



O.F.F. NEWS



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GEORGES RIVER HONOURS

A) The Georges River Combined Councils' Committee (GRCCC) Community River Health Monitoring Program was honoured with the 2012 National Urban Landcare Award at the biennial Landcare Australia Awards gala dinner on Tuesday, September 5th at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre. www.landcareonline.com.au/

B) The International River Foundation has announced the three finalists for the 2012 Australian River prize - our Georges, Queensland's Condamine, and WA's Swan and Canning Rivers. It is the country's richest environmental award, recognising outstanding, visionary and sustainable programs in river management. www.riverfoundation.org.au/

OUR KOALAS

Koala numbers in the wild have declined by an estimated 29% in the past 20 years, and are now vulnerable in three states. The Australian Geographic Society is working with the Australian Koala Foundation [AKF] to aid in research, conservation and habitat protection. The decline in numbers appears to be largely due to a habitat loss, disease, dog attacks and car strikes with loss of habitat as the greatest problem. AKF is seeking donations to help manage and preserve its 40 hectare wildlife sanctuary on the Sunshine Coast. www.australiangeographic.com.au/

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Australia's critical environmental protection laws are under serious threat. Federal and State governments have recently announced an aggressive plan to wind back the country's system of essential environmental protections, which have been in place for decades, for land, water, wild life and iconic wild places. Environmental laws are an essential element of a healthy society, protecting our fragile ecosystems, health, communities, the economy and future generations. Environmental organisations across the country are collaborating to fight against these threats, and to encourage the community to join them in protesting. For details and suggestions on how to protect places you love, go to: <http://placesyoulove.org/>

COAL SEAM GAS

Coal Seam Gas (CSG) has been extracted and used in Australia for nearly 30 years, but only recently has it come under close public scrutiny. The coal industry argues CSG is a far cleaner way to produce electricity than coal; but on this the scientific community is divided. Concerns have been raised for several years about the long-term impacts from CSG mining, focusing on aspects such as reduced groundwater levels and risks to groundwater quality (among other issues such as surface water, land use, gaseous emissions, and waste-water management). Groundwater risks take many months, years or even decades before their impact can be properly assessed. According to the Sydney Catchment Authority, water levels in Woronora Reservoir are dropping, despite attempts to repair longwall damage. www.abc.net.au/rural/coalseamgas/

OATLEY PARK'S FLOWERS IN SEPTEMBER

The September list on the website has fourteen flowers including this Waxlip Orchid (*Glossodia major*), a mauve-blue ground orchid with a solitary hairy leaf, to be found in open woodland down from the oval. off.oatleypark.com/



WASTE MANAGEMENT

Research shows that up to 40% of the average kerbside garbage bin is food. A lot of this is avoidable food waste and most of it can be composted or put in worm farms. Every bit of food that we throw out has cost money, so it makes sense to use as much of our food purchases as possible. Food waste is a problem in many countries. In the UK, the Waste Resources and Action Programme (WRAP) estimate that a third of the food bought is thrown out. If that waste were eradicated, it would be equivalent to taking one in five cars off the road. IN NSW the average household throws out \$1,036 of food yearly. foodwise.com.au/did-you-know/x

HUNTING IN NATIONAL PARKS



Allowing access to our national parks for volunteer hunters keen to shoot feral animals may seem sensible, but the evidence shows that a program of hunters controlled by the Game Council will provide no environmental benefit, is likely to lead to environmental harm and put at risk the public's enjoyment and safety. The Game Council was set up in 2002 after an earlier political deal between the Labor Government and the Shooters Party. It is a highly unusual arrangement for a statutory authority. The board must have a majority of hunters, ensuring that decisions never get made against hunters' interests. [Andrew Cox, Colong Bulletin]

LIONS FESTIVAL - OATLEY - 20TH OCTOBER

Each year, on the 3rd Saturday in October the streets and parks of Oatley are transformed into a sea of stalls, entertainment, rides, and music. OFF runs a stall each year, and is looking for volunteers for the day, or any part thereof. Please contact Liz T9580 6621 or Alan T9570 8332 closer to the time. For more information go to www.oatleylions.org.au/



EXCURSION TO MT WHAITE.

On 30th Sept the Whaite family is leading an excursion to the mountain named after Harry, who, with his friend Jack Gibson, mapped the area in the early 1940s. We will scatter Harry and Olive Whaite's ashes and place a commemorative plaque from family and friends, and would be delighted to have members of OFF join us on this family excursion. We will be meeting at 10am at Tableland Rd, off the GW Highway, around the corner of the large pottery shop just before Wentworth Falls. We will drive down Tableland Rd, past the Queen Victoria Nursing home, turn into Red Ridge Rd, go a further 5-6kms to the gate blocking the road, and park the cars.

It is not an easy walk, with 3kms or so on the road and another 3kms to the top of Mt Whaite. There is no track after we leave the road, but lan, our navigator, will be leading us by the best possible route. Still it will be bush bashing all the way, and you will need protective long sleeves and trousers. Bring plenty of water and your lunch, and be prepared for a magnificent view from the top of Mt Whaite, well off the beaten track! [Note from Jennifer Whaite. Please ring me if you have any questions, and do let me know if you are planning to join us. My phone number is 9580 7343.]

Meetings of the Society are held at the Uniting Church Hall Fredrick St Oatley [cnr Letitia St] starting at 7.45pm, usually on the fourth Monday. Visitors and accompanied children are welcome at meetings and excursions.

COMING EVENTS

Sept 24th (Mon) 7.45pm, the regular monthly, meeting with David Kirshner speaking on Komodo dragons, the planet's largest lizards, over 3 metres long and weighing over 135 kgs. David is a noted expert on these dragons.

