



Gunning District Landcare Inc.

Annual Report 2022 - 2023



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Unless otherwise stated, all photos in this annual report were taken by Sonya Duus



Overview

Gunning District Landcare works towards making our farms, properties, homes and public spaces economically and environmentally sound and sustainable by promoting and encouraging the adoption of natural resource management principles.

In all that we do, we emphasise the principles that:

- The plight of several endangered species in our district is caused by declining biodiversity and deteriorating ecosystems. In working to help their survival, we also help to improve the agricultural and environmental health of our district;
- Landcare is for all in the district, be they long established full-time farmers, newcomer hobby farmers, rural “blockies”, or village residents;
- Landcare is inclusive;
- We achieve best results through working in consultation and partnership.

Gunning District Landcare is supported by the Upper Lachlan Landcare Network.

Gunning District Landcare is open to all people with an interest in sustainable farming and healthy environments. The overriding principle guiding Gunning District Landcare’s activities is that the environment and production are intertwined.



Gunning Scouts & Cubs plant trees at the Gunning Showground bush block, October 2022

Photo by John Storey

Chairs Report

For GDL the 2022 – 2023 year was one of extraordinary activity and achievement following the challenging “COVID years”. During COVID we had maintained a steady program of engagement and development but one with, of necessity, fewer face-to-face events.

In the last financial year, we have secured over \$300k of external grant funding, initiated several exciting new projects, and continued to build our relationships with our key stakeholders: the Gunning and district community, Landcare NSW, Upper Lachlan Landcare, the Ngunnawal community, Local Landcare Services and Upper Lachlan Shire Council.

At the end of June this year we farewelled our marvellous coordinator, Sonya Duus, who has been the cheerful face of GDL for many years. Sonya has been an exemplary coordinator, one who has managed to keep the whole ship afloat during particularly challenging times. We wish her well in her new role as project officer with the Yass Area Network.

In June 2023 the NSW government allocated an additional four years of funding to Landcare NSW to continue the coordinator program. We eagerly await news of the level of ongoing support that we can expect. In the meantime, we have welcomed Leah Samson as our new coordinator. Leah has already achieved significant successes in the role and brings a fresh new perspective to much of what we do.

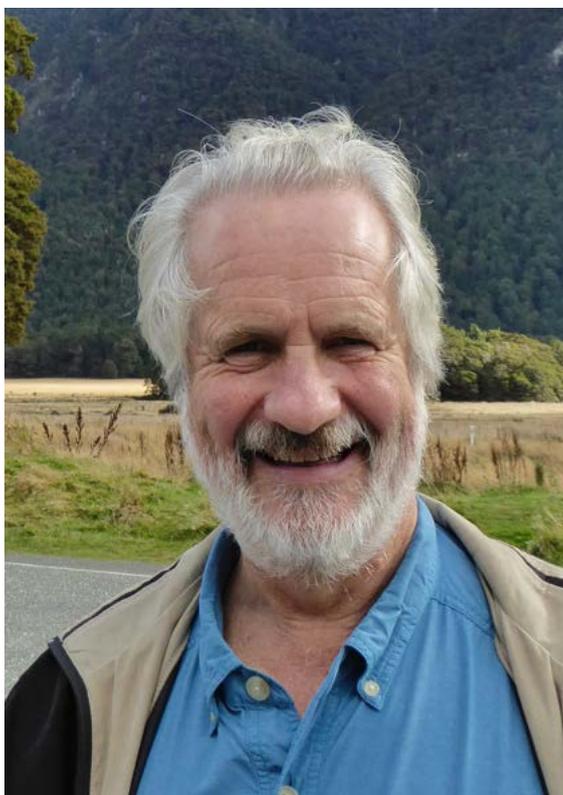


Photo by Michelle Storey

During the year we added three new project officers to our staff: Louise Duncan, Courtney Tindale and Kim Garsia. Without their hard work and dedication, our dreams would never become reality.

Our Annual Report lists the many activities, relationships and successes that we have had during the year, and in those difficult COVID years as well. We look forward to a bright future as we continue to deliver on our mission: *To support and empower our community in building a sustainable and ecologically healthy Gunning District, with farms that are economically and environmentally sustainable, landscapes rich in natural biodiversity, and communities that are happy, cohesive and resilient.*

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to my committee, especially Vice-chair Janet Heffernan and Treasurer Susan Medway, without whom my job as Chair would be completely unworkable.

John Storey - Chair, Gunning District Landcare

The Area We Serve

Gunning District Landcare was formed on 30 November 2015 by combining two former local Landcare groups that covered the Jerrawa Creek and Blakney Creek/Biala catchments. The two founding groups recognised that their goals and needs were similar, and collectively more could be achieved. In 2019, GDL was delighted to merge with Breadalbane Landcare, which expanded the group's area once again.

