December. 2025 | Issue 2

The Green Thread

Stories of sustainability from Birpai country to Wiradjuri country







Green Gowns award for lasting biodiversity achievements

Charles Sturt University has won the Nature Positive category of the Green Gown Awards Australasia with our submission, “Restoring Nature, Inspiring Futures: 20+ Years of Biodiversity Leadership”. We edged out a highly competitive field of finalists including: University of Melbourne, Macquarie University, University of Tasmania and University of Sydney and progress through to the International Awards, announced in 2026. Ben Heard and Ed Maher from the Sustainability team accepted the award on behalf of the university (above). A heartfelt congratulations to all our student, staff, and community champions over the years whose dedication has driven lasting biodiversity improvements across our campuses.

Charles Sturt has been enhancing campus biodiversity for more than two decades. Beginning with an artificial wetland at Albury Wodonga in the late 1990s and formal targets set in 2005, the university has mobilised over 2,000 staff, students, and community volunteers. Together we’ve planted 38,000 native seedlings, built wetlands and habitats, installed pest exclusion fencing, and carried out ecological burns.

These efforts have already resulted in 20% of our core university-managed land — over 330 hectares—being designated to nature recovery, with a goal of 30% by 2030. The results are visible: thriving vegetation corridors, wetlands, and green spaces with integrated biodiversity such as pollinator gardens and “frog highways” via swales. Citizen science efforts utilising iNaturalist reflect the results - more than 1,000 species recorded at the Bathurst campus alone and noteworthy sightings including the critically endangered Swift Parrot (Albury and Port Macquarie campuses), and the endangered Gang Gang Cockatoo, on Albury campus.

Biodiversity projects deliver more than healthier ecosystems and wildlife outcomes. Economic gains include reduced maintenance through native plantings, lower fuel and mowing costs, and less water use. Partnering with business units and community groups also cuts event costs while boosting engagement and biodiversity targets. Equally important, Charles Sturt’s biodiversity efforts support student and staff wellbeing, fostering face-to-face connections with peers and community groups and the opportunity for solace in nature.

Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of The Green Thread - a newsletter dedicated to sharing and promoting the work done towards sustainability across our diverse communities.

The Charles Sturt ethos 'Yindyamarra Winhanganha' - the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live well in a world worth living in embodies sustainability. It drives what we do.

We pay our respect to all First Nations elders both past and present from the lands where Charles Sturt University students and staff reside.

In particular, we acknowledge the Wiradjuri, Ngunawal, Gundungurra, and Birpai peoples of Australia, who are the traditional custodians of the land where Charles Sturt University campuses are located.

Contents

Green Gowns award 01

Campus Environment Working Groups 02

Emissions: why 'net zero' matters 03

Embodied carbon & capital works 04

Agriculture that adapts to climate change 05

Repair & reuse at our libraries 06

Growing value: the benefits of trees 07

Food waste is a resource 08

Sustainable merchandising with Cheers 09

Days of Our Livestream: Peregrine falcons 10

Sustainable summer suggestions 11

Staff sustainability champ: Gareth Smart 12

Related Sustainable Development Goals





Join a Campus Environment Working Group

Feeling inspired by our Green Gowns win? Our campus environment working groups are open to all staff and students across our main campuses. These groups help to identify the need for action, drive initiatives and empower others to improve our campuses and take action for sustainability. These groups go a long way in supporting the Sustainability @ Charles Sturt team in our work. Hear about being part of a Campus Environment Working Group in our interview with staff member Gareth Smart, on page 11 and see our website for contact details for your local group: Local Sustainability contacts.

Emissions – why does ‘net zero’ matter and what are we doing towards it?

After the hottest year on record, world leaders have just met for COP30 Climate Summit in Belem, Brazil, to negotiate global action on climate change. UN Secretary-General António Guterres, stressed nations are falling dangerously short of delivering on Paris Agreement targets. “Even if new national commitments are fully implemented, the world is still heading for clearly more than 2 degrees of warming. That means more floods, more heat, more suffering – everywhere.”

