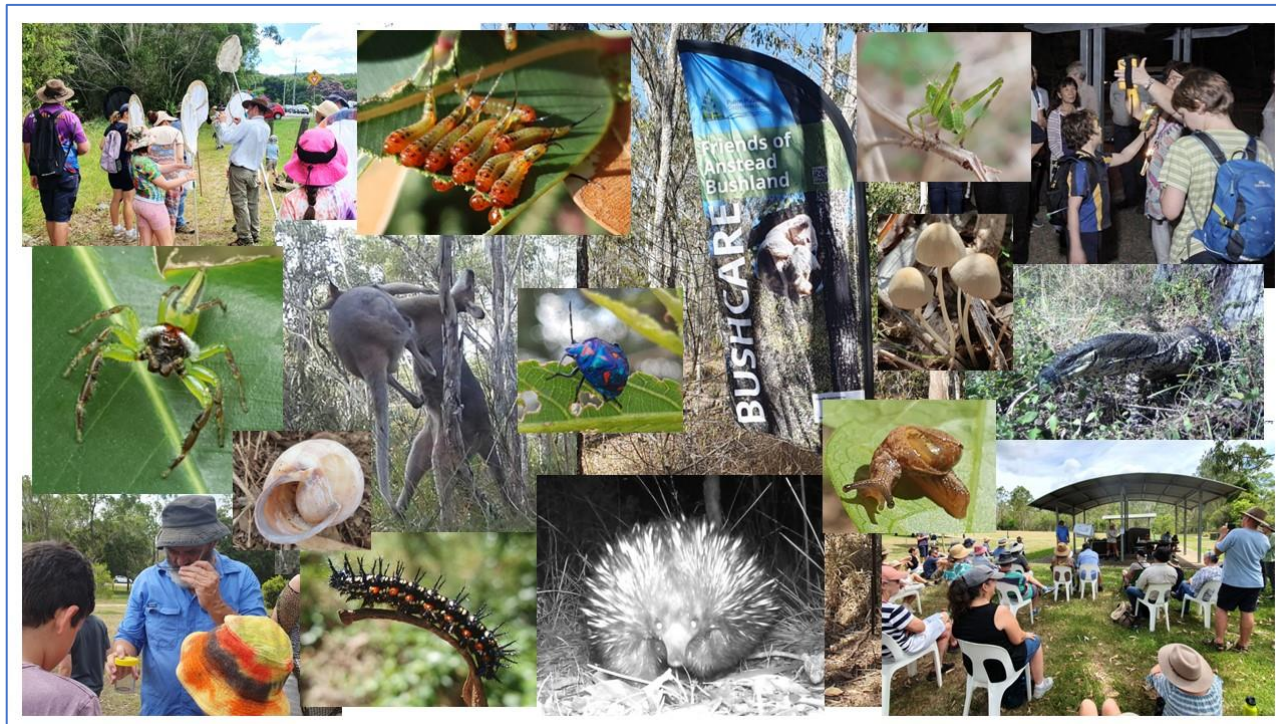




Friends of Anstead Bushland

Anstead Bushland Reserve Creek Catchments Program – Five Year Site Plan Report: Year Two (December 2022-November 2023)



Year Two Goals and Achievements¹

Project 1: Enhancing Anstead Bushland Reserve ecosystems through assisted natural bush regeneration

In line with the primary long-term goal articulated in the Anstead Bushland Reserve (ABR) Five Year Site Plan (i.e. sustainable enhancement of ecosystems within ABR), Project 1 remained the central focus of bushcare activities for Friends of Anstead Reserve (FOAB) in Year Two of the plan. Following the advances made in Year One (notably increases in the number and type of native species observed in treated areas), further achievements were recorded in Year Two.

