



FT8 - Central Gardens



- Merrylands Rd, Merrylands West
- UBD Map 210 C10
- Toilets, kiosk, picnic area
- Remnant Cumberland Plain vegetation
- Plan for sewer mining
- Toxic algal blooms a problem
- Ducks and bird spotting
- Toilets, kiosk, picnic areas
- Rangers on site

Site Information

The largest stand of remnant Cumberland Plain Woodland vegetation community on clay/shale soil on the Holroyd side of the Upper Parramatta River catchment is located at Central Gardens. Mowing of grass at the gardens has been restricted in recent times and native grasses are naturally regenerating in the unmown areas.

The constructed pond at the gardens features a mini waterfall and aerator. It has no natural inflow of stormwater and is currently supplied by mains water. There are plans to establish a mini-sewage treatment plant (STP) at a cost of \$1million. The STP will treat sewage to a Primary level and will provide opportunities to undertake sewer mining for supplying the pond. The pond has experienced problems with toxic algal blooms, which are minimised by the aeration system installed at the ponds. There are carp and ducks at the pond. The local anglers club regularly fishes at the pond, returning fish to the pond after catching.

Park gates are closed at night.



Areas of Cumberland Plain Woodland regenerating after cessation of mowing



Mown picnic areas at Central Gardens

Site Activities

- Catchment walk
- Water quality testing
- Habitat assessment
- Endangered ecological communities (Cumberland Plains Woodland regeneration)

- Transects, quadrats
- Mapping
- Weed identification
- Ground cover assessment

Site Walk

1. Park in the car park accessible from Merrylands Rd. Central gardens is noted for being a large stand of Cumberland Plain Bushland. As you walk in note the Picnic area and denuded understorey. What impact might this have on the trees in this area? What will be left when the trees die? What could be done about this? Is there any way the trees and (newly planted) shrubs could be protected without compromising this area as a recreation zone?
2. Animal enclosure. Many animals are present in this area including wallabies, emu, grey/red kangaroo, native waterfowl, galahs, parrots, rosellas, and cockatiels. Observe the animals. Which of these species may have inhabited this area before European settlement?
3. Walk around the lake to the west. This area has recently been fenced off for regeneration. Before fencing it appeared similar to the picnic area. How has it changed? What species are present that were not in the picnic area? Fencing off this area has positives and negative. Name two of each. Is this how the area would have looked prior to settlement? Why/why not?
4. Continue around the lake. Note the number of weeds in this area. Can you identify them?
5. Walk onto the viewing platform. An aerator and waterfall are used to oxygenate the water. Why? Note the number of ducks in the Gardens. Are they native? What effect could they have on the area?

Links

Cumberland Plains Woodland - National Parks and Wildlife Service Website
www.npws.nsw.gov.au