



# Urban Landcarer

Volume 25 - Issue 2 - March/April 2024

## Inside this issue:

Spanish Moss gone feral 2



Super Saturday with Janet 3



Warners Bay Landcare celebrates 24 years 3



Welcome Coco 4



Groups seeking members 8

Critter of the moment 14

Landcare sightings 15

## Winsome's contribution recognised

*A heartfelt congratulations to the remarkable Winsome Lambkin for receiving a Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to conservation and the environment.*

*Winsome is the guardian for three Landcare sites: Floraville Ridge and Rainforest Reserve, Fossil Wing Creek and Cold Tea Creek Landcare, and is an active member of the Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network. It's great to see her commitment and passion recognised.*

*Winsome has shared the following about her journey and receiving this award:*

"Landcaring skills are learnt 'on the job', beginning with knowledgeable input from experienced people followed by personal observations. An example of this is 'Don't start at the edge of an area!' as the edges host most of the weeds, often because of the extra sunlight and rain. Begin your weeding under a tree, perhaps, as the birds will have dropped/ pooped out seeds of natives, and weeds, and you'll be rewarded almost immediately. If you're hand weeding, wait until after rain has softened the ground and the weeds will just slip out, otherwise each plant needs to be scraped and 'painted' with poison or 'cut and painted'. Both tasks are much more tedious and time consuming. Of course, these methods are the most suitable for some weed species.

Over my twenty plus years of Landcaring, I've been instructed by the best known Landcarers in the Hunter Region- we all know who you are - and yet every person I've spoken with has imparted a snippet of information. 'Make reasonably neat piles of lantana so it can be rolled over if any



takes root or weeds grow into the pile.' 'Leave fallen timber in situ as it is home to some creatures.' 'Tramp down disturbed soil to lessen erosion.'

I love the sayings that Landcarers pass on like 'If you can't stay for ten years, don't start' and 'If in doubt, don't pull it out'.

The BIG question often asked is 'What will happen when the group leaves a site?' Yes, the area will revert to some degree but the healthier site will be more resilient and hopefully someone else will take care of it. It will always be better than when you started.

One of the personal benefits of Landcare is exercise and its free! Walking into the site, carrying equipment, bending, stretching, pulling, reaching and balancing are all involved – much like a gym class!

An additional benefit is 'mindfulness'. By concentrating on your surrounds of the natural environment, differentiating between weed or native species, identifying bird calls, sighting tiny creatures, you are totally engrossed in 'living in the present'.

I have three quite different sites which I care for. I'm attracted to each one for a different reason.

**Continued on page 2...**

## ...Continued from Page 1

I have worked in Floraville Rainforest Gully for 20 years. It's an enormous site in a steep sided gully and the work there will never be finished! The range of plant species is amazing just because it is rainforest! 'Looks like a jungle' someone exclaimed! How true! Its story is too long to tell here.

I was drawn to Cold Tea Creek, at Belmont South, about 6 years ago when I noticed the discarded rubbish and the infestation of weeds. I'd previously worked there 25 years ago, as a novice landcarer with a now disbanded group. I felt that with a little input, I could free-up the natives they had planted. That area will be a 'show piece' with the soon to open FAST cycle and walking route.

Just over 4 years ago, I moved and discovered a Council reserve just 80 metres from my new front door! With a site plan drawn up, I can spend an hour there any time! It's a small area with powerlines, sewerage inspection vents, two tracks and the picturesque Fossil Wing Creek which is named after the unique fossilised beetle wings, dated at 252 million years! (No you can't

see them except at the Australian Museum in Sydney.)

I'm honoured to be a recipient of this Order of Australia Medal. For over 20 years I have been passionate about working on sites and educating others on our natural flora and fauna, including fungi and pioneer species. It brings me great joy, satisfaction and reward on each visit.

