

## IN KIND – A VOLUNTEER PERSPECTIVE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is the existential challenge of our time.

As nations dither, everyday people in our community are taking action to heal the planet. Captured in black and white by photographer, Yanni van Zijl, this exhibition profiles volunteers from the Noosa Integrated Catchment Association (NICA).

Students from the Good Shepherd Lutheran College Noosa inquire of the volunteers what inspires them and what advice they would have for the next generation. This is a full text summary of those interviews.

**In kind** (*definition*): goods or services, not involving money or measured in monetary terms.

An exhibition by, and of, the volunteers of NICA

---

### PORTRAIT 1. “A TESTER OF WATERS”

#### What do you do for NICA and what inspired you?

I am the president of NICA. I was inspired when I saw the good work that other volunteers were doing.

#### How did you become involved or what made you interested in NICA?

When I moved to this area 9 years ago, I wanted to do some volunteering in the environmental area, and a friend suggested NICA.

#### How much work do you do for NICA and how many days do you volunteer?

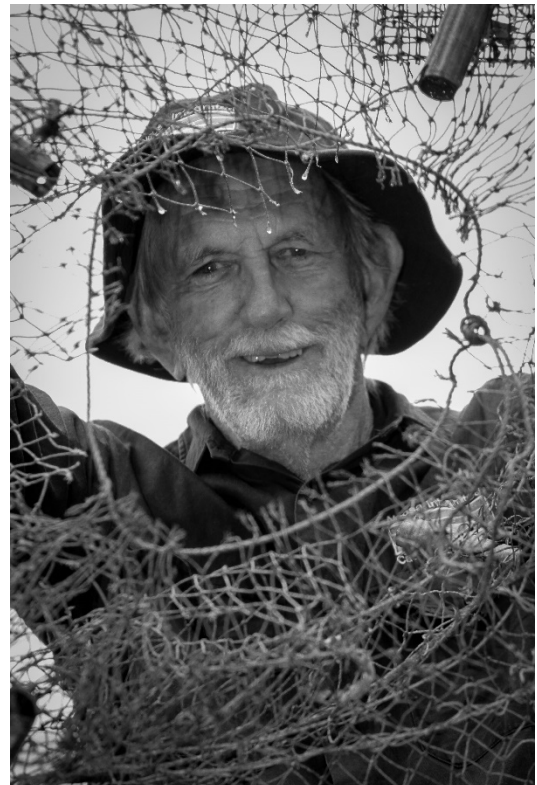
About 1 day a week, sometimes more, for NICA.

#### Do you have a certain goal that you are aiming for through volunteering?

My goal would be for Noosa to fulfil the aims of the Biosphere Reserve and demonstrate how humans can truly live in harmony with nature.

#### What do you see happening in the next 20 years if people continue the way we are?

This is a very good question and one that should concern all of us, not only in Noosa, but everywhere. If we continue on our current path, the planet will be hotter, the air will be more polluted, there will be fewer forests to absorb the carbon dioxide and the sea levels will be higher. Future generations depend on what we do now.



---

## **PORTRAIT 2. “A VALUED ALL ROUNDER”**

### **What do you do for NICA and what inspired you?**

I currently work with the River Rangers doing various activities including rubbish collection and shorebird surveys.

### **How did you become involved or what made you interested in NICA?**

A lifelong interest and working on environmental projects attracted me to NICA as an active group helping to conserve Noosa River.



### **How much work do you do for NICA and how many days do you volunteer?**

I participate on the river 2 or 3 days a month.

### **What is your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

Finding a local group which appeals to your interests and within your ability, be it the Environment, Bush Fires, SES etc. is a good way to start volunteering.

### **Do you have a certain goal that you are aiming for through volunteering?**

My main goal for volunteering with NICA is to see the Noosa River cared for and protected from the increasing volume of visitors.

### **What is your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

To become a volunteer is just a matter of finding a group who's values you feel an affinity with and contact their administration to learn more. Noosa is well placed with volunteer organisations who need all the support they can get to protect our fragile environment.

### **What do you see happening in the next 20 years if people continue the way we are?**

Especially young people are needed to keep up the good work as the whole world is under immense pressure and their future is at stake.

---

## **PORTRAIT 3. “A VOLUNTEER FOR ALL SEASONS”**

### **What work do you do for NICA and what inspired you to become a volunteer?**

I work one day a month for the Bushcare group at Giraween near where I live digging out weeds that have overtaken the natural habitat and replanting native trees and plants. Also one day a month on the River Run which involves going out on NICA's boat collecting rubbish along Noosa river banks and islands. The inspiration came from wanting to put something into the community I live in.

