



HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL

Weed All About It

www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Volume 17, Issue 2

Newsletter for the 'Hawkesbury Bushcare' Program

Spring 2017

FREE BIRD TOUR & The Aussie Backyard Bird Count

Celebrate National Bird Week 2017 by taking part in the biggest citizen science project, just like thousands of others across Australia! From 23 to 29 October 2017 it's National Bird Week and this can be a great way to contribute to bird conservation. To get involved all you need is 20 minutes, your favourite outdoor space (this doesn't have to be your actual backyard), and some keen eyesight to take part in the annual Aussie Backyard Bird Count!

Not only will you get to know your feathered neighbours, but you'll be contributing to a vital pool of information from across the nation that will help us see how Australian birds are faring.

For more information and to get involved in the count, go to <http://birdlife.org.au/get-involved/whats-on/bird-week>



Rainbow Bee-eater



Sacred Kingfisher

To register and to download the Aussie Bird Count App, go to <http://aussiebirdcount.org.au/>

To support National Bird Week and help you brush up on your bird identification skills, Hawkesbury Bushcare will hold a bird watching tour in October with resident Cumberland Bird Observers' Club member and keen ornithologist Keith Brandwood <http://www.cboc.org.au/>

Details are -

Saturday, 21 October 2017 – 5am
Ebenezer - Hear and see the operatic

dawn chorus. Birds to be seen include; Sacred Kingfisher, Rufous and Golden Whistler, Mistletoe Bird, Crested Shrike-tit, Scarlet Honeyeater, Eastern Yellow Robin and White-throated Gerygone are just a few of the 60 plus species we hope to see.

What to bring - binoculars, closed footwear, drinking

water and a light snack. Places are limited, so book early!

For further information or to book your spot, please contact Council's Community Bushcare Officer, Martin Gauci on 4560 4525 or email mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au



Editorial

G'day sports fans, weed wackers and creature crusaders.

This is one of those bumper issues with heaps of stuff coming up for you to get your hands on or some past events that have happened to read about.

I reckon this issue has something for everybody; if not please let me know and we'll give it a go to include it for next edition. Before you know it 2017 will be coming to an end so make the most of this beautiful time of year with the great showing of wildflowers and our native fauna out and about both day and night.

Now make sure you get to page 11 of this brainstorming bumper issue as I would love feedback and input on this. There are so many great articles in this edition, I could not pick which one would win the "Super Scribe Scripting Award", if there was one; ah, we can only dream.....

So thanks to those articles that were sent in and I welcome future articles to this newsletter. Enjoy the read people.
Happy Days and go Parra for 2018!

Marty Gauci
Community Bushcare Officer & HIMAG Facilitator
mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au



If you are interested in being involved in any of the Hawkesbury Bushcare sites, or would like to contribute to this newsletter, please contact Council's Community Bushcare Officer on 4560 4525, or email: mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au. We would love to hear from you.



Hawkesbury
Landcare
Network

Hawkesbury Landcare Network Update

Xuela Sledge is a relatively new Local Landcare Coordinator, with Hawkesbury Landcare Network. Xuela (Swayla) started in the role in April this year. She has spent a number of years working for NPWS, teaching at TAFE and working in the private landholder conservation field, across the Blue Mountains and Western Sydney regions. She also works on Landcare initiatives across Greater Sydney, with the Greater Sydney Landcare Network.



Hi, I'm Xuela

Wetlandcare

Artificial habitat islands for Bushells Lagoon Saturday, 4 November 2017

Come along to a day of making and launching artificial habitat islands in Bushells Lagoon, Wilberforce. 4 November will be an event of learning, for people to be able to take new skills back to a waterbody of their own. Bushells Lagoon is only one of the Hawkesbury wetlands currently being predated upon by the fox, so lets put in some inexpensive floating islands to help the ground dwelling birds (and their young) survive here – and elsewhere....

Rainforest Network Gathering Saturday, 14 October 2017

Previous members of the Hawkesbury Rainforest Network will be encouraged to come together for an event in October. New landholders with Rainforest are also invited to this event, as are bush regeneration contractors with Rainforest experience and anyone else interested in local Rainforest communities, specifically Western Sydney Dry Rainforest or Blue Mountains Shale Cap Forest. The event aims to gather a snapshot of where landholders are currently and who needs support with issues of managing their rainforest. This is a partnership event with Hawkesbury Environment Network. A field visit will also be part of the day. All catering included. 10am-3pm. Venue TBC.

Soils Health

A series of Soils Health workshops have just been finalised, equipping participants with some great knowledge and know-how in soil health and its management. Further Soils Health workshops are being planned for later this year, including a hands-on Introductory workshop and one for people who already have the basics in-hand, and want to learn more about grazing management.

