

# Welcome

Welcome to Landcare Alive! This self-drive ecotour showcases a number of sites, easily visible from the road, that demonstrate how Landcare is addressing problems like salinity, erosion, declining water quality and loss of biodiversity. Around Holbrook, everyone is becoming more aware of the necessity of managing our natural surroundings. Gone are the days of mass clearing, overgrazing, and 'cowboy' farmers. Welcome to the forward thinking, environmentally aware, more productive farmer that makes agroforestry, fencing sensitive areas and creating wildlife corridors a priority.

This is why Holbrook Landcare has been such a success; around 80% of farmers in the district are Landcare members. Over 1.5 million trees have been planted on our farms since Holbrook Landcare was created in 1988. We're well on the way to improving soil and water quality and seeing the return of threatened plant and bird species.



Looking for an alternative route that's off the beaten track or a scenic place to have a picnic? Take time out from your drive and discover what's happening in this beautiful part of the world - 'God's Country' according to the locals!

# Where We Are

Holbrook is situated in southern New South Wales, just north of the Victorian border. You'll find Holbrook on the Hume Highway between Melbourne and Sydney.

For more information on touring Holbrook or any of the Landcare Alive! sites contact...

- Telephone 02 6036 3181
- Email [office@holbrooklandcare.org.au](mailto:office@holbrooklandcare.org.au)
- Web [www.holbrooklandcare.org.au](http://www.holbrooklandcare.org.au)



Holbrook Landcare  
CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY SINCE 1988



Natural Heritage Trust  
Helping Communities Helping Australia  
A Commonwealth Government Initiative



# Self-Drive Ecotour

# Landcare Alive!

Tour Holbrook's conservation sites



Actual Landcare projects at work



Striving for sustainability

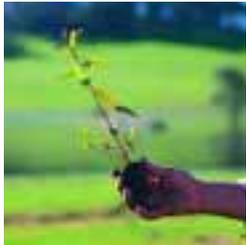


Holbrook Landcare  
CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY SINCE 1988

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# How it Works

There are three ecotours to choose from, all beginning in Holbrook. Take your time to drive around the ecotour that suits you best, following the map and numbered signs along the way. Here's how it works:



Choose the ecotour that suits you.

### LOOP ONE

Four Mile Lane circuit = 80km

### LOOP TWO

Annandayle Road Circuit = 34km

### LOOP THREE

Mountain Creek Circuit = 61km

Look at the Landcare Alive! map. Each site has been colour coded and fits one of the following categories:

#### GREEN

Land Et Water Management

#### ORANGE

Nature Conservation Projects

#### BLUE

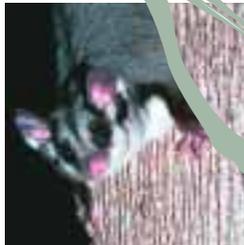
Wetlands Projects

#### YELLOW

Gully Erosion Management

#### RED

Points of Interest - picnic spots, pubs, cafes, farmstays and more.



Each Landcare Alive! site is numbered on the map. This corresponds to signage locating each site. Some sites are 'drive-by' only and some are close to a parking bay so you can stop, read the site information from the brochure, and contemplate how important it is that we all work together with nature...

# About Us

Holbrook Landcare is a vibrant rural community group, whose members have the common goal of sustaining their local environment. Established in 1988 to address land degradation problems within the Holbrook area, the Group covers 171,000 hectares of the Upper Billabong Catchment. Around 80% of the rural landholders (or 176 farming properties) take an active part in Holbrook Landcare - one of the highest participation rates in Australia.



As the group has grown in numbers, enthusiasm and expertise, so has its achievements. Between 1988 and 2003, 78 projects have been undertaken and funding of \$3,201,589 received for on-ground works and studies. As is typical of Landcare projects, the actual amount of grant monies received is a fraction of the total spent by landholders. Their input in time and actual expenses ranges from a minimum of dollar-for-dollar up to eight times the grant amount, depending on the type of project.

Holbrook Landcare has twice won the coveted National Landcare Award.



# Current Projects

## The Rebirding Project

In 1994, Holbrook Landcare members realised that something was drastically wrong with local ecosystems. Trees, weakened by livestock impacts, were being 'eaten alive' by massive quantities of sap-sucking insects. Over 40% of trees within the Catchment were suffering from severe dieback. A major cause of this was the lack of shrubby understorey to provide sanctuary for insect-eating birds. Thus the Rebirding Project was hatched - one of the largest Landcare revegetation projects in New South Wales.

