



## International Environmental Weed Foundation Annual Report – June 2023



*International Environmental Weed Foundation is pleased to present a report covering activities for year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.*

### **International Environmental Weed Foundation (IEWF) trading as Habitat Network and The Habitat**

This has been an unusual year weather-wise. We have gone from floods in 2022 to almost no rain in 2023. In general I think our native plants are a bit confused and have been flowering at unusual times. For example the *Boronia ledifolia* that normally flowers in May in the Field Of Mars Reserve has waited until July to flower. Possibly as a result of these different conditions we have experienced less seed available to collect and difficulty in germinating a number of different plants from seed as well as convincing our cuttings that they need to grow and so the number of plants we are carrying in the nursery is down by about 3,000 at the end of June 2023 compared to same time last year. However we are still having a good throughput of plants out into the wider community including schools and bushcare groups via The Habitat, see stats on page 2.

Our habitat corridor projects and promotions continue to expand with plantings (and weeding) and talks / workshops raising awareness. We look forward to continuing our work on these long into the future.

We have kept our websites up-to-date and remained active on social media. Check out:

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

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

<https://www.facebook.com/HabitatNetwork> and also HabitatNetwork on Instagram.

The Google AdWords grant is still helping to promote our Habitat Network website.

And as usual we have continued to support Councils and environment groups from far and wide in delivering talks and workshops on our favourite topic 'Small bird habitat corridors and connections'.

Also our Executive Director, Bev Debrincat, received the Greater Sydney Individual Landcarer of the Year Award in June 2023 for her ongoing work with IEWF, Habitat Network, The Habitat, Greater Sydney Landcare, Landcare NSW, and local landcare, bushcare and environmental groups and projects. Well done Bev and to all who support our many initiatives and projects. Its an award we can all be proud of!

Bev receiving award from Trish Doyle MP Member for Blue Mountains - photo courtesy GSLLS



## The Habitat - community plant nursery and food garden

Post-COVID we have settled back into our normal routines. We have a number of volunteers from various walks of life including young people doing their Duke of Edinburgh Award and some with disabilities that attend with their carers. We still have not seen the return of some of our regular daycare visitors or Council workshops hosted at The Habitat.

On a very positive note we have some volunteers who have been working with us since 2012-2013 some regularly and some as time permits—these include obviously Bev Debrincat and Pam Ward (who coordinate The Habitat) and also David Duval and Trevor Green. Many of the volunteers from the early days continue to visit and support us in other ways. Thank you!! We also thank, for their on-going support: Bev’s and Pam’s families; the Directors and Corporate Members of IEWF; and the 40 volunteers who worked with us at The Habitat this past year.

The Santa Rosa Park section of the Shrimptons Creek habitat corridor is looking fantastic thanks to Steve Holmes and other volunteers from The Habitat. Steve still continues to put in many hours every week keeping the weeds out of the



Peron’s tree frog at The Habitat (1 of 5 frog species found there)

pristine areas, planting to expand the habitat values and gradually expanding the area worked. The Habitat has bought a Streamwatch Alert Kit for monitoring the water health of Shrimpton’s Creek and after completing training now undertakes monthly testing.

As usual The Habitat provided 50 plants free of charge to a number of local schools for National Tree Day. We gave 20 plants at no cost to local bushcare groups whenever they visited throughout the year. And we continued another tradition (since 2015) of providing trees in tubes and foliage for the annual Parliamentary Friends of Landcare event at NSW Parliament House.

### The Habitat statistics by financial year:

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Total volunteer hours	4337	4554	3612	4094
Recorded visitors	2260	2617	1815	1579
Total plants out (sold, donated or planted)	6083	6865	9201	7796
Total out plus in-stock at EOY	9635	12583	14550	11457

We thank all of our volunteers for their support, especially our core team Bev, Pam, Penny, Jenny and Steve.

## Hunters Hill Small Bird Corridor and Lower Parramatta River Habitat Corridor

Hunters Hill Council and Habitat Network have established a 9km habitat corridor for small native birds across Hunters Hill Municipality. This corridor is being expanded into a network of habitat criss-crossing public and private lands.

