

# Green Skills: a retrospective

Celebrating 20 years of working for a sustainable future in Western Australia



Green Skills is a not for profit environmental organisation established in 1989, focused on the promotion and demonstration of sustainability. From its Murdoch, Albany and Denmark offices, Green Skills operates a diverse range of environmental sustainability programs, employment programs, and quality environmental training in metropolitan and regional areas. Green Skills was one of the first environmental organisations of its kind in Western Australia, and since its inception, has been a leader in developing innovative environmental projects, generating community awareness on environmental issues, encouraging community involvement in on-ground activities, and generating environmental career opportunities.

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Compiled by Michelle Yeomans, Louise Duxbury, Basil Schur and Annabelle Newbury, Green Skills Inc.

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## 1. Foreword by Louise Duxbury and Basil Schur

“The land and how we treat it, is what determines our human-ness. Because land is sacred and must be looked after, the relation between people and land becomes the template for society and social relations.”  
*Australian Aboriginal author, Mary Graham, 1999.*

*We acknowledge the traditional owners of the south west lands of Western Australia, the Noongar people, past and present.*

It is inspiring to look back on 20 years of our collective efforts to make a positive difference to the environment and our communities. The number of people who have been involved in the myriad practical projects, courses, workshops, and meetings during Green Skills’ journey is impressive. We thank you all!

From its inception in 1989, Green Skills has been at the forefront of community action to show that positive change is possible. Our success has rested on partnerships: partnerships between city, country, farmers, agencies, businesses, environmentalists, and the under-employed.

The organisation grew out of a vision for a green economy. We set out to provide innovative training linked to key new projects, to create meaningful and sustainable jobs for the unemployed and to demonstrate green business opportunities.

Together we have made a tangible difference.

Western Australia has changed since 1989 and we have been part of that change. We played a key role in developing training to provide skills needed for the fledgling farm forestry industry and landcare movement. This included planting the farm forestry trials with CALM in the early 90s, paving the way for export wood-chipping to shift from old growth forests to plantations on farms. Our involvement in the evolving farm forestry sector has continued to the present with thousand of trees being planted across the south coast and south west each year.

We pioneered the first fencing subsidy programs encouraging farmers to fence off rivers and creeks, making both funds and labour available to speed the rate of change – this started as a trickle and became a flood. Such support has now been taken up as standard practice by key government agencies.

Green Skills partnered with farmers, government agencies and other NRM groups to develop plans for 18 of the most important wetland suites between Walpole and Esperance, and funnelled funds towards fencing, revegetation and weed control.

We got our boots dirty helping fledgling sectors like organic agriculture, seed collection, eco-tourism, farm forestry, landcare, and energy auditing get off the ground. We developed and piloted new training courses that jump-started programs providing both useful training and contributing to environmental rehabilitation. We have provided education and training to all sectors of the community, school children, youth, under employed, unemployed, indigenous people and women, responding to changing needs and funding available.

We garnered the investment needed for significant community infrastructure, including fundraising and supervision of the Denmark Environment Centre building program, and overall coordination and fundraising for the Denmark Centre for Sustainable Living refurbishment. Through our Ecojobs environmental services we have provided jobs for those wanting to work for the betterment of our environment and skilled workers for local governments, agencies and businesses.



Staff members and supporters have contributed to countless workshops, conferences, seminars and consultative committees. We were central in the formation of other organisations such as SCRIPT (precursor of South Coast NRM) and the Denmark Education and Innovation Centre, and helped make projects, such as the Albany Windfarm and the extended Bibbulmun Track, come to fruition.

Through our small property advisory services on the south coast and peri-urban Perth, thousands of smaller landholders have been provided information and skills to contribute to more sustainable management of their land and their lives. Hundreds of workshops and field days, EXPOs and conferences have been offered.

We didn't and couldn't do it by ourselves. We are proudly part of a whole movement of caring, committed people in Western Australia working to make a difference in the way we treat each other and our precious environment.

From small beginnings, we have grown steadily in both numbers of staff employed from 2 to 25 permanent and 60 casual workers, and scale of projects from a \$50,000 grant to a \$2 million budget. Like the ripples in a pond, this in turn has expanded the numbers of people whose lives have been touched by the diverse courses, projects and enterprises coordinated through Green Skills.

We have had our fair share of challenges. Accessing support and funds to turn ideas into reality has never been easy. Nor has developing the skills and capacity to attract, mentor, affirm and honour the many people who make organisations like Green Skills thrive. This includes our staff, board of management members, Ecojobs workers, clients, colleagues from partner organisations, volunteers and participants of our activities. We have worked to maximise the amount of positive work done for every dollar, causing some stress on personnel.

This book captures some of the successes, disappointments, celebrations and setbacks along the way. It honours the commitment to promote social justice and care for the environment by all who have contributed in any way. That commitment forms the foundation of Green Skills. As we take time to reflect on our past we also have opportunity to dream about the future.

We hope you will be part of writing that future.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. On the left is the signature of Louise Duxbury, which is written in a cursive, flowing style. On the right is the signature of Basil Schur, which is written in a more blocky, stylized cursive font.

Louise Duxbury (Project Manager and former State Coordinator, 1989-present) and Basil Schur (Project Manager, 1989-present)



## 2. The Beginnings of Green Skills

Green Skills evolved from the idea of Prof. Peter Newman in the late 1980s, to form a 'greenhouse corps' to reverse the impacts of the Greenhouse Effect. His concept involved "young Australians volunteering overseas to work for two years on tree planting projects. The work would be funded by government, industry and individuals through the establishment of a special greenhouse trust." *Call for young to form 'tree corps', The West Australian, February 27 1989.*

Louise Duxbury worked with Peter Newman, then associate professor of Environmental Science at Murdoch University, for seven years as a tutor in Environmental Sciences and research assistant, after completing her Honours thesis on barriers to adoption of renewable energy options in the domestic sector, Perth, WA, under his supervision.

Early 1989, she had coordinated the first training course for unemployed people on Reafforestation and Landscape Planning Skills from the Denmark Environment Centre, from an idea raised by Tony Pedro (a local Denmark farmer) and Bruce Mattinson (then with the state Department of Conservation and Land Management). Basil Schur was a participant on this course. "Peter heard about this course and was excited by the potential." *Louise Duxbury, Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

Peter Newman was at the time seconded to the Department of Premier and Cabinet, and promoted the 'greenhouse corps' concept with the Premier Peter Dowding, and Louise was offered a grant of \$50,000 from the Government of Western Australia Department of Employment and Training to establish Green Skills, then known as the Greenhouse Corps. The grant was presented at a media event by Premier Dowding on International Greenhouse Day, 1st September 1989.

The revised objectives of the Greenhouse Corps were to raise community awareness of the Greenhouse Effect, to coordinate restoration and revegetation projects to demonstrate positive change and counter the Greenhouse Effect, and to run education and training programs to provide people with the skills to make positive changes to the environment.

"One has to remember that the very first conference on the Greenhouse Effect in Western Australia had been run in 1988 called 'Greenhouse 88'. There was a sense of urgency around this period that something had to be done quickly about climate change. Tree planting was one of the positive solutions promoted so this was the main focus of many of the first training programs and projects organised by us." *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

The Greenhouse Corps was developed as a special project of APACE Western Australia, a Fremantle community-based organisation, promoting appropriate technology and environmentally sustainable development. The benefits of becoming a special project of APACE were that APACE's constitution, incorporation and recognition as a public benevolent institution could then be applied to the Greenhouse Corps and the relatively small grant could go to building practical projects and training courses rather than in the administrative costs of establishing a new organisation.

"Originally the Greenhouse Corps was going to be a special project under another organisation, Westrek, which was running very successful projects for young people. Scott Christie from Community Aid Abroad and I met with Janet Holmes à Court, patron of Westrek, and Peter Sherlock, the manager of Westrek at the time, at their plush head office in Perth. They really liked us but when they found out that the amount of money being offered was only \$50,000, they declined the offer! Undeterred, we decided to carry on and found APACE willing to sponsor the project" *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

## The Greenhouse Corps..... community training for environmental management

Western Australia's recently established Greenhouse Corps will train people in the practical skills needed to counter climatic change, reverse salinity and erosion and reduce our energy use.

People can participate by:

- Taking part in short courses for unemployed youth.
- Taking part in short courses for city dwellers.
- Enrolling in detailed courses on rural landscape design, reforestation and energy management; or
- Undertaking advanced training with opportunities for eastern states and overseas exchange.

In rural areas the Greenhouse Corps works on land rehabilitation; fencing off remnant forest; tree

planting for shelter belts, woodlots and water catchment repair; and whole farm planning.

In urban areas the Corps plants trees and works on land rehabilitation; assesses energy use in the home and industry and promotes ways to reduce energy consumption.

Overseas, the Greenhouse Corps will link into aid projects working to reduce the Greenhouse Effect and other global environmental concerns.

The Greenhouse Corps was set up with a seeding grant from the WA Government but is seeking ongoing funding from the private business sector and the community.

For further information contact Scott Christie (09) 220 0629, Louise Duxbury (098) 481 019.



Louise Duxbury



Scott Christie

*Green Skills' first media release: Greenhouse News, October 1989*

Janet Pettigrew was appointed as the first Perth coordinator of the Greenhouse Corps, responsible for overall financial administration and Perth-based projects from the APACE office in Fremantle. On the South Coast, the main office was established at the Denmark Environment Centre. Louise Duxbury quickly began writing submissions for training and practical projects, garnering Basil Schur's part time assistance in project development and coordination from Denmark. Sally Haigh joined the team in 1991.

"My first role was to establish the Perth office at APACE in Fremantle. In hindsight it was a simple as a trip to the stationary store as we certainly didn't have the budget to be at the cutting edge of technology. With a second hand desk, chair and filing cabinet, it was then the simple task of installing a new phone line, buying a few note pads and pens and the office was officially open for business. I didn't have too long to wait long for us to catch up to the technological revolution that was taking place. APACE purchased its very first computer a few months later. I remember standing next to APACE's Office Manager, Susan, with a touch of trepidation as we turned on this mysterious cream box." *Janet Pettigrew, Perth Office Coordinator, 1989-1991.*

"When I first started working for Green Skills one day a week, we were based in a tiny office at the back of the Denmark Environment Centre's original building. Louise, Basil and I shared one computer. When Gerda joined us, she had to work in the corridor if we were all there!" *Sally Pamberger (nee Haigh), Administration and Denmark Office Coordinator, 1991-1998.*

## Green Skills: a retrospective

A management committee was formed soon after the establishment of the Greenhouse Corps, to help guide the growing organisation, initially comprising of Peter Newman, Louise Duxbury, Greg Ryan and APACE members John Croft and David Kaesehagen.

In 1992, Greenhouse Corps underwent a name change, to APACE Green Skills, reflecting the change in media and political focus from a climate change perspective, to environmental education and job creation. Soon after, a Denmark-based management committee was established, called the APACE Green Skills Denmark Subcommittee, comprising of volunteers from the community, local agencies and business. The Denmark Subcommittee reported to the management committee of APACE monthly.

The early development of the Greenhouse Corps was greatly supported by individual state ministers following the lead of the initial grant from the Premier in 1989. Annual funding of \$60,000 was obtained by direct lobbying of ministers by the Greenhouse Corps State Coordinator Louise Duxbury for several years, with the amounts secured dropping to smaller amounts as the organisation became more established.

“It did not matter whether the presiding government was Labor or Liberal, we were able to present the innovative work being done by us and gain relatively untied funding from the state government to further develop training courses and projects. One year I asked for a contribution from four different ministers and we were successful with all of them, so had twice as much, \$120,000 in total, as I had budgeted on. We were very careful to make such funding work very hard for us to make the most of each dollar. Such funding for development of innovation is now sadly unavailable.” *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*



### 3. Environmental Skills Training

Within the first several years of operation, Green Skills established a range of training opportunities, including workshops, short courses, and longer-term courses for people wanting to change their career direction and for young unemployed people. Training programs included courses in landcare planning and communication skills, seed collection, organic horticulture, environmental tourism, work preparation courses for the long-term unemployed, and energy conservation. Early training programs were funded by Jobtrain, Workskills, Jobskills and the Landcare Environmental Action Program.



*Albany Advertiser, November 6 1992*

Accredited training programs in conservation and land management, organic horticulture, home sustainability assessments, farm forestry, and tree felling, as well as shorter non-accredited training courses, were continually developed according to community needs. On many occasions, Green Skills developed prototypes of training programs which were then developed as accredited training. Green Skills also delivered accredited landcare training to trainees in job-based traineeships.

As the scope of training programs grew, a new office and training centre was opened in Albany (circa 1994) which became a base for many of the training courses and Green Corps programs on the south coast. In the early years APACE Green Skills' training was delivered at the excellent APACE site on Johannah Street in North Fremantle. After separation from APACE various venues were used for metropolitan training delivery, in addition to the APACE site, including the Environmental Technology Centre at Murdoch University, Fairbridge Farm, Whiteman Park and the Bennett Brook Catchment Group premises in Caversham.



*Lesley Baker, Sally Haigh, Stirling MLA Monty House, and Louise Duxbury at the Albany Training Centre in 1995*

## Landcare Planning and Communication Skills Courses

The first course run by the newly formed Green Skills was the Landcare Planning and Communication Skills course. Early courses were run at the Rylington Park Research Farm near Boyup Brook. Later, the first half of the course was run from Rylington Park, and the second half run in Albany at the Great Southern Regional College, and the Green Skills Albany Training Centre after its opening. Both locations provided a very practical backdrop for the delivery of this two-month course which covered soils, hydrology, flora and fauna management, mapping skills and whole farm planning for production and conservation. These courses emphasised both the practical skills for sustainable land management as well as on communication and group skills.

“A highlight of many of these courses was spotlighting native fauna in the Perup Nature Reserve adjacent to Rylington Park, a haven for marsupial populations. I remember bogging the bus on a firebreak, 4 miles from the nearest homestead, right at the end of an exhilarating evening spotting tammars, woylies, possums and nocturnal birds. All eleven of us walked out, having gratefully received help from a very sleepy farmer, and eventually were all asleep in our beds way after midnight. To say I had OHS worries that night would be an understatement, but in hindsight, it was an adventure!” *Basil Schur, Project Manager (Biodiversity, Farm Forestry and Community Development), 1989-present.*





*David Nile speaking at a Landcare Planning and Salt Land Rehabilitation Course at Rylington Park, in 1997*



*Landcare Planning and Integrated Farm Forestry Course at Rylington Park, circa 2000*

The Landcare Planning and Communication Skills courses were run from 1990 through to 2002 and covered topics including conservation protection through whole farm planning, salt land rehabilitation, and farm forestry, depending on changing community needs. Session presenters were local farmers, or came from government agencies, businesses, and not for profit organisations. Many of those who attended had either university degrees or practical skills in related areas and were keen to make career changes to enter the new landcare field. Participants assisted with facilitation of sessions and in food preparation each day as part of the group skills component of training.

“Doing whole farm planning when we started at Rylington Park was pretty arcane compared with today’s GIS capabilities. I remember the group sitting in the spartan lecture room next to the shearing shed with dust billowing in during the hot easterly winds and poring over aerial photos and mapping farm features onto special clear overlay materials. The students did a great job presenting finished farm plans with some great innovative landcare ideas to participating farmers from the district.”  
*Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

## Training Programs for the Under-Employed

Several 3-month programs for long-term unemployed people were established with funding through Jobtrain, a major Commonwealth Employment Services (CES) program. Courses were run in Albany, Mt Barker, Manjimup, Bridgetown, Pinjarra and Denmark. The courses focused on the development of practical skills supplemented by sound knowledge, and the opportunity to enhance skills in real working environments. Courses included Environmental Tourism, Seed Collection, Organic Horticulture and Reforestation Techniques.

Participants in the Environmental Tourism Course developed understanding of the tourism industry, environmental impacts of tourism, and marketing. Participants in the Seed Collection courses learnt plant identification skills, dieback control, seed collection and wildflower picking techniques, and bush survival skills. Organic Horticulture courses covered farm planning and soil testing, ground preparation and soil improvement, composting, plant propagation, crop rotation, integrated weed and pest control, water management, determining viable markets and organic certification. In Reforestation Techniques courses, participants learnt tree planting techniques, group preparation, pruning and maintenance, seed collection and propagation, and were introduced to whole farm planning concepts. Participants were able to develop proficient skills actively taking part in waterways and remnant vegetation fencing, nursery work and tree planting projects. All courses covered business skills and skills for the workplace such as effective communication.

“We were able to demonstrate that longer-term unemployed people who participated found working on conservation efforts very motivating and rewarding. This helped to sell our courses to the CES. There were also individuals within the CES who could see that we were offering meaningful skill and work opportunities in a growing field and they supported our bids for funding.” *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

Other employment training programs such as Jobskills were also utilised to undertake training in environmental skills and on the ground project work. The Jobskills program running from 1992 was important in providing longer-term unemployed the opportunity to gain work skills in six-month job placements. Green Skills was able to run significant projects such as the organic horticulture venture in Denmark and the energy auditing project in Albany, as well as gain assistance in our offices for administrative roles.



## Landcare Environmental Action Program (LEAP)

In 1992, the first Youth Conservation Corps Training Program funded by the Commonwealth's Landcare Environmental Action Program (LEAP) was launched in Albany. 17 training programs for unemployed youth were delivered by Green Skills from 1992 to 1996, in Albany, Denmark, Esperance, Harvey, Collie, Northam, Jarrahdale, Nedlands, and South Perth. Over 200 participants completed the training program, with the majority of participants going on to further training or employment within 3 months.



### Course gave young people new purpose

**T**WO young people — one a LEAP veteran and the other a LEAP novice — talked this week about how the program had helped them.

Neal Bodel has made an extraordinary three-year journey from the dust to the finish of the Young West Australian of the Year award and he says it is all due to LEAP.

After falling out of school at the end of Year 10, he spent six years on the dole and although he was interested in permaculture, he had no idea about how to further it.

Then he went on a LEAP course at the Men of the Trees nursery in Hazelmere where he learned about permaculture and landcare.

Straight after that, Mr Bodel, 24, did an advanced landcare course run by Green Skills and started work as a manager at MOTT's City Farm which he has just left to work for an organic farm in Denmark.

This month he will be among those competing for the Young West Australian of the Year title.

"I would not have had these opportunities but for the LEAP program," he said.

"We have done six LEAP programs at City Farm. You see the successes and it's not just the job successes but the character successes — the self-esteem which boosts people to go looking for a job rather than living on the dole."

"It developed my ability to speak publicly and to make me feel confident that I knew what I was talking about."

At the same time, young people did not have to sell their soul.

"It gave me renewed confidence that you don't have to conform and work at something you don't want to do," he said. "You can get where you want without compromising your spiritual and political beliefs."

West Australian, November 11 1996

## Unemployed teens to build platform

FIFTEEN unemployed teenagers from Northam will complete a look-out platform on Mt Ommamey as part of a Landcare Environment Action Program in December.

The LEAP project has \$15,000 funding from the Northam Town Council to build a platform with an information stand, and a walk trail down to the Dr Burrows grave site.

The site will be landscaped and the area around the road entry to Mt Ommamey will be repaired.

Greenskills is involved in the project and receives Government funds.

Coordinator from Greenskills, Jill

Agderal, said the project would go for six months and participants were aged between 15 and 20 years old.

The group would be planting trees, landscaping the entry and putting up information signs.

