



O.F.F. NEWS



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KANGAROOS NESTING IN TREES

At the next monthly meeting on Monday 21st March the presentation will be on the North Queensland World Heritage Area (see overleaf). This will feature some **remarkable native rainforest fauna**: rare and endangered species such as the magnificent cassowary, highly intelligent monkey-like cuscuses, and tree-kangaroos that construct nests of branches high in the canopy. Please note that this meeting will be on the third Monday of the month because the fourth is Easter Monday. The April monthly meeting will also be on the third Monday as the fourth is ANZAC Day.

DOUBLE ANNIVERSARY

2005 is not only O.F.F.'s 50th Anniversary year but also the National Trust's 60th Anniversary Year. The latter is being celebrated with a **National Trust Heritage Festival** which includes about 400 events (mainly in April) in association with affiliated organisations. One of these events will be the Oatley Park Heritage Tour with O.F.F. as outlined below.

OATLEY PARK HERITAGE TOUR

This is a guided walk through Oatley Park on Sunday, 17th April as part of the National Trust Heritage Festival and to commemorate our 50th Anniversary. It will be conducted by O.F.F. members and will **feature the Park's natural and cultural heritage items** such as significant plants, army camp site, historic baths, and depression era stone work. As the tour is open to the public, **bookings are essential** (limited group numbers). Contact Graham Austin on 9579 2375.

TELL ROBIN IF YOU DON'T GET IT

We want to make sure all members receive their monthly copies of O.F.F. News a few days before each monthly meeting. Whether you receive it by post or email, please tell Robin Dickson on 9580 5663 if any issues do not arrive.

FINAL SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Is your 2005 subscription overdue? Please note that, according to the Constitution, **membership ceases if payment is not made by 31st March.**

50th ANNIVERSARY NOTES

O.F.F. began with a meeting at the home of Rafe and Moyia Kowron on 30th November 1955. A number of special events will therefore be held during 2005 to mark our anniversary year. The first of these is the **Oatley Park Heritage Tour** on April 17 (see details in column 1). Below are two other events.

Anniversary Dinner, Friday, October 21. Ask friends and family to come along and enjoy a Big Night Out at Roslyn Gardens, Peakhurst. Good menu and live music. More details at meetings and in later issues of O.F.F. News

Birthday Picnic in Oatley Park, Wednesday, December 7. This was the day when the name of the Society was decided 50 years ago. The Georges River Community Services have generously offered to help by providing coffee and cake for the picnic. More details in later issues of O.F.F. News.

Further information: Lesley Cox, 9579 3782

OATLEY PARK PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Hurstville City Council has now released its long awaited Plan of Management of Oatley Park. The Society has made substantial inputs to this and we are pleased to see that most of our recommendations have been accepted. It is now officially recognised that the Park should be managed **primarily as a natural bushland reserve** for protecting the 'diversity of biological species, populations and communities it accommodates'. We are particularly pleased that the Plan accepts our recommendation for allowing bikes on sealed roads and fire trails but **not on walking tracks** or any other part of the Park.

ROYAL NATIONAL PARK FOREST WALK

Happily for 14 O.F.F. members at the field day on 5th March, the forecast of rain was wrong and walking conditions were good. Features of the walk included:

- easy walking along the Forest Path through beautiful rainforest with stately eucalypt emergents
- lunch under the rainforest canopy at Palona Brook
- Palona Cave and its fascinating limestone formations
- A scramble up Palona Falls to the ferny flats above.

Pictures and other details of this excellent trip will be placed on our website www.off.oatleypark.com

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 children are welcome to attend all meetings and field days.

Coming Events

March 21 (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, 7.45pm. Dr Fred Bell, Environmental Scientist, will speak on the **North Queensland World Heritage Area.**

April 2 (Saturday) FIELD DAY. Drawing Room Rocks, near Berry. A short steep walk up the Illawarra Escarpment at Wood Hill with some level sections and splendid views. Total distance about 4 km return. Meet at **9.30 am at Apex Park** - on the Sydney side of Berry just over the bridge. About two hours drive from Oatley. Bring water, morning tea and lunch. Hat, strong walking shoes etc are advisable. Leader: *Graham Lalchere*, tel 9580 3107.

