



O.F.F. NEWS



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EASY IDENTIFICATION OF FROGS

About two thirds of the 200 + Australian native frog species are found near Sydney, as revealed in the book *Frogs and Reptiles of the Sydney Region* by **Ken Griffiths**. It contains beautiful colour photographs and details of each frog, together with similar information on Sydney's lizards, snakes and turtles. A recently revised (second) edition also includes a **CD with the calls of the frogs**, greatly assisting identification. The 128-page book, published by New Holland, costs about \$25. O.F.F. is very pleased to have the author as our speaker at the **next monthly meeting on 28th May** (see overleaf). In addition to his special interests in herpetology, Ken is a professional wildlife photographer, and his skills in this area will ensure an excellent presentation.

EASY IDENTIFICATION OF RNP PLANTS

A **user-friendly** identification guide to native plants in the coastal areas of the Royal National Park has been prepared on a **CD** by the Sutherland Group of the Australian Plants Society. Its features include:

- an interactive system for people with no botanical knowledge to quickly identify **300 native plant species**
- **detailed information** on all the above species
- more than **1,200 excellent photographs** of the plants, flowers, leaves and fruit
- **compatible** with Windows 98/2000/NT/ME/XP.

The CD may be purchased for \$20 from RNP Visitors Centre Audley, Paddy Pallin Miranda, Sydney Wildflower Nursery Heathcote, or **at the next O.F.F. meeting on 28th May**. For other stockists, order forms and further information see <http://members.ozemail.com.au/~ssgap/coastal.htm> or contact Rhonda at rhodaniels@bigpond.com or 9521 8381.

O.F.F. INTO DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

The Society has recently purchased a DELL digital projector, thanks to a number of generous donations by members. For many years we have owned a 35mm slide projector to assist guest speakers and members in their slide presentations. However, this equipment, although still operating satisfactorily, has become almost obsolete with digital technology's rapid replacement of traditional methods.

GENERIC PLANS FOR PARKS ETC.

Hurstville City Council's Draft 'Generic Plans of Management' for **Parks and General Community Use Areas** were on public exhibition up to 3rd May. These were very general (= generic ?) objectives and proposed actions for 159 parcels of mainly grassed community land and open space, with a total area of about 248 hectares. Following a report by Alan Fairley, O.F.F. Committee submitted comments on the plans to Council, suggesting that many of the areas should be recognised as important **links in 'green web corridors'** between bushland remnants. Comments were also made about the need to identify endemic trees and other native vegetation in each area for appropriate **specific management** plans.

OATLEY OYSTERS KO QX

Georges River was the oldest and largest Sydney Rock Oyster fishery until 1995. In that year it was struck by the **QX parasite** which is deadly to oysters, although harmless to humans. By 1998 the oyster industry in this area had completely collapsed, and QX had spread to other waterways such as the Hawkesbury River. In efforts to combat the parasite, scientists from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and several universities sampled **surviving oysters in Lime Kiln Bay** and other severely affected areas. These were used to breed QX resistant strains that were later re-introduced to some of the original fishery sites. The **first good crops** of healthy oysters in the Georges River - Botany Bay area from the resistant strains have recently been reported (DPI, April 2007).

NARROW NECK WALK, 28th APRIL

On a cool and misty morning, perfect for walking, our party of 12 set out for Clear Hill at the end of the Narrow Neck fire trail. We were soon rewarded with clearing weather and dramatic views over Wild Dog Mountains, Kowmung River and Cox's River. There were also many wildflowers out, especially *Banksia spinulosa* and *Lambertia formosa*. With such pleasant distractions the 10 km walk to our scenic lunch spot at Clear Hill seemed much shorter. After lunch, on the return walk, the cliffs around Kings Tableland and Mt Solitary, previously hidden in the morning mist, provided spectacular highlights in the afternoon sun. An altogether enjoyable day. (report by Lesley Cox)

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

May 28 (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, 7.45pm. The main feature of the meeting will be a presentation by Ken Griffiths entitled 'Frogs and Reptiles of Sydney' (see overleaf).

