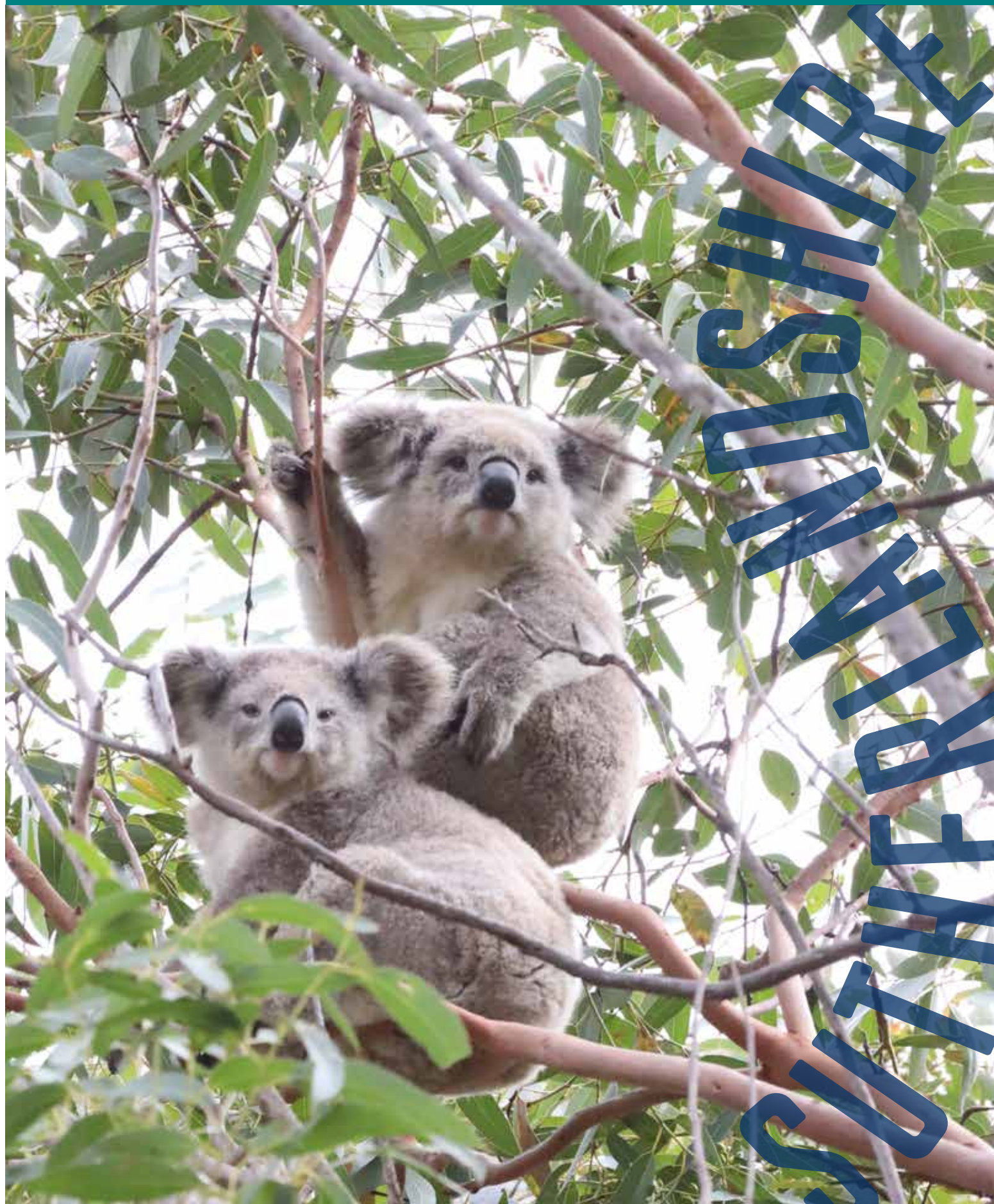


BUSHCARE

BULLETIN

JAN 2024 - ISSUE 66



Bushcare Calendar

Date	Event
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JANUARY

10, 18 & 24	Nursery propagation
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9	Spotlighting at Greenhills
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18	Scamper through the Jungle
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31	Nursery Whackers
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FEBRUARY

14, 15 & 28	Nursery propagation
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3	Yoga in the park
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5	Birds and Bushcare
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9	Kayaking at Swallow Rock
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15	Burnum Burnum guided walk
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21	Bird spotting in The Royal
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23	Nursery gardening group
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MARCH

13, 21 & 27	Nursery propagation
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6	Working with woody weeds
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13	LHCA guided walk
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22	Nursery gardening group
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Cover image - Koalas
Graham Avery

Bushcare, Oh Yeah!

By Nathan Clare - Bushland Coordinator

As we get to the end of another year it's a good time to look back and enjoy the success of the year that's passed and all that's happened. It's been a big year of change in the Bushland Unit with our fearless leader Kevin Seymour retiring to a terrible life in the Blue Mountains, filled with long horrible days spent bush walking and mountain biking. Well respected by all, we wish him all the best. We've gained an excellent new addition to the unit with Justin on the regeneration team. We've enjoyed the enthusiasm of our newest trainee, Eli, and seen Polly breathe new life into the Joseph Banks Native Gardens.

We saw the Bushcare team absolutely go for it and run 30 events in 30 days to celebrate 30 years of Bushcare. By the end of the month there had been drone photo shoots, basket weaving and spoon carving, bird walks and natural dyeing courses and several tons of weeds removed!

The nursery has gained two new ferneries and thanks to our innovative nursery team 29 new fern species are being produced and are now available to the public. The volunteer propagation days continue to be a great success and the seed collected at this year's events will keep everyone busy for a long time to come.

Although these changes are very exciting, the most exciting changes are the ones we see in our local reserves and are thanks to our incredible volunteers. The power of Bushcare is right there to see when you think back to what your Bushcare site used to look like when you first started and how far it has come. Think of the amount of weeds removed, the native plants supported to grow and the native fauna species able to

flourish as a result. You are what makes Bushcare and we sincerely thank you for the proactive choice you have made to go out and do what you can to help your local environment. From the Bushland Unit we wish you and your families all the best and look forward to another exciting year in 2024!

Grant Funding News

By Jason Salmon - Team Leader Bushcare

The Bushland Unit often receives grant funding from the State and Federal Government. This money is used to undertake important environmental protection work managing environmental weeds, priority weeds and vertebrate pests such as cane toads, rusa deer and foxes. All of which have a significant impact on our local flora and fauna.