## Heartlands: towards sustainable land use in the Murray Darling Basin

A number of ecotour sites are a result of the *Heartlands* project. *Heartlands* is a collaboration between the CSIRO, Murray Darling Basin Commission, State and Commonwealth Governments, local people and Landcare Groups in the Billabong Creek catchment. The overall aim of the *Heartlands* project is to develop alternative farm production systems that are economically viable as well as being environmentally sustainable. Scientists are working closely with landholders and the community to advise on wildlife issues such as remnant vegetation and identifying biodiversity 'hotspots' (from which wildlife emigrate to restored areas).

## Upper Billabong Management Plan

The Upper Billabong Land and Water Management Plan working group was formed in 1997 to increase knowledge and skills in relation to natural resource management. The group won National Landcare Awards in 2001 and 2002 for its success in bringing together both technical experts and the community to tackle the various environmental challenges facing the district.

# Holbrook Landcare Self-Drive Ecotour sites

## LOOP ONE - THE FOUR MILE LANE CIRCUIT - 123km

**1** Geddes Family's Farm Forestry Site - An 11 hectare site, 9,500 seedlings have been planted since September 2002. A trial of a low rainfall eucalypt species suitable for high value timber products like hardwood flooring and furniture, to be harvested in 20-30 years. The environmental aim is to use more water in an area of the farm that is prone to waterlogging, thus creating better water management that is integral to solving dry land salinity. This site is part of the farm forestry program funded by *Heartlands*.

**2** Wearn Family's TSR and Revegetation - This site includes a Travelling Stock Reserve (TSR) which were once used by drovers to water and rest stock. TSRs provide a valuable vision of what the Holbrook area looked like before large scale land clearances. Note the old trees with hollows and fallen timber - habitat for a range of birds, gliders and other small marsupials. The site beside the TSR has been fenced off for better livestock management and revegetated with a range of species to re-introduce site 'structure' (trees, mid-storey and ground vegetation). Tours available - (02) 6036 7233.

**3** Murdoch Family's Glenfalloch Farmstay - Rustic shearer's accommodation for self-catering groups, some with special needs. More details phone David Murdoch on (02) 6036 7203.



**4** Bev Geddes' Manoora Sanctuary - Bev Geddes is a life-long field naturalist and has dedicated her 300ha property to nature conservation. A fox-proof fence is being constructed around the Sanctuary with the assistance of a Green Corps team, a group of young people interested in environmental issues who take part in a training and development program funded by the Commonwealth Government. The fox is one of the greatest threats to the long-term survival of small marsupials and ground nesting birds such as the Yellow-Footed Antechinus and Bush Stone-Curlew. Visitors welcome - phone (02) 6036 9547.

**5** Lankeys Creek Winery - This locally owned winery produces cool climate wines. Cellar door open by appointment (02) 6036 8000.

**6** Jingellic Pub - This old pub, nestled on the banks of the legendary Murray River, provides beaut meals and a lot of history. Stop for a drink and take in the surroundings of the Upper Murray.

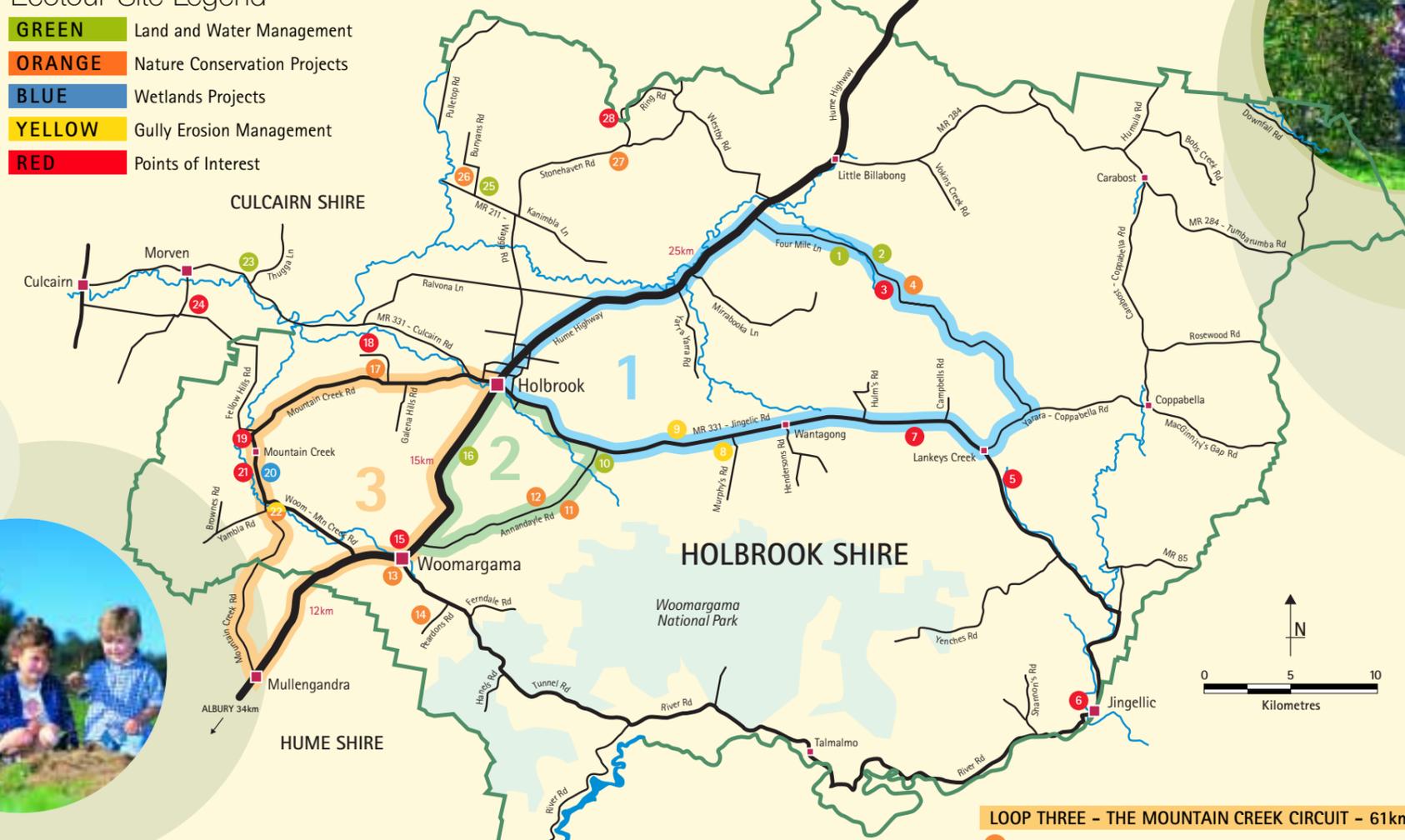
**7** Ardrossan - A long term commitment to the environment through better management of perennial pastures, soil health and water quality won the Bulle family the 1993 NSW Landcare Award.

