



# BANDICOOT times

Summer 2016–17 | N° 63

## Clean Up Australia Every Day

In Spring 2016, twelve volunteers joined Bushcare on kunanyi / Mt Wellington to continue the program's cleanup efforts from Autumn. As it was too windy on the summit, the group moved to the Springs, and across 3 hours, a staggering 152.5kg of waste was collected.

Clean Up Australia Every Day activities are held throughout the year across Hobart, with Clean Up Australia Day held in March each year. To get involved visit [www.cleanup.org.au](http://www.cleanup.org.au)



Photo: Waste collected at the Springs

## Green Army Support for Private Property weed management

Sue Drake,  
Convenor, Ridgeway Bushcare

Two Green Army teams have been working alongside Ridgeway Bushcare volunteers, sweeping through Erica on private property in Ridgeway. By working with the Green

Army, the group have been able to tackle infestations on private property that would have otherwise been impossible for the group or the land owner to tackle themselves. It's a great relief to the neighbours to have this weed and fire threat reduced.



Photo: Before and After, Photo: Sophia Newman



A PROGRAM OF



City of HOBART



## Annual Bushcare BBQ

On 27 November, around 90 people gathered at the Derwent Sailing Squadron to celebrate the 2016 Bushcare year. It was a great opportunity for Council staff, volunteers and supporters to acknowledge the Council's largest volunteer program, with over 400 volunteers registered in the program this year.

Alderman Harvey with the assistance of Bluebell the Bandicoot thanked all the Bushcare groups and volunteers for their efforts, and awarded the annual Bushcare Legend's Golden Secateurs Award.

This year's Bushcare Legend was Astrid Wright – Convenor, supervisor and group volunteer of Friends of Knocklofty Reserve. Astrid is one of the program's longest giving volunteers. Through her willingness to help and inspire others, Astrid has developed a long lasting partnership between her group and local school – Lansdowne Crescent Primary, giving her time to connect the schools teachers and students with Knocklofty Reserve. Astrid has, and continues to be a wonderful ambassador for Bushcare.

To all those who were unable to make it, thank you for all your support this year and we wish you all a successful Bushcare year in 2017.



Photo: Bushcarers coming together over a BBQ lunch



Photo: Bushcare group representatives with Alderman Harvey and Bluebell



Photo: Long-time Bushcarers Gavin Wright (Lambert Gully Bushcare), Bruce Longmore and Sue Drake (Ridgeway Bushcare)



## Spring plant give-aways: a huge success!

This year's plant give aways were a huge success, with over 100 people attending each of the three plant give-aways. We gave away over 1300 Tasmanian native plants. This is a huge

contrast to previous years where Bushcare groups have struggled to find homes for plants left over from such events. We are currently working with our nursery staff to collect seed and propagate more plants for 2017.



Photo: Plant give-away



Photo: Trackcare volunteers working on the slides connector track

## Trackcare

Across two working bees in August and September Trackcare volunteers have worked alongside Council staff to help finish the Slides Connector track in South Hobart – well done!





## Scots Early Learning Centre - Plant a Tree or Two

Patricia Foster,  
Scots Early Learning Centre

Scots Early Learning centre is an inner city Centre. This means we are limited on play space and we are not lucky enough to be surrounded by the native bush. In order to get to an outside area that is lush with grass and plants, it means we generally need to hire a bus with seat belts and go on an excursion which we have planned in advance and had the parents all sign permission slips.

Our Centre has chosen to go down the Reggio Emilia approach, which recognises that children have their own ideas and ways to express them. We have only just begun this journey and National Plant a Tree Day (Or in our case week) is one of our first big steps to a new way of learning.

The change to the playground is immense. We are so excited to think of the different birds and insects that are going to come into our playground now that it is more inviting. It won't take long for the bushes to settle in and grow bigger and we will be able to use them as hidey holes while racing through them, using them to weave through.

An enormous heart felt thank you to all how have donated to our beautiful playground.

