

BANDICOOTtimes

Spring 2018 | No 70



CONSTANT
GARDENERS

hobartcity.com.au/bushcare



A PROGRAM OF



City of HOBART

Bushcare Roundup



Sjaan Field
Program Officer Bushcare

Winter has been filled with lots of special Bushcare activities.

In June, Bushcare supervisor Michelle Storer took a group of five students from Mount Carmel College into McAulay Reserve as part of their environmental efficacy class. The students were excited to walk in the grasslands, learn about the reserve's history and how Bushcare volunteers maintain the grasslands.

University of Tasmania orientation week in July was a brilliant opportunity to meet university students and talk with them about Bushcare. We met many students and enticed a few into attending some of our working bees.

I popped down to the Lenah Valley Garden Club to talk about Bushcare with some of their more active members, it sparked lots of interest and we expect to see a few of them at future Bushcare events.

We have given away 450 native plants for people

to plant in their gardens. The South Hobart Bushcare Group and Waterworks Valley Landcare group held plant giveaways. Nicole Gill, Steve McEntee and I attended a National Tree Day event at Farm Gate Market in July, providing advice to shoppers about which native plant species would do best in their gardens.

The Trackcare Dig Days on the Slides in July and August drew a great crew of local mountain bikers who put in a tremendous effort. Our expert Trackcare staff helped teach the Trackcare volunteers stone edging and other track building techniques.

On a bitter sweet note Michelle Storer is stepping down from her role as Team Leader Bushcare as she takes on a new role as Weeds Officer with Huon Valley Council. Michelle will continue working with Bushcare on Fridays and supervising her usual Sunday working bees until a replacement is appointed. We wish Michelle well in her new role and thank her for all her work, passion and enthusiasm with Bushcare over the past year and a half.



Nicole Gill, Janet Stone and Steve McEntee giving expert advice at the South Hobart Bushcare Group plant giveaway.

Cover: Sue Gillespie and Ken Mackay identifying plants at a working bee.

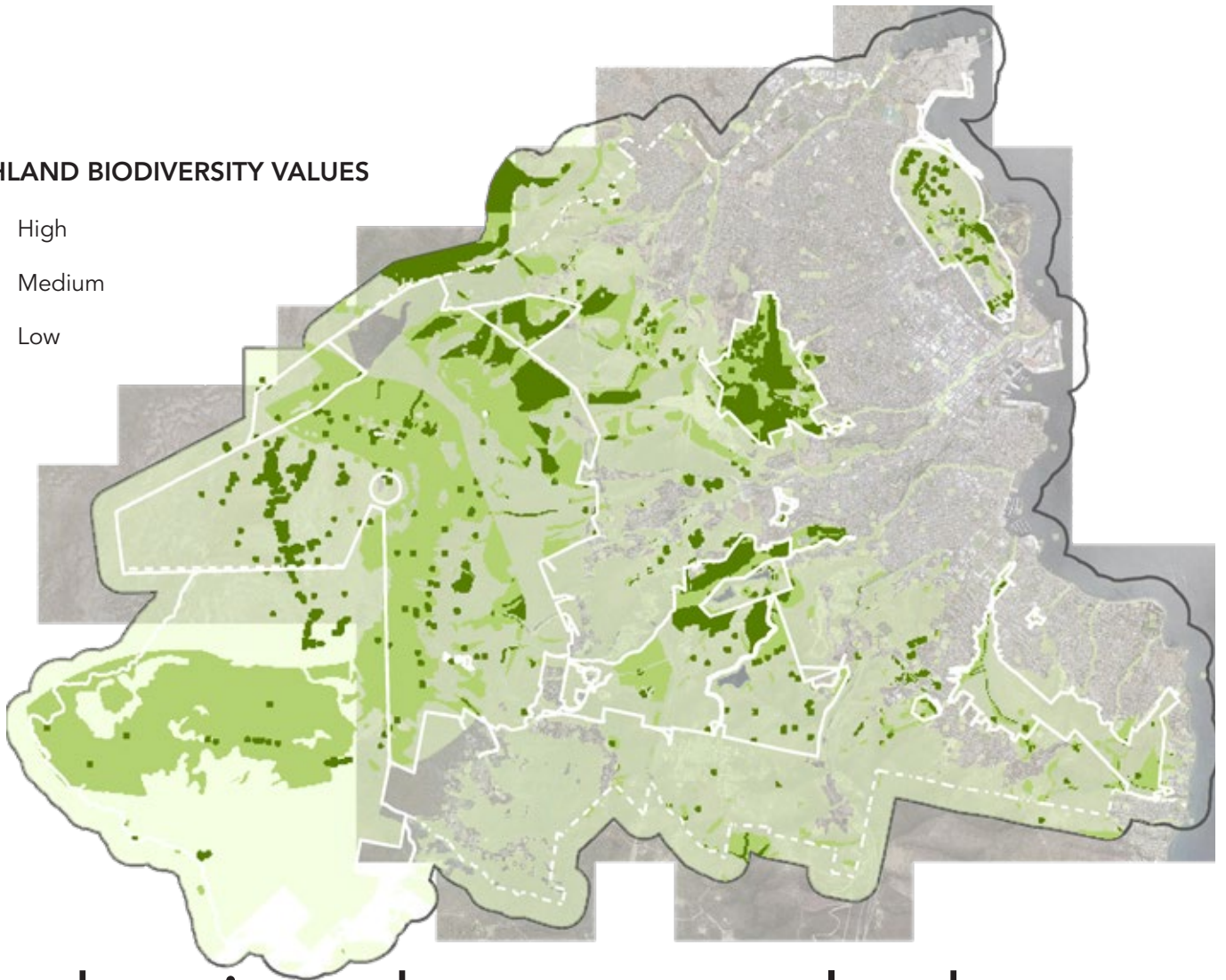
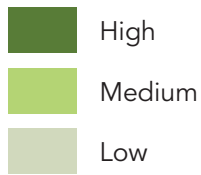


