



ISSUE 6

PORT MACQUARIE LANDCARE GROUP INC.

SPRING 2012

## Site Health Assessments



The dogs are barking it: Nobbys Beach is the "most improved" Landcare project, with its health more than 300% better than it was at the start! The success of this new and challenging project was shown in Bill Peel's annual health report. At the November Landcare meeting, Bill said Nobbys has seen big changes, through endless hours of Landcare work by a happy, social group (and their dogs). Other sites had inspiring results too. Timber Ridge, Widderson and Rushcutter have all improved by more than 200%

Of course all our Landcare sites are winners and Bill took the opportunity to say, "Congratulations to each and every one of you! You have done a fantastic job." The advances that our volunteers have made are recognised in Bill's chart below.

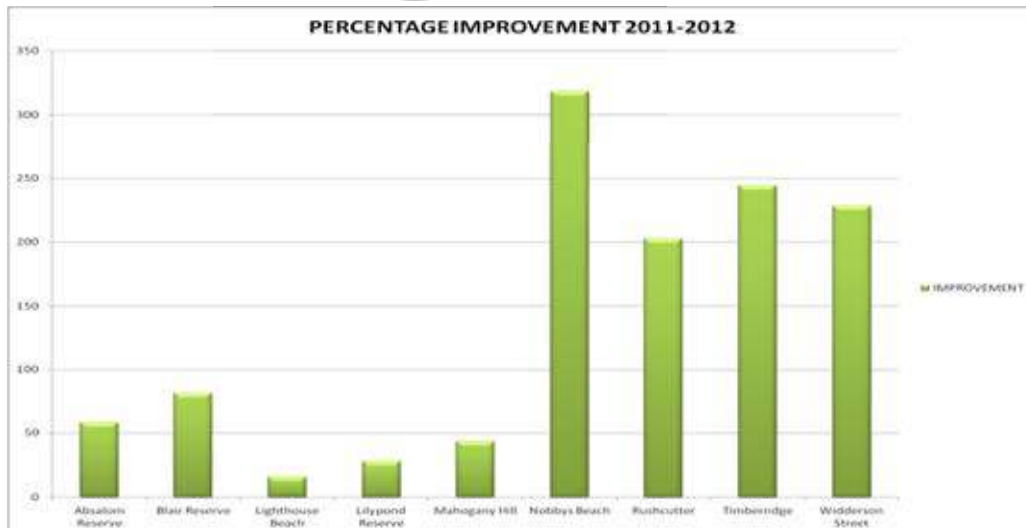


Measuring progress is the reason we do health assessments. Landcare and Council can see where resources are needed to bring the sites closer to 'maintenance' - the state where Landcare hands the site over to Council's team. Already Timber Ridge and Rushcutter have graduated to maintenance, along with Absalom.

Many things are taken into account when measuring health as each site is different. It's history, where it sits in the landscape and catchment, how well it's connected and what the neighbours do are all important. Other factors include the presence of Endangered Ecological Communities and Threatened Species, weeds and soil seed banks, and maybe a fire regime. Management, how far the site has progressed, and what resources it has (money and labour) are also considered.

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PERCENTAGE IMPROVEMENT 2011-2012



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# Site Health Assessments



**Absalom Reserve** started in 2009, has had \$137,610 worth of volunteer work and funding of \$9542. The aims were to enhance the subtropical flood-plain forest corridor, encourage *Melaleuca biconvexa*, and manage erosion – ferns are now germinating in the exposed clay banks where they have no competition.

**Blair Reserve** started in 2004 when Council built a boardwalk. It has had \$339,364 of volunteer work (9172 hours) and funding of \$17,993. Blair is famous for turning bare drainlines into stable, vegetated corridors - soft engineering. Weeds including *Syngonium* are being controlled, dumping and encroachments have stopped and there is a high quality BMX track for kids.

**Hastings School** project started in 2006 with P&C working bees removing Camphor Laurel and Lantana. It was nurtured by a students' Environment Club, and became a Landcare project with six volunteers. Environmental Levy Funding and NRMA funding helped with regeneration and planting,

enhancing the education of students. This site will link up with Yarranabee restoration works.

