

# BANDICOOTtimes

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A PROGRAM OF



City of **HOBART**



# Bushcare Roundup



**Talia Sawers**  
Program Officer Bushcare

**B**ushcare is back, and what a great start to the year it's been. As sad as we are to say goodbye to the glorious summer weather, we're delighted to welcome back our wonderful volunteers and get stuck into some serious weed control with you again!

We're fortunate to have Sonya Stallbaum return to the Bushcare family as Team Leader, bringing with her a wealth of knowledge in bushland restoration.

It is shaping up to be a busy and productive year already, with several exciting partnerships and a few grants to help our volunteers restore their local patches, provide habitat for some of our threatened species and share our love of Hobart's bushland and biodiversity with the wider community.

It's exciting to have staff from TasNetworks join our efforts to restore the Hobart Rivulet, and we are also partnering with TasTAFE to provide opportunities for non-English speakers that will help them connect with nature and learn about our local environment – we're very grateful for the extra hands as well!

Waterworks Valley Landcare has been busy developing a grant-funded interpretive sign for Fantail Quarry that showcases the group's extensive knowledge of the area and displays beautiful illustrations and photos of local birds. It will definitely be worth a visit!

A huge thank you to Fern Tree



Bushcare team leader Bec Johnson shows volunteers hundreds of minute foxglove seeds.



Bushcare volunteers on the hunt for Daphne laurel and foxglove also uncover remnants from the 1967 bushfires.

Photos: Alison Hetherington

Bushcare for yet another successful Daphne laurel search and control mission. Thanks also to Bec Johnson for the countless hours she has dedicated to getting the Fern Tree community on board and managing the Weeds Action Fund grant for this project. Job well done all!

Next in sight is the Landcare Action Grant, awarded to the Ridgeway Bushcare group to provide habitat for threatened eastern barred bandicoots that call Ridgeway Park home. Works have

begun and we're already looking forward to monitoring the new bandicoot homes and sharing our findings with you.

We're also the grateful recipients of a Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Grant to help achieve some of the recommendations of the new Hobart Rivulet Vegetation Management Plan.

With so many exciting projects in the works, there are lots of ways to get involved. We're looking forward to seeing you at a Bushcare working bee soon!



**Cover photo:** Grasslands on the Queens Domain.  
Photo: John Sampson

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**THRIVING  
GRASSLANDS  
FEBRUARY 2022**



**APRIL 2020**



**AUGUST 2021**

## MCAULAY RESERVE

# Sowing seeds of success

While it's been a bumper year for weeds, our Bushcare native plantings have also been thriving, thanks to the hard work of the Friends of McAulay Reserve volunteers.

Native grassland species planted at the reserve in August last year are now head-high and happily seeding the soil with the next generation of grasslands.

Thanks to funding from an Australian Government Communities Environment Program grant the City of Hobart

removed introduced pine trees from McAulay Reserve in April last year, paving the way for the native grass plantings.

Seeds from the locally occurring but threatened crested spargrass (*Austrostipa blackii*) were collected and then propagated at the City of Hobart's nursery before volunteers and staff planted them out in the reserve, along with several other grassland species including kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*) and woolly New Holland daisy (*Vittadinia gracilis*).

Volunteers ensured the new grassland plants survived encroaching weeds and the site now looks quite amazing.

Our next mission in the area is to propagate more seed, also collected by volunteers, before planting out a degraded spot in the neighbouring Edith Avenue Reserve.

We can't wait to see how the native grassland in this little patch of bushland in Sandy Bay increases in diversity over time.



# Allocasuarina, goodbye Casuarina

Looking up towards the summit of the Queens Domain travelling southeast along the Brooker Highway, a distinctive streak of gold can be seen snaking between dense vegetation.

A sweep of kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*) dominates the north face of the hill, its summer flush of deep-gold seed heads staking out a patch of remnant grassland in the heart of Hobart.

