



Talking up Biodiversity Workshop 2

November 2010

Evaluation Report

Introduction

The second of the two Talking Up Biodiversity workshops was held on November the 5th, 2010 at the Maiden Theatre in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney. The workshop was a combination of presentations and interactive group work; see the agenda attached at Appendix 1. Grahame Collier facilitated it.

Twenty-six people attended the workshop and all provided a completed evaluation form

Overall rating of the workshop.

Participants were asked to describe the workshop using a choice of sixteen words. Half were positive words and half negative words. Participants were able to select as many as they wished.

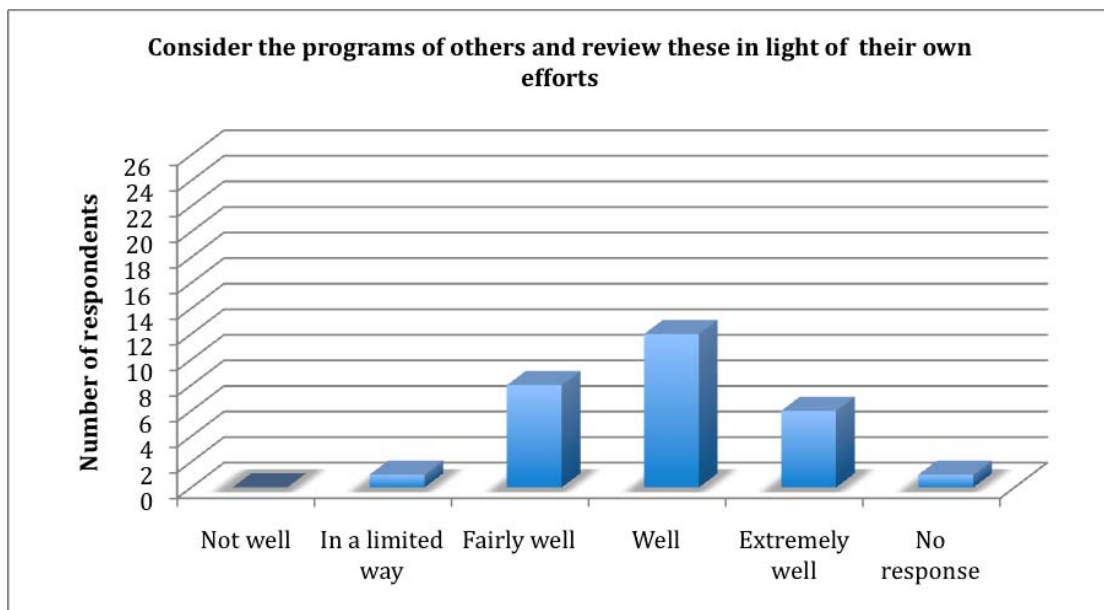
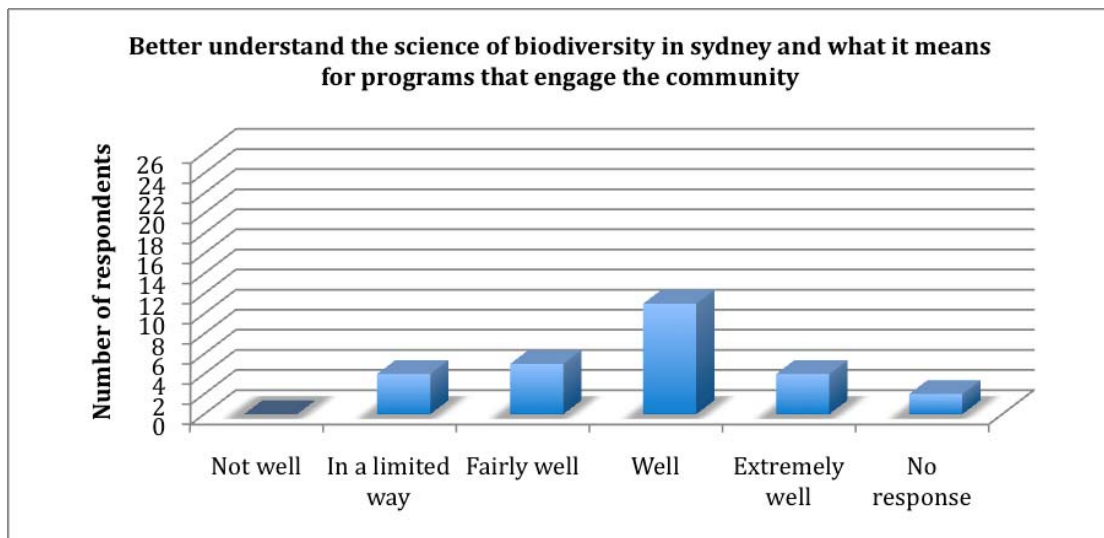
No participants chose any of the negative words/phrases, which included such words as: 'useless', 'unnecessary' and a 'waste of time'. The most frequently chosen words were 'thought-provoking' (22 respondents); 'enjoyable' (20) 'interesting' (17); Quality time (13) and 'satisfying' (10). The words "good" and challenging were also selected by several participants this is a very positive response.