"We will be making it a better tourist attraction," Ms Agderal said.

Participants will attend C Y O'Connor TAFE to learn land management skills including conservation concepts.

Ms Agderal said the LEAP project was very important because it prepared participants for the workforce.

"We have only been here three weeks and their self-esteem has rocketed," she said.

Participant Leonie Onn



**LEAP PROJECT:** Young locals (left) Leonie Onn and (right) Guy Putland start work on a lookout platform on Mt Ommamey with supervision from Sandra Ryan from Greenskills.

said she enjoyed the project as it gave her something to do during the day and she had al-

ready completed a first aid certificate.

Stage two of the project will receive \$27,000 from

the Northam Town Council to fully re-vegetate the side of Mt Ommamey.

Advocate, July 10 1996, p. 10



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Participants of the six-month program completed the theoretical components at TAFE, or through Green Skills. The practical components were coordinated by Green Skills, with participants developing a variety of hands-on skills, including fencing, revegetation, weed spraying, river bank restoration, construction of platforms, boardwalks and walk trails, first aid, and coastal restoration, with a focus on personal development, self-esteem building and teamwork skills.

Major projects completed as part of the programs include:

- Construction of a whale watching platform at Point Ann in the Fitzgerald National Park,
- Design and development of picnic and barbeque facilities at King River Picnic grounds, Albany,
- Fencing of remnant vegetation and planting on the bank reserves of the Kalgan River,
- Construction and placement of a beach access boardwalk at Gull Rock Reserve near Albany,
- Restoration of the Anglican Church and war memorial in Jarrahdale,
- Dune restoration at Swanbourne Beach, and campsite and track construction on a section of the Bibbulmun Track near Collie



*LEAP participants constructing fencing along a riverbank, Albany, 1996*

“The LEAP programs were a real challenge in managing 15 young people as they transitioned from school to work. We had many brilliant team leaders although a few did not last very long. One memorable occasion was when one assistant team leader became so fed up with the team doing, or not doing, fencing out on a farm that he sped away in the bus leaving the team stranded. A team member alerted the farmer and the team was quickly collected by another staff member!” *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

A decision was made by the Commonwealth in 1996 to cut the Landcare Environmental Action Program (LEAP) in favour of the Green Corps program.

# Green Skills cut

**F**REMANTLE'S APACE Green Skills' environmental training and employment services for the unemployed have suffered a 75 per cent cut in funding following last week's federal budget.

Cuts to labour market programmes will cause a dramatic reduction in training programmes and create social problems, according to co-ordinator Christine Bailie.

Programmes to be cut include the Landcare Environment Action Programme, New Work Opportunities and Job Skills.

Of the 225 people who pass through Green Skills' programmes each year, about 150 are involved in employment training.

"The labour market programmes were not just about getting people ready for work, they also focused on personal development, self-esteem and improving life-skills," Ms Bailie said.

"Now that there will be nothing to fill that role, young unem-



Green Skills officer Christine Bailie.

employed people will just fall in a hole.

"We'll face significant social costs. People will take more drugs and there will be an increase in crime and psychiatric problems."

Ms Bailie said the federal government's decision to replace training programmes with on-the-

job traineeships would disadvantage the long-term unemployed and those with social or learning difficulties.

"There will be fewer places and employers will be able to choose the cream of the unemployed. A large group of unemployed will be left," she said.

Federal opposition member for Fremantle Carmen Lawrence said the changes amounted to a \$1.8 billion national cut in employment programmes over the next four years.

"It's unbelievable when people talk about this being a fair budget when we already have 8.5 per cent unemployed," Dr Lawrence said.

"It is going to be very difficult for the long-term unemployed and those difficult to place (in employment) to get any training."

State employment and training minister Norman Moore said there was little the state government could do if the Commonwealth decided to cut funding.

"In situations where programmes may be jointly funded we will need to look at the specific details of the federal budget and what effect they may have," the minister said.

City of Fremantle north ward councillor Ann Forma said the city's already high unemployment rate would worsen because of the cuts.

*Fremantle Gazette, August 30 1996*

## Green Corps

Green Skills continued to manage Green Corps programs as a subcontractor of Conservation Volunteers Australia, and later Greening Australia. Green Corps programs were open to all young people, not just unemployed youth. Green Skills managed more than 20 Green Corps programs from 1996, in Albany, Denmark, Esperance, Mt Barker, Serpentine-Jarrahdale, and Rockingham, and delivered training to more than 20 additional Green Corps teams. David McNamara, Green Corps team leader and Project Manager for Ecojobs, led 11 of these Green Corps teams, an Australia-wide record at the time.

"I supervised about 120 young people during the Green Corps years and about two-thirds were female. With some notable exceptions, they were more motivated, harder working, showed more initiative and were keener to learn about the environment and how to care for it." *David McNamara, Project Manager (Ecojobs), 1997-present.*

Green Corps teams received training and completed projects in weed control, fencing, wetland and dryland plantings, track construction and maintenance, installation of interpretive signage, building boardwalks and bird hides, rat baiting, and wildlife surveys. Team building and career development were strongly emphasised.



## Green Skills: a retrospective

Major projects completed include:

- Construction of 12kms of the Bibbulmun track and construction of a camp shelter,
- Environmental weed control at many different sites,
- About 500,000 trees planted on farms,
- The Kalgan River trail (later renamed the Luke Penn walk) including nine bridges,
- Stairways and steps for sustainable beach access and coastal repair work at a number of beaches and fishing spots,
- Construction of composting toilets,
- Silviculture pruning for farm forestry projects,
- Construction and installation of nest boxes at several sites,
- Many kilometres of fencing in several catchments,
- Waterways fencing and tree planting, bird hide construction and rat baiting at Mutton Bird Island in the Torbay catchment,
- Sedge planting at a constructed wetland in Albany and temporary educational display,
- Yakamia Creek floodplain restoration, and
- Construction of a walk trail, boardwalk, interpretive signage, and bird hide at Lake Seppings.



*A Torbay Catchment Green Corps team led by Terry Davey, with local farmer Gary Martin, circa 2003*

“The Green Corps teams run by Green Skills were recognised across the state as some of the best because of our dedicated staff and the quality of our projects. Our team leaders provided amazing role modelling to the young people involved and were rewarded by seeing the development of the young people, who always presented leaders such as Dave Mc with terrific thank you cards and gifts, and kept in touch after courses ended” *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*





*The Gooralong Brook Green Corps team, constructing a trail in 2004*

My first job with Green Skills was as team leader of the Jarrahdale Green Corps team. We toiled for weeks on a dry stone wall near the old Jarrahdale Post Office, only to be told that it would probably fall down and really needed to have thicker walls that were mortared together. So we broke it all down and did it again. By the time we finished we had made a really good rock wall that every one of the group members had invested a lot of effort and love into. I get a bit of a kick knowing that many of the group members learned their first work skills doing that job.” *Mick Sherriff, Project Manager (Ecojobs), 2004-2006.*



*The stone wall constructed by the Gooralong Brook Green Corps team in 2004*

I look at the photos on the wall above my desk and see hundreds of faces of young Green Corps participants, trainees, staff and others smiling back at me. There are stories of great achievement or the opposite, great wealth and bleak poverty, the joy of birth and the tragedy of death, success against the odds and unexpected failure – in short, all the strengths and weaknesses of society at large. I am sure all of these people have taken something positive from their association with Green Skills (some more than others), and I know that I am the richer for having worked with them.” *David McNamara, Project Manager (Ecojobs), 1997-present.*

“Managing two Green Corps teams, in Rockingham and Jarrahdale, was a highlight for me. Watching the young people develop as a team, complete on the ground projects and undertake accredited landcare training was particularly satisfying.” *Annabelle Newbury, State Manager, 1998-present.*

“I do often think about all the kids I met while teaching the Green Corps and wonder what these kids ended up doing. One couple I remember teaching actually settled in Rosebery, and we have become work colleagues in recent years. One is working in mining as an environmental officer and the other is a council weed and fire officer. I think overall my experience with Green Corps was a very positive one. It was a real privilege to be part of those young lives at a very formative stage.” *Ben Osgerby, Project Manager (Training) 1999-2005.*

## Accredited Training

It became clear that our commitment to provision of training would be more effective by becoming a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) so that we could deliver nationally accredited training. Green Skills fulfilled the necessary registration requirements and became an RTO in December 1996 and then in 1997 was listed with the WA Department of Training as a preferred training provider of Landcare and Waste Management traineeships. Green Skills then went through the lengthy process of documenting its policies and procedures and was validated as a Quality Endorsed Training Organisation (QETO) in 1999. Now Green Skills operates as an RTO under the Australian Quality Training Framework 2007, and is committed to maintaining quality standards through a process of continuous improvement.

The first accredited training programs offered were Certificate I in Basic Landcare & Environment Action (initially offered to Green Corps participants), and Certificate III in Organic Farming. Training for Traineeships in Certificate II Land Conservation & Restoration and Certificate II Waste Management were offered from 1997. A Certificate III qualification in Landcare was later developed and delivered by Green Skills from 1999. Traineeships in Certificate II Horticulture (Parks and Gardens) and Certificate II Horticulture (Nursery) were offered to trainees at Bandyup Prison in 2002. In 2003, a new training package in Conservation and Land Management was developed and Green Skills was scoped to delivered Certificate I, Certificate II, Certificate III and Certificate IV in Conservation and Land Management.

Accredited units from the Forest Products Training Package were delivered on the south coast from 1998. In 2000, Green Skills included Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training in its training profile. The nationally accredited short course in Home Sustainability Assessment was added to our training scope in early 2008. This course trains participants to undertake sustainability assessments of energy, water, waste and transport. The course was developed by Holmsglen TAFE on behalf of Sustainability Victoria, and piloted by them in late 2007. To date, November 2009, Green Skills is the only Western Australian RTO to be scoped to deliver this course in Home Sustainability Assessment (HSA). A total of 104 participants have already undertaken Green Skills courses in HSA.





*A Home Sustainability Assessment Course at the Centre for Sustainable Living in 2008*

Accredited training in chainsaw operation, and tree maintenance and felling was added to the Green Skills scope of training in June 2009.

## **Landcare Traineeships**

Since 1997, more than 400 landcare and conservation and land management trainees across Western Australia have received training from Green Skills. Traineeships consist of a one year full-time employment placement within the landcare industry, which provides the opportunity for on the job work experience while receiving accredited training.

In 1997, the Western Australian state government introduced the Landcare Training Initiative, which was a four year program to boost the number of landcare trainees through the provision of a subsidy paid to employers towards trainee wages of \$8,000 per year. This was a substantial incentive and resulted in the establishment of a wide range of trainee placements becoming available.

*“The Landcare traineeships were a tremendous buzz at the time when I started in June 1998. There was a program with 24 indigenous Certificate II trainees starting in Tom Price and Paraburdoo that Louise Duxbury and Biddy Myers were organising. Later on I coordinated the program for 8 of them to continue onto Certificate III. It was a challenge to deliver training at distance, but with innovation and flexibility, our tutors, John Robertson and Chris Ferreira, managed it brilliantly. I visited the trainees during the program – two of them were employed at Karijini National Park – so it was a wonderful site visit.” Annabelle Newbury, State Manager, 1998-present.*

Green Skills has delivered training to trainees employed with a diverse range of employers, including the Department of Environment and Conservation, Catchment groups, landcare consultants, local government bushcare teams, Millstream Prison Work camp, KEEDAC Aboriginal Corporation in Wagin, and Pilbara Iron in Dampier, and school based traineeships to students in Years 11 and 12.

## Green Skills: a retrospective

Trainees have participated in a variety of projects including Landcare work on farms; nursery work; propagation; Geographical Information Systems; computerised mapping; revegetation projects; chemical, biological and manual weed control; fencing of remnant vegetation and forestry areas; farm forestry project work; and track construction and maintenance.



*Trainees from Pilbara Iron, receiving plant recognition training in 2005*

“The travel for training programs took me up to the Pilbara. One trip in particular I camped in my bivvy bag in the Tom Price Caravan Park as a cost-saving measure. I think I had the option between a bed in the motel or a hire car so I could have a weekend trip out to the gorges. I didn’t have to ponder that decision for very long. I had all these offers of shelter from the dust, wind and rain from well-meaning grey nomads who took pity on me sleeping on such a thin foam mattress. Boy those budgets were tight weren’t they?” *Ben Osgerby, Project Manager (Training), 1999-2005.*

“I get great satisfaction hearing of the success of some of Green Skills’ past trainees. Training with Green Skills certainly provides people with great hands-on start to a career in Conservation and Land Management.” *Greg Duke, Project Manager (Farm Forestry and Training), 1998-2007.*



*Farmgate, August 2008. Green Skills delivered Cert II CLM training to participants under South Coast Natural Resource Management's Restoring Connections Program*

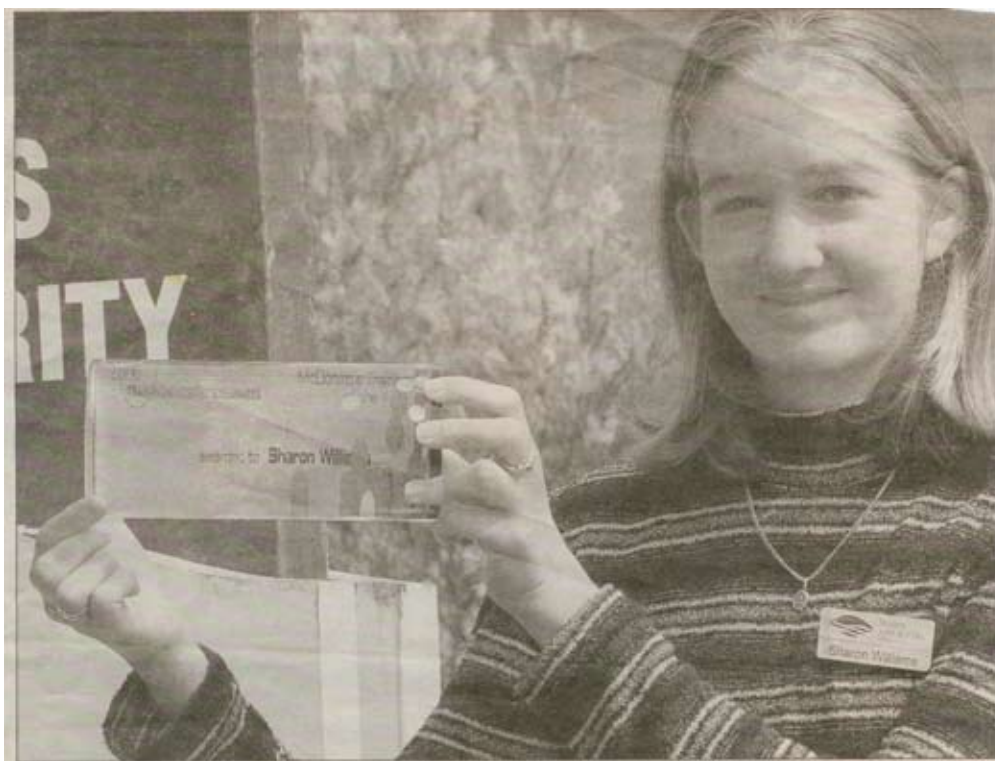
"I vividly remember one landcare trainee who was working for a fencing contractor out in the northern wheatbelt. I went there to sign the training agreement with the supervisor. When I arrived at the house it was a very rough collection of fibro sheds kept in a very poor state. Mad Max movie scenes sprung to mind. The farmer was in the middle of butchering a pig and came out of the shed carrying a bucket of guts followed by a swarm of flies which cast a shadow over him. He pulled his bloody hand out of the bucket and thrust it in my direction introducing himself. I remember shaking his hand as I didn't want to offend (typical me) and then immediately wondered where I could wipe my hand as I had my city clothes on. He offered a cup of hot tea even though it was a scorching summer's day and I rather hoped he would have offered a beer. It was fun trying to not to swallow the flies with the tea. It was the fastest signup ever." *Ben Osgerby, Project Manager (Training), 1999-2005.*



*Trainees Emily Want, Kaleisha Dakin-Barnes and Cerise Lockett carrying out water monitoring in 2008*



“One great memory I have of my earlier days was being invited to the Hyatt Hotel in Perth for the WA Department of Training annual Trainee Excellence Awards. A Green Skills trainee (Sharon Williams) had been nominated for the Trainee of the Year. Sharon worked partly for the WA Department of Agriculture and partly for the Water and Rivers Commission. It was a very formal affair. They had announced a number of awards and finally came to the Trainee of the Year. Sharon won the award. The award was across all industry areas and was a great achievement for Sharon. It also appeared that industry had finally recognised a career path through traineeships for young people interested in this area. I must say that I was also very proud as Green Skills were Sharon’s training provider.”  
Greg Duke, Project Manager (Farm Forestry and Training), 1998-2007.



**AWARD WINNER:** Sharon Williams was named Trainee of the Year at the WA 2000 Excellence Training Awards ceremony in Perth last Friday.

## Dream step closer after win

By **MINH LAM**

LANDCARE has always been important to Albany woman Sharon Williams, especially after growing up on a Bremer Bay farm.

It led her to her job at the Waters and Rivers Commission, and resulted in her McDonald's Trainee of the Year at the WA 2000 Training Excellence Awards win in Perth last Friday.

"I was sure that I wasn't going to win the actual award," Ms Williams said.

"I just thought it would be a good experience and if I got any further that it was good. It has just been a bonus winning."

The 20-year-old won from 200 initial, and then 11 final applicants.

She had to do three presentations to a panel of four before she and three other finalists travelled to the awards ceremony at the Hyatt Hotel. Ms Williams won

\$7000, to be used for study or for setting up her own business, and an air ticket to any Australian capital city.

She also received an air ticket to Hobart, where she will represent WA at the national training excellence awards ceremony in November.

Ms Williams looked forward to going to Tasmania and the awards selection process would allow her to practise her public speaking again.

The former Albany Senior High School student recently completed a landcare traineeship, organised through Great Southern Group Training and environmental training group Green Skills.

Ms Williams was placed at Agriculture WA and the Waters and Rivers Commission, where she worked on projects such as the sampling of water quality at Yakamia Creek and local revegetation work.

She didn't plan going into landcare but

it was something she enjoyed and had been involved in on the family farm in Bremer Bay.

Ms Williams is on contract to the Waters and Rivers Commission until the end of the year and wanted to do some work for AgWA after that.

Her dream was to set-up a farm so city children could learn about farm animals and agricultural life.

Waters and Rivers Commission regional manager Naomi Arrowsmith said Ms Williams deserved to win the award.

"We just appreciate her enormously. She is great and shows heaps of initiative," she said.

Green Skills training coordinator Greg Duke congratulated Ms Williams on her award win and said she thoroughly deserved it because of her great commitment to training and landcare.

Sharon Williams, a Green Skills landcare trainee, won the "Trainee of the Year" award in 2000.



*Green Skills' trainee Amy McCracken carrying out maintenance work on a plantation in 2006*

Alan Carter and Greg Duke developed a program for Green Skills to employ Conservation and Land Management trainees directly. Teams of three trainees have been employed in Albany since 2006 to carry out a variety of work relating to revegetation, weeding, silviculture and related biodiversity projects. The program of works has been sponsored by Integrated Tree Cropping and South Coast National Resource Management, and trainees have also been able to provide on the ground support directly to other Green Skills projects. In some cases, trainees worked with Green Skills for two years, completing Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management in their second year and were able to take on work requiring an increased level of skill and responsibility.





