



HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL

Weed All About It

www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Volume 18, Issue 1

Newsletter for the 'Hawkesbury Bushcare' Program

Autumn 2018

Be on the lookout for the American Corn Snake

Feral animals are now taking a different twist. There have been recent sightings of the American corn snake (ACS) *Pantherophis guttatus* throughout the greater Sydney area. ACS is a non-venomous small to medium-sized, slender snake which originates from the United States of America and Mexico. Adult snakes can grow up to 180 cm long. Colouration in the corn snake species is highly variable however the most common form is orange or brownish-yellow with large black-edged red blotches down the middle of its back. For more information and pictures on the ACS see <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nia/american-corn-snake>.

The ACS can potentially carry ticks that spread the bacterium *Cowdria ruminantium* that, although not lethal to reptiles, can kill grazing animals. ACS are also a vector of cryptosporidiosis, a diarrhoeal disease.

ACS has the potential to reduce limited or small populations of native wildlife species by preying upon them or competing for habitat or food. The main ecological impacts where the ACS has been introduced are on native animals that may be consumed as prey, including mammals, birds, frogs and lizards. It is primarily active at night and is both a terrestrial burrower and extremely good climber. It only preys on



American corn snake detected on Wolgan Valley Rd, Newnes, in late 2017.

at night, which is potentially dangerous to adult birds on the nest. Breeding occurs in spring and 3–40 eggs are laid during the summer. Individuals can live for up to 32 years in captivity.

The ACS is able to survive in a diverse range of habitats including open grassland, forest, agricultural land and semi-urban areas. These characteristics and the ability of the species to hide under objects, burrow underground and to climb trees, make detection of the snake in an open environment difficult. Because the ACS is difficult to detect, eradication once established in the wild is difficult.

The ACS is considered a serious invasive species and is listed as

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Editorial

G'day Everybody.

This is our first edition for 2018! I'm glad to see the end of a hot summer, although I did manage to catch a few waves and do a number of different rainforest walks from Katoomba, Kurrajong and to the Central Coast. What a great experience those rainforests all were. All very different; but the common denominator was the majestic Coachwood, particularly as they were all in flower; and kids just love their helicopter-like aerodynamics! I do too.

But let's focus on this edition. Firstly, congratulations to Richie Benson for being our 2017 Environmental Volunteer of the Year! He received this well-deserved award at the Bushcare Landcare Awards. Richie has been committed to the restoration of natural areas along the Hawkesbury River via bushland regeneration and revegetation and his involvement with the Hawkesbury Environment Network. He has also been involved with –

- Cumberland Reach riverbank revegetation,

- Formation of Cumberland Reach Landcare,
- Hawkesbury Landcare Network Committee member and
- Raising awareness of sites in need of urgent attention.

Secondly, a huge thanks to Chris Dewhurst at the Hawkesbury River County Council (HRCC) for letting us host the 2017 Bushcare Landcare Awards at the HRCC HQ. The place was decked out like a Christmas tree and most of us remained dry despite the downpour and we had a great time. What a great contribution this was to Bushcare and Landcare as we always try to do something a little bit different each year at the awards. And last but not least, enjoy the read and thanks for all of those cool articles by those who contributed. To those who are keen to add to the next edition, I welcome your creative input.

PS. To all those active Bushcarers out there. Why don't you invite a friend along to Bushcare this year with you; it's nice to be asked, and you never know, they might say yes.

Happy Days

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.



BUSHCARE/LANDCARE AWARDS

I certainly did not expect it!

I am proud to be the 20th award winner of the 2017 'Environmental Volunteer of the Year' award at the 20th annual 2017 Hawkesbury Bushcare Landcare Awards. It was such a shock! I can think of so many well deserving people in the Hawkesbury, so I was really proud of my achievement. To be recognised for something that I have a lot of passion for gives me a great feeling of hope for our future, with like-minded people supporting each other.

2017 Bushcare Landcare Award recipients



L-R back row - Jeff Cottrell, Robin Woods, Fred Wood, Rosemary Otten, Richie Benson, Prue Gargano, Janet Fox, Peter Mobbs, John Jose & Clr Brad Bunting.

L-R front row - Clr. Danielle Wheeler, Marty Gauci, Max Krensell, Dana Pank, Xuela Sledge & Jade Paton.

