

THE BUSHLAND BULLETIN[©]



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The Editorial Committee, PO Box 210 Panania NSW 2213 | Telephone: 9785 2374

TREES: STILL THE ENEMY

by Colin Gibson

Vandalism

Protected trees are mutilated

THE removal of protected fig trees in an endangered bushland at the Creek in Bank Hill was criticised by the Bankstown Council when it was announced on Monday for its approval.

Colin Gibson of the Bankstown Bushland Society said the council's decision to allow the removal of the trees was a "disgrace" and a "blatant breach" of the council's own policies.

Mangroves cut

BANKSTOWN Council is planning to remove the mangroves of a 1.5-hectare site in the Domain. The council's decision to remove the mangroves was criticised by the Bankstown Bushland Society.

Cut above rest

Trees are terrific but when they threaten our homes, call for a professional.

Home

C-B Express 20-7-2002

Hunt for vandals after trees killed

Bankstown Council has launched a hunt for vandals who are responsible for the destruction of protected trees in the Domain.

Inside this issue...

- ◆ About The Bush.....*Tylophora woollsii* in Bankstown
- ◆ Chullora Bushland Saved
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- ◆ Bush Regeneration and the NHT Guidelines

..... Plus 2004 Activities Program and Bush Regeneration Dates

The fate of the fig trees in the Domain is symptomatic of the regard public authorities have for trees that stand in the way of their plans, be they developmental or landscaping. The destruction of the trees was justified because of their age, being a threat to public safety. It was reported that a branch had nearly fallen on a

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picnicker. So woe betide any tree that sheds a branch, yet the fact is that all trees, young or old, shed branches occasionally as part of the maturation process, or as the result of exposure to strong winds. Therefore no tree is safe from being culled in the interests of public safety.

The public was assured that professional arborists had examined the trees before issuing the death warrants, and that a member of the Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust is the head teacher of arboriculture at Ryde College. That college produces hundreds of qualified 'tree surgeons' (note that most call themselves arborists these days, which simply means a person who climbs trees professionally) – most of these make their living destroying trees, the thousands that are lost each year, sacrificed to the great imperative of urban consolidation. Few arborists make any money in tree doctoring or preservation; once an arborist is called in to examine a tree that is in the way of a development, the death warrant is as good as signed.

We've recently witnessed first hand the cowboy approach of the Padstow TAFE arboriculture class when our bush regeneration team arrived for work at The Crest in June, to find eight turpentines felled in the midst of the endangered brushforest. A large fallen ironbark that functioned as an effective and much needed barrier, was cut into rounds, and a forest red gum had been brought down along the north edge of the reserve. TAFE has since claimed that most or all of these trees were dead or dying, yet in an endangered habitat, it is still irresponsible. The Bushland Society work team is permitted to remove weeds in there, only under NPWS licence and strict guidelines, the TAFE had no right to be in there at all.

This was vandalism at its worst, yet, though the finger pointed directly at TAFE, it was at first denied, until the same mob turned up more than a week later to maraud around for more! Thankfully men at the council depot were on to them, and action was taken to prevent further. The TAFE team is there specifically to remove planted

non-indigenous tallow-woods which we are all for, yet, left to their own devices, they have helped themselves to whatever they could put chain-saw into, leaving an unashamed mess in their wake: stumps and sawn sections piled up among tangles of moth vine, bridal veil creeper and asparagus, to make effective bush regeneration difficult.

So TAFE are not the virtue of all goodness when it comes to trees and they can consider themselves lucky they are not to be heavily fined, though Council and NPWS are to issue stern warnings. If it were you or I they would have thrown the book at us, but TAFE are excused, being 'a fellow government agency', the error put down to a procedural fault.

Councils all over Sydney are watering down tree-preservation policies out of the necessity to accommodate ever bigger populations, in line with the principles of the flawed economic growth paradigm. Trees are, as they always have been; in the way, and governments at all levels are content to proffer lame excuses to justify the destruction of the indigenous urban treescape. Sadly, it seems we will continue to hear the sort of excuses proffered by the Botanic Gardens Trust to justify tree destruction for a long time to come.