The Gunning District



Map generated in Google Earth

2022 - 2023 Gunning District Landcare Committee

Position	Name	No. meetings attended
Chair	John Storey	7
Vice Chair	Janet Heffernan	7
Secretary	Scott Keyworth	6
Treasurer	Susan Medway	6
Committee member	Bob Spiller	2*
Committee member	Matthew Streat	5
Committee member	Nerida Hart	2

Public officer: Nerida Hart

*out of two possible meetings

At the 2022 AGM, GDL Life Member Bob Spiller stepped down from the committee. John Storey provided the following acknowledgment of Bob's extraordinary contribution to Landcare in our region:

Bob Spiller has been a constant, vital part of GDL since before it existed... Bob played a pivotal role in one of our predecessor groups, Jerrawa Creek Landcare, and served as GDL's first Chair. He was the driving force behind the highly successful, widely acclaimed, and cleverly named Tussock Tamer, Feral Fox Fighter and Mates of Mundoonen projects, as well as LandWaterLife, the Barbour Park Planting Project, and others. Bob is already a life member of GDL in recognition of his many years of devoted service, without which we would be a much lesser organisation. We offer our gratitude to Bob and wish him well in his future activities.

Meetings

The Gunning District Landcare committee generally meets at 10 AM on the last Friday of the month, every two to three months.

Constitution

Gunning District Landcare (GDL) is an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*.

Gunning District Landcare adopted a new constitution (based on the [model constitution](#) prepared by the NSW Office of Fair Trading) at our Annual General Meeting in November 2020. A copy of the latest version of our constitution can be downloaded [here](#).

Strategic plan

In early 2022 Gunning District Landcare held an extensive consultative process to develop a new strategic plan. That plan was adopted in June 2022, and is presented overleaf.

Gunning District Landcare Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025

Our Mission

To support and empower our community in building a sustainable and ecologically healthy Gunning District, with farms that are economically and environmentally sustainable, landscapes rich in natural biodiversity, and communities that are happy, cohesive and resilient.

Goals

1. Respond effectively to climate change

Gunning District Landcare recognises that we live in a rapidly changing world, as climate change pressures and technological advances reshape both our landscape and our response to these changes. Our response to the challenge of climate change should include both mitigation and adaptation, striving to achieve a carbon-neutral future while adapting farming and land management to better suit the hotter and more extreme climate yet to come.

2. Engage effectively with the community

Gunning District Landcare will maintain wide and active engagement with the community – including production farmers, smaller landholders, business enterprises, village residents and school children. We acknowledge the Aboriginal custodians of the Gunning area, and will seek to build meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal people and groups in our area. We recognise that the Gunning district consists not only of Gunning but also other villages such as Collector, Dalton, Jerrawa and Breadalbane, along with smaller settlements and the surrounding farms and land holdings. We aim to increase our profile in the media (including social media), our website traffic and the numbers of people participating in Gunning District Landcare activities by making all of these relevant and appealing.

3. Increase participation and membership

It is important to not only engage with the community, but also to ensure that Gunning District Landcare builds its membership. Recognising that the demographics of the Gunning district community are changing as the population grows, we must ensure that we continue to be relevant, welcoming and inclusive. We aim to foster a culture within our group that reflects these values. Everyone with an interest in caring for our land and/or an appreciation of the natural environment will feel welcome and respected as a member of the group.

Strategic focus

1. Stimulate and embrace new ideas

Gunning District Landcare will remain agile in order to effectively anticipate and respond to challenges in our region. We will adopt a culture of encouragement and openness towards new and different ideas consistent with our goals.

2. Strategically plan and implement actions

Gunning District Landcare sees sound planning and implementation as critical to the success of all our actions. We need to keep focussed on Gunning District Landcare's mission and seek opportunities to fulfil multiple goals through specific activities. Before undertaking any project, we must ensure that adequate funding has been secured, including any management and contractor components.

3. Work effectively

We must work efficiently and effectively as a group, maintaining full accountability and discharging our constitutional responsibilities in a professional manner. This can be supported by ensuring that the group's basic organisational structures are healthy and can sustain our actions, including through the formation of sub-committees that involve members of the Gunning District Landcare committee as well as non-committee members and others in our community. A professional bookkeeper should be retained as the most efficient way to ensure transparent accounting practices.

4. Maintain a professional coordinator

Gunning District Landcare recognises that having a professional coordinator to work a minimum of two days per week is critical to the group's success. Gunning District Landcare intends to maintain funding for a professional coordinator on an ongoing basis, seeking funding through appropriate agencies.

5. Nurture and increase partnerships

Since its inception, Gunning District Landcare has developed fruitful partnerships with a range of local groups and organisations. Our goal is to nurture these existing connections as well as build new ones. Good communication and coordination with Upper Lachlan Landcare are especially important. We must work closely with Upper Lachlan Shire Council and Local Land Services, while recognising the demarcation of responsibilities between us and these organisations.

6. Proactively seek and secure funding

The success of Gunning District Landcare depends on having funds available to run activities that contribute to our mission. Gunning District Landcare will seek funding through grants from State and Federal Government departments and agencies, philanthropic foundations, and other similar bodies.

Activities (overview) 2022-2025

	On-going activities	Planned activities
Threatened species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Conserve the threatened Southern Pygmy Perch: work with community, scientists and relevant agencies to follow recommendations from the local action plan ☐ Mates of Mundoonen program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Care for threatened species in the Gunning district; create an information booklet to distribute to landholders and residents
Biodiversity and landscape function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Plant native shrubs, trees and grasses to increase biodiversity and landscape function ☐ Contribute to the conservation and enhancement of local natural areas, such as the Gunning Golf course, Gunning Showground and Dalton bush block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Rejuvenate high priority riparian areas such as Oolong Creek ☐ Review land management practices including erosion control
Pests and weeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Feral Fox Fighters: work closely with Local Land Services and landholders to increase the effectiveness of this program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Work collaboratively to manage designated weeds and pest animals, with a particular focus on emerging weeds
Public education and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Hold relevant forums and hands-on workshops ☐ School holiday program: host engaging activities for young people ☐ Maintain on-line and social media presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Extend the program of forums and workshops, tailored to local needs and interests including climate change ☐ Organise a major event focussed on what it means for ULSC to be a Carbon Neutral Shire

Our Partners

Gunning District Landcare continues to partner with a range of organisations to reach our strategic goals. During 2022-2023 we have partnered with:

Acciona Energia

Acciona Energia co-funded the establishment, training, and equipment for our Bushcare group.



