



# **Ginninderra Catchment Group**

## **FY23/24 Annual Report**

Prepared for the  
**Ginninderra Catchment Group**  
**Annual General Meeting FY23/24**

November 2024



## CHAIR'S REPORT

### Chair Report 2023-2024

First and foremost thanks to Kat, our Executive Officer, and the GCG staff team for maintaining our organisation. They have once again delivered great outcomes this year. The role they play is vital in supporting our 33 member groups and their volunteers to do all the on-ground work we do.

Some notable statistics for the 2023-2024 year are:

- Planted over 1,500 native plant species
- Undertaken over 12 hectares of weed control
- Hosted over 40 community events, including workshops and clean-up days
- Supported 40 Waterwatch Volunteers across 47 sites
- Supported 592 Frogwatch surveys across 220 sites
- GCG website had over 31,000 views

Next year we will develop a new Strategic Plan and I'm hoping this will be an exciting opportunity for all of us to draw on our past experiences, to celebrate what we have achieved to date and to come up with an inspirational vision to assist us to carry our work forwards.

- What do you want your patch to look like in 10 – 20 years,
- What is your vision for Ginninderra Creek?
- Can we replace concrete with soil and plants?
- How do we build ongoing community stewardship for our local environment?
- What areas in the catchment do we need to protect from future urban development?
- How do we learn from our indigenous elders?

Another key element of going forward will be the actual on-grounds works of the Urban Rivers Project kick-starting in 2024-2025. For this year we have been part of a lot of project planning and via that we have a good base for the delivery of on-ground works. It will be an exciting project.

I'd also like to acknowledge the role of the GCG Executive Committee. The Committee is a key part of the governance of the Ginninderra Catchment Group. The Committee carries legal and organisational responsibilities, and we work to maintain and build our member groups, ensure that the culture of the organisation is supportive to staff and volunteers and we keep our governance in line with the systems and accountability required of a non-government organisation undertaking environmental activities.

We need to acknowledge and thank our funding providers including the ACT Government, the Commonwealth Government, ICON Water and Corporate Volunteer sponsors.

On behalf of Ginninderra Catchment Group thank you to all our dedicated staff, Executive Committee, members groups and volunteers for all you do. Thank you all.

Clare Henderson  
Chair, Ginninderra Catchment Group  
2023-2024

## GCG CATCHMENT REPORT

### Introduction

The Ginninderra Catchment Group (GCG) is proud to present its 2023-2024 Annual Report, highlighting a year of impactful community-led environmental stewardship, innovative projects, and strengthened partnerships.

This year's achievements reflect our commitment to preserving and enhancing the natural environment of the Ginninderra catchment area while fostering community engagement and collaboration. From habitat restoration and citizen science programs to educational initiatives and strategic planning, GCG has continued to empower volunteers, engage stakeholders, and deliver measurable outcomes for biodiversity and ecological health. This report celebrates the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and partners in advancing sustainable conservation practices for the benefit of current and future generations.

### Staff

#### **Kathryn McGilp**

Executive Officer

#### **Bruno de Oliveira Ferronato**

Project Officer (from October 2023), and  
Turtle Project Officer

#### **Fiona Spier**

Project Officer (until August 2023)

#### **Yolandi Vermaak**

Waterwatch Coordinator

#### **Anke Maria Hoefer**

ACT and Region Frogwatch Coordinator

#### **Jarrod Ruch**

Rural Projects Officer (until February 2024)

#### **Suzanne Richardson**

Communications Officer and Project  
Assistant

#### **Rouane Bannister**

Assistant Projects and Communications  
Officer (from September 2023)

#### **Julian Low**

Finance Officer

### Committee

<b>Position</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Chair</b>	Clare Henderson	Clare Henderson
<b>Deputy Chair</b>	John Giacon	Ken Hodgkinson
<b>Secretary</b>	Vacant	Vacant
<b>Treasurer</b>	John Connelly	John Connelly
<b>Education and Community Engagement Officer</b>	Vacant	Vacant

<b>Public Officer</b>	John Pugh	John Pugh
<b>General Members</b>	Wally Bell	Wally Bell
	Roan Dunstone	Roan Dunstone
	Ken Hodgkinson	John Giacon
	Bob Richardson	Sandy Lolicato

## Members

Crace Landcare	Higgins Landcare Group
Croke Place Lions Landcare	Holt Micro-Forest Landcare
Emu Creek Landcare	Jarramlee Park Landcare
Friends of Aranda Bushland	Kuringa Woodlands Landcare
Friends of Budjan Galindji (Franklin Grasslands - FOG)	Landcare of Lawson
Friends of Flea Bog Creek	Macgregor Landcare
Friends of Gossan Hill	Maribyrnong Community Climate Action Group (Kaleen Landcare)
Friends of Gundara Street Neighbourhood Playground	Melba Landcare Group
Friends of Harrison Wetlands	Moncrieff Landcare (Moncrieff Litter Action Group)
Friends of Mount Painter	Mount Rogers Landcare
Friends of Mulligans Flat	Mulanggang Traditional Aboriginal Landcare
Friends of The Pinnacle (fotpin)	Native Grassland Restoration Landcare
Friends of Wangara Parks	North Belconnen Landcare
Friends of Yerrabi Pond	Sutton Landcare
Giralang Pond Landcare	Umbagog Landcare
Hall Landcare	Wallaroo Landcare
Hawker Community Landcare	

## COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CEESP) 2023-2024

### Overview

The Ginninderra Catchment Group (GCG) led the CEESP program, funded by the ACT Government's Environment, Planning, and Sustainable Development Directorate. The program aimed to engage the community in environmental education and stewardship activities, focusing on urban open spaces, local waterways, and reserve lands in the ACT. Through partnerships with ACT NRM, member groups, and various stakeholders, GCG fostered community involvement in preserving biodiversity and promoting conservation.

