

Gecko Newsletter



Spring 2019 | No 78

Blue Mountains City Council Bushcare Program

Join Blue Mountains Bushcare

Bushcare is a great way to meet likeminded people, make new friends, and have fun, with activities tailored to suit your abilities - it's not all about hard work.

Bushcare is family friendly so bring your kids, friends or even a neighbour to join in.

If you would like to:

- be in the bush
- make a difference in the environment
- learn bush regeneration skills you can use in your own backyard

There are 60 Bushcare groups across the Blue Mountains, ranging from Lapstone in the Lower Blue Mountains to Mount Victoria in the Upper Blue Mountains and across to the basalt topped Mount Wilson. There are a wide range of meeting times and days to suit everyone.

The Bushcare Officer provides training for all skills levels. No previous experience necessary, just enthusiasm! Bring a hat, water and wear suitable clothing and sturdy shoes.

For further information
[bushcarebluemountains.org.au/
join-bushcare](http://bushcarebluemountains.org.au/join-bushcare)

Bushcare Update - Making a Difference!!

By Sandy Benson (Bushcare Team Leader)

Sometimes it seems as though the world's environmental problems are so large it's overwhelming, we feel like "am I doing enough?" or "what is the point?" It seems that no matter how many reusable shopping bags we use it pales by comparison to the impact of global issues like climate change.

However, the world has come together before to solve global environmental problems, like the hole in the ozone layer. We tackled that issue globally, by coming together to develop a set of rules that eliminated the source of the problem.

You may not feel like it, but the choices you make day in and day out do add up and make a difference. You live in the Blue Mountains because you want to live near nature, go for bushwalks, be with likeminded people and enjoy a sense of community. You probably already go to the op shop instead of buying new, buy only what you need and reduce reliance on packaging. Use reusable bags or boomerang bags, you compost and you join in environmental causes and volunteer your time.

Volunteering with Bushcare brings all of those elements together. We make huge changes on the ground, over time eliminating weeds that would one day overtake our native bush reducing biodiversity and resilience. We discuss world problems (sometimes solving them), get our hands dirty and go home with a real sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.

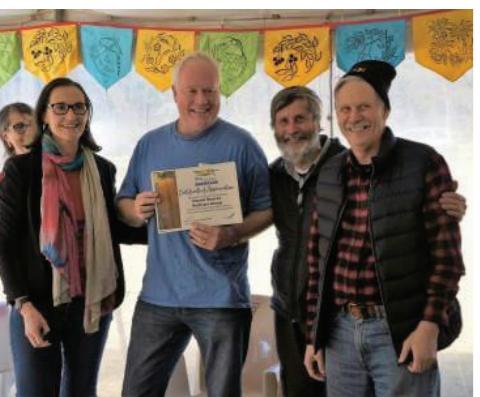
We are not alone in our individual efforts, thinking we are only making a small indent - we are a community of over 400 people turning up each month, equating to 1,200 hours of environmental benefit to our future. We are also part of a much larger community with over 6000 Bushcare/Landcare groups Australia wide. *All of us turning up to make a difference!*

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Annual Bushcare Awards



The Deanei Forest Bushcare group accepting their 25 Year Certificate. From left to right: Cllr Hollywood, Rob, Mike & Glen



Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Group accepting their 30 years award. From left to right: Susan, Monica, Cllr Hollywood & Lesley



Lachlan Garland accepting the Golden Trowel - Legend of the year presented by Mayor Cllr Greenhill



Marianne Bate accepting the Landcare Legend Award presented by Mayor Cllr Greenhill



Blue Mountains Bushcare Website
bushcarebluemountains.org.au

Bushcare Picnic 2019: A celebration of volunteers

The annual Bushcare Picnic is held to celebrate and thank our hardworking Bushcare volunteers for their commitment and enthusiasm throughout the year in helping to keep our bushland healthy.

The picnic this year was so much fun and included the annual awards, pizza and soup and 'Bushcare the Musical' (starring the Bushcare Officers) to an informative snake show, all while enjoying a beautiful winter's day in the Megalong Valley.

Masters, Legends and Rising Stars

Congratulations to those volunteers who were recognised as Masters, Legends and Rising stars. Individual awards went to:

Legend	Lachlan Garland
Hard Yakka	Michael Alexander
Landcare Legend	Marianne Bate
Masters	Elizabeth Mitchell & Liz Field
Environmental Warrior	Zachary Zembry (inaugral award)
Junior Legend	Rodney Towerton
Young Conservationists	Megalong Public School - for their video "Save the Callistemon megalongensis"

A number of Bushcare groups also received recognition for years in service in the Bushcare Program, with one group working together for 30 years.

