

February 2021

# LAND FOR WILDLIFE

THE NATIONAL PROGRAM RUN BY LOCALS

NSW & ACT



## Great results despite the ups and downs



John Asquith in the CEN nursery at Ourimbah.

A LOT has happened since the October 2019 newsletter. Drought, Bushfire and COVID had an impact on Land for Wildlife.

Drought slowed registrations. Bushfire hit some areas hard. Then COVID kept people home and interest in Land for Wildlife surged.

There are now 2176 properties involved in LFW - an increase of 11 per cent. This is a total area of 168,881 ha, with 83,204 ha of retained bushland and a further 21,103 ha under rehabilitation.

This is an outstanding result for everyone involved. Thank you for helping to provide habitat and preserve native plants and animals.

New regional provider Campbelltown City Council will use Land for Wildlife as a tool in its Koala Town Project this year.

Assessor training for groups in

the Penrith, Hawkesbury and The Hills Council areas will start soon.

The CEN Land for Wildlife Program is working with the Great Eastern Ranges Organisation on a new partnership called the Plains to Pacific (Deerubbin) Partnership. This will connect the western flowing Macquarie River near Oberon to the Eastern flowing Hawkesbury-Nepean River catchment creating a magnificent west-east corridor.

Within this there are over 1.5 million hectares of national parks, nature reserves and water catchment lands.

Check out changes to landholder grant funding in this newsletter.

**John Asquith OAM,**  
Land for Wildlife Co-ordinator



Committee member John Lemon helps set up a Koala drinking station

## Helping our Koalas

Armidale Tree Group has helped make the region's koala population more resilient to drought.

Prompted by the severe dry conditions at the beginning of 2020, the group worked with Armidale Regional Council to install and maintain drinking stations for koalas and other wildlife.

People can help the group protect koalas by making a tax deductible donation. \$1000 will buy and maintain a koala drinking station. \$100 will plant and maintain ten koala food trees. To donate, go Armidale Tree Group website.

Armidale Tree Group is a not-for-profit organisation with a passion for sustainable, shared environments which benefit wildlife, livestock, people and flora.





**Left:** Jarlanbah group, Dr Dan Oxley, Karl Worrall, Cherie and Russell Pugh. Picture by Mark Worrall.

**Above:** Wiccardwood group, Cathie Dosba-Thompson, Maree Bracker and Sándor von Kontz. Picture by Gavin Tinning.

## Two new groups join wildlife program

Richmond Landcare has welcomed a new Land For Wildlife assessor to its team.

Land for Wildlife member, Gavin Tinning has a long history in environmental management, bushfire planning and community development and has enabled a host of new properties to join the program in the Lismore and Ballina shires. He works closely with neighbouring regional provider, the Border Ranges-Richmond Valley Landcare Network.

"Conducting Land for Wildlife assessments is so inspiring, meeting passionate landholders who are a wealth of knowledge about how the landscape and habitats have evolved in the last 20-30 years," Gavin said.

Among the new additions to the program are the Jarlanbah and Wiccardwood Communities.

Ten members of the Jarlanbah Community in Nimbin participated in their Land for Wildlife assessment in July.

Landcare Coordinator Hannah Rice-Hayes said managing community land in a residential area was a challenge, especially in the weed friendly environment of the northern rivers of NSW.

"Twenty years of hard work has

transformed an eroded gully into a diverse rainforest creek line supporting wallabies, koalas and wonga pigeons, and the long nosed poteroo recently sighted on a camera trap," Ms Rice-Hayes said.

"The ongoing efforts of the Jarlanbah Community demonstrates how thoughtful design and management of village residential areas can create habitat for wildlife," she said.

"This community is fortunate to have people who volunteer their time to maintain the creek line vegetation and tackle the weed incursions."

Wiccardwood Community in Georgica is another example of community efforts to restore landscapes north of Lismore that were cleared and intensively farmed.

"Five members of the Wiccardwood Community completed the Land for Wildlife assessment," Ms Rice-Hayes said.

"The challenges of weed management on a certified organic property were highlighted and the work of contractors and the community with regeneration of a dry rainforest gully, helped by Jiggi Landcare and Bush Connect program," she said.

## Clarence mourns loss of 'hero' Tom

Clarence Valley Land For Wildlife members have been saddened by the recent death of group stalwart and friend, Tom Davidson.

Tom, aged 63, had been ill for some time, but did not let this stop his work for Land For Wildlife.

Fellow member, Patricia Edwards, remembered her "friend, mentor and hero" fondly and spoke of his valuable contribution.

"Tom first turned up at the Environment Centre in 2010, when he was training the local Green Army kids in land conservation," Ms Edwards said.

"With a Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment, and a Diploma in Conservation Land Management, he immediately became a mainstay for our own newly developing physical conservation activities, and from the start set the centre's shop up with an ongoing supply of tree tube-stock that sold like hot cakes," she said.

"From that point on, whatever I asked of Tom, he delivered, willingly and always with the same relaxed smile and refusal to accept anything in return.

"When I applied for a grant to set up our own small bush regeneration team, to help our growing number of Land for Wildlife landowners deal with problem weeds, he was the obvious person to train and lead the team.

