

THE BUSHLAND BULLETIN[©]

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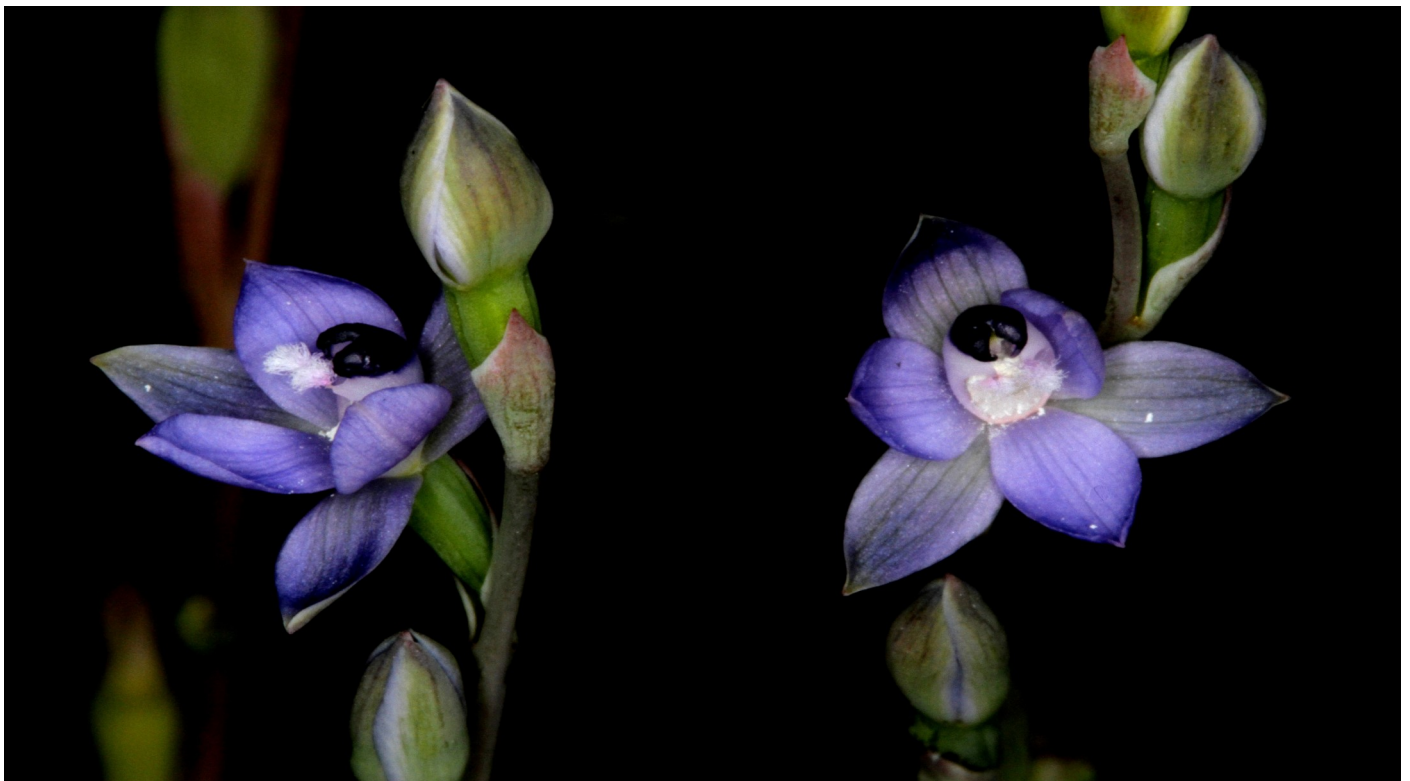
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“Funnel Web” Orchid in Canterbury-Bankstown by Col Gibson

A chance post of a mystery sun orchid on the Facebook NSW Native Plant Identification page last year reminded me of a picture Darryl McKay had taken of an anomalous looking sun orchid at Picnic Point in 2015. Matching it to the Facebook post, it turned out to be an undescribed species in the *Thelymitra pauciflora* complex previously known only from a few locations around the central coast.

