

PNHA NEWS

Winter 2023 Issue 96

Pittwater Natural Heritage Association - thinking locally, acting locally

PNHA Update



Lizard Rock Petition

The visitor galleries were full of Northern Beaches people for the presentation of the petition to NSW Parliament, and Debate, on Thursday June 29 2023.

Our several local parliamentary representatives all spoke in strong support of the petition requesting that the development and destruction of the bushland be stopped. You can watch a video of the petition and the debate [here](#).

The future of the site is uncertain, but as the fire authorities oppose the development it cannot proceed for now.

PNHA submission: Northern Beaches Council's Tree Canopy Plan

We sent our submission to PNHA members. We believe adequate and dedicated financing is the key to achieving whatever else the Plan recommends.

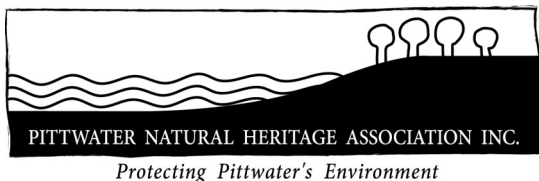
Report: Weeds Round Table July 21

About 30 people met to discuss what to do about the increase of weeds in the Northern Beaches area. Conny Harris organised this gathering at the Narrabeen Tramshed, attended by bush regenerators and other interested residents, and staff from the NBC Environment and Climate Change department whose presence and support we appreciate.

We voted to approach the NSW Government on the topic of the Biosecurity approach to weeds, which > p.2

**Pittwater Natural Heritage Association, PNHA (us) and
Pittwater Environmental Heritage Group, PEHG**

**What's the difference? Confused? You're not alone. We are negotiating with PEHG to
differentiate PNHA publicly from that group.**



PNHA is on Facebook Want to get in touch?

pnhainfo@gmail.com Follow us on Instagram

INSIDE: Membership Renewals, PNHA joins NCC, PNHA Walks: Birds and Bush on Mullet Creek, From the Crown to the Sea. Spotted Gum forest in Palmgrove Park Avalon, Noisy Miners, Foxscan and Fox Baiting, Tawny Frogmouths with Rat Lungworm, Invasive Species dedicated email.

by its legislation in 2015 replaced the old Noxious Weeds Act. The new approach focuses on managing new and emerging weeds, aiming to stop them becoming established. Of course that should be done, but that relegates weeds that are already considered out of control to a lower priority. We agreed that this approach is not suitable for urban bushland, where established weeds continue to spread, damaging native vegetation and our biodiversity. As well, this approach has reduced the legal powers of weed management staff to enforce control of weeds.

PNHA had recently requested NBC to recognise the Tuckeroo tree as a weed in this area, so we were pleased to learn that bush regeneration contractors are instructed to remove this tree from bushland reserves.

More about Weeds:

Councillor Miranda Korzy tabled a motion about weeds at the NBC meeting of May 23. Raising awareness and knowledge of weeds in the community, recruitment of bushcare volunteers and improvement of the NBC website weed information were some of the topics. PNHA addressed Council in support of her motion. A slightly amended motion was adopted and you can read it [here](#).

PNHA met with Miranda and NBC staff on August 3 to discuss actioning these ideas.

Conservation Zones Review

This is still ongoing. The council expects to receive feedback and advice from the Department of Planning and Environment, the authority with the final say about any proposed zoning changes, in the next month or two. Council anticipates that this process will, in many cases, resolve concerns flagged in earlier submissions. You can read the latest from Northern Beaches Council [here](#). **PNHA raised several issues, particularly with the methodology.**

PNHA Membership 2023-2024

It's time to renew your PNHA Membership, so you will soon receive an email asking for your renewal or letting you know if you are still financial. The membership form on our website has been out of action recently, so if you have renewed your membership and received no reply, please email us: pnhainfo@gmail.com.

Thank you very much if you have already renewed. Can you encourage a friend to join us?

We really appreciate and need our members' support



Nature Conservation Council
The voice for nature in NSW

PNHA Joins NSW NCC

PNHA has become a member group of the NSW Nature Conservation Council. NCC Member Groups are part of a vibrant democratic network of community environmental organisations. There are currently 173 Member Groups, acting as a collective Voice for Nature in NSW. Our PNHA values and work in our small and important Pittwater area are certainly aligned with those of NCC. More about NCC [here](#).



