



NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST LANDCARE

REGIONAL UPDATE

Issue 57, 25th May 2012

UNCOVERING CYCAD SECRETS AT WARIALDA

The cycad is an ancient and mysterious species that dates back to the days of the dinosaurs, and it seems that Warialda in Northern NSW could be Cycad Central!

Amateur botanist John Hodge believes he has discovered up to eleven new types of cycad in the Warialda region. There are currently less than 300 different types of cycad documented worldwide.

BRG CMA Catchment Coordinator, Liz Blair, has commended John Hodge for his important work in documenting local cycad species, "Flora and fauna unique to our region are of great value to the whole community. John's dedicated research efforts provide new evidence that we live in a truly unique and special part of the world which is worth preserving and protecting for future generations."

BUDGET RESTRAINTS LEAD TO POOR RESULTS

Professor David Pannell of the School of Agricultural and Resource Economics of the University of WA says that in Australia we often try to get away with running environmental projects on a shoestring and then are disappointed about the poor results – he says that unrealistic costing of projects with the lack of proper feasibility studies by government leads to misallocation of funds and is damaging to the environment

and to support by communities *Pannell Discussions 100412.*

BIOCHAR IN AGRICULTURE— AN UPDATE FOR FARMERS

A 2 day workshop for farmers to hear the results of the National Biochar Research Initiative and North Coast field trials will be held Wed 6-7th June 2012. The field day will be held at Wollongbar Primary Industries Institute Wollongbar. RSVP 30 May 2012
rsvp@seftonpr.com.au or 6766 5222.

INVITATION TO RENEWABLE ENERGY BUSINESS FORUM

The New England North West Round Table Steering Committee is an initiative to develop employment, supply, training and services opportunities for regional energy projects. The forum will take place 15th June 2012 in Armidale. Please contact to register or for further information by email paul.cruickshank@environment.nsw.gov.au or direct on 0457593827

STRATEGIC REGIONAL LAND USE PLANNING

Office of Environment & Heritage (OEH) is providing soil and land information to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for the development of biophysical strategic agricultural land (BSAL) maps as part of the NSW Government's strategic regional land use policy. In supporting the release of the

draft Upper Hunter and New England-North West strategic regional land use plans, maps of land and soil capability and derived inherent soil fertility for those areas have been released. Further maps will be made available as more strategic regional land use plans are released. For inquiries about soil and land in NSW, and the use of soil and land information, email soils@environment.nsw.gov.au.

19-YEAR-OLD COMBINES FARMING AND TECH EXPERIENCE

Alex Schimp started learning programming at age 11. Now, at age 19, he has developed an iPhone and iPod Touch application that will help certified organic farmers keep their crop records organized with simple clicks and taps of their fingers. Schimp launched his [Seed to Harvest](#) iPhone and iPod Touch app in March. The app—available as a limited [free version](#) and a [full version](#) through Apple's "App Store"—gives certified organic farmers the ability to record vital information right on the field (since the information logging aspect of the app does not require Internet access). Farmers can use the app to keep track of information such as when they plant certain crops, how much of the crop they plant and where it's planted; the input of soil amendments.



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY

Send your news for the Landcare Update to
Sarah Legge at sarah@gwymaclandcare.net.au



"OUR FARMERS, OUR FUTURE" ENVIRO-STORIES EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA, along with the Cotton Catchment Communities CRC and Central West CMA are supporting the "Our Farmers, Our Future" Enviro-Stories Education Program. We are looking for students to use their imagination and write and illustrate stories about 'Life on the Farm'. Stories can be from a human, plant or animal perspective or about events that occur on farms. Students have a chance to go in the running to get their book published. Contact Peter Coleman for further information at admin@envirostories.com.au (Entries close 29 June 2012)

Pest Animal Management and Landholder engagement in New England NSW is a new project that is up and running in the region. The project has numerous partners and runs until June 2013. The project aims to reduce the threats to endangered ecological communities and threatened species in the New England region of NSW also aiming to raise awareness about the impact of pest animals such as pigs, foxes, wild dogs and rabbits on our valuable natural assets as well as agricultural production. Landholders will be engaged in cooperative program to control and manage these pests. PESTSMART has a range of **fact sheets** available regarding pest

animals and their control, including wild dogs, foxes, feral pigs, feral cats and rabbits. To find out more visit <http://www.feral.org.au/pestsmart/>

GROW WITH WOOLWORTHS 2012 AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS SCHOLARSHIP

Woolworths is offering 30 young Australians the opportunity to attend the 2012 Woolworths Agricultural Business Scholarship program. During the 12-day course, you'll gain a broad academic perspective on the business of agriculture from key academics, Woolworths business leaders and other industry experts. The program will give you valuable insights into key issues and opportunities in this sector. This is a free program running Monday 27th August to Friday 7th September 2012 Woolworths Support Office 1 Woolworths Way, Bella Vista NSW. To apply visit woolworths.com.au and click the link 'Woolworths Agricultural Business Scholarship'. Applications open Wednesday 4th April to Friday 1st June.

15 GREEN MAKEOVERS TO SCHOOLS AND YOUTH GROUPS Landcare Australia have joined with Turf Australia and Junior Landcare to offer 15 green makeovers to schools and youth groups across Australia, which will see up to 100,000 square metres of natural turf professionally laid in school grounds and recreation areas. Grant recipients will be visited

by a professional turf grower who will lay real turf in their recreational areas to provide natural grass coverage for kids to enjoy. All schools, including preschools and kindergartens, as well as youth groups including Scouts, Girl Guides and other community organizations that involve and support young people are all eligible to enter the Perfect Patch of Green program. Applications close on July 31. For more info please visit www.juniorlandcare.com.au.

MAKING FARM WORK EASIER AS WE GET OLDER

The Rural Adversity Mental Health Program in association with Hunter New England Local Health District and Farmsafe Australia Incorporated is running a workshop that will be of interest to all farmers of around 55 years and older. The Workshop facilitated by Dr Lyn Fragar is a very practical workshop where farmers will discuss the farm work that is getting harder as they get older, and will provide an opportunity to think about the ways that older farmers can get *MORE FIT FOR FARM WORK* as older people, as well as ways that farm work can be made *MORE FIT FOR THE OLDER FARMER*.

Date: Tues 12th of June, 2012
Time: 9:00am – 1pm Venue: New England Club, GLEN INNES NSW 2370 RSVP: By Friday 8th of June, 2012 to Georgina Gough on 0467 780 374 or email Georgina.Gough@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au