Found a Lace Monitor at Lake Gillawarna on the 9th September. This is the first one that I have seen in Bankstown and as far as I know it is the first record for more than 20 years. Previously recorded only from Yeramba lagoon.



Editor




ATTENTION

If anyone has interesting sightings of birds, frogs, reptiles or mammals in the Bankstown district or needs identification assistance, I would be happy to hear from you.

**Please call Darryl on
9708-5283**

e-mail: dmckay@optusnet.com.au




ABOUT THE BUSH TYLOPHORA WOOLLSII IN BANKSTOWN

by Colin Gibson

The native vine, *Tylophora woollsii* is a rare plant with an interesting history. It was first collected by the Rev. William Woolls at Parramatta, some time between 1848 and the mid 1860's. One reason why we don't know the specific year of collection might be that the specimen cannot currently be located, in other words, it has gone missing at the herbarium where it was lodged. In the mid 19th century there was no herbarium in Sydney, but Ferdinand von Mueller in Melbourne was building a collection. Along with other specimens, Woolls gave his *Tylophora* to von Mueller. The material then found its way on a sailing ship to the old country, where at Kew Jeremy Bentham was working on his great *Flora Australiensis*. The name *Tylophora woollsii* first appeared in the volume that was published in 1869.

The type *Tylophora* specimen then traveled back across the world to be re-incorporated into von Mueller's collection, eventually the National Herbarium of Victoria, Melbourne. There were no further field observations of the plant, nor were any collections made for a century or more, until it was found by J B Williams in 1964, not at Parramatta but way up on the Nymboida Road north of Dorrigo. Since then a few collections have been made up north, around Dorrigo, and also at Bald Rock near Tenterfield; similar material has also been found in Queensland.

I just so happened to be strolling through the scrub one day – actually it was one of our clean-up days at Norfolk Reserve, Chullora in March 1999 – when I found a vine unfamiliar to me, about half a dozen plants in one location, tangled up through *Bursaria* bushes. At first I thought it might be one of the lesser known *Parsonsias* or *Marsdenias*, but as I examined it more closely, one character or another ruled these out: I collected a specimen to study at home. I only had leaves to go on,

but the closest match I could make with anything in the floras was *Tylophora woollsii*, which hardly seemed possible.

Soon after, I submitted my collection to the Sydney herbarium, with my tentative identification. The specimen was returned with a note declaring: 'Possibly *Parsonsia* sp.,' and stating that a better specimen was required for full identification. Even so, I was happy to add *Parsonsia* to the list for Norfolk, not having seen that genus there previously; the likelihood of it being an unusual form of something common rather than a typical form of something rare, I was prepared to accept.

I knew to keep an eye on the plant though, to try and find it in flower or fruit, in order to confirm whatever it truly was. Whenever I went back, there were only leaves to be seen; then, over a dry summer, the plants shriveled and disappeared altogether, proving the species is very sensitive to its ecological requirements. This of course was very disappointing, as I could not necessarily expect to see the plant again. Perhaps it had been killed off altogether.

It was not until the bush regeneration day in March this year that I found that at least one plant had grown back, and that it was attempting to produce flower buds in the leaf axils. This is exactly what I was hoping for. Two months later I saw the plant again, but was disappointed to

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BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY COMMITTEE

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★ Any person is encouraged to contribute to The Bushland Bulletin. Simply mail your article, letter, advertisement, pledge or other item to :-
★ The Editor,
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find the inflorescences aborted, probably due to the extremely dry conditions. Nevertheless, lower down the stems the inflorescence structure had developed well enough to note a zig-zag pattern, characteristic of *Tylophora woollsii*, an autumn flowerer too, so the season was right. There was now no doubt in my mind that it was this species, a fact soon after confirmed by the herbarium.

Seeking more information, I contacted the Sydney herbarium and made an appointment to inspect the collection boxes. Unfortunately Woolls' collection was not there, but a brief note on one enclosing folder in the tight hand of the late L A S Johnson "seen at Mel" suggested an inquiry be made in that direction. Afterwards I contacted the Melbourne herbarium which confirmed the lodgement, but despite thorough searching it could not be located. This might seem irregular but it is certainly not unprecedented. There are a

number of ways a specimen can go 'AWOL', as an unreturned loan for instance, or it might have been put away in the wrong box somewhere, or it might even be sitting under a pile of specimens in a botanist's office. At any rate, only time will tell if Woolls' specimen (the type no less) will reappear.

