



O.F.F. NEWS



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DROUGHT-PROOF NATIVE LAWNS ?

Tim Berryman, an expert on **native grasses**, has a Master of Applied Science degree and extensive professional experience in environmental management and planning, land restoration and community development. We are fortunate in having him as the speaker at our next **monthly meeting on 22nd May** (see over). He will tell us about many of the surprising and poorly appreciated features of native grasses that make them so interesting and useful. If you want to find out what species might be suitable for your needs, where to get the seed, and anything else about native grasses, make sure you come to this meeting.

NOT ALL BOOM AND GLOOM

With Australia's **record budget surplus** and currently vaunted wealth, one might expect a boom in measures to improve the environment and conserve biodiversity. Sadly, many of us **perceive the reverse** - environment and conservation seem to have lost their political and social significance. But there is a **spark of hope** in a recent poll by Roy Morgan International. It found that 89% of Australians agree "if we don't act now we'll never control our environmental problems". This high percentage makes **Australians more environmentally aware** than people in most other countries, including the United Kingdom, New Zealand and U.S.A. (from *Mambara, Autumn 2006*, Sydney CMA Newsletter)

OATLEY PARK THIS MONTH

Alan Fairley has listed some plants in Oatley Park that should be flowering conspicuously in May/June:

Sunshine Wattle (*Acacia terminalis*) shrub to 2m, bipinnate leaves, bright yellow flowers.

Sweet-scented Wattle (*Acacia suaveolens*) slender shrub to 2m, pale yellow or cream flowers.

Heath Banksia (*Banksia ericifolia*) small crowded leaves, orange-red flower spikes

Variable Bossiaea (*Bossiaea heterophylla*) shrub to 1m tall, yellow and red pea-type flowers

White Fingers (*Caladenia catenata*) white ground orchid with a single flower on a 20 cm stem

Rough Wax-flower (*Philotheca scabra*) white with 5 petals, small shrub on sheltered slopes.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Members are advised that a special resolution will be put to a Special General Meeting at 7.45pm, immediately before the monthly general meeting on 26th June. The resolution will propose amendments to the objects of the Society, as detailed on the separate sheet with this issue of O.F.F. News

NOT MANLY TO SPIT !

"Saturday 29 April dawned grey with some drizzle, but again the promise of rain was unfulfilled, happily for 14 O.F.F. members who trained and bussed (?) to the Spit Bridge start point for a really enjoyable medium grade 11 – 12 km walk around and above the shorelines of Middle and North harbours in totally fine and pleasant walking conditions." After these apt opening words and summary, leader Cliff Crane's report describes the highlights of the walk, including:

- magnificent views of Sydney Harbour with its National Park and myriad of sailing and other craft,
- site of attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh during his visit in 1868,
- Clontarf, Reef and Forty Baskets beaches,
- Aboriginal carvings, scrubland, and various forest types including pockets of subtropical rainforest,
- two sunbaking water dragons,
- historic cliff-built huts at Crater Cove,
- coffee and shopping on Manly wharf, and then the Manly ferry back to Circular Quay.

Cliff's **full report** on this excellent field day, with photos, will be on our website at off.oatleypark.com

CITIZENS' CLIMATE CAMPAIGN

A campaign has been initiated by members of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society **to put climate change on the political agenda**. It will get people all over Australia to send a loud message **every month** to politicians either by email or letter. **O.F.F. members are invited to participate in this scheme simply by emailing 'Yes !' to climatez@bigpond.net.au**. You will then be emailed each month with contact details of politicians and a suggested aspect of climate change to bring to their attention. Further information may be obtained from Robin at mosman@hermes.net.au

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

May 22nd (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING. 7.45 pm. Tim Berryman will speak on **native grasses**.

May 27th (Saturday) FIELD DAY. UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS. Neates Glen car park, Evans Lookout, Govetts Leap, Braeside Walk. 7-8 km round trip. Magnificent views from the cliff rim track over the deep Grose Valley. Many steps on a well made track. Meet at Neates Glen car park at 10.45 am. If travelling **by car**: allow about 2 hours from Oatley along the M4 & Great Western Highway. Turn right just before Blackheath on to Evans Lookout Road. Drive 2.9 km to Neates Glen car park on right. If travelling **by train**, catch 8.18 am train from Central, arriving 10.34 at Blackheath where train will be met by Graham Austin. Bring water, morning tea, lunch, sturdy shoes. Leader: Janet Austin, phone 9579 2375 or 0402 434 576 (M).

June 26th (Monday) SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING. 7.45 pm. See page 1 (overleaf) and enclosed notice.