Community Fox Control Pilot in Bilpin

Eight properties in the Bilpin/Berambing area have recently joined forces to start a cage-trapping program for foxes. This group is gathering with an intent to bring back small marsupials eg: the Bandicoot, but also to increase their chicken, lamb and kid security. Most landholders have blocks that are not large enough to legally bait on, so trapping is a reasonable alternative for them. The program will also be filmed so that others can see that a community fox trapping program is a feasible option for everyone, particularly if limited by baiting restrictions or baiting preferences.

Streamwatch

Hawkesbury Landcare Network has a StreamWatch Kit available for loaning out to the community. A StreamWatch training day was held in July, with Landcare and Bushcare volunteers attending. Four sites have started being monitored as a result, three of which are on Hawkesbury Wetlands, which have had no data on them in the past. If you would like some practice doing Streamwatch before taking it on as a monthly commitment, come along to a Bushells Lagoon Wetlandcare Day which occurs monthly (Wednesday or Thursday).

Community Tools Container

A Community Tools Container is currently being fitted out for use by the community as a storage centre. Space will be available in the Container should you need extra storage. Tools will also be available for borrowing for any Land-caring pursuit.

If you would like any more information about any of these events or programs please contact Xuela Sledge, Local Landcare Coordinator, Hawkesbury Landcare Network on 0410 616 139 or landcare@hrcc.nsw.gov.au

THE SYCAMORE WAR CONTINUES

November 11 & 12

Want an awesome free holiday at Jenolan Caves with a free tour of the caves? Of course there is a catch.



Come along to volunteer and help remove 50ha of weeds invading bushland at Jenolan Caves. This program has been going for the past 8 years and Trish and the team really know how to put on a nice show.

Volunteer weekends are run to help control invasive weed plants around the caves. Professional bush regeneration contractors are on hand to train you in weed identification and control techniques, so experience isn't essential.

For more information see –
<https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/volunteer-activities/jenolan-caves-sycamore-war>

Bookings are essential

Contact: Trish Kidd Project Officer
NPWS Office - Oberon
E: trish.kidd@environment.nsw.gov.au
M: 0423 527 740 P: 6336 1972



nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

Weed All About It - Newsletter for the Hawkesbury Bushcare Program
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Compost Revolution

Council is promoting the Compost Revolution program to all Hawkesbury residents. Under this program you can purchase a worm farm or compost bin at 50% off Recommended Retail Price and you will also receive free home delivery. Composting and worm farming is a great way to improve your garden, it may also allow you to downsize your red lid bin saving you \$200 p.a.

Compost Bins \$69.90

Worm Farms (including 1,000 worms) \$73.90

Simply go to <http://compostrevolution.com.au/hawkesbury/> hawkesbury to place your order. Any questions please contact justin.murphy@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au or call 4560 4566.



This project was supported by the NSW EPA as part of the Waste Less, Recycle More initiative, funded from the Waste Levy.



Rodney Riddle

Bushcare in Cumberland Plain National Parks

by Scott Herring

Cumberland Area NPWS currently looks after 13 Reserves within an area roughly bounded by Maroota, Mulgoa, Kemps Creek and Prospect Reservoir, conserving over 4500ha of remnant Cumberland Plain vegetation communities, with more Reserves soon to be added.

Endangered Ecological Communities comprise approximately 83% of these Reserves, and amongst these are some very beautiful remnants of quite rare vegetation community subtypes such as sand-based woodland at Agnes Banks Nature Reserve (NR) and Dry Rainforest and Alluvial Forest at Mitchell Park.

All of the Reserves have been subjected to major disturbance such as clearing and grazing, however a few Reserves such as Prospect NR benefit from a long history of protection and the quality of the bushland in this Reserve is a rare thing on the Cumberland Plains Woodland (CPW). All Reserves suffer from the effects of weed invasion to some extent, and there are over 1250ha of bushland within current NPWS Cumberland Reserves in need of active restoration.



NPWS Bushcare Volunteers Linda, Andrew, Jim and John battling the African Olive invasion in Scheyville NP

Volunteers are increasingly important in fighting weed invasion and protecting these last remnants of CPW. The volunteer program for Cumberland NPWS has been gaining momentum over the last few years, from one stalwart group fighting Olives in Scheyville National Park (NP) and a lone, dedicated, long term Bushcarer at Mitchell Park to now having over 50 volunteers on the books with 4 main Bushcare groups (in Cattai NP, Mitchell Park, Wianamatta Regional Park and Scheyville NP).

Cumberland Area NPWS needs more volunteers to fight weed invasion in these valuable remnants of CPW. More Bushcarers are needed to help our fledgling groups and make them a more regular thing. There are also opportunities to volunteer on an irregular basis and to work in different Reserves with a variety of projects, sometimes in areas closed to the public.

If you are interested in volunteering in any of our Western Sydney Reserves, please contact Scott via scott.herring@environment.nsw.gov.au or call 4572 3100.

Bush Trackers at McMahon Park

Earlier this year a group of students from Glossodia Public School were lucky enough to be part of the Bush Trackers program at McMahon Park, Kurrajong.

