



JUNE 2020

# LANDCARE IN FOCUS



Major General the  
Hon. Michael Jeffery, AC,  
AO(Mil), CVO, MC (Retd)

*H*onouring Landcare Australia Patron and  
Australia's first National Soils Advocate

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## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Contact our editorial team with your article or content idea by emailing [lif@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:lif@landcareaustralia.com.au)

\*Due to space restrictions some article content may be edited. We also cannot guarantee that all submissions will be published.



Cover photo courtesy of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment General Jeffery surveying soils on native pastures

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## LANDCARE'S IMPORTANCE DURING TIMES OF STRUGGLE

**HON DAVID LITTLEPROUD MP, MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, DROUGHT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Australia has a unique and diverse environment, one that flourishes on the health of the natural resources it relies on.

We are a nation that has been built on resilience and recovery.

This year, Australia's environment, and our farmers that manage the land, have had to deal with the effects of drought, floods, bushfires and now the impacts of COVID-19. One thing that remains clear throughout the years is that our bush and communities always bounce back after disaster strikes.

From the earliest days of Australian agriculture, we have had to adapt and improve as a matter of necessity. This could explain why Aussie farmers have such a strong spirit of innovation and ingenuity and a commitment to continually adapting and improving their farming practices, even during difficult times.

To protect and sustain our environment, we also must invest in programs that address key issues and opportunities for managing our resources in a sustainable way.

That is why the Australian Government is investing around \$1 billion in Phase Two of the National Landcare Program over five years through to 2022-23. This will continue to support regional employment

in activities that protect and conserve Australia's water, soil, plants, animals and ecosystems, and support the productive and sustainable use of these resources.

The projects under the program also place an emphasis on the connection between communities, the environment and sustainable agriculture.

Drought conditions and the effect of the recent floods and bushfires are being felt across much of the country right now and apply great pressure to Australian people and landscapes.

Vegetation loss, erosion, degradation of river banks and the spread of weeds through struggling pasture and grasslands are just some of the pressures

being seen across our nation.

For 30 years, Landcare has been a force of good striving to develop and preserve productive landscapes that benefit nature as much as they do people. But it's in times like these where the importance of Landcare's work really comes to the fore.

I look forward to seeing the positive outcomes delivered through Phase Two of the National Landcare program and helping many rural and regional communities to recover and flourish into the future.



## LANDCARE AUSTRALIA IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING AN INCLUSIVE LANDCARE MOVEMENT

**DR SHANE NORRISH, CEO LANDCARE AUSTRALIA**

It's been three decades since Landcare began and we have much to be proud of!

I often wonder whether, when our Prime Minister at the time, the Hon. Bob Hawke AC, first backed Landcare and created Landcare Australia in 1989, did he truly contemplate such a diverse and impactful volunteer movement? Did he contemplate the full extent of involvement by farmers, landholders and communities who have come together across Australia to protect and restore our land and unique environment? Did he contemplate a movement that embraces the practices of Indigenous Australians and engages the next generation of Junior Landcarers?

Back then, Bob Hawke was amazed by the outstanding achievements of the early Landcarers and he championed Landcare and Landcare Australia all his life.

As a young sustainable farming agronomist, I remember a Brisbane meeting decades ago when a participant commented on Landcare's massive responsibility and the extraordinary trust Australia placed in Landcare.

That trust is respected by all Landcarers and the Landcare Australia team, who passionately protect and promote Landcare's profile and reputation because it represents the combined efforts of generations of Landcarers.

I'm proud to lead an organisation that has supported community Landcarers and their groups to become the most highly recognised community-based environmental movement in Australia. The Australian Landcare model is so successful that it has been adopted by 20 other countries.

In earlier years, Australia imported rabbits, blackberries, foxes, lantana and cane toads. And now we have exported Landcare because it works exceptionally well. Importantly, when that success is boosted by appropriate funding and support of local people, communities quickly work out how to get things done on the ground and multiply returns from that funding many times over. If Landcare hadn't been around for more than 30 years, what would Australia look like now?

In the last three decades we've achieved a great deal of good work. Yet there is much more to do. We are all confronting the impacts of a changing climate,

biodiversity loss, droughts and of course, devastating bushfires. I appeal to all who value Landcare to work together, to work with us, so we can further build Landcare's success. We need Landcare now more than ever.

Over the years, Landcare Australia has provided many millions of dollars in support and promotion to Landcare groups and the Landcare community. We have funded many thousands of community grassroots projects and advocated the importance of Landcare to successive Federal and State Governments, business, industry and international agencies.

We are continuing to get on with supporting the Landcare community and the protection and restoration of natural assets. We have been consulting the Landcare community, Government agencies, researchers and other NGOs to increase the impact of grants funding, including those supporting bushfire recovery. In recent weeks, we have been able to fund over 70 projects with Landcare and other community groups in bushfire affected areas. A good result but we must do more.

I remain convinced that a strong and united national voice is the best

outcome for Landcare. During our work to unify Landcare at the national level, we looked at ourselves and the National Landcare Network and understood that Landcare is much bigger than what is represented by our two organisations. Our Board, staff and other stakeholders are committed to supporting an inclusive Landcare movement, which reflects our vision of all Australians actively caring for our unique land and water assets.

We welcome working with the Landcare peak organisations, networks, and groups in each state and territory, youth networks, Indigenous organisations, environmental NGOs, farming organisations and the vast range of other organisations, groups and individuals involved in Landcare, just as we have always done.

We will continue to work hard supporting those Landcarers, wherever we can. That's our role, that's one of the reasons why we were created by Bob Hawke 31 years ago.

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That's our role, that's one of the reasons why we were created by Bob Hawke 31 years ago.



## IMAGINE IF YOU COULD CARRY YOUR LANDCARE GROUP IN YOUR POCKET!

Download the new Landcarer mobile app from wherever you get your apps today.





Microsoft Teams meeting with Victorian and Tasmanian RALFs. Image Supplied

## REGIONAL AGRICULTURE LANDCARE FACILITATORS A STORY OF RESILIENCE

### THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The National Landcare Program is a key part of the Australian Government's commitment to natural resource management (NRM). The Regional Land Partnerships (RLP) component of the National Landcare Program contracts regional NRM organisations across Australia to deliver environment and sustainable agriculture priorities at a regional and local level.

As part of the RLP, each NRM organisation employs a Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator in their region. RALFs, as they are commonly known, work with farmers, industry and community groups to promote sustainable agricultural practices and support the delivery of sustainable agricultural projects. Landcare groups are encouraged to work closely with their local RALFs as they work towards a common goal to adopt new and innovative sustainable agriculture practices.

#### MICROSOFT TEAMS MEETING WITH VICTORIAN AND TASMANIAN RALFs

The department recently met with RALFs in each state and territory (approximately 75, including those in part-time roles) via Microsoft Teams to check how they were coping during these uncertain times. It was clear that RALFs had been working hard to support farmers, landholders and community members during prolonged drought, the recent bushfire season and now COVID-19. Evizel Seymour, a RALF in Wet

Tropics Queensland, advised she had been speaking with many farmers over the phone about their practices, aiming to keep a sense of normality during this time.

