

## Fern Tree Bushcare Group

We meet on the second Sunday of each month Feb-Nov from 10:00am-12:30pm.

For the remainder of 2013 we are meeting at the top of Browns Road.

Contact us:

email: bushcare@ferntree.tas.au

web: ferntree.tas.au/bushcare

### Help us make Fern Tree holly-free!



Thanks to NRM South for funding for printing this leaflet and the Fern Tree Weed Booklet.

September 2013.

## Fern Tree Bushcare Group



### Please, help us make Fern Tree holly-free!

We would like to introduce the new edition of the Fern Tree Weed Booklet. It is being distributed freely to every household in the Fern Tree area.

There are many weed species in this area which can have an impact on nearby bushland. Of all the weeds you will find in the booklet, the most invasive in the Fern Tree area and the one on which the Fern Tree Bushcare Group spends most of its time, is holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). Please take the time to read about holly and then take action on your property. Please, help us make Fern Tree holly-free!

### Why do we want to make Fern Tree holly-free?

Holly invades the understorey forming dense thickets of thousands of small hollies and prevents native bush and trees from growing. In time these hollies will mature into large berry bearing trees. If allowed to remain the berries will spread holly further, up into the Mountain Park and down the Brown's River valley.

The Fern Tree Bushcare Group, with the help of contractors, has removed at least **150,000 hollies** (from seedlings to 3 metre high trees) from the Dunns Creek/Longhill Gully area (Pipeline Track below old shop), an area of only 2.5 ha(6 acres) over the past 3 years!

A similar number of hollies were removed over a period of years from the area above Pillinger Drive and the reservoir track. Other Fern Tree hot spots for holly are the area between Summerleas Rd and Browns River (and up to Reids Rd) - representing at least another 150,000 plants - and the area above the Pipeline Track to the west of the Wishing Well which borders the Mountain Park. **Holly is a major problem in the Fern Tree area.**

## **How you can help**

We believe it is possible to remove holly from the area completely, but only if all mature trees are removed first. Thanks to the joint efforts of bushcare volunteers, Hobart City Council and NRM South, we are removing all mature hollies from public land. We thank private land owners who have already removed holly from their land.

**If you have mature holly on your own property or if you are aware of any holly elsewhere in Fern Tree, please contact us** either by email: [bushcare@ferntree.tas.au](mailto:bushcare@ferntree.tas.au), or phone 62391991.

We can assist you with advice. We may be able to assist with labour. Occasionally we have funds available if professional arborists are required for larger hollies.

You can tackle smaller hollies on your property yourself. We can provide you with a herbicide dabber, a demonstration and instructions because each small stem has to be cut by hand just above ground level and dabbed with herbicide to prevent regrowth. Cut stems have to be kept off the ground in case they re-root.

You can also help by coming along to a Fern Tree Bushcare Group working bee. See back page for details.

## **Facts about Holly**

Holly is a native of Europe and was introduced to the Fern Tree area over 100 years ago. It was not known then, and many people do not realise now, that holly is a major problem in the wet forest on the slopes of Mt Wellington.

Hollies have male and female plants - the typical red berries form on the females after 5-12 years. The berries are toxic and known to have harmed children, although there have been no reported deaths. Birds do not eat them until cold weather, especially frost, reduces toxicity during late winter. This is why the berries remain on the trees for a long time, thus making for an attractive tree in winter.

When birds finally eat the berries they usually only fly short distances after eating (up to 500m) where they either regurgitate the seeds or pass the seeds through the digestive tract, spreading the seeds into the surrounding forest.

Holly burns well because the leaves have oil in them. It burns almost as well as eucalypt. It is therefore not a protection from bushfire but a bushfire risk. However, fire does not kill holly - it will regrow from the root stock after a fire has passed through.

Introduced holly is also a major problem in other parts of Tasmania (around Zeehan, Queenstown and in NE Tasmania), the Blue Mountains in New South Wales, parts of Victoria and parts of the west coast of North America.

**Thank you for playing your part in making Fern Tree holly-free!**