Sept 29th (Sat) Field Day: Collaroy to Manly walking 11.5 km covering five beautiful beaches. It is an easy walking with a bit of up and down on the headlands. You may be tempted to have a swim. "The perfect walk to clear your head and get away from it all" [SMH Depart from Mortdale station on the **8.15 train to the bus from Wynyard**. The walk starts at the intersection of Pittwater Rd and Anzac Ave East, Collaroy where those in cars can join the walk at 10am, for about four hours to Manly. There we catch the next ferry to come home, or stay and mingle on the Concourse. **Leader: Julian Sheen.**

Sept 30th (Sun) Mt Whaite excursion organised by the Whaite family. [See the note below]

Oct 1st (Mon) UN World Habitat Day [note below]

Oct 13 -14th Field Weekend with Menai Wildflower Group to Lithgow. Please contact Jason jay.shaz@hotmail.com and he will keep you up-to-date.

Oct 20th (Sat) Oatley Lions Village Festival

Oct 22nd (Mon) 7.45pm regular monthly meeting with Glenda Wardle speaking on The Simpson Desert

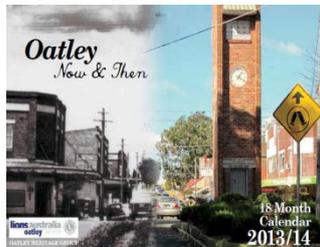
Oct 27-28th Field Weekend: Capertee National Park. - Leader: Deb Andrew

Nov 9th (Fri) OFF Annual Dinner,

Dec 3rd OFF Picnic in Oatley Park

TALK: OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP

At the August meeting Cliff Crane and Rodger Robertson presented a view of the history of the Oatley Heritage Group with reference to its founders and key contributors since 1995. They described the recent innovations of digitalisation of the research reports, and photos and the development of its website. Most interesting was the work with the local schools in relating stories of old Oatley and taking the schoolchildren for historical walks around Oatley. They also discussed old photos and stories of Oatley's history. The Oatley Heritage Group with Oatley Lions Club is producing a 2013-14 calendar featuring old and new photos of the area and all the important dates in the Oatley calendar. It will be on sale in October. The Group would appreciate any contributions of old photos, letters, and stories of old Oatley for their records. The Oatley Heritage Group next meets on the 30th November 10.30am at Oatley RSL when Cliff Crane will report on his research into Real Estate Agents of Oatley. [Summary by Rodger Robertson]



WONDABYNE, BRISBANE WATERS NP

Fourteen joined the walk on 1st Sept climbing steeply from Wondabyne Station and following sandstone ridges to Pindar's Cave. We were rewarded with a profusion of wildflowers including white heaths, cream wattles, palest pink wax-flowers, deep pink boronias, apricot-hued *Banksia ericifolia*, deep red *Grevillea speciosa* and a multiplicity of yellow and red peas. The track afforded a fine view south over Mooney Mooney Creek, and the white dome of the Baha'i Temple gleamed on the horizon beyond. After a pause to admire tadpoles in a brimming Pindar's Pool, lunch was scooped beside the honeycomb sandstone of Pindar's Cave where sparkling droplets drizzled from the long overhang onto ferns beneath. Notable birds seen near Wondabyne included a vivid male Variegated Wren lurking amongst ferns, and a Bassian Thrush foraging beside the railway line. Footnote: Pindar was an Ancient Greek poet; it is believed Myles Dunphy named the cave-like overhang after him. [Report by Liz Cameron, trip leader]



A RODEO IS COMING TO TOWN

After receiving a call expressing concern about the forthcoming rodeo in our local area, the Humane Society is petitioning local Councils not to allow such an event on public land. HSI argues that rodeos typically cause torment and stress to cattle and horses, exposing them to pain, injury and even death. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_treatment

MYLES DUNPHY STREAMWATCH

This is a regular testing program by volunteers of the creek lines flowing through to the Georges River. The Group next gathers at 9am on Tuesday 25th Sept. For more detail ring Sharyn (9579 1262) or Heather (0425 291 879).

BRIEFLY

Drones: (unmanned aerial vehicles) are skimming over Indonesia's jungle canopy to photograph orangutans, to protect rhinos in Nepal, and to study invasive aquatic plants in Florida. bushwarriors.org/

Speakers: Our Program Officer is looking for interesting speakers on subjects related to flora and fauna for some of our meetings next year. If you have any suggestions please contact Matt on 9570 8271.

Walks: Our Field Officer is looking for people to lead interesting walks. Please contact Alison on 9580 5557

Membership You can opt to renew your membership for 2013 by direct bank transfer - [more detail when the renewal notice is sent out]. OFF is also inviting donations to the "President's Fund" from which the Society donates to dynamic environmental groups. New members are welcome. If on the internet, click here for [details](#).

World Habitat Day (UN) is on Monday 1st October to reflect on the state of human settlements and people's right to sufficient shelter. It also aims to remind people that they are responsible for the habitat of future generations.

Mulga Road Books 89 Mulga Rd Oatley W, Rotary Club of Hurstville has a wide range of quality second hand books. <http://rotarcap.com/mrb/>.

Menai Wildflower Group Trip To Lithgow OFF members are welcome to join this MWG weekend trip in October to explore the Gardens of Stone. [For more detail Contact Jason at: mailto:jay.shaz@hotmail.com]

THE ANNUAL O. F. F. DINNER

It is on 9th Nov, 7 pm at South-Hurstville RSL. The theme will be HATS. A hat of any sort decorated or not, will be required for entry. The price will be \$38 per person. Details of the menu will be available when booking at the September meeting. We hope that you will be able to join us. Donations of things for raffle prizes will be gratefully accepted.