Formerly widespread, the Domain's critically endangered lowland *Themeda triandra* grasslands once formed vast mosaics of Muwinina-managed country, shaped by fire and cared for over millennia. Today, these ecosystems are limited to small fragments situated north of Hobart and into the Midlands, where they face complex and constant threats.

Development, weeds, climate change and altered fire regimes have had deep effects on grasslands and grassy woodlands such as the Queens Domain, but a joint effort by the City of Hobart and the University of Tasmania's Professor Jamie Kirkpatrick is bringing this grassland back from the brink.

The Queens Domain has seen some dramatic landscape changes over the years. The removal of traditional fire management paved the way for weeds, shrubs and small trees to begin their slow march across the grassland. Without regular burning, slashing or grazing, shrubby seedlings shaded out the *Themeda* and shouldered in on the inter-



Pip Jones  
Team Member  
Fire & Biodiversity

tussock spaces usually occupied by orchids, daisies, lilies and twining pea flowers. Drooping sheoak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) gradually closed in on the grasslands, changing their structure to form a dense canopy with little else underneath.

Although naturally occurring on the Domain, sheoaks can quickly grow out of control. The fallen sheoak branchlets form a dense mat that prevents undergrowth from developing. In the 1930s and 40s, there was a brief reprieve from the *Allocasuarina* invasion when large stands were sawn down and hauled out to fire up the ovens of bakers in town. Within a couple of decades, however, the Queens Domain was largely dominated by this species.

The dramatic change to vegetation structure on the Queens Domain has been the subject of a long-term study by UTAS Professor Jamie Kirkpatrick. Documenting vegetation change in the Domain's grassy woodlands since 1974, Professor Kirkpatrick's remarkable research has guided restoration efforts on the Domain for decades.

His documentation showed sites of high conservation value within the grasslands were markedly declining as the sheoaks advanced.

"One of the major problems in

maintaining rare plant species on the Domain is that most of them do not like thick litter from sheoaks or competition from kangaroo grass, so are now surviving under exotic cypresses," Professor Kirkpatrick says.

The Soldiers Memorial Avenue, which is regularly slashed, holds some of the Domain's rarest remnant species. It was understood in the early 90s that the City of Hobart's fire regime would need to be frequent and regular to suppress the spread across the rest of the reserve. Mature sheoaks and their dense carpet of needles prevented prescribed burns from getting hot enough to be effective, and larger trees were surviving the burns unscathed – burning alone was not enough to progress the Domain's restoration.


The City of Hobart's current integrated approach of mechanical thinning and periodic burning has made significant headway in the ecological restoration of the grassy woodlands on the Queens Domain.

The City's Fire and Biodiversity Team and Bushcare volunteer crews have been working hard to keep sheoak numbers in check.

By freeing up space around the white gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) and blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) saplings surviving among the sheoaks, these young trees will have enough space, light and nutrient to put on growth and become resilient canopy trees.

It takes approximately 100





years for a tree to begin forming hollows, so these saplings will one day create critical habitat for swift parrots, pardalotes, masked owls and other hollow-nesting species.

Where sheoaks have been removed, the lowland grasslands have been quick to return. According to Professor Kirkpatrick, “the wallabies and pademelons now on the Domain are also doing their bit, while the bandicoots create regeneration niches”.

A walk along the Joggers Loop today will take you past elbow-high speargrasses where thick sheoak once stood. The grasslands’ purple and yellow wildflower palette is gradually coming back – Dianella lilies and delicate button flowers dot the grassy understorey.

From deep time to today, grasslands have evolved with complex management regimes, and caring for them in the face of a changing climate will be no easy task. The City of Hobart’s longest-running ecological restoration project is far from over.





The top of the Zig Zag Track rewards with stunning vistas. Photo: John Sampson

# TIME'S BEEN CHIPPING AWAY AT THE ZIG ZAG

**John Sampson**

For more than a century the Zig Zag Track has been a major walking route to the summit of kunanyi/Mt Wellington, and for those wishing to explore the further reaches of the South Wellington Track and the incredible rock formations that peer out over Hobart.

