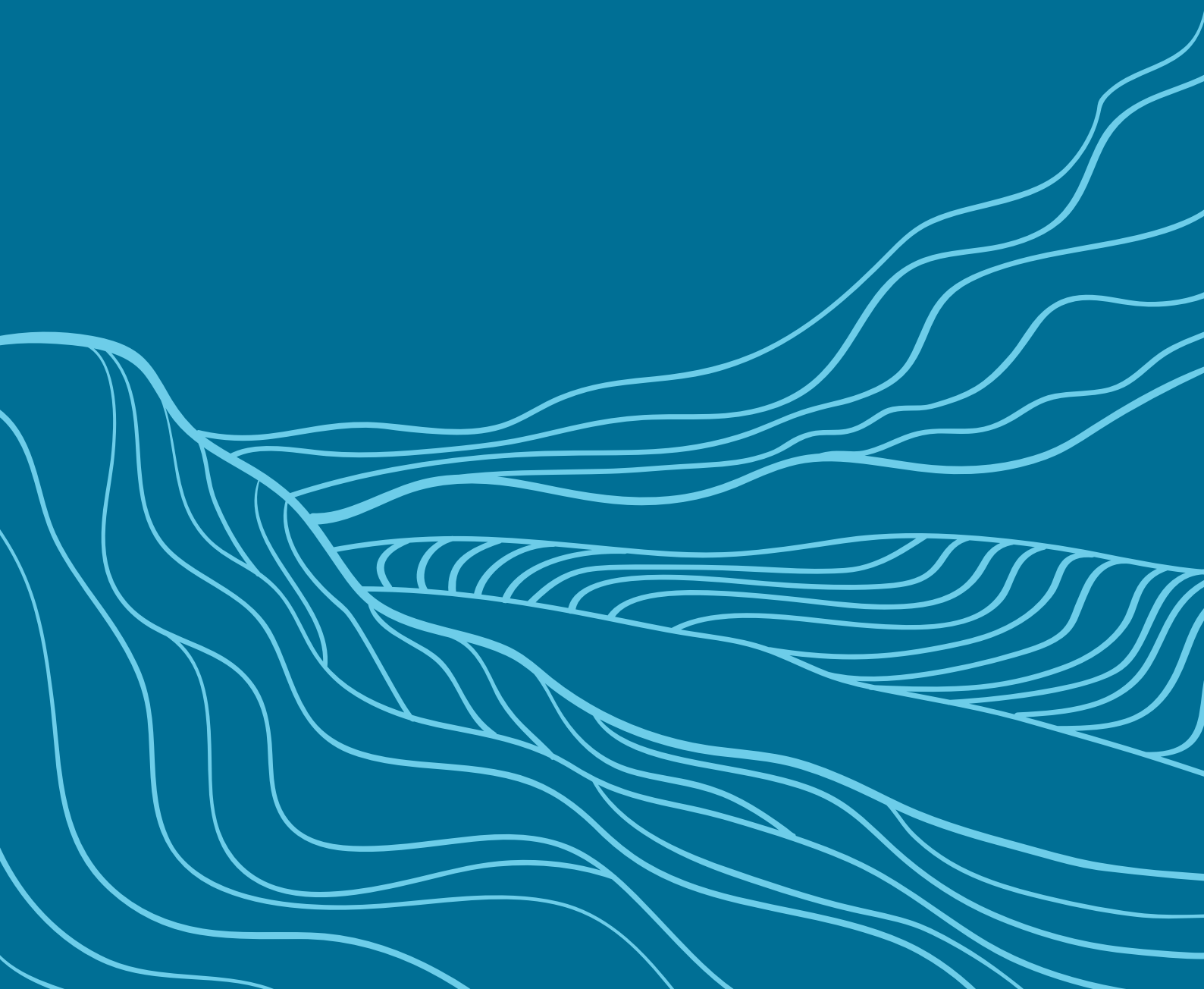


NOOSA INTEGRATED CATCHMENT ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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Acknowledgement of country

NICA acknowledges the Kabi Kabi people as the traditional owners of the land and sea of the Noosa River catchment. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and recognise the enduring role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in caring for country across Australia.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome everyone.

I would like to recognise and thank the First Nations' people and all the people who followed, as well as all the current custodians who now care for and contribute to safeguarding the Noosa River and its catchments.

On behalf of the NICA Management Committee, I wish to thank all our members, long-standing and recent, for supporting our hands-on community group.

Your membership as well as your personal and physical support contributes to our successful volunteer activities which include;

- On-ground vegetation rehabilitation.
- Fortnightly intertidal marine litter clean-ups.
- Monthly water quality testing.
- Monthly shorebird monitoring and recording.
- Community education and engagement; Clean up Australia Day.

Funds raised from NICA's book sales continue to be an important contributor to the running of NICA and help fund new publications.

Stephanie Haslam is the author of a new book 'Noosa's Native Plants – Flowering Now'. This book is hot off the press in time for Christmas. NICA member Joan Heavey has also published a book which is a valuable resource on native orchids.

I would like to thank, and thank again, Bruce Hallett, Tony Haslam, Gillian Studdock, Yanni Van Zijl, Pam Walpole and Justin Campbell, for their contribution during the last year.

After 30 years organisations often go through some fragmentation, followed by a period of reassessment to strengthen their resolve and purpose. This year 2025 your committee has been carrying out a reassessment, discovering problems and truths.