This Award also gives me the opportunity to acknowledge that the leaders of our country recognise the importance of landcare volunteers. Locally, Lake Macquarie City Council and local politicians have given exceptional support to around 180 groups of landcarers in that area. Raising the awareness of landcare through this award may inspire more people to join us. I have learnt my skills from TAFE, from Bush Regenerators, people with skills in birding, hydrology, fungi, plant identification, methodology in weeding. I also have learnt from each person I've spoken with from their snippet of information.

Thankyou for this award which inspired me to continue with my passion for Landcaring."

---

## Has Spanish Moss gone 'feral'?

By Marion Lugg, LMLVN Chair

You may remember the interesting newsletter article last year that Lois Simpson wrote, about concerns with Spanish Moss *Tillandsia usneoides* becoming weedy in our precious bushland.

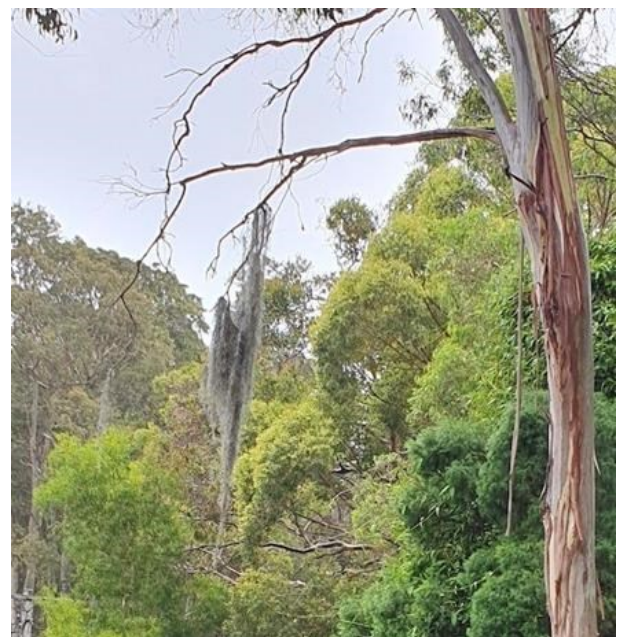
A group in northern Sydney is also starting to get worried about its spread into bushland reserves there. They have begun a citizen science project to collect data on its spread, to see if it should be considered a serious weed in the region. It is certainly weedy in more tropical climates, such as in Queensland.

I have found it growing high up on a couple of trees in my Landcare site! It was very difficult to reach and remove, which is part of the problem with it. I also noticed it on a tree overhanging a street in Wangi Wangi, also very high up and right next to the State Conservation Area there (see photo).

If it turns out that we have enough evidence that it's spreading in Lake Macquarie, we could add our data to the Sydney project.

### How you can help

To know if we have enough data to be useful, we'd like to hear from anyone who's seen Spanish Moss



growing where it seems 'out of place', i.e., basically anywhere that isn't in someone's garden. It could be in a park, or on a street tree. You may even find it on your site or in other bushland!

Please get in touch by emailing the location to [Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au) so we can follow up on your sightings and collect the information for the project.

# Super Saturdays are back!

*By Winsome Lambkin, Coordinator of SSS for Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network Committee*

Super Saturday Sessions (SSS) are back in 2024. There are just 4 this year and you shouldn't miss any of them. These mornings (each held 9am-12noon) are a great opportunity to check what's new at the Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre, umali barai-ku, at Booragul. It gives you the opportunity to talk and socialise with other Landcarers and glean ideas for your site. There'll be presenters who are experts in their particular field of work or study and many who will talk about their site (flora – weeds and natives, fauna, fungi etc) on topics of special interest.

On **9 March**, Janet White will talk about riparian plants but expect her variations and humour throughout the morning! Catch up on Floraville Rainforest too.

On **18 May**, Mick Roderick has information on the importance of Mistletoe and we'll see what's happening at Catherine Hill Bay.

On **1 June**, Garry Smith, speleologist, with over 50 years of experience, will take us below ground, via his amazing photographs, to places we will never go! Brad Shultz, LMCC Biosecurity Officer, has several topics of interest for us. Who are Henry and Daisy? Wait and see!