The Zig Zag Track is by far the most popular walking route to the summit of kunanyi/Mt Wellington.

Named after the zig-zag nature of the route, the track climbs steep terrain immediately south of the Organ Pipes.

Walkers catch tremendous views across Hobart, the River Derwent

and out across the Organ Pipes as they head up through forest into sub-alpine and alpine environments.

But many feet and the elements have taken their toll, and the track is now in need of considerable repairs to overcome erosion issues and make it safer for the walkers and trail runners drawn to this special place.

Anyone who has ventured up the Zig Zag Track recently will have noticed just how rough it has become compared to the recently upgraded Organ Pipes and Pinnacle tracks, which have both benefited from major trackwork in recent years. The City of Hobart has invested \$2.1 million in these

tracks over four years.

Built in the early 1900s as a section of the Pinnacle Track, the Zig Zag Track can be trying for walkers, especially in snow and ice conditions.

Years of foot traffic and the harsh mountain weather have eroded parts of the track, digging out the original surface soil and leaving patchworks of rocks that can prove difficult to negotiate for the many people that take this route to the top of kunanyi.

## **Giving the Zig Zag a spruce up**

The Zig Zag Track is expected to be closed until winter this year as





City of Hobart track crews get to work.

If possible it will be open on weekends, but that will depend on safety conditions.

The work on the Zig Zag Track will make it a much safer walking route while maintaining its important heritage values and the bush feel so many people love.

In the interim, sections of both the Milles and Icehouse tracks are being improved as alternative routes to the Pinnacle while the Zig Zag Track is closed.

It is important to remember that the Ice House Track and South Wellington Track both traverse alpine environments, and inclement weather can create dangerous walking conditions.

South Wellington Track offers little shelter and is recommended for well-equipped, experienced walkers, but in good weather it is a stunning plateau walk that rewards those that slow down and take in



Hikers from another era nearing the top of the Zig Zag Track. Note the post and wire barrier needed due to the slipperiness of the terrain in snow and ice. Photo: Courtesy WPMT

the majesty of the mountain.

It crosses an open, alpine landscape that feels as old as time. Beautifully weathered rock formations stand like mountain sentinels against the dramatic backdrop of Hobart and the River

Derwent to the east, and the wide open vista of the dramatic southwest.

The City of Hobart website has excellent safety tips to help walkers stay safe on the mountain. Visit [hobartcity.com.au/kunanyi](http://hobartcity.com.au/kunanyi)





Rock armoring has been used to protect nearby tree roots and snig tracks. Photos: John Sampson

# Snig tracks and sawmills

A new, dual-use trail that climbs through blue gum and stringybark forest and skirts its way around the remains of long-lost logging sawpits and snig tracks has been built on the lower slopes of kunanyi/Mt Wellington.

The new climbing route leads to the top of the Upper Luge, a downhill, mountain bike only track that returns riders down through the forest canopy to Main Fire Trail.

The route is expected to prove highly popular with local mountain biking clubs, and bushwalkers have long called for a walking track that links Middle Island and Main fire trails. Trail runners will also be drawn to the new track.

Soon to be officially named, the shared use, intermediate (blue) level track is the result of months of meticulous track work and detailed cultural, environmental and archaeological analyses of the area.

Surveys undertaken before any work could start have mapped out centuries-old snig tracks that show where loggers once dragged timber down the forest slope to what are thought to be small sawpits.

Archaeologically important, the mapping will now help protect the old snig tracks, remnant sawpits and tree stumps, all evidence of timber-getting dating back to the early 1800s.

Sam Cottrell-Davies works at Next Level Mountain Bike, a Tasmanian trail-building company that built the new track based on designs created by the City of Hobart.

“This job has been about so much more than just building a mountain bike trail,” said Sam.

“We had so many features to think about, including how to protect the tree roots of the big blue gum and stringybark trees in the area, as well as historical heritage values like the snig tracks, sawpits and old stone outcroppings.

“We feel we have treated the bush and heritage in a manner that respects the beauty and history of the mountain.”