We found that we needed to strengthen the purpose and resolve, the core values of this long-established community group. We have reinforced the message that community groups are a place for community members to come together

for a shared interest or group of interests and for camaraderie.

We are aiming to increase community involvement and involve as many members and non-members as possible.

While the NICA Management Committee was assessing and resolving the way to strengthen NICA the Urban Wildlife Gardens sub-committee with a great sense of purpose has become a wonderfully productive and proactive group. We are very proud of their activities.

When the new Management Committee took over the priority was to sort out two funding grants that were about to expire. Another one, sadly, had been forfeited.

NICA's 20-year-old boat had been a good work horse, but was ageing, as are many members. We need a boat with a more stable working platform, easier to load and unload and which is easier to get on and off. With funds from a Qld Government 'Gambling Community Benefit Fund' grant together with funds from NICA we purchased a small multi-hull boat. 'Osprey' Catchment Care has proved a great asset. Thanks to Pam who did a great job with the logo.

NICA's 'Tread Lightly' project is supported by a Qld Government Engaging Science grant. Our seven varied on river excursions have had very successful outcomes, except one! It was a freezing windy wet day, and we huddled together trying to steal one another's warmth and yearning for a mug of hot soup.

One Tread Lightly event led us to discover an infestation of the invasive weed, American Sea Rocket, growing on the Sand Spit in the estuary. Following that revelation, Yanni swung into action organising great publicity on socials, in the local newspaper and on radio. The result was that we had 66 volunteers over two weeks remove thousands of plants over many hectares. It was a massive and successful undertaking.

Bruce McConkey was the 'in charge' of the Water Watch program for many years. He retired this year and moved south, closer to his family. We will miss him and

thank him for all his volunteer work for NICA.

Thanks to the Water Watch crew, who under Monique's guidance, continue to test water at 20 plus sites around the Noosa River Catchment.

We also want to thank Russ Lamb for being a wonderful and knowledgeable 'in-charger' for the Estuary Shorebird Resident and Migratory boat excursions for 'Tread Lightly'. They were very popular. Thanks also to the Shorebird crew who have done a mighty job each month, over 20 years and continue to monitor and count the Shorebirds/Waders in the estuary.

Yet more thanks to Roger Kelly and the band of River Rangers who 'get down and dirty' each fortnight collecting seemingly never-ending amount of marine litter out of the Noosa River.

Thanks also to Marg and Tony King who have been organising a monthly casual get-together, despite some weather uncertainties. All attendees found them most enjoyable. If you haven't been yet, come along, they are good fun.

Thanks to the Noosa Yacht and Rowing Club for storing the 'Osprey'. Thanks also to the Noosa Ferry for supporting us today.

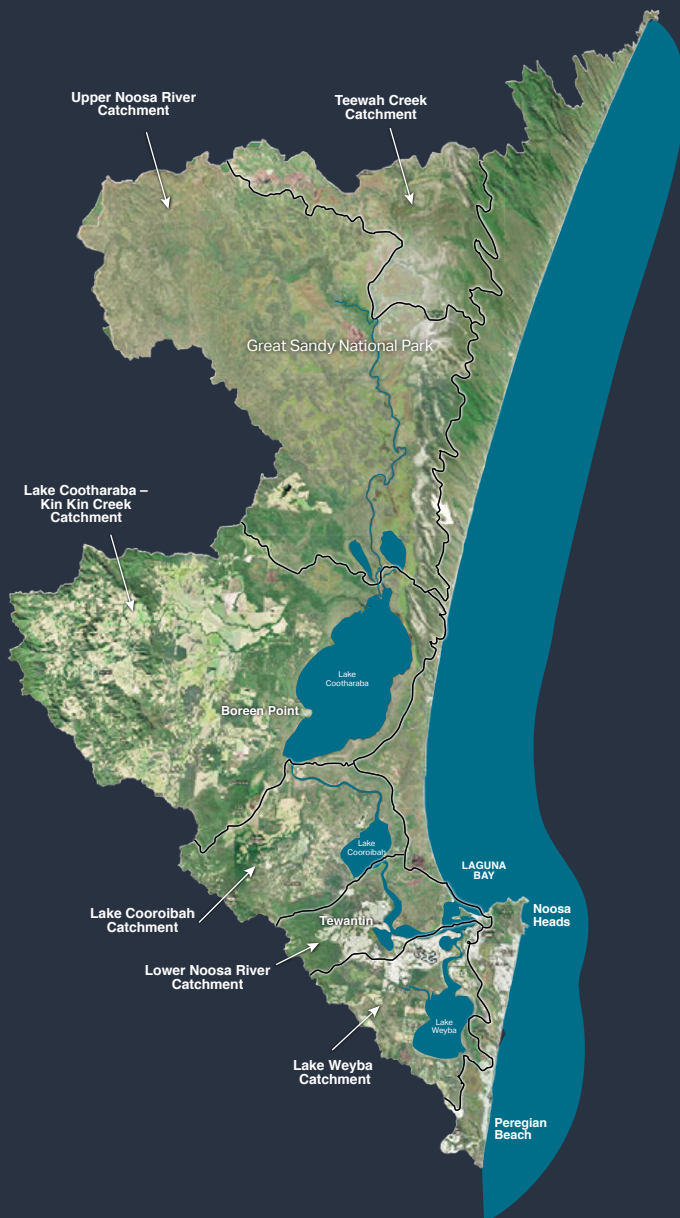
Noosa Council support us with operating expense funds and this has helped enable 915 volunteers to work for 3,200 hours so far this year, with a labour value of \$145,000 to the Council and community. A big thank you to Noosa Council.

