

Beach - Bush - Birds

The purpose of the Greenlink project by community volunteers was the removal of major threats (weeds) to remnant vegetation habitats. This resulted in the restoration of a bushlink or "Greenlink" wildlife corridor around Long Reef to connect up with Dee Why Lagoon Wildlife Sanctuary, through to Narrabeen lagoon and the Warriewood wetland.



Bitou bush removal - Long Reef headland

Agave This Cacti/succulent introduced 1920's escaped from Fishermen's beach huts, and had engulfed nearby native Kangaroo grass (*Themeda australis*) grasslands. Reefcare volunteers numbering only seven in 1998 struggled to remove this weed. To tackle the next big threat Bitou, more volunteers and funding were necessary. The Greenlink project was born after approaching the Northern Beaches Catchment Management Committee for assistance.

Bitou bush The continued spread of Bitou bush (noxious weed) was threatening to engulf ALL remaining natural grassland habitats on Long Reef headland. In the past thirty years native grasslands on the headland had shrunk from two hectares to only ten thousand square meters in 1999 - a 95% loss.

Council controlled mowing. Within Griffith Park/ Fishermen's beach areas the mowing and whipper - snipping of park grasslands by Warringah Council was normal practice. Volunteers marked out remnant grassland areas and recommended mowing be stopped to encourage native grass to regrow. It was a great success - within a year *Themeda* native grass and native shrubs were regrowing.

Dumping The dumping of soil/building rubble behind Long Reef Beach hind dunes was acceptable practice up until 1999. Reefcare "Save our Dunes" project resulted in the area being reclaimed as a Reserve. The ground is being cleared and native vegetation been replanted.

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Council mowing



Dumping

Volunteers meet the challenge

Over the past four years Reefcare volunteers -now numbering over 60 members, plus Conservation Volunteers Australia have put in hundreds of hours working on the project. The works involve clearing of Bitou and other seasonal weeds, replanting grasslands and working with council to control mowing of parklands.

Greenlink a Natural Heritage Trust funded project

On completion of the project native grasslands now occupy over one hectare in area - a 99% increase since starting the project. The NHT funded project enabled Reefcare volunteers to tackle these tasks - the restoration of the headland Grasslands - a habitat where eagles fly. These grasslands supported only one pair of nesting Kestrels but now, Black-shouldered Kites and other grassland birds have moved back into the area.

The Greenlink project was a great success

The project received a State Award from the National Parks and Wildlife for Habitat Restoration in 2000. Warringah Council also received the Sydney Metro Award for conservation Excellence for work done by volunteers. The project is now used as a "Case Study" in NSW schools, HCS Science syllabus \ as an example of ecosystem rehabilitation.

The NEW Greenlink Walk and Discover Long Reef projects

Reefcare volunteers working with Sydney Northern Beaches Envirolink, are now completing a "Greenlink Walk" around Long Reef's natural habitats for the local community to enjoy.

S.N.B. ENVIROLINK www.ans.com.au/envirolink



**Greenlink Walk project
Funded by Envirofund -
Natural Heritage Trust**



**Discover Long Reef project
and Reefcare's web page -
funded by a Coastcare grant**