



AABR NEWS

Australian Association of Bush Regenerators NSW

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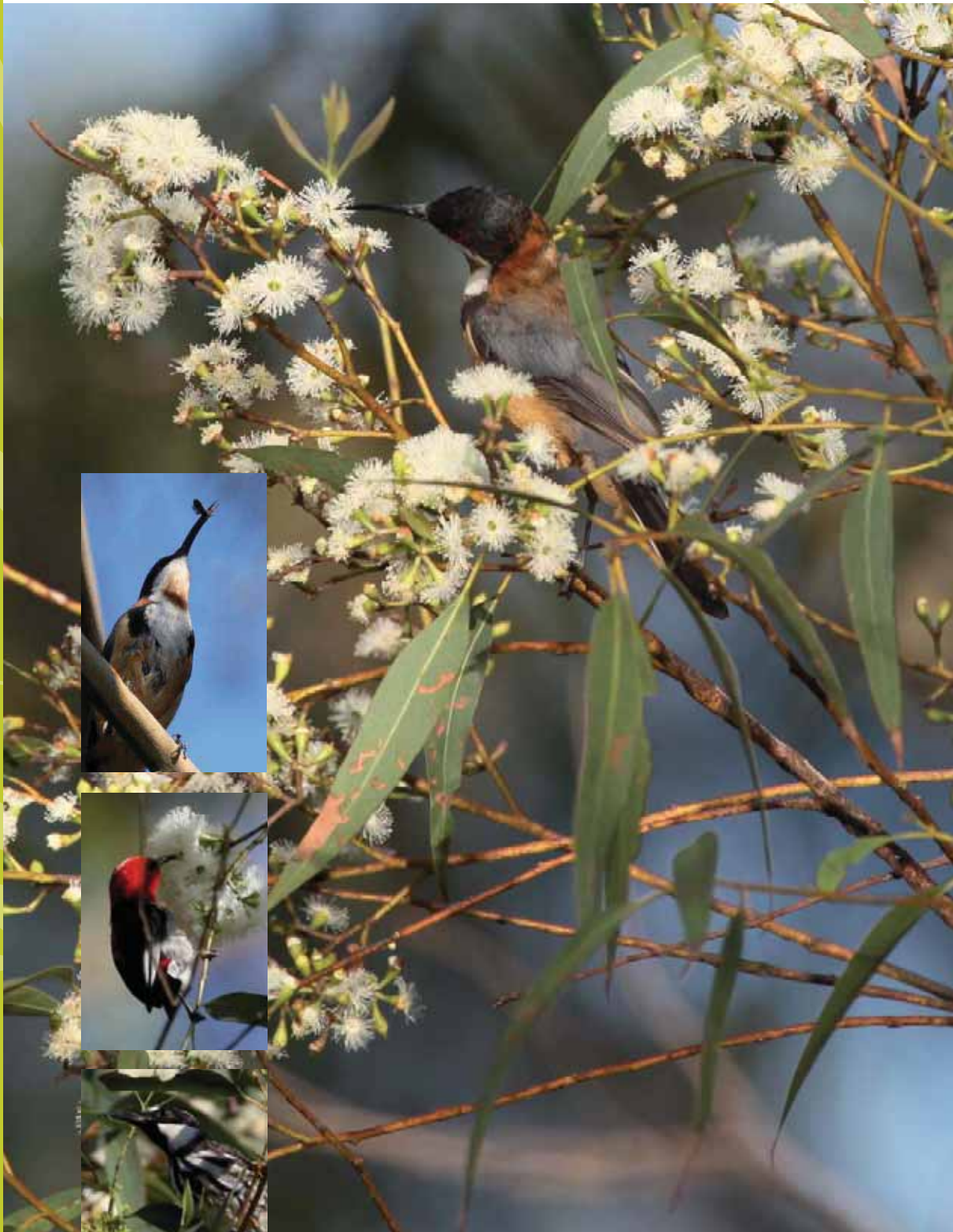
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January in the blackbutt forest at Kenthurst. Each tree takes its turn to host the feast, and the air is scented with nectar.

Pictured here are eastern spinebill—taking nectar and also insects, scarlet honeyeater, white cheeked honeyeater, and bell miner—who spends much of its time scaring the other birds out of its favourite trees.

Other obvious visitors were grey-headed flying-foxes, rainbow lorikeets, white naped honeyeaters, and many beetles and wasps.

Photos Virginia Bear



President's Perspective

Hi Folks

Last year finished on quite an exciting note with the launch of a new bush regeneration book by Robin Buchanan. It was just over 15 years ago now that I first heard the words bush regeneration mentioned and was introduced to some of those weird and wonderful people that were, and mostly still are, putting it into practice. Not long afterwards I started the TAFE course at Ryde and had Robin as a teacher. It was not long afterwards that I bought my first copy of her book, *Bush Regeneration Recovering Australia's Landscapes*. Over the years this was not a book that just sat on the shelf and gathered dust, but was as much a part of the tools used to regenerate areas as my regen knife and trowel. It was a useful reference point as new challenges were faced to see what others had done in similar situations previously. When I was working at Ku-ring-gai Council some 10 years ago and we didn't have a copy for staff, I tried to get a couple but it was out of print and you couldn't seem to get one for love nor money. And so the long battle began.