*David McNamara with Green Skills' trainees Jessica Evers & Megan Lanigan in 2009*

Successful Green Skills trainees 2006-2009:

Charmaine Iwach	completed Certificate II CLM	February 2007
Amy McCracken	completed Certificate II CLM	February 2007
Julian Neville	completed Certificate II CLM	April 2007
Charmaine Iwach	completed Certificate III CLM	January 2008
Amy McCracken	completed Certificate III CLM	January 2008
Marnie Vaux	completed Certificate II CLM	July 2008
Kaleisha Dakin-Barnes	completed Certificate II CLM	December 2008
Cerise Lockett	completed Certificate II CLM	December 2008
Jessica Evers	due to complete Certificate II CLM	December 2009
Megan Lanigan	due to complete Certificate II CLM	December 2009

## 4. On-the-Ground Landcare and Sustainability Projects

Landcare and sustainability projects have been a large component of Green Skills activities. Project work has included community awareness-raising of landcare issues, encouraging community engagement in restoration projects and planting days, wetland catchment planning and implementation of catchment plans, water sampling and water quality assessments, vegetation assessments, establishing and maintaining farm forestry sites, waste management, and promoting sustainable living.

### Revegetation and Biodiversity Restoration Projects

The first on the ground project run by the Green Skills was the Treebank project in 1990. The concept was for people to donate money through selected banks to pay for trees to be planted in Western Australia with a portion of the donation going to projects overseas through Oxfam (previously Community Aid Abroad). The project did not have the budget to promote it widely and did not raise a great deal of donations. However, through the project Green Skills was able to establish 40,000 seedlings, mainly in the Avon River Catchment.

“Treebank really set the model for future revegetation with the project depending on partnerships with other organisations such as Greening Australia and the Ribbons of Green projects, assistance in doing the planting through students and volunteers, with great coordination by Greenhouse Corps staff members Janet Pettigrew and Basil Schur.” *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

Green Skills has undertaken revegetation projects for biodiversity through its many training courses and projects every year since the completion of the Treebank project. This includes restoring and protecting remnant bushland on farms and in reserves, developing management plans for reserves in the Great Southern region, erosion control projects in coastal areas, and constructing a whale watching platform. Two examples of long term projects are Rylington Park and Denmark High School.

Green Skills was involved in the development of Rylington Park, an agricultural training farm near Boyup Brook from 1990 to 2002. Rylington Park was the location of the Landcare Planning and Communication Skills courses from 1990 through to 2002, as well as landcare work experience training. A whole farm plan for Rylington Park was developed, and Green Skills assisted to implement the plan, fencing remnant vegetation, establishing wildlife corridors, farm forestry sites, and shelterbelts, constructing a dam and planting appropriate species to address salinisation. Planning and implementation of the farm plan were integrated into courses, work experience weeks and field days.

In 2000, the Denmark High School relocated onto former Denmark Agricultural College land, and Green Skills formed a close association with the school, working to implement a landscape plan for the school grounds. Green Skills has coordinated revegetation and biodiversity conservation projects at the school, including Karri forest reforestation and wetland plantings, with students taking part in planting days.

“John Corson was the Principal of the Denmark High School when it relocated to new premises on former Agricultural College Land in Denmark in about 2000. John was energetically supportive of community partnerships. He invited Green Skills to help coordinate a landscape plan for the 18 hectares of school grounds. Each winter since 2001, Year 8 students have planted local native trees and shrubs according to that plan. The result is beautiful to behold, rehabilitated wetlands and

creepline, and a young karri forest emerging beside the tranquil Denmark River. John always led by example, and prior to his retirement from education, was always in the thick of things, either playing his bagpipes for all to hear, or getting muddy planting trees along with his students.” *Basil Schur, Project Manager (Biodiversity, Farm Forestry and Community Development), 1989-present.*

“My most memorable times with Green Skills have been working on the landscaping projects at Denmark High School. Basil as project manager always consults with the school and arranges for the area to be sprayed and ripped or mounded. The only thing Basil can’t arrange or control is the weather. It is now the tenth year since we started planting trees and shrubs down the town end of the school property and the trees there are quite large now. With Basil organising everything, all I have to do is turn up with the enthusiastic little Year 8s, hopefully with trowels, gloves and raincoats.” *Jenny Findlay, Board of Management, 2003-2009.*

Green Skills has also been involved in the planning and implementation of Gondwana Link, a major project on the south coast, restoring connectivity of ecological systems across the landscape, and protecting and replanting large bushland remnants. From 2005 to present, Green Skills has coordinated the Gondwana Link (Forests to Stirling Ranges) project, reviewing and collating scientific and planning information and developing recommendations for an important part of the Gondwana Link project, between the Stirling Range National Park, the Mt Lindesay National Park and the Mt Roe National Park. This included a survey of wandoo woodland health, planning for the Cranbrook to Mt Barker Rail Reserve Corridor, and research into landscape restoration planning for the three main link areas connecting the Stirling Ranges to Mt Roe National Park, the Stirling Ranges to Porongurup National Park, and the Porongurup to Mt Lindesay National Parks. Community-based workshops were facilitated to promote further community awareness of bushland corridors, and to encourage further involvement of shires, landholders and plantation companies.

“As time went on I became more and more involved with the organisation and Green Skills became not just a job but an enviable lifestyle. It became a major part of my life, something I was proud to tell people that I was involved in, with such a progressive and community-based organisation. When Joyce and I visit the area we love so much (Denmark and the south coast) and we pass a Green Skills project, particularly one that I was involved with, I grow another foot tall with pride. Nothing gives me more satisfaction than going back and looking at an area we had worked on and seeing the improved landscape.” *Greg Duke, Project Manager (Farm Forestry and Training), 1998-2007.*

## Wetlands

Work on wetland conservation and restoration has been a major on-the-ground project area of Green Skills. This includes the ongoing South Coast Wetlands Conservation Program, the Wetlands Education Centre in Denmark, numerous field walks, workshops and community planting days, foreshore condition surveys and action reports for more than 14 river systems on the south coast, and waterway fencing and revegetation projects.

The ongoing South Coast Wetlands Conservation Program was launched in 1994. On an annual basis, restoration and preservation work in wetland areas on the south coast was undertaken, including fencing of wetlands, remnant vegetation and vegetation corridors; tree, rush and sedge planting; development and implementation of management plans; construction of walk trails; installation of interpretive signage; installation of bird hides and nesting boxes; presentation of field days and community events; mural and sculpture installations; and the establishment of a Wetlands Education Centre on Denmark Agricultural College farm land.

Collaboration on the project with Water & Rivers Commission and the Department of Environment commenced in 1999. Since then, a total of more than 240 kilometres of fencing has been constructed to protect wetland areas, numerous workshops and field days promoting the appreciation and conservation of wetlands were held, and 18 management plans were prepared for priority wetland suites across the south coast between Walpole and Esperance, including the Two People Bay Wetland Catchment Management Plan, the North Stirlings-Balicup Wetlands Catchment Management Plan, and the Wilson Inlet Catchment Wetland Suite Management Plan.



*Kevin Hopkinson, Green Skills wetlands officer, circa 2001*



## Winning green team



**WINNING TEAM:** David McNamara, Jodie Plowman, Leith Scott, Daniel Cork, Sheridan Wakefield, Aimee Williams, Basil Schur and Kate Marwick hit the wetlands

trail. The trail at the Wetlands Education Centre is one part of the picture which has won Green Skills Denmark the bush land and waterways category of the 2003 WA Environment Awards. **See story page 2.**

## Green Skills wetland project a State winner

GREEN SKILLS Denmark's 1km walk trail at the Wetlands Education Centre is one part of the picture which has won the organisation the bush land and waterways category of the 2003 WA Environment Awards.

Environment Minister Judy Edwards presented the awards at a ceremony in Perth at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Saturday, October 25.

Green Skills Denmark was one of 14 category winners.

It was recognised for its work in protecting the environmental values in 509,000ha area encompassing the Torbay, Wilson, Parry

and Irwin inlet catchments which is proposed as a UNESCO biosphere reserve.

Green Skills has carried out strategic planning and on-ground projects in cooperation with farmers, agencies and community groups in the area.

It was cited for its biodiversity conservation, catchment rehabilitation and inspiration to other organisations in WA.

Meanwhile the team led by Green Corps team manager David McNamara has been busy working on and off for four months with tree planting, fencing and bushland regenerating.

*Denmark Bulletin, November 6 2003*





*Albany Advertiser, 2000*

A number of community field days and planting days in wetland areas have been held, encouraging community awareness of the importance of wetlands.



*Construction of the Wetlands Education Centre, Denmark, in 1996.*

Establishment of the Wetlands Education Centre, 2km east of Denmark, began in 1995, to promote farm-based wetland conservation and restoration on WA's south coast, in partnership with the WA College of Agriculture in Denmark. A caravan was converted into a mobile wetlands education centre, based at an 8 ha site on the Denmark Agricultural College farm. Works on the site included a range of demonstration tree plantings, construction of walk trails and associated bridges, a bird hide and island, a wetlands lookout, information display and entrance statement, seating area and composting toilet.

Over the last 15 years, the site has also hosted a wide range of educational and training activities, focusing on wetlands rehabilitation, revegetation, silvicultural techniques, and environmental monitoring. It has also provided a venue for a wide range of community art projects, including mosaics, landscape art, sculpture, community performance events, and art classes. The Centre is an ongoing resource, forming part of the overall South Coast Wetland Conservation Program.

“Each year we would undertake flights over the farms we had fenced and planted through the Farm Forestry and Wetland projects. Basil pioneered the early flights and inducted me into the challenging art of navigating across the countryside, identifying sites and capturing these from the air. Basil had the added complexity of suffering from air sickness and nearly every flight was punctuated by violent gagging as poor Bas lost his breakfast into the sick bag. Basil being the true trooper he is, would quickly fold the bag up, wipe the cereal from his beard, resume his duties and keep clicking away. He is a true Legend!” *Kevin Hopkinson, Project Officer (Farm Forestry and Wetlands), 1994-2005.*



*Aerial view over the Wetlands Education Centre, Denmark. Photo taken in 2008.*

## **Farm Forestry**

In the early years of the Blue Gum industry in the lower south west, Green Skills had an involvement in helping to establish some early Blue Gum demonstration and research plots, building on work started by the Denmark Environment Centre. From 1990, Green Skills provided teams of previously-unemployed people to contract plant various Blue Gum timber-belts and other woodlot plantings as part of integrated farm forestry designs, including catchments targeted for water resource rehabilitation. Green Skills also provided teams to contract plant Blue Gums on properties across the lower south west for various private plantation companies until the mid 1990s.



As large private businesses entered the plantation establishment field, using less integrated planting methods, Green Skills farm forestry work focused on pioneering integrated plantings for high value timber production in the intermediate to lower rainfall sections of the Great Southern. A long term project promoting integrated farm forestry on the south coast was established in 1995. Between 1995 and 2008, more than 400,000 trees and shrubs were planted on over 80 demonstration integrated farm forestry sites on the south coast. Sites were established in a variety of environments and rainfall areas, including salt affected areas, and areas receiving less than 600mm annual rainfall. The sites demonstrate shelter belts, high value timber production, streamlining, salt land reclamation, and waterway protection. Selected established sites were silviculturally managed by Green Skills, Green Corps teams and landcare trainees for high value timber production.



*A farm forestry demonstration near Mt Barker, in 1997, one year after planting*



*Farm forestry planting in 2005*



*A 1999 Oil Mallee plantation in South Stirling. Photo taken in 2005*

"A very memorable time was the acquisition of one of the early "company cars" in 1998, to use in field work for Farm Forestry and Green Corps training programs, a rusty old Land Cruiser personnel carrier. It came equipped with a range of special features including:

- leaky exhaust which made the 6 diesel cylinders sound like 12;
- holes in the floor that you could watch the road whiz by underneath, and made sure everyone was "feet off the floor" when you went through puddles or crossed creeks, as the floor periodically flooded. We often wore our wet weather gear and gum boots, inside the car;
- huge moon explorer tyres coupled with no power steering, so it drove much like trying to control a tank and gave you a good workout just driving around town.

The old beast did however, negotiate some extreme 4WD situations, particularly on sodden Walpole farms, traversing boggy creek crossings and safely delivering planting teams and trailer loads of plants to otherwise inaccessible locations. A truly memorable machine." *Kevin Hopkinson, Project Officer (Farm Forestry and Wetlands), 1994-2005.*



**FARM FORESTRY:** Greg Duke and Alan Duns unloaded hundreds of seedlings in Denmark this week in preparation for the South Coast Farm Forestry Program.

## Delivery a step closer to diversity

GREEN Skills of Denmark received a huge boost to its South Coast Farm Forestry Program this week.

Thousands of native tree seedlings were delivered to Denmark on Tuesday as part of an extensive trial for drier farming areas.

Green Skills landcare work experience program participants will plant the trees to gain experience in land restoration techniques.

Green Skills project manager Greg Duke said the program focused on demonstration projects in Mt Barker, Ongerup and the South Stirling areas.

State agencies, landcare conservation groups and farmers would all be actively involved.

There would be a strong emphasis on integration of tree types to assist with landcare, shelter-belts, wildlife conservation and diversity of income for farmers.

"Our project demonstrates an alternative to large scale, fence-to-fence tree plantings, and shows how farmers, the environment and the farm forestry industry can all be winners," Mr Duke said.

"The Farm Forestry Program aims to promote high-value timber as a viable crop for farmers, increasing farm diversity and reducing the problems of salinity, waterlogging and erosion."

The range of seedlings delivered to Denmark this week reflected the differing uses anticipated for the future trees and timber.

"Sawlog producing eucalypts, melaleucas for salt land rehabilitation, and acacia hosts for sandalwood have been included this year," Mr Duke said.

A total of 10 sites will be planted with 43,000 trees this year, providing information and skills to farmers, landcare workers and the scientific community.

The seedlings have been donated by WA Plantation Resources, Forrest Nursery of Donnybrook, Timbercorp and APFL.

*Albany Advertiser, July 11 2002*



Training courses, field days and seminars promoting the development of farm forestry were delivered, including a Blue Gum Forum in 2000, farm forestry seminars in Albany, and Master Tree Grower's programs. Field days raised awareness of the benefits of farm forestry and provided landholders with skills and access to resources. In 2001, Green Skills was registered to deliver accredited training in farm forestry, including Certificate II and III in Forest and Forest Products.



*Kevin Pampling with Green Skills Landcare trainees Marnie Vaux, Amy McCracken and Charmaine Iwach, at a farm forestry demonstration site in 2007*

Investigating Potential Bush Products in the Great Southern was a major project run over a 12 month period in 2002 and was an important development within the farm forestry project work already undertaken by Green Skills. The project involved the development a species database indicating possible uses for cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, timber, and human consumption from local plants. Information on Aboriginal use of species was collected by an Ethnobotanist and provided to local Aboriginal organisations as a confidential database; a summary of similar projects and key individuals was collated; interviews with selected farmers to provide an indication of potential farmer interest in developing new products were undertaken; and feasibility or pre-feasibility studies on four of the higher potential species (swamp sheoak, sandalwood, warrigal greens, and blister bush) from the database were completed.

It was out of this project that the subsequent swamp sheoak farm forestry program, run over a four year period by Green Skills, emanated.

This study on *Casuarina obesa* (swamp sheoak) as a potential dryland farm forestry species commenced in 2002 in conjunction with the *Casuarina obesa* Working Group in areas affected by salt and waterlogging. An additional 350,000 *Casuarina obesa* trees were established on demonstration sites between 2003 and 2008. In addition, the program involved silvicultural management of selected demonstration sites, and regular field days and seminars focusing on dryland farm forestry options for farmers.

# Sheoaks could be salt saviour

THE call is out for local landholders with established plantings or natural tracts of swamp sheoaks to participate in a farm forestry survey.

A study into the Great Southern's natural biodiversity identified the salt-tolerant swamp sheoak (*Casuarina obesa*) as having major uses in salinity-affected areas.

Green Skills projects manager Basil Schur said apart from being salt-tolerant, the swamp sheoak also could have economic benefits.

"The sheoaks are grown primarily for landcare regions because they are salt-tolerant, but the wood is actually very attractive and there could be niche markets for it," he said.

Local grower Bill Hollingworth established a sheoak plantation five years ago and was more than pleased with the results.

"We don't expect returns for another 10-15 years, but the beauty of it is we're growing a timber crop here on saline land," he said.

Mr Hollingworth has already adapted the thinnings from the plantation for use as fence posts.

"They're a bit ugly and unconventional, but they do the job," he said.

"We call them 'rustic'."

Mr Hollingworth's plantations at Bandicoot Nursery contain four species of sheoak over 40ha.

He said recent visitors to the nursery from the Wheatbelt were impressed with



**PACKED WITH POTENTIAL:** Bill Hollingworth inspects a swamp sheoak seedling at Bandicoot Nursery.

the potential application of the sheoak in salinity-affected areas.

"They said, 'Why weren't we doing this

40 years ago?' and the reason is that it just needs someone to prove first that it can be done."

*Albany Extra, November 7 2003*

## Organic Horticulture

Green Skills began coordinating organic horticulture courses based in Denmark in 1992. Courses for the unemployed were funded first through the Jobtrain program and then through Jobskills programs. An organic demonstration site was established to provide a site for practical training, and allowed participants in courses to develop farming and horticulture skills. It was a battle to develop commercial level organic gardening without the funding for machinery, such as small rotovators and sheds.

The demonstration site was moved to Denmark Agricultural College farmland in 1995, and a 2ha herb trial site was established, a compost heap was constructed, and the watercourse was fenced off from stock. Accredited training in Certificate III in Organic Farming commenced in 1996.

"The first site managed by Dwayne and Reggie Peppin was wonderfully productive but trying to get it picked every day and to an outlet that could sell it all, proved to be very difficult. We were before our time with organics! Still, buoyed on with finding a Certificate III in Organic Farming from Orange University NSW and our experience at the first garden location, we went bigger and better on a prominent South Coast Highway location on Denmark Agricultural College farmland and started again. I remember sitting at meetings with the College staff who complained that our gardening was 'messy' and needed to be cleaned up with some spraying! Dave Walker did a fantastic job of establishing the site but it was still not paying its way so we reluctantly closed shop on organic farming in 1997." *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*





*The Organic Horticulture Site at the Denmark Agricultural College farm, in 1997*

In 2002 the Green Skills Organic Industry Development Project commenced, coordinated by David Lee and Colleen Yates from the Fremantle office, promoting the growth of the organic industry in Western Australia. The outcomes of the project included facilitation of the establishment of organic supply chains in beef, apples, olives, lamb and meat chickens, the production of the WA Organic Farm & Food guide, facilitation of lectures, tours, workshops and the 5<sup>th</sup> Organic Symposium in 2004, promoting the supply of organic produce in supermarkets, and support of the Organic Growers Association (OGAWA).

## **Ecotourism**

Green Skills has supported the early growth of small business and community enterprise development in the ecotourism industry. In 1994, an ecotourism project was set up to survey 30 sites in the Rainbow Coast region, assessing the environmental impacts of tourism and the market potential for ecotourism. In 1995, Green Skills facilitated an ecotourism seminar, generating awareness of ecotourism and providing networking opportunities. Another ecotourism impact research project was run in 1996. This project was based at Green's Pool, William Bay National Park, and trialed a range of surveys to assess the community and visitor perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism. Through the project, a Community Impact Survey was developed for national application.