It was great to see so many other people receive awards too! It really takes a strong network of Volunteers and supporters to achieve what we do. Councillors Danielle Wheeler and Brad Bunting presented the awards which included -

- The Hawkesbury Community Nursery Green Thumb Award – Rosemary Otten
- 20 Years Long Service to Bushcare & Landcare – Eric Brocken & Peter Mobbs
- 21 Years Long Service to Bushcare & Landcare – Robin Woods
- The Super Scriber Scripting Awards – Viniana Vereua, Dana Pank, John Jose, Jeff Cottrell & Robin Woods
- Rookie of the Year – Phil's Forest Bushcare
- Landcare Buddies – Prue Gargano & Janet Fox

Hawkesbury City Council and Landcare hosted the night at the Hawkesbury River County Council (HRCC) HQ in South Windsor decorated in its finest, with great food, entertainment and catching up with our Bushcare and Landcare mates. Blacktown City Council Councillor Brad Bunting unveiled the new Landcare equipment container for Landcare volunteers, donated by HRCC and Hawkesbury Landcare Network. The container will be used to store resources to share across the Hawkesbury. This is a great win for us!

The Hawkesbury is under a lot of pressure from development which is nothing but a disaster for our natural environment with lots of endangered flora and fauna in this area. I am passionate about the Hawkesbury River that I live along and have used more than I can remember. Some of the biggest issues I see in the river are nutrient runoff (especially from turf farms, market gardens and South Creek), erosion which has dramatically increased by the enormous wash of wake boats and rubbish. Every piece of rubbish dropped in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment has the potential to move its way down the river and into the ocean. I see it all the time!

I am working along the river to help reduce the impacts these issues have; and with many Bushcare and Landcare sites along the Hawkesbury River, anyone can get involved. For Landcare, contact Xuela Sledge landcare@hrcc.nsw.gov.au or 0410 616 139 and Bushcare Marty Gauci mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au or 4560 4525.

I would like to thank everyone who has come along on my journey so far. I could not have achieved this without your support!
Richie Benson

Return and Earn

You can now receive a 10 cent refund on eligible beverage containers from one of nine local collection points in the Hawkesbury. For a map of locations and full details of the scheme see www.returnandearn.org.au. If you have more than 100 containers to drop off please visit Windsor Metal Recycling, at 20/124 Ham St, South Windsor or call them on (02) 4577 2020.

There is also a Reverse Vending Machine collection point at the Australian Hotel carpark, 1 Pitt Town Rd, McGraths Hill. This machine allows you to drop off up to 500 containers at a time. You then choose if you want a Woolworths Voucher, make a donation to charity or transfer the funds to your PayPal account (this requires downloading the myTomra App) <https://mytomra.com.au/>.

Return and Earn aims to reduce litter in the environment and help the NSW Government achieve its goal to reduce litter volume by 40 per cent by 2020.

Please Remember:

Containers should not be crushed or broken and should have the original label attached to be eligible for the refund.

What drink containers are accepted?

Most drink containers of sizes between 150ml and 3L will be accepted in exchange for a 10cent refund when presented to an approved NSW collection point.

The following drink containers are excluded:

- plain milk or milk substitute containers
- flavoured milk containers of 1 litre or more
- pure fruit or vegetable juice containers of 1 litre or more
- glass containers for wine and spirits
- casks (plastic bladders in boxes) for wine and casks for water of 1 litre or more
- sachets for wine of 250 millilitres or more
- containers for cordials, or concentrated fruit and vegetable juices
- registered health tonics

Can I still use my yellow recycling bin?

Yes. You can continue to place your drink containers in your yellow lid bin for recycling as usual. Kerbside recycling remains very important to our community. Return and Earn is designed to complement kerbside recycling by reducing litter and encouraging people to recycle drink containers when away from home.

Further information:

The Return and Earn scheme is the responsibility of the NSW State Government. For more information, please visit www.returnandearn.org.au.



Biocontrol for weeds in Hawkesbury Region

Biocontrols for weeds include insects, mites and rusts that reduce or suppress specific weeds without harming crops or native plants. Biocontrols do not eradicate weeds but they are a long term control method that can be used in conjunction with other methods of weed control. They are best used for large, dense infestations of weeds or for weeds where access is very difficult such as rocky steep sites. Biocontrols are available for a wide range of weeds in NSW including cat's claw creeper, salvinia, Madeira vine and crofton weed.