The Australian Government

The Australian Government, through the Planting Trees for the Queen's Jubilee grant, funded a site clean-up and the planting of 75 trees at the Gunning Showground bush block.



Australian Government

Biala Wind Farm

Biala Wind Farm's community fund provided the financial resources for GDL's highly successful 2023 Paddock Tree Project.



COORDINARE - South Eastern NSW Partners in Health Network

Funding from COORDINARE - South Eastern NSW PHN enabled GDL to continue providing school holiday activities in 2022-2023.



Creative Gunning

Gunning District Landcare partnered with Creative Gunning in the production of reusable shopping bags and received a generous financial benefit from their sale.



Gunning Library, Upper Lachlan Shire Council

Gunning Library hosts some of our children's activities during the school holidays. It also holds numerous books and a waterbug testing kit donated by GDL.



The NSW Government

Through its Strong Country Communities grant, the NSW Government has generously funded extensive work at the Gunning Showground to develop an ecological park for the whole community to enjoy.



OzFish Unlimited

OzFish Unlimited has provided invaluable resources for GDL to increase momentum in our efforts to conserve Southern Pygmy Perch in the Gunning region.



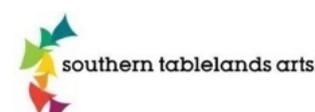
South East Local Land Services

South East Local Land Services has been an invaluable partner and source of funding for GDL's 2022 Paddock Tree Project.



Southern Tablelands Arts

We enjoyed working closely with Southern Tablelands Arts to deliver the 'Champions of Change' short film festival, in July 2022.



Transgrid

Transgrid co-funded the establishment, training, and equipment for our Bushcare group.



Upper Lachlan Landcare

Upper Lachlan Landcare is the umbrella group of GDL. ULL provides on-gong support and assistance, and we have started working together closely on the School Holiday Program.



Upper Lachlan Foundation

Generous support from the Upper Lachlan Foundation provided us with a high-quality data projector to support our meetings and public events.



Upper Lachlan Shire Council

We are working with Upper Lachlan Shire Council to develop the ecological park at the Showground bush block, and to restore habitat at Oolong Ck. Importantly, Council administered funding from Local Land Services to remove woody weeds in Dalton.



GDL: a charity with Deductible Gift Recipient status!

We are very proud of becoming a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission in May 2022, and being listed on the Australian Register of Environmental Organisations (REO) in December 2022. Our listing on the REO endorses GDL as a deductible gift recipient. That means that all donations over \$2 to GDL are now tax deductible and that we will be eligible to apply for a wider range of grants.



Our Impact: 2019-2023 NSW Landcare Program

Between 2019 and 2023, Gunning District Landcare achieved a great deal thanks to support from the NSW Landcare Program. This program provided core funding for a part-time Coordinator (8.75 hours per week) and a range of other resources that enabled us to attract grant funding, communicate regularly with our members, and deliver projects and events while maintaining a high standard of governance within our organisation. The Program funding also meant that our Coordinator Sonya Duus could take part in professional development training, most notably the South East Local Leaders training which has enhanced her skills, confidence and connection to other leaders in the region.

They were challenging years due to COVID and the associated restrictions, but GDL along with the broader Landcare network in the region learnt to adapt and move online wherever possible. And of course, it was sweet delight to gather in person again once restrictions were lifted. Some of the highlights over the course of the program include:

Evening Seminars

We have found that evening seminars in Gunning have always been popular and well attended. They are relatively short events with engaging expert speakers, and an opportunity to meet other landholders interested in similar topics. Funding from LLS Regional Land Partnerships helped us to deliver these events which covered the topics of ‘the importance of ground cover’ (Oct 2019), ‘combining production and biodiversity’ (Sept 2019), ‘understanding soils for better land management’ (Aug 2019).



Katharine Brown presenting on ‘understanding soils for better land management’ in August 2019

Mates of Mundoonen

Funding from WIRES enabled us to launch the Mates of Mundoonen project, aimed at looking for Koalas and Spotted Quail-thrush in the Mundoonen Nature Reserve. A Koala was last seen in the reserve 2005, and Spotted Quail-thrush are a ground nesting species that was feared to be facing local extinction and which is vulnerable to predation by foxes, cats and dogs. The project also aimed to engage the local community to learn about this special native forest located between Gunning and Yass. The project included a number of wonderful events such as introduction to bird watching, spotlighting, a webinar about koalas, and a popular information session with expert speakers.



The late Tony Saunders leads a bird watching event in Mundoonen Nature Reserve, April 2021.

Monitoring Southern Pygmy Perch

We were very pleased to receive funding from the Australian Government's Community Environment Program, which enabled us to provide training to a keen group of local citizen scientists in how to monitor for endangered Southern Pygmy Perch in 2021.



