# Berry Landcare

## Coachwood Escarpment display:

Over the recent holiday period many Berry people have noticed and commented on a display of soft pink colouring in a band along the slope of the escarpment just below the base of the sandstone cliffs. This is an annual phenomenon but this year it has been very noticeable. This part of the escarpment is classified geologically as “Gerringong volcanic” laid down 250 million years ago at the end of the Permian as volcanic deposits. This forest type takes its name from the tree responsible for the display - “Coachwood Warm Temperate Rainforest”. The species dominates at high altitudes on the benches and steep slopes of the escarpment. Smaller stands of the tree can be found in forest remnants further down the escarpment. One beautiful specimen is on the corner of Berry Mountain Road and Tourist Road.

Coachwood *(Ceratopetalum apetalum)* is in the same genus as the popular Christmas Bush *(Ceratopetalum gummiferium).* Their floral displays are similar. Coachwood usually grows to a height of 25 metres, with a trunk diameter of 90 cm. However exceptional specimens can reach 40 metres and live for centuries. The trunk has distinctive horizontal marks, or [scars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scar), which often encircle the [trunk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trunk_(botany)). Larger trees have short [buttresses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buttress). Its timber is light and easily worked. It is used for [flooring](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flooring), [furniture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Furniture) and [cabinetwork](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabinet_(furniture)), hence its name. Courtroom number three of The [High Court of Australia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Court_of_Australia) is beautifully furnished with coachwood timber. The flower petals are white but the pink colour comes from the calyces that remain after the petals fall. One feature of this marvellous tree is the fawn carpet of fallen detritus under the mature trees in late summer.

There are many of these floral displays taking place in our beautiful landscape throughout the year, from native orchids to Turpentine trees. Surely one of the rewards of living here in the Illawarra is the understanding where and when these miracles of nature take place. Join us at Landcare.

## Weed of the Month:

Sacred Bamboo (*N*andina domestica). This popular garden plant is regarded as an environmental weed. It is listed as an environmental weed by the Blue Mountains City Council, and it is occasionally found in bushland edges and along drainage lines in that region. It has recently been found growing wild on the south coast. Its distinctive red berries while attractive are poisonous to birds. Some of the modern cultivars do not produce fruit, or produce fewer fruit, and are therefore not as invasive.

## Working Bees for March 2017:

Alexandra Street Parkcare: 9-11 am Friday 17st March: Gail Paton 44487915.

Bong Bong Road: 9-11am Sunday 12th March: Julia Woinarski 4464 2084.

Bundewallah Bushcare: 2-4pm Sunday 26th March : John Clark 44643911.

Camp Quality: 9-11am Sunday 19th March: Hugh Sheil, [hugh.sheil@realtimecom.com.au](mailto:hugh.sheil@realtimecom.com.au) or Jeanne Highland 4464 1271.

Moeyan Hill: 3-5 pm Saturday 18th March: Bill Pigott 44643241 or [wpigott@bigpond.net.au](mailto:wpigot@bigpond.net.au).

Mount Coolangatta: Nola Barker. Mobile 040944-6418, [nolajbarker@live.com.au](mailto:nolajbarker@live.com.au). Time to be advised. Meet at end of Roxbrough Rd, Far Meadow.

Mark Radium Park: 9-10am Friday 24th March: Rodney Cole 4464 1475.

Princess St. Parkcare: 9-11am Monday 26th March, Terry Oades 4464.3654.

Tindalls Lane: 3-5pm Sunday 12th March: contact Jim Jefferis 4464 2988.

**Plant identification service:** Please contact Harvey Blue 4464 1880 or Ian Parker, 4448 6359.

Visit our pages at:  <http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/berry-landcare> for more on Berry Landcare and late changes to working bee details. Information can also be found on Facebook.