Botanist Boris Branwhite, who is working on the taxonomy of this species, has given it the manuscript name *Thelymitra* sp. nov. “*atrax*”. This name is derived from the pincer-like post anther lobe extensions which very much resemble the black fangs of the Funnel Web Spider genus *Atrax*. Darryl’s 2015 find consisted of a single plant, but last year he found a second population further up the river.

This second population consisted of four plants, two of which are pictured here. The flower is small, less than two centimetres across. These Georges River occurrences represent a significant extension of the known range of this rare and seldom seen species.



2020 Roundup

by Chris Dewhurst

In 2020 the Society held six meetings; however, due to Covid, only one of these was held in person. The online meetings consisted of four to six people. Whilst some people preferred the convenience of this format, most felt it an inferior experience, especially from maintaining a social perspective to the Society. It is to be hoped that the restrictions will be lifted in 2021 enough for us to return to our regular meeting room.

The Society made comment on a number of issues via correspondence throughout the year. This included bushland protection advocacy in the following areas:

Yeramba Lagoon, Riverlands Golf Course, Wonga Smith's Bush at Milperra, the Moorebank Intermodal, the Draft Canterbury-Bankstown Consolidated Local Environment Plan, review of the Federal Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act, review of the *Hibbertia puberula subsp. glabrescens* (Bankstown Airport) Management Plan, and the State government's Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan.

We also wrote to the Minister for Planning regarding private development potentially affecting Airport Reserve at Milperra and provided advice for East Hills Girls High School's *Eucalyptus beyeriana* bush regeneration project.

Our president, Ashlie Stevenson, addressed the Local Planning Panel with regard to the Deed of Agreement for Riverlands between Canterbury-Bankstown Council and the developer; while vice-president, Skye Virgin, addressed the LPP with regard to the Draft Consolidated Local Environment Plan. Skye also represented the Society at the Annual Conference of the Nature Conservation Council and gave an address on the need for Environmental zoning to protect areas of ecological significance in our area.

Our Clean Up Australia Day was once again at Ashford Reserve, with bush regeneration ongoing at Monash Reserve, Yeramba Lagoon, Lambeth Park and Deepwater Park. Thanks to all who pitched in. The arrangement with Council to work the fourth Tuesday of the month as a Bushcare team, though suspended due to Covid for much of the year, resumed in October.

We are grateful to C-B Council Bushcare team leader, Peter Goss, for his valued support here.

I would like to thank Karlo Taliana for the important job of recording meeting minutes, and Col Gibson for his consistent support and work in preparing a great deal of the correspondence. A special thanks to our long-serving treasurer, John Gibson, who stepped down from the role at the November AGM. Thank you, John, for your outstanding work and good luck to Karlo who is stepping into the role of treasurer.

Here's to 2021, may it be a good year for the bush and for all.

Chris Dewhurst

Secretary,
Bankstown Bushland Society.



The NSW Government's Cumberland Plain Conservation Plan – remodelling western Sydney for developers

by a biodiversity expert (per Greater Sydney Landcare Network, September 2020).

This Plan is essentially about biobanking and offsets. It will transform a very large proportion of the Cumberland Plain. It is a plan about development. It already has locked in outcomes – and yet is only proposed. It is a conglomeration of business and government.

Penrith and south west Sydney will be the hardest hit. Penrith will be double the size in dwellings. Cobbity Hills, which currently has the biggest private area of Cumberland Plain Woodland left will be taken out. Wianamatta Regional Park will effectively be cut in two. 9km of South Creek will be taken out for a highway – although elevated, the highway will go over the riparian/ bushland sides of the creek, cutting across it several times. 10,500ha of rural land will be destroyed – industrial agriculture will dominate with sheds the size of a km squared. 1014ha of CPW is proposed for clearing to make way for development.

This is greater than 10% of a critically endangered threatened ecological community (currently illegal under the federal law). Wildlife will be isolated. There will be 50 forced evictions. Barriers will stop Koala re-colonisation. Without the CPCP development would continue to

go ahead one by one, which is harder for the developers. This Plan is proposing blanket approval for development across western Sydney. Better outcomes for the environment would arise with individual developments.