As for the plants at Norfolk, could the species have always been here, before and since Woolls's time? It is more typically a rainforest margin vine, so to find it twining through *Bursaria* bushes under ironbark, woollybutt and melaleuca is intriguing. Although drought sensitive, the species can possibly survive drought and scrub fire too, so it is possible the plants at Norfolk, though not large, are quite old, disappearing to underground rootstocks only to reappear in well watered seasons. Or could there be mature specimens surviving in old back yards somewhere in the neighbourhood? There is very little bush in this part of Sydney,

therefore little opportunity for seed to blow in from other bushland sites, so if there are plants hanging on in backyards somewhere, it wouldn't surprise me.

Thinking back to the years we campaigned to preserve the Norfolk bush from housing development: had we lost, there would be no bush and no *Tylophora*. At the time we had to argue the site's importance for the *Acacia pubescens* population, yet we and all the experts missed the presence of the rarest plant in the Sydney region. The lesson is that you never presume to know everything in an area of remnant bushland, and that the potential of the site is what is most important, whether anything is known to be rare there at any given time, or not.

Thanks to Louisa Murray and Katie Sommerville for information from the Sydney and Melbourne herbariums, respectively.

GOOD NEWS – CHULLORA BUSHLAND SAVED

by Irene Jones

After years of lobbying the State Rail Authority, National Parks, Bankstown Council and various politicians, the Bushland Society has finally received a statement in writing from the Minister for Transport Mr. Costa that ownership of Site 3, the last remaining viable remnant of Cooks River/Castlereagh Ironbark forest on the old rail yards site, is to be ceded to Bankstown City Council.

Discussions are under way between the Society, Bankstown Council and Landcom (acting on

behalf of SRA) regarding the fencing and remediation/clean-up of the site before its hand-over.

Despite the dumping of considerable amounts rubbish and old railway detritus in the bushland, this now rare vegetation has survived remarkably well, demonstrating its vigour and resilience.

Site 3 is the largest parcel of this indigenous vegetation in the Cooks River catchment that is reserved – other smaller pockets are at Cox's Creek (Strathfield),

Norfolk Reserve (Greenacre) and at Campsie. Within Site 2 at Chullora, the bushland is sliced though by privately owned freight rail facilities which are expected to be expanded over time at the expense of the bushland that is left.

The Bushland Society expects that it will be involved in restoration/rehabilitation of the bushland at Site 3 which will entail weeding, ripping and closing of tracks and some planting of locally sourced plants.

THOUGHTS OF A WESTIE

Grassroots and Catchment Management

by David West

In 1988 I attended a Landcare Forum held at the Orange Ex-Services Club, as the Bushland Society's representative on the Cooks River Catchment Management Committee. The forum was attended by approximately 450 people from all parts of NSW and I must say, it certainly was worth attending. There were plenty of people there who face the same seemingly insurmountable range of problems environmental, that we face in our own local backyard. This is not to say there was ample time to discuss our own situation with my peers in any great depth, due to a pressing agenda.

Naturally, being a bureaucratic arrangement, many of those attending were there representing various other government agencies with a finger or a foot in the environment camp, I did take every opportunity to speak to some of these people and gather as much information as possible including printed matter, to bring back and circulate to our locality.

The main discussion was all about how the Landcare organisation should function, a number of options were put forward and a final vote taken. I'm sorry if this vague description leaves you wondering, but although I found it to be democratic, what a waste of a splendid personal face-to-face contact with those struggling like me – opportunity squandered. I had come many kilometers to find out how I might solve urgent environmental problems here at home. Clearly

there was not going to be time to compare notes to the degree I would have liked and definitely needed.

Despite these distractions, it was important and worthwhile to attend, contacts were made, avenues opened and I am grateful to have been given this opportunity to begin to understand a little better how to proceed in our quest for sense and sensibility for the environment. What we need now is the opportunity to talk more to on-the-ground people, like you and me, we need a separate forum. What are other groups in the Sydney basin doing, for instance?

