



Killcare Wagstaffe Trust

Newsletter

January 2014

Next General Meeting

Sunday February 2nd at 9.30 am
at the Maitland Bay Information Centre.
Guest Speaker after the meeting - TBA
All visitors and residents are welcome

COSS Lands excluded from Gosford LEP

Gosford Council has moved to adopt the draft LEP and recommend that it be gazetted by the State government. COSS lands (Coastal Open Space System) will be excluded.

In the original draft LEP COSS lands were to be given a RE1 zoning (public recreation). After considerable lobbying by community groups, including the Trust, Council agreed to seek a special zoning category from the State government that would protect the lands but still retain some flexibility over their use. The COSS lands are, after all, unique to Gosford and deserving of special consideration in the LEP. Before the last election it looked like this would be granted but the change of government has delayed this, perhaps indefinitely.

Council has decided to keep the old zonings for COSS lands (which were a mixture of zonings but many of them were 7(a) – conservation) until the issue is resolved. Council's Acting Director Environment & Planning, Eddie Love said "As our COSS and environmentally sensitive lands are all governed by Plans of Management and important vegetation communities are also protected by legislation, this moves makes sense until appropriate zonings can be created for these areas"

The General manager, Paul Anderson said council will continue to fight for recognition of the unique Coastal Open Space System within the planning system. "As part of its resolution, council will continue to pursue the matter of appropriate environmental zonings for its COSS land separately with the State Government."

Council is also considering the preparation of a Planning Proposal for the inclusion of sensitive vegetation mapping in the LEP.

Website redesign

The Trust website will be redesigned in February. A local website designer has been engaged to set up a new site that can be managed by the committee. It is to be hoped that it can become even more of a resource for information about the natural environment of Bouddi peninsula.

Many thanks to Terry Jones who set up the original website and has managed it for many years.

Comocabana

Update on the sorry saga of the illegal structure above Como Pde.

Since the last newsletter the property has been sold. This was the last opportunity that the Council had to issue demolition order for the illegally built structure on the ridgeline. At the last General meeting Peta Colebatch represented the WTKCA and explained that they were similarly disgruntled at Council's failure to effectively carry out its regulatory responsibilities.

We decided to complain to the ombudsman and seek a meeting with the General manager of Council. The ombudsman's investigation has been completed. The report reiterates much of the information we provided. It goes on to make the point that Council was entitled to rely on its legal advice and that it had acted within the ombudsman's guidelines prepared in 2002 entitled *Enforcement guidelines for Councils*. It went on to say that the Council's communications were adequate and that further action by the ombudsman was not required.

The meeting at Council was attended by Mark Attwooll, David Legge (the President and Treasurer of the Trust), Peta Colebatch and Faye Gunther from the WTKCA, Paul Anderson (General Manager of the Council) and Danielle Dickson (Director of Environment and Planning).

While they did give us a fair hearing, during which we made our objections to Council's repeated failures perfectly clear their general attitude was essentially defensive, justifying their lack of action as being based on their legal advice. We have asked to be shown this and will follow this up. It also became clear that communications from both groups were not getting through to the GM despite being addressed to him.

They acknowledged that Council has a problem with regard to enforcement and are aiming to have an enforcement policy in place this year. Don't hold your breath. The one positive outcome is that our communications should receive more attention and response in the future.

Wildlife news



It's been hard to miss the fact that this year has been a bumper year for cicadas.

Those with scrub turkey mounds nearby might have also noticed that there are more chicks this year than normal.

We were told to expect a bumper year for mossies but fortunately this has failed to materialise. The experts said that the recent high king tides, which flood the saltmarsh, followed by days of high temperatures were ideal for mosquito reproduction. The prediction was for a huge increase in mosquito population by the 10th of Jan. This doesn't seem to have happened and, with any luck, will turn out to be a false alarm.



The Anstices

Hildegard and John Anstice bought their 4.6 ha property at Killcare heights in 1983. Their contributions to the local area since then have been immeasurable.

In 1984 they moved into a large shed on the property while they built a 2 story mudbrick house with bricks moulded and sun dried from soil on their property. Part of the story is told by Jill Baxter in the booklet – reflections from the beach and bay.

Their comfortable and spacious home was ready for them to move into in October 1984. They planted an orchard and a variety of protea and found that the pink ice variety was the best suited to their soil and location. Hildegard created many large flower arrangements for events at Wagstaffe Hall and these protea always came in handy. For some time Hildegard also created window displays at the NPWS at Maitland Bay which are missed.

Hildegard worked as a potter in the large shed.. During December and January a gallery was open on the ground floor of their house. In the rest of the year they were wholesaling artistic pottery to galleries in NSW. Hildegard and John also organised and conducted many weekend workshops for pottery enthusiasts including building kilns, firing kilns, pit firing, raku firing etc.

The Anstices were leaders in the social life of Killcare. They started the monthly barbeque at Putty Beach, solstice drinks parties on the longest day of the year and hosted many Melbourne Cup parties in their home. A great time was had by all.

In 2013 they sold the property as it was becoming difficult for them to maintain its sweeping lawns and native bushland. Now they are ready for the next stage of their life in a retirement village after an interval in Europe.

Thanks from us all Hildegard and John

Anne Bowe



Summer Solstice at Putty

Sweet Pittosporum - Is it a weed?

There are several ways we can relegate a plant to the category of weed. Does it belong as part of the local ecosystem? Does it behave like a weed – prolific and invasive? Is it useful or a pest?

Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) certainly satisfies these definitions where it has been introduced in places such as Tasmania, Western Australia, Cuba, South Africa, Lord Howe and Norfolk Island. Its role in the Sydney Basin and surrounding coastal areas including the Bouddi peninsula is not so straight forward. It is native to the moist sandstone gullies in this region and is probably an important pioneer plant there.

Unfortunately it has been able to capitalise on many of the changes in the landscape since European settlement, particularly the reduction in fire frequency and the increased soil moisture and nutrient levels from run-off in urban and semi-urban areas. It now behaves like an environmental weed in many areas. Its prolific production of orange berries allows wide dispersal from birds, possums, foxes and humans. It can become established very quickly and starves surrounding plants of sunlight and nutrients.

There is little consensus among botanists, gardeners and bush regenerators as to its status. My own attitude is to treat it as a weed. I have seen it take over on several south coast beaches to become the dominant vegetation even on the slopes exposed to the sea. Recently I had a go at removing it from my 1 ha bush block and found three trees with trunks thicker than my calf and over thirty smaller specimens.

It is easy to identify by the undulating edges of the leaves and by the clusters of orange fruit. It is behaving true to form on the Bouddi peninsula and is becoming increasingly common on our sandstone slopes.

Hand: Hand removal is only recommended for very small plants, ensure the root system is removed and the disturbed area is covered over with mulch to reduce spread of other weeds.

Cut and paint: Cut plants off at ground level and immediately paint the stump with an undiluted glyphosate based product. This is useful for larger seedlings that are too hard to hand pull but should not be attempted on trees greater than 50 mm as they are likely to resprout.

Frill and fill : Drill or chip holes 2-3 cm deep and about 5 cm apart, at the base of the trunk. Fill the hole immediately with an undiluted glyphosate based product. This technique should be used for plants greater than 80 mm in diameter. Best done in active growth stage which is late spring and mid autumn.

