

Community Native Plant Nursery
&
Community Garden

Santa Rosa Park, Ryde

Procedures

April 2010

Updated: May 2010

Updated: December 2010

*Written by: Bev Debrincat, International Environmental Weed Foundation (IEWF)
and Habitat Network*

Co-authors: Pam Ward (Ryde – Hunter’s Hill Flora & Fauna Preservation Society (RHHFFPS), Steve Papp (FOM Environmental Education Centre (FOM Env Ed)), Robbie Renu (Mars Inc), Ryde bushcare volunteers Steve Holmes and David Martin, Michael Crane (Certificate of Horticulture from Ryde TAFE).

Community Native Plant Nursery and Garden

Long-term vision

To grow a vibrant community nursery and community garden, supported by the local council and community. The nursery will provide environmental education and local native plant species to the community that will encourage the creation of an extensive habitat network throughout Ryde and Hunter's Hill. The community garden will build local community while growing edible plants in a safe and friendly environment.

Objectives

- To provide fun native flora and fauna oriented education for the local community.
- To build a happy and friendly growing community.
- To increase awareness of the role of the natural environment in our lives.
- To improve the function of the local natural environment within the local council areas.
- To extend the Habitat Network (started in 2008 by IEWF in partnership with City of Ryde (CofR), Hunter's Hill Council (HHC), Ryde – Hunter's Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society (RHHFFPS) and Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre (FOM Env Ed)) by providing an on-going source of local indigenous native plants to the residents of Ryde and Hunter's Hill for planting in their gardens and at bushcare and volunteer sites.
- To create native corridor connections between bushland areas.
- To actively demonstrate principles of sustainability such as food growing, restoration, reuse and recycle.

- To seek to fund all nursery needs through small membership contributions annually, donations, sponsorship, grants and physical assistance by volunteers and Council.
- To network with the wider Ryde and Hunter's Hill communities including: community garden groups, Permaculture groups, Mars Inc, FOM Environmental Education Centre, Habitat Network, Jimmy Shaw's schools vegetable garden project, community development and bushland management sections of both Ryde and Hunter's Hill Councils, business groups, schools, health groups, aged groups and other community groups.
- To run the community nursery and garden as a not-for-profit project with all incoming funds feeding back into developing the nursery and garden.
- To run the nursery as a shared plot garden where we all grow and share.

Insurance

International Environmental Weed Foundation is the umbrella organisation for the nursery and garden. IEWF will provide \$20 million public liability insurance and the ability to seek grants.

For insurance cover all volunteers working at the nursery and garden and also all visitors to the nursery will sign on and off in the book provided. This will also provide a record of hours volunteered and activities undertaken for use when seeking and reporting on grants and other activities.

Members – Volunteers

All persons working in the nursery and garden **must be registered** as a **member of IEWF's Habitat Network**, so as to provide insurance cover.

All participating in nursery and garden activities will be required to sign in and sign out using a book which will be kept in the nursery shed.

All new volunteers and those attending for educational purposes will be required to register (using the registration book also stored in the shed) as a member of the Habitat Network by providing name, address, email address and phone number and indicate if they would like to be included on the emailing list.

All who have worked at the nursery and garden will also be required to sign out – for safety reasons. And as appropriate a note should be made of the activities undertaken within the nursery and garden.

See section on Fees below.

All new volunteers, prospective volunteers and visitors should be advised of the health and safety procedures for the nursery and garden and be supervised. Accredited volunteers can work unsupervised but would be required to co-ordinate their activities with someone from the management committee, as only certain species of plants and quantities will be required.

Accredited volunteers are those deemed by the management committee to work in a safe manner, follow instructions, work to the nursery and garden plan and seek guidance.

We aim to be inclusive however if anyone is disruptive or under the influence of drugs or alcohol they will be asked to leave – safely.

Fees

Regular Members will be asked to pay an annual fee of \$20 per year per family to help with paying for water and soil.

For Casual Members, a fee will be charged of \$5 to cover materials and they will be given some plants to take home to their garden to start a habitat area. These casual member fees may be converted to a full membership by paying the additional \$15.

Members will be eligible at no cost to attend all workshops and education sessions – if they book in.

Some special volunteers who would find it hard to pay even these fees will be given membership at no cost at the discretion of the management committee.

Donations

All donations and receipts of funds should be receipted, using the receipt book provided. IEWF is a registered not-for-profit Limited company and is on the Register of Environmental Organisations making all donations tax deductible.

Management

The nursery will be overseen by a management committee (minimum of 3). Initially this committee will consist of Bev Debrincat, Pam Ward and Michael Crane, with support from the others who have contributed to this document. At the first anniversary of the establishment of the nursery the committee should review the structure and arrange an election of the management committee for the following 12 months.

