



VOL. 1 ISSUE 1 • DEC 2023

# WEEDER'S DIGEST

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE HRCC

## Merry Christmas from us!

Welcome to our first newsletter, the Weeder's Digest. We are hoping that we can provide you with more information on what we do, both out in the community and behind the scenes. Please feel free to pass on any feedback or suggestions.

It's been a huge year for the Hawkesbury River County Council. Without the impact of floods, we have been able to get on with the job of managing the growth of fast-growing weeds throughout the The Hills, Hawkesbury, Blacktown and Penrith areas! We celebrated our 75th Anniversary with honorary guests and a golden shovel. Our staff have also attended multiple educational days including the Big Weeds Day Out and Prohibited Matter Training to keep our weed control knowledge up-to-date.

We would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and happy new year. We look forward to seeing you again in 2024!



## Restoring Remote Rivers

Price Morris Cottage Field Day at Macdonald Valley - 24th Sept. 2023.

Hosted by Kate Hughes and HNLN Landcare, this event showed landowners the area of works conducted in the Restoring Remote Rivers grant, as well as allowing participants to walk through the property to view the riparian restoration works firsthand.



Hawkesbury-Nepean  
**Landcare**  
Network





# Big Weeds Day Out

HRCC attended the Annual Big Weeds Day out event, hosted by The Sydney Weeds Network. Here we provided weeds for educational display and attended the scheduled presentations, where we learned about cutting edge weed management practices.

This was a great opportunity for HRCC to showcase some of our achievements, and network with staff from other parts of the industry.



## Did You Know?

Giant devil's fig (*Solanum chrysotrichum*) is often confused with Sticky nightshade (*Solanum sisymbriifolium*) in our county.







# Biosecurity Act and Priority Weeds Workshop

Biosecurity staff delivered the council's annual Biosecurity Act and Priority Weeds workshop for member council staff, community members and private contractor staff. The workshop was well-received and provided opportunity for positive reviews and helpful suggestions, such as making the training available to all on-ground staff.

Attendees were given an overview of HRCC, an introduction to the responsibilities of the Local Control Authority and Biosecurity Act 2015, information on classifying priority weeds, and advice on weed control.

This workshop was helpful in expanding the knowledge of the attendees, which will extend to implementation at on-ground visits.



## Benefits of the Act

Biosecurity protects our economy, environment and community from the negative impacts of pests, diseases, weeds and contaminants.

For example, weeds negatively impact cattle, horses and other stock, therefore putting our \$14 billion agricultural economy in NSW at risk.







# Implementing the Biosecurity Act

This past year, we have continued in our role as Local Control Authority under the Biosecurity Act. Some achievements in this area include:

- Controlling 69 hectares of terrestrial and 198 kilometres of aquatic weeds across the four local government areas.
- Undertaking 1,793 private property inspections.
- Retaining staff who continually refine their control, surveillance and planning techniques to maximise efficiency and results.
- The continued dedication of building relationships with industry stakeholders.
- Facilitation of the Hawkesbury-Nepean Landcare Network.
- And continuing to be an industry leader in every facet of weed management.



# Objectives of the Act

To manage biosecurity risks from animal and plant pests and diseases, weeds and contaminants by:

- Preventing entry into NSW;
- Quickly finding, containing and eradicating new entries;
- Effectively minimising the impacts of pests, diseases, weeds and contaminants that cannot be eradicated through robust management arrangements.







# Annual Report Summary

Over the last year, our organisation's vision has been met by taking a shared services approach to weeds management in local government. We have achieved tangible outcomes throughout the local government areas of Blacktown, Hawkesbury, Penrith and The Hills.

We were happy to welcome Mr Barry Smith - the retired General Manager of Hunters Hill Council - who took on the temporary role of General Manager at HRCC while Mr Chris Dewhurst was on annual leave.

We continue to operate sustainably to develop new ideas to diversify income and become more sustainable as an organisation. We also seek to broaden our funding base from sources outside of the rates pool, such as Australian and NSW government grants.

