



**Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.**  
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## HOPE E-news Bulletin 2013 #2 --- 10 March 2013

The following items have been gleaned from various e: newsletters received by HOPE in recent times; and/or prepared specifically by HOPE members and supporters. If you have any news to contribute, please forward to [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) . Deadline for articles is 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month.

Hello,

*Last month we talked about waste generation and how to reduce it. [Reverse Garbage](#) has turned waste reduction into an art. Literally! Items that are thrown out at the end of their functional life (in particular industrial discards) are collected and turned into fantastic works of art. And you can learn how you can do the same. Reverse Garbage has a number of workshops for all ages until the end of May. More information in the article below.*

*An issue that is often overlooked in protecting and preserving our environment for the long term is population growth. [Sustainable Population Australia](#) (SPA) is concerned that overpopulation will lead to an environmentally degraded world. The article below has further information about what SPA does and why. What do you think, is there a relationship between population growth and environmental degradation? Do we need to actively work on population numbers to preserve our world for future generations? As Ian Lowe says, "the future is not somewhere we are going. It is something we are creating".*

Miriam Sharp, [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au)

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

### March 2013

- 10-16 - [Ground Water Awareness Week](#)
- 20-21 - [3rd National Sustainable Food Summit, Melbourne](#)
- The [3rd National Sustainable Food Summit](#) addresses 'How do we get to where we need to go?' - mapping out how transformational change might occur within our food system over the next 50 years with a focus on immediate and emerging priorities. This event is the largest and most diverse gathering of practitioners interested in the sustainability of our food system, and attracts delegates with interests across the food supply chain, including primary producers, manufacturers, retail brands, and members of the business, government, education, public health, community and not-for-profit sectors.
- 21 - [World Forestry Day](#)
- 22 - [World Water Day](#) is held annually on 22 March as a means of focusing attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.
- 22 - [Ride2School Day](#)
- 23 - [World Meteorological Day](#)
- 23 - [Earth Hour](#)

### April

- 13-21 - [Australian Heritage Week](#)
- 14 - Felton Food Festival (Qld) – [www.feltonfoodfestival.org.au](http://www.feltonfoodfestival.org.au)
- 18 - [World Heritage Day](#)
- 22 - [International Mother Earth Day](#)

### Office Hours

HOPE's office is open every Monday from 9am to 5pm; with the library resources available at the same time. Other times can be arranged through the office.

## Office News Report – 10 March 2013

### Overview:

What an interesting and productive couple of months it's been for us at the office. Thanks to all who have made contributions – especially members of the management committee, office admin staff and the many local and online volunteers. Your efforts are appreciated.

Nationally and state-wide, we continue to support the good works of our colleagues by promoting their projects, campaigns and events through our website and e:news bulletin; as well by on-forwarding important communiques directly to our members and supporters.

Our promotional activities have focussed on "Protecting the Laws that Protect the Places You Love" ([www.placesyoulove.org](http://www.placesyoulove.org)); Clean Up Australia events; "Plastic Bag Free Queensland" ([www.qccqld.org.au](http://www.qccqld.org.au)); and the Qld Protect the Bush Alliance ([www.ptba.org.au](http://www.ptba.org.au)).

Locally – i.e. in Toowoomba – the office staff reviewed office procedures and practices; undertook a national promotional media campaign and membership drive; and developed a full suite of administrative policies. Thanks Tia and her skills for these major undertakings. Thanks also to OurCommunity [http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) for access to their draft policy templates.

We also helped the management committee organise an appeal for gardening tools and equipment (Jan-Feb), various information displays, quarterly meeting (15 Feb), garage sale (23 Feb) and the screening of the *In Transition 2.0* documentary (28 Feb).

On the down side, several members of the management committee and admin support volunteers have been unable to contribute to HOPE's activities due to either work commitments or ill health. We hope their respective situations improve soon. In the meantime, we invite members and supporters to step up and volunteer some of your time and talents to help share the workload!

