

Super Saturday of raptors and other birds

Thank you to Pam and Bob Montgomery for organising this SSS and providing this story.

Our Super Saturday Session on 14 March was fully booked - 40 seats in the room – and all filled!

We came together to listen to three passionate people tell us about Raptors and other birds.

Maurice Ashton got the ball rolling, showing photos he has taken of the birds he has studied in the Dora Creek and Cooranbong area over the past 10 years. He showed us a large number of beautiful bird photos, from the small Silvereyes to magnificent Ospreys and Brahminy Kites.

He told us of the sneaky predatory fox along the Boy's Walk, in Avondale College grounds; of the little bird darting into low bushes beside the track, and the only way he knew there was a nest there was because it went in with food in its beak and came out with an empty beak. He spoke of the different types of bird habitat in the area, the changes he has seen in the vegetation types and quantity, and how it affects the food and nesting materials for the birds.

There is an amazing number of bird species in this area, 125 species have been sighted and recorded along the bird walk (Bushland Estate private property) alone.

Morning tea, then no urging needed for everyone back inside, to hear our next speaker, Catherine Wroe.



Catherine started caring for wildlife around 20 years ago, deciding to focus on birds due to the high numbers needing care. She was taken by the different species' behaviours and personalities. She developed a special interest in raptors about 10 years ago and undertook the required specialised raptor rehabilitation training. She then built specifically designed aviaries and appropriate facilities for intensive care – compliant with the OEH Code of Practice for Injured, Sick and Orphaned Birds of Prey policy. (No mean feat, and as an independent volunteer, at her own expense, other than donations!)

Catherine passed on so much information, - what distinguishes a raptor from other birds, what they need to survive and the many threats to their survival (and other birds and all their food sources).

George Voss gave us a wonderful photo display of raptors, describing where the various species can be found. He had us laughing at how to tell them apart – or not! – by

using photos side by side of similar raptors, and pointing out each one's characteristics. This one has a collar all the way round, this one the collar only goes part way, etc. It was very difficult at times to differentiate the species, and males from females.

Unfortunately we ran out of time. Lots of questions from the group. So much wonderful information and photos of our fantastic bird life, presented by three people passionate about their interest, and brought to vivid life for us by them. They all were in agreement with the importance of habitat and the conservation of our bushland. Impacts like land clearing, climate change, poisons, and predatory animals are major threats to all levels of our native creatures and food chains, be it seeds, insects, small animals, lizards and reptiles, frogs -- and to nest sites, nesting materials.

A huge thank you to all for a great day, and to the generous people who donated over \$300 for Catherine's work on the day.

COVID-19 community updates

We're following advice from the NSW Government on the recent outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). We'll continue to keep you updated about coronavirus relevant to our Lake Macquarie community on our website and social channels. Find out more at www.lakemac.com.au/News-articles/Novel-Coronavirus-COVID-19-community-updates

Please take the following precautions into consideration when planning your upcoming events, including working bees, group meetings and other public gatherings.

Ask participants to stay home if they are unwell, or have been advised to self-isolate.

As usual, ensure participants register and sign in and out of your event so they can be contacted if required.

Encourage participants to wash their hands often during your event. Provide facility for hand washing with soap where possible, or hand sanitizer as an alternative.

Ensure good hygiene practices are in place, particularly in relation to food handling and shared equipment or workspaces.

Visit the Health NSW website for further information, www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/

protect-yourself.aspx.

Stay up to date with current advice as circumstances change, and review your activities and risk management accordingly. Visit www.health.nsw.gov.au.

Please forward this information to your group members, particularly those who are organising upcoming events.



Beware of mozzies and ticks!

Many of our volunteers may have encountered an increase in mosquitoes and ticks on your Landcare sites over the past few weeks. Warm and wet conditions have meant that these insects have become more prevalent.