The Paris Agreement, adopted 2015 and signed by 196 countries including Australia, aims to limit the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. To achieve this, the Agreement makes ‘net zero’ essential. ‘Net zero’ means balancing the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere with the amount removed, so that overall emissions equal zero.

Australia is already experiencing significant climate impacts, confirmed by CSIRO’s 2024 State of Climate Report, with projections worse than the global average. The Government also recognises climate change as an existential threat to Pacific peoples, stressing our moral obligation to act. Scientific evidence shows only achieving ‘net zero’ will halt warming and provide climate stability.

Despite this, in some circles, there has been a shift in narrative and focus away from ‘net zero’ and towards climate adaptation. Both elements remain critically relevant to curb the intensity of climate change experienced by current and future generations and the extent of adaptation measures that society will need to adopt.

Did you know...

Charles Sturt Professor of Public Ethics Clive Hamilton leads Australia’s first national survey on public attitudes to life on a warming planet. It explores views on future heat, food security, and potential social collapse. The results of this research will be progressively published on the project’s webpage: Climate Adaptation Survey.

Charles Sturt established a firm position on the importance of reducing emissions when it became Australia’s first Certified Carbon Neutral University under the Australian Government’s Climate Active program back in 2015. While ‘carbon neutral’ and ‘net zero’ are often used interchangeably, net zero is increasingly preferred as it highlights eliminating emissions at their source and reducing reliance on offsets.

By the end of 2024, Charles Sturt cut emissions at the source by 27% from a 2014 baseline through renewable electricity agreements, energy efficiency upgrades, phasing out gas appliances, and installing rooftop solar. The balance of emissions have been off-set through our high-integrity Carbon Offset Portfolio.

However, despite maintaining our certified carbon neutral status, ongoing challenges include curbing the rate of growth in Scope 3 emissions, (96% increase since the baseline year but masked by large reductions in scope 1 and 2 emissions) and establishing a pathway for eliminating >90% of all emissions to bring us in line with the national response to the Paris Agreement including the nomination of 2030, 3035 and 2050 targets. See our next article for more information on what we can do about Scope 3 emissions.

Embodied carbon and capital works: what's changing?

Over the period since initial Certification (2015), Charles Sturt has reduced Scope 1 and Scope 2/3 energy emissions by 78%. In the same period, Scope 3 emissions have increased by 96%. The percentage contribution of project building construction emissions in 2024 has now risen to more than 18% of the total emissions.

Scope 3 emissions are typically referred to as embodied carbon emissions. Embodied carbon refers to the total greenhouse gas emissions generated during the production, transportation, construction, maintenance, and disposal of building materials. Essentially, it's the carbon footprint built into the fabric of a building. Unlike operational carbon which comes from heating, cooling, and lighting, embodied carbon is locked in from day one and can account for up to 50% of a building's total lifecycle emissions.

Understanding embodied carbon can help us make more informed, responsible choices. As a university, we play a role in influencing supply chains, reducing emissions, and setting benchmarks for sustainable development. Building awareness also supports better collaboration with architects, engineers, building contractors and suppliers to help us meet our sustainability targets more effectively.

The university's Strategic Infrastructure team has delved into the topic of embodied carbon during 2025. This team manages the development, design, and construction of all university capital infrastructure projects. This includes developing design briefs, coordinating stakeholders, and ensuring alignment with strategic goals. The team works closely with the Sustainability Team from the initial discussions to ensure our design approach reflects the University's commitment to its sustainability objectives.



Above: Intern in the Strategic Infrastructure team, Hudson Lord, with the Port Macquarie Lab Refurbishment project. The project includes vinyl flooring featuring an Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) and new furniture with Climate Active certification, lowering the project's embodied carbon emissions.

