



2023 / 24 ANNUAL REPORT

**LANDCARE ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

We would like to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first Landcarers and custodians of the Country we work, live and Landcare on. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we pay our respect to elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.



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1. OUR VISION

Resilient Landscapes. Empowered Communities.

2. OUR MISSION

We build environmental knowledge and grassroots action to improve the diversity, productivity and resilience of living systems for current and future generations.

3. OUR VALUES

Representative – the representative voice for Landcarers at local, state and national levels.

Adaptable – an agile and flexible organisation able to respond to changing conditions.

Energetic – a dynamic organisation that is outcome focused.

Professional – a professional business conducted with respect and integrity.

Independent – decisions are made independently and in our members' interests.

Inclusive – an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.

Knowledgeable – knowledge drawn from Aboriginal culture, science, community and industry.



4. STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1: Embedding a whole of systems approach.

Intent: All our decisions benefit future generations.

GOAL 2: Leading Landcare in SA.

Intent: Strategically influence relationships and policy to advance our members' needs.

GOAL 3: Learning with Aboriginal people and communities.

Intent: Learning from and partnering with the first Landcarers.

GOAL 4: Strengthening community participation.

Intent: Providing support for a thriving, inclusive, diverse and intergenerational Landcare movement.

GOAL 5: Assuring Organisational Performance.

Intent: Operating in an ethical, efficient, transparent and accountable manner.



Scan the QR code or
click [here](#) to view the
LASA 2021-2025
Strategic Plan.



Arid Lands Botanic Gardens. Credit: Eleanor Pratt

5. NATIONAL LANDCARE NETWORK



The Landcare Association of South Australia (LASA) is a member of the National Landcare Network (NLN) alongside the seven other Landcare peak bodies in each State and Territory. The NLN is the collective voice for community Landcare across the country.

The Network has over 2,000 active State and Territory Landcare Organisation members representing 6,000-plus individual Landcare groups (Figure 1) and over 160,000 Landcarers across Australia. These groups feed into the representative nature of the NLN through the Members Council.

We would like to acknowledge the work of Lara Tilbrook who has represented LASA on the NLN Members Council and John Chester who is the South Australian nominee on the NLN Board of Directors. Thank you also to Gerry Butler who works closely with the NLN as the NLN secretary.