The state government is offering four offsets to relieve the loss of CPW, including land parcels on sandstone (not shale). Koala additions – which are beneficial, but 50% of this offering is already under reservation including confluence land and wasteland.

Development is locked in in this Plan, but not the offsetting. There is no staging of the development. The budget

offering is far too low. Land under local government reservation is being re-packaged and offered as offsets. Previous western Sydney growth areas had staging and good budgets. Connectivity is completely overlooked.

We need to aim for: 500m wide koala corridors at Mt Gilead – this is a core corridor for the Koalas merging west; additional 2km tunnel to save Wianamatta Regional Park; Cobbitty tunnel to the north and south; Corridors to be a priority in the offsetting; a fair budget locked in; staging development; new offsets – not already public land; conservation of what remains, not revegetation; no taxpayer subsidies.



Tide Turns at Yeramba Lagoon

by Col Gibson

An important step in the restoration of the natural functioning of Yeramba Lagoon was completed in November when OEH through the National Parks & Wildlife Service opened the lagoon to tidal influences for the first time in more than half a century. This and extensive weed removal was made possible by grants and Green Army funding obtained by Federal member for East Hills, the Hon. David Coleman.

The high tide now reaches up to about the mid point of the lagoon with the low receding to reveal what were formerly mudflats occupied by mangroves. Aquatic weeds are dead or dying. Water quality is clearer than it has been for decades, aquatic weeds are dead or dying and mullet are now seen in the lagoon.

The fringing swamps also seem to be benefiting from the return

of the tides and lower overall water levels. These swamps are a complex of estuarine species, including *Melaleuca ericifolia* paperbark swamp scrub and fresh water sedge swamps dominated by *Cladium procerum*, *Gahnia clarkei*, *Telmatoblechnum indicum*, *Gleichenia dicarpa* and *Eleocharis spp.*

These swamps seem likely to expand. A particularly good thing about *Cladium procerum* is that it seems to be resistant to invasion by *Ludwigia*.

The fern *Telmatoblechnum indicum* occurs here at its upstream limit in the Georges River estuary. The fact that most of the Australian Virtual Herbarium records of this species in the Botany Bay and Georges River catchment are very old (late 19th and early 20th centuries), suggests that the species has been lost from much of its known range in the estuary. It also suggests that the species does not occur opportunistically and that it has always been present in long

established fringing sedge swamps including here at Yeramba. The natural occurrence of these sedge swamps can be attributed to the supply of freshwater from intermittent rills draining the ridgetop heath on the eastern slopes above the lagoon.

Mechanical removal and spraying has eliminated most of the invasive *Ludwigia peruviana* from the lagoon. It was the dominance of this species that triggered the calls for action to save the lagoon in 2015. It is hard to believe that so much has been achieved since then, but *Ludwigia* still hangs in around the fringes of the lagoon and there is no better time than now to finish it off.

The Society's involvement with volunteer weed removal at Yeramba through its support of the Friends of Yeramba Lagoon dates back to October 1994. In the years following, much was achieved; among the chief targets of this work were privet, honeysuckle, lantana, *Ochna serrulata* and *Asparagus aethiopicus*. The Green Army gave this effort a significant boost in the Swamp Mahogany Forest at the head of the lagoon by removing a substantial quantity of privet from the area. The Society will continue to advocate for the continuation of bush regeneration work at the head of the lagoon and around its bush margins.



Protecting Bushland in Liverpool

by Ian Bailey

At the Nature Conservation Council Annual Conference in October, NSW Bush Carers moved to protect bushland in Liverpool Local Government Area: that the NCC advise Liverpool City Council of the almost total clearing of native bushland including Endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland in the Liverpool LGA and call for the preservation of all remaining native trees, shrubs and grasslands and the restoration of degraded areas zoned Environmental Protection (RE1).

