



O.F.F. NEWS



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AGM FIRST MEETING OF 2011

Best wishes for 2011 to all our members and friends are extended by the 2010 Committee. The first meeting this year will be the Annual General Meeting on Monday, 7th February, when the 2011 office bearers and Committee will be elected, followed by slides/pictures and a light supper, as detailed overleaf.

URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

The Federal Government has released a discussion paper on options for how to manage growth and sustainability for Australia's biggest urban centres. The paper, *Our Cities – Building A Productive, Sustainable and Liveable Future* is open for comment and feedback, until 1st March. www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure/

CONSERVATION SUCCESSES

The Wilderness Society reports some successes in 2010. In NSW, after a 4-year battle, the Tillegra Dam project on the Williams River was finally scrapped. In Victoria, 45,000 hectares of forests in East Gippsland, including Goolengook, and a significant section of Yalmy River were protected in new parks and reserves. In Queensland, the wild Wenlock River was protected from a destructive strip mining operation. In Tasmania, the timber industry agreed to pull out of native-forest logging, ending decades of conflict with a solution that protects jobs and forests. Unfortunately, Gunns is now threatening to renege on its agreement if certain new conditions are not met.

BIODIVERSITY

One species and five sub-species of Australian birds when last surveyed ten years ago, were listed as critically endangered. They are now thought to have been extinct for many years. This means a 25 per cent increase in the number of extinct Australian birds, with the likely culprits being habitat loss, interbreeding and introduced predators. So says environmental scientist Professor Stephen Garnett of Charles Darwin University, NT, the co-author of a new study. Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act has up until now listed 23 species and subspecies of birds as extinct. <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/>

GORILLAS IN CRISIS

The Humane Society reports that in ten years, with civil war, refugee crises, coltan mining, and massive illegal hunting the number of eastern lowland gorillas in the south of the Congo has gone from 25,000 to 5,000 with pressure still mounting. The Society is looking for financial support for its program in the area. <http://www.hsi.org.au/>

Note that Coltan is a mineral ingredient in making mobile phones. Recycling our old phones may be one way for us to help a little in reducing the pressure on the gorillas.

SPOTLIGHTING OATLEY PARK 26TH NOV

A keen group of spot lighters gathered at Oatley Park for the fauna spot lighting, the last field event for 2010. The warm balmy conditions were perfect. We first brushed up on a few interesting calls of nocturnal birds and mammals waiting for the light to fade. Heading off to the bottom gate we saw Grey-headed Flying Foxes (Megachiroptera) heading out from their roost to feed on flowering eucalypts. A small insectivorous micro bat (Microchiroptera) flew about above our heads so we could conveniently compare its differing size and flight behaviour to the flying foxes. We saw a Tawney Frogmouth peering at us with red eyes in the light before flying off. We then spied two Common Ringtail Possums peeking out from their nest hollow in an old dead eucalypt. A Common Brushtail Possum appeared, with its black brushy tail, and ran nimbly along the branch. Several Grey-headed Flying Foxes were seen feeding upside down on the nectar in the flowering Sydney Red Gum (*Angophora costata*). We eagerly checked our bat harp traps set up that afternoon but alas, no micro bats were caught. We heard the call of the Owlet Nightjar, and, as we ambled out beside the oval, we were serenaded by a pair of Boobook Owls or Mopokes, the latter name from their "mopoke" call, one of the loveliest sounds of the Australian bush at night. [Report by walk leader: Debbie Andrew.]

BIRD VISITORS TO OATLEY

On December 21st 2010, a pair of Little Lorikeets flew over Moore Reserve wetlands and landed in one of the fringing she-oaks before flying up into a large eucalypt. On December 18th, a small flock of Figbirds* fed on native figs in a tree at the entrance to Seymour Reserve. In late November and early December, an Owlet Nightjar was heard calling loudly in the early hours from a back yard with plenty of trees in Woonoona Street. On January 3rd, a male Darter was spotted flying over Moore Reserve. It came low as if inspecting the wetland but flew off over Hurstville Road. [A note from David Waterhouse]

*Figbirds (*Sphecotheres viridis*) are part of a worldwide family that includes the orioles. Males have bare, red skin around the eye, contrasting against a black crown and grey neck and throat. The remainder of the body is olive-green, with a white under-tail area.



Male Figbird feeding on a berry
Photo: Bill Cameron © Bill Cameron

PHYTOPHTHORA DIEBACK

Check on this devastating plant killer before your next walk in the bush. http://www.rbgnsyd.nsw.gov.au/plant_info/

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

Feb 7th (Monday) 7.45pm Annual General Meeting with the election of officers and review of the work of the Society. If you are interested in nominating for the committee, please contact Liz Cameron. If you have interesting photos please bring them for a "PowerPoint presentation", [sorry no slides, must be digital photos on CD or memory stick!]. The meeting will close with a social supper - please bring a plate.

