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Annual Report

2020-2021 Financial Year

Whitsunday Catchment Landcare - Vision and Goal

To promote the planned and sustainable management of the O'Connell/Andromache, Proserpine and Gregory River catchments in a constructive and balanced way by actions such as promoting ecologically sustainable development, developing catchment management strategies, involving the community in NRM decision making and promoting of the value of a coordinated catchment-wide approach for managing natural resources.

Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Inc. is:

- An Incorporated and Registered Environmental Organisation
- Registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and is afforded Tax Deductable Gift recipient status from the Australian Taxation Office. WCL reports annually to the ACNC and the QLD Office of Fair Trading.
- A Not-for-profit Community based organisation that has been operating in the Whitsunday region since 1998.
- In 2020-21 WCL had 65 members and over 45 registered volunteers and 284 people receive our monthly newsletter.
- WCL has a Management Committee of 7 members, which include community, local council and industry representatives.
- WCL also has a Public Fund that is administered by a Public Fund Committee of 5 members, acting independently of the WCL Management Committee

WCL is a member of the Central Qld Coast Landcare Network, a partnership for the natural resource management of catchments in the Central Qld Coast bioregion: Pioneer, Sarina and Whitsunday Catchments.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Chairperson: Graham Armstrong

Secretary: Jacquie Sheils

Treasurer: Glenda Hodgson,

Community members; Dale Mengel,
1 Vacant position

Industry & Local Council

Representatives: John Casey;
CR. Garry Simpson

2020-21 Staff:

* Coordinator (P/T): Cath Campbell

* Landcare Officer (P/T) Chris Barbeler

* Nursery/Volunteer Coordinator (P/T):
Nicole Murphy

* Admin. Officer (P/T): Leigh Donkers

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Chairperson's Report 2020-2021

Graham Armstrong Chair -Whitsunday Catchment Landcare



Well, what an enjoyable and productive year of achievements we have had. The professional side of our activities have received a welcome boost from the Queensland Government's Reef Assist Program, enabling our project team to tackle a range of persistent environmental weeds across the area and provide practical support to local land holders.

On behalf of everyone at WCL, I would like to acknowledge the undaunted efforts of our Coordinator, Cath Campbell, who keeps the organisational wheels turning, coordinating the numerous office related activities and ensuring the grant and contract dollars continue to flow through the organisation. I would also like to extend my gratitude to my fellow committee members (Jacquie Sheils (Secretary), Glenda Hodgson (Treasurer), Dale Mengel, John Casey, CR Gary Simpson who joined me in steering the organisation through a difficult natural resource management landscape and ensuring that our funds are put to good use, maintaining a focus on our project deliverables, contract obligations and the welfare and interests of our members and volunteers. On the financial side we were able to maintain our financial position over the year (i.e. cover all of our operating costs). The diligence of our book keeper Lee Donkers and her timely updates to the management committee are greatly appreciated.

Our Project's "team leader" Chris Barbeler is commended for his great focus across a range of projects and for supervising our expanded on-ground staff. On the volunteer side we have been able to offer a range of volunteering opportunities including camping trips to Cape Upstart Station to help our Landcare project team fulfil an important contract with NQ Dry Tropics protecting endangered Beach Scrubs. Reliable revenue from our professional activities was an important focus during the year and is fundamental to maintaining the organisation's professional capabilities and financial health.

Good progress has been made at the WCL nursery site as the on-site facilities continue to grow and improve under the capable guidance of our nursery supervisor Nicole Murphy. Whitsunday Regional Council has provided us with a long-term lease for the nursery site which has enabled Cath to apply for a wider range of grants. Securing funding for the nursery and a home base for our professional staff will remain challenging as our ambitions increase.

I would like to express the organisation's appreciation to all who have supported our efforts over the year especially NQ Dry Tropics, Whitsunday Regional Council, Cane Growers, Sugar Services & Reef Catchments.

For a full list of all the organisations & businesses that have supported WCL during 2020-2021 -please see page 9 of this report. We greatly appreciate your support.

Our community support continues to grow and volunteer numbers are increasing. Opportunities to help improve our local environment are plentiful but our ability to respond to opportunities is dependent on our professional capacity and the community support we can attract. For example, expanding relationships with local National Parks would provide increased opportunity to enrich our bushcare experience and contribute to local conservation initiatives.

