

Case study

Adelaide Hills Wine Region

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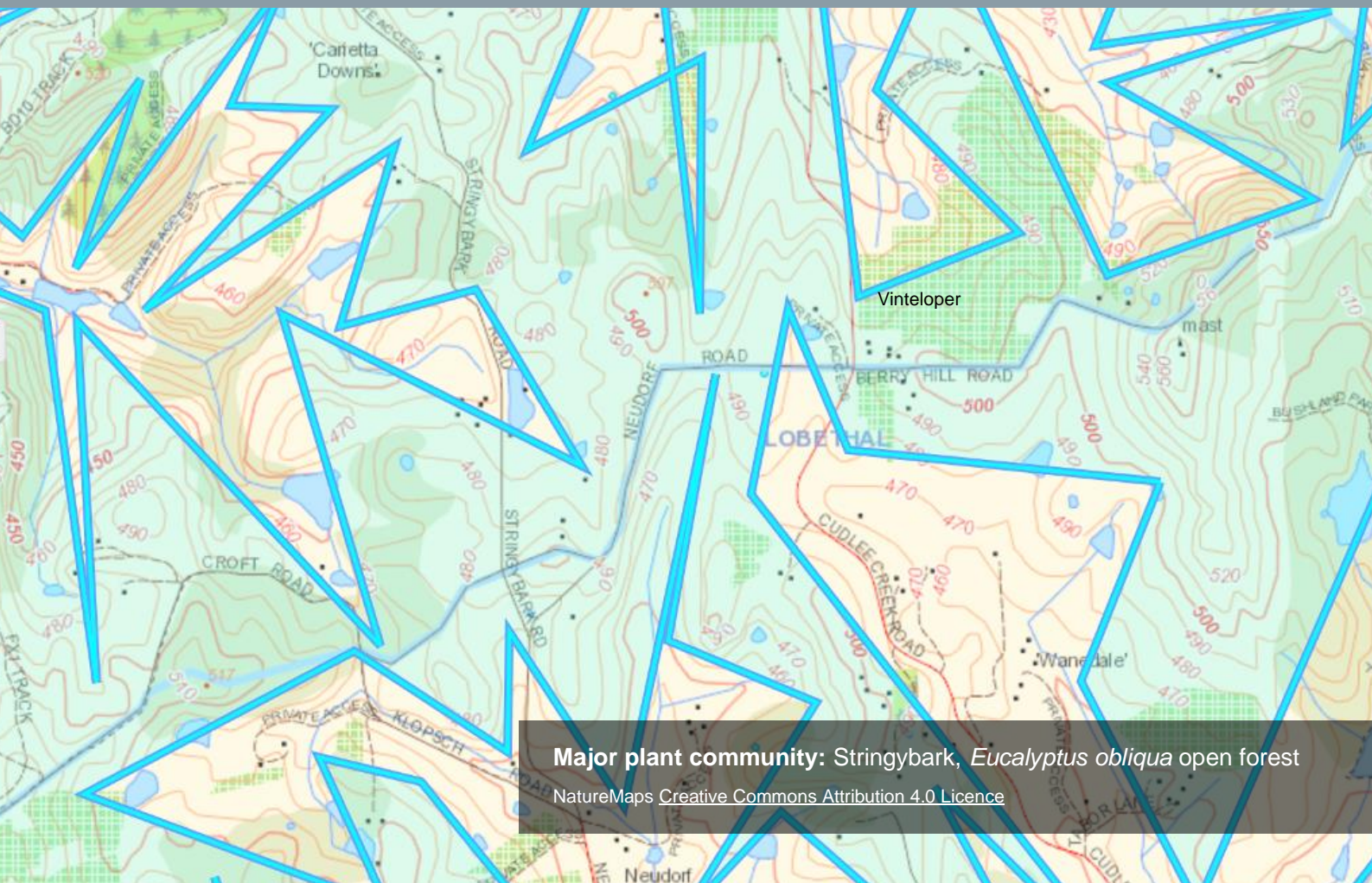
Vinteloper, Cudlee Creek

EcoGrower: David Bowley

"Involvement in the EcoVineyards program has been wonderful for Vinteloper, our close followers and community. Bringing smart agriculture into the vineyard to improve the environment, vineyard quality and beautify our landscape. What's the downside?"

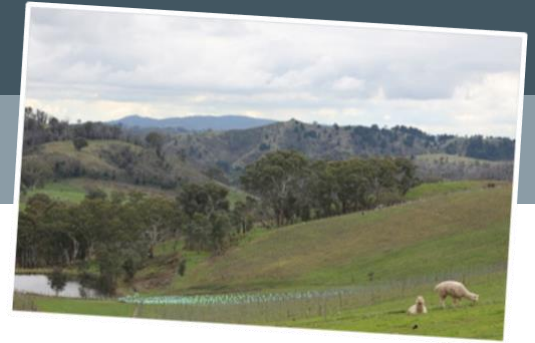


September 2023



EcoGrower: David Bowley, Vinteloper

Adelaide Hills Wine Region



Case study

What worked well?

