

KATOOMBA AND DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY.

NEWSLETTER NO. 47. - FEBRUARY, 1982 - PRICE 20c.

Editor: R. W. Alcorn, 43 Rutland Rd., MEDLOW BATH.



PINK ROBIN

Patron: Mr. Allen A. Strom, A.M.

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- Olegas Truchanas 1972.

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COMING MEETINGS. At CONSERVATION HUT, VALLEY OF WATERS RESERVE,
VALLEY ROAD, WENTWORTH FALLS.

Fri. Mar. 26th. 8p.m.- Annual Meeting. Election of Officers.

Fri. Apr. 30th. 8p.m.- Dick Turner on a Trip to the Tamani
Desert.

Fri. May 28th. 8p.m.- Naturalist speaker from Waterboard.

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Anyone with suggestions for walks to contact Lloyd Jones, 57-2270 or Keith Sherlock, 57-1927.

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Thurs. May 20th. - Nature Trail. Meet Conservation Hut, Valley of Waters, 10a.m.

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Eighteen people were blessed with perfect weather for their January walk. The route was Neates Glen, the Grand Canyon & the return was by way of the old horse trail leading up to Evan's Lookout.

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Newsletter No. 47. - Page 2.

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This was the theme of the talk given to the January meeting of the Society by our Patron, Allen Strom, A.M. We are given knowledge to take up professions, trades etc., to earn a living but none on the effect of our lifestyles on the environment. Consequently we are wrecking it - and our own lives in the process.

Allen showed some slides which dealt with the historical development of the Gosford district - from pleasant farms and week-enders to the present suburban development, bustle, pollution, "modern" buildings, power stations, etc. -- a complete reversal of the original relaxed land use.

Also a grim warning to us in the Blue Mountains, where our population has grown by an incredible one-third in the last 8 years. Thank you, Allen.

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Walking Saturday afternoon on the heath-clad Kanangra Plateau, we were astonished to find a specimen (with one flower and several buds) of the Pink Flannel Flower, *Actinotus Forsythii*. This rare native plant has not been found before in the Blue Mountains, outside Narrow Neck Plateau and Kings Tableland.

The tablelands were covered with delicate white flowers of a species of *Baeckia*, which attracted native bees, the subject of Mr. Rodd's February talk to our Society.

Orchid experts discovered and showed us thriving colonies of ground orchids.

The most interesting birds were Rock Warblers and Spine Tailed Swifts. The Swifts swooped over our heads, one of the world's fastest flying birds, taking hovering insects from the air.

The view from the Kanangra Plateau was, of course, breathtaking. We all felt gratitude to Milo Dunphy, the Colong Committee, Betty Kaub and her late husband Martin and all those others whose unrelenting campaign saved this wonderful wilderness area from limestone mines and pine plantation.

Over 20 of us camped one night at the Boyd Crossing, beside a crystal, unpolluted stream.

Mick Dark led a spotlighting expedition which located 2 great gliders in the tall gums behind the camp. One of these obliged with a gliding display!

On the Sunday morning, Graham Alcorn led a birding expedition down the river from the camp, through pleasant open eucalypt forest. We didn't see many species of birds - about 18 in all. Commonest were the handsome olive-green white-eared Honeyeaters, who seemed to have the whole forest divided up into territories. Most interesting was an Emu Wren, found when the river expanded into a sedgey swamp, which is their typical habitat.

The camp out idea was a great success. Many members thought we should do it more often. Any ideas?

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Newsletter No. 47. - Page 3.

LAND PRESERVATION FUND COMMITTEE REPORT.

LAND FOR RESERVE: Blue. Mtns. City Council is having the land selected by the Society valued. The block (part Lot 3, DP 244889, Sinclair Cres., Wentworth Falls) has within its boundaries a small escarpment and 200 ft. of Jamison Creek. Unfortunately there is considerable weed intrusion in the low lying section, but the undisturbed area contains a good variety of flora.

THE SALE OF NATIVE PLANTS held in the Hut on 26th - 28th February was most successful. Most of the plants were grown by experts, Greta Vanry and Jill Dark, and were fine specimens.

WE HELPED OPERATION NOAH.

Our Society donated \$50 to the National Parks & Wildlife Society's Operation Noah Appeal to save endangered species. Also, our members Jill Dark, Wilson Alcorn and Graham Alcorn gave of their time to address schools, boy scouts, girl guides and others, showing slides of endangered species and their habitats. Wendy Godfrey and others of the Lower Blue Mtns. Conservation Society also did splendid work addressing High Schools and Scout Troops in the Penrith area.

