

HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"



What does this photo have to do with Climate Change?



If you want to find out, come along to our next monthly meeting where our **two guest speakers, Catherine Fitzpatrick and Melinda Cook**, will tell us about their work as Climate Change campaigners.

- *How well do you understand Climate Change?*
- *What are its likely impacts?*
- *What are governments, businesses, communities and individuals doing about it and what more needs to be done?*

Even if you think you can answer all these questions, come along anyway, as it promises to be a lively evening!

Catherine Fitzpatrick is team leader of the Energy Campaign for Greenpeace Australia Pacific. She has been involved in environmental activism since the Franklin Dam campaign in the early 80s. She has worked for the Wilderness Society and Greenpeace the David Suzuki Foundation in Canada.

Melinda Cook is the Nature Conservation Council's (NCC's) Climate Change Coordinator. She was the organiser of last year's 'Walk Against Warming' in which 50,000 people marched in Sydney and regional centres as diverse as Grafton and Moruya, Armidale and Coonabarabran. Much of her work involves increasing awareness of Climate Change and establishing and supporting community climate action groups.

But even though we will hear about the science and impacts of Climate Change, it won't be all doom and gloom. Our speakers will be focussing on solutions to the problem - from things you can do at home to creating a groundswell of public support for more decisive action by governments to combat Climate Change.

The meeting and talk will commence at 7.30 pm on Friday 28 July at the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls. Visitors welcome!

(This year's 'Walk Against Warming' will be on Saturday 4 November.

Details at www.nccnsw.org.au or check Hut News closer to the date.)



Walk Against Warming, Sydney 2005.

Sustainability Booklet Released

If you want to do something positive and practical about climate change, water crises, and the other challenges facing the sustainability of our society, then we have a resource for you. The society has just released a new booklet titled **'Sustainability: Concepts and Action'**. It developed out of the Sustainability Workshops run in January and February of this year, and has been written and compiled by the Society's Environmental Education Officer, Craig Linn, who coordinated the workshops.

The booklet concisely covers the environmental issues motivating the urgent need for sustainability and explains the ecological footprinting framework. It then uses this framework and a wealth of background references to explain and explore the practical actions we can all take to reduce our impact on our very finite planet. As such, it is both a sustainability resource and a practical work booklet for households to assess the current level of their environmental sustainability and take positive action to improve it.

Released to workshop attendees several weeks ago in electronic form, the booklet has already received a lot of positive feedback such as: *"a fantastic resource"*, *"really useful"*, *"This resource is absolutely awesome!"*, *"easy to understand and excellent references"*, and *"I immensely enjoyed reading this document"*.

The booklet will be officially released in print form at the Society's July meeting, where copies will be available. The document has also been released in electronic form (a 43 page PDF document), with the most up to date version available at <http://members.optusnet.com.au/~bmsustain/> where Craig maintains both the booklet and the web links for all the internet references in the booklet. A link to the above download page for the booklet should also be available at the main BMCS web site by the time you read this.

Any questions or feedback about the booklet should be emailed to Craig Linn (craiginbm@optusnet.com.au).

Tribute to Marion Hawley

Many people still fondly remember Marion as our supper lady for the Monthly Meetings, or even perhaps her time as our President in the mid-90s. She was intelligent, independent and confident, and always ready to be of help.

Trained as a nurse, she went to Rhodesia as a medical missionary and upon her return, held the position of Matron at a hospital in Sydney. After moving to the Mountains, she worked as a nursing educator until her retirement.

As well as conservation, her interests included the Church, art and photography, and indigenous issues. She was one of those rare people who only needed four hours sleep - and devoted the rest of her time to helping other people.

She loved adventure and drove around Australia alone - at the age of 70 years! However, her tremendous energy was cut short as a result of major surgery and her last three years must have been hard to bear for a woman of such action. We will never forget her characteristic resilience, courage and good spirit.

Jim Wallace

HUT NEWS

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Letter of the Month—June 2006

Nuclear Energy Debate a Dangerous Diversion from Real Solutions

John Howard has recently called for a debate on nuclear power. However, energy experts say what is needed is a much wider debate on Australia's energy future.

