

# THE BUSHLAND BULLETIN<sup>©</sup>



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

## Reform Bill Threatens Rare Species

by *Irene Jones*

The Minister for the Environment recently introduced a Reform Bill, which purports to increase protection of threatened flora and fauna species in NSW. Rather than strengthening existing legislation, the NSW Threatened Species Act 1995, this 'reform' is highly likely to weaken legislative protection for threatened species and endangered ecological communities in both urban and rural NSW.

At the first reading of the Reform Bill on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2004, the Minister referred to prior consultation with stakeholders, yet community and environment groups were excluded from this process. At the second reading on 27<sup>th</sup> October, objections to the Reform Bill were raised by parliamentary members of the Greens and Democrats parties, and a number of letters from concerned community members and groups, including a letter from the Bushland Society, were read into Hansard.

Our main worry is that the proposed reforms will favour developers over conservation of rare habitat. Whenever 'developer' and 'speeding up' development applications is mentioned as a reason for changing legislation it is obvious that the intention is to make life easier for developers and as a result, lower the standing of threatened species and their habitat in the equation.

We have been concerned for some time that the existing 8-part test, which is currently used to initially assess bushland values, has been abused in the past by

developers, councils and ill-qualified 'experts' to achieve destruction of threatened species habitat for the benefit of development, especially on private land. Continuation of the use of ill-qualified people to undertake environmental studies, using a 'check-list', should not be perpetuated. Only properly qualified and accredited ecologists should do this work.

Providing incentives to land-owners (usually in rural areas only) to reserve endangered vegetation is often a matter of exchange of offsets. Developers are given approval to remove indigenous vegetation from one area to be replaced by planting in another area. There has never been official recognition of the scientific fact that the habitat qualities of indigenous bushland cannot be replicated by planting a few trees.

This government has spent years developing recovery plans for

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### Inside this issue...

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- ◆ New grant for wetland

..... Plus 2005 Activities Program and Bush Regeneration Dates

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Cumberland Plain Woodland vegetation, which have never been brought to fruition. If there was genuine commitment to the protection of threatened species, the completion of these plans should have had very high priority, rather than being placed on the back-burner, presumably until this legislation goes through.

Plans such as The Southern Sydney Catchment Blueprint offer no protection to Cumberland Plain Woodland vegetation in western Sydney until 2010. So until then it's likely to be open slather on the tiny fraction of important vegetation left - the lungs of Sydney gradually being destroyed while this government sits on its hands.

We believe that the Reform Bill will not 'uncomplicate' the process of determining threatened species but will, in fact, further complicate the process by inserting additional committees with the express purpose of

reducing the number of species determined as needing legislative protection.

Strategic land-use and landscape planning is not the answer to preserving biodiversity if individual properties or small scale developments are left out of the process. In some urban situations, this could mean the loss of small areas of important habitat that are surrounded by development, but form important staging posts in a biodiversity corridor.

What happens to our threatened species while these plans and mapping are being prepared? A moratorium should be placed on any development in NSW that is likely to have an impact on threatened species until such planning has been completed.

This Bill will allow certain developments within areas certified by the Minister as having biodiversity significance. These are not listed, but the Bushland Society cannot envisage any development in such an area as having no impact on the threatened species.

The proposed legislation is likely to undermine the independence of the NSW Scientific Committee, through the introduction of a Natural Resources Commission and the Minister's ability to intervene in the determination process. This smacks of political interference in the process and the current concerted effort by our politicians to disempower independent bodies and government agencies so that the politicians hear only what they want to hear and can swear ignorance when things go wrong.

This, unfortunately, is happening at all levels of government (less so at the local government level) for the sake of total political control and to avoid any responsibility to the community, or accountability. The appointment by the Minister of a statutory Social and Economic Advisory Council as well as a Biological Biodiversity Advisory Council sets the cap on the whole process – of course, economics will win every time over threatened species conservation! Whenever bureaucrats and politicians talk about the 'triple bottom line' the community knows which component comes last every time and that is the environment.

