

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2025

There is plenty of news since our June 2023 and December 2024 newsletters.

We've gained new people and farewelled others. Respect, tolerance, patience – these are key ingredients in the alchemy of community projects. A shared vision is still unfolding, with new and returning projects underway.

Check out our Strategic Goals, and consider some volunteering with us! Membership renewals are also much appreciated.



CONTENTS:

- Koala Habitat Project
- Eucalyptus Day at Mt Christopherson
- Spring 2024 Open Day
- Dandarrga Landcare Native Nursery News
- Dandarrga Landcare Regen News
- Community Garden News
- Dorriggo Seed Savers News
- Kitchen upgrade
- Tea Towels
- Finances
- Volunteering with DCN
- Strategic Goals and Initiatives for 2025-26
- Who's Who at DCN and Secretary's Report



We've had abundant organic harvests from the **community gardens**, and enjoyed satisfying team work. Together we have planted, weeded, and whipper-snipped. We have watered, mulched, made compost, laid paths, gathered seed and harvested tomatoes, potkins, lettuce, kale, leeks, beans, cucumbers, garlic, spuds, chokoes and persimmons. See **Community Garden News** for more.



The team who propagate and sell the **native plants** (on site and from the Rainforest Centre Barrow) are becoming quite efficient and professional at processing seed, potting up, weeding and pot-washing (though no-one much enjoys the pot-washing!)

We have expanded into another large renovated shadehouse to keep up with demand. Our local seed donors have been bringing in seed and seedlings of an exciting range of species. See **Native Nursery News** for more.



Despite the challenges of flooding and small leaf privet, the unflappable **regen teams** have been out and about on the waterways, weeding and planting. The last year has been perfect for rapid growth of new riverside plantings, noticeably enhancing the river habitats for both people and wildlife.

The **Bielsdown River Walk** team have moved on, after four years of support from Dandarrga Landcare and DCN. They are now working with Bellingen Landcare, who are the new Crown Lands License holder. Check out their work in the Bielsdown River Walk Journals on our website. For more news about our local regen projects, see **Regen News**

Excellent work has been done by various local friends who contracted to upgrade the kitchen, install LED's in the office, build steps, install irrigation, lay gravel and repair shadehouses. The nursery and gardens are looking shipshape. We are also blessed with the most efficient office staff, our new WHS officer (Paulette) is on the ball and our highly inspiring but retiring chairperson (Katie) is a whiz at planning. DCN is now a **Charity**, and we have a **Business Plan and Strategic goals**.

The **Koala Project** team completed a two year funded project to plant koala habitat corridors and produce new vegetation mapping for the Dorriggo Plateau. The maps are now online and available to all.

Read on to learn more >

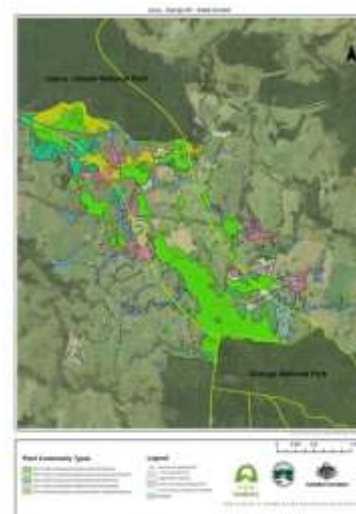
Koala Habitat Restoration Project Completed



A federally funded two year project has been successfully completed. Koala habitat has been planted at Mackays Creek Road and Junuy Julum; Dorriggo Plateau Koala Habitat maps are online

[More info here on our website](#)

Our digital vegetation mapping of the biodiversity corridors on the Dorriggo plateau is now available as [an interactive map on the SEED database.](#)



Zoom in to the Dorriggo Plateau on the Map

Choose your preferred base layer

Click on a polygon for more information on the Plant Community Type (PCT)

You can also download the spatial data for use on your own GIS system.