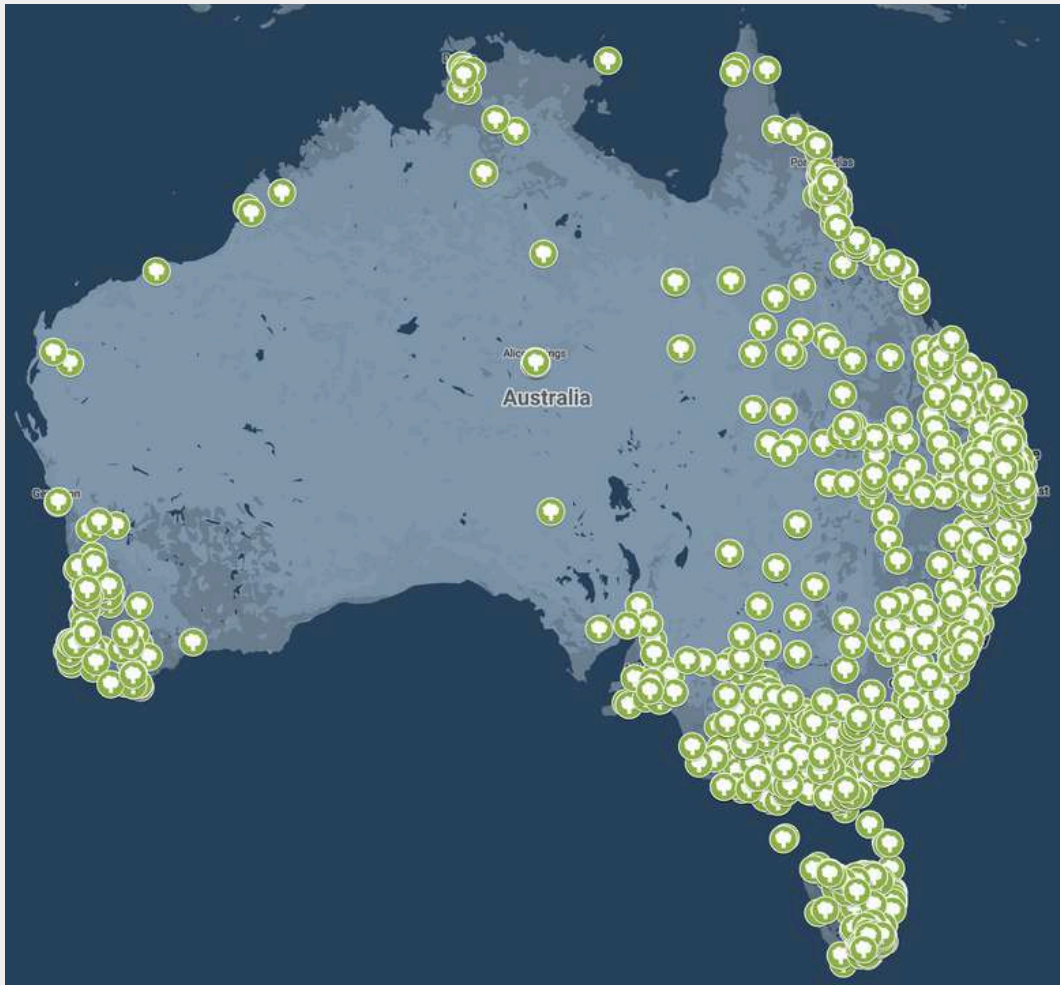


Figure 1. Map of the National Landcare Network (NLN) showing over 2,000 active State and Territory Landcare Organisation members (based on data provided in August 2022).

6. OUR PEOPLE

Management Committee



Sarah Barrett
Chairperson



Jack Hetherington
Treasurer



Shaun Branden
ALT Rep
Public Officer



Lara Tilbrook
Committee



John Chester
Committee



Sarah Castine
Committee



Gerry Butler
Chair, Indigenous
Engagement Sub-Cmte

Staff



Paula Jones
Executive Officer



Natalia Diaz
State Landcare
Coordinator

7. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Dear Landcare Association of South Australian Members,

This annual report details our organisation's accomplishments in 2023/24, highlighting our active role in the National Landcare Network (NLN) and our commitment to advancing Landcare initiatives across South Australia. Our focus has been guided by our 2021-25 strategic plan. We held a review of the strategic plan with the LASA committee during the year which enabled newer committee members to gain a greater understanding, review our progress of the plan and also highlight developing areas to prioritise.

Our major funding streams during 23/24 were through the National Landcare Network and the South Australian Government Care for Landcare Package. We made significant progress in our workplans against these programs and this report contains some commentary on our significant achievements. Both programs will continue into 24/25.

Through the Care for Landcare package 33 groups have secured funding (23/24) under the small grants scheme. We are fortunate to have the availability of this State funding to strengthen the Landcare member network across the state, enabling Landcarer's to do what they do best, caring for our waters, wildlife, land and country.

Significant events and highlights throughout the year have included:

- Support and sponsorship of the Nantawarrina Indigenous Protected Area 25 year anniversary celebrations
- Hosting the South Australian Landcare Awards in Port Augusta
- Parliamentary Friends of Landcare dinner and presentations
- Numerous members forums and training events

LASA continued our engagement in the National Landcare Network though our state-based representatives on the members council, Lara Tilbrook and Indigenous representative for the National Landcare Network, John Chester. Through this year there has been some significant developments and more recent shifts in NLN staffing occurring. This includes the resignation of long standing NLN CEO Jim Adams and the appointment of the new National Landcare Facilitator Melanie Tyas who we are working closely with.



This year we have been fortunate to have Natalia Diaz as our State Landcare Coordinator and Kate Wignell as our financial manager. Our Executive Officer Dr Eleanor Pratt has moved onto another position within the Northern and Yorke Landscape Board and we wish her well in her new role. I am very pleased to announce that Paula Jones has been appointed as our new executive officer. Paula brings a wealth of experience from the tourism sector as well as environmental education and volunteer management having been the coordinator for the Arid Lands Botanical Gardens. I'm looking forward to working with Paula, her getting to know our members, and the possibilities that lie ahead.

Finally, I would like to thank our small but passionate committee members Lara Tilbrook, Shaun Branden, Jack Hetherington, Sarah Castine and John Chester who have assisted in developing our relationships with members and new partners throughout the year.

Also, my sincere thanks and acknowledgement to all Landcare volunteers, individuals and groups who are out there "Landcaring" in our landscapes, towns, cities and communities.

