

# HUT NEWS

Issue No. 338  
July 2016



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"

## BE INSPIRED! SEMINAR ON WOMEN PIONEERS IN CONSERVATION



20th Century women who shaped our environmental culture

**Marie Byles - Isobel Bowden - Eleanor Dark - Dorothy Butler - Ruth Schleicher**

*Speakers: Anne McLeod, Ken Goodlet, Jim Smith, Trish Doyle. General discussion chaired by Tara Cameron*

**2 PM, Saturday, 23 July**

**Wentworth Falls School of Arts  
(Cnr Great Western Highway & Adele Ave)**

**ALL WELCOME! Gold coin donation**

## SEMINAR ON WOMEN PIONEERS IN CONSERVATION

How did a generation of 20<sup>th</sup> century women shape our environmental culture?

On July 23, at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts, a panel of biographers and admirers of women who laboured to make our environmental consciousness what it is today will come together in a public event, hosted by the Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

A range of female and male voices will participate. There will be a focus on five women whose contributions reached their zenith in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Marie Byles** was Australia's first female solicitor in NSW in 1924 and committed to the cause of women's rights in law. She worked on behalf of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs in their quest to reserve vast tracts of land for national parks and protect our natural heritage. There will be a reading from an inspiring prose passage of **Eleanor Dark** about the "mist waterfalls of Katoomba".

The woman who grew up in the Woodford bush and made tremendous contributions towards Blue Mountains botany, environmental art and political campaigning – **Isobel Bowden** – will be remembered with an offering from the leader of a recently completed major research project involving Woodford Academy. **Dot Butler** became legendary as "The Barefoot Bushwalker" and helped to save the Blue Gum Forest.

**Ruth Schleicher** settled in Hazelbrook after WW1, served as a honorary ranger, wrote countless letters to the press on nature and other issues and, with her brother, established the Blue Mountains Flora and Fauna Preservation Society.

**BE INSPIRED by the contributions of these women!** Come to the **Wentworth Falls School of Arts on Saturday 23 July**. Visitors are welcome and entry is by a gold coin donation.

*Anne McLeod's biography of Marie Byles will be available for purchase at the meeting and is available from [www.annemcleod.com.au](http://www.annemcleod.com.au):*

**Can you help?** We need volunteers to help on the day: meet and greet visitors, assist with setting up, afternoon tea, etc. Please contact Christine 4787 7246, [hutnews@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:hutnews@bluemountains.org.au)



Photos: **Winter Magic 2016**. Some members of BMCS and RAWSA (Residents Against Western Sydney Airport) gather, among other local environmental groups, to march in the Grand Parade. (Perry, the lovable Pyrenean Mountain Dog stole the show. He has been promised a Consoc sash to wear in the parade next year.)

**"Hut News", the newsletter of  
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## Hiroshima Day documentary film screening:

### "CONTAINMENT"

Saturday, 6 August, 8pm

Mount Vic Flicks, Mount Victoria

**Tickets: \$20. Available at Megalong Books, Leura, Gleebooks,  
Blackheath, and online at <https://www.tugg.com/events/97140C/>**

Blue Mountains Nuclear Free Group is hosting a one-time screening of the documentary film "**CONTAINMENT**" which asks whether we are adequately caring for future generations with current storage methods for handling radioactive waste. The screening will be on Hiroshima Day, 6 August. Blue Mountains Mayor Mark Greenhill will open the event and there with a guest speaker.

Presently, Blue Mountains City Council has a stance of **No Transport of Radioactive Waste through the Blue Mountains**. With the Great Western Highway regularly being proposed as a route for radioactive waste from the Lucas Heights facility to dump sites under consideration by the Commonwealth Government, the Blue Mountains community should be vigilant and informed of the risks inherent in the nuclear fuel cycle.

"**CONTAINMENT**" provides a global and intergenerational perspective on the nuclear industry. "How should we protect yet-to-come generations of humans on earth - people who will not share our language, our nations, even our civilisation?"

Part observational essay – (filmed in weapons plants, Fukushima and deep underground) – and part graphic novel, "**CONTAINMENT**" weaves between an uneasy present and an imaginative troubled far-future, to demonstrate the problem of storing nuclear waste, one of the deadliest, most long-lasting substances on the planet. This incredible documentary uses striking imagery and animation to ask practical and philosophical questions about the long-term storage of radioactive waste, exploring the idea that over millennia, nothing stays put.

Contact : JAN THORNLEY Mobile: 0411 743 979  
Blue Mountains Nuclear Free Group

## Protecting our leafy garden streets

As part of the development of Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2015, Council developed a new residential zone – R6 Residential Character Zone – specifically in order to protect and conserve the leafy residential streets of the Blue Mountains containing character housing set on large lots with traditional gardens. This new zone was not included in LEP 2015 as this required an amendment to the state-wide LEP template and the new zone was deferred for further consideration. This means the existing zoning under LEP 2005 for these areas has been retained.

