

Capacity building

Berrima Wildlife Reserve

Southern Highlands Landcare Network

LEP23-014-LLC04-2



Sth Highlands
Landcare
Network

Berrima Wildlife reserve - Restoring ecosystem functioning through weed control

The issue

Berrima Wildlife Reserve (BWR) consists of three plant community types including open forest, transition zone and riverbank/riparian zone. The riverbank/riparian zone area had large dense weed infestations, meaning access needed to be created just to be able to treat the weeds, and to carry out weed control assessments for flora and fauna impacts. The target weeds in this zone are:

- Woody weeds: Cotoneaster, Hawthorn, Pines (Juvenile only), Privet, Pyracantha, Willows.
- Vines and scramblers: Blackberry, Honeysuckle, Ivy, Wild Rose. Herbaceous weeds such as: Blackberry Nightshade, Evening Primrose, Fleabane, Hemlock, Ox Eyed Daisy, Spear Thistle, St John's Wort, Yellow Flag Iris.
- Grasses: Serrated Tussock.

The solution

In 2022 a funding opportunity arose to commence controlling Blackberry, through ongoing working bee's focussing on strategic spraying and brushing cutting access paths. In 2024 the dead Blackberry and Hemlock canes were cut down which has helped transition the control of Blackberry and Hemlock into a maintenance phase.

The weed control of invasive species at the reserve have been staged so as not to remove all the dense foliage that shelters small birds at once. Dense infestations are broken down into manageable chunks at different times of the year, and weed control is carried out through a combination of mechanical removal and targeted herbicide application.

The impact

The Key Objective of the project is to increase site biodiversity by restoring and maintaining the native vegetation and wildlife corridors at the reserve. As the weed threat is controlled, the area has been allowed to recover naturally, with the bushland revegetating through the native seed bank already present.

- Exotic/invasive plant species are being controlled and are no longer invading the bushland or riverbank.
- Native species are no longer being outcompeted for water, nutrients, sunlight, and space.
- Land is being restored so visitors can walk through, picnic, and enjoy it.
- Water Dragons, Platypus and Rakali habitat is being returned to it's natural state.
- A great regular meeting place and event for environmental education, networking, socialising and support.
- Attracts volunteers locally and across the shire.
- Easily accessible location with range of things to do to suit different volunteers.



Key facts

- The project is successfully controlling weed infestations of blackberry, hemlock and privet along the Wingecarribee River at Berrima
- Weed control is allowing native vegetation to regenerate and habitat for reptiles and mammals such as Water Dragons, Platypus and Rakali to be restored.