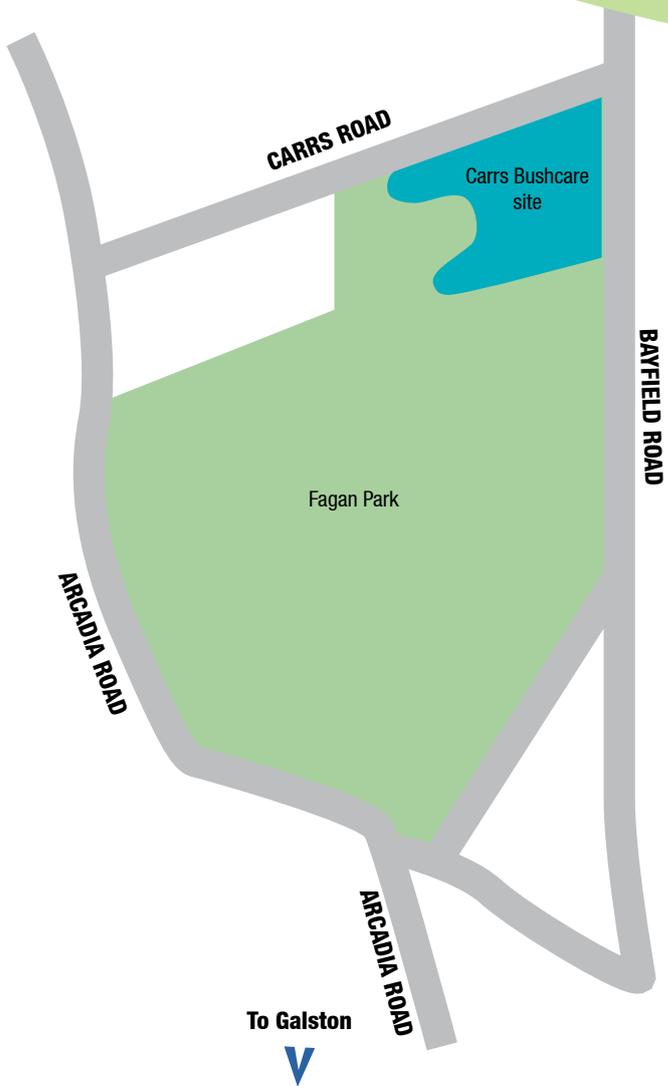




Photo by Rae Rosten

Carrs Bush, Fagan Park, Galston

Bushcare case study



About our Carrs Bush bushcare site

Location

Carrs Bush is located within Fagan Park in the rural area of Hornsby Shire. The bushcare site is located in the north-eastern corner of the park, bounded by Carrs Road and Bayfield Road. The area drains into Still Creek, part of the Berowra Creek Catchment.



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Native heath plant (*Epacris purpurascens* var. *purpurascens*) photo by Robyn Cox, National Trust

Flora of Carrs Bush

Fagan Park contains the largest remnant (around 7ha) of Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest in Hornsby Shire.

Sydney Turpentine-Ironbark Forest is of national conservation significance and is listed as a critically Endangered Ecological Community under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)* and an Endangered Ecological Community under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act (1995)*. Hornsby Shire has about 295 ha of this type of forest found mainly on private land, with Carrs Bush being one of the largest patches remaining.

Carrs Bush contains a relatively intact Turpentine-Ironbark Forest. However some areas do require a lot of work.

Turpentines (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) dominate the upper canopy but there are also smooth-barked apples (*Angophora costata*) and mahoganies (*Eucalyptus acmenoides* and *Eucalyptus resinifera*). The shrub layer is open and the ground layer is dominated by microlaena, maidenhair fern (*Adiantum aethiopicum*) and rasp fern (*Doodia aspera*). Vegetation surveys have found over 100 native species including an endangered native heath plant (*Epacris purpurascens* var. *purpurascens*) and small-tongue orchid (*Cryptostylis leptochilia*).

Carrs Bush continues to be threatened by the encroachment and domination of the weed panic veldt grass (*Ehrharta erecta*). The volunteers and professional bush regeneration teams aim to stabilise previously worked areas to push the weed grasses to the edges. The ultimate aim is to reduce the impacts of weeds, particularly the weedy herbaceous layer and work from the good bush out. The vegetation of the site is relatively resilient and able to bounce back. With consistent work, the bushland can become more stable and more likely to regenerate without intervention.

Wildlife of Carrs Bush

The forest provides many birdwatching opportunities. Powerful and barking owls have been sighted in the area. Members of the Bushcare group have observed red-browed firetail finches, superb fairy wrens, tawny frogmouths, golden whistlers, sacred kingfishers and many other interesting species.



Tawny frogmouth, photo by Robyn Cox

Bushcare case study

Major projects

Council has been awarded two grant projects at Carrs Bush:

2000 - Environmental Trust to improve walking tracks, signage, build three new bridges and undertake bush regeneration activities.

2007 - Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority for weed control along the road edge.

Council has assisted the group by extending and upgrading the existing fence and edging. These measures aim to minimise disturbance and runoff from the surrounding parkland. Council continues to support group by providing funds for bush regeneration contractors.



Barbara Cush, photo by Esme Wood



Bushcare volunteers

About the Carrs Bush group and community participation

Fagan Park was donated to the Department of Lands (NSW) in 1979 by Bruce Fagan. Hornsby Shire Council was appointed Trustee for its care, control and management.

Bushcare was initiated on the site by Barbara Cush in 1999. Barbara was a driving force within the group until she passed away in 2006. If you walk along the track you will find a rustic bench dedicated to Barbara. If you were to sit down you would see Barbara's favourite tree, the base of a lovely old turpentine.

Currently the group consists of five members working on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Council provides a trainer to assist with planning and technical assistance once a month.

The volunteers keep coming back because they enjoy seeing the health of the forest improve. Their efforts are rewarded with seeing more and more birds visiting the area.