



VOL. 1 ISSUE 2 • MAR 2024

WEEDER'S DIGEST

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE HRCC

Greetings from the ground!

Despite the weather being wetter than usual this summer 2023-24, the Hawkesbury River County Council team is off to a successful start! We have surpassed our quarterly targets in areas such as Control of Eradication listed terrestrial weeds (Boneseed) (10.2 HA), Control of Asset listed aquatic weeds (3.5 HA) and creating 10 weed maps of Crown Reserves.

In addition, the Land For Wildlife (LFW) Training Day in December was a success, with attendees learning about conservation agreements on private land. As Hawkesbury Nepean Landcare Network (HNLN) receives regular expressions of interest from the community requesting LFW site assessments, we want to thank the Local Landcare Coordinator (LLC) for organising and hosting this highly important event!



The Story of Cattai

Castle Hill Library -
19th Oct. 2024.

Hosted by The Hills Shire Council and the Local Landcare Coordinator, the Cattai Aware Project was a hands-on workshop where school students used an interactive learning tool to gain an understanding of our impact on nature and the local waterways.





Community Training Events

HRCC has taken part in several events organised and supported by both the Local Landcare Coordinator and Landcare groups. These include ‘Discover Creatures of the Night’ hosted by Mountains for Wildlife; ‘Land For Wildlife Training Day’ and ‘St Albans Village Market Stall – Hawkesbury Nepean Landcare Network’. The pre-existing Landcare group, ‘Platypus Landcare in the Hills’ was also reformed using funding from Connecting Outdoors grant.

Other smaller meetings included Valley for Wildlife, Great Eastern Ranges, Mountains for Wildlife, Hawkesbury Environment Network, Cattai Hills Environment Network, Platypus Landcare in the Hills and Mulgoa Valley Landcare Group.





Drone Surveillance in Flood Affected Areas

HRCC took part in the Remote Pilots Licence (RePL) and Aeronautical Radio Operators Certificate (AROC) training. Two staff spent the week at the airfield in Red Rock, NSW, where they received comprehensive training in Drone Piloting and Safe Operations of Remotely Piloted Aircrafts.

We have now collected our very own drones: two DJI Mavic 3 Enterprise models with multispectral cameras. All of our drones have now been inventoried and labelled, ready to commence future surveillance and mapping missions once the Remote Operators Certificate (ReOC) has been obtained.



Drone kit with batteries purchased under the grant.

Did You Know?

Drones can be considered a more efficient and cost-effective way to survey flooded areas for aquatic weeds.

Many modern drones have GPS coordinates embedded into image files, which means weed management teams can accurately survey large aquatic areas, detect weeds and develop better management plans.





General Biosecurity Duty

The General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) is a key feature of the Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW) (S22). It states that all private and public land managers (or anyone who deals with weeds) must prevent, eliminate or minimise the risks posed by the weeds that are present. In order to prioritise weed management, all weeds need to be categorised by the risk they pose to human health, biodiversity or agricultural production.

GENERAL BIOSECURITY DUTY

WHAT IS MY DUTY?

 **Prevent biosecurity risks**
 **Eliminate risks**
 **Minimise risks**
 **As much as is reasonable**

WHEN DO I HAVE A DUTY?

If you deal with, or deal with a carrier of biosecurity matter you have a duty
 e.g. weeds, animals, plants or machinery...

 **And if you should know that there is a risk**

HOW DO I FULFILL MY DUTY?

By referring to:

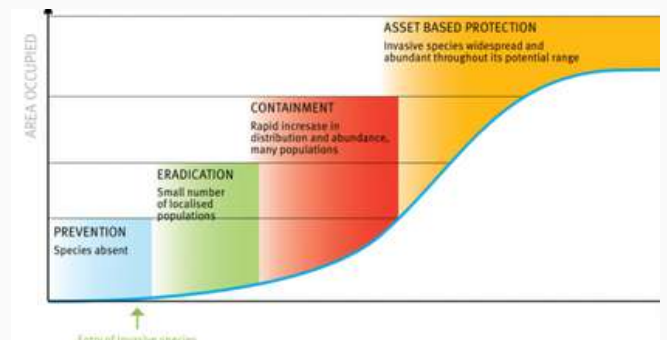

- State strategic plans
- Regional strategies
- Local plans
- Guidelines & advisory material
- Codes of practice & industry standards
- Mandatory measures



Four Stages of Prioritisation

In managing weeds, HRCC is compliant with the NSW Biosecurity Strategy (2015-2020), categorising all weeds as one of the following for more efficient weed management:

- Prevention
- Eradication
- Containment
- Asset Based Protection.





Early Needs Recovery Program

The \$13 million Early Needs Recovery Program is part of the \$150 million Primary Industry Support Package which is co-funded by the Australian and NSW governments. The program aims to support primary producers in the most flood-impacted regions and industries of NSW to regain productivity.

