



PROTECT SYDNEY WATER

A coalition of 50 groups [of which OFF is one] from across Sydney, Illawarra, the Southern Highlands and Blue Mountains has been launched to protect Sydney's drinking water from destructive mining practices. The alliance, called *Protect Sydney's Water*, has statistics showing overwhelming opposition to coal mining and coal seam gas development in drinking water catchments. The poll found 87% support for banning coal mining and coal seam gas activities in water catchment areas and within 2 kilometres of rivers and wetlands. Sydney's drinking water, coming from catchments from the Shoalhaven and Illawarra to the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury, is a critical resource for more than 4.5 million people.

Sydney Catchment Authority figures show that four longwall coalmines* drain about 3 billion litres a year from the water supply - enough water to fill 1,200 Olympic-sized swimming pools or for 43 million 10-minute showers. Coal seam gas fields are now the latest threat, with exploration licences covering most of the catchment. *[BHP-Billiton's Dendrobium, Peabody's Metropolitan, NRE's Gujarat and Wongawilli] nccnsw.org.au/media/water

ENVIRONMENT VERSUS ECONOMY

Is it possible to maintain or increase energy supplies while cutting back on greenhouse gas emissions? The ABC notes that some think it not possible, and that the only option would be to do away with economic growth, an argument that does not go down well in many quarters. New studies conclude that the world can have its cake and eat it – economic growth can continue while emissions are cut. www.abc.net.au/environment/.

An example is the recent discovery of a carbon neutral thermocell at Monash University. This can harvest wasted heat from power stations [or vehicle exhaust pipes] and convert it into electricity.



Monash.edu/news

WAVE ENERGY

Ocean waves, tidal and non-tidal ocean flows, are attracting increasing interest in Australia as a potentially viable source of renewable energy. A CSIRO study concludes that ocean waves could supply about 10% of Australia's electricity by 2050. Ocean Renewable Energy: 2015-2050 notes that the areas that could benefit from ocean energy technology include Perth, the southern coastline and to a lesser extent the east. Wave energy has the greatest potential for Australia. The southern coastline has the greatest wave resource because strong southern ocean winds generate consistently large waves that travel northwards to that coastline. The large consistent swell provides ideal conditions for wave energy production. The east coast also provides a consistent, although not as large, wave energy resource. www.aussierenewables.com

OFF's FACEBOOK PAGE

Our Facebook page is for you to make comments, upload photos or chat about environmental issues. Please visit the page and "like" to keep in touch with updates.

www.facebook.com/OatleyFloraandFauna

ANOTHER TASMANIAN PULP MILL

There is currently a proposal under consideration for another a pulp mill at Longreach on the Tamar River [as pictured].



The area is of great natural scenic beauty with a 100,000 population. An alternative site, an unpopulated area near Hampshire, surrounded by vast forests, was not put forward. It is

questionable that the mill could succeed financially, and [The Herzfeld Report](#) in 2007 noted that the resulting large amount of effluent into Bass Strait makes pulp mills in this area unacceptable. [The attached website has been following this saga for over seven years. www.tamarpulpmill.info/]

COALPAC PROJECT ASSESSMENT

The NSW Dept of Planning & Infrastructure on October 4th issued an Assessment Report on the Coalpac Consolidation Project involving open cut mining along the valleys and slopes at the western edge of the Ben Bullen State Forest. In summary the Report states, that while the substantial economic benefits and implications of not proceeding with the Project are fully recognised, it is concluded that the nature and scale of the environmental impacts of the current proposal are not acceptable. It is therefore recommended that the mining operations as currently proposed not be approved. [However, it states] there may be some merit in allowing a smaller extension that avoids the most sensitive parts of the site. This would enable some of the remaining coal resources to be extracted, the existing mining voids filled and appropriately rehabilitated, and a suitable final landform created that integrates with the surrounding landscape. [See the Report online](#)

& www.facebook.com/protectgardensofstone

OUR MANGROVES UNDER STRESS

Geoff Francis reports that some Grey Mangroves along Lime Kiln Bay near the footbridge appear in poor health. Insect attacks have formed galls on the leaves, leaf margins have been eaten by caterpillars and there is some fungus like brown rust. The leaves on some branches have died and fallen off. However, other mangroves nearby on the southern bank seem quite healthy.

Crimson Rosella	Platycercus elegans
<p>Large red and blue parrot with blue cheeks. Young birds are greenish. Prefers eucalypt forests and is common in the Blue Mountains. Feeds in trees and on the ground, on the seeds of eucalypts, grasses and shrubs. Clear piping calls.</p> <p>34 cm</p>	

[Common Bird Species from "Birds of Oatley Park" a photographic guide](#)

COMING EVENTS

Oct 28th (Mon) 7.45pm regular monthly meeting with Christine Guthrie speaking on Hidden Treasures: Places & Plants in Sutherland Shire. Christine has recently retired as Manager of Sutherland Shire Bushcare.

Nov 2-3rd (Weekend) Field Trip to Hassans Walls Orchid Sanctuary, Lithgow. Meet at 9.30am Saturday at the northern, Bent St, end of the Valley Plaza car park [Lithgow St](#) Lithgow. Bring hat, sunscreen, lunch, water and binoculars for views from the lookouts. There are no toilets in the Reserve. Participants should arrange their accommodation for Saturday night. A possible social dinner and options for Sunday can be discussed on arrival. **Saturday Leader: John Watters ☎ 9534 1096**

Nov 15th (Fri): Our Annual Dinner scheduled for this date has been deferred until next year. [See the note below.*].