This mapping was done as a part of our Koala Habitat Restoration Project funded by the Australian Government.

Eucalyptus Day at Mt Christopherson



On National Eucalyptus Day 22nd March, Mount Christopherson was a unique venue to appreciate the spectacular natural landscapes of the Dorriggo Plateau, and learn more about our local eucalypts and how to create koala habitat.

Local experts on hand included Blue Rock Rainforest Nursery (Barry Hicks and the Flying Hill Kanukas), North Coast Local Land Services, Jaliigirr Biodiversity Alliance, Ecologist Mark Graham, and the Land for Wildlife Project.

With the welcome flurry of koala habitat grants to our local landholders, the local native nurseries and regen teams have been scrambling to source seed of koala food trees, like Tallowood, Blue

gum and Dorriggo White Gum.

We have learned from recent research that particular trees are the tasty ones, so our seed collecting needs to be very specific. The Plateau has its own genetically distinct mob of koalas, tough and extra furry for mountain weather. Extra tree corridors may give them opportunities to create more territory, as long as we plant the tasty ones!

Spring Open Day 2024

Our Spring Open Day last year was a warm and friendly event, bringing together the talents of a team of locals, with Katie Francis at the helm. Live music by John Peppercorn and Richard Francis, kids events, a salad created by Steffi from the gardens, a spit roast by Irish, a beautiful table display of abundance by Lyn Tarleton, a great range of tomato plants started by Rebecca Doblo, and a composting workshop.



Spring Open Day 2025

Our next Spring Open Day is November 8th. Stay tuned for details on our website [News and Events](#) page, and our Facebook pages.

Dandarrga Landcare Native Nursery News

We've grown an abundance of native trees, shrubs and groundcovers over the last year or so, and we are buying in **mature rainforest trees** from Bluerock Native Nursery to supplement our stock. Beautiful local plants to regenerate native habitat, on your land or in your garden.



Stock Numbers in August were 4,960, with another 3,000 seedlings in hicos ready to tube. Propagation Records and Seed Audit are up to date. The shade houses are well stocked with Antarctic Beech, Sally Wattle, Banksia, Brush Muttonwood, Orange Thorn, Red Cedar, Rosewood, River Oak, Koda, Maiden's Blush, Black She-Oak, Forest Oak and Lomandra longifolia. The [August stocktake is here](#) on our website.

Our policy is to collect local seed, buy from local suppliers, and create strong partnerships in our local community. We are also keen to pass on our knowledge and experience to people interested in what we do. You can support us with a couple of hours of your time to work with other volunteers, and enjoy some grounded outdoor activities, potting up in the propagation shed, weeding in the shadehouses or processing native seed with a cuppa and conversation.

Hundreds of Antarctic Beech seedlings donated by Bridget Rees, and Dorrigo Waratahs donated by Richard Rees have been selling well, with customers from the far reaches of Queensland and NSW. Shining Burrawang plants from Gordonville were donated by Joanna Dadd and Burrawang Seed found on the Dorrigo Mountain was donated by Sangya. Peter Vlatko is a regular seed donor of Cascade/Brooklana species, and Rod and Ruth Holmes donate eastern Dorrigo species. Carol and

Trevor Deane donate seed from Tallowood Ridge and Jill Cranny brings in Dorriggo Pepper from Deervale. With the support of our members, we are collecting, propagating and disseminating genetic diversity from a wide area of the Plateau.

Local Soil

We are now sourcing **soil** locally, from Jack Buchanan at the old timber mill on Dome Road. Aged and composting sawdust and woodchip, processed by Jack, is now providing a fine potting mix for our seedlings

Shadehouse upgrades 2024-25



Shadehouse 5 is the largest of the structures on site, and is now floored with gravel, and equipped with new shadecloth and irrigation, connected to the automatic watering system. A robust working bee in Spring 24 began the refurbishment. Our local contractors did a great job installing sprinklers and moving gravel, assisted by volunteers Piers Hammick and Mal Dwyer.

