

HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"



The BMCC Community Groundwater Forum Brian Marshall

After two years of agitation and persistence by the Conservation Society, Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC) held a 'round table' meeting with government departments about groundwater concerns and Council involvement in the approval process. The community, including the Society, was excluded from this meeting at the government departments' insistence.

At that time, BMCC committed itself to running a community groundwater forum at which an independent consultant and the same government departments would make presentations and respond to questions from the audience. This took place on Saturday 29 April at the Mid-Mountains Neighbourhood Centre in Lawson.

The forum was chaired by Dr John Williams, Chief Scientist with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Speakers were Chris Jewell, a groundwater consultant based at Bullaburra, and representatives of the Sydney Catchment Authority, Sydney Water and DNR.

The talks were informative and open, and the audience's questions were searching. However, due to time constraints, many questions remained unasked or incompletely answered. The Chair and Frank Garofalov (BMCC) suggested that unanswered questions and concerns should be sent to the speakers for written response and concurrently copied to Council. The Society has done this and is now awaiting responses.

Aspects of the Macro Water Sharing Plan (MWSP) for groundwater sources in the Blue Mountains are incomplete. The meeting requested BMCC to arrange another forum to fully evaluate the MWSP once a draft is available for public consideration. Particular emphasis was placed on this taking place before the MWSP became too fixed and passed to the Catchment Management Authority for 'conveying' to the community.

Other matters of particular concern to the Society, and probably BMCC, include:

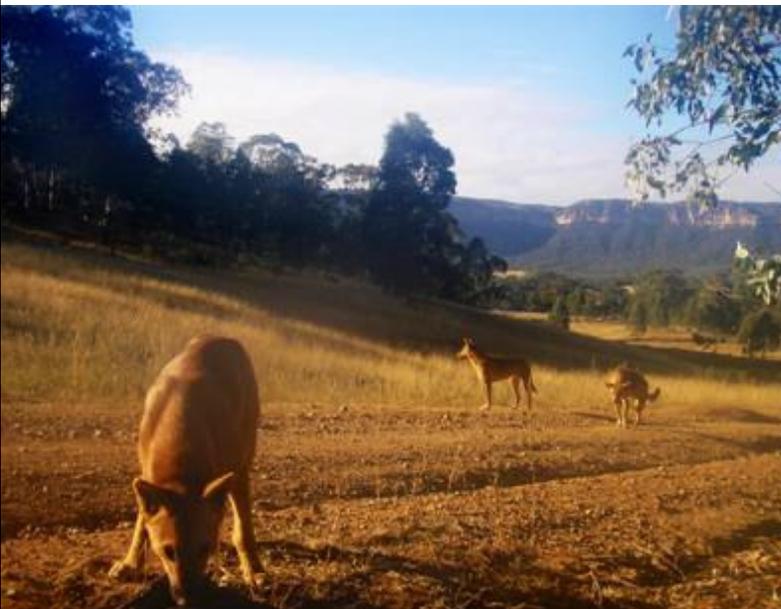
- **Basic Water Rights:** the 'right' to take groundwater for domestic purposes, even where a reticulated water supply is available, is the principal impediment to metering domestic bores and charging for the abstracted water. It is absolutely disgraceful that the Sydney Metropolitan Water Plan actually encourages domestic bores. The development of this 'right' stems from a need in country areas where a reticulated supply is not available. There is a clear need for government thinking to change; 'free' groundwater from un-metered domestic bores is unacceptable.
- **The interdependence of groundwater and surface water** was emphasised by several government speakers. Yet, despite this, the fundamental concept would seem to be negated by DNR in its approach to creating MWSPs for groundwater sources and unregulated surface water sources. The basis for the different number of groundwater and surface water plans (there are more of the latter) requires careful explanation.
- **Inadequate time allowed for the development of MWSPs for groundwater sources.** The concept of 'groundwater' necessitates an understanding of recharge areas and their precipitation/infiltration characteristics, concentration sites (aquifers), discharge sites, watertable geometry relative to topography, gross and local flow characteristics, relationships between stacked aquifers, and the age-characteristics of the abstracted water. These matters are critical to environmental health and sustainable extraction practices. Yet speakers indicated that MWSPs must be produced within a time-frame that is incompatible with achieving this level of understanding. The MWSPs

(Continued on page 2)

What are dingoes doing in the Blue Mountains?