Yours in Landcare

Sarah Barrett
Chairperson
Landcare Association of SA



Working Together Award Finalist Elouise Fehring (SYP Landcare Group) with Natalia Diaz and Sarah Barrett. Credit: SA Environment Awards

8. STATE LANDCARE COORDINATOR'S REPORT

This year marks my first full year with LASA. It's been an incredible learning curve that has been very well worth it.

We've had significant success in our capacity-building efforts through training workshops. We hosted seven workshops throughout the year, both online and in person, offering a variety of topics relevant to our members and the broader Landcare community. The enthusiasm and active participation were clear indicators that these learning opportunities resonate deeply with our community.

Visiting our groups across South Australia has been one of the most rewarding experiences of the year. It has not only been refreshing but also deeply reinvigorating to witness firsthand the passion and dedication of our volunteers. It's clear that the work we do is driven by this very passion, and it's the conversations and excitement shared during these visits that affirm we are heading in the right direction with Landcare in SA. Each interaction with groups and members has provided invaluable insights, reminding me of the power of collective action in caring for our land.

The State Landcare Awards were another highlight of the year, showcasing the incredible community engagement and excitement across South Australia. It's always amazing to see how the work being done locally fits into a larger national network. The awards are a testament to the dedication and innovative approaches that our members and supporters bring to the table. It reinforces that Landcare in South Australia is part of a bigger movement, one that is growing in strength and impact.

Our commitment to our members remains at the heart of everything we do. It is this ongoing dedication that drives us to maintain and foster strong partnerships while continually seeking out new opportunities for collaboration. These partnerships are crucial in ensuring the longevity and success of our projects and providing the resources needed to support our volunteers.

We recognise that the landscape of volunteering has changed, and with it comes new challenges. Volunteer engagement, retention, and succession planning are heavy administrative burdens on our groups. That's why we remain focused on finding ways to better support our members, reducing the load where we can and ensuring that they have the tools and assistance needed to thrive.



As I reflect on the year, it's evident that the strength of our community lies in its passion, resilience, and willingness to come together for the common good. Members have made great strides in protecting and restoring the environment, and I look forward to continuing this journey with you with renewed energy and focus in the coming year and beyond.

If you're not yet part of a Landcare group, I encourage you to get involved. There are so many ways to contribute, whether it's volunteering in the field, joining a committee, offering digital skills, or supporting our mission in other ways. Together, we can make a lasting impact on the land we all share.

Natalia Diaz
State Landcare Coordinator
Landcare Association of SA



Natalia Diaz and Eleanor Pratt at the Nature Conservation Society of SA Earth Jam. Credit: Liza Savchuk

9. INTRODUCTION FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Members and friends of the Landcare Association of South Australia,

I am thrilled to introduce myself as the new Executive Officer of the Landcare Association of South Australia. My name is Paula Jones, and I am truly honoured to step into this role, following the dedication and hard work of our former Executive Officer, Eleanor Pratt. Eleanor's contributions have set a strong foundation for our ongoing efforts in landcare, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to her.

I had the pleasure of meeting some of you at the SA Landcare Awards in Port Augusta this past May, where I showcased the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden. It was inspiring to connect with fellow enthusiasts who are passionate about preserving and enhancing our unique landscapes.

As a proud South Australian country girl, I grew up in the mallee of the upper South East, surrounded by the beauty of nature. My academic journey in Zoology and Botany at the University of Adelaide laid the groundwork for my commitment to environmental stewardship. I initially ventured into the tourism sector, where I spent seven rewarding years at Monarto Zoological Park as a volunteer guide and staff member. My career then took me to managing Visitor Information Centres across the mid-north of our state, where I focused on visitor engagement, tourism promotion, and volunteer management.

Most recently, I served as Coordinator of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, overseeing a 250-hectare garden and its dedicated team of staff and volunteers, including the AridSmart Nursery. This experience deepened my desire to make a meaningful impact in landcare, leading me to this exciting opportunity with LASA.

I am eager to leverage my management skills to support and enhance the vital work that LASA undertakes. I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming months, learning about your remarkable projects, and exploring how we can collaboratively advance our mission.

Thank you for the warm welcome, and let's continue to work together to nurture and protect our precious land.

