

KATOOMBA AND DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Newsletter No.25. August 1976. Price 10¢

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

To have a saying printed here,
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or dead.

R.E.M. Douglass

OUR SOCIETY

COMING MEETINGS: August 26th Members' night. Bring your slides---
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WENTWORTH FALLS/VALLEY OF WATERS TRACKS: You may be pleased to hear that tracks in the area are at last being given some attention, with the allocation of three rangers to work on the tracks.

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Local Press.

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Do your observations agree with this?

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WILDLIFE.



TO.....Graham Alcorn
43 Rutland Road
MEDLOW BATH
N.S.W. 2780

A PROPHET OF GLOOM!

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'It is generally believed that there used to be some life on Earth. Recently reports from our space stations indicate that the far away planet is undergoing a particularly violent period not at all conducive to life as it may once have been known there. Recent photographs show a distressing trend; vast areas have been swept clean and in their stead tall four--sided icicles have risen from the ground. Our astronomers believe this is the signal of a new ice age for the planet. There are bad signs on another front; the branching out of varicose-like veins over the terrain has continued unabated. This growth appears to be malignant. Moreover, the hard shiny corpuscles that course over it have increased at an even greater rate so that, in spite of newer and wider lengths of veins, they can hardly move. No sooner does a new vein grow than it gets clogged. It has not yet been determined if these corpuscles are a form of life or anti-life. Dead ones are piled up in huge lots to the side and are beginning to outnumber the moving ones. They could be victims of a dense pall that covers the whole Earth, except for some areas of the great seas. The sea of peace, once a gleaming mirror, is now tarnished, especially offshore from where the stalactite-like icicles are growing. Oil slicks cover large areas and some parts resemble a sewer more than a sea. It is a time of ice, stagnation and death. This prognosis is supported by another new phenomenon, the launching of projectiles into space from two places on the Earth's surface. Evidently the Earthlings that remain are trying to leave. One cannot blame them.'....."

From Confronting the Future.

Australia and the World The next hundred years.

By Charles Birch.

MORE ABOUT ENERGY

Some people will have heard of, even read, the publication entitled "The Limits to Growth". Probably, fewer people would have heard of Hower T. Odum. Prof. Odum teaches energetics at the University of Florida. He is quoted here from an article (too long to quote in full) entitled "Energy, Ecology and Economics"

"Many forms of energy are low grade because they have to be concentrated, transported, dug from the deep earth or pumped from far at sea. Much energy has to be used directly and indirectly to support the machinery, people, supply systems, etc. to deliver the energy. If it takes ten units of energy to bring ten units of energy to the point of use, then there is no net energy. Right now we dig further and further, deeper, and go for energies that are more and more dilute in the rocks. Sunlight is also a dilute energy that requires work to harness. We are still expanding our rate of consumption of gross energy, but since we are feeding a higher and higher percentage back into the energy seeking process, we are decreasing our percentage of net energy production. Many of our proposed alternative energy sources take more energy feedback than present processes.

"High costs of mining, processing fuels, developing costly plants, storing wastes, operating complex systems, and operating government agencies make present nuclear energy one of the marginal sources which add some energy now, while they are subsidized by a rich economy. A self-contained, isolated nuclear energy does not exist.High energy cost of nuclear construction may be a factor accelerating the exhaustion of the richer fuels.

"Breeder Process: The Breeder Process is now being given its first tests of economic effectiveness, and we don't yet know how net yielding it will be. The present nuclear plants are using up the rich fuels that could support the breeder reactors if these turn out to be net yielders over and beyond the high energy costs,

ENERGY. Continued

in safety costs, occasional accidents, reprocessing plants etc. Should we use the last of our rich fossil fuels wealth for the high research and development costs and high capital investments of processes too late to develop a net yield?

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".....The terrible possibility that is before us is that there will be the continued insistence on growth with our last energies by economic advisors that don't understand, so that there are no reserves to make a change, to hold order, and to cushion a period when populations must drop. Disease reduction of man and of his plant production systems could be planetary and sudden if the ratio of population to food and medical systems is pushed to the maximum at a time of falling net energy. At some point the great gaunt towers of nuclear energy installations, oil drilling and urban cluster will stand empty in the wind for lack of enough fuel technology to keep them running. A new cycle of dinosaurs will have passed its way. Man will survive as he reprograms readily to that which the ecosystem needs of him so long as he does not forget who is serving who. What is done well for the ecosystem is good for man. However, the cultures that say only what is good for man is good for nature may pass and be forgotten like the rest."

