



OFF News

Oatley Flora & Fauna Conservation Society Inc.

Protecting the local environment since 1955

<http://off.oatleypark.com>

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MORE ON COAL MINES: NORTH AND SOUTH

The National Trust has joined the debate on mining, opposing open-cut coal mining proposals within listed Landscape Conservation Areas or that impact on those areas. It notes that proposed new coalmines and extended coal mining areas in the Upper Hunter Valley would have major impacts on the Muswellbrook/Jerry's Plains Landscape Conservation Area. The National Trust recognises that economic factors tend to dominate any considerations relating to mining activities; but it argues that if the only way mining can be profitable is by utilising environmentally or socially unacceptable practices, then these industries are simply unprofitable.

www.nationaltrust.org.au/nsw

The Australian Institute notes that mining plays a small role in the economy of the Southern Highlands. The major employing industries are service, manufacturing, and construction. While tourism is not separately counted in most statistical publications, it employs around six times more Southern Highlands residents than mining. Mining in the Southern Highlands makes modest contributions to state government royalties - some \$24 million, or 0.04% of state revenue, while the State provides millions of dollars of assistance to the mining industry every year.

Over a six-year period, state governments in Australia spent \$17.6 billion supporting the mineral and fossil fuel industries. <http://www.tai.org.au/content/coal>

GASFIELD FREE CAMPAIGN

[Echonetdaily](http://www.echo.net.au) reports that filmmakers on the north coast are launching a crowd funding appeal to help bring the story of the [Bentley Blockade](http://www.bentleyblockade.com) to the big screen. They want to create a feature length documentary that tells the story of the blockade, and the social movement that led to it. The film's director, Brendan Shoebridge, from Lismore, has been following and filming the fight against unconventional gas mining since early 2011. <http://www.echo.net.au>

A UNIQUE ROSELLA

Tasmania has its very own endemic Rosella known as the Green Rosella, Tasmanian Rosella or Mountain Rosella. They can be found from wet forests in the mountains to dry forests near the coast and in gardens, but not in cleared areas which lack trees.

They are charismatic birds with an adult body size up to 36 cm, making it the largest sized Rosella in Australia. Their upper body is mottled dark green and black, with the neck and underparts of the body are lemon-yellow. Their head is bright yellow with blue cheek patches and a bright red band across the forehead.

<http://www.backyardbuddies.net.au/b-mail>



ROADS OR PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Dr Tim Williams, CEO of the [Committee for Sydney](http://www.committeeforsydney.com), has called for a transport revolution, condemning the \$15 billion [WestConnex](http://www.westconnex.com) project. In his view there is no strategic or structural planner for Sydney at present, apart from *Roads and Maritime Services* (RMS), and RMS needs to be reconstructed. It has got it wrong on transport priorities, with no ambition to promote public transport. Tim considers we have a road transport upheaval here, not happening in other cities in the world that are reducing their highway capacity, not increasing it. <http://www.engineersaustralia.org.au>

OUR LAND, OUR WATER, OUR FUTURE

A coalition of activist groups, *Our Land, Our Water, Our Future*, notes that in 1993 the NSW Government approved a massive coal seam gas licence stretching from the Illawarra, across suburban Sydney and north to the Central Coast called "PEL 2." It covers the water catchments that supply our drinking water. It has been renewed twice — first by Eddie Obeid, and later by Ian Macdonald. Now this CSG licence is up for renewal again, without public consultation. We are encouraged to demand that our objections be taken into consideration. See more and sign on at <http://www.landwaterfuture.org.au/pel2action?>

PROTECTION OF PUBLIC LAND

The EDO notes that the NSW Land and Environment Court has overturned a plan to build a function centre in a Newcastle park, setting a precedent for the protection of public land from private development.

The court overturned the development consent granted by Newcastle City Council for *Annie Street Commercial Pty Ltd* to build a function centre, public kiosk, and car park on the site of an old bowling club in Newcastle's King Edward Headland Reserve, overlooking the ocean.