Volunteer citizen scientists attending training session for SPP Monitoring

Fungi Discovery Workshop

We were very pleased to be able to host a fungi discovery workshop with the engaging and renowned fungi expert, Dr Alison Pouliot in May 2021. Alison shared an enormous amount of information through stories, a beautiful specimen table and a walk in a nearby park. This event was made possible by contributions from LLS Regional Land Partnerships.



Dr Alison Pouliot leads a fungi discovery workshop in Dalton, May 2021

Trail Camera Photo Competition

We were excited to run a Trail Camera Photo Competition in early 2021, in which we received entries from 10 participants across 5 categories, including native bird, other native animal, feral animal, night-time photo, and a junior entry.

A photo of a male Lyrebird performing on his mound entered into the GDL Trail Camera Photo Competition by Jason Harrop, of Burrinjuck.



GDL Life Members

At the 2020 AGM, Gunning District Landcare awarded Life Membership to John and Jan Weatherstone, and formally embraced the Life Members of Jerrawa Creek Landcare Group (JCLG), one of the predecessors to GDL. John and Jan Weatherstone are much loved members of our regional community. They have received widespread acclaim for their innovative management of Lyndfield Park, John's family property. The work of John and Jan Weatherstone has inspired many people around Australia to engage with sustainable land management. Mary and John Walsh were the first Life Members of JCLG, awarded in 2008. They were early and enthusiastic adopters of Landcare, and their contribution was exceptional and long term. Both were JCLG committee members with Mary being a very effective president. John was particularly knowledgeable about trees and plants. Jan and Bill Granger were awarded Life Membership of JCLG in 2011. They were founding members and Jan had been a highly valued and long-serving Treasurer, reflected in her nomination for the Westpac Community Treasurer of the Year Award in 2007. Bill was a willing and invaluable contributor to many of the group's activities.

In 2013, Bob and Rosemary Spiller were also endorsed as Life Members of JCLG for their enormous contribution to the group, including Bob's role as Secretary for many years. Bob was also awarded Life Membership of Gunning District Landcare in 2017 for his active and effective role in the newly formed group. Janet Heffernan was awarded life membership of GDL in 2018 in recognition of the significant time and energy that she has put into numerous Landcare activities, most recently the efforts to conserve our local and endangered Southern Pygmy Perch.



GDL's 2020 AGM, held in Barbour Park.

Our Impact: 2022-2023

Gunning District Landcare has enjoyed another successful year filled with projects, workshops, seminars, and other activities that have provided ongoing support and learning opportunities for adults and children in our region.

Southern Pygmy Perch - Update

Gunning District Landcare has a passion for our local endangered Southern Pygmy Perch and has been working towards the conservation of the species over many years, guided by a Local Action Plan developed by fish scientists Mark Lintermans and Luke Pearce.

A survey of Oolong Creek in December 2021 found good numbers of Southern Pygmy Perch. This was a delightful surprise for all involved, as we did not know whether the population in Oolong Ck had survived the drought! It refocused our efforts in the area and led to a partnership with OzFish Unlimited, as well as DPI Fisheries, fish scientist Mark Lintermans, local landholders and the community to undertake habitat enhancement.

Fishers for Fish Habitat Forum Newcastle

On Friday 25th November 2022, Vice-Chair Janet Heffernan and Coordinator Sonya Duus shared GDL's story of caring for Southern Pygmy Perch at the 'Fishers for Fish Habitat' forum in Newcastle, organised by OzFish Unlimited. It was a fabulous opportunity to meet like-minded folk and to learn about the many and varied projects that are protecting and enhancing fish habitat along the coast as well and throughout the inland waterways.

Removing Woody Weeds from Oolong Creek

Removing weeds is a critical first step towards the objective of establishing appropriate native vegetation to enhance habitat for Southern Pygmy Perch in Oolong Creek. One of the first actions has been to remove blackberry and elm suckers from near Fossil Park in Dalton.

Over three weekends in March, April, and May 2023, OzFish Unlimited provided the fully equipped River Repair Bus and a staff member to assist with woody weed removal. Janet Heffernan worked tirelessly alongside OzFish staff and local volunteers to tackle the woody weeds.

Local Land Services provided the funding for this project, with administration and input from Upper Lachlan Shire Council.



Gunning Showground Bush Block

Gunning District Landcare, with support from the Showground s355 Committee and the Upper Lachlan Shire Council, began work to restore a patch of degraded Box Gum Grassy Woodland in the Gunning Village in 2022. Located in the south-west corner of the century-old Gunning Showground, the 2.2 ha bush block made up of mixed vegetation is significant in the local area.

Although the majority of our local land was made up of Box Gum Grassy Woodland pre-colonisation, clearing the land for agriculture and development has reduced the ecologically important community type to merely 5% of its previous range. Most of the remnant Box Gum Grassy Woodland is now fragmented and sparsely dispersed across south-east Australia. We are fortunate to have a space within the village of Gunning that contains this kind of vegetation - the only such ecological community within 2.5km. In many cases, wildlife needs to be able to move from one remnant bushland to another, and the Showground bushland represents an important link in this connectivity chain and, significantly, is a rare example of this endangered ecosystem within the heart of a village.

