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Celebrate our Centre opening!



Best-selling author and Gardening Australia presenter Hannah Moloney will headline a month-long program of events and activities to celebrate the opening of the Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre, umali barai-ku at Booragul.

The centrepiece of celebrations at the new-look centre will be a community open day on Saturday 18 February, where Moloney will deliver a keynote address and join a panel to share tips on 'Embracing a good life in Lake Mac'.

Lake Macquarie Mayor Kay Fraser said the centre would be a hub where the community can learn more about how to live more sustainably.

"Umali barai-ku means 'to do for the earth' in Awabakal language, and that's the rallying call we're inviting our community to embrace through these celebrations," Cr Fraser said

"With the opening of the new centre, we're bringing

together Council staff and Lake Macquarie Landcare and Sustainable Neighbourhoods volunteers under one roof for the first time – creating a one-stop shop for our community to gather and learn."

The family-friendly community open day will also include a crop swap, hands-on workshops, electric vehicle displays, live music, free gelato and more from 9am-3pm.

Other events to be held at the centre throughout February include workshops and talks on native bees, planting for pollinators, bush fire awareness, fungi facts, and native wildlife including snakes and flying foxes.

Meanwhile, volunteers can unite to help clean up a local Landcare site as part of an Eco Angel event on Wednesday 15 February.

Lake Macquarie City Council Landcare Coordinator Jason Harvey said the events throughout February provide a wider platform to share the

Landcare message of living wisely and looking after the natural environment.

"These events will give people the opportunity to learn more about what we do on the ground, and encourage them to get more involved in one of the largest Landcare networks in the country," Mr Harvey said.

To view the full program of events and activities, visit lakemacquarielandcare.org.au.

Built on the site of the former Landcare Resource Centre at Booragul, the Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre features indoor and outdoor community meeting spaces, as well as updated kitchen and office space for Council staff and volunteers.

The NSW Government contributed \$202,118 to the \$2 million project through the Stronger Country Communities Fund, with Council funding the remainder.

Congratulations to the 2022 EEL Award Winners!

Over 60 Landcarers and supporters came together in November to celebrate another successful year. We were also pleased to be able to give a sneak peek of the new Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre - Umali Barai-ku and want to thank everyone for their patience and support during the protracted reconstruction of the new facility.

The evening kicked off with the annual Lake Macquarie Environmental Excellence in Landcare (EEL) Awards ceremony. The EEL Awards provide an opportunity to promote and celebrate the wonderful achievements of Landcare volunteers throughout the year and to applaud the remarkable dedication of our long-term volunteers who have reached impressive milestones.

Following the passing of local nature guru and Landcarer, Carl Fulton, the LMLVN committee made the decision to honour him by renaming the education award in his memory to 'Carl Fulton Memorial Community Education Award'. This would be in recognition for his efforts as a well-known and respected long-standing staff member and volunteer, generous with both his time and knowledge.

State Member Jodie Harrison presented the awards for newcomer and long-standing groups, Mayor Kay Fraser, State Member Greg Piper and Mackenzie Robson

(representing Federal Member Dan Repacholi) presented awards for individual Landcarers in categories including community education, Landcare achievers and local legends.

Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network Chair for 2022 and dedicated Landcare volunteer at several sites, Lois Simpson, received the John Hughson Soaring with Eagles award. The award represents the pinnacle of the Lake Macquarie Environmental Excellence in Landcare awards, being awarded to an individual who has achieved all of the previous awards and who makes a regionally significant contribution to Landcare.

Landcare Coordinator, Jason Harvey, said Lois Simpson has been an exceptional representative of Landcare for over 20 years and was very deserving of this award.

"Lois is an exceptionally hard worker, making a positive difference at multiple Landcare sites. She shines when working with others as she shares her infectious enthusiasm and strong ethic for nurturing our environment and the people that love it. She shares the Landcare message far and wide through her involvement in the Network, local and regional events and through content for our newsletters and videos. Her efforts in continuing to champion the Landcare movement should be commended."



