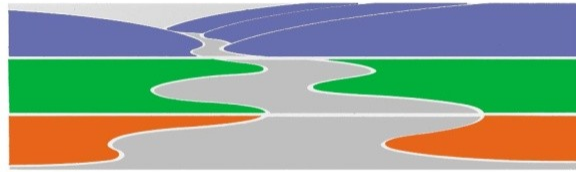


Noosa Integrated



Catchment Assn. Inc.

Annual Report 2019



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President's Report

By Bruce Hallett

With support from Noosa Council, NICA's programs have continued to roll along this year.

Bruce McConkey's Waterwatch team has been gathering valuable data and has purchased new water testing equipment thanks to a grant from Gambling Community Benefit Fund.

Jill Denning and Allen Briggs' group continue their monthly count of shorebirds and waders, and have been working on a report for Noosa Council summarising the last 14 years of data, thanks to Richard Howard for compiling the data into a comprehensive report.

The NICA Girraween Bushcare Group has been doing some great work along Cooyar St and Sunshine Beach Road, removing invasive weeds and planting native vegetation, and the associated group of weeders did 3 trips again to the sand island near the mouth of the river.

Our River Rangers go out weekly to collect rubbish from the banks of the Noosa River, creeks and islands, and we continue to investigate ways we can extend NICA's sea grass and mangrove monitoring programs. A new boat trailer has been purchased with a grant from Bendigo Bank.

Another great new initiative this year has been the Noosa Council funded Urban Wildlife Garden project (UWG). This is proving very popular, and is a great way to get some valuable advice on how to make your suburban garden a bit more wildlife friendly. Thanks to the perseverance of Tony and Stephanie Haslam to obtain funding for the Pilot Project.

NICA has continued to auspice other groups such as Friends of Kinaba and NBBCC (Noosa Bush Beach and Creek Care). Jill Campbell and NBBCC have recently been successful in obtaining grants from Noosa Council for ongoing work at Cooloosa, Sunshine Beach and a Qld State Govt Threatened Species grant for Eucalyptus conglomerate.

This year we have made changes to our website to enable ecommerce, so that memberships and book purchases can now be done on line with a credit card or Paypal. We have also updated our bookkeeping software to the on line version, on the cloud. Look out for updated editions of a couple of NICA publications in the coming year, as well as some exciting new projects that are in the pipeline.

Many thanks to our committee of Dalia Mikhail, Kay Southam, Tony Haslam and Richard Howard. Thanks to our hard working office manager/secretary Gillian Studdock. Special thanks to all the volunteers that help make NICA the unique organisation that it is, the weeders, the river rangers, the botanical people and everyone else who supports NICA.

And lastly thanks to Noosa Ferry for continuing to support us to have our AGM on the Noosa River.

We look forward to continued success in 2020.

Treasurer's Report

By Tony Haslam

This report only covers the 2018/19 Financial Year, so it doesn't include UWG or any other funding received since 1st July 2019.

From a financial point of view the outcome for NICA has been similar to the preceding few years, still not meeting expenses from income and falling short by an amount of \$4,369.55 which compares to an audited shortfall of \$4,544.

Total income for the year was \$83,932.75 (Excluding GST). This doesn't include any carried forward amounts.

Noosa Council contributed \$24,018.48 which includes our 3 year Alliance Grant, River Education program, and Clean Up Australia Day.

The QLD State Government provided project funding totaling \$33,080.66 through their "Community Sustainability Action Grants" programs which funded Noosa Bushland Beach and Creek Care Group work at Cooloosa Stage 2, and NICA's Girraween project.

Income derived from crafts and books sales was up this year to \$19,267.11 with a further \$7,566.50 from various sources including, donations, membership fees, and interest.

On the expenses side we have spent a total of \$89,312.47 comprising \$43,042.09 on Operating Overheads including Staff, \$36,779.63 on Project / Program activities including provision for future expenditure, and \$1,112.51 on expenses relating to our Sales activities.