Nov 25th (Mon) 7.45pm regular monthly meeting and Social Supper with Ann Young speaking on Upland Swamps of the Woronora Plateau - Ecology & Mining Threats.

Dec 1st (Sun) Field day Royal National Park early morning bird watching- **Leader: Deb Andrew ☎ 9570 2695**

Dec 2nd (Mon) Christmas Picnic in Oatley Park [details later]

2014

Feb 3rd (Mon) AGM followed by members' photos & social supper.

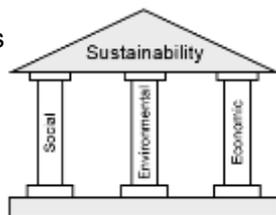
Feb 24th (Mon) 7.45pm regular monthly meeting and Social Supper

SEPT 23RD TALK: ENVIRONMENTAL DILEMMAS

Dave Kirshner, who was to speak at the September meeting on monitor lizards, was unable to attend. Instead, there was a presentation on our environment and the dilemmas facing an effective program for protecting and conserving it.

The environmental areas listed as threatened and/or threatening included the dramatic rise in population, the drain on energy resources, and the devaluation of air, land, water, flora, fauna, and food. The extent of the impact of human activity on the environment is hotly debated, and protection measures severely criticised. Those not convinced of a significant human contribution consider expenditure on environmental protection as an unproductive and unnecessary waste in these fiscally trying times. The economic argument slows the implementation of protective processes, and the picture is further muddled, with disagreement on precisely what protection can and should be provided.

Conserving a healthy environment is important, and if we do not temper our use of natural resources, they will eventually be exhausted. What we need is sustainability, where we can live within our planet's means socially, environmentally and economically. [\[more on our website\]](#) & www.environment.gov.au/sustainability/



LA PEROUSE FIELD DAY 28th Sept

Eleven enjoyed Jennifer Whaite's coastal walk from Little Bay to La Perouse. They included Jennifer's granddaughter Heidi from Albury, and Adrienne Smith, a former OFF member now living in Wagga Wagga. It was a fine hot day with breezes gusting round Henry Head where they lunched. Some of the party had walked the track in the opposite direction, but the rest were seeing the attractive coastal heath and hind-dune woodland for the first time. Jennifer provided an historic background to the area and there was plenty of entertainment. The Westpac Rescue Helicopter crew let off lurid flares during the morning tea at Cape Banks. They were able to admire the skill of golfers teeing off from the tiny green on the rocky promontory, which supported a wide range of hardy native plants including flannel flowers in bloom. Swallows, kestrels, kites and a hobby manoeuvred expertly around the cliffs, and they saw the *James Craig* sailing south to meet ships heading for the Navy's 100th anniversary celebrations in Sydney Harbour.

It was an easy walk and the only difficulties were experienced by Heidi, who seemed to slip frequently on the smoother sections of the path. A later inspection showed that her sneakers were in fact roller sneakers, with wheels in the heels, a trap for unwary grandparents!

At the completion of the walk at La Perouse, some had a refreshing swim in Botany Bay, while the rest indulged in iced coffee. See something of La Perouse at

www.google.com.au/search?q=la+perouse

OATLEY PARK WALKING TRACKS BROCHURE

OFF has received a grant of \$1500 from the Minister of Environment's Conservation Fund to publish a colour brochure on Oatley Park Walking Tracks. Mark Coure, MP for Oatley, assisted in obtaining the grant. A presentation was made by the Environment Minister Robyn Parker on 1st Oct at *The Castle* in the Park to Alan Fairley and Graham Fry representing OFF. Research on the walks is now well underway. This is in addition to the \$500 recently provided by Oatley RSL towards printing the brochure on "Native Plants of Oatley Park", soon to be published.

*THE ANNUAL SUPER RAFFLE

With our annual dinner deferred, the raffle will now be held at the 25th Nov meeting. We are seeking your help again with raffle donations; the proceeds are donated to conservation organisations. Donated items will be gratefully received at the Oct meeting; or you can bring them to me at 41 Lloyd St. [Thanks for your support. Sue Howard ☎ 9579 1718]

FOR NOTING

Cruelty Free Festival Sun 3rd Nov. Find out how to save animals at Belmore Park, Haymarket. <http://crueltyfreefestival.org.au/>

Membership renewal for 2014 can be by direct bank transfer [more detail when the renewal notice is sent out]. New members are most welcome. off.oatleypark.com/membership

Myles Dunphy Streamwatch, next meets at 9am on Tues 29th Oct. Details: Sharyn (☎9579 1262), Heather (☎ 0425 291 879).

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

National Water Week is on 20-26th Oct. It is held every year to raise awareness of issues surrounding Australia's most precious resource. www.savewater.com.au/national-water-week

Oatley Heritage & Historical Society: The next meeting is on Friday, 29th Nov at 10.30 at Oatley RSL with Julian Sheen and Rodger Robertson speaking about Oatley in 1913, "One Hundred Years Ago" <http://www.oatleyheritagegroup.com/>

Speakers wanted: Our Program Officer is looking for interesting speakers on subjects related to flora and fauna for our meetings next year. Please contact Matt ☎ 9570 8271.

The Road to Sustainability - Transport an interesting article by Ross Coster, in the October Hut News www.bluemountains.org.au/

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