When I joined the AABR committee some 3 years ago they had been trying in earnest for some time to get it reprinted. The copyright holders had no interest in doing so, nor in giving up the rights to someone else and try as many avenues as we could there seemed to be no way to get it done. We were constantly faced with enquiries about the book but no avenues seemed to bear fruit. Robin also wanted to update the book, bringing in the almost 20 years of learning, new techniques and innovation that had been taking place in the time since the first print. Then Tocal College came on the scene and to the rescue, giving Robin the chance to do just that with a brand new book. The result is *Restoring Natural Areas in Australia*, a more up to date and expanded version of the old manual. This book will bring bush regeneration across a huge variety of different Australian landscapes to new and old regenerators alike and be an excellent guide for the next generation of bush regenerators. AABR is proud to have been involved in the book's production and I would thank and congratulate Robin, Tocal College, and anyone involved in the work to get this book to print.

Surely one of the most astounding debates that did the rounds for me last year was that around climate change. And it wasn't about to what degree it will affect us and what we should do about it, but that it was still being argued as some sort of con that isn't happening at all, all sold as a balanced argument. To me it's a bit like the modern Flat Earth Society, or the tobacco lobby group that can still truck out scientists arguing there's no evidence that smoking is harmful, and selling that to the punters as balanced debate. That this got so much momentum was truly impressive in itself. As we look at our governments, big business and those that won't do anything meaningful about it until 'that person over there does', it's going to

come down to those on the ground to give our bushland and biodiversity the best chance to cope with whatever changes may come. Keep up the good work folks! There's so much of it going on, just hard to see it at times while the world argues about deck chairs.

Warmest regards

Matt

Matt Springall
President AABR NSW

Advertising in AABR news

We have recently decided to include a small amount of paid advertising in the newsletter, for goods and services that may be of interest to bush regenerators.

Contact Virginia on 0408 468 442 or vbear@froggy.com.au for details.

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AREAS OF INTEREST

AABR walks and talks: Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub, North Head, Manly

From the records and notes of Danny Hirschfeld and Danie Ondinea. Many thanks to Peter Jensen for fact checking and editing.

On a beautiful, warm, clear August day, Peter Jensen of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (SHFT) led over 30 keen people on a walk and talk through the North Head Sanctuary, which contains the largest remnant of the nationally endangered ecological community, Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (ESBS).

Peter first introduced us to a brief history of the area and its layout using a large (5m wide) aerial photo of the whole headland, mounted on a raised stage, in the Visitors Centre. This allowed for some interpretation of past and current activities. We then headed off to follow Peter around the loop track through the Banksia Scrub.



Having lunch overlooking Sydney and the Harbour

Dozens of stunning native plants were in flower. Some in flower on the day included *Banksia aemula*, *Epacris obtusifolia*, *Grevillea buxifolia*, *Grevillea speciosa*, *Kunzea capitata*, *Lasiopetalum joycea*, *Patersonia* sp., *Philothea buxifolia*, *Philothea salsolifolia*, *Schoenus brevifolius*, *Sprengelia incarnata*, *Styphelia* spp., *Woollisia pungens*, *Xanthorrhoea resinifera*, *Xylomelum pyriforme*.

The site of the former School of Artillery was transferred from the Department of Defence to SHFT in 2001, and was opened to the public as the 'North Head Sanctuary' in 2006. The site is one of eight former military and special use lands managed by SHFT that are being restored and opened up for public use. The land is owned by the Commonwealth and SHFT is a Commonwealth agency within the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage & the Arts.

The North Head Sanctuary contains numerous heritage buildings, structures and sites, including the North Fort Artillery museum, the Third Quarantine Cemetery, and the sandstone

'Avenue of Honour' (built during the Great Depression with unemployed labour).

Other significant lands at North Head include Sydney Harbour National Park, North Head Sewage Treatment Plant, the St Patricks estate, the Quarantine Station hotel development, Manly Hospital, and the Australian Institute of Police Management.

ESBS

North Head has the largest area of ESBS in existence and most of the remnant at North Head is on SHFT land. The ESBS occurs on aeolian (i.e. windformed) sand dunes, perhaps more accurately known as a 'dune sheet', that was formed over 40,000 years ago. The dunes are up to 35 metres deep, elevated between 85 and 120 metres above sea level on Hawkesbury Sandstone. These dunes, where undisturbed, are made up of predominantly white sands that have been highly worked and leached of nutrients, unlike Sydney's yellow beach sand.

ESBS is listed under both Commonwealth and NSW threatened species legislation as an Endangered Ecological Community. The



Above: Typical ESBS—white sand and low scrub. Below: the dry wetland



ESBS Recovery Plan and the ESBS 'final determination' under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (NSW) identifies:

- 63 characteristic species make up this ecological community;
- it occurs only in the local government areas of Manly, Randwick, Botany and Waverley;
- its structure is largely heath and scrub (i.e. the canopy consists of shrubs, respectively less than or more than 2m high), with small areas of woodland or low forest;
- the type of soil on which it occurs— aeolian dune sands.

The final determination, originally made in 1997, was amended in 2002 to include the patch of ESBS at North Head. Of the 145 ha of known ESBS, 69 ha (i.e. greater than 47%) occurs at North Head.