Dr Richard Corkish of the School of Renewable Energy Engineering at University of NSW says: '*Energy efficiency and renewable energy work now and can be deployed rapidly if the political will exists. Nuclear energy is a dangerous diversion from real solutions*' (Sydney Morning Herald, 22.5.06).

Academics at UNSW and University of Technology say that Australia could not develop a nuclear power industry in time to stave off the effects of climate change, and such a programme would be prohibitively expensive. No private investor would take on the responsibility without huge ongoing public subsidies - as in Britain (SMH, 20.5.06). Nuclear waste transport and disposal remains an unsolved problem.

One action that the Federal Government could take right now is to raise its Mandatory Renewable Energy Target, by which it tells power companies how much renewable energy they must buy. This creates a market, which acts as an incentive for renewable energy industries to develop. It would cost the government nothing. Australia's target is set so low, at 2%, that it has already been filled for the next five years. In Britain and Germany, the target is 10% by 2010 and 20% by 2020.

Send a short message to the Prime Minister making some or all of the following points:

- Express your concern that the energy debate is being focussed on nuclear power rather than looking at immediate, lower cost options already developed.
- Ask that the Federal Government immediately raise the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target to 10% by 2010 and 20% by 2020, to bring Australia in line with British and German targets.
- Ask for an immediate increase in funding for renewable energy projects. Currently, only \$25 million has been allocated for such projects over the next five years.

It is important that the Federal Opposition also understand our concerns about global warming so you might like to send them a copy of your message too.

Contact Details: Post to Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600, or email:

The Hon John Howard: <http://www.pm.gov.au/email.cfm>

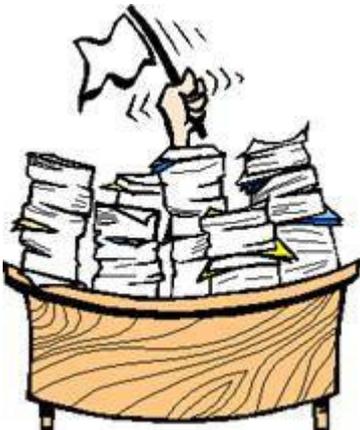
(This is the only way you can send an email to the Prime Minister.)

The Hon Kim Beazley: Kim.Beazley.MP@aph.gov.au

For information on how you can reduce your personal contribution to greenhouse emissions, visit the ACF Greenhome Guide at www.acfonline.org.au/greenhome.

Rosemary Lathouris and Robin Mosman

YOUR OPPORTUNITY!



No, it's not quite that bad
- but we do need some help!

(or the note you instantly pass over)

For at least two issues, Management Committee has been appealing for help because we lack a Meetings Secretary. Unfortunately, the phone never started ringing, SO WE STILL NEED ONE.

I would also like to take this opportunity, on behalf of Management Committee, to acknowledge Alan Harris' contribution. Alan was our very valuable Administrative Officer, but has needed to relocate to Melbourne (our condolences) as of June 29. THIS MEANS THAT WE ARE HUNTING FOR HIS REPLACEMENT.

Why should you be concerned? -

The Society is working for the conservation of the Blue Mountains, as you know it and love it. Some positions on Management Committee are mainly administrative; others are mainly committed to working at the environmental 'coal-face' (if that's not a contradiction of terms!) If 'coal-face' workers need to cover administrative aspects, environmental activities (these being our principal objective) are necessarily short-changed.

If you are prepared to HELP with either of these positions, without the added burden of being on Management Committee (your choice), please ring Brian, Heather (after July 8) or Liz to discuss possibilities.

Brian Marshall

Visit our website at www.bluemountains.org.au

Giant Dragonflies come out to play at Winter Magic



Winter Magic Lyndal Sullivan

Winter Magic was a day of fun for Society members with eighteen Giant Dragonflies in the Parade and lots of discussion around our stall displays.

