



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

## THIS ISSUE Contains

- *Biological Farming happenings*
- *Farm gate Tour Follow-up*
- *Meet our President— Brian Irving*
- *Madiera Vine—New WONS & Control ideas*
- *Field Day info*
- *Indian myna update*
- *Feral Scan*
- *TAX Time*
- *Resources available*
- *Events Calender*

## ‘...it’s not rocket science! It’s much more complicated than that’



**Gary Zimmer books  
are available for  
borrowing through the  
Landcare Office LIBRARY**

On the 17th of July some 18 Hastings catchment locals ventured to the Dorrigo Plateau to hear international soil health expert Gary Zimmer and his daughter, researcher and ecologist, Leilani Zimmer-Durand, speak on biological farming. The day was hosted by North Coast Regional Landcare Network and Bellingen Landcare.

Gary, known as the ‘father of biological farming’ is an incredibly enthusiastic and entertaining presenter and valuable source of knowledge. He’s an internationally published author, researcher and consultant and also has the dirt under his fingernails through running his own organic dairy farm for some 25 years.

Now more than ever techniques like biological farming are key to helping farmers save dollars. Whether it be through pasture cropping, holistic pasture management, compost, mineral balancing, green manure crops, bio products, biodiversity or other techniques to manage land using more natural systems.

### Key points that I brought home from the day were :

- soil testing is one thing—but available nutrient in the forage material is another - there needs to be more emphasis on *leaf analysis / tissue testing* to see what is actually in the crop.
- Greater diversity in cover crops and pastures is important and it has been proven that **‘collaboration is more important than competition’ -even in the plant world!!!**
- Diversity in pastures / crops, builds diversity in soil biology and RESILIENCE within the farming system.
- Improving soil biology raises pH levels making nutrients and minerals available. **‘Regenerative farming’** is the new concept—it is about regenerating our soils—not sustaining them in their often depleted state.

We are keen to get a **BIOLOGICAL FARMING COURSE— 8-10 sessions at 3–4 week intervals running starting in October—this course would be offered through TAFE .**  
Please call the Office to **EXPRESS your INTEREST .**

**Sea Acres Rainforest Centre is calling for high quality photographs of local national parks (Hastings area) for a new permanent exhibition called Spirit of the Land opening in September 2012.**

*Spirit of the Land* is the title for what will be a "must see" multi-media interpretive experience for visitors to be created downstairs at Sea Acres Rainforest Centre. The exhibition will feature film, display and interactive elements, taking the viewer on a virtual journey through Birpai Country and into the iconic national parks of the region.

Spirit of the Land is a collaborative effort involving a range of local organisations including the Birpai Local Aboriginal Land Council, ABC Open, North Coast Institute of TAFE Information Technology and Creative Industries, NovaSkill and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (part of Office of Environment & Heritage OEH). Many of the participants have volunteered their time to support this community project.

You're invited to contribute to this exciting community project by sending us your best nature or wildlife images for inclusion on interpretive panels and displays in the exhibition.

**Images of the following parks in the Hastings Region are needed:**

Sea Acres National Park  
Crowdy Bay National Park  
Dooragan National Park  
Kattang Nature Reserve  
Werrikimbe national Park  
Boorganna Nature Reserve  
Queens Lake Nature Reserve

**Image specifications:**

Quality: high quality images are needed – minimum 300 dpi or >2MB jpeg files.

Supplied: as separate image files via e-mail or disk. Naming protocol:

Title\_reserve\_photographer.jpg eg  
Sunrise\_DooraganNP\_MSmith.jpg

**Use restrictions:** We reserve the right to use your image, in part or whole, within the overall graphic or interpretive design in the exhibition.

**Contact for more information:**

Sea Acres Rainforest Centre, Ph: 02 6582 3355  
email: [SeaAcres@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SeaAcres@environment.nsw.gov.au)

# Farm Gate Tour 2012



JUNE LONG WEEKEND  
9th, 10th, 11th

*'Informative, unexpected, engaging and inspiring! These are the words I would use to describe my recent experience of the Land-care Farm Gate Tours. I visited many properties over the long weekend and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I have a personal interest in sustainable land management so the learning aspect for me was great.*

*But I took my kids to some, mostly with animals - chickens, pigs and cows - and the interaction for them was exciting and educational.*



*So I want to congratulate you and thank you all for making it possible!*

Jane Ellis, Marketing and Promotions Coordinator in the Tourism and Economic Development Unit at Port Macquarie Hastings Council).

