



Richmond  
**Landcare**  
Inc.

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2023-2024

ARTWORK "BALUUN - RIVER" - BY TYWANA CALDWELL  
BUNDJALUNG ARTIST AND WINNER OF THE RIVER OF RECONCILIATION ART AWARD.



# OUR COMMITTEE AND STAFF

**Chair** Dr Hedy Bryant (Ballina Coastcare)  
**Acting Vice Chair** Alan Larsen (Boatharbour Landcare)  
**Treasurer** Lyn Thomson (Baggot Park Landcare)  
**Acting Secretary** Alana Bryant (Whian Whian Landcare)  
**Public Officer** Big Rob (Lismore Lake Landcare)  
**Member** Jim Kinkead (Tregeagle Landcare)  
**Member Position** vacant

## Our Sub Committees

**Governance & Risk** Hedy Bryant, Big Rob  
**Finance** Lyn Thomson, Alan Larsen  
**Member Engagement** Alana Bryant, Jim Kinkead and Emily Headlam  
**Reconciliation Action Plan** Hedy Bryant, Emily Headlam, Louissa Rogers, Michael Kennedy (Aboriginal Landcare Officer, North Coast Regional Landcare Network)

## Our Staff

**Local Landcare Coordinator** Emily Headlam  
**Executive Officer/Project officer** Kathryn Kermode  
**Project Officer** Ivy Young  
**Administrative and Project Support Officer** Rebecah Watsford  
**Project Manager Nature Based Solutions** Louissa Rogers  
**Project Officer Nature Based Solutions** Tom Wolf



# CHAIR'S STATEMENT

This year we revised our Strategic Plan to align with the new Landcare Enabling Plan (LEP) 2024-2027.

- Our **purpose** is *“Inspiring and supporting communities in caring for the Richmond River catchment”*.
- Our **Vision** is for *“Connected, educated and caring communities, rehabilitating the health of the catchment guided by Bundjalung knowledge and best practice science, and well-prepared for climate uncertainty”*.
- At the heart of our **culture** is *“Compassionate Stewardship”*.

Under the new Landcare Enabling Program, our Coordinator, Emily Headlam was employed on a full-time basis from March. This has increased our capacity to support our 55 active member groups and member schools, and implement other projects, in the stewardship of our catchment.

This Annual Report provides the opportunity to report on and review the many activities and events that have enabled us to achieve our purpose. We have increased our capacity to deliver valuable projects during the year. Of note was our success in obtaining a \$2.8 million grant from the Commonwealth Disaster Ready Fund for “Nature-Based Solutions: Building Resilience in the Lismore Catchment”.

It has been a busy but productive year. I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation for our passionate and dedicated staff and committee. I wish to acknowledge the contribution of Peter Biddles who sadly passed away in May 2024. Peter, as Treasurer from 2020-2023, followed by Lyn Thomson, both worked tirelessly in embedding new financial systems and processes required for RLI’s increased financial accountability. I also wish to express my deep appreciation for Shaun Eastment, Chair from 2019-2023, who retired in September 2023. Shaun created policies and procedures reflecting best practice in governance and workplace operations. Certainly, it was Shaun’s leadership that enabled RLI to grow into the organisation that it is today.

I wish to thank Lismore City Council and Ballina Shire Council for their ongoing support for Landcare in the catchment. Most importantly, I wish to acknowledge the ongoing passion and commitment of our Coastcare, Dunecare and Landcare groups and members, who continue to show up on their patch weekly and monthly, to regenerate our unique and diverse sub-tropical ecosystems. If you are interested in joining the RLI committee please don’t hesitate to contact me.

**Hedy Bryant**



# A REFLECTION OF THE YEAR LANDCARE COORDINATOR



This initiative is made possible by the NSW Landcare Enabling Program, a collaboration between Local Land Services and Landcare NSW supported by the NSW Government.

What a tremendous year it has been for Richmond Landcare and the Richmond Catchment. I am continually in awe of the incredible community of Landcare volunteers who work so tirelessly caring for, and advocating, to improve our environment. A huge thank you to our 50 plus Landcare, Dunecare and Coastcare member groups restoring our ecosystems and supporting each other to do Landcare across the catchment. They are the lifeblood of our organisation and make us the very proud Landcare family that we are!