There was a great response to the Dragonflies' message:

*Dragonflies need hanging swamps,
Swamps need "Spring Water"
We can help by using water from
taps or tanks - not bores or bottles.*

Our stall-holders were able to talk with many people, both friends and strangers, about the bottled 'spring water' issue.

The stall also provided an opportunity to recruit new members and discuss the many issues/campaigns we are involved in, such as the protection of the Gardens of Stone.

ZERO WASTE FESTIVALS

Have you been appalled by the amount of waste produced at events such as Winter Magic and the Folk Festival?

Both these major local events are run by community committees with members concerned about waste. But the Blue Mountains region could, through Winter Magic and the Folk Festival, become famous for holding Zero Waste Festivals!

If you have ideas about how to reduce the waste produced at these events, here is an opportunity to make a difference!

The Society is currently looking for some volunteers to assist with this project. Ring 4782 1635 for further information.

For Diana Levy of the Interpretive Walkers, seeing the Giant Dragonflies in the parade at Winter Magic inspired her to pen the following words. It also brought back memories of a trip in search of these illusive creatures.

Giant Dragonflies Dance

Petalura gigantea!

dancing up Katoomba Street,
in a flock – or gang – or swarm
(what is a group of dragonflies?)

In the cold of Winter Magic, there they were, dancing between two Conservation Society banners, very much alive and not endangered at all.

When the Interpretive walkers went to find giant dragonflies in April 2004 with Meredith Brownhill, we made a special effort to stop talking. We walked single file beside the swamp at Mt. Hay.

There were still a few, but they're very good at hiding in the buttongrass.

Stickness –
on a burnt branch
a dragonfly

Fire had been through the area not long before. We emerged as though in camouflage, with charcoal streaks all over ourselves.

We saw quite a few males looking rather tatty after the mating, with a clasper gone – but no damsels (females). They were probably off laying eggs in the water, as they have since pre-dinosaur times.

Diana Levy

Upcoming Events

Conservation and Restoration of the Cumberland Plain - A Symposium

19 July, 2006. \$50 (\$25 concession)

University of Western Sydney

The Cumberland Plain retains surprising biodiversity. But how do we preserve and restore these ecosystems?

Enquiries: Dr. Charles Morris (UWS) 4570 1635 c.morris@uws.edu.au or Tim Beshara (Greening Australia) 9673 5220 tbesara@ga.org.au

Celebrating Wilderness - Fifth National Wilderness Conference

8-10 September, 2006. \$90 (\$60 conc)

University of Technology, Sydney

A celebration of wilderness conservation and its potential role in creating a more environmentally aware and sustainable society.

Enquiries: call the Colong Foundation for Wilderness on 9299 7341 or visit their website at www.colongwilderness.org.au.

Saving our Hanging Swamps

On Friday 12 May, Blue Mountains City Council organized a workshop with swamp rehabilitation expert Dr. Roger Good. The workshop was very well-attended by Council staff, (and despite the short notice) bush regeneration teachers and volunteers, Conservation Society members, etc.

Roger has been involved in the rehabilitation of bogs and fens in Australia's alpine areas since the 1960s. His wealth of theoretical understanding and practical knowledge was put to good use, and greatly extended, by his work in Kosciusko National Park following the fires in 2003.

His presentation took through the 'what, when how and why' of repairing these fragile ecosystems, illustrated with plenty of slides. Then we headed out to have a look at some of the problems facing our local hanging swamps - and to discuss how they could be best be addressed.

The best hope for our damaged swamps lies not in expensive, high-tech materials - but in a realistic assessment of what is wanted and whether it is achievable, lots of patience, and plenty a willing volunteers!

Juli Boddy



Inspecting damage to a hanging swamp in Katoomba (Photo: BMCC)

You can achieve the same result by taking a walk in a Blue Mountains' State Forest!

On July 7, Newnes, Ben Bullen Jenolan, Nullo Mountain and Coricudgy State Forests are scheduled to join the vast majority of State Forests that have been thrown open to recreational hunting (euphemistically termed 'conservational' hunting) of feral species.

