

BANDICOOTtimes

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Bushcare Roundup



Sonya Stallbaum
Acting Bushcare
Project Officer

This year's wet winter has provided excellent conditions for planting and we're hoping the moisture-laden ground will give our new plantings on the Hobart Rivulet the long-term advantage the young trees, shrubs and grasses need to survive summer. The wet conditions are also a boon for a number of in-fill plantings in some of the more degraded and diversity-poor areas of our bushland reserves.

As Bushcare advances through the best of the bush, there are prospects for further enhancing our bushland values. The relatively new science of hollow creation has amazing potential to boost habitat and Ridgeway Bushcare has been very active in this space, we are watchful and hopeful for positive long-term results.

A big thank you to the Mount Stuart Scout Group who teamed up with Valley Street Bushcare. Together they planted 100 native plants at Providence Gully in West Hobart. Densely planted sedges along Providence Creek will help improve water quality and habitat potential.

At the Queens Domain 20 TAFE students helped thin out woody vegetation that would otherwise overshadow and threaten the domain's native grasslands. A couple of the students accidentally rustled out a bandicoot, giving them a fleeting glimpse of one of the wildlife species we are



TAFE English students Juri Hatano and Constanza Lyon Jara in the weeds with our team member Samantha Jones.

protecting by caring for and restoring grassy woodland ecosystems.

We love working with the TAFE English students. They are fun, willing participants who never hesitate to throw on some knee pads and get into the task at hand.

Working bees

If you are after more Bushcare opportunities download the spring working bee program from the City of Hobart website. With a spring in the step, the sun on our backs, Bushcare offers many opportunities to enhance and protect our local natural areas.

South Hobart Bushcare has found sun orchids in their urban remnant and are now actively working to protect them. Fern Tree Bushcare is tackling Daphne laurel and karamu, both escaped garden plants that love shady environments and are slowly but steadily advancing their range.

These "sleeper weeds" lie under

the radar, waiting to make a run for it. Bushcare has conquered many of the common, listed woody weeds in Hobart, but there are others to keep an eye on, like the bulbs and lilies described in this edition of the Bandicoot Times.

At Knocklofty Reserve, where there is dry woodland with gahnia sedges below, the Friends of Knocklofty will be searching for chaostola skipper butterflies and identifying the habitat requirements for this threatened beauty with Dr Phil Bell.

Hobart Rivulet Bushcare will continue examining the in-stream life of the rivulet to get a better understanding of its health with the help of the entertaining aquatic ecologist John Gooderham.

Bushcare plays an important role in monitoring nature and spring is a great time to join in and become immersed in the flush of life responding to longer, warmer days.



Cover photo: Bushcare
volunteer Alison
Hetherington.
Photo: Sjaan Field

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Kirsten Fairfax joins Penelope Clark and her son Harlow on the banks of the Hobart Rivulet. Photo: John Sampson

Many hands make light work

On the morning of Sunday 31 July, this year's National Tree Day, our Bushcare team carefully positioned 600 native trees, shrubs and ground cover for planting along the banks of the Hobart Rivulet.

Within hours more than 70 happy, passionate, enthusiastic volunteers were on site and giving the bare, muddy earth the care and attention it needed, planting out the area with love.

It was the perfect recipe for a perfect National Tree Day.

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us at the Hobart Rivulet next to the Cascade Brewery, it was a smashing success and part of a long-term project run by the City of Hobart to remove highly invasive and weedy crack willows and replace

them with native plants.

Crack willows are a highly adaptable species that have pushed out native vegetation, smothered the stream bed with their roots and created choke holds on water flows, worsening the impacts of major flood events.

This weedy willow overloads natural waterways with dead organic matter, sucking oxygen from the system and damaging the health of this waterway for aquatic plants and wildlife, like the local platypus.

Willows also drop limbs, erode banks and can damage infrastructure.

Controlling willows to protect the natural environment requires a well-planned, long-term approach.

Most willows spread when stem fragments or twigs break off the main tree and grow new roots in water. Pieces can travel many kilometres before taking root at a new site.

The City of Hobart is carrying out a staged removal of willows from the Hobart Rivulet, replacing the weedy trees with native species that will create wildlife habitat, improve water quality and restore the health of the stream bank corridor.

You know how it goes. The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.