Much of this reform proposal appears to fit nicely with government plans to expedite the development approval process, which also is an excuse to bend over backwards to allow development whatever the environmental cost. Recent action by the parliament to override legitimate decisions by the Land and Environment Court can only be seen as a direct attack on this independent body, whose role and purpose is being largely undermined so that developers and politicians win again, not the environment.

The NSW government is a public service. It and its parliamentary representatives need to work much harder to convince the community that the environment is in safe hands.

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## ABOUT THE BUSH

### PROGRESS at THE CREST and LANSDOWNE

by Colin Gibson

Turpentine – Ironbark Forest in western Sydney is an endangered plant community listed under the schedules of the Threatened Species Conservation Act. Two of the best surviving examples of this habitat are to be found at The Crest of Bankstown Bass Hill, and at Lansdowne Reserve in proximity to the Hume Highway. Bankstown Bushland society regenerators have worked at both of these sites for many years, beginning at The Crest in 1991.

Now, supported by the NSW government's Environmental Trust Program, the Society has been able to give extra impetus to this work, to extend the field of activity and to target some of the more problematic weeds invading core areas of the habitat. The grant is not the total answer to the threat of weed invasion at these sites, but it is an important contribution towards managed solutions.

The Society has utilized the grant to keep a team of professional bush regenerators, supported by the volunteers, on-site once per week since September, 2003. The chief aim has been to establish effective control over key threatening weed species within specified core habitat areas, as well as check in the short to medium term weed proliferation along defined margins. This work has progressed steadily and the outcomes are well underway towards being achieved.

At The Crest (a rare Turpentine remnant with understorey comprised of species of the

rainforest ecotone), the greatest effort has been focused on establishment of control over the two most pervasive weeds in the brushforest area: Ehrharta and Bridal Creeper. This has largely been achieved on the level ground in the north east corner of the site; work continues from a line of established control towards the upper gully slopes and along the more level ground in the direction of the Rex Road boundary.

Ehrharta requires very meticulous follow-up work timed to prevent seed set from propagules within the soil, in order to exhaust the seed bank. A frontline is established when this has been achieved. Bridal Creeper can either be sprayed or removed by hand. The latter course of action has been decided upon in the turpentine forest at The Crest because of the preponderance of native species, many of local and/or regional significance, enmeshed by the weed. This has made for a somewhat cautious approach, but one that is absolutely necessary in the case, for instance, of species such as *Typhonium brownii*, the localized habitat of which is entirely engulfed by Bridal Creeper, Ehrharta and Moth Vine; or of *Parsonsia lanceolata*, of which fewer than ten individuals are known within the whole of western Sydney, three so far observed at The Crest. Blanket spraying of Bridal Creeper within the turpentine brushforest would be far too risky for these and a range of other significant species.

Unlike The Crest, Lansdowne does not have a serious Ehrharta problem. Within the core habitat area though are a range of invasive weeds, most problematic being African Love Grass which interposes itself monoculturally among an understorey covered extensively with *Microlaena stipoides*. Slashing with follow-up spraying has proved very effective in controlling this species.

Bridal Creeper infestations are more localized at Lansdowne than at The Crest, and a combination of hand weeding and spraying has been the approach deemed appropriate according to specific situations.

Bankstown City Council has made significant contributions at both sites, being responsible for disposing of all bagged weeds and the removal of a dumped car and a truck load of illegally dumped mulch, along with other rubbish at Lansdowne.

Council bush regenerators have also been active in the Turpentine forest at The Crest, whilst at Lansdowne, Council has made a major contribution towards the prevention of illegal vehicular access along the Henry Lawson Drive boundary, installing some 545 bollards.

