



Greetings from the Bushcare Team and wishing you all the best for 2011. We hope you have had a restful festive season and are ready for all the weed growth in response to the rain! Thankfully it has been wonderful for native plant regeneration as well.

*Happy reading  
Lyndal Sullivan  
On behalf of the Bushcare Team*



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## **DATES TO NOTE**

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**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January Leura Cascades** 9 am – 1pm A morning of weeding beside the creek and paddling. A joint BMCC/NPWS event. Morning tea provided. Contact Lyndal Sullivan 4780 5528, [lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> February Katoomba Creek Walk and Weed** 8 am – 6 pm Off-track and creek walking along part of Katoomba Creek searching out weeds. Contact Lyndal Sullivan 4780 5528 [lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> February Introduction to Eucalyptus** (*see details p8*)

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February Grose River Mt Victoria** 8am-5 pm A full day weeding the headwaters of the Grose River. Joint NPWS/ BMCC Book on [vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au) or 47873112

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February Bushcare Network Meeting 6pm** Lawson. Light dinner provided. RSVP by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February and for details of discussion topics, contact Lyndal Sullivan 4780 5528 [lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> February Sustainable Living in Early Childhood workshop** 10am - 2pm Includes nature based play. Contact 4780 5788

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> February – Braeside Blitz, Blackheath** 9am-3pm Help remove mature gorse from the hanging swamp in the Braeside area. Contact Vanessa Richardson 4787 3112 or [vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au)

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March Clean Up Conversations, Marmion Swamp, Leura** Rubbish collection, interpretive walk & lunch. Contact Jasmine 47 80 5788

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March Valley Of The Waters Planting, Wentworth Falls.** 9 am - 12 noon Planting to protect a swamp. Includes morning tea. Contact Arthur Henry NPWS on 4787 3104 or [athur.henry@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:athur.henry@environment.nsw.gov.au)

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March Introduction to Bushcare 9am –1pm** (*details p4*)

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March Govetts Leap Weeding with a View 9am – 1 pm** Weeding around the magnificent Govetts Leap Lookout. Enjoy an extra special morning tea. Contact Vanessa Richardson at NPWS on 4787 3112 or [vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au)

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March Hester Creek Swampcare, Leura, 9am-1pm** Celebrate the Landcare group's work with a free BBQ after the work morning. Book with Michael Hensen on [mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) or 4780 5471

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March Wentworth Falls Lake Bushcare/Swampcare event** 1pm - 4pm Help plant a swamp buffer to replace willows. Afternoon tea provided. Book with Michael on [mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) or 4780 5471

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***Dates to Note continued.....***

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March Pitt Park Bushcare/Swampcare event** 2-5 pm Help replant the swamp buffer with seedlings grown by the local Pitt Park bushcare group. Afternoon tea provided. Book with Michael Hensen on [mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) (preferred) or 4780 5471

**Saturday/Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> March GGWW Blue Gum Forest overnight** Come along and spend a night in the Blue Gum Forest area and help reduce the weeds by day along the Grose River. Strenuous and remote. Contact Vanessa at NPWS 4787 3112 or [vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au)

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April Wentworth Creek Swamp, Wentworth Falls** 9am-2pm Join Swampcare in tackling one of the last remaining large Himalayan Honeysuckle infestations in Wentworth Falls. Lunch and morning tea provided. Book with Michael Hensen on [mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) or 4780 5471

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April Wentworth Falls Picnic area** 9 am – 12 noon NPWS follow up planting event. Morning tea provided. Contact Arthur Henry NPWS on 4787 3104 or [arthur.henry@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:arthur.henry@environment.nsw.gov.au)

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April Marmion Swamp Planting** 9 am - 12 noon A morning to assist the Bushcare Group provide a swamp buffer. Includes morning tea. Contact Karen on 4780 5623 or [khising@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:khising@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April Connaught Swamp, Blackheath** 9 am -1pm Swampcare is supporting National Parks' efforts to control an emerging Himalayan Honeysuckle invasion in Connaught Swamp. Lunch provided. Book with Michael Hensen on [mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) (preferred) or 4780 5471