The students, approximately 70 in total consisted of years 3 & 4 (stage 2). These students were extremely lucky to be shown the bushland of McMahon Park through the eyes of the National Parks and Wildlife Discovery Rangers. The Discovery Rangers have that special ability to show the bushland in all its intricacies in an inviting, informative, appreciative, scientific and funny way that manages to imprint a positive experience on the students.



NPWS Discovery Ranger Dindy and Hawkesbury Community Bushcare Officer Martin Gauci sharing their knowledge with the attentive crowd

The students were invited through a smoking ceremony with Chris Tobin and were also shown aspects of Indigenous culture. Throughout the walk and tour of the bushland the students were given pencils and paper and asked to write, draw and create what they see and value within McMahon Park. From this artwork the Bush Trackers map of McMahon Park will be

created and published. Hawkesbury Bushcare eagerly awaits this creation. For past maps that other schools have created in bushland areas see <http://www.bushtrackers.com.au/guides-maps>

The Bush Trackers program is a great initiative for local schools to help engage students with nature in a fun and rewarding way and at the same time fulfil curriculum requirements. Positive regular exposures to nature like this can prevent the "Nature-deficit disorder"; building on children's confidence, focus and a calming effect.

A big thanks to all those who were involved for this great day.

Bush Trackers partners are seeking other schools in the Hawkesbury that would like to participate in the program.

For more information contact Jacqueline at NPWS on 0419 307 099 or jacqueline.reid@environment.nsw.gov.au

Hawkesbury Youth Bushcare Club Facebook Page by Dana Pank

Hi, my name is Dana Pank and I am the creator of the Facebook Page "Hawkesbury Youth Bushcare Club". I have lived in the Hawkesbury my whole life and became passionate about the local environment when I became involved in the Green Army. After my contract ended I began a traineeship with Hawkesbury River County Council and completed my Certificate III in Natural Area Restoration. I now have re-joined a new Green Army contract and am currently employed as a secondary supervisor on the local team.

Through my TAFE experience I was inspired and learnt so much about how to look after bushland and restore sites. I also started attending local Bushcare groups in my area, specifically the Cumberland Reach Memorial Reserve Bushcare Group in Cumberland Reach and also Phil's Forest Bushcare Group in Richmond. From this experience and also attending an Intrepid Landcare event aimed at young people I saw an opportunity.

Young people in the Hawkesbury needed to hear about Bushcare! I contacted Marty on how I could start up a page as this generation rely heavily on social media to hear about these topics. This is where it began and I hope to expand my page a lot more.

If you run or volunteer at a Bushcare site in the Hawkesbury I would love your photos! Anything from rare plants, fauna sightings, weed management and also photos of you and your

teams getting involved. The more I can post the greater the community can be engaged and informed of the great work that is happening. It would be awesome to see the groups expand. Please direct photos to the Facebook Pages inbox with the name of your group.



Thank you for your support!

https://www.facebook.com/Hawkesbury-Youth-Bushcare-Club-1234027046712862/?view_public_for=1234027046712862

Transects and Quadrants at George

by Viniana Vereua

The Bushcare community at George Street Reserve Bushcare consist of cool and quirky characters who have very similar passions and a common goal to protect and conserve nature in all its glory.

George Street Reserve vegetation community is part of Cumberland Plain Woodland (Shale Gravel Transition Community), an Endangered Ecological Community in Sydney which is in dire need of protection and conservation. George Street Bushcarers work towards protecting and bringing back the natural bushland in the reserve. We practice bush regeneration, bush revegetation and we also monitor changes within the bushland.

Just recently, we performed a survey on-site where we assessed the biodiversity value of George Street Reserve. This was done by measuring out a 20m X 50m quadrant and a 50m transect. We recorded all the native and weed plant species within the quadrant and listed only the native plant species at every 5metres along the transect. The Bushcarers also recorded possible fauna habitat. The data collected included the different vegetation layers, percentage of cover, presence of hollows, fallen logs, external and internal impacts (fire, pollution, erosion) and plant identification.



Michael, Karen & Nicola ready for the transect.

One of the main reasons a survey was performed was to help us monitor changes of George Street Reserve, this is very important for bush regeneration as it shows you what methods work and if you need to improve on certain areas. We also wanted to get to know our site on a deeper level and try to have a better understanding of it. Furthermore, we hope that the data collected would be used to support applications of funding or continued protection of the reserve in the future.

From the survey, I learnt valuable surveying skills such as setting up transects and plant identification, from the littlest ground cover to the tallest tree. The survey process really displayed how knowledgeable and skilful my fellow Bushcarers are, it taught us that we all have something to offer and that we can all learn from one another.

The Bushcarers at George Street Reserve hope to help educate and bring people together in nature so that more people can appreciate and protect the natural environment.