So, an important question the management committee and our members will need to consider is - Are we content to maintain our current size and capabilities or do we want (or need) to explore ways to expand both our community activities and professional reach in line with the needs and opportunities from all interested parties across the Whitsunday Local Government Area?

In the year ahead your support and participation will be well received as the newly elected Management Committee works to extend our connections and partnerships throughout the Whitsunday Community and promote best management practices for our land and waterways, always remembering that "Good Nature connects our Landcare community"

Graham Armstrong

Chair – Management Committee

Whitsunday Catchment Landcare – It's in our Nature!

Coordinators Report– Cath Campbell

This will be the 7th Coordinators Report I have written and when I read last years, it was hard to write something different to reaffirm my high regard for the WCL staff and Volunteers. *I have given it a good go though.....*

The 2020-21 financial year has been a busy one for Whitsunday Catchment Landcare (WCL). Firstly, I would like to express my sincere appreciation of and respect for, the WCL staff and volunteers.

For another year we have been dedicated professional team, whilst undertaking our respective roles, especially during the second half of the year, when we all adapted to the Reef Assist Team. The increase to our work force, additional work sites and day to day management, allowed WCL staff to demonstrate just what talented folk we are. I can't say that there haven't been stressful times but we have kept communicating and working well as a pretty tight team.

Together, we have achieved a lot. We have continued to make a positive contribution to improving environmental outcomes in the region through our plant nursery, community engagement, grant funding and contract work. As I said before, it has been a big year. *(And all the while, Covid 19 was lurking in the background.)*

Our volunteers have been outstanding in their commitment and contributions to our organisation, their work at the nursery and at project sites is inspiring, especially for one who hopes to join their ranks in the coming year.

I also thank the WCL Management Committee for their generous donation of time, expertise, support and their ongoing confidence in the WCL staff.

Chris Barbeler, our Landcare Officer has fulfilled his role with dedication and resourcefulness. Chris's honesty, strong work ethic and intelligence has contributed greatly to the success of this years projects. He has continued to build his expertise and broaden the context of his experience in environmental management. Chris has managed a wide variety projects and contracts and modelled best practice revegetation and weed control in our regional area.

Nicole Murphy, our Nursery Coordinator has done an outstanding job at our community nursery. Nicole juggles volunteers, school groups and the management of the nursery, in just two days per week. Again, Nicole has overseen the production of over 20,000 native tube stock this year, which have sold to NRM groups, local government agencies and the general public.

Leigh Donkers, WCL's Admin Officer, demonstrates her wealth of knowledge, professional expertise, diverse experience, dedication & enthusiasm whilst undertaking her administrative role. Leigh has continued to ensure WCL's accounts & financial records are managed with efficiency, accuracy and keeps our staff prompt with their timesheets and expenditure verifications. And all the while, Leigh does this with a wicked sense of humour.

I would also like thank our Casual Staff for the hard work they have contributed during the 2020-21 contract works.

The QLD Government funded, Reef Assist (RA) Program enabled WCL to take on the role of employment provider as well this year. The RA program provided funding to employ 2 full-time staff and a 0.5 position. The 0.5 position was shared between our Landcare Officer & Admin Officer and this enabled the coordination and administration of the program.

A special note of appreciation to our office volunteer, Jackie Marten, who has ventured into our office and done really important but time consuming & focused work (that I never seem to find time to do) like data recording & compiling, photo cataloguing and especially, managing our membership list records & reminders.

WCL moved into a new office this year and wasn't that a shift. We moved from a windowless 5m x 3m room to one almost 3 times the size and with windows over the Main Street of Proserpine. We actually had to get up from our desks to pass things to one another. As of June 30 2020, Reef Catchments (RC) found themselves unable to extent their in-kind support for WCL. We are grateful for the provision of the office space and IT support, while it lasted and WCL has been successful with a few quotes for contract services for RC revegetation, revegetation maintenance and weed control projects.

The money earnt by WCL from contracts contributes to the ongoing employment of WCL staff and the undertaking of WCL funded community/volunteer based activities and events.

