

Northwest Cumberland Carers

NETWORK NEWS

In July 2007 members of the Northwest Cumberland network got together for a morning of tree planting in Whalan Reserve and across the creek under the powerlines in Boronia Reserve, North St Marys. A mix of 500 local native trees and shrubs were planted continuing on the great work done by the friends and the network last year.

For more news on the next network activity go to the "Join in" Section over the page.

Interested in funding for Junior Landcare projects? Mitre 10, Coles and Australia Post through Landcare Australia are offering funds for projects including water quality, recycling, biodiversity, school gardens to name a few. To find out how to apply go to www.landcareonline.com and click on funding opportunities. Applications close 18th October.

Rebecca Mooy
Community Support Officer
Hawkesbury Nepean
Catchment Management Authority



John Diamond from the Friends of Ropes Creek at the tree planting day

In the spotlight - Fairfield Creeks and Wetlands Group

The Group was initiated in 1999 by a dedicated group of Bushcare volunteers who were seeking to restore and monitor Fairfield's creeks and wetlands. To achieve this the group regularly carries out bush regeneration, replanting, clean-up days, Streamwatch monitoring and wildlife surveys. Over the years the group has successfully completed a number of major restoration projects which they continue to maintain, including:

- Restoration of Fish Habitat in Orphan School Creek,
- Restoration of the Cabramatta Creek Wetlands,
- Fish Barrier Mitigation in Cabramatta Creek
- Plan(t) it for Real - Visions for Cabramatta and Brickmakers Creeks.

The group is currently looking to welcome new volunteers to the group and meet members from other Bushcare Groups. If you are interested in finding out more please call Megan Haberley at Fairfield City Council on 02 9725 0758.



Group members skirt cutting Balloon vine at the Cabramatta Wetland.

Fairfield's October Enviro. Events

6th October –
Planting Day,
Cabramatta Creek
Missing Link,
Meet at the end of
National Street,
Cabramatta at 8:30am

11th October – Grand Opening of the Cabramatta Creek Flying-Fox Viewing Platform.

Meet at the Sunnybrook Hotel Car Park, Hume Hwy, Lansvale from 10:00am

20th October – Fairfield City Council's Spring Environment Tour, Call 9725 0264 to reserve your seat on this free bus tour.



Mulgoa Valley Landcare Helping to Keep Bridal Creeper Under Control

Why is Bridal Creeper a problem?

In Australia it has been declared a Weed of National Significance (WONS). Its climbing habit smothers other vegetation. After setting fruit in September - October, the red berries are eaten by birds. The seeds pass through the birds gut and are effectively dispersed. Plants are commonly found growing below bird perching places e.g. at the base of trees or fences. Underneath the ground the plant forms dense rhizomes (underground stems) from which tubers form. Breaking a rhizome will not kill this weed - it has the ability to regrow! Collectively the rhizomes form mats which prevent native seedling establishment.

Methods of control?

- **Chemical** application usually only kills the vegetative parts although the herbicide Brushoff has a degree of success.
- **Manual** removal is difficult, slow, and costly and does not guarantee total removal.
- **Biocontrol** uses plants natural enemies for control.

Types of Biocontrol

Recently CSIRO's Mick Neave introduced the Mulgoa Valley Landcare Group to two biocontrol methods.

RUST

The rust *Puccinia myrsiphylli* is host specific to Bridal Creeper and is successful in controlling the weed during its active growing period. (March to November). It grows on the underside of Bridal Creeper leaves reducing the plants photosynthesis, destroying leaf tissue.

The rust also acts as an energy sink tricking the plant into diverting energy from its tuber reserve for the rust's use. The rust is a fungus so its life cycle is dependent on high humidity and a slight breeze to mature and distribute its spores.

Spread of the rust is best undertaken in late afternoon by wiping rust infected Bridal Creeper plants on the underside of uninfected Bridal Creeper plants.



Lisa Sinclair and Mulgoa Landcare members learning about biocontrols from Mick Neave.

Spray the plants with water to increase humidity. When ripe Rust spores will explode spreading millions of infectious spores. After 20 weeks of inoculation with the rust the tuber size decreases greatly reducing the plants energy storage.

LEAF HOPPER

Leaf hopper *Zygina* sp is most active from March and November with populations greatest in spring when it lays eggs on Bridal Creeper leaves. The Leaf hopper feeds on the plant's photosynthetic cells turning the leaves white. It can take several years to reduce the food reserves within the tuber. Dispersal of the hopper is very slow due to the insects movement.

It was advised to speed up the spread to take a few large plastic bags and secateurs to the release site. Cut a large bunch of heavily infested foliage and quickly put it in a bag. Collection in the early morning is best. Travel to the next site and release the hopper.

LEAF BEETLE

There is also a leaf beetle *Crioceris* sp which was not demonstrated. It is still early days for this agent, more work is needed regarding the best time and number of insects to release.

Join In

North West Cumberland Carers Network - Getting to know Plants of the Cumberland Plain

Teresa James, local botany expert will be joining us to share her knowledge of local natives.

When: Saturday 13th October, 9:30 -12
Where: Nurragingy Reserve, Knox Rd. Meet at the Kookaburra picnic area.

Bring: Bottle of Water, suncream, camera.
Where: Sturdy shoes, long pants, long sleeves and a hat.

Cost: **FREE** and morning tea provided

To join-in ring Rebecca Mooy on 4587 0066 or email Rebecca.Mooy@cma.nsw.gov.au before Wednesday 10th October.

Landcare Forum

When: Friday 30th November 2007

Where: Bowden Centre, Mt Annan Botanical Gardens

For more info and to register contact Rebecca Mooy (02) 4587 0066.

Support Contacts

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NSW Volunteer of the Year Award 2007-Nominations Open

Nominate your volunteers for the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award 2007. Nominations are due by **Monday 15 October 2007**. For further information and forms, visit The Centre for Volunteering at <http://www.volunteering.com.au/>

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