

## 2 Minutes with Ray Richardson

Ray is the coordinator for the North Lawson bushcare group that has recently partnered with the home school network.

### Q. What brought you to Bushcare?

I was concerned with the amount of weeds in public areas and I have environmental concerns. I also have a love of indigenous vegetation.

### Q. What are the challenges (if any) you find both positive and negative?

Getting enough people coming along to bushcare to keep the group going was always a concern and the size of the site and the weed population on the site.

The positives are seeing the differences we are making and seeing that the plants we have planted have taken off.

I also appreciate the public who comment on how good the site is looking.

### Q. What is your favourite/most hated plant and why?

My Favourite is any Grevillea as there is such a variety of shape, form and habit and they are hardy.

I also claim to have the largest Grevillea Bronze Rambler in the mountains as the trunk has a girth the size of a dinner plate.

My most hated plant is Blackberry as it is difficult to remove and reinfests so easily. You also need to be well equipped to deal with it due to the thorns.

### Q. If you could invite four of the people who inspire you to dinner, who would you pick?

I would pick Barry Humphreys and his various characters, Gough Whitlam, Bruce Beresford and Robin Williams the presenter on the ABC science show.

### For the Diary 2015

Sat 14 March Bushcare Picnic

Sat 29 August Bushcare Network Conference

**Your Newsletter:** This newsletter is compiled by Erin Hall (assisted by Sharon Huxley) from Blue Mountains City Council with contributions from volunteers 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,



If undelivered please return to  
Locked Bag 1005 Katoomba NSW 2780



POSTAGE PAID AUSTRALIA



End of Winter greetings Blue Mountains Bushcarers! As always, its been an action-packed quarter with our 65 Bushcare groups doing lots of weeding, planting and other bush-caring activities. Your dedication to our bushland never ceases to amaze and inspire the Bushcare Team (pictured below). We have been saddened by the deaths of 3 members of our Bushcare community in recent times. I hope the tributes in this issue will evoke fond memories to those who knew them.

As well as doing our best to make sure Bushcare goes on at your site every month, we've been working on ensuring the visibility of Bushcare in the electronic world: The weeds website is at an exciting stage - the existing information is being moved to a new server, meaning it will be possible to include more weed profiles and information. If you would like to volunteer to assist with this process please contact Erin on 4780 5320, and for an update on the new Bushcare website.

(bushcarebluemountains.org.au), see inside.

The BMCC Bushcare team pictured at our annual planning meeting on 31 August.

Monica Nugent

Acting Team Leader



From left to right: Lyndal, Jane, Karen, Jill, Monica, Erin & Peter



## DATES TO NOTE

### Saturday 27 Sept Holly Walk 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Come along for a short walk to target large and small Holly plants below the Frogs Hollow Bushcare site. Booking are essential to find our meeting place and more details about the day. Contact Karen Hising at the Bushcare office 4780 5623 [khising@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:khising@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)

### Thursday 2 Oct Swampcare at Valley View Swamp 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Help us get the swamp back in shape. This swamp supplies water (and weeds) to the Braeside area and ultimately finds its way to the Grose River. We will continue on from previous work. Lunch and morning tea donated by Hominy Bakery. Please book with Lyndal 4780 5623 [lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) by Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September.

### Sunday 5 Oct Popes Glen Remote Bushcare 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Come along to extend the work done by the Popes Glen Bushcare group over the past 15 years. We will be working in the creek for most of the day so be prepared for wading. There are a range of weeds that we wish to stop going further into the National Park. This is a joint BMCC/NPWS activity. Please book with Lyndal 4780 5623 [lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) by Thursday 25 September.

### Thursday 9 Oct Leura Falls Group Catchment Meeting 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

The Leura Falls Catchment group meets at Council's Administration Building in Katoomba. Come along to get updates on progress with work in the catchment, participate in making plans for future events & find out what's going on with other groups. For more information contact Jenny Hill [plai09@hotmail.com](mailto:plai09@hotmail.com)

### Wednesday 15 Oct Remote Bushcare on Grose River Mt Victoria 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Join us for a full day of weeding the headwaters of the Grose River and remove a selection of weeds that are still germinating after the 2006 fires. Morning tea and lunch provided. This is a joint BMCC/NPWS activity Contact Vanessa Richardson to book. [vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:vanessa.richardson@environment.nsw.gov.au)

**Deadline for contributions for next Gecko 4 December 2014**



**Saturday 18 Oct Remote Bushcare Katoomba Creek 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**  
Help us continue the fantastic work in another remote section of Katoomba Creek, searching out weeds. Experience required with off-track walking and wading in the creek, numbers limited. This is a joint NPWS/BMCC event. Contact Lyndal Sullivan 47805528 or lsullivan@bmcc.nsw.gov.au by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October