5 YEARS: Home Schoolers Lawson and Birriban Katoomba High School

10 YEARS: RSPCA Landcare Group, Leura School Swampcare and Upper Kedumba Pine Street Bushcare Group

15 YEARS: Beefarm Road Bushcare Group, Darks Common Bushcare Group and Linksview Landcare Group

20 YEARS: Jackson Park Bushcare Group and Mount Wilson Bushcare Group

25 YEARS: Deanei Reserve Bushcare Group

30 YEARS: Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley



Rodney Towerton accepting the Junior Legend award presented by Mayor Cr Greenhill



Zachary Kembrey accepting the inaugural Environmental Warrior award presented by Mayor Cr Greenhill

Picnic continued Heartfelt help



"Bushcare the Musical"

Did you know the BMCC Bushcare Officers were so talented?

This year we put on an 'accurate' historical depiction of the history of Bushcare. We all had a giggle and sang along to the songs, had great feedback and requests for next year. But we'd like to see the volunteers put one on for us!



Weed it, just weed it!!

Snake Display

Our local snake expert, Neville Burns provided a fascinating snake demonstration and gave the Bushcare Volunteers a 'safe' close-up of many of the snakes they could encounter around their homes and bushcare sites.

Neville cut through many myths and answered life-saving questions about snake behaviour with an emphasis on snake awareness and safety with Blue Mountains species.



Neville Burns gives a demonstration

Kids Activities

Kids and adults alike enjoyed making jewellery and mobiles from items scavenged from the natural environment and odd crafty items found around the home.

Garguree Swampcare and Fairmont Resort crew working together

By Jane O'Neill and Alison Steele

Council always encourages community and corporate participation in our Bushcare days. This June, in recognition of NAIDOC 2019, the Fairmont Resort & Spa's General Manager, Scott O'Neill, team members and their families joined in the monthly Garguree Swampcare Group.

This group is collaboratively driven by the Garguree Traditional owners and BMCC to regenerate The Gully (Katoomba) which is a sacred Aboriginal Place that holds both happy and sad memories for our local Indigenous community.



Fairmont Resort team working with Garguree Bushcare Group hand weeding Vinca



Patrick showing how it's done!!



Impromptu callisthenics before morning tea

Photo credits: Jane O'Neill

Photo credit: Alison Steele

Jane, our Garguree Bushcare Officer, rallied 40 plus combined volunteers for the day and after introductory words of encouragement and some warm up exercises, everyone was in the mood for the hand weeding of the Blue Periwinkle (*Vinca major*) along the swamp edge, where some great work was made in reducing this, and mulching adjacent to Middle Swamp.

The group was moved by the smoking ceremony and listening to Aunty Sharyn's vision for the future, all whilst sharing wholesome Kingy Chai, refreshing Lemon Myrtle Tea and the scrumptious Lilly Pilly jam with damper. The Fairmont team found it a true honour to be present in the Gully with the Local Gully Traditional Owners, Aunty Sharyn, Jim Hall and David King. A member of the team expressed it as "a truly priceless and spiritual cultural exchange".



Morning tea with a Traditional Owner's flare



Chloe participating in the smoking ceremony



Blue Mountains Bushcare Website
bushcarebluemountains.org.au



New Bushcare Groups



Valley View Swamp Bushcare Group

By Ed Bayliss Hack

Gorillas in the Swamp (G.I.T.S.) are a newly formed dedicated group of Swamp-carers who have been heroically spending their own time to fight back weeds and take care of the invaluable and endangered ecological area that is Valley View Swamp, Blackheath.

There has been a number of Swampcare events at Valley View Swamp which have contributed significantly to the health and condition of the site. In order to stay on top of the great progress already made we will be holding a monthly meet-up in order to revamp the regeneration of the natural environment.

Importance of Swamps

Blue Mountains Swamps are biologically diverse plant communities that occur nowhere else in the world. The swamps provide crucial habitat to a number of Threatened Species including the Blue Mountains Water Skink (*Eulamprus leuraensis*) and the Giant Dragonfly (*Petalura gigantea*).

Blue Mountains Swamps are coming under ever increasing pressure and are very susceptible due to the edge effects of urbanization and urban runoff.

