

HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"



Please note that there will be no monthly meeting in December and no Hut News in January.

In this last Hut News for the calendar year, the BMCS Management Committee would like to thank all of our members for their support throughout the year. We'd especially like to thank all those who've so generously contributed their time, energy, skills and enthusiasm to the work of the Society. We wish you all a safe, happy and fulfilling Christmas and New Year. Our next monthly meeting will take place in January when we will discuss an Agenda for Action in 2008.

AGENDA 2008 *What environmental issues are you passionate about?*

We could all agree that climate change, over development, degradation of the remaining wilderness areas, conserving groundwater and hanging swamps and promoting environmental education are significant issues but are there any other particular projects you feel the Society should take on board?

DO YOU HAVE A PARTICULAR ISSUE YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT?

Come along with your friends to the January meeting and tell us all about it. Members of other environmental organisations & the media will also be invited to attend and participate.

VISITORS WELCOME!

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

TIME & DATE: 7.30pm Friday,
25 January 2008,

VENUE: Conservation Hut,
Wentworth Falls

SPEAKERS: Management
Committee members, invited
guests & audience participation

Islands in Peril: Climate Change & its impact on our Pacific Neighbours



Date: Monday 17th December 2007

Time: 6.30pm for 7.00pm start (to 8.30pm)

Venue: The Library, Carrington Hotel, Katoomba

*Organised by the Australian Conservation Foundation
and Friends of the Earth Blue Mountains*

The once-idyllic Pacific atolls of the Carterets are under threat from rising sea level due to climate change. Special guests from the Carterets will share with us their fears for their future and their stories of courage and determination to protect their unique cultures.

Another special guest from the PNG Ecoforestry Forum will share her experience of forest campaigning in Papua New Guinea.

Gold coin donations (Light refreshments provided)

RSVP: Natalie Lowrey natalie.lowrey@for.org.au, 0421 226 200)

Photos: Toby Parkinson www.podfruits.com.au/photography-png.htm

Spiritgardens - seeking the spirit of Blue Mountains habitats

This exhibition of photographic works by BMCS member and Medlow Bath resident, Chris Ireland, is a journey to the ancient spirits of place. In both indigenous and Old European traditions, nature is alive, imbued with a sacredness, a spirit. This journey takes the viewer through varied habitats of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, seeking the spirit of ecosystems created by aeons of time, geology, plant, animal and human life.

The images do not seek to define literally, to categorise scientifically; rather they seek the fleeting, the ephemeral, the sacred. This work seeks to define a re-connection with nature as a sustaining and healing practice in a world disconnected.

Chris has been exhibiting for many years in Sydney, interstate and overseas, and BMCS members may have seen her exhibition '13 moons' at the Blue Mountains Heritage Centre during October 2006.

The exhibition is at the Blue Mountains Heritage Centre, Govetts Leap Rd, Blackheath. It opens with drinks from 1-3pm on Sunday 6 January 2008, and continues until 4 February. The Centre is open every day from 9am-4.30pm.

Volunteers needed for GOS2 Campaign



We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers to join our Objective 3 Subcommittee to help with the **Gardens of Stone stage2 Campaign**.

The Subcommittee was set up to achieve protection for Newnes, Mt Airly and Western Escarpment areas. The GOS2 Proposal (Colong Foundation, BMCS and Colo Committee) was launched in October 2005, and after nearly a year of intense lobbying, public meetings and familiarizing people with the area, a report was released by the Department of Environment and Conservation in August 2006 entitled *Assessment Report GOS2 Proposal-State Conservation Areas and Park Extensions*. Since then we have been continuing to lobby politicians, etc. but feel we need to review our strategies and direction.

No specific experience is necessary. The types of activities you may be involved in could include helping to plan our future strategies as well as more practical activities such as planning visits to the area, arranging talks and meetings and letter writing.

Anyone interested in further details please contact Karen McLaughlin. Phone 63552835 or email karen.mclaughlin@ozemail.com.au.