On **17 August**, Maree McCarthy has a garden full of wonders and Grahame Feletti will talk about the Birds of Belmont Lagoon and surrounds.

Every Session will have plants for you to identify. Mark your diaries now!

## 9 March: Landcare - more than just weeds



Join us for a talk by nature champion Janet White about the social, physical and mental benefits of Landcare. Janet's talk will also explore nomenclature, the role of site topography and the impacts on the Lake and beyond. A hands-on riparian species ID session will occur after morning tea.

**When:** Saturday 9 March, 9am-12pm

**Where:** Landcare and Sustainable Living Centre, umali barai-ku

Free - including morning tea. Numbers are limited so please RSVP by Wednesday 6 March to the Landcare Office on 4921 0392 or [lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au).

## Warners Bay Landcare celebrate 24 years

*By Bunya Park/South Creek Guardian, Annette Ryan*

Warners Bay Landcare (WBL) are celebrating its 24 years of continuous volunteering in Landcare. Our current members have a combined total of 131 years' service (including past members it would be approaching 155 years' service).

WBL have planted 120,000 tube stock.

WBL have organised 18 National Tree Days.

WBL have organised a site for 19 Clean Up Australia Days.

We have much experience over our many sites and continue to care for the riparian zones of Warners Bay Creeks.



You can learn more about the group in the Warners Bay Case Study from 2015 on our website [www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au](http://www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au)

# Farewell Alex, Congratulations Steph, Welcome Coco!

At the beginning of this year we welcomed Coco as our new Nursery Apprentice.

Coco (pictured at right) comes with strong enthusiasm and skills, having volunteered with us in the past. Her passion for plants runs deep, rooted in her upbringing surrounded by greenery in her dad's nursery as well as her connection to the world of Landcare with her mum being the vice-president of Capertee Valley Landcare.

Coco will be assisting in the nursery as well as attending TAFE to gain her formal qualification in nursery production. We're excited for her to join the Lake Macquarie Landcare community and support the evolution of her learning journey.



Our previous Nursery Apprentice Steph Taylor has completed her studies and is replacing Alex Wilson as our Landcare Nursery Officer. We are thrilled to keep Steph in the team with all the wonderful skills and relationships she has developed during her time here.



We farewell Alex (pictured at right) who has been an integral part of our team for almost 12 years, and her commitment and positive impact have left an indelible mark. We wish her all the best for her future and her move down south with her family. She will be missed by many!

## Green Team assistance

The Green Team are busily assisting groups around Lake Macquarie.

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 [Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au) or 4921 0392 to book your friendly team visit.



