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New video celebrating the values of South Lawson Park

Peter Ardill

South Lawson Park Bushcare

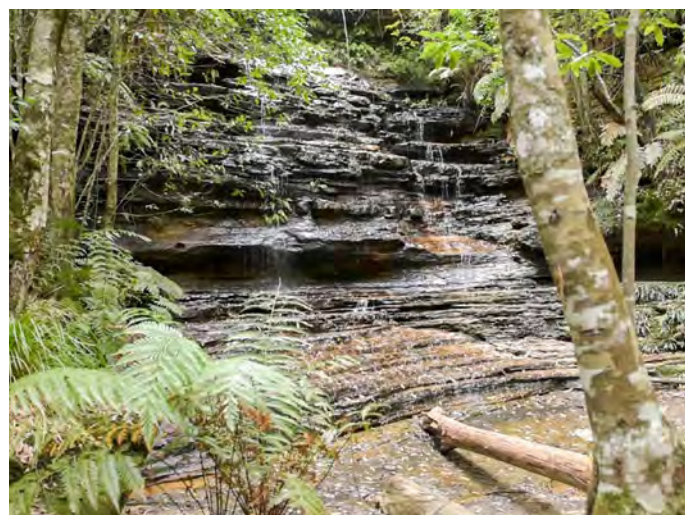
The South Lawson Park Bushcare group at Lawson in the Blue Mountains of NSW, around 100 kms west of Sydney, celebrated 20 years of bushcare in 2016.

Their recently released commemorative film takes a look at the ethical values that urban fringed patches of bushland possess and how a coordinated bushcare and streamwatch approach to regeneration planning optimises and validates volunteer bushcare activities.

Lawson Creek is a significant Blue Mountains catchment and eventually discharges into the Hawkesbury-Nepean river system, via the Blue Mountains National Park and World Heritage Area. Weed invasion, pollution and high sediment flows are common occurrences. As with most bushland parks in the Blue Mountains, South Lawson Park is located near the ridgetop, and these impacts can have severe downstream effects if not managed. With the guidance of Blue Mountains City Council Bushcare Officers (the first, in 1995, being AABR's Virginia Bear), these adverse impacts have been reduced.

The bushcare group has a two stage approach to managing the urban impacts. The bushcare activities address the weed problem, and the flora of the riparian area has been enhanced with both planting and natural regeneration techniques. Streamwatch monitoring, supported by the Australian Museum and Blue Mountains City Council, provides measurable, standardised data on water quality and macroinvertebrate life. Oxygen, phosphate, salinity, pH and turbidity levels are tested on a monthly basis. Testing for macroinvertebrate life is done on an annual basis.

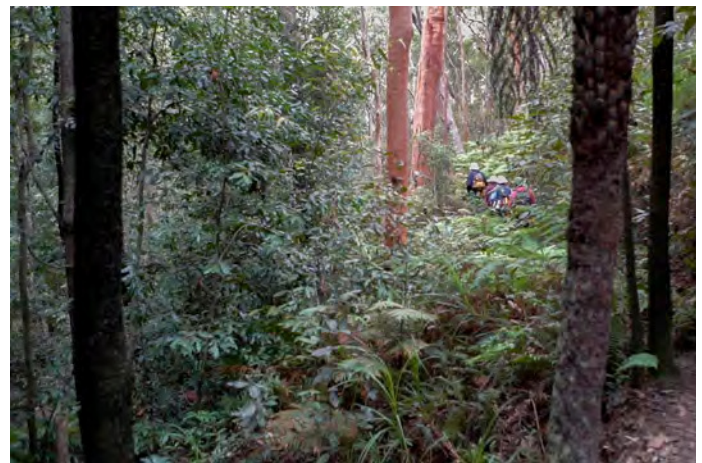
These two activities obviously complement each other: bushcare helps to provide a stable base of native flora and soil stability which enhances water quality and the streamwatch results can



Waterfall. South Lawson Park.

indicate problems with flora depletion and land management. Streamwatch results also reflect the effectiveness of the bushcare approach: reasonable results are generally indicative of good bushland and catchment management, particularly in the context of stressed bushland remnants.

Maintaining the urban reaches of Lawson Creek catchment in a reasonable environmental condition will always be an ongoing battle. The consolation is that this buffer zone of bushland,



South Lawson bushland

although damaged in many ways, is being supported and improved, assisting with the preservation of the more pristine bushland and riparian tracts further downstream.

The film is produced by Peter Ardill (an AABR member) and Vera Hong, and directed by Vera Hong of Seconds Minutes Hours Productions. This professionally crafted film portrays the complexity of the Lawson Creek catchment, including the waterfalls, swamps and rich flora diversity. The aerial scenes are stunning. The life, knowledge and beauty intrinsic to this bushland area are celebrated with the Blue Mountains as the backdrop.

The eight minute film may be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/verahong/south-lawson-bushcare> with the star performer being our beautiful bushland.

The film was produced with support from Greater Sydney Local Land Services with funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, and also with support from Blue Mountains City Council. Thanks to Seconds Minutes Hours Productions for their generosity with time and skill.

The bushcare group's website is available at www.southlawsonpark.bushcarebluemountains.org.au

For further information on Australian Museum Streamwatch visit www.streamwatch.org.au

Details for Blue Mountains City Council bushcare may be viewed at www.bushcarebluemountains.org.au

Photos: Vera Hong, Seconds Minutes Hours Productions