

Safety Alert – Hazards on a bush Campus!

Number 20-10

1 BACKGROUND

The weather is warming up so it's important to remember some of the hazards on a bush campus in the warmer months.



1. **Mosquitos:** Mozzies are prevalent at the Callaghan and Ourimbah campuses in warmer months.
2. **Snakes:** Snakes are generally not a big issue as they prefer to avoid humans, however they can be seen on or near paths and around buildings.
3. **Birds:** The campus is home to many different types of birds. Some nesting birds such as Magpies and Noisy Miners are known to be protective of their territory and young and may swoop people who pass through their territory.

2 ACTION REQUIRED

1. **Mosquitos:** When dealing with mozzies, prevention is better than cure!
 - a. When outside avoid getting bitten by covering-up with light-coloured, loose-fitting long sleeved shirt, long pants and enclosed footwear where possible;
 - b. Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, avoiding eyes, mouth and any open cuts or wounds. The best repellents contain at least 20% DEET or Picardin. Repellent is readily available around the University.
 - c. If you notice pooled water, potential mosquito breeding sites on campus please report it as a hazard through the online Health & Safety incident management system [AIMS](#) and log a [Maximo](#) for maintenance work. Ensure fly screens are properly fitted to doors and windows - Staff can log a [Maximo](#) request if any fly screens require repairs.
2. **Snakes:**
 - a. Snakes in general are timid creatures and will retreat if people are near by. If you encounter one, remain calm, move away from it, change your route, or wait for it to retreat. If you see a snake in a building notify people in the area and contact IFS on 16500 and they will arrange for WIRES to come and relocate it – try and have someone watch the snake from a distance to see where it goes to.
 - b. If you are out and about on campus, please avoid looking at your phone while walking so that you have time to respond to a snake or any other hazard on the walkway.
 - c. Snakes are protected by law and it is illegal to kill snakes and most snake bites occur while a person is trying to kill or capture the snake. Although snake sightings on campus are not uncommon there has never been a snake bite reported at the University.
3. **Swooping birds:**
 - a. If you notice a persistent swooping bird please log a hazard report in [AIMS](#) so we can arrange for a warning sign to be installed.

3 ASSISTANCE

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact the Health and Safety Team on 403 39999 (#5) or Usafe@newcastle.edu.au