



## NEW CONSTITUTION ACCEPTED

A Special General Meeting was held during the June meeting, where members accepted the new Constitution and Mission Statement unanimously. A copy of this Constitution can be found on the OFF website at: <http://off.oatleypark.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/OFF-Constitution-adopted-25062018.pdf>

**Acknowledgement of Country.** The Committee resolved to deliver this important acknowledgement at all general meetings. The attendees at the June meeting witnessed the first acknowledgement.

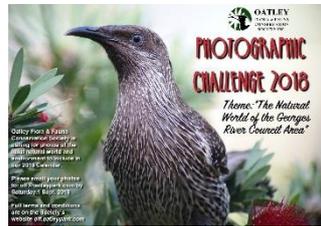
If you do not have access to the web and would like to read the new Constitution, please contact OFF President - Graham Lalchere on 9580 3107 to obtain a copy.

## OFF CELEBRATION DINNER

The annual OFF Celebration Dinner was held on Thursday 28 June, 2018 at OAT MILL, Oatley RSL. In attendance were 43 members and friends of Oatley Flora and Fauna. Everyone enjoyed a lovely meal followed by the annual raffle. Prizes were generously donated by members and as usual there were plenty for everyone. The evening ended with a delicious dessert of cupcakes made by Sue Howard. Thank you to all those involved in organising the fun-filled evening.

## 2019 OFF CALENDAR

As done in previous years, OFF is producing a 2019 calendar for sale at the Oatley Festival in October. The theme of this year's calendar is "Nature in the Suburbs" and will feature images of Oatley's natural environment. This is a chance for local photographers to see their images in print. If you have a nice photo, we would like to see it. The 12 best images will be chosen for inclusion. Images can be sent to [off@oatleypark.com](mailto:off@oatleypark.com). The closing date for the submission of photos is 1 **September, 2018**. For more information, including photo entry rules visit: <http://off.oatleypark.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018-OFF-PHOTO-COMPETITION-Rules.pdf>



## WILD HORSES IN KOSCIUSZKO NATIONAL PARK

OFF sent a letter to the NSW Premier objecting the recent legislation protecting the brumbies in Kosciuszko, despite all scientific evidence showing the damaging impact horses have on this fragile environment. A reply from the Premier (via her Parliamentary Secretary Jonathan O'Dea) stated that the Bill does not propose to increase the population of brumbies in Kosciuszko National Park, and in sensitive areas brumbies will be removed and rehomed outside the park, or if possible relocated to less sensitive areas.

## KOALA PROTECTION

The Society has given its support to the Georges River Koala Network which is trying to protect the koala population between the Georges River and Campbelltown. Letters have been written to the planners of Mount Gilead Estate and the Minister for Defence regarding Holsworthy Military Area. Included in the letters are requests for wide bushland corridors, road fencing (especially along Appin Road) and the construction of overpasses and underpasses. The Army was asked if it has a koala management plan, whether a koala habitat has been cleared and whether safe movement corridors have been considered for koalas.

## OFF CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE LOCAL NATIVE VEGETATION

Show your support for OFF's campaign to increase local native vegetation in the Georges River local government area. Upcoming events include:

### National Tree Day – Sunday, 29 July, 2018 (9.00 am - 11.00 am)

Georges River Council will be planting 1000 native species in H V Evatt Park, Lugarno. Everyone welcome. For more details and to RSVP visit: <https://treeday.planetark.org/site/10018138>

### National Tree Day – Sunday, 29 July, 2018 (8.00 am – 2.00 pm)

Beside Penshurst Library, Forest Road, Penshurst. Council plant giveaway to increase the biodiversity of native flora and fauna in your garden. Residents only – bring your rates notice and a carry bag. OFF members will be helping Council staff label plants and provide gardening advice – if you can help please contact Liz Cameron on 9580 6621. For more details and to RSVP visit:

<https://treeday.planetark.org/site/10018147>

### OFF Planting Day – Sunday, 5 August, 2018 (10.00 am – 12 noon)

OFF members will be planting 500 native species in River Road Reserve, to extend our successful planting near the railway underpass in Oatley. Plants will be purchased from the Sutherland Shire Nursery with a grant from the Minister for the Environment's Conservation Fund, sourced through local member Mark Couré. Please bring gardening gloves, trowel, hat, sunscreen and water.

## NORTH HEAD SANCTUARY WALK

A dozen OFF members and friends enjoyed a brilliant walk to North Head Sanctuary on Sunday 1 July, 2018. The walk had something for everyone - spectacular views, flora and fauna, sculptures and history. The walk commenced from Manly ferry terminal, across to South Steyne Beach and then along Marine Parade which was busy with people enjoying the unseasonably warm day. Along the route were interesting sculptures highlighting the aquatic life in the Cabbage Tree Bay Reserve.

At Shelly Beach the group encountered some very bold Brush Turkeys who were keen to sample our morning tea cakes. The top of the hill offered spectacular views north. Cunningham's Skinks were spotted taking in the sun and view. The walk continued through the walled area with endangered Banksia Scrub. There were some flowering plants to keep our plant experts occupied. The flowering Banksia attracting little Wattlebirds and the New Holland Honeyeater.

