

SPRING 2014

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Newsletter managed by Hornsby Shire Council
Natural Resources Branch

For more information visit
hornsby.nsw.gov.au/bushcare



Bushcare website

a resource
page for
volunteers

Have you visited our Bushcare website lately?

The Bushcare website provides information for existing volunteers as well as for new people interested in volunteering. Since we have provided the opportunity to apply online, the number of new applications has risen greatly.

Just to raise some highlights, we do have a function "find a site near you"

that is currently being facilitated by bushcare.org.au for people to view where Hornsby Council's Bushcare sites are located. We generally only list sites with a trainer and those not landlocked by private property.

The website is constantly being updated with new information and resources for volunteers and we

would like to start a gallery page in the near future with your Bushcare photos. We are also investigating the option of booking online for Bushcare workshops and events.

Should you have any suggestions to update or resource our Bushcare website, please don't hesitate to contact us with them.

Visit hornsby.nsw.gov.au/bushcare or find it on top of the list of our Hornsby Council website under "your environment".



Contact Details

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General Bushcare enquiries

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Hornsby NSW 1630

Environmental Scientist – Bushcare

Leanne Johnston (Mon to Wed)
and Meron Wilson (Thur to Fri)
9847 6362

Bushland Coordinator

Community Programs

Danielle Sutton (Mon to Thur)
9847 6360

Nursery and Guided Bushwalk Program Coordinator

Ross Rapmund 9847 6361

Incident and hazard reporting
9847 4848 including outside
business hours

Reporting a tick, leech or jumping ant bite? – it's easy...

You may have been lucky enough not to have been bitten by a tick, leech or jumping ant, but others know them all too well! Should you have been bitten, you may not have had much of a reaction other than a pesky itch for weeks to follow, however everyone can respond differently. People who have an adverse reaction, either locally or systemically, need further medical attention.

Most people let us know if they have had an adverse reaction to a bite, but we don't hear about minor bites. To help keep a record of all bites, we have prepared a form for your site folders, should you need to refer to this information later. It will also provide good data for the site over time and for scientific purposes we may start seeing patterns of their occurrence due to weather, topography or even types of plants or wildlife on site.

Please follow the steps of the flowchart outlined on this form in your site folder, of what to do should you have a bite and refer to the documentation if you like to learn more about these types of bites.

We will collect these forms through your Bushcare Trainer once they fill up and collate the data at Council. Your cooperation is much appreciated.

Staffing and new projects update

Our Bushcare Trainer, **Adam Hutchinson** of over two years' service, resigned in September. Many volunteer groups will be sorry to see his enthusiasm and knowledge leave their site. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

Bushcare Trainer, **Jean-Philippe Kecman** has quickly replaced half of Adam's sites. We are currently recruiting a new trainer for the remaining sites. We apologise for the inconvenience caused and will have a

new enthusiastic and knowledgeable trainer in place shortly.

Bushcare Officer, **Leanne Johnston**, has taken long service for two months in September and October, and taken her family to Europe. Jean-Philippe Kecman will be spending some time in the office to work on the Bushcare Christmas Party and reviewing site plans.

Project Officer, **Liz Pearce** is working on the next edition of the *Look-alikes*

booklet that we hope to have out by the end of the year. This edition will have a very different look.

Over the coming months, we will be planning our workshops and events for the year ahead, getting ready for the Bushcare Christmas party including reflection on the past 25 years, publishing the 2015 Bushcare calendar and programming the campaigning and promotion for the Bushcare program for the coming year.

CRR sites – did you know?

The Catchments Remediation Rate (CRR) is a special rate used to improve and protect the health of Hornsby Shire's waterways and catchments. Thanks to the funds from this special rate, Council has recently installed interpretive signage at a number of biofilter sites (also known as raingardens) around the Shire. Maybe you've seen one near your Bushcare site.

Some of these signs were created using customised artwork for a specific biofilter location, with the majority based on the generic style shown below.

Bushcare volunteers will have an opportunity to visit some sites with CRR devices in 2015 as part of a site tour.



2014 Bushcare Christmas Party

This year we are wrapping up the celebrations of twenty five years of the Bushcare Program at our annual Christmas party. This will be held at the Asquith Golf Club on 29 November from 10am. Bushcare volunteers and contributors will be receiving invitations shortly and will need to RSVP as numbers are limited.

We will be providing a buffet lunch and reflecting on the past twenty five years' highlights. Should you be interested in contributing your memories and photos of your Bushcare site over time to a display or in telling us your personal Bushcare Story, we would be very interested in hearing from you. Contact bushcare@hornsby.nsw.gov.au or 9847 6362.

We will need submissions by 3 November at the latest.

Bushcare for birds

Harry Recher recently gave a great talk on the local bird populations. The good news: the European Blackbird is the only non-native species to invade undisturbed environments. The bad news: poor Bushcare practices can have a dramatic effect on local bird populations.

