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# Artists prepare for Art Fair

by Tonya Haynes

One of my favourite events of the year is the Nimbin Art Fair, held at Easter time in the historic Nimbin Town Hall. So much creative talent is a joy to behold.

So, to all you artists out there who are brave enough to expose your amazing, creative secrets for all to see, make sure that you seek an application form, and ensure your entry is in by 16th March.

The Fair opens on Saturday 12th April, encompasses the Easter school holiday period AND the new exciting initiative by the Nimbin Arts Collective, Nimbin's very first 'Nimbin Art Trail' (see article below for more details), with the Nimbin Art Fair closing Sunday 27th April – a truly wonderful Artful April to be had by all.

## Artist of the Month

This year's Art Fair will be heralded by our Artist of the Month, the multi-talented Jenny Mac.

In Jen's own words: she is a long time resident of the area, who studied art at both the Lismore and Murwillumbah TAFE.

She also attended private workshops



All artwork by Jenny Mac

as well as conducting her own workshops where she shared with others her own art skills.

Her love for Abstract Expression was encouraged and embellished by a talented, but retired artist, who taught a small class of five students in the hills. A fabulous day for \$5 a day and bring a plate!

Jen has recently shifted her focus from up-cycling and re-purposing clothes, where her unique imagination created eye-catching fashion out of old garments, to revisit her love for acrylic, mixed media painting.

At the moment, Jen's passion lies in capturing the essence of the local

people. She does this with a subtle combination of colour that pleases the eye and presents an encouragement for further reflection.

Jen's new works now hang, as do her unique fashion pieces, at the Nimbin Artist Gallery, 49 Cullen Street, open 10am-ish to 4pm-ish, seven days a week.

Call us on 6689-1444, follow us on facebook, check out our brand new website: [www.nimbinartistsgallery.com](http://www.nimbinartistsgallery.com) and now also on instagram.

## Blue Knob Gallery – Who were... and are now



Left: Geoff Stirling

Above: Figures by Geoff Stirling  
Right: Shell baskets by Renita Glencross

### We were young once...

We thought it would be fun to see images of the artists and people we have come to know personally or through their artwork over the years, and have a glimpse of how, where and when their 'creative journey' might have started.

We sometimes forget that we were all young once, and had dreams no matter how old we are now.

Something else unfolded as the artworks, images and statements came in; it became a heartwarming experience. We witnessed what it is to remember...who we were and who we are now.

This exhibition has been a surprise, a delight, and we express our deepest thanks to the artists and artisans who have given something more of themselves for this exhibition.

The opening on Sunday 9th February was another delight, with the trio When the Money's Gone (Peter Walker, Trevor and Denise White)

choosing to perform songs that took us back to other times when we were all younger.

### Relics V – Mapping time & place

Renita Glencross is a practitioner and teacher of Indigo dyeing. Her restraint in the use of indigo and other natural dyes in her artwork brings a sense of calm to The Solo Space at Blue Knob Hall Gallery.

Her delicate and refined touch with fibre, ceramics, woven glyphs, sigils, and natural ephemera, beautifully expresses this artist's journeys between the desert, the sea, the forest, and all the learnings in-between: life and death, transience and impermanence, attachment and letting go.

Her exploration in weaving and natural dyeing has taken her on a

lifelong learning journey from the southern forests and seas, through the Australian central deserts to the remote top end of the Territory, and across Asia into Indonesia, Vietnam, China and Cambodia.

• **Blue Knob Cafe** – has a great selection of freshly made gourmet toasties, pies, savoury pastries, specials, cakes and coffee/drinks. All-day breakfasts are now available on Saturday and Sunday.

We look forward to seeing you for food, art and a great view of Blue Knob. See our Facebook page for more info about the Café.

• **Blue Knob Writers Group** – meet weekly at Blue Knob Cafe on Sundays. For more info contact Alex 6689-7268 or Helen 0487-385-134

• **Blue Knob Singers** – meet Thursdays from 3.45pm at Blue Knob Hall. Everyone welcome, turn up, or for more info call Peter 0458-487-865.

## Call-out to artists for inaugural Nimbin Easter Arts



The Nimbin Arts Collective (NAC) will be producing and publishing a free arts trail map of the Nimbin village centre and surrounds that highlights and promotes local artists, arts and craft businesses, studios and galleries.

We invite you to be a part of it! The map will also be available digitally on the *Nimbin Village* and *Visit Nimbin* portals, once published.

The launch for the trail will be during the Easter weekend: Saturday 19th and

Left: Benny Zable and his Imagine mural

Sunday 20th April.