This year we have received Crown Reserves Improvement Fund Program (CRIF) funding for weed control at The Esplanade, Cronulla \$25k, Rusa Deer Program \$20k and Fox Program \$16k.

Greater Sydney Local Land Services fund our Weed Action Project (WAP) to the tune of \$30k. Currently we are in year 4 of a 5 year program

The Saving Our Species *Prostanthera densa* project has received \$9k to continue works to protect this endangered species by planting new plants grown at the nursery.

A substantial grant of \$200k was also awarded to Sutherland Shire Council from The Saving Koalas Fund-Community Grants Round-2. This federally funded grant supports the creation, restoration and protection of koala habitats, extension and expansion of koala monitoring initiatives, and the improvement of koala health and care.

The intended outcome of the program is to improve the extent, quality and connectivity of the nationally listed koala's habitat. The SSC Bushland Unit will be managing 3 habitat restoration projects in Engadine, Woronora Heights and Lucas Heights as well as an educational signage roll out in the Woronora River valley.

Wattlebird Pie

By Peter Turbet - Bushcare Volunteer

Many of us have noticed the sharp decline in the numbers of the Red Wattlebird (*Anthochaera carunculata*) in the past few decades, caused mainly by the influx of noisy miners. However, probably fewer of us know that the wattlebird population also took a dive a century or more ago and this time the cause was human hunting.

Back then “red wattlebirds” were also known as “gillbirds”. In the 1880s and 1890s, Bowden’s Club House Hotel on the corner of Hunter and Castlereagh Streets, at the time a fairly well-known establishment, often had locally shot “roast gill bird” as a welcome addition to the menu. Around the same time, Sutherland Shire historian Frank Cridland wrote “in season there was good gill-bird shooting among the honeysuckles” in the area north of today’s Dunningham Park, Cronulla. By “honeysuckles” Cridland meant coast banksias (*Banksia integrifolia*) and there are still some venerable specimens of *B. integrifolia* along Elouera Rd towards Cronulla High.

In Autumn, wattlebirds from the mountains migrate to the coast to feast on the nectar of winter-flowering banksias and there is a movement from south to north as well. The *B. integrifolia* forests along the NSW coast must have been teeming with them.

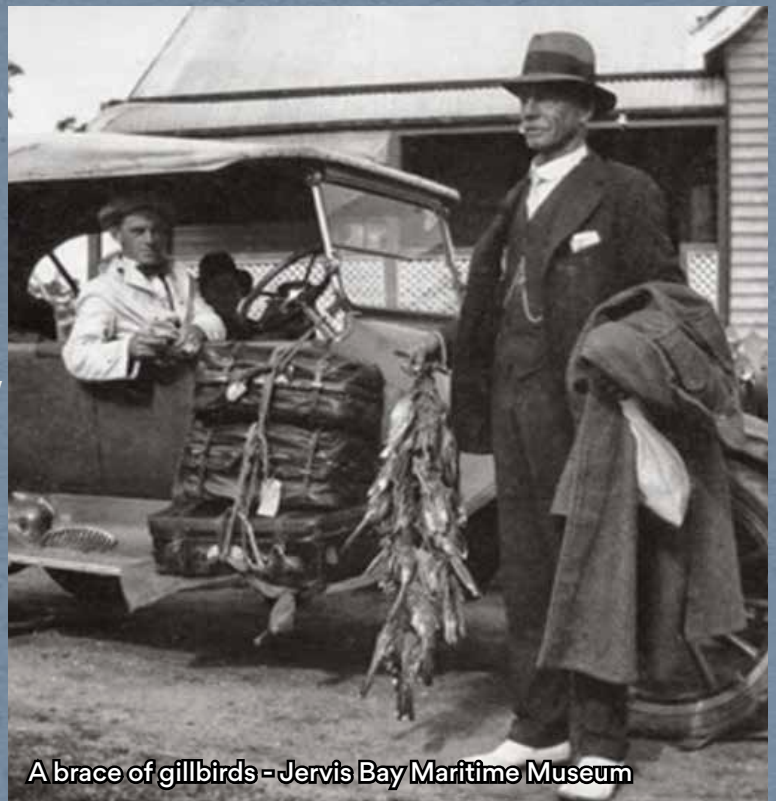
The south coast of NSW seems to have been especially popular with the hunters. The Sydney Mail in 1912, extolling the attractions of Huskisson, said the area had “comfortable accommodation in boarding houses, a fine beach for surfing, splendid fishing, and in winter time Gillbirds coming in numbers afford good shooting and make nice pies.” The photograph of the man holding a string of wattlebirds was taken in the main street of Huskisson. In July 1923 the Sydney Morning Herald reported that a small party of shooters near Nowra with only two rifles bagged 532 gillbirds in just a day and a half!

Such exploitation was unsustainable and by the 1920s, an open and close season for gillbird shooting was in place – the open season went from 15 April to 15 August. The depletion in wattlebird numbers was still concerning the authorities and in July 1923 the Acting Premier of NSW announced the open season would end earlier than usual on 31 July – mainly because August is breeding season. The shooting of gillbirds was to be totally banned in 1924 with the birds protected until 15 April 1925. A daily bag limit was also going to be considered.

By the end of the 1920s interest in gillbird shooting was beginning to wane and an article in The Brisbane Courier in 1927 states: “To our elders of a former generation, the wattle-bird was, perhaps, the most popular of all native table-birds but none will regret that parrots, pigeons and wattle-birds are now rarely put into pies.” That being said, in 1929 an honorary national park ranger was prosecuted for shooting gillbirds near Windsor in the close season and as late as 1935, a correspondent from country Victoria sent her recipe for “Gill-bird and Tomato Casserole” into The Australian Women’s Mirror – quarter two or three birds and put them into the pot.

The Fauna Protection Act of 1948 has most NSW birds, including the Red Wattlebird, protected from hunting, but surprisingly the Crimson and Eastern Rosella were not!

Why were wattlebirds hunted so much? Possibly because of their sheer abundance. Why were they eaten? Possibly because the mentality back then was that if you shoot something you may as well, or should, eat it. Maybe wattlebirds were particularly tasty! Roast gillbird, gillbird pie, gillbird casserole – I think I’d prefer KFC!



