



Land for Wildlife and Garden for Wildlife

Central Australia Newsletter

September 2017

From the Land for Wildlife Coordinator

Land for Wildlife has had yet another busy month getting ready for the Land for Wildlife birthday event, which went off with a bang at the end of the month. Thanks to all who attended and made the day such a success. To those who couldn't make it—happy 15 years of Land for Wildlife and 10 years of Garden for Wildlife!

The weather is beginning to warm up, which means it's a perfect time to get on top of propagating and planting native species in the garden and pruning winter-flowering shrubs to give them a chance to spread out in a healthy manner.

It's also a good time to collect seeds from those species that you wish to have germinate on your property. Clean and dry the seeds in preparation for sowing them in their new positions.

Enjoy the warm weather and let us know how the plant and animal life in your garden is responding to the change of seasons!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY LAND FOR WILDLIFERS!!



A Native Orange (*Capparis mitchellii*) flower at Simpson's Gap this month.

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Happy Birthday Land For Wildlife and Garden for Wildlife Landholders!

Land for Wildlife is celebrating 15 years of the program in central Australia, and Garden for Wildlife is celebrating 10 years of the program! We hope that the two complementary programs have been beneficial to our members and we look forward to continuing to support local landholders to preserve, enhance and restore wildlife habitat on private properties in the years to come.

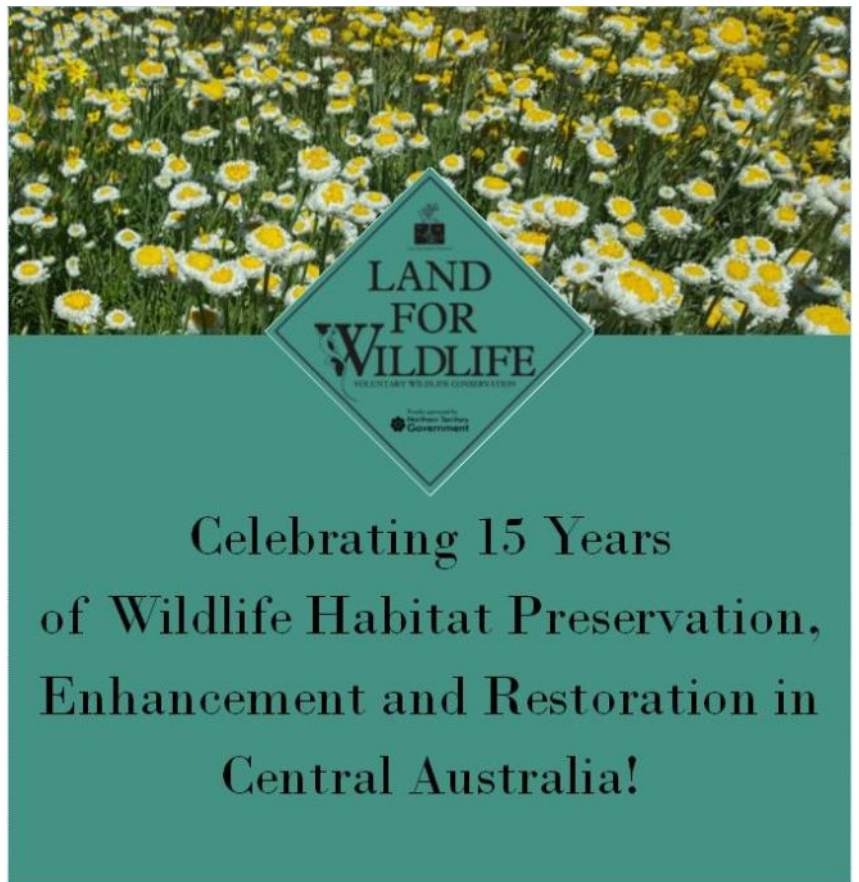
Thanks to our host Low Ecological Services and current funding partners (Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife, Alice Springs Town Council, Territory NRM), as well as those that have funded and supported us in the past (so many!). We couldn't have done it without you!

Many thanks to all Land for Wildlife coordinators past and present for building the program up to be what it is and providing expert assistance to landholders throughout central Australia. Thanks also go to the local organisations and groups that have supported us over the years to get the word out and assist us with the program at large.