Among the most notable achievements by November 2023 were marked reductions in weed coverage in several Project 1 pegged sites. Weed removal that commenced in small 'Bradley islands' within a number of these 16mx16m (256m²) pegged sites in Year One expanded across almost the entire area of several sites during Year Two, with this work including removal of most of the creeping lantana and lantana bushes that had been prevalent within these areas (see Site Plan for further details on Project 1 pegged sites and Bradley islands). While this exceeded the extent and pace of weed reduction initially envisaged, native plant regeneration in the cleared areas has been sustained to date (albeit slowing during the dry weather). The work has also delivered a significantly enhanced outlook for visitors using one of the main walking trails in the Reserve.

These achievements are illustrated in Figure 1, the top panel of which underlines the marked contrast evident by late 2023 between the weeded areas around Pegs A, B and C and the unweeded areas immediately opposite, on the other side of the walking trail. In the lower panel, the picture on the left provides another view of Pegs A, B and C at this time, highlighting the now exposed rocks where a Collared Delma was sighted on 25/8/23, while the one on the right illustrates the extent to which invasive weeds have been controlled around Pegs F and D.

In addition to these achievements, and following expansion of FOAB's approved working areas eastwards to facilitate work within the Collared Dema project area (see Project 3 below), an additional pegged area was established in April 2023 adjacent to the walking path bench seat opposite Pegs B and C. The new site adheres to the same 256m² area as the earlier sites, however it is more elongated (32mx8m rather than 16mx16m). Work within this site has targeted coral berry and asparagus vine removal and lantana bush control.

Similarly, work also commenced at Peg D, a 'Community' area north of Peg F, in a more elongated shape than the initially adopted 16mx16m. The Community area provides an opportunity for all volunteers to work together, sharing knowledge obtained through working their individual sites. During the somewhat drier autumn and winter conditions, working in the community area allowed the other pegged areas to 'rest' (i.e. remain largely undisturbed apart from occasional maintenance to maximise the capacity for native plant regeneration). It also allowed volunteers to commence targeted asparagus vine and lantana control within a highly visible area between the central circuit walk tracks (between Pegs A/B/C and Peg F).

¹ This report should be read in conjunction with the *Anstead Bushland Reserve, Creek Catchments Program – Five Year Site Plan*, which provides a detailed explanation of the projects and other activities planned for Anstead Bushland Reserve. Links to the Site Plan and Yearly Reports to date can be found on the Pullen Pullen Catchments Group website Bushcare Groups page: <https://www.pullenpullencatchments.org.au/bushcare-groups/>