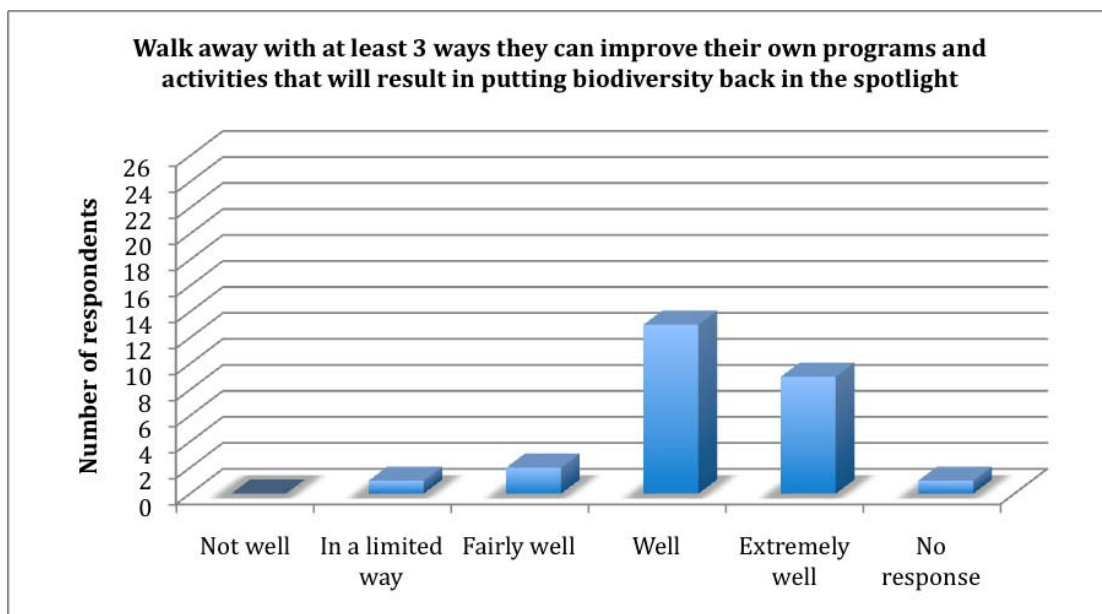
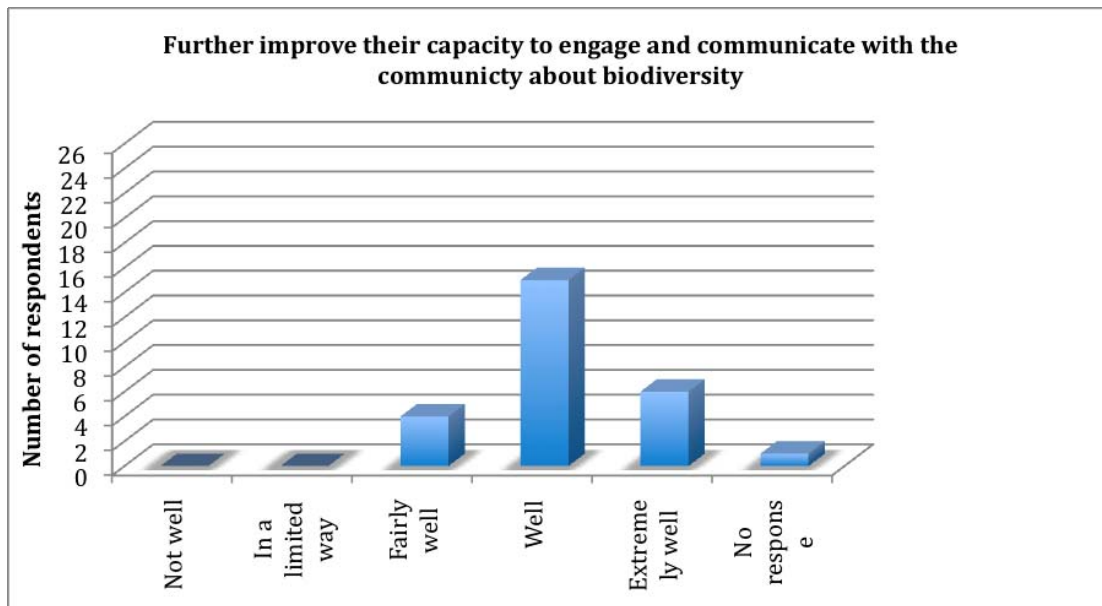
Participants were asked to score the workshop out of five (where one = poor and five = great). The average score given in this question was '4.4', meaning that most participants rated the workshop highly. No participant rated the workshop less than a 3.5 on this scale

