

# LOCAL HEROES BEHIND OUR BEST BEACHES

Locals who dedicate their time to helping care for our coasts were recognised by the Fitzroy Basin Association Inc. (FBA) and the Capricorn Coast Landcare Group on Friday 7 November.

FBA Chief Executive Officer Suzie Christensen said 18 locals were acknowledged in celebration of Coastcare Week, which runs from December 3 to 9 and this year had the theme of 'Local Heroes'.

She said the event included an inspection of dune restoration work at Shelley's Beach before a medal presentation and a morning tea at Kerr Park in Emu Park.

"Coastcare Week is an opportunity to pay tribute to individuals and groups who are consistently doing their part to protect and enhance our beaches for the benefit of all," she said.



*HEROES: (Left to Right) Back row- Kaye Gardner, Karen Spiers, Eric McKeague, Jenny Foley, Bill Burrows, Cliff Bunn, Mike Prior, Steve Maloney (Capricorn Coast Outriggers), Front row- Ayla Comyn and Nathan Muir from Emu Park State School, Alyson English and Sam Stephenson from Taranganba State School and Alby Wooler. Absent: Eric McKeague, Murray Bullock, John Birks, John and Fran Rivory, Surfriders, Friends of Keppel, & John McFarlane.*

"We have some fantastic beaches in our region, and the conservation and restoration work of local people is helping to keep them that way."

## E-inbrief

- National Landcare Program Sustainable Practice grants opened on 17 Nov 2007. Find links to the guidelines, application forms and info on Queensland NLP workshops [here](#).
- Check out the FBA events calendar [online here](#) for all the latest happenings around CQ.
- A new Weeds CRC publication is available that lists over 28,000 introduced plant species and their weed status. You can [view it here](#).
- CSIRO have released the 'Climate Change in Australia' report- available [here](#).

## Mega water savings for Fitzroy

Almost 40 local groups in central Queensland will share funding of more than \$1.6 million to help conserve water.

FBA congratulates the 39 successful applicants under the Community Water Grants for their water-saving efforts.

The total water saving delivered to the Fitzroy region through the funded projects is expected to be reach a massive 159 mega litres.

Projects include the installation of rain water tanks, upgrading amenities with dual flush toilets, and improving irrigation systems.

A private landholder also received funds for a project that will save 40 mega litres of water a year.

## Weevil pools breed weapon against weed

Weevil breeding pools have been created to help eradicate a weed choking central Queensland waterways.

Four new bio-control pools launched in November by the Livingstone Shire Council will breed a weevil to help control regional outbreaks of the weed *Salvinia*.

Establishing the facility was a collaborative effort between the Council, the Capricorn Pest Management Group, and Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA), who contributed \$19,000.

FBA Water Quality Coordinator Nathan Johnston said the facility would make weevils available locally to deal quickly with *Salvinia*, a weed of national significance (WONS).

“*Salvinia* weed spreads fast. It can double in size every two to three days and seriously impact on the flow and health of our regional waterways,” Mr Johnston said.

“Our best weapon against this invasive weed is the *salvinia* weevil, which has proven effective at reducing infestations in CQ in the past.”



*WEEVIL WATCH: (L-R) Cr Graham McDonald, President of the Capricorn Pest Management Group, Nathan Johnston from FBA, Council's Ian Dare, Mayor Bill Ludwig and Andrew Petroescheky from the NSW DPI inspect a weevil breeding pool.*

Mr Johnston said previously the weevil had to be transported to the region when outbreaks of *Salvinia* were discovered.

“Having a local breeding facility means we have quick and easy access to the weevil, and it also removes any hygiene concerns associated with transferring the weevil from another area,” he said.

## WALLABY RECOVERY PROJECT WINS STATE AWARD

A project supported by the Fitzroy Basin Association to save the bridled naittail wallaby from extinction has won a state-wide environment award.

‘Project Kial: Bridled Naittail Wallaby Recovery’ won the Environment and Landcare category of the Queensland Regional Achievement and Community Awards.

FBA Biodiversity Coordinator Graham Lightbody said more than \$46,000 had been provided to help the endangered wallaby.

“Our involvement helps support around 45 wallabies in a captive breeding facility at the Kial Sanctuary near Marlborough,” Mr Lightbody said.

“The wallaby was once common



*A Bridled Naittail Wallaby, above, and Peter Brooks and Tina Janssen below.*

west of the Great Divide, but their numbers have dramatically declined and they are listed as extinct in both Victoria and New South Wales.

“The only known significant wild population of the wallaby occurs at Taunton National Park near Dingo.

“The FBA believes this project is essential to the biodiversity of our region, and to help protect this unique animal for the future.”

FBA funding goes towards feeding the wallabies, erecting fences and enclosures, and breeding costs.

Mr Lightbody congratulated Tina Janssen and Peter Brooks of Australian Animals Care and Education Inc. who coordinate the project at their property about 10km from Marlborough.



