



# AABR NEWS

Australian Association of Bush Regenerators NSW

**Nº 118**  
**September**  
**2013**

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## AABR's free seminar day Regeneration!

**3 October Sydney Olympic Park**

**9:30-3:30**

**Register by 19 September**

***The big scrub rainforest is reclaiming the paddocks.  
Hear Mike Delaney explain how.***

### Be inspired by speakers talking about regeneration and replanting at a range of sites across NSW

**Keynote speaker: Jon Dee** 2010 NSW Australian of the Year and co-founder of Planet Ark, National Tree Day and World Environment News.

**Mike Delaney (EnviTE Environment and Big Scrub Landcare)**—Restoring Big Scrub rainforests.

**Paul Gibson-Roy (Greening Australia)**—Reconstructing Cumberland Plain grassy understories.

**Peter Jensen (Sydney Harbour Federation Trust)**—Regenerating North Head's Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub.

**Peggy Svoboda (Hunter Central Rivers CMA)**—Restoring saltmarsh in the Kooragang Wetlands, Hunter Valley.

**Speed talks**—by councils and bush regeneration contractors.

**Sydney Olympic Park Authority**—presentation on (and walk to) local restoration sites.

### If that's not enough, come for the lunch!

Parents Café Catering will be providing mainly middle eastern food—with a difference. The organisation is associated with Fairfield High School parents and is a social enterprise established to explore pathways to employment and training for newly arrived refugees in hospitality and hands-on work experience. It is a showcase of refugees' positive contribution to our society and to raise community awareness about refugee issues.



Register by 19 Sept via the [AABR Website](http://AABR Website) or call Jane Gye [secretary@aabr.org.au](mailto:secretary@aabr.org.au) 0415 647409

### Travelling from outside Sydney? We hope you can!

We chose Sydney because there is a large population of interested people within easy travelling distance. However we are keen to assist and encourage regenerators and friends wherever they live to be part of this event.

If you would like a billet for your stay, or if you are in Sydney and can offer a billet please let us know.

# President's Perspective

**Hi all—lots and lots to report this issue.**

**Upcoming Seminar:** The committee and various willing helpers (paid and unpaid) have been working tirelessly to achieve the imminent changes in AABR – all of which are to come to fruition on 3 October with the free seminar being held at Sydney Olympic Park (thanks goes to all for the work put in to date and the work on the day...any further volunteers most welcome).

Members are coming from as far as the Sunshine Coast in Qld and the south coast of NSW to join in the celebrations and hear the inspiring speakers we have lined up (read more about the speakers program on page 4)

If you want to come along, **please register now** (by clicking on the [link on the AABR website](#)). Bookings are limited to 200 and we are pushing registrations early so that we can get our catering numbers committed well in advance.

**Hope you like the new website:** Thanks To Mitra Gusheh our webmaster, the redesigned website is now live and we are attracting quite a few comments from people new to AABR. This promises to become an increasingly rich resource for spreading the messages about regen and other forms of ecological restoration. Case studies are going to be a particularly important component so please keep these rolling in—and you will notice that the final draft of AABR's Statement on Ecological Restoration is now available on the AABR website for downloading.

**Program of AABR activities:** AABR has managed to snaffle the services of Rosanna Luca to develop a range of activities following on from the seminar. Some activities will be advertised at the Seminar and AGM...but please contact [secretary@aabr.org.au](mailto:secretary@aabr.org.au) if you would like to conduct a field day on your work site. AABR can cover your insurance and help with the publicity. The sky is the limit.

**Accreditation:** As of 3 October, membership, of course, will no longer convey recognition of competence as a practicing

bush regenerator. This recognition will be transferred to a new accreditation system, managed by a 14-strong sub-committee of AABR assessors (4 from Sydney, 8 from regional NSW areas and 2 from Queensland). The application form for accreditation can be downloaded from AABR's website.

In the 2014 financial year, AABR will introduce a modest annual fee for accreditation—which is yet to be decided (feedback from members is invited as to the best fee scale to keep AABR's accreditation system afloat but not turn off loyal regenerators, particularly volunteers or low waged workers).

**Join the committee at the AGM!** By now you will also have received notice of the AGM—which will be held at Sydney Olympic Park at 2.45 pm, directly after the guided walk. One opportunity this offers is for anyone interested in joining the AABR committee to nominate—and we can have up to 40% of the committee made up of people who are not accredited bush regenerators so anyone keen is welcome to put their hand up either at the meeting or in writing ahead of time (our long-serving treasurer would appreciate a break, so please let us know if you might be able to take on the role).

We welcome committee members from all regions. We meet by teleconference, so it doesn't matter where you are based.

There will also be 4 resolutions on notice to amend the constitution: two relating to the proposal to enable 'corporate memberships' for AABR, a third to remove the rather limiting 'NSW' from AABR's name (in recognition that we now have substantial numbers of members in other states.), and a fourth to enable the committee to determine the upper limit of the bush regeneration accreditation sub-committee. Other topics on the agenda include commencing the discussion on the fee structure for members and accreditation.

**Tein McDonald  
President**

## AABR's new website is up!

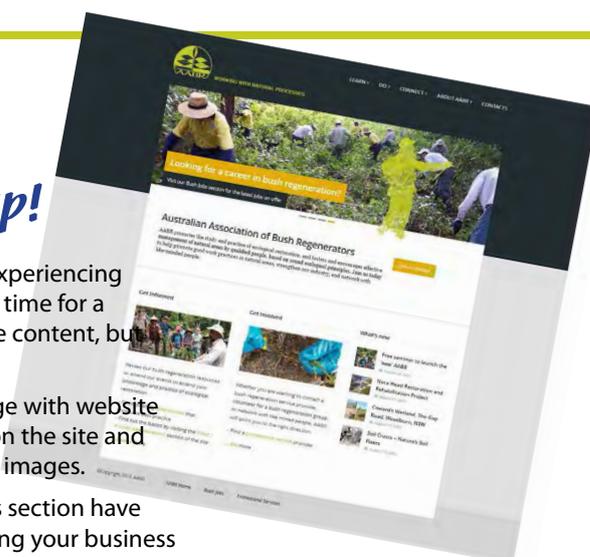
We were due for a fresh look, and our old site was experiencing a growing number of technical difficulties, so it was time for a complete change. We are still reviewing some of the content, but the site is up and running smoothly.

