

# Bushcare Shoalhaven

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links



*spring edition 2013*

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## Bushcare Field Officers

*– How They Help You?*

Council has been directly employing three Casual Bushcare Field Officers since September 2012, to support Bushcare volunteers by providing on-site training and advice in bush regeneration to Bushcare Groups.

This September makes it a year that Jeff, Cate and Rebecca have been working directly for Council to support Bushcare Groups. Previous to this, Cate and Rebecca and were doing the same job but were employed by Real Options International Pty Ltd who were contracted by Shoalhaven Council to provide the service.

As many of you will already know Cate, Rebecca and Jeff bring a wealth of knowledge and skills in bush regeneration, botany, pest animals and plant control, native fauna management, communications and relations, volunteer management and cake cooking and tasting expertise

The three have a combined experience of over 50 years in natural resource management and bush regeneration, having worked in the both the public and private sector.



Rebecca Rudd - Central Shoalhaven Bushcare Field Officer in action



to live a work here. They also have a passion for Bushcare, and the great work that Bushcare volunteers do in our City. All three want to see Bushcare grow and see Bushcare Groups as a conduit for communities to grow, meet, learn and foster a stewardship for their local ecology.

The best way for Bushcare Groups to do this is to share the load, swap ideas and learn from others about how to adapt to the ever changing environment as your Bushcare site slowly regenerates. One of the biggest killers of volunteer organisations and individual volunteers is burn out. When the majority of organisation/ or coordinating falls on a minority it can soon overwhelm.

Bushcare Field Officers can help prevent your Bushcare Group and volunteers from “volunteer fatigue”. They can share the burden of carrying the weight of expectations of your Bushcare Group by helping you in the following ways:

1. Being the go to person on – site for seeking advice and “what to do next” type of questions
2. Being the ID person for others in your group
3. Assisting with inquiries from residents and visitors about your Bushcare site or work
4. Helping the volunteers stick to your Bushcare plan
5. Facilitating group discussions and decision making process
6. Being the conduit for getting assistance and advice from Council
7. Getting tools and equipment for you
8. Coordinating/facilitating training days for your Bushcare Group
9. Assisting with neighbourly relations on your Bushcare site
10. Organising special outings or excursions for volunteers to help inspire and enthuse everyone.

These are just some ideas and there are many more that I have not thought of, so if your Bushcare Group doesn’t already have a Bushcare Field Officer helping you, pick up the phone or email me and book them in, you won’t regret it.



**Jeff Bryant, Bushcare Field Officer for the Northern Shoalhaven, with his two sons Obi and Sam.**



**Cate Brooks, Bushcare Field Officer for Southern Shoalhaven at Tabourie.**

## Bushcare Policy Update

Council is currently reviewing the policy which guides Council’s Bushcare program, and would love your input and feedback on the changes to the Bushcare Policy. Over the coming weeks Council will be making contact with all Bushcare volunteers seeking your input to the proposed changes. This will be done via several mechanism including e-mail distribution, web based feedback and good old snail mail.

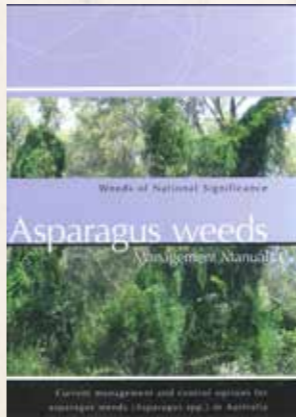
There are a lot of changes to the Bushcare policy as the document is quite out of date with the changing face of volunteerism. The framework, that these changes to the Bushcare program will be based on, are the type and level of support offered to different types of Bushcare Groups and, as follows:

1. Large Bushcare Groups – These will be groups that have more than five active volunteers and undertake more 300 person hours of volunteer work per year – These Bushcare Groups will receive the highest level of support.
2. Small Bushcare Groups – These are groups who have less than five active volunteers and undertake less than 300 person hours of volunteer work per year – These Bushcare Groups will receive a moderate level of support.
3. Independent Bushcare Volunteers - It is preferred that Bushcare volunteers be members of willing to join existing Bushcare Groups but it is acknowledged that this is not always practically possible. Independent volunteers will receive minimal support from Council.
4. Special Project Bushcare Groups – These are organisation or individuals associated with outside groups or agencies that wish to participate in Bushcare works/projects, such as Schools/Corporations/Business. They generally only participate for a limited or set amount of time and may assist existing Bushcare Group/s – Special Project Bushcare Groups will be individually assessed by Council based on their value to the Bushcare Program and the amount of support will depend on this assessment.

This is just a very quick overview of some of the proposed changes to the Bushcare Policy, so please keep an ear out for the draft policy and have your say

## Asparagus Fern Control Project, Narrawallee

– A Case Study



Many Bushcare Groups will be very familiar with the wide spread environmental weed known as Asparagus Fern. The scourge of the Shoalhaven is the Ground or Basket Asparagus Fern or Asparagus aethiopicus which has degraded many native vegetation communities across the Shoalhaven.

