



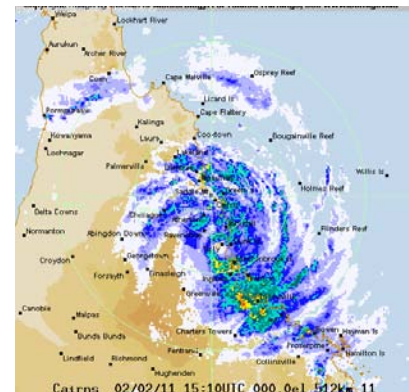
Wollombi Valley Landcare News for February 2011

La Niña and Recent Extreme Weather Events

Saturday 19th February 2011 at 2:00 pm

The next Landcare meeting will be held at Laguna Hall.

Recent events such as the flooding in Queensland and Victoria, and Tropical Cyclone Yasi have focused attention on *La Niña* as a control of Australia's weather. In this talk David Edwards, from the School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of New South Wales will outline the



El Niño Southern Oscillation Phenomenon (ENSO) which includes the current *La Niña* phase and also look at where this fits into longer term patterns of climatic variability in Australia. The implications of this variability on river flows and channel condition will also be discussed.

The presentation by David Edwards will be preceded by a presentation by Greg Bone, Manager System Planning and Lachlan King, Project Manager from Hunter Water, to provide a presentation on the upgrade of the Paxton Wastewater Treatment Works, off Millfield Road, Paxton.

Everyone is welcome. We look forward to seeing you there.

For more information contact Graham Taylor on 4998 3326 or Jane Mowatt on 4998 8158.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Wollombi Valley Landcare Group Inc, or any other Landcare agency or government department, but are presented to promote discussion about and the practice of sustainable land use and environmental responsibility.

The Paxton Wastewater Treatment Works

For our next meeting on Saturday 19 February we have invited Greg Bone, Manager System Planning and Lachlan King, Project Manager from Hunter Water, to provide a presentation on the upgrade of the Paxton Wastewater Treatment Works, off Millfield Road, Paxton. More specifically Greg and Lachlan will be talking about Hunter Water's future plans for the plant and what is being done to continually improve environmental performance.

The current \$18 million Paxton Wastewater Treatment Works upgrade is nearing completion and will provide additional treatment capacity to cater for homes at Millfield and Ellalong that were provided with access to the new sewerage system under the PSP program in mid 2010. Greg and Lachlan will talk about the planning work that is now underway to develop a long-term sustainable effluent management strategy for the Paxton plant, which will focus on any further works that may be required to meet the longer-term needs of the community and environment. As part of this, a review of the findings of previous effluent reuse investigations is underway, as well as an assessment of the feasibility of new reuse opportunities. The results of these studies will be incorporated into a sustainable decision-making process.



This Earth Hour, go beyond the hour - Saturday March 26 @ 8.30 PM

On March 26, hundreds of millions of global citizens, from one hundred different countries, will unite in the action of lights out. Will you be one of them?

Earth Hour is a call to action to every individual, every business and every community. It starts with a simple flick of the switch at 8:30pm on March 26 2011, in a collective display of commitment to protect the one thing that unites us all - the planet. Sign up to show your support.

- 2007 = The year Earth Hour was launched as a call to action on climate change
- 35 = The percentage of total greenhouse gas emissions which are emitted in the generation of electricity
- 128 = The number of countries across the world who took part in last year's Earthhour
- 4088 = The number of cities across the world which took part in Earthhour 2009

Why not encourage your employer, council, school, university, community group or restaurant to organise an Earthhour Event? Or why not organise a party or family get together with friends? There are lots of ideas and guides on the Earthhour website www.earthhour.org.au

Why not have a bit of fun. Create an Avatar and try out the Footprint Calculator to see how many planets it takes to support your lifestyle?

After calculating your ecological footprint, find out how you can reduce your family's and your own ecological footprint.

What can you do? There are specific steps each one of us can take to be more in tune with the capacity of the natural world.

These are things we can do **right** now to get around more efficiently, reduce the energy use in our home, change the way we eat and reduce the amount of waste we produce.

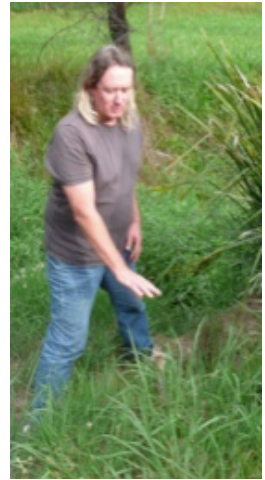
"Alone we can do little - together we can make a real difference".

Caring for Wombats....

