

**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      DECEMBER 2017**

*Please distribute this newsletter to others in your networks and groups, or refer them to the link at [www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au).*

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

I would like to personally express my thanks to the GCG community for all your inputs to the health of our catchment, its water, ecology and communities, resulting in the very pleasing award at the ACT Landcare awards dinner on 23 November (see below if you've not already heard). Two major awards to GCG within a month must surely demonstrate how highly our catchment work is valued! I look forward to chatting about this when we meet at the **AGM and Xmas Party on 11 December**. Also, welcome to Sutton Landcare which has recently joined as a member of Ginninderra Catchment Group.

*Sandy Lolicato*

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## **From the GCG office, Frogwatch and Waterwatch**

### ***GENERAL GCG & LANDCARE***

#### **CONGRATULATIONS!!**

Ginninderra Catchment Group was announced as the winner of the Fairfax Landcare Community Group Award for 2017, at the ACT Landcare Awards Dinner on 23 November! This award is testimony to all the work that the Group has achieved over the last 21 years. Big congratulations and thanks to all the hard-working volunteers and staff over the years who have made this award possible!

To make the night even better, people in GCG won or were involved in five other awards:

- ❖ **Lenore Hodgkinson**, Convenor of North Belconnen Landcare Group and Landcare for Littlies, won the prestigious Australian Government **Individual Landcarer Award** (see photo of Lenore with Dr Peter Bridgwater).
- ❖ **Anke Maria Hoefer** won the **ACT Government Environment Community Support Award**.
- ❖ **Karissa Preuss** received the **Highly Commended Award** in the **ACT Government Environment Community Support Category**.
- ❖ The **ACT Catchment/Parkcare Groups and Conservation Volunteers Australia Green Army Program Partnership** won the **Australian Government Partnerships for Landcare Award**.
- ❖ **Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch Program**, of which GCG is a significant contributor, now through Bruno, won the **ACT Government Citizen Science Award**.



The photo below shows members of GCG who were at the dinner. More information is at the ACT Landcare and Waterwatch Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ACTlandwater/>



Catchment Groups were clearly shown to be central to community Environmental Management in the ACT over the course of the evening. The ACT Environment Minister Mick Gentleman and many other dignitaries were present. Many award-winners used the opportunity to highlight the current funding situation and importance of ongoing funding to Catchment Groups and to Frogwatch if the ACT is to continue its outstanding work for the environment.

It was a wonderful evening, and we have even more to celebrate at the Christmas Party now!!

#### **REMINDER: AGM and XMAS PARTY**

A reminder that the GCG **AGM** will be held from **5 pm on Monday 11 December**. It will be in the GCG office building, still signposted as the Kippax Health Centre, Holt (behind Kippax shopping centre). During the AGM, Bruno Ferronato will give a short presentation on turtles and their health in our catchment.

The GCG **Xmas party** will immediately follow the AGM, at **6 pm** in the internal courtyard of the building. **All welcome!** Please rsvp for catering reasons.

## A NEW NATIONAL LANDCARE ORGANISATION

The Boards of the National Landcare Network and Landcare Australia met in Canberra on 23 November to re-affirm their commitment to move forward with the formation of a new national Landcare organisation.

They agreed on the next steps to make this happen, with the due diligence to be completed by Christmas and the new entity to be established before the end of this financial year. Once formed, this new organisation **will give the Landcare movement a single national organisation** working on its behalf, which will combine and build on the representative capacity and voice of the NLN and the marketing, education, fundraising and program delivery skills of Landcare Australia. Both organisations are committed to doing what is best for community Landcare, and recognise that they will have a greater impact together.

The National Landcare Network, the National representative body for Landcare, also met in Canberra last week for the AGM and a series of meetings. Representatives from each State and Territory flew in for the event. **Dr Peter Bridgewater** from Landcare ACT was elected Chair of the National Landcare Network (NLN) Board. **Karissa** was elected Chair of the NLN Members Council, the representative component of the NLN (she will be carrying out these duties outside GCG hours).

