



O.F.F. NEWS



Published by
**OATLEY FLORA & FAUNA
CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.**

Print Post App. No. PP 255003/03239

Since 1955

Issue: 2007/3

March/April 2007

TRAVEL THE SILK ROAD

O.F.F. Vice President and well known author, **Alan Fairley**, will be the speaker at the next monthly meeting on **26th March** (see over). Alan has recently travelled through western China on parts of the old Silk Road trade route which are still rarely seen by western tourists. He will give us a **pictorial presentation** of features of this area, including:

- ancient Buddhist caves
- extraordinary deserts with huge sand dunes
- Urgan settlements
- the second lowest point on earth
- the fabled town of Kasgar.

This will undoubtedly be a fascinating talk that should not be missed.

CORRECTIONS TO 2007 PROGRAM

As one of a number of Committee members who read through the proofs of the Society's 2007 Program I can vouch that the final version sent to the printer was 100% correct. Nevertheless, in the printed Programs that later came back to us and which were mailed to all members in February, **the following minor mistakes** had somehow occurred:

- The **field day on April 1st is a Sunday**, not Saturday as printed
- **The September field day is on 29th**, not 39th
- Beverley Watters' name is **spelt incorrectly** under 'Hospitality and Welcome' (last page).

To avoid possible misunderstandings, **please correct your Program** accordingly. (Fred Bell)

FUTURE OF MYLES DUNPHY RESERVE ?

Close to the new supermarket and the railway station, Myles Dunphy Reserve (named after the famous Oatley conservationist) is still mainly native bushland. However, it includes the **site of the old bowling club** which obviously has much redevelopment potential, and Hurstville Council is reported to be carrying out **detailed studies of the area**, possibly for this purpose. There are concerns, of course, that inappropriate development here could be very detrimental to the bushland of the reserve. A good opportunity to discuss these concerns will be our **April monthly meeting** when the speaker will be Council Bushcare Officer, Heather Stolle (see 'Coming Events' overleaf).

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA 2007

Clean Up Australia on Sunday 4th March again drew a strong community response to the project area nominated by Oatley Flora and Fauna. We concentrated on both sides of Lime Kiln Bay near Jinna Reserve, Peakhurst. Our participants totalled 28 adults and children, and they collected 25 bags of rubbish. Although less rubbish was reported than in previous years, an area near Mortdale Heights was found to be badly littered and polluted by storm water from the golf course. The OFF committee is requesting a gross pollutant trap be installed in this area by Hurstville Council, possibly as part of an Environmental Restoration and Rehabilitation grant. Thank you to all those who took part. (Julian Sheen)

RARE LOCAL FAUNA SIGHTINGS

Prince Edward Park and Forbes Creek, Woronora, are the sites of recent reports of **wombats** and a **koala**. The koala had been tagged and was tracked from near Campbelltown. There have also been new recent reports of a **swamp wallaby** in Oatley Park. (from John Kensett, 'Bushcare Link' and Sutherland Council)

INNER HARBOUR WALK: Sat 3rd March

It was a hot sunny day for our walk along the Inner Harbour from **Milsons Point to Greenwich Wharf**, but at least we avoided the storms of other recent days. There were 29 people at the start and almost as many by the time we arrived for the 3.56 pm ferry - not that we lost anyone, but some had to leave the group early. Participants were very impressed with the **variety of the scenery** and how each bay presented a different face. There are still some nice patches of bushland around the foreshore, and lunch was held in one of these under the shade of trees at Balls Head overlooking the harbour. An unexpected discovery was the **tunnels under the Coal Loader**. It was a good walk to start the year's program and a number of participants expressed the desire to complete the **second section** of the Inner Harbour walk to **Hunters Hill** in the future. (Alan Fairley)

FINAL SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Is your 2007 subscription overdue? Please note that, according to the Constitution, **membership ceases if payment is not made by 31st March.**

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 26 (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, 7.45pm. The main feature of the meeting will be a presentation by Alan Fairley entitled 'The Silk Route, a Photo Journey'. (see overleaf).

