



Biodiversity on Farms

An NRM North supported project from 2019-2023

What are the benefits?

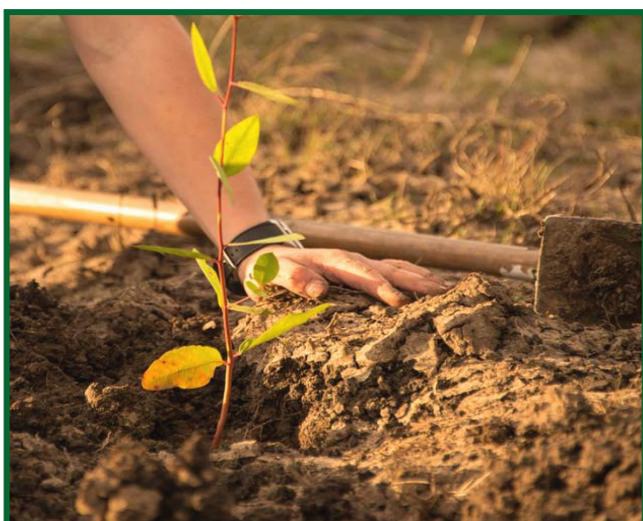
Maintaining and enhancing native vegetation on your property can:

Increase stock liveweight gain and reduce mortalities through shelter provision

Exposure to strong wind, rain and heat events can double the energy requirements for sheep and cattle and reduces their available energy for growth and lactation.

Reduce wind erosion, enhance microclimates and improve pasture/crop growth

Shelterbelts and remnant native vegetation alter the average windspeed, wind direction and turbulence of airflow, which decreases soil erosion and damage to plants. They also help to reduce soil moisture loss via evaporation in Summer, and warm soils by day in Winter. This encourages earlier germination, crop/pasture growth and improves water-use efficiency, including irrigation applications.



Prevent soil loss and promote soil formation and nutrients

Remnant vegetation and shelterbelts can reduce top-soil loss through erosion events by reducing wind speeds and overland water flow, increasing infiltration and improving soil structure. Trees also have the ability to extract nutrients deep in the soil profile and concentrate them in top soil which can improve pasture growth in their vicinity.

Provide habitat for beneficial wildlife, including birds of prey, bats, threatened species, and pollinators

Remnant vegetation and shelterbelts can provide food and habitat to attract threatened species and other beneficial wildlife such as bats, birds of prey, insects and birds which provide pollinating and pest-reducing services.

Increase farm profitability, aesthetics and income

Retaining or enhancing native vegetation can increase property profitability, aesthetics and income by:

- ⇒ Increasing or improving the growth of pasture and crops, liveweight gain in stock, stock fertility, wool production and farm landscapes
- ⇒ Decreasing stock mortality, soil erosion, pesticide use and pollution.



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What can I do to improve biodiversity on my property?

- Maintain or improve native understory (i.e. small trees, shrubs, sags and tussocks) in remnant patches of bush
- Exclude stock from existing native vegetation to reduce damage, compaction and nutrient input, and encourage regeneration of native species
- Manage incursions of invasive weeds (particularly blackberry, gorse and Spanish heath)
- Plant native species to provide natural habitat and enhance bush connectivity
- Consider planned burning to encourage native plant regeneration if natural regeneration is insufficient

Shelterbelts and revegetation— How do I start?

- **Pre-planning:** start planning your shelterbelt or revegetation project at least one year before you intend to establish it.
 - ⇒ Start observing elements of your property such as strongest prevailing wind direction and identifying where shelter is particularly needed. Creating a map of your plans will help!
 - ⇒ The effectiveness of shelterbelt and revegetation projects are influenced by planting density, height, number and type of rows, layout and connectivity
- **Species Selection:** native species have many advantages over exotics. To maximize the benefits and success of your planting, consider selecting a variety of species that are native to the local area
- **Weed control:** prior to planting, and for the first 1-2 years after planting to reduce or remove competition for water, nutrients and light from the establishing plants.

For more information refer to the best-practice guide for Tasmanian revegetation projects:

<https://www.nrmnorth.org.au/revegetation>



Funding available:

Commercial landholders in the following areas may be eligible for funding to support revegetation projects and fencing off bush or waterways:

- North-eastern coastal plains (Bridport, Waterhouse, Musselroe areas)
- Flinders Island
- Northern Midlands

To find out more, contact the NRM North office on 6333 7777 or email: lbird@nrmnorth.org.au



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References:

North West Environment Centre (undated). *Native Shelterbelts for North-West Tasmania*. Launceston, Tasmania: North-West Environment Centre.
Victorian Government Department of Sustainability and Environment (2004). *Native Biodiversity Resource Kit*. Melbourne: The State of Victoria Department of Sustainability and Environment.