The Society supports protecting these large lot, low density residential areas as they frequently back onto the national park or other bushland areas, thereby providing a buffer and helping ensure high density residential areas are not directly adjacent to bushland.

The good news is Council has now submitted a Planning Proposal to add the R6 zone to the Blue Mountains LEP 2015 via an amendment and to make consequent changes to the state-wide LEP template. Council is now waiting for approval from the new State Government planning body for Sydney – the Greater Sydney Commission – to proceed with a public exhibition process for the new R6 Residential Character Zone. A copy of the R6 Zone Planning Proposal and the relevant Council decision from the March 29, 2016 Council meeting can be found on Council's website.

The Society welcomes the development of the R6 Planning Proposal which brings the R6 Residential Character Zone one step closer to ultimately being included in Blue Mountains LEP 2015. When the R6 Zone is publicly exhibited it will be important that the community show their support for this zone, and for keeping our leafy streets intact, by making public submissions backing the zone.

**Land Use Subcommittee**, [landuse@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:landuse@bluemountains.org.au)

## WORLD HERITAGE WILDERNESS THREATENED BY DAM RAISING PROPOSAL

Environmentalists are reeling from the NSW Government's plans to raise the wall of Warragamba Dam.

Keith Muir, director of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness, said plans in the NSW Budget to commit to the first phase of the project were a catastrophe. "There would be significant and obvious damage to world heritage listed Greater Blue Mountains wilderness and national parks upstream of the dam. The lovely reaches of protected wild rivers, including the Kowmung, Coxs and Nattai Rivers, would be damaged. Flood inundation will scar wilderness areas by killing river bank vegetation and depositing sediment. 3,500 hectares of World Heritage wilderness and national park would be turned into a "dead zone".

Mr Muir said it was a cavalier attitude to the world heritage listing and created a false sense of security for those on the flood plain. If you allow urban development on a flood plain you are begging for a catastrophe.

The dam raising proposal has come up before and been rejected. It should be rejected again for all the same reasons. Refer to page 4, "More money thrown at the (dam) wall", for some recent history and including previous massive flows of public money related to Warragamba and Sydney's water.

### What you can do:

Write to Premier Mike Baird: (The Hon Mike Baird MP, Premier of NSW, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney 2000)

Go to the Colong Foundation for Wilderness website <https://www.colongwilderness.org.au/dont-raise-dam> for more information and a sample letter.

## The Gardens of Stone Photographic Exhibition

Weekend of 17- 18 September, 2016

The new Law Building, Sydney University

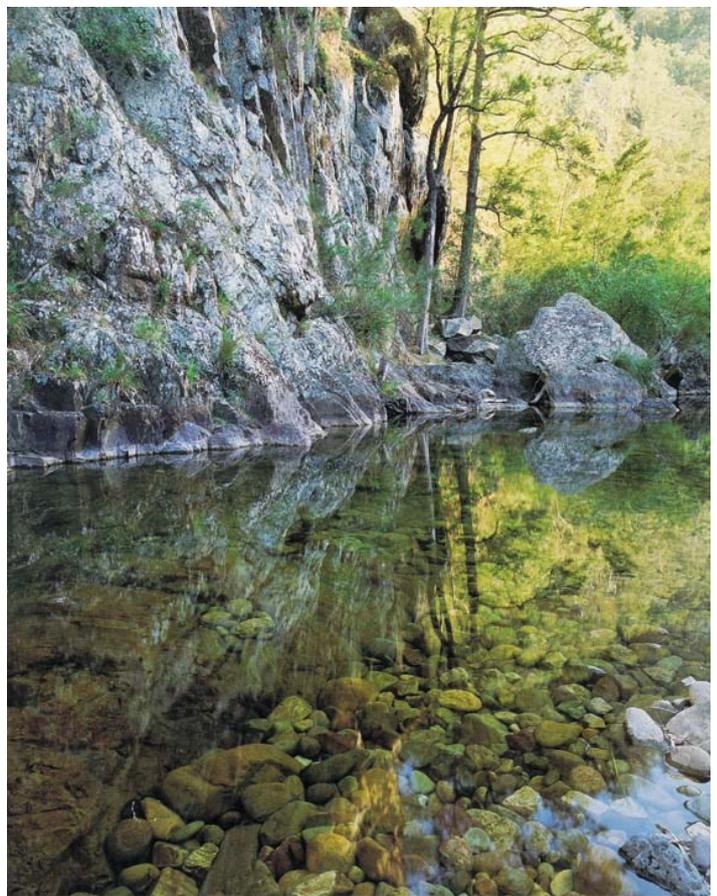
The "Gardens of Stone: *In Focus*" Photographic Exhibition will display in a kaleidoscope of images the breathtaking beauty of a rarely visited but accessible part of the Blue Mountains, near Lithgow.

Please put this event in your diary today so that you may join us to view the works, share in each other's passion for photography and conservation through a series of nature and photography talks and workshops. Socialise at lunch and the celebration dinner, and witness the launch of the Gardens of Stone Heritage Report. The exhibition is for one weekend only, so be quick!

