

PNHA NEWS

Autumn 2022 Issue 91

Pittwater Natural Heritage Association - thinking locally, acting locally

PNHA UPDATE:

We've had a busy time putting in submissions for various proposals.

1. Northern Beaches Council has called for comments on several studies which will form part of the new Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan (LEP/DCP) currently in preparation. PNHA has commented on:

Draft Northern Beaches Council Northern Beaches Environment Study and the **Northern Beaches Council Community Strategic Plan**

PNHA supports the vision and goals of the Community Strategic Plan.

"As a local environment organisation who have been advocating and undertaking on ground works for over 25 years, PNHA is passionate about Protection of the Environment. We agree with the strategies listed under Protection of the Environment, and acknowledge that while Northern Beaches Council has undertaken work consistent with these strategies we don't feel that enough has been done. Therefore, we submit that the following strategy be included under goal 1:

'Increase financial capacity to enable necessary protection and management of bushland and waterways'

We say this because our experience with bush regeneration has shown us that maintenance of bushland reserves is a continuous requirement, especially in weather like we are experiencing in summer 2022. In times like these the amount of work on bush regeneration must be increased to meet the challenge of better growing conditions for weeds and the funding must be there to enable the extra work to be undertaken."



Pastel Flower *Pseuderanthemum variabile* flowers can be white, pink or mauve, about as big as a violet. It is a tiny herb of shady rainforest or wet eucalyptus forest, north of Bega in NSW. It spreads by seed and rhizomes. More: <https://resources.austplants.com.au/plant/pseuderanthemum-variabile/> This one is in Spotted Gum forest at Newport.



Protecting Pittwater's Environment

PNHA is on Facebook Want to get in touch?

pnhainfo@gmail.com Follow up on Instagram

INSIDE: PNHA update continued, submissions and the new LEP, Lizard Rock: proposed urban development in Oxford Falls, NBC and Pittwater's biodiversity– some weeds to watch out for, PNHA Nature Walks for 2022, Long-necked Turtles rescued, Autumn fungi and resources.

2. Department of Planning: click: [Design & Place State Environmental Planning Policy](#).

We would like to see in the policy:

- Strong, enforceable environmental performance standards
- Increased biodiversity in urban areas
- Regulations to maximise tree cover in urban developments
- A plan to achieve net zero emissions in all new buildings

No more gas connections to new suburbs

And any legislation based on the policy must be drafted tightly so as to remove all “loopholes”

Will the LEP be a document which can stand up in court to preserve the character and environment of our area?

PNHA is member of the Pittwater Community Alliance, consisting of representatives of community groups in the area. The Alliance is discussing funding an expert town planner to review the LEP when it is in draft form and presented for public submissions. This probably will not be until towards the end of this year.

3. SEPP for Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council land - Lizard Rock

You pass **Lizard Rock** on your left if you go up Oxford Falls Rd west, then Morgan Road, towards Forest Way. It's not an Aboriginal engraving, but an interesting rock formation beside the road that someone has painted to look like a lizard with teeth.



This is in the large area of wonderful bushland for which this proposal would develop 450 houses on 71ha. **Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment** are strongly opposing this, and offer sensible alternatives that would allow the MLALC to earn money from the area without environmental destruction.

This development is proposed as the **Aboriginal Lands SEPP amendment and Northern Beaches Aboriginal Land Development Delivery Plan**. [Please get your submission in before March 21 via the links on this page:](#)

<https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/northern-beaches-aboriginal-land-development-delivery-plan>

Though this problem is outside the Pittwater area that is our focus of concern, we will be supporting Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment in their opposition to this. **We have attached their excellent submission with this newsletter for your information.**



Cr Miranda Korzy invited PNHA to give her a list of our priorities for the new Northern Beaches LEP.

We replied that we have many serious concerns about the state of Pittwater's natural environment and in our view the overarching requirement of a strong LEP is preservation of the local biodiversity.

Controls in the LEP that could help prevent loss of biodiversity are those on:

- ◆ floor space ratios, setbacks and other measures that would preserve tree canopy
- ◆ biodiversity corridors, waterways, riparian zones
- ◆ Endangered Ecological Communities, such as Coastal Upland Swamps, Littoral Rainforests, Spotted Gum Forest etc.

All of these controls need to be as strong as possible and tightly drafted so they can be defended in the NSW Land and Environment Court.

We also would like to see the inclusion of Character Statements in the LEP..

Finally, weed control is one of PNHA's major concerns but it is not possible to deal with this comprehensively in the LEP. However, implementation of planning controls in the new LEP that restrict or prevent planting of priority weed and other undesirable species in new developments would help.