The community group, Friends of King Edward Park, challenged the project's approval on the site reserved for 'public recreation' under the Crown Lands Act. [Read judgment](http://www.fokp.org.au)

NATIONAL TREE DAY 26th JULY

Planet Ark is celebrating 20 years of planting trees and urging Australians to participate for National Tree Day on Sunday 26th (and Schools Tree Day on Friday 24th) July. They are looking for coordinators from councils, schools, national parks, Landcare, Bushcare, environmental and nature care organisations, community groups, businesses, faith and sporting groups to organise a tree planting or nature-care event in their local area.

Those taking part in National Tree Day will be contributing to Australia's largest community tree planting and nature-care event, and joining thousands in making a difference, connecting people with nature, and inspiring positive environmental change. <http://treeday.planetark.org/>

DRAFT HURSTVILLE TREE MANAGEMENT STUDY

Hurstville City Council has placed the Draft Tree Management Study on public exhibition until Friday 19th June. It can be viewed at Council's Customer Service Centre, Hurstville City Library, and on the Hurstville Council website <http://www.hurstville.nsw.gov.au/>. The aim of the Tree Management Study was to document every Council Street Tree within the Local Government Area and identify the



key characteristics of those trees. The community can submit feedback on documents Council has placed on formal public exhibition

NOTE RECENT ARTICLES ON THE WEBSITE

- Seasonal birds in Oatley by David Waterhouse.
- The SAWT Facility* [Site of Field Day May 27th].
- Source to Sea* – Nepean; OFF members participated in activities organised by Greater Sydney Land Services to celebrate Volunteers in Bushcare along the Sydney Rivers.

<http://off.oatleypark.com>

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 22nd (Mon) Meeting 7.45pm with Alan Fairley speaking on "A trip around Gujarat, Western India."

June 27th (Sat) Field day: Cowan to Taffys Rock via Jerusalem Bay. This walk is for those who would like a more adventurous outing. It is classed as medium/hard and around 16km; one section of the walk is rugged and slippery. It is great walk, with stunning views of the Hawkesbury River, and the beautiful wildflowers that abound in the area. As it is an all-day walk, bring lunch, snacks, and drinks. For those coming by train, catch the 7:45am Wyong train from Central, platform 11 (travel in the rear 4 cars for the short platform at Cowan) arriving at 8.36am. There is track work on the Illawarra line that day, and we have to travel by bus to Central. Meet at Oatley at 6:45am to ensure the connection at Central. On the return, catch the 3:47pm train from Cowan. **Leader: Adrian Buzo** ☎ 0406 860 628.

July 22nd (Wed) Field Day: Macleay Museum (Natural History, Ethnography, & Historic Photo Collections) and **Nicholson Museum** (Antiquities) University of Sydney <http://sydney.edu.au/museums/> **Leader: Liz Cameron.** ☎ 9580 6621 (After 30th June).

July 27th (Mon) Meeting 7.45pm with Chris Lloyd speaking on Seabirds.

Aug 1st (Sat) Field day: Maddens Creek and Bulli Tops, view the source of the Georges River. **Leader: Sharyn Cullis**

Aug 24th (Mon) Meeting 7.45pm with Leroy Gonsalves speaking on "Microbat predation on mosquitoes"

Sept 19th (Sat) Bus trip to Camden Park open day, Macarthur home and garden. **Leader: John Davoren**

Sept 26/ 27th Weekend Field trip Mt Bushwalker and other walks on mid-south coast. **Leader: Deb Andrew**

Sept 28th (Mon) Meeting 7.45pm with Jennifer Whaite speaking on "Travels through Ethiopia"

VERTEBRATE FAUNA OF NORTH SYDNEY RESERVES

At the May 25th meeting Ben Hope, Threatened Species Officer of [OEH](http://www.oe.gov.au/), gave an informative presentation to an audience of 50+ on the current use of motion detecting cameras in the Garingal and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Parks. The cameras are placed in strategic positions to detect wildlife, and provide insight into the variety of species and frequency of numbers. Ben scrutinises every image from the thousands of stills, to find, and to decipher the species for detailed information on the biological diversity of the reserves. The result is a literal snapshot of the health of the reserves, but this technique cannot totally replace experienced field officers utilising sight and hearing to detect the presence of the more elusive members of the threatened species club that, under our watch, has an ever-expanding membership.

