



July 08

Newsletter

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Working Together to care for Southern Tasmania's Natural Resources

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Australian Government



Tasmania  
Explore the possibilities

## Going Native! Gardening in the face of Climate Change

With climate change forecast to bring consistently warmer, drier weather for Tasmania, NRM South is at the forefront of a drive to make Southern Tasmanian gardens more sustainable.

Through a new series of native planting guides, NRM South is encouraging home gardeners to become more water-wise and species savvy, by getting acquainted with native plants endemic to their local area.

Covering each of the twelve municipalities in the Southern region, NRM South's new *Plant Species Lists* have been prepared in partnership with the Understorey Network, and with input from the Department of Primary Industries and Water.

As part of NRM South's Skills Development and Community Education program, the new lists started as planting guides for on-ground revegetation projects, before evolving into a resource with broader community appeal.

The lists were launched at the World Environment Day *TreadLightly Envirofest* at the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens and have already become very popular, proving to be highly valuable resources for amateur and professional gardeners alike.

Each Plant Species List is colour coded by municipality and contains a sample of Tasmanian native plants occurring naturally within that municipality. The lists are divided by plant type and size, from trees, shrubs and climbers, down to native herbs and grasses. Plants are also graded according to vegetation community, soil type and potential use – from erosion control through to low flammability gardening for fire prone areas, and even a ready supply of bush tucker.

Tasmanian exotic gardens and urban streetscapes, with predominantly European, American and Asian plants, commonly use more water than our dry weather specialised Tasmanian native plants. Not only are our native plants more water-wise, they don't

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require expensive fertilisers or chemicals to thrive and many also have scented flowers and colourful seeds to attract nectar and fruit eating insects, birds and animals to our homes.

All of the native plants in the *Plant Species Lists* are well adapted to each specific area, are relatively easy to grow, and can be obtained from native plant nurseries across Southern Tasmania. Most can also be readily propagated from local provenance seeds.

The lists are by no means exhaustive, rather providing a solid foundation on which gardeners may develop a range of spectacular plantings and gardens which are truly local, and which actively maintain and encourage local biodiversity.

These guides, the latest additions to NRM South's growing library of community education publications, are now available from all Southern region council offices (Huon Valley, Kingborough, Hobart, Glenorchy, Brighton, Clarence, Sorell, Tasman, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Central Midlands, Southern Highlands and Derwent Valley) as well as selected native plant nurseries. Electronic copies may also be downloaded from the NRM South website, or from selected council websites.

**For further information contact  
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## NRM South Incentives - Practical Assistance with On-Farm Works

With the sustainable use of our productive landscapes a core component of the *Natural Resource Management Strategy for Southern Tasmania*, achieving progress towards increased sustainability and resource condition change through on-farm works has been a key objective for NRM South.

Through the highly successful *Incentives* program, NRM South been doing just that, assisting landholders across the region to undertake on-ground works towards improving the quality and sustainability of soil, water and biodiversity.

Targeting landholders, farmers, farmer groups and Landcare groups, through *Incentives* NRM South provided a total of \$513,000 to support landholders in undertaking on-ground works and activities to benefit both production and the environment by improving management of soil, water and native vegetation.

With a "no forms" application process, the program has proven very popular and highly accessible to landholders.

Concentrating on two key catchments (Coal/Jordan and Swan/Apsley) the *Incentives*

program has specifically focused on north facing slopes, covenanted bush areas and implementing existing property management or whole farm planning. Works that have been funded include fencing, installing off-stream watering points, erosion control activities, weed eradication and revegetation.

These activities are already resulting in more sustainable land management practices, improved water quality, increased protection of threatened species, improved connectivity and quality of habitat at the landscape scale and greater control of weeds, pests and diseases.

The results have been so encouraging that a further round of the north facing slopes project will shortly commence. With drought increasing grazing pressure throughout the region, it is anticipated that the environmental and financial benefits of managing stock access to north facing slopes will see strong demand for this final stage of the NRM South *Incentives* program.

**For more information, contact  
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# The Performance Story - Reporting on Outcomes in the Dew Rivulet and Derwent Catchment

A new tool is changing the nature of reporting on NRM projects by focusing on outcomes and the wider social benefits of NRM investment within the community.

The new technique is allowing NRM South to improve output reporting - measures of trees planted, kilometres of fencing erected or hectares of native vegetation protected from damage by livestock, and to more powerfully communicate intermediate outcomes necessary to achieve long-term NRM goals.

As a part of a national pilot across twenty NRM regions, NRM South, Greening Australia (Tasmania) and the Derwent Catchment NRM Committee have been working with the Australian Government NRM Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement team to trial the use of Performance Story Reports.

