



2018 NATIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

11 October
Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

Nominee: Peter Watton, SA

Category: Australian Government Individual Landcarer

Peter Watton has been involved in Landcare as a volunteer and staff member since 2000. Beginning his career in the financial sector and coming to Landcare later in life, his knowledge of bush regeneration techniques, native and pest plant identification and safe chemical handling quickly won him respect in the industry. Anyone who has attempted a career change as an adult with kids will appreciate the passion and perseverance it took for Peter to do so, and it is to his credit that he is now in a position to train and mentor others.

As well as helping co-ordinate volunteers across over 300 Bush For Life (BFL) sites in his role at Trees For Life (TFL), Peter continues to volunteer himself, carrying out bush regeneration at four BFL sites in his own time, as well as assisting in restoration work and bird banding at Scott Creek Conservation Park. Peter also works tirelessly to contain the spread of needlegrass in the Scott Creek area, contributes to Malleefowl mound monitoring and Orange-bellied Parrot and Australasian Bittern surveys, and tends his own patch of heritage Mallee bushland near Swan Reach on the River Murray.

Peter's wildlife and flora photography has been a key factor in the success of the TFL calendar, and his photos make a regular appearance on TFL's social media pages. Peter is also a regular contributor to the BFL newsletter "The Bushcarer," and compiles the regular newsletter "Bandicoot Tails" and manages the Facebook page for the Friends of Scott Creek Conservation Park, the group of which he is now president. He also writes a monthly article in "Cherry Chatter", a Cherry Gardens community newsletter. Peter has also been a regular on radio over the years, talking about South Australia's precious bushland and various methods of effective weed control.

Peter has developed much of TFL's workshop materials and fact sheets in relation to Bushcare techniques and the use of selective herbicides. With his Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment, Peter has developed a range of training workshops for staff and volunteers to develop their Landcare skills. He's presented workshops on bush regeneration principles to TAFE students, Green Army participants, Aboriginal Learning on Country participants as well as volunteers and landholders. Training imparted includes introduction to minimal disturbance bush regeneration, brush-cutter use and maintenance, broadleaf herbicide, broadleaf and bulb weed management in grassy ecosystems, seed collection and native plant and grass identification.

Peter advocates for the natural environment on various committees, whether they're conservation-focused or not. He has championed the importance of appropriate vegetation management as part of the SA Power Networks' Arborist Reference Group for vegetation management near power lines, and has been involved in negotiating to minimise clearance of native vegetation for recreational areas such as mountain bike paths. Peter continues to trial new techniques and herbicides and educates himself about new developments in bush regeneration, and he is generous in sharing his ever-expanding knowledge.

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





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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 2016 National Landcare finalists, visit www.landcareaustralia.org.au

Ends

For further information, photographs or interviews contact:

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Web summary:

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