Plant Health

Myrtle Rust first appeared at our nursery in Autumn 2024, on Lemon-scented Tea Tree, *Leptospermum petersonii*. It was found in the Rainforest Barrow by the NPW Ranger Kirsty Hervey, and subsequently at the nursery. This rust species, first detected in Australia in 2010, is spreading along the east coast, and has since necessitated constant watchfulness at the nursery and the binning of most of our Myrtaceae plant stock at the stage when purple lesions appear. We now exclude all potential host species from the Barrow.

A consultant, Marc Percival, was employed to review our nursery facilities and report. We are in the process of implementing his recommendations, and have instituted **new Biosecurity Protocols** to avoid contamination of our stock by Myrtle Rust and other plant pathogens. As our facilities are inadequate, we are temporarily and reluctantly ceasing propagation of most of the Myrtaceae species, including Bottle Brush, Tea Tree, Water Gum, Tallowood, and Lilly Pillies. The Mountain Tea Tree *Leptospermum polygalifolium*, Tallowood *Eucalyptus microcorys* and Dorriggo White Gum *Eucalyptus dorriggoensis* are so far proving resistant. We are using part of Shadehouse 4 to temporarily quarantine any plants brought in from other nurseries.

The Rainforest Barrow

The old Rainforest Barrow had a mishap in May when a wheel fell off. It has been reinforced and repaired by Rick Deason, and kept stocked by Joanna, with Annie as back up. A new and sturdier barrow will be built by Rick, and will hopefully find itself installed somewhere at the new Dorriggo Rainforest Centre when it is finally completed. Staff at the Rainforest Centre have kindly agreed to take card payments for the plants at reception.



April Working Bee

A working bee in April renovated the shadecloth on the roof of our oldest shadehouse, which collects leaf litter from the big River Oak beside it. A heartfelt thank you to all the people who turned up to help! Shadehouse 1 is again suitable as the winter refuge for our more sensitive rainforest species. Shadehouse 4 has been weeded, along with the Tyringham Road bank and some of the native gardens. A list of tasks from the recent WHS audit has been completed. All in all, a very productive working bee with great people.

Regular Wednesday Working Bees

We are holding regular working bees from 10am – 12am every Wednesday.

Dandarrga Landcare Regen News

Dandarrga Landcare has several active regeneration project sites in Dorriggo. Each site is managed by a project coordinator and may have only one or several volunteers assisting with regen work. The following is a brief summary of the projects and volunteers who work these sites.

Ash Street Bridge - Nadia Camatta

Dangar Falls Reserve - Peter Berkeley, Nadia Camatta, Di Kilbride, Sandra Irwin

Don's Patch - Piers Hammick, Annie Stanton

Bielsdown River Western Bank - Peter Murphy

Dragon's Bend - Lyn Livingstone, Rowan Holden

Fern Gully - Piers Hammick, Peter Murphy

Hilda's Pool - Susan Allom, Lyn Skillings, Kate & Peter Cooper

Nina's Springs - Piers Hammick, Nadia Camatta

Rocky Creek - Phil Johnson, Nadia Camatta, Peter Berkeley, Andrew Beasley



Dandarrga Landcare Regener's Native Seed Project 2025-26

Tuesdays are now the designated day at the Nursery for the Bush Regen teams to meet, prior or after site work, to create a central focus for seed collection, documentation, propagation, new volunteer inductions, workshops and discussion. This project has received funding from the Bellingen Shire Council's Environmental Levy Community Fund, which will fund training, workshops, and local species mapping using the digital platform NaturMapr.

