

Learning from Biodiversity Conservation in the Rangelands

Valuing Biodiversity on Farm



Neighbours coming together to talk biodiversity conservation

Traditional owner knowledge

Traditional owner knowledge

"We had a great day, was great to catch up with neighbours and discuss what they do and see on their place to do with biodiversity conservation and regeneration" - Tracey

Introduction

The formation of a partnership between Western Landcare NSW (WLNSW), Bush Heritage Australia (BHA) and the Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) has enabled a collaboratively designed 'showcase' event at 'Naree Station', Yantabulla.

'Naree' is a Bush Heritage owned and managed property in Yantabulla in far north-western NSW 150km north-west of Bourke. Bush Heritage Australia recently entered into an agreement 'in perpetuity' with the BCT for positive Biodiversity Conservation outcomes such as protection of wetlands from non-native grazing, a key water bird breeding site. Several mammal species being conserved at Naree include Striped-faced Dunnart, Sandy Inland Mouse and Little Pied.

Naree was chosen due to it being located one of the four bio-regions marked by the BCT for events to be held and it also ticked a box because of their heavy involvement in conservation activities. Almost all surrounding landholders are pastoralists so it was important to show the link between Biodiversity conservation and the importance of it in relation to farming systems. 14 people attended the event which was considered to be good as we needed to take into account the large property sizes in the area, the remoteness of both properties and people and the percentage of absentee landholders who have property in the area as well.

The Issue

The Western Region of NSW makes up 42% of the state with a large number of bioregions, broadscale properties and in some areas a high percentage of absentee landholders.

Located in the *Mulga Lands* bioregion on the Cuttaburra Channels the land is very sensitive to overgrazing. The BHA property has been destocked since 2012 and with this in mind it was important to make sure the event was still relatable to other landholders along with the key theme "Importance of Biodiversity on Farm".

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The Solution

The Landholder event for this field day was to champion what local landholders are doing in the area and to share with neighbours different ideas around what biodiversity conservation looks like.

It was a successful event with presentations from BHA undertaking a historical talk about the property. The BCT regional ecologist & regional conservation officer discussed the programs and opportunities available as well. This was followed by good questions being asked and the smaller group size enabled this really well.

Out on property, Naree was able to show off the results of the conservation work they have undertaken, with the recent rain only highlighted this. Due to destocking on the property there has been regeneration of Mulga trees which many surrounding landholders have not seen this on their properties because goats eat the young trees quickly. Neighbouring graziers Dave and Tracey were able to present while out in the field from their perspective what they had done to increase and conserve biodiversity while also grazing stock.

Budjiti traditional owner, Phil was also in attendance. He undertook a *Welcome to Country* and showed the group significant sites, artefacts and talked about all the different species on the land working together and their importance.

Moving Forward

Attendees walked away with a deeper understanding for what biodiversity conservation is and how it can benefit a farming business through more sustainable farming practices.

They were also able to understand more about the different species of plants and animals on their properties from the expertise of the BCT ecologist, Budjiti traditional owner and knowledge from their neighbours.

The event successfully championed the work that BHA are doing and also shed light on who the BCT are & their partnership with Landcare NSW and Western Landcare.