



OFF News

Oatley Flora & Fauna Conservation Society Inc.

Protecting the local environment since 1955

<http://off.oatleypark.com>

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CONCERNS ABOUT CROWN LAND

The NSW Upper House is currently conducting an inquiry into Crown Lands in NSW. The inquiry will look at: a) the extent of Crown land and the benefits of active use and management, b) the adequacy of community input and consultation regarding the commercial use and disposal of Crown land, c) the most appropriate and effective measures for protecting Crown land so that it is preserved and enhanced for future generations, and d) the extent of Aboriginal Land Claims over Crown land and opportunities to increase Aboriginal involvement in the management. Submissions accepted until sun 24th July. Submission guides available shortly. More information on our the NCS [website](http://www.off.oatleypark.com).

PRESERVE MYLES DUNPHY RESERVE

[Change.Org](http://www.change.org) notes that the former Hurstville Council did not obtain agreement from the community to rezone, reclassify, sell or lease the Oatley Bowling Club land site. Nor did the former Council explain why all its discussions on this subject were held in secret. The only survey taken (2010) resulted in most people voting for the area to be retained for community purposes. The site is part of the Myles Dunphy Reserve, named after our local famous environmentalist. In 2010 Hurstville Council's lawyers confirmed that the Reserve included the site of the former Oatley Bowling Club.



Myles helped pioneer the foundation of national parks and urged the council to spare the Reserve from housing development. The new Georges River Council now seems to be moving swiftly in trying to change the status of the OBC site.

www.theleader.com.au/story/4014631/.

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF CRISIS

The Great Barrier Reef's recent El Nino-triggered mass coral bleaching could threaten its world heritage status, scientists and conservationists have warned. Last year, the UN's World Heritage Committee decided not to put the reef on its "in danger" list, potentially disastrous for the tourism industry. But footage recently released revealed brightly bleached white reefs along Queensland's far north coast.

Janice Lough, a scientist with the Australian Institute of Marine Science and the National Coral Bleaching Taskforce, said the current situation looked "very bad" in the northern part of the Great Barrier Reef. "Water temperatures have been really well above normal and, large parts of the reef have been affected.

Richard Leck, from the World Wildlife Fund, which provides advice to the heritage committee, said the northern part of the reef has been severely bleached, and was at risk of coral mortality. [Check out AMCS video!](#)

Members may be interested in recent articles on local bird observations - available on line. [Just enter Journal name & date]

[Powerful Owl Fledglings](#) and [Australasian Grebes](#) in Australian Field Ornithology by M. Mo and D. Waterhouse Sept 2015 & Dec 2015

[Mobbing responses of Powerful Owls](#) in Australian Zoologist Vol 38 Issue 1 (2016) by M. Mo, D. Waterhouse, P Hayler and A. Hayler

THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY

The NSW Government has drafted legislation that will severely weaken biodiversity protection. The legislative titles of *Biodiversity Conservation Bill* and *Local Land Services Amendment Bill* are misleading and obscure. The bills will actually allow increased damage to the natural environment through less-regulated land-clearing.



If enacted they will 1) remove a legal requirement that land clearing should "maintain or improve" biodiversity and 2) facilitate widespread destruction of native vegetation in both country and urban areas. *Nature will pay the bill for this ill-conceived legislation.* We must be sure our objections are heard. [More at <http://www.standupfornature.org.au/>]

PLASTIC FREE JULY

Plastic is designed to last forever, yet every day we use it for disposable items lasting a few minutes and then throw away. Most is landfilled, some recycled and some ending up in the environment. It is estimated that 8 million tonnes enter the oceans per year where it entangles and is ingested by wildlife. Every bit of plastic ever made still exists somewhere, and in the first 10 years of this century there was already more plastic produced than last century. [Read more](#)

PROTECTING GROUND WATER

The [EDO](#) has launched a case in the Federal Court on behalf of Western Downs Alliance. This is the first CSG case brought under national environmental law testing the application of the Water Trigger. The client is challenging the approval of 6,100 new CSG wells in the Surat Basin in Queensland. The wells will draw water from the Great Artesian Basin, and are likely to release waste water into lakes and rivers, including the Dawson River.

Their client argues that the project's approval was unlawful because the Environment Minister didn't properly assess the impact the project will have on water, as required by the 'Water Trigger' under the EPBC Act.

A CASE FOR HIGH SPEED RAIL

A high speed rail from Sydney to Melbourne, for example, can reduce travel times, noise impacts, promote development in regional areas, and allow people to travel in comfort. The time to build the HSR Sydney to Melbourne should have been now. But the Western Sydney Airport decision has already been made, and future governments are likely to prefer Air to Fast Rail travel with its impact on airports.

HSR can transport passengers between Sydney, Melbourne in 2.44 hours, in comfort. Flying takes over 3 hours, plus the time to reach the airport (at least an hour before the flight), going through security, boarding the plane, taxiing to the runway, taking off, flight time, landing, reaching the terminal, collecting luggage, and traveling on. wikipedia.org/wiki/High-speed_rail_in_Australia

DO WE NEED ANOTHER AIRPORT, NOW OR IN THE FUTURE?

