



# Newsletter for the Macleay Catchment

EDITION 47 AUTUMN 2015



## Chairs Report

Some good news on funding,. The State Government has pledged fifteen million dollars over the next four years to Landcare even though its short of what we were seeking it's a step in the right direction and with the Federal Government due to release the budget in May hopefully there will be further funding available. While on political matters, our new member for Oxley Melinda Pavey has indicated a willingness to get involved and support the Landcare movement and has already attended a couple of our events. We look forward to working with Melinda.

Macleay Landcare has been busy running events with a well-attended tree fair and a very successful Farming & Land Management Expo at the showground which was attended by Landcare members and the public from up and down the coast. Special mention for our Landcare Officer Sharon who organised the event and took on the role of MC it was a great day and we hope to have more in the future.

Mid North Coast Organics (MNCO) have donated an amount of cash and an overhead projector plus other items to MLN. Our thanks go to Susan Harwood from MNCO and our Vice Chair Sally Ayre Smith for organising the donation.

As we approach the close of this financial year I would like to remind members our AGM is coming around and we are always looking for new committee members willing to put in a bit of time and fresh ideas. So if becoming a committee member and making a contribution appeals to you please put your name forward when nominations open. Until the next newsletter stay safe and keep on Landcare-ing.

Regards,

*Graham Butcher*

## Articles:

- Cane Toad Alert for Maria River .....2
- Fish Kills in the Macleay estuary.....3
- Building Fish Habitat at Dondingalong ...4
- Collombatti Wild Dog Project.....4
- Wild Dog program & Mick Thorman.....4
- Nuts about Organic Macadamias.....5
- New Biodiversity Act proposal.....6
- Farming and Land Mgt EXPO Review....6
- Solar Power on Farms.....7
- Importance of Riparian Zones.....7
- What is Biochar? .....8
- Weeding with a difference .....9
- Senate Report into Landcare .....9
- Buy Australian.....10
- CSIRO Climate Predictions.....11



Macleay Landcare Network would like to express our gratitude to Macleay Options Inc. for their generous donation of 200 weed mats made from locally recycled cotton mattresses.

The weed mats are available free to Macleay Valley residents undertaking native seedling planting. We also have bamboo stakes and plastic tree guards for purchase. Don't forget that a range of bush regeneration tools and tree planters (Hamilton and Potti Putki) are available for hire.

# Cane Toad Alert!



This male cane toad was captured near Crescent Head on the Maria River road at the dirt/ tar junction last week. It is unknown whether this individual hitch hiked his way south or whether he is one of a local, but unknown population.

If allowed to populate and spread, 'Cane Toads will pose a serious threat to the swamp forest biodiversity hotspot around Maria River and Limeburners National Park area' (Thor Aaso, Environmental Officer with Port Macquarie Hastings Council).

In response to the sighting local environmental organisations, including Macleay Landcare, NPWS, North Coast Local Land Services, Kempsey Council and PMHC will collaborate to tackle the issue. So far a cane toad survey was undertaken during the evening of April 4th by NPWS Staff and toad-experienced volunteers from Port Macquarie (thank you very much Janet Slater and Julie and Steve HO from PM Landcare who have captured 15 toads in Port Macquarie).

It is important that urgent action is taken so please be on the look out for Cane Toads and collect specimens for identification or report any sightings to the Kempsey Shire Council (ph 6566 3200) or Macleay Landcare today (ph 6562 2076).

Go to <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/pestsweeds/HelpStopTheSpreadOfCaneToads.htm>



# New projects in the Macleay

Project	Funding Organisation	Funded
<b>Rehabilitating Significant Coastal Vegetation at Grassy Head</b>	<b>NSW Government's Environmental Trust</b>	<b>\$93,000</b>

This project is an extension of the first year project previously funded by ET. Once again it's an enormously collaborative effort and my gratitude goes again to Chris Kaczan of Grassy Head Dunecare and Ron Kemsley and Greg Egan at Kempsey Shire Council. KSC has offered to assist the project with weed control and beach access work. If you don't already know about Grassy Head projects, the Nursery trust and the Dunecare Group are very active in involving other community organisations and so what is essentially an environmental project has enormous flow-on social benefits as well. Here is a list of other groups that are working at Grassy Head: TAFE students (Kosta Delimihalis), Kempsey Correctional Services In-mates program (Ken Buckley), Macksville Adult mental health men's group (Suzie Braun), and local pre-schools and primary schools. We are looking forward to working with the Dunecare Group again soon!