Sean Sun, is the Brief and Design Officer within this team. Sean attended an Embodied Carbon masterclass run by the Green Building Council of Australia this year, and explains why organisations need to consider embodied carbon:

"As operational emissions decline due to electricity grid decarbonisation, embodied carbon is on track to be the largest source of emissions in the building sector. Embodied carbon encompasses the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the entire lifecycle of a building, including the materials and processes used from construction through to refurbishment or deconstruction. The decisions made during the design and planning phases of buildings are locked in for years to come. Tools for measuring embodied carbon vary in quality, coverage and cost to access. By quantifying the emissions from materials and construction processes early, we can empower ourselves to make informed decisions and minimise the carbon footprint of our buildings."

Calculating embodied carbon requires time and human resources. However, despite these challenges, the Strategic Infrastructure team are on a journey of modifying processes and implementing meaningful actions, such as nominating certified carbon neutral or low carbon materials as part of the design documentation. Whilst it is early days for the university growing its capability to assess, measure and report on embodied carbon, this work is critical for emissions reduction into the future.



"We will focus on practices that conserve and optimise the rainfall-derived soil water for plant growth and fruit production and improve the delivery and scheduling of supplementary irrigation."

- Dr Jason Smith



Collaboration for agriculture that adapts to climate change

Do you know of a primary producer who has experienced challenges due to the impacts of climate change and the extreme weather events it brings? Across our regions in recent years we have experienced extreme drought, flooding and bushfires and few experience the effects of these more profoundly than our primary producers.

In response, Charles Sturt University is leading an innovative research project targeting cool-climate winemakers, apple and cherry producers in the Central West, southern NSW and Tasmania to help them to be better prepared for future droughts. These industries are highly reliant on rainfall, and supplementary irrigation is mostly limited to on-farm water collection and storage. This makes them particularly susceptible to drought times, which are expected to increase in frequency and severity.

The project, 'Adapting temperate viticulture and horticulture to seasonal drought and climate volatility', began in July 2025 in collaboration with growers who have been long-term research partners of the university. Funding for this important work was granted by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund (FDF) Long-term Trials of Drought Resilient Farming Practices Program, with $7.94 million awarded to Charles Sturt's Gulbali Institute. In-kind contributions from project partners lift the project's total value to more than $16.6 million over five years.

This project will use participatory action research principles, with growers collaborating with agronomists, communications specialists, modellers, economists, and social scientists to test and share drought resilience strategies. The aim is to improve water use efficiency and yield during and after drought. Five-year funding allows flexibility to adapt methods based on seasonal results and forecasts. Social resilience will be strengthened through knowledge-sharing and relationships built via podcasts, workshops, and field days.

The project team includes Dr Anne Johnson, Dr Jason Smith, Dr Jen Bond, Dr Ketema Zeleke, Dr Xinyi Zhang, Dr Joanne Ashnest and Professor Leigh Schmidtke, working in partnership with The University of Tasmania's Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture and the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

"The overall aim of the project is to address the issue of drought risk in perennial cropping systems that have high reliance on rainfall and limited irrigation security," Dr Smith said.

The integration of social science, agronomy, and systems modelling reflects a growing recognition that climate resilience requires technical innovation and community engagement. Growers will assist with data analysis, strategic actions, and the communication of those strategies. This shared knowledge creation and problem-solving journey will build social resilience in these communities and ensure benefits will flow beyond the project itself.

Repair and reuse: Libraries launch ‘The Mendery’

The Mendery is now up and running across our libraries on all six main campuses. A student-led space for small repairs and creative fixes, from loose buttons to flat bike tyres, it's all about sustainability, self-sufficiency and sharing skills. Students can borrow a needle and thread or a small set of precision screwdrivers, or even grab a new bike tube. Staff are welcome to borrow the non-consumables.

The Mendery came about through conversations with students telling us what they need and observing what other university libraries offer. Student feedback through the *Your Student Voice* survey indicated students valued practical, accessible and wellbeing-focused support that helps them feel cared for and confident on campus. Staff recognised the need and this is where the SSAF funding came in. During the planning stage library staff surveyed students in the library kitchenettes to see if they liked this idea, and they said yes. Students endorsed the project again during the SSAF funding process.