4.Rezoning. PNHA also made a submission to the State Government's proposal to change the way amendments to Local Environment Plans are made. We believe that the proposed changes reduce the power of local councils and make it easier for developers to act in their own interests instead of the interests of the community.

5.Proposed closure of a public reserve next to 32 Watkins Rd Avalon Beach

Between numbers 32, and 34 and 36 Watkins Rd Avalon is a strip of Crown Land which runs up to the hill to meet Bangalley Head Reserve. The owner of 32 requested NBC close it as a road reserve. He wanted to buy the land to add to his property thus enabling subdivision. PNHA was among many objectors. Rob Stokes, as Minister for Active Transport and Member for Pittwater, told NBC he would not support such a sale. "The NSW Government does not need the proceeds from the sale of this land. There is much greater public value in retaining and improving this reserve for access for the community rather than selling the land for private development."

PNHA Grants:

Palmgrove Park Spotted Gum Forest Restoration, Avalon

We met this week with Toolijooa bush regeneration staff who will be preparing the site for planting. Areas between existing trees will be sprayed and prepared for planting tubestock of a variety plants in the Spotted Gum community. Students from Avalon Public School will be helping. This grant for \$5000 is from NBC.

Mona Vale Dunes; The final report has been submitted for the last Mona Vale Dunes project. This \$3500 grant from NBC funded weeding Asparagus Fern and Coastal Morning Glory in bush in quite good condition, much of which had been planted on a volunteer field day in 2006. PNHA contributed \$1000 for a total cost of \$4500.



Does NBC really recognise and value Pittwater's biodiversity?

We now have several new Councillors, following the elections last December .

PNHA Members have received the letter we wrote to all the Councillors, introducing them to PNHA. The letter pointed out the discrepancy between the high value given to the natural environment in council documents and the apparent lack of spending on maintaining natural areas. We received replies from Clrs Vince de Luca, and Miranda Korzy. We are awaiting a reply from Council staff.

We are alarmed at the neglected and weedy condition of many of our natural areas. We need members to speak up and support PNHA concerns by writing your own letters/emails to NBC, with photos. Please address your letters by email to council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au or a paper letter addressed to the CEO Ray Brownlee, PO Box 82 Manly NSW 1655 Australia. Include clear photos if you can. If you need weeds identified, email photos to pnhainfo@gmail.com for us to identify.

If PNHA and our community do nothing to convince NBC to help our natural environment, we have only ourselves to blame if it gets even more degraded, difficult and expensive to care for.

Some weeds to watch out for on roadsides, bushland, dunes, creeklines:

Weed photo	Type of plant	Locations
1.Large Leafed Privet	Big shrub/ small tree	Roadsides, gardens
2.Broadleafed Pepper	Big shrub/ small tree	Common in Newport
3.Ground Asparagus Fern	Ground cover, scrambler	Everywhere
4.Easter Cassia	Sbrub: yellow flowers in autumn	Mainly road sides, damp areas
5.Balloon Vine	Climber, balloon-like seed pods	Wet areas, near Bilarong Reserve, Wakehurst Parkway.
6.Morning Glory Two species	Climber, large purple/mauve flowers.	Narrabeen Creek, Mona Vale Dunes
7.Ludwigia peruviana	Medium shrub, large yellow flowers	Narrabeen Creek, WW Wetlands
8.Cockspur Coral Tree	Big shrub/ small tree	Mullet Creek, WW Wetlands
9.African Olive	Big shrub/ small tree	Avalon



1.Large-leafed Privet, flowers at Christmas, Newport



2. Broad-leafed Pepper, Newport



3. Ground Asparagus Fern, Mona Vale Dunes



4. Easter Cassia



5. Balloon Vine, Careel Bay



6. Morning Glory, Narrabeen Creek



7. Ludwigia, Narrabeen Creek



8. Cockspur Coral Tree, Warriewood Wetlands



9. African Olive, Avalon Golf Course road edge. Looks like a native shrub. Seeds spread by fruit-eating birds.



We recognise that COVID and the wet weather have prevented some weed management and encouraged weed growth but we consider that for several years the maintenance of the natural environment for biodiversity has been poorly funded compared with more spectacular infrastructure and new projects, such as concrete paths, new surf club buildings and so on.

The PNHA committee expects to resume quarterly meetings with NBC Environment staff this month.

PNHA Activities for 2022

Sunday Nature Walks on the third Sunday of the month, starting at 9am. Meeting place and details on booking. We welcome children with parents. Most of these walks are not suitable for strollers or wheelchairs.

May 15	Crown of Newport circuit - landscape, bushland, views through several Newport reserves.
June 19	Irrawong Track - plants and birds
July 17	Warriewood Wetland- birds
August 21	Chiltern Track - plants and birds
September 18	Waratahs and Grevillea caleyi - Terrey Hills
October 16	Roadside trees in Waterview Street Mona Vale

Please book for these by emailing pnhainfo@gmail.com

Rain = Turtle Road Trips!

