



O.F.F. NEWS



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

May/June 2009

THE STORY OF THE DHARAWAL

The writing of this book was the subject of the talk at the April meeting by Mary Jacobs with comments from her co-author Les Bursill. It is the story of the Dharawal speaking people of Southern Sydney, their language and culture, from fishing, hunting, bushtucker, rock art, beliefs and a Dharawal-English dictionary. <http://www.lesbursill.da.ru/>

DINGO FRIEND OR FOE

The Colong Foundations argues that aggressive eradication of wild dogs and dingo conservation efforts are not sufficient to save the dingo. The Foundation has nominated the Dingo [*Canis lupus dingo*] as endangered under the Threatened Species Conservation Act, 1995 on the grounds that hybridisation with domestic dogs has reached a critical level. www.colongwilderness.org.au/Dingo/

PRESERVING NATIONAL PARKS

Blue Mountains City Council has written to NSW tourism minister Jodie McKay, opposing any proposed changes that could allow development within national parks. Recommendations from the NSW Taskforce on Tourism and National Parks Report to change the National Parks and Wildlife Act is due to be debated in Parliament by the end of June. Councillors unanimously backed a matter of urgency motion expressing "serious concern" about the report's recommendations, particularly relating to new visitor accommodation. <http://bluemountains.yourguide.com.au/>

OATLEY PARK THIS MONTH

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

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

Sweet-scented Wattle, (*Acacia suaveolens*), a 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*) is white with 5 petals, small shrub on sheltered slopes.

JOADJA

The historic village of Joadja is the scene of an OFF field day in June [see under Coming Events]. Once a thriving kerosene mining settlement 31 km north-west of Mittagong, established in the late 1870s, it is of National heritage significance, a most important nineteenth century industrial and archaeological mining relic. www.smh.com.au/news/

THORNLEIGH-FULLERS BRIDGE WALK 3rd May

Participants were obviously not put off by the adverse weather reports nor the 13km distance, as 21 people checked in at Thornleigh Station for the walk down Lane Cove Valley. The weather forecast turned out to be wrong and the day was a brilliant autumn blue. Jumpers and coats were shed early. The highlights of the valley were the magnificent Blackbutts on the slopes and the wide variety of plant species seen as we passed from river margins to dry upper slopes. Not a lot was in flower, but there were some autumn greenhoods, lots of white epacris and pink dog rose. There was even a clump of the rare *Melaleuca deanei*, typically not in flower. There were a few sore feet by the time we reached Lane Cove Park, but all enjoyed the day and the companionship.

[Report by Alan Fairley, Walk Leader]

MYLES DUNPHY STREAMWATCH

Some twenty people attended the first training session on 28th April at the corner of River and Mulga Rd, Oatley. They came from OFF and Myles Dunphy Reserve Bushcare. Claire from Sydney Water was a good trainer, and will return to assist at the next session! New comers are welcome without any commitment. Sessions begin at 9 am and the next scheduled are on 26/5/09 and 28/7/09. This is a regular testing program by volunteers of the creek lines flowing through to the Georges River. The cumulative impact of small tributaries is often overlooked as threats to downstream water quality and aquatic ecosystems. For more detail ring Sharyn (9579 1262) or Heather (0425 291 879).

ANIMAL RESCUE AMBULANCES

WIRES has recently launched two brand new rescue ambulances. They are on the road five days a week rescuing native animals in distress and are expected to travel up to 70,000 kms a year. With the latest technology they are capable of a rapid response to wildlife in need. www.wires.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