During the last decade, 2010 to 2020, large areas of native bushland have been cleared for what is termed Significant Infrastructure. Apart from the total clearing of bushland for housing estates, major sections have been cleared to accommodate large businesses and commercial projects

including the Moorebank Container Intermodal, 125 ha (loss of hundreds of trees and koala habitat), Western Sydney Airport 3,000 ha (loss of 1,000s of trees including endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland), widening of access roads to the east from Badgerys Creek for the loss of 100s of trees, Inglis Horse Stables, Warwick Farm, 80 ha (loss of ancient Forest Red Gums, valuable habitat trees) and Warehousing Warwick Farm, Governor Macquarie Drive 80 ha (further loss of old habitat trees).

By Council's own reckoning, less than 7% of original native bush remains in the LGA. Liverpool was founded in 1810 by Lachlan Macquarie when removal of bush was deemed necessary to provide for farmland and grazing. At no time in the history of Liverpool since has any section of bush been declared protected by zoning as a National Park (with the exception of a small part of the Georges River National Park at Sandy Point.

It must be recorded that Liverpool City Council has supported the restoration of a number of sites in the LGA by contract bush regeneration and by supervised volunteer effort. There have been 35 or more sites improved in the last few years, some in a worse condition than others.

Liverpool Action Group Inc. (LAG Environment Group) has, over the last five years, removed lantana and other woody weeds and vines along a kilometre of the banks of the Georges River and planted 4,500 trees, shrubs and grasses. Some local and state government funding has been of assistance. However, none of these sites are protected as a Nature Reserve or National Park and we ask that the Liverpool City Council, with haste, apply to protect all remaining stands of native bushland.



The Sign of the Axe

by Myles Dunphy

(extract from *The Katoomba Daily*, August 24, 1934).

The task of subjugating wilderness in the past was reckoned to be a manful job. Sturdy men and trusty axes, confronted with primeval bushland, steadily hewed a wide and wasteful way though it and out the other side. Later on, tree destruction became a kind of national complexus, it went altogether too far; it became spiteful. For some settlers the very zenith of land 'improvement' was a holding absolutely short of trees – a grassy desert. Rain-drags never were considered; wind-breaks rarely. Sometimes a settler – after much travail might plant a couple of pine trees for a little shade which he thought his beasts might need.

In the early days, wilderness was considered to be Public Enemy No. 1. There were no half measures about the way our fathers dealt with land cover – or the creatures thereof. Tour the country now and grieve for some of the results. Progress here was built upon ten million log-fires, half a million bright-edged axes and a continuity of steady effort. We have to admire the energetic determination of our honoured progenitors, whist wishing they had mixed a little more intelligence with their plain and fancy and all too-proficient axe-work.

The trouble today is that too many persons have the same old '40's and '70's yearning to sink an axe, in one second, into the butt of a tree which may have taken any time from 40 to 200 years to grow. Far too many of those fires still smoke; far too many axes and saws are in evidence. The inherited part of four generations still hinders our national intellect. It is inevitable that very soon we shall follow the same path of painful realisation already taken by other countries. Like them, we may be able to reduce our loss by unhesitatingly grabbing our tracts of scenic wilderness whilst there remains any wilderness to grab. The matter is urgent. Why?



Myles Dunphy 1953

Because – viewed nationally – those log-fires we spoke about now constitute National Enemy No. 1; the axe is National Enemy No. 2, No. 3 Enemy is not far behind; it is production beyond demand, and this includes unnecessary roads – even emergency relief work roads. Especially into goodly, scenic places best suited for preservation as primitive wilderness; not so much for the

people of to-day, but rather for the more necessitous people of the future. The world was not made for any one particular generation alone. Whether we like it or not, we hold our land in trust for our successors.

This is the Age of Conservation; it follows an Age of Wastefulness. Few of the younger countries halted the devastation in time, but most are making a valiant though belated effort to save something of the natural adjuncts of the land, before the aspect of nature changes to the great misfortune of the human race. This is not fancy, but all-too obvious fact to interested minds.