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BLUE SNAIL PELLETS AND BOWER BIRDS

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The Bayer Company, which makes them, claims they are repellent to birds, but even if eaten large doses are needed to kill a bird. Before this they are immobilised but recover after they stop eating. This information is supplied by our member Mrs Elma Reilly, who is concerned about their effect on Satin Bower Birds. "Whilst the bird won't eat the pellets, poison adhering to the mouth parts, particularly if the pellets have been softened by rain, might be lethal should he decide to use them for decoration", she writes.

Mrs Reilly appeals to members if they use this type of pellets to do so with care and keep an eye out if Bower Birds show an interest in them, and let us know.

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WILDLIFE RETURNS TO BURRAGORANG

Many have commented on the interesting article in the Sydney Morning Herald, July 17th on the return of wildlife to the Burragorang Valley since its protection as a water catchment area for the Warragamba Dam.

Strict entry conditions and patrolling by Water-Board rangers has turned the area into a vast wildlife sanctuary. The article gives an encouraging account of a great number of native species that have increased abundantly as a result. (This, incidentally, despite the supposed ravages of "ferocious" dingoes about which we have been hearing so much in the local press of late).

Our Society is concerned at reports that the Water-Board intends to install a purification plant about 1980, and relax its controls. We have had reports of considerable pressures to open up the area for tourists, also to allow power boats on the Dam.

At a recent meeting a resolution was carried to go to the Nature Conservation Council this year, strongly urging that all existing

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controls be maintained in the
management of the Warragamba Catchment Area.

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THREAT OF RADIO TOWERS ON KING'S TABLELAND

Radio Station 2KA recently submitted to the BMCC a proposal to locate a broadcasting installation--four towers and connecting grid--on Crown Land on the King's Tableland, Wentworth Falls.

In addition to consideration of the unfortunate aesthetic effect of four towers impinging upon this scenic landscape the environmental consequences of clearing ten acres of heathland, to allow sinking of the grid 18 inches underground, must be taken into account.

Run-off from the inevitable scouring would adversely effect the adjoining swamp and the creek which it feeds and which is tributary to the Wentworth Falls Cataract.

Vegetative rehabilitation of the scarred ten-acres to anything like its natural cover would be impossible, because of the exposed nature of the site and the limitations imposed by the requirement for shallow-rooting plants to avoid interference with the grid.

The BMCC has opposed the proposal. The Planning Committee of our Society has written to the Town Clerk fully supporting the Council's attitude.

In general, there is the desirability of maintaining the King's Tableland in its natural state, and the Society has made detailed submissions to BMCC and to the National Estate Inquiry, 1973-75, in this regard. In particular, the portion of Crown Land which was the subject of the 2KA proposal is the one about which the Society has approached the Minister for Lands, asking that it be dedicated as an addition to the Wentworth Falls Reserve which it adjoins.

The Planning Committee considers that, if such expansion is necessary, the installation should be sited on land which is already disturbed and which is not on any escarpment.

THIS MIGHT NOT BE AMISS

Should you go on the flora excursion and you desire to learn something about the flowers and plants etc. do not forget to take writing material to record what you see and want to remember.

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Some plants that I have seen about here and perhaps you with your recording apparatus might, may will at some future time see these and many others and perhaps get to know and love them even more than the exotics which you are more familiar with the names of.

Patersonia fragilis.....Short Purple-Flag...This is the native iris.
Dichopogon strictus.....Chocolate Lily.

Helichrysum scorpioidesEverlasting Button.

Hardenbergia, Oxylobium, Carpobrotus, Kunzea, Billardiera,

Acacia longifolia, Bauera. Goodenia, Comesperma,

Prostanthera, Callistemon, Calytrix, Pimelea,

Pittosporum, Leptospermum, Dillwynia, Banksia,

Grevillea, Olearia, Correa, Eriostemon,

Melaleuca, Westringia, Pultenea, Drosera, Xanthorrhoea,

It is surprising I do remember having seen some plants on my rambles about these hills and valleys. But don't expect me to bring forth the name of the plant when I am suddenly confronted with it.

R.E.M.D.

This version of the Newsletter was re-typed from the original by Phoebe Coster in March 2021 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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