### **How did you become involved?**

I was asked by another member of NICA, looked into it and decided I liked their aims. Also NICA has different social events giving the opportunity to get to know other people'

### **What's your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

Look on website for NICA (Noosa Integrated Catchment Association) or telephone 5449 9650 for information and speak to someone about what you think you would like to do.

### **Do you have a certain goal that you are aiming for through volunteering?**

I would like to see our environment go back to its natural state to be seen & enjoyed by future generations, rather than see it covered in overgrown vines, weeds & people's discarded rubbish.



### **What do you see happening in the next 20 years if people continue the way we are?**

More loss of marine life, birds being caught up in fishing line, plastic, more pollution etc. We can all make a contribution in some way, no matter how small, to save the planet.

---

## **PORTRAIT 4. "THE RIVER RANGER"**



### **What do you do for NICA and what inspired you?**

I volunteer for the River Watch program which involves going out on the Noosa River in the NICA boat with other volunteers to collect and remove rubbish and report hazards. I was inspired when I moved to Noosa eleven years ago after retiring. I have always been interested in the environment and chose to live in Noosa because of the strong focus on protecting the natural environment.

### **How did you become involved or what made you interested in NICA?**

I started by learning how to do the water testing and going out in the boat with other volunteers. Next I did the training to obtain my boat licence. I have also been involved in weed removal from the sand islands and I was involved in the first recording of the mangroves along both sides of the Noosa River as a base-line for future monitoring. I also undertook seagrass mapping in various

locations under the supervision of an environmental scientist.

**How much work do you do for NICA and how many days do you volunteer?**

River Watch draws up a monthly roster and most months I go out once for four hours. Other activities are less structured - such as fundraising and the annual Clean Up Australia Day.

**What is your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

Get information and choose an area you are really interested in. Ask questions and make time to attend meetings and get information off the internet.

**Do you have a certain goal that you are aiming for through volunteering?**

I wanted to meet like-minded people and learn about the environment. The social aspect is important when you move to a new area.

**What do you see happening in the next 20 years if people continue the way we are?**

The most important global issue is CLIMATE CHANGE and the response from all levels of government and all parts of the community in order to reduce the effects on all aspects of life is critical. Reducing greenhouse gas, reducing plastics, recycling food waste and changing energy use and dealing with population changes must become a focus of all effects in relation to the environment.

---

**PORTRAIT 5. “THE URBAN WILDLIFE GARDENER”**

**What do you do for NICA and what inspired you?**

I weed and help run the Urban Wildlife Gardens for NICA. I was inspired to become a volunteer because I enjoy weeding and wanted to use my skills and help the environment.

**How did you become involved or what made you interested in NICA?**

I became involved with NICA after starting with the Council Bushcare program.

**How much work do you do for NICA and how many days do you volunteer?**

I do on average 2hours of volunteer work per week

**What is your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

Give it a go. The first try might not suit but you will find a place for you.

**Do you have a certain goal that you are aiming for through volunteering?**



I don't have a certain goal that I am wanting to obtain through volunteering. I have been able to gain paid employment from volunteering so that has been a bonus.

**How do you become a volunteer?**

I became a volunteer in the Noosa shire by ringing the Council and asking where the closest Bushcare group was.

**What do you see happening in the next 20 years if people continue the way we are?**

I see a world where people become more out of tune with the natural environment.

---

**PORTRAIT 6. "A RARE GLOSSY INDEED"**

**What do you do for NICA and what inspired you?**

I work with NICA in Bushland regeneration, Sand Island weeding, local Clean up Australia Day events. Also, I volunteer at Sunshine State Primary School, raising environmental awareness and use NICA's Fussy Glossy Book as a publicity tool for a threatened species.

**How did you become involved or what made you interested in NICA?**

Volunteering was something that I had done most of my life, and in retirement at Noosa, more time and opportunities were available. NICA was a natural progression, from my on- going association with Noosa Parks Association.



**What is your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

Look around your community, your parents, friends etc. and search for volunteering in Noosa online.

**Do you have a certain goal that you are aiming for through volunteering?**

Passing on my knowledge and understanding of our natural local habitat, its flora and fauna, and the vital need to protect what we still have.

