

Bush Neighbours

Do you live next to a bushland reserve?

As a bush neighbour you are in a special position to enjoy our wonderful natural areas.

It also means you hold the key to their protection.

*Take time to read Bush Neighbours and find out what you can do to be a **good bush neighbour**.*



Holroyd City
Work. Learn. Play.



When you live near the bush... you have a piece of Australia's natural heritage at your doorstep!

Holroyd City Council manages 70 hectares of remnant bushland in 10 different nature reserves.

Occupying these are a number of bushland communities, including:

River Flat Forest, Turpentine-Ironbark Forest and Grey Box-Iron Bark Woodland. These bushland communities are now very rare.

Our bushland provides food and shelter for a variety of animal life including birds, bats, frogs, reptiles and insects. In some of our larger bushland parks, small native mammals such as possums and long nosed bandicoots may still be found.

Unfortunately, a number of our local plants and animals, such as the Downy Wattle and the Swift Parrot, are in danger of becoming extinct and are listed as threatened species.

Our bush is more than a garden – it is a complex living environment of plants, animals and landscapes. It has been evolving for thousands of years to be perfectly suited to the conditions in your local area. That makes each bushland area unique. Enjoy getting to know its rich diversity, and you may help guide it through the changes that development brings.

Restoring and protecting our bushland

Most of Holroyd's natural areas were cleared in the past to make way for our homes. The bushland remnants that now remain are mostly fragmented or long and skinny, leaving them quite exposed to impacts such as weed invasion, vandalism and pest animals.



We need your help – how to be a good bush neighbour

Join a bushcare group

Why not get fit and have fun meeting people while helping to look after your local environment. Council runs a Bushcare program to assist residents in carrying out voluntary bush regeneration in local reserves. Bushland remnants are difficult to manage and the best results are achieved by Council and neighbours working together.

For legal reasons, and to ensure work is undertaken in the most appropriate way, neighbours must get permission from Council before working in our public reserves. For further information about Bushcare contact Council's Bushland Officer on 9840 9840.



What is the Council doing?

It is not easy to take care of remnant bushland, there are no real quick-fix solutions.

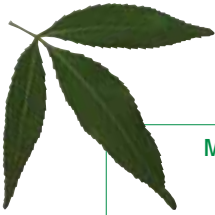
With limited resources Council tries to be strategic in its management approach, looking at priorities such as:

- Carrying out weed control to maintain good bushland areas.
- Supporting bushcare groups by coordinating, training and providing equipment to volunteers.
- Maintaining fire access breaks behind neighbouring properties.
- Protecting threatened plant and animal species.

Some of the works Council can assist neighbours with involves:

- Controlling weed infestations that are causing problems.
- Pruning or removing unhealthy trees along reserve boundaries.

*Grey Box Woodland
of the Lower Prospect
Canal Reserve*



Mowing the bush isn't looking after the bush

When you mow the bush you are mowing precious native plant species.

Continual mowing ultimately results in a loss of species that could have been growing in that area for hundreds of years.

Mowing will inhibit the natural regeneration of canopy trees. As most of our bushland is classed as being an endangered ecological community, unless you have permission from NPWS, it is illegal under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act* to mow it.

Blackberry, listed as a noxious weed for the Holroyd area.

Keep your backyard in your backyard

Please don't expand your lawn or garden into the bush or "improve" the bush by planting. In many of our reserves, vegetable gardens, compost bins, play equipment, outdoor settings, extended lawn and garden areas are taking valuable bushland space. This can cause more damage than you think by becoming a public safety or fire hazard. Extended backyards are also a common cause of *weed* infestations!

Council's Bushcare Officer and experienced volunteers can show you how to look after the bush beyond your back fence. *Remember* – if you want to do any work in our reserves it needs to be authorised by Council as part of a bushcare project.

Keep your pet dogs and cats out of the bush

Pets can be a great source of joy and an important part of the household. However, nobody likes to see their cat or dog with a dead native bird, possum or lizard. One of the most important things you can do to look after our native fauna is to be a responsible pet owner.

Domestic dogs and cats kill and stress our native animals – even if well fed! So keep your cat inside – especially at night and make sure that your dog is secure on your property.





Garden waste smothers native plants, introduces weeds and can be a fire hazard.