**Lilypond** started 16 years ago with Ken and Yvonne Errington aiming to turn lantana jungle into a rainforest like Sea Acres. They started the Landcare group and pioneered our partnership with Council, building a boardwalk and establishing a native forest with plenty of natural regeneration and copious wildlife. It is at the top of the Yarranabee catchment project.

**Lighthouse Beach** has been tended by Dunecare volunteers since about 1990, with countless volunteer hours and more than \$70,000 funding for this large, challenging area. Contractors were engaged to control woody, vine and grass weeds, with ongoing Bitou control. Council is now responsible for the section from the surf club to Vendul Crescent and for the "Camel Corner" end while Landcare volunteers work in the central Dunecare areas. The aim is a healthy corridor with regenerating Littoral Rainforest.

**Mahogany Hill** started 12 years ago, with 2000 volunteer hours so far, and \$4990 in funding. Weeds were controlled in the Eucalypt forest, the bare quarried area has been cleaned up and replanted, and it's now an important green corridor.

**Nobbys Beach** has grown rapidly and now has 30 volunteers, working in partnership with Council to benefit from a grant this year of \$100,000 from NSW Government Environmental Trust.

**Rushcutter Reserve** started in 2005 in the middle of the catchment, has seen 7000 volunteer hours, and received \$5,900 in funding. Private land was part of the wetland weed problems, Taro being the worst weed. Mown areas were turned into koala habitat with violets as ground cover.

**Timber Ridge** was started in 2003 by Landcarer Noel Kinny, and his achievements were supplemented with Landcare team work from 2010, along with \$1,000 in funding. The Subtropical Rainforest was restored to health, a *Madiera* infestation was controlled and mown areas were taken back.

**Widderson Street** started in 2007, adjacent to Westport High and Westport Primary schools. With 612 volunteer hours, and funding of \$361, regeneration has replaced mown areas. Koalas are already using the young trees in this green corridor.

*More words of wisdom from Bill: "If sites slide backwards it's a waste of all your time, so when direction has to change, 'take the medicine' so as not to dishonour all the hard work that's gone before."*

- Julie Ho





## President's Report



The start of the summer growing season is upon us. This is when the weeds usually

start to outpace our ability to keep up, but this year it should be different. The Health Assessments of our sites conducted over the last couple of months have shown that all of them are in good condition. This, combined with our strong volunteer numbers and the increased skill of those volunteers, mean the weeds won't stand a chance of getting ahead of us.

The sheer scope of the works on Wrights and Yarrabee Creeks has meant that we have needed to use machines more than ever before. The 'Tritter' or 'Forestry Mower' contractor has been a great find. Mel Losh had engaged this person to help establish Asset Protection Zones with such success that she was happy to refer him to us. He has removed huge

weed loads from these new sites and turned branches from weed tree removal into mulch, enabling us to plant into the mown area where we were unable to get mulch delivered. He has also felled large *Grevillea robusta* (Silky Oaks) on Pacific Drive 6. (If you go to YouTube and type in 'landcareportmac tritter' you can see the video of this machine in action). We have also had a bobcat and excavator into areas the Tritter cannot get to. The neighbours of these new sites have also been supportive with many of them giving us welcome practical assistance including access to water for our plantings, toilet facilities, morning tea and removal of adjacent weeds.

The Christmas Party was our biggest yet with 83 people turning out to celebrate the year's achievements. Thor Asso, Natural Resources Officer from Council summarised our significant growth – members, projects and grant funding – in 2012. Certificates were awarded to many members in recognition of a lot of dedication and hard work, including the ACES team who were there with us for the first time. Each guest received a *Hibbertia scandens* seedling as a gift from the Nursery Team.

I was honoured to be awarded a life membership of Landcare in recognition of my 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with this wonderful organisation.

Thank you to all volunteers and supporters, past and present, who together help make Landcare such a great organisation to be a part of. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and may the future bring more of us together to help our precious environment.

-Estelle Gough

[nursery@landcareportmac.com.au](mailto:nursery@landcareportmac.com.au)



## A Parent's Thank You



"I wanted to say Thank you to all the Landcare volunteers and ACES Carers who make it possible for my daughter Jessica Beresford to volunteer with Landcare. Jessica loves working with you all and looks forward to her Mondays and Saturdays or Sundays that she works with Landcare. Not only do you do wonderful things for the community but you are a wonderful caring group of people."

