

Regional Landcare Update 14

The fortnightly e-news of the New England-North West Landcare Network

Issue 14: 30th July 2010

Growing in Granite

Balala-Brushgrove Landcare Group (near Uralla) and the Soil Health Forum are commencing a new experiment to address the challenges of difficult, granite soils.

Much of these thin granites have low CEC, so applied fertiliser – organic or otherwise – washes through quickly. The experiment will see if bentonite could be a useful addition to these topsoils, in order to establish a green cover crop. If so, this may kick-start a pioneer selection of legumes and deep rooted grasses and improve soil fertility.

Various rates of bentonite application will be trialled, with and without the addition of rock minerals, and observations will be made over three years.

If you'd like to have an input into the set up this Spring – including help with the fencing! – Please contact either Jody McNally on 6778 7109 or Jill Moore Kashima on 6778 4998. All welcome!

NSW Farmer Champions

NSW Farmers Association has announced the 2010 winners of the Farmer of the Year competition. In the open category, Ridley Bell of Alstonville Plateau was named Farmer of the Year. Ridley operates a blueberry farm on the north coast of NSW and is regarded as a pioneer of the

blueberry industry. Runners-up were Pepe Bonaccordo of Windsor and Phillip Lynn of Clancy Pastoral, Glen Innes. Young Farmer of the Year was awarded to Andrew Carroll of Palmers Island (Yamba) who farms Mulloway fish, with runner up award going to sugar cane grower, Angus Stainley, Murwillumbah.

A complete summary of the award recipients and a summary of the recent NSW Farmers annual conference is available at www.nswfarmers.org.au

Plague Locust Warning

The Department Of Industry and Investment is advising of a significant impact to anyone travelling due to a Plague Locust infestation. This affects most of western NSW.

Hatching of the Australian Plague Locust is anticipated to commence in the final days of August. Swarms are anticipated to be of such size that should a travelling motorist impact the swarm, full visibility through the windscreen will be lost immediately. Reports indicate that the swarm may be seen as a “grey haze”.

Radiator/grill protection and windscreen cleaning aids is essential in your vehicle. A map of locust activity for the general travelling public is available at: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/256658/locust-activity-map.pdf

Report swarms of locusts to the Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) within the region.

Ag Quip 2010

Held each year at Gunnedah, this year's event will run from 17-19 August. Each year, the event attracts over 100,000 people. Event sponsors Commonwealth Bank will award a Honda Quad Bike valued at \$14000 to one lucky Ag Quip visitor. The event will also incorporate a chemical card refresher course – for those wanting to kill two birds with one stone – with the course being offered at the NSW Farmers stand on 18th August. Find out more training@nswfarmers.org.au

Solar Heating Initiative

Farming the Sun is a renewable and sustainable energy initiative of the New England Sustainability Strategy (NESS) and promotes the uptake of green energy in the New England. As part of the Farming the Sun initiative, NESS has released a new range of SolaMate air heating systems solar air heating systems.

SolaMate has won both an ABC New Inventors Episode (Judges & People's Choice 2009) and an HIA GreenSmart Product award 2009. Up to 30 SolaMate systems are available at wholesale prices, with NESS offering further incentives for households agreeing to be demonstration sites.

Contributions to the Landcare Update are welcome.
Email to Fiona Adams at gwymacgg@bigpond.com



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More information available from NESS Regional Coordinator, Liz Gardiner 67787249 or lizgardiner1@hotmail.com

Private Conservation workshop in Inverell

Environmental Defender's Office (EDO) and BR-G CMA will host a joint workshop in Inverell on Saturday 7th August.

Running from 10am-4pm, the morning session will have EDO representatives discussing conservation options and the types of organisations that offer conservation agreements.

The afternoon will include a field trip to a local property, where a conservation agreement is already in place.

The workshop is free, with transport available for those travelling from Moree (or locations en route to Inverell). Register with Zara Farrell at CMA office in Moree 67572562.

Community Garden Gathers Steam in Inverell

The reality of a community garden in Inverell continues to gather momentum, with a recent public meeting attracting strong numbers.

The concept is being championed by local NRM group Macintyre Development Unit, with support of Gwympac Landcare, Inverell Shire Council and local schools. To find out more about the concept or how you can be involved, contact Gwympac 67211241.

Landcare Week Theme

The theme for Landcare Week 2010 (6th-13th September) is: Community for ClimateWatch.

The campaign encourages Landcare and coastcare groups, CMAs, NRMs, schools and youth groups, business and industry, and everyone from the general community to register as a 'Landcare ClimateWatcher' for Landcare Week.

Registration is free and participants are asked to monitor, collect and record data that will be used by scientists around the world who are studying the impact of climate change on ecosystems.

Now is the time for your group to think about how to be involved. Register your activity at www.landcareonline.com.au and secure a Resource Kit.

Group Projects Fencing Discounts

Southern Wire is an Australian manufacturer of wire fencing products. The company offers fencing demonstrations for Landcare groups interested in specific fencing needs and special discount pricing for group projects that involve fencing. This may include revegetation projects, livestock retention and fencing to reduce the impact of pest animal species.

For more details, contact Jerry Sivewright at Southern Wire 08 92799999 or

jerrys@southernwire.com.au

Landcare Website Changes

The original NSW Landcare website (www.landcare.nsw.gov.au) has closed down.

This website was established in 1998 and was maintained by the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) on behalf of the NSW Landcare community and the NSW Landcare Committee (NSWLC).

DECCW, NSWLC and Landcare NSW Inc have agreed to endorse the Landcare NSW Inc (www.landcare.nsw.gov.au) website as the main site supporting the NSW Landcare community. Subsequently, the NSW government run website closed down on 30 July 2010. Landcare organisations are encouraged to include the link on their website.

Grains Research & Development Updates

The Grains Research and Development Corporation will host grower updates throughout the northwest on the following dates:

Narrabri - Friday 20th August

Moree - Friday 31st August

Walgett - Wednesday 1st Sept

For more details, phone John Cameron 02 9482 4930 or northernupdates@icanrural.com.au



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