Please register your interest in the map, trail and market by sending details of your business, including your name, your business name, contact details, address and business logo or a photo of your work to Steph Seckold at [sibley@nnc.org.au](mailto:sibley@nnc.org.au)

The NAC is a lively bunch of artists, crafts-people, makers, shakers, businesses and galleries operating in the Nimbin area. We meet regularly to plan events and other random art activations.



# Wood ducks of North Lismore

by Jimmy Willing

This is a painting of a family of wood ducks but it's also a portrait of a house, a human family, and a nostalgic backward look at how life once was.

The painting was commissioned by Melissa Gulbin who sent me a plethora of information and research photographs, pretty much everything but the kitchen sink.

As such I cautioned her with a less is more approach as simplicity is a good thing in art.

However, when I opened up the research material I threw my own caution to the wind and said to myself, "I can do this."

Having recently moved my studio back to North Lismore, it was just a small walk over to Alexandra Parade to get information on the house. It's all boarded up now, as it was devastated by the Great Flood and I reckon it will probably be



demolished in the next year or so.

The old neighbourhood is no longer bustling; rather it is now a ghost town with one house after another boarded up.

There is a small number of old

school diehards who refuse to leave, and also an influx of young squatters, but my old hood is now very quiet and it will soon become a vast wetland park that will be wonderful place for wood ducks!

## Nature inspires creativity

Roxy Gallery is excited to present 'Nature's Embrace', a captivating exhibition by artists Brenda Bryant and Michelle Jeffery.

Brenda Bryant, a Tweed Valley-based artist, draws her inspiration from the breathtaking Gondwana Rainforests of the area.

Having retired to the region 12 years ago, Brenda immersed herself in art classes, experimenting with mediums from soft pastels to oils.

Today, she focuses on traditional oil painting techniques, capturing the ever-changing beauty of the rainforests she frequents.

Her works, which have earned her numerous accolades, reflect her deep connection to the natural world and her ability to translate its wonders onto canvas.

Michelle Jeffery studied art in Newcastle in the nineties, and brings a unique perspective to capturing the natural environment.

Working primarily in acrylics, Michelle creates imaginative



landscapes that reimagine the scale, colour, and texture of natural elements.

Her works invite viewers to engage with the blank spaces on her canvases, encouraging them to envision their own stories within her compositions.

Michelle's work is an exploration of the power of Mother Nature to inspire creativity and evoke a sense of peace.

Together, Brenda and Michelle's works form a harmonious dialogue between realism and imagination, offering a beautiful exploration of the natural world.

'Nature's Embrace' is a must-see exhibition for anyone who appreciates the beauty and complexity of nature, as seen through the eyes of two talented artists.

The show runs from 7th March to 4th May. Join us for the exhibition launch on Friday 7th March at 6pm at the Roxy Gallery, Kyogle.

# A celebration of women's creativity in the Northern Rivers



'Nasturtium Room' by Katka Adams

The Serpentine Community Gallery is proud to present 'Her-Art Work', an inspiring community exhibition showcasing the talent and vision of women artists across the Northern Rivers.

This exciting exhibition, open to artists who identify as women, working in all mediums, including painting, sculpture, mosaic, installation and performance, offers a platform for women to share their creative expressions, challenge perspectives, and celebrate their artistic journeys.

'Her-Art Work' is a space for reflection, storytelling, and empowerment. Throughout history, the achievements of women artists have been overlooked.

It is in an attempt to balance the historical books that we provide this exhibition space for our women artists.

'Her-Art Work' is running in conjunction with the Lismore Women's Festival and International Women's Day 2025.

Whether established or

emerging, artists will present works that explore themes of identity, transformation and creative strength, offering audiences a compelling and immersive experience.

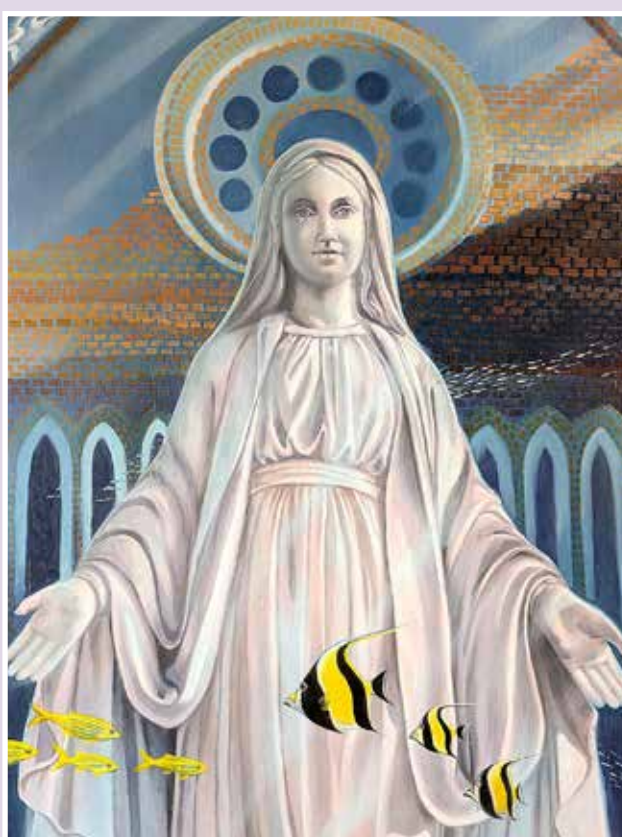
So why is International Women's Day (IWD) still relevant?