Land for Wildlife celebrated the occasion with an event at the end of September, held at Olive Pink Botanic Garden (a long standing LFW member themselves who were gracious to provide assistance with the event venue). The event was very successful with roughly 35 LFW and GFW members in attendance for a range of great workshops and presentations. Presentations included a summary of the program, a property planning for wildlife presentation, an NT register of significant trees update, a seed collection workshop by Charles Darwin University, a bat box building workshop by Parks and Wildlife Commission NT, and a documentary Wild Brumby Run. The event included catering for morning tea, as well as lunch, provided by the Land for Wildlife team.

Thanks to Territory Natural Resource Management for supporting the event through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. In addition, Olive Pink Botanic Garden provided in kind support towards the fabulous venue. Local groups provided door prizes as in kind support, including books from Land for Wildlife, two vouchers from Red Kangaroo Books and two vouchers from Alice Springs Desert Park. The lucky recipients were drawn at random from those present—we hope that the vouchers and books are well received (they are certainly well deserved!).

There has been some excellent feedback from the event, with many of the attendees showing great appreciation for the informative workshops and a chance to mingle with other members. Missed the party? This newsletter includes some information from the workshops to get you up to date... Plus you will find more in next month's issue Enjoy!



It's a birthday—of course there must be cake! I'll keep my job as coordinator though and not skip to cake designer in a hurry.





John Tyne from Parks and Wildlife Commission NT and Erin Westerhuis presented a workshop on how to build bat boxes, which was run as part of the Land for Wildlife birthday event (Image B. Low).

Building Bat Boxes

By John Tyne (Parks and Wildlife Commission NT)

Thanks for your interest in the bat boxes that I was showing on Saturday!

The bat boxes I built were all made from one plank of untreated softwood timber. To make one of the smaller boxes, you'll need approximately 1.5 m of timber that is 190 mm wide and 45 mm thick. I was able to find a piece like this at the Home Hardware shop in town. I used 70mm long exterior timber screws to piece it all together.

The back piece: 350 mm long x 190 mm wide x 45 mm thick

The front piece: 200 mm long x 190 mm wide x 45 mm thick

Two side pieces: 200 mm long x 190 mm wide x 45 mm thick

The roof piece: 380 mm long x 190 mm wide x 45 mm thick

The base/floor: 100 mm long x 170 mm wide x 45 mm thick
(this is the only piece that isn't 190 mm wide!)

Two spacers for back: 50 mm long x 190 mm wide x 45 mm thick

(these are to put on the back of the box so when you hang it is off the tree/post a little ways)

On the inside I used a staple gun to put up some old shade cloth. Instead of shade cloth you could score lines into the back so that the bats are able to climb it more easily. On the extension out the bottom that the bats will have to land on to climb up, I scored the timber using a hand saw. You could also put shade cloth on this instead. The gap at the base should be around 20 mm wide to allow the bats to climb in. On the boxes I made, I put an exterior grade metal hinge and two magnetic clasps on the lid so that I could open it. You could simplify things by just fixing the lid down with screws and not using a hinge. Depending on where you hang it, you could just screw it straight to an object (shed/post), or you could strap it to a tree. Try and hang the box at least 3 meters high, in a sheltered area but with a clear flight path to the box entry.

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John Tyne and Erin Westerhuis presented a workshop on how to build bat boxes, which was run as part of the Land for Wildlife birthday event. The internal space is lined with shade cloth (Left) and various designs can be used (Right) (Images R. Ferrari).

Good luck putting this together, and let me know if you have some success with bats moving in. Any questions feel free to ask!