Meetings of the Society are held at the [Oatley RSL & Community Club](#), 23 Letitia Oatley from 7.30 to 9.30pm, usually on the fourth Monday. Visitors and accompanied children are welcome at meetings and excursions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

[See OFF's whole year's program at: off.oatleypark.com/program]

July 25th (Mon) Meeting at 7.30pm with Rob Brewster from [Rewilding Australia](#) speaking on **Returning carnivorous marsupials to the landscape.**

July 31st (Sun) Field day walk from Stanwell Park to Helensburgh. A 15 km moderately strenuous walk through contrasting scenery from Stanwell Park to Otford, Burning Palms, and onto Helensburgh. If travelling by train catch the Kiama train at Hurstville at 8:48am, leave the train at Stanwell Park Station at 09.34. We proceed through the old Otford railway tunnel 1 mile in length, bring a torch as the ground is uneven. Lunch at Burning Palms. We should reach Helensburgh to catch the 5:23pm train. Only fit walkers should go on this outing - not suitable for those suffering from claustrophobia. **Leader: Adrian Buzo**

Aug 22nd (Mon) Meeting at 7.30pm with Rodger Robertson speaking on: "Flora and fauna of Northern Alaska"

Aug 23rd (Tues) Field Day: Discovering the diverse flora of the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney. **Leader: Amanda Gibson**

Sept 24-26th Weekend Field Trip Exploring Capertee NP. We have booked both the cosy homestead and cottage for the weekend to use as a base while we explore the park and enjoy its abundant wildlife. The accommodation has been reserved for 3 nights, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Members can stay as long as they wish over that period. There are 4 bedrooms in the homestead with beds for 14 people. The cottage has another 6 beds in two bedrooms. The cost will be \$50 per person per night. To reserve a place, please contact **Graham Fry** on fryg@zipworld.com.au or ☎9580 6621. Camping is also available on site.

Sept 26th (Mon) Meeting 7.30pm with Julian Sheen speaking on **Travels through Central Asia**

THE MAN FROM COXS RIVER

At its 27th June meeting OFF tried something different; instead of a speaker we showed a DVD. The RSL facilities enabled this, and on the cold wet June night the warmth of the RSL was also appreciated.

The film was titled [The Man from Coxs River](#). This locally made film was about removing brumbies from the Coxs River in the Blue Mountains National Park. It was a fascinating story showing the many trials and tribulations of trying to round up wild horses, partially break them in and then walk them up the slope to the waiting truck. It was rough work but very professionally done by the local people, particularly the Carlons who used to take people on horse riding into this area.

[The DVD is available for sale through www.themanfromcoxsriver.com for \$15 or alternatively, Graham Fry will have some for sale at the next meeting.]

FIELD DAY TO THE ABC STUDIOS AND BARANGAROO

Despite inclement weather during the previous week, Wednesday 29th June was a beautiful, sunny day when fifteen OFF members set off to explore the western edge of the CBD. We walked from Central station (with a short coffee break) down to the ABC studios for a guided tour, visiting both radio and TV studios producing the shows familiar to most of us.

On leaving the ABC, we walked down the relatively new walkway joining Central to the Darling Harbour precinct. This walkway has been built over the tracks of the original goods train line and many artefacts from that era have been built into the design, as well as leisure activities (such as metal ping pong tables) to provide for the nearby university students, workers and residents. On the way we stopped to look at and in the "paper bag" building designed by the architect Frank Gehry and built for the UTS Business School. We had a leisurely lunch in the sunshine, before heading north to Barangaroo through the extensive construction taking place at Darling Harbour. After enjoying the waterfront at Barangaroo together, we separated and made our own way to Circular Quay. Some of us had afternoon tea up in the Rocks, enjoying one member's memories of youthful exploits in the area. [Note by Leader Sue de Beuzeville]

WILD HORSE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service is seeking feedback on its [Kosciuszko National Park Draft Wild Horse Management Plan 2016](#). If you would like to make a submission, the Colong Foundation for Wilderness has made available a [submission guide](#) and [draft submission](#). The National Parks Association also has a [submission guide](#) available. Submissions close 19th Aug.

Please note that due to some concern about our print layout, I have increased the size of the font for this edition. Comments are welcome. [John D]

AUSTRALIAN BIRD FEEDING & WATERING STUDY

The Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study is a citizen science initiative being conducted by researchers at Deakin and Griffith Universities. Our interests are the interactions people have with birds in their own backyards, as this can have a huge impact on bird diversity and abundance. One of the most common ways people interact with birds is through providing food and water.

The Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study aims to gather quantitative data on the effects of supplementary feeding and providing water for birds and reasons why people provided food and/or water. In doing so we aim to develop purpose guidelines for those who feed birds to do so with minimum risk to birds.

You can sign up for and to participate in The Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study by turning to <http://www.feedingbirds.org.au>. The survey will start on Monday the 1st Aug when we will ask you to monitor the birds visiting your bird baths and/or feeders 3 times a week. The survey will run for 4 weeks ending on Sun 28th Aug.

<https://csdb.org.au/feedingbirds/home.aspx> - If you have any questions about the study, check out our [Q&A](#) section or just send an email to <mailto:g.cleary@deakin.edu.au> ?subject=Study

FOR NOTING

Gardens of Stone photographic exhibition at the new Law Building Sydney University. 17-18 Sept. Details at <https://www.colongwilderness.org.au/civicm/event/info/>

Homegrown Power Plan is a joint project between [GetUp!](#) and [Solar Citizens](#), as reported in *The Guardian*, showing how to [power with renewable energy](#)

Myles Dunphy Streamwatch, next meets at 9am on Tues 26th July [Details: Sharyn ☎9579 1262, Heather ☎0425 291 879].

National Tree Day Sun 31st July and our concerns about trees! <http://www.bing.com/search?q=national+tree+day+2016+>

Nature Conservation Council NSW with links to 150 community organisations is committed to protecting and restoring the unique natural environment of NSW. <http://www.nature.org.au/about/>

Powerful Owl Project is co-managed by BirdLife Australia's Birds in Backyards program and the Threatened Bird Network. <http://birdlife.org.au/projects/powerful-owl-project>

Who
came up
with that
rubbish
about
climate
change?