### Program Objectives

**Supporting Member Groups:** Engaged 33 member groups, including Urban, ParkCare, and Rural Landcare groups, providing resources, administrative and project support.

**Community Engagement and Education:** Enhanced community environmental literacy, habitat restoration, and volunteer skill-building.

### Key Activities and Events

**Community Events and On-Ground Work:** The program organised over 41 community participation events, including planting days, clean-up activities, and workshops. Notable events included the Wildbark Community Day, engaging 150+ participants.

**Educational Workshops:** Workshops fostered skills in sustainable land management and involved diverse community groups. Over 375 volunteer hours were recorded, contributing to revegetation and habitat restoration.

**Corporate and School Engagement:** Engaged with local businesses, schools, and community councils to broaden participation. Events such as corporate volunteer days with AECOM at Budjan Galindji and school engagement programs promoted hands-on learning.

### Program Achievements

**Revegetation Efforts:** Planted over 1,531 native plants across 244.85 hectares, including trees, shrubs, and grasses. Key species planted included *Eucalyptus rossii*, *Acacia dealbata*, and various native grasses. These efforts supported habitat restoration and increased biodiversity across urban and semi-urban landscapes.

**Weed Control:** Managed invasive species over 12.28 hectares, focusing on St. John's Wort, African Love Grass, and other exotic species across key sites including Budjan Galindji and Kaleen Grasslands.

**Community Education and Stewardship:** Developed targeted communication strategies, including newsletters, social media campaigns, and events that reached over 1,200 community members. The program's Facebook posts, like those promoting World Bee Day and World Wetlands Day, achieved over 13,000 views.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

The program fostered collaboration between GCG, ACT Government, regional catchment groups, and local community organisations. It facilitated consultations on the ACT Nature Conservation Strategy and the Upper Murrumbidgee Draft Strategy, contributing to policy development and strategic planning. This engagement ensured that community perspectives were integrated into land management strategies and conservation goals.

### **Challenges and Adaptations**

**Weather and Environmental Conditions:** Extended periods of wet weather and fluctuating environmental conditions posed challenges for on-ground activities. The program adapted by shifting event schedules and using online platforms for community engagement.

**Volunteer Engagement:** While the program attracted new volunteers, sustaining ongoing participation required continuous engagement efforts, including recognition events such as the GCG Christmas Party and volunteer appreciation activities.

### **Outcomes and Impact**

**Enhanced Environmental Stewardship:** Over 100 new volunteers gained skills in environmental management, fostering a culture of stewardship within the community. Engagement events like the Wildbark Community Day provided opportunities for hands-on learning.

**Increased Community Capacity:** The program's support for member groups facilitated 32 new project proposals and funding applications, contributing to long-term sustainability in local conservation efforts.

**Improved Environmental Awareness:** Through a combination of on-ground activities and digital outreach, the program reached thousands of community members, increasing understanding of waterway health, native species, and habitat restoration.

### **Conclusion**

The CEESP program 2023-2024 successfully met its objectives of promoting environmental education and stewardship in the Ginninderra Catchment area. By supporting diverse community groups, engaging stakeholders, and delivering targeted education initiatives, the program has laid a strong foundation for ongoing conservation efforts. GCG remains

committed to empowering the community to protect and enhance the natural environment in the ACT.

### **Acknowledgments**

This program was made possible through the support of the ACT Government's Environment, Planning, and Sustainable Development Directorate, ACT NRM, and the numerous volunteers and community members who participated in and supported these activities.



## MAJOR CATCHMENT PROJECTS

### **Connecting Nature, Connecting People (CNCP) Program**

This ACT Government-funded program focused on habitat connectivity through community events and restoration projects. GCG collaborated with Emu Creek Landcare Group for biodiversity assessments, including VegWatch monitoring, soil testing, and heat mapping across three stages of revegetation.

The pilot site at Emu Creek featured revegetation trials, with data collected to inform future restoration efforts. Additionally, GCG hosted two pollinator workshops in partnership with Canberra NatureMapr, training volunteers to survey and identify pollinators as part of the Canberra Urban Biodiversity Surveys (CUBS). The program embraced a holistic approach to conservation, connecting habitats across the landscape.

### **Celebrating Excellence at the 2024 ACT Landcare Awards**

The Ginninderra Catchment Group proudly celebrated the achievements of community members at the 2024 ACT Landcare Awards in Throsby, hosted by Landcare ACT. This event recognised volunteers, nonprofits, First Nations peoples, and farmers dedicated to environmental stewardship. GCG winners included

- The Bush on the Boundary Committee (Australian Government Community Partnerships Landcare Award) and
- Sarah Sharp (Women in Landcare Award),
- Jenny Andrews (Highly Commended for the Women in Landcare Award).

Supported by the ACT Government, Landcare Australia, the Australian Government, and Woolworths, the event highlighted the shared commitment to a sustainable future.

### **Drain Stencilling Project**

Completed by Bruno and Kat, this project aimed to enhance public awareness of stormwater and its impact on local waterway health. Stencils with messages such as “Only rain down the stormwater drain” were applied to over 90 stormwater drain sump covers across ten areas, including shopping centres in Belconnen and Gungahlin. This initiative helps educate the community on protecting water quality.

