

# Donkeys Controlling Dogs

Securing  
Our Region



Jade Hunt, Ellen Mathie, Maggie Jamieson,  
Michael Walters and Ben Klose

Holbrook Public School



## Creative Catchment Kids

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to agriculture and natural resource management issues.

**[www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/](http://www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/)**

## Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants.

**[www.wirraminna.org](http://www.wirraminna.org)**

## Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by Peekdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

**[www.envirostories.com.au](http://www.envirostories.com.au)**

# Donkeys Controlling Dogs

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Michael Walters and Ben Klose

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**School:** Holbrook Public School

## Local Land Heroes - Securing Our Region

In 2015, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about their 'Local Land Heroes' who are involved in pest management in the Murray and Murrumbidgee regions. These heroes are local individuals, couples, a business or industries that have made a difference in their local community by contributing to the management of pest animals and plants. The program was generously funded by Murray Local Land Services and Riverina Local Land Services.

Local Land Heroes is part of Enviro-Stories, a PeekDesigns education program.

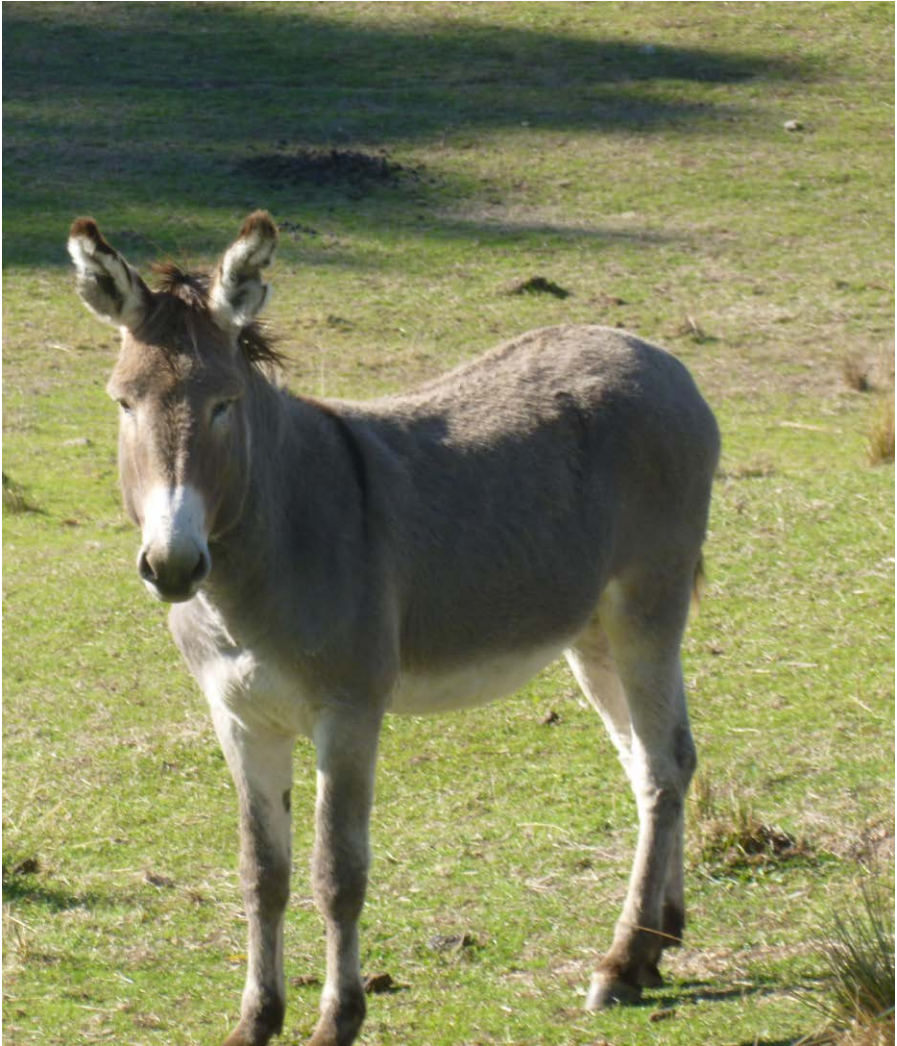


Local Land  
Services



Australian Government





Rob and Sally Bulle are married, with four children. They own a farm called 'Ardrossan,' which is about 23 kilometres down the Jingellic Road from Holbrook. Rob has been working with his donkeys for three years. He has 15 donkeys on the farm.

