



Backyard Bushcare is coming to Pacific Palms

Do you live at Blueys Beach, Boomerang Beach, Elizabeth Beach, or Charlotte Bay? Backyard Bushcare is now running in your area, and it is for anyone with plants on their property! It's for:

- The fastidious gardener - do you know which common landscaping shrubs are invading local bushland?
- The weekend warrior - do you know which plants to prioritise getting on top of, and the most effective ways to do it?
- The gardening avoider - do you know whether you are inadvertently harming local plants and animals beyond your property?

...and everyone in between.

In this flyer you will find more information about what Backyard Bushcare is, why environmental weeds are a problem for everyone, and some simple tips to get started.



As residents of the MidCoast region, we enjoy natural beauty in our own backyards. Backyard Bushcare will help you sustain our natural environment and the habitats of our visiting wildlife.



WHAT IS BACKYARD BUSHCARE?

It's about getting whole-of-community action on protecting natural bushland from invasive plants, starting in your own backyard.

The program is being coordinated by MidCoast Council, in partnership with National Parks with assistance through the NSW Government's Environmental Trust.

In Pacific Palms there has been a lot of activity in removing weeds from bushland by volunteers, National Parks, and Council – but the scale of the problem means you may not have noticed. That's why we need to be working wherever invasive plants are found – including backyards.

For more detail about what Backyard Bushcare will look like in Pacific Palms, please see our website.

The problem with environmental weeds

Environmental weeds are a threat

to native ecosystems, impacting on many endangered plants and animals. They are plants that invade natural areas (as opposed to plants that are pests in your garden, or agricultural weeds).

Environmental weeds are a problem because they alter ecosystem structure, species composition, fire regimes, soil stability and native species abundance. Weeds compete with native plants for space, light, nutrients and water. While you may notice that some species, such as certain birds, will live in the weeds, on the whole the number of different animal and plant species able to live in the area will reduce.

Effective weed management is costly and time consuming for everyone managing natural areas, including government bodies, farmers and private landholders. Success requires collaborative effort across the landscape.

Did you know...

Approximately 65% of weeds invading reserves and bushland areas have originated from urban gardens and are termed 'garden escapees'.

"Loss and degradation of native plant and animal habitat by invasion of escaped garden plants, including aquatic plants" has even been listed as a 'key threatening process' under the Commonwealth's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Environmental weeds in your garden

An environmental weed could be one that popped up by itself in your garden, something that was already there when you moved in, or you may have unwittingly planted it! Some plants available in nurseries are weeds in the lush Pacific Palms climate.

Weeds spread into natural areas from backyards via animals, birds, wind, water, green waste dumping, and attachments on vehicles. They know no boundaries!

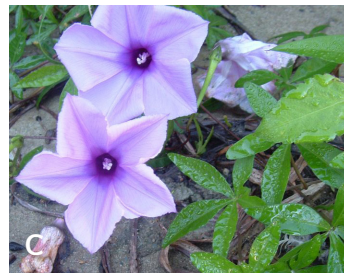
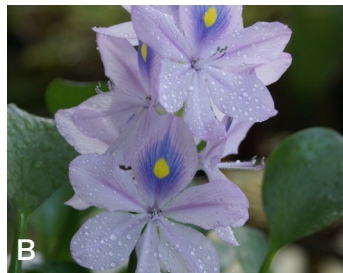
It may take a few years to reduce the weed 'seed bank' in the area and stop the spread, but working together the weed burden in natural areas and in your backyard get lighter.

Take a look around your garden today to find out if it contains any plants that may be classed as environmental weeds.



Common environmental weeds

Many of the plants in our gardens are ones we grew up with, but did you know some of them are actually classified as weeds and can be dangerous to our environment? Here are some below, but for more help with identifying environmental weeds, download a copy of 'Garden Escapees & Other Weeds of Bushland & Reserves' from our website, or contact us for further advice.



Look out for these common environmental weeds in your garden.

A: Ground asparagus, B: Water hyacinth, C: Coastal morning glory, D: Cassia

How to get involved

Getting involved in Backyard Bushcare can have all sorts of benefits, including reduced maintenance in your garden, feeling good about helping local wildlife, and creating a beautiful space for you to enjoy. Getting involved doesn't mean doing everything at once; it's just about starting where you are. Pick one of the ideas below, or come up with your own:

- Get familiar with the plants in your garden. Are any environmental weeds?
- Prune plants before the berry or seed sets
- Allocate half an hour in the next week to spend removing as many environmental weeds as you can. You could make it social, and swap working bees with a friend!
- Join – or start! – a volunteer group. You'll meet people, help the bush, and get familiar with local weeds.
- Plant bushland friendly plants such as natives. Good nurseries will have staff who can advise you.
- Keep an eye out for Backyard Bushcare Events
- Sign up to email updates to get tips and the latest project info at <http://eepurl.com/c9rDWf>

For more information

Visit our website at www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/backyardbushcare

Phone our friendly team on 6591 7222

Or email us on council@midcoast.nsw.gov.au

midcoast.nsw.gov.au/backyardbushcare