Many members will have seen sick and mangy wombats on their property, often during the day, oblivious of what is around them. Mange is has a growing effect on the wombat population and if not addressed will see the dmise of these native animals from many areas of the valley.



Two people who are passionate about caring for the wombats are Chris Jackson and Louise Hicks who took some time before the Landcare Christmas Party to pass on their



experience of using homemade flaps suspended above the wombat's burrow to dribble some *Ivomec* onto the wombat's back as he exits his burrow to

forage for food. The *Ivomec* enters the animals system and over time can cure it of the Mange. For more information on this simple easily delivered and effective treatment contact Chris and Louise at hickjack@optusnet.com.au

...and a Christmas Party

The annual Landcare Christmas Party was held at Graham & Sue's place in Dry Arm on Saturday 11 December, following Chris Jackson and Louise Hicks presentation on Wombat care.



The event had been timed for 5 PM, so the sun was off the little valley and a bit of a breeze made for a very pleasant evening. About 25-30 members and friends were present and were soon in party mode.



The usual excellent selection of salads to share accompanied the barbeque, followed by delicious slices and cakes, all washed down with a few celebratory wines and beers.

There was a little unplanned excitement when flames appeared at the top of one of the gas bottles, but the situation was promptly and efficiently dealt with by the chief barbequer, Grant Hartley, who was only slightly singed in the process.

After coffee and with both the stars and the mozzies coming out, everyone drifted home having very pleasantly celebrated the end of another successful Landcare year.

Wollombi Valley Landcare Group Contacts

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Items for newsletter: Graham Taylor - 9981 6317/4998 3326 wollombi.landcare@gmail.com

Tell them where to shove the coal!

We recently received an email from Dick Clarke, who many will remember as the person who gave us a very insightful presentation on climate change and sustainable housing in August 2007. Dick has now brought to our attention that the NSW Government Planning Department is inviting feedback from community and industry on the directions and issues to be addressed in a Coal and Gas Strategy for NSW. If you are concerned about the environmental, economic, social, and health issues associated with the growth in the coal mining and coal seam gas industry, and we all should be, then this is an opportunity to tell the new state government what you think. You have until 15 April to have your say. For access to a *Scoping Paper* and a *Terms of Reference Paper* and details on how to lodge a submission go to:

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/StrategicPlanning/CoalandGasStrategy/tabid/495/language/en-AU/Default.aspx>

Submissions can be emailed to coalandgasstrategy@planning.nsw.gov.au

A belated thank you and welcome

On Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th November, it was the Wollombi Village Country Fair held between St Michael's Church and the tennis courts in Negro Street. Like the previous year the weather on the Saturday was somewhat inclement but fined up into a beautiful day on Sunday. This time Landcare had a stand on both days so there was a need for volunteers to help out on "manning" the stand. While there was a little trepidation from a few of our members who felt unsure they would be able to "tell the Landcare story" to others that called by,



everything went very well with the roster arranged so that those that had volunteered to help out had a member of the committee close at hand to answer any tricky questions that might arise. Overall the Fair proved a great success with good patronage on both days, and for Landcare we were pleased to welcome five new members:

- Bernadette Harris
- Alison Pratten
- Russell Hawkins & Margot Temby
- Judy Waite
- Willem & Caroline Van Zanten

I would also like to thank those members who agreed to help man the stand on the two days:

- Audrey Balla & Peter Peter Berman
- Louise Hicks & Chris Jackson
- Camilla Dorsch
- Catherine Craig
- Louise Gee
- Janet Ho
- Angus Jon
- Jane Mowatt

Graham Taylor

Some times it is a struggle to find enough material to fill our newsletter. But I know there are those amongst our membership that have the skills to make a contribution. So if you know something or have an experience that you would like to share with other members then why not get out the pen or the keyboard and send us your thoughts for possible inclusion in the next newsletter? Perhaps you have heard about an activity that is being planned and might be of interest to Landcare members, then let me know.

Graham Taylor

Saving the earth at Cundle Flat

Gwynnyth Llewellyn and Daryn Poulden were keen to realise the productive potential of their Cundle Flat property, but were also determined to protect the property's natural assets for the long term.

The couple had a steep eroding tributary with what appeared to be "little waterfalls" forming and contacted the CMA for some advice. Tina Clemens from the CMA's Taree office visited the property to assess the site and worked with the landholders to develop a plan for halting and remediating the erosion. A successful application was made to the CMA for funding through the 2008-09 round of Sustainable Agriculture Grants to implement the works.



The works involved installing almost 500 metres of fencing to exclude stock from affected areas and revegetating the area with 1800 native plants and trees to reduce run off and provide groundcover for long term protection.

