

The Ants and the Butterfly



Until recently, it was thought that the Arid Bronze Azure Butterfly (*Ogyris subterretris petrina*) was extinct. It has a symbiotic relationship with the sugar ant (*Camponotus terebrans*). The Mukinbudin Conservation Group was involved in the rediscovery of this unique species in a patch of bushland just west of the Mukinbudin town site. The Mukinbudin Conservation Group (MCG) applied to Wheatbelt NRM in 2010 for a Small Community Grant to design a garden of specifically propagated native species. The garden complements and extends the Regional Herbarium. Sturdy metal sculptures (made especially for the outdoors by local metal work artist) depicting the life story of the butterfly, the ant and the leafhoppers were designed, constructed and installed. The Mukinbudin Shire erected a rock wall and laid paving for the regional Herbarium garden. A children's book, written by Catilin Moloney was produced.

The project provided a sense of community spirit and ownership of a worthwhile project. There was strong sense of pride because they created a wonderful native garden of species from this region for all to enjoy. The Shire of Mukinbudin donated time and machinery

and assisted with the garden preparations. The MCG and local community planted out the site and laid reticulation. Participants in the project said, "has been a very educational, worthwhile and delightful activity to be involved in," and "the two *Eucalyptus loxophleba* ssp *lissophloia* are our Story Trees as they are one of the trees

around which the *Camonotus* ants build their nests and from whence they and the leafhoppers obtain their food. The Butterfly Walk is planted with *Leptospermum*. As all the plants are local we hope to provide a butterfly friendly environment."

Wheatbelt NRM Small

Community Grants 2010/11

Recipient: Mukinbudin Conservation Group Inc.

Amount Funded: \$15,000

People Involved: 26



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wheatbelt
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Community
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