Long-necked turtles (*Chelodina longicollis*) are freshwater turtles that live in dams, creeks, lakes and sometimes even brackish lagoons. Often - when it is rainy - the turtles will move from one body of water to another and their journey can take them through horse paddocks, backyards and across roads.



Unfortunately they are fairly slow-moving on land and they end up being hit by cars, bitten by pets or occasionally relocated to the ocean by well-meaning members of the public!

In our Sydney Wildlife Mobile Care Unit we have recently had an influx of eastern long-necked turtles with carapace fractures of varying severity, after being hit by cars as they attempt to cross the road to get to another water source.

The shell of a turtle is a bit like an exoskeleton - imagine that the carapace (top shell) is like a spine and ribs that have been flattened and fused. As such, a fracture of the carapace is tantamount to a broken bone in any other animal.

Carapace fractures can be tricky to fix as they need to be properly cleaned, debrided, reduced and stabilised and pain relief is essential. A fracture of the 'bridge' is very serious as it joins the carapace (top shell) and the plastron (bottom shell) and if the bridge has been compromised it can indicate internal injuries as well.

In the case of freshwater turtles being sucked down stormwater drains and ending up on beaches - should you find one, please contain the turtle and take a photo for identification before trying to relocate it. Freshwater turtles cannot tolerate salt water. Many well-meaning members of the public have put freshwater turtles in the sea and this is





This baby turtle was rescued from Mona Vale beach in 2017. Its neck is turned sideways to its right as it tries to retract its head. Heavy rain the previous day must have washed it down the drain from the golf club ponds. It was lucky to be found and returned to fresh water.

Autumn is Fungus season

Want to know more about Australian fungi?

An App for Iphone, **iFungi AU**, helps you identify fungi, as you enter characteristics such as colour, whether it has gills or pores, and so on. Tells you if it's edible, common and scientific names, season it appears, smell, habitat. Great photos and information. You can browse images, search by a name, do a Quiz. The app is not perfect though, quite often not leading to a definite identification. But the images and variety of fungi species is wonderful. For \$4.99 it's still worth having.

Two more Apps to explore:

<http://www.fungioz.com/fungioz-app.html>

<https://www.awe.gov.au/science-research/abrs/publications/cds/funkey-agarics>

detrimental to their survival. (A marine turtle has flippers and cannot retract its head or legs into its shell. Freshwater turtles have webbed 'claws' and *can* retract their heads and legs into their shells.)

For advice about any wildlife in need of rescuing, please contact your local wildlife rescue organisation.

In Sydney you can contact:

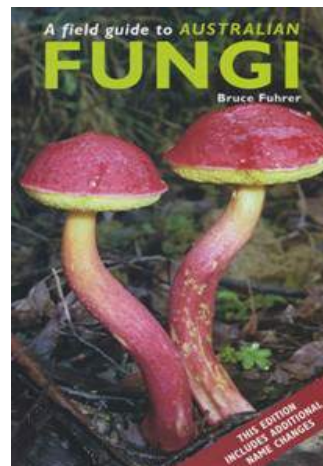
Sydney Wildlife Rescue, 9413 4300 (24hrs),

Australian Seabird Rescue 0438 862 676

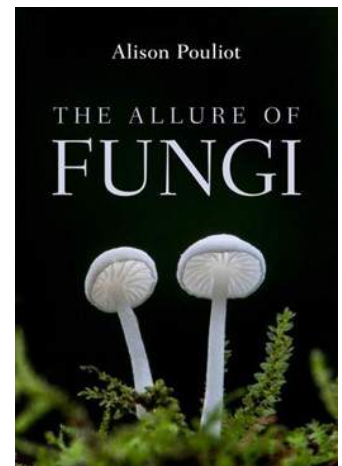
Taronga Wildlife Hospital 9978 4785

WIRES 1300 094 737

Lynleigh Grieg



A Field Guide to Australian Fungi - Bruce Fuhrer
Bloomings Books 2011.
Cost: \$40 -50.00



The Allure of Fungi - Alison Pouliot presents fungi through multiple perspectives – those of mycologists and ecologists, foragers and forayers, naturalists and farmers. CSIRO 2018.
Cost: about \$50.00

Membership of **Pittwater Natural Heritage Association Landcare Group** is open to all who share our aims of caring for the natural environment of the Pittwater area and working to enhance and protect it. You can find a Membership Application form on our website <http://pnha.org.au/join/> or contact us on pnhainfo@gmail.com for one to be sent to you.

Cost \$20 per year, \$10 unwaged.