The Society, together with members of the Lithgow and Capertee Valley Environment Groups, particularly opposes hunting in the Blue Mountains' State Forests, and in principle opposes hunting in all State Forests. The Minister (Ian MacDonald), your local Members (Bob Debus and Gerard Martin), and the Game Council NSW have been so informed.

According to Paul Lovelock, Game Manager for the Game Council's Snowy and South East Region: "*The Game Council will only be declaring low use forests...*" (21 February 2006). Yet 12 of the 20 most visited forests in NSW were subsequently declared; and now **Newnes State Forest, the second most visited forest in NSW**, has been listed.

On the Game Council's website: "*Hunter densities ... may vary according to the characteristics of the declared area, including topography, terrain, land use, vegetation, location, public use and preferred hunting methods.*" Yet, as well as ongoing listing of heavily used forests, there is no discrimination between popular 'hardwood' (native vegetation) and less appealing 'softwood' (pine) portions of forests.

The main concerns:

Unacceptable risk to the public

Newnes State Forest is enjoyed for family outings, picnicking, car camping, day and multi-day bushwalks, rock climbing, abseiling, bird watching and photography, as well as 4-wheel driving and trail biking. People pursuing these activities are at risk from hunting, no matter how careful the hunter may be.

'Spin' before substance is exemplified by Brian Boyle, CEO Game Council (Newcastle Herald, June 3): "*I'd like to reassure the community that public safety has been paramount in determining which State forests will be covered by these conservation hunting programs.*" This makes a mockery of submissions to the Game Council and Minister opposing 'conservational' hunting, particularly in heavily used forests.

The Game Council's website states: "*Public safety is being meticulously considered through a comprehensive risk analysis to Australian Standard 4360 and along with stakeholder and neighbour consultation.*" Yet this process is incomplete (beyond a very limited study). Why declare forests in advance of the risk analysis? What is the urgency?

Similarly, "*The licensed hunter is fully responsible for their actions ... This includes positive identification of the target and only firing when there is no discernible risk or injury to any person, or damage to property.*" Yet accidents continue to happen. Why should this collateral damage be deemed an acceptable risk? Why should ascribing it to a statistical aberration comfort the family of a dead bushwalker?

The Game Council's risk-aversion measures can be judged from: (a) The land will not be closed, "*However signage will be placed at entry points to ensure the public is aware of hunting on declared public areas. Areas will also be posted on government agency websites.*" (b) Hunters will be subject to "*Exclusion zones and constraints ... in forests where there are high concentrations of other users, for example in camping areas.*" (c) Hunters will know where the boundaries to public lands are because they "*...will be given information on boundaries with their booking where appropriate. This may include a map or, in some cases, conditions of the written permission may require the hunter to obtain topographical maps.*"

None of this inspires confidence. Knowing that hunting is scheduled does not deflect stray bullets. Excluding the hunter from heavily used portions of State forests fails to exclude the hunter's bullet, while those in less heavily used portions

remain vulnerable. Expecting hunters to stop and consult maps (assuming they have maps/air photos of appropriate scale) when pursuing game is extraordinarily optimistic, even if the bullet stops at the boundary! Were it not so serious, these 'safety' measures would be laughable.

Inadequate enforcement

Any legislative and licensing process will only be as effective as the enforcement policy. Why will licensed hunters comply with all regulations and safety measures? How will unlicensed hunting be controlled/prevented?

For controlling licensed hunters, the Game Council cites the mandatory code of practice, loss or suspension of licence and heavy fines, yet there is negligible chance of sufficient rangers and police being around to catch offenders. Furthermore, loss of licence for traffic offences results in unlicensed driving; removing a hunting licence will exacerbate unlicensed hunting.

To prevent unlicensed hunting, the Game Council asks licensed hunters to report suspicious activity to the police or rangers. Does this sound like an effective measure?

Is 'conservation' hunting cost-effective?

The Game Council argues that, when integrated with other methods, hunting contributes to the control of feral species. No doubt, even one animal shot is a contribution, but is it effective in view of the attendant risks?