<b>Collombatti Landholders Collaborate on Feral Animal Control</b>	<b>Australian Government 25th Landcare Anniversary Grants</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
--	---	-----------------

This project has got off to a great start with an initial meeting with the landholders at Collombatti to determine which properties will be involved and to work in closely with Mick Thorman of the North Coast Local Land Services who are currently running a larger control program that incorporates this area. This project will hopefully assist landholders to take charge of trapping once the initial program of control is completed. Bernard Whitehead from Saltair demonstrated how to set a soft-jaw trap at our Workshop and a DVD of his method

<b>Macleay Valley sustainable grazing practices and winter dung beetle trial</b>	<b>Australian Government Funding via the 25th Landcare Anniversary Grants</b>	<b>\$18,800</b>
--	---	-----------------

This project will see a Sustainable Grazing Course come to the Macleay Valley. The series of workshops will support a group of local graziers to learn more about sustainable grazing practices in order to maintain ground cover, to prepare for drought recovery, to promote desirable pasture species, to manage weeds and so on. The 3 part course will be delivered mid year over a three month period.

The winter dung beetle trial will assist 2 local graziers to release winter dung beetle species (Bubas bison) in the Macleay Valley and to monitor their occurrence in coming years. We are seeking two eligible landholders to participate so please contact Macleay Landcare if you have a herd and live in a grazing area in the Macleay. Two community Dung beetle workshops will also be held in 2015-16 so we'll keep you posted.

# Australia Day Fish Kills

by Max Osborne, North Coast Local Land Services Kempsey

North Coast Local Land Services are currently working with a core group of key NSW government agencies, Kempsey Shire Council and the University of New South Wales to address a chronic floodplain issue on the Collombatti-Clybucca Floodplain.

The importance of the work being undertaken was recently brought into sharp focus with a significant fish kill around the heavy rainfall experienced over the end of January period.



Although remediation of this area has been previously attempted at a 'paddock scale', the site remains acidified and continues to discharge poor quality water into the Macleay River estuary. A report developed by the University of New South Wales outlines the significant impact that drainage of the Collombatti-Clybucca floodplain has had on the local wetlands and wider Macleay River estuary and presents a strategy to remediate the site.

The remediation option focuses on changing current land use practices to achieve large-scale remediation and habitat generation. The remediation strategy presents an opportunity to restore one of the most significant coastal backswamps in NSW to the vibrant wetland it once was.

North Coast Local Land Services has also developed a Clybucca Working Group, consisting of many community group representatives that will be engaged with this project as it gains momentum.

Significant pre-Australia day rainfall (180+mm over 4 days from 20th to 23rd) filled sections of the Macleay floodplain, particularly drains, billabongs and backswamps. However, prior to this, some rainfall had resulted in verdant wetland areas of water couch and paspalum.

The standing water from the pre-Australia Day rain event remained on the floodplain over the long weekend, a long enough period for these pasture grass and semi-aquatic plants to become submerged, die and then rot. During decomposition of this organic matter bacteria consumed the oxygen in the water. In addition to this deoxygenation, a complex series of chemical reactions occur, particularly with the soil, which also consumes dissolved oxygen from the water column. These processes add a cocktail of chemicals to floodwaters changing acidity and heavy metal levels, and other important water properties.

The hypoxic (lack of dissolved oxygen) conditions in these drains and backswamps is enough to kill fish in those water bodies. Hundreds of dead eels and mullet were observed up stream of the Menacrabinni fixed floodgate.

Between the 26th and 28th of January another 80+mm of rain pushed the now deoxygenated flood waters from the backswamps and drains into the estuary. A major fish kill was observed on Thursday 29th January in Clybucca Creek (between Kemps Corner and Clybucca) where a wide variety of aquatic organisms perished including benthic organisms such as polychaete worms, crabs, prawns and fish.

Currently, poor water quality from the Collombatti-Clybucca floodplain alone (not considering the other two major backswamps on the Macleay – 'Swan Pool' and 'Belmore Swamp') impacts over 50 km of the lower Macleay River estuary during discharge events. During normal conditions, with a drain water level at mean sea level (0 m AHD) the Collombatti-Clybucca drainage network holds approximately 500 ML of deoxygenated acidic water (pH ~ 3) that has high concentrations of aluminium and iron. This equates to approximately 220 Olympic swimming pools of vinegar (pH ~ 3) being discharged into the river at the first flush of a rainfall event. (Glamore and Rayner, 2015).



Photos : Penny Kendall NPWS, Max Osborne NCLLS 2015

## Funding for Macleay River: Fish Habitat and Erosion Control

Macleay Landcare has recently received a NSW Primary Industries Habitat Action Grant to address river bank erosion and improve fish habitat in the Macleay River at Dondingalong.

The \$35,000 grant from the NSW Recreational Fishing Trust will see at least 200m of riverbank protected by rock and large woody debris structures and the bank revegetated with long stemmed tube stock seedlings and fenced from stock access.



Photo: Sharon MLN, Peter Corlis NSW Lands and Barry Lee.

This project is a collaboration between landholder, Barry Lee, Macleay Landcare, Office of Environment and Heritage and the Roads and Maritime Service. RMS will donate \$10,000 worth of tree stumps sourced from the highway upgrade to the project. Landcare has engaged NSW Lands Soil Conservation Service to design the in-stream works and oversee critical construction stages of the project.

