

Landcare Christmas gathering

14th December, 2011

all members and their families
welcome !!

please call the office to for
details.

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Carbon and Clean Energy Future
update

DUNG Beetles



*supporting voluntary natural resource management in
the Hastings and Camden Haven catchments*



**Daintry Gerrand and Paul Scott—
Hastings Landcare Support Officers**

Vanessa McTyer New President of Hastings Landcare



Vanessa McTyer has been a member of Hastings Landcare for the past six years after relocating to the region with her partner Matthew Bailey in 2005.

She was previously involved with Wollombi Landcare in the NSW Hunter Valley.

Vanessa and Matthew live on 200 acres at Comboyne where they operate a tubestock nursery supplying provenance-specific plants to order.

Approximately half of their property is maintained under formal conservation agreement and they also raise a small number of beef cattle, meat rabbits and poultry. Currently they are also trialling tree crops for production horticulture.

Vanessa has been involved in the natural resource management (NRM) industry for over fifteen years, working for local government and private enterprise as a bush regenerator and propagator of local native plants. She holds professional memberships with both the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators (AABR) and the Nursery and Garden Industry of Australia (NGIA).

Currently Vanessa and Matthew run Bolwarra Environmental Services P/L (BES), an environmental restoration business providing consultancy, management plans, flora/fauna surveys, bush regeneration, weed control, revegetation, seed collection and plant supply. BES commenced operation in 1998 on the outskirts of Sydney. Vanessa holds vocational qualifications in Conservation & Land Management and Horticulture, and recently graduated with a degree in Training and Development which focused on training strategies relevant to NRM and agricultural industries. She intends to continue studies in postgraduate environmental management in 2012.

Vanessa is looking forward to contributing to land management in the Hastings region over the next twelve months and urges members to contact her with any issues they would like to discuss.

Vanessa can be contacted via: Telephone: 02 6550 4080

Email: vanessa@bolwarra.com, Mail: PO Box 77 Comboyne NSW 2429



NRCMA activity in the southern part of the region.



contributed by

Steve MacDonald—Board Member—NRCMA

INTRODUCING Steve MacDonald

Steve was a former secondary high school Science and Agriculture teacher before swapping chalk for microphone to become a Rural Reporter with ABC radio for 27 years. As a Broadcaster, Steve has covered an array of farming issues together with stories on the management of natural resources, compiling and presenting relevant interviews for air. From this experience he gained a wide understanding of landholders interests and concerns about their enterprises and projects. Steve has witnessed, first hand, achievements of groups and individuals working towards achieving sustainable outcomes for the environment together with all the passion that comes from those efforts. Steve joined the CMA Board in April, 2008 .

It “never ceases to amaze” when I think of the level of NRM activity being initiated by the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority and appearing in the form of on-ground works conducted by that enthusiastic army of landholders and volunteers throughout this diverse region.

At any point in time, there is a large number of groups and individuals involved with an impressive variety of projects that have in some way been funded through the CMA as well as other funding bodies right down to the input by individual landholders.

The NRCMA, as you would know, is keen to see the level of engagement increase as much as possible to enable productive outcomes and strongly supports the spirit of collaboration to bring about effective outcomes.

This engagement comes in its various forms whether it be Landcare networks, Councils, government agencies, landholders or a combination of one or more bodies to achieve good outcomes that provide resilience to the environment. It is the cumulative effect that can be so powerful in achieving such positive outcomes. It increases the networking that happens for more positive results.

Here on the Mid-North and Far North Coasts and Northern Tablelands we have such a wonderful and diverse environment to work with which as everyone well knows, has its fair share of challenges.

As a bit of an idea of what has currently been happening in the southern part of the region here are some of the more recent projects.

- Integrated Threatened Species Recovery Maria River
- Implementation of the NSW Bitou Bush Threat Abatement Plan in the Port Macquarie area
- Recovery of Port Macquarie Littoral Rainforest.

There has also been funding allocated for soil studies as well as supporting sustainable farming activities.

NRCMA also directs funds into Hastings Landcare Inc to support ongoing work on a variety of projects. NRCMA Board acknowledges the invaluable work undertaken through Landcare.

