



Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group Inc.

Araluen Creek Restoration Project

Community Newsletter

October 2022

General Meeting

The next general meeting of the UDCLG will be held on **Friday 21st October** 2pm at Robyn's Cafe, Majors Creek Mountain Rd. Join us for project updates and planning. New members always welcome.

Araluen Creek Restoration Project

The Araluen Creek Restoration Project is funded by the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund through the joint Commonwealth & State Disaster Recovery Funding. The project aims to deliver in stream works that will support the creek and its environs into the future.

Onsite Construction

Unfortunately Soil Conservation Service construction work has not yet commenced and we continue to experience major weather related delays. The constant rain is seeing high creek flows at remediation sites and boggy conditions. This is hampering the movement of machinery and vehicles onsite.

The remediation of the 13 sites will deliver stability, reduce sediment movement, control erosion and future bank collapses.

Vegetation of Sites & Volunteer Assistance to Plant Trees

Planning for re vegetation of sites is well under way and we are aiming for a Planting Day in November. With the regular rain events we are experiencing we have had to rethink our planting schedule. Sites will be planted out once works have been completed. We will repeat this process for all sites. The group will send out an SOS to assist in this task.

Further information will be circulated soon.

Seed Propagation Day

Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group Inc.
invite you to attend

Native species propagation/seed planting day with Lyn Ellis

Saturday 19th November 2022
10:30am – 3:30pm
Robin Clubbs' café

Morning tea & a light lunch will be provided

Presentation includes native seed collection, germination & growing techniques.



Photo: Clare Henderson

We are calling out to local volunteers to come along, learn about seed collection, propagation and the growing of native plants.

This planting day is a strategy that will allow us to have a follow-up round of planting in early 2023 with locally grown endemic plants.

We encourage locals participating to take home trays of seeds for germination and to nurture plants until Autumn next year.

For further information & expression of interest for catering purposes please call Cath on 0248 464079 E: cathharri@gmail.com





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Learning native seed collection and propagation with Lyn Ellis

By Clare Henderson, Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council

Our Saturday 3 September a workshop on native seed collection and propagation “delivered useful, practical advice and hands on technique that gave participants the knowledge needed to collect and propagate native species at home” says Cath Harrison, Upper Deua Landcare Community Liaison Officer.

Although the chunky part of the project is the actual large scale works along the creek, designed to stabilise the creek bed. Over the last six months as part of the Araluen Creek Restoration Project, the Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council has run a series of workshops on creek management. These are focused on the other necessary elements to look after Araluen Creek, such as riparian health and Waterwatch monitoring, re-vegetation, weed control and measures to keep stock out of the creek line by fencing and providing alternative water sources. In addition, we have looked at small scale erosion control measures. Our first workshop in February 2022 was on the geology of the Araluen Valley.

Larry O’Loughlin, Secretary of the Upper Shoalhaven Landcare Council said: “Not only will there be some big earthworks soon to help stabilise the creek, but through these workshops we will also know about how to get the plants that will help maintain the banks and also bring back the insects and animals that are the life of the creek, as well as weed control creating a whole of creek approach”.

The workshop under the expert guidance of Lyn Ellis, participants had a choice of native seed for planting tubestock trays of twenty plants to take home. All of the seed was suitable for riparian areas in the Araluen / Braidwood area. The size of seed varied and this was a key factor in getting the right planting depth and the right top layer for the chosen seed. Some seed does best with sand and some with potting soil on top. At home, we have Lyn’s sample tray, plus a tray of 20 *Banksia marginata* (Silver Banksia) and 20 *Eucalyptus ovata*, (Swamp Gum).

Lyn and her partner Murray ran a local native plant nursery near Mongarlowe for 20 years. Many windbreaks and

plantings around the Braidwood district were planted from their stock. They developed a great reputation for providing good hardy tubestock plants. However, Lyn and Murray did much more than propagate and sell tubestock. Their advice on plant identification, what to grow where, when and how, was invaluable then and Lyn keeps on giving in this regard.

In addition to native seed collection and propagation, the workshop included how to make a good seed raising mix, choice of pots and the “Art of Watering”. Spoiler alert: if you weren't there you missed it.

A key theme from Lyn was the need to be "observant and opportunistic" when collecting seed and when faced with the challenge of propagating your first plants to "just give it a go" and be willing to experiment and learn on the job.