The ESBS shows marked variation across the site due to various factors including differences in aspect, wind & salt exposure, past disturbance, and soil moisture. Where the sand sheet thins, there is a crossover with sandstone woodland and heath species, and several ephemeral wetland areas are present where the watertable or impervious sandstone lies near the surface.

Fire history and management

There were reportedly regular fires on the headland until the 1930s, however when the military developed the site, much of the vegetation was cleared for military exercises and fire frequency dropped dramatically. The largest recorded wildfire was in the 1940s, when more than 100 ha burnt. Smaller wild fires have occurred since. Between 2003 and 2005, DECCW's Parks and Wildlife Group (NPWS) carried out two prescribed burns over 10 ha each, at Bluefish Point (near the Shelley Beach track) and near the Quarantine Station.

Fire management of the site is complex, due to the number of stakeholders involved and the rich natural and cultural heritage values of the site. Fire risk has increased following the opening of the whole site to public access in 2006. A joint-stakeholder North Head Fire Management Strategy has been prepared by DECCW to guide appropriate fire regimes for the



Peter tells us about fire and other management issues for the nationally listed Third Quarantine Cemetery

ecological communities present and for the protection of life and property. A mosaic of small scale fires are intended in the future, in keeping with the size of the headland and the need to retain habitat for native fauna and flora. North Head contains a significant number of rare, vulnerable and endangered species and an endangered population of the Long-nosed Bandicoot.

As much of the ESBS at North Head has not burnt for more than 30 years, the Plan proposes a fire regime with a desirable fire frequency of 8 to 15 years (and no more than 30 years). This is to avoid plant species becoming locally extinct, which may occur with greater or lesser fire intervals. Two burns are planned for SHFT land in the coming year and monitoring of the fire response is planned.

Fire management has included selective manual removal of vegetation from the Third Quarantine Cemetery, a nationally listed cultural heritage site (1881-1925). Following the departure of the military from the site, ESBS had regenerated in the cemetery, producing a high fuel load around the heritage graves. Over time, the removal of taller shrub species such as coast wattle *Acacia longifolia* var. *sophorae* and coast tea tree *Leptospermum laevigatum* has allowed a highly diverse range of ESBS smaller-growing species to thrive. The species diversity stands in direct contrast to the untreated dense stands of *Leptospermum laevigatum* adjacent to the cemetery.

Site regeneration

There has been ongoing bush regeneration over the years with contractor reports dating back to the 1980s when Defence managed the site. Due to the highly porous and nutrient poor attributes of the soil, weed control within ESBS has been easier to achieve than in many other plant communities. As the SHFT land occupies most of the higher parts of the headland, the negative impacts of stormwater run-off are less considerable than the surrounding National Park. Some of the main weeds within the ESBS include the grasses pampas grass *Cortaderia selloana*, African lovegrass *Eragrostis curvula* and giant paspalum *Paspalum quadrifarium*.

In 2007, an area of about 50m x 20m has been left to regenerate near the entrance to the Sanctuary, on North Head Scenic Drive. Up until that time, the area had been regularly mown for decades, like the large areas of lawn still around it. At that time, a number of native species could be identified at ground level, which had survived the mowing. These included typical ESBS shrub species, such as *Monotoca elliptica* and *Leptospermum laevigatum*. Since cessation of mowing, the native vegetation has grown to almost 2m high in places, with the assistance of occasional weeding of the buffalo and couch grasses. Over 30 additional native plant species have since been identified in this area, with several grasstrees being the only planted specimens introduced (these were successfully transplanted from the path of an adjacent development).

Disturbance and cultural plantings

Since the 1930s, there has been a history of extensive mechanical clearing of vegetation for tracks, firing ranges and permanent and temporary buildings, some of which have now been removed. Since 2001, SHFT has carried out extensive remediation of contaminated areas and removed unexploded ordinance. Following these years of disturbance, a good cover

of native vegetation has returned in varying degrees, mostly through natural regeneration from the soil seedbank that has survived the disturbance.

Many non-local plant species were introduced before and during the Defence years. There are anecdotal reports of the army planting species such as Coastal Tea Tree *Leptospermum laevigatum*, Broad-leaf Paperbark *Melaleuca quinquenervia* and more recently Heart-leaved Stringybark *Eucalyptus camfieldii* in the area. Other cultural plantings include native species such as Tallowwood *Eucalyptus microcorys*, Willow Myrtle *Agonis flexuosa* (WA) and Southern Blue Gum *Eucalyptus bicostata* that don't occur naturally in the Sydney Region. Some planted specimens within the cultural landscaped areas remain as part of the military and quarantine heritage but are gradually being removed from bushland areas where appropriate.

Tracks, boardwalks and Phytophthora management

The plant pathogen, *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (Pc) has been recorded throughout the headland. Pc is a soil-borne water-mould that spreads more quickly in wet conditions, eg. during rainwater run-off or through soil spread by pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Pc has been linked to the death of *Angophora costata* and *Eucalyptus botryoides* at Middle Head, Mosman and at Collins Beach, North Head. Pc influenced die-back within the ESBS at North Head has been less evident, although there is a traditionally moist area near the disused 'Gun Park' where an area of shrubs is gradually dying off and being replaced by ferns. More investigation is required.