June 26th (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING. 8pm approx. Roewen Wishart will speak on **Australian Bush Heritage Fund**.

DON'T SELL THE SNOWY !

In December 2005 the NSW Government announced it will **privatise their share of Snowy Hydro Limited** (previously known as Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority). Soon after that the Federal and Victorian Governments decided to sell their shares, and it is understood that full privatisation becomes effective next month (June). Conservationists and many others concerned about this are organising **protest rallies** in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra on **Tuesday 6th June**. The Sydney rally will be held at 12.30 pm at the Archibald Fountain, Hyde Park. Further details may be obtained from Sylvia Hale MLC on 9230 3030 or Acacia Rose on 0402 298 821

INVASIVE SPECIES CD ROM

Weeds and feral animals are now regarded as one of the three major threats to biodiversity conservation in Australia, the other two being global warming and land clearing. The Invasive Species Council (ISC), a non-government, not-for-profit organisation, is currently concerned about the **number of new potential weeds and feral animals being deliberately introduced** to Australia each year with government permission. These are mainly for horticultural and agricultural purposes. The ISC has recently issued a CD ROM explaining the problem and some proposed measures to improve the situation. **O.F.F. has several copies of this CD ROM which will be available for loan to members at the next monthly meeting.** For more information on the work of ISC and how to participate in its activities see www.invasives.org.au

RESTORATION OF NEVERFAIL BAY

A **community consultation** meeting was arranged by Kogarah Council on 2nd May to discuss a proposal to restore part of the **Neverfail Bay shoreline**. It was held at Oatley RSL Club and attended by about 50 residents including a number of O.F.F. members. The Council has planned **another meeting for June or July** when a more detailed 'Concept Plan' will be put on display, with an invitation for public comments.

VERY BRIEFLY

Health Policy and Sustainability: Seminar, May 23, 5.30pm Auditorium, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown. Details: Diana Freeman 9351 2818

Exhibition of Henry Gold's wilderness photographs May 23 to June 4, Bondi Pavillion Gallery. Details: tel 9299 7341 or see www.colongwilderness.org.au

NPA Slideshow 'The Antarctic Peninsula': May 24, 8pm Sutherland Multi Purpose Centre 123 Flora St , Admission free, all welcome.

Royal Herbarium, R.B.G. Sydney: May 26, 2-3pm, tour of collection and talk about the book 'Herbarium' by author Ashley Hay (O.F.F. speaker last year). Admission free, **bookings essential:** 9250 1988.

World Environment Day: June 5.

World Ocean Day: June 8.

NOTABLE QUOTES

'Anyone who believes that exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an economist' by Kenneth E. Boulding, (disenchanted) Professor of Economics, awarded Nobel Prize in 2002.

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society Inc.

TIME TO CHANGE THE RULES?

NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING - 7:45 PM, 26 JUNE 2006

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society Inc.'s Rules include (in Rule 2) a list of objects of the Association – what we are all about. The rule states:

2 OBJECTS

The objects of the Association shall be:

- a) to stimulate interest in Australian flora and fauna;
- b) to foster an understanding of the need to conserve the natural environment and resources; and
- c) to cooperate with other societies in protecting the environment.

Your Committee, prompted by Vice President Alan Fairley, has reviewed the objects and proposes that they should be modified so that they:

- include the idea of *acting* to protect the environment, not just *stimulating interest* and *fostering understanding*,
- stress action at the local level, while
- including our commitment to environmental concerns beyond the local area.

The proposal is to amend Rule 2 so that it will read as follows:

2 OBJECTS

The objects of the Association shall be:

- a) to stimulate interest in Australian flora and fauna;
- b) to act to protect and foster an interest in the natural environment, particularly at the local level;
- c) to foster an understanding of the need to conserve the natural environment and resources; and
- d) to cooperate with other groups to achieve these objectives at local, state, national and international levels.

This proposal will be put to members as a special resolution at a special general meeting of the Society. For the motion to be passed, a quorum must be present at the meeting (that is, at least twenty members present in person), and at least three-quarters of the members who are present must vote in favour. There is no proxy voting.

Members must be sent a notice of the special general meeting, with at least 21 days notice, and the notice must give details of the special resolution. Accordingly, the May/June 2006 edition of OFF News and this page give notice of the meeting and the resolution.

If you have any questions about the proposal, please raise them at the general meeting on 22nd May 2006, or phone one of the Committee members (our numbers are on the back of the Program). Remember, the special general meeting will be held immediately before the 26th **June 2006** general meeting.