But the toe-tap dance shuffle of the catchment saga just keeps rolling along. As everyone knows, the Cooks River Catchment Management Committee, that funded our important work at Norfolk and Chullora, was done away with some time following this forum. After a long hiatus and interminable political shuffling, versus community input, a Southern Sydney Catchment Management Board was established. This board produced the Southern Sydney Catchment Blueprint and has now disappeared from view, to be replaced by the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority. This Authority has responsibility for the former Sydney Harbour catchment as well as the Southern Sydney catchment area, including the Hacking catchment; a much bigger area but with absolutely

no community representation, and so far no sign of the small grants program that so benefited the few scraps of bushland in the Cooks River catchment..

I recently was given a copy of the Southern Sydney Catchment Blueprint – Government and community working together, printed in July 2003. I urge all of you to get a copy of this and another publication from the Dep't of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, 'Bringing Back the Bush to Western Sydney'. It's important to read and appreciate how little regard is shown for our bushland remnants, but even less regard is shown for shale soil remnants which are still under direct threat from the push for more development land. Note how many other authorities maintain 'a finger in the ointment', eg. Sydney Catchment Authority, Sydney Ports Corporation, Waterways Authority, etc., etc.

Nothing but the community and our efforts can ensure changes are made and a better outcome is forthcoming, as for the new Catchment Authority 'the ball is in their court' and time will tell!

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BOOK REVIEW*by Robert Miller****Seldom Seen: Rare Plants of Greater Sydney*
by Alan Fairley**

I have known Alan Fairley since the early 1970's. Firstly as a teacher, in my early days as a pupil at East Hills Boys High School and later on being reacquainted whilst working at Bankstown City Council's Native Garden at Sylvan Grove. I was fortunate to accompany Alan on many of his field trips undertaken whilst compiling photos and field notes for his best-selling *Native Plants of the Sydney District* co-authored with Dr. Phillip Moore. Some of Alan's other publications include: *A Field Guide to the Sydney Bushland*, *Wildflowers of Sydney*, *The Observer's Book of Wildflowers of Australia* and *Discovering the Blue Mountains on Foot*.

Seldom Seen: Rare Plants of Greater Sydney, I am delighted to say, is Alan's best book to date, and is highly recommended. The content is well presented, distinctive and unique, combining historical, botanical and photographic material together. The book is published by New Holland Publishers Pty

Ltd. The following information is extracts from their press release:

"Seldom Seen: Rare Plants of Greater Sydney features approximately 210 rare plants within the botanical area known as Greater Sydney. This runs from just west of Lithgow, follows the Great Dividing Range and extends north to Port Macquarie and south to the Shoalhaven River at Nowra.

The body of the book features the rare species themselves, approximately a page per species. They are organized in alphabetical order, each entry consists of at least one colour photograph of the species, a botanical description and notes on its habitat and distribution. The history of the plant's naming and collection and other interesting facts are also named. Throughout the book there are a number of historical illustrations; some botanical and colourful; other photographs of field trips of famous botanists and collectors.

The plants described include many newly named and quite a few newly discovered species – including the Wollemi Pine. Being rare, many of these species have never before been seen in colour photographs. Some notes on the collectors and botanists who have contributed to our knowledge of Sydney's rare plants are compiled in an appendix. This list has never before been brought together and will form a useful reference for historians and botanists.

The book will be of interest to the general public and professionals working in the field e.g. doing assessment work for development proposals, bush regeneration and local councils and environment agencies and groups. It will also appeal to local community groups, schools and gardeners. There is a strong public interest in 'rare things', which by their nature are seldom seen."

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**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
and
CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

The annual general meeting (AGM) of the Bankstown Bushland Society Inc will be held on Wednesday 17th November 2004. It will commence at 7.30 p.m. followed by an ordinary meeting at 8.00 p.m. at Padstow Progress Hall, (annex), Ryan Road, Padstow.

All positions on the Committee automatically become vacant at the AGM. Nominations are invited for the following positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer, Public Officer, Editor, Editorial Committee, and also General Committee positions.

BUSH REGENERATION and the NHT GUIDELINES

By Colin Gibson

I wonder why it is that the Federal government's big environmental standard bearer, The Natural Heritage Trust, seems to struggle so much with the concept of bush regeneration – or, more correctly, why it seems to have such an aversion for the term. This is all the more puzzling given that bush regen is certainly not a new concept anymore, it's been around for decades.

