



GECKO Winter 2009
The Newsletter of the Blue Mountains City Council Bushcare



Welcome to the Winter issue of Gecko. I hope you will enjoy reading it in a warm sunny spot. This year's thankyou picnic can only briefly acknowledge all the wonderful work done by volunteers—please accept this as the personal thanks of the Bushcare Team for your contribution. For those Lower Mountains bushcarers who would like the picnic closer to home next year, we are still open to ideas for a suitable venue.

Happy winter weeding



Lyndal Sullivan
Bushcare Team Leader

DATES TO NOTE

The following events are in addition to the monthly Bushcare and Landcare activities. For a Monthly program of activities contact the Bushcare Office.

* Details of these events are in an article within this newsletter.

Saturday 15th August Newnes Plateau Swamp vegetation and ecology workshop *

Monday 17 August North Katoomba Swampcare-Landcare *

Wednesday 19th August Bushcare Network 6pm All welcome. Light dinner provided Lawson Library / MCRN meeting room. RSVP for catering to Tracy Williams 4780 5623 or twilliams@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Saturday 29th August Sassafras Gully Trackcare, Springwood 9am to 1pm. Contact Soren Mortensen on (02) 4780 5742 for further information and meeting place.

Saturday 29th August Reconnecting to Country - Walk & Talk Hazelbrook *

Saturday 5th September Reconnecting to Country - Walk & Talk Wentworth Falls*

Saturday 5th – Sunday 6th September Sycamore Weeding Weekend Help treat the Sycamore infestation at Jenolan Caves. With 50ha to treat there are plenty to go around! A good cause & good company. Contact Trish Kidd 0423 527 740.

Tuesday 8th September Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems of the Blue Mtns- talk *

Thursday 10th September Reconnecting to Country -Talk Springwood *

Saturday 12th September RSPCA Landcare 9am

Saturday 12th September Birdwalk Knapsack Creek 7.30 – 10 .30 am with Dick Turner . Book with Nathan Summers on 4780 5623 nsummers@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Saturday 19th September Reconnecting to Country - Walk & Talk Lawson *

Saturday 26thSeptember Blue Mountains Swamp Vegetation Workshop *

OCTOBER - Great Grose Weed Walk – a series of activities held in the valley and upper catchments of the Grose River. For a program of half, 1 and 2 day weeding walks, contact NPWS on 4787 3112 or vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Thursday 1st October Reconnecting to Country. Evening Talk Wentworth Falls *

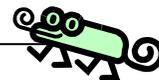
Thursday 8th October Swampcare Wentworth Falls *

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Deadline for contributions for next Gecko September 1st 2009

DATES TO NOTEcontinued



Saturday 10th October Reconnecting to Country - Walk & Talk Bullaburra*

Saturday 10th October Knapsack Historic walk 3- 6 pm

Bookings essential. Contact Nathan Summers on 4780 5623 or nsummers@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Sunday 11th October Mt Victoria – Grose River headwaters 8:30am – 4pm. A joint NPWS/BMCC Remote Bushcare event. Contact: NPWS coordinator Vanessa Richardson 4787 3112 or vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au

Friday 16th October Hester Creek Swampcare , Leura, *

Sunday, 18 October Marmion Swamp Planting 9.30 am - 12.30 pm Assist the Bushcare Group consolidate previous planting areas. Includes morning tea. Contact Karen Hising on 4780 5623 or khising@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Sunday 25th October Braeside Blitz: GGWW event 9:30am – 3pm NPWS Coordinator Vanessa Richardson 4787 3112

Saturday 31st October Remote Bushcare on Katoomba Creek 8.30 am – 4 pm

A full day walking along Katoomba Creek searching out broom or other weeds. Off track walking and moving around obstacles. Requires reasonable level of fitness. Contact Lyndal Sullivan 4780 5528 or lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Saturday 31st October Bonnie Doon Microstrobos Morning 9am—1pm

Learn about these prehistoric plants and help protect them with some practical work. Morning tea provided.

Contact Jill Rattray on 4780 5623 or jrattray@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Saturday 31st October-Sunday 1st November Sycamore Weeding Weekend

Help treat the Sycamore infestation at Jenolan Caves. With 50ha to treat there are plenty to go around! A good cause & good company. Contact Trish Kidd 0423 527 740.

