

Sanctuary in Grandview Drive, Newport

From the east of Bilgola Plateau the view of the coast is wonderful. But residential development has changed the plateau. The demand for bigger houses with the widest possible views has led to fewer trees and a declining bushland character.

This will never happen at 57 and 59 Grandview Drive. Lynette O'Neill has bequeathed her blocks of beloved Pittwater Spotted Gum bushland to Pittwater Council, to be rezoned from residential to environmental protection E2 and named Sanctuary. When the time comes, her small

house on one block will be demolished and its footprint re-generated to bushland.

She has asked Pittwater Environmental Foundation (PEF) and PNHA to assist with managing the land and meeting associated costs from funds she has donated to PEF.

We congratulate her on her success in achieving this bequest after long negotiations with the Council and wish her many more happy years in her treasured bushland.



As the land faces south, many ferns enjoy the shade. Streaks on this Birds Nest Fern, *Asplenium australasicum*, are the spore-bearing structures.

Both images: M. Macrae



Red Olive Plumb, *Elaeodendron australis*, is an understorey small tree in the Pittwater Spotted Gum forest on Lynette's land. It is uncommon in Pittwater. Only the female trees bear these spectacular orange berries.

Mona Vale Road Update

Planned fauna bridge for Mona Vale Road may be a Sydney first

Pittwater Natural Heritage Association has been informed by Roads and Maritime Services of their intention to construct a vegetated fauna bridge on Mona Vale Road West when it is upgraded to four lanes. It will likely be the first purpose designed fauna bridge to be constructed over an arterial road in the Sydney region.

The good news was given to a PNHA delegation who met with RMS project managers in February.

They were informed that the fauna bridge is to be located just to the east of the Kimbriki Road intersection. It will be 50 metres wide and be topped with one metre depth of soil which will carry the same vegetation community as is found at that locality. While the design of the proposed fauna bridge has not yet been finalised, we believe that it

may be similar to the one shown in the photo (below).

Other fauna crossings are planned for the Mona Vale Road upgrade, such as underpasses and rope bridges in various locations along the length of the upgraded road. Exclusion fencing will be incorporated to direct fauna to the crossings.

More detail will be made available as the road design is refined, starting with a Review of Environmental Factors due to be made public about mid-2015. We are continuing to liaise with RMS to try to achieve positive environmental outcomes.



10/50 Code: Clearing for Bushfire Protection: Stop the Chop



Self assessment by residents replaces expert evaluation of fire risk by Council arborists and the Rural Fire Service. Many trees in Pittwater and elsewhere have been destroyed for views, annoying leaves on the car, easier development.

It will be at least 100 years before trees planted now will develop hollows of value for fauna.

PNHA has joined protests and written submissions along with many other community groups and local Councils, calling for an immediate moratorium.

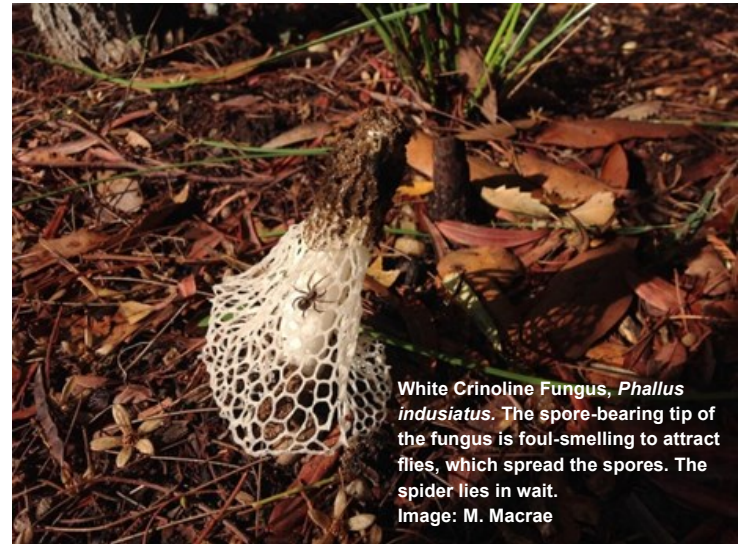
A review into the code is said to be finalised in the first half of 2015, but for urban trees and their birds and animals that rely on them it is already too late.