Bird facts of Sydney:

Sydney has over 450 native bird species. Over half of the thirty introduced species have moved in from other parts of Australia since European settlement, including Sulfur-crested Cockatoos, Galahs, Long and Short Billed Corellas. Another forty species are locally extinct or have non-viable populations.

This poses the question: Where are the little bush birds?

Jacky Winters, Speckled Warblers, Rufous Whistlers and White Throated Gerygones are all in decline, from a number of factors.

- Habitat fragmentation – increased housing and infrastructure demands (road, rail etc) are cutting up our bushland into smaller and smaller patches that are unlinked and provide little protection.
- Loss of vegetation structure – people favour open spaces with scattered trees where it is easy to walk. This type of habitat is favoured by the big, bold birds such as Rainbow Lorikeets, Kookaburras, Pied Currawongs and Noisy Miners.
- Loss of genetic diversity – isolated, fragmented reserves reduce the ability for birds to breed within a wider population thus reducing the genetic diversity of the populations. Did you know that most of the genetic diversity is held within the population? Our small birds can easily become inbred due to a limited genetic pool.

- Predation – cats are very skilful predators. Our little bush birds need protection from cats and feral animals. Predator proof fencing can improve the population health of our small birds.
- Aggressive exclusion – Noisy Miners are known to exclude birds foraging in their home range. These birds deliberately drive out other birds to keep all the available resources to themselves, often leading to a decline in vegetation health.

When working in a bushland reserve it is important to think about ecosystem function rather than focussing on the weeds. If a weed provides resources for the local fauna consider how you will work the site. If it flowers at a time when nectar is scarce then the weed is usually vital to the survival of the local fauna. Should this be the case you will need to regenerate or re-introduce indigenous species that provide the same resource at the same time of the year before you tackle the weeds in the reserve.

Without careful consideration, restoring the vegetation does not restore biological diversity.

What is good habitat for birds?

To be successful, birds need plenty of cover, food and water. They need places to forage, roost and nest. The greater the diversity of vegetation species and complexity of structure, the greater the bird population it can support. Some birds like to nest in dead wood or roost on dead branches; others roost in trees with smooth bark but forage on trees with rough bark.

Birds and mammals don't think about native and non-native plants: they think only of resources available to them.

For more information online:

Habitat network

www.habitatnetwork.org/CommunityNursery.htm

Birds in backyards

www.birdsinbackyards.net/birds/Natural-Habitats-Birds



Sydney has over 450 native bird species. Over half of the thirty introduced species have moved in from other parts of Australia since European settlement

Silvereye on Kangaroo
Apple by L Wilson

Spinebill by L Wilson



Your stories and news items
are always very welcome.
Contact our Bushcare Officer
on 9847 6362 or email
bushcare@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

Bushcare major day out

The 2014 Bushcare Major Day Out held on Saturday 6th of September attested once more to the commitment and enthusiasm of our Bushcare volunteers.

The Blue Gum High Forest setting of Calool Corner in Beecroft saw 30 plus seasoned and greener bushcarers braving wet conditions to take on a large plume of *Tradescantia fluminensis* (commonly referred to as Trad or Wandering Jew) that recolonised the edge of the creek following the one in a hundred year flooding event that took place in February 2010.

Under persistent rain one group, with tool belts and wet weather gear on, raked and piled *Tradescantia* on the banks of the creek whilst the second group carefully hand weeded *Tradescantia* growing amongst native groundcovers and shrubs in the adjacent area.

After a productive session, everyone gathered inside the local Guides Hall for a well deserved early lunch.

Sausage sizzles and hot drinks were shared and this occasion provided a great opportunity for all participants to meet, mingle and share experiences with other Bushcarers and new interest attendees.

Undeterred by the ominous conditions outside, everyone then set off for a site tour of four Bushcare sites. Each group leader talked passionately about how their sites have changed for the better over the years. Greg Robertson (Calool group) mentioned the group's battle against *Tradescantia fluminensis*, Barbara and David Darmanin (Bambarra/Darmanin group) described how their group had to remove expanses of Bamboo and Privet and Ross Muller and Anita Wynne (Roselea group) talked us through the hard work put in to improve the condition of their site. Stephanie Chew (Bushcare Trainer) praised the efforts of the 'Three Blokes' (Malcolm Ferguson, John Lilly and Clyde Cox) on their site.

