



Newsletter

Conserving and restoring from forest to foreshore

May normally means our Annual Mother's Day Community Planting! However you might have noticed its been raining alot! We've postponed our popular Mother's Day Community Tree Planting to Sunday 16th June.

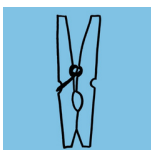
You'll find plenty to read and do in this newsletter however, including BVL workshops, Koala Conversations and other events.



Our picture this month is of the community members and volunteers that came out recently to our Ocean Shores Community Tree Planting on 13th April. Thanks to all 150 plants were planted on Devine's Hill to replace weeds. The plants were carefully selected to ensure the views from Devine's Hill will be maintained.



BRUNSWICK VALLEY LANDCARE IS A REGISTERED CHARITY ON PEGS AND PUBLINC



Local Pegs app allows businesses to offer discounted prices to locals. You can opt to keep the discount, tip the business, or donate to a local charity



As a Publinc member, not only do you get discounts on food and drinks at Hotel Brunswick, but you can donate your points to a local charity



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

BVL NEWS



The 13th Annual Brunswick Valley Landcare

MOTHER'S DAY TREE PLANTING

NEW DATE CONFIRMED SUNDAY 16TH JUNE

LIVE MUSIC
ABBIE CARDWELL
JESSE WITNEY



*Please wear sturdy shoes, hat and sunscreen
Bring a water bottle, keep cup and a raincoat*

BBQ, DRINKS & HOME-BAKED TREATS AVAILABLE



Fundraiser - Stone and Wood

**\$1:1L - fundraiser for Brunswick Valley Landcare
during the month of May**

In the Stone & Wood tasting rooms, they donate \$1 from every litre of beer sold to a local community cause every month. This means that every visitor to a Stone & Wood tasting room inherently becomes a part of the community story, just by buying a beer. In 2023 they supported 23 local causes through their venue's charity of the month program.



BVL NEWS

Two Great Workshop Topics for Landcarers: Sign Up! Sign Up!

Tool Use and Maintenance

Where and when: Held at Byron Centre for Permaculture (Cnr Burringbar and Gordon Sts Mullumbimby - opposite Byron Community College) from 1.30 – 4.30pm on Friday 31 May.

A useful tool workshop for landcarers!

Come and learn how to use common tools used in landcare and gardening work properly. We will also cover maintaining them to keep them in good condition.



We'll also cover how to clean up and maintain secateurs so bring yours (or other similar tool) along to give them a make over!

Tickets \$25 which includes materials and afternoon tea. Book early as places are limited <https://events.humanitix.com/tool-use-and-maintenance-workshop>

Plant Identification with Dr Jo Green

Volunteers and members of Brunswick Valley Landcare are invited to a fun workshop to learn and practice the key features that allow you to identify plants with Dr. Jo Green.

We know this will be popular so we've scheduled two workshops:

Where and when: Held in Maslen Arboretum (Heritage Park Mullumbimby) from 1.30 – 4.30pm on Friday 28 June and Friday 12 July.

You can select plant material from the arboretum for identification, or bring along a plant you would like identified (or both). Books and keys will be available to help you identify your favourite top five rainforest trees plus some plants of the forest floor (with reference to the Plants of the Forest Floor book).

Afternoon tea will be provided to registered attendees.

Free for Brunswick Valley Landcare locality group volunteers (use the code provided by email when booking). Numbers are limited so please book early to avoid missing out.



To book <https://events.humanitix.com/plant-identification-with-jo-green>

Byron Bird Buddy News

A few interesting events/ activities coming up with Byron Bird Buddies:

- Monday 13th May 9am start, Survey at The Wallum – Crown land at Brunswick Heads Meet at end of Omega Court. Contact BBB – Monthly survey byronbirdbuddy@gmail.com
- Murwillumbah Arts Trail – Bird Nerd exhibition
<https://www.murwillumbahartstrail.com.au/program/>
- Wednesday 22nd May 11am, Byron Bay Library – talk on Bowerbirds – preschool 3-5yr old - Special Story Time BBB – Isabel

D.R.W.I.L.D. Card

Northern Rivers Wildlife Hospital are excited to introduce the DRWILD digital download, designed to help you be ready to assist wildlife in need at a moment's notice.

The DRWILD card contains essential information and tips for providing first aid to injured or distressed animals. By downloading and printing this card at home (perhaps keeping one on your fridge and one in your car glove box), you'll have valuable guidance right at your fingertips, ensuring you can act swiftly and effectively to help wildlife in your community.

To download your copy click [here](#)

Mullum2Bruns Paddle

Positive Change for Marine Life is looking for volunteers to assist at their annual Kayak River Clean Up during the Mullum2Bruns Paddle on Sunday May 26.

Roles include:

- Participate in the kayak clean-up (kayaks provided for the first 10 sign-ups)
- Assist PCFML with waste sorting and recording at finish line

Date: Sunday, May 26th, 7:30 am

Locations: Heritage Park, Mullumbimby (paddlers) & Banner Park, Brunswick Heads (waste audit)

Sign up to volunteer for one or both roles [here](#).



