



Voluntary Carbon Sink contributing to the Nurcounge Malleefowl Corridor

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Biodiverse Carbon Sink established at Nurcough, Victoria

In early 2008 planning was already well underway to identify strategic corridors which would re-connect isolated landscapes and species within the Habitat 141⁰ vision. Habitat 141⁰ partners Greening Australia, Parks Victoria, Trust for Nature, Victorian Mallee Fowl Recovery Group, Tooan/Arapiles Advisory Group and the Grampians to Little Desert Biolink together identified the 'Nurcough Link' as a key area of opportunity for landscape connectivity gains.

The 180 hectare property was then purchased by Greening Australia for the purpose of undertaking high quality biodiverse restoration providing multiple environmental outcomes whilst also generating carbon credits through the voluntary market.

Funding was obtained from the RE Ross trust, carbon credits are generated on behalf of Simply Energy, and Cool Melbourne contributed funding to increase the number of species planted at the site to provide better habitat.

Now successfully established, the project represents the largest biodiverse revegetation project ever undertaken in Victoria in a single year. Needless to say the project has boosted Greening Australia's confidence in our ability to scale up the size and pace of on-ground works necessary to achieve the Habitat 141⁰ vision.

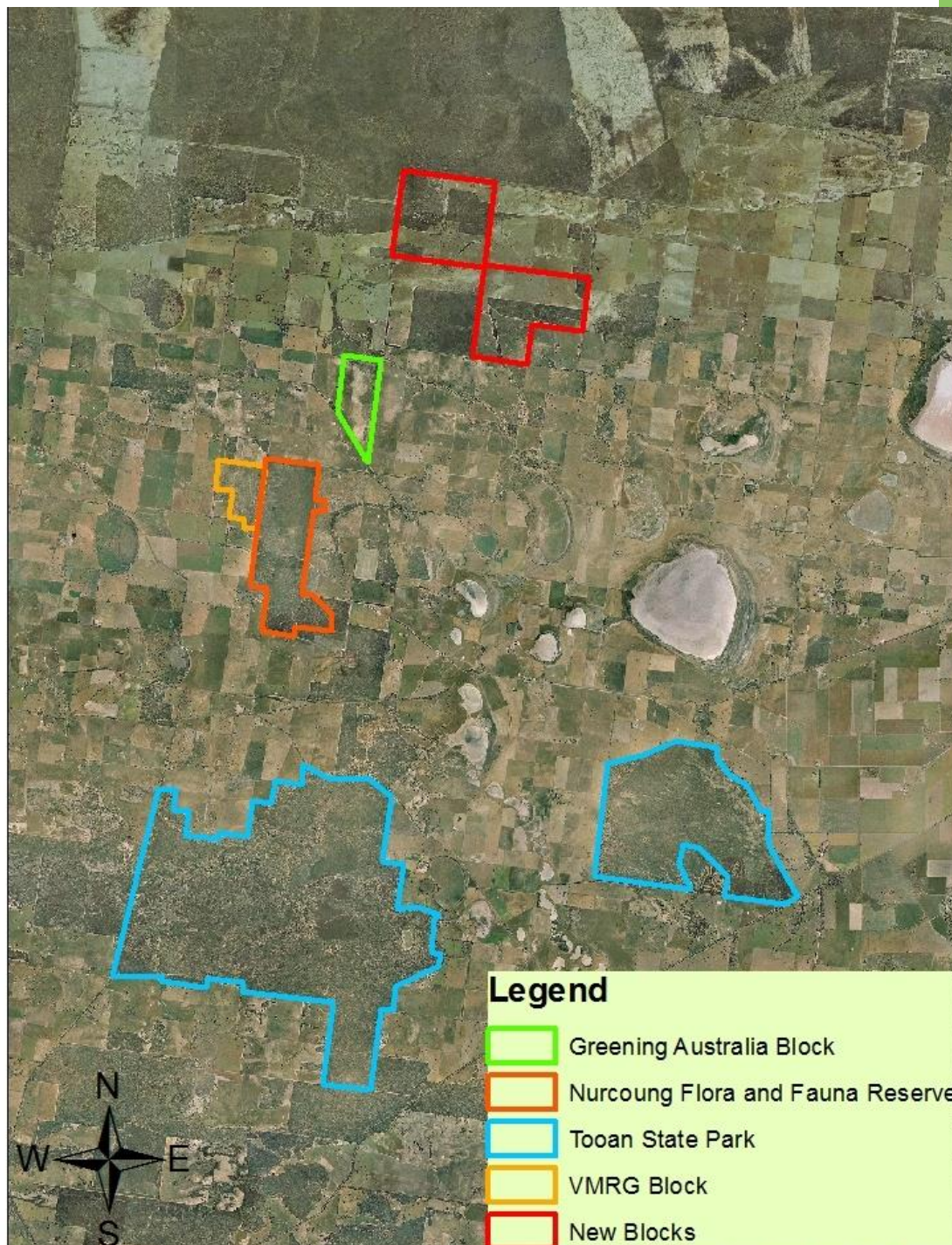
The Nurcough Malleefowl Corridor

The Nurcough Malleefowl Corridor is a priority initiative of Habitat 141⁰ aiming to restore landscape connectivity between the Tooan / Arapiles State Park and The Little Desert National Park. Protecting existing habitat and creating new habitat via strategic restoration of cleared land to facilitate the natural migratory movement of species is considered a critical action towards the conservation of several species in this landscape.

Since Greening Australia undertook the restoration project at Nurcough we have been working closely with the Victorian Malleefowl Recovery Group (VMRG) to monitor and better understand population trends of the Malleefowl in the local landscape.

Increased awareness of the developing corridor led to the private purchase by one of the VMRG members of another property in the corridor which is now also being restored to native vegetation by Greening Australia.

New blocks available for sale have been identified and earmarked for future fundraising campaigns making the emerging Nurcough Malleefowl Corridor an ideal case to study the effectiveness of landscape scale restoration.



Malleefowl to benefit

The nationally endangered Malleefowl, although cryptic by nature, are highly susceptible to predation and hence are limited in their ability to move freely throughout a fragmented landscape. Habitat 141⁰ Conservation Action Planning has identified the Malleefowl as a potentially useful indicator species of the effectiveness of emerging wildlife corridors as facilitating increased movement of species.

It may take at least 20 years before a revegetation site is considered habitat for Malleefowl, however in the meantime we have created a corridor to allow movement and new food resources.



A demonstration site

Greening Australia is not in the business of property purchase. We have always partnered with landholders to undertake restoration efforts, however this site has provided a great demonstration of what can be achieved with significant resources allocated. The carbon market being so new, it is easier to show people what we are talking about and they can see what's possible with their own eyes. Greening Australia is keen to continue contributing to the science of landscape scale restoration and so have established and committed to monitoring 43 permanent monitoring plots across the property. Monitoring is undertaken every Autumn and Spring with the objective of answering many of the questions still unknown to restoration practitioners from appropriate direct seeding rates, survival statistics and whether to plant or direct seed certain species. In collaboration with Singarayer Florentine from Federation University a paper detailing our findings has been published in the Journal Restoration and Ecological Management. <http://www.ecologicalprocesses.com/content/2/1/34>