RALFs are demonstrating a great deal of resilience, flexibility and innovation right now. One of the consistent messages from RALFs regarding COVID-19 was the positive results of having to quickly embrace online technologies such as video-conferencing, to replace their usual face-to-face contacts with their colleagues and stakeholders. Many RALFs have reported saving hours of travel time due to meetings being held online, allowing them to spend more time on other activities. Many RALFs are delivering workshops online where practical and are working to ensure their stakeholders continue to receive information, whether via phone, email, newsletters or podcasts. Some online events have been attracting more participants than usually attended face-to-face.

#### GLEN SUTHERLAND MALLEE, VICTORIA RALF

RALFs know what issues their region is facing and are key in facilitating change. When asked what the greatest challenge was for his region, Mr Sutherland advised: "The greatest challenges being faced collectively, by our farming communities, support services and agencies, have resulted from the prolonged and severe drought experiences in the Northern Mallee. The challenges are about the adaptation of planned activities and how to keep

these relevant to farmers in a drought situation. The social, economic and environmental impacts of the drought have driven an adjustment to the delivery of a number of sustainable agriculture projects and activities and the response has been to adapt key messages to achieve the desired outcomes whilst maintaining the relevance and interest of those affected. As an example, some sustainable agriculture engagement activities have shifted focus from straight production gains to maintaining ground cover and managing sheep in stock containment facilities. Likewise, making specific information available about recovering wind eroded paddocks and preparing for next season, for best crop outcomes."

#### LETISHA NEWMAN SOUTH COAST WESTERN AUSTRALIA RALF SOUTH COAST NRM REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

RALFs undertake various activities and many report that no day is the same. When asked what an average day in her role looks like, Letisha Newman, a RALF in South Coast Western Australia advised: "Our south coast region covers 8.6 million hectares from Walpole in the west to Cape Arid in the east. The RALF role for our region is split between myself in the west of our region, based in Albany, and Kylie Fletcher in the east of our region. The role is varied with no two days being the same. The variety of activities includes event management, supporting partner organisations with applications, meetings and events, communicating and promoting sustainable agriculture information and providing internal support to South



Vicki Hortsman, Fitzroy, Queensland RALF. Image Supplied

Coast NRM with sustainable agriculture projects. We also spend time writing funding applications for projects and looking for opportunities to recognise and nominate key agriculture leaders for industry awards".

#### VICKI HORTSMAN FITZROY, QUEENSLAND RALF

The role has attracted some very knowledgeable and passionate people from various backgrounds. When asked why she became a RALF, Ms Hortsman advised: "It is a position I had always coveted. I take my responsibility as a RALF seriously and sometimes I'm the only person a landholder may see for a number of weeks. The position of a RALF is highly adaptable to meet the needs of our stakeholders and rural communities. Part of what I view as central to my role is caring for the sustainability of our environment, our rural businesses, and ourselves. It's important to me that the sustainability of a landholders enterprise is looked at from all angles".

The Australian Government is committed to sustainable Natural Resource Management and RALFs play a crucial role in contributing to the achievement of meaningful sustainable agriculture outcomes.

For more information on the RLP visit [nrm.gov.au](http://nrm.gov.au)

For more information on RALFs visit [agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/natural-resources/landcare/national-landcare-program/landcare-facilitators](http://agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/natural-resources/landcare/national-landcare-program/landcare-facilitators)

## A FRESH APPROACH

Latina™ Fresh, a General Mills brand, partnered with Landcare Australia in 2019 to develop a sustainable agriculture program in northwest New South Wales to help farmers improve the sustainability and resilience of farm production systems. Latina™ Fresh has been making fresh pasta using Australian durum wheat for over 20 years and their pasta relies on high quality Australian durum wheat. Some 50 to 70 per cent of durum wheat is grown in northwest New South Wales, which has been hit hard by the effects of drought in recent times. The partnership is working with farmers to develop methods for conserving more of any spring and summer rainfall in the soils and storing it when needed by crops.

In the most recent project supported by a General Mills Foundation charitable contribution, trials for a variety of cover crops in the Moree region aim to assess the effects on soil moisture and durum production. Overseeing the trial, Rimanui Farms agronomist Alice Clark outlines project plans and intended benefits

### EXPLAIN THE TRIAL AND WHAT'S INVOLVED.

It's made up of different treatments - millet, sorghum and barley which are all terminated at different intervals to see how much water

is used to get to a certain stage of moisture and allow for cover.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR THE SOIL WITH THIS TRIAL?

With these three different crops compared to a stubble fallow, having that soil moisture increases our AMF levels. The drought had seen some fallows that had gone for over 18 months and due to the dry conditions, some of the microbes in the soil had broken down and suffer from long fallow disorder and that just decreases your crop. We want to see which of these crops retain the most moisture in the upper profile.

### CAN THE RESULTS OF THE TRIAL ULTIMATELY ASSIST AND SUPPORT DURUM GROWERS IN THIS AREA?

Definitely, if you can find a cover that can increase your fallow efficiency and not host crown rot which durum is usually very susceptible to, if you can increase that moisture, you would be more inclined to go with durum if you have the field set up and ready to go. With that warm moisture in the field, it should work to the benefit of durum.

Read the full interview at [landcareaustralia.org.au/project/a-fresh-approach](http://landcareaustralia.org.au/project/a-fresh-approach)



Rimanui Farms agronomist Alice Clark is overseeing the trial. Credit: Melanie Jensen

## TREE-PLANTING FOR ENDANGERED MAHOGANY GLIDERS

Hundreds of trees are being planted in North Queensland to help the endangered mahogany glider.

Crews of tree-planters have been extending wildlife corridors between Tully and Townsville in North Queensland - the only region in the world that this glider calls home.

Terrain NRM's Jacqui Diggins said the work on private land to connect sections of woodland, was part of a five-year project.

"This is a real collaborative effort with landholders and groups including the Giringun Aboriginal Rangers, Herbert River Catchment Group, Cassowary Coast and Hinchinbrook Council nursery staff and volunteers," Mrs Diggins said.

The 'Biodiversity Bright Spots -Tackling Woodland Threats' project is supported by Terrain NRM through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

Mrs Diggins said mahogany gliders could glide for about 30 metres on average. "Sometimes connecting relatively small sections of land can make a huge difference," she added.

The last population estimate for mahogany gliders was 1500 to 2000 and this was before Cyclone Yasi wreaked havoc in glider habitat between Cardwell and Tully.

For more information visit [terrain.org.au/woodlands-tackling-threats](http://terrain.org.au/woodlands-tackling-threats)

Mahogany gliders are endangered and they're only found in North Queensland. Credit D Dickson





Leo and Sue Cleary continue to make improvements to Hastings Park, like the recent Solar Power System, to ensure the farm continues to operate as a dairy into the future with an intergenerational succession plan now in place. Image Supplied

## SOLAR POWER SYSTEM REDUCES DAIRY'S ELECTRICITY COSTS

With nearly 120 hectares of mainly irrigated dairy pasture, Hastings Park is a highly productive dairy farm with a herd of 350 cows. Owned by Leo and Sue Cleary, the farm, located on the New South Wales Mid North Coast, produces up to 2.8 million litres of milk annually.