This year we've begun to experience the financial impacts of signing the lease for the Community Nursery site at Kelsey Creek Road, Proserpine. The lease arrangement makes our organisation financially responsible for the operational costs but this is generously offset Whitsunday Regional Council (WRC) donation to our water use & rates. WRC also provides irrigation water and free mulch for our grant funded local revegetation sites. WRC staff have provided support and assistance where they are able to and I would like to express our sincere appreciation for all their efforts.

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Coordinators Report– continued:

The security of tenure at the nursery site has enabled us to plan for infrastructure improvements, apply for grants and make capital investments in our organisation and facilities. We have plans and funds to reduce costs in the 21-22 F/Y.

I would also like to thank Cane Growers, Sugar Services Proserpine & National Parks for the generous provision or offer of their boardroom/meeting room for our AGM & General meetings, at no charge.

Late in the 20-21 financial year we began discussions with QPWS to establish a Volunteer Agreement. This has come to fruition and allowed our Volunteers to actively contribute to weed control in local national park reserves.

A whole hearted thankyou is offered our 65 members and all of our generous Volunteers. This year WCL had 45 registered & active volunteers who either attend our community nursery mornings, community plantings, seed collecting expeditions or site visits. In spite of covid WCL Volunteer hours contributions were significant. From the 2nd July 2020 to 24th June 2021, WCL recorded a total 2496.5 hours donated to the community nursery, 192 hours at the office, 539 hours at Galbraith riparian revegetation site maintenance and 116 hours planting at various other sites—**totaling 3,343 hours** that have been donated by WCL's generous and committed volunteers. This year I learnt that volunteer \$\$ value has increased from \$25 to \$42 (GBRF volunteer in-kind valuation) which is much more respectful of their efforts. **The total dollar value of this equates to \$140,427.**

Where would the world be without volunteers?

Our Community Nursery continues to be a significant contributor to our organisation through plant sales to the local community, NRM agency revegetation projects & Whitsunday Regional Council projects and our volunteer program. Donations of plants for this years National Tree Day were offered to all schools in our region and Proserpine State High School Students attended 6 practical plant propagation skills sessions during the year.

WCL has continued to successfully offer a range of Fee for Service Land Management Advice, Weed Control Services and Equipment hire to local landholders, as well as undertaking weed control & revegetation maintenance contracts privately as well as NRM agencies- NQ Dry Tropics; Reef Catchments & other government agencies. I have continued to apply for grants from a variety of sources, and have been successful in obtaining a few, but as we all now know there are a variety of influences that impact on who & where grant funds are allocated. WCL finds itself competing for: contract funding against local commercial industry operators; for grant monies with other community groups, but continue to explore every opportunity to diversify our funding sources, which must be matched by our capacity to deliver on our commitments.

As I mentioned a bit earlier in this report, this is my last year as Coordinator with Whitsunday Catchment Landcare. I have been in the seat for 7 years and it is time for me to let someone else have a turn at "driving the bus". I am very pleased that, that someone is a person held in high regard by many of our members & volunteers. So welcome to the drivers seat- Christine Peterson. I wish you all the best and hope that your time as Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Coordinator, will be as rewarding as mine has been.

I can honestly say my time as Coordinator has flown by and although challenging at times, its been a "great gig" and I have enjoyed it immensely. But I am really looking forward to moving sideways into a volunteer role, getting my hands back into the potting soil and talking "Plantise" with my fellow volunteers.

Thank you again to all of WCL's supporters for their generous contributions, hard work and dedication to Whitsunday Catchment Landcare.

Yours Sincerely,



Cath Campbell– WCL Coordinator.



