

### WetlandCare Australia art competition

To celebrate World Wetlands Day 2009 on 2nd February, WetlandCare Australia is hosting their 2nd annual Australia wide art competition, offering categories for both children and adults as well as a new Primary School prize. The competition themes are "Upstream-Downstream", "Wetlands connect us all" or "Wetlands" generally.

Entries close **Friday 5 December 2008**

### GREEN LIGHT FOR NATIONAL WIND FARM GUIDELINES AND POLICY

Federal Environment Minister, Peter Garrett welcomed the agreement to advance the development of national wind farm guidelines. The new guidelines would improve consistency and transparency in the wind farm planning and approval process and help address some of the barriers to wind farm development.

"Wind energy has the potential to deliver a significant proportion of Australia's future electricity needs and an important role to play in helping Australia achieve our target of producing 20 per cent of our electricity needs from renewable sources by 2020."

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/garrett/2008/pubs/mr20081107b.pdf>

### HERITAGE HONOUR FOR ICONIC ALPS

One of nation's most outstanding and breathtaking mountain landscapes, the Australian Alps, has been awarded Australia's highest heritage honour with its inclusion in the National Heritage List. The Australian Alps National Parks is the largest and most complex National Heritage assessment to date, encompassing 1.6 million hectares of national parks and reserves across eleven national parks and nature reserves in the ACT, NSW and Victoria.

<http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/garrett/2008/mr20081107.html>



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SPRING 2008

### Landcare Highlights in 2008

A key challenge in 2008, advocated both by the Landcare report and the Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA 'Local Provenance Plant & Seed Strategy' has been strengthening existing partnerships with community nurseries and assisting with the establishment of new community nurseries. The CMA has responded by providing financial assistance for Lithgow community nursery and playing a key role in the formation of the new community nurseries in Moss Vale and Goulburn. The CMA supplied the three nurseries with software to facilitate managing provenance seed banks and held seed collection workshops in Moss Vale and Goulburn as well as plant propagation workshops in Moss Vale.

While the Goulburn seed bank is still in its infancy, the Moss Vale community nursery is going ahead in leaps and bounds with over 25 volunteers coming to the monthly working bees. The Moss Vale provenance seed bank now has a range of provenance seed and the first seedlings are thriving. Working closely with local government Bushcare staff at the community nurseries also fosters a cooperative approach to supporting Landcare and Bushcare groups.

Responding to recommendations to encourage feedback and facilitate information sharing, the HNCMA initiated regional Landcare awards which led to the inaugural Hawkesbury-Nepean Landcare Forum in 2007. Over 40 nominations were received for the regional awards and five of the regional winners were then selected as state finalists. Gandangarra Aboriginal Landcare Group and Friends of Avalon Dunes won the Indigenous Group and Coastcare categories respectively at the NSW Landcare Awards.

The regional awards were presented at the Hawkesbury-Nepean Landcare Forum held at Mt Annan Botanic Gardens in south-western Sydney in November 2007. One hundred Landcarers from across the Hawkesbury Nepean catchment gathered to acknowledge the Landcare Award winners and share their ideas and experiences in caring for our catchment. Inspirational speakers and tours also offered the Landcare community information about best practice natural resource management and insights into other Landcare management strategies.

- Regional Facilitators Update
- Landcare in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment in 2008
- Native vegetation communities for conservation
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- Funding

Other events and field days were also conducted throughout the year attracting around 1,000 participants.

The Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA continues to work alongside Landcare groups providing support, advice, encouragement and help. But it is the Landcare community that inspires hope for a healthy environmental future.

**Geoff O'Connor**



**Value of Landcare to environmental restoration work over \$3.3 million**

The Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA sent all Landcare groups a survey form in September 2008 to find out about their activities and to see what has changed since the last survey in 2006.

The 2006 survey recorded 124 Landcare groups and networks of which about 110 were active. Since then another 18 groups have finished their projects, disbanded or decided to take a break for a while, bringing the total number of inactive groups to 32. 33 new groups have formed in the last two years. So while some groups move on, new ones step in to take their place introducing new projects, new skills and new enthusiasm.