**Wednesday 12 Nov Bushcare Network Meeting 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm**  
All volunteers but especially group coordinators are invited to join the network. It's your chance to be involved in keeping up the high standards of our Bushcare program! Please book with Monica Nugent 47805528 [mnugent@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mnugent@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)

COUNCIL LAUNCHES 300K PROJECT TO CLEAN UP LEURA FALLS CREEK

Blue Mountains City Council, with funding from Council’s Environment Levy, is teaming up with the local community and the Sydney Catchment Authority (SCA) in a \$300,000 project to clean up Leura Falls Creek.

Leura Falls Creek forms the headwaters of Leura Cascades, one of the Blue Mountains’ most well-loved locations. In recent years, this iconic waterway has suffered increasingly from the effects of urban stormwater runoff and pollution. The Leura Falls project aims to improve creek condition by constructing seven pollution-trapping stormwater treatment systems within the catchment, restoring degraded creek sections and running hands-on education workshops for local businesses and residents.

The Leura Falls Creek Catchment Working Group (LFCCWG), made up of five dedicated local Bushcare volunteer groups, will be actively involved, - assisting the Council and the SCA to run a comprehensive monitoring program to track changes in water quality.

Mayor, Cr Mark Greenhill said, “Our City sits within a major drinking water catchment, servicing 3.7 million people, so healthy local waterways are critical to our water supply. They also underpin local recreation, tourism and biodiversity. Urban stormwater runoff is one of the biggest threats to our local waterways and our community consistently rates local water quality as a significant priority (in Council’s annual community survey). Council is currently restoring over 130 creek and bushland sites such as Leura Falls Creek across the City, - work which is only made possible with funding raised through Council’s Environment Levy. We can all do our bit to protect local waterways from the damaging effects of urban stormwater by not sweeping or hosing leaves or sediment down drains, and using water sensitive urban design (such as rainwater tanks) on our properties,” said the Mayor.

The Council secured a \$150,000 grant from the SCA for the project by matching the grant with a \$150,000 contribution from Council’s Environment Levy. The Levy raises around \$1.5 million annually from Council rates and funds projects to restore creeks, improve water quality, control noxious weeds and maintain walking tracks and lookouts across the City.

The SCA grant is part of the NSW Government’s \$1.9 million commitment to help councils in Sydney’s drinking water catchments improve sewage and stormwater infrastructure. The SCA’s Priority Pollutants Program is designed to reduce the amount of pollutants flowing to drinking water storages.

From left to right: Cr Don Macgregor (BMCC), Susan Jalaluddin, Jenny Hill and Lynne Carson (LFCCWG), Kristy Good (Program Coordinator, SCA) and Geoffrey Smith (Natural Environment Program Leader, BMCC) at Leura Cascades.



**The Depot’s New Arrivals**  
In the recent moving of the furniture around the depot we have disturbed the yearly nesting of our local Masked lap-wing (*Vanellus miles*) they have a clutch of three eggs and are guarding their territory like their chicks are about to hatch. Staff meticulously and very slowly moved the stone block nest so as not to disturb the nesting birds.  
<http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/species/Vanellus-miles>  
Since we took this photo two little chicks have hatched from three eggs.

Council’s Aquatic Systems Officers present Papers at National Conference

**Bifenthrin pesticide contamination: impacts and recovery at Jamison Creek, Wentworth Falls**  
Amy St Lawrence<sup>1</sup>, Ian A. Wright<sup>2</sup>, Robert B. McCormack<sup>3</sup>, Christina Day<sup>1</sup>, Geoffrey Smith<sup>1</sup> and Brian Crane<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1.</sup> Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba, NSW 2780. Email: [astlawrence@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:astlawrence@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)  
<sup>2.</sup> School of Science and Health, University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag 1797, Penrith, NSW 2751. Email: [i.wright@uws.edu.au](mailto:i.wright@uws.edu.au)  
<sup>3.</sup> Australian Aquatic Biological Pty Ltd, PO Box 3, Karuah, NSW 2324. Email: [rob@aabio.com.au](mailto:rob@aabio.com.au)

**Factors influencing deoxygenation following an unintended whole of water body herbicide treatment of aquatic weed cabomba in a natural wetland in the Blue Mountains, NSW, Australia**  
Christina Day<sup>1</sup>, Ian A. Wright<sup>2</sup>, Amy St Lawrence<sup>1</sup>, Robert Setter<sup>1</sup>, Geoffrey Smith<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1.</sup> Environment Branch, Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba, NSW, 2780. Email: [cday@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cday@bmcc.nsw.gov.au)  
<sup>2.</sup> School of Science and Health, University of Western Sydney, Locked Bag 1797, Penrith, NSW 2751. Email: [i.wright@uws.edu.au](mailto:i.wright@uws.edu.au)