A brace of gillbirds - Jervis Bay Maritime Museum

Saltmarsh in the Shire

By Cristine Breitenbach - Nursery Team Leader

Saltmarsh is not a vegetation community that people are often aware of or familiar with, in comparison to other plant communities in the **Shire**. **S**altmarsh generally occurs behind mangroves, in tidal zones. These areas are exposed to regular tidal inundation but limited wave action. There are many reasons why **S**altmarsh are important ecosystems, including providing habitat for organisms, plants and animal **s**pecies, nesting, breeding, and feeding areas, **s**horeline **s**torm protection and pollution filters. In the **Shire**, Bushcare **s**ites that contain **S**altmarsh areas include **S**horebird Res, **S**wallow Rock, Burnum Burnum, Farrer Place, Constables Point, Bonna Point, Espalnde Foreshore Res and Oyster Bay Oval.

So, by now you must be wondering why so many **S**'s in this article have been highlighted. That is because for most Saltmarsh species we grow in the nursery, the Genus begins with the letter **S**.

Samolus repens- Creeping brook weed.

Creeping rhizomatous herb, that sets out roots at the nodes, to 15cm high. Grows in damp salty conditions. Flowers Sept to April, with attractive small white star flowers. It is easily propagated by cuttings and layering.

Sporobolous virginicus- Salt Water Couch

Creeping rhizomatous and stoloniferous perennial grass. Clumps can be up to 1/2m high. Occurs in Saltmarshes, sandhills and areas of high salinity. Panicle flowers throughout the year. Although seed is readily available, we propagate this species by cuttings.

Sarcocornia quinqueflora- Beaded Samphire or Glasswort

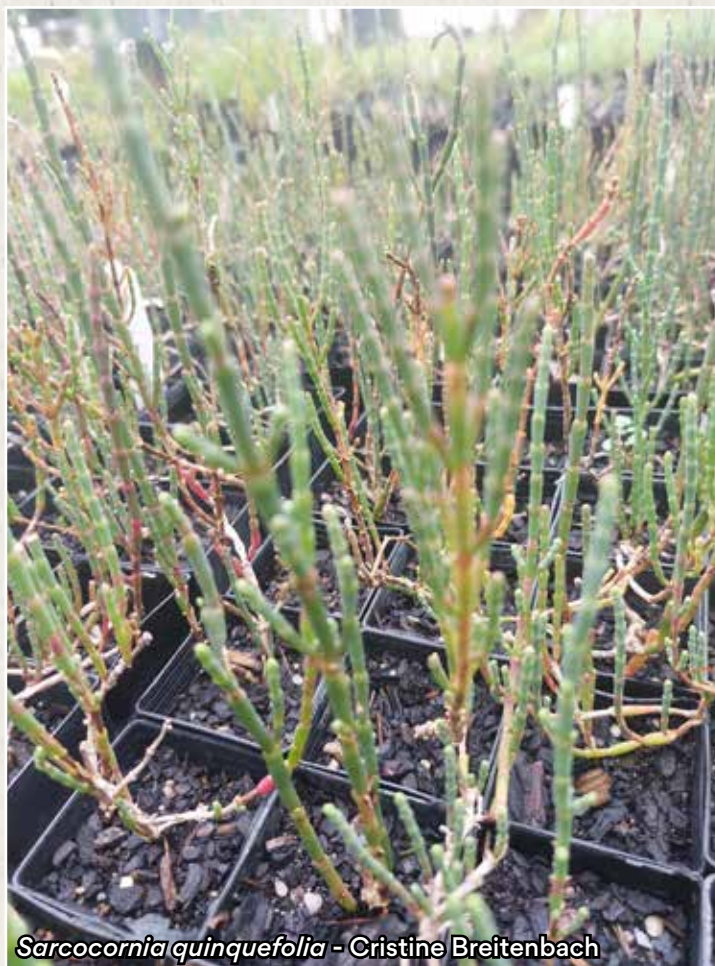
Small erect leafless herb, with succulent jointed stems. Stems spread horizontally then turn upwards to 30cm. They have a high tolerance to salty and boggy conditions. Flowers are inconspicuous and occur in Summer. In their natural habitat, they use the tides for seed dispersal. We propagate by cuttings and have had cuttings that have set seed in the trays. Stems are edible and can be pickled, steamed, or blanched.

Suaeda australis- Seablite

Low spreading herb to 40cm with fleshy foliage that is pale/light green in colour. They naturally



Sporobolous virginicus - Cristine Breitenbach



Sarcocornia quinqueflora - Cristine Breitenbach

occur on edges of saltmarsh, coastal flats, and tidal wetlands. Flowers are insignificant and occur in spring to early summer. In the nursery we have propagated Suaeda by cuttings and seed. Young leaves and stems are edible and can be eaten raw or steamed, are crunchy and pleasantly salty and have a similar texture to bean shoots.

These plants do not normally make it onto the benches in the retail area of the nursery, though they have the potential to be used in garden situations as edibles, for foliage contrast or for salty and boggy conditions that may be difficult to plant out.

Other species that we grow for saltmarsh projects are

Juncus kraussii- Sea Rush

Ficinia nodosa- Knobbly Club Rush

Tetragonia tetragonioides- Warrigal greens



Suaeda australis - Cristine Breitenbach

Farewell Barry

By Nathan Clare and Cristine Breitenbach

As all good things must unfortunately come to an end, we say goodbye to Barry Milton, our grumbly old push-bike-riding mate with a heart of gold who is retiring. Barry started at the Camellia Gardens as part of a Job Seeker style program. When the program finished, Barry kept turning up and continued to work as a volunteer. Eventually, Council realised he wasn't going away, so he was offered a role in the Parks Department. Barry then worked his way around various parks and road reserves and has always been a great help to us here at the nursery and Joseph Banks Native Gardens. Not only has he been a valuable part of our team, but he has also spent many years volunteering every weekend for the Cronulla RSL Stingrays and Sutherland Shire Softball Association. Through his work, his volunteering efforts and his death-defying rides to and from work, with a flag the size of a bedspread, Barry is somewhat of a Shire celebrity. We wish Baz all the best and will keep in touch as he volunteers at the nursery... when he feels like it....



Barry - Emma Brame

Bushcraft Fest!

By Bradley van Luyt - Bushcare Officer

Bushcare is about Council and community working together to restore our local natural areas. We work with volunteers but to get volunteers, we need to promote the program. We have lots of different events to promote Bushcare and this year one of our biggest was Bushcraft Fest. Bushcraft Fest was a coming together of our various craft-based events, with all four workshops running concurrently at the one venue and one of our big events held to celebrate 30 years of Bushcare at Sutherland Shire Council.