Sunday 1st November Reconnecting to Country - Walk & Talk Katoomba*

NOVEMBER Jamison Valley Weedbuster Program

A program of activities in the Jamison Valley and upper catchments This is a new joint program developed by NPWS with assistance from BMCC Bushcare. Contact Vanessa Richardson 4787 3112 vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au



Working on the In-side: the Blue Mountains Bushcare Network

Are you interested in discussing Bushcare ideas or problems with members of other groups? The

quarterly Bushcare Network meetings offer an opportunity to work together on issues that are bigger than one group.

Issues discussed at the last meeting included the potential impact on sites of vegetation clearing works for power lines and highway widening works as well as the mechanisms to address these issues. New weeds to the mountains is always of interest.

The Network has been developing ideas for slogans which could be used to promote Bushcare on A frame display boards to explain who we are to passers by, when Bushcare groups are working.

Two ideas suggested for slogans were -

Bushcare - Appealing for a better nature

Make an ethical investment - join Bushcare

If you have a suggestion, would like to 'road test' or

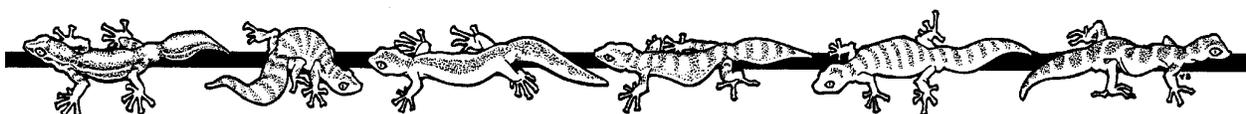
refine some of the ideas proposed so far, we would like to hear from you.

Volunteers from any Bushcare or Landcare group are invited to attend as are groups which work on National Parks land or professional bush regenerators.

To find out what the network has been involved in, go to website <http://www.weedsbluemountains.org.au/> then go to the link at the lower left hand corner and click on the Bushcare Network logo.

Meetings are held in Lawson in the meeting room in the Lawson library building on a Wednesday at 6pm. There is light dinner provided before the meeting starts. If this day or time does not suit you and you'd like to attend, please suggest an alternative.

Anyone interested in attending is welcome to suggest items for discussion. If you would like further information about the next meeting on 19th August, please contact either of the conveners Barbara Harley (4782 4305) or Mike Purtell (4751 2143), or Tracy Williams at BMCC (4780 5528).





Reconnecting to Country – Conversations with Bushcare

Join with fellow Bushcarers on guided walks and talks to hear stories of Aboriginal culture, history and heritage in the Blue Mountains. Aboriginal people from our local community will share their knowledge and culture in a series of walks and talks across the Mountains including evening talks. The evening talks will explore Aboriginal history and culture in the Blue Mountains and will also include current archaeological work being undertaken here and the importance of it. These talks will begin in August and will continue into 2010 in various locations across the Mountains.

Walks & Talks: Please bring a hat, drinking water, sunscreen and wear sturdy shoes. Children are welcome with the supervision of an accompanying adult.

Bookings are essential, numbers are limited. For more information and to book your place on a walk or at an evening talk, please contact Elly Chatfield at BMCC (Thursdays & Fridays) Tel: 02 4780 5726 or echatfield@bmcc.nsw.gov.au.

The Reconnecting to Country Project is a partnership project between Blue Mountains City Council and The Gully Traditional Owners.

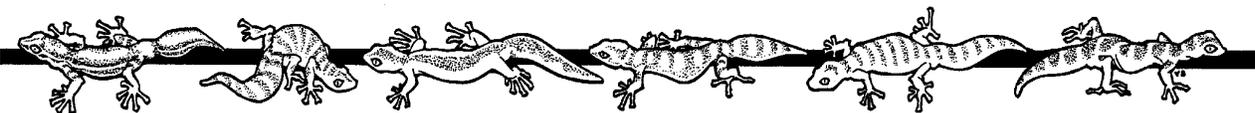
Day	Date	Area	Start Time	Finish Time
August				
Saturday	29 August	Hazelbrook	10am	12pm
September				
Saturday	5 September	Wentworth Falls	10am	12pm
Thursday	10 September	Springwood	7pm	8.30pm
Saturday	19 September	Lawson	10am	12pm
October				
Thursday	1 October	Wentworth Falls	7pm	8.30pm
Saturday	10 October	Bullaburra	10am	12pm
November				
Sunday	1 November	Katoomba	10am	12pm
Saturday	21 November	Katoomba	10am	12pm
December				
Saturday	5 December	Wentworth Falls	10am	12pm

There will be more walks & talks and evening talks in 2010 in the Blue Mountains.

