



Killcare Wagstaffe Trust

Newsletter

October 2015

General Meeting Sunday November 1st at 9.30 am
at the Maitland Bay Information Centre.

All visitors and residents are welcome

Triangle development

We understand that the development proposal for increased density on two blocks in the triangle adjacent to the Bells Resort is to be submitted some time in the near future.

Both Council and Coast and Country (a John Singleton company) have promised community consultation and the Trust is committed to be part of that process. Keep an eye out for future "developments"

Local Bushcare News

Dramatic Progress at Putty Beach Reserve

Bush Regeneration work at Putty Beach Reserve recently received two massive boosts.

Firstly, Council finally managed to get on board the National Parks aerial spraying. After a successful test spray several years ago, planned sprays have been abandoned year after year for one reason or another. This year there were no impediments and the Reserve received a spray of low concentration poison at a time when the bitou was growing and the native bush was dormant. Widespread bitou death can be observed from the beach south of the middle car park on Putty Beach Drive. Very little damage to native vegetation has occurred.

Hopefully this can be repeated whenever the NPWS is carrying out a similar operation so that the inevitable regrowth can be knocked back and the seed bank in the soil depleted.

The other boost is a Green Army team that is in the middle of over 12 weeks continuous work in the Reserve. This is a programme for 17-24 year olds to train and work in the environment. They have done extensive work near the first carpark on Beach Drive, between the National Park and the middle carpark on Putty Beach Drive.

Successful Grants

Local community bushcare groups have been successful in obtaining two Local Land Services (LLS) grants for local reserves.

The regional LLS boards replaced the old Catchment Management Authorities in NSW in January 2014. LLS brings together agricultural production advice, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management into a single organisation. The Central Coast is part of the Greater Sydney LLS region. Grant money is available for implementation of natural resource management and sustainable agriculture programs



Bouddi, Wagstaffe and Lobster Beach Bushcare have received \$30,000 to be spent over three years at Rileys Bay, Iron Ladder and Wagstaffe Point in Bouddi.

Cockle Bay Bushcare have received \$20,000 for work in Shelley Beach Rd – Empire Bay. The money will be used for local contractors to undertake on ground work – supporting the dedicated volunteers.

Iron Ladders

White Flowers are Blooming

October seems to be the month for white flowers in natives garden plants and weeds. Does anyone have any idea why?

First the exotics. Two common weeds, Privet and Wandering Jew or Trad, both have white flowers that are present at the moment. Star Jasmine

The bastard White mahogany (Eucalyptus umbra) is also beginning to flower with some dramatic displays of white flowers. Christmas bush (Ceratopetalum gummiferum) has white flowers which are out now. After pollination by flies and native bees, the sepals, which form the outer whorl or calyx that protects the flower bud, enlarge and turn deep pink to red in colour giving the magnificent display in early Summer.

The flannel flowers have been out for several weeks and the white sprays of flowers on the Tick bush (Kunzea ambigua) are easy to spot. They both like the poor sandstone soils and plenty of each can be seen on Wards Hill Rd. The tick bush gets its name from its reputation for giving relief from ticks and other parasites to native animals which are said to be often found sleeping under Kunzea plants.



