



NEWSLETTER

www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/bushcare



BUSHCARE WINTER 2020 – ISSUE 46

COORDINATOR'S UPDATE

Gareth Debney - Bushland Management Coordinator

Caption: Sandstone staircase upgrade on the eastern Berry Island foreshore by Gareth Debney, 31 January 2020



For most of us, this year has been unlike any we've experienced before. The COVID-19 global pandemic has disrupted virtually every aspect of our lives and has had a shattering effect on communities across the planet. While we have been relatively fortunate so far in Australia in terms of infection rates and deaths, it has come at a huge cost to our society with some people/industries bearing the brunt more than others.

In our own way, the Bushcare Program has not escaped these disruptions, although the impact has been minimal in the grand scheme of things. Following the tightening of social distancing and public gathering regulations in late March, Council took the necessary decision to suspend our volunteer Bushcare programs – including Adopt a Plot, Nursery and Bushcare Calendar events and activities. We know this was disappointing for many volunteers, but nevertheless it was imperative to comply with the health regulations and to keep our Bushcare family safe.

As a result of this decision, the Bushland Operations Team (Tristram, Flo, Ramin, Clare) and Adopt a Plot Supervisor (Emma) added maintenance of the Bushcare sites to their already busy workloads, made all the more difficult by perfect growing conditions that prevailed in late Summer/early Autumn and the impediment of social distancing in the workplace.

The suspension of Bushcare volunteering and workshop activities has also had a major impact on our Bushcare Officer Andrew Scott. With no activities to organise and minimal program administration to complete, his attention turned to a long-overdue review of our Bushcare Program Guidelines and utilising innovative, non-contact ways of keeping in contact with our Bushcare volunteers. This was achieved by:

- circulating short (mostly) video blogs made by our Bushcare Supervisors while they worked on the Bushcare sites
- keeping a presence on our social media platforms, and

- preparing/sharing a weekly Bushcare Learning for our volunteers, profiling different technical skills used in the field of bush regeneration

These training initiatives received consistent positive feedback from several volunteers and generated good discussion among others.

As I write this update, the Government has announced a slight easing in public gathering restrictions which means that Bushcare can resume (with conditions). The Bushland Team is working to put procedures in place so that we can restart Bushcare for 2020 as soon as possible, and I expect by the time you are reading this update, we will be back to the (new) normal.

On behalf of the Bushland Team, I'd like to thank everybody for continuing to engage with the Bushcare program throughout this difficult time. Please keep safe, follow the rules and we look forward to catching up with you soon on site.

GADYAN WALKING TRACK UPGRADE, BERRY ISLAND RESERVE, WOLLSTONECRAFT

The Bushland Team recently completed a comprehensive upgrade of the popular Gadyan Track that loops around Berry Island in Wollstonecraft. Addressing numerous management issues in the reserve, the upgraded track elements will reduce erosion, protect sites of Aboriginal cultural significance, prevent the use of unauthorised tracks, minimise informal access to sensitive foreshore areas and provide a safer, more enjoyable walking experience.

The project was coordinated with the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (Heritage Unit), the Aboriginal Heritage Office and the Sydney Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Upgraded elements included:

- a floating boardwalk at the eastern track entry (protecting an eroding shell midden)
- two dimension sandstone staircases that link the eastern foreshore with the loop track

- numerous “corralling stones” – large sandstone boulders placed strategically along the track edges to prevent track widening (while maintaining a natural feel)
- timber handrails, sandstone step repairs, water bars and trip hazard removal

The track is now reopened, and the Bushland Team has received many positive comments about the work from locals and visitors to the reserve.



Above: a 30m-long raised boardwalk was installed at the eastern entrance to the Gadyan Track. This enabled the track alignment to be diverted away from an eroding midden, protecting the culturally significant site and allowing it time to stabilise. Due to the highly sensitive nature of this work location, a novel construction methodology had to be developed for the boardwalk that avoided any soil disturbance. While traditional raised boardwalks are founded on timber posts buried up to 500mm underground, this boardwalk sits on hydra-cut sandstone “logs”, each weighing about 300kg and sitting on the soil surface. Timber joists were then attached to the sandstone bearers and a fibre reinforced plastic “FRP micro-mesh” decking laid on top.



Before



After

Above & front cover: Dimension sandstone staircases were constructed at two locations on the eastern Berry Island foreshore to replace severely eroded steps that link the shoreline with the loop track. Again, due to the nearby presence of middens, low-impact construction methodology had to be implemented.