**We all look forward to the continuation of the grant and volunteer support through 2005.**

## LEAF - TAILED GECKOS AT YERAMBA LAGOON

by Nerida Hrazdil

This Southern Leaf-tailed Gecko (*Phyllurus platurus*) lives in the bushland surrounding Yeramba Lagoon. They live in the dry sclerophyllous woodland where canopy species of *Eucalyptus punctata*, *E. sclerophylla* and *Corymbia gummifera* dominate the landscape.

The Southern Leaf-tailed Gecko lives in sandstone rock crevices on the western rock shelf. This little gecko was observed during a spotlight fauna search 12<sup>th</sup> June 1997. That night it was cold and we were lucky to see the gecko and its 1cm long brown scat that had a little white spot (solid uric acid) on one end of it. On this occasion it was sheltering in a sandstone rock crevice. The gecko was fearful for its life, as it squeaked in distress when the herpetologist tried to encourage it out for people to see.

It will be important to restore the gecko habitat if its future is to be assured. Human impact is simplifying the ecological bushland complexity and generally reducing the habitat of the gecko.

The bushland area has a main road to the south, an electricity sub-station the western heath land area and significant urban development on the north and east surrounding Yeramba Lagoon bushland. The area is subject to urban water run off, dumping of exotic plant cuttings, clearing of bushland adjacent to properties, etc. Feral cats and dogs not on leads outstrip native populations and compete for scarce food resources and so

threaten the habitat.

Human activities include trail bike riding, kids letting off home made bombs, etc. Kids often light fires. Despite all this, politically there is a lot of interest in restoring the area and improving the Georges River foreshore. This should be of benefit to restoring flora and fauna habitat.

1. A Stormwater Trust grant of \$160,000 was partly used for a nutrient and sediment program. Two gross pollution traps on the eastern and western stormwater inlets are to be installed. The one on the eastern side at Kennedy Street was installed in 2000. The council engaged in a community education program about keeping the catchment area clean. This will help educate people and change attitudes about polluting the water that runs through the Yeramba Lagoon bush land to the lagoon and the Georges River.
2. Bankstown Council received a grant for \$167,530 from the State Government under the Georges River Foreshores Improvement Program. NPWS and Council will use the grant to build a bridge over the lagoon outlet and a path around Yeramba Lagoon. This pathway goes right past the habitat of the little gecko. The pathway will help keep bikes and

people with dogs off the natural ground litter. They also want to improve the water quality of the lagoon. This will also help address the weed problem.

3. A grant of \$66,000 has been made to Bankstown Council by the State Government to fight against storm water pollution.
4. Recently NPWS brought in Greencorps workers to close off pathways and remove weeds in the major creek lines.
5. There are interest groups that look after bird and reptile/mammal populations, recording numbers observed. Darryl McKay does monthly bird counts. Terrill, Colin, Nerida and Darryl do bush regeneration and write reports to NPWS about what they are doing. Because of the strong community interest in the area NPWS are making the area a priority for the placement of signage.

Addressing the impacts on the bushland area and gecko habitat will do a lot to save the gecko and flora and fauna creatures.

The main factors limiting gecko numbers in the Yeramba Lagoon bushland is the destruction of ground litter by dogs, trail bikes and weeds. Yeramba is part of the wildlife corridor along the Georges River and can be

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restored if impacts are minimized.

**Dogs:** People walking dogs without leads let their dogs rough up the ground litter and kill reptiles, as well as leave dog scats that threaten the ground litter ecosystem of interrelating fauna and flora.

Australian plants and animals did not adapt with dogs and cats and therefore did not evolve to fend them off. Human influence threatens the survival, abundance and evolution of a native species or ecological community, suggests the Environment Australian Biodiversity Group.

People arrive in cars to walk their dogs in the Georges River National Park, as soon as they get into the park they take the dogs off their leads. A dog in the Yeramba precinct bit one bush regenerator. Reptiles freeze when frightened and are standing prey to dogs and cats, etc. Dogs attack and kill skinks, lizards and geckos! Dogs bark and leave a scent behind, scratch and bury things in the bush, often disturbing orchid tubers and other microscopic native root systems as well as the gecko niche. They bring attachment weed seeds and disperse them. Dog faeces introduce damaging nutrients and pathogens. They are indeed a significant threat to native flora

and fauna. Under the NPWS Act and Regulations, dogs are prohibited in National Parks and Nature Reserves, minimum penalty \$200.

