

2015 Bushcare Landcare Awards

The invitations for the Bushcare Landcare Awards are always attractive, as are the locations where they are held and the food provided. Since I started volunteering at the HCC Community Nursery I have only missed one – the first – because it coincided with our local Fire Brigade Christmas party which is a truly community event not to be missed. However, after that I made sure not to commit to any event in early December so as not to miss this event. Why? Because this event brings together local heroes in a field of endeavour that is becoming increasingly a passion of mine.

As I approach my late 50's I find the world an ever more challenging place to live. Being able to contribute to improving it in any way gives great comfort. Climate change poses great challenges for all of us and those that follow. The politics around it can be quite cynical and depressing. However to work with others who value our planet and understand the importance of protecting our biodiversity through bushcare activities, or with landholders that work with the land rather than exploit it for short term gains, is a great reward.

The 2015 event was held on a glorious day at the amazing EarthCare Centre. Even taking the wrong exit from the Motorway (twice!) didn't dampen the good feeling. After a great brunch with great local



That's me in the middle

produce, some from the community garden at the EarthCentre, what more could you have asked for?

I certainly was surprised to win the Environmental Volunteer of the year award. I am honoured to share the award with sixteen remarkable people whose names are attached to the plaque. I am also continuously buoyed by all the volunteers at the Hawkesbury Community Nursery and in local Bushcare Groups throughout the district and the Council and Greater Sydney Local Land Services (GSLLS) officers that are committed to the shared goals of Bushcarers.

As a Bushcare and Landcarer I am guided by one of the key lessons: the goal is never to just kill a weed but to repair a damaged environment.

I think this goal unites all those involved in bushcare and landcare and motivates us to keep up our endeavours.

Congratulations and thanks to all those who attended the day and made it such an enjoyable event, and to those who received

the various awards presented by Cr Jill Reardon and Vanessa Keyzer, Regional Landcare Facilitator with GSLLS. Other awards went to the following:

- The Hawkesbury Community Nursery Green Thumb Award – Joan Simpson
- Rookies of the Year – George Street Reserve Bushcare Group
- Group of the Year – Sunnyvale Bushies Bushcare Group
- 21 Years Long Service – Linda Anderson and Mark Anderson
- The Educational Bushcarer Award – Steve Lans

However we are all winners and Marty Gauci, key event organiser, made sure that we all went home with a prize and a smile.

Thank you for valuing the work of volunteers.

Vera Zaccari
 Macdonald Valley

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Editorial

Hey Readers-

Happy New Year to you all; hope you had a nice break and got to recharge your batteries. 2015 wound up in a pretty cool way with the Bushcare Landcare Awards; I had a great time, so thanks heaps everyone.

Sadly this will be the last postal edition of the Bushcare Newsletter 'Weed All About It'. However all is not lost. Hard copies will be available from various avenues throughout the Hawkesbury, that will include:- the libraries, Hawkesbury Community Nursery, Council Chambers, EarthCare building at WSU, NPWS building Richmond, HCC Museum and Gallery and Hawkesbury Men's Shed Richmond, plus a few

other locations. Those that will be posted will be to the Hawkesbury Bushcare supervisors, so you should be able to get a hard copy at your regular Bushcare site. For the meeting dates and times of these sites, a copy of the 2016 Hawkesbury Bushcare Calendar can be seen on page - 5, or <http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/environment/natural-environment2/bushcare>.

Alternatively please send me your updated email to receive future newsletters digitally.

Thanks again to those that contributed articles, they are always warmly welcome.

Happy Days everyone!

Marty Gauci
 Community Bushcare Officer & HIMAG Facilitator
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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.

Grants Report

to Jan 2016 & Project Update

from Land Management Officer - Michael Pattison

Hawkesbury Revegetation – Poor weather conditions has delayed planting though we are still aiming for over 4000 trees, shrubs and groundcovers to be planted this autumn. Funding allows for follow up maintenance including watering and weeding.

Mac Valley Arundo – The Arundo project is progressing well with around 10 public sites under ongoing treatment. Combined with the works on private lands, there is a significant area of the infestation now undergoing treatment. The project will continue this year with funding through GSLLS and Council.