"Maybe you really were being watched as you walked down that lonely bush track: I know I was." Brad Purcell

Nine out of ten people don't quite know whether to believe Brad Purcell when he tells them he's researching dingoes in the Blue Mountains. Maybe it's because he looks too young to be a scientist (a likely explanation!) or maybe it's because dingoes only live out west in the desert—don't they?



A PhD candidate in Wildlife Research at the University of Western Sydney, Brad Purcell will be the **guest speaker at our next monthly meeting**, where he will answer all your questions about the Australian Dingo:

Predator, pest, companion or prey?

Native, exotic: needed or not?

What is the Australian Dingo anyway?

What would Australia look like without them?

And more importantly-

WHAT ARE THEY DOING IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS?

Brad will provide an insight into the life of dingoes and dingo hybrids in the Southern Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. How many may be there; what they eat; how, when and where they travel; and he'll even show you what they look like, genetically pure or otherwise.

The meeting and talk will commence at 7.30 pm on Friday 30 June at the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls. Visitors are most welcome.

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Quoll Club

*Are you a budding artist?
Are you keen to teach our children
about the local environment?*

Lots of parents have asked that we continue producing the Quoll Club newsletter but we need someone to take on the job.

For those of you who may not have seen it, the monthly Quoll Club newsletter contains nature notes, puzzles, word games, quizzes and competitions.

So if you want to do something creative and rewarding for the future of nature conservation - but don't want the workload associated with being on the Management Committee - why not give it a go?

Call the office and leave your number or email us and we will contact you with more information.

Letter of the Month—June 2006 2006 Sydney Metropolitan Water Plan

The Iemma Government has recently released the 2006 Metropolitan Water Plan but, rather than showing some innovation in response to public concerns, the "new" policy contains nothing to inspire confidence in our water future.

Mr Charles Essery, a former Sydney Water executive, says "Sydney has 18 months of water supply remaining, yet we continue to waste more water through our ocean outfalls and stormwater discharges than would meet all our needs." (Sydney Morning Herald, 15th May)

Nor has the desalination plant been shelved: it is still an integral part of the Government's plan to meet Sydney's water needs. Mr Essery described it as the world's biggest metropolitan water recycling plant - expensively recycling polluted seawater.

Even if you've already written to the Premier about Sydney's water supply, write again so he knows how much you are concerned.

Send a short message to the Premier asking:

- Why is there no increase in the volume of recycled effluent from the 2004 target? Is this target in fact achievable? There are still no details on how it is to be implemented by 2015.
- What is his justification for continuing with plans for a desalination plant, now conservatively estimated to cost taxpayers \$1.3 billion?
- Why are there no plans for harvesting rainwater and stormwater?

Remember there is an upcoming State election and now is a good time to lobby politicians, so you might like to send a copy of your letter to the leader of the Opposition as well.

Contact Details: Post to Parliament House, Macquarie St. Sydney 2000, or email:

The Hon Morris Iemma: thepremier@www.nsw.gov.au

The Hon Peter Debnam: peter.debnam@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Are you getting replies to your letters? We would be interested to hear. Please email us at climatez@bigpond.net.au.

Rosemary Lathouris and Robin Mosman

We were also going to suggest that you mention the sale of Snowy Hydro, but public outrage appears to have made the various governments rethink their decision. Whether our politicians are really listening to us or not, at least no-one can say that we're not trying—keep up the good work! (Ed.).

