



# NEWSLETTER

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## B U S H C A R E

WINTER 2023 – ISSUE 58

### COORDINATOR'S UPDATE

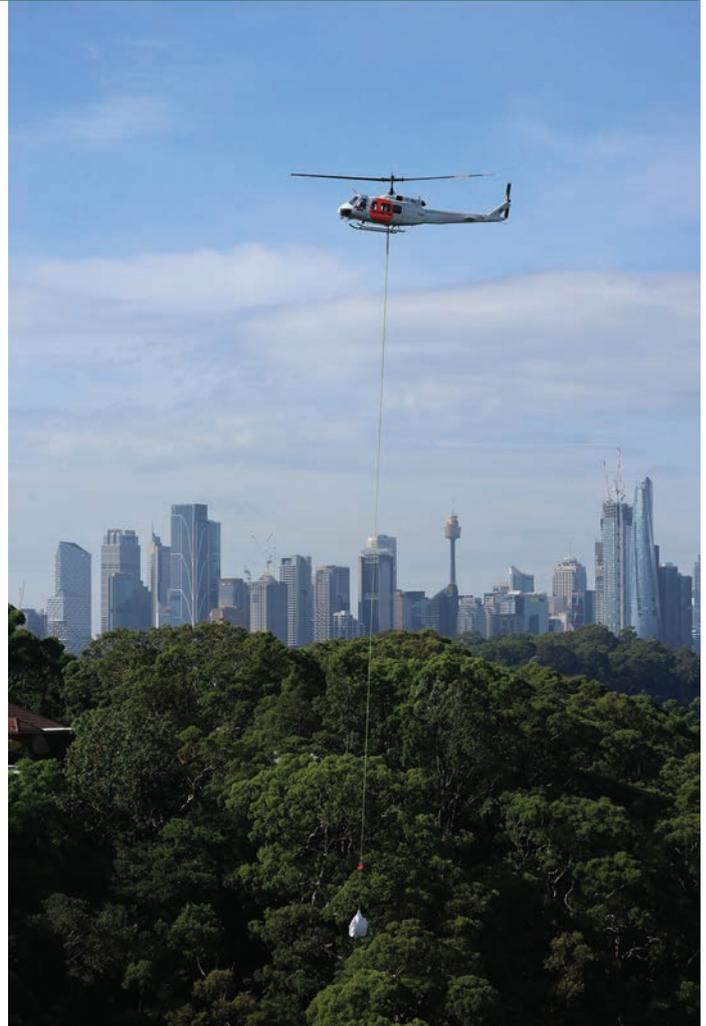
by Gareth Debney  
Bushland Management Coordinator

Just as we prepare our homes for the coming winter, so do several urban wildlife species that call North Sydney home. Unfortunately, many are forced to compete for an ever-diminishing number of natural hollows in their human-modified environments. While it's certainly no replacement for the real thing, Council has recently installed a mix of nest boxes in open space around Cammeray Golf Course, where scores of trees have been removed over the past 12-18 months as part of the State Government's major road infrastructure projects.

In years gone by, the Bushland Team had built up an inventory of over 60 nest boxes placed in various bushland and open space reserves. However, the relatively short lifespan of these boxes (typically less than 5-7 years) and low occupancy rates by target species saw us transition to creating chainsaw hollows in standing dead trees as an alternative. The main advantages of chainsaw hollows, compared to timber nest boxes, are longevity in the environment and thermal properties that mimic natural hollows. However, as part of the Cammeray project, we are returning to nest boxes and trialling the use of a recently developed 'Habitech' design, which utilise a 3D printed, UV-stabilised plastic shell that is double-walled for insulation and infilled with thick timber panels and hardwood shavings for better thermal regulation. It will be interesting to monitor these nest boxes and compare their lifespan and occupancy rates to the old traditional timber designs.