Ecotours was developed as a small enterprise of Green Skills in 1996, offering tours around Denmark of wetlands, coastal heath, the marine environment (including snorkelling tours of Green's Pool), landcare projects, bushland management, organic gardens, and energy efficient housing. Through the enterprise, Green Skills aimed to set a high standard of ecotourism in the region. The enterprise was closed in September 1997.

Green Skills continued to promote the development of the industry, with Ecotourism Mentoring workshops in 2003 and 2005.

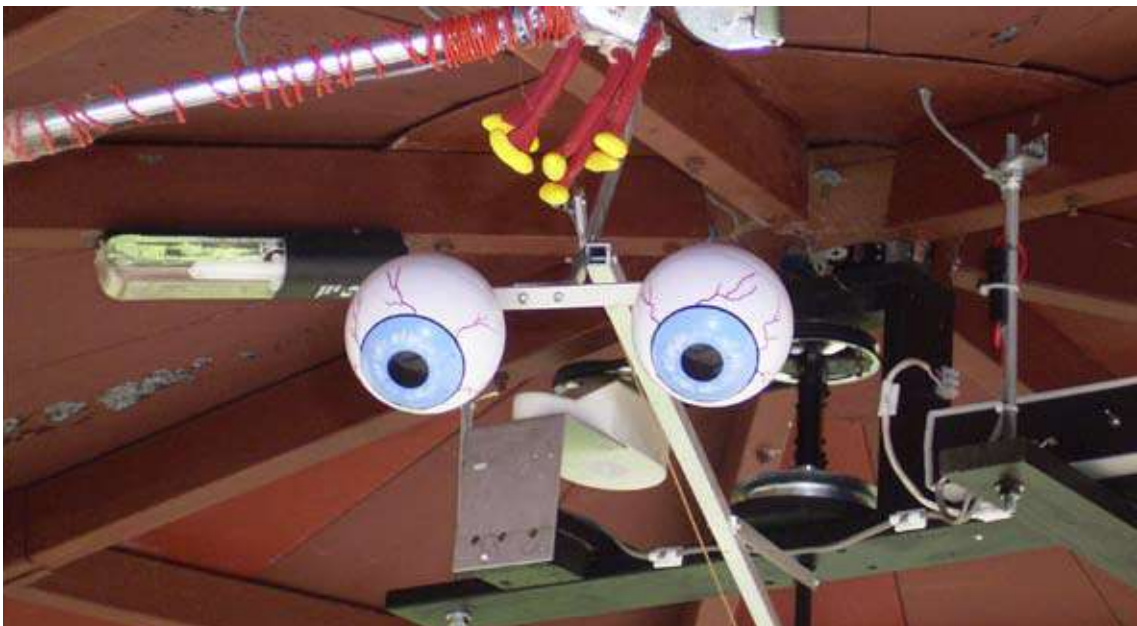




*An Ecotour of Greens Pool, William Bay National Park in 1996.  
Pictured are Louise Duxbury (second from right) and Mary Sturmer (far right)*

## Community Environmental Art Projects

Green Skills has contributed to many community art projects linked to our environmental projects, such as the Denmark Wetland Education Centre, Wilson Inlet projects, the Denmark Community Park, the Albany Wind Farm, and the Centre for Sustainable Living Wetland. Working with local artists and cultural organisations on performances, murals, sculpture and public art has provided opportunities to generate community involvement and ownership of projects.



*Solar powered kinetic sculpture at the ETC funded through Community Arts Network*





*An environmental community art project. Corrine Glorie, artist, painting a mural about Wilson Inlet, Denmark in 1996*



*Back to the Research Station Day, March 1997. Students created 3D models of their plan for the Community Park on former Research Station land beside the Denmark River*



*In 1997, Rob Fairclough, teaches a group of community participants how to carve wood. The resulting sculpture features an osprey and dolphins and has stood for the past decade at a prominent lookout overlooking the mouth of the Wilson Inlet in Denmark*

## Watershed Torbay Communication Plan

In 2001, the Torbay Catchment Group and Department of Water Watershed Torbay were successful in attracting funding from Land and Water Australia to undertake the Watershed Torbay project, a national demonstration project for whole of catchment waterways restoration. The aim was to further develop and test approaches to waterways management at the whole catchment level, as opposed to the river reach scale, and communicate the findings of the project nationally.

Green Skills was a central player in the five years of research, planning, community communication activities, and on-ground actions. Green Skills also provided labour support through several Green Corps projects to undertake 68kms of fencing, revegetation, construction of a bird hide, and weeding. The communication tasks included preparation of a communication plan, writing and distribution of quarterly newsletters, support for the catchment restoration planning and preparation of the final document, facilitation of a community input forum and research presentations to the community, writing of media releases, running of catchment tours, photographic exhibitions, development of a catchment health report card for the community and the keeping of a communication log. The learnings from the project were also presented at several national and state conferences. The project was very successful in meeting all of its targets and attracted the 2006 National Theiss Riverprize for the strength of the research program underpinning the project.



*PhD student Paul Close, and potato farmer Chris Westcott on a data collection field trip to Lake Manaru*

## The Denmark Tip Shop and Recycling Centre

The Denmark Tip Shop and Recycling Centre was established by Green Skills in 2001, at the Denmark Waste Transfer Station with the approval of the Shire of Denmark. The intent of the tip shop was to divert materials from landfill and reduce resource consumption, on the understanding that a large percentage of that material can be reused without any processing.



In its first year of operation, the Tip Shop diverted 100 cubic meters from landfill. Since that time, the Tip Shop has become a major feature of the Denmark town and community. The Tip Shop has diverted more than 3,000 cubic metres of materials from landfill to date. Toxic substances, such as car batteries are collected and recycled for their lead content. Aluminium and copper are also recycled. Materials collected and sold at the Tip Shop include household and garden furniture, books, clothes, toys, tools, crockery, and building materials. The Tip Shop provides a social as well as environmental service to the local community through supporting lower income families and individuals. Finances generated through sales at the Tip Shop have enabled the Recycling Centre to become self sustaining and able to employ five people on a part time basis.

In 2009 the Tip Shop expanded its operations through acquiring a second shed, a building to be used for sustainability education, installation of a composting toilet and expanded outdoor area. This has been possible through the support of the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, Shire of Denmark, the WA Waste Authority and Lotterywest.



Full circle: Ivor Bell at the Tip Shop in Denmark, which recycles goods and reduces landfill.

## Tip shop brimming with bargain bins

IT IS A load of rubbish but bargain hunters love it.

The Green Skills McIntosh Road Recycling Centre and Tip Shop in Denmark sells people's unwanted goods to save them going into landfill.

Everything from clothing, crockery, computers, books and furniture to building materials, scrap metal, bath tubs, photocopiers and kitchen sinks is sold.

Green Skills Denmark manager Chris

Baillie said people received a discount at the waste transfer station if they sorted recyclables and non-recyclables. The reusable items were then sold. About 350cu m of goods had been diverted from landfill.

"What's interesting is the way people reuse items," Ms Baillie said. "We've sold some ironing boards to fishermen who want a fish-cleaning table and crockery to kids for their cubbies."

## "APOLOGY"

In this week's Newmart catalogue on sale Monday 2.6.03, we have advertised Just Juice 2L.

**Due to circumstances beyond our control, this product is not available in Newmart stores this week.**

*We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused our customers.*

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## Centre for Sustainable Living

The Centre for Sustainable Living (CSL) is a major project managed by Green Skills on behalf of the community organisation Denmark Education and Innovation Centre Inc (DEIC). The CSL is a small conference centre with accommodation and catering facilities, featuring three function rooms, a recreation room, office space, and 66 dormitory style beds. The CSL provides many demonstrations of sustainability in action, including the use of low toxic materials, sensitive landscape design, waste recycling, passive solar heating and cooling, onsite wastewater management systems and more. The CSL sits on just over one hectare of land adjacent to the Denmark High School, Denmark.

The Centre became available when the former Denmark Agricultural College buildings, belonging to the Western Australian Education Department, were to be decommissioned in 2000 and then demolished. The Denmark community, headed by the Denmark Historical Society's Clive Malcolm, successfully lobbied the Education Department over a four year period to save the buildings. Exhaustive fundraising by Louise Duxbury through the DEIC, with support from 14 other community organisations, enabled the transformation of 1950's architecture into an exemplary sustainable centre suitable for hosting social, cultural, environmental and educational events. A project team met weekly to oversee the refurbishment of the centre during 2004. Work-for-the-dole participants were involved alongside a small team of dedicated local builders and craftsmen.

"I remember those weekly meetings with Jessie MacIver, John Piercey, Clive and Fay Malcolm, Ian Conochie, Pam Minchin, Cesco Zovi, Kevin Brown and sometimes others trying to figure out all the decisions that needed to be made. We had to overcome problems like having to buy in a demonstration on-site waste water system because the Education Department did not want us on their sewerage line, and the electrical wiring that had to be replaced because the regulations had recently changed. Another problem was the corridors where the Jarrah flooring was covered by lino glued to the wood and then carpet, and had been recessed by 6mm. Cesco had the great idea of jacking the floor boards up. Jessie was fabulous at keeping the figures up to date while we thrashed out our options!" Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.



*Meeting Rooms of the CSL,  
during refurbishment*



*Meeting Rooms,  
after refurbishment*

The CSL was officially opened by Mrs. Patricia Tassell, Member of the Lotterywest Board, on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2004.



*BioMAX wastewater recycling system at the CSL in 2004*

The first years of operation were difficult as the Centre strove to market itself both to the local community and the clients based in Perth and the south west. The financial backing of Green Skills was critical in keeping the Centre's doors open. The number and variety of events, workshops, training courses, seminars, conferences, meetings, school camps, retreats and expos that have been run at the Centre since 2005 is very impressive. They include the Turning Waste into Water Seminar, events associated with the State Natural Resource Management Conference in 2005, the Finding the Energy EXPO in 2007 and 2009, the Southern Arts and Craft Trail Exhibition in 2008 and 2009 and the SoundzAbound music festival weekend 2009. School camps, university field trips, agency courses such as the River Restoration course and Green Skills seminars and courses such as the Home Sustainability Assessment course have found their place in the Centre. Green Skills has collaborated closely with the Denmark Arts Council on present major community arts and environment projects such as Brave New Works and the Gondwana Youth Arts Program.

The Smart Women Sustainable Women program of workshops and events 2008, was followed by the Sustainable Men's program which included over 27 workshops, photography and art exhibitions and gatherings. Both of these programs, along with regular Tea, Talks and Tours programs have been initiated by Green Skills through the Centre. The program of events for the local community and customers from across the state, and indeed, overseas visitors has proven the value of the Centre vision. It is also very pleasing that the Centre is now financially at a break-even point.



### CSL impresses new minister

GREAT Southern Minister John Bowler recently visited the Denmark Centre for Sustainable Living with Local Government and Regional Development Department director general Cheryl Gwilliam.

The department funded the centre in recognition of the contribution it will make to local economic activity.

The visitors were surprised by the size of the facility and impressed with the professional refurbishment work undertaken.

The demonstration of site waste water systems, acoustic ceilings, solar space heating and night cooling system, use of local timbers and passive solar design features were highlighted during a tour of the building.

Mr Bowler was enthusiastic about the development of links between the adjacent education facilities already underway and the potential to develop the learning precinct further.

He commended the community for its efforts in developing the centre.

**ON TOUR:** DEIC convenor Debbie Rice, John Bowler, Louise Duxbury of Green Skills, centre for sustainable living manager Dawn Atkin, Dorothy Redreau of Green Skills and Cheryl Gwilliam.

*Denmark Bulletin, May 5 2005*





*A community event at the Centre for Sustainable Living*

“The Centre is a wonderful story of community coming together to create a vision and make it come true! The Centre looked a bit wrecked when we started the refurbishment. The amount of community volunteer time to do the refurbishment and then to run the Centre has been magnificent! We have regular volunteers at the centre who are very important to it functioning effectively as well as students, WWOOFers (willing workers on organic farms) and people doing community service hours. Volunteers are inspiring!” *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

An onsite wetland was constructed from a kikuyu infested wasteland in 2005 to remove nutrients and sediments from surface and sub surface runoff from the CSL and the adjacent TAFE Denmark campus and Denmark High School, and ensure that the nutrients from the onsite waste water treatment, reticulated onto the revegetation beds of local species around the Centre, did not end up in the Denmark River. The wetland was designed by Steve Janicke from the Department of Water and planted out by the Denmark High School and community volunteers. Weeds were sprayed and over 3000 reeds, shrubs and trees were planted. The wetland also creates riparian habitat for fauna and provides an educational facility, with pathways and interpretive signage. Further development work is presently ongoing at the wetland site.

“Constructing the wetland and drainage system at the CSL was a tricky job. There were heaps of trenches to put in and unfortunately the site was riddled with underground pipes (power, sewage, electricity, telephone, etc.) and absolutely none of it was documented. We had a guy come in and ‘divine’ where the pipes were.” *Mick Sherriff, Project Manager (Ecojobs), 2004-2006.*





*Earthworks at the site of the Centre for Sustainable Living wetland in early 2006*



*Green Skills trainees working at the CSL in 2006*



Green Skills: a retrospective



*Denmark High School students assisting with planting at the Centre for Sustainable Living wetland in 2006*



*The completed Centre for Sustainable Living Wetland. Photo taken in 2008*



At the end of 2005, work began on the Sanctuary Project, an enclosed octagonal building for cultural events, environmental education and training and meditation, with a native garden roof, floor and wall mosaics, and stained glassed windows. It opened to the public on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2006. A composting toilet was installed in 2008 and in 2009 a small Gondwana botanic garden was established adjacent to the Sanctuary.

## Sanctuary a symbol of community creativity

THE Denmark Education and Innovation Centre and Green Skills sanctuary project received a crowning touch on the weekend with a spectacular spherical glass light.

Curtin University product design student Holly Pepper made the 70cm-diameter kilo form glasswork in six pieces and assembled them with the help of her father, John Pepper, into the orb in the centre of the sanctuary roof.

Holly received \$3000 from Arts WA for the project which involved making a mix of clear and coloured glass in a laced design to GreenSkills' specifications to represent the earth from outer space.

"It's a fairly organic design which gives off nice shadows," Holly said.

She said the project had enabled her to develop a lot of skills as student glass projects tended to be small-scale making 'functional glass balls'.

The glass orb was displayed at a Curtin graduates showcase of student work and was an unusual exhibit among the wood and metal works most students favoured.

A former Denmark High School student, Holly, 21, said the orb would interest students working in the medium at the school.

As a student at the high school glasswork had not been available but in recent times she had received help in the medium from her former teacher Linda Halsie.

Sanctuary project organiser Basil Schur said there was much to be done before it was completed.

More than 45 people attended the launch of the sanctuary on November 24 where Healthy Community Project coordinator Gill Sellars opened the building.

She acknowledged businesses, grant providers, community groups and more than 150 people who have contributed to the project.

High school principal Diane Cole spoke at the launch and a letter from renowned community development activist John Cruik was read.

He wrote about the importance of community building and creativity, which he said the sanctuary aptly symbolised.

The sanctuary has taken six years to develop in its secluded spot west of the Centre for Sustainable Living on high school land.

The hexagonal building features a 'garden roof' set on a pine roof over a dam-liner membrane.



Holly Pepper and John Pepper with Holly's newly installed glass orb at the Sanctuary.



German volunteer architecture student Steffen Schulz checks the garden roof on the Sanctuary building with its native garden roof.



High school principal Diane Cole addresses staff, students and members of the community at the launch.

*Weekender, December 7 2006*

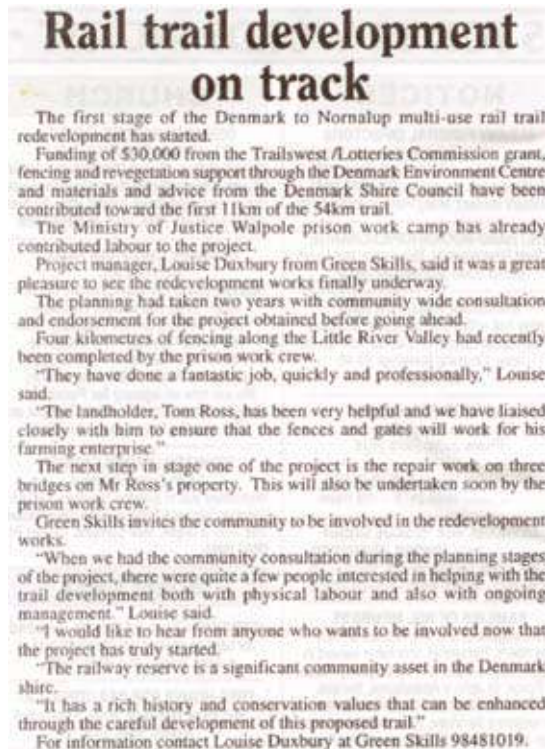


*The Sanctuary*

## Denmark-Nornalup Heritage Rail Trail

Since 2002, Green Skills has managed the development of the Denmark to Nornalup Heritage Rail Trail in sections, in collaboration with the Shire of Denmark, WA Department of Sport and Recreation, Lotterywest, the Ministry of Justice's Walpole Prison Work camp, and landholders. Two years of community consultation took place before commencement of works in 2004.

The trail follows the route of the former Denmark – Nornalup railway, built in 1926-1929 and closed in 1957.



*Denmark Bulletin, January 16 2003*

The project involved construction of new sections of the trail, upgrading of existing sections, repairing of bridges, fencing, restoration of native vegetation, and installation of signage. The first stage of the trail, an 11km section from Denmark to Wentworth Road was opened in September 2005. Successive stages of the trail were constructed, maintained and upgraded in subsequent years.



*Project Officer Melinda Lyons biking on a newly opened section of the trail in 2006.*





**HAPPY TRAILS:** Denmark resident Graham Mason was one of the first to take a ride on the newly rebuilt bridge over the Little River on the proposed Denmark to Nornalup Rail Trail. Picture: Basil Schur

## Bike trail tourism asset

CYCLISTS will be able to enjoy a section of WA's proposed world-class Munda Bididi bike trail when the first leg of the Denmark to Nornalup rail trail is opened this month.

When complete, the Bibbulmun for Bikeriders is expected to be a significant tourist attraction for the region.

The 11km first stage of the Denmark to Nornalup trail will eventually form part of the 900km off-road Munda Bididi Trail, to run from Mundaring to Albany.

Munda Bididi is Noongar for 'path through the forest'.

Construction on the third and final stage from Northcliffe to Albany is scheduled to begin within a year. Project manager Louise Duxbury described the new Denmark trail as a major asset for the community with valuable tourist attraction potential.

Ms Duxbury said the completed section of trail gave people the opportunity to walk or ride in safety away from traffic, winding through a range of vegetation with views across to Mt Hallowell.

Funding for the 22km second stage of the trail, from Wentworth Road to Parker Road, was

secured through a State Government Trailswest grant with support from the Denmark Shire.

Work on stage two started this month and was expected to be completed early next year.

Ms Duxbury said the Ministry for Justice Walpole camp and local contractors had been important sources of support for the construction of the trail.

Ms Duxbury said Green Skills was keen to hear from other community members and businesses who would like to help out with the project in the future.

For further information contact Basil Schur on 9848 1019.