A Director of IEWF (or a nominated representative) must be on the committee due to it providing the umbrella organisation; initially this is Bev Debrincat.

All spending, fund raising and policy decisions are to be agreed by the management committee. All nursery monies will be recorded and accounted for separately under the IEWF structure and kept in a separate account. IEWF is a registered not-for-profit Limited company, is on the Register of Environmental Organisations (donations are tax deductible) and undergoes annual auditing with Satill & Miller Services, Pitt Street, Sydney. The committee is to nominate signatories (a minimum of 2 signatories for signing).

This management committee will:

- Create a detailed site plan which takes into account issues related to the selected site such as whether the area is a flood and bushfire prone area and allow for less abled access.
- Create and manage a budget based on regular overheads (lease, water, soil for potting etc.)
- Seek funding, equipment and supplies through grants, donations, sponsorship etc, and manage the funds. All funds will be kept in an account specifically opened and managed for the community nursery.
- Ensure the insurance cover and procedures are in place.
- Report regularly to council and consult to ensure all developments are in accordance with council requirements and legislation.
- Promote the nursery and the opportunities offered with the objectives of increasing environmental knowledge and attracting volunteers to the nursery.
- Assist with or implement education activities, such as running training sessions and workshops, co-ordinating with City of Ryde and Hunter's Hill Councils environmental education staff, creating signs and interpretive materials, etc.

- Co-ordinate the daily running of the nursery, as required.
- The management committee should initially meet face to face a minimum of 3 times per year. Email will constitute a meeting at all other times.
- Create a five year action plan including selection and quantities of plants with input from initial volunteers. Only certain species of plants and quantities will be required.

Volunteer co-ordinator/s

A roster will be established to ensure that plants are watered or at least checked every 2nd or 3rd day, depending on prevailing weather conditions.

The co-ordinator/s will:

- Be in charge of access to the nursery and garden. A combination padlock will be used and code should only be given to known and trusted volunteers.
- Check regularly that all occupation health and safety measures are followed and highlight potential hazards to visitors and volunteers.
- Monitor resources, request supplies / equipment from the management committee.
- Oversee the activities of the volunteers / visitors and ensure everyone attending the nursery and / or garden signs on and off (for insurance purposes and tracking volunteer hours). New volunteers / visitors to the nursery will also need to provide their contact details and indicate if they would like to be a member and added to the contact email list. See also fees above.
- Participate in nursery activities, demonstrate correct methods and run short education sessions.
- Ensure plants are watered and maintained.
- Schedule, co-ordinate and promote plant give-away days (with the assistance of the management committee and volunteers).
- Schedule, co-ordinate and promote planting days (with the assistance of the management committee and volunteers). If planting on Council land co-ordinate with Council Bushcare Officer when planning.

- Meet, greet, discuss such topics as the roll of the nursery and environmental issues, health and safety.
- Manage a schedule for access by other groups.
- Ensure that species and quantities of plants grown are those planned for and required.

Health and safety – See Appendix A

A nominated regular volunteer will need to be present when new volunteers are present at the nursery and garden for the purpose of security, safety and to provide guidelines for activities, and to ensure these guidelines are followed.

All new visitors to the nursery will be:

- Shown any hazards or potential hazards within the nursery and its surrounds
- Have demonstrated to them the safe way to lift (bending knees) (we should get charts to hang in the nursery)
- Have demonstrated to them the safe way to use any tools or equipment.
- Advised to conduct themselves in a sensible manner (if they are not)

In case of any medical emergency – call 000

Or if the situation is not so urgent take the volunteer to:

Family Midway Medical Centre 117 North Rd, Ryde NSW 2112 - (02) 9878 6988

For First Aid:

- **Call 000 if a medical emergency**
- there is a First Aid kit on the wall in the shed
- for cuts and abrasions clean wound with clean water and stop the bleeding by applying a bandage and pressure as required
- for burns cool the wound with cool running water for at least 15 minutes or until help arrives

- for bites have the volunteer sit or lie somewhere comfortable and keep them calm until help arrives
- for shock lie the patient down and keep them warm until help arrives
- for allergies or unusual reactions or disorientation of any kind, seat the volunteer and ask if they know the cause and treatment. If not known and symptoms persist either call 000 or take them to the Medical Centre.

Volunteers – areas to be addressed

Areas to be addressed include: How to attract new volunteers, how to register new volunteers, status of volunteers, communications with volunteers, training of volunteers, community education, conflict resolution, OH&S (including risk assessment and minimisation), child protection, standards, recognition of volunteers for training or exceptional effort (e.g., certificates of recognition or attainment), etc.

