

Biodiversity in North Sydney



Endangered – Sunshine Wattle (*Acacia terminalis* subspecies *terminalis*)

What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity, or biological diversity, is the variety of all species on earth. It is the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, their genes, and the terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems of which they are a part¹.

For the last 200 years, Australia has witnessed the largest documented decline of biodiversity of any continent in the world¹. The repercussions of this decline are not yet fully understood, however, it is feasible that the loss of key species such as insects could have a dramatic affect on our way of life. The goods and services we have come to rely on are inevitably derived from the wide variety of organisms on our planet. It is in our own best interests to preserve biodiversity.



Endangered – Magenta Lilly Pilly (*Syzygium paniculatum*)
Photo by P&J Smith

North Sydney's Biodiversity

North Sydney Council is a small, highly urbanised local government area. Only 5% of the original vegetation observed before European settlement remains. It occurs in narrow fragmented reserves that are vulnerable to urban pressures. Council's Bushland Plan of Management addresses these issues and aims to build ecological resilience.

In 2007, ecologists were engaged to survey avian biodiversity and to prioritise areas of habitat critical to the survival of less common native birds in our bushland reserves. Council then undertook a more comprehensive Natural Area Survey in 2010 of all North Sydney's remnant bushland. Several threatened plant and animal species, as well as three endangered ecological communities were identified. This survey established a baseline of North Sydney's natural assets and a measure of their intrinsic value for rehabilitation and recovery.



¹ (Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities)

Main photo:
'Forest Red Gum Foreshore Forest' occurs in Badangi Reserve and is a rare form of the critically endangered 'Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest' vegetation community. Photo by P&J Smith

