



mambara

The Aboriginal Darug name for
Geebung Tree (*Persoonia* sp)

Celebrating environmental volunteering, biodiversity and the science of what we do

After the presentation by Chairman of the Sydney Fungal Studies Group, Ray Kearney, delegates attending the SMCMA Community Forum at the Epping Club on May 21 were left in no doubt "fun" was a huge part of "fungi".

The SMCMA hosts an annual Community Forum to acknowledge and appreciate the work and commitment of the 6,000 people who participate in regular Bushcare and Landcare groups across Sydney.

The SMCMA believes this effort should be recognised and championed. Even though volunteers don't expect a "thank you" – most appreciate knowing their work is valued.

This year the Community Forum included the 2011 SMCMA Regional Environmental Awards. Compere for both events was ABC-TV science reporter, Bernie Hobbs.

Macquarie University Emeritus Professor Andrew Beattie launched the Forum with an inspiring presentation on "Biodiversity: Australia's Living Wealth". Presentations from Wolli Creek "Birdos" convenor, Dorothy Luther and Wallalong Crescent streetcare convenor, Bill Jones were equally well received.



Right: Chairman of the Sydney Fungal Studies Group, Ray Kearney, bestowing magic on the mushrooms and other mycological treasures of Sydney. His "patch" for three decades of study is the Lane Cove Bushland Park near Gore Hill.

Who knew fungus could be so much fun?



There's a lot happening in our Backyard

This World Environment Day — June 5, Australia's 56 Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions are joining forces for the first time to deliver a communication theme with the message: "There's a lot happening in our backyard". The SMCMA Community Forum and Regional Environmental Awards featured in this Mambara give a snapshot that proves there is indeed "a lot happening in our backyard".



The 56 Natural Resource Management regions across Australia.





Out & About

at the community forum

Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority

2011 Regional Environment Awards and Community Forum

The SMCMA is one of 13 NSW Catchment Management Authorities and one of Australia's 56 natural resource management regions.

Winners from the SMCMA Regional Environmental Awards have been entered into the NSW State Landcare Awards. While Sydney groups and individuals carry out natural resource management in an urban context, their challenges and successes can be shared with collegiate groups from across NSW and Australia.

Congratulations to all entrants and category winners of the 2011 Regional Environment Awards. Results are:

Innovation Award

Joint Winners:

Sydney Fungal Studies Group and the Habitat Network

This award was instigated by the SMCMA following its 2010 Community Forum. The award recognises the innovative approaches by Bushcare or other community groups who engage more people in their work, or who have demonstrated new approaches to issues.

All nominees across the four categories were considered by the judges for this award.

The **Sydney Fungal Studies Group** was honoured for three decades of work identifying, promoting and protecting the endangered fungal communities in the Lane Cove Bushland Park near Gore Hill. Their publications are a valued resource for bush regenerators and play a key role in expanding awareness of the mycological treasures of Sydney.

The **Ryde – Hunters Hill based Habitat Network** is a community initiative that works to provide habitat advice and reconnect people with native habitats to enrich our environment and our community.

Education Environment Award

Highly Commended:

Jasper Road Public School (Baulkham Hills)

Jasper Road Public School (2009 winners) has been highly commended by the judges. Their environmental program commenced in 1991 with the establishment of a shade house. A senior group of students who named themselves – 'Arbors' manage this and are actively involved in all aspects of the school's environmental program, including streamwatch activities, tree planting and conducting energy, water and waste audits.

Winner:

Narrabeen Lakes Public School

Narrabeen Lakes Public School has a whole-of-school commitment to environmental education and action to improve the biodiversity and sustainability of their school grounds and local area. They have established a bush regeneration project near Narrabeen Lagoon, planted local native species for bandicoot habitat, are developing a native grasses seed bank and have a garden club, producing vegetables for sale. They promote their eco-activities to the general community and participate in local environmental activities.



ABOVE: The Welcome to Country was given by Uncle Greg Simms. He is a western Sydney elder and an artist. He makes artefacts: shields, clubs, boomerangs and Aboriginal weapons and tools using traditional methods learnt from his father. He decorates these items and paints on canvass. He is an engaging story-teller.



ABOVE: Delegates anticipating the start of the 2011 SMCMA Community Forum and Regional Award. The event was attended by some 110 bushcare volunteers from across Sydney. The Community Forum is an annual event and the Regional Awards are held every two years. Winners from the four categories are eligible to enter the NSW State Landcare Awards to be held in Parkes in September.