Planting trees for the Queen's Jubilee

In 2022, Gunning District Landcare received funding from the Australian government as part of the Planting Trees for the Queen's Jubilee grant round. In this project, we engaged the local Scouts, Cubs and Joeys to help us plant 75 native trees for Box Gum Grassy Woodlands. The funding also allowed us to clean up the site; we organised for around 100 old car tyres and four truckloads of other rubbish to be removed, and the felling and stump grinding of two large dead pine trees.

The tubestock planted were appropriate species for the endangered Box Gum Grassy Woodland ecology that is already present at the block, including eucalyptus, sweet bursaria, and a variety of wattles. A ceremony was held to dedicate the planting to the platinum jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the Gunning Shire Hall, attended by councillors John Searl, Susan Reynolds and Lauren Woodbridge. Community representatives from Gunning were also in attendance, along with Landcare members and visitors. Councillor John Searl presented a eucalyptus seedling to the Chair of Gunning District Landcare, John Storey. This project represented the first step towards preserving and enhancing the existing habitat.

GDL Chair John Storey receives a Eucalypt seedling from Councillor John Searl at a ceremony to dedicate the planting to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.



Stronger Country Communities

Our vision for the bush block to become an ecological park only grew after the positive start of a site clean-up and tree planting. So, we were overjoyed when our application for funding from the NSW Government's Strong Country Communities grant round was successful. As part of this project, we will install wheelchair accessible paths and benches, a yarning circle, and interpretative signs highlighting the native plant and animal species and their importance to the local Indigenous community. A new perimeter fence will also be installed.

When complete, the Showground Bush Block will be utilised by community groups, school children, and by members of the public as an inspiring and educational space to relax and enjoy the ecologically important surroundings. The Bush Block will also be home to a self-sustaining volunteer Bushcare group, which will further the bush regeneration works and create volunteer and training opportunities for members of our community.

There has been considerable support and excitement from community members and leaders as to the opportunities the development will create for our local schools as well as the positive impact it will have on woodland birds, reptiles, and mammals. GDL aims to develop the site with minimal disturbance, and in collaboration with the local Ngunnawal community to honour significant sites and create a space that is welcoming to all.



State and Local government representatives and staff gather together with GDL volunteers at the Gunning Showground bush block to receive news of the Stronger Country Communities funding.

Photo courtesy of Office of Member for Goulburn, Wendy Tuckerman

Paddock Trees

Scattered paddock trees are ubiquitous across the Australian countryside. Unfortunately, due to age and other environmental pressures, many are being lost from the landscape. Paddock trees are critically important habitat for birds, insects, and other wildlife, and can provide considerable benefits to landholders. They also provide habitat for various insectivores, which help minimise insect pest damage, help protect stock and crops from extreme wind and weather, and improve the surrounding soil.

With support from Local Land Services, GDL launched its first Paddock Tree Project in 2022 for landholders to access plants, tree guards, and weed mats to plant a new generation of paddock trees in our district. Protecting the seedling trees from stock and other animals is the key to success, so we followed in the footsteps of other Landcare groups in the region (e.g. Hovells Creek Landcare, Upper Lachlan Landcare, Yass Landcare) by purchasing rolls of tough steel mesh to turn into sturdy tree guards. There were two guard sizes on offer: 1.2m high which is fine for sheep and other small animals, and 1.65m high which is good for cattle, horses, and other large animals. Applicants agreed to contribute \$20 per small guard and \$25 per large guard and agreed to provide the steel posts to secure the guards. The landholder contribution meant that we could stretch the grant funds further, and it also gave the landholders a greater sense of investment in the project and the trees that they are establishing.



In 2022, there were 18 participating landholders who received between 5 and 24 trees and guards. About one third were 'sheep' guards and the rest were 'cattle/horse' guards. In total, 276 protected trees were planted as part of this project in its first year - helping to replace the old and dying paddock trees that serve a vital role in our landscape's ecology. Yass Landcare Nursery supplied the tubestock of 5 different eucalypt species (Yellow Box - *E. melliodora*, Blakely's Red Gum - *E. blakelyi*, Apple Box

- *E. bridgesiana*, White Box - *E. albens*, and Red Box - *E. polyanthemos*). Local Land Services provided the funding for the initial project, which enabled us to offer the subsidised trees and guards to our participants.

Due to the popularity of the 2022 project, GDL applied for funds from the Biala Wind Farm Community Grant to run the project again. We were very pleased to receive around \$20,000! This funding enabled us to increase the scale of the project, distributing 408 native trees, weed mats and sturdy guards to 18 properties in the Gunning region in May 2023.

We put out a call for expressions of interest in March 2023, and held a working bee for participating landholders to cut up and collect their guards, seedlings and weed mat on a Saturday in May. There are a number of benefits for landholders being involved: with the high price of steel, participation in the project meant that landholders were paying less than half for the guards than if they were doing it alone; they had assistance in cutting up the mesh guards; they received appropriate Eucalypt seedlings, propagated by the Yass Landcare Nursery; it gave them access to the expertise from Gunning District Landcare volunteers; and it was a chance to meet other like-minded landholders in the region.