There are other species of Asparagus that have become established on the NSW Coast such as Bridal Vail Creeper, Climbing Asparagus and Cape Asparagus. As previous reported in Shoalhaven Bushcare Links the Asparagus species have been declared as a Weeds of National Significance (WONS).

As part of that process a Best Practise Management Guidelines manual is being produced, part of this manual features case studies of Asparagus spp. control/removal projects across the country.

Our very own Narrawallee features in these case studies and focuses on the Narrawallee Beach Dune Restoration Project undertaken by the Narrawallee Foreshore and Reserves Bushcare Group from 2005 through to 2011.

The case study examines the projects background, methodology used, what worked well and what didn’t work and the also looks and what monitoring and follow up was like. In my experience the Narrawallee case has been one of the most successful Ground Asparagus Fern removal projects I have seen.

This success has been due to several factors coinciding at the same time, climatic, funding availability, good partnerships, availability of quality bush regeneration contractors and most importantly a passionate and dedicated Bushcare Group who have been extremely dedicated to seeing the project succeed.

Copies of the Asparagus Fern Best Practise Management Guidelines can be downloaded from the WONS Website at <http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/asparagusweeds/>

*NOTE: I have 8 copies of the Weeds of National Significance (WONS), Asparagus Weeds - Management Manual to give to Bushcare Groups that are actively dealing with control of any Asparagus Weeds. To obtain a copy please contact Alasdair Stratton at [bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au) or you may obtain directly from the WONS Weeds Coordinator, Hillary Cherry at [hillary.cherry@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:hillary.cherry@environment.nsw.gov.au).*

## The Mighty Marina Bushcare Group

– Culburra Beach

The band of merry men and women who roam the beaches, lakes, foreshores and forests of Culburra Beach creating regeneration and rejuvenation wherever they tread. They are otherwise known as the Marina Bushcare Group. The name was taken from a lane that was laid out by planners, when the town was sub-divided, the lane runs in a mismatched sections adjacent to the beach directly behind the fore-dune.

John, Les, Lynne and Wendy and all the volunteers have worked tirelessly on regenerating many sites across Culburra Beach, including Ocean St beach access area, Lee St (near Lake Wollumboola), multiple dune restoration sites including Mia Way, Sunshine St, The Bowery and The Mall. There latest project is taking on the restoration of Curleys Bay, adjacent to a proposed BMX track.

The before and after photos of the Lee St project below is some examples of the great work the Marina Bushcare Group have done and continue to do, hats off to you.



*Lee St Site Before – August 2011*



*Lee St Site – After February 2011*



# Work Health & Safety - Council Bushcare Volunteers – Fact Vs Fiction

As reported in the last edition of the Shoalhaven Bushcare Links, the changes to the national legislation that governs work health and safety. Have meant that for organisations who manage volunteers, in many cases the volunteers they are responsible for are regarded as workers in relation to providing a safe work environment.

This fact means that there is going to be some changes for you as a Bushcare volunteer when undertaking volunteer work with your Bushcare Group. To clarify what these work health and safety changes will mean for you as a volunteer. I have separated some of the commonly heard fiction and replaced them with the facts, to separate the red tape from the reality.

FACT	FICTION
Bushcare Volunteers are “deemed” as workers under the Work Health & Safety Act 2011	Shoalhaven Council does not have a duty of care to Bushcare Groups and volunteers under the Work Health Safety Act 2011
The definition of a volunteer is a person who is acting on a voluntary basis <i>(irrespective of whether the person receives out-of-pocket expenses).</i>  Under Shoalhaven Council’s Volunteer Programs Safety Policy, volunteers are grouped into two categories, as follows:  • <b>Council Volunteer Program Workers</b> – These are people who volunteer to undertake activities under arrangements that are likely to identify them as a ‘worker’ for the purpose of the WHS Act 201. This generally means they do work that is supervised, supported or coordinated by a Council employee i.e. Bushcare Coordinator or Bushcare Field Officer  • <b>Individual or Group Volunteer Activities on Council Owned or Managed Land</b> - Volunteer individuals and/or community groups undertaking activities on Council or Crown land, but not as Council Volunteer Program Workers, will not be deemed ‘workers’ for Council for the purposes of the WHS Act 2011. Such as activities include street verge maintenance, street tree planting and construction of shared pathways	As a volunteer for Shoalhaven Council I do not have to exercise a duty of care, for myself and others
Bushcare Groups need to participate in the process of assessing the risk to themselves and visitors on their Bushcare site/s	I have been working all my life and can use common sense so I don’t need to worry about assessing the risk on my Bushcare site!
Bushcare volunteers have to be inducted when they first start work on a Bushcare Site, this is the same for a volunteer who is only working once or volunteer who is joining the group long term	When a new volunteer arrives all they need is gloves and a bit of get up and go before they start work
A Bushcare site is the same as a Council work site when it comes to “Site Safety”	Council don’t take the safety of volunteers as seriously as it’s paid employees
Bushcare volunteers can use small motorised plant such as hand held mowers and whipper snippers on their sites – provided the small plant does not require any formal training/qualifications in order to operate it – such as chainsaws. A Council staff member who is qualified will need to undertake a safety check of the equipment before use to insure it is safe.	Volunteers can only use hand tools
Shoalhaven Council has a statutory duty of care to maintain and provide, as reasonably practical, a work place that is without risk to paid and un-paid workers health and safety	Council just want to impose all this red tape safety stuff to make life difficult
Shoalhaven Council needs to have a process or a means by which people working in a Council volunteer program are inducted and/or made aware of their and Councils responsibilities/role in workplace safety	Making sure my Bushcare volunteering experience is a safe one is not Councils business.