Figure 1: Project 1 weeded areas, October-November 2023





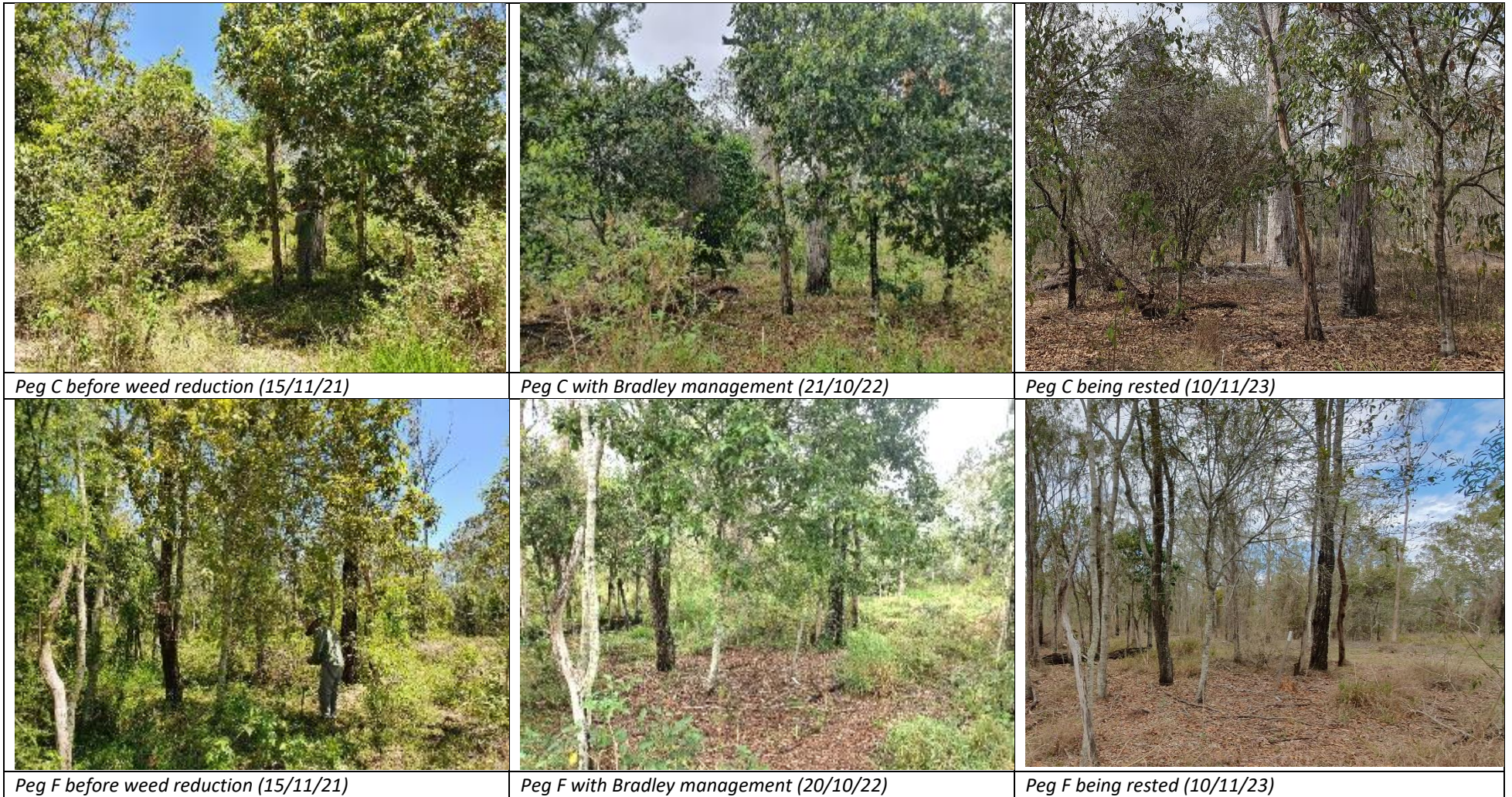
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| <p>View across pegged sites A, B & C, 13/10/23</p> | <p>View of unweeded area immediately opposite Pegs A, B & C (other side of walking trail), 13/10/23</p> |
|  |  |
| <p>View from Pegs B/C towards Peg A showing lantana removal, 10/11/23 (Collared Delma sighted in exposed rocks 25/8/23)</p> | <p>View from Peg F towards Peg D Community area showing lantana, asparagus vine and molasses grass control, 10/11/23</p> |

Figure 2 presents sets of images that further illustrate advances made in the pegged sites since work commenced under the Site Plan in late 2021 and early 2022. The most recent pictures (on the right in each row) indicate the impact of the drier weather in 2023. While both natives and weeds have been retarded under these conditions, we anticipate significant regrowth once the area receives sufficient rainfall (at which stage further weed control will be required).

Figure 2: Progress in a selection of Project 1 work sites since commencement of work under the Site Plan in late 2021 and early 2022





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| <p><i>Bradley Island close up view (5/03/22)</i></p> | <p><i>Bradley Island close up view showing Swainsona queenslandica regeneration (21/10/22)</i></p> | <p><i>Bradley Island close up view showing limited weed and strong growth in natives during dry spell (10/11/23)</i></p> |
|  |  |  |
| <p><i>Bradley Island close up view showing native grass regeneration following weed management (21/10/22)</i></p> | <p><i>Bradley Island close up view showing plectranthus and native bedstraw regeneration (21/10/22)</i></p> | <p><i>Bradley Island close up view showing limited weed and natives during dry spell (10/11/23)</i></p> |

A further contribution to Project 1 during Year Two was the engagement of a team of corporate volunteers from Rio Tinto in a bushcare session. Organised through Volunteering Queensland, this event took place on 11 August 2023. The group undertook supervised weeding, focusing on severing stems of climbing asparagus fern and cutting back seeding molasses grass. This activity contributed not only to FOAB's primary long-term goal of the sustainable enhancement of ecosystems within the Reserve but also to the goal of educating and engaging the community in bushcare regeneration activities.