Today there are 125 active Landcare groups in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment. The average number of members for each group is approximately 18 people per group with the total number of Landcare members being about 2,705 people (see Table 1).

Landcare groups contributed over 70,000 hours of voluntary labour in 2008 which is worth over \$2.1 million. In addition Landcare attracted funding of more than \$1.1 million from local, state and federal governments and other organisations bringing the overall value of Landcare to environmental restoration work to over \$3.3 million. This is an increase of nearly \$1 million since 2006.

Landcare in the Hawkesbury-Nepean	2006 survey	2008 survey
Number of active Landcare groups	110	125
Number of Landcare mem	c. 2752	c. 2705
Number of hr worked by Landcare members	68,487	71,608
Value of volunteer in-kind contribution	\$1,369,742 (volunteer labour valued @ \$20/hour)	\$2,148,231 (volunteer labour valued @ \$30/hour)
Value of funding for Landcare activities	\$1,009,961	\$1,180,564
<b>Total value of Landcare to community</b>	<b>\$2,379,703</b>	<b>\$3,328,796</b>

In 2008, Landcarers regenerated more than 825ha and established around 56,209 plants in the Hawkesbury-Nepean in spite of challenging weather conditions across the catchment. Volunteers also contributed to provenance seed collection and plant propagation for revegetation projects working at the community nurseries in Lithgow, the Blue Mountains, Picton and the newly formed community nursery at Moss Vale. Other activities included fencing, erosion control and trackworks.

Landcare groups also played a vital role in fostering community understanding of environmental conservation and natural resource management. In 2008, Landcare groups in the Hawkesbury-Nepean produced 79 media articles and 108 newsletters and other educational information. They also participated in 55 environmental field days.

**VOLUNTARY ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS**

The Australian Government's 2008-09 round of grants for the Voluntary Environment & Heritage Organisations program was recently announced. Applications close 5pm **Friday 28 November 2008**. Grants cover day to day running costs such as office rental, utilities, office supplies, staff and volunteer training and are open to national, state/territory, regional and local organisations geared towards:

- The protection and/or enhancement of the natural environment; or
- The protection and /or conservation of Australia's historic heritage

Applications are available from the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts at [www.environment.gov.au/about/programs/gveho](http://www.environment.gov.au/about/programs/gveho) or call 02 6274 2422

**Drought Transport Support Subsidy Scheme Extended**

The NSW Government's 50% drought support subsidy scheme has been extended again, and will be in place until at least November 30, 2008. Only livestock producers in drought declared parts of the state are eligible for drought transport subsidies, except for returning stock from agistment. For more information contact your local RLPB.

**AUSINDUSTRY Climate Ready Innovation Grants**

The Australian Government's Climate Ready Innovation Grants aim to increase the level of high quality innovation activities by small to medium sized enterprises in Australia that address the effects of climate change. Applications close 4 December 2008. Visit [www.ausindustry.gov.au](http://www.ausindustry.gov.au)

**Grants & funding websites**

- Grantslink [www.grantslink.gov.au/](http://www.grantslink.gov.au/)
- DAFF grants & assistance [www.daffa.gov.au/about/grants\\_and\\_assistance](http://www.daffa.gov.au/about/grants_and_assistance)
- DEWHA grants & funding [www.environment.gov.au/programs/index.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/programs/index.html)
- FRRR grants [www.frrr.org.au/currentprojects.asp](http://www.frrr.org.au/currentprojects.asp)
- Caring for our Country [www.nrm.gov.au/funding](http://www.nrm.gov.au/funding)

**Landcare Australia Ltd grants**

Details of grants available to groups can be accessed at: [www.landcareonline.com](http://www.landcareonline.com)

Closing dates for 2009 rounds will be on the website shortly.