A special thankyou to the following:

- Hobart City Council
- Bunnings Kingston
- Greenhill Nursery

All our wonderful parents especially the families of:

- Zali B
- Ivy W

- Eve W
- Hudson W
- Patrick D
- Cadence H
- Zac M
- Wilfred F
- Matilda F
- Ruby P
- Samuel M

And a special thank you to Kelly and her team at Work For The Dole, for investigating all the names of the trees for us.

Planet Ark and Co-Op Toyota as a major sponsor of Planet Arks National Plant a Tree Day.

Without the support of all these people, we would never have had this wonderful ongoing adventure and the beautiful playground we have begun.



Photo: Thank you scots early learning centre



## Adventures into the world of orchids with Waterworks Valley Landcare

Waterworks Valley Landcare delved into the world of orchids at their October working bee.



Photos: Chris Harries, Waterworks Valley Landcare





KeepGuard

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Did you know little penguins live on the City of Hobart's urban fringes? The City of Hobart works with the Derwent Estuary Program, other Councils and non-government organisations to help conserve little penguins and their habitat in the Derwent. A recent study from the University of Tasmania sheds light on what it's like to be a little penguin in the Derwent.

## Insights into a little penguin and short-tailed shearwater colony in the Derwent Estuary

Haruhi Wabiko, Researcher,  
University of Tasmania

Human activities such as coastal development, tourism and changing ecosystem are critical issues around the world and Tasmania is no exception. Those human habitat alterations can change both native and non-native predator behaviour, leading to an increase in predator populations which often results in increased predation pressure on native animals such as seabirds. Seabird populations are particularly vulnerable to increased predation pressure as they have largely evolved in the absence of large mammalian native predators. Seabirds typically lack anti-predator behaviours, especially in response to introduced predators. This coupled with many seabird species

evolving in the absence of land predators, renders seabirds unable to defend themselves against introduced land predators.

Tasmania is one of the largest breeding areas of short-tailed shearwater and little penguins in Australia. Many of them are suffering from human activities especially in urban areas. Although seabird population trends and direct predator-prey interactions are unknown, it is assumed that the population of little penguins and short-tailed shearwater at the Neck at Bruny Island are facing several concurrent threats, and increases in predation pressure are thought to be one of the main threats to this colony. However, predator activity has not yet been quantified and information about predator-prey interactions is scarce. To minimise seabird declined, it is important to understand how introduced predators impact seabird colonies, in order to inform management mitigation practices.

The current study addressed the knowledge gap concerning little penguins and short-tailed shearwater predators at the Neck colony at Bruny Island by utilising motion triggered cameras to identify and measure predator activity and count carcasses to estimate predation pressure. The surveys occurred throughout the breeding season of 2015-16 when little penguins and short-tailed shearwater may be more vulnerable to predation.

Nine potential predator species were observed including native tiger snakes (*Notechis scutatus*), white-bellied sea eagles (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*), brown goshawks (*Accipiter fasciatus*), forest ravens (*Corvus tasmanicus*), brush-tailed possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*), and eastern quolls (*Dasyurus viverrinus*). Three introduced species were also present within the colony; the black rat (*Rattus rattus*), feral cats (*Felis catus*) and humans. Nine cat predation events on rats ( $n=4$ ) and short-tailed shearwater ( $n=2$  adults,  $n=3$  chicks) were captured on camera. Predator visitation, especially that of cats, ravens and possums, showed two distinct peaks; a small peak early in the breeding season when short-tailed shearwaters and little penguins are mating and incubating eggs; and a larger peak in the late breeding and pre-fledging periods, when short-tailed shearwater (not little penguins) chicks are less secure. Six little penguins and 65 short-tailed shearwater carcasses were found in the surveyed region at the Neck between October 2015 and May 2016. Carcass counts also increased markedly towards the short-tailed shearwater pre-fledging period. However, predation risks from minor species during other breeding phases, like pre-breeding, may be underestimated due to the study timing and method limitations.

