

PNHANEWS

Autumn 2025 Issue 103

Pittwater Natural Heritage Association - thinking locally, acting locally

ACTIVITIES AND REPORTS

Ingleside fauna corridor and Fauna Crossings on Mona Vale Rd East

The fauna overpass and underpass are now in place and being used by fauna, as camera traps reveal. But unless bushland on either end is connected to these passes they will be useless as connections to bushland in the wider landscape. When the Ingleside land release was abandoned, its agreed fauna corridors were no longer recognised and protected. PNHA is determined the corridors must remain.



A Wallaby's view: Looking east across Mona Vale Rd

Our campaign to save land in Ingleside for a fauna corridor has gained welcome support over the past few months, and we are cautiously optimistic that more support is to come.

Since the completion of the fauna bridge and underpass on Mona Vale Road east, our group has been working to have the

INSIDE: Tree Management Policy, Avalon Golf Course bush regeneration grant, Companion Animals Act Review, Palmgrove Park planting day, Book Review: Field Guide to Marine Life, Native Wood Cockroach, Useful Insects: Giant Mosquito & Feather-legged Assassin Bug, Aerial Weed—Spanish Moss, Twining Guinea Flower & its fauna.



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bushland owned by the Dept of Planning on the western side of Mona Vale Road east, which adjoins the fauna crossings, rezoned to C2 conservation and added to Ingleside Chase Reserve so it will be permanently protected in public ownership.

We have met with staff from Northern Beaches Council's Environment and Open Space and Planning and Place departments as well as Jacqui Scruby, our Pittwater MP. They have all given us expressions of support, so we will be approaching Councillors about passing a resolution to take steps towards having the land incorporated into Ingleside Chase Reserve.

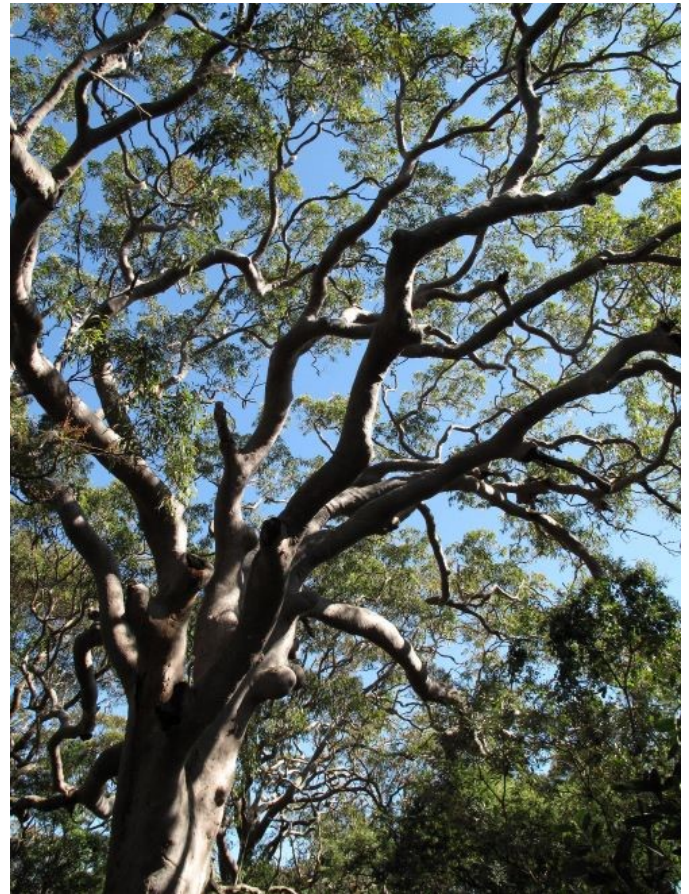
Draft Tree Management Plan—Northern Beaches Council

PNHA Members will have received our submission. A concern is the lack of protection for small trees, under 5m tall.

We propose setting up a “**Significant Junior Tree**” Category .

Right: Sydney Red Gum *Angophora costata* in Stapleton Park Avalon. Everyone's idea of a **Significant Tree**

Below: Scribbly Gum *Eucalyptus haemastoma* on a nature strip in Barrenjoey Rd, Avalon, planted at the request of a resident. This tree, **at less than 5m**, is not protected). Will it survive to be a significant tree?



Avalon Golf Course Bush Regeneration Grant

Our grant application for \$5000 to NBC was **successful!** and PNHA will add \$2000 to this bush regeneration project. Work is in the central area in the bushland in the best condition, with only scattered weeds, and will expand from there into weedier bush as funds allow.

Dragonfly Environmental contractors have started work. Included in the project will be recording fauna information for insectivorous bats, birds and possums and gliders, and invertebrates.

The golf course has remnant bushland with over 100 native species.

Companion Animals Act Review

We urge members and friends to write a submission to this review. **Closing date is May 4**

You can read the discussion paper about this review here: <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Review-of-the-Companion-Animals-Act-1998-Discussion-Paper-.pdf>

and write your own submission at this website: <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/companion-animals-act-review/>

You are welcome to get some ideas from our PNHA submission, below:

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this review. In line with the aims of Pittwater Natural Heritage Association our comments are restricted to preventing the harm done to wildlife by roaming cats and dogs.

