

Fact Sheet for ABC Gardening Australia at The Gully

February 27, 2020

(Fact Sheet derived from the questions asked by ABC Gardening Australia pre-filming)

The Gully Location and Size

The Gully Aboriginal Place is located to the west of the township of Katoomba, within the Upper Kedumba River Valley in the Blue Mountains area, NSW. The Gully covers an area of 73.1 ha and is bounded by residential areas to the north, east and west, and by Katoomba Falls and Blue Mountains National Park to the south.

Bushcare and Swampcare working sites

- 35 hectares – This covers Garguree Swamp Care, Upper Kedumba and Friends of Katoomba Falls
- 8 hectares Maple Grove

Dominant plant communities in the site

NATIVE BUSHLAND	
<i>Eucalyptus oreades</i>	Open Forest / Tall Open Forest scheduled LEP 2015
<i>Eucalyptus radiatta</i>	Tall open Forest scheduled LEP 2015
<i>Eucalyptus sieberi</i> - <i>Eucalyptus piperita</i>	Open Forest / Woodland
<i>Eucalyptus gullickii</i>	Alluvial Woodland scheduled LEP 2015
Heath, Scrub	scheduled LEP 2015
Blue Mountain Upland Temperate Swamp (otherwise known as Hanging Swamps)	Ecological Endangered Community (Blue Mountains Swamp) Federal and State
MODIFIED BUSHLAND	
Introduced communities	regenerating /revegetated community; Regenerating areas – shrub & forest areas after the mass clearing from the race course
Undefined Native	

Threatened plant species recorded in this corridor:

- *Acacia ptychoclada* (ROTAP) a rare shrub listed as regionally significant. Grows on the margins of hanging swamps.
- *Amaleea incurvata* (ROTAP)
- *Pherosphaera fitzgeraldi* (Dwarf Mountain Pine) Endangered
- *Persoonia acerosa* (Mossy Geebung) Vulnerable
- *Pultanaea glabra* Vulnerable
- *Xanthosia dissecta* Vulnerable A tufted subshrub to 15cm high with short woody rootstock. Grows in wet heathland swamps occasionally beside creeks in damp soil.

Threatened fauna also associated with these communities

- *Dasyurus maculatus* (Tiger Quoll) Vulnerable -State Endangered – Commonwealth

- *Eulamprus leuraensis* (Blue Mountains Water Skink) Endangered – State & Commonwealth
- *Tyto tenebricosa* (Sooty Owl) Vulnerable - State

Ecological communities within the close vicinity of The Gully of local significance

- *Ceratopetalum apetalum* – *Doryphora sassafras* Rainforest
- *Eucalyptus gullickii* Alluvial Woodland (located Glen Wattle Close West of The Gully)
- Blue Mountains Escarpment Complex (located south of The Gully)

All three communities are scheduled communities on the Blue Mountains City Council 2015 LEP (Local Environmental Plans).

- BC Act 2016 - Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 EPBC Act 1999 - Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Scheduled - locally significant within Blue Mountains City
- Non-scheduled - not locally significant within Blue Mountains City
- VEC - Vulnerable Ecological Community
- EEC - Endangered Ecological Community
- ROTAP - Rare or Threatened Australian Plant

Weed species you have been managing?

Weeds from Cool climate – Central tableland climatic zone	Emerging weeds
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> (Blackberry)	<i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i> (Shasta Daisy)
<i>Ligustrum sinense</i> (Small-leaf Privet)	<i>Kniphofia sp</i> (Red Hot Poker)
<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i> (Large-leaf Privet)	<i>Buddleja Davidii</i> (Buddleia)
<i>Ilex sp</i> (Holly)	Agapanthus
<i>Vinca major</i> (Blue Periwinkle)	
<i>Montbretia crocosmia</i>	
<i>Lonicera japonica</i> (Japanese Honeysuckle)	
<i>Poplar sp</i> -	
<i>Leycesteria formosa</i> (Himalayan Honeysuckle)	
<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> (Cherry Laurel)	
<i>Prunus serrotina</i> (Wild black Cherry)	
<i>Salix cineria</i> (Willows)	
Cotoneaster	
Annual grasses	

How does the site change with the seasons?

In terms of the site, then Bushcare is very seasonal. We have a management plan co-developed between The Gully Traditional Owners (GTO) and Bushcare with the core value being Connecting to Country through indigenous ecological practise and philosophy, whilst also following ecological practice in natural area management. We manage our Gully restoration process with awareness of how weeds behave seasonally by observing flowering and fruiting times, when growth is most active, and whether the weeds are performing an important habitat function and if so, is it appropriate to remove them.

By connecting to Country at Garguree everyone is involved in the essence of Place, Healing and Connection, understanding the past and looking towards the living Cultural future. The many and varied ways of connecting can be through weeding, chatting, listening, playing, wheelbarrowing, photographing, eating, singing, sculpting, brush matting, planting, learning new regeneration skills, flora and fauna identification, bush tucker, standing by the fire, rubbish collection, stream watch, fungi identification, creating habitat, observing and monitoring and educational events - just to name a few. As these connections are seasonally based it means observations of The Gully 'in all its times' and a 'deep understanding of place' is constantly being fostered. And as such, large numbers of volunteers have always been inspired to come along to Garguree Swampcare throughout the year whether it is in the very cold, frosty mid-winter or the heat of summer.

Another exciting goal for The Gully is to establish opportunities to undertake seasonal cultural burning events. This not only provides valuable cultural education and learning opportunities for the Aboriginal community; it will also achieve hazard reduction meeting ecological conservation and restoration outcomes. These seasonally based cultural burning events will focus on the areas identified in The Gully *Fire Management Plan* for prescribed burning. Following the burn then post fire weed control management will be established.

What are some of the biggest challenges?

- Storm water management – Control channelizing and rehydrating the swamp system. Protecting the biodiversity and ecological values of wetlands with particular reference to their hydrological environment (including water quality and water flow), and the flora, fauna and habitat values of the wetlands. This comprises restoring and regenerating degraded wetlands and facilitating community education in relation to wetlands and their use by the community, without compromising the ecological values of the wetlands.
- With the exclusion of fire from The Gully for the past 60 + years, along with the impacts of urban runoff and bird distributed weeds – conditions have mostly favoured exotic vegetation and environmental weeds establishment, which over time have significantly degraded the health of this area. Reintroduction of cultural burning in partnership with bushland operation practices will aim to provide effective weed control and help restore the ecological health of The Gully.
- Reduce pressure on The Gully from surrounding properties (both from public and private lands) through education regarding threats such as weeds and run off, engaging the community in Bushcare activities and to educating the wider community about the cultural and ecological importance of this area.
- Education of the community around dogs off leash and fauna protection.
- To restore degraded bushland. Protect existing landforms such as natural drainage lines, watercourses and swamps.
- Protecting bushland as a natural stabilizer of the soil surface and for carbon sequestration and moisture holding capacity
- To ensure the ongoing ecological viability of the land by protecting the ecological biodiversity and habitat, flora and fauna and other ecological values of the land with climate variability becoming a very real issue.