Year 3 of ET Wheeny Creek

Restoration – The Wheeny Creek Restoration Project funded by the Environmental Trust is now finished. Over the 3 years the project has treated invasive weeds over 20 hectares of Shale Sandstone Transition Forest and Alluvial Woodland. Council will continue to invest in ongoing weed control across the site.

Year 4 of Hawkesbury River

Restoration – This project is going well and continues to reduce the impact of weeds on Council riverside reserves.

Greater Sydney Local Land Service (GSLLS)

- Have provided funding for ongoing Lantana control at Half Moon Farm. This project has been running over the last few years and is showing great signs of success. Annual monitoring of Lantana density is continuing across the site.

NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)

- The Bush Fire Mitigation project is underway to create an Asset Protection Zone west of Bowen Mountain. The aim of this project is to reduce fuel loading directly behind the houses to alleviate some of the risk in bushfire season. Funding has also been allocated to upgrade the fire trail network and increase safe access for fire fighters.

Estuary Management Program –

OEH – Funding was provided through the NSW Estuary Management Program to improve stability and

decrease erosion on the banks of South Creek, adjacent to the boat ramp at Governor Phillip Park. Rubble rock (rip rap) was laid over geotextile fabric from top of bank to around 3m below average high tide. This style of treatment not only stabilises the bank, but provides significant inter-tidal habitat for aquatic life. I noted a school of Estuary Perch fingerlings feeding amongst the rocks within a month.



Local Land
Services
Greater Sydney



Australian Government
Department of Sustainability, Environment,
Water, Population and Communities



Office of
Environment
& Heritage

Weed All About It - Newsletter for the Hawkesbury Bushcare Program Volume 16 Issue 1 Summer 2016 This newsletter has been printed on 100% recycled paper.

Gardening tips for Goodenia



Have you ever wanted a small plant that is tough as old boots, not a weed, likes full sun, is drought tolerant, attracts the native animals, will grow bushy & compact, is as versatile as a Coastal Rosemary – *Westringia fruticosa* but comes in our nation's colours (green & gold)? Well now you can.

This little Aussie great is *Goodenia ovata*, Hop Goodenia and will tolerate just about any soil in the Hawkesbury. It can handle frost, drought, full sun & part shade & grows to about 1.5m x 1.5m. The only secret to this little gem is to tip prune the soft green growth 2- 4 times a year in spring & autumn to increase foliage and flowering. Try to avoid a summer & winter prune & give it some water in its early stages to get it established. Goodenia is great for a formal or informal garden. Naturally it is found on the edges of rainforests and sheltered gullies throughout the Bowen Mountain and Kurrajong area.

The volunteers at the Hawkesbury Community Nursery love growing this family favourite & look forward to seeing you at the nursery 10 Mulgrave Road, Mulgrave on a Wednesday 9am-1pm, 4560 4651. For more details go to <http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/services/places-and-facilities/community-nursery>. Happy gardening.

HAWKESBURY LANDCARE OFFICER

Hawkesbury River County Council has been successful in obtaining a grant from NSW Landcare to employ a part-time Local Landcare Facilitator. The position will be hosted by the County Council at South Windsor, but will serve Landcare activities right across the greater Hawkesbury region. This will be achieved by forming a "steering committee" from the newly convened Hawkesbury Landcare Network.

This is a historic appointment as it will be the first time a professional will be focussed on the coordination and promotion of Landcare across the area. It is a credit to existing Landcarers, whose presence created the platform to make this grant a possibility. The position will initially seek to support current projects, but it is hoped in time it will allow the opportunity to expand activities in both scale and participation. The position is currently being advertised, and we expect the successful candidate to be announced in March 2016. Further details and announcements will be made through our website www.hrcc.nsw.gov.au and Facebook page.

Chris Dewhurst, General Manager, HRCC.

Monitors of the Hawkesbury

Genus: Varanus; Coloquial; Goanna
Species: 3 in total in Hawkesbury Catchment

Lace Monitors

(*Varanus varaius*) arboreal

Our most predominant Monitor is also known as Common Goanna or Lacey. Although arboreal they do come down to the ground to forage for food.

