



# O.F.F. NEWS



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CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.**

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## NOTICE OF MOTION ON SUBSCRIPTIONS

O.F.F. Committee has regretfully concluded that an increase in membership fees is needed to cover higher insurance premiums and increased costs in printing and posting O.F.F. News. Accordingly, as required by the Society's rules, members are advised that a motion will be put to the monthly (general) meeting on **22nd November** to increase the annual membership fee to \$25 for an individual or family (at the same address).

## BENOWIE TRACK WALK

Despite light showers and forecasts of more wet weather, 11 OFF members took part in a very interesting and rewarding walk along the Benowie Track in the Hornsby area on Saturday, 2nd October. Some of the flora and fauna sightings and other features of the walk are in a more complete report which may be viewed on our website at [www.off.oatleypark.com](http://www.off.oatleypark.com)

## ANNUAL DINNER A WINNER

Our Annual Dinner on 8th October at Peshurst Hotel was an extremely enjoyable social event with excellent food. A feature of the evening was a fun raffle with 18 very good prizes which raised over \$250 for the Society. Thanks are due to all concerned, especially Lesley Cox for organising the dinner, Faye Coughlan for organising the raffle, and members and businesses who donated the prizes (see below).

### THANKS TO PRIZE DONORS

The Society is very grateful to the following local businesses for donating prizes at our Annual Dinner:

**Bresnehan's Butcher & Deli**  
**C&B Gourmet Shoppe**  
**Mandies Fashion Boutique**  
**Mortdale Wholesalers**  
**Mortdale Wishbone Chicken**  
**Oatley Delicatessen**  
**Urban Fringe Hairdresser**  
**Video Ezy Mortdale**

## HARMONISING WITH THE BEETLES

Our speaker at the next monthly meeting on **25th October** will be **Dr Chris Reid** whose topic is '**Beetles in the Ecosystem**'. Chris says he was studying insects at the age of 5 and decided to specialise in beetles at the age of 12. He completed a PhD on beetles in 1990 and has worked professionally in that area since then. He is now with the Australian Museum where he is involved in various projects, including one on the use of beetles for landscape studies.

## BLUE MOUNTAINS WORLD HERITAGE

Alex Colley is an extraordinary 95-year old conservationist who has actively campaigned with Myles and Milo Dunphy (and many others) to protect the Blue Mountains since the early 1930s. His inspiring story of the struggle, together with 60 beautiful full page colour photographs and 28 memorable black and white images by acclaimed photographer Henry Gold, has just been published in a magnificent 136-page book 'Blue Mountains World Heritage'. This is now available from the Colong Foundation for Wilderness (tel 9299 7341) for just \$50, which includes postage. Framed prints of the images are now also available from Henry Gold (tel 9451 3041).

## WANTED: O.F.F. PHOTOS FOR 50th

Founded in 1955 after concerns about Oatley Park, next year Oatley Flora & Fauna celebrates 50 years of involvement in conservation issues which, in itself, is quite an achievement. Activities to mark this special occasion will include an annotated account of the Society's history, a special Annual Dinner and a special Picnic in the Park. **If you have any photographs of OFF activities** (walks, camps, plant study days and bush regeneration days etc), **especially from the 50s, 60s or 70s**, and would be prepared to have them scanned for a slide show, **please call Lesley Cox on 9579 3782**. Please call Lesley, also, if you have any other ideas for the celebrations, or would like to help.

Meetings are held at the **Uniting Church Hall, Frederick Street, Oatley.**  
(near the corner of Letitia Street)

It is intended that meetings commence promptly at 7.45 pm.

Visitors and accompanied children are welcome to attend all meetings and field days.

## Coming Events

**October 25 (Monday)**, Regular monthly meeting at 7.45 pm. **Dr Chris Reid**, Australian Museum, will speak on **Beetles in the Ecosystem**.

**October 30 (Saturday)**, Field Day, **Harbour and South Head Heritage Trail**. 8.04 am train from Oatley (second carriage), then 9.15 am ferry from Circular Quay (Wharf 4) arriving at Watson's Bay Wharf 10am. Walk along South Head Heritage Trail which should take about two and a half hours. Suggested lunch in Robertson Park after the walk and then a wander around the Gap area before returning to Watson's Bay Wharf by 2.00 pm to catch the ferry back to the Quay. Bring water, hat, binoculars, lunch (although plenty of places to buy food at Watson's Bay). Leaders: Annette and Julian Sheen, tel 9594 4888.

**November 17 (Wednesday)**, Mid-week Field Day - **Sydney Sculpture Walk** with extra points of interest. Level walking, 3 to 4 hours. Lunch in Royal Botanic Gardens. Meet Martin Place, Macquarie St end, 10.15 am. Train from Oatley 9.35am. Leaders: Janet and Graham Austin, tel 9579 2375.

**November 22 (Monday)**, Regular monthly meeting, **Dr Phil Moore** will speak on **Writing about Wildflowers of Central Australia**. Followed by end-of-year Social Supper.

### NEW SPECIES FOUND BY ALAN

It seems incredible that a previously unknown plant species can be found less than one kilometre from Blackheath Station and right next to a popular walking track. But that is what has happened. In November 2001 O.F.F. Vice-President, Alan Fairley, observed a clump of unusual leaves on a wet rock wall on the Centennial Glen track. A small specimen was taken and grown on in a pot where, in November 2003, it produced an unfamiliar flower. Alan took it to the Sydney Herbarium where, after some debate and misidentification, it was agreed that it was a new species of *Ultricularia* (Bladderwort genus) for Australia. It has similarities to a South African species, *U. sandersonii*, and DNA tests may be required to determine its affinities.

### BANJO BY CLIFF

Former OFF President and current committee member, **Cliff Crane**, is the invited speaker to the 'Friends of Hurstville Library' meeting on Thursday, 28 October, 11am in the main library, Queens Rd and Dora St, Hurstville. His 60 minute presentation is on **'The Life and Times and Ballads of Banjo Paterson'**. The public - and particularly OFF members - are welcome. Entry is free. Inquiries: Cliff, 9580 3269 - or just turn up.

### VERY BRIEFLY .....

**National Bushcare Month**: October. Details and program at [www.nht.gov.au/nht1/programs/bushcare](http://www.nht.gov.au/nht1/programs/bushcare)

**Port Botany Inquiry**: Resumes 19 October. See June/July OFF News. Also [www.coi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.coi.nsw.gov.au)

**Environmental Forum**: Hands-on Sydney case studies for environmental groups, bush regenerators, land managers etc. 5-6 November, University of Sydney. Details: Leanne Cusiter 9895 5965.

**Buying Green Conference & Exhibition**: Telstra Stadium, Sydney Olympic Park, 10-12 November, Details: [www.impactenviro.com.au/buyinggreen2004](http://www.impactenviro.com.au/buyinggreen2004)

**Bird Surveys, October-December**: Volunteers are needed for NSW coastal surveys of Rufous Scrub Bird (Peter, 4951 6466), Hooded Plover (Chris, (03) 9882 2622) and Little Tern (Damon, 6298 9727).

### DID YOU KNOW ?

The **Grey Nurse Shark**, once considered very dangerous to humans, was the most commonly seen shark around Sydney up to the early 1960s. **It is now regarded by experts as slow, docile and quite harmless to humans.** It declined rapidly during the 1970s due largely to spearfishing and offshore beach meshing, and was declared a protected species in 1984. Recent surveys show that **only about 400 remain** in the entire waters of eastern Australia.