For example, long lengths of rubber matting (recycled conveyor belts) were placed on the track surface to minimise the impact of transporting each sandstone step (weighing 300+kg) several hundred metres to the work sites. If you look closely at the steps, you’ll see each one has been “faced”. Construction involved striking each block with a chisel and hammer hundreds of times over – a very labour-intensive task, but one that maintains the heritage aesthetic of the reserve and adds a non-slip tactile surface to the hydra-cut sandstone.

The keen-eyed observer will also notice that the third step in the front cover image is timber, not stone. This was necessary to create a bridge over a major tree root of the Sydney Red Gum growing immediately beside the track and to help keep the vulnerable foreshore stable.

Similarly, the addition of a steel handrail (right-side image above) provides a dual purpose of improving accessibility for track users, while cutting off access to an old informal track that ran straight through a midden on the foreshore.

By investing in our walking track system and employing these materials and construction techniques, we maximise the lifespan of track infrastructure and reduce the number of times track work needs to be carried out in the reserve. This, in turn, minimises disturbance to the reserve and disruption to track users.

WILDLIFE WATCH UPDATE

(FEBRUARY 2020 TO APRIL 2020)

Big thanks to all the Wildlife Watch volunteers who monitor wildlife in North Sydney and submit their observations to Council. The highlights of recent sightings were:

- **Long-nosed Bandicoot** (Badangi Reserve)
- **Swamp Wallaby** (Brightmore Reserve)
- **Grey Goshawk** (Balls Head Reserve)
- **White-headed Pigeon** (Badangi Reserve, Waverton Park)
- **Crested Turn** (Badangi Reserve)
- **Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo** (Badangi Reserve)
- **Peregrine Falcon** (Balls Head Reserve)
- **White-bellied Sea- Eagle** (Balls Head Reserve)
- **Green Tree Snake** (Brightmore Reserve)
- **Powerful Owl** (Harry Howard Reserve, Primrose Park)
- **White-browed Scrubwren** (Cremorne Reserve, Balls Head Reserve,
- **Carradah Park, Primrose Park, Forsyth Park, Badangi Reserve)**
- **Eastern Water Dragon** (Brightmore Reserve, Coal Loader, Tunks Park)
- **Little Pied Cormorant** (Kirribilli Urban, Cremorne Reserve)
- **Australian King Parrot** (Balls Head Reserve, Smoothery Park, North Sydney Urban, Cammeray Urban, Cremorne Reserve, Gore Cove Reserve, Waverton Park)
- **Eastern Whipbird** (Primrose Park, Cremorne Reserve, Brightmore Reserve)
- **Masked Lapwing** (Camberay Urban, Brightmore Reserve)
- **Superb Fairy-wren** (Primrose Park, Bridge End)
- **Variegated Fairy-wren** (Primrose Park, Balls Head Reserve)
- **Crested Pigeon** (Bridge End)
- **Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike** (Bridge End)
- **Spotted Pardalote** (Bridge End)
- **Tawny Frogmouth** (Badangi Reserve, Wollstonecraft Urban, Waverton Urban, Balls Head Reserve, Cremorne Reserve, Neutral Bay Urban)
- **Grey Fantail** (Bridge End)
- **Musk Lorikeet** (Balls Head Reserve)
- **Soldier Crabs** (Cremorne Reserve)



Caption: Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) by Sarah Carter

Have you seen any interesting fauna in the North Sydney Council area or do you have a photo of your observations? If so, email the Bushland Project Officer, Ramin Khosravi, at council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au, visit Council's Bushcare webpage - www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/bushcare or post your photo on the North Sydney Council Bushcare Facebook page at www.facebook.com/bushcare

SYDNEY WILDLIFE UPDATE

Managing during COVID-19



By Bev Young
Sydney Wildlife Carer

Our office closed mid-March and since then we have been running the rescue line and information online from members' homes. We had huge help from one of our members, Paula, who managed to set up a dedicated online platform for us and ran online tutorials for members who would operate it. She is still there making changes and supporting members non-stop, as well as running her own business from home. I took on the training and it's been a big learning curve, but it has also given me something worthwhile to do while in lockdown – quite a mental health strategy actually!