HUT NEWS

"Hut News" is the newsletter of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.
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Wildlife Protection Areas

Does wildlife in bushland near you need better protection from trail-bike riding, dumping of garden waste, roaming companion animals, etc.?

Well, it is possible for our local Blue Mountains City Council to declare Wildlife Protection Areas where such things are prohibited. It can be done quite easily.

Wildlife protection is the objective of

Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort

H.H. Sheik Ahmed bin Saeed Al-Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive of the Emirates Airline and Group hosted the Regeneration Ceremony in the Wolgan Valley from 11am-4pm on November 21. The aim was to celebrate 'commencement' of the \$100 million construction and environmental regeneration project. Participating politicians (past, present and future – at the time) comprised Kerry Bartlett, Phil Koperberg, Matt Brown (Tourism), Bob Debus, Sandra Nori and Gerard Martin (local Member). Others present included Lithgow's Mayor and General Manager, Kerry Fryer (Blue Mountains Tourism), numerous business associates and consultants, and a range of media interests. The environment was represented by Richard Kingswood and Richard Whyte from DECC, Joan Domicelj for GBMWHAC, Veronica Nolan from CVEG and me for BMCS.

The event involved opening speeches by Sheik Ahmed KB, PK and MB, followed by a Welcome to Country and site-preparation ceremony by representatives of the Wiradjuri people, and a tree-planting (Wollemi Pine) ceremony. This was followed by a multi-course lunch for about 150 people (my guess!) featuring local produce (including wines) in a massive air-conditioned marquee, erected for the occasion on the future site of the principal resort building that will overlook the 40 free-standing guest-suites.

A second less elaborate event took place from 4 to early evening on the same day. It was mainly for the travel industry and a range of potential suppliers. Special coach transport was laid on from Sydney, in addition to guests using their own transport.

Construction of the Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort and Spa was originally intended to start in March of this year. It was held up for a range of issues including: modifications to the original Concept Plan, environmental considerations related to this, operational uncertainties within the State Department of Planning, meeting the requirements of the Federal Department of the Environment and Water Resources, and indigenous matters. These issues are now essentially resolved, such that the Emirates is able to move into the construction phase. In fact, site preparations started a few weeks ago and the process will now accelerate. Construction should be finished by March-April 2009 and the Resort fully commissioned and open for guests in August 2009.

When completed, the Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa will occupy about 2% (<35 hectares or ~80 acres) of the >1600-hectare (4000 acres) region of degraded land within the Wolgan Valley. The remaining 98% is destined for rehabilitation as a high-value nature conservancy abutting the World Heritage Area. BMCS is confident that the overall project will greatly benefit the environment of the Wolgan Valley and adjacent parts of the World Heritage Area and Western Escarpment, as well as benefiting tourism and the local economy.

Brian Marshall

GREEN-HINTS to COMBAT GREEN-HOUSE on the COMPUTER



I thought that we were doing the environment a favour by using computers for communications and reports (ie lessening the amount of paper being used). BUT there is always a grey side to everything—did you know that ...

- ☞ A laptop used 5 hours a day will generate around 40 kilograms of greenhouse gas each year. Even worse are desktop computers, generating 200-500 kilograms in the same amount of time (most of which is from the monitor).
- ☞ An LCD panel monitor generates about half this and, I am told, adjusting the brightness to a lower level can cut emissions by ¼ (however I have yet to discover how to do this...)
- ☞ Of course screen savers don't save energy. Best to switch everything off when not in use or use power management to control it. If it's a Mac you can put it to sleep. Ahh...

Susan Girard, Climate Change Subcommittee

the Companion Animal Act 1998 and Councils do have the authority to declare local bushland reserves as Wildlife Protection Areas.

For example, Ku-ring-gai Council completely prohibits cats and dogs in Wildlife Protection Areas. Warringah Council has fifteen Wildlife Protection Areas where cats and unleashed dogs are prohibited. Hornsby Council also prohibits the taking of native plants from its Wildlife Protection Areas.

Clearly, these Wildlife Protection Areas do give native animals and plants

better protection. They also raise awareness in the community about the presence of wildlife and the threats to their existence. And, with correct signage at the protected areas, Councils are empowered to enforce the rules with fines for offenders.

