



Killcare Wagstaffe Trust

Newsletter

July 2014

Next General Meeting

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

August meeting cancelled

At the last committee meeting it was decided that we would not have an August general meeting. There was no urgent business and the committee members are travelling or are busy with work and family commitments.

Maitland Bay Information Centre

New displays have been erected in the downstairs area – a stuffed echidna and a Boobook owl and an interpretive sign for the Daley's Point aboriginal carvings.

Geoffrey Potter, Gosford Council's Local Studies Librarian has written a new book on the wreck of the Maitland. Called "Wreck of the Maitland: A Scene to Make the Angels Weep", it was published by Council and is the result of a great deal of original research. It will be available at the MBIC for \$35.

The new computer and internet connection has been a success. Many of the volunteers have turned out to have better computer skills than expected and others have been enthusiastic learners. Thanks to Terry Jones for helping to streamline the system.

We have had some botanical and local history books donated. The July committee meeting decided to turn the storeroom into a resource centre with bookshelves, a desk and perhaps a computer. If anyone has bookshelves they would like to donate, email the Trust on killcarewagstaffetrust@gmail.com

Bush Classroom at Pretty Beach School

A couple of years ago KWT donated money for the purchase of new seats to replace those burnt in the bushfire. The seats were purchased in Dec. 2012 but not yet installed because the principal has been on sick leave. The decision has been complicated by Dept Education reaction to a student death from falling branch.

Website Launch

Keep an eye out for announcements for the official launch of the new Trust website. It won't be long now.

New National Park signs

The numerous signs that have been erected to direct visitors to Bouddi NP were the result of lobbying by the local business community. They are to help visitors reach the Putty Beach campground which is why they don't direct attention to other sections of the park.

OzAtlas app

This free app for iPhones or Android allows users to retrieve lists of species recorded within an area, and to view details of the species such as recorded distribution, scientific name, common names and images. It also allows users to submit species occurrence records with an image to the Atlas of Living Australia.

Getting to know your local Casuarinas

The trees we all call Casuarinas are spread throughout the Bouddi peninsula. Examples can be found in almost all of our plant communities from ridgetop to alluvial flats. Although they are an integral part of so many Australian landscapes, they are not universally loved.

They are easily recognised by their distinctive dull green, segmented branchlets. As these were seen to resemble the plumage of the cassowary, the name Casuarina was given, derived from the Malay word for Cassowary (kasuari).

The family is called Casuarinaceae and is native to Australia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. It contains four genera including *Allocasuarina*, which is endemic to Australia, and *Casuarina*, which has several representatives in Australia. The other two genera are almost exclusively tropical.

Casuarinaceae have evolved to thrive in tough exposed conditions with poor soils such as sandy coastal foreshores, riverbanks, dry grassy woodlands, desolate rocky sites or swampy alluvial flats. They have no close relatives.

The leaves are minute scales that circle each joint of the green branchlets. The woody fruit are produced by the female plants and the rust coloured flowers are more prominent on the male plants. The roots have nitrogen fixing nodules and inhibit the growth of other plants under their canopy. They are fire sensitive, burning easily and only regenerating from seed after fire.

The seeds provide food for many birds. They are the preferred food source for glossy black cockatoos.

The similarity of the timber to oak was recognised by Captain Cook and the common name she-oak is said to be a chauvinistic reference to the timber being difficult to work and inferior to real oak.

Aboriginal uses included spear making from the timber, using an infusion of the inner bark as a gargle for toothache and chewing the young fruit to stimulate saliva production. The mat of fallen needle-like foliage under sheoaks was considered a safe place to leave children as snakes were said to avoid these areas.

On the Bouddi peninsula we have four species: *Casuarina glauca*, *Allocasuarina distyla*, *Allocasuarina littoralis* and *Allocasuarina torulosa*. The easiest way to differentiate these species is by their woody fruit which are quite distinctive for each species.