~ John Tyne

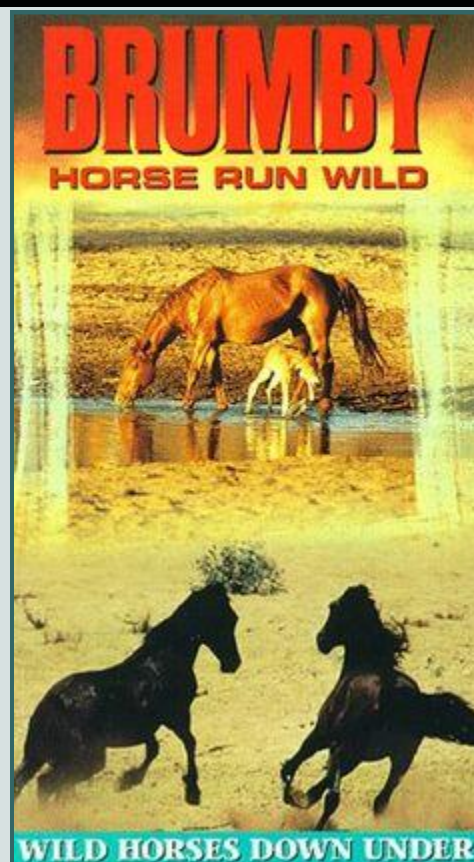
Build bat boxes to install on your property and provide them with a safe space by following John Tyne's helpful instructions. You can also download some fact sheets that were provided by the crew on the day, including [Boxes for Bats](#) and also the [Bat Roost Box Kit](#).

Brumby Horse Run Wild

John Tyne provided a copy of *Brumby Horse Run Wild* (1990), a documentary narrated by Bryan Brown on wild horse control. It was filmed in various Australian locations, including the semi-local site of Kings Creek Station. The video is not for sale, however John has informed us that is available for viewing on [YouTube](#) (50 mins).

*"A wild, unhandled lot they are
Of every shape and breed.
They venture out 'neath moon
and star
Along the flats to feed"*

~ Banjo Paterson

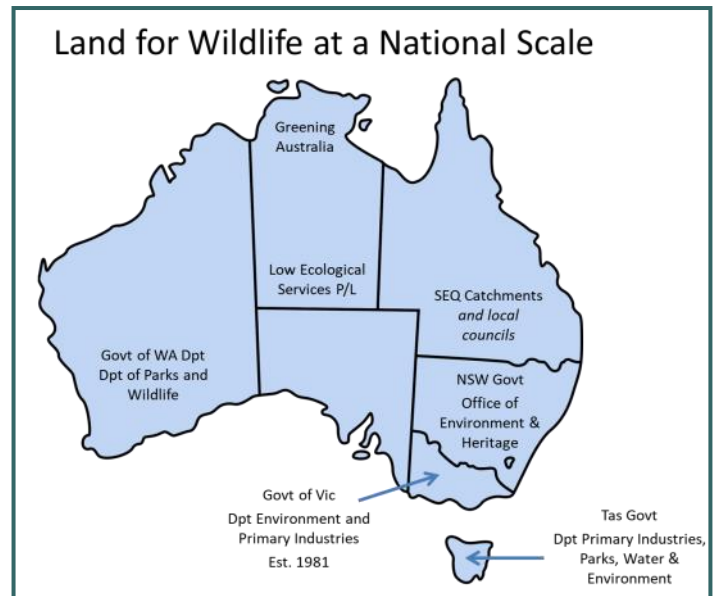


Land for Wildlife and Garden for Wildlife Central Australia: Celebrating 15 years of Wildlife Habitat Preservation, Enhancement and Restoration

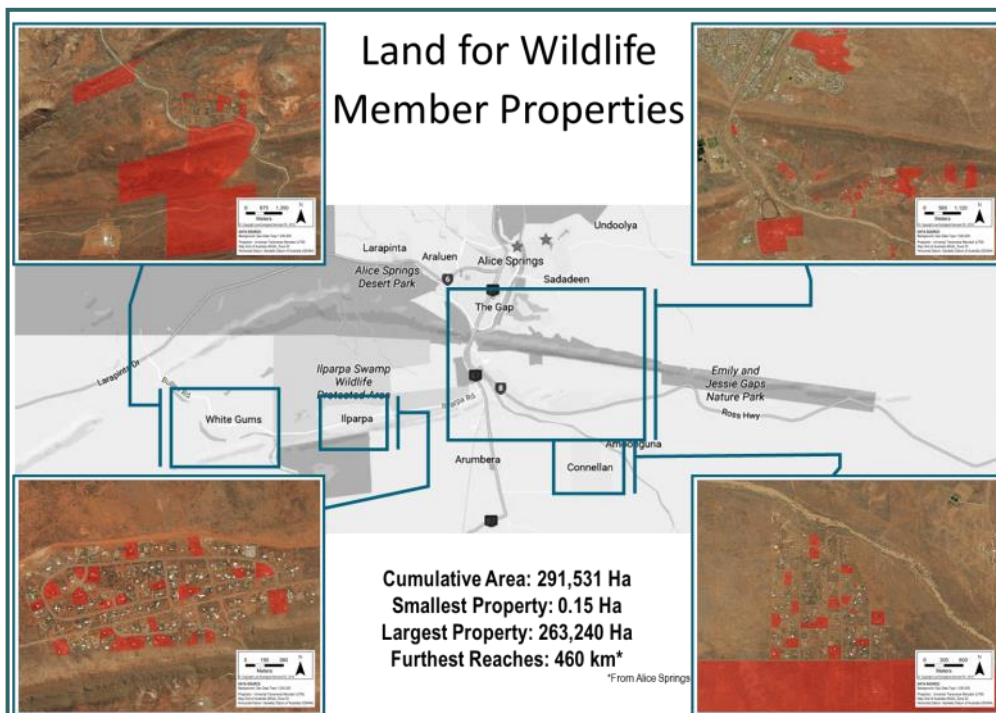
As part of the 15th birthday event, we provided some background and a summary on the Land for Wildlife and Garden for Wildlife program in central Australia.