Nat Green posted this message on Port Macquarie Landcare Group Inc.'s timeline

## Fast Facts

- ◆ Real Christmas trees are an all-Australian product. Most artificial trees are manufactured in Korea, Taiwan or Hong Kong.
- ◆ Real trees are a renewable, recyclable resource. Artificial trees contain non-biodegradable plastics and metals.
- ◆ For every real Christmas tree harvested, 2-3 seedlings are planted in its place. Each hectare provides the daily oxygen requirements of 45 people.

- Estelle Gough



# Native Plant: Guinea Flower



## *Hibbertia scandens*

This fast growing scrambler is very versatile in any garden, including those exposed to salt winds. It is seen in this photo as a hedge, scrambling in a thick curtain over existing plants or a trellis. It also makes excellent ground cover. It has stunning yellow flowers for most of the year that are followed by shiny orange fruit. Performing well in areas as diverse as coastal dunes, Eucalypt forests and rainforests it flowers best in full sun but will grow successfully in semi-shaded areas.

- Estelle Gough [nursery@landcareportmac.com](mailto:nursery@landcareportmac.com).



*Hibbertia scandens*  
fruit



*Hibbertia scandens*  
flowers

# Weed: Asparagus Fern



## *Asparagus aethiopicus*

**Origin:** A native of southern and eastern Africa, it was introduced to Australia in the late 19th Century as a garden and pot plant.

**Description:** A perennial shrub or scrambler which forms a dense, compact mass of tuberous roots, it has hardy, almost spiky "leaves" which are flattened stems called cladodes that assume the same functions as a leaf.

**Flowers:** These are white to pale pink, bell-shaped to 4mm long. It flowers in late summer.

**Fruit:** The fruit is a round, bright, shiny red berry to 6mm in diameter with one to a few black seeds which are indigestible to birds, making birds an effective dispersal mechanism.

**Dispersal:** It readily grows from pieces (containing rhizome) and spreads into bush from dumped garden waste. Seeds are spread by water as well as birds. Berries will ripen if left on the ground.

**Ecology notes:** As this is a shade tolerant plant able to live in clay and sandy soils it is a weed of urban bushland and a significant threat. It can invade relatively intact forest systems and damage native



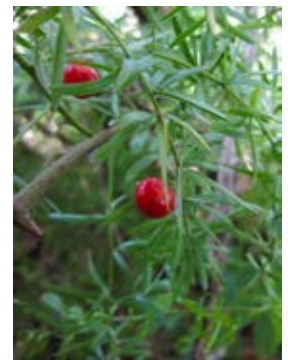
John Sherwood shows the choking root system

plant species by competing aggressively for soil moisture (which it stores in tubers), nutrients and space.

**Control:** With this species the crown (rhizome) is the critical part of the plant to locate and remove. The tubers, which are for water storage only, can be left in the ground as the plant cannot reproduce from these. **Manual Control:** With gloves cut stems 20cms above ground

so the crown is not lost. Check where the stems join the crown and with a knife or mattock remove the whole crown and any remaining tubers (which could help the plant recover). Bag and remove from site or hang in tree to dry out. **Chemical Control:** Seedlings may be sprayed with Glyphosate and penetrant and mature plants in active growth times may be sprayed with Glyphosate @ 10mls/litre water + penetrant or Metsulfuron methyl @ 1-1.5 gms/10 litres water. As it is such an adaptable, aggressive and damaging weed it should be dealt with urgently and mapped to check on seed bank germinations.

- Rex Moir 0429 680 131  
[jandrmoir@gmail.com](mailto:jandrmoir@gmail.com)



The fruit of *Asparagus aethiopicus*





## Meet Our Volunteers

My name is Tyler Jungblut, I am 14 years old and currently in Year 9. I joined Port Macquarie Landcare in April 2012.

To-date I have worked with Rex's team on Sunday mornings mainly at Blair Reserve (wading in the swamp) and Rushcutter Reserve.