Feb 28th (Monday) 7.45pm Regular monthly meeting. Gary Schoer is speaking on "Kimberley by Sea - an expedition into the lands of the Wandjina and the Gwion Gwion (or Bradshaw) rock art".

March 5th (Saturday), Field Day to Dharawal State Conservation-Minerva Pools. Leader: **Graham Lalchere**
T 95803107 [Details in the next OFF News]

Mar 6th (Sunday) Clean Up Australia Day -OFF members and friends will be working in the area noted in the next OFF News.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF OATLEY FLORA AND FAUNA CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC. FOR YEAR ENDED 31.12.10. Lesley Wylie, Hon. Treasurer

Credit Balance- 01.01.10		\$6,727.53
Receipts		
Subscriptions	\$3,650.00	
Donations	\$1300.00	
Sale - Plants	\$151.00	
Annual Dinner	\$1,920.00	
Annual Dinner Raffle	\$145.00	
Sale – OFF Caps	\$340.00	
Sale – OFF Mugs	\$7.00	
Meeting Stall Sales	\$250.00	
Interest	\$1.20	
Oatley Lions Festival Refund	\$120.00	
Total Receipts -31/12/10		\$7,884.20
Department Fair Trading	\$47.00	
OFF Caps	\$1,273.25	
Printing/Postage	\$837.20	
Australia Post Box Rental	\$79.50	
Printing Programs	\$244.30	
Annual Dinner	\$1,770.00	
Insurance	\$749.52	
NCC Membership	\$200.00	
Donations (see Note)	\$1,400.00	
Lions Oatley Festival Stall	\$120.00	
Oatley West P.S. Re-planting	\$312.00	
Oatley P.S. Re-planting	\$150.00	
Narwee P.S. Vegetable Garden	\$50.00	
Oatley Uniting Church Hall Hire	\$275.00	
Sundries	\$261.14	
Total payments		\$7,618.41
Balance at 31/12/2010		\$6,842.82
Add Cash Management Trust A/c	\$8,903.71	
Total Society Funds		\$15,746.93

Notes: This report has not yet been audited

- Donations of \$200 went to The Colong Foundation, Birds Australia, WIRES, Kuringai Bats, Wilderness Society, Australian Bush Heritage, and Total Environment Centre.
- The Society's funds at 31.12.10 were \$15,747 including \$1,398 in *The President's Fund* from which donations go to selected conservation groups, [as noted above].
- Included in the Society's funds are subscriptions for 2011 of \$1,450 paid in advance.
- Generous donations of \$720 have been received with the 2011 subscriptions so far, and these will go into the *The President's Fund*.

Thank you.

OATLEY BOWLING CLUB SITE

At its September meeting, Hurstville council resolved to prepare a plan of management for the Myles Dunphy Reserve. The whole Reserve (except for the Scout Hall) is currently classified as a natural area under the Generic Plan of Management for Natural Areas. At its December meeting, Council resolved that the Plan of Management apply only to the Natural Reserve excluding the former Bowling Club Site. The budget for the plan is about \$40,000. Council can then submit an application (to itself) to rezone the former Bowling Club site to Residential and to reclassify it as Operational Land. Once it is classified as "operational" it would be open to lease for seniors' housing, and it can be sold.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS 2011.

As expected, "glitches" with the new electronic bank transfer system have occurred. We have already received several anonymous transfers. As outlined in the renewal notice it is **IMPERATIVE** that you enter your name in the twenty-character reference field of the transfer document. If you receive a reminder notice for non-payment of your 2011 membership subscription, and have already paid electronically, please phone Robin Dickson on 9580 5663 so that we can sort out the problem.

Briefly

Kim Wagstaff is to be congratulated on receiving **Kan Oatley Electorate Community Award**. O.F.F. nominated Kim in due recognition of his enthusiastic contribution to the community and to conservation.

Colong Foundation continues the battle for the wilderness. <http://www.colongwilderness.org.au/>

Earth Hour will be held on Saturday March 25th between 8.30- pm and 9.30 pm local time.

Clean Up Australia this year is on 6th March. Details in next O.F.F. News and at the February monthly meeting. www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/

Bush Regenerator's Handbook, the third edition from The National Trust of Australia (NSW) has just been released. <http://www.nationaltrust.com.au/>.

Snowy Mountains 2011. Our annual trip to Smiggins Chalet is from 12th to 19th February. [Costs are \$102 double or twin share, \$47 extra adult in room, \$81 single, and \$39 per child]. There is still time to make a late booking - contact Robin Dickson as soon as possible on 9580 5663

You are a clever pup, but stop winning every time!