Opens Saturday, 10:00 AM - Award ceremony and refreshments from 2:00 PM Saturday. Exhibition closes 2pm Sunday.

For more details go to the Gardens of Stone *In Focus* Celebration registration page:

<https://www.colongwilderness.org.au/campaigns/the-gardens-of-stone/register-gardens-stone-focus>



Timeless tranquillity in the wilderness, threatened by dam raising. Kowmung River, <https://www.colongwilderness.org.au/dont-raise-dam>

## Bush Explorers Encyclopaedia A New Free Resource for all Bushwalkers

On line right now is a new, free, interactive resource for all bushwalkers to help plan walks in the Gardens of Stone National Park, part of the western Wollemi National Park and part of the Blue Mountains National Park – the Bush Explorers Encyclopaedia.

Using the website [www.bushexplorers.com.au](http://www.bushexplorers.com.au) you can now find complete data, and in most cases a picture, about more than 1100 of the stunning features to be found in these unique areas.

The discovery process is simple. Go to the website [www.bushexplorers.com.au](http://www.bushexplorers.com.au), press the 'Encyclopaedia' button and then, using the search function, key in the name of the feature you are interested in. In seconds, you will have information to use in deciding whether this feature is one you wish to visit. Each feature has a description, the name of the relevant topographic map, grid references, its status with Geographic Names Board, whether it is protected within a national park or not, sample walks to do, as well as links to where you can find out more information.

The bush explorers Michael, Brian and Yuri are keen to receive your stories and photos from any visit, historic or current. Good stories and pictures can be added to the website so that it always provides up-to-date and comprehensive information for all users.

Good walking.

**Michael Keats, Brian Fox, Yuri Bolotin**  
[www.bushexplorers.com.au](http://www.bushexplorers.com.au)

## MORE MONEY THROWN AT THE (DAM) WALL Christine Davies and Brian Marshall

The NSW Baird Government has had another “lightbulb” moment. It’s been raining in the Warragamba catchment; the dam is full and could overflow. Let’s raise the dam wall!

This notion has been periodically floated and, after inevitable controversy, placed in the too hard, too expensive and environmentally unsound baskets, and put back in its box. But, unfortunately, the lid was not nailed down hard enough.

In 1985 international experts advised that Warragamba dam did not meet contemporary design standards. The wall was raised by five metres and strengthened at a cost of \$29 million. More was envisaged in terms of constructing an auxiliary spillway but this stalled pending more grandiose ideas of wall-raising.

An Environmental Impact Statement (1995) favoured raising the wall by as much as 23 metres. But the Fahey Government was replaced by the Carr government and common sense prevailed. An auxiliary second spillway was constructed (1998-2002) at a cost of \$100 million. It enabled the dam to fully comply with modern safety standards and was a cost-effective way of increasing flood-handling capacity.

By 2007 the dam was at 35% capacity and Sydney faced water shortages. The feasibility of desalination was investigated (commencing around 2005). The Sydney desalination plant was built at Kurnell at a cost of \$1.89 billion and officially switched on by the Keneally government in 2010. Sydney’s water supply was safe and assured. It then started to rain, such that the privatised plant now costs around \$195 million per year to be on standby.

In 2012, Warragamba spilled over for the first time in 14 years. Insanity returned and raising the dam for flood mitigation purposes was revived by Infrastructure NSW. This was strongly opposed by environmental organisations and once again seemed to be shelved.

Now, in 2016, raising the wall once again is on the agenda, not least because, throughout the protracted history of the dam, development on the Nepean-Hawkesbury floodplain has continued unabated. Its description as a government- and engineer-driven real estate boom is outrageously reprehensible. It is totally unsurprising that Premier Baird, who seemingly suffers from development mania, has embraced this simple-minded approach.

Yet raising the dam wall, once the dam’s integrity was assured by the initial raising and auxiliary spillway, is ridiculous.

There would be significant damage to the World Heritage Area. In parts of its wilderness, in the lower reaches of declared wild rivers, flood inundation would kill riparian vegetation and destroy threatened flora and dependent fauna. The swathe of water would create a major barrier separating large parts of the World Heritage Area. One must ask, ‘Why fight to obtain World Heritage listing of this magnificent region if it can be compromised by myopic governments which sanction damage one day and lose office the next’?

Major floods would still occur as experienced at Picton recently. The increasing dimension and frequency of such floods as a function of climate change will mean that, no matter how high the wall is raised, the flood plain will still be inundated by 1 in 200, 1 in 500 and even larger flooding events.

Regardless of the above, the dam only deals with 50-60% of the total Nepean-Hawkesbury catchment. Big floods from the Grose, Colo and Macdonald Rivers will variously impede outflows and enhance back-up above Sackville gorge while flows from the South Metropolitan Catchments will join the system up-river from Penrith.