The BMCC Community Groundwater Forum (Continued from page 1)

consequently reflect a 'risk-assessment' approach (rather than scientific knowledge) and rely on periodic review to iron-out deficiencies. How much environmental damage will result, before deficiencies are overcome (if ever!)? This is why a moratorium on domestic bores in regions of reticulated water supply is now essential.

- **A full explanation is needed of how DNR determines an aquifer's recharge rate.** This is the essential starting point for any process whereby the natural recharge-discharge balance that supports groundwater-dependent ecosystems is modified by abstraction for social or economic purposes.
- **It should be acknowledged that plans to distribute groundwater between environmental, social and economic needs are value judgments.** The environment existed in dynamic harmony with natural recharge-discharge events; social and economic demands are testing the extent to which environmental damage will be tolerated.
- The proposed MWSP for groundwater allows no abstraction of 'recharge' in the Blue Mountains National Parks and World Heritage Area (sensible), yet permits 25% abstraction in immediately adjacent areas (incomprehensible).

The environmental sensitivity of the Blue Mountains and World Heritage Area requires acknowledgement that any abstraction of groundwater must have regional and/or local environmental consequences. Experiential learning (the 'suck-it-and-see' approach) is unacceptable, abstraction from existing domestic bores should be metered and charged for; and councils should be empowered to determine the local needs of their communities.

There should be no 'right' to abstract groundwater and destroy ecosystems.

Visit our website at: www.bluemountains.org.au

Sustainability books presented to Libraries

Rosemary Lathouris

Earlier this year, the Blue Mountains Conservation Society conducted two very successful Sustainability Workshops. Participants went away with plenty of ideas on how to lighten their impact on the planet and still enjoy a full life. As a result of the workshops, the Society decided to donate a set of books to both Blue Mountains City and Lithgow City Libraries so that the sustainability message could go further.

This week, Rosemary Lathouris will present a set of 17 books to Robyn Menzies of Blue Mountains City Council Library Services. Unlike the reference books that the Society donated to the library some years ago, these books are for borrowing and should be on the shelves soon.

Many of the books offer practical advice on topics such as composting, growing your own fruit and vegetables, building with natural materials, and building and landscaping in bushfire-prone areas. Others explain environmental issues such as climate change in more depth. So if you're interested in making your lifestyle more environmentally friendly, visit your library and take a look at some of the new books.

Books for both Blue Mountains and Lithgow City Libraries

- *Create a Sunsmart, Waterwise Garden*, Linda Ross,
- *Landscape and Building Design for Bushfire Areas*, Caird Ramsay and Lisle Rudolph, CSIRO Publishing
- *Recycle Your Garden - the essential guide to composting*, Tim Marshall
- *Smart Permaculture Design*, Jenny Allen
- *The Complete Book of Fruit Growing in Australia*, Louis Glowinski
- *Our Stolen Future*, Theo Colburn, Dianne Dumanoski and John Peterson Myers

Books for Blue Mountains City Libraries

- *Alternative Construction: Contemporary Natural Building Methods*, Lynne Elizabeth and Cassandra Adams
- *The Berry Grower's Companion*, Barbara L. Bowling
- *The Permaculture Home Garden*, Linda Woodrow
- *Nut Grower's Guide - the complete handbook for producers and hobbyists*, Jennifer Wilkinson
- *Compost*, Charlie Ryrie

Books for Lithgow City Library

- *The Earth Garden Water Book*, Earth Garden Books
- *Waterwise House & Garden*, Allan Windust
- *The Weather Makers*, Tim Flannery

Greenhouse grabs

Local:- Blue Mountains City Council is running a Green Power information campaign in libraries and sports centres to encourage residents and businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They are reducing their own emissions by switching to energy-efficient lights in Council buildings and for street lighting, installing solar panels at Katoomba and Glenbrook pools and changing its car fleet from six to four-cylinder models.