### Summary reports:

HOPE's **appeal for gardening tools and equipment** was an outstanding success! The collected items were donated to Friends of the Escarpment Parks and Highfields Pioneer Village. Thanks to everyone who donated items.

Our **information display** at Grand Central Shopping Centre (GCSC), Toowoomba, 11-17 February, wasn't as well patronised as we hoped it might have been. Thanks to GCSC's centre management for the free site; and to Toowoomba Regional Council, Friends of the Escarpment Parks and Birdlife Southern Queensland for providing literature, posters and volunteers throughout the week-long display.

**Ordinary Meeting, 15 Feb.** --- 18 adults (representing 6 envNGOs) were present to hear Howard Nielsen (NAC Consulting) explain the role of the proposed Conservation Council for the Darling Downs region; and to field questions/concerns from the audience.

After a short cuppa break, HOPE members re-grouped for the business part of the meeting.

As there were insufficient committee members present to form a quorum, no motions were dealt with and only brief notes of the meeting were taken. A full copy of the report is available from the office.

**Garage Sale, 23 Feb** -- Sales of \$715 less \$42.50 for promotional advert in The Chronicle newspaper giving us a net profit of \$672.50. A fantastic result! Thanks to all the donors of goods & chattels; and to Joy, Tia & Mary who helped with set-up, staffing on the day and packing up. Leftover goods were disbursed over several days to local charities.

**National Screening of *In Transition 2.0* documentary, 28 Feb** – The screening was held at the Toowoomba campus of the University of Southern Queensland - good venue, but very low attendance. Damn!! We'll arrange to have other screenings throughout the year. We'll also make the video available to members and community groups for private screenings.

**Clean Up Australia Day, 3 Mar** – HOPE's head office planned a clean-up of the neighbourhood area in which the office is located. The event was cancelled due to wet, cold and windy weather. Thanks to The Glennie School and St. Mary's College, both located near the HOPE office, for cleaning up their respective school precincts.

### Other matters:

#### Gardenfest 2013, 3-5 May, Toowoomba

HOPE has been offered 2 free sites at Gardenfest 2013 being held on 3-5 May at the Toowoomba College of TAFE. We propose to have an information display and a number of demonstration activities.

Ian Simons has agreed to provide a chook tractor; and Terry Ryan will demonstrate square foot gardening and a worm farm. We would like to include a working compost bin demonstration; and an urban weeds display. Can you help with either of these?!

Lots of volunteers will be required over this 3 day event. Please register your interest by contacting the office on 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) .

### **Celebrating Queensland's Environment, 3-7 June, Toowoomba**

HOPE has decided to jointly celebrate World Environment Day (5 June) and Queensland Day (6 June) under the banner of *Celebrating Queensland's Environment*. Our aim is to showcase the good works of government agencies (federal, state and local), the University of Southern Queensland and the environment sector in looking after our natural environment.

HOPE has booked a week long (3-7 June) community information area at the Grand Central Shopping Centre, (GCSC), corner of Margaret and Dent Sts, Toowoomba; as well as the upstairs Jacaranda Conference Room (GCSC) on 6 June for a half-day speakers program.

Once we have confirmed the participants, we'll organise the program and start promoting the event.

Volunteers will be required to staff both aspects of the event. Please register your interest by contacting the office on 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) .

### **Outreach activities**

1. **Kitchen Conversations** – In keeping with our 'back to basics' approach of promoting HOPE and its Charter, we'd like to introduce "kitchen conversations" as a means to share experiences and knowledge about living more sustainably. The office is pleased to host a regular Monday morning kitchen conversation over a cup of tea. We invite others to host a similar get-together in their community.
2. **HOPE information display at PCYC Market** – We are looking for volunteers to staff a regular monthly information display at the Toowoomba PCYC market. HOPE will cover the cost of the site and provide the equipment and literature. Please register your interest by contacting the office on 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) .

### **Annual Pledge Day**

We invite members and supporters to consider making an annual financial contribution to help cover our operating costs of approx. \$15,500 p.a.

