Welcome to the very first ‘Illawarra Flametree’ edition for 2013. We hope you all had a much deserved rest over the holiday period and are feeling refreshed and inspired to get back into a new year.

We have lots of exciting and interesting information to share with you in this issue, including information about netting your fruit in a wildlife friendly way as well as some important information about Alligator Weed which we are asking you keep an eye out for.

In this issue, we would like you to meet the lovely ladies from Hooka Point Park Bushcare group who are doing an amazing job at preserving the remaining vegetation around Lake Illawarra.

We also explore a number of local events that will help you to look after our local environment, and learn some useful facts and identification tips in our well received feature ‘Along the Bushtucker Trail - With Terry Rankmore’.

We hope you enjoy the February 2013 issue of the Landcare Illawarra ‘Illawarra Flametree’ Newsletter.

From the Landcare Illawarra Team.
Wollongong City Bushcare Coastal Walks

Wollongong City Bushcare has been running a number of coastal walks over summer. There are still a few walks scheduled over the coming weeks if you would like to visit some beautiful sites and hear about the great work the Bushcare volunteers are doing to protect these areas.

**Wednesday 20th February:** 6 – 8pm, Puckey’s Estate, Fairy Meadow
Meet at Fairy Meadow surf club at the end of Elliotts Rd
Round trip through Puckey’s Estate and back along the beach.
Introduction to the heritage and history of the area
Estimated distance 4k. Flat.

**Wednesday 27th February:** 6 – 8pm, Hill 60, King George V Oval, and Coomaditchie, Port Kembla
Meet at the white coast guard building on the top of Hill 60.
We will head south to Coomaditchie; walk around the fresh-water lagoon where the cormorants roost and head north east across King Georges Oval; to northern side of Hill 60 and back through the bush to the top.
Estimated distance 4.5k. Some hills.

**Wednesday 6th March:** 6 – 8pm, Windang
Meet at eastern end of Boronia Ave (turn left at 2nd set of traffic lights when approaching Windang from the north and drive to the end of the road to park)
Walk will include dune vegetation including littoral rainforest; Bushcare restoration, beach walking looking at shells and sea birds – particularly the protection of the endangered Little Tern’s nesting sites
Estimated distance 3.5k. Flat.

**Points to note and things to bring**
Please wear strong shoes, long pants and long sleeves and a hat and bring some water to drink.
You might like to bring a camera to capture the beauty and binoculars to help spot the wildlife.
Bring a sandwich or snack to eat along the way or come early and have a picnic before we set off.
We will walk whatever the weather so that we experience the coast in all its glory, just dress appropriately – it surely can’t be as wet and wild as 2012.
Children under 15 must be accompanied by an adult.
We will be off-track often so the walks are not suitable for prams or strollers.
And please don’t bring dogs.
We will gather at the meeting place at 5.45pm and start promptly at 6pm.
For more information contact:
Paul Hellier, Bushcare Officer
p. 42278113 e. phellier@wollongong.nsw.gov.au

**Disaster Recovery Training - CVA**
CVA have been involved in Disaster Recovery after Cyclone Yasi and the QLD floods, we assisted in the shoreline response to the Rena Oil Spill in The Bay of Plenty, NZ and are continuing to assist communities affected by the Black Saturday Fires in 2007.

It’s Important to note that we are not taking the place of emergency services who respond immediately after an event – we will be there in the recovery phase.
What we have found is that after the initial outpouring
of support after a disaster winds down, affected communities can often feel overwhelmed with the massive task of mending their houses and lives, let alone repairing the land and their fences; it is during this time that our teams are deployed to lend a much needed hand. We will be holding a workshop on Saturday the 2nd of March, focusing on mental health first aid and responding to those who have faced a traumatic event. Guest speaker Lyn Page will discuss with us her experiences in working with tsunami victims in Japan and cyclone and flood victims in QLD to give us some first-hand insight into the highs and lows of disaster recovery.

**When:** Saturday 2nd March, 9am – 1pm  
**Where:** Meet at CVA office. 12/30 Swan St Wollongong  
**RSVP:** Jess or Renae p. 42 289 246  
e. wollongong@cva.org.au

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**Hooka Pt Park and Fred Finch Park Clean up - Clean Up Australia Day**

Hooka Pt and Fred Finch Parks are great for sport, bike riding, fishing, a good walk, bird watching, and walking the dog, and all in a beautiful setting right on the Lake shore. The winds and tide, and sometimes even a human litterer, mean there is a build-up of drink bottles, food wrappers etc plus the odd super market trolley & car wheel. The litter accumulates particularly near the water and is very bad for the Lake. Regular clean-ups of the rubbish are what we need to keep the area healthy, looking good and to show that we love it!