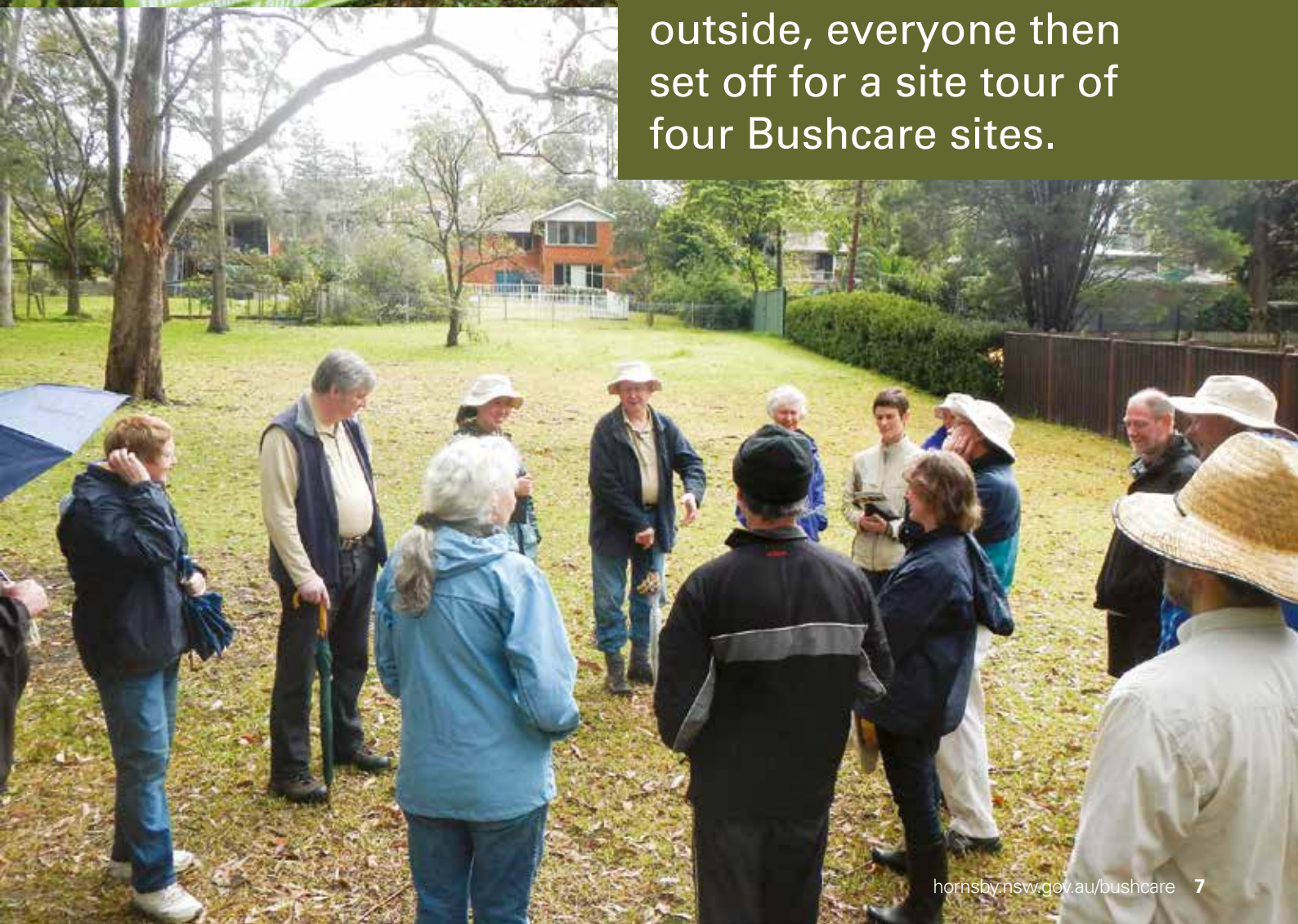
A spontaneous brainstorming session resulted in Barbara submitting the idea of a combined work morning once every three or four months to help each other out. Group leaders agreed that taking in turns to go to different sites would benefit all sites. They also welcomed others outside these groups to join them. The day concluded with everyone taking home a native plant from the Community nursery.

The Bushcare team would like to thank all the participants who turned up despite the difficult weather conditions. It was great to catch up with everyone and meet some of our new volunteers and new people too. There is little doubt that this year's Major Day Out was a success and we are looking forward to seeing you all at the next session! Our thanks also extend to every single one of you doing an amazing job in 'bringing back the bush' across the Bushland Shire. A truly inspiring bunch!





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National Tree Day

This year Hornsby Council focused its involvement in National Tree Day on its support for the Shire's schools.

Twenty five preschools, primary and high schools, both public and private, took up the offer of free plants from the Community Nursery for their school grounds. This represents around one third of all schools in the Shire.

In the lead-up to the event participating schools received information about the vegetation community in their area, with most of them being located in Blue Gum Forest and Turpentine Ironbark Forest Critically Endangered or Endangered Ecological Communities. They were provided with lists of suitable species from which to select their plants, and advice on how to plant for best results. Over 1,600 tube-stock were handed out.