Peter describes the materials and construction of the elevated walking track

One strategy to minimise the spread of Pc has been the construction of a network of elevated walking tracks within the ESBS. The tracks follow the alignment of pre-existing military tracks as far as practical to minimise disturbance to flora and fauna. The tracks are constructed of high-density recycled

plastic sleepers sitting on the sand, overlain with a framed, steel mesh walking surface. The steel mesh allows light to reach the soil, allowing native vegetation to grow under the boardwalk, thereby lessening the likelihood of erosion.

Wildlife and feral animal management

A comprehensive fauna study was carried out in 2002, Birds Australia carried out three years of bird monitoring between 2006 and 2008, and an invertebrate study was conducted in 2006. NPWS and UNSW have carried out regular monitoring of the endangered population of Bandicoots over several years. The bandicoot numbers had been relatively stable, at around 200. However, in the past few months, a sudden spate of fox attacks occurred, in which 9 Little Penguins and 14 Bandicoots were killed. DECCW set up infra-red cameras to confirm the presence of the foxes and an extensive fox baiting program was carried out. The number of kills appears to have declined in recent weeks.

Rabbits are also present at North Head. These cause soil erosion, particularly on the loose, sandy ESBS soils. They also graze on native vegetation, including regenerating seedling growth. SHFT is involved with the joint-stakeholder rabbit control programs using a combination of Pindone poison baiting, Calici virus inoculation and follow-up shooting.

SHFT has recently contracted Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC) to carry out research on the wildlife at North Head including Bandicoot population dynamics and behaviour, and the ecological role of the introduced Black Rat *Rattus rattus*.

Community support

The North Head Sanctuary Foundation, a volunteer not-for-profit group, have set up a community nursery to propagate plants for disturbed areas of the headland and also runs a number of activities including educational walks and talks.

Thanks to Peter for a terrific field trip!



Danny Hirschfeld pointing out *Schoenus brevifolius* in the dry wetland area



AABR walks and talks: Cumberland Plain

*Cumberland Plain Woodland with an understorey of *Themeda australis* at Lansdowne Reserve*

The AABR Field trip on Saturday August 1 was led by Alan Fairley, environmentalist and natural history writer. His books include *Native Plants of Sydney District* and *Seldom Seen-Rare Plants of Greater Sydney*.

The trip focused on the Cumberland Plain plant community at Lansdowne Reserve, Bass Hill & Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest and Cumberland Plain Woodland of The Crest, Georges Hall.

Twenty two people met at Lake Gillawarna Parking area on Henry Lawson Drive then walked to Lansdowne Park. Fortunately we were joined by Cameron Lownds, Bankstown Bushland Officer and others from Bankstown Council, and interested bush regenerators who were on hand to explain the restoration work in progress. After lunch we drove to the northern end of The Crest, Georges Hall.

The satisfying mood of the day was topped off by observing a sun basking Bearded Dragon.

From Alan Fairley

Report on inspection of Lansdowne Reserve & The Crest Reserve

Lansdowne Park at Bass Hill is a large patch of clay woodland rising gradually in height from Hazel Street in the south to the Hume Highway in the north. It is cut by gentle gullies with

low dividing ridges and is an outstanding site to observe a range of native plants not usually encountered on sandstone soils. Our large group approx 15-20 started at Hazel Street where the dominant trees are *Eucalyptus moluccana* and *Eucalyptus tereticornis*, sprinkled with the occasional *Eucalyptus eugenioides* and *Eucalyptus fibrosa*, all typical trees from clay soils of Western Sydney. Ground cover consisted of scattered plants of *Eremophila debilis*, *Dillwynia sieberi*, *Bossiaea prostrata*, *Daviesia squarrosa* and *Cheilanthes sieberi*. The taller shrub layer was often *Pultenaea villosa*, *Bursaria spinosa* and *Leucopogon juniperinus*. Further up the track, we were excited to see large stands of the rare *Acacia pubescens* and the vine *Marsdenia viridiflora*. The latter was once thought to be extinct but there is a healthy population in Lansdowne Reserve managed under Council's bush regeneration program.

Later we went to nearby The Crest Reserve at Georges Hall. The Crest is a mixture of Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest with a developed dry rainforest element and Cumberland Plain Woodland.

Of particular note were *Solanum stelligerum*, *Melicope micrococca*, *Rulingia dasyphylla* and *Pterostylis mutica*. For most, it was a first time sighting of these species. We also looked for some sign of the elusive Arum Lily *Typhonium brownii*, but true to form, there were not even any leaves showing.

The large number of people attending was proof of the interest in seeing new plant communities and most commented favourably on the areas visited and the learning experience.

Lansdowne Reserve History

Most of the vegetation of Lansdowne has been cleared and what we see today is regrowth. The first landholder of the area that is today Lansdowne Reserve was John Shortland who was granted the land around 1800. In the early 1920s the area was subdivided, roads constructed, drainage works undertaken and a limited number of houses built. Between the late 1940s to the 1980s the subdivision was resumed for Council recreational open space as part of the green web scheme.

In the 1980s large areas of the reserve ceased to be mowed as part of a project to allow the bushland to regenerate. Unfortunately around the same time a large scale landscaping project was undertaken which installed a large number of non endemic native species. Many of these plantings still exist today and can be seen as stands of *Eucalyptus maculata*, *Eucalyptus microcorys*, *Casuarina cunninghamiana* and *Eucalyptus saligna* along old roadways and in old recreational areas.