**8** Scent Bottle Creek Rehabilitation Project and Picnic Site - This site aims to fence out the entire Scent Bottle Creek, which impacts on several landholders. This rehabilitation project relied on landholders, Holbrook Landcare, state agencies (eg Dept of Land & Water Conservation) and Soilworks (Soil Conservation Service) working together. The project aims to halt erosion of fragile soils and improve water quality downstream by preventing nutrients and sediments escaping into the creek. Strategic earthworks, constructed wetlands and fencing to exclude livestock will help stabilise the creek banks. A wildlife 'highway', extending from Woomargama National Park to the Jingellic Road, will then be created. Stop for a bite to eat at the picnic table provided and enjoy the scenic Wantagong Valley.

**9** Keogh Family's Quarry Site - Nestled behind valuable remnant roadside vegetation is a disused quarry that the Keogh family and Holbrook Shire Council are rehabilitating. A great place to stop for a break at the picnic table provided.

## Ecotour Site Legend

- GREEN** Land and Water Management
- ORANGE** Nature Conservation Projects
- BLUE** Wetlands Projects
- YELLOW** Gully Erosion Management
- RED** Points of Interest



## LOOP TWO - THE ANNANDAYLE ROAD CIRCUIT - 34km

**10** Plunkett Family's Farm Forestry Site - About 4,500 seedlings have been planted on 4.5 hectares since September 2002. \*See Site 1 - The Geddes' site for more information on Farm Forestry. This site is funded by *Heartlands*.

**11** Hicks Family's Rebirding Site - Perched on top of a hill, this site combines a number of land management issues, including addressing waterlogging, protection of sensitive lands from erosion, and creating habitat for woodland birds. Note the size of the site. Imagine how good this will look in another ten years time! Also note the range of species planted - trees and shrubs are important for a diversity of woodland birds, creating a stepping stone for wildlife moving out of the Woomargama National Park. Also visible is a 3.5-hectare farm forestry site with about 2,800 seedlings planted in September 2002.

**12** Hassall Family's Rebirding Site - This smaller Rebirding site is a good example of fencing out eroded creek lines and the benefits of doing so. The absence of hard-hoofed stock enables the creek line to regenerate much faster and the water quality improves. Another little stepping-stone for our feathered friends.

**13** Woomargama Town Common - Like Travelling Stock Reserves, Town Commons often contain valuable remnants of the type of vegetation that once would have covered the Holbrook district. The local Woomargama community got together and have undertaken a Rebirding project to fence out portions of the creek and revegetate parts of the Common for nature conservation.



**14** Woomargama Station Rebirding Site - This site, planted in 2002 is another great example of fencing out and rehabilitating creek lines. Imagine how much better the water quality must be once cattle and sheep have been excluded!