Images: Positive Change for Marine Life

Northern Region Seed Bank Workshop on Seed Collection Apps

As part of the Northern Region Seed project and during the Koala Conversations event (see events page for more detail), Tweed Landcare are hosting this workshop.

The workshop will provide an overview of how to use the free smartphone Apps iNaturalist and Handy GPS when collecting native seed for koala habitat and other restoration projects.

The Regional Seed Bank project includes many of the species koala's like on the species list.

To book <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1210337?>



Koala Conversations

Two weeks of ideas, dialogue and action

North Coast Regional Seed Bank- Seed collection Apps

PUBLIC EVENT

This workshop will provide an overview of how to use the free smartphone Apps iNaturalist and Handy GPS when collecting native seed for koala habitat and other restoration projects.

30 MAY 2024

From 8.30 am - 11.30 am
Mullumbimby, address provided on registration

This event is also supported by the North Coast Regional Seed Bank project which is funded by North Coast Local Services.



FIND MORE INFORMATION



Supported by



You are invited to attend 2023 / 2024 NSW Landcare Awards

Come and celebrate our Landcare NSW finalists! The 2024 Landcare Awards are delivered in collaboration between Landcare NSW and Local Land Services. The official award ceremony will be held in Sydney at the Sergeants Mess, Chowder Bay, June 3rd at 2:30 - 6:30 pm. Tickets are available to purchase until 16th May [click here](#).

With an impressive 139 submissions received, the competition was intense across all nine categories. See further information at <https://landcarensw.org.au/nsw-landcare-awards-3/>

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL NEWS

Drainage education campaign kicks off

This educational campaign encourages residents, businesses, and visitors to keep their waste out of drains and easements to:

- reduce flash flooding
- reduce damage to property
- help the environment.

We have found everything from tree branches to old fridges and children's toys dumped in drains and easements, and this causes all sorts of issues for our drainage system. Drains get blocked and flash flooding occurs, which can then damage properties from drains overflowing.

Dumping things such as garden waste can also contaminate our waterways. It is also illegal under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997, and people can face a big fine for doing so.

What to do with your waste:

- Compost your garden waste.
- Use leaf litter, lawn clippings and compost to mulch your garden.
- Take advantage of your bins to dispose of your waste.
- Use a commercial waste disposal service.
- Take your large waste to the Byron Resource Recovery Centre. Residents get two \$50 waste disposal vouchers a year and can hire a trailer for free.
- Do not throw waste over your back fence, into bushland or into easements.
- [Report illegal dumping](#).

Below: Illegal dumping of green waste



Byron Shire Council hopes to reduce litter by 40% by 2029

Council's new Litter and Illegal Dumping Prevention Strategy has a target of reducing littered items by 40 percent over the next five years. The Strategy, which is on public exhibition, has been drafted with extensive feedback from key community organisations and feedback from interested residents and businesses.

The closing date for public submissions is 19 May 2024. People can get more information or make a submission on the [Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy](#) on Council's website.

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL NEWS

Furry Friends Festival

Byron Shire Council are holding the Furry Friends Festival on Saturday 15th June at Bangalow Showgrounds.

<https://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Recreation-Culture/Events-Venues/Whats-On/Furry-Friends-Festival-2024>



The inaugural *Furry Friends Festival 2024*

Come along and bring your pet dogs on lead for a morning of furry fun and frivolity!

When: Saturday 15 June, 9am to 12pm

Where: Bangalow Showgrounds

- Face painting
- Great prizes
- Photo booth
- Community sausage sizzle
- Vet advice
- Dog trainer talks
- Freebies
- And more!

More information

[www.byron.nsw.gov.au/
Furry-Friends](http://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Furry-Friends)



www.byron.nsw.gov.au

Caring for Catchments Project and Grant Funding

The Caring for Catchments project aims to improve catchment health, build flood resilience, and enhance biodiversity through riparian revegetation and reforestation with the objective to restore and protect waterways by planting up to 240 hectares of native vegetation along 8 kilometres of cleared river and streambanks over the next three years.

The project is the first of its kind, attracting some of the largest grant funding for these sorts of works in Australia. North Coast Regional Landcare Network (NCRLN) is excited to be delivering this project with funding from the Australian Government through the Northern Rivers Recovery and Resilience Program 2022-23 administered by NSW Reconstruction Authority.

Brunswick Valley Landcare will be working with NCRLN to deliver a workshop about this program soon (details to be announced).

- Small Project Grants: \$20,000 to \$60,000
- Large Project Grants: \$60,000 to \$160,000

Private landholders, Councils and community groups can apply. Collaboration is highly regarded. Private landholders interested in applying are strongly advised to call Brunswick Valley Landcare to discuss their project as we may be able to connect landholders together for a stronger application.