Contact Us

16 Elizabeth Street
GPO Box 503
Hobart 7001, TAS

P 03 6238 2884
E bushcare@hobartcity.com.au
W hobartcity.com.au/bushcare
f facebook.com/cityofhobartbushcare

BUSHLAND BIODIVERSITY VALUES



Reshaping the way we look after our bushland reserves

The City of Hobart is working on a biodiversity action plan that will reshape the way we manage our bushland reserves and threatened species for decades to come.

Pulling data together from multiple sources it maps threatened vegetation communities, threatened species and identifies potential valuable habitat for our threatened native animals.

It also identifies biodiversity 'hot spots' in our bushland reserves that may be vulnerable to invasive weeds, including orange hawkweed, Chilean needle grass, serrated tussock, English ivy and Montpellier broom, and will set the groundwork for clearly targeted work to contain or eliminate these threats.

For Bushcarers, the action plan will help identify areas that are home to our most valuable native plants, plant communities and animals.

City of Hobart ecologist Elise Jeffery says the plan will

also fine tune the City's fire and biodiversity strategy, maximising biodiversity outcomes beyond removing weeds. For example, the plan is already helping to deliver succession plans for large old habitat trees.

"Habitat trees with big hollows are incredibly valuable to the health of our bushland reserves," she says. "So we have to make sure the next generation of saplings is in the ground, growing up ready to become the large old trees of the future."

The work is already paying off in Knocklofty Reserve, where the City's fire and biodiversity teams are using cool burns to protect an extremely rare land snail, the ammonite snail (*Discocharopa vigens*), and significant large old trees.

The City's knowledge of the weeds and threatened species found in its bushland reserves is always improving. Bushcarers can help improve this knowledge by reporting sightings through the Natural Values Atlas — naturalvaluesatlas.tas.gov.au

Bush balladeer tuned into nature

Steve McEntee has two passions in life, music and nature.

The professional musician and trombone player who studied jazz at the Elder Conservatory of Music in Adelaide and is also trained in conservation and land management. He has no problems straddling the two worlds, and loves his new role as a casual Bushcare supervisor with the City of Hobart.

“You learn so much about nature in this role,” he says.

“The members of our Bushcare groups have an incredibly rich knowledge of their local patch of bush. I love sitting down with them and hearing about what’s happening in their area.

“They’re really tuned into the movements of local native animals, the lifecycles of native plants and they’re really tuned into nature.”

His favourite spot is Knocklofty Reserve.

“You can be beavering away at a patch of weeds then all of a sudden you just notice how quiet and peaceful this place is, despite being on the fringe of Hobart’s inner suburbs.”



Steve McEntee at the Farm Gate Market National Tree Day plant giveaway.

Steve started with Bushcare in July, and one of his first tasks was to help out at the Hobart Rivulet community clean-up day after May’s devastating floods.

“I saw one volunteer cleaning up a single square metre of land along the rivulet for two hours solid,” he says. “It really summed up for me the commitment and sense of community spirit on that day.”