Lace Monitors are usually laterally banded in spots and stripes. Juveniles are vividly marked with contrasting creamy yellow spots, further highlighted by black outlines. Sadly these colourful markings fade with age.

Adults are stoutly built and quick moving on all fours. Occasionally adult males will attain a length of six feet (1.8m).

They inhabit both the Sandstone Blue Mountains Range and the Cumberland Flood Plain and have done so for countless millennia.

There is a second colour form called Bells Form. These generally occur in the Western reaches of the Hawkesbury Catchment such as Wolgan Valley and Capertee. Bells Form display broad lateral bands of light creams and contrasting darker black/greys. In these parts both forms occur and interbreed. Like all Monitors they possess large sharp claws for climbing trees and digging for food and nesting sites.

All Monitors reproduce by egg laying. Eggs are creamy-white with a leathery shell. They are usually layed in a dugout hole in the ground or occasionally in a termite mound. Quantity varies from approximately six to twelve. Mating usually occurs early spring. Gestation period from 30-60 days. Eggs laid in late spring. Incubation period from 150-300 days. All this is dependent on prevailing weather conditions. Eggs vary in size from about Bantam hen size to large hen size.

Heath Monitors

(*Varanus rosenbergi*) arboreal

As the name implies they inhabit the Heathlands of the Hawkesbury.

Heathlands are those lands where predominantly Heath grows. Heath is generally prickly shrubs that grown on shallow low nutrient soils, not my favourite habitat, however, it does offer good cover to Heath Monitors. Heath Monitors are considerably smaller than Laceys as they only grow to about four feet in length. They have a more slender, racey build.

Heath Monitors utilise similar comoflauge colours as the Lacey, the difference is in the pattern. Only at very close quarters is the positive identification efficient. For me the front legs are the best indicator: Laceys are striped or banded. Heaths are spotted.

All Monitors can stand on their hind legs and make an awkward waddle, although they resemble a T-Rex when doing so they are not fast in this mode. They obviously do this to gain a better vista of their surroundings.

All Monitors have long forked tongues. They actively protrude their tongue to pick up scent particles. The left and right fork helps to determine the direction of the source of the scent.

The internal olfactory organ determines the type of scent.

Sand Monitor

(*Varanus gouldii*) terrestrial

This is our rarest Monitor in the Hawkesbury but fortunately is prevalent over much of the inland of Australia and my personal favourite.

Sandys also only attain a length of approximately four feet (1.2m). As the name suggests they prefer sandy and sandstone country when found in the Hawkesbury.

They were once prevalent around the Annangrove - Glenorie area, but sadly, not so now.



Monitors fighting for their territory – Photo – Brad Clay

Although Sandys again utilise similar spot and stripe camouflage, the presence of a sandy brown hue dominates this Monitor and will readily identify them. Another trait of these Monitors is that they tend to seek refuge under slabs of sandstone rather than up a tall tree.

Hawkesbury Monitors like to dine on large insects, such as, Locusts, Cicada, Grasshoppers, Beetles etc., and when available, small mammals and bird eggs.

Generally all Monitors are shy and quick to retreat to safety. Some Lace Monitors

will overcome this shyness in frequently patronised barbeque areas. It is here they may become bold and make a dash for a hot barbeque sausage or unattended sandwich. It amazes me that some picnickers frown on this. I believe they should be glad for the interaction.

Vulnerability

All Lace Monitors will eat carion, such as road kill.

Some Laceys patrol certain roads for road kill. Inevitably these Laceys will become road kill themselves.

Most Monitors will eat domestic fowl eggs. This usually leads to conflict with the farmer.

The value of a Fowl Egg is about 50 cents.

The value of a Native Monitor is priceless.

All monitors are di-urnal. They are active only during daylight hours.

Ferals

One of the greatest threats to Monitors is foxes. These ferals sniff out the buried eggs of Monitors and devour them all. This is a great part of the cause in the decline in all our Australian Native Species.

