

Bushcare Shoalhaven

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July August 2016

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National Tree Day 2016 – What Happened?

Planet Ark National Tree Day 2016 in the Shoalhaven was a huge success. Four Bushcare Groups hosted planting events and 1800 native trees, shrubs and groundcovers were planted by community, industry and schools. Many of these plants were supplied by the wonderful volunteers at the Culburra Community Nursery and Milton Landcare Nursery.

Events were held in Berry, Shoalhaven Heads, Huskisson and Basin View.

Berry Landcare partnered with staff from Fulton Hogan, who were awarded the contract to build the Foxground/ Berry Bypass. Two planting days were held revegetating a section of Bundewallah Creek bank adjacent to the overpass bridge; one with Berry Public School on Friday 26th July and then a community day on Sunday 28th July attended by over 60 people.

Noel Schneider and volunteers from the Shoalhaven Heads Bushcare Group held an event with Shoalhaven Heads Public School and planted 450 native groundcovers, shrubs and trees along a section of reserve that links the new shared pathway from River Rd Reserve to McIntosh St.



Down in the Bay Roger Hart, from the Huskisson-Woollamia Bushcare Group, worked in with the Huskisson Beach Tourist Park and Council to implement stage 2 of the Huskisson Beach revegetation plan in which 200 coastal native species were planted on the dunes to provide habitat, dune stability and shade for beach users.

At Basin View, St Georges Basin Public School helped Council staff and volunteers from the Smiths Bay Bushcare Group, plant 300 groundcover native species to improve biodiversity along the foreshore area where the Bushcare Group has been regenerating the estuarine native vegetation communities with grant assistance from the NSW Environment Trust.



Left to right - Will Armitage, Chair Berry Landcare and Colin and Kim Dove enjoying National Tree Day at Berry

Nowhere else in the world

Bomaderry Creek bushland is a piece of biodiverse paradise nestled between North Nowra and Bomaderry. It's made up of two parcels of land, one managed by the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage and the other by Council.

It's unfortunately more famous for a certain link road project that, for 20 years, threatened to split the bushland in two. The idea was finally abandoned in 2014 in favour of another route north of Bomaderry Creek.

The Bomaderry Creek bushland is also home to an extremely rare plant known as Bomaderry Zieria (*Zieria baeuerlenii*), a small shrub that occurs nowhere else in the world. It's listed as Endangered under both the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999* and (Schedule 1, Part 1) on the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995*.

The Bomaderry Zieria is thought to be a sterile hybrid that does not produce seed and over the last 17 years the known population has decreased by 70% (Barratt. T, 2007). The National Recovery Plan for Bomaderry Zieria has identified the following threats:

- Browsing by rabbits and other herbivores
- Competition from weeds
- Impacts from recreational activities
- Inappropriate fire regimes
- Stochastic events (random probability distribution that may be analysed statistically but may not be predicted precisely)
- Drought

To reduce the threats, the State and National Recovery Plans have identified the following actions

- Reduce herbivore pressure
- Control weeds
- Minimise pedestrian and trampling impacts
- Monitoring
- Manage fire regimes
- Maintain ex-situ collections
- Translocation and educational project

Last year Shoalhaven Council, in partnership with the Bomaderry Bushcare Group, NPWS and Office of Environment and Heritage, was awarded a \$97,361 grant from the NSW Environment Trust under the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program. The grant was to implement the Bomaderry Zieria Recovery Plan actions listed above.

The project runs from 2015 -18 and will see some Bomaderry Zieria plants fenced to reduce pressure from browsing, implementation of trial burns to stimulate germination from existing rootstock, weed control and educational signage, along with on-going monitoring to measure the success of these actions.

Bomaderry Zieria stock, that have been propagated from the existing population from cuttings, will also be planted. These plants are currently held in stock at the Booderee, Wollongong and National Botanical Gardens.

It's also planned to make these ex-situ Bomaderry Zieria plants available to residents of Bomaderry and North Nowra to plant in their gardens.

This is an exciting project aimed at improving the health of, arguably, the rarest plant on the NSW South Coast and working cooperatively with the community and state government agencies.



Terry Barratt (Bomaderry Creek Bushcare) and Alex Duera (NPWS) inspecting fencing to protect Bomaderry Zieria plants.

Welcome Back Cate Brooks

For those Bushcare Groups in the South, we would like to warmly welcome back Cate Brooks, the southern Bushcare Field Officer. Cate took 6 months leave to welcome her second daughter Ari Oliver into the world.