The stop at North Head Sanctuary Foundation Information Centre was productive thanks to an enthusiastic and informative volunteer. The walk towards the centre of the headland kept history buffs happy, as they explored fortifications and military



buildings. After a lunch break, the walk continued to the Fairfax loop which offered some stunning views of the Sydney harbour headlands and city. The group also witnessed glimpses of whales frolicking amongst the flotilla of whale watching boats. A photo gallery of the trip can be found at <http://off.oatleypark.com/?p=7234>

**Coming OFF Events in July/August 2018**  
OFF Full Year Events Calendar at: [off.oatleypark.com/program](http://off.oatleypark.com/program)

**23 July 2018 – Establishing a Small Bird Habitat**

During the Monday meeting, Bev Debrincat will explain how easy it is to establish small bird habitat corridors in our own yards. She will describe corridors the Habitat Network have been working on at Ryde and Hunters Hill and then run a short workshop to illustrate how to plant small bird habitat havens.

**29 July 2018 – Field Trip to Bonnum Pic, Nattai National Park**

Bonnum Pic is a spectacular ridge jutting out over the Wollondilly Valley in the Nattai National Park. The group will meet at The Glass House coffee shop - Mittagong at 8.45 am, and then car pool to the trail head. The 12-15 km out-and-back walk is a combination of fire trail and bush track hiking, and optional rock hopping. The group will pass through a variety of landscapes, from classic bush land, to open ridge-top heath, to a series of wind and water-moulded rock formations. Return to Mittagong will be at approximately 4.00 pm. Leader Adrian Buzo.

*Meetings of the Society are held at the Oatley RSL Club, 23 Letitia St, Oatley (lower level sports room) from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm, usually on the fourth Monday of the month. Visitors and accompanied children are welcome at meetings and field days.*

**BRIEFLY SPEAKING .....**

OATLEY PARK BUSHCARE group is on the second Saturday of each month starting at 12.00 pm. Meet at the entrance on Douglas Haig Street. Georges River Council Bushcare Officer: John Kensitt 0435 963 643.

MYLES DUNPHY STREAMWATCH Details Heather Stolle 0425 291 879. This activity usually takes place on the Tuesday after OFF General Meetings.

**GEORGES RIVER CLEAN UP**

**Beauty Point Reserve, Padstow Heights Sunday, 19 August, 2018 from 9.00 am.** Access is via the gate adjacent to Roma Reserve, Playford Road. The closest cross street is Roma Avenue. Please note that access is difficult - steep and rocky grade and part of the track is muddy. Please bring sturdy shoes, hat, gloves, water and sunscreen.

**SAVE THE BLUE MOUNTAINS WILD RIVERS**

In 2016 the NSW Government announced plans to raise the Warragamba Dam wall by 14 metres – drowning 65 kilometres of wild rivers and 4700 hectares of national parks surrounding the dam. The dam wall raising is said to be for flood mitigation to justify new urban sprawl across 2355 hectares of Western Sydney floodplains.

The environmental devastation caused by raising the dam wall would see the lower Kowmung, Coxs, Nattai, Kedumba, Wollondilly and Little Rivers smothered beneath dam mud. This would kill many plant and animal species that inhabit the wilderness area, including the vulnerable Camden White Gum. Destroying a protected World Heritage site would be an international disgrace.

You can help to save the Blue Mountains wild rivers. Here are some suggestions:

- Sign an online petition at <https://www.wildrivers.org.au/petition>
- Write a letter to a newspaper or politician.
- Make a tax deductible donation to the Colong Foundation at: [wildrivers@colongwilderness.org.au](mailto:wildrivers@colongwilderness.org.au)

**BIRD NEWS**

The sea-eagles that have nested at Newington Reserve in recent years are back again and like previous years you can observe the action on the Internet by visiting <http://www.sea-eaglecam.org/video.html>. The female has laid two eggs, the first on the 11 June, 2018 and the second on the 14 June, 2018. The incubation period for this species is around six weeks and so the eggs should hatch in mid-July. This link enables you to view the birds on the nest and take part in an ongoing discussion about the eagles with people from all around the world.

Locally, our resident pair of Ospreys which have tried to successfully nest on the Georges River in recent years have had problems each year ranging from mobbing by ravens to jet-skies roaring close to the nest. They have now built a nest in a tree near the river and with a good pair of binoculars the nest can be seen from Webster's Lookout in Oatley Park. We hope they are successful this year as this is one of the most southerly locations in Australia where this species nests. Their continuing presence along the Georges River is a reward for the efforts of many people and organisations who have cleaned up the river and surrounds that has led to a healthy river with plenty of fish for the Ospreys.



Source: Dave Mercer

**OFF MEETINGS VENUE**

Some members have expressed disappointment with the switch to the downstairs area in the Club. Your committee is endeavouring to improve conditions there in several ways:

- Having a more reliable and independent sound system.
- Provision of at least 60 comfortable chairs for each meeting (early birds will still get the best seats).
- Conspicuous signage directing people who use the lift, on how to get to the Sports Bar.