Gwynnyth and Daryn are continuing to protect and maintain the trees planted throughout the project and have also done considerable work controlling an infestation of Cats Claw Creeper along the creek.

Gwynnyth and Daryn say they've already seen the benefits of the work they've put in as they experienced several major flood events in early 2010 and were relieved to see that there was no active erosion resulting from them.

If you have erosion that needs addressing on your property, contact your nearest CMA office (see details at the bottom of this newsletter) for advice and to find out what financial assistance is available through the CMA in 2011-12.

Although this story, taken from the February issue of Catchment News refers to a Taree, the Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority are also there to help you with your property in the Wollombi Valley. Go to www.hcr.cma.nsw.gov.au or contact the CMA Tocal Office at 816 Tocal Road (Private Bag 2010) Paterson 2421

Phone: 4930 1030

Fax: 4930 1013

Email: hcr@cma.nsw.gov.au

The success of our Landcare group relies on the input of members, and particularly the committee. Have you thought of joining the committee and contributing your ideas to the future success of the group? The committee meet about once every two months for an hour or two and also help out with arranging future meetings and the setup of the meeting, so the demand on your time is not great. It also is an opportunity to meet others and learn more about Landcare.

Australia could lead with world's cheapest renewable energy

Australia has the potential to produce some of the world's cheapest renewable energy, meeting all its energy demands by 2050, in line with the release today of a major new study by WWF.

The Energy Report, which breaks new ground with its global study of total energy needs, including transport and energy availability, found that the world's entire energy needs could be filled cleanly, renewably and economically within just 40 years.

"If we continue to rely on fossil fuels, we face a future of increasing anxieties over energy costs, energy security and climate change impacts," WWF Director General Jim Leape said.

"We are offering an alternative scenario - far more promising and entirely achievable.

"The report shows that in four decades we can have a world of vibrant economies and societies powered entirely by clean, cheap and renewable energy and with a vastly improved quality of life.

"But the report is more than a scenario - it's a call for action. However, we must start now." The two-part report contains detailed analysis and a scenario by respected energy consultancy Ecofys, as well as analysis by WWF. It shows that by 2050, the world's power, transport, industrial and domestic energy needs could all be met - with only isolated residual use of fossil and nuclear fuels - boosting energy security and reducing pollution and catastrophic climate change.

Downloads

Please click [here](#) to download the [Energy Report 2011](#) (15Mb)

Please click [here](#) for the [Media Summary](#)

Please click [here](#) for the [Supplementary Briefing](#), "What would a Global 100% Renewable Energy Plan Mean For Australia?"

For further information:

[Kellie Caught](#), WWF-Australia Head of Climate Change, Mob: 0406 383 277

[Cortlan Bennett](#), WWF-Australia Media Officer, Mob: 0404 700 001

Volunteer for NSW Energymark and reduce your carbon footprint and power bills.

CSIRO and the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW are looking for 500 volunteers to lead small group discussions on energy, climate change, water and waste in their communities.

You don't need to know a lot about energy and climate change to participate – simply gather a small group of people (family, friends, neighbours or workmates) for discussions using support and discussion material provided by CSIRO and NSW Government.

Energymark works by volunteer convenors getting small groups of people together to meet regularly to learn and discuss what they can do to make a difference. Convenors and participants receive easy-to-read fact sheets that the discussions are based on. There is a lot of talking, activities and sharing ideas to help at home! Anyone can get involved!

The NSW Energymark program is a CSIRO initiative in partnership with the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW helping households lower power bills and reduce our impact on the environment.

To register or for more information visit www.energymark.com.au or call 1300 119 003



The Native Vegetation Act 2003 was enacted in December 2005 and introduced a new approach to managing native vegetation across NSW. The Act aims to prevent broadscale clearing unless it can be demonstrated that it will improve or maintain environmental outcomes.

CMAs are responsible for applying the regulations of the Act and supporting landowners in managing native vegetation on their properties.

Clearing native vegetation

Clearing remnant native vegetation or protected regrowth requires approval under the Native Vegetation Act, however there are some cases where clearing [does not require approval](#). Specific restrictions apply to [clearing on vulnerable and state-protected land](#).

If you are considering clearing native vegetation on your property, you are advised to [contact your local CMA office](#) first to determine whether approval is required. Where clearing does require approval, landholders may apply to the CMA for a Property Vegetation Plan (PVP) or make an application for Development Consent.

Information sheets on various aspects of the Native Vegetation Act (2003) and Regulation (2005) are also available from the [Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water \(DECCW\) website](#).

Suspected illegal native vegetation clearing can be reported to DECCW by calling 131 555 or sending an email to info@environment.nsw.gov.au, with as much information as you can provide.