Our rescuers also deserve a medal. They have been rescuing wildlife with a whole raft of new restrictions to follow. For our carers it's business as usual. We have had meetings on Zoom, but otherwise no events like training courses or community education events. Some of us are putting many hours into designing online training courses for future use and getting our usual newsletters out. Our workload has not changed - just done differently, and in many cases, with an added level of challenge.

If you would like to support the work of Sydney Wildlife Volunteers, visit us at www.sydneywildlife.org.au

2021

NATIONAL LANDCARE CONFERENCE

Due to COVID-19, the National Landcare Conference Steering Committee has announced the conference has been rescheduled to 10-12 March 2021 at the Sydney International Convention Centre.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to extend the deadline for the Call for Abstracts to Wednesday 1 July 2020. We are seeking presentations for the concurrent session that demonstrate the Landcare ethos for the following streams: Sustainable Agriculture, Environment & Climate Change, Community Partnerships in Action and Landcare Impact.

Abstract submission:
www.landcareaustralia.org.au/call-for-abstracts



SOME EXCITING NEWS

Long-nosed Bandicoot observed at Badangi Reserve

As mentioned in the last edition of the Bushcare Newsletter, we suspected that Bandicoots might have moved into Badangi Reserve as the Bushland Team found an increasing number of Bandicoot-like diggings each time we visited the reserve.

In April, the Bushland Team set up three camera traps where numerous diggings were found, and in two weeks, we recorded photos and videos of the Long-nosed Bandicoot (*Perameles nasuta*) on three different dates, (18 & 24 April and 2 May). This is exciting news for the Bushland Program as Bandicoots have never been recorded in Badangi Reserve before - the last time they were recorded

was in April 2015 in Tunks Park.

Now the question is, where are they coming from? Could it be only one individual that was removed from an unwanted location such as private property, and released in the reserve? Or, could they have travelled from Lane Cove through Gore Cove? Lane Cove Council has confirmed that despite not having any recent sightings of the Long-nosed Bandicoot (the last one recorded on camera in Lane Cove was in July 2015), they did find a Bandicoot-like digging in Batten Reserve in April this year and have also deployed camera traps in their reserve.

The camera traps are still in action in Badangi Reserve as we hope to see evidence that there is more than one Bandicoot living in the reserve and that hopefully, a viable population is proliferating there. The bad news is that the Long-nosed Bandicoot isn't the only animal that has been caught on the cameras. A young fox has been seen passing by the locations of the camera traps repeatedly, sometimes only a few hours after the Bandicoot. It highlights why the Northern Sydney regional fox baiting program is crucial to protect our precious wildlife. Let's hope that our new resident will outsmart Mr Fox.

by Flo Stricher - Bush Regenerator



Caption: A Long-nosed Bandicoot and a Fox caught on camera within hours of each other on 24 April in Badangi Reserve.

THE RE-EMERGENCE BANDICOOTS IN AND AROUND NORTH SYDNEY

The Bushland Team's recent discovery of Bandicoots in Badangi Reserve, Wollstonecraft has prompted a review of their re-emergence in our neighbouring Council areas where the population trend appears to be positive.

Our Wildlife Watch database records indicate Long-nosed Bandicoots returned to the Middle Harbour cluster of reserves from mid-2013. Wildlife camera traps recorded their presence in Mortlock Reserve in July 2013 and Tunks Park in June 2014 and April 2015.

Bandicoots most likely emigrated from Willoughby City Council to Tunks Park. Simon Brown, a WCC Wildlife Officer, provided the following summary of Bandicoot observations there:

“Long-nosed Bandicoots were not recorded in our first fauna survey in 2001. Our first records in more than 20 years for the LGA came from teams working in reserves around Castle Cove in 2002/2003. Willoughby then trapped and micro-chipped Bandicoots in reserves adjoining Middle Harbour as well as Blue Gum Reserve from 2004 to 2006. Small numbers and distribution were recorded.

“In the following years they were increasingly recorded in backyards around the LGA's suburbs and streets. Camera trapping from 2012 onwards revealed they were now in every reserve except Artamon Reserve and some of

the smaller urban parks. They were also found along Scotts Creek up to Muston Park and nearby houses, including west of Penshurst Street and south of Victoria Ave. Unfortunately, a lot of our monitoring was not that methodical, but sometime around 2016 they seemed to decline or disappear in some reserves. Today they are only occasionally reported but, are believed to be present and widely distributed.”