Land for Wildlife is a not-for-profit program that runs in various capacities throughout Australia. Land for Wildlife is aimed at assisting landholders in peri-urban and rural areas to preserve, enhance and recreate wildlife habitat. A parallel program, Garden for Wildlife, was developed in the biodiverse hotspot Alice Springs to assist members residing on urban blocks. The programs rely on voluntary and non-legally binding efforts from local landholders.

Land for Wildlife as a brand was established in 1981 by the Victorian government and Bird Observer's Club of Australia. Land for Wildlife in Alice Springs and its partner program Garden for Wildlife have been running successfully for fifteen years, and ten years, respectively. They have been hugely successful programs and are widely regarded in the Alice Springs region. The program was initially run through the Alice Springs Town Council on a three year federal government grant. The Alice Springs Town Council ran it for a year, with Low Ecological Services taking up the remainder of the contract and hosting the program ever since and seeking grant moneys from a variety of agencies. The program is currently funded locally through Parks and Wildlife NT and the Alice Springs Town Council remains a sponsor. The program also has funding for individual projects through support from Territory Natural Resource Management and funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare programme. Additional previous funding bodies include Territory Eco-Link, Territory Natural Resource Management, Caring for Country, Landcare, Natural Heritage Trust, Envirofund, PowerWater and Low Ecological Services with in kind support and endurance.



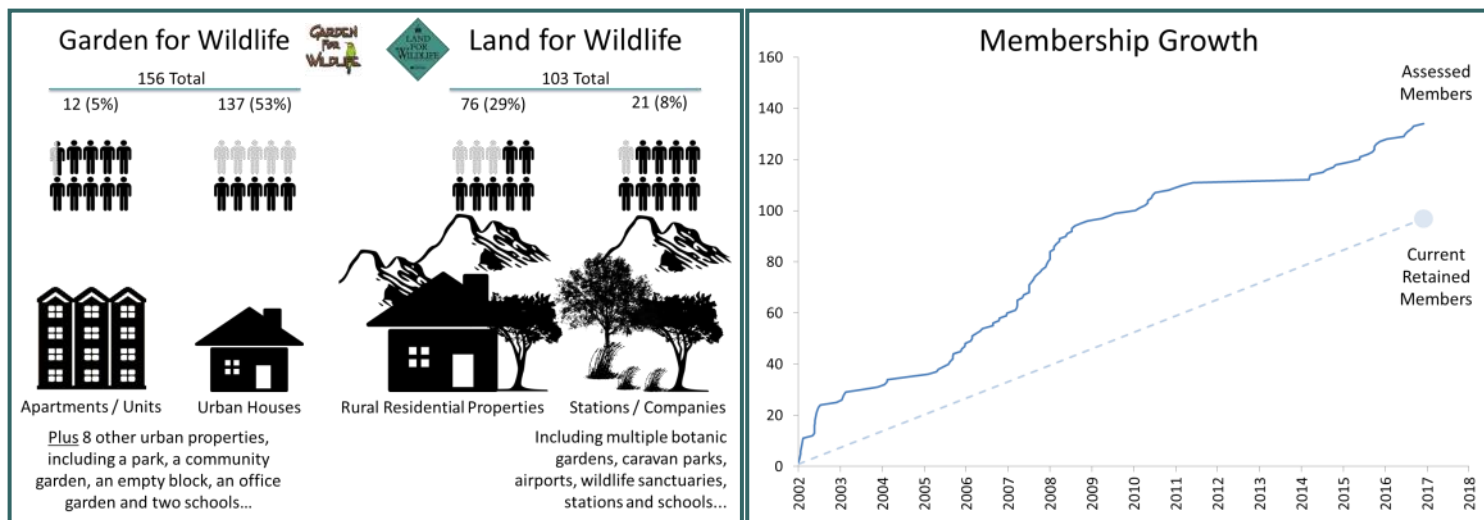
Many of the member properties are situated within the MacDonnell Ranges Bioregion, containing the highest number of vulnerable and rare species listed with conservation status nationally and at the NT level. As a result, preserving even small patches of vegetation is a worthwhile venture in terms of providing habitat for native fauna species (and protecting the local native flora species themselves).