- Australia Post Community Development Grants
- Westpac Operation Backyard employee grant programme
- Junior Landcare Grants Program
- VISY Junior Landcare Recycling Grants
- Australia Post Junior Landcare Biodiversity Grant
- Coles Junior Landcare School Garden Grant



The endangered *Diuris aequalis* - Buttercup Doubletail

**Volunteering**

Some thoughts on volunteering from *Conservation Volunteers Australia*

**Volunteer fact 1**

% of population (over 18) who volunteer

1995	24%
2000	32%
2006	35%

**Volunteer Fact 2**

Reason for volunteering (in decreasing order)

- Helping others
- Personal satisfaction
- To do something worthwhile
- Social contact

**Volunteer fact 3**

How first became involved in volunteering (in decreasing order)

- Someone asked
- Knew someone involved
- Self involvement

**Landcare Awards**

**2008 National Landcare Awards**

Finalists from around Australia gathered in the Great Hall at Parliament House in Canberra in October for the presentations of the National Landcare Awards. Actor Jack Thompson was the Landcare Awards 'Ambassador' and he and Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett were on hand to present a range of awards. Hawkesbury Nepean was represented by two groups – *Friends of Avalon Dunes* and the *Gandangarra Aboriginal Landcare Group*.

These two groups were the NSW winners in the Coastcare and Indigenous Group categories respectively. Competition was very tough and neither group came away as national winners, but congratulations to them for getting as far as they did.

**2009 Hawkesbury Nepean & NSW Landcare Awards**

Looking ahead to next year, we will be calling for nominations for our Regional Landcare Awards in April and May 2009. The winners of our Regional Awards will go on to be the Hawkesbury Nepean representatives at the NSW Landcare Awards which next year will be presented at the 2009 NSW Landcare Forum to be held in Port Macquarie in September. So please give some thought to nominating your group or an individual landcarer for these awards. We will provide further information on the categories and the process for nominations in the new year.

Regional Landcare Facilitator  
Geoff O'Connor



Last year **Tableland Basalt Forest** was listed under the *Threatened Species Act* as an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC). Recently a proposal was submitted to the NSW Scientific Committee to list **Snow Gum, Black Sallee, Candlebark and Ribbon Gum Grassy Woodlands** as an EEC. This is because these vegetation communities have been extensively cleared, isolated and degraded through agricultural activity and rural sub-division.

Tableland Basalt Forest is as the name suggests occurs on basalt soils and in this region is found around Crookwell, Taralga, Oberon, Moss Vale and the upper Shoalhaven. The open canopy is generally dominated by Narrow-leaved Peppermint (*E. radiata*), Ribbon Gum (*E. viminalis*), Snow Gum (*E. pauciflora*) and Mountain Gum (*E. dalrympleana* subspecies *dalrympleana*). Generally the shrub layer is sparse but the groundcover is dense, comprising of native grasses and herbs.

The Snow Gum (*E. pauciflora*), Candlebark (*E. rubida*), Black Sallee (*E. stellulata*), and Ribbon Gum (*E. viminalis*) Woodlands is found on a variety of soil types around the Southern and Central Tablelands. Being a woodland community they have an open canopy, with sparse shrubs and groundcover dominated by grasses such as Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*), Wallaby Grass (*Austrodanthonia* spp.), Poa spp and Weeping Grass (*Microlaena stipoides*) with scattered herbs.

These vegetation communities are not well represented in Reserved Lands. Remaining remnants on privately owned land are usually under stress from domestic livestock and weeds. For those interested in finding out more about these and other endangered ecological communities or threatened species, the Department of Environment and Climate Change: [www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au)



Before stock exclusion



After stock exclusion

**Free fencing materials**

The **Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority (HNCMA)**, through its **Bushland Conservation Project** is working with landholders to conserve remnant native vegetation on private land.

HNCMA will fund fencing materials and assist with appropriate native tubestock and weed control where required.

In most instances exclusion of livestock (with some strategic grazing), controlling of weeds and pest animals will allow for improvement in the vegetation's condition and biodiversity.

If you require more information about this program ph HNCMA 4828 6747 [www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hn.cma.nsw.gov.au)

HNCMA offers free on site consultation for landholders.