- In relation to this the last fact point, Council has developed small 15 page *(including title page and signature page)*, A5 Volunteer Induction Handbook for Health, Safety and Conduct. The booklet covers the basics of volunteers need to be aware of when working in a Council volunteer program. The purpose of the volunteer induction handbook is to:
- Provide you with basic information on how we operate our organisation
  - Inform you of our conduct standards
  - Provide you with information about our safety system, to protect your health, safety and wellbeing, and that of other people, while volunteering with Council.
- Allow your participation in creating and maintaining a safe environment for you to undertake voluntary activities.
  - Recognise your status as an Inducted Volunteer
  - Fulfil the organisational requirement to comply with Work Health Safety (WHS) legislation.
- This volunteer handbook will be sent out to all Bushcare volunteers over the coming months, asking you to read through the booklet and sign the last page as an acknowledgement and return the signed page.
- Council will be running a several short volunteer induction workshops, which will be late November. At which we will be asking you to return the signed induction booklets.



# Creature Feature – Yellow-Bellied Gliders (Petaurus australis)



Water colour picture of 2 x Yellow Bellied Gliders (Petaurus australis), Painted by Peter Longhurst

The Yellow-bellied Glider (*Petaurus australis*) is an arboreal (tree living) glider possum that is listed as Vulnerable on Schedule 2 of the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (TSC Act). The Yellow-bellied Glider has a patchy distribution in a wide range of forest habitats through eastern Australia. Distribution of this species has declined up to 50% over some areas of its former habitat.

The Yellow-bellied Glider generally prefers reasonable quality, tall open forests which contain a mix of larger older trees containing large hollows for shelter and nesting as well. This species is quite specific in the resources it requires for survival. These include a distribution of suitable sized tree hollows, winter flowering eucalypts to provide nectar and pollen, eucalypt trees suitable for tapping sap and trees with loose, shedding bark for foraging a range of insect prey.

Additionally, honeydew, manna and occasionally Acacia gum are used. Yellow-bellied Gliders may use a number of den trees within their home range depending on seasonal food resources and breeding. They usually live in family groups which occupy large home ranges in the order of 30 to 65 hectares depending on availability of denning hollows and food resources.

What do they eat?

A particularly important component of this species’ diet is obtained through licking sap tapped from incisions made in the bark of mostly eucalypt trees. This behaviour occurs on a variety of mostly

smooth-barked eucalypt trees, with only single trees within a stand of similar trees used for tapping sap. Tree selection may change over seasons and time, although an individual tree may be used for 10 years or more.

How to Recognise a Yellow Bellied Glider Feed Tree?

Trees incised by Yellow-bellied Gliders for tapping sap can be recognised by the presence of a series of gnawed incisions made into the bark of the trunk of the tree. These incisions are usually shaped in a shallow V with the length of the incision being measured during one study as typically 12cm in length, with an incised channel 1 to 5cm wide and up to 1cm deep (Mackowski 1988). The shape, lengthand depth of incisions, however, may vary considerably depending on tree species and individual animals with some incisions being flat shaped and over 50cm in length. Trees being used by this species for tapping sap can be recognised by the presence of one or more of these incised shallow V to flat incisions in the bark on the trunk of the tree. The presence of dried sap may also be observed ‘bleeding’ from the incision and often there may be the remains of chewed bark lying at the base of the tree trunk.

# Conservation of the Yellow-Bellied Glider Habitat – What We Can Do?

Broad-leaved Apple <i>(Angophora subvelutina)</i>	Grey Box <i>(E. moluccana)</i>
Messmate <i>(E. obliqua)</i>	Blackbutt <i>(E. pilularis)</i>
Spotted Gum <i>(C. maculata)</i>	Cabbage Gum <i>(Eucalyptus amplifolia)</i>
Grey Gum <i>(E. punctata)</i>	Narrow-leaved Scribbly Gum <i>(E. racemosa)</i>
Sydney Blue Gum <i>(E. saligna)</i>	Thin-leaved Stringybark <i>(E. eugenoides)</i>

Retention of a variety of preferred Yellow Bellied Glider sap feed trees *(refer to table above)* and in particular, trees with signs of incisions as described above are vital for the conservation of this species. All sap trees with recent incisions less than two years old as evidenced by non-occlusion of the incision *(i.e. where the incision has not closed)* must be retained from harvesting activities.