Following on from this initiative, we recently collaborated with our Urban Forest Team to acquire a 'Hollow Hog piglet' and specialist training in its use. The piglet is a purpose made tool that attaches to an angle grinder and can be used to bore hollows into a live tree. With practice, this tool can achieve the closest imitation natural hollow possible. By selecting appropriate live trees with existing large diameter branch stubs, the piglet grinds a small circular opening into the stub, and then by progressively rotating the tool around the inside of the stub, a nesting chamber is created. Finally, a species-specific sized entry hole to the chamber can be made using a hole saw. While protecting our existing canopy trees is the most important strategy, we hope that these new habitat augmentation technologies will help alleviate the trend of disappearing natural hollows in our fragmented landscape.

Promotion of North Sydney Bushcare's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary has been in full swing since April, with an article in North Sydney News, digital ads in local bus shelters, community noticeboard posters, videos, social media posts and letterbox flyers being delivered around Brightmore Reserve and Forsyth Park. Several new volunteer applications have been received in response to these ads which is promising! In addition, Bushcare Officer Andrew also curated a fantastic display of Bushcare and biodiversity conservation memorabilia in Stanton Library during the month of May. Lastly, we hope all our amazing Bushcare volunteers have



Caption: Helicopter lift for the Gore Cove track upgrade, photo taken from Vista Street, Greenwich by Andrew Scott on 23 March 2023.

enjoyed their special 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary morning teas throughout May and the commemorative badge that was designed in-house at Council. If you missed out on receiving a badge, contact Andrew or ask your Bushcare Group Supervisor.

Also approaching its 30th anniversary is Planet Ark's National Tree Day. Commencing in 1996, North Sydney Council has been a steadfast supporter of Australia's largest community day of action for the environment. This year, the Bushland Team will be hosting a planting site in Hamilton Reserve, Cammeray. Adjoining Tunks Park (west), Hamilton Reserve provides important buffer habitat to Quarry Creek and although small, provides a variety of vegetation types ranging from riparian and sheltered cliff faces to a more open wet-sclerophyll forest. Join us on Sunday 6 August and help build on the ecological values of this important bushland remnant. RSVP: [www.treeday.planetark.org/site/10028001](http://www.treeday.planetark.org/site/10028001).

Lastly, I'm pleased to report that all the planning, consulting and sleepless nights have paid off for our Gore Cove Reserve track upgrade heli-lift project. In March, we successfully moved 46 tonnes of large-dimension sandstone blocks from the carpark in Balls Head Reserve to six separate drop points along the Gore Cove walking track using a specialised heavy-lift Bell UH-1 helicopter. Huge thanks go to the 30+ residential properties on Milray Avenue that voluntarily vacated their homes for 5 hours to enable the heli-lift to occur. I'm also very grateful to all the Council staff that helped in various ways to ensure the complex operation ran efficiently and without incident. Over the ensuing seven-weeks, we were able to install:

- 134 hand-shaped large dimension sandstone steps
- 3x raised boardwalks
- water-bars
- edging and handrails all of which were constructed by our contractor Australian Bushland Constructions

The project has improved the quality, safety, and longevity of this popular bushwalk while retaining its 'wild' bushland character.



## BOOK REVIEW:

### A GUIDE TO THE CREATURES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

BY ANNE PICKLES



Caption: Photo of a moulted spider exoskeleton by Anne Pickles

Early one Sunday morning, as I was walking through Badangi Reserve in Wollstonecraft, I stopped to look and listen for animals to record for Wildlife Watch. My eye was caught by something shining on a leaf – the beautiful silver moulted exoskeleton of a spider.

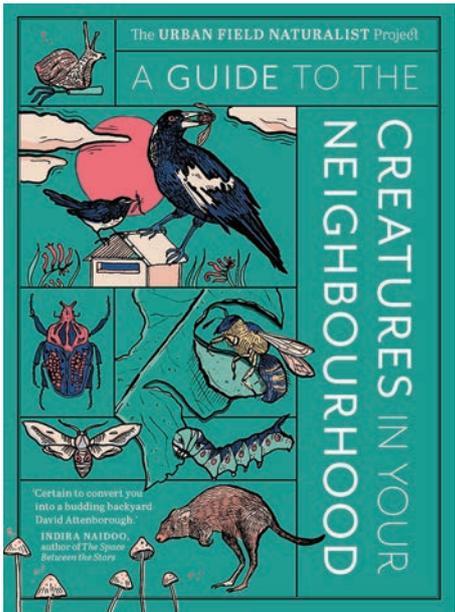
A recent publication from the Urban Field Naturalist Project, *A Guide to the Creatures in your Neighbourhood*, celebrates Australia's urban environments and the pleasure we can get from observing the plant and animal life around us.

