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National Volunteer Week and minibeasts

On 20 May, we came together for a special celebration to recognise the incredible contributions of our volunteers — the heart and hands behind Landcare in Lake Macquarie.

The day included certificates of appreciation, a shared lunch, and two fascinating, hands-on Minibeasts Workshops hosted by Travelbugs Mobile Minibeasts.

Getting up close with live and preserved invertebrates was a powerful reminder of how important Landcare is. Minibeasts may be small, but they play a huge role in our environment — from pollination to soil health and nutrient cycling.

Because of our dedicated Landcare volunteers, these tiny creatures have the healthy, diverse habitats they need to thrive.

Thank you to all our Landcare volunteers!



On Country Experience at Mount Sugarloaf

By Kate Meares, Publications and Grants Officer

In early June, 22 Landcarers were treated to a special On Country Experience at Mount Sugarloaf. The event was delivered by Ashley Williams from Bindelong Aboriginal Corporation together with Uncle Norm who provided a Smoking Ceremony and explanation of its significance at the start of the cold sunny morning, once everyone was gathered. Ashley then walked the group along the ridge with spectacular views to the west, pausing frequently to point out significant plants and features and describe their importance to Aboriginal Culture.

Many traditional uses were explored with participants getting the opportunity to try their hand at a Dianella whistle, chew the base of Lomandra leaves for sustenance, see the soapy properties of wattle leaves and watch Ashley's skilled weaving and rope-making. All ears and hearts were open as Ashley described the important principles of looking after Country, only using what was needed and ensuring sustainability of all resources for the future.

Thank you to everyone who attended and a special thanks to Ashley and Uncle Norm and also to Bindi from Council who supported this event.



Biddabah Creek update

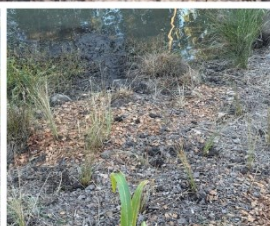
By Vina Chubb, Team Leader

During a visit from Simon, Landcare Coordinator, we were given some Knobbly Club Rush plants to plant on our site. At the edge of our waterway at the roadside front, there was a large patch of the remaining Paspalum that we had removed.

Paspalum is a tufted perennial grass weed that grows up to a metre and a half tall. It is a highly invasive plant and grows along the edges and spreads. It out-competes the native vegetation.

Our team removed the remaining patch from this part of our site and replanted Knobbly Club Rush. It is a versatile hardy sedge plant and thrives in environments like riverbanks and swampy ground. It attracts and supports local bird life and its upright leaves provide hiding spots for native frogs providing a vibrant ecosystem around the waterway.

The clearing of the roadside front of our site of Paspalum and the replanting of local native plants has resulted in great interest and positive comments from our local community. That is thanks to the hard work team members have given to this task over the past two years.



Super Saturday Session on Black-necked Storks

By Winsome Lambkin, LMLVN committee member

Rob Kyte, from Hunter Bird Observers Club gave us an exciting presentation on the Black-necked Stork project at our June Super Saturday, showing photos and videos taken from a drone of the birds in their nest in Hexham Swamp. The large nest, perched on the top of a flimsy Melaleuca, is added to each year and becomes more unstable. A support structure is now in place to hopefully stabilise their home.

These birds stay together for life and their babies must establish a new territory for themselves. Hexham is perhaps the most southerly location of these magnificent birds. In northern Australia, they have been incorrectly named Jabiru but that species is not native to Australia. Rob has promised to return with an update, perhaps early next year, so make sure you attend that Super Saturday Session.

Following morning tea, the study of items on display, lots of exchanges of happenings and a quiz, we were given an exciting talk by Rosalynd about her site at Whitebridge. Thank you to our great presenters and everyone who came.



July Super Saturday Session: Fabulous Fabaceae

With spring romping up, our beautiful peas are about to flower! Landcarer and plant identification extraordinaire, Janet White, will give a brief quirky field guide to assist in identifying the pea species of Lake Macquarie. This isn't an exhaustive list but a few fun cues to help with genus identification.