Nearly finally, Bruce is stepping down from the Management Committee this year after stints as President and Vice-President over many previous years. He agreed to join us this year to help with the re-assessment. He will continue to be the 'In Charger' for the Girraween Bushcare group and organise the trips to the Sand and Sheep Islands. A big thanks to Bruce.

Finally, another big thanks to our volunteers, members and non-members alike.

JILL CAMPBELL

NICA'S PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES



“The conservation and ecologically sustainable use of the Noosa River catchment”

854km²
at the intersection of the
Macleay-McPherson
overlap

1,505km
of coastal lagoons,
rivers and creeks

61
regional ecosystems

1,340
plant species

350
terrestrial vertebrate
animals

217
bird species

2
nationally significant
wetlands

A community of over
54,000
residents

NICA'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

Strengthen conservation of the Noosa River catchment

Enhance community knowledge

Improve awareness and understanding across the community

Contribute to improved water quality

Collaborate with, and support, partners within the catchment

Support science-based intervention to improve long-term sustainability

Explore and broaden funding sources

For
29 years

one community organisation
dedicated to its conservation
and sustainable use

2025 NICA TREASURER’S REPORT

When the current Management Committee took over the reins in 2024, one of the major tasks was to reconcile and get a handle on what we had inherited. Understandably, there were different approaches, and some activities had to be reassessed.

This turned out to be no small task and could not have been completed without the diligence and dedication of our Office Administrator and bookkeeper, Gillian Studdock. So, on behalf of NICA, I would like to offer our fulsome thanks to Gillian for helping us through the transition between the Management Committees.

We engaged Stratogen Accounting to compile the special purposes financial statement of Noosa Integrated Catchment Association Inc. and Advanced Business Advisors to carry out an audit. The audited Financial Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 is available for members to peruse.

The following are the key financial outcomes in summary.

TRADING INCOME (Book Sales)	2025	2024
Total Trading Income	\$13,296	\$25,734
Gross Profit from Trading	\$5,317	\$13,569
PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT	2025	2024
Total Income	\$148,610	\$189,624
Total Expenses	\$109,373	\$230,986
Profit from ordinary activities	\$39,237	(\$41,362)

As is seen from the figures above, book sales are down from \$25,734 to \$13,296 with associated ‘profit’ falling from \$13,569 to \$5,317.

However, a welcome improvement in the Profit from Ordinary Activities figures has seen NICA go from a loss of (\$41,362) in 2024 to a gain of \$39,237 in 2025, a turnaround of \$80,599.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT: NOOSA RIVER CATCHMENT FUND

The Noosa River Catchment Fund, NICA’s tax-deductible gift recipient, received over \$1,000 in community donations for FY2025. No funding was allocated to projects this year. The NRCF concluded FY2025 with \$26,691 in cash at the bank.

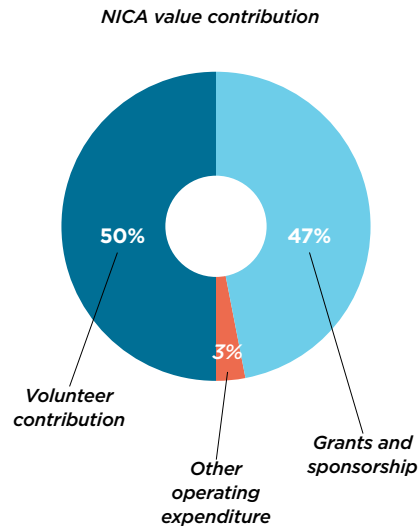
The management of the Noosa River Catchment Fund has reverted to the NICA Committee, following recent changes to the Incorporated Associations Act by the Queensland Government.

NICA’S VALUE CONTRIBUTION

NICA’s management committee, program coordinators and the members who participate in our programs are all volunteers from the Noosa community. Our programs, including expenditure on equipment and contractors, are funded through a combination of grants from third parties, donations from the community or the sale of merchandise and other income streams from NICA.

The contributions of volunteers towards NICA’s programs (“in-kind” contributions), multiply the value of the grant and other funds received or deployed by NICA toward the Noosa catchment. In line with guidance from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, NICA applies an “in-kind” value of \$46 per volunteer hour contributed.

In FY2022, NICA estimates that our volunteers contributed over 5,000 hours toward our programs and the catchment – significantly multiplying every \$1 invested in our programs through grants and other funds.



NICA'S INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Since 1996, NICA's aim has been the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of the Noosa River catchment. NICA's integrated catchment management program is aligned to that purpose and organised across four linked thematics:



CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

including our Bushcare, Urban Wildlife Gardens and Get Your Wetlands programs;



WATERWAYS

including our Riverwatch, Waterwatch programs and aligned programs;



THREATENED SPECIES

including our high priority biodiversity conservation programs (e.g. migratory shorebirds, aquatic ecosystems, flora species);



COMMUNITY AND AWARENESS

spanning our botanical publications, Monday with NICA forum and community participation events (Clean Up Australia Day, Wildflower Festival, Tread Lightly).

NICA's activities and programs utilise the support of hundreds of volunteers of all ages from across our community, supported by a panel of expert contractors and external consultants.