Bushland Restoration Works

Works over the last 6 years have focused on rehabilitating the Cumberland Plain Woodland of the eastern and northern parts of the reserve. Last year alone council spent over \$100,000 on bush regeneration works at Lansdowne Reserve with great success. The use of fire has been an important tool in our weed control and regeneration strategies. Burning in combination with hand weeding has proven to be a useful strategy in eliminating many weed species including Mother of Millions *Bryophyllum* sp. in selected areas in the east and north of the reserve.

Works have also focused on protecting and encouraging the rare *Marsdenia viridiflora* population to expand. In one location non endemic *Eucalyptus malculata* that were planted in the 1980s were felled to increase fuel loads to enable a prescribed burn in 2005 to be undertaken to eliminate *Bryophyllum* sp. and encourage the recruitment of *Marsdenia viridiflora*. This strategy proved to be particularly successful, with *Bryophyllum* sp virtually eliminated (with the assistance of some post fire weeding) and now the *Marsdenia* population is larger and healthier than ever!

After a bushfire in 2005 a large population of *Pimelea spicata* re-appeared (photo top right). Highlighting the dependence of many of our native plants on the occurrence of periodic bushfires. Research indicates that around 5-7 years after a bushfire *Pimelea spicata* begin to decline due to increased shading and competition from other native plants. This has been evident here!

A biological control agent has been released to reduce large infestations of bridal creeper in Lansdowne Reserve. The bio-control agent is a fungus which attacks the leaves causing damage and sometimes total defoliation. We undertook an active release program between 2002 and 2006 until all known infestation were infected. Observation indicates a marked decrease in bridal creeper density in the original release areas, without any other treatment. I would highly recommend this approach given the frugal resources most land managers have to tackle such a problematic and widespread weed.

In 2005 bushfire occurred south of the lake in an area dominated by *Eucalyptus saligna* trees. The fire was found to have killed many of these trees with others reshoooting over the next couple of years. It is expected that the relatively young age of the trees (20+years), extended drought around the time of the fire, and inappropriate climatic and soil conditions for this species caused the death.



Above and below: Cumberland Plain Woodland shortly after a burn



Photos by Cameron Lownds

Regenerators gather to launch Robin Buchanan's new book

The Maiden Theatre at Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens was filled to capacity on December 4 with people celebrating the launch of *Restoring Natural Areas in Australia*. AABR NSW was honoured to host the launch with the help of the book's Publisher, Tocal College.



Peter Dixon reminded us how close we were to the spot where Europeans, with their exotic plants and animals first settled in Australia, where the Bradley sisters coined the name bush regeneration for their method of selectively weeding and harnessing the resilience in the ecosystem, and Kellys bush—subject of the world's first Green ban in 1971, where local residents and unions banded together to protect it from development.

Peter had one small complaint about the book: he was disappointed that there was no ballerina dancing in the bush in her tutu to illustrate the importance of choosing the right clothing. He remembers being impressed and intrigued by this when first seeing Robin's previous book.

Clarence Slockee (above left), the Aboriginal Education Officer at the gardens welcomed us with a traditional Bundjalung dance. Our president Matt Springall, and principal of Tocal College Dr Cameron Archer also spoke.

Dr Milton Lewis talked about his work with farmers who want to conserve and repair natural ecosystems on their properties, and the need for a practical guide.



Robin generously provided the notes from her speech...

'Thanks every one.

It is 20 years almost to the day, 10th December 1989, since some of us were here for the launch of the first book for the industry 'Recovering Australian landscapes'.

I think it was the beginning of 2007 when this book started—almost 3 years!

There are lots of thanks.

Bob Makinson, Conservation Botanist here at the Botanic Gardens and President, of the Australian Network for Plant Conservation, for organising the venue for the afternoon.

Australian Association of Bush Regenerators for chasing TAFE to update and reissue the old book. They also surveyed the industry and demonstrated that there was a need for a new book, a piece of knowledge that Tocal College was well aware of.

AABR also contributed funds to the publication and have hosted today—including the delicious feast to follow.

The personnel at Tocal college:

- Darren Bayley who started the whole affair when he asked Ann Loughran (of *Native Plant or Weed* fame) to write a book on bush regeneration.
- David Brouwer and Darren for their patience through many meetings and versions
- Dean Morris for this wonderful book design.

Ann Loughran:

- for inviting me to help write the book
- We battled on together through Pasha Bulker floods (Ann's house) and bushfires at my home as we discussed the audience, style and content
- Ann sensibly opted out part way through as she realised that it was an overwhelming project, so her name is at the top of the acknowledgements rather than on the front cover

All the technical helpers on particular chapters:

- Agata Mitchell TAFE
- Mark Walters TAFE
- Ross Rapmund of Hornsby Shire who also gave time to the nursery shoot
- Phil Stewart stands out. We have hung around at TAFE for innumerable years and he has widened my knowledge of three main areas:
 - Heritage
 - Fauna and pest animals
 - Rural issues—such as by dragging me out west of Parkes to the Cooks Myalls Landcare group

- The Cooks Myalls Landcare Group who hosted many a TAFE class and gave me a crash course in Braford and Santa Gertudis cattle, salinity, crop production and many more rural issues—many photos are from their landcare area.
- Jenny & Jim Starling who read the manuscript when I was about to burn the lot—they made helpful suggestions and told me it was worth going on.