You'll also have the chance to socialise with other Landcare volunteers and catch up with what's happening at local sites and at the Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre, umali barai-ku.

When: Saturday 12 July 2025, 9am - 12noon.

Where: Landcare & Sustainable Living Centre, umali barai-ku 80 Toronto Road, Booragul.

Cost: Free - including morning tea.

Numbers are limited. Please RSVP by Tuesday, 8 July to the Landcare office on 4921 0392 or lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au



Flaggy Creek Landcare 25 year anniversary

By Robert Gibson, Flaggy Creek Landcare Team Leader

Flaggy Creek Landcare started 25 years ago with five members. Three of the original members are still involved. During that time we have cleared an area of about 3 hectares of the larger weeds such as lantana, privet, cassia and camphor laurel, and done considerable replanting. The area is much improved with some of the gums we planted now 15 metres high. We now have 10 members ranging in age from 35 to 82. The Great North Walk passes through our site, so we have had a lot of favourable comments from walkers and locals exercising, which is very encouraging.

We wanted to have a celebration for our 25th anniversary and decided to get the local community involved. We did a mailbox drop in the local area inviting residents to come for a tour through the site and see what we have been doing. The leaflet was also put onto Facebook.

Unfortunately, it rained on the morning and we only had one visitor, a Landcarer from another group, so we just did our regular Landcaring activities. We did have one other visitor, a possum who was startled in the grass. He mustn't have expected anyone to be out in the rain that morning.

We invited our visitor (the human one) to have morning tea with us. We had bought a cake large enough to feed 20 people so there was plenty for the 8 of us.

Congratulations to Flaggy Creek Landcare for achieving this milestone and a huge thank you for your work over the 25 years!



Dogs, drones set to sniff out Lake Mac koala populations

Lake Macquarie City Council is set to roll out surveys over the next 18 months to help identify koala populations throughout the local government area. To conserve and protect koalas in Lake Macquarie, more information is required about their population, habitat use, distribution and barriers to movement.

Surveys will likely initially use detection dogs to establish the presence of koalas in koala habitat areas. If koalas are identified, drones could then be deployed to find out more about population sizes and home ranges.

Council will work with the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water and will use NSW Government grants awarded under its NSW Koala Strategy to undertake the surveys. We'll also work closely with Port Stephens and Cessnock City Councils who are both doing similar work. Read more at <https://lm.city/44s2q2j>

Community members can assist by logging any koala sightings using the I Spy Koala App <https://bit.ly/3YzKwqG>