NICA targets best-in-class citizen science outcomes and attracts funding to support our programs from grants, donations, merchandise and other income streams.





WATERWAYS

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

RIVERWATCH



The five routes, visited in regular sequence



Gus Allen, Sam Forrest and Anne McGovern with rubbish from Route 3, August 13



Unidentified crab pot with its GPS location

This program was greatly enhanced in 2025 by the commissioning of the cat-hulled Osprey, which replaced the tired old NICA runabout, thanks to support funding from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund.

The purposes of the program remain the same, viz; to collect rubbish and fishing tackle that has gathered along the shoreline and around illicit campsites; to record the presence of derelict watercraft, crab-pots and campsites, and to note any other issues of significance to wildlife and proper river management. GPS coordinates of problem locations are included with photographs.

Five routes have been selected to cover as much of the Noosa-Weyba estuary as can be readily accessed, and the aim has been to patrol them in turn, so each is visited every two months or so. Collected rubbish is spread out and photographed before skipping, but a detailed audit of this material has been discontinued.

Some routes have been visited three times now, yet the amount of rubbish retrieved on revisits remains considerable, so the frequency of trips seems to be about right.

It is by now apparent that crab-pot management in this system is sadly astray. Very rare pots carry the required identification, and why would they? Spontaneous removal of these illicit pots does not seem to be a priority for the Boating & Fisheries division of the Qld Dept. Primary Industries, although they receive our Riverwatch reports and sometimes collect pots that we locate.





PROJECT SNAPSHOT

NICA'S NEW BOAT - OSPREY

Since our first launch of Osprey on 23rd April, our NICA volunteers have logged 15 Riverwatch clean-up trips, totalling 248 hours of work.

The Osprey has made the Riverwatch programme far more effective, allowing crews to retrieve all types of rubbish from the river and the littoral tidal flats.

Our fortnightly Riverwatch will continue in 2026, and all volunteers will be welcome on board.



15

Riverwatch clean-up trips

248

volunteer hours
contributed

NICA CAPABILITIES

DRONE

NICA's CASA-certified UAV pilot, Klaus Horner, operates our new Mavic Air-2S drone over the river, thanks to support from the office of Sandy Bolton MP. The drone is used to support multiple catchment and waterways programs by capturing and processing high resolution aerial imagery for NICA's project teams.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

WATERWATCH



NICA's Water Watch program has been steady for 2025, with a growing team of over 20 dedicated volunteers who bring knowledge, curiosity and passion to the project.

27 sites have been tested monthly across the Noosa River catchment, from Kin Kin Creek in the north to Murdering Creek in the south. Sites are either accessed by foot, or by one of the two vessels, including the new NICA boat 'Osprey'. Data collected includes Temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$), pH, Dissolved Oxygen (DO), Electrical Conductivity (EC), Turbidity (NTU), Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) and Salinity (ppt), as well as observational data such as weather influences and fauna observed. Nutrient samples test for Total Nitrogen, Total Phosphorus, Ammonia as N, Phosphate as P and Nitrate + Nitrite.

Noosa Council has continued to support and help direct the program, including funding the project coordinator and purchasing two new Horiba U-52 Water Quality meters for the teams to use. This has been greatly appreciated and essential to ensuring accurate data collection with fewer malfunctions. The five nutrient sites being tested monthly have been reduced to three, including two in Noosa Waters Canals and one in Kin Kin Creek above Lake Como. A broader scope of nutrient testing is now being led by Noosa Council at around 12 key sites. This is also complemented by a stormwater outlet testing project and sediment coring project in Lake Cootharaba, both led by Noosa Council, but complementary to NICA's water quality testing.

Data is uploaded onto the Swim Local platform and downloadable for a specific focus. This year, data has been accessed by researchers and local groups, including researchers at the University of the Sunshine Coast, who are analysing populations of Bull Sharks in the catchment. Environmental data, such as water temperatures, salinity, and turbidity, could help identify preferred habitats. Groups have also accessed data to support regenerative agriculture in the Noosa Shire.

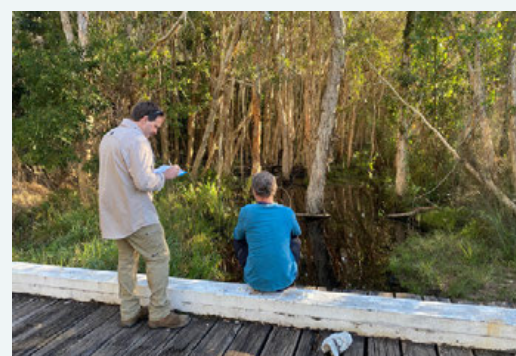
To briefly summarise the results in the data collected for the 2025 annual year-to-date:

January to March recorded heavy rainfall, strong winds, and flooding—linked to Cyclone Alfred and major inland rain—which caused high turbidity and low dissolved oxygen (DO%) across sites as sediments and organic matter were flushed through the system. Water appeared darker, especially in Tronson's Canal and Wooroi Creek, from tannin and sediment inputs.

Late March heavy rain events, as well as persistent rainfall through April, May, and June, led to elevated turbidity, low pH, and low DO%, particularly in April. Sediment disturbance and runoff were widespread. These conditions indicate rainfall-driven erosion and organic loading. WOO550 (Wooroi Creek, George St) showed a notable impact, warranting targeted monitoring and sediment source investigations to guide management and reduce long-term effects.