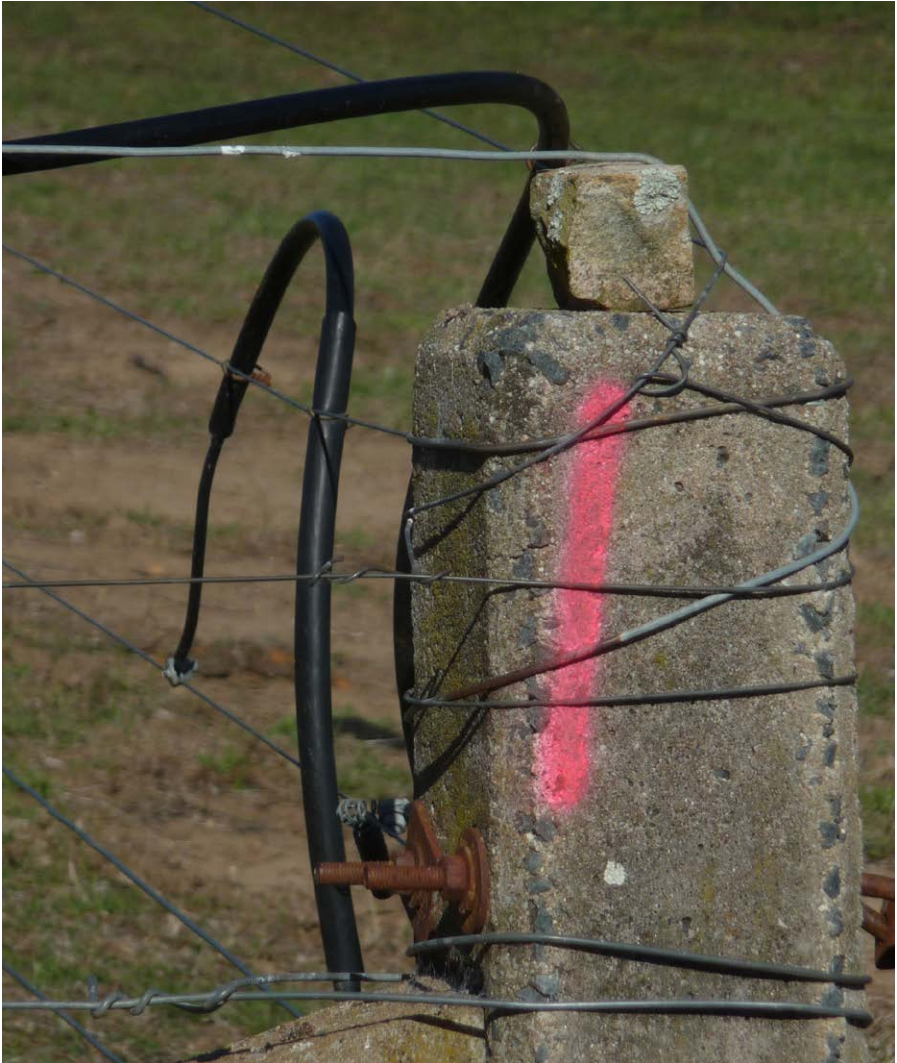




The donkeys were delivered from central Australia, in a cattle truck. After they were delivered, Rob immediately put them all together in a yard. He fed them hay and water, while they became used to their new home. A few weeks later, they were put into different paddocks with the sheep.



The donkeys befriend the sheep to protect them. When the donkeys see a wild dog attacking a sheep, they charge and start biting and kicking them. They call out with a loud, high pitched noise at the dogs, which scares the dogs away and alerts the other sheep. Some farmers like to put the donkeys by themselves or in small groups.



Around the farm, Rob likes to put out bait for the foxes and wild dogs. The bait sites are marked with a colour on the fence.

Sometimes, Rob and his friends go out shooting the dogs or tagging them, to learn more about their movements.



Wild dogs are social animals. They live in small packs and are most active around dawn and dusk. They make dens in hollow logs, caves or wombat holes. Wild dogs can hunt successfully alone or in packs, depending on the type of prey. The average home territory could be around 100 km<sup>2</sup>.





Wild dogs don't attack for food, they attack for fun. As top-order predators, wild dogs hunt native and feral animals. They help get rid of other introduced predators, such as foxes. However, wild dogs can cause loss of livestock on grazing lands and can also spread diseases. The wild dogs attack the lambs because they are smaller and slower.



The wild dogs attack the sheep under their back legs. The back legs are one of the main attacking areas because there is not as much wool to bite through. Another very common attacking area is the neck. It is a very vulnerable place, as the sheep can't protect this area.



Research across the Australian Alps is improving our understanding about the habitats of wild dogs, as well as their movement patterns and other behaviour. Research continues into the different materials and techniques that can be used to control this pest. This research assists farmers in their efforts to limit the impact of wild dogs on domestic livestock.





Rob has found that there are less wild dog attacks since bringing in the donkeys. He has found that the donkeys work better when one is by itself in a paddock with the sheep. Rob has now started to breed his own donkeys to work on the farm.

- Wild dogs are pack animals.
- Wild dogs attack native animals.
- Wild dogs usually weigh between 15 and 25 kilograms.
- Wild dogs eat goats, pigs, rabbits, wallabies and kangaroos.
- Wild dogs include dingoes, domestic dogs-run-wild and hybrids of the two.
- Wild dogs spread diseases to livestock.



On behalf of Holbrook Creative Catchment Kids, we would like to thank Sally and Rob Bulle for spending time with us and helping us learn about the donkeys. They have taught us about wild dogs being a major pest and what they do to control them.







Back Row: Maggie Jamieson, Ben Klose, Ellen Mathie  
Front Row: Jade Hunt, Michael Walters

2015 Year 6, Holbrook Public School

## CONGRATULATIONS

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the 2015 NSW Junior Landcare Team Award and will be competing in the 2016 National Landcare Awards.



Local Land Services

