

# Shirtsleeves

Hunter Region Landcare Network

Network News

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## GREEN FINGERS - GREEN JOBS

Hey there Shirtsleeves readers. Aaron Ireland is my name and I'm with the National Green Jobs Core (NGJC) program where Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) gives people aged 17-24 accredited training towards a Cert II in Conservation Land Management. CVA has two NGJC teams, at Blackbutt Reserve in Newcastle and Yambuloong Indigenous Resource Centre in Lake Macquarie.

I love being in such a great environment and have met great people and made great friends. I am absolutely blown away by how lovely Blackbutt really is. Just imagine working where there are Koalas, Kangaroos, Emus, Wombats and lots of native birds. There is such a diverse range of flora including Lilli Pilly and Native Grape. We learn to identify native plants and weeds, techniques for weed removal, collect seeds and propagate plants, repair walking tracks and undertake ChemCert training.

Removing weed infestations, repairing greening centers and/or re-vegetating native areas aren't boring, tiresome and plain right 'dull'. Our teams have great fun and find the work they do very rewarding.

This course provides us with knowledge about the environmental sector and practical rehabilitation techniques. The car pooling pick ups might be a little dull but that is as bad as it gets. NGJC gives me insight into a world I had never imagined and allows me to increase my communication and people interaction skills. It is definitely helping me achieve practical life skills whilst helping the environment.



My opinion of National Green Jobs Core - Simply Awesome. Best start anyone can have at getting involved with the environmental sector.

Get Out There and Get Involved!

Aaron Ireland

## HRLN PROJECTS

- Lake Liddell Demonstration Site—Hunter Indigenous Aquatic Plants Nursery & tree planting activities
- Composting for Yield Enhancement Field Days for farmers
- HRLN Website upgrade including Sustainable Farming data
- Research into climate change in the Hunter for Sustainable Farming initiatives
- Partner in the Hunter River Rehabilitation Project at Singleton
- Landcare Assistance Funds to local Landcare Groups in the Hunter Water Corporation catchment
- Bi-annual Hunter Landcare Forum & Muster
- Educational resources for schools—includes the Lorax Puppet Theatre for young children
- Workshops and Field Days on a range of topics—Wildlife Corridors, Sustainable Agriculture, Weed Control
- Landcare facilitation at a regional level
- Native seed collection for plant propagation
- Partnerships with Local Councils to address land and water conservation and rehabilitation needs

## HRLN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The HRLN will be celebrating another year of supporting the Landcare community and Landcare Groups in the Hunter when we meet on Saturday 9th of October for the AGM and bi-monthly General Network Meeting. It has been a busy year for the HRLN with new conservation and rehabilitation project grants obtained and existing projects managed.

HRLN represents Landcare and local communities in Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Cessnock, Maitland, Port Stephens, Dungog, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter Local Council areas.

Morning tea and lunch will be provided at the meeting and we would hope to see you there.

## A LANDCARE HERO

Graham Whitelaw was a committed Landcarer with Kilaben Bay Landcare and a long standing member of the Lake Macquarie Landcare Network.

Graham reinvigorated the Kilaben Bay community through his commitment to community access to public land, building a walkway through the SEPP14 Wetlands of Kilaben Bay. This enabled students to walk to school at St. Josephs Primary and the general public to experience the local bushland. When the Kilaben Bay Progress Association folded the Landcare group filled a void to keep the local community engaged.

Graham was a big picture Landcarer who offered his financial skills to local and regional networks, laying strong foundations for these growing groups.

He was the 'Glue' that helped to keep the HRLN on track, wrote grant applications, managed projects and held executive positions such as Treasurer. A tireless worker for the Network, any task he undertook was always done professionally and with good heart.

Graham died suddenly in August leaving a great void within the HRLN community and in his own local community.

HRLN members recently planted natives as a tribute to Graham (see photo).



Jenny Castles & Suzanne Pritchard

## CELEBRATING NATIONAL LANDCARE WEEK

Scone Landcare joined with local residents to plant 60 native trees in the Bill Rose Sport's Complex, Scone over two days in early September, as part of National Landcare Week. River Redgums were planted along the creek and Casuarinas, Callistemons and Leptospermums near the playground and playing fields and the bordering roadways.

The Upper Hunter Shire Council provided the trees. It felt great to be planting natives out in the community again after the prolonged drought.