The member base extends to Yulara in the south-west, Andado Station and Ross River in the south-east, Narwietooma Station to the north-west and Tennant Creek Airport to the north. Cumulative property area covered by the 103 Land for Wildlife and 156 Garden for Wildlife members is 291,531 hectares, and rising.

Collaboration with private landholders is a successful method of conserving habitats and nature corridors, to address the challenge of species decline though habitat loss. This is achieved through regular engagement activities (workshops, participation in public events and monthly

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newsletters), providing networking opportunities, as well as providing on-going support and management advice specific to each block.

When signing up a new Land for Wildlife member, an assessment is conducted on the property, which includes identifying the flora and checking for tracks or scats of fauna, as well as identifying special value habitats and any management issues the property may have. An assessment report is then prepared for the property owner, which includes detailed information about the assessment, property management concerns and suggested methods for going forward. Ongoing assistance in the form of support, advice, information resources and links to other professionals and specialist organisations in the region is provided. Garden for Wildlife is more informal and membership does not include an assessment or report, but rather a resource package and informal site visit to assist with development planning, any queries and plant identification.

Attention in both programs is given to encouraging landholders to plant local native plant species, as these species are self-reliant and there is a subsequent reduction in water use in our water-limited semi-arid zone. Retaining and protecting remnant vegetation is recommended to members. To allow regeneration of habitat, members are advised to fence areas from livestock and restrict the access of livestock to ephemeral rivers and drainage systems. Encouraging distribution of run-off and controlling erosion is oft-needed advice. Members are encouraged to control weed and feral species, such as removal of Buffel Grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) to allow room for native grasses, and trapping feral cats (*Felis catus*) to limit the predation pressure on native mammals and reptiles. Protecting various elements of wildlife habitat, such as fallen wood, leaf litter and dead branches and trees with hollows are also encouraged.

While the programs have been successful for many long-term members, Alice Springs has a notoriously transient population. While this has benefits in people taking ‘the message’ with them to other regions, it also makes maintaining contact with member properties and their current owners an ongoing challenge. This challenge has been overcome through a combination of efforts, such as the use of MailChimp as an online newsletter mailing tool – bouncing emails promote impetus to contact members to clarify their current status, regular interaction with members to stay up to date with their conservation efforts and the encouragement of communication through the monthly newsletter. The small community of Alice Springs has the benefit that networking with members through chance meetings around town is a useful tool.






As well as the transient membership, the coordinator position has been run by many energetic and qualified specialists over the period of the program in central Australia. While this can be a challenge for members with respect to different levels of engagement, each coordinator comes with a different focus, drive and experience – which can be a benefit in that the information and energy is kept fresh. A potential benefit for incoming coordinators and for LFW members is the amazing expertise and experience available amongst the LFW landholders and their willingness to share that expertise.