- **May 25th (Monday), 7.45 pm Regular Monthly Meeting, Speaker: Gary Schoer (National Parks Association, Southern Sydney Branch) 'History of Exploration & Science in Antarctica'**
- **May 30th (Saturday) Field day in the Blue Mountains' from Pulpit Rock to Black Heath.** A few short steep spots and some sections where the track falls away sharply at the edge. Allow 2 hrs driving Oatley to Blackheath, meet at 10.45 am. Right from Great Western Hwy at Govetts Leap Rd [opposite the railway crossing] then left at Edwards St, to the swimming pool park. A few cars will take us to the end of Pulpit Rock Rd, down Hat Hill Rd to begin the walk. Walking time about 3½ hrs along Pulpit Rock Track to Boyd's Beach, on Popes Glen Track back to Edwards St. Bring water, lunch, and clothes for possible 10°C. **Leaders: Judith Malcolm, John Davoren 0431 703 621**
- **June 22nd (Monday), 7.45 pm Regular Monthly Meeting Speaker: Ross Bradstock (Centre for Environmental Risk Management of Bushfires, University of Wollongong) "The Burning Question: Fire Ecology"**
- **June 27th (Saturday) - Field day visiting Joadja*.** It is an arranged tour so numbers must be known beforehand. The costs are - adults \$16.50, 10-16 year-olds \$10.50, under 10 free. Morning tea is provided, BYO lunch or purchase there. **Leader: Heather Mackey [See next newsletter for further details.]**
- **July 27th (Monday), 7.45 pm Regular Monthly Meeting Speaker: Tim Entwisle "From Algae Everything"**

OATLEY BOWLING CLUB SITE**

OFF has been writing to Hurstville Council [HCC] for at least two years, with little or no success, calling for the preservation of this part of the Myles Dunphy Reserve as a sustainable community area. Finally Hurstville Council has engaged a private consultant to undertake discussions with the community. During the last month various community groups including OFF have been consulted. Committee members presented the view that this land remain available to the public, not be sold, alienated or otherwise sequestered, that no activity should be undertaken that would damage or threaten the bushland nature of the reserve, and should be for community recreational activities. Soon it will be turn of individuals to speak up in the public consultation phase. Your letters to HCC and its appointed consultant could help to keep this site in public hands. For more details go to www.friendsfoatley.com

GREEN LOANS

As many will have already noted, low-interest loans are now available to make our homes more energy and water efficient. The loans are available from banks with a low interest rate subsidised by the Government. <http://www.environment.gov.au/greenloans/>

AUSTRALIAN SEASCAPE

The Wilderness Society notes that our seascape is double our landscape and below the surface is more varied and dramatic than above. Canyons, undersea mountains, plateaus and trenches are home to a great variety of life, but overfishing, oil and gas drilling, mining and pollution are destroying marine habitats. Some marine species have already disappeared, and climate change may make matters worse. <http://www.wilderness.org.au/>

**FUTURE OF THE BOWLING CLUB SITE

Note Monday June 8th from 11am to 3pm at Boongarra Reserve [opposite Oatley Station] for a meeting arranged by Friends of Oatley, Lions and OFF to let the community know of the Council's plans. That is to alienate the area and to lease it long term to a private entity. Come along for a sausage sizzle and information day.

BRIEFLY

A Aboriginal Archaeological Tour Saturday 23 May 2009 at Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell As part of National Archaeological Week 2009, consultant archaeologist Paul Irish and Botany Bay National Park Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer Dean Kelly will lead a walking/talking tour of the archaeological work in the area. It is for one hour and free, but booking is essential. Call Paul Irish on 0418 450 490 or paulirish@optusnet.com.au

M Mammoths Exhibition at the Australian Museum. Until 24th July. The Mammoth was elephant-like, but a much bigger creature, and disappeared at the end of the Ice Age, some 10,000 years ago. This exhibition comes from the National Museum of Natural History, Paris.

S Shooting Bats Friends of Bats note the unrestricted shooting of Grey-headed Flying foxes by orchardists, and are seeking support for their campaign to stop the cruelty. www.sydnevbats.org.au/

W World Environment Day 5th June is a United Nations day designed to stimulate awareness of the environment and the need for political action for its preservation. Sydney Olympic Park Authority is celebrating the day with environmental events and programs Details Mike Bartlett Tel: 9714 7334, mike.bartlett@sopa.nsw.gov.au, www.sydnevolympicpark.com.au/

W World Ocean Day 8th June "Helping our climate, helping our ocean" www.theoceanproject.org/

OCEAN WARMING?



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