*Albany Advertiser, May 11 2004*

"I remember turning up on site while the Pardelup prison work crew was working on restoring a beautiful timber bridge over the Denmark River. They could be a bit of a rough and ready lot who always watched their swearing when I was around. They broke into huge smiles as I presented a homemade Christmas cake for morning tea in appreciation of their efforts." *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

The multi-purpose trail for walkers, mountain bikers and horse riders boosts recreational opportunities for tourists and local residents, and provides a loop option for walkers on the Bibbulmun Track. It is intended to closely link with the Munda Bididi Perth to Albany cycle trail.



# Heritage trail a boost for tourism

CORRECTIVE Services Minister Margaret Quirk officially opened the newest section of a major heritage trail in the region on Saturday.

Staff and prisoners from the Walpole Work Camp played a vital role in the Hay River to Denmark section of the trail.

They provided an estimated 11,000 hours of labour valued at \$162,600 on the track which crosses South Coast Highway 8km from Denmark.

"Reparation is a cornerstone of Corrective Services in WA and to be involved in a project of such historical importance is a gratifying way for these offenders to be giving something back to the community," Ms Quirk said.

Denmark Green Skills first proposed the development of a multi-use trail for walking, cycling and horse riding from Denmark to Nornalup using the old railway reserve in 2001.

The first section of trail work started in 2002.

Denmark Green Skills projects manager Basil Schur said the trail was a priority under the Shire of Denmark's Master Trail Strategy.

"It is intended that it will be linked to the world-class long distance Perth to Albany cycle trail - the Munda Biddi Trail - when it reaches the south coast in a couple of years," he said.



**ON TRACK:** Walkers set out on the 12 kilometre Denmark trek.

The Minister paid tribute to the role of Denmark Green Skills in bringing the project to fruition and the support provided by the Shire of Denmark.

Denmark Visitor Centre manager Ian Osborne said the trail ensured a greater experience for visitors to the area.

He said the various trails constructed in Denmark are to be amalgamated into the one system guided by signs and a map to be produced.

A local company, Denmark Bike Adventures, is already offering bicycle tours utilising the tracks.

Since 2002, the Walpole Work Camp prisoners have cleared 62km of rail reserve, built 6km of fencing, reconstructed seven rail bridges and crossovers, excavated six culverts and installed hundreds of signs.



**OFFICIAL:** Green Skills projects manager Basil Schur with Margaret Quirk at the opening of the rail trail.

Albany Regional Prison's industrial workshop also contributed by making many of the timber signs.

Another 14km of trail

between the Kent and Bow Rivers is to be completed, with the construction of three large bridges. The project is expected to be finished by 2008.

*The Weekender, March 1 2007*

Green Skills has also coordinated the construction and redevelopment of several other trails, including the Mt Lindesay Trail on the south coast, The Luke Pen Kalgan River Trail near Albany, and the Crown Tramway Reserve Nature Trail in the southern metropolitan area.

## 5. Sustainability Education

### Promoting Sustainable Land Management

As early as 1990, Green Skills attracted funding to work on landcare education for climate change with funding through the Federal Government's Greenhouse Information and Education Program supported by the state Greenhouse Coordinating Council and the South West Development Authority. Seminars in Bunbury and Perth and a weekend workshop on landcare education for climate change held in the south west were part of this early program coordinated by Janet Pettigrew and Glenn Christie.

Between 1991 and 1998, one-day and three-day 'Women in Landcare' training workshops were held specifically targeting rural women. Workshops were held where local women expressed interest, including Esperance, Quairading, and Wongan Hills. This program was important in building the skills of women to participate more actively in the burgeoning landcare movement in a cultural context where agricultural decision-making was dominated by men. The workshops covered both practical landcare skills such as how to take soil tests, understanding soil types, seed collection and propagation, and whole farm planning, as well as meeting skills, conflict resolution and media skills.

*"It was great to see women who had participated in these workshops gain confidence to become actively involved in landcare work and groups, with some taking on leadership roles." Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

In 1999, the Small Property Advisory Service was established to provide advice to small landholders about managing a small property. Part of the outcomes achieved by the service was the coordination of a 3-year Sustainable Land Management Program in Peri-Urban Rockingham and Kwinana from a new office at the Rockingham Regional Environment Centre. More than 12 'Heavenly Hectares' introductory landcare workshops, property planning courses, pasture field days, weed control field days, and revegetation field days were delivered to more than 300 landholders, providing up to date landcare and property management information. A Small Property Services Directory was developed listing more than 100 relevant local businesses.



Sound Telegraph, March 8 2000, p.11





*Jane Davie showing students from Baldivis Primary School how to plant seedlings at the Baldivis Children Forest, 2001.*

Community planting days were organised, including revegetation of the Children's Forest and local wetlands, involving local schools and community members.

In addition, Rockingham staff assessed local bushland sites to develop Local Bushland Assessment Criteria and Guidelines for Assessing Bushland, developed a Greening Plan for Rockingham, developed a Management Plan for the Children's Forest in Baldivis (for the City of Rockingham) and managed the Healthy Waterways Program.

Through the Healthy Waterways Program a catchment action plan was developed, revegetation sites were established in Rockingham and Kwinana, and on-ground action was implemented to improve water quality at demonstration sites on the Peel and Birrega Main Drains, Serpentine River and Peel Harvey Estuary. A water quality monitoring program was also developed, measuring nutrients, temperature, pH and dissolved oxygen on a monthly basis.

*"We held a tree planting festival in conjunction with City Farm at Wellard Rural Exports, to re-establish a degraded wetland to reduce nutrient export and improve water quality in the Peel Harvey Estuary. We had marquees, food, even a live DJ! Over a hundred people turned up from all over Perth and I will never forget Chris, Donna and I dancing to the Bee Gees whilst planting trees – I'm sure it has never been done before or since!! It was a great day and it reminded me that there is nothing like tree planting to unite the whole community in doing something positive and wonderful for the planet."* Tracey Bell, Project Manager (Landcare and Sustainability), 1995-2009.

Staff at the Rockingham office moved to the Serpentine Jarrahdale Landcare Centre in 2003, and delivery of small property advice was extended to the whole of the Peel-Harvey Catchment with the Sustainable Land Management Program. From 2004 to 2007, 87 'Heavenly Hectares' introductory landcare workshops, property planning courses, and field days were delivered in the Peel-Harvey Catchment, attended by almost 2,000 people.

*"For a short while I worked on the Sustainable Land Management for Small Landholders 2005-2007 series of workshops, assisting in the coordination of Heavenly Hectares workshops, field days and Property Planning Courses. Landholders came away from the workshops buzzing with ideas and inspiration for their properties. The workshop series was a credit to all the landcare centres, consultants and Green Skills staff who were involved with its delivery".* Michelle Yeomans, Project Officer (Landcare), 2006-2009.



# Group to monitor water quality in rural region

GREEN Skills has begun a water quality monitoring program in rural Rockingham and Kwinana to collect data at selected sites in and around the Peel and Birrega main drains.

Green Skills spokeswoman Donna Sampey said the results would be used to measure short and long-term changes in the water quality in the rural region.

She said the quality of the waterways was important to maintain native habitats and recreational values.

"The Peel and Birrega main drains pass through the heart of the rural areas of Rockingham and Kwinana, capturing water flowing off the land before draining into the Serpentine River that is one of three major river systems that feed in the Peel Harvey Estuary.

"Unfortunately, these waterways have long suffered the effects of surrounding land uses that input fertilisers, pesticides, sewage, manure, and petroleum products.

"High levels of nutrients, toxins and pathogens result in pollution, algal blooms and deteri-



Tracey Bell checks the quality of the water. Picture: Neil Mulligan

oration of habitat," she said.

Green Skills project manager Tracey Bell said catchment problems had already shown up in the upper reaches of the Serpentine River as a potentially toxic blue-green algal bloom.

"The monitoring program is part of Green Skills' Healthy Waterways Project that shows

how rural properties, drains and wetlands can be revegetated to reduce nutrients and pollutants entering the Serpentine River and the Peel Harvey Estuary," she said.

Monitoring results will be distributed to stakeholders, resident landowners and interested community members.

*Weekend Courier, February 7 2003*

A south coast small property advisory service was coordinated in Denmark from 2003 to 2004.

In 2008, Craig Carter and Dorothy Redreau were employed as Regional Community Engagement Officers, funded by South Coast Natural Resource Management, to engage small landholders in the Youngs Siding to Walpole area and the Lower Albany Hinterland in natural resource management. A range of community workshops on natural resource management topics including fencing, invasive species and plant propagation were organised in 2008 and 2009.

## Native Tree Recovery

Green Skills established the Native Tree Decline Program, in response to the increase in severity and distribution of native tree decline throughout the south west. A variety of species have been declining, including flooded gum, tuart, jarrah, marri, banksia, wandoo, and peppermint.

A trial was run in 2005 in Serpentine Jarrahdale, testing the efficacy of a variety of treatments including phosphite injection, insecticide implants, nutrient implants, and revegetation of understorey species, on flooded gum trees. The trial ran for 3 years in conjunction with the Serpentine-Jarrahdale Landcare Centre and the Tuart Health Research Group at Murdoch University.

“One of my most memorable moments working at Green Skills would have to be going on a site visit to a farm in Jarrahdale to assess the suitability of a stand of flooded gums for inclusion in a tree injection trial with Tracey Bell. At the time, Tracey had a broken leg and was in a cast. She did a fantastic job, trooper that she is, negotiating cow pats and barbed wire fences. She even managed to maintain her air of professionalism when ants crawled down the inside of her cast!” *Michelle Yeomans, Project Officer (Landcare), 2006-2009.*

## Learn how to save the trees at workshop

Many species of native trees in south-western Australia are experiencing unprecedented rates of decline and premature death from a range of factors including pests, disease, water stress and loss of understorey vegetation.

A common symptom is canopy decline, where browning off and death of the upper and outer branches occurs, leaving trees looking bare or twiggy.

While new foliage usually grows, repeated episodes over a number of years may weaken trees and their ability to resprout, eventually leading to death.

The Serpentine Jarrahdale Landcare centre and Greenskills staff are trying to help local landholders to keep their trees in the best possible health by providing native tree decline workshops with funding from Lotterywest.

Greenskills project manager Tracey Bell said that the workshops cover how

to recognise early signs of decline, how to treat sick trees and how to create a healthier supporting environment.

“Instead of feeling powerless to help sick or dying trees we want to offer landholders some sensible strategies that will really make a difference to help their trees recover,” she said.

Workshop attendees will be invited to participate in a trial to assess the effectiveness of a range of treatments for sick native trees.

Those participating will receive a free native tree treatment kit worth over \$100 and additional funding assistance to look after their native vegetation.

The free workshop will be held in Byford on Friday, October 17 from 9.30am to 12.30pm.

To book or for more information, call Greenskills on 9360 6667 or email [tbell@greenskills.org.au](mailto:tbell@greenskills.org.au)



*A flooded gum struggling to survive.*

*SJ Examiner, October 9 2008*



More than 8 workshops have been held for landholders, providing advice on what people can do to manage and prevent native tree decline on their properties. In 2008, a landholder trial commenced, in which landholders tested nutrient implants, phosphite injection, phosphite implants, and combined nutrient and phosphite treatments, on a variety of species in a range of landscapes.

# Vitamins to the rescue of dying native trees

JOCE THOMSON

Native trees in some of WA's best-known forests are in such poor health that scientists are injecting them with chemicals and implanting mineral supplements as they work on ways to prevent them from dying out.

Hundreds of iconic trees, including jarrah, flooded gum, marri, jarrah and peppermint, are being treated.

Murdoch University researcher Paul Barber said the deteriorating health of key native species, first identified in the 1990s, was becoming worse through the South-West and Wheatbelt.

"The incidence of native tree decline is rapidly increasing," he said. "It's getting to the stage where it is becoming difficult to find a healthy tree."

The State's Centre of Excellence for Climate Change, Woodland and Forest Health is analysing why the trees are dying.

While dieback is known to be a big problem, other factors being considered include acidity, disease, fungal pathogens and changes in soil microbiology.

"We are running out of time to save some of these iconic trees," Dr Barber said. "What we need to do is try some treatments, see if we can manage to reverse the decline and save the trees while we keep working to find the causes."

Treatment trials began three years ago and are delivering promising results, so Landcare officers are now training local communities how to use the techniques. These include

implanting stems with capsules containing macro nutrients plus zinc, manganese and iron, and also injecting stems with liquid phosphite, a biodegradable fungicide which acts as an immune booster to guard against dieback disease.

Recent research has focused heavily on the decline of native tuart trees. The biggest tuart woodland is found in the Yalgorup National Park between Mandurah and Bussell, but it risks being wiped out.

Dr Barber said earlier disease was killing marri in the South-West while beekeepers were reporting reduced honey yields from jarrah and marri.

The causes of mortality were likely to vary between species and locations, but the symptoms were similar. "If you look around at most of our native trees now you are seeing trees with quite a lot of dead wood in the crown, and quite a bit of transparency where you can see through the crown," he said.

"That is what we class as trees starting to show early signs of decline, as it becomes more severe you see less more of that dead wood and you see the contraction of that crown and just the foliage produced out from the main stems. It can be regarded as panic growth."

Non-profit environmental group Green Skills has been working with the centre, and will run native tree decline workshops to help local communities and assist landholders identify sick trees and apply a range of treatments, including nutrient implants and understorey restoration. "The implants are no different to



On the job: Tracy Bell shows how vitamins are injected into trees as part of a trial to improve their health. *Photo by the*

business taking a vitamin pill," biodiversity project manager Tracy Bell said. "I don't think it's a long-term answer but it's about giving the trees a boost until we find solutions."

Ms Bell said WA was facing a challenge to protect its native flora, but the treatments appeared to be working and it was critical that research and rehabilitation continued.

"We only have a few patches of really good bushland left and we need to do everything possible to ensure its survival," she said.

Dr Barber will speak at the WA Beekeeping Conference today and discuss the impact of native tree decline on honey production.

WAFarmers' beekeeping section president David Leyland said members had noticed a reduction in nectar yields from wandoo, jarrah and marri trees, which were harvested by bees from October through to March.

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UNDoubtedly WA'S BEST RANGE

The West Australian, July 4 2008

On the south coast, reserves in the Shire of Denmark were assessed for the presence of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in 2007 and 2008 and recommendations were developed for the management and prevention of *Phytophthora Dieback* in these reserves.

"One of my favourite projects to work on was the *Phytophthora dieback* mapping project in the Shire of Denmark. *Phytophthora* is so insidious, so I suppose you can look at as either depressing or a challenge. I prefer the later. The current challenge is building knowledge and awareness so that everyday people can avoid its unnecessary spread." *Melinda Lyons, Project Manager (Biodiversity), 2006-2009.*



## Conferences

While there has been an annual Landcare conference in WA since the inception of the Decade of Landcare 1990-2000, the scope gradually expanded to include all aspects of the environment. This resulted in a change of name to the Natural Resource Management conference. Green Skills successfully bid to coordinate the 2005 State NRM conference in Denmark. It was the first State NRM conference in WA and also the first to be held in a small rural town. It was a massive undertaking that resulted in a lot of challenges and forging of new partnerships.

The conference was described as an unprecedented success. With more than 520 delegates over three days the conference set a new benchmark for NRM conferences. The conference consisted of high profile plenary presentations supplemented by a mix of tours, workshops and presentations. The coordination commitment also included a key role in preparation of venue and catering for the state NRM awards gala evening.

The conference theme 'Sustainability Side by Side' reflected the need to harness the resources of everyone living and working in the environment to collaboratively make a greater positive difference. Green Skills partnered with the Denmark Agricultural College to present the conference in the College gym, classrooms and dining area. The committee from Green Skills, the Denmark Environment Centre, the Centre for Sustainable Living, the Denmark community, Denmark Shire and the Denmark College of Agriculture, all contributed considerably to the success of the conference. Major in-kind support was provided by SCRIPT (now South Coast NRM) by allocating significant time from key staff and supporting staff and community members to attend the conference.

Green Skills engaged the experienced services of Monica Durcan (Landcare Promotions) for the overall coordination of the conference and Debbie Rice (ARID) for local coordination and volunteer liaison. Conference Convenor, Alex Campbell, brought with him extensive links to industry and government, and the Deputy Convenors, Louise Duxbury and Dorothy Redreau from Green Skills provided much of the overall strategic planning and coordination.

"A highlight was the success of the inaugural State Natural Resource Management Conference in 2005. More than 500 people attended. This massive project included the transformation of the Agriculture College gymnasium into a conference venue with a stint as a gala dining room on one of the nights" *Dorothy Redreau, Project Manager (Biodiversity and Community Engagement), 1998-2009.*



*Minister Judy Edwards, addressing the 2005 State NRM Conference in Denmark.*

Building on the skills developed during the NRM Conference, Green Skills successfully tendered to run the 4<sup>th</sup> State Coastal Conference in 2007 on behalf of the Denmark Shire who had bid to hold the conference in Denmark. The conference theme and title, 'Connecting Land, Shores and Oceans' highlighted the breadth of landscape connections which affect coastal management processes, well beyond the shoreline.

The program included three full days of presentations, workshops and tours, an opening ceremony with welcome to country, a beach BBQ evening event and the hosting of the WA Planning Commission Coastal Awards dinner. Overall conference coordinator Melinda Lyons, assisted in the early stages by Deb Booker, pulled together an excellent committee from local community, businesses and agencies to steer the event.

## **Energy and Water Efficiency Community Education**

Promoting awareness of climate change and encouraging householders, businesses, and the community to commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions was one of the initial objectives of Green Skills.

A practical Going Green manual, put together by Janet Pettigrew and Chris Baillie, was published in 1991 and a series of Going Green workshops ran in the Perth metropolitan area from 1991-1998 based on the manual, encouraging recycling and reduction of materials going to landfill, chemical free cleaning, energy efficiency, water conservation and non-toxic pest control. Green Skills trained people to facilitate discussion of 'Going Green' in their community. Energy conservation seminars were also held for supermarkets, nursing homes and local governments.



Spring Cleaners was a small Green Skills enterprise that operated out of the metropolitan office from 1997-2000, providing non-toxic cleaning services to small business and householders in the Fremantle area.

A 6-month energy auditing project was run in Albany in 1994 funded through the Jobskills program. Four people were provided training in energy auditing and completed audits on Albany City Council administrative and other buildings. Project coordinators William Press and Louise Duxbury brought down expertise from Perth such as John Healey, an engineer specialising in renewable energy technology and auditing to help train the program participants. An energy auditing and retrofitting course was also run and several houses for low income people were retrofitted to train participants in retrofitting skills.

*“While auditing and retrofitting are now recognised by most people, Green Skills was ahead of the times initiating such courses on the south coast in 1994. I believe that often Green Skills was helping to pave the way for new ideas and new skills.” Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

In 2000, Green Skills was awarded a contract to act as local facilitator for the Albany Greenhouse Allies Project. The project was designed to improve energy management and efficiency in small to medium size businesses in Albany. Fifteen businesses received energy audits, and seminars were held to raise awareness of energy efficiency and greenhouse issues.