The updated functionality allows us to better engage with website users. We look forward to reading your comments on the site and welcome any contributions in terms of content and images.

Our Professional Services section and the Bush Jobs section have also been updated. If you are interested in advertising your business or any vacant positions, just let us know.

The website is a tool for serving our members. Any suggestions for improvement are always welcome.

Thanks to Maree Thompson, Environment Projects Coordinator at EnviTE Environment for supplying a stack of photos for the site.



## Welcome to new members

Mark Cacchia  
Caroline Haskard  
Terese Haywood  
Diana Tsoulos  
Anne Matheson

# Byron shire to go chem free?

Rhonda James

In early July NPWS proposed to aerial spray bitou bush along the Byron coast in Tyagarah Nature Reserve. This triggered concerns from a section of the community about the use of chemical sprays in Byron Shire. This method of aerial spraying of Bitou has been efficiently and effectively used in northern NSW with exceptional results. As well as a huge reduction of weed there has been an increase in diversity of flora and fauna.

Community concerns include lack of consultation, impacts on coastal biodiversity, health and tourism and replacement of bitou bush with other weeds (Byron Shire Echo July 9 2013).

Representatives from the bush regeneration industry, including members of AABR, met to discuss the impacts that a proposed ban of herbicide to control weeds in bushland will have on current projects and the industry.

The group proposes to prepare a brief policy document which includes relevant local research and monitoring data. The document will include case studies where the diversity of flora and fauna has been monitored over a period of time. Best practice ecological restoration methods will be outlined in the document.

Byron Shire (is part of a northern NSW biodiversity hotspot which is being severely impacted by a suite of highly invasive weeds. The absence of a viable alternative to herbicide use will result in current programs, over 200ha of public land in Byron Shire, reverting to their previous state of weed invasion.

Further information will be provided in the next edition of the newsletter.

*Rhonda James is a member of Northeast NSW/Southeast QLD subcommittee*

## What is happening with training and bush regeneration? An update on Smart and Skilled

Kate Low

This article summarises some of the changes happening with training in NSW as a result of state government policy Smart and Skilled.

There are similar changes occurring in all states, but each state is implementing the COAG agreement in different ways. AABR welcomes comments from other VET providers in other states.

The future of training in Bush Regeneration/Conservation and Land Management remains uncertain. In newsletter 117 (p3) Tein McDonald described some of the changes that are likely for anyone studying in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. The VET sector includes TAFE and other Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

Since last writing, the Independent Pricing and Regulation Tribunal (IPART) have released their draft recommendations on pricing and fee setting for government funded VET. For most students this will mean that there is an increase of between \$500 and \$1500 plus per qualification. (IPART 2013). The draft recommendations are complex, with the report being over 200 pages. In areas it is still difficult to work out what is proposed, and how the rules should be interpreted. The following points seem likely/are already in place:

- only courses that are on skills lists (areas where there is an identified need for training) will be funded—these lists still

aren't published, but we believe that our industry courses may well be on the lists (thanks to the hard work of many AABR representatives)

- if a student has a previous qualification at a higher level (in any field) they will not be eligible for government funding and will be required to pay full fees
- students from other states must now pay full fees in NSW— This has the greatest impact for students from southern Queensland and Northern Victoria who study in NSW
- apprentices and trainees will have fees capped at \$3000. This is a substantial increase—currently most trainees in conservation and land management pay \$478. RTOs can charge less than the fee of \$3000, but need to maintain quality
- government beneficiaries will continue to have subsidised training but will now pay \$400 for a CIII qualification.

### What TAFE is doing

Each TAFE institute will develop local solutions (in consultation with industry). We know that ours is a skilled but low paid industry. We know that our industry needs training. It is likely that the shape and format of the training that you are accustomed to at TAFE will change, as we endeavour to give students and employers what they need while still making the training affordable.

You can find out more about IPART and look at fact sheets for both students and industry [here](#) and [here](#).

*Kate Low is a Head Teacher, Environmental Management, at Ryde College. The views expressed here are Kate's, not an official TAFE view.*



# AABR's free seminar be prepared to be inspired!

AABR's October seminar promises to be the perfect antidote to the avalanche of environmental 'bad news' streaming from every quarter.

As if galloping land clearing, pollution, habitat fragmentation and exotic invasions is not enough, climate change has to throw its pall over the viability of ecosystems we know and love. So what do we do? Renew our inspiration to optimise the chances for ecological restoration and rehabilitation (of course)!

Who better to start the program but Jon Dee—2010 NSW Australian of the Year and co-founder of Planet Ark, National Tree Day and World Environment News. Jon is now the Managing Director and founding Chair of 'Do Something'—an inspiring organisation working to create and promote positive social and environmental change. Jon will reinforce the message underlying the changes in AABR—opening up membership to everyone supportive of repairing damaged plant and animal communities so that individuals and organisations can join forces to make ecological restoration work on the ground for the betterment of the environment and society.

The speakers following Jon will bring alive their own stories of success from all parts of NSW and some from Queensland. Each major ecosystem type—rainforest, grassland, wetland, dry forest and heathy scrub—will be represented by at least one report.

## **Big Scrub Rainforest**

Mike Delaney (EnvITE Environment) will be talking about the successes of Big Scrub Landcare, who have been working for 20 years to regenerate (and link with plantings) remnants of what was the largest (at 75,000 ha) subtropical rainforest in the southern hemisphere. Cleared for farming in the late 19th Century, the vegetation type is now listed as an Endangered Ecological Community at state level and Critically Endangered Ecological Community at federal level. The project has attracted more than \$2M in grant monies over the last 20 years. This has been invested in an effort that has resulted in most of the significant Big Scrub remnants (87% of the 68—totalling 330 ha) having been subjected to systematic rainforest regeneration treatments. All show substantial levels of recovery, buying more

time for the Big Scrub species in this agricultural landscape. Some 900,000 trees are estimated to have been established on about 250 ha of Big Scrub sites.

