

Landchat

Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 121, January - December 2022



Southern
New England
Landcare

Our mission is to **lead**, **connect** and **enable** our communities to reach their sustainability goals in a changing environment.

Welcome

Welcome to Landchat Number 121.

In another year of flooding rains, Landchat 121 showcases 12 months of great achievements by members and friends.

Membership is now free, so make sure your details are up-to-date in our system so you can enjoy all the great benefits. Happy reading!



Michael Taylor — 2022 Australian Farmer of the Year!

This year, our very own member, Michael Taylor of Harnham Landcare Group, was named the 12th winner of the Kondinin Group and ABC Rural Australian Farmer of the Year award.

Michael, along with his parents, Jon and Vicki own Taylor's Run at 'The Hill', Kentucky and have been very active members of the Harnham Landcare Group and Southern New England Landcare Ltd.

Southern New England Landcare congratulates Michael on this very prestigious accolade.

For those who missed it, we've reproduced the following article with thanks to the Kondinin Group's Farming Ahead website at <https://www.farmingahead.com.au/farmer-of-the-year/news/1439168/michael-taylor-named-2022-australian-farmer-of-the-year>.

Michael's win was announced on 8th September 2022 in Canberra at the Kondinin Group and ABC Rural 2022 Farmer of the Year Awards.

Michael has built a reputation around his future-focused approach to farming and his management of 4000 sheep, production of sustainable superfine Merino wool, mixed Angus cattle herd, timber mill and farm stay accommodation makes him an incredibly diversified primary producer.

Through tree planting and rotational grazing, Michael has increased stocking capacity, lambing percentages, reduced degradation, and sequestered carbon for the future.

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*Left: Michael Taylor at 'Taylor's Run', Kentucky.
Image courtesy Michael Taylor.*

2022 Member Musters

focus on natural capital

May - Stuart Austin on Carbon Credits at Wilmot

Southern New England Landcare group representatives and friends came together on 18th May 2022 at Uralla Community Centre to share their activities and hear from guest speaker Stuart Austin on Wilmot Cattle Co's carbon initiatives.

Stuart spent several years in northern Australia, as well as living and working overseas. The Wilmot Cattle Company team take a regenerative approach across three properties Wilmot, Woodburn and Morocco – spanning 5,665-hectares in the New England region – to produce grass-fed beef and sequester soil carbon.

Stuart notes subtle changes in the landscape, each time he shifts cattle to fresh pasture on Wilmot, an 1854-hectare-property, near Ebor, where he and his family are based. Native plants are emerging, and the pasture biomass and ground cover continue to flourish, following a shift in grazing management nine-years-ago.

Since switching to a soil health focus in 2012, soil carbon results have increased from 2.5 percent to 4.7 percent at Wilmot. Stuart demonstrates the importance of farmers in restoring ecological function alongside building a profitable and robust business.

November - Dr Rachel Lawrence on Natural Capital Accounting

Dr Rachel Lawrence was our guest presenter on Natural Capital Accounting at the November Member Muster, which was held in conjunction with the Southern New England Landcare Annual General Meeting in Uralla.

Rachel is a generalist ecologist. Her initial degree was in Forest Ecology in Tassie – which is her true home. After that Rachel worked for the Australian Plague Locust Commission travelling from Dubbo across to the Flinders Ranges and north well into central Queensland monitoring and controlling locusts in Queensland, NSW, Victoria, and South Australia.

Later, while living in Queensland Rachel worked for Queensland DPI in forest health and entomology and that led to a job in Armidale working in Integrated Pest Management in the grains industry in northern NSW.

“Our role is to provide food and fibre for the world but also to preserve the environment we manage,” Stuart says.

“As farmers we manage so much of this landscape on a percentage basis and a full ecological system includes animals. If we manage those animals in a positive way that benefits the environment, then we can have a huge positive impact on the landscape, which is what’s required for us to have a significant impact on the climate.”

Some 30 people attended the event and afterwards enjoyed a light supper and networking, catered by Michael's Cafe in Uralla.

Richard Daugherty thanked Stuart for his educational and enlightening presentation.

She then did her PhD at UNE looking at various ecological outcomes on grazing properties on the slopes and tablelands, trying to understand things that are happening where inputs are reduced and long rests from grazing are applied.

Ultimately that led, via Southern New England Landcare, to her current involvement in natural capital accounting and working now with Bush Heritage.

Rachel also has a Permaculture Design Certificate and works a day per week as a potter – which gets her away from the computer enough to keep her healthy and happy.

Rachel’s presentation slides are available to those wishing to obtain a copy.

Please contact karen.zirkler@snelandcare.org.au.

2022 John Winter-Irving Bequest to Peter Barkley

John Winter-Irving is remembered for his absolute passion for the land and he believed Landcare was the most wonderful forum which combines a huge amount of practical work with marvellous opportunities for education and exchanging knowledge.

At the Annual General Meeting, the 2022 John Winter-Irving Bequest recipient was announced as Peter Barkley and Southern New England Landcare congratulates Peter.

Peter is a volunteer who set up and coordinates the Friends of Barry Munday Reserve Group where he has been an active leader for the last several years.

Peter has assisted the group to attract funds to successfully rejuvenate a recreation reserve in their local area, that now has a renovated set of tennis courts, barbecue area and some new koala habitat.

Already, the community is making use of the revitalised area, which is enabling better community connectedness.

Peter is active on ground via working bees with his group, he is the Southern New England Landcare group representative, he attends the office regularly to seek assistance and utilise resources and he regularly attends SNEL member musters.

Peter was involved in setting up the Uralla Community Co-op, and he was also involved in the setup of Banded Bee Farm, a local permaculture operation that conducts training workshops.

As Peter was unable to attend the AGM, a special presentation morning tea was held for him on Thursday 15th December at Southern New England Landcare's Hanna's Arcade office.

Below from left: Vice President David Steller, Coordinator Alex Hunter, Peter Barkley, Jill Moore-Kashima, Bev Stubberfield, Project Officer Struan Ferguson, Steve Harvey and Project Officer Des Andersen. Image courtesy of Karen Zirkler.



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“My family has been farming in the New England region of NSW for more than 180 years, and I would like to see them still farming this area for centuries to come. I have followed in my parent’s footsteps of caring for our land with regenerative goals and showing how you can integrate both a successful grazing enterprise and agroforestry program,” Michael said.

Ben White, General Manager of Research at Kondinin Group, said Michael’s ability to run numerous enterprises in synergy, while keeping the care of his land at the forefront, is highly commendable.

“The diversification strategy Michael oversees on his multi-generational farming enterprise, and the success he is having adopting innovative practices, is remarkable. He deserves recognition for how the operation is working in synergy in the now, with clear and motivated acknowledgement of the future needs of the industry,” Ben said.

Michael is an active member in the wool industry, supporting grower groups such as Tablelands Merino and as a founding member and director of Australian Ethical Merino Growers Co-operative.

Both grower groups, and the family’s ongoing close relationship with Italian wool processors such as GS Schneider and Reda, demonstrate Michael’s commitment to bridging the gap between growers and customers through education and traceability.

Recently he collaborated with Haute Couture designer Sofia Crociani and also local Australian brand Simple Chic, on separate projects to tell the

story of sustainable wool growing.

Agroforestry has contributed significantly to Michael’s farm, supporting his aim to run a sustainable and regenerative enterprise. As an active member of his local Landcare group and also as a [past] director for Southern New England Landcare.

Michael’s network and knowledge of agroforestry has been recognised nationally through awards and presentations, but most importantly as a local mentor for other farmers wanting to manage trees on their farms.

“Pursuing sustainable practices has been a focus of ours since the early 1980’s. We manage 180 hectares of Radiata Pine and other mixed species, which we can mill on-site. We replenish what we harvest and are keen to share the importance of integrating agroforestry into modern farming operations.”

Last year, Michael partnered with Southern New England Landcare to co-host an event focused on the concept of silvopasture - where trees and shrubs are incorporated into pastures for forage and grazing purposes.

Michael is the 12th winner of the Kondinin Group and ABC Rural Australian Farmer of the Year award. The annual awards program has been running since 2010 and continues to recognise excellence in farming and farming communities across rural and regional Australia. The 2022 Awards are supported by Platinum Sponsor WFI.