Hasting Park is one of 28 certified a2 Milk™ dairy farms across Australia selected to produce only the A2 protein and none of the A1 protein found in regular cows' milk. The Cleary's were eligible to apply for an a2 Milk™

Sustainable Agriculture Landcare Grant to fund a project to reduce electricity costs by installing a Solar Power System in the dairy. The Cleary's were successful with their application, receiving \$40,000 in funding.

With the addition of a Solar Power System in the dairy, the Cleary's were aiming to reduce their electricity costs and then further reduce these costs when a Solar Power System in the dairy is added to the irrigation grid. Overall, the goal was to ensure a more financially sustainable business.

Installation of the solar panels resulted in a 12-15 per cent saving on utility costs. Leo Cleary said: "At a time when other costs, especially purchased feed have increased greatly, the savings we're seeing are a big help."

To learn what more they could do to save on electricity, the Cleary's commissioned an energy audit. They have taken on board the recommendations from the audit and processes they have implemented to make better use of their solar energy, including:

- Boiling water during the day
- They used to mix feed and milk at the same time but now they do this separately so that they can utilise the solar energy for this work
- A longer-term solution will be to have a storage battery

For more info visit [landcareaustralia.org.au/news/2018-a2-milk-sustainable-agriculture-landcare-grant/](http://landcareaustralia.org.au/news/2018-a2-milk-sustainable-agriculture-landcare-grant/)

## LEADING AQUACULTURE BEST PRACTICE

Producing 3500 tonnes of saltwater barramundi, Humpty Doo Barramundi is an enduring story of triumph in the NT.

Established in 1993, the secret to the family owned and operated business is a sustainable water treatment system with 'little to no exchange with the surrounding waters' forming the basis of a food chain ecosystem.

Brackish water is extracted from the tidal Adelaide River during the dry season months and pumped into a constructed wetland water treatment system that surrounds the production ponds.

As the fish produce ammonia and nitrites, these metabolic waste products feed into the constructed wetland water treatment system where they're filtered through vegetation

and broken down and consumed by naturally occurring bacteria and microalgae. As waste water moves through the constructed wetlands, nitrifying bacteria will begin to colonise. These bacteria will convert toxic ammonia and nitrites into nontoxic nitrates via metabolism and oxidation.

"Once the nitrification process is complete, the water is recycled back into the production ponds. Throughout this process, aquatic microalgae and macrophytes consume waste products and form the basis of a food chain for small native fish and invertebrates," said Dan Richards, CEO and co-owner of Humpty Doo Barramundi.

"The constructed wetland performs to a standard where it can successfully maintain the conditions necessary for the maintenance and growth of over



Dan (l) and Bob Richards posing with two of their barramundi. Image Supplied

3500 tonnes of premium saltwater barramundi each year with little to no exchange with the surrounding waters."

Humpty Doo Barramundi will go on to represent NT while competing for the Australian Government Landcare Farming Award title at the National Landcare Awards in 2021.

The National Landcare Awards Gala Dinner will be held on Thursday 11 March at the International Convention Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney. This event was to take place in November 2020. Due to COVID-19, we have moved the event date to March 2021. Further information about how to buy gala dinner tickets will be announced in September 2020.



The overall competition winner was 7 year-old Jarrah McGauran from NSW and his stunning image of a camouflaged moth. Credit J McGauran

## 3000 KIDS ENTER 'WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKYARD?' CAMPAIGN

Junior Landcare's recent 'What's In Your Backyard?' photography competition generated nearly 3,000 entries from across Australia. Joining forces with Junior Landcare, Costa Georgiadis, the popular gardening guru and new Junior Landcare ambassador, launched the campaign to encourage the next generation of Landcarers to get outside and document what's in their local environment during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Children submitted a photo and selected one of the four categories - biodiversity, food production, Indigenous perspectives and waste management - and told us why the subject of the photo was important to them.

The judging was very tough but ten entries were selected with each winner receiving a \$250 camera. The overall competition winner was 7 year-old Jarrah McGauran from NSW and his stunning image (pictured left) of a camouflaged moth. Jarrah said: "I like nature. When I was with my Mum I found a beautiful camouflaged moth on the tree."

Check out the Top 100 photos on the new Junior Landcare website [juniorlandcare.org.au](http://juniorlandcare.org.au)

## JUNIOR LANDCARE LAUNCHES LEARNING CENTRE

WITH EDUCATION ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Launched earlier this year, Junior Landcare's Learning Centre features dynamic 30-minute learning activities. Credit Landcare Australia

The activities are focused on four key areas: biodiversity, food production, Indigenous perspectives and waste management. The resources include easy-to-follow instructions with photographs, instructional videos, school curriculum links and useful references. Every activity includes a story to introduce the activity to children. This will help them

understand why the learning activity is important to them before they begin. New to the Learning Centre is a Just for Kids section with activity sheets developed to help children at home and at school explore Junior Landcare and create their own ideas.

Funded by Woolworths, the Junior Landcare Learning Centre has been developed for the use of Landcare groups and youth groups, teachers and educators, parents and carers.

We welcome new ideas for the Learning Centre and you are welcome to contact us at [digital@landcareaustralia.com.au](mailto:digital@landcareaustralia.com.au)

Visit the Junior Landcare Learning Centre here: [juniorlandcare.org.au/learningcentre/](http://juniorlandcare.org.au/learningcentre/)



Launched earlier this year, Junior Landcare's Learning Centre features dynamic 30-minute learning activities. Credit Landcare Australia



New Junior Landcare ambassador Costa Georgiadis (right) with Landcare Australia CEO Dr Shane Norrish. Credit Landcare Australia

# AUSTRALIA SAYS THANK YOU GENERAL JEFFERY

## OUR FIRST NATIONAL SOILS ADVOCATE

When Australians involved in agriculture talk about soil health, they invariably think of Major General the Hon. Michael Jeffery—a man who has long and passionately advocated for improvements in the health of our agricultural landscape. Taking the bull by the horns as Australia's first National Soils Advocate, General Jeffery has championed soil health through the integrated management of soil, water, vegetation and animals to the benefit of all Australians.

From Parliament House to the paddock, thousands of people involved in caring for the land have met General Jeffery and been inspired by his work. He has changed attitudes regarding sustainable practices to improve soil health, farmers are more willing to talk about regenerative agriculture and Ministers more mindful of implementing policies that support healthy landscapes.

As patron of Landcare Australia, General Jeffery is a dedicated, passionate advocate for Landcare, working to raise awareness of our work to protect, restore and sustain the productivity and value of Australia's natural environment.

General Jeffery has now stepped aside as National Soils Advocate. Here we acknowledge the work and substantial impact this inspiring statesman has had.

