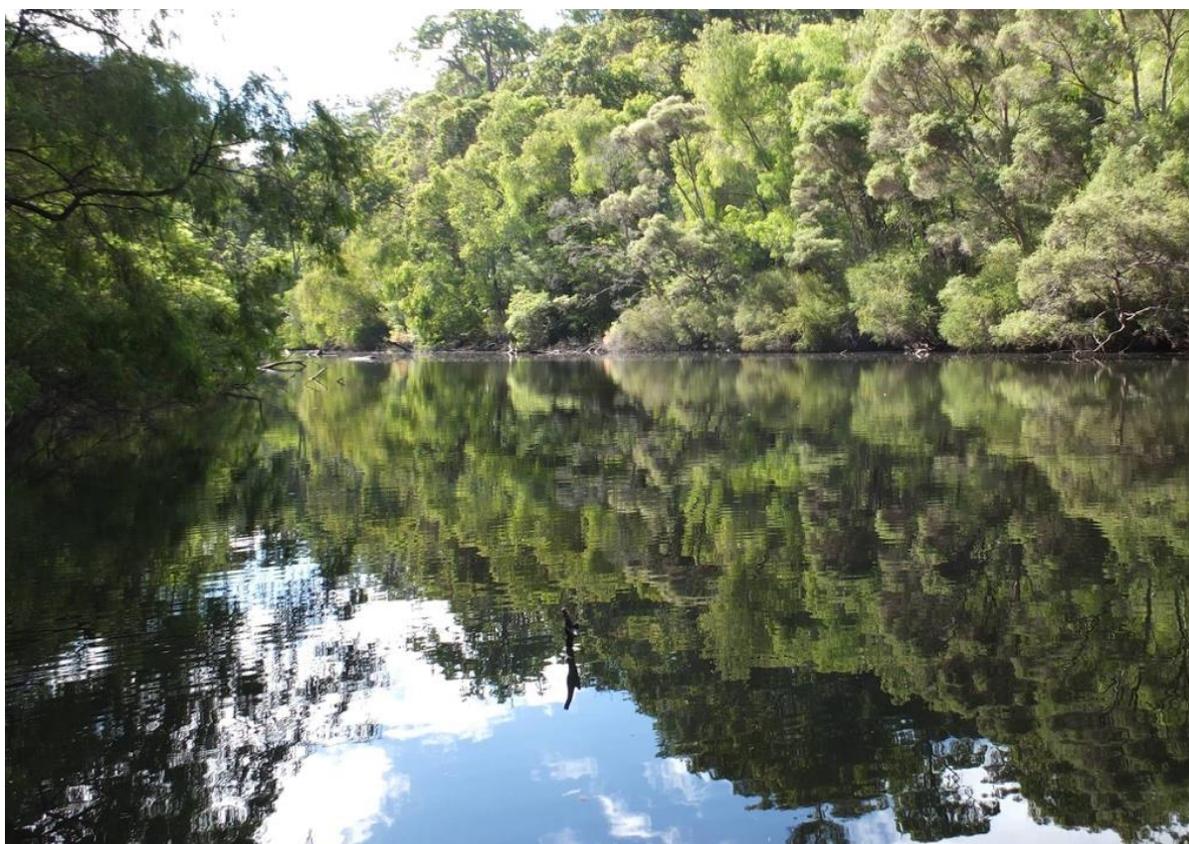


From Little Things Big Things Grow

'Small projects with huge impact'

To **inform, inspire** and **involve** people in sustainable natural resource management is the Southern Forests Community Landcare's number one objective.

At the core of Caring for Country is an awareness of the natural wonders and threats to their existence. The forests and river systems under the watchful eye of Southern Forests Community Landcare (SFCL) are blessed with enormous biodiversity to spark the wonder, but these ecosystems are also under enormous pressures.



Andy Russell and Lee Fontanini, long-term project officers, paddle down the Warren River, monitoring the banks and riparian zone for weed infestation.