These swamps also play a vital role in maintaining water flow in the area to creeks, waterfalls and ground-water by capturing and storing rainwater and slowly releasing it over time. They also act as filters, purifying water prior to its release into the natural environment downstream.

New Management Strategy

Big plans are in store for Valley View Swamp with a new management strategy nearing completion. The plan will address the issues with stormwater through the construction of sandstone water-retention basins,

Woody Weed Wander... another new bushcare group.

With the success of the Holly Walk, the Woody Weed Wander and Woody Weed Workout Events, the Woody Weed Wander Bushcare Group was recently established. This Group will operate similarly to other Bushcare Groups, but will "wander" to various sites, removing/treating stands of mature/semi-mature woody weeds of all species.

The group will initially work in the Upper Mountains, with some sites already confirmed or on offer, but there may be the option to work in various parts of the Mountains in the future.

We will be meeting on the first Friday of the month from 9am to 12noon, including morning tea.

Our first session will begin on Friday, 6 September at Blackheath.

If you are interested to be involved or have any queries, please contact Karen Hising on 4780 5623 or at khising@bmcc.nsw.gov.au



Dr Ian Baird volunteering to preserve Valley View Swamp in Blackheath. Photo: Ed Bayliss Hack

sediment settling ponds, bio-filtration systems and rock lined channel. As well as being aesthetically pleasing, these storm-water control structures will provide the benefit of improved water quality, reduced sedimentation in the swamp, rehydrating ground water and creating habitat. This project is funded by the Greater Sydney Local Land Services under the National Landcare Program.

We are looking forward to observing and documenting the progress throughout the works of this project and will continue to remove and control the invasive species on the site and encourage native regeneration.

Valley View Swampcare (G.I.T.S.) will meet the second Thursday of the month from 9am to 1pm, on the corner of Valley View Road and Hargraves Street, Blackheath.

Please wear weather appropriate clothing which you don't mind getting dirty, sturdy footwear (gumboots if wet), a hat, sunscreen, plenty of water and something for morning tea. Tools and gloves are provided.

For more information contact the Swampcare Bushcare Officer - Ed Bayliss Hack on 4780 5623 or ebayliss@bmcc.nsw.gov.au



Woody Weed Wander - Paul Vale treating Holly
Photo: Karen Hising

Creek Restoration.....



Creek Restoration the natural way, with a little help from Bushcare

South Lawson Park Bushcare Group and Lawson StreamWatch

Article by Peter Ardill

In 2010 Lawson Creek was overwhelmed by massive amounts of silt that had been transported by heavy rains from a collapsed track and building site along the Great Western Highway.

A 200 metre section of healthy bushland creek was reduced to a shallow trickle of water (Image 1) and these conditions made it impossible for water insects (bugs), crayfish and tadpoles to exist.

Bushcare members alerted Council and sediment controls across sections of the creek, to try and disperse the sand were installed. Fortunately, lots of professional bush regeneration and volunteer bushcare work had been done in the area, and the surrounding natural bushland was very healthy, with a good mix of trees, shrubs and groundcovers.

This bushland served as an important restoration function. Natural debris from the trees and shrubs, such as large branches, bark, sticks and leaf litter, was constantly being deposited in the creek. It further dispersed the sand and created riffles and pools, steadily replacing the aquatic fauna habitat that had been smothered in the sand.

Amy St Lawrence, Council's Aquatic Systems Officer, explained: "Bug recolonisation relies on having intact bug populations/communities nearby...different types of water-bugs will recolonise in different ways, providing their water quality and habitat requirements recover."

In 2015 the StreamWatch Group recommenced water quality testing on the site, with good results. But one question remained - would the bugs come back?

Over the years more of the deposited sand was transported downstream, and by 2018 the creek was starting to resemble its former healthy condition, displaying a few deep pools, some good natural habitat of logs and other fallen timber, and a layer of decayed leaf litter along the banks and channel (Image 2).

In May, 2019, the StreamWatch volunteers tested for bug life in the water. And we got them! Mayfly nymphs, which are very sensitive to pollution, so that was pleasing, and also damselfly nymphs, dragonfly nymphs, boatmen and water treaders, and crayfish and tadpoles.

Amy explained the re-colonisation process: "Insects probably hatched at the site from eggs laid by adults that decided your pools were suitable; adults that possibly came from further downstream on Lawson Creek. Your large crayfish may have been there all along despite the sedimentation, or may have moved overland from a pool downstream or a nearby creek."