The first workshop, Bio –Threats and Barriers, was held in August to learn about the biosecurity threats on the Plateau



Dangar Falls - Community Working Bee 10th June



Regen Site Reports 2025

Learn more about the latest News on these Bush Regen sites:

1. [Dandarrga Landcare Regen Report](#) by Nadia Camatta, including Dangar Falls, Dragon's Band, Fern Gully, Rocky Creek and Peter Murphy's report on Bielsdown River Western Bank
2. [Don's Patch and Nina's Gate Report](#) by Piers Hammick
3. [Hilda's Pool Report](#) by Susan Allom



New Regen Tools

DCN has funded new regen tools for our regen teams. Mark Ottignon undertook the research and purchasing, in consultation with the volunteers. The tools are now being used on our regen sites, and at the Nursery and Gardens:



Community Garden News

The gardens are a **community space**. We welcome suggestions and volunteer help to further establish the paths and raised beds, the food forest, the fire pit and the covered seating area.

A **native food garden** is being developed below the water tanks in the south west corner. Some inspired ideas have surfaced at morning tea, including a **Waratah garden**, an experimental electroculture bed, a citrus orchard and a scattering of

garden sculptures (scarecrows?) made from woven vines.

A small team of volunteers have done regular hours over the last two years. Graham Prior has been a regular blessing with the brush cutter and whipper snipper over the growing seasons, keeping weeds at bay. Michael Hyland is a seemingly tireless syntropic garden practitioner, producing **an abundance of food and great compost** in the six composting bays.

Read [Michael's Community Garden Report August 2025](#)



Dorrigo Seed Savers News



We have a new **Seed Savers Coordinator**! Jeanette Jones has been managing the seed saving almost single-handedly, and has stepped down, leaving gardens full of plants and a cupboard full of **seed ready to packet**.

Rebecca Doblo has returned to organise the harvesting, processing and packeting of seed. Seed Saving with a group is a relaxing social activity, with a lot of good garden gossip thrown about.

We would love to see you at the Dorrigo Seed Savers Pack n Chat activities, which are held at the nursery weekly on a Wednesday morning. Get in touch if you are interested. Contact: dandarrga@gmail.com

Kitchen upgrade

The kitchen has been lined, painted and new shelves and benches have been installed. A big thank you to Katie for managing this project!



Trees of Dorriggo Tea Towels

We have a new batch of tea towels, in 100% cotton, available for sale at the Nursery, at markets, and at the Tourist Information Centre. Price is still \$20, and \$15 member discount.

Thanks to Ellie for organising this purchase, and for being a steady treasurer and a regular market stall volunteer!

Grants and finances

It has been a good year financially with plant sales – our main income source – increasing from last year. We also received two grants from the Bellingen Shire's Environment Levy and another from them for two Dangar Falls working bees. Also received was a Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife Milestone 3 grant. These were expended within the financial year. A third BSC ELCF grant was received late in June for regeneration and seed saving which will be expended in the next financial year. This year also saw the completion of the Federally funded Koala Project which has run over 3 financial years.

We have continued to spend our own funds improving infrastructure; mainly repairs and maintenance to Shadehouses. We are doing very well financially as an all-volunteer Community Not-For-Profit Association.

Strategic Goals and Initiatives for 2025-26

Here's our **Vision**:

We strive to be an inclusive, welcoming community, fostering respect, care, and clear communication. We aspire to connect people with nature, serve as a hub for projects and knowledge sharing, and build strong local and regional networks. We celebrate the diversity of people, skills, and knowledge. We share locally grown produce and expertise in propagation, seed saving, and regenerative practices.

And here are our **two main Goals**:

1. Consolidate relationships with volunteers & the local community to regenerate land and waterways on the Dorriggo Plateau & promote sustainable practices.
2. Strengthen DCN as an organisation.

Volunteering with DCN



We do a wide range of tasks and activities, some that might interest you and even lead onto further learning, experience and employment. We're happy to support you with training.

Many tasks involve regular activities at the Nursery and Gardens, but others can involve occasional online computer work from home, helping at local markets, or short distance travel to help on landcare regen sites or local properties.