Cath Harrison, Upper Deua Landcare Community Liaison Officer, said: “We all left with a sense of enthusiasm and our tray of freshly planted native seeds to grow for revegetation. From a community perspective it provides groups such as Upper Deua Catchment Landcare to consider broader opportunities to grow our own tubestock of endemic plants for restoration projects into the future”.

The workshop began with seed collection and the key points Lyn made were:

- Get permission
- Collect locally
- Collect from a number of plants of a particular species
- Collect mature clean seed (no insects)
- Collect when the time is right, understand your species
- And then label, label, label (type, date, source) and store well.

Then the workshop looked at the principles of seed propagation. Top tips were to understand:

- Treating the seed to break dormancy, understand your species. Does it need heating or something to get it out of its shell?
- When to plant



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This is a Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund project through the joint Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangement



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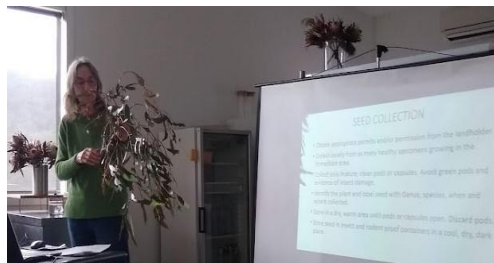
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- Advantages of direct sowing into tubes
- Importance of soil mix and fertilizer
- Location of tube stock
- Watering.

Then we had hands-on fun, planting out our own set of 20 tubestock with our choice of seed. Lyn did a demonstration using different sized seeds and then we did our own trays under her supervision. Fingers crossed some of these trays will be used for an autumn tree planting along Araluen Creek.

Penny Hayman, Secretary of the Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group, found the workshop an eye-opener, commenting “Normally my focus is on pulling things up, the weeds, not on planting. So this was a mind-shifter. Yes, I understand the importance of revegetation however it always seemed something for someone else, and an expensive add-on. Lyn provided such a great step-through off how we can actually do it ourselves locally and make it succeed.”

If you would like copies of hand-outs and other information from the workshop please contact clare@dacelo.com.au



Lyn Ellis showing us tips on seed collection.
Photo: Clare Henderson



Lyn showing us all how to plant native seed from start to finish. Soil mix, depth, settling the mix, planting depth, covering the seed and watering. Photo: Larry O’Loughlin

Water Testing

The Rivers of Carbon workshop held earlier in the year has acted as a catalyst to begin planning regular water testing of the Araluen Creek and its major tributaries.

Two testing kits will be purchased by the group and monthly monitoring and testing will commence at set locations soon.

Annual General Meeting- Preliminary Notice

The groups AGM will be held post project. Date to be announced.

Membership

Upper Deua Catchment Landcare Group Inc membership is \$2 annually or \$5 for 3 years. Contact Treasurer, Robyn Clubb to join or check your status. E: clubbr@yahoo.com

Note: For insurance compliance purposes all volunteers participating in planting days and other activities are required to be a member of the UDC Landcare Group.

Project Information

Cath Harrison, Community Liaison
E: cathharri@gmail.com

UDCLG Newsletter

Newsletter is prepared and compiled by Cath Harrison with contribution from Clare Henderson of USLC.





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Target Weed of the Month

Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* species aggregate)

Blackberry is a prickly scrambling shrub with dark coloured berries. It forms thickets and is one of Australia's worst weeds.

How does this weed affect you?

Blackberry has already cost around \$100 million to control and in lost production. It:

quickly infests large areas, forms dense thickets that restrict:

stock access to waterways

access via fire trails

takes over pastures

is unpalatable to most livestock

reduces native habitat for plants and animals

fuels bushfires

provides shelter for rabbits and foxes

provides food for introduced species such as starlings, blackbirds and foxes.

Blackberry can have some positives such as:

edible fruit

supporting pollinators

food and shelter for some native animals and birds such as bandicoots and blue wrens

leaves can be used in herbal medicines.

The *Rubus fruticosus* aggregate

There are lots of different blackberry species. In NSW, the European blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) is most common. *Rubus fruticosus* is the collective name for different European blackberry species. Nine species occur in NSW.

This weed profile is about the *Rubus fruticosus* species in NSW.