Paula Jones
Executive Officer
Landcare Association of South Australia



10. 2023/24 HIGHLIGHTS

Care for Landcare

The Care for Landcare Program is a \$1M investment from the Government of South Australia into community Landcare in South Australia over a four-year period from 2022-23 to 2025-26. The Program consists of four major components:

1. Project coordinator(s)
2. Small grants scheme
3. Insurance for Landcare groups
4. Operational and administrative costs

LASA has made significant progress against the 2023-24 Annual Workplan and has seen a positive impact on the Landcare community across the life of the Care for Landcare Program. Notably, there is an improved connection and optimism within the South Australia Landcare network, with members enthused about the support that they are now able to access, particularly in relation to the State Landcare Coordinator, grants and insurance fee reimbursements.

The State Landcare Coordinator visited and contacted a significant number of our 67 Landcare groups around the state during the 2023-24 year (Figure 2) and has numerous more trips planned during 2024-25 to visit our more remote groups (e.g., travelling to the Riverland, northern Eyre Peninsula, Southeast and Kangaroo Island).



Friends of Anstey Hill 35 Year Celebrations. Credit: Natalia Diaz

Care for Landcare cont.

Significant Highlights

In 2023-24, we reinforced our commitment to upskilling and building capacity within the Landcare community through the **Care for Landcare Program**. We successfully conducted **seven training sessions and workshops**, enhancing participant knowledge and skills. This initiative was bolstered by significant in-kind and cash contributions from various partners, which allowed us to expand our training and support activities beyond the program's initial scope.

