

NIMBIN ARTISTS GALLERY
 OPEN DAILY
 10am - 4 pm
 49 Cullen St, Nimbin
 CONTACT: PH 02 6689 1444
www.nimbinartistsgallery.org
nimbinartistsgallery@gmail.com



by Tonia Haynes

Grandma's crochet bed spread, which she designed and created from scratch and then spent many months, and much skilled concentration bringing it into physical form (if lucky), is still in the cupboard, or on a future relative's bed. We call it 'craft'. And it would be fortunate to bring in 20 bucks in an op shop.

Conversely, Picasso's 'Le Reve', which looks much like a child's attempt to capture the human form, is a painting on canvas and worth \$155 million. It's called 'Art'.

A search for the meaning of these two words in the dictionary has proved to be fruitless, because they mean similar things, and once again, we are

When craft becomes art



This piece 'Cast Asunder' of Julian Assange was made in April 2011 when the American authorities were openly encouraging the death of Julian Assange. It took a long time but finally he is free to live his life.

faced with the idiosyncrasies of human thought.

Pauline Ahern's delightfully quirky and highly imaginative attempts to capture an appreciative audience embrace both craft and art.

In her own words: "My art/craft practice revolves around being creative by recycling that which can be reduced and reused."

"I wish I could create as quickly as the ideas that jump into my head. I feel satisfied when I can make a political/

social statement with my art, except that most pieces I make are just for fun.

"Art or Craft, who cares?! As long as it touches someone in a meaningful way."

The Nimbin Artists Gallery has the privilege of showing some of Pauline's special creations.

We are open from 10am until 4pm, seven days a week and our volunteers will always assist as best they can with all enquiries about any of the artists' works, which are shown in our cozy and friendly gallery.

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Cyanotype plus

by Corinne Batt-Rawden

'The Path Out' is Lisa Bristow's latest body of work, an investigation of images and text that she produced as part of her healing journey in the aftermath of escaping from domestic violence.

Lisa said, "The path out was not an easy one and came with many consequences. While my partner was arrested and incarcerated, I would spend the next six months homeless and separated from my children."

"During my time alone, I would find solace in capturing the various moments I was experiencing on my Fuji Finepix. Gifted with a laptop, I managed to procure a pirated copy of photoshop. With this I began to work on the many images I captured during this time."

"15 years on, I find myself revisiting many of these images, and given the somewhat precarious issue of hard drive storage, it has been exciting to explore cyanotype printing."

"Using photoshop to create the negatives, I've been able to take my digital world to analogue, with additions of text written during this time

and capturing my own inner voice."

Lisa is printing on fabrics and paper to create "homely" objects that we associate with family and home.

"I use fabric in a home sense of bed linen, curtains, tea towels, teddy bears and assorted pieces to allow us to view these images," Lisa said. "The use of the bed linen brings to mind the phrase that it was my bed and I needed to lie in it."

'The Path Out' is on exhibition in Gallery 1 at Serpentine Gallery from 21st to 31st August.

Rekindle

Concurrently in Gallery 2 is 'Rekindle' a joint exhibition by Gemma Hall and Samantha Livingstone who collect and re-combine discarded treasure.

Gemma Hall said, "Sometimes I look for specific items to fit with my work, other times it is the unique nature of a piece salvaged that sparks a new creation."

"I love the puzzle of trying new (to me), techniques and resources to tell a story or inspire curiosity. I gently explore the speed in which humans consume and discard "stuff".



by Gemma Hall (below)

by Lisa Bristow (above)



by Samantha Livingstone

"In this body of work, I have rekindled my connection with my artistic voice and honouring my creative journey, hoping it encourages people to be brave, be bold and tap into their own unique creativity."

Samantha Livingstone said, "I collect up bits, mostly from the ground. I don't necessarily like them, but they may serve a purpose at some point. I hold onto them until they do. Often they shouldn't have been there in the first place and I can't leave them behind."

"Things catch my eye all the time. I have many items.

I build them up until they please me. I want to bring the piece together as a whole and also see their parts.

"People can make what they will of them. There is no message, other than broken and discarded stuff can be re-imagined as something else completely."

Serpentine Community Gallery is at 3/104 Conway Street, Lismore and is open Monday-Friday 10am-4pm and Saturday 10am-2pm.

Opening Night for both exhibitions is on Friday 23rd August, 5.30-8.30pm.

A most colourful Fibre Show



'Donna II' by Melissa Hume

The oft-heard comment at Blue Knob Hall Gallery's current exhibition 'Fabric of Life – The Fibre Show' is that it looks "beautiful".

This is one of the most colourful Fibre Shows we've had. Fiona Shadwell's large hand-painted cloths and Melissa



'What's Love Got to do With It?' by Pauline Ahern

Hume's felted wraps are a feast for the eye as people walk in the door.

This year's artists and artisans have more than fulfilled the requirements for a fibre exhibition, and it has wowed visitors from all over.

