



# O.F.F. NEWS



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## GOJAK ON JOADJA

At our next monthly meeting on 28th August (see over), the speaker will be Denis Gojak from the Bankstown Heritage Group. His topic will be 'Joadja Shale Oil Mining Site'.

During the late 1800s Joadja was the largest town in the Southern Highlands, and its kerosene shale mines were the most important source of oil for lighting and heating in the Colony of NSW. It is now a ghost town containing the remains of many old stone buildings and workings with World Heritage listing. The fascinating history (and geography) of this area, as presented by Denis, will ensure a meeting you should not miss !

## LETTER FROM THE WHEELERS

Some of our more senior members will remember Eric and Margaret Wheeler who joined O.F.F. in 1959 and were active members until moving to Grafton in 1971. Eric was President from 1963 to 1965. They have recently written a very nice letter to the Society with nostalgic recollections and 27 photographs of past events and personalities. The full letter and a selection of the photographs will be placed on our website at [www.off.oatleypark.com](http://www.off.oatleypark.com)

## BUSH HERITAGE WORKING BEES

Following a stimulating talk at the June monthly meeting by Roewen Wishart, a number of members expressed interest in the Australian Bush Heritage Fund's working bees. These provide opportunities for inexpensive holidays at interesting places with like-minded people and, at the same time, enable direct participation in very effective and important conservation measures. The places and dates for forthcoming working bees are:

- Nardoo Hills Reserve, Vic; Sept 16-17, Oct 7-9
- Cravens Peak Reserve, Qld; Sept 26 - Oct 6
- Tarcutta Hills Reserve, NSW; Oct 7-15
- Liffey River Reserve, Tas; Nov 4-6.

Information on any of the above may be obtained from Joelle Metcalf on [volunteers@bushheritage.asn.au](mailto:volunteers@bushheritage.asn.au) or (03) 8610 9102. A paper on ABHF volunteering may also be obtained from Julian Sheen on 9594 4888 or [jandasheen@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jandasheen@optusnet.com.au).

## ILLAWARRA ESCARPMENT FIELD DAY

Our field day of July 29th was marked by glorious weather and 11 enthusiastic walkers. As planned, the group reached the intriguing 'Drawing Room Rocks' with its splendid views, and then continued on to the Barren Grounds Nature Reserve. Some interesting bird sightings and other observations were made here, as described in the full report by trip leader, Graham Lalchere. This will be placed on our website with a selection of photos (see [www.off.oatleypark.com](http://www.off.oatleypark.com)).

## FOXES IN HURSTVILLE

Despite recently reported increases in local fox sightings, the only action by Hurstville Council, according to 'The Leader', will be to record the sightings on a database. The Society has therefore written letters to both 'The Leader' and Council requesting additional measures such as locating and fumigating dens, baiting with 1080 poison, and trapping. These measures have been used effectively by Ku-ring-gai, Hornsby, and other urban councils, apparently without problems.

## RECYCLING CORKS

As Rotary Clubs have stopped collecting corks some members are apparently under the impression that they are no longer needed for recycling. However, Lesley Winters has advised us that the Guides of NSW are still enthusiastically collecting corks and want to continue receiving them. Lesley or John Winters or Joan Bell are all happy to receive corks from members at meetings, and will pass them on to the Guides.

## ANNUAL DINNER 2006

**The 2006 O.F.F. Annual Dinner will be held at Roslyn Gardens on Friday, October 20 at 7.00pm. This was the venue for our 50th Anniversary Dinner last year and it was so enjoyable we have decided to make a return visit - slightly scaled down, of course. The cost will be \$30 per person for pre-dinner savouries, a two course meal and tea/coffee.**

**Robin Dickson will be taking names and accepting payment at both the August and September monthly meetings. She may also be contacted on 9580 5663.**

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

**August 28th (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING.** 7.45 pm. Denis Gojak will speak about the **Joadja shale oil mining site.**

**September 2nd (Saturday) FIELD DAY. BONNET BAY - THE GLEN & KOOLANGARRA RESERVES.** Meet at Bonnet Bay Reserve, lower end of Washington Drive, 9.30 am. We will have morning tea at this reserve (which has toilets) before starting the bushwalk. The track is about 6 km and rated 'moderate'. Bring lunch and water, wear suitable bushwalking clothing with boots or strong shoes, and hat.