Email Karissa for details: [landcare@ginninderralandcare.org.au](mailto:landcare@ginninderralandcare.org.au)

## ACT ENVIRONMENT GRANTS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED

GCG has been successful in three grants

- **Blackberry control in the Ginninderra Catchment:** \$5537 – This project will undertake blackberry control to improve native habitat and enhance connectivity of natural temperate grasslands, Box-Gum woodlands and riparian areas in the Ginninderra Catchment.
- **Adult poplar removal to restore Ginninderra Creek corridor at Macgregor:** \$1482 – This project will remove invasive exotic adult poplars along the Ginninderra Creek riparian corridor to improve management of a riparian ecosystem.
- **Citizen science Frogphone monitoring trials:** \$15,000 – This project will support citizen science to trial the use of new monitoring technology in isolated and remote locations to improve the efficacy and accuracy of collecting data on wildlife populations in the ACT

## WELCOME TO SUTTON LANDCARE

We welcome Sutton Landcare into the GCG family of Landcare groups. Sutton Landcare's area starts just north of Mulligans Flat and the ACT border. It includes the Yass River, which is now monitored for water quality by Bruno and his Waterwatch team. This means GCG now has two key NSW Landcare Group members: Wallaroo/Hall and Sutton.

## HEALTHY WATERWAYS INFORMATION SESSION

Last month, Justin Foley gave an update on the ACT Healthy Waterways program, which aims to protect and improve long-term water quality in the ACT and Murrumbidgee river system.

There are three proposed works in the Ginninderra Catchment, which are all expected to see construction in the first half of 2018. They are: Croke Place Wetland; Wetland on corner of Ginninderra Dr and Copland Dr; and Creek works on Tattersalls Cres., Florey. Community info will be provided by letterbox drop to nearby residents and via the webpage. For more information see <http://www.environment.act.gov.au/water/ACT-Healthy-Waterways/healthy-waterways/act-healthy-waterways-project>

Fiona Dyer from University of Canberra also gave an update on related water quality research. Two projects have been undertaken: 1) Research at Lake Tuggeranong and Isabella ponds. This is looking at what is driving the algal blooms in the lake: in-lake or stormwater nutrients. The resulting information will be used to look at what management needs to do to stop nutrients from creating

the blooms. Trials will be developed following more info. 2) The second project is on urban ponds. Urban ponds are used to trap and process nutrients to improve the quality of water entering river systems. Research is looking at how best to manage water levels so the ponds function at maximum effectiveness. For this, a series of trials is exploring how the ponds process nutrients. This research project should improve our knowledge about the wetlands and ponds of the ACT. Fassifern and Jarramlee are part of the project. (Wetlands in Dickson and Lyneham and Coombs are also in it).

*Karissa Preuss, Executive Officer*

## ***WATERWATCH***

Thanks to everyone who helped in the water bug (macroinvertebrate) surveys this Spring. It was great and I hope to see you (and new volunteers are welcome as well) in March–April for the Autumn bug blitz.

CONGRATULATIONS to all the Waterwatch volunteers (Ginninderra and Yass) who have been helping in our program at Ginninderra Catchment Group! The Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch Program, which GCG contributes significantly towards, **won the ACT Government Citizen Science Award**, at the ceremony on 23 November at the Awards Dinner in Pialligo.

*Bruno Ferronato, Waterwatch Coordinator*

## **News from within Ginninderra Creek catchment**

### ***Umbagog Landcare, Latham***

On Saturday 4 November we had a successful working bee, cutting and daubing Box Elder, Willow and Privet along the creek from the Axe Grinding Grooves down towards the stepping stones. On the Macgregor side of the creek there were considerably more woody weeds, and so we need to concentrate on these spots in our December working bee.

We saw a number of small birds, Reed Warblers and Cisticolas as we made our tunnels through the reeds to get to the woody weeds close to the creek banks.

Thanks to all who came and helped.

#### **All are welcome at our next working bee: 8 am Saturday 2 December**

This working bee begins at our summer starting time, **8 am**. The main focus this month will be the woody weeds along the Macgregor side of the creek between the Axe Grinding Grooves and the Florey Drive carpark.