It rained on the scheduled planting day but that didn't stop the activity – or the enjoyment. Northholm Grammar wrote "National Tree Day was a great success. The kids just wanted to keep on planting and despite the drizzle, this didn't dampen their enthusiasm".

And from Asquith Public School: "The children loved the tree planting despite the weather and many of them loved getting their hands dirty".

We are very pleased with the response from the schools and hope to continue to attract them coming back and grow with new schools participating in the years to come.



Do Bandicoots reduce Bushfires?

The tiny marsupials who spend their nights digging for truffles on the forest floor could be holding together ecosystems in ways scientists are only beginning to understand.

These little marsupials, looking a bit like kangaroos in miniature, spend all night digging for dinner on the forest floor. But it is not the foraging pits that these little diggers leave that gives them away, but a lack of crunching dead leaves underfoot. They are so prolific with their digging activities that they can bury large amounts of leaf litter in a single night.

Professor Chris Johnson from the University Tasmania, an ecologist with over 30 years' experience studying mammals, suspects that bandicoots and other mammals that dig for food or burrow for shelter, can influence how a bushfire burns through a landscape. Fires tend to start down on the ground in the dry litter and a fire will spread if the litter layer is continuous. These animals are digging holes and throwing soil up into heaps and that creates a lot of micro-firebreaks at a very, very small scale. This diminishes the likelihood that a small fire will spread and turn into a large intense fire.

At the moment the evidence is anecdotal and Professor Johnson is now gathering the data to see if his suspicions



are correct. The impact of bettongs and bandicoots on reducing fuel loads is obvious - to anyone who has had the opportunity to see it. It is a sad fact that the last 200 years has seen Australia gain the mantle of having the highest rate of mammal extinctions in the world, and those mammal species that dig or burrow are no exception to this statistic. Of the twenty nine mammal species that are considered to be diggers, six are known to be extinct and a further seven species are endangered. Another five species are vulnerable or near threatened, while most of the remaining species have suffered huge restrictions in their range.

For Professor Johnson, it provides a compelling case for greater control of feral cats and foxes, which continue to be the biggest threat to the dwindling numbers of digging mammals that remain. www.abc.net.au/environment/articles/2014/06/30/4029166.htm

Cunio Point working bee

Thank you to the lovely ladies of Berowra Waters Bushcare Group who asked to work somewhere warm for a change over the winter months.

The Cunio Point working bee was a great success with 25 volunteers attending a Bushcare session on the Hawkesbury.

The purpose of the day was to remove the nasty succulent Mother of Millions (*Bryophyllum delagoense*), a native of Africa introduced to Australia as an ornamental garden plant. Mother of Millions reproduces rapidly, producing hundreds of tiny plantlets which quickly form new colonies. It has adapted to dry conditions and can survive long periods of drought.

So why is Mother of Millions at Cunio Point?

The Point is named after the Cunio family who owned the land. According to early Council records, the surname was spelt Cuneo, being registered to Thomas Mazzini Cuneo in the 1920's under Permissive Occupancy. The family, however, have no other link to the Berowra Waters area, and never lived at the point. The only evidence of a homestead is the derelict stone wharf and the Mother of Millions.

We couldn't have picked a better day, the sun was shining, Berowra Creek was sparkling, and the people were excited, curious and happy. Overall we weeded out 65 bags of Mother of Millions! It exceeded our expectations. Luckily Malcolm Hugman was on hand to further volunteer help to transport the weeds to the waste station at Mount Ku-ring-gai. Thanks Malcolm.

Another participant that needs special mention was Rob Moxham the owner of the barge. Not only did Rob do a great job getting us to and from site, he joined the other volunteers. From a multi-generation oyster farming family, Rob has a great love of the river and wants to do all he can to improve the health of the river. He shared some great local stories too.

Thanks to all the volunteers who attended the day. For any further interest in attending a unique boat access Bushcare activity, Floating Landcare is always looking for people to join them out for a fun and exclusive day.

See page 19 for a list of outings for the rest of this year and the dates and sites organised for 2015 will be available online from November 2014.

www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/environment/trees,-plants-and-bushland/floating-landcare

Past newsletters can
be viewed in colour
on Council's website
hornsby.nsw.gov.au/bushcare

The Cape adventures

Contributed by Bushcare volunteer Mark Cachia

So it was, on the 16th of July bright and early I boarded my first flight that day from Sydney to Cairns. I was going to spend 1 month volunteering with Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) at their Piccaninny Plains Sanctuary. This sanctuary is located on the Cape York Peninsula about two hours drive from Weipa and is home to some amazing creatures, which is why it was purchased by AWC.

For a little bit of background, AWC was started around 1991 by a businessman named Martin Copley. Since then AWC has become the largest private conservation organisation in Australia now owning more than 3 million Hectares and 24 properties around Australia.