Habitat Action Grants are available to individuals and community groups such as fishing clubs to carry out infrastructure and environmental improvement works. The grants usually open in October. Please contact Macleay Landcare if you are interested in applying and we may be able to sponsor the application. For more information go to: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/habitat/rehabilitating/ahr-grants-program](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/habitat/rehabilitating/ahr-grants-program)



Primary  
Industries



### Indian Myna Traps from Stuarts Point Men's Shed

BUY YOUR OWN! \$55 each for an extremely well made trap

Contact Les Oxenbridge 5626 5519 or Bob Morrison 6569 0210

Euthanize your Mynas at the Kempsey Vet Clinic at 68 Smith Street

Contact Mark the vet on 6562 4962

[www.macleaylandcare.org.au](http://www.macleaylandcare.org.au) for Indian Myna trapping fact sheets

## Meet Mick Thorman North Coast Local Lands Service



You may already know Mick Thorman because he has been working extensively in the Macleay area for a number of years assisting landholders to control pest animals. Currently, Mick is a Senior Lands Service Officer based in the Kempsey office.

At the moment the NCLLS is investing \$150,000 over 12 months in the Kempsey Shire to control wild dogs. The funding is sourced from the Commonwealth Government's Drought Support Package.

The project has undertaken 132 km of aerial baiting during October 2014 and will be repeated in June 2015 in upper Macleay.

The NCLLS is targeting wild dogs through the aerial baiting and trapping program where property owners provide local knowledge of dog movements and sightings.

The project offers training to groups of LLS rate payers who then become certified to handle and use 1080. This chemical accreditation course takes 3-4 hours and is free to rate payers.

When the project funding ceases the LLS hopes that land holders continue to maintain the established working groups.



### Guest Speakers at the next Upper Macleay Wild Dog Group Meeting in May

The next meeting with the North Coast Local Land Services and Upper Macleay Wild Dog Group will be held on **Sunday 24th May at the Willawarrin Hall from 4pm– 7pm**. Guest speakers include:

**COL WILKIE** from **Australian Vertebrate Pest Management**: the Macleay trapping program since October 2014.

**GUY BALLARD** from the NSW Industry and Investment **Vertebrate Pest Research Unit** (University of New England campus) will speak about research undertaken as part of the invasive species wild dog demonstration sites program.

The Willawarrin meeting will also discuss a group ground baiting program to be undertaken in early June. The meeting is open to all residents. Come to be informed and contribute to a constructive meeting. For further info contact Mick 6563 6700.

## Growing Organic Macadamia Nuts with Charlie Higgins

Macleay Landcare interviews Charlie Higgins. He and his wife, Jane are one of six certified organic macadamia nut growers in the Nambucca Valley where they tend to 2350 macadamia nut trees. They purchased the property with existing 25 year old trees and since then have established younger varieties.

The Higgins manage the property with the intention of long term financial, social and ecological sustainability. This means that Charlie's farm will be able to produce food without the need of chemical inputs long into the future. Macleay Landcare asks Charlie how he manages to do this...



MLN: Have you always produced nuts organically? If not what was the trigger for change?

CH: When we bought the property the orchard had been regularly sprayed with round-up to kill grasses growing under and between the established Hawaiian variety trees and a heavy tractor was used often. A hand held blower was used to push the nuts from under the trees. The soil was washing from the wheel tracks and very little soil was covered by grasses. We moved to using a lighter weight tractor with fewer passes, and stopped blowing the nuts out. We then hand sprayed a much narrower section of grass so that more ground cover was maintained to hold the soil.

***The main trigger for changing management practices was the expense. We were paying the spray contractor half of what we were getting paid for the nuts.***

MLN: Was the transition between contemporary farming and organic practices difficult?

CH: Initially we reduced the chemical use by spraying a narrower area beneath the trees, we mulched between trees forming hills and covered the roots. It took 2 years to transition and we did suffer from fruit spotting bug damage but there was no increase in damage when the spraying stopped. After this period all chemical applications ceased, including the use of Round-Up. I wanted grass cover to come back in and spraying kept us on the Phytophthora treadmill because it also killed the good bugs. We were also concerned about our own health and didn't want to use chemicals.

MLN: How did the orchard respond?

CH: There have been some good responses by the trees and some trees are still catching up from transition to organic. Part of the strategy was to increase nutrition in the form of

blood and bone and compost to the trees to help them heal from phytophthora. I developed a composting system using biodynamic microbes and TNN Formula 1. If I had my time over again I would have started sooner with a heavier application of blood and bone for more nitrogen content, with TNN Formula 1 and less carbon content in my compost. This approach would have resulted in a faster transition to organic AND high levels of production. I also spend between two to three hundred hours a year making compost.

MLN: What would be your very first recommendation to commercial producers considering going organic?

CH: I did a short course with soils expert Graham Saint at Yandina QLD where we looked at beneficial microbes in compost and compost tea brews under the microscope. I have also read a lot on Elaine Ingham. I look at neighbouring properties and copy any good management practices I see. The Nambucca valley macadamia growers are a progressive group so there's always a lot to learn from each other.