To give an example: the NHT funds several Landcare focused glossy publications, the three that the Bushland Society receives are 'Bush', 'Natural Heritage' and 'Australian Landcare'. All these magazines report and comment on environmental land management, the recovery of degraded landscapes and weed proliferation. I have several copies in front of me now and blown if I can find any reference to the term 'bush regeneration'. Some of the articles describe what can only be volunteer bush regeneration projects, but nowhere is the term used; it's as though the term has been editorially 'weeded out' to pardon the expression.

One of the issues of 'Bush' I have in front of me is bannered with 'Working Together on Weeds' – in fact the entire edition (May 2004) is devoted to weeds. We read of 'weed management', 'weed control' and 'revegetation' but never 'bush regeneration'. This edition includes a list of Australia's 20 worst weeds (we all have our favourites), warns us of backyard weeds, promotes the concept of biological controls and

emphasizes that, as weeds cost Australian agriculture \$4 billion a year, prevention is better than cure.

'Bush' appears to be wholly focused on farmland rather than bushland management, though it does promote the Bushcare concept which has taken off in both town and country regions. Here again, in outlining the Trust's aims for Bushcare, the term bush regeneration does not get a run, 'conserving and enhancing remnant native vegetation' is as close as it gets.

Let us then look at the 'Australian Landcare' edition of June 2003. Landcare, like Bushcare, is also a broad-based concept that is just as relevant in urban landscapes as it is in 'the bush'. Again, this journal strongly leans towards the agricultural side of environmental restoration, important as it is. Indeed, the journal is sub-headed 'Australian Farm Journal'. The June 2003 edition is bannered "Weeds Issue: Control and Management Combine to Confront the Threat". Though it is twice as thick as 'Bush', you are no more likely to find the words 'bush regeneration' anywhere inside.

We are informed that weeds in pastures cost the nation over \$792 million per year. The editorial laments the weed control treadmill that so many grain farmers and livestock owners get caught in: "as long as the focus on weeds remains on control alone then landowners will never get off the treadmill." We also learn that as part of a

\$1.5 million package, we now have a national weeds management facilitator to "help continue the war on Australia's weeds". No mention of a bush regeneration field commander, however.

Other issues given attention include dryland salinity, alternatives to plastic bags and there are features on the 'Spirit of Landcare' and 'the spirit of volunteerism'.

'Natural Heritage' is no less agriculturally oriented: "farmers are some of our nations most active environmentalists," says David Kemp and Warren Truss in the foreword. No-one would argue with that, but it leads me to ask, is it farmers who don't like the term bush regeneration? Could there be sensitivity shown here to those who might think bush regeneration aims to revert their productive acres back to the unruly wild?

Landholders and farmers are lauded all through the pages of the Autumn 2004 edition from the dinkum Aussie monoculturist gracing the cover, to the eco-efficient Queensland Grain Growers Organisation, to the Riverina irrigators and the hard hat wearers of the Fertilizer Industry Federation of Australia. Volunteers get another pat on the head from the Minister, David Kemp, who triumphs in the number of seedlings planted on the number of hectares, and the spectacular 40,000 kilometres of fencing funded under NHT's generous \$2.7 billion dollars: "These outstanding achievements

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would not have been possible without the efforts of the tireless volunteers.”

All of which brings me to the point. Where does bush regeneration fit into the Natural Heritage Trusts scheme of things? It seems to me to be a very distant relative of the real work of agricultural environmentalist. The NHT guidelines for grants tells it all: for community based bush regeneration groups like the Bushland Society there is little on offer from the glorious \$2.7 billion. A group such as ours cannot get funding for hands-on bush regeneration works where the need is to employ skilled professionals in endangered habitats in either urban or rural situations. We would qualify for funding for fencing, seed collection, tree-planting, equipment, mulching., materials for erosion control or for materials and aids that communicate the issues to others, and we can get money to generously pay a consultant to come in and tell us what we already know, but we cannot get funding through NHT's Australian Government Envirofund to employ professional bush-regenerators to do what they are trained to do, i.e. recover endangered habitats. Materials and abstracts are fundable, but hands-on labour is not, that is all to be done by Minister Kemp's tireless volunteers.