Hooka Pt and Fred Finch Parks are places for Berkeleyites and all of Wollongong to be proud of!

The Bushcare group would love some extra hands for an hour or so on the day from any interested community members.

**When:** 9am – 1pm, Sunday, 3rd March, 2013  
**Where:** Hooka Pt Park and Fred Finch Park  
**Meet:** The picnic table near the Holborn St carpark to register, arrange groups & collect bags etc  
**Bring:** yourself and your family members (all kids need a supervising adult with them), sturdy shoes/gumboots, hats, sunscreen, water etc. and strong wheelbarrow if you have one please

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**In Safe Hands Training**

Conservation Volunteers Australia will be delivering training to more than 500 Landcare and community groups across Australia through a series of training workshops in 2013. These workshops will help develop practical skills and ensure people understand their legal obligations. Agency staff as well as volunteers are encouraged to attend the free sessions and can register through the website.

**When:** Saturday March 16, 10am  
**Where:** Illawarra Master Builders Club  
To register visit the website:  

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**More local events**

The Landcare Illawarra website has an active calendar listing loads of up and coming events that the whole community can become involved in.

Visit the Landcare Illawarra website to see what exciting events may be happening near you. Also if you would like your event uploaded onto our website, email details to Megan Rowlatt  
communitysupport@conservationvolunteers.com.au  
[www.landcareillawarra.org.au](http://www.landcareillawarra.org.au)
Dealing with deceased Flying Foxes

As you may or may not be aware, there is a large resident camp of grey-headed flying foxes at Figtree which is located within close proximity to residences, businesses and sporting fields. Given the recent extreme heat events, unfortunately a number of Grey-headed flying foxes have died as they couldn’t cope with the heat.

Grey-headed flying foxes play a vital role in spreading seeds and pollinating native plants, but are also known to carry a number of viruses which can cause problems for humans if they become infected. As such, the issue of dealing with dead flying foxes is of concern to a number of people.

In light of these issues, the NSW Office of Environment & Heritage (OEH) and NSW Health Department recently released information on the handling of dead flying foxes.

Please see the below websites, fact sheets and media releases for information regarding dealing with any dead or injured flying foxes:

- OEH website
- NSW Health website

Invitation to Complete Survey for Wollongong Dune Management Strategy

You are invited to have your say on any Wollongong City Council projects at any time by visiting the website [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

Council has engaged consultants GHD to prepare the Wollongong Dune Management Strategy for the areas in the vicinity of the surf clubs at the 17 patrolled beaches in the local government area. If you would like to contribute to the development of management strategies, please complete the survey on Council’s website that will be open until 28 February.

New Friends of Minnamurra Rainforest Group

The South Coast Region has received funding from the NPWS Volunteer Grants Program to establish a volunteer Friends Group at the Minnamurra Rainforest Centre in Budderoo National Park.

The volunteer project aims to encourage the local community as well as park visitors to get involved in bush regeneration around the popular Minnamurra Rainforest Centre.

The volunteers will build on the highly successful regeneration and weed control program undertaken at Minnamurra by NPWS over the past eight years.

A successful Friends Group will play an important role in the sites’ future protection against weed invasion.

Work will continue focusing on the Endangered Ecological Community—Illawarra Subtropical Rainforest. Volunteer bush regeneration half-day sessions will be undertaken once a month with NPWS staff and a bush regenerator providing guidance on plant identification and weeding techniques.

Following the regeneration sessions, a BBQ lunch and peaceful boardwalk tour will be provided for participants.

If you enjoy mingling with wildlife and like-minded rainforest regenerators the team would like to meet you! Phone 4236 0469 for more information.
MEET THE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Profile

Our volunteers are the driving force of Landcare and often go unrecognised in the community for their hard work. They work tirelessly and contribute many hours to their local patch of native bushland. So we want to introduce them to you, and hear more about what makes them tick...

Meet: Frances Paterson and Annie Marlow

Group: Hooka Point Park Bushcare

How long have you been volunteering for?: The group has been running for less than a year, but the three of us (Frances, Annie and Annie’s sister Julie Marlow) have been involved in volunteer or environmental work for many years.

What inspired you to get involved at this site?: Frances: I grew up in Pittwater surrounded by the bush, so this is where I think I developed a strong connection with the land and wanted to care for the environment from a young age. I’ve been involved in various Bushcare projects for over 12 years.

