



LAND FOR WILDLIFE

New South Wales



Number 2—August 2009

Hello Land for Wildlifers,

Hope your activities are going well, since taking on LFW we have been keen to talk to Landholders and organisations that are interested in becoming LFW Regional Providers. Discussions have been held throughout NSW with nearly 20 councils, several CMAs and many Landcare Networks. Land for Wildlife is such a positive program that the response has been very rewarding and enjoyable. On the next page we have a story about two new Regional Providers Wingecarribee and Byron Councils. Many other organisations are considering becoming involved in the program. Partnerships are a key to the success of Land for Wildlife and potential Regional Providers are provided with network support wherever opportunities arise.

Occasionally, I hear about properties that have not been receiving LFW or Bush Matters newsletters, if you know of anyone with this problem let me know or if you have any questions drop me a line to lfwnsw@cen.org.au.

Cheers John



Land for Wildlife Registrations



Land for Wildlife meeting at Clarence Valley Shire Council

The new Land for Wildlife database is now up and working. We expect to make registration and reporting simpler and more efficient. In NSW there are currently 474 members of LFW with 59 in the category of Working Towards Land for Wildlife. If you are one of those 59 properties and you would like to be re-evaluated drop me a line. The total area of habitat retained or restored on properties registered is over 20,000 Ha. with a total property area of over 40,000 Ha.

Land for Wildlife is currently available in Ballina, Byron, Cessnock, Gosford, Hornsby, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Wakool (Murrakool Group), Wingecarribee and Wyong local government areas. The extent of support for LFW may vary due to limited resources or the regional provider may be inviting strategic landholders to join initially. We are currently addressing the issue of obtaining more resources for LFW. However, if you are a landholder and you would like to fill out and send an expression of interest (available on CEN website www.cen.org.au under Join Land for Wildlife) the expression of interest will be put on file or sent to the relevant Regional Provider.



Land for Wildlife welcomes Byron and Wingecarribee Councils



CEN is delighted to welcome Byron and Wingecarribee Shire Councils to the 'Land for Wildlife' Program. In the coming months we hope other wildlife aware Councils will join the program as well.

Wingecarribee Shire Council



Wingecarribee Shire Council Bushcare staff from left : Stuart Chadwick ; Belinda Rowe ; Lizzie Bennetts

Wingecarribee Shire is located 2 hours south of Sydney, nestled in the heart of the Southern Highlands. The region is well known for its native flora and fauna, including wallabies, eastern grey kangaroos, koalas, bandicoots, possums, quolls and echidnas. As well as a variety of reptiles, amphibians and birds, the region is also home to the crankiest resident in the Australian bush, the hairy-nosed wombat.

Wingecarribee Shire Council is committed to wildlife conservation and is excited to be introducing the Land for Wildlife program to its area. Since the opening of the program the council has signed up 15 enthusiastic landholders.

Wingecarribee Shire Council officially launched its Land for Wildlife program at Penrose Public School on the 8th of August, at 10am. Councillor Larry Whipper hosted the event with the school and presented the Land for Wildlife signs to the program participants.

Byron Shire council



Byron Shire Council's Biodiversity Extension Officer, Wendy Neilan, accepts a LFW sign as a new LfW provider.

Over the past two years, BSC has delivered an Extension Service to shire landholders who want to restore areas of their properties for conservation.

Biodiversity extension officer, Wendy Neilan, visits landholders at their properties and provides a biodiversity assessment and on ground advice about land management issues. Participants in the program are given mapping of vegetation types, threatened species locations, koala habitat and other ecological attributes as well as a swag of fact sheets in a package tailored to suite their needs. They are also invited to join an e-news group to keep up to date with workshops, field days and incentive programs.

There are also many species listed as rare and threatened to be found through the shire. "People are excited to find out about these precious plants and animals that share their land as their home. The focus in the extension service is to provide people with sound advice, boost their confidence and break down the tasks ahead so they are not overwhelmed. BSC recognizes we need private landholders to be active participants to achieve conservation at the landscape scale." explained Wendy Neilan. Now Byron Shire landholders will enjoy the added bonus of being nationally recognized for their efforts and share in the benefits of Land for Wildlife program.



‘Land for Wildlife’ around Australia

The ‘Land for Wildlife’ program was founded in Victoria in 1981 when it was recognized that landholders who voluntarily protected wildlife habitats on their land should be encouraged and assisted in their efforts. The program has now gone national with over 10,000 members across every state and territory. Although the program is run slightly differently in each state, they all share the same fundamental goal to ‘encourage and assist landholders to provide wildlife habitats on their properties’.