A small group such as the Bushland Society, which is already fully committed to a volunteer bush regeneration program, were it successful in obtaining a grant for materials

and consultants, would have to drop most or all of its existing volunteer program in order to perform all the labour on the site of the grant. What value would there be overall for the environment in that? The fact is that in Bankstown, the biggest need is not for tree-planting or mulching or for high cost consultants, but for hands-on professionally led, volunteer assisted eradication of target weed species such as privet, blackberry, alligator weed, etc. This is how the NHT Envirofund could make a difference in our area, but it does not seem to be available for this purpose.

Despite being fully committed to our volunteer bush regeneration program in Bankstown, our recent application for NHT funding of a regeneration program for Milperra Wetland was deemed ineligible due to “insufficient matching contribution by the applicant.” Despite the fact of our long established commitment to volunteer effort, and the fact that whenever we do win a grant we administer it ourselves without drawing on the fund (surely a not inconsiderable contribution in itself it seems we do not do enough. The rejection slip encourages us to ‘re-submit with budget aligned to the guidelines.’ This does sound promising until you consult the new guidelines. A new requirement for financially-limited community groups such as the Bushland Society comes under the heading of “Weeding and Revegetation Contractors” – “if you intend to engage contractors to undertake weeding and revegetation work, you are required to make a financial contribution 50% of the cost of this activity. This applies

to bush regenerators...” – at last, there are the magic words, but only by way of the bad news, for what this means is that if we want, say \$10,000 for professional bush regenerators, we first have to come up with \$10,000 out of our own pockets, or no deal. Such a policy works well for those that have a commercial interest in the subject area, farmers for instance who can double the value of their cash contribution, but it offers no incentive for community groups with a bush regeneration focus such as ours.

We did not require government assistance to become volunteer bush regenerators, though indeed, where it is provided, it is appreciated. But when we apply to the government to help us get the ball rolling, to expand the effort into a new area, we are told that we are not contributing enough.

Perhaps if we were not contributing anything at the moment we would have a better chance, for then the NHT might be more prepared to provide us with all the tools and materials we don't need, to which we could add the volunteer labour solely to be focused on the application site.

It's never been easy to attract a grant, an application form is much like an elaborate lottery ticket, yet over time the requirements have only got stiffer, until now we are almost completely shut out. I'm cynical enough to think it is based in some kind of philosophical position, that it is cheaper to praise and flatter volunteers, rather than financially empower

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BUSH REGENERATION at LANSDOWNE and THE CREST

by *Nerida Hrazdil*

Every Thursday we soldier away getting rid of seeding annuals then tackling bridal creeper, *Myrsiphyllum asparagoides*, paddy's, *Sida rhombifolia*, asparagus fern, *Protoasparagus aethiopicus*, pigeon grass, *Setaria spp.*, *Ehrharta erecta*, mother-of-millions, *Byrophyllum delagoense* and moth vine, *Araujia hortorum*. We have been given the OK to tackle the *Myrsiphyllum* at The Crest now, before it smothers the precious understorey of the Turpentine Ironbark Woodland. The experiment with rust continues in other areas.

Mick, Pat and I start at 7am without regard for how bitterly cold or unbearably hot it may be; Irene and Colin and sometimes Darryl turn up at anytime, to surprise us. Colin always delights us by showing us where the rare endangered species hide. I am looking forward to seeing the *Typhonium brownii* in flower late February and March next year.

I work all over Sydney with the National Trust, but rarely see the diversity of different species we work among at The Crest and

Lansdowne. The rich chocolate coloured soil is amazing after seeing mostly sandy soils in Sydney.

We are often accompanied by birds, lizards and different assortments of ants at morning tea and lunch time. Imagine having picnics every day in these lovely areas! Mick came across a red belly black snake basking in the grass on two occasions at Lansdowne. If we take 5 minutes to lean back and look at the canopy species, that is a wonderful sight; we see different birds including Kookaburra, Butcher bird, etc., and we might even find a hidden moth vine fruiting! Colin found a large blue-tongue lizard under a mat someone had thrown away. We covered the mat with leaves and branches. We all agree these areas need more shelter/habitat boxes, logs mats, etc. for reptiles, birds and mammals. Irene's niece Rene found a Bearded dragon at Lansdowne last Thursday, the first record for the area, according to Darryl.