Protection of forests, particularly forests with older trees containing hollows, is vital for the survival of the Yellow-bellied. Yellow-bellied Gliders are also hollow dependent species requiring a distribution of suitably sized tree hollows for denning and breeding. A 50m exclusion zone must be implemented around trees used as dens by Yellow-bellied Glider’s.

For more information on this species please refer to the ‘Species Profile’ and the Approved Recovery Plan available on <http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/content/recovery+plans>

Information sourced from Advisory Note 3, NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, August 2007



Students from Vincentia High School's Koori Cadets Program working at the Tallyan Point – Basin View Bushcare Group site

## Vincentia High School – Indigenous Cadets Help Bushcare

Several Bushcare Groups around the Bay and Basin region have worked with Shoalhaven Council and Vincentia High School to host the Indigenous Cadets Program. The program has been put together by Vincentia High School, in which it has a group of local Aboriginal students from the high school work with Natural Resource Management organisations such as NPWS, Booderee NP, Southern Rivers Catchment Management and Shoalhaven Council to give the students some hands on education and experience.

The Tallyan Point Bushcare Group was one such organisation that hosted the cadet program on their Bushcare Site. Megan Mulligan, the Bushcare Group Coordinator wrote to Vincentia High School congratulating them on the cadet program the following is a copy of Megan's email.

To Mr Glenday & Mr Hogan, Vincentia High School

Hello Vincentia High School,

On Wednesday 29 May this year our Bushcare group at Tallyan Point, Basin View had the pleasure of hosting the Indigenous Cadet Rangers from your school.

The cadet rangers were inducted to the site & introduced to the major species of both natives & weeds in the area. After some education as to the nefarious nature of Asparagus fern (which is the major weed of significance to this Bushcare group) and training in its safe & effective removal, the cadet rangers set to with commendable gusto and assisted us with the eradication of a nasty expanse of this weed.

Fortunately we had a perfect day for this activity, and after being rewarded for excellent Asparagus fern removal with a convivial morning tea, we all enjoyed an informative and beautiful walk around Tallyan Point, observing the significance of bush care work already conducted and taking in the wealth of knowledge of Rebecca Rudd, our bush care adviser from Shoalhaven Council and Graham, who came with the cadets & their teachers.

We were most impressed with all aspects of the cadets during their visit - their interest, ability to undertake hard work, lovely

manners & friendly good behaviour made the day a pleasure for our group.

A special word of commendation for their teachers, Ashleigh and Jonathan, who obviously commanded the total respect of the cadets while maintaining a warm, friendly and productive working relationship with them. It was heartening to observe, and obviously facilitated a great outcome for the site visit and all concerned.

What I learned on the day about the Indigenous Ranger Cadetship Program impressed me greatly, and we hope the cadets and the school continue with such productive and innovative programs.

Please pass on our thanks and congratulations to all concerned and keep up the great work.

And our group would love to have you back, anytime!

Megan Mulligan Coordinator  
on behalf of Tallyan Point Bushcare

## The Dolphin Point – Re-Birth of a Bushcare Group, Burrill Lake

Many years ago a lone volunteer worked to regenerate the coastal vegetation, including littoral rainforest remnants at Dolphin Point near the mouth of Burrill Lake. The volunteers name was Cath Campbell and she brought the bush back to life in and around Dolphin Point, which had been neglected for years.

Just as Cath was getting on top of the weeds and was seeing good results for her efforts her husband got a job on the Whitsundays and she had to say good bye to the point.

Last year Alex and Jacqueline Wilks moved into a house opposite the point, which Alex knew well from spending many hours surfing the point. They saw that the native vegetation surrounding the point was becoming overrun with exotic weeds such as Ground Asparagus Fern and Cape Ivy.

Jacqueline contacted Shoalhaven Council to seek assistance and soon a new Bushcare Group had emerged at Dolphin Point. The group have drawn up a plan which has been adopted by Council and work has begun on re-instating the health of the bushland at Dolphin Point, with regular working bees being held, where the community get together to help look after Dolphin Point.



Members of the newly formed Dolphin Point Bushcare Group resting at the lookout after the group's first working bee in November 2012



## Shoalhaven Council to Trail “Banner” at Coastal Vegetation Poisoning site at Collingwood Beach

At the Council Ordinary Meeting of 21st May this year, Council passed the following resolution in relation to a large section of native vegetation on Collingwood Beach, Jervis Bay that had been poisoned by person/s unknown. The resolution was as follows:

- Council trial the installation of the banner at the Collingwood Beach tree vandalism site for a period of 3 months;
- A report be presented to Council on the 3 month trial after the installation of the banner, in view of amending Council's Foreshore Reserves Policy;
- Council nominate Collingwood Beach vegetation vandalism sites as National Tree Day sites; and
- Before a banner is erected, Council conduct a doorknock of affected residents to ascertain their view prior to the proposed trial.