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April – Bushcare Picnic at Megalong Valley Reserve. 12 noon.** Delicious Vegetarian and Carnivorous BBQ. Music from the Gang-Gang Bush Band, Children's activities, Awards and prizes, Site treasures competition. Bus transport available. RSVP by 22<sup>nd</sup> April to Bushcare office 4780 5623 or [bushcare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bushcare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)

**Friends of the Colo trips for experienced bushwalkers**

**25-27 Feb: Colo Gorge from Boorai Ck to Canoe Creek** Contact Carol Isaacs  
[carofe@bigpond.net.au](mailto:carofe@bigpond.net.au) 9639 9509

**5-11 Mar: 5<sup>th</sup> Colo Colossus** (Coorongooaba to Culoul via the Capertee and Colo Rivers)  
Contact Andy Macqueen 4757 1083 or [andymacqueen@gmail.com](mailto:andymacqueen@gmail.com)

**9-10 Apr: Colo River at Tootie Creek**  
Contact Andy Macqueen as above





Photo courtesy of Kerrie Sims © I & I NSW

Australian plants are under threat from Myrtle Rust. This fungus affects many iconic Australian natives. It was first found at a nursery on the NSW Central Coast in April 2010.

### What is Myrtle Rust?

Myrtle Rust (*Uredo rangelii*) is closely related to the Eucalyptus/Guava rusts. These are serious pathogens which affect plants belonging to the family Myrtaceae including Australian natives like bottle brush (*Callistemon* spp) and eucalypts (*Eucalyptus* spp).

Myrtle Rust produces masses of powdery bright yellow or orange-yellow spores on infected plant parts. It infects leaves of susceptible plants producing spore-filled lesions on young actively growing leaves, shoots, flower buds and fruits.

Leaves may become buckled or twisted and may die as a result of infection. Sometimes these infected spots are surrounded by a purple ring. Older lesions may contain dark brown spores. Infection on highly susceptible plants may result in plant death.

### Where is it?

Myrtle rust has been found on 140 properties from Brisbane to the mid south coast of NSW. It is in 25 bushland sites and adjoining residential properties with several large tracts of bushland infected on the Central Coast with 2 recent ones in the Hornsby Shire. There are 29 known susceptible host species and this number is expected to rise.

Plants currently observed as being infected include a range of garden plants such as *Agonis flexuosa* (willow myrtle) cv. 'Afterdark', *Gossia (Austromyrtus) inophloia* cv. 'Aurora' and 'Blushing Beauty'.

Native species infected include *Callistemon viminalis* (Bottle Brush), *Syncarpia glomulifera* (Turpentine), *Tristania nerifolia* (Water gum), and *Rhodamnia rubescens* (Scrub turpentine)

### How does it Spread?

Rust spores travel very long distances on the wind and may infect susceptible plants many kilometres from the source. Humans can also spread Myrtle Rust in infested plant material (such as cut flowers and nursery stock) on clothing and equipment (eg packs and tools).

### What is happening?

A nationally funded response is in place to control the extent and rate of spread. A National Myrtle Rust Coordination Group representing industry, government and non-government is overseeing actions. Based on the current knowledge and distribution of the disease, it is not believed feasible to eradicate it, so the focus is on slowing its spread. In NSW, the lead

agency is Industry and Investment NSW (I&I NSW).

### What to do if you find it

Myrtle Rust is a notifiable pest which means that by law, you must report it within 24 hours.

Call the **Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881**. Do not take a specimen of infected plants or any plant material off the site.

Leave the area and provide these details (where possible):

- \*name and contact details
- \*site details –grid reference & access
- \*species affected
- \*approximate number of plants
- \*number of people on site and \*take a photo

Recently purchased Myrtaceae plants from nurseries should be inspected for signs of Myrtle Rust and anything suspicious reported.

