

Landcare Australia: Landcare's role in supporting bushfire impacted communities

Full article at <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/landcares-role-in-supporting-bushfire-impacted-communities>



The current bushfires in Australia are at an unprecedented scale and have significantly impacted the environment and communities in many parts of the country. Millions of hectares of land have been devastated, with an estimated loss of more than one billion native animals, thousands of homes have been destroyed and lives tragically lost.

We applaud and thank the amazing work of Australia's fire-fighting and emergency response services, so reliant at these times on volunteer effort.

Landcare Australia recognises that with global average temperature continuing to rise, climate-related emergencies such as the current bushfires, and recent flood and rain events, can be expected to increase in their frequency and intensity and occur over longer time periods. With the increasing impacts of climate change and extreme natural disasters, Australia's communities, landscape and biodiversity are under enormous pressure.

It is within this context that Landcare and landcarers will play a continuing, enhanced and critical role in both the immediate and long term responses to natural disasters.

Landcarers provide early response, an existing and immediate face-to-face network, and are actively caring for their local areas. Early response measures include: telephone check-ups to people in their community; assisting with the clean-up and restoration; replacing fencing and caring for stock and native animals.

Beyond the immediate aftermath of natural disasters, Landcare groups also provide a social hub, including bringing people together, and running workshops with mental health experts to talk to group members directly. Local landcarers are also there for the long term, with on-ground works over months and years, providing affected people with opportunities to actively participate in community and environmental recovery, working together to repair properties, to heal and nurture their communities and the environment.

In the 10 years following Black Saturday, many Landcare groups were involved in the response effort. Researchers from Melbourne University found people involved in community groups were more likely to have better mental health outcomes than those who weren't. Additionally, they found strong connections to the natural environment was also associated with increased mental health, life satisfaction, resilience, community attachment and post-traumatic growth.

Landcare Australia, together with the National Landcare Network, and the state and territory Landcare organisations, will continue to support the Landcare community to work together to restore land, water and coastal landscapes, enhance habitat and strengthen community resilience.

To express your interest in volunteering to support in the bushfire recovery efforts visit <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/volunteerbushfires> or <https://conservationvolunteers.com.au/bushfires/>

Bushfire relief: How you can help

There are a number of ways you can help the people, animals and communities affected by the ongoing bushfire crisis.

Donations are a great way to show your support and provide much needed resources efficiently. Some of the organisations you may like to support are:

NSW Rural Fire Services and Brigades - www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/news-and-media/general-news/how-you-can-help

You can make a donation to the NSW RFS Trust Fund or a participating brigade to help with financial support for volunteer firefighters, disaster recovery relief for bushfire cleanup, and increased support for fire affected farmers.

Australian Redcross Disaster Relief and Recovery - <https://fundraise.redcross.org.au/drr>

The Australian Redcross fund recovery programs and emergency assistance in communities affected by disasters like bushfires. Your donation will go towards helping people and communities prepare for disasters and protect what matters most, as well as training, equipment, logistics and coordination of volunteers.

WIRES - www.wires.org.au/blog/emergency-donations-to-help-wildlife

The situation for wildlife is devastating and it will be months before the full implications on wild populations can be understood. WIRES is rescuing and caring for as many sick, injured and orphaned native animals as possible.

Port Macquarie Koala Hospital - www.gofundme.com/f/help-thirsty-koalas-devastated-by-recent-fires

Initially, the Koala Hospital's aim was to raise money to purchase and distribute 12 automatic drinking stations to be placed in areas to help in koala and wildlife survival. The number of drinking stations being built has now been increased to 100 and they are being shared with other wildlife organisations in fire affected regions across New South Wales.

Hunter Wildlife Rescue Service - <https://www.hunterwildlife.org.au/>

The Native Animal Trust Fund Inc. (NATF) Hunter Wildlife Rescue Service has an established network of volunteers who rescue, rehabilitate and release all sick, injured and orphaned native fauna in the Hunter.

