



OFF News

Oatley Flora & Fauna Conservation Society Inc.

Protecting the local environment since 1955

<http://off.oatleypark.com>

Issue 8/16

Aug/Sept 2016

LIME KILN BAY WETLAND PROJECT

Lime Kiln Bay (LKB) wetland was constructed in 2000 to improve aesthetics of the area and quality of water draining into Lime Kiln Bay reed beds, mangroves, the bay and the Georges River. The wetland and surrounding bushland represent a significant community asset. There are increasingly significant environmental impacts on the wetland from urban development that are causing a deterioration in the natural qualities of the area. The aim of the project was to raise local community awareness of the impacts on the wetland, promote increased involvement, behaviour change and reduce the impacts. **

http://off.oatleypark.com/?page_id

CONCERNS ABOUT CROWN LAND

The NSW state government is reviewing the administration of Crown land in NSW and proposes to a) establish a Crown Lands Division as part of a public trading enterprise, b) promote economic growth over social, cultural, local and environment concerns, c) overhaul the ownership of Crown lands that could result in their widespread sale or commercialisation by the government and/or transfer to local councils, and d) replace eight existing Acts applying to Crown lands with a single Act.

The Crown Lands under review make up nearly half of NSW (approx. 33 million ha). Most of this land is in western NSW (30 million ha). In addition, there are 2.5 million ha of Crown reserves across the state. The remainder of the Crown lands include waterways, travelling stock reserves, commons, roads and unallocated land.

State forests and Crown land reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 are not subject to this review. <http://www.nature.org.au/crown-land-fact-sheet>

SAVE OUR TREES

Stand Up for Nature notes that trees and wildlife in rural areas are in the Baird government's sights. Bushland remnants and landmark trees in Sydney and in towns across NSW are also at risk. Under Premier Baird's leadership, we have lost thousands of trees in a misguided drive for more rapid "development". Since becoming Premier, Mr Baird has conducted a war on trees. First, his 10/50 code allowed people to cut down thousands of trees to improve their views. Then he approved the destruction of hundreds of trees to make way for his big infrastructure projects. Now his *Biodiversity Conservation Bill* is set to fast-track land-clearing approvals to appease big agribusiness and property developers. We need strong, effective conservation laws that will stop the loss of trees and bushland. Mr Baird's new *Biodiversity Conservation Act* is not good for biodiversity or conservation. <http://theconversation.com/> <http://www.standupfornature.org.au/suburbs>



KEEP THE PUBLIC PARKLAND

Georges River Council proposes to progress the planning proposal for the reclassification and rezoning of the former Oatley Bowling Club site to allow its use for up to 9 storey high-rise seniors accommodation (80 units) and as mixed density residential housing. Impacts on the reserve from this gross overdevelopment would be grave.

This proposal is clearly wrong - the site is part of the Myles Dunphy Reserve, named after one of Australia's first environmentalists and Oatley resident. Myles approached Hurstville Municipal Council with a view to turning the land into a reserve spared from housing development. HMC wanted to purchase or resume the blocks of land, some of which were then owned by WW2 servicemen, and eventually did so for the purpose of a park. It was gazetted as a "Reserve" (probably before the end of the war). A grant from NSW government assisted in acquiring the land for "park purposes". <https://www.change.org/p/>

A MARINE PARK FOR SYDNEY

The Sydney community has strongly backed a marine park for Sydney, with about 5,000 submissions supporting the initiative as part of the NSW Government's Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment. The assessment is considering ways to enhance marine biodiversity in the area between Newcastle and Wollongong. The proposal for a marine park is one initiative that includes proposals to reduce pollution in waterways and restore important fish habitat. Clearly people want a marine park for the Sydney region, that would include fully protected marine sanctuaries like Shelly Beach at Manly, that has abundant marine life, including giant cuttlefish, schools of hundreds of yellow tail and large gropers. It's an example of what many other parts of the Sydney coastline could be like with better protections for our marine life in a large-scale marine park.

A marine park would be science-based and multi-user, allowing fishing and other activities while fully protecting some areas for conservation and ensuring fishing. <http://www.nccnsw.org.au/> & <http://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/>

ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS

The BMCS July Hut News notes that the combined infrastructure and urban planning proposals of the NSW Baird Government could, in just a few years, harm everyone in Greater Sydney and the Blue Mountains region. 3,500ha of World Heritage wilderness and national park would be turned into a "dead zone"

The way to minimise the harm from floods in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment is to stop putting buildings on flood plains. The airport and new motorways will greatly increase air pollution in what is already the worst urban air pollution trap in Australia. <http://www.bluemountains.org.au/documents/hutnews/> & <https://www.colongwilderness.org.au/dont-raise-dam-guide-letter>

Tasmania's Giant Freshwater Crayfish is terrifying-looking, but still needs our protection. [Put in a submission today to protect their home.](#)