As rainfall eased by the July-September quarter, temperatures rose, and turbidity declined, resulting in clearer, more stable conditions. DO% remained variable, with very low levels at stagnant sites indicating ongoing oxygen stress during dry periods. Several sites also recorded below-average pH, suggesting continued acidic influence from soils and organic inputs. Overall, water quality improved toward spring, though low-flow oxygen depletion remains a key concern.

An end-of-year analysis will be undertaken to include scorecards that compare the last two years of data with historical data and assess how this aligns with the DETSI guidelines. The DETSI Water Quality Objectives for the region are currently under analysis, and our data will help amend these to be locally relevant. The goal of the annual reporting is to give a snapshot of the catchment's health, promote projects and decision making to strengthen conservation of the Noosa River catchment, as well as support change to some of the current DETSI WQOs.





CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT





PROGRAM OVERVIEW

GIRRAWEE BUSHCARE

This group has been weeding and restoring the native vegetation for many years in the Girraween Nature Refuge, which borders the Noosa National Park. We originally started behind Ozcare, then gradually worked north along Cooyar Street, then along Sunshine Beach Road, down Bicentennial Drive, and around the edge of the Dolphins Rugby fields.

We have received several grants over the years to help us do this work. One was a 12-month grant awarded through the Bushfire Recovery for Wildlife and Habitat Community Grants program. The aim was, and still is, to recover and build resilience for flora and fauna.

We work on the last Tuesday of the month, so if you have a spare couple of hours (8 am to 10 am, followed by morning tea), then contact the NICA office.

Some photos below show one of our restoration success stories.



Above: Before and after planting



Above: Before planting
Below: Planting event





URBAN WILDLIFE GARDENS



The Urban Wildlife Gardens program has achieved its objectives in the 2024/25 financial year, with support from NICA and funding from Noosa Council through its Alliance Partnership. Funding was also gratefully received from Member for Noosa Sandy Bolton MP.

There has been a steady increase in members from 204 at the end of June 2024 to 225 at the end of June 2025.

UWG's core objective is to provide a service for urban landowners who want to create gardens that support and encourage native wildlife and enhance biodiversity. This has been successfully achieved through regular workshops, open garden visits and events organised in partnership with other organisations.

Events

Noosa Council Alliance funding enabled the UWG Program Coordinator to provide a Garden Visit to all new members and share information and resources to help them create wildlife gardens.

Workshops drew on local experts to present information on local native plants and wildlife, including providing habitat with nest boxes, establishing frog habitat and understanding the role of spiders in the garden.

There were several Open Wildlife Garden Visits to show how individuals have used native plants to create wildlife havens in different parts of Noosa Shire.

Other events included a Burgess Creek Walk and Talk, which explored the role that urban gardeners in the catchment can play to protect adjacent natural areas.





Collaboration

During the year, UWG increased engagement with other groups and programs, providing opportunities for collaboration and exchange of ideas. This included an Exhibition promoting UWG in June at Cooroy Library.

UWG has worked in partnership with Noosa Council to engage with their environmental programs and broaden our outreach to the community. In a joint approach with two landholders, UWG received funding through the Council's Climate Change Adaptation Program for the installation of two verge gardens in the Noosa Shire during the 2025/2026 financial year.

UWG also liaised with Noosa Council to plan a Community Workshop for later in the year. The event is designed to engage with the broader community and increase awareness of the importance of using local native plants to create habitat, as well as the damage that weeds and invasive species can cause to our bushland areas.

The UWG tour of the Hinterland Adventure Playground with Noosa Council staff from Parks and Gardens and Infrastructure Services provided an opportunity to explore how council has integrated a nature-based all-abilities play area with significant wildlife habitat adjacent to the riparian corridor of Cooroy Creek.

UWG also worked in partnership with Noosa and District Landcare to run a Native Garden Clinic at the Pomona HinterHub, featuring experts from both organisations, with support from a Backyards for Biodiversity member and a Land for Wildlife Officer.

UWG subcommittee member, Shaun, presented a 'Climate Resilient Landscapes in Noosa' talk for Landcare Linkup.

Urban Wildlife Gardens became an associate member of Friends of Noosa Botanic Gardens and organised a Bush Tucker Walk there with a Gubbi Gubbi elder. UWG subcommittee members supported the Bushcare National Tree Day, helping to plant trees at Belli Creek.

Other Activities

A major accomplishment during the year was the establishment of a dedicated UWG Website in January. This, along with the Monthly UWG Newsletter, will increase the program's reach and provide readily available information and resources to members and the general community.

Another highlight was UWG subcommittee member, Tony Haslam, receiving a Noosa Queensland Australia Day Award for his voluntary work over more than 20 years at NICA and UWG.

UWG regularly publishes an article about local native plants in the Your Local Lifestyle paper, promoting the program throughout the Noosa Shire.

What's in the future for UWG?

UWG looks forward to running the Community Workshops in partnership with Noosa Council in 2025/ 2026 to reach out to the broader community. The installation of three demonstration verge gardens in Peregrine Beach, Castaways Beach and Pomona, and the planned following media coverage, will provide publicity for UWG and Council's Greening Noosa Policy.

UWG plans to follow up on the Frog Habitat Workshop by installing a demonstration frog habitat pond in the local community. There will also be a focus on the social aspect of the program to see increased engagement with existing and new members. This will start with inviting members to 'Drinks at the River' in December.