This has seen a major change in the way Shoalhaven Council managers and responds to the deliberate destruction or damage to foreshore vegetation on Councils owned and/or managed foreshore public reserves. To date, Councils response to the damage or poisoning of foreshore vegetation has been to erect standard 600mmx400mm steel signage highlighting that it is illegal and replanting the affected area to replace the loss of vegetation, in consultation with surrounding landowners.

This change in direction has meant that Shoalhaven Council has made the decision to use a 6 metre x 3 metres banner to highlight to the public that the on-going

deliberate destruction of vegetation on public foreshore reserve, will not be accepted by Council. Which is one of the largest landowners and managers of foreshore areas in the Shoalhaven.

Since this resolution was passed, Councillor Jemma Tribe, Council staff from Environmental Services Section and community representatives from the Vincentia Residents and Ratepayers Association. Have been working together to get the design and layout of the “Vegetation Vandalism Banner” completed.

As per part d) of the resolution consultants also undertook a survey before the banner is due to be installed. The survey was undertaken by door knocking residents that had views of the beach (waterfront) and residents that did not have views and pedestrians using the adjacent shared pathway that runs the length of the beach. The results of this pre-banner survey were very interesting. The following points highlight some of the survey unexpected results:

- 100% of the residents surveyed, that owned properties with views of Collingwood Beach said they thought native vegetation, including trees, growing on the sand dunes at Collingwood Beach was very important. Whereas only 57% of residents that did have views thought the same.
- 100% of residents that owned property with views answered that they were supportive or very supportive of Council's need to address the issue of vegetation vandalism on public land?

At the time of writing the banner working group had finalised the design and installation will commence very soon. Following installation as per the resolution a follow up survey will be undertaken to evaluate the impact the banner has had on the public's perception of illegal damage to foreshore vegetation on our beaches, bays and lakes.

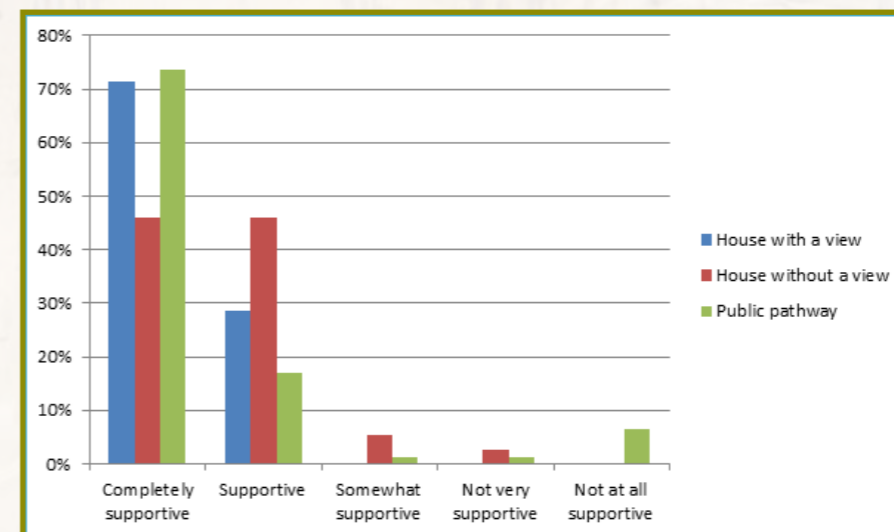


Figure 1: Bar graph of Survey participants responses to the questions “How supportive are you of Council's need to address the issue of vegetation vandalism on public land?” . The survey participants were grouped into the following three categories 1. Owners of Houses with view i.e. beachfront (Blue) 2. Owners of houses without a view i.e. not beachfront (Red) 3. People using adjacent shared pathway (Green).



## National Tree Day 2013 – Shoalhaven Heads Bushcare

Noel Schneider, Shoalhaven Heads Bushcare Group

Over 400 native trees, shrubs, & groundcovers were planted by 5th & 6th class students from Shoalhaven Heads Primary School on 26th July adjacent to the track from Gumley Reserve to Holiday Haven. Teachers Amber and Josh assisted along with volunteers from Shoalhaven Heads Bushcare group, Jan, David, Rae, Anne, John and Noel.

Thanks to Shoalhaven City Council & Shoalhaven Heads Arboretum for donating the plants. The students were told about the biodiversity that their plantings would encourage & the importance of healthy dunes to our local community. The planting procedure was demonstrated before the students broke into groups to create more patches of native bushland in our village. A BBQ was enjoyed by the volunteers following the planting & the plants will be nurtured & watered during August.

## Fox's – Are We Winning The Battle?

The simple answer is NO!

A survey called “dob-in-a-fox”, run by DPI in Melbourne some years back, found foxes in almost every suburb of Melbourne. Densities of up to 15 foxes/km<sup>2</sup> were found in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne! However, city folk are not able to shoot or bait in the area and have little experience of trapping!

