

KATOOMBA AND DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Newsletter No.42

Price 20¢

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EDITOR W. ALCORN Rutland Road Medlow Bath. N.S.W.2780.



HYACINTH
ORCHID

Patron. Allen A Strom. A.M.

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is only beauty put into practice"

Jean Jacques Rousseau.

O U R SOCIETY

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Walks are held on 1st saturday of month and adver-
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Later speakers will be given in following issues.

6th December 1980

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Social Day with a walk from The Hut at 10.30am a barbecue most
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THE BRADLEY METHOD OF BUSH REGENERATION.

The following most interesting and useful article appeared in the
November Newsletter of the Blue Mountains Group, Society for growing
Australian Plants. We thank them for permission to reproduce it:-
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Regeneration Officer for the National Trust, who spoke to us on the

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The National Trust, which had a few properties with many weeds, employed Joan and paid workers to assist her. This placed the whole system on a professional basis and it gained increasing acceptance by councils. The first property, Blackwood Reserve, was tackled in 1976. Here a major problem was dense privet - 10 plants/square metre which allowed no other understorey. Within 3 years of its clearance 90 to 105 species of native plants had returned. It now consists of a beautiful stand of Blackbutt, with glades of ferns and maidenhair. As with any area, Blackwood was well documented - the area is mapped, time in man-hours to remove a particular weed determined, and time for any weeds to return noted.

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From our Land-use Committee

Threatened Resources of the Blue Mountains' Region

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It is a region with distinctive features which provide an opportunity TO MAKE IT A REGION WITH A DISTINCTIVE FLAVOUR. We must conserve and use to advantage, rather than destroy, its special resources.

It offers the role of an area of unspoilt naturalness for the growing populations of the adjacent cities; who use it as a retreat for active and passive relaxation and a breath of fresh air, and enjoy its expansive views of wild grandeur, its waterfalls and variety of vegetation. Records indicate that it is these features which have attracted people for more than a century. Very importantly it is one of the principal parts of the catchment area of the Hawkesbury River system, including the Warragamba Dam. Its importance reaches far beyond local considerations. It must not become just another suburban area. Its distinctive resources will disappear as the people seeking them change them

Tourism is one of its main roles. Tourism will become a threat to its character and thereby itself be threatened, if not controlled with knowledge and care and in conformity with its characteristics.

Threats to the Characteristics and resources of the Blue Mountains include basic threats such as those to Natural Water systems and to vegetation, and more superficial threats such as visual, air and noise pollution the main watershed is not included in reserves therefore the catchment areas of the streams, and the escarpments are vulnerable and need protection. Threats are made more serious by the fact that the natural environment they effect is largely National Park and other open space to which the ridges drain, these reserves become polluted, degraded, overused as the need for them increases.

The following quotation is from the Report of the National Estate Committee of Inquiry, Canberra, 1974: "3.79 By comparison with other continents, Australia is deficient in rivers and streams. Not only are there few of them, but they carry much less water in relation to the size of their catchment - - - 3.81 - - - land use in catchment areas can profoundly and deleteriously affect the character of the river - - - siltation, salination - - - nutrient supply - - - eutrophication - - - Some of the worst effects come from the clearing of timber on the banks of watercourses - - - 3.84 It is important that careful control be exercised over the use of catchment areas of all rivers - - - "

Consequences of Changes to Natural Water Systems may be both local and distant. Causes of change include interference with vegetation; filling in of swamps, denudation of watersheds and small catchment areas above swamps, roadworks, guttering of watercourses, cutting into the water-table, redirection of drainage, covering ground with buildings, pathways etc. (their guttering, spouting and drains connected to Council drains;) pollution by people congregated together for accommodation, tourist attractions, industry, etc., and use of creek waters and watercourses by these.

The consequences include disturbance to catchment and retention of rainwater (by interference with swamps and vegetation above them, etc.), to direction, speed and volume of drainage, and to purity and ph of water. Some of the results of these are rapid, forceful run-off with erosion of soil, creek beds and escarpments, also inconsistency of supply for flora, fauna, waterfalls and finally rivers, also gouging (by loads of sediment formed by man-made erosion).

Vegetation is part of the watercatchment and retention system and necessary for the provision of a continuing supply. It covers and maintains the poor soil; gives both oxygen and moisture to the air and removes carbon dioxide;; it mitigates the effects on water, soil, flora and fauna of hot sun and drying winds; it provides the characteristic variety of habitats for animal life and food for migrating birds; it gives beauty and interest to both close and distant views and contributes to scenic and recreational attractions. Any action that enhances drought conditions and that reduces or changes the nature of the vegetation may have dangerous consequences in this vulnerable region. The effects of frequent, out-of-season burns is not yet known. The understory (rapidly diminishing) is an important element of our Hawkesbury sandstone vegetation.

Increase of population and development means increase of threats. Unwise development increases threats. Subdivisions often result in denudation, erosion, interference with natural drainage, encroachment of gravel and sand onto adjacent vegetation and into creeks; bulldozed areas often remain for months before construction work or planting commence. Badly sited roads and service trails result in erosion and changes in drainage patterns. Badly sited residences, scenic motels, swimming pools, tourist attractions, sewerage systems cause problems. Depletion of inadequate water supplies means less flow from dams into the creeks below them. Industry and mining need to be carefully restricted.

Clifftops and Escarpments in whatever zoning they occur are characteristics of B.M. scenery, they are threatened by buildings, roadways, unsuitable agricultural usage, lookouts and other tourist attractions. Consequent pollution and erosion effect not only the escarpments themselves and views but headwater swamps and watercourses on top and valley creeks and forests below, undeveloped land still exists within or near townships; this is needed for wise regional planning, but there is the problem that these are mainly privately owned by people being forced to sell in an effort to meet rising costs, and public money is not made available to secure them; there are threats to crown land and other open space by sale to developers or by alien usage in sites where they are needed to preserve adjoining reserves or scenic vantage points.

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The L.P.F.C. has recommended another block of Environmentally Sensitive Land suitable for reserve, for members' approval.

This version of the Newsletter was re-typed from the original by Phoebe Coster in May 2022 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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