There is a huge variety of work on show. From natural to man-made fibres, there is sculpture, basketry, weaving, and some clothing that can only be considered as wearable art; such is the skill and imagination of the artists.

The Fibre artists and artisans in the area have showcased their work with an endless variety of materials we call fibre. There is still time to enjoy this exhibition as it will run until Saturday 31st August.

• **Blue Knob Cafe** – now has



'Dragon Bonnet' by Courtenay Heffernan

gourmet toasties, soup specials, cakes, coffee and drinks. With more to come on the menu, we look forward to seeing you on the veranda and continuing to support this adventure that is Blue Knob Hall. See our Facebook page for more info about the Café.

• **Blue Knob Writers Group** – meet weekly at Blue Knob Cafe on Sundays. For more info contact Alex 02 6689-7268 or Helen 0487-385-134

• **Blue Knob Choir** – meets on Thursdays from 3.45 to 5.15pm at Blue Knob Hall. Everyone is welcome, just turn up, or for more info, call Peter on 0458-487-865.

For more info, see: *Blue Knob Gallery, Cafe & Ceramic Studio* on Facebook. Open from Thursday to Sunday, phone 02 6689-744, email: bkhgallery@inet.net.au

An ode to Neville Cayley



by Jimmy Willing

I was lucky enough to grow up with a couple of Neville Cayleys hanging in the family home.

It has always amazed me that my father owned these treasures from another time but in the 20th Century they were not considered art, merely scientific drawings!

One of the paintings was of nesting Wonga pigeons but it was the painting 'Kookaburra

Feeding its Young' (pictured) that etched itself into my mind.

My father loved these paintings, and so did I, so that after his death they were placed in my care. They created a revolution in my work. Everything became covered in birds, paintings, posters, stage sets, and in the case of Nimbin even a whole pub!

Anyway, at right is my 'Kookaburra Feeding its Young', unabashedly inspired by my father's 1897 Neville Cayley.



Regional Community Theatre – Australia's creative edge

Theatre North provided quality theatre experiences for artists and audiences on the northern rivers region of NSW from 1981 to 2024.

The regional community theatre company was established by Peter and Ros Derrett to meet the demand for challenging mainstage performances, touring, skills development workshops, youth theatre and Theatre In Education programs.

To celebrate the activities of the company and explore its history through a sharing of memories an exhibition is open at the Pop Up Museum until the end of August.

The Richmond River Historical Society's Pop-Up Museum, at 109 Molesworth Street is hosting a display of a range of diverse items documenting the contribution the organisation made to the regional cultural life.

The exhibition offers comprehensive photographic coverage of performances through a range of programs, posters and promotional material of the wide range of activities in Lismore, the region and nationally. From the massive community production *Xerxes* staged in Lismore City Hall in 1992, to commissioned works for international audiences at

Expo 88 in Brisbane to intimate one person shows at Rochdale Theatre, Goonellabah, local original work attracted significant media attention.

The company created a loyal following amongst delighted audiences, dealt with issues of lean administration and partnerships with other specialists and agencies.

It developed a range original theatre that drew on local issues and ideas and attracted audiences and participants of all ages and skills' levels. Come and reminisce.

The exhibition is open daily from 10am.

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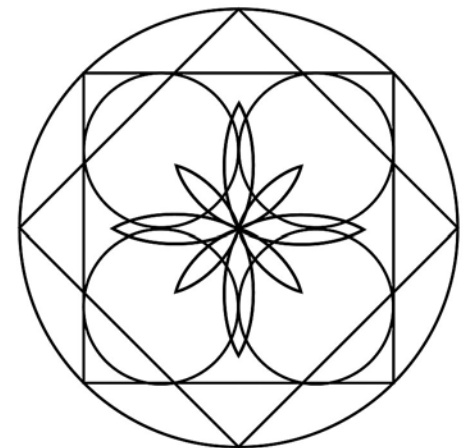
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Be a greater glider champion



Happy citizen scientists after a night of spotlighting in Bulga State Forest

by Susie Russell, vice-president, North Coast Environment Council

Greater gliders (GGs) are gloriously fluffy, sleek and cute. They are very cool. They used to be common. When I first saw one in 1992, they were common if you were looking in the forest that still had big old trees. Since then 30 years of logging and megafires have seen them go from common to endangered.

There are little colonies that survived the fires and they are being wiped out, glider by glider, as the huge logging machinery obliterates their forest homes. This is happening in the publicly-owned State Forests of NSW and Queensland.

They would be one of the easiest animals to protect, because they have a home range of about three hectares, which is pretty close to a 100m radius circle around where you see them. If no logging was allowed within 100m of a glider sighting, at least that particular glider would have a chance of surviving. Instead, Forestry and the EPA have a ridiculous rule that puts a 50m protection zone around a glider den tree – a tree where a glider is seen entering or leaving a tree hollow.