Southern Forests Community Landcare encompasses the entirety of the Shire of Manjimup and sections of five neighbouring shires where the catchments of the rivers from the Donnelly to the Frankland may lie.

Historically, when access to funding was less constrained, Southern Forests Community Landcare managed large, multi-partner collaborative projects, addressing landscape scale issues such as salinity and erosion mitigation, feral animal management, woylie conservation and experimenting with biocontrol of invasive species such as bridal creeper.

Agriculturally, Southern Forests Community Landcare has supported innovative farmers in trialling novel practices: multi-species pastures, soil amending biochar and biofertilisers, multi-species rotational grazing and increasing dung beetle diversity.



Poultry followed sheep in Mountfords Wines' organic vineyard and cider apple orchard, in a trial to manage weed and insect pressures and build soil fertility

Faced with its own extinction, Southern Forests Community Landcare has reoriented its focus to provide opportunities, with its limited resources, for the community to be informed, inspired and involved!

Sharon Rose joined the Southern Forests Community Landcare team to manage a unique Land Art project, working with renown land artist, Elaine Clocherty, and a wide range of community members, to construct a large sculpture in the Manjimup Heritage Park. Assembling the natural materials to represent local birds, waterways and ecology was a creative and enjoyable pathway to learning. The collaborative effort was also community building.

"It was just fantastic to see so many people working together in nature to make this beautiful ephemeral sculpture," enthused Sharon.



Community Land Art Project, Manjimup 2018

This community engagement has continued, courtesy of a small State NRM grant, where urban residents can actively assist in mitigating the effects of insect decline on surrounding horticulture farms dependent upon pollinating species. Insects aren't the only pollinators and through a series of workshops Sharon is organising, the interconnectedness of nature is reinforced.

The charismatic Frog Doctor, Johnny Prefumo, dispelled myths about frog habitats (frogs need damp places but ponds aren't essential for most species) and focused on other elements – plants that attract insects and provide shade and shelter.

Johnny Prefumo, The Frog Doctor





Bat box building workshop with Joe Tonga



Community enthusiastically building native bee hotels



Tracy Lansdell shared her knowledge of the enormous diversity of native bees and their ecological functions

Being nocturnal, many are unaware of the role microbats play in pollination and control of pest insects – mosquitoes and crop pests. Joe Tonga brought his carpentry skills and extensive knowledge to a sell out bat box building workshop.

Sustainability guru and self-taught native bee expert, Tracy Lansdell, enthralled the crowd with the beauty of native bees and the many bee hotels constructed with materials she brought are now dotted around the town.

Future *Pollinator Aplenty* workshops and field walk topics are planned to further the awareness of the important work of pollinating species: birds, integrated pest management and bush foods.

Besides deepening awareness of the interconnectedness of nature and our place - and responsibilities - in the natural world, *Pollinators Aplenty* also seeks to increase the

connectedness of community. Bank of New Ideas founder, Peter Kenyon, facilitated a forum exploring ways to build a supportive network.

'*Pollinators Aplenty* has had larger than anticipated attendance, with people travelling from outlying areas to attend,' Sharon reflected. 'There are some wonderful personal stories and heart-warming changes that have occurred.'

Deb Bull, new to town and new to farming had some wonderful inspiration after attending a Southern Forests Community Landcare workshop about frogs.

'I never thought that attending a workshop about frogs would be so pivotal in my journey as a new landowner/farmer. The "light bulb" moments with regards to the bigger picture and our eco system came at a perfect time for me. Later that day I downloaded a recommended app from the workshop and spent hours that weekend learning about the flora on our property along with listening to frog sounds and recording them. I realised then that going to that workshop was the best decision I made after moving to the country. I would have floundered for so much longer not knowing what to learn first. Just listening to the frogs was a perfect place to start :) Who knew they had so much to say'.

More information about Southern Forests Community Landcare is available [HERE](#)

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