



O.F.F. NEWS



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See OFF's Website at - <http://off.oatleypark.com>

June/July 2008

MOUNT TOMAH WALK

After driving (with misgivings) through heavy rain on the way to Mt Tomah I arrived to be told by the gatekeeper that the "Oatley Flora and Fauna" were all in the café as it was too cold at the sundial meeting place. After everyone was fortified with hot coffee and cakes we decided to brave the weather. Fortunately the rain held off, and the fog and mist weaved its own special magic as we made our way through the garden. We were amazed by the number of budding plants looming out of the mist like bright jewels; there was some teasing sparkle after all! There was a huge range of plants, many of which we had never seen before. Of them all, the *Proteas* would have to be the favourite of the day. The fog thickened as the day progressed, but even though we missed the marvellous panoramic view of the rugged Blue Mountains wilderness, the twenty of us gathering at the Viewing Platform at the end of the day agreed that a great day had been had by all! [Report by Robin Dickson – Walk Leader]

BACKYARD INVERTEBRATES

At the May meeting Martyn Robinson, Australian Museum Naturalist, highlighted the role of worms, snails, slugs, bugs, spiders, caterpillars, cockroaches, butterflies, milli and centi-pedes in contributing to a healthy state of the planet. He argued convincingly that invertebrates are essential to the functioning of our planet, but if humans disappeared overnight, their absence would have very little negative effect on the natural world.

DINOSAURS MOVING INTO SYDNEY

There is an exciting new exhibition of skeletons and life size models at the Australian Museum at the moment. Details at 9320 6000 and <http://www.australianmuseum.net.au/dinosaur/>

Standby energy costs the average Australian household approximately \$100 year. The best way to save energy is to switch off at the plug

SYDNEY BANDICOOTS

Long-nosed Bandicoots were once widespread and common in Sydney. Isolated populations remain in bushland areas to the north and south of Sydney. A small colony at Manly is classified as an 'endangered population'.
<http://www.faanet.gov.au/>



TEMPERATURE RISE

Ian Prosser CSIRO Science Director stated at the Australian Water Summit 2008 that there is a 50% probability that we will loose 30% of all species with a 2°C rise in global temperature.

BUYING BACK OUR HERITAGE

Every year OFF donates part of its funds to other conservation groups that act to protect the environment. In recent years one of these groups has been *Bush Heritage Australia*, a non-profit organisation that buys land to protect threatened plant and animal communities. It now owns and manages over 600,000 hectares in 23 reserves throughout Australia. BHA has recently purchased Bon Bon Station, a massive area of inland South Australia as part of its program to retain biodiversity. <http://www.bushheritage.org.au>

NATIVE PLANTS IN OATLEY PARK

309 have been identified. A list and some photos can be found on the OFF website.

WALLABIES HERE

Wallabies [but not the one pictured here] have recently been seen on a street in Peakhurst at 8.30 am. If you see one in your area please let us know so that some record can be kept of their numbers



APPEAR - TOSS CAMERA

Specially designed cameras installed to capture wildlife footage in South East Asia have recorded remarkable images of the world's rarest rhino. After a short inspection, a rhino mother charged the camera and sent it flying. <http://wwf.org.au/>

Meetings of the Society are held at the Uniting Church Hall Fredrick St [cnr Letitia St] Oatley starting at 7.45pm, usually on the fourth Monday of the month.

Visitors and accompanied children are welcome to all meetings and excursions.

COMING EVENTS

- **June 23rd (Monday) Regular Monthly Meeting with Lloyd Hedges on 'Outback trip to Corner Country'.** Lloyd has family connections in Queensland's Corner Country. He is a plant person involved in Menai Wildflower Group and native seed collection for a nursery at Lucas Hts.
- **June 28 (Saturday), Field Day: Heathcote National Park.** Meet at car park, eastern side of Waterfall Station at 9.15 am. Train leaves Oatley 8.48 am to Waterfall by 9.13 am. First stop is Camp Coutts then Lake Toolooma, then along a fire trail through the Heathcote Creek valley to Kingfisher Pool, looking for the Yelgun Cave (large, but difficult to find) and returning along the Bullawaring Track. The track is about 8km of fairly easy walking except for a 300 m steep uphill section near the end. You will see winter-spring wildflowers, pools and waterfalls, and an old railway dam. Bring morning tea, lunch, water, hat and walking shoes. Leaders: **Joan and Fred Bell 0409 449 770**
- **July 17th (Thursday) Extra Field Day: North Sydney's Hidden Valley** Meet at Nth Sydney Station at 10am to see quaint workman's cottages and gardens with lots of history and stories, with links to Henry Lawson, the Holtermann Nugget, *Graythwaite* Red Cross home for WW1 returned soldiers, and many other points of interest. Bring lunch. **Bookings required.** Phone **Janet Austin on 9579 2375.** Leaders **Keith Robinson (0427 611 795) and Ted Green.**
- **July 28th (Monday) Regular Monthly Meeting with Graham Quint,** Conservation Director of the National Trust speaking on **Landscape conservation.**
- **August 2nd (Saturday) Field Day: Manly Dam Reserve Circuit.** Leader **Janet Austin.**

CLEAN COAL

In our coal dominated economy it is often claimed that "clean coal", *geo-sequestration*, or *Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)* will help avert the greenhouse crisis. CCS is designed to capture carbon dioxide emissions and store them below ground or sea. <http://www.risingtide.org.au/cleancoal> However, Greenpeace has released *False Hope*, a damning report on CCS, concluding that it could not start reducing pollution before 2030, and noting there are proven technologies that can be systematically applied to the problems now <http://www.greenpeace.org.au/blog/energy/?cat=14>.

RETAIN OUR FORESTS

The Wilderness Society calls for deforestation to cease. Old forests are efficient and urgently needed carbon banks. <http://www.wilderness.org.au>

TREES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Local Councils seem to be overly worried about possible compensation payments resulting from falling tree branches, and perhaps approving more readily than refusing tree removal applications. Considering the importance of mature trees in maintaining a healthy environment, it is suggested that Councils should give careful consideration to the rules regarding tree removal. If you see trees being threatened, report the matter to your Council and let OFF know too.

FOXES MOVING IN

Councils have been contacted, but so far have not agreed on a response to the growing fox numbers. The shooting in Centennial Park may have worked there, but is no help here.

VERY BRIEFLY

National Parks Association of NSW: free slideshow 8pm on every 4th Wed. 123 Flora St Sutherland Admission Free. 9299 000, <http://www.npansw.org.au>

National Tree Day Sunday 25th July **Schools Tree Day** Friday 23rd July. Details Bryan Pirie 1300 88 5000 <http://www.lionsclubs.org.au/Planet-Ark>

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness very interesting information, books CDs. 9261 4200 <http://www.colongwilderness.org.au>

The Threatened Species Network reports a Daisy Bush *Olearia arida* has been sighted in the NT, 135 years after the last recorded sighting. <http://wwf.org.au/>

Bore Water www.bluemountains.org.au/

Use water from taps and tanks, not from bottles or bores. Help save "spring" water for the flora.

OFF NOTE



http://www.nicholsoncartoons.com.au/cartoon_154.html