# Plant Spotlight on *Planchonella australis*

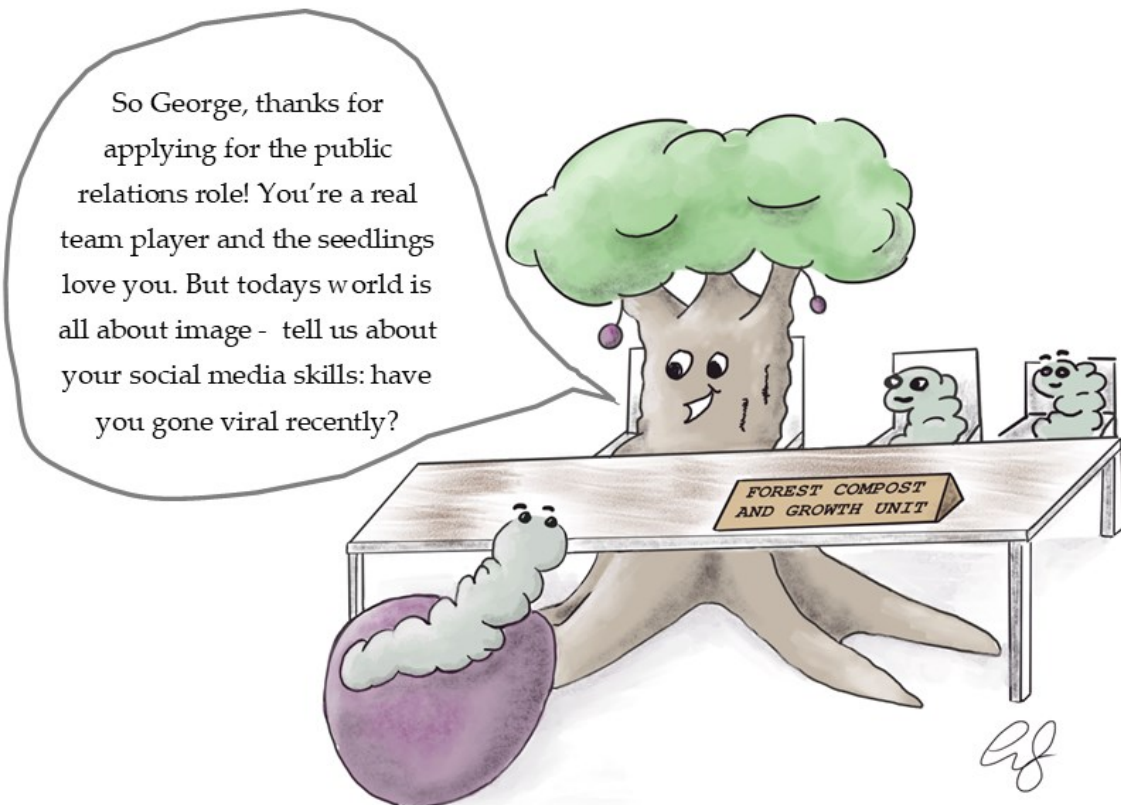
By Nursery Officer, Steph Taylor (with cartoon by Wendy Gleen!)

*Planchonella australis*, commonly known as Black Apple, typically fruits from September until November. The trunk of this tree has beautiful folds called flutes, flaring out at the base with what are known as flanges. Its large, leathery leaves range from 8-16cm long and alternate along the stem. Its flowers are quite inconspicuous while its fruit is large, black and fleshy—hence the name Black Apple. Each fruit contains 2-5 seeds.

In January, *Planchonella* fruits have mostly dropped onto the forest floor to undergo their natural process before seed germination. Pictured at right are two Black Apples, the top image is plum-like with still-juicy flesh. In the second image, the hundreds of tiny grubs that appear as white speckles have done their job of breaking down the flesh into what looks and feels like an ideal propagation mix. The skin of some of the older Black Apples had already broken down, and buried under the composted fruit shiny-black seeds were beginning to germinate. To me it looks like this process is *Planchonella*'s natural adaptation to increasing germination rates of the seeds inside fallen fruit.



*Planchonella* acts as a great nursery tree not only due to the shelter that all large trees provide to young plants but also because of its contribution to the top layer of soil in a rainforest. Underneath the tree is a dark, rich layer of organic matter from the broken-down fruits, providing benefit not just to *Planchonella australis* but all microorganisms and flora flourishing under its canopy.



# Kenibea Nest Box Success

By Wendy Gleen, Landcare Support Officer

This month Bob and Judith from Kenibea Landcare were excited to find 4 of the nest boxes installed on their site as part of their Community Environment Grant were occupied by possums! We sometimes take possums for granted, but they are disappearing from the urban area as it becomes more intensively developed. Saving common species can actually be as important as saving threatened ones: they are all an integral part of the natural world; indeed, possums are one of our last tangible connections with it.

Sometimes, despite tree hollows being far and away the best option, our wildlife needs a little extra housing. As in this project, it is best for an ecologist to make a site assessment to be sure the nestboxes don't imbalance the local ecosystem for example by advantaging one species over another. Then ongoing monitoring of installed boxes needs to be assured, to prevent invasion by feral species, protecting our struggling native animals.