Places to View Monitors

Australian Reptile Park, Calga, North Coast, New South Wales. Here there is a good collection of Monitors and other Reptiles.

Featherdale Wildlife Park, Kildare Road, Blacktown, New South Wales. Here there are numerous Monitors and other Natives on display.

Mick Greentree, Naturalist

MACDONALD VALLEY CELEBRATES by Viki Winton

On 31st October 2015 ten years of bush and river care in the Macdonald Valley reached a pivotal point. It was high time to mark this occasion with a celebration!

More than 100 local landowners came together in St Albans Park to join the party. The event was carefully orchestrated by Vera Zaccari of MVA and Weed Wackers fame. Vera adorned the park with information tents, a Community Nursery native plant stall, the bush style podium for the formalities and tables laden with a festival of food which only our wondrous Jan Hawkins could contrive and carry out. The scene was set, not even the slightly gloomy weather could alter the cheerful atmosphere.

Linda Hanlon from the GSLLS was the first to speak; she gave an overview of the project from its outset, followed by congratulatory words from Cllr Jill Reardon and our own Sherri McMahon who talked about the process for the 'on the ground' works. Hawkesbury Cllrs Jill Paine and Leigh Williams also came and we thank them for their interest and support.

Each participating landowner was then presented with a pretty certificate recognizing their contribution in rehabilitating the Macdonald River along with a number of native plants grown from seed collected locally. These endorsements were presented by the three funding / organisational bodies involved from the start.



Some of the grant recipients over the past 10 years.

The HNCMA (now GSLLS) chose and entrusted Linda Hanlon with the overall management and responsibility. She succeeded admirably. The Macdonald Valley is a far finer environment than 10 years ago and so many more people are aware of the importance of amending riverbank degradation.

Time then for Local bush regenerators to give a demonstration of the treatment used for eradication

of *Arundo donax* or Giant Reed, currently the main target weed in the Valley and then as a marker of the event and to finalise the formalities Hawkesbury Council's bush guru Marty Gauci planted a *E. michaeliana* on the riverbank where we trust it will grow prolifically in tandem with another 10 years of bush and river restoration.

GEORGE STREET RESERVE BUSHCARE GROUP

by Nicola Trulock

George St Reserve, located near the Bligh Park Shopping centre, is a long stretch of critically endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland. It contains many wonderful native plant and fauna species some of which use the reserve as a link between Windsor Downs Nature Reserve and the bushland at Rickaby's Creek Paddocks.

George St Reserve is infested with a variety of weeds, most notably African Lovegrass and Mother of Millions which are a familiar sight throughout the Hawkesbury region. These weeds spread quite quickly, taking up the nutrients, light and space that would otherwise be used by native grasses and herbs.

Bush Regeneration contractors have been hard at work within the reserve, removing the African Lovegrass and Mother of Millions to reveal the beautiful array of native grasses, small shrubs and herbs that managed to exist underneath. Tiny delicate wildflowers have been uncovered such as the Purple Burr Daisy, Vanilla Lily and Blue Flax Lily.

The George St Reserve Bushcare Group was formed towards the end of 2014 by a group of Bligh Park residents who are active within their community and share a passion for their local bushland. After

a morning of vigorous weeding, catching up on news and a lot of laughter, we chat over cups of tea and get to eat the wonderful home baked cakes and slices that the George St Bushcare Volunteer Supervisors, Julie and Karen, bring in for us to eat.

Earlier last year, Greater Sydney Local Land Services in conjunction with Hawkesbury City Council helped interested volunteers to attend some workshops run by the esteemed botanist, Theresa James, on identifying and caring for Threatened Ecological Communities. Three members of George St Reserve Bushcare attended this workshop and were able to learn more about Cumberland Plain Woodland and the threatened species which live within it, some of which can be found in the reserve. This knowledge has been shared amongst us all at the Bushcare group and has helped us to better care for our precious bushland remnant.



The new George Street Reserve Bushcare Group, willing and able

We have already achieved so much in the short time of the Bushcare Group's existence, having removed a substantial patch of exotic grasses and Mother of Millions. We have seen the ground heal after our disturbance and then come to life as native seed has regenerated into patches of young Weeping Meadow Grass and Three Awn Speargrass.