Top: Lois Simpson received the Soaring with the Eagle's Award, presented by Greg Piper Lake Macquarie MP.

Above: Marion Lugg received a 10 year service award, presented by LMCC Mayor Kay Fraser

Following the award ceremony, guests enjoyed the chance to relax and catch up with fellow Landcarers over some nibbles before teaming up to participate in the annual Landcare trivia competition. James Hamilton was announced as the winner of the 'Landcare Sightings' People's Choice Photography Prize with his wonderful photo of a Buff-banded Rail attracting the most votes on the night.

A full list of the award winners is available on our website www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au



Left: Thompson Street Habitat Restoration were awarded the Newcomers Group Award presented by Jodie Harrison MP



Left: Rod Mellor, of Coal Point Progress Association, received the Local Legends Award presented by Mackenzie Robson (representing Dan Repacholi MP).

LMLVN Committee 2023

The Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network (LMLVN) held their Annual General Meeting on the 18 November, electing the following Committee positions for 2023:

Chairperson: Marion Lugg

Deputy Chairperson: Lois Simpson

Secretary: Wendy Davidson

Treasurer: Bob Montgomery

General Committee Members: Pam Montgomery, Ruth Hinds, Nancy Lott, Winsome Lambkin and Don Roach.



The Network meets for a few hours on the second Tuesday of each month. Landcarers are welcome to attend these meetings. Contact the Landcare office on 4921 0392 or Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au for further information

Landcare Coordinator's 2022 report

By Jason Harvey, Landcare Coordinator

I wanted to take the time to say a big thank you to all of our volunteers for your hard work in 2022

The seasons have been so poorly differentiated in terms of weather for the last year, that it has been one long growing season for the weeds, which has meant one long working bee for our groups. Yet you have persisted, doing what you can while patiently and philosophically accepting the challenges that the weather have thrown at us all.



2022 Landcare Volunteer Achievements

14,369 hours volunteered

12.5 hectares weeded

4,221 plants in the ground

65,876 plants produced by
the nursery



Even while the season's activities tend to mean a busier personal time for most of us, there is still an awareness that a fresh calendar will be up on the wall (maybe even one that contains a Landcare sighting photo submitted by someone you know). I know my attention is on the beginning of 2023, when we will finally be able to fully open the doors of the new Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre to the Landcare community and the public. We have had some opportunity to give people a sneak peak of the centre, but we very much look forward to the formal opening in the beginning of February. To celebrate that occasion, we are planning a month full of events and activities we hope you will be able to join us for.



February 2023

THUR 2	Official opening and Welcome to Country
MON 6	Native Bees with Dani Lloyd Pritchard
TUES 7	Planting for Pollinators with Maree McCarthy
WED 8	Organic Resource Recovery facility tour
MON 13	Fungi talk and walk with expert and author Pam O'Sullivan
TUES 14	Landcare site tours
WED 15	EcoAngels clean up and iNaturalist talk
SAT 18	Community Open Day: Embracing a Good Life in Lake Mac, featuring Hannah Maloney
WED 22	Snakes: Enlighten not Frighten with Teresa Purnell
THUR 23	Flying Fox mini seminar with expert panel
FRI 24	Cane Toad/Frog Info Session Spotlighting
SAT 25	Repair Cafe
THUR 28	SIMtable workshop

Bookings essential for all activities except Open Day, via eventbrite (link at lakemacquarielandcare.org.au) or call the Landcare & Sustainable Living Centre on 4921 0392



Fridays in the field

Follow us on Facebook to see our regular segment 'Fridays in the Field' with Landcare staff. Here are some snippets from recent weeks.