## **Cumberland Plain Woodlands**

Familiar to many in Sydney, this ecosystem (also listed as endangered) has been subject to extensive regeneration and planting works over the last 30 years. Recent innovations in restoring grassy understories will be reported on by Greening Australia's grassland reconstruction wizard, Paul Gibson-Roy. In Victoria, Paul pioneered methods of scalping weedy topsoils and reseeding sites with diverse native groundcovers that soon colonise, creating a more sustainable matrix for further forest development. He has now brought his expertise to bear on the challenges of Sydney's grassy woodlands.

## **Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub**

Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (photo above) is another inspiring story. Had restoration practitioners not woken up to potential for seed of species of this community (yes, also endangered) to persist for decades in the soil, many of these sites would have been written off as not worth saving. Peter Jensen from Sydney Harbour Federation Trust will illustrate cases where cessation of mowing and thinning to reduce fire hazard triggered substantial regeneration of long 'absent' species, encouraging fresh approaches to managing and recovering this rare and beautiful community type, now subject to works by many Councils, agencies and golf clubs across Sydney.

The project is one of the case studies on the [AABR website](#).

## **Saltmarsh restoration**

Saltmarsh restoration is the theme of Peggy Svoboda's report on works carried out over recent decades at the Kooragang Wetlands in the Hunter Valley. Like other endangered communities, this is one subjected to many threats—but is now threatened by sea level rise. Peggy will describe the lessons learned from bringing this community back to health and optimising its chances of adapting and retreating inland as sea levels do rise.

## Speed talks

Speed talks will follow—presented by bush regeneration contractors and Council officers.

## A delicious lunch

Lunch will be catered by the Fairfield High School “Parents Café Catering” (a social enterprise established to explore pathways to employment and training for newly arrived refugees).

## Sydney Olympic Park—talk and walk

After lunch there will be a short talk by Jenny O’Meara of Sydney Olympic Park Authority, prior to a guided walk through the site. Jenny’s talk will explain the current works program for the highly valuable natural areas of the Park which received extensive restoration/remediation prior to the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. See below for more detail.

## Permethrin treated clothing for sale

### ... and tick protection info

Kim Cheney will have clothing for sale on the day **cash only!** And Lynn Rees will be providing information on protecting yourself from ticks.

As Lynn explains “The key reason for doing all of this tick protection stuff is that we are passionate bush regenerators and want to be able to keep doing it safely and want all our other colleges on board too. Imagine what would happen if we all stopped bush regenerating because of a few tick bites! I have been really humbled by my volunteers who said after learning about my Lyme disease diagnosis that they would keep doing it if I was.”



# Talk and walk at Olympic Park

Sydney Olympic Park is a complex and dynamic place with parklands of high ecological value located next to commercial and residential developments—not to mention a major events precinct.

The Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) has responsibility for management of the natural areas which typically contain threatened species habitat, and/or endangered ecological communities including Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest, Coastal Saltmarsh and freshwater wetlands.

Following the extensive restoration/remediation that occurred prior to the 2000 Olympic Games, active management is required to maintain ecological values and to meet regulatory requirements.

Jennifer O’Meara, Parklands Ecologist with SOPA, will give a presentation after lunch at the seminar on the Authority’s long-term programs of habitat maintenance, weed control and replacement - informed by a program to monitor target species, particularly their responses to vegetation management.

Site inspection: Following the talk, Jennifer and Andrew Jack, will lead an inspection of local restoration sites, to illustrate the following issues introduced in the talk:

1. endangered ecological communities and threatened species—Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest zones, green and golden bell frog, Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest
2. weed management of freshwater wetlands and STIF
3. revegetation and regeneration of Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest, remediation/construction of Narawang Wetland for endangered species habitat
4. pest animal control (fox and *Gambusia*)
5. management of threatened or high value species habitat (green and golden bell frog, Latham’s snipe, sea-eagle)
6. water level management for habitat values
7. if time permits, a visit will be made to the coastal saltmarsh of Newington Nature Reserve.



Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest revegetation works to extend the buffer and create a corridor between woodland and wetlands precincts of Newington Nature Reserve.(a) Prior to works in June 2008. (b) Results approximately 5 years after seeds were propagated from the Reserve and planted into ripped and mulched soil. After 4 years, the corridor is now self sustaining with natural recruitment occurring.

# Battling ticks (and weeds) in the home of Skippy



**Chris Brogan, Earth Repair Ecology**

Recently the Earth Repair Ecology team were lucky enough to work for a number of weeks at Waratah Park in Sydney's Terry Hills. Waratah Park is the name of the fictional National Park where the television series Skippy the Bush Kangaroo was set, and the rangers cottage is still there!

When we initially started working, a number of the team were attacked by ticks. Most of our work is on the Cumberland Plain where for reasons I don't understand ticks and tick bites are rare or do not occur at all. I had however been following the tick issue and debate regarding Lyme disease through reading the AABR newsletter. Having attended a tick awareness night in February this year I was very concerned about exposing myself or my staff to tick bites as this can lead to debilitating illness or worse.



A close friend of mine has chronic fatigue syndrome and while he is unsure as to the origins of his condition he worked as a bush regenerator during the 1980s. A number of my staff had worked as bush regenerators on the northern beaches prior to being employed by Earth Repair Ecology and tell horrific stories about the regularity of tick bites and the complacency with which this issue is treated. So I stopped work at the Park until I could find a solution.

It was after reading an article by Lynn Rees about Ticks and Tick prevention in AABR newsletter No. 117 I realised this may be Permethrin Infused clothing. I discussed this with the team and there was some concern regarding exposure to insecticide however after I received this email from my Site Supervisor Derek Bridgman I decided this may provide a safe way of mitigating the risk of tick bites.

