

Sep - Oct 2017 Edition



*New Ways Forward - Youth Bushcare/Landcare Forum at Riversdale (picture courtesy of Megan Rowlatt)*

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## Greetings

### Hello again Bushcarers

As I type this, we are experiencing a strange phenomenon called 'rain' - a welcome change after the prolonged dry period of late, and much needed by our reserves and other natural areas. It's likely we'll be kept busy over the coming months with

flushes of weeds.

Congratulations are due to Alasdair, who has been officially appointed the Natural Resources and Floodplain Unit Manager - well done Al!

Cheers

Jeff Bryant  
Acting Bushcare Coordinator

## **Intrepid Landcare - *New Ways Forward* - Youth Bushcare/Landcare Forum**



Megan Rowlatt leading *New Ways Forward* workshop

In late September, the *New Ways Forward* – Youth Bushcare and Landcare Forum was held at the historic and picturesque Riversdale on the Shoalhaven River. *New Ways Forward* was targeted at young people in the community who are passionate about the environment and interested in creating change. The forum was supported by Shoalhaven Landcare and Shoalhaven Bushcare and facilitated by Intrepid Landcare co-founder, and internationally recognised change-maker, Megan Rowlatt.

The day began with a workshop led by Megan, designed to inspire, engage and help the participants to develop leadership and planning skills and to define and create opportunities for environmental and social change. Megan's success stories of amazing initiatives achieved by groups of young people around Australia and abroad are truly inspiring, and the planning process she teaches provides a practical

and effective method for exploring and developing projects.

The afternoon was spent on the Shoalhaven River with Riverwatch volunteers who demonstrated the proven methods Riverwatch has used to restore and protect the Shoalhaven River. A barbeque lunch was enjoyed, and some planting undertaken to help stabilise the river bank.

Thanks to Megan, Riverwatch, Riversdale, Shoalhaven Landcare and all the participants, for making the day a success. Shoalhaven Landcare and Shoalhaven Bushcare will work together to further develop the Youth Bushcare and Landcare Forum.



Planting to stabilise Shoalhaven River foreshore (picture courtesy of Megan Rowlatt)

## **Vincentia High School Students Planting at Plantation Point**

Year 9 students from Vincentia High School's *Links to Learning* youth program, recently helped with planting at Plantation Point, Vincentia to fill in gaps and support the existing vegetation of the Bushcare site. One of the aims of the *Links to Learning* program is to share with students the value of being part of – and giving back to – the community, so this project gave them the opportunity to enhance a natural area that is valued and well-used by the community.

Council and the Vincentia Bushcare Group really appreciate the help provided by the students in planting to improve the vegetation at Plantation Point. The day was very successful and the conduct and enthusiasm of the students was impressive.



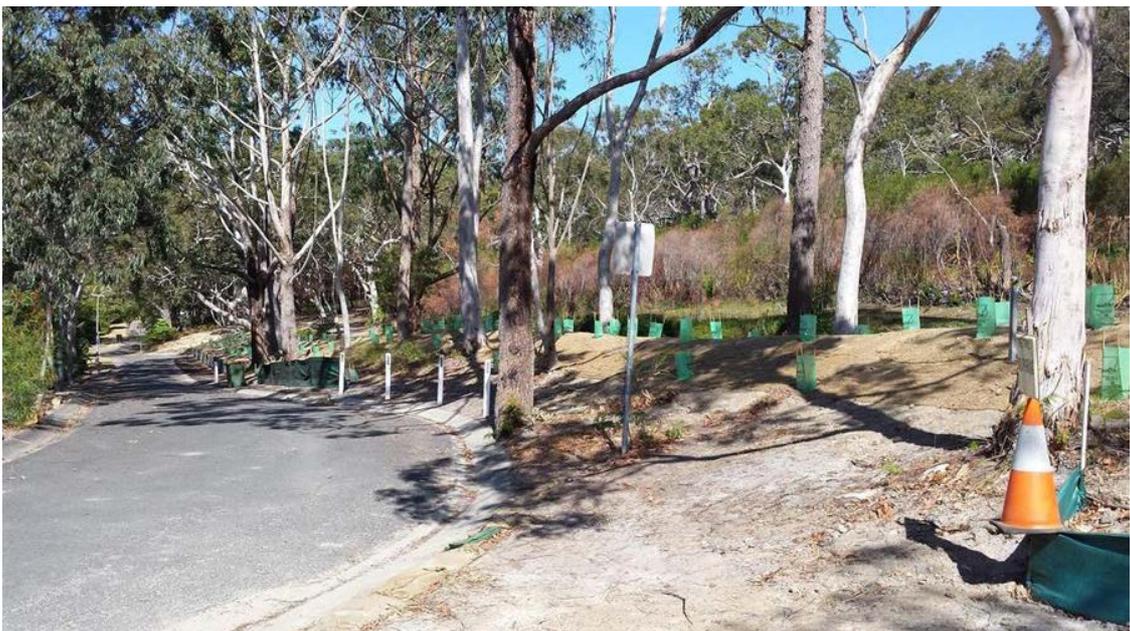
Vincentia High students at Plantation Point with trainers and Bushcare Field Officer Rebecca Rudd

## Hyams Beach Planting

The Hyams Beach Bushcare Group have been busy with planting and maintaining groundcovers and low shrubs, to improve the visual amenity and help stabilise the road verge at Silver Strand Circuit, Hyams Beach.

This has followed (and supports) works by Council to remedy drainage issues, discourage inappropriate parking and improve bank stability along this road verge.

Keep up the great work Hyams Beach Bushcare.



Planting at Silver Strand Circuit, Hyams Beach



## **Planned changes to WHS Policy affecting Bushcare volunteers working alone**

Council is in the process of reviewing and updating its Volunteer Work Health & Safety procedures in relation to volunteers working alone.

One of the key changes that will be introduced to improve the safety of volunteers, is the addition of 'working alone' to the high-risk category of work activities. Council has recognised the risk inherent in volunteers working remotely and in isolation and is taking steps to minimise this risk.

Part of this process will require Council to update and improve the on-line Volunteer Induction Health and Safety procedure, with the inclusion of an instructional video to improve the learning outcomes. The Council's "Volunteer Induction Handbook" will also be updated to include working alone or in isolation as a high-risk activity.

Council's Work Health & Safety Unit has advised that when these changes to volunteer safety procedures are implemented in early 2018, volunteers will no longer be permitted to work alone on Bushcare sites. We recognise that this change may be unwelcomed by some, but consider the potential risk to volunteers justifies the need to implement these changes.

Council will offer guidance and support in transitioning to the change by facilitating individuals currently working on their own to join existing Bushcare Groups nearby, providing some additional staff time to assist smaller Bushcare Groups and assisting with any assessment of risks to your Bushcare site.

For the interim period, please continue to be safe and sensible when working on Bushcare sites:

- Ensure that First Aid Kits are on-site and stocked with in-date supplies;
- Ensure that you have a mobile phone on-hand and that battery charge and reception are adequate;
- Maintain sight if working apart from the group or have regular check-ins;
- Ensure that a friend or family member knows where you are and what time you are expected back.

Can Group Coordinators please pass this important information on to other volunteers in their Bushcare Groups.

If you currently work alone on Bushcare sites, and would like to discuss options for continuing your involvement with Bushcare, including opportunities for working with a Bushcare Field Officer, joining another group, or getting support in trying to enlist new members, please contact the Bushcare Coordinator on (02)4429 3300 or by email at [bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au).

## What's On?

### Shoalhaven Bushcare & Parkcare Christmas Picnic 2017



**WHEN:** Thursday 14 December 2017

**TIME:** 12.00pm - 3.00pm

**WHERE:** Shoalhaven Heads Native Botanic Gardens, Celia Ave, Shoalhaven Heads

**BRING:** Chair, picnic rug, BYO alcohol and dessert

**RSVP:** by Monday 11 December to Karen Rourke - 4429 3392 or [karen.rourke@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:karen.rourke@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au) - please advise any dietary requirements

Bushcare and Parkcare will be wrapping up 2017 together with a picnic at the Shoalhaven Heads Native Botanic Gardens.

Come along and join the celebrations with great company and delicious food wood-fired pizzas, including vegetarian and gluten free options



## Weed Talk - Climbing Nightshade (*Solanum seaforthianum*)

**Description** Climbing Nightshade is a sprawling shrub or climber with deeply lobed (pinnate-like) leaves.

Climbing Nightshade has mauve-blue flowers, about 20-30mm in diameter and flowering in Spring and Autumn. It produces berries of 8-12mm in diameter, becoming bright red when ripe.

**Habitat** Climbing Nightshade is a native of West Indies.

In NSW it is commonly naturalised on moist sites from the Central Coast and north. Locally it has been found, in recent years, growing in sandy soils between Shoalhaven Heads and Gerroa, and occasionally in riparian areas of creeks.



**Control** Climbing Nightshade is generally easy to hand pull – particularly if growing in sandy soils. Larger stems can be cut and painted with Glyphosate (always apply herbicides as per labels or Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority {APVMA} off-label permits).



If you need help identifying a plant that may be Climbing Nightshade, contact your Bushcare Field Officer or Coordinator.



## Boil the Billy

Boil the billy is a segment devoted to the stories and tid-bits to share about what you have seen, discovered or heard lately at your Bushcare site. Unfortunately we don't have anything for this editions "**Boil the Billy**" segment, but please send in any stories or pictures for the next edition.

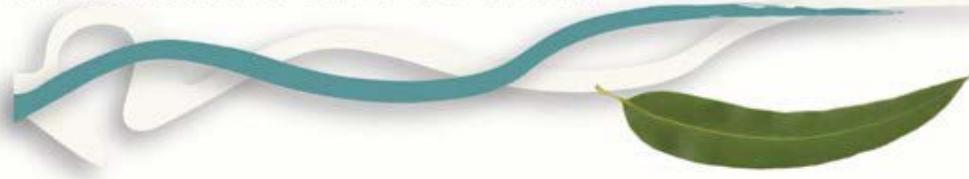
**Bushcare Links is a bi-monthly newsletter of the Shoalhaven Bushcare Program which aims to support and inspire ecological restoration by community Bushcare Groups across the Shoalhaven LGA.**

**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 on [bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au)**

**The deadline for the next edition is 5pm - 20 December 2017**

# environmental services

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