The highly positive response to the workshop cannot be understated. This feedback speaks volumes for the structure content and approach used, The fact that all participants walked away happy is a strong indication of quality.

Specific workshop objectives

The graphs below indicate how well people felt the objectives of the workshop were met. All objectives were well met. Although 15% of participants felt that the first objective, relating to the 'science of biodiversity', was met only in a limited way. This may have been because some participants were expecting a more Sydney specific focus. All other responses to all objectives were more positive than this. It is interesting though that Professor Beattie's presentation was rated exceptionally positively, see below.





Suggestions for change

Participants were asked to indicate what they would change about the workshop. Responses are as follows:

- More example activities
- An outside activity, such as a beautiful location, shame not to get amongst it.
- Make it longer with more experts lecturing on biodiversity
- A bit more time for group work, but totally understand time constraints.
- That I was not preoccupied by all the other projects I have on (needed to clear my head better)
- Use Tim Flannery instead of Nelson Mandela (local person)

- More info on existing documents or tools available to use re communications, biodiversity education, case studies etc. Especially websites to tap into.
- I would like the opportunity to practice initiating dialogue –building conversations and graduated responses

The best ideas

Participants were asked to describe the best ideas they got from the workshop. Their responses, collated under headings, are as follows:

Professor Beattie

- Andrew's discussion re what real biodiversity is.
- Dr. Beattie's talk re complexity and promoting biodiversity
- Information from Professor Beattie's presentation
- Want to read more by Professor Beattie.

Leadership - Stepping up

- Nelson Mandela
- Considering the idea of leadership and its relevance.

The case studies

- Case studies contained great ideas
- Case studies of how to partner with/inspire community.

Engaging with the Community ideas/strategies

- Find the bigger audience
- Promote the positive
- Know your audience
- It's OK to promote what biodiversity does for us, not just conservation
- Stay empathic – tune in to the people you are working with
- Communicating productive biodiversity
- The psychology of communicating
- Identifying audiences
- A better understanding of the value of biodiversity and meaningful examples I can give to senior students
- Partnerships for programs
- Graduated response to change (X3)
- Stimulation and encouragement
- Lots of smaller, relevant ideas
- Practical ideas to take to the workplace, e.g. need to market our success better, need to think about who our target audience are
- Interesting ways to communicate to different audiences.

A different view of Biodiversity

- Expanding the commonly held concept of biodiversity to include organisms less than 1 cm.
- That biodiversity is generally largely underground (invertebrates/microorganisms)
- Focussing on biodiversity in a different way
- Change in understanding of what biodiversity encompasses
- Interesting ways to think about biodiversity.

