

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17



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Cumberland Land Conservancy (CLC) is a volunteer operated not-for-profit charity dedicated to acquiring and managing land for conservation in perpetuity including education of the community to be like land managers. We focus on the Cumberland Plain of Western Sydney, one of the most heavily cleared landscapes in Australia.

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*Cover: The CLC property 'Wallaroo' protects 38 hectares of habitat in a heavily cleared landscape. The conservation of 'Wallaroo' and similar corridors provides hope for the future of the woodland and wildlife of Western Sydney*

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## President's report

I am delighted to endorse this 2016/17 Annual Report of Cumberland Land Conservancy Inc. Since our origin in December 2014 the organisation has rapidly positioned itself to fill the gap in conservation land management and education of the community in conservation land management on the Cumberland Plain.



The increasing pressure on survival of the natural heritage of the Cumberland Plain makes it essential for community based conservation land managers and educators such as Cumberland Land Conservancy Inc to ensure land which is otherwise under threat of land clearing is conserved for future generations.

CLC gratefully acknowledges the support of the following:

- Commonwealth Government
- Greater Sydney Local Land Services
- Conservation Volunteers Australia
- Commonwealth Government Green Army Program
- Nature Conservation Trust of NSW



*(above) A CLC property management and community meeting at 'Wallaroo'*



## Our purpose

Cumberland Land Conservancy (CLC) is a volunteer operated not-for-profit charity dedicated to acquiring land for conservation and educating in conservation management. We focus on the 'Cumberland Plain' of Western Sydney, one of the most heavily cleared landscapes in Australia. This region is now being cleared and developed at an even more rapid rate with little or no planning to conserve key linkages.

The CLC stands apart as the sole organisation successfully securing biodiversity corridors in this landscape. We strive to conserve the Cumberland Plain, engaging, educating and empowering the community and partnering with government and business to set a new standard in conservation land management.

This work would not be possible without the support of our members and volunteers. Each CLC member is a co-owner in our properties and a custodian on behalf of all the residents and wildlife of Western Sydney.





## Who we are

CLC is completely volunteer driven not-for-profit charity.

Our executive committee are elected by popular vote at the Annual General Meeting. The current office bearers are as follows:



**President – Wayne Olling** Wayne brings a wealth of experience to the CLC having volunteered as an advocate for the Cumberland Plain environment with numerous conservation organisations. In addition to his role for the CLC Wayne is Manager – Flora & Fauna at Blacktown & District Environment Group Inc and Secretary of Cumberland Conservation Network.



**Secretary – Mark Fuller** Mark combined his professional background in design and print with a love of photography to produce the Birds of Western Sydney photo guide. Mark enjoys sharing his enthusiasm for birds, helping at BirdLife Australia Discovery Centre, Birds in Schools project and as Editor for the Cumberland Bird Observers Club.



**Treasurer – Brian Powyer** Brian brings extensive corporate and not-for-profit experience to the CLC. Brian is a former senior executive in the NSW Principals' Association, former Assistant Director Curriculum in the NSW Department of Education, and is currently Deputy President, National Trust of Australia (NSW).



**Public Officer – Maureen Harper** Maureen is an experienced bushcare volunteer and conservation campaigner in western Sydney and founding member of the Knudsen Reserve Bushcare group.



**Scientific Officer – Peter Mobbs** Peter brings over 26 years of experience in bushland conservation & restoration. Peter is full time Teacher of Natural Area Restoration and Conservation & Land Management at Richmond College TAFE



# Our conservation impact

## Conservation properties

Our goal necessitates the acquisition of land for conservation with a focus on wildlife corridors. The 2016/17 year has been an excellent one for CLC and we have been fortunate enough to have commenced the process of acquiring three properties securing 44.81 ha of habitat in western Sydney for conservation in perpetuity. This land will be owned under covenant by the membership of CLC to protect and restore our native flora and wildlife. We are currently negotiating with a corporate donor for a fourth property of 4.8 ha in the Regentville region.