George Street Reserve Bushcare meets on the 4th Sunday of the month from 9am-12noon. For more information on how you can get involved, please contact Martin Gauci, Community Bushcare Officer on 4560 4525 or 0413 195 248 or mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Kurrajong a Buzz

Proudly Promoting
Pollinator Week
Sunday, 19 November
2017 10am-2pm



Kurrajong village will be a buzz on Sunday, 19 November with the celebration of Australian Pollinator Week. The Kurrajong Community Forum is a leader in promoting the importance of pollinators in a fun and educational way. The Hawkesbury's finest features – gardens, farmlands, waterways and bushland are ideal for creating an environment that supports a range of pollinators.

Kurrajong a Buzz is a community event with activities, stalls and information for all ages. Take home messages will include the importance of pollinators for food security and how to create a pollinator paradise by maintaining a welcoming environment for birds and insects. Native plants from the Hawkesbury Community Nursery and exotic plants that attract pollinators will be available. The co-ordinator of the Hollows as Homes citizen science project, Dr Adrian Davis will set up with Council's Bushcare stall.

The Blue Mountains Botanic Garden Mount Tomah will entertain and educate visitors with speakers, activities and games around pollination, thanks to a science grant from Inspiring Australia.

A coup for the event is having the person who started Pollinator Week in Australia, Dr Megan Halcroft speaking on the importance of pollinators and native bees.

For more information, check the Kurrajong a Buzz facebook page.

Contact: Elizabeth Docking - 0438 670 753
Lyn Ward - 0411 107 456
Email: radocking@bigpond.com or
lynward486@yahoo.com.au
www.facebook.com/KurrajongaBuzz/
<http://beesbusiness.com.au/pollweekmain.html>



Volunteer Profile



Name: Jeff Cottrell

Position in Group: Trip Leader for Friends of the Colo (& Willow Warriors) <http://www.willowwarriors.org.au/> also treasurer of Friends of the Colo and Greater Sydney Landcare Network. But I also like to volunteer with North Sydney Bushcare, Lake Parramatta Bushcare, Hawkesbury Bushcare, Yellomundee Aboriginal Bushcare Group and Jenolan Caves Sycamore.

Occupation: Business Systems Consultant (helping businesses install enterprise management systems and design processes to record data they need to help them manage their business).

Reason for volunteering: There are many reasons why I volunteer. In no particular order they are.

- Access to waterways to go paddling. If I want to paddle a river now, I can usually contact the local National Parks Ranger, Local Landcare Coordinator or Landcare group who can help me organise access to property where the public are not allowed. In return I provide mapping of issues we see and if they would like, we also do follow up control particularly on Willow control programs. My first Landcare experience was in 2000 and it involved being flown by helicopter into the middle of the Wollemi (Wilderness) National Park to spend 5 days paddling 60km in the Colo gorge treating black willows. Last year I ticked another item off my bucket list when I got to paddle on the Wollondilly River through Schedule land Schedule II special areas of Sydney's drinking water catchment, onto the top end of stored water of Lake Burratorang mapping and treating willows and other weeds for National Parks. But there have been many others.
- Removing invasive non-native plant species that frequently impede access to waterways or along waterways.
- I love paddling in natural places and so would love to be able to leave some places in Australia where people can go and not see the impact of European culture but instead see what was here before Europeans arrived. These are also places where native plants and animals can do their thing.
- The learning and social experiences I have through groups I volunteer with and places I go. Talking to volunteers and agency staff you too get to learn so much without the bias and lack of knowledge often seen in the media (both social and mainstream) or the need for someone to only tell the corporate / political message.
- I enjoy being around the people who volunteer and work in the conservation of our natural environment. My parents were big on volunteering with schools, sports and community fundraising when I was growing up (well mum still does at 87) and I observed that the people who volunteered with them were different to those who stood back and watched.

Best Achievement: In conservation volunteering I think it is either the Friends of the Colo "Willows Out of Wollemi" project where we expanded the initial program on park to include



the entire catchments and remove almost all of the black willows from the Colo Catchment (5 known mature Black Willows still in the Colo catchment). Or the Wingecarribee Crack Willow program where we mapped and treated the majority of Crack Willows along 80km of the river and opened up a 14km section of river through the Wallaby Rocks Canyon to paddlers which was rarely paddled because it was too dangerous. There are some Crack Willows left where landowners did not want them removed but we can easily monitor and control the spread from the few remaining Crack Willows.

I am unable to decide which has been the most rewarding experience I have had whilst volunteering. The first couple of helicopter flights across the Wollemi Wilderness and into the Colo Gorge were very special but then being invited by the Yellomundee Aboriginal Bushcare Group and National Parks Rangers to participate in the Yellomundee Firesticks program which involved the introduction of cultural burning by traditional owners on National Parks estate, after 100 years plus of them not being able to carry out the practices on the land. I cannot imagine what it would be like if I was told I could no longer go paddling and go nuts when 6 months of dry weather means there is no whitewater.

Favourite Native Species: Sandpaper Figs because I can ask new volunteers to feel the leaves and tell me what they think the tree is called. But I also like Casuarinas planted 4m apart as they make superb hammock trees and they are Australia's willows performing the same function but drawing much less water from the river or wetland.