George St Reserve Bushcare Group meets every 4th Sunday of the month from 9am to 12noon and we would love for you to join us in restoring this beautiful patch of Cumberland Plain Woodland. Hope to see you there!!



2016

Hawkesbury Bushcare Calendar

Help the environment and have an enjoyable day

SITE LOCATIONS	GROUP	DAY	TIME	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Kurradjong/Kurradjong Heights Areas															
Singletons Reserve, Kurradjong	Mill Road Bushcare	1 st Friday	9am – 12noon	*	5	4	1	6	3	1	5	2	7	4	*
Don Street Reserve, Kurradjong Heights	Don Street Bushcare	Various	Various	Contact the Community Bushcare Officer for further details (02) 4560 4525											
McMahon Park, Kurradjong	McMahon Park Bushcare	Last Sunday	9am – 12noon	*	28	27	24	29	26	31	28	25	30	27	*
Matheson Park, Kurradjong	Matheson Park Bushcare	3 rd Friday	9am – 12noon	*	19	18	15	20	17	15	19	16	21	18	*
855 Comleroy Road, Kurradjong	Merroo Crown Reserve Bushcare	Various	Various	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
North Richmond/Grose Vale Areas															
Navua Reserve, Grose Wold	Navua Community Group	1 st Sunday	9am – 12noon	*	7	6	3	1	5	3	7	4	2	6	*
Redbank Creek, North Richmond	Redbank Creek Bushcare	2 nd Wednesday	9am – 12noon	*	10	9	13	11	9	13	10	14	12	9	*
Glossodia/Ebenezer/Sackville Areas															
Woodbury Reserve, Glossodia	Woodbury Reserve Bushcare	2 nd Saturday	9am – 12noon	*	13	12	9	14	11	9	13	10	8	12	
Charles Kemp Recreational Reserve, Ebenezer	Charles Kemp Reserve Bushcare	4 th Saturday	9am – 12noon	*	27	26	23	28	25	23	27	24	22	26	*
Aboriginal Memorial Reserve - Lower Portland	Cumberland Reach Memorial Reserve Bushcare Group	1 st Sunday	9am – 12noon	*	7	6	3	1	5	3	7	4	2	6	*
Wisemans Ferry/Macdonald Valley Areas															
561 Settlers Road, Lower Macdonald	Sunnyvale Bushies Bushcare	3 rd Saturday	9am – 12noon	*	20	19	16	21	18	16	20	17	15	19	*
St Albans Park, St Albans	St Albans Village Weed Wackers	3 rd Sunday	9am – 12noon	*	21	20	17	15	19	17	21	18	16	20	*
Windsor and Surrounds															
Hawkesbury Community Nursery 10 Mulgrave Road, Mulgrave (next to Companion Animal Shelter)	Nursery Volunteer Group	Wednesday	9am - 1pm	*	Open every Wednesday or by appointment, excluding Public Holidays. Contact the Community Nursery Officer for further details (02) 4560 4651										*
George Street Reserve, Bligh Park	George Street Reserve Bushcare	4 th Sunday	9am – 12noon	*	28	27	24	22	26	24	28	25	23	27	*

* Optional workdays that can be negotiated with the various Supervisor/s

Come and grow some native plants for your property, school, community, Bushcare or Landcare Group

What to Bring?

- ▶ Sun hat
- ▶ Sturdy shoes
- ▶ Long sleeve shirt
- ▶ Long pants
- ▶ Sunscreen
- ▶ Drinking water
- ▶ Eye Protection
- ▶ Enthusiasm
- ▶ A sense of humour
- ▶ A smiley face
- ▶ Joke
- ▶ A love of the environment

Enquiries

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This document contains important information.
If you do not understand it, contact the
Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450.



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Council Website: www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au
Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9.30am-5pm

A chirping count – over 1 million!

Friends, families and the Hawkesbury Bushcare groups all got together last October to 'make every bird count' for the Aussie Backyard Bird Count.

