

## Case study

### Langhorne Creek Wine Region



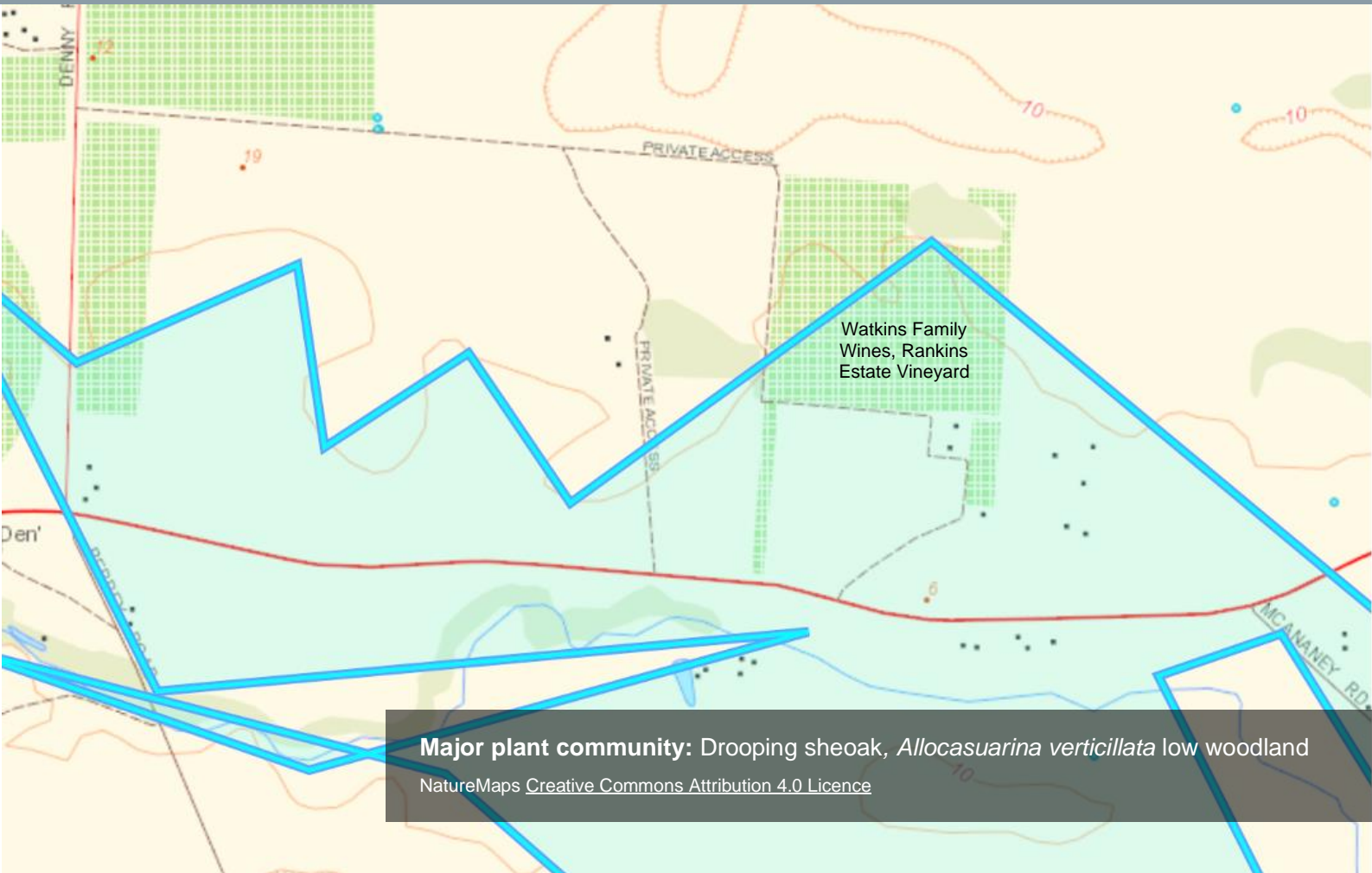
## Watkins Family Wines, Rankins Estate Vineyard

**EcoGrowers:** David Watkins and Mark Evans

*“Being involved in the EcoVineyards program has been great for the environment, our organic growing program and our business. The program is not only good for the environment but also is improving the look of the property and has brought our staff and community together on planting days and is encouraging wildlife.”*



October 2023



EcoGrower: David Watkins and Mark Evans, Rankins Estate Vineyard

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### What worked well?