What if there had been a wall of weeds, such as privet or blackberry, and not natural bushland, along the creek? It is quite likely that the damage may not even have been noticed, and that the weeds would have colonised most or even all of the silted creek. Bushcare makes a difference, in lots of different ways.

Further information and illustrations: <https://southlawsonpark.bushcarebluemountains.org.au/lawson-creek/>



Image 1: Silted Lawson Creek 2010
Photo: Peter Ardill



Image 2: Natural debris in Lawson Creek, October 2018
Photo: Peter Ardill

Grant News



5 years funding for weed control

Article by Linda Thomas

Bushcare volunteers, form an important component of Council's overall weed management strategy. However, there are many other interesting conservation projects that you may hear about or encounter in your local area.

Two new grants

Council has received new grants from Greater Sydney Local Land Services and the NSW Environmental Trust which will help expand our capacity to deliver target weed control, bush regeneration and stormwater control outcomes over the next five years.

Each year Council's Environment team applies for grants where grant program targets align with Council's core program outcomes. In this way Council is able to extend its delivery of environmental programs within the Blue Mountains and increase the value of return for a rate collected dollar. As these funding sources are dependent on broader political climates, they cannot be relied upon to deliver core Council functions, but are an effective means of building capacity when an opportunity presents itself.



Himalayan Honeysuckle and Holly in Moist Basalt Cap Forest
Mt Wilson Photo credit: Linda Thomas

Most grants have a 12-18 month time frame, so these five year grants allow for the consolidation and extension of a range of programs to help target cross tenure issues across public reserves and private lands.

Council will use these grants to:

- Target Cats Claw Creeper in Springwood, Blaxland and Lapstone. This is a new priority weed which has limited distribution in the lower mountains. The aim over five years is to substantially control and eradicate all known populations of Cats Claw Creeper in our Local Government Area.
- Extend ongoing programs to control Pussy Willow, Boneseed and African Olive in the mid to lower mountains.



Youth Council engaging with Winmalee Primary School launching 'Project Plant it' Photo: Jenny Hill

Remote Bushcare



Sassafras Gully Remote Bushcare

Article by Steve Fleischmann

Another wonderful remote bushcare day in the lower mountains. Work in Sassafras Gully has been ongoing for several years on the border of Council and National Park land near where Wiggins Track meets Victory Track at Sassafras Creek.

A cool temperate rainforest in a gully bounded by drier woodland uphill, the area has Ginger Lily, Small and Large Leaf Privet as well as large and mature Japanese Honeysuckle that have climbed up into the canopy.

Invasive species are threatening the understorey diversity of the mature Sassafras and Coachwood forest. Some of the honeysuckle were so tall they were only identifiable by their distinctive peeling bark and mottled skin because the leaves were too high in the canopy to observe.

On the morning of May 25 three volunteers - Ian, John and Roland and myself braved fine weather (and traffic delaying truck accidents) to tool up and walk the 45 minutes into the work area.

On remote days we carry more equipment with us including, emergency management communications gear, all the tools we will need, a large first aid kit, plenty of water, food for the day, warm clothing and, of course morning tea in a protective container because, let's face it, no one wants squashed cake.

Once at the work site we drop our heavy packs, put on our tool belts and look around to determine who was going to work where to get the maximum amount of work done. Our small team focused on Ginger Lily, canopy height Privet and Japanese Honeysuckle, and Privet seedlings. The larger Ginger Lilies were poisoned and the smaller seedlings removed and composted while the honeysuckles and privets were also treated with herbicide. Over the course of the day we worked on an area approximately 500m².

On the walk out we came across a local spring outlet, also known as a leaf spring. This is where a groove has been carved underneath a spring seep point to allow a leaf to be placed into it so it can be filled.

Looking to delve deeper into the local bushland?

Sign up to one of our remote Bushcare days.

Upcoming events will be held in Popes Glen and Katoomba Creek.

For further information or to volunteer for a remote Bushcare day please contact Steve Fleischmann on 4780 5623 or sfleischmann@bmcc.nsw.gov.au



Ian working on a Ginger Lily, note the size of the treated honeysuckle in the foreground
Photo: Steve Fleischmann



Sassafras Gully "leaf spring".
Note the carving into the stone to allow the leaf to sit there
Photo: Steve Fleischmann

We would love to hear from you and encourage Bushcare Volunteers to submit stories for publication in the Gecko. For more information contact your local Bushcare Officer.

Native Truffles in the Mountains?