Rattling around in my spoon-addled head I had the idea of combining the little crafty gigs we do into a grander affair. I work with woody weeds (ie carve spoons from Privet), Bill has his Native Bee Habitat workshop, Sabrina and our Bundeena volunteer Diane dye up a storm with the Natural Dyeing workshop (make sure you include the “e” in there) and we’ve had a full house every time we’ve run a Basket Weaving workshop. When I suggested this zany idea of getting the gang together for a giant crafty shindig the team said go for it. And we did.

Coordination of such an event always worries me. What if? What if? What if? Oh well, what if we didn’t then nothing would happen so I ploughed ahead. I was amply assisted by all of my colleagues and we made it happen. Everyone ran their own show and I organised the venue. We were hosted by the ladies at Karingal Guide Training Centre in Engadine. A great little patch of bush in the middle of suburbia with some great little clearings where folks could sit and carve, build, weave and dye things. And on top of all that Guides would feed us!

A few meetings were held. “You good to do this?” “Can you make that happen?” Yep yep yep. All good and on we went.



Spoon carving workshop - Bill Howse



Show and tell- Bill Howse

I had plenty of privet to carve, Bill was brimming over with bee stuff, Sabrina and Diane were weeded up for dyeing and Grace was going to help our weaver Lissa to warp and weft and bind. But the weather. What about the weather? That was the only thing out our control. Of course I worried about it all night, getting little sleep, but come the day, 23 September, the sky was glorious.

And so to the day at hand. Bump in from 7:30 for a 9 am start. Utes and trailers rolled in and tables, gazebos and boxes of stuff were dragged out set up and the Fest began to take shape. I had a head start, setting up much of my stuff the afternoon before but I was still running around like a blue-arsed fly as the kick-off approached.

Slowly the punters trickled in. I had front of house "Hello, here for Bushcraft Fest, over there, under the banner we'll be starting soon.." and on it went. We had nearly forty excited attendees ready to get crafty.

I can't speak for the other workshops but mine went off very well. I had two seasoned volunteers with me and a few newcomers as well. I was ably assisted by my good friend and fellow spoon carver and cynic Paul and we carved up a storm. Privet was split, chopped, pared and shaved and by the end of the day everyone had a spoon, and I think we only used one bandaid!

Breaks punctuated the day with a delicious morning tea and a barbecue lunch eaten, sprawled out on the grass in the shade of the gum trees, chatting with friendly folks about the things they were making. Is this not living?

Righto, back into it for the last session. Wrists getting sore, heads getting weary, take extra care as you carve this bit and then, slowly but suddenly it was knocking off time. Show and tell, summing up and big thanks to all who taught, learned and, especially, cooked.

Knock off meant pack up. The worst bit of the day but it had to be done so it was done. There was a creaking noise as I closed the gate when leaving Karingal and I'm still not sure if it was the hinges or my back but either way we were done. I had a great day, was very proud of and grateful to my fellow Bushcare Officers and just a little bit guilty that I was going on holidays the next day, because they were stuck with the unpacking at the nursery!!!

Is this Bush Regeneration? No, not really but we were using natural materials, found in the field to bring people together to make and chat and learn about the bush around here. Not Bush Regeneration but certainly a valid bit of Bushcare.



Bee habitat workshop - Bill Howse



Dyeing workshop - Grace Lonergan



Weaving workshop - Grace Lonergan

29 and Counting!

By Emma Brame - Nursery Horticulturalist

When the nursery first experimented with ferns and growing them from spore, we did not have high hopes, as growing ferns from spores can be extremely difficult and neither of the nursery staff had ever had any experience in this. *Asplenium australasicum* (Birds Nest Fern) was the first species we decided to tackle and was first sown in May 2021. It is with great pleasure, the nursery can say we now have 29 different fern species in production and counting. The nursery has a range of ferns for sale in tube stock at \$3.20, 140 mm pots at \$12.50 and 200 mm pots at \$20. In addition to this we also have a range of *Platycerium bifurcatum* (Elk Horn), that are mounted and ready to be hung at \$25 each, 118 mm pots that are ready to be mounted or kept in the pot for \$20 and tube stock for \$15 each.

With the help and knowledge from volunteer Helena, the nursery continues to fine tune its propagation and production methods. We have planted out a number of species in the nursery gardens and have also planted out stock pots to assist and improve spore collection, as timing is everything. This will be particularly handy for the ferns species that are a bit fussier, such as *Calochaena dubia* (Soft Bracken Fern), to propagate and rely on fresh spores. Generally, fresh spores are the best and are far more reliable when sowing. As mentioned, with species like *Calochaena dubia*, the fresher the better so we aim to sow this species within a week of collection. For species not quite as fussy such as *Doodia aspera* (Rasp Fern), spores can be sown within two to six weeks of collection.

To cater to our growing number of ferns, the nursery's ferneries have now been completed with nursery-grade shade cloth and front panels that roll down installed. This will help protect the ferns in the coming summer months and from harsh winds. With this being said, the ferns can now stop taking up so much space in the shade house, freeing up more space for other plant species to harden off in.



Adiantum hispidulum - Emma Brame

Now it is warming up, it is perfect time to start sowing spores. Here are a few fern species the nursery currently has in production and are working on.

***Adiantum hispidulum* (Rough Maidenhair Fern)**

An attractive fern with arching dark green fronds with pink new growth. It can grow up to 50cm tall. It grows well in rainforests, under the shade of eucalyptus trees and along watercourses. Its common name refers to the hairy stems making it feeling rough to touch.



Pellaea falcata - Emma Brame

***Pellaea falcata* (Sickle Fern)**

A hardy fern that looks similar to fishbone fern (when mature) but with smooth bright green fronds and grows up to 60 cm tall. It grows well in moist shady open forest and rainforests. When fronds start to appear, they almost have a heart shape frond (a notable feature that helps you identify and ensure you are growing the correct species and that cross contamination in the sowing process has not occurred).



Histiopteris incise - Emma Brame

***Histiopteris incisa* (Bat'swing Fern)**

An upright fern with distinctive fronds in the shape of 'bats wings' as the common name suggest, are soft and are a pale green in colour. It spreads with creeping rhizomes and grows in low light. It can grow up to 1.5 m in height and grows naturally in wet gullies and rainforest.

***Blechnum cartilagineum* (Gristle fern)**

A short, creeping, rhizomatous fern with erect leathery fronds when mature that are yellow green in colour. When new fronds emerge, they are pale pink. They grow in forests, rainforests and along side creek banks and sheltered slopes.