Kenibea Landcare seeks volunteers to maintain their beautiful bushland for wildlife, humans, and its own well-being. Contact the Landcare Centre for assistance opportunities.

This project is supported by Lake Macquarie City Council through its Community Environment Grants Program. Watch the video of the nestbox inspection on our Facebook page.



Above (left): Nestbox monitoring from the ground with a pole camera at Kenibea Landcare site and (right) evidence of a resident Brushtail Possum!

---

## Community Environment Grants

The Community Environment Grants are now open until 25 March. Grants of up to \$5000 are available for incorporated, not-for-profit community organisations for project ideas that improve the local environment or inspire environmentally sustainable behaviour within Lake Macquarie. Find out more information at [www.lakemac.com.au/Our-Council/Grants-and-funding/Community-Environment-Grants](http://www.lakemac.com.au/Our-Council/Grants-and-funding/Community-Environment-Grants)

If your Landcare group would like any assistance applying for grants for Landcare works please contact Kate Meares at the Landcare Office on 4921 0392 or [Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au). Remember all grants applied for under the Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network require approval from the LMLVN Committee and the Landholder.



# What's in a hollow?

By Amy Trello, Landcare Support Officer

We drive our comfortable hollow cars to our functional hollow offices and back to our insulated and more efficient hollow homes. We go out to a cozy hollow restaurant and collect our shopping from busy hollow centres or watch a movie in a dark hollow theatre. Are we as reliant on hollows as other animals? So, what goes into a hollow?

Australia has over 300 native species that rely on tree hollows to fit their lifestyle. Hollows are homes, a place for social gatherings a place for protection and insulation from heat, cold, rain and wind and a source of food. Various mammals, reptiles, frogs, birds, and insects need hollows as a home just like us. Just like us different species have different requirements for where they reside.

Hollow dwelling creatures rely on tree hollows whether it is ground floor or a high rise. Echidnas, bandicoots and lizards like hollows and dead woody branching on the ground amongst the leaf litter and shrubs while others prefer hollows in trees overlooking the Lake, creeks and hills around.

Hollow dwelling creatures even have requirements and preferences for how big or small their entrance holes are, at what diameter and height the tree is at the entrance hole, how wide or deep the hollow is on the inside and what aspect or direction the hollow is facing. For instance, Feather Tail Glider families need several hollows to live and socialise in. Their entry holes into live and dead trees need to be about 25mm. This allows for them to access it and keep them safe.

Microbats can crawl in and out of a sliver in a tree which may open into a larger hollow. They prefer an N-NW aspect on a tree as this helps them increase their body temperature before they fly at night.

Tree hollows generally take more than 100 years to form. We can't throw one away and quickly get another one. Whether the tree is alive, senescing (slowly dying back) or dead it is important to preserve maturing and mature trees and their root systems. Mature trees can have multiple well-formed hollows and still be sound and in good health. When trees are removed regardless of having hollows or not; it puts pressure on the inhabitants to find other places to go. I'd imagine we all know of someone or have heard of someone feeling the pressure of finding a place to live. The same goes for all creatures that depend on hollows.



With the loss of trees on public and private land, it puts pressure on where these creatures will live, socialise and thrive next. This is why it is so important that we protect mature trees, especially those with hollows (like this amazing example pictured, found in a Coal Point Landcare site).

# 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, 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
Dudley	Fern Creek Landcare	1st Saturday of the month 8:30 – 12 noon	Gabi 0478 670 146, <a href="http://www.facebook.com/FernCreekLandcareDudley">www.facebook.com/FernCreekLandcareDudley</a>
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
Lakelands	Biddabah Creek Landcare	Every Monday 8:30am	Vina 0437 492 387
Swansea	Lakeside Drive Landcare (cnr Wallarah St & Lakeside Dr)	Every 2nd Wed 8:30am-3pm and Fri 9am - 3pm	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 \***