Neil Fifer Sydney, Aust Jul 2004

PNHA Walks: Birds and Bush along Mullet Creek Sunday June 25

We didn't see a Rose Robin as we hoped, but saw and heard lots of other birds appreciating the flowering Swamp Mahoganies. We were with guides who knew a lot of bird calls, and were good at spotting them. This is a great way to learn about birds.

We admired the great job the bush regenerators are doing along the creek near the Jim Revitt boardwalk below Irrawong Rd, remembering the terrible weeds of a few years ago.

Yellow-faced Honeyeaters were very active in the flowering swamp mahoganies.

Image: Neil Fifer



July 30: A guided PNHA walk on a lovely day through very different types of bushland in Attunga Reserve and Crown of Newport Reserve Newport. Above: view from top of Attunga Reserve. Right: down from the rainforest, back at Porter Reserve.

Don't miss [Spring Wildflowers and Birds on the Chiltern Track in Ingleside on August 27. Details \[HERE\]\(#\)](#) .

BUSHCARE FOCUS : Palmgrove Park Avalon

Palmgrove Park Avalon is a remnant of the Spotted Gum forest that was once widespread on the lower slopes of the Pittwater peninsula. This bushland's official name and forest type is **Pittwater and Wagstaffe Endangered Ecological Community**, endangered because so much has been cleared for suburban development. Canopy trees, smaller trees and shrubs, and ground layer plants make up this community. Though scattered remnant Spotted Gums remain on private land, there is little chance of seedlings surviving in gardens and lawns. More information [HERE](#).

A grant to PNHA from Council in 2021 funded revegetation of a section between Dress Circle Rd and Bellevue Rd. The tubestock planted there late in 2022 by students from Avalon Primary and bush regeneration contractors is flourishing. More tubestock was planted on National Tree Day on July 30 2023.

A new Bushcare group will now be working there from Saturday August 5, starting at 9am and working for up to three hours. Your help would be wonderful.

Bringing back the bush. During 2022 the incessant rain delayed the project as the site was a bog.

Below: before mulching, 4.8.2021

Below: 23.1.2023



Noisy Miners

A man was recently fined \$1000 for shooting a Noisy Miner in Terrey Hills last November. We can probably guess how he felt about this bird. However the bird *is* a protected native species.

But wait! It also has the status of a **Threatening Process**, meaning it seriously harms other birds, explained [here](#).

But that doesn't mean we are allowed to kill them at will. We may certainly feel like doing so because of their violent bully-



Grey Fantail

Image: Rod Warner

ing of smaller birds and the insistent begging calls of the fledglings.

They thrive in habitats that are open, with limited understorey, and along the edges of bigger woodland or forest patches. Our suburban gardens provide just the type of habitat they like. Their presence means we are unlikely to see Wrens, Thornbills, Robins and other Honeyeaters in our gardens.

Should we cull Noisy Miners? This article [discusses the pros and cons](#)

We'd all like Superb Wrens or a Grey Fantail in the garden. Habitat recreation over a wide landscape is needed, so we need to think about adapting many connected gardens, specially near bushland.

Smaller birds need places to feed, rest, nest and hide so include areas of dense native shrubs. You will be recreating the complicated

structure of bushland that Miners can't utilise.

Avoid those showy hybrid grevilleas and bottlebrushes around which Miners control territories.

[Here's a video](#) about Bird Friendly Gardening, from Birdlife Australia, with tips about how to make your garden into habitat for smaller native birds.