New Sustainable Agriculture Project Officer

In September this year Southern New England Landcare welcomed Aggie Seiler (pictured left) to the team as the Sustainable Agriculture Project Officer.

Aggie grew up across the north of Australia, having spent her early childhood in Kununurra, Western Australia, and school years in Queensland. She spent many school holidays working on sheep and cattle properties in Western Queensland and Cape York, where her love of the land and its people became a core part of her identity.

Aggie left behind her Bachelor of Science at the University of Queensland to work on a remote corporate cattle station in the Northern Territory, while completing a Bachelor of Nursing degree.

Since then, she has nursed across the Top End in a variety of roles and later specialised in community mental health nursing. These adventures have taken her from Broome to Bamaga and back again.

In 2021 Aggie moved to the New England, with her husband and young family, to run a family-owned grazing enterprise west of Guyra. The change has triggered a return to study a Diploma of Agriculture, and a renewal of her love of the sciences as they apply to the soil, climate, ecosystems, and sustainable food production.

Aggie is thrilled about her new role as the Sustainable Agriculture Project Officer with Landcare, and the prospect of actively working in the community with her two greatest passions: the land and its people.



Resilient Pasture Landscapes Project Launched

Much of the New England may be sopping wet, but the spectre of a variable climate and the inevitable next big drought haunts the thoughts of graziers.

This new initiative aims to support farmers to be better equipped to manage for a variable climate and for when the next dry hits.

The two-year program aims to improve farmers ability to assess and budget pasture and feed availability.

The software program Ag360 will be used as a support tool to track the changes over time and to use climate forecasting for production decision making processes.

Farmers from across the Southern New England Landcare and GLENRAC and regions have submitted their EOI's for the formation of the farmer groups.

Ten groups of approximately 10-20 farmers are forming into communities of practice.

In this supported and peer to peer learning environment the pasture coach will lead graziers through

learning the art of accurate pasture assessment and feed budgeting. GLENRAC and Southern New England Landcare will also be looking to expand the groups learning by hosting four field days per year with guest speakers and workshops set to extend farmer knowledge in the areas of their interest.

Aggie Seiler from Southern New England Landcare and Emma Tilley from GLENRAC and are chomping at the bit to see how the groups evolve over the time.

"The project strengthens resilience on so many layers, increasing social connection and peer to peer learning across a range of topics from pasture health, nutrition, animal health, soil health and water quality," said Aggie.

"All the while farmers are being supported and extended by the pasture coach and guest presenters on each of the specialties," she said.

For more information, contact aggie.seiler@snelandcare.org.au or call 6772 9123.

Movement in the Malpas

The incredible third La Nina event has certainly created some movement of water across our landscapes and for many, the abundance has created its own set of production and landscape challenges.

The historical Malpas Group has also experienced its ebbs and flows of momentum and in the past six months have been revitalised by the work of Pete Fitzgerald who was contracted to help focus the Malpas Group's Action Plan and framework for the coming five years.

Aggie Seiler in the new Sustainable Agriculture Project Officer role will now take on the Malpas Catchment Coordinator role and work to support the group in attaining its sustainability goals for improved water quality and security outcomes for the Guyra and Armidale water supplies of Guyra and Malpas Dams.

The Armidale Regional Council have endorsed a Malpas Water Quality Concept Note and have allocated funding to support the project goals for the water monitoring programs of Council's Catchment Water Quality Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

Bill Perrottet, local Guyra farmer and member of Malpas Catchment Group, commented that he is looking forward to working with Aggie in her role as coordinator of Malpas catchment Group and the Pastures Landscapes Resilience project.

"It will be good to kick start projects after drought, fires and flood disruptions over the last five years and be better prepared future dry times using skills from the resilience project," said Bill.

For more information, contact aggie.seiler@snelandcare.org.au or call 6772 9123.



From Weedy Wasteland to Wildlife Wetland

On ground works are well underway on this project, led by Armidale Urban Rivercare Group (AURG), to rehabilitate a highly weed-infested section of Dumaresq Creek in Armidale.

The ecological restoration of this section of Dumaresq Creek, between Holmes Avenue and Canambe Street, will include the removal of exotic woody weeds, the establishment of a designed wetland to filter the creek water, and riparian plantings of local native species.

Earlier this year, residents were informed about the project getting underway via a letter drop, which included the Notice of Works.

In February, AURG hosted a community event for residents, dog owners and interested members of the community, to walk and talk about the works about to take place.

Everyone then enjoyed a barbecue with some food supplied by AURG.

In between periods of rain, weed removal has taken place within a substantial section of the project area on the northern side of the creek. The work team is about to start work on the southern side of the creek.

Bryan Johnston, co-convenor of the AURG, said, “We’re excited about the project and the pending wetland we are going to create.”

“We’ve now cleared enough of the woody weed area for Sarah Mika from UNE to start developing the design for the wetland,” he said.

The Aquatic Ecology and Restoration Research Centre at the University of New England will partner with Armidale Urban Rivercare Group to design the wetland, while Armidale Tree Group will partner to select and grow riparian and wetland plants.

AURG is working closely with the Armidale Regional Council, and has met with nearby organisations such as the Armidale Equestrian Centre and O’Connor High School as the project progresses.

The project is proudly funded by Stronger Regional Communities, NSW Government.

Left top: The Weedy Wasteland being cleared 27 May 2022. Photo courtesy of Struan Ferguson.

Left bottom: The Work Crew: Bruce Whan, Gordon Bell, John Fitzgerald and Kjell Knable 27May22. Photo courtesy of Struan Ferguson.



2022 Coordinator’s Choice Awarded to Angus Adair

Each year, the staff at Southern New England Landcare choose someone for the Coordinator’s Choice Award.

This award is made to a member who has been super helpful to them as staff members throughout the year. It’s a way of providing some recognition and appreciation for the effort the recipient has made.

In 2022, the Coordinator’s Choice is Angus Adair.

Angus has been involved in Armidale Urban Rivercare Group for many years, and after spending some time away from the district, returned recently to continue his involvement.

When Armidale Urban Rivercare Group’s founding member Bruce Whan became seriously ill earlier this year, he left a massive hole in the management of their very significant Weedy Wasteland to Wildlife Wetland project.

However, Angus jumped right in, taking the reins, albeit tentatively at first. He has proven himself immensely valuable to the project, and to our team, as he has really kept the show on the road during Bruce’s recovery.

Angus is always on time for a meeting, having done what he said he would do, and more. What’s more, he always turns up with those delicious choc orange treats for us as a thank you for our help. It really should be the other way around!

Congratulations Angus – we really appreciate you!

A presentation morning tea is being arranged for early in 2023.

The board and staff of Southern New England Landcare wish Bruce Whan all the best for his continuing recovery and hope he can join us again in the new year.

Protecting New England Biodiversity Project

Events are taking place throughout the region to establish landholder networks and enable landholders undertaking private land conservation (PLC) to develop knowledge and obtain peer support.

Landcare NSW is working in partnership with the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust to raise awareness and support private land conservation.

Bush for Biodiversity Regional Event – Glen Innes

Thirty-eight people braved the wet cold weather on the 25th and 26th March 2022 at the Glen Innes Showground for Bush for Biodiversity.

The event was organised and hosted by the New England Landcare Network Inc (comprised of GLENRAC, GWYMAC, GBLC and SNEL) and gathered landholders engaged in private land conservation to develop their knowledge and connect them with their peers.

After the Welcome to Country, Leith Hawkins, Regional Manager Northern Inland Region NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT), opened the event and shared a bird's eye view of private biodiversity conservation efforts in the region.

The keynote speaker for the event, Dr John Hunter, a landscape ecologist from UNE, spoke of his experiences as a private conservation landholder including some of the difficulties, like a lack of understanding and even hostility from neighbours engaged in primary production.

John went on to explain the nuances involved in using fire as

a management tool and covered examples of ecosystems, like upland wetlands and rainforest among others, where this practice is not appropriate for various ecological reasons.

From the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA), Matt Bertalli (based in Glen Innes) talked people through the various management techniques for each of the weed species likely to occur in this region.

Alex Dudley, the entertaining ecologist, whose main interest is reptiles and amphibians, delivered sessions on the practicalities of fauna surveys, animal identification and wildlife conservation including some of his amusing poetry.