Australia says thank you.

### THE HON. SCOTT MORRISON MP, PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA

At the National Drought Summit I convened in 2018, there was one voice, I must say, that stood out above all the others, and it stuck in my head. It was the voice of the National Soils Advocate and former Governor-General Major General Michael Jeffery.

He articulated a soldier's common sense to these diabolical problems.

### PROF. ROBIN BATTERHAM AO FRENG FAA FTSE, FORMER CHIEF SCIENTIST OF AUSTRALIA

General Jeffery saw the need for change in land management practices some years ago and has been tireless in spreading this message and showing the path forward. Above all, he has championed the cause widely. We are indebted to him. We must and will pick up and carry forward the momentum he has generated.

### THE HON. GARY NAIRN AO, CHAIRMAN, THE MULLOON INSTITUTE

Michael Jeffery is a great supporter of landscape repair and rehydration. He is a standout among those who have advocated for the adoption of good landscape management. He has succeeded in raising these important matters publicly and has energised change on farms right across Australia.

### JULIAN CRIBB FRSA FTSE, AUTHOR

Michael Jeffery is a human of exceptional vision. He has a profound understanding of what is most important to the survival and wellbeing of humanity - the food which sustains us - and our relationship with the landscape and soil. With determination, tenacity, influence and conviction, he gave us a better understanding of the problem and its solution, setting a new paradigm and hope for our future, and we thank him.

### MAJOR GENERAL JOHN HARTLEY AO, CEO, FUTURE DIRECTIONS INTERNATIONAL

Through his natural capacity to engage people at all levels, General Jeffery has sought to influence political, policy, scientific, educational and business leaders and land managers. His soil health work has been exemplary and inspirational.

### ALASDAIR MACLEOD, CHAIRMAN, SOILS FOR LIFE

I became aware of Michael Jeffery's magnificent work on soil health when I was seeking better land management solutions for our farms, and I am so thankful for his positive impact. Michael effectively engaged his audience with his deep knowledge and passion, while learning from and sharing their stories.

### ANDREW METCALFE AO, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND THE ENVIRONMENT

My department very much values and thanks General Jeffery for the leadership, passion, intellectual rigour and influence, which he has provided for soil health in Australia and internationally. Australia is so much richer for his tireless advocacy, which is indeed enduring.

### IAN THOMPSON, CHIEF ENVIRONMENTAL BIOSECURITY OFFICER

Australian land managers are forever grateful of the way in which General Jeffery has sought to get soil recognised as a national, natural asset, and one that requires constant quality management to maintain its value.

### TIM WRIGHT, FARMER, NSW

All Australians have a lot to thank General Jeffery for. As a farmer, you need to work with the farmland rather than against it. In his aspiration for a better Australia, he listened to farmers and built an excellent knowledge of how to achieve this, which he shared widely to benefit the nation.

### LUCINDA CORRIGAN, DIRECTOR, FARMERS FOR CLIMATE ACTION

I thank General Jeffery for such wonderful service throughout a lifetime of personal commitment. Well known for his passion for Australia, he gave to public service in a very hands on way, building on 30 years of Landcare.

### DR MICHAEL CRAWFORD, CEO, CRC FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE SOILS

When General Jeffery was first appointed, I was in America talking to leading soil scientists about their attempts to advocate for soils. They were astounded and highly envious that the Australian Prime Minister had appointed a former Governor-General to this role. What he achieved will serve Australian soils well for many years to come.

### STUART MCALPINE, FARMER, WA

I thank General Jeffery for his no-nonsense approach to advocating the importance of soil to the wealth of our nation, health of our landscape, and quality of our agricultural produce. His achievements give us hope that we can regenerate the landscape damaged by agriculture in the pursuit of short-term production.

### HON. ALANNAH MACTIERNAN MLC, MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT; AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

Michael has embraced soil biology with an extraordinary vigour – indeed, the General mounted a great campaign to bring attention to farmers on the front line of soil health. This has been a great encouragement and has helped ensure that farmers pushing the boundaries were properly heard and supported.

### MICHAEL ROUX, ADC FORUM

Michael Jeffery is a National Treasure. I thank this remarkable man who has made, is making, and will make a difference. His understanding and advocacy about the high correlation between the health of our planet and the health of humanity has driven him relentlessly to pursue his focus on the importance of good management of soil, water, animals and plants.

### TONY MAHAR, CEO, NFF

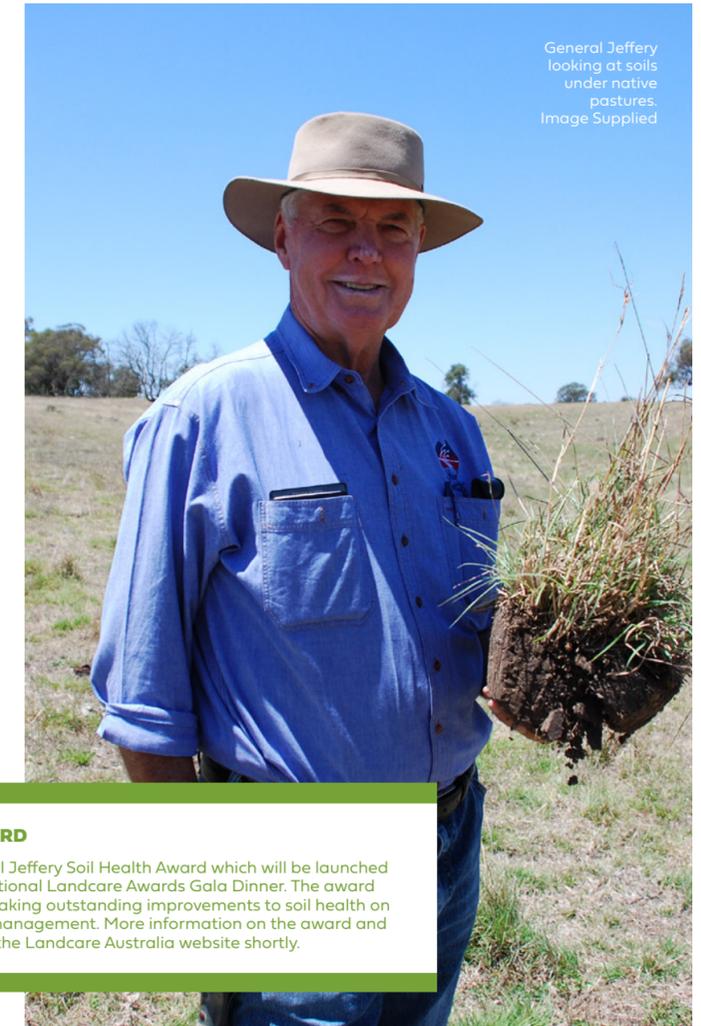
General Jeffery has been a tireless and passionate advocate for paying better attention to the health of our national soil resource. The NFF thanks General Jeffery for his considerable contribution as Australia's first National Soils Advocate. His ability to frame soil as the foundation of agriculture has been of great value to the farming sector.