The difficulty with going organic is the 2 year delay. That is, what you do today takes about 2 years to show results and the challenge is to predict the conditions or seasonal issues in advance.

**Don't persist with a method or product if it's not working. And if you don't have a good memory, keep notes about applications, the timing, weather and your observations.**

MLN: What do you do on your orchard that sets you apart as an organic producer?

CH: I have established a fertiliser, calcium, compost and foliar spraying program that works well for my trees. I get my soils tested every two years to guide my future program. Ludwig Mueller from Agrivision helps by trialling new products on the trees, such as silica.

MLN: From a financial perspective are you better off producing organic nuts?

CH: Yes. The conventionally farmed price for nuts is \$4.60-\$4.80 per kilo (nut in shell) but as an organic grower I receive \$5.80-\$6.00 per kilo (nut in shell). A recent development for the organic macadamia nut industry is the interest shown by an international cosmetics company seeking organic oil.

***Thanks Charlie & Jane and good luck with your harvest!***

From the team at Macleay Landcare Network.



**Ludwig Mueller- AGRIVISION**

6585 0381 or 0431 133 833

**E-mail: [agrivision1@bigpond.com](mailto:agrivision1@bigpond.com)**

**Website: [www.agrivision1.com.au](http://www.agrivision1.com.au)**

## A review of biodiversity legislation in NSW Final Report

The Independent Biodiversity Legislation Review Panel has investigated the effectiveness and application of the *Native Vegetation Act 2003* and *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* in biodiversity conservation in NSW. The Panel recommends that a new piece of legislation – the Biodiversity Conservation Act– replace these existing laws.

Among other suggestions, it recommends that vegetation clearance should be treated like a development proposal and assessed using a clear and consistent approach in line with ecologically sustainable development principles. This approach is similar to the way local councils assess urban style development applications through the Environment Protection and Assessment Act.

The Panel also recommends prioritising biodiversity conservation at a bioregional or state scale rather than a site or property scale . It also recommends greater implementation of ‘ biodiversity off-setting’ for major developments.

Based on submissions and general community grumblings about the existing NV Act, the Panel indicates that a heavy regulatory approach to implementing the new law needs to be balanced with a community education and advisory service together with financial incentives. The Local Land Services has been identified as the key agency to deliver most aspects of the new Act.

For more information go to  
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/biodiversity/BiodivLawReview.pdf>

### Potential Benefits of the proposed changes include:

- better environmental outcomes
- reduced compliance burden
- minimal increase in program delivery and admin costs to NSW taxpayers

## Class 1 Weeds Workshops

8th May Bellbrook Hall 10am-1pm

20th May Willawarrin Hall 10am-1pm

Guest Speakers include KSC Greg Egan & Keegan Noble & Terry Schmitzer Mid North Coast Weeds Advisory Committee. Topics include landholder responsibility managing Class 1 weeds (Tropical Soda Apple) and control outcomes to date. **RSVP KSC 6566 3200**

## Review—Mid North Coast Farming & Land Management Expo

This event, held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March attracted 77 people from as far away as Hannam Vale, Rollands Plains and the Nambucca Valley to the Kempsey Showground for an opportunity to meet and talk with experts about various farming and property management issues.

The collaborative effort by Macleay, Hastings and Nambucca Landcare Networks together with the North Coast Local Land Services, NSW Farmers and WorkCover NSW resulted in 8 exhibitor stands and 14 short presentations on a range of interesting topics including energy efficiency using solar power



on farms, farm safety, pasture management, soil building and health, biosecurity, wild dog control, river management and mental health services for farming communities, to name a few.

If you missed this event, MLN has copies of the presentations on our website and a link to a short video featuring contacts for farming and natural resource management in the Macleay valley.



## Want to know what clearing you can do without approval under the Native Vegetation Act?

### Free local information sessions

This one is for the  
Mid North Coast

Grafton Community Centre  
59 Duke Street, Grafton  
RSVP to 6642 0622

**Wauchope, Tuesday 5 May**  
Wauchope Country Club  
24 King Street, Wauchope  
RSVP to 6563 6700

All sessions 9.30 am to 12.00 pm  
Morning tea will be provided

Sessions will cover: RAMAs, regrowth provisions and self-assessable codes for clearing paddock trees in cultivation and thinning native vegetation, new online native vegetation information tools. When do I need approval? What can I clear without approval? Can I clear paddock trees or thin native vegetation? What information and advice is available?

For more information about Native Vegetation legislation visit  
[www.environment.nsw.gov.au/vegetation](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/vegetation)

# Solar Power on the Farm

*As a bit of background to this newsletter article, Macleay Landcare interviewed Nambucca Dairy Farmers and solar energy users, David and Alison McKay in the lead up to the Farming and Land Management Expo held in March. On the day of the Expo, Gerry Flores Manager of the NSW Farmers Association Energy Innovations Program, provided exceptional detail about installing solar power for home and farm use.*



David and Alison McKay installed a 30,000 KWH direct to grid solar system on their 400 head dairy farm. The impetus to go solar was increasing farm power bills arising from milk refrigeration and irrigation costs.