A performance story report is an evidence-based statement about progress towards a vision for a natural resource. The report is supported by multiple lines of quantitative and qualitative evidence. Departing from traditional reporting methods, a significant

element is the recording of first-hand stories from individuals affected by the project.

As well as explaining what the investment has achieved, the performance story also describes the underlying links that show how the achievements were accomplished, making it a more effective tool for evaluating the impact and appropriateness of NRM investment.

The Performance Story Report on NRM investment in the Dew Rivulet and Derwent Valley over the last eight years will soon be available. This report will enable NRM South to better inform stakeholders about changes in local knowledge and activity resulting from investment, as well as highlight the contribution to a strengthened sense of community, vital to sustaining rural communities through challenging periods, such as the current drought.

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## Faces of NRM: Tim and Jane Parsons

Sixth generation farmers, Tim and Jane Parsons are passionate advocates for Natural Resource Management, running their Hamilton farm with an ecological emphasis and sharing their passion through championing best practice in sustainable farming. Tim and Jane see themselves as custodians, not just owners, of their land, making it their responsibility to sustain the land, and improve it for future generations.

Their commitment is highlighted by their win in the Primary Producers division of the 2007 Tasmanian Landcare Awards, an award which followed the Sustainable Agriculture Award in the 2004 Tasmanian Environmental Excellence Awards, among many others.

Over more than fifteen years of Landcare activity Tim and Jane have achieved significant condition change and stopped the decline in biodiversity and land condition. But despite their awards neither is resting on their laurels. "We still have a lot of work to do, and we'll keep at it until the next generation takes over, and, hopefully, keeps at it for their lifetime as well. And on and on." says Tim.





## Say Hello

The Tasmanian wedge-tailed eagle (*Aquila audax fleayi*) is an endemic eagle subspecies. With only about 130 pairs successfully breeding each year in Tasmania, it is listed as critically endangered, and is one of three species of raptor contained in the statewide *Threatened Species Recovery Plan* currently being undertaken by DPIW on behalf of NRM South, NRM North and Cradle Coast NRM. Major threats include habitat loss, collisions with powerlines, persecution through shooting, trapping and poisoning and nest disturbance. Found in a variety of habitats, nests are very noticeable, most commonly in large sheltered eucalypts. Notoriously shy nesters, they will often desert their nests if disturbed, especially early in the breeding season which runs from August to January.

## Places to Go

Biblical place names are common features in the Southern Midlands, possibly indicating that in Southern Tasmania early European settlers had found the Promised Land. Prominent among these is the Jordan River. With restorative works through Brighton and Southern Midlands Municipalities well advanced, this waterway is now much closer to its pre-settlement condition. At Brighton, council works crews have recently removed a chain of weed islands formed by low water flows, and CVA teams have finished planting some 4000 native plants, with trees high on the river bank and a variety of shrubs, grasses, reeds and sedges along the water line. With National Tree Day in late July, now is a perfect time to see the progress on this waterway with a stroll along the new track south of Ford Road.



## Update: Paterson's Curse

The drought across much of the State has provided ideal growing conditions for some of our most resilient weeds. Although only present in relatively small, scattered infestations, Paterson's Curse is capable of invading and dominating drought-affected pasture. As well as reducing productivity, Paterson's Curse is toxic to livestock, particularly horses and cattle. The recent rains, although modest, will provide a major growing boost for Paterson's Curse seedlings - and now is the ideal time to control them. Once the plants begin to develop flowering stems they become much more difficult to control, and if they reach flowering stage there are very few control options available. For further information email Southern Tasmanian Weeds Strategy Project Manager, Sandy Leighton at [sleighton@stca.tas.gov.au](mailto:sleighton@stca.tas.gov.au)

## Latest News

NRM South is leading a drive to keep the waters of Port Davey/Bathurst Harbour free of introduced marine pests. Using a new "console guide", NRM South is assisting boat operators to keep their boats pest-free, preventing unintentional translocation of marine organisms into the World Heritage Area. In coming months NRM South will work with Marine And Safety Tasmania to distribute the guides to boat owners, as well as developing a statewide marine pests brochure in partnership with DPIW and NRM North.

Congratulations to all winners in the recent Tasmanian Awards for Environmental Excellence! All have made a significant contribution towards achieving NRM South's vision of protected, sustainably managed and improved natural resources in Southern Tasmania.

Photographs: Wildseed Tasmania, Patrick Taylor, Simon De Salis and Karen Stewart (Department of Primary Industries and Water), Brighton Municipal Council.



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