And, furthermore, because governments have stupidly factored in the Nepean-Hawkesbury flood plain as a massive centre for new development, the Warragamba dam-raising proposal will inevitably encourage urban sprawl over flood prone areas. The false logic is that if government sponsors building in these areas, they must surely be safe. The Collaroy experience is a classic extension of the consequences of greed coupled with stupidity.

The moral is that to minimise damage in flood-prone areas, don’t build there to start with and, if you have already built there, don’t make things worse by adding more.

*And now try this experiment. Place an empty bowl out in the rain. If it rains long enough, the bowl will fill and overflow. Now try it with a larger bowl. ... Maybe an even larger bowl will work?*



Photo: Warragamba Dam Auxiliary Spillway: WaterNSW, <http://www.waternsw.com.au/supply/Greater-Sydney/safety/warragamba-dam-auxiliary-spillway>

## Concerns and actions! Brian Marshall

1. The outrageous **draft Biodiversity Conservation Bill and Local Land Services Amendment Bill** have been brought to your attention and actions suggested [*June Hut News pp5-6*]. Premier Baird and Ministers Stokes and Speakman have collective responsibility for this travesty. They say that the existing systems are deficient, particularly in terms of certainty of outcome, and that the proposed changes are better for the environment. This is spin! The current systems favour mining and other forms of development; when environmental groups successfully oppose a development, government seeks to change the offending law; the current changes will further enhance the imbalance to the detriment of the environment. Minister Speakman offers nothing other than *"There are a range of diverse views on the proposed reform"*, despite the environment being his portfolio.

**What to do?** Although formal submissions were due by 28/06, you can still email/phone the minister(s), indicating your displeasure, and telling Minister Speakman his role is to protect the environment, not acquiesce to pro-mining changes.

2. Those in government who are responsible for the changes in item 1 have flagged their intention to amend the **Environmental Planning and Assessment Act** [see <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Legislative-Updates>]. The draft will appear in the spring, but 'planning' is currently seeking input from those with experience of the processes. There will unquestionably be major lobbying by mining and CSG companies and professional organizations representing the companies' interests. If the changes heralded in item 1 are indicative, the spin will say one thing but the Baird government's imperative will focus on clarifying and streamlining processes to facilitate developments to the detriment of environmental outcomes.

**What to do?** Between now and mid-August, environmental organizations and individuals should make submissions emphasising deficiencies in current processes and highlighting aspects of the existing regulations which must not be weakened. Additional information and guides to individual submissions will be provided when they become available. Any submissions should also be sent to Ministers Stokes and Speakman so that they are aware of the intensity of feeling within the community.

3. **Clarence Colliery's** licence to discharge mine-water to the Wollangambe River is subject to review by the EPA. Research has comprehensively demonstrated the injurious nature of the discharges to water quality and dependent ecosystems, even when the discharges are superficially compliant. The proposed changes to EPL 726 were referred to a Joint Expert Panel and the Panel's final report is being peer-reviewed. The EPA will distribute the peer-reviewed report to Key Stakeholders (including BMCS) and convene a meeting to explain and hopefully finalise the licence by mid-July. The big question involves the extent to which the licence will be massaged to enable Clarence Colliery to continue polluting the Wollangambe wild river and thereby the World Heritage Area. BMCS demands that the discharges be fully treated to ensure that the water

quality is commensurate with the natural receiving waters prior to any mining-induced pollution. Anything less will be unacceptable.

**What to do?** Either rejoice, or be ready to denounce any perversion of process. You will be advised!

4. Much delay in reviewing Clarence's licence stemmed from the **massive spill of mine-waste** (~ July 1, 2015) due to the collapse of a holding dam. Cleaning up the toxic black 'goo', which polluted the Wollangambe for many kilometres into the World Heritage Area was prioritised by the EPA. The extremely expensive clean-up has yet to be finalised, but the magnitude of the catastrophe has resulted in the EPA prosecuting Clarence Colliery in the Land and Environment Court for an alleged Tier 1 (highest level) offence. The National Parks and Wildlife Service has separately commenced prosecuting Clarence over the alleged damage to the Blue Mountains National Park and World Heritage Area arising from the same incident. The findings of the Court will not be known for some time, but BMCS believes that the clean-up costs should not influence the magnitude of any fines imposed. Indeed, it would be totally unconscionable if the fines were deemed to be effectively expunged by the clean-up costs.

**What to do?** Wait and see, but be prepared to express outrage should Clarence be insufficiently fined for potentially avoidable impacts on a wild river, a National Park, and World Heritage values.

5. Few can be unaware of the enormous impacts of the proposed **Western Sydney Airport** on the World Heritage area, Sydney's water supply, the scenic values and ambience of the Blue Mountains on which the tourist industry is based, and the life-style of its village-based human residents. And few will be unaware of the enormous impact the airport's construction and protracted use will have on greenhouse gas emissions, irrespective of how they are counted. The 'no' campaign, as witnessed in many issues of Hut News, is strong, well justified, and provides well researched alternatives, but the two major parties seem blind to the logic, or are perhaps afraid to risk coming out from under their largely bi-partisan security blanket. I despair that more environmentally sustainable means of transport are being embraced in many other countries whilst Australia suffers from political myopia.