Much science-based opinion opposes shooting as a cost-effective means of feral animal control, particularly when night-hunting is precluded, as envisaged by the Game Council. Logic also suggests that successful eradication of legal targets creates an unhappy 'sport' hunter, perhaps even tempted to take what is in the sights, or to re-introduce feral species!

The (un)representative Game Council

According to Brian Boyle, Game Council NSW has a mix that "*...ensures all issues are properly identified and managed, from safe and humane hunting practices through to conservation and land access arrangements.*" Despite this, 7 of the 14 members of the Game Council **must** be nominees of hunting organisations and **must** include the Chair, the Chair has deliberative and casting votes, and a quorum is 8 from 14 members.

How much influence do the 'non-hunting' members exercise in this seemingly unrepresentative Game Council, particularly as the 'spin' and 'declarations' are seriously out of kilter? A reasonable perception of the Game Council's policy is that, by declaring nearly all forests for recreational hunting, the onus is on other users to mount opposing cases.

Were I the responsible Minister, I would be far from confident that the safety of 'non-hunters' and the native fauna are truly protected.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Immediately send a letter/email to Minister Ian MacDonald (Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney, 2000; email macdonald.office@macdonald.minister.nsw.gov.au), and copy it to your local member and the Premier (lakemba@parliament.nsw.gov.au).

Express your disgust at the composition of the Game Council and the totally unacceptable threat posed to other users of State Forests, and ask him to ensure that Newnes, Ben Bullen and other Blue Mountains' State Forests, together with at least the fifty most visited State Forests, be removed from Schedule 1 of the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act, 2002*.

HAPPY HUNTING!

'Conservation hunting' - a double-edged sword

Although it may sound odd, opening up State Forests to 'conservation hunting' could actually lead to an increase in the number of feral animals over the long term - and not just in State Forests but also in nearby National Parks.

Given the damage that feral animals cause, shouldn't we welcome those who are willing, not only to help eradicate them, but to do so at little cost to the taxpayer? But therein lies the catch.

Our cash-strapped State Government, in its rush to embrace the ideology of 'market-based' solutions, is in danger of forgetting the basics. Industries measure their success in terms of expansion and profits - not by how quickly they can put themselves out of business!

But not all within government are oblivious to the dangers inherent in this muddle-headed approach.

In a media release on 6 April this year, the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) expressed its concern at the discovery of a small group of fallow deer in the Wollemi National Park.

Animals such as deer, raised in a domestic situation and released into the bush, often suffer a painful death. If they do survive and turn feral, they can cause major damage to the fragile environment of our parks and reserves. They graze and trample the vegetation, causing soil erosion and competing with native animals for food. They can foul waterholes and spread weeds and have the potential to transmit diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease. They may also be a danger to unsuspecting walkers, campers and drivers.

However, what is particularly worrying is that the deer were almost certainly dumped. The media release states that the deer, which were found near the Wheeny Creek camping area, were all young males of the same age and that all the evidence points to their deliberate illegal release.

"NPWS suspects the deer may have been dumped for the possible purpose of future illegal hunting. Deer are often 'seeded' throughout National Parks so that hunters can return at a later date."

No doubt most recreational hunters would like to believe that they will be performing a public service by controlling feral animals. But if this sort of thing is happening now, how much greater will be the temptation to 'replenish the supply' of potential quarry, once hunting feral animals in our public forests is no longer illegal!

There is no doubt that feral animals such as deer are a serious environmental problem, but encouraging recreational hunting on public land is not the answer.

Juli Boddy



A ROMAN POLANSKI FILM OLIVER TWIST

BRAID fundraiser at MT VIC FLICKS

Saturday 15 July 2006 at 8pm

BRAID (Blackheath Residents Against Improper Development) is holding a fundraising evening at Mt Vic Flicks on Saturday July 15th.

The movie is Roman Polanski's new version of Dickens' classic 'Oliver Twist', described as 'among the best adaptations of one of the greatest of all books' (David Stratton, The Australian). Rebecca Gilling, actor and environmentalist, will be the guest speaker.

Wine will be served before the movie and there will be a delicious supper afterwards as well as interesting lucky door prizes.