# Bug released to target Cat's Claw in CQ

A South American bug was recently released into Australia for the first time as a biological control agent in central Queensland.

The Tingid Bug was released at four trial sites in the Boyne Valley area near Gladstone recently to control Cat's Claw Creeper infestations.

It is thought to be the first release of the bug in Australia since its official approval after extensive testing.

The trial is supported by the Calliope Shire Council, the Gladstone Area Water Board and FBA.

FBA Biodiversity Coordinator Graham Lightbody said Cat's Claw Creeper was a threat to Boyne River Catchment, which supplies the Awoonga Dam, Gladstone and Calliope districts' reticulated water supply.



*TINGID RELEASE TEAM:  
L-R, (back row) Kevin Dailly,  
Darryl Saw from Calliope  
Shire Council, David Orridge  
from Gladstone Area Water  
Board (GAWB), Ian Neill-  
Ballantine of Calliope Shire  
Council, (front row) Peter  
Collier of GAWB, Vanessa Wood from FBA, and Melissa  
Toms of GAWB.*



*INSET: Tingid bugs feeding on Cat's Claw*

## How is FBA meeting the climate change challenge?

CEO Suzie Christensen said FBA was part of a 'Practical Adaptation to Climate Change in Regional Natural Resource Management' project funded by the Australian Greenhouse Office.

"The project will help us incorporate the realities of climate change into our work promoting improved natural resource management," she said.

"Several regionally-specific scenarios were developed in consultation with the local community, which were then tested using a range of computer modelling programs.

"This has provided a clearer picture of the potential impact of different outcomes, such as increases or decreases in rainfall and temperatures.

"Based on this modelling work, the project is now developing practical tools and processes that will help inform FBA's planning and investment in various on-ground works, strategies and scientific research."

"It takes over ecosystems and poses a very severe threat to native bushland biodiversity and grazing land productivity," he said.

"It can eventually smother and kill large trees in waterways that then fall over, causing severe erosion and choking up the river systems.

"Cat's claw creeper has large root tubers, it's difficult to kill with selective herbicide treatment and manually removing the plant is very labour intensive and expensive.

"Hopefully the Tingid bug will provide a natural solution."

The Tingid Bug sucks the chlorophyll from the Cat's Claw leaves, which ultimately defoliates the plant, debilitating its growth and seed set.

More than 200 potted Cat's Claw plants infested with various stages of the bug from eggs to adult were planted amongst Cat's Claw Creeper infestations.

Calliope Shire Council's Local Laws and Noxious Weeds Coordinator Darryl Saw said that recent monitoring at the sites revealed there had already been a small migration from host plants to local plants, but it could be two years before a positive result is seen.

Peter Andrews Field Day 6 December 2007

## BACK TO NATURE APPROACH IS 'COMMON SENSE'

Best-selling author, environmental scientist and horse stud owner Peter Andrews believes natural sequence farming (NSF) is as obvious as the nose on your face.

Talking to landholders at a field day near Marlborough on Thursday 6 December, Mr Andrews called NSF a 'common sense' approach to working with the Australian landscape.

He said NSF was about "restoring the balance in the landscape", by rebuilding natural water flows and vegetation that existed in the Australian landscape before European settlement. This includes creating natural barriers and ponds that break up the flow of water through the environment.

More than 50 people attended the day organised by the Three Rivers sub-regional group and the Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA), which included a presentation at the Clarke Creek P&C Hall and a visit to the property of graziers David and Elizabeth Hill.

Three Rivers Coordinator Michelle Wright said local land managers appreciated the chance to question Mr Andrews, who wrote the best-selling book 'Back from the Brink'.

"Peter is renowned for the results he achieved in restoring his Tarwyn Park property at Bylong in New South Wales from a run-down piece of land into a lush, fertile landscape," Ms Wright said.

"Many local landowners are keen to explore new management ideas that may have a positive impact, both on the environment and the productivity of their properties."



ABOVE: Peter Andrews with David Hill, and RIGHT: Peter tells the crowd what he'd do to restore a riverbed on the Hill's property. BOTTOM LEFT: More than 50 landowners attended the field day to hear what Peter had to say.



"They had lots of probing questions about how Peter's NSF theories might be applied to the Isaac, Connors and McKenzie river catchment areas.

"Landholders also got a hands-on feel for NSF through visits to two sites on the Hill's property where Peter described what techniques he would use to improve the areas."

FBA Chief Executive Officer Suzie Christensen said the interest generated by Mr Andrews' visit demonstrated the proactive approach of many local landholders.

"It shows that landholders in the Fitzroy Basin do want to improve their knowledge so they can manage land in a more sustainable way," Ms Christensen said.

"They want to be part of the solution to the environmental damage caused by poor practices in the past," she said.

Ms Christensen said the FBA was considering funding a study tour to Mr Andrews' property in NSW to enable landholders to see the effects of NSF techniques in person.