Income and Expenditure 2018/2019	
Income	
Noosa Council Grants	\$24,018.48
QLD State Government Grants	\$33,080.66
Sales	\$19,267.11
Miscellaneous	\$7,566.50
TOTAL INCOME	\$83,932.75
Expenditure	
Operating Overheads incl Staff	\$43,042.09
Project / Program activities	\$44,147.70
Sales Expenses	\$1,112.51
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$88,302.30
Profit (Loss)	(\$4,369.55)

NICA PROJECTS

Monday with NICA

By Kay Southam

NICA wholeheartedly thanks and applauds each of our Speakers who gave up their time to share their subject with us in 2019. Our Presenters work tirelessly in their given field and inspire others to follow them, the Community ever the richer for their passion and generous spirit. We just hope that we can be lucky enough to hear from them some time in the future as their stories continue to evolve.

February- Keep it in Kin Kin - Phil Moran from Landcare gave us an update on how this crucial long term Project is progressing. It began In 2017 when Healthy Land and Water teamed up with Noosa and District Landcare Group and Noosa Council to design and implement the project in an effort to prevent further environmental damage from runoff and the like. The project aims to build resilience into the catchment, reduce erosion and minimise the levels of mud flowing into Kin Kin Creek and nearby waterways.



March - Sandy Bolton, our local Member of Parliament gave an enlightening talk and overview of her day to day involvement at the State Government level and her approach to pushing ahead for our Community. The Wallum Quilt designed by Julie Dodds and sewn by members of Patches of Cooroy was presented to her on loan and is now hanging proudly in Sandy's Noosa Office.

May- Juanita Bloomfield from Tourism Noosa gave us a very informative presentation about Tourism Noosa and the diversity of her role where she works hard to recognise environmental matters as a key concern for tourism. At the end of the evening attendees had a much better understanding of the work of

Tourism Noosa and how it can work for the environment in a positive way.

June - Richard Creswell, Glenn Hale and John Kircher from Maritime Safety Queensland were very generous with their time and were able to explain and answer some of the more difficult questions relating to our local waterways. They explained the legislation for people living on boats and talked about the restrictions on the Noosa River.

July- Wildflowers of WA Joan Heavey gave the most enlightening presentation and entertaining stories of her 2018 journey and adventure to uncover the most precious of wildflowers on her trip through the different regions of WA.

August - Terrie Ridgway from Bat Rescue Inc. gave us a whole new understanding of Flying foxes through the Ages, their behaviour and just how vulnerable these little creatures are and how this has now become her life's work

September - A welcome visit from Linda Oliver our Sponsor From Bendigo Bank along with an informal get together and update of NICA Programs



October -Roslyn Leslie from WILVOS gave us a presentation about the volunteer work involved in rescuing and rehabilitating wildlife. Wilvos have a dedicated hotline that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; 5441 6200. What a fantastic and crucial service they provide.

November – Angus Warfield McAlpine gave us a fascinating insight into the technical aspects of using drones to map mangroves. His research contributes to non- destructive, cost-effective, and timely assessments of forest structure of mangroves.

River Education Programme

This NICA Program was funded by Noosa Council for the amount of \$2,850 for 2019-20 year until June 2020. The program covers WaterWatch, River Watch, Sand Island Weeding and Bird Counts.

It is estimated that the dollar value of the volunteers' time over the four streams amounts to approx \$22,300 or 534% return on the grant. This doesn't include the social capital of having this work carried out by a community based organisation

We are negotiating with Noosa Council with a view to having the program funded on a 3 year alliance basis from July 2020.

Volunteer River Watch

By Roger Kelly and Allen Briggs



The River Watch programme carried out by NICA includes weekly trips throughout the lower reaches of the Noosa River and Weyba Creek by volunteers from NICA. It is supported partially by grants from the Noosa Council. The aims are to observe the Noosa River and Weyba Creek, to note any unusual behaviour, support/advise visitors in their use of facilities, remove rubbish where practicable, and support authorities where appropriate in maintaining the integrity of the Noosa River Catchment.

Over the year 37 such trips were carried out with peak holidays, inclement weather, and occasional absences of appropriate volunteers accounting for the other weeks, Volunteer time amounted to about 400 person hrs .

