

# PNHA NEWS

Winter 2013

Issue 63

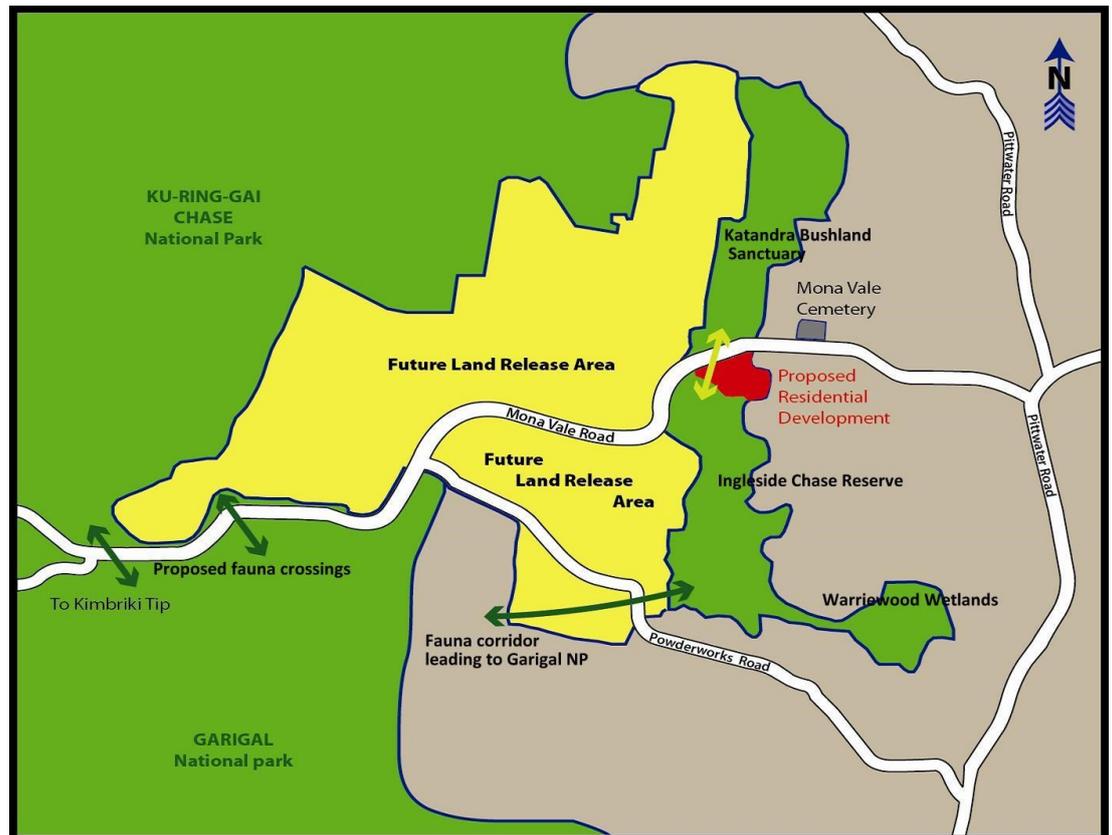
Pittwater Natural Heritage Association - thinking locally, acting locally

## Development Threatens Bushland Sanctuary

Early this year a proposal to rezone non-urban land for a residential development at 120 Mona Vale Road Warriewood was put before Pittwater Council. On studying the proposal, the PNHA committee became aware that it posed a threat to the viability of fauna populations in Katandra Bushland Sanctuary by cutting off its link with other bushland habitat on the Warriewood escarpment.

It also became clear to us that when the impending Ingleside land release goes ahead, leading to the inevitable loss of bushland habitat for roads, houses and lawns, then Katandra will most likely lose its links to other nearby bushland areas, especially Ku-ring-gai Chase national park. This makes retention and enhancement of the corridor across 120 Mona Vale Road between Katandra and Ingleside Chase Reserve even more critical, as habitat corridors enabling free movement are vital for preservation of our local fauna populations.