It's important to acknowledge the contribution of women, all the work undertaken daily, especially the unpaid, unrecognised, such as caring for home and children, the all-too-many tasks and juggles to keep a home functioning and safe for all.

Also the contribution of women in the workplace, where we/they are still waiting for equal pay and conditions (compared to males).

The contribution of women who, sometimes at risk to themselves, speak out loudly about the issues impacting on women and children, locally, in Australia and worldwide – who call out the misogyny, racism, violence and the oppressive systems that keep women from full and proper opportunities.

And finally, we're



'Mary After the Rain' by Maya Veit

celebrating IWD because women deserve to be celebrated. From the infant to the crone, we make up more than half the population (but get far less of the resources and laws of support).

*"Women are the life givers, life bearers and the light carriers. Need I say more?"*

– Rose Hogan

Gallery director Corinne Batt-Rawden said, "I believe International Women's Day is still relevant as women around the world continue to face significant challenges despite progress in gender equality.

"These issues vary across cultures and societies, but common challenges include gender violence, unpaid domestic work, child brides, the pay gap and financial rights, and reproductive rights to name a few."

The Northern Rivers is renowned for its thriving artistic community, and this community-driven exhibition further cements the region's commitment to fostering creative expression and inclusivity.

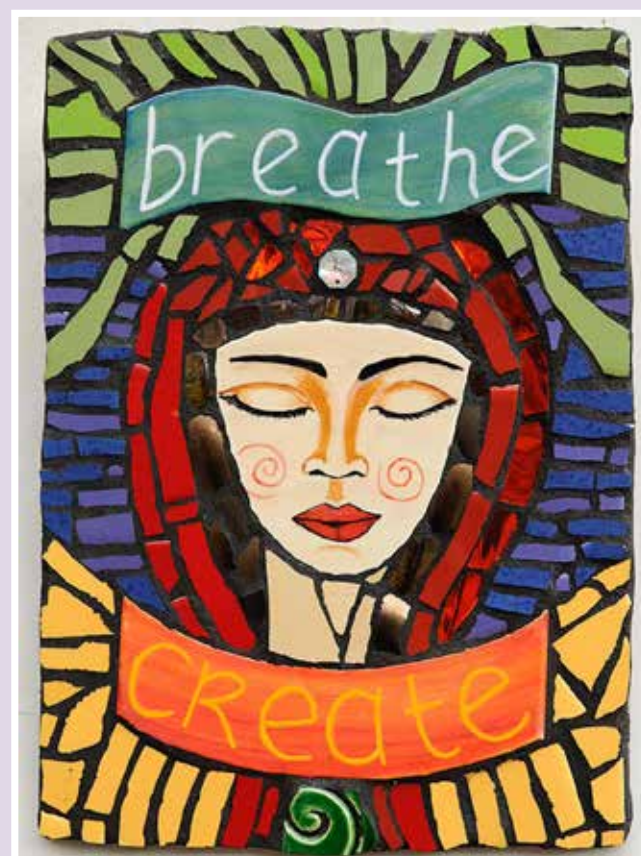
'Her-Art Work' recognises that art is a means of social commentary, personal storytelling and cultural connection, providing an opportunity for artists to share their stories while celebrating the richness and diversity of their creative practices.

The opening event is 6pm 'til 9pm on Friday 7th March. All are welcome to attend the opening.

Her-Art Work is on show until 4pm, Friday 28th March. Go to: [gallery@serpentinearts.org](mailto:gallery@serpentinearts.org) for more details. You can find us at 104 Conway Street, Lismore.



'The Tree Shepherd' by Kate LeJam



'Breathe Create' by Sky Rose





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# Hidden in plain sight

by Scott O'Keeffe

You might not have known who the singer was, but you've probably been hearing this song all summer.

The song usually starts around dusk. It's a steady low buzz that quickly increases in volume. It doesn't reach the level of being painful, but some folks reckon it's irritating. For me, it's the sound of summer.