### DR SHANE NORRISH, CEO, LANDCARE AUSTRALIA

We are grateful for General Jeffery's inspiration and recognition of good soils management as the foundation of sustainable production systems. Working with General Jeffery as the Patron of Landcare Australia has been a privilege, and I greatly appreciate his enormous contribution.

### THE GENERAL JEFFERY SOIL HEALTH AWARD

We are thrilled to announce the inaugural General Jeffery Soil Health Award which will be launched in September 2020 and presented at the 2021 National Landcare Awards Gala Dinner. The award will recognise a farmer or land manager who is making outstanding improvements to soil health on their land, and who advocates for improved soil management. More information on the award and how to submit a nomination will be published on the Landcare Australia website shortly.



General Jeffery looking at soils under native pastures. Image Supplied



General Jeffery and his wife Marlina as they plant a tree at the National Arboretum in Canberra. Credit National Arboretum



General Jeffery with the then Prime Minister the Hon. Julia Gillard. Image Supplied



General Jeffery with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the grounds of Government House while Governor General. Image Supplied



General Jeffery discussing soil health with farmers. Image Supplied



Trail cameras will record both the activity and return of wildlife like swamp wallabies (pictured). Image Supplied



WIRES and Landcare Wildlife Relief and Recovery Grants is providing a crucial lifeline to local Landcare environment networks and community groups working to restore bushfire impacted habitat of animals including the brown hawk (pictured). Image Supplied



Far East Victorian Landcare is coordinating a citizen science project across the region aimed at monitoring the recovery of habitat and the diverse wildlife it supports including platypus (pictured). Image Supplied

## WIRES INSPIRES COMMUNITY BUSHFIRE ACTION

The Black Summer bushfires devastated habitats across East Gippsland but local volunteers and communities are rallying together to restore and nurture impacted species.

With financial support from the WIRES Landcare Wildlife Relief and Recovery Grants, Far East Victorian Landcare is coordinating a citizen science project across the region aimed at monitoring the recovery of habitat and the diverse wildlife it supports including platypus, swamp wallabies and brown falcons.

Identifying key sites within each of the 12 impacted communities throughout East

Gippsland, initial stage one activities will focus on monitoring and assessment of effected sites. Trail cameras will record both the activity and return of wildlife and simultaneously, the impacts of pest animals on habitat recovery.

“This will enable environmental volunteers and other interested groups, like schools for example, to undertake accurate fixed point photo monitoring of vegetation recovery over time,” explained spokesperson Penny Gray. “Monitoring the recovery of the flora will identify areas and species that are slow to recover or not recovering at all because the fire

was too intense. This information will assist the community and potentially agencies in prioritizing areas for on-ground works or other recovery processes.”

Community volunteers will be trained in the use of the cameras and the uploading of data to a fixed point (it is expected this will be a web page which will be developed as part of the project) where results can be shared with the broader community and enhance subsequent stages of the coordinated project.

“The results would develop management plans that aim to improve habitat and wildlife recovery,” Penny added. “It could inform the strategic location of nest boxes, priority weeds and potential revegetation or habitat augmentation works that will lead to improved outcomes for wildlife in our bushfire affected ecosystems.”

Facilitated by unprecedented public appeals and donations, the \$1million WIRES and Landcare Wildlife Relief and Recovery Grants program is providing a crucial lifeline to the essential work of Far East Victorian Landcare and other local Landcare environment networks and community groups working to restore bushfire impacted habitat across

the country.

WIRES CEO Leanne Taylor said this grants scheme with Landcare Australia is committed to protecting and preserving Australian wildlife, habitat and local communities from the effects of climate change and extreme natural disasters.

Leanne said: “This partnership between Landcare Australia and WIRES is an important step towards the restoration and recovery of Australian wildlife and landscapes deeply scarred by the unparalleled impacts of bushfires and drought.”

Landcare Australia CEO Dr Shane Norrish said the grants program will improve outcomes for wildlife support and associated habitat rehabilitation projects.

Dr Norrish said: “Through partnerships like this, Landcare Australia is getting on with the job of providing funding to local groups quickly and helping to drive and coordinate national bushfire and drought response with targeted high-priority actions, which are delivered on the ground by locals.”

For full list of recipients visit [landcareaustralia.org.au/wireslandcaregrants](http://landcareaustralia.org.au/wireslandcaregrants)



Environs Kimberley and the Yawuru Country Managers will conduct regeneration, flora surveys and weed management to monitor and assist natural regeneration of these culturally important ecosystems. Image Supplied

## BUSHFIRE IMPACTED REGIONS SECURE BOOST FROM LANDCARE AUSTRALIA RECOVERY GRANTS

Conservation of rare WA plant ecosystems impacted by bushfires led by Environs Kimberley and aboriginal rangers Yawuru Country Managers was one of 23 projects to secure funding from Landcare Australia’s \$300,000 Bushfire Recovery scheme.

In August 2019, arson-lit fires tore through significant vegetation at multiple sites around Broome and around the Dampier Peninsula, heavily impacting three different types of ecosystems, all of significant conservation and cultural importance.

The infernos burnt extensive areas of the priority listed Minyuru habitat and Cable Beach Ghost Gum, a species endemic to the Broome peninsula. They also destroyed swathes of the Federally Endangered Mayingan manga balu or Monsoon Vine Thickets of the Dampier Peninsula, which occur as patches within and behind coastal dunes, making up less than 0.01 per cent of the peninsular region yet supporting 25 per cent of its plant species.

Environs Kimberley and the Yawuru Country Managers will conduct regeneration, flora surveys and weed management to monitor and assist natural regeneration of these culturally important ecosystems, whilst furthering knowledge on how to manage these habitats to minimise threats from fire in the future.

“These ecosystems are not only ecologically important, but culturally significant to the local Yawuru traditional owners,” explained ecologist Dr Malcolm Lindsay from Environs Kimberley.

Meanwhile, across the country in Harrogate, east of the Adelaide Hills, 220 hectares of Wyndam Farm was burnt right through from boundary to boundary decimating works undertaken in 2014 by Bremer Barker Catchment Group and Goolwa to Wellington LAP (GWLAP).

With fences destroyed, ground-layer and soils exposed and large ancient red gum decimated, revegetation works had been planned for this site prior to the fires to add creek line diversity and block revegetation.

Ben Simon, Senior Project Officer for the Goolwa to Wellington Local Action Planning Association (GWLAP), said, “The funds from our Landcare Australia Bushfire Grant will enable re-planting local trees including red gum, install guarding and provide maintenance of more than 2,000 local native seedlings in Davidson Creek.

GWLAP have more than 2000 local provenance seedlings growing at their nursery that will be ready to plant in June 2020 for the site.