We have been working with members of the Katandra board, Northern Beaches Roadkill Prevention Committee, Pittwater Council and others on this project and, as shown in the plan, our vision is a regional one. There is a need for fauna crossings on Mona



Vale Road linking Garigal National Park with Ku-ring-gai Chase - which is currently being considered by Roads and Maritime Services as part of their upgrade of Mona Vale Road west - and fauna corridors along Mullet Creek have to be created to link Ingleside Chase Reserve with Garigal National Park.

The proposed development at 120 Mona Vale Road is for 71 detached houses on the steeply sloping site, with an entrance onto Jubilee Avenue. Pittwater Council refused the rezoning application for this site on 4 March, but the Department of Planning and Infrastructure has directed that the proposal be progressed. Consequently Pittwater Council has prepared a planning proposal to be forwarded to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for a Gateway Determination.

We are campaigning for a portion of the western section of the site to be protected in public ownership to serve as a fauna corridor. This is our immediate concern and we are meeting with state government agencies to convince them of its importance.

It is expected that the development proposal will be on public exhibition in November and that submissions will be sought from the community.

Members, we need lots of support on this so we will update you with more detail and how you can help with the campaign.



*Inside: PNHA Update; PNHA Activities; Landscaping with Weeds; African Olive Brochure; Swamp Lillies; Ospreys; Submission to Council (Ku-ring-gai Chase NP POM); Cockatoo Wing Tags; Upper Mullet Creek*

# updateupdateupdate

## Indian Myna, Common Myna

These are two names for an introduced pest, also called Flying Rat! PNHA attended the recent Indian Myna conference in Canberra, hosted by the Canberra Indian Myna Action Group (CIMAG).



Mynas are present in Pittwater, familiar in shopping centres and school playgrounds. They are a pest because they nest in hollows potentially or actually occupied by native fauna. They are messy and noisy. CIMAG has had great success in trapping, so that they are now the 20th most common bird in Canberra, falling from the 3rd most common over the past five years. The traps have been placed in backyards, not public land. You can report sightings of Mynas by going to :<http://www.feralscan.org.au/mynascan/>

PNHA entered a few sightings recently, but there are inadequate records for Pittwater. If you see Mynas, go to this link and enter your information.

A few years ago PNHA bought some Myna traps and handed them over to Pittwater Council but they have not been much used. Mynas are very smart birds and trapping has to be strategic or they will become trap-shy.

**PNHA Members! Who can help take up the Myna campaign in Pittwater?** We can help with more information. Please contact us if you can:

- Report sightings on the Mynascan website
- Help construct traps of the current successful design
- Participate in trapping with a trap on your land

## Planning White Paper and PNHA Submission

PNHA is very concerned with the implications for Pittwater of the White Paper on reforming the NSW planning law. We contacted members by email several times, forwarding information and urging members to express their views to the government.

Pittwater Council has been active in alerting the community to the proposals. We believe the new law could change Pittwater from the pleasant, leafy, environmentally friendly place we know and love to a developers' paradise, with the community caught by surprise when they realise it is too late to object to what may happen – 80% of developments being built with no chance of consultation at the DA stage, and so on.

## Voluntary Amalgamation of Pittwater, Warringah and Manly

The consultation paper Future Directions for NSW Local Government - Twenty Essential Steps—proposes changes to Local Government in NSW.

PNHA strongly objects to any such amalgamation. Pittwater

Council commissioned an independent review of the proposal, which found there was no purpose in doing so. Many PNHA members were among the crowd at the public hearing at the Warringah Council Chambers on June 4.

## Beeby Park, Mona Vale

This park is on the corner of Golf Ave and Barrenjoey Road, Mona Vale. While we regret the loss of trees, we did not pursue this as an issue of great importance to our natural environment. Other concerns, including about the legitimacy of the use of the area for parking were described by the Save Beeby Park committee, and forwarded to PNHA members by email for your consideration.

We understand Pittwater Council intends to plant more trees than will be removed by the works.

## Avalon Street Stall, June 8

We set up a street stall outside Woolworths Avalon to inform passers-by about Boneseed, a close cousin of Bitou, and African Olive. Pittwater Council had received a grant to spread the word about Boneseed, so we were glad to help out.