Brown Bunyip Cicadas (*Tumasa tristigma*) are very common in the Northern Rivers district and further afield as well. They're found from Cape York Peninsula to Ulladulla, on the coast and as far inland as the tablelands west of the Dividing Range.

They inhabit forests, especially wet eucalypt forests on the fringes of rainforest, and She-oak forests. Brown Bunyips have also adapted successfully to urban areas – yet another native animal to take advantage of new niches in cities.

They can be hard to spot because they blend well with



their surroundings, but you'll certainly hear them if they are around.

Brown Bunyips, and all cicadas belong to the insect order, Hemiptera, which also includes Planthoppers, Leafhoppers and Spittlebugs. The Brown Bunyips you see and hear in the summer are winged adults, and they're only around for a short while.

Most of a Brown Bunyip's life is spent as a nymph underground. The nymphs spend several years feeding on sap taken from plant roots.

When the nymphs complete their final moult, they emerge as adults. The cicadas that

you see above ground are near the end of their lives. It's the same for all species of cicadas.

The sounds cicadas make are the work of males, who produce the songs to attract females. Large aggregations of cicadas often produce deafening choruses in which the pulsing sounds can become synchronous.

It is hypothesised that these loud, throbbing choruses act as a deterrent to predatory birds. I can't imagine how we might test this hypothesis.

Like birds, each species of cicada has a unique 'song'. These sounds are produced by a pair of ribbed membranes

called tymbals. Tiny muscles flex, causing the rigid tymbals to vibrate, creating the 'song'. Some of the sounds made by cicadas are very high pitched and not audible to humans.

Following mating, the female cicadas lay eggs. You might have seen a cicada egg nest without knowing it. For years I've been finding weird little symmetrical 'ladders' cut into the twigs and small branches of plants in my nursery, like the ones in the photo. It turns out that these are cicada egg nests.

The slits you see are cut into the twigs by the female using her ovipositor. Clusters of eggs are then laid in the slits. As the eggs hatch, the nymphs drop to the ground and begin a lengthy period feeding on plant sap. Soon after breeding all the adult cicadas die.

Cicadas are food for a variety of vertebrates, especially birds, and spiders. Australia has around 800 species of cicada, but we know almost nothing about most of them. What a wonderful attraction for those of us who are curious.



# One joey's very lucky day

by Rosy (WIRES volunteer)

It was a day like any other for Mark, Byron Bay resident and WIRES volunteer, who was going about his business when fellow volunteer Melissa rang to check if he was aware of a wallaby in need of rescue.

He wasn't, but when he heard the story, he swung into action.

Incredibly, the wallaby had been collected by a car and had spent the night lodged behind the fender. Next day, unaware of the furry passenger, the driver set off for Ballina Fair, leaving the vehicle in full sun in the shopping centre's car park.

Thankfully, a passer-by was drawn to strange noises coming from the car and reported the trapped wallaby to WIRES.

Within minutes, Mark was on his way. "As soon as I saw a texted photo of the red-necked wallaby, I rang Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital," Mark says. "There was every chance it could die from stress myopathy, an often-fatal condition affecting kangaroos, wallabies and other wildlife species, meaning sedation would be essential to the wallaby's survival.

Another potential problem without sedation was that the wallaby could take off after being released and cause havoc in the car park."

Mark's phone call resulted in the hospital's head vet, Dr Bree Talbot's arrival at the scene within minutes of his own. Dr Bree deftly anaesthetised the wallaby, a year-old joey, and Mark set about removing a panel below the bumper bar to gain access to the animal, using tools provided by a Ballina Fair security guard.

"Thankfully, umbrellas had been set up to provide the joey with shelter from the blazing sun," Mark says. "I had to work really carefully to extract it."

Dr Bree performed a quick, on-the-spot examination before taking the patient to the Byron Bay Wildlife Hospital where it stayed overnight under observation.

"We were amazed to find this young joey relatively unscathed – just a bit of blood from a small cut on one foot," Mark says.

Next morning, the joey was given the all-clear and Mark transported the lucky creature from the hospital to a local outdoor enclosure where Annie and Dave, also WIRES volunteers, care for

injured animals.

After two more nights of observation, Annie and Dave declared the youngster ready to go, opened the enclosure gates, and introduced him to a small mob of similarly aged orphan joeys.

"Ideally we'd have released him where he'd come from, but in this case, we just didn't know," says Mark. "He's moved in with the mob who hang around Annie's house but also have access to an adjoining national park."

Thanks to an observant shopper and a team of dedicated wildlife rescuers, carers and top-notch vet, this young joey has a remarkable tale to tell his new-found friends.

Mark has been a WIRES volunteer for the past five years. "I probably respond to 100 or so cases each year," he says. "Snakes are my most common rescues but I'll help any animal in a desperate situation: in pain, suffering, real emergencies."