Eligible activities

On-ground, nature-based measures that will assist flood mitigation, build resilience to flooding and improve catchment health. For example, but not limited to:

- Planting native trees and shrubs along waterways to improve water quality, stabilise riverbanks, and enhance habitat for wildlife;
- Fencing of riparian areas and providing off-stream watering points;
- Weed management

Knowledge sharing, education and community engagement programs promoting awareness and education about riparian restoration, flood resilience and environmental markets within the targeted catchments.

Projects will run for 18 months. 2 tranches July 24 – Dec 25 and Nov 24 – Aug 2

Applications close 5pm Monday July 1 2024.

For further information and to apply <https://northcoastlandcare.org.au/caring-for-catchments/>



Gone in a puff of smoke: 52,000 sq km of 'long unburnt' Australian habitat has vanished in 40 years

Landscapes that have escaped fire for decades or centuries tend to harbour vital structures for wildlife, such as tree hollows and large logs. But these “long unburnt” habitats can be eliminated by a single blaze.

The pattern of fire most commonly experienced within an ecosystem is known as the [fire regime](#). This includes aspects such as fire frequency, season, intensity, size and shape. Fire regimes are changing across the globe, stoked by climate and land-use change. Recent megafires in Australia, Brazil, Canada and United States epitomise the dire consequences of shifting fire regimes for humanity and biodiversity alike.

In [new research](#), the past four decades of fires across southern Australia were analysed. We found fires are becoming more frequent in many of the areas most crucial for protecting threatened wildlife. Long unburnt habitat is disappearing faster than ever.

“Fire regimes that cause declines in biodiversity” was [recently listed as a key threatening process](#) under Australia’s environmental protection legislation.

The research found areas of long unburnt vegetation (30 years or more without fire) are shrinking. Meanwhile, areas of recently burnt vegetation (5 years or less since the most recent fire) are growing. And fires are burning more frequently.

On average, the percentage of long unburnt vegetation within reserves declined from 61% to 36% over the four decades we studied. We estimate the total area of long unburnt vegetation decreased by about 52,000 square kilometres, from about 132,000 sq km in 1980 to about 80,000 sq km in 2021. That’s an area almost as large as Tasmania.

At the same time, the mean amount of recently burnt vegetation increased from 20% to 35%. Going from about 42,000 sq km to about 64,000 sq km in total, which is an increase of 22,000 square kilometres.

And the average number of times a reserve burnt within 20 years increased by almost a third. While the extent of unburnt vegetation has been declining since 1980, increases in fire frequency and the extent of recently burnt vegetation were mainly driven by the record-breaking 2019–20 fire season.

What does this mean for Australia’s wildlife?

Fire management must adapt to stabilise fire regimes across southern Australia and alleviate pressure on Australia’s wildlife. Indigenous land management, including [cultural burning](#), is one approach that holds promise in reducing the incidence of large fires while providing fire for those species that need it.

We can also help wildlife become more resilient to shifting fire regimes by reducing other pressures such as invasive predators.

To read the entire article [here](#)

Tree-planting project transforms 'ugly' hill into 'paradise'

In the late 1990s, eight friends went looking for the most degraded, clapped-out piece of farmland they could find. Not to live on, or to make money from, but to transform into the bushland it once was.

"[Land] has been degraded, exploited and used economically, we just wanted to explore a different kind of relationship to country," Mr Meldrum said.

In 2001, after three years of searching, the friends pooled together \$19,000 and purchased 134 acres near Moonambel in central Victoria. As soon as they saw the "ugly" hill, they knew they'd found what they were looking for.

"There were four living trees on it, lots of erosion and it was an eyesore in the community," Mr Meldrum said.

Early tree plantings were successful because the group sourced good advice from local land management authorities.

To read the whole story, see <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-04-05/resource-rich-conservation-tree-planting-group-success-moonambel/>



From the early days to what is now 'paradise'



New report shows Nature Blocks can transform cities into havens for urban biodiversity

All across Australia, people have been creating their own **Nature Blocks™** – small areas in gardens and homes that support biodiversity.

These ‘blocks’ of nature, which can take many shapes – from pots, pollinator gardens to insect hotels and lizard lounges – are not only restoring nature to cities, but also create vital habitat corridors for ecosystems to function optimally.

Considering that half of Australia’s threatened species live in urban areas, where the majority of Australia’s population also lives, our towns and cities are critical areas for nature conservation.

However, biodiversity in cities faces a number of threats including loss and fragmentation of habitat, invasive species, climate change, and pollution. While there are numerous government and nonprofit initiatives aimed at protecting and restoring nature in cities, there is also huge potential for citizens to be part of the solution.

By creating Nature Blocks, people in cities are able to transform their homes and gardens into refuges for wildlife. Australians are thereby able to actively take part in building back nature, while simultaneously benefitting from the associated ecosystem services like nature helping to mitigate climate change impacts.

Conservation Volunteers Australia launched the Nature Blocks initiative in August 2023, through a collaborative partnership with the Bupa Foundation. The aim is to restore critical habitat for biodiversity in cities, while also getting people involved in activities that can improve their wellness.