NRCMA is responsible for addressing aquatic, soils and terrestrial projects that will result in strengthening the Natural Resources. Funding to gain a better understanding of the marine environment through research activities and allocating funding for things like better commercial fishing techniques are some of the areas of engagement. As well as responsibility for marine three nautical miles off the coast, the NRCMA also has Lord Howe Island under its wing for the allocation of funding for Natural Resource projects.

Small and sustainable

... the future of farming in the Hastings Valley...

In late 2009, funding of \$15,200 was received by Hastings Landcare from the Australian Governments Caring for our Country program, to run the above project.

Ann Eggert was appointed to co-ordinate the project which aimed to promote more sustainable land management practices in the Hastings Valley, specifically those holdings owned by farmers relatively new to the land, and/or those with smaller acreage. This was to be achieved through education and establishment of a network of information and support. A number of workshops were held throughout 2011 and a Small Farm Network website was established. It is hoped that this website will also be the basis for information sharing between landholders and others in the rural sector through a blog based discussion group.

As part of the project, 6 workshops were held across the catchment. The workshops were an introductory workshop, a soils workshop, a short Holistic Management course, a 'Nutrisoil' information session, a basic farming workshop and a 'tree' workshop (9 days in total). The total attendance at these workshops was almost 180 (85 individuals), with participants attending an average of almost two days each. A number of participants attended five to six of the nine days. Feedback from surveys completed after the workshops was overwhelmingly positive.

From these workshops, Hastings Landcare now has an email list of 63 individuals who are interested in finding out about any other workshops Hastings Landcare may be running in relation to this project. The website has also been well visited and is regularly updated with events, resources and links to other related websites. Part of the funding from this project was used to purchase satellite air-photos for participants in the workshop. A total of eighteen air-photos were provided to landholders, an essential tool in enabling them to plan their activities and more sustainably manage their land. A number of books on a variety of topics related to sustainable agriculture were also purchased and are available for borrowing by Hastings Landcare members. A list of these books can be found on the Small Farmers Network website.

For more information on this project, please call—

Hastings Landcare on 6586 4465 or visit the website at www.smallfarmnetwork.wordpress.com



Russ Glover - Woolgoolga Rainforest Products leads the session on 'Australian native food species'.



Andrew Hearne - Near River Produce at Pappinbarra demonstrates 'compost making'



Lachie Hollis, Koree Island, explaining his organic essential oil and garlic enterprise



plans to run a similar series of workshops on weekends in 2012.

BUBBLE and SQUIRT

contributed by Richard Cullen

Kids, Bubbles, mud-bricks, trees, work stations, trees, water pistols, more bubbles, kids, teachers, Landcare volunteers, what a mixture and all at Kendall Public School's Environment Day.

An Environment Day?

Yes, suggested by Kim Barry a parent and then the teachers other parent got on the bandwagon and on Wed 21st Sept the pupils and teachers (and CHLC) put on work gear and got involved.

Yeah but what went on? Kendall is a particularly fortunate primary school. In the 70's it was a Central School. By the 90's this had become a fully Senior School to Years 11 & 12. But when the High School moved to the brand new separate Camden Haven High School at Kew they left behind extensive grounds in a rural setting and a just planted three acre Rainforest with great potential.

Camden Haven Landcare had put in the odd (spasmodic) working bee at this RF site planted onto bare paddock in 1997/8. But in July This year the group made the decision to give this iconic and unique area (what other primary school has its own maturing RF?) some serious time. How serious? Since then the group has put in 49 hours during July, 28 hours in August and 53 hours in Sept! A record for a group with 15 members the most senior, Hazel, being 90 yrs of age? Hazel was a volunteer on the E Day. Another record? (By the way Hazel was reported for doing wheelies on her quad bike on her farm last month while on the way to check out the environmental work in her gullies.)

Back to E Day. Teachers, led by Michelle Budai and Justin Sheridan, had organised the pupils into a variety of environmental activities – working in the vegie patch, weeding & mulching, recycled art work from waste materials, and a visit to their Rainforest area. Ali Biggs from Midcoast Waste did a hands on session with all pupils exploring the whole recycling process.