Currently, our income is derived from project grants, fund-raising, corporate sponsorship and donations, but falls well short of our requirements.

Your financial support, by way of an annual pledge, will considerably help us to achieve better financial viability.

Please contact the office on 07 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) to discuss payment options.

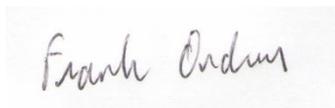
### **Volunteers needed**

More active volunteers – both local and remote (i.e. online) – are required to help us maintain our high levels of activity.

We are currently looking for people to assist with admin tasks; internet research and article writing; and media and marketing activities. We are also seeking expert comment from academics and the like to assist in critiquing government and industry reports. On-ground helpers are also required to assist with staffing information displays, and helping out at events.

Please contact the office on 07 4639 2135 or email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) to offer your assistance.

A fair portion of the above work would ideally be done by locals (i.e. in the Toowoomba area) because the HOPE office is in Toowoomba. However, quite a bit of the literature review, research, media and publications activity can be done via email. If you have a little bit of time to help us in any way, then contact the HOPE office on email [office@hopeaustralia.org.au](mailto:office@hopeaustralia.org.au) or phone (07) 4639 2135.



Frank Ondrus, acting Office Manger and President – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135

## Feature Articles

### The future is our creation

By Ian Lowe, Chairperson of the Australian Conservation Foundation



**"Despite the successes, we now have to recognise that almost all the important environmental indicators are getting worse.**

The most recent warning is that we are approaching critical thresholds. Beyond these tipping points, natural systems can change rapidly and irreversibly, with potentially tragic consequences for human civilisation. The situation is truly critical.

Distinguished economists have described climate change as the worst market failure in human history. The World Economic Forum said that the recent problems of food, fuel and finance are the "canaries in the mine", showing that the fundamental economic system we rely on is unsustainable.

It is no longer enough to fight to protect our precious natural assets one at a time. We need to deal with the driving forces that are destroying them: population growth, increasing consumption, the pattern of economic development and the societal values that are allowing a disastrous course.

We are living beyond our means. The good news is that there is a growing groundswell of recognition. More and more people now see the logic of the argument and accept the evidence they can see with their own eyes. At a gut level, they understand that we are living beyond our means and need to change. Nobody I know wants to leave their grandchildren a bleak future. Most of the damage to natural systems is still being done by ignorance rather than malice. Our task is to roll back the cultural, social and economic incentives that lead to these actions and to build irresistible momentum for change.

It won't be easy, but I am incurably optimistic. Human societies can shift radically when people realise the need. Changes that once seemed utopian visions have happened in recent decades.

Twenty five years ago, it was idealistic and naïve to be dreaming of a Berlin without the Wall, or a South Africa without apartheid, or an African-American as US president, a woman Prime Minister. These changes came from the ground up, from changes at the grass-roots spreading through the entire community to displace outdated approaches and attitudes. Our role must be to amplify and build support for that change and compel the political system to respond.

We have to continue to fight against inappropriate development proposals: coal seam gas extraction on prime agricultural land, irresponsible ventures to expand mining and export of coal when we know it has to be phased out as an energy source, new uranium mines when the nuclear industry globally has been stopped in its tracks by the Fukushima accident, encroachment onto floodplains and destruction of critical habitat.

I always remind people that the future is not somewhere we are going. It is something we are creating. There are many possible futures. We are deciding which one will occur by our decisions and actions (and by our non-decisions and inaction)."

Find out more by visiting the ACF website at [www.acfonline.org.au](http://www.acfonline.org.au) where you can sign up for email updates, make a donation or become a member. You can also call ACF on 1800 223 669 or email [acf@acfonline.org.au](mailto:acf@acfonline.org.au)

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### Simple steps to cut energy bills – by ClimateWorks Australia

In the face of rising energy prices, simple actions can save Queensland households between \$120 and \$280 a year depending on their house type. Replacing light bulbs and shower heads, switching appliances off standby mode, reducing the use of clothes dryers and purchasing more energy efficient products, all release pressure on the wallet. Combining these initiatives with the purchase of green power can lead to a carbon neutral home along with reduced energy bills – a win-win for households.