Staff report keen uptake of the sewing supplies with the tools and bike repair items being used responsibly. The Mendery is also creating opportunities for skill-sharing and connection - just another way our fabulous library staff are providing excellence in supporting student wellbeing. While there are still some items being delivered and some ongoing discussions around how best to make some items available for use, the project has been well received.

Promoting repair over replacement, The Mendery supports sustainability and self-sufficiency, aligning with the University's ethos: yindyamarra winhanganha, living well in a world worth living in. It also reflects the Library Strategy 2025–26 focus on inclusion, wellbeing and sustainability through free, student-centered services.



Student Linh Nguyen explores the Mendery items in the Dubbo campus library



Over coming months, staff will roll out Phase 2 – expanding The Mendery's focus on creativity and wellbeing. Planned supplies include sewing, knitting and crochet items, and other simple handicraft materials that encourage relaxation, connection, and creative confidence. If you'd like to help Phase 2 take off, look out for a call out for donated items for The Mendery Phase 2 via ‘What's New?’ newsletter.

Growing value: The benefits of trees on campus

When was the last time you laid under a tree and just looked up? Trees are more than just a beautiful backdrop to university life—they're vital contributors to a sustainable, healthy, and inspiring campus environment. Integral in the work of enhancing our natural assets, Ben Heard, Project Officer in the Sustainability team, reflects on the many ways trees support our university.

There is a saying "the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago". This is because the majority of trees take a long time to establish and develop important structures such as tree hollows for supporting native wildlife. It can take over 100 years for a tree to form small hollows suitable for gliders, and even longer for hollows for birds such as parrots, owls and cockatoos. The CSIRO reports more than 300 Australian species of birds, reptiles and mammals depend on hollows. What else do trees do?



Trees are Environmental Champions. Trees play a powerful role in reducing our environmental footprint. They absorb carbon dioxide, filter air pollutants, and help manage stormwater by reducing runoff and erosion. Their shade also cools the campus, lowering energy use and mitigating the '*urban heat island*' effect.

Trees are Biodiversity Boosters. They provide essential habitat for native birds, insects, and other wildlife, helping maintain biodiversity on campus. Planting locally endemic species supports local ecosystems and strengthens our resilience to climate change.

Trees are Living Learning Spaces. They offer hands-on learning opportunities across disciplines—from environmental science and landscape architecture to cultural studies. They also hold cultural significance for First Nations communities, offering a chance to embed Indigenous knowledge into campus planning and education.

Trees are Smart Investments. Beyond their ecological and social value, trees make economic sense. They protect infrastructure from erosion, reduce building cooling costs, and enhance the overall appeal of the campus—making it more attractive to students, staff, and visitors alike.

Trees Support Wellbeing. Green spaces have a proven impact on mental health. Studies show that time spent around trees can reduce stress, improve focus, and boost overall wellbeing. Shaded walkways and leafy courtyards also encourage physical activity and provide peaceful places to recharge between classes or meetings.

Top Ten Tree Tips:

- **Retain** dead and live hollow-bearing trees
- **Leave fallen trees/logs**, especially near water
- **Build nest boxes** suited to your local species
- **Plant native trees** that will form hollows in future
- **Preserve native vegetation** along waterways
- **Plant trees strategically**, allowing for growth and leave a buffer zone around buildings
- **Educate others** in your community about trees
- **Educate yourself** on local tree removal proposals
- **Give children** time to ponder over trees
- **Plan a picnic** or walk with friends or family in nature to appreciate our amazing native trees this summer!

Food waste is a resource, with staff-member Ben Dehlsen

In October, scientist and conservationist Dr Jane Goodall passed away after a life dedicated to the natural world. She is quoted as saying:

"I like to envision the whole world as a jigsaw puzzle... If you look at the whole picture, it is overwhelming and terrifying, but if you work on your little part of the jigsaw and know that people all over the world are working on their little bits, that's what will give you hope."