There the pupils were divided into three groups of eight and moved around three stations with Lorraine Gill, a teacher and seven LC volunteers.

1st an exploration of a mud brick shed with Lorraine, how the bricks were made, how it was built, the feel of it, who built it.

2nd a tour of the RF along trails set up by LC. Our volunteers carried bags and when we 'discovered' the 'bad guys' (the weeds) marked with bright pink cattle marker paint, the pupils sprayed them with water pistols, with wondrous enthusiasm! Others blew their bubbles when they came to the 'good guys' mature red cedars, hoop pines, white beeches, native Tamarind, et al to make them feel calm and happy and ready to grow more.

Thankfully it was just tank water in those pistols and the bubbles beautifully reflected the forest as they celebrated growth, reaching to the sky, hope for the future and as they burst, the fragility of our environment.



For some interesting reading AND MORE 'FOOD FOR THOUGHT' !!

YOU may like to have a look The Ecological Agriculture Australia Association (EAAA) which was formed in November 2009 at Orange in Central West NSW. The EAAA vision and objectives are outlined below with key foci of the EAAA nested within ecology in the management of our natural resources and the communities that reside there. The key activities of EAAA are expressed through the five pillars of ecology (natural & social), ethics, education, farming and food.

Website— www.ecoag.org.au

GRASSES, LEGUMES and HERBS Field Days



Carol Rose and Harry Rose led 2 very informative days last week at Bellangry and Ellenborough on 'Grasses, Legumes and Herbs' of the North Coast. Hastings Landcare, on behalf of the 49 landholders who attended, wishes to thank David & Lyn Jenkins and Ian & Jill McKittrick for hosting the days.

The focus was on recognition of a variety of paddock plants and their management for production, biodiversity and sustainability. Carol Rose, DPI Agronomist said that '...most pastures on the coast contain a large number of grasses and other herbaceous species. The composition of the pasture can vary greatly from year to year depending on climate, grazing regimes and fertiliser, and other factors, giving producers the scope to alter species composition to meet their management and sustainability goals.'

Carol also stressed that '... many plants are indicators of certain conditions, such as compaction or acidity and so can be used to guide management decisions.'

Grant Taylor—Weeds officer from Port Macquarie Hastings Council and Terry Schmitzer, the Regional Weed Management Officer for the Mid North Coast Regional Weeds Committee also attended the days with valuable information on weed species and pasture management. Along with information on the **new WEED ALERT** Tropical Soda Apple.

A limited number of the excellent field guide books used at the workshops - Grasses of the Mid North Coast and 'Legumes and Herbs of the MNC' are available from Landcare Office. CD versions are also available. New expanded edition guides, due out early next year cover the entire NSW coastline and will be available for \$20 a copy.

Hastings Landcare plans to run 2 similar workshops on weekends in February & March , 2012



Top Left— Bellangry Field Day with Carol Rose.
Above—Ellenborough Field Day with Harry Rose.

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Successful Rehabilitation of Wompoo Fruit-dove



contributed by Matthew Bailey & Vanessa McTyer

Late one afternoon at the beginning of September, we came across an injured Wompoo Fruit-dove sitting on the ground by the side of the road at Comboyne. Although otherwise healthy it appeared to have suffered some kind of collision injury, possessing a small cut and missing feathers from the area above its left wing.

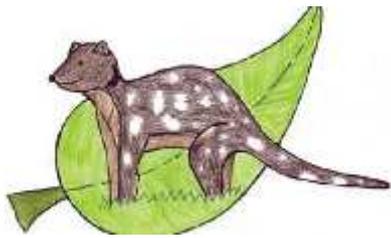
Local veterinarian Dr Michael Azzopardi performed the initial assessment before recommending that the bird be examined by the staff of East Port Veterinary Hospital. Dr Michaella Griffin – who has a particular interest in avian medicine – undertook a thorough examination including radiography of the affected wing. This showed that although significant tissue damage had occurred, the wing itself was not broken. Dr Griffin prescribed a course of treatment involving antibiotics and pain relief medication, and after a return visit to East Port Vets one week later the pigeon was successfully released at the Comboyne site.

