



# O.F.F. NEWS



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

Mar/April 2010

## OATLEY PARK - A LITTLE HISTORY

Oatley Park was dedicated for Public Recreation on March 25<sup>th</sup> 1887 and proclaimed on May 29<sup>th</sup> 1888. Under the Public Parks Act of 1884, Governor Baron Carrington declared the land at Limekiln Bay, Georges River to be a public park, then to be known as 'Peakhurst Park'. West Oatley between Gungah Bay Road and the Park had not yet been subdivided. From Oatley Park Ave to Jew Fish Point (116 acres) was the Donnelly Fisher grant. *The Gates* now at the western end of Mulga Rd is, apparently, where the gates of the Fisher property were located. North of Oatley Park Avenue was the John William Alexander White grant, (81 acres), occupied by Myles McRae, whose name is better known now in Penshurst.

## ACACIA PROMINENS – GOSFORD WATTLE

This is a rare plant in Oatley Park flowering in mid August. A few plants are on the out-road beside the



phyllode margin. [Note from Alan Fairley]

## A BIRD IN THE HAND

Australian Geographic reports that Erin Stone, experienced bird trainer, rehabilitated this injured peregrine falcon. "The falcon was quite nervous, so the first step I took was to build a relationship with him. Gaining trust is the most important step in training any animal. Then we started the lure training, a technique used for centuries, where the keeper swings a leather lure around with



food attached that the bird chases."

[www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/](http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/)

## ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Have you paid you OFF subscription for 2010?

If not, please post your cheque to

The Secretary, PO Box 52 Mortdale.

Subs remain at \$25 per person or family living at the same address.

Mar 31<sup>st</sup> is usually the cut off date

## KOALAS

Koala numbers are declining dramatically, and in the far south coast particularly. The Australian Koala Foundation wants the Koala listed as a threatened species. Data from Mumbulla, a threatened area, suggests that koalas will eat any species of eucalypt, and that it is nutrient content not tree species that is important! Clearly, whole forests need protection, but Forests NSW is to log a far south coast forest, home of the last remaining koala population in the region. [www.chipstop.forests.org.au/](http://www.chipstop.forests.org.au/)



## THE KIMBERLEY CAMPAIGN

The Wilderness Society calls for support for the Kimberley campaign. The West Atlas oil spill off the Kimberley coast brought into sharp focus the risks associated with oil. It calls for a clear message to the State and Commonwealth Governments that the Kimberley is too important to put at risk. Ph: (08) 9420 7255:



[wa@wilderness.org.au](mailto:wa@wilderness.org.au) [secure.wilderness.org.au/cyberactivist/](http://secure.wilderness.org.au/cyberactivist/)

## CLIMATE CHANGE?

The World Meteorological Organization notes that 2000-2009 was the world's warmest decade on record, warmer than the 1990s, in turn warmer than the 1980s. In Australia, the Bureau of Meteorology notes that each decade since the 1940s was warmer than the preceding decade. The Earth has warmed by around 0.74 °C from 1906 to 2005, a statistically significant climatic change. [www.climatechange.gov.au/](http://www.climatechange.gov.au/)

## HELP COPE WITH CLIMATE

The head of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced a \$AUD112 billion fund to help countries mitigate the effects of climate change. He said at the World Economic Forum. "Efforts to deal with climate change should not be blocked because we cannot meet financing needs." [environmentalmanagementnews.net/](http://environmentalmanagementnews.net/)

## OUR ENVIRONMENT

In 2010, for the first time in history, a majority of the world's population will be living in cities. In 1950, 30% of the world's population was urbanised. By 2050, 70% will be. [David Hall reporting in Hut News] [bluemountains.org.au/HutNews/1003news.pdf](http://bluemountains.org.au/HutNews/1003news.pdf)

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 are welcome to all meetings and excursions

**COMING EVENTS:**

**Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> (Monday)** 7.45pm: Regular monthly meeting with **Dr Peggy Eby** a biologist, for the last 20 years studying Grey-headed Flying Foxes, who will speak on *Flying Foxes in Sydney*, focussing on the biology, behaviour, and conservation of flying foxes, including Oatley's Myles Dunphy Flying Fox camp.

**Mar 28<sup>th</sup> (Sunday)** Field Day: Tour of the Glen Reserve and Burnum Burnum Sanctuary, Bonnet Bay. **Leader: Jason Cockayne.** Meet at 9am at Lincoln Crescent Seat/Washington Drive, Bonnet Bay. Morning Tea will be at 10.30am at the Sanctuary, Tudar Road, Bonnet Bay. We continue through reserve for an hour, and then have lunch. It will be a fairly casual walk, and we may discuss plants along the walk, as the walkers would like.