We also looked to our western neighbour Lane Cove Council. Michelle Greenfield, LCC Bushland Interpretation Officer, said: “Bandicoot sightings have been sporadic here; we have reports of diggings in several reserves and parks from 2006 through 2011.”

Of great interest to North Sydney, is an observation by a resident at 2 Glenview St, Greenwich (in the Berry Creek corridor)

in August 2012 - diggings and scats in front and back yards and the discovery of a shelter under some weedy vegetation in the garden. This was followed by diggings at Shell Park, Greenwich in June 2015.

A Southern Brown Bandicoot (*Isodon obesulus*) was reportedly sighted at night by an AFM Fox Consultant in Hands Quarry Reserve, Lane Cove in September 2013. A Long-nosed Bandicoot was possibly

sighted by a resident at Tennyson Park, Lane Cove in 2010 and positively identified on camera at Phoenix St Garden, Lane Cove in July 2015.

Hugh Wyllie, Bushland Management Officer for Mosman Council to our east, reported two sightings of Long-nosed Bandicoots at Spit Reserve and Little Ashton Park in 2016. Diggings and scratchings consistent with the species

were also recorded at Parriwi Park, Quakers Hat Park and Wyargine Point. The Atlas of Living Australia also has 12 records for Mosman spanning 2011-2017.

The Bushland Team recently contacted Sydney Wildlife to source Bandicoot records and a Neutral Bay Vet to verify a BioNet record for Cremorne. We hope to build a better picture of Bandicoot distribution and populations over time.

STRICKLAND STATE FOREST VISIT

By Andrew Scott
– Bushcare Officer

On Sunday 1 March, 22 community members, including four Bushcare volunteers were bussed by the Bushland Team to Somersby on the Central Coast, 1 hour 15 min north of North Sydney for a tour of Strickland State Forest, the site of the first government forest nursery (1886-1890) and first national forestry training school (1920-1927). There we met our guide Alf Britton, a retired forest worker and champion for the Friends of Strickland Forest.

Friends of Strickland Forest is a Landcare type group that was established in 1998, initially born out of residents' concern for hoons, burnt-out cars and rubbish dumping, now with a focus on bush regeneration, track construction and forest maintenance. Alf added that many residents walk their dogs here which has been a good thing as more eyes reduces [the incidence of] vandalism.

Alf said the Friends had built many of the formal tracks throughout the forest to open the area up for passive recreation and they had won several eco-tourism awards for their work. The first track we walked, the Ridge to Rainforest Track, a 2.1km medium grade walk took the volunteers 10 years to build.

Alf said when building tracks, you must first identify your obligatory points, that maybe points of interest or lead people away from sensitive areas and then grade

between them. He said water runoff was a major concern when building tracks as it can cause soil erosion and in order to prevent this cross-fall drains had to be constructed at intervals. Our group was impressed to see the many stone retaining walls which were constructed by the volunteers to create a seamless track. How they transported the stone, we can only imagine – no wonder it took 10 years to build.

The Ridge to Rainforest Track meandered gently down from a Peppermint Gum forest to a rainforest primarily dominated by Cabbage Palms (*Livistona australis*). Interestingly, Alf referred to the Cabbage Palms as weeds, and they did appear to dominate the creek line. The ground was covered with seedlings – could this be a function of the fire regimen?

The forest was a land of giants and we saw some of the largest examples of trees commonly seen around Sydney – ginormous Turpentines, Angophoras, Peppermints, Blue Gums, Iron Barks, Mahogany, Figs and Spotted Gums. We saw an amazing diversity of fungus, native bees and interesting colonies of ants. Alf stopped at intervals to showcase an array of rainforest species e.g. Trochocarpa, Grey Myrtles, Crab Apples, Lilly Pilly, Coachwood and Narrow Leaf Figs. At the creek line, Alf pointed out sediment that had been washed down

from the newly extended freeway, he said they had buried springs in this area.

We had lunch at the bottom of the trail before walking the Arboretum Track, a 2.3km easy grade loop track in an area cleared for timber in the early days where remnants of native and exotic tree plantings were established for forestry research. The Arboretum is dominated by massive Bunya Pines, Hoop Pines, Flooded Gums (that look exactly like Blue Gums), Tallow Woods, Cedar and even some Everglades species – a truly amazing spot.

This visit was the highlight of the NSC Bushcare events calendar so far. Several of the participants said they would come back and Alf suggested we return next year to walk the other trails.