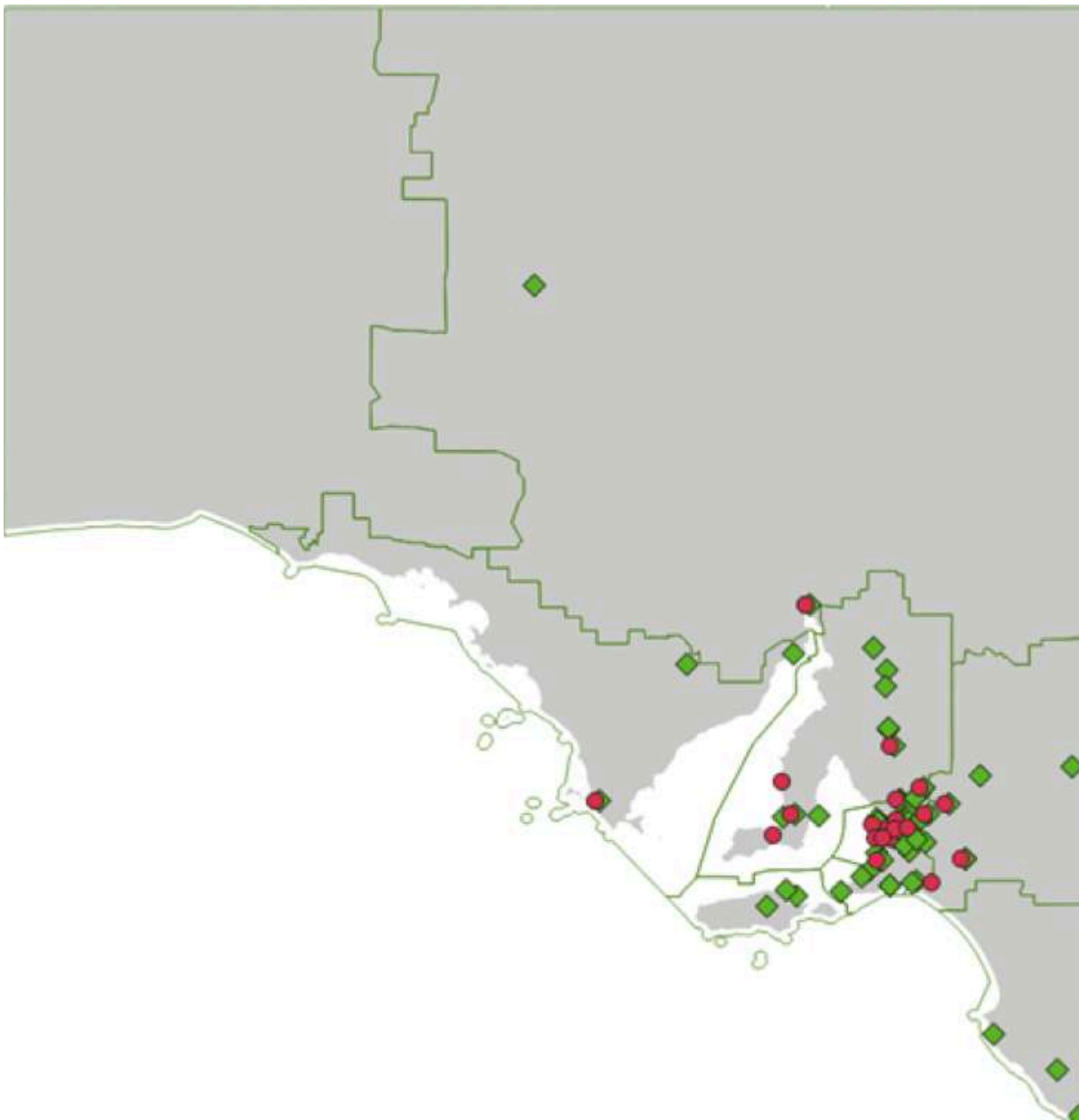


Figure 2. Landcare SA member groups (green diamonds) overlaid with the State Landcare Coordinator's site visits during 2023-24 (red circles).

Care for Landcare cont.

Indigenous Engagement Initiatives

We continued our collaboration with the **LASA Indigenous Engagement Subcommittee** and the **Aboriginal Lands Trust**, fostering meaningful relationships with Aboriginal communities. Key activities included:

- Supporting the **25th Anniversary** celebrations of the **Nantawarrina Indigenous Protected Area**.
- Securing **\$46,000** from the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) for a NAIDOC Week event organised by the Clare Valley NAIDOC Committee.
- Establishing a reciprocal sponsorship with **Reconciliation SA**, facilitating our presence at their Reconciliation Week breakfast in exchange for resources at the SA Landcare Awards.
- Developing a **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)** for LASA and initiating visits to various Aboriginal communities, including the **Colebrook Reconciliation Group** and the **Raukkan Aboriginal Community**.
- Engaging in consultations for the **Wardang Island IPA** expansion and collaborating with the **Firesticks Alliance - Kurna Fire Team** on educational workshops and presentations at the SA Landcare Awards.



1. Experience nature and culture on a walk by Karrawirra Pari/River Torrens.
2. Northern Adelaide Ngadjuri significant sights bus tour.
3. Point Pearce Cultural Burning. Credit: (1, 2) Natalia Diaz, (3) Eleanor Pratt

Care for Landcare cont.

Landcare Small Grants Scheme

All groups that successfully acquitted their grants invested in essential equipment and materials that enhanced their Landcare activities, including:

- Plants and planting materials, propagation supplies, and personal protective equipment (PPE).
- First aid kits, weed management tools, and various other resources like signage and solar lighting.

2024 Care for Landcare Grants

We have rolled out the **2024 Care for Landcare Grants** as part of the broader Landcare Financial Assistance Package. This year, we received **42 submissions**, with **33 eligible for funding**, slightly lower than last year. Notably, there were 16 new applicants, indicating growing awareness of the program.

Each eligible group received approximately **\$1,893.94** (GST excl), totalling **\$62,500** allocated for grants. Requested items included tree guards, propagation materials, PPE, and various tools.

Through these efforts, we are committed to empowering the Landcare community and enhancing environmental stewardship across South Australia.





Berri Barmera Landcare Group Schools National Tree Day planting event. Credit: Natalia Diaz

Care for Landcare cont.

Insurance Reimbursement

The insurance reimbursement package was delivered to eligible groups who paid out of pocket for their insurance premiums. This year 18 groups opted-in for insurance reimbursement, compared to 11 the year before.

LASA reimbursed a total of \$21,032.58 in insurance reimbursement to these groups.

Groups noted they pay anywhere between \$460 and \$3,780 + in insurance fees to make sure they're adequately covered for their Landcare activities. Some free insurances do not adequately cover all activities, so this has been a big help to groups.

Nantawarrina 25th Anniversary

In September 2023, LASA and the NLN proudly joined in celebrating the 25th anniversary of Nantawarrina, Australia's first Indigenous Protected Area (IPA).

Originally a pastoral station, Nantawarrina was established by the Nipapanha community in 1998, covering 58,000 hectares of Adnyamathanha lands between the Northern Flinders and Gammon Ranges National Parks in South Australia. The area is expertly managed by Nantawarrina Rangers, who protect and nurture the landscape through a range of activities, including vegetation and weed control, monitoring the yellow-footed rock wallaby population, and managing feral animals.