Land for Wildlife has been incredibly successful and is a much-loved program in the region. One of the major avenues of communicating with and engaging members and the wider community is through the monthly newsletter and social media posts. Newsletters contain relevant and current information on hot topics, which members can use to manage their properties. The newsletter also provides opportunities for members to share their experience and wildlife snapshots with other members. The website blog and social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, give multi-media

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Social Media

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 <p>Land for Wildlife Newsletter</p> <p>434 Subscribers</p> <p>Newsletter, upcoming events</p>	 <p>Land for Wildlife Garden for Wildlife</p> <p>415 LFW 29 GFW Page Likes</p> <p>Links to newsletters & web blogs, flora and fauna images from member properties, current interest articles</p>	 <p>@LFW_Alice</p> <p>98 Followers <i>New in mid-2016</i></p> <p>Images from member properties of flora and fauna</p>	 <p>@LFW_Alice</p> <p>449 Followers</p> <p>Links to newsletters, links to web blogs</p>	 <p>Land for Wildlife</p> <p>1,163 Views <i>New in mid-2016</i></p> <p>Wildlife videos taken on member properties & surrounding region, cat monitoring Stories</p>
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savvy members avenues of staying engaged with Land for Wildlife on a more regular basis between newsletters – whether it be through the posting of a photo from a member, sharing upcoming events, or posting an article relevant to the day. It also gives Land for Wildlife members the ability to interact as much or as little as they wish, without intensive moderation from the coordinator. Social media followers are steadily increasing with regular interaction. Social media also enables Land for Wildlife to engage with people that are outside of the membership network – the Alice Springs community, Australia and internationally.

Land for Wildlife collaborates with many government agencies, which provides a

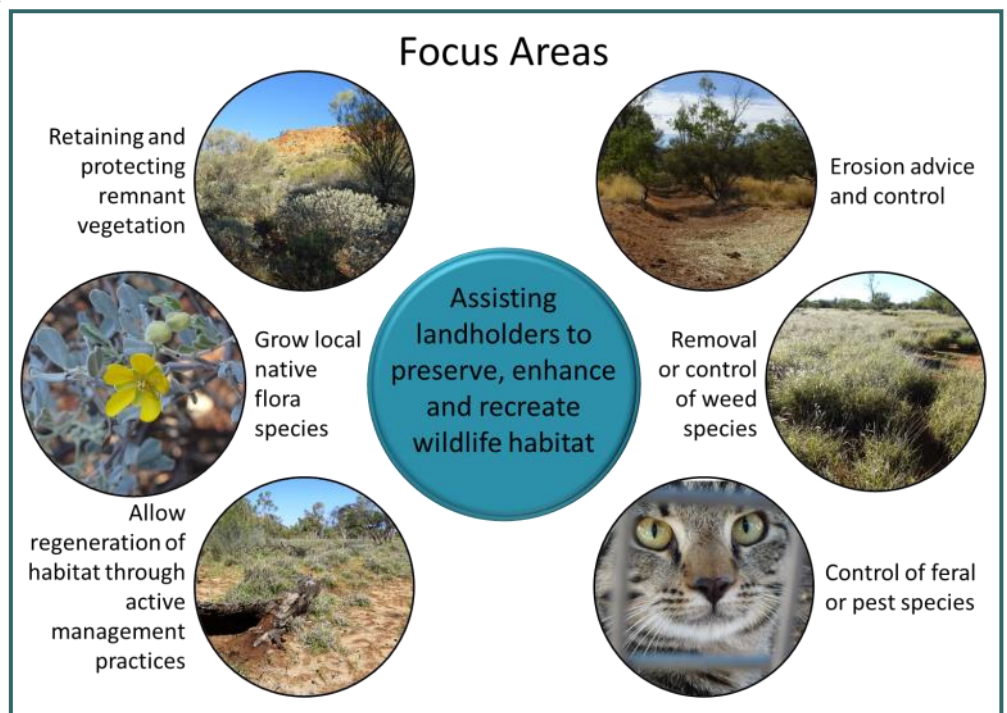
conduit to gain and pass on information - such as PowerWater for water conservation, Department of Land and Resource Management for weed management and erosion control information, and Parks and Wildlife for flora and fauna information. The experience of the LFW coordinators and the networks provided by the role means that the coordinator is able to handle a wide variety of issues.

Engagement with the youth of Alice Springs occurs through a range of community events, with the DesertSmart EcoFair providing one very useful lead. Land for Wildlife ran a 'Biodiversity' workshop to four school groups at this year's EcoFair, with positive feedback coming from all involved. Exposure is gained from our involvement in other community events such as the Olive Pink Botanic Garden Plant Sales, EcoFair markets, Pets on Parade, Alice Springs Show and Mini Bilby Festival.