Try to get neighbours to do this also. It will be a long term project of great value to our natural environment. **Patience is needed.**



Noisy Miner, a native Honeyeater

Image : Rod Warnock



Male Superb Fairy Wren

Image:Neil Fifer

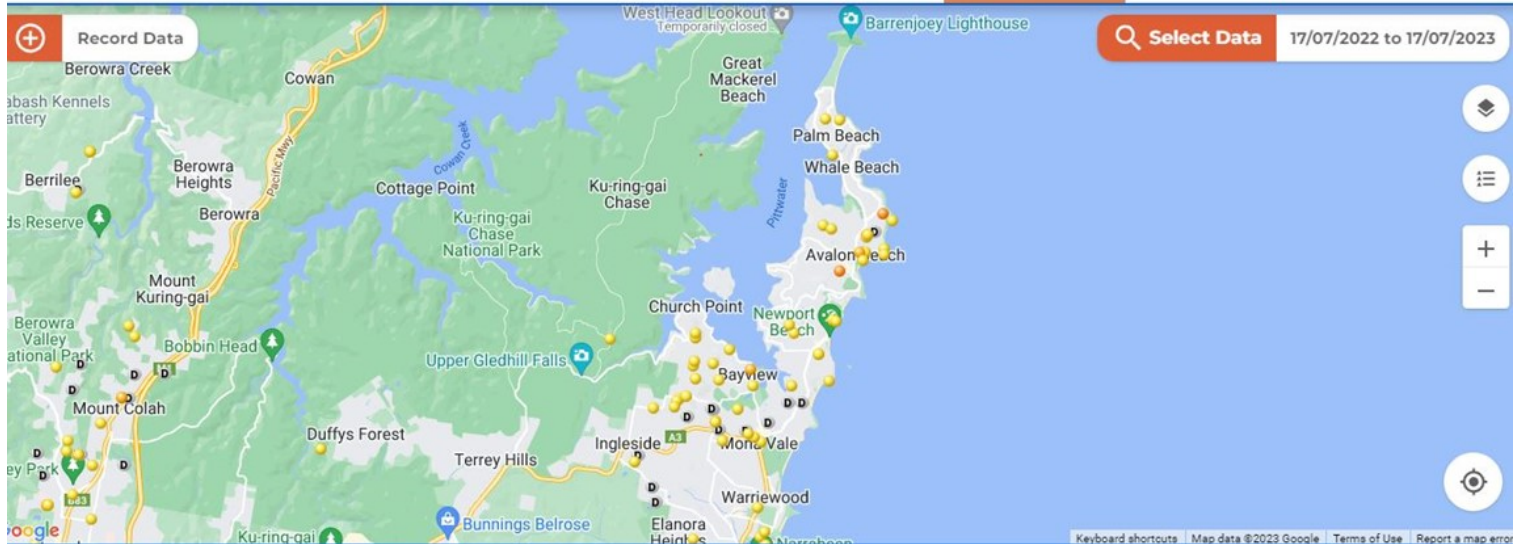
Have you seen a Fox in the Pittwater area?

There are plenty around, doing a lot of damage to our wildlife and chooks. To help control foxes, you can record sightings on the **Foxscan** app on your phone. How to get this app: <https://www.feralscan.org.au/foxscan/>

Recent recordings of fox sightings are shown on the map below, part of the Foxscan app.



Image: Pixabay



PNHA has just been notified of continuous and ongoing fox control using 1080 poison with ground baits and canid pest ejectors (CPE's) in Sydney Harbour National Park, Garigal National Park, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, and Lane Cove National Park. This is for the protection of threatened species of wildlife. As part of this program, baiting also occurs on North Head Sanctuary managed by Sydney Harbour Federation Trust and the Australian Institute of Police Management facility at North Head. This will occur during the period of 1 August 2023 – 31 January 2024

This Information from Kane Cleal, Assistant Project Officer Conservation Bush Recovery, Greater Sydney Branch, NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service. For general enquiries about 1080 contact Steve Parker on 0447 212 652.

What is a CPE? a Canid Pest Ejector. [See this Video](#) on how one works. Clever design, but not for the home garden.

Wildlife Rescue: Tawny Frogmouths and Rat Lungworm



Sydney Wildlife Rescue report they have recently had two poor Tawny frogmouths with suspected Rat Lungworm attend the Sydney Wildlife Rescue mobile care unit for vet examination. Each bird had paralysis of legs, were listless and could not fly. Both were found on the ground in the open during the day, totally defenceless.