Figure 3: Volunteering session with Rio Tinto group, 11/8/23 (Photos courtesy of Volunteering QLD)



Project 2: Maintaining and enhancing the condition of previously replanted high-visibility areas

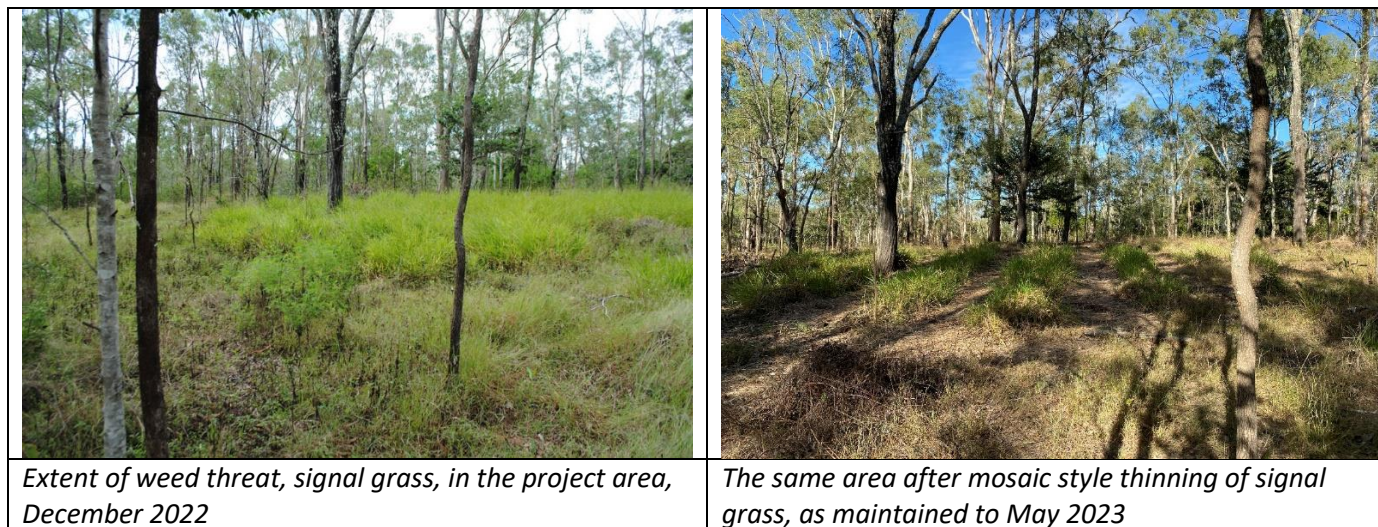
Project 2 received less direct attention in Year Two than in Year One (when a Tree Planting Day held on National Tree Day 2022 attracted over 60 community volunteers who planted around 500 trees, shrubs and ground covers in the Fig Tree Garden and surrounds). Nevertheless, maintenance of the plantings was required throughout Year Two, and the corporate volunteers who worked with us on 11 August 2023 (see Project 1 above) also planted another nine trees in the Fig Tree Garden surrounds, drawing on stock from Pullen Pullen Catchments Group's collection of native plants at the Moggill State School nursery.

A significant change in Year Two that modified the scope of Project 2 was the redrawing of FOAB's bushcare boundaries in ABR. After discussions with Brisbane City Council (BCC) during 2023, one of the areas initially listed for Project 2 work (the Water Tank and surrounding area, where previous groups of Pullen Pullen Catchments Group volunteers had planted trees) was excised from the area allocated to FOAB for bushcare. The area will now be managed by BCC, whose contractors undertook extensive weed control activities there in the months preceding and following the hazard reduction burn conducted in April 2023.