WIRES Northern Rivers is holding their next Rescue and Immediate Care Course on Sunday, 23rd March. For more information visit: [www.wires.org.au/training/rescue-and-care](http://www.wires.org.au/training/rescue-and-care)

Our local wildlife needs you!



# Job loss claims 'baseless scare-mongering'

by Dailan Pugh

The North East Forest Alliance accuses the AWU of unfounded scaremongering with their claims of 9,000 job losses if the Great Koala National Park is created, as NEFA's assessment identifies only 118 to 218 industry jobs in north east NSW will be directly affected by creation of the park.

In a press release (13/2/25), the Australian Workers Union (AWU), claim over 9000 jobs will go in the hardwood industry if the 'Great Koala National Park' is imposed on North Coast communities.

The AWU apparently rely upon an industry report based solely upon unverified industry data, that applies to the whole of NSW, with most of the timber coming from private lands and plantations.

The AWU claims are baseless scaremongering.

A review by NEFA identifies that direct job losses from the creation of the Great Koala National Park could be in the order of 118 to 218 jobs within the North East NSW region from Gosford to the Queensland Border, with a similar number of indirect jobs.

This is a small price to pay to stop the degradation of one of the most important Koala populations in NSW and the homes of 108 other threatened species.

A 2019 assessment for the timber industry identified 566 jobs in logging native State Forests in North East NSW.

A 2021 assessment by the Natural Resources Commission put it at 590 jobs.



The Great Koala National Park represents 21% of the area of native State Forests in North East NSW able to be logged, so is only a small portion of total logging jobs in the region.

Since those assessments, the 2019/20 fires resulted in a 45% reduction in logging volumes from north-east NSW's public native forests, and most recently NEFA had the Forestry Corporation admit they have been inflating their claimed yields by 30% for at least the past three years.

There are less jobs in logging now than previously identified".

The creation of the GKNP will create new employment opportunities in park management, rehabilitation and tourism. With tourism alone estimated by the University of Newcastle to generate 9,810 new jobs over 15 years.

It is past time for the NSW Government to stop procrastinating and declare the full 176,000 ha of State Forests as the world class koala park they have identified it as being.

## ALP's new surveillance plan slammed

The Climate Justice Alliance of Northern Rivers (CJA) has condemned Prime Minister Albanese's recent pledge to waste \$3 million on CCTV and other security measures in the Ballina, Byron and Tweed shires.

The treatment of children in the Australian criminal justice system has been criticised in the Human Rights Watch's World Report 2025, as well as by Children's Commissioner, Anne Hollands, who says: "We cannot 'police' our way out of this problem, and the evidence shows that locking up children does not make the community safer."

The statistics show that young people are not

deterred from crime by the threat of incarceration, with 85 percent of children released from supervised detention returning to sentenced supervision within 12 months.

CJA member groups agree that instead of increased policing, we need increased care and support for young people from an early age.

Byron Environment Centre's Emma Briggs said, "Young people face an increasingly challenging future with the housing, cost of living and climate crises converging."

To 350.org's Chels Hood Withey, "It is hardly surprising they feel alienated by a government that

chooses to spend millions on increased surveillance, and \$14.5 billion on subsidising the fossil fuel industries that threaten to destroy any hope for a liveable climate."

Marie Reilly of Rising Tide Northern Rivers said, "Instead of supporting these corporations, we could be investing taxpayers' money in affordable housing, increased income support and integration of health, education and social services in local communities," as well as "culturally safe prevention, early intervention and diversionary programs including free and accessible sport, music, social and cultural programs."

# Clay: Nothing and everything exists as life living itself

by Michael Brooke

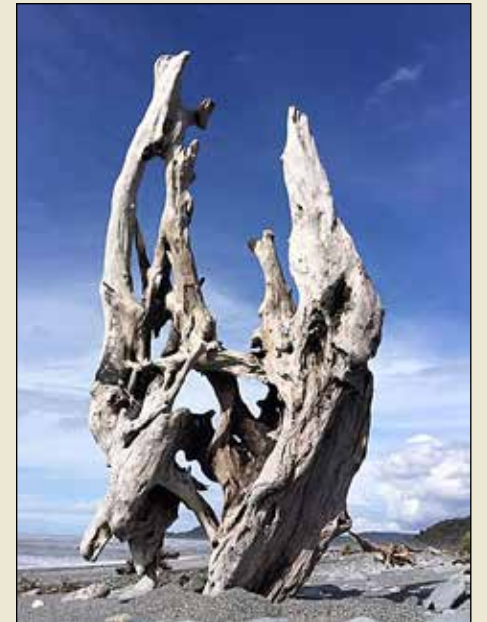
I have a friend, Denis Hopking: painter, sculptor and a master potter. He is nomadic. He moves between three forms of artistry. Today he is a craftsman who shapes clay-ware on a potter's wheel.