Terrific find!

By Liz Kabanoff

Blue Mountain Bushcare volunteer and fungi expert, Liz Kabanoff, uncovered a *Podothydnangium*, a genus Liz had never heard of and is Liz has never heard of it, it is a find!

Liz contacted her 'truffle expert' colleague in the USA and with their help was able to identify this fungi. There was only one record of this fungi in NSW on the Atlas of Living Australia, the other listed recordings were in Victoria and Tasmania.

Fungi come in an amazing variety of forms and the ones we often don't come across are underground species, variously known as sequestrate, hypogeous, or false truffles (not to be confused with edible truffles that grow in Europe in the genus *Tuber*.)

A volunteer with the Else Mitchell Park Bushcare Group, Springwood, was clearing a swathe of *Tradescantia* (Trad) away and Liz looked at the ground and noticed a number of small pink blobs. On closer examination she realised



Laccaria sp. Pink fungi found under Trad at Else Mitchell Park.
All photos: Liz Kabanoff



Podothydnangium australe, still attached to a plant root.

they were a type of underground fungus.

Liz couldn't resist and went back the next day for a closer look, and discovered many more sitting just at ground level under the carpet of Trad. She found a second species which was white with a brown interior.

The pale pink fungi are in the genera *Hydnangium* and *Podothydnangium*, and are related to a common emergent fungus, *Laccaria*, which was also found growing nearby.

Around 300 species of underground fungi in 80 genera have been discovered in Australia, but it is estimated that many hundreds more are yet to be unearthed. These fungi are mycorrhizal, forming associations with the roots of plants, typically trees such as Eucalyptus, Melaleuca and Casuarina.

They tend to have a strong odour, which can be detected by native animals such as bandicoots, potoroos and bettongs which dig them up for food. These types of fungi sit below soil level, or sometimes at soil level buried under leaf litter. They don't have a cap that opens up to release spores, but instead, the spores are formed inside the body of the fungus. They rely on birds and animals to eat them, the spores passing through the animal's digestive tract and deposited in their scats.

They have been found to make up 30 to 40% of the diet of some of our native animals, and are therefore an important source of food for animals in our bushcare sites.

If you find any of these native truffles please let your Bushcare Officer know or email bushcare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au



Podothydnangium australe cut open to reveal fertile tissue.

These are not edible!

Wild Pollinator Count

Australian Pollinator Week: 10-17 November, 2019

As part of this year's Australian Pollinator Week, which acknowledges our important and unique insect pollinators, Bushcare will be holding an event in conjunction with Wildplant Rescue on

Saturday 16 November from 10am - 2pm. Come along and learn all about bees, make a bee hotel, and buy some plants specifically for your new bee friends.

It will BEE great to see you there!

For event dates and times see our *What's On* section over the page.

For more information go to wildpollinatorcount.com



Vale Street Biofilter Planting



Planting around the Vale Street Biofilters

Article by Amy StLawrence, Jenny Hill and Karen Hising

In late May, we had another successful planting morning event around the biofilters (otherwise known as "raingardens") at Vale Street, South Katoomba - our second event in two years. We planted between 850 - 900 plants in three hours, with 17 volunteers, two contractors and two Council staff - a fantastic effort!

Our planting work around the biofilters will reduce ongoing need for brushcutting/mowing, reduce weed infestation, increase habitat for local wildlife, prevent soil erosion on sloping ground into the biofilters and improve the local aesthetics.

The Vale Street biofilters were built within the footprint of the old constructed wetlands at the site to improve the pollutant removal capacity of the system. These works were completed as part of the Leura Falls Creek Catchment Improvement Project, a joint Council, Water NSW and community initiative that built seven stormwater treatment systems throughout the catchment area, as well as rehabilitating eroded creek lines.

The Vale Street system includes a gross pollutant trap to remove rubbish, coarse sediment and organic matter and three biofilters to remove dissolved pollutants, such as nutrients and pathogens. The biofilters consist of layers of gravel and sand, planted with native sedges and shrubs. Water quality monitoring has shown them to be very good at improving the quality of stormwater before it flows into Leura Falls Creek, with significant reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus, suspended solids, faecal coliforms and rubbish. The design of the system and creekline restoration works have also greatly reduced downstream flooding and created pools and ponds for local wildlife.

The water in the Leura Falls Creek Catchment travels through industrial, residential and natural areas to Leura Cascades and eventually arrives in the Sydney basin to be stored for drinking water.