**Trail Bikes:** Years of degradation to the pathways and bushland are due to use of unregistered trail bikes. The bikes have **widened** pathways, **crushed** native seedlings, **created new tracks through fragile native communities.**

Sandstone rocks have been smashed, crushed and thrown off pathways; soils have been **compacted** (destroying soil fauna that have a lot to do with regeneration and the survival of the gecko). Most significantly, the bikes are **eroding** pathways and exposing neighbouring native species roots (especially on the north-eastern heath land area.

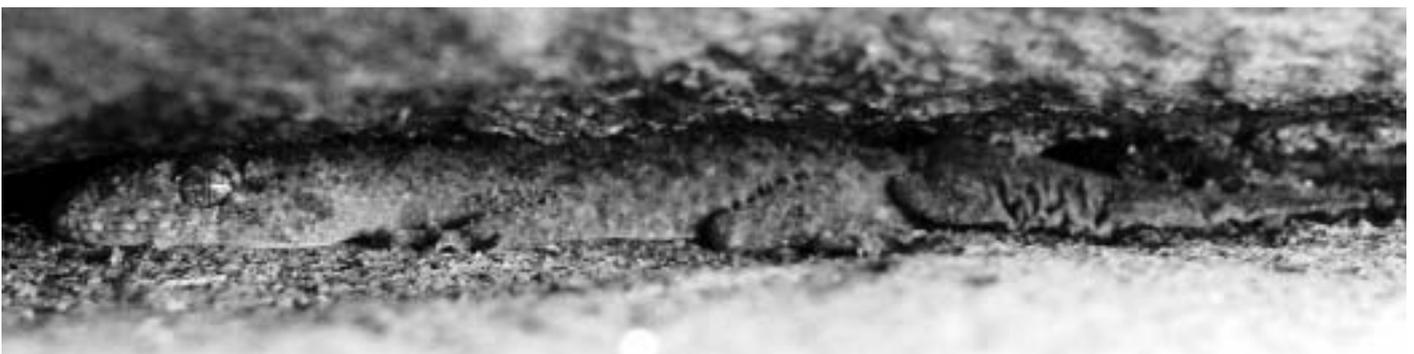
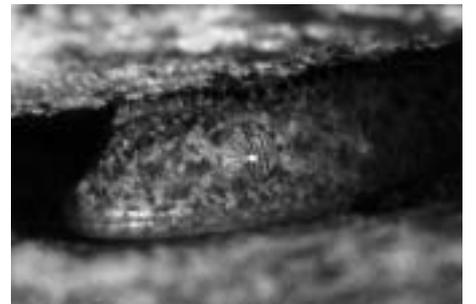
Too many pathways cause the **fragmentation of bushland** and this is a significant threat to bushland habitat and the eventual loss of fauna and flora species, for example, the Southern Leaf-tailed Gecko.

The bikes introduce **exotic seeds**, and the riders bring in rubbish as well. Bush regenerators are kept busy weeding and picking up rubbish. The gecko pollinates native species while looking for native plant nectar. While

searching for nectar and arthropods to eat the geckos risk being run over by bikes or killed by dogs.

The trail bike problem causes harmful unnatural **noise pollution** to native creatures. Trail bike riders have **kicked over eight different juvenile species over a period of seven to nine months in 2002**, for example, *Persoonia levis*, *Isopogon* sp., *Banksia* sp. *Angophora* sp. *Acacia* sp., and several Eucalyptus trees along the pathways north of the lagoon area.

Enhancing re-colonisation of the Southern Leaf-tailed Gecko depends on minimizing the impacts mentioned above, in order to minimize disturbance of ground litter (where the gecko finds food and lays eggs), rocks, logs and termite nests.