GDL Chair John Storey and Project Officer Courtney Tindale cut mesh for tree guards at a working bee in May 2023

Gunning District Landcare is proud of its Paddock Tree initiatives and is particularly grateful for the support of Local Land Services in 2022 and a Biala Wind Farm Community Grant in 2023 that made our program possible

Mates of Mundoonen

In conjunction with NSW Parks and Wildlife Service, ACT Parks and Conservation, and WIRES, GDL was involved in the latest search for Koalas in the Mundoonen Nature Reserve. In early December 2022, GDL volunteers assisted researchers in placing 'song meters' throughout the Mundoonen Nature Reserve, with the objective to record animal calls within the survey area. As Koalas are difficult to spot by eye, one of the ways scientists can determine their presence in an area is by listening for their calls. The researchers analysed the recordings and although some brushtail possums did their best impressions, ultimately no Koala calls were identified. The last confirmed sighting of a Koala in Mundoonen Nature Reserve was 2005.



Staff from NSW Parks and Wildlife Service and ACT Parks and Conservation install 'song meters' in Mundoonen Nature Reserve to listen out for Koalas.

School Holiday Program

After a couple of quiet years due to COVID, Gunning District Landcare resumed School Holiday activities in 2022, thanks to remaining funds from COORDINARE - South Eastern NSW Partners in Health Network.

Waste to Art Workshop

Al Phemister, a renowned sculptor based in the Yass Valley, delivered a creative workshop on turning waste into art. Participants discovered how to recognise waste and rubbish that could be upcycled into art materials. They then learned a variety of techniques and processes to turn those upcycled materials into 3D art to take home and keep (or even use as a gift!).

Bug Catching Workshop

The other school holiday activity for the 2022-2023 financial year was held at the Gunning Showgrounds Bush Block on 7 July 2023. Seven children attended, and we began by playing a simple mimicry game aimed at helping the children understand how some insects communicate information to each other and how they find their way back to their colony when out foraging. Due to the inclement weather, rather than searching for bugs in the bush block the children searched a maintained area between the bush block and the shearing stand. Within this small area 6 different insect species were collected and identified

With the alarming decline in invertebrate (especially insect) species and numbers, this activity provided an important opportunity for children and their parents to gain some familiarity and overcome some fears of the various creepy crawlies that are critical to healthy functioning ecosystems.

Champions of Change Short Film Festival

Gunning District Landcare worked closely with Southern Tablelands Arts, Upper Lachlan Landcare, and Yass Area Network of Landcare Groups (YAN) to organise a short film festival, showcasing the films produced from the Champions of Change project. This project linked up local environmental heroes with people keen to learn how to create short documentary films, who were trained by Brian Rapsey from Rhapsody Films. Screenings were in Crookwell, Gundaroo and Dalton. The films screened were:

- Street Trees for Bees by Vivian Straw
- Pygmy Perch by Rhian Williams and Kim Morrison
- Climate Change by Elizabeth Goodfellow
- Whole Paddock Regeneration by Sue MacKenzie
- Waste not, want not by Heidi McGeoch

Each Champions of Change film festival screening featured a Q&A from one of the film makers. Each local Landcare group was on hand with info about how to get involved and make positive change in the local environment.

The Champions of Change film screening in Dalton included some GDL film stars, including Bob and Rosemary Spiller (pictured), and Janet Heffernan.



Connectivity in the Upper Lachlan Shire

Gunning District Landcare Vice Chair, Janet Heffernan, is working with other members of the Upper Lachlan Landcare community to implement the Habitat Connectivity Prioritisation Plan for the Upper Lachlan Local Government Area prepared by the late Tony Saunders.

The Plan identifies high priority areas for habitat connectivity work. This includes private landholdings and nature reserves. We are currently implementing a grant in the Laggan area where seven landholders have submitted applications for works including paddock trees, fencing off existing patches of remnant vegetation and direct seeding.

A number of workshops to build biodiversity skills are being organized which include Eucalyptus identification, understanding ecological communities, learning to identify scats and scratches, and audio surveillance. The group will be seeking grant funding over several years to keep implementing the key recommendations of the report.