Specific activities

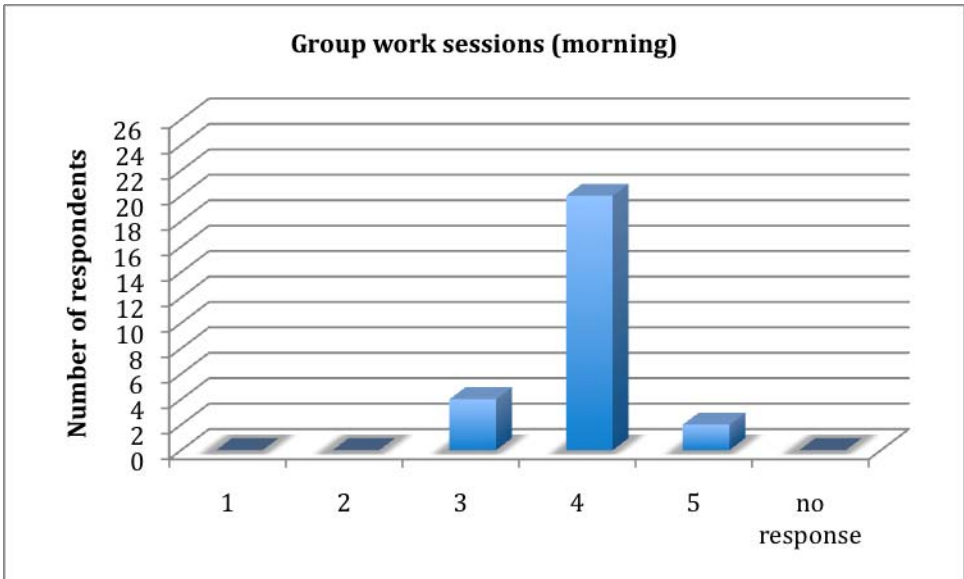
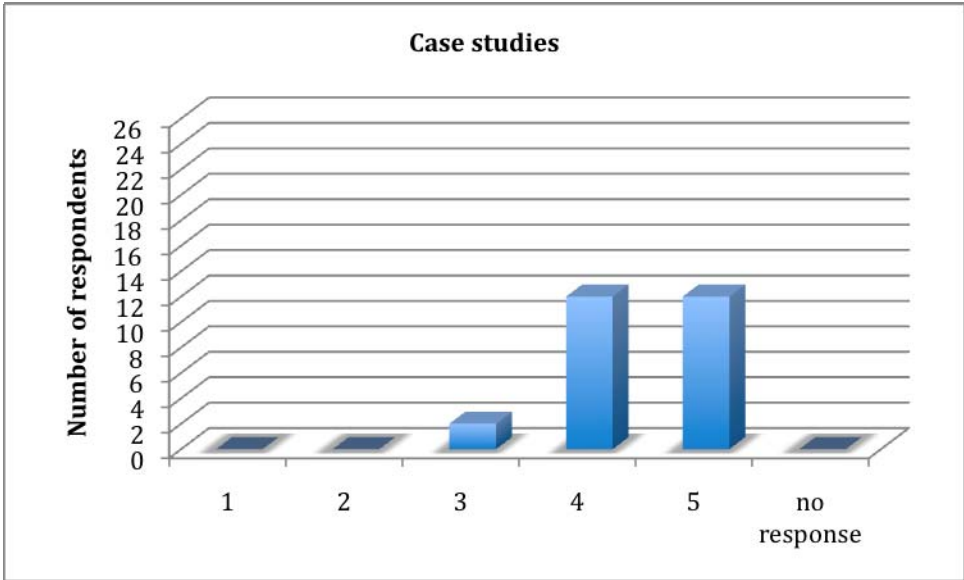
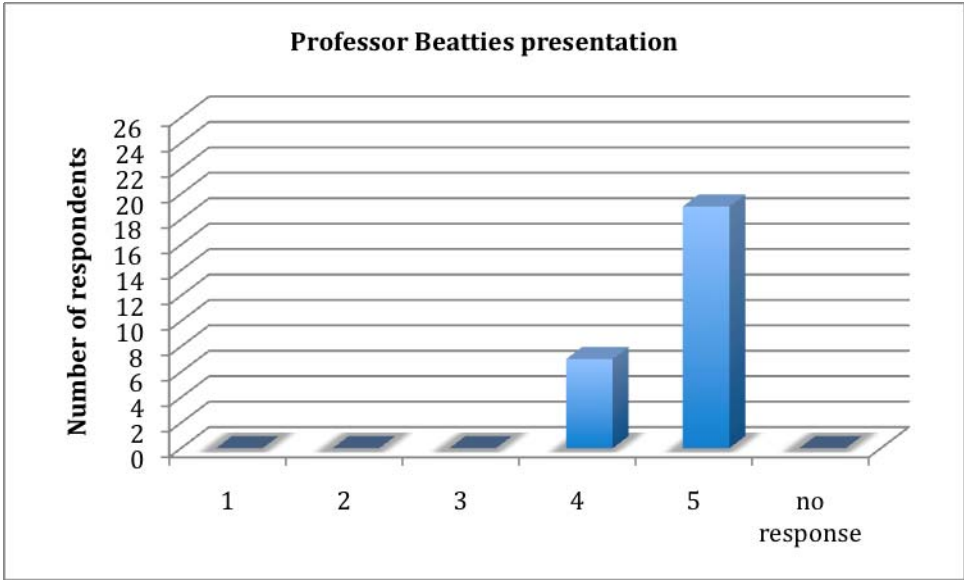
- Those from my peers during group discussion
- Outlined in the world café exercise
- World café works, lots of ideas produced.