25 years of dedication at Warners Bay Landcare

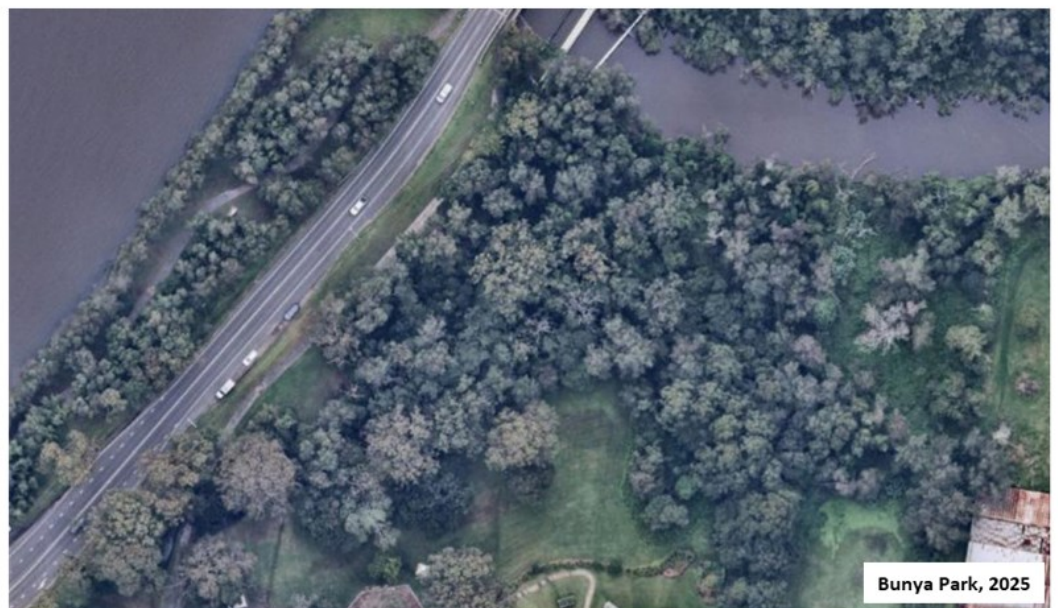


This year marks 25 years of amazing work by the Warners Bay Landcare group. The group's progress is highlighted by these aerial photos of one of their sites, Bunya Park, which show just how much the area has improved thanks to their ongoing efforts. Bunya Park is just one of six sites the group cares for, and they play a big role in keeping the lake healthy.

Congratulations to the group (pictured above) on reaching this milestone, and a huge thank you for everything you've done over the past 25 years!



Bunya Park, 2007



Bunya Park, 2025

Is my Landcare site a Tiny Forest? Well, not exactly

By Amy Trello, Landcare Support Officer

You might have heard about Tiny Forests. They are popping up in communities and schools around Lake Macquarie, Australia and are all over the world. The concept of a Tiny Forest comes from Japan and has been around since the 1970s. Professor Akira Miyawaki developed the method after researching, testing and engineering a way to restore degraded land. This is why they are also often referred to as the Miyawaki Forests. Tiny Forests are a way to create places for wildlife and the community. They capture carbon and slow water runoff during rain events and assist in combating the Urban Heat Island Effect, just to name a few benefits.

The question has been asked 'Is my Landcare site a Tiny Forest'? Some might say my Landcare site is small and it doesn't take up a lot of space and sometimes we plant close together so it could easily be described as a Tiny Forest. There are some similarities, so how is it different? To that, I say, well, it is similar but there are a couple key differences that will help determine if it's a Tiny Forest or natural area (Landcare site).

Tiny Forests can be described as compact, densely planted, engineered ecosystems the size of a tennis court. The soil is improved with manures and composts and mixed and loosened using a machine. These enriched soils give nutrients to the plants allowing them to grow quickly. Tiny Forests are typically established in under-utilised areas which were bare and barren parcels of land.

This tiny forest in Teralba, pictured below, was planted in 2023 and was a large patch of mown grass. Some of the tallest trees are now 8 meters tall with many others not far behind.



A Landcare site in Lake Macquarie is generally a natural area, often near a water course or bushland. The soils here are typically old and nutrient poor. The NSW State Environmental Planning Policy 2021 states "bushland is land on which there is vegetation which is a remainder of the natural vegetation of the land or, if

altered, is still representative of the structure and floristics of the natural vegetation".

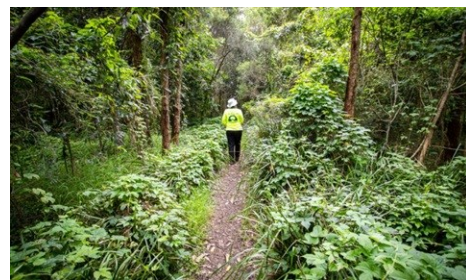
Often, our Landcare sites can easily be

defined by this. We usually have some mature native trees and vegetation that classify it to be bushland with a weedy midstory and understory. Native vegetation in these sites is more widely spaced, where competition for light and nutrient over years has determined the floristic structure and spacing between vegetation. These natural areas vary in their structure – they may only have one vegetation layer e.g. grassland, or a very open midstory e.g. Casuarina forests, or a dense one e.g. rainforest, which means there is great diversity across the landscape.

We go through our Landcare site daily, weekly or monthly looking for native regeneration, pulling weeds, assessing and reassessing the work we have done or are yet to do. This highlights another important difference. When we work on a Landcare site, the goal is predominately sustainability of that natural area. We want to remove weeds to let the natural area return to what it was prior to weedy invasion. If we do our job right, the site will maintain itself with only a small amount of weed control to keep it healthy. We work slowly, methodically and encourage natural regeneration where possible. Tiny Forests work on a much shorter timeline, hoping for maximum growth and minimal maintenance within as little as two years. When Landcare sites are planted, species are provided that fit in that particular vegetation community. Biodiversity is determined by soil composition, surrounding flora and fauna species, aspect and water availability. We aim to preserve the genetic lineage of the plants that have evolved in that exact location. This is called genetic diversity.