During the year our volunteer pool rose from 11 to 16 people which should assist in increasing the trips for next year. The volume collected amounted to 25cub/m into the skip and significant extra unable to be fitted into the skip. The more detailed reporting system has been retained but modified. Weed species and locations are not now reported as everyone is aware of the ongoing infestations.

The new motor has been a great success with significant power for the job and greater fuel efficiency. We have also been successful in getting a grant from Bendigo Bank for a new boat trailer, thanks to Richard Howard for organising this.

Keyser Island remains a regularly-used campsite with ongoing destruction of vegetation, compaction of soil and cutting down of trees for firewood. Munna Island is in danger of moving west as erosion on the eastern end compounds these effects there. An active large camp on Sheep Island was located and tidied up several trips with the help of QPS after. An abandoned drug distribution site was cleaned up under the eastern end of Monks Bridge. At the suggestion of Noosa Council we reported on the stormwater drains which have had their filters removed. All still are open to the river or Weyba Cr.



Overall it was a successful year for us with new crew added, the new engine working well, and the replacement of the trailer placing us well on track for continuing the work in the New Year.

NICA Waterwatch Report

By Bruce McConkey

Water testing is now conducted at twenty six river, lake, and creek sites along the Noosa River catchment from below Lake Weyba up to the Upper Noosa River, to enhance historic data and raise awareness about water quality issues. Testing has continued monthly through the year, using three volunteers per trip. Interested volunteers nominate for this service and are coordinated by a volunteer. Parameters monitored are water temperature, pH, conductivity, salinity, turbidity, and dissolved oxygen content, while general visual observations e.g. water appearance or floating matter are also noted.



NICA has assumed full responsibility for the program, the work covering all aspects of coordination of volunteers, instrument calibration, data collection, data recording and analysis, and finally reporting. We have estimated that the volunteer input for the program has amounted to almost 400 hours for the 2019 year. A new project arrangement is required between NICA and Noosa Shire Council to ensure continuity of recordings which are of value to organisations responsible for management of waterway quality and improvement.

Past data has been analysed and forwarded to NSC, showing that in general water quality of the Noosa River system is not far from compliance with Qld Government guidelines. The data obtained from the tributary creeks shows lower water quality than the main river which confirms that more detailed investigation and greater control of those streams would be prudent. Poor water quality in Cranks Creek, and in Eenie Creek in particular, indicates that measures should be undertaken to remove pollutants and to re-oxygenate the water. It also indicates that a schedule of testing and investigating stormwater drain outlets should be revived.



Retention of a Waterwatch program is recommended.

Incidental reports of reduced fish population suggest that additional tests might be sought, such as chemical or biological pollutants, which could be more directly related to ecological health of the river.

Wader and Tern Bird Counts in the Noosa River Estuary

By Allen Briggs

2019 has been the fourteenth consecutive year in which a dedicated group of volunteers led by Jill Denning has monitored and recorded shorebird populations in the Lower Noosa River. In all, the group has now conducted over 150 near monthly surveys, a testament to the group's passion and persistence.



The primary focus of the group has and remains the diversity and abundance of the many species of resident and migratory shorebirds that frequent the Lower Noosa River. Nevertheless, the group also

records and observes the many other species of terns, gulls, wading birds, water birds, sea birds and raptors that also rely on the estuary for all or part of the year.

As in recent years, 2019 witnessed a further decline in numbers (and diversity) of migratory shorebird species including several of our more threatened visitors such as the Bar-Tailed Godwit, Far Eastern Curlew, Curlew Sandpiper and Double-Banded Plover. Numbers of resident shorebirds, particularly coastal breeders such as the Red Capped Plover, have generally remained more resilient. These trends align with research findings across the East Asian-Australasian Flyway and in Australia where the drought continues to disrupt inland wetland habitat. Tern numbers, particularly the Common and Little Tern, which make up the majority of individuals recorded in our surveys, have also continued to decline, though the rationale for that is less well understood. Nevertheless, we keenly look forward to this summer's migration with interest and the surprising visitors it has already begun delivering on the wing.