The trouble is, GGs can use more than a dozen hollows. In their patch they have favourite hollows, hollows for when an owl is about and you need a quick getaway, hollows near those trees that taste good in the spring, etc. And to see a glider entering or leaving, well you need to be sitting watching a hollow after dusk, when it's dark and they venture out to feed, or whenever they return to a hollow before dawn. Many hollows can't be seen from the ground. So, in practice few of the greater glider's trees get protected.

The last year has seen the farce of Forestry Corporation of NSW's 'care' exposed. For years they have been looking for gliders and other nocturnal animals during the day! Needless to say, they never found a GG den tree that way, so haven't had to protect any forest.

This led to the EPA adding some new rules for looking for glider den trees that involves spotlighting a small percentage of the forest. Similar spotlighting surveys undertaken by Forestry Corp over 20 years produced about one den tree sighting a year in the whole of NSW coastal forests. So, in the unlikely event that they see a glider coming out of a den when they walk down the road with a torch that will be one tree with a 50m protection zone, and nothing for all the rest of the forest area they don't even survey.

The EPA also says they have introduced a 'landscape measure' to leave more trees per hectare greater than a certain size. This sounds good in theory. If it was to leave six of the largest trees per hectare it would certainly help, however they chose to specify a size: to leave six (or in some forests four or less) 'glider' trees greater than 80 cm diameter at breast height (trees are narrower in the breast than at the butt-which sounds a bit like a stand-up joke). These days, in many forests, those trees are no longer there. There will be trees between



Photo: Bones Rock

50-80cm that gliders use for sure, but they get no protection because they aren't big enough. And the trees that do get left get no protection zone. They just get left and the logging occurs around them.

And so, trees the gliders use as pathways or safe spaces, or as favourite feed trees disappear, and their world shrinks and they die sooner rather than later. And thus, little glider lives are winking out all across the forest estate.

We have tried to stop them legally, but all avenues have failed. The EPA is hamstrung because the government insists that it can't change any of the logging rules if it has an impact on wood. And of course protecting any trees has an impact on wood. And so everyone washes their hands off the problem. Forests that are home to gliders are being knocked down every day and gliders are dying. Professor David Lindenmayer, a glider expert, says the gliders don't move, they stay and die.

In the last year, citizen scientists, (that could be you?) are getting out in the forest at night looking for GGs and their den trees. Each den tree should mean a small, protected area. But last week we discovered that in Styx River State Forest near Armidale, many of the den tree protected areas had been logged. Two of the den trees had also been logged. The EPA is 'investigating'. But that means little, given that the EPA has colluded with the Forestry Corporation to minimise the likelihood of glider den sightings.

The largest remaining GG populations seem to be in the more isolated hinterland areas along the spine of the Great Dividing Range. Local groups are organising missions to try and identify them, knowing that Forestry Corporation's logging plan is closing in on many of them.

Please write to Premier Chris Minns and ask him to protect greater gliders and their home range and get involved in your local environment group to do some citizen science.

Logging halted at Shea's Nob SF

by Susie Russell, NEFA

On 26th July, community stopped loggers in Shea's Nob State Forest, west of Coffs Harbour.

A group of local passionate forest protectors walked into logging operations, bringing logging operations to a halt for the third time in a week.

The group again stopped two logging crews that have been working in separate sections of the forest.

One of the community members said, "I have no other choice, Gumbaynggirr Country is my home. The Gumbaynggirr people don't want it, the local community doesn't want it, I struggle to



find anyone who lives in this area that wants logging here.

"These forests have been here for millions of years. So much has been taken, we are literally seeing the last pockets of forests being felled, we are in the time of

the sixth mass extinction; once these species are gone they won't come back."

More information on up-coming local actions and events can be found at: www.facebook.com/bellingenactivistnetwork

NSW Forestry Corporation fined

In a damning judgement handed down in the NSW Land and Environment Court, Justice Pepper found that the NSW Forestry Corporation had failed to protect areas that were unburnt or lightly burnt in Yambulla State Forest after the 2019/20 bushfires, and that the logging of those areas was likely to have harmed several threatened species.

She found that actual harm had been caused to 53 eucalyptus trees, and



potential harm to three threatened bird species in the area, and fined the corporation \$360,000

and ordered that they cover the legal costs of the Environment Protection Authority, totalling \$150,000.

The judgement found that: "FCNSW has not sufficiently demonstrated genuine contrition and remorse for its commission of the offences."

Scott Daines, spokesperson for South East Forest Rescue said, "Today's court findings seem to confirm that Forestry Corporation is a rogue agency. They can't be trusted with our forests."

Feline freedom vs wildlife protection: Kyogle Council calls for legislative reforms

by the Kyogle Environment Group

In the on-going debate surrounding pet ownership and its impact on local ecosystems, the spotlight in Kyogle has turned towards our feline friends.

Cats, cherished as companions by many, are also revealed as one of the most efficient predators, posing a significant threat to wildlife. As concerns mount, Kyogle Council has called for legislative reforms to promote responsible cat ownership.