**Key Points**

- Jamison Creek in the Blue Mountains was contaminated by a pesticide, Bifenthrin, in July 2012
- The pesticide caused a mass crayfish kill and severe, adverse effects on aquatic macroinvertebrates
- Eighteen months later, the macroinvertebrate community (including crayfish) has recovered well
- The incident highlights the potential hazards of urban pesticide use and the risks associated with direct stormwater connections between urban areas and natural waterways.

**Download the full Jamison Creek paper at:**  
<http://7asm-2014.m.asnevents.com.au/information#/schedule/abstract/11636>



**Key Points**

- The recently registered SharkTM Aquatic Herbicide (240g/L carfentrazone-ethyl) was used at Glenbrook Lagoon to treat an infestation of cabomba, one of the first applications of this scale in Australia.
- Water quality and ecological effects were monitored to determine the impacts of the herbicide on a large natural water body.
- One year later, monitoring programs show a return to healthy dissolved oxygen levels; a healthy population of native fish and turtles; and no evidence of cabomba or weed water lily.
- This case study highlights the challenges involved with planning and implementing a large scale aquatic weed control program and the importance of understanding and careful consideration of the current physical, chemical and biological conditions of the individual water body being targeted.

**Download the full Glenbrook Lagoon paper at:**  
<http://7asm-2014.m.asnevents.com.au/information#/schedule/abstract/11623>





Roger Nethercote

Roger was one of the foundation members the Linksvie Landcare Group. He had just completed 10 years of Landcare volunteering and was on long service leave from Penrith City Council before retiring in July this year. Unfortunately, he was struck down with a sudden, unexpected illness and passed away in February. Within days, we had lost a man who was not only a valued member of our group, but a man whose talents and dedication will be missed by the Blue Mountains and Penrith communities.

Roger’s service to the people of the Blue Mountains and Penrith Councils over the past 35 years, has been recognized by both councils. Roger provided leadership in the area of city and environmental planning, as well as dedicating time to Landcare and Springwood Athletics.

Recognition of his value to Springwood Athletics as, Team Manager and Equipment Manager, is indicated by a Life Membership and Volunteer of the Year award granted in 2010. The club has now introduced the Roger Nethercote Perpetual Trophy for the most improved athlete for the year, in recognition of his many years of dedicated service.

Roger was a relaxed, easy going, cheerful member of our group whose natural modesty hid the extent of his abilities and achievements in both his volunteering and his career. His love for the environment was obvious and his wide range of experience and interests made for very enjoyable conversations both during our bush regeneration and over our breaks for a cuppa.

Roger’s wife Jenny has continued to work with our Landcare group, while their children, Kristy and Andrew have continued with their new careers despite the ravages and disruption to their lives by the recent bushfire and loss of a very special husband and father. Roger will be proud of them.

by Chris Gorman



VALE BOZ BROOKS  
CONSERVATION WARRIOR

Boz was one of the founding members of both Tree Fern Gully and Marmion Swamp bushcare groups. She was an active and pivotal member. We remember her as hard working, cheerful, full of fun and ideas. We are greatly saddened by her death.

Boz will never be forgotten. She had a keen intellect, and worked with dedication and determination to make a positive difference through her strong commitment to Bushcare, and to our North Leura environment and community. Council recognised her efforts with two Bushcare awards at this year’s Picnic. She is a local legend: her name and her work will live on.

The Welsh poet Dylan Thomas wrote in a poem for his dying father:

*Do not go gentle into this dark night  
But rage, rage against the dying of the light.*

Boz raged - and raged! Good on you Boz!  
1954 - 2014

by Barbara Harley

Kerry Brown



Kerry Brown was the wonderful coordinator of the Medlow Bath Bushcare group from the beginning in 2005 ‘til this year. She passed away in June. Kerry was warm, kind, calm, generous, always positive, always looking to see how she could help others while making light of her own difficulties. She personified the Adam Lindsay Gordon lines: “life is mostly froth and bubble, two things stand like stone, kindness in another’s trouble, courage in your own”. Kerry is greatly missed, not only in Bushcare but in the larger community, to which she contributed in many ways.

by Jill Rattray

How to Compost your Weeds

None of your bushcare weeds need to go to landfill – they can all be composted, including seeds & tubers. The exception is corms (Montbretia and Watsonia) which we will cover next issue.

