

# news

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## DIG IN FOR TREES

Join the country's biggest community tree-planting event and pop a native tree in the ground on National Tree Day, Sunday, July 30.

National Tree Day started in 1996 and since then more than 3.8 million people have planted 23 million trees across Australia. Schools across the country are also encouraged to dig in on Schools Tree Day Friday, 28 July.

Tree Day is an initiative of Planet Ark whose aim is to engage the community in "hands-on, fun, positive environmental action, in places where they live, work and play". This year, award-winning nature photographer Steve Parish OAM has joined the event, as an Ambassador (see his glorious photo at top right).

➤ If you want to register a site or be a coordinator, contact 1300 885 000 or visit [treeday.planetark.org](http://treeday.planetark.org)

## WORLD'S LARGEST LAND DONATION

Lauded as the world's largest-ever land donation, one million acres (408,000 ha) of privately owned wilderness has been donated to the Chilean Government. It will form part of a network of 17 national parks in Patagonia covering an area the size of Switzerland.

Donated by Kristine McDivitt Tompkins, the widow of US billionaire (founder of The North Face) Doug Tompkins, it features some of Chile's most stunning scenery, including snow-capped peaks, red-rock canyons, glaciated fjords, whitewater rivers and coastal volcanoes.

"I know that if Doug were here today, he would speak of national

parks being one of the greatest expressions of democracy that a country can realise, preserving the masterpieces of a nation for all of its citizenry," she said on handing over the land.

The 17 parks will stretch from the Chilean city of Puerto Montt down to Cape Horn, some 2000 kilometres (1250 miles) to the south.

➤ For more, visit [news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/03/historic-gift-helps-chile-protect-10-million-acres/](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/03/historic-gift-helps-chile-protect-10-million-acres/)

## SWAPPING FOOD AND FRIENDSHIP

Crop Swap Australia is a new initiative to help backyard gardeners all over the country swap their locally grown produce, plants and seed. It is the brainchild of Laurie Green who has been successfully running Crop Swap Sydney for over a year and which alone has more than 2800 members.

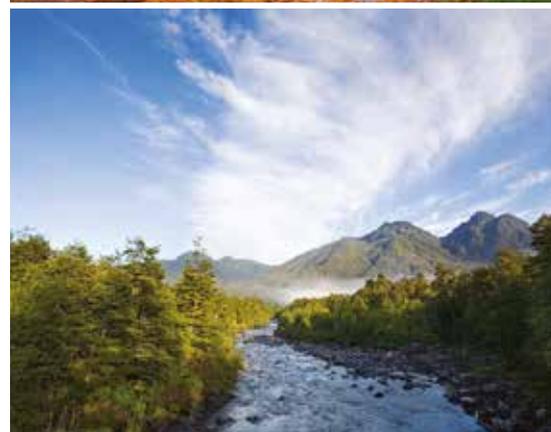
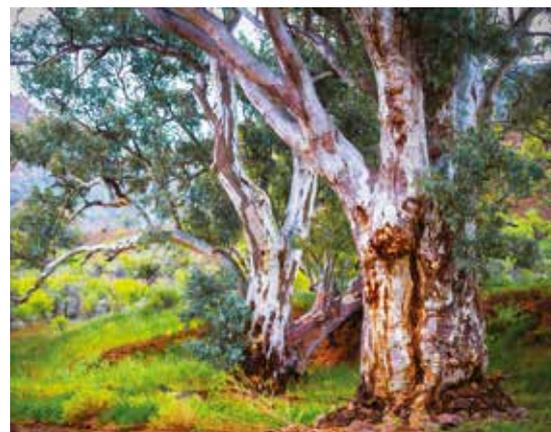
Crop Swap is a cashless market that helps to build local community, reduce food waste and help people eat better, at less cost.

Of Crop Swap Sydney, Green says it has no funding but is "just something that works" for her family and many other people Sydney wide.

"Countless exchanges have taken place via the existing infrastructure of Facebook [[@CropSwapSydney](https://www.facebook.com/CropSwapSydney)] and at face-to-face events" Green says.

"We also recently partnered with Pocket City Farms at Camperdown Commons [Sydney] where we hold monthly events at their amazing urban farm. These events are often coupled with educational workshops, native bee honey tasting, seed swaps or talks, all free of charge."

➤ Details: [cropsydney.com](http://cropsydney.com)



TOP: RIVER RED GUMS IN THE IKARA-FLINDERS RANGES NP, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.  
CENTRE: PATAGONIAN LAND DONATION.  
ABOVE: DONATED BOUNTY AT CROP SWAP SYDNEY.

events

**QUEENSLAND GARDEN EXPO**

A must visit for green thumbs and novice gardeners alike, this annual expo will provide three days of workshops, demonstrations and lectures from leading gardening experts, as well as representatives from more than 55 nurseries and over 360 exhibitors. Set in the Sunshine Coast hinterland town of Nambour, it will also feature the Giant Kitchen Garden and a totally organic food court. And don't miss the onsite Plant Clinic for plant problems and identification.

**WHEN:** 7–9 July

**WHERE:** Coronation Avenue, Nambour, Qld

**DETAILS:** 07 5441 4655; qldgardenexpo.com.au

BELOW: GARDEN DISPLAYS FEATURE AT THE QUEENSLAND GARDEN EXPO IN NAMBOUR - THIS ONE BY AMBER LEAF LANDSCAPING.



**NANNUP FLOWER & GARDEN FESTIVAL**

The charming village of Nannup (WA) will burst with colour and creativity during this four-day festival, showcasing more than 100 garden and craft stalls, landscape trends, new plant releases and open garden displays. Plus, a dedicated children's area, garden talks and floral displays.

**WHEN:** 17–20 August

**WHERE:** Nannup, WA

**DETAILS:** 0476 208 573; nannupgardens.org.au



**BIOCHAR CONFERENCE**

The 2017 Australia New Zealand Biochar Conference in Murwillumbah, northern NSW, will bring together scientists and growers to showcase the very latest in biochar technology and products. Two days of indoor presentations will be followed by outdoor workshops and demonstrations – all in conjunction with a trade expo featuring biochar producers, fertiliser and compost producers and farming equipment.

**WHEN:** 10–12 August

**WHERE:** Day 1 & 2

Murwillumbah Civic & Cultural Centre; Day 3

Murwillumbah Showgrounds

**DETAILS:** anzbc.org.au

For more on biochar, see our feature story, *Burning Desire*, on page 53.

**GLOBAL PERMACULTURE GATHERING**

Permaculturists from around the world and others interested in ecological farming and sustainable livelihoods will head to Hyderabad, India for the 13th International Permaculture Conference (IPC) from 25–27 November this year. The conference is being hosted by the Indian NGO Aranya Agricultural Alternatives.

More than 1000 Indian and international delegates are expected with presentations from 100+ speakers, as well as workshops, panel discussions and cultural exchanges.

Following the conference will be a five-day Permaculture Convergence (Nov 27–Dec 2) where permaculture design course graduates and enthusiasts will network and discuss all things permaculture on a 38-hectare (96-acre) farm run by IPC host. An extended design course and other practical specialist courses will also precede the conference and convergence.

**WHEN:** 25–27 November

**WHERE:** Hyderabad, India

**DETAILS:** ipcindia2017.org; on Facebook @IPCIndia2017

LEFT: POLAM FARM IN INDIA IS HOSTING PERMACULTURISTS LATE THIS YEAR.