



Lake Macquarie  
Landcare

# Case Study

**Bushland Site**

## Mahogany Park, Morisset



### Project Partners:

- Morisset & District Landcare
- Lake Macquarie Landcare
- Hunter Water Corporation
- Lake Macquarie City Council



## Background

Mahogany Park is located in Morisset, in the south-west of Lake Macquarie Local Government Area and in the in the upper catchment of Pourmalong Creek. The Hunter Water owned site is looked after by Morisset & District Landcare, a long-standing community group that has been involved in Landcare activities on various sites in the Morisset district and with neighbouring groups.

## Site Information

Mahogany Park is a Hunter Water storage site containing a large reservoir and a disused water tank. With Hunter Water permission and funding support, the Landcare group has established gardens of native flowering plants including out-of-zone natives which are suitable for the broader objectives of the site.



Early days of planting and weeding in 2002

## Lake Macquarie

Lake Macquarie is located on the NSW east coast. It contains mountains, forests, waterfalls, extensive beaches, and a large coastal estuarine lake with an area of approximately 110 square km, and a catchment area of 605 square km.

These areas support a wide range of habitats and uses including nature conservation, recreation, residential and commercial development and rural activities. As a result, the natural environment has suffered a high degree of modification and degradation.

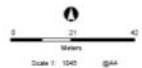
## Aboriginal Heritage

Lake Macquarie is rich in Aboriginal cultural heritage dating back tens of thousands of years. The people who lived around Lake Macquarie and Newcastle were known as the Awabakal which means "*the people of the flat surface*" presumably referring to the Lake and its flat surrounds.



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Above: Mahogany Park Landcare site (shown in red)

## Vegetation

Mahogany Park has been created by the Landcare group to contain bird-attracting flowering trees, shrubs and groundcovers, with different plants flowering at different times throughout the year. Plants include Grevilleas, Callistemons and Acacias.

Recently, additional native bush-tucker plants have been planted as part of a Sustainability grant project (see page 6).



Above: *Grevillea venusta* - Byfield Spider Flower - a rare Queensland plant used in gardens for bird attracting. Note Although this is an out-of-zone native it meets the requirements of the land owner.

## Fauna

Mahogany park is home to a variety of bird and animal life. Grey Kangaroos and Bandicoots frequent the area. Satin Bowerbirds have made bowers in Mahogany Park and other resident birds include Rainbow Lorikeets, Kookaburras and a range of Honeyeaters.

## Landcare group

Morisset and District Landcare have been working at Mahogany Park for over 16 Years. As well as regenerating and protecting natural bushland and wildlife habitat they aim to educate the community and provide a natural place of peace and contemplation.

The group has been assisted in the past by patients from Morisset Hospital and others within the community. The group currently consists of about 12 members who work regularly, usually on a weekly basis.

Interested volunteers can contact Landcare Team Leader Helen Gould on 4973 4916.



Above (Top): Rainbow Lorikeets feeding on a planted Grevillia in Mahogany Park

Above (Middle): Satin Bowerbird bower amongst vegetation

Above (Bottom): An Eastern Grey Kangaroo visiting (photo: Helen Gould)



**Above & top: Some of the regular members of Morisset & District Landcare Group**



**Above: An area of the park during the early 2000s when the group started work (left) and the same area in 2014, showing the established gardens (right).**

## Bush tucker plants in Mahogany Park

In 2014 -15 Morisset and District Landcare received a sustainability grant from Lake Macquarie City Council to plant Bush Tucker species at Mahogany Park.



The following species have been planted to provide an educational example of native bush-tucker plants as well as a source of food for native birds and wildlife. They supplement existing bush tucker plants at Mahogany Park including Bottlebrush and Wattles.

Please note this information is not to be used as a definitive guide to what can be eaten as there are risks involved in eating wild foods and you should be completely sure of your plant identification skills and knowledge before trying anything!

Remember also that many bushfoods, although edible, can taste quite awful and, as with our usual fruits, there can be an amazing variety of taste within a single species.

### **Native Hibiscus (*Hibiscus heterophyllus*)**

A shrub with lobed leaves and pink/white, edible flowers, also called Native Rosella.



### **Native Ginger (*Alpinia caerulea*)**

In appearance, Native Ginger is very much like the Asian Ginger we use in cooking and has a rhizome with a more delicate flavour that can be used in the same way. The Native Ginger has a small, blue, many-seeded fruit with little flesh that is also edible.



Photo [www.anbg.gov.au](http://www.anbg.gov.au)

**Warrigal Greens (*Tetragonia tetragonoides*)**

Found growing in many of our foreshore reserves, usually under Swamp Oak. The leaves can be eaten as a vegetable or made into a pesto but must be blanched with cooking water discarded due to high oxalate content.



**Native Violet (*Viola hederacea*)**

An excellent groundcover with light blue/mauve/white flowers, depending on the soil type it is growing in. The flowers are edible and make an interesting garnish to a tossed salad.



**Kangaroo Grape (*Cissus antarctica*)**

Although edible, none of the Native Grapes are particularly palatable, but the vines are useful quick replacement plants as habitat where canopy is still intact.



Photo T.M. Tame ©The Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust

**Wombat Berry (*Eustrephus latifolius*)**

A gently scrambling climber, Wombat Berry can be found in most of the bushland reserves around Lake Macquarie. The fruit is yellow-orange and not particularly tasty.



Photo Fagg, M  
[www.anbg.gov.au](http://www.anbg.gov.au)

This project is supported by LMCC through its Environmental Sustainability Grants Program

## References and Further Information

Australian National Botanic Garden - [www.anbg.com.au](http://www.anbg.com.au)

Buchanan, R, 2009, [\*Restoring Natural Areas in Australia\*](#)

Lake Macquarie Landcare - [Landcare Fact Sheet 5 - Local bushfood plants](#)

Trees in Newcastle - [Bush Food Garden - How to grow bushfoods in your own school or backyard](#)

Weeds Australia - [www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au)

The Lake Macquarie Landcare website [www.lakemacquarielandcare.org](http://www.lakemacquarielandcare.org) provides links to newsletters, environmental programs, grants, Landcare, weeds and trees.

If you wish to know more about this and other projects in Lake Macquarie please contact the Landcare Resource Centre.

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*Lake Macquarie Landcare is proudly supported by Lake Macquarie City Council*