National:- An ABC report last month warned that the future of the renewable energy industry in Australia is being jeopardized by the government's lack of funding for research and apparent reluctance to promote proven technologies such as wind and solar. The Mandatory Renewable Energy Target could have given the industry a boost, had it not been set so pitifully low.

International:- Also on the ABC last month, Federal Environment Minister Ian Campbell said Australia should be encouraging Canada to join the Asia-Pacific Climate Change partnership. Canada is a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol but is not meeting its greenhouse gas reduction targets. Although Australia has not signed up to Kyoto, he denied Australia was trying to destabilise the deal by talking to Canada about joining the Asia-Pacific partnership.

Fire Danger from 'Unmanaged' National Parks

On 20 April the Lithgow Mercury ran an article by the Volunteer Firefighter's Association (VFA) which emphasized the danger associated with 'unmanaged' National Parks. The timing of the article seemed to relate to consideration of the Gardens of Stone Stage 2 proposal by Lithgow Council. The article's implication was: why create new parks when existing ones are inadequately managed and pose a fire hazard to adjacent farming properties? The unmentioned corollary is that, rather than abandon the creation of parks dedicated to protection of environmental, scientific and cultural values, there should be a widespread campaign (including the VFA) for increased funding.

Irrespective of the timing of the VFA's article within the context of the Gardens of Stone Stage 2 proposal, fires in the Lithgow Region provide little evidence of the 'danger'. The most serious bushfires in the Lithgow area in living memory involved unmanaged Crown Land, not National Parks. The 2003 bushfires apparently started on private property near the Small Arms Factory, then spread to unmanaged Crown Land around Hassan's Walls and Scenic Hill. Similarly, the 2002 fire apparently started on private property in the Vale of Clwydd before spreading onto unmanaged Crown Land on Scenic Hill. And the serious 1998 fires apparently started on Council land before spreading to unmanaged Crown Land above Hermitage Flat, Macaulay Street and the State Mine.

In contrast, fires at Bungleboori in 2003 were well attended and resourced by National Parks, while the 2003 Mount Hay fire was well-contained by earlier hazard reduction burning by National Parks.

The devastating Canberra bushfires apparently originated on Forestry land, rather than in a National Park. The Newnes Plateau and Ben Bullen State Forests are located on the eastern extremity of Forestry's Macquarie Region, which is managed from Bathurst. We cannot remember when hazard reduction was last undertaken, but they may be inadequately protected by Forestry fire fighting resources centred on Bathurst. Fire detection resources may also be inadequate given that the nearest Fire Tower is in Sunny Corner State Forest.

The VFA correctly points out that the Rural Fire Service (RFS) does not own or manage land and is not responsible for fire management on privately owned, National Parks, Forestry, or any other land. This is the responsibility of the owners or managers. However, in 2002 legislative changes gave the RFS Commissioner the authority to order all private, commercial and government landowners or managers to conduct essential hazard reductions. If, as the VFA says, fire management in National Parks is deficient, why hasn't the Commissioner issued Section 66 Notices requiring essential remedial action? Presumably because such action is deemed unnecessary!

Substantial tracts of Crown Land surround Lithgow but determining the government agencies that hold responsibility for the differing tracts is difficult. The RFS Commissioner could, in the first instance, send remediation Notices to the Minister for Lands. However, there is little sign that this happens or is effective, as hazard reduction is rarely (if ever!) undertaken.

RFS volunteers traditionally criticise fire management by National Parks. Nevertheless, evidence in the Lithgow region suggests that the VFA's concerns about the danger from 'unmanaged' parks could be more usefully directed towards improving fire management of the region's unallocated Crown Land and State Forests.

Chris Jonkers and Brian Marshall

The environment: not worth a grain of sand! Brian Marshall

Next time you drive along the Bells Line of Road between Bell and Lithgow, look northward and imagine this region scarred by more access roads, cleared tracts, sand piles and deep, steep-sided sand pits.

But mind you don't run under a massive sand truck!