The impact of Nature Blocks to date has been impressive. Our new report, [Our Nature Blocks](#), shows that 72,802 people have engaged with Nature Blocks, 600 Nature Blocks have been created, and 97 percent of people surveyed say they feel their health and wellbeing improved by taking part in the Nature Blocks initiative.



Further reading <https://conservationvolunteers.com.au/nature-blocks-report/>

Dung dynasty: The plant boosting powers of beetle recycler

Dung beetles, those unsung heroes of the insect world renowned for their prowess in breaking down cattle dung, have now been found to have a positive impact on plant growth.

A multi-level meta-analysis of 24 studies spanning 14 countries and [published](#) in Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences has revealed the humble beetles impacted plant growth by 17%.

Lead author, Ph.D. candidate Daniel Anderson from The University of Western Australia's School of Biological Sciences, said dung beetles had long been recognized for their role in recycling nutrients and enhancing environmental health but the study results revealed another remarkable aspect to their abilities.

"Dung beetles have been imported into many countries to break down cattle dung, which left unburied, provides habitat for nuisance flies and creates areas of rank pasture that cattle avoid," Anderson said.

"A well-known consequence of this dung recycling was thought to be increased plant growth but study results over the past half a century had been mixed.

"We assessed what impact dung beetles have on plant growth overall, and if there were any factors that influenced the dung beetle and plant growth relationship and did this with a multi-level meta-analysis, a more precise method of averaging."

Anderson said the research team also investigated what factors influenced the magnitude of plant growth and found that plant measurement type was important. "When dung beetles accessed dung, plant weights generally increased more than plant lengths," he said.

"It appears that the nutrients from buried dung are incorporated into plant shoots, allowing for thicker leaves with greater photosynthetic capability, the process by which plants convert light into chemical energy to fuel their growth.

"Additionally, the recycled nutrients might have caused a proliferation of root hairs, which would allow for greater nutrient uptake and take away the need for investment in longer plant roots. "We also found that plant growth was greater when more beetles accessed dung, probably because it increases the amount of nutrients available to plants and increases growth."

Further reading https://phys.org/news/2024-03-dung-dynasty-boosting-powers-beetle.html?utm_source=nwletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily-nwletter#google_vignette

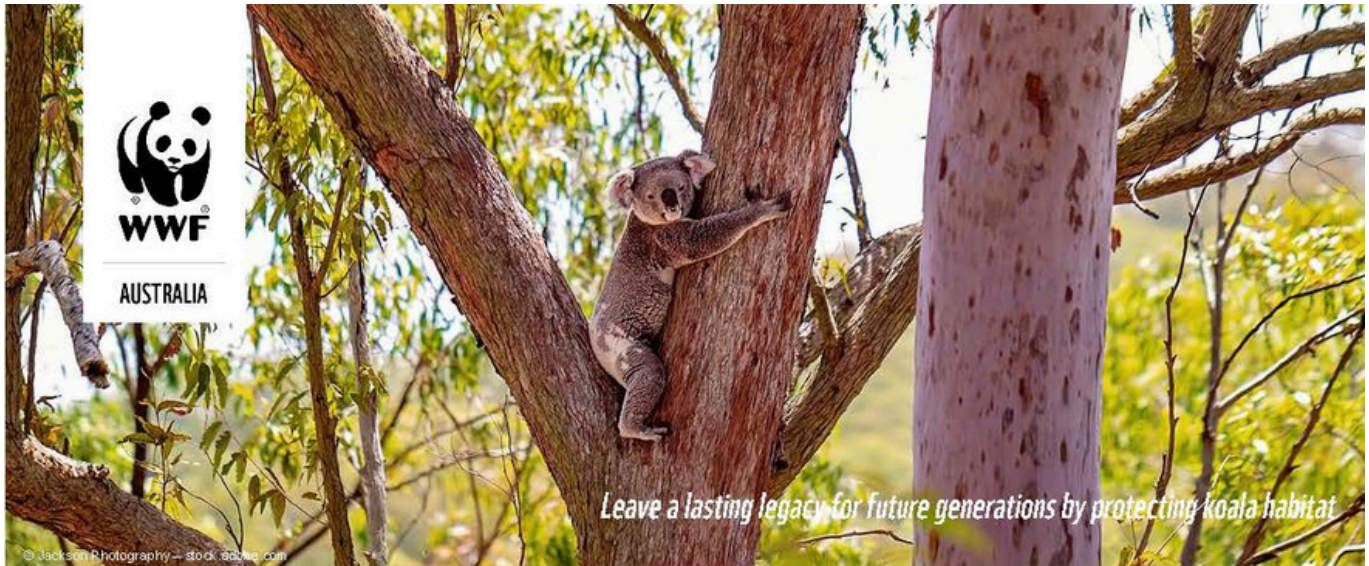
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From the Greener Spaces Better Places newsletter

A new research paper has been released - **Rapid responses of bees and butterflies but not birds to targeted urban road verge habitat enhancements**

Read it here <https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/1365-2664.14648>

Byron Shire Landholders wanted - Protecting Koalas



PROTECTING KOALA HABITAT IN THE NORTHERN RIVERS THROUGH PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION AGREEMENTS

East coast koalas have recently been listed as Endangered - one step closer to extinction due to the massive decline in populations.