A deep dive into local plant identification took place with Wendy Hawes, an Inverell based ecologist who specialises in grassy woodland ecosystems and with a passion for environmental education, covering the main eucalypts, shrubs, and ground covers.

On the second day, John Hunter and Wendy Hawes led a walk through a patch of nearby bushland and Mark Blair (BCT) demonstrated some Ecological Monitoring Module (EMM) plotwork which forms the basis of the BCT Monitoring and Evaluation Program.

To see the film about the Bush for Biodiversity event made by David Waugh of Verso Design go to Southern New England Landcare's YouTube Channel or type <https://youtu.be/67tzCG8BkMc> into your web browser.

Eastlake Event - Salisbury Plains

On Friday 17 June 2022, 47 people gathered at Eastlake on the Salisbury Plains between Uralla and Walcha to hear Gordon Williams, an NSW Biodiversity Trust (BCT) Agreement holder, present on his experiences protecting biodiversity within a livestock production property.

Participants heard from Joe van Eyk, who leases Eastlake for beef production, on how his operation fits within this whole farm production and conservation endeavour.

NSW BCT staff, Frances Wright and Mitch Whitten, presented information on the various conservation and stewardship agreements available and what having an agreement entails.

The gathering went into the field and inspected a 72 ha Biodiversity Conservation Agreement area and engaged in a wide-ranging discussion covering topics such as state lead biodiversity protection policy and valuation, wider implications for landholders, the offset scheme and federal biodiversity protection pilot programs.

Participants included landholders interested in private land conservation, landholders with BCT agreements, NTLLS Staff, Nick Reid, Emeritus Professor in Ecosystem Management in the School of Environmental and Rural Science, Dr Rhiannon Smith and Professor Robyn Bartel from UNE and Neal Fenner (based in Uralla) from New England Weeds Authority (NEWA).

One participant gained "more understanding of the range of BCT Agreement options", while another said there was "a

good range of topics to promote thought in areas not previously considered”.

One participant learnt that “caring for the land can have financial benefits in more than just the dollar value in livestock”.

“Great event to gain information and meet like-minded people” was the response of yet another participant.

Right Top: Mark Blair (BCT) talking to participants about plotting methods used in BCT Monitoring and Evaluation Program. Courtesy of David Waugh.

Right Middle: Wendy Hawes (Envirofactor) and participants during the Plant Id session. Courtesy of David Waugh.

Bottom: Gordon Williams presenting to participants. Courtesy of Struan Ferguson.

Landcare NSW is working in partnership with the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust to raise awareness and support for private land conservation.



**Biodiversity
Conservation
Trust**



Landcare
New South Wales



2022 President's Report

The 2021-2022 financial saw Southern New England Landcare Ltd contribute significantly to the health and wellbeing of the communities and the natural capital of our region.

A total of **26 projects** were on the books, 8 of which were finalised and another 18 in progress.

The funded value of these projects was **\$2.73 million dollars**, but we know that when the in-kind contributions provided by land managers and project participants are added, we can multiply this by a factor of six, making the total value of these projects something like **\$16.4 million**.

These projects ranged from on ground biodiversity projects in both rural and urban areas, and various state and federally funded koala conservation projects, to catchment and landscape health projects focussed on building communities of practice. Underpinning all these projects are two key projects that are the 'enablers' – the NSW Landcare Support Program funded by Landcare NSW and Local Land Services, and our Core Services project funded by Northern Tablelands Local Land Services.

Through our work, we **engaged 16 Landcare groups, 133 members, 861 eNews subscribers, and 1032 social media followers**.

We've successfully partnered with other significant regional organisations across a range of initiatives such as Armidale Regional Council and the University of New England, as well as our peer Landcare networks; GWYMAC, GLENRAC and Granite Borders Landcare to deliver locally relevant outcomes for our members and friends. And importantly, we have partnered with and supported our member Landcare groups and individuals to work on the very local issues that are important to them.

There have been **25 network level events, 9 group level events, and a total of 715 event participants** and you will find these figures summarised on this financial year's

'Strategic Plan Achievements' infographic document we have available.

A key outcome and a highlight of all this activity is the positivity that results when there is funding to do great work on the ground. We've seen how being well funded affects the people involved in a very positive way, giving everyone a great sense of purpose.

While our focus on the issues associated with COVID-19 has reduced in recent months, it has been replaced by a focus on the impacts of the extremely wet conditions on our events and project work. Having the ability to be flexible seems to be the order of the day.

Looking outwards towards our greater region, the New England, over the coming months, Southern New England Landcare will be represented at three regional workshops designed to plan the Landcare priorities for the New England region. We see this work as vital in bringing common priorities of our grassroots networks to the attention of State and Federal bodies.

Landcare NSW has now completed its governance restructure, and we are capably represented by our own member Steve Harvey who represents the whole New England region, on the LNSW Council.

Back in our own region, it's been great to see the re-emergence of Member Musters twice a year with guest speakers on topics of interest. I note tonight we have a past staff member Rachel Lawrence joining us to speak on Natural Capital Accounting. It's wonderful to have you back among us Rachel. And Rachel is a great example of how Landcare can 'value add' to the careers of emerging ecologists, agronomists, and extension officers.

Our current staff team includes Karen Zirkler as our Executive Officer, Struan Ferguson working on biodiversity projects, Des Anderson taking care of koala projects, Alex Hunter as our admin assistant, Amanda Fenwicke as our bookkeeper, and new team member Aggie Seiler who was recently recruited for the

Malpas project and our UNE Resilient Pastures project. Also worthy of mention is contractor Brooke Robertson, who has been responsible for delivering key outcomes against our koala projects, and Pete Fitzgerald who was contracted for about 6 months to deliver specific outcomes against our Malpas Catchment Project.

In all the busy-ness, Landchat has yet to land in your letterboxes this year. A decision was made to make it an annual publication this year due to time constraints, so you can look forward to a bumper edition in time for the Christmas break. On the other hand, we have delivered something like 40 eNews to your email inbox this year. The board would like to express our appreciation for the valued dedication of our staff for their continued efforts.

I would like to thank my board colleagues for their volunteer efforts, time, and deliberation over many topics this year. It has at times been challenging, but we have demonstrated that we function well as a team.

Over the last year, we sought fresh involvement, and as a result, David Steller joined us representing Armidale Tree Group Inc. During tonight's board nominations, we see that Professor Nick Reid is likely to join the board which is very exciting. We welcome their experience and expertise, and hope they also gain something from our organisation, which is in itself unique in many ways.

And to all our members, we would not be the organisation we are without you, what you believe in and what you do. Thank you for your support, initiatives, and efforts over the last year.

Due to a new business venture, the time constraints are such that I am sadly resigning from the Board. I take this opportunity to thank the Board and staff for their support over the last couple of years and every success on the path forward.

Richard Daugherty,
16 November 2022

Keep Your Eyes to the Sky for Threatened Birds of Prey

July to February is breeding season for the target species for the Birds of Prey Monitoring and Stewardship Project.

These species include: Little Eagle, Square-tailed Kite, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, Spotted Harrier, Barking Owl, and Black Falcon.

Look out for nesting activity like the carrying of sticks and other nest material for renovating or rebuilding of nests. This is the best way to identify the location of nests.

We are looking for bird sightings, injuries, and deaths – we can confirm identification and investigate territories and importantly nesting sites.

Reporting sightings throughout the Northern Tablelands of these threatened species, particularly during breeding season, will assist UNE to monitor the reproductive success of breeding pairs.

Report activity to:

- Steve Debus email sdebus@une.edu.au or phone 0409 779 766
- Northern Tablelands Local Land Services email enquiry. northerntablelands@lls.nsw.gov.au or phone 1300 795 299 (during business hours) or
- Join the Facebook Group - Raptors of the Northern Tablelands.

Southern New England Landcare, with local film maker David Waugh of Verso Design, have successfully completed several short films to assist landholders and community members to identify the birds of prey, learn about the project and report sightings of them.