It is worth acknowledging, that all of our hard-won survey data is incorporated into the Queensland Wader Study Group database (which began in 1992) as part of the National Shorebird Monitoring Program. That data is used to identify population trends across Australia and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway and ensure appropriate conservation plans are enacted under Australia's EPBC Act and related bilateral treaties.

In another significant development, the group was generously awarded a grant in July by the Noosa Council under the Community Environment Grants Program to review and analyse the previous 14 years of survey data and report on trends witnessed in shorebird populations in the estuary. A preliminary version of that report has been already been submitted to Council and the final version along with new information resources for the community should be available early in the New Year. It is hoped that this will bring renewed community attention to the precious avifauna in our midst and the critical ongoing work of the survey group.

Finally, I would like to once again take this opportunity to thank Noosa Council for their ongoing support of the shorebird monitoring program, along with the team at NICA for their administrative support and O Boats for the valued use of their vessels. I look forward to 2020 and the release of our much awaited survey report along with the Noosa Council's River Plan and its accommodation of shorebird habitat.

As always the group welcomes any new members, experienced or otherwise, when space permits, to join them on monthly surveys on the Lower Noosa River so please contact the NICA office for scheduling. If you think you would like to develop knowledge in this area, the group would be happy to have you along. Observations including photos of unique birdlife elsewhere in the Noosa River system or nearby areas are also always welcome.

Sand Island Weeding

By Bruce Hallett



For a number of years, NICA has taken a team of dedicated weeders to a sand island near the mouth of the Noosa River to help rid the island of invasive species, and allow the native flora to recover.

As the area is a resting/nesting site for shore birds and waders (both resident and migratory) the island is closed between October and March. This year we had trips in April, June and September, with a total of 156 volunteer hours.

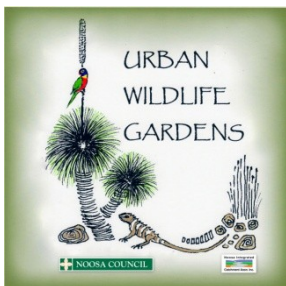
With continued support from Council and O Boats, we plan to have another 3 trips next year. Members are notified beforehand, so if you wish to help remove a few weeds (and perhaps spot some birds) then you are most welcome.



Urban Wildlife Gardens

By Stephanie Haslam

Funding was received from Noosa Council and the programme was launched by Mayor Wellington in September 2019 at Dame Patti Park at Sunrise Beach. Although advertising was focused on that area, people from all parts of Noosa Shire have expressed interest. Michelle Newall has been kept busy visiting gardens, answering questions and attaching our sign to fences and letterboxes. She is doing a great job helping urban residents discover the delights of local native plants and the other species that call Noosa home.



At the beginning of December 53 gardens had joined the programme. So far Michelle has visited 22 participants. Plants have been distributed and participants have received a discount on NICA publications.

A working group consisting of Suzanne Bloomfield, Jan Maddin (Noosa Council), Kay Southam, Tony Haslam, Michelle Newall, Desire Gralton and Dalia Mikhail was set up to design the programme and produce the flyer that supports it. Now the programme is well and truly up and running, very little changes have been needed to the initial concept and I would like to thank members of the working group for their input.

The Last month has focused on fine tuning communications with Urban Wildlife Gardens participants and the NICA website is being updated to facilitate this. Meanwhile we have produced an active UWG Facebook page with lots of photographs of local fauna and flora.

The first UWG Newsletter is due to go out by the time you read this. And the much anticipated native bee workshop is being planned for early in the New Year.

Michelle will speak to various groups about the aims of the programme. The Art Wall at Noosaville Library has been booked for September 2020 when invited local artists will use UWG as the theme for an exhibition.



Girraween Bushcare Group

By Bruce Hallett



Despite the impact of the controlled burn in the area some months ago, the NICA Girraween Bushcare Group has made good progress this year with some willing volunteers. This group works along Cooyar St north from Ozcare past the Bio-basin, and continues along Sunshine Beach Road (David Low Way if you prefer) up to Bicentennial Drive, removing invasive weeds and planting native species.