Cate returned to work in September 2016 and I know all southern Bushcare Groups will be looking forward to catching up with her. I would also like to thank Erin Smith, who has been standing in for Cate. Erin has been a great support with her friendly and professional manner supporting the Bushcare Groups in the south.

Malcolm Whan R.I.P – Milton Rural Landcare

Suellen Harris – Milton Landcare Nursery

Recently Mal Whan passed away following a battle with cancer. He was aged 60. Milton Rural Landcare would not be where it is today without the hard work of Mal and Carolyn Whan. They, with a handful of likeminded enthusiasts, created the Milton Rural Landcare nursery and it stands as a tribute to their passion and hard work. The nursery, and those who knew, will continue to miss him.



*Carolyn and Mal Whan,
co-creators of the Milton Rural Landcare Nursery*

Safety Note

Tick Season Fast Approaching Some things you need Know

While most tick bites cause little or no symptoms, they occasionally result in allergic reactions, toxic effects and/or tick-borne infectious diseases. Council has adopted the following NSW Department of Health recommendations regarding control measures for tick bites.

When you are outdoors in tick prone areas such as coastal bushland:

- Wear a long sleeved shirt that is fitted at the wrist, long pants tucked into high socks, enclosed shoes and a wide brimmed hat. (Note that ticks are easier to see on light coloured clothing).
- Wear an insect repellent that contains DEET or Picaridin. Wash your hands and any areas that may have had exposure to the DEET when you return inside, or before you eat.
- Spray your clothes and hat with an insect repellent that contains DEET or Permethrin.
- Try to walk in the centre of cleared paths as much as possible, and try to avoid brushing up against plants and grasses, sitting on logs or leaning on trees.

After you come inside:

- Remove your clothing and check for ticks. Check your clothes, behind your ears, hairline and back of head, groin, armpits, backs of knees and hands.
- If you find ticks on your clothes, pick them off with tweezers and put them in the garbage.
- If you find a tick already attached to your body, remove it carefully with fine, pointed tweezers or a Tick Twister (available from SCC Stores).
- Do not try to kill the tick with methylated spirits or any other chemicals, and avoid squeezing the tick as this may cause the tick to inject more toxins into your blood stream.
- If you have a severe infestation of larval stage ticks (often referred to as grass ticks) take a bath for 30 minutes with 1 cup of bicarbonate of soda.

Seek medical attention if you have difficulty removing a tick, or develop a bull's eye rash, secondary infection or allergic reaction to a tick bite.

Work, Health and Safety Volunteer Induction Deadline Extension

Oh No! I can hear everyone saying as they read this title... yes WHS isn't exactly riveting dinner party conversation, however if you boil it down it is really important. Everyone who is volunteering in your Bushcare Group needs to feel safe and know that their safety is being taken seriously by Council and fellow volunteers.

Having said that, you should have received an email or a letter from Council asking you to complete an on-line volunteer induction which ends in a grand finale quiz (and no you don't win anything if you get it right sorry).

To date Council has sent two letters to all registered Bushcare volunteers requesting that they complete the volunteer induction by 22nd June 2015 (1st letter) and 19th August 2016 (2nd letter). Most of you have completed the induction, however there are still volunteers that still need to apply themselves to this important task.

The final date for completion of the on-line induction has been extended to **31st October 2016**. After this there will be no more extensions and all Bushcare volunteers that have not completed the induction will be automatically de-registered.

So please consider this the final warning and take this opportunity to click on this link [Council Volunteer Induction](#) and complete it before 28th October 2016. If you require a hard copy to be posted out to you please contact Karen Rourke on 4429 3392.

Ulladulla Heathlands Book Launched Nick De Jong

The long awaited launch of Nick de Jong's book, *Heathlands - Walks and Wildflowers of the Ulladulla Headlands*, was held on 20th August 2016 at the Ulladulla Ex-Servos Club. Richard Groves, heathland expert and ecologist (formerly CSIRO), officially launched Nick's book with an entertaining and highly informative speech.