Perhaps we should learn from this that we are powerless to meet this challenge while every method of control is constrained. While there are good reasons why this is the case in the urban zone, the reality is that we are not able to do what is truly needed to meet the challenge. When the urban foxes get infected with rabies, the priority will change to human health and pet safety. Only this tragedy will change the balance and see some constraints to action lifted. Sadly it may take a disaster to enable action to control urban foxes.

Click Here to read about ACTA's FOXOFF® Baits

To report fox sightings click <http://maps.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/sightings/> on Shoalhaven City Council pest plant and animal web based map.

## Weed Alert – *Asparagus falcatus* “Sicklethorn”

A newly emerging *Asparagus* weed, *Asparagus falcatus*, has recently caused a stir amongst weed managers on the east coast. The weed, commonly known as Sicklethorn, is known to occur on the mid north coastal region of NSW and south east Queensland (in riparian areas of suburban Brisbane).

Sicklethorn is a robust climber that prefers moist, semi shaded growing conditions and as it looks unlike other *Asparagus* weeds that have naturalised in Australia. It may not obviously strike people as a member of the *Asparagaceae* family. Introduced into Queensland as a garden plant (which has since escaped in waterways), *Asparagus falcatus* is native to western, eastern and southern Africa, Sri Lanka, the Canary Islands and the Mediterranean. Leaves are shiny, dark green, often sickle shaped (hence the name!). Woody stems have hard, hooked thorns and are light grey in colour. Small white flowers are followed by fruit that ripens to red. Whilst literature describes the plant as growing 2.5 – 3 m tall in its native range, anecdotally it grows to 6 metres in Australian conditions. Although originally from sub-tropical regions a quick ‘Google’ reveals it will survive overnight temperatures of 2 degrees and ‘will grow for anybody’.

If you have seen this species and can comment on its ecology, distribution or effective control techniques then the Coordinator would love to hear from you!



*Asparagus falcatus* (Sicklethorn) flowers



The leaf of *Asparagus falcatus* (Sicklethorn)



## Review of Weed Management in NSW – A Chance to Have Your Say

The Minister for Primary Industries has requested the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to undertake an independent evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of weed management arrangements in NSW, with the view of informing the further development of the proposed NSW Biosecurity Act, and other relevant strategies under the NSW Biosecurity Strategy. The review will focus on existing good practice, opportunities and barriers that exist within current arrangements and ways to overcome barriers to inform the recommendations.

The Commissioner for Natural Resources, Dr John Keniry AM, was asked to Chair a Steering Committee to ensure the terms of reference are met and stakeholder input is appropriately considered. The Steering Committee consists of Cr Reg Kidd - Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee, Dr Bruce Christie - Biosecurity NSW, and Mr Mick O'Flynn - Office of Environment and Heritage.

### Terms of reference

The Minister's terms of reference (see Appendix A), received on 20 August 2013, request the NRC to:

- assess (based on existing data) the distribution and abundance of weeds across NSW, their impacts, likely trajectories and risk creators and bearers
- evaluate current regulatory and institutional arrangements across both public and private tenures
- evaluate weed management programs funded by the Australian and NSW Governments
- identify and assess viable alternative weed management arrangements
- provide advice on potential transitional arrangements for the future implementation of the NSW Biosecurity Act and NSW Biosecurity Strategy 2013-2021.

For the purposes of the review:

- The assessment of the current and projected distribution and abundance of weeds and their impacts is to rely on existing data.
- Weeds include both introduced and native species, but are limited to terrestrial and freshwater aquatic species only; marine species and marine environments are excluded. The review will consider weeds identified under a variety of legislation including noxious weeds as defined under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993, invasive native scrub and feral native species under the Native Vegetation Act 2003, environmental weeds identified in the biodiversity priorities for widespread weeds, and Weeds of National Significance and National Environmental Alert List Weeds noted in the Australian Weeds Strategy.

The Issues Paper will be available for public comment for six weeks until 6 December 2013. The NRC will review all comments to inform a draft report.

Electronic submissions can be provided through the Have Your Say website - <http://engage.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/weed-management-review>

Paper copy submissions can be faxed to (02) 8227 4399 or mailed to:

Weed Management Review  
Natural Resources Commission  
GPO Box 4206  
Sydney NSW 2001

Submissions must be provided by the closing date to allow us sufficient time to consider them before making our findings and recommendations. If you are unable to provide a submission before the closing date, you may contact us to discuss whether a late submission can be accepted.