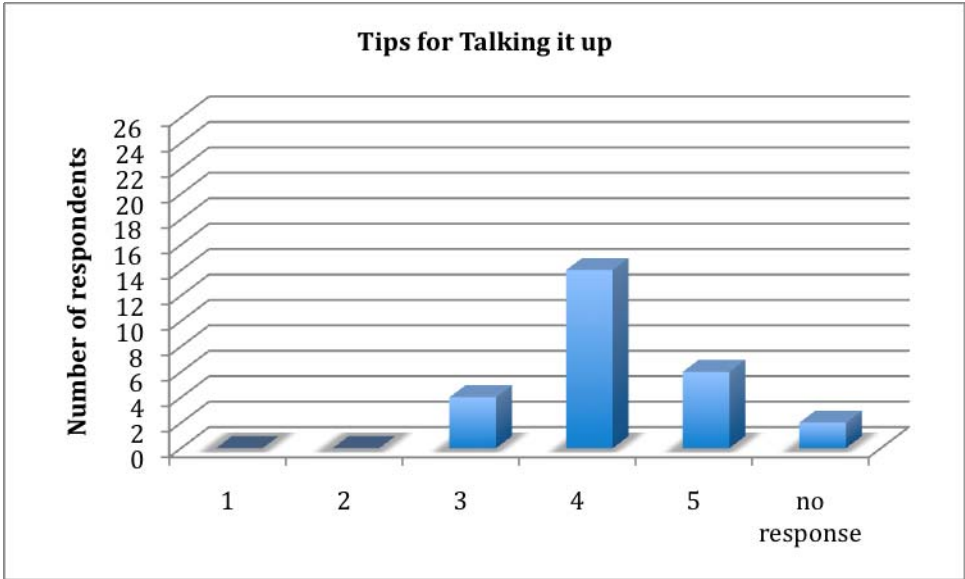
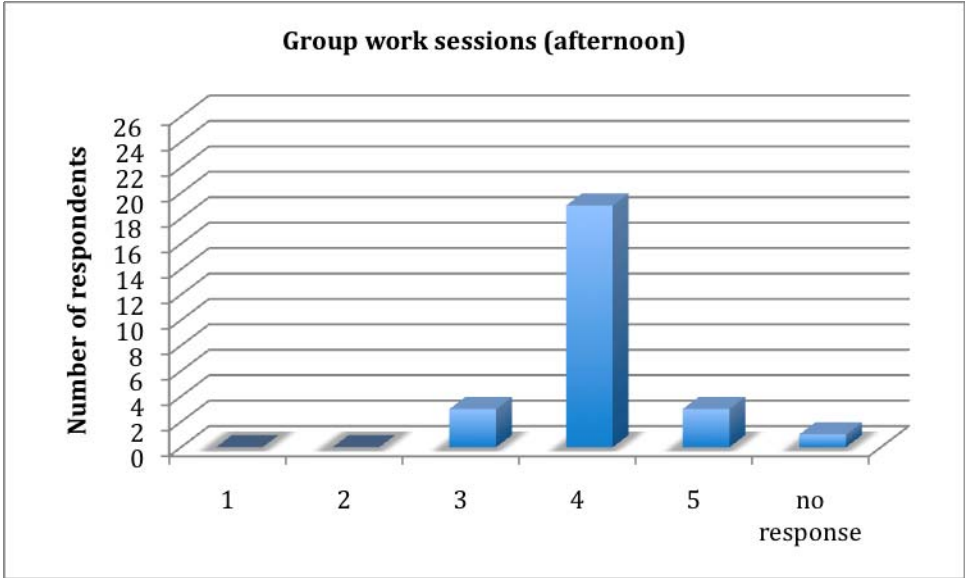
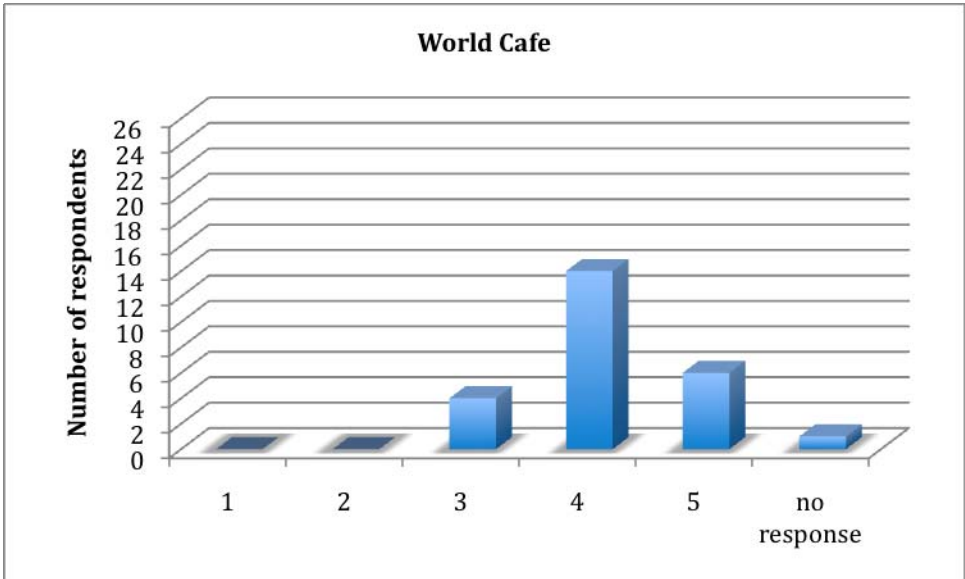
General responses

