

KATOOMBA & DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY.

NEWSLETTER No. 17. JULY 1974. Price 10¢.



Patron Mr Allen A Strom
Advisor in Conservation
Department of Education N.S.W.

"The degree of civilisation of any people may be judged by their attitude to wildlife, which is entirely at their mercy."

--Plato.

*****OUR SOCIETY*****

OFFICE-BEARERS for 1974-75.

President: Mr. R. Douglass, 23 Martin St, Katoomba. 82-2081
Secretary: Mr. K. Smith, 32 Third Av., Katoomba, 82-2594
Mrs A. Wintzler has again taken on the Treasurer's job.
Mrs E Norman is our new Hut Roster Supervisor.
Mr K Gorringer has already been busy as our new Publicity officer.

If you see any news items relating to our Society and work, Mrs C Van Der Held, our Research and Records Officer, will be pleased to hear about it.
Other officer-bearers continue from the previous year.
We thank all those who freely volunteered their services in 1973-74 for a job well done.

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These continue to be held at the Hut at intervals, the latest being Mon. June 10. Miss Winsome Gregory, Hut Curator, will be only too glad to hand you a hammer, paintbrush or whatever.

TOWN PLAN SUBMISSION:

Much work has gone into this submission, perhaps one of the most important publications produced by the Society. It is well worth reading. The submission shows just how vulnerable the Blue Mountains area is, as a vital watershed, and how important it is to conserve and rightly use what water and other resources we have. Interested people may buy a copy at \$1-60, or alternatively, read the copy in the library.

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION is a national non-profit organisation set up to promote the understanding and practice of conservation. Right now, they would like you to become a member, because the greater the membership, the greater will be its influence on decisions being taken in Australia on environmental pollution and conservation. Full membership entitles you to a monthly newsletter & national conservation magazine, "habitat" as well as other occasional publications.

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Another donation made was to Total Environment Centre, a non-profit organisation founded in Feb. 1972. Concerned with natural and urban environments it is able to react swiftly against spoiling forces at work in a modern economy. It is financed by donations but is available to be commissioned to prepare specific studies.

BITS AND PIECES:

Thanks to Mrs Atkin for her presentation of a hand-painted tablecloth. Also to Miss I Mackenzie for a sketch of Hakeas, now hanging in the Hut.....Talking about hydrocarbons polluting the atmosphere, have you heard that (according to U.S.A. Environment Protection Agency), ten cows can burp enough gas a year to heat a small house.

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In April we again enjoyed the beauty and comparatively easy walking of Narrow Neck, Katoomba. This is a walk that never fails to inspire, with the great rocks and deep valleys on one side and the peaceful farmlands of the Megalong Valley on the other.

Victoria Falls, at Mt. Victoria, was decided on for May, and in spite of the fact that there had been almost incessant rain for days and even weeks beforehand we found the path in excellent condition in most places and the three to four mile driving track from the Great Western Highway was also in good condition. The recent rains made the Falls very spectacular with a great volume of water pouring over.

On all these walks there is always the interest and sometimes the thrill of discovering many and varied trees, shrubs, ferns, flowers, fungi, birds and insects and of course various types of orchids.

--Nora Dillon.

A Sad Loss:

Not long after writing the above report, our outings organiser, Nora Dillon passed away. She was beloved by all members of the Society who knew her, and will be sadly missed. She had an unflagging love for the beauty of the Blue Mountains which was reflected in her enthusiastic Outings Reports to the monthly meetings and Newsletter.

Nora did regular Hut Duty over many years and was always available to do extra duty when some other member could not attend. A person of outstanding character who did many kindnesses,

The sad news has just come to hand of the death of another member, Miss Nurah Jefferson. Miss Jefferson had been an active member of The Naturalists Society of N.S.W. before settling at Wentworth Falls, when she immediately gave her support to this Society. She had a considerable knowledge of the native flora and delighted to introduce others to it.

We extend our sympathy to the relatives of Miss Dillon and Miss Jefferson.

EDITOR: GRAHAM ALCORN P.O. BOX 39 BLACKHEATH *****

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BEAUCHAMP FALLS & BACK VIA GOVETT'S LEAP.

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Surprisingly enough, we found some wood which could be used to prepare our aqueous beverage, but we had to consume our infusion under dank conditions. As we squelched our way up Govett's Leap, one felt overwhelmed by a sense of otherworldliness, as the mist and cloud seemed to be all at once below us, around us and above us. On reaching the creek on top, there were moments of apprehension as we imagined ourselves being washed over Govett's Leap Falls.

Although by this time we had well and truly reached saturation point, we still managed to converse on the problems of the world in this age of Aquarius, of today's wishy-washy society and how important it was to keep one's head above water.

In all, the day was a soaking success, and we look forward with undampened enthusiasm to our next ramble in this sunburnt(???) country.

---Kevin Smith

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ON A DEAD ROBIN.

Small, yellow-breasted one whose watchful eye
Followed the turning earth beneath our spade
For luckless grub, or hapless worm;
Companion of the lonely track,
Joining us when the billy boiled
For crumbs and company --
Small, friendly, fearless one,
Farewell.

--- Wilson Alcorn.

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Maclura spp.

Newsletter No 13 gave a brief note on the 'Osage Orange. Further information may be of interest to those who, visiting pastoral districts of the Central Tablelands, may have come upon the tree in fruit. On seeing the fruit they will understand why it immediately evoked the curiosity of James and Molley Vaughan when they collected a specimen from a tree on a property at Bannaby, near Taralga, in autumn 1973. Their host, not a long-time resident, was unable to give them any information. Later James showed their specimen--"my embroidered lemon" Molly nick-named it-- to Bob Douglass who identified it.

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a word known orally, not literally! As will be apparent presently.)

In Sydney we learned that the tree was the introduced North American *Maclura pomifera* of the Moraceae--the mulberry family, and named in honour of W. Maclure, American geologist. Its common name 'Osage Orange' came from its being indigenous to the 'Osage country' --the territory of the Indian tribe called after the Osage River.

In his 'Trees of N.S.W.', Anderson describes the tree as "medium sized";..spreading crown, branches armed with stout thorns and with milky sap. Grown mainly for the large, unusual orange-like fruits.... not edible...and as an impenetrable hedge or breakwind." The "embroidered" appearance is the development of the fruit from the inflorescence---a pistillate raceme in small dense heads. Anderson in his "ABC of the Royal Botanic Gardens" listed a specimen tree of the *Maclura pomifera*, so those interested may see the fruit there if a visit is made in autumn.

My second reason for these notes is that in the new edition of "Flora of the Sydney Region", Beadle, Evans, Carolin and Tindale, a native species of the Moraceae, the 'Cockspur Thorn', a large native shrub (straggling or climbing) formerly classified as *Cudrania cochinchinensis*. This species is found on the coast, in or near rainforest. Though indigenous this *Maclura* is not endemic. its specific epithet indicates, it was named from a specimen found in Cochin China.

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Please send contributions for September issue to Box 39 Blackheath.

This version of the Newsletter was re-typed from the original by Phoebe Coster in December 2020 to enable search engines to 'see' the text. Minor changes have been made to correct typographical errors and to add clarity.

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