"Tom and I, with help from his wife Jeanie, distributed hundreds of healthy young tube-stock trees across the valley.

"Tom left quite a legacy."



The late Tom Davidson, back row, second from left.



Nets in the Pollack Lagoon revealed many native fish species and other aquatic animals.

# Urgent action to protect wetland

It was a day of mixed emotions for the 45 people who attended a recent tour of The Pollack Wetland and Koondrook-Perricoota forest near the town of Barham in southern NSW.

The tour was run by Western Murray Land Improvement Group to show how managed environmental watering had improved the wetland but to warn that without action, the forest faced irreversible damage.

The Pollack wetland covers 700ha within the Koondrook State Forest on the edge of the Murray River. Over the last six years it has been subjected to regular controlled inundation which has resulted in a growing canopy of river red gums and a diversity of native water plants in the swamp.

Waterbird breeding has also improved as food sources and nesting sights in the wetland have developed.

Environment Consultant and Koondrook-Perricoota Project team leader Dan Hutton said this included white-necked herons, white-faced herons, Nankeen night herons, half a dozen duck species, and for the third year in a row, a pair of Little Bitterns.

Large nets placed in the Pollack Lagoon prior to the tour were pulled up to reveal a plethora of small bodied native



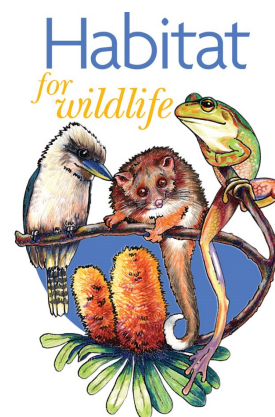
Tour participants discuss the future of the wetland

fish, as well as tadpoles, turtles and yabbies.

Charles Sturt University freshwater fish researcher Dr John Conallin told tour participants there were no exotic fish species present in the nets because the carnivorous native fish tended to suppress alien species.

The news was not all good however, and in another part of the wetland known as Smokehouse Lagoon, there was no water or wildlife in sight. Dan Hutton stressed the need to act.

"After working on this project for the last ten years, this area will not last another ten without irreversible damage," Mr Hutton said.



Western Murray Land Improvement Group Inc.





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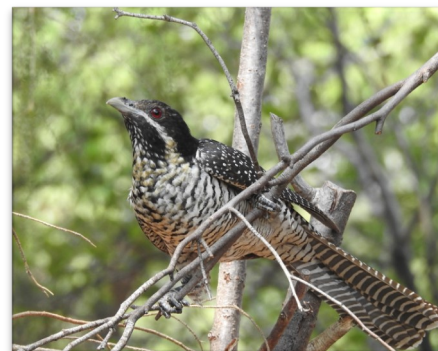
POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTRALIA

## Cameras used in post fire study

Land for Wildlife and other program are helping the Shoalhaven region recover after last year's devastating bushfires.

National Landcare funding meant that Milton area landholders affected by the fires were given the chance to have a Land for Wildlife assessment and to take part in a

citizen science wildlife monitoring project. Special cameras were set up to record wildlife over two week and the information will be analysed by the NSW National Parks Association. The data will also be used to help manage feral species.



## How to apply for your wildlife grant

One hundred thousand dollars in grants to help landholders improve their properties for wildlife is available in 2021.

For the first time, landholders will apply directly to the Community Environment Network (CEN), rather than to the Biodiversity Conservation Trust which has handled grants in the past.

Fifty \$2000 grants will be available each year.

Land for Wildlife co-ordinator John Asquith welcomed the change and urged Land for Wildlife members to apply.

"LFW encourages and assists landholders to include nature conservation along with other land management objectives on their properties and these grants help offset the cost," Mr Asquith said.

Biodiversity Conservation Trust Programs Director Carolyn Davis said the trust had funded the program since 2018 and would continue this through CEN.

\*More information on the CEN website at: <https://cen.org.au/>



Biodiversity  
Conservation  
Trust

Land for Wildlife coordination is supported by the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust.

## Landcarers join in training

Greater Sydney Local Land Services demonstration farm at Richmond was the venue for a recent training day expected to benefit landholders on the north west fringe of Sydney.

A dozen Landcarers took part in the training, including a lecture and field trips to bushland sites.

NSW Land for Wildlife co-ordinator John Asquith said the Richmond Lowlands were a "magnificent area" and important food bowl for Aboriginal people since ancient times.

"European settlers only survived the foundation years of the colony due to the richness of the soil for farming," Mr Asquith said.

Mr Asquith said however, that European settlement had caused



Participants in the Richmond Lowlands Land for Wildlife training.

damage to the Lowlands through land clearing leading to erosion.

Since that time river vegetation protection and tree planting had helped to restore river banks.

The demonstration farm showcases latest sustainable farming methods to local farmers.



## Program funds 340 new trees

Hot November temperatures did not stop members of Grass Roots Mentoring Group from planting, watering and mulching 340 trees.

The project was funded through Lismore City Council's Rural Landholder Initiative.

The program is a key part of



council's Biodiversity Management Strategy and involves education days, free resources and an annual small grants program.

The Rural Landholder Initiative works with landholders to restore and enhance biodiversity assets on private land.

PO Box 149, Ourimbah. NSW. 2258.