LASA was honoured to sponsor and support this three-day anniversary celebration, which highlighted Nantawarrina's lasting success and significant contributions to both the local community and the environment.

NLN CEO Jim Adams spoke to the importance of this milestone, stating: "On behalf of the community Landcare movement, the National Landcare Network thanks the Nipapanha Community Aboriginal Corporation for the invitation to attend this celebration, and for their extraordinary work in restoring the health and biodiversity of the land."



Nantawarrina 25th Anniversary Celebrations. Credit: Lara Tilbrook



Nantawarrina 25th Anniversary Celebrations.

Nantawarrina 25th Anniversary cont.

“This anniversary offers us a moment to reflect not only on the achievements of the past 25 years but also on the thousands of years of Aboriginal custodianship that have shaped this landscape. We celebrate the efforts of the Nipapanha Community Aboriginal Corporation in revitalising ecosystems, recovering endangered species, and restoring critical waterways.”

“Nantawarrina’s success is a powerful example of the effectiveness of First Nations knowledge in land stewardship, demonstrating their vital role in protecting and restoring fragile habitats and safeguarding biodiversity.”

The community Landcare movement is committed to walking alongside First Nations Custodians, respecting their knowledge and leadership in land and sea management, and supporting their efforts in caring for Country and community across Australia.

SA Landcare Awards

On Friday, 3 May 2024, LASA hosted the 2023-24 SA Landcare Awards at the Port Augusta Cultural Centre – Yarta Purtli.

The SA Landcare Awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of individuals, groups, and organisations dedicated to conserving South Australia’s natural resources and building resilient landscapes for future generations. Award winners and their projects span a wide range of initiatives, including climate innovation, sustainable agriculture, youth engagement, community partnerships, and collaboration with First Nations.

Former LASA Executive Officer, Dr. Eleanor Pratt, expressed her gratitude to the SA Landcare Award sponsors, dignitaries, and special guests while acknowledging the finalists and winners as true Landcare champions.



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1. First Nations Landcare Collaboration Award winners - Nipapanha Community Aboriginal Corporation.
2. Green Adelaide Urban Landcare Award winners - The Gums Landcare Group.
3. NextGen Landcare Award winners - Biology Society of South Australia.
4. Woolworths Junior Landcare winners - St Micheals Lutheran Primary School. Credit: Peter Taylor



Uncle Harry Dare (L) and MC Sophie Thomson (R). Credit: Peter Taylor

SA Landcare Awards cont.

“We are incredibly proud of the Landcare community in South Australia,” said Dr. Pratt. “It has been a privilege to show our appreciation for these dedicated volunteers who give their time and energy to care for our state’s beautiful landscapes. Congratulations to all the winners, finalists, and highly commended nominees, and thank you to the Landcare network and our wonderful partners and sponsors, without whom events like these would not be possible.”

Winners of the SA Landcare Award categories received a \$1,000 cash prize from LASA and will go on to represent South Australia at the 2025 National Landcare Awards.

Following the awards, over 60 guests enjoyed a tour of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden on Saturday morning, led by Sophie Thomson, Peter Langdon, and the Friends of Arid Lands Botanic Garden group. The stunning gardens left a lasting impression on visitors, with many promising to return again.



Paul Dixon and Clem Newchurch from Firesticks Alliance - Kurna Fire Team (L) and the Bandicoot Superhighway team (R). Credit: Peter Taylor

Partnerships

To achieve the best outcomes we have worked with a huge range of partners, including Aboriginal communities, non-government organisations (NGOs) and government and corporate bodies.

Thank you to all of our wonderful partners below for their support of community Landcare, we look forward to working with you again!



National Landcare Network



Government of South Australia
Department for Environment and Water



Fox and Cat Management workshop held in Yorke Peninsula. Credit: Natalia Diaz

11. MEMBER'S SPOTLIGHT

Through our **69 member groups & 80 individual members**, we represent almost **6,000 Landcarers**. Our eNewsletters and social media channels reach **another ~3,000 people**.