There has been a significant amount of work undertaken in this catchment, including weed control, planting, monitoring, local community environmental education and information. The Leura Falls and Gordon Creek Catchment Group (a group of volunteers from Bushcare Groups and local residents in the catchment working together with Council) has been very active in much of the overall improvement works.

We will be conducting another planting morning at Vale Street in mid - 2020, including some easy and challenging options in continuing to plant around the biofilters, as well as along the creekbanks and up through an unformed road reserve, which adjoins the Vale Street Bushcare site.



Planting shrubs into the bank of the Vale Street Biofilter.
Photo: Karen Hising



Planting sedges into the wet area. Photo: Karen Hising



Planting on the slope to prevent soil erosion. Photo: Karen Hising

We can all **do our bit** to improve water quality for our local waterways by preventing/collecting rubbish in the streets, vegetating bare soil areas, picking up dog faeces whilst walking, washing cars on lawn areas and covering stockpiles of soil/mulch.

We can also capture stormwater run-off by installing water tanks on our properties for toilet flushing, laundry and garden use or allowing it to soak into the ground gradually with vegetated areas and raingardens, rather than large areas of hard surfaces, such as concrete.

Is this a weed?...

Is this a Weed - Elderberry Panax (*Polyscias sambucifolia*)?

By Karen Hising

One of the most common questions I am asked as a Bushcare Officer: "Is this a weed?" And quite often the person asking the question is referring to the native Elderberry Panax (*Polyscias sambucifolia*).

Polyscias sambucifolia is a variable small to large shrub or sometimes even a compact tree. The leaves are compound, with clusters of succulent bluish-grey fruit in Summer.

An important colonising species in regenerating areas, it can appear as a single plant or in small dense forests before other species have the opportunity to regenerate. At Blackheath Centenary Reserve, where all large shrubs and trees have been removed for powerline safety, swathes of *Polyscias* have appeared over time and have shaded out groundlayer and grassy weeds. Fortunately, it has not grown too tall to warrant removal under the powerlines – yet!

This plant also provides feeding opportunities for local wildlife. Birds enjoy feasting on the fruit, which is how it is widely propagated. The Elderberry Panax Leaf Roller (*Cryptoptila australiana*) can infest the whole plant in swathes of webbing. The larvae live in a communal shelter made of leaves joined with silk and feed on the foliage. They are dark-brownish green, with orange spots and white hairs. Pupation occurs within the larval shelter.

The plant can look quite bedraggled from the impacts of these insects, but they generally bounce back once the caterpillars finalise their lifecycle to moths and move on. Birds may also enjoy feeding on these larvae.

Whilst it may not be considered a particularly attractive plant (particularly when covered in webbing), it can be an important part of some ecosystems.

Polyscias - from the Greek word, *poly*, meaning many, and *skias*, meaning shade, possibly referring to the shade from many leaves; and **sambucifolia** - referring to leaves which resemble Sambucus, the Elderberry.

There is some debate pronouncing the genus name – poly-sy-as or pol-is-kias.



Polyscias sambucifolia covered in swathes of webbing
Photo credit: Mariko Ward

Do you need help with your Bushcare website?

If you are having trouble working out how to put up information or photos of your hardwork on the Bushcare Website we are offering assistance to one person per group.

If you think this may help please contact Sandy Benson on sbenson@bmcc.nsw.gov.au or on 4780 5623

Be inspired by Deanei Forest Bushcare Group webpage - deanei.bushcarebluemountains.org.au/



September

Remote - Braeside Blitz, Blackheath

Sunday 22 September
9am - 3pm

Come along and support the Braeside Bushcare group spending the day working our way along the border of the park in search of Holly and Cherry Laurel. Morning Tea and Lunch provided. Book by the Wednesday 18th September with Grant on 0499 699 150 or grant.purcell@environment.nsw.gov.au

Weed, Walk and Talk, Gloria Park, Hazelbrook

Sunday 22 September
1:30pm - 4:30pm

Come and explore Gloria Park learn about local plants and animals, find out about the history of the area and do some easy weeding with our Bushcare Officer. Bookings essential at <https://www.bushcarebluemountains.org.au/event/hazelbrook-weed-walk-and-talk-gloria-park-2/> or contact bushcare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

North Katoomba Creek Catchment Planting Day

Friday 27 September
9:30am - 12:30pm

Help transform the weedy Twynam unformed road reserve and improve its biodiversity and native fauna habitat. All tools, materials and morning tea will be provided.