**Some 120 people experienced the Inaugural FARM GATE TOUR and planning is already underway for next year and some complementary. Hastings Land-care thanks the 10 farms which made the event a reality! .**

Barbushco, Brackenridge Berries, Harris Beef, Lorne Valley Macadamias, Falls Forest Retreat, Armstrong Oysters, Koree Island Herbs, Eggerts Dairy, Near River Produce and Kindee Valley Farm.

David Shepard 'Siteware' for graphic on logo and maps.

Martin Newell and staff at LJ Hooker, Laurieton for printing .

Cathy Eggert and Jeremy Bradley for 'Soil Biology Workshop'

Carol Rose Dept of Primary Industries for Paddock Plants Session.

# Soil Health and Pasture Management

## BIOLOGICAL FARMING 1

*Proposed Course in association  
with TAFE and Soil Care Inc.*

### Course topics

- Biological farming principles, Soil balance, Soil profiles, Composting
- Soil physical properties, Texture, Structure, Soil water, Construct compost heap
- Soil carbon/Organic matter, Soil biology, Soil foodwebs, Biodiversity, Soil Health Cards, Check compost
- Soil nutrition, pH, Soil testing, Plant nutrition, Plant physiology and nutrient uptake, Nutrient balance, Check compost
- Interpreting soil test results, Developing nutrition programs, Sources of nutrients
- Groundcovers/covercrops, Biological pasture management systems, Check compost
- Biological cropping systems, Ecosystem management, Develop soil management plan
- Soil degradation & management, Pest, disease & weed management
- Soil management plans, Revision, Check compost

**Field excursions and practical sessions will be a component of all classes. The Course will have a fee — yet to be defined.**

**Please Express your interest in this Course to the Landcare Office on 65 864465**



Primary  
Industries

## SOIL HEALTH ROADSHOW

**Nambucca, Macleay & Hastings  
planned for  
24th—29th of September**

Carol Rose, NSW Department of Primary Industries Kempsey-based agronomist, is in the process of planning an interesting and informative 1 day program. Please express your interest in this event by phoning the Landcare Office - 65 864465.

## PLANNING PASTURES & FARM MACHINERY

Planned for October - currently being planned

**Recent  
Paddock Plants  
Day  
at Red Hill.**



**Local soil biology discussion group starting—  
see 'Microherder's article on page 7.**

## ***MADIERA VINE and CATS CLAW— New WEEDS OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE***



### **The Taylor method for treating Madeira Vine**

(Andrew Paget – CAP Implementation Officer Hunter Central Rivers CMA)

After becoming frustrated with the normal scrape and paint technique, using a vegetable peeler or a knife to do the scraping, one of my friends, Geoff Taylor suggested that a wire brush could provide a suitable alternative tool for achieving the required stem exposure. We have now used this technique over the past year with excellent results.

The wire brush is used to abrade the surface layer from one (smaller diameter vines), or several, lengths of vine (about 20cm each) – each section requires only (say) 5 strokes with the wire brush. The 1:1 glyphosate water herbicide is then squirted/sprayed onto the exposed surfaces (using, for example, a 500ml spray bottle).

This technique has the advantages of:

- speed
  - safety; no sharp edge (knife or scraper)
  - more efficient exposure of the vine to the herbicide
- can be used for any diameter of vine (very fine vines can be broken, but the herbicide is taken up by the lower section, and there are no tubers on the top section).

An option for an additional improvement would be to incorporate a pad wipe system into a wire brush, so that one hand can hold the vines while the other abrades the stems and applies the herbicide (would avoid having to place the wire brush down and pick up the spray bottle).

## **Meet our President — Brian Irving**

Brian grew up on the family farm in Western Australia. Prior to his joining the Australian Army he was running the farm whilst his father was working off the farm.

After 23 years of service he started a new career as a Financial Advisor/Insurance Broker. He moved to the Port Macquarie area in 1998 and retired from that profession and purchased a 150 acre farm at Rollands Plains.

Brian initially fattened steers on the property and then moved into breeding of Angus weaners for sale in Wauchope and Kempsey. He actively improved the property. Grants from various sources were successfully negotiated. With these grants he fenced off Bril Bril Creek which runs through the property, provided off stream watering systems and put in subdivisional fencing for more effective stock/pasture management. Additionally a large area of steep wooded land was excluded from stock. The program was finalised when 3000 trees were planted to provide wind shelter belts and water flow control.

