



Landcare UpHunter

Spring 2015

In this issue:

Mustering in Orange	p1
Junior Landcare - Investigate Fire Ants	p2
Resources for Schools	p2
Building a Sustainable Environmental Future	p3
Resources & Funding	p3
Events for your Diary	p4
On the Verge of Weeding	p4
Contacts	p4

Mustering in Orange

Landcarers and government from across NSW gathered in Orange in September for the bi-annual three day State Conference and Landcare NSW Muster. The event "From the Ground Up - Celebrating the International Year of Soil" highlighted healthy local landscapes linking to food production, waterway health and community health.

Topics covered at the conference included Returning Organics to Your Soil with your community on board - resource recovery, recycling, soil improvement and community empowerment; Nutrient management; Effective soil extension outcomes; Social media and soil health outreach, Making soil - water and plants - weapons of mass construction and Floodplain stability and revegetation strategies.

Landcare NSW gave a bi-annual review of State wide Landcare, an update on the resources available to groups via the Landcare NSW website, staff support for local groups and the NSW government's Landcare Support Program for 2015 - 2019.

Funding for up to 60 part-time Local Landcare Coordinators (LLC) across NSW was announced. Coordinators will work closely with local groups and networks to build capacity, source funding, develop partnerships, increasing community engagement.

Small group discussions varied from governance, 'grass roots on-ground' funding options, State and National Landcare to succession planning ideas and skills.

NSW Landcare Award winners were announced in Junior Landcare Team, Young Landcare Leader, Individual Landcarer, Indigenous Land Management, Landcare Community Group, Landcare Facilitator or Coordinator, Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices, Coast Care and Partnership with Landcare categories.

Category winners will represent NSW at the National Landcare Awards next year.

On a conference Field Trip to the villages of Blayney, Neville and Carcoar we visited constructed and rehabilitated wetlands, seeing major riparian works in progress with removal of Willows and creek bank stabilisation. Native tree plantings along the riparian corridor will provide habitat, shelter and connectivity for local wildlife.

The focus at a local farm was on sustainable, holistic farming systems and the benefits for the farmers, livestock and the land. An Aboriginal cultural burning demonstration also provided insight into landscape re-generation and weed control methods.

All round it was a great Conference and a great Muster!

Ruth Hardy





Department of
Primary Industries

2016 Science and
Technology Competition



Use your science and technology skills to investigate whether
FIRE ANTS ARE IN YOUR SCHOOL?

**FREE
ENTRY**

Entry is free and open
to all Stage 3 students
in NSW Schools

Links to the NSW Syllabus for Science and Technology, English and Geography. Competition guide, teacher handbook and learning sequence can be found online at <http://www.tocal.nsw.edu.au/home/investigate>

Registrations open November 4, 2015
Competition to be run Term 1, 2016

Investigate provides authentic learning experiences to support students development of science, technology and communication skills. Real-world content guides the application of these skills in a meaningful learning context.

Compete in three easy steps:

- 1** Design and complete an investigation to lure ants and find out if there are fire ants in your school.
- 2** Create a communication product to inform and educate your school and community about fire ants and your investigation findings.
- 3** Complete the student and teacher entry and exit surveys for extra points.

PRIZES

Prizes:

All participating schools and students will receive a Certificate of Participation.

The following prizes will be awarded to schools that demonstrate creativity and excellence in their communication product and incorporate evidence of an outstanding investigation. (Judging criteria available).

1st \$1000
2nd \$750
3rd \$500
Highly Commended
\$250



Email: schools.program@dpi.nsw.gov.au
Online: <http://www.tocal.nsw.edu.au/home/investigate>



www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

Resources for Schools

In the Hunter Valley we have some different types of ants but not all species live in New South Wales. Fire Ants are likely to be found in Queensland. The NSW DPI Schools Program has been developed (with NSW Dept. of Education advisor assistance). There are lots of resources for your teachers to use. Do you learn about wildlife in your classroom? What do you learn about your environment and agriculture at school from your teachers and other students?

The Investigate: Fire Ants Competition is open to Year 5 and Year 6, Stage 3 students at NSW Primary Schools. Talk with your teacher and school friends and see if the school can include this in next year's learning program.

Information provided by NSW DPI Schools Program

Building a Sustainable Environmental Future

Our Shire has many community organisations that are working to identify and address diverse needs in our area. In support, Upper Hunter Shire Council has a Grants Officer based in Scone who works to assist organisations and groups to source funding opportunities and submit grant applications and holds Grant Writing Workshops in major towns across the Shire

Funding can come from a variety of sources including government and philanthropic organisations. Achieving successful partnership agreements with other organisations can be pivotal to gain some sources of grant funding. Council's advocacy can range from a support letter for a community grant application to linking organisations to achieve joint partner funding.

Working towards a sustainable environmental future is part of Council's focus and activity. Sometimes it is funded directly for programs such as Waste Less, Recycle More programs; flood mitigation planning; waste & water management; land management, pest plant & animal control and rehabilitation.

Council publishes a monthly Grants Bulletin which lists upcoming grants and application details across a broad range of community sectors e.g. environment, health, education, community, arts, cultural, sport and heritage.

Please contact Council's Grants Officer, Johanne McKiernan on 6540 1126 or email jmckiernan@upperhunter.nsw.gov.au to discuss your potential environmental or other project or possible partnership opportunity, for your group to be added to the Grants Bulletin email list or to enquire about a future Grant Writing Skills workshop.