Tickets \$20.00 (supper included): available from Mt Vic Flicks; Bogbean Healthfoods in Wentworth Street, Blackheath; and Megalong Books in the Mall, Leura.

Enquiries 4787 7302 or 4787 5822. **Bookings essential.**

The funds will go towards the joint Supreme Court action being taken by BRAID and the Blue Mountains City Council. As reported in the May edition of Hut News, the action concerns the judgement of the NSW Land and Environment Court in favour of development and subdivision of Parklands before connection to the sewer, a judgement which affects all unsewered properties across the mountains.

Nursery News Kevin Bell

Instead of focussing on a particular plant, this month we are highlighting a type of plant; those with spines, needles, pungent pointed leaves or other sharp features which we generally describe as being "prickly".

"Ouch!" you say, "Why would I want those in my garden?" - but there are many good reasons.

Firstly, they provide a welcome refuge for small birds and encourage nesting. Secondly, their foliage provides an interesting contrast with that of more benign plants. Further, they are useful for directing (or discouraging!) traffic - both humans and other animals. And finally, they produce a variety of colourful flowers to bring joy to any garden.

Of the scores of plants that have developed prickles as a defence against being eaten, just a few local examples will be illustrated here.

Of the Acacias, there is the familiar *Acacia ulicifolia* or Prickly Moses (probably a corruption of Mimosa -



Gorse Bitter-pea, *Daviesia ulicifolia*
(Photo: Aust. National Botanic Gardens)

although if you've unexpectedly become entangled in a large bush it may have elicited an exclamation like "Holy Moses!") which has cream flowers over a long period in autumn and winter. *A. brownii* (Dwarf Prickly Moses) is smaller and has deep-yellow flowers in spring, *A. echinula* (Hedgehog Wattle) has large, orange-yellow flower balls in late winter, and *A. oxycedrus* (Spike Wattle) grows to 4m and is the only spiky wattle in the area with yellow flower clusters in rods.

Another spiky plant is *Grevillea acanthifolia*. One of our most beautiful local grevilleas, it has spectacular, large, deep-pink flower combs with touches of silver. It is common on wet ground in the upper mountains but still grows well in drier conditions.

The pea family contains many spiky plants, such as *Daviesia ulicifolia* (Gorse Bitter-pea), a widespread small shrub to 1m; and *Bossiaea obcordata* (Spiny Bossiaea), a small shrub with pretty heart-shaped leaves which is found in the lower mountains. Both of these plants display a profusion of red and yellow pea-flowers in spring.

For these and other prickly plants, (see our website for a full list) which can add interest to your garden and make welcome some little feathered friends, drop into our Lawson nursery* on Wednesday mornings or come along to our big Spring Sale in October (Watch out for more details on the Spring Sale in forthcoming issues of Hut News).

* Please note - neither our Blackheath nursery, nor the stall at the Lawson Magpie Markets, will be operating in July. The Blackheath nursery will re-open on the first Tuesday in August.

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.

Jul-17	Xmas in July, Blackheath	Mary	4787 6584	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	10.00am
	<i>Walk in Bacchante Garden, then lunch at Gardiners Inn (\$26 for 3 courses, limited numbers).</i>				
Jul-24	Glenbrook Gorge, Glenbrook	Heather	4739 1493	Glenbrook Station carpark	9.00am
	<i>Spectacular sandstone escarpments.</i>				
Jul-31	Bus trip to Bent's Basin, Mulgoa	Birgitta	4784 3191	BMCC Depot, Springwood	8.30am
	<i>Nepean Riverbanks. Fare \$10, pay when booking.</i>				
Aug-7	Rienit's Pass, Mt. Victoria	Phil	4787 5560	Mt Victoria Station	9.30am
	<i>Open forest and views over Kanimbla Valley.</i>				
Aug-14	The Victory Track, Faulconbridge	Mary	4787 6584	Faulconbridge Station carpark	9.00am
	<i>Mountain creek and tall forests.</i>				

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.