No previous knowledge or special equipment is required, the book simply urges us to slow down, observe, record, ask questions and share. There are accessible chapters discussing the common plants, birds, animals, insects, and fungi that you might find in an area like North Sydney, illustrated with lively and sometimes quirky line drawings.

Activities are suggested for observing what is going on around you, such as sketching, nature journaling or just sitting and staring at flowers. You could sketch the activity in your backyard at different times of day or year or go sketching with a group and discuss how you each see different things. The authors urge readers to share their observations using storytelling, images, and other means.

Written for adults, this book is also suitable for children interested in the world around them and educators or community group leaders looking for easy, accessible activities that anyone can do. It would be a great present for anyone who is curious about plants or animals but is perhaps a bit intimidated by birdwatchers or native plant enthusiasts.

If you like keeping count of your wildlife observations, you should consider joining North Sydney's Wildlife Watch program. North Sydney's varied environments of bush, parks, gardens, and buildings are habitat to an astonishing range of creatures that I am gradually learning about. Reading this book gave me insights on different ways to observe, learn about and share the beautiful and amazing things I find, such as that silver spider skin.



Caption: Zoë Sadokierski and others, *A Guide to the Creatures in your Neighbourhood*, Murdoch Books, Sydney, 2022 ISBN 9781922616326, available from bookshops and Stanton Library.

# WILDLIFE WATCH UPDATE

(AUTUMN 2023)



Caption: Green Tree Snake traversing the lawn by Evelyn Pravaz.

The Green Tree Snake is nothing to be afraid of, it has no venom or fangs. Its body is often a beautiful golden-green and it may be seen eating frogs and lizards in your garden, just sunning itself, or in this case, moving about. They sleep at night in places including rock crevices and tree hollows.

They are the most common snake found in Sydney!

Find out what else people have been spotting in the North Sydney Local Government Area.

- **White-faced Heron** (Art Barton Reserve Lavender Bay, Anderson Park Neutral Bay), foraging on the lawns
- **Australian Magpie** (Folly Point Cammeray) drinking from water fountain basin
- **Noisy Miner** (Folly Point Cammeray, Cremorne urban) badgering Australian Magpies who were drinking from the water fountain basin, feeding on (hybrid) yellow grevillea flowers
- **Pale-lipped Shadescink** (Neutral Bay urban, Cremorne Point) sunning itself on a strappy Spider Plant; eating an insect snack on a Morning Glory vine
- **Sulphur-crested Cockatoo** (Primrose Park, Neutral Bay urban) eating fruit/seeds from trees including a Magnolia
- **Syringoseca rhodoxantha moth** (Cremorne reserve) resting with torn wings
- **Welcome Swallow** (North Sydney urban) sheltering in the alcove of a building
- **Saunders' Case Moth** (North Sydney urban) its mobile home camouflaged against gum-tree bark
- **Sod Webworm Moth** (Neutral Bay urban) found in a stairwell, with other moths
- **Australian Raven** (Neutral Bay urban, Carradah Park Waverton) feeding on spilled food waste; resting on a fence
- **Tawny Frogmouth** (Cremorne Point, Neutral Bay urban) roosting, camouflaged against the bark of gum trees
- **Australian Brush-turkey** (Lower Spofforth Walk Cremorne Point, North Sydney urban) walking along the footpath; walking/foraging on lawn
- **Leaf-curling Spider** (Balls Head Reserve) hundreds found along the track
- **Garden Orb Weaver** (Cremorne Point) on a Breyntia plant
- **Ringtail Possum** (Balls Head Reserve, Neutral Bay urban) partially predated; electrocuted on wires
- **Laughing Kookaburra** (North Sydney urban) resting on a power pole
- **Australian King-Parrot** (North Sydney urban) eating seeds on a Magnolia tree
- **Green Lacewing** (Neutral Bay urban) trapped in stairwell
- **Oleander Butterfly** (Neutral Bay urban; Cremorne urban) feeding on Salvia; feeding on red gum-tree flowers
- **Grey-headed Flying-Fox** (Neutral Bay urban) dead on powerlines
- **Elegant Snake-eyed Skink** (Neutral Bay urban) sunning itself on bricks
- **Pied Currawong** (Coal Loader Waverton) eating insects in a lawn
- **Powerful Owl** (Primrose Park) holding onto a ringtail possum meal

For a full list of species, go to: <https://www.ala.org.au/biocollect/> Under 'Citizen Science projects', search for NSC Wildlife watch.