*Hi Chris,*

*Based on the information provided by the US Environmental Protection Agency Permethrin infused clothing is "below the Agency's non-cancer and cancer LOCs (level of concern)". [1]*

*Also according to an MSDS for Permethrin used to infuse in clothing as an insect repellent "Permethrin is not mutagenic, teratogenic or carcinogenic. Skin sensitisation tests indicate that Permethrin active ingredient was not a skin sensitiser. At high doses, the solvent caused reversible damage to the liver and kidney of male rats. These effects are not relevant to humans at occupational levels of exposure." [2]*

*References*

[1] [www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/REDs/factsheets/permethrin\\_fs.htm#health](http://www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/REDs/factsheets/permethrin_fs.htm#health)

[2] [www.thetraveldoctor.com.au/permethrinmsds.pdf](http://www.thetraveldoctor.com.au/permethrinmsds.pdf)

Looking at this information I'd say that it would be quite safe to use the Permethrin infused clothing, and could offer another defence against Ticks.

I kitted the team out with Permethrin infused overalls and went back to Waratah Park. After three weeks of solid bush regeneration no one reported being bitten by ticks. So I can report that they do appear to be a solution. I have 10 pairs on the work truck at all times. The only limitation is that the Permethrin lasts for 100 washes only so I am planning not to wash them until I get complaints. I bought mine from The Safety Depot in Panania (Call John 8710 5301).

And according to Wikipedia, Skippy is still being broadcast in Iran.

# Can Aboriginal ownership secure Waratah Park's future?

Jenny Harris, Duffys Forest Residents Association

After many years of uncertainty and decline, an exciting and innovative proposal by Waratah Park's new Aboriginal owners is bringing renewed hope.

Waratah Park, in Duffys Forest Sydney, was once a magnificent 13-hectare sanctuary. It is strategically located on a ridgetop above Cowan Creek adjoining the spectacular, heritage listed, Kuring-gai Chase National Park.

As the home to the TV series "Skippy", the site became recognized nationally and internationally for its iconic embodiment of Australia's unique wildlife and landscape. It holds significant environmental, heritage and cultural values, not only for Australians but also for overseas visitors.

After decades of commercial occupation by some whose interests did not include the preservation of fauna and flora or heritage, approximately 25% of the park has become damaged by weeds, landfill, rubbish dumping and vegetation clearing.

The sorry saga of Waratah Park began back in 1998 after the acquisition of the lease by Waratah Park Pty Ltd. This period of decline ended in 2003 with the RSPCA storming the site and seizing 145 starving animals. International publicity ensued. A hefty fine and a conviction of cruelty to animals were followed by a short ray of hope when the prominent conservation company Earth Sanctuaries, founded by John Walmsley, took over the lease with great promise of a return to glory. Sadly those days were short lived. Following the financial demise of Earth Sanctuaries, and takeover by the property developer Prudentia Investments in 2007, the gates were closed once more to the public.

Following the termination of the lease in 2010, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) lodged a land claim.

Less well publicised was the worsening weed problem, with privet, pampas grass, lantana, *Ludwigia peruviana*, blackberry, moth vine, Madeira vine, African love grass, asparagus, ehrharta, senna, crofton weed, *Arundo* and a host of others steadily increasing their territory. But those in the know were alarmed. The Duffys Forest Residents Association (DFRA) became a champion of the site, and stepped up their efforts to protect and restore it and reduce the threat of further weed spread into adjacent bushland.

It was a big undertaking but we just couldn't stand by and watch the demise. It was clear that without intervention and on-going bush regeneration the future was grim. Waratah Park would be incapable of being restored and achieving NSW Heritage listing as an environmentally and culturally significant site. In 2011 Crown Lands issued DFRA a "Letter of Authority" to occupy the land to undertake beautification, eradication of noxious weeds and hazard reduction/bushfire prevention. This marked the beginning of monthly volunteer bush regeneration days.

But then a game changer. In April 2013 the land claim appeal by the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) was successful and Crown Lands were directed to transfer ownership of the site to the MLALC by August 2014.

Waratah Park is now set to become the hub of Sydney's first Aboriginal owned Park.

MLALC proposes to turn most of its landholdings, (about 10% of the land in Warringah LGA), into Gai-Maraigal Park, to be managed by an Aboriginal Board in line with a management plan under Part 4A of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NSW). The Park proposal would incorporate 1000 hectares of claimed and unclaimed land in the Oxford Falls Valley, Wheeler Heights and Belrose areas, and Waratah Park.

In a letter to Warringah Mayor, the Chair of the MLALC, Mr Ricky Lyons sought in principle support for the proposal stating "We are of the view that the lands are of both cultural and natural significance to Aboriginal people, and that such a park would be a very important addition to the local, national and international visitor experience within the Sydney Region. An Aboriginal Owned Park would provide a range of significant opportunities for our membership such as employment and cultural land management skills." <sup>1</sup>

DFRA and representatives from wildlife groups, Sydney Wildlife and Wires have developed a strong, positive working relationship with MLALC to progress a sustainable business plan for the park.

MLALC is now seeking a partner experienced in establishing and operating of a joint tourism venture. Waratah Park would include an Aboriginal Cultural Centre, and be the focal point for visitors. Cultural tours within the adjacent National Parks would also be offered. A wildlife rehabilitation clinic/hospital training venue—hopefully attached to a university—is also planned.

Early this year DFRA received a grant from the NSW Crown Lands. The \$35,000 falls far short of what is required to restore and regenerate the site but it allowed DFRA to engage Earth Repair Ecology for work in the more sensitive areas of bushland, and other talks requiring professional skills and equipment.