To protect against mosquitoes and reduce the risk of diseases they transmit: cover-up with a loose-fitting long sleeved shirts and long pants when outside; apply mosquito repellent to exposed skin; avoid working during peak mosquito biting hours, especially around dawn and dusk.

Information on staying safe around mosquitoes can be found on the New South Wales Health website: www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/mosquito.aspx

The best way to prevent tick bites is to avoid tick-infested areas. If this is not possible, wear appropriate the appropriate PPE as when protecting against mosquitoes. It is a good idea to tuck long pants into socks, and wear light coloured clothing to make it easier to see ticks on clothes before they attach to the skin.

Before entering possible tick infected environments apply an insect repellent to your clothes and/or skin. The repellent should be applied and re-applied according to the manufacturer's instructions. Clothing treated with permethrin is also recommended.



EVENTS CALENDAR

LAKE MACQUARIE LANDCARE EVENTS

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Events postponed

- 28 March Team Leader Training
- 4 April Super Saturday Session- Nature Photography and Herbarium
- 14 April Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network meeting



In response to advice regarding COVID-19, the below events will be postponed until further notice:

- 28 March Team Leader Training
- 4 April Super Saturday Session- Nature Photography and Herbarium
- 14 April Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network meeting

Lake Macquarie City Council is following all advice given by the Australian Government and NSW Health department to ensure the wellbeing of our residents.

Thank you for your understanding during this challenging time.

Ernest Hardes Memorial Scholarship

Are you or do you know a young tertiary student currently studying Horticulture, Agriculture, Permaculture or a related qualification in the Hunter Region? Applications are now open for the first year of the Ernest Hardes Memorial Scholarship. You'll receive:

- \$1600 worth of biodynamic and Permaculture courses with Purple Pear Farm, with the option to add \$400 from below for a Permaculture Design Certificate.
- Up to \$400 in short courses offered by your choice from our friends at Purple Pear Farm, Limestone Permaculture and Urban Hum

- 2 days on the farm experience with Little Hill Farm in Mount Vincent, a small family run innovative free range poultry operation.
- 2 hour private tour of Limestone Permaculture
- 2 years membership to Hunter Organic Growers Society to keep on learning!

Get your applications in now! Closing 30th May.

Brought you by HOGS with the generous support of Purple Pear Farm, Limestone Permaculture & Little Hill Farm

Applications can be made via www.hunterorganicgrowerssociety.org.au

About the Landcare Bulletin

This newsletter provides news and event information to local Landcarers on a monthly basis. Landcarers who have access to email can subscribe to a fortnightly update rather than receiving the newsletter via mail. Contact the LRC for further information via email lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au.

A colour extended edition, the *Urban Landcarer*, is mailed to Landcarers four times a year. All newsletters can also be found at lakemacquarielandcare.org (note you can view a colour version of this edition online).

Please contribute to our newsletters!

Please send your stories and photos to Kate Meares via email lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au or post to **P.O. Box 97, Toronto NSW 2283**. Submissions for the next newsletter (May Landcare Bulletin) are due 20 April. Submissions for the next colour edition (June Urban Landcarer) are due 12 May. Thank you to all the Landcarers who contributed stories, photos and information for this newsletter.

Please circulate this publication within your group or share it with your neighbours



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LRC SUPPORT STAFF

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LAKE MACQUARIE LANDCARE VOLUNTEER NETWORK COMMITTEE

Chairperson: Bob Montgomery, **Public Officer:** Garry Stewart, **Deputy Chairperson:** Lois Simpson, **Secretary:** Pam Montgomery **Treasurer:** Ruth Hinds **Other members:** Winsome Lambkin, Don Roach, Annette Ryan, Marion Lugg and Charlene France.

Network Email: lmIn@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

The opinions and views expressed within this newsletter are not necessarily those of Lake Macquarie Landcare Network or Lake Macquarie City Council



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Lake Macquarie Landcare is proudly supported by Lake Macquarie City Council