



In the Valley

Rainforest News and Views



Newsletter evolution

The Byron Shire Landcare and Dunecare newsletter is sent out electronically every month by Brunswick Valley Landcare and now includes our newsletter as an insert. Thanks to our Community Support Officer Alison for facilitating. A few people have notified a preference for continuing to receive hard copies. We hope no-one misses out, let us know what works for you (email wilsonscreeklandcare@yahoo.com.au, write to PO Box 678 or drop off a note at 1016 Wilsons Creek Road, providing address and number of hard copies required, or other suggestions). Please talk to any new neighbours who would like to be connected. As has been recent practice, newsletters will also be available from our Facebook group page.

The story of our Landcare Field Day

“Breakfast with the Birds”

A completely different weather story this time! Not a cloud nor a drop of rain, rather a sunny warm day. Rain, you are welcome now however!

I would like to start by saying a big thank you to all who attended the field day, and we hope that you came away with some fun stories, photos, knowledge, and even some new friends.

Also, heartfelt thank you to all the diligent volunteers involved who made valuable contributions during the day, and to the generous land holders who made everyone feel so welcome.

Below are a few of the stories people have submitted, which together create a memoir of the day. I may add a couple additional stories in the next newsletter.

On the Wilsons Creek Huonbrook Landcare Facebook page, you can find more pictures, videos, and info from the day.

Bird Walk by Robyn Berrington

Don't we all love those early morning bird calls in our beautiful song filled valleys? Wouldn't it be wonderful to identify which birds are making each sound? If only I had a memory like the birdies on our bird walk!!

Our field day started with a not-so-early morning bird walk along a short section of Wilsons Creek, led by David Milledge and two women from Byron Bird Buddies – Jan Olley and Anne Jones. We crossed the canal that diverts water from the Wilsons Creek to Mullumbimby, and walked down to our host Saxon's regeneration site near the creek – soon to be a beautiful rainforest site but currently very degraded by a coral tree monoculture. Across the creek was a naturally regenerated forest of eucalypts with rainforest understory. We were fortunate to sight or hear 34 different bird species in this one small area, with the amazing knowledge of these three people – see the list below. The most prolific were the very active and lovely sounding Lewin's Honeyeaters darting through the trees, but I think my favourite call was the Varied Triller.

Jan showed me her very handy and informative phone app which is basically the field guide bird book with the added bonus of recordings of their calls – *Pizzey and Knight Birds of Australia – digital version*. She also said Michael Morcombe's *eGuide to Australian Birds* has sound recordings too. If you are interested in sharing your sightings nationally, she suggests uploading the bird data to <https://birddata.birdlife.org.au>. The download is free.

A wonderful start to our informative field day.

Coral tree demo, and riparian management by Darryl Larkin

Darryl has created the below report on his experience of Stuart's coral tree management. Stuart's session coordinates well with our recent coral tree eradication project. This gave people the chance to ask questions, helping to inform the community about the nuts and bolts' of what coral trees are, their nuisance effects in our ecosystem, and a hands-on demo of how to manage them.

“My Favourite Tree...well no, My Least Favourite Tree” [according to Stuart]

Summary of Stuart's presentation on the eradication procedures for Coral Tree.

- It's an ugly plant, spiky...it's just a horrible tree!
- It has no seeds, so when treated properly, it's gone! Elimination is possible!!
- Coral Tree is a soft wood tree and easy to drill.
- Idea is to drill into the xylem / phloem region found just below the bark while keeping the drill roughly parallel to the outside of the tree.
- Small trees ...about 5 cm diameters; one drill hole is all that is needed [battery drill is the perfect tool!].
- Large trees, perhaps ten or more holes – drilled at a 45 degree angle so they overlap and cover the total circumference of the tree
- Aim is to get the poison up into the foliage as well as the roots; it is a waste of time to attempt to control Coral Trees during dormancy [November to January best time for treatment when the tree is in active growth]. For treating very large trees, use two rows of holes. Say about knee high and another row about shoulder high.
Any broken live pieces of coral that are found should always be stacked well off the ground to dry out and well out of the way of floodwater
- Camphor Laurel trees; the aim is to get the poison into the root system, so the drilling is done closer to the base of the trunk – this prevents the trees from 'suckering.'
- Recipe for Coral Tree treatment – 1:5 [glysophate to water].
- Camphor – 1:2.5 [glysophate to water].
- Privet – 1:2 [glysophate to water].