The new track is an uphill-only trail for mountain bike riders, minimising potential conflict with other users, who can walk or run the track in both directions. The Upper Luge, which runs parallel to the new track, is now a dedicated trail for mountain bike riders.

The initial design of the new climbing trail went through a number of alterations once track builders moved from the design stage to working on the forest floor. The trail location and the points at which it crosses old snig tracks had to be approved by a supervising archaeologist, which means the finished trail winds uphill to avoid significant sites, and has a gentler gradient than is usual for a trail of this nature.

To add challenge, steeper shortcuts have been added between switchbacks for fitter



riders, walkers and trail runners.

Everyone who worked on the new trail underwent environmental and cultural heritage training. Once on site, the City of Hobart tracks team and Next Level ensured clear buffers were established between the trail, cultural heritage sites and important habitat trees. Rock armouring was used to protect tree roots and stop the erosion of the old, heritage-value snig tracks.

Subtle changes to the trail included re-alignments that open up views of some of the most impressive trees in the area, all hundreds of years old and which escaped the axe and saw of early colonial logging operations.

An important milestone in developing the City of Hobart's Riding the Mountain plan, the new climbing route helps create a more connected track network on kunanyi, helping to take riders off busy roads and away from fire trails. The work has been partly funded through a national Australian Government COVID stimulus package to support tourism recovery worth \$238,000 and brings us a step closer to a seamless and integrated recreational network.



Jack Marsh puts the Luge through its paces before the track reopens to riders.



Sam Cottrell-Davies and Titus Cardona Peart put the finishing touches on the Luge track.





# Getting the balance right

**Ben Masterman**

Education and Regulations Coordinator,  
Wellington Park Management Trust

We need to balance protecting the natural and cultural heritage values of Wellington Park with making it available for people to use, particularly for recreation and education. Once somebody has experienced a place and what makes it special, they tend to understand it better and care about it more.

The area where the City of Hobart has built a new, dual-use track and upgraded the Luge track is home to some of the tallest trees on the mountain, which escaped the 1967 fires. These giants of the forest are great survivors and we want to look after them.

The people who have built the new track followed very clear and stringent environmental and cultural heritage guidelines, enabling them to create a track that is fun to walk, run or ride, but also one that is a sustainable distance from these beautiful big old trees and their giant, clambering roots.

We're well aware of some of Hobart's earliest evidence of European settler use in the foothills of kunanyi/Mt Wellington. Cutting down and dragging out trees for building and firewood was happening well before the Tasmanian heritage-listed Historic Mountain Water Supply was built, and some people are concerned that track development could damage this evidence.

Exhaustive assessment and approval processes found that the original and informal Luge track had indeed affected some original heritage features, including snig lines, but that with careful trackwork, use of this track could continue to be enjoyed



Ben Masterman, known to many as Ranger Ben, has been meeting and greeting visitors to kunanyi/Mt Wellington for 11 years. He cares deeply about the mountain, its fauna and flora, its big trees, and its tracks and trails. Photo: Luke Tschärke

as in the past – but now just for recreational and educational reasons. The new trackwork actually protects these features – and offers an opportunity to educate visitors about the history of European use of the mountain.

Walkers, runners and riders all agreed that the old Upper Luge track was getting a bit busy and not everyone felt safe sharing the one track in both directions. The City of Hobart has clearly listened to these voices and figured out a solution. Separating the downhill riders from the walkers and runners will go a long way to easing tensions as well as congestion on those warm mountain mornings

when everyone just wants to get out there.

Formalising the Luge track brings us a step closer to completing a long called-for descending mountain bike trail between The Springs and South Hobart. The City's Ride The Mountain plan proposes two alternative segments to formally complete this route, and I am positive all visitors will benefit.

Local riders will have a dedicated, shuttle-ready downhill track and visiting riders won't get lost as much! Walkers and runners will see far fewer bikes on key tracks, and drivers won't have as many bikes on the road.