I am participating in the Duke of Edinburgh award through my school St Paul's High and at present completing my Bronze level which has a volunteering component. One reason I chose to complete this component with Landcare is because my nan, Carol, volunteers with them also. It gives us both an opportunity to spend time together. As well as this, I gain satisfaction from helping to protect the bush and provide a healthier environment for the local wildlife.

I enjoy playing sports and keeping healthy. In particular, I play soccer and basketball, both for school and club. I like music (alternative rock, jazz and dubstep) and I have played the trumpet for 7 years with school and local bands. Music has provided me with many fantastic opportunities. Two years ago I had the opportunity to play in Hong Kong. Recently, I was lucky enough to travel to Los Angeles, California with one of these bands to perform on Hollywood Boulevard, Universal Studios and at Disneyland where our band participated in the Performing Arts program. Last year I was also given the opportunity to perform with James Morrison when he visited Port Macquarie.

I am looking forward to continuing my volunteer work with Landcare into the future as I have learnt a great deal about the different native and introduced flora, and the effects these have on our local environment.

- Tyler Jungblut



## An Interview with Paul Trundley



*Paul enjoys a mud bath at Blair*

Paul Trundley worked for a while in Port Macquarie some 8 years ago. After spending most of the time since then in China teaching and 'hanging out' he's returned for a while to enjoy the fishing and the beaches.

Centrelink 'encouraged' him to undertake some voluntary work and as an outdoor person he chose bush regeneration, in Wollongong and in Sutherland Shire in Sydney before moving to Port Macquarie and joining our Landcare group.

Having spent several years living on the edge of a wetland on the Central Coast he thought Blair Reserve wouldn't be a problem and immediately got stuck in to removing invasive species from the swamp. Sure, the team works in welly deep mud much of the time but we still don't understand how Paul gets covered in twice as much mud as anyone else. He claims it saves money on skin care products!

In morning tea breaks he's been talking a bit about life in China, offering insights he's gained from backpacking there and meeting ordinary people. After working in the mud at Blair Reserve he reckons he's now qualified to go planting in China's paddy fields when he goes back there in a couple of months time.





## What the Fungi?



### Subject: Auricularia Cornea

These funny little fungi remind me of "Shrek ears". They pop up everywhere on living trees and old stumps and I have even found them on deeply buried dead wood, growing through the dirt. Their colour ranges from pale brown to deep purple depending on where they are - if they are in full shade they are at the deep purple end of the spectrum but in direct or dappled sun light they are much paler, almost pink.

The top of the lobe is covered with a fine layer of hairs which make it look like velvet, while the underneath or fertile side has a smooth texture, like a puppy's ear. Spores are white, bean shaped and smooth. At 12-19um you would need about 166 lying end to end to cover the width of a pin head which is only 2mm wide - small but not the smallest by far.

When this fungus gets going it is spectacular - a fallen log covered with *Auricularia cornea* is a work of art!! They sometimes mould around each other for support, becoming distorted in order to grow. I have found them in most of the reserves I have been in, but very few fungi like the cold (and quite frankly, I don't blame them!!!) so they are seldom seen in winter.

While autumn is fruiting time for most fungi, spring rain may see some of them fruiting so have your eyes down and cameras ready. Don't forget to look up every now and then though - I've walked into quite a few low branches!

- Angela Millett



A fallen log covered with *Auricularia cornea*



## How sweet it is!

On a recent visit to our site at Capalla Court (Rushcutters) to check on the progress of the grass spraying I was approached by local resident Mr Charlie Gaherity enquiring about our plans for the site. During the course of the conversation he expressed his appreciation of our efforts, not only at Capalla, but

also the overall contribution made by Landcare as a whole.

As a token of his appreciation he presented me with a box containing a number of beautiful hand make chocolate cupcakes in various flavours which are made at home by his wife, Bertha. Tempted though I was, I resisted the urge to scoff the lot and instead took them to work next day - where Rex's team proceeded to scoff the lot. Lovely!!

It's nice to get a bit of feedback (pardon the pun). I thanked Mr Gaherity on behalf of Landcare and said I'd try to arrange a 'plug' in Habitatler.