*Right: Me at Cape Upstart
Photo: G. Armstrong*

Program Area		Activities	Funded by
Community Program	Revegetation and Seed Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Galbraith Park Riparian Corridor, Nelly Bay, Dingo Beach, Cannonvale Botanic Gardens Cape Upstart, Twin Creeks. Undertake regular site visits by volunteers for endemic seed collection and planting. 	WCL-Operating reserves
	Public Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCL website maintained & upgraded. broad selection of weed identification, control and sustainable land management information available at the events as well as at the WCL Community Nursery Monthly Newsletter, Facebook Page and Website. Providing land management advice over the phone, by email, in person, at the nursery and at the WCL office Social media pages– Facebook & Instagram. 	WCL– Operating Reserves. NRM Information sourced from various Govt. organisations
	School and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proserpine High School– Student visits to the nursery for 6 practical sessions in plant propagation. National Tree Day– WCL member & volunteer only event at Galbraith Park due to Covid but plant donations were offered to all schools. Attended St. Catherine's school event and undertook a Weed Stampede. Donations of plants to Schools and community- 	WCL Operating Reserves. Proserpine High School.
	Weed control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular covid safe site visits by volunteers to undertake bush regeneration activities through the removal of weeds and rubbish , managing irrigation, mowing edges of revegetation plots at Galbraith Park (539 hours total) Weed control at 12 remnant Littoral rainforest site at Cape Gloucester (Hydeaway Bay, Dingo Beach, Nelly Bay) Kings Beach (2 sites) Queens Beach, Whitsunday Paradise, Cape Upstart 3 sites 	State Government CSA Grant, NQ Dry Tropics Contracts WCL Operating Reserves.
Volunteer Program	Community Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propagation of a wide variety of endemic plants for supply to the community and WCL revegetation projects. A total of 14,366 plants were sold this year with well over 20,000 plants propagated at the nursery. Broad selection of weed identification, control and sustainable land management information is available at the Community Nursery. 310 Plants donated to Local schools, National Tree day events& community groups. 	WCL Operating Reserves.
	Volunteer Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twice weekly events at the community nursery–plant propagation, seed processing & revegetation site maintenance– a total of 2496.5 volunteer hours dedicated to the Community Nursery. Site visits to: public reserves to collect seed, undertake revegetation projects and maintenance of Galbraith Park Riparian Corridor, Cape Gloucester -Dingo Beach & Nelly Bay, Twin Creeks –seed collecting, re-vegetation & revegetation maintenance. Site visit to undertake planting on one of our volunteers property Annual Christmas Lunch at Cape Gloucester Eco Resort National Tree Day -July 2020– cancelled due to Covid. WHS– all new volunteers undertake a workplace safety induction when volunteering with WCL 	WCL-Operating Reserves.
Self-generated funding	Contract works and Plant sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCL– Land Management Advice— 4 private landholders. Weed control equipment hire—2 Landholders. Contract weed control-Sickle Pod control at 4 sites in Bloomsbury. Revegetation & site maintenance contracts-Whitsunday Paradise, Kings Beach, Queens Beach, Cape Upstart Station- NQ Dry Tropics. NDRAA –O'Connell River revegetation & ongoing maintenance– Reef Catchments. Twin Creeks revegetation– WRC; Leucaena control at Flagstaff Hill– Dept. Natural Resources. Plant Sales- 14,366 plant sold form the WCL Community Nursery Reef Assist Program– Reef Catchments contract to employ 2 .5 full-time equivalent positions for a 12 month period. Project sites included—Cats Claw Creeper, Exotic Dutchman's Pipe, Prickly Pear Control. Reef Clean– Beach cleans at Conway & Wilsons Beach– Tangaroa Blue 	Reef Catchments , NQ Dry Tropics Whitsunday Regional Council projects/ LMAC Private Sales.

In 2020-2021 WCL was unable to undertake or participate in the usual wide range of community projects & activities, due to the impacts of Covid 19 restrictions. But we have achieved the following:

Community Program: Funded from WCL-Operating reserves

Revegetation and Seed collection- Undertake regular site visits by volunteers for endemic seed collection and planting at: WCL member properties, Galbraith Park Riparian Corridor, Nelly Bay and Dingo Beach. Two mornings per week Volunteer mornings at the Community Nursery & first Saturday of the month Nursery opening for sales. Volunteers Christmas party.

Public Education: Funded from WCL-Operating reserves. An extensive selection of Sustainable Land Management, weed control information was made available for free at the WCL Community Nursery. (NRM Information sourced from various Govt. organisations.)