These talks, in addition to inspiring people to volunteer to go door knocking, were also most valuable in reaching a large audience of young people with lessons in ecology.

Our Society also provided an actor to play the part of Noah in the publicity stunt which opened the Operation Noah Appeal.

Funds raised go to very specific preservation programmes for 10 endangered species:-

The restoration of 3 Historic sights, 3 National Parks, 3 Natives Reserves, 7 Ecological Surveys, Employment of at least 40 Scientists and Technical Assistants plus the Provision of a Ph.D Scholarship.

DEVELOPMENT THREATENS SHIPLEY.

The Shipley Residents Group has forwarded to the New South Wales Heritage Council an outstanding submission on the threat of development to the Shipley Plateau, Blackheath.

Prepared by Jan and Peter Thornley of The Ranch, the submission has graphic photographs, maps, drawings, historical data and documentation of the threat of development to this only remaining quiet rural area in the Upper Mountains.

It is indeed encouraging that the residents of Shipley have banded together to try and protect their life styles from the effect of development.

In the last analysis, it is only the forceful protests of the people that are effective.

B.M.C.C. ACTS FOR YORK ST. RESERVE.

Our last Newsletter reported an objection to the B.M.C.C. from our Land Use Committee to a development on Lot 1 in Frog's Hollow, York Street, Katoomba and a deputation to the Town Planner urging the purchase of land for a reserve on the fine wooded slope above the Lot, to save this fine piece of Mountain Ash forest as a back drop for the village and protect Leura Creek Catchment.

We report with pleasure that the Council has written saying they are negotiating for this.

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SOUTH WEST TASMANIAN WILDERNESS.

A "NO DAMS" RALLY will be held in Sydney on Saturday, 27th. March, to protest against the Tasmanian Govt's. decision to go ahead with building the Gordon - below - Franklin dam; to call on the Federal Govt. to use its powers to prevent the building of the dam; and to halt the destruction of Tasmanian wilderness by forestry and mining.

PROGRAMME FOR THE RALLY IS:

10.30 a.m. - Assemble at Town Hall Square.

11.00 a.m. - March to Hyde Park South.

12. noon - Rally - Speakers.

1.00 p.m. - Concert - Redgum and a Folk Singer

Main importance of the rally is focusing attention on the Federal Government's role in this issue. We urge all members and supporters who can possibly do so, to attend.

THREE SISTERS CLIMBATHON on 13th & 14th March is organised by the Three Peaks Outdoor Society to assist the Tasmanian Wilderness Society's fight. Three teams of two climbers each will attempt to climb the 1,000 ft. high West Wall of the 3 Sisters as many times as possible within 24 hrs., beginning Saturday noon. Sponsorship can be phoned to the South West Tasmanian Committee.



This latter Committee writes that if any of our members want to help organising the rally or the campaign in general, they have plenty of work.

Address is:- South West Tasmanian Committee of N.S.W.
399-Pitt Street, Sydney or
P.O. Box N204, Grosvenor St., Sydney. 2000
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SPECIAL B.M.C.C. MEETING ON OBJECTIVES.

Our Land Use Committee wrote to the B.M.C.C. objecting to the way we considered the Administrator had watered down the Statement of (Planning) Objectives to place less emphasis on the environment.

The B.M.C.C. has invited spokesmen from the Committee to put our case to a Special Council Meeting on Tuesday March 16th at 8 p.m.

It is an open meeting and we expect a good attendance of Society members in the gallery.

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BLUE MOUNTAINS NEED ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER.

Certainly no Local Government Area in New South Wales; and probably in the whole of Australia, needs an Environmental Officer more than the Blue Mountains.

We are an extremely delicate ecological area. We are surrounded by National Park. We are a major part of the Hawkesbury Water Catchment Area, (being the main ridge from which the streams rise) and, for the commercially minded, the Tourist Trade is our main industry.

Let us hope the Council stops shilly shallying and appoints one.

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TREE PLANTING CAMPAIGN.

The Society for Growing Australian Plants has formed a Tree Planting Campaign Committee for the Year of the Tree in the Blue Mountains.

Our Society was represented and will send a member to the next meeting at the Glenbrook Native Plants Reserve on Wednesday morning, March 17th.

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