He says, "I arrive at the doorway of the pottery. I'm about to leave the world and its worldly affairs and cross the threshold into a different universe... a world of clay, a world of damp smelling earth, a world of imagination, inspiration, essentially intuition."

Before the wheel turns, he pauses. There has to be rhythm, physical connection and a gentle flow of the soul – moments of quiet before the work begins. Touch of the tips of fingers, hands to the wet malleable clay, the wheel spins, the pot grows, becomes a moulded form, it glows. The potter is nowhere to be seen, the person is not there, the personality has been superseded by a 'Clear Seeing' level of absorption ... the artist is in a creative space where 'Nothing and Everything Exists as Life Living Itself'.

'Life living itself' is a way of describing the 'Artist at work'. The first work of art in the world was a likely a stone shaped by Nature. Nature as the artist, living itself. Lofty Nature Where Heaven and Mankind Combine is a deep-rooted philosophy in the Orient. The potter works in 'slow-time,' where time flies by unnoticed. His clear seeing is a form of understanding that there are 'Mountains Behind the Mountains Around You. There is Sky Beyond the Sky You See.'

Creativity is a force of Nature. There's not a work of art in existence that is not a depiction of Nature; Nature with



an infinity of forms. The pot is made, work fulfilled, the artist moves back into mundane time. He washes his tools, leaving all things tidy and in their rightful place, he steps back into the world, the world of laws and rules and the departments which humans practice.

And then perhaps he relaxes, afternoon tea, and then unwinds by gentle gardening, the perfume of roses as they blossom in their own time, their own life living itself. He is mindful of their thorns... and now light waning, sunset, the sun falling behind the mountain around him:

*Naught but earth, sky, rock and I  
No sound but wind  
Great is the sky, small am I  
Clothed, yet naked and exposed  
This is sacred ground.*

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**NEXT WORKSHOP - LISMORE - SUNDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MARCH**





by Suzy Maloney

All vertebrates have three types of muscles – skeletal, smooth and cardiac. Smooth muscle is an involuntary muscle type found in the walls of organs, the digestive system, blood vessels and other locations.

Cardiac muscle is also involuntary and causes the heart to beat. But here we're only going to talk about skeletal muscle. This type of muscle is involved in movement and posture and is consciously controlled.

There are two main types of skeletal muscle, fast twitch and slow twitch. These muscle fibres play distinct roles in a horse's physical performance, and understanding the difference between them is key to optimising training, care, and performance in horses.

In this article, I will explore the characteristics, functions, and significance of these muscles in a horse's body.

Slow-twitch muscles: endurance and efficiency

These fibres are abundant in muscles that require sustained, low-intensity activity (eg. Drafts), such as those used in long-distance walking or trotting (eg. Arabians) and for posture. Slow-twitch muscles contract slowly and can maintain their activity for long periods without fatigue.

• **Endurance and efficiency:** Slow-twitch fibres are highly efficient at using oxygen to generate energy. They excel in prolonged, steady work and can carry out repetitive movements over time without tiring quickly.

• **Rich in mitochondria:** They

# Horses' muscles – fast and slow twitch

have a high concentration of mitochondria, which are the energy-producing organelles within the cell. Mitochondria use oxygen to generate ATP, which powers muscle contractions.

• **Fatigue resistance:** These fibres can contract for long periods without tiring, making them useful for endurance activities, such as long trail rides or consistent, low-intensity trotting.

• **Less power:** They can't generate as much force or speed as fast-twitch fibres. Instead, their strength lies in their ability to sustain moderate contractions over extended periods. Fast-twitch muscles: power and speed. Designed for quick, explosive movements, these fibres are used in activities that require a lot of power in a short amount of time, such as sprinting, jumping, or making quick, sharp turns.

There are two types: fast-twitch oxidative fibres are versatile intermediaries, providing both speed and endurance. They contract faster than slow-twitch but also use aerobic metabolism, allowing them to maintain power over a longer time than pure fast-twitch fibres. They're used in activities like dressage,

eventing, show jumping, and middle-distance racing (eg. thoroughbreds). Fast-twitch glycolytic fibres are all about speed and power.

They contract very quickly and generate significant force, but fatigue quickly due to their reliance on anaerobic metabolism. They are useful for high-intensity, short-duration events such as barrel racing, and short sprints (eg. quarter horse racing).

After exerting maximum effort, horses need a period of recovery before they can be used again.