Your support to restore and protect their habitat will help reverse their decline.

To the Landholder,

Seeking Expressions of Interest: Protecting koalas in the Northern Rivers

Are you interested in helping to maintain the local koala population and increase the quality of their habitat?

WWF-Australia, the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the Biodiversity Conservation Trust and Envite Environment have partnered to invest funds and further incentivise permanent conservation agreements for private landholders to protect, restore and manage koala habitat on their land in the Northern Rivers region of NSW. The Northern Rivers supports key koala populations that are of statewide significance. This project will contribute towards securing these populations for future generations through private conservation agreements developed with the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT).

What is a Conservation Agreement?

A Conservation Agreement is an in-perpetuity voluntary agreement between the landholder and BCT to conserve and manage biodiversity on an area of your land. These agreements are registered on the land title and are binding on subsequent landholders. This option may suit you if you have areas on your land that contain high quality koala habitat and you wish to ensure those values are protected into the future.

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Eligibility Criteria

- Privately owned land within the Northern Rivers shires or Councils - Lismore, Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Kyogle, Richmond Valley and Clarence Valley
- Minimum 20 hectares of moderate to good condition high quality koala habitat (koala sightings/records, mapped koala habitat and or presence of preferred koala food trees)
- Be willing to enter into an on-going conservation agreement with BCT

Funds Available

Funding of up to \$45,000 over three years is available for eligible activities within the conservation area, delivered through Envite Environment, with on-going support options thereafter. You may also be eligible for discounts on Council Rates and Land Tax depending on the Local Government area you are in.

Activities Eligible for Funding

Qualified contractors will undertake works, which may include:

- Weed control
- Fencing
- Pest animal control
- Revegetation
- Habitat restoration (nest box installation)
- Repairs to existing features such as tracks to maintain the conservation area
- Native vegetation restoration planning
- Project or grant management support

For more information

Fiona Dawson | Koala Habitat Restoration Ecologist

Envite Environment

0427 957 277 | fionad@envite.org.au

Report sick, injured, or orphaned koalas to Friends of the Koala on 6622 1233 and sightings online at friendsofthekoala.org. For Clarence Valley, phone WIRES on 1300 094 737 and report sightings via the Clarence Valley Council Koala Register. An additional sightings tool is the NSW Government "I Spy Koala" app.



**REGENERATE
AUSTRALIA**



Centuries-old trees killed by tiny pathogens

A "heartbreaking" stand of "skeletons" along one of Sunshine Coast's most popular scenic drives is sobering evidence that bunya pine dieback is spreading outside national parks – killing trees from an ancient species that once fed dinosaurs with its spiky football-sized cones.

For thousands of years, Aboriginal nation groups journeyed to Queensland's Bunya Mountains and Blackall Range, gathering large nut-filled cones from pine trees towering up to 50 metres high. The bunya pine, *Araucaria bidwillii*, has survived since the Jurassic period at least 145 million years ago, but soil-borne plant pathogens introduced since European settlement are taking a terrible toll.

"Phytophthora is a fungal-like organism — it's not a fungus, it's a microscopic water mould that's pathogenic and lives in the soil," Dr Shuey said. Dr Shuey, who is conducting research for the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, said that tests showed a different type of phytophthora dieback killed the stand of bunnys on the side of Landsborough-Maleny Road. It was not multivora, the strain impacting both bunya and hoop pines, *Araucaria cunninghamii*, in the Bunya Mountains.

"So, the bunnys that are dying here [at Maleny] we've detected *Phytophthora cinnamomi* — *cinnamomi* tends to move more like a bulldozer so you don't get that patchy dieback as much.

Slowing the spread

Any activity that moves soil, water or plant material can spread phytophthora, including bushwalking, mountain biking, four-wheel-driving, timber harvesting and feral pig incursions.

"Make sure your gear is clean, your shoes are clean, your bike's clean, don't go out when it's muddy," Dr Shuey said.



Further reading <https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2024-04-15/bunya-pine-dieback-symposium-blackall-range/>

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\$3.8 million to help Northern Rivers community heal after 2022 floods

Researchers at Southern Cross University have been awarded more than \$3.8 million to help Northern Rivers locals affected by the devastating 2022 floods.

In a world-first approach, the researchers will implement a stepped care model to support over 200 people left with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after the floods.

Further information <https://www.health.gov.au/ministers/the-hon-mark-butler-mp/media/38-million-to-help-northern-rivers-community-heal-after-2022-floods>

REGENERATIVE FARMING

Empowering Women in Farming Businesses

Women are estimated to provide one-third of on-farm income, often through the management of the farm business itself (ANZ 2020) yet are often not specifically trained in these skills. Alongside this, there are an increasing number of women looking for entrepreneurial ways to market and sell their farms output or value-added products but may not have the support or networks to successfully pursue these pathways.