- Monthly Newsletter, Social Media pages– Facebook & Instagram and Website.
- Fielding land management questions over the phone, by email, in person, at the nursery and at the WCL office.
- AGM– presentation– Wild Orchid Hunters

School and Community Engagement funded from: WCL-Operating reserves

- Proserpine High School– Student visits to the nursery for 8 practical sessions in plant propagation.
- National Tree Day- July 2020 event at Galbraith Riparian corridor & plant donations to all local schools for their own projects

Weed control & revegetation maintenance funded from Queensland Government Grant–Community Sustainability Grant and WCL Operating Reserves

- Regular site visits by volunteers to undertake bush regeneration activities through planting, removal of weeds and rubbish from environmentally sensitive areas such as Dingo Beach, Hydeaway Bay, Nelly Bay Beach Scrubs & at Galbraith Creek Riparian Corridor.

Volunteer Program funded from WCL Operating Reserves and State Grants.

- Community Nursery- Propagation of a wide variety of endemic plants for supply to the community and WCL revegetation projects. A total of 14,366 plants were sold this year with well over 20,000 plants propagated at the nursery.
- Broad selection of weed identification, control and sustainable land management information is available.
- WH&S WCL provides all new volunteers with safety inductions & training in the use of equipment and resources for volunteer activities.
- Volunteer Activities– funded from WCL-Operating Reserves. Volunteer events at the community nursery – plant propagation, seed processing & site maintenance. WCL had 45 registered volunteers in 2020-21, who attend our regular community nursery mornings, community plantings, seed collecting or site visits. All our Volunteers are asked to follow covid safe protocols and new volunteers are inducted in workplace health and safety, nursery practices and safe engagement when going "bush". Twice weekly volunteer events are held at the WCL Community Nursery and these are well attended. Activities at the nursery include: propagating of endemic plants, processing seed, recording propagation methods and results, nursery site maintenance, social interaction, great morning teas. Our once per month "off site" alternative activities such as seed collecting and site visits to Landcare friends or volunteers properties where also restricted by group numbers covid limitations & constrained by our staffing capacity. Our volunteers have continued to staff the nursery for opening to the public, on the first Saturday of every month, with hand sanitizing and social distancing protocols in place. *Continued over page.....*

Achievements continued:

- **3rd Thursday of the month– alternative activities to the Community Nursery** -Site visits to public reserves to collect seed, undertake revegetation projects, site maintenance and visit vegetation communities of interest. 116 volunteer hours at site including: Nelly Bay, Dingo Beach, Galbraith Park, Twin Creeks revegetation site, WCL volunteer's property for planting, weed control, watering, mulching and rubbish removal.
- 3 day Camping trip to Cape Upstart Station.
- Annual Christmas Lunch at the Cape Gloucester Eco Resort.
- National Tree Day was cancelled this in the 20-21 Financial year due to Covid restrictions

Grants Received during 2020-21

- QLD Government—Gambling Community Benefit Fund- \$19,348– \$8300 held over into 2020-21 financial year & used for infrastructure improvements at the Community Nursery– the old carport now has a concrete floor, a new roof & walls, new shelving was installed. This enables our other assets to be stored securely & unaffected by weather impacts.
- Great Barrier Reef Foundation– Turtle Nest Protection at Cape Upstart Station. This project will enable 4 site visits to be undertaken to the site & 10 turtle nest protection devices installed over nests that will be GPS and recorded with Queensland Parks & Wildlife.

Self-generated funding: Contract works and Plant sales.