Most hated weed: Willows that spread prolifically by seed. These include Black Willows and Grey Sallow Willows and a few Hybrid Willows. But Lantana runs a close second.

6 people you would like to invite to dinner: Rosie Cottrell, Simone and Sam Vivers, Ben, Corinna, Dana, Maddy and Jack Cottrell (my family, OK that's 8) as it would be great to catch up with them, as I spend so much time out on the river and they are not as keen at paddling as I am.

Attracting volunteers to your bushcare activity

Invite someone

Did you know most people begin volunteering because someone simply invited them to? Who do you know that you could ask to your next event?

Be welcoming

Sometimes we forget that it can be quite intimidating starting something new. If a new person comes to your activity, make them feel so welcome they won't be able to resist coming back.

Make a difference

Many people volunteer because they want to contribute, give something back and make a difference. Be sure you make it clear how your activity contributes to the greater good.

Make it social

People often volunteer to add to their social experience. Make sure your activity includes a social aspect, rather than making it all work. For example, include a morning tea or have drinks after the event.

Mix it up

Can you combine your activity with other fun stuff? Consider taking something else you are passionate about and adding bushcare to it to see who else might turn up. For example, bush walking and bushcare, fishing and bushcare ...

Get online

Most people find out about things by searching online. A presence on Facebook, a website or the NSW Landcare Gateway are all great avenues to help people easily find you online.



Local Land
Services
Greater Sydney

Sapwood Sucks by Hugh Patterson

When cutting and painting, stem injecting or scraping and painting woody weeds the herbicide must be applied to the sapwood (living xylem). The sap is at less than atmospheric pressure and the pressure of the air forces the herbicide into the sapwood. From there it can translocate through the plant.

The cambium layer is only one or two cells thick so it cannot take in the herbicide. It is meristematic tissue not vascular so it cannot translocate the herbicide. The idea of applying a 'cambium ring' is a myth.

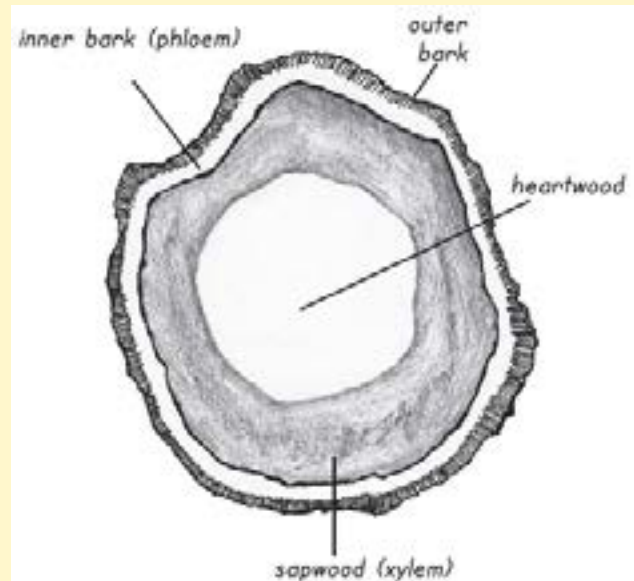
The inner bark (living phloem) contains sap with dissolved sugars and amino acids. Because of the solutes, osmosis moves water into the phloem and the pressure of the sap is above atmospheric pressure. When you cut a weed with milky sap the outflow of sap is obvious. There is no point trying to apply the herbicide to the phloem - the sap flow will just flush it off.

The herbicide labels are quite specific that the herbicide should be applied to the sapwood.

Very few of the weeds we treat contain genuine heartwood so that is not an issue. Some stems which have been damaged may have areas of dead wood. There is no point putting the herbicide on dead wood.

Any advice about weed control by cutting, scraping or injection should include the instruction to apply the herbicide to the living sapwood.

Any advice to only apply a ring of herbicide is based on poor understanding of plant structure and physiology and is WRONG.



Note that the drawings of Virginia Bear can be quite misleading in this respect. The drawing should probably show a zig zag action indicating the whole stump is being covered rather than a circular action indicating a ring is being applied.

Put the herbicide on the sapwood, the whole sapwood and nothing but the sapwood. Sapwood sucks!

Is it a Cassia? Is it a Phyllanthus? NO, it's a Breynia! by Nicola Dixon

Many native plant species can look very similar to weedy exotic species. It is easy to get them confused, but if you remove natives you're going to owe your Bushcare group a lot of cake!

To avoid those bakery bills and learn some key identification skills, come along to a half day workshop:

WHEN: Thursday, 2 November 2017

WHERE: Hawkesbury City Council Community Nursery

What TIME: 9.30am to 1pm

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL: Email wapadmin@hrcc.nsw.gov.au or call Nicola Dixon on 4574 9601.

Light refreshments will be provided.

This will be a very hands on workshop, with around 35 samples of look-alike groundcover, grass, herb, shrub and tree species. It will be delivered by experienced and knowledgeable weed experts from Hawkesbury River County Council, the weed control authority for Hawkesbury, Blacktown, Hills Shire and Penrith Councils.