So back to the story, after my uneventful flight to Cairns I took a much smaller plane across the Peninsula to Cairns and got my first glimpse of the red soils of the areas.

Once I arrived at Weipa, I began to realise how isolated this area was. Food was only brought in once a week by plane and by Thursday all the fresh food had gone. During the wet season these areas are completely cut off by water and inaccessible for months at a time.

When I arrived at Piccaninny, I was greeted by Sally one of the land managers employed by AWC to manage the area with her husband Graham. Sally had many years bush regenerating and Graham had done almost everything else, including truck driving, mustering, grading, and working in cane fields. With their wealth of experience in practical land management they could fix anything and had a very good method for managing the area.

One of the main tasks I had was to brush-cut about 8km of fence-line, making it look neat for the donors who would drive along this road. Every August donors who donate \$10,000 or more are invited to find out more about this area. They are treated to restaurant style meals, a sunset boat cruise, a helicopter flight, spotlighting and bird watching. The event takes quite a lot of organising and is probably the most stressful time for the land managers. It all takes place at the largest lagoon in the area known as Watsons Lagoon at the southern end of the property near the Archer River.

As well as being very picturesque, Watsons is also known for its high diversity of wildlife, especially birds such as Brolgas, Jabirus, Red Goshawks, White-throated Honeyeater and Black-throated Finches, to name a few.

It is actually quite dry here on the inland side of the northern extremity of the Great Diving Range, and the vegetation is mainly *Eucalyptus* and *Corymbia* (Bloodwood) Woodlands. The rainforests for which Northern Queensland is famous are actually only really found near the coast on the eastern side of the Range, and along large river systems such as the Wenlock River.

Wet Sclerophyll species such as *Lophostemon suaveolens* grow in soaks, which function as wetlands or wet sclerophyll pockets over the dry season. Melaleuca stands are also a sign of impeded drainage in otherwise dry woodland outside the wet season. It was here that I saw my first Palm Cockatoo and Spotted Cuscus, both unique animals to the Cape York Region and Papua New Guinea.

While in the north of the property, I volunteered with the ecologists of AWC setting up infrared cameras and many different traps to find out what is here and what changes occur in the populations over time. So far they have found that the highest populations of flora and fauna are those with a thick layer of grasses and a mosaic of cool – warm burns once a year. It is interesting to hear in northern Australia that there seem to be too many burns and at the wrong time whereas in Sydney you often hear there never being any burns because it's too difficult to get done. There are obviously exceptions.

Some of the animals we caught either accidentally or through trapping were:

- A new species of blind snake! (*Ramphotyphlops unguirostris*)
- Freshwater Crocodiles
- Fishing bats (*Myotis macropus*)
- Northern Velvet Gecko (*Oedura castelnaui*)
- Frill-neck Lizard (*Chlamydosaurus kingie*)
- Many skink species

I saw many more native creatures including massive goannas and Slaty-grey Snakes all over the front yard. I also saw cane toads, feral pigs, cattle and horses. Pigs are some of the worst, trampling and eating the lagoon vegetation on which much of the local wildlife depends during the dry months.

All in all, it was a great experience and I would highly recommend volunteering for AWC if you can spend the time and the money for travel. Just remember, everything's bigger in the Cape!



Council gets its first Biobank Agreement for Upper Pyes Creek and New Farm Road Bushland

What is a Biobank Agreement?

It's a site that is permanently set aside for conservation where 'biodiversity credits' are created. Council has just created its first Biobank Agreement at Upper Pyes Creek and New Farm Road Bushland.

The biodiversity credits are being purchased from Council by Transport for NSW to offset the loss of biodiversity associated with the North West Rail Link and the Epping to Thornleigh Third Track Project. Over \$2.5 million of funds for the purchase of the credits allows for management of the Council land for biodiversity conservation through an annual payment to manage and restore the bushland in perpetuity.

The amount of funding was determined through a biobanking assessment and identifying the costs of management of the land. Transport for NSW also funded the site assessment and establishment. The Biobanking Agreement includes a plan covering future management actions and costs over the next 20 years and in perpetuity.

Upper Pyes Creek and New Farm Road Bushland are located within the headwaters of the Berowra Creek catchment and have excellent connectivity to Berowra Valley National Park contributing to the corridor and biodiversity values. They have a range of native fauna and provide potential habitat for threatened species

including *Epacris purpurascens* var *purpurascens*, Grey-headed Flying Fox and Gang-Gang Cockatoo.

They occur on Wianamatta Shale and feature Blue Gum High Forest. This community has been extensively cleared due to flatter topography and more fertile soils, and is now extremely rare and not well conserved in the national parks.

Blue Gum High Forest is listed as a Critically Endangered Ecological Community in the Sydney Basin Bioregion by both the Commonwealth and State Governments. The NSW Scientific Committee recognised that only 1% of the original forest remains, and in Hornsby Shire it was originally the most common vegetation community in the urban areas but now is so rare that it represents only 0.2% of its remnant bushland vegetation. In 2007 only 37 ha of Blue Gum High Forest remained in Hornsby Shire, most of which is modified to highly degraded.