Grey fantails are just one of the many native bird species to be found in Waterworks Reserve. Photo: Eric Woehler, BirdLife Tasmania

# The song remains the same

Josh Mitchell

Beneath the famed reservoirs of Waterworks Reserve, the Sandy Bay Rivulet meanders behind a row of houses on its quiet journey toward the River Derwent.

Alongside it is a quiet walking track that leads to Fantail Quarry. Marked by a round, blue mosaic, it is a peaceful pocket where you can take a seat and immerse yourself in the serenity of surrounding bushland.

The Waterworks Valley Landcare Group has turned Fantail Quarry from a nondescript lacuna to a haven for local bird life.

Starting with the installation of nesting boxes, the group provided a new haven for local birds to birth new generations. Made of varying sizes, the boxes include one designed for bats to take shelter in.

Bird-attracting trees and shrubs have been planted with the aim of filling the quarry even further with opportunities for local birdwatchers to check species off their lists.

The inspiration for the quarry came after seeing a similar sanctuary interstate.

“One of our members had been to a very nice aviary-garden on the mainland,” says Carol Bristow, of the Waterworks Valley Landcare Group.

“It was a place you could go where there were bird-attracting plants, and education for the community. We thought it was a really nice idea, and this quarry was a location we had always thought it would be nice to do something with.”

While green rosellas and grey fantails may be familiar to most Tasmanians, new interpretative signage to be installed at the quarry will aid keen birdwatchers in identifying the nearly 50 different species they may see.

The new sign (see next page) will tell the story of the quarry, reminding visitors that the birds’ songs in this area are a journey through time. Even as history has changed, the song has remained consistent, as Don Knowler, local ornithologist, writes:

“Bird song echoes from the past.

At Fantail Quarry it rings through the ages. The sweet twitter of the grey fantail and the piping of the green rosella serenaded the first Tasmanians, the Muwinina people, who walked this way.”

This quarry provides a place to reflect, to relax, and listen to the sounds of birds. The addition of tables provides a comfortable place to sit and absorb the sensory encounter.

“Since the tables have gone in, we’ve seen the occasional group of people having a little picnic here,” says Ms Bristow. “And with the sign up, we hope they’ll stop and have a look around, and watch out for birds.”

Alongside the fantails that the quarry is named for, visitors may also catch sight of native birds such as striated and spotted pardalotes, superb fairy-wrens, thornbills, scrub wrens, and even the beautiful golden whistler.

- *Waterworks Valley Landcare Group are always welcoming new volunteers. Look them up on Facebook for details of their next event.*



# Fantail Quarry

We acknowledge the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the Traditional Custodians of this land for more than 40,000 years. We are standing part way between kunanyi/Mt Wellington and timtumili minanya the Derwent – important places of connection for the Muwinina people.

Birdsong echoes from the past. At Fantail Quarry it rings through the ages. The sweet twitter of the grey fantail and the piping of the green rosella serenaded the first Tasmanians, the Muwinina people, who walked this way.

Birds then provided the soundscape to the invasion of European settlers. And bird music accompanied Charles Darwin on his trek past this spot as he wrestled with the mystery of what he termed natural selection, its reality we now know as evolution.

Birds are the focus at Fantail Quarry simply because they are always obvious, always in sight or within hearing. They are our window on nature, but they are only one component of a complex ecology centred on this hollow of sandstone. It is this complete environment that Waterworks Valley Landcare volunteers have worked to preserve.

Stop and listen to the birds and the wind that ruffles and rustles the leaves of wattle and gum.



Grey fantail

All birds can be divided into two groups – those that hunt insects and those that bury their beaks into nectar and pollen, and also exploit the bounty of seeds and fruit. Diet is not exclusive, however.

Insect eaters will eat fruit when it is available, and nectarivores will feed their young insect food to provide protein for growing bones.

When we observe birds we see life cycles like our own. We both share the journey of life. Like us, birds find partners, build homes, raise young and see them safely on their way. For the young there are lessons to be learned, among them how to sing. It is this music that is our own link to history. The greening of Fantail Quarry ensures the music will ring out into the future.