TALL STORIES

Can you do better than this 208 cm cocksfoot, or the 198 cm Bromus (prairie grass) ?

These were dug up by Rae Druitt at Wentworth Falls Lake.





BUSHCARE “THANK YOU” BBQ

This year’s picnic heralded the onset of Winter, which was a change from our tradition of summer BBQs. Many thanks to all who braved the rain and cold of the mountains to enjoy a mostly sunny Megalong Valley for the annual Picnic/BBQ in May. As always, it was a pleasure to welcome and enjoy the company of familiar and new faces.

Many thanks go to the Gang Gangs for sharing their music with us all day.

Thanks go to the Lawson RFS and Fred Taylor for the loan of their BBQs. Also thanks to local businesses who gave generous discounts on food or awards – Bakers Delight, Hominy and OPSM.

Thankyou Jasmine Payget, Laurie Strathdee and Kim for providing the memorial shield and junior awards; and also to Jasmine for so graciously presenting the junior awards.

The photographic exhibition created much interest and demonstrated the talent we have amongst Bushcare groups. Thankyou to all those who contributed and we will continue to enjoy your photos wherever the opportunity arises to display them. We hope all the other budding photographers who missed out this year will start thinking about entries for next year.

David King gave us all a wonderful Welcome to Country with very inspiring words about Bushcare.

It was also appreciated to have Councillor Janet Mays present awards on behalf of Blue Mountains City Council. She warmly acknowledged the important work done by all members of all groups.



GROUP AWARDS

5 YEAR AWARDS

Hester Creek	Leura
Alexander Cres	Glenbrook
Beefarm Rd	Springwood
Darks Common	Glenbrook/Lapstone
Frelander Avenue	Katoomba

10 YEAR AWARDS

Sublime Point	Leura
Mt Wilson	Mt Wilson
Wentworth Falls Lake	Wentworth Falls
Knapsack Creek	Lapstone
Gregory Terrace	Lapstone
Sutton Park	Blackheath
Jackson Park	Faulconbridge

15 YEAR AWARDS

Else-Mitchell Park	Springwood
Deanei Reserve	Springwood
Redgum Park	Bullaburra

20 YEAR AWARDS

Centenary Reserve	Blackheath
Katoomba Falls Creek Valley	Katoomba

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS



Junior Encouragement Award - Tjanala Friedrich.

Rian Strathdee Junior Award - Jamie & Kyle McPherson

Masters Award - Pat Stemp, Libby Raines, Alan Bewley, Joan Gahl, Imre Gahl

Landcare Award - Bob Chapman

Hard Yakka Award - Diane Schnebli, Paul Vale

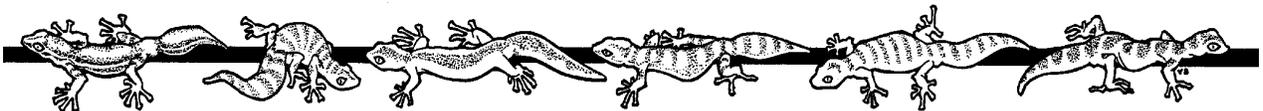
Bushcare Legend Award- Hugh Paterson



All the Fun of the Day



Photos: Paul Vale and Nathan Summers



Bye Bye to Trish

After being with Bushcare for two and a half years, my time has come to move on. I remain at Council after deliberating long and hard over the decision to leave Bushcare, having accepted a position working on incentives projects with landholders delivering the Bush Backyards Scheme.

I would like to express how much I have enjoyed this time particularly with my current Bushcare colleagues as well as a number of my predecessors. Most importantly I'd like to extend my sincere appreciation to all of the individuals and groups I have had the fortune of working with, who I will miss very much. I feel we

have made some meaningful inroads into managing bushland areas effectively and strategically, and I have met some fantastic people in the process and had a lot of fun. I trust this momentum will continue in order to achieve the sustainable and long-term conservation-based outcomes we're all working toward.

Many regards,

Trish Kidd



Swampcare update

Swampcare has an exciting series of educational events for people wanting to learn more about Blue Mountains Swamps and Newnes Plateau Shrub Swamps. Or you may prefer to come along to the complementary program of swamp restoration workdays. If you want to receive regular email updates of Swampcare activities please email BMCC Biodiversity Conservation Officer Michael Hensen mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au to join the Swampcare list.