Collaboration with the Tjuwanpa Women Rangers and the Ntaria Junior Rangers on a regular basis has resulted in the development of a good working relationship with the indigenous communities in the West MacDonnell Ranges, as well as cross-cultural information transferral regarding important NRM issues of the region.

The land assessments give the property owners knowledge regarding the flora present on their block. Many members find plant identification a challenge and are hesitant to do extensive weed control at the risk of removing natives. With a little guidance regarding plant identification, members are much more willing to get active in the garden removing the pesky species, resulting in a healthy garden full of local natives. Land for Wildlife encourages nurseries to provide local native plants and encourages the nursery association to assist in spreading the word, but maintaining those connections is always a challenge due to the transient nature of Alice Springs.

Several properties are now Buffel grass free and only require minimal maintenance to keep the Buffel at bay,



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and some property owners have even made their way out onto the verge to clear the buffel. Consequently, many native forbs and flowering annuals have returned, providing fruit, seed and foraging vegetation cover for native birds and other fauna.

Erosion control and education has been a priority, which has been extremely helpful for members and other residents in the rural area of Ilparpa.

A long-term success on central Australian Land for Wildlife properties has been the ongoing trapping support given to members for feral animals such as cats, rabbits and spotted turtle doves. Members can borrow traps and get the information resources necessary to assist them in their trapping journey.

In the last couple of years, Land for Wildlife has been running a domestic cat monitoring project in Alice Springs. This is supported by Territory Natural Resource Management, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. The project focuses on engaging domestic cat owners regarding responsible pet management by tracking the movements of pet cats with a GPS tracker. The project has been picked up by the local media on several occasions and has gained a huge amount of interest in the community.

The NT Register of Significant Trees was conceived in 1982 by the National Trust and Greening Australia and is now management by Land for Wildlife central Australia. It includes central Australia, Katherine and the Darwin region. Candice Appleby has been working hard to revitalise the register and convert it to an online format.

Land for Wildlife/Garden for Wildlife has won many awards over the years, including: Best Urban NRM Group (TNRM Awards 2015 and 2016), Toshiba Leading Information Award Community Group (NT Landcare Awards 2011), Community Award (Melaleuca Awards 2010), Urban Landcare Award (NT Landcare Awards 2009), and Merit Award (NT Landcare Awards 2007).

Our success has come from a combination of all efforts that have been put in, from workshops and attending events, newsletters, social media interaction to personalised engagement and advice. Overall, Land for Wildlife and Garden for Wildlife have been hugely successful in central Australia for engaging the community regarding the importance of preserving and revegetating wildlife habitat on private as well as public lands and we look forward to another 15 strong years of the program. [Blog](#) ►

NT Register of Significant Trees: Seeking Committee Members

The NT Register of Significant Trees coordinator, Candice Appleby, has had a flood of new tree nominations coming in and is looking to get them processed. For a tree to make it onto the register, its status needs to be assessed against the nomination criteria and then ratified at a committee.

Do you know about local plants and have some expertise you can provide? Do you have a keen interest in the environment and protecting it? Land for Wildlife needs you!

Get in touch with Land for Wildlife if you are interesting in being a part of the NT Register of Significant Trees Committee and processing new nominations. Email LFW@lowecol.com.au and let us know you're interested!



To learn more about the NT Register of Significant Trees, head to the Land for Wildlife website and the [Significant Trees](#) page. While you're there, browse the interactive map to see what significant trees are in your area. Is there one missing? Nominate it now for inclusion in the register!



NT Register of Significant Trees Alice Springs entry #32—a Desert Bloodwood (*Corymbia opaca*) at Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park. Image taken in the 1950's (Image source unknown).

Fire in a mature tree in the Todd River (Bottom Left). Emergency services fight the grass fire at the base of the tree (Top) before inserting a probe adaptor to spray water into the hollow trunk of the tree (Bottom Right). (Images C. Appleby)



Fire in the Todd

Land for Wildlife's Candice Appleby contacted the emergency services quickly upon observing a grass fire around the base of a mature River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) in the Todd River this month. The quick action from all involved saved the tree from burning. The fire was picked up by the Alice Springs News, who reported on the importance of the NT Register of Significant Trees. You can read more about the recent incident by heading to the Alice Springs News [Link](#) ►



Threatened Species Day Cake Auction

The 7th of September was Threatened Species Day! To honour the day, Land for Wildlife Central Australia's coordinator, aimed to raise money for a group that is working to protect threatened species locally—the Australian Wildlife Conservancy. Funds raised went towards protecting threatened species at Newhaven Sanctuary, north-west of Alice Springs.