Upper Pyes Creek and New Farm Road Bushland are some of the larger remaining areas of Blue Gum High Forest in public ownership. Their restoration will be managed by Council using contract bush regenerators to complement the work of the New Farm Road Bushcare Group.



The amount of funding was determined through a biobanking assessment and identifying the costs of management of the land.



Rail line *Gleichenia* relocated

In late 2013 Murray Road Bushcare volunteer Maureen Correy contacted the Epping to Thornleigh Third Track (ETTT) Alliance about the possibility of relocating portions of *Gleichenia dicarpa* (Pouched Coral Fern) that was in the path of the new third track, north of the Cheltenham Road Bridge.

After consultation with their environment team, ETTT was happy to advise that portions of the fern had the potential ability to be relocated to a place of Bushcare's choosing.


Portions of the fern were carefully removed in June this year and delivered to two suitable Bushcare sites in Beecroft and Epping for replanting. Care was taken to keep as much of the root system as possible as these ferns are notoriously fussy about being disturbed. Volunteer then planted the fern in suitable positions where the fern would receive plenty

of filtered light and its root system would be kept moist.

The ETTT team is very happy to have worked with Hornsby Shire Bushcare to help this local plant flourish and

hope they are growing well in their new homes. We now have to hope the fern responds to all the effort made on its behalf and thrives in its new homes.



A man wearing a white hard hat, safety glasses, an orange high-visibility vest over a light blue shirt, and blue jeans is standing on a hillside. He is reaching out with his right hand towards a large, dense clump of bright green ferns. The hillside is covered in similar ferns, and a rocky outcrop is visible in the background under a clear blue sky.

Portions of the fern were carefully removed in June this year and delivered to two suitable Bushcare sites in Beecroft and Epping for replanting.

Boneseed alert!

This invasive noxious weed has been found in Hornsby Shire, and Council is urging residents to report any sightings. It has been discovered in Hornsby, Mount Colah, Mount Ku-ring-gai, Berowra, Glenorie, Dural and Epping. It may also be present in other suburbs within Hornsby Shire.

The weed is a South African plant that was introduced to gardens in Australia over 150 years ago. It has since 'jumped the garden fence' to become a serious invader of native bushland. It can form dense monocultures that smother and suppress native plants and prevent regeneration. If left unchecked, boneseed has the potential to invade much of southern Australia, endangering our native flora and fauna in its wake.

Its status in New South Wales as a Class 1 noxious weed means it must

be eradicated from the land and it is the responsibility of the land's owner or occupier to control boneseed on their property.

Any residents who have seen boneseed growing in Hornsby Shire are encouraged to contact Council's Natural Resources team to report the location by calling 9847 6832 or emailing bushland@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

Council's Natural Resource Officers can assist with identification and information on control, removal and eradication of Boneseed on your property.

Boneseed can be identified by the following features:

- Shrubs up to three metres high.
- Flowers are yellow with 5-8 petals and up to three centimetres in diameter. Peak flowering occurs from August to October.
- Leaves are 3-9 centimetres long and alternate along the stems. They are oval shaped with irregularly serrated edges. New growth is covered with white hairs that are shed as the leaves mature.
- Woody stems are branched and upright.
- Young fruit are round, green and fleshy, turning black when mature. They contain a single, smooth, round seed (6-7 millimetre diameter) which is bone-coloured when dry, giving it the name 'boneseed'.



Emerging bushland weed

Ruellia squarrosa (Creeping Ruellia)

This native of Mexico is a member of the *Acanthaceae* family (as is *Pseuderanthemum variabile* or Pastel Flower). It is a sprawling perennial shrub with branches to 60cm and long, dark green, soft wide leaves that look fuzzy because they are densely covered in white hairs ("pilose").

Creeping Ruellia grows very low to the ground and spreads more by underground runners than by seeds. It blooms in deep shade and does well even when overgrown by other plants.

It is commonly cultivated in gardens and has naturalised in the Lane Cove area as a garden escape. It has been found growing along creeklines in

Bushcare sites from Epping to Cherrybrook. This is a newly emerged and quite invasive weed – one to watch for. If you think you have spotted it on one of your sites point it out to your Trainer, or collect a sample for positive identification.

Removal techniques are experimental at this stage. Treat as you would Mistflower (*Ageratina riparia*). Spraying with Glyphosate affects the leaves and stems but the root system persists. Carefully digging out the plant and removing from site proves to be the best method.

For more on Ruellia identifying features look up plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au



Give native snails a second thought

It is not often we spare a thought for the humble snail but they play a vital role in recycling nutrients and keeping our bushland healthy.