If you know of a bushland area where wildlife needs protection, please write to the General Manager at Blue Mountains City Council, outlining the problems and suggesting Wildlife Protection Areas for the Blue Mountains.

Meredith Brownhill

Visit the BMCS website at: www.bluemountains.org.au

In memory of Helen Lomax

Many members of the Society will remember Helen Lomax, who passed away peacefully on the 30th October 2007 – she had just celebrated her 84th birthday.

Helen was an active member of the Society, ANTaR (Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation) and actively supported Indigenous people. In 1986, she helped start the first bushcare group in the Blue Mountains – Friends of the Blue Mountains. Some may remember Helen maintaining the campfire at the gates to Fairmont Resort during the community protest against its development and boiling the billy to make cups of tea for passersby.

Helen celebrated life with her great love of plants, birds and nature, and created a lovely garden at her house with birdbaths that attracted so many birds, bringing joy to her and her visitors. She also celebrated life through her many friendships.

Meredith Brownhill

Blue Mountains Environment Summit 23-24 February 2008, Katoomba High School

This summit is a follow-up to the 1995 summit which looked at the key issues for the Blue Mountains. It came up with a series of recommendations for State, Federal and Local government on specific matters where policy or legislative changes were needed.

The summit is being organised by a community steering committee with the assistance of Phil Koperburg. It will focus upon climate change, water, energy, land management, transport and more. Speakers will include Peter Cullen and Mark Diesendorf.

This is an opportunity to raise issues that you think are important!

Contact Tara Cameron
on 4751 1130 or
dontara@ozemail.com.au.

A Spring Haiku

So many flowers presented themselves to the bushwalkers at the Hanging Gardens in Wentworth Falls in September – a spring splash of colour, form and aromas. It's wonderful that flora is still, and submits to being looked at and identified and admired. So we could say, of the beautiful scents blowing on the wind, "Oh, that's *Philotheca*, that's *Boronia*".

But fauna is another matter. A raptor of some sort soared into the blue sky, and then out of view. And in the dark thicket, a mystery bird whistled away. We waited, trying to get a glimpse of the singer of these various songs. We peered, we craned, and waited quietly some more. Finally, a glimpse:

Opening his grey beak
butcher bird
sings all the colours

Diana Levy

Nursery News Kevin Bell

Our featured genus this month is *Leptospermum*, commonly called "Tea-trees". The name arose from the practice of early settlers to use an infusion of leaves of these plants as a tea-substitute. I've tried one local species, *L. polygalifolium*, and wasn't too impressed but maybe it was the coastal species *L. laevigatum* which was used by the settlers. I'd be interested to hear if anyone has tried this or other types?

Leptospermum is a genus of about 83 species, all but three occurring in Australia. It seems the first systematic study of Tea-trees was carried out in 1776 by a father (Johann Reinhold Forster) and son (Johann Georg Adam Forster) team. The former had an interesting life. Born in 1729 in Dirschau in the former Prussia, he studied languages and natural history and became a pastor. In 1754 he married a cousin and their son, Georg, as he was usually known, was born. In 1765, on the invitation of Empress Catherine of Russia, he moved to Saratov on the Volga to carry out nature studies. For this he was not paid and, as he had overstayed his leave, he also lost his position as pastor. Disgruntled, he moved to England where he replaced the famous chemist and discoverer of oxygen, Joseph Priestly, at the Dissenters' Academy in Warrington, teaching languages and natural history. As a result of what would be just one of numerous clashes with others throughout his life, he resigned this position after a year. Despite largely living in poverty, he produced a book, *A Catalogue of British Insects*, in 1770. He made a living by translating several important scientific works and came to the notice of Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander, both of whom had accompanied James Cook on the maiden voyage to Australia. He was elected as a Fellow of the prestigious Royal Society

in 1772 and, when Banks refused to join Cook on the second expedition, Forster jumped at the chance to gain the position of scientist, for which parliament had voted four thousand pounds, and took his son with him.