As stated by Danielle Mulholland at a recent council meeting it is estimated that pet cats allowed to roam freely outside are responsible for the deaths of a staggering 323 million native Australian animals annually. This figure paints a stark picture of the ecological toll exacted by our furry companions. In New South Wales, however, existing legislation falls short in addressing this issue. Unlike several other states, the NSW Companion Animals Act 1998 lacks provisions mandating cat containment, or what is commonly referred to as a 'cat curfew.' This regulatory gap not only jeopardises local wildlife but also undermines community safety and the welfare of the cats themselves.

The absence of legislative support for cat containment means that councils in NSW are unable to implement locally specific measures to address the issue effectively. While other states empower local governments to enact containment policies tailored to their communities, NSW lags in providing this essential flexibility.

Empowering councils to introduce cat containment policies, in consultation with the local community, is paramount. Such policies would require cat owners to keep their pets within the confines of their properties, aligning

with existing regulations for dogs and other pets. This approach is crucial for safeguarding wildlife, enhancing community well-being, and ensuring the safety of cats.

The Local Government Association of NSW has thrown its weight behind these proposed



reforms, advocating for streamlined processes of animal registration and restrictions on cat roaming beyond their owners' properties. Additionally, research from the RSPCA NSW underscores the benefits of cat containment, revealing that cats kept safely at home tend to live up to 10 years longer.

Recognising the multifaceted nature of the issue, the NSW Government, in collaboration with the RSPCA NSW and 11 councils, has initiated the 'Keeping Cats Safe at Home' project. This initiative aims to promote responsible pet ownership through education and subsidised desexing programs, thereby reducing the number of roaming and stray cats.

Kyogle Council has partnered with RSPCA NSW to deliver the Keeping Cats Safe at Home Project. Cat owners who would like support to transition their cats from roaming to being safe at home are encouraged to submit an expression of interest for a voucher for either \$250 or \$500. This voucher can be used to buy a cat enclosure, cat netting or cat enrichment products. To apply complete your expression of interest online at Kyogle Council's website. Applications close midnight Sunday 8th September.

The need for legislative reforms to align with the realities of responsible cat ownership is increasingly apparent. Balancing the freedom of pets with the protection of wildlife presents a complex challenge, but with concerted efforts and proactive measures, a harmonious coexistence may yet be achieved.

Honeyeaters

by Scott O'Keeffe, ecologist

I see this every winter. When the native honeysuckle (*Banksia integrifolia*) flowers, all sorts of animals, small and large suddenly appear, competing for the nectar. Visitors to banksia flowers always include a variety of honeyeaters, especially Lewin's, Brown and yellow-faced honeyeaters. But the loudest, most hyperactive and aggressive of these is the white-cheeked honeyeater (*Phylidonyris niger*) (WCH).

It's a very striking bird, with boldly patterned plumage. Their heads are mostly black, with a prominent white cheek patch. Their underparts are white with black stripes. The back, rump and tail are black, with yellow patches on the wings and tail. They have black eyes which distinguishes them from the similar and closely related New Holland honeyeater (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*). The New Holland honeyeater has white eyes.

Being honeyeaters, WCHs need trees and shrubs that produce nectar. Shrubby vegetation communities with *Banksia*, *Melaleuca*, *Callistemon*, and *Leptospermum* are favoured, especially in moist boggy areas. WCHs are also found in woodlands and open forests that have an understory with abundant nectar-producing shrubs.

They can sometimes be found in sedgeland that contain patches of *banksia* and *leptospermum*. To the delight of urban residents, WCHs have adapted to some cityscapes where they take advantage of the variety of flowering plants in streets, parks and gardens.

WCHs are usually seen individually, in pairs or groups of three. Larger groups may be seen where there are abundant food resources, and that's not just nectar! Insects are also an important part of their diet. One study found that about 80% of the WCH diet consists of nectar and 20% insects.



A white-cheeked honeyeater feeding at a banksia integrifolia flower

WCHs spend a large part of their foraging time sallying from perches to catch flying insects and gleaning them from leaves and foliage. The proportions of nectar and insects varies with season and location. Nectar production is often



White-cheeked honeyeaters love banksia nectar, but grevilleas like this one are a close second. Photos by the author

seasonal, so when nectar is not being produced by the preferred plants the birds may increase the proportion of insects in their diets or they may wander in search of other flowering plants. WCHs are well known for their seasonal, and

usually predictable wandering, which coincides with flowering of favoured food plants.

Breeding in WCHs occurs mostly in winter (April-August) but can occur at any time of the year. Some studies show that breeding often coincides with flowering of preferred food plants. It makes sense for an animal to raise young when food is abundant.

Nests are built entirely by the females. These are cups made of fine plant material woven together with adhesive spiderwebs. Nests are usually constructed a metre or less above the ground. They are well camouflaged and hidden deep within dense foliage.

The female lays and incubates one to three eggs which hatch in about 15 days. Both adults feed the fledgelings for several weeks, and all of the birds remain together within the home range, possibly until the juveniles become adults.