### **Habitat protected forever:**

Property	Area (ha)	Threatened species
Wallaroo, Mulgoa	38.86	Cumberland Plain Woodland Cumberland Riverflat Eucalypt Forest Cumberland Plain Land Snail ( <i>Meridolum corneovirens</i> ) White-bellied Sea-Eagle Varied Sitella East-coast Freetail Bat ( <i>Mormopterus norfolkensis</i> ) Eastern Bent-winged Bat ( <i>Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis</i> ) Fishing Bat ( <i>Myotis macropus</i> )
Bartolo Nature Reserve, Agnes Banks	2.20	Cumberland Shale-Gravel Transition Forest Cumberland Plain Land Snail ( <i>Meridolum corneovirens</i> ) Gravel Pea ( <i>Dillwynia tenuifolia</i> ) Nodding Geebung ( <i>Persoonia nutans</i> )
Marsdenia Nature Reserve, Llandilo	3.75	Cumberland Plain Woodland Cumberland Plain Land Snail ( <i>Meridolum corneovirens</i> ) Bush Pear ( <i>Marsdenia viridiflora</i> subsp. <i>viridiflora</i> ) Sydney Bush-pea ( <i>Pultenaea parviflora</i> ) Juniper-leaf Grevillea ( <i>Grevillea juniperina</i> )
Total area protected	44.81 hectares	11 threatened species 3 endangered ecological communities



## ‘Wallaroo’

Our first property ‘Wallaroo’ is a 38 hectare property at Mulgoa is being purchased with assistance from the Commonwealth Government and the NSW Nature Conservation Trust. ‘Wallaroo’ protects critically endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland, Cumberland Riverflat Eucalypt Forest and six species of endangered wildlife.

‘Wallaroo’ is a former grazing property and contains significant areas of exotic vegetation as well as other areas in need of weed and feral animal management. This site is the focus of our restoration efforts and community education and engagement. CLC has recently installed an equipment shed and toilet and we run regular volunteer working bees, wildlife surveys and education events at the site.



*‘Wallaroo’ was named after the wallaroos that call this area home (left) It also protects the vulnerable Varied Sitella (right)*



*‘Wallaroo’ protects critically endangered Cumberland Plain Woodlands (above)*



## Bartolo Nature Reserve

The Bartolo Nature Reserve at Agnes Banks protects 2.2 hectares of high conservation bushland in Sydney's northwest. The property forms part of a key corridor between the woodland on Western Sydney University's Richmond Campus and the Agnes Banks Nature Reserve.

This acquisition is being assisted by the Commonwealth Government and the NSW Nature Conservation Trust protects Critically Endangered Cumberland Plain Shale Woodlands and Shale-Gravel Transition Forest; the endangered Cumberland Plain Land Snail (*Meridolum corneovirens*) and the vulnerable *Dillwynia tenuifolia*.



(Above right) The property protects a valuable population of the threatened *Dillwynia tenuifolia*.  
(Above left) The Southern Boobook calls the Agnes Banks site home

(below) Regenerating Shale-Gravel Transition Forest





## Marsdenia Nature Reserve

This Llandilo property is 3.75 ha of high conservation bushland and part of a key corridor between the Wianamatta Regional Park and the Wianamatta Nature Reserve. It is being acquired with assistance of the Commonwealth Government and NSW Nature Conservation Trust.

The site protects Critically Endangered Cumberland Plain Shale Woodlands with unusually high species richness and numerous threatened flora. Preliminary surveys have already identified:

- Cumberland Plain Land Snail (*Meridolum corneovirens*) (Endangered, NSW)
- A large population of *Grevillea juniperina subsp. juniperina* (Vulnerable, NSW)
- A large population of *Marsdenia viridiflora var. viridiflora* (Endangered population NSW)
- A single individual of *Pultenaea parviflora* (Endangered, NSW; Vulnerable Federal)

The site is located within the Richmond Woodlands Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) which protects the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot.



