



OFF News

Oatley Flora & Fauna Conservation Society Inc.

Protecting the local environment since 1955

<http://off.oatleypark.com>

Issue 9/14

Sept/Oct

WORLD HABITAT DAY 7th Oct

The UN has designated the first Monday of October of every year as *World Habitat Day*. First celebrated in 1986, it is now in its 28th year. It is a global awareness day to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, everyone's right to adequate shelter, and our responsibility for the future of our own habitats. For more than half a century, most countries have experienced rapid urban growth, urban sprawl, and ever-higher demand for motorized travel, with environmental, social, and economic consequences. More at <http://unhabitat.org/world-habitat-day/>



IUCN WORLD PARKS CONGRESS

On 12-19th November, National Parks and Wildlife Service, and Parks Australia, is hosting the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's World Parks Congress at Sydney Olympic Park. It will bring together over 3000 participants from 160 countries to plan for the future of some of the planet's most valuable places - world parks, the cornerstone for biodiversity conservation, and a major contributor to human health.

Held once every ten years, the Congress provides a unique opportunity to bring about change and to help find inspiring solutions for parks, people, and the planet. www.worldparkscongress.org

POWERFUL OWLS [POWLS]

As noted in our last edition, the [Powerful Owl Project](#) run by David Bain and Holly Parsons for *Birds-in-Backyards* includes a study of POWLS (*Ninox strenua*) of the Georges River. The Project is gathering data for all the pairs living along the River. [\[Note sightings in Moore Reserve\]](#)



Co-incidentally, the first POWL was found in the Sydney Basin in 1853, apparently from Cabramatta Creek, where the species is still reported. The finding was only a decade after [John Gould](#), father of bird study in Australia, described the species to the Royal Society. [Note from Chris Lloyd, our speaker on Sept 22nd]

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. See all 14 at off.oatleypark.com/



MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS

There is now an online video on the migratory shorebirds that Deb Andrew has been monitoring in Botany Bay. These birds were the focus of the OFF outing that Deb led in March. The video and additional information on the Endangered Shorebird Community Botany Bay is on www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspeciesapp/. Shorebird Migration will be a major theme at the Australasian Bird Fair at the Armory in Sydney Olympic Park on 25-26th October. www.birdfair.com.au

DEFENDING ENDANGERED SPECIES

The September [Hut News](#) notes that Deb Andrew, who spoke at BMCS's *Threatened Species Day* event, is involved in the projects to restore habitat for critically endangered [Regent Honeyeaters](#) in Capertee Valley, and [Swift Parrots](#) elsewhere. She has studied [Spotted-tailed Quolls](#) for many years, and seen how competition from feral predators threatens their existence.

BUSHFIRE PROTECTION PROBLEMS

The NSW Nature Conservation Council [NCC] is concerned that the new rules in NSW allowing people to clear trees and bushland around their homes will threaten thousands of mature trees and hectares of bushland in suburban Sydney.

The new *Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice* allows landowners to clear trees within 10m of their homes, and other vegetation within 50m, without the expert Rural Fire Service approval previously required.

NCC notes, "If everybody exercised their rights under this rule, some parts of Sydney would lose more than 50% of tree canopy, and there will be a radical change the character of entire suburbs."

The vulnerable LGAs include Hurstville, Sutherland, Pittwater, Hornsby, Warringah, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, The Hills, Blacktown, Penrith, Blue Mountains, Liverpool, Camden, and Campbelltown. This rule overrides years of carefully crafted [environmental protections](#) for which we have fought for years.

<http://www.nature.org.au/news/2014/>

OATLEY LIONS FESTIVAL - 18th OCTOBER

On the 3rd Saturday in October, the streets and parks of Oatley are transformed into a sea of stalls, entertainment, rides, and music. Roving entertainment will include the St George Scottish Pipe Band, the Riverwood Squadron Drum Corp, and The Hot Potato Band.



Enjoy a motorbike ride for \$5 with the proceeds going to Children's Cancer Research. Second hand bargains are on offer in the vacant block behind the Oatley RSL. You are encouraged to walk, cycle or use public transport, and to hop on the free Festival Courtesy Bus.

OFF runs a stall each year, and is looking for volunteers for the day, or part thereof. Please contact Liz ☎95806621 closer to the time. For more information, see <http://www.oatleylions.org.au/>

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 22nd (Mon) 7.45pm monthly meeting with Chris Lloyd speaking on **The Changing Ecology of the Georges River & Powerful Owls**

Oct 10-12th Weekend at Capertee National Park: Meet at Capertee NP at the [Homestead](#) on Friday. Check in with the caretakers Neville and Doris Eather. Bring your own linen and pillows. If you have any questions please contact **Liz Cameron** ☎9580 6621 or **Leader: Debbie Andrew** ☎[h] 9570 2695 [w] 95856915 📠 0490172501

Oct 27th (Mon) 7.45pm monthly meeting with **Jim Vickery** speaking on **Rainwater harvesting in Oatley**

Nov 2nd (Sun) Field day - Illawarra Fly & Illawarra region. Maps and directions provided closer to the date. Please indicate interest on the clipboard at next OFF meeting or email off@oatleypark.com. **Leader: Melina Amerasinghe**

Nov 24th (Mon) 7.45pm meeting and social supper with **Shauna Chadlowe** speaking on **Australian Wildlife Conservancy.**

Nov 29th (Sat) Field day -On Five Ferries **Leader Jennifer Whaite** ☎9580 7343

Dec 1st Christmas Picnic / BBQ [Details later]

Then for 2015, we have Feb 2nd AGM, and Feb 23rd 7.45pm regular monthly meeting.