*“One of the most memorable projects that I worked on during my time at Green Skills was the Albany Greenhouse Allies Project. This was jointly funded by the Australian Greenhouse Office and Western Power, and the project was set up to provide assistance to small to medium sized business in Albany to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. I decided that it was strategically valuable to get support from the business community, so enlisted the Albany Chamber of Commerce and Industry as a member of the Advisory Committee for the project. After some early scepticism, the Chamber soon saw that you could achieve the ubiquitous “win win” solution where the businesses not only reduced greenhouse gas emissions, but also saved substantial sums on their energy costs, and they became major advocates for the project.” Alan Carter, former State Manager, 1999-2007.*

From 2001 to 2004, Green Skills worked with local councils in the Perth metropolitan area on the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign, and more recently in Denmark, identifying sources of greenhouse gas emissions, developing abatement strategies, and conducting energy audits for council owned buildings.

In 2002, the Cool Communities project was launched. 120 participants attended workshops on how to improve energy efficiency in the home. Energy efficient light globes and low flow showerheads were provided to all participants. Denmark High School and Albany Primary School were also involved in the project, with students learning about reducing greenhouse gas emissions as part of their school curriculum.

# Initiative to save energy at home

By NIC GIBLETT

GREEN Skills is encouraging more Great Southern householders to join a nationwide community-based household greenhouse behaviour change initiative.

Albany, Denmark and Mt Barker were selected last year as a combined area to become one of only three Cool Communities in WA and 22 Australia-wide.

Coordinating group Green Skills is promoting energy conservation and efficiency to reduce consumption by 25 per cent in the target area, and make Albany's energy use 100 per cent sustainable.

To date 120 households have registered for the program, which is funded by the Australian Greenhouse Office.

Program converts and interested members of the community were invited to attend workshops in Albany and Denmark last week on improving energy efficiency in the home.

Facilitated by mechanical and electrical engineer John Healey and Green Skills manager Alan Carter, the workshops encouraged participants to explore the range of options available to save energy in the home.

Mr Healey said there was an energy saving option everyone could incorporate into daily living.

He said some while some options involved expense, others such as switching to low energy light globes or compact fluorescents.

"Lighting is usually the first area people tackle because of the low costs and you don't require a tradesman," Mr Healey said.

## Cool global warming

Use compact fluorescent lights

Purchase the highest energy efficient star rating appliances

Insulate your home and save on heating and cooling costs

Cut hot water consumption by washing clothes in cold water and fit a water-efficient shower head

Plant, protect and conserve existing trees and shrubs

Mr Carter said the workshops gave householders the opportunity to learn first hand about techniques used to reduce energy consumption.

"It's really about triggering ideas. There is a lot of information and resources out there if people are encouraged to look," Mr Carter said.

According to the Australian Greenhouse Office one fifth of Australia's greenhouse gas emission come from households and seven million households nationwide each produce more than 15 tonnes of emissions every year.

Anyone interested in the Cool Communities project can visit the website at [www.greenhouse.gov.au/cool\\_communities](http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/cool_communities) or phone Green Skills on 9842 1334.

*Albany Extra, 24 October 2003*

In Perth and Denmark in 2007 to 2009, Green Skills coordinated workshops and EXPOs, supported by the Sustainable Energy Development Office, demonstrating ways to reduce energy use in established homes. The Denmark Finding the Energy workshop series and EXPO was held in 2007 at the Centre for Sustainable Living Denmark. Following on from this successful EXPO, an Energy and Water EXPO was held in 2009 as part of the Green Town: Denmark Walpole project, sponsored by Western Power, the Water Corporation, the Denmark Shire and some of the exhibitors. The Green Town: Denmark Walpole project also included running of workshops, attendance at market days, distributing education materials to 50 accommodation outlets, installing education displays in more than 8 shop fronts and visitor centres as well as running a schools competition. In Perth, Solar Passive Home Design workshops were held in 2005 to 2007, and a Retrofitting Perth Homes for Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Savings workshop series and EXPO were coordinated in 2008. Also in 2009, Green Skills coordinated the 2009 Mandurah Living Smart EXPO on behalf of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.





*Project Manager Aline Brion and presenter Paul Zuvel at a 2005 Passive Solar Building Design workshop*



*Kevin Toovey, installing a banner for the October 2008 Retrofitting EXPO at the Fremantle Town Hall*



*Louise Duxbury at the Energy and Water EXPO in Denmark, 2009*

## Publications

Green Skills has coordinated the writing and printing of a number of publications for purchase, aimed at educating people to make more sustainable lifestyle decisions and to influence policy decisions. Green Skills also has many project reports that are important planning documents for work that has subsequently been undertaken by the organisation.

These publications include Jewel of the Rainbow Coast, Caring for Our Country, Southern Plants for Your Garden, and A Region of Diversity.

Jewel of the Rainbow Coast, published in 2002, is a collection of photographs and portraits of local farmers, fishermen, conservationists and others with a special interest in the Wilson Inlet and its catchment. It shares the concerns of the locals interviewed, their vision for the future and their landcare efforts to rehabilitate the wetlands and waterways of the catchment.

Caring for Our Country, published in 2003, is a collection of stories and photos of 17 people with a special interest and involvement in landcare from the lower Great Southern, Western Australia.

# Book marks caring roles



**BOOK SKILLS:** Green Skills workers Greg Duke, Gurda Vogt, Chris Baillie and Basil Schur with copies of *Caring for Country*.

THE significant role local farmers play in caring for the land has been captured in a new book, *Caring for Country*, launched last Thursday in Denmark by GreenSkills.

The book focuses on caring for the biodiversity of the catchments of the Irwin, Parry, Wilson and Torbay Inlets.

The book was edited and produced by Green Skills project officer Basil Schur, Sally Haigh and Barry Evans.

Mr Schur said the book, which took two years to complete, recorded the life stories of 17 prominent personalities in the landcare field.

It covers a wide area, from Kent River to the other side of Denmark, and Albany scientists and agencies also feature in the book.

This is the second in a series of books released by Green Skills. The first, *Jewel of the Rainbow Coast*, Wilson Inlet, was released in 2001.

Mr Schur said *Caring for Country* came about after a study on Mt Lindesay, which is 25km north of Denmark.

"It is a special conservation area, proposed as a large national park. It contains many rare species of plants," he said.

"Out of this study on the history and conservation of the important area came the stories of farmers, fishermen and others who were helping care for the country."

He said the book was a community effort, with a huge input from local photographers, volunteer interviewers and Green Skills staff.

Copies can be bought from Denmark newsagents and Green Skills offices in Denmark and Albany.

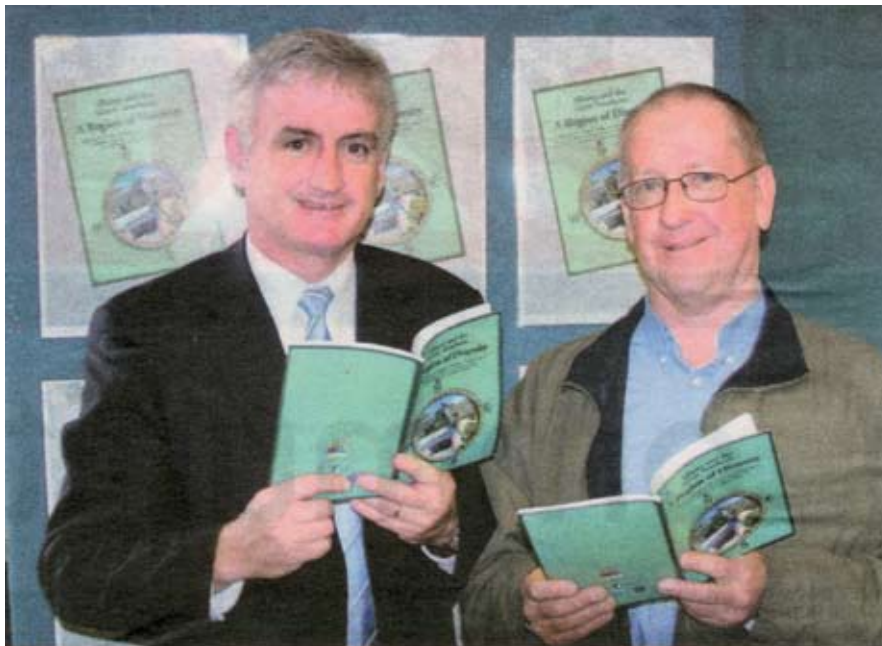
Coinciding with the book launch at the Denmark Council Administration building on Friday was a photographic display of the images used in the book. The exhibition will run for three weeks.

*Albany Advertiser, 20 May 2003*



The Southern Plants for Your Garden book and CD was written by Green Skills' Dorothy Redreau, and published in 2004. The book and accompanying CD is a practical guide, helping people to use local plants in parks, gardens and landscaping to attract birds and minimise water and fertiliser use.

"Producing the Southern Plants Book was a great opportunity for me. I have always been passionate about local plants and their endless potential for landscapes and gardens. I found that I love to do research and I was humbled by the willingness of the contributors to the book to allow me to use their photographs. The support and assistance from Green Skills' staff, board and supporters enabled me to reach this important personal goal. The support from the Wildflower Society, Greening Australia, and others actually got it printed." *Dorothy Redreau, Project Manager (Biodiversity and Community Engagement), 1998-2009.*



Premier Alan Carpenter and Green Skills State manager and author Alan Carter with his new publication, *A Region of Diversity*.

## Guide to diversity

Great Southern nature-based eco-tourism was given a boost with the release of a new guidebook that its author hopes will revitalise appreciation of the region's natural wonders.

The book, *A Region of Diversity*, also carries an important conservation message which author and Green Skills State manager Alan Carter says is the importance of leaving the natural environment the same way that you found it.

Mr Carter said the region's rich biodiversity and geological history makes it one of the most spectacular spots on the planet.

Attending the book's launch in Albany last week, WA Premier Alan Carpenter said the guide would help market the Great Southern

reputation. "The Region of Diversity guide addresses this problem and will be valuable to tourists and tourism operators alike," he said.

The Premier said the guide would also complement the range of tourism strategies already under way in the region, such as the northern shires Heritage Trails, the City of Albany's Amazing Albany and other initiatives developed by the Great Southern Marketing Association.

*A Region of Diversity* was produced by Green Skills Inc, the Great Southern Development Commission and the City of Albany.

The book is available through regional outlets including visitor centres, newsagents

*The Extra, 20 October 2006*

*A Region of Diversity* was published in 2006. The book is a guide to nature-based tourism in Albany and the Great Southern, written by Alan Carter.

## 6. Employment Services

### Ecojobs Environmental Personnel

Ecojobs Environmental Personnel was established in APACE Green Skills' Fremantle office in October 1995 with initial funding provided by the Department of Employment, Education and Training. The aims of the program were to link suitable people, including LEAP graduates, into casual contract employment, further training and work experience. In its first three full years of operation, Ecojobs placed 61 people in full time positions, almost 400 people in casual positions, and provided advice of work experience to more than 900 people. Income from contracts and placement fees made it partially self-funding. Ecojobs continued to grow, expanding its volume of business and number of contracts. Services were provided for metropolitan councils, the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, Defence Estate Organisation, and Waters & Rivers Commission.

Ecojobs on the South Coast was launched in Albany, in October 2000. Early work included flora surveys for Water & Rivers Commission, and revegetation, mulching and weeding for City of Albany. Ecojobs activities have been coordinated sporadically out of the Denmark office, with a particularly active period in 2005 and 2006 when operations were managed by Mick Sherriff and Albert Adams.

Staff have worked on bush regeneration, tree planting, wetland restoration, weed control, eradicating woody weeds, weed mapping, flora and fauna surveys, seed collection, brush cutting, and mulching.



*Ecojobs staff working on mine site rehabilitation at Boddington for ALCOA in 2004.  
Plants were delivered around the site by helicopter*



## Green Skills: a retrospective

Major projects include mine site rehabilitation in Boddington, construction of the Mt Lindesay trail in Denmark and *Senecio glastifolius* control in Albany. Staff members have gained valuable work experience and the opportunity to expand networks in the environmental industry while studying for a degree or TAFE qualification.

One of my favourite Ecojobs projects (or Eco Slobs as we sometimes would say) was the Mt Lindesay trail. This was a terrific job because it was in a great location, had a decent budget and allowed us to employ the Ecojobs casual staff with some certainty of ongoing work. The job was unusual as it used precast concrete instead of wood for the steps and waterbars. I'm sure they are still there and will be for a long time yet." *Mick Sherriff, Project Manager (Ecojobs), 2004-2006.*



*Ecojobs staff planting at Point Fraser, 2006*

"The most difficult job I had with Ecojobs was doing some landscaping for a property developer who was undertaking a development in Denmark behind the hospital. I met the developer and discussed using native plants for landscaping around the development and he seemed keen. This developer had had a nasty reputation with other tradesmen around town and I was a little worried about working for him but I took the job. I spent a day or two doing a detailed plan for the whole development, relying heavily on Dorothy Redreau's book on landscaping with native plants. I met the developer onsite and showed him my reams of A3 coloured plans and he said, 'Oh no, I just wanted a few plain trees and some flowers for colour'. He then pointed to some *Watsonia* growing nearby and asked if we could transplant some of those." *Mick Sherriff, Project Manager (Ecojobs), 2004-2006.*



*Ecojobs staff at Blue Gum Lake, Booragoon, 2007*

Ecojobs has built up databases of available casual staff in each of our Green Skills offices which have enabled Ecojobs to supply trained casual staff to more than 100 government agencies, local government authorities, private companies and community and landcare groups in the Perth Metropolitan areas and South Coast regional areas. Clients have been able to employ experienced staff on an as-needs basis and have saved on recruitment, training and administration costs while achieving excellent environmental outcomes for their projects.

“The best part about managing Ecojobs in Perth is meeting, interviewing and inducting 70 – 80 young new staff each year. They are full of enthusiasm and will go on to complete a combined 20,000 hours of on-ground environmental tasks with Ecojobs every twelve months. The tasks that they complete are a great training ground for themselves, where they meet like-minded others interested in environmental pursuits, and the work they complete is all hands-on environmental restoration that will make a difference to the world we live in.” *Kevin Toovey, Project Manager (Ecojobs), Jan 2008-present.*

Through Ecojobs, Green Skills has skilled up people to enter the landcare industry and assisted them to build up their experience, their confidence and their networks. Ecojobs has become a valuable social enterprise for Green Skills, generating a modest surplus which has been put back into the organisation to support other projects and activities.

A bushland sensitive weed spraying enterprise was launched in May 2006. A weed spraying unit was purchased and qualified staff were appointed to manage weed control programs for various metropolitan councils. The venture was discontinued at the end of the 2007 season, due to difficulties in accessing available trained staff, and being able to deliver services to our high standards, at competitive rates.



“Ecojobs has been an important project in the metropolitan office since 1995. Tracey Bell was the first Ecojobs Manager and she was followed by Jean-Paul Orsini at the end of 1998. Others have been Karen Jensen, Peter Hood, Helen Fry and Greg Duke. For the past two years Kevin Toovey has been Ecojobs Manager and we have seen income from labour hire soar to record levels. There are presently 110 on the metro Ecojobs employee database and about 20 of these are experienced team leaders. Ecojobs offers an excellent service to clients and employees which really does tick all the boxes of what Green Skills aims to be about.” *Annabelle Newbury, State Manager, 1998-present.*

## Landcare Work Experience and Environmental Career Opportunities Programs

Green Skills has operated an environmental career and landcare work experience program supported by the WA Department of Education since 1999, first through the Joblink program and later through Employment Directions Network Diverse Services. Green Skills has been able to provide practical training, networking opportunities and information and advice on environmental career opportunities to thousands of school and university students and unemployed people in both the metropolitan and south coast regions

Participants in the programs have worked on biodiversity restoration and farm forestry projects, carrying out activities including tree planting, weed control, bushland surveys, mulching, brushcutting, plant propagation, nursery work, silviculture, fauna monitoring, trail construction and water quality monitoring. Work experience programs have been held at locations including the Albany Training Centre, Denmark Centre for Sustainable Living, landcare sites on the South Coast, Rylington Park, Environmental Technology Centre at Murdoch University, and Paruna Wildlife Sanctuary.

Work experience programs and environmental career opportunities workshops have featured industry representatives who have been able to discuss work opportunities in their industry area and the training pathways required to gain entry. Our aim has been the development of practical skills and knowledge to assist entry into the landcare industry.

In 2002, Green Skills was awarded a contract through the State Department of Training and Education to undertake a survey identifying the rate of growth in the Green Jobs industry and the training and other support needed to assist in further growth of the sector. This work was undertaken in collaboration with Drs David Annandale and Angus Morrison-Saunders from Murdoch University.



*Curtin University Students at a Work Experience Week on the South Coast in 2006*



*Participants of a work experience program at Paruna Wildlife Sanctuary and Karakamia Wildlife Sanctuary in 2005, led by Darren Davies (far right) and assisted by Annika Schnur (second from right)*



*Students at career development workshop at the Environmental Technology Centre in 2006*



Green Skills have participated in school Career EXPO Days at High Schools, Universities and TAFEs, disseminating information on environmental career options and training pathways to senior high school students. Green Skills also developed an Environmental Career Resource Kit, providing information on environmental career pathways and training and work experience opportunities.



*Annabelle Newbury and Greg Duke, speaking with school students at the Applecross Senior High School Career EXPO in 2007*

“We had a landcare work experience project helping with various elements of the Green Skills program. I worked with members of the Environment Club from Curtin University on the Reserves project. They camped in a shed in Kojonup and worked on the Myrtle Benn reserve grubbing out woody weeds and learning about the local environment. It was a great way to get to know them and to involve them in real projects.” *Dorothy Redreau, Project Manager (Biodiversity and Community Engagement), 1998-2009.*

## 7. Green Skills Incorporated

### Incorporation

It became apparent that APACE Green Skills was outgrowing the parent body and that much of this new activity was taking place across the south coast region and south west five hours drive from Perth. The distance from the parent body APACE also made it difficult to maintain monitoring and scrutiny of Green Skills. By 1998 the necessary work was done to establish Green Skills Inc in its own right and to separate from APACE with the blessing of the APACE management committee.

“Green Skills was like an adolescent child grown larger than the parent, wanting all the freedoms of adulthood without the responsibilities. Green Skills had grown from a grant of \$50,000 to a 1.5 million dollar business by the time of separation, without fully understanding the administrative burdens placed on the parent body APACE. The period of separation brought much of this to light and there was a reckoning that caused some pain to both parties. The wonderful role played by APACE in parenting Green Skills should be warmly recognised” *Louise Duxbury, Former State Coordinator and Project Manager (Sustainability), 1989-present.*

## Green focus creates chances

WITH the increasing awareness of unemployment and landcare issues, there is a strong push to create more jobs in the environmental sector.

While the understanding of environmental issues is widespread in the community, the level of skills and practical experience to tackle issues is not always up to the task.

One Perth-based training organisation has established a market niche as an innovative leader in this specialised field. Green Skills is providing leadership in environmental training and management of practical conservation projects with the aim of creating opportunities for new jobs and sustainable enterprises in this field.

Biddy Myres, Green Skills' Perth coordinator, said a quarter-hectare block of land was lost to salinity in WA every minute which, among other landcare problems, reinforced the need for more trained people to counteract this damage.

She said the number of jobs and the amount of training in the environmental field was expanding.

Green Skills has been operating since September 1989 as part of APACE AID, a Fremantle-based charitable organisation.

After a decade of steady growth with offices established in Denmark, Albany, and Fremantle, Green Skills decided to go out on its own in February.

One of its aims is to promote, create and manage quality conservation projects which benefit the environment and maximise the involvement of disadvantaged and unemployed people.