Now is a great time to look for these colourful birds as they are very active and vociferous, constantly advertising their presence when they visit nectar-bearing plants.

Dour flower power

by Scott O'Keeffe, ecologist

I write about how all sorts of 'natural' phenomena interact to produce what we call ecosystems. Ecology is the study of those interactions, including those between 'nature' and human social and economic systems, which play an enormous part in shaping the ecological form and function of whole landscapes.

Australian landscapes are already overburdened with invasive species that have profound economic, social and ecological impacts. Changes to our climate and landscapes create new opportunities for plant and animal invasions.

Many skilled, knowledgeable people and agencies work to reduce and address these risks. Sadly, they are under-resourced and have weaker voices than those from vested interests who do not prioritise environmental protection, ie. 'biosecurity.'

Let's focus on agriculture. In the 20th century Australia imported twice as many exotic legumes and grasses, as there are native species in the whole of Australia. Anyone in Northern NSW who has participated in land care or native vegetation management will know the frustration of working where pasture species such as setaria, silverleaf desmodium and siratro are present. These are just the tip of the iceberg, and we are constantly adding new potentially invasive species to the mix.

Exotic pasture grasses are bred to thrive on poor soils and in the harsh environments that characterise much of Australia. New exotic and existing invasive species are bred to reproduce and spread. Their increased vigour and robustness disposes them to invading and damaging new areas in already fractured

landscapes. The intention is to release them in harsh places where unique dry forests, woodlands, shrublands and grasslands have evolved.

An instructive example is buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*), a native of Africa. It is highly invasive and causes landscape-wide ecological damage on three continents. It was introduced to Australia in the 1960s as a pasture species to stabilise degraded landscapes. It is widespread in Australia, spreading from pastures to natural ecosystems, especially dry savannah.

Buffel grass can form a continuous dense ground cover that excludes other plants, and also produces huge quantities of viable seed. This enables it to rapidly colonise new areas. To make matters worse this grass produces a large biomass of highly combustible dead material. It burns unusually hot and can destroy the seeds of native plants that might otherwise germinate after a fire in undisturbed woodland. Overseas, buffel grass is a major problem in natural ecosystems. Nevertheless, we're still spreading it around.

The nursery trade is also a major source of invasive plants. This stems from lack of oversight by government agencies that have surrendered compulsory biosecurity screening to the nursery industry. This makes no sense. The nursery industry makes money by selling plants; reducing the list of species it can offer for sale is counter to its economic interests. It's obtuse to expect horticulturists to voluntarily regulate their own activities. If that could work, tobacco companies would stop selling cigarettes.

The industry body, Greenlife oversees biosecurity risk assessment in the nursery trade. It claims that government oversight is

unnecessary and that the industry does a good job regulating itself. But Greenlife admits that some nurseries that use the industry plant selection database to assess plant 'suitability' ignore warnings about plants flagged as potentially invasive.

Here's the problem: 'suitability' is not the same thing as safe. It's plausible that some nurseries purposefully select potentially invasive species because they will sell more. People want to buy plants that are not difficult to grow. The characteristics that make plants easy to grow are very often the same characteristics that make them potentially invasive.

Nursery plants have already contributed to the extinction of four native plant species. In 2008 in Melbourne, Bunnings (who account for 40% of the retail plant trade) and several other large wholesale nurseries were prosecuted for selling Mexican feather grass, a species recognised world-wide for its invasiveness. It has the potential to colonise huge areas of Australia, outcompeting and excluding native species.

The nursery trade is served by large, sophisticated plant breeding programs that aim to breed plants that are more saleable. Some of the desired characteristics are cosmetic, for example flower size, shape and colour. However, just like pasture grasses for primary production, the horticultural sector is producing and selling plants with precisely the characteristics that make them highly invasive.

Recently, I visited a local nursery selling *Ipomoea carnea*, a relative of the sweet potato. Its seeds are available for sale, and it is promoted as a garden plant for inhabited Barrier Reef Islands. Meanwhile, it is rapidly colonising and destroying wetlands in the Nile Delta, in India where huge infestations are taking over crops and wetlands, and in many other countries.

I've found seedling and sapling colonies of



Buffel Grass has colonised the entire understorey of this woodland in the MacDonnell Ranges, central Australia. Photo: Tony Marsh

cigar box cedars (*Cedrella odorata*) in the edges of a local native forest that provides optimal conditions for this highly invasive species.

In the Galapagos Islands, thickets of cigar box cedars are so dense along shorelines that they prevent land access for marine turtles that need to come ashore to lay eggs. Seeds of this species are readily available online and it is promoted locally for mixed forestry plantations.

Authorities make it worse by setting a bad example for the public. The two main botanic gardens in Brisbane both have large specimens of cigar box cedars that set large quantities of readily dispersible seeds. It's reasonable to assume that visitors will take this as an indication that it's permissible to grow these plants.