A MARINE RESERVE IN SYDNEY WATERS

The 25th August meeting saw a change in speakers. OFF member and NPA stalwart, Gary Schoer presented the case for a Marine Reserve in Sydney waters and the link between no-fishing areas and healthy populations of marine biodiversity. The promotional video "Tale of Three Bays" was shown highlighting the aquatic reserve in Cabbage Tree Bay, Manly. This sanctuary of some 20 ha covers the entire bay, rocky shores and beaches from the southern end of Manly Beach to the Shelly Beach Headland. It provides protection for fish and marine vegetation/habitats with a "no take" policy, while maintaining current access, minimising user conflict, and enhancing enjoyment of the diverse marine environment.

Underwater footage of other "paper marine reserves" in Sydney, that are not formally protected, shows absence of marine life and the need for greater protection. Establishing more marine reserves around Sydney has widespread support (including Oatley MP Mark Coure) but since the last election, the political influence from Shooters and Fishers Party portrays marine sanctuaries as an infringement to personal freedom. The ocean may seem limitless from the surface, but life beneath reveals a completely different story.

[Summary from Matt Allison - Program Officer]

Leroy Gonsalves will be a speaker next year.

SPHINX & BOBBIN HEAD WILDFLOWER WALK

Predictions of bad weather on 30th Oct kept many away, but six defied the showers to complete the 10 km stroll.

Starting at North Turramurra, we followed the original Bobbin Head Trail 4½ km along the ridge and down to Cowan Creek. Plenty of wildflowers were noted and ticked off from the leader's Top 30 list. Notable were the [Boronia](#), [Eriostemon](#), and [Calytrix](#). We had lunch at the very quiet Bobbin Head marina before walking the narrow track along the shores of Cowan Creek. The wet weather had many side creeks overflowing, but the trees and ferns looked magnificent in the wet. The uncommon [Darwinia procera](#) and [Leionema dentatum](#) were conspicuous. The most strenuous part of the walk was the 1km ascent from the creek to the ridge top, up a series of stairs. The interesting and historical [Sphinx Memorial](#) (carved from sandstone rock in the 1920s) was inspected before we ended our hike and returned to our cars. [Report by Alan Fairley - leader]

SYLVAN GROVE NATIVE GARDEN

On Wed 10th Sept, some seven OFF members and friends accepted the invitation of the East Hills Group of Australian Plants Society (APS) to join them on a visit to Sylvan Grove. The warm sunny morning attracted over 40 people and we were treated to a spectacular display of flowering native plants including long sprays of creamy rock orchids. Jim Mackay, Horticulturist at the Garden, led an informative tour along the gently winding paths through the garden, and the visit concluded with a convivial picnic lunch. We encourage you to visit this overlooked gem in Bankstown. It is open weekdays between 7 am and 3 pm throughout the year and, from mid-August to November, on weekends as well. Admission is free. <http://www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au/>

RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGET [RET]

The Australian Solar Council [ASC] is holding a Public Forum at the Ramsgate RSL 6-8pm Wed, Sept 17th to promote the retention of the RET in its original form. The Forum will give representatives of all Federal political parties the chance to state their policy on the RET, and for the public to air their views and ask questions. ASC asks as many as possible to attend. <http://solar.org.au/save-solar/>

OFF LIBRARY

The Society has purchased a number of books that are available for loan to OFF members. Just ask at the back desk at Monday meetings. Titles include:

The Biggest Estate on Earth (Bill Gammage) – investigates the land management of Aborigines.

A History of the Blue Labyrinth (Bruce Cameron) - a beautifully produced book with lots of photos and many references to our former Treasurer Harry Whaite.

Sustainable House (Michael Mobbs) – what one person has done to be self-sufficient in energy, water, and waste disposal in his Sydney house.

Sustainable Food (Michael Mobbs) – the sustainable use of water and energy associated with growing and processing food.

A Natural for World Heritage (Geoff Mosley) - the argument for granting World Heritage Listing for Royal National Park.

The Green Corridors of Southern Sydney (NPA Southern Sydney) – a DVD outlining the importance of protecting the green areas south of Sydney.

FOR NOTING

Australasian Bird Fair at the Armory in Sydney Olympic Park on 25-26th October. www.birdfair.com.au

Myles Dunphy Streamwatch, next meets at 9am on Tues 23rd Sept. Details: Sharyn (☎9579 1262), Heather (📠 0425 291 879).

Membership renewal for 2015 can be by direct bank transfer – [more info when the renewal notice is sent out]. New members are welcome. Click here for [details](#).

Oatley 2015 Calendar [Nature in the Suburbs](#) Retail price \$10 at the Lions Festival. \$8 for members at OFF or OHHS stalls.

Speakers: 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.

Walks: Our Field Officer is looking for people to lead interesting walks next year. Contact Graham ☎9580 6621