# THOUGHTS OF A WESTIE BACKYARD BUSHLAND CORRIDORS

by David West

My usual mixed platoon of native birds that normally arrives on time and ravenous, year in, year out and take turns at breakfast lunch and tea on the bountiful and numerous flowers on our two *Banksia spinulosa*, have not turned up at all this year.

No evidence of the usual damage from fruit bat crash landings either.

How in the name of whatever's his name, am I supposed to sleep, what with worrying about "what is the world coming to, when the rotten birds won't show up on time and trot their stuff so I can watch and marvel at the passionate defence of their turf, their style, their differing mannerisms, beauty and grace!

In previous years the regulars, after some initial squabbles and frequent gate crashing, but mostly in their correct pecking order, took their usual feed, but only dining on particular flowers and ignoring the rest. Now I ponder the question, if the nectar is rationed out, how then are those other flowers pollinated, as they obviously have been, with some few barren exceptions. Bearing in mind I don't sit there watching the tree all day, do I?

What is to become of the seven other various banksias we have installed around our garden in anticipation of avian crowd control measures becoming necessary as word spreads about the great nosh available at the West's residence? Are they all to be ignored? But where are the New Holland Honeyeaters and red wattle birds, the occasional rainbow lorikeet and eastern Rosella when we need them?

One pair of wattle birds are across the road, visiting a group of Grevillea "Honey Gem", only one New Holland to be seen about. Closer inspection of a number of neighbouring grevilleas shows most have few mature flowers, the bees however do seem to be gainfully employed. Pulling apart a mature flower reveals some nectar, some moisture, not very sweet.

Recently I saw an Eastern Spinebill feeding on something else, an exotic with plentiful labiate flowers most suited to the curved beak and lighter bird, obviously he was enjoying a good feed but he did not visit the banksia. I even went out and cut up a banksias flower, tasted it,

smelt it, looked at it through a magnifying lens – no smell, no nectar, flower parts not as soft or as moist as one would expect. This year it was also strange to see a flower grow from the trunk of the tree, just above ground level, no leaves, just a flower. (Looking for other pollinators?)

On Easter Monday, we stopped for lunch and coffee at Woodford, my wife, our daughter and I, on the way to "do over" the shops and a church bazaar at Leura, and there I found (at Woodford) a *Banksia spinulosa*. So, hanging over the churchyard front fence, I check the flower and there it is, the same problem, dry flowers, no nectar.

Ah ha, me thinks!

My neighbour's splendiferous Banksia "Giant Candles" is also similarly affected.

Looking out at my Camellia sasanqua hedge as I edit this, there is a wattle bird, it appears to be picking insects off the leaves, so all is not lost, the little blighters do seem to know where we live!

Well, another week and a half later I can say this: I've had a White-plumed Honeyeater give the banksia a cursory examination then visit the camellias, also similarly, two unidentified grey honey eaters, possibly juvenile, very upright stance. But off they go before I can introduce myself and check further into what we call

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Have you Forgotten something ?



Membership renewals are due. Contact the Membership Secretary on 9785 2374 to find out if you are financial.

### Note from The Editor

Any person is encouraged to contribute to The Bushland Bulletin. Simply mail your article, letter, advertisement, pledge or other item to :-  
The Editor,  
PO Box 210  
Panania 2213  
e-mail: dmckay@optusnet.com.au

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themselves.

After watering one of the banksias fairly often, there has been an improvement, some flowers are attracting wattle birds and bees. The two mornings that we had a dense fog, it wetted the flowers considerably and this seemed to help the nectar supply. The Banksia "Giant Candles" next door also seemed to benefit from the wetting of the flowers.

Now it is winter and we have had a little rain so now the Red Wattlebirds, Eastern Spinebills, occasionally a single New Holland Honeyeater and even more seldom, two are seen on a more frequent feeding tempo. From the middle of June, through into early July, we've had the pleasure of watching the Silvereyes darting through the banksias, feeding only from the very base of the flowers.

