



## International Environmental Weed Foundation Annual Report – June 2015

*International Environmental Weed Foundation is pleased to present a report on our activities during the year from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015.*

### **International Environmental Weed Foundation (IEWF)**

#### **also known as Habitat Network and The Habitat**

IEWF continues to provide weed identification and weed management information and advice. Our website [www.iewf.org](http://www.iewf.org) is well used mostly by people looking for simple visual identification of common weeds and weed management information. We also respond to requests for plant identification, provide information related to ecological restoration and run ecological restoration projects. Projects such as **Habitat Network**, **The Habitat** community native plant nursery and food garden and the Hunter’s Hill small bird corridor continue to flourish. We have also embarked on a new small bird habitat corridor along Shrimpton’s Creek. Please see below for more detail.

IEWF manages the following websites and social media:

[www.iewf.org](http://www.iewf.org)

[www.habitatnetwork.org](http://www.habitatnetwork.org)

[www.rncalliance.org](http://www.rncalliance.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/HabitatNetwork>

We also utilise GoSeek/GoVolunteer website to attract new volunteers to The Habitat.

### **Habitat Network**

As usual under the Habitat Network banner we have continued to develop small bird habitat corridors and connections, network with our members, run workshops, made representations, hosted stalls, given talks, created a new brochure “Berry, berry bad plants”, continued to run **The Habitat** and a few other things. See below for more details.

“Habitat Network” and “The Habitat” were registered as our Trade Marks.

### **The Habitat - community native plant nursery and community food garden**

The Habitat has now been in operation for 2½ years having



*Sustainability workshop at The Habitat*

officially opened November 2012. The Habitat is run as a partnership between IEFW (as part of our Habitat Network project) and City of Ryde Council. City of Ryde is providing the land and water. Council has committed funding to improve drainage, provide a shelter and a small amenities block which will include a small office for our use, a toilet facing outwards for the park users and one for The Habitat facing into the nursery, and a storage room for sports clubs.

Our volunteers co-ordinate and run The Habitat on a day-to-day basis. Everyone working at The Habitat is a volunteer. All funds earned are put through the books of IEFW, are allocated for The Habitat and are used to cover running expenses and to expand the facilities. The food garden is an open area (no fences). We encourage the local community to visit, share in the produce from the open garden, volunteer, socialise, share their knowledge and, importantly, learn.

The Habitat volunteers grow local provenance native plants, using seed and cuttings collected from local bushland, and food plants. They also run 3 worm farms, undertake composting and maintain both the nursery and food garden. New garden beds and plants are constantly being added. This year our volunteers have ranged from 4 years of age to over 80. We have volunteers of many different nationalities and from all walks of life including, young mums, grand parents, people with mental health issues, young people (mostly doing activities for Duke of Edinburgh, Boys Brigade and university sustainability leadership and some with autism), work experience and people who just love to garden or socialise. The Habitat provides opportunities for us to engage with a broad audience to share knowledge relating to plants, habitat,



*A view of The Habitat showing educational posters on the fence*



*The Habitat now has 3 species of frogs resident. This one is a Peron's tree frog in the glasshouse.*

sustainable living, ecological restoration and more.

Plants are provided at no cost to local restoration projects undertaken by bushcare volunteers under the supervision of local Council Bushcare Officers. Plants are also provided at no cost to local schools to undertake a National Tree Day event with their students in July each year. Plants and bottles of worm juice are also sold to the public to help fund the facility.

Plants were provided to City of Ryde for the Australia Day citizen ceremony and for other citizenship ceremonies throughout the year.

**The Habitat statistics for financial year:**

	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
Total volunteer hours	2,921 hours	3228 hours
Total regular volunteers	34	46
Total casual volunteers	32	56
Recorded visitors	1,520	1334
Total plants out	3813	5246
Total out plus in stock at EOY	10274	11140

6 Workshops plus 4 other events were run by us or by City of Ryde and hosted at The Habitat. These events covered native bees, worm farming, composting, food gardening, a Ryde Environmental Education Network meeting, guided walks/talks along Shrimpton’s Creek and a Christmas gathering.

Our volunteers contributed their thoughts to Macquarie University’s Outdoor Living Project and also to the NSW Environmental Trust’s Community Food Initiatives research project run by R&S Muller Enterprises.

