



camden council fact sheet



Biodiversity in the Camden LGA

Biodiversity refers to the variety of all life forms, the different plants, animals, microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems they form.

Why is biodiversity important?

Biodiversity is critical for the survival of all the earth's species, including the human race, for the provision of resource services such as clean air and clean water. On a local scale, biodiversity is important for community well being in terms of aesthetics, science, recreation, culture, health and spirit.

Biodiversity of the Camden LGA

The Camden Local Government Area (LGA) lies within the Cumberland Plain, and has rich Nepean River flats and undulating Wianamatta Shale hills. The main vegetation community is Cumberland Plain Woodland which is a Critically Endangered Ecological Community under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* and the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*. There are four other endangered ecological communities under the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* found in the Camden LGA, being Cumberland River Flat Forest, Cumberland Swamp Oak Riparian Forest, Moist Shale Woodland and Elderslie Banksia Scrub Forest.

Cumberland Plain Woodland contains two prominent Eucalypts, Grey Box (*Eucalyptus moluccana*) and Forest Red Gum (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*) which typify the remaining natural landscape of Camden. The ground layer in Cumberland Plain Woodland is typically made up of grasses such as Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda australis*) and Weeping Meadow Grass (*Microlaeana stipoides*).

The Camden LGA has approximately 2033ha of remnant good quality vegetation which includes 1366.5 ha of Cumberland Plain Woodland. This means that approximately 90% of vegetation across the LGA has been cleared and degraded since European settlement.

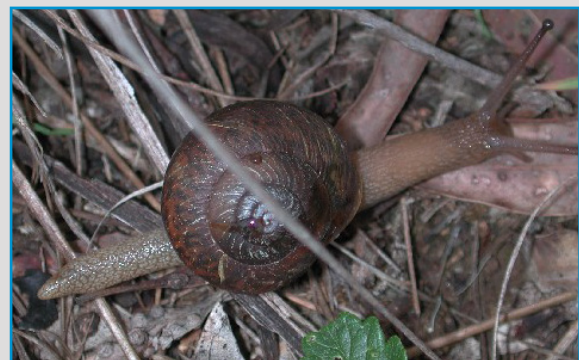
Population growth and development is placing enormous pressure on our natural areas and biodiversity due to habitat clearing, degradation of waterways, and spread of pest animals and weeds.

Cumberland Plain Land Snail (*Meridolum corneovirens*)

In New South Wales, only six invertebrate animals have been listed as endangered, three insects and three land snails. One of these snails, *Meridolum corneovirens* or the Cumberland Plain Land Snail, is found only in western Sydney in the Cumberland Plain Woodland ecosystem under logs and debris and around bases of trees or clumps of grass, burrowing into loose soil.

The presence of Cumberland Plain Land Snail is an indicator of a healthy ecosystem. However the habitat of the snail has been drastically reduced with clearing of bush for agriculture and development and continues to be subjected to development pressures. This clearing will impact on remaining populations because the composition of the leaf litter that grows the fungi on which it feeds is altered or lost.

In listing the Cumberland Plain Land Snail on the endangered list in 1997, the NSW Scientific Committee was of the opinion that the numbers of this species had been reduced to such a critical level and its habitats have been so drastically reduced that it is in immediate danger of extinction and that *Meridolum corneovirens* is likely to become extinct in nature in New South Wales unless the circumstances and factors threatening its survival cease to operate.



How does Council protect and enhance biodiversity?

Local Biodiversity Strategy for the Camden LGA

At the Council meeting on 8 October 2013, Council adopted the Local Biodiversity Strategy for the Camden LGA. This strategy provides the framework for Camden Council and the community to achieve the vision for biodiversity as expressed in Camden 2040. It brings together the available information about biodiversity within the LGA, and provides a clear and practical approach to guide future management of biodiversity that is consistent with legislation, plans and policies.

Bushcare

Bushcare is an environmental volunteer program run up by Council to provide an opportunity for residents and visitors to actively participate in managing and maintaining the remnant urban bushland areas in the Camden LGA.

Current locations include:

- Hayter Reserve: Wire Lane, Camden South, first Friday of the month from 9am to 12pm
- Kings Bush Reserve: Chellaston Street, Camden, every Tuesday from 9am to 12pm and the first Sunday of the month from 9am to 12pm
- Parrotts Farm: Richardson Rd, Narellan (next to RFS), second Friday of the month from 9am to 12pm
- Ron Dine Reserve: McCrae Dr (and Cowper Dr), Camden South, third Friday of the month from 9am to 12pm
- Sickles Creek Reserve: Sickles Drive, Grasmere, last Sunday of the month from 9am to 12pm

Management of Australian White Ibis

In an effort to manage the population and the overall impacts that the Australian White Ibis has on residents and the local environment, in 2013 Council adopted a Management Plan for the Australian White Ibis at Lake Annan. This species is protected in NSW and as a result, Council has obtained licences from NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and the NSW Environment Protection Authority to enable some of the management strategies such as egg oiling and burning of a portion of abandoned Australian White Ibis nests to be implemented.

Natural Resource Projects

As funding and resources allow Council implements natural resource projects to maintain and enhance our local biodiversity. In the past 12 months, Council has recently been successful with a number of grant applications including:

- Gundungurra Reserve Interpretation Signs: Council received \$1,300 under the NSW Governments Cumberland Plain Recovery Project – Minor Expenditure Grant program to develop and install 4 interpretation signs at Gundungurra Reserve (north) to promote awareness, education and engagement in the management of Cumberland Plain bushland and biodiversity.
- Rehabilitation of Camden Wetlands Reserve: Council received \$35,312 from the NSW Governments Public Reserves Management Fund Program to remove woody weeds and rehabilitate the wetland. A community planting day was held on 8 March 2015.
- Nepean River Trail – Habitat Corridor Enhancement and Extension: Through the Commonwealth Governments 20 Million Trees Program, Council has received \$93,500 to remove woody weeds and plant 10,000 trees and large shrubs at Cowpasture Reserve in the Riparian Corridor of Nepean River
- Green Army Program: Council has been approved to sponsor three consecutive Green Army teams (3 stages) from April 2015 to November 2016 with each team undertaking 6.25ha of targeted weed removal and revegetation at the Town Farm and Fergusons Land with the planting of 1,000 plants including 50 *Eucalyptus benthamii*, resulting in a total of 18.75 ha of target weed removal and 3,000 plantings.