### Measures to prevent the spread

If you have been visiting anywhere the fungus may be present (eg Central Coast bushland or nurseries), shower and change into clean clothes (including hats, gloves and footwear) before leaving the area. Launder clothing including hats and work gloves before re-use in another area. Clean boots by washing in detergent/soap or sprayed with 70% water/methylated spirits. Wash vehicle inside and out before going to a bushland area.

### How to reduce the risk to the Blue Mountains bushland

In addition to our current hygiene procedures we practice to contain the spread of weed seeds and *Phytophthora*, we suggest you also spray your tool belt and wear freshly laundered clothes and hat to site, including gloves. For those items which cannot be laundered, remove soil and mud, then disinfect using a truck wash or spray with 70% water/methylated spirits. It is important for packs if you use the same one for bushwalking or working on other sites. Another consideration is to minimise the number of items brought to the site to reduce opportunities for spread

For further information see the website of the Dept Industry and Investment NSW (I&I NSW) <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/plant/myrtle-rust>.

*All photos courtesy Industry & Investment NSW*



Myrtle Rust on Turpentine leaf

photo Dr Angus Carnegie@I&I



## Weed Management Success

Last year, Blue Mountains City Council reviewed the weed management strategy for the whole of the council area. With the previous strategy document lapsing, a new document was developed by council staff in consultation with community representatives and residents.

Blue Mountains Bushcare Network (BMBCN), a committee of members from Bushcare and Landcare groups in the Council area, produced a submission in September in response to the draft document. Blue Mountains Conservation Society and BMBCN produced detailed submissions and held discussions which led to positive changes in the final document.

One of the major points of the BMBCN submission was the lack of available funding for weed management and restoration work after bushfires, both planned and unplanned. For example, the 2009 fire at Sublime Point created an environment for a massive explosion of weeds in the burned areas. Intense work by Bushcare volunteers and others to rehabilitate the area has not been sufficient to overcome the weed problem. With more resources (money) at an early stage, this major weed problem could have been avoided.

It is pleasing to report that the new Weed Management Strategy was adopted unanimously by Councillors at their meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010. Recommendations put by BMBCN at the council meeting were also adopted. One asked Council to make representations to the NSW Government for funds to be made available for weed control where weed spread had been stimulated by fire. In the planning of all prescribed burns, the network would like to see an allowance for weed control, and

emergency funding for wildfires extended to cover weed control as part of the remediation work carried out after the emergency had finished. No such funds are currently available. This is an important step to gain more positive measures in the battle against weeds in the Blue Mountains World Heritage Areas.

To have your say and effect change, think about getting involved with the Bushcare Network. Next meeting at Lawson Library, on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2011 (see front page for details). For more information on the Network, the weed strategy or weeds, either contact Paul (47 87 8080), the Bushcare office or click on <http://www.weedsbluemountains.org.au/>

Paul Vale for The Bushcare Network



Weed growth one year after the fire that spread to the Sublime Point Bushcare site - May 2010

Erica lusitanica - Barbara Harley



### Introduction to Bushcare

*Would you like to know more about the thinking behind bush regeneration?*

*Would you like to learn how to identify the weeds in your area?*

*Have you always wanted to come along to bushcare but not known what we do?*

Come along to an Introduction to Bushcare on Sunday 13th March 2011 from 9am-1pm

The morning will consist of an introduction to tools, weeds and concepts then a walk in the surrounding bushland to demonstrate techniques.

We will meet at South Street Council Depot

RSVP essential to Erin Hall BMCC Bushcare 4780 5623 or [ehall@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ehall@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) by 9<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Morning tea and lunch will be provided.



**Dig out your Treasures!**

**A new competition for the Annual Bushcare Picnic**

**What is your Group's most unusual find?**

Bring along that special 'treasure' found on your bushcare site, or start looking out for something new to bring along to the coming Annual Bushcare Picnic.

**Prizes for the most unusual found objects.**

Just bear in mind that if you bring it– you get to take it home again too!