Bushcare volunteers ignite, invigorate and inspire us

What did I learn after three days chatting with 650 people from across Australia at the National Volunteering Conference who are deeply involved in the volunteer movement?

If I had to come up with one take home message it would be that volunteers are never ‘just volunteers’. For Bushcare, volunteers are our lifeblood. They are often the first point of contact between the City of Hobart and other members of the community, they are our ambassadors, our champions and they inspire the staff that work with them.

Of the 780 people that volunteered for a City program this year more than half



Sjaan (second left) with delegates at the National Volunteering Conference.

volunteered with Bushcare. That’s an extraordinary figure and one that reflects the passion and commitment of the people who work with us in Hobart’s bushlands.

As we experienced after the May flash flood clean-up events at Hobart Rivulet and Cornelian Bay volunteers can achieve incredible results if they are given the right support. We need to continue to recognise community-driven ideas and adapt and respond to spontaneous events.

Being part of this year’s National Volunteering Conference in Sydney reaffirmed for me the importance of ensuring that all of our volunteers feel like they are a valuable member of our community.

Our volunteers are not just volunteers. They are the people who ignite, invigorate and inspire our work.

Science week awakens our inner scientists

Rob Armstrong

Program Officer Bushland Recreation

Curious minds had plenty to feast on during National Science Week in Hobart last month, with a raft of Bush Adventures activities designed to bring out the natural history buff in everyone.

Aspiring map makers learned how to create their own, personalised maps of Tasmania using LISTmap, an online tool that lets you explore layers of natural and cultural information, enriching your understanding of our fascinating island home.

Down at Long Beach in Sandy Bay our "Sea Shell Science" team discovered how nature uses curious and creative solutions for adaptation and survival.

We wandered the tideline looking for creatures that capture prey with neuro-toxic barbs and plants that have evolved floatation devices to stay in the sunlight.

The Festival of Bright Ideas, part of National Science Week, saw thousands coming through the door, exploring science's game changers and change makers.

For those who have joined the war on waste our marine scientist Lauren Roman offered up plenty of food for thought, presenting the findings of her PhD on the impacts of marine debris on wildlife.

Whether you enjoyed one of our Bush Adventure activities during National Science Week or found something else to feed your curious mind this was a great week to unleash your inner scientist.



WHAT'S YOUR NEXT BUSH ADVENTURE?

You don't have to be wild at heart to join a Bush Adventure, but it helps. From fungi forays to guided walks and nest-box making, our program has something for everyone. Book online at hobartcity.com.au/bushadventures



CONSTANT GARDENERS

Bushcarers planting natives at a Cornelian Bay Bushcare Group working bee.

Sue Gillespie calls her Bushcare crew small but steady. They're a loyal bunch, and that's exactly what you want from volunteers.

Sue is the convenor of Cornelian Bay Bushcare, and one of its founding members.

"I was down at Cornelian Bay during an open day," she says. "There was a history talk and some stalls, and Hobart City Council was looking for locals to start up a new Bushcare group. I signed up that day.

"I had a natural interest in the area. I learned to swim at the Cornelian Bay Baths and spent quite a bit of my spare time as a girl growing up down at the bay."

She remembers the early days of the group when both sides of the bay were full of weeds, many of them 'escapees' from the nearby botanical gardens and the boatsheds when people used to live in them.

Boneseed, cotoneaster, golden wattle and African boxthorn were all in the mix.

Since then Cornelian Bay has been transformed into a hugely popular space for locals and visitors who want to spend a bit of time on the foreshore in a beautiful bushland setting.

Steadily beavering away, clearing out weeds and planting local native plants, Cornelian Bay Bushcare has played no small part in creating this special place. Cleaning up rubbish blown from the cemetery is also an ongoing job. At one point they even brought in a cherry picker to pull out weeds from a cliff face far too dangerous for human hands to reach.

The group has been so successful that they've ventured into other bushland reserves, joining recent efforts to restore native grassland on the Queens Domain.

Sue's volunteer spirit doesn't stop with Bushcare, she also helps out at a nursing home and has been part



Sue Gillespie helps at the Cornelian Bay clean up after the flash floods in May.

of the City of Hobart's Still Gardening program for about ten years. Still Gardening connects volunteers like Sue with older people who are struggling with the upkeep of their beloved gardens.

"When you first start with your garden mate they can be a bit down in the dumps," she says. "They don't feel like going into the garden if it's gone to rack and ruin, but after a few hours out there you can feel their spirits lift."

In September the Cornelian Bay Bushcare Group is planning a 'walk and talk' by bird enthusiast Denis Abbott. It's a chance for the hard-working group to sit back and enjoy the fruits of their labour.