**What to do?** Continue the fight because the case for the airport is poorly founded and the consequences of failure are horrendous.

### BMCS Planning and Development Resource Kit

Do you want to take action on an environmental issue in your neighbourhood or the Blue Mountains more broadly?

Do you want information about the laws and procedures relating to development and environmental protection?

Find out what **YOU** can do! Go to the Planning and Development Resource Kit [www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml](http://www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml)



## National Tree Day

Sunday 31 July, 2016

## Schools Tree Day

Friday 29 July, 2016

Look for an event near you. Plant a native tree or shrub or create an area for planting in the spring. Our nursery reopens for sales at the beginning of August.

## Clarence Colliery mine waste collapse into Wollongambe River— one year on ...

Centennial Coal has pleaded guilty to a Tier One pollution charge (the most serious level) under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act* and to damage to a national park under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act*. In July 2015 a mine waste heap at Centennial's Clarence mine near Lithgow collapsed and spread its toxic sludge into the Wollongambe River and the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

A hearing date for Centennial Coal's two prosecutions has been set for 12 August.

Because of Centennial's guilty plea the hearing will only cover the penalties to be applied.

Meanwhile, the clean up of the Wollongambe River is still underway nearly a year later.

**Madi Maclean** [mlhmaclean@bigpond.com](mailto:mlhmaclean@bigpond.com)

## Looking back ...

### Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society newsletter No. 65, October 1986

Isobel Bowden once said ...

"A little sitting down and patient observation coupled with study of the observations of others is necessary if we are to be aware of much at all."

Red-browed Treecreeper sipping nectar

Recently, in Medlow Bath, I saw this insectivorous bird sipping nectar from *Banksia ericafolia* flowers. It poked its beak in and out among the flower spikes like a honey eater. Having apparently exhausted one bush, it then flew to another! Graham Alcorn

### CAVE WARBLER (*Origma solitaria*)

What an enigma  
Is the origma.  
Nobody can be sure  
About the taxonomy  
Of this anomaly

Graham Alcorn

## Focus on track funding

\$9 million will be spent on upgrading the Royal Coast Track in the Royal National Park over four years, but a one-off private donation offer of \$350,000 (Dick & Pippa Smith Foundation) for the Katoomba-Wild Dogs– Kanangra track is far more controversial.

The Coastal budgeting does show Government awareness of the increasing popularity of bushwalking (and bush fun running). While areas of New South Wales, including the Central Blue Mountains, have overused tracks, it makes sense to put many times more than the foreshadowed \$9 million into accessible bushwalks outside gazetted Wilderness areas, especially those close to the majority of the New South Wales population. Allocations for capital works must be followed up with adequate annual maintenance budgets.

Unless it is modified substantially, the Katoomba– Wild Dogs– Kanangra proposal is likely to contravene the Wilderness Act. In its current form, most environmental organisations would oppose it.

## Poets' Corner

### Four Tanka

a saucer of swamp  
with button grass clumps  
edged by bush  
home of birds, insects, snakes  
and sanctuary for us

veiled in mist  
ghostly leaves drip,  
trunk patterns  
darken in the damp  
shed bark hanging

- Lois Holland

the only sound  
water falling over rocks  
to the plunge pool  
fringed by fern and moss  
my church in the forest

a gum leaf  
in the billy of tea  
whirl it round,  
a welcome cuppa  
in the stillness of the bush

*Tanka is a classical Japanese form: a five-line poem (Ed)*

*Readers of Hut News are invited to send a poem inspired by the Blue Mountains, maximum of 20 lines. Each month, one or two will be published in Poets' Corner. Poems can be emailed to [brendan049@gmail.com](mailto:brendan049@gmail.com) or even posted to Poets' Corner at 5 Lurline Street, Wentworth Falls 2782.*

**Brendan Doyle.**

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND URBAN LIFESTYLE DISASTERS – A GENUINE THREAT

**Don Morison**

The combined infrastructure and urban planning proposals of the NSW Baird Government could, in just a few years, harm everyone in Greater Sydney and the Blue Mountains region, even the narrow vested interests who currently make up the cheer squad for these misguided ideas.

Consider the Warragamba dam wall raising. The Colong Foundation for Wilderness has already explained in detail why this is only a stopgap measure. It is a pathetic attempt to postpone human cooperation with the forces of nature (like building sea walls instead of taking development away from coastal dunes).

The way to minimise the harm from floods in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment is to stop putting buildings on flood plains. But this tremendously environmentally damaging and money wasting proposal goes in lock step with the foolishness of putting a major airport and massive extra population into Greater Western Sydney. The airport and new motorways will greatly increase air pollution in what is already the worst urban air pollution trap in Australia – this will further burden already overstretched health facilities.