Jo McKiernan



Resources & Funding

Department of the Environment (Federal) - EPBC Act Protected Matters Report: general guidance on matters of national environmental significance & EPBC Act protections e.g. World & National Heritage; wetlands; ecological communities; threatened & migratory species. <http://environment.gov.au/epbc/protected-matters-search-tool>.

International Fund for Animal Welfare (FAW) and NSW Wildlife Council (NWC) - Wildlife Rescue app. Links to your nearest wildlife rescue group in NSW. Download to your mobile via the Apple Store and Android market or <http://www.ifaw.org/australia/our-work/animal-rescue/help-rescue-wildlife-nsw-download-our-app>.

Urban Riparian Forests reduce the abundance of invasive plants - for research results go to Invasive Plant Science and Management, online 27th May 2015. <http://wssajournals.org/doi/abs/10.1614/IPSM-D-14-00081.1>

FeralScan updated mobile App to help landholders record pest animal problems, map pest locations, provide data for easier pest control management. Download from AppStore or Google play. Go to <http://www.feralscan.org.au/> for more information.

Online Ag Careers Expo hosted by RuralBiz training - access the recording from this event at <http://www.ruralbiztraining.com.au/ag-careers>

Junior Landcare Badge - for information on how local Scouts & Cubs can gain their Landcare Badge go to <http://www.scouts.com.au/environment/landcare-australia> or email landcareuphunter@gmail.com or Tel: Ruth 0407 232 539.

The Australian River Restoration Centre- provides a 'hub' for connecting & sharing river & riparian information, knowledge, resources & experience. Go to <https://arrc.com.au/>

Funding

Ian Potter Foundation - Environmental Small grants - funding up to \$20,000 for increasing volunteer support to meet environmental challenges. Applications close on 11th of December. Go to <http://www.ianpotter.org.au/what-we-support/environment-and-conservation>.

Bjarne K Dahl Trust - Eucalypts - grants for up to \$50,000 for conserving areas of high conservation status; conservation research and activities; reducing Eucalypt habitat loss and diseases; education and awareness. Applications close on 30th November. For information go to <http://dahltrust.org.au/grants/>

Hunter Local Land Services Community Education Grants - up to \$1,000 to support, for example, education, capacity building or communication in Natural Resource Management, animal health and agriculture. Applications close 30th November. Go to <http://hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au/our-region/grants-funding-scholarships/community-education-grants-program>

Events for your Diary

Landcare UpHunter events:

Stall at Bloom Markets, Scone Public School, Liverpool St. Scone Saturday 5th December 9.00 - 2.00pm. Landcare, environment & farming resources, herbs & plants.

2015 Native Wildlife & Native Flora Photo Competition: travelling Exhibition of winning photos from children, youth & adults across the Upper Hunter Shire:

View the photos at:

Linga Longa Inn, Riley St, Gundy 12th - 15th December - for opening hours information Tel: 6545 8121.

Scone - Scone Visitor Information Centre, Cnr. Kelly & Susan St, Scone 9.00am - 5.00pm weekdays & 10.00 am - 4.00pm weekends. 16th December to January 25th. Tel: 6540 1300.

Murrurundi - for exhibition details contact Ruth on 0407 232 539.

International Volunteer Day on the 5th December.

International Mountain Day on the 11th December.

Pages River Warriors Working Bee at Wilson Memorial Oval Murrurundi (weekends). For dates & times email Sandy@boydscreek.com.au

Glenbawn Catchment Landcare Group Contact Gavin MacCallum at glenbawncatchment@outlook.com

Landcare UpHunter & Scone Landcare - refer details below



Scone Landcare

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On the Verge of Weeding

Over many months we have had repeated periods of rain followed by sunny days across the Upper Hunter. This has helped create ideal conditions for so many weeds to grow in paddocks, parks, backyards, on roadsides and on street verges.

It has also created great conditions for weeding!

Most of us with a grass verge outside our home would have some garden tools and garden gloves. If we all weeded our own bit of verge, even roped in our neighbours and friends to do the same, our towns and villages would look so much nicer.

It would help our children or grandchildren learn about nature in their own street.

Discovering what weeds to get out first and by the roots, which ones to leave for Mum or Dad to do, which are the nasties e.g. Khaki Weed or Bindi (Cat's head) and how to safely dispose of them and which tools to use can all be part of the fun.

Fireweed has a yellow flower and Blue heliotrope has very sticky seeds that can travel for miles on the wind. Both these weeds can be found on some street verges.

Maybe our Local Council could provide practical support and promotion for this?

These initiatives are better than just mowing over weeds and replacing grass with concrete. It minimises chemical use that can affect our waterways and ecosystems.

Hand picked weeds can become mulch and compost, if done early. So before the seeds mature, let's get into it! Save our gardens from infestation and save us and our family pets from painful sharp seeds. Stop the spread, including via car tyres.

How? A short weed blitz with a follow up from time to time on your own patch of street. Everyone has different ideas but we usually all hate weeds.

We can also make sure that quick-growing garden foliage is trimmed to keep it out of the eyes of people walking by and rocks are safely inside our fences and

Get your Local Councillors involved with a verge blitz!

For information on weeds go to NSW WeedWise <http://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/>

Ruth Hardy



Blue Heliotrope



Fireweed



Khaki Weed



Caltrop (Cat's head)

Note: Landcare UpHunter have copies of 'Weeds of the Hunter and Central Coast' to give away at their stall at Bloom Markets (refer Events column on this page).

Visit us at www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/scone-landcare-group