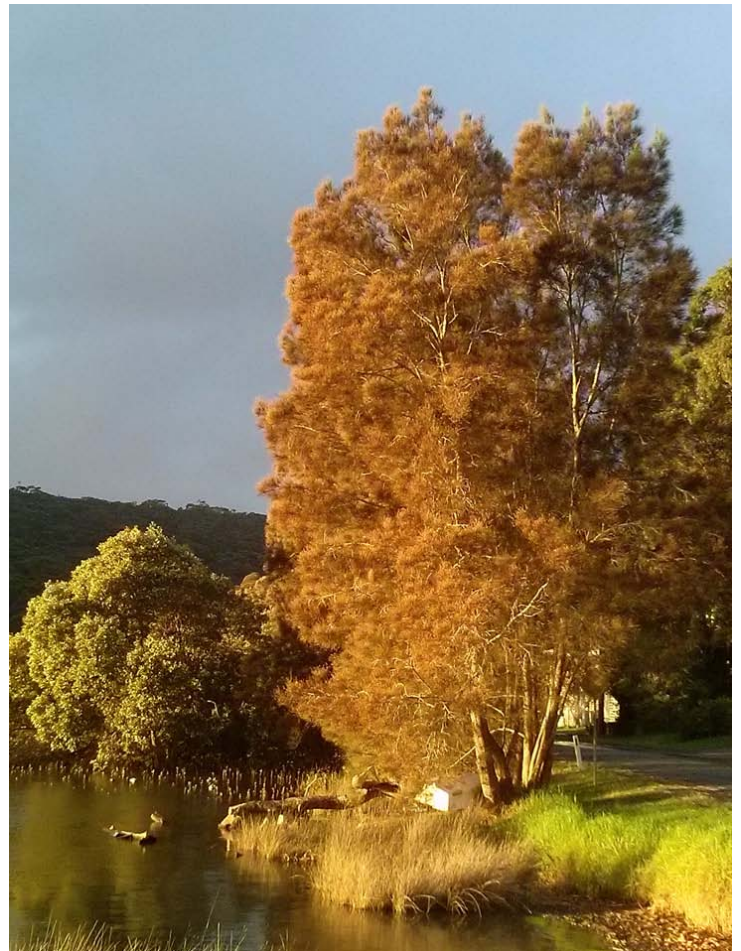
***Casuarina glauca* (Swamp oak)**

Almost all the casuarinas found by the water's edge of Brisbane Water belong to this species.

It can grow up to 20m. The fruit is spherical and is much smaller than of the other species.



Swamp oak fruit (above) and a flowering male (right)



***Allocasuarina distyla* (Scrub sheoak)**

This hardy species grows on the exposed slopes facing Broken Bay and the ocean. It is the smallest of the species growing to between 2 and 5 m depending on the environment.



Allocasuarina littoralis (Black oak) grows along the whole east coast and is one of the most common of this family in Australia. It grows to about 12m and on the Bouddi peninsula can be found on the slopes and the ridgetops. Most of the allocasuarinas on Wards Hill Rd belong to this species.



Allocasuarina torulosa (Forest oak) likes to grow on the fringes of rain forest and is found in the wetter gullies on the Bouddi peninsula. It grows to between 15 – 30 m high and has a distinctive rough brown bark. The woody fruit is large and spherical with the seeds arranged in longitudinal columns.

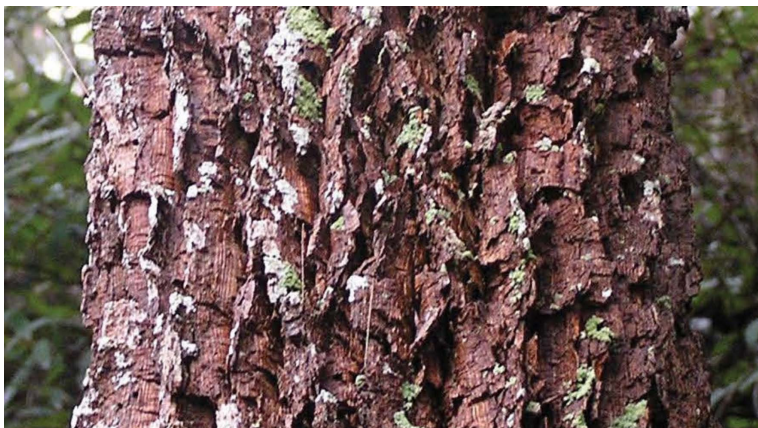


Photo Competition

The Trust's photo competition is on again. This years theme is "Sandstone" .The photos must be taken on the Bouddi peninsula

Due to several other photo competitions this year the judging and final date has been pushed back to the beginning of December

Entry forms and competition rules are available on the Trust website.