It is impossible to significantly mitigate the air pollution time bomb of Badgerys Creek airport by building a few new railways. This is because it is part of an urban sprawl model that governments are effectively favouring. Ubiquitous low density suburbs on the Cumberland Plain create the most difficult possible challenges for public transport. They mean that Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains are likely to miss out on the benefits of transport technology improvements in the coming decades.

Governments could adopt a linear urban development model for New South Wales. This would allow high speed surface transport to play a much greater role and remove the need for a second airport. But governments are deaf to such possibilities.

What do residents of Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains face under current policies? We face massive environmental degradation of the World Heritage Area and remaining natural areas of the Cumberland Plain. We face spending more hours each day in clogged traffic arteries and a deteriorating public transport system, with fares and motorway tolls rising. We face huge increases in the incidence of respiratory illness with health facilities hopelessly overcrowded and underfunded. We face an economic “growth model” where nearly all the jobs become robotised or casualised. We face climate change induced extreme weather events, meaning that floods and storms, when they do happen, will be worse than ever.

I don't have to walk up and down the footpath with a “doomsday placard”. You already get the picture. Don Morison.

### VALLEY OF THE WATERS BUSHCARE

The Valley of the Waters Bushcare Group meets on the second Saturday of each month, 9am till noon. Tools and gloves are available. Bring a drink, a snack and a sunhat.

New members are welcome.

Phone Karen 4757 1929.

## Hollows as Homes

In urban and agricultural areas large, hollow-bearing trees are in decline, but many species of animal rely on tree hollows. In NSW, hollow-dependent species include at least 46 mammals, 81 birds, 31 reptiles and 16 frogs. Of these, 40 species are listed as threatened with extinction. This is why the ‘loss of hollow-bearing trees’ has been listed as a key threatening process.

Hollow-bearing trees in urban areas are commonly removed as a safety precaution. However a new method of cut-in hollows has been developed, which aims to safely retain trees, increasing hollow habitat which is important to conserve biodiversity. Cut-in hollows complement the well-established method of nest boxes.



*Cut-in hollow for small bird. J Martin*

With the help of the community, the *Hollows as Homes* project aims to assess the availability of tree hollows and their use by wildlife across Sydney and the Blue Mountains. An aim is to collect data to inform Councils decision-making process when installing supplementary hollows to support biodiversity.

The *Hollows as Homes* team wants you to report tree hollow(s) or nest boxes in your backyard, street, park and/or paddock through [www.hollowsashomes.com](http://www.hollowsashomes.com). You'll need you to take some measurements of the hollow-bearing tree/nest box and report your observations of wildlife using the hollow(s). Training is available through workshops and the website.

Your information will be used to build a picture of the location and type of hollows available, as well as the wildlife using these hollows. The information will inform Councils' plans to retain important habitat trees, plant future habitat trees and supplement missing habitat (e.g. small, medium or large hollows).

The *Hollows as Homes* project was launched in March 2016 and is coordinated by the Royal Botanic Garden, University of Sydney, and Australian Museum. For more information contact Dr Adrian Davis [hollows.ashomes@gmail.com](mailto:hollows.ashomes@gmail.com) or [facebook.com/hollowsashomes](https://www.facebook.com/hollowsashomes). *Hollows as Homes* is supported by the Sydney Coastal Councils Group through funding from the Australian Government.



Australian Government



SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP



HOLLOW'S AS HOMES

# NAMING THE WILD DOG MOUNTAINS—Jim Smith (Part 4 of 7)

Parts 1—3 of this series were published in April/May/June 2016 Hut News

<http://www.bluemountains.org.au/hutnews-archive.shtml>

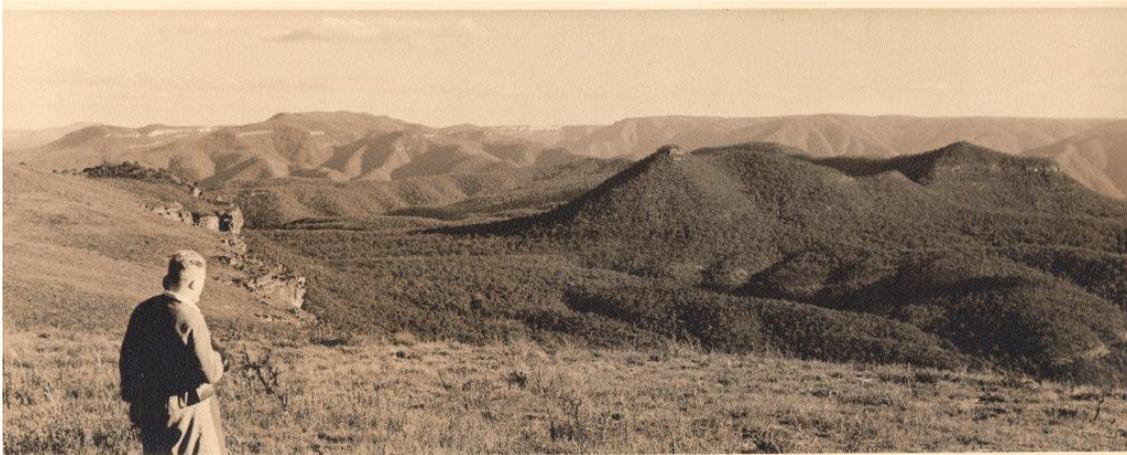


Photo of part of the Wild Dog Mountains by Wal Green taken in the 1940s. The pointed Mount Mouin is near the centre of the picture, with Mount Warrigal to the right. Jim Smith collection