The North Sydney Council Bushland Team would like to thank Alf Britton for sharing his wealth of knowledge accumulated over a lifetime working in State Forests, we couldn't have asked for a better guide. Also thank you to Mike Hill, Partnerships Leader for Forestry Corporation of NSW, for allowing us to visit. Current projects, dates and meeting points can be found on The Friends of Strickland Forest newsletter. To request a copy or for further information about volunteering, email volunteer@fcnsw.com.au or phone 9872 0107.



A: Alf Britton and guests on the Ridge to Rainforest Walk at Strickland State Forest, 1 March 2020. B: Flooded Gum (*E.grandis*) planted by Alf in 1975 to replace salvage logged Blue Gum. C: Suspension Bridge on the Arboretum Track, Strickland State Forest. D: Rhubarb Bolete (*Boletellus obscurecoccineus*), Strickland State Forest.

BUSHCARE COMMUNITY NURSERY UPDATE

After a two-month absence during the COVID-19 lockdown, the nursery group has begun to meet again every fortnight, albeit with reduced numbers to accommodate the physical distancing guidelines. I've continued to work in the nursery and have been busier than ever, with autumn being one of the key seasons for plant propagation. Autumn and winter are also a good time for planting so despite the suspension of Bushcare and several community events, we've been supplying lots of plants to the Bushland and Gardens Teams for use in our parks and reserves.

During the lockdown, I was sorting through the photo files and came across these images showing the very early days of setting up the nursery. This is long before my time and I marvel at how much has been achieved over the years – from an asphalt industrial wasteland to a thriving plant hub. Everyone loves a good before-and-after photo!

Clare McElroy – Bushcare Community Nursery Supervisor



Caption: Bushcare Community Nursery, concrete slabs poured for sheds and shelter, March 2011.



Caption: Bushcare Community Nursery, polyhouse and propagation shelter erected, June 2011.



Caption: Current view of Bushcare Community Nursery, May 2020.



Caption: Bushland Team erecting the shade house, April 2011.



Caption: Nursery Office Portable Shelter, April 2011.



Caption: Construction of the potting shed shelter, May 2011.

ADOPT A PLOT UPDATE

Wow what a start to the year it's been! The Adopt a Plot program continues to run even though volunteering on site, our annual Adopt a Plot meeting and our talk on native bees has been postponed for the time being. In the meantime, our Bushcare Officer Andrew Scott recommends an interesting podcast series from the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney called *Branch Out*. **Episode 12 is on Bee behaviour.**

I have been able to get to all the Adopt a Plots over the past few months and it has been great getting to know and working with all those who volunteer on their plots. I'm blown away by how good all the plots look and how long participants have been involved – some since 2005! I have received many nice comments while on site from locals enjoying their beautiful native bushland surrounds which is a

credit to you and your involvement in the program.

Work on site the past month has involved hand weeding to reduce the annual and grass weeds that relish the warm weather and recent rainfall, along with some slope stabilisation in areas and planting. The native groundcovers and grasses have also relished recent rainfall and have expanded on all sites, with the beautiful little blue flower of *Commelina cyanea* to be a favourite of the native Blue Banded Bee I've seen buzzing around most plots!

With the cooler weather about now and less exotic grass and annual weed growth, I'm looking forward to getting to each plot to carry out further planting. This will help to offset senescence of previous shrub layer plantings and to increase plant diversity.

Bird sightings on site included:

- a funny five minutes watching a Grey Butcher Bird trying to dominate a pair of Whipbirds as they foraged and then taking shelter in a mix of native vine and Lantana thicket in Cremorne Reserve, the Butcher Bird soon getting bored and flying off
- Superb Fairy-wrens enjoying the safety of Lantana thicket at Cremorne Reserve
- a Rufous Whistler pair searching for insects in the native canopy on site at Bandangi Reserve.

I have also met the resident water dragon who is regularly people watching near the old wharf on Cremorne Reserve pathway. Looking forward to catching up with you all soon!

By Emma Hyland
– Adopt a Plot Supervisor

WEED TO WATCH BALLOON VINE (*Cardiospermum grandiflorum*)

Family: Sapindaceae

Origin: Believed native to tropical Brazil and Argentina, possibly an early introduction to Africa, where it is now a declared noxious weed in parts of the tropical south and east.