The system, installed in 2009 under the Federal Government's Solar Bonus Scheme will pay itself off by the end of 2015 thanks to a generous sign up rate of 60c/ KWH rebate. Currently the rebate sits at 6 cents/ KWH for new systems.

The McKays seized the opportunity to install four sun-tracking panels as well as fixed panels on their dairy bales roof. They paid a local solar energy operator a 'significant sum' to design and install all aspects of the system.

The tracking panels are 33% more effective than the fixed panels in generating power and require surprisingly little maintenance. David said all he has to do is grease some moving parts and replace light detecting sensors when they blow on the tracking panels.

Despite the size and capacity of the solar panels, Alison and David pay for power when they irrigate pastures in the dry months of Spring.

You can download Gerry's PowerPoint presentation off our website or contact him using the details below.



**Gerry Flores**  
Energy Innovation Manager  
p: 02 9478 1004  
m: 0430 016 933  
[florestorresg@nswfarmers.org.au](mailto:florestorresg@nswfarmers.org.au)

## Riparian Zones : Where Land and Water Meet

Riparian zones are where land and water meet on the margins of wetlands, creeks, and rivers. Riparian zones adjoin or directly influence a body of water. They can include the bank and land alongside vast rivers, small creeks, and hillside gullies, and also include land around lakes, wetlands and river floodplains that connect with the river during floods. They can be natural features of the landscape or artificial, such as a farm dam. Riparian zones may occur whether the water bodies are permanent or temporary, such as gullies or wetlands that periodically dry. Riparian zones are therefore dynamic in nature.



### Why are Riparian Zones so important?

Riparian zones maintain biodiversity in the landscape and the natural corridor of vegetation links upper catchment streams to low land rivers, estuaries and the marine environment. The natural regimes of erosion, deposition, floods and droughts results in an enormous range of habitats. The vegetation in and along water courses play a key role in providing:

1. Stream bank strength and erosion protection
2. Terrestrial and aquatic habitat
3. Wildlife corridors across the landscape
4. Filtering of sediment and nutrients in overland flow from adjacent land
5. Temperature and light control

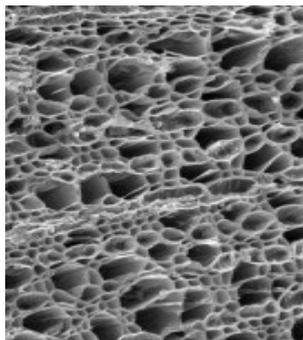
### Riparian Revegetation Guidelines

MLN is currently preparing a freshwater riparian revegetation guide to assist landholders undertaking revegetation work on their river banks. The \$2000 grant from the North Coast Local Land Services is assisting in the revision of an existing 1998 DLWC document, and it will be available on our website after June. We are hoping to secure additional funding to have hard copies available.

# Benefits of Biochar

Biochar is simply charcoal. Charcoal is carbonised organic matter produced by an oxygen reduced burning process called pyrolysis.

For farmers, the two most important factors about charcoal is its longevity, lasting hundreds of years, and its sponge like structure. The structure of Biochar comprises millions of microscopic holes and crevices which will hold air and moisture and provide housing complexes for microbes.



***“Biochar may represent the single most important initiative for humanity’s environmental future.”***

***Tim Flannery - Macquarie University Professor in Earth and Life Sciences 2008.***

Leaving aside the global environmental benefits of carbon sequestration, Biochar offers tangible benefits for local farmers:

- Increases soil water holding capacity
- Increases microbial populations
- Reduces soil compaction - so it can breathe
- Produces healthy tilth and structure (humus)
- Neutralizes and maintains soil pH
- Neutralizes soil toxins
- Improves germination of seedlings
- Provides a rich source of carbon hummus
- Increases productivity , reduces fertiliser usage
- Replenishes and retains soil nutrients
- Improves cation exchange capacity

There are currently many trials of Biochar in Australia.

**Here in the Macleay valley, George Walker is one of our members who is trialling Biochar production and usage on his property at Collombatti.**

George has been active in applying beneficial microbes (Compost Tea) to his soil and now expects that Biochar will offer similar soil improvements to that he has seen from adding beneficial microbes. To date George has built and tested two simple prototype retort kilns to make Biochar and also tried the open trench technique.

“Making Biochar is not rocket science.” Says George.

“Anyone can do it in a hole in the ground.”

George’s latest trial have included digging a pit 1.6m lng x 1.1m wide x 0.6m deep. The pit’s location confirms to the latest NSW Bush River regulations for small pile burns during the October– March permit season.

With this diameter, George should be able to produce 1 cubic metre or 1000L of Biochar. The effort is worth it because currently 5 litres of Biochar costs \$8 from the local hardware store.

George says that his Biochar will no go very far at the target application rate of 5kg per square metre, but as a one off application that will last more than 200 years– it’s well worth the effort.



