



O.F.F. NEWS



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APPLE DUMPLINGS IN OATLEY PARK

Billardiera scandens is a native vine with yellowish bell-shaped flowers, found in Oatley Park and many other bushland areas of eastern Australia. Its common name is Apple Dumplings or Apple-berry because of the small, edible fruit that taste like baked apple when ripe. The *Billardiera* genus occurs only in Australia and contains about 10 other species. It was named after the French scientist Jacques-Julien Houtou de La Billardiere who found and described many new plants on an important exploratory voyage to our southern shores in the 1790s. The historical, scientific and geographical significance of this voyage should be much better known and appreciated by Australians.

La Billardiere will be the topic of historian, Dr Ed Duyker, the speaker at our next monthly meeting (see p.2), and this should be an extremely interesting and informative evening.

FUTURE OF THE PLANET COMPETITION

To celebrate World Environment Day, Saturday 5th June, 2004, Georges River Community Service Inc, in conjunction with OFF, is holding a competition for local children to outline their '**Ideas for the Future of the Planet**'. Entries may be in story form, poetry, artwork, puzzles, graphs, games, models or any other chosen form. There is no age requirement. Entries should be delivered to Georges River Community Service Inc., 63 Pitt St Mortdale (near Boundary Rd) before 30th April or to the next monthly meeting of OFF on 26th April (see over). For further details, phone Wendy on 9570 5332 or Robin on 9580 5663.

NEWS CONTRIBUTIONS INVITED

Members' comments, views and brief articles (especially local issues) are very welcome for inclusion in OFF News when editorial space is available.

NEW BOOK BY ALAN FAIRLEY

A number of OFF members have enquired about the new book by our Vice President and well-known author, Alan Fairley. He is pleased to advise that it has now been released by the publishers (New Holland Struik). The book is called 'Seldom Seen' and is about rare plants of the Sydney area. It contains colour photographs and descriptions of 210 rare species as well as interesting stories about how they were found etc. Many of the species have never before been shown in colour photographs. Alan will have a copy of the book for members to see at the next meeting on 26th April.

MOORE RESERVE WILDLIFE

Kogarah Council completed its re-created Moore Reserve wetlands in the spring of 2001. Since that time, David Waterhouse has been regularly visiting the area, recording the return of birds. The question is, how successful are man-made urban wetlands like Moore Reserve and Lime kiln Bay in bringing back wildlife ?

David has found those in Moore Reserve very successful, attracting some species which have long been absent from Oatley. For his complete report, log on to our website at off.oatleypark.com

WOMBARA-THIRROUL WALK

Another very enjoyable field day was held on March 27 when 16 OFF members walked along the coastal rocks and beaches from Wombara to Thirroul. Features and photographs of the trip are on OFF's website off.oatleypark.com

PERSONALISED ADDRESS LABELS

Cliff Crane produces 225 personalised address labels (including 45 with coloured Christmas motifs for Christmas card sending) for \$10 plus postage. He will donate \$5 to OFF from each order for OFF members. They are a good buy and you'll be helping OFF finances! Ring Cliff on 9580 3269 for details.

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

April 26 (Monday). Regular monthly meeting at 7.45pm. Dr Ed Duyker, Historian, will give a talk entitled 'La Billardiere - French Explorer/Botanist'.

May 1 (Saturday) FIELD DAY, Wollie Creek, remnant bushland between Tempe and Bardwell Park. Travel by train from Mortdale, 9.13 am or by car to Tempe, meet on western side of railway station. Train arrives 9.31 am. Check for trackwork before May 1. Bring lunch, water, wear a hat and walking footwear. Leader: Heather Mackey, tel 9528 7071.

May 24 (Monday). Regular monthly meeting. Bob Crombie, formerly of NPWS and TAFE (ecology teacher) will speak on Eco-scaping Gardens.

OATLEY TREE LOSSES CONTINUE

We despair at the loss of another grand old blackbutt in Moore Reserve c/o Kogarah Council, reported by a resident of Asquith Street, Oatley, who lives beside Binnawie Reserve (the Louisa Street portion of Moore Reserve). A large coral tree had dropped a sizeable limb and, being concerned for safety, she contacted Council. When the Council person arrived he was more interested in the blackbutt that stood beside her house. Being an old tree resplendent with a myriad of nesting holes and housing a family of brush-tail possums and nesting parrots it was observed to have termite damage. The resident made a point of saying she loved this tree, calling it 'the Melrose Place tree' owing to all the comings and goings of native fauna. She made the added point of saying she did not want it to come down. However, a termite inspector was called who confirmed it was affected by termites (as is every old tree with nesting holes) and declared it must be removed. Four days later a Council tree gang arrived and the tree was felled, contrary to the wishes of the neighbourhood. There was no community consultation, no attempt at termite treatment or measures to protect the needs of the dependent fauna. When the tree loppers began work the resident enquired of them the danger to the possums probably hiding in the hollows. She was told that when they heard the chainsaws they would soon leave. Next morning, just metres from the felled tree, a young possum was found dead on the path. (Report by Alan Fairley)

VERY BRIEFLY

Grevillea Park Bulli: Open days, Saturdays and Sundays of April 24,25 and May 1,2

Cooks River guided kayak tour: Saturday, May 8, Riverlife Project. Bookings at Marrickville Council's Citizens Service Centre, 9335 2222.

Botany Bay Fishcare Volunteers: program funded by NSW Recreational Fishing License Trust to promote sustainable fishing in Botany Bay and Georges River. Further information: 8437 4914 or visit www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au

Kai Mia Way: guided walk along Woronora section Sunday, June 6. Bookings at Sutherland Shire Environment Centre, 9545 3077 (ask for Nick or Jo)

Riverside Reflections: award-winning book on history of Lugarno, by Glenyss Barnham. For a copy email riversidereflexions@barnham.com.au or call Glenyss at night on 9533 3214.

Bushfire Conference: Influences of political and social changes on management, 24-25 June, at University of Sydney. Nature conservation Council of NSW. Details and enrolment forms, 9279 2466, fax 9279 2499, email ncc@nccnsw.org.au

Up Close and Spineless: invertebrate photographic competition for children and adults. Good prizes. Australian Museum, 9320 6202. Closes June 28.

DID YOU KNOW ?

The world's population increases by 250,000 people every day. At present it is 6.2 billion and is expected to exceed 10 billion by 2050 (from Professor David Pimental, Cornell University, New York)

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