Ivy found growing in a straw in bushland at Popes Glen  
photo Alan Lane



## Learning to Live with Fire in the Lower Blue Mountains - Workshop Report

Twenty eight residents from the lower Blue Mountains, joined speakers and Nature Conservation Council representatives for an informative workshop in November last year. Some of the myths surrounding fire and fire management were dispelled, and the local community was introduced to some of the science that underpins fire management.

Dr Stuart Matthews, CSIRO Research Scientist gave a presentation on the science of fire behaviour and how it impacts on fuel management. Fire behaviour is influenced by fuel, topography (slope) and weather. He presented research findings from Western Australia and the Sydney basin which indicated that the benefits of hazard reduction burns are not only limited to certain weather conditions, but they are also temporary.

Hugh Paterson, Bushfire Project Officer, Blue Mountains Conservation Society, discussed the impact of fire on flora, fauna and community diversity in the lower Blue Mountains. He raised the emerging issue of low intensity burns conducted when fuels are too wet to burn. These hazard reduction burns are sometimes attempted to meet community expectations, they create smoke but do little to reduce bushfire risk and can have a negative impact on the local ecology.

Glenn Meade, Regional Operations Co-ordinator, NPWS discussed the fire management strategy adopted by the main agencies in the Blue Mountains (Rural Fire Service, National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Blue Mountains City Council). \$20 million is spent on fire management in the Blue Mountains area each year allocated between the strategies of:

1. community awareness and preparedness
2. asset protection (building enhancement and clearing)
3. strategic fuel reduction

4. prevention of ignition, detection and early response
5. combat fire fighting

Peter Belshaw, Bushfire Management Officer, Blue Mountains City Council, discussed Council's role in bushfire management. It included maintaining Asset Protection Zones (APZ), hazard reduction burning on reserves where mechanical treatment cannot be undertaken, fire trail maintenance, and community education. Peter emphasised that bushfire risk cannot be eliminated and the concept of residual risk must be understood and accepted by the community.

Superintendent David Hoadley, Acting District Manager of Rural Fire Service emphasised that everyone needed to take responsibility, as there just are not enough red trucks to turn up to every house, and recommended preparing a Bush Fire Survival Plan.

Workshop papers are available from NCC or from the Bushcare office



Post fire weeding at Sublime Point Bushcare site May2010





# Six Seasons

Last October David Ryan presented a series of videos called "Seasons Greetings" for Bushcare volunteers with a discussion of the local seasons. The videos recorded the 'Seasons Greetings' project, which was initiated by the local Aboriginal community to record Blue Mountains seasons from a local Aboriginal perspective.

Between February 2009 and February 2010 artists and community members explored different cultural methods to observe and reflect on the seasons. During this time eight workshops were held from the Megalong to Penrith led by indigenous artists (supported by Shiney Pictures a non-indigenous arts group). The video documented the creative process the community took in producing their work in progress - ranging from photography, dance, drawing, painting, music, poetry to wood-carving.

Some of the Aboriginal project participants proposed the possibility of 6 seasons, and were adamant that this was only the beginning of a journey to understand the complex weather patterns and resultant environmental changes.

The 6 seasons proposed were:

- Hot & Dry – January/February
- Wet, getting cooler – March /April
- Cold, Frosty, Short days – May/June
- Cold and windy – July/Aug
- Cool, getting warmer – September/October
- Warm & Wet – November/December

Discussion amongst bushcarers present at the video evening supported the notion that the traditional European 4 seasons may not be appropriate for the Blue Mountains. Some suggested that there may even be different seasonal cycles in different parts of the mountains, with examples of observations.