In keeping with his temperament, he complained bitterly in his notes about his accommodation and the indifference of Cook "to the study of nature". He wrote a telling statement which still has validity: "it has always been the fate of science and philosophy to incur the contempt of ignorance". When the ship arrived at Capetown he persuaded the botanist Andreas Sparrman, a pupil of the great Swedish botanist Linnaeus, whose system of classification we still use today, to join him and paid his expenses. When the expedition returned home, Forster claimed that the Admiralty had agreed to allow him to write an account of the voyage for profit but he was denied this and told he had only been employed as a collector. To circumvent this prohibition, he arranged for Georg to write *A Voyage Round the World in His Majesty's Sloop Resolution* using his father's notes and this was published in 1777. A year later Forster published his own *Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World, on Physical Geography, Natural History, and Ethic Philosophy* which received high praise in scientific circles. Several of his later works, most written in Latin, were published posthumously.

Later, he returned to Germany and accepted a chair of natural history at the University of Halle, where he died in 1798.

Much has been made of Forster's temperament but there is no denying his considerable accomplishments.

So, if you would like to honour the memory of this learned and talented man, why not plant some Tea-trees in your garden? We have a selection of seven

species to offer at our nurseries and would be pleased to help you in your choice. Particularly spectacular are *L. macrocarpum* which has the largest flowers of any Australian species and *L. rotundifolium* with its brilliant pink flowers. Because of the high oil content of their leaves, they are quite flammable and we would urge caution in planting them if you live in a high fire-danger area.

For a great Xmas idea, why not some plants for friends or relatives or a gift voucher which they can use later? A plant continues to give pleasure long after this annual event has passed and we have a good selection to tempt you. The nurseries will close after sessions on the 11th and 12th December and will re-open on the 15th and 16th January 2008 at Blackheath and Lawson respectively. Finally, warm thanks and hearty Season's Greetings to our many valued customers.

We hope to see you all again in 2008.



Johann Reinhold Forster with his son Johann Georg Adam Forster, by Daniel Beyel (after John Francis Rigaud) (Photo: National Library of Australia.)

Sustainable Development Policy Review

Change of Date - Sat. 16 February

Email: pmorrison26@yahoo.com.au

Mail: 97 Sinclair Crescent, Wentworth Falls 2782

Phone: 4757 1393

The Conservation Society's Land Use Subcommittee is currently reviewing our Sustainable Development Policy. Any member interested in having input into the policy review is invited to attend a workshop to discuss the draft policy and express your views.

If you are interested in attending please register your name and contact details with the Land Use Officer, Phillip Morrison, and you will be forwarded the details of the workshop and a copy of the draft policy for review.

(Oops...Last month's Hut News referred to this policy as a Blue Mountains City Council policy — it is actually the Blue Mountains Conservation Society's policy — my apologies for any confusion caused. Ed.)

And, last but not least, . . .

Could anyone interested in contributing to an update of the **BMCS Transport Policy** please contact Heather Hull on hhull001@bigpond.net.au.

Old King Coal the Destructive Old Soul¹

Wendy Frew's article² on the risk to water supply and the environment from inadequately restricted underground coal mining effectively emphasised the unholly relationship between the 'dirty' coal industry and the two major political parties. The article is timely. The findings of an Independent Expert Panel (set up by the State Government) into longwall mining beneath or adjacent to river systems in the southern coalfield are due out soon. Significantly, the Panel must also report on the economic and social contributions of the coal resources in the southern coalfield! Is the dice loaded?

The RiversSOS³ campaign for a 1 km buffer along watercourses stemmed from concerns about damage arising from subsidence caused by longwall mining. RiversSOS' submission eventually caused the State Government and coal-mining companies to take notice, particularly when RiversSOS commissioned a critical review of an expert report prepared for one of the coal companies. The persistence of RiversSOS resulted in the IEP's enquiry. Inconceivably, a moratorium on approvals for extraction close to and beneath watercourses and major bridges^{4,5} was not imposed during the enquiry.