## Biochar Workshop– June 2015

**What is Biochar? What are the benefits to my perennial or annual crop? How do I make it? How do I use it?**

Macleay Landcare will host a Biochar workshop in the Kempsey area in June ...we’ll keep you posted!

## Korean Pickled Garlic

**A winner at this year’s Kempsey Show**

Congratulations to Macleay Landcare member and organic garlic grower, Stephen McNamara (‘Garlic Farmacy’) for taking out first prize for his pickled garlic and second prize for the turban ‘hard neck’ garlic category (pictured) at the recent Kempsey Show.

**Korean Pickled Garlic: peel fresh or cured garlic and place in a sterilised jar. In a saucepan add 125ml soy (or tamari) sauce, 125ml rice wine vinegar, 15g sugar and 10g salt. Bring to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes. When still hot pour over garlic and seal jar. Set aside for 2 months. Note: if you use cured (or dry) garlic the pickle may turn blue! Stephen assures MLN that it’s still fantastic to eat...Bon appetit!**



## Weeding with a Difference

A sporting site in Melbourne is being used for a weed-tackling treatment that doesn't contain herbicides. A group of green thumbs have used steam to kill weeds, instead of applying chemicals.

The Weed Network's Dr David Low said they were trialling the method at Bayside Council sites. He said they had been researching chemical-free methods for working with weeds for five years. "We

have been working with Bayside Council to introduce steam weeding as an alternative to herbicide in sensitive sites used heavily by children, for example for athletics," Dr Low said.

He said a survey exploring attitudes towards herbicide use has found that 78 per cent per cent of people who used them believed they contributed to pollution. Dr Low said the findings showed a majority of people were worried about the health and environmental effects of herbicides. "People are recognising that the chemicals commonly used to manage weeds are causing pollution and health issues. They want something done to reduce this source of pollution," he said.

Photo: The Weed Network's Dr David Low is coordinating a project where they steam weeds, rather than using herbicides. Picture: Susan Windmiller



David Low (right), with weed steamer Andy Morgan.

## Australian Senate Enquiry Into Landcare

A Federal Government Senate enquiry has made 15 recommendations about Landcare's future in a recent report. The recommendations, based on 77 submissions to the enquiry affirms Landcare's enduring role in community based natural resource management and suggests that funding is returned to previous levels to avoid losing vital links to groups and individuals in the local community. Quotes from the report:

**'Landcare's enduring popularity is due to the embedded philosophy of embracing local issues, empowering communities with education extension and decision support tools that deliver practical solutions.'**

'The committee acknowledges the importance of using local groups and landholders, employing local knowledge and taking local action to achieve results. The committee supports the continued strengthening of networks and involvement of local groups in regional decision making and planning to achieve enduring outcomes on the ground.'

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment\\_and\\_Communications/landcare/Report](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Environment_and_Communications/landcare/Report)

## North Coast Local Land Services and Landcare Sign Up



On March 1st the North Coast Landcare Network and the NCLLS entered a new working relationship with the signing of a **Partnership Agreement**.

Bob Jarman, Chair of the North Coast Local Landcare Network (NCLN) and Kent Lee, Chair of the NCLLS Board both acknowledge the important role each organisation plays in delivering natural resource management, sustainable agriculture and biosecurity services to the north coast community.

Currently MLN is delivering 3 NCLLS funded projects in the Macleay: Building Resilience in our soils and landscapes, Community Capacity Support (Landcare Officer position and office), Revising Freshwater Riparian Revegetation Guidelines for Macleay catchment.

## GPG Crown Rot & Bahia Grass Control Field Day

Thursday 21st May 10am-2pm

Old Aerodrome Road area Kempsey.

Presentations by Kempsey Council Weeds Officer Greg Egan, DPI Fungus Expert David Officer, Austwest Seeds Broker Lachlan Jeffers, Macleay Landcare and Brendan O'Brien North Coast Local Land Services.

**RSVP Brendan on 6563 6709**

## Buying Australian will help to Sustain you and our Farmers

Did you know that there is only one Australian manufacturer of frozen **Australian grown** vegetables... and that's Simplot Australia?

Aside from the fact that Simplot is an American multi-National company responsible for buying up a number of Australian owned companies, it is now struggling to compete in the Australian market with other frozen vegetable companies (though recent frozen food handling and hygiene scares revealed in the media may have alleviated this).

So, how does a company that owns the supply chain begin to suffer? The reason is the cost of production, the high Australian dollar and most importantly consumers buying cheap imported vegetables.

Two well known Australian brands, Heinz and McCains, have moved their plants to New Zealand to become more competitive.