What does it look like?

Blackberry is a shrub with tangled, prickly stems. It can be hard to tell different *Rubus* species apart. Contact your local weeds officer for advice on identification.

Leaves are:

alternate along the stem in clusters of 3 - 5 leaves dark green on leaf tops lighter green on the underside of leaves covered in short, curved prickles absent in winter in cooler climates.

Stems are:

called 'canes' up to 7 m long vertical, arched or growing along the ground covered in sharp prickles (except

for *Rubus ulmifolius* var. *anoplothrysus*) green, purplish or red depending on how much light they get.

Flowers are:

white or pink, 2 – 3 cm in diameter clustered in a cylinder or pyramid shape on the end of canes showing from late November to late February.

Fruit are:

dark coloured berries with each berry having 20 – 30 seeds.

Roots are:

Woody perennial in a crown up to 20 cm wide with a main root up to 4 m deep with secondary roots that grow horizontally from the crown for 30 – 60 cm, then downwards with thin roots.

Where is it found?

Blackberry infests about 9 million hectares of land in Australia. The *Rubus fruticosus* species in NSW grow in different areas:

Rubus anglocandicans is the most common species in wetter areas of the state

Rubus leucostachys is widespread

Rubus polyanthemus is in Kosciuszko National Park

Rubus laciniatus is in wetter areas of the state

Rubus ulmifolius var. *ulmifolius* is widespread

Rubus ulmifolius var. *anoplothrysus* may be present in NSW

Rubus vestitus is uncommon

Rubus leightonii is uncommon

Rubus phaeocarpus grows in the Kowmung River area.

What type of environment does it grow in?

Blackberry likes:

temperate climate with a warm summer and cool winter annual rainfall of at least 700 mm.

Blackberry can grow in drier climates if it has access to water e.g. along a riverbank. It does not like heavy shade.

How does it spread?

Seeds

Blackberry produces a lot of seeds. There can be up to 13,000 seeds per square metre under a blackberry bush at the end of a fruiting season. Birds and animals feeding on the berries spread the seeds in their droppings. Seeds also spread by water and with soil.

Vegetatively

When first year canes (primocanes) touch the ground, they sprout roots and become new 'daughter' plants. The next year, primocanes produce short canes with flowers and berries on the end.



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Control

Long term control of blackberry is an ongoing process. A combination of control methods and follow up is needed.

Physical removal

Physical control alone is rarely successful because it's hard to remove all the roots. Cultivation often spreads blackberry further. Slashing can help make access through infestations, but promotes regrowth. After slashing, use a follow-up control.

Biological control

The leaf rust fungus *Phragmidium violaceum* is the only deliberately released biological control agent in Australia. It attacks the leaves, and infects flower buds and unripe fruit and stops blackberry producing daughter plants.

Phragmidium violaceum spores need dew, rain or high humidity to germinate. It is most effective when: most of the plant's canopy is young leaves annual rainfall is greater than 750 mm rainfall is evenly spread over the year, January temperatures average about 20°C.

Eight different fungus strains of *Phragmidium violaceum* were released in 2000.

Pasture management

Strong, actively growing pastures help prevent blackberry invasion.

Grazing

Goats can make a start on controlling heavy infestations. Goats prefer blackberry over improved pasture species. Cattle will not control blackberry infestations but can stop daughter plants from establishing. Sheep may graze blackberry seedlings if there is no other palatable feed around.

Burning

Burning will not kill blackberry. Burning can make infestations more accessible for follow-up treatment.

Chemical control

Herbicides are the most reliable blackberry control method. Use herbicides in combination with other control methods. There are many herbicides registered for use on blackberry. A mixture of triclopyr + picloram used with or without aminopyralid gives the best long-term control. Spray healthy, actively growing plants with new leaves on the cane tips. Apply to both the outer and inner leaves. First year plants are easier to kill with herbicide. Well-established thickets may need more treatments.

After slashing or burning, wait until plants have up to 1 m of regrowth before applying herbicide.

Some blackberry species are more resistant to certain herbicides than others. Identify the species before choosing a herbicide.



For technical advice and assistance with identification please [contact](#) your **local council weeds officer**.

For further information call the **NSW DPI Biosecurity Helpline on 1800 680 244** or send an email to weeds@dpi.nsw.gov.au