Regardless, a Tiny Forest or natural area (Landcare site) are both achieving physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual interconnectedness. And it's not all about us humans. These places are providing something for others, a service to anyone or anything around them, a place for protection, quiet, exploration, discovery and hope. Different ideas, different methods but all moving in the same direction.

Special thanks to the Landcare team, Groundswell Collective and ReLeaf Lake Mac for their contributions.



Safety at Landcare sites

Safety is top priority when working out on a Landcare site. We'd like to remind everyone that if you are ever injured during a Landcare activity - no matter how minor - it's essential that you report it to the Landcare office as soon as possible. Reporting incidents allows us to keep accurate records for insurance purposes, provide the support you may need, and ensure we maintain a safe working environment for all.

To report an injury please contact the Landcare office on 4921 0392.

Many tasks in the field involve lifting, bending, and moving materials. To help prevent injuries, please take a moment to watch our Healthy Moving for Landcarers video at <https://youtu.be/mZ5b8JzDodE>, which demonstrates proper techniques for moving your body safely.

Green Team assistance available

The Green Team have been helping groups with their weeding efforts and other site maintenance.

Each Landcare group can be supported with two Green Team visits per financial year. However, active groups who submit their work diaries can apply for further assistance. If there is room in the calendar once the first round of entitlements are filled, we will consider providing additional support.

Please contact Landcare staff on lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au or 4921 0392 to book your friendly Green Team visit.

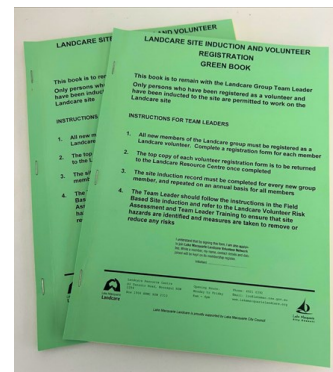


Landcare Site Induction and Volunteer Registration Forms

A reminder for all Landcare groups to please ensure that new volunteers complete the Landcare Site Induction and Volunteer Registration Green Book forms (also referred to as Green Sheets) when joining the group. In some cases, long-standing volunteers may need to update their details by filling out these forms again.

These are important Work, Health and Safety records and are vital in ensuring that volunteers continue to be covered by Council's and Landcare's Personal Accident insurance.

If you do not have a Green Book or need further assistance, please contact the Landcare office on 4921 0392 or lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au



Are your group membership details up to date?

Please get in touch with the Landcare office with any updates to members in your Landcare group. Landcare volunteers that are part of your group are also members of the Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network (LMLVN), and it is important that a current register of members is maintained to meet the LMLVN's legal requirements. If you wish to learn more about the Network and why they keep a separate membership register of all our Landcarers, you may also get in touch with the Committee directly on the following email - lmlvn.inc@icloud.com

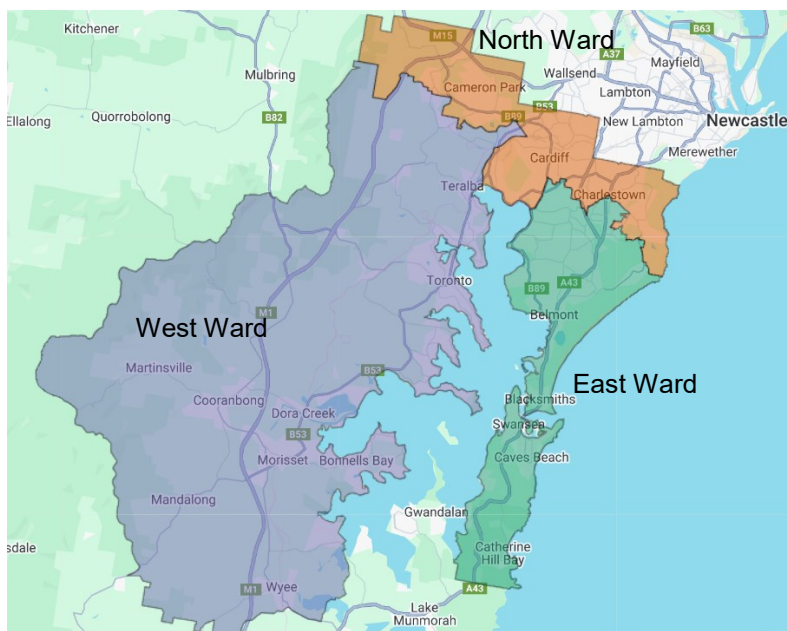
By checking in with the Landcare office we can ensure we have the correct members for your group on file and that necessary permissions are in place for us to share the details required by the LMLVN for their membership register. You can contact us on 4921 0392 or lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