**Taken from the Chair's Report 2022/23**  
Councillor Karen McKeown MP  
Chair, Hawkesbury River County Council



Our full Annual Report is available at the link below:  
<https://hrcc.nsw.gov.au/documents/>





# Frogbit Rapid Response

The Frogbit Weed rapid response was held over three days in November 2022. This newly emerging aquatic weed has the potential to severely impact the main river system, so HRCC and the NSW Department of Primary Industries acted quickly to survey and inspect an area of 800ha in Oakville.

This event involved 17 different agencies and over 60 participants, and was the largest scale weed response event ever to be held in Greater Sydney.



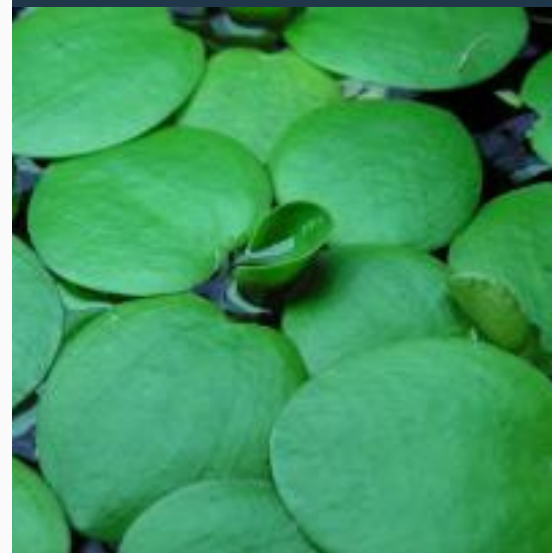
## Did You Know?

Frogbit is a floating water weed with small, round glossy leaves.

These plants grow very quickly, forming dense mats over water bodies.

They have the ability to:

- prevent native water plants from growing;
- reduce light, food and shelter for fish and other aquatic animals;
- block waterways and irrigation channels;
- create dangerous conditions by hiding the water surface to make it appear like firm ground.







# Weed Control Update

## Mother of Millions (Local Asset Control)



This is a typical patch of Mother of Millions (*Bryophyllum* spp) growing amongst African Lovegrass. When the grass patches are thick, they are easier sighted when flowering.

## Boneseed (State Eradication Target)



Boneseed (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera* subsp. *monilifera*) control was undertaken during spring, treating seedlings in known locations across the county. Due to current weather conditions germination has not been favourable and few plants have been treated. In the previous year, a record number of plants were treated due to above average rainfall. However, summer storms could prove favourable for them. This is evidence of how weather plays a role in weed control.

## Did You Know?

*Salvina molesta* is a floating aquatic weed that has the potential to shut down entire river systems? This in fact happened to the Hawkesbury-Nepean River as recently as 2005.



Nepean River at Castlereagh, 2005





# HRCC 75th Anniversary Celebrations

On 26th August 2023, HRCC was joined by honorary guests and the general public to celebrate our 75th anniversary. Staff set up a wonderful weeds display which was enjoyed in good weather, and we were able to showcase our premises, equipment and information display to show visitors what it is we do. We also handed out free native plants to the guests in attendance.

General Manager Chris Dewhurst opened the ceremony and was followed by Councillor Karen McKeown OAM, who reflected on the organisation's achievements and the value HRCC brings to the community. We then celebrated with the ceremonial planting of a native shrub, breaking ground with a golden shovel.

We would like to thank the HRCC staff for their assistance in making the day run smoothly, as well as our special guests for making this an event to remember.







# Need to get in touch?

We can provide advice on weeds control and identification or connect you with the appropriate resource.

Check out our social media or head to our website for more detailed information.

[www.hrcc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hrcc.nsw.gov.au)

[www.weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Or contact us at:

(02) 4574 9600

[inspections@hrcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:inspections@hrcc.nsw.gov.au)

[council@hrcc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@hrcc.nsw.gov.au)

PO Box 6021

South Windsor DC 2756

# It's more than just weeds

By preventing the spread and impact of priority weeds, we contribute to protecting the environment, agriculture and human health.

Hawkesbury River County Council operates on the traditional lands of the Darug and Darkinjung peoples.