### **Farm Dam Restoration in the Upper Murrumbidgee**

In partnership with the Murray-Darling Healthy Rivers program, this project focused on sustainable farming, biodiversity enhancement, and water quality improvement in Sutton and Wallaroo. Key achievements include planting 335 trees and 1,100 aquatic plants across 6.45 hectares, with the involvement of 35 volunteers. The initiative supported the Murray-Darling Basin Plan through best-practice natural resource management. The project was funded by the Australian Government’s Murray–Darling Healthy Rivers Program.

## ACT ENVIRONMENT GRANT PROJECTS

### **Umbagog Grasslands Track Restoration**

From June 2022 to December 2023, this project aimed to restore critically endangered grasslands in the Umbagog District Park, addressing erosion along tracks in the Blue Devil and Native Sunray Grasslands.

Supported by an ACT Environment Grant, activities included designing sustainable tracks, manual weeding, and planting native species across 1.8 hectares. Around 25 kg of native grass seeds was sown over 0.3 hectares, with 304 meters of track restored. Educational signage was installed to raise public awareness of grassland conservation.

The initiative involved GCG, Umbagog Landcare Group, and other partners, and contributed to long-term habitat and ecosystem conservation and enhancement.

### **Parkcare Reserves Weed Management**

Supported by an ACT Environment Grant, the Invasive Species Weed Warriors project focused on managing invasive weeds across 365 hectares in three key ACT nature reserves: Budjan Galindji (Franklin), Mount Painter, and The Pinnacle.

Over 12 months, Parkcare volunteers and contractors treated 13.11 hectares of invasive species, including Blackberry, Serrated Tussock, Saint John's Wort, and African Lovegrass.

Restoration efforts included sowing 162 kg of Themeda grass seed across 2.8 hectares.

The project engaged over 20 volunteers and provided training for community members.

This initiative strengthened community conservation skills and contributed to the ecological health of local reserves.

### **Gungahlin Urban Revegetation**

From March to November 2023, the Gungahlin Urban Revegetation project, funded by the ACT Nature in the City Grant, engaged over 305 participants in 41 community events.

Activities included planting 1,531 native trees, shrubs, and grasses across 244.85 hectares and conducting weed control over 2.28 hectares.

The project fostered environmental stewardship, with over 100 new volunteers gaining skills in conservation and revegetation. Community clean-up efforts removed 5 kg of waste from 3.74 hectares, enhancing the ecological health and appearance of urban areas including Crace and Franklin Ponds.

The initiative involved 26 partner organisations, contributing to the restoration and long-term sustainability of Gungahlin's natural spaces.

## **Harrison Wetlands Project**

The Harrison Wetlands project, funded by an ACT Environment Grant, focused on improving biodiversity and habitat quality across approximately 16 hectares. Key activities included a community planting event on Moullakis Island, where 19 participants, including corporate volunteers from KPMG, planted 135 native trees, shrubs, and wetland sedges over 0.22 hectares. The project also involved weed control across 15.7 hectares, targeting woody weeds and Serrated Tussock. With 15 first-time participants, the event fostered skills in conservation and environmental stewardship. The initiative was a collaborative effort between GCG, the Friends of Harrison Wetlands, and the ACT Tree Unit.

## TCCS ADOPT-A-PARK GRANT PROJECTS

### **AAP Habitat Restoration Workshop Series**

From November 2023 to February 2024, GCG hosted three Habitat Restoration Weekend Workshops, led by regeneration expert Jarrod Röch. With over 60 participants from 23 Landcare and Parkcare groups, the workshops focused on restoring native habitats by reclaiming “special places” with intact native flora.

The sessions combined theoretical knowledge with hands-on training, covering invasive species management and riparian restoration strategies. Participants praised the workshops for their practical insights and transformative learning experience. Funded by the Adopt-a-Park Community Grant Program and an ACT Environment Grant, GCG aims to continue empowering volunteers in future workshops.

### **AAP Kuringa Woodlands**

From January 2023 to May 2024, this project focused on revegetation and weed control across 8.5ha of endangered Box Gum Grassy Woodland in Fraser. Supported by an Adopt-A-Park grant, regular working bees controlled 7.1ha of African Love Grass and 5.6ha of St John's Wort.

The project included a community information day, drawing 40-50 participants for guided walks on birdlife and grassy woodlands. In 2024, corporate volunteers from Samsara Eco joined efforts to plant 40kg of native seeds. The initiative enhanced community engagement and conservation efforts.

### **AAP Ambalindum Park Stage 3**

From June 2023 to March 2024, this community-led initiative transformed 1.06ha of Ambalindum Street Playground in Hawker. Supported by an Adopt-A-Park grant, the project involved planting over 250 native species and managing weeds across 0.3ha.

With 30-40 participants and numerous events, it strengthened community connections and environmental education. Key partners included the Ginninderra Catchment Group and Friends of The Pinnacle.

### **Jarramlee Community Day**

On September 30, 2023, the Jarramlee Community Day, funded by the TCCS Adopt-A-Park program, brought together over 25 local residents at Jarramlee Pond in Dunlop. Participants planted 240 native shrubs and groundcovers across 0.10 hectares and managed weeds over 0.25 hectares, enhancing local biodiversity. With at least 15 first-time participants, the event fostered new connections and environmental stewardship within the community. The initiative was a collaborative effort involving GCG, the Jarramlee Park Landcare group, and TCCS, contributing to the ongoing restoration and vitality of Jarramlee Pond.

