

Lower Blackwood Land Champions



JAN WHITE & GUDRUN THIELE
KNOWLEDGE & PASSION - A WINNING COMBINATION

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Hard working volunteers are often shy about beating their own drum, this is certainly true of quiet achievers **Jan White** and **Gudrun Thiele** - through their respective community volunteer roles, both have dedicated countless hours working to protect Augusta foreshore's health.

Jan, with help from Gudrun, manages the **Augusta Community Nursery** - both Jan and Gudrun pay tribute to local horticulturalist Ann Austin (now deceased) who initiated the Green Corps nursery, “.... Ann was an inspiration, she started it all”. Jan declares, “She taught me what a weed was and wasn’t an how to deal with them..... Ann made things happen”. The nursery’s volunteers over the years have collected seed, taken cuttings and grown plants and trees for various Shire and other landcare projects in the Augusta local area. When I casually say how lucky the Shire is to have the volunteers and community nursery Gudrun says, “ ...actually we are lucky to work so closely with the Shire. They make it possible to have the resources we need”.

Gudrun coordinates the **Augusta Coast and Land Care Group**; the volunteers and the projects responsible for many of the riparian revegetation and weed control activities on the Augusta foreshore. Both the nursery and coast and land care volunteers are responsible for the whole cycle; they start with locally foraged seeds and cuttings, they grow the plants and then plant the plants back into their native environment, they watch it grow, maintain and nurture them. Jan says, “ It’s just a really good feeling when you go for a walk and think, look, I planted that”.

Although both Jan & Gudrun are originally from Europe they have made Australia home over many years. Gudrun tells me, “ Jan knows everything about the local environment, she has very good knowledge of all the bushland areas....all the plant names, all the animals...if you want to go anywhere, just ask Jan, she'll tell you how to get there”. Gudrun was always passionate about native forests in her home country of Germany but this interest was sparked again by the raw Augusta landscape, she maintains, “ ..it's all still here, around Augusta and the southwest”. Jan who just returned from a trip over to Albany adds, “...you realise how much original forest we still have and how good it is that it is protected... the forest needs to be able to do its own thing, the plants, the animals...”.

When asked what inspires them to keep going with their volunteer work Gudrun says, “ I can see that what we do is making a difference, even a morning of weeding, like yesterday...”, then Jan says, “ Oh yes, that was brilliant!” Gudrun continues, “ ... we went along a creek line that we'd planted previously , weeded it out and put sleeves around some of the plants. Just two hours and we achieved so much together”. Jan adds, “ Its beautiful seeing all the plants grow ...and then there's the social side, the cup of tea and biscuits after all the hard work... you get an internal feeling of feeling good about what you've done”.

Its clear Jan and Gudrun are as enthusiastic as ever, enjoying their volunteer work. Together they are building a healthy social landscape as well as supporting and regenerating the local environment, nourishing the community's landscape in more ways than one. Two more true local land heroes!--

Story by Katrina Lombardo Jan 2019



Lower Blackwood Catchment
Land Conservation District Committee

A HEALTHY CATCHMENT STARTS WITH
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

