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**GOING FULL CIRCLE**

Isabella Bergamo is a seasoned Landcarer living in the coastal city of Newcastle. At the ripe old age of ten Isabella already has over seven years of landcaring under her belt!

Along with her family, she has assisted her local Bushcare group since she was two, helping to look after her local patch of bushland, the gully and playground areas.

When asked about Landcare projects she has worked on Isabella said “Projects in the gully included Clean Up Australia Day and National Tree Day. More kids from the area come and give a hand these days. I can teach them how to plant and water a tree. We have two other big days in the year and then I work with Mum and others in between”.

When we get together as a group we get rid of weeds that are not good for the environment, pick up rubbish in the water in the gully and plant native trees, bushes and shrubs. The bush out the back can now be used by people going for walks and walking their dogs.

I have planted She-oaks and now the Black Cockatoos have come back because of them. Sometimes I count the number of species of different birds when I am walking out there. I plant Kangaroo grass too. If people cut down trees they should plant more in their place.

WIRES also came to see us about releasing an Echidna in our area as there were several anthills”.

Increasing recycling to minimise pollution, protecting local waterways from bottles and cans and disposing of rubbish appropriately along with community education are all a focus for Isabella.

Isabella said “It is very enjoyable to plant plants and fairly fun collecting rubbish and working out what rubbish will cause pollution”. “I would like to see more people get involved to make our group bigger”.

The Bush Fire Brigade helped to clear lots of Lantana from the area, resulting in natural regeneration of native trees and ground covers in the gully.

With the aid of grant funding, her local Bushcare group have worked to stabilise gully erosion and run off from an old colliery and neighbourhood area, by establishing rock works. The upper gully leading to the bush is a pleasant place to walk, with filtering of water before it reaches the lower parts. A new play area on the gully floor also gives a safe place for local children to play.

Helen McClelland  
& Ruth Hardy

Same spot -  
different years



Isabella  
aged two  
aged ten



#### HRLN PROJECTS

- HRLN Website upgrade incl. Landcare Farming, Coastal & Riparian
- Long term research into climate change in the Hunter for Sustainable Farming initiatives
- River Redgum project—local provenance plantings along the Hunter River
- Educational resources - incl. mobile Puppet Theatre & Junior Landcare Kits
- Workshops - Junior Landcare & Adult education incl. Wildlife Corridors, Landcare Group support
- Landcare facilitation at a regional & state level - representation on Landcare NSW
- Local Council partnerships to address land and water conservation and rehabilitation needs

#### REGIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

Results of the 2013 Champions of the Catchments Regional Awards were announced recently at Tocal Agricultural Centre in the Lower Hunter. The Awards give opportunity for individuals and Landcare Groups from the Hunter, the Lower North Coast and Central Coast to showcase their ideas, projects and achievements.

In the Hunter, our congratulations go to:

Helen McClelland - winner of the Individual Landcare Legend

Jenny Castles - Highly Commended in Individual Landcare Legend

Thornton Public School winner of the Junior Landcare Team

Tilligerry Habitat - Achievement in Landcare Community Group Innovation

Shortland to Wallsend Landcare - Achievement in Landcare Community Group Innovation

The City of Newcastle - winner of the Local Government Landcare Partnership

Trees in Newcastle - Highly Commended in Coastcare

James Armstrong - Achievement in Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices

Anne & Bill McPhee Achievement in Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices

Their contribution to the environmental health of the Hunter and the diversity of activities represented is inspiring.

The winners from our Regional Awards have automatically progressed to the State Landcare Awards judging, the results to be announced at the State Landcare & Catchment Management Forum in Newcastle in September.

Ruth Hardy

#### Gingering up our Town

Since establishment two years ago Gingers Lane Tidy Towns members have worked to conserve and improve our local environment. One of our first projects ensured restoration of estate entry walls and signs. Walled areas were cleared of weeds, soil improvements made, mulch applied and new plants established.

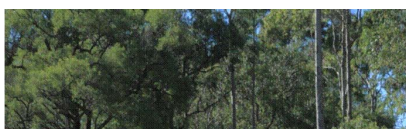
We look forward to our monthly working bees - they are not just hard work but a good opportunity to share ideas, skills and some humour! With an initial membership of 23 we now have residents maintaining roadsides within the estate, on an ongoing basis. Our group is also part of Cessnock Council's Adopt-a-Road program.

It is great to see the wider community participate in our clean ups. A good way to get to know our neighbours more!

By improving our local environment we have seen greater indirect resident participation e.g. people mowing their nature strips more frequently. Keeping roadsides clean has also seen a reduction in litter thrown from vehicles, litter that then cannot wash away into nearby storm water drains or into Swamp Creek.

Now to complete our Heritage Trail plans for Gingers Lane to Bailey Park, which will include commemorative family tree planting.

David Woods



## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Twelve Individual Members

Three Landcare Groups

## SHOREBIRDS IN THE HUNTER ESTUARY

Over the past two years WetlandCare Australia have been conducting a program of community education, weed and fox control in the Hunter Estuary, for the protection of shorebirds. This NSW Environmental Trust funded project was a multi-partner initiative of government and community organisations.

A field trip and workshops for stakeholders helped identify and prioritise partnership projects for federal government.

A highlight of the education program was a Scientific Seminar on Shorebird Best Practice Management, aimed at bridging the knowledge gap for land managers and consultants working in the estuary.

*Juncus acutus*, Bitou Bush, Water Hyacinth and mangrove control on 25 hectares occurred at five priority sites.