**Meeting point:** carpark off Florey Drive, Latham. People will need to sign on and off so they are covered for insurance purposes.

**Contact on the day:** Caroline [0428 349 473](tel:0428349473)

**What to bring:** Please wear long sleeves, long pants, thick socks and sturdy shoes, hat, sunscreen, drinking water and gloves.

If the weather is too wet Caroline will send out an **email at 7 am**, so please check your email prior to coming along.

The January Working Bee is likely to be on 6 January 2018.

*Celina Smith, Convenor*

### ***Friends of Aranda Bushland***

Our summer work parties are on the **first Sunday of the month**, 8.30 am and 11.30 am. See our website for details: <http://friendsofarandabushland.org.au>.

### Weeding

This spring we have had a veritable explosion of St John's Wort in the Snow Gums reserve and we are determined not to let it set seed. Therefore, we are meeting every Sunday morning, instead of once a month, to remove as many plants as possible, especially the ones with flowers, as they form each week. We will continue this through the summer, until the St John's Wort flowering and seeding period is over.

### Erosion control

At our November workparty we placed our newly-made coir logs in a shallow eroded depression, securing them with short star pickets and covering them with branches to prevent the kangaroos from eating them (*left photo above*). We also constructed another leaky weir in the deep erosion gully, using tall star pickets and a length of ringlock netting (*right photo above*).

*Jenny Andrews, Convenor, Friends of Aranda Bushland*



## Crace Landcare Group

REMINDER: The next date for a Crace Landcare working bee is this coming weekend, 9 – 10.30 am, **Sunday 3 December**. See <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CraceLandcare/about/>

*Fleur Leary, Convenor*

## North Belconnen Landcare

North Belconnen Landcare Group – Junior Landcare (Landcare for Littlies) meets **every Wednesday and Saturday at 9.30 am** until the work is done or the weather is too warm. We start earlier in warmer weather, and at flexible times in school holidays to suit whoever is available to do landcare. Latest times and activities are posted on North Belconnen Landcare Group Facebook page in OPEN Groups. Or contact Lenore Hodgkinson on mob 0421 746 693. We welcome all ages, from 1–2 years to over 90 years, and newcomers, especially in the holiday season when many regulars go away.

Our group focuses on planting for more biodiversity at our site, as well as maintaining the grasslands and trying to reduce the weeds – especially Chilean Needlegrass and African Lovegrass.

We do not use chemicals but dig weeds out or smother them with newspaper and mulch on top, a method that works well if there are no 'goodies' in the patch. It is a quick way to eradicate 'baddies', as the children call them. This is also a good way to prepare an area for new plantings, with forward planning because it takes about 9–12 months to kill the weeds. Native plants grow well when planted into the mulched area. New mulch contains toxins that kill weeds, so mulch to be used near good native plants must be aged first.

The citizen science part of our group is led by Ken Hodgkinson. He is collecting useful data from follow up assessments of areas that were burnt and mowed and then planted with 5 different species of native plants. Survival data is showing significant results.

It was very exciting at the Landcare Awards Dinner on Thursday 23 November when Lenore (Convenor of the Junior Landcare group) was announced the winner of the **Australian Government Individual Landcarer Award**. Our Landcare Group is grateful to the staff of the Ginninderra Catchment Group office without whose support and help we would not be able to continue and certainly would not have been able to win such an award.

Congratulations to Karissa Preuss for her Award at the Awards night. She works so tirelessly to help us all. Thanks also to Fiona Spier and others in the GCG office.



Our Landcare group is looking forward to seeing everyone at the Christmas Party on Monday 11 December. We hope to muster some of our Junior Landcare Band families to lead some singalong items.

The photo (from the Facebook page) shows April Yan getting ready for Landcare for Littlies.

*Lenore Hodgkinson, Convenor*

### ***Friends of the Pinnacle (FOTPIN)***

The November Update on FOTPIN's activities (No. 21) is now online at [http://www.fotpin.org.au/newsletters/fotpin-update\\_21.pdf](http://www.fotpin.org.au/newsletters/fotpin-update_21.pdf). It covers the Whitlam Pipeline, interaction with Belconnen High School, Spring walks, Aboriginal Heritage walks, the ParkCare display at Jamison, a Vegwatch Forum, Butterflies at the Pinnacle, the Annual Planning Meeting, and the Weetangera Primary School fete.