UWG will continue to encourage members to actively engage on UWG's Facebook page by sharing content and to start using Instagram more effectively.

UWG looks forward to the publication, through NICA, of Stephanie Haslam's new book, 'Noosa's Native Plants – Flowering Now', which will provide another valuable resource for urban wildlife gardeners.

UWG continually strives to improve engagement with members, other community groups and the wider community to increase awareness of the importance of local native plants for wildlife and biodiversity.



ISLANDS RESTORATION PROGRAM

Restoring degraded mangrove and saltmarsh habitat to preserve threatened ecosystems and high priority species, including shorebirds amongst the islands of the lower Noosa River, remained a priority for our on-river volunteer Bushcare teams, led by Jill Campbell and Bruce Hallett.

Multiple excursions to the Sand Island and more recently Sheep Island removed hundreds of kilograms of invasive weed species and marine debris, from over five acres of vulnerable estuarine wetland, all by hand. Encouragingly, native flora species, particularly mangroves, demonstrated excellent resilience with the habitat slowly recovering and, in some areas expanding and providing additional cover and complexity for diverse and healthy estuarine ecosystems. The team looks forward to continuing this important work next year and always welcome new volunteers.



Bushcare volunteers at work on the Sand Island, Noosa River estuary.



Bushcare volunteers after a morning's work on the Sand Island, Noosa River estuary.



NOOSA BUSH, BEACH AND CREEK CARE



Our bushcare group has been actively carrying out bushland, creek and dunal rehabilitation works since 2004.

NICA has been the auspice partner for our 21 grants since 2008. Together, we have been a great team.

Many of our Bushcare group also support NICA's on-ground activities, particularly with the Sand Island and Girraween.

Our 3-year Qld Government grant, where we have been successfully working on six sites in the National Parks, including Sheep Island, officially finishes this year. However, our activities will continue.

In 2025, Noosa Bush Beach and Creek Care volunteers have held 42 working bees across 12 project areas, totalling 2,500 hours to date and a labour value of \$112,500 to the community.

We are a happy, efficient mob and are proud of all our rehabilitation activities. Morning tea is always a special time to catch up and solve the world's problems.

Special thanks to all the 'weeder feeders' and Sheryl Hedges, who has unfailingly made us something substantial each week since 2011.





PROJECT SNAPSHOT

TREAD LIGHTLY – ENGAGING SCIENCE GRANT

NICA has been successfully running for 12 months under the Queensland Government Engaging Science Grant – “Tread Lightly.”

The grant involves a series of eight half-day field trips, each with a different theme and target participants.

So far, there have been seven in the Noosa River and Estuary, covering topics including Migratory Shorebirds, Resident Shorebirds, History of the Noosa Islands and their importance to the Lake Systems,

Salt Marshes, Mangroves, Marine Life, Tidal ecosystems, Flora of Sheep Island, Erosion and pollution, and, recently, American Sea Rocket.

Yet to come is an investigative walk to document the flora and marine life of Cranks Creek, which flows into Lake Doonella.



PROJECT SNAPSHOT

RALLY ROUND

Rehabilitate Noosa's National and Conservation Parks

For three years, Noosa Bush Beach and Creek Care (NBBCC) have been successfully actioning their Queensland Government's Community Sustainability Action Grant, Conservation – “Rally Round, Rehabilitate Noosa's National and Conservation Parks”. NICA is the Auspice Partner.

To date, on this project, NBBCC has held 75 working bees, totalling 3005 volunteer hours, across 25 ha at six distinct sites.

The major sites include Sheep Island, Tewantin National Park Scientific Area 37, Laguna Lookout steep embankment, the Dolphin Point area, Sunshine Beach Road and Parkedge Road NNP park perimeter. Each of the six sites has had a different major target invasive weed.





THREATENED SPECIES





PROGRAM OVERVIEW

SHOREBIRDS AND TERNS

Initially started in 2005, monthly shorebird surveys are now in their 21st year and still going strong. The survey team aims to survey every calendar month and has done so for the last 20 months. This year, we bid a fond farewell to pioneer surveyors Jill Denning and Allan Briggs, who both retain an active interest in our work and will always be welcomed aboard. Judy Coles also retired from her recording duties this year.

All surveys have concentrated on the riverbanks, bars and islands between O Boats and the river mouth. Species diversity held steady, averaging 19 per survey, with a low of 16 in May and a peak of 23 in March. However, total bird numbers continued their gradual decline, ranging from 162 in July to a remarkable 3,066 in March. Only three months exceeded 1,000 birds, largely due to resident Crested Terns in October and migratory Common Terns in January and March. Nesting activity was limited to two resident species – Red-capped Plover and Beach Stone-curlew – with eggs observed but no fledglings recorded to date. March brought some notable sightings, including a single Far Eastern Curlew, a Sanderling, and an impressive 2,545 Common Terns.

Cyclone Alfred's arrival in March provided some interesting and rare sightings with Sooty and Roseate Terns, Greater and Lesser Frigatebirds, and a Peregrine Falcon

spotted at the river mouth. Sadly, none remained by the time of the formal March survey.

Members of the team also contributed to two NICA Tread Lightly community events, with participants being shown the methods of spotting, identification and counting used by the team during surveys. Team members also joined the weeding group to protect an active Red-capped plover nest during the removal of the invasive American sea-rocket. We continue to contribute to the Queensland Wader Study Group's extensive database, ensuring our local efforts support broader conservation efforts.