**What is your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

**What do you see happening in the next 20 years if people continue the way we are?**

Our younger generation need to be heard, and correct our generation's past mistakes, listen to Sir David Attenborough's messages, else an uncertain future will evolve.

---

## **PORTRAIT 7. “THE BUSHCARER”**

### **What do you do for NICA and what inspired you?**

I'm one of the volunteers rehabilitating a Sand Island in the Noosa River mouth. It is critical habitat for birds migrating annually from Siberia. I assist writing grant applications and organizing on ground projects. I want to help with NICA's positive actions.

### **How did you become involved or what made you interested in NICA?**

I have belonged to the Bushcare group, Noosa Bush Beach & Creek Care for 17 years. For our group to receive government grants, we need the support of an incorporated group. NICA has provided both their members' and administrative support for 12 years.

### **How much work do you do for NICA and how many days do you volunteer?**

I volunteer 2 days a month with NICA for their on-ground rehabilitation projects and volunteer another 2 days a month with grants.

### **What is your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

Volunteering is very rewarding both mentally and physically... just do it! If you enjoy being outdoors and respect the environment, both NICA and Bushcare are a great way to get involved.

### **Do you have a certain goal that you are aiming for through volunteering?**

Invasive introduced weed vines and creepers out-compete and suffocate our native vegetation at an alarming rate. My goal is to enhance and preserve intact areas of wildlife habitat and our quality of life.



### **What do you see happening in the next 20 years if people continue the way we are?**

If people continue the way we are, the future for the planet will be bleak. There must be a time in our life, a time in the life of planet Earth when those in the driving seat realize that enough is enough. We are nearly at the point of no return as the escalating search for continued unrelenting economic growth is destroying what is special about the planet. We are the custodians of our place - earth, seas, air ... and all their species. In our search to stimulate this growth, we have been destroying and extinguishing species - mammals to insects, land to marine, mosses to trees - as well as polluting the air- and destroying ourselves and society in the process.

If it continues, the prospect is frightening, and... perhaps as smart a species as we are, we don't actually have the individual or combined intellect needed to plan and manage a sustainable future without growth, without destroying ourselves, other species and the planet in the process. Let's hope we do! When will a political party, or alliance of all parties - a Government - accept that our planet Earth is finite. Who will make a stand & draw a line in the sand & say- enough is enough- let's find another way.

## **PORTRAIT 8. “A VOLUNTEER MAGNIFIED”**

### **What do you do for NICA and what inspired you to become a volunteer?**

I am a member of 2 groups in NICA a) long term study of the number and species of waders and terns using the Noosa river estuary for feeding and / or roosting in involving both resident and migratory birds, and b) River Watch - the monitoring of the Noosa river in relation to boats, jetties, crab pots, weeds, rubbish and illegal camp sites. So I am out on the river counting birds and collecting rubbish etc on a regular basis.

My daughter was a Greenpeace activist and stimulated an interest in the environment so after my retirement environmental concerns seemed to be a useful activity to become involved with.

### **How did you become involved or what made you interested in NICA?**

NICA was supplying the boat when I first started bird monitoring so joining it was appropriate.

### **How much work do you do for NICA and how many days do you volunteer?**

2 or 3 mornings a month are spent with bird trips or River watch. Also I arrange the rostering of about 20 volunteers involved with the RW and 6 or 8 with the bird counts – another 1 or 2 days a month

### **What is your advice for people who want to start volunteering?**

Follow your dreams and incorporate environmental concerns in your everyday life. Maintain a healthy balance between concern for self and concern for others and opportunities will arise where your efforts can assist others as well

### **Do you have a certain goal that you are aiming for through volunteering?**

Only to contribute a little to the community during my retirement in a worthwhile way.

### **How do you become a volunteer?**

By joining NICA which provided a way to pursue interests and involvement in other activities.

### **What do you see happening in the next 20 years if people continue the way we are?**

The conflict between the ideas of the individuals right to pursue his/her etc own goals and the expectation of a fair go for everyone is currently out of balance. Major changes in this balance tend to occur after war, catastrophe, or other disaster. May be after this epidemic changes might occur (hard to predict whether they will be for better or worse). One hopes they are for the better for all of us.



---

## PORTRAIT 9. THE STUDENTS OF GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN COLLEGE NOOSA



Dedicated to the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of the Noosa River Catchment

[www.noosariver.com.au](http://www.noosariver.com.au)  
[admin@noosariver.com.au](mailto:admin@noosariver.com.au)  
075 449 9650