The removal of willow trees and revegetation of this site was assisted by project partner Cascade Brewery and with funding provided through a Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Grant.



Oliver Strutt takes out some large karamu in Wellington Park.

HUNTING KARAMU

We're on a hunt for karamu, a native New Zealand tree that thrives in cool, wet forests such as those found in Fern Tree.

Listed as a noxious weed in Tasmania, this bushland bully moves into forest and smothers our native flora. Like so many of our bushland weeds karamu started out as a garden plant but has escaped into nearby bushland to become an environmental weed.

To see what could happen in our wet forests if we don't eradicate karamu we just have to look at what is happening on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria, where the weed has formed huge walls of vegetation lining roadside verges.

Karamu can grow up to 6 metres tall and as it spreads takes out the understorey, then smothers the mid-storey of native forest.

Left to its own devices karamu outcompetes mature eucalypts.



Fern Tree Bushcare volunteers Don Wang, Nigel Mowsar and Stuart Graham controlling karamu in Wellington Park.

Tackling karamu

Karamu was once a familiar sight in Fern Tree's forests, but thanks to the efforts of the Fern Tree Bushcare group and residents it's now much harder to find.

Hunting for karamu, Daphne laurel, holly and foxglove, our intrepid Fern Tree Bushcare volunteers work in some challenging terrain, navigating around huge mossy logs, through deep leaf litter and across steep slopes.

Have you seen this plant?

Karamu (*Coprosma robusta*)



Look out for shiny leaves, some of which are a tell-tale yellow that stand out like flags in the forest.

Fleshy berries are clustered and range from green to dark orange in colour.

Spotting karamu

Karamu has proven itself a real bushland destroyer in Victoria. Thankfully it is not yet widespread in Tasmania, and in Hobart and Kingborough we have a chance to eradicate karamu before it can do real damage to our forests.

Native to New Zealand, karamu is its Maori name. The plant has shiny leaves, some of which are a bright, tell-tale yellow, which stand out like flags in the forest.

The bright orange berries are not always visible, but they are very fertile, and if you find a karamu bush there's a good chance it will be surrounded by karamu seedlings slowly taking over the forest floor.

Some of our native birds and introduced birds are big fans of the juicy orange berries. Our native silver eyes and introduced blackbirds love them and can often help karamu invade new forest areas through their droppings.

Just like crack willows karamu has the power to envelop our forests in massive thickets, depriving native species of the flora they

have evolved with and creating a monoculture of karamu.

Karamu invasion is bad news for our native wildlife and our native bushland.

Join our karamu hunt

Thankfully karamu is at a relatively early stage of invasion in southern Tasmania, and with a strong community effort we have a chance to control and eradicate the weed before it gets completely out of control.

Karamu is a small tree that can be weeded out by cutting the stem low to the ground with a hand saw or loppers and dabbing the cut stump with herbicide – known as the cut-and-paint technique.

In Victoria some areas have been overwhelmed by the weed and are now littered with dead eucalypt trees killed by karamu infestation.

We want to stop karamu in its tracks, long before anything like that can happen here.

The City of Hobart is part of a three year karamu eradication

project, and we are putting out a call for anyone who lives near wet forests around Hobart to report sightings of karamu using the new iNaturalist project page.

For more photos of karamu and tips on identifying this woody weed, as well as links to the iNaturalist app, visit hobartcity.com.au/karamu.

We need people to check their gardens and nearby bushland to stop the spread of karamu.

The City of Hobart is working to eradicate this weed under a Weed Action Grant. These grants are provided by the Tasmanian Government to tackle weeds that are impacting valuable agricultural and environmental assets.

I've found it. Now what?

- Record your finding in the iNaturalist app.
- Phone Bushcare on 03 6238 2884, especially if you have found karamu in a bushland reserve.
- Visit hobartcity.com.au/karamu to find out more about this weed.

Weed Watch



Bec Johnson
Team Leader Bushcare

So you think you're familiar with environmental weeds? You may not have your eye in for this new group of garden escapees because they look so much like natives when not in flower.

Introduced lilies, irises and bulbs can be hard to spot when they come up near native flax lily (*Dianella*), native sagg (*Lomandra*) and native sedge (*Lepidosperma*).