In what could be the biggest citizen science project in Australia's history, the bird count gathered statistics from all over Australia, with:

- Over 560 different bird species sighted
- Over 42,000 people submitted counts from across Australia
- Over 1 million birds counted (for a list of the birds Australia wide go to – <http://aussiebirdcount.org.au/results/>).

So what did we do? A small group of us headed over to Swallow Rock Reserve (aka Argyle Bailey Memorial Reserve) for the dawn chorus and then to spot a few birds. With the bird tour led by Keith Brandwood from the Cumberland Bird Observers' Club (CBOC), we were not disappointed in seeing:

- a Sea Eagle opening its mouth in defiance against its smaller attackers/defenders.
- the strong contrasting colours of a Mistletoe Bird
- the vibrant colours of a Sacred Kingfisher, perched way up high.
- the White-throated Treecreeper doing what they do best, and
- hearing and seeing the dawn chorus totalling 65 different bird species. Wow!



Keith and the merry onlookers with the binoculars

Now that's something to tweet about!

The bird counting event aimed to create bird awareness and conservation by learning the skills to identify birds and as well as creating homes for birds in our own gardens. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Identifying birds

- There is a free app for identifying birds see - <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/aussie-bird-count/id917024019?mt=8> or <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=info.gaiaguide.android.app.australianbirds&hl=en>, or do your own app search.
- Join a local bird group. The Cumberland Bird Observers' Club is very close - <http://www.cboc.org.au/>

Creating Bird Friendly Gardens

- Concentrate on attracting smaller birds to your garden, if you are on a standard building block. These birds are the honey, insect & seed eaters. The honey eating birds' favour plants such as Grevilleas (smaller flower/ no hybrids), Correa, Banksia, Callistemon and Melaleucas. Where there are flowers, there are usually insects so these plants will also attract the insect feeders, as well as Acacias and Leptospermum (Tea Tree). The seed eaters will like the native sedges and grasses like Lomandra, Kangaroo Grass, Tussock Grass etc. The Hawkesbury Community Nursery has a stack of these plants, go to page 2 and 5 of the newsletter to find out more details on the nursery.
- For great tips on how to attract the three types of bird eaters and some great gardening tips on how to create a native garden; visit <http://aussiebirdcount.org.au/gardening/> and also <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/Your-Garden-How-make-it-safe-haven-birds>.

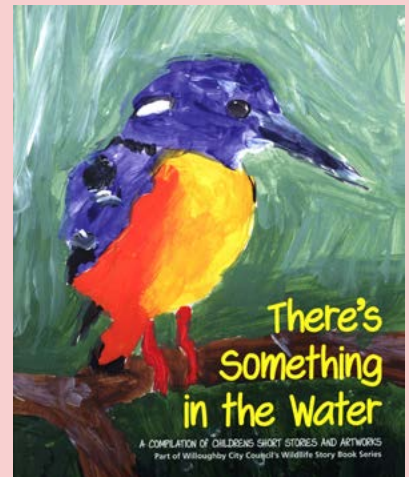
If would like to attend future bird tours in the Hawkesbury, contact the Cumberland Bird Observers' Club (see below) or contact Marty Gauci to register your interest. Big thanks to Keith Brandwood for his great knowledge and generosity for the morning bird tour. Keith is a member of the CBOC, a club which conducts bird tours all year round. For more information on this club, their outings and events, visit <http://www.cboc.org.au>.

A colorful poster for Clean Up Australia Day 2016. At the top, the text 'Clean Up Australia Day 2016' is written in a playful font, with a green map of Australia and a hot air balloon. Below this is a large, stylized illustration of a landscape with a river, trees, buildings, and a sailboat. The date '6 March 2016' is prominently displayed in blue. Below the date, the text 'Come on Australia - Let's Go' is written in a bold, black font. Further down, it says 'Register now at cleanupaustriaday.org.au or call 1800 CUA DAY'. At the bottom, there are logos for major partners like Shop A Docket, McDonald's, and the EPA, along with other smaller logos for partners and suppliers.