Some of the considerations suggested that could define local seasonal change included wind changes, wet/ dry, colour (of dominant flowers), movement of fauna and flowering of particular plants. Ken Schaeffer shared a



lower mountains seasonal framework he developed over 11 years ago with his Mt Riverview students from reference material and observations:

- Seeding; hot weather January/February
- Dispersal /Migration; territories relaxed March /April
- Low activity; hibernation May/June
- Early Movement; birds nesting, wattle flowering July/August
- High activity; migrants arrive, wildflowers September/October
- Developing young; storms & bushfires November/December

Sources of knowledge which may be relevant to the local situation discussed included:

- The D'harawal cycle recorded by Bodkin & Andrews
- The Bureau of Meteorology website indigenous weather knowledge section.
- The Blue Mountains Conservation Society website timeline/calendar of Upper Blue Mountains observations.

The Seasons Greeting project was a year of exploration culminating in an exhibition of the works in Blackheath at NPWS. The Aboriginal artists who collaborated on the initial project are continuing their seasonal exploration with support from DECWA Aboriginal Small Grants fund. The group known as the Marra Mob, are working together in a series of workshops/walks to observe changes in flora and fauna, discuss anecdotal recounts and reference materials, and produce artworks that depict relationships between plants and animals. We look forward to appreciating more beautiful and informative works.

*Many people keep Nature Diaries that record interesting and unusual happenings in our natural world. If you have any such material or if you wish to agree or disagree with the seasonal models mentioned above we would love to hear from you.*





## NO MORE WEEDS FOR SALE

The sale of environmental weeds at markets held on council land should now stop. Last November Council notified market organisers of a new ‘condition of hire’ that prohibits the sale of weeds. The letters explained that weeds are a major threat to the World Heritage Area and provided a weed list. The weeds prohibited are noxious and environmental weeds, as listed in the Blue Mountains Better Living Development Control Plan.

The impetus for this change has come from a long standing bushcare volunteer, who wishes to remain nameless. Not only was she concerned about the sale of weeds but that some sellers were unfamiliar with the names and behaviour of the plants they were selling. Whilst this ban on weed sales only applies to markets held on council land, many private nurseries are also refusing to sell weeds.

So keep an eye out for any weeds you see being sold!

If you want a copy of the list of weeds either ring the bushcare office or go to the home page of [www.weedsbluemountains.org.au](http://www.weedsbluemountains.org.au) for “Scheduled Weeds of the Blue Mountains”.



Red Hot Pokers - Photo Barbara Harley



Australian Plant Society joined Glenbrook Lagoon Bushcare group for a walk and discussion of the biodiversity of the site, its history & impacts in June 2010 photo Lachlan Garland



## Introduction to Eucalyptus

*Do all trees look the same to you?  
Would you like to know how to identify gum trees?*

*Then this course is for you!*

Jill Dark will be conducting a half day workshop for bushcarers, bringing her vast knowledge and enthusiasm.

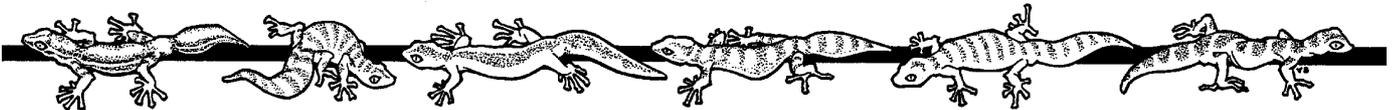
Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> February  
9am - 1pm.

Springwood Council Depot Office,  
entrance from Lawson Road Springwood (off Hawkesbury Road)

RSVP essential to Erin Hall BMCC Bushcare 4780 5623 or  
ehall@bmcc.nsw.gov.au by 10<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

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**Your Newsletter:** This newsletter is compiled by Lyndal Sullivan (assisted by Sharon Huxley) from Blue Mountains City Council with contributions from volunteers (with special thanks to Barbara Harley & Shirley Brown) and Council's Environmental Management Staff. It is sent to Bushcare & Landcare volunteers and other interested people. Contributions and suggestions are always welcome, as are requests for alterations to the mailing list. Contact: Bushcare, Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba NSW 2780; phone 4780 5528 or email [bushcare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bushcare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au).



If undelivered please return to  
Locked Bag 1005 Katoomba NSW 2780



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