If you wish to contribute a sighting of wildlife, or have related comments about what you have seen, please contact Council's Bushland Project Officer via [council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au) or 9936 8100. Find out how to get involved by searching for Wildlife Watch on our website: [northsydney.nsw.gov.au/wildlifewatch](http://northsydney.nsw.gov.au/wildlifewatch)

by Karina Hanemann  
Bushland Projects Officer

I went along to my first Bushcare on Sunday and what a first impression!

It turned out to be a celebration for 30 years of Bushcare. We had cake, were given a pin, and planted a new tree to honour the achievement.

I heard from Mary-Lyn, Harry Howard Bushcare Group Convenor, about the gums that she had planted there nearly 20 years ago. They now towered over our heads, and I looked up to them with awe. Unfortunately, after all the rain, some of them are not doing so well, so the new tree we planted, *Backhousia myrtifolia*, is more of a rainforest style and we're hoping it will take to the area nicely.

Lauren Walker, the Council Bush Regenerator who supervises the team, an extremely knowledgeable plant enthusiast, introduced me to the local weeds that would be our target for the day, and with ease rattled off the scientific



Caption: (R to L) Mary-Lyn Lawrence, xxxx and Lauren Walker celebrating 30 years of Bushcare at Harry Howard Bushcare meeting on Sunday 6 May 2023

names for these and the precious local natives to be mindful of. She pointed out an active fox den that still had little paw prints going in and out, and warned

against the active ant nests dotted around.

There was Anna, a dedicated local with a wealth of information on composting, and Rachel, a lady with a passion for nature, who comes from out of area and will travel just because she enjoys it. And, not to be forgotten, Eddie, the speediest weeder of them all, who had a sweet bird hanging around him watching as he moved the dirt, just in case he was unearthing it's next snack.

It really was a brilliant day. Inspiring, relaxing and tiring - the good tiring. I instantly felt like one of the team and like perhaps I'd be around in another 30 years' time looking up at the tree that I helped plant. It was a lovely experience meeting these new people on a cool sunny Saturday morning under the hidden canopy that makes up Harry Howard Reserve and I'm looking forward to many more.

## BUSHCARE SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

By Tim Windon - Bush Regenerator

The Bushcare school holiday program is in full swing again, with more activities planned for July, and September this year. On 18 April, we ran a fun family bushwalk around Berry Island's Gadyan Track. This was followed by a spotlight walk around Balls Head Reserve with Australian Wildlife Display's Anthony Stimpson on 20 April. During a hands-on look at some of the native animals Anthony brought in for the show, we discussed why these native species are so important and what we can do to protect them. The attendees got

very lucky with the weather after a wet week and were able to go out and about looking for some of Balls Head's local fauna. We were also very lucky in what we saw!

- Ringtail Possums (*Pseudocheirus peregrines*)
- Brushtail Possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*)
- Tawny frogmouth (*Podargus strigoides*)
- And our local colony of Large Bent-wing Microbats (*Miniopterus schreibersii oceanensis*) which are listed as a vulnerable species in NSW under the Biodiversity Conservation Act.

On top of what Anthony brought in!  
Flying fox | Diamond Python | Ringtail

possum | Tawny frogmouth | Spiders and scorpions | Green Tree Frog

The next spotlight walks are 13 July and 28 September. Hope to see you there!

Another popular program is the family kayak day run by Laura Stone from Sydney by Kayak. A beautiful day was had on the 19 April, paddling from Tunks Park boat ramp to Salt Pan Cove where along the way you can see and learn about lots of native flora and fauna. On our latest venture, we were able to see things like Water Dragons (*Intellagama lesueurii*), some marine life and a water-side view of the bushland that you don't often see just by going on a regular bushwalk.