April 1 (Sunday) (Note this walk is NOT on Saturday, as in program) FIELD DAY. Colo River Gorge - Bob Turner's Track. This is a chance to visit the magnificent and unspoilt Colo River gorge by one of the easiest routes. It is truly beautiful. About 7.5 km round trip (there and back). It involves a descent and a climb but they are not arduous. The plan is to meet up at Wilberforce just north of Windsor at 9.30 am. We should meet at the garage on the corner in the centre of town where parking should be O.K. From there we will go in convoy up the Putty road past Colo heights to the turnoff on the left. Drive about 4km on a reasonable unsealed road before a small parking place. We will then walk down into the gorge where there is a picnic spot and a wonderful beach with swimming at the bottom. We will stay and explore the area before returning to the cars in the afternoon. Bring lunch, good walking shoes and swimming gear.

April 23 (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, 7.45 pm. Heather Stolle will speak on 'Small reserves, big impacts - bushcare in Myles Dunphy Reserve'.

CONSERVATION ELECTION ISSUES

On the eve of the NSW elections, conservation groups are demanding an end to the **iniquitous influence** of big business on the major political parties. As may be seen at www.democracy4sale.org, the development industry donated more than **\$5.5 million to NSW Labor** and **\$3.5 million to the Coalition** in a recent year, coinciding with the effective destruction of the NSW planning laws to protect the environment. This must be seen as **corrupt and antidemocratic**, and should be unacceptable in a decent, civilized society. Other election issues relevant to conservation are at:

- www.environmentelection.org.au (updated daily by the Nature Conservation Council), and
- <http://voteclimate.org.au> (climate change issues).

LONGWALL MINING SUBSIDENCE

Longwall mining was listed as a **Key Threatening Process** to 15 species and ecosystems under the NSW *Threatened Species Conservation Act* in July 2005. This extensively used form of underground mining involves the continuous working of a long face of coal ahead of hydraulically operated roof supports that allow the roof to subside into the cavity as the face progresses. The amount of coal extracted and the subsidence of land at the surface are both greater with this method than with older methods. Near Appin and in the Hunter Valley, land **has subsided by up to a metre** through longwall mining, with severe damage to river systems, wetlands and other habitats. Current proposals to extend such mining into the water supply catchments of the **Woronora and Wyong Rivers** are now causing conservationists much concern.

EARTH HOUR, 31st MARCH

Residents of Sydney and suburbs will be asked to turn off all non-essential lights and electrical equipment for **one hour at 7.30pm**, Saturday, 31st March. This is to draw attention to the problem of global warming and also to mark the start of a campaign to **cut Sydney's greenhouse gas emissions by 5%** before 31st March 2008. The campaign is a joint initiative of WWF (originally World Wildlife Fund), the City of Sydney, and the NSW Government. Support has also been pledged by **more than 100 substantial corporations** (e.g. Fairfax Media, Toyota and AMP).

VERY BRIEFLY

Cooks River Festival: Sunday, April 15, Sustainable Water Showcase, 11am-4pm, Steel Park, free. Details: Marrickville Council, tel 9335 2104.

Beat the Drought Talk: Tuesday, May 1, 10.30am-12pm, Royal Botanic Gardens. \$18. Bookings: Friends of Botanic Gardens, tel 9231 8182.

Recommended publication

Day Walks in the Lower Grose River and Tributaries by Michael Keats (61pages). Copies are available from Keats Holdings P/L, 33 Livingstone Avenue, Pymble NSW 2073, 9144 2096, cost \$16.70 (incl. postage).

DID YOU KNOW ?

Australia is the **world's largest exporter** of coal and controls about 30% of the international trade in this commodity. Combustion of the 80 million tonnes we exported last year would have produced **more than 200 million tonnes of greenhouse gases.**