We extend our thanks to O Boats and Noosa Council for their ongoing support. This year also saw the welcome addition of Jean, Juanita and Angela to the team, joining John, Richard and Russ in looking forward to each and every survey.





COMMUNITY AND AWARENESS





PROJECT SHAPSHOT

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY IN NOOSA



Summary points

1. Confirmed collection sites = 16
2. Volunteers registered, as per collected sign-on sheets = 99
3. Site Supervisors were very willing, helpful and enthusiastic.
4. Clean Up reports - five sites completed the CUAD detailed report template, 2 completed only the summary reports, and nine sites have either not completed or not returned their report.
5. Peter Hunnam has produced a report, "Noosa River Rubbish Audit 2025", that provides a high level of detail on the rubbish collected and analysed from river-based sites.
6. Paid newspaper advertising was once again through Noosa Today and Cooroy Rag, which included an editorial news story. This year also saw paid advertising on Facebook, which seemed to achieve good reach and a good number of 'Likes'.
7. Great communication and support from Cleanaway, who dropped off wheelie bins at each site, and a skip bin at Wooroi Day Use Area.
8. Great support again from Noosa Shire Council, and Tourism Noosa through the Plastic-Free Noosa program.

Observations and suggestions

1. Some coordinators mentioned the trend towards a decreasing number of volunteers compared to previous CUADs. The site of Federal was dropped this year on the recommendation of their coordinator (who had been doing the role for years).
2. Some coordinators mentioned that there's less rubbish to clean up compared to previous years, perhaps due to better community attitudes about dropping rubbish, or that "it's CUAD every day in our area".
3. One coordinator mentioned that the Clean Up for Turtle Hatchlings initiative, which runs a month prior to CUAD, often uses the same volunteers and the same beach sites as CUAD. The proximity of the two events may diminish the enthusiasm for CUAD at these beach sites.
4. Facebook advertising with targets to community groups in the region seems to be a very effective way of promoting CUAD/NICA messages.
5. Asking site supervisors to undertake a detailed analysis of rubbish may be acceptable to some, but not all. While supervisors were asked to attempt to complete the detailed or at least the summary clean-up report, the majority did neither. In my opinion, this is understandable, as volunteers may feel that their time is better spent collecting rubbish than analysing it.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

SUNSHINE COAST WILDFLOWER FESTIVAL

A summary of events hosted by NICA and UWG in the Sunshine Coast Wildflower Festival, 16-31 August 2025.

NICA/UWG hosted three events in the 2025 Sunshine Coast Wildflower Festival:

Tue 19 August	Wildflower Walk, Arthur Harrold Refuge, Noosa North Shore
Tue 26 August	The Battle to Save the Marcus High Dunes, Noosa National Park
Sun 31 August	Wildflower Walk, Noosa National Park Headland section

A summary of the events including guides, volunteers and attendance numbers is shown in Table 1

Table 1 Summary of key information from three walks hosted by NICA/UWG

Walk	Date	Guide	Volunteers	# bookings available	# participants (+ vols)	# no-shows	# late cancellations	# total
Arthur Harrold Refuge, Noosa North Shore	19 Aug 2025	Sarah Lawson Dave Burrows (Noosa Council)	Joan Heavey Bruce Hallet Vanessa Presling Keron Hilton	30	17 + 6	3	8	23
Marcus High Dunes	26 Aug 2025	Shaun Walsh	Pam Walpole Vanessa Presling Keron Hilton	15	12 + 3	4	5	15
Noosa National Park Headland Section	31 Aug 2025	Sarah Lawson	Kay Southam Bruce Hallet	15	7 + 3	7	4	10





Bookings and promotion

This year, booking numbers at the Noosa National Park and Marcus High Dunes walk were limited to 15 as per QPWS requirements (otherwise a permit would be required). Sarah advised QPWS of walk location and dates several weeks prior via this link www.qld.gov.au/environment/parks/permits/organised-events.

Events were set up in Eventbrite with assistance from Gill Studdock and were promoted via NICA and UWG Facebook pages. Many thanks to Gill for her time and effort in supporting Sarah.

All three events booked out with people on the waitlist for each. A reminder email was sent four days before each event to give people time to cancel if they were no longer able to attend, so that tickets could be released to others on the waitlist.

There were significant numbers of no-shows and late cancellations across all three events, particularly for the Noosa National Park walk. Other event organisers, such as Sue Davis from Wild/flower Women and ANPSA Wallum Study Group leader Hilary Pearl, both commented on high numbers of no-shows this year, even when tickets had been purchased. Illness seemed to be a common reason for cancellation.

Volunteers and guides

Many thanks to Dave Burrows from Noosa Council for collaborating on the Arthur Harrold walk. His fantastic botanical and historical knowledge and enthusiasm were greatly appreciated by all.

Many thanks to Shaun Walsh for his

thorough research and engaging story telling about the Battle to Save the High Dunes – and for highlighting the efforts of those who came before us and the incredible outcome achieved. It is a story that could be published somewhere!

Thank you to all volunteers who greeted and checked in participants, kept an eye on stragglers during the walks, and contributed their plant identification and botany knowledge to the group – the walks are enriched by collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Safety and logistics

A risk assessment was available for participants to read on arrival, and participants were required to sign an acknowledgement of the risks. The guides also talked about the risks and controls at the beginning of each walk. These included losing the group/getting lost, slips and trips (in wet weather) and snakes and ticks.