Our next kayak day is 27 September which you can book online on the North Sydney Council website.

## POST FIRE SCOTCH BROOM (*CYTISUS SCOPARIUS*) CONTROL WORKS

23-26 FEBRUARY 2023

By Andrew Scott - Bushcare Officer

Readers may recall that North Sydney's Bushland and Tree Teams participated in the National Parks & Wildlife Services (NPWS) Scotch Broom Control Works in early November 2020, as part of North Sydney Council's commitment to the Black Summer Fires bushfire recovery effort.

One of the aims of this trip was to investigate a prospective Bushcare

volunteer trip. This came to fruition in late February when David Bell and David Yip joined the Bushland Team and NPWS for a Scotch Broom Control project at Pole Blue Campground. Although not a post burn site, Pole Blue is the location of a montane wetland, an endangered ecological community, with two-wheel drive access. Works at this location fit in with the NPWS strategy of containment for Scotch Broom. cont. p8

# FOREST BATHING & TREE PLANTING

On Tuesday 21 March, Smoothey Park Bushcare Volunteer Mayu Kataoka led a group of six participants on a forest bathing walk around Primrose Park.

Forest bathing is the practice of immersing yourself in nature in a mindful way, using your senses to derive a whole range of benefits for your physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing. It is also known as Shinrin-yoku. 'Shinrin' means forest and 'Yoku' stands for bathing (Ref: [www.healingforest.org](http://www.healingforest.org)).

Mayu said the purpose of her forest bathing activity was to enable a connection with nature through mindfulness, to become aware of the presence of trees and to raise awareness about the importance of protecting and nurturing our precious environment.

As an accompaniment to the walk, Mayu made a request to plant trees. Tristram Thomas, Council's Bush Regeneration Team Leader, said, "this works for us, as the planting could be included as part of the Primrose Park Canopy Replacement Project that we have been working on for a few years."

The forest bathers planted 12 plants in total (six *Angophora costata*, three *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* also known as NSW Christmas Bush and three *Allocasurina littoralis*), just east of the National Tree Day site that added to the eight trees planted last year. Prior to this event, the Bushland Team provided a safety briefing, and prepared the site with pre-dug holes and placed plants and stakes in the ground.

Mayu said tree planting is a perfect addition to forest bathing, as it enhances the sense of connection with trees and nature. She said, every participant planted at least two trees and they absolutely loved it. Thanks again to Trusty and the Bushland Team for all your support.



Caption: Photo of canopy replacement planting for Forest Bathing activity at Primrose Park on Tuesday 21 March by Mayu Kataoka

## ADOPT A PLOT UPDATE

by Larissa Kabokov – Adopt a Plot Supervisor

Now that the Adopt a Plot program has been up and running again full-time for nearly a year now, we have managed to bring all plots up to a maintenance level. Due to all the crazy wet weather over the summer period, the exotic plants have been loving the conditions, the most common weed species being exotic grasses (*Ehrharta* and Summer grass), exotic vines (*Ipomoea*, *Cardiospermum*, *Anredera*) and a mix of various herbaceous weeds, making the work a little harder to get on top of. Having said that, the conditions have been perfect to install native plants in areas that are lacking native plant diversity and density. Coming into the colder months, most of the plots only need a monthly sweep through to remove scattered weeds and to monitor/maintain boundaries for weed outbreaks.

There are currently 18 active plots, 12 are donation plots and six plots being worked with volunteers. We have reintroduced two new plots in Cremorne Point which will create more continuity throughout the bushland.

In early June, we will hold our annual Adopt a Plot meeting to discuss achievements this financial year, future goals, and any queries. So far, since July last year, we have committed 390 hours and have planted 965 native plants.

We would like to thank all donors and volunteers for their patience getting the program back to full swing. We are excited to see what can be achieved in the future.

## The Habitat Tour

On Wednesday 22 March, four Bushcare volunteers and the Bushland Team visited The Habitat nursery at Santa Rosa Park, North Ryde, run by Habitat Network.