Property Vegetation Plans

If you are looking to manage native vegetation on your property you might consider having a Property Vegetation Plan (PVP) developed with the CMA. A PVP is a voluntary, legally binding agreement between a landholder and the CMA, which can provide a number of benefits, including:

- long-term security for landholders wanting to protect native vegetation for future generations;
- financial assistance for managing native vegetation on a particular property;
- the certainty of knowing what vegetation on a property is regrowth and will not require future clearing approvals;
- clarification on requirements under the NV Act of activities like rotational farming, grazing or cultivation practices;
- determination on clearing approval and offsets associated with the clearing.

You can apply for financial assistance through an incentive PVP right now through the [Hunter-Central Rivers CMA's 2010-11 Incentives Program](#). Contact [your local CMA office](#) and a qualified CMA officer will discuss the process with you and help you decide whether it is the right option for you.

Information on other private land conservation mechanisms is available on the websites of the [Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water](#) and the [Kosciusko2Coast project](#).

Reprinted from http://www.hcr.cma.nsw.gov.au/default.asp?section_id=46

Out of the Ashes

A stunning documentary about Victoria's Black Saturday bushfires shows the intensity and ferocity of the fires and how resilient Mother Nature and her creatures in their recovery after such events. If you missed the show on ABC1 on Sunday night then catch-up and watch it on iView at www.abc.net.au/tv/channels/abc1.htm

The following extract from the Spring 2010 issue of Bush Matters, a Newsletter of the Conservation Partners Program of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW maybe of interest to many Landcare members. Further details about the Atlas can be found at <http://wildlifeatlas.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/wildlifeatlas/about.jsp>

Atlas of NSW Wildlife

The Atlas of NSW Wildlife records sightings of flora and fauna. Landholders can both use and contribute to the Atlas.

The Atlas is the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) database of fauna and flora records. It contains over four million recorded sightings and is the main repository of information and knowledge about biodiversity in NSW.

Why is the Atlas so important?

The records within the Atlas are used by a large variety of people for a variety of purposes, such as:

- private individuals who may wish to know about species on and around their property
- academics and researchers working in particular areas or species
- students working on school projects
- DECCW staff to assist in better management and conservation of species, both on and off reserves
- Commonwealth and state government departments for conservation planning and land management
- local government agencies for environmental impact assessments
- consultants and landholders looking at activities which may include clearing of native vegetation for development or agriculture.

The Atlas plays an important role in the planning system in NSW. When assessing the environmental impacts of developments and land clearing applications, government authorities and environmental consultants use the information contained in the Atlas to determine which fauna and flora species will be affected and whether this impact is acceptable. Any new surveys undertaken are subsequently entered into the Atlas to help build a more complete picture of our biodiversity.

Where does the information come from?

Records come from various sources including historical reports, DECCW staff, survey data from major projects, consultants (as part of the Scientific Licence procedure), landholders and the general public.

How can landholders use the Atlas?

The Atlas contains sightings of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and endangered invertebrates (such as insects and snails). It does not contain records of fish, or invertebrates unless they are listed under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*.

You can search the Atlas website at <http://wildlifeatlas.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/wildlifeatlas/watlas.jsp>.

By choosing an area to search in, and the sorts of species you would like to search for, a map or report can be produced showing the records in the Atlas. If there are no records of that species in the search area, it does not mean the species is not found there—it simply means that there are no records to date.

Why contribute?

The more records in the Atlas, the better the picture of the distribution and presence of species in an area. Landholders with Conservation Agreements, Wildlife Refuges, Registered Property Agreements and other properties with significant conservation values are able to contribute to the Atlas by recording their sightings of fauna and flora and submitting them to DECCW. These areas protect some of the best biodiversity in the state and they are a wealth of information.

Many landholders have extensive species lists of fauna and flora that they have seen on their properties. Submitting these records to the Atlas allows increased knowledge about what is found in the area and may be used to predict what species are likely



Regent Honeyeaters.
Illustration: © DECCW & Government

to exist in similar habitats in the local area. This assists well informed decisions about land use and management. They will also be contributing to our understanding of the world around us and add to the body of scientific knowledge.

Private landholders can make valuable inputs to the Atlas and help ensure important decisions are done with the best information available.

How can you contribute to the Atlas?

To ensure records are accurate, it is important to record all relevant information including full name and contact details, location, date, habitat and other information. The spreadsheet and the manual cards will tell you what is needed to accurately record sightings.

If you are interested in supplying records to the Atlas, please contact the Wildlife Data Unit on gis@environment.nsw.gov.au or Conservation Partners Program on conservation.partners@environment.nsw.gov.au or 9995 6769. Records can be submitted electronically using a spreadsheet, or manually using cards.