We are all familiar with the introduced Garden Snail (*Cantareus aspersa*) so it's heartening to know that none of the local native snails will eat your vegies. In fact the native Southern Carnivorous Snail (*Austrothyrida capillacea*) feeds on garden snails and is the gardener's best friend. It is found in most of Hornsby's bushland and will move into nearby gardens as long as there is good shelter and no pesticides.

Hornsby is also home to the rare Dural Land Snail (*Pommerhelix duralensis*). This is a relative of the endangered Cumberland Plain Land Snail. Hornsby Shire Council has recommended that the Dural Land Snail be listed under the EPBC Act as an endangered species and a decision is expected soon.

The Dural Land Snail is found in the northwest fringes of Sydney between Hornsby and the Hawkesbury Shire. It prefers shale habitats such as Blue Gum High Forest and Turpentine Ironbark Forest but can also be found in sandstone vegetation with a minor shale influence. These habitats are being rapidly lost to development.

Dural Land Snails live off native leaf litter and fungi. They do not tolerate weedy groundcovers such as Trad so bush regeneration helps recover their habitat. Like most of our wildlife they rely on fallen timber for shelter and for food so maintaining this can also help them.

Dural Land Snails do not burrow which can make them vulnerable to fire. These snails are very fond of composting wood and it can be heartbreaking to find their charred shells after a pile burn. Where Dural Land Snails are present this can be avoided by scattering cut material or by only piling on exotic vegetation (eg. Trad) which they avoid. The Dural Land Snail can be identified by its uniform coloured shell and slightly flattened profile compared to the mottled pattern and taller spire of the introduced Garden Snail. Identifying the Dural Land Snail from some native species can be more difficult and professional identification may be needed. Best time to find them is during wet weather so it's more probable that you would find their spent shells outside of this time.



The Dural Land Snail might be found in any of the shale bushland reserves in Hornsby. Council's Bushcare Trainer, Michelle Brown has recently found Dural Land Snails in Glenorie Park Bushcare site and they have also been recorded from the western edges of Berowra Valley Regional Park.

If you think you have found a Dural Land Snail you can report this to your Trainer or to Peter Ridgeway at Greater Sydney Local Land Services (Peter.Ridgeway@lls.nsw.gov.au) for further confirmation. Make sure to include some photos of the shell from different angles to help identify your snails. Peter is currently working on a 'Snails & Slugs of Sydney' brochure guide and will let us know when it is available.

Registration cards

Since 2011, all Bushcare registration cards will be valid for five years. Unfortunately they only cover Bushcode workshop attendees from the beginning of that year. It is important to do the refresher bushcode to brush up on your skills and keep your accreditation current.

Do we have your current email?

Have you moved, changed jobs or just changed your email address? If so, please update your details with us. By choosing to view you get to save trees and you will also be one of the first people to view the latest newsletter!

Please note you need to book into most events, and numbers are limited. If you don't book the event may be cancelled.

Diary dates

Hornsby Bushcare and Nursery Volunteer Christmas Party

Registered volunteers are invited to join in the celebration of 25 years of Bushcare. Invitations are in the post, and RSVPs are essential.

When? Saturday 29 November

Where? Asquith Golf Club, Mount Colah

Hornsby Bushcode Workshop

For all new Bushcare volunteers and those needing a refresher.

When? Saturday 18 October from 8.45am-3pm

Where? Earthwise Cottage, 28 Britannia Street, Pennant Hills

Book? bushlandadministration@hornsby.nsw.gov.au or phone 9847 6832

Australian Native Plant Society – Northern District

Talks followed by guided walks take place on Monday mornings, from 9.45am to around 12.30pm at the Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden, 420 Mona Vale Road, St Ives.

Information sheets are provided. No prior knowledge is required - just an enquiring mind and a love of the bush! For more information see www.blandfordia.org.au

Topics explored over the next few months are:

Monday 13 October

Callistemons, Kunzeas and Melaleucas (Myrtaceae)

Monday 20 October

Waratahs and other Proteaceae

Monday 27 October

Grasses (Poaceae)

Monday 3 November

PlantNET

Monday 10 November

Bird walk (9am start)



Monday 17 November

Leptospermums and Baeckea (Myrtaceae)

Cost \$5 per person.

Enquiries: Bill (9498 6052) or Wendy (9144 5600)

The Group holds monthly meetings at the Willow Park Community Centre, Edgeworth David Avenue, Hornsby. The meetings start at 8pm on the second Friday of the month and include news on upcoming events, plant identification and a guest speaker.

Lomandras and Xanthorrhoeas

When? Friday 14 November

Presenter? Margarita Clayton

Lomandra longifolia is well-known for the micro-habitat that it provides for frogs and insects. Less obvious are the many smaller Lomandras such as *L. brevis* and *L. obliqua*. Grass Trees are another popular strappy-leaved plant whose tall flower spikes provide a feast for insects, insectivorous birds and honeyeaters. Margarita's talk will cover many species belonging to these two plant genera.