BELOW: Greenway Bushcare: Jennifer Fernandez and Bronte Gully Bushcare: Stefan Gawronski.



ABOVE: Habitat Network: Raymond Horsey with Wallalong Weeders Bushcare Coordinator, Margarita Clayton.

Out & About

at the Regional Awards



LEFT: Winners of all five categories at the SMCMA Regional Environmental Awards.

ABOVE: Return of the Mermaids project: Malcolm Fisher is presented with the Community Group Environmental Award by SMCMA Board member Dedee Woodside.



ABOVE: Landcare Australia's Sara Dupressoir (far left) presented the \$2500 Urban Landcare Award to the Cooks River Valley Association members (Chris Bartlett, Gayle Adams, Liz Miller and Peter Munro). They were congratulated by SMCMA Chairman Philip Sansom and ABC science reporter, Bernie Hobbs.

Aboriginal Environment Award Winner:

The Towra Team

Comprised of young La Perouse Aboriginal community members. With the initiative and leadership of NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service officer and community leader, Dean Kelly, the Towra Team have been working as National Parks trainees based at Kamay Botany Bay National Park (KBBNP). The Towra Team were involved in the restoration of the "Meeting Place" at KBBNP, weeding and planting back the original vegetation of the area as well as other sites around the Park. The team members are working towards certificate qualifications in conservation and land management.

Community Group Environment Award Highly Commended:

Lilli Pilli Reserve Bushcare Group (Sutherland)

Established 15 years ago this group has succeeded in having their "patch" of bushland recognised as an Endangered Ecological Community - one the few remnants of Littoral Rainforest in all of Sydney. They have published several booklets about the Reserve and its plants.

Winner:

**Save Manly Dam Catchment Committee
- "Return of the Mermaids" project**

There are some special places in Sydney's bushland and Mermaid Pool and its surrounds at Manly Vale is one of them. The Save Manly Dam Committee have succeeded in transforming this hidden, polluted rubbish dump. The group began work on the project in 2002 and their restoration story - their persistence, multi-pronged approach and engagement of the community, has lead to the "Return of the Mermaids".

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Australian Government



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Regional Environmental Awards



Urban Landcare Award

This award is sponsored by Landcare Australia Limited and donated \$2500 prize money.

Highly Commended:

The Habitat Network
[Joint winners of the Innovation Award]

Winner:

Cooks River Valley Association (CRVA)

The Urban Landcare Award, as well as awarding great work 'on-ground' also recognises the importance of informing and engaging the community – the CRVA has worked at all levels – engaging everyone from politicians to local school communities to work towards a common objective of improving the health of the Cooks River including water quality, state of the riverbed and flora and fauna. The results are now starting to show – it is inspiring to see that even in the most densely populated, oldest suburbs of Sydney – the natural environment and its restoration – is of vital importance to the community.

Traditional Toolmaking

A traditional toolmaking workshop on the tranquil banks of Lake Parramatta in April transported participants back to a time when people skilfully crafted their tools using materials readily available in the natural environment.

Workshop participants spent five hours creating traditional Aboriginal fishing spears under the guidance of Boolarng Nangamai artisan, Steve Russell. Boolarng Nangamai means "together dreaming" and the Gerringong-based group of artists and crafts people is dedicated to keeping Aboriginal culture alive.

The SMCMA hosted the toolmaking workshop highlight the way Aboriginal people lived and worked in harmony with their natural environment.

Soaking in the warm autumn sun by the calm water of Lake Parramatta many people made comments that it was easy to imagine what it might have been like living a traditional lifestyle using their spears to catch fresh fish for their meals.

Last year the SMCMA conducted two highly successful workshops focussing on traditional weaving with participants crafting ornaments and fishing nets.

L-R: SMCMA Indigenous Community Support Officer, Margaret Bottrell; Boolarng Nangamai artisan and workshop leader, Steve Russell, Yvonne Kaiserglass, Sunia Lesumo, Tony Lonsdale and Aleshia Lonsdale.



As part of another project the SMCMA is supporting the Parramatta Park Trust to construct the Burrumattagal Aboriginal landscape trail. Community planting days have resulted in 200 grasses, shrubs and trees being established along the trail which is part of establishing a vegetation corridor along a creek flowing to the Parramatta River.

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