

**GINNINDERRA CATCHMENT GROUP connects, supports and leads local communities to improve the health of Ginninderra Creek & surrounding environments**



**ACT and Region Frogwatch Program & the Ginninderra and Yass components of Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch operate from the GCG office**

**Web:** ([www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au)); **Office:** Kippax Health Centre, Holt ACT; **Phone:** 02 6278 3309

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## **GINNINDERRA CATCHMENT GROUP NEWS**

**JUNE 2018**

*Please distribute this newsletter to others in your networks and groups.*

### ***From the Convenor***

I am pleased to provide good news on our funding position. Mick Gentleman (Minister for the Environment) announced that the Catchment Groups were successful in gaining \$352,000 for the next year. Karissa, Ken and I met with Ian Walker (Director for the Environment, ACT Government). Ian emphasised the Government's priority on maintaining community catchment management and to develop a proposal on its longer term financial sustainability. We hope to have a contract in place shortly, which will detail the deliverables.

We recently presented information to the select committee on budget estimates regarding the Frogwatch submission. ICON water is to assist in funding the ACT tadpole kits, and Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate have indicated that additional funds will be provided to keep the annual census and other Frogwatch activities going for the year, more to come.

We submitted a Grassland Restoration component of the ACT NRM's tender to the National Landcare Program's funding – and we hope for a Commonwealth announcement shortly.

As detailed below in the news, GCG has undertaken many activities recently. I was involved in the CSIRO planting and the regenerative agriculture workshop. At the recent GCG General Members meeting, there was discussion on the funding position, possible future funding models, Urban Landcare, the ACT Government Inquiry into the value of the natural environment (GCG will be providing a submission), and update reports. We will be following up on a number of actions arising from the meeting.

I would like to personally thank our catchment community, including our volunteers, member groups and Executive particularly in supporting our budget bid and in driving strong catchment outcomes. Our staff need a specific mention: Karissa, Anke Maria, Bruno, Fiona and Julian – we appreciate your tireless efforts and your passion in your work.

*Sandy Lolicato*

### **[Acknowledgement of funding](#)**

## ***GENERAL GCG & LANDCARE – news from GCG Office***

### **LOOKING AFTER COUNTRY WITH CSIRO GINNINDERRA PROJECT**

GCG has again collaborated with CSIRO to revegetate the site of the Ginninderra Project. This year over 100 volunteers planted 1500 shrubs into Box–Gum woodland and dry forest, which will attract a wide range of woodland birds. These plantings complement the 3500 shrubs planted in Box–Gum woodlands at Ginninderra in 2017, which have recorded a 90% survival rate and excellent growth rates. The planting events were held over two days and involved people of all ages and walks of life, with a strong presence from the Well Station Cubs. The second planting day, which was held at the start of National Reconciliation Week, included a welcome to country by Ngunawal Elder and Custodian, Wally Bell. During a break in planting, community members took the opportunity to visit a scar tree in the nearby scribbly gum forest, where Wally shared his knowledge about the indigenous history and heritage associated with the area and broader Ginninderra catchment.



For more information, including a short video, see <https://ginninderraproject.com.au/thanks-a-million-for-a-mountain-of-planting/> and <https://ginninderraproject.com.au/looking-after-country/>

### LANDHOLDERS LEARN ABOUT EROSION CONTROL AND WATER MOVEMENT IN THE LANDSCAPE

On 24 June, rural landholders from within the Ginninderra Catchment and beyond participated in a workshop led by Cam Wilson, Head Designer at Earth Integral and Project Officer, with Mulloon Institute for farming, environment and society. Cam provided an informative and engaging workshop, which involved both theoretical and practical components. In the theoretical component, workshop participants learnt about the movement and storage of water within a functional local landscape and a range of low-cost, human-scale techniques, using locally available materials to tackle a variety of erosion issues. In the hands-on component participants gained hands-on experience in addressing erosion through installing four erosion control works. This activity was supported by Yass Area Network and National Landcare Program and built on a previous workshop funded by a Landcare ACT sustainable agriculture grant. Thanks to Paul Newall for hosting the practical component and the Wallaroo Fire Shed for use of the venue.

