



2018 NATIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

11 October
Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

Nominee: Grace Bassett, SA

Category: Austcover Young Landcare Leader Award

Grace is an inspiring young woman. Despite her young age, she has achieved more than most in her desire to encourage youth to get involved with environmental issues. For many years, the Mount Compass Area School student has been involved with environmental groundwork; leading a variety of revegetation projects around her school and local area and spending countless hours looking after sites. Passionate about sharing her love for the environment with others, Grace has passed on the knowledge she has gained to friends, neighbours, and locals, giving them a new passion for local native plants.

Grace's first project was to bring an existing garden bed at her school back to life, five years ago. The bed had been planted with vegetables that failed to survive. Grace planted local native plants, and the bed is now flourishing. Since tackling that first project, she has involved students from younger classes to plant sites around the school: transforming the school's appearance and attracting native birds and insects.

Mount Compass Area School is home to a rare Fleurieu Peninsula swamp with a boardwalk, one of only a few in South Australia. Grace has helped to identify rare plants and revegetate the swamp. Grace has also helped set up a swamp ambassadors group at her school. This has helped spread awareness in the community through talks, speeches, and tours, including the opportunity to appear on the television show *Totally Wild*.

As a member of the Youth Environmental Council, Grace has become a student mentor, allowing her to pass on her knowledge on to others. She is also a regular volunteer at Stipiturus Swamp Conservation Park, where she has planted many seedlings including the rare Mount Compass oak bush and helped build a bridge, which is part of the Park's new hydroponics scheme. This scheme is improving water flow, redirecting water away from old drains. In addition, Grace has also organised working bees for the community to get involved in clean-up days, plant seedlings and habitat restoration.

Since she began planting at school, Grace has faced a variety of challenges and learnt many valuable lessons. One challenge, in particular, has been dealing with building rubble and poor soil quality near the School's agriculture shed, where Grace planted seedlings. Despite having to fill spots each year, many plants have survived and thrived in this area.

In her roles as a Youth Environment Council mentor and Mount Compass Area School swamp ambassador, Grace has honed her public speaking and presentation skills whilst presenting to property owners, politicians, students, and teachers. She completed a Conservation and Land Management course in 2017 where she has assisted students from Moana Primary School on a sand dune revegetation day and is currently completing Year 12. Each week Grace attends the Youth and Community in Conservation Action (YACCA) group in Willunga giving her a chance to share her knowledge with other students and learn from them.

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

All of Grace's environmental work is carried out in her free time, volunteering after school and on weekends – all whilst finishing high school. This hard work and passion has been widely recognised and celebrated. At just 12 years of age, Grace was involved with the Young Environmental Forum, for which she received the Natural Resource Management Environmental Award. Over the past three years, Grace has received Mount Compass Area School's Environmental Ambassador Award, giving her the opportunity to meet and learn from highly skilled and passionate people who have worked in the environmental field for many years.

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 contact:

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

Grace Bassett
Student, Mount Compass Area School
grace.bass@skymesh.com.au
08 8556 0108

Web Summary

Grace is an inspiring young woman. Despite her young age, she has achieved more than most in her desire to encourage youth to get involved with environmental issues. For many years, the Mount Compass Area School student has been involved with environmental groundwork; leading a variety of revegetation projects around her school and local area and spending countless hours looking after sites. Passionate about sharing her love for the environment with others, Grace has passed on the knowledge she has gained to friends, neighbours, and locals, giving them a new passion for local native plants.

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