Please see our websites for a full write up of this project and especially last years annual report. Annual reports can be found at: <https://iewf.org/about.htm>. A detailed write up of the project from 2008 to 2020 can be found at: [https://www.habitatnetwork.org/HH\\_Small\\_Bird\\_Corridor\\_2020-01.pdf](https://www.habitatnetwork.org/HH_Small_Bird_Corridor_2020-01.pdf)

For the period 2021 to 2023 this project has been enhanced by a DPIE Coastal and Estuary Grant for \$76,000. See <https://www.huntershill.nsw.gov.au/biodiversity/>, which has continued to fund bush regeneration throughout the corridor. The bushcare groups within the corridor continued to improve the biodiversity in their bushland patches through weeding and some planting. Hunters Hill Council also led a National Tree Day planting at Riverglade Reserve in July 2022.

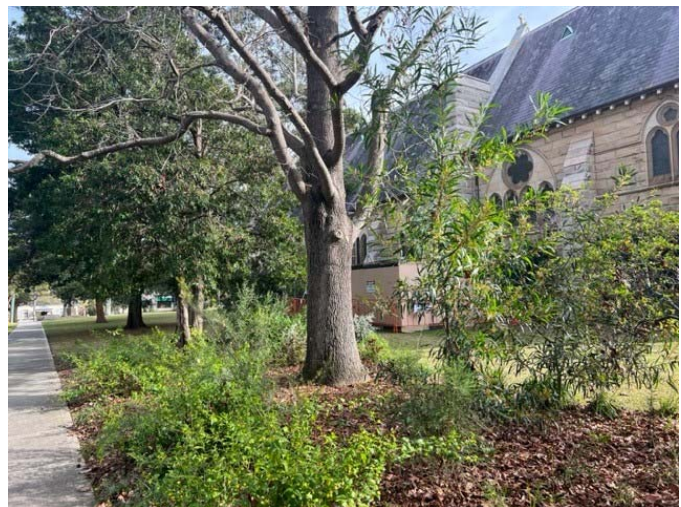
Jacqui from Hunters Hill Council and Bev from Habitat Network have focused on community engagement. Between us we door-knocked close to 200 homes and businesses and letterboxed an additional 50 homes. We talked about the network of habitat we are creating across Hunters Hill Municipality, the work being done on public land and how they (as private land owners) can help by planting some native habitat in their own gardens. Written information was also provided about the project along with an invitation to a free workshop on how to plant small bird habitat.

This coming Spring we plan to door knock again and this time offer each property a *Melaleuca lineariifolia*. Melaleucas are fantastic habitat connector plants as they have a dense canopy which offers protection to small birds when they have to travel between bushland remnants.

At Moocooboola, held in August 2023, Hunters Hill Council with our assistance gave out about 100 *Melaleuca lineariifolia* and we explained to the community the benefits of a connected network of habitat and how they can help.

A talk and workshop entitled 'Small bird habitat corridors and connections' was presented to the community at the local Hunters Hill Anglican Church hall in March 2023. Thank you to Reverend Michael for the use of the hall and for showing the group his community's wonderful habitat planting, which is within the network of habitat we are creating. See photos on this page.

This project was also promoted as part of the National Landcare Conference field trip to Kellys Bush in August 2022. It was mentioned in North Sydney Council's summer 2022 edition of its Bushcare News. And will continue to be promoted when the video, being produced by North Sydney Council Bushcare about this field trip, is released later in 2023. See more detail under Promotions.



Above 2023-08 Habitat planting at Hunters Hill Anglican Church. Below planted October 2021



## Shrimptons Creek small bird habitat corridor (2.8 km)

This is a narrow corridor of bushland and parkland extending along Shrimptons Creek in Ryde from Quarry Road, through 7 parks and reserves, down to Macquarie Centre (a large shopping complex built over the creek). Our project aims to improve the biodiversity and habitat connectivity along this creekline. It has many and varied issues which gives this project some distinct challenges. One of the major issues currently is the extensive high-rise residential and business developments taking place between Epping Road and Macquarie Centre which are chipping away at the habitat.