The 'Empowering Women in Farming Businesses' program aims to assist women involved in farming businesses to access the tools and networks they may need to improve and develop their business and decision-making skills, as well as expand relevant networks who can provide further support.

NSW Farmers is excited to be delivering 12 events across NSW in 2024, including Grafton on Wednesday 25 September 2024.

To register your interest in one of these events please complete our registration form [here](#)



What is vertical farming?

One of the most modern and high-tech farming methods may soon bring some of Australia's oldest surviving plants into the mainstream.

It's all part of the long-term plan for Indigenous-owned company BoomaFood and its indoor vertical farm in Cessnock in the NSW Hunter Valley.

The farm is producing greens like lettuce and micro herbs, but BoomaFood founder Corey Robertson hopes to expand into native herbs and crops.

Vertical farms can be built in warehouses, greenhouses or, in the case of BoomaFood, specially designed shipping containers.

The farms use artificial light, temperature, water and humidity control, meaning they can provide more food on a smaller footprint than traditional farming.

To read more <https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2024-04-23/vertical-farms-plans-to-bring-native-plants-to-consumers/>

Primex Workshops

Primex is fast approaching, taking place from 16-18 May in Casino. There will be great range of panel events and presentations happening exploring topics related to regenerative ag, livestock and primary production. Byron Shire Council's Agricultural Officers have compiled a list of not-to-be missed panel discussions and presentations below.

- Thursday 12.30-1.30: [Circular Economy Opportunities for Agriculture](#)
- Friday 9.30 – 10: [Biological, Physical and Chemical Considerations for Post flooded Soils with Dr John Grant](#)
- Friday 10.15 -10.45: [Soil Health – the key to managing damaged soils](#)
- Friday 11-12: [Building Resilient Farms with Regenerative Principles](#)
- Friday 12.15 – 12.45: [Integrating farm forestry into farm systems with Dr John Grant](#)
- Friday 1 – 1.30: [Post Flood Pasture Reboot with Kieran Livermore who will discuss an alternative path to a perennial pasture using cover cropping techniques.](#)
- Friday 1.45 -2.15: [Regenerative Orchard Management with Ross Arnett](#)
- Saturday 11 – 11.30: [Improve Productivity and Resilience on Your Farm with Dave Forrest](#)

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Two other Local Land Services Workshops on offer:

Paddock Plants

[21 May Kyogle](#)

[22 May Stokers Siding](#)

Improve your identification of plants, analysis of landscapes, and understand seasonal conditions and soils to guide better management of your land.

Practical stockmanship

[27-28 May Grafton](#)

[30-31 May Wollongbar](#)

This workshop is for you if you're interested in improving your stock handling skills.



SNIPPETS

Watch carefully for unintentional plastic additions to your compost

Recent research by PhD student, Dr. Yuxin Huo, supervised by Prof. Balwant Singh, examined the impact of plastic exposure on soil organisms, analysing 2936 observations from 140 publications. The work found that plastics had significant adverse effects on plants and fauna, with higher concentrations causing more harm. Larger plastics (>1 µm) harmed plant growth and germination, while smaller ones increased oxidative stress. Small plastics had a more adverse impact on fauna reproduction and survival. Polystyrene (PS) affected soil fauna more than polyethylene (PE). Vegetable plants were more affected than cereal plants.

Further reading and thanks to Terry Moody of Clarence LC for this reference: Huo Y, PhD thesis *Microplastics contamination and decomposition in soils* at <https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/31742>

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Updated Australian Frog Atlas

An exciting update this month is the revised Australian Frog Atlas. First released by the Australian Museum Frog ID team in 2022, this updated version features highly detailed distribution maps of Australia's 254 frog species.

The second version of the Australian Frog Atlas highlights both small and large map revisions, including significant range extensions informed by FrogID. For example, the Blacksoil Toadlet (*Uperoleia trachyderma*) is now known to occur 300km further south-west than previously thought. Additionally, our team has added maps for the seven new species of Australian frogs described since the initial version, with most of these additions also informed by FrogID data.

All maps are free to download as a valuable biodiversity resource. Thank you for contributing more frog records to our national FrogID database, and please keep recording both near and far from home to further enhance our understanding of Australia's frogs!

To read more and download the maps <https://australian.museum/blog/amri-news/australian-frog-atlas-2024/>

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Farmers trial new tech as 3G network shutdown looms

As the shutdown of the 3G network approaches, millions of Australians are switching over their phones to make sure they are compatible with 4G, but farmers are facing a much bigger problem. Farmers have a range of equipment that relies on 3G signals to work and as the 3G towers around the country are switched off water pumps, weather stations, soil monitors and security systems have stopped working.

Costs are mounting but the quality of phone services are declining. Telstra is doing some "optimisation work" ahead of its June 30 shut down. "We're changing antenna designs, and there are software changes in the network that will push the 4G coverage out to the extremities of 3G," Mr Taylor said.