Blechnum cartilagineum - Emma Brame

***Gleichenia dicarpa* (Pouched Coral Fern)**

A fern that we have had recently success with prothalli forming (what germinates initially in the fern life cycle and has both reproductive organs). The fronds are forked several times and can grow 1 to 2 m. The mature fronds have "pouches" on the underside where the spores form. It grows in damp sunny places around creeks, swamps, and cliff basses.



Gleichenia dicarpa - Emma Brame



Gleichenia dicarpa prothalli - Emma Brame

Mexican Feather Grass Update

By Linda Brown - Invasive Species Officer

In December 2020, Mexican feather grass was detected in the Barden Road/Australia Road area of Barden Ridge by the Invasive Species team. Mexican feather grass (*Nassella tenuissima*) is a highly invasive weed that has not been found in Greater Sydney before and presents a significant biosecurity risk. Mexican feather grass can invade bushland and pastures where it displaces desirable species. It is hard to control and has the potential to take over up to 65% of NSW if left unchecked. Unfortunately, this nice looking grass has been sold in nurseries in the past sometimes labelled with another name and therefore still can be found in some gardens. Because of its invasiveness, Mexican feather grass is listed as Prohibited Matter and needs to be reported to the Department of Primary Industries.



Nassella tenuissima - Linda Brown

After finding the Mexican feather grass infestation intensive surveys have been conducted to determine the extent. The infestation is very localised but spreads over land that is managed by a variety of stakeholders. To ensure that ongoing tenure neutral management is achieved, a working group has been formed by the Department of Primary Industries which includes Sutherland Shire Council, Transport for NSW and a private landholder. The number of plants detected per year has been drastically reduced over the last three years but unfortunately this year some seeding plants were found. This means that the survey and control works must be continued until at least 2028 because the seed of Mexican feather grass is estimated to be viable in the soil for five years.

You can help us by keeping an eye out for Mexican feather grass. If you suspect to have found Mexican feather grass please take a photo and report it to the Invasive Species Team under 9524 5672 Option 3 or pestspecies@ssc.nsw.gov.au or call the NSW DPI Biosecurity Helpline 1800 680 244. Please do not treat or remove any plants that you suspect to be Mexican feather grass because there are some native species that look very similar to it.



Nassella tenuissima seed head
- Linda Brown

What does it look Like?

- Tussock grass with tightly rolled, thin (0.25 to 0.5 mm) leaves that are up to 60 cm long.
- The leaves are smooth if you roll them between your fingers and coarse if you slide your fingers down the leaf.
- The seed heads are clustered at the end of the stem and 15 to 25 cm long.
- The seeds are small (2 to 3 mm) but have a 4.5 to 9 cm long awn (looks like a bristle or thick hair) at the end of the seed.

The NSW Weedwise website and app is a fabulous resource for priority weeds and weed control. You can find more information on Mexican feather grass including a 3D model here. <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/MexicanFeatherGrass>

Dharawal Names of Plants and Places

By Graham Avery – Aboriginal Heritage Officer

The Dharawal Country extended from south of Gamay (traditional name of Botany Bay) to Cambewarra and Nowra. I am a descendant of a Dharawal woman from Illaroo near Kangaroo Valley, and her son married a Dhurga woman of Moruya in 1860s. Dharawal and Dhurga are two different language groups, but both are remarkably similar to each other than to Dharug language in Sydney area.

Dharawal is a name derived from the Illawarra Aboriginal clan group called the Waddi Waddi people meaning cabbage palm tree – *Livistona australis*, and Thirroul is a pronunciation of Dharawal because of the cabbage palm trees grow in the valley. Many Aboriginal community members in La Perouse are descendants of Waddi Waddi and Gweagal peoples, and some are descendants of Aboriginal ancestors of Cullunghutti and Cambewarra.

I had compiled and researched on early colonial journals on three language groups; Dharug, Dharawal and Dhurga, to understand if the three groups are related or not. According to my research, those groups are different languages, and Dharawal seem to have one dialect because of the clan groups travelled between Shoalhaven and Kurnell. Most of the stone artefacts in Kurnell marang (sandhills) were originated from Shoalhaven for the last 5,000 years, and you can see these artefacts in the Australian Museum display today.

Dharug is more of a standalone language, situated in Sydney Harbour area and Cumberland Plain. Dharug is a name of the native pale vanilla-lily - *Arthropodium milleflorum* which has an edible tuber, and Darook Park in Cronulla is derived from Dharug.

I had listed the Dharawal names of plants from William Macarthur's source published in Paris Universal Exhibition of 1855, and I had compared his source with William Dawes' notebook written in 1792. Both vocabularies are similar and most of the differences are because William Macarthur was living in Camden among the Dharug people, but he associated with Dr Ellis, a Dharawal leader of the Kangaroo Valley or Bundanoon near where my ancestors were born.

If you are interested in the Dharawal plant names, please contact me, 02 9710 0423 or gavery@ssc.nsw.gov.au.

Whackers at Windy Point

By Sabrina Thompson - Bushcare Officer

As we all know, the fifth Wednesday of the month is a day of celebration for many enthusiastic bushcare volunteers. We gather at a site in need of primary bush regenerating and 'GO FOR IT'. On Wednesday, 30 August, ten lively volunteers rocked up on a delightful morning at the wonderful Windy Point. The early birds were treated to a pod of dolphins frolicking in the waves nearby.

Our targets this time were turkey rhubarb, climbing Senecio, the ubiquitous asparagus and lots and lots of shrubby daisy. Because the weeds covered a large proportion of the site, we focused on one particular patch. While not the easiest spot to access, as it was on a fairly steep slope, everyone managed to pick a spot surrounding a large Port Jackson fig and a massive tuckeroo and weeded to our hearts' content.

We managed to fill the truck up within an hour. Chris had to empty the truck so we could fill it up again. Wow! Two truckloads worth. Thanks to all that attended, it was fantastic to start another part of this very long narrow site along the shoreline between Shelley Beach and Oak Park. If you'd like to join us more regularly, Windy Point Bushcare Group gather on the first Wednesday of the month at 8.30 am and we meet on the Esplanade at the end of Via Mare.