Participants will receive a free copy of the excellent Look-alikes handbook produced by Hornsby Shire Council <http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/media/documents/environment-and-waste/bushland-and-biodiversity/bushcare/native-and-weed-look-alikes/Introduction.pdf>

And remember: when in doubt, don't pull it out!



Native breynia, weed cassia – Hornsby Shire Council

Fun times at Phil's Forest

by Robin Woods

To everyone who has had a part in the planning and lead up to this operation on Sunday, 3 September; what a day filled with fun and enjoyment!

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped plant, Xuela Sledge our Hawkesbury Landcare Co-ordinator for setting it in motion, catering and promotion; Suzie Wright of CVA for the volunteer base; Liam Orrock CVA supervisor for close liaison with Angus Reynolds of Blue Tongue Ecosystems and Marty Gauci Community Bushcare Officer of Hawkesbury City Council and Richie Benson and his team, to make the planting follow smoothly and Mark Fuller of Avianation for a great talk and discovery of 24 species of birds within and around the forest...who'd have thought we would see so many!!?



"The Bushcarers caring!"

To get involved with Phil's Forest Bushcare (1st Sunday of the month from 9am-12noon), contact Martin Gauci, Community Bushcare Officer on 4560 4525 or 0413 195 248 or mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

New and Improved Native Garden at the Hawkesbury Community Nursery by Jutta Hamilton

During the cooler months of the year, the native garden of the Community Nursery had a make-over. Nursery Volunteers Dennis, Michael and a team of the Green Army took their turns to prune, weed, cut back, mulch and add a variety of new plants to the garden.

Within weeks the garden showed its real beauty. Stout Bamboo Grass is gracefully flowering and the seed heads provide food for many little birds like Red-Browed Finch. The Blackthorn hedge has become the safe and preferred nesting site, with 13 tiny Superb Fairy-wren nests, built from the spent seed heads of the Stout Bamboo Grass.

Pink Spider flower Grevillea and Philotheca have been flowering for weeks and Bottlebrush, Native Frangipani and Golden Paper Daisy are in full bud, ready to start flowering. Little Honeyeaters like the Eastern Spinebill, the White-plumed Honeyeater and Wattlebirds are checking on the progress. We have also spotted the first native bees.

Little green frogs are calling from the strappy leaves of Lomandras and Blue Flax Lily. In sunny spots of the garden, juvenile lizards are sunbaking, rushing off into the safety of Weeping Meadow Grass, Native Geranium, and Saltbush groundcovers when disturbed. It will not be long before we will see the resident Blue Tongue Lizard.



Green thumb Mick helping to transform the native garden

The Breynias and a Sandpaper Fig add a nice contrast in colour with their dark leaves. Their fruits will mature later in the season and will feed some of the fruit eating animals that frequent the garden.

If you need some ideas for your native garden at home, come and see us on a Wednesday, 9am-1pm

at the Hawkesbury Community Nursery, 10 Mulgrave Rd, Mulgrave. Or by appointment, please contact Jutta Hamilton, Community Nursery Officer 4560 4651 or Jutta.HAMILTON@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Hollow Workshop at McMahon Park

Earlier this Year Dr Adrian Davis from "Hollows as Homes" gave a dynamic presentation on the importance and types of hollows and who uses them in and around the greater Sydney area. This was done through a few night and day motion camera movies which showed a variety of native fauna using and competing with each other to use these valuable hollows. Following the presentation, we walked through McMahon Park Bushcare site and saw a variety of hollows within the bushland area; what a great credit to the McMahon Park Bushcare Group.



If you were one of the unfortunate ones to miss out on the Hollows as Homes workshop, all is not lost. Dr Adrian Davis will be at Memorial Park as part of the Kurrajong a Buzz festival on Sunday 19 November. You will have the opportunity to ask Adrian about ecology and conservation and to learn exactly why our trees and hollows are an important component of our cities and natural landscapes. Because understanding these hollows is an important key to conservation.

Using examples of nest boxes, tree hollows, possums and the amazing Powerful Owl, Dr Adrian Davis will discuss the importance of tree hollows to our native wildlife, and explain how you can get involved in this exciting national program. Being involved in Hollows as Homes couldn't be easier!

Simply visit www.hollowsashomes.com to register and report any hollows you see and any wildlife using them.



Dr Adrian Davis and his eager students learning about hollows

Our community loves natives

We've been flat out at the Nursery this year! We just keep on growing a wide variety of native plants for the Hawkesbury and the community keeps wanting more, which is simply fantastic. With 150 different species currently in stock, our plant varieties cover the Hawkesbury area far and wide. From St Albans to Bligh Park; from the majestic Blue Gums to the delicious Winter Apples; we try to cover all our bases.