**April 15<sup>th</sup> (Thursday)** Field Day: Exploring the environs of Ultimo/Broadway **Leader: Keith Robinson.** The walk starts at cnr Broadway and Harris Sts at 9.30 am, and then moves on to visit various buildings and points of interest in the area, including The Peter Johnson building, the ABC building, TAFE catering college, Harris Community Centre, and the Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre. It should finish about 2.30- 3 pm.

**April 19<sup>th</sup> (Monday)** 7.45pm: Regular monthly meeting with **Kris Spike**, a composer, pianist, and environmental campaigner, speaking on *Population & Sustainability*.

**May 1<sup>st</sup> (Saturday)** Field Day: Tour at Bulli - Illawarra Grevillea Park. **Leader Heather Mackey**

**CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY - SUN 7<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

This year's site for OFF was at the bottom of Poulton Park, Morshead Drive, Connells Point. It was a successful day with many joining in, including groups of local Guides and Scouts. It was also the site of a free breakfast BBQ organised by Kogarah City Council for all volunteers that participated in Kogarah's Clean Up Australia Day. This made it a very busy site.

**SMIGGINS 2010: FEBRUARY 13-20**

There were sixteen of us this year and we were so pleased to have Win Tonkin amongst us. Steady rain in the first two days turned the alpine streams into foaming cascades and the Snowy River crossing below Charlotte's Pass was briefly inundated, but the weather soon cleared, and it was a delight to feel the cool mountain air after Sydney's oppressive heat.

Above the tree line were drifts of white gentians and clusters of deep pink berries of Carpet Heath. The rain brought out lots of wildlife including lizards, butterflies, and flame robins and Jan photographed a crayfish in one of the clear tarns.

Various groups completed walks including the Dead Horse Track, Waterfall Walk, Porcupine Rocks and ascent of Mt Townsend, and there were car trips to Yarrangobilly Caves and Tom Groggin and Khancoban. The cosy 'fire', challenging jigsaws and sharing of films and photos enhanced the happy hours in the lounge. We do appreciate Robin Dickson's organisation of this annual event. [Report by Liz Cameron]

**BURNUM BURNUM SANCTUARY**

A haven of serenity and solitude, the sanctuary at Bonnet Bay offers a range of great bushwalk tracks revealing stunning rock escarpments & formations. Keep an eye out for "Eagle Rock" the shape of the rock is much like the head of an eagle. You may come across an array of wildlife, blue tongue lizards, black cockatoos, and tiny wrens. The sanctuary also offers lots of parking, picnic areas, playground, and a wetland area to explore. [See field day on Mar 28]

**OFF NEWS OF 40 YEARS AGO.**

March 1970 referred to oil drilling on the Great Barrier Reef, proposals for Sydney's second airport to be at either Wattamolla or Duffys Forest, and plans to have Towra Point reserved as a Park.

April 1970 reported on reactions to the continued industrial development of Kurnell Peninsula [in the year of the Cook Bi-centenary] and on the public meeting pushing for the "retention of the remainder of the Kurnell Peninsula".

**SPEAKER AT THE FEB 22<sup>nd</sup> MEETING**

The 2010 program began in spectacular fashion with 60 enjoying Gary Dunnett's talk and his stunning photos of colourful underwater life at Shiprock Aquatic Reserve in Port Hacking. The biodiversity in such a small area, close to Cronulla, was extraordinary. Gary explained the adaptations of the animals and algae that allow them to crowd onto the sandy substrates and rocky cliffs of what is essentially a flooded sandstone valley, and how some of the land and water-based human activities can threaten the fauna and flora at Shiprock.

**BRIEFLY**

**Biodiversity (International Year of)** - Details of what the world is doing throughout the Year can be found at: <http://www.cbd/int/2010/celebrations>

**Climate Change Conference** - 18-21 April for those interested in the efforts of local communities in adapting for and helping mitigate effects of climate change, at the Fairmont Resort, Leura. Registration is essential. [www.localclimatechangeconference.com/](http://www.localclimatechangeconference.com/)

**Cooks River Wetland.** Work begins soon on constructing a new wetland on the banks of the river at Heynes Reserve, Canterbury. [Mambara: - Ise 25]

**Earth Hour 8pm Sat March 27<sup>th</sup>.** You can sign up and support on <http://www.earthhour.org.au/>

**Oatley Bowling Club Site** is still under threat. Community representatives cannot gain access to review its potential as a temporary [or even continuing!] community centre.

**Requiem For A Species: Why We Resist The Truth About Climate Change:** by Clive Hamilton. Most eminent climate scientists agree that the world is now on a path to a catastrophe and it is too late to stop it. This book is about why the warnings were ignored. [Reviewed in Hut News]

<http://www.bluemountains.org.au/> ]