The reviewers:

- Tein McDonald—editor of Ecological Management & Restoration (EMR) who also helped with some chapters
- Doug Benson—Senior Plant Ecologist, here at the Botanic Gardens and our liason person for the day
- AABR who had the joy of ploughing through the manuscript
- Steve Honeywood who checked the manuscript for any profoundly stupid things I had said about rural issues
- Margaret Walters who helped with the fine detail of dot points and compound adjectives

All those that so freely gave images to help illustrate vital points.

The family, who contributed enormous hours, in particular Tom & Kim (the photographer of the front cover and many other shots). The cat contributed one photo as well.

Rob Loughran did some amazing watercolours for the book and has made the publication that much more interesting and useful.

Thanks to those who have written all the manuals and ID books for particular areas. I have read many while writing the book
All the students who have asked stupid questions over the years. They have all made me realise that we all have different bundles of knowledge; what is obvious to me may not be to others. Indeed today is not about me—by this stage of my life I am the sum total of all the industry interactions—discussions in the field, conversations at workshops and arguments in corridors.

It is an afternoon to celebrate the industry.

Thanks to all those who have helped on this day, in particular

- Peter Dixon
- Milton Lewis
- Richard Burns
- Danny Hirschfeld

Apologies to:

- all those I have forgotten to thank
- frogs—not one photo
- mistakes—particularly p83 where the caption of the hummock and tussock grass have been swapped
- all those who could have written the book or chapters much better than I.

Thanks everyone for coming'



The Roaring Forties sang two songs written by John Warner: *Wind in a Million Leaves*, and *Murrumbidgee Water*. In the photo left to right are: John Warner, Margaret Walters, Robin Connaughton and Tom Hanson.

Two members of The Roaring Forties: Margaret Walters and Tom Hanson (Robin's husband) were involved in the book's production.

The Roaring Forties

Renowned since 1988 for the powerful impact they make singing unaccompanied folk songs—are strong individual singers and choose robust songs telling of real people, their lives and work. They are constantly adding to their repertoire with songs of Australia's social and industrial history and its environment. Sea shanties and other maritime songs are their particular speciality. Their new CD is titled 'Life of Brine'.

Contact Tom Hanson 9457 9945 or Margaret Walters 9698 2206. www.roaringfortiesfolk.com

THE WIND IN A MILLION LEAVES

*Written in the International Year of the Tree, 1984
(John Warner)*

*From the wild Bass Strait, where the seething winds
Twist cliff-top scrub to the shapes of pain,
To the mountain ash of the inland slopes.
And the great red gums of the river plain -'
The land is enriched by the trees that grow
On the western plains, or Kiandra's snow.
Deep roots and strong against wind and cold -
They are more our wealth than the buried gold.*

*Must we make a desert with our own cruel hands
And die of the waste with a heart that grieves,
Or gaze on the stars, through the branching limbs,
To the song of the wind in a million leaves.*

*We have cleared the slopes for the homestead farms.
Laid bare the hills with relentless will,
Turned soil to dust with our grazing stock,
Sent the jewels of earth to the timber mill.
For a million years, come wind or drought,
New growth has come to the fire-scarred slopes -
But man has come, with the power of steal
And his poisoned breath is the death of hope.*

Chorus

*For they feed on the sun and their lives are long,
Its light is their strength, they reflect its glow.
They break the shock of its searing glare
To a dappled shade for the beasts below.
And who are we that the trees should die
For a passing glory of doubtful worth?
The earth's not ours to be plundered bare,
Humankind is but one child of the Earth.*

Chorus

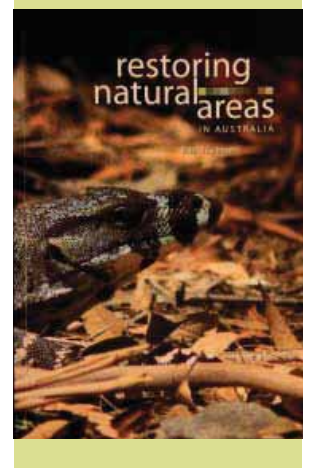
Buy the book!

Restoring Natural Areas in Australia is available through AABR for \$44 and at the discounted price of \$40 for AABR members.

Postage is \$9.00.

Orders can be placed via ibb56@yahoo.com.au

This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it .



Farewell to three friends of the bush

Margaret Beavis

A past AABR committee member, and dedicated bush regenerator died on January 17. She devoted many thousands of voluntary hours to bush regeneration over nearly three decades.

A gathering to honour Margaret's many contributions towards making the world a better place will be held at a Sydney bushland reserve. May 2 is being considered, contact Tein on 02 6682 2885 or Nancy on 02 9416 7334. We will send an email and post details on www.aar.org.au

Alistair Hulett

Well known to many as a singer, songwriter, activist and bush regenerator, died in Glasgow on January 29th.