## 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	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
Morisset Park	Lakeview Road Morisset Park	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
Holmesville	West Wallsend District Landcare	3rd Sun of the month from 8am or 9am, Western end of Elizabeth St. Holmesville	Paul Lindsay – Secretary, WWDSNG 4953 2252
Kahibah	Kenibea Landcare	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
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

## New Landcare videos

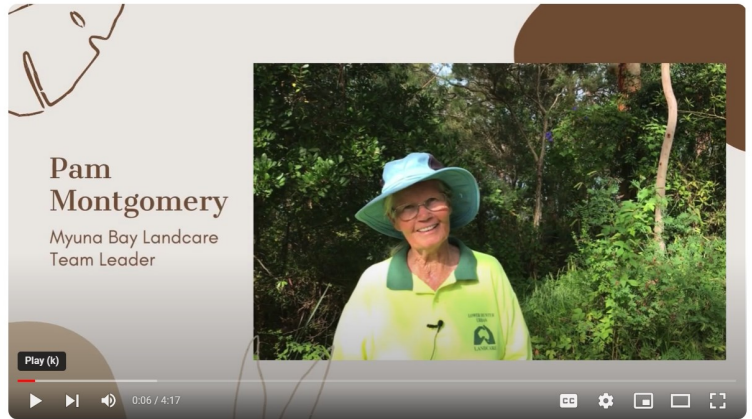
At Lake Macquarie Landcare, we've been busy developing new video content.

In our latest Landcare site video, hear from Pam Montgomery at Myuna Bay about her beautiful site and the challenges with Morning Glory.

On our Youtube and Facebook page you can also check out our Green Team Insights video and hear Brad from the Green Team talk about how volunteering helps other groups and has great personal benefits.

If you have suggestions for videos, or would like a video made of your Landcare site, please contact us at [lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au).

Visit our Youtube Channel [www.youtube.com/LakeMacLandcare](http://www.youtube.com/LakeMacLandcare) to watch videos on a range of Landcare topics including a new site video on Myuna Bay (top right) and the Green Team (bottom right)



## 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 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](http://www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au) or email us at [lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au)

### Website



[www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au](http://www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au)



### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/LakeMacLandcare](http://www.facebook.com/LakeMacLandcare)



### Youtube Videos

[www.youtube.com/LakeMacLandcare](http://www.youtube.com/LakeMacLandcare)

# It's just Maths really...

By Simon Lubinski, Landcare Program Delivery Officer

I recently had a discussion with my precocious nine-year old. I expressed surprise at some great results she received at school, and she replied as only a nonchalant 9 year old genius can 'It's just Maths really...'

I was reminded of her insightful remark when I talked with an overwhelmed Landcarer this week who had recently taken a road trip up the coast and was struck by the amount of weeds along the major roads. It's depressing! They're everywhere! Who's going to do something about it?

It seems so true. It can be overwhelming. Seeing the hectares of weeds, marching towards the horizon, taking over our bushland, and no one is doing anything!

It's at this point, it helps to take a step back and take a deep breath. As my grandmother would have recommended, have a Bex and a lie-down. And then think about what Landcarer's are doing.

When we start a new group with enthusiastic Landcarers, we tell them to start small, focus, work from good to bad, protect the best and move to the worst. Put your head down and do what's in front of you. Eat the elephant, one bite at a time. If you put your head up and look at the wall of weeds around you, you can be

dispirited and throw your hands up in despair.

But think on this. One weed removed is one weed that hasn't reproduced to make ten more weeds. One Eucalypt saved from a weedy vine will lead to 10 new gum trees growing from it's seeds. Talking to one other person about what they can do in their own backyard, or even over their back fence can make one new Landcare site. And then they talk to one more person, and the message grows. One action can make a big difference. One weed removed, one tree saved, one person talked to can make major changes. Landcare in Lake Macquarie started small all those years ago. Some environmentally minded folk got tired of saying 'Who's going to do something?' and decided to be the people to 'do something'. It started small, but weeds were treated, trees were saved, and the message grew. Look at us now!