Leave the bush in the bush

Rocks and fallen branches provide homes for native animals, while flowers and seeds ensure that plants will reproduce. Removing objects, flowers or seeds without permission can harm the animals and plants that live in our reserves.

Don't dump lawn clippings or garden waste

It may “be out of sight out of mind,” but dumping garden waste and lawn clippings over the back fence is causing terrible damage to our bushland. It spreads weeds, creates fire hazards, smothers native plants and can even change soil nutrient levels to favour weed growth. Even if the bush already looks weedy, garden dumping just makes it harder to restore it to a healthy condition.

Garden waste can make great compost around the garden or can be placed on the kerb collection during Council's twice yearly clean up.

If you notice anybody dumping waste on public land please immediately contact Council's Compliance Officers on 9840 9840.



These flowers, commonly known as Mother of Millions, are environmental weeds in Holroyd.



Please don't dump grass clippings in the bush. This is a major source of weed infestations.



Spotted Pardalotes

What About Snakes?

Snakes play an important role in balancing nature.

They eat small animals such as mice which helps control these populations. Other animals, such as the Bearded Dragon, in turn, eat snakes as part of their diet.

*Local native wattle,
Acacia longifolia.*

Take an interest in your local plants and wildlife

Find out about the amazing diversity of plants and animals in your local bushland. Observant bush neighbours are often the first to notice ecological changes such as a decline in small bird numbers. A number of organisations encourage the community to maintain a local diary about the wildlife around them and we also value your insights.

Please understand that the bush is a natural place that cannot be modified to make it completely safe for humans. Some inhabitants, such as spiders and ants, can bite or sting so they should be treated with respect and left alone.

There are many fascinating creatures that play an important role in our local ecosystem so PLEASE don't harm them! Council offers advice and contact details if you are not sure of an animal sharing your home.

Remember all the plants, logs, rocks and other things found in our bushland reserves are homes for native animals.



Tread gently in the bush

Many of our most beautiful and sensitive native plants and insects are tiny and can easily be damaged or destroyed by careless trampling or foot traffic. Walking in the bush is a wonderful way to enjoy the natural beauty of our bushland reserves, but please try to stay on formed tracks. Be aware of the impact your presence may have. Designated walking trails also help prevent erosion and minimise the spread of weeds.

V. Bear



Silvereyes



Ironbark flowers

V. Bear



The Stripped Marsh Frog (also known as the Toc-Toc frog) is one of our more common local frog species.

Living with snakes. Why do snakes enter gardens?

Snakes are protected by law in all Territories and States in Australia. They cannot be taken from reserves, kept or destroyed without a Licence.

Most snakes entering gardens are only passing through. They very rarely take up residence in suburban back yards because there is not enough food or shelter to support them and they fear human activity. Snakes can be attracted to gardens for short periods during prolonged drought. They search for water from pet bowls, swimming pools or other similar areas. Most people are bitten by snakes because they are either attempting to kill them, or handle them.

A tidy back yard free of debris and stockpiles will help keep snakes from entering your yard.

Rumours and tales have given snakes the reputation of being dangerous and hostile. Most snakes are more scared of humans than humans are of them, and will usually move away if left alone.



Contact details

For more information contact:
Council's Bushland Management Officer
9840 9840

If you witness anybody dumping contact:
Council's Compliance/Ordinance Officers
(office Hours) 9840 9840
(weekends and after hours - follow prompts).

Regional Illegal Dumping Service (RID)
9676 6363



Holroyd City
Built Around People

Holroyd City Council
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Merrylands 2160

Website:
www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au



UPPER PARRAMATTA RIVER CATCHMENT TRUST

This brochure has been produced in conjunction with the Greystanes Woodland (Alpha Park) Bushcare Group, with funding assistance from the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust.



H. Pollard

Local native shrub, Davesia ulicifolia.



V. Bear

Local native shrub, Bursaria spinosa.

Have a bush friendly garden

Some common garden plants can spread into the bush and become weeds. As a good bush neighbour, please take special care to make sure that these plants are kept under control or replace them with less invasive plants. Better yet, why not create a garden using local native plants—this can extend the habitat area for native fauna, not to mention reducing your water bill!

Council is happy to provide you with a list of garden plants suitable for our local area. To find out more about planting locally indigenous plants contact Councils Bushland Officer.

Local native climber, Hardenbergia violacea.



H. Pollard