There's Something in the Water

Willoughby City Council has kindly donated several copies of a great kids' books titled 'There's Something in the Water' to Hawkesbury City Council Libraries (Richmond Branch and Hawkesbury Central Library, Windsor) and the three Environmental Education Centres of Brewongle, Longneck Lagoon and Penrith Lakes.

The book of short stories is part of an educational project designed to facilitate 'kids teaching kids' about local wildlife. Year 5 classes at each school in Willoughby were asked to focus on their local water catchment and the wildlife that depends on it. Then they shared their knowledge by writing a short story on a particular animal and reading it to a younger student. The book contains the best stories from the participating schools.



This book is a real winner. The stories have the ability to get into the minds of kids, and the colourful illustrations can give kids the confidence to draw and illustrate something themselves. Thanks to funding from The Greater Sydney Local Land Services (GSLLS), these stories on catchment and wildlife will go to many libraries across the greater Sydney region.

CAT'S CLAWS DEMISE PUTS JEWELS IN OUR EYES

Run by a local landcare group, this project has aimed to assist landholders to protect endangered bushland from the damage inflicted by Cat's Claw Creeper, which is a highly invasive vine that climbs high into the canopy of our forests. Funded initially in 2013 as a project to educate and engage landholders, map the weed and train locals in methods of treatment, we found that the scourge was much greater than first recognised. Over 40 landholders were assisted by contract bush regenerator Jacob Philpott and also by a Green Army team. Local Land Services and Hawkesbury River County Council also joined in the events to spread the word. Meanwhile every summer we saw new flowering at the tops of some of the tallest gums in the district.

The news came that we might be able to secure a colony of Leaf-mining jewel beetles (*Hylaeogena jureceki*) which are successfully attacking the Cat's Claw in northern NSW. Contact finally made with DPI Grafton just before their office closed confirmed we might be able to have about 250. These beetles are tiny...less than 2mm in length, they could easily escape out of most enclosures. We obtained a purpose-built enclosure to keep beetles on pots of the weed, which meant they could be monitored. Beetles were sent on 7 December just as their office closed. Two packets of green leafy vines with 250 beetles on each and two very warm 'icebags' after a long postal delay. I estimated we only had about 150 alive. We transferred them into the tent and a couple of days later we took some to the chosen reserve site where they have plenty of the creeper to carry out their life-cycle.

These beetles are host-specific to this plant species, which means they rely entirely on this plant. About 40 were retained in the cage onto potted creeper; that way they can easily be monitored for rates of damage to the plant, any signs of breeding, and activity in high and low temperatures. The recent photos taken a month after they started their travel seem to indicate that they are settled into the plants. I am amazed how big a chunk of leaf is consumed by such a tiny creature within an hour! Monitoring of the other selected sites will be maintained over a few months to see if any beetle offspring have started to appear.



Jewel Beetle *Hylaeogena jureceki*

Once we are sure of success, we will begin contacting participating landholders to offer a small colony onto their own sites. It would be crucial that the site is not attacked with chemicals during their stay.

Thanks to the many landowners and agencies, including the Landcare team Jacob Philpott, Kate Young, Trish Butler and Janet Fox; Alison Towerton, Angie Fricker and Vanessa Keyzer (GSLLS); Scott Herring & Steve Chapple (NPWS), Bernadette and Rod (DPI), Frank and Laura from Wheen Bee Farm, Hugh Paterson Good Bush People; Marty Gauci, Mick Pattison, Sean Perry and Jutta Hamilton (HCC); Richie Benson and Chris Dewhurst (HRCC). Photos show the beetle magnified and beetles on leaves with hand as scale.

For more information, contact Robin Woods via email robin@hen.org.au or 0414 672 014.

Nationally listed – Critically Endangered Rainforest

The Commonwealths Department of the Environment have made a handy little book for the nationally listed and critically endangered vegetation community. This little beauty is titled "Western Sydney Dry Rainforest and Moist Woodland on Shale: a nationally-protected ecological community".

This guide is for anyone who wants to understand this Hawkesbury vegetation community - what it is, why it is threatened and what national protection means for people in the region. To get your digital copy go to - <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/publications/western-sydney-dry-rainforest-moist-woodland-shale> Having a read of this book you may notice a few familiar names in the print; so it's great to see our Bushcare and Landcare comrades being recognised. The booklet is a great read as it covers those every day questions we want to know about like:

- What it is, why it is so important, why it needs protection, are all patches of it protected, and more....