The Wompoo Fruit-dove (*Ptilinopus magnificus*) is a large rainforest pigeon easily identified by its colourful plumage - purple throat, chest and upper belly, yellow lower belly, green underparts, pale grey head and conspicuous yellow wing-bar. Over fifty-one species of fruit-bearing trees, palms, vines and epiphytes have been identified as feed trees of the Wompoo Fruit-dove, including quandongs, laurels, figs and cudgeries. Wompoo Fruit-doves are considered important dispersers of mature-phase rainforest plant species.

Wompoo Fruit-doves are classified as Vulnerable under the Threatened Species Conservation act, primarily due to clearing and burning of rainforest areas for grazing, logging, fragmentation of habitat and weed invasion. The Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) recommends the following activities to assist the species' recovery: planting locally-occurring fruit-bearing trees and shrubs; protecting remnant rainforest and moist forest habitat; initiating weed control and rainforest regeneration projects; retaining forested corridors that link east-to-west migration routes; and protecting known and potential feed trees.

We wholeheartedly wish to thank Dr Gary Turnbull (owner of East Port Veterinary Hospital) and Dr Michaella Griffin for their provision of expertise and support in the rehabilitation of this unique and valuable individual.

Australian Govt NSW Education Landcare Awards FINALIST



Congratulations to Westport High School 'Environment Team' (WET)

for being a FINALIST in the NSW Landcare Awards. The teachers and students involved in the WET Project—Rainforest Learning Centre and Nature Trail are to be congratulated on a great program. WET members gave an excellent presentation at the NSW Landcare Awards recently held in Parkes.

Food for thought

"You are either an ecologist or a lost soul"

The word ecology comes from the Greek 'oikos' and 'logos', ancient, sacred words. Logos can mean story, mystery or meaning, and oikos means house, home or astrological domain. Moore suggests that combined it could translate as "the mystery of being at home in this life," on this Earth. To live ecologically you are part of life, family and community. "Getting the big and the small to complement each other is part of the world of ecology. This is where society and person come together, where science and psychology meet, where nature and the individual share the same life. Ecology is the making and tending of life". "Ecology is basically a form of love, and only out of love for life can you find good reason for protecting your environment." It is a 'sacred art' and "the primary work of us all and you are either an ecologist or a lost soul"

From an article by Thomas Moore in "Resurgence" No.219

North Coast Regional Landcare Network NEWS AGM & State Awards winners



Contributed by Neville Sloss

The first forum for community representatives and Landcare staff across the Northern Rivers catchment has been hailed an outstanding success.

More than 50 representatives from Landcare attended the two day event at Arrawarra, north of Coffs Harbour. It was held to develop skills, share ideas and produce greater collaboration across the region.

It also coincided with Annual General Meeting of North Coast Regional Landcare Network which includes all the major Landcare networks from the NSW/Qld border south beyond Port Macquarie and west to Tenterfield and Armidale.

The newly elected president of the network, Neville Sloss from Richmond Landcare Inc said the event reflected the amount of support and commitment to Landcare across the region.

"The North Coast Regional Landcare Network began only two years ago with the support of the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority and we now employ two Regional Landcare Facilitators through the Federal Caring for our Country program."

At the AGM, others elected to the committee were:

Brian Dodd	Vice-President (Chair of Clarence Valley Landcare & former North Coast RLN President)
Colin Matthews	Vice-president (Community Support Officer for Bellinger Landcare)
Daintry Gerrand	Secretary (Vice-President & Community Support Officer, Hastings Landcare)
Craig Stehn	Treasurer (Community Support Officer, Coffs Harbour Landcare)

"Since we had our regional forum, the NSW Landcare Forum was held last week and it was a credit to our region that we had finalists in seven of the 12 Award categories, with three wins and two highly commended awards."

South West Rocks Dune Care won the Coastcare Award, Bob Jarman from Northern Landcare Support Services won the Local Landcare facilitator/coordinator Award and Tweed and Byron Shire Councils won the Local Government Landcare Partnership Award.