Margarita is an active volunteer at Ku-ring-gai Wildflower Garden, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and Muogamarra. Her photos of wildflowers are legendary.

2014 Australasian Bird Fair

When? October 25-26

Where? Sydney Olympic Park

For more information and to book online www.birdfair.com.au

Wombeyan Caves 'Weed Whacking' Weekend

When? 1 and 2 November

When was the last time you went to Wombeyan Caves? Are you keen on volunteering and bush regeneration works? Then this spring there's an event that could be just right for you.

You're invited to a weekend work-session treating woody weeds and vines impacting upon the unique values of Wombeyan Karst Conservation Reserve. Food, tools and simple accommodation are provided. Just bring your work clothes and sleeping gear.

Bookings are essential.

Contact: Trish Kidd, Project Officer NPWS Oberon

E: trish.kidd@environment.nsw.gov.au

M: 0423 527 740 **P:** 6336 1972

Further details:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/NationalParks/parkVolunteering.aspx?id=N0352



Floating Landcare Activities November and December 2014

RSVPs close one week prior to each event so please book in early. Email Julie via floatinglandcare@gmail.com or call Rebecca Mooy at Greater Sydney Local Land Services on 4725 3055.

Peats Bight

Meet at: Deerubbin Reserve Boat Ramp, Mooney Mooney
Date: Sunday 26 October
Time: 8.30am return 2pm
Main task: Bush regeneration

Hungry Beach

Meet at: Cottage Point Wharf
Date: Saturday 8 November
Time: 8.30am return 1.30pm
Main task: Bush regeneration

Greater Mackerel Beach

Meet at: Taylors Point Wharf, Clareville
Date: 14 March 2014
(postponed from rainy 23 August)
Time: 8.15am return 2pm
Main task: Bush regeneration

National Parks Association of NSW

Marine Forum

When? Sunday 9 November,
Time? 9am - 5pm
8.45am - 3pm
Where? Bondi Pavilion,
Queen Elizabeth Drive,
Bondi
Cost? (incl. organic lunch)
general: \$70,
concession: \$60

Hear from inspiring marine scientists, Indigenous leaders and historians about what makes this place so special. Participate in our forum and interactive workshops and help contribute to the conservation of Sydney's marine future.

Bush Regeneration at Jenolan Caves

Spend a weekend at Jenolan Caves treating cold-climate garden escapees, mainly Sycamore Maple trees. The work involves bush regeneration and target weeding on the slopes and hills around the Caves, using cordless drills to stem-inject trees, or the cut and paint/scrape method for woody shrubs and vines. Full training is provided. A barbecue dinner is held on the Saturday night as well as an evening activity such as a cave tour or a spotlight walk.

When? Saturday 15 November
10.30am to 4pm
Sunday 16 November
8.30am to 3pm

Where? Jenolan Karst Conservation Reserve. See getting there information.

Bookings: Email the coordinator to book or for more information phone 6336 1972.

Site specific promotional material now available for your Bushcare site

One popular idea to come out of the Group Leader Forum was for Council to create promotional material for individual Bushcare sites wanting to recruit new volunteers.

We have now prepared flyer and poster templates for you to provide the details specific to your site. You can letter box drop in your local area and display posters in nearby outlets.

Should you want to receive this material for your site – here's what you need to do:

1. Provide a very brief description of your site or group to entice new volunteers (no more than 30 words) eg. Our group established in 2003 and work along the perimeter of the magnificent Berowra Valley Regional Park.

We have a fabulous and well deserved morning tea following our Bushcare session.

2. Confirm meeting place, day of the month and time.
3. Tell us how many flyers (which will be folded for letter box drops) and posters you would like to have printed.
4. Provide the name and address of who to send the material to for distribution. (You will also need to fill in a record sheet of distribution to evaluate its success)



Send the information to Bushcare on 9847 6360 or 9847 6362 or bushcare@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

Should the distribution of flyers and posters not immediately entice new volunteers to your site, don't be disheartened. It will create awareness, appreciation and respect for what you are doing for the local community. Perhaps it may plant a seed for the future and eventually they will find the time to join you at a later date....

PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO THIS NEWSLETTER

You can send your stories or letters to the Editor for the next edition by 1 JUNE 2015

Fax: 9847 6362 **Mail:** PO Box 37, Hornsby 1630
or **Email:** bushcare@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

This newsletter has been compiled by the Natural Resources Branch and Bushcare volunteers.

Almost every week there is a free guided bush walk through a part of the Hornsby Shire. Visit hornsby.nsw.gov.au/bushwalks for more information.



THE BUSHLAND SHIRE
If not claimed within
7 days please return to
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