There we met Bev Debrincat, cofounder of the International Environmental Weed Foundation (IEWF) trading as Habitat Network. IEWF is a company limited by guarantee with over 1,000 members and supporting groups. It aims to educate the public about the impacts of weeds on our natural environment, to restore degraded ecosystems, improve native habitat and improve the natural function of urban landscapes. IEWF has been running since 2003.

Habitat Network is also focused on delivering small bird habitat projects in the Ryde and Hunters Hill Local Government Areas. The Habitat community nursery and garden is a project run by Habitat Network in partnership with City of Ryde Council and provides affordable plants for local projects and the community.

The idea for the Habitat Network originated with Bev's fascination for an orchid nursery during a trip to South America, plants pillaged from nature for sale to tourists and a chance meeting where she learnt about the practice of restoring natural capital. On Bev's return, she applied these principles to her local area of Ryde and Hunters Hill. Bev organised three community engagement workshops on the topic, participant feedback revealed a limited knowledge of weeds, native plants and they observed loss of small



Caption: (L to R) Pam Ward and Bev Debrincat at the Habitat Nursery in Santa Rosa Park, Ryde on 22 March 2023 taken by Andrew Scott

native birds. The community's interest to conserve small native birds turned out to be the lynch pin of the project, which could be achieved through the provision of suitable habitat - mid story and understory native vegetation and habitat connectivity.

Bev started The Habitat nursery and garden with her friend and fellow bushcarer Pam Ward, who we met on the day. Pam has a lifelong interest in growing plants, she said, she grew up in a market garden family from Scone and has propagated plants for most of her life.

The need for a native plant nursery was first discussed at a City of Ryde Council Bushcare Christmas party. The search for a suitable site soon began.

A half-acre of underutilised Council land of mown grass, fronting Quarry Road was considered. Bev, with the assistance of other bushcarers, put together a business plan. They approached Council with the proposal. Permission was eventually given to build a nursery along with a community garden. A grant helped financially.

The nursery facilities - new tubes, shade shelters and benches were initially cobbled together from recycled materials. Permaculture North and other community groups donated plants for the community garden. Today, the

nursery sports a modern lunchroom and office, shelter, and toilet facilities, courtesy of Council.

The nursery funds its own activities. There are no paid staff, with volunteers able to work from 10am to 4pm every Wednesday and Saturday (except major public holidays). They produce over 10,000 native and food plants each year that are sold to the public to fund the nursery and gardens operations. Council's waste team encourages residents to bring scraps to the site for composting. Bev said the adjoining community garden and selling the food plants has attracted people's interest in gardens, who then become interested in native plants, weeds, habitat etc.

After our tour of the nursery, we went for a guided walk with Steve Holmes, Habitat volunteer, to look at bushland restoration works along the nearby Shrimpton's Creek. Steve discussed some of the issues faced by the creek line and how they were working to improve habitats for small birds and habitat connectivity here. It was great to see regenerating ground covers and very few weeds in such a highly urbanised waterway, no doubt due to Steve's Bushcare works often more than one day per week.

We then enjoyed a cup of tea and lunch before jumping in the bus to continue

our journey along the Shrimpton Creek bushland corridor. We walked from Greenwood Park and then under Epping Road arriving at a strip of ginormous residential and commercial developments, the bushland narrowed and appeared weed infested here. The bushland corridor to Lane Cove River Valley is interrupted at this point by the Macquarie Shopping Centre, providing some interesting challenges for wildlife connectivity.

It was great to meet The Habitat volunteers and we were inspired after learning about their efforts to improve habitat for small birds in Ryde and Hunters Hill but sobering to witness the pressures of urban development on bushland. This experience left our group wondering what the future holds for small native birds in Sydney.

A big thanks to Bev Debrincat for hosting our tour, she is a tireless crusader for urban bushland and wildlife conservation. Bev provides educational talks for local Government and other groups, and she is on the State Advisory Council of Landcare NSW and Chair of Greater Sydney Landcare.