Speed and power: Fast-twitch fibres contract quickly and forcefully, making them ideal for explosive movements like galloping, jumping, or sprinting. They allow a horse to accelerate rapidly and perform high-intensity actions.

High power output: They produce large amounts of force in a short period. However, this power comes at the expense of endurance, they are not well-suited for long-duration activities.

All horses possess a combination of these muscle fibre types, but the proportion can vary significantly depending on the breed, training, and the type of activity the horse is involved in.

It is this variation that makes some horses more suitable for one type of exercise than another, eg. Thoroughbreds are bred for speed, and have a higher proportion of fast-twitch fibres.

While the proportion of fast-twitch and slow-twitch fibres is largely determined by genetics, training can help optimise the performance of the fibres that are most relevant to the horse's discipline.

• **Endurance training:** Long, steady training sessions, such as long-distance rides, can increase the efficiency of slow-twitch fibres, improving stamina and reducing fatigue.

• **Strength and speed training:** Short, intense bursts of activity, such as interval training or sprinting, can help develop the power and speed of fast-twitch fibres.

The balance between fast-twitch and slow-twitch muscle fibres in a horse's body is crucial to their overall performance and ability to excel.

Understanding the differences between these muscle types allows us to tailor training programs to the specific needs of each horse.

[www.happyhorsesbitless.com](http://www.happyhorsesbitless.com)

## Pool solutions



**View from the loo**  
by Stuart McConville



Lazing idly in knee-deep water watching the school of Crimson Spotted Rainbow fish fascinate over my body hair and skin, I am immersed in gratitude for the opportunity to build the natural swimming pool in which I lie.

The tiny fish are young enough to not be afraid; the older ones seem to keep their distance.

They nibble and butt my skin while I lie still, a small movement and they're off only to shyly return seconds later.

They are part of the diverse ecology which keeps my pool clear of excess algae without the use of any type of chemical.

The development of my pool has been a long process of waiting for the ecology to establish and adding the right biota at the right stages, ensuring everything has enough food to sustain without feeding.

About a third of the surface area is a shallow wetland which is planted out with a variety of macrophytes including

beautiful water lilies, water rushes, water ribbon and vetiver grass.

These consume nutrients in the water as well as oxygenating the pond. A floating bund prevents debris from the filter area getting into the swimming zone.

The access area has a rocky bottom to prevent slippage on the pool liner, which is very slippery unless covered.

A large shade cloth over the shallow swim zone acts like rainforest trees, keeping the water (and users) cool to reduce the likelihood of algal growth.

The deep zone extends down to 2.5m and provides a sump for leaf litter etc. to easily be scooped out.

It also contains a pump which takes deep low oxygen / high nutrient water and pumps it up through a water fall into a biochar bog garden which both oxygenates the water and grows an abundance of watercress for my salads.

The pool biota consists of what I have added (fish and freshwater mussels) plus at least four species of frogs including tusked frogs which are quite rare, at least three species of dragonfly plus the visitors such as birds, bats, red

bellied black snakes and water dragons.

It is very satisfying to have provided a home for so much life.

On the downside, cane toads are a constant threat to my little pool tribe. After rain I can catch up to 10 toads a night trying to overrun my pool.

Occasionally I miss a few and end up with a swarm of black 'toadpoles', which I trap with a [watergum.org](http://watergum.org) trap armed with bait from the adult toads' poison glands.

The toads are euthanised in the freezer, after I get enough, I thaw them out, cut off and skin the rear legs and make very tasty jerky out of them.

Their little dried claws even make great toothpicks for the inevitable fibres lingering between my teeth. The rest make good compost.

My natural pool building know-how is up for hire. If you are interested in building one of these, please reach out and I can help with design and stocking.

Stuart McConville runs *PooH Solutions Compost Toilet and Waste Water Services*  
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<https://poohsolutions.com>

## Bushwalkers head to Evans Head



Resting on Goanna Headland with Snapper Rock to the South

by Peter Moyle, Nimbin Bushwalkers Club

A clear sky and light winds on arrival made for a perfect day to tackle the Evans Head coastal walk. Leaving the Chinaman's Beach carpark, we headed south along the coastal heath track before hitting the coast at Snapper Rock where the stunning coastal views open up.

A casual walk along the beach north saw some take a refreshing dip to cool off before we climbed the northern Goanna Headland. Almost at Evans Head, we took the secluded beach track before finally making it back along the beach to home. Another cooling swim before a social refreshment catch up.

This walk never disappoints and the 16 walkers, some newbies, but most returning walkers all happy, and same time next year booked in.

Next, a weekend in the Border Ranges with the many varied tracks to explore, then Uki and the start of the multi-day walk on the new National Park trails with creeks, waterfalls and rainforest.