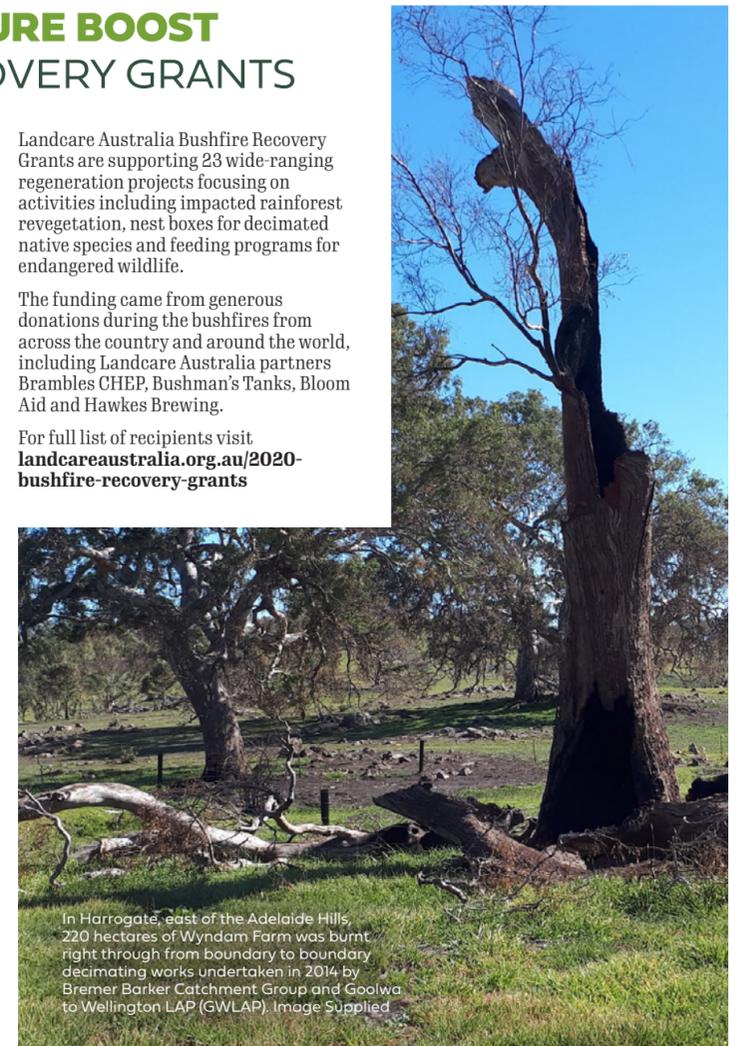
Revegetation will involve the planting of local trees including red gum (*Eucalyptus camadlulensis*), old man Banksia (*Banksia marginata*), Blackwoods (*Acacia melanoxylon*), Drooping She-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) and blue-gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxydon*). A suite of grasses, sedges, rushes and shrubs will also be planted to improve biodiversity, reduce erosion in the watercourse and provide refuge for wildlife.

Made possible due to the extraordinary volume of donations from generous organisations and private donors, the

Landcare Australia Bushfire Recovery Grants are supporting 23 wide-ranging regeneration projects focusing on activities including impacted rainforest revegetation, nest boxes for decimated native species and feeding programs for endangered wildlife.

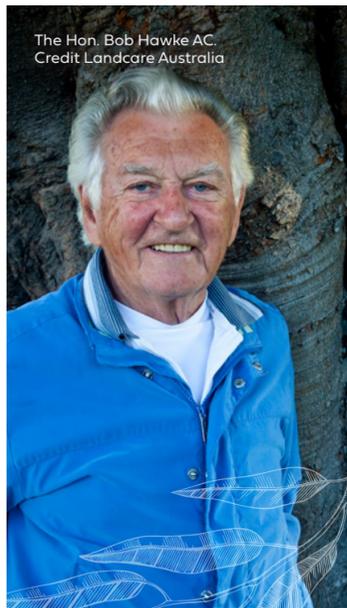
The funding came from generous donations during the bushfires from across the country and around the world, including Landcare Australia partners Brambles CHEP, Bushman’s Tanks, Bloom Aid and Hawkes Brewing.

For full list of recipients visit [landcareaustralia.org.au/2020-bushfire-recovery-grants](http://landcareaustralia.org.au/2020-bushfire-recovery-grants)



In Harrogate, east of the Adelaide Hills, 220 hectares of Wyndam Farm was burnt right through from boundary to boundary decimating works undertaken in 2014 by Bremer Barker Catchment Group and Goolwa to Wellington LAP (GWLAP). Image Supplied

The Hon. Bob Hawke AC  
Credit Landcare Australia



## NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR THE 2020 BOB HAWKE LANDCARE AWARD

The Bob Hawke Landcare Award is a prestigious, national award that publicly recognises an individual involved in championing Landcare and inspiring others to take action on their own property or through a Landcare group. The award acknowledges a person's leadership and commitment to Landcare, natural resource management and sustainable agriculture. The award recipient will be an individual who actively pursues, introduces and shapes innovative farming systems to improve productivity, profitability, sustainability, and the quality of our natural resources. The Bob Hawke Landcare Award recipient will be awarded a prize package of \$50,000 for further development of their knowledge and skills in sustainable land management to enable an even stronger contribution to Landcare.

For more information and to apply, please visit the Bob Hawke Landcare Award website: [bobhawkelandcareaward.com.au](http://bobhawkelandcareaward.com.au)



2018 National Landcare Conference in Brisbane  
Credit Landcare Australia

## 2021 NATIONAL LANDCARE CONFERENCE CALL FOR ABSTRACTS CLOSE WEDNESDAY 1 JULY

The 2021 National Landcare Conference will be held from Wednesday 10 to Friday 12 March 2021 at the International Convention Centre in Sydney. The National Landcare Conference Steering Committee is seeking presentations from Landcare networks and groups, land managers, farmers and farming systems groups, Traditional land managers, research and development agencies and universities, environmental not-for-profits, environmental community groups including Coastcare, Bushcare, 'Friend's of' groups, Rivercare and Dunecare, and other individuals and organisations who are involved in managing conservation and sustainable land management activities.

The conference presentations will demonstrate the positive impact Landcare has on landscapes, the environment, sustainable farming productivity and in our communities across Australia. The conference streams include:

### SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

*Innovation and technology, soil health, adaptation to climate change, integrating productivity and conservation.*

Farmers manage over half of the Australian landscape and innovation in primary production and conservation of natural capital are critical to ensure a better future. This stream will focus on how farming and agriculture is adapting to an ever-increasing range of challenges, including climate change. It will also

look at how Landcare is developing and implementing innovative farming practices to sustainably manage our productive natural assets.

### ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

*How to encourage individuals to take positive action to mitigate climate change with Landcare?*

With impacts of climate change increasing through extreme drought, fire and flood events, Australia's landscapes and biodiversity are under immense pressure. Communities and individuals need to have confidence in effective actions that will make a difference individually and collectively, and help restore, protect and manage our natural assets and our own wellbeing. This stream will demonstrate how various Indigenous, Bushcare, Coastcare and other Landcare community groups, as well as the organisations they work with, are contributing to successfully meet these challenges and provide ideas for more people to take positive action with Landcare.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

*Building community capacity and resilience, communication and storytelling, volunteering, partnerships, building and sharing knowledge.*

Community participation is at the heart of Landcare. This stream will demonstrate the achievements of individual Landcare community groups and projects and the value of actively investing in communities and successful

partnerships. The stream will also explore how Landcare can enhance engagement with rural communities, support the sharing of knowledge and help breakdown the disconnect that exists between the city and the bush.