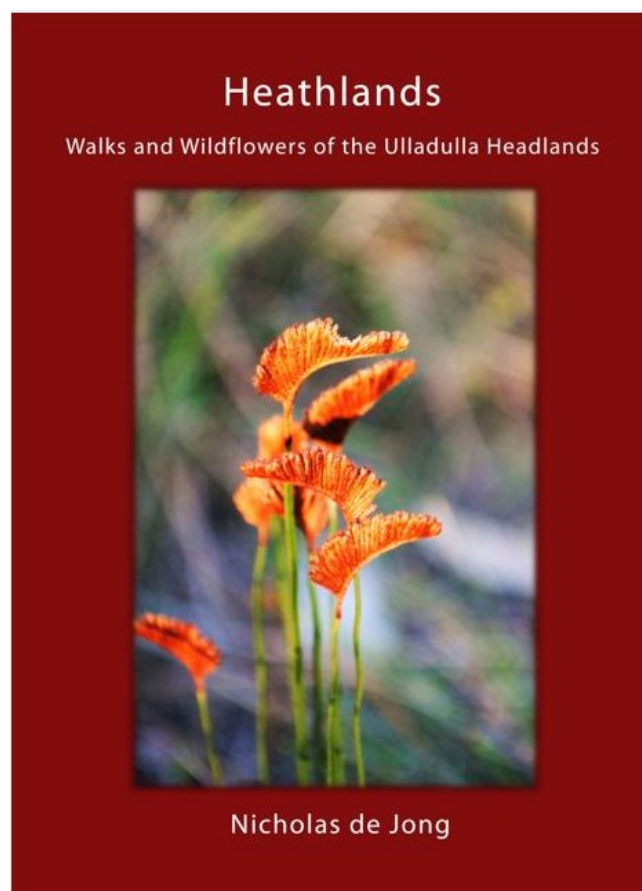
Nick's interest in heathlands began in the 1970s when he and his family began visiting the area to stay with Nick's retired parents. Later, for his honours degree, he studied banksia communities. This led to a collaborative study with the Sydney Herbarium and a PhD. After a long teaching career, Nick and his wife also retired to the area. He then combined his hobby of plant photography, with his rich experience and knowledge of plant communities, to embark on creating the *Heathlands* book.

Beautifully illustrated with Nick's photographs, *Heathlands* is accessible to the layperson and invites us all to know more of Ulladulla's unique, natural botanic gardens.

Following the launch, the South Pacific Heathland played host to various 'walk and talk' tours led by Richard Groves, members of the South Pacific Heathland Reserve Trust and Uncle Fred Carriage from the Ulladulla Aboriginal Land Council.



Nick De Jong speaking at the launch of his book, Heathlands



Nick de Jong hard at work on his beautiful book, Heathlands

Copies of Nick's book can be purchased from Boots Great Outdoors and the Harbour Bookshop, in Ulladulla.

Thank you Ian Taffs—Basin Walking Track

Many Bushcare volunteers in the Bay & Basin area will know Ian Taffs, Coordinator of the Basin Walking Track Bushcare Group. For the past 10 years, Ian has worked tirelessly to maintain the Basin Walking Track at Sanctuary Point and protect and restore foreshore vegetation.

Sadly, Ian has decided to hang up his Basin Walking Track Bushcare Boots and has resigned as coordinator of the Bushcare Group. Ian said that he could no longer handle the constant bullying and harassment from some residents whose properties back onto the reserve.



Ian Taffs (far right) working with the Vincentia Bushcare Group at Orion Beach, November

Under Ian's coordination the Basin Walking Track Bushcare Group has contributed 4,967 volunteer hours to maintaining and restoring the bushland around the walking track; undeniably one of Sanctuary Point's greatest community assets.

The in-kind financial contribution of Ian and the volunteers equates to \$149,010!

What a fantastic achievement! This contribution to the community will last for generations to come and enhances a great asset for our enjoyment.

I know Ian would not have made this decision lightly as his love and passion runs deep for the plants and animals that call the Basin Walking Track home and his continual efforts to learn more about his local environment are

admirable. Those of you who know Ian will know that he would rather let his actions speak louder than his words; he is a true quiet achiever.

Ian's experience highlights broader issues for all Bushcare volunteers who experience harassment whilst working on Council reserves across the city.

In order to address this issue, staff and councillors will work closely with the Shoalhaven Bushcare Representative Group to develop a communication strategy aimed at improving community understanding and perception of the work that Bushcare Groups undertake. The strategy will utilise social media, radio and local press to tell some of the wonderful stories about Bushcare volunteers to showcase the vitally important work being done to keep the Shoalhaven "Unspoilt".

Other less obvious ways of informing councillors and community about Bushcare are through Council's Annual Report and State of the Environment Reporting. And when Bushcare Action Plans are reviewed, presentations are prepared for Councillors outlining the achievements and contributions of the Bushcare groups. All these documents are on Council's website.

Council has a set of guidelines on how volunteers and employees can respond to aggression from non-workers/public. It offers practical steps to reduce the risk of confrontation from aggressive people, what to do if approached and the assistance Council can provide. If you would like a copy of the guidelines please contact Alasdair Stratton.

And please report any incidents of bullying and harassment to Alasdair as it's important we have documented evidence. This will help identify any 'hot spots' or repeat occurrences and will assist in identifying measures that could be put in place to try and reduce or prevent these occurrences.