The code has been modified to restrict it to areas closer to bushland but the destruction of trees and undergrowth for reasons other than fire safety continues.

Fauna Watch—What's In Your Garden at Night?

Our Reconyx fauna camera is now ready to use. Its infrared sensor is triggered by body heat taking black and white photos by night and coloured shots during the day. Marita has practised with it on her chooks and the dog and is ready to lend it to PNHA Members.

What we'd actually like to record is fauna that is harder to see—perhaps Sugar Glider, Feathertail Glider or native rats? Contact us if you'd like to take up this offer.



White Crinoline Fungus, *Phallus indusiatus*. The spore-bearing tip of the fungus is foul-smelling to attract flies, which spread the spores. The spider lies in wait.
Image: M. Macrae



QUIZ: Which bird is the Indian Myna?

ANSWER: Top
bird. The lower
bird is the pro-
tected native
Noisy Miner.

Both images: Rod Warnock



Pittwater Indian Myna Action Group (PIMAG)

Several traps supplied by Pittwater Council are now in action on private land and birds are being caught. We have been careful to adopt humane procedures for euthanasia approved by the RSPCA.

As many groups around the country are already working to control this pest, we can benefit from their experience. CIMAG in Canberra has been very successful. See: <http://www.indianmynaaction.org.au/>

Recently we met with Clarence Valley Myna catchers, Laura and Kevin who gave us useful tips on use of cages and also on managing such a project, which can get quite complicated. We will not be trapping in public areas so as to avoid confrontation with people concerned about killing animals.

If you would like to trap Mynas or help with this project please contact PNHA.

Baha'i Temple Bush Regeneration Project

Our bush regeneration project at the Baha'i Temple is now in its second year with the dedicated team of volunteers from PNHA and the Baha'i congregation assisting professional bush regenerators to help the recovery of the critically endangered grevillea, *Grevillea caleyi*.

Grevillea caleyi is a large sprawling shrub found only in isolated patches in the northern beaches area. Its red tooth-brush-like flowers open in late winter and spring.

Our bush regeneration work is funded by Greater Sydney Local Land Services and the Office of Environment and Heritage Saving our Species program. PNHA co-ordinates the volunteer program.

To watch a video of the program produced by Office of Environment and Heritage, click on <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/SavingOurSpecies/sosvideos.htm>

The volunteers work on the site one morning every two months. Dates for 2015 are April 13, June 1, October 12 and December 7.

We are always in need of more volunteers so if you are interested in helping call David Palmer on 0404 171 940 or email pnhainfo@gmail.com

More info: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phallus_indusiatus



Pennisetum species

As noted in our last newsletter, Pennisetum species popularly planted as Swamp Foxtail and Fountain Grasses are weeds in Pittwater.

Following PNHA's request for action, Pittwater Council is in the process of removing them in various locations and replacing with native grasses or *Lomandra longifolia*.

Follow us on facebook.

We are posting more often so keep up to date this way in between emails and newsletters:



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pittwater-Natural-Heritage-Association-PNHA/160354487421636>