April 18 (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING. 7.45pm. Nick Carlile, Dept of Environment and Conservation, will give a presentation entitled **In search of KacauNi Gau (Fiji Petrel).**

O.F.F.'s CLEAN-UP-AUSTRALIA DAY A GREAT SUCCESS

Thirty volunteers turned up at Pamela Avenue, Peakhurst on a beautiful Sunday morning 6/3/05 to clean up the banks of Lime Kiln Bay. Twenty five bags of rubbish, several tyres and other materials were removed. **We were helped by the use of kayaks** supplied by Sharyn Cullis. With these we could get more effectively into the mangrove area.

Volunteers noted that the bush and mangrove areas, while still containing rubbish, were not as polluted as in previous years. In fact as site supervisor and faced with so many keen cleaner-uppers, I felt it only fair to redistribute some of the rubbish back to the bush and so ensure that all volunteers gained a sense of achievement from the exercise. **I resisted this temptation.**

Hurstville Council cooperated well with the volunteers and provided a very good lunch afterwards.

A big THANK YOU to all those members and friends who took part

Julian Sheen

WARNING: FOXES AND SMALL PETS

An addendum has been issued by Lesley Winters to her very informative account at the last monthly meeting of the local fox problem. There have been three recent reports of small pets (2 kittens, 1 pup) being taken by foxes in the Oatley-Mortdale area. In all cases, food had been left in the backyard for the pets, and the **foxes ate this and the pets as well.** Members are asked to advise local councillors of all fox sightings as Hurstville and Kogarah Councils are obviously not dealing effectively with this problem.

'TERRIBLE' KURNELL DECISION

A decision on the Heritage Listing of Kurnell Peninsula has just been announced. The only parts considered worthy of listing are the Headland and Cook's Landing Place, both of which are already protected in Botany Bay National Park. By the Australian Heritage Council's 'objective' criteria, the Towra Point waterbird habitats, great sand dune remnants, and special Aboriginal sites **are not considered unique or unusual 'in a national context'**. 'This is a terrible result' said Bob Walshe, a leading conservationist who has been striving for many years to have the Peninsula's qualities recognised. However, as noted (cynically) in last year's August issue of O.F.F. News, the area is so important economically that such a disappointing decision is really no surprise.

VERY BRIEFLY

Goat Island Picnics: March 20 & 27, Sydney Harbour National Parks. Bookings 9247 5033.

National Trust Foundation Day: April 6, further information: tel 1800 650 093 or 9258 0123

New National Parks Strategy: closing date for submissions is April 8. See Feb/Mar O.F.F. News.

Secrets of Barrington Tops: April 27, 8pm. NPA Slideshow, Sutherland Multipurpose Centre.

DID YOU KNOW ?

The total remaining area of rainforest in Australia is about the same as the Sydney-Newcastle-Wollongong urban area, i.e. 20,000 sq. km. Half of this rainforest is in North-east Queensland and is the **only habitat for 78 species of rare or endangered native fauna.**

VERY BRIEFLY

Sustainable Development Education Decade

(UN) 2005-2014, <http://portal.unesco.org>

Goat Island Picnics: March 20 & 27, Sydney Harbour National Parks. Bookings 9247 5033.

World Forests Day: March 21, www.unesco.org/forests/forests_celebrations

World Water Day: March 22, www.unesco.org/water/water_celebrations

National Trust Foundation Day: April 6, further information from ??????????

New National Parks Strategy: closing date for submissions is April 8. See Feb/Mar OFF News.

Oatley Park Heritage Tour: Sunday, April 17, with National Trust. Details overleaf.

Secrets of Barrington Tops: April 27, 8pm. NPA Slideshow, Sutherland Multipurpose Centre.

Sedges & Rushes Identification: Two-day workshop for Bushcare volunteers, Kirrawee, April 30 & May 1, details & bookings 9710 5790

Burnum Burnum Sanctuary, May 1, Open Day, Woronora River foreshore section, Jannali. Details from Graeme or Gary, 9545 3077.