Annie: I come from the Alpine environment in Victoria where I worked in a number of wetland and highland vegetation projects involving Landcare during this time. I’m very passionate about the ecology of environments around water and ensuring there is good water quality for the wider community.

The three of us are very passionate about the environment, and the environment around Lake Illawarra is very special. There aren’t very many natural areas left around the lake so it’s important we protect these areas as they provide critical habitat for fish populations acting as nurseries and habitat for wetland and migratory birds.

We were really concerned about the damage large infestations of Moth vine and other weeds were having on the native Casuarina forests and salt marsh areas. We use the area for walking and picnicking and had noticed things getting worse and decided to do something about it.

What are some of the issues you are dealing with at your site?: Weed invasion is the biggest threat we deal with in our activities. Unfortunately, the site also suffers from regular arson and vandalism. Parts of the forests have been set alight and damage has also been caused on the wetland by four wheel drive users who are illegally accessing the site somehow. It’s disappointing to see this happening, this area is a fantastic asset to the community.

What is your vision for the site?: We’ve had great support from Wollongong City Council and the Lake Illawarra Authority, but it would be great to see more community members enjoying the site for recreation and even coming along to lend a helping hand, even if it’s just at our annual Clean Up Australia day event! To become involved contact Bushcare on 4227 8113.
Native animals, increasingly displaced from their natural habitat by tree clearing and extreme weather, are resorting to flowering and fruiting trees in our gardens. Tree netting is a popular way to protect fruit from wildlife, particularly in urban areas, but the wrong type of netting can be deadly. Hungry animals are easily caught in ‘bird netting’, which has a mesh size greater than 1cm square. The rescue statistics show that most animals die with horrific injuries or require long term care before release.

Tree netting guide
Two ways to protect your backyard fruit and wildlife
1. Protecting individual fruit.
Search online for ‘fruit protection bags’, look for Green Harvest and The Native Shop for a range of bags and sleeves. Plastic garden pots can also be useful (see right).
2. Protecting the whole tree.
We recommend a densely woven net that will not trap wildlife and doesn’t need a frame, such as the Fruit Saver nets, Hail Guard or Vege Net. These nets are all white - the colour best seen by animals at night. Go to our website for videos about these nets and other ideas.

WIRES will be holding a training course for prospective new members in May this year it will be a two day course over one weekend in Albion Park Rail and we need enthusiastic new members who love wildlife and want to help. For further information please contact Cathy Joukador on 42566 449 or by email caffeyanne@hotmail.com

More information about safe netting of trees to protect our wildlife can be found at www.wires.org.au
Alligator Weed
Illawarra District Noxious Weeds Authority

Much discussion and publicity in the media has in the past been given to the spread of the aquatic weeds Water Hyacinth and Salvinia. This was particularly so when these were found in the Hawkesbury River near Sydney recently.

Unfortunately, not nearly as much attention and publicity has been given toward outbreaks of potentially the greatest aquatic weed threat to the nations freshwater river systems – Alligator Weed.

A native of South America, Alligator Weed is thought to have been accidentally introduced to Australia in the cargo of a ship, possibly during WWII. Since that time Alligator Weed has spread to infest approximately 4000ha, mainly in the eastern states of New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. To date the Lower Hunter and Greater Sydney sub-catchments in NSW form the core areas of Alligator Weed infestation in Australia.

Any infestation occurring outside those core areas are by definition non-core-area infestations. Currently non-core-area infestations occur at three main sites in the Illawarra – Duck Creek at Yallah; Dunmore Wetlands at Shellharbour, and in a small creek at Stanwell Park.

In late 1995 Alligator Weed was accidentally discovered in a domestic vegetable garden in Brisbane, where it was being grown in mistake for the leafy Sri Lankan vegetable plant Mukunuwenna. Subsequent investigations in the Illawarra over the next year identified 16 urban plantings of Alligator Weed. An intensive eradication and education program against the domestic cultivation of Alligator Weed was extremely successful in eradicating the weed from 15 of the 16 gardens identified. This infestation along with two more recent discoveries at Shellharbour and Yallah now comprise the three known infestations in the Illawarra.

