

Landchat

Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 105, July - September 2015



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@snelcc.org.au

Diary Dates

Organic Livestock Production field day.....	8 Sep
Fox Control evaluation workshops	wk of 21 Sep
Gather in the Glen	9-11 Oct
Frog Dreaming	15-16 Oct
SNELCC AGM	18 Nov
SNELCC Christmas Party	16 Dec

SNELCC Christmas Party

SNELCC will be hosting it's Christmas Party at the SNELCC office balcony on 16th December 2015 from 4pm.

All members welcome.

This is a great chance for us to thank our sponsors, recognise our high achievers and have a social catch-up.

More information will come to hand *as plans develop so watch this space!*

AGROFORESTRY PEER GROUP MENTORING POWERING ON

The Agroforestry Peer Group Mentoring Program is really getting some momentum in the Southern New England, with seven landholders being visited during the last few months.

Landholders who have taken up the mentoring opportunity are located east of Guyra, Puddledock, Kentucky, Uralla, Nowendoc, Wollomombi, and east of Armidale. Another three have been booked in for their initial mentorings site visits during September and October.

During September, Barnaby Joyce will be joining us on an Agroforestry Peer Group Mentor visit at a property near Tamworth. This will be an opportunity for Southern New England Landcare to promote this extension method and its benefits to the Australian Government.

On a similar note, Michael Taylor was one of four people to represent the Agroforestry Peer Group Mentoring program in Canberra during June, to Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries heavy-weights. Feedback indicates that departmental staffers were suitably impressed with the capabilities of the program.

In the Southern New England region there are currently 10 Agroforestry Peer Group Mentors available to members and non-members of landcare. The mentors have a wide range of skills and experience.

To participate in the program, contact Kristy@snelcc.org.au or call 6772 9123. The cost to participate is \$75 per year (\$25 discount for existing SNELCC members), and includes a site report that captures the conversation, ideas and suggestions made at the initial visit, plus an additional 2-4 mentoring visits over the following 12 months.

Interested in keeping up to date on the Agroforestry Peer Group Mentoring Program? Join our Facebook group at www.facebook.com/groups/NENWN.

QUOLLITY KOALA CORRIDORS

Southern New England Landcare has again been successful in gaining a grant from the NSW Environmental Trust. This funding application was lodged as a joint project with Citizens Wildlife Corridors Armidale. The grant of \$96,000 is the third such grant that SNELCC has been awarded from the NSW Environmental Trust over the past three years .

The application stage requires developing a catchy “tag line” or “hook” to interest the funding body and thereby make a project stand out in a competitive process. After a brainstorm amongst the staff, the project was given the name “Quollity Koala Corridors and Questions” which must have hit the right note with the assessment panel - they might have appreciated the pun.

The project will enhance and protect key wildlife movement corridors by planting new vegetation and protecting remnant vegetation with the habitat needs of the Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) and the Eastern Spotted-Tailed Quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*) central to project outcomes. The project will also survey birds as indicator species for assessment of habitat health.

Land clearing and resulting loss of habitat is a Key Threatening Process (KTP) to the survival of the Koala and Spotted Tailed Quoll. The project will develop multiple aspects of wildlife habitat management and ultimately provide a recovery plan by reducing KTPs through the following activities:

1. Revegetation and remnant conservation of primary habitat for Koalas and Spotted Tailed Quolls across 11 properties with a combined total of 11,290 plantings on 28 hectares. Revegetation projects were selected from existing Landholder Expressions of Interest with SNELCC and CWC.
2. Survey current populations of Koalas and Spotted Tailed Quolls on participant sites.
3. Raising landholder and community participation in reporting and recording endangered species with the intention of encouraging long-term active engagement in caring for and establishing wildlife corridors.

Activity 1 involves enhancing native vegetation through a known Koala and Quoll corridor from the Dangar’s Falls area north through Imbota and Yina Nature Reserves and connecting through an arc

north-east of Armidale via Puddledock and Duval Nature Reserve. Koalas and Quolls use this corridor as habitat however sections of the corridor lack native vegetation, limiting the range, dispersion and breeding opportunities of Koala and Quoll populations.

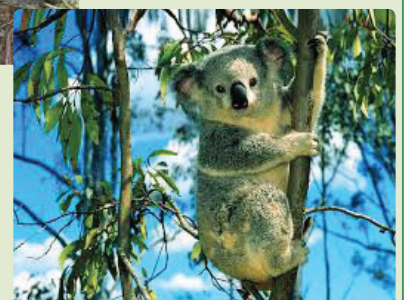
Activity 2 includes specialist surveys of Quoll and Koala populations on participant properties and nature reserves within the corridor to provide baseline population estimates.

Activity 3 involves enabling our community to become involved with the recovery of Koala and Quoll populations.

There will be many opportunities for public participation in this project, whether you live in town or on a rural block. Opportunities will include attending information seminars on wildlife management including both passive management (reporting sightings) and active management (helping restore habitat), attending field days for identifying, reporting and monitoring wildlife movements and learning about and planning revegetation projects for habitat restoration.

“Quollity Koala Corridors and Questions” runs for 2 years from July 2015 until June 2017 with the aim of continuing this project beyond 2017. Our project partners include Armidale Dumaresq council, the University of New England and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services who are all dedicated to combining resources with SNELCC and CWC to create a long term wildlife management strategy for the Northern Tablelands.

This project is funded through the NSW Environmental Trust.



LOCAL LEGENDS MOVE ON

It is with sadness that Southern New England Landcare announces the resignation of two amazingly talented staff members in recent weeks. Our loss is Landcare NSW gain as both Sonia Williams and Lucy Chapman leave our organization to take up positions with the peak body for Landcare in NSW.

Sonia has been with SNELCC Inc and Southern New England Landcare Ltd since their inception and has performed many roles for the organization. She leaves a legacy for the community and very big shoes to fill! Lucy has been with SNEL Ltd for some 10 years in administration and member support.

Thankfully, neither will be very far away for at least some of the time. LNSW will rent an office at SNELCC for them as their base, although it is expected they will spend much of their time assisting landcare organisations around the state.

Southern New England Landcare thanks both Sonia and Lucy for their enormous contributions to landcare in our region and wishes them the very best in their future endeavours. We will miss you both!

FROG DREAMING 2015

Frog Dreaming is on again at 'The Hill' Kentucky 15-16 October 2015, and this year we are joined by 85 keen students from Armidale High School, Kentucky, Drummond, Kingstown, Waldorf and Minimbah.

Under the umbrella of sustainable land management, we will be covering themes relating to on-farm biodiversity, native revegetation, role of insects and soil biology, pest animal identification and wildlife ecology.

During these past eight years, this event has built awareness and skills for more than 800 students from across our region. This is possible because we have great supporters and volunteers, including Bec Smith, Helen Schwartz, Matt MacKenzie, Carina Johnson, Michael Taylor, Chris Riley and Ruth Tremont.

Watch this space for photographs of the event in the next edition of Landchat.

ARMIDALE URBAN RIVERCARE UPDATE

Restoration works are continuing along Dumaresq Creek with monthly planting and maintenance days involving local residents and Armidale Urban Rivercare Group members.

Of particular note are Bruce Whan and Gordon Bell, whose tireless efforts to control the many environmental weeds causing problems along the creeklands are so very appreciated.

Bruce and Gordon are happy to report that many of the plantings are so well-established that they are shading and successfully competing with undesirable plants such as phragmites and typha. Well done to all involved. The creeklands are looking fantastic.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LOCAL LANDCARE WINNERS!

During late May, the Regional Landcare Awards were held in conjunction with the New England North West Landcare Adventure at Lake Keepit, hosted by Tamworth Regional Landcare Association.

Congratulations to The Ascent Group for their win in the Partnerships with Landcare category, Helen Schwarz of Armidale for her win in the Individual Landcarer category, and Armidale Urban Rivercare Group for their win in the Landcare Community Group Category!

FREE TICKETS AND TRAVEL TO GATHER IN THE GLEN!



Women For All Seasons
9-11 October 2015
Email: gatherintheglen@gmail.com

Glenrac at Glen Innes is hosting the 2015 NSW Rural Women's Gathering on the weekend of the 9-11th of October, 2015. A sensational speaker list combined with educational and interactive field trips is sure to please, so put this date in your diary!