So anyone with a sweet tooth and taste for the decadent can contact Mrs Gaherity on mobile 0407-391-829 or 6582-0738

and order some of her delicious cupcakes - they are recommended for that special treat and would make nice gifts.

As an aside and for those of you who follow the Rugby League, Mr Gaherity grew up in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs, played a lot of football with Bondi United and was a member of the Roosters 1975 President's Cup team.

Enjoy!  
- Ian Morrison





# A Landcarer's Garden



## Landcarer's urban garden – Clifton Drive

When I moved into this house two years ago the front yard had a lot of rock borders, very poor, dry soil and a smattering of exotic plants, including a hedge between my neighbour's front yard and mine. I took the whole lot out (with the somewhat perplexed blessing of my kind neighbour) and started completely from scratch by spreading gypsum, covering the ground with cardboard and topping this off with a very thick layer of mulch (which has been replenished three times). I then planted local native seedlings sourced mainly from the Landcare Nursery, and sprinkled pigeon poo (from the same neighbour) liberally about in autumn and spring.

This is the result after 18 months! Flourishing are Lamandra, Dianella, Senna, Native Hibiscus, Lillipilli, Lemon Myrtle, Hakea, Callistemon, Hardenbergia and Native Ginger. The broad-leafed Hibiscus is doing much better than the narrow-leafed one.

It is remarkable just how quickly it has been possible to create a micro-habitat on such a small patch of ground that is surrounded on all sides by bitumen, concrete, lawns and a smattering of exotic plants.

- Bev Sibthorpe



# House sitting

## Letter to Julie Ho from Landcarer Ian Jury

Hi Julie,

Road trip Port Macquarie to Yarrambat, Victoria completed safely, with slight delay at Eden, NSW while they put out bushfires along the road but no worries as humpback whales entertained us by leaping just a short way out to sea.

Mountain View is the place to be! [Our friends] Jane and Doug have given us a day's training and have now gone on holiday leaving us their beautiful house on a hill with views all over the countryside. We have 2 young grey kangaroos and a swamp wallaby to bottle feed outside, 3 young wombats in a pen outside who are pretty lively, a corella who is visited daily by choughs, lorikeets, galahs, ravens, and sulphur crested cockatoos, 2 little ringtail possums, one brushtail possum and 3 magpies and a blackbird who are due for release next week. Inside we have baby Melba and baby Banjo who we bottle feed and are trying to potty train. (Photos attached)



Ian and Melba

Otherwise after feeding, cleaning, playing with and lots of woolly pouch washing the day is our own.

There is a lot of what looks to me like Erhata grass here. I have tested it on wombats, grey kangaroos and swamp wallaby and all have eaten it! Perhaps your swampies need some education.

Will keep in touch, don't send us any more animals yet!

All the best,

Ian and Carol



Carol and Banjo



## Bush Regeneration and Fauna

In the rehabilitation works that we undertake, we change fauna habitat by removing some resources and replacing them with others. For the animals that occupy these sites this can be a challenging time and I am often asked "what happens to these species?"

The short answer is that we can never understand the full impact on all species because food webs and the ecology of weedy landscapes and the bush we aim to restore are so complex. However, logic would dictate that when removing or changing habitat rapidly, especially on small sites with limited opportunities for dispersal or alternative sites to occupy nearby, we should move cautiously. What information we do have regarding fauna impacts also supports a precautionary approach. Locally, that information has to do with birds.

To address the question we need to consider what we are trying to do with bush regeneration. Importantly, we are trying to remove ecological brakes that prevent the local ecology from moving forward and being self-sustaining. The most usual brakes are environmental weeds. The birds that occupy large areas of weeds are often different from those that will occupy the finished area of bush once it has been restored.

For example, birds that are common in Lantana thickets include wrens such as Superb Blue Wren, Variegated Blue Wren and White-browed Scrub Wren and the honeyeaters Lewins Honeyeater and Eastern Spinebill. Prospects even among this small group of birds vary according to what vegetation you intend to restore and there will be swings and roundabouts.