Bookings essential for catering purposes. Contact Steve on sfleischmann@bmcc.nsw.gov.au or on 4780 5623

What's on!

September

Continued

Remote - Grose Valley, Blackheath (3 full days)

Saturday 28 - Monday 30 September

A 3 day activity ideal for the fit and adventurous who want to spend a time rock hopping and weeding along the Grose River. Some experience at overnight self-reliant camping is required and numbers are limited. Book by Monday 23rd September with Grant on 0499 699 150 or grant.purcell@environment.nsw.gov.au

October

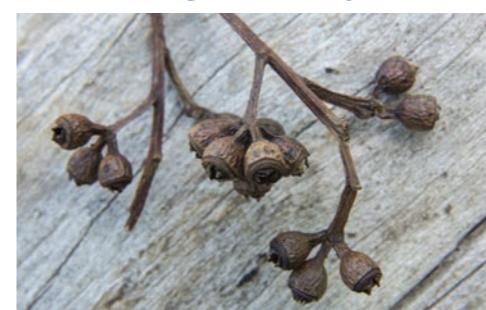
Remote - Headwaters of the Grose Valley, Blackheath

Thursday 24 October
9am - 4pm

Spend some time exploring the headwaters of the Grose Valley. Be prepared for the possibility of wet feet. Morning tea and lunch will be provided. Book by Friday 18th October with Grant on 0499 699 150 or grant.purcell@environment.nsw.gov.au

Seed Collection Workshop

If anyone is interested in an intermediate-level seed collection workshop then register your interest with Tracy on tabbas@bmcc.nsw.gov.au



Eucalyptus capsules
Photo credit: Ian Brown

October

Continued

Leura Falls Creek/Gordon Creek Catchment Care Day

Sunday 6 October
9:30am - 2pm

A great chance to meet and work alongside the Bushcare volunteers who care for the Leura and Gordon Falls Creeks catchments. We'll be tackling some big woody weeds and some regrowth on the edge of Carrington Park and on the Upper Leura Cascades creekline. For more information and to RSVP for catering purposes, please contact Monica on mnugent@bmcc.nsw.gov.au by Monday 30 September.

November

Remote – Katoomba Creek

Saturday 2 November
8:30am – 5pm

Continue the great work done by volunteers in a remote section of Katoomba Creek. Bush regeneration and bushwalking experience is essential. This is a joint NPWS and BMCC activity, and numbers are limited. Book by October 28th November with Grant on 0499 699 150 or grant.purcell@environment.nsw.gov.au

The Gully Get-together Katoomba

Saturday 9 November, 9am - 1pm

Connect to Country, enjoy great company and delicious food as well as some productive work - the annual Gully Bushcare Groups' Get-together is on again! The Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley, Upper Kedumba Bushcare Groups and Garguree Swampcare Group invite you to help restore the bushland of The Gully, improve the water quality of the creek that flows over Katoomba Falls where the

November

Continued

endangered *Pherosphaera fitzgeraldii* (Dwarf Mountain Pine) grows. RSVP for catering purposes contact Monica on mnugent@bmcc.nsw.gov.au by Friday 1 November.

Weed Walk and Talk – Burgess Falls, Hazelbrook

Sunday, 10 November
1:30pm – 4:30pm

Come along and do some easy bush regeneration around the vicinity of Winbourne Avenue with one of our Bushcare Officers, followed by an informative walk to Burgess Falls Bookings essential at <https://www.bushcarebluemountains.org.au/event/hazelbrook-weed-walk-and-talk-burgess-falls-2/> or contact Nathan on nsummers@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Pollinator Workshop - Wildplant Rescue, Katoomba

Saturday 16 November
10am - 2pm

It's Pollinator Week from November 10 - 17. A family friendly Bushcare event. Come along and enjoy the day at Wildplant Rescue to see what native plants attract pollinators, make native bee hotels and listen to talks on habitat, native bees and other pollinators.

For more information contact Jane Anderson at jlandersen@bmcc.nsw.gov.au or 4780 5623

December

Kodala Lane – Glenbrook lagoon

Sunday, 1 December
1:30pm – 4:30pm

Come join us to restore the bushland at Kodala Lane near Glenbrook Lagoon for all to enjoy. For more information contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@bmcc.nsw.gov.au or 4780 5623.

Seasonal Calendar

Source: A timeline for the Upper Blue Mountains. Compiled by Jim Smith for the Blue Mountains Conservation Society.