Christmas Bush



Kunzia ambigua / Tick bush

Which brings us to.... Ticks

TICKS ARE ABOUT

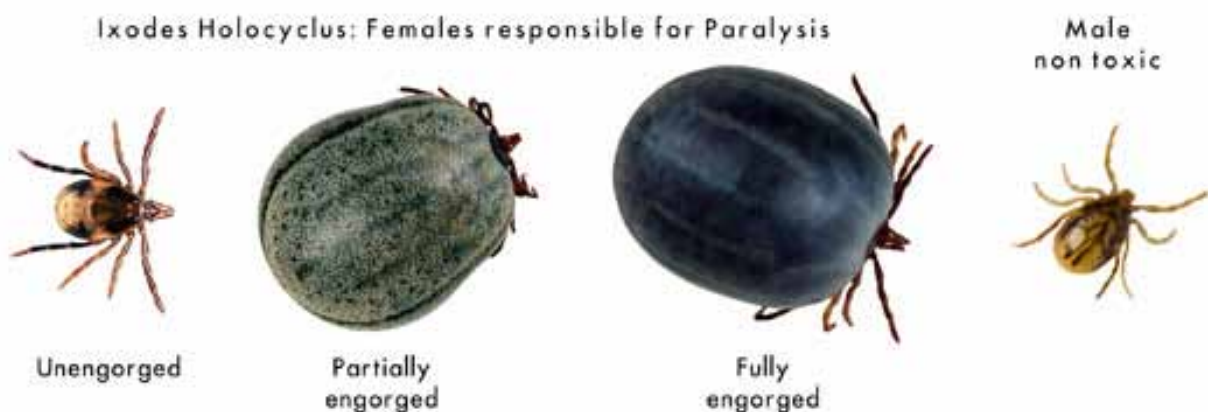
It has been noted that several people are getting ticks at the moment. Perhaps the relationship between the Tick bush and ticks is as simple as they are both noticeable at the same time.

While there are around 75 species of tick in Australia, it is the paralysis tick (*Ixodes holocyclus*) which appears to be responsible for most human bites on the east coast of Australia. It is found in many vegetation types, usually below one metre from the ground.

The tick has four life stages- egg, larvae, nymph and adult. Larva and nymph ticks are what most people refer to as grass ticks. These are active from autumn to winter with adults active in spring to mid-summer.



The barb of a paralysis tick - no wonder they're hard to pull out



Don't panic if you get a tick bite as it is very unlikely that it will make you sick.

That said, it does seem that in rare cases tick bites can make you ill. Controversy continues regarding whether Lyme disease exists in Australia, but it does seem that a Lyme-like disease is around. Allergies to red meat have been associated with tick bites. If after a tick bite you get a "bull's eye" rash around the bite see your doctor.

Using a personal insect repellent and tick resistant clothing will reduce the risk of getting a tick. Scabies ointment around the wrists, ankles and neck has been reported to be effective by local bush regenerators.

At this time of year check yourself by running your fingers through your hair and changing clothes after doing any work in the bush or garden.

If you do find a tick attached to you or a loved one, never attempt to place any chemical such as methylated spirits onto the tick, nor should it be touched or disturbed, as the tick will inject saliva into the skin, which could make the situation worse.

Rather, the tick should be sprayed with an aerosol insect repellent preferably containing pyrethrin or a pyrethroid. The combination of hydrocarbons and the pyrethrin acts as a narcotic and a toxicant, and prevents the tick from injecting its saliva. *Lyclear*, a scabies cream containing permethrin will also work well.

The tick should be sprayed again one minute later (or dabbed with the *Lyclear*) and left. After 24 hours it should drop off naturally or be gently removed with fine-tipped forceps. There is a new plastic device available from chemists that is cheap and effective for this.

It is normal for a tick bite to remain slightly itchy for several weeks, however if other symptoms develop, then a doctor should be consulted immediately.

An information sheet produced by the Australian Association of Bush Regenerators (AABR) is available on the Trust website. (www.killcare.wagstaffetrust.org.au).

Bandicoots have been blamed for tick dispersal.

Fox baiting seems to be responsible for a rise in bandicoot populations and a simultaneous rise in tick populations. While bandicoots are a host of the paralysis tick they have quite small ranges - less than an acre and it is possible that other animals such as wallabies, which also prosper after fox baiting, contribute to ticks becoming more common.

Bandicoots live in shallow holes lined with leaf litter that are dug under dense vegetation which is why they are rarely seen or disturbed during the day.

They are omnivorous marsupials and have a gestation of only 11 days. The tiny young travel through a cord attached to their mother's womb to reach the pouch. Here they drink milk from the mother's teats and grow until they are large enough to leave the pouch. At about three months they can begin to live independently.

The long nosed bandicoot is the most common and is likely to be the species responsible for the grooves in your garden.

Cassia Removal Day

We plan to have another attempt to mobilise a bit of community labour for a Cassia Removal day in March. Cassia is a woody invasive weed with bright yellow flowers that appear in February/March and likes to live along roadsides.

With a little effort and persistence it should be possible to eliminate this weed from the peninsula over a few years.

Keep an eye out for information in the new year