## **WATERWATCH**

### **Introduction**

Waterwatch is a citizen science program funded by the ACT Government, that engages the community to participate in monitoring the health of our waterways across the Upper Murrumbidgee region, spanning four catchments.

### **Projects**

#### **Continuous Projects**

In the period July 2023 - June 2024 the Ginninderra Waterwatch Coordinator conducted 22 waterbug surveys across the catchment, in both Spring and Autumn seasons respectively. Of these, 15 sites were in the Ginninderra Catchment and 7 in the Yass catchment.

During this same period, a complement of approximately 40 Waterwatch volunteers conducted water quality surveys across 47 water testing sites. Of these, 34 are in the Ginninderra Catchment and 13 in the Yass catchment.

At the end of the year, the Waterwatch Coordinator conducted 9 Rapid Assessment of Riparian Condition (RARC) surveys. Six were in the Ginninderra Catchment and 3 in the Yass catchment.

Results can be seen in the current 2023 Catchment Health Indicator Program [\(CHIP\) Report](#). The Coordinator noted that standouts of these results are the overwhelming lack of hollow bearing trees in the catchment and overall weed infestations, and the fact that the Ginninderra Creek water quality rating is consistently good considering it is such an urbanised waterway (the presence of mayflies at some waterbug sites was very encouraging).

#### **Ad-hoc Project – Educational Videos**

During this period, the Coordinator managed the delivery of a series of professionally produced short educational videos. These included a suite of videos pertaining to water quality testing, each test showcased and demonstrated to new volunteers, as well as a safety video and an introductory video of the Waterwatch Program.

A separate short film was also produced on Platypus, how to spot them and how to conduct surveys and identifying platypus and rakali. This video is aimed at anyone who is interested in doing platypus surveys and helps in preparing for the event.

## Events

### Platypus Survey

The 2023 August Platypus survey was a resounding success, with over 200 volunteers signing up for 34 surveys across 8 sites. The Ginninderra Waterwatch Coordinator facilitated 5 surveys.

A total of 23 individual Platypus and 16 Rakali were noted which is slightly higher than the total numbers in 2022.

**Table 1: Number of Rakali and Platypus detected during surveys in 2023 (2022 numbers in brackets)**

Location	Surveys	Number of individual Rakali	Number of individual Platypus
Molonglo River below Coppins Crossing	4	1 (2)	3 (2)
Jerrabomberra Creek within Nature Reserve	4	7 (2)	1 (0)
The Sanctuary, Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve	4	1 (1)	7 (7)
Queanbeyan River, Queanbeyan	4	3 (1)	4 (2)
Murrumbidgee River, Point Hut Crossing	4	1 (1)	3 (4)
Murrumbidgee River, Scottsdale Bush Heritage Reserve	6	0 (2)	2 (4)
Murrumbidgee River, Mittagang Crossing (Near Cooma)	4	1 (0)	3 (1)
Cooma Creek, Cooma	4	2 (1)	1 (1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>16 (10)</b>	<b>23 (21)</b>

### Educational Events

Other events attended included a Platypus talk for Yass residents, the Sustainable Expo in Canberra, Community Day at Mulligans Flat and a multi-day Scouts Australia Event as well as visiting various schools for educational talks, waterbug excursions and incursions and water testing exercises.

### Quality Assurance & Quality Control (QAQC)

Two QAQC events were scheduled to assist volunteers in refreshing the water testing kits, test their equipment and get to know their fellow volunteers over lunch and a talk presented by Dr Gavin Smith on snakes in our midst.

## Conclusion

The success of this program is based on the dedication of our cohort of passionate volunteers, as well as funding from the ACT Government, ACT Natural Resource Management in the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.

## FROGWATCH

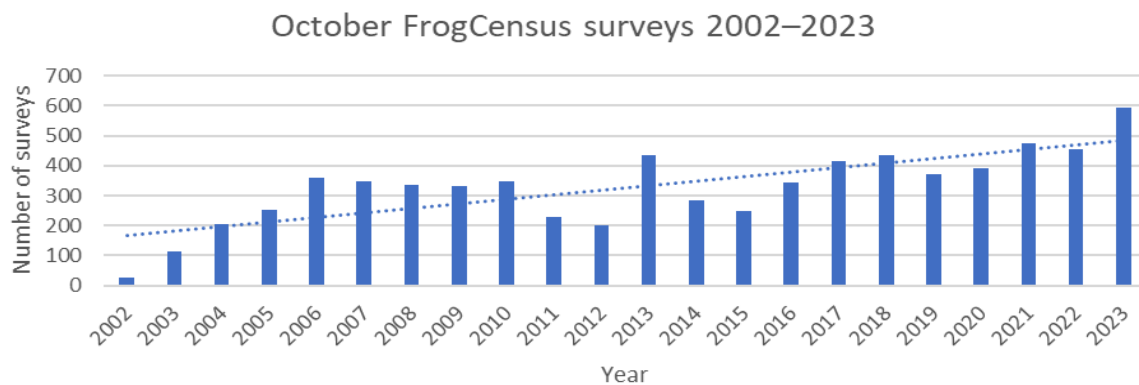
### Introduction

FrogWatch is a community-based frog monitoring program. The annual October FrogCensus covers survey sites throughout the Capital region, from Cooma in the south to Gundaroo in the north and from the Cotter River in the west to Captains Flat in the east. Biggest shout out to all amazing FrogWatch volunteers- you are the best!!