Alligator Weed is a perennial, stoloniferaus plant that can grow both on land and in water. With extremely vigorous growth and great tolerance to most control measures it is generally considered one of the greatest aquatic weed threats to the state’s freshwater river systems. Spreading by stolons (creeping stems) it can affect agricultural and irrigation systems, natural waterways, riparian environments and wetland systems. It can form dense
monocultures competing with and displacing desirable pasture species, native riparian vegetation as well as restricting light and causing anaerobic conditions that ultimately alter the aquatic ecology. It produces masses of interwoven creeping and layering stems which are hollow when mature. Leaves are dark green, glossy and sessile (no stalk), spear shaped and in opposite pairs along the stems. Papery white ball-like flowers occur on stalks in mid to late summer. Alligator weed propagates readily from stem pieces. Control of Alligator Weed is extremely difficult. Mechanical control can often promote spread and chemical options are limited. Biological control using a flea beetle offers hope with some infestations, however with 4 native look-a-likes, any suspected infestations are best reported to the IDNWA in the first instance for proper identification and control options. Being a weed of National Significance (WONS) and Class 2 notifiable noxious weed makes Alligator Weed one of the highest priority weeds for detection and management in NSW. It also reflects the serious potential for spread of this plant and the importance of containment and eradication of new infestations. For further information please contact the IDNWA on 4233 1129.

Sydney Rock Lily

**Aboriginal name**: Buruwan (Dharawal).
**Botanical name**: *Dendrobium speciossum*
**Meaning of the Name**: Dendrobium-tree living which refers to its epiphytic habit of this species. Speciossus-beautiful, has showy creamy flowers.
**Habit**: Cliff edges, sandstone outcrops.

**Edible Use**
Stems roasted before eating. The food is high in starch like potatoes. Stems were stored and eaten later.

**Medicinal Use**
The sap from the stems was rubbed onto areas that were either burnt or blistered.

**Indicator Use**
Blue tongues could be found nearby.

**Propagation**
By dividing clumps of the plant and re-potting or planting in suitable habitat.

**Landscaping/ gardening**
A very good rockery plant in frost free areas. Grow in full sun or in one quarter shade. They should not be planted in soil, but nailed with masonry nails to a rock or tree which gives it support. If grown in a growing medium, this needs to be a course mixture which is well drained. They require good air movement as well plenty of water while growing.
Project Launch and Botany Bushwalk

Landcare Illawarra will be hosting lunch and a botany workshop in Foxground on Saturday 23rd of February. Participants will take a guided walk through Illawarra Subtropical Rainforest and learn basic skills in botany and plant identification.

Following the rainforest walk, will be the official project launch for ‘Protecting Illawarra Endangered Ecological Communities: Illawarra Woodland and Rainforest Project’ which has received 6 years of funding from the Australian Government’s Clean Energy Future Biodiversity Fund.

Interested landholders and community members can hear about how the program will be contributing to regional biodiversity outcomes and will be working towards protecting two endangered ecological communities in the Illawarra by supporting private landholders to manage this vegetation on their properties.

Landcare Illawarra project officer, Richard Scarborough will explain how landholders can become involved in the project. Guest speakers will discuss the impacts of vegetation fragmentation on our biodiversity, and the importance of connectivity between vegetation remnants to maintain healthy ecosystems.

Following the project launch and a complementary lunch, there will be another guided walk around the top of the property looking at the mix of Rainforest and Tall Eucalypt forest.

This workshop is free for all interested participants.

There is a cap on numbers for the morning rainforest walk, but anyone can come for lunch to celebrate the project launch, and take an afternoon walk.

**When:** Saturday February 23, 9.30am – 3pm. Lunch 12.30 for 1.00pm Project Launch.

**Where:** Location in Foxground will be supplied upon registration

**RSVP:** RSVP’s are essential for catering purposes. Contact Megan Rowlett on 4229 7526 or email communitysupport@conservationvolunteers.com.au by Tuesday the 19th of February.
Wollongong
Illawarra Youth Landcare
A team of young volunteers ranging in age from late teens to early thirties travel around once a month assisting an existing Landcare or Bushcare group in the Illawarra on their site. This is a great opportunity to see the region and learn about different environmental issues. Visit the website for project updates.
www.illawarrayouthlandcare.com.au

Wollongong City Bushcare
There are over 50 Bushcare sites throughout Wollongong from Windang and Dapto in the south to Helensburgh in the north. All Bushcare volunteers are working with Council to conserve our precious natural areas of bushland, foreshore, creek lines and escarpment. Bushcare groups usually meet regularly each week or each month, learning new skills and meeting new people while helping out the environment. Everyone is welcome to join the Bushcare program - every extra hand helps. For information on a group near you, contact Bushcare - 4227 8113 or visit the Bushcare section of the Wollongong City Council website.

Shellharbour
Shellharbour City Council supports a number of Bushcare, Landcare and Parkcare groups across Shellharbour. To find out more information or to join a group, use the contact details below.