The bushcare program has been running for 18 months now, and has grown to twice monthly regeneration days, with the Skippy Heritage attracting volunteers from as far away as Newcastle and the Blue Mountains. It includes Corporate groups such as Dell Computers who help out once per month. We fondly refer to many as our "Skippy tragics" who are passionate and determined to see the home of Skippy restored to its former glory.



## Next workday Sunday 18 October

Experienced bush regenerators, willing to help supervise, are particularly welcome. Non-corporate workdays are usually the second Sunday of each month, from 9.00 am to 1.30 pm.

Check [DFRA's website](#) or call Jenny Harris 0408 512 060

Waratah Park is at 13 Namba Road, Duffys Forest NSW.

<sup>1</sup> MLALC Letter to Warringah Council 8 August 2013

# Forum on plants and animals of Western Sydney 29.6.13

Noela Kirkwood-Jones

Long-term Bush Regenerators with Lane Cove National Park Edie Rosenberg, Bill Jones and I travelled beyond the sandstone curtain out west to Blacktown responding to a kind invitation from the Blacktown & District Environment Group Inc. to attend a Cumberland Plain Forum.

Many thanks to Wayne Olling, Secretary, and Martin O'Reilly, President of the Group, for the huge amount of organisation they put into ensuring the day ran so smoothly.

We were particularly keen on renewing our acquaintanceship with renowned Botanist and Author Teresa James who was selling her new book *Native Flora of Cumberland Plain Woodland. An Identification Guide*.

We had a most enjoyable and informative day and were spoilt rotten with delicious food for morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea provided by local people. It was a full agenda with 6 speakers giving a pictorial presentation on the plants and animals, the threats they face, and what the future holds for them. Each person received a sample bag full of goodies including some great brochures courtesy of Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA on Mammals, Frogs and Reptiles of Western Sydney and Grey Box Psyllid Dieback in Western Sydney; also the Birds of Western Sydney and two great little booklets on A Gardener's Guide to the Native Plants of Western Sydney and Cumberland Plain Woodland Species for your Garden courtesy of Western Sydney Conservation Alliance Inc. and Blacktown and District Environment Group Inc.

Teresa gave the keynote address, followed by Peter Mobbs, Horticulturist and Bushcare Trainer, who spoke on Weed Threats; Dr. Tanya Leary, Threatened Species Officer, National Parks and Wildlife Service, spoke on the animals; Mark Fuller, Cumberland Bird Observers Club, spoke on the birds. Steve Mercer, Director, Strategic Assessments (EPBC Act) Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, gave a run-down of Federal Government Protection Measures and Geoff Brown, President, Western Sydney Conservation Alliance, spoke about what the community can do. There was ample time for Q&A after each speaker.

Teresa gave an inspirational keynote address. She is well known among bush regenerators, plant lovers, students and other caring people for her dedication and commitment to preserving our precious natural environment. Teresa has always had time to assist local groups with conservation battles, for instance as a guide in a bushwalking tour of the former Airservices Australia site at Cranebrook in 2006 to help prevent the rezoning and development of the land. Bill and I were inspired by Teresa's publication *Observations on the effects of mowing on native species in remnant bushland, western Sydney* (1994) *Cunninghamia* 3(3) 515-519. As a consequence we persuaded Ku-ring-gai Council to cease mowing at Wallalong Crescent, West Pymble, in 2003. Teresa subsequently visited our site and made helpful comments and suggestions. Her other publication *Rare Bushland Plants of Western Sydney* (1999), with L. McDougall and D.H. Benson, has inspired many people to strive to protect our dwindling western Sydney flora.

Sadly, the message from the Forum for the CPW is one of clearing and fragmentation, and plants and animals in decline. With an increasing population the survival of the CPW is seriously threatened.

On a brighter note with dedicated groups like the Western Sydney Conservation Alliance and the Blacktown & District Environment Group (together with the motivation of Teresa's book) on the job and the incredible resilience of the CPW there is cause for hope.

Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished. *Browning*

## Native Flora of Cumberland Plain Woodland. An Identification Guide.

We are full of praise for Teresa's new book and highly recommend it. She has spent many hours surveying, studying and photographing the plants of western Sydney. In her Acknowledgements she pays respect to its "wonderful custodians" and hopes "this book will encourage many to reflect, take a closer look at and be inspired by the uniqueness and beauty of our western Sydney flora"

Section 1 introduces the Cumberland Plain Woodland (CPW) and associated communities, its listing as an Endangered Ecological Community and subsequently Critically Endangered in 2009, how to identify it, what are the threats and how we can help in its recovery.

Section 2 describes over 190 characteristic and rarer plants. The terminology has been kept simple. You can browse through the profiles in alphabetical order or use a series of simple keys. The photographs are excellent, many of them taken by Teresa herself. There is also a short glossary. Threatened plants area identified with red for quick reference. The book is a very user-friendly field guide with the spiral binding allowing the pages to stay open and the plastic cover for placing on the ground.

# Fox and cat snippets

## Feral cats and foxes—do they deserve their bad reputation

New research from the Australian National University in Canberra suggests that perhaps feral cats and foxes may not fully deserve their bad reputation, at least on some Australian islands. It shows that native mammals were most likely to die off on islands that had rats but not feral cats, foxes or dingoes.

ANU biologist Emily Hanna and research adviser Marcel Cardillo emphasised it is not suggested introduced predators should not be controlled. However, the control of feral cats and foxes should be balanced with the control of rats, to avoid the sudden expansion of rat populations.

Phillip Cassey, an ecologist at the University of Adelaide Environment Institute and research leader of the current Invasive Animals CRC project 'Exotic vertebrate risk analysis and complex invasion pathway framework' said "Analyses like Hanna's can assist in prioritisation of resources and focus which is absolutely vital when it comes to planning feral pest animal eradication campaigns on islands on limited budgets.

See the ANU article in *Global Ecology and Biogeography* and contact Emily Hanna at [emily.hanna@anu.edu.au](mailto:emily.hanna@anu.edu.au) and Phill Cassey at [phill.cassey@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:phill.cassey@adelaide.edu.au) or (08) 8313 4042.