### Projects

#### FrogCensus

Three training events, boosted by a RiotACT article and an engagement activity in Cooma and a fully revised census instruction manual. Biggest FrogCensus since 2002, thanks to massive community support (see below). 592 surveys (30% increase from 457 surveys in 2022) were done at 220 of 227 FrogWatch sites (average of 2.7 surveys per site). More detail here: <https://shorturl.at/eFE6s>



#### Habitat Assessments at all FrogWatch Sites

In depth habitat assessments (RARC and FRARC) @ 209 of 230 FW sites with support of a field assistant. Currently data prep for analysis. Report writing early 2025.

#### Other Projects

Farm dam restoration in Gundaroo, Native fish forum, BUG ID course (WW).

### Education

#### Frogs in your Pocket Guide

New ACT frog pocket guide developed, published and officially launched. Looks awesome and is very popular.

#### Community Education Events

Two mid-winter walks and talks, four Frog Lessons for Wellbeing created 2022. Plenty of school education, Platypus surveys in August, Sutton Landcare presentation, WW QAQC session and talk, CHIP launch, working with Green and Golden Bell frog team (UC), Horticultural Society of ACT, Goulburn Garden Club presentation, SACTCG inaugural member group meeting presentation).



### **Tadpole Kits for Schools**

120 Tadpole kits to schools and homeschoolers across the Capital region in Term 4. What a hoot. Plenty of **school education** sessions: German Australian Playschool, Koala Playschool, Radford College, Steiner School @ Scottsdale, STEM festival at Garran, AAEE ACT Chapter meeting.

### **Finance**

#### **Financial Management Work**

Verification of 2023-24 finances. Budget for 2024-25 projections and planning, including increased work hours & additional project officers for field work components. Management of grants.

#### **Grants 2023-2024**

All funding gladly received and acknowledged.

2023-2024 ACT Gov Core funding \$90,000, delivery of FrogCensus, etc. 3 days/week, finished

2023-2024 Icon Water Tadpole Kit funding \$15,000, finished

2022-2023 ACT Enviro Grant \$5000 – Frogs in your pocket guide, finished

2023-2024 ACT Enviro Grant \$11,300 – Frog-friendly Habitat brochure, in process

2023-2024 ACT Enviro Grant \$12,660 – Frog-friendly Habitat workshops, in process

### **Communications**

Quarterly newsletter, education newsletters and project support emails, newspaper articles, social media.

## TURTLEWATCH

### Projects

#### **Turtle Project at Tidbinbilla (completed)**

We have finished our turtle sampling in Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, after two seasons of monitoring (2022-24). The highlights of this project include: (1) turtles were almost four times more abundant within the Sanctuary (protected by predator-proof fencing) than in dams outside of the sanctuary (no conservation measures), (2) interestingly, little recruitment (amount of young turtles) were observed within the Sanctuary and the outside area, (3) we have some evidence of bandicoots preying on turtle nests within the Sanctuary, (4) our basking surveys revealed that most of the animals recorded were observed swimming, only a few were seen basking on logs, and (5) turtle move in and out of the Sanctuary freely through the flood gates.

We would like to thank all the volunteers involved in this project, the ACT gov for funding it, and the PCS staff involved, especially Michelle and Scott.

#### **Manuscripts (underway)**

Our team has published a manuscript on the importance of habitat connectivity within the urban landscape for turtles, please see more information in here:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11252-024-01583-5>

We are currently preparing another paper on the nesting ecology of turtles within urban areas. More information soon.

#### **Turtlewatch Project (underway)**

We would like to thank the ACT Gov (ACT Environmental Grants 2024-25) for funding our new citizen science project. We will be monitoring turtles within the new Healthy Waterways wetlands in Belconnen (Croke Place and Melba wetlands) and within the lower Ginninderra Creek (below the Lake Ginninderra dam wall). We aim to collect baseline information on turtles living in an unmodified urban creek and in the new wetlands constructed in 2019. The volunteers engaged in this project are from local Landcare groups within the lower Ginninderra Creek area and University of Canberra Environmental Science students.

## Conclusion

We are grateful for the current funding from the ACT Government and for the participation of many volunteers in the turtle monitoring projects. We will aim to continue understanding how well eastern long-necked turtles are doing within the Bush Capital and potential conservation measures to help them thrive in urban ponds.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Communications Staffing

In September 2023, GCG expanded its communications capacity by hiring Rouane Bannister as Assistant Project and Communications Officer for two days per week. Suzanne Richardson, the existing Communications Officer and Project Assistant, continued four days per week. Together, the team dedicated approximately four days per week to communications, with the remainder focused on projects. Rouane primarily managed Facebook posts and engagement, allowing Suzanne to concentrate on communications-related projects, internal operations, and ICT support.

### Communications Outputs

#### GCG Mailing List

The GCG mailing list remained a vital communication channel for reaching our supporters. Over the past year, we sent 15 major mailings, including our monthly events newsletter and the quarterly Grassroots update.

As of 30th June 2024, the list had 1,020 subscribers (+3 from last year), with 129 new sign-ups. Those who unsubscribed either did not provide a reason, cited “no longer interested,” or informed us they were moving away.

We promoted the mailing list using a mounted flyer with a QR code at events, via subscribe forms on our website and Facebook page, and through email referrals when receiving expressions of interest in volunteering.