These are the findings of *Low Carbon Lifestyles*, a report commissioned by Origin Energy (Origin) and prepared by ClimateWorks and CSIRO. The report identifies thirty different actions householders can take right now to reduce their energy use and carbon footprint.

ClimateWorks Chairman, Professor John Thwaites said, "At a time when some in our community have expressed concerns over rising electricity prices, the *Low Carbon Lifestyles* report has been designed to provide consumers with the tools to help them save on their energy bills."

The *Lifestyles* report analysed three different house types – an apartment, a small house and a large house – across four states – Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. Householders can therefore gauge approximately how much they can save depending on their state and house type. The free report is designed to be user friendly, so householders can clearly see which action will give them the largest savings or the biggest reduction in emissions, including the equivalent number of cars off the road or trees planted.

The report found (for a typical large house) that low cost actions such as switching to energy efficient showerheads can save around \$160 a year in Queensland, \$235 a year in New South Wales, and \$315 a year in South Australia, while upgrading to energy efficient light bulbs can save around \$130 a year in Victoria. Upgrading to an efficient hot water system can save around \$440 in Queensland, \$935 a year in South Australia and \$650 in New South Wales.

Savings can be further increased by investing in an energy efficient product instead of a standard product when an old one is ready to be replaced.

The report highlights that just one or two key actions such as upgrading an inefficient hot water system or installing solar panels can deliver huge savings on bills and emissions. Installing a 3kW PV system could save a large household from around \$165 a year in Queensland, up to \$940 a year in South Australia, reducing emissions from energy use by around 35 per cent on average and freeing household income for other uses.

For more information about ClimateWorks and to download a free copy of the *Low Carbon Lifestyle: A Practical Guide for Households* go to [www.climateworksaustralia.org/publications.html](http://www.climateworksaustralia.org/publications.html)

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### **Sustainable Population Australia (SPA)**

SPA was formed in Canberra in 1988 by people who felt that the issue of population numbers was overlooked by many of those striving to preserve Australia's environment. We have grown to become a national organisation with branches in all States. We fear the world our children will inherit will be overpopulated and too environmentally degraded to support the quality of life everyone deserves. SPA members receive six newsletters a year and may access monthly eNews, online forums and local branch events, with many opportunities to help promote population stabilisation in political and public discourse.

#### **Aims and objectives**

- To contribute to the public awareness of the limits to Australian population growth from ecological, social and economic viewpoints.
- To promote awareness that the survival of an ecologically sustainable population depends in the long-term on its renewable resource base.
- To promote policies that will lead to the stabilisation, and then to reduction, of Australia's population by encouraging low fertility and low migration.
- To promote urban and rural life-styles and practices that are in harmony with the realities of the Australian environment, its resource base and its biodiversity.
- To advocate low immigration rates while rejecting any selection of immigrants based on race.
- To promote policies that will lead to stabilisation, and then reduction, of global population.

#### **Further Information**

SPA Inc. (National Office), PO Box 3851, WESTON CREEK, ACT 2611

Phone: 02 6288 6810; E-Mail: [info@population.org.au](mailto:info@population.org.au) ; Web: [www.population.org.au](http://www.population.org.au)

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### **Sustainability Showcase – Catalysing a Confluence for Sustainability**

It is no secret that we are living in interesting and challenging times, and collaborative strategies for sustainability are what we need if we are to address our planetary emergency head-on. Many organizations, movements and initiatives have sprung up to take on the challenge of transitioning society to a more sustainable paradigm – some emerging from the grass-roots, others from the political sphere, and still others from the arena of innovation. However, despite the many small successes that deserve recognition and celebration, we are facing ever more concerning challenges and the discourse is shifting only incrementally. For this it is imperative that we collaborate with others, using shared platforms for communication and action, in order to engage the range of skills and wisdom of a wide range of change-agents – and strengthen our response to this impending crisis.