Sand and sand mining

Sand is a basic requirement of the construction industry. It can be obtained from natural deposits such as dunes, beaches, estuarine and offshore accumulations, or deeply weathered friable rock (such as sandstone). It can also be produced by crushing rock or recycling construction materials, but these methods are relatively expensive and quality control is more difficult.

The main things that companies look for in a sand deposit are:

- Mineralogy (very simple, with no weathered components - so minimal variation in hardness)
- Grading (grain-size distribution)
- Grain shape, roughness (not too irregular or too smooth)
- Extractability (minimal need for crushing)
- Cleanliness (no undesirable impurities, minimal washing requirements)
- Quantity available (tonnage)
- Site topography
- Access to transport
- Proximity to the market
- Social, political and environmental constraints

But of all these factors, it is proximity to the market that makes or breaks a deposit. This is because sand is a high-volume product with a low intrinsic value (unlike gold or most metallic ores), so the price it fetches is largely controlled by transport and handling charges.

Expressed differently, sand has a high 'place value' - the closer the source to the utilisation site, the greater the company's profit margin.

So why does Newnes Plateau attract sand miners?

Work by the former Department of Mineral Resources identified a broad 'footprint' (most of Newnes Plateau) within which exploitable sand resources *might* exist. However, although shallow sand deposits cover much of the higher ground, the majority of Newnes Plateau lacks a sufficient depth of sand and friable sandstone to justify commercial extraction. Even the present government would reject clearing all the high ground and scraping together the shallow accumulations - I'm an optimist!

However, the company granted the right (by Minister Sartor) to extract sand and kaolin at Newnes Junction believes it has identified an economically significant sand deposit within the Newnes Plateau.

SAND DEPOSITS OF THE NEWNES PLATEAU

A small part of the Newnes Plateau has zones of deeply weathered friable Banks Walls Sandstone, controlled by near-vertical fracture systems. In the late Tertiary to early Quaternary (and ongoing in places), the concentration of groundwater flow within the fractured sandstone caused deep weathering. These zones have been preserved within the high Newnes Plateau (around 1100m) as it has experienced little subsequent erosion, other than where affected by the headwaters of today's river systems. Such zones *may* contain commercially significant sand deposits, but further exploration is needed to delineate them.

Sand from these 'favourable' (for sand mining) zones on Newnes Plateau supposedly presents a desirable grading curve, requires little or no crushing, is relatively clean and easily washed, and has few 'impurities'.

There is also easy access to the Bells Line of Road and the railway (at least in the southern area near Clarence and the existing sand quarries).

Transport costs to western Sydney are significant but considered 'acceptable' - though no doubt the sand miners would rather the deposits were at Kurrajong Heights or Glenbrook!



Sand mine, Newnes. (Photo: www.lee.greens.org.au)

What about other parts of the Sydney Basin?

Newnes Plateau is not the only area under threat from Sydney's voracious appetite for sand. It is one of six onshore areas being investigated by the Department of Planning under its Sydney Construction Materials Strategy (SCMS).

Originally it seemed that the aim of the SCMS was to evaluate the relative merits of differing regions, but it is becoming increasingly clear that all areas are on the table. For though these deposits differ in various ways (in quality, cost of extraction, etc.), all six have significant 'place values' relative to different parts of the greater Sydney region. Profit margins and development costs far outweigh environmental considerations - I'm also a realist!

The Government should resolve the confrontation and environmental damage that will stem from appeasing sand miners and developers. If the massive known sand accumulations offshore were to be used, the economies of scale should mitigate the cost of washing out the salt. Inevitably, there will be questions about the washing site and truck movements through Sydney. There is also the spectre of beaches washing out to sea—but this should not happen if the deposits are below the current wave base and sea level is rising (which it is), yet scare mongering is hard to counteract.

The Government still seems to oppose the offshore solution and appears to be opting for subterfuge and expediency to solve the problem. If the DAs in the pipeline prior to the start of the SCMS are approved, as with Newnes Junction, Sydney will have enough convenient sand reserves for the reasonable future (measured in Government life spans). Thus the SCMS becomes a theoretical exercise in preserving the environment, after construction industry objectives have been met!

