



2018 NATIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

11 October
Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

Nominee: Ginninderra Catchment Group, ACT
Category: Fairfax Landcare Community Group Award

Ginninderra Catchment Group (GCG) has the mission to “connect, support and lead local communities to maintain and improve the health of the Ginninderra Catchment and surrounding environments” in the ACT Region. For the last 21 years, this community-driven Group has achieved significant outcomes related to this mission.

GCG has a long history of innovation, establishing a number of projects and programs that are now a fundamental part of environmental management in the ACT.

- GCG was the first of the existing catchment groups to be established in the ACT. Based on this effective model of community engagement, two other Catchment Groups have since been established to provide coordinated and strategic approach to community land management across the ACT.
- GCG was also the first organisation to implement Waterwatch at a catchment scale in the ACT. The Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch Program, which works with the community to monitor, raise awareness, education, restore and protect waterways in the ACT Region, is now a well-respected community-government partnership program.
- GCG established the first Bush on the Boundary Reference Group in the ACT, a forum for knowledge exchange to assist biodiversity conservation in close proximity to the areas of urban development. There are now a number of such reference groups operating.
- GCG started and continues to coordinate the ACT and Region Frogwatch Program, which provides the only frog monitoring in the ACT Region and education to over 3,500 people annually.
- GCG also developed the first Aboriginal Landcare Group in the ACT, Mulanggang Aboriginal Landcare Group, which is now expanding to restore key sites across many areas of the ACT.

As a Landcare network, GCG supports 16 Landcare Groups including Parkcare, urban, rural, junior, and Aboriginal Landcare. GCG also continues to coordinate award-winning citizen science and community education programs; including the ACT and Region Frogwatch, and the Ginninderra and Yass components of the Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch Program (outlined above) and a native grassland restoration project, which is demonstrating best practice regimes for managing native grasslands through fire management.

GCG is an independent community-driven association based on a solid governance framework and underpinned by a strategic approach. It operates across various land tenures to achieve ‘whole of landscape’ results. Collaborating with the community, schools, businesses, government and others in the implementation of plans is core business for GCG. Current priority program areas of GCG include: community environmental stewardship, improved condition of priority ecosystems (particularly natural temperate grasslands), Aboriginal land management, waterways and riparian areas, sustainable agriculture, citizen science, and community engagement.

This program is supported by Landcare Australia and the National Landcare Network, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.





2018 NATIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

11 October
Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

Over the last two decades, GCG has demonstrated significant improvement in environmental restoration and community engagement. For example, in a two-year period, GCG restored over 7km of the Ginninderra Creek corridor, which involved the removal of 135 truckloads of woody weed, which were replaced with over 4500 shrubs and grasses (bank and in-stream) as strategic habitat. It is estimated that over 600 volunteers have contributed more than 8,000 hours of volunteer time towards the restoration of the creek corridor during this time. GCG has also coordinated 28 workshops for rural landholders focussed on weed management, pest animal control, heritage and property planning over the last five years. Over 230 landholders participated in these workshops and 75% of respondents to an evaluation survey reported practice change as a result of the workshops.

One of the challenges GCG has faced is the lack of community and organisational understanding of Aboriginal heritage in the catchment. In 2000, the GCG's strategy identified cultural and heritage conservation as an issue in need of action. However, this wasn't addressed until 2013 when GCG staff created links with local Aboriginal custodians. Together they developed a project to identify local cultural heritage sites and increase community awareness about these. As of 2017, over 30 interpretive walks have been held, involving over 600 people; a brochure and four short films have been developed; and GCG has also drafted an Aboriginal land management strategy. To ensure an Aboriginal perspective is included in all decisions an Aboriginal custodian has been appointed to the GCG executive committee.

Landcare is a grassroots movement that harnesses individuals and groups to protect, restore and sustainably manage Australia's natural environment and its productivity. Groups that fall under the Landcare umbrella work on a diverse range of environmental projects and include farmers embracing sustainable farm management and any community group that partakes in volunteer environmental activities. To find out how you can become a Landcare volunteer and for full details on all 2018 National Landcare finalists, visit www.landcareaustralia.org.au

Ends

For further information, photographs or interviews, please contact:

Naomi Straw
Landcare Australia
naomi.straw@landcareaustralia.com.au
02 8440 8823

Karissa Preuss
Ginninderra Catchment Group
landcare@ginninderrallandcare.org.au
02 6278 3309

Web Summary

Ginninderra Catchment Group (GCG) is a community-based, natural resource management organisation with more than 20 years' experience coordinating community environmental management in the north-west ACT Region. As a Landcare network, GCG supports 16 Landcare Groups including Parkcare, Urban, rural, junior and Aboriginal Landcare. GCG also coordinates citizen science and community education programs, including the ACT and Region Frogwatch Program and Ginninderra Waterwatch (part of the Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch Program).

This program is supported by Landcare Australia and the National Landcare Network, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