Volunteers working hard - Sabrina Thompson

Frog or Cane Toad

By Chad Davison - Invasive Species Team Leader

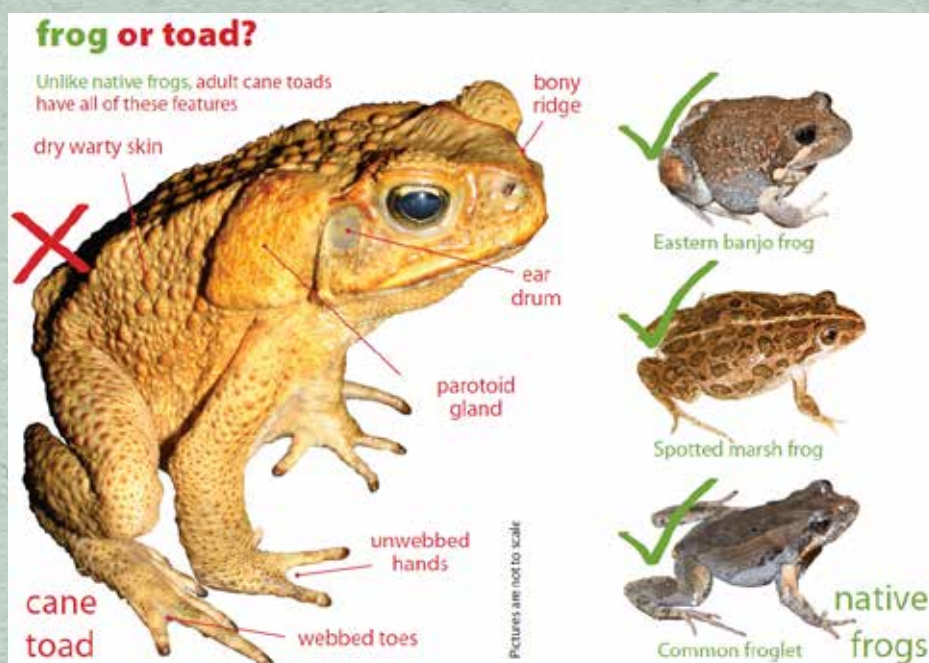
Cane toads in Sutherland Shire are not a new thing. There was a large Taren Point population which was finally controlled in 2015 and since then, only three Cane toads have been recorded in Caringbah between January 2021 and February 2022. The latest cane toad was caught by a Caringbah Leisure Centre council employee who had the keen eye to notice it and call the Invasive Species Team straight away. These toads are believed to have arrived as hitch hikers on vehicles or in garden supplies from the north coast.

Sutherland Shire Council's Invasive Species Team are always on the lookout for possible new incursions, and during the warmer months of the year, conduct regular night time surveys in known areas. SSC also engages professionals to conduct further monitoring and eDNA water sampling, an amazing technology where we are able to sample water bodies for the presence of cane toad DNA. We often get people ringing the council with reports that they have caught or heard a cane toad, and there are some excellent tools available online that can help identify toad by sight and sound. <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/vertebrate-pests/nia/key-new-incursions-species/new-incursions/cane-toad> and <https://www.frogid.net.au/frogs/rhinella-marina>.

Many reports of a capture of a toad usually end up being a native frog species which is why Council advises on keeping the animal alive in a bucket or such until it can be properly identified. Quite often a suspected juvenile toad ends up being a Perons tree frog and its unfortunate if a little frog is killed because of mistaken identity. If you do catch or see a suspected cane toad, call the Invasive Species Team on 9710 0333.



Cane toad - Cristine Breitenbach



Sun, Snags and Sticky Slices

By Bradley van Luyt - Bushcare Officer

And so our 30th Year of Bushcare has drawn to an close and what better way to finish off such a momentous year than to get together to cook and eat with friends.

Around 100 friends came together for our annual Bushcare BBQ. Once again, we converged on the old Port Hacking Ladies Bowling Club, adjacent to Bill's Fernleigh Reserve and we had a ball.

I think it was Eisenhower who said no battle plan survives first contact with the enemy. Wise words indeed and as we were to soon find out. We were well prepared. Jason wrote a detailed checklist and running sheet for the day. Much was done during the week and only a few things needed to be loaded on Sunday. Come D-Day everything would go like clockwork. So we hoped. All was great until the people at Coles didn't have our order. Oh no! No salad, no fruit, no bread, NO SAUCE!!! Quick bit of revision, negotiation and then... no problem. Bags filled and we were on our way. Salads and fruit platters were still ready for lunch. There was also a Bushcare Officer (who may or may not be writing this) who forgot to bring his big gazebo from home. No problem, we had enough cover. Despite some



Jason and Cr Pesce, Mayor
presenting long service awards
- Grace Lonergan

hiccoughs it all went smoothly as we have a great team. As well as the Bushcare Officers we had helpers from our Nursery, Invasive Species Unit and the Beach Team too, helping with set up, barbecuing, salad assembling and, thankfully, packing away. A big thank you to Emma, Chad and Phil for saving our backs!

One, two... a dozen gazebos were dragged off and put up to shade the oncoming horde. By the last one we almost knew what we were doing! Meanwhile Emma and Sabrina hit the kitchen and started chopping. Heavy barbies were taken from their cases and fired up. Banners erected. Snags and onions on!

Slowly the crowd wandered in, swelled and it was like old home week all over again. It was great to catch up with friends I'd not seen for a while. Some members of my former Saturday groups were there. I'd surrendered these groups to Sabrina's care when I went to a Monday-Friday roster in 2022. They said they were doing very well with Sabrina. She's a great Bushcare Officer, very knowledgeable and a very hard worker...BUT... her coffee isn't as good as mine. I'm glad I'm good for something!!!!

Slowly the very colourful salads from Shire Foods and the fresh garden salad assembled by Emma and Sabrina

were laid on the tables. Meanwhile in the little alcove next to the hall, our BBQ team made up of Grace, Chad and Phil sweated themselves to husks cooking over 200 snags, a similar quantity of chicken sticks and enough onions to cause a significant biohazard if consumed in a confined space. Big trays full of the hot stuff soon joined the salads. Sauce? Yep. Bread? Yep. OK, let's go!

All of a sudden "That annoying man with the microphone" as Jason described himself, made the announcement everyone was waiting for: "Comengedditt!" An orderly mob wandered up, perused the offerings before them and meandered off with heavy plates. It was quiet for a short while as mouths were full.