Nursery - Seed and plant provenance

All plants grown will be natives of the local area and sourced locally.

All plants grown will be those species suitable for urban gardens and with a focus on their habitat potential for our local native fauna.

Seed will be sourced from Mars Inc or on special seed collection days co-ordinated with the appropriate Council bushland staff. This will ensure volunteers are not indiscriminately collecting seed and will assist to keep seed supply fresh.

All seed and plant material entering the nursery should be labelled with genus and species, source of material and date of collection.

Only limited smaller trees will be grown for urban gardens. However, some may be grown for bushcare sites and for strategic plantings.

A focus will be on growing cuttings from plants which are difficult to grow from seed.

A diverse range of species in smaller quantities should be grown in preference to large quantities of the same species – aim for biodiversity.

Sustainability

The nursery and garden will:

- Be inclusive and aim to share all plants and produce
- be chemical free
- grow a biodiverse range of local native habitat plants and food plants

- not detrimentally impact on the environment inside or outside of the nursery by aiming for zero runoff, not using chemicals, storing soil securely, using only the amount of water needed to ensure seedlings optimum growth and by controlling any weeds which may grow.
- aim to incorporate water saving, reuse, recycling, composting, mulching, habitat and energy efficiency techniques.
- build community throughout Ryde and Hunter's Hill.
- reuse all pots by cleaning with water only.
- remove all rubbish from the site.
- keep the nursery and surrounds neat and tidy.
- create attractive garden beds near the nursery to demonstrate the use of native plants and food plants.

Promotion of nursery and garden and its objectives

The objectives will be promoted. Any promotional ideas need to be approved by the management committee and a budget approved before commencing any activity.

Innovative ideas are encouraged.

Any activities taking place outside of the designated growing area should have the approval of the land or property owner prior to planning the activity.

Closing down the nursery and garden

If for any reason the nursery and garden closes down all equipment and supplies, etc (not belonging to Council) will be donated to another community nursery or compatible community project. Any remaining funds will be donated to a community not-for-profit organisation of the committees choosing.

Appendix A

Potential Hazards, measures and responsibility

Potential Hazard	Measure to be taken	Responsibility
Hoses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure hoses neatly stowed when not in use - Point out hazard to visitors and volunteers 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Lifting plants, soil or benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep back straight and bend knees - Put sign for safe lifting techniques on shed 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Soil contamination & soil-borne bacteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wear gloves when handling soil. - Ensure soil is moist whenever handling to avoid air born contaminants. - If moving soil ensure it is moist to avoid dust or wear a face mask 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Sharp tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure gloves are worn when using tools - Ensure tools are not left on the ground or in hazardous locations 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Spiders and insect bites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure gloves are checked before adorning - Ensure gloves are worn when lifting or moving equipment or plants 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Flood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During heavy rain events assess the overland flow through the site - Personal safety is the first priority - If overland flow is significant vacate the site, co-ordinator 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden

	<p>should take the sign-in book</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet in the car park and check that all volunteers not signed out are present 	
Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There should be no risk of a fire. However should one occur, vacate the site calmly with co-ordinator taking the sign in book - Meet at the car park and check that all volunteers not signed out are present 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Allergic reaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If a volunteer has an allergic reaction ask them what has occurred and if they have medication - If symptoms are severe take the sufferer to the medical centre at the shopping centre just up the road or call 000 if very severe 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Snakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep the areas under benches clear so that a snake can be seen easily - If a snake is seen leave it alone and warn other volunteers 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Inclement weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be aware of inclement weather and bring appropriate clothing - No-one is expected to work in adverse conditions - if you are not comfortable don't work - Bring plenty of water to drink 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Foot injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed footwear must be worn in and around the nursery 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Sun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UV protection – sun screen should be used, and a long 	Co-ordinator and all working within

	sleeve shirt and a hat should be worn for protection from the sun as appropriate to prevailing conditions.	nursery and garden
Manual handling of plants, tools and other nursery activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The committee will to the best of its ability provide a safe environment - Volunteers will be asked regularly to input into how activities can be undertaken more safely and effectively - Volunteers should only undertake activities that they feel confident in achieving safely 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Drug and alcohol abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No drugs or alcohol will be allowed within the nursery / garden - Anyone intoxicated will be asked to leave - If an intoxicated person is not in a fit state to leave a friend, an ambulance or police should be called – as appropriate 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Harassment and discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will not be tolerated - One warning will be given to anyone acting in this manner - If the first warning is ignored the person will be asked to leave and not return to the nursery/garden. 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure all equipment is cleaned and returned to its rightful place before signing out. 	Co-ordinator and all working within nursery and garden