Giant cheque for Fern Creek Gully Landcare

On 18 January Fern Creek Gully Landcare site was attended by Federal Member for Shortland Pat Conroy who awarded the group funding through the Communities Environment Program.

On their [Fern Creek Landcare Facebook page](#) the group says "Today we were so grateful to receive a \$20k grant from Pat Conroy MP to restore the Squirrel Glider Habitat and Hanging Swamp. We can't wait to put the money to good use! Stay tuned for more info on how this project is going to regenerate the habitat. If you want to get involved in bringing back a vulnerable species, send us a message!"



EVENTS CALENDAR

LAKE MACQUARIE LANDCARE EVENTS

11 February - LMLVN Committee Meeting

When: Tuesday 11 February, 2pm to 3:30pm

Where: Landcare Resource Centre, 80 Toronto Road Booragul.

Lake Macquarie Landcare Volunteer Network (LMLVN) is the volunteer arm of the partnership with Lake Macquarie City Council that works to support Landcare in Lake Macquarie. It has an Executive/Committee management structure and meets each month at Landcare Resource Centre. All registered Lake Macquarie Landcare members are welcome to attend. For more information contact Deb at the LRC on 4921 0392 (Mon-Wed).

22 February - Team Leader Training

When: Saturday 22 February, 8.30am-12.30pm (**Now fully booked - Please enquire about March session**)

Where: Landcare Resource Centre, 80 Toronto Road Booragul.

These free training sessions provide you with the skills to be a Landcare group leader. As well as learning valuable environmental and safety information, you are awarded with a certificate and free educational resources to assist with your Landcare site.

Bookings essential to LRC on 4921 0392. Note this training is open to all Landcare volunteers. Tea, coffee and biscuits provided.

OTHER EVENTS

25 February - Community Environment Grants Information Session (2019-20 Round 2)

When: Tuesday 25 February 2020, 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm AEDT

Where: Lake Macquarie Council - Committee Room, 126 - 138 Main Road, Speers Point, NSW 2284

Council's Community Environment Grants open on 10 February. Applications will close 23 March. This information session will cover the type of projects that can be funded (including examples of past projects that have been successfully funded), tips on completing an application, insight into how the applications are assessed, and an opportunity for you to ask questions. Light refreshments will be provided.

RSVPs ESSENTIAL through [Eventbrite](#)

To get the most out of this session, please familiarise yourself with the Application Form and Guidelines prior to the session.

1 March - Clean Up Australia Day

Community members, schools, local groups, clubs and businesses are invited to lend a hand to tidy up our environment for Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday 1 March 2020.

To organise a clean up find a site and register the site through the Clean Up Australia Day website www.cleanup.org.au/

If you'd like to join an existing group, check out registered sites online. **Register your site by Wednesday 12 February to ensure Council lists your site in its Clean Up Australia Day promotions.

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 (March Urban Landcarer) are due 12 February. 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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2NURFM, Australian Government, Delta Electricity, Hunter Region Landcare Network, Hunter Local Land Services, Lake Macquarie City Council, Landcare Australia, NSW Government, Origin Energy.

LRC SUPPORT STAFF

Landcare Coordinator (M-F): Jason Harvey, **Finance & Admin. Officer (M-F):** Sue Edgar, **Landcare Network & Admin. Support Officer (M-W):** Debra Punton, **Landcare Support Officers:** Adam Lee (M-Th), Daniel Oldfield (W-F), **Landcare Grants & Publications Officer (T-F):** Kate Meares, **Communications Officer (acting M-W):** Allira Jackman **Site Maintenance & Nursery Officer (M-F):** Alex Wilson **Apprentice Landcare Nursery Officer:** Annabell Hooghuis.

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: lmn@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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Email: lro@lakemac.nsw.gov.au
www.lakemacquarielandcare.org

Opening Hours:
Monday to Friday
8am - 4pm



Lake Macquarie Landcare is proudly supported by Lake Macquarie City Council