

13 June 2019

## FIRST YEAR MILESTONE UNEARTH'S WEB OF LIFE

The first year of an exciting five-year project, *Protecting Little Llangothlin Lagoon for Future Generations*, has come to a close, with some highly beneficial and advantageous outcomes set to ensure the sustainability of the significant site.

Situated between Glen Innes and Armidale, Little Llangothlin Nature Reserve, covering an area of 260 hectares, is the site of one of the few remaining high-altitude freshwater lagoons on the New England Tableland.

Little Llangothlin Nature Reserve is a Ramsar site, (a wetland designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention).

The *Protecting Little Llangothlin Lagoon for Future Generations* project evaluates data about the ecological condition and function of the Little Llangothlin Nature Reserve to inform future management, with particular attention to improving conditions for threatened species and ecological communities.

The project is supported by Northern Tablelands Local Land Services in partnership with GLENRAC Landcare and NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. Valuable research is being carried out by a team of ecologists, led by Dr Mahri Koch, Project Manager at GLENRAC Landcare.

The five-year project is improving the understanding of the ecological character and condition of the Ramsar site, ultimately to restore the site and reduce threats to the site.

A number of priority actions have been identified at the conclusion of the first year's study.

"These actions include annual revegetation around the lagoon of the threatened ecological community *Eucalyptus nova anglica* (New England Peppermint). Engaging with surrounding landholders is also a priority and we are encouraging them to work on further reducing invasive species and other threats," said Dr Koch.

UNE scientists have been conducting surveys of the flora, fauna, aquatic fauna and water quality of the lagoon. Wetland health baseline data surveys were postponed due to the impacts of long-term drought, which has left the lagoon without water for the previous eleven months.

"The flora survey carried out by Dr John Hunter, Associate Professor, School of Environmental and Rural Science, UNE, identified possibly three unnamed, plant species, which is incredibly exciting and highly valuable to our study," said Dr Koch.

"While the lack of water has curtailed our aquatic research, it has enabled us to establish a substantial amount of monitoring equipment including water depth, temperature and light metres, which have been installed in preparation for when the rains arrive".

The first year's research will inform invasive species control carried out by NSW National Parks & Wildlife and the most appropriate management for maintaining quality and building on the resilience of the site.

"An important part of the project is engaging with landholders to ensure they understand the worth of the site and the value of invasive species control," explained Dr Koch.

The conclusions from the first year's study have inspired Dr Koch.

“Amongst the significance of the scientific data, it’s important to recognise that we are telling the story of the web of life of the Little Llangothlin Lagoon. We are looking forward to continuing to build on that story in years to come,” she said.

For further information regarding the project, contact Dr Mahri Koch, Project Manager, GLENRAC on 02 6732 3443 or [mahri.koch@glenrac.org.au](mailto:mahri.koch@glenrac.org.au)

Media contact: Annabelle Monie 0429 626 326 E-mail: [annabelle.monie@lls.nsw.gov.au](mailto:annabelle.monie@lls.nsw.gov.au)