#### Monthly Events Newsletter and Online Calendar

GCG continued to promote member group events and conservation activities. We published 11 editions of our monthly events newsletter, featuring working bees, special events, relevant community activities, grant opportunities, and government consultations. The newsletter had an open rate between 25.3% and 41.1%, averaging 32%.

Our online calendar, launched the previous financial year, also remained a key tool for promoting events. It was viewed 769 times and served as a central reference point for individuals seeking to get involved.

#### Quarterly Update Newsletter *Grassroots*

We continued to publish *Grassroots*, our quarterly email newsletter, which provided updates on GCG activities, Waterwatch and FrogWatch programs, member group news, and

environmental resources. *Grassroots* had an open rate between 36.7% and 40.4%, averaging 38.5%.

## **Facebook**

GCG's Facebook page remained a key platform for engaging current stakeholders and reaching new audiences.

As of 30th June 2024, the page had 1,205 followers (+245 from last year).

We posted 3-4 times per week, focusing on:

- Volunteer and event recaps
- Promotion of GCG and member events
- Educational content and community consultations

Our most popular posts included before/after photos of sites, World Wetlands Day, and features on frogs, waterbugs, turtles, and plants. The post with the highest engagement compared a painting of Umbagog in the 1830s with a contemporary photo, possibly of the same location.

We also used small amounts of paid promotion, which effectively increased visibility and led to greater event attendance and engagement.

## **Signage Projects**

Building on the success of last year's native grassland interpretive signs, we worked on additional signage projects for member groups, including a grassy woodland interpretive sign and group identification signs. These are being developed in consultation with members and will incorporate QR codes linking to online content. Educational and etiquette signage will also be developed as part of the Adopt-A-Park grant in the coming year.

Additionally, we supported member groups with their own signage projects, such as North Belconnen Landcare's Betty Davis Wildflower Patch sign, where GCG assisted with content collation and coordination with designers.

## **Website**

The GCG website was regularly updated with news, small updates, and group information. A funded project is planned for the coming year to comprehensively update the member group section.

In 2023-24, the website had 31,942 views, with the FrogWatch pages, events calendar, and native grassland page attracting the most traffic.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## Auditor's Report

## Management Letter



ACCOUNTING

SELF MANAGED SUPER FUNDS

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Committee Convenor  
Ginninderra Catchment Group Inc.  
PO Box 446  
HOLT ACT 2615

15<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Dear Sir,

RE: Audit of Financial Statements and records 2024

We have completed the audit of the association's financial statements and records for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024. It is our opinion that the reports present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the association.

The XERO data-file was very well executed and maintained, and we thank Julian Low for his assistance.

However, some items need attention as follows:

- TFN withholding on interest needs to be investigated – Westpac is withholding tax on your interest – which would normally be claimed back in a tax return, as you do not lodge a tax return this will need to be resolved with Westpac.
- The June BAS 2024 has not been lodged with the Australian Taxation Office and is now due for lodgement and payment.
- Also, we have notice that the July and August 2024 Instalment activity statements have not been lodged with the ATO and this requires action.

The Net Profit of the association is \$48,229.83 at the end of the financial year. Gross Income has increased significantly since the 2023 Financial year. The direct expenses of the projects have increased but this is expected with the increase in the funding for the projects.

PO Box 111, Belconnen ACT 2616  
Unit 7, 7 Beissel Street, Belconnen ACT 2617  
t 02 6256 6000

info@callaghans.com.au  
www.callaghans.com.au



The administration & operating expenses have increased only marginally since the 2023 financial year.

The Balance sheet of the organisation is in a healthy position with net assets increasing for the financial year.

We attach our invoice for \$4,200 plus GST as per our quote previously provided. We also provide a quote for the 2025 financial year of \$4,200.00 plus GST.

We provide a bound set of accounts for your records and a second set for provision to the ACNC with your Annual Return.

Could we please have a copy of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting when completed.

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact us and we look forward to being of assistance in the future.

Yours faithfully,



Justin Corkran  
Partner

Encl: 2 x Financial Reports  
1 x invoice

Regarding the above points:

- 1) We are currently in discussions with Westpac regarding the issue of tax being withheld on the term deposit
- 2) The BAS had not been lodged at the time of the audit as there were some additional invoices we were waiting on, but this has since been lodged
- 3) See above for additional information

## Auditors Report - Income Statement

### Ginninderra Catchment Group Incorporated Ginninderra Catchment Group Inc.

ABN 75 648 187 515

#### Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
<b>Income</b>		
Interest received	7,749.38	3,198.24
Other income	556.36	600.00
DECCEW - Catchment Grant	437,551.92	351,839.82
DECCEW - Frogwatch Grant	137,680.37	104,759.05
DECCEW - Waterwatch Grant	96,246.88	80,178.37
Catchment Income - Other	17,569.02	
Turtle Project Income	16,047.68	16,913.50
Donations	571.00	
Donations- Catchment	1,495.52	
Total income	<u>715,468.13</u>	<u>557,488.98</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Advertising & marketing	216.31	191.18
Audit fees	4,200.00	4,200.00
Bank fees & charges	0.20	11.21
Depreciation - Other	318.00	637.00
Donations		20.00
General expenses	419.70	2,228.70
Insurance	4,378.31	7,073.83
Operating expenses		
Catchment expenses	111,322.00	88,139.17
Frogwatch expenses	19,154.64	22,178.54
Waterwatch expenses	7,820.20	8,941.45
Turtle Project Expenses	<u>3,245.17</u>	<u>1,077.52</u>
	141,542.01	120,336.68
Office expenses	5,063.08	5,483.52
Printing & stationery	1,190.76	784.44
Computer expenses	53.64	641.80
Rent on land & buildings	4,203.01	11,671.53
Salaries - Coordinator		
Catchment wages	244,014.52	194,137.33
Frogwatch wages	89,501.79	68,449.97
Waterwatch wages	63,281.40	61,814.60
Administration wages	17,687.49	17,140.20
Turtle Project Wages	<u>11,257.41</u>	<u>10,589.27</u>