1. The Gums Landcare Group Governors Leadership Foundation Tour.
2. Friends of Sturt River World Environment Day Planting. Credit: Natalia Diaz



Tour of the Arid Lands Botanic Gardens at the 2024 SA Landcare Awards. Credit: Eleanor Pratt

Henley Dunes Care Group

The Henley Dunes Care Group was initially set up to combat the large amount of sand that was blowing up and down the Esplanade, to create a green wall to combat erosion and to provide a corridor of native plants to support biodiversity. We have planted extensively along the dune, this has involved working with volunteers, schools, TAFE and Trees for Life and a corporate group. In some areas we have established fencing to give the dune plants a better chance of survival.

Recently we have focussed on removing Gazanias. This is an ongoing problem as many people put them in their garden. In recent years our section of coast has been subjected to severe erosion events and large sections of the dunes have washed away. This has meant that many of the plants we put in were washed away as well. Despite this setback we have continued to weed, collect rubbish and put in further plants.

There is much more that we can do. The section between Henley Square and Henley Beach Road needs further planting and weeding and the section nearer to the Torrens Outlet also requires extensive planting to combat erosion. We would love the help of more volunteers so if you fancy a Sea Change, then we would welcome you with open arms.



Volunteers from the Henley Dunes Care Group working together to weed, collect rubbish and put in further plants. Credit: Henley Dunes Care Group



The New Springs Landcare Group inspect dam management projects at Tom Hampton's property. Credit: New Springs Landcare Group

New Springs Landcare Group

New Springs Landcare Group (NSLG) is a phoenix reincarnated from a long standing presence at Tungkillo, now bringing together landholders around Mt Torrens-Charleston-Harrogate-Brukunga-Woodside, affected by the 2019 Cudlee Creek bushfire.

As a fledgling group much of the initial focus has been on recovery of both the land and the people. Supporting each other and building camaraderie has been just as important as practical post-fire land management.

In the past year NSLG has worked on dam management projects across ten properties, variously fencing to control stock access, installing overflow systems to return water to the environment, clearing weeds and promoting native species to develop habitats supporting biodiversity.

In autumn NSLG visited the Tungkillo property of original member Paul Edwards to see the transformation of more than 20 years of careful caring for land, from weed control and replanting, through to water management and erosion control. It has inspired the group to pursue a digital archive project to preserve generations of knowledge and make it readily accessible for public good.

The Group also sponsored efforts to clear a section of the Dawesley Creek of invasive woody weeds that pose a threat to the local ecosystem, water quality, and biodiversity.

Berri Barmera Landcare Group

In 2023/24 Berri Barmera Landcare implemented *The Grow Together Project*, an original project where participants came together and engaged in hands-on environmental activities with a common purpose of saving the planet.

Activities were wide and varied and included seed collection, sowing, community tree plantings, field trips and guided environmental walks. The project also linked participants with local community groups and community support services, and it reconnected our vulnerable citizens to their community whilst creating a lifelong positive community impact.

The project created passion, a real sense of purpose and overall, it improved participants mental and physical well-being.



The Grow Together Project participants engaging in activities across the region. Credit: Berri Barmera Landcare Group.



Upper Wakefield Landcare Group with the new 'Frogs of the Wakefield River' sign.
Credit: Upper Wakefield Landcare Group

Upper Wakefield Landcare Group

The aim of our group is to clear the weeds and invasive trees from the Wakefield River banks within the township of Auburn and replant with more suitable species to improve the habitat.

Our main project for the last financial year was to design and install two information signs on the path on the eastern side of the river, one for the frogs and one for the waterbirds which frequent the river.

We recorded the sounds of the frogs to identify them. The sign encourages visitors to listen to the sound of the frogs and provides information to identify which frog they can hear.

Five waterbirds were chosen for the other sign which encourages visitors to look for the birds which may be present.

We purchased the frog photos from Ryan Francis Photography and Clare Signs produced the signs and frames ready to install.

Thanks to Landcare SA for the funding of this project.

12. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As we look ahead, the upcoming year for LASA will be a time for consolidation and preparation that involves all our members.

With our new executive officer on board and plans to enhance our strategic communications, we're well-equipped to meet our current commitment.

We also aim to build on the momentum of the Care for Landcare Program and intensify our collective advocacy for Landcare at the State and Federal levels. Engaging and strengthening relationships within our community will be essential as we shape our agenda together this year.



Biodiversity McLaren Vale Group Field Day. Credit: Natalia Diaz



Landcare
Association of
South Australia



Anti-erosion water management and native plantings at Paul Edwards' Tungkillo property. Credit: New Springs Landcare Group