A new brochure to raise awareness of African Olive is available from the council, produced with help from PNHA.

Weed specimens do attract attention, and about 65 people stopped for a chat. There is no better way to learn about weeds than a face to face chat with a piece of the weed beside you. One man went straight to the hardware store to buy a wallboard saw for his Asparagus Fern and came back to show it to us.

We also had on display the horror weeds Asparagus Fern and Madeira Vine (aka Lambs Tails).. As the special insurance policy we needed to attend the Pittwater Wine and Food Fair was still current, it was a worthwhile extra use.



# activities activities

## PNHA at Pittwater Wine and Food Fair, May 5

The Sustainability Lane was a showcase for exhibitors with environmental displays and was of great interest. PNHA's usual display of weeds again attracted attention. We had photographs displaying progress of our Estuary Care grant revealing how the banks of Careel Creek in Avalon have changed as a result. We talked to a lot of people - our main reason for attending - and sold a lot of our cards. We appreciated Council sharing the cost of special insurance we needed for this event.

The Sustainability Lane was visited by people perhaps lured to the event by the wine and food, but who then learned about PNHA, renewable energy, fisheries, native plants, WIRES animal care and so on.

## PNHA AGM 2013

**Martyn Robinson will be our guest speaker at our 2013 AGM.**

This is on Sunday September 1, 2-4 pm, at the Coastal Environment Centre, Lake Park Road, Narrabeen.

Martyn is the resident naturalist at the Australian Museum.

His wealth of knowledge about the world of insects and other tiny creatures is encyclopaedic. And he has a great ability to let us in on amazing facts of the natural world.

This will be a celebration of invertebrates, with live stick insects, insect display and photos. We'll have a variety of reference books to consult.

Sir David Attenborough says: "If we and the rest of the back-boned animals were to disappear overnight, the rest of the world would get on pretty well. But if the invertebrates were to disappear, the world's ecosystems would collapse."

Come and meet a few, and hear how PNHA is going as we near our 20th anniversary.

Join us for Afternoon Tea.

**All Welcome**

## PNHA Birdwatchers at Warriewood Wetland, July 7

Our aim of searching for honeyeaters making the most of the Wetland's flowering swamp mahoganies was almost thwarted by two postponements due to the recent heavy rain. By the time our group of sixteen met on Sunday 7 July, most of the blossom was gone but we still recorded eight different honeyeaters including the tiny and colourful scarlet honeyeater. The overall tally for the morning was thirty-nine species seen, plus six species heard.

Our next walk on 8 September at Chiltern Track, off Chiltern Road, Ingleside is an opportunity to investigate the wildflowers and birds in a different habitat. Enquiries to [pnhabirdwatching@gmail.com](mailto:pnhabirdwatching@gmail.com)

**Katandra Bushland  
Reserve  
Opening Days in 2013  
are July 7,  
then all Sundays  
until end of October,  
10-4pm**

## Landscaping with Weeds

Our shopping centres and general landscaping are being planted with species classified as weeds and harmful to native bushland.

They are listed in the booklet ***Garden Escapes and other Weed of Bushland and Reserves - a responsible gardening guide for Sydney***. This is published by the Sydney Regional Weeds Advisory Committees and is given out by Council staff ( and PNHA) at field days, market days and so on.

Weeds used in Council landscaping, and examples of some locations:

- Extensive recent plantings of *Liriope* sp in Avalon. Near Mona Vale library *Liriope* is fruiting. (booklet p.53)
- Crimson Fountain Grass *Pennisetum setaceum* & Swamp Foxtail Grass *Pennisetum alopecuroides*. These have been used at Mona Vale and Avalon. (Booklet p. 52) The species are hard to distinguish. Naturalisation is evident in Therry St and Simmonds Lane Avalon and Grandview Drive Newport. These should be controlled as soon as possible. Advice has been available for some time about the weed potential of these grasses. See <http://www.anbg.gov.au/gnp/interns-2003/pennisetum-alopecuroides.html>
- *Lomandra hystrix*, a NSW North Coast species, is used instead of the local *L. longifolia*. (Booklet p. 27) at Avalon outside the Recreation Centre and on edge of new section of Attunga Rd next to Attunga Reserve Newport.
- Giant Strelitzia *Strelitzia nicolai* appears to have been used in landscaping for the new playground on Callistemon Way Warriewood. This spreads by seed into bushland and we consider is another plant to avoid.

