



***“I can lose myself in nature
and work steadily to free
plants from invasive
weeds”***

**Winsome from Floraville Ridge and Rainforest Landcare and LMLN
representative**

Pottery, patchwork and politics didn't interest me but plants did! I was checking through the courses offered at Charlestown TAFE and there it was – Bush Regeneration. That was in the early 1990s. I followed this up with a more formal course some time later, though I've learnt most information 'on the job'.

My involvement really took off when Floraville Public School needed to design a track. This involvement continued for over ten years with grants to provide tracks, steps and revegetation. Junior Landcare was established along with parent participation and the school won environmental awards. All of this could not have happened without the involvement of Rose Chesterfield, friend, teacher, and environmentalist and the Landcare Office.

At the same time, local residents wanted a track from our street to the top of Floraville Ridge. We began by clearing Bitou Bush from the ridge but then moved to the very bottom end of the rainforest gully. What a mountain of weeds! However, in the areas we have worked, the natives seem to be winning.

So why do I love Landcare? I can lose myself in the gully. The new growth on plants, the ground covered in Red Ash seeds, the recognition of native species, passionfruit flowers, bandicoot diggings, a rustling lizard and of course, the birds. They all present themselves as I stroll along the track. My eyes and ears strain to catch as much as I can. I make mental notes of tasks to be done but I don't despair at the jobs ahead. I'd love more people to join me on my strolls and perhaps stay a while to free some plants from invasive weeds. Perhaps we could sit on the bridge and listen for the birds of which there are over 50 species. I'd take you up into the true rainforest, to the Owls Knoll, which is named after the Powerful Owl which frequents that area or perhaps to the caves and rock-faces which are hidden by vegetation.