A new platform for communication, collaboration, and convergence of action has been established by a coalition of change-agents whose focus is on the all-out effort that must be harnessed in order to reach our shared goal. [Sustainability Showcase](#) is this platform – a platform whose express intent is to “catalyze a

confluence for sustainability”, defining the discourse for a transition toward sustainability. This showcasing of strategies for sustainability involves bi-annual touring summits with presentations and panels from leaders in the field of sustainability who share the common ground of an understanding of our shared predicament and a need to collaborate in order to survive. Another card up the Sustainability Showcase sleeve is a magazine, to be released monthly from mid-2013, whose content is sourced from field leaders in sustainability. And perhaps the joker in the pack may turn out to be the web-based networking platform, exploiting with integrity the fervour of social media toward a purpose befitting the label of humanity.

The [Sustainability Showcase](#) event series is kicking off 2013 with the [Automatic Earth Tour](#) from March to May, featuring, among some of the best local Aussie talent, international speaker Nicole Foss. An international sustainability and finance expert, Foss’ list of credentials is as long as anyone’s arm, and rarely is she stumped by any challenging question. Senior editor for [The Automatic Earth](#), Foss explains the links between the converging pressures facing the globe – peak oil, financial crisis, and climate change, to name but a few – and the implications for our everyday lives and what we can do to address them.

Unveiling a communication platform not unlike TED or TEDx, Sustainability Showcase events create opportunities for individuals and representatives of groups to present, and seek support for, strategies for edging society toward sustainability, and shifting the discourse of a paradigm on the brink. Bringing together like and unlike-minds under the umbrella of shared intent, goals and understandings, Sustainability Showcase is the opportunity of an era for us to converge, not compete, for strategic solutions to our planetary emergency. The time has come, the confluence is here, and we are the ones we’ve been waiting for.

*Check out the [Automatic Earth tour website](#) for details of an event near you. You may also want to check out [Sustainability Showcase](#) and the [Automatic Earth Tour](#) on Facebook or [Twitter](#) to keep up to date with Showcase tour information as it is released.*

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### **WILD MOUNTAINS... reconnecting with nature to nurture our earth**

Today we face an uncertain future of accelerating environmental change. With our global population now over 6 billion the human impact has never been greater. The earth's life support systems are under threat resulting in wasted opportunities and conflict while making bad economic sense. The need for us to understand our relationship to the natural systems that sustain all life is fundamental to a positive future. Wild Mountains Trust is set up specifically to meet this need. The Trust believes that children (tomorrow's citizens and leaders), and adults can make decisions in their personal and professional lives based on deeper understandings of and feelings for the environment. Most importantly, we need motivation, hope and inspiration that we can make a difference for a sustainable future.

Adjoining world heritage national park in the spectacular Macpherson Ranges south of Brisbane, Wild Mountains purpose built education centre is a practical role model facility, incorporating appropriate design and recycled materials with renewable technologies for energy generation and waste disposal. As a listed Nature Refuge, Wild Mountains’ subtropical and eucalypt forests provide a magnificent venue for education. According to co-founder and president Richard Zoomers, “Ours is a head, heart and hands approach. We have our learners understand earth’s basic systems which support all life, including us. By impacting on those systems we ultimately affect ourselves.”

“We also believe it vital to get our learners back into nature to experience its wondrous beauty and to have time to reflect on their new understandings and feelings. Finally we believe that once they know how life ticks and have formed a renewed relationship with the earth they can then take a “hands on” approach in changing their lives back at home and at school.” Wild Mountains offers residential school programs of 3 to 5 days duration, catering for up to forty students: Earthkeepers for 10/11 year olds and Shapers of Tomorrow for 13/15 year olds. The 13 day International Student Volunteer Programs provide hands on skills as well as knowledge and analytical skills for making positive personal lifestyle choices.

