



O.F.F. NEWS



Published by
OATLEY-FLORA-&-FAUNA
CONSERVATION-SOCIETY-INC.
Print-Post-App. No. PP-255003/03239

Since 1955

Check out OFF website: <http://off.oatleypark.com/>

Issue 10/8

Aug/Sept 2010

GEORGES RIVER COMBINED COUNCILS' COMMITTEE Inc (GRCCC)

At the July meeting Alison Hanlon, Executive Officer of the Committee spoke on the history, objectives, and work of the GRCCC. The Georges River begins its journey approximately 60km south-west of Sydney in the town of Appin, flows north towards Liverpool, through the Chipping Norton Lake Scheme, then east to Botany Bay. The catchment area of land draining into the river is approximately 960km². With over 1 million people living within it, this is one of the most highly urbanised catchments in Australia, and everything that occurs within this area affects the river, and is of concern to the Committee. Alison's most informative address cannot be appropriately summarised in this space, but much of the detail can be found on website: <http://www.georgesriver.com.au/>

THREATS TO WILD ANIMALS OR TREES

Threatened native animals and plants that live on prime development land could be "offset" by an undertaking to protect different species somewhere else, under proposed state government changes to biodiversity rules. It means an echidna colony in one part of NSW could be destroyed in exchange for the preservation of a rare stand of trees elsewhere in the state. The proposed new biodiversity certification guidelines would allow developers of large urban projects even greater flexibility than the controversial BioBanking scheme, and includes provisions for cash payments for building on the habitat of certain animals if no suitable offset can be found. www.smh.com.au/environment/

FORESTS TO WOODCHIPS

Australian native forests are being logged at a greater rate than ever before. 85% of all of the native trees logged in Australia are wood chipped and shipped to Japan for the paper industry. New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania are involved in logging native forests for woodchips, and it is not a sustainable practice in any of these states. In NSW alone, 2000 trees a day are sent to the chip mill, or 1 million tonnes of logs a year. Native forests are now being logged on 20-year cycles, when it takes some 150 years for a tree to grow to maturity and form part of a mature ecosystem. Logging in such short cycles thins out the canopy, takes away most of the mature trees, and causes the forests to dry out. There is mounting evidence to suggest that the devastating fires such as the recent Black Saturday fires are made worse by logging forests. <http://www.forestmedia.com.au/>



WATTLE DAY – 1ST SEPT



Proclamation of Wattle as the national floral emblem was completed during the Bicentennial Year 1988. Golden Wattle, *Acacia pycnantha*, was the actual species chosen. In 1992, the Commonwealth and States agreed to unify Australia's Wattle Day to 1st September, the first day of the spring season. www.wattleday.asn.au/

GREENER ELECTRICITY

Electricity generation across Australia's five eastern states was greener in 2009 compared with the previous year. Growth of 11% in renewable electricity generation and 8% for gas meant that the average carbon intensity of electricity fell by 1% compared with 2008. This was despite a continued reliance on coal-fired power stations and an increase in the use of some of the largest and most greenhouse intensive coal-fired stations in the country. The findings are part of *The Climate Group's* Electricity Generation Report 2009 on electricity generation and associated emissions from coal, gas, liquid fuel and renewables. However, electricity and emissions across the five states continue to be dominated by a relatively small number of large coal-fired power stations: the top 20 generators of electricity were all coal-fired and accounted for more than 90 % of [their] greenhouse gas emissions. The top 10 accounted for more than 70 % of total emissions. <http://www.theclimategroup.org/assets/files>

WEATHER-RELATED DISASTERS

The number of disasters has doubled in the last 30 years, according to a comprehensive analysis of storms, floods, and droughts. There were 828 "weather catastrophes" involving loss of life and major economic damage across the world last year, compared with 317 in 1980. The analysis by Munich Re, the reinsurance company, found 385 such events in the first six months of this year - the second highest in any January to June period since records began in 1974. The report does not include the recent flooding in Pakistan, landslides in China and wildfires in Russia. <http://blogmyway.org/news/>

JUDITH MALCOLM 1940 – 2010

It is with great sadness that I note the death of our member Judith Malcolm. Judith died suddenly on 31st July following a stroke. With a background in teaching and law Judith became a great conservationist and was active in each place she lived, in North Sydney, Balmain and Haberfield before coming to Oatley, where again she took a great interest in matters of community concern. Judith was a vibrant member of OFF and was on the committee for a term. Our deep sympathy goes to John and all their family. Julian Sheen

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

Aug 23rd (Monday) 7.45pm: Regular monthly meeting with **Jeff Smith**, Director of the NSW Environmental Defender's Office speaking on Legal Aspects of Climate Change and Biodiversity Conservation.

Aug 28th (Saturday) Field day: Kiama to Gerringong and return. 12 kilometres. (Note change from program, due to possible track closure at Werri Lagoon). Meet Kiama Railway Station 9.30 am and then drive to start of walk at end of Elanora St. Allow 1½ hours driving time from Oatley. Train departs Sutherland 7.11 am, arriving Kiama 9.13 am. The track is very exposed, has some steep grades, is generally grassy but with some rocky/muddy/uneven sections. Wear sturdy footwear, and bring hat, jacket, sunscreen, first aid, plenty of water and lunch and snacks. Please contact **Leaders: Lesley or Peter Cox** on 0438 878 774 for more details.