In 2010 Brian and his wife Dianne sold the farm and moved to Port Macquarie to enjoy some time together. Brian “volunteered” for the Chairman position in Hastings Land Care earlier this year.

## Myna News

The long breeding season is now officially over for the Indian Mynas, and they will be returning to their communal roosting sites for winter. If you notice a build up of Indian Mynas in your area – usually in their hundreds - you are probably playing host to their winter roost. Please call in these roost sites to Justine so that they can be recorded, and we can have a chat about how to manage them. Ph 0428 864 465 or email [myna@macleaylandcare.org.au](mailto:myna@macleaylandcare.org.au). Check out our new Indian Myna Website. [www.indianmynaproject.com.au](http://www.indianmynaproject.com.au) We have piggy backed with the long running Indian Myna project to the north to put together this site. It includes all our resource material (also available on the Hastings Landcare site) plus, you can see the ongoing tally of birds caught. A new feature is the forum section, where you can put your IM questions or observations out into cyber space to be answered or commented on by other trappers. A great resource. Make sure you have a go.

**Birds on a wire – a common winter sight (image: [www.feralscan.org.au](http://www.feralscan.org.au))**

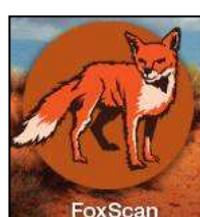
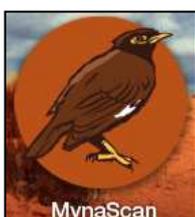


## Do you want more information on feral pests??

Feralscan is a website supported by the DPI, Caring For our Country, and the Invasive Animals CRC, among others, which allows landholders to actively report sightings of feral animals. “Citizen science” they call it. *You* enter sightings of various pests onto a map, and the results will give pest managers information on how to locate resources to control the various pests. There is also up to date information on the latest research into each pest. Indian Myna Project officer Justine Elder is uploading all information collected through our indian

myna project to this site. You can see where the bad infestations of Mynas are in both the Hastings and Macleay areas, and compare to other areas.

For the site to be accurate, it is important that as many people as possible pass on their information. So don't be shy, we know there's lots of frustrated feral watchers out there. Its easy to upload information, so look it up and have a go. It may result in better resources coming our way!!



## **ITS TAX TIME ! Check out the ATO – for Landcare Information** *there may be some useful information for you.*

Home > Businesses > Industries & business types - Primary Producers > Advanced topics > Landcare & water  
Landcare operations

### **Check with your Tax Agent or Accountant about your individual situation and the latest information.** **Introduction (extract from ATO site)**

Landcare operations cover what were previously known as land degradation measures. You can claim a deduction in the year you incur capital expenditure on a landcare operation for land in Australia. The deduction is reduced if the land is not used wholly for either:

- a primary production business, or
- a business for the purpose of producing assessable income from the use of rural land – except a business of mining or quarrying.

A landcare operation is one of the following operations:

- eradicating or exterminating animal pests from the land
- eradicating, exterminating or destroying plant growth detrimental to the land
- preventing or combating land degradation other than by the use of fences
- erecting fences to keep out animals from areas affected by land degradation to prevent or limit further damage and assist in reclaiming the areas
- erecting fences to separate different land classes in accordance with an approved land management plan
- constructing a levee or similar improvement, or
- constructing drainage works - other than the draining of swamps or low-lying areas - to control salinity or assist in drainage control.

An approved land management plan is a plan that:

- shows the different classes within the land and the location of any fencing needed to separate any of the land classes to prevent land degradation describes the kind of fencing and how it will prevent land degradation, and
- has been prepared by, or approved in writing as a suitable plan for the land by: an officer of an Australian government agency responsible for land conservation who has authority to do so, or an individual who was at the time approved as a farm consultant.

A register of authorised consultants who can prepare land management plans for the purposes of landcare deductions is held by the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry. Information about gaining access to the register is available on the DAFF website .

No deduction is available if the capital expenditure is on plant unless it is on certain fences, dams or other structural improvements. In each case, apart from the construction of a levee, the operation must be carried out primarily and principally for the purpose stated. This is to ensure that the deduction for expenditure on landcare operations and the three-year write-off for water facilities cannot both be claimed for the same item of expenditure.

Were a levee is constructed primarily and principally for water conservation, it is a water facility.