Leader: Heather Mackey, tel 9528 7071 or 0418 473 735 (M)

**September 25th (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING.** 7.45 pm. Gary Schoer will give a presentation entitled 'Chile and Chillier .... Antarctica via Patagonia'.

### PROTEST AGAINST BIOBANKING

The latest Government/developer/economic weapon to combat the constraints of conservation is biobanking. Essentially, this allows natural areas of conservation significance to be destroyed if they can be offset by the protection of 'similar' areas of land elsewhere. The scheme was released for public comment last year (see [www.dec.nsw.gov.au/threatspec/biobankbill.htm](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/threatspec/biobankbill.htm)), and a bill to put it into effect will be considered when the NSW Parliament resumes at the end of August this year. In general, conservationists are strongly opposed to the scheme, particularly as acceptable methods of selecting and assessing offsets are not yet available. Most groups have expressed their objections to the Minister (The Hon. R.J. Debus, Level 36, Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney 2000) and they are now asking individuals to do the same as a matter of urgency.

### WILDFLOWER TOURS WITH ALAN

O.F.F. Vice President and well-known native plant authority, Alan Fairley, will lead two guided wildflower tours for National Parks and Wildlife Service in the coming Spring months. Both tours will be in Royal National Park starting at Audley Causeway. The first will be on Sunday 17th September, 9.30am to 12.30pm, and focus on the expected brilliant wildflower display of the coastal heathlands. The second will be on Tuesday 10th October, 9.30am to 12.30pm, in the eucalypt woodlands. The cost for each tour will be \$20 per person and all participants are required to book in advance through the National Parks and Wildlife Service Discovery Co-ordinator on 9542 0649, or at the Royal National Park Visitors Centre on 9542 0666.

### VERY BRIEFLY ....

**St George Councils' Sustainability Festivities:** August 26. Courtyard, 2 Belgrave Street, Kogarah. Features include: hybrid cars, plants to attract native birds, water and energy saving, children's activities. More information: Alexandra Vandine on 9330 9510.

**Guided Walks, Joseph Banks Reserve, Kareela:** August 27, 10am-4pm, large range of native plants in both natural and planted areas. Expert information, ideas and sales. Australian Plants Society, 9528 9262.

**Peak Oil & Permaculture:** August 29, 6.30pm NSW Parliament House Theatre. Acclaimed speakers David Holmgren & Richard Heinberg. Bookings: 9230 2603 or [dominika.rajewski@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:dominika.rajewski@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

**David Suzuki: 'Putting the World Back Together':** September 4, Enmore Theatre, Newtown. Doors open 6pm, Suzuki speaks 8.10pm; for Anvil Hill Campaign. Details, bookings: [www.anvilhill.org.au/](http://www.anvilhill.org.au/) or Christine on 6547 8011 or [christine.phelps@reset.net.au](mailto:christine.phelps@reset.net.au)

**Fifth National Wilderness Conference:** Sept 8-10, Main Campus, Uni of Technology, Sydney. Speakers include Premier Iemma and leading conservationists such as Bob Brown, John Sinclair and Keith Muir. Cost for individuals: \$90 (\$60 Concession). Details & registration forms: Colong Foundation, 9299 7341.

### DID YOU KNOW ?

After the city of Hiroshima was destroyed by the U.S. atomic bomb in August 1945, the first plants to rise from the radioactive ashes were apparently Australian Acacias. In recognition of this an Acacia Appreciation Club was formed by the citizens of Hiroshima. The club has recently arranged exchanges of friendship messages with Australian schoolchildren and plant enthusiasts.