We have made visible headway in the love grass areas, *Eragrostis*

curvula. Mick's slashing and spraying of huge areas of it seems to have worked well. *Ehrharta* seedlings are now targeted after the initial removal of giant *Ehrharta* several months ago. Last week at Lansdowne we tackled freesias that were lying flat and seemingly dead, but as we removed the bulbs we found they were well and truly alive!

The drought and dry conditions is having an effect on the weeds as well as the natives, we hope it rains soon. Well what do you know! On the 14th August it started to rain and this will continue for a few more days, thank goodness. That means more weeds too.

We were very sad about the vandalism to 8 Turpentine trees and the loss of the fallen Ironbark that was future habitat. The following week, Council workers stopped the vandals chain-sawing more trees down!

So mostly the days are very happy except for several weeks at The Crest after the vandalism.

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the grass-roots groups who are out there leading the charge, with or without financial assistance.

I'd like to conclude this little tirade with a quote from an article in Australian Landcare, June 2003, from a feature by National Landcare Facilitator, Coral Love, entitled "*Ensuring the spirit of volunteerism lives on:*

Not-for-profit volunteer groups

provide a service that is in the interests of public benefit. These groups rarely make a claim and those that do are usually genuine cases for low amounts of money. There is an urgent need for a long-term solution at a national level – to support these groups and organizations across Australia. Otherwise, the adverse impact on the spirit of volunteerism could mean volunteers opt to withdraw their time in the future.

Leadership is required at a national level to protect Landcare and other not-for-profit groups from a system that is being abused by the private sector. But the question remains, where is this leadership to come from?"

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WORK FOR THE DOLE EFFORT FOR BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND

Daniel Clarke

I commenced work with H&H Accredited Training in May 2003 and took on the position of supervising a bushland regeneration/work for the dole project.

At this time we began working at Kelso Tip Milperra where we mainly planted trees and targeted weeds such as scotch thistle, castor oil plant and moth vine. About fifty percent of the trees planted have survived. This is due I feel to the poor soil quality at the site and also the lack of rain. The participants were keen to learn the skills however of planting trees and everyone performed really well at this site. The highlight was encountering an eastern brown snake (about 50cm long) in September last year.

I felt then that the participants should learn a wider range of bush regeneration skills and we got stuck into cutting and painting of privet and other weeds such as camphor laurel. We worked at the corner of Milperra rd and Henry Lawson Drive where we took out privet and did various handweeding jobs through the site. Here we also encountered a snake, this time a red bellied black snake. To my disappointment I also found a dead ring tail possum, mauled by a cat by the looks- but at least they are present in the area.

We then moved on down to Lambeth Reserve in about August 2003 where we worked up along past the toilet block and again targeted privet, pittosporum and ochona. We also had a go at the large agave plants and the plumbago further up the slope. The results here were fantastic. There was a lot of native regeneration occurring, plants such as *Breynia oblongifolia*, *Rapanea variabilis*, and various Acacias were sprouting up everywhere. The participants were

enthused to learn about the importance of native plants as well as being able to observe Spotted Pardolotes coming in and out of a hole in the side of the slope. We still do a maintenance day on this site about once every two months.

In October 2003 we attacked Virginius Reserve Revesby (end of Centaur St). This site was a bit overwhelming. It could not be walked through along the middle at the beginning due to a forest of privet and then massive clumps of arundo grass. We chipped away however over the hot summer months and into the autumn and managed to cut and paint the majority of privet and arundo grass. The site now looks a whole lot better and can be walked through quite easily. Follow up maintenance will be essential at this site as resprouting is rife. Again we continue to do maintenance work and work in league with the council who undertakes spraying on the various vines.

In early 2004 we were directed to the revegetation gardens at Carysfield Reserve Bass Hill which were choked with Bidens (Farmers Friend). Over two months we handweeded the entire site, did some follow up spraying and then with the help of council we mulched. These gardens (running alongside the carpark) now appear greatly rejuvenated and have aesthetic appeal.