Hawkesbury River County Council has released a number of biological control agents into various weed infestations throughout the Hawkesbury area over the past two decades, with varying degrees of success. Salvinia weevil *Cyrtobagous salviniae* has been the most successful of these agents. It has taken almost ten years for the subtropical insect species to become acclimatised to our local conditions but now that it has, the weevil has been active in the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system and in farm dams successfully controlling Salvinia and eliminating the need to spray this aquatic weed with herbicides. The salvinia weevil has been so successful that council has reduced its herbicide application on Salvinia by 97% in the Hawkesbury-Nepean River. The salvinia weevil now has a resident population in the river, to tackle Salvinia whenever it rears its head.

Bushcare and Landcare groups in the Hawkesbury area are partnering with local and state government in a biocontrol project. The aim of the project is to help people integrate biocontrol methods into their weed control programs.



The Salvinia Weevil likes eating Salvinia for breakfast, lunch & dinner. Pic from: <https://nt.gov.au/environment/weeds/how-to-manage-weeds/biological-control>

To guide the project in the Hawkesbury area we would like your ideas. Please go to https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Hawkesbury_biocontrol_Feb_2018 to do our short survey about biocontrol; survey.

This activity is supported by the Established Pest Animals and Weeds initiative, part of the Australian Government's Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper, the government's plan for stronger farmers and a stronger economy.



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BYO cup and save

Council is partnering with the Hawkesbury Environment Network (HEN) and Responsible Cafes in a campaign to reduce the thousands of disposable coffee cups used in the Hawkesbury every year that cannot be recycled and instead are either landfilled or become litter. HEN volunteers so far have visited over 70 local cafes.

You can help this campaign by buying a reusable coffee cup and by asking your local café to sign up and offer discounts to customers that bring reusable cups.

Let's come together as a community and take action. The Hawkesbury could be the first in Australia to have a whole township signed up to www.responsiblecafes.org.



Landcare in the Hawkesbury

Hawkesbury Landcare Network (HLN) is a community-based organisation set up for landholders to access advice, support and on-ground resources, towards improved land management including weed management, dam or creek restoration, planting, nest box installation or feral animal control (to name a few).

HLN works with all landowners and continues to implement projects on all tenures including the Bilpin Feral Animal Management Group, Soils Health Network, Landcare in Schools, Streamwatch and WetlandCare, Hawkesbury Rainforests, individual Landcare groups and other special networking or recognition events. The Bilpin Feral Animal Management Group is about to expand its operations and would like to hear from any Bilpin residents having problems with feral animals.

If you would like to find out more about Landcare in the Hawkesbury please get in touch with Xuela Sledge, Local Landcare Coordinator, Hawkesbury Landcare Network at landcare@hrcc.nsw.gov.au or 0410 616 139.



Volunteers working on the Cumberland Plain Landcare Program at Hawkesbury High School, Freemans Reach.



Australia's Forgotten Harvest by Wez Champion

I am constantly saddened by the fact that every country in the world is known for a unique spice or flavour in their food. Yet in Australia, very few people know the taste of Cinnamon Myrtle, Strawberry Gum, White Aspen or Mountain Pepper!

It is because of this, my garden may be a little different to the usual native garden. It's not ornamental (although it is eye catching), it's not designed around conservation (although I do try to propagate). My entire backyard garden is set with one core theme; "Bush Food". I'm no experienced gardener by any means, but my passion for finding Australia's unique flavours has seen me learn many new things.

Recently, I saw a very wise and respected man, Mr Bruce Pascoe, talking about his life and how he dreams that Australian Native crops would be in abundance and on the shelves of major super markets! He mentioned a native plant I had never heard of; Kangaroo Grass. He spoke of this grass once growing on fields as far as the eye could see, and the indigenous people would harvest its seed, grind it and make bread from it. Yes, that's right. Australia can

be proud of the recent historic discovery that this country's people were some of the first bakers on earth!



The slender and distinctive Kangaroo Grass

Not only was this native grain such a unique option for flour, Mr Pascoe explained that Kangaroo Grass requires only what this country can give it. No fertilizers or extra watering required just set and forget! Each year the crop dies down and a new crop will pop up in the warmer months. You can't help but ask the obvious question. "Why isn't this crop common place in our local farms today?"

I recently obtained some Kangaroo Grass from the Hawkesbury Community Nursery and set each plant randomly between the other bush tucker trees and shrubs. Whilst I won't be pumping out tonnes of grain, I have faith the flavour of Kangaroo Grass flour will enhance standard flour and give it a uniquely Australian taste.