These films are available for viewing on Southern New England Landcare's YouTube Channel:

1. Vulnerable Raptors of New England:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9k5TMR2SaY>
2. Vulnerable Raptors of New England - Dr Steve Debus, Ornithologist:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R4J2DBR-ao>
3. Vulnerable Raptors of New England - Professor Paul McDonald, University of New England:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KztMeYZVnvw>

4. Vulnerable Raptors of New England - Chris Baker, Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carers:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3cGrhmqFEbl>

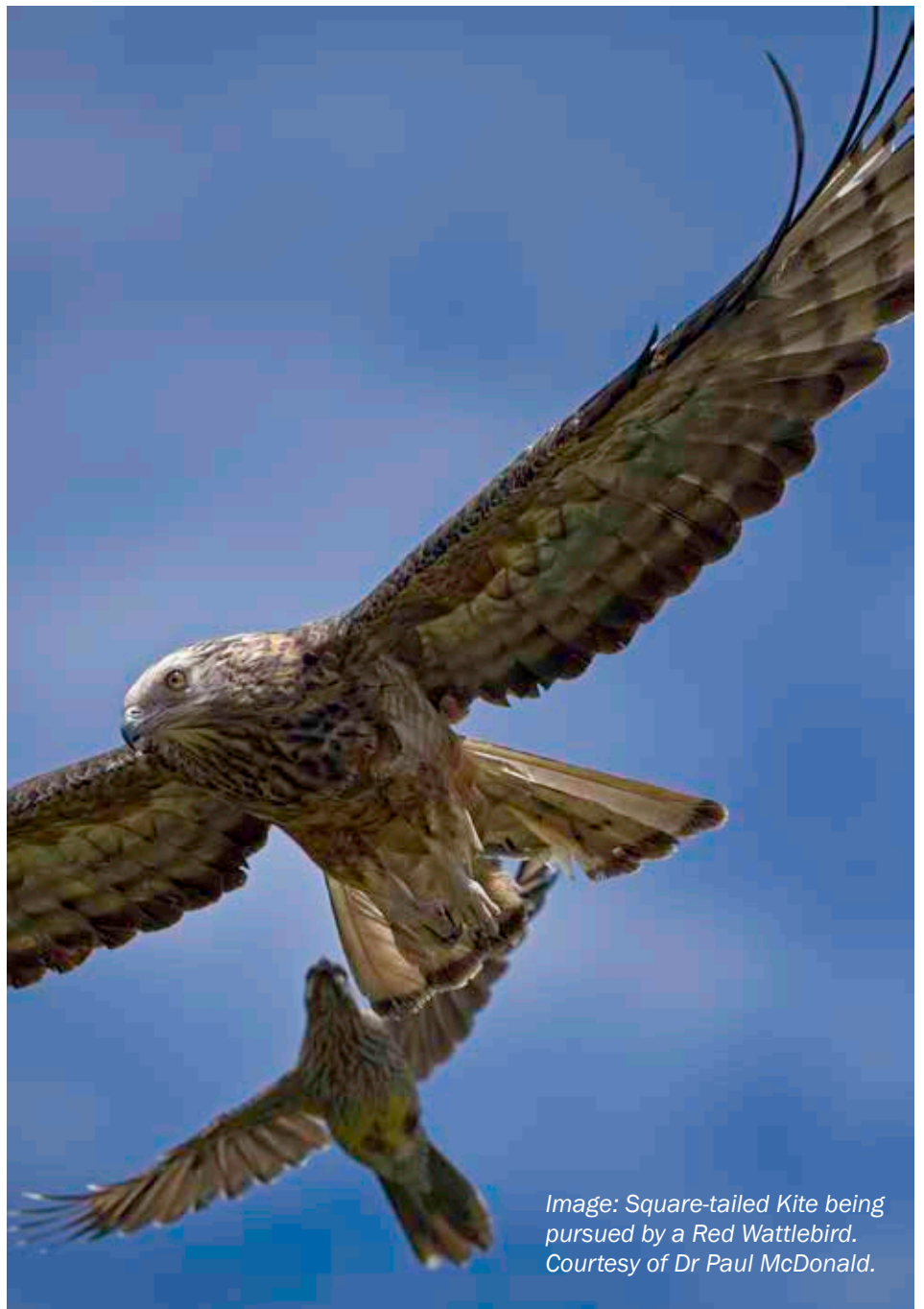
Southern New England Landcare extends its thanks to Steve Ahoy (Nganyaywana nation), Anne Starr (Foxforth Herefords), Steve Harris (Landholder), Gordon Williams (Eastlake Partnership), Jodie Caldwell (Landholder), Verso Design, Dr Paul

McDonald (UNE), Dr Stephen Debus (UNE) and Euan Belson (NTLLS) for their generous participation and assistance.

The films were funded by Northern Tablelands Local Land Services as part of the 2021-2022 Birds of Prey Monitoring and Stewardship Project being conducted in partnership with the University of New England.



Local Land
Services



*Image: Square-tailed Kite being pursued by a Red Wattlebird.
Courtesy of Dr Paul McDonald.*

Koala Conservation Capers

Workshops ensure we can feed our koalas

On 31st March 2022, twenty five koala carers and local landholders attended two workshops on Koala Feed Tree identification.

Hosted by Southern New England Landcare, the workshops were held at the Armidale Tree Group and run by David Carr from Stringybark Ecological. They were designed to provide skills and knowledge to those interested or involved in koala care.

The workshops covered basic eucalypt anatomy, bark types, juvenile and adult leaves, buds, fruits and using voucher specimens for identification.

The course then provided the opportunity to connect this knowledge with a Native Seed Collection Workshop on the 6th and 7th of April 2022.

Hosted by the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, this course was designed to help participants collect and propagate native seed stock.

Participants found value in the workshops, as evidenced by the following testimonials:

“The course covered every aspect of eucalypts so even as a beginner I feel like I have an excellent understanding now.”

“Will be planting a lot more feed trees for koala now I know their preferences.”

“I thought it was interesting hear that what leaves a koala likes depends a lot on what they have been eating! I didn't realise that stringybarks were a popular food with some koalas.”

For more information, contact des.andersen@snelandcare.org.au or 6772 9123.

Engaging school students in Koala Conservation

The Northern Tablelands Koala Partnership Project (NTKPP) in partnership with Thalgarrah Education Centre are developing a koala conservation project to engage school students in the Armidale region.

The project-based learning activities complement the Koala Smart Program (<https://www.koalasmart.org.au/>), a free curriculum-based program designed to ‘inspire Primary and Secondary students to actively create positive change and save our koalas.’

On the 14th of October 2022 Southern New England Landcare delivered the first Northern Tablelands Koala Partnership Project Schools’s presentation to a Stage 2 class from Ben Venue Public School.

The NTKPP is continuing to develop partnerships with local schools and environmental education centres with the opportunity to continue to engage young learners in koala conservation.

Signs warn drivers of koalas on New England Highway

Koalas are now officially listed as endangered.

Vehicle strike is a key threat and has played a big part in koala population decline. It is one of the most frequently reported causes of injury and death for koalas brought into care by wildlife rehabilitation groups.

Vehicle strike tends to be clustered at specific locations called ‘hotspots’, where a road intersects the with koala habitat. Koala vehicle

strikes are also more likely to occur at dawn and dusk when it's more difficult for drivers to see and avoid collisions.

There has been a vehicle strike hotspot identified on the New England Highway south of Uralla where the 50km/hour speed zone changes to a 100km/hour speed zone. Eight koalas have been hit here in the past two years.

To mitigate vehicle strike in this area, Southern New England Landcare in partnership with Uralla Shire Council and the Uralla Golf Club has:

1. Installed two variable message signs at either end of the hotspot area to warn drivers that they are entering a koala zone.
2. Arranged more frequent mowing of roadside grass in the hotspot area to improve driver visibility.
3. Provided general koala vehicle strike updates and safe practise awareness raising information to the community through Council and social media.

More information at <https://snelandcare.org.au/koala-program/koala-projects.html> or by contacting des.andersen@snelandcare.org.au or on 6772 9123.

Top right: participants in the Koala Feed Tree Identification Workshop.

Middle right: Brooke Robertson from NT Fauna Solutions Pty Ltd with Ben Venue Public School students.

Bottom right: The koala hotspot signs on the New England Highway south of Uralla.

This project is proudly funded by the NSW Government.