**15** Woomargama Hotel and Store - A handy watering hole and a great place to stop for a break. Snacks, drinks, petrol plus more.

**16** Trescowthick Family's Farm Forestry Site - One of several sites established by the *Heartlands* project to address waterlogging and potential salinity through farm forestry. This unique site was a four-way collaboration - the landholder, the Landcare Group, the Government and a private timber company called Integrated Tree Cropping. This sort of partnership, garnering public and private funds, will be necessary to solve national environmental problems like dryland salinity in the future. 13,000 seedlings are planted in 16 hectares on the property.

## LOOP THREE - THE MOUNTAIN CREEK CIRCUIT - 61km

**17** Locke Family's Rebirding Site - Philip and Mandy Locke's Rebirding site, planted in 2001. \*See site 11 - for more rebirding details.

**18** Babbler's Nests on Ravenswood Road - See if you can find the Grey-Crowned Babbler's characteristic nest. Listed as a 'threatened species' in NSW, this bird faces assault from the influx of Noisy Miners, an aggressive native bird that pushes other birds out of their territories. Grey-Crowned Babbler's are interesting to watch as they live in family groups.

**19** Laurie & Bev Cottrell's Mountain View Picnic Spot - Enjoy the beautiful remnant of Grassy Box Woodland, comprising Yellow Box, White Box and Red Gum... how's the serenity?!

**20** Bill & Kate Cottrell's Wetland and Rebirding Site - This constructed wetland makes use of an old dammed watercourse and has both shallow and deep areas to cater for a variety of water birds and other species. Wetlands slow down moving water which prevents erosion and holds water for a time, allowing sediments to settle and nutrients to be used by aquatic plants and other organisms. This 'processes' the water, improving quality before it flows into the creek and groundwater systems. A hilltop Rebirding site will also provide groundwater recharge and biodiversity benefits.

**21** Margaret Cottrell's Tarcoola Farmstay - Tarcoola is a 4 1/2 star farmstay offering dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation. Farm tours are also available. Please call (02) 6036 4132.

**22** Sorraghan Family's Erosion and Rebirding Site - This Rebirding/*Heartlands* planting is another wonderful example of fencing out stock from creek sites, allowing regeneration of vegetation, improving bank stability and water quality.



## A FEW SITES OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

### ALONG CULCAIRN ROAD

**23** Heriot Family's Revegetation Site - Pete Heriot's 16 hectare site is a good demonstration of a large-scale work that addresses numerous problems. Pete was facing a rising ground water and salinity problem. His shearing shed was sinking and valuable country was becoming waterlogged. Pete started an extensive program of planting along the ridgelines that were previously bald. Basically, the trees at the top of the hill soaked up the water lying at the bottom of the hill. Other landholders took notice, and now large hill top revegetation sites can be seen all around the district. Due to its size, the site has also attracted numerous woodland birds because of the multi layered infrastructure of large trees, shrubs and trees that have fallen over - perfect places for birds to play in.

**24** Morven Hotel - Another great old pub. Fantastic meals, cold beers and good old country hospitality. Make sure you ring Roger on (02) 6036 5211 to make a booking or place your order.

### ALONG WAGGA ROAD

**25** Hulme Family's Rebirding and Farm Forestry Sites - This groundwater recharge site combines farm forestry and nature conservation on a large scale. Trees have been planted at the top of the hill to soak up discharge further down the slope. The Hulmes also have a Deciduous Tree Nursery and Farm Stay. Farm tours on request, including biological shearing and some amazing conservation management sites. Please call (02) 6036 6137.

**26** Bunyan Family's Back Creek Reserve - This unique site presents a vision of what the district would have looked like before European settlement. Old remnants of grassy box woodland are plentiful, including red gums, white box and yellow box. These species were the first to be cleared for farming as they grew in the most fertile areas. Another spot brimming with birdlife. Get out the binoculars and see what you can identify.

### ALONG STONEHAVEN ROAD

**27** Val Ciblis' Conservation Site - The whole of Val Ciblis' 280ha property has been dedicated to nature conservation - the most diverse range of plant and bird species in the district. Note: Stonehaven is a rough gravel road. Visitors welcome, phone ahead on (02) 6036 2694 to arrange a tour.

**28** Jayfields Farm Tree Nursery - A mosaic of revegetation and farm forestry style plantings. Also a supplier of native seedlings for farm forestry and Landcare works in the Holbrook district. Phone for a price list or more information (02) 6036 7235.

## FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY

Please always drive safely and take note that this is a 'drive-by' tour only. Do not venture onto farms without landholders' permission as this may interfere with livestock and farming operations and may result in possible injury to yourself.

Holbrook Landcare Group has made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of all details in this document. Holbrook Landcare Group accepts no responsibility or liability for any omission or incorrect information.