12th Sept (Sunday) *Earth Foundation* is having a Spring Gathering in Oatley Park focussing on the bushland, catchment management in Lime Kiln Bay and fire management. The organisation is a not-for-profit group providing environmental education in the field. Lunch is to be provided and a fee will be charged. Bookings essential. Phone Kate Hughes on 45 682118

Sept 16th (Thursday) Field day Cabarita and Breakfast Point **Leader: Keith Robinson**

Sept 27th (Monday) 7.45pm: Regular monthly meeting with **Robin Stacey** speaking on Flora and Fauna that shaped Australia's science and culture.

Oct 9th (Saturday) Field day: Lower Blue Mountains **Leaders: Graham and Janet Austin**

WALK REPORT. WATSONS BAY TO BONDI.

On 31st July, the forecast of showers kept some participants away and only nine defied the threatening weather to meet at Watsons Bay. As it turned out, there were no showers, the early cloud lifted and it was a wonderful day for a walk. Firstly, the group inspected fortifications at Green Point and South Head and walked around the historic Lighthouse and Cottage. The Harbour looked great and sunshine lit up the City through the clouds. After The Gap, the track led up the cliff line to Signal Tower for a picnic lunch. Beyond Macquarie Lighthouse, we passed around the spectacular rocky inlet known as Diamond Bay, and then followed the track and road towards Bondi Beach. We inspected the Aboriginal rock engravings in the middle of Bondi Golf Course, and as we stood beside a large carved whale, the real thing appeared offshore spouting and frolicking - a truly fitting end to another memorable OFF walk. [Report by walk leader Alan Fairley]

OATLEY PARK IN SEPTEMBER

Myrtle-leaf Wattle (*Acacia myrtifolia*; shrub to 1 m, short broad leaves, pale yellow balls up to 8 in a group)

Sunshine Wattle (*Acacia terminalis*; shrub to 3m, feathery leaves, pale yellow balls up to 40 grouped.)

Sweet-scented Wattle (*Acacia suaveolens*; slender shrub to 2m, straight narrow leaves, pale yellow balls)

Pink Spider Flowers (*Grevillea sericea*; shrub to 2m, flowers usually pink but sometimes white)

Green spider Flowers (*Grevillea mucronulata*; low or spreading shrub to 1.5m, groups of 6 or more flowers)

Rough Wax-flowers (*Philothea scabra*; small shrub on sheltered slopes, white flowers with 5 petals)

Fuschia Heath (*Epacris longiflora*; 2 cm red tubes with white lobes, sharp-pointed leaves to 12 mm long)

Bush Pea (*Pultenaea stipularis*; shrub to 2m, yellow pea-type flowers, and crowded thin leaves to 3cm long). [Alan Fairley provided this list]

OATLEY FLORA AND FAUNA SOCIETY

Oatley Flora and Fauna Society conducts regular bush walks and has speakers on interesting topics at their monthly meetings. The Society also supports tree-planting events, Clean up Australia and restoration of the local bushland. You can help improve the local environment. Join us at our monthly meetings to hear interesting speakers and meet like-minded people. More detail at: <http://off.oatleypark.com/documents/> If you are reading this on line just click the underlined section to open up the website at the precise reference point.

OFF ANNUAL DINNER

The 2010 Annual Dinner will be held on Friday 12th November, 7 pm at South Hurstville R.S.L. Club, 72 Connells Point Rd, South Hurstville (almost cnr of King Georges Rd) in the South Lounge. Cost \$35 per person for a Buffet including pre dinner platters, a selection of hot dishes, salads, desert, bread rolls and tea or coffee with mints. Drinks can be purchased at the bar. **Alison Gilroy** and **Robin Dickson** will be taking bookings and accepting payment at the September/October meetings, or can be contacted on 9580 5557 or 9580 5663.

Briefly

Speakers for Next Year: Our Program Officer is looking for interesting speakers on subjects related to flora and fauna for some of next year's meetings. If you have any suggestions please contact Melina Amerasinghe on 9580 1504.

Myles Dunphy Stream Watch The watch is monitoring the 2 drainage lines that meet in the reserve, one carrying stormwater from Oatley shopping centre and the other just downstream of Mulga Rd. Testing days are generally 4th Tue of the month, meeting at the former Oatley Bowling Club car park about 9 a.m. Visitors are welcome. For more information ring Sharyn T9579 1262 or Heather 0425 291 879. www.streamwatch.org.au/

Membership fees Next year members can opt to pay their membership fee by direct bank transfer - [more detail when the renewal notice is sent out]. The fee will remain at \$25 per family for 2011.

Marine sanctuaries The NSW government plans to remove the vital protection provided by marine sanctuaries for our turtles, dolphins, seahorses and hundreds of other marine plants and animals. This move goes against the overwhelming scientific and community support for marine parks. www.bluemountains.org.au/HutNews/



"There are better ways to log off."