Mark Foster

(the news was posted by Matthew Bailey on the Bush Regeneration email list-server 13.2.10)

I have some sad news, Mark Foster died Friday 12 in a motorcycle accident on the central coast. Many of you know Mark or Foz as he was affectionately known. For those of you

who don't know Mark he was a great bush regenerator and friend of the earth who worked for the National Trust and Total Earth Care from the early nineties, was a founding member of the Bushland and Rainforest Co-operative, a bushcare trainer for a number of local councils, a bush regenerator employee with Pittwater and Warringah councils and in the later 2000's served the community in his employment with the NSW Fire Brigade as well as running a Bush regen contracting business: Engedi Environmental Services which principally operated on the central coast.

Mark also gave generously to various charities and undertook much overseas aid work over the years. Mark was also an AABR member.

Marks departure is a loss for the industry, the bush and the planet. Mark had deep intuitive knowledge regarding resilience and the reinstatement of natural systems, he was a true believer in the Bradley inspired 'good' bush priority philosophy, he had a tremendous capacity for hard physical work (he could really smash Lantana) coupled with the sensitivity required for finer weeding. Mark always brought good cheer, laughs, energy and positivity to a site and was inspiring in his knowledge and love of rainforest and permaculture. Mark was a humble and generous soul in so many ways and is loved and missed by many.

Amorous diamond pythons ignore nearby bush regenerators

Winsome Lambkin of Floraville NSW sent these photos. She says they were 'doing their thing' whilst the bush regen team worked just metres away, I think they are a very important part, if not the main reason for, caring for the environment. The Pythons didn't seem disturbed by our presence- perhaps they were too 'involved,' but usually we move away from wildlife, for example, birds' nests and Land Mullet.

Here is part of a short article Winsome wrote for the Lake Macquarie Urban Landcarer:

In mid-October, as the sun warmed the gully, two pythons were observed coiled together, making a circular shape whilst nearby a third, very robust python approached. When next seen, the three were together in a more elongated tangle. This slow moving entanglement persisted for perhaps an hour, ending as the sun became more intense and the snakes slithered away.

It is quite usual for more than one male to mate with the female and research indicates that the males do not engage in combat. Each of these snakes was about 2 metres in length.

Diamond Pythons Morelia spilota are common in Floraville rainforest gully as they seem to frequent the eastern side of Floraville Ridge which runs from Belmont North to Belmont (Hill Street). They feed on birds, rats, mice, possums and bandicoots. Diamond Pythons lay eggs and the female coils around the clutch to incubate them which can take from 10 to 15 weeks. This care is uncommon in snakes. Hatchlings measure from 25-40 cm.

Diamond Pythons, though not considered endangered, are under pressure from habitat destruction.



What AABR Achieved 2008-9

From a report prepared for the AGM, October 14 2009.

Field Trips – focusing on endangered ecological communities:

- April 11, 2009: Illawarra Rainforest field trip with Anders Bofeldt.
- August 1, 2009: Cumberland Plain field trip, Lansdowne Park, Lansdowne & The Crest, Georges Hall with Alan Fairley.
- August 30, 2009: Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub, North Head, Manly with Peter Jensen, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust.

Workshops:

- June 21, 2009: Eucalypt Identification workshop with Van Klaphake.

Seminars:

- October 14, 2009: Frog friendly habitats with Arthur White.

Positions with other organisations:

- National Tree Day Committee: chaired by AABR.
- NSW Environmental Trust Grants: AABR assisted with application assessments.
- NCC's monthly Bush Fire Advisory Committee meetings: AABR represented.

Regional Sub-Committees:

- Far North Coast NSW / South East Queensland, with efforts to establish a separate Queensland group.
- Hunter.

Website:

- Almost 1,900,000 visits.
- Numerous updates.
- Bush Jobs employment advertising service remaining popular.
- Professional Services for advertising Member businesses also popular.
- Past AABR newsletters being posted.
- Weeds Cooperative Research Centre website is due to close in 2010 – AABR has permission to host some of the ecological documents.

Projects:

- Robin Buchanan's new book, Natural Area Restoration in Australia, in association with TOCAL College: AABR contributed \$5,000 towards publication, made comments on the text and hosted the launch.
- Professional Association for the bush regeneration industry: AABR continues to investigate establishing one.
- Restoring Biodiversity Industry Association: AABR donated \$1,000 towards costs. Several AABR committee members assisting RBIA.

- Society for Ecological Restoration International conference, Perth, Aug. 2009: AABR subsidised Bill Jordan's airfare from the USA. Bill is an elder statesman of ecological restoration, an inspiring writer on the cultural implications of ecological restoration, and a shining light in the foundation of restoration generally.
- Volkswagen Group Australia: AABR registered so that members can arrange trade conditions.
- WorkCover classification of Bush Regeneration: Some committee members continue to work towards guidelines for prevention of injury for the industry.
- Agrifoods Skills Council: Interpreting the Agriculture/Horticulture/Conservation training package for specific industry sectors including Cert III and Diploma Natural Area Restoration. AABR prepared 'exemplars' for interpreting the Natural Area Restoration stream CLM training package.
- Inter-agency (NSW) cooperation on weed control: AABR met with Department of Environment rep to promote and deliver more effective management of environmental weeds.
- Byron Shire – Camphor Laurel clearing: AABR promoting ecologically strategic use of stands of Camphor Laurel as 'rainforest starters' rather than indiscriminately clearing them to generate 'green electricity' at local sugar mills.