The first herbarium records in Australia are from 1923, around Sydney. It is now a serious environmental weed in coastal Queensland and NSW, in parts of south-western WA and several Pacific Islands.

Habitat: Prefers wet sites such as creeks, urban drainage lines and rainforest margins. In North Sydney, it can be found along the disturbed railway corridor and in the "Dense Weedy Habitat" zones of Cremorne Reserve, Primrose Park and Harry Howard Reserve.

Habit: A robust climber to 30m or more, reaching to top of canopy and forming thick curtains that exclude light and inhibit photosynthesis in the native plants below. The weight of this vegetation can also contribute to canopy collapse and ecosystem destruction.

Stems: Ribbed lengthwise and covered with stiff yellowish or reddish coloured hairs, particularly when young.

Leaves are compound, arranged alternately along the stem and have a tendril in the leaf axil to assist with climbing. Leaves are bright green, softly hairy and divided into



Caption: Balloon Vine (*Cardiospermum grandiflorum*) at Rarotonga by G. McGormack 2003, The Cook Islands Biodiversity Database & Website.



Caption: Native/Slender Grape (*Cayratia clematidea*) by Margaret R Donald, Palm Beach NSW 25 Jan 2017, Wikimedia.org

three groups of three leaflets. The leaflets are 2-8cm long and 1-5cm wide with pointed tips and coarsely toothed margins. The terminal leaflet of each group of three is usually significantly larger than the two side leaflets.

Flowers are white, four petalled and fragrant. They occur in clusters throughout the year but most prolifically in autumn.

Fruit is a large papery balloon-shaped capsule with three compartments, each containing a hard, round, black seed. The inflated capsules will float, aiding dispersal by wind and water. Seed viability is around 18 months in the soil and at least six months after continuous immersion in water.

Control: hand pull seedlings. Skirting vine curtains will reduce stress on supporting tree and fauna possibly using vine for habitat; cut or stem scrape large bases and paint with Glyphosate.

Native lookalike: *Cayratia clematidea* (Native Grape, Slender Grape) in Vitaceae family. Distinguish from Balloon Vine by smooth, hairless stems (no bristles) and leaves; compound leaf appearing to have five leaflets (the bottom leaflets have two lobes); fruit is a black berry; small green flowers in summer; plant is much smaller and a weak climber rarely exceeding a few metres.

Clare McElroy - Nursery Supervisor

SYDNEY - PARTHENIUM WEED ALERT

Parthenium weed (*Parthenium hysterophorus*) is a Weed of National Significance (WoNS) and is regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential for spread, and economic and environmental impacts, being mainly a weed of pastures and crops. It is widespread in Queensland with sporadic infestations reported in NSW. It can cause severe allergic reactions in people and health problems in dogs and livestock. Other common names are bitter weed, carrot grass and false ragweed.

Recently the first incursion of Parthenium weed was recorded in Sydney. It was found in an urban compost heap by a Sutherland Shire Council invasive species officer in Engadine (southern Sydney) and reported to DPI Biosecurity. This is the first recorded incursion of Parthenium Weed east of the Great Dividing Range.

The weed could be brought into NSW in contaminated soil, seed, grain and hay if proper biosecurity procedures are not followed. NSW DPI State Priority Weeds coordinator, Nicola Dixon, advises Sydney residents to look for the weed in their local area, especially after rain. Inspect roadsides and areas with bare soil, where soil or compost have been delivered or where earthworks have taken place and check areas where animals have been fed hay, grain or bird seed.

Anyone who suspects they have seen Parthenium weed should note the location and call the NSW DPI Biosecurity Helpline, 1800 680 244, or their local council or Local Land Services with the details for identification and assistance.

Compiled originally for AABR News No.144 May 2020 p11 from a range of publicly available sources.

Further information visit;
weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/weeds/partheniumweed



Caption: Parthenium weed (*Parthenium hysterophorus*) by Yercaud-elango 22 Dec 2014, Wikimedia.org

CALENDAR & GREEN EVENTS

BOOKINGS must be made for all events at: www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/greenevents or 9936 8100 unless otherwise stated

The Bushland Team is committed to providing the Bushcare activities and events where measures for social distancing due to the COVID-19 Pandemic can be applied. Please refer to the events listing on the North Sydney Council home page and Green Events page for further information.