If the Lantana thicket is returning to rainforest, then White-browed Scrub Wrens, Lewins Honeyeaters and Eastern Spinebills will be favoured, but the Variegated and Superb Blue Wrens will have lost their habitat. If however, the regenerated habitat is to be grassland then the Superb Blue Wrens and Variegated Blue Wrens will be favoured while the White-browed Scrub Wrens, Lewins Honeyeater and the Eastern Spinebills will lose habitat.

But that is not all. With a shift from a weedy landscape to a new or restored habitat other birds come in to occupy the new homes that you have created. For example, conversion from Lantana to grassland creates new habitat for Red-backed Wrens, Black Cuckoo Shrikes, Square-tailed Kites etc.

For conversion from Lantana to rainforest the list is much, much larger, creating new habitat for the Brown Gerygone,

Brown Cuckoo Dove, Superb Fruit Dove, Rose-crowned Fruit Dove, Wompoo Pigeon, Satin Bowerbird, Regent Bowerbird, Noisy Pitta, Brush Turkey, Ciccabirds, Barred Cuckoo-shrikes, Varied Trillers, Drongos etc.

So the answer is complex and site-specific. Our charter and objective is to restore natural habitat for a wider range of species than can exist in weed dominated and collapsing ecosystems. The most widespread and adaptive species which use weedy areas can lose out, but our work conserves the others that have suffered most at our hands through habitat destruction.....and that is why we do bush regeneration.

- Bill Peel



Photo courtesy of Roz Anderson

## Blair Reserve Jumping

The Blair Street BMX track is now complete and the "mounds of dirt" have been turned into professional looking bike jumps. They were completed in time for the August school holidays and much appreciated by the local children who commented "The jumps are awesome, thank you so much!" The track upgrade is the result of Council's committed Parks and Recreation staff seeing an opportunity to combine their skills and resources with donations from businesses to make a real



Ben Olfers flying high over the Blair Reserve BMX jumps

physical, visual and environmental perspectives. This Landcare project commenced officially in 2004 with the construction of a raised boardwalk to which concrete paths have been progressively added. The voluntary work on the BMX track by Council staff complimented the 9,700 hours put into this site by Landcare over recent years. Walking paths now link Hart, Hassall and Pettit Streets and provide ready access to the oval and children's play equipment in Blair Street. The total area is 3.13 hectares.

- Bill Quaglio



difference for local kids. Council invested \$1,500 and a number of staff, in particular Trent Arnold and Shane Clarke, worked in their own time to extend that investment. The track is now much safer to use and has been designed for varied skill levels.

It has been very satisfying for all concerned to see Blair Reserve transformed and now enjoyed from



Work begins on the BMX jumps





# Local Fauna on our Sites

## Peron's Tree Frog (Emerald Spotted Tree Frog, Laughing Tree Frog)

These tree frogs are variable in colour and can change their colour. They are usually shades of grey and brown but can be almost white. Their thighs, armpits and groin are mottled yellow and black and they sometimes have emerald green spots on their back. Their eyes appear cross shaped - the only other Litoria species with eyes like this is Tyler's Tree Frog. Males (44-53 mm) are smaller than females (46-65 mm). Peron's Tree Frogs are found in forests, woodlands, shrub lands and open areas. They live in tree hollows, cracks and beneath flaking bark and are common near towns and cities where they breed in ponds or dams. Their range goes from southern Queensland through most of New South Wales into the northern parts of Victoria. Their call is a high pitched cackle.

- Roz Anderson



The Brown Cuckoo-Dove - also known as Brown Pheasant or Large-tailed Pigeon - is a long, slender, rainforest bird around 43cm long that is usually seen low in the trees. The female has a brighter chestnut cap and a scaly pattern on the breast. They raise a single offspring during their breeding season.

The Brown Cuckoo-Dove is found throughout north-eastern and eastern Queensland, including off-shore islands, and eastern coastal areas of New South Wales. Its range is expanding down the coast of New South Wales. It is also found in the Philippines, south through Borneo to Sumatra, and through the Moluccas and Sulawesi to New Guinea.

- Roz Anderson



This little critter was spotted at the Yarranabee site. To-date it hasn't been identified so any information would be appreciated.