What should be done?

In summary, the BMCS believes the government should:

- focus on offshore and estuarine resources;
- promote recycling - Australia is lagging behind in construction material recycling;
- implement a Government controlled pricing policy to negate the 'place value' of near-Sydney sand resources and make crushed rock, recycled products and more distant resources economically viable; and, as a last resort;
- impose extremely rigorous consent conditions that truly protect the environment on any granted application.

Business will always select the cheapest solution to maximise profit. Don't blame them, just change the parameters so that Newnes Plateau and other sensitive areas become less attractive for sand mining.

In search of the Feathertail Fly

On Thursday 18 May, the Interpretive Bushwalking group went in search of the Feathertail Fly along the Nature Track at Wentworth Falls. This mysterious little creature has been seen by the group on several occasions over the years, at Pulpit Hill, Transit of Venus walk at Woodford and on the Nature Track, usually in or near heathland on the sunny ridgetops, and always during May.

In 1963 Isobel Bowden wrote a leaflet for the Nature Track, distributed by the Blue Mountains Conservation Society (then known as the Katoomba and District Wildlife Conservation Society). The leaflet, which won an award for environmental education, was available at the old Conservation Hut where Society volunteers operated a kiosk at weekends. NPWS has continued the tradition and we purchased a copy of its walking track and visitor guide "The Nature Track, Valley of the Waters" from the Conservation Hut for one of our walkers to read at the numbered markers along the way.

There are many highlights to this beautiful walk. On this day we had a leisurely morning tea on the edge of the

cliff above a valley and watched flocks of honeyeaters passing by, on their northward migration. Some of our group get very excited about birds – there was even more excitement when Ron spotted an insect, its white feathery tail lit by the sunshine, flying over the valley. With eager anticipation we climbed up the stairs to Edinburgh Rock and there they were – just where some of us had seen them some years before – swarming above the heath.

Sue found a relative of the species in her insect book and on the internet and I emailed an enquiry to Search and Discover at the Australian Museum.

Here is an extract from their reply:

"Thanks for sending the photo of the unusual creature. We receive an inquiry about this insect every few years and they are usually reported from the Blue Mountains area. We will add your useful locality and date records to our files.

"The insect is usually called a Bird of Paradise Fly but I like your name for it. The 'fly' is actually a true bug, Callipappus species (family Margarodidae, superfamily Coccoidea, order Hemiptera).



Bird of Paradise or 'Feathertail' Fly
Callipappus sp. (Photo: Graham Nelson)

"This colourful winged individual is a male; the females are wingless, look like larvae and are much larger (up to 40mm)."

It would be good to find out more about our Blue Mountains species of *Callipappus*.

Bushwalkers, have you seen the Feathertail Fly? If so please contact me on 4787 7246 or send an email to davica@bigpond.net.au with details of when, where, type of vegetation, etc.

Christine Davies

Nursery News Kevin Bell

Refurbishment of the Blackheath nursery is now complete with the installation and testing of controlled irrigation in the new glass-house. Separate systems provide the different conditions needed to propagate cuttings and seeds, both of which are kept in heated beds. At present, about 140 species are grown over the course of a year, but the new facility will enable us to raise a wider variety of species in greater quantity.

Although the greatest variety of plants are available in Spring and Summer, about 80 species are currently in stock, giving home gardeners and landscapers a wide selection of quality local plants. A list of plants available now and throughout the year can be found on our web-site (just go to www.bluemountains.org.au and click on 'Nursery').