The Habitat won 3rd place in City of Ryde’s Garden Competition in the community garden section. And Pam Ward, a volunteer co-ordinator at The Habitat, received a Volunteer Recognition Award from City of Ryde.

**Shrimpton’s Creek Project**

Previously the volunteers from The Habitat have undertaken planting and weed control along Shrimpton’s Creek close to the nursery. This year we produced a formal plan for a small bird habitat corridor along Shrimpton’s Creek with the aim of engaging all neighbours backing onto the reserves along Shrimpton’s Creek. To help fund the production of printed material for this project we received \$1,100 from Greater Sydney Local Land Services. For the next financial year we will commence door knocking, distributing information and plants and organise planting events to create small bird native habitat connections along the creekline.



**IEWF Activities**

**Greenwood Park Bush Regeneration**

Johnson Controls donated funds to IEWF, as they have done for the previous 4 years. These funds were used to employ professional bush regeneration company National Trust to undertake invasive plant control at Greenwood Park. The staff from Johnson Controls also undertook some supervised weeding and planting activities at Greenwood Park.

*IEWF activities continued on next page*

*IEWF Activities Cont.*

## **Grants**

IEWF applied for and won funding from the Greater Sydney Local Land Services to produce printed material for the Shrimpton's Creek small bird habitat corridor project. Thank you GSLLS.

We supported Hunter's Hill Council and St Ignatius College in applying for grants.

Bird survey information from the Hunter's Hill small bird habitat corridor project was provided last year as baseline data for a combined Parramatta River Councils grant project called "Native habitat recovery in the Parramatta River catchment". A new report "Parramatta River Catchment Native Habitats and Fauna" was released in June 2015 as part of this project.

## **Greater Sydney Landcare Network (GSLN)**

IEWF is still involved with this new umbrella network which aims to provide support, leverage funding for big picture projects and foster closer links between landcare and bushcare groups across the Greater Sydney area. The organisation is now incorporated, won funding from 4 grants and is running projects, including Source to Sea events, mobile apps and youth engagement. See [greatersydneylandcare.org](http://greatersydneylandcare.org) for more information.

The IEWF representative is also now representing GSLN on the Landcare NSW Council. This is also a good opportunity to promote our projects across NSW.

## **Bushland and Environment Advisory Committee (BEAC) City of Ryde , Bushland Management Committee (Hunter's Hill) and lobbying**

IEWF continues to be represented on these 2 committees. The Biodiversity Plan for Ryde is now in draft form with Council. The committee is awaiting its turn to comment.

Both committees discussed and made recommendations for submissions related to RFS 10/50 rule and flying fox management. IEWF also made independent submissions on both issues as well as the Draft Boronia Park Plan of Management, Draft Macquarie Park DCP in relation to habitat corridors and the Federal Government's inquiry into Environmental Organisations.

IEWF also contributed to the NSW Resource Commission's review of weed management in NSW.

## **Promotions, events and workshops**

The Habitat and Habitat Network were promoted at stalls that we ran at West Ryde Fair, Moocooboola Festival in Hunter's Hill, Granny Smith Festival in Eastwood organised by City of Ryde, Riding For the Disabled Fun Day and at a couple of social inclusion network expos.

Habitat workshops were run for Loreto Normanhurst Girls High School's Bushcare Day and Lane Cove River Catchment Day at St Ignatius College.

A presentation, "The Habitat and Creating Habitat", was given for Cultivate NSW at Ryde Tafe and at The Great Green Gardening Event at Macquarie University. We presented our Shrimpton's Creek project at the Bushcare Forum hosted by Greater Sydney Local Land Services, and we attended an AABR event "Rebuilding ecosystems – what are the principles?" giving us an additional opportunity to network and distribute information.

An IEFW representative regularly attended the Ryde Environment Education Network (REEN) meetings and we provided on-site advice on habitat plantings to West Ryde Public School, Ryde Public School and St Ignatius College and email advice to Mount Victoria Public School in the Blue Mountains.

Permission was given for our Habitat Haven poster to be used as the basis of promotions for other habitat projects including how to plant habitat pages in the “Garden Escapees & Other Weeds of Bushland & Reserves” Mid-North Coast edition (11,000 copies printed) and an on-site sign at [Mt Gravatt Conservation Reserve](#) . We also gave permission for our YouTube Echidna videos to be used in a story for a science news program called Daily Planet on Discovery Channel in Canada.