# Native or Weed - Look a Likes



Ficus Macrophylla (Moreton Bay Fig)



Ficus elastica (Rubber Tree)

## Differences

Native	Weedy Look-A-Like
Underside of young leaves are like red-brown felt	Coppery green, young leaves
Underside of older leaves lose felt	Underside of leaves, dull, pale green
Pale green leaf sheath	Pink to red, papery leaf sheath
Fruit is a red-purple fig with white dots	Fruit is a dull yellow fig

## Similarities

Native & weed
Large evergreen trees with buttressed trunks
Aerial roots
Large, dark green, thick, leathery, shiny, elliptical, alternate leaves

# Native or Weed - Look a Likes



Rubus parvifolius (Native Raspberry)



Rubus fruticosus spp. agg. (Blackberry)

## Differences

Native	Weedy Look-A-Like
Light green leaves, densely hairy, white underneath	Dark green leaves on top and lighter green beneath
Berries ripen from green to red	Berries ripen from green, to red to black
Evergreen	Semi-deciduous
Stems up to 1m long	Stems green, purple or red up to 7m long
Small plant	Can form very large thickets

## Similarities

Native & weed
Arching stems, covered in prickles, which root at the tops
Compound leaves with 3-5 leaflets with toothed margins
Five petalled, cup-shaped, pink or white flowers in clusters
Segmented berries



# Native or Weed - Look a Likes



Scaevola calendulacea  
(Fan Flower)



Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. rotunda  
(Bitou Bush)

## Differences

Native	Weedy Look-A-Like
Sprawling growth habit	Erect growth
Leaves and stems are hairy	Young growth (leaves and stems) covered in white down
Leaf apex more or less blunt	Leaf apex pointed
Blue fan-shaped flowers	Yellow daisy flowers
Fleshy purple berries	Black berries

## Similarities

Native & weed
Leaves are fleshy, hairy, spoon-shaped, alternate.
Occur on coastal dune systems

# Native or Weed - Look a Likes



Oplismenus spp. (Basket Grass)



Tradescantia fluminensis (syn. T. albiflora)  
(Wandering Jew)

## Differences

Native	Weedy Look-A-Like
Leaves less crowded along stems	Leaves close together
Leaves with wavy margin	Leaves with straight margin
Leaves with very narrow point	Leaves with a much broader point
Feathery grassy flowers standing above leaves	White flowers

## Similarities

Native & weed
Leaf shape
Parallel veining on leaves
Trailing habit



## Flooding Story

– *Basin Walking Track Bushcare Group*  
Gwen & Ken Smith – *Basin Walking Track Bushcare Group, Sanctuary Point*

Late June 2013 was a time of heavy rain. From the readings on our rain meter, our area received in excess 320mm of rain over the five day period of heavy rain. The catchment area for St. Georges Basin is extensive and with rain run-off from urban and rural districts, the water level in the Lake rose approximately a metre plus. It was quite insidious watching the fingers of flooding water run their way through the vegetation adjacent to the water's edge. We have developed, and care for, several sections of endemic native plantings along the Basin Walking Track around the foreshores of the Lake.

The water receded very fast initially, leaving soggy and boggy patches which are still drying out. Of interest is the effect this inundation of over four days has had on the vegetation. At the height of the flooding, most of the plants were covered by salt water. Only the topmost leaf sections of *Lomandra longifolia* were visible, just 'floating' between the *Casuarinas glucas*. Although covered with sea grass and washed-in debris, they do not appear to have suffered. We were unsure of the fate of the *Crinum* lilies, *Westringia fruticosa* and *Dianella* spp., but we cleaned them of the debris; and they now look sound.

Many of the newly planted *Juncus* reed plants were washed away from their sites, but we were able to recover them from the onshore flood line, and replant them. We are hopeful for their re-establishment. The salt bushes, *Rhagodia* and *Atriplex*; and *Einadia* species were rather bedraggled. They were lying over, some with broken stems, some having lost their footings; but now interestingly, they have new leaf growth at their node joints.

The Salt Couch grass which is very tolerant of salty conditions, is slowly regaining its rigidity. It has to regrow itself up between the excess of deposited sea grass. The flow of water carried away much of the mulch naturally deposited from *casuarina* fallout, but we are confident that this will be replaced over successive seasons. Just shows how hardy and tolerant endemic plants can be.



*Planting during the inundation*



*Planting back to normal*



## Day Fair 2013

On Sunday June 2nd This year the Lady Denman Heritage Complex hosted the World Environment Day Fair. The day was a great success again this year, with the hard working committee doing a fantastic job in organising the stalls, displays and events that ended up seeing around 1200 people come through the event on the day.

Shoalhaven Council held a successful display and stall that was focused around biodiversity in the Shoalhaven. There was a lot of information on threatened species, including a threatened species call guessing competition, colouring in competition and a habitat garden.

Bushcare had a presence at the stall as well with information on groups, activities, volunteering, native plant give a ways and a weed identification service. There were also talks on native plant propagation, twitching and attracting native birds to your garden, water quality and threatened species,

All and all it was a great day with lots of positive feedback from visitors to the stall on how interesting and informative it was. These sorts of events do take a lot of work to organise and you may not see immediate results. However, undertaking educational extension events like these pays off in the long term.



## Ticks – *Be alert not alarmed!*

It is tick season again and all Bushcare Staff Volunteers need to be aware of the potential for tick bites.

How can I reduce the likelihood of being bitten?

