



HEALTH OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

WWF notes that the UNESCO World Heritage Committee has voted to maintain pressure on Australia to deliver on its promise to restore the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

This decision requires Australia to deliver "effective and sustained protection" of the reef from threats including reckless industrialization and pollution. Australia is required to provide a first report on progress in just 18 months.

It welcomed Australia's "commitment to establish a permanent ban on dumping of dredged material from all capital dredging projects within the property" and to restrict new mega port expansions in and near the reef.

Following this decision, WWF expects a full ban on dumping in the reef's World Heritage waters to come into force within months.

"Australia has promised to prioritize the health of the reef over damaging activities like dumping dredge spoil. UNESCO will be watching to ensure that the condition of the reef improves in coming years, as will the 550,000 WWF campaign supporters and millions of people worldwide who are deeply concerned and want to see a stop to industrial destruction of the Great Barrier Reef," said Marco Lambertini, Director General of WWF International. UNESCO expressed concern that habitats and wildlife populations have declined, and that the reef's overall outlook is poor. It emphasized that major long-term threats such as water pollution and climate change remain and require action. [End-to-Great-Barrier-Reef-dumping](#)



A WARMER WINTER

It is hardly surprising that people noting cool conditions in southeast Australia or snowy photos on their television will imagine cold conditions across the whole of the country. However, winter 2015 temperatures for Australia as a whole were above the long-term average, continuing the trend which has seen only two below average seasons since 2000. The national average winter temperature was 0.8° C above the 1961–90 reference period, making it the ninth warmest winter on record. These findings are verified from the entire Bureau network of nearly 700 temperature stations. <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/>

OATLEY LIONS FESTIVAL - 17TH OCTOBER

OFF ran a stall at the Lions Festival, as it has done for many years. It was a lovely and successful day. Lots of friends and other interested people dropped in. The highlight of the day was the interactive model of the water catchment borrowed from the Australian Museum. This tied in well with OFF's project to raise community awareness of Lime Kiln Bay Wetland and changing behaviour to reduce detrimental environmental impacts. [More on the website](#)



NEARING THE END FOR FOSSIL FUELS?

Wind and solar power have made great strides in recent years, accounting for 56% of [net additions to global power capacity](#).

Tesla's Elon Musk has introduced his new **Powerwall** – a wall-mounted energy storage unit that can hold 10 kilowatt hours of electric energy, and deliver it at an average of 2 kilowatts. This means that a domestic system plus storage would come out ahead of coal-fired power from the conventional grid. [Theconversation.com/the-tesla-battery-end-for-fossil-fuels](#)

THE PROPOSED BADGERYS CREEK AIRPORT

"A draft Environmental Impact Statement [EIS] has confirmed a 24-hour a day operation with a lower quality of life for the people of Western Sydney," said Keith Muir director of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness.

"The people living in suburbs east of Parramatta have the fresh air and an aircraft curfew. Those living west of Blacktown and Liverpool will not. The noise from the 24-hour-a-day airport operation will cause sleep interruption for many people, and the road traffic associated with the proposed airport will create unacceptable levels of ozone-based air pollution". <https://www.colongwilderness.org.au/>

AN ARTIST ACKNOWLEDGED

The August entry in the [2016 Oatley History Calendar](#) co-sponsored by OFF has a colourful detail from a painting of Oatley West Public School in the 1990s. The artist needs to be acknowledged. His name is **John Corby**. [Noted by Julian Sheen]

REGENT HONEYEATERS – chance to fund research

The Regent Honeyeater is a striking and critically endangered bird that breeds in Capertee NP. This year box and ironbark trees are flowering well in Capertee Valley and a PhD student at ANU, Ross Crates, has located a number of breeding Regents. He is using video cameras to monitor nesting pairs and is seeking funds to purchase more cameras. OFF members Liz Cameron and Shaun Keys-Byrne have already contributed to the project; others may wish to donate at the November meeting or at the OFF picnic in December. <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/>

CHANGE OF DATE FOR NEXT POWL WORKSHOP

I aim for Sunday 6th Dec. to do some pellet analysis, data review and generally to chew over the last breeding season. If you have not been to a workshop before, let me know and I will give the details and directions to the venue. [From Chris Lloyd](#)



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HURSTVILLE COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS AWARDS 2015

"It was a pleasure to accompany John Davoren, our Newsletter editor to this year's awards at Hurstville Council Chambers. John was nominated by Oatley Flora and Fauna and received his award for the diligence and imagination he has put into our newsletter over the last eight years. The Newsletter is not only a resource for our members, but a reference point for conservationists across the city. Well done John", Julian Sheen

RECENT ITEMS ON THE WEBSITE

- 1) Monitoring Georges River Health.
- 2) Sydney Rivers in Pictures and Poetry.
- 3) Dolphins on the Georges River.
- 4) 2016 Oatley History Calendar
- 5) Spring Walk in Oatley Park

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 20th (Fri) Field day Brooklyn* [The Riverboat Postman cruise](#) up the Hawkesbury River [*originally Sat 28th Nov]. We will catch the 7:59am train at Oatley to Central and change to a Central Coast service that leaves at 8:45am. We leave the train at Hawkesbury River and walk about 100m to the wharf, the steps at the station are steep so be careful. On the cruise, we are provided with both morning tea and lunch, and we return at 1pm. With appropriate train connections, we should be home by 4pm. The cruise will cost \$44, payable on the day; the company asks that if possible we have the right money so we can board without delay. We only have 7 vacancies, so if you wish to come please contact the Leader, **Graham Fry** ☎ 95806621.