Our results represent an important baseline for predator-prey interactions for future monitoring and conservation, particularly given planned infrastructure development and cat eradication activities in the region. Further targeted studies are needed to fully understand the predator-prey interactions and in order to implement efficient mitigation measures to conserve seabird populations into the future.



# BUSHCARE news



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**KeepGuard**

03-14-2016 05:13:06

*Photos: Short tailed shearwater being taken by a cat and the colony being visited by a tiger snake.  
Photos: Haruhi Wabiko, Kingborough Council, Tasmania Parks and wildlife and IMAS*



# How many species are there in your backyard? Discoveries at the Extinction Matters BioBlitzes – marking 80 years since the death of the last known thylacine

Janet Smith and Clare Hawkins

First published in the Running Postman

## Do you know what's living in your backyard or local area?

There is probably an incredible number of species - some of which you or perhaps no one else has ever seen. Some of them may be threatened, and what we do in our backyards can make a real difference to their future prospects. So to mark Threatened Species Day this year, BioBlitz events were held in September to look at what was living in two very different backyards in the State – Queen's Domain Hobart (South) and Bell's Parade, Latrobe (North). A BioBlitz is a festival of science in nature - a great way to bring scientists, naturalists, schools and the community together to look for and appreciate what we have in our own backyards and local areas. The day's theme, 'Extinction Matters', was used to reflect on and celebrate the significance of every species. At both sites it was ready steady go at 10 am Friday morning, and the race began to discover and record as many living things as possible over a period of thirty hours - through the night and finishing at 4 pm on Saturday afternoon. Scientists

and naturalists took groups of school children and members of the public on adventures of discovery and learning; every species was identified, recorded in iNATURALIST\*, and its ecological role, life history and odd habits were discussed – this gave each person a sense of pride in what they had discovered, a personal knowledge of what was living in their own backyard and an awareness of its conservation needs. A massive range of living things were found - bats, crayfish, fungi, bugs, insects, aquatic plants and mammals, birds, plants and more.

More than 50 scientists and naturalists were involved, along with hundreds of additional participants. All involved had the opportunity to improve their skills in finding, identifying and recording the plants and animals in their local areas.

The events were run by a partnership between the Bookend Trust, City of Hobart and Latrobe Councils.

The partners brought together scientists and naturalists from the Tasmanian and Queen Victoria Museum and Art Galleries, University of Tasmania, Threatened Plants Tasmania, BirdLife Tasmania, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, Parks

& Wildlife Service, Inland Fisheries Service, and Forest Practices Authority, along with private consultants and others. Additional support was provided by NRM South, Cradle Coast NRM, Inspiring Australia and the Tasmanian Department of Education and the Rotary Club of Latrobe kept participants' energy levels up with food and hot drinks.

Scientists and naturalists included Conservation Landowners Tasmania members, Rob Garnett and Phil Collier, and Sarah Lloyd, who wrote the DPIPWE publication BUGS BIRDS BETTONGS & BUSH. Janet Smith and Anna Povey also helped with the event in Latrobe.

As well as generating extensive species lists, the BioBlitzes resulted in a lot of very happy people - feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

[www.facebook.com/CradleCoastNRM/](http://www.facebook.com/CradleCoastNRM/)

To find out more about what was found during the BioBlitzes, and for information on useful, fun ways to apply and further develop biodiversity-spotting skills, you can 'like' the Extinction Matters Facebook page, and explore the two 'Extinction Matters' projects on iNaturalist.

Please get in touch if you'd like to help out with future events. A report for each is currently being prepared, and will be hosted on the website [extinctionmatters.com.au/](http://extinctionmatters.com.au/)



\*iNaturalist is a citizen science project and online social network of naturalists, citizen scientists, and biologists built on the concept of sharing observations of biodiversity across the globe - especially valuable when tracking the conservation status of our less common species. Observations can be added via their website or from a mobile app ([www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org)) or added directly to the Tasmanian Natural Values Atlas [www.naturalvaluesatlas.tas.gov.au/#HomePage](http://www.naturalvaluesatlas.tas.gov.au/#HomePage)





## Bicentennial Park Firebreak Maintenance

### What's happening?

The City of Hobart is currently implementing annual maintenance of firebreaks in Bicentennial Park. Staff have assessed each firebreak in recent weeks preparing for the start of the maintenance program to identify required works.