## Dunphy names the Wild Dog Mountains

Dunphy later decided to extend the 'dog' theme right through the range to the south of Medlow Gap. He was once asked what inspired him to do this. His answer has never been reprinted and should be of interest to anyone who has walked in the area. A 'reporter' from the Sydney Bush Walkers Club was sent in 1942 to interview Dunphy and received this (paraphrased by the reporter) reply:

*"Mouin" is an aboriginal name, the meaning of which Myles could not trace, so he took it to stand for the original blackfellow. The only other named place being Black Dog rock, and the fact that dingoes were very prevalent there, gave him the idea of naming the surrounding mountains and ridges as different kinds of dogs, which might be imagined as belonging to the Blackfellow "Mouin". So the mountains south of Mouin were called "Warrigal" (native name for dog), "Dingo", and, between the two, that flat clear little plateau,*

*often likened to a cricket pitch, was named Merrimerrigal (Merri= dog; gal= place of many dogs). Thus native names of dogs were used for the nearby mountains. The ridges running from these mountains to the Cox were named, starting from the Black Dog and going west, as follows: Black, Red, White, Grey, Spotted, Brown, Yellow, Brindle, Blue and Bad Dog (can't get off this one)--Some extra spurs from these were named Blue Pup, Brindle Pup, Yellow Pup, Brown Pup and Kelpie Rock. The gorge between Harry's River and Kanangra River was called Merriganowry Gorge. It means the tribal ground of all the dingoes.*

Dunphy's story mimics the themes of Aboriginal Creation stories in that he has imagined that Mount Mouin was once a legendary person who was transformed into a landscape feature and that the ridges coming off the range were once his dogs. However, Mouin was not a character in the original Gundungurra story and the local Aboriginal legend has nothing to do with dogs.

Dunphy promoted his names through hand-drawn maps sent to other bushwalkers until he had the opportunity to have input into the first edition of the 'Tourist Map of the Blue Mountains and Burratorang Valley', published by the New South Wales Lands Department in 1932. Appearing on this map were, in addition to the cattlemen's Black and White Dog ridges, the new names: Blue Dog Range, Brindle Dog Ridge, Yellow Dog Range, and Spotted Dog, as well as the three main peaks: Mounts Mouin, Warrigal and Dingo, collectively named The Wild Dog Range. Another dog-themed name was Merrigal Creek. Dunphy was probably frustrated that, due to the scale of the map, he was not able to fit on more 'dogs'. Alan Rigby described the 'discovery', in April 1932, of the high plateau to the south of Mount

(Continued on page 9)

1937 edition of the Blue Mountains Burratorang Tourist Map, showing Dunphy's 'Wild Dog' names.



## Naming the Wild Dog Mountains (continued from page 8)

Warrigal: "This was duly reported to M. J. Dunphy and named Meri Merigal (the place of the Dingoes). A better name would be "the place of the Eagles", for here they abound."

As well as the publicly available 1932 map, Dunphy distributed privately larger scale maps with more names. Some of these are included in the 1935 article by Walter Roots which adds Dingo Pup, Merri-Merrigal, Dingo Gap, Wombat Parade, Merrigal Gap, Splendour Rock and Kelpie Point. A private map compiled by Rae Else Mitchell in 1937 includes also Spotted Pup Ridge, Yellow Pup Ridge and Kennel Flat. Red Dog made a single appearance on the 1937 edition of the 'Blue Mountains Burratorang Tourist Map', but was removed on the 1939 and subsequent editions.

It was not until 1953, when Dunphy produced the first edition of his 'Gangerang, Wild Dog Mountains, Lower Kowmung, North Thurat' map that the general public was able to obtain a map which included the full set of Dunphy's canine names. Added to the dog colours were Brown and Grey and there were numerous new pups, points and gullies in the dog colours, and a Mount Yellow Dog. Other dog related names were: Faithful Hound, Bad Pup, Howling Dog, Knights Pups, Grizzled Dog, Growler Ridge, Debert's Pup, Snarling Dog, Ghost Dog, Sharp Tooth and Cattle Dog. Robert O'Reilly would never have suspected that his spontaneous exasperated description of the Black Dog Track would eventually give rise to scores of canine related names.