Bev's parting message is one of encouragement;

**“Start up your own habitat network”**  
to affect change.

# NATIVE HAVENS UPDATE

By Karina Hanemann  
Bushland Project Officer



Emily lives alongside bushland and had spent years tackling weeds in her garden. She contacted us regarding this and her desire to have a natural garden like the bushland next door.

Together, we walked through her yard and not only identified a variety of weeds, but also a variety of (remnant) native groundcovers underneath them, including Commelina and Basket Grass, along with a variety of seedlings including Bleeding Heart. These were all hiding under and around the fleabanes, Crofton Weed and Ehrharta grass weeds. We developed a basic plan and Emily dedicated one kitchen knife to the cause, to help remove the Ehrharta grass easily using the 'crowning' technique.

An enthusiasm was generated that resulted in many hours in the yard and much restoration of the site. You can see some terracing that was created from cut weedy-bamboo, along with a few plantings, but in no time the Commelina has taken over and covered the bare earth and much of the site. We are looking for other seedlings that may pop up or come over from the bushy side of the fence now they have a chance and can be recognised and supported. If not much grows over time, Emily can plant some locally grown seedlings from our nursery in places to try and create layers and increase the variety of plants in her yard.

Emily now has the low-maintenance bushy backyard that she desired and one which also poses no threat to the bushland next door from weed-spread, but instead complements it, as ferns and other species can slowly move across into her yard and provide additional habitat for wrens and other small birds that are present in the area. Emily's family no longer sprays weeds and they hand-remove which is also great for the insect-eating wrens. Her yard now forms part of a corridor through the neighbourhood for the wildlife to use.

Each week, people old and new to the Native Havens program have been making enquiries and requesting plants or assistance with their gardens. They



Caption: Emily Fung removing weeds in her new native 'bush garden'

want to support local wildlife, as well as enjoy the beauty of local native plants that will grow easily.

Some people have simply requested plants to fill in gaps, others have requested dozens, as they were mass-planting entire new garden beds. There is no shortage of people who are wanting to participate. Some have seen the benefits of existing native plants and would like to increase the value seen, such as Ted from Wollstonecraft who noticed that the flowers on his new *Grevillea sericeas* were attracting many insects, which together with new groundcovers and warm bricks nearby brought in the lizards, and then predatory kookaburras to eat them!

Others saw certain wildlife about and asked for plants that could assist them, for example Lauren in Cammeray had seen Blue-banded as well as Teddy-bear bees in her yard and wanted some more plants to help them. We offered her an assortment of blue-purple flowering plants as well as Dianellas. Kathryn of Crows Nest had an elderly possum that needed more food and safe spaces in the yard, so we sourced some Tea-trees, Kunzeas and Lilly-pilles for her. At times, helpful additional garden elements were also suggested such as possum boxes or bird-baths/water-sources. Note: North Sydney Council and some wildlife organisations sell possum boxes if you or your backyard buddies need them.

If you are a resident and would like to restore your local natives, plant some trees, or see how you too can assist local wildlife, please call Council.

# BUSHCARE EVENTS CALENDAR

Bookings must be made for all events at: [www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/bushcareevents](http://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/bushcareevents) or 9936 8100 unless otherwise stated.

## JUNE

- 2 Walk and Yarning Circle** | Friday 10.30am to 12pm  
Bookings: [www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/bushcareevents](http://www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/bushcareevents) or 9911 3583
- 3 Growing Ferns & Groundcovers** | Saturday 9.30am to 12pm  
Bookings: [www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/bushcareevents](http://www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/bushcareevents) or 9911 3583
- 8 Lane Cove Bush Kids – Nature's Night Shift** | Thursday 9.45am to 11.15am  
Bookings: [www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/bushcareevents](http://www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/bushcareevents) or 9911 3583
- 17 Working with Woody Weeds** | Saturday 10.30am to 1.30pm
- 22 Battlers for the Bush Tour** | Thursday 9am to 3.30pm
- 25 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Walk** | Sunday 9am to 2pm

## JULY

- 9 Bushwalk – Balls Head** | Sunday 10am to 1pm
- 11 Family Bush Walk – Berry Island** | Tuesday 10.30am to 12pm
- 13 Family Spotlight Walk** | Thursday 5.30pm to 8.30pm
- 20 Living with Brush Turkeys** | Thursday 6.30pm to 8pm