Monthly Volunteer Weekend Programs provide a place where people can come and reconnect with nature whilst working on this amazing project with other like-minded people. Venue hire is also available for certain groups. Richard adds, “There is little money to be made from education so Wild Mountains constant challenge is raising sufficient funds to supplement program income in order to provide our unique and powerful programs while maintaining and expanding the centre.”

Established in April 1998 as a community-focussed, non-profit organisation with the aims of education and conservation, Wild Mountains Trust is a fully audited, deductible gift recipient. For further enquiries please contact us at [www.wildmountains.org](http://www.wildmountains.org)

## General

### [Building Sustainably at No Extra Cost](#)

Building a truly sustainable home need not cost more than a traditional home and in some instances it will be cheaper. The key is all in the planning. A sustainable home has to be well balanced with design and material choice.

### [Green Journey – Taking Steps to Better Choices](#)

We believe in supporting local, organic and environmentally responsible businesses, individuals and organisations that demonstrate they are providing the public with safe, eco-friendly and sustainable products and services (sourced in a manner that shows respect for both our earth and the animals on it.) We support and promote local educators who share their knowledge about green topics with you. We [spill the beans](#) on what is affecting your ability to choose clean, safe and healthy products, and provide [alternatives and resources](#) to enable you to make informed choices about what is right for you and your family. Please take some time to read an [Inspiring Story](#), check out [The Green Blog](#) and [Like us on Facebook!](#)

### [Birds Australia -- Volunteers Required](#)

The Threatened Bird Network is BirdLife Australia's community based program aimed at encouraging participation in urgent conservation tasks for threatened birds. At any one time, TBN has over 5000 volunteers registered and assists up to 30 projects per year working on threatened bird conservation. The main vehicle for promoting the activities for volunteer involvement is our Volunteer newsletter. TBN is now calling for volunteers interested in assisting in the office duties required to support this vital project. Tasks will include connecting people with conservation projects, communications and database management. No prior experience is necessary. In return, BirdLife can offer the opportunity to work with one of Australia's leading conservation organisations, gain insight into the operations of the TBN project and work with other like-minded people. We require volunteers who are able to commit to at least half a day in our Melbourne office on at least a quarterly basis. If you are interested in providing your support, check out our [website](#) and email your days/availability to Project Coordinator [Janelle Thomas](#)

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### **BirdLife Australia Conservation Strategy**

BirdLife Australia has released its long-awaited Conservation Strategy. Its goal is to: "Achieve improvements in the state of Australia's birds by mitigating the main threats to selected taxa and assemblages". To achieve this vision means improving outcomes for birds by tackling the threats they face.

The strategy is shaped by five principles:

- Delivering measurable outcomes
- Using a knowledge-based, adaptive learning approach
- Decisions and actions based on the best available knowledge
- Research and conservation to be integrated into everything we do
- Collaborate with peers and partners

Because Australia's birds face many threats, and because we have finite funds, we must select a limited number of taxa to work on. These will be reviewed regularly, along with project outcomes and progress. For more information, head to the [BirdLife Australia website](#).

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### *Advertisements*



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## Queensland News

### Reverse Garbage – 2013 Workshop program

#### **Adult Workshops**

We've launched a long-awaited new adult workshop program on the fourth Saturday of each month from February to May 2013. Our exciting new themes are: Eco Embellishments, Beautiful Bunting & Decorative Delights, Salvaged Steampunk and Marvellous Masquerade. The adult program is designed to provide participants with an array of tips and techniques to use salvaged and scavenged materials in a themed workshop setting. Participants can turn trash into treasure to create their own gorgeous items under the guidance of an experienced workshop facilitator.

#### **School Holiday Program (6 – 12yrs)**

The school holiday program offers children a break from school routine but not from learning! Designed for children aged 6-12 years, these themed workshops combine art and environmental learning and encourage creativity with salvaged materials. Themes include: robots, spaceships and aliens, marvellous masks, kite making, mad hatter's tea party and more. These workshops are a parent-free zone and run for two hours with materials and tuition included. Children leave with a piece of eco-art or a toy of their own creation!