Proudly funded by





New Board

The AGM elected the following board members on the 16th November 2022:

1. Bill Perrottet – President
2. David Steller – Vice President
3. Bev Stubberfield – Treasurer
4. Steve Harvey
5. Jill Moore-Kashima
6. Bryan Johnston
7. Peter Metcalfe
8. Nick Reid

Karen Zirkler was appointed Company Secretary.



Strategic Plan & Policy Updates

The board of Southern New England Landcare conducted their annual Strategic Plan and Policy Review workshop on 20th April 2022.

While most content has remained relevant and unchanged, the Southern New England Landcare Strategic Plan (2022) includes updates to the context in which we operate, given the implementation of the New England Renewable Energy Zone.

You can view the updated Strategic Plan at <https://snelandcare.org.au/resources/publications/640-strategic-plan-2019.html>

Several new policy documents have also been adopted and can be viewed and downloaded at <https://snelandcare.org.au/resources/publications/629-policy-documents.html>



Southern New England Landcare at Black Gully Music Festival



Southern New England Landcare had a strong presence at the 2022 Black Gully Music Festival on 12 November.

We joined forces with sub-group, Armidale Urban Rivercare to set up a wonderful display illustrating lots of the good work we support.

A major focus our Northern Tablelands Koala Partnership Project, with key team members present to host kids activities, and talk koala conservation with passers-by.

Left top: Half of the Southern New England Landcare display tent.

Left bottom: Armidale Urban Rivercare Group's display attracted a great deal of attention.

Below: Young koala enthusiast, Patrick, won the Koala Guessing Competition, guessing 333 - just one more than the actual number of Gummy Bears in the jar. Patrick was very excited to be taking home the jar of lollies!

Top right: Locals joined the fun and frivolity with Sustainable Living Armidale's dancing koala's rendition of 'Staying Alive'!





Koala

detection dog demonstrates skills to festival crowd

The Koala Detection Dog Demonstration was a prime attraction at the Black Gully Music Festival.

Koala Detection Dogs can detect the presence of a koala by sniffing for 'scats' (koala poo) which may be detected by dog up to six weeks after a koala has left the area.

This information is extremely useful to help researchers and field officers understand which tree species are preferred koala feed trees and how to protect and restore this habitat.

Southern New England Landcare would like to say a big thank you to the Canines for Wildlife team who brought one of their koala detective dogs to demonstrate how they identify koala habitat.

More than 65 festival goers watched on as the spaniel was successfully put through his paces finding koala scats.

Left: The Canines for Wildlife team after the demonstration to 65 festival goers.

These initiatives are proudly funded by the NSW Government.



Proudly funded by



November Group Round Up

More than 20 groups were represented at the November Annual General Meeting held in Uralla on 16th November 2022.

During our usual 'Around Our Groups' session, group representatives shared what's been happening in their local group area since the last gathering.

It's pleasantly surprising how much amazing work is being done and what follows is a brief summary:

Richard Daugherty – Balala Brushgrove Landcare

Not a lot happening as a group. Much more happening as individuals such as Natural Capital Accounting and Farming for the Future. Tim Wright added the helicopter shoot off for feral pigs got a good attendance and that will occur in early December. It's a biosecurity money from the State Government through LLS. Will also be dealing with deer.

Kate Boyd – Sustainable Living Armidale Inc

Active through a range of sub-groups. Also has forums but work in with other things that are already happening to partner with other groups and get more community involvement. Renewable energy issues would be of interest to most here. Helen Webb as the convenor has contributed to ARC processes providing comments on their action plan. Their climate group was involved in a conference for the nature conservation council in June at Echidna Gully. Restarted their energy group to have input into the state-wide strategy for how Energy Co should work better with the community. Happy to discuss those things more with people. There is also a water working group.

Helen Stokes – Friends of Angophora Bushland Reserve

Four working bees which have been difficult to organise because of the rain. The reserve is looking very nice. It's very small but the plantings done on the recommendation of Ruth Tremont have survived the drought and the floods and are growing well. It's a great place to enjoy the peace.

Peter Metcalfe – Dumaresq Landcare

Amazing regeneration (nature has reigned supreme). Some group members have been planting koala food trees. The drought and the cyclone really killed off a lot of the local trees. Most of the fallen trees have no seed on them (they didn't flower). This year there is a mass flowering, which is seed for next year. The wet soil and the cyclone and then wind, have done a lot of damage. Makes you realise how puny our efforts are.

Gordon Williams – Harnham Landcare

LLS ran a water systems field day recently at Gordon's with 20 participants. Some mixed plantings of oaks and bottle brush along Blue Mountain Road. Did apply for a BCT koala tender but were not successful. Eastlake field day for the BCT organised by Struan was very successful.

Prof Nick Reid – UNE

Resigned last year due to issues at UNE. Very challenging times at UNE, retained most junior staff, will no doubt regroup and keep going. Student numbers have reduced but possibly due to covid. Confident that it will improve. Looking forward to working with this group and some of the people he has worked with in the past.

Steve Harvey – Dangarsleigh

Very quiet as a group since a big meeting last year on the koala project. There are several Landholder Management Agreements were struck at that time. Struggling with getting on the country due to the wet.

Arleen Packer – Save the Regent Honeyeater Group

Have had a few meetings and a lot of fun. Struan has led the group with several activities – 3 excursions to look at TSRs and thinking about enhancing for the benefit of Regent Honeyeaters including plantings. The have done lots of plant ID while out and about. Lots of planning. Peter Metcalfe commented that the success of plantings at the Kingstown school and there is room for plenty more. Have made a good connection with Helen Ward from LLS TSR team. The road building has knocked down significant habitat trees which has been very disappointing and distressing.

Michael Taylor – New England Agroforestry Network

Silvopasture field day last year so haven't had many events since then. Are intending to be part of a natural capital project. Harvesting of 50 ha planted pine now. The sawmill has been running a lot. It's the icing on the cake for Michael's parents who planted them all 35 years ago. Shortage of timber around the country so forest industry is looking to private land for future timber supply. Michael introduced Katie Barnett who is managing a lot of Michael's upcoming work and field days. David Mailler noted an interest in TSRs and the natural regeneration taking place there.

Beatrice Bashford – Harnham Landcare Group

Kentucky public school pine forest was taken down and was replanted with natives this year. Seven landholders in the Harnham group are involved in the Environmental Trust Thunderbolt project to connect corridors and wetland habitat. Protecting New England Biodiversity project conducted a field day at Glenburnie recently. Struan is assisting to talk to Uralla Council to do tree planting at Racecourse Lagoon at Uralla. Andrew Huggett has also been involved in bird surveys.

Carol Shantal – Znet Uralla

Let's talk water project report has been finalised. Have applied with New England Solar for a small grant to do some work in the Kentucky Dam Catchment. Greening Uralla Project is in its second year. A series of workshops in February about keeping Uralla cool – looking at streetscapes in the town and will give a report to council for their consideration. Focussing on climate issues impacts on food security so created a local food abundance program which will visit some local farms. Working with Struan on the Racecourse Lagoon project planting.

Helen Webb – People's Park Group

Working to do maintenance on the creek lands in Armidale. Regularly putting in 2-5 people for a couple of hours on Thursday mornings with a focus on the HiCUB sites. Getting good response from the community re the success of the plantings. Helen has a focus on grasses and ground covers. Have some lovely sites e.g. area 13 near Cooke's Road. There have been at least 20 floods this year. Noticed the expansion of Indian Mynas.

Helen also spoke on Armidale Urban Rivercare's Weedy Wasteland to Wildlife Wetland project. Touched on Bruce's ill health and grateful for Angus Adair stepping in to

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coordinate. Encouraged everyone to take a walk along there as it is very beautiful.

Jill Moore-Kashima – Soil Health Forum

Started back in 20007 with a lot of events but haven't done much recently. Tim Wright as a founding member has been continuing lots of work with grazing management in recent years. Looking at a contentious area which is cultural burning. Some slow fire's into local connections with traditional owners. It needs to be slow and careful. This is a topic that we need to deal with. Let's get on top of this topic and become more prepared for a possible onslaught of inappropriate activity with fire. Have also identified a need for more work on grass identification. Phil Spark did a fauna survey on Jills place and Margaret's place (neighbour) and the results are fabulous and were presented today. Will also be presented at the Blackbutt field day on this Friday.