We expressed these concerns to the Council in a letter at the end of May, adding that the landscape and reserves staff have a duty of care to acquaint themselves with plants which have acknowledged weed potential and refrain from using them. Alternative local species could be recommended by staff in the Natural Environment and Education section of council.

Such unsuitable plant choices set a bad example to the community. The fairly recent decision to disallow Tuckeroo *Cupaniopsis anacardioides* in landscaping proposals associated with DAs has come too late to prevent it becoming a local weed. It is still being widely planted on private land.

Why must we continue to acquire weeds from ignorant horticultural practices? This is the source of most of our environmental weeds.

## African Olive Brochure

African Olive is an unremarkable large shrub, with dark dense foliage, looking vaguely "native". But it's a noxious weed and very common in, but not restricted to, Avalon. It forms a virtual hedge along the southern and eastern boundary of Avalon golf course, but is gradually succumbing to bush regeneration work.

PNHA assisted with the production of Pittwater Council's new brochure about it. Go to

[http://www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/environment/noxious\\_weeds/shrubs/african\\_olive](http://www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/environment/noxious_weeds/shrubs/african_olive) to find information and see link to the brochure.



Crimson Fountain Grass *Pennisetum setaceum*

## Swamp Lily, *Crinum pedunculatum*

Some unwelcome native moths use this plant for food and make a complete mess of the foliage. You need to pick them off and also watch out for snails. Both hide down deep in the base of the leaves during the day.

The moth is *Calogramma picta*, but you're more likely to see the caterpillars. Lyn Illingsworth says these are distasteful to birds. The bright markings probably indicate to the birds they are not to be eaten. This moth will also lay eggs on the introduced *Clivea*, a smaller plant relative with orange flowers, tolerant of heavy shade.

*Calogramma picta* from [http://www.galerie-insecte.org/galerie/image/dos95/big/papillon\\_spodoptf.jpg](http://www.galerie-insecte.org/galerie/image/dos95/big/papillon_spodoptf.jpg)



*Calogramma picta* caterpillar. Photo: M. Macrae



Swamp Lily, *Crinum pedunculatum*



## Ospreys and White Bellied Sea Eagles Nesting

Narrabeen Ospreys were flying around a few weeks ago, but we don't know where they might nest this spring. Their previous nest in a dead tree near Wakehurst Parkway fell to the ground late last year when a branch broke off. Let us know if you see birds flying around with sticks. Ospreys occur in many countries of the world. You can see live action on an Osprey nest in Montana at [http://cams.allaboutbirds.org/channel/27/Hellgate\\_Ospreys/](http://cams.allaboutbirds.org/channel/27/Hellgate_Ospreys/)

To check out White Bellied Sea Eagles nesting, go to <http://www.sea-eaglecam.org/papers.html> and click on Live Video.



Image: Neil Fifer

**In September 2014 PNHA will celebrate its 20th birthday. How can we mark this event? Send us your ideas!**

### PNHA Membership

*We now have over 100 members. Have you renewed your membership? We still have 40 un-financial members.*

*Please look at our Facebook page and "like" us. This may spread our environmental messages and get more members.*

*Pittwater's population is now about 60,000 – we need to get more of these people on board as members.*

Copy of Email Correspondence Dated 15.7.2013

From: PNHA

To: mne.planning@environment.nsw.gov.au

Subject: Submission on proposed amendments to KCNP Plan of Management



### Submission on proposed amendments to KCNP Plan of Management

Pittwater Natural Heritage Association would like to make the following comments on the proposed amendments to the Ku-ring-gai Chase Plan of Management as they affect Barrenjoey Head.

Barrenjoey Head is an iconic area, highly appreciated for its heritage and natural attributes. The proposed changes to the Plan of Management put it in danger of being loved to death.