This Leaf-tailed Gecko inhabits rainforests and lives inside large tree root systems and strangler fig hollows. It can drop its tail when threatened to confuse predators. Eventually a new tail will grow but it will be very different in colour and pattern. In late spring the female will lay one or two soft-shelled eggs which she buries in moist soil and leaf litter to prevent them drying out. Left unattended, the offspring hatch after three months and begin fending for themselves. They are fully mature after two years and can survive for eight years or more. - Roz Anderson



The Topknot Pigeon is a large, very distinctive bird with an unmistakable floppy crest on its head. It has a pale grey breast, dark grey wings and a slatey-black tail with one light grey band. Males and females are both about 41cm long and very similar in appearance. Their range stretches from far north Queensland to the south coast of NSW, but they have been seen as far south as Tasmania. Generally they are in flocks that can number in the hundreds, but on this occasion only two were seen. Topknot Pigeons spend most of their time in the rainforest canopy where they feed on the fruit of Figs, Lillypillies, Bangalow Palms and Blueberry Ash. Breeding season is from July to January when they build a nest of long, loose twigs high in the rainforest trees for the one large and slightly glossy egg that is laid. This bird was spotted by Harry Mitchell (our eagle-eyed bird-spotter) in a Cabbage Tree Palm in Rushcutter Reserve (off Capalla Court).

- Roz Anderson



## Spiny Leaf Insect Extatosoma tiaratum

The Spiny Leaf Insect is a species of stick insect that can vary in colour from green, reddish brown or light brown. They feed mainly on Eucalyptus leaves but will also eat other plants such as rose bushes. Females are larger than the males. When disturbed, this insect will often curl the end of its abdomen over its back like a scorpion.

The female lays her eggs from a tree where they fall into leaf litter. The eggs are collected by ants and taken into the ants' nest where the ants feed on the sticky end of the eggs. When the nymphs hatch they resemble and smell like ants. They make a quick escape from the nest before the ants realise they are intruders and head for a Eucalypt tree which they climb to feed on the foliage.

Spiny Leaf Insects can be found in coastal regions of Queensland and Northern NSW.

- Roz Anderson

## Dwarf Crowned Snake Cacophis krefftii

This species of snake has been spotted at Blair Reserve and Yarranabee.

It is small, only growing to about 25cm, and weakly venomous. They have tiny mouths and short fangs, usually rearing up and mock striking with a closed mouth, more like a 'head butt'. The diet of this nocturnal snake consists of small skinks which they find in leaf litter. By day they shelter in moist litter and under rocks, logs and bark.

- Roz Anderson



Don't ask me if I'm looking forwards or backwards cause I'm outer here! - Photo by Rex Moir

The Habitatler team would like to thank and acknowledge Roz Anderson for providing us with her photos and informative articles





## Volunteers' Information Walk



### Yarranabee Launch

A great start has been made on this exciting riparian project downstream of the Lilypond. NSW Environmental Trust is funding the enhancement of this corridor which includes Endangered Ecological Communities and Threatened Species that will be helped to survive by this work.

Big swathes of Lantana along the edges have been cleared using the tritter, leaving the ground covered by Lantana mulch. This clearing has reduced the fire hazard and given access to Landcarers who are starting weed work in the riparian zone. The opened-up areas resulting from weed removal

will be stabilised and protected by planting fire-retardant plants. Funding is being sought to buy hundreds of seedlings that will establish a canopy and close the edges of the bushland along Yarranabee Creek.

Landcarers walked around the first block of Yarranabee Creek between Koala Street and Braemar Drive (about 2kms) with Steve Ho and Estelle Gough who were starting the photographic record. The python that had welcomed Steve and Estelle a few days earlier was nowhere to be seen, but we were serenaded by a Koala.

- Julie Ho





# Natural Resource Management in PM-HC Update

## Vegetation and Koala Habitat Mapping

Both data sets are in the final verification phase and should be completed by Christmas. Once completed Council will begin the process of developing an LGA-wide Koala Plan of Management and Biodiversity Strategy.