Between lunch and cake our Mayor, Cr Carmelo Pesce spoke and thanked our volunteers for all their hard yakka over the last 12mths. He then handed out long service certificates and shook hands with the recipients (one volunteer noticed how many were limping as they ambled up to collect their 15, 20 or 25 yr certificate. Yes, good healthy outdoor exercise this Bushcare stuff!). Unfortunately one of said long-serving types, a leading light in the Loftus Bushcare scene, Louise Broadhead was unable to make it. Louise has worked with us for over 25 years and was certainly conspicuous by her absence. We all wished her well (and happily ate her portion of lunch and cake!!!). Lucky door prizes were well received with a good pair of Felco secateurs, a worm farm and a beautiful Christmas bush resplendent in its red blooms all finding new homes.

Despite the tropical conditions (fooof! It was muggy!!) a goodly gaggle joined Bill on a tour of his site. A very informative walk and good way to work off some of the lunch too.

As the bushwalkers traipsed back in, the crowd started to drift away again as they do every year. Picnic chairs were snapped shut, eskys rattling with empty wine bottles were closed. Handshakes and hugs were exchanged as old friends bid each other adieu for another year. As they left the hard yakka started again. Chairs stacked, tables dropped, everything trollied off to their respective niches around the old club as gazebos came down as quick as they went up. We had less stuff than when we started but it never seems to go back into the truck or trailer as it did in the morning but fit it did. A last sweep of the place and we left for another year, returning to the nursery for a quick unpack and then off home. Phew. What a day. Now, let's start planning for next year!!!



Some of the Cronulla volunteers
- Grace Lonergan

BUSHCARE WORKDAYS

Workdays can be cancelled at short notice. (BvL) etc after the time denotes the first initial of the Bushcare Officer responsible for the group.

1ST SATURDAY

Lucas Heights Conservation Area, 8.00am (JS)
Gunnamatta Park 8.30am (GL)
Wanda Beach, Cronulla 8.30am (ST)
Alcheringa Reserve, Miranda 12.30pm (ST)
Tea Tree Place, Kirrawee 1.00pm (GL)

2ND SATURDAY

Maandowrie, Loftus 8.30am (GL)
Freyra St, Kareela 8.30am (ST)
Struen Marie Reserve, Kareela 10.30am (ST)
Yarra Vista Court, Yarrawarra 1.00pm (ST)

3RD SATURDAY

Burraneer Park, Caringbah 8.30 am (GL)
Hall Drive Reserve, Menai 8.30am (ST)
Beauford Park, Caringbah 1.00pm (GL)
Corinth Road, Heathcote 12.30pm (ST)

4TH SATURDAY

Akuna Avenue Oval, Bangor 8.30am (ST)
The Esplanade, Cronulla Point 8.30am (GL)
Biddy Giles Park, Kirrawee 12.30pm (ST)
Various reserves, Maianbar 1.30pm (GL)

1ST SUNDAY

Carina Bay, Como 8:30am (GL)
Bass & Flinders Point, Cronulla 8.30am (BH)
Burnum Burnum Sanct., Jannali 9.00am (ST)
The Crescent Creek, Woronora 1.00pm (BH)
Oyster Creek Gully, Jannali 1.00pm (GL)
Kingswood Road, Engadine 1.00pm (ST)

2ND SUNDAY

Kareena Park, Caringbah 8.30 (ST)
Fernleigh Road Res, Caringbah 9:00am (BH)
Kareela Reserve, Kareela 1.00pm (BH)
Ingrid Rd/Anitra Reserve, Kareela 1.00pm (ST)

3RD SUNDAY

Prince Edward Park, Woronora 8.30am (BH)
Honeysuckle Reserve, Jannali 8.30am (GL)
Paruna Reserve, Como West 9.00am (ST)
Grays Point Reserve 1.00pm (GL)
Buckinbah Place Reserve, Lilli Pilli 1.00pm (ST)

4TH SUNDAY

Darook Park, Cronulla 8.30am (BH)
The Glen Reserve, Bonnet Bay 8.30am (ST)
Savilles Creek, Kirrawee 8.30am (GL)
Banksia Res, Engadine 1.00pm (ST)
Marina Crescent, Gymea Bay 1.00pm (GL)
Rutherford Reserve, Burraneer, 1.00pm (BH)

1ST MONDAY

Whitton Street, Heathcote 8.30am (BvL)
Taren Point Shorebird, Taren Point 9.00am (ST)
Columbine Close, Loftus 1:00pm (BvL)
Brigalow Place, Engadine 1:00pm (ST)

2ND MONDAY

Delta St, Sutherland 9.00am (BH)
Koolangara Res, Bonnet Bay 9:00am (ST)

3RD MONDAY

Hakea Street, Yarrawarra, 8.30am (BvL)
Port Hacking Rd Res., Sylvania 9.00am (ST)
Australia Rd, Barden Ridge 9.00am (BH)
Nelson Street, Engadine 1.00pm (BvL)

4TH MONDAY

Young Street Reserve, Sylvania 9.00am (ST)

1ST TUESDAY

Myra Creek, Loftus 8.30am (BvL)
Dunoon Place Reserve, Bangor 9.00am (BH)
Menai Conservation Park, Menai 9.00am (ST)
Upper Forbes Creek, Engadine 1.00pm (BvL)
Surrey Place, Kirrawee 1.00pm (BH)

2ND TUESDAY

Caravan Head Res, Oyster Bay 9.00am (BvL)
Lilli Pilli Point Reserve 9.00am (BH)
Forbes Creek South, Engadine 1.00pm (BvL)

3RD TUESDAY

Forestgrove Drive, Menai 9.00am (ST)
Kareena Park, Caringbah 9.00am (BH)
Sesquicentenary Pk, Heathcote 9.00am (BvL)
Corea Street Reserve, Sylvania 1.00pm (ST)
Darook Park Sth, Cronulla 1.00pm (BH)

4TH TUESDAY

Bottle Creek, Heathcote 8.30am (BvL)
Loftus St, Bundeena 9.00am (BH)
Lilli Pilli Point Reserve 9.00am (ST)
Hungry Point Res, Cronulla 12.30pm (ST)
Ninth Avenue North, Loftus 1.00pm (BvL)

1ST WEDNESDAY

Windy Point, Cronulla 8.30am (ST)
Bundeena Reserve, Bundeena 9.00am (GL)
Prices Reserve South, Woronora 9.00am (BH)
Simpson Rd, Bundeena 11.30am (GL)

2ND WEDNESDAY

Cabbage Tree Point, Bundeena 9.00am (BvL)
Constables Point, Maianbar 9.00am (GL)
Green Point Rd Res, Oyster Bay 9.00am (ST)
Alcheringa Reserve 9.00am (BH)
Gooyong Reserve, Bangor 1.00pm (BH)