Support roles and activities

- **Media and Education:** Assist the Media Coordinator to promote the Nursery and share information, news and events with our supporters, volunteers and the local community. Website admin; social networks, newsletters, multimedia promotion.
- **Markets and Sales:** Help find homes for our plants in the local community, the shire and further afield. Help with customer sales on site.
- **Nursery Site Maintenance:** Help look after the Nursery grounds, tools and equipment
- **Bush Regeneration :** Plant and maintain habitat along our waterways, help identify and eradicate invasive weeds and work to stabilise eroded river banks and mitigate further soil and bank erosion
- **Community Liaison:** Connect with different community groups, schools and local organisations to sponsor, help and to promote DCN
- **Grant applications:** Assist with grant opportunities and applications to get more

financial support for the Nursery as we grow our role in creating a more resilient community.

- **Native Plant Nursery Support Team:** Work with the coordinator to make sure our seeds and plants are looked after and have what they need; Manage nursery supplies, maintain a propagation record, and do regular stocktake; Collaborate with other nurseries on seed, stock, marketing, sales and orders. Organise volunteers and help them with propagating and looking after plants. Help customers with their orders; manage email orders. Help stock and manage the Rainforest Barrow, weekly, at the Dorrigo Rainforest Centre. Gather information about the species and create Plant Information Labels; update and send out native seed calendar to volunteer seed-collectors bi-monthly.
- **Dorrigo Seed Savers:** Work with the coordinator growing and harvesting seed from the Seed Savers Gardens, processing and storing seed with a group of volunteers; recording and storing seed stock, labelling, printing and packaging seed packets, propagating plants from seed, quality testing, networking with customers. Growing seed at home to bring in, coming to workshops and events, visiting gardens.
- **Community Garden Support Team:** Work with the coordinator and volunteers to establish the community garden, grow seedlings, manage soil and compost bays, build raised garden beds, and garden sheds, plant a permaculture food forest.

Secretary's Report from Lyn Livingstone

Exciting news for Dorrigo Community Nursery (DCN) since the 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) is our successful application with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC), to gain charity status. A few of the benefits of being a Charity include: improved access to funding opportunities; computer software discounts; potential green waste exemption. Being a registered charity helps promote public trust and confidence in our organisation.

Following confirmation of our new charity status, we applied to Bellingen Shire Council for exemption of dumping fees at the Dorrigo Waste Facility and were successful in gaining an exemption on tip fees for our green waste.

We were also successful in gaining tax exemption status with the ATO. This will reduce the administrative task of annual reporting which has become a more involved task. Reporting will now be undertaken by ACNC on our behalf.



Our AGM was held on Sunday 24th August.

The new DCN Committee includes:

Secretary Lyn Livingstone

Treasurer Ellie Fruitrich

Chairperson Rebecca Doblo

Ordinary Committee member Annie Stanton

Ordinary Committee member Mark Ottignon

Ordinary Committee member Nadia Camatta

Ordinary Committee member Peter Berkeley

Ordinary Committee member Paulette Butler

Who's who at DCN

The Seed Savers Coordinator – Rebecca Doblo

The Community Garden Coordinator -Michael Hyland

Native Plant Nursery Coordinator - Annie Stanton

Regener's Native Seed Project Coordinator – Nadia Camatta

The Media Coordinator – Annie Stanton

The WHS Coordinator – Paulette Butler

The Volunteers Coordinator (Position Vacant)

The Grants Officer (Position Vacant)

Regen site Coordinators:

Dangar Falls – Peter Berkeley

Rocky Creek Reserve - Phil Johnson

Bielsdown River Care Project - Piers Hammick, Lyn Livingstone, Nadia Camatta, Susan Allom



Opening Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9:00am – 12:30

Website: <https://www.dorrigocommunitynursery.org/>

Facebook Pages: [Dandargga Landcare](#), [Dorrigo Seed Savers](#), [Dorrigo Community Garden](#)