This hot composting method will enable you to compost down all the weeds from your bushcare site in about three months to use on your veggie garden.

It is a method that is best done in a garden rather than bushcare sites because of the concentration of nutrients which leach into the soil.

Nothing needs to be purchased except maybe the steel mesh when you first set up.

MATERIALS & TOOLS

For initial set up

- Steel mesh – 4 panels 1m x 1 m (see step 2)
- Tie wire & pliers
- Plywood or solid board - 1 m x 500m (or width of the front of your bin x approx. 500mm )
- 4 bricks or large rocks
- Shade cloth, sediment control fabric or other (see step 12) - total 4.5 m x 1 m
- Water & brush for cleaning up
- Garden fork

Ongoing collection for each new bin

- Supply of dead dry weeds (carbon), and/or shredded paper (see step 5)
- Supply of fresh green weed material, kitchen scraps (see step 6)
- Supply of chook manure or other accelerant (see step 7)
- Weed tea (see step 8)

TIME

It takes a good half day once every 3 or 4 months to assemble/fill a bin. This system needs to be done at one time. It relies on collecting and storing materials until you have sufficient material to fill another bin – about 35 of the small weed bags plus your kitchen scraps (see notes about storage in steps 5 & 6).

As a general rule only take away the parts of the plants that may grow again or grow into new plants – seeds/flowers, corms, rhizomes or branches that layer when there is nowhere safe to ‘raft’ them off the ground; but in general leaving the material on site is best practice.

By Lyndal Sullivan



STEP 1 SELECT A LOCATION

It is ideal to locate your ‘bin’ somewhere that will benefit from the nutrients that will leach into the ground; eg under a fruit tree, upslope of your veggie garden, NOT near bushland or a creek. It is useful to have at least 2 going at once.



STEP 2 CONSTRUCT A FRAME

The minimum size of compost needed to generate sufficient heat is 1 cubic metre; ie 1 m x 1 m x 1 m high. The larger it is the better. Steel mesh with 50mm X 50 mm squares is an ideal material and comes in sheets of 2000 x 1200. Cut 2 sheets into 1/2s giving 4 panels of 1m X 1.2m. Then wire 3 sides together using tie wire, leaving the front one open for now. This will allow you to start filling the bin easily without straining your back.



STEP 3 BASE LAYER

Lay down a layer of sticks or loose material that will provide aeration



STEP 4 PROP A BARRIER IN FRONT OF THE BIN

Prop a temporary barrier in front of the ‘open door’ about 500 mm high to keep the contents in place. This temporary low ‘front door’ will allow for ease of piling till it is about ½ full. Some props will be needed to hold it in place – bricks, rocks or full kitchen scraps buckets.



STEP 5 BROWN LAYER - CARBON

Add a layer of dried vegetation about 250mm thick. This can be – dried weeds, and also shredded paper, dried leaves or wood shavings. To dry out weeds from site they will need to be stored off the ground and in containers/bags that don’t trap the moisture.

STEP 6 GREEN LAYER - NITROGEN

Add a layer of green material about 150mm thick - fresh weeds and vegetable scraps. These will be the weeds mostly recently collected which are still green, such as weed grasses. Green kitchen waste needs to be stored carefully to ensure it doesn’t attract animals. Do not include meat or fats in this.







## STEP 7 ACCELERANT LAYER

Add a layer of accelerant materials about 50mm thick – chook manure, grass clippings, comfrey, yarrow, urine, dolomite, seaweed.



## STEP 8 WATER

After each accelerant layer, add water in any of the following ways (or just water is also fine) Weed tea – made by soaking weeds in water for at least a few days, but longer is better; Comfrey tea – same as weed tea, except more potent, particularly if soaking for weeks; Seaweed mix;



## STEP 9 REPEAT

Repeat steps 5, 6, 7 & 8 until the bin is about ½ - 2/3 full

## STEP 10 WIRE FRONT 'DOOR' ON

When bin is about ½ full wire on the front panel and remove the temporary barrier



## STEP 11 ADD A LID

Continue to repeat steps 5, 6, 7 & 8 until the bin is full – finish with the carbon layer. It is best to overfill it as the contents will pack down within a day or two. It is useful to have something to stop the top layer from blowing away and to let the rain in. This is only needed for a short time. Old cotton clothes, coir mats, old carpet or shade cloth can work.



## STEP 12 WRAP IT UP

Whilst your bin needs good air flow, it works best if the heat can also be retained. Shade cloth or sediment control fabric works well to cut down the cooling effect of breezes. Alternatively you may locate the bin where it is protected from winds by shrubs, a fence or some other semi-solid barrier.