In the last few months we have undertaken work at Shortland Brush Reserve Lansdowne (behind Barnabys Restaurant) where again there is a great deal of privet and every other weed really. We continue here to target privet, coral tree and bridal creeper and we are also planning in the near future to plant some trees and clean up a lot of the rubbish.

Our other current site is Morgans Creek Reserve Revesby. This site is my favourite in Bankstown actually. It has such resilient bushland which contains a vast variety of native plants. Here we continue to target asparagus fern, mother of millions, wandering jew and Madeira vine. We also love to observe the pair of tawny frog mouths that inhabit a tree in the reserve just outside the row of houses. They have been there everyday for the last three weeks.

Speaking for myself, I thoroughly enjoy working in the bush regeneration industry and find the bushland of Bankstown to be full of many surprises and delights. I love constantly passing on knowledge to the participants and feel a sense of achievement that I am teaching them about native plants, weeds and the importance of protecting these areas for future generations of humans and animals.

Ninety nine percent of my participants on the project do their best to take part and learn all that they can on the job. Since May 2003, I have worked with over a hundred different participants carrying out bushland regeneration and have seen the great results people can achieve when they work as a team in a friendly atmosphere.



A family of Tawny Frogmouths

BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

**** Bankstown Bushland Society meetings are held at Padstow Progress Hall (annex), Ryan Road, Padstow. ****
 3rd Wednesday of every month. In annex at the rear. Time: 7.30 pm
 Tea and biscuits provided. All welcome.
 Further inquiries please ring : 9785 2374 or 9771 3864

Bush regeneration is an interesting and rewarding way to connect with our local flora and fauna and to learn the basics of practical bushland restoration.

Interested nature loving persons are most welcome to spend a morning, or an hour or two, with us in any of our programmed regeneration sites.

BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY BUSH REGENERATION ACTIVITIES PROGRAM June to October 2004

NB: All activities commence at 9.30am.

DATE	1 st MONDAY:	3 rd SUNDAY (except Dec)
SEPTEMBER	6th: Monash Reserve, East Hills. Meet in Monash Reserve car-park off Henry Lawson Drive. Work to concentrate on African Lovegrass and Paddy's Lucerne.	19th: Lambeth Park, off Henry Lawson Drive at Picnic Point. To continue with privet and follow-up work in new area at up-stream end of reserve.
OCTOBER	4th: Norfolk Reserve, Chullora. Meet at Norfolk Road entrance. Continue with Paddy's etc. along western side.	17th: Salt Pan Creek. Meet at boardwalk entrance, Alma road, Padstow. Wandering dew special.
NOVEMBER	1st: Lansdowne Reserve – off Hume Highway at Lansdowne Road entrance.	21st: The Crest – Follow-up at northern entrance. Meet in the car-park adjacent to athletics field off McLean Street.
DECEMBER	6th: East Hills Park. Meet in car-park off Cook Crescent. Hand weeding Rhodes grass in bushland verges. Follow-up Mother of Millions.	12th: Lambeth Park. End of year gathering – continuation of work at 'the steps'.

WHY NOT JOIN THE SOCIETY ?



The Bankstown Bushland Society is an incorporated association under the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 1984.

We are Bankstown's only incorporated association dedicated to protecting our City's environment.

The Society's objects are:

- To protect the environment of Bankstown
- To assist other persons in the protection of the environment in Bankstown
- To foster better community awareness of environmental issues
- To lobby through Government, commercial and other persons for the maintenance of a high quality of life through the progressive improvement of the environment

If you are concerned about the local environment, then consider joining our Society. As a member, you receive one year's subscription to this newsletter, and can participate as a voting member in the direction and decisions of the Society.

✂

Yes, I wish to join the
Bankstown Bushland Society Inc:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode _____

Telephone Number: _____

Membership fees
 Family - \$20
 Ordinary - \$15
 Concession - \$10
 "student/unwaged/pensioner"

Attached please find my payment of:
 (\$.00) _____
 (amount in words)

Send this coupon with payment to:
The Secretary,
Bankstown Bushland Society Inc.
PO Box 210
Panania NSW 2213



Bankstown Bushland Society Inc.
PO Box 210
Panania NSW 2213