

Conservation work a most rewarding effort

HAVE you ever thought about volunteering with an award-winning organisation?

Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) added another award to their growing collection this year when they won the water category at the Banksia Foundation Awards for their innovative Revive our Wetlands program.

The Revive program was developed in partnership with BHP Billiton in 2000 and is Australia's largest national wetlands revival program lending a helping hand to over 160 wetland sites across the country.

The Revive partnership between CVA and BHP Billiton has been renewed for another three years.

More than \$1.8 million is being invested in the program from 2007-2009 for school education, coordinating volunteers and the management and monitoring of Revive sites.

The program was developed in response to the issue of water management across Australia



Envirochat

and is aimed at the protection and restoration of wetlands. Five key wetlands sites will receive significant assistance and over 50 others will benefit from the program.

Wetlands are considered to be among the world's richest ecosystems with freshwater wetlands supporting a significant proportion of the world's species of plants and animals and are important breeding grounds and nursery areas for numerous bird and fish species.

Wetlands may well play an important role in climate change as they can act as a haven for animals during times of drought and act as water storage facilities during floods.

Wetlands are intricate ecosystems that are vulnerable to environmental pressures such as loss of native vegetation, invasion of

exotic weeds, degradation due to feral animals, pollution from agricultural practices, development and recreation and changes in land and water use.

Wetlands act as important filters, removing pollutants before the water flows into the connecting river systems leading to cleaner, healthier waterways.

This week the program is focusing on Mackay and Oonooie wetlands in Sarina.

The program encourages community action and awareness. The project will involve exotic plant removal and fencing to reduce outside impacts and increase biodiversity. - KATE DORTMANS.

For further information phone Kate Dortmans on 4951 0933 or visit www.conservationvolunteers.com.au.



Members farewell club stalwart

NEW Nebo QCWA member Dee Whitehead, left, who was elected International officer at the last branch meeting, with retiring international officer Daphne Allen and Nebo QCWA branch president Marlon Graham. Members will soon farewell Mrs Allen who has been a stalwart member of the group and community supporter for many years.

Picture: FRANCES CAMERON. 130907/20

Growers have price options

WHILE widespread general rain throughout the district, with falls between 40-80mm, may have been beneficial to ratoons and early plant, considerable time has been lost to the harvest in both Mackay Sugar and Plane Creek areas.

At the time of writing Mackay Sugar has almost 45% of the crop harvested and Plane Creek, with the recent setback of boiler no. 2, has harvested 29%. Distinct operations



Canegrowers Comment

By Paul Schembri

the loss of good agricultural land to rural subdivisions, the increased demand for commercial tree growing and the price paid per hectare making it impossible for growers to compete.

These factors, combined with the