#### **Wacky Wednesdays (3 – 5 yrs.)**

We've launched a new Wacky Wednesday program on the first and third Wednesday of each month, starting in February, with the exception of Wednesdays during the school holidays. Our fun new themes include: Crazy Collage, Under the Sea, Magical Masks, Eco Easter Craft and more! The Wacky Wednesday Workshop program is designed for pre-schoolers (3-5 years) and their parents to enjoy eco-friendly art making together. Our workshop facilitators take parents and children on a creative adventure through the world of waste!

**Where** - Reverse Garbage, 20 Burke Street Woolloongabba.

Contact & Bookings - 07 3891 9744 or [info@reversegarbage.com.au](mailto:info@reversegarbage.com.au)

Further Info – [www.reversegarbage.com.au](http://www.reversegarbage.com.au)

Full program – visit our [workshop calendar](#)

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### Queensland floods: what do history and river hydrology tell us?

Eastern Australia has experienced devastating floods again in January 2013, just two years after the horrors of the January 2011 Queensland floods. When will flood risk planning adequately reflect [the realities of history and river hydrology](#)? Hopefully before more lives are lost and more people have to suffer losing their homes, possessions and life memories.



**Seen an echidna? A platypus? A quoll? Let the [Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland](#) know!**

Take a photo on your iPhone and help us monitor populations. All you need to do is make sure your 'Location Services' is set to 'on' under the Settings/Privacy menu and send the image to us at [wpsq@wildlife.org.au](mailto:wpsq@wildlife.org.au) Your photo will store the coordinates for us to record your sighting, just

let us know your name and contact number in case we need to ask a question. Observation, maybe even conservation, is that simple!



**Queensland State Landcare Conference – Call for abstract now open**

Condamine Headwaters Landcare Group is calling for Expressions of Interest to deliver presentations at the Queensland State Landcare Conference, being held in Warwick from 27 – 29 September 2013. This year's conference, with the theme 'Healthy Habitats ... Profitable Production', will focus on balancing sustainable natural resource management with vibrant landscapes for profitable and productive farming. Call for paper Expressions of Interest closes 28 March 2013, speakers notified 15 April 2013, final abstracts and biographies due 1 May 2013. For more information head to [Condamine Headwaters Landcare Group](#).

## National News

### [Australians vastly underestimate food wastage in the home](#)

Most Australian families vastly underestimate the amount of food they throw away each year, according to a study conducted by Panasonic Australia.

### [National Retailer's Association](#)

The National Retail Association is dedicated to educating retailers on the environmental and economic benefits of improved environmental performance. We are committed to encouraging retailers to implement environmentally sustainable practices within their business and reduce their use of energy, water and waste in order to increase profitability whilst caring for our environment.

### [Taronga and Woolworths join forces to commit to a future full of fish](#)

Taronga Zoo and Woolworths have joined together to launch an ambitious program for marine conservation in Australia. Aimed at raising awareness in Australian consumers and empowering them to make informed choices of Sustainable Seafood, the campaign will combine Taronga's experience in conservation education with Woolworths' connections to 890 communities throughout Australia.

### [Innovative program makes it easy for consumers to recycle plastic packaging](#)

Thanks to an innovative new recycling scheme, and just in time for the post-Christmas glut of empty packaging, consumers can now recycle flexible plastics by returning them to more than 370 drop off points at Coles supermarkets in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide.

The [Community Landcare Grants](#) are small grant available through the Sustainable Agriculture stream of the Australian Government's Caring for our Country initiative. Grants between \$5000 to \$50 000 (GST exclusive) are available to help local community-based organisations and groups take on-ground action as well as build their capacity and skills to manage their natural environment and productive lands, while contributing towards program outcomes. The [2013-14 Community Landcare Grants](#) round is now open, with applications closing at 5pm (AEDT) on 20 March 2013.