This month's feature plant is the Sunshine Wattle, *Acacia terminalis*, aptly named for the burst of colour it brings to the mountains in the colder months when little else is in flower. There are two sub-species: *aurea* has golden flower balls and is found in the upper Mountains; whilst *angustifolia* has cream to pale-yellow flowers and occurs at lower altitudes, although their ranges do overlap. Fast-growing open shrubs of 2-3m, they are frost hardy, adaptable to a variety of conditions, and bring a welcome burst of colour to the garden and the bush when little else

is in flower. The Sunshine Wattle is featured on the cover of our 'Springwood's Wattles' booklet, available at our nurseries for \$2.50, or free with every purchase over \$50.

This lovely plant is available from our Lawson nursery* on Wednesday mornings and from our stall at the Lawson Magpie Markets on the 3rd Sunday of each month.

(* Please note that our Blackheath nursery will be closed during June and July—it will re-open on the first Tuesday in August.)



Acacia terminalis (Photo: Australian National Botanic Gardens)

From Butterbox Point to Witches Leap...

Ever wondered how your favourite Mountain haunt came by its name? Well now is your chance to find out.

Brian Fox is a member of two historical societies and was described as "the foremost historian of Blue Mountains place names" by local studies librarian, John Low.

This month sees the launch of Brian's 'Blue Mountains Geographical Dictionary', the culmination of 35 years experience as a cartographer and over 350 day walks within the Blue Mountains. Brian has painstakingly researched and documented over 2165 historical and current place names in the Blue Mountains region: from Lapstone to Mount Hay; the Blue Labyrinth to the Devil's Wilderness.

Copies of the book, a limited edition of only 300 copies (320 pages, including 30 maps and photographs), can be purchased directly from Brian Fox on 6332 2590 (AH).

BMCS Bushcare

The Valley of the Waters Bush Care group works in the Blue Mountains National Park at Wentworth Falls on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

Tools are provided but bring morning tea, gloves and drinking water. New members are always welcome. Contact Karen on 4757 1929 for meeting place and more information.

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY BUSHWALKING GROUP

Membership of the bushwalking group is open to Society members. **Cost of insurance and affiliation fees is \$15 per member.** For further information, contact the coordinator (listed) or Walks Convenor, David Bowskill (4757 3416, davidbow@tpg.com.au)

MONDAY LEISURE WALKS

Usually 'Short Day' walks of 3-5 hours, suitable for walkers of average fitness. Graded **MEDIUM**, these walks may include some short rock scrambles or sections off track. Bring morning tea and lunch. Carry at least 1 litre of **WATER**, 2 litres on warm days.

Jun-12	Charles Darwin's Walk, W. Falls <i>Named after Charles Darwin who walked it!</i>	Bob & Mary	4784 1334	Wentworth Falls, Stockyard carpark	9.15am
Jun-19	Lapstone Zig Zag <i>Historic feat of railway engineering.</i>	Ron	4757 1526	Glenbrook Station	9.15am
Jun-26	Waternymph Dell, Wentworth Falls <i>Walk on to the lake for a BBQ lunch.</i>	David	4757 3416	Wentworth Falls, Stockyard carpark	9.15am
Jul-3	Terrace Falls, Hazelbrook <i>Mountain creeks and waterfalls.</i>	Kees	4759 1958	Hazelbrook Station carpark	9.00am
Jul-10	Sun Valley, Valley Heights <i>Old volcanic crater and tall forests.</i>	Allan	4751 7953	Valley Heights Station carpark	9.00am
Jul-17	Xmas in July, Blackheath <i>Walk in Bacchante Garden, then lunch at Gardiners Inn (\$26 for 3 courses, limited numbers).</i>	Mary	4787 6584	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	10.00am

THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS

EASY to **MEDIUM** grade walks conducted to suit walkers on the day. Slower walkers are catered for; on longer walks there may be an option for a slower group to complete only a section of the walk. Carry at least 1 litre of **WATER**, 2 litres on warm days.