New South Wales

The Land for Wildlife program started in NSW in 2000 and since 2007 the program has been coordinated by the Community Environment Network. The program now has nearly 500 members including 59 in the Working Toward Land for Wildlife Category. With a total of 20,000 hectares of land retained or restored and a total property area of over 40,000 hectares. The Land for Wildlife program continues to gain community support with nine schools in the Hunter region alone participating in the program. Last August CEN had its first state Land for Wildlife conference. It was held in ANZ theatre at Taronga Zoo, followed up by a full day’s bus trip around Land for Wildlife properties north of Sydney.

Northern Territory

Land for Wildlife is a relatively new program in the Northern Territory, but has already succeeded in signing up 59 properties, with 6 more working towards registration. The Territory also hosts the ‘Garden for Wildlife’ program as a complementary scheme so residents of the Alice Springs area, who do not have a suitable property, can participate by turning their gardens into wildlife friendly environments. The Garden for Wildlife program promotes community participation in nature conservation and environmentally friendly practices. Gardens for Wildlife helps property owners create wildlife habitats in their own backyards.

Queensland

Queensland recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Land for Wildlife program coming to their state by holding the first Open Property Scheme with 28 landholders opening their gates to visitors. Queensland has 3,000 registered properties with 200,000 hectares of wildlife habitat now protected. Some Queenslanders have found the Land for Wildlife assistance program is not only an excellent way to get involved with the protection and enhancing wildlife habitat but also a good way to learn how to integrate agriculture, grazing or tourism (such as eco friendly accommodation on their land).

Tasmania

Tasmania joined Land for Wildlife in 1998 and the program is currently coordinated by Tasmania’s Department of Primary Industry, Parks, Water and Environment. Tasmania has in excess of 650 properties registered with the program and 47,500 hectares of habitat under management. Some Land for Wildlife registrants are also assisting wildlife protection organizations by allowing wildlife to be released on their Land for Wildlife properties.

Victoria

Victoria was the birthplace of Land for Wildlife. The program was initiated at a time, that 95% of the Victoria landscape had been cleared for farming and other purposes. Since then an estimated 6000 properties and 14,800 people have joined the program. Victoria currently has 160,000 hectares, comprising of a wide variety of ecosystems including forests, woodlands, heaths, grasslands and freshwater systems.

Western Australia

In May 2009 Kaarakin, Perth’s Black cockatoo rehabilitation Centre, became Western Australia’s 2000th Land for Wildlife registrant. It is estimated that landholders in Western Australia have set aside 300,000 hectares of land for the use by the program.



What is land for wildlife?

'Land for Wildlife' is a voluntary property registration scheme that aims to assist landholders, who wish to become involved with the program, to maintain wildlife habitats on their land. Registration is free and non-binding. The good faith agreement, between the CEN and landholders, does not change the legal status of the properties.

What does Land for wildlife do?

The key feature of the land for wildlife program is the environmental property assessments the organization provides free to land holders.

These assessments include:

- Individual consultations to determine the environmental sustainability of their properties and assess any management issues.
- Site reports advising on how to manage environmental issues such as erosion, wildlife habitats and weed control.
- Species lists identifying native and exotic plants that may be growing on the property
- Advise on how to integrate wildlife conservation into the properties usual farming/management practices.

In addition to environmental property assessments, LfW gives landholders the opportunity to participate in workshops, meet like minded people and receive up to date information via fact sheets and regular newsletters.

Does my property qualify?

The program is available to landholders who:

- Have properties with half a hectare or more of native bush land
- Are willing to manage all or part of their property in an environmentally sustainable way

The Land for Wildlife program is available to private landholders who own properties ranging from small bush blocks up to large farming and grazing operations.

Why is maintaining land for wildlife so important?

Only 8.34% of the NSW's land, is currently protected as National Park, leaving the vast majority of NSW land in private ownership. This puts private landholders in a unique position to help create natural havens for wildlife on their properties and in turn form wildlife corridors that connect various habitats together. Wildlife corridors are links between animal habitats that can be formed by riparian strips, ridge lines or properties with intact bushland. These wildlife corridors are important because the remaining animal habitats in Australia are becoming increasingly fragmented, leaving bush islands that are far from one another, containing populations that are too small to maintain the vast genetic diversity this country once had.



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