbuster Ponds Creek in the Armidale State (Pine) Forest.

This learning opportunity was part of the Herbert Park Landcare Group's "Ten Years On: Building on Past Efforts along Tilbuster Ponds Creek" project. This project is removing huge volumes of woody weeds from the creekside area downstream of the Rockvale Road bridge over Tilbuster Ponds Creek, and replacing weeds with native vegetation.

A special part of this field event was the chance it gave a group of UNE Agricultural Extension students to plan for, organise and run an outdoor, hands-on extension event. The students met the challenge well and, together with staff and volunteers from New England Weeds Authority, Armidale Tree Group and NSW Forestry Corporation provided a fun, educational and social occasion for users and neighbours of the Armidale Pine Forest.

Thanks to ongoing support from funding from the Australian Government's Clean Energy Future Biodiversity Fund, and hard work of volunteers from Herbert Park Landcare Group and Friends of the Pine Forest, this project is now in its closing stages. However, there are 2,000 seedlings yet to be planted and (of course) there is the continuing need for follow-up weed control Overall, a great example of good team work.





Landchat - Landcare in Southern New England



Southern New England Landcare and Northern Tablelands Local land Services



Present:

Trees on Farms

Landholder Demonstration and Field Day

Covering how to plant, what to plant and where to plant

When

Event 1 Friday 21st November at "Eastlake" Uralla

and

Event 2 Tuesday 25th November at "Olmo" Boorolong

Where Directions available when RSVP

- Free working dog C3 vaccinations and worming by the North Hill vet clinic @
 9am
- "Tree I.D." and "Trees for different Landscapes" expert & landholder hosted discussion @ 9:30am
- On farm demonstration site visits @ 10.30am
- Free BBQ lunch & informal chat with Ascent @ 1pm
- Property planning workshop @ 2 -3.30pm





What to Bring: Covered footwear, hat, sunscreen and optional notebook

More details & RSVP - Tuesday 18th November to Southern New England Landcare 6772 9123.

This event is part of the Australian Governments Drought assistance package and is proudly supported by:

Ascent Group NORTH HILI

FOR SALE

2007 Peugot 307 XSE 5 speed manual BCX 18A

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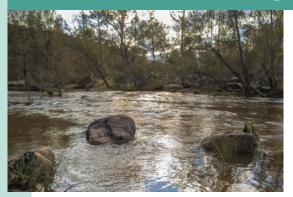




Billagul

\$220,000

230ha Inland Fishing Wonderland







Just an hour's drive from Armidale or Tamworth, Billagul has a 1.3km frontage to the MacDonald River - renowned locally for its great fishing. Reserve your future amid the beauty and splendour of a property that is part of a critical corridor connecting Pilliga Nature Reserve in the west, with the east coast National Parks of Guy Fawkes,

The Nature Conservation Trust of NSW is a not-for-profit business committed to private land conservation. All properties are sold with a conservation agreement in place.

WWW.nct.org.au 1300 330 717 f

Cathedral Rock and Oxley Wild Rivers.

There is easy all weather 2WD access, a hard phone line traversing the property and a DA approval for a new dwelling on one of numerous possible house sites. Billagul provides you with the opportunity to create a dream sustainable lifestyle.

Contact:

Adam Dawson 0448 801 391 adam@nct.org.au



Citizen's Wildlife Corridors Armidale Inc. invites **you** to a

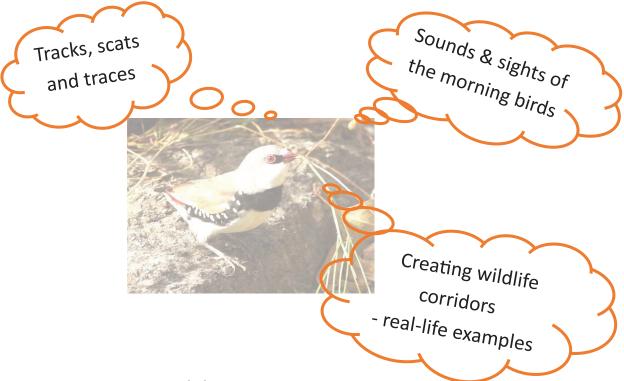
BIRD and FAUNA MORNING

Friday 5th December, 8am—11am

at

"Suncrest",

40 Mt Mitchell Rd, Invergowrie



RSVP and directions:

Phone 6772 9123 or email ruth@snelcc.org.au











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If undeliverable return to Southern New England Landcare Level 1, 3/119 Beardy Street, PO Box 85, Armidale 2350. Tel 02 6772 9123, mail@snelcc.org.au, www.snelandcare.org.au

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Southern New England Landcare enjoys a good working relationship with a number of reputable local businesses. If you would like to include your business in our publications, please contact us on 6772 9123 or mail@snelcc.org.au

Southern New England Landcare appreciates generous support from Caring for Our Country, Armidale Dumaresq Council, NSW Environmental Trust, Local Land Services Northern Tablelands, and is sponsored by Landmark (Armidale) and Wesfarmers Federation Insurance.

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.











2015 SNELCC Inc Meetings

SNELCC Inc meetings are held quarterly and commence at 6.30pm

Wednesday 18 February 2015
Wednesday 20 May 2015
Wednesday 19 August 2015
Wednesday 18 November 2015 (includes AGM)

Next meeting Wednesday 19 November 2014 (includes AGM)

Meetings are held at the Uralla Community Centre (cnr Hill & Maitland St) All members are invited. Please contact your group's SNELCC Representative if you wish to accompany them to the meeting. A light supper will be provided for a small charge. Please RSVP by the Tuesday PRIOR to the meeting for catering purposes.

Tel 6772 9123 • mail@snelcc.org.au www.snelandcare.org.au



CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY