



## Hastings Landcare Inc.

Supporting Voluntary Natural Resource Management in the Hastings, Camden Haven and Wilson River Catchments

### Website Coming Soon

- ?? Hastings Landcare is building a website
- ?? We are seeking your stories and stories from your group to make our local site useful to local people.

### National Volunteers Day

Friday  
5th December, 2008

Three volunteers were awarded Life Membership at Port Macquarie Landcare's Christmas Party on the 30 Nov, for their ongoing commitment to local projects since formation of the group in 1998.

They were:

Ken & Yvonne Errington  
Steve Cartwright

**CONGRATULATIONS!**



Santa's little helper—Julie Ho

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Number 40



Summer 2008

## Celebrating our volunteers



Julie and Estelle showing off their professional Landcare shirts

At the end of October, I went on a whirlwind tour of some of the many sites that Port Macquarie Landcare group are working on, with Julie Ho and Estelle Gough. First off was Ruscutters Reserve where there has been a planting and weeding project funded by Environmental Levy. The site is surrounded by houses and has a path running through it with some unwanted destruction by local kids but the group is working hard to restore it and are returning some previously mown areas to native vegetation. The site is home to the endangered



Three Tawny Frogmouth chicks at Ruscutters Reserve

species *Melaleuca biconvexa*. Next we went to Hastings Public School where the principal Grant Heaton is doing a tremendous job, a lot of it on his own time, to tackle the enormous problem of Camphor Laurels adjoining the school grounds, again with the help

of Environmental Levy funds. His enthusiasm has worn off on the kids who have joined in during lunch times and weekends to cut down the trees and plant replacements.



The bridge under construction at Hastings Public School

They have also built a great track through the newly cleared forest of Camphors using Camphor logs as the border and covered in mulch. Most of the logs were hauled into place by the children in groups. Estelle also found *Melaleuca biconvexa* at this site. The groundsman has helped as well and they are currently constructing a walkway bridge and continuing to plant seedlings.

Next stop was lunch at Julie's (that hit the spot, thanks Julie!), and a look at the trailer purchased for the group with Environmental Levy funds, which is used to

transport seedlings, tools and other items as well as calling for volunteers on the signage on the trailer. The council themselves have even used it on occasion!

Then we went to Westport High School where they have fenced off a rainforest remnant, also with Environmental Levy funds. They have many species of flora and fauna there including koalas which have been known to traverse across the playground – perhaps looking for the canteen's supply of eucalyptus lollies!

Last stop was Widderson St near Westport High, a small revegetation project seeking to create a link between remnants existing in an urban environment.

The Port Macquarie Landcare group is to be congratulated on their commitment, enthusiasm and project successes with group numbers, sites and successful funding growing, a great achievement in this age where funding is tight and people are time poor.

Ann Eggert

# At the Cod Grounds-PURG

Last weekend I joined up with Port Macquarie Underwater Research Group (PURG) who dive with Scuba Haven at North Haven. The meeting time was 7.00 am so it was an early start however the drive up was magical with low fog covering the ground and the golden yolk of the sun rising slowly through the mist.



During introductions I realised I had previously met Michelle from Port Macquarie at a SCAN weekend at Soldiers Point. Michelle is a former member of DOUTS so we shared mutual friends and had plenty to chat about on the way out to the Cod Grounds. I was buddied with Peter, the owner operator of Scuba Haven as I was the “new girl”. Just after gearing up I was handed a digital camera to record the marine life. I clipped it on to my BC and hit the water. Due to the recent rough seas visibility was not good and the water temperature ranged from 19 to 16 degrees. We anchored on the pinnacle where the Grey Nurses usually reside. They were not there



this day however we did see two Port Jackson sharks. After a time we swam back to the anchor rope for our decompression stop then climbed back on board for a total dive time of 28 minutes with a maximum depth of 33.1 metres.

During surface interval we devoured lamingtons and chatted some more.

A personal highlight was a nearby humpback whale, which surfaced now and again. There was another one further out, which was breaching however “our whale” was not inclined to show off. We did our second dive at the same site with a maximum depth to 29.6 metres. I took a few more photographs before catching up with Peter to begin our ascent for a total dive time of 28 minutes.

On the trip back I was reflecting on my new buddies and the dive when we came upon a mother whale with her baby. Thankfully Peter stopped the boat as the calf was filled with the exuberance of life and breached over and over again. I thought the

excitement was over when we were going through the bar towards the boat ramp but looked up to see multi coloured hang gliders gently circling North Brother in the afternoon sun. I was tired out after an early start and a double dive but this was a perfect end to the day.

*Heather Armour*

For more pictures and info:  
[purg.com.au](http://purg.com.au)

## About PURG

PURG's aims are focused on the local marine environment and include:

- ?? Enhancing education
- ?? Promoting values
- ?? Conducting research including documenting outcomes and ongoing monitoring
- ?? Providing advocacy to government for conservation
- ?? Supporting links in the community
- ?? Acting as a vehicle for funding and project management
- ? Conducting rehabilitation activities

## Landcare Community Nursery

The Landcare Community Nursery provides indigenous plants grown from local provenance for community revegetation projects. This not-for-profit nursery makes your project's funding go further.

Contact Estelle on 65836508 or 0432141605 if you would like to volunteer at the nursery or need plants for your community project.

## The Green Book is back

The popular Resource Kit for Rural Landholders has been reprinted and is available from the Landcare Office. The resource kit has a range of information and contacts useful to new and established landholders.

It provides brief descriptions of natural resources: soils, water, native vegetation and pastures, and factors that impact on them. Included is a guide to more detailed information and relevant contacts in Government

departments and other organisations. The kits are available free of charge from the Landcare Office. Drop in today and pick up your copy.



Kit author, Harry Rose, at the kit launch in 2006. The latest edition has been updated.

# Rural Residential Living

Many people are opting out of city living and moving to areas where they can enjoy the peaceful tranquillity of a rural atmosphere without wanting or needing to create a commercial existence from the land.

Others, who have lived off the land for most of their life are also looking to downsize to smaller properties where they can still undertake some farming or agriculture, but on a smaller scale.

To cater for this demand developers and councils have introduced Rural Residential areas.

*Rural residential* refers to land in a rural setting, used and developed for dwellings that are not primarily associated with agriculture. Some agriculture may take place on the land, however it will be ancillary to the use for a dwelling. It is likely to be carried on for 'lifestyle' reasons and is unlikely to provide a significant source of household income. Rural residential land is typically also used for non-agricultural home occupations or for large gardens. These lots are larger than typical residential lots, but are usually too small for agricultural use.

Because of its primarily residential function, rural residential

development requires access to most of the normal services and infrastructure provided in urban settlements. Typically it also generates urban residential amenity expectations.



Moving to a rural residential property however, requires a whole new set of skills and knowledge than those needed for living in town. It often requires some understanding of how to manage weed, land, water, animal, fire and biodiversity considerations. However finding information and assistance in this regard can often be a time consuming and complex task.

The Hunter—Central Rivers CMA in collaboration with many other

government agencies and community groups has developed a guide which is accessible at [ruralresidentialliving.com.au](http://ruralresidentialliving.com.au)

The Guide brings together a range of existing information and resources to assist in implementing activities that may be suited to a rural residential property. It will also assist in understanding and addressing the many land management issues and challenges that owners may face. The resources included in the Guide have been developed by a range of government agencies, local councils, community organisations and others, however have not previously been brought together in one readily accessible location.

Topics which are covered include: neighbours, property planning, cultural heritage, water, weeds, waste management, bushfires, vegetation, water flow, wildlife, livestock & pets, gardening, pests, fencing, energy, soil and legal issues. Under each of these main topics is a list of associated websites that will assist in researching any issues.

The kit is also available on disc from the Hastings Landcare office.

## Northern Rivers Biodiversity Management Plan

The Northern Rivers region covers 50,000 sq kms of north eastern NSW extending from the Camden Haven north to the Queensland border and inland as far as Armidale. The area features a range of public lands including 22% national parks and 12% state forest. Whilst a number of major populations centres occur along the coast, the majority of the area, around 59% is private land used primarily for farming and forestry.

The plan covers all land tenures and seeks to encourage all land

managers, including the indigenous community, to get involved in threatened species recovery planning and on-ground delivery.

The vision of the plan is to provide for the future conservation of the exceptional natural environment within the region by identifying threats and providing priority actions for the recovery of threatened species and communities and the maintenance and repair of landscape connectivity. A draft plan is proposed to be completed in late Dec 08.

For further info or to provide comment please refer to

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/biodiversity/nrbiodiversitymanagementplan.htm>.

Requests for info or to submit comments can also be sent to:

Plan Coordinator, Northern Rivers  
BMP, Department of Environment  
and Climate Change  
Locked Bag 914  
Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

## Same office, new staff member, new initiatives

Over the last six months, the Landcare office has been a pretty busy place. In September we said farewell to Anne Rudd who had been doing volunteer office work for us since September 2007. Anne did an average of one day per week over this time and achieved a lot, doing tasks which we just could not get around to! Thank you Anne for your work, patience and good humour!

In June of this year, Paul Scott joined us doing 1-2 days of volunteer work per week. In September, after experiencing his many talents, the Committee decided to employ Paul for two days work per week. Paul is working on administrative tasks and getting us all organised so the office can operate more efficiently and effectively. Paul has managed to develop a reporting system to the NRCMA for our CSO contract which makes reporting much easier and this has been introduced to the other networks for their use.

He has also been updating all our GIS records so that we have up to date layers on all previous grant projects as well as the locations of landholders who have expressed an interest in funding.

The list of landholders interested in funding has also been updated so that they can readily be contacted when funding becomes

available. If you are interested in going on this list, please contact the office and we will send you a survey form.

We are also establishing a Natural Resources Management Network to better coordinate funding priorities and projects and be aware of all the current projects in the region. Wetland Care, PMHC, Mid North Coast Weeds Advisory Committee, Mid North Coast Dairy Advancement Group, Comboyne Community Association and NRCMA are all involved in this network. With the latest GIS mapping from the council, we are aiming to work towards a regional project which we can apply for in partnership with these agencies.

The website is a work in progress and Cath has got it to a stage where it is almost ready to go, BUT we still need YOUR input! Please email contributions including information on your group through to the office ASAP.

The Indian Myna project is continuing with the number of enquiries not abating. The Mens Shed at Timbertown are now involved and are constructing the PGs traps for us at cost to try and meet demand.

So, we are busy little bees (as you all are out there too!). The office is still open Tuesdays to Fridays but our individual work days are:



**Cath - CSO:**

Tuesdays and alternating between a Wed and a Thurs (opposite to Paul)



**Ann - CSO:**

Thursdays and Fridays



**Paul - Admin:**

Tuesdays and alternating between a Wed and a Thurs (opposite to Cath)



**Ingrid - Indian Mynas:**

Wednesday

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## Workshops on Biological Farming and Holistic Management

A workshop on Biological Farming and Healthy Soils by Dr Maarten Stapper will be held in Wauchope on the 2nd Mar 2009. Workshop topics will cover soil biology, including boosting microbe numbers, and diversity, plant health and drought tolerance, improving food and feed quality, effective organic and non organic weed control, nutrient storage-availability and uptake and how to move away from reliance on

synthetic pesticides & fertilisers.

For further info contact Hastings Landcare office 6586 4465 or email [hastingslandcare@midcoast.com.au](mailto:hastingslandcare@midcoast.com.au)

### Using animals to stop stream erosion?

Brian & Kerry Wehlburg will be hosting a Holistic Mgt Field Day on their Kindee property on the 18th January 09. Topics will include

Insights into time controlled/planned grazing/cell grazing, measuring feed in paddocks, planned grazing to improve animal nutrition and \$ return, measuring rate of growth of pasture plants to stop overgrazing, benefits of grazing charts, using animals to reduce weeds and using animals to stop stream erosion.

Bookings are essential for catering purposes. Please contact Hastings Landcare.

# Carbon: the next big farm commodity?

Make no mistake: carbon trading is going to be a fact of life. What that means for agriculture is largely in the hands of the farm sector.

Last week, Federal Climate Change minister Penny Wong made it clear at the CarbonExpo 2008 conference that there are no last-minute second thoughts from government about carbon trading and the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS).

But it was the fact of the conference itself that really jolted home to me the realisation that carbon has arrived as a new commodity.

The conference hosted about 1100 people from 24 countries. The place was solid with suits—development bankers, financiers, carbon traders and technology company execs prominent among them. They were there to get in on the ground floor on a business that by 2050 is expected to be turning over \$10 trillion—more than today's oil industry.

The overwhelming impression is that serious money is heading into carbon. Globally, about \$64 billion went that way in 2007.

Where the money goes, agriculture can't afford not to follow.

But while the business community is focused on the opportunities offered by carbon trading, the prevailing conversation in the Australian agricultural sector is about the potential for disaster.

There's no question that the early iterations of the CPRS will be imperfect—in fact, it's never going to be perfect—and it will create winners and losers. If farmers focus on the costs, and not the opportunities, they stand to be among the losers.

Right now, we know one thing about the CPRS: ag isn't in it. That means we can be fairly certain of a second

fact: farmers will become the recipients of extra costs passed down from suppliers, and carbon costs deducted from farm products by those they supply.

Because the CPRS is going to have a "soft start", and because hopefully the government has enough common sense not to kill the golden goose and so buffer agriculture from any extreme flow-on costs of the CPRS, farmers are unlikely to initially feel much pain.

Ag is going to be asked to carry its weight, however, whether it's within or outside the CPRS. The screws on this scheme are tightened gradually. By 2020, if business goes on as usual, they might begin to really hurt.

But only if farmers fail to harness carbon as a commodity.

Farmers work with the ultimate solar-powered system, the plant



kingdom, which has the ability to take excess carbon from the atmosphere and turn it into something useful—including grain, meat, timber, and soil fertility.

Businesses across the planet increasingly want a new plant-generated product, carbon, and agriculture is uniquely placed to supply it—and at the same time increase its soil fertility, its ability to harvest rainfall, and grow crops and

pastures.

It's a matter of applying a little human ingenuity and joining the dots.

There are currently some gaping holes in this plan, notably the interface that links carbon-conservation farming with carbon accounting systems. But the inexorable power of the market is at work. The holes will be fixed—roughly to begin with, but enough to get some momentum.

All that agriculture needs from Canberra is a carbon trading environment that provides incentives to sequester carbon, and incentives to trade in it. That job done, Canberra should get out of the way.

Like any other farm commodity market, the main business of carbon trading will be between farmers, who have to learn how to stack this new commodity away on their farms, and the markets that are beginning to materialise.

Get this trade working, and it could be an overwhelming positive for agriculture. Not only does it give farmers the ability to mitigate the extra costs that will come with the CPRS, it can boost the productivity of every other commodity they produce. What other commodity does that?

Carbon trading is new, and for most it will demand a whole new set of skills. But right now, there's no reason to suppose that it's a negative for agriculture. It may be just the opposite.

*Matt Cawood*

Matt Cawood is based in the NSW New England region and is the science and environment writer for the Rural Press group of weekly agricultural newspapers.



## Thirsty Country

The dinner you ordered arrives, but it doesn't look like chicken and veg.

It looks just like water – several hundred litres of it. That's because Asa Wahlquist has opened your eyes to what becomes of Australia's water: much of it goes into food production.

Each calorie equates to one litre of water, or in the case of dairy products, 10 litres. In Australia the average person eats 2,800 calories a day. Most of our water wastage, comes from food waste.

Author of *Thirsty Country*, Asa Wahlquist is a rural journalist who has raised the alarm about our water problem. She spoke in October at a Laurieton dinner, where guests included several local politicians.

Asa reminds us that we live in the driest continent with the most variable rainfall, highest evaporation and lowest runoff.

Climate change is already upon us, and the CSIRO predicts Murray River flows will fall by 15% for every degree of increase in temperature.

This means the problems coming from over-extraction of river water for the production of food, will probably get worse.

She also notes that ethanol production consumes water: 4000 litres per litre of ethanol from corn or sugar. That's more than it takes to provide a day's food for one of us.

Which leads her to Peter Cullen's comment, that debates about water are debates about

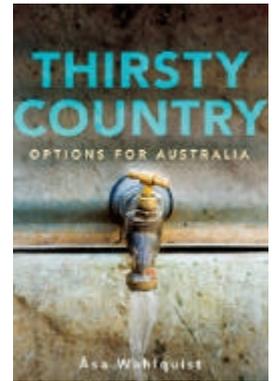
the kind of society we have.

For example, it's good news that Sydney is not short of water, even though its dam levels are low. The city actually has plenty of stormwater runoff, well in excess of what is supplied by Sydney Water.

In spite of this, Sydney fails to use this resource, and instead will have a desalination plant.

So is there anything we can do? You will be pleased to know our local community has an honourable mention in *Thirsty Country*, because we are already recycling water on a large scale.

Julie Ho



## Ngurrula Aboriginal Corporation – Building Nest Boxes for our Wildlife

Ngurrula Aboriginal Corporation is a CDEP, a federally funded training centre for local Aboriginal people in the Nambucca Valley. Ngurrula's CDEP operations have been set up to provide opportunities for Aboriginal communities of the Nambucca Valley.

They have a woodworking centre involving trainees manufacturing habitat nesting boxes and outdoor furniture. These boxes have been designed with input from environmental consultants.

Twenty standard boxes are now available and other designs can be made on request. A trained team is available for installation.

There are many animals and birds that use natural tree hollows for nesting and breeding as about 20% of our Australia wildlife don't build nests. Through clearing of native vegetation and the introduction of pest and weed species, hollows are fast becoming harder to find. The Indian Myna Bird is putting extra stress on the availability and use of natural hollows.

By the time the hollows inside trees

are large enough for Powerful Owls and Black Cockatoos those trees could be hundreds of years old. We need to protect trees with hollows in order not to lose the animals that live in them and/or compensate with nest boxes where we can.

Go to <http://ngurrula.com/habitat.php> or phone Rob Henry on 0407 901 066.

Ingrid Pullen



## Shelly Beach

### Real Estate

New homes for available for immediate occupation in the Shelly Beach area.

Two new homes were recently established in the Merinda Reserve at Port Macquarie. These sturdy dwellings were constructed by the handy craftsmen at Douglas Vale, using only the finest natural timbers (one also comes with carpet).

Mounted high on eucalypt trees and overlooking the bushland canopy, the homes have a picturesque south-easterly aspect. The residences would be well suited to either a feathered or furry family, with tendencies for nocturnal habits.

A relatively quiet area within a koala corridor, this bushland cul-de-sac has only occasional pedestrian traffic. However, the Koala Hospital staff has been seen relocating various individuals to the area over the years.

Neighbours will include the highly reproductive Tawny Frogmouth family (parents annually producing 3 or 4 chicks) but who pretty much keep to themselves, the rowdy galahs nesting in the old hollow, and a diamond python snake. Numerous other birds will fly in and out on the area depending on seasons, and the koalas will be constantly climbing the tree next door and keeping you up nights when mating in Spring and Summer.

Janet Watson

# ‘BEST PIC’ – SHADE and SHELTER BELT species

**TREES NATIVE TO THE MID-NORTH COAST.** Prepared by Daintry Gerrand, DPI Kempsey

The ‘best pic’ selection of species on this leaflet are long-lived species suitable for open areas which have a moderate growth rate.

There are often complaints that ‘the natives do not grow as quickly’ as the weed species etc and that the landowner desires ‘fast growing shade species’. The problem with the majority of fast growing species is that they invariably live a very short time – a little bit of patience and good management of the plantings will ensure long-lived shade trees.

It is recommend that plantings be established plantings in blocks of mixed species. Site preparation (deep ripping, mounding, weed and grass control), fertilisation and

watering to promote active growth are essential activities for success.

Early tip-pruning to encourage canopy spread is also a good practice and will develop a better quality shade tree.

Also consider having options for ‘spelling’ or rotating access to shade areas in order to minimise impacts of compaction and nutrient build up. Use electric fencing to compartmentalise areas.

For areas where you require winter sun a range of deciduous species are suitable. For assistance with deciduous species contact your local nurseryman and seek advice on suitable species for your situation. Be careful to select species which do

not have the capacity to naturally regenerate or sucker profusely. Species such as Chinese Elm, Paulownia, Gleditsea should be avoided due to their capacity to invade remnant bushland.

Waterlogged areas may need to be drained and mounded and species such as Melaleuca chosen for their tolerance to poor drainage.

Or what about mangoes or macadamia trees – they serve dual purposes.

*Your local Landcare office will be able to help you with suitable nurseries to source local native tube-stock for you planting project.*

Botanical name	Common Name	Good as individual shade tree Or as part of a shelter belt	Best as part of a shelter belt
<b>Medium sized trees</b>			
<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	Blackwood Wattle		☞
<i>Acmena smithii</i>	Lilly Pilly		
<i>Allocasuarina torulosa</i>	Forest Oak		☞
<i>Alphitonia excelsa</i>	Red Ash		☞
<i>Callistemon salignus</i>	Pink-tipped Bottlebrush	☞	☞
<i>Callistemon viminalis</i>	Weeping Bottlebrush	☞	☞
<i>Melaleuca stypheloides</i>	Prickly-leaved Tea-tree	☞	☞
<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>	Native Daphne		☞
<i>Syzygium australe</i>	Lilly Pilly	☞	☞
<i>Tristaniopsis laurina</i>	Water Gum	☞	☞
<b>Taller trees</b>			
<i>Eucalyptus microcorys</i>	Tallowwood	☞	☞
<i>Lophostemon confertus</i>	Brush Box	☞	☞
<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>	Rusty leaf Fig	☞	
<i>Ficus macrophylla</i>	Moreton Bay Fig	☞	
<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i>	Broad-leaved Paperbark	☞	☞
<i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i>	Turpentine	☞	☞
<i>Waterhousea floribunda</i>	Weeping Lilly Pilly	☞	☞



Weeping Bottlebrush



Tallowwood

Hastings Landcare

44a Cameron St

PO Box 126

WAUCHOPE 2446

02 65 864 465

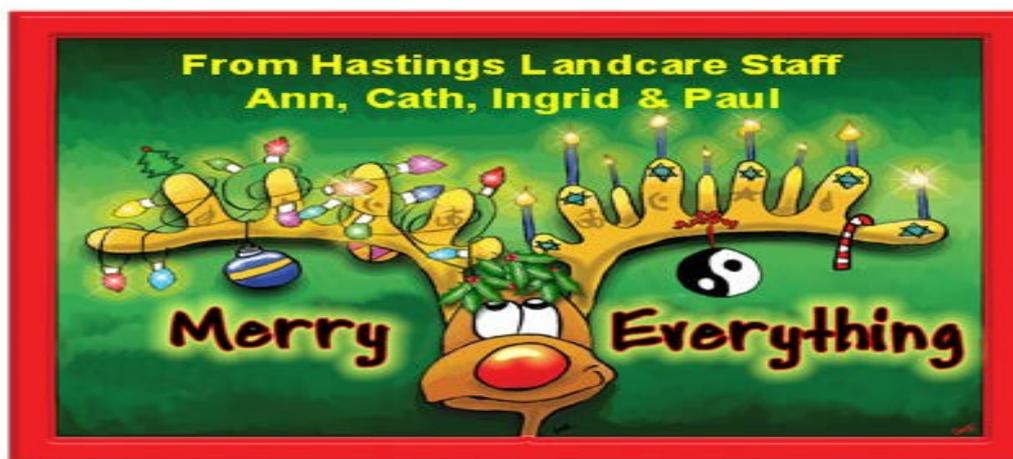
[hastingslandcare@midcoast.com.au](mailto:hastingslandcare@midcoast.com.au)



Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, the National Landcare Program and the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority support the production and distribution of this newsletter.

*HatCH* presents a forum for the expression of a range of opinions. The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of Hastings Landcare Inc. or its employees. While every effort is made to publish accurate information, Hastings Landcare Inc. and its employees do not accept responsibility for statements made and opinions expressed in this newsletter. We invite and appreciate your contributions.

Special thanks to contributors Julie Ho, Daintry Gerrand, Janet Watson & Heather Armour.



## Don't forget your website contributions

Hastings Landcare expects to launch our website in the very near future and we are seeking contributions of photographs, information and stories from your group, your project or your relevant field of interest.

Please call the office for details on the style of information we are seeking or send an email with your idea.  
[hastingslandcare@midcoast.com.au](mailto:hastingslandcare@midcoast.com.au) 6586 4465

## Life on the Edge

Australians are being challenged to live "life on the edge" this summer by collectively travelling the entire length of Australia's coastline – a whopping 36,000 kilometres - whilst helping to raise one million dollars in support of Coastcare projects nationwide. You can walk, ride, swim or run and complete 100km sections of the coast as a team over the summer. Register with [lifeontheedge.org.au](http://lifeontheedge.org.au)

## Calendar of Events

For further information on these coming events please ring Hastings Landcare

Hastings Landcare Inc. meeting	17 December 2008
Australian Government <b>Caring For Our Country</b> info session (replaces Envirofund, National Landcare Program and others)	Coffs Harbour 17 December 2008
Holistic Management field day with Brian Wehlburg	Kindee 18 January 2009
Biological Farming workshop with Dr Maarten Stapper	Bellinger 2 March 2009
Wauchope Alternative Farming Field Days	14-15 March 2009
NSW Landcare Forum and State Landcare Awards	Port Macquarie 10-11 September 2009