Mary Coustas – is a Logie Award-winning actor, comedian and writer, better known as her alter ego Effie – the 'trash-with-flash' Madonna of the western suburbs. With a wonderful combination of naivety and clarity, fuzzy logic and shrewd intelligence, Effie is a suburban superstar. Mary is the star of *Out of Work*, *Acropolis Now*, *Wogarama*, *Hercules Returns* and *Greeks on the Roof*. An icon of Australian comedy, she has won two awards for Best Comedy Performer, a Logie Award and a Variety Heart Award from her industry peers. Get ready to laugh and be charmed by the unique Effie!



Gail & Roger Fletcher – Roger Fletcher is a local Glen Innes self-made success story. From droving sheep in 1967, he and wife Gail now own and direct one of the most successful abattoirs in New South Wales, Fletcher International Exports Pty Ltd at Dubbo and Fletcher International WA near Albany in Western Australia. Hear how they have worked together to make Fletcher International Exports the largest sheep meat processor in Australia today, exporting to more than 95 countries, and employing over 1,300 staff.

Michael Crossland – One of Australia's most sought after inspirational speakers, Michael was diagnosed with cancer before the age of one, and has spent over a quarter of his life in hospital. Defying the odds, he has gone on to build his life of exceptional achievements, including a successful professional and sporting career. Michael is a national ambassador for Camp Quality, and recently featured in a humanitarian documentary about the countless lives saved through his orphanage and school in Haiti. Hear Michael's story about dreams and determination, and be inspired to achieve ongoing positive change in your own life.

Dr Donna Quinn – Donna was born and raised in Glen Innes, where she worked in the local pharmacy as an assistant. Hear how Donna achieved her dream of becoming a doctor, and why she returned to work in a rural town.

Jean Kittson – As a performer and scriptwriter for stage, television, and radio, Jean is well known for her comedy debates on the ABC, Channel 9, and Channel Ten, plus features on 'The Big Gig', *Let the Blood Run Free*, *Good News Week*, and *The Einstein Factor*. She is also a regular guest on ABC 702 radio drive programme, *Thank God It's Friday*. Writing for magazine and newspapers, she has been a regular columnist, and is the author of *Tongue Lashing* and *You're Still Hot to Me*, a look at 'the joys of menopause'.

Jean was a founding Director of the National Cord Blood Bank, the inaugural Chair of the Australian Gynaecological Cancer Foundation (AGCF) and a founding Ambassador for Ovarian Cancer Australia. Jean is passionate about rural Australia and health.

Georgina Dent – is a journalist, an editor, and a passionate advocate for gender equality. She was appointed editor of *Women's Agenda* in October of 2014, Australia's leading website for working women. In March of 2014 she was recognised as a finalist as 'Journalist of the Year' in the inaugural Women's Empowerment Journalism Awards in Singapore. Georgina is a regular television commentator and public speaker on women's advancement in the workplace and gender equality. Georgina will bring to Gather in the Glen the perspective of a young, professional woman working hard to make the world a better place for both her contemporaries and those who will come after her.

Annabel Dulhunty – Annabel lives between Glen Innes and the Southern Highlands and is passionate about rural and regional renewal and the potential of philanthropy. She is a former Director of the Vincent Family Fairfax Foundation (VFFF), having served for eight years, and is now a board member of the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal.

Free bus travel from Uralla

Because this is one of the few times the event has been so close to home, this year, Southern New England Landcare has a small amount of funding to subsidise a bus to the event. The bus will be leaving Uralla on Friday 9th October, and returning on Sunday 11th.

Book now to win a free Gather in the Glen Registration!

The first 20 SNELCC members to book a seat on the SNELCC bus to the Gathering will be placed in the draw for a free ticket to Gather in the Glen! Tickets are valued at \$250. Call 6772 9123 to book your seat!

The Gathering is focussing on bringing women from the region together. Attendees are encouraged to bring a friend or relative, and there will be discount for mother and daughter bookings.

More information and bookings

More about the program at

<http://www.glenrac.org.au/gather-in-the-glen.php>.

To register go to

https://www.stickytickets.com.au/28707/gather_in_the_glen.aspx.

HAVE YOU SIGHTED THIS BIRD?

