

BRUNSWICK VALLEY LANDCARE Annual Report 2007/08

Report summary

A successful Nature Festival, and the securement of substantial Environmental Trust funding, were the highlights of another good year for Brunswick Valley Landcare.

The Brunswick Valley Nature Festival in June attracted more than 600 visitors with biodiversity as its main theme. The festival slogan "birds, bugs and butterflies", was reflected in the keynote address by prominent entomologist Dr Don Sands. The Visions of the Valley photographic competition was again held in conjunction with the festival and was the most successful yet, attracting more than 150 entries.

The dedicated efforts of a volunteer organising committee made the festival possible. The Festival was funded in part by the NSW Government's Environmental Trust which made two major grants to BVL. The Trust is providing \$99,650 over three years for BVL's ongoing community education program, 'Protecting Biodiversity in a Coastal Development Hotspot' an initiative to develop awareness of biodiversity issues in the Byron Shire.

A second project, Reconnecting Lowland Riparian Corridors on the Brunswick River, will receive ET funding of \$99,605 over three years. This project has been developed by the Mullumbimby Creek Locality Group and will extend work undertaken with a previous Environmental Trust grant. This project demonstrates what a dedicated and active group can achieve.

Membership

Membership remains healthy with more than 120 current financial members and 90 non-financial members representing more than 25 active locality groups. This is similar to last year but I would urge those who are non-financial to pay their dues so they can continue to enjoy the advantages of membership, particularly the insurance cover which membership provides.

Community Support Officer

In June BVL negotiated a new community support contract with the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority. We lobbied successfully for a return to the former boundaries limiting the CSO's responsibilities to Byron Shire rather than the coastal region which included Ballina and the Tweed, a situation with which BVL was never comfortable. Colin Hastie left us on completion of the contract and we are fortunate to have Wendy Gibney as our new CSO. The committee has recorded its thanks to Colin for his contribution.

Byron Shire Council

We are grateful to Byron Shire Council for its ongoing support, and particularly for the provision of office accommodation and administrative resources for the community support officer, which is a valuable in-kind contribution.

Workshops and events

We have had an active program of monthly training workshops and events during the year with excellent attendance. These events continue to play an important role in increasing community awareness of natural resource management issues and on behalf of BVL I thank those volunteers who contributed their time and energy.

Management committee

BVL's affairs are managed by a volunteer committee assisted by two part-time paid officers, our project officer Judy Macdonald and our book-keeper Annette Stanton. The management committee has met formally on 11 occasions since the last annual general meeting. As I will not be re-nominating I take this opportunity to thank all members of the outgoing committee for their support and their considerable contributions to the committee's work. The committee handles a significant workload, is responsible for a high level of funding, and I believe punches well above its weight. I offer my best wishes to the incoming committee and wish BVL all the very best for the future.

Adrian Begg, President. 19 November, 2008