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]**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.** We will catch the train departing Oatley at 9.05am, Mortdale 9.07am and meet at the Woolloomooloo Gate on Art Gallery Road at 10am. The walk should take 2-3 hours. We will have lunch in the gardens, either bring your own or buy it at the cafe. The afternoon is free to visit the other local attractions such as the new Calyx Exhibit, or perhaps the Art Gallery to see the Archibald Prize paintings. **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 fyg@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****25TH JULY: TALK ON REWILDING AUSTRALIA**[Rewilding Australia](#) is only three years old, but it is changing the debate on conservation, trying to move the concept of ecosystem management from conserving our ecosystems in their current degraded state to the use of cost-effective solutions to restore ecosystem function. The goal is to manage ecosystems to a point where the species assemblages can look after themselves a little better.

Rewilding Director Rob Brewster's presentation at the meeting provided an insight into the vast losses of Australian wildlife in the past hundred years as a result of the spread of cats and foxes. Rob also discussed the problems with relying on short-term solutions to feral pest control (baiting and shooting) and proposed that protecting mainland marsupials by using Tasmanian devils to create a 'landscape of fear' for feral cats and foxes would be a more cost-effective, humane method.

Technical problems during the meeting gave the opportunity for an extended Q&A session which members much appreciated. [Noted by Jan Douglas]

FIELD DAY JULY 31ST STANWELL PARK

A cool Sunday provided the ideal conditions for an arduous walk from Stanwell Park to Helensburgh.

After alighting from the train at Stanwell Park, 7 members of OFF (one member having a train problem) were asked for directions by 2 foreign tourists (from Italy and Israel) to the north side of the Royal National Park. Realising they would have a great distance to cover they opted to join our walk. As we had back packs and maps they assumed we knew what we were doing.

We set off for the long abandoned [Otford Railway tunnel](#), running for 1.82 km between Stanwell Park and Otford. In 1888 it was the longest and steepest single line tunnel. Torches were required as we skirted rubbish, abandoned machinery, the eroded floor and water running through. We were impressed by the quality of the brick work, still in excellent condition.After a brief stop at the Otford cafe our leader unfortunately had to leave us due to an injury. We had good maps and there were many signs along the way, some had walked the track previously, so we continued on. The ridge walk provided great views out to sea and down to Burning Palms. We saw some beautiful Angophoras and stringy barks and Gynea Lilies in flower. Epacris and [Correa reflexa](#) were also seen. The Coast Track down to Burning Palms was wet in the gullies but the palm forest we passed through made up well for the wet track. We enjoyed a quick and well-earned lunch on the beach; the skies cleared and we enjoyed a beautiful vista of the surf.

The trek uphill to the Garawarra car park was quite steep and hot. There we were met by our member with the train problem. He had had an exciting walk of his own as he did some bush bashing to find the Burgh Track. He agreed that the walk back to Otford would be

preferable to continuing to Helensburgh as we may not have reached there before dark. Back to Otford proved quicker and a very pleasant walk through beautiful angophoras, and we caught the 5.15pm from Otford station. There was one benefit in our leader leaving us in the morning; as when making his way to Otford Station he had come across a small brush fire that he and others were able to put out, and to alert the bush fire brigade. [Noted by Vicki Bolling]

**AUSTRALIAN WATER SURVEY**The [Australian Water Association](#), the national peak body that delivers information, expertise and collaboration for sustainable water management to Australia's water professionals, has conducted a national survey on Australia's key water issues. [ended 12 Aug; details here](#)**MANGROVE FORESTS THREATENED**An unprecedented mass death of mangrove forests across Northern Australia's coastline has sent alarm bells ringing, with [Limmen Bight](#) in the Gulf of Carpentaria, one of the worst hit places. Mangroves are critical to marine ecosystems, acting as crucial nurseries for fish and other marine life. They are also important for our climate, forming critical carbon sinks.<http://www.marineconservation.org.au/pages/climate-change.html>**FOR NOTING****B**ushcare Major Day Out: 10th Sept 8.30 to 12.30 in Poulton Park near corner Moreshead Dr and Rickard Rd, Sth Hurstville. <http://www.bushcaresmajordayout.org/>**M**yles Dunphy Streamwatch, next meets at 9am on Tues 30th Aug [Details: Sharyn ☎9579 1262, Heather ☎0425 291 879].**M**uogamarra Nature Reserve, famous wildflowers, open weekends, Sat 13th Aug to 18th Sept - 9am to 4.30pm. Entry: \$10 adults, \$5 children, \$25 family. Menai Wildflower Group visiting the Reserve on 27th Aug and has invited members of OFF to join them at 9 am. Closest railway station Cowan; consider car-pooling.**P**owerful 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>**S**ave the wetlands and river systems**. OFF has been painting messages on drains in the area to remind people of what drains are for and what their misuse can do. [The Leader published these photos on 20 Jan.](#)**drains are for rain so butt out**