11 November by Wendy

Seeing a Landcare Agreed Action Plan come to life is so much fun. The plan is written following bush regeneration principles but that is just the beginning: each group develops its own characteristic approach as they bring the plan to life, working within the unique context of their site. At Ballantrae to Halewood Landcare (Jewells) it looks like giant weedy bites have been taken by the cookie monster, as the group uses a mosaic approach leaving some weedy patches alone (for now) as important habitat for fauna like the gorgeous buff-banded rail (see the stunning photo above by Landcarer James Hamilton).



The Green Team assisted some mulching and planting this week to help out-compete some vigorous ivy, and give a kind buffer to some significant old trees.

Some of the members were involved in the very first works at this location many years ago and are passing on their knowledge about the riparian corridor. The newly formed group is keen to welcome new members so contact Lake Macquarie Landcare on 4921 0392 or lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au if you would like to join the fun!

18 November by Simon

Last Friday, Amy and I visited Central Rankin Park's site along Blue Wren Creek. With all the recent heavy rain, some of the creeks around Lake Macquarie are starting to show signs of stress and erosion. Blue Wren Creek is no different, with the toe of some of the banks getting eaten away, removing vegetation and exposing sodic soils behind the topsoil layer. Sodic soils are soils with a high sodium content. Sodium plus water makes for some significant erosion in creek lines.

The trick is to cover the exposed soil to stop erosion. Mulch tends not to stay in a creek line for long, and planting without some kind of cover can result in continuing erosion and a lot of swimming plants. In this instance, an organic, slotted jute matting was placed over the top of the exposed soil, pinned in with metal pins, and planted out with *Carex* and *Lomandra*.

The jute matting is like an organic carpet and will

breakdown over time. Its job is to create a physical barrier to stop the water from eating away at the bank, prevents weed growth, and catches organic matter to create a new topsoil layer. Species that are planted with the jute matting are chosen for their quick growth and ability to bind soils together. *Carex* is a fantastic grass species that binds soils, grows quickly, and lays over in high flows, allowing water to get through the creek line.

Some creek lines will need a bit of TLC with the weather we've been experiencing. If you have a creek line in crisis, contact the Landcare office to talk to Simon, Wendy or Amy about a site visit.



Before shot of the Blue Wren Creek bank.

After shot of the streambank fitted with jute matting.

9 December by Effie

In honour of Coastcare Week, our nursery officers, Alex and Steph, ventured out to Swansea and Blacksmiths for some seed collecting.

It was a glorious day, with the sun almost being eclipsed by the brightness of the Tuckeroo *Cupaniopsis anacardioides* fruit.

Alex can be seen collecting the brilliant yellow fruits which will be dried out and open up to reveal the bright red seeds inside.

Coastal seed collection is important to build up a supply of coastal plants in the nursery for our Landcare and project sites. Planting vegetation can help mitigate dune erosion by reducing the effect of wind and water and also provide important ecological habitat!



Thank you to Conservation Volunteers Australia!

The Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network received a huge donation of tools and equipment from Conservation Volunteers Australia recently. We would like to thank them for their kind generosity!

This donation gives the Network the opportunity to further support our Landcare groups with tool belts, loppers and mini-mattocks. The Network intends on sharing these items out amongst our groups. We will do our best to spread the joy fairly, so be warned, there will be customer limits in place!



If your group could use some more equipment, please contact the Lake Macquarie Landcare on 4921 0392 or lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au and we will see what we can do

Keeping in touch with Lake Macquarie Landcare

At Lake Macquarie Landcare, we are working to maintain engagement with our Landcare community in safe and diverse ways. Please like us on Facebook and sign up to our fortnightly e-newsletter - this is the best way to keep up to date with our news and events and opportunities for online engagement.