Darryl McKay assures me such large flocks of perhaps 15 – 20+ birds are from Tasmania that migrate to South East Australia during winter. Food and water on a regular basis are essential to survival, so the birds must find it somewhere. Hence the need to migrate to dine on seasonal and climatic bursts of flowering and nectar production, or fruit and insects, etc.

City gardens alter the natural pattern somewhat by having a greater variation of food sources than the bushland because we have exotic plants from around the world in them. Many birds have adapted to sometimes temporary residence in our city because they are able to take refuge and find sustenance here, when food or water is in short

supply elsewhere. In fact many bird species are nomadic, they move about. Others find it a garden of Eden here in suburbia and stay.

What we must keep in mind is that too many people, gardeners like me included, are dangerously boosting the food supply for only part of the year by planting only such things as grevilleas, when we could be planting a mix of plants which provide adequate feed throughout the entire year.

Check out your garden, ask at the nursery to fill the gaps in natural food supply and become a real haven in times of famine and drought. Most people will only have room for shrubs, up to perhaps callistemon at 3 or 4 metres tall, but for those that have some space, a eucalypt in flower is a mighty big food supply for 1 or 2 months, plus snacks provided by insects and honeydew.

Plant a patch of native grass instead of putting out bird seed to feed sparrows etc. Avoid leaving cat and dog food outside, it only encourages introduced birds, including that pest the Indian Mynah. Put in a bird bath, high enough so the birds can see the cat coming.

But getting back to my original question about the banksias. Drought and a plant's defence mechanism to counter this stressful condition do appear to be the culprit here, but then, what do you think? As for myself, I will continue to explore and ponder over the wonders of this evolutionary process of reproduction, adaptation and survival.

### ***Tylophora woollsii* recently discovered in Bankstown.**

This species has not been recorded in the Sydney region since the mid 19th century.



*Tylophora woollsii*  
Norfolk Reserve 17-09-2004



Harry sitting under *Tylophora woollsii* at Norfolk Reserve  
17-09-2004

## GOVERNMENT to SELL GEORGES RIVER up the CREEK

by Colin Gibson

The future of the Mill Creek bushland owned by the Commonwealth Department of Finance is looking very uncertain indeed. Although the Federal Government is prepared to see the land added to the Georges River National Park, the State Government is expected to pay for the acquisition via the National Parks & Wildlife Service. If market prices are asked then there is no hope of the cash-strapped NPWS paying for

the land.

Not surprisingly the State Government is not prepared to pay for land that is already owned by the public, arguing that the Federal Government should not offer for sale public land to the public, especially such environmentally significant land, home to an abundance of wildlife including wallabies, koalas and quolls and a host of rare flora.

Local environment groups are also feeling betrayed. Sharyn Cullis, secretary of the Georges River Environmental Alliance was quoted recently in the Sydney morning Herald (4

– 10 – 04), that the “Federal Government had shown no real stewardship towards the land, spent nothing on its protection and allows its constant degradation by allowing four-wheel drives and trail bikes in there every weekend. Since the land was taken from the people of New South Wales early last century and resumed for military purposes it should be given back. The Federal Government has no right to financial gain from its sale.”

It seems the saga is far from over, and we'll be following developments keenly.

## NEW GRANT FOR WETLAND HABITAT RESTORATION

Bankstown Bushland Society has been successful in obtaining a grant of \$9,631.82 from the Commonwealth Government Envirofund for 2004-05. Most of the money will be spent in employing a team of fully qualified bush regenerators to remove invasive woody weeds and annuals from the Milperra Wetland Complex.

The Society has committed to working at the site in equal value

to the Envirofund grant and Bankstown City Council will also contribute to the work. Some planting may be done if required, but most of the work entails removal of weeds so that the endemic, natural vegetation can survive and flourish in the long term.

