

BUSHCARE IN BEECROFT 2006

Have you ever wondered what local bushcare groups get up to?

WHY DO WE NEED TO LOOK AFTER THE BUSH? Doesn't it look after itself? In the past the bush was left to look after itself and it managed quite well until the increasing impacts of urbanisation began to take effect. Bushland is very often downslope from adjoining development such as shops, houses, roads and park ovals. Disturbance and nutrients from increased stormwater runoff make conditions ideal for weeds to establish. Unfortunately some garden plants are no respectors of reserve boundaries and their seed or plant parts are spread by birds, wind, water and dumping. Many people have self seeded plants in their gardens without being aware that they are bush invaders.

Some common bird-spread weeds in our area are Privet, Camphor Laurel, Ochna, Asparagus and Lantana. Other groundcover weeds and vines are even more difficult to control. We all know that if a neighbour has Wandering Jew growing it is likely to spread into our garden even if there is a fence.

WHAT IS BUSH REGENERATION?

Bush regeneration is really the strategic removal of weeds and the encouragement of the local native species to replace them. In many cases good natural regeneration will occur without replanting. Natural regeneration from the native seed bank in the soil will result in far more diverse regrowth than can be achieved by planting and will preserve the unique local character of each patch of bush. Even cleared or mown areas can regenerate amazingly well and a good local example is Observatory Park, Beecroft. Of course some areas are so disturbed that planting is required but only local native plants grown from seed collected locally.

There are many active volunteer bushcare groups in the Beecroft Cheltenham area. Some are large and some small but they are all working to preserve our local bushland.

HORNSBY COUNCIL'S BUSHCARE PROGRAM

Hornsby Council is the manager of most of the bushland reserves in Beecroft and Cheltenham so almost all volunteer bushcarers in our area work as part of Hornsby Council's bushcare program. There are a few groups that are supervised by Lane Cove National Park staff and one by the National Trust. Hornsby Council's program began with just nine groups in 1989 and has grown to be one of the largest in the Sydney metropolitan area with about 800 volunteers. Anyone interested in Bushcare can contact Council's Bushland staff on **9484 9572 or 9484 3677** and they will fill you in on how the program works. All groups have a regular bushcare trainer and Council provide a one day training course for all volunteers. The course is offered either on a Saturday or a Thursday and is very informative and enjoyable. You can be put in touch with a group near you, there are a lot to choose from in Beecroft and Cheltenham.

WHERE ARE THE GROUPS IN BEECROFT AND WHEN DO THEY WORK?

Here are the locations and working times of some of the groups working in the Beecroft Cheltenham area.

BAMBARA BUSHCARE GROUP. The Bambarians work on park areas and bushland between Roselea School and Midson Road. Their area includes the artificial wetland behind the Plympton Road Scout Hall and bushland in Ray park. Since work began in 1993 they have carried out several major planting days and much of this bushland has been transformed. There are now some lovely walks through the area which didn't exist before. In April 2006 new plaques have been installed on the history of the area and its pioneer families. There are really several small groups who work at different times and locations along this arm of Devlins creek.

Contact Dorothy Doolan on 9876 5713 for information on the groups working between Orchard Road and Ray Park. Anita Wynne on 9871 1312 for the group working near Roselea School every Friday morning. They have great morning teas! Or Simon Binning on 9869 0334 for the group working behind Bingara Road once or twice a month.

CHILWORTH RESERVE GROUP. This group works in Chilworth Reserve every Friday morning usually meeting at the end of York Street Beecroft at 9.00am. The group have been working in the reserve since 1991 and are pleased with their progress but there is still plenty more to do so they would love to hear from you. Contact Sheila Woods on 9484 6764. They have very good morning teas too!

COBRAN ROAD GROUP. This group works on bushland in Lane Cove National Park at the end of Cobran Road on 1st Saturday of the month. The group have been working there since the bushfire in January 2002. They are supervised by National Park staff. Contact Lane Cove National Park 9415 3998

FEARNLEY PARK is located between Chapman Avenue and Hannah Street, Beecroft. It is a lovely little haven behind the houses with Devlins Creek flowing through it. The park contains remnant Blue Gum High forest and so is very special. There are two groups working in the park. One is a large one which works on the 4th Saturday morning of each month near the Chapman Avenue entrance nearest to Cardinal Ave. Contact Richard Shields on 9484 3078. The other is the Wyndam family group who work on another entrance area to the park further down Chapman Ave. They work on the second Saturday afternoon each month. Contact Shirley Wyndam on 9484 3094.

HULL ROAD GROUP. This is a small park where Council installed a retention pond in 2001. It is now a lovely area frequented by ducks. The group works every 2nd Saturday afternoon in the month from 3.00pm to 5.00pm. Contact Ross Walker on 9875 4446.

KIRKHAM STREET GROUP. This small group works on the entrance area to Beecroft Reserve at the start of the access track to Beecroft Scout Hall. It usually meets on the 1st or 2nd Saturday of the month. Contact Sheila Woods on 9484 6764

LUDOVIC BLACKWOOD SANCTUARY. This bushland area next to Mount St Benedict's school is managed by the National Trust. Volunteers work there twice a month on the 2nd Saturday and the 3rd Friday mornings. They are supervised by the National Trust. Contact Elisabeth Dark on 9258 0123.

LYNBRAE AVENUE GROUPS. Two families with houses in Lynbrae Avenue back on to bushland off Orchard Road. Both would like to hear from any new volunteers to help them continue the wonderful progress they have made on the bushland sections behind their properties. To find out when they are next working Contact: The Gants, Ivan and Shirley. 9877 0350. The Smiths, Lee and Geoff . 9876 2438.

MALTON ROAD GROUP. A lovely bush track along Byles Creek starts at the end of Malton Road. It is maintained by a dedicated group who work once a fortnight on a Monday morning. They are supervised by National Park staff. Contact Dick Stanbury on 9484 1673.

MIDSON ROAD GROUP. This group works on the last Sunday of the month on the wetland remediation area completed by Council in 2003. The area is opposite the new retirement complex Becroft Sanctuary. Contact Ceridwen Jones on 9869 2072.

OBSERVATORY PARK. The triangle we all drive past on Becroft Road and Pennant Hills Road contains endangered Blue Gum High Forest beautifully regenerated since 1989 after years of mowing. The group works there on the 1st Saturday morning of the month. Contact Ron Leslie on 9484 7413.

SEALE CLOSE GROUP. A small enclosed haven of bush accessed off Seale Close. The group works there on the 2nd Saturday afternoon of the month. Contact Chris Rapp on 9980 5174.

WONGALA GULLY GROUP. This group works on an unformed section of Wongala Crescent with a footpath through it to Pennant Hills. Contact Graham Baker on 9484 7324.

AREAS THAT NEED A NEW VOLUNTEER GROUP.

There are a few places that in 2006 are in need of a volunteer group to look after them.

LAMORNA AVENUE WETLAND. A new remediation project was completed by Council early in 2006 along a drainage channel in the park behind Lamorna Avenue. The plantings around the ponds and along the waterway would establish much quicker with a bit of help from local residents. Other similar remediation projects as listed above have had the benefit of help from local bushcarers but there is no group currently working on this site.

NARENA CLOSE. For many years the bushland behind Narena Close was looked after by Helen Clarke until she moved to Canberra in 2002. It is a lovely area of bush at the head of Byles Creek.

Contact Council Bushland staff on 9484 9572 or 9484 3677 if you would be interested in working on any of the above sites, new or old or starting one of your own.

HAPPY WEEDING!