Thanks to the many groups that have already been in touch with Deb or Marion about this in the last few months.

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).



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
Dora Creek	Dora Creek Landcare	Minnie Street or Boat Ramp - every Tuesday 9am – noon at one or the other	LML 4921 0392
Eraring	Eraring Landcare	Variable	LML 4921 0392
Fennell Bay/ Bolton Point	Kooroorra Bay Landcare	8.30-11.30am, every 2nd Wednesday of the month (please call to confirm)	LML 4921 0392
Holmesville	West Wallsend District Landcare	Varies	Robynne 4953 3401 or 0429322051
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 Park	Lake Petite	Varies	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	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 Landcare	Varies - see Wyee Point Reserve Landcare Facebook page	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
Highfields	Highfields Landcare	Variable	LML 4921 0392
Kahibah	Kenibea Landcare	Variable	LML 4921 0392
Kotara South	Tathra Landcare	Variable Sundays 8-10am. Meet at end of Neerim Ave	LML 4921 0392
Lakelands	Biddabah Creek Landcare	Every Monday 8:30am	Vina 0437 492 387
Macquarie Hills	Torrens Avenue Landcare	Varies	LML 4921 0392
Rankin Park	Central Rankin Park Landcare	Wednesdays, Sundays	LML 4921 0392
Whitebridge	Fernleigh Track Whitebridge	1st Sat and 3rd Fri of month, 8 -11am. Fernleigh track rest area, entry from Paterson Close, Whitebridge.	LML 4921 0392
Whitebridge	Whitebridge Balireh	Varies	LML 4921 0392

East Ward Groups

Suburb	Group Name	Meeting Time	Contact Details
Belmont	John Fisher Road	Varies	LML 4921 0392
Blacksmiths	Blacksmiths Marks Point Pelican Sustainable Landcare group	Varies, usually meet Tues 8:30am Grannies Pool Carpark	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
Eleebana	Stobbart Creek Landcare	Every three weeks, 8:30-10am	LML 4921 0392
Floraville	Floraville Ridge & Rainforest Reserve	Variable	Winsome 0431 968 315
Jewells	Ballantrae to Halewood	Varies	LML 4921 0392
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 ***

Fridays in the Field/ Friday Focus on Facebook

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

16 May FRIDAYS IN THE FIELD with Amy

Since 2019 Middle Point Road Landcare in Bolton Point has been tackling the weeds. In the initial clearing of weeds like Lantana, the group made 'habi-stacks' where small piles of weed debris are made and scattered through the site to break down over time while providing some habitat (shown in the first photo). Then they encountered nasty weeds like Madeira Vine and Morning Glory. They have also been dodging and weaving the Bull and Jumping Jack ants onsite too!