### CULTURAL BURNING

Karissa, Ken and Wally attended a Cultural Burning Forum, which highlighted the importance of Aboriginal burning processes. GCG and Mulanggang Aboriginal Landcare Group ran a joint stall at the event (see photo) and many forum participants were interested to hear more about the Aboriginal land management work being undertaken in the Ginninderra Catchment.

The Forum, titled 'Cultural Burning: Evolving with community and Country', was an opportunity to learn, and establish collaborations with others committed to cultural burning and caring for Country. Keynote speakers included: Bruce Pascoe (author and historian), Dean Freeman (ACT Fire Management Unit), Oliver Costello (Firesticks), Terrence Taylor (Jigija Indigenous Fire Training Program) and Victor Steffensen (Mulung Indigenous Fire Management).



A cultural burn was to be undertaken at Gubur Dhaura, a site where Mulanggang works, as part of the conference. This was postponed due to weather. Karissa and Wally are now working with Dean Freeman to ensure that the burn at Gubur Dhaura, as well as another cultural burn at Umbagong, will be undertaken as soon as weather permits. Wally was involved in a pre-burn at Gubur Dhaura in preparation for the burn of the cultural zone.

## **LANDCARE ACT REGIONAL FORUMS**

GCG supported two Landcare ACT Regional forums in May. One was: 'Aboriginal Cultural Land Management and Sustainable and Productive Rural Practice for the 21st Century': an early evening conversation with renown authors Bill Gammage and Bruce Pascoe, which was facilitated by Peter Bridgewater (Chair Landcare ACT) and Wally Bell (Ngunawal Elder). If you missed the workshop a film can be seen here <https://landcareact.org.au/indigenous-land-management/>. The second forum was: 'Regenerative Agriculture' with guest speakers Charles Massey and Martin Royds. Both events were successful, with over 90 attendees, including mostly rural landholders.

## **NATIONAL LANDCARE PROGRAM REGIONAL DELIVERY COMING TO A CLOSE**

The National Landcare Regional Delivery Program funding, delivered through ACT Government, which has supported extensive GCG Catchment work over the last five years, is coming to a close on 30 June. GCG have achieved all agreed milestones. Communications regarding key outcomes of the project are being developed and will be uploaded to the new GCG website, when the website is active again. GCG is grateful for the support we received, and look forward to working with ACT NRM and National Landcare Program phase 2 into the future.

## **GCG WEBSITE**

Our website went 'down' in May, and we are taking the opportunity to have it rebuilt.

*Karissa Preuss, GCG Executive Officer*

## **WATERWATCH**

### **WATERWATCH EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Our Waterwatch educational activities are being well received by the community. We have visited several schools and other groups in the North Canberra area, such as Giralang Primary School (Pre-school), Kirinari Child Care at University of Canberra, Birralee Ventures Group in Gungahlin, Canberra Naturalists Group, Weetangera Primary School (Year 4) and Florey Painting Playgroup – Florey Primary School. In addition, Bruno teamed up with Ben Huttner-Koros from Molonglo Catchment Group to deliver an educational activity at Narrabundah College (Year 11), Kaleen High School (Year 7), and Karabar High School in Queanbeyan. The educational activities focus on water bugs and broader Catchment health and are tailored to the age of the particular students.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP**

Bruno has joined the other Waterwatch coordinators and our Waterwatch Regional Facilitator for a Health and Safety Workshop conducted to streamline the control of risks within the Waterwatch program. A draft document is being prepared and it is based on the risk assessment for ACT Parks & Conservation. The Waterwatch team will adapt the document to our circumstances.

### **QAQC**

Waterwatch program recently hosted another Quality Assurance Quality Control (QAQC) event at Jerrabomberra Wetlands. We had around 30 Waterwatch volunteers from the ACT and Cooma participating. Bruno gave a talk to the volunteers about 'Turtles in the ACT', following the event, which received positive feedback.