From Feral Flyer 240 August 2013 *Invasive Animals CRC e-newsletter*

## Mega moggies of Arnhem Land prove scourge of bush

By Alyssa Betts, ABC Rural, June 4 2013

The feral cat population across Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory has exploded, with traditional owners saying they've noticed a steep decline in local birds and other wildlife.

The Warddeken ranger group has taken some amazing pictures of how big the feral cats are getting in the region, and has used them to leverage funding from the Federal Government to monitor and kill the pests.

Chairman of the ranger group, Dean Yirbarbuk, says the cats are getting bigger and there are "several thousand" of them in the Warddeken area of central Arnhem Land.

"All we know is our birds and animals are declining," he says.

"We hope this project will help us to try and find a way to get rid of the cats."

Research manager Georgia Vallance says funding from the National Environmental Research Program will complement the ranger groups' culling activities.

"We've been noticing more feral cats here over the last few years, and when these cats are culled by the rangers they perform a gut analysis, and the amount of animals inside these cats is staggering.

"One that was culled had the remains of two sugar gliders, a velvet gecko, a bird and some insects... so that's just one cat, over one day,

"So the project the rangers are now doing is to try and establish the population of cats, what their range is and what their behaviour is.

"There's been some research that cats will gravitate towards recently burnt country because the hunting is easier, and if that's the case we'll have to adapt our management regime."

Ms Vallance says funding is being spent on tracking cats using motion-sensor cameras. Later in the year, the Australian Wildlife Conservancy will provide dogs specially trained to catch cats, so that GPS collars can be attached.

From [www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-04/huge-feral-cats-arnhem-land/4731696](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-04/huge-feral-cats-arnhem-land/4731696)

## Caring for Our Country supports Tasmanian fox eradication

Tasmania's Fox Eradication Program (TFEP) has been boosted by the announcement that the Caring for Our Country Program is allocating \$1.9 million over four years to support the incursion response and biosecurity components of the TFEP.

Craig Elliott—Manager Invasive Species Branch Tasmania Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment—said that the eradication is moving into its third and final stage with a focus on completing the landscape monitoring program to confirm the absence of foxes and, where foxes are detected, launching an incursion response to locate and destroy the animals.

The eradication has now past the two-year mark without further evidence of foxes being detected. The Stage 3 Plan is now being finalised which aims to complete the program within the next 4 years.

Contact [craig.elliott@dipwe.tas.gov.au](mailto:craig.elliott@dipwe.tas.gov.au) and (03) 6336 5229.

From Feral Flyer 240 August 2013 *Invasive Animals CRC e-newsletter*

## Feral cats and foxes won't replace dingoes in the rangelands

New research from the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IA CRC) has shown that the control and removal of rangeland dingoes and other wild dogs on mainland Australia does not open the door for smaller predators to take their place.

Published in *Frontiers in Zoology*, lead researcher Ben Allen—PhD candidate at The University of Queensland and IA CRC researcher at Biosecurity Queensland revealed that similar or greater numbers of foxes, feral cats and goannas are found in areas where dingoes are left alone compared with areas where dingoes are controlled by lethal means.

Suggestions that current lethal control of dingoes in pastoral mainland Australia promotes foxes and feral cats, has led some scientists to advocate the prohibition of dingo baiting to protect wildlife. Based on observational studies, the proposition is that dingoes keep down the numbers of mesopredators (middle-sized predators like foxes, feral cats and goannas) thereby providing a safer haven for wildlife.

"Our new paper reports the results of several large predator control experiments which showed that current baiting programs in the rangelands do not produce more foxes and feral cats—it just doesn't happen," Ben said

From Invasive animals CRC Media Release July 1013 [www.invasiveanimals.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/MRBAllen\\_Mesopredator\\_10Jul13.pdf](http://www.invasiveanimals.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/MRBAllen_Mesopredator_10Jul13.pdf)

# Other notes and news

## Mid-Western Regional Council's roadside marker program

Almost a thousand fire-engine red guideposts were recently installed by Mid-Western Regional Council's Environment team indicating a road area of highly significant vegetation to Council road crews and contractors.

The guideposts are exactly the same as normal white reflective guideposts, but these ones are distinctly red, and instead of the usual reflector, they display a green, blue or yellow sticker.



A green sticker indicates a threatened species in the area, such as a Capertee Stringybark *Eucalyptus cannonii* or Ausfeld's wattle *Acacia ausfeldii*.

A yellow sticker marks a high value area such as Box-Gum Woodland Endangered Ecological Community containing White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum trees.

A high concentration of easily transferable weeds is marked by a blue sticker on a red guidepost.

Each sticker also indicates the distance of the high significance area, where the area starts and ends as well as the class and subcategory of the area.

To make sure the project will continue to be effective for the long term, stickers on guide posts are UV protected to last for ten years in the elements, and individual markers will be monitored and replaced when needed. Periodic reviews will be undertaken to make sure guide posts and coloured stickers remain relevant to the areas they mark, and are updated as the environment changes.

Most guide post markers will be located out of towns, especially on back roads which have had minimal disturbance in the past.

The project builds on Council's roadside corridor mapping work undertaken over the previous two years which allowed it to identify the significant areas.

This project was funded by the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust.

From NSW Roadside Environment Committee Newsletter Edition 14 May 2013  
[www.rta.nsw.gov.au/environment/downloads/rec\\_newletter\\_14\\_may13.pdf](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/environment/downloads/rec_newletter_14_may13.pdf)

## Proposed NSW noxious weed changes—Lord Howe Island takes a stand

Submissions are being sought for an important new noxious weeds order, including many new listings for Lord Howe Island

*Noxious Weeds (Weed Control) Order 2013* (under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*) fully amends declarations in Weed Control Classes 1, 2 and 3 and replaces previous Class 4 declarations. It will replace *Weed Control Order No. 28*.