Ms Myres said Green Skills conservation projects had made a significant contribution to land and water rehabilitation in WA. Courses and projects had contributed to widespread tree planting, whole farm planning, bushland fencing and conservation, organic horticulture, waste minimisation, energy



Green Skills staff Darren Davies, Jon Mitchell, Biddy Myres, Tracey Bell and Louise Duxbury at their Fremantle office.

conservation, and ecotourism. In 1995, Green Skills established Ecojobs Environmental Personnel, the first and only employment agency in WA specialising in matching job-seekers to new environment jobs.

Ms Myres said that in the eight months to April 1998, more than 90 Ecojobs clients had found work in this sector.

“It is a win-win situation for both unemployed people and the environment,” she said.

A significant factor in the organisation's success is it directly links training to practical projects.

Green Skills helped to launch environmental traineeships in WA.

The organisation placed 22 trainees to the end of April, with this figure expected to quadruple in the next year.

During 1998, it plans to focus its research and development on the Rylington Park biodiversity program, the South Coast wetlands program and biodiversity restoration programs in the Albany hinterland and Great Southern.

Louise Allan-Johnson

*West Australian, June 10 1998, p 82.*



On 26<sup>th</sup> January 1998, the management committee of APACE agreed that APACE Green Skills should form an incorporated organisation in its own right, Green Skills Inc. Formal separation took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 1998 and the Fremantle staff moved from the APACE office into new premises in central Fremantle. The new office at 30 Holdsworth Street was officially opened by the Minister for Employment, Training and the Environment, the Hon. Cheryl Edwardes MLA on World Environment Day, June 5<sup>th</sup> 1998. Activities at the Denmark Environment Centre and Albany Training Centre continued as normal. In August 1998, Green Skills successfully applied to the Australian Taxation Office for public benevolent institution status.

“I started in the Fremantle office on Holdsworth Street a few months after Green Skills separated from APACE. The office was in a small terraced house, very Fremantle and very close to the city centre. Louise asked me to temporarily help out with filing and straightening out the office. Somehow I stayed around.” *Annabelle Newbury, State Manager, 1998-present.*

## Board of Management

The Denmark Subcommittee took on the responsibility of full Board of Management in December 1997. Members of the Board have volunteered a huge amount of their time, attending monthly Board meetings, providing governance and direction to Green Skills. The Board has been responsible for planning, including an annual review of the Strategic Plan and Business Plan, conducting a program overview, financial management, human resource management, and recognising opportunities for marketing and promotion.

But board meetings are not all planning and review: “Dorothy Redreau at a board meeting livened things up by dragging us out into the car park to play the Hoki Poki ‘You put your right foot in, you put your right foot out’ etc. Good citizens walking into the car park to their cars to go home after their town visit were seen to do about turns and head off away from the weird ring of dancing board members.” *John Piercey, Board of Management, 1998-present.*



*The Board of Management in 2005: Gary Schwab, Alan Carter, John Piercey, John Pepper, Malcolm Armstrong, Tina Smith, and Jenny Findlay.*

“All the members of the Board have been fantastic and it has been a pleasure and an honour to work with the Board. Gary Schwab’s attention to detail is amazing. He covers all our minutes and meetings with a fine tooth comb, and volunteers an incredible amount of his time to Green Skills. I always felt very important when he called me ‘Madame Chair’. John Piercey always has a laugh, and his long term dedication is very admirable. As State Manager, Annabelle’s tenacity was astounding. I especially like the way she stood up for Green Skills and the other small creditors with the auditors of a liquidated company. Over my 5 years I thoroughly enjoyed working with everyone on the Board. They are a loyal, dedicated and very talented crew of people. For me they have been an inspiration.”  
*Jenny Findlay, Board of Management, 2003-2009.*

It was around 2002 that I took up the position of State Manager. It was sometimes a challenge coordinating activities of Green Skills across the State, from Albany, but it was a task that I thoroughly enjoyed. I had a very supportive Board, headed up initially by Bruce Menzies, then John Piercey and finally Jenny Findlay. Board meetings were always interesting! The topics of conversation at Board meetings were many and varied as we surveyed the various staff reports and we were also always keen to check out John Pepper’s attire! He often came straight from work with paint splattered shorts and often without shoes – not quite the blue pin stripe suits that you normally associate with a Board – thank heavens!! The prize for the most interesting “fashion” accessory, however, must go to John Piercey who turned up one day with a tattered beanie on his head and when we asked why he was wearing it, he took it off to show us a half cut head of hair – he had lost track of time while cutting his own hair and realised that he was running late so put down the scissors, put on the beanie and drove into Denmark!”  
*Alan Carter, former State Manager, 1999-2007*



*Board members John Piercey, Debbie Rice, John Cheyne and Phil Cocks at the Centre for Sustainable Living in 2009.*



## 8. Working at Green Skills

The outcomes achieved by Green Skills since 1989 have been made possible by the commitment, dedication and hard work of the staff, volunteers and supporters of the organisation.

“I have had the opportunity to create a multitude of really great projects and work with a really talented and passionate group of people. I have learned so much from my mentors Louise Duxbury, Basil Schur, Annabelle Newbury, Chris Baillie and Dorothy Redreau. They always supported and inspired me and provided the most incredible leadership for the organisation, without which I’m not sure Green Skills would be here today. Of course our fantastic Board of Management have always been there to encourage and support staff since the early days. Other staff members I’ve worked closely with, and who have made my work at Green Skills so enjoyable and rewarding, include Donna Sampey, Jane Sturgess (nee Davie), Michelle Yeomans, Nicola Wiseman, Sam Soltoggio, Kevin Toovey, Annika Schnur and Greg Duke.” *Tracey Bell, Project Manager (Landcare and Sustainability), 1995-2009.*



*Green Skills Staff at the 1998 inservice*

*Front: Basil Schur, Darren Davies, Dorothy Redreau, Christine Baillie, and Tracey Bell.  
Back: John Townley, Greg Duke, Chris Ferreira, Sally Haigh, Gerda Vogt, Annabelle Newbury,  
David McNamara, and Louise Duxbury.*

“Working at Green Skills has introduced me to an amazing group of dedicated professionals, so committed that they would refuse pay-rises and were scandalised by mileage rates. I also met many Green Skills supporters such as long-term associate Diane Harwood, who is still my friend and colleague after eleven years, Barry Evans of Black Dog Design, Katie Syme (Queen of Fungi), Mark Parrè of Denmark Shire Nursery and Rob Gully of Environment House. Others like our Board give endless hours to guide and support us. All of our projects rely on the generosity, camaraderie and goodwill that our communities never fail to provide.” *Dorothy Redreau, Project Manager (Biodiversity and Community Engagement), 1998-2009.*

“When I started, there was a flat pay structure, and all permanent staff were on \$15 an hour. Gradually varied pay levels were introduced, though there was some sense of regret about doing so. Staff would decide on pay rates and rises at inservices, and sometimes we would decide against having an across the board pay rise because of concern about the financial impact it might have on the organisation.” *Annabelle Newbury, State Manager, 1998-present.*



*Staff at the Murdoch office in 2007.*

*Front: Nicola Wiseman, Tracey Bell, Annabelle Newbury, and Samantha Soltoggio.  
Back: Alan Carter, Michelle Yeomans, Donna Sampey, Greg Duke, and Aline Brion.*

“Green Skills made me feel quite at home from the minute I arrived. Having come from a fanatical corporate environment in the wine industry I loved the casual atmosphere, flexibility and friendly people. That’s not to say that everyone doesn’t work hard, in fact quite the opposite! But the people have a passion for what they do, and are committed to making a difference...that is what makes Green Skills such a unique organisation. Although I have now left to pursue my new role in life as a mum I will always look back on my employment with Green Skills as my most enjoyable.” *Samantha Soltoggio, Project Officer (Ecojobs), 2006-2009.*

“The Green Skills staff were always a delight to work with and soon became like a family to me. Louise and Basil presided over things like a couple of proud parents watching their family grow from the early days in the back of the Denmark Environment Centre. In fact, I remember visiting them in the mid 1990s when I was working with Senator Christabel Chamarette and being very impressed with their plans and their passion! Chris Baillie, Greg Duke, Gerda Vogt, Annabelle Newbury, Tracey Bell and all of the other staff over the years soon became an important part of my life during that period as we struggled against funding cuts and changes to programs in order to keep the organisation going and our valuable work programs intact.” *Alan Carter, former State Manager, 1999-2007*



“Over the eighteen months I worked for Green Skills I had the privilege of meeting some wonderful people who provided me with both inspiration and a passion for the environment. Louise’s energy and commitment to the organisation was unwavering and her support to me was invaluable. I congratulate everyone who has contributed to the growth of Green Skills over the past twenty years. It is wonderful to have been a part of an organisation which has been such a positive force for change, not just in terms of environmental remediation and education, but one that has changed people at an integral level.” *Janet Pettigrew, Perth Office Coordinator, 1989-1991.*

“There are lots of inspiring people in Green Skills. I was on a steep learning curve when I joined and I was spoilt to be immersed in its wonderland of minds and energies. It is an open and sharing place to work where patience and respect are valued.” *Melinda Lyons, Project Manager (Biodiversity), 2006-2009.*

## **Inservices**

Green Skills staff from all offices have met annually for inservices. Inservices have been an effective forum for staff to evaluate past activities and develop future directions. They have provided opportunities for team-building, to resolve any conflicts, and to improve time management, IT and supervision skills, interspersed games and activities. Inservices have played an important role in bringing the staff from the various offices together.

“I will never forget my first inservice in Denmark in 1995, at Basil Schur’s house. Firstly, having come from working in a very conservative engineering firm, I was pleasantly surprised that it seemed to be the norm for staff to host work functions at home, let alone be allowed to dress casually and even take one’s shoes off! Everyone was so lovely and there was a real feeling of camaraderie, mutual respect and support – plus passion to make a real difference in the world. It was such a far cry from what I was used to, it really touched me and I have never forgotten it. It was at that moment I realised what an amazing organisation Green Skills was – and continues to be to this day. The funniest part of that day was Basil’s fridge being invaded by ants...we had to pick them out of our lunch!” *Tracey Bell, Project Manager (Landcare and Sustainability), 1995-2009.*

“Inservices were always an experience. In my early days, we held them at The Cove in Denmark. There were numerous brainstorming sessions and endless sheets of butchers papers filled up with vision, strategies and plans as well as lots of games and activities to break up the more serious sessions – my favourite was always Lee Joyce’s circle dancing. There was a potluck meal round the enormous table with staff, board members and partners and David Mc would invariably bring along some bottles of his good red wine.” *Annabelle Newbury, State Manager, 1998-present.*



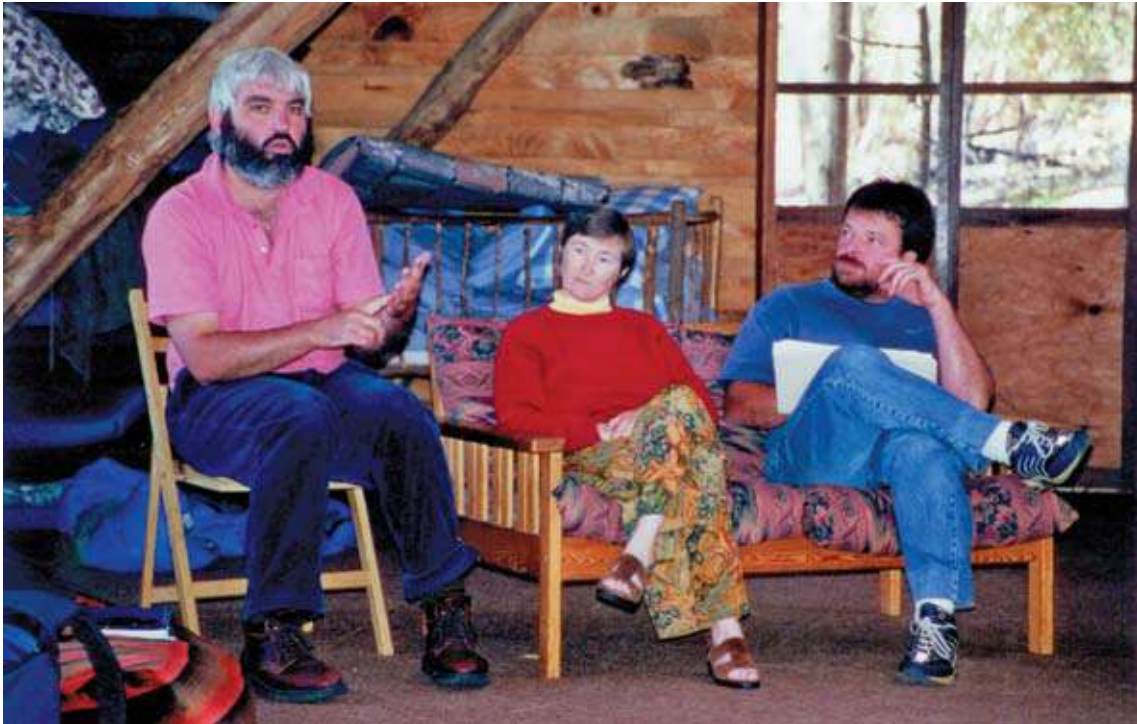
*Annabelle Newbury and Louise Duxbury at the 1999 inservice at The Cove*



*Green Skills staff at the 2000 inservice dinner at The Cove in Denmark*



Green Skills: a retrospective



*Basil Schur, Lee Joyce and Greg Duke at the 2004 inservice in Denmark*



*Metro and South Metro Staff at the newly opened Murdoch office, 2004.*





*Alan Carter, Helen Fry, Bob Gretton, Paul Faassen and Annabelle Newbury at the 2006 inservice, at the Centre for Sustainable Living, Denmark*



*Green Skills Staff at the 2007 inservice at the Centre for Sustainable Living, Denmark  
Front: Sam Soltoggio, Gerda Vogt, Melinda Lyons, Annabelle Newbury, Alan Carter, Tracey Bell,  
Louise Duxbury, Cherie Evans.*

*Back: Michelle Yeomans, Lee Joyce, David McNamara, Yvonne Quinn, Greg Duke  
and Bob Gretton.*



## Green Skills: a retrospective

“At my first inservice, I had only been at Green Skills a short time so had no idea what to expect. When we started the day off with a getting-to-know-you ‘Emu Rumble’, I realised this Green Skills bunch were pretty friendly and ahead of their time with the free hugs! I did have a great time getting to know everyone and their projects.” *Aline Brion, Project Manager (Sustainability), 2001-2006.*

“One of the many lasting memories I have of my association with Green Skills Inc. was the first inservice I attended. The inservice was held at the Cove in Denmark and was attended by almost every staff member and it was the first time I was able to get to know staff from Fremantle and Albany. I was in awe of the qualifications, professionalism, experience and enthusiasm of the staff. The easy way by which I was included in discussion and goal setting made me feel a part of the team right from the beginning. For me, the highlight was the chocolate frogs handed out by Jessie MacIver, then Finance Manager, to anyone who could answer her questions on accounting matters. I failed!” *Gary Schwab, Board of Management, 2002-present.*

## 9. Fire

On July 4<sup>th</sup> 2009, the Denmark Environment Centre, which had housed the head office of Green Skills for 20 years was completely gutted by fire.

### Denmark loses green centre in \$1m blaze

GABRIELLE KNOWLES

Police arson squad detectives are investigating a fire which destroyed the Denmark Environment Centre and adjoining businesses.

The blaze caused almost \$1 million damage to the two-storey complex, which housed the centre, a dental clinic and an accountancy firm.

It began about 10pm on Saturday and sections were still smouldering yesterday morning.

Centre convener Janice Marshall described the fire as a tragedy for the Denmark community, saying many records had been lost, including a reference library, a botanical collection, art and 30 years of archive material.

"The range and rareness of the books destroyed is heartbreaking," Ms Marshall said. "Smoke and water



Lost cause: Firefighters try to save the environment centre. Picture: Simon Neville

may have damaged a few others. We haven't been able to check yet."

The centre was set up in 1987 by residents opposed to logging in the South-West's old-growth forests and became a rallying point for other environmental issues.

Ms Marshall said the buildings were insured but a public appeal had begun to help replace the buildings.

"Denmark is a very generous community. That's why we've set up a

building appeal. We're guessing (the insurance) won't cover it," she said.

Ms Marshall said a piece of cloth with a poem on it had been tied to a veranda post of the gutted building.

"Every time we read it, it gets at our throat," she said. "It just shows how important the environment centre is to the town."

Arson squad detectives began to examine the scene yesterday afternoon to try to find the fire's cause.

*West Australian, July 6 2009, p 13*

The loss of the head office was an emotional blow to staff, supporters, clients and colleagues. Green Skills was able to continue its activities as usual in the Perth and Albany offices, and Denmark staff relocated to the Denmark Centre for Sustainable Living.

Green Skills appreciate the south coast community for the many offers of support and assistance that were received.

"I started working with Green Skills in 1992 and we rented a small office from the Denmark Environment Centre. We only had 2 small desks and 3 chairs to share between Louise, Basil, and myself. So when everyone was in the office I had to work standing at the map cabinet. Working conditions improved. 17 years later, 2 days after the terrible fire, I had to work standing at a filing cabinet...Working conditions will improve!" *Gerda Vogt, Administration Officer, 1992-present.*



## 10. Keeping On by Annabelle Newbury

What a heartening achievement it is for Green Skills to be 20 years old and still going strong.

Green Skills started off with two desks and a filing cabinet in a tiny office in the Denmark Environment Centre and an office at APACE's premises in North Fremantle. Twenty years later, Denmark staff are based at the innovative Centre for Sustainable Living, and we have excellent office space and training facilities in Albany and at Murdoch University's Environmental Technology Centre. While the destruction of the Denmark Environment Centre by fire in July 2009 was a huge loss to Green Skills and to the community, staff have carried on regardless and I thank and commend them for it.



So, why has Green Skills survived and thrived? Firstly, I think this is due to dedicated key staff who have kept the original spirit of Green Skills alive, people who have tirelessly led the way and inspired other committed staff to follow. Here I refer to the roles played by Louise Duxbury and Basil Schur whose vision and example have helped to sustain us through the turmoil of changing times.

Secondly, Green Skills has always been highly innovative and at the cutting edge of change. Ahead of its time, Green Skills was set up as an organisation to work on the urgent problem of climate change in 1989! If only governments had got on board then, we would not be facing the dire consequences of inaction that we are experiencing today.

Green Skills staff have never been short of a good idea or lacked the courage to try something new. Not all of the schemes and dreams succeeded, but enough did. New training, employment and sustainability opportunities have emerged while core project work has continued on programs such as conserving wetlands, promoting farm forestry and engaging communities to sustainably care for the land. Many of the innovative ideas we developed have become mainstream nowadays, and yet the need for Green Skills to continue is stronger than ever given the enormity of the challenges we all face.

Thirdly, Green Skills has had the ability to duck and weave and change with the times. We have adapted to new government and community programs and changing funding regimes, and we have seen the opportunities in the challenges we have faced.

'Flexibility' has been our golden rule. When landcare and waste management traineeships were subsidised by the WA state government, we trained 60 or more trainees a year; when programs allowed, we managed and trained Green Corps teams throughout the state; and then when the funding climate or the program altered and the money disappeared, we moved seamlessly, embracing new areas in which we could fulfil our mission of promoting and demonstrating sustainability.