Jul-13	Habitats of Blackheath, with Ian Olsen*	Simone	4757 3416	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	10.00am
	<i>An informative walk through various habitats with botanist Ian Olsen</i>				
Jul-20	Bonnie Doon, Katoomba	Joan	4782 2218	Gearins Hotel, Katoomba	10.00am
	<i>Cliff area walk with views.</i>				
Jul-27	The Lapstone Zig Zag, with John Low*	Simone	4757 3416	Glenbrook Station	10.00am
	<i>Explore the various ways that the train line climbed the eastern escarpment with BMCC local historian, John Low.</i>				
Aug-3	Empire Pass, Lawson	Phil	4787 5560	Lawson Station carpark	10.00am
	<i>Walk through one of the Mid-Mountains' gems, some steps and bush paths.</i>				
Aug-10	Chemistry in the bush, with Kevin Bell*	Simone	4757 3416	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	10.00am
	<i>Learn about the biochemistry of bush plants with BMCS's very own chemistry expert (& nursery manager) Kevin Bell.</i>				
Aug-17	Minihaha Falls, Katoomba	Joan	4782 2218	Gearins Hotel, Katoomba	10.00am
	<i>Level walk to falls to see vegetation regenerating after the 2002 bushfires.</i>				

* **These walks are part of the new 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.

WEEKEND WALKS

These walks are all graded **MEDIUM**: + indicates they include some hard climbing; (+) indicates the hard climbing is optional. Before attending, please discuss the walk with the leader or the **Weekend Walks organiser, Jim Percy (4758 6009)**, especially if this is your first walk, or you are unsure of the classification. Carry at least 1 litre of **WATER**, 2 litres on warm days.

Jul-15	Wollangambe River MEDIUM	Andy	4758 6302	Mt Victoria Station carpark	9.00am
Jul-22	A traverse of the Paterson Range HARD	Andy	4758 7787	Grose Vale (ring for details)	8.30am
	<i>An adventurous walk with a new leader in the footsteps of the explorers. Total distance 20 km - about 5km on firetrail, remainder off track. A car swap will be organised (ring leader for details).</i>				
Jul-29	Mailes Ridge Mountain Lagoon MEDIUM	Meredith	4782 4823	Mt Victoria Station carpark	9.00am
Aug-5	Dalpura and Jinki Gully MEDIUM	Jim	4758 6009	Mt Victoria Station carpark	8.30am
	<i>Two very interesting gullies off the Bells LoR, near the Mt Wilson turnoff. Occasional views into the Grose Valley but each gully has a beauty of its own, with frightful scrub between - gaiters and gloves recommended! (Map Mt Wilson)</i>				
	<i>Total distance 6km - 1km on firetrail, 1km on rough track, 4km off track.</i>				
Aug-12	Pulpit Rock EASY	Bill	4758 8545	Blackheath Station carpark	9.45am

Discover more about the Blue Mountains this Winter

Are you looking for a fun and educational outing? Maybe something especially for the kids, or for the whole family to share? Or a challenging walk with an experienced and knowledgeable guide?

Then the NPWS Blue Mountains Discovery Program could be just what you're looking for.

All activities are led by NPWS Discovery Rangers whose main role is to foster an appreciation and understanding of the natural and cultural heritage of the places visited.

For example, during a walk, the Discovery Ranger will explain the local geology, help you to identify plants and bird calls, and show you how to recognise traces of nocturnal animals. They can also teach you about how the

local Aboriginal people lived.

Discovery activities are run throughout the year with short breaks in June and December.

Blue Mountains Winter Discovery brochures, maps and further information are available from the NPWS Blue Mountains Heritage Centre, Govetts Leap Road, Blackheath (open 9.00am to 4.30pm every day, phone 4787 8877).

Details are also available on the internet: www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au. (click on **Parks and Reserves** in the box on the left, then click on **NPWS Guided tours** and choose the park or area you are interested in).

Please note that bookings are essential for all Discovery activities to prevent overcrowding.

Don Cameron

(From 6 September, the Warrumbungles Discovery Program has a special week of activities to coincide with the peak wild-flower season.

More details next month - Ed.)

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.

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

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