# Berry Landcare

## A Quiet Achiever:

Barry Virtue, the previous site co-ordinator for Broughton Vale, is leaving the Berry district. Barry and his friend, Dave Johnson set up the Plant Propagation Nursery (affectionately known as Plant Prop) at Berry Public School in the mid 1990s.

Barry was a teacher at Berry Public School at that time, and he and Dave prepared a program to give children opportunities to gain practical skills in plant propagation, as an extension to the more formal classroom Environmental Science lessons.

Barry had always wanted to encourage young children to have an appreciation and understanding of the natural world around them as well as an understanding of the principles of conservation. The school nursery provided the means and the solution for real and practical experiences to achieve this still very necessary aim.

Under Barry’s guidance, and as joint ventures with the community, the children entered Environmental Competitions, and in 2007 Berry Public School won The Regional Landcare Education Award.

Over the years Barry’s pupils grew and supplied thousands of plants for Landcare sites, National Tree Planting Days, Camp Quality, Berry Sport and Recreation Camp, Conservation Volunteers projects in Berry as well as Gerringong, Shoalhaven Heads and Albion Park. More recently, Plant Prop has been supplying plants to Fulton Hogan for the Foxground Berry Bypass, Illawarra Conservation Volunteers and Berry Bushlinks projects.

Barry’s knowledge and expertise about plants and birds have been greatly appreciated on seed collecting forays with Plant Prop and the Berry and Illawarra Landcare volunteers. The seeds collected are either stored in The Seed Bank or planted out in The Living Tree Bank. This has resulted in the Plant Prop’s having over 6000 plants of known local provenance including a range of ground covers, shrubs and trees that are available to anyone who wishes to grow them.

Barry has always had the education of the children in mind, and, most recently, he initiated an article in The Town Crier to promote the activities of the children at Berry Public School Plant Propagation Nursery to the local community.

Barry has been a facilitator at 2 community workshops for Leon Fuller’s project “Growing Illawarra Natives”. The community website will provide information and planting guides for local gardeners to know which local plants will best suit the specific requirements for their gardens. Barry’s local knowledge of the flora and fauna of the area has been of great value to Berry Landcare and he will be greatly missed.

## Working Bees for May 2017:

Alexandra Street Parkcare: 9-11 am Friday 19th May: Gail Paton 44487915.

Bong Bong Road: 9-11am Sunday 14th May: Julia Woinarski 4464 2084.

Broughton Vale: 2-4 pm Sunday 7th April: Kelvin Officer 0427 255417.

Bundewallah Bushcare: 2-4pm Sunday 28th May : John Clark 44643911.

Camp Quality: 9-11am Sunday 21st May: Hugh Sheil, hugh.sheil@realtimecom.com.au or Jeanne Highland 4464 1271.

Moeyan Hill: 2-4 pm Saturday 20th May: Bill Pigott 44643241 or wpigott@bigpond.net.au.

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

Mark Radium Park: 9-10am Friday 26th May: Rodney Cole 4464 1475.

Princess St. Parkcare: 9-11am Monday 22nd May, Terry Oades 4464.3654.

Tindalls Lane: 2-4pm Sunday 14th 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.