### **WATERWATCH BEING USED IN FURTHER RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS**

Bruno has provided information about the GCG Waterwatch program to a citizen science survey project (PhD candidate Pat Bonney, Federation University), and has coordinated with Geoff Williams from the Australian Platypus Conservancy, to host a public talk on rakali (water rat) monitoring project in Lake Ginninderra/Belconnen area on 01/08/2018. In addition, Bruno has given feedback on a Yass Gorge book written by Geoff Robertson and others, from 'Kosciusko to Coast', where the waterwatch program is highlighted and the importance of citizen science projects in the gorge.

### **RIPARIAN CONDITION ASSESSMENTS**

Bruno has started riparian vegetation surveys in Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve and within the next month he will conduct several surveys in the Ginninderra catchment. Riparian condition is one of the parameters used to measure catchment health, together with water quality and water bugs.

*Bruno Ferronato, Waterwatch Coordinator*

## FROGWATCH

The Climate Change project has kicked off! Dedicated volunteers are monitoring 14 sites across town on a weekly basis. More rain is much needed – so keep going with your rain-dancing!

**AND bookings are open now for Tadpole Kits.** Here is the link to the booking form (because the GCG website is still 'down'). Please share the link with your teacher colleagues or class teachers to help advertise the project. [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfTuQds1oFZqoEL\\_sFvKBePoQunqxZ1APMb5jZo-rFfe7RA/viewform?c=0&w=1](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfTuQds1oFZqoEL_sFvKBePoQunqxZ1APMb5jZo-rFfe7RA/viewform?c=0&w=1)

Anke Maria Hoefer

## Catchment member groups 'happenings'

### North Belconnen Landcare (Evatt)

See Open Groups on Facebook for updates on our group.

The Scrape and Sow project has now been scraped and sown in our Landcare Patch near the Spain Place footbridge. This is a joint ACT Government and Greening Australia venture and our Group will assist with ongoing care. The "baddies" (Chilean Needlegrass and African Lovegrass) have been scraped off mechanically and the seeds of the "goodies" (native grasses and forbs) have been planted in their place. Fifty species have been included in this wild flower project which is to be named the "Betty Davis Wildflower Patch" after our very precious landcarer who died recently at the age of 91 years. Her husband and family are very happy to have a wildflower patch named after her. (The photos show the patch, viewed from the footbridge (left) and the Greening Australia staff preparing to fill the seeder with the seed mix.)



The recent very welcome rain has helped our landcare group. Weeding is now the main agenda with much removal of African Lovegrass taking place as well as St John's Wort and Chilean Needlegrass. Our group benefited from the hard labour of Telstra employees who volunteered a day to assist our group. Three trailer loads of African Lovegrass were removed from one of our native grassland patches. *Themeda* seeds were spread in spaces left after the removal of this weed.

Our group continues to grow with the help of the Facebook group which now has 126 members – which means nearly that many families, as most members are representing a family. Our students are more active in Uni breaks and in school holidays.

The Wednesday morning group has a wide variety of age-groups, ranging from babies who like to crawl around the older children who dig up the weeds and plant grassland species, to older home-schooled children and sometimes some oldies as well. See the photo (right) taken



last week on a lovely winter's day after digging up some Lovegrass and singing Happy Birthday to my husband Ken.

Our ongoing Landcare times need adjusting at this time of year as it gets cooler. Current start-times are 9.30 am on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Please check our Facebook page for any further adjustments of start times. Look in "Open Groups" and type in North Belconnen Landcare Group.

*Lenore Hodgkinson, Convenor*

## ***Friends of Mulligans Flat***

*The Friends of Mulligans Flat has over 500 members who have registered on our MyVolunteer database. It is through this database, supported by the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, and Facebook, that we communicate news updates about the Mulligans Flat Wildlife Sanctuary, upcoming events and activities. Apart from the 'standard' park care activities (weeding and rubbish) the Friends can get involved in turtle relocation, Echidna counts, Bettong monitoring, Bush-stone Curlew feeding and assisting in a range of ANU projects.*

***Monthly work parties*** are held on the second Wednesday of each month. Meet at the Woolshed at 9:30 am.

***Seasonal work parties*** are held on a Sunday morning once each season, actual dates being advised closer to the activity. We usually meet at the Woolshed at 10:00 am.

### **MONTHLY WORK PARTIES**

Over the last two months, with the Bettong fence completed, the Friends have returned to the usual and never-ending cycle of weed removal. But it still gets us out for a lovely walk through the Sanctuary – we even spotted a few Bettongs out and about in the sun!