John Reynolds  
Catchment Coordinator  
HNCMA

## Around the Groups

### Roslyn Landcare Tree Planting Day

The purpose of this day was to plant 400 native trees and shrubs. Species planted included *Eucalyptus viminalis*, *Eucalyptus radiata*, *Acacia melanoxylon* and *Acacia dealbata*. These species occur locally as part of Tableland Basalt Forest, an endangered Ecological Community.

This planting was part of ongoing community efforts to increase native vegetation cover by creating wildlife corridors. By linking remnants that lead to major forest areas—in this case Mount Rae Forest—it is hoped to encourage insectivorous birds, threatened species and other wildlife to further enhance biodiversity. Past plantings have greatly increased connectivity and led to a resurgence of local bird species.



The day was a great success with 18 enthusiastic landcare and community members attending. Work progressed well under the watchful eyes of HNCMA's Helen Ward and Roslyn Landcare Project Co-ordinator Eric Hurn.

Thanks to the Baxters for providing the land (and the BBQ) and Margaret Wheelwright for some lovely salads. The real thanks though must go to all who prepared, planted and watered, and made the day a memorable community event.

Mark Selmes

### Landcare Tour to the Southern Highlands

A bus tour of landcare sites in the Southern Highlands was held as part of National Landcare Week (1-7 September). Landcare Week is now in its 13th year and aims to grow the landcare movement by recruiting new volunteers.

The bus tour provided a great opportunity to get ideas from leading projects restoring bushland and river sites in the Highlands. Sites visited included the spectacular Mt Gibraltar where the local landcare group has spent over 10 years restoring a unique bushland site, and also Whites Creek in Moss Vale where the Moss Vale landcare group have been removing willows and replanting with local native species. The group also called into the new Wingecarribee Community Nursery which is propagating local native plants for revegetation projects throughout the Highlands.

Research conducted by Landcare Australia earlier this year shows that 40% of Australians are worried enough to want to volunteer on local environment projects

Goulburn landcarers are in return hosting a bus tour for the Southern Highland landcarers (see page 3 for details).

### Tarago Landcare Group

Members of the Tarago landcare group gathered at the Tarago Common to erect a sign at a HNCMA Bushland Conservation Project site. The sign highlights the significant flora and fauna species being protected at the site and acts as an important educational tool for locals and visitors.



## Whats on

### Southern Highlands/Goulburn Landcare Tour & Christmas Lunch

Thursday 4 December 2008

The bus tour will visit:

- River Restoration Project at Rhyanna Creek
- Erosion & salinity control project at Currawang Rd
- Restoration of Tennis Court at Yarra
- Endangered Yellow Box/Red Gum vegetation community

Christmas lunch at Goulburn Brewery

**RSVP: Helen Ward: (02) 4828 6752**

### Caring for your property Field Day

1262 Crookwell Rd  
Sat. 21 March 2009, 11 am to 3 pm

Visit two local properties to see how the HNCMA have helped protect waterways and bushland. You will also learn about the aboriginal heritage of the area.

Free BBQ Lunch provided

**RSVP: HNCMA (02) 4828 6747**

### Well being in Rural Communities day for Women

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December  
Marulan Community Hall  
9.30am to 2.30pm

**RSVP: Fran Beck 4829 8160  
Skye Dixon 4822 4795**

### Natural Resource Management For Small Area Landholders

#### What does this NEW Project offer?

- Free or subsidised workshops and training for small area landholders in the Goulburn region.
- Membership of a small farms network.
- Skills and knowledge in a variety of topics including:
  - Sustainability
  - Weed identification and control
  - Pest animal control
  - Farm planning
  - Agriculture and Horticulture
  - Biodiversity
  - Plant identification
  - Farm safety
  - Soils and Climate Change
  - Water quality

#### Interested in being involved?

**Dale Chalker, DPI (02) 4826 6618**

### National Launch of Serrated Tussock Best Practice Manual

Tuesday 25th November  
Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve

Speakers include:

Dr Aaron Simmonds: research on native pastures, grazing and serrated tussock

Luke Pope - hands on experience with tussock control and management

**RSVP Bronwen Wicks, DPI (02) 4828 6632**