Further reading <https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2024-05-02/farmers-trial-new-tech-as-3g-network-shutdown-looms/>

EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

Koala Conversations

Experience a series of engaging events across the Northern Rivers, including workshops, tree plantings, and field days, all focused on koala conservation. These activities, led by various organisations, aim to foster understanding and action for our beloved koalas.

Culminating on June 1st in Lismore, our one-day forum will feature expert speakers discussing vital topics focused on Protecting, Restoring, and Creating Koala Habitat.



For a full list of workshops and to register <https://friendsofthekoala.org/koala-conversations/>

RAINFOREST CONNECTIONS CONFERENCE - BALLINA

Conservation, restoration, innovation are the themes for this exciting local conference from 4 - 7 June 2024.

Rainforest Connections 2024 is the first conference in over two decades that is dedicated to the restoration, rehabilitation, and management of Australia's unique rainforest habitats. This event will connect more than 200 delegates from a wide range of backgrounds including scientists, program managers, on-ground practitioners, community members and specialists implementing projects in the field.



Early bird registrations close 12 April <https://rainforestconnections.com.au/>

EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

WIRES workshops

The WIRES Rescue and Immediate Care Course (RICC) is available to NSW residents aged 18 years and over and is the first step to start you on your WIRES journey.

The course consists of an online theory component and a workshop component.

Workshops are still being confirmed for NSW in 2024, however the following are now open and available for student registrations:

- June 2 - Lismore (Northern Rivers)
- June 8 - Coffs Harbour (Mid North Coast)
- August 24 - Brushgrove (Clarence Valley)
- September 1 - Lismore (Northern Rivers)

For further information about the workshops and to sign up, see

<https://www.wires.org.au/training/workshop-schedule>

PRIMEX 2024

When: 16-18 May

Where: Casino

Primex is one of Australia's largest coastal-based agribusiness events, connecting the world's leading brands & suppliers to our target audience in agriculture, forestry, fishing and natural resources industry sectors.

Join us in the Northern Rivers to have a unique Paddock to Plate experience at an exhibition that celebrates all facets of food & primary production, including producers, educators, innovators, chefs, students, exhibitors, and everyone in between.

For a full program of events and activities and to book see <https://www.primex.net.au/>



FUNDING

Climate Smart Agriculture Program

The Climate Smart Agriculture Program Small Grants Round 1 has recently opened. Grants of between \$10,000 and \$100,000 will be given to support farmers, land holders and community groups to adopt sustainable agriculture best practices. The grants will fund projects that will improve the management of our natural resources and increase sustainable on-farm productivity and resilience to climate change.

Applications close on the 4th of June.

[Click here for more information.](#)

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Caring for Catchments Grant Program

The Caring for Catchments project aims to improve catchment health, build flood resilience, and enhance biodiversity through riparian revegetation and reforestation with the objective to restore and protect waterways by planting up to 240 hectares of native vegetation along 8 kilometres of cleared river and streambanks over the next three years.

See further information on page 8 of this newsletter.

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Byron Shire Council Community Initiatives Grants

Each year, Council invest in community projects that deliver positive social, cultural and environmental outcomes. These projects also promote community participation, inclusion and cohesion.

The Community Initiatives Program awards grants for community projects that:

- Address a specific need.
- Build a sense of community.
- Align with Council priorities.

Incorporated not-for-profit community organisations and community groups auspiced by an incorporated organisation are eligible to apply for grants of up to \$5000.

If you are a BVL locality group, talk to Joanne about submitting an application.

Applications are now open and close on 30 June 2024.

For more information see <https://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Council/About-Byron-Shire/Grants/Community-Initiatives-Grant>

WEED OF THE MONTH

Cassia (*Senna pendula* var. *glabrata*)

Cassia is a tall sprawling shrub with bright yellow flowers. It invades bushland and outcompetes other plants. Cassia is a perennial spreading or sprawling shrub 2–4 m tall. If supported by other plants it can grow up to 5m. The stems are usually upright but lean over when laden with flowers or pods.

Leaves are up to 8 cm long on stalks up to 4 cm long, alternate along the stem and consist of 3-6 pairs of opposite leaflets.

Flowers are bright yellow and pea-like, about 3 cm wide with 5 large petals, in clusters at the tips of the branches and usually present from late summer to autumn but may be present any time of year.

Cassia looks like:

- Winter senna (*Senna septemtrionalis*), another invasive weed, which has leaflets with pointed, rather than rounded tips.
- Coffee bush (*Breynia oblongifolia*), a native plant, which has alternate leaves and round berries.

Control

Successful weed control requires follow up after the initial efforts. This means looking for and killing regrowth or new seedlings. Using a combination of control methods is usually more successful.

Control plants before they flower and set seed either with physical removal or chemical control.

For physical removal, pull or dig out small plants when soil is damp or soft. Dig out the roots so the plants do not reshoot. Mulching can suppress new growth.