### [Josh's House – proving the merits of sustainable homes](#)

After 20 years of renovating other people's houses and gardens to demonstrate his sustainable house ideas, Josh Byrne (environmental scientist and well known ABC TV Gardening Australia presenter) is undertaking his most ambitious house project yet – the design and construction of two 10-star energy efficient family homes in the Fremantle suburb of Hilton. Construction started in November 2012 and is scheduled for completion by May 2013. Follow the progress at [Josh's House](#).

### **Bushfire Prevention**

Bushfires are a common hazard during the Australian summer. [Learn more about bushfire prevention from this interview with a bushfire scientist.](#)

### **Bring about the elimination of leaded petrol / gasoline globally**

Click here to find out more and sign the petition:

[http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Bring\\_about\\_the\\_elimination\\_of\\_leaded\\_petrol\\_gasoline\\_globally/?kRXqja](http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Bring_about_the_elimination_of_leaded_petrol_gasoline_globally/?kRXqja)  
[b](#)

### [Improving road safety for Australia's high-flyers – what can we do?](#)

Roads pose many risks to wildlife – from preventing or curtailing their movement, to causing death or serious injury. Given the number of major roads being built or enlarged as road authorities try to accommodate ever-increasing volumes of traffic, the problem of wildlife on roads is set to worsen.

### [Leafy green a key to urban cool](#)

Scientists are using thermal imaging to work out how plants can be used to reduce the severe temperatures in our cities.

### [Humans, not disease, responsible for Tassie Tiger extinction](#)

Humans alone were responsible for the demise of Australia's iconic extinct native predator, the Tasmanian Tiger or thylacine, according to new research.

## Resources

### Websites

#### [How to Grow & Use Nasturtiums](#)

Tips on how to use this herb in your garden and kitchen.

Find the Queensland Herbarium at <http://www.qld.gov.au/environment/plants-animals/herbarium/>

#### [Top tips for a sustainable 2013](#)

With the start of a new year, many people recovering from the haze of long lunches and celebrations make personal resolutions – exercise more, eat well, travel – all things to make them feel better, healthier and more productive. Why not take a similar stocktake of your business and resolve to break some of those bad environmental habits that also detract from your productivity?

#### [Sandbag solutions](#)

With sandbags lining the streets, and flood waters receding, what do you do with them all?

[Drop Zone](#) provide a FREE recycling service for households and small businesses to dispose of unwanted televisions, computers and computer products (such as printers, keyboards and mice), regardless of their brand or age.

#### **Consumer guide to installing solar panels**

Solar panels are now an affordable option for Australian households looking to reduce their power bills and generate their own clean electricity. The use of solar panels has expanded quickly over the last couple of years and more consumers are looking for guidance so they can make an informed decision. The Clean Energy Council has prepared this guide so that you can make smart choices about a system that is right for you. [Click here to download the guide](#) The Clean Energy Council has also addressed some myths about solar energy through its new Solar Myths and Facts info sheet - [click here](#).

#### **New look *Lock the Gate Alliance* website**

As you may have noticed, we started 2013 with a new-look website. We wanted to create a place full of useful information and resources. We also wanted to make it easier to get involved in our movement. [Take a look around](#) and let us know what you think.

### **Book Reviews and Reports**

A new report of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN (FAO), titled "[Biofuels and the Sustainability Challenge](#)," addresses the issue of biofuel sustainability based on a global assessment of major commodities and feedstocks. The report is guided by the need to understand the economic, environmental and social sustainability dimensions of biofuels, and how these elements can be used to address the challenges of land-use change, food security and climate change.

#### [The Last Place You'd Look for a Wallaby](#)

Following the success of his first book, the rollicking Stephen Leacock Medal for Humour finalist *The Curse of the Labrador Duck*, Glen Chilton, an ornithologist and acclaimed behavioural ecologist, returns with more tongue-in-cheek revelations in *The Last Place You'd Look for a Wallaby*, this time about introduced species that are creating biological Armageddon.

#### **Wetlands Australia**

*Wetlands Australia* is a twice yearly publication by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities. *Wetlands Australia* brings together information and resources from across Australia relating to wetlands conservation, management and education. Read the magazine or subscribe online at [Wetlands Australia](#).

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