Two of our volunteers also helped at the Bushcare stand at the Retirement and Lifestyle Expo stall which gave us an opportunity to discuss habitat corridors amongst other things. Our brochures and a representative were present at an event entitled “Bringing Life Together – Our Living River”, and we contributed an article to the AABR newsletter on Bog Restoration for habitat in Ireland.

### **Birdlife Australia - Birds in Schools Program**

Last year IEFW introduced the Birdlife Australia project coordinator to our key contacts within several local schools. This year several of the schools have developed habitat plans. One of our representatives visited Ryde Primary School to advise on the implementation of their plan. Birdlife Australia bought plants at a discounted rate from The Habitat and provided these to a number of schools for planting.

### **Hunter’s Hill Small Bird Corridor - success**

IEFW, as part of the Habitat Network project, continued working with Hunter’s Hill Council on the Hunter’s Hill small bird corridor project, which extends from the top of Tarban Creek and around the waterfront passing through Riverglade Reserve and Betts Park through to Gladesville Hospital.

Within the small bird corridor are a number of volunteer bushcare groups of which 2 are led by our volunteers in partnership with National Parks and Hunter’s Hill Council. These 2 groups are known as Bedlam Bay Bushcare and Tarban Bridge Bushcare.

Activities this year, as for last year, included weeding and in-fill planting to strengthen habitat island connections. In December one of the planted habitat islands was used by Superb fairy wrens as a nest site and small birds have been seen using other planted islands of habitat.

### **Hunter’s Hill Grant Project—Bird Surveys**

In December 2013, March 2014, November 2014 and March 2015 IEFW undertook bird surveys for Hunter’s Hill Council as part of their NSW Environmental Trust grant project entitled “Restoring EECs along the Lane Cove River Estuary”. With the help of a very knowledgeable local young man, Max, we surveyed 7 locations in Buffalo Creek, Boronia Park and Ferdinand Street Reserve on each occasion. We will do similar surveys for 1 more year to monitor changes resulting from bush regeneration works around these sites.

## Online updates and promotions

Three websites [www.iewf.org](http://www.iewf.org), [www.habitatnetwork.org](http://www.habitatnetwork.org) and [www.rncalliance.org](http://www.rncalliance.org) have continued to be maintained and enhanced by our volunteers. IEWF has also continued to expand the Habitat Network YouTube channel.

Please have a look at the Activities photos on [www.habitatnetwork.org](http://www.habitatnetwork.org) to view progress and the pictorial history of our various projects.

Google Adwords are very kindly continuing to sponsor the promotion of all of 3 websites which helps to maintain and build on visitor numbers to these websites.

The [Habitat Network Facebook](#) page is still very popular as we engage followers with local native flora and fauna photos from our seed and cutting collection outings for The Habitat twice a week, and other photos and snippets of information relating to habitat.

## Education materials

All IEWF brochures, posters and information sheets are available for use from: [www.habitatnetwork.org/resources.htm](http://www.habitatnetwork.org/resources.htm) and from <http://www.iewf.org/resources.htm>.

Brochures are regularly utilised by other environmental groups and Councils. Permission to use our habitat haven poster was granted to the Habitat Stepping Stones project being coordinated by Macquarie University. See also Promotions on page 4.

A new brochure “Berry, berry bad plants” was produced and distributed.

## Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife Private Land Conservation Grant

A grant for ecological restoration on the land owned by Bev & John Debrincat (both Directors of IEWF) was run for 2 consecutive 3 year periods (ending June 2014). The property is at Delicate Nobby, Crescent Head, NSW and is a strategic habitat link between Hat Head and Limeburner’s Creek National Parks and also the newly recognised Goolawah National Park. Even though grant funding is not available this year work has continued (paid for by the owners) on the property to manage weed invasion and to promote natural regeneration and biodiversity.



*Hunter’s Hill small bird native habitat corridor. This island of native plants is being used as a nesting site by superb fairy wrens - December 2014. The Hakea sericea to the centre of the photo provided sufficient protection for the nest. This island is next to a main road and work site for bridge repair works.*