Indian mynas have been spotted across the New England Tablelands and are slowly increasing their territory. SNELCC has 6 Indian Myna traps available for hire. We currently have two volunteers in the Guyra district who have sighted Indian Mynas and are now hosting a trap to capture the birds.

We are looking for more volunteers to assist with this program as these birds are a genuine threat to native fauna including birds and small

mammals. Indian Mynas compete successfully for habitat by flocking in numbers, eventually driving out native species. Indian Mynas can also kill native birds and fauna by removing eggs and young from nests and hollows.

The trapping program will allow people to become involved with nine available traps to be placed on properties through the district. Trappers are not asked to euthanize the birds as this can be done by SNELCC

staff in accordance with the NSW Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1979. You can also assist by reporting sightings of the birds which will enable SNELCC to map and monitor their distribution, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the control program.

Anyone who would like to assist is welcome with all efforts greatly appreciated. For more information please call SNELCC on 6772 9123 or email mail@snelcc.org.au.



The Indian Myna.



The native honey-eating Noisy Miner.



SNELCC has Indian Myna traps available for use by community members.

ORGANIC LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION FOR BEGINNERS

Everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask!

Tuesday 8th September 9 am sharp, "Myall Springs", Rangari (35km north east of Gunnedah). Annabelle Bushell (Australian Organic Ltd) - What you need to do to become Australian Certified Organic (ACO) and maintain it.

Peter Gall (Arcadian Organic and Natural Meat Co) - Markets and premiums for organic meat.

Matt Carter (2013 Australian Livestock Producer of the Year) - Organic livestock production in practice.

This is a wonderful opportunity to learn the basics of organic livestock farming. At the end of the day you will have all the information to decide if this suits your farm operation.

Fully catered and free. Overnight bunk style accommodation available for anyone travelling long distance.

**Booking is essential
call
Mark Kesby 0428429244
or email
mpkesby14@gmail.com**

FOX CONTROL WORKSHOPS

During the week of 21 September, evaluation workshops for the 2015 Coordinated Fox Control Program will be held in both Walcha and Armidale.

If you volunteered as a Fox Control Coordinator this year, expect an invitation to the workshop in the coming weeks, which will also provide a tantalizing meal as a thank you.

Have a think about what worked well this year and what could be improved for next year, and bring your thoughts with you! We look forward to catching up.

ALL THE DIRT III – BUILDING KNOWLEDGE FOR RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE SOIL MANAGEMENT

The 25th Anniversary of Landcare Grants 2014-15, through the Federal Department of Agriculture, has provided SNELCC with funds to assist with delivering a soils management course, 'All the Dirt III' to land managers of the Guyra district.

'All the Dirt III', to be run by Derek and Fiona Smith of Working with Nature will extend and complement previous 'All the Dirt' workshops of the Malpas Group.

Landholders from 15 properties will participate in a 34-day soil management course, to be completed by 30 June 2016, and will utilise previously developed extension resources. Participants will learn to collect soil and leaf samples for analysis using appropriate methods and be able to have their pastures tested for a range of feed quality measurements. Participating landholders will also directly measure growth rate outcomes, and using these measurements make meaningful correlations between soil health, plant (pasture) and animal production.

'All the Dirt III' will address soil degradation issues in the Malpas Catchment but more importantly focus on ways to regenerate a healthy soil-pasture system to maintain healthy, resilient and productive grazing ecosystems for a diversity of species within that local community.

This project will help land managers to further understand their soils and the relationship between inputs, outputs, stock management and overall productivity. Improved understanding of how the production system works will help participants to increase productivity, build capacity of the grazing community to analyse their resource base, and increase knowledge and skills of participants to make management changes for positive production and environmental benefits.

There are two spare places. So be quick - even if your property is outside the Malpas Catchment.

To participate in this opportunity phone Derek and Fiona on 6779 1722.



Derek Smith, of Working with Nature, Guyra, will lead 'All the Dirt III'.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVES CHANGES AFOOT

Travelling Stock Routes and Reserves in NSW are highly significant assets, particularly in rural areas. They support many threatened species, threatened ecological communities and high conservation value ecosystems. They also provide feed reserves for stock in times of drought.

There are some big changes happening regarding management of TSRs in the Northern Tablelands. Local Land Services has recently started to issue five-year grazing permits. Many of these reserves have not been under long term grazing leases or have only begun to be leased in recent years.