So this is what Landcarers do. They focus their efforts, they work on the 'ones'. They work on the ones because the ones grow. The ones turn into manys! Exponentially! Like my little girl says, 'It's just Maths really'.

**Below: a native Tuckeroo freed from Bitou at one of our coastal Landcare sites will go on to fruit and help more tuckeroos regenerate, with seeds spread by birds near and far.**



# 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.

## 9 February with Wendy and the Green Team

Remember the challenge thrown to the Ballantrae to Halewood Landcare Group last year when we 'poked the bear' by deciding to tackle the Madeira vine infestation at the top of the creek? Council's Natural Areas Projects Team aced the primary weeding, but the real deal is in the follow-up. Madeira, a transformer weed, can smother whole ecosystems. Despite rain and a smaller crew, we bagged over 40kg in an hour! All hands are welcome to join the challenge, contact Landcare on 4921 0392 or [lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au).



## 23 February with Amy - Focus on lignotubers

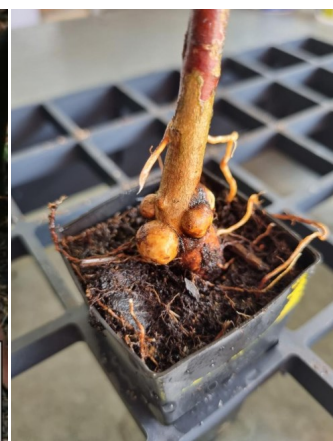
Many of our Eucalyptus tree species and various other trees and shrubs have a special organ called a lignotuber; pronounced lig-no-tuber. What is a lignotuber? This term was first used by an Australian botanist named Leslie Kerr to describe the woody swelling at the base or below ground level of the stem or trunk of a tree or shrub. This below-ground part of the tree is insulated by the soil in drought and is generally protected during a bush fire. This woody swelling is a carbohydrate storage for when times get tough. They are a last resort in survival for tree and shrub species.



How old is a lignotuber? Assessing the age of lignotubers is very difficult because of access under the soil to the organ. Putting an approximate age on lignotubers may be possible through a scientific method called radiocarbon dating. This is important as it means Australia could have some of the oldest living trees on earth simply from the lignotuber. This is another reason that makes our Australian bush so fascinating.

The next time you are out on your Landcare site or on a bush walk and you lean up against a tree or stop to enjoy the scrubby shrubby understory take some time to see if you can spot the long-lived lignotuber.

**Pictured below is the shrub Mountain Devil after a fire. Notice the black charred bulbous lignotuber just above soil level.**



The photo showing the tube stock is Swamp Mahogany (*Eucalyptus robusta*). Notice the exposed section just above soil level. The bulbous bits on the stem are the lignotuber.

# News from the Network Committee



Over the next few weeks, we will be calling on Team Leaders to come into the Landcare & Sustainable Living Centre, so that we can update information in the Green Books, provide information for them to take back to members of their groups, and obtain up-to-date information on the groups' current membership. This is also a great opportunity to drop in for a tour of the centre and nursery, plus you can bring along any completed paperwork and catch up with your fellow volunteers and Landcare staff.

For those who can't make any of the sessions, a site visit will be possible, but we're hoping most will be able to come to the centre.

---

## Landcare shirts and hats

The Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network now has fresh stock of Landcare shirts and hats available to purchase. Shirts are \$35, available in sizes: S, M, L, XL, and XXL. Hats are priced at \$22, in sizes 57cm, 59cm, and 61cm.

If you would like to purchase, you can drop into the Landcare Office, or contact us on 4921 0392 or email [Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au) to coordinate a suitable pick-up time. Cash payments only for shirts and hat purchases.



---

## Face to Face Team Leader training

Lake Macquarie Landcare is actively seeking expressions of interest for our face-to-face Team Leader training. While online training remains available and is suitable for some, the in-person option provides a unique opportunity to connect with fellow Landcarers and benefit from more hands-on interactions with our experienced trainers.

If you're interested in registering, please send an email to [Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Iro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au) or call 4921 0392.