The State Gov't Dep't of Environment and Heritage Protection has given a 3 year Community Sustainability Action grant to the Group and there is still 1 year remaining. There have been 12 weeding/planting days this year, with a combined total of 365 volunteer hours.

NICA has also auspiced another grant for Jill Campbell's NBBCC group at Sunshine Beach and they are making great progress in the gully between Cooloosa St. and Heathland Drive. Anyone who drives that way will have seen the fantastic change with the removal of the invasive white morning glory vine (and other weeds). This is a big job and the assistance from Council is greatly appreciated.

Please contact the NICA office if you want any more information on Bushcare.

Noosa Bush Beach and Creek Care

By Jill Campbell

For the past 11 years, NICA has been NBBCC's auspicing partner which enables us to apply for grants and implement the works. For those of you unfamiliar with the term auspice, what it means is, that NICA manages the funds, administration, record keeping and helps us with reporting.

This year we have been successful in receiving 2 new grants.

- "Morning Glory... Going Going, But Not Yet Gone" is Stage 3 of Cooloosa Urban Wetland Rehabilitation. This is a Noosa Council 12 month community grant worth \$20,000 to rehabilitate the riparian dunal embankment of the wetland.
- "Strengthen Existing & Establish Additional Populations of Endangered Eucalypt conglomerata – Swamp Stringybark" is a 3 year Queensland Government Community grant worth \$18,000. Swamp Stringybark is Queensland's most endangered eucalypt with only 1000 left in the wild at last count in 1995. It is only found between Beerwah and Kin Kin.

Grants enable us to buy materials and pay for Contract Labour to assist us with heavy works. However, you may not realize that, as with all grants, our volunteer labour is a compulsory "In-Kind" component of the grant. So for \$38,000 our volunteers will be responsible for \$38,000 or 900 hours of work.

Thank you to NICA for all you do.



Sunshine Coast Wildflower Festival

By Gillian Studdock



NICA hosted four walks in the 2019 Sunshine Coast Wildflower Festival, (17th August to 1st September) all of which were repeats of popular walks of previous years. All walks were fully booked – total number of participants was 119.

Feedback was very positive and particularly recognised the inputs of the volunteer guides – Sonia MacDonald, Robert Price, Stephanie Haslam and Trevor Hatfield (QPWS) who were enthusiastic, committed and well prepared. Special thanks to Allan Carr and Bob Carey who stepped in to help guide at Girraween.

Weather was dry, sunny, light winds provided perfect walking conditions. Sales of NICA merchandise; Tony set up a small display of reference books, brochures & tea towels at all sites prior to the start of the walks. Good level of interest in books and promotion for NICA.

NICA Publications

By Gillian Studdock



All our field guides '*Noosa's Native Plants*', '*Weeds of the Sunshine Coast*', '*Grasses*' and '*Sedges*' continue to sell well, demonstrating the need for these important resources to aid in best practice land management, an important function which NICA facilitates well.

The books continue to be sought out by members of the public, local bookshops, environmental consultants and Councils from all over SEQ.

For the 2018-19 year total sales were \$19,267.

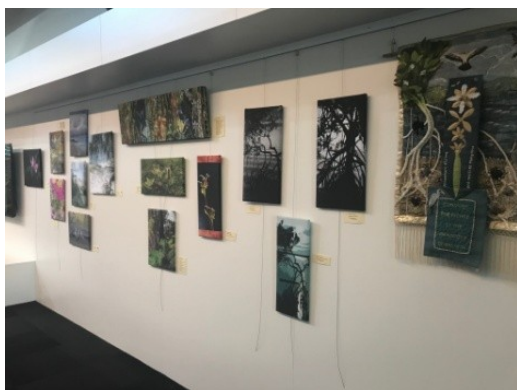
Look Like Noosa

By Stephanie Haslam

Teatowels featuring local flora and fauna continue to sell and will become available via NICA's online marketing facility. Members are encouraged to view items on offer by visiting

<https://noosariver.com.au/shop/>

This year's exhibition at the Noosaville Library's Art Wall included a wall hanging depicting the mangrove community together with a number of mounted fabric prints. A slideshow on the big screen allowed us to showcase our various projects as well as more photographs of Noosa's environment.