I don't claim that these examples are the product of willful negligence, but it certainly demonstrates that businesses and government are not taking biosecurity issues seriously. That goes for consumers as well. We all need to think carefully about what species we buy and plant. As a society we're taking a dangerously relaxed attitude to biosecurity.

Most folks understand the need to be careful with fire; I think biosecurity risks are on a par.

Transform your garden into a bird sanctuary

Bird enthusiasts and garden lovers are invited to join the 'Bird Friendly Backyards' workshop at the Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens on Saturday, 10th August, from 10am to 1pm.

This engaging event is hosted by Richmond Landcare Inc. and Friends of Lismore Botanic Gardens, with special guest Rodney Falconer from Birdlife Northern Rivers, who will provide invaluable insights

into attracting native birds to your garden and creating thriving habitats.

Participants will also learn the fundamental principles of habitat creation, including the types of plants and structures that provide food, shelter, and nesting opportunities for birds.

To bring these concepts to life, attendees will embark on a guided tour of the Lismore Rainforest Botanic Gardens, with a special focus on



identifying bird habitats and observing best practices in action.

This hands-on experience will cement the learnings and inspire participants to

implement similar strategies in their own backyards.

The workshop will also include a delightful morning tea, providing an opportunity for participants to connect with fellow bird lovers and share their experiences.

Join us for this exciting workshop and learn how to transform your garden into a bird-friendly haven.

The cost is \$10 per ticket, and spaces are limited, so early booking is essential. To secure

your spot, please visit: <https://events.humanitix.com/bird-friendly-backyards-workshop>

For more information, please contact: Ivy Young, Project Officer on 0497-831-463 or email: projects@richmondlandcare.org

This is the second Garden Habitat Heroes workshop, funded through the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewals' Strengthening Rural Communities Program.



Nimbin Garden Club notes



by Peter Brooker

Although none of us have ever imprisoned Thanatos in his own chains or deceived Persephone, we are condemned, as gardeners, to a fate not unlike that imposed on Sisyphus in that our task is unending and we have to accept failure in the same way we accept success.

There are those amongst the condemned who have vision or perhaps just a few ideas that develop into something quite uplifting.

Mandie is one of those with vision and she needed it because when she

wandered onto her three acres, some 40 years ago, it had less trees than the Nullarbor and was overrun with lantana.

Mandie and her then partner, now neighbour, slashed the paddock destroying the lantana and leaving a blank canvas. A passive solar house was designed, drawn out on the ground and then walked through, resulting in the expansion of some rooms deemed to be too small when they stood in them.

Now, as you drive in, you pass between Narnia to your left and a mini Stonehenge to the right. After that, everything living you see was



planted firstly by Mandie and her ex, then by Mandie and Steve.

Nothing tall grows close to the house, nothing that could obstruct either the sunlight or the movement of air, but there are endless pots and gardens filled with all manner of colourful flowers from jonquils, snowdrops and some red ones.

There was once a tree but much to the chagrin of the granddaughters it, and their tree house, was removed before it could send its expanding roots into the foundations, but that was all, just the one.

Away from the house the rainforest trees have spread across the creek and up the opposing hill. Amongst those trees, where the flourishing bromeliads climb,



the Bangalow palms are forming a forest as are the coolamons and the *Eleaocarpis grandis*, sometimes called the blue quandong, a Kauri pine, as thick at its base as at its crown, black bean, a red cedar, aniseed and lemon myrtle and of course, orange and lemon trees, a kaffir lime, paw paw, and a dwarf grapefruit.

Mandie has declared this to be the worst vegetable growing season ever. Where broad bean once excelled not one has grown, but thankfully the Ethiopian spinach, peppery Vietnamese mint, basil and some basic vegetables have shown up.

In what she calls the 'wild area', sweet potatoes, turmeric, galangal and strawberries thrive, while along the border a row of pineapples grow.



All gardens have a standout shrub or feature, this one had a few. There was the array of colourful plants around a unique house, a spectacular tulip magnolia in full flight at the edge of Narnia and a *Xanthostemon chrysanthus* or golden penda close to the 'wild area'.

We should remember, as Rudyard Kipling said, "To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul." Thank you, Mandie, for a sunny day and a pleasant stroll.

Next meeting is to be held at Chris and Mac's home, 45 Shipway Road, Nimbin on 17th August, 2pm to 4pm. There is a dam with a jetty, so don't forget your swimwear.

It is also our AGM so membership renewal is due. Any members wishing to join the committee should prepare nomination speeches. Bring a cup, a chair and something to share.

Facing the wetiko

Book review

by David Harris

No Mo Trippin by Nick Sun

It was my delight to discover that this book has been written!

I met Nick Sun (pictured) through Sydney's underground performance space, Lanfranchi's Memorial Discotheque, which operated in the early years of this millennium.

He performed as a stand-up comedian, and his work was particularly dark and unsettling, using humour as a tool to visicet contemporary thought and lampoon the world we know.

