

# Watching for weeds

## Taking care of your bushland after a fire



**Bush fires create conditions that favour the establishment of weeds, which can prevent native plants and desirable garden plants from reestablishing and thriving.**

After a bush fire, it's important to manage weed growth in bushland on your property. Council can provide technical advice and support to help you manage weeds on your property, during the clean-up and rebuilding process. Contact our Community Conservation Officer, Linda Thomas on **4780 5612** or at **lthomas@bmcc.nsw.gov.au** for more information.

More information about weeds in your area is available online: [weedsbluemountains.org.au](http://weedsbluemountains.org.au)

### Why is controlling weeds important?

Weeds spread easily and have a negative impact on native plants and wildlife. It's important to control them as soon as possible, to prevent them from spreading to neighbouring properties and native bushland.

While many native plant species and desirable garden plants survive bush fires, their ability to reestablish, thrive, and reseed is reduced by the presence of weeds that aggressively compete for water, light, and soil nutrients.

The cleared post-bush fire landscape is also an opportunity to control weeds while they are visible and before they start to spread.



Weeds such as Scotch Broom will quickly spread into burnt areas if not controlled.

### Native plants

Native vegetation may take several years to recover after bush fire and will change in composition over time.

Australian native plants are adapted to recover after bush fire but it can take some time before your local bushland looks like the healthy vegetation community it was before the fire.

Within weeks of a fire some trees and grasses will start to resprout. Over the next few years most of the original shrubs and trees will regrow from existing rootstock or from seeds stored in the soil.

For at least the first few months post-fire it is best to just observe the recovery process and allow the bushland to regenerate itself.

In some situations, where natural regeneration is not progressing well, the planting of native vegetation or direct seeding may be required to stabilise soils and assist with the natural process of regeneration. If you are planting in recovering bushland, you should only use native plants grown locally, and use locally collected seeds to maintain the integrity of the bushland.