Relocating to NZ has meant that these companies are able to buy cheap imported vegetables without having to legally declare the country of origin on the packaging. They are then selling these products onto Australians as 'made in New Zealand'. Read the Landline program transcript or catch up on ABC iview at <http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2013/s3848919.htm>

So if you are like me and love to have a packet of frozen peas handy for a Sunday roast, opt for **Birdseye** or **Edgell** brands and that way you'll do your bit to support 150 farming families and 500 factory workers in Bathurst NSW and Devonport Tasmania and ensure domestic food security into the future.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) is an independent statutory agency. Most foods in Australia are required by the Food Standards Code to have country of origin labelling. Appropriate labelling is regulated by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) under Australian Consumer Law, such that

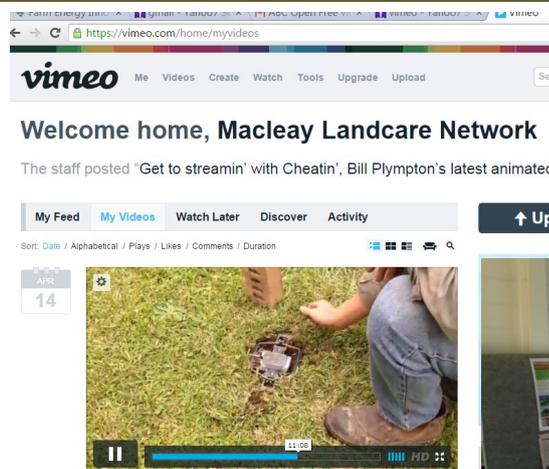
**IN Australia** Packaged food must carry a statement identifying either: the country where the food was made, produced or grown; or the country where the food was manufactured or packaged and that the food is a mix of ingredients imported into that country or a mix of local and imported ingredients.

**IN New Zealand** Country of origin labelling is **voluntary** and suppliers may choose not to display this information. When suppliers do include country of origin information, it must be accurate. However, all food must be labelled with the contact details of the food supplier in New Zealand or Australia, so you can contact the supplier and ask for details about the food..

## ABC Open Film Making

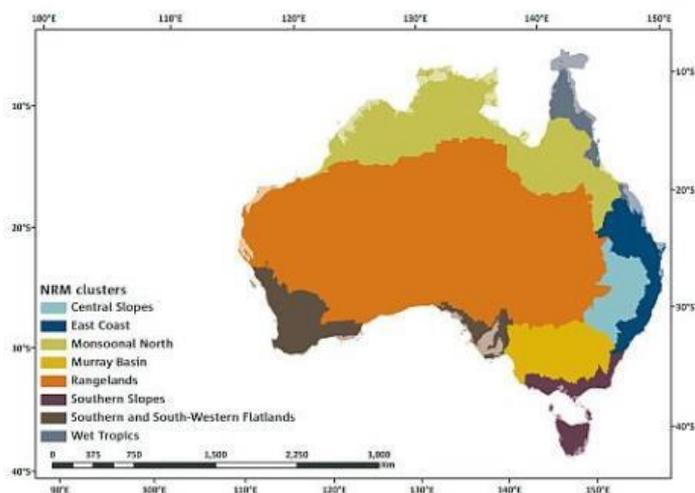
MLN and others joined Wiriya Sati from ABC Open to learn how to make short films using various devices. Short films are a great way to capture the key messages of a field day or similar event and make it available to those that may have missed the event as well as the broader community.

At the moment we have a film about setting a soft jaw trap for wild dogs or foxes available as a link on our website: [www.macleaylandcare.org.au](http://www.macleaylandcare.org.au)



# New climate projections for Australia

CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) have released updated projections for Australia's climate. The projections are based on eight NRM clusters and 15 subregions. NSW is covered by the Murray Basin, Central Slopes, Rangelands (north and south), **East Coast** (south) and Southern Slopes (south).



The projections show that average temperatures will increase, with more heat extremes and fewer cold extremes. Time in drought will increase over southern Australia, with more severe droughts. Southern and eastern Australia will experience harsher fire weather and increasing evaporation rates will reduce soil moisture. Extreme rainfall events that lead to flooding are likely to become more intense. The report includes a chapter describing how to use climate change data in impact assessment and adaptation planning. <http://www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/en/>

## KEY MESSAGES

- Average temperatures will continue to increase in all seasons (very high confidence).
- More hot days and warm spells are projected with very high confidence. Fewer frosts are projected with high confidence.
- Decreases in winter rainfall are projected with medium confidence. Other changes are possible but unclear.
- Increased intensity of extreme rainfall events is projected, with high confidence.
- Mean sea level will continue to rise and height of extreme sea-level events will also increase (very high confidence).
- A harsher fire-weather climate in the future (high confidence).
- On annual and decadal basis, natural variability in the climate system can act to either mask or enhance any long-term human induced trend, particularly in the next 20 years.

This report is an excerpt from **NRM on Farms**, a monthly e-newsletter about climate and natural resources in agriculture.

Produced by the Department of Primary Industries, the newsletter is relevant and informative with latest news about biodiversity, climate, emissions, energy, food, land use, soils, sustainability and water. You can subscribe directly to the newsletter by emailing Rebecca Lines-Kelly [rebecca.lines-kelly@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rebecca.lines-kelly@dpi.nsw.gov.au)



## Farm Gate Tour on again in the Hastings June 6-8th

This is a self-drive program set in the greater Hastings Port Macquarie & Camden Haven Valleys with farm tours at set times three times a day. **THIS TOUR PRESENTS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY to MEET FARMERS & experience LOCAL FARMING LIFE** on properties not generally open to the public.