### **MOTHERS' DAY BIRD WALK**

Our annual Mothers' Day bird walk was held on Sunday 13 May. It was quite a blustery and cold morning so attendance numbers were down quite a bit. But 15 people braved the elements and once sheltered from the wind by the trees it was very pleasant with a surprising amount of birds spotted, including small mixed flocks. Not to be outdone, some of Brian Bettong's family also made a fleeting appearance.

### **UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

**Winter Work Party:** First up, on **Sunday 1 July** we will hold our Winter Work Party. Meet at the Woolshed at **10:00 am and we will finish around 12:30 pm**. Ranger Dave would like our help to identify and remove some Cootamundra Wattle. Bring a hat, water, snack and gloves. Dave will provide everything else we will need and he even has a supply of extra gloves.

**Monthly Work Party:** The next monthly work party will be on **Wednesday 11 July from 9:30 am to 12:00 noon**, meeting at the Woolshed.

**Science in the Sanctuary:** On **Thursday 19 July** starting at **6:45 pm** will be this year's "Science in the Sanctuary". This is always a very popular event and numbers are limited, so if you are interested book early! See <https://mulligansflat.org.au/event/science-in-the-sanctuary-2/> for details.

*Mark Smith, Convenor*

### **NOTE:**

To contact the Landcare or ParkCare Group Convenors, email or phone the GCG office. The groups' webpages will be up again on the GCG website when it has been rebuilt:

[www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au) > Landcare > Landcare groups

## **Around the region**

### ***'Sanctuary: A Year at Mulligans Flat' – an exhibition, 28 June – 22 July***

At 'Strathnairn', 90 Stockdill Drive, Holt ACT (10–4 Thursday – Sunday), this is an exhibition of paintings of the unique & vulnerable creatures who live in Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary, by emerging Canberra artist Emily Birks. *Official opening:* by Dr Kate Garrock, Sanctuary Ambassador, Superstar of STEM and Ecologist at Mulligans Flat Woodland, on **Saturday 30 June at 4 pm**.

(The images below show two examples of Emily's work.)



### ***Forum on Local Soils and Native Plants for Southern Tableland Gardens***

This is the Australian Plants Society NSW – Southern Tablelands District Group Annual Forum. There will be two sessions on **Saturday 7th July** at the **Goulburn Worker's Club starting at 10:00 am and finishing at 12:30 pm**. The first session will consider how to basically identify the different soil types and environmental factors, including micro-environments, commonly found in the district. This will be followed by how to improve establishment and growth of native plants in those soil types and conditions, for example, methods of improving drainage or water retention, modifying pH, etc. leading to improved establishment and an expanded range of plants that can be grown.

The second session will describe native plant groups suited to the local soil conditions, climate, and micro-environments and provide some examples of good species for gardens in this region. For example, the basic characteristics of different plant groups and species and their ability to cope with local soil and micro-environments and usefulness in gardens for attracting fauna, as ground cover etc.

There will be an opportunity for questions and discussion at the end of each presentation along with a break for morning tea to give participants the opportunity to interact.

Access to the Club from 9:30 am through the entrance off the McKell Place carpark.

For catering purposes, we require those wishing to attend to **RSVP before 6 July** to [rcgalland1@bigpond.com](mailto:rcgalland1@bigpond.com)

### ***Call for planting volunteers, Thurs 26 July, Murrumbateman Landcare***

For several years Kalli and Rudi Rajic have been undertaking revegetation on their property. And some of you helped out with a very damp but enjoyable community planting day in September 2016 – so thanks very much for that. The photo was taken on that day. (I (Bob) will be there again this year and so will my dog, both looking pretty much the same as last time, but the kids will be bigger.) On that earlier occasion Landcare volunteers were planting part of a 1 km connectivity restoration corridor to enhance landscape connectivity, biodiversity and stock shelter. That planting site connected to a neighbouring property which had already had a significant amount of protection and enhancement revegetation activities over the previous 3 years, and coupled with some good roadside vegetation and an old green road, this area will in time be a great hub for fauna and flora.



