

Hi Folks,

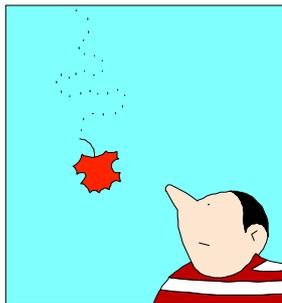
The government grant system that supply's funding to groups working on environmental projects is the *Caring For Our Country* grants. A government business plan is produced each year that outlines the government's priority environmental targets that will be funded, so submitted projects must address the targets in this plan. The 2009-10 Business is being reviewed this year, so the upcoming targets may change. Once the plan is out, groups can understand what targets are to be met when they apply for funding. The article on page 2 of this newsletter is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR ALL BUSHCARE/LANDCARE GROUPS**. Please read this article and start planning for the future.

Cheers, Kerry.....thompson@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

SAFETY FIRST

WINDY WEATHER

The windy season is upon us again so please alert all Bushcare group members to be vigilant about working under and around trees when high winds prevail. It is extremely dangerous to be near trees when the strong westerly winds are tearing branches from trees.



Major injuries can result if hit by a falling branch.

Always be conscious of the force of the wind if it starts to strengthen throughout the day. You may begin your work session in calm weather and not notice that the wind has picked up during the morning.

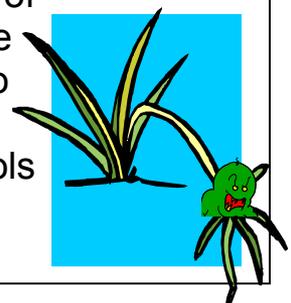
Choose a work site in an open area if possible. If your site does not offer such an alternative, then postpone your work session until you are sure the windy conditions have abated.

It is important to check out the site **BEFORE** you commence working under trees, as a snapped branch may be hanging precariously in the tree ready to fall with the slightest movement of the tree. As they say...Err on the side of caution.

WHAT DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW IN THE SHOALHAVEN?

Shoalhaven Landcare Association has developed a CD of a Powerpoint presentation all about weedy garden escapes. The presentation is directed at community groups and is simple and to the point. Notes are provided with the 20 minute slide show, so no research is required by the presenter.

If anyone is interested in giving a presentation, or knows of a group that would benefit from the presentation and would welcome an information session on the topic, please contact Terry Barratt of Shoalhaven Landcare Association on **44221211**, or Al Stratton to discuss the possibility of support for such a session. Garden escapes are a major source of weeds that Bushcare groups tackle, so educating the public is one of the best tools to combat the issue.



Funding News - Australian Government's Caring for Our Country

Unless you have been hiding under a rock for the last 12 months you may have heard of Federal Environmental Minister Peter Garrett - Caring for Our Country funding, which is the new funding program for environmental projects Australia wide. The funding was to replace previous federal government programs such as Coastcare and Envirofund.

The Caring for Our Country program released a business plan for the year 2009-10 which outlined what the funding would target and what kind of projects would be given preference - this would determine who and what would get funded. The Caring for Our Country targets where nationally based with larger scale milestones such as the Wet Tropics, Kakadu and the Barrier Reef. The NSW South Coast unfortunately did not have many of the Caring for Country targets located in our region. Add to this the requirement to have multiple partners involved in any potential project and the preference for larger scale organisations such as Catchment Authorities or incorporated networks of Landcare groups to apply, meant that the traditional community based grass roots Coastcare/Bushcare or Landcare groups didn't get a look in. This is particularly the case for coastal areas as many of the Caring for Our Country Landcare targets were aimed at sustainable agricultural issues which occur west of the divide.

These fears were founded when the first round of Caring for Our Country grants were announced a month ago. In the base level funding bids 13 NSW Catchment Authorities received funding, with our Catchment Authority, Southern Rivers doing pretty well receiving \$9,850,000 over 4 years. Only one larger scale project was funded for the NSW Coast which was called "Meeting multiple targets through Increased Coastal Community Engagement along the New South Wales coastline" which received \$3,457,394 and will be managed by the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority. How much the NSW South Coast will see of this is anyone's guess. Of the final tier of funding for Landcare groups, only two NSW coastal projects, which will see funds go to on-ground work on the coast, were successful, they were:

- **Macleay Landcare Network, Reduce impact of weeds of national significance in littoral rainforest and endangered plant species habitat, which revived \$99,000.**
- **Nambucca Valley Landcare Inc, Nambucca Valley Landcare and Nymabaga Goori Green Team Protection Proposal, which received \$100,000**
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This sends a clear message from the Australian Government in that smaller coastal based volunteer Coastcare and Bushcare groups who are not part of a larger network will not be funded. This is why it is imperative, if we are to really start to tackle some of the on-ground coastal environmental issue in the Shoalhaven, we need to work together. Smaller local based Bushcare groups are going to have to get together and coordinate and plan broader based

SHOALHAVEN CITY COUNCIL BUSHCARE

Bushcare Coordinator

Alasdair Stratton 44293592

0422234593

PO Box 42 Nowra 2541

stratton@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

projects if they are going to have any chance of receiving funds under the Caring for Our Country program.

With this in mind, Shoalhaven Council Bushcare will be holding a *Planning for Funding workshop* in late September 2009 to seek input from your Bushcare group on what your priorities are for your patch, and how this can be woven into a larger scale project. So please, between now and then, have a think about what the real Bushcare issues are for your area. Venue and dates will be advised closer to the date. For further info on Caring for Our Country visit the website at www.nrm.gov.au.

Lake Wollumboola Bushcare Group

Lake Wollumboola Bushcare Group has been at work on a public reserve along the northern shore of Lake Wollumboola since 1999. This high conservation dune and wetland environment provides habitat for the Green and Golden Bell Frog and three Endangered Ecological Communities. It acts as a buffer between the residential area of Culburra Beach and Lake Wollumboola. Indigenous species re-emerged once the three metre walls of Bitou and Lantana were removed. On-going weed removal and planting activities have maintained the gains, thus containing invasive weeds.

Group coordinator Karen Knowles says the group are always looking for opportunities to raise community awareness and understanding of the values of the wetland. "This is equally important to the practical weed control and habitat restoration work that we do," Karen said. An example of this was on National Tree Day July last year when students from Culburra Public School and community members joined the group in a planting activity.

The group was delighted to receive the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority Champion of the Catchment "Nature Conservation Award" in 2008. Karen says "the groups greatest achievement has been the restoration of the wetland, but receiving the award is a great recognition of that achievement". Receiving the award also provided an opportunity to celebrate achievements of Bushcare and Landcare groups and individuals in Culburra Beach /Orient Point and the broader region as well as other Shoalhaven recipients of SRCMA awards.

Around 17 volunteers are on the books. Some people are weekenders so group working bees are held on the second Saturday and forth Tuesday of each month to provide the greatest opportunity for people to join in.



Culburra Primay School students displaying the "snake" made of plastic tubestock pots, now empty after an exciting mornings work planting *lomandra* along the edge of the wetland to define the site boundary from the adjacent mown grass area.