In our case, we feel irrigation was a key driver to the plants establishing and has pushed them onward through the now two growing seasons.

In other areas where we have planted without irrigation those plants have not thrived with as much success.

Pitfalls to avoid?

Selection of planting site and management of planting density. This simply came down to supervision on the planting days.

We ran two planting days and each time had 50+ volunteers putting over 1,000 plants in the ground. This led to some plants going where they probably shouldn't.



Progress (June 2021 to 2023):

Brief description of our project

We devoted approximately 1 ha of land on our property to two dedicated biodiversity planting sites. Planting select species of native plants, with a focus on *Leptospermum continentale*, prickly tea-tree and *Bursaria spinosa*, sweet bursaria (aka Christmas bush), the aim was to support predatory arthropods and native species in the heart of our property to reduce our need for synthetic and man hour pest control.

What did you do and when?

It's been a very big project.

Clearing the site and the removing topsoil layer occurred in Autumn to provide a clear site without competition from weeds or exotics.

Installation of irrigation and fencing followed, to facilitate us supporting the establishment of these plants with water and exclusion of grazing animals.

Planting took place in the winter while soil temperature was low but moisture high, allowing the plants to settle before growth accelerated in spring.

From there, we managed competition through mowing and brush cutting grass and weeds. This continues today!

Where to from here?

Through 2023 the focus remains to support the two planting sites we have growing, to full establishment.

Site 1 was planted in 2021 while Site 2 was planted in 2022 and needs some review.

Each site took substantial investment of time and money, so to move on to another project before these are self-sustaining would be foolish.

Photo above: Vinteloper vineyard with new plantings in the swale near the dam.

Photo left: David Bowley installing the photo point (Photos: Mary Retallack).



Planting day with Hills Biodiversity volunteers 2021 (Photo: Dorky)



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Planting day with Hills Biodiversity volunteers 2021 (Photo: Dorky)



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Maturing insectary plants and EcoVineyards, September 2023 (Photos: Vinteloper)

EcoGrower: David Bowley, Vinteloper

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Insights

What has been the most valuable aspect of the program for you personally?

Seeing our land evolve in such a positive way, leaving a legacy for the future.

I love watching these areas establish, and I very much look forward to the mini forest that will be plonked in the middle of our vineyard in 8-10 years' time.

Most valuable aspect for our business?

It makes it sound very commercial, but truth is the MOST valuable aspect has been the storytelling element, and helping customers understand that our values as a business include climate and environment considerations. We put our money where our hearts lay in this regard.

Has your level of knowledge increased significantly since you became an EcoGrower?

Without question.

Native plant list:

- *Acacia paradoxa*, prickly wattle
- *Acacia pycnantha*, golden wattle
- *Acacia retinodes*, swamp wattle
- *Allocasuarina verticillata*, drooping sheoak
- *Arthropodium strictum*, chocolate lily
- *Austrostipa mixed species*, spear grass
- *Bursaria spinosa*, sweet bursaria
- *Callistemon sieberi*, river bottlebrush
- *Dodonaea viscosa* ssp. *spatulate*, sticky hop bush
- *Hakea rostrata*, beaked hakea
- *Hardenbergia violacea*, native lilac
- *Leptospermum continentale*, prickly tea-tree
- *Olearia ramulosa*, twiggy daisy-bush
- *Rytidosperma geniculatum*, kneed wallaby grass
- *Scaevola albida*, pale fan flower



Photos: New plantings and view of the Vinteloper vineyard (Photos: Mary Retallack).

Expenses (cash and in-kind)

Name: Vinteloper			Region: Adelaide Hills		
Date	Activity	Number of plants	Grant cash expenses	Additional cash co-contribution	In-kind time captured
20/05/2021	Site preparation - Hunter Brothers 2.5 hrs @ \$185/hr			\$ 370	
19/06/2021	Purchase of Tube Stock - 750 plants @ \$1.90	750	\$ 1,425		
15/06/2021	Tree Guards, stakes, weed mats and fertiliser		\$ 2,284		
24/06/2021	Planting time (30 people x 5 hours)				150 hrs
22/06/2021	Additional plants sourced from HFLB	450			
27/06/2022	Purchase of Tube Stock - 600 plants @ \$1.90	600	\$ 291	\$ 849	
26/07/2022	Planting time (30 people x 5 hours)				150 hrs
15/06/2022	Tree Guards, stakes, weed mats and fertiliser			\$ 1,795	
24/07/2022	Additional plants sourced from HFLB	200			
TOTAL		2,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,014	300 hrs

Program partners



This project is supported by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, through funding from Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

Acknowledgement of country

The EcoVineyards program acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and waters we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country.

Disclaimer

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For more info about the National EcoVineyards Program see <https://www.ecovineyards.com.au>

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