Common or Green Tree Snake

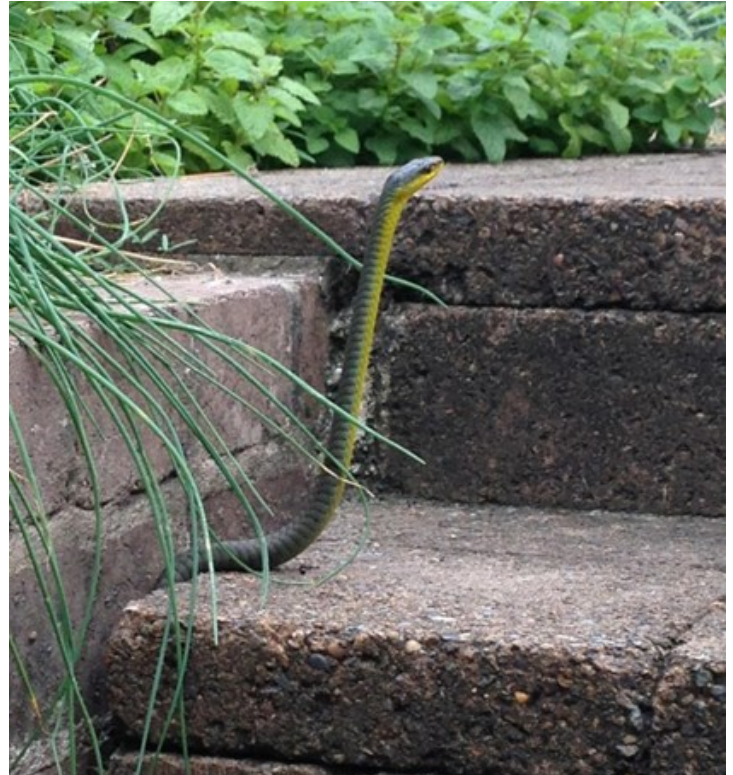
Dendrelaphis punctulata

This elegant snake was in a Warriewood garden. This common snake is harmless, readily recognised as it is an agile snake with a very slender body and tail. The body colour varies from green to olive-green to black, sometimes even blue, frequently pale yellow on the throat and belly but other pale colours have been noted, blue flecks are present on the flank. Eyes are larger than in most snakes. Found in a variety of habitats ranging from rainforest to woodland to urban areas where it preys on fish, frogs and other small animals.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dendrelaphis_punctulata

Other local snake images at:

<http://www.whatsnakeisthat.com.au/nsw/sydney.html>



Long-billed Corella in Avalon

This cockatoo looks as though it has had an accident but the red colouring around its head and neck is natural. Its long beak enables it to dig up bulbs and roots of native plants found in its native habitat around western Victoria and southern New South Wales. Feral populations have sprung up in Sydney, Perth and Hobart and SE Queensland from the release of captive birds. More information:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long-billed_corella

<http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/species/Cacatua-tenuirostris>

The Little Corella is more common in Pittwater and both fly around with Sulphur-crested Cockatoos. Watch a flock feeding on the ground to pick the differences among the three species.

Feeding is not recommended.

Pittwater Natural Heritage Association

Birdwatching and Wildflowers 2015

Sunday 26 April

Warriewood Wetlands

Our first walk of the year!

The Wetlands' variety of habitats supports many species, making it one of Sydney's birding hotspots.

Where: 7.30am. Meet at Katoa Close, North Narrabeen.

Bring: Binoculars, water, insect repellent, morning tea.

Bookings: pnhabirdwatching@gmail.com

Enquiries: 0402 605 721 or 0439 409 202

Sunday 24 May

Chiltern Track, Ingleside

This walk is timed to coincide with the flowering of the eucalypts, which last year attracted large numbers of honeyeaters including the endangered Regent Honeyeater.