We don't need to look far amongst Charles Sturt staff for people doing their bit towards sustainability. Ben Dehlsen is Senior Finance Officer in the Division of Finance team, working out of the Wagga Wagga campus. Ben enjoys engaging with staff and students to promote sustainability both at home and in the workplace. For example, he has started a ride to work Tuesday group chat to encourage active and sustainable transport among staff, reduce car emissions, and promote healthier lifestyle choices within the university community. It doesn't end there.

Ben grew up on 10 acres which included an orchard, so has always been involved in growing food, but didn't fully realise its importance until he had his own children. Motivated by a desire to educate his kids on how food is grown, Ben started growing his own food more actively at home. Then came the worms.

"I started worm farming during the COVID-19 pandemic, initially to reduce our kitchen and garden waste as I was noticing how much waste was going into our green bin. The worm farm was then producing this beautiful natural and organic fertiliser on a regular basis. Our veggie patch was thriving and the soil was full of life. Worm farming has become an important sustainable practice in our home, where we are always conscious of how to compost our kitchen waste whether that be in our worm farm, compost bin or bokashi compost system."

Landfilling food and other organic waste is particularly harmful. It causes the production of methane, a greenhouse gas much more powerful than carbon dioxide. In light of global greenhouse gas emissions reaching their highest annual levels ever recorded in the atmosphere in 2024, we all need to do our bit to reduce emissions.

All LGAs where our main campuses are located recycle food waste through the green lidded bin. The Sustainability Team is working on improving the recycling rate of food organics waste on our campuses, and this is a big job. If you are passionate about helping us achieve this, please join your local Campus Environment Working Group to share your ideas.



Clockwise from top left: Ben checks his worm farm; plentiful worms make healthy compost; Dubbo campus worm farm and Port Macquarie campus worm farm.

Contact the following staff members to find out more about worm farming at your campus:

Wagga: Ben Dehlsen bdehlsen@csu.edu.au
Dubbo: Sophie Mancer smancer@csu.edu.au
Port Macquarie: Jacqui Murray jacquelinemurray@csu.edu.au

Days of Our Livestream: Peregrine falcon loss and love

In 2006, PhD student Ian Grange and Dr Cilla Kinross noticed peregrine falcons using the Orange campus water tower as a launching pad to hunt. They surmised that if a ledge or box was placed high in the tower (30m up) it might be used as nest. Thus started the FalconCam Project. Key staff assisted by installing a nest box with camera into the tower in 2007, and in 2008, the first falcon egg was hatched into a nestling.

Since then, upgraded cameras have streamed globally, with “citizen scientists” recording behaviour in a YouTube chat for Dr Kinross’ database. These data resulted in two published articles on breeding and courtship, with a third underway comparing prey items to local avifauna.

The livestream is both educational and captivating, with 29,000 subscribers worldwide following the trials and tribulations of the breeding pairs. Feeding falcon chicks is a full-time job, with prey needing to be supplied by both parents hunting day and night. The original pair, named Beau and Swift, were succeeded by Bula and Diamond. When Bula vanished in 2016, Xavier arrived and ‘saved the season’ just as chicks were hatching.

Fast forward to this season, when in August Xavier went missing. Friends on the livestream chat were in dismay for 5 long days, as Diamond waited for Xavier, presumed dead, and the prospect of chicks seemed unlikely. Then entered suitor Gimbir (Wiradjuri word for ‘spring’ or ‘fountain’).