JULY

- 7 **Family Bush Walk** | Tuesday 10.30am to 12pm
- 19 **Native Plant Identification** | Sunday 9.30am to 12.30pm
- 31 **Schools Tree Day** | Friday
RSVP: 17 July Register: treeday.planetark.org
Enquiries: The Bushland Project Officer on 9936 8100

AUGUST

- 1 **Bush Walk - Balls Head** | Saturday 10am to 1pm
- 2 **National Tree Day** | Sunday 9.30am to 11am
Register: treeday.planetark.org/site/10023445
Enquiries: The Bushland Management Coordination on 9936 8100
- 8 **Solitary Bee Hotel Workshop** | Saturday 10am to 1pm
- 9 **Introduction to Wildlife Watch** | Sunday 10am to 1pm
- 13 **Bandicoot Talk** | Thursday 6pm to 8pm
- 15 **Market Stall** | Saturday 8am to 12pm

SEPTEMBER

- 13 **Wildlife Watch Walk & Talk** | Sunday 7.30am to 10.30am
- 19 **Community Nursery Open Day** | Saturday 9am to 12pm

OCTOBER

- 4 **Seed Propagation Workshop** | Sunday 9.30am to 12.30pm
- 6 **Family Bush Walk** | Tuesday 10.30am to 12pm
- 8 **Family Kayak** | Thursday 10.30am to 12pm
- 14 **Bushcare Visit - Constables Pt.** | Wednesday 10am to 3pm
- 24 **Fire Sites Tour** | Saturday 10am to 1pm

NOVEMBER

- 15 **Bushcare Kayak Lane Cove River** | Sunday 8am to 2pm

DECEMBER

- 5 **Yerrabingin Roof Top Garden** | Saturday 9am to 12pm
- 13 **Volunteer Christmas Party** | Cancelled at the moment, we plan alternate group parties

Bushfire Fire Recovery Update

Andrew Scott
Bushcare Officer

In the previous Bushcare newsletter, the Bushland Team announced a commitment to Bushfire Recovery through the provision of a Building Bridges to Boorowa-style volunteer activity in which Council would transport, supervise and support up to 40 North Sydney volunteers to assist with appropriate activities.

Since this time, we were able to respond to the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators (AABR) Post Fire Wildlife Habitat Response that offered to match volunteers seeking to provide their time and skills to regenerate burnt areas with fire affected individuals and community groups, in addition to several other initiatives.

AABR registered our interest and provided several sites/groups in need of assistance. We settled on a project to help control a 1,000 ha infestation of Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius subsp. scoparius*), 95% of which was impacted by fire in the Barrington Tops National Park, home to threatened species and montane wetlands, a World Heritage listed area.

Boyd Carney – Bush Regeneration and Volunteer Officer for Hunter Central Coast Branch Office NPWS described the proposed project as follows.

“Scotch Broom is incredibly opportunistic, the literature tells us that we should expect a mass germination post fire, this should exhaust most of the seed bank. The aim in the short-term is to kill any of the broom that has survived the fire while it is easy to access, working in from the edge of containment. This approach would reduce the potential for new seed infestations and provide obvious cost benefits.

“From there we have three to four years to control the Scotch Broom until it reaches maturity and full potential for new seed-set. It is still too early to judge the natural resilience of the burnt area, as native seedlings are just starting to appear and the winter weather (including snow) may have some impact on them. We will have a better idea in spring. We are unsure what is the best way to treat the seedling regrowth, that is why we are working with Conservation Volunteers

Australia (CVA) to establish monitoring plots that investigate different methods of treatment.”

The Bushland Team had just started planning for this activity when the COVID-19 Pandemic and the ensuing social isolation measures impacted all of us. The initial idea was for the Bushland Team to visit and undertake weed control works, including brush cutting, and to follow up with a contingent of volunteers if the conditions were deemed suitable. The project has been put on hold for now, but we hope to fulfil our Fire Recovery commitment as soon as possible - we'll keep you posted!



Captions: Scotch Broom by Darryl S. July 2012 Wikipedia.org



Did you know North Sydney Council Bushcare has a Facebook page? Like us at www.facebook.com/bushcare



To be informed of interesting environmental education videos visit Envirotube on Youtube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/greenstylenorth>

For more information or to make a booking for any of these workshops or special events please contact the Bushcare Officer on 9936 8100. Printed on 100% recycled, 75% post consumer and 25% pre consumer waste.

Gratitude to all our contributors who take the time to put ideas and research into words so we can learn. Thank you.

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