"You get so many different birds down here, both bush birds and shorebirds," says Sue. "I've listed up to 35 different species, including oyster catchers, egrets, pardalotes, parrots, ducks and even pelicans."



Credit: Eric Woehler ©

JOIN US!

Bring your binoculars and join ardent Birdlife Tasmania member Denis Abbott to learn about the birds that call the Cornelian Bay foreshore their home.

When: Sunday 23 September
10 am – 12.30 pm

Where: Meet at the Cornelian Bay Boathouse carpark



Neil Mackay and Ken Mackay – father and son volunteering together in 2007.

A connection with nature

Ken Mackay wasn't an immediate convert to the Bushcare cause. He first put his toe in the water as an act of moral support for his then young son Neil.

As a student at The Friends' School in Hobart Neil was being encouraged to get involved in a voluntary service that gave something back to the community. A neighbour mentioned an event the local Bushcare group had coming up, and Ken and his son decided to give Cornelian Bay Bushcare group a go.

"Neil was a bit young to go on his own so I tagged along to give him support," says Ken.

"He stuck at it for the next four years, despite the competing demands of school, being a teenager and the responsibility of playing state hockey."

His son is now 29 and works as a doctor in Cairns. Ken has stuck with the Cornelian Bay Bushcare group and, after 16 years, is one of its stalwarts.

Like so many of our Bushcarers Ken's connection with nature goes back to childhood. As a young boy he would spend time with his uncle Dr Geoffrey Bratt, who worked as an industrial chemist at the zinc works, but was also obsessed with the study and collection of lichens. This involved a lot of time walking in the bush.

"In his spare time my uncle travelled the world collecting lichen," says Ken. "He'd even been to the Kerguelen Islands in Antarctic waters studying them."

Dr Bratt built up an extensive collection of lichen from across Tasmania, curated the Tasmanian Lichen Herbarium and even had a species named after him, *Parmelia brattii*.

Now 62 and retired, Ken maintains a lifelong interest in bushwalking and gardening.

"I love being out in the bushlands around Hobart," he says. "They make me feel good about the city I live in while also giving me a sense of escape. Last week I walked up to Collins Cap in Wellington Park, I saw one other person at the start of the walk and then nobody else for the rest of the day. It was so quiet and peaceful up there."

As you'd expect, Cornelian Bay is also close to Ken's heart. Just 15 minutes from his house in New Town, it has been part of his life all the way back to when his son was a baby and he and his wife would take him down to the bay in the pusher.

"I want to see what happens to the native trees I've helped plant," he says. "I've got a vested interest in seeing them grow up."

Waterbug Blitz – putting our waterways under the microscope

Citizen scientists from across the country are expected to join Australia's first ever National Waterbug Blitz in spring this year.

The waterway monitoring event encourages Australians to discover how healthy their local waterways are by exploring and identifying the waterbugs that live in them.

Waterbugs (or freshwater macroinvertebrates) are small invertebrates that live in freshwater. These include juvenile stages of many insects like dragonflies, damselflies, mayflies, caddisflies, water beetles, and more. Each type of waterbug has a certain sensitivity to pollution or water quality changes in their waterway. So the type and number of bugs found in a waterway can tell you how healthy it is.

The National Waterbug Blitz will be held from September to November each year, with at least two events planned for Hobart. Keep an eye on the website for more information at waterbugblitz.org.au

Download the Waterbug App

You can download The Waterbug App for free from Google Play or the App Store. It'll teach you the names of all the waterbugs, and when it gets upgraded in September it will help you tell how healthy your river is too!



The log cabin caddis fashions an intricate home from neatly cut lengths of water plant leaf.

WALKING BOOK CLUB

FIRST SUNDAY AFTERNOON, 2–4.30pm

If you love walking in the bush and talking about books and the environment, why not join one of our Walking Book Club sessions? Upcoming books include:

2 September The Terranauts, by TC Boyle
Meet: Ridgeway Reservoir, Ridgeway Road, Ridgeway

7 October Feral, by George Monbiot
Meet: Sandy Bay Sailing Club car park, Long Point Road, Sandy Bay

Weed Watch



Many of Tasmania's weedy plants started out as garden ornamentals, and the hummingbird or hardy fuchsia (*Fuchsia magellanica*) is one. An easy to grow plant with attractive pink and purple drooping flowers, the hardy fuchsia is a popular choice for gardens. Unfortunately, the plant's hardy nature also makes it a great environmental invader! Considered an environmental weed in Tasmania, it forms dense, sprawling thickets that out compete native plants. Preferring wet environments, it is often found taking over river banks or disturbed patches of wet forest.