- That veg corridor programs are appreciated.
- Utilitarianism in Biodiversity
- Cultural attitudes to biodiversity
- Quiet time for connecting with the environment
- Realising biodiversity as an issue of concern is falling within the community – I was not aware of this problem.
- Some values of biodiversity
- Insights into how other people talk about biodiversity and the sorts of projects they are doing.

Specific Sessions in the workshop

Participants were asked to rate specific parts of the workshop on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 equals very poor and 5 equals excellent. The graphs below indicate the results. In summary, Professor Beattie's presentation and the four case study presentations rated particularly highly. All sessions were well rated by most participants with no score less than three on a five point scale and over 80% of scores as a four or a five.





Other comments

All other comments relating to the workshop are listed below. They are all very positive.

- Well done, good amount of information and variety of case studies.
- I stayed for half the workshop and I definitely got a lot from the time I was here especially from Professor Beattie.
- Great stuff x3
- Thanks for providing all of the materials on CD. I was able to listen to the presenters in a more focussed way.
- All good
- I wouldn't change anything
- I hope the resources (money) at council increases the awareness of biodiversity, but it's a chicken and egg situation.
- Engaging , amusing, friendly (and beautiful weather)
- Lovely and useful, also good to meet like minded
- Great to have an educator to lead workshop.
- Very enjoyable. Thanks for organising
- Great location and delicious food, Thank you.
- The workshop should be rolled out across all of NSW if resources/funding permit.
- Great to meet Aimee from Birds Australia again and hope we are able to work together, love her approach of sustainable program via birds.
- This is just the start; I know I can achieve better outcomes for my local community.
- Great to have a small group less than 50 people so that we could meet, share ideas, interact.
- Lovely to see Grahame again
- Very worthwhile.

Appendix 1. Agenda November 5, 2010: Talking Up Biodiversity Workshop

- 9:00** **Getting Started, Welcome, Introductions**
- 9:20** **Presentation Professor Andrew Beattie: ‘Biodiversity in Sydney in 2010 and beyond – the issues, opportunities and challenges’.**
- 10:00** **Applying the science to my program – Small/whole group discussion**
- 10:30** **Morning tea**
- 11:00** **Case study presentations:**
Native Haven Program in North Sydney Council. Is it working?
Ramin Khosravi. Bushland Project Officer
- Starting in your Backyard: Communities protecting their coastal wetlands*
Kate Heyward Senior Project Officer. WetlandCare Australia
Presented by Sue Martin
- Birds as Indicators*
Aimee Freimanis Education Coordinator Birds Australia
- 11:50** **Facilitated whole group activity – What’s in these case studies for my program? What do they mean for me?**
- 12:30** **A taste of what’s in store this afternoon**
- 12:40** **Lunch**
- 1;10** **What do we mean by ‘talking up biodiversity’? – Communication, engagement and education; an overview and perspective**
- 1:30** **Putting Biodiversity in the spotlight – identifying and finding solutions for the challenges.** A world cafe style activity where people identify challenges and work at and share solutions
- 3:00** **A Working Afternoon Tea – Handy Hints for Communication/Education – Maximising the benefits, getting people to talk with others**
- 3:50** **Workshop close, what did I learn, evaluation etc**
- 4:00** **Finish**