David Steller – Armidale Tree Group Inc

40 years old next year. Spent the drought fixing up their infrastructure where they propagate plants. Have finished all the bushfire grant requirement. Now there are the floods so want to expand the growing area. But can't prepare the base for the new hoop house due to the wet site. Trying to double production from 100,000 per year to 200,000 per year as there is such a demand. New seed collection and separation and storage equipment through a grant process. There is no viable seed bank in the region, so they want to make sure there is with this bumper season of flowering. Storage will be up to 20 years. Still taking orders (well in advance).

Bev Stubberfield – Uralla Rivercare Group

Formed in 2000 so about 22 years old. Seven sites are the same

age. The creek has been flooded 8 times this year (normally twice). Lots of sediment in the form of sand which has caused a lot of islands in the middle of the creek. Causing narrowing of the waterway. Concerned. It may have gold in it! Some very large rock revetment and riffles. They have amazingly all survived this flooding. They were designed by Redfrog (Michael Lloyd). All sites doing well but maintenance is difficult as it's too wet. Lots of properties changing hands. Lots of new rental houses so difficult to get folks interest.

Bill Perrottet – Malpas Catchment Group

Have had a few meetings over the last year which tended to focus on the raising of the dam wall. A field day at Urandangie on Natural Sequence Farming especially interesting was the math and physics done by the Mulloon Institute. Was very interesting. Can we store more water in the environment? Yes, we can rather than having it in dams. Convinced that we can store water better in the environment after that field day. Some of the clubs are keen on big facilities with a new dam height. Pete Fitzgerald assisted with this process. Aggie Seiler is the new Malpas Coordinator. Some of the Guyra people felt left out of Landcare, so thinking there may be a new Guyra Landcare Group.

Tim asked if Wongwibinda or Aberfoyle had much activity. Not much. Struan mentioned the Mother of Ducks Lagoon application that failed earlier in the year. Bec Smith would be a great person to get involved. Tim mentioned the Earth Canvass art day where they were privileged to see a platypus very clearly.



Surveys Highlight Northern Tablelands Koalas

After rain delays followed by more rain delays, the 2021-22 Koala Surveying and Monitoring was finally concluded in April, 2022.

Koala surveying and monitoring data is a vital part of the NSW Koala Strategy. Under the Strategy survey data provides information on koala populations including presence and absence (where koalas are or are not, relative to what we believe is koala habitat), koala population densities and individual koala ranges.

The 2021-22 survey also included assessments of preferred koala feed trees and other plant associations that form typical koala habitat.

Surveying and monitoring data forms one of the of the four Key Focus Areas of the strategy. This data informs and ultimately helps koala conservation funding to be directed toward activities and regions where it's needed.

The 2021-22 Koala Surveying and Monitoring project included 50 survey sites located within an area adjacent to the Armidale Area of Regional Koala Significance (ARKS). Each survey site supported two survey methods:

1. Acoustic monitoring - using an AudioMoth over 14 consecutive nights to record the male koala bellows.
2. Koala detection dog surveys – using a specialist dog to locate koala scats (poo) by scent. Dog surveys were conducted over a 200m by 50m (1hectare) grid.

Detection Dog Results

Koala detection dog 'Max' sampled 47 sites. Three sites were disqualified due to fox baiting. Eighteen sites out of 47 had a scat present (38%).

AudioMoth results

Forty nine AudioMoths were retrieved after 14 nights (one device on Killen's Travelling Stock Reserve went missing). Four acoustic

monitoring sites recorded bellows (8%). All four sites also recorded koala scats by the detection dog.

Detection dogs can detect the presence of koalas at a site for approximately six weeks after the koala has moved away from the area. Audiomoths are only able to detect a koala if it is:

- simultaneously present at a site
- within range (within an approximate 100 m radius from the device)
- calling (mostly males).

Other potential factors for the significantly lower recording rate from AudioMoth devices may be:

- placement of AudioMoths in December which is towards the end of the key koala calling activity period (August – November)
- periods of rain during the 14 nights (rain deters koala activity and interferes with sound detection)
- lower recording range of the model of AudioMoth used (approximately 100 m)
- some sites had nearby possible noise factors (roads, creeks, and frog noise).

Assessment of koala habitat showed koalas appeared to use at least nine species of eucalyptus trees as food trees.

Koala scats found under Stringybark species yielded by far the most positive sightings (66%).

Acknowledgements

The project was delivered by Southern New England Landcare, Canines For Wildlife, JML Ecological and Stringybark Ecological. The project was made possible by the great support from our project partners including private landholders, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, University of New England (Newholme Field

Laboratory) and the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services. Each partner helped facilitate koala surveys on their property and provided great local knowledge to help guide site selection.

The data set helps support previous koala surveys undertaken in the region and further supports our expanding knowledge of koala populations in the Northern Tablelands. Disturbingly, these declining populations are becoming increasingly vulnerable to many threats including disease, vehicle strike, livestock and dog attacks and reduction of habitat.

Given koala populations in NSW are now endangered, the Northern Tablelands Koala Partnership Project will continue to focus on engaging the whole of our community to assist.

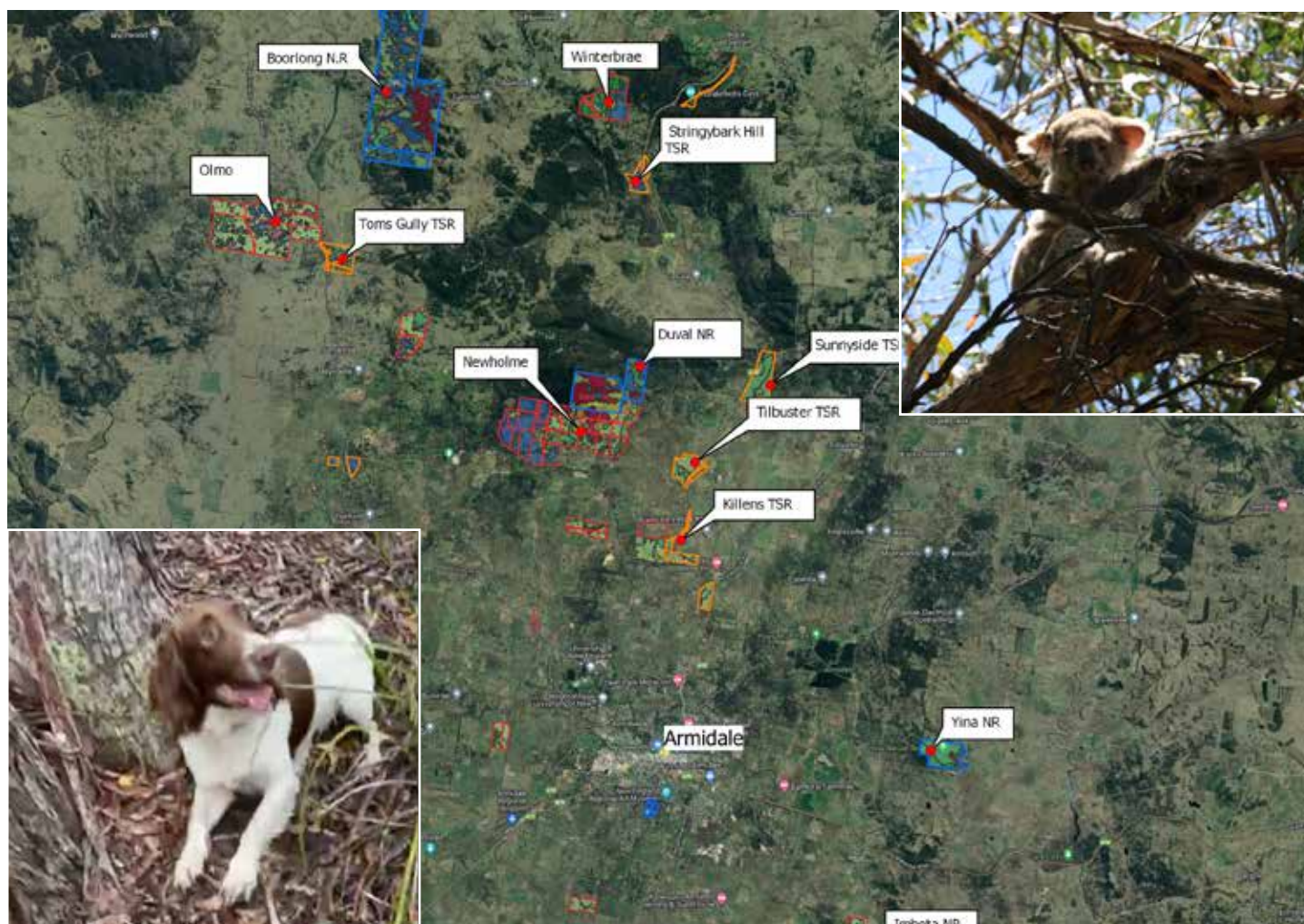
All help from our community is extremely valuable, from recognising and protecting habitat on your property (nearly all local Eucalyptus trees provide koala feed), to reporting sightings, alerting wildlife carers when a sick or injured animal is encountered, or reducing vehicle strikes and dog attacks.