### LANDCARE IMPACT

*Landscape, biodiversity, community resilience, mental and physical health of individuals, community wellbeing, agriculture productivity, economy.*

This stream will demonstrate the positive impact Landcare has in multiple areas including the environment, landscapes, agriculture, community, health and the economy. Demonstrating the multiple impacts of Landcare is essential to help showcase to government, business, and philanthropic supporters the value of continued and increased investment into Landcare - as well as why ongoing investment is required now more than ever.

All abstracts are to be submitted electronically in accordance with the guidelines and should be submitted by 11.59 pm (EST) on Wednesday 1 July, 2020.

Authors may submit more than one paper, but the program is limited and your submission(s) may not be included in the conference program.

Closing on Wednesday 1 July. For more information or to submit an abstract for the National Landcare Conference, please visit the Landcare Australia website [landcareaustralia.org.au](http://landcareaustralia.org.au)



Pastures Field Day held at Blessington, Tamar Valley as part of the MLA funded pastures demonstration. Image Supplied

## TAMAR VALLEY PASTURES DEMONSTRATION PROVING PROFITABLE & SUSTAINABLE

Three Tamar Valley properties in northern Tasmania proved to be ideal locations for demonstrating how sound pasture and grazing management practices can meet an industry target increase of 10 per cent profitability to the red meat supply chain.

The Tamar Valley Pasture Improvement Demonstration project which was run over 136 hectares of land, was funded by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) and delivered by Tamar NRM.

At two sites, the project compared production from paddocks recently

sown down to improved pasture species against old pastures typical of the region. One site was under dryland conditions and the second had access to irrigation. Results indicate that a 30 per cent increase in pasture production was achieved under dryland conditions at Springmere Farm, Beaconsfield while a 200 per cent increase was observed on improved pastures under irrigation at Elverton, Blessington. This demonstrated tangible benefits when recommended pasture management practices and the utilisation of the feed grown is undertaken.

The third site at Greenhythe, Hillwood built on an existing Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) trial site, looked at the adaptation abilities by measuring persistence of a range of pasture grass, legume and herb species under 680 mm annual average rainfall. It indicated perennial ryegrass planted was not well adapted to the changed conditions of reduced annual rainfall experienced locally over the past decade, and that cocksfoot is proving a better perennial grass option at this site.

As well as promoting MLA's many online resources for farm management,

the project drew on local expertise from TIA's herbage development program, veterinarians, and soil and feed testing laboratories.

With an estimated 50,000 hectares of quality grazing land in the Tamar Valley, an average increase of 1DSE/ha pasture production would equate to an added return of \$2,000,000 to the region. As such, change to realise the multiple benefits for producers and the region continues to be encouraged.

Full more information visit [tamarnrm.com.au](http://tamarnrm.com.au)

## REFRESHING INTEREST IN WILDLIFE INVESTMENT PARTNERS SOUGHT TO REVISIT BENCHMARK WILDLIFE SURVEY

Eighteen years after the most comprehensive wildlife review ever undertaken in the Murray/Wakool Rivers region, Landcare is taking up the challenge again. Originally initiated by Murrakool Inc, now run by the Murrakool Land for Wildlife, the survey and engagement activities were completed by ecologist Matt Herring in 2003 with final report published titled 'Murrakool Wildlife: Magnificent Diversity, Precarious Future', providing a salient message on the perilous state of many species at the time.

The original wildlife survey work was extensive, covering 45 sites across a range of vegetation types, underpinned by extensive community engagement activities. This project increased

awareness of local wildlife diversity and empowered rural communities with practical knowledge to make positive change, translating into locally relevant on-ground actions.

The Western Murray Land Improvement Group (WMLIG), is leading a project to refresh interest in wildlife and provide fresh insights into the status of wildlife in the region. A consortium made up of several stakeholder members including Murrakool Land for Wildlife, are again seeking to replicate the Murrakool Wildlife Survey in 2021 to compare the status of fauna in the region, especially after prolonged drought conditions in the last two decades. The aims of the 2021 Wildlife Survey Project are to identify, prioritise and address key



Native to the region is the Barking Gecko.  
Credit Michelle Morton

knowledge gaps and biodiversity threats in the region as highlighted by the 2003 Murrakool Wildlife Survey and key supporting data which will underpin a threatened species strategy.

The project will improve the knowledge and understanding of native animals and plants residing in the landscape and place us in a better position to conserve

and enhance our natural heritage for future generations. However the project will not go ahead without funding. If you would like to invest and partner in the project contact WMLIG on [admin@wmlig.org](mailto:admin@wmlig.org) or 0354 531 577 or Project Manager, Rick Ellis on 0428 372 357 for more information.

## TIDE TO TIP AN OYSTER INDUSTRY WATERWAY CLEAN-UP INITIATIVE

Oysters are often called the canary in the coal-mine of estuary health. However it is oyster farmers who are truly the eyes and ears of the waterway. Out on their punts every day, these watermen have an intimate knowledge of their local environment and are often the first to report water pollution events and upstream disturbances.

Oyster farmers have a long history of supporting community groups to clean-up estuaries, volunteering their equipment and knowledge for the public good. Recognising the capacity of the oyster industry to undertake estuary clean-ups, in 2019 OceanWatch Australia saw an opportunity to mobilise as many oyster farmers as possible to undertake estuary clean-ups in the same week to lift the profile of environmental stewardship and encourage others to do the same. The oyster industry was overwhelming supportive and the Tide to Tip Initiative was born.

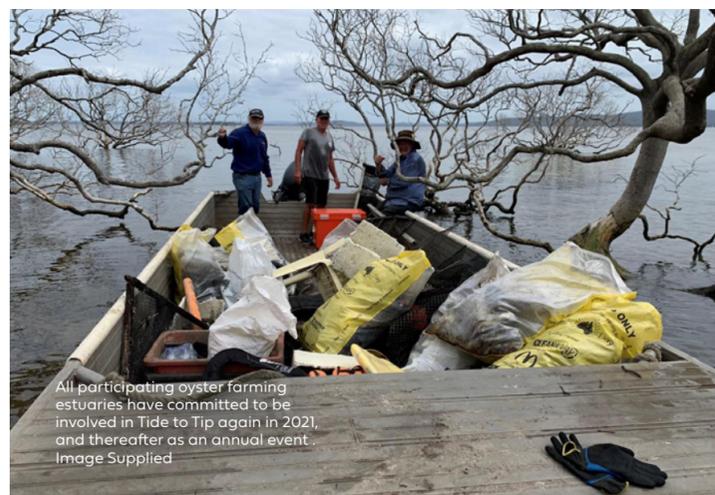
Despite a horror summer of drought, fires and floods, 243 volunteers across NSW came together in February, investing 1000 hours of their time to remove 12 tonnes of rubbish from sensitive coastal environments.