Unfortunately, along with more visitor facilities such as kiosks, restaurants, function centres etc. come introduced pest species such as common (Indian) mynas, black rats, mice and more. These species are attracted by litter and food scraps and drive away native species. In addition, there is a danger of increased disturbance of the native bushland by informal tracks, litter and weeds. Another concern is increased runoff from vehicle access roads causing increased weed invasion. Consequently, we think that increasing the visitor facilities on Barrenjoey Head will degrade the natural values of the area, especially given that the resources available to NPWS staff may not be sufficient to maintain the area properly.

Over the years our association has assisted NPWS carry out bush regeneration activities around the Barrenjoey Head area and we would like to think that our work has helped the native vegetation recover from past neglect. We are disappointed to learn that the proposed changes to the plan of management could cause further degradation to the natural area.

Yours Sincerely  
David Palmer  
Secretary

## Sulphur Crested Cockatoo

### Wing Tags

**Have you seen a Cocky with a yellow plastic tag on its shoulder?**

Wing-tags are being fitted to Sulphur-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua galerita*) as part of a joint study being conducted by the Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust and the University of Sydney.

The study aims to assess how many cockatoos call Sydney's Royal Botanic Garden home, how far these birds travel to find food and if they nest within tree hollows within the Garden.

Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust Wildlife Management Officer, John Martin said they see up to 70 cockatoos within the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney.

'However, we don't know if the same individuals are present each day; we suspect that a much larger number of cockatoos, for example, several hundred, could visit the Garden over a calendar year. We also don't know where they forage or where they're breeding, as a low level of breeding has been observed within the Garden,' Mr Martin said.

Thus far 20 cockatoos have been tagged at Sydney's Royal Botanic Garden. This is the first study to use plastic wing-tags on parrots.



Sulphur-crested cockatoo research needs your help. If you see a wing-tagged cockatoo please report the tag number and colour (e.g. 142-green or 011-yellow) and location to [cockatoo.wingtag@gmail.com](mailto:cockatoo.wingtag@gmail.com). An option is to forward us pictures of the tagged cockatoos that you have observed.

Alternatively, sightings can be reported to the Australian Bird and Bat Banding Scheme (ABBBS).

Read more: [http://www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/welcome/feature\\_stories/Sulphur-crested\\_cockatoo\\_research](http://www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/welcome/feature_stories/Sulphur-crested_cockatoo_research)

<https://www.facebook.com/CockatooWingtags?sk=wall&filter=12>

## Upper Mullet Creek Biodiversity Project

Mullet Creek runs through Ingleside Chase reserve and down into Warriewood Wetland.

Pittwater Environmental Foundation has now received the second year's funding for this project. It will run over six years at a cost of \$250K thanks to a Large Project grant from the NSW Environmental Trust.

Pittwater Council is managing the bush regeneration contract work, which is going according to plan. A community bushcare group now works on the third Saturday of the month, near the Irrawong waterfall. So far they have planted tubestock, set up a fence to exclude Swamp Wallabies that found the tubestock very tasty, and done some weeding. Another group met for the first time in May at the Wesley St entrance at Elanora.

PNHA is helping with regular monitoring of the birds of the area. We would love to have more helpers. Contact Karin Nippard Pittwater Council's bushcare officer if you can help: 9970 1363 or [Karin\\_Nippard@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Karin_Nippard@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)

## Membership Application

I would like to join Pittwater Natural Heritage Association. I agree with the PNHA's aims: raising awareness of and preserving our unique Pittwater natural environment.

Name:..... Signed:.....

Address:..... P/Code .....

Email:..... Ph:..... Date:.....

I would like a **paper copy** OR **emailed** newsletter (circle your choice). Membership fee: \$20 or \$10 pensioner/student. To pay your membership, you can deposit electronically into our account at the Commonwealth Bank: BSB 062 208, account no.10168467. Type your surname in the reference box so we know who the membership is for. Alternatively make cheque payable to: **Pittwater Natural Heritage Association** or **PNHA**. Post cheque payable to **Pittwater Natural Heritage Association** to PNHA, PO Box 187, Avalon Beach NSW 2107.