You can subscribe to our fortnightly e-news online at www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au or email us at lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

If you have suggestions for how you would like to see us engage with you, or have ideas for maintaining connections with your group, we would love to hear them! Please email lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

Please keep engaging with Lake Macquarie Landcare through these channels:

Email newsletter



Subscribe to our fortnightly e-newsletter

Email lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

Website



www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au



Facebook

www.facebook.com/LakeMacLandcare



Youtube Videos

www.youtube.com/LakeMacLandcare

Nifty News from the Nursery

By Apprentice Nursery Officer Stephanie Taylor-Peters

This season was so slow to start warming up but the nursery welcomes the change in weather now that it's here! Finally, seeds are germinating quicker and cuttings putting out roots with more vigour. Our wonderful volunteers are focusing on production at the moment and I'm sure they'd be happy if they never had to see another *Carpobrotus* cutting again.

At the end of 2022 we were excited to see one single but very important seedling of *Actinotus helianthi*, commonly known as Flannel Flower emerging. Recently I've seen it flowering profusely down my way- a bit inland from the beach down the road from me.

We've never had any luck propagating *Actinotus* from seed but a few months ago we undertook a few experiments to encourage the seeds to germinate. Out of 4 pots of seed one tiny trooper pushed out its cotyledons from under the vermiculite for us!

Pictured above is one pot of seeds being cooked a little with a firelighter, and fast forward to when our little baby has pushed out its first fuzzy true leaves.

It won't be enough to fill any orders but it's very special to watch grow and hopefully one day mature.



Reminder to stay safe from Legionnaires' disease when gardening

Legionella longbeachae bacteria is often found in potting mix and can cause the lung infection Legionnaires' disease if someone inhales dust from contaminated soil.

There have been 96 cases of Legionnaires' disease reported in 2022 from the type of bacteria that can be found in potting mix and soils in NSW, and 106 were reported the previous year.

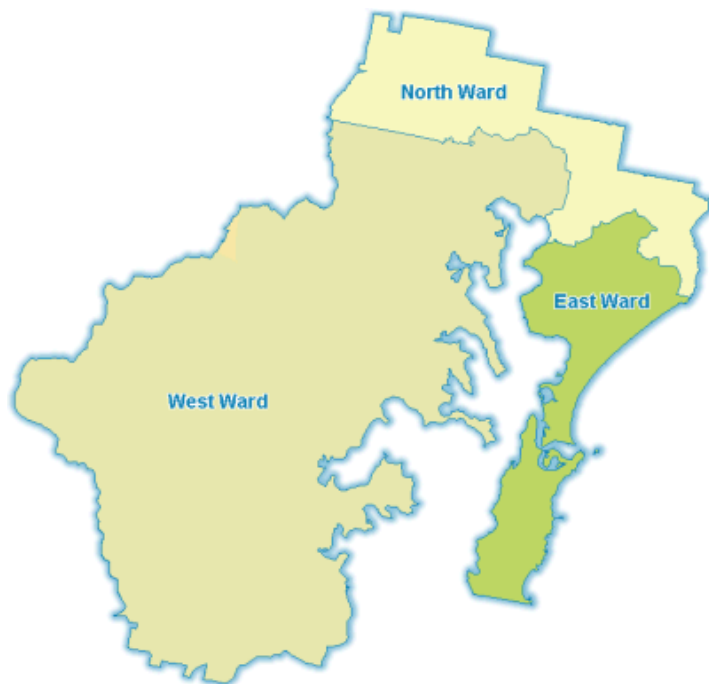
When handling potting mix, make sure to wear gloves and wash your hands thoroughly with soap before eating or drinking. Wetting the potting mix first also helps prevent any contaminated potting mix dust blowing up into the air and being inhaled. For more information visit https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/legionnaires_disease.aspx



Landcare groups seeking members

The following groups would like to attract new volunteers. If you would like to advertise or update your group's details on this page and our website, please contact us on 4921 0392.

The groups have been organised under wards and suburbs to make them easier to locate, especially for those wishing to volunteer close to home (see map at right of wards in Lake Macquarie).



