



Front Julie Bartlett, Jo Bradshaw (left), Eileen Ryan (right).

Julie's garden of eden

Volunteering with the Friends of Noosa Botanic Gardens has cultivated great things for Cooroy 'green thumb' Julie Bartlett.

"When I moved here from Melbourne about 10 years ago I was looking for an activity I was passionate about but also where I could make new friends. This has been ideal," Julie said.

Julie is one of around 30 regulars who devote many hours a week to ensure every inch of the eight-hectare botanic gardens are bursting with colour and life year-round.

Armed with an encyclopedic knowledge of plants, Julie also hosts monthly guided walks of the gardens and has helped identify some of its most extraordinary inhabitants, including an extremely rare macadamia species.

"People love our guided walks, they see things they haven't seen before and it's a wonderful feeling to share my knowledge with visitors and help them develop a deeper understanding of these amazing gardens," she said.

To become a member of the Friends of Noosa Botanic Gardens, visit noosabotanicgardens.com

Significant land added to conservation estate

The key site is home to valuable habitat for native birds and animals including koalas and wallum froglets

A 106-hectare land parcel on the banks of Cooloothin Creek is now entirely gazetted as nature refuge in a win for the local environment and Council's conservation efforts.

Bought by Council in 2015 with Environment Levy funds, the site holds valuable habitat for native birds and animals including koalas, greater gliders and wallum

froglets and compliments the biodiversity values of the nearby national park.

It is also a key linkage with riparian and wildlife corridors along the western side of the Noosa River.

While the state government gazetted the larger portion of the site in 2019, Council initially

intended to resell the cleared 2.5-hectare section as a rural housing block.

"But, given the quality and speed of the regeneration after Council purchased the site, we've decided to add it to the conservation estate along with the larger parcel," Council's Environmental Services Manager Ben Derrick said.

"Nature refuges offer permanent security for parcels of land with significant environmental values."

The latest addition to Noosa Shire's conservation estate supports a key goal of Council's Environment Strategy to ensure half of all land in the shire is managed for its environmental values by 2030."

Kym's chapter of change inspires



Left to right Kym Anderson and Kathryn Rose.

For Kym Anderson, volunteering has been much more than just a way to give back, it's been a lifeline.

After an unexpected redundancy later in life, Kym found purpose and connection through Noosa Council's Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutor Program.

Now one of the program's longest-serving tutors, Kym

is dedicated to helping adults discover the power of reading, writing and numeracy.

"I love the wealth of information adult learners bring, and the joy of those 'aha moments' when something clicks after years of struggle," Kym said.

For Kym, each tutoring session is a reminder that learning is a two-way street and a special journey

that never stops.

Kym's tutoring goes beyond formal lessons, it builds confidence. Whether it's helping someone fill out forms, understand their children's homework, or navigate a household budget, Kym focuses on what matters most to each learner. Each session builds trust and respect and delivers plenty of laughter; something the library staff know all too well.

As this is National Volunteer Week (19–25 May), Kym's story is a powerful reminder of the difference volunteers make every day in our community.

"If you know an adult who finds literacy a struggle, encourage them to take a bold step. Adult Literacy and Numeracy at the library could change their life," Kym said.

Kathryn Rose, Noosa Council's Literacy Coordinator, said the tutoring process benefits both tutors and learners.

"Whilst migrants are learning how to understand and communicate in Australia, they, in turn, educate our tutors about their home customs and culture."

Teenager proudly loving life in orange

Youngest SES volunteer gives back through service

At its core, volunteering is about people - doing things for others and our community. It connects us all and has a positive impact on everyone's wellbeing. This is what drew 17-year-old Gracie Springer to Noosa SES.

Gracie is the youngest member of more than 100 SES volunteers across the four groups in Noosa, at Boreen Point, Pomona, Cooroy and Tewantin.

All these members volunteer their time when we need it most, assisting us during and after floods, storms, emergencies and everything in between.

Gracie is a member of the Tewantin SES group and is excited about National Volunteer Week and having celebrated WOW Day (Wear Orange Wednesday) this past Wednesday. She shared that, even at such a young age, she's proud to wear the jaffa suit.

"We're lucky to have some great mentors working with us, like our Acting Group Leader at Tewantin, Mel Geitl and our Local Controller, Warren Kuskopf," Gracie said.

"I'm learning heaps, giving back and proud to be part of a great team of volunteers," she said.

If you'd like to know more about your local SES group, call Noosa Local Controller, Warren Kuskopf on 0415 989 990.



Volunteers Mel Geitl (left) and Gracie Springer.

In Brief



Volunteer with Noosa Bushcare

Join Noosa Bushcare and make a real difference in your local environment. Volunteers work with Council to restore degraded bushland areas and reduce the impact of weeds, all while enjoying the outdoors and making new friends. With 19 active groups holding regular working bees, there's always a chance to get involved. Find out more at noosa.qld.gov.au/Environment-and-Waste/Environment/Noosa-bushcare.

Gallery Volunteering

Noosa Regional Gallery volunteers are the heart of our community, dedicating their time and passion to support our exhibitions and events. Their invaluable contributions help create a welcoming and enriching experience for all visitors. Our longest-serving volunteer has been with us for an incredible 18 years, exemplifying the purposeful and rewarding nature of their work.

We are deeply grateful for their commitment and enthusiasm.

For more information about volunteering, visit the Gallery website and complete the online form.