Clean Up Aust Day 2019

By Joe Jurisevic

Around 400 volunteers turned Sunday March 3rd across the Noosa region to pick up over 6 tonnes of other people's rubbish as part of Clean Up Australia Day, organised once again by the Noosa Integrated Catchment Association (NICA) with showers impacting on volunteer numbers at some sites.

24 sites were registered where volunteers jumped into boats and vehicles, or walked the lengths and breadths of Noosa's bushland, parkland, road reserves, creeks to Clean Up our region.



An amazing job yet again from our team of volunteer co-ordinator Joe Jurisevic, NICA's Gill Studdock and the 24 dedicated NICA site supervisors who coordinated the volunteers that turned up at sites across the region. It was a heartening example of the community turning out to tackle the rubbish that is dropped or dumped in our environment. The volunteers were ably supported by Noosa Council, as well as local businesses Cleanaway and Allcott Hire to help dispose of the rubbish, with Sofitel and Peppers Noosa Resorts providing generous prizes for a prize draw for volunteers.

The data collected from all the Noosa CUAD groups recorded that over 5 tonnes of rubbish was removed from our environment, with 4 tonnes of illegal dumping

removed from local forests and 1 tonne of litter from the river, wetlands, parks and streets, over 300kgs of which was diverted from landfill and recycled.

NICA volunteer Peter Hunnam worked with total of 40 volunteers from Tewantin BushCare Group, Tewantin State School students and families, NICA River Rangers and others who registered at the Tewantin boat ramp site to undertake an audit of their findings. Peter observed that "litter in the lower Noosa River remains a significant problem, despite the preventative and clean-up actions that are being taken".

"The significant problem now is the very large numbers of diverse types of small plastic items that get into the river system." The CUAD 2019 audit at Tewantin boat ramp recorded conservatively over 1,600 plastic items, 74% of the total number of rubbish items collected from the Tewantin foreshore of the Noosa river.

The hinterland was once again fully behind Clean Up Australia Day with sites in Kin Kin, Cooroy, and Pomona recording good numbers of volunteers to Clean Up their community. Noosa Sea Scouts were involved once again, and the Sunshine Coast 4WD Club were largely responsible for removing the large volume of rubbish from illegal dumping sites in Yurol Forest near Pomona.



Illegal dump sites were once again a major focus this year with the bushland still being used by some as a 'free' alternative to Council facilities where regularly dumped items such as whitegoods can be disposed of at no cost or saleable items donated to the Reviva recycled goods shop. It was disappointing to see a large number of tyres being still being found dumped in our bushland, but fortunately only a few mattresses this year.

Sponsored in Noosa by:



Noosa Civic Sustainability Campaign

By Gillian Studdock

NICA volunteers have been involved in sustainability fundraising campaigns with Noosa Civic in the lead up to Christmas each year since 2014.

- 2014 we made 300 'seed bombs'
- 2015 300 designed reusable bags
- 2016 300 Keep Cups were sold and in
- 2017 300 native plants 'Lomandra'
- 2018 350 reusable water bottles



For the 2019 year NICA volunteers manned the stall at Noosa Civic selling 350 sets of bamboo toothbrushes. Proceeds from the campaign were donated to NICA, a total amount of \$1,855.

NICA would like to acknowledge this great initiative of Noosa Civic Shopping Centre.

Volunteer Hours 2019

By Bruce Hallett

We note that in a recent report, the Institute of Community Directors stated that the Australian Bureau of Statistics has calculated that volunteers are worth \$40 per hour. An estimate of hours by NICA volunteers, not including committee meetings, compiled from the following table totals 2,642 hours, a total amount of \$105,680 in kind cost, working towards a sustainable Noosa River Catchment.

Grant applications	147
Waterwatch	411
Noosa Civic Fundraiser	40
Girraween Bushcare Group & Sand Island	541
Clean up Aust Day 2019	130
Urban Wildlife Gardens	278
Festivals	117
River Rangers	480
NNP website, craft & exhibitions	208
Shorebird & Wader count	250
Monday with NICA	40
Total Volunteer Hours	2642

Thanks to our Sponsors