Some of the things required include removing or thinning the understory and shrubs. Some trees will also need to be lopped or removed where their canopies overlap creating a continuous connection between the

bush and houses. Like other years, the work will be done by contractors and supervised by the City.

Management of bushfire risk is a shared responsibility between property owners and the City of Hobart, which manages Bicentennial Park. Absolute protection of life and property in the urban-bushland interface can never be guaranteed, but using a combination of management strategies, with each of us doing our part, will reduce the risk for everyone.

### Reducing the risk – our role

Bicentennial Park is a loved and well used part of the City's bushland reserve system and much of its vegetation is bushfire prone. The interface where houses and the bush meet is where people and properties are most likely to be exposed to smoke, embers, radiant heat and direct flame from bushfires. This means the risk to life and property is greatest in these areas.

The City of Hobart is actively reducing the risk from bushfire on public land through planned hazard reduction burning and by building and maintaining a network of firebreaks and fire trails.

Firebreaks are buffer areas along the edges of reserves which join urban development. The vegetation in these areas is selectively removed to reduce fire fuels to very low levels. They provide a level of protection from fires and allow access for bushfire response and hazard reduction burning operations. The City currently maintains over 100 firebreaks covering more than 50 ha across the reserve system.

### Reducing the risk – what you can do

The most important things that you can do to protect yourself, the people around you and your home and property are to:

- Plan and prepare yourself for a fire event; and
- Reduce the bushfire fuel levels around your home and buildings and within your yard.

If you would like more information on how to do this visit the Tasmania Fire Service website at: [www.fire.tas.gov.au](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au)

If you would like further information on this or other City bushfire management programs, please contact City of Hobart on 6238 2886.



## Backyard wildlife citizen science research reveals effects of domestic pets

A citizen science study undertaken in the City of Hobart municipality has revealed that Tasmanian bandicoots are more naïve to cats and dogs compared to their mainland cousins.

Dr Anke Frank led the citizen science study “Backyard Wildlife Hobart” with fellow researchers Dr Alex Carthey and Dr Peter Banks. With the assistance of 548 residents who participated in the study, they aimed to quantify for the first time the effects of domestic cats and dogs on native mammals and how these impacts might be mediated by backyard size, features and location. Such information is very useful for anyone wanting a wildlife friendly backyard.

As discussed in their first published paper from this research, the researchers predicted that in Hobart, in the absence of dingoes, Tasmanian bandicoots would not recognise dogs as a threat. Just like they predicted,

contrary to their mainland cousins, Tasmanian bandicoots avoided backyards of dog owners.

Other key findings include:

- Residents with backyards directly backing bushland were most likely to report a bandicoot whereas those further away (>500m) were less likely to report them.
- Bandicoot sightings were higher in yards on mainland garden/lawn rather than paved/tiled areas as well as backyards with mainly native vegetation
- The availability of drinking water in a backyard was positively associated with bandicoot sightings
- Water regimes, growing fruit of vegetables, using pesticides, herbicides or fungicides had no impact on the presence of bandicoot sightings or their scats

### So what does this mean?

Despite cat and dog ownership in the City, bandicoots might be persisting because of the diverse range of habitat available, including open lawn areas adjacent to thick sheltering vegetation. Such habitat occurs throughout Hobart from the CBD to kunanyi / Mt Wellington. Such habitat provides a safe, shelter-abundant, and quality feeding areas for bandicoot.

You can read the full journal article at [PLOS ONE](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0161447).