Tullimbar Landcare, Albion Park. Meets at Elizabeth Brownlee Reserve (end of Digby Close), 2nd Wednesday and the 4th Saturday of the month 9am-1pm. Contact Ruth Jenkins on 4256 2684.
Blackbutt Bushcare, Blackbutt. Meets in Blackbutt Forest, 3rd Sunday of the month 9am-12 pm. Contact Tony Hepworth on 4297 6490 for directions to the meeting site.

Oakey Creek Bushcare. Meet at Oak Flats on the Boulevard end once a fortnight on Wednesdays 9-12 Mt Warrigal Bushcare (Alex Hoffman Reserve). Meets at Rowland Ave, 1st Thursday of the month 9am -12 noon.
Currambene Reserve, Flinders. Meet at the corner of Grainger Parkway and Baragoot Road, every second Saturday 9am - 12noon. Contact Council on 4221 6111 for details.
Boonerah Point Bushcare, Mt Warrigal. Meets east of Boonerah Point carpark (Reddal Parade) every second Saturday, 1pm – 4pm.
Deakin Reserve Bushcare. Meets on the 3rd Saturday of the month 9am-12pm at Deakin Reserve Oak Flats. Locations can change so contact Council if you are interested in any of the above groups and would like more information, contact council on 4221 6111.

Kiama
Bombo Headland Landcare
When: Generally meet on the 4th Saturday of the month from 2pm-4pm
Where: The Boneyard, Bombo Headland. Bring any tools, gloves you have.

Seven Mile Beach Landcare
When: Meet on the last Sunday of every month from 9am.
Where: Seven Mile Beach Reserve, Gerroa. Contact Grant on kishmerinuk@bigpond.com for location details.

Little Blowhole Landcare
When: Meet on the first Saturday of the month and work through the cooler part of the day from 2pm or sometimes from 3pm during daylight savings.
Where: Little Blowhole Reserve, Kiama

What do I bring?
Wear sturdy closed in shoes, long pants and long shirt to avoid insect bites, sun burn and scratches from vegetation. Wear a hat and sunscreen, bring gloves if you have some, plenty of drinking water and snacks if you need them.

There are many more groups to get involved with in our region. For more information about ALL of the active Landcare groups across the Illawarra visit www.landcareillawarra.org.au or contact Landcare Community Support Officer - Megan on 4229 7526 communitiesupport@conservationvolunteers.com

Event Promotion
Would you like your Landcare projects advertised? Email your group details to communitiesupport@conservationvolunteers.com.au or call 4229 7526. We can also promote your events and projects on our Landcare Illawarra Facebook profile www.facebook.com/landcareillawarra
**Sustainable Agriculture: Community Landcare Grants**

Close March 20 2013

The Community Landcare Grants have just been launched and DAFF is seeking applications for between $5000 and $50,000 to support the natural resource management community to ensure Australia’s agricultural base is sustainable, productive and resilient. Detailed eligibility criteria is available in the Community Landcare Grant 2013-14 guidelines available on the Caring for our Country website.

**Sustainable Environment: Target Area Grants**

EOIs for projects over $1M close March 12 2013
Projects between $50K - $1M close April 1 2013

Target Area Grants will provide funding of between $50,000 and $2 million for projects to maintain ecosystem services, protect our conservation estate, and enhance the capacity of Indigenous communities to conserve and protect natural resources across six target areas. Target Area Grants will provide funding of between $50,000 and $2 million for projects to maintain ecosystem services, protect our conservation estate, and enhance the capacity of Indigenous communities to conserve and protect natural resources across six target areas. Guidelines are available on the Caring for our Country website.

**Coles Junior Landcare School Garden Grant**

Round 2 closes May 10 2013

Since 2008 Coles has been providing School Garden Grants of up to $1,000 to schools and youth groups to help create gardens in their grounds or community, such as bush tucker gardens, water wise gardens or veggie gardens.
These programs encourage students to learn about the environment through “outdoor learning” and interaction in developing their own school gardens.

Round 2: closes 5pm (AEST) Friday 10 May 2013
Round 3: closes 5pm (AEST) Friday 2 August 2013

www.juniorlandcare.com.au

**Other Websites**

GrantsLINK

This website helps you find funding available under a variety of grant programs in a number of fields for individuals, businesses and communities to help you to develop solutions to local, regional and national problems, fund ideas and initiatives or provide assistance in times of hardship.

www.grantslink.gov.au

If you need any assistance in applying for funding contact your Landcare Community Support Officer 4229 7526 or communitysupport@conservationvolunteers.com.au

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