While some oyster farmers went it alone, other oyster farming groups partnered with like-minded stakeholders including professional fishermen, recreational fishers, Indigenous groups, rotary clubs, councils, eNGO's, NSW DPI, NSW Local Land Services, National Parks, Sydney Fish Market, OceanWatch and more. These partnerships have also helped oyster farmers to build relationships and community support within their local area.

All participating oyster farming estuaries have committed to be involved in Tide to Tip again in 2021, and thereafter as an annual event.



Oyster farmers in Merimbula Lake getting stuck into the clean-up. Image Supplied



All participating oyster farming estuaries have committed to be involved in Tide to Tip again in 2021, and thereafter as an annual event. Image Supplied



Installing a predator/macropod exclusion fence on 3.4 ewe lambing paddock in St Helens. Image Supplied

## CREATING BAAS AND BANDICOOTS PREDATOR PROOF PADDOCK

Southern Brown Bandicoots are a threatened species. While there is a strong desire to increase the bandicoots' range of habitat on private farms, there has been a lack of sites where farm production and bandicoots have been proven to benefit together from predator exclusion fencing.

In 2019, the Basalt to Bay Landcare Network was one of 13 groups in six states to receive a Gallagher Landcare Fencing Grant for projects that align with improved grazing management and/or conservation. They used the funding and in-kind Gallagher fencing to undertake a project to increase breeding success of their local Southern Brown Bandicoots and to build a secure habitat for future releases of individuals from other populations.

A 3.4 hectare ewe lambing paddock in St Helens Victoria adjoining the last known public land population of bandicoots in the local area, was the project site.

The project entailed planning and installing a predator/macropod exclusion fence constructed using

8-Line Gallagher Westonfence powered by a Gallagher S400 Portable Solar Energizer.

Remote cameras stationed on the fence and nearby, record the wildlife response to the change of barrier between the Parks Victoria Reserve and the farm - which is the boundary that sees the most wildlife pressure.

The network is also monitoring a bandicoot that has recently been seen on camera quite close to the new fence, as it will be able to access the paddock for the first time.

The project shows how to achieve multiple environmental outcomes including protecting stock from foxes, protecting pasture from kangaroo/wallaby grazing, feral pig access, and prevent fence damage and fence entanglements.

According to Lisette Mill, Basalt to Bay Network facilitator, "the project provides local Landcare with a case study site with evidence for landholders about how to keep pests and unwanted wildlife out of land used for agricultural production and threatened biodiversity."



Despite access to Kangaroo Island being restricted due to COVID-19, locals continue to undertake on-ground activities where possible (Pictured) KI Dunnart. Image Supplied

## LIFELINE FOR KANGAROO ISLAND'S DUNNARTS

### NATIONAL BUSHFIRE RECOVERY AGENCY

The Black Summer bushfires were devastating for Australia's flora and fauna, no more evident than on Kangaroo Island. Known for its coastline, mountains, bushland and its variety of wildlife, the bushfires destroyed two thirds of the island's habitat, forcing the feral pig population to impact the remainder of the island's important vegetation.

Churning up the ground, the feral pigs affect soil retention, damage

recovering bush, carry pests and diseases and foul water sources.

With help from the Commonwealth's bushfire recovery funding, Kangaroo Island Natural Resources Management is moving fast on feral pig and cat control. Camera traps are being placed in unburnt areas to detect the feral predators

The Wildlife and Threatened Species Bushfire Recovery Expert Panel named the Kangaroo Island Dunnart as one of the Top 10 species under threat following the bushfires. Initial assessments indicate a significant

decline in population, with more than 95 per cent of its habitat burnt.

Across the island's west, about 50 cameras have been set up in 12 of the larger unburnt patches of land to monitor the Dunnart's movements while feral pest control is underway.

National Bushfire Recovery Coordinator Andrew Colvin said he recognised the importance of this work.

"Having been to Kangaroo Island a number of times over the past months to speak with locals, it is apparent that recovery and regeneration is not only

about what we can see but also what we don't see," Mr Colvin said.

"The ecological system of the island was greatly disturbed with the bushfire season and funding this work is essential to ensure that severely impacted animal populations continue to survive."

Threatened Species Commissioner, Dr Sally Box says there are positive signs for Dunnarts.

"A recent camera trap image of a Dunnart was cause for celebration, as it proves that the unburnt patch of habitat is still supporting the species."



Volunteers Jill Bauer and Pam Cready help create terraces. Image Supplied

## REVEGETATION AT OPOSSUM CREEK CONTINUES

### LUISE MANNING, PRESIDENT SPRINGFIELD LAKES NATURE CARE

Lloyd Bird OAM passed away in September 2009 but he left a legacy of his work behind in Opossum Creek, removing invasive weeds and planting natives to restore the

catchment and ecosystems of the historic Woogaroo Scrub.

Sadly, nothing much was done after Lloyd's passing until local Landcare group, Springfield Lakes Nature Care Inc (SLNC), decided to apply for a Federal Government Community Environment Program grant. Last year we received

\$20,000 to continue Lloyd and his team of dedicated helper's work.

We contacted Martin Bennet, who worked with Lloyd and learnt his trade. Martin is now a renowned Environmental Survey Ecologist and SLNC is grateful to have his expertise in guiding this project alongside our contractors "The World

As I Am', who have tirelessly but gently worked the land, removing huge amounts of lantana and celtis, creating terraces from the debris for ease of planting and sediment control.

This enabled our volunteers to plant understorey shrubs to create a bird friendly haven for the many local species including whipbird, red-browed finches and several varieties of honey eaters. The contractor, Rachel Hughes has commenced ring-barking mature Camphor Laurels which will remain in situ until the original native trees that Lloyd planted in the late 1990s, have a chance to grow. These natives were eclipsed and outcompeted by the weeds. Over 1000 native trees will be planted in the coming weeks to revegetate the land, restore the ecosystem and provide essential habitat for native species, including several endangered keystone species that use the sclerophyll dry rainforest as habitat.

Several members of the group came to help cut lantana, ready for painting with poison, carting some of the smaller Celtis sinensis trunks to help create the terraces, placing mulch around the natives and watering the newly planted seedlings and shrubs.

SAVE THE DATE

# 2021 NATIONAL LANDCARE CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY 10 TO FRIDAY 12 MARCH

# 2021 NATIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

THURSDAY 11 MARCH

**International Convention Centre,  
Darling Harbour, Sydney.**

The full conference program and early bird tickets for the 2021 National Landcare Conference will be announced in September 2020.

You have an opportunity to present at the 2021 National Landcare Conference, the Call for Abstracts campaign will close on July 1. For further information and to submit an abstract, please visit the Landcare Australia website: [www.landcareaustralia.org.au](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au)

The National Landcare Conference was to take place in November 2020. Due to COVID-19, we have moved the event date to March 2021. The 2021 State & Territory Landcare Awards campaign will take place in 2021, more information will be announced late this year.

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