Nursery Officer Jutta Hamilton & Councillor Nathan Zamprogno

We've had two great events this year - the Hawkesbury Show in May and National Tree Day in July, which was also our Open Day at the Nursery. We supplied around 900 plants to show visitors (not all of them from the Hawkesbury, so some Hawkesbury native plants will be planted in other parts of Sydney) over three days, consisting of 20 different species that included trees, shrubs, groundcovers and vines. At the National Tree Day event we gave away 41 different species and over 850 plants at the Nursery. The Nursery Open Day was even bigger this year, with 14 environmentally/community focused organisations showing fantastic support through their involvement. Some of these organisations included NPWS, Wetland Warriors, Hawkesbury Landcare, Hawkesbury Men's Shed and the Hawkesbury River County Council, to name a few.

Special thanks to Ken and Trish for their help on plant advice at the Hawkesbury Show and also the two main "young guns" Chris and Richie. Their enthusiasm, knowledge and dedication are truly infectious and greatly appreciated by all. The National Tree Day plant giveaway this year was a real winner and it could not have happened if it was not for all the Nursery Bushcare volunteers that helped in its preparation and on the actual day.

These plant giveaways are a great avenue to both keep the general public aware and informed of the importance in the protection of our rivers, waterways, riparian land and natural eco-systems and as well creating and extending on the urban and rural habitats for our native fauna. Every little bit counts!

Wattle Day and End of year festivities

by John Jose

"It's too hot, it's too close to Christmas and too many people are going off on holidays... it's too, too, too..."

The Bushcare Landcare Annual Party is usually held in December but I am questioning whether another date in the year may be more suited. I had vague recollection of the past existence of "Wattle Day". It was originally celebrated on 1st August and was later changed to 1st September.

I researched the Day's origins and it seems that it was mostly celebrated in primary schools. Children would come to school with a sprig of wattle in their uniform. The Golden Wattle is our National Floral Emblem and what a thoroughly wholesome cause for a day of celebration.

I thought it fitting also that our Bushcare Landcare Annual Party should be aligned to such an important date on the calendar. Plus no heat, no Christmas and no holidays. I visualise all Bushcare Landcare Party Goers arriving at the party with sprigs of wattle in hand and the venue itself would be decorated in sprigs of wattle blossom.



Sydney Golden Wattle

Do I have any supporters for this change of date for the Bushcare Party? Please contact Marty Gauci for your feedback and suggestions.

To celebrate Wattle Day, the Hawkesbury Community Nursery is giving away one free Wattle to the first 83 participants. All you need to do is come along with a copy of this article to the Hawkesbury Community Nursery on a Wednesday between 9am to 1pm. This will be a great way to spread the sprigs and to create the great green and gold throughout the Hawkesbury area, plus creating oxygen and a great food source for our native fauna. There are plenty of different Wattles to pick from that include; White Sallow, Sickie shaped, Swamp, Flax-leafed, Sydney Golden, Parramatta Green, Silver stemmed and Sweet scented Wattles, plus Coastal Myall and Prickly Moses. For the full list of current nursery stock, go to - http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/59698/Hawkesbury-Community-Nursery-Available-Species-List-2017-September.pdf I'm sure the nursery will have something for you that will suite your needs.

For more on Wattle Day, go to – <http://www.wattleday.asn.au/>

Bushcare Landcare Awards 2017

Yes it's that time of year and fast approaching.

These events are always such a fantastic time. The main reason I think why they are so great, is that we always seem to get some great little ideas and suggestions from everyone. These suggestions range from location, nominations and duration. And don't you just love some of those Bushcare/Landcare Award names that we come up with over the years, but at the same time appreciate and value the great commitment and innovation to our natural environment through bush regen, weed control and revegetation our Bushcare and Landcare people do. You guys are the environmental conscience and lifeblood of the Hawkesbury.

So I welcome and call for all your nominations and suggestions for –

- Environmental Group of the Year
- Environmental Volunteer of the Year
- Nursery Green Thumb
- And any other award that you may suggest
- Location and duration

If you cannot remember any past awards as well some of the groovy locations, please see past Bushcare Newsletters at – <http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/environment/natural-environment/bushcare/bushcare-newsletters> and see Volume 17 Issue 1, Volume 16 Issue 1 & Volume 15 Issue 1.



Hawkesbury Indian Myna Action Group (HIMAG)

Hawkesbury Indian Myna Action Group (HIMAG) Update
HIMAG is a coordinated community project to improve the biodiversity of the Hawkesbury area through community education and humane control of Indian Myna Birds.

HIMAG VOLUNTEER AREA COORDINATORS (VAC) AND TRAP AVAILABILITY

Leigh Williams: Sackville VAC 0437 498 589

leigh.williams@pacific.net.au

Peter Ryan: Pitt Town VAC & free trap hire. 0431 430 800

Justin Arndt: Glossodia & surrounds VAC

0421 647 339 himagglossodia@gmail.com

Brad Clay: Wilberforce / East Kurrajong VAC bh: 4560 4532

ah: 4576 3393 bclay@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Jenny Fraser: Kurrajong & surrounds VAC

0409 817 548 himagkurrajong@gmail.com

Hawkesbury Men's Shed: Trap Construction & sales,
23 Bosworth Street, Richmond, contact: Terry 0414 355 263 & Les
0408 442 955, Mondays & Wednesdays.