The Southern Coalfield is the current focus of concerns, but the enquiry's implications are much broader. Threats to water supply, and to ground- and surface-water resources and their dependent ecosystems, equally apply in the Western Coalfield of the Lithgow region and the coalfields of the Newcastle, Hunter and Gunnedah regions.

Claims and counter claims that preceded and have continued during the enquiry do little to advance informed opinion. The various parties may be fully aware of the complexities associated with possible water loss and subsidence-induced structural damage, but they fail to communicate it.

Longwall mining extracts coal by machines from roughly horizontal layers (or seams) a few metres in vertical thickness several hundred metres below the ground surface. It takes out coal as rectangular blocks or 'panels' with a working face of about 150 to 300 m wide that is progressively advanced along the seam and creates a panel length of 1 to 3 km. As the coal is mined, the now-unsupported overlying rocks collapse (or subside) into the open space. The mechanism of collapse, involving fracturing and/or bending of rocks, propagates upward to the ground surface, which physically lowers (subsides) by about 60% of the seam's thickness. The propagating fractures and flexures bounding and within the broader body of subsiding rocks may breach and link water-bearing layers (or aquifers, thereby disturbing the groundwater regime) and even disrupt river beds (part of the surface water regime) such that water is 'lost down the cracks'.

There is clear evidence of mining-induced damage to the bed of Waratah Rivulet and to parts of the Bargo, Cataract and Upper Nepean Rivers. In the words of Dave Burgess⁶, the Waratah Rivulet "... drained like a bathtub so that all aquatic life would have gone with it ... and it is continuing to drain after rain". This is a watercourse that the Healthy Rivers Commission termed pristine in 1999. Environmental groups, coal mining companies and their consultants, the Sydney Catchment Authority, the Department of Environment and Climate Change, the Department of Water and Energy, and many State Government politicians all agree on the fracturing, local scenic damage and impacts on water-dependent ecosystems. There is less concurrence on what happens to the 'lost' water. Hence the enquiry!

Why are Waratah Rivulet and the Upper Nepean Catchment so critical?

First, the rivulet is the most dramatic example of scenic damage and 'lost' water. It supplies or supplied 29% of the water to Woronora Dam⁴, the principal water supply for Sutherland Shire which is concurrently building a desalination plant⁶. Demand already exceeds supply in this region. Any losses caused by mining will exacerbate the deficit⁷. Second, many^{2,6,7} believe that coal mining in the Southern Coalfield, which

underlies the catchments for about 20% of Sydney and the Illawarra's water supply⁶, collectively threatens "... the long term sustainability of Sydney's metropolitan drinking water supply and environments"⁷. This is hardly surprising when, on current extraction projections, over 90% of the Upper Nepean and Woronora catchments will have been undermined within about 20 years². Third, despite much-trumpeted remediation work⁸, there is little evidence of its effectiveness^{6,9}.

At best, I believe that remediation seals the more obvious fractures, thereby reducing but not eliminating water 'losses', while at worst it is visually polluting, fails to restore scenic damage, has limited impact on water 'losses', and necessitates invasively remedial maintenance work for at least as long as mining in the region induces ongoing disturbance.

Where does the water go? Is it really lost from the catchment?

Creeks and rivers have variable flows reflecting rainfall patterns in their catchments. Some are ephemeral with residual flow (if any) being through the sediments that lie beneath the riverbed. In limestone country, streams may go underground, leaving a dry valley at surface, before reappearing lower down the topography. These are natural examples of reduced or disappearing flows, whereas they are mining-related in the Southern Coalfield.

Subsidence-induced fracturing and flexing enhances the hydraulic conductivity of rocks immediately beneath the riverbed. In effect, water flows through the fracture system rather than over the 'un-fractured' rock. But is the water just below the surface and will it reappear further downstream? Or do the fractures that breached the riverbed allow lateral dispersion and deeper penetration? And what does this mean in terms of water reappearing lower down the dam's catchment or being lost from this catchment? The possibilities are complex and without detailed information on such

Continued on page 5

Membership Matters...