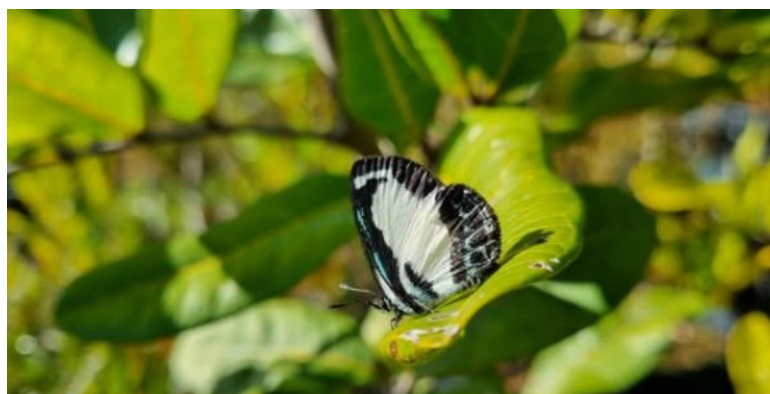
This group has stuck with it and are finally tipping the balance from weeds to natives on their site. Look what they have achieved with some supplemental planting and a whole lot of umph! These photos show various stages of natural regeneration along with some added plantings. Well done Middle Point Road Landcare!

23 May FRIDAY FOCUS on Small Green-banded Blue Butterfly by Steph

This Autumn has been great for butterflies. We have a new caterpillar in the nursery this week, this time eating our *Alphitonia* seedlings. This distinct caterpillar belongs to the Small Green-banded Blue Butterfly. The caterpillar's body is noticeably flat and is covered in long hairs. The dorsal band is dark with pale edges.

They're found in rainforest and Eucalypt forest, where the caterpillar's feed on plants in the Red Ash Family Rhamnaceae. In our area, the main host plant is Red Ash *Alphitonia excelsa*. The caterpillars live on the underside of an *Alphitonia* leaf until they are ready to pupate. The adults are very small, being only 34mm in size. The top side of the male's wings are bright blue, while the females have a thick black band around the wing's edge with a white patch on each wing.

They're a very quick-moving butterfly, which makes it difficult to capture a photo of them - especially of the top side of their wings. They're distributed along our East coast, ranging from the Torres Strait to Southern NSW.



Delta support at Lake Petite and Dobell Drive sites

Funding from Delta Electricity was again welcomed by Lake Macquarie Landcare in the 2024-25 financial year and was used to support Lake Petite Landcare group in Morisset Park and Dobell Drive Landcare group in Wangi Wangi. The funding allowed professional bush regeneration support for both sites to help the volunteers in their efforts to target a range of environmental and priority weeds.

The before and after shots at right provide an example of the weeding impact achieved. Volunteers from both groups and the Green Team contributed to the weeding efforts with some working alongside the professional bush regeneration team to also share knowledge about weed removal and the site.

Karen, Team Leader of Lake Petite shared the following after receiving a bush regeneration support day "Our group thanks you from the bottom of our gumboots to the top of our sweaty hats... for getting our site the much appreciated help this year. Zak and his fab team were truly amazing. Dave and I were on site with them but had to call it quits after about 3 hours while the regen team worked on and on.... our hearts were keen but our old bodies screamed.... Quitting time!!!! :) The results from the bush regeneration team were also seen by the rest of small usual social Fridays working LC group ... the response was WOW WOW!!!! Thanks to all involved."



Top: Before works, showing Bitou, Morning Glory, Asparagus and other weeds at Dobell Drive Landcare site.



Above: After Bitou removal and bush regenerator treating other weeds at Dobell Drive



Far left: Bush regenerator removing Lantana, Cats Claw Creeper and other weeds at Lake Petite Landcare site



Left: Cats Claw Creeper tubers removed by hand at Lake Petite to minimise damage to surrounding native plants

Our partnership with Clear Sky Australia

Our Landcare nursery receives regular visits from Clear Sky participants as one of our partnerships with local disability support providers. While helping with planting, potting up, watering, weeding and general site maintenance, participants build skills, connect with others, and feel proud of the positive impact they're making in the community.

Read more about this great partnership at www.lakemac.com.au/News-articles/Landcare-partnership-takes-root-in-Lake-Mac



Landcare in the media and now on Instagram

Lake Macquarie Landcare and volunteers have been in the media spotlight recently, with news articles and radio interviews sharing the experience of Landcare with the broader community.

News articles: Our nursery staff and volunteers have been featured in Newcastle Weekly and Inside Local Government, with both articles highlighting our collaboration with disability service providers.