Frank, A.S.K., Carthey, A.J.R., and Banks, P.B. (2016) Does historical coexistence with dingoes explain current avoidance of domestic dogs? Island bandicoots are naïve to dogs, unlike their mainland counterparts, [PLOS One journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0161447](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0161447)

## Bushcare’s Major Day Out with Ridgeway Bushcare

On Sunday 11 September over 30 locals joined Ridgeway Bushcare for Bushcare’s Major Day Out. Families came along for story time, to learn about Ridgeway Park and the efforts of Ridgeway Bushcare. Highlights included a step back in time exploring the old tea rooms and gardens, the ‘67 bushcare fire story, vegetation changes in the area, the rare *E. cordata* on Chimney Pot Hill Rd, Bird Tasmania’s stall, local geology and demonstration of local weeds and how to remove them.

Any Bushcare group can get involved in Bushcare’s Major Day Out in 2017 by visiting [www.bushcaresmajordayout.org](http://www.bushcaresmajordayout.org)



Photo: Talking to locals at Bushcare’s Major Day Out at Ridgeway Park





## A tale of caution if you are feeding sulphur crested cockatoos

Serena Rule,  
South Hobart Bushcare resident  
and volunteer

Sulphur crested cockatoos readily take advantage of free food, and there is concern amongst South Hobart residents that feeding cockatoos is causing them to congregate around houses, often causing damage as they go. In 2016, cockatoos have damaged three houses, and a large flock can be regularly seen between Wellesley Park and Waterworks Reserve.

Having now become fearless of both dogs and humans, the cockatoos forage on other decks, demolish gardens, and chew window frames, doors and cladding. This appears to be an effort both to maintain their beaks and for fun. They are extremely intelligent and long-lived, and once a habit is formed will persist.

My own experience was a great shock - in the space of a couple of minutes half a dozen birds caused about \$1000 worth of damage before I could tear out to scare them off. Fortunately I was at home - had I not been, I probably

would now be living in a colander. Once I stopped shaking, I netted my entire house that day. The flock hung around for weeks trying to find the weak spot in my defences, and fly over recesses to check. Unfortunately I am now living in a bird cage whilst the culprits fly free. Some farmers are in despair at the damage they are now doing to Tasmanian crops.

The cockatoos can also compete for nesting holes and demolish vegetable gardens and fruit as it ripens. I have seen them bullying and driving off the Waterworks currawongs, seen currawongs and ravens vanish completely for days, or literally cower in shrubs on my own block when the cockatoos are screeching nearby, and have noticed an absence of the smaller garden

birds when they are around. The only respite seems to have come since a peregrine and a (I think) goshawk have become occasional visitors.

Those of us whose houses or gardens are being vandalised would really appreciate it if people feeding the white cockatoos anywhere in the Hobart area, realise that the birds can become a major nuisance, and consider the implications - emotional, financial and ecological - for residents and for other birdlife.





# BEYOND bushcare

## Volunteering in Tasmania: understanding motivation, sustaining participation

### Are You A Volunteer? Tell Us What You Think!

### We want to hear from Tasmanian volunteers!

We are asking volunteers to contribute to a survey about volunteering in Tasmania. This survey will provide the first in-depth, large-scale analysis of the reasons Tasmanians volunteer and the benefits that result from their volunteering. The knowledge generated from this study will help engage and sustain the volunteer workforce into the future, and will help inform public policy.

You can be completely anonymous or, if you are interested in talking about your volunteering experience in more depth, you can include your name and a contact number or email. If you provide us with your name and phone or email details, you will also be entered in the draw for a \$100 gift voucher prize.