These are all environmental weeds in Tasmania:


- Stinking iris (*Iris foetidissima*)
- Red hot poker (*Kniphofia uvaria*)
- Agapanthus (*Agapanthus praecox*)
- Arum lily and calla lily (*Arum* and (*Zantedeschia*)
- Montbretia (*Crocsmia x crocosmiiflora*)
- Belladonna (*Amaryllis belladonna*)

These plants are popular garden choices because they are hardy in drought and flood, frost and fire.

If you have any of these plants in your garden it's best to keep them in a pot, and keep an eye out for any that are spreading in spring. Perhaps because of our milder winters or introduced pollinators, these plants seem to crop up now more than in the past, at a surprising distance from the source.

The delightfully named stinking iris produces bright red seeds that are spread by birds, wind and water and can easily germinate over 100m from their source in just one season. It looks like native flax lily when not in flower.




 **Red hot poker**
Kniphofia uvaria



 **Stinking iris**
Iris foetidissima




 **Agapanthus**
Agapanthus praecox




 **Arum lily**
Arum & Zantedeschia



 **Montbretia**
Crocsmia x crocosmiiflora



 **Belladonna**
Amaryllis belladonna

It's shallow rooted and easy to pull out. However, agapanthus and arum can spread from root fragments and are deep-rooted, requiring major excavation or serious herbicide. Red hot poker tends to wedge its roots between rocks and through other plant roots, making it particularly challenging – just ask Lambert Gully Bushcare Group.

Montbretia requires surgical skill to extract hundreds of tiny bulbs,

or just excavate the entire topsoil. Belladonna produces large, deep bulbs like onions, which break off readily. You may have seen the pink flowers of belladonna at Darlington on Maria Island.

If you would like to get your eye in for some of these, you could give us a hand at the Friends of Wellington Park's working bee, on Tuesday 1 November, where we will clean up a big patch of these weeds.

Urban tree canopy project

Hobart is set to become one of the nation's greenest cities under a new project that will fast-track the City of Hobart's Urban Street Tree Strategy.

The new Our City Canopy project is the brainchild of philanthropist couple Douglas and Jenny Armati, who want to leave a lasting legacy by accelerating the City of Hobart's goal of creating an urban tree canopy across 40 per cent of the city by 2046.

"Planting trees has been a lifelong passion for myself and my wife Jenny, and by backing this new tree planting project through a special Trees for the Future Fund we are turning a personal passion into something much bigger than ourselves, something that will benefit the people of Hobart long after we are gone," Mr Armati says.

The Armatis hope to see Hobart businesses, individuals and other philanthropists back the Our City Canopy project by contributing to



Trees help make cities more climate resilient and have real economic benefits.

the Trees for the Future Fund that underpins the initiative.

"Increasing the number of trees that line our streets, parks and playgrounds will have so many positive impacts for our city and the people who call Hobart home," Mr Armati said.


"Planting more trees across Hobart will make the city more climate

resilient, more beautiful and ensure we have clean city air that is the envy of the world.

"Planting more trees also has real economic benefits by reducing stormwater run-off and the impacts of erosion and floodwater damage on city infrastructure."

For more information visit ourcitycanopy.com.au.

McAulay's Reserve



*It is mine.
At least it feels that way.
Not well known or prepossessing
It sits in suburbia
But parts recall former times
When grasslands were pristine
And weeds did not infest.*

*Now two remnant spots remain,
Tended and loved by Bushcare folk,
Recalling times gone by.*

*Macrocarpa trees,
Not endemic to this place,
Visitors, planted by the old professor
Who used to own this land.*

*His house still nestles on the fringe.
He knew the value of this corridor.
Blue gums and other eucalypts,
Sentinels along the creek.*

*Understorey native hops and prickly
acacia,
Home for myriad birds which love this
space.
Possums abound and build their dreys,
And just occasionally a straying wallaby.*

It is ours, to share.

– Margaret Eldridge is a neighbour of McAulay Reserve and in 2010 founded the McAulay Reserve Bushcare Group



BUSHCARE CELEBRATIONS

— 2022 AWARDS & BBQ —



Thursday | 17 November 2022

5.30-7.30 pm

VENUE

Legacy Park, Queens Domain



BOOK NOW

☎ 03 6238 2884

✉ bushcare@hobartcity.com.au

🌐 RSVP bushcare2022.eventbrite.com.au



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