This year marked a period of significant growth for Richmond Landcare, with the addition of three new team members: Louissa Rogers as Project Manager for the Nature Based Solutions project, Rebecah Watsford as administrative and project support officer, and Tom Wolff as Project Officer. Ivy Young has continued as a highly valued Project Officer, delivering a number of incredible community events and workshops through our various projects on koalas, landslips and native species. We thank Executive Officer and Project Officer Kathryn Kermode for her vivacious energy and commitment to building a great work culture and strengthening our Aboriginal Partnerships, cultural knowledge and protocols in RLI. We are particularly proud of the River of Reconciliation Art Award, an initiative Kath spearheaded to promote reconciliation through art. We are honoured to feature this winning artwork by Widjabul Wia-bul artist Tywana Caldwell in many of our publications. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Richmond Landcare volunteer committee, whose invaluable contributions drive much of our organisation's success. As a not-for-profit, we rely on our committee to manage and guide our operations and governance, and their commitment is the backbone of our progress.

Landcare offers one of the most accessible ways for community members to take meaningful action for the environment. This year, we delivered a wide array of educational workshops and events to engage and empower our community, working alongside councils, Landcare groups, and environmental organisations on impactful projects. Highlights include the Koala Detection & Habitat Restoration Field Day, the Scrub to Stream Field Day for biodiversity and creek health, a Landslip Information Evening, community koala tree planting through the Arks Project, Science in the Pub's "Koalas in the Big Scrub," a native bee workshop at the Lismore Botanic Gardens, the Rosy Futures Landholder Field day and the Rainforest Connections Conference. We also hosted the hugely successful Alstonville School Enviro Day, where 100 Year 8 students engaged in hands-on environmental learning with activities like tree planting, waterbug testing, and educational sessions on riparian restoration and local ecosystems.

Thank you to our partners, staff, volunteers, and supporters for your unwavering commitment to grassroots environmental action. Together, we continue to make a lasting impact.

**Emily Headlam**  
**Landcare Coordinator**



# A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT WE'VE DONE



55 ACTIVE CARE GROUPS WITH 3 NEW MEMBER GROUPS



OVER \$1 MILLION DOLLARS IN FUNDING FOR PROJECTS



48 LANDHOLDER SITE VISITS



36 HECTARES OF LAND RESTORED THROUGH FUNDED PROJECTS



3 PLANTING DAY EVENTS



14 WORKSHOPS & EVENTS



17 NEW LAND FOR WILDLIFE MEMBERS



961 ATTENDEES TO WORKSHOPS/EVENTS



6 NEWSLETTERS



1748 FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS  
↑ 11%

9 MEDIA RELEASES



# OUR MEMBER GROUPS

Alstonville-Maguire's Creek Landcare  
Aquarius Park Landcare  
Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue Inc.  
Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue Inc.  
Ballina Coastcare  
Bangalow Garden Club  
Banyam Baigham Landcare  
Bexhill/Coopers Creek Landcare  
Big Scrub Rainforest Conservancy  
Billen Cliffs Landcare  
Birdlife Northern NSW  
Boatharbour Landcare  
Broadwater Koala Park  
Browns Creek Catchment  
Bungawalbin Landcare Group  
Bush Fruits LGBTIQ+  
Byron Bird Buddies Landcare  
Caniaba Landcare  
Clunes Landcare  
Coopers Creek Water Users Group  
Coraki Environmental Carers  
Dorrobbee Grass Reserve Trust Landcare  
Evans River & Coastal Landcare Inc  
Federal Landcare  
Fish Habitat Network  
Floreath Park Landcare Group  
Fox Road Landcare



Friends of Lismore Rainforest Botanical Gardens  
Friends of Wilson's Nature Reserve  
Friends of the Koala Inc  
Friends of Wilson Nature Reserve Landcare  
Georgica Sustainable Farming Landcare  
Goonellabah Tucki Landcare Inc.  
Goonengerry Landcare Group  
Gungas Rd Valley Landcare  
Jiggi Catchment Landcare  
Jiggi Valley Farmers Landcare Group  
Lennox Head Landcare  
Lismore Lake Landcare group  
Mackellar Range Landcare  
Martin Drive Landcare  
Nashua Landcare  
Nimbin Rocks Coop Landcare  
Patch's Beach Dunecare  
Richmond River Chapter OzFish Unlimited  
SoilCare Inc  
South Lismore Duck Pond  
Tregeagle Landcare Group  
TROPO Landcare Group  
Tuckombil Landcare  
Tuntable Creek- Coronation Pk  
Whian Whian Landcare  
Wilson's Creek Huonbrook Landcare Group  
Wilson's River Landcare  
Woodburn Landcare



# OUR PROJECTS

## Landcare Enabling Program 2023-2027



The NSW Landcare Enabling Program is a state, regional and local program empowering individuals and communities to take action on local problems and deliver outcomes across local and regional issues. **Landcare NSW & Local Land Services.**