**Meanwhile, we will be holding a thank you BBQ for Ian
at 12pm on Wednesday 26th October 2016 at
Paradise Beach Reserve, Walmer Ave, Sanctuary Point.**

If you like to join us to say a big thank you to Ian please RSVP to Karen Rourke
44293392 or Karen.rourke@shoalhaven.nsw.gov for catering purposes.

Weed Talk – Mother of millions (*Bryophyllum* species)

(Information courtesy of WeedWise NSW D.P.I.)

Description

As the name suggests, Mother of millions reproduces rapidly, producing hundreds of tiny plantlets which quickly form new colonies. It is adapted to dry conditions and can survive long periods of drought. This increases the plant's potential to persist and spread. Mother of millions is toxic when ingested by livestock; it is also poisonous to humans and household pets.

It's a succulent perennial plant growing 30 cm to 1 m in height. The stems are pinkish-brown or greyish in colour. The leaves are pencil-shaped, pale green to pale brown in colour with dark green patches and a shallow groove on the upper surface. There are up to seven projections at the tip of each leaf which when broken off can develop into new plants. The flowers are orange-red in colour and occur in a cluster at the top of a single stem. Flowering can occur from May to October.



Mother of millions, hybrid mother of millions and resurrection plant are all poisonous when ingested and can cause heart failure. Toxins are present in all parts of the plant, however, the flowers are five times more poisonous than the leaves and stems. It's unlikely that humans or pets would eat enough plant material to become poisoned, but because mother of millions can be found in many gardens, the likelihood of human or pet poisoning is increased.

Habitat

Mother of millions is commonly found growing on gravel and sandy soils. It's a weed of disturbed sites such as roadsides, along fence lines, around rubbish tips and abandoned rural dwellings. It also occurs frequently along creeks and rivers where it's spread by floodwaters.

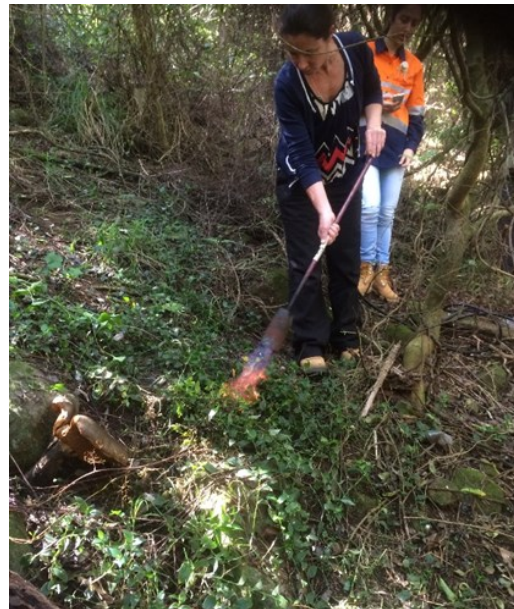
Control

Preventing the spread of mother of millions is the best control measure. Learn to identify mother of millions and regularly check for it in winter when the plants are in flower and are easier to see. If found remove immediately using a combination of control methods including hand removal, fire, herbicide application and rehabilitation. Regularly check creek lines after floods for new infestations.

For large infestations, fire is the most economical control option available and will kill the plants and much of the seed stored in the soil. Using fire first will reduce the cost of any spray applications.

Four insects have been imported into Australia for testing as biological control agents for mother of millions. Testing of the first and most promising insect, *Osphilia tenuipes*, a stem-boring weevil, has been completed. However, this agent appears to also attack closely related exotic ornamental plants. Therefore, approval for the field release of this agent has been delayed until issues surrounding the potential impact of this insect on the non-target ornamental plants have been addressed.

Thorough spraying of mother of millions with herbicides is effective if sufficient wetting agent (non-ionic surfactant) is used to penetrate the waxy outer covering of the plants – especially that of the plantlets. Mother of millions may be controlled with herbicides at any time of the year if the plants are not stressed, but infestations are easiest to see in winter when the plants are in flower. Spraying during flowering also prevents new seeds from developing.



Mia Dalby demonstrating the Flame Weeder at Milton, Sept 2016; a very effective non-chemical control tool for Mother of millions

Bushcare Links is a bi-monthly newsletter of the Shoalhaven Bushcare Program which aims to support and inspire ecological restoration by community Bushcare Groups across the Shoalhaven LGA.

If you have something you would like to share, or have any inquiries on the content of this issue, you can email the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator, Alasdair Stratton

bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

The deadline for the next edition is 5pm 30.10.2016