East Ward Groups

Suburb	Group Name	Meeting Time	Contact Details
Blacksmiths	Blacksmiths Beach Dunecare	Every 2nd Wed of the month, Meet at 9am at 8 Carawa Street, Blacksmiths	LML 4921 0392
Blacksmiths	Pelican Area Sustainable Neighbourhood Group	Varies	Greg 49714808
Catherine Hill Bay	Catherine Hill Bay Landcare	First Mon of the month, 3-5pm at Carpark at Graveyard Beach	Carmel Brown 0438 499 636
Dudley	Fern Creek Landcare	1st Saturday of the month 8:30 – 12 noon	Gabi 0478 670 146, www.facebook.com/FernCreekLandcareDudley
Eleebana	Stobbs Creek Landcare	Every three weeks, 8:30-10am	LML 4921 0392
Floraville	Floraville Ridge & Rainforest Reserve	Variable	Winsome 4945 4336
Jewells	Ballantrae to Halewood	Varies	LML 4921 0392
Pelican	Lakeview Parade Pelican	Monthly, usually on Wednesday mornings	Ted 0418328466, tedlougher@hotmail.com
Swansea	Lakeside Drive Landcare (cnr Wallarah St & Lakeside Dr)	Every 2nd Wed 8:30am-3pm and Fri 9am - 3pm	Garry 0400 033 006
Valentine	Allambee Gardens Reserve Landcare	Last Sun of month 2-4pm	LML 4921 0392
Valentine	Green Point Foreshore Reserve Landcare	Every Wed 8-11am	LML 4921 0392
Warners Bay/ Eleebana/ Lakelands	Warners Bay Landcare	Usually 1st Sun, 2nd Thurs and 3rd Fri of the month, 9am-12noon	LML 4921 0392

*** Have your group details changed? Please contact Lake Macquarie Landcare on 4921 0392 to update ***

West Ward Groups

Suburb	Group	Meeting Time	Contact Details
Bolton Point	Awaba Bay Landcare	1st Sun of each month, 9am-12noon, The Ridgeway between Bolton Cl & Fulton Cl	LML 4921 0392
Carey Bay/ Coal Point	Coal Point Progress Association Landcare	Every Thursday 8am-12:30pm	LML 4921 0392
Eraring	Payten Street Landcare	Variable	LML 4921 0392
Fennell Bay/ Bolton Point	Kooroora Bay Landcare	8.30-11.30am, first and third Wednesday of every month (please call to confirm)	Tony 040 889 1411
Macquarie Hills	Torrens Avenue Landcare	Varies	LML 4921 0392
Mirrabooka	Dandaraga Road - Fishery Point Landcare	1st Thursday or 3rd Saturday of each month.	Email Wilma on wilvk123@gmail.com or call LML 4921 0392
Morisset	Lakeside Retirement Village Landcare	Varies - several times a month	LML 4921 0392
Morisset	Yunung Landcare	1st Wednesday of the month and as needed	LML 4921 0392
Sunshine	Sunshine-Silverwater Landcare	1st Saturday & 3rd Thursday mornings of each month	LML 4921 0392 or email Marion melugg2@gmail.com
Toronto	Toronto Lions Park	2nd Friday of the month, 8-10am	LML 4921 0392
Toronto	Toronto Greenway Landcare	Every Sat from 8am.	LML 4921 0392
Wangi Wangi	Wangi Landcare (Oval site Cnr Donelly Rd & Dobell Dr)	Last Tues of the month, 8-10am	Janet White 4975 5715
Wangi Wangi	Dobell Drive Reserve Landcare	2nd Sun of the month 8am –10am	LML 4921 0392
Wangi Wangi	Myuna Bay Landcare	2nd Fri of the month, 9am – 12noon.	LML 4921 0392 or email rmontgomery962@gmail.com
Wangi Wangi	Wangi Ridge Preservation Board Landcare	Sun, 8-10am, meet at water tank at Cres Rd	LML 4921 0392
Wyee Point	Wyee Point Reserve 2022	Varies	LML 4921 0392