Our role is to continue to ensure that the growing understanding that humanity must lighten its ecological footprint and live more sustainably on this planet is translated into practical on-the-ground action. The community has a plethora of information, but this is often not implemented. Between the impulse to act and acting there are myriad obstacles which all too often can result in measurable change not actually occurring.

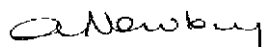
Into the future, our commitment is to ensuring that all of our programs bring about sustained behaviour change. Through projects and activities that encourage sustainability and connectedness, we will continue to empower people to act in ways that lighten our impact on the finite resources of planet earth, while strengthening a sense of community, promoting social justice and enhancing the social well being of all individuals involved.

Our dedicated team of talented staff will continue to develop and implement effective projects across Green Skills' four key social enterprise areas:

- Innovative projects in the areas of biodiversity, waste management, home sustainability and water and energy efficiency;
- Delivery of high quality nationally accredited training in Conservation and Land Management, Tree felling and climbing and Home Sustainability Assessment; and the delivery of non-accredited training across the broad range of our activities;
- The ongoing success of Ecojobs Environmental Personnel in the metropolitan and south coast regions will expand paid employment opportunities that build skills, confidence and networks that encourage more people into our vital industry while ensuring positive environmental outcomes;
- The Centre for Sustainable Living, managed by Green Skills on behalf of the Denmark Environment and Innovation Centre Inc, will continue to offer enormous scope for the development of sustainability projects and activities into the future – many as yet undreamed of.

Green Skills will continue to be at the cutting edge, though it appears more crowded and jostled by hyperbole these days. The need for action is more important than ever, and the need to think clearly and act resolutely and effectively is absolutely crucial, while occasionally glancing backwards to ensure that the ideals and vision we started with remain with us.

Our work continues towards Green Skills' vision of a community in which all people share and experience the principles of biodiversity and ecological integrity; equity and human rights; long-term economic health and personal wellbeing. We hope that you will be with us on this journey and support and participate wherever you are able.



Annabelle Newbury (State Manager and Project Manager, 1998-present)



## 11. Acknowledgements

### Green Skills Staff Members 1989-2009

Albert Adams, Dawn Atkin, Jan Axe, Christine Baillie, Ivor Bell, Julie Bell, Tracey Bell, Deb Booker, Aline Brion, Laurina Bullen, Alan Carter, Craig Carter, David Chadwick, John Croft, Lisa Cuthbert, Terry Davey, Darren Davies, Martin Dickinson, Greg Duke, Louise Duxbury, Robert Dwyer, Cherie Evans, Nick Evans, Diane Evers, Paul Faassen, Tim Frodsham, Chris Ferreira, Sue Ferreira, Trish Flowers, Helen Fry, Patrick Gillespie, Bob Gretton, Diane Harwood, Sean Hazelden, Maren Heckel, David Henke, Peter Hood, Kevin Hopkinson, Belinda Huebsch, Kim Johnson, Clare Jones, Lee Joyce, Amanda Keesing, Kate Kelly, Mat Kirkman, Nadine Laphorne, David Lee, Nicola le Breton, Patricia Leahy, Sylvia Leighton, Tina Lewis, Sofie Lines, Kerry Logan, Melinda Lyons, Bobbie MacKay, Laura McCarthy, Jessie MacIver, Nancy McClellan, David McNamara, Jason Menzies, Pam Minchin, Jenny Mitchell, David Moore, Peter Morris, Janice Morrison, Bidy Myres, Annabelle Newbury, David Nile, Jean-Paul Orsini, Ben Osgerby, Sally Pamberger (nee Haigh), Kevin Pampling, Alan Peerless, Janet Pettigrew, William Press, Ross Pontin, Johnny Prefumo, Yvonne Quinn, Richard Rathborne, Ben Reay, Karen Rebuck (nee Jensen), Dorothy Redreau, Tina Richardson, David Robinson, Donna Sampey, Annika Schnur, Basil Schur, Mick Sherriff, Samantha Soltoggio, Angie Stacey, Jane Sturgess (nee Davie), Sharon Symes, Dee Thorpe, Gordon Tompkins, Kevin Toovey, Mark Tupman, John Townley, Therese Wade, David Walker, Andrew Waters, Nicola Wiseman, Adie Wilmot, Damon Wood, Gerda Vogt, Colleen Yates, Michelle Yeomans.

### Green Skills Management 1989-2009

#### State Managers

1989 – 1997	Louise Duxbury
1997	Christine Baillie (Acting State Manager)
January 1998 – June 2000	Louise Duxbury
June 2000 – December 2000	Christine Baillie
December 2000 – March 2007	Alan Carter
April 2007 – present	Annabelle Newbury

### Green Skills Board of Management Members and APACE Green Skills Denmark Subcommittee Members 1989-2009

Eddie Anderson, Malcolm Armstrong, Christine Baillie, Wendy Barry, Neil Blake, Ken Blechynden, Alan Carter, John Cheyne, Phil Cocks, Mandy Curnow, Louise Duxbury, Geoff Evans, Jenny Findlay, Adele Foote, Patrick Gillespie, Louise Hillman, Rod King, Sylvia Leighton, Max Lewington, Jessie MacIver, David Moran, Helen Marshall, Bruce Menzies, Annabelle Newbury, Prof. Peter Newman, John Pepper, John Piercey, Debbie Rice, Julie Ross, Greg Ryan, Gill Saunders, Gary Schwab, Tina Smith, Ruth Speldewinde, Alex Syme, Len van der Waag.

## Volunteers

Green Skills would like to give thanks to all the wonderful volunteers and collaborators who have assisted with a huge range of activities over its 20 years. Many of our projects would not be possible without the enthusiasm and commitment of these dedicated people.

A special thanks to Kaye Stott and Geoff Prince for the maintenance of the Green Skills website, and our tip shop and Centre for Sustainable Living volunteers.

## Sponsors and Project Partners

Albany Waterways Management Authority; Albany Plantation Forestry Company of Australia; Alcoa; Arts WA; Australian Council of the Arts; Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry (formerly Department of Primary Industry & Energy); Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (formerly Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs); Australian Government Department of Education, Workplace Relations and Small Business; Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development and Local Government (formerly Department of Transport and Regional Services); Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust; Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers; Bunnings Tree Farms; Centre for *Phytophthora* Science and Management; Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management; Centre of Excellence for Climate Change, Forest and Woodland Health; City of Albany; City of Cockburn; City of Fremantle; City of Gosnells; City of Joondalup, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder; City of Mandurah; City of Melville; City of Nedlands; City of Stirling; City of Rockingham; City of Wanneroo; Co-Operative Bulk Handling; Conservation Volunteers Australia; Country Arts WA; CSPB Wesfarmers LTD.; Denmark Agricultural College; Denmark Education and Innovation Centre; Denmark High School; Environmental Technology Centre, Murdoch University; Esperance Lions Club; Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal; Gillamii Centre; Gordon Reid Foundation for Conservation; Gondwana Link; Government of Western Australia Department of Agriculture and Food; Government of Western Australia Department of Commerce; Government of Western Australia Department of Corrective Services (formerly Ministry of Justice); Government of Western Australia Department of Culture and the Arts; Government of Western Australia Department of Education and Training (Employment Directions Network); Government of Western Australia Department of Environment and Conservation (formerly WA Department of Conservation and Land Management; and WA Department of Environment); Government of Western Australia Department of Local Government and Regional Development; Government of Western Australia Department of Planning and Infrastructure; Government of Western Australia Department of Racing Gaming and Liquor; Government of Western Australia Department of Sport and Recreation; Government of Western Australia Department of Water; Government of Western Australia Sustainable Energy Development Office; Great Gardens; Great Southern Development Commission; Great Southern WA Area Consultative Committee; Greening Australia WA Inc; Habitat Tree Farm; Hay River Land Conservation District Committee; Healey Engineering; Healthway; Ian Potter Foundation; Infitree; Integrated Tree Cropping; International Power Kwinana (formerly Edison Mission Energy); The Laminex Group, Landcare Serpentine Jarrahdale, Landcare WA, Lotterywest (formerly WA Lotteries Commission); Lucas Mills; Mazda Foundation; Metroof; Mitre 10; Mitsui & Co. Ltd.; Murdoch University; Myer Foundation; National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality; Paruna Wildlife Sanctuary; Peel Harvey Catchment Council; Perth Convention Bureau; Pilbara Iron; Program for Australian Tree Health; Rylington Park Management Committee; Shire of Denmark; Shire of Esperance; Shire of Mundaring; Shire of Northam; Shire of Plantagenet; Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale; Shire of Tambellup; Smarter than Smoking; South Coast Natural Resource Management; South Coast Regional Initiative Planning Team; South West Catchments Council; Timber 2002 Albany; Torbay Catchment Group;



## Green Skills: a retrospective

Town of Kwinana; Town of Cottesloe; Valinor Farm; WA Plantation Resources Pty Ltd; Waste Management and Recycling Fund; Water Corporation; Western Power; The Wilderness Society; Wildflower Society of Western Australia; Wilson Inlet Management Authority; Waste Management Board; Zest Health Clubs.

Former federal and state assistance programs and departments: Australian Nature Conservation Agency Program; Commonwealth Regional Assistance Programme; Commonwealth Regional Solutions Programme; Community Conservation Grants; Department of Environment, Water & Catchment Protection; Envirofund; Federal Government Greenhouse Information and Education Program; Job Link; Natural Heritage Trust.

## 12. Appendices

### Green Skills Office Premises

#### **Green Skills Denmark**

September 1989 – July 2009  
July 2009 – present

Denmark Environment Centre, 35B Strickland Street, Denmark  
Centre for Sustainable Living, South Coast Highway, Denmark

#### **Green Skills Albany**

1994 – August 2001  
August 2001- present

216 Middleton Beach Road, Albany  
146 Aberdeen Street, Albany

#### **Green Skills Metro**

1989 – March 1998  
March 1998 – July 2004  
July 2004 – present

APACE, 1 Johannah Street, North Fremantle  
30 Holdsworth Street, Fremantle  
Environmental Technology Centre, Murdoch Drive, Murdoch

#### **Green Skills South Metro**

January 1999 – June 2004  
  
July 2004 – January 2007

Rockingham Regional Environment Centre, 49 Safety Bay Road,  
Peron  
Serpentine-Jarrahdale Landcare Centre, 12 Paterson Street,  
Mundijong



## Green Skills Projects 1989-2009

### **Long-Term Project Activity Areas**

- Landcare Planning and Communication Skills courses (1990-2002)
- Rylington Park Biodiversity Project (1990-2001)
- Facilitation services (1990-present)
- Going Green manual and workshops (1991-1998)
- Women in Landcare training courses (1991-1998)
- Contract tree planting (1991-present)
- Organic Horticulture Demonstration Site and courses (1992-1997)
- Landcare Environmental Action Program (1992-1996)
- South Coast Regional Wetlands Conservation Project, Wetlands Fencing Program and educational events (1995-present)
- Denmark Wetland Education Centre (1995-present)
- Farm Forestry Program (including demonstration plantings, pruning and thinning, and training) (1995-2008)
- Ecojobs Perth (1995-present)
- Community environmental arts projects (1995-present)
- Green Corps Program (1996-2005)
- Riparian and estuarine surveys (Oyster Harbour Catchment, Scotsdale Brook Catchment, Frankland River, Gordon River, Perup Piver, Yerraminnup River, Torbay Catchment, Owingup Swamp, Irwin Inlet, Lower Nornalup Inlet, Wilson Inlet Catchment) (1996-present)
- National Eutrophication Management Program Communication Plan (1996-2000)
- Accredited training programs (1997-present)
- Employment Directions Network/Job Link and landcare work experience weeks (1999-2009)
- Southern Region Biodiversity Restoration Program (estuarine catchment restoration and demonstration projects) (2000-2004)
- Ecojobs South Coast (2000-present)
- Denmark Tip Shop and Recycling Centre (2001-present)
- Denmark Centre for Sustainable Living (2001-present)
- Watershed Torbay Communication Plan and rehabilitation (2001-2005)
- Denmark – Nornalup Heritage Rail Trail (2001-present)
- Development of a new UNESCO biosphere reserve for the Great Southern (2002-2007)
- Swamp Sheoak (Dryland) Farm Forestry Program (2002-2008)
- Green Skills Traineeship Program (2006-present)
- Representing Wilson Inlet on the international Living Lakes Network (2006-present)

### **Shorter-Term Projects**

- Treebank Project (1990)
- Greenies in the Kitchen workshops (1990-1991)
- Reforestation Techniques Training courses (1991-1992)
- Seed Collection and Wildflower Picking courses (1991-1992)
- Energy conservation seminars, Fremantle (1991-1992)
- Work Preparation Skills courses (1991-1992)
- Tree planting half-day courses (1991)
- Market Research into Employment Opportunities in Environmental Fields in the Great Southern Region (1991-1992)
- Greenhouse Information and Education Strategy (1991)
- Bushwatch Education Project (1992-1993)
- Training Component for the Islands of Green Project, Bunbury (1992)
- Jobskills placements (1993-1995)
- Arts and environmental mural at the Denmark Recreation Centre (1993)
- Local Government Energy Efficiency seminars, Fremantle (1992-1993)
- Energy Auditing Project, Albany (1994)

- Bibbulmun Track Project, Denmark (1995)
- Ecotourism Seminar (1995)
- Ecotourism Project, Williams Bay National Park (1995-1996)
- Ecotours (1995)
- Worm farm, Fremantle (1996)
- Spring Cleaners Non-toxic Cleaning Service (1996-2000)
- Wilson Inlet Arts Environment and Community Design Projects (1995-1996)
- South Coast Highways Landcare Project (1996-1998)
- Mentoring Program for Youth (1997-1998)
- Bojanning Lakes Community Workshops (1998)
- New Uses for Blue Gums Seminars (1998)
- Enviroworks (1998-2001)
- Great Southern Rural Town Reserves Project (1999-2002)
- Rockingham Small Property Advisory Service (1999-2001)
- Sustainable Land Management Program in Peri-Urban Rockingham and Kwinana (1999-2001)
- Rockingham Greening Plan (2000)
- Cities for Climate Protection (2000-2004, 2007)
- Albany Coastal Strategy Communication Plan (2000)
- Vision for Wilson Inlet Catchment Community Consultation (2000)
- Landcare Support Program, Great Southern (2001)
- Southern Plants Project (including Southern Plants for your Garden publication, demonstration gardens, and workshops) (2001-2005)
- Master Tree Growers programs (2001, 2004)
- Great Southern Bush Products Program (2001-2004)
- Denmark Community Master Plan (2001)
- Climate Change and Agriculture workshops, Mt Barker and Pingrup (2001)
- Workshops at the State Landcare Conference (2001)
- Energy Auditing for the City of Gosnells (2001)
- Sustainability Indicators and Local Government Seminar (2001)
- Albany Wind Farm community environmental art project and input into Wind Farm Advisory Committee (2001)
- Revegetation Projects at Denmark High School (2000-2005)
- Healthy Waterways (Water Quality Monitoring Program for the Peel & Birrega Main Drains) (2001-2005)
- Albany Greenhouse Allies (2001)
- Rainbow Coast Local Agenda 21 (2001-2002)
- City of Albany Energy Efficiency Housing Project (2001)
- Jewel of the Rainbow Coast, Wilson Inlet Publication (2001-2002)
- Albany Hinterland Biodiversity Program (2002)
- Office Paper Recycling Audit, Denmark and Albany (2002)
- Organic Industry Development Project (2002-2004)
- Green Jobs Survey (2002)
- Waste Water Management field days (2002)
- Mt Lindesay Community Awareness and Trail Redevelopment (2002-2004)
- Perth Biodiversity Project (2002)
- Crown Tramway Reserve (2002)
- Gosnells/Armadale Regional Employment Strategy (2002)
- Cool Communities (2002-2003)
- City of Albany Trails Projects (2002)
- Baldy's Children's Forest Revegetation Projects, Management Plan and Environmental Education Package (2002)
- Bushcare Enterprise Development Program (2003)
- Environmental Career Resource Kit (2003)
- Support for Land for Wildlife Program (2003-2004)
- Caring for Country publication (2003)

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- Provenance Seed Collection Program (2003-2004)
- Coordination of the 4<sup>th</sup> International Fungi and Fibre Symposium, Denmark (2003)
- Coastal Climate Saver Project (2003)
- Coastal Management Specification Manual (2003-2004)
- Small Property Management Advisory Service, Denmark (2003-2004)
- Strategic Report on Youth Issues (2004)
- Mounts Vegetation Mapping Project, Albany (2004)
- Development of the Saltland Pasture Revegetation Course (2004)
- Blue Gum Plantations, Native Fauna and Corridor Links, Wellstead (2004)
- Denmark CommunityWise Audit (2004)
- Hay River Conservation Corridor Project and seminar (2004)
- Promoting Tree-Based Enterprises in the Great Southern (2004)
- Feral Pig Control Program (2003-2004)
- Bushland and wetland rehabilitation at Bollard Bullrush Swamp, Folly Pool, and Black Swan Wetland (2003-2004)
- Biodiversity Restoration Linked to Sustainable Agriculture Workshop (2004)
- Sustainable Land Management Workshops in the Peel-Harvey Catchment (2005-2007)
- Kwinana Bushland Surveys (2004)
- Rockingham Greening Plan (2004)
- Magenup Lake Management Implementation Plan 2005-2010, Interpretive Signage and Revegetation (2004-2005)
- Centre for Sustainable Living Wetland (2005-present)
- Centre for Sustainable Living Sanctuary (2005-present)
- Gondwana Link West (2005-present)
- Sustainable Wine Enterprise (2005-2006)
- Coordination of the State Natural Resource Management Conference, Denmark (2005)
- Peel Harvey Regional Ecological Linkages (2005-2006)
- Restoring the Health of Flooded Gums in the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale (2005-2007)
- Saving Energy with Zest (2005-2006)
- Great Southern Nature Based Tourism Information Package and "Albany and the Great Southern: A Region of Diversity" Publication (2005-2006)
- Ecotourism Mentoring service (2003, 2005)
- Solar Passive Building Design Seminars, Murdoch (2005-2007)
- Biodiversity Education in the South Coast (2006-2007)
- Feral and Native Fauna Management Partnerships Project (2006)
- Feral Pig Eradication Information Booklet (2006-2007)
- Community Arts Network Project: Building the ecoHeart sculpture at the Environmental Technology Centre (2006)
- Energy Efficiency at the Murdoch Student Village (2006-2007)
- Wetland Health and Householder Education Project, Murdoch (2006-2007)
- Bushland Sensitive Weed Spraying Service (2006-2007)
- Towards Zero Waste (2007)
- Native Tree Recovery Project (2007-present)
- Bunbury ecoHOME Research Project, Murdoch (2007)
- City of Melville Spot the Savings (2007-2008)
- Coordination of the 4<sup>th</sup> WA State Coastal Conference, Denmark (2007)
- Phytophthora dieback assessment in selected reserves in the Shire of Denmark (2007- 2008)
- Acid Sulfate Soils publication and workshop (2008)
- Retrofitting Perth Homes for Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Savings (2008-present)
- Green Seniors (2008)
- Waterwise Bike Team (2008)
- Indigenous Farm Forestry Feasibility Study (2008)
- Capacity Engagement Project for Natural Resource Management (2008-present)
- Green Town Education Program, Denmark/Walpole (2009-present)
- Sustainable Community Energy Project, Denmark/Walpole (2009-present)