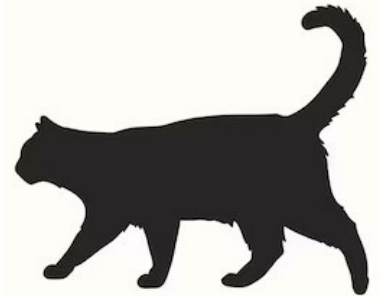
Rewriting the Companion Animals Act is essential. Its laxity has been a major stumbling block to the reform efforts our wildlife need for their protection ('NSW Invasive Species Management Review 2024', "Management of Cat Populations in NSW 2024").

All their research has shown that Councils, (the enforcement entities) need to be given the power to effectively hold pet owners accountable for the actions of their pets, and the current Companion Animals Act does not do this, particularly for cats.

Cats must be registered and microchipped, must be contained on the property of the owner, and there needs to be a limit to the number of cats allowed per property. Cats must be desexed except in special circumstances, as detailed in Canberra's cat policy. See: <https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/pets-and-wildlife/cats>

Off-leash dog areas should be fenced to keep loose dogs away from wildlife, roads and passersby. Councils should be obliged to enforce dog regulations. Councils that fail in this respect should be fined. Metrics might be number of dog wardens (1 per 1,000 dogs?). Number of fines issued (5 per day per warden?). Where unleashed dog areas have been allocated on beaches, wardens should see that dogs are restricted to those areas only and within any time limits laid down.

Councils should be able to levy fees on dog owners to pay for wardens and the maintenance of off-leash areas.



Palmgrove Park Avalon

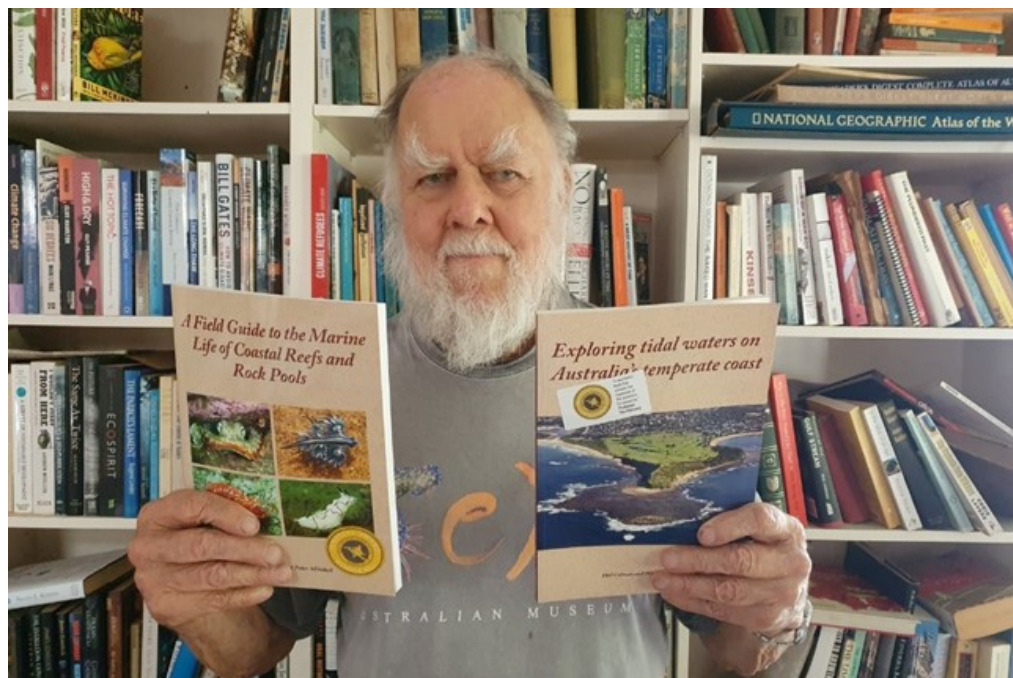
The Spotted Gum area planted with tubestock funded from our 2021 NBC grant is transforming the turf to bushland.

The bushcare group that now works there on the first Saturday morning of the month is extending the planted areas.

Our next work morning will be on Saturday morning April 5, 8.30.

We'll need some help to get all the plants in on that day, so if you can lend a hand please contact pnhainfo@gmail.com.

Book: A Field Guide to the Marine Life of Coastal Reefs and Rock Pools



Phil Colman and Peter Mitchell have published an expanded and updated version of their privately published book of several years ago.

Phil and the two books

Lisa Calder of Reefcare (Long Reef) sent us her review:

Have you ever walked along a rock shelf when the sea is at low tide and looked at all the seaweed and sea creatures and wondered how they survive both high and low tides?

Then wondered what is that shell moving? What is that? Want to know answers to all those questions and more? Well, now you can.

Phil Colman and Peter Mitchell have updated their first book "*Exploring tidal waters on Australia's temperate coast*" which they self-published in 2011 and sold out.

