



O.F.F. NEWS



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

Jan/Feb 2009

SMIGGIN HOLES 2009

A group of 25 friends, most of them OFF members, enjoyed the Snowy Mountains experience as we have done for many years. The mountains put on a real show for us. The weather was very mixed, with some lovely clear days and others with short sharp random thunderstorms, heavy cloud, some rain, and strong biting winds. The flowers on the lowlands were not as prolific as last year, but some lovely patches were to be seen on the Main Range Track. Sadly there were no gentians this year. Walks included the traditional first day Porcupine Rocks excursion, the Lakes Walk (the full circuit of the main range track), Blue Lake, Waterfall Walk, Rainbow Lake, Mt Stilwell, and the Pallaibo Track. Attempts were made on the Dead Horse Gap Walk and the scaling of Mt Townsend, but these had to be abandoned because of weather conditions. The Mt Townsend attempt provided great photo opportunities, including some huddled miserably behind rocks trying to find enough shelter for a lunch break. Non walkers drove to Dalgetty, Adaminaby, Cabramurra and Khancoban, Lake Eucumbene, the Snowy and Murray Rivers, Tumut 2 and Murray 1 Power Stations, old Kiandra Gold Fields and enjoyed views (with heavy cloud and fog) of the western side of the Main Range. The Schnapps distillery on the Thredbo Road proved to be another popular diversion. Everyone had a great time in spite of or perhaps because of the weather. A delicious "dinner out" was enjoyed at Charlotte Lodge, Charlotte's Pass. Most of us tried Jindabyne's coffee shops and we could not leave out the Thredbo Chairlift. Looking forward to our 2010 visit! [Report by Robin Dickson]

CLIMATE CHANGES

The Land newspaper quotes *The Drought Exceptional Circumstances Report* to the Federal Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry. It notes especially the comment that Australia has one of the most variable climates in the world, and that, over time, many internal and external factors will influence the climate. Changes in El Niño–Southern Oscillations, the Indian Ocean Dipole, Earth's rotations, energy from the Sun, volcanic eruptions as well as human induced changes in volumes of greenhouse gases, aerosols, ozone and in land-use are most of the factors the report identifies as influencing our climate.

<http://theland.farmonline.com.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.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT NSW

Legislation in NSW is usually reviewed after five years to see if the objectives of each Act remain valid and the means are appropriate. *Native Vegetation Act 2003*, *Natural Resources Commission Act 2003* and *Catchment Management Authorities Act 2003* are now due for review. The Environmental Defender's Office is gathering information on issues of concern, perceived problems and suggestions for improvement. Anyone with comments can contact Robert Ghanem [(02) 9262 6989 or mailto: robert.ghanem@edo.org.au].

TREE REMOVAL

Hurstville Council's current policy is apparently to allow tree removal if three Ward Councillors agree, even if Council's own Tree Management Officer recommends against it. Councils must recognise a tree's social and environmental value, not just its monetary value. As Alan Fairley argued in *The Leader* [22/12/08], a tree removal application should be refused if it cannot be clearly shown that it threatens the safety of residents or is likely to cause structural damage.

NATIONAL PARKS OF NSW

From ancient rainforests and cool, alpine highlands to powdery white beaches and outback plains stretching to the horizon, the national parks of New South Wales cover an extraordinary diversity of landscapes and habitats, and protect precious flora, fauna, historic and cultural heritage. Details are available on the National Parks and Wildlife eNewsletter: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au>

FOX BAITING

The Department of Environment and Conservation and several local Councils are running a program to reduce the fox threat to fauna. There will be clear signposting. Details can be obtained from the Department on 9668 2000

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Have you paid your annual subscriptions for 2009? If not, please post your cheque to P.O. Box 52, Mortdale 2223, or pay Lesley Wylie at the AGM on 2nd February. The subscription is still only \$25 per person or family (living at the same address).