North Ward Groups

Suburb	Group Name	Meeting Time	Contact Details
Cardiff	Afton Close Landcare	2nd & 4th Sat of month 9-12, end of Close	LML 4921 0392
Charlestown	Flaggy Creek Landcare	2nd Sat of the month, 8am, meet at corner of Kaleen & Wakal Sts	Robert Gibson 4943 7486
Holmesville	West Wallsend District Landcare	Third Sunday of the month from 8am Eastern Summer Time, 9am for the rest of the year, Western end of Elizabeth St. Holmesville	Paul Lindsay – Secretary, WWDSNG 4953 2252
Kahibah	Kenibea Landcare (Cnr Kenibea Ave & Ocean View Pde)	Variable	LML 4921 0392
Kotara South	Tathra Landcare	Variable Sundays 8-10am. Meet at end of Neerim Ave	LML 4921 0392
Mount Hutton	Mount Hutton Landcare	Fridays, from 8:30am	LML 4921 0392
Rankin Park	Central Rankin Park Landcare	Wednesdays, Sundays	LML 4921 0392

Focus on Ballantrae to Halewood Landcare



Dave Hamilton, of Ballantrae to Halewood Landcare, recently shared with us some photos of his experience on both Finsbury Close Landcare and Ballantrae to Halewood Landcare sites explaining:

"The area went through several incarnations. In the beginning we thought all natives were good. Then we became part of the Ballantrae Landcare group and learned that if the plants are not endemic to the area, they are imported, even if it is from other parts of Australia. The stream flows into Jewells Wetland, so any thing we do can get carried to the Wetland."

Native plants from other areas can cause problems in local ecosystems. After a few obstacles, some of which included serious rain events and plants decimated by possums, the group restarted works to the great benefit of the local community.

The site is a narrow creek line corridor running between Ballantrae and Halewood Close within the Jewells catchment. This narrow riparian corridor is an important connection between larger natural areas to the East and West, allowing movement of native flora and fauna. It is a popular thoroughfare for locals and a great advertisement for the rewards of bush regeneration in preserving and enhancing the environmental value of the coastal zone.

The above photos are taken of the early site, while the photos to the right show the groups current efforts and areas presently being worked on.

These are great efforts underpinning robust ecosystem function as well as creating a beautiful natural outlook!



The Coastal Management Program

The draft Lake Macquarie Coastal Management Program is now on public exhibition.

The Lake Macquarie coastal zone spans the lake and part of its catchment, the coastline and Swansea Channel, and is ecologically rich and physically dynamic. The plan will be the strategic guide for the management of our city's coastline for the next 10 years.

Feedback received during the exhibition period will inform the final Coastal Management Program.

Feedback on the draft program closes 3 February 2023. Visit <https://shape.lakemac.com.au/coastal>

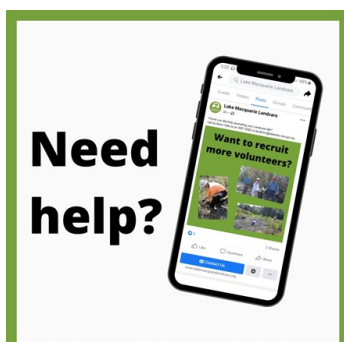


Welcome to Goola Ave Landcare

A warm welcome to one of our newest groups Goola Ave Landcare in Charlestown. This site is a beautiful little spot on Little Flaggy Creek. This passionate Landcarer is ready to take on the weeds and encourage the natural resilience that exists on the site. The beauty and unique water feature are enough to show this local gem's potential.



Promoting your Landcare site



A reminder that Landcare staff are available to assist in developing promotional materials and promoting events through our Facebook page, fortnightly e-newsletter and monthly hardcopy newsletters. We can help get the word out about your Landcare site and help to encourage people to join you at your next working day,

If you would like assistance in attracting volunteers to your site, contact us on 4921 0392 or email Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

Join the Torrens Avenue Landcare group!