The Rajic's property is in a tier-one erosion control area. Kalli and Rudi had already undertaken Whole of Paddock Rehabilitation across an 11 ha paddock, and the 2016 planting was to provide protection and restoration works to protect local populations of vulnerable bird species such as Rainbow Bee Eaters, Diamond Firetail Finches, Scarlet Robins, and other small birds and animals that occupy the granite outcrop areas and old trees.

Your help is sought in planting another 500 trees to further enhance the successful landscape scale project, 'Murrumbateman Landcare Linking Biodiversity', funded through the

Australian Government. If you helped last time, thanks and come along again, if only to have a sticky beak at how your earlier efforts have already made a difference – and unfortunately I can reliably forecast a drier day for it this time.

If you weren't able to help last time, come along and see what can be achieved – a bit of a field trip postscript to Dr McIntyre's presentation on planning for revegetation planting (see next item). I'll send out an update with times and other details a little closer to the event but put the date in your calendar now! And RSVP me now if you are already that organised into the future.

[<bob.mccoll.bm@gmail.com>](mailto:bob.mccoll.bm@gmail.com)

*Bob McColl, Murrumbateman Landcare Group*

### ***Sue McIntyre's expertise at Murrumbateman Landcare Group meeting***

The meeting on **Thursday 5 July, 7.00 pm**, Murrumbateman, follows on from our field visit on 5 May ('Planning for Planting, Part 1'). Botanist and ecologist **Dr Sue McIntyre** will lead the discussion on:

- How do you choose from the hundreds of species that could potentially be used to re-vegetate your property?
- What are some of the important principles in selecting material that best matches your site?
- And the most important aspect? – to consider the re-vegetation site itself.

**WHERE:** Back room of the Murrumbateman Country Inn (a booking clash with our usual room but also more capacity for the crowd we expect!

**RSVP:** by reply email please **by Tuesday 3 July**. [<bob.mccoll.bm@gmail.com>](mailto:bob.mccoll.bm@gmail.com)

### ***Black Mountain symposium, 24 August 9–4.30; 25 August 9.30–noon.***

'The past 50 years informing the next 50'. Early notice. Themed talks at CSIRO Discovery Centre on the Friday (themes: natural environment and cultural environment). Walks in Black Mountain Nature Reserve on the Saturday. Cost: \$55 for the symposium talks, fully catered. Guided walks \$5. To register, and for program, see: [www.friendsofblackmountain.org.au/symposium](http://www.friendsofblackmountain.org.au/symposium)

### ***21st Australasian Weeds Conference, 9–12 September, Sydney***

The Weed Society of New South Wales Inc., on behalf of the Council of Australasian Weed Societies Inc., is hosting the 21st Australasian Weeds Conference at Manly, in Sydney from 9 to 12 September 2018. To discuss new developments, go on field trips, and share information about cutting-edge and best weed management practices, register via <http://www.21awc.org.au>. Earlybird rego closes on **13 August**.

### ***'Striving for Restoration Excellence', 25–28 September, Brisbane***

This is the conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration Australia, for people who care about the bush, sea & waterways: scientists, managers, practitioners, policy makers & planners. Earlybird rego is available until 'til **27 July**. Details: <https://www.sera2018.org/>

### ***National Landcare Conference 2018, 10–12 October, Brisbane***

'Landcare – Building a Better Tomorrow' is the title of this year's conference. Registrations are now open for the conference and awards. Details are at <http://www.nationallandcareconference.org.au>. Earlybird rego ends on **31 July**, and there is a huge discount to register if you are a volunteer landcarer, i.e. not paid to do it. GCG is nominated in the national awards, so it would be great to have GCG landcarers at the conference!

## ***12<sup>th</sup> Australasian Plant Conservation, Conference, 11–15 November***

‘Moving house – a new age for plant translocation and restoration’ is the title of this week-long conference at CSIRO Canberra ACT. Abstracts are due by **Friday 27 July**, and earlybird registrations close on **Friday 31 August**. If you join the ANPC you receive a discount on the registration fees. Find out more about APCC12, and register, at <http://anpc.asn.au/conferences/2018>.

## **Ginninderra Catchment Group is grateful for support from**

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