- 28 Schools Tree Day** | Friday **Register:** [Treeday.planetark.org](http://Treeday.planetark.org)  
**Enquiries:** Bushland Project Officer on 9936 8100

## AUGUST

- 5 Wildflower Walk** | Saturday 8am to 4pm
- 5 Bushcare Stall – Produce Markets** | Saturday 8am to 12pm
- 6 National Tree Day** | Sunday 9.30am to 11am
- 13 Native Havens Garden Tour** | Sunday 9.30am to 1pm
- 19 Nestbox Building Workshop** | Saturday 10am to 2pm
- 27 Bushcare Visit – Chowder Head** | Sunday 8am to 2pm

## SEPTEMBER

- 2 Introduction to Wildlife Watch** | Saturday 10am to 1pm
- 4 Illawarra Grevillea Gardens Visit** | Monday 8am to 4pm
- 16 Composting with Weeds** | Saturday 10am to 1pm
- 23 Community Nursery Open Day** | Saturday 9am to 12pm
- 26 Family Bush Walk – Berry Island** | Tuesday 10.30am to 12pm
- 28 Family Spotlight Walk** | Thursday 5.30pm to 9pm

cont. from p4

Scotch broom has become a major weed in the Barrington Tops since it was first introduced as a garden plant from Europe in the 1840's. It infests approximately 10,000 hectares of the sub-alpine plateau.

Boyd Carney, NPWS Bush Regeneration and Volunteer Officer, coordinated the 4 day event which was supported by 35 volunteers from Newcastle, around the Upper Hunter, Sydney, Gloucester, and Mid North Coast. Each day, Boyd provided an in-depth induction and safety briefing for all new volunteers. It was great to learn about Scotch Broom and strategies for its control. The plan of works focused on follow up weeding for brown stem plants (Stage 2, 3 to 4 years old) around the circumference of the wetland, about 5 to 10 metres above the 3km loop track to the edge of the swamp. We purposefully left green stem plants, mostly up to knee height, as they are capable of regenerating when cut without the use of herbicide. These plants will be controlled when they have developed to Stage 2. The hard work

was made easier with the trial use of battery pack secateurs and loppers – the secateurs proved to be a crowd favourite. Qualified staff and volunteers were armed with brush cutters and pole saws that made short work of the broom. We noticed it was much easier to cut single stem plants as compared with those that were multi stemmed. Boyd said, as a rule, broom under canopy will grow straight as these plants are protected, while in open areas they coppice in response to heavier snow fall – a theory and a generalisation as there are always plants that break that rule.

The weather was highly changeable, we found ourselves stripping down and layering up several times a day, but overall, it was a suitable temperature for labouring. It was a good feeling at the end of each workday to stand back and see the understory of the Ghost Gums (*Eucalyptus pauciflora*) and Black Sallys (*Eucalyptus stellulata*) free of the green tsunami (the broom). Boyd said, at the conclusion of works, the volunteers had contributed 504 hours

to clear approximately eight hectares of Scotch Broom at Pole Blue, and that's no mean feat.

On Friday night, we were treated to a spotlight walk with our guide John Simpson, a keen volunteer and an ecologist for Hunter Water who helps monitor Greater Glider and we were thrilled to see five individuals. The Greater Glider is a threatened species that requires old growth tree hollows for habitat, and along with other wildlife, have been impacted by the bushfires. The gliders were easy to spot because their long chocolate tails draped over the branches in which they sat.

The Bushland Team would like to thank Boyd for running a fantastic event and to NPWS for allowing our team to stay at quaint Little Murray Hut - a luxury.

Dates for future volunteer events will be posted by the end of June with a promotional video that was recorded here. For further information contact: Boyd Carney  
[Boyd.Carney@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Boyd.Carney@environment.nsw.gov.au)



Did you know North Sydney Council Bushcare has a Facebook page? Like us at [www.facebook.com/bushcare](http://www.facebook.com/bushcare)



Visit regenTV the Australian Association of Bush regenerators video platform, view recordings of webinars, field days and forums.  
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**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 paper.

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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