Torrens Avenue Landcare, situated in Cardiff/Macquarie Hills is looking for enthusiastic Landcarers to join the group.

The site is a patch of bushland that separates Cardiff industrial estate with residential housing and forms an important connection to other small fragmented bushland in the area for birds and other wildlife. Fiona

(Team Leader) has been managing the weeds on site, such as Privet, Lantana, Ochna, and Bamboo since 2018 and aims to improve the quality of habitat to see the return of small bush birds in the area.



For more details, please contact Lake Macquarie Landcare on 4921 0392 or Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

Help out at Wyee Point Reserve

Wyee Point Reserve 2022 Landcare is currently a group of 1 with Team Leader, Sharyn, looking for new members to come along and help out with weeds such as Lantana, Wild Tobacco, Cassia, Ochna, Bitou Bush, Camphor Laurel, and Asparagus Fern.

This is a special area that Sharyn has chosen to protect and improve with a large and diverse connected forest, a critically endangered vegetation community, and known habitat for six threatened fauna species including the Glossy Black-cockatoo, Little Bent-wing Bat, Large Footed Myotis and Grey Headed Flying Fox.

Sharyn has created a Facebook page: Wyee Point Reserve 2022 Landcare where you can see all the wonderful efforts she has put into the site so far - as well as a video of the Eastern Grey Kangaroos that live in the reserve.

If you are eager to help out, contact Lake Macquarie Landcare on 4921 0392 or Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au for more details.



2022 Lake Macquarie School Environment Awards winners

The annual School Environment Awards showcase and recognise the innovative and inspiring sustainability projects happening at schools all around Lake Macquarie.

St Mary's Catholic College won 'Overall High School' for their efforts planting 1000 trees, shrubs and grasses with Landcare's school program, implementing drink bottle stations, rain water tanks and LED lights, as well as an impressive bin system.

Garden Suburb Public School took out the 'Overall Primary School' category for its five-bin waste system, vegetable garden, energy saving LED lights, water audits and waste-free lunches.

See all eight winners at www.lakemac.com.au/News-articles/Schools-five-bin-waste-system-takes-out-top-prize



Fire Danger Rating & Early Warning Network

Fire Danger Ratings have changed. Previously fire danger ratings were based on only bush and grass. The new system uses eight different types of vegetation, and has been simplified into four levels. Find out more at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/news-and-media/media-releases/new-fire-danger-rating-system-to-keep-communities-safe-this-bush-fire-season

You can register to receive emergency alerts for your area with Lake Mac's Early Warning Network. Sign up for SMS alerts or download the free app to be notified for fire weather warnings and bush fire emergency warnings. You will also receive warnings for events such as severe storms, hail, damaging and destructive winds, heavy rain and flooding. Find out more and register at www.lakemac.com.au/For-residents/Emergencies/Register-with-the-Early-Warning-Network



Keep an eye out for cane toads

A population of cane toads, an invasive species and serious biosecurity threat, was recently discovered in the Mandalong area.

Lake Macquarie residents are asked to be vigilant for cane toad sightings as they become more mobile during summer months. Cane toads are commonly found sheltering under sheeting on the ground, around pots, wood piles and drainpipes.

If you think you have found a cane toad:

- Do not harm it as it may be a native frog species.
- If it is safe to do so, capture the animal and place it in a container with high sides. Ensure you wear gloves and other protective clothing to prevent exposure to their toxins.
- Immediately report all suspected sightings to NSW Primary Industries on 1800 680 244 or through their online biosecurity concern form.
- Another useful resource is Toadscan, a free app to help track cane toad populations in your local area.

Photo above courtesy of Graham Pritchard.