For the **pipeline to the new suburb Whitlam**, crossing the Pinnacle Reserve, the Update includes a map showing the final alignment of the pipeline corridor. There will be temporary fencing during construction, with gates to allow passage for Reserve users and wildlife. The Update outlines proposals for rehabilitating native vegetation after construction.

There is to be a **butterfly walk** at the Reserve on 11 February, led by Suzi Bond. Suitable areas will be scoped during January.

With the support of the Ginninderra Catchment Group, FOTPIN has succeeded in obtaining a grant to run two **Aboriginal Heritage walks** at the Pinnacle in 2018. One date (to be confirmed) may be a Sunday during the 2018 Heritage Festival (April 14–29).

*John Brannan, Convenor*

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

*The Friends of Mulligans Flat has over 450 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.*

*Our monthly work party is held on the second Wednesday of each month. Meet at the Woolshed at 9:30 am. We also have seasonal work parties 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.*

**November Work Party.** With the Paterson's Curse now flowering and carrying viable seeds it was down to picking and bagging the horrible weed. With about 15 people helping we covered about 25 hectares in a couple of hours – a great effort. Fortunately, the density was not too heavy and they pulled out easily following the recent rains.

The photos below show the area *before* (left) and *after* (right) our work.

Mark Smith, Convenor



### ***Mt Rogers Landcare (Spence, Melba, Flynn, Fraser)***

On Monday 13 November, hours after we'd continued our assault on the Tree of Heaven with Anne, Ted and Diana, Angharad and I hosted a group of about twenty Murrungundie Guides for a stroll on Mt Rogers. They normally meet at Charnwood near the Mt Rogers Scouts' Hall but wanted to renew acquaintance with the hill.

In August 2010 some of their predecessors planted shrubs 50 m in from the Wickens Place carpark. This sprummer the shrubs flowered again. The pale yellow Early Wattle flowers were especially welcome in late winter.

Four leaders, including Rhonda who's been an inspiring local Guide Leader for over 30 years, took over from the girls' parents at 18.00 hrs. We strolled along the Tween Tanks track where Angharad introduced them to the Frogmouths. Father was on the nest with a just-visible chick with mother in typical Frogmouth pose on a nearby branch. The Field Guide came in handy.

We pointed out the differences in the trees' ages by their sizes, noting that the others had been planted as the four suburbs were built around Mt Rogers 45–50 years ago. The view across CSIRO land and Hall to Spring Range offered the chance to mention the opportunities of the Centennial Trail's walks. As we came within 200 m of the summit, the impact of Gungahlin and Crace was clear and treeless.

Once at the summit the girls began working out the compass points and where their homes were. Rhonda asked them what they thought the Trig Point was for. As we walked we found ourselves being asked questions about the plants, the birds we saw and heard (the Bronzewing Pigeons were calling) and the likelihood of snakes and lizards. There were always excited interactions between the girls. Currawongs' calls increased as pre-dusk approached.

The Guides divided into patrol groups to work out the next few weeks' programs whilst drinking water and eating their snacks. They were able to complete missions in their Nature Play CBR Passports having seen birds, a few flowers, the different trees and shrubs, bugs, beetles and the distant views.



We pointed out the wild oats, relating them to porridge and saying the plants were normally taller but the rain pattern had kept the stalks shorter. On the return journey we paused at the Bench Mark Tree for further drinks and a few photos.

As we neared Wickens Place again one adult heard "And we can see the sunset!". If only more learning and fun could be scheduled outdoors! Thanks for coming, Guides. You made our day!

Thanks to Rhonda for providing the lower photo, and for her improvements to my photo above it.

*Rosemary Blemings, Convenor*

**NOTE:**

To contact the Landcare Group Convenors, email or phone the GCG office, or check the groups' webpages on the GCG website at: [www.ginninderralandcare.org.au](http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au) > Landcare > Landcare groups.