In addition to naming a few places in the Wild Dog Mountains after his friends, Dunphy brought in an imported Aboriginal word Marralomed Point.

### Endnotes:

<sup>17</sup> Anonymous, 'On Dogs', *The Sydney Bushwalker*, October 1942, p.7. Don Matthews thought that the reporter could have been Ray Kirkby, who died in 1982.

<sup>18</sup> Alan Rigby, 'Lost in the Wild Dog Mountains', *The Sydney Bushwalker*, December 1932, p.3.

<sup>19</sup> Ron Bracewell, 'Wild Dog Mountains', copied from Rae Mitchell's Blue Print (7-12-37), 13th of March 1944. Mitchell Library, MT3, 812.17/1940/1.

<sup>20</sup> Marrola is the Gundungurra (and in other regional languages) word for hand but the 'meda' is a made up suffix or one from a far distant language.

## Wild Life in Blackheath Christine Davies

It's cold in Blackheath, with an icy blast from the snowfields. If I were a bird I'd probably fly somewhere else for the winter. But there are Banksias and Sunshine Wattles flowering and little swarms of insects. The heathland is just full of honeyeaters.

In the garden, *Correa reflexa* near the bird bath is covered with flowers. The flowers are small, pale pink/yellow and unspectacular. But the Eastern Spinebill, with its long narrow beak, is the only bird who can reach the sweet nectar at the base of the narrow tubular flowers and, next to the *Correa*, there are still flowers on the red Grevillea which the Eastern Spinebill also enjoys.

A little flock of Red Browed Finches seemed to thoroughly enjoy bathing in the near freezing water of the bird bath.

Yesterday, I was sitting at the computer and looked out the window when a flock of Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos flew overhead. When they reached the trees in the National Park most of them flew over. But two of them headed for a gap in the trees and, close together, turned their bodies sideways to adjust their flight path as they veered around the tallest tree and toward the Grose Valley. Silhouetted before the cloud, it was a beautiful display of synchronised flying. (June 2016)

## You can become a member of Blue Mountains Conservation Society

- Post this Application Form with your cheque or money order to: Blue Mountains Conservation Society, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782, OR
- Join online at: [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

(Use capitals please—even for email address)

Name(s) 1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....

Address: .....  
.....PC .....

Phone(s) .....

Email .....

**I/We agree to support the aims and objectives of the Society as set out on reverse side of this membership application:**

Please sign if named above.

Signature(s) 1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....

MEMBERSHIP FEES (please circle one item)

Single \$35 Concession (Senior/Student) \$25

Household \$40 Household Concession \$30

Corporate (negotiable)

Membership (circled above) \$ .....

Donation (tax deductible) \$ .....

Bushwalkers: please add

\$20 per walker per annum. \$ .....

TOTAL AMOUNT \$ .....

Send my copy of Hut News by

Please tick box  mail  internet only

Would you like to be involved in any of the following activities or working groups? (Please underline):

Land use/development issues; Environmental Education; Threatened species issues; Website and social media; Plant nursery assistance; Bushcare; Publicity/photography; Water quality/sourcing studies; Administration;

ENQUIRIES: Phone 02 4757 1872

Email: [membership@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:membership@bluemountains.org.au)

### A BEQUEST: Please remember us in your Will.

The Law Society of NSW recommends the following wording: "I bequeath the sum of \$ ... to the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc. for its general purposes and declare that the receipt of the treasurer for the time being of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society shall be complete discharge to my executors in respect of any sum paid to the Blue Mountains Conservation Society".

**BLUE MOUNTAINS  
CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

**Blue Mountains Conservation Society is a community organisation working to achieve the preservation and regeneration of the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains.**

**The Society believes that World Heritage status provides an opportunity for local community members to become custodians of the unique biodiversity and scenery of the Blue Mountains.**

**The Mission of the Society is to help conserve the natural environment of the Blue Mountains.**

**The Aims and Objectives of the Society are to:**

- Disseminate and foster an understanding of the ideals of Conservation.
- Promote the need for ecological sustainability.
- Protect the natural environment—flora, fauna, habitat, water, land and air.
- Actively oppose those human activities which degrade or destroy the natural environment.
- Repair the adverse effects of human activities upon the environment.
- Encourage the love of the natural environment by conducting a regular program of bushwalks.
- Increase the pool of expert knowledge about the natural environment, through meetings, excursions, research and other activities.
- Provide information to the public on matters of Conservation, especially through the Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters, Wentworth Falls.
- Maintain close and friendly relations with like-minded groups.

**Welcome to new members**

Neil Hausfeld  
Rosie Crossing  
Lindsey Gray  
Matt Renner

**BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION  
SOCIETY [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)**

'Like' us on Facebook:

Blue Mountains Conservation Society

Follow us on Twitter: [bmcnsnw](https://twitter.com/bmcsnsw)

## The Australian Bird Feeding & Watering Study

The Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study is a citizen science initiative being conducted by researchers at Deakin University and Griffith University. Our interests