Green rosella



Superb blue wren

Satin flycatcher

Text and Illustration, Don Knowler • Photographs, Pradeep Pandiyan • Project by Waterworks Valley Landcare, supported by City of Hobart.





Spotted pardalote

Scarlet robin

### Fantail Quarry bird list

- Brown goshawk
- Collared sparrowhawk
- White goshawk
- Tasmanian native-hen
- Masked lapwing
- Yellow-tailed black cockatoo
- Sulphur-crested cockatoo
- Green rosella
- Eastern rosella
- Scarlet robin
- Pink robin
- Dusky robin
- Golden whistler
- Grey shrike-thrush
- Grey fantail
- Superb blue wren
- Brown thornbill
- Yellow wattlebird
- Brush wattlebird
- Black-headed honeyeater
- New Holland honeyeater
- Yellow-throated honeyeater
- Crescent honeyeater
- Eastern spinebill
- Silvereye

- Spotted pardalote
- Grey butcherbird
- Grey currawong
- Black currawong
- Forest raven

### Uncommon

- Bassian thrush
- Strong-billed honeyeater
- Tasmanian scrubwren

### Summer only

- Striated pardalote
- Fan-tailed cuckoo
- Shining bronze-cuckoo
- Welcome swallow
- Tree martin
- Black-faced cuckoo-shrike
- Satin flycatcher

### Introduced species

- Blackbird
- House sparrow
- Starling
- Goldfinch
- Greenfinch



## Dodging a bullet

**D**aphne laurel is one of those weeds that puts Fern Tree on the weed map – along with orange hawkweed, karamu, holly, Darwins holly and other declared weeds of limited range.

But we are lucky enough to be in a position to eradicate this invasive weed before it becomes widespread. It's a bit like stopping a virus in its very early days.

Daphne laurel is an established, highly invasive weed in cool temperate forests of New Zealand and the US. However, in Australia it is only known as a weed around the Grays/Clegg roads area in Fern Tree, and a smaller part of Collinsvale. It is likely that, if not controlled, it will become another significant environmental weed in Tasmania.

Although it doesn't grow over a wide area, the challenge with Daphne laurel is its distribution – widespread in low numbers across about 60 private gardens. So a big part of the job has been negotiations with private land owners. This is not helped by the fact Daphne laurel is not a declared weed – it was only recognised in 2012.

Daphne laurel is an attractive but toxic small shrub. Birds find its shiny black fruit very tasty, and have helped disperse the weed widely, even into dense, shady forest.

Since 2017 Fern Tree Bushcare volunteers have invested an incredible 19 working bees into Daphne laurel control, often covering several properties in one working bee. With an average of eight people at each activity, that's



**Bec Johnson**  
Team Leader Bushcare

equal to one person working a full 47 days on Daphne laurel alone.

We help land owners recognise and manage Daphne laurel on their properties, and if they wish, we help with other environmental weeds if we see them. We really appreciate the trusting relationship with the owners, as well as lawn space for picnic morning teas!

With the help of a grant from the Tasmanian Government Weeds Action Fund in 2021, we were able to engage contractors to search a large area of bushland on the kunanyi/Mt Wellington side of Grays Road, while Bushcare continued to work in the core area. Through the grant we also produced a flyer and formal letters to all owners. In-kind support included negotiating access to 30 of the 60 properties. Over six working bees in 2021 our volunteers located hundreds of immature and about 30 mature Daphne laurel plants.

Our volunteer work was just part of our in-kind contributions to this

grant, and we deeply appreciate all of the land owners who allowed us on their properties to check for this potentially disastrous weed.

Searching requires a keen eye and patience, and knowing where the weed is not as important as knowing where it is!

If you are interested in helping Tasmania dodge another 'weed bullet', please get in touch and join us on the second Sunday morning of the month. Our working bees are always followed by a minor feast of home-baked goodies.

### Foxglove update

Foxglove has been found on kunanyi/Mt Wellington at 1100 metres above sea level, 950 metres from the nearest track – Smiths Monument.