### Walks Programme

**Sunday 23rd March – Unicorn Falls and Whiskey Creek in the Mount Jerusalem National Park**

**Leader:** Peter Moyle 0412-656-498

**Grade:** 3-4. The first part on the new multi day walk, leaving Unicorn Falls carpark before heading to Whiskey Creek. Walking on some new trails, there may be slippery conditions after rain. We have combined the two regular walks: on return to Unicorn Falls a swim under the falls available and recommended. Good footwear needed.



**Meet:** Two spots, whichever suits: 9am at the primary school in Uki, or if coming from Mullumbimby meet at Uncle Toms at 9am. Ring to organise car-pooling and to register.  
**Bring:** water, lunch, and a hat.

**Sunday 6th April – Boggy Creek track and onto Peates Mountain, Whian Whian Conservation Area**

**Leader:** Peter Moyle 0412-656-498

**Grade:** 3-4 We will follow on to Peates Mountain on the new multi-day walking track, there may be some slippery sections after rain, but that means plenty of water to enhance the views. About 3.5 hours and 11km, Blackbutt Forest before rainforest and the lovely creek.

**Bring:** the usual, a hat, drinking water, lunch, and good bushwalking boots/shoes. Insect protection recommended; spraying on ankles does reduce leeches.

**Meet:** At Minyon Falls carpark at 9am for a 9.15 start before following the Boggy Creek track and the beautiful creek and waterfalls on offer.





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need of a trim, a frangipani not really in need of anything, and a huge tree fern that blocked both light in and vision out, but when we cut it back, as the poet Betsy Unrah put it, "She was a house of many rooms, a window in each one. From one her garden smiled at her, another room, the sun."

Alas, all that grows is not wanted, and so it is here. Entangled with the wanted were *tradescantia fluminensis*, or sniper wort, and of course, camphor laurel and golden rain trees.

All were removed and loaded onto the CMC truck by the delightful CMC guys who took it all away.

It was a privilege to clear this garden for the residents and when you saw them, content, sitting quietly reading, watching television or gazing out across their now cleared garden, it brought to mind the words of GK Chesterton when he wrote, "There are two ways to get enough. One is to continue to accumulate more and more, the other, is to desire less."

We have a hospital, volunteers, fundraisers and

most importantly we have aged care, which means we can stay within our unique community and amongst friends, when the time comes. What more could you want?

You may think this a type of pyrrhic victory, not that we won the battle at great human cost like King Pyrrhus of Epos in battling the Romans in 279, and again in 280 BCE, but a hollow victory in the sense that we must return to battle again and again, but that's what we do and others will follow.

As the anonymous poem put it:  
*One song can spark a moment,  
One flower can wake the dream,  
One tree can start a forest,  
One bird can herald spring,  
One smile begins a friendship,  
One hand clasp lifts a soul,  
One star can guide a ship at sea,  
One word can frame a goal.*

And thus we pass the baton into the future.

Our next garden visit is at Carly and Scott's Syntropic garden, 5/56 Robb Road, Lillian Rock at 2pm on Saturday 15th March. Bring a cup, a chair, and something to share.

by Peter Brooker

Well, here we go into another year of NGC or, as one anonymous poem put it, "Life, I am the New Year. I am an unspoiled page in your book of time. I am your next chance at the art of living".

So, we took that unspoiled page and we wrote upon it a single word, 'Hospital.'

That word came to us from France in the 15th century, being first noted with its current meaning by 1540.

It, like many words, has its root in Latin "Hospes", meaning 'guest' or 'stranger', the adjective, 'hospitale', meaning 'guest house' or 'inn'.

Having read the word, 18 NGC members, along

with two members of the Nimbin community and two employees of the CMC roadwork contractors, put on sunscreen, gloves, a hat and grabbed their variously-sized pruning shears or secateurs, and headed for the aged care unit.

Now, if you have never seen behind the neatly trimmed gardenia hedge that divides the aged care facility from Cecil Street you are missing out.

There is a garden full of Australian native plants: from succulents to lomandra, some westringia or native rosemary, two raised vegetable beds with a few herbs, and some lettuces.

There was a lemon tree, desperately in need of pruning, a lemonade tree in

## Generous donation to school's Breakfast Club

by Kerry Hagan

It is with great pleasure that Nimbin Garden Club was able to donate \$700 to Nimbin Central School Breakfast Club from the proceeds of our Christmas raffle.

The Breakfast Club feeds at least 80 of our kids every morning, thanks to the tireless efforts of Marc and his team.

The Garden Club would again like to thank everyone who donated prizes to make this happen and the people on the street who bought tickets.

Thanks everyone!



Kerry Hagan presents the cheque

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