This freshwater wetland, which encroaches into Airport and Ashford Reserves and the corner of Henry Lawson Drive and

Milperra Road, is all that remains of the original wetland habitat on the mid-Georges River floodplain, after years of land reclamation, filling and rubbish dumping.

The vegetation is typical of a freshwater wetland transition zone but after years of neglect, except twice yearly activities at the site by our members, is heavily infested with exotic plants.



BBS members carrying out bush regen at the Wetlands



White-faced Heron on nest at the Wetlands, November 2004

## The Age of Weeds: Let's declare war before it's too late.

*By Julian Cribb*

Humans are the vectors of weeds. It is our failure of stewardship, our failure to even see what is going on before our very eyes that is the cause of this problem. For example, of the 6,600 plant species, which are presently permitted to be imported into Australia, over 4,000 are known agricultural or environmental weeds. They include beauties like Bridal Creeper, *Parkinsonia*, and – wait for it – no fewer than 69 strains of blackberry! All perfectly legit.

Roughly one-in-ten of all the plants introduced into Australia eventually turn out to be a serious weed. Collectively, they now smother about 20 million hectares – which is 35 per cent more than the total predicted area of dry land salinity. Today it takes the entire export earnings of the gold industry, just to pay for the damage weeds inflict on the economy. And this is only the start.

In 200 years Australia will have ceased to exist. There will be a large rock with a recognizably Australian outline, but it will be submerged beneath a green tide of alien botanical life forms that will, in the course of their conquest, have eliminated every hairy-nosed wombat, koala, corroboree frog, wollemi pine, Richmond birdwing and bellbird on the planet. Australians will be a race of transplants in a transplanted land unless we learn to see now what is taking place right now in our bush landscape our grandchildren will never behold.

The average Aussie does not

think weeds are a problem.

The very word implies something feeble and inconsiderable – a nuisance – not the Agent Orange of ecosystem obliteration, which some of them become. Yet they are our gravest environmental threat, and we invest only a fraction of the effort in controlling them, compared with tackling salinity, a less widespread problem.

As a science communicator, I can only say that if we hope to control the “Green Death” – the wholesale landscape destruction which weeds cause – we must first muster the Australian people to the cause. Currently weeds are rated at about 20<sup>th</sup> in a list of our environmental problems, which is another way of saying: They're not on the public or political radar. Raising awareness will require long and repetitive discussion of the threat, its nature, its extent and its consequences. And its ultimate costs – financial, social and environmental.

It will involve engaging the public's interest and enthusiasm. It will require their willing partnership, their sense of ownership of the issue. It took an Ian Kiernan to call the children of Australia to compel the adults to “Clean Up Australia”. Who is the Kiernan of weeds? Who is to lead the children of Australia on a campaign to root out and destroy every pestiferous patch that threatens our sacred landscape?

When will the politicians in their first-class airline seats and comfy

air-conditioned limousines, who seldom in a lifetime set Gucci-shod foot in the real Bush, realize that they are presiding over the irreversible ruin of our land? Who is to tell them?

I hereby anoint every reader an Evangelist of Weeds. Whatever else you may do in your profession, you are now a Chosen One, and you must win one convert a day for the rest of your lives. On your deathbed, convert the padre who comes to give you final unction.

On a more serious note, arousing the Australian people and their governments to the imminence and magnitude of this threat is our most pressing task. Only when we have succeeded will there be resources to do the science that checks the weeds. I end by declaring, not so much a War on Terror, as a War on Weeds.

**\*Edited transcript of a presentation to the Australian weeds Conference, Wagga Wagga, NSW, September 6, 2004.**




**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](mailto:dmckay@optusnet.com.au)**




## GIVE THE IBIS A GO AT GILLAWARNA

by Colin Gibson

Have people noticed how much down are the numbers of Sacred Ibis at Lake Gillawarna this season? It is not, I assure the reader, due to the wasteful \$40,000 spent by Council on destroying habitat and nests. It may well be that the Ibis made their own decision: given the alleviation of the drought in certain parts of the inland the ibis simply did not need to nest at Gillawarna in such numbers as in preceding years. The fact is that when the drought was most severe, the Ibis abandoned many of their inland nesting sites for the safety and security of Lake

Gillawarna. So was the reaction really necessary?