Project 3: Improving habitat for the vulnerable Collared Delma (*Delma torquata*)

Project 3, which aims to improve habitat for the vulnerable Collared Delma (*Delma torquata*) in ABR, advanced considerably in Year Two of the Site Plan. This followed BCC's approval in November 2022 for work under the federally-funded collaborative project, *Improving Collar Delma Trajectories in Brisbane's Western Suburbs*², to be undertaken in a designated section of ABR. By March 2023, contractor teams had markedly reduced weed coverage, particularly the significant threats to delma habitat posed by signal grass and creeping lantana. A mosaic style approach was used to avoid major disturbances that could impact adversely on delma and other species. The work has enhanced potential habitat by exposing rock within the worksite while maintaining leaf litter coverage (see Figure 4 for illustration of reduction in signal grass coverage within the area). Following completion of the project, FOAB has maintained the site to prevent re-seeding and re-encroachment of weeds.

Figure 4: Collared Delma habitat enhancement in ABR, 2022-2023



² This project, which received support from the Australian Government, ran from April 2022 to March 2023 and was undertaken jointly by PPCG and the neighbouring Kholo Creek Catchment Group.

Other activities in Year Two

In line with the Site Plan schedule, a Bird Walk was held in ABR on Saturday 2 September 2023. It was led by ecologist and avid birder, Deborah Metters, who engaged participants with her extensive knowledge of bird species and the ecologies that support them. The 25+ attendees were rewarded by the recording of over 50 species of birds, including the White-throated honeyeater and both White-bellied and Black-faced cuckoo shrikes.







Butterfly surveys were also held throughout the year in association with Brisbane Catchments Network and Brisbane's Big Butterfly Count (BBC). Pullen Pullen Catchments Group also assisted Cuberla Witton Catchments Network in furthering knowledge of microbat presence within Brisbane's western suburbs by conducting a community microbat night-walk in ABR (and subsequently in Pullenvale Forest Park) – see Figure 5 for photos from these events.

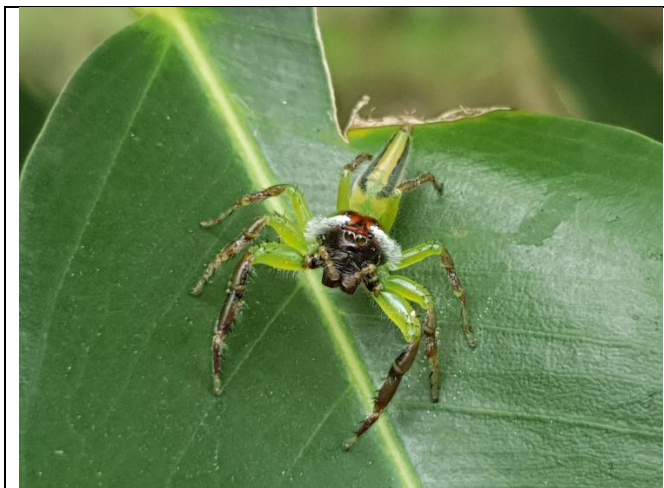
Figure 5: Year Two surveys



Overall, Year Two was an eventful year during which FOAB engaged in extensive bushcare work and hosted events and surveys involving the local community. Appreciation of biodiversity in ABR by volunteers and the community continues to be enhanced by these activities. Figure 6 presents images taken by volunteers or captured via the wildlife cameras BCC has endorsed for use within our bushcare sites. (Images of feral deer were also captured, with sightings reported to BCC.)

Figure 6: Notable wildlife observations in ABR during 2023

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| <p><i>Collared Delma sighted in Peg A area, 25/8/23</i></p> | <p><i>Red necked Wallabies</i></p> | <p><i>Lace monitor</i></p> |
|  |  |  |
| <p><i>Bandicoot</i></p> | <p><i>Koala</i></p> | <p><i>Echidna</i></p> |



Spider dressing for Christmas



Hibiscus beetle



Grasshopper



Semi slug on Passiflora weed



Echidna diggings and scats



Katydid