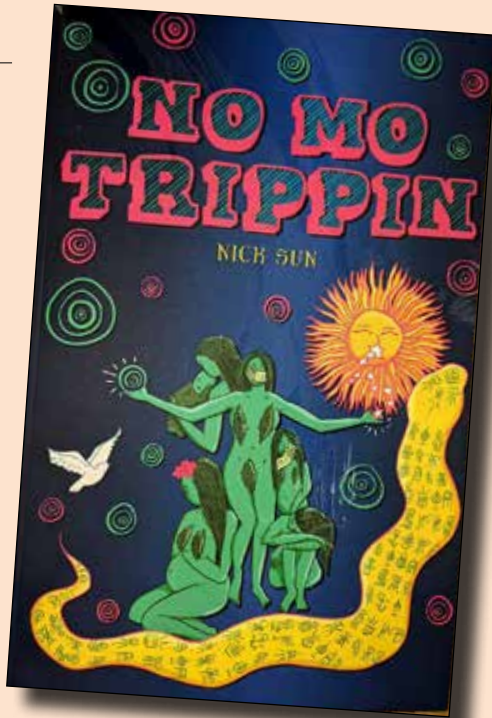
He came up for MardiGrass in 2015 and headlined the comedy night, and began by announcing that he was stoned. Very stoned. Perhaps too stoned.

He went on to describe the depth of his experience of paranoia, anxiety and discomfort, in such harrowing detail, that it was apparent that the seams of reality were being snipped, that the audience was being dragged into a psychosis, a collective meltdown of truly epic proportions.

It was a train wreck performance, which was brilliantly uncomfortable for performer and audience alike. He is a genius.

His new book, his first, is similar. In 2015, he moved away from comedy, and began his calling as a shamanic plant healer, working with ayahuasca and other local varieties.

His journey of discovery took him across the globe, and through Nimbin,



where he lived for a while, and has written about his trials, his failures and his nightmares in this book, *No Mo Trippin*.

Without wanting to spoil your enjoyment of the book, I can say that he survives, and is forever changed by his journeys, the ego deaths, facing the wetiko which threatens to consume us, and coming to realise that the truth that we seek may not lie on the other side of madness.

To wit, pull your bloody head in.

Anyone who has doubts about the worth of this type of healing journey, anyone who reaches for their gun when they hear the word shaman, would do well to read this book. It had me truly laughing out loud.

Nick spares no-one, and especially not his own ego, from his deft and witty observations. It is a brutal and hilarious piece of psychedelic gonzo journalism, which will, I am certain, become a classic in this field of work.

No Mo Trippin is now available in Nimbin from the Hemp Embassy and Perceptio Books, and is also available on-line at: www.amazon.com.au/NO-MO-TRIPPIN-Nick-Sun/dp/0645682705



Rocky Creek Dam walk evokes Big Scrub



by Peter Moyle, Nimbin Bushwalkers Club

Finally, some consistent good weather, winter days with clear skies, fresh mornings and light winds, perfect for us to get out and about.

A bit of juggling with walks, but all well attended.

Our walk at Rocky Creek Dam had 18 members tackle the trail, firstly crossing the causeway and then the short walk to the 'Big Scrub' walk, a lovely short loop through a remnant of the rainforest that once covered most of the Northern Rivers.

We spread out and took our time meandering through the forest and over the creeks running with crystal clear water, and for a change we did this with no talking for the extra enjoyment of the solitude, with senses highlighted in a special experience.

Up the fire trail a couple of kms before the turn towards the dam was another lovely walk with plenty of majestic ferns and palms. The trees down from the storms a few years back were gradually being cut out, but were still a scramble to navigate.

A BBQ lunch provided by Mark at the picnic area finished another great day out.



Walks programme

Sunday 18th August
Goonengerry National Park

Leader: Ron Smith 0497-792-789

Grade: 3-4. 10km approx 4 hours. There are some off-track sections that may be slippery. Good walking shoes/boots needed. We will be walking into an area with some nice waterfalls, Ron guarantees plenty of water. This is a great walk even in the wet, as it is on top of the ridge so not boggy.

Meet: 9am at the Goonengerry NP at the end of Mill Road. Bring the usual hat, water, and lunch.

Sunday 8th September
Byron Bay Lighthouse by train

Leader: Peter Spearritt 0421-055-292

You must register with Ron, as numbers are limited.

Meet: 9.30am at the North Beach Station, Bayshore Drive, near the Sun Bistro, allowing time to park (no cost) and purchase our train tickets, \$4 each way, for the 10am solar train departure. From the train we will walk to the Lighthouse via Wategos Beach (some steep sections), returning via the Tallows Ridge Track, in time to catch the 15.15 train back to our vehicles. Approx 10-kilometre walk.

Bring: lunch and water, coffee and ice cream available at the Lighthouse Cafe.

Leadership and horses

by Suzy Maloney

I heard something the other day that really resonated with me, "A good leader empowers others."

Leadership and horses can be a touchy topic with some saying the idea of the human being a good leader for the horse is out-dated.