For maps and more details please see our previous annual reports on <https://iewf.org/about.htm> and [http://www.habitatnetwork.org/Shrimptons\\_Creek\\_Corridor.htm](http://www.habitatnetwork.org/Shrimptons_Creek_Corridor.htm)

This past year has seen bush regeneration and biodiversity enhancement work continue along Shrimpton's Creek. Our volunteers from The Habitat concentrated on Santa Rosa Park, which is near The Habitat nursery and garden and also on the RMS site near Epping Road. City of Ryde bushcare continued working in Greenwood Park. National Tree Day (NTD) plantings (organised by City of Ryde) took place again in ELS Hall Park. This is the 3rd year of NTD plantings and the area is looking great.



National Tree Day planting extension August 2023 - July 2022 plantings are behind this fresh planting.

Between Epping Road and Macquarie Centre existing restored native plant areas are growing well in amongst a number of development sites, including that of a new bridge. One development cleared out the weedy habitat being used by the remaining small bird population (White-browed scrubwrens) and replanted with natives. This area looks like it will provide habitat in the future but in the meantime it doesn't offer any protection for the birds. Another development, redeveloped the walking path, and between the path and the building replanted with lawn

to be mown and hybrid and non local natives - this was an opportunity lost to improve the endemic native habitat. The small family of scrubwrens is hanging on in amongst this very noisy and constantly changing landscape having moved to a less well protected area. Many of the larger birds have simply moved out.



One of many new developments—this one planted lawn between the building and the bush.

The small family of fairy wrens around the RMS site seem to be happy enough however the size of the population is not growing due to need to connect with other family groups. As the habitat values are improved some new birds are making an appearance in Santa Rosa Park. A pair of Eastern rosellas and Buff-banded rails have been seen recently.

## Promotions, events and workshops

We continued to work with Greater Sydney Landcare and Landcare NSW and continue to support the bushland committees of both City of Ryde Council and Hunters Hill Council.

We were involved in 2 events with Woollahra Council - an online talk and an in-garden workshop for the community. We also delivered talks and / or workshops for Hunters Hill Council, City of Ryde Council at Gladesville Library, Erskineville Small Bird Project and Parramatta Council.

On a very wet afternoon in August 2022 we participated in a field trip to Kellys Bush in Hunters Hill as part of the National Landcare Conference. North Sydney Council Bushcare organised this activity. Kellys Bush volunteers took some of the participants for a short bushwalk and told them about its interesting history. Jacqui from Hunters Hill Council and Bev from Habitat Network, delivered an informal talk about the Hunters Hill small bird habitat corridor and network project and discussed how this is complemented by the work being done at Kelly's Bush. We had a captive audience on the bus as we took shelter from the torrential rain. The talks were all recorded and a video is being produced by North Sydney Council for release later in 2023.

Stalls were the usual success at Moocooboola with Hunters Hill Council, and Granny Smith Festival and Sustainability Fair with City of Ryde Council. The Granny Smith event was back to full swing for the first time since covid. It is always good to engage with the community at these events even though for us the Ryde events are getting quite expensive.

Brochures have been distributed by other organisations at various locations including Liverpool Fair, Hawkesbury Fair, National Landcare Conference and by Sydney Metropolitan Wildlife on their numerous stalls, they are also distributed by us from The Habitat, at our stalls and via regional landcare groups.

As usual we provided free plants to a number of schools for National Tree Day and continue to provide plants to bushcare groups. We consulted about native plantings and food gardens, on-site, with several schools, including West Ryde Public School and Domremy College.

Our websites have been kept up-to-date and we attempt to post on our HabitatNetwork Facebook and Instagram pages at least weekly.

To see photos of more activities please visit our activities photos page:

<https://www.habitatnetwork.org/PhotoPages/ActivitiesPhotos.htm>



Stall at Sustainability Fair in June 2023 at Ryde Park