Money was raised via a cake auction! Who doesn't love cake?! A chocolate mudcake decorated with fondant in a threatened species theme was auctioned off via eBay with all profits to go to the AWC.

The auction was carried out through inspiration from the Threatened Species Commissioner's #TSBakeOff, which was judged by Annabelle Crabb and Rebecca West.

While we didn't win the TSBakeOff, Parks and Wildlife Commission NT's John Tyne was lucky to be the recipient of

the cake, with his bid going towards protecting threatened species through the AWC.



NORTHERN
TERRITORY
**YOUNG
ACHIEVER
AWARDS**

2017-18
**NOMINATIONS
NOW OPEN**

Nominate online at www.awardsaustralia.com



MAKE EVERY BIRD COUNT
23-29
OCTOBER 2017



Aussie Backyard Bird Count

Get ready for the BirdLife Australia's fourth annual [Aussie Backyard Bird Count](#). The #AussieBirdCount is a great way to connect with the birds in your backyard, no matter where your backyard might be — a suburban backyard, a local park, a patch of forest, a farm, down by the beach, or the main street of town. Your backyard can be anywhere you find birds.

Register your interest as a Counter now through the [website](#) and Download the free *Aussie Bird Count* app from [Google Play](#) or the [iTunes](#) app store. If you already have the *Aussie Bird Count* app from last year, there's no need to delete it – an update is available on 1 October. You can also submit your counts through the [website](#) if you prefer not to use a smartphone or tablet to take part. And if you're a teacher, check out the Bird Count curriculum-based [lesson plans](#) to get your students (or the whole school!) involved.



Zebra Finches
(*Taeniopygia guttata*)
visit the LFW office
for a refreshing
beverage.



Adventures with Alice Springs Landcare

Meet on the last Sunday of each month @ 7:30 am

Sunday 24 September 2017

Join us for **Cactus Control** at Spencer Valley, East Side
Contact Andy on 0429 977 436

Sunday 29 October 2017

Join us for **Buffel Control** at Spencer Valley, East Side
Contact Sue on 0409 412 045

Sunday 19 November 2017

Join us at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station @ 9 am for
our Landcare AGM Contact Suni 0400 889 010

Sunday 26 November 2017

Join us at Maynard Park, Northside
Contact Andy on 0429 977 436

*Please wear covered footwear and BYO hat, water, gloves and a
mattock if you have one!*



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AgriFutures Rural Women's Award

Nominations are now open for the 2018 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award.

The award is open to all women involved in rural industries, rural and regional businesses and communities. The Territory winner will receive a \$10,000 bursary.

[Click here to learn more about the awards and how to submit an application.](#)

Ilparpa Claypans Action Group

After many months of meetings, surveys and conversations, the Ilparpa Claypans Action Group is considering evolving into either becoming an Incorporated Association or a subgroup of Alice Springs Landcare Incorporated Association.

Please feel free to join us on **Saturday 7th October at 10am -12pm** to have a say on the future of the group. Location: Gallery, Olive Pink Botanic Gardens.

On the agenda:

- A presentation on how we can work together with the Traditional Owners.
- A presentation on the option of becoming a branch of the Alice Springs Landcare group.
- A discussion on the draft constitution (if we decide to go down the path of becoming an Incorporated Association).
- An overview of future activities for the community organised at the Claypans.

Your voice is important as we all want the best for this place!

Further Reading

Click the link symbol to be redirected to the article



Article • Stunning detective work uncovers Night Parrots at Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre



Article • Just ten MPs represent more than 600 threatened species in their electorates



Article • Domestic Cat Monitoring in Alice Springs (Reproduction of LFW article on Bob Gosford's blog)



Video • TeeGee (The last of the Domestic Cat Monitoring and Awareness Videos has hit YouTube)



Do you have any stories or images to share? Get in touch! We are always looking for members to share their experiences via our social media and newsletter. Email us with your suggestions of articles or topics that you wish to hear more about.

Cheers,

Caragh, Candice and Bill

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**... and tag us in your
posts to keep us
updated!**