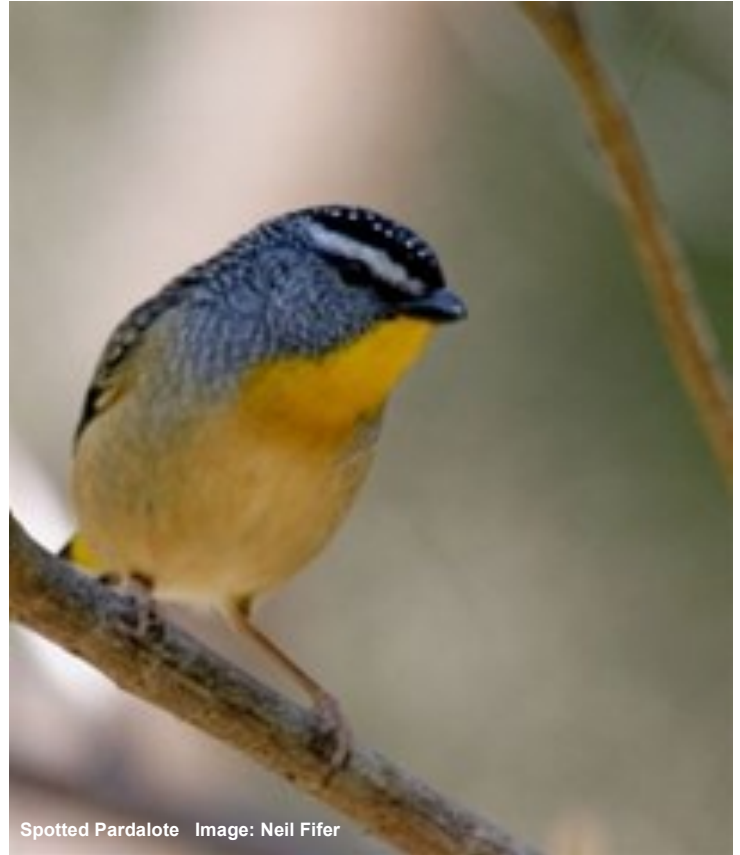
Where: 8.00am. Meet at the fire trail gate at the start of the track, nearing the end of Chiltern Road, Ingleside.

Sunday 16 August

Chiltern Track (Wildflower Study Walk)

The wildflowers should be at their peak. There will be an expert plant guide to study the wildflowers and birdwatchers are welcome to join the walk and explore the track for birdlife.

Where: 9.00am. Meet at the fire trail gate at the start of the track, nearing the end of Chiltern Road, Ingleside.



Spotted Pardalote Image: Neil Fifer

Sunday 20 September

Irrawong Reserve

The rainforest habitat at this reserve is renowned for bird species not commonly seen in Pittwater.

Where: 8.00am. Meet at the far end of Irrawong Road, off Garden Street, North Narrabeen.

Sunday 15 November

Warriewood Wetlands

The Wetlands' variety of habitats supports many species, making it one of Sydney's birding hotspots.

Where: 7.30am. Meet at Katoa Close, North Narrabeen.



2015 Bush Regeneration & Envirofun Weekends at Pittwater YHA

May 15-17 and August 28-30.

Our worst weed, Asparagus Fern, is in retreat because of these \$20 bargain and fun weekends.

To book: phone 9999 5948, email: pittwater@yha.com.au

PNHA offers guided bird and plant walks to participants.

Upper Mullet Creek Biodiversity Restoration project

About to enter its fourth year, this \$250,000 project is progressing, with a great reduction in weeds that used to cover the area below the Irrawong waterfall. Tubestock planting is needed to restore bushland where regeneration is unlikely because of years of silt deposition and weed infestation.

Browsing Swamp Wallabies find young tubestock irresistible so the plantings have to be fenced for a while.

Two bushcare groups work along the creek. One meets below the waterfall, off Irrawong Road on the third Saturday afternoon of each month.

The other has met a couple of times on the southern arm of the creek off Wesley Street, Elanora Heights, but with few participants. We will try a week day to see if that better suits helpers.

On our last Irrawong bushcare day we were accompanied by an eight month old orphaned Swamp Wallaby Matilda and her carer Sonja Elwood.

The groups need helpers, so contact Bushcare Officer Helena Dewis at Pittwater Council to get involved in caring for Pittwater's biggest area of bushland. Helena_dewis@pittwater.nsw.gov.au or 0408 164 235.

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.

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www.pnha.org.au