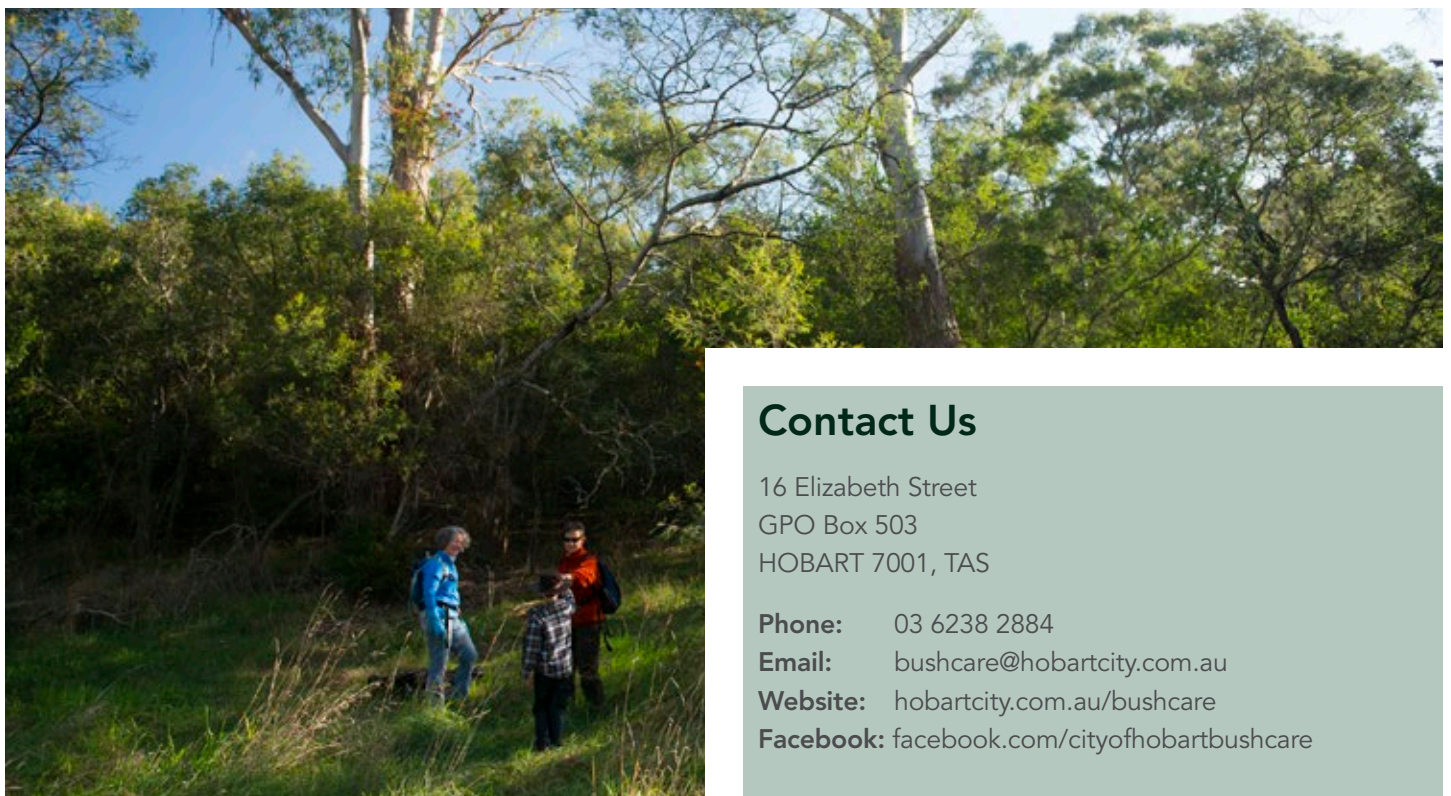
The results of this survey will be released in time for Volunteer Week, 8-14 May 2017.

The Tasmanian Community Fund is supporting this project, as is the University of Tasmania, Volunteering Tasmania, the City of Hobart, the Royal Automobile Club of Tasmania and Hydro Tasmania.

Two researchers from the School of Medicine, University of Tasmania, Dr Elizabeth Shannon (Senior Lecturer, Postgraduate Programs) and Dr Sue Pearson (Lecturer, School of Medicine) have prepared the survey and will be analysing the results.

So, get online now – go to [surveys.utas.edu.au/index.php/579386?lang=en](http://surveys.utas.edu.au/index.php/579386?lang=en) and tell us what you think!

If you want more information about this project, please contact Elizabeth on [e.shannon@utas.edu.au](mailto:e.shannon@utas.edu.au)



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