- Wear appropriate clothing including long sleeved shirts, long pants tucked into socks and a wide brimmed hat. Ticks are more easily detected on light coloured clothing.
- Use an insect repellent that contains DEET or Picaridin and ensure that you spray your hat and clothes.

Have you checked for ticks?

On returning from a tick area, do a thorough check for ticks. Common locations include behind the ears, on the back of the head, groin, armpits and back of knees.



What should you do if you find a tick?

There is a lot of conflicting information about what you should and shouldn't do if you find a tick and you are encouraged to do your own research, however, NSW Health recommends the following:

- Remove a tick as soon as possible after locating it. \*\*Note: If you are allergic to ticks, seek urgent medical attention and treatment prior to removal.
- Use fine pointed tweezers and grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible. Gently pull the tick straight out with steady pressure. If you have difficulties seek medical attention.
- Do not try to kill the tick with methylated spirits or any other chemicals. This will cause the tick to inject more toxins.
- If you have a severe infestation by larval stage ticks (often referred to as grass ticks) take a bath for 30 minutes with 1 cup of bicarbonate of soda.

Further information is available at: [http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/general/ticks\\_factsheet.html](http://www0.health.nsw.gov.au/factsheets/general/ticks_factsheet.html)

**NOTE:** It is important that if you or someone in your Bushcare Group is bitten by a tick that you report it to the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator on Ph. 4429 3592 or mobile 042234583.

As you may be aware there are many tick borne viruses that can be contracted via the Tick's saliva when you are bitten, and many of these take days and sometimes weeks to show up. This is why it is important that Council has a record of the bite to follow up should you need to seek further medical care.

As you may be aware currently Lyme Disease, which is transmitted by ticks is not currently recognised as occurring in Australia, even though there are many incidents of people being positively diagnosed with the disease in Australia.

One of the short term symptoms of Lyme is a red circular bull eye like rash that appears at the bite site. If you would like to know more about Lyme disease and/or Ticks in general here are some website that are worth looking at.

1. Karl McManus Foundation  
<http://www.karlmcmannusfoundation.org.au/>

2. Sydney University – Department of Entomology – Ticks  
<http://medent.usyd.edu.au/fact/ticks.htm>

## Community Biodiversity

– *Are We Getting It Right?* – Caitlyn Rankin, Honours Thesis, University of Wollongong

By now you will have received and hopefully completed the questionnaire sent out by University of Wollongong honours student Caitlyn Rankin. The questionnaire forms part of a research honours project being undertaken by Caitlyn Rankin. The project is being conducted by the University of Wollongong's School of Earth and Environmental Sciences and hosted by Shoalhaven City Council.

The study is titled "Effectiveness, motivations, and operations of volunteer Bushcare groups in the Shoalhaven: Implications for sustaining community biodiversity management". The project is being overseen by a team which includes Council staff and senior staff from the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences.

This honours project aims to provide information to Shoalhaven Council about the difference community volunteer work has made to biodiversity, threatened flora and fauna and endangered communities by assessing the impact on behaviour, knowledge and the perceived value of biodiversity of those volunteering in the Shoalhaven Bushcare program.

The discussion of the report will focus on the following key aspect:

- A definition of community restoration and biodiversity for the purposes of this study;
- The effectiveness of community based restoration to improve biodiversity;
- What are the associated benefits of the Bushcare program
- How can the effectiveness of the Bushcare program be enhanced; and,
- Briefly, the implications of these findings for the management of community based restoration/ improving biodiversity in the Shoalhaven.

I personally can't wait to see the results and the recommendations of the research project. This study will indicate, whether we are heading in the right direction and if there is anything we can do differently to improve the Bushcare program and most importantly the volunteer experience of those involved in Bushcare.

The thesis is due to be submitted to the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences by 29 October this year, and should be available to the public shortly after.



## The NSW Environmental Trust invites grant applications to its Restoration and Rehabilitation Program

Grants of \$5,000 to \$100,000 available to:

- Community organisations and non-profit associations (total program \$2,000,000)
- State and local government organisations (not schools) (total program \$2,000,000)

**Applications open 21 September 2013 and close on 31 October 2013**

Application Forms - Guidelines, application forms and more information will be available on the Trust website: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/restoration.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/restoration.htm)

Contact the Trust - For further information about the above grant programs please contact the Trust on 02 8837 6093 or email [info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au)



## Council Says "Thank You"

Council at its ordinary meeting of September 24th 2013 Shoalhaven passed the following resolution to thank and recognise the work Bushcare Group's do in the Shoalhaven – So a big thank you all our hard working Bushcare volunteers 991. Additional Item – Bushcare Voluntary Work

"That Council recognise the value of the Bushcare Groups' voluntary hours, 59,411 hours' worth approximately \$1,782,330 since 2005, and its significant contribution to community building within the Shoalhaven and further the Council Bushcare Representatives Group encourages Councillors to include Bushcare site tours on their Familiarity Tours.

**If you prefer to receive this newsletter electronically via email please notify Council at [Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au)**

# Shoalhaven City Bushcare

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