There are many changes. Significantly, 11 new declarations have been proposed for Lord Howe Island, to help protect the area's unique World Heritage listed ecosystems. These include a few misbehaving mainland natives:

white cedar/chinaberry tree	<i>Melia azedarach</i>
sweet pittosporum	<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>
umbrella tree	<i>Schefflera actinophylla</i>
red cedar	<i>Toona ciliata</i>
king orchid/rock lily	<i>Dendrobium speciosum</i>
flame tree	<i>Brachychiton acerifolius</i>
bower vine	<i>Pandorea jasminoides</i>
lilly pilly	<i>Acmena helimampra</i> , <i>A. smithii</i> , <i>Syzygium oleosum</i>
coastal teatree	<i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i>
brush cherry/magenta cherry	<i>Syzygium paniculatum</i>

Lord Howe Island weed managers would appreciate your submission in support.

A copy of a draft version of *Noxious Weeds (Weed Control) Order 2013* and an explanatory note is available for download at [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) or from your local NSW Department of Primary Industries office.

Submissions must be in writing—send to:

Invasive Species Support Officer  
NSW Department of Primary Industries  
Locked Bag 21  
ORANGE NSW 2800

Or email to [admin.weeds@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:admin.weeds@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Or fax to 02 6391 3206 (include the sender's name and address and mark attention Invasive Species Support Officer).

Submissions must reach DPI by COB Friday 18 October 2013.

## Lending a hand to threatened biodiversity in the Hunter

The Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management (HCCREMS) team joined up with four of its partner councils to undertake three projects for the Roadside Vegetation Implementation Project (funded by the NSW Environmental Trust) that protect and rehabilitate roadside environments supporting threatened species or communities including:

- Hunter Valley Weeping Myall and *Acacia pendula* (NSW TSC and the EPBC listings)
- the federally critically endangered listed White Box-Yellow Box Grassy Woodlands and derived grasslands
- the critically endangered *Persoonia pauciflora* and threatened Grey-crowned Babbler.

Populations of these species and communities are few and far between and road verges provide a great opportunity to restore and expand on small fragmented patches, which can increase the overall gene pool.

Bush regeneration and targeted weed control activities were completed at 16 sites. Site preparation, specialist knowledge and sensitive weed control methodologies were applied to minimise impacts on native vegetation. This was particularly stringent within the White Box-Yellow Box communities, as the team had to be trained in identifying native versus exotic grasses.

The results have been really impressive, with evidence of active regeneration of Weeping Myall at a number of the more degraded sites in just one year. The Box communities have also regenerated, with native grasses now dominating many sites.

Training has been undertaken by council officers, to enable identification of the major species and ensure appropriate roadside maintenance takes place.

These and other projects are now imbedded into the Regional Roadside Vegetation Marker Scheme that is presently adopted by 12 of our 14 LGAs.

For more information contact Eva Twarkowski at HCCREMS on (02) 4978 4029

From HCCREMS via NSW Roadside Environment Committee Newsletter Edition 15 August 2013



### Vale Tom Macdonald

We were saddened to hear that Tom Macdonald passed away on June 8. Tom lived at Roseville on Sydney's North Shore and was a tireless worker for restoring degraded bushland over a very long time. He made a big impression on a lot of people.

His nephew, Bruce Macdonald told us "Tom hadn't been well for quite a while—he was facing some serious battles down the line (though he never complained), but died suddenly (thankfully), sipping a cup of tea, in his PJs, out in the sunshine on his front verandah, overlooking his beloved bushland and no doubt listening to birdsong—very appropriate and he wouldn't have wished it any other way.

Tom was an extremely talented man in so many ways and will be greatly missed."

## Potential use of a native parasitic plant as biological control agent

### Research for PhD by Robert Cirocco

This project, funded by an ARC Linkage Grant, investigates the interactions between the native parasitic vine *Cassytha pubescens* and native and invasive plants. We aim to assess the potential use of the parasite to control invasive plants such as *Cytisus scoparius* (broom) and *Ulex europaeus* (gorse). We use a combination of laboratory, glasshouse and field experiments.

Robert Cirocco is studying *C. pubescens* and its differential impact on native versus invasive hosts. He has found that *C. pubescens* has substantial negative effects on the biomass of the invasive host *Ulex europaeus* (gorse) but not those of the native hosts *Leptospermum myrsinoides* and *Acacia paradoxa*.

Rob is close to finishing his PhD.

From Bulletin of the Ecological Society of Australia Issue 2, Volume 43, June 2013  
[www.ecolsoc.org.au/documents/ESA\\_Bulletin\\_June\\_2013\\_I2\\_V43.pdf](http://www.ecolsoc.org.au/documents/ESA_Bulletin_June_2013_I2_V43.pdf)

## The effect of invasive blackberry on habitat quality for small native mammals

### Research for PhD By Jasmin Packer

Jasmin is investigating the effect of blackberry on native vegetation and small mammal communities within native, mixed and blackberry-dominated ecosystems in the biodiversity hotspot of the Mount Lofty Ranges.

This research has identified *R. anglocandicans* as an ecological engineer that retains native mammal communities in degraded ecosystems. Blackberry is especially important for the endangered southern brown bandicoot (*Isodon obesulus*). Blackberry density, and small arthropods associated with it, were the strongest positive predictors for recruitment of juvenile bandicoots into the meta-population.

Jasmin is in the final stages of her PhD.

From Bulletin of the Ecological Society of Australia Issue 2, Volume 43, June 2013  
[www.ecolsoc.org.au/documents/ESA\\_Bulletin\\_June\\_2013\\_I2\\_V43.pdf](http://www.ecolsoc.org.au/documents/ESA_Bulletin_June_2013_I2_V43.pdf)

Like to see more news from your area—or about the type of projects you work on?

### Help us make it happen!

We rely on contributions from members—and others willing to share. If it's of interest to bush regenerators it probably belongs in the AABR newsletter.