Now they have got together again with an even bigger and better second edition "*A Field Guide to the Marine Life of Coastal Reefs and Rock Pools*", being launched in 2025. This book will answer more of those questions you have walking on the inter tidal zone – What is that? Why is that happening? How do they survive low tide? Phil says of the second book "there are a lot more colour photos, it is fun and I believe more enjoyable and more humour than the first book" Read the full review [here](#) in interview with Phil Colman at his home February, 2025

Where to get this book? So far it's available on Amazon, Booktopia and Ebay for about \$26. Why it is not available in bookshops remains a mystery. **Phil has given PNHA several copies to sell to members. Our price is \$20 so contact us at pnhainfo@gmail.com if you would like a copy.**

Native Cockroaches

Strayed into an Avalon kitchen, this calm but confused native Wood Cockroach was relocated outside near some old logs. Home at last! Very ancient insects, the insect order Blattodea dates from the late Jurassic, before dinosaurs appeared. Important recyclers, and food for other fauna. Was ours later a Bandicoot's supper?

More: [Native cockroaches](#)



Two Useful Insects:

One: Giant Mosquito?

Don't kill it!

If it's about three times larger than other mosquitos and has some white on its legs, it's an insect to appreciate.

This mosquito doesn't want your blood. It gets all the protein it needs for laying eggs by feeding on the wrigglers of other mosquitoes. The Elephant Mosquito *Toxorhynchites speciosus* is its name, Toxo to its friends. Notice its long sucking mouthparts, not for biting you but for feeding on flowers. It helps a bit to limit the numbers of those other mozzies.



Toxo takes a rest on someone's knee



Left: Here Toxo hangs out with other wrigglers. They are always upside down when breathing at the surface.

Their breathing tubes are at the tail end.

Right: Toxo was often horizontal.

More great Toxo photos [here](#) in a very useful website: **Brisbane Insects**.



Two: Feather-legged Assassin Bug (*Ptilocnemus* species). It can kill Jumping Ants

Assassin bugs are a group of predacious insects that target other invertebrates for their food requirements. They belong to the family Reduviidae, whose species possess a strong spine-like proboscis they use to stab their prey. Some inject digestive enzymes into their victim, permitting an easier uptake of bodily fluids. Most are slow stealthy hunters but one group (Holoptilinae), feed primarily on ants, using some unusual ways to overcome them.

Adult species of *Ptilocnemus* possess a gland on their undersides (Trichome) from which they exude a liquid attractive to ants. When consumed, this paralyzes them, whereby the assassin bug can strike, piercing soft tissue of the ant with its proboscis. Another ploy used by these bugs (especially juveniles) to attract prey is by the constant waving of its feathery hind legs. Ants seeking food are attracted by this movement, but risk themselves becoming prey of the assassin bug.

Some species of *Ptilocnemus* are thought to specialise, preying only on jumping ants, (*Myrmecia* species), which they hunt by lying in wait along ant trails. Even small nymphs of these assassin bugs have been found quite



The bug's left feathery leg is tangled in spider web. Feathery antennas too.

capable of overcoming these ants.

In Avalon two nymphs were found (several days apart) inside our house, presumably having flown in accidentally or brought in on clothing. They were relocated outside, both still continually and alternately, waving their feathery back legs.

Gary Harris

Want to know more? [Australian Museum Assassin Bug information](#)

Aerial Weed

Spanish Moss *Tillandsia usneoides*

If you have this this curious plant in your garden please get rid of it. However much you like it, please. We must not let it take over our trees.

It is becoming an environmental weed because of its ability to suffocate native canopy trees. Native to the south-east United States to Argentina, it's now a weed of the north shore of Sydney, in and around Lismore and on Lord Howe Island.

Details of the threat it poses to certain native trees and forest types is available [here](#) and [here](#). At the entrance to Toongari Reserve from Avalon Parade, it is infesting a Brush Box, below.

Despite its weedy behaviour it is still able to be sold. Its seeds have feathery parachutes that enables them to float like dandelion seed which can spread up to approximately 250 m away from the nearest Spanish Moss. It is also spread by Noisy Miners and Currawongs collecting pieces for nesting material. We're hoping it will be listed as a local weed and no longer be sold in nurseries.



Spanish Moss is well established in this Brush Box, above. (That's a piece of a palm frond in the centre of the image.)

Right: just getting started on another tree.



Twining Guinea Flower *Hibbertia scandens*

A versatile and beautiful sun-loving hardy native climber with value for insects. Its large golden flowers from spring to autumn and attract native bees. Various tiny moth caterpillars feed on its foliage, causing minor disfigurement except for occasional plagues of day-flying Grapevine Moths. It is long lived, will cover a fence and is happy to be pruned as a ground cover.



Above: Carpenter Bee *Xylocopa* species. Blue Banded Bee also comes to these flowers.



Left: Teddy Bear Bee *Amegilla bombiformis* pauses for some preening before going to the flowers.



Left: This 1cm long moth is a *Pollanisis* species. *Hibbertia scandens* is its food plant.



After flowers are buzz pollinated by these and other native bees, these berries contain one seed each. If you're interested in dying fabric, the bright orange-yellow juice in these might be useful. Used as a ground cover, it still flowers happily.

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.