These changes and their potential implications have been the topic of renewed debate, and SNELCC

encourages the community to engage in the discussion.

Do you have an opinion? Would you like to discuss the issue with your neighbours or others? Would you like to hear from the experts? SNELCC can facilitate this discussion. Staff are happy to help you organize something at a scale you feel comfortable with. Give us a call on 6772 9123 or mail@snelcc.org.au.



SEED BANK GROWS KNOWLEDGE & NATIVE SPECIES

The Northern Tablelands North West Seed Bank is sowing seeds of knowledge as well as seeding the expansion of native vegetation biodiversity across the region.

“Using direct drill planting techniques with stock from the Seed Bank gives land managers a viable, low cost alternative to revegetation using tube stock,” said Ivan Lackay.

Ivan says the Seed Bank is also helping to build community knowledge about seed collection and native flora and seed identification skills.

“We hold regular training and accreditation courses to provide education and advice about sustainable seed collection techniques.”

“These courses give the participants practical experience in collecting, processing, storing and selling native seed as well as introducing them to the science behind 'best-practice' seed management.”

“Once they’ve completed the course they become accredited seed collectors we can rely on to deliver quality seed within our guidelines, which require correct plant identification, genetic diversity, matching provenances based on environmental factors, correct drying and storage and good record keeping.”

The Seed Bank was established in 2009 to supply viable, local provenance seed for revegetation and restoration activities.

Since that time, 300 kg of seed have been collected for use on the North West Slopes and Plains, and 140 kg of seed for revegetation projects on the Northern Tablelands. Stocks from the Seed Bank have been used for the Brigalow Nandewar Biolinks project, Trees on Farms, and Upland Wetlands projects as well as on Travelling Stock Reserves (TSRs).

The seed is purchased from Florabank accredited collectors across the region. It’s then stored in the Seed Bank which is managed by Project Officer, Ivan Lackay, and is located at the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services’ Vivian Street office in Inverell.

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services promotes the use of a diverse range of endemic native plant species in revegetation sites, in order to establish healthy communities of native vegetation.

“We’ve also been working with indigenous land management organisations to give Aboriginal people

the opportunity to participate in this industry” said Ivan Lackay.

“It’s good to see these blokes getting skills and putting them into practice on their own land, building their knowledge, and giving the people who own the land a better understanding of important natural resource management issues.”

“It’s been very gratifying to see the young men who’ve participated take the information and advice we’ve offered and put that into practice with so much enthusiasm on their own country.”

“We have trained Aboriginal rangers, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, and Aboriginal men’s groups from across the North West and Northern Tablelands. They are great ambassadors for this sort of work and they really enjoy showing people what they’ve achieved on their land.”

“Our most recent Introductory Seed Collectors Course was organised in partnership with the Inverell Aboriginal Men’s Group, and the Armajun Aboriginal Health Service. The course was delivered by Field’s Environmental Service, Dave Carr from Stringybark Ecological, and Northern Tablelands Native Vegetation Officer, Sheridan Lawson.”

“The day was a big success all round with Dave and Sheridan impressed by participants’ knowledge of local flora and fauna, and their willingness to learn skills that can connect them back to country and build the potential for seed collection as a profit generating business.”

“It turned out to be a learning exercise for everyone involved as local elders named many plant varieties in the local Aboriginal language, and what they were commonly used for.”

“Two of the participants also went on to complete professional seed collectors’ accreditation.”
The next Local Land Services Seed Collection course will be held in spring 2015.



**For more information
phone
Ivan Lackay on 02 6728 8043
or
email ivan.lackay@lls.nsw.gov.au**

*Kurrajong seed collected
and held at the seed bank*



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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 Armidale Dumaresq Council, NSW Environmental Trust, Local Land Services Northern Tablelands, New England Mutual and is sponsored by Landmark (Armidale) and Wesfarmers Federation Insurance.

Landchat presents a forum for the expression of a range of opinions.

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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.



SNELCC Inc Meeting & AGM

Wednesday 18th November 2015

at

Uralla Community Centre

4pm to 7pm

**Please RSVP to the meeting for
catering purposes.**

Tel 6772 9123,

mail@snelcc.org.au

www.snelandcare.org.au