Send photos, articles and ideas to [newsletter@aabr.org.au](mailto:newsletter@aabr.org.au)

Or call Virginia on 0408 468 442

# What's happening

## 27-29 September

Queensland Landcare Conference—  
Healthy Habitats... Profitable Production

**Where** Warwick

**Contact** [headwaters.ddrlandcare.org/](http://headwaters.ddrlandcare.org/)

Bringing together hundreds of land managers, extension staff and researchers finding solutions for balancing healthy habitats and profitable production.

## Thursday 3 October

AABR's regeneration—launch of the revitalised AABR—seminar and site visit

**Where** Sydney Olympic Park

See inside for details

## Monday 7 October

World Habitat Day

**Contact** [www.un.org/en/events/habitatday](http://www.un.org/en/events/habitatday)

## 6-11 October

The SER2013 World Conference on Ecological Restoration: Reflections on the Past, Directions for the Future

**Where** Madison Wisconsin USA

The 5th World Conference of the Society for Ecological Restoration will bring together more than 1,200 delegates from around the world interested in the science and practice of ecological restoration as it relates to natural resource management, climate change responses, biodiversity conservation, local and indigenous communities, environmental policy and sustainable livelihoods.

**Contact** [www.ser2013.org/](http://www.ser2013.org/)

## 15-17 October

Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities' (AMRRIC) 2013

**Where** Alice Springs.

**Contact** [www.amrric.org/news/conference2013](http://www.amrric.org/news/conference2013)

## 24-29 November

EcoTas13. 5th joint conference of the Ecological Society of Australia and New Zealand Ecological Society

**Where** Auckland

Celebrating ecology on both sides of the Tasman: diversity and opportunity

This is the latest of a series of conferences held between the Ecological Society of Australia and the New Zealand Ecological Society to celebrate advances in ecological science, and the ecological connections and differences between the two countries.

Every four years, the New Zealand Ecological Society and the Ecological Society of Australia hold a joint conference to discuss the latest issues and advances in ecological science, and to renew a commitment to developing excellence in ecological approaches in science and management throughout Australasia. EcoTas13 is the 5th such joint conference, and each one has exceeded the last in scope, size and impact. This one will be no exception. The conference will create a critical forum on ecology for researchers, managers and policy makers, and we urge ecologists covering the full range of ecosystems, life forms, approaches, and scales to attend and highlight their valuable contributions.

It will highlight the huge range of ecosystems that we strive to manage within our diverse region and the range of scales that ecology needs to address. EcoTas13 will explore the latest scientific developments, opportunities and innovations in our quest to understand and value biodiversity and habitats in our region and solve complex problems. We expect that the conference will facilitate critical interchanges amongst our participants that will significantly advance ecology in and between the two countries.

**Contact** [ecotas13.org/](http://ecotas13.org/)

## 11-14 February 2014

Island Arks Symposium III & Workshops

**Where** Hobart

- Island translocations
- Island restoration and reassembling island ecosystems

- Indigenous island communities and indigenous conservation management
- Island people and communities: entrepreneurship, economic development, conservation capabilities
- Island conservation and protection- includes terrestrial and marine protected areas
- Emerging threats to island conservation and communities
- New innovations and technologies for island research and management

**Contact** [islandarks.com.au/island-ark-symposiums/island-arks-symposium-iii/](http://islandarks.com.au/island-ark-symposiums/island-arks-symposium-iii/)

## Friday 4 April 2014

Sydney Weeds Professional Forum 2014

**Where** NSW Teachers Federation Conference Centre in Surry Hills.

Sydney Weeds Committees Inc. is hosting a one day technical forum for weed management professionals and operational staff working across the Sydney and Blue Mountains region.

This one-day forum is about:

- building capacity of the weed management workforce in the region
- sharing new technical information, knowledge, strategies and experiences
- network and meeting new contacts in the industry.

For local, state and federal government land managers, private companies, contractors/consultants, reserve trusts, non-government organisations and groups, and academics who are involved with weed management.

Sponsored by the NSW Weeds Action Program, Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority and the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators.

**Contact** [info@sydneyweeds.org.au](mailto:info@sydneyweeds.org.au)

## 26-29 May 2014

16th Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference

**Where** Brisbane

The conference program will consist of presentations on control initiatives, innovations in research, management and policy and the latest research outcomes. The conference will focus on Management of vertebrate pest animals across the landscape

**Contact** [www.avpc.net.au/](http://www.avpc.net.au/)

# AABR NSW

**President**  
Tein McDonald  
[president@aabr.org.au](mailto:president@aabr.org.au)

**Treasurer**  
Paul Ibbetson

**Membership Officer**  
Louise Brodie  
[membership@aabr.org.au](mailto:membership@aabr.org.au)

**Secretary**  
Jane Gye  
[secretary@aabr.org.au](mailto:secretary@aabr.org.au)

**Website advertising**  
Mitra Gusheh  
[advertise@aabr.org.au](mailto:advertise@aabr.org.au)

**Committee members**  
Heather Stolle, Elisabeth Dark,  
David Wakeham, Kate Low,  
Scott Meier, Neridah Davies

**Northeast NSW/Southeast  
QLD subcommittee**  
Mike Delaney 02 6621 9588  
[miked@envite.org.au](mailto:miked@envite.org.au)

AABR News is the quarterly newsletter of the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators (NSW) AABR Inc, usually published in March, June, September and December.

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 C/O Total Environment Centre Suite 2, 89 Jones Street Ultimo NSW 2007**

**0407 002 921**

[www.aabr.org.au](http://www.aabr.org.au)

[enquiries@aabr.org.au](mailto:enquiries@aabr.org.au)

ABN: 33 053 528 029 ARBN: 059 120 802

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)
\$50-400	p.a	AABR Contractors & Consultants Lists	(appropriately qualified & experienced bush regenerators)

**Newsletter contributions and comments are welcome**

Contact Virginia Bear [newsletter@aabr.org.au](mailto:newsletter@aabr.org.au) 0408 468 442

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of AABR

**New  
membership/  
accreditation  
system starts  
3 October 2013**