## Around the region

### *ACT Government weeds management, 8 December talk by Steve Taylor*

In this talk, **10.45 to 12.30 on Friday 8 December**, Steve Taylor will speak about the ACT weeds legislation, major ACT weed containment and eradication strategies and approaches, keeping up with changes in thinking and technology, and training and use of professional staff, contractors and volunteers. Also, the use of Facebook and other online media to identify new weeds, and approaches to extreme weed control and use of drones.

**AT:** NSW Government Offices (the rusty building), 11 Farrer Place, Queanbeyan, organised by K2C. You must register with [geoffrobertson@iprimus.com.au](mailto:geoffrobertson@iprimus.com.au), ph. 0403 221 117, to be met in the foyer, and taken to the meeting room. See [https://www.parkopedia.com.au/parking/canberra\\_queanbeyan/](https://www.parkopedia.com.au/parking/canberra_queanbeyan/) for info on where you can park.

### *Alligator Weed – LOOK OUT!*

This is an alert to look out for Alligator Weed in waterways. It has been found in **Yerrabi Pond**, Isabella Weir, **Ginninderra Creek** and Lake Burley Griffin. Alligator Weed is an aquatic plant that is prohibited and notifiable plant under ACT legislation. It is also listed as a Weed of National Significance.

If you think you have spotted Alligator Weed at the edge of a waterway, contact Access Canberra or 'Fix my Street' to arrange for someone to check the sighting and arrange removal if necessary. **Do not try to remove it manually yourself**, because when you break the stem, pieces can float downstream and establish elsewhere. For more details and a photo see the [e-brochure on the GCG website](#).



### *Walk the Border – what a feat!*

It's well worth checking out the blog written about the Walk the Border feat that Conservation Council President Rod Griffiths completed in October. The photos at the blog are outstanding and the commentary gives invaluable observations about the land that the border crosses. They are particularly valuable because few people get to see those lands in person. See <https://walktheborderact.wordpress.com/>

## ***Planting to attract native birds – a factsheet from Greening Australia***

Greening Australia has produced a handy fact sheet (compiled by Nicki Taws and Catherine Ross) that describes what to plant to attract native birds to gardens in the ACT region. See:

[https://www.greeningaustralia.org.au/uploads/knowledge-portal/Planting\\_for\\_birds\\_brochure.pdf](https://www.greeningaustralia.org.au/uploads/knowledge-portal/Planting_for_birds_brochure.pdf)

## ***Snakes Alive! – 15 to 21 January 2018***

This amazing annual exhibition of Australian Reptiles and Amphibians is not to be missed!! It is organised by the ACT Herpetological Association, a great bunch of very enthusiastic people that like to share their wealth of knowledge and their appreciation for our herpetofauna. The exhibition will run from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2018, 10 am to 4 pm daily, at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Each day several feeding sessions are on show as well as interesting talks about herpetological facts. Kids and adults simply love this event and it is a fantastic activity for the school holidays and the perfect gift for Christmas, easily combined with a voucher for a picnic or a visit at the ANBG's café!!

## ***National Heritage Places map available online***

The new [National Heritage Places map](#) documents the places of outstanding heritage importance to Australia. Together these places tell Australia's story from its earliest fossil records to the long history of Indigenous settlement of this continent, and events that have made Australia what it is today. The front of the map shows the locations of National Heritage listed places, and the back has a summary of their Indigenous, natural and cultural values. (This item comes from the *Weekly Landcare snapshot for Riverina & Murray*, sent out by Bindi Vanzella.)

## **UPCOMING DATES**

(\*indicates working bee)

\*2 December Umbagog Landcare

\*3 December Crace Landcare

\*3 December Friends of Aranda Bushland

\*4 December Mt Rogers Landcare

8 December ACT weeds management, talk at Queanbeyan. Must register.

**11 December AGM followed by the Christmas Party**

**15–21 January Snakes Alive!**

\*Every Wednesday and Saturday, North Belconnen Landcare

\*Thursdays, Friends of the Pinnacle (FOTPIN)

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

