

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF BUSH REGENERATORS

NEWSLETTER NO. 2.

FEBRUARY 1987

GENERAL MEETING

Members and intending members are invited to the general meeting to be held on 21 March 1987 at the Visitor's Centre of the Field of Mars Wildlife Refuge, off Pittwater road, Ryde. The meeting will commence at 11 o'clock and finish at 2 p.m. Bring your lunch - coffee and tea will be provided.

FIRST GENERAL MEETING

On 22 November 1986 a meeting of members and intending members was held at the Field of Mars Visitors Centre. The bush regenerators came from a diversity of backgrounds, which provided a lively exchange of ideas and information and contributed to a most successful occasion.

ACCREDITATION

The accreditation committee met recently. Details at the next meeting.

FUND RAISING - GARAGE SALE

Thanks to Frances Stewart and her family for their marvellous effort in raising a considerable amount of money for the Association. This will go towards operating costs and publications. Frances has generously offered her home and organizing abilities for future such occasions.

PROPOGATION OF NATIVE PLANTS

Sally Fisher on the staff of Wirreanda Nursery advises that they will grow plants from seeds and cuttings provided by clients. This will be of considerable advantage where supplementary planting is necessary in a bush regeneration area. Contact. Howard Smith, 169 Wirreanda Street, Ingleside.

COURSES ON OFFER IN 1987.

1. Botany and Ecology of the Sydney Region - 6.30 pm Tuesdays from February 26th. Cost \$165 for 27 meetings.
 2. Botany and Ecology - Advanced: Low Life Amongst the Plants - 3 weekends at Pearl Beach at Crommelin Biological Research Station. Total cost \$238 (includes accommodation, food and lab. fees).

1 and 2 are part of the University of Sydney's Continuing Education Program. Further inquiries 692 2907.
 3. Identification of Rainforest Plants (Gwen Harden). 7 meetings and a Saturday excursion. Mondays at 4.00 pm. Cost \$64.00.
 4. Natural History of South Eastern Australia (Jim Steenson). 8 meetings and 2 excursions. Mondays 10.30 am. Cost \$69.

3 and 4 are Workers' Educational Association courses. Further inquiries 274 2781.
 5. Sydney Technical College - exact course title unknown but something like Plant Identification and Collecting. 10 sessions plus excursions. Lecturer Bob Crombie. Further inquiries: 699 822.
 6. Centre for Environmental Studies located at Ku-ring-gai College of Advanced Education. Bush Regeneration Course - Lecturer Janet Fairlie-Cunninghame. 20 February for 10 weeks. Friday mornings. Phone 467 9200. \$90.
 7. Other courses at the above centre. Details phone Joan Webb 467 9200.
 8. National Trust of Australia (NSW). Introduction to Bushland Management. Commences 28 March. Saturday afternoons for 10 weeks. Cost \$110. Further details Judie Rawling 27 5374.
 9. Ryde School of Horticulture - Bush Regenerators Course. Approx. 10 weeks. Details 807 0278. Commencing end March.
 10. Hornsby Evening College. Bush Regeneration. Commences 12 February for 9 weeks. Thursday mornings. Lecturer Janet Fairlie-Cunninghame Enquiries 477 5460.
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FIELD OF MARS RESERVE

The Field of Mars Reserve was originally proclaimed a reserve for public recreation in 1887. It was not until 1966 that a group of local citizens banded together to ensure that the reserve be permanently set aside for the conservation of native flora and fauna and for passive recreation. A little over 10 years ago the reserve was dedicated as a Wildlife Refuge under the National Parks and Wildlife Act. A large population of birds are found with over 70 different species recorded in the reserve. Brushtail and ringtail possums and many different reptiles inhabit the area.

The approximately 50 ha reserve is bounded by Pittwater Road and in the west by the Field of Mars Cemetery and is essentially on the boundary of North Ryde and Gladesville. It is managed and maintained by the Ryde-Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society in co-operation with Ryde Municipal Council who are the Trustees of the reserve.

