



Coastal Fringe-myrtle (*Calyptrix tetragyna*)



Red Parrot-Pea (*Dillwynia viridula*)



Mick - Getting involved is key to making positive change

This case study was transcribed from an interview. These are Mick's words and opinions.

What was your goal and what did you achieve?

At the start of the year there were many projects that I had in mind, but because COVID kind of threw it out the window, I took as many actions as I could with the restrictions in place to do something that would actually make a difference.

My school has an environmental focus group and we did lots of things in that group this year. I was also involved in my SRC as well. One of the things we did in the SRC is we managed to get a new bin system in and we've been trialling that with the teachers of each different block e.g. Maths, English, Ag, so it seems like that's been going pretty well.

I've also run multiple workshops for Science Week that we held at our wetlands which was good.

I've gone on a few camps, helped with some tree planting at a Blaze Aid site in Lobethal which is really good - I was quite proud of that.

Since 2013, our family's owned a property in the southeast - we call it Bangham - and we've done a lot of revegetation there to help build habitat for the native red tailed black cockatoos. We've gone back there again this year after the restrictions eased off a little bit and it was really good because we saw a few red-tailed black cockatoos actually coming back there and eating. I think that probably felt like one of the biggest achievements, because since I was maybe seven or so I'd been working on that property and planting trees, and to actually see that all the trees are really big now and seeing the red-tails come in - it's probably the best feeling I reckon out of everything I've done.

Did you face any challenges?

What I'd planned for the year was thrown out the window because of COVID. The way I overcame that was I created a list and I decided what I could do and what I couldn't and that mostly just excluded me running events or doing anything related to the community. Most of it was relatively easy though because a lot of it was through my school and my family, so I didn't have to worry too much about COVID.

Who did you work with?

My school's environmental focus group, as well as my school's SRC. My parents provided a lot of support while doing these things, as well as them buying Bangham so I could do the work in the first place, and getting the grant to do that. Without my parents' work, it'd be really hard to do what I've actually done.

How have you promoted or shared your work?

For the bins, the only way to do this was for the school to actually see them starting to come into place. We're starting to introduce them into the classrooms now that the teachers have trialled it. For Bangham it's been tough to present to my school because it is our private property and there's probably not much benefit to me saying that we've been doing this apart from people think it's pretty cool.

What will happen now?

Everything continues - our property's going to continue growing. We've pretty much finished planting the trees and we're going to keep going down there maintaining everything and seeing what's happening, recycling the tree guards. It'll be good to see the cockatoos actually coming and maybe we'll start introducing some understorey to it soon. It should pop up underneath anyway.

With my school recycling bins, we may do some upgrades as it's only at prototype stage, that's why we gave it to the teachers so they could say what they thought. It could change in the future so we just have to stick with that and see what happens. For Science Week, we'll probably do it again next year as well which will be good.

Your advice to other students?

For the school side of things honestly just getting involved in as many groups as possible was good. I'm involved in three different environmental groups - the Friends of Belair National Park, WREAPA - the Woodcutters Road Environmental Protection Association, which was an old block that we had that we've just sold, and the Sturt Upper Reaches Landcare Group. Any group like that, anything similar, get involved because sometimes a lot of the events and actions you can take will come to you rather than you having to create them. But I'm not discouraging creating your own things. It's good to do your own things too. Plan out what you're doing beforehand rather than just jumping straight into it.

What have you enjoyed most?

Seeing what came out of the work - for Science Week that we ran at the wetlands particularly from Mitcham Primary, seeing the kids' faces light up was really good because you know that you've made an imprint, and afterwards they were speaking to their teachers about what they'd learned. Bangham is the same - because we set out to plant those trees to make habitat for the red-tailed black cockatoos - to actually see them now coming in eating from the plants that we've planted was amazing. Same with seeing people using the bins. All of it is seeing that I've made something happen and doing something good is probably what I enjoy the most.