COMING EVENTS

Feb 2nd (Monday) 7.45pm Annual General Meeting, . Reports on O.F.F.'s 2008 activities, (including financial activities as listed below), and election of office bearers for 2009. Members are invited to comment on the activities, management and direction of the Society. The AGM will be as brief as possible and followed by **members' pictures and a light supper**. If you have digital pictures or slides [but no more than 15!] of interesting places or Society activities, please bring them to the meeting. Also, **please bring a plate of finger food** for the supper.

Feb 23rd (Monday) 7.45pm Regular monthly meeting with Paul Irish speaking on Aboriginal middens and campsites around Sydney.

Feb 28th (Saturday) Field Day- Mill Creek Menai Area. Leaders Joan and Fred Bell [details in next OFF News].

March 1st Clean Up Australia Day –OFF will be in the Miles Dunphy Reserve. [Details next OFF News]

March 23rd (Monday) 7.45pm Regular monthly meeting with Jane Tarran speaking on Biodiversity in Urban Sydney

SUMMARY OF THE O.F.F. AUDITED FINANCES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.12.08

Lesley Wylie, Hon. Treasurer

Credit Balance as at 01.01.08 **\$6,343.79**

Receipts

Subscriptions	\$3,650.00	
Donations	\$1,169.00	
Sale – OFF History		
Being Green	\$8.00	
Sale - Plants	\$202.60	
Sale - Stalls	\$60.00	
Sale - Mugs	\$33.00	
Annual Dinner	\$1,830.00	
Annual Dinner Raffle	\$200.00	
Lithgow Trip	\$1,405.00	
Sundries	65.00	
Interest	\$33.14	\$8,655.74
		\$14,999.53

Payments

Department Fair		
Trading	\$44.00	
Uniting Church	\$275.00	
Hurstville Council Grant		
Expense	\$406.00	
Printing/Postage	\$862.44	
Australia Post Box		
Rental	\$75.00	
Printing Programs	\$158.70	
Wireless Microphone	\$405.00	
Annual Dinner	\$1,664.00	
Insurance	\$749.52	
NCC Membership	\$200.00	
Donations (see Note)	\$2,720.00	
Lions Oatley Stall	\$90.00	
Lithgow Trip	\$1,407.60	
Sundries	\$199.19	\$9,256.45
		\$5,743.08

Credit Balance as at 31.12.08	\$5,743.08
Add Cash Management Trust a/c	\$8,401.81
	\$14,144.89
Less balance of HCC Grant	\$311.70
Total Society Funds	\$13,833.19

Note: Donations: (\$120) Sydney Wildlife, (\$160) Total Environmental Centre, (\$200) Colong Foundation (\$320) Birds Australia, WIRES, Gene Ethics Network, Australian Bush Heritage, Environment Defenders Office, Kuringai Bats, Wilderness Society. The Society's funds at 31.12.08 were \$13,833 including \$828 in The Presidents Fund for donations to other environmental bodies. Generous Donations from members through 2008 enabled us to increase our donations by 60% on last year's donations. Included in the Society's funds is 2009 Subscriptions in advance of \$1,325 representing 35% of members. Generous donations of \$750 were received in Nov/Dec with 2009 Subscriptions to go in the President's Fund. – Thank you.

BRIEFLY

NSW Community Climate Summit will be held on 19-21 February 2009 climatesummit@nccnsw.org.au or contact Marnie Kikken on 9279 2466, <mailto:climatesummit@nccnsw.org.au>
The Zealous Conservator: A life of Charles Lane Poole by John Dargavel available at booksellers Help threatened wildlife from disappearing. Contact Bush Heritage Australia on 1300 628 873 or www.bushheritage.org.au

OFF NOTE

Note that Mum Poss fed Junior soon after this photo was taken. The photos of the camels in the last edition had been gently moved into the photo of the truck to complete the "twin cams ute". There was no camel discomfort!