The view being that the human and horse are together as equals with neither being leader or follower.

While this idea appeals to me, it's not what I see playing out in the paddock every day between my horses. In the world of horses, the principles of leadership are vividly demonstrated through their interactions, hierarchies, and communication with each other.

I do feel that horse herds function around the form of leaders and followers, and that when a horse trusts a person as their leader, they can relax and be happy feeling safe and cared for.

I also believe that this does not require belittling or suppression of the horse in any way at all. Intimidation and force may appear to be getting results, but they're short-lived results; it's also morally questionable and



unnecessary.

It's this form of leadership that people may see in the broader equine world, and it is definitely not what I'm talking about.

A good leader empowers the horse to reach their full potential and helps them overcome their fears; they never push horses through it, creating stress and trauma.

A good leader is open to listening to the horse, allowing them to have input into what is happening and changing what they do in response.

We earn the trust of a skittish horse through patient understanding, not force. We build trust by listening attentively, being fair in our decisions, and demonstrating integrity in our actions.

Effective leadership isn't about commanding authority. In herd dynamics, horses often exhibit leadership by guiding and protecting other

members, particularly in the presence of perceived threats.

Leadership is about forging strong connections and inspiring confidence. When we as a strong leader ask the horse to join with us to overcome an obstacle, as a combination we can do so much more than either of us could individually.

Horses can notice extremely subtle cues from our posture, eye contact, and movement. Clear communication is essential in both horsemanship and leadership. Horses respond best to clear, concise cues that leave no room for ambiguity.

A horse can sense fear or confidence in their handler, a leader's demeanour and body language can significantly impact how they are perceived and followed.

As always, the personal work we do with ourselves precedes everything we do with the horses. How are we

presenting to our horses? Are we giving the message that we are a good leader?

The number one gift we can give to our horses is to stay calm. If as a strong leader we stay calm and steady through all the random things that arise, no matter how scary or crazy they seem, our horses can trust us.

We want to stay steady no matter what. If we don't get scared, angry, frustrated, or fall into any other of the human emotions that can rustle our calm, our time with horses transforms.

A good leader remains flexible and adaptable, able to change strategies or plans when circumstances require. The wisdom of horses serves as a timeless reminder of the power of leadership grounded in respect, communication, consistency, calmness, and empathy.

There is so much we can learn from horses. They mirror to us how we are presenting, so we can learn and grow in all our leadership skills in a positive way that respects and empowers our horses.

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by Les Rees

I like to think that I have a strong communication with my horses and I am often pleasantly surprised when setbacks offer some amazing rewards to the deepening of the bond between horse and human.

The youngest of my horses has recently been going through some problems with conjunctivitis in his left eye. Two days after noticing it and fearing the worst, I called Sophia, our amazing Sol Vet here in Nimbin to come and have a look at him. She sedated him and put in a nerve block to relax the muscles to allow her to examine his eye. At the time there was some cloudiness appearing and on a second visit she discovered a corneal ulcer had developed.

Eyes can become ulcerated when the surface has been damaged, often caused by scratching the cornea. This can be extremely painful and can cause blindness if left untreated.

Treatment included anti-inflammatory paste and the application of ointment into the affected eye. This is not an easy task because horses don't like their eyelids pulled open and they have extremely strong muscles that control them.

My horse certainly wasn't a pushover and fought hard to stop any application of the medication but I persevered gently and eventually he understood that I was trying to help him, allowing me access to his eyes without stress.

It has been around three weeks now, initially medicating twice daily, then with a change of medication upon finding the ulcer, to medicating his eye five times daily.

My beautiful poor boy had a huge amount to put up with and eventually became reasonably relaxed about it. Each time I give him his medication he licks my hand gently. I'm sure it's his way of



thanking me and it has strengthened our bond even more.

I find this experience very humbling and it never fails to amaze me that after all the years spent with horses, there is so much more they can teach me. We know that we can trust each other and the incidents that present themselves along the path of our life together will deepen that precious bond and connection we have together.

I've always found that traumatic events cement the bonds between animals. There was a time when I went to the sale yards regularly in order to save unwanted horses from those purchasing them for meat.

They were confused and traumatised finding themselves in these dreadful places and they weren't treated well by their handlers. I brought back two each time so they had to travel together in my horse float. My reason for bringing two horses home was for mutual support. They shared the same trauma and once inside the float, they could begin a relationship formed by bonding with each

other to soften the blow. Once they had travelled together, they tended to pair up as buddies having bonded in the float.

I have still got two ponies that I rescued in Tasmania. They were one of the worst cases of animal cruelty I've seen. My promise to them was to give them a permanent home for life, free from being ridden.

The trauma occasionally rears its head for one of them and he couldn't go to a home that failed to understand how to deal quietly with him when this happens. Also they have such a strong bond, it would be wrong to separate them. So they're part of our family and always will be.

Being social animals it's important for horses to live with others. They need the company to enable them to create those important supportive bonds, the glue that holds any family together.

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