It had flowered and seeded at this altitude, which is a long distance from human seed sources or impacts, so it must have come by natural dispersal.

Foxglove has a very high potential to invade almost everywhere in Tasmania, except dry environments. If you see a small outbreak of foxglove, best to nip it in the bud, so to speak.



# Welcome return to Bushcare

**Sonya Stallbaum**

Team Leader Bushcare

**H**ello Bushcare! In a smidgin under a decade, I'm back, taking on the role of Team Leader with the Bushcare program.

I left Hobart in 2012 and moved with my partner to a 20-hectare covenanted bush block in Gunns Plains where, over three years, we built an off-the-grid strawbale house.

The result, although still not quite finished, is very beautiful. Surrounded by wet sclerophyll stringy bark and white gum, the area is home to Tassie devils and spotted-tailed quolls (they lived in the house before we got the doors on), and lots of birds.

We have an excellent vantage point overlooking the eastern slope where for two seasons we've watched a pair of brown goshawks raise their chicks. Our bird bath delights scrub tits, thornbills, spinebills, scarlet robins and yellow-throats, just to name a few.



During my decade in North West Tasmania I worked as the natural resources officer at the Central Coast Council, a massive learning curve. I worked side-by-side with six active Landcare groups.

The environments we were working in were highly degraded, at first going against my better judgement and best practice principles of prioritising the most intact natural values. Weeds I'd never met – cape ivy was strangling most of the coast, mirror bush the size of small houses, and marram grass – tough stuff. We made slow progress, but between the groups and my NRM

contractors we made a substantial impact. It was hugely fulfilling.

In between work and caring for our property I got involved in a fantastic restoration project on private land on the Leven River, where I would spend a few hours a week grubbing blackberry and watching the riparian zone bouncing back, one of my most rewarding sideline efforts.

Work has called us both back to Hobart, plus all the advantages on top – friends, restaurants, movies, entertainment and the beautiful natural surrounds.

So it is back to Bushcare, I'm happy to return to such a dedicated, enthusiastic and well supported program. I'm enjoying being reunited with the City of Hobart and a community that respects and nurtures the wonderful natural environment so selflessly.

Some is the same, a lot is different. I look forward to reacquainting myself with the old and new faces and places.

## A field of feral flowers

*One day I went walking out in the bush  
To get through dense scrub, I just had to push  
I battled my way through for many hours  
Till I found a field of feral flowers*

*I was surprised by this colourful sight  
These bright flowers of purple, pink and white  
That hung from long stems as high as my chest  
So I thought I'd stop here for a short rest*

*Large floral tubes with darker spots inside  
Darker spots that act as a nectar guide  
Calling bumble bees in to pollinate  
So that the feral flowers procreate*

*I sat and watched foxglove and bumble bee  
English invaders spread in synchrony  
White with pollen were hairy bumble bees  
Foraging on foxgloves in the cool breeze*

*I picked up my pack, and resumed my walk  
Pushing my way past each flowering stalk  
Grown more thickly than the surrounding scrub*

*As I pushed through, my skin these plants did rub*

*I began to feel ill, aching and pain  
So much torment now throbbed inside my brain  
I felt a hot flush flow over my face  
What have my people brought here to this place?*

*Britain's bumble bees pollinating weeds  
Each plant producing thousands of small seeds  
Smothering this field so many called home  
Where for thousands of years, many did roam*

*I looked at the field that used to grow grass  
Where hunter and hunted used to both pass  
Where wallaby and wombat used to graze  
Where families by campfires used to laze*

*Now by the English it is over-run  
Foxglove and bumble bee in summer sun  
This feral wasteland we have created  
Little England was so over-rated*

*– Andrew Hingston*





# ISN'T IT TIME YOU JOINED BUSHCARE?



## AUTUMN PROGRAM OUT NOW!

Put a spring in your step and join one of our Bushcare spring activities! Download the latest activities program from [hobartcity.com.au/bushcare](http://hobartcity.com.au/bushcare).



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