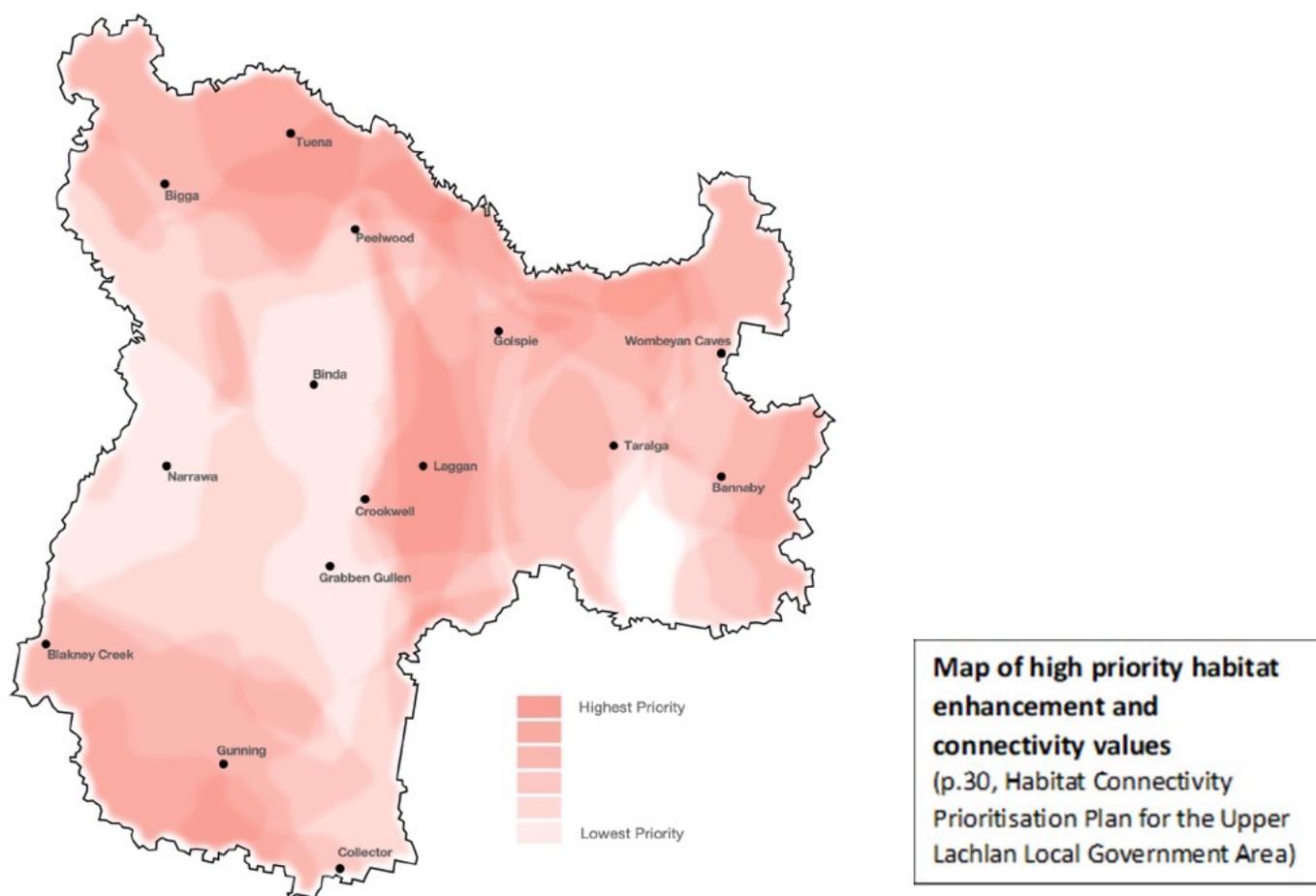


Figure 7. Overlapping distribution of all ten criteria used to identify relative priority for enhancing habitat connectivity within the UL LGA.

Dalton Bush Block

Gunning District Landcare has had a long-term interest in the Dalton bush block, located next to the Dalton Public School. It is a great example of high quality remnant Box Gum Grassy Woodland in the Southern Tablelands landscape. Gunning District Landcare has held funding for the enhancement of the bush block for a number of years. In partnership with the Dalton P&C Association, Vice-Chair Janet Heffernan organised for a contractor to remove weeds from the area (blackberries and tagaste) in June 2023, so the native plants now have room to flourish.



Box Gum Grassy Woodland in Dalton. Photo by Janet Heffernan

Gunning District Landcare Resources

Tools and Equipment

As part of our Public Education and engagement strategy GDL has invested in a range of tools and equipment which are available for our members.

Our policy for almost all items is that they are free for use by members on their own projects and for community field days. These items are not available for commercial use.



Available tools and equipment include:

- Single tyne ripper – used to prepare ground for tree planting;
- Moulder – used to prepare raised beds for tube stock planting;
- Tractor Drawn Tree Planter – a machine that rips soil and allows the operator to drop tube stock into place;
- Pottiputki Planters – used to plant Hyko and standard tube stock. Also excellent for planting riparian plants;
- Hyles Hand Seeder – a tool to direct sow seeds by hand, suitable for small jobs;
- Motion activated cameras – used for monitoring wildlife and feral animals;
- Common Myna bird traps – for capturing invasive and destructive Common Mynas;
- Projector and Screen – used by GDL for presentations**; Road Buddy LD10 sound system – used by GDL at events**.

** The last two items are not available to individual members but may, at the discretion of the Equipment Officer, be borrowed by other community organisations.



*The single tyne ripper can be used to prepare ground for single paddock trees, as well as for longer strips.
Photos: Janet Heffernan & Ruth Aveyard*



Moulder, attaches to three-point linkage on tractors

Kindly donated to GDL by John Weatherstone

Photo: Scott Keyworth



Tractor drawn tree planter, attaches to three-point linkage on tractors

Kindly donated to GDL by John Weatherstone

Photo: Scott Keyworth

Library books

Gunning District Landcare has donated a range of excellent resource books to the Gunning Library, related to flora, fauna, soils, Indigenous history, and more. You can see the books that are available on the GDL website or via the Library catalogue. There are currently around 100 such items listed for loan

Financial Report

It is with pleasure I present the Annual Financial Report for Gunning District Landcare Incorporated:

2023 Not-For-Profit Association Report

Gunning District Landcare Incorporated For the year ended 30 June 2023

ABN 37 324 840 668

Prepared by HelloLedger

Gunning District Landcare Incorporated is in a sound financial position with net assets of \$65,929 for the financial year ending 2023.

It is through the efforts of previous treasurers, committee members, particularly our retiring Coordinator Sonya Duus, and bookkeeper Leonie Martin that Gunning District Landcare Incorporated can present a sound and comprehensive financial report. GDL is most thankful to Leonie Martin of HelloLedger for the provision of expert financial advice and analysis. Individual projects being undertaken by GDL can be monitored and reported on with up to the minute balances, allowing for sound planning and allocation of resources.