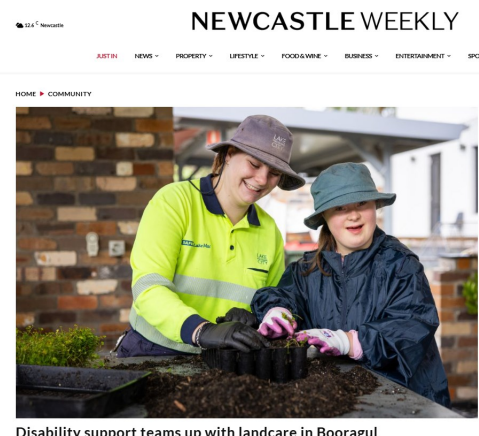
A Newcastle Herald article paid tribute to the dedication of our volunteers during National Volunteer Week. LMLVN Chair, Marion Lugg, was quoted "To get that extra acknowledgement is a bit like icing on the cake."

Radio interviews: Whitebridge Balireh Team Leader, Rosalynd O'Shannassy, was interviewed on ABC Radio Breakfast program, where she shared her passion for protecting and restoring local ecosystems. In response to a question asking about joining Landcare with minimal plant knowledge Rosalynd said, "I think if you start with an open mind and be willing to learn and grow - which I've done in the two plus years - I'm just learning all the time and that's an exciting journey for me because it's building up my knowledge."

LMLVN Deputy Chair, Lois Simpson, was interviewed by ABC Radio Drive's host as they broadcasted live from Toronto. Lois touched on garden escapes and how the community can help Landcare by stopping weeds from their garden reaching bushland, reminding everyone that "we must care for our wonderful land and the treasures of nature it holds".

Social media: Hunter Region Landcare Network's short video showcased the beautiful Catherine Hill Bay Dunecare site and the personal motivations of the volunteers taking care of it in. Another short video shows the story behind the group's newly restored sign.

Lake Macquarie Landcare has also started an Instagram channel and is sharing more stories about sites and groups through www.instagram.com/lakemaclandcare/



Disability support teams up with landcare in Booragul

Keeping in touch with Lake Macquarie Landcare

At Lake Macquarie Landcare we like to engage with our Landcare community in diverse ways. Please like us on Facebook or follow us on Instagram 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 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 sharing information about 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



Instagram

www.instagram.com/lakemaclandcare/



Youtube Videos

www.youtube.com/LakeMacLandcare

Leeches - 'swipe and go' is the way to go for removal

About Leeches

Leeches are segmented worms that are ectoparasitic (feeding on the outside of their host). They can be found in moist areas throughout Australia and frequent rainforest sites, damp ground and in low foliage. Although unpleasant and itchy, their bites are usually harmless and can be treated without medical attention. It's important to monitor bites for signs of infection or allergic reactions, but these occurrences are quite rare.

Reducing the likelihood of bites

- Wear long pants tucked into socks or consider long, tight-woven socks like 'anti-leech socks' or gaiters to help prevent leeches from finding soft skin to latch onto
- Apply insect repellent before starting work or consider clothing that is treated with repellent
- Check for leeches during breaks or after working (check in socks and shoes) and keep an eye out for leeches on clothes while working that might be able to be flicked off before they latch on



Leech removal

If a leech does latch onto you, removing it quickly and safely can minimize discomfort. Using methods harmful to the leech, like applying salt, fire, pulling, or sprays, may cause the leech to regurgitate into the bite which may increase the risk of infection. Breaking the suction with a fingernail or credit card can remove the leech more quickly reducing the chance of regurgitation. To do this, gently pull the skin under the leech until it's taut, and slide a fingernail or card under the leech's mouth to separate it from the skin. Flick the leech away before it reattaches.



Clean the wound with water and apply an antiseptic to help avoid infection. Cover with an adhesive pad e.g. Band-Aid. Remember to monitor the bite for signs of allergy or infection that may require medical attention. Itchiness is common for hours or days and try to avoid scratching the site.