I would like to thank all members for their patience and understanding whilst I was settling in as Membership Secretary. There have been a few difficulties, mainly arising from the record-keeping needs of the bushwalking club, but hopefully things are now much improved.

Since March this year membership has risen by about 90 members (approximately 10%), substantially reversing the decline over the previous 12 months. I think this is a testimony to the good work done by the Management Committee and the good reputation built by past Committees as well as society placing greater importance on being aware of, and participating in, environmental issues.

I wish to give a special thanks to Diana Rich, not only for her work in organising the Hut News mail-out, but also for her moral support and sensible suggestions.

Finally, have a happy Christmas (those of you who celebrate it), and to all of you I wish the best for the people and things you care about and believe in for the New Year.

Ilan, Membership Secretary

The Perfect Gift

At this time of year the ideal gift is an annual membership to your Society. To make this gift, simply mail name and address of the recipient and a cheque for \$xx (individual) or \$xx (family) to the office at PO Box 29 Wentworth Falls 2782. We will then fill out an application form and mail it to the recipient for his/her/their signature together with SAE and greetings note specifying you as the donor.

Bart

Old King Coal...

Continued from page 4

things as relationships between the topography, geological layering and its aquifer/aquiclude characteristics, and relative positions and elevations of the fractured site and the dam, the questions are unanswerable. This is the challenge facing the coal companies, Government agencies and various experts: either do the 'science' or examine the probabilities and apply caution.

Metropolitan Colliery and its owner (Peabody Energy) assert that water supply is not at risk because water is not lost from the catchment¹⁰. They maintain that¹⁰ "While subsidence-related cracking has caused increased subsurface flow in some sections of the rivulet, the water resurfaces downstream." Peabody Engineering contends that remediation (grouting) of the visible fractures will resolve the 'local' problem⁸.

Various experts^{7,11} reject the companies' claim¹⁰ that no water is lost. They say the claim is largely unsubstantiated by proper studies^{6,11} and that "... even the companies' experts cannot say definitively where the water goes"⁷, it appears that The companies are apparently stating their belief as fact, despite uncertainty and a lack of clear evidence^{6,7,11}.

Those claiming water is lost from the catchment also lack definitive evidence. But whereas companies prefer to extract the coal and deal with 'complications' as they arise, environmental groups and some Government agencies see damage, acknowledge the potential consequences and urge caution^{4,7,9,11}. They have the moral high ground.

What is probable? Fracturing and other subsidence-related mechanical damage are visible and incontrovertible, and spatially related surface flows are reduced or disappear^{11,12}. Experts examining this evidence within the context of known geology and hydrologic principles believe that all the water does not re-enter the flow downstream^{7,11}. There is a probability that an indeterminate quantity of water is lost from the dam's catchment. In terms of decreasing rainfall predicted under climate change for the region, any

reduction in catchment performance will be serious⁹. The Precautionary Principle should be applied.

Is there an answer?

Not from the State Government on its performance to date. As stated by Dave Burgess⁶, "... major new mining projects are approved by the Minister for Planning under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, while new series of Longwall panels are approved by the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) whose primary objective is to facilitate mining." The latter is affirmed by the DPI disregarding recommendations for caution made by other Government agencies^{6,9}.

Certainly not from the coal companies and industry-related organisations⁹. Metropolitan/Peabody indicates that any damage needs to be weighed against the economic benefit¹⁰, while the NSW Minerals Council sees exploitation of the Southern Coalfield as a justifiable trade-off between the value of coal resources and the environment¹³.

Perhaps from the Independent Expert Panel, if its findings are swayed less by short-term economics and more by longer-term consequences. The Panel should abandon the trade-off philosophy^{10,13} that attempts to balance State revenue from coal, company profits and jobs against safeguarding the ecological integrity and sustainability of the water-supply catchments. These sorts of trade-off allowed exploitation of asbestos and addition of lead ethyl to petrol long after the potential for damaging consequences was recognised. The Panel should accept that: (a) subsidence-related damage to the groundwater and surface water regimes urgently needs scientific evaluation; (b) in the absence of science, Government sanctions mines and companies push ahead on the basis that remediation, mitigation or compensation will resolve 'unexpected' damage; and (c) until science comprehensively shows the environment and water supply **are not unsustainably compromised**, the Precautionary Principle, as embodied in the practical approach advocated by Keith Muir⁹, should be implemented.