HRCC currently has funding under the grant, which has enabled the purchase of drone technology to be used for undertaking surveillance of flood impacted areas. They will be used as a part of our inspection process to cover more area on rural properties in our county council area.

Under the Early Needs Flood Recovery funding, HRCC has employed a contractor to undertake spraying with the use of a drone to treat a salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) infestation in the Penrith LGA. The infestation was well established and access to this was difficult, as it was along a roadside location, covering 1 hectare in size. Three treatments were undertaken between December and January and will now be maintained by HRCC staff.



The Carp Fish Out

On Saturday, February 17th the Hawkesbury Nepean Landcare Network along with HRCC were invited to host stalls and activities at the Annual Lake Woodcroft Carp Fish Out. The event was organised by Blacktown City Council.





Weed Control Update

Cats Claw Creeper (State Asset)



Cats claw creeper (*Dolichandra unguis-cati*) infestation on McClymonts Road, beside Cattai Creek in Kenthurst. This work was requested by council. Staff have prioritised canopy trees and have skirted vines which have been treated with Vigilant II gel.

Boneseed (State Eradication Target)



Boneseed plants can usually be found under larger trees, which is an indication that plants are spread by birds. To date, staff have treated just 10 plants this season, which is a significant reduction from the previous year where we treated over 1400 plants.

Did You Know?

Opuntia monacantha (commonly known as Prickly Pear) is an upright cactus with smooth, glossy oval-shaped stems. It forms dense infestations and has sharp spines that can injure both animals and people.



Glossodia, 2023

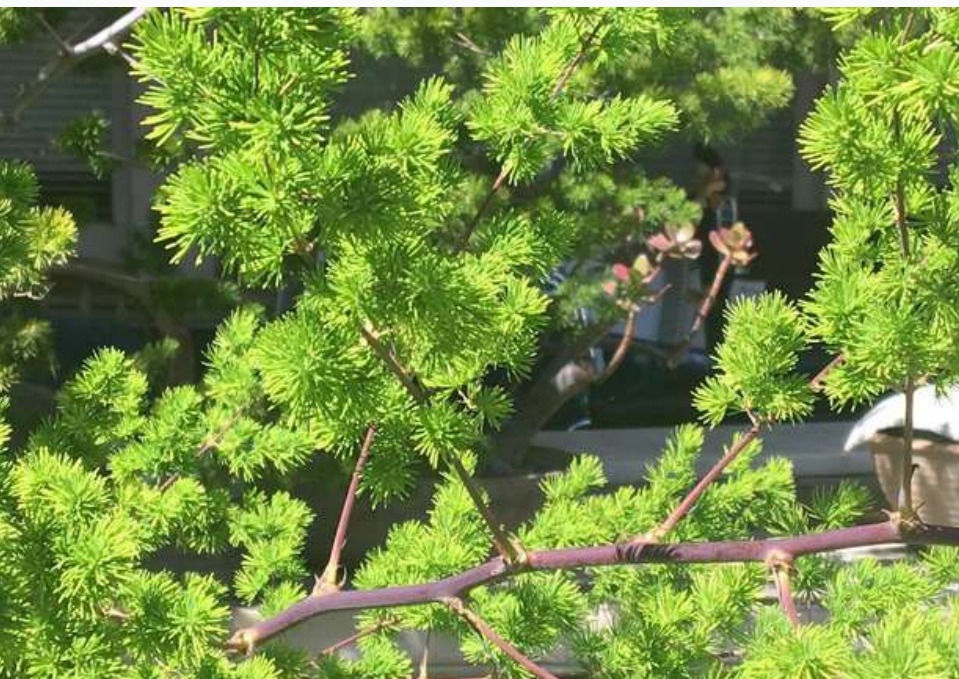


Weed Profile – Ming Asparagus Fern

The HRCC weed control team recently found and treated Ming Asparagus fern (*Asparagus macowanii*) in Maraylya (Hawkesbury LGA) in roadside bushland. It is also referred to as pom-pom asparagus due to its soft and delicate leaves, which some find quite appealing!

Ming Asparagus fern is a shrubby plant with a fern-like appearance, usually growing 1-2 m tall. Although it occasionally grows to 3 metres tall, the root system consists of relatively short, fleshy, tuberous roots. Older stems are pale grey to white and have small spines.

The weed was introduced into Australia as an ornamental plant originating in Africa, and it can outcompete native species in natural areas. Staff completed crowing of plants and removed them from site.



Important to Note

The Ming Asparagus fern should not be sold in parts of NSW. For more information, please click the link below.

<https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/Details/280>





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

www.weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au

Or contact us at:

(02) 4574 9600

inspections@hrcc.nsw.gov.au

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.