Hawkesbury Bushcare has been lucky enough to get a few hard copies (limited of course) of this book. Contact your community Bushcare Officer Marty to see if any copies are still available – 45604525 or mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au. If not don't fear as we plan to put a few at the local library.



Above - Western Sydney Dry Rainforest © Robin Woods

Volunteer Profile



Name: Ian McEwan

Group: Matheson Park Bushcare Group

Group Location: Matheson Park, KURRAJONG

Time with Group: About 14 years

Position in Group: Volunteer

Occupation: Retired

Reason for Volunteering: To give back to the community. To restore Matheson Park by eradicating weeds

Best Achievement: Stream Watch and helping to eradicate Lantana and Privet

Favourite Native Species: NSW Christmas Bush *Ceratopetalum gummiferum* and Gum Trees (Angophoras, Eucalypts and Corrymbias)

Most Hated Weed: Fireweed *Senecio madagascariensis*

6 people you would like to invite to dinner:

Trish Butler, Robin Woods, Garth Smith, John and Toni McKenzie and Janet Fox





Hawkesbury Indian Myna Action Group (HIMAG)

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

Leif Rosengaard: Hobartville VAC & free trap hire.

4578 2189 leifemail@aol.com

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

Men's Shed: Trap Construction & sales,

23 Bosworth Street, Richmond, contact: 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-environment2/pest-animals/indian-myna-control-program-himag> or Google "Hawkesbury Myna" it may be quicker. Or contact for general enquiries contact Martin Gauci Council's Community Bushcare Officer and HIMAG facilitator, (02) 4560 4525 or 0413 195 248, mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au.

Trappings from Oakville

Over the last few years I've had the Indian Mynas building up in numbers around my place with a slow reduction in the number of native birds, especially all the smaller birds. I thought to myself 'I've had enough of this'. I noticed they were congregating in my plum tree; a nice shady area for summer (must be their favourite spot). So I decided to set the trap up under the plum tree. I put the trap out nice and early in the morning with a bit of bread and caught about 10 after the first few days of trapping. Overnight I euthanased all of them except one (I always make sure to keep the liveliest one for the next day's trapping). Well, over a five week period I caught a total of 61 Indian Mynas; I'm pretty happy with that. I did catch a few native birds, but I just let them go pretty much straight away.

Ken Wharfe

CONGRATS MAC VALLEY ASSOC.

Congratulations to the Macdonald Valley Association who was awarded the Hawkesbury Environmental Award in the 2016 Hawkesbury Australia Day Awards. This new award in Council's Australia Day Award program aims to recognise an individual or group for their outstanding contribution and dedication to protect and enhance Hawkesbury's natural environment. The award was presented at a special ceremony on Australia Day recognising the Macdonald Valley Associations 10 year anniversary of restoring the banks of the Macdonald River. This work of the Association has been a great example of what can be achieved when people work together to drive real change for the environment and produce outcomes for our community.

Find out more about the Hawkesbury Australia Day Awards at <http://www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au/services/people/community-awards/australia-day-award>. Nominations for the 2017 Hawkesbury Australia Day Awards will open in October 2016.

Join the
Compost Revolution

Take the tutorial, do the quiz and receive your discounted compost bin or worm farm straight to your door! Visit www.compostrevolution.com.au/hawkesbury to get started today.

Compost Revolution is an online resource to teach you the skills of composting and worm farming.

Composting and worm farming is easy to do and reduces the wasteful dumping of food scraps in landfill where they produce harmful greenhouse gases.

For more information about Council and the Compost Revolution program visit www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au.

Compost bins (including composting k-it)

\$29.90*

Worm Farms (including worm farming k-it and the worms)

\$44.90*

That's 70% OFF RRP

*Available to Hawkesbury residents only. One per household.



Weed All About It NEWSLETTER

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The General Manager, Hawkesbury City Council
PO Box 146, Windsor 2756



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