Overshadowing the direct effect of coal mining on water supply is the universal need to combat climate change by progressively eliminating dependence on 'dirty' coal. Continuing with Australia's highly polluting power stations while waiting 15-30 years for 'clean' coal technology to become commercially viable is not the answer.

As this is the final Hut News for 2007, I wish you the compliments of the season and leave you with this thought:

*Old King Coal¹ is a dirty old soul and a dirty old soul is he,
He opens his mines and despite the times gets government complicity,
For every government practises a fiddle in the arms of big business,
So they fiddle away thinking only of today and consign us to environmental mess!*

¹ With apologies to the 18th century nursery rhyme about King Cole or Coel

² "Mines blamed for threat to water supply", Wendy Frew, SMH, Nov 5

³ BMCS is one of the many environmental groups belonging to and supporting RiversSOS

⁴ "Mining to spread across the Woronora Plateau", Dave Burgess, The Colong Bulletin, Bulletin 224

⁵ "Risk to life, but more mining under bridge", Wendy Frew, SMH, Nov 20

⁶ Dave Burgess, Total Environment Centre, cited in Frew²

⁷ Martin Krogh, Sydney Catchment Authority, cited in Frew²

⁸ Peabody Engineering, cited in Burgess⁴

⁹ Keith Muir, Colong Foundation, <http://climatechangecoalition.com.au/news/item-view/article/your-drinking-water-is-draining-away-your-water-catchments-are-cracking-up.html>

¹⁰ Peter Doyle, Metropolitan Colliery, cited in Frew²

¹¹ Ann Young, hydrogeologist, cited in Frew²

¹² Sydney Catchment Authority, cited in Muir⁹

¹³ NSW Minerals Council, cited in Burgess⁴



Brian Marshall

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY BUSHWALKING GROUP

Membership of the bushwalking group is open to Society members. The BMCS Bushwalkers' Guide, which explains the Grades (#), and the Spring Program can be found on the Society's website www.bluemountains.org.au or will be posted on request. For further information contact Walks Convener, Christine Davies on 4787 7246, email bushwalks@bluemountains.org.au, or by mail at PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782.

Before attending a bushwalk, please discuss the walk with the leader or group co-ordinator (listed below). This is essential if this is your first walk or you are unsure of the classification.

MONDAY LEISURE WALKS: 'Short Day' walks of 3-5 hours, for those of average fitness. Bring morning tea, lunch and adequate water. Co-ordinator: Norm Harris (4784 1554).

Dec-24, Dec-31 — No walks programmed

Jan-7	Happy Valley, Mt Wilson (3) <i>Rainforest walk.</i>	Ron 4757 1526	Mt Victoria Station carpark	9.00am
Jan-14	Furber Steps & Landslide, Katoomba (3) <i>Early coal mining area.</i>	Norm 4784 1554	Gearin's Hotel carpark, Katoomba	8.30am
Jan-21	Grand Canyon, Blackheath (3) <i>Magical canyon.</i>	Ros 4733 3880	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	8.45am
Jan-28	— No walk programmed			
Feb-4	Reinitz Pass, Mt Victoria (3) <i>Closed forests.</i>	Ros 4733 3880	Mt Victoria Station carpark	9.00am
Feb-11	BUS TRIP to Palm Beach (2) <i>Walk to Barrenjoey Lighthouse. BBQ lunch. Fare \$12 when booking.</i>	Bob 4787 6584	BMCC Depot, South St, Katoomba	8.30am

THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS: Walks conducted to suit walkers on the day. Bring morning tea, lunch if noted & adequate water. Group Co-ordinator: Simone Bowskill (4757 4316, simbow@tpg.com.au).