The John Morony Correctional Complex. Trap construction & sales,
corner of The Northern Road and Richmond Road,
Berkshire Park Contact: Allan Lister 4582 2219

allan.lister@dcs.nsw.gov.au (Best to call in morning periods)

For more Detailed HIMAG info. Go to –

<http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/environment/natural-environment/pest-animals/indian-myna-control-program-himag> or Google "Hawkesbury Myna" it may be quicker. Or contact Martin Gauci: HCC, Community Bushcare Officer & HIMAG facilitator; general enquiries 4560 4525 or 0413 195 248, mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au.

AVOID BREEDING SHY BIRDS

This little article was in the last issue of the newsletter, but this cannot be stressed enough.

IMPORTANT TRAPPING TIP – Avoid breeding "shy birds".

Euthanase birds at night, when other Indian Mynas are asleep / roosting. Therefore they will be unable to see or hear this occurring and will not learn to avoid the Pee Gee Trap. If Indian Mynas hear what is called a "distress call" from other Indian Mynas, they become more wary of things that are nearby. If they see a Myna being captured by a human inside a trap, then they also become more wary of that spot, which means that we could end up with Myna populations that avoid traps. For all the science, go to <http://andreasgriffin.weebly.com/>. To hear the various Indian Myna Calls go to <http://andreasgriffin.weebly.com/myna-callsphotos.html>

Mens Shed Nest Boxes

The local men's Shed at Bosworth Street is branching out with their construction and contribution to HIMAG. Earlier last year some of the Men's Shed participants became inspired by the 'Build your own Wildlife Nest Box. A guide for Western Sydney' book, produced by the Greater Sydney Local Land Services. So far the nest boxes that the guys at the Hawkesbury Men's Shed have concentrated on are; Pardalotes, Microbats, Red-rumped Parrot, Musk Lorikeet, Feathertail Glider, Pygmy Possum, Antechinus and Microbats with the microbat box being extremely popular. Terry at the Men's Shed said "the philosophy at the Hawkesbury Men's Shed is not a focus on producing traps or nest boxes, but it's about looking after the welfare of the men in the shed. It's about the conversation and comradely the men have at the shed together and the bi-product of this is the traps and nest boxes".

The nest boxes and traps can be acquired from the Richmond Men's Shed via a \$40-50 donation to the shed, which covers materials and running costs. Located at 23 Bosworth Street, Richmond. Open Mondays & Wednesday 9am to 1pm. Call Terry 0414355263.

If you feel you are a successful Indian Myna trapper and would like to pass on your trapping skills to others in your area, please contact Martin Gauci (02) 4560 4525 or 0413 195 248 or email mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au



The Hawkesbury Men's Shed participants with a Pee Gee Trap and a variety of nest boxes.

Hawkesbury Bushcare - Scheduled Meeting Times

Mill Road Reserve Bushcare

Mill Road (Singletons Rv), Kurrajong
1st Friday of the Month (9am-12noon)

Don Street Reserve Bushcare

Don Street, Kurrajong Heights
Various work days

McMahon Park Bushcare

McMahon Park, Kurrajong
Last Sunday of the Month (9am-12noon)

Matheson Park Bushcare

Matheson Park, Kurrajong
3rd Friday of the Month (9am-12noon)

Merroo Crown Reserve Bushcare

855 Comleroy Road, Kurrajong
Various work days

Navua Community Group

Navua Reserve, Grose Wold
Various work days

Phil's Forest Bushcare, Richmond

Old Kurrajong Road at Richmond Bridge, Richmond
1st Sunday of the Month (9am-12noon)

Charles Kemp Reserve Bushcare

Swallow Reach Place, Sackville
4th Saturday of the Month (9am-12noon)

Cumberland Reach Memorial Reserve Bushcare

Aboriginal Memorial Reserve, Lower Portland
1st Sunday of the Month (9am-12noon)

Sunnyvale Bushies

Lower Macdonald Valley
561 Settlers Rd, Lower Macdonald
3rd Saturday of the Month (9am-12noon)

St Albans Weed Wackers

St Albans Park, St Albans
3rd Sunday of the Month (9am-12noon)

George Street Reserve Bushcare

George Street Reserve, Bligh Park
4th Sunday of the Month (9am-12noon)

Nursery Volunteer Group

Hawkesbury Community Nursery,
10 Mulgrave Rd. Mulgrave. Ph 4560 4561
Wednesdays (9am-1pm) or by appointment
Jutta.HAMILTON@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

If you are interested in being involved in any of the Hawkesbury Bushcare sites, or have any enquiries, please contact the Community Bushcare Officer, Martin Gauci on 4560 4525, or email: martin.gauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au. We would love to hear from you.