Koala sightings can be reported directly to Southern New England Landcare or by using the iSpy koala app. Sick or injured koalas should be immediately reported to WIRES 1300 094 737 or Northern Tablelands Wildlife Carer's 1800 008 290.

This activity is part of the Northern Tablelands Koala Partnership Project (NTKPP), hosted by Southern New England Landcare and funded by the NSW Government.

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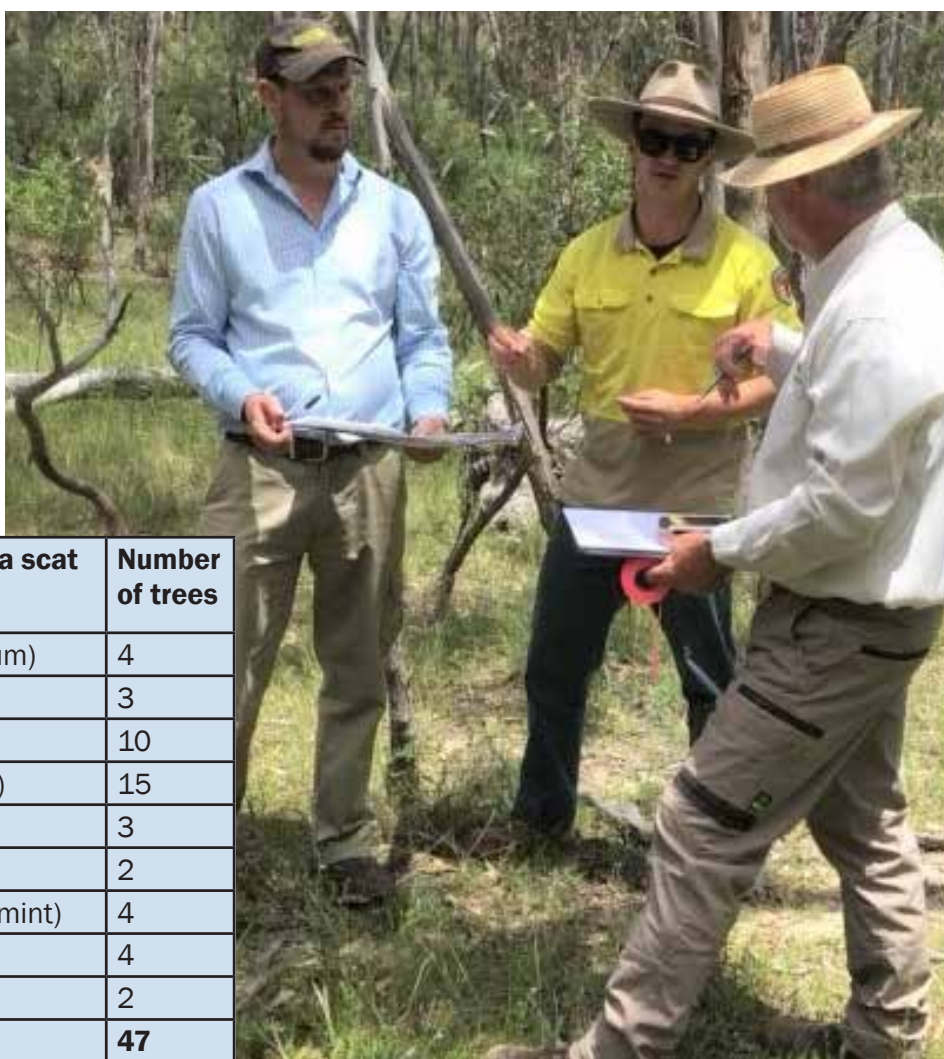
Above: Koala Monitoring and Surveying sites.

Top inset: Koala near Sunnyside Travelling Stock Reserve.

Bottom inset: 'Max' finds a scat.

Right: The survey team at Imbota Nature Reserve.

Below: Tree species that recorded koala scats.



Species of tree that recorded a koala scat	Number of trees
Eucalyptus blakelyi (Blakely's Red Gum)	4
E. bridgesiana (Apple Box)	3
E. calignosa (Broad leaf Stringybark)	10
E. laevopinea (Silvoer top Stringybark)	15
E. melliodora (Yellow Box)	3
E. nobilis (Ribon Gum)	2
E. nova-anglica (New England Peppermint)	4
E. youmanii (Youman's Stringybark)	4
Stringybark spp not identified	2
Total trees	47

Important Insurance Update

If you are one of the key contacts in your local Southern New England Landcare group, you may have received an email this year from Landcare NSW, suggesting that your group consider taking up membership with Landcare NSW, and accessing the new insurance deal they have secured.

Your group will only need to consider this if it is incorporated in its own right. For instance, Arding Landcare Inc., Sustainable Living Armidale Inc, Armidale Tree Group Inc. etc.

All *unincorporated* sub-groups of Southern New England Landcare Ltd are NOT required to sign up as members of Landcare NSW for the purposes of insurance, as they are already signed up and insured under the new policy recently taken by Southern New England Landcare Ltd under the Landcare NSW master policy arrangement. However, your sub-group of Southern New England Landcare Ltd needs to be aware of the new 'rules' that now apply under the new insurance policies.

New rules for (unincorporated) sub-groups

Insurance cover for Section 355 Committees of Council, school groups, or “branches” of other organisations (e.g. Rotary Club) is provided by their parent body’s insurance. Our Southern New England Landcare Ltd example is BC2 - Armidale High School Bushcare Group, where its group activities are covered by the school.

Unincorporated groups operating as a named working group, sub-committee, or as a sub-group under the constitution of the umbrella organisation (i.e. all those Southern New England Landcare sub-groups listed below) can be covered as part

of the umbrella network's policy (at no extra cost) under the following conditions:

1. The individual members of this sub-group take out individual membership with your main body (we ask that everyone signs up for free at <https://snelandcare.org.au/membership/become-a-member.html>)
2. The sub-group operates in the name of the umbrella organization under a “term of reference” from the main body that a true “line of sight” of activities exists. The 'term of reference' is the Southern New England Landcare Ltd constitution.
3. The ultimate decision-making authority for the sub-group is the management committee of the umbrella organisation, i.e. the board of Southern New England Landcare Ltd. This does not mean that straight-forward sub-group decisions cannot be made by the sub-group itself.

Southern New England Landcare Ltd sub-groups listed on the Company Register

The sub-groups listed below have been accepted as member groups of Southern New England Landcare Ltd, and are listed on the Company Register. These groups DO NOT need to take out Landcare NSW membership and insurance, but DO need to be aware of, and follow the rules outlined above.