Fox monitoring programs in the estuary saw 47 volunteers recording, on an ongoing basis, observations of fox movements and these were mapped to inform the fox-control program. Hunter Bird Observers Club also contributed shorebird monitoring statistics. Eight sites across six land tenures were identified for fox control with some 240 foxes eradicated. This ensured minimal disruption to shorebird numbers when the birds arrived (often in poor condition) and when they fattened up ready for their epic journey north.

Hosting of a field trip and workshop for stakeholders followed, to help identify and prioritise partnerships for Federal and State government funded programs. Grant sourcing is ongoing to ensure education, weed and fox control continues to protect shorebirds in the Hunter Estuary

Louise Duff



## REGIONAL LANDCARE UPDATE

The Australian River Restoration Centre provides information, knowledge and resources for successful river restoration projects. [www.aarc.com.au](http://www.aarc.com.au)

Private Native Forestry training clips produced by the EPA include;

Introduction to PNF video playlist - legal framework & Code of Practice; Introduction to PNF - Training DVD. The technical series video playlist addresses concepts in the introductory clips, landholder/harvesting in applying the Code of Practice. Also PNF Technical info - training DVD. Go to [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au)

Linking Australia's Landscapes book release. Chapter 19 covers Landcare: 'Linking Australia's landscapes by linking its land managers'.

Invasive Animals CRC has developed a mobile phone and iPad App which contains species profiles for 31 of Australia's worst pest animals. Called the Field Guide to Pest Animals iOS App it can be downloaded from the Apple Store or scan the QR code with your mobile.

Weeds of National Significance (WONS) - National Weeds Co-ordinator positions (Broom etc.) have ceased. WONS information can be accessed via the Weeds Australia website [www.weeds.org.au/wons](http://www.weeds.org.au/wons) also via the Atlas of Living Australia. Scotch Broom via [www.rootala.org.au/bdrs.com](http://www.rootala.org.au/bdrs.com)

Tips on how to write to government Ministers - <http://www.crikey.com.au/2009/12/16/dont-waste-your-time-waste-theirs-a-guide-to-writing-to-ministers/>

**Funding Opportunities** - closing dates:

NSW Environmental Trust - Restoration & Rehabilitation grants. Round opens mid September & closes 31st October. Go to [www.nswenvironmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.nswenvironmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au/)

Foundation for Renewal & Regional Renewal - Small Grants for Rural Communities. Round opens 1st August. Go to [www.frr.org.au](http://www.frr.org.au)

Norman Wettenhall Foundation - Small Environmental Grant Scheme. Round opens 6th September. Go to [www.nwf.org.au](http://www.nwf.org.au)

**Dates for diary:**

“Our Place Community Forum on 8th August at Charlestown & 10th August at Raymond Terrace. Email [marketing@wetlands.org.au](mailto:marketing@wetlands.org.au)

HRLN General Meeting for members on 10th August at Morisset. Tel: 0458 348 110

Hunter Farm Forestry Network - Propagation of Native Seeds Field Day on 11th August at Muswellbrook [www.hffn.org.au](http://www.hffn.org.au)

Land for Wildlife Forum on 16/17th August at North Sydney [www.cen.org.au](http://www.cen.org.au)

Composting Worm Farming (Newcastle residents) on 24th August Tel: 4974 2863

Landcare NSW Muster 3rd September 9.00 -12.00pm at Newcastle Town Hall, Hunter Street, Newcastle

2013 NSW Landcare & Catchment Management Forum 12.00pm on 3rd September to 1.00pm on 5th at Newcastle Town Hall, Hunter Street, Newcastle [www.landcarecmaforum.com.au](http://www.landcarecmaforum.com.au)

National Biodiversity Month - September

National Bilby Day - 8th September

**...and THE PASSION GOES ON**

On a pleasant winter's day Landcarers from across the Hunter attended a 'Passion Mashin' workshop aimed at inspiring and re-invigorating groups.

Participants focussed on creative ways to organise activities, attract new volunteers, 're-charge the batteries' of existing volunteers, increase media skills and share a myriad of Landcare ideas and experiences.

Coastcare, Bushcare, Dunecare, Tidy Towns, schools, other Junior Landcare, university, retirement village, farming and Landcare groups were there.

How do you blend landcare with other activities? You could organise:

- A 'Youth for Lantana Bash'
- Sing as you weed and plant
- Family tree - planting trees to celebrate your family 'roots'
- Spotlight walks with bush tea & damper
- Speed planting for singles
- Meet with another group at a National Park for a Ranger 'walk & talk'
- A local residents Spot the Bird Survey on your 'Landcare patch'

These 'blends' create buzz - great for media attention, attracting new audiences and keeping your volunteers interested. Buddy up with other groups - scouts, sports, business, cultural specific groups and combine activities to cross-pollinate interest.

Mix up your usual 'formula' of Landcare by changing where and how you meet and keep the buzz alive. Increase volunteer skills and involvement.

- Have a 'bring your grandchild' (or bring your grandparent) working-day
- Meet quarterly over 3 days for special projects rather than monthly
- Have a 'bacon and eggs' morning instead of tea and biscuits
- Have 'leader for the day' or rotating roles instead of committee positions
- Meet at the pub or cafe in full volunteer uniform to help share the buzz
- Share your story on what inspires you on your site and invite people along

Since hearing at the workshop about other great group projects in the Hunter, people have been inspired to 'pay a visit' to other sites e.g. Abermain Landcare and Tilligerry Habitat volunteers visited Thornton Public School's Lower Hunter Spotted Gum Ironbark Forest conservation project, with plans for Thornton Landcarers to visit the bay and Tilligerry is visiting Pioneer Dairy down south.

HRLN would love to know what Landcare projects and sites you have been to lately and recommend others visit.

Kate Meares & Ruth Hardy



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Landcare Australia: [www.landcareonline.com.au](http://www.landcareonline.com.au)