# Critter of the moment: Red Triangle Slug

Article and photo by Winsome Lambkin

The Red triangle slug, *Triboniophorus graeffei*, found in eastern Australia, is our largest native land slug. It comes in a range of colours, with a red triangle on its back and a red edge on its foot. This slug had 2 tentacles (not 4) which can be retracted. It can grow to 14cm though this one, photographed in Floraville Rainforest Gully, is about 7cm. There's an opening, pneumostome, a breathing pore within the red triangle. The body can be fully extended, looking like a leaf, or contracted into a lump! The Red triangle slug grazes on algae found on rocks and the smooth bark of trees.



## Chemical Clean Out



Household quantities of the following household chemicals and items are permitted (up to a maximum of 20 litres or 20 kilograms of a single item), except paint. Up to 100 litres (in 20L containers) of paint accepted.

- Solvents and household cleaners
- Floor care products
- Ammonia-based cleaners
- Pesticides, herbicides, poisons
- Pool chemicals
- Hobby chemicals
- Motor fuels
- Fluorescent globes and tubes
- Acids and alkalis
- Smoke detectors
- Paint and paint-related products
- Gas bottles
- Fire extinguishers
- Car and household batteries
- Motor oils and cooking oils

For more information, including what waste can be disposed of at the Chemical CleanOut, visit [epa.nsw.gov.au](http://epa.nsw.gov.au).

Lake Macquarie residents will be able to safely dispose of hazardous household waste free of charge at the upcoming Chemical CleanOut.

**When:** Saturday, 16 March 2024 | 09:00 AM - 03:30 PM

**Where:** Rathmines Boat Ramp, Dorrington Rd, Rathmines 2283

As with previous Chemical Cleanouts, visitors will be required to stay in their vehicles at all times while the operators remove the waste from car boots, trays or trailers.

# 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: A baby Channel-billed Cuckoo being fed by its foster parent, a Pied Currawong (Photo by John Sharples, Arbre Close Landcare).



Above: A Jacky Lizard amidst the Tussock Paspalum and (below) insect art on a Breyntia leaf. Photos by Wendy Davidson, Keith Barry Oval Landcare



Above: Grey Mangrove *Avicennia marina* sprouting at the edge of the Belmont Lagoon (Photo by Winsome Lambkin, Cold Tea Creek Landcare).



# 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](http://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 2023-24 is \$4.65 per forestry tube. EFTPOS purchases only please.



## 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](mailto: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 (May/June Urban Landcarer) is 12 April 2024.

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](http://www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au)***

## Sincere thanks to funders of current and recent grants:

- 2NURFM Radio
- Australian Government
- Delta Electricity
- Greater Bank
- Hunter Region Landcare Network
- Hunter Local Land Services
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- NSW Government
- Origin Energy

## LANDCARE SUPPORT STAFF

**Landcare Coordinator :** Jason Harvey, **Finance & Admin. Officer:** Frances Fraser, **Landcare Network & Admin. Support Officer:** Debra Punton (M-T), **Landcare Program Delivery Officer:** Simon Lubinski **Landcare Support Officers:** Wendy Gleen (M-W), Amy Trello (T-F), **Landcare Publications & Grants Officer:** Kate Meares (T-F), **Landcare Communications Officer :** Stephanie Cassel (M-Th) **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:** Bob Montgomery **Other members:** Pam Montgomery, Winsome Lambkin, Don Roach, Julia Stenton and Nancy Lott

**Public Officer:** Julia Stenton

**Network Email:** [lmIn@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lmIn@lakemac.nsw.gov.au)

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



Lake Macquarie Landcare  
80 Toronto Road, Booragul NSW 2284  
Box 1906 HRMC NSW 2310

Phone: 4921 0392  
Email: [lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au](http://www.lakemacquarielandcare.org.au)

Office hours:  
Monday to Friday, 8am - 4pm



*Lake Macquarie Landcare is proudly supported by Lake Macquarie City Council*