**\$30 for a self drive booklet available from May 18th**

13 enterprises ... topics include dairy - organic and A2 milk production, organic & biological farming practice, oyster production, organic garlic farming, artisan sheep's cheese, regenerating soils through biological practice, blueberries, avocados, native bush foods, beef production & genetic breeding, building soil carbon, managing weeds & biodiversity and an opportunity to visit a 'sustainable home' in Wauchope. Booklets available online at [www.hastingslandcare.org.au](http://www.hastingslandcare.org.au) or the Hastings Landcare office 44 Cameron Street Wauchope Or call their office on 65 864465 or 0467 864465.

This is the newsletter of the Macleay Landcare Network covering the Lower Macleay Catchment

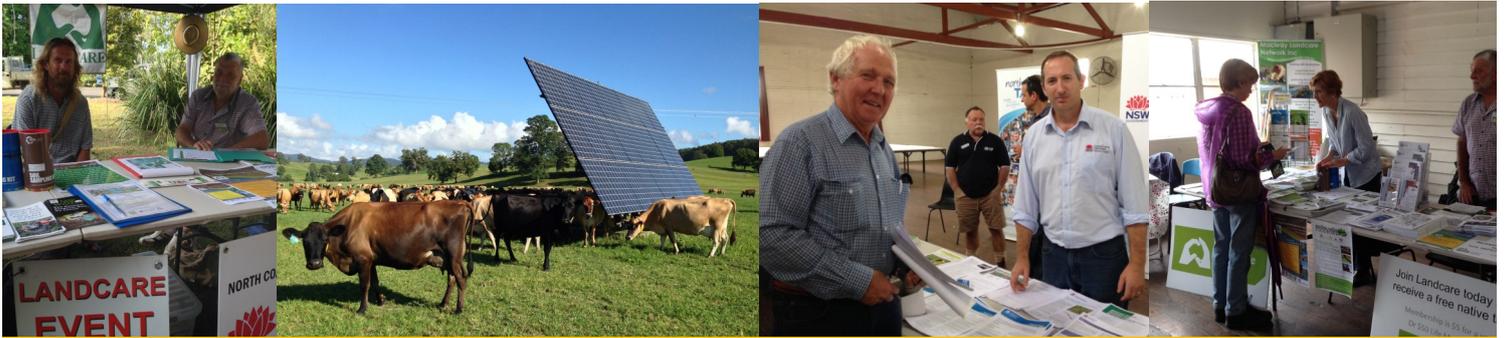
PO Box 3048, 19 Sea St Kempsey Showground NSW 2440

Tel: 02 65622076 Fax: 02 65622076 and email: [admin@macleaylandcare.org.au](mailto:admin@macleaylandcare.org.au)



Macleay  
**Landcare**  
Network Inc.

Welcome to the following new members: Gaye Buchanan, Wayne Riddal, Fiona Walker, Janelle Wooldridge, Jo-Anne Woods, Chris Woolley, Sean Boulton, Penni Couham, Toby Davis, Trudie Franklin, Terry O’Conner, Tim Fox, Andre Hofman, Julie Hulme, Jenny Puch, Karen Smedlye, Jon Radley, Glen Ravo, Lynette Robinson, Fiona Sharpe, Rhys Thomas, and Sally from Diya Plants native nursery.



**MACLEAY LANDCARE– SUPPORTING NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT and SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN THE MACLEAY VALLEY**



This newsletter is produced by the Landcare Officers and support staff of the Macleay Landcare Network Inc. with assistance received in funding from the North Coast Local Land Services.

Whilst Macleay Landcare Network Inc. makes every effort to publish accurate and up to date information, the MLN and its employees do not accept responsibility for inaccuracies and or opinions that may be expressed in this newsletter.

## MLN Committee Meetings

***Bi-MONTHLY every last Wednesday of the month . Next Meeting: Wed 27th May from 6pm at Macleay Landcare Office 19 Sea St, Kempsey Showground***

A reminder that members are invited to the Macleay Landcare Network’s Committee Meetings.

Come along to find out more about this network and how we are working with the community.

RSVP on 6562 2076.

## Events Calendar

Date and Time	Location	Event Theme
5th May 9:30am–12noon	Wauchope Country Club 24 King Street	Local Land Services: Clearing under the Native Vegetation Act
8th May 10am-1pm	Bellbrook Hall	Kempsey Council: Class 1 Weeds Workshop & Tropical Soda Apple
20th May 10am-1pm	Willawarrin Hall	Class 1 Weeds Workshop & TSA
21st May 10am-1pm	Old Aerodrome Road area	LLS: Parramatta Grass Crown Rot and Bahia Grass Control
6-8th June	Hastings Valley	Hastings Landcare: Farm Gate Tour . Ph 65 864465