## Councils Bush Regeneration Team is now 6 strong

Council has recently doubled its bush regeneration team from 3 to 6. The extra capacity will assist Landcare in tackling the urban riparian reserves within Port Macquarie and assist our invasive weeds team in tackling 70km of riparian vine weeds (Cats Claw, Kudzu, Madeira vine and Balloon Vine) in the Hastings, Ellenborough, Thone, Bunno, Camden Haven and Wilson Rivers. PMHC asks people to keep a keen eye out for these target weeds and report them to Council ([thor.aaso@pmhc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:thor.aaso@pmhc.nsw.gov.au)).

## Roadside Weed Control

Get ready to see control of invasive weeds along rural roads in your area. PMHC has secured \$48,000 to control invasive weeds in the Upper Camden Haven and Comboyne Plateau. Where required, Council's Invasive Species Coordinator Grant Taylor will be contacting landholders to gain agreement and access to treat fence lines adjacent to road reserves. To complement this effort, Council will be employing another invasive weed officer to provide a full time roadside weed control effort for all rural roads in the LGA. Over time the entire 20m wide road reserve will be treated and maintained for all invasive weeds which will be a major benefit in the battle against weed invasion into farmland, rivers and bushlands.

## Significant Roadside Vegetation and Habitat Trees

To complement the vegetation mapping and roadside weed control, Council has

completed an audit of all significant habitat trees, koala food trees, remnant patches of Endangered Ecological Communities and rare and threatened plants within the rural road reserves in the LGA. This data will help Council avoid or mitigate impacts on this important vegetation whilst undertaking roadside maintenance works.

## Ecohealth - a check of the health of our waterways

In partnership with the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority, University of New England and University of New South Wales, PMHC will be completing a 12-month comprehensive health check of our waterways including the major freshwater and estuarine waterbodies in the LGA. Report cards for each catchment will be available at the end of the year.

- Thor Aaso

Natural Resources Officer, PMHC



# Banking on the Environment

The staff at ANZ Port Macquarie recently helped Port Macquarie Landcare by mulching and edge planting in the Wrights Creek catchment area, which will help protect this Subtropical Rainforest remnant from drying out and preserve it for future generations. ANZ Bank sees itself as part of the wider community and not just about banking – it is also about doing things in our community to help make a difference. Bank staff participated in this activity to help keep Port Macquarie a beautiful place to live.

Port Macquarie Landcare Group has secured funding of \$250,000 to commence a 6-year project to rehabilitate Wrights and Yarranabee Creeks in Port Macquarie. This funding, together with over \$800,000 in labour from Councils' two Bush Regeneration Teams and Landcare volunteers, will result in well over \$1,000,000 dollars of additional investment in the environment in Port Macquarie over the coming years.

The project covers significant remnant forest corridors that survive on these two creeks. They include three state and/or nationally threatened ecological communities that provide habitat to



*Zac, Brett, Chloe and Nicole Parnell along with Phillip Trojan pitch in to help Landcare*

least 11 threatened animals and two threatened plants. This biodiversity is currently threatened by weeds that also increase fire risk to these sensitive riparian areas. The project will control weeds from the top of each catchment, following Asset Protection Zone establishment by the Council.

Landcarers will lead community groups and neighbours by coordinating contractors to regenerate these reserves and their precious cargo. Revegetation with fire-retardant rainforest species will seal edges, extend corridors and improve links. Connectivity will be improved, biodiversity and threatened

species will benefit and ecosystem services will be enhanced. Macquarie Nature Reserve and Kooloonbung Creek will benefit from the reduction in weeds upstream from their valuable ecological systems. These works cover 56ha, bringing the total area worked on to 80ha.

Corporate groups and individuals interested in participating in Landcare projects or in becoming a member of Port Macquarie Landcare are encouraged to contact Estelle Gough on 0432-141-605 for further information. You too can "make a difference" and all age groups are always welcome.

- Bill Quaglio



*A pleasant way to spend a Sunday morning*









## Awards Presentation



*A huge thank you to Steve Ho for all our wonderful Christmas photos*

## Upcoming Event

Date / Time	Event Details	Contact
Tues 8 Jan 2013 6.45pm for 7pm start	General Meeting of PMLG Port City Bowling Club	RSVP Janet Slater janetslater1237@bigpond.com



*The Habitatler team wishes you and your habitat  
a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

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donate **yourself** to Landcare