Ruth Hardy



### Our Newest Recruit

Every little bit helps. Somehow we think he was more interested in the worms than helping plant the trees.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Two new Individual Members

One Group Member: All Saints College, St. Joseph's - Lochinvar

## WHY WE SHOULDN'T FEED WILD BIRDS

Our Australian birds have evolved to eat a varied diet of Australian seeds, plant nectars, berries and fruit, insects and other birds or reptiles - not bread, bought seeds or honey.

Feeding native birds can cause them harm.

- Magpies and Kookaburras that prefer mince to insects, reliant on their "human feeder"
- Runners'-parrots that cannot fly due to a poor diet when young or as adults
- Unbalanced populations from meat eaters that over breed and kill tiny native birds
- Bread left for Magpies that feeds invading Indian Mynahs instead

Indian Mynahs are steadily increasing on Tilligerry Peninsula at Port Stephens. Five years ago at Tanilba Bay Public School we had a flock of Magpies that did their Magpie things- rolling in the dust, lying on their backs and squawking.

One day, at a practice emergency evacuation five hundred students and their teachers stood by the playground and waited for the all clear as in the distance all you could hear was the chortling of Magpies, amused at our antics.

Since then we found bread scraps being thrown to the birds. In a very short time the Magpies were joined by at first a few, then a lot of Indian Mynahs.

I used to be woken by the dawn chorus of Kookaburras, Lorikeets and Magpies. Now it is often a chorus of Mynahs.

Fran Corner



Aussie Noisy Miner



Indian or Common Mynah

## LIDDELL SOLAR THERMAL PROJECT

On Saturday 12 June members of the HRLN visited the Macquarie Generation, Liddell Power Station for a tour of the Solar Thermal Plant. Liddell was commissioned in 1972, the first power station to be located inland away from salt water supplies traditionally used for cooling. This required an artificial lake and Lake Liddell was created.

In 2002 Solar Heat and Power approached Macquarie Generation looking for a power company to partner in testing and developing their solar thermal technology. The solar mirror arrays cover more than four football fields. The mirrors reflect the sun's rays onto overhead tubes containing water, to produce steam which heats the boiler of one of the power stations unit.

The system is fully automated with innovative techniques for controlling irregular heating from seasonal temperatures and cloudy weather.

This reduces the use of over 2,000 tons of coal each year and saves 4,000 tones of carbon dioxide, the equivalent of taking 750 cars off the road.

After the visit we drove to the far side of the lake for lunch and some good Landcare discussion.

Some of us stopped off to check an HRLN planting site from three years ago. Most of the native trees had survived the drought!

Helen McClelland  
HRLN Publicity Officer



### Dates for diary:

HRLN AGM & General Network Meeting at 10am on October 9, Maitland District Leagues Club, Bulwer St. Maitland

NSW Landcare Forum & Muster, November 3 & 4 at Wellington.  
Contact HRLN for more details

Carbon Farming Conference, Expo & Carbon Cocky Awards, October 26-29 at Dubbo.  
[www.carbonfarmingconference.com.au](http://www.carbonfarmingconference.com.au)

### INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS IN THE HUNTER

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) hosted multiple International Student Volunteers (ISV) groups from the USA, Canada, UK and Ireland this winter. Students completed 2 weeks of practical conservation activities and a Study Manual before embarking on 2 weeks holiday.

A team of eight students visited Murrurundi in the Upper Hunter, completing 5 days of Woody Weed removal along the Pages River. Staying in the beautiful Murrurundi House the students relished the country experience, clearly a world away from their regular lives in faraway lands.

At the Hunter Wetlands Hotspots Project students learnt about our native Aussie coastal environment like mangroves, salt marshes and other aquatic flora. They removed exotic weeds from Ash Island and helped the local community at the permaculture gardens. At the Hunter Wetland Centre in Shortland trees like Casuarinas and Melaleucas were also planted.

ISV will be back again next year but CVA is here to stay with numerous projects over the coming months. Contact [newcastle@cva.org.au](mailto:newcastle@cva.org.au) for more info.

Tim Silverwood



### Who's Who in HRLN

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We thank all contributors and reserve the right to reduce or edit contributions. Due to space limitations some items may be held over to a future issue.

### Links

Landcare NSW Inc: <http://www.landcarensw.org.au/>

Communities in Landscapes: integrating production & conservation across Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands: <http://cil.landcarensw.org.au>

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