If you are carrying on a primary production business on the land, you may claim the deduction even if you are only a lessee of the land. Any recoupment of the expenditure would be assessable income.

These deductions are not available to a partnership. Expenses for landcare operations incurred by a partnership are allocated to each partner who can then claim the relevant deduction in respect of their share of the expenditure.

# RESOURCES

## LANDCARE COMMUNITY NURSERY

*community nursery for community re-vegetation*

The role of the nursery is to provide local provenance indigenous plants. This not-for-profit nursery operated by Port Macquarie Landcare Group enables your project's funding to go further.

**Address:**

NPWS Depot, end of Blackbutt Rd, Port Macquarie

**Times:**

Monday 9am—12 noon

Other times by arrangement.

**Contact:** Estelle Gough

6583 6508 / 0432 141605

## WICK WIPER—

available for loan from Hastings Landcare. Contact the Office

## 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.

## Hastings Microherder Group to Start— 14th August at 6pm—7.15 pm

**Microherding** is a new term for a very old practice. Traditional farming relied on stimulating the soil organisms to maintain, or increase, fertility. Our great grandfathers were microherders, but they could not see their mob of microbes. They just knew what produced good crops and did it.

**Modern microherders are farmers and gardeners who focus their skills on the biology in their soil.** They believe that the millions of microbes present in every spoonful of soil are the key to successful and sustainable agriculture.

*Soil consists of minerals and organic matter. The organic matter is everything that is, or was, alive. We can all see the larger organisms in the soil and know that good soil will have crumbly texture, plants with long roots and lots of worms. It is the soil organisms that we can't see that 'organise' the soil. They enable the free flow of air and water, fix nitrogen, make minerals available to plants and fight disease.*

*Microherders use microscopes that allow them to look at, and identify, what organisms are present in our soil and what is lacking. They can then target different parts of their property for different treatments. These treatments will reduce as soil fertility increases, and the icing on the cake is that fertility will stay up with minimal ongoing costs.*

Food-security depends on the farms, the farmers and the business of farming to be healthy, renewable and successful. Most farmers are aware that input costs are rising and returns are falling but what is happening beneath the soil is even more of a threat to their business future.

**If you are interested in building long-term soil fertility and are sick of the costs and problems of high rates of chemical use then you may be interested in being a microherder.**

For more information contact Jeremy Bradley and Cathy Eggert on 65856202

Email [ceggert@bigpond.net.au](mailto:ceggert@bigpond.net.au) or visit Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/CompostBiology> .

# EVENTS CALENDER



## CONTACT US

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hastingslandcare  
@midcoast.com.au

www.hastingslandcare.org.au

OPEN

Tuesday to Friday



EVENT details	Date
<b>Hastings 'Microherders' Discussion Group</b> — Call Jeremy Bradley or Cathy Eggert on 65 8562 02 for details	6pm <b>14th August</b>
<b>Hastings Landcare Inc.</b>  <b>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b> - Wauchope Country Club, to be followed by a General Meeting.	4pm <b>21st August</b>
<b>LANDCARE WEEK</b>  1st—Macleay Landcare network Tree and Produce Fair	<b>2nd-9th Sept.</b>
<b>Soil Health Roadshow - DPI *</b>	<b>24th-29th September</b>
<b>Planning Pastures / Machinery for Pastures *</b>	<b>?October</b>
<b>Grasses of Coastal NSW</b> - Harry and Carol ROSE - if you would like to host a paddock plants day - please call the office. Proposed for Ellenborough in October, other dates can also be scheduled. *	<b>October - December , February on</b>
<b>Biological Farming I - 8-10 sessions at 3 weekly in- tervals - See article on Page 3. *</b>	<b>?? October or early 2013</b>
<b>Topics being worked on DUNG BEETLES, FIRE &amp; BIODIVERSITY , 'KEEPING BEES'</b>	
<b>DATES will be 'locked in' and included in our next Newsletter</b>	
<b>* Please call the office to Express your interest</b>	<b>6586 4465</b>

Northern Rivers  
Catchment Management Authority

**HatCH in Colour - available on [www.hastingslandcare.org.au](http://www.hastingslandcare.org.au)**

## HELP SAVE RESOURCES—

*We are striving to reduce the amount of paper we consume in this production and you can help!*

*If you would be happy to receive the newsletter electronically please let us know and you will then be notified by email when the newsletter is available on the website.*

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.