Community Recycling Stations reopen

Problem waste collection has recommenced following a temporary pause in services, with problem waste again being collected at the Awaba Community Recycling Centre and from the Community Recycling Stations located at Lake Mac libraries, the Council depot building and the Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre. There is also a new Recycling Centre at Belmont North (details at www.lakemac.com.au/Projects/Belmont-North-Community-Recycling-Centre)

At Community Recycling Stations you can dispose of mobile phones, batteries, light globes, DVDs/CDs and smoke detectors free of charge.



Critter of the Moment: Grass Yellow Butterfly

By Stephanie Taylor, Site Maintenance and Nursery Officer Landcare

I was super excited to see all the Grass Yellow Butterflies fluttering about the nursery. But then, we noticed our *Breynia oblongifolia* (Coffee Bush) seedlings were being eaten away. The culprit? Small green caterpillars with a single white stripe down their sides — the Grass Yellow caterpillar.

Our first job of late Autumn days has been to scan all of our *Breynia* plants, gently pluck off the caterpillars, and relocate them. Luckily, we have some established *Breynia* in our garden that can withstand a bit of munching. And after all the butterflies' hard work reproducing, they deserve a chance.



The egg hatches within 3 days and once hatched, the caterpillar goes through 5 instar stages over a period of 12 days. After about 4 days of pupating the Grass Yellow Butterfly emerges. Their appearance is influenced by seasonal variation, presenting darker markings during the wet season and fainter markings in dry periods.

Another potential Grass Yellow Butterfly!

By Winsome Lambkin, Team Leader for Cold Tea Creek Landcare

Special thanks to Steph who discovered caterpillars on the *Breynia oblongifolia* in the Landcare nursery and reported her findings in an e-newsletter article in May. Having read her article, I checked a chewed *Breynia* on the Cold Tea Creek site and found a small green caterpillar with a single stripe down its side. I copied Steph and moved it to a mature shrub nearby.

Walkers on the adjacent Fernleigh and Awabakal Shared Track (FAST) will enjoy pretty yellow butterflies including the relocated one. It's important to read the articles about our local area in Landcare publications.



I'm so pleased and excited that I read Steph's observations.

Landcare sightings!

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.



Above: The colourful fruit of the Rough-fruited Pittosporum *Pittosporum revolutum* at Kooroora Bay Landcare site (Photo by Robert Muir)



Above: Satin Bowerbird bower at Floraville Ridge Landcare site (Photo by Winsome Lambkin)



Above: Fungi at John Fisher Road Landcare site (Photo by Jane Cunliffe-Jones)



Above: Hairpin Banksia *Banksia spinulosa* flower spikes photographed top-down at Arbre Close Landcare site (Photo by John Sharples)

Plant sales from the Landcare nursery

Local tubestock for home gardens can be purchased from the Landcare nursery on Tuesdays and Wednesdays 8:30am - 3:30pm or by appointment.

Plants available for sales are also listed and described on our website www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au

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 2025-26 is \$3.50 per forestry tube. EFTPOS purchases only.



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 (September/October Urban Landcarer) is 12 August 2025.

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.

This publication (and much more) is available online www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au

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- Origin Energy

LANDCARE SUPPORT STAFF

Landcare Coordinator: Simon Lubinski (acting), **Landcare Business Support Officer:** Emily Hemsall, **Landcare Network & Admin. Support Officer:** Debra Punton (M-T), **Landcare Support Officers:** Wendy Gleen (M-F), Amy Trello (M-F), **Landcare Publications & Grants Officer:** Kate Meares (T-F), **Landcare Communications Officer :** Stephanie Cassel (M-F) **Site Maintenance and Nursery Officer:** Stephanie Taylor, **Apprentice Landcare Nursery Officer:** Coco Della Libera

LAKE MACQUARIE LANDCARE VOLUNTEER NETWORK COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Marion Lugg, **Deputy Chairperson:** Lois Simpson, **Secretary:** Wendy Davidson **Treasurer:** Julia Stenton **Other members:** Pam Montgomery, Winsome Lambkin, Don Roach, Nancy Lott and Vanessa Whelan **Public Officer:** Julia Stenton

Network Email: lmIn@lakemac.nsw.gov.au (admin matters); lmIn.inc@icloud.com (for direct communication with the Committee)

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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Lake Macquarie Landcare is proudly supported by Lake Macquarie City Council