Highly commended were the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority in the Natural Resource Management Award and the Yarrawarra Aboriginal Corporation in the Indigenous Award.

"Landcare is alive and strong in our Northern Rivers Region thanks to the support of the community and the NRCMA, working on many fronts including sustainable farming and biodiversity protection and

Hastings & Macleay Indian Myna Project



Left - Justine Elder, Project Officer
Above - Indian Mynas in 'PeeGees' Trap
(photo-Mike Gibbs, North Haven).

As reported in our last newsletter this joint project with the Macleay Landcare Network has received funding from the NSW Environmental Trust and the project has raced off to an enthusiastic start. Both the Hastings and Macleay Landcare Offices have been inundated with many inquiries generated from articles in the press.

Project Officer - Justine Elder has been employed to run the program, which will focus on monitoring the spread of the birds, public education, support for groups funded under the previous Hastings program, and establishing new action groups in Indian Myna hot spots to control, trap and remove the birds. Justine brings with her 15 years experience of community work in the natural resources sector, including Stream Watch and Catchment education in the north west of NSW and more recently working for NPWS on the north coast. She has also lived in the area for 10 years and has observed the birds increasing in number.

The first step for anyone taking part in the Indian Myna project is to do some monitoring. Monitoring will give us an idea of what the Myna birds are doing in each area and give information on the best way we can manage them. Sometimes we can interrupt their breeding cycle by removing their food source (pet food or bird seed) or by removing any opportunity that they have to roost or nest in your yard.

Once the monitoring sheets are returned to the Landcare Office we can then decide on the best way to treat the problem in each case. If trapping is required, you must be trained in trapping before we allocate you a trap. Remember if you trap you must be willing to humanely euthanize the birds by either cervical dislocation, gassing with CO₂, or by taking them to one of the vet clinics who are working with us on this project. All trapping comes with responsibility.

We are having a couple of training workshops in the next few months. These workshops cover trapping techniques and more information about this birds behaviour and issues, and you will also be able to meet other people trying to do the same thing. Workshops are scheduled for the 25th October from 10.00am to 12.00 noon at the Dunbogan Jubilee Hall and on the 30th November at the Wauchope Library.

There will be more workshops in early 2012. In the meantime.....

- Hastings Mens shed is making 9 more traps for us to get out into the community – thanks guys.
- We are working on a new Indian Myna website in conjunction with the Mid North Coast Indian Myna Project which is running to the north of here.
- Monitoring sheets and other information are available on the Hastings Landcare web-site.

Justine Elder can be contacted on **Mondays / Tuesdays at Macleay Landcare 02 65622076** ,
Wednesdays at Hastings Landcare 02 65 864465 or on her **MOBILE 0428 864465** if not in the office on those days.
Email - myna@macleaylandcare.org.au

Feral Animal Control in Western Australia & Victoria

Contributed by Vanessa McTyer

*Predation by the European red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) and predation by feral cats (*Felis catus*) are listed as key threatening processes by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). Both of these species are believed to have contributed to the decline and extinction of many species of native fauna including ground-dwelling and semi-arboreal mammals, ground-nesting birds, freshwater turtles, and frog and reptile species.*

The Western Australian Parliament has taken steps to combat the threats posed by feral cats by passing ground-breaking new legislation, the WA Cat Bill (2011). The following is an excerpt from Birds Australia's e-News (October 2011):

Some of its key features include mandatory registration, micro-chipping and sterilisation of all cats over 6 months old, and the provision for local governments to seize cats in any public place or on private property at the request of the owner/occupier. Owners of impounded cats can be charged for all the associated costs of the cat's incarceration, including the sterilisation and micro-chipping (which will be compulsory for the cat's release).