**Ginninderra Catchment Group Incorporated**  
**Ginninderra Catchment Group Inc.**

ABN 75 648 187 515

**Income and Expenditure Statement**

**For the year ended 30 June 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
	425,742.61	352,131.37
Salaries - Provision for Annual leave	15,237.31	(10,410.00)
Staff training	883.57	1,427.00
Subscriptions	2,254.90	2,494.25
Superannuation		
Catchment superannuation	33,507.38	20,384.40
Frogwatch superannuation	9,845.19	7,187.27
Waterwatch superannuation	6,960.97	5,657.54
Administration - superannuation	1,906.21	1,763.29
Turtle Project Superannuation	1,300.43	1,111.87
SGC Interest		16.22
	53,520.18	36,120.59
Telephone & Internet	971.64	2,181.06
WHS Audit		3,200.00
Volunteer events	2,089.53	650.38
Website expenses	152.73	50.00
Workers Compensation Insurance	4,800.81	2,981.55
Total expenses	667,238.30	544,106.09
<b>Profit from ordinary activities before income tax</b>	<b>48,229.83</b>	<b>13,382.89</b>
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities		
<b>Net profit attributable to the association</b>	<b>48,229.83</b>	<b>13,382.89</b>
<b>Total changes in equity of the association</b>	<b>48,229.83</b>	<b>13,382.89</b>
Opening retained profits	160,605.06	147,222.17
Net profit attributable to the association	48,229.83	13,382.89
<b>Closing retained profits</b>	<b>208,834.89</b>	<b>160,605.06</b>

## Auditors Report - Balance Sheet

### Ginninderra Catchment Group Incorporated Ginninderra Catchment Group Inc.

ABN 75 648 187 515

#### Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		\$	\$
<b>Current Assets</b>			
<b>Cash Assets</b>			
Westpac Interest account		172,807.93	170,380.83
Westpac operating account		528,821.49	601,817.64
		<u>701,629.42</u>	<u>772,198.47</u>
<b>Receivables</b>			
Trade debtors		12,554.71	12,980.00
Westpac Business Term Deposit		156,750.24	151,967.96
		<u>169,304.95</u>	<u>164,947.96</u>
<b>Other</b>			
Prepayments		8,055.79	7,197.11
		<u>8,055.79</u>	<u>7,197.11</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b><u>878,990.16</u></b>	<b><u>944,343.54</u></b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
<b>Property, Plant and Equipment</b>			
Office equipment		3,689.20	3,689.20
Less: Accumulated amortisation		(3,371.00)	(3,053.00)
		<u>318.20</u>	<u>636.20</u>
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b><u>318.20</u></b>	<b><u>636.20</u></b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b><u>879,308.36</u></b>	<b><u>944,979.74</u></b>

**Ginninderra Catchment Group Incorporated**  
**Ginninderra Catchment Group Inc.**  
 ABN 75 648 187 515

**Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2024**

	Note	2024	2023
		\$	\$
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
<b>Payables</b>			
<b>Unsecured:</b>			
Trade creditors		9,292.75	26,228.08
Expenses accrued		2,049.52	6,678.20
		11,342.27	32,906.28
<b>Current Tax Liabilities</b>			
GST clearing		5,662.06	26,899.63
TFN withholding tax		(2,177.00)	(1,637.00)
PAYG Withholdings payable		10,086.00	7,344.00
		13,571.06	32,606.63
<b>Provisions</b>			
Superannuation payable			9,328.32
Provision for Annual leave		43,313.03	26,488.74
Provision for Long Service leave		6,077.30	7,664.28
		49,390.33	43,481.34
<b>Other</b>			
Income in Advance		478,980.36	552,854.36
		478,980.36	552,854.36
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>553,284.02</b>	<b>661,848.61</b>

## FY 2023/2024 Financial Summary

The net profit for FY 2023/2024 is the difference across the auditors' report and GCG internal financial reports, but this is purely due to adjustments to GST and the term deposit interest / tax-withheld.

### Current Tax Liabilities

GST clearing	5,662.06
TFN withholding tax	(2,177.00)
PAYG Withholdings payable	10,086.00

Total assets held by GCG are **\$879,308.36**, this less the **\$590,350.85** of liabilities owed against grants, projects, and member funds leaves **\$288,957.51** (*which is more than 6 months reserve set at \$250,000*) of equity to cover overheads in the event that GCG were to lose its funding,

This up from 2022-2023 by **\$48,229.83, which is the net profit for the year**

## FORECAST FY 2024/2025

### Upcoming Projects 2024/2025

#### Urban Rivers Program

The Urban Rivers and Catchments Program is a collaborative initiative led by Landcare ACT in partnership with the Buru Ngunawal Aboriginal Corporation, Ginninderra Catchment Group, Molonglo Conservation Group, and Southern ACT Catchment Group. This program aligns with the Australian Government's \$200 million election commitment to restore urban waterways for the benefit of native species, ecological health, and community wellbeing.