1. Aberfoyle Landcare
2. Armidale Urban Rivercare
3. Balala-Brushgrove Landcare
4. Boorolong Landcare

5. BOZO Landcare
6. Cooney Creek Landcare
7. Dangarsleigh Landcare
8. Dumaresq Landcare
9. Friends of Angophora Bushland Reserve
10. Friends of Barry Munday Reserve
11. Friends of Black Gully
12. Glen-GRO Landcare
13. Grass Grower's Tea Party
14. Harnham Landcare
15. Herbert Park Landcare
16. Lower Apsley River Landcare
17. Malpas Catchment Group
18. New England Agroforestry Network
19. Nowendoc Landcare
20. Oaky Landcare
21. People's Park Landcare
22. Rockvale Landcare
23. Save the Regent Honeyeater Group
24. Soil Health Forum
25. South Armidale Walking Track Group
26. UNE Landcare
27. Uralla Rivercare
28. Winterbourne Moona Plains Landcare
29. Wongwibinda Landcare
30. Woolbrook-Walcha Road Landcare
31. Yarrowitch-Tia Landcare

Hazardous Activities

Under Southern New England Landcare Ltd's membership and insurance with Landcare NSW, the following activities are regarded as potentially hazardous and **MUST** be undertaken by appropriately skilled, trained, licensed, or certified individuals. These activities should be preapproved by the committee of management:

1. Use of pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals (including trailer mounted units)
2. Use of chainsaws, heavy and motorised machinery
3. Use of firearms
4. Pest baiting
5. Use of watercraft (not exceeding 8m in length)
6. Snorkelling and scuba diving
7. Working at heights.

Member groups undertaking these activities on either singular or regular basis must inform their Local Landcare Coordinator or designated safety officer, and operate according to both Federal and NSW state legislation, and the Landcare NSW WH&S policy and risk assessment requirements.

All paid group members whilst participating in Landcare style group activities on public land or in a Landcare group based 'working bee' on private and/or public land, should ensure that they have appropriate certification, qualifications, and skill levels.

Designated activity leaders and Landcare Coordinators **MUST** check the insurance and relevant

certifications of all contractors and suppliers of pesticides/herbicides/ other chemicals that are intended to be used at the controlled activity.

All Landholder group members on which a Landcare developed project is being implemented on their own land, and who are working on their own property outside of a specific Group controlled activity, must ensure they have the correct certifications, skills and corresponding insurances to cover this work.

All Landcare group members on which a Landcare developed project is being implemented on any waterway must ensure they have the correct certifications, skills, and corresponding insurances to cover this work. As a minimum of one person must hold a current Bronze medallion (SLSA) or equivalent.

Landcare NSW will not permit untrained or unlicensed volunteers to be participating in any of the abovementioned activities.

Download Landcare NSW's Hazardous Activities Information Sheet for more information.

Important reminders for sub-groups of Southern New England Landcare Ltd:

1. Membership - please check that all your group members are signed up as members of Southern New England Landcare (which is now FREE) by visiting <https://snelandcare.org.au/membership/become-a-member.html>
2. Constitution - remember, your group must abide by the

Constitution of Southern New England Landcare Ltd.

3. Group funds - if your group still holds funds and you would like to use them for a group activity or project, please get in touch with the office to make arrangements.
4. Promotion - all event and activity promotional materials need to reference Southern New England Landcare Ltd as the group's governing body. An easy way to do this is to state something like "This initiative is hosted by NAME OF YOUR GROUP - a Sub-Group of Southern New England Landcare Ltd". This will ensure the activity is covered by the insurance policy.
5. Pre-approval - activities that are part of a controlled Landcare Group or Sub-Group activity should be preapproved by the committee of management of that group.
6. Paid contractors - any paid contractors working on landcare projects should forward their insurance and qualification details to the office on mail@snelandcare.org.au
7. Inform the SNE Landcare Coordinator - please, if you are arranging an event or activity, make sure you let us know! Email is probably best on mail@snelandcare.org.au so we have a 'record' of your planned event.



This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Program. A collaboration of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.

PEER GROUP MENTORING SERVICE FOR AGROFORESTRY



FARMER TO FARMER EXTENSION

FOR FARMERS
MANAGING TREES
FOR REASONS THAT
MATTER TO THEM!



WHO ARE THE MENTORS?

- LOCAL EXPERIENCED TREE GROWERS
- MASTER TREEGROWER PROGRAM GRADUATES
- TRAINED MENTORS



WHAT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?

- FARM VISITS SUPPORT YOUR IDEAS & GOALS
- TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AND INFORMATION
- SITE REPORTS



WHAT TOPICS CAN BE COVERED?

- Shade and shelter
- Farm aesthetics
- Natives or exotics
- Tree establishment
- Habitat
- Farm tree planning
- Native forest management
- Species identification
- Trees for timber

HOW DO WE KNOW IT WORKS?

Most significant change technique tells the story...

The suggestions and guidance of what species to try, planting locations, when and in what season to plant, as well as planting designs have all been of tremendous value.

Nolan Hine & David Munzies, Cattlebrook, Urala

The mentors passed on valuable insights about the diversity in my forest and helped me see it as a whole ecosystem. They also provided useful practical tips which filled out much of my own opinions on where to go with its management.

Rob Laurie, Brigadon, Nowendoc.



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A project of the New England Agri. Woodland Network (NEAWN), a sub-group of Southern New England Landcare Ltd. This project is supported with funding from the Australian Government, and in-kind contributions from the Australian Agroforestry Foundation.



Jeff Strudwick on how the PGM Program helped...

Prior to my involvement with the PGM program as a mentee, I was involved with the recent Master Tree Grower Course in Armidale.

Over many years with our property, myself and my family have always considered sustainable grazing management, mineral supplementation of our livestock and the protection of vulnerable riparian areas as very important.

Remnant areas of bushland have been fenced off for their protection. I have taken advantage of Catchment Management Authority and Landcare information and subsidies relating to improvements to my land management and infrastructure.

More recently, it has been my aim to become less reliant on off farm income (shearing) and devote more time on farm. There is a firewood resource on my property that could be utilised and maybe the potential to further develop native timber milling. As well as improvements to my grazing enterprises, I have sought to find ways and assure myself that financial sustainability can be obtained from the farm itself.

I received a visit from three Peer Group Mentors (Garry Bashford, Peter Metcalfe, and Karen Zirkler) on 13 November 2015. There was much discussion and travel to different parts of my property viewing the grazing

areas, the timbered areas and the improvements so far developed.

A comprehensive report was written which included suggestions on thinning dense timber areas, property planning, improving soil fertility and thus animal production. The report also included a plant species list and a bird species list. With the report came a lot of other reference material and handouts.

I have all the necessary equipment to develop a firewood supply business as part of the farm enterprise cash flow. I will need to obtain the proper State Government permissions and seek advice on thinning some thick stands of existing timber, creating the firewood resource, and leaving good trees to grow on for possible later use.

The significant change for me was the mentors giving me confidence and suggesting the necessary steps in this process. It is hard to knock back the income you receive from the shearing activity. But maybe the firewood enterprise can part way substitute. I was pleased to receive the plant species list and bird list. However maybe my ideas and later suggestions by the mentors of collecting and selling native tree, shrub, and grass seed, is a possible farm enterprise.

*Jeff Strudwick, Ridgeview, Uralla,
January 2016*

How to get help

Southern New England Landcare has six local landholders trained in Agroforestry Peer Mentoring.

All you need to do is contact our office and tell us a bit about what you think you would like to do.

We then contact our peer mentors and set up an appropriate time for a property visit.

The mentors spend 2-3 hours with you on-farm, taking a look around, asking you lots of questions, discussing ideas and taking photos.

The lead mentor will then prepare a site visit report for you, detailing everything discussed, including possible ways forward, with useful links, contacts and even species lists.

You then have access to another 2 visits from your chosen mentor over the next 12 months, to support you in your endeavours.

The cost of the program is \$110 including GST and you must become a member.

We will invoice you when you receive your site report.

For more information or to book a site visit, contact mail@snelandcare.org.au or phone 02 6772 9123.

If undeliverable return to Southern New England Landcare,
Suite 10, 128 Beardy Street, PO Box 85, Armidale 2350.
Tel 02 6772 9123, mail@snelandcare.org.au.

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Landchat

Landcare in the Southern New England, No. 121, January - December 2022



Southern
New England
Landcare

Landchat presents a forum for the expression of a range of opinions. While every effort is made to publish accurate information, Southern New England Landcare Ltd and its employees do not accept responsibility for statements made and opinions expressed in this newsletter.

Our activities are supported by:



Need Insurance

for your farm, equipment, car or household?

We recommend Wesfarmers Federation Insurance, proud supporters of Landcare.

Mention you are a member of Southern New England Landcare, and 3% of the value of your premium is returned to us to support projects!

Contact David de Ferranti on
1300 934934 or 0412 328 911.



This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Program.

A collaboration of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.