For full details of the new Act, go to: <http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/bills.nsf/BillProgressPopup?openForm&ParentUNID=F86394C3FA4A36BB482578B0001AFF0F>

Attempts to address the fox problem in Victoria are also underway, with the Victorian government paying \$10 for each fresh, dried or frozen fox scalp presented to specialist staff at DPI offices across the state. Wild dog scalps and hides will also attract a \$50 bounty per dog in designated wild dog control areas. (Report courtesy

Update on the

Comboyne Wildlife Recovery Project

Contributed by Matthew Bailey & Vanessa McTyer

During 2011 Bolwarra Environmental Services entered into the second year of the Comboyne Wildlife Recovery Project which aims to enhance conservation outcomes for threatened species and high conservation-value vegetation on public and private land at Comboyne. The project is funded by the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (NRCMA) with additional support from Port Macquarie Hastings Council (PMHC) and the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).

Project outcomes are being achieved via on-ground restoration works (including environmental weed control), threat abatement, habitat and corridor enhancement (including riparian and wildlife corridors) and vertebrate pest control. Fauna surveying is being conducted to augment existing low levels of local data and to inform better habitat management, whilst sub-catchment planning (to identify long-term strategic vegetation enhancement opportunities) is also being undertaken.

Initial fauna surveying activities performed during the first year of the project confirmed the presence of fifteen threatened or protected migratory species including Parma Wallaby, Wompoo Fruit-dove, Masked Owl and Yellow-bellied Sheathtail Bat. Predictably the greatest species diversity was observed at a site surrounded by 6000 ha of remnant vegetation. However a surprisingly large number of threatened and protected migratory fauna species were also detected within the intensively farmed area of the central Comboyne Plateau highlighting the ecological value of 'stepping stone' habitat remnants and the complexity of habitat restoration in intensively-farmed agricultural zones.

Farming activities and wildlife habitat management are by no means incompatible. By retaining remnant vegetation (including hollow-bearing trees), dead standing trees, creating wildlife corridors and installing nest-boxes, landholders are able to assist in the conservation of threatened species whilst at the same time benefitting from the presence of fauna. For example, many species of birds and microbats are highly effective at consuming insect pests that damage crops and pasture, and owls in particular have proved useful in reducing farm chemical usage via natural rodent control.

The proximity of Comboyne to the OEH-mapped Bulga to Port Macquarie connector corridor and Great Eastern Range Initiative corridor also means that landholders in the area possessing better-condition vegetation remnants may be favourably considered for voluntary conservation agreements with various organisations.

Comboyne landholders wishing to participate in the Comboyne Wildlife Recovery Project can contact Bolwarra Environmental Services on:

Telephone: 6550 4080

Email: beetle@bolwarra.com

Post: PO Box 77 Comboyne NSW 2429



IMPORTANT DATES

Indian Myna Workshop—10.00 to 12.00 Wauchope Library	30 November 2011
2011 Holistic Management Conference—Wingham	18/19/20 Nov. 2011
Landcare Christmas Gathering	14th December , 2011
Grasses, Legumes and Herbs Field Day - TBA	February and March,
'More beef from pastures' - series of Workshops with DPI	Commencing March 012
'Farm Gate Tour' - a self-guided tour giving access to a diversity of farms and enterprises. Local provenance produce will be available along the route. A range of NRM land management topics will also be delivered on-farm.	14th & 15th April, 2012
Biological farming— Internationally renowned Dr Marteen Stapper— a North Coast regional Landcare Activity at Eggerts RedBank Dairy	12th March, 2012

Contact Us

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LANDCARE COMMUNITY NURSERY

community nursery for community re-vegetation

The role of the nursery is to provide indigenous plants grown from local provenance. This not-for-profit nursery enables your project's funding to go further.

Address: NPWS Area Depot, end of Blackbutt Rd, Port Macquarie
Times: Monday morning 9am—12 noon
Other times by arrangement
Contact: Estelle Gough

WAUCHOPE COMMUNITY GARDEN Vegetable Seed Exchange

Hastings Landcare now stock vegetable seeds from the Wauchope Community Garden.

If you would like to grab some seed just drop into the office. They are free.

You are also invited to drop into the garden to see whats going on etc.

The garden is opened Mon, wed, Fri 9.30 to 1.30

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. Thanks to contributors to this issue: Richard Cullen, Steve MacDonald, Vanessa McTyer, Matthew Bailey, Neville Sloss.