### Koala Arks



Supporting private landholders through the Land for Wildlife Network within Koala Arks of the Northern Rivers Project. Projects includes Land for Wildlife Assessments, bush regeneration, tree planting and cultural fire. **WWF.**

### Koala Connect



Restoring and connecting koala habitat in the Lismore and Ballina shires. Enhancing the quality and connectivity of existing koala habitat, improving the overall health and resilience of the local koala population, community koala monitoring and ensuring the long-term survival of this iconic species. **Saving Koalas Fund.**

### Landslip recovery Project



Works on remediating landslides in the Northern Rivers that impact on lowland subtropical rainforest. The focus of phase three was working with bush regenerators to establish cover on the landslides to stabilize the slopes with local plant species and undertake weed control. **North Coast Local Land Services.**

## Rosy Futures



Mitigating threats and supporting climate change adaptation of Rosewood Mistletoe. Working along Duck Creek, Alstonville, Rosy Futures is restoring an area of the Big Scrub Rainforest that contains the endangered Rosewood Mistletoe. Environmental Trust (NSW Department of Planning and Environment)

### Land For Wildlife (LFW)



Assessments of private properties for Land for Wildlife, a voluntary property registration scheme for landholders who wish to manage areas of wildlife habitat on their property. Land for Wildlife encourages and assists landholders to include nature conservation along with other land management objectives. **Community Environment Network.**

### River of Reconciliation Art Award



As part of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the Aboriginal Art Award honours and celebrates the rich culture and history of the Traditional Owners of the Richmond River catchment. Open exclusively to local Aboriginal artists, the Main prize winner: Tywana Caldwell with "Baluun - River". Junior prize winner: Noah Davismarlowe with "Sunset". Artwork is featured in our promotional materials and future RAP plans. **Aboriginal Benefits Foundation.**

### Garden Habitat heroes



Educational events that are targeted to educate and encourage people to grow native and endemic species in their gardens that will support native wildlife in urban areas. **FRRR.**

### Nature Based Solutions



The Nature-based Solutions: Building Flood Resilience in the Lismore catchment project (RLI NBS project) is a pilot project that aims to gather evidence that the nature-based solution of reforesting the riparian and upper sub-catchment floodplains can be used as a flood mitigation strategy for the Wilsons River catchment.



# TREASURER'S REPORT

Our final Not-for-Profit (NFP) Association Report has been completed by our auditors. Once signed, it will be submitted for final review and filing. The past financial year has been marked by both gains and challenges. On a positive note, Landcare NSW secured a substantial government grant that will fund Landcare Coordinators across the state, including our own Richmond Landcare Coordinator, Emily Headlam, for the next three years.

We have also improved our financial position significantly compared to last year's deficit of (\$128,553). This improvement is due to implementing spending restraints and maintaining rigorous oversight of our bookkeeping practices. Recently, government grant managers have implemented stricter controls on how volunteer organisations can access funding for administrative costs. In the past, Richmond Landcare and similar organisations were able to allocate up to 10% of project funds for administrative expenses. However, under the new rules, all administrative costs must now be directly charged to specific projects, removing this flexibility.

Additionally, we are no longer permitted to temporarily invest project funds. Any income from such investments must now be returned directly to the project. This change eliminates a previous opportunity to generate modest returns—typically 4-5% interest—which contributed to covering Richmond Landcare's operational expenses. These returns could amount to approximately \$15,000 per year.

The bottom line is: Our audited report for this year shows a loss of (\$68,112). While one of our projects was completed in the 2023-2024 financial year, generating a \$15,000 profit, the profit was not transferred to RLI General funds until after the fiscal year ended. Additionally, we missed out on approximately \$7,138 in interest income due to new restrictions, which required this amount to be returned to the project. After factoring in these adjustments, our effective loss is (\$45,974). Although this represents a substantial improvement from last year, sustaining annual losses is not viable. As a Not for Profit (NFP) organisation, we are not expected to generate large profits. However, maintaining a small surplus is essential to support ongoing operations and provide additional services to our members. We've made substantial progress over the past fiscal year, but it's crucial to keep this momentum going. This means upholding our financial discipline and maintaining precision in our bookkeeping practices.

Although it was a challenging financial year, we have not had to use our RLI Term Deposit of \$150,000. It is important to acknowledge that we could not have accomplished all that we did this year without the countless hours contributed by our dedicated volunteer committee in so many ways.

***Lyn Thomson - Treasurer Richmond Landcare Incorporated***