Critter of the moment: Australian Magpie

The Australian Magpie *Cracticus tibicen* must be one of our most familiar and loved birds and needs little introduction. Their description, habitat and behaviour is listed at www.birdsinbackyards.net/species/Cracticus-tibicen

Equally insightful is the following poem by Judith Wright which is provided from www.friendsofarandabushland.org.au/schools/writing-about-nature/judith-wrights-poem/

*Along the road the magpies walk
with hands in pockets, left and right.
They tilt their heads, and stroll and talk.
In their well-fitted black and white.*

*They look like certain gentlemen
who seem most nonchalant and wise
until their meal is served – and then
what clashing beaks, what greedy eyes!*

*But not one man that I have heard
throws back his head in such a song
of grace and praise – no man nor bird.
Their greed is brief; their joy is long.
For each is born with such a throat
as thanks his God with every note.*



Above: Australian Magpie (Photo by John Sharples, Arbre Close Landcare)

Native of the moment: Settler's Twine

By Wendy Davidson, Coal Point Progress Association Landcare

Settler's twine the strongest plant in the world!

A recent arrival has been discovered on the ridge at Coal Point - on the Stansfield site, away from the influence of escapees from backyard gardens. Alex identified it as *Gymnostachys anceps*. Settler's twine, Settler's flax (from northern Queensland), and Boorgay are its common names. It is found in rainforests and humid Eucalypt forests of eastern NSW and eastern Queensland. It is endemic to Australia, and is the only plant in its classification.

Its leaves are linear, with parallel venation. The parallel venation may be why it was successfully used as a twine by the early settlers. In the 1870s, at an exhibition in Paris, *Gymnostachys anceps* was voted as the strongest plant on earth.

This year Lismore's Rainforest Botanic Gardens, as part of their expo Celebrating the Power of Plants, highlighted this plant. They tested the 1870's claim. They took a leaf of the long-leaved clumping grass-type plant, held it up, and "kept adding weight until it broke at 56 kg - just one metre long and one-centimetre wide green leaf". That is one strong leaf.



Settler's Twine at Stansfield Close Landcare Site (Photo by Wendy Davidson).

Snapped!

Check out these pictures contributed by Lake Macquarie Landcare volunteers and staff in recent months. Please keep sending in your photos and snippets for our newsletters, website and Facebook page.



Tawny
Frogmouth
(left) and
*Dipodium
variegatum*
Slender
Hyacinth
Orchid (right)
(Photo by
Fiona Van der
Helm at
Torrens Ave
Landcare).



Left: Fringed Lilies at Dandaraga Road Fishing Point Landcare site (Photo by Wilma King).



Above: *Doryanthes excelsa*, Gynea Lily at Mount Sugarloaf (Photo by James Hamilton, of Ballantrae to Halewood Landcare)

Plant sales by appointment only

Local tubestock for home gardens can be purchased from the Landcare nursery by appointment. Plant sales can be made over the phone Mon – Wed 8:30am to 3:30pm with pick ups preferred 9am-12noon Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

It is greatly appreciated if plants are chosen from the list on our website www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au and paid for in advance via EFTPOS over the phone. Arrangements can be made for purchased plants to be collected from the Landcare & Sustainable Living Centre at 80 Toronto Rd Booragul.

Please call us on 4921 0392 for plant sales enquiries. Discounts are available for Landcare volunteers and Backyard Habitat for Wildlife Members – the discounted tubestock rate for 2022-23 is \$4.10 per forestry tube.



Would you like to contribute to our newsletters?

Perhaps you would like to promote a successful project, showcase what your group is up to or just share something interesting happening on your site. Please send your stories and photos to Kate Meares via email lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au or post to **PO Box 97 Toronto NSW 2283**. Call Kate with any questions on 4921 0392. Deadline for articles for the next newsletter (March April Urban Landcarer) is 12 February 2022.

Thank you to all the Landcarers who contributed stories, photos and information for this newsletter.

Please circulate this publication within your group or share it with your neighbours.

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The opinions and views expressed within this newsletter are not necessarily those of Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network or Lake Macquarie City Council



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