Participants were checked in to the Arthur Harrold walk on the Tewantin side of the river, before carpooling across on the ferry.

Weather and site conditions

The weather was cool and wet for the first week. The Arthur Harrold walk went ahead despite the rain early that morning. The first hour of the walk was clear, then heavy rain persisted for the remainder of the walk

The weather for the remaining two walks was sunny and clear

At Arthur Harrold, the flower display was minimal compared to previous years. However, the flowering at Noosa National Park and the Marcus High Dunes was

spectacular.

Feedback

Feedback from participants at all three walks was very positive, even in the pouring rain at Arthur Harrold. NICA could consider sending feedback forms to participants in future if more formal feedback was required

Suggestions for future

Eventbrite is a great site for organising events – however, the task of organising bookings, answering emails, sending reminders, etc, is significant for three events. In the future, NICA could consider charging participants to attend – say \$10, which could cover the admin costs of organising the walk and may make “no-shows” less likely.

Other

This year, Wendy Cliff from Sunshine Coast Council outsourced the coordination of the Sunshine Coast Wildflower Festival to Sarah Lawson/NICA. SCC provided funding for Sarah to coordinate the program (via NICA), as well as providing funding for printing costs for flyers.

There was a focus on expanding the types of activities offered this year, including hands-on native plant propagation (Coolum Community Native Nursery), a focus on the legacy of environmental activism in the Marcus High Dunes (Shaun Walsh - UWG), and threatened plant survey training for community groups (Paul Donatiu, Queensland Threatened Plant Network and Noosa Landcare). The new activity hosts provided positive feedback about their events.



Hibbertia scandens – Twining Guinea Flower





PROJECT SHAPSHOT

NICA PUBLICATIONS

The 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 in catchment management and education, an important function which NICA facilitates well.

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

NICA has also published 'Fussy Glossies', a children's book on the plight of the vulnerable Glossy black cockatoos, written by Catherine Cheung.

NICA has recently published 'Noosa's Native Plants - Flowering Now' by Stephanie Haslam. This book is now available for sale and would make an excellent Christmas present.

This year we have added to our SHOP on NICA's website Joan Heavey's recently published book, 'A Field Guide to Native Orchids of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve & the Sunshine, Cooloolool and Fraser Coasts.' We have also added to our SHOP 'Noosa Coast - Coastal Custodian's Guidebook' published by Sharyn Kerrigan and Rochelle Gooch.



PROJECT SHAPSHOT

NOOSA'S NATIVE PLANTS WEBSITE



The first iteration of Noosa's Native Plants website came on the scene some years ago. It met the basic awareness raising and community education aspects identified in the Noosa River Catchment Management Strategy

During that time, it had one major upgrade, but technology had overtaken it. So, Noosa Council gave NICA a grant to migrate the data and functionality of the existing Noosa's Native Plants website onto a modern platform with improved access via smart phones, tablets and personal computers, and in the process of migration incorporate up to date search capacity.

The website remains an important resource used frequently and freely by members of the public and NRM practitioners throughout South-East Qld. A primary purpose is to demystify and raise awareness of local native plants with colour photographs and basic botanical information on over 1,300 plant species in Noosa Shire. It includes traditional and cultural uses of the plants by aboriginal people and early European settlers. There is landscaping advice, and species lists for many localities within the Noosa Shire and the facility to scroll through these and select plants to obtain information about them. The website is an excellent reference and freely available on the internet.

It is now about to undergo a staged revision by members of the Urban Wildlife Gardens program to further update its functionality and ensure that the information contained in the website is up to date and relevant.

www.noosasnativeplants.com.au



NICA SOCIALS

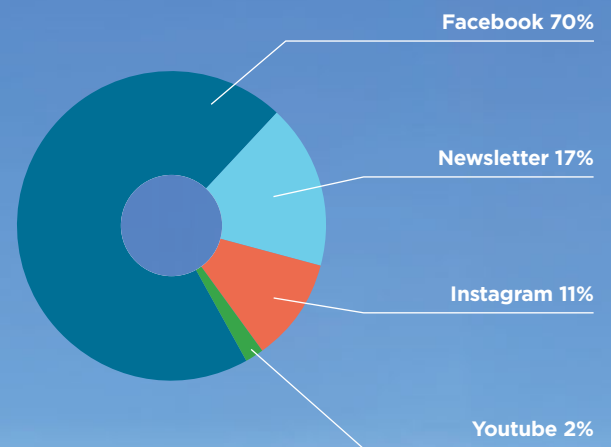
We have had some extremely enjoyable and entertaining evenings with good company at special, different locations. The first one was held at Laguna Lookout.

Sometimes it has been 'bring your own nibbles and drinks', and on three occasions we have had a Theme Night. A Trivia Quiz, a Yorkshire Theme and a Fish and Chip night on Gympie Terrace at the Boathouse. Thank you, everybody, for joining us, and we will see you next year for more fun.

NICA IN PROFILE

Through increased program activity and the production of engaging content, NICA continued to raise its profile and deliver its message to the Noosa community and further afield. Impressively, NICA's cross-media presence now extends to almost 2,500 independent subscribers across our channels.

Followers



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANKS

NICA is grateful to the ongoing support and assistance of our partners and sponsors.

PROJECT AND FUNDING SPONSORS



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