- Endemic Plant supply– 14,366 tube stock sales (excluding plant sales made as part grants & contract funds)
- WCL– Land Management Advice & weed control Equipment hire. WCL has hired out its Quikspray trailer, provided land management advice and undertaken weed control on a fee for service basis to private landholders.
- WCL has undertaken contract work for local organisations such as Reef Catchments, North Queensland Dry Tropics, Whitsunday Regional Council and on private properties. This contract work has enabled WCL to earn small profits, which is spent on activities untied to external obligations, such as our volunteer, school and community engagement activities. Contract works in 2020-21 have included: Tangaroa Blue– Reef Clean events at Conway & Wilsons Beaches; Reef Catchments—Revegetation & Weed control at one site on the O'Connell River; Whitsunday Regional Council -Twin Creeks Riparian revegetation & maintenance; NQ Dry Tropics- Littoral Rainforest (Beach Scrub) weed control & marine debris collection at Cape Upstart Station and Kings Beach, Queens Beach & Whitsunday Paradise at Bowen.
- Reef Assist Program (RAP)– WCL participated in this Qld Government funded employment program. This program was a response to the impacts of covid restrictions on employment within the QLD State. The program enabled WCL to employ the Reef Assist Team of 2 (Team Leader & Trainee) with the 0.5 position shared by our Landcare Officer, who coordinated the team & projects and our Admin Officer to manage the programs financial administration. The RAP team worked diligently at 3 sites with Weeds of National Significance and provided revegetation & weed control assistance at 10 peri-urban landholders who had existing Land Management Plans. Full-time positions were filled by Team Leader– Wayne Oakley and Revegetation Officer Trainees- Fenna Van Zelen & Holly Hayhurst. They have done an outstanding job at: Managing 3 sites infested with Weeds of National Significance. -(Prickly Pear Biological Weed Control & physical removal at Conway Beach; Cats Claw infestation at Myrtle Creek/ Proserpine River at Mt Julian; Exotic Dutchman's Pipe at Silver Creek at Paul's Pocket); Providing land management support services for 10 peri-urban landholders; Gaining practical experience with project implementation and a variety of equipment that is used in different landscape contexts and undertaking & achieving units in their Cert 3 -Conservation & Land Management

Publications and Management Committee:

Monthly Newsletter, Social media pages and Website. WCL produces a monthly newsletter that we distribute to our members and many other interested people or organisations. A special thank you goes to Steve & Alison Pearson and WCL members for their terrific contributions to our newsletter. Six Management Committee meetings were held every 2 months.



*Above: WCL volunteers at Cape Upstart Station– after clearing marine debris from the beach.
Photo: D. Young*



*Above: WCL Staff– Chris Barbeler (left) & Wayne Oakley (right) with a ute load of marine debris.
Photo: J Sheils*



*Above: WCL Volunteers planting at the Aldred's property in August 2020.
Photo: C. Campbell*



*Left: WCL Volunteers at our Christmas lunch– 10.12.2020
Photo: C. Campbell*



*Above: WCL volunteers & community members at the Twin Creeks riparian revegetation site on the 21.03.2021.
Photo: C. Campbell*



Above: WCL Volunteers planting at Dingo Beach 18.02.2021- Photo: C. Barbeler

Working Groups/ Committees Supported

- Central Qld Coast Landcare Network
 - WRC Pest Management Committee
- Mackay Whitsunday Regional Pest Management Group
 - WCL Public Fund Committee
 - Healthy Rivers to Reef
 - Fauna Rescue Whitsundays



*Left: Cape Upstart –
with lenticular cloud
Photo: G. Armstrong*

Thank you to all those below for your ongoing support of Whitsunday Catchment Landcare

- Reef Catchments NRM, for hosting the WCL Office during 2020– April 2021, providing their ongoing support to WCL activities and grant applications and the opportunity to obtain NRM contracts that facilitate the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment in the Whitsunday Region.
- Whitsunday Regional Council– Administrative Staff, Parks and Gardens Department, Waste Management Department, Proserpine and Cannonvale Depot staff , Pest Control and Local Laws Officers. Purchasing plants and partnering in revegetation projects.
- North Queensland Dry Tropics– for providing contract funding for a revegetation project.
- Canegrowers & Sugar Services Proserpine for their continuing support, generous provision of their boardroom for our General meetings
- Whitsunday Regional Library Staff– for recovering & repairing our Community Nursery Reference books
- Kapow Interactive for their ongoing support for the Central Queensland Landcare Network and WCL.
- Bendigo Bank– Cannonvale for their help in the financial management of WCL.
- C.E Smith Accountants– for their Auditing of the WCL financials.
- Irrigear Whitsundays for their generous discounts and assistance with equipment, irrigation at the nursery and revegetation sites.
- Aldabra Nursery for potting soil supply.
- Climate Classics for prompt supply of work shirts.
- Cannonvale Fire Protection for keeping our fire extinguishers up to date– Thank you Nigel.
- Whitsunday Mowers Pty LTD– for servicing our small machinery.

And last but not least-

- Federal and State Governments Grants programs that support Environmental projects and Volunteer support grants.