My hope is to harvest the seeds and make up some small batches of some very unique flour, and use it for some hybrid bread! And lucky for me, I have a brother who is a baker!

A Day in the Office by Jutta Hamilton

The months of October until April are the busiest months for native plant seed collecting along the roadsides and in the Council reserves in the Hawkesbury Area. Every year we head off to collect seed for revegetation projects along the waterways, reserves and farms. We do not look for anything rare or endangered, but collect seed of the common plants in the different vegetation communities in the Hawkesbury.

The seed data base held and updated at the Hawkesbury Community Nursery is our reference for seed collection times for various plant species and locations, bearing in mind that rainfall or the lack of it and weather patterns can alter the outcome. The book by Murray Ralph, 'Seed Collection of Australian Native Plants. For Revegetation, Tree Planting and Direct Seeding', also assists us when collecting and sowing seed.

Well prepared with pole pruner, secateurs, collection bags, buckets, and lists of plant species we should encounter; at the first stop we hit a hurdle! A hazard reduction burn a few months earlier makes it very difficult to find the track with low shrubs and branches camouflaging and obscuring our way.

The next stop, a grove of Cheese Trees full of ripe fruit! At first glance, easy to pick and it gets us very excited. However, the excitement is of short nature, as upon testing the seed we noticed that insects had their feast on them already. Further down the track the Clerodendron seed we hope to collect has not set at all.

By now we should have encountered 15 species of seed marked on our wish list, but nothing has been found. Just as

frustration sets in, we become aware of some duck noises and watch a Sea Eagle that is hunting very close to us. A magnificent bird; and as we are watching, our eyes are taken high into the sky and into the distance we noticed Koda, a rainforest tree full of seed. We had never noticed this tree before. In the distance we spot a Sydney Blue Gum with a broken branch full of seed.

At all other plant stops and at a few new exploration stops we finally do find a wide range of seed including Clerodendron, Native Hibiscus, Tea Tree, Turpentine and various grasses. The seed collecting trip ended up being quite successful, lots of seeds were found with no ticks or leaches attached to us.

When collecting seed, we always have to keep in mind that firstly the seed is there to perpetuate the plant species in its habitat and to feed the native animals. Even if we find plenty of seed, we only

collect a small percentage and we never take more than we need. The Flora Bank Guidelines can be found at - <http://www.florabank.org.au>, explaining the protocols on collection, record keeping, local provenance, storage and seeding.

After the seed collecting, we have to label and document in detail each seed lot found. The following Wednesday, Volunteers will help to clean and sow or dry and store the seed. This process takes quite some time, patience and skill and many busy volunteer hands.

For nursery hours see page 8, or phone 4560 4651 or email jhamilton@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au.

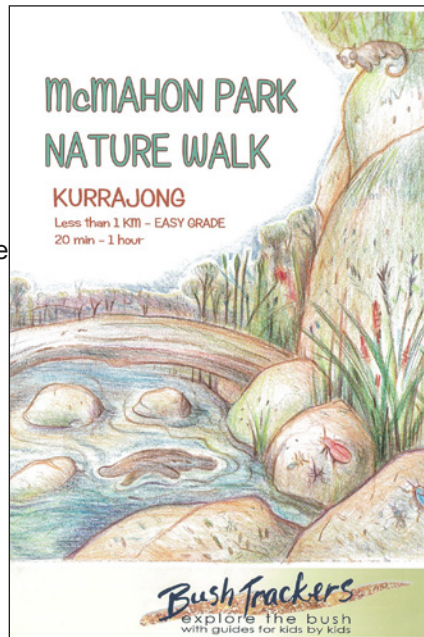


The hands on task of sorting the highly valuable seed by the highly valuable nursery volunteers.

Bush Trackers Map

The McMahon Park Bush Trackers map is here, thanks to the creativity and curiosity of the students at Glossodia Public School (GPS). These maps were presented to the students who helped create them earlier this year and the students were very proud to see the end result. Thanks to the enthusiastic students of GPS, their teachers and parents, who experienced McMahon Park.

Inspiration for Bush Trackers came to the Senior World Heritage Officer (Blue Mountains National Parks and Wildlife Service) in 2011 from the Stronger Families Alliance and its vision of creating Child Friendly Communities across the Blue Mountains. Bush Trackers seeks to celebrate Blue Mountains nature with children and families and make bushwalking easier for families to enjoy. Bush Trackers is about connecting children with nature and encouraging positive attitude and behaviour change towards the 'bush' and environmental protection.