Weather

- September is the driest month. Equinox on 22 September.

Mammals

- Spring peak of Bush Rat, *Rattus fuscipes*, and Swamp Rat, *Rattus lutreolus*, numbers. Many juveniles born Aug/Sept.
- Female Antechinuses with young --> October.
- Echidnas wander.
- Brushtail Possums call (Spring --> Autumn), mating.
- Ringtail Possums, Sugar Gliders, Yellow-bellied Gliders and Pygmy Possums born (--> summer)
- November: Antechinuses weaned.
- Road kills as juvenile mammals disperse.

Reptiles and Frogs

- September: Many lizards active; chasing, mating.
- First snakes to emerge: Copperhead and Red-bellied Black Snake.
- After equinox, Perons Tree Frogs call at night. In a good year Whistling Tree Frogs will call a few weeks after equinox too. i.e. calls can overlap.

Insects

- October: Common Jezebels, *Delias nigrina*, white butterflies active.
- Imperial White Butterflies, *Delias harpalyce*, active (larvae feed on mistletoe). Red Ichneumonid Wasps, *Netelia producta*, swarm. Larvae are parasitic on moths.
- Nellies Glen Butterflies mating on hilltops (Sept-->Nov) e.g. at Pulpit Hill.
- Cicadas emerge.
- November: Common Brown Butterflies, *Heteronympha merope*, mating eggs, dropped from air to grass. Swordgrass Brown Butterflies, *Tisiphone abeona* larvae on Ghania (swordgrass).
- Caper White Butterfly migration to north-east
- Tachinid Flies (mid November).
- Whistling Moths, *Hecatesia fenestrata*, begin to call on hot nights before rain. Larvae feed on Dodder, *Cassytha* sp.
- Christmas Beetles emerge.
- Termites fly.
- Fireflies (late Nov - early Dec)

Aquatic

- Female Crayfish with 'berries' (young)
- September: First major hatching of Galaxias fry.
- November: Second major hatching of Galaxias fry.

Birds

- September: Migrants return: Rufous Whistlers from Qld, Sacred Kingfishers from Qld, New Guinea (NG).
- Southwards honeyeater migration peaks.
- Satin Bowerbirds display, mate, lay eggs.
- Rose Robins return to gullies.
- Kookaburra calls increase.
- Many juvenile New Holland Honeyeaters dispersing.
- Channel-billed Cuckoos arrive.
- October: Satin Flycatchers arrive from Qld, NG.
- Black-faced Monarchs and Rufous Fantails arrive, from Qld, NG.
- Koels arrive from Indonesia
- November: Many young birds being fed.
- Satin Bowerbirds hatching.
- Silvereyes feed on Cedar Wattles, *Acacia elata*, extra-floral nectaries.

Plants

- Grevilleas: *Grevillea phyllicoides*, *Grevillea mucronulata* flower.
- Epacridaceae flowers: Woolsia, *Epacris microphylla*, *Epacris pulchella* flower.
- Leucopogon flowers perfume the air from September/October.
- Peas flower: e.g. *Bossiaea rhomboidea*.
- Orchids: Sun Orchids, *Thelymitra*; *Caladenia* (Aug-> Dec); Flying Ducks (Nov)
- Endemics: *Alania endlicheri*; *Sprengelia monticola*; *Epacris reclinata* flower.
- Miscellaneous: Mistletoes, Casuarinas, Grass Trees, *Hibbertia* sp. flower.
- Boronia floribunda* (Oct.), Kunzia & Isopogon flowers (late Oct.)
- Black Ash, *Eucalyptus sieberi*, flowers (Oct/Nov).
- Peppermint Gum, *Eucalyptus piperita*, flowers (Nov).
- Introduced Elm trees release their winged seeds.
- November: Native Current fruit drops.
- Christmas Bush and Waratah flowers.
- Rainforest canopy: Coachwood, Sassafras flower (Sept), Wonga Vine (Oct)
- New growth leaf of Coachwood is purple
- New growth leaf of Possumwood is pink.
- New growth leaf of Acacia elata is silvery.

Your Newsletter is compiled by Bushcare Staff from Blue Mountains City Council with contributions from volunteers and Council's Environment Branch Staff. Contributions and suggestions are always welcome, as are requests for alterations to the mailing list. Please contact the Bushcare Team Leader at Bushcare, Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba NSW 2780; phone 4780 5528 or email bushcare@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

If undeliverered please return to:
Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba NSW