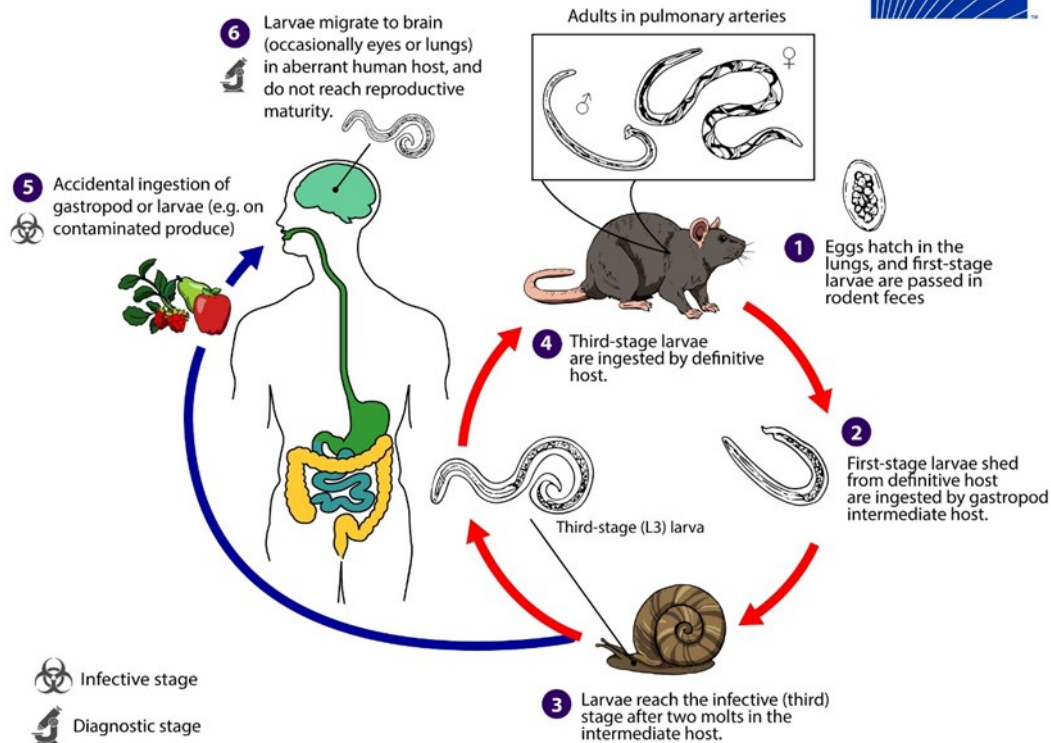
After the vets determined that the birds had rat lungworm they administered treatment with appropriate medication. The birds within a few days started to flap their wings, flutter on the ground but still could not fly. They have had a repeat vet visit and treatment every two weeks. They go home with the volunteer carer for feeding and home care.

One has been released, the other is in care at Sydney Wildlife Rescue rehabilitation facility at Waratah Park.

What is Rat Lungworm ?

Angiostrongylus cantonensis, the rat lungworm, occurs naturally in introduced black and Norway rats which can tolerate infection. It can damage the neural system in accidental mammalian and bird hosts. Native species are susceptible, with marsupials and flying-foxes appearing to be highly susceptible.

However, the infection pathway responsible for the high prevalence of infection in tawny frogmouths in the northern suburbs of Sydney has not been clearly elucidated. The relevance of snails and slugs in the diet of these birds has not been clarified. Free-living tawny frogmouths would seem to be at high risk of exposure to this infection as their natural diet comprises mainly invertebrates, including the intermediate host species of *A. cantonensis*.



Rat lungworm life cycle from: https://www.cdc.gov/dpdx/angiostrongyliasis_can/index.html

Rat lungworm disease is an extremely rare cause of meningitis in Australia. It is associated with eating infected snails and slugs. Most people make a full recovery but occasionally it can cause serious illness. Details [here](#)

Sydney Wildlife Rescue is a volunteer group that rescues, cares and rehabilitates wildlife. We have fundraised to purchase, set up and operate a mobile care unit. The unit is staffed by volunteers carers and vets who volunteer their time and services to treat wildlife patients. All treatments are free to registered carers.

We rely on donations to keep our services running. <https://www.sydneywildlife.org.au/>

Feral pests bothering you? Invasive species bugging you?

Use this new dedicated email: invasivespecies@northernbeaches.com.au to report weeds, foxes, rabbits or any other invasives species to Northern Beaches Council.

Let's hope action follows!

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.