The program has been funded by four grants: one with NSW Environmental Trust, NSW Heritage, and two Commonwealth 'Your Community Heritage' Grants. Bush Trackers partners include NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service; Stronger Families Alliance; Blue Mountains Conservation Society; Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Penrith, Lithgow and Oberon Councils; as well as PHEEN (the Penrith Hawkesbury Environmental Educators Network), RCE-GWS (Regional Centre of Expertise for Sustainable Development Greater Western Sydney); Muru Mittigar; and a number of Aboriginal organisations.

Since its pilot program in 2012, 30 school excursions across the Blue Mountains and surrounds for 8-10 year olds, have resulted in 30 Bushwalking Guides, by kids for kids, using the students artwork and poetry. See <https://www.bushtrackers.com.au/>.

To get your copy of the McMahon Park Bush Tracker map, all you need to do is come along and meet the Bushcare Group at McMahon Park at one of their meetings and they will be more than happy to give you the map as well as a hands on tour of the walk. This group has helped transform this once 'mown monoculture' into the now diverse and dynamic ecosystem it is today. The McMahon Park Bushcare Group meets on the last Sunday of the month from 9am to midday. For further information, contact Council's Community Bushcare Officer, Martin Gauci on 4560 4525 or email mgauci@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au.



The students of Glossodia Public who helped create the Bush Trackers map.

American Corn Snake - from front page prohibited under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015. It is an offence to deal with an ACS unless authorised by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI).

If it is considered safe to do so, competent people should attempt to capture any ACS detected in the open environment. If it's unsafe, people should try to keep track of the ACS, photograph it and report it to DPI so that a competent person can be arranged to collect it.

Any information on ACS detected in NSW can be reported to NSW DPI through: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/forms/report-an-unusual-animal-sighting> phone 1800 680 244. Or Email: invasive.species@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Other non-native animal species that can pose a biosecurity risks to the NSW economy, environment and community include – ball python, milk snakes, Asian black-spined toads, veiled chameleons, red-whiskered bulbuls, iguanas and cane toads.

For more information on some of these species see <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nia>.

Facebook @ HCC

Council has launched its new Corporate Facebook page which will add another aspect of community engagement to Council's already strong connections with the Hawkesbury community. Like and Follow us on our Facebook page to receive daily updates <https://www.facebook.com/hawkesburycitycouncil>. We would like our Bushcare Groups to provide us with stories and photographs of your current projects in the Hawkesbury so that we can share this with our community. These can be sent via our email address council@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au and marked to the attention of our "Digital Communications Coordinator".

HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL
HAS A NEW OFFICIAL FACEBOOK PAGE!

 [Hawkesbury City Council](https://www.facebook.com/hawkesburycitycouncil)

Like, follow and share
and be part of our new online
Hawkesbury community

www.facebook.com/hawkesburycitycouncil



HEEN to PHEEN

HEEN to PHEEN? What the? Well it's now official. HEEN is now PHEEN.

The Hawkesbury Environmental Educators Network (HEEN) has now made it official with the great involvement from Penrith Council and Penrith based schools to the past HEEN meetings. The name change was voted by participants via Facebook on HEEN and those who have been attending the HEEN meetings.

Penrith & Hawkesbury Environmental Educators Network (PHEEN) is a network for people who work with students and other young people in the Hawkesbury and Penrith regions, and have an interest in sustainability and the environment. It provides an opportunity to network with other like-minded people, get inspiration, hear about resources to help you, learn about professional development opportunities, and connect with local environmental education centres, community groups and councils.

The most recent PHEEN meeting for 2018 was at Glossodia Public School (term 1). What a great success story! Glossodia Public have implemented so many environmental initiatives within their school. Some of these included; a vegie garden and orchard, a bushtucker garden, composting bays and worms farms (compost boys and worm farm boys), a massive bee hotel, bushtucker garden, a bush regen site at their dam, no plastic food packaging (the nude food girls), stopping the sale of disposable cups at the school (the coffee cup girls), plus; 10c bottle refund, reusable Tshirt bags, plastic bag reduction and Orang-utan displacement from palm oil. Congratulations Glossodia Public School, you make it look so easy and fun!