Chemical control can include spot spraying or cut and paint.



Top left: Cassie flower;
Bottom left: Cassie leaves
and leaflets
Right: Cassie fruit containing
up to 40 seeds



More information: <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Cassia>

WORKING BEES

Why not get out and get involved in one of our local groups?

For all Landcare Working Bees please wear protective clothing - long pants, long-sleeved shirt, closed-in shoes, hat, gloves and bring water, sunscreen, and insect repellent. Please always contact the group co-ordinators before attending a working bee as plans do change!

Bangalow Land and Rivercare, Bangalow

WHEN: every Saturday 8:30am

WHERE: find out from

CONTACT: Noelene Plummer bangalowlandcare@gmail.com 0431 20 0638 6687 4470

Friends of Lilli Pilli (Byron Bay)

WHEN: 1st Saturday of the month 3:30pm - 5:00pm

WHERE: At entrance to Lilli Pilli (contact Deb).

CONTACT: Deb Jorgensen deborah.jorgensen60@gmail.com 0434 254 802

Green and Clean Awareness Team, Byron Bay

WHEN: 3rd Sunday of the month 9:00am

WHERE: Meet Main Beach, Byron Bay

CONTACT: Peter Farmakis peter.farmakis@gmail.com 0488 715 565

Heritage Park Landcare, Mullumbimby

WHEN: Saturdays 9:00am – 11:00 am

WHERE: Heritage Park, Mullumbimby

CONTACT: Diana Hughes bromspot@gmail.com

Jinangong Landcare, Ocean Shores

WHEN: 1st Sunday of the month

WHERE: The Tunnel Road, Ocean Shores

CONTACT: Ian Parer ianparer@hotmail.com

Mullum Town Landcare, Mullumbimby

WHEN: Morning of last Sunday of the month

WHERE: find out from John Tann

CONTACT: John Tann johntann99@gmail.com

Ocean Shores Landcare, Ocean Shores

WHEN: each Thursday at 8.30 – 11.00 am (8.00am DST)

WHERE: corner of Yallakool Drive and Warrambool Road, Ocean Shores

CONTACT: David Kemp dnkemp77@gmail.com 0427 650 861

Suffolk Park Dunecare

WHEN: 8.30 - 10.30 every fourth Sunday of the month

WHERE: find out from:

CONTACT: Rebekah O'Flaherty rebekahoflaherty@gmail.com 0428 942 903

Tallowood Ridge Locality Landcare

WHEN: Second Saturday of the month from 3pm (winter), 4pm (summer).

WHERE: Tallowood Ridge Estate, Mullumbimby

CONTACT: Joanne McMurtry jmcmurtry@bigpond.com

Tyagarah Landcare

WHEN: Each Thursday 9:00am – 11:00am

WHERE: 23 Prestons Lane, Tyagarah

CONTACT: Bela Allen bela_allen@yahoo.com 6684 7113

Can't find a group near you? We have many other groups who meet on an ad hoc basis (contact us for more details) or if there isn't an existing group in your neighbourhood or you are interested in

LINKS

- Arakwal <http://arakwal.com.au/>
- Australian Association of Bush Regenerators <http://aabr.org.au>
- Border Rangers Alliance http://www.greasternranges.org.au/border_ranges/overview/overview
- Bangalow Koalas <http://www.bangalowkoalas.com.au/>
- Bangalow River and Landcare <http://www.bangalowlandcare.org.au/>
- Big Scrub Landcare <https://www.bigscrubrainforest.org.au/>
- Brunswick Valley Landcare <http://www.brunswickvalleylandcare.org.au/>
- Byron Bird Buddies <http://www.byronbirdbuddies.com.au/>
- Byron Community College <http://www.byroncollege.org.au/>
- Byron Shire Council <http://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/>
- EnviTE www.envite.org.au
- Environmental Trust <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/envtrust.htm>
- Friends of the Koala www.friendsofthekoala.org
- Federal Landcare Inc federalandcare@gmail.com
- Local Land Services www.northcoast.ils.nsw.gov.au
- North Coast Local Land Services <http://northcoast.ils.nsw.gov.au/>
- Border Ranges Richmond Valley Landcare www.brrvl.nsw.gov.au
- Mullumbimby Community Gardens <http://mullumcommunitygarden.wordpress.com/>
- North Coast Nature <http://www.northcoastnature.org.au/>
- Richmond Landcare Inc. <http://www.richmondlandcare.org/>
- Rous County Council (formerly Far North Coast Weeds) <http://rous.nsw.gov.au/>
- Soilcare <http://www.soilcare.org>
- Tweed Landcare Inc. <http://www.tweedlandcare.org.au/>
- Wilson's Creek Huonbrook Landcare <http://www.wilsonscreeklandcare.mullum.com.au/>

For information about Landcare or other natural resource issues in Byron shire please contact



Landcare Coordinator, Alison Ratcliffe 0421 244 640
info@brunswickvalleylandcare.org.au

www.brunswickvalleylandcare.org.au