We cannot really live for commerce alone, nor will our civilisation be deemed great until we thoroughly recognise the fact that the bushlands and all they naturally contain are gifts of Nature far transcending in value all

monetary and commercial considerations. The humanising gifts of Nature are necessary for our interest, education, adventure, romance and peace of mind. They constitute the antidote for the evils of our semi-artificial existence. As we destroy our bushland environment we destroy just so much of ourselves. The balance of Nature is finely adjusted; upset it, and there will be a desert at our doors.



***Check out BANKSTOWN
BUSHLAND SOCIETY on
FACEBOOK***

The BBS Facebook page provides us opportunities for posting information relevant to the natural environment and flora and fauna of our bushland regeneration projects, nature walks and such. Anyone interested in the Georges River and bushland generally is welcome to join our page.

ELECTRONIC BULLETINS

The Bushland Bulletin is available to subscribers in hard copy or digital form or both. To obtain a digital copy all you have to do is send your email address to the Editor (see front cover).

ADVANCED NOTICE for CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY Sunday 7th March

This year we aim to do Walshaw Park (Herbert Crabtree Reserve). Meet in Miriam Street off Hector Street, Bass Hill, 9.00am. To confirm, please contact Skye on 0411584295, or Col at greenaisance1@gmail.com.

Bush regen with CBC BUSHCARE:

Bush regen at Monash Reserve, East Hills, off Henry Lawson Drive, every fourth Tuesday of the month from 9.30 am to 12.00 noon.

Keep an eye out on Facebook for notices of other regen activities during the year.

Salt Pan Creek Walk

An easy stroll along the Salt Pan Creek (Pat Rogan) Walkway through bushland and wetland, Saturday 30th January. Meet at the bottom of Alma Road Padstow at 9.00am.

MEETINGS

Bushland Society meetings are normally held at Padstow Progress Hall, Ryan Road, Padstow, on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (except December & January), in the WAL BROWNING MEETING ROOM at rear of hall. HOWEVER, due to CORONAVIRUS restrictions, meetings will not be held at the Hall until further notice. In the meantime meetings will take place at private residences. Members wanting to attend need to give notice to Secretary Chris Dewhurst on cdewhurst2626@gmail.com or ring Skye on 0411584295.

BANKSTOWN BUSHLAND SOCIETY COMMITTEE for 2021

President:

Ashlie Stevenson

Vice President:

Skye Virgin: 0411584295

Secretary:

Chris Dewhurst

Assistant Secretary:

Colin Gibson: 9788 6232

Treasurer:

Karlo Taliana:

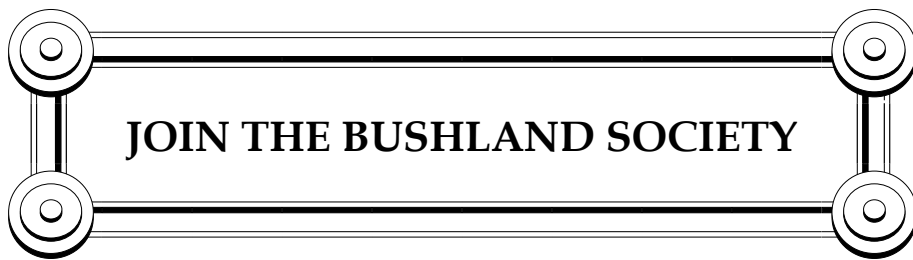
Committee Members:

Wal Browning
Darryl McKay
Ian Bailey

Bushland Bulletin

Editor:

Colin Gibson



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

Bankstown Bushland Society has lobbied effectively for the protection of bushland and the natural environment since 1988. By joining the Society you can make an important contribution to our local environment.



I wish to join

Bankstown Bushland Society Inc:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode _____

Telephone No. _____

Email: _____

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

Membership fees

Family/Group - \$20

Ordinary - \$15

Concession - \$10

"student/unwaged/pensioner"

Send payment to:

**The Secretary,
Bankstown Bushland Society Inc.
PO Box 210
Panania NSW 2213**

Or pay by direct transfer to

**BSB 512 170 Account Number 100087319, AND put
your name on the transfer form.**

Enquiries: greenaissance1@gmail.com



**Bankstown Bushland Society
Inc.
PO Box 210
Panania NSW 2213**