#### Objectives:

- **Riparian Habitat Restoration:** Improve critical riparian zones across the Ginninderra, Molonglo, and Southern ACT Catchments through weed management, revegetation, and community-led conservation activities.
- **Water Quality Enhancement:** Address threats like sedimentation, turbidity, and pollution through erosion control, pollutant removal, and vegetative buffers.
- **Community and Cultural Connections:** Reconnect people with nature and embed Ngunawal cultural practices in waterway restoration to benefit ecosystem services and promote cultural heritage.

#### Key Activities:

- **Surveying and Site Identification:** Evaluate and prioritise 15 restoration sites using ACT ecological mapping and local input.
- **Weed Control and Erosion Management:** Mitigate invasive species and sedimentation along 32 km of critical waterways.
- **Riparian Revegetation:** Rehabilitate 24 hectares of riparian zones, improving habitat quality for species like platypus, Rakali, and Macquarie Perch.
- **Cultural Engagement:** Implement Ngunawal-led cultural water activities, including heritage assessments and traditional land management practices.
- **Community Involvement:** Conduct 18 engagement activities to foster stewardship and empower volunteers.

#### Expected Outcomes:

- By 2027, restoration of over 113 hectares of riparian habitat and measurable improvements in water quality.
- Increased resilience of urban waterways against climate challenges, benefiting endangered species and urban ecosystems.
- Enhanced cultural awareness and stronger community ties to local natural resources.
- Alignment with Strategic Plans:
- This project complements key initiatives such as the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, ACT Healthy Waterways Program, and the ACT Aquatic and Riparian Conservation Strategy. By leveraging these frameworks, the program ensures coordinated action for long-term environmental and community benefits.

### Governance and Monitoring:

- A robust governance structure integrates adaptive management and risk mitigation strategies, guided by Ngunawal custodians and project delivery partners. Progress is monitored via the MERIT platform, ensuring transparency and evidence-based reporting.
- The Urban Rivers and Catchments Program serves as a model for integrating ecological restoration, cultural leadership, and community engagement, building healthier urban waterways for future generations.

### **ACT Environment Projects**

GCG received funding from the ACT Department of Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development to support several initiatives:

1. Turtlewatch ACT: A new citizen science program to monitor Eastern Long-Necked Turtles and their response to urbanisation.
2. Ginninderra Native Nursery: Expansion to increase propagation of local native species and host educational workshops.
3. Children's Book (Leap to Learn): Partnering with FrogWatch and Molonglo Conservation Group to create a book about ACT's frogs and conservation efforts.
4. Revegetation on Mount Painter: Establishing native shrub and tree clusters to improve habitat connectivity.
5. EcoMap: Site planning for member groups to enhance web presence and community engagement.

### **Adopt-A-Park Projects**

GCG received funding from the ACT Department of City Services to support several initiatives:

1. Wildlife Ways: Enhancing Jarramlee's Biodiversity through vegetation management, weeding and creation of a new water sensitive design feature
2. Gundara Green: Trails Embracing Ngunawal Wisdom through the creation of a new Ngunawal bush food garden at Gundara St pocket park in Aranda

## GCG Constitution Update and Strategic Plan Review

### GCG Constitution Update:

In response to changes to the model rules for incorporated associations, Ginninderra Catchment Group (GCG) has undertaken a comprehensive review and update of its Constitution. The primary amendments focus on enhancing the governance and operational frameworks, specifically in the areas of membership, dispute resolution, and the scheduling of planned meetings:

- **Membership:** Revisions have been made to streamline the membership application process and clarify the rights and responsibilities of members. This includes more explicit criteria for membership eligibility and the introduction of new categories to better accommodate different types of stakeholders.
- **Dispute Resolution:** A new dispute resolution mechanism has been introduced to provide a clear, structured process for resolving internal conflicts. This framework is designed to ensure disputes are handled promptly and fairly, minimising disruption to GCG's activities.
- **Planned Meetings:** Changes to the scheduling and conduct of planned meetings aim to improve participation and decision-making. This includes more flexible meeting formats and enhanced provisions for remote participation, reflecting the need for greater adaptability in governance practices.

### GCG Strategic Plan Update:

Simultaneously, GCG has updated its Strategic Plan to align with current environmental priorities and the evolving needs of the community. The revised Strategic Plan, spanning 2024-2028, focuses on the following key areas:

1. **Environmental Impact:** Strengthening our initiatives in habitat restoration, species protection, and ecological research to achieve significant environmental benefits across the catchment area.
2. **Community Engagement:** Expanding our outreach and engagement efforts to foster a deeper community connection with local ecosystems and promote active participation in conservation activities.
3. **Capability Building:** Enhancing the skills and knowledge of our members and volunteers through targeted training programs and resources, empowering them to contribute more effectively to our projects.
4. **Partnership Development:** Building stronger relationships with government bodies, local businesses, and other stakeholders to secure the support and resources necessary for our projects.

This strategic refresh aims to position GCG as a more agile and impactful organisation, ready to face the challenges of environmental management and community engagement in the coming years.

## Conclusion

As we conclude the 2023-2024 financial year, the Ginninderra Catchment Group reflects on the collective achievements that have made a lasting impact on our environment and community.

Through the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and partners, we have strengthened ecological health, fostered environmental awareness, and empowered local communities to take an active role in conservation. The challenges faced have only underscored the importance of collaboration and adaptability in our work.

Moving forward, GCG remains committed to building on these successes, deepening community connections, and continuing to lead innovative projects that protect and enhance the Ginninderra catchment. Together, we are creating a legacy of stewardship and sustainability for future generations.