

Strengthening biodiversity corridors along the lower Lane Cove and Parramatta River estuaries (2022 to 2024)

This project is an extension of the Hunters Hill small bird habitat corridor on which Hunters Hill Council (HHC) and Habitat Network (HN) have been working since 1995. For the story from 1995 to 2020 please see [Hunters Hill small bird habitat corridor article](#). This new project is supported by the NSW Government's Coastal and Estuary Management Program (\$76,000).

The following update is written by Jacqui Vollmer (HHC) and Bev Debrincat (HN).

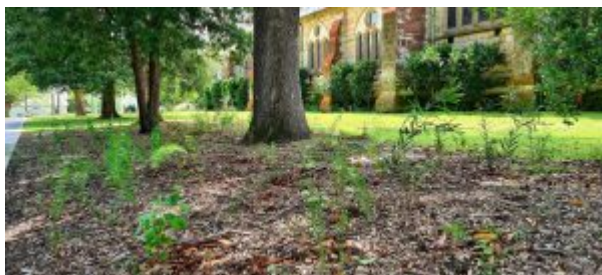
Biodiversity Corridors Grant

This 3-year grant project aims to implement priority actions from the Lane Cove River and Parramatta River certified Coastal Zone Management Plans (CZMP). It also has significant synergies with the Hunter's Hill Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2021-26. Bushcare groups and bush regeneration contractors are working across three reserves namely Boronia Park, Riverglade Reserve and Kellys Bush. Five hectares of bush regeneration will improve east-west connectivity, restore Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs) i.e. Coastal Saltmarsh, Swamp Oak Forest and Sydney Freshwater Wetlands, rehabilitate key habitat for native threatened fauna e.g. Powerful Owl, and increase the resilience of these EECs.

In addition, the project encourages community awareness and knowledge of local biodiversity values. A biodiversity awareness campaign will be run, including using Council's and Habitat Network's digital platforms, a promotional video and door knocking residents, schools and businesses in identified corridor areas.

Some residents have already made a start. Short case studies have been written and are on the HHC website - see more about this project and what some of our residents are doing to preserve our local biodiversity and to create wildlife habitat in their gardens:

[Biodiversity Corridors – Hunter's Hill Council](#)



See Council and Habitat Network links below for further advice on creating a wildlife friendly backyard:

<https://www.huntershill.nsw.gov.au/environment/bushland-and-biodiversity/creating-a-wildlife-friendly-backyard/>

<https://www.habitatnetwork.org/>

Let us know if you would like to be involved – email info@iewf.org

Project Rationale

This project aims to implement high priority actions identified in the Lane Cove River Estuary and Parramatta River Estuary Coastal Zone Management Plans (CZMPs).

These actions were also identified in the Hunters Hill Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2021-26. The Biodiversity Conservation Strategy is based on the collection of baseline conditions of biodiversity including the 3 Endangered Ecological Communities (EECs), 1 Critically Endangered Ecological Community (CEEC), 20 known threatened flora and fauna and 28 species identified as locally significant.

Three main challenges were identified in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy being mainstreaming, invasive species and habitat fragmentation. Recommendations for addressing these challenges include: (1) increased community participation and engagement, particularly among the youth, and may be addressed through improved communication strategies, biodiversity programs, and partnerships; (2) current practices for dealing with invasive species have been effective and should be continued; and (3) habitat fragmentation can be addressed through the development of new biodiversity corridors, primarily focusing on connecting Boronia Park and Riverglade Reserve with Kellys Bush in order to bridge the large gap between the eastern and western reserves within the Hunter's Hill LGA.

The project also aligns with the Parramatta River Catchment Group's aims to strategically approach habitat restoration at a landscape level and identify key linkages between bushland remnants which provide stepping stones for fauna moving between core habitat areas along the Parramatta River across to Lane Cove National Park.

These locations are of state significance and the EECs are key habitat for threatened fauna such as the Powerful Owl, small passerine and migratory birds. Bush regeneration works will be carried out in accordance with the high priority actions in the CZMPs, Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, various reserve Plans of Management and current best practice management. In addition, the project builds on over 20 years of bushcare work in these reserves.

Projected Project Outcomes

- Improved east-west ecological connectivity i.e. Boronia Park and Riverglade Reserve with Kellys Bush
- Improved condition and /or extent of estuarine vegetation including EECs i.e. Coastal Saltmarsh, Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest and Sydney Freshwater Wetlands
- Improved key habitat for native threatened fauna e.g. Powerful Owl (landscape managed species) and small passerine and migratory birds
- Improved ecological integrity through improved water quality
- Increased resilience of these communities, which will have greater capacity to survive rising sea levels as a result of climate change
- Increased local community knowledge and awareness of local biodiversity and reserves including increased participation in habitat restoration and related projects