## STEP 13 HANG OUT THE WEED BAGS & CLEAN UP

It is important to hang out the weed bags to dry for about a week, then store for reuse. Allow time to clean out and dry kitchen scraps buckets. Next is you – you will be a bit smelly too! The bin may be a bit smelly for about a day but it soon goes.

LID	
BROWN LAYER – CARBON	
ACCELERANT & WATER	
GREEN LAYER - NITROGEN	
BROWN LAYER – CARBON	
ACCELERANT & WATER	
GREEN LAYER - NITROGEN	
BROWN LAYER – CARBON	
ACCELERANT & WATER	50 mm
GREEN LAYER - NITROGEN	150 mm
BROWN LAYER – CARBON	250 mm
COMPOST - Undecomposed from previous pile	
STICKS - Base	

## STEP 14 USE COMPOST ON YOUR OWN GARDEN

You do not need to do anything more for about 3 months – no turning to aerate the bin etc. After about 3 months it should be ready, except there will be some materials at the edges that need to be put aside to go in the next bin. Take off the front panel, so it is easy to get at. You can then keep the bin in this location or move it – it is easy enough to move with the 3 panels connected. When you have collected enough material you can start again

## Website News

Your new website [www.bluemountainsbushcare.org.au](http://www.bluemountainsbushcare.org.au) is open for each group to have their own page. The idea behind this is that you can add your own information to these pages. For example you could upload a photo or two from your workday using your smart phone or put your plant list up from your site. Its your choice. The weeds website is in the process of being updated and there is an opportunity for volunteers to be involved. If you would like to be part of the process please contact Erin Hall at the Bushcare office.

## Training in Disability Awareness at Bushcare

In keeping with our policy of access and equity, BMCC Bushcare is committed to making the benefits of Bushcare accessible to everybody in our community, including those living with a disability.

Bushcare is pleased to provide this training opportunity. It will assist Council's Bushcare staff, Bushcare Group Co-ordinators and other interested volunteers to integrate people with varying levels of ability into Bushcare whilst ensuring a safe and satisfying Bushcare experience for all members.

**Date:** Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October  
**Time:** 9:30am - 4:00pm  
**Venue:** BMCC Administration Building, Civic Place Katoomba  
**Cost:** Free

About the trainer: Maeve Dunnett is passionate about the rights of people with disabilities to access all the same services that non-disabled people are able to access. She is a Bushcare volunteer a member of the Blue Mountains Bushcare Network, a qualified trainer with 20 years' experience.

**Morning tea and lunch provided RSVP essential to Monica Nugent by Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October**  
 email - [mnugent@bmcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mnugent@bmcc.nsw.gov.au) or phone - 4780 5528



## On the Web

The Nature Conservation Council, in conjunction with Birds in Backyards, has put together a fact sheet that explains how people can design their gardens to mitigate risk from bush-fire, whilst also providing important habitat for birds (and other wildlife). <http://www.nature.org.au/media/1794/bird-friendly-garden-factsheet.pdf>

### Field Guide to NSW Fauna

Explore and identify the unique and diverse fauna of New South Wales with this free app.

### Frogs Field Guide

Discover frog species near you, listen to calls, view images, explore frog attributes and log your own sightings of frogs.

### Birds of Australia (Morcombe)

This app version of the famous field guide contains over 790 species, and the bird-call playback function is amazing, allowing you to get closer to the more inquisitive birds. (Lite version FREE, Full version Android \$28.00 or Apple \$38.00).

### Decision Point

*Decision Point* is the EDG's monthly magazine presenting articles, views and ideas on environmental decision making, biodiversity, conservation planning and monitoring. Check it out for yourself at <http://www.decision-point.com.au/> In issue #82 you'll find the following stories:

#### 1. Environmental decisions and metrics

Does a weak decision metric really matter? You bet it does! – page 4

#### 2. Mapping the social network

Angela Guerrero looks at cross-scale collaboration in the Gondwana Link – page 6

#### 3. Land use, fragmentation and spatial scale

One small crop or two large pastures – page 8

#### 4. Biodiversity priorities in the Brigalow

Managing multiple impacts on biodiversity in the Brigalow Belt – page 10

#### 5. Pine fiction

Measuring connectivity in pine plantations – page 11

#### 6. Evaluating bang for buck

What is the return on our environmental investments – page 12

#### 7. How green is my suburb?

Managing the impacts of urban development on large trees – page 13

#### 8. Halting cane toads

Could we build a waterless firebreak? – page 14

#### 9. Research briefs

Does public funding crowd out private supply of environmental works? Of practitioners, participants and conservation tenders. Agri-environment schemes and reptiles – page 3.