Obviously they had a need to be there and did not come to spread salmonella and frighten the ducks. Now that conditions have improved to a degree, many have returned to their familiar nesting sites; too late for the trees cut down by council even before the ratification of the management policy, and sad that the trees' only crime was that the birds liked to roost in them.

The Bushland Society has written to NPWS to cease the destruction of Sacred Ibis habitat at Lake Gillawarna, to slash no more reed beds nor cut down any more trees. We have asked that no further licences to collect or

remove eggs or to destroy nests be issued.

Increasing numbers of people believe that Lake Gillawarna is a suitable place for the ibis, and that claims made against them of being spreaders of disease and destroyers of natural habitat are unfounded. The presence of the ibis has established a natural control over weed species such as blackberry and balloon vine. The Lake Gillawarna Sacred Ibis nesting site is one of the great wildlife spectacles of the Georges River wetlands

**A petition to save the Ibis is being organised by local resident Alan Cronin. Anyone wishing to support the petition can contact Alan on Phone: 9724 0008.**

### \$40,000 worth of habitat destruction at Lake Gillawarna



### CLEAN-UP AUSTRALIA DAY

**March: 6th. Clean-up Australia Day at Louisa Reserve. Meet in Carysfield Road next to entrance of Velodrome.**

## BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

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 PROGRAM

**January to July 2005**

**NB: All activities commence at 9.30am.**

**MONTH:**

**1<sup>st</sup> MONDAY:**

**3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY (except Dec)**

MONTH:	1 <sup>st</sup> MONDAY:	3 <sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY (except Dec)
<b>JANUARY</b>		<b>16<sup>th</sup>: East Hills Park.</b> A sweep through the new area sectioned off from mowing. Meet in the car park in Cook Crescent.
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup>: Padstow Park.</b> Regen. under Ironbark forest. Meet adjacent Banks Street.	<b>20<sup>th</sup>: The Crest of Bankstown.</b> Volunteer support of the grant program. Meet in car park opposite athletics complex (via McLean Street).
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup>: Lansdowne Reserve.</b> Volunteer support for grant program. Meet in car park at Lansdowne Road.	<b>20<sup>th</sup>: Lambeth Park.</b> Continuation of follow-up at 'The Steps'. Meet in car park of Henry Lawson Drive.
<b>APRIL</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup>: Norfolk Reserve, Chullora.</b> Continuation of work at Woolworths gate entrance, Meet adjacent Norfolk Road.	<b>17<sup>th</sup>: Milperra Wetland/Ashford Reserve/Airport Reserve.</b> Meet at Milperra Wetland, cnr. Henry Lawson Drive & Milperra Road.
<b>MAY</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup>: The Crest.</b> Volunteer support of The Crest grant. Meet in car park opposite athletics complex (via McLean Street)	<b>15<sup>th</sup>: Smith Park, East Hills.</b> Follow-up continues. Meet in car park off Lehn Road.
<b>JUNE</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup>: Norfolk Reserve, Chullora.</b> Follow-up at Woolworths gate entrance.	<b>19<sup>th</sup>: Back to Yeramba.</b> Combined regen. day with Friends of Yeramba Lagoon. Meet at end of Kennedy Street, Picnic Point.
<b>JULY</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup>: Lansdowne Reserve.</b> Volunteer support of Lansdowne grant. Meet in car park at Lansdowne Road.	<b>17<sup>th</sup>: Milperra Wetland/Ashford Reserve/Airport Reserve.</b> Meet at Milperra Wetland, cnr. Henry Lawson Drive & Milperra Road.

**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**