The organisation completed a number of projects during 2022/2023, while other funded projects are continuing. These are noted on pages 19 - 27 of the Annual Report.

The efforts of committee members and our coordinator in applying for grants cannot be underestimated. Highlights include:

- Department of Regional NSW Stronger Communities Grant of (\$247,000) to commence the restoration of 2ha of box gum grassy woodland, an endangered ecological community (EEC) adjacent to the Gunning showgrounds, locally known as The Gunning Bush Block
- Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources grant of \$20,000 commemorating the Queen's Jubilee for planting of trees in the Gunning Bush Block
- Two successive grants (Local Land Services \$10,000 and Biala Wind Farm \$20,000) for planting paddock trees, allowing a significant reach to small and large landholders about the multiple benefits of paddock trees
- Grants from Acciona Energia (\$5,000) and Transgrid (\$4,141) to establish a Bush Care Group to provide training for local residents to maintain the Gunning Bush Block
- Upper Lachlan Landcare grant of \$5,000 allowing the continuation of our exciting school holiday program
- OzFish Unlimited grant of \$3,545 to prepare a report on the 2021 southern pygmy perch survey and make recommendations on restoration activities within Oolong Creek
- Upper Lachlan Shire Council - \$1,600 for the preparation of a Habitat Management and Enhancement Plan for the Gunning Golf Course
- Friends of Grasslands - \$1,500 for an informative seminar and field day promoting the conservation and rehabilitation of Box Gum Grassy Woodlands
- Upper Lachlan Foundation - \$1,272 for the purchase of a projector.

At the time of publishing, GDL awaits the outcome of the 2023-2027 NSW Landcare Program funding allocation. We are hoping for funding for a Coordinator at 0.6 FTE to enable the group to continue successful strategic planning, relationship building, implementation of programs and the delivery of quality advice and assistance to our community.

Gunning District Landcare will continue to pursue funding opportunities through grants from State and Federal Government departments and agencies, philanthropic foundations, and other similar bodies to pursue activities that contribute to our mission.

We remain in a strong administrative and financial position to pursue our goals.

Susan Medway

Treasurer

6 November 2023



Assets and Liabilities Statement

Gunning District Landcare Incorporated As at 30 June 2023

	NOTES	30 JUN 2023	30 JUN 2022
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents			
AUD PayPal		-	325
Projects Account	2	165,919	117,670
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents		165,919	117,995
Term Deposits			
NAB Term Deposit #2186		12,564	12,533
NAB Term Deposit #7856		17,500	-
Total Term Deposits		30,064	12,533
GDL Public Fund			
GDL Public Fund		20	-
Total GDL Public Fund		20	-
Other Current Assets		13,689	575
Total Current Assets		209,691	131,103
Total Assets		209,691	131,103
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
PAYG Withholding Payable		1,284	1,132
Trade Creditors		321	10,891
GST Payable		2,905	1,293
Superannuation Payable		1,459	909
Total Current Liabilities		5,970	14,226
Non-Current Liabilities			
Other Non-Current Liabilities			
Projects & Allocated Funding		145,077	57,499
Total Other Non-Current Liabilities		145,077	57,499
Total Non-Current Liabilities		145,077	57,499
Total Liabilities		151,047	71,725
Net Assets		58,645	59,378
Member's Funds			
Retained Earnings		58,645	59,378
Total Member's Funds		58,645	59,378

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

GDL Life Members

Gunning District Landcare's life members are recognised as having made a significant contribution to Landcare and our region's natural environment.

Bill & Jan Granger

John & Mary Walsh

Janet Heffernan

John & Jan Weatherstone

Bob & Rosemary Spiller

GDL Membership Register 2022-2023

John & Suzette Boddington

Brendan & Samantha Malone

Jake Brown

Dianne Matthews

Keith Brown

Kate McKay

Karilyn Brown

Lea-Anne McPhee

Russell Bush

Brent & Susan Medway

Brendan, Carly, Bryony & Ellie Conlan

Tony Medway

Brett Douglas

Dilair Mustafa

Sonya Duus

Greg Mumm

John Edwards & Maryanne Johnstone

Alison, Matthew, Evelyn, & Lila Nash

Kim Garsia

Andrew, Tracy, Jesse, & Daniel O'Brien

Phillip Gould

Andrew Robertson & Laura Soane

Bob Hayden

Barbara & Michael Rowett

Vince Heffernan

Angela, Tim, Paige, & Benjamin Rundle

Ross, Diane, Brent, & Breanna Hickey

Bill Schumann

Kay & Andrew Hull

Michelle & John Storey

John & Kerry Hyman

Jackie Thompson & Peter Zerbe

Alison & Bill Johnson

Helen Vooren & John Fischer

Scott, Lynn, Amelia, Grace and Elliott
Keyworth

Helen & Roger Willoughby

Charles & Lucy Knight

Angela & Jon Winston-Gregson

Sze Yeen Lee & Huw Edwards

Lauren Woodbridge

Wayne Lloyd & Richard Walton



Tree planting provides benefits (or at least entertainment) for multiple species! Scott Keyworth



The next generation of paddock trees are thriving! Susan Medway



Reflections on the dam in the Gunning Showgrounds Bush Block – Leah Samson

Authorised by Gunning District Landcare Inc. PO Box 23 Gunning NSW 2581. Phone 0488 027 653

www.gdl.org.au September 2023