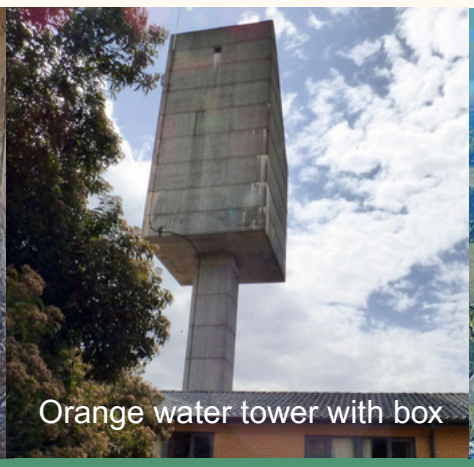
At just one year old, Gimbir saved this season, bonding with Diamond, who laid three eggs, one of which hatched on 5th November. It is fascinating watching little Girri (Wiradjuri for ‘red’) grow, tended to by one experienced parent and another far less experienced but nonetheless eager parent.

A total of 27 peregrines have hatched and fledged over the years. Volunteer moderators in USA, Europe and Australasia help steer the conversation back to the falcons when it diverts to recipes, religion, puppies or politics. The ‘chatters’ are enthusiastic, friendly and the livestream educational for many.

This project has two aims: studying peregrine falcon behaviour and raising awareness of apex predator ecology. Research shows clear patterns of behaviour but also individuality. For example, some males avoid incubating, whereas Gimbir first-time Dad has incubated like an old hand. The research has also shown that falcons hunt frequently at night, targeting quails, grebes, and waterbirds, revealing impressive nocturnal vision, and that courtship rituals like pair-bonding occur year-round.

Webcams inside and outside the tower provide continuous research and education 24/7, all year. This detail simply could not be captured by researchers in the field. Charles Sturt staff and volunteers are commended for this rewarding project, funded now entirely by public donations. Girri is expected to fledge mid-December. Tune in now and you won’t look back!


Gimbir meets Girri for the first time


Orange water tower with box


Diamond and Girri’s room with a veiw



Sustainable merchandising with Cheers

Cheers is CSU's in-house food, retail, and entertainment department, providing cafés, catering, events, and bar services across Wagga, Bathurst, and Orange campuses. It also runs AusPost and Charlie's retail outlets at Bathurst and Wagga, plus Charlie's online shop for uniforms and merchandise.

Sustainability @ Charles Sturt have supported Cheers over 2025 in their endeavour to implement key sustainable actions. These include reducing single-use packaging through the provision of "Have Here" and Keep Cup initiatives. Customers receive a $0.50 discount when dining in at Pulse or when bringing their own clean Keep Cup. Food-waste capture has been expanded with organics bins across all Cheers café areas and plate-collection trolleys in the Wagga dining hall. Cheers also partnered with BDL 229 in Wagga to manage organic waste. Vinnies clothing bins were added to the campus dining hall.

The Cheers tender process for university merchandise for 2026 and beyond places a strong emphasis on sustainable products.

The business unit has partnered with Bluegum, a supplier recognised for its proven commitment and credentials in sustainability. This supplier's range includes items such as hoodies made from recycled PET plastic bottles, reusable coffee cups made from recycled polypropylene and stainless steel, and reduced packaging on products. Additional sustainable products, including new lanyards and merchandise lines, are scheduled for release in 2026. The university in collaboration with Bluegum will continue to develop sustainable products as part of the retail offering.

Samantha Way, Southern Coordinator of Food & Beverage Services, reflects on the benefits of these practices:

> "*Sustainable operations are important as they help to address environmental challenges like climate change and resource depletion while providing tangible business benefits. These benefits include a stronger brand reputation, increased operational efficiency, and cost savings.*"

We look forward to hearing news on the next chapter in Cheers' sustainability journey.

Your sustainable summer suggestions

Australia's Agricultural Identity - an Aboriginal Yarn
by Joshua Gilbert

Unique new book from Worimi man and fourth generation grazier, who grew up on Wiradjuri country, Josh presents a way forward for Australian agriculture.

Living Hot
by Clive Hamilton

Written by Charles Sturt researcher Clive Hamilton this book assesses the challenges we face on a heating planet and provides a farsighted roadmap for a path to survive and thrive.

Better, Bolder, Different
by Kate Hall

All the daily decisions we make about clothes, food, transport, sleep, stuff, wellbeing and relationships can be tweaked to benefit not only the environment, but also ourselves and others.