3RD WEDNESDAY

Croston Rd, Engadine 9.00am (BvL)
Albert Delardes Reserve, Illawong 9.00am (ST)
Gooyong Riverside, Woronora 9.00am (BH)
Dunwell Avenue, Loftus 1.00pm (BvL)

4TH WEDNESDAY

Forest & Corella Roads, Kirrawee 9.00am (BvL)
Newcombe Street, Maianbar 9.00am (GL)
Wattlebird Reserve, Caringbah 9.00am (BH)

1ST THURSDAY

Kareela Golf Course 7.00am (GL)
Joseph Banks Native Plant Reserve 9.00am (GL)
Louden Avenue, Illawong 9.00am (BvL)
John McKinn Park, Cronulla 9.00am (BH)

2ND THURSDAY

Kareela Golf Course 7.00am (GL)
Parc Menai 8.30am (BvL)

3RD THURSDAY

Kareela Golf Course 7.00am (GL)
Eighth Avenue, Loftus 8:30am (BvL)
Savilles Creek Reserve, Kirrawee 9.00am (GL)

4TH THURSDAY

Kareela Golf Course 7.00am (GL)
Drysdale Place, Kareela 9.00am (BH)

1ST FRIDAY

Coonong Creek Reserve, Gymea 8:30am (GL)
Ewey Creek, Miranda 8.30am (BvL)

2ND FRIDAY

Ninth Avenue Reserve, Loftus 9.00am (BvL)

3RD FRIDAY

Farrer Place, Oyster Bay 8.30am (BvL)
Kyogle Place, Grays Point 8.30am (GL)
Gunnamatta Foreshore, Cronulla 1.00pm (GL)

4TH FRIDAY

Kiora Road South, Yowie Bay 8:30am (BvL)
Shiprock Reserve, Lilli Pilli 9.00am (GL)
Community Nursery, Gymea 9:00am



Stylidium graminifolium
- Emma Brame

**To join Bushcare
please go to**

<https://www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au/Bushcare-Volunteers>



Don't forget our Facebook page. It is a hub to share information, photographs and video amongst users. Log onto Facebook, search 'Sutherland Shire Bushcare' and 'like' the page.

Bushland Activity

Bookings are essential and made on Council's website. NOTE: For events in National Parks entry fee applies.

Special Events

SCAMPER THROUGH THE JUNGLE

**Thursday 18 January
9:30am - 11:30am**

Our "Scamper through the Jungle" Bushcare event has become our most successful school holidays activity for kids, and it's free! Form a small team or pair and collect clues as you race through the amazing gardens of the Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve. Recommended for primary school ages, parents are welcome to accompany their children on this activity. Registration is required, the race will have a staggered start over 3 time periods.

NURSERY WHACKERS

**Wednesday 31 January
9:00am - 12:00pm
Community Nursery, GyMEA**

Bushcare. What is it all about? If you're curious, come along to Bush Whackers at the Sutherland Shire Council Community Nursery, GyMEA. Meet the whole Bushcare team. This special Bushcare event is the perfect excuse to get out and meet new people, learn about the Shire's beautiful bushland and get some exercise. All equipment, gloves and morning tea will be provided.

TO BOOK GO TO:
www.sutherlandshire.nsw.gov.au
**AND SEARCH FOR
BUSHCARE EVENTS**

WORKING WITH WOODY WEEDS

**Wednesday 6 March
8:30am - 4:00pm**

Join Bushcare on a journey to discover what to do with woody weeds. You'll learn how to turn useless privet into one of the most useful of objects - a spoon. All tools, materials and morning tea supplied.

Bushwalks and Guided Nature Walks



SPOTLIGHTING AT GREENHILLS WETLAND

**Tuesday 9 January
8:00pm - 9:30pm**

Our invasive species team will give you an insight into their priority weed and pest animal program and afterwards we will explore the surrounding area making sure that no cane toads have taken up residence. We will observe native frogs and hopefully spot some turtles and mammals as well. BYO torches please and all children under the age of 18 are to be accompanied by an adult.

YOGA IN THE PARK

**Saturday 3 February
8:30am - 12:00pm**

Join Bushcare for a gentle yoga class followed by a native planting session at Gunnamatta Park.

BIRDS AND BUSHCARE

**Monday 5 February
9:00am - 12:00pm
Taren Point Shorebird Reserve**

Join SSC Bushcare and guest speaker, Ricki Coughlan, for some light weeding, morning tea and an educational talk on the shorebirds that use the Taren Point Shorebird Reserve ecosystem.

KAYAKING ON THE HACKING RIVER

**Friday 9 February
8:30am - 12:00pm**

The Invasive Species Unit will host a guided kayaking trip on the Hacking River where you will enjoy and learn firsthand about our important estuarine ecosystems and the threats to them from invasive species.

BURNUM BURNUM WALK

**Thursday 15 February
9:00am - 11:30am**

Join Bushcare and botanist Dan Clarke for a guided nature through Burnum Burnum Reserve. This walk will be looking at the reserve after a hazard reduction burn. Bookings are essential.

BIRD SPOTTING IN THE ROYAL

**Wednesday 21 February
8:00am - 11:30am**

Join Bushcare and bird expert, Ricki Coughlan, for a bird spotting stroll through The Royal National Park.

NATURE WALK: LUCAS HEIGHTS CONSERVATION AREA

**Wednesday 13 March
9:00am - 12:00pm**

Join Bushcare and botanist Dan Clarke for a guided nature walk through this seldom visited reserve in the west of the Shire. This walk will highlight the extensive conservation work Bushcare has undertaken in partnership with the Mill Creek Mountain Bike Community.



Kunzea and Dianella - Emma Brame

Have you seen this Turtle?

By Chad Davison

Red-eared slider turtles (REST) are a very invasive species and have been found in multiple locations across Sydney. SSC recorded its first REST approximately two years ago in Oyster Creek. Recently, acting from information from the public, a second REST was located, this time at Camellia Gardens. The Invasive Species team sprung into action and on the second attempt, the REST was successfully caught. RESTs are very aggressive and look like a smaller version of the Snapping turtles from the USA. If you know someone with a REST, or are the owner of one, please do not let the turtle go in the wild but ring SSC or DPI as they present an extreme risk to our environment. If you see a REST somewhere in the Shire, then ring the Invasive Species Team on 9710 0333.



Red-eared slider turtle - DPI

Bushcare Contact Details

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And follow the prompts

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