June 2 (Saturday) FIELD DAY. Sydney Harbour National Park, North Head Loop Walking Track. Catch 8.47 am train from Oatley (or 8.49 am from Mortdale), then 10.00 am Ferry from Circular Quay to Manly. The walk starts outside the Information Centre near Manly wharf. About 7 km of good tracks/roads with one or two short hilly sections and a small number of steps. Scenic and historical features throughout. Carry lunch and water, wear suitable footwear and hat. Leader: Heather Mackey 9528 7071

June 25 (Monday) REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, 7.45 pm. Libby Cameron (Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens) will speak on 'Maintaining an oasis in the concrete jungle'.

WARATAH RIVULET COAL PROTEST

As reported in the March/April issue of O.F.F. News, **longwall coal mining** has become a conservation threat. The most recent stream to be damaged by land subsidence from this industry is Waratah Rivulet, flowing into Woronora Dam. Extensive collapsing and cracking of the bed of the Waratah Rivulet is causing **pollution and losses** of water in this part of the Sydney supply system, and disrupting both aquatic and riparian ecosystems. As appeals to the mining company have not stopped the damage a number of conservation groups have planned a protest rally on **Saturday, 17th June** at 11 am. Participants will meet at the gates to the mining site on Old Princes Highway, 3 km south of the Helensburgh exit from the F6 Freeway. Further information may be obtained from 9261 3437 or 0409 447 913 or daveb@tec.org.au.

GREENS' GREENHOUSE BLUEPRINT

Senator Christine Milne recently launched a major Greens' policy response to the problems of climate change, oil depletion and economic trends. Entitled 'Re-Energising Australia', it stresses the **moral imperative to address these problems now**. It argues that, in doing this we can also 'rebuild our educational and manufacturing base, create jobs and wealth as well as build resilience in ecosystems and more secure, happier, healthier communities'. The actual measures proposed in the response are surprisingly moderate and have **good scientific support**. They seem less extreme than the measures that may well be imposed on Australia in the future through trade restrictions etc. by the governments of countries with more responsible greenhouse policies. The full document is about 36 pages (1.11 MB) and may be obtained from Senator Milne on 03 6224 8899 or senator.milne@aph.gov.au.

VERY BRIEFLY

Household Chemical Cleanup: Saturday, May 26, Hurstville Council Works Depot, cnr Depot Rd & Roberts Ave. Details of items accepted: tel 131 555 or www.cleanout.com.au

NCC Bushfire Conference, 'Bushfire in a Heating World', Thursday, May 31 9am-6.30pm, & Friday, June 1 9am-5pm, Centenary Lecture Theatre, Royal North Shore Hospital, St Leonards. Fees: \$165 (individual), \$99 (concession). Details: NCC www.nccnsw.org.au/bushfireconf2007, or 9279 2466.

Public film screening on Oil Crisis, 'Crude Impact', Saturday, June 2, 1.30pm Mitchell Theatre, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney. More details: Gordon 9528 6091

World Environment Day: Tuesday, June 5.

World Ocean Day: Friday, June 8.

Carbon Emissions Trading: Thursday, May 31, release of final report of Prime Minister's Task Group.

Seminar on Carbon Trading and the Derivatives Market (following PM's Task Group report): Thursday, June 14. The Australian Centre for Environmental Law, Sydney. Details: Val Carey on 9351 0238 or v.carey@usyd.edu.au

Waratah Rivulet Coal Protest: Saturday, June 17, 11am. (see item this page)

Recommended new book: 'Scorcher: The dirty politics of climate change' by Clive Hamilton. Published by Black Inc. 266 pages, RRP \$29.95.

O.F.F. JOKE

"Go forth and multiply" roared Noah, as he released the animals from the Ark. "Ssorry, Sir" hissed one of the snakes "we couldn't possibly do that". "Ha ha ha" chuckled Noah "even adders can multiply". "Yesss" sighed the snake, "but we're odd adders".