Saturday 15th August Newnes Plateau Swamp vegetation and ecology workshop –Newnes Plateau

9.30-12.30 Want to learn more about the flora and ecology of Newnes Plateau Shrub Swamps? Join Ian Baird and Michael Hensen for Newnes Swamps 101 at Carney Swamp.

Book with Michael Hensen on mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au (preferred) or 4780 5471

Tuesday 8th September Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems of the Blue Mountains 7-8.30pm

Santa Maria Centre, 253 Great Western Highway, Lawson

Join Peter Serov, an aquatic ecologist from Department of Natural Resources, to learn more about groundwater dependant ecosystems of the Blue Mountains. No bookings required.

Saturday 26th September Blue Mountains Swamp vegetation workshop 9.30-12.30 Hazelbrook

Want to learn more about the flora and ecology of Blue Mountains Swamps? Join Ian Baird and Lyndal Sullivan for Blue Mountains Swamps 101. Book with Michael Hensen on mhensen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au (preferred) or 4780 5471



VEGETATION MAPPING



Bushcare groups are being invited to contribute their knowledge of local areas to the planning process. Local knowledge of vegetation communities and creeklines will assist Council's Strategic Planners to identify those areas where the existing mapping needs refinement.

The whole of the Blue Mountains has been mapped in the past for different vegetation communities, creeklines, slopes and a range of other features.

If you are interested in getting involved in checking out your local area, ask your Bushcare officer for maps. Any problems that you detect for further investigation should be marked on a map and sent through to Lyndal Sullivan at the Bushcare office. (If you mail it to council, be sure to label it clearly that the hard copy is to be retained and sent through). Maps and notes will then given to the planners who will organise for ground-truthing to be undertaken. For more information ring 4780 5528 or lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Vale Terry Vaughan

It is sad news to announce that one of our long time Bushcare volunteers, Terry Vaughan has recently passed away. Terry had been part of Bushcare in the Katoomba Falls area since its very early days in 1989, regularly coming to work sessions for the different groups in Katoomba Falls.

He was also an active community person. Terry had a healthy range of interests including geography, languages, Aussie Rules, politics (as a member of the ALP), dogs (including his domestic dingo crosses) and his Irish heritage. These interests added to the atmosphere of Bushcare work sessions. He was a long term member of the Gaelic club and actively pursued the Gaelic language, and would often provide interesting conversation on the Gaelic origin of words at Bushcare. Terry was involved in other local community work including St Vincent De Paul.

Terry worked for Blue Mountains City Council from 1976 to 1997. This included work with the Swimming Pools, Walking Tracks and Parks and Gardens. His dedication to the native bushland and weed control was evident even at this stage, and he would readily take any available opportunity to eliminate exotic plants. Originally coming from Harbord, Terry had also worked with Sydney City Council and Newcastle Council before coming to the Blue Mountains.

Terry was a solid and steady contributor to Bushcare.

He was quietly consistent with his Bushcare work and added his big personality to work sessions.

It was a privilege to have his contribution to Katoomba Falls Valley Bushcare over this time.

Nathan Summers



BUSHCARE HAT GOES INTERNATIONAL!

In February I had a 'tramping' holiday in New Zealand on the South Island. Before going I had the dilemma of deciding which would be the best hat to take. It had to be bendy, not blow away and also keep off the sun. And the winner was....my Blue Mountains Bushcare hat of course.

I am shown here with my Sherpa guide with a Mount Cook glacier in the background (also wearing my AABR T-shirt).

This was a holiday where no weeds were pulled although there was plenty of Broom!

Janet Rannard, South Lawson Bushcare



PLANT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

Are you interested in learning skills to identify grasses, sedges or eucalypts?

If you know some basics, wish to learn more, and are interested in attending a 2 day workshop on any or all of these groups of plants, please let us know. These will involve a small cost.

Bushcare is planning workshops later in the year or early next year but needs to gauge where the interest lies. Please let us know of your interest on 4780 5528 or lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au



Your Newsletter: This newsletter is compiled by Lyndal Sullivan (assisted by Sharon Huxley) from Blue Mountains City Council with contributions from Bushcare volunteers and Council's Environmental Management Staff. It is sent to Bushcare volunteers and other interested people. Contributions and suggestions are always welcome, as are requests for alterations to the mailing list. We can be contacted at Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba NSW 2780. Phone 4780 5528 or e-mail lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au; Fax 4780 5349.



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Locked Bag 1005 Katoomba NSW 2780



POSTAGE PAID AUSTRALIA