Ocean, with David Attenborough - Disney

With the stunning cinematography we have come to expect, this impactful but ultimately optimistic film is a must see if you didn't catch it earlier in 2025. If you enjoy the ocean, own a pet or consume seafood, this one is for you.

Australia's Wild Odyssey - ABC Iview

With stunning visuals of Australia's ecosystems, this series follows the flow of water across the Australian continent to uncover the incredible connections that link all creatures on earth: from ants, to eagles to us.

The Climate Restorers - SBS

This four part series explores the climate and ecosystem restoration efforts involved in returning the climate to a state in which all life can thrive.

What's the true cost of Climate Change?

Ever noticed how debates about climate change tend to focus on how green policies are too expensive – and less about the huge bill we'll all face the longer we fail to act? That's exactly what this excellent five-part series explores.

Climate Calling - SBS

Make sense of the latest news about climate change and the environment, with reports and interviews from the SBS News team. Hear the story behind the headline.

Doctors for the Environment

The Doctors for the Environment Australia Podcast series discusses latest DEA news & a range of topical environment and health issues.

The Great Unwaste

The Great Unwaste is more than a campaign – it's a call to arms. On this website, learn how small changes in our homes can make a big difference collectively.

Spiny Leaf insects
- for nature lovers of any age

If life feels too fast, too expensive, or both, give a nature-lover a grounding gift of a spiny leaf insect. They are harmless, cheap, low maintenance and mesmerising pets. A fantastic way to slow down over summer and marvel over our natural world.



Meet staff sustainability champ: Gareth Smart



We interviewed a Staff Sustainability Champ, Gareth Smart, who is making a difference through his role at Charles Sturt:

What's your role and what does an average day look like?
I am a Digital Learning Officer (DLO) in the Division of Learning and Teaching with a focus on content design to improve student learning and experience. We design and produce interactive media, illustrations, infographics, animation, simulations and video work amongst other deliverables to be embedded in Brightspace. These assets are created with the subject experts to help foster student understanding of complex subjects and support the Models of Engagement and Assessment Practices. Some days I am running around campus with camera gear trying to get "the shot" or record sound with mics, and other days I am heavily engaged in converting learning strategies to interactives and editing video and sound.

What is the best thing about the Port Macquarie campus?
The grounds are wonderful, with iconic modern buildings sustainably and responsibly integrated along an active koala corridor. And it is very active – with routine koala sightings throughout the year. It really does feel like magic to spot a koala right in our midst during a morning stroll or a lunch break and I've been quite fortunate to manage a few good photos for our annual sustainability reports. It really doesn't hurt that we're not far from the beach and that we work with wonderful people on campus.

What does Sustainability look like to you and how are you incorporating it into your daily job?
Sustainability for me is being conscious of waste and trying to avoid it. Finding simple ways, be it through the use of a keep cup, separating waste effectively or considering what mark we leave on the world through our action or inaction, I to try do my part. I've also been documenting fauna (mostly) at intervals on campus as a visual record of what is flourishing on campus, and assisting the Sustainability team with poster design.

What benefits are there in engaging in the Campus Environment Working Group?
There is a real positive energy about the group, it is a community geared towards positive changes and maintaining what is working for both the environment we inhabit and the community that interact with it. Everyone is open to tabling and talking through ideas for the better and everyone's voice is heard and respected. It is a great way to give back and see positivity in action.

What can we as a university do to be more sustainable?
Firstly – The university collectively is doing a fantastic job. Every year, we have new cohorts from different areas and diverse backgrounds joining us here on campus for the first time in various capacities. Therefore, effective training and messaging around sustainability, recycling and maintaining a clean, safe environment for all is ever ongoing, must be inclusive and easy to understand. We can lead by example, be curious about how and why systems and people work the way they do and collaborate to make a world worth living in.

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of The Green Thread, please email stories, images or ideas to: jacquelinemurray@csu.edu.au