PHEEN meets each quarter, we email out a quarterly newsletter, and we also have a Facebook page. If you would like to learn more about PHEEN or like to keep in touch, please contact us on 02 4732 7983 or email andrew.hewson@penrith.city, or join us on Facebook.

The next PHEEN meetings will be -

Term	Date	Venue
2	Tue 22 May	Kurrajong Public School
3	Thur 13 Sep	Penrith Observatory (Western Sydney University)
4	Mon 5 Nov	Jordan Springs Community Hub

Nursery Update

The Hawkesbury Community Nursery has been going gang busters! The volunteers at the nursery have been growing a wide variety of native plants, some of which will be going to the Hawkesbury Show to encourage tent visitors to plant a native garden or build on their existing native garden. Hawkesbury City Council has been doing this plant giveaway at the Hawkesbury Show since 2009 with only one plant species on offer, but lots of them in the first year! Now into its 10th year, with 900 plants on offer and consisting of 20 different species, ranging from trees, shrubs, groundcovers and climbers, we are pretty hopeful that no one will be disappointed.

Late in 2017, the nursery went on the road to the Kurrajong-a-Buzz festival and provided over 300 plants to visitors. This was a real winner, as we had all associated information sheets for the public to educate them on which plant is best for their situation.

On two separate occasions we have had both Strathfield Council and Hornsby Shire Council visit the nursery to get ideas on how they can change or improve things at their nurseries. This is a great avenue in sharing information and ideas and a great help to all nurseries involved, with the natural environment being the biggest winner.



Strathfield Council Visitors

Senegal Tea Weed Review by HRCC

Hawkesbury River County Council (HRCC) is a single purpose authority to control and remove priority weeds for Hawkesbury City Council.

Late last year the Noxious Weed Act of 1995 was replaced with the Biosecurity Act 2015. More information can be found - www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/biosecurity-legislation

HRCC is currently conducting inspections in the Redbank Creek catchment area for- Senegal tea plant (*Gymnocoronis spilanthoides*)

What does it look like?

- Stems are ribbed, pale green and erect, becoming prostrate as they lengthen and age.
- Stems are hollow which allows the plant to float.
- Shiny dark green leaves grow 5-20cm long, with serrated margins
- White pom-pom like flowers occur in groups at the ends of stems in late spring or early summer and continue until temperatures fall.

Habitat- Senegal tea prefers tropical, subtropical and warm temperate regions and will grow in damp floodplain soil, on the margins of creeks and dams, in wetlands and in still

or slow-flowing fresh water. Plants can grow when fully submerged.

How does it spread? - It is an aggressive invasive plant capable of growing up to 15cm per week. It can propagate from leaf fragments and by seed.

Problem - Dense mats can block waterways and out-compete other species.

Need more information

- The Priority Weeds list is found on our website at www.hrcc.nsw.gov.au
If you have any questions regarding this or other weeds please contact us at -

DEPOT/OFFICE: 6 Walker Street South Windsor 2756
PHONE: 024587 9600

EMAIL: weeds@hrcc.nsw.gov.au





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: Indian Myna Trap and nest box 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>

Urban Sprawl

As urbanisation pushes further west, those species that are adapted to urbanisation and living in these environments will follow. Pest species such as foxes, feral cats and Indian Mynas will be on the increase. To fight the negative impacts these animals have contact

Foxes - Greater Sydney Local Land Services email gs.service@lls.nsw.gov.au, 1300 795 299

<https://greater-sydney.lls.nsw.gov.au/>

Cats - Hawkesbury City Council Animal Shelter Phone: (02) 4560 4644 /

Email: companionanimal@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Indian Mynas – see the contact list for HIMAG.

Installing nest boxes and having a native garden that is comprised of a diversity of plants is another way to help reduce the negative impacts of urban sprawl.

Off with the birds

Swallow Rock Reserve, once again did not disappoint for the abundance of birds that we saw on an early Saturday morning in October, thanks to the expert eyes and ears of Keith Brandwood. We were all ready for the dawn chorus, however with the slight drop of temperature overnight, our fine feathered friends decided to have a bit of a sleep in, so we had to wait. But once the birds got started we were not disappointed, and we were kept entertained for hours. The Red-browed Finch in the Stout Bamboo Grass (pictured), Mistletoebird darting around the Caruarinas and the White-throated Treecreeper climbing up the gum trees were all such a pleasure to witness. In total, 55 birds were identified, 10 down from past events at Swallow Rock Reserve.