Jun-15	Castle Head, Narraweek <i>Walk along ridge to lookout, via firetrail and bush track, possible exploratory walk as well. Bring lunch.</i>	Joan	4782 2218	Gearins Hotel, Katoomba	10.00am
Jun-22	Centennial Glen, Walls Ledge, B'heath <i>Great views on bush tracks, some steps.</i>	Phil	4787 5560	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	10.00am
Jun-29	BUS TRIP TO TARONGA ZOO <i>Cost of bus trip and Zoo entry: \$20 to BMCS bushwalkers. Payment at booking essential.</i>	Simone	4757 3416	Katoomba bus depot	8.30am
Jul-6	Cathedral Cave, Split Rock Glastonbell <i>Scramble down to see fantastic rock formations and cliff side walk. \$5 donation.</i>	Phil	4787 5560	Mt Victoria Station	10.00am
Jul-13	Habitats of Blackheath, with Ian Olsen* <i>* This is the first in the THURSDAY INFORMATIVE WALKS SERIES. For practical reasons, numbers may be limited on some walks and registration will be necessary. See our website for a full program or contact Simone Bowskill on 4757 3416 for one to be mailed to you.</i>	Simone	4757 3416	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	10.00am

WEEKEND WALKS

These walks are all graded **MEDIUM**: + indicates they include some hard climbing; (+) indicates the hard climbing is optional. If this is your first walk, or you are unsure of the classification, please discuss it with the leader or Walks Convenor before attending. Carry at least 1 litre of **WATER**, 2 litres on warm days.

Jun-17	Golden Staircase to Mt. Solitary MEDIUM+	Bill	4758 8545	Gearins Hotel carpark	8.30 am
Jun-24	Cripple Creek MEDIUM	Liz	4754 4966	Valley Heights Station carpark	9.00am
Jul-1	Lost World MEDIUM	John	4739 2508	Springwood Station carpark	9.05am
Jul-8	Nature Walk, National Pass, etc. MEDIUM	Ros	4733 3880	Conservation Hut, Went. Falls	9.00am
Jul-15	Wollangambe River MEDIUM	Andy	4758 6302	Mt Victoria Station carpark	9.00am

Winter Magic goes Green

If you're at the Winter Magic Festival on Saturday June 24th, make sure you visit the Blue Mountains Conservation Society's stall in the special 'Green Precinct' at the top of Katoomba Street.



There will be plenty of information on issues that the Society is actively involved from Sustainable Living and Climate Change to the Gardens of Stone Stage 2 Proposal.

Once again, the Giant Dragonflies will be joining the parade which leaves from Katoomba Public School at 11.30am. Afterwards, they will be at the Society's stall to talk with people about groundwater issues and distribute copies of the Society's booklet 'Groundwater: Lifeblood of the Environment'.

A familiar place, seen anew..

Last autumn the Interpretive Bushwalkers took a walk on the tame side - the area below Katoomba Falls. It was once a coal mine but now has heavy tourist traffic.

We mingled with a Japanese tour group who were walking down Furber steps too - their delight at seeing sulphur-crested cockatoos was refreshing - how we begin to take things for granted!

Amenities and instructional installations abound in the mine area and it was fun to crawl into the mine, ride the incline back up the hill. But I was most taken with a spring which was near the site of the village that once housed the miners.

Manangaroo spring -
bubbling water drowns out
voices of tourists

Diana Levy

More Informative Bushwalks

Diana Levy's poem and Christine Davies' Feathertail Fly article both arose from the 'Interpretive Bushwalks' run by Christine. As these are always booked out, we are adding some 'Informative Walks' to the Thursday Pleasure Walks whenever leaders are available. The first of these will be led by botanist Ian Olsen on 13 July (see above for details).

So if you want to learn, or to share your knowledge, call Simone on 4757 3416.

Welcome to new members

Roscranna Chrestman, Leura
Colin Scouler, Glenbrook
Wendy Parkinson, Blackheath
Paul Heslop, Bayswater, WA
Linda Rapson-Coe, Bayswater, WA
Deborah Henville & family, Blackheath
Sara Lovelock & family, Leura

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

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