*Grevillea juniperina* (above) and Cumberland Plain Woodland (below) at Llandilo





## Current negotiations

CLC is negotiating with a corporate donor for the donation of a 4.8 ha property in Regentville. The site is a key link between Blue Mountains National Park and Mulgoa Nature Reserve. These east-west links are critical to the annual migration of Scarlet, Flame Robin and Rose Robins, which migrate from the Blue Mountains to the fertile Cumberland Plain each winter.

The site includes endangered Shale Sandstone Transition Forest, the endangered Dural Land Snail (*Pommerhelix duralensis*) the largest known population of the regionally rare wattle *Acacia prominens*, and a small population of Bandicoots.

*The Superb Fairy Wren (top left) and the Endangered Dural Land Snail (bottom left) and both occur in Shale-Sandstone Transition forest (right) at the Regentville property.*





## Community engagement & volunteers

In 2016/2017 CLC now has 112 registered members. Our member volunteers have contributed 280 hours developing the weed zoning, completing the flora survey, managing bush regeneration and pasture slashing. They have undertaken 85 hours on pest animal surveys and control and 75 on-site hours of property management. While our fabulous Green Army team have contributed 2076 hours learning the function of bush regeneration.

We have had 6 specific events including a camping weekend, where participants learnt about bush regeneration along the riparian zone, learnt about the onsite fauna, helped install the floating bird islands and finished off the evening with astronomy and bush poetry.

Another highlight of the year was the Koori firesticks cultural burn at Wallaroo. Over 80 people were educated in, listened, watched and then participated in the ancient practice of 'Cultural Burning'.

We also have regular community engagement events with monthly bird surveys that are open to the public.

In total, we have had over 1400 hours of engagement with over 200 people, our facebook presence has also ramped up with 360 people now following our work and 126 people reading our bimonthly newsletter.

***If you are interested in helping the CLC protect & restore our environment please contact [president@cumberlandlc.org.au](mailto:president@cumberlandlc.org.au) or speak to any of our committee members.***



## Best practice conservation management

CLC is developing new benchmarks for best practice conservation management, education and partnerships in the region. All our reserves are restored under a comprehensive Plan of Management developed in partnership with industry experts. **Bush regeneration** is a key component on all our reserves, strategically managing exotic flora through a combination of professional contract, volunteer and Green Army work. This has already restored large areas of exotic vegetation into diverse native communities.

CLC is also a leader in fauna recovery. Our **pest management programs** are successfully reducing fox and feral deer not only on our properties but through education and partnership with neighbouring landowners. At 'Wallaroo' we have responded to fauna monitoring results by supplementing tree hollow habitat with **arboreal habitat hollows** in partnership with Sydney Arbor and **terrestrial hollow logs** with Friendly Fred's Arborists. **Fire Management** is another critical requirement for healthy Cumberland Plain Woodland and we have already succeeded with both ecological and cultural burns at 'Wallaroo'.

**Monitoring & adaptation** is key to our purpose. CLC has completed benchmark surveys for both fauna (in partnership with Australian National University) and flora at 'Wallaroo' which allow detailed quantitative assessments of the impact our management is making. This work has already informed our property management as well as informing others via the Atlas of Living Australia. Similar monitoring is planned for our new acquisitions.



*(above) A cultural burn undertaken at 'Wallaroo' in partnership with the local Aboriginal community and Greater Sydney Local Land Services, June 2017.*



## Get involved

CLC's work brings together a broad community of committed people who strive to secure and protect our natural environment. Our supporters participate as financial donors, volunteers, pro bono service providers, partners and collaborators and all are fundamental to our success.

### NGO and Government

CLC encourages partnerships with other NGOs and government agencies to deliver real conservation outcomes for Western Sydney. CLC extends our gratitude to the wonderful support of our current partners including Conservation Volunteers Australia, Greater Sydney Local Land Services, the Department of Environment & Energy and the Nature Conservation Trust of NSW. Together we have helped deliver the best possible land management and conservation options for the Cumberland Plain.

### Corporate

Our work offers an opportunity to provide cost-effective and meaningful change for Western Sydney's environment. CLC encourages corporate support for our conservation work and we are presently seeking new corporate partners. Diverse opportunities are available including financial support, in-kind support, workplace education/volunteering and land negotiations.