- Removal of problem trees encourages the seed bank of native species to germinate. Follow up should be done to keep down any regrowth of non-natives. An area that has been treated to rid Coral etc., will have shade developing through the re- introduction of native species which inhibit the regrowth of the non-native species.
- Stewart's three favourite species for natural regeneration in a riparian rainforest area: Blue Quandong, Sandpaper Fig and Water Gum. Stewart did say that in some cases he may thin regrowth where there is an overabundance of a native pioneering species [e.g. Pencil Cedar] to allow more diversified regeneration.
- Madeira Vine treatment: scrape from ground level to about head high BUT only on one side of the stem. This method ensures translocation of the poison to the above ground corms as well as the tubers below ground level.



above; Stuart talking with participants, surrounded by coral trees!

Bamboo Conversion by Stephen Millard

We visited the property of Rose and Cristiano where running bamboo and a forest of camphor had overrun large parts of the property. Cristiano had been single-handedly cutting and painting the bamboo. Using a Bush Connect grant, Stuart MacDonald from Footprint tried the same technique, but soon found this to be slow and frustrating. Finally a large excavator was brought in to clear an area that will remain as a mown clear space. It also cleared a huge patch of clumping bamboo and some pines that, together with the

running bamboo, had virtually engulfed the house. A smaller machine is being used to rip out more running bamboo that had spread under the camphor forest which has just been drilled and injected.

It was mentioned by several attendees that some friends and neighbours were still planting bamboo in the area! Stuart explained to a very attentive audience, the pros and cons of the different ways of getting rid of these weeds, but stressed that it would be much smarter not to plant them to begin with. Stuart explained in some detail that the re-gen solution in each situation has to be tailored to the specific problem.

After years of experience, Stuart thinks the best re-gen technique is to clear everything in one go to let light and heat into the soil which will have rain forest seeds ready to germinate. These seeds may lie dormant for decades whereas camphor seeds only last for two years in the soil. After clearing, zero tolerance of weeds means diligent and persistent spot spraying until a native canopy starts to shade out the exotics.

The overall aim of this work is to recreate rainforest that will support the original biodiversity. This is also the goal of the Great Eastern Ranges project which is to provide a spine of biodiversity right down the eastern ranges of Australia, with extensions to the western plains and branches towards the coast, such as through the Byron Shire.

More stories on our field day to come in next newsletter...

Bush Connect field day!

For those who have not had their fill already, see the flyer reg the upcoming Bush Connect field day. This is for the project that is conducted jointly with Goonengerry and Wilsons Creek/Huonbrook.

Restoration and Rehabilitation grants - Change in timing

The NSW Environmental Trust usually calls for applications to its Restoration and Rehabilitation Grants Program in August / September each year.

The **call for applications** will now commence in **November 2017**, with **applications closing** in early **February 2018** .

Successful grantees will still be announced in May/June, with projects commencing as normal in August.

This shift is in response to internal process reviews and feedback from applicants and grantees within the recent independent program evaluation (undertaken by the Natural Resources Commission), including concerns about the length of time between application submission and notification of successful projects.

Questions?

Contact the Trust Administration on (02) 8837 6093 or via [email](#).

To find out about other grants programs delivered by the Environmental Trust, please visit the [Trust website](#).

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The NSW Environmental Trust is administered by the Office of Environment and Heritage

The Coral Tree Eradication Project - update

Coral Tree works have been continuing on our roadsides. A grateful thanks to Council who have supported the project by supplying traffic control. We see this a win win, with Council achieving reduced future maintenance now that Coral Tree limbs will not crash over the road as well as benefits to the environment and community.

Roadside Update by Marg East

It was great to start the roadside trees. I worked with Ollie, his offsider Chris and 2 traffic control on Tuesday and Wednesday this week - They did a great job and have logged and chipped all the identified roadside coral trees between Koonyum Range rd and Wanganui/Huonbrook corner - That is -we've taken all or any part of the tree that would cause concern for road safety once poisoned. Ollie and Chris were great to work with - professional and efficient. We cleaned up really well on most sites - will just do another 'pick-up' follow-up in a couple of weeks.

I have 2 more days booked with Ollie and the traffic control (6th and 13th) which will be spent doing heaps of trees at Mill Rd and hopefully Baba's tree up at Wilson Creek if I can encourage him to part with it !

Contact for queries or reporting:
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Funded by NSW Environmental Trust

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WCHL is on Facebook.

To become a member of our group, go into Facebook, search for Wilsons Creek Huonbrook Landcare and request to join. Any member can approve you. Alternatively you can go to the URL below: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/551428364915585/?ref=ts> Once accepted as a member, feel free to post photos and stories, ask and answer questions and check in regularly

Local Contacts

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