Hardy fuchsias can be controlled by hand-pulling or cutting and painting stumps with herbicide. Cut stems can form new roots if left in contact with moist soil, so dispose of cuttings safely. The best way to prevent new infestations of this weed is, of course, to not plant them in gardens at all. Of the hundreds of fuchsia varieties and cultivars, *F. magellanica* is the only one that has become weedy, so there are many alternatives to choose from. Even better, you could choose a native — native fuchsia (*Correa reflexa*), a hardy shrub with attractive red and green drooping flowers, is the perfect alternative.

Tracks and trails update

The City of Hobart's track works teams have an impressive workload ahead of them in the lead-up to Christmas.

Pinnacle Track to the summit has been the centre of some incredible stone work as part of the Great Short Walk Rejuvenation Project and is now open to the public. The City is now working on the final stage of this project, the Chalet Connection, which will include a new BBQ and tables at the Chalet.

The walking track at Providence

Valley Reserve in Mount Stuart was one of our hardest hit in the May floods, but is being resurfaced and will be open again soon. Storm damage to our bushland infrastructure has been estimated at \$1.3 million.

After extensive community consultation, work on the first stage of The Missing Link mountain bike project is underway. A new shared use track will be built above Strickland Falls creating a long-sought link between Middle Island

and Rivulet fire trails. It will include a ford and stepping stone crossing across the Hobart Rivulet.

There will also be upgrades to the track from Upper Rivulet Trail to Liverpool Crescent, so expect it to be closed during works.

And on the Queens Domain the City is entering the final stage of Max's Infinity Loop to complete the soft fall link around the loop, encircling the summit that will be popular with runners, walkers, cyclists and dog lovers.

Salvator Rosa Glen Creek Track — a west side story

West Hobart now has a new walking track into its favourite patch of bushland, Knocklofty Reserve.

What was once an informal path following the creekline is now an official track, connecting the local neighbourhood with the much-loved reserve.

Workers from the City of Hobart and locals have worked together to bring this new track to life. The City removed dense, invasive willows from the creekline and has planted local native species. Locals have chipped in their time and effort by maintaining the new plantings.

Join our working bee!

Join the Friends of Knocklofty Reserve for a community working bee planting, mulching and weeding along the new Salvator Rosa Glen Creek walking track.

When: Sunday 16 September, 2–4.30 pm.

Meet: Western entrance to the track (in front of number 46A Salvator Road, West Hobart).



Completion of the new walking track at Salvator Rosa Glen Creek.



North-South Track – staff assessing damage at the Clapper bridge.

Mountain biking back on track for summer after bridge washout

The iconic North-South mountain bike track on kunanyi /Mount Wellington should be back on track by summer after May's devastating floods carved out a four-metre crater around the Clapper Bridge.

The City of Hobart's track workers spent all winter working on the rejuvenated Pinnacle Track, but have now turned their attention to repairing the North-South Track, rerouting the track 10 metres upstream.

The rest of the North-South Track between The Springs and Clapper Bridge withstood the May floods.

Originally built as part of the North-South Track, the Clapper Bridge was based on a method dating back to medieval England where large slabs of flat stone were placed across rivers.

The Clapper Bridge quickly became a signature feature of the award-winning North-South Track, with its design reflecting the surrounding natural environment.

TRACKCARE

Volunteering at a Trackcare 'Dig Day' is a great way to learn new track building techniques while having fun on the mountain.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 16 September Improving the Slides track
Meet: Slides / New Town Fire Trail Junction, McRobies Gully
- 21 October Missing Link track connection
Meet: Carpark off Strickland Ave before Strickland Falls, Wellington Park (subject to change)
- 18 November Missing Link track connection
Meet: Carpark off Strickland Ave before Strickland Falls, Wellington Park (subject to change)





BUSHCARE'S

Big Day Out

Hosted by
Conservation Volunteers Australia

SUNDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2018
10 AM – 2 PM

Join the Friends of McAulay Reserve Bushcare group to discover a new bushland jewel in Hobart.

You will learn how to eradicate cotoneaster and hawthorn weeds and help us restore this precious reserve to improve habitat for bird life, bandicoots and other creatures.

Meeting location: Edith Ave / Churchill Ave Reserve, entrance to 268 Churchill Ave, Sandy Bay.

For more information: hobartcity.com.au/bushcare



A PROGRAM OF



City of **HOBART**