Since birds manage to inhabit a variety of habitats, they are considered to be an outstanding indicator of the health of the overall environment. This decline may be an indication of climate change, altered fire regimes, habitat displacement via land clearing, loss of trees with nesting hollows, weed invasion, predation through feral animals such as cats and foxes or a combinations of these factors. For a detailed list of the threats to our native birds, go to <http://www.birdlife.org.au/conservation/science/threats-to-birds>.

So what are some of the things you can do to help population numbers of native birds in the Hawkesbury?

If you are on acreage, the sea is your oyster! A diversity of plants native to your local areas is always a winner, remember. 'Plant diversity = Species diversity'; having a wide variety of plant species that flower different times of year and

as well have different flower types, seed sizes and foliage types will be the result in a variety and diversity of different bird species. Installing a nest box that can temporarily replace a tree hollow for a few years is also helpful; contact the Hawkesbury Men's Shed at Richmond on page 8 for further details on nest boxes.

Generally, native animals are hesitant to travel along cleared areas, as it exposes them to predators. Planting corridors on acreage is always a highly valuable way to help our diverse native fauna (not only birds) to travel from one patch of bushland to another, creating connectivity between zones of bushland. For more information, see <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/Fragmentation-and-Wildlife-Corridors>.



Red-browed Finch, Photo Rob Brear

If you only have a small garden in suburbia, you may think that it is insignificant, however all these small gardens holistically play an essential part in the urban habitat web for birds that roam from garden to garden. For some great bird gardening ideas see <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/Your-Garden-How-make-it-safe-haven-birds>, or visit the Hawkesbury Community Nursery for some plant and bird advice (see page 4 and 8).

SITE LOCATIONS		GROUP	DAY	TIME	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Kurrajong/Kurrajong Heights Areas																
Singletons Reserve, Kurrajong	Mill Road Bushcare		1 st Friday	9am – 12noon	*	2	2	6	4	1	6	3	7	5	2	*
Don Street Reserve, Kurrajong Heights	Don Street Bushcare		Various	Various	Contact the Community Bushcare Officer for further details (02) 4560 4525											
McMahon Park, Kurrajong	McMahon Park Bushcare		Last Sunday	9am – 12noon	*	25	25	29	27	24	29	26	30	28	25	*
Matheson Park, Kurrajong	Matheson Park Bushcare		3 rd Friday	9am – 12noon	*	16	16	20	18	15	20	17	21	19	16	*
North Richmond/Grose Vale Areas																
Navua Reserve, Grose Wold	Navua Community Group		Various	Various	Contact the Community Bushcare Officer for further details (02) 4560 4525											
Near the North Richmond Bridge, Nth Richmond	Phil's Forest Bushcare		1 st Sunday	9am – 12noon	*	4	4	1	6	3	1	5	2	7	4	*
Glossodia/Ebenezer/Sackville Areas																
Charles Kemp Recreational Reserve, Ebenezer	Charles Kemp Reserve Bushcare		4 th Saturday	9am – 12noon	*	24	24	28	26	23	28	25	29	27	24	-
Aboriginal Memorial Reserve, Lower Portland	Cumberland Reach Memorial Reserve Bushcare Group		Various	Various	Contact the Community Bushcare Officer for further details (02) 4560 4525											
Wisemans Ferry/Macdonald Valley Areas																
561 Settlers Road, Lower Macdonald	Sunnyvale Bushies Bushcare		3 rd Saturday	9am – 12noon	*	17	17	21	19	16	21	18	15	20	17	*
St Albans Park, St Albans	St Albans Weed Wackers		3 rd Sunday	9am – 12noon	*	18	18	22	20	17	15	19	16	21	18	*
Windor 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	*	25	25	22	27	24	22	26	23	28	25	*
Windor Wharf, Windor	Windor Wharries Bushcare		2 nd Wednesday	2pm - 5pm	*	14	14	11	9	13	11	8	12	10	14	*

* 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
- ▶ Eye Protection
- ▶ Sturdy shoes
- ▶ Enthusiasm
- ▶ Long sleeve shirt
- ▶ A sense of humour
- ▶ Long pants
- ▶ A smiley face
- ▶ Sunscreen
- ▶ Joke
- ▶ Drinking water
- ▶ 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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www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au
Monday to Friday 8.30am-5pm