KEMPS CREEK SAWT FACILITY*: May 27th

Ten people boarded the OFF bus at Oatley station at 09.30 on a beautiful sunny autumn morning. We travelled out to the SITA Resource Recovery Park at Kemps Creek where an eleventh person joined us.

The Education Officer, Kristal Dilucchio gave a very interesting presentation, fielded many question from us, and then kitted us out in high vis vests, hard hats, and safety goggles. We then boarded the bus for the other side of the resource park, and after fitting bright pink earplugs, we entered the [SAWT](#) Facility.

The rubbish is processed in two different lines, one for green organics and kitchen waste (green bin) from Penrith council, and one for general and kitchen waste (red bin) from Liverpool Council.

Most of the processing occurs under cover in a huge hangar like building. The red bin waste has several stages of processing and sorting, by large magnet, a process to take out the aluminium, and manually, at this stage. The green bin waste does not need these steps. There are 14 tunnels for storing rubbish for the first 3-4 weeks (with air and water put in) where the decomposition is started. The material is then sifted and processed again before being put outside in long lines, in various stages of decomposition, mostly covered with tarps (especially in the cold weather, to speed up the decomposition).

The whole process takes from 14-16 weeks. Both products are very rich in organic nutrients, but the red bin waste is contaminated with some metal and glass fragments, and is only used for mine reclamation, while the green bin waste produces very high-grade compost for all general purpose landscaping uses.

It was evident that plastic bags are a significant problem for the managers of our waste, as are old VHS tapes. We resolved to lobby our respective councils to include kitchen waste for recycling (either the red bin system or the green bin system) as it cuts down the amount of waste going to landfill by about 60%.

After leaving SITA, we visited a nearby coffee shop, for delicious liquid refreshment, before the return journey. [Report from Alison Gilroy field day leader]

WALK FROM SPIT BRIDGE TO MANLY

May 31st was the day for the rain-delayed walk originally scheduled for early in the month. Despite the unpromising weather, nineteen set out on the walk through the Sydney Harbour National Park. It was a largish group with a variety of walking capabilities. The walk around the northern harbour foreshores has a range of interesting flora, helpfully identified with signs. Because of the erratic weather, some unexpected species were in flower. Some of us enjoyed using a new and inexpensive app "Wildflowers Australia." With the spectacular scenery, photo ops, aboriginal rock carvings and abandoned fishermen's shacks to speculate about, we took rather longer than planned; finally signing off at Manly wharf at 2.10pm. Most enthusiastically continued

for a convivial lunch in a pub over-looking the ocean; there were not one but two different styles of band playing at us from different sides. We finally made it back to Circular Quay on



the ferry by 4.30pm with some hardy types still expressing interest in checking out the "Vivid" light festival! [Report by Erica Buzo walk leader]

FOR NOTING

Doryanthes – Details about this Southern Sydney Journal of Art, Heritage and Natural History at: doryanthes.info/

Land management workshops for Sydney-based landholders. Details for this and others at <http://eepurl.com/bo93Cr>

Myles Dunphy Streamwatch, next meets at 9am on Tues June 23rd [Details: Sharyn ☎ 9579 1262, Heather ☎ 0425 291 879].

Oatley Heritage & Historical Soc. The next meeting will be a "coffee and chat" meeting on 31st July at the Library.