CLC expresses its heartfelt thanks to the ongoing corporate support provided by Apple Australia, Hally Labels and TransGrid which have assisted in restoring our local environment in Western Sydney.

### Schools and Educational Institutions

CLC seeks involvement of schools and educational institutions in understanding the function of the nation's natural heritage and how the representation resting in Western Sydney can be assisted in function. CLC offers venues and trainers for education and on-ground experience to this end. CLC is a player in the Earthwatch driven citizen science schools program which facilitates on-site school based science programs contributing to scientific literature.

### Members & Volunteers

None of our work would be possible without the dedication and expertise of our volunteer base. Whether visiting as a Landcare volunteer or assisting behind-the-scenes there are numerous opportunities to help protect and restore our local environment. Regular volunteer opportunities including Landcare and biodiversity survey & monitoring are advertised on the CLC Calendar available on our webpage. For other opportunities please contact us to arrange an opportunity that suits.



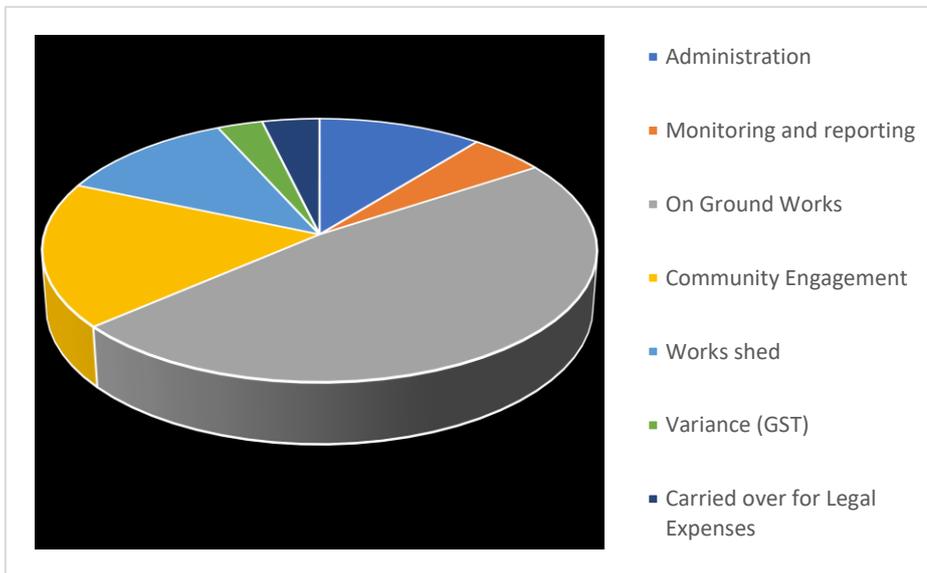
# Finance & Governance report

CLC is a volunteer operated not-for-profit incorporated association. We are registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

## Sources of income 2016 - 2017

Income – carried over from 2015-2016	1513.97
Grant funding – Carried over from 2015-2016	40,000
Membership fees	770
Donations	826
Service	290
Interest	58.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>43458.1</b>

## Expenditure - Commonwealth grant funding (\$40,000)



All expenses for the 2016-2017 financial year were funded from the Commonwealth grant funds.

# Volunteer Profile

Robert Shestanovich



"I really love going to Wallaroo as I have met so many wonderful people who have become friends. Friends who also care about nature and its importance. Having this commitment we really can and are making a difference. It's a very positive feeling. At CLC Wallaroo great things are happening for the plants and animals."

*(above) Robert, indulging in his other passion...(catch and release).*

Robert Shestanovich has been a member of the Cumberland Land Conservancy since its inception. Robert participates on the Property Management Committee which meets once every two months to plan works for Wallaroo. Robert is also a regular volunteer and often steps in to supervise less experienced volunteers.

Robert's passion for critically endangered ecological communities of the Cumberland plain and the biodiversity it supports has been of great benefit to the Cumberland Land Conservancy.

In particular, Robert enjoys meeting people with similar views towards conservation and assisting these good people in the care of nature.