Dec-20, Dec-27, Jan-3 — No walks programmed

Jan-10	Fairmont Resort to Inspiration & Moya Pts (2) <i>Walk past the Fairmont Resort and through the bush to the lookouts at Inspiration and Moya Points.</i>	Simone 4757 3416	Cnr Leura Mall, Megalong St	9.45am
Jan-17	Nature Trail, Wentworth Falls (3) <i>Classic walk from the Hut into the valley and out via Edinburgh Rock.</i>	Maurice 4739 4942	WWFalls Station carpark, nr clock (to car pool)	9.40am
Jan-24	Coachwood Glen, Mermaid's Cave, Packsaddlers (1) <i>Cool walk for the summer heat. Bring lunch to have at Packsaddlers.</i>	Simone 4757 3416	Blackheath N'hood Centre	9.40am
Jan-31	Faulconbridge & memories of Henry Parkes (1) <i>Explore area associated with Henry Parkes.</i>	Maurice 4739 4942	South side railway line	9.10am
Feb-7	Dargan Dams (2) <i>Walk along bush tracks to dams and old pump house. Swimming possible. Take lunch.</i>	David 4757 3416	Mt Victoria Station	9.00am
Feb-14	Little Zig Zag, Darkes Common, Bluff L'out (3) <i>Walk in the lower mountains.</i>	Maurice 4739 4942	Glenbrook Stn carpark	9.30am

ADVANCE NOTICE: Mar-6 BUS TRIP to Dunns Swamp. \$12, bookings essential. Call Simone on 4757 3416.

Note regarding Thursday Pleasure Walks

This series of walks was initiated for those of us who are unable, for whatever reason, to walk for long periods, at a fast pace, or on extended uphill climbs. For various reasons some walks held on Thursdays now deviate from this concept, however I feel we should ensure that some walks held on Thursdays still meet these original goals and to that end any walk led by me will do so.

I hope this may encourage those walkers who have been part of this group in the past, but who felt that Thursday walks had become too hard, to return and enjoy this series again.

Simone Bowskill, Thursday Pleasure Walks Coordinator

WEEKEND WALKS: Usually full day, longer walks at a faster pace. Bring morning tea, lunch and adequate water. Before attending, contact the leader or Group Co-ordinator, Jim Percy (4758 6009, jp34@tpg.com.au).

Dec-22, Dec-29 — No walks programmed

Jan-5	National Pass - refurbished & upgraded (3) <i>One of the Blue Mountains' oldest and most popular walking tracks, constructed 100 years ago (from 1906 to 1908). The track features more than 1000 stone steps and the tallest outdoor staircase in Australia. Approx. 3km.</i>	Ron 4757 1526	Wentworth Falls Station carpark	8.30am
Jan-12	Wentworth Pass (3) <i>Approx 5km, steps and a ladder, Slacks Stairs.</i>	Ron 4757 1526	Wentworth Falls Station carpark	8.30am
Jan-19	Federal Pass - Leura end (3) <i>Federal Pass was completed in 1900 to connect Katoomba Falls to Leura Falls. Approx 3km.</i>	Ron 4757 1526	Leura Station carpark	8.30am
Jan-26	Federal Pass - Katoomba end (3) <i>The other end of last week's walk along the Federal Pass. Approx 3km.</i>	Ron 4757 1526	Gearin's Hotel carpark, Katoomba	8.30am
Feb-2	Porters Pass (3) <i>This historic track was built in 1886 as a way down from Blackheath into the Kanimbla Valley.</i>	Ron 4757 1526	Blackheath Station carpark	8.30am
Feb-9	Little Zigzag, Mt Victoria (3) <i>Another historic track, created in 1877 as a way down from Mt Victoria into the Kanimbla Valley.</i>	Ron 4757 1526	Mt Victoria Station carpark	8.30am
Feb-16	Wollangambe Canyon (2) <i>Short walk to a swim in the cool canyon waters surrounded by sandstone cliffs.</i>	Meredith 4782 4823	Mt Victoria Station carpark	9.40am

BMCS Bushcare

The Valley of the Waters Bushcare 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.

For more information, contact Karen on 4757 1929.

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

Ilan Salbe 4759 2372

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