The open area at the property entrance has worked really well, as we were able to prepare the area thoroughly and has the capacity to retain good soil moisture, so the plants are having a good success rate.

### Pitfalls to avoid?

However, the second site was not so good. It will require more work, as this site was a lot harder to prepare and is competing to much with the established trees.

With the area in the middle of the property I would run an irrigation system to the plants and dig a bowl around the bottom of the plant.

We tried biodegradable grow guards. However, they have broken down to early, so I would use different grow guards next time.

### Progress (June 2021 to 2023):

#### What were you hoping to achieve and why?

We established two tree planting areas, one in the entrance to our property that already has part native trees and shrubs.

We have re-filled an open area with various native trees and shrubs with the help of Landcare and the community.

The aim is to regenerate this space that is unused and to help with the environment and encourage beneficial bugs to help with our organic/sustainable growing practices.

The second area is in the middle of our vineyard property amongst established native trees where we planted 1,000 plants as well as installed bat boxes and bird perch.

Again, we want to achieve to help with the environment, encourage beneficial bugs to help with our organic/sustainable growing practices.

#### Where to from here?

Yes, we plan on expanding our plantings and continue to improve the areas we have already established.

#### Are there any outstanding knowledge gaps you would like filled?

To continue learning what the best plants to grow in our area and what works and what doesn't.

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

Doing our little bit to help with the environment and growing a product in a sustainable way.

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

Yes, I think so. I am still learning but the process has been very informative.



Photo above: Microbat box installed in a eucalypt tree (Photo: Mark Evans)

Photo left: Insectary plants ready to be planted (Photo: Mark Evans)



Photos: Planting insectary plants at the entrance to the vineyard in 2021 (Photos: Mark Evans).

**Clockwise:** Native insectary plants at the entrance to the vineyard; insectary plants on the first row of M1 were planted under a dripper with weed mat and grow guards; a trial with burra weeping grass and oxley wallaby grass mixture in the undervine area of Block 163 (Photos: Mark Evans).



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#### Native plant list:

- *Acacia spinescens*, spiny wattle
- *Bursaria spinosa*, sweet bursaria
- *Calocephalus citreus*, lemon beauty-heads
- *Chenopodium nutans*, climbing saltbush
- *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, common everlasting
- *Dianella revoluta*, black-anther flax-lily
- *Ficinia nodosa*, knobby club-rush
- *Kennedia prostrata*, running postman
- *Kunzea pomifera*, muntries
- *Leptospermum continentale*, prickly tea-tree
- *Melaleuca lanceolata*, black paperbark
- *Orthrosanthus multiflorus*, morning flag
- *Rytidosperma* ssp., wallaby grasses
- *Wahlenbergia stricta*, Australian bluebell



## Expenses (cash and in-kind)

Name: Rankins Estate Vineyard			Region: Langhorne Creek		
Date	Activity	Number of plants	Grant cash expenses	Additional cash co-contribution	In-kind time captured
12/10/2021	Weed Matt (weed control)		\$ 30		
07/07/2022	Tree Guards (150/pack @ 174.21 ea)		\$ 1,219		
07/07/2022	Stakes (@ 0.74 ea)		\$ 740		
14/07/2022	Plants in forestry tubes (@ 2.28 ea)	1,000	\$ 2,010	\$ 270	
30/06/2022	Prepare planting areas			\$ 735	24 hrs
03/07/2022	Community and staff planting entrance area			\$ 919	90 hrs
12/07/2022	Plant and grow guard mid property planting area			\$ 1,731	57 hrs
13/10/2022	Spray around grow guards mid property area			\$ 245	8 hrs
Various dates	Landcare funded maintenance around entrance planting area				24 hrs
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,000</b>	<b>\$ 3,901</b>	<b>203 hrs</b>



# ECO VINEYARDS

GROWING RESILIENCE NATURALLY

## 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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