Nov 23rd (Mon) Meeting & Social Supper 7.45pm with **Dr Arthur White** speaking on "Ghost Bats & Cane Toads".

Note this is our last meeting in the church hall; so please bring a plate of food for the farewell supper.

Dec 7th (Mon) OFF Picnic in the Park, our annual Christmas get-together, in Oatley Park at the Steamroller from 5.30pm.

BYO food, drinks, picnic chairs, table etc. Barbecues if no fire alert. Info Liz Cameron ☎9580 6621.

Feb 1st (Mon) AGM at Oatley RSL starting at 7.30pm. Supper will be served after the meeting. Members are invited to bring electronic images to share with the audience.

OCTOBER 28TH COAL MINING AND WATER POLLUTION

Dr Ian Wright from the University of Western Sydney (UWS) presented startling evidence of environmental damage caused by coal mining in the Sydney Region. He worked as a scientific officer with Sydney Water investigating the impact of human activities on creeks and rivers in the Sydney basin before taking up a research fellowship at UWS in freshwater ecology and water pollution. He is now a full-time lecturer in water quality and management, environmental planning and environmental regulation areas. Dr Wright, comparing water samples taken upstream of mining activity with those downstream, found significant deterioration in water quality attributable to waste water discharge from mining operations. Toxic levels of salt, bicarbonate, zinc, nickel and other minerals impacted on aquatic life and degraded waters flowing through prized wilderness areas and World Heritage sites.

Long-wall mining, in particular, is responsible for subsidence in the bedrock of some creeks and streams feeding into Sydney's water catchments. He showed photographs of streams simply disappearing into cracks, and re-emerging further downstream polluted by mining waste. He was critical of the Environmental Protection Agency, responsible for regulating the discharge of wastewater from mines, arguing that pollution licence conditions needed to be tightened, requiring mining companies to meet higher standards. He noted that the regulator had lifted its game recently, but only under pressure from the community and government.

Dr Wright noted the need to keep the pressure on our politicians to introduce more stringent rules on mining activities, and saw his role as keeping the community (including OFF) informed of developments in the regulation of the coal industry. More at <http://off.oatleypark.com/>

FIELD DAY 31ST OCT: ROSE BAY TO WATSONS BAY

This walk was generally well reviewed and was given an overall four-star rating. Thirty-one OFF members and friends took part, ignoring threats of rain and thunderstorms. The weather was perfect for walking.

Features of the day included: a history of Rose Bay and Mr George Rose (1744-1818); seaplanes; Dumaresq Bay; the Hermitage Walk- the most extensive remnant bush on the south side of the harbour; Carrara (or Strickland) House; and Greycliff House.

We had lunch and a swim at Nielsen Park; and then moved on to Coolong Street, otherwise known as Swank Street (many miles from Struggle Street!). We then went to Vaucluse House Park, Parsley Bay suspension bridge and the Watsons Bay Pub. Some thought there were some steps too many, but most agreed that the world class views of Sydney Harbour were a rich compensation. [Notes from Leader Julian Sheen] See more photos at <https://plus.google.com/photos/>



HARK TO OUR RELOCATION!

OFF meetings will be at Oatley RSL, from 1st Feb 2016.

OFF first met at the Swimming Club Hall Myall St, Oatley West, then at the Uniting Church Hall on Gungah Bay Rd. In October 1986, the venue was changed to the Uniting Church Hall, on Frederick St. The OFF President at the change was John Blacker, the Secretary Lesley Cox, and the News Editor Alan Fairley. We have had a 29-year association with the current location, and the venue proved to be a great success. The decision to move from Frederick St has not been taken lightly, and there is some regret at ending such a long and cordial association with the Uniting Church. However, the new venue is suitable in many ways, with good acoustics, sound system, projector, and screen. It also has good seating and more parking spaces. **Meetings will be from 7.30 to 9.30pm.**

SNOWY MOUNTAINS SUMMER EXCURSION

It is an OFF tradition to spend a week in the Snowy Mountains in January. The Smiggin Holes Hotel Chalet, the usual accommodation, has converted its common room into another unit. The alternative lounge is much smaller and lacks the atmosphere of the former common room. Alternatively, we may lodge at Charlotte Pass where rates are lower, but there is only one large, shared kitchen. We would like to hear from members.

a) Would you like to join an unofficial OFF trip to the Snowy Mountains next January? b) Is so; would you prefer to stay at Smiggins Chalet, Charlotte Pass, or another location? Please contact Graham Fry or Liz Cameron (☎ 9580 6621, fryg@zipworld.com.au & lizc@pacific.net.au)

FOR NOTING

Membership renewal for 2016 can be by direct bank transfer – [more info when the renewal notice is sent out]. New members are welcome. Click here for [details](#).

Myles Dunphy Streamwatch, next meets at 9am on Tues Nov 24th [Details: Sharyn ☎9579 1262, Heather ☎ 0425 291 879].

Oatley Heritage & Historical Soc. [OHHS] Next meeting 27th Nov Julian Sheen speaking on [Robert Townson](#) at Oatley RSL at 10.15am. <http://www.oatleyhistory.org.au/>

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

MASS TRANSPORT