Promotion of bush regeneration at public events:

- DECC Environmental Volunteering Forum, 11 June 2009, Powerhouse Museum Sydney: AABR gave presentation.
- Campbelltown and Blacktown Environment Festivals: AABR provided info sheets.
- Royal Easter Show Bushcare Stall: AABR assisted staffing and provided info sheets.
- 'Paying the Price of Garden Escapes' report (AABR – WWF): presentation given to Volunteer Coordinators Network.
- Big Scrub Day 2009, NE NSW: AABR held an information stall.
- Other regional Sub-Committee field events.

Grants:

- Commonwealth Government GVEHO grant: \$1,500 received for admin. funding.

welcome new members

Philippe Binetruy
Bruce Clarke
Robert Marr

What's happening

February 24

Registrations close COB Wednesday 17 February

ANPC Workshop The Translocation of Threatened Plants

Have you been involved in, or would you like to be involved in, the planning, approval or implementation of a translocation project for threatened flora? Then this workshop is relevant to you!

Questions to be addressed include:

- What is translocation?
- When is it appropriate to use translocation as a tool to conserve threatened species?
- What needs to be done when planning a translocation program?
- How should a translocation program be implemented?
- What ongoing management and evaluation is required?
- Where can I go for more information?

The workshop will include WA case studies of translocation programs, highlighting lessons to be learnt.

The registration form and program are available from the anpc: Website: www.anpc.asn.au

Where Perth

P 02 6250 9509 F 02 6250 9528 E anpc@anpc.asn.au

February 16-19

Plant Identification Skills for Environmental Assessment,

Designed to provide training in the basic skills needed to successfully identify vascular Australian plants and introduced weeds. This course is targeted at professionals working in the industry who wish to develop or refresh their skills in this discipline. It will be run by the Janet Cosh Herbarium at the University of Wollongong for 4 days with a maximum of 12 places available. Belinda Pellow, the Curator of the Janet Cosh Herbarium and an author of the fifth edition of the 'Flora of the Sydney Region' will be the course leader. The course will run from 9-5 each day and will include, parking, lunch and tea breaks. Cost: \$1045.00.

Where Janet Cosh Herbarium, University of Wollongong,

Information and a registration form can be found on the Janet Cosh Herbarium www.uow.edu.au/science/biol/herbarium.

Herbarium Monday or Tuesday 02 4221 4340

March 28 (to be confirmed)

AABR will be hosting a picnic to celebrate the release of Robin Buchanan's new book

Where on the Nepean River at Penrith NSW. Check www.aar.org.au for details.

mid 2010

Eucalypt workshop with Van Klaphake

Van Klaphake unveiled his new 'Guide to Eucalypts' at a sold-out AABR workshop in June 2009. AABR plans to repeat the event and if you would like to attend please register your interest at ibb56@yahoo.com.au (this email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it)

September 26-30 2010

17th Australasian Weeds Conference

New Frontiers in New Zealand

Where Christchurch, New Zealand

Organiser The New Zealand Plant Protection Society Inc. and The Council of Australasian Weed Societies Inc. www.17awc.org

September 28- October 1

ANPC 8th National Conference:

Planning conservation to achieving restoration: A conference for everyone involved in conserving Australia's unique flora and native vegetation

Where Perth

Anyone for acapella bush regeneration (Lismore)?

Are you interested in learning part-singing while doing volunteer bush regeneration? I am looking for a few people to join me doing mainly hand weeding the grassy understorey at the Lismore Bushland cemetery on a regular basis. (I am already doing regen there but would go more often if I could combine

it with my other love, singing harmony with friends.) The atmosphere is very peaceful there and our little melodies would just enhance it. If you know of anyone interested, let them know that no experience in either field is necessary, just love of bush and ear for harmony.

Tein McDonald 02 6682 2885.

New AABR student subscription rate

We now offer students of the Certificate III Conservation and Land Management—Natural Area Restoration a one year subscription to the newsletter by email for \$10

AABR NSW

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AABR News is the newsletter of the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators (NSW) AABR Inc. AABR NSW was established in 1986 out of concern for the continuing survival and integrity of bushland and its dependent fauna in or near bushland areas, and seeks new members and friends for promoting good work practices in natural areas. The Association's aim is to foster and encourage sound ecological practices of bushland management by qualified people.

AABR NSW has regional committees in northeast NSW/Southeast Queensland and the Hunter, and a sister organisation in Western Australia: AABR WA.

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To keep in touch and be notified about events, subscribe to Bush Regeneration or Bushcare list servers and check out Solutions, the Bush Regeneration Bulletin Board—see website for detail.

\$20:00 p.a	AABR Newsletter Subscription	(all interested people)
\$10:00 p.a	AABR Newsletter Subscription	(email for 1 year for students of Certificate III CLM—Natural Area Restoration)
\$25:00 p.a	AABR Membership	(appropriately qualified & experienced bush regenerators)
\$25:00 p.a	AABR Contractors & Consultants List	(appropriately qualified & experienced bush regenerators)

Newsletter contributions and comments are welcome

Contact Virginia Bear vbear@froggy.com.au 0408 468 442

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of AABR NSW