The reserve consists of mainly Hawkesbury sandstone but also Wianamatta shale in the higher parts. Two major creeks run through the reserve, Strangers Creek in the north and Buffalo Creek in the south. The source of Buffalo Creek is near Top Ryde Shopping Centre. After passing suburban areas it enters the reserve and then flows through, finally entering the Lane Cove River. The lower areas along Buffalo Creek are part of a saltwater-freshwater estuary. In the creek valleys just above the tidal limits in sheltered pockets are found plants of warm-temperate rainforest, eg Ceratopetalum apetalum, Elaeocarpus reticulatus, Callicama serratifolia and Ceratopetalum gummi ferum. In the largest area, the dry sclerophyll forest, Eucalyptus gummi fera and Syncarpia glanulifera, with various wattles and native grasses are found in the higher areas. Where the sandstone begins to dominate over the shale, the vegetation is characterized by stands of Angophora costata and occasional Eucalyptus haemastara. On the main area, the sandstone, are E. haemastara, E. piperita, banksias and Angophora costata with hakeas, kunzeas, peas (Dillwynia retorta, Pultenaea flexilis, Platylobium formosum and many others), persoonias and grevilleas typical of Sydney sandstone flora.

Weed problems are from various causes. On the perimeter, garden refuse and escapes from adjoining properties are a concern. Weed infestation is present in drainage areas. Unfortunately the reserve is lower than many of the adjacent properties and drainage enters the reserve at several points. The major weed problems, however, are found along the larger creeks, Buffalo and Strangers.

Bush regeneration in the reserve is being carried out on two fronts. One is the National Trust team which is working in the Cascades area of Buffalo Creek (the far western area of Field of Mars, near the corner of Pidding and Cressy Roads). A large area in this part of the reserve has now been restored to much of its former glory. The other bush regeneration effort is by voluntary workers from Ryde-Hunters Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society and other interested workers.

This effort has concentrated more on the area across Buffalo Creek adjacent to the Visitors Centre, but workers have also spot weeded throughout the reserve generally. Progress is evident in this area of Buffalo Creek. Ipomea indica, Cardiospermum grandiflorum and Araujia hortorum have been removed from the casuarinas and melaleucas and a reasonable area below the rock shelves has now been regenerated. This work is now being done on a regular basis by the abovementioned workers.

Bill Jones
Ryde-Hunters Hill Flora & Fauna Preservation Society.

WILLOUGHBY ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

The Sugarloaf Bush Regeneration Project aims to restore the bushland along two creek catchments, Sugarloaf Creek and Camp Creek, in the South Arm of Sugarloaf Bay in Middle Harbour. It is a delightful area with waterfalls, cascades and pockets of rainforest below the drier vegetation of the Hawkesbury sandstone.

In places angophoras tower over lilly pillies, coachwoods and watergums. Tree ferns and black wattle border the creeks. Ringtail possums nest in the foliage, eels swim in the pools and curious water dragons watch as we work. Cockatoos and currawongs call and glide in the air currents below the main waterfall.

The project commenced with a National Estate grant of \$10,000 and has now received a grant of \$80,000 from The Australian Bicentennial Authority - both federal funds keenly sought and difficult to obtain. Such funding reflects the growing awareness of urban bushland by governments and public alike and acknowledges the significance of this site, only 8km from the GPO.

BUSH WALK IN WOLLEMI NATIONAL PARK

A camping and bush walking week end will be held on 28-29 March in the Wollemi National Park. We will drive to and pitch camp on the plateau above Newnes. Saturday's walk will be through a maze of canyons, through lush vegetation to the top of a 100 m. waterfall with views to the spectacular Wolgan Valley.

On Sunday the walk crosses a divide into another canyon system and then to the cliff top and along the edge, with more extensive views to the valley.

Meet at the cafe at Bell at 8.30 a.m. Driving time - about 1½ hours from Pymble. Bring enough water for the whole weekend. Enquiries Henry Fairlie-Cuninghame or Toni McKay 419 6803.

449 8725

OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

Last year the Friends of the Blue Mountains organized a weekend Bush Regeneration School through Katoomba TAFE. This was attended by members and other interested people from the Blue Mountains area. It is their intention to carry out voluntary work at various sites, one being at Echo Point lookout. This may be of interest to other such groups who would like to learn more about bush regeneration, and bushland management.

HERITAGE WEEK

AABR has been asked by the Australian Museum to provide displays and activities in the Discovery Room during Heritage Week, and the weekends 11-12 April and 18-19 April. The theme is the promotion of understanding and investigating of the local bushland environment. Helpers will be needed.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

AABR has received application for membership from people who although not bush regenerators are involved in bushland management and who would like to be kept informed of our activities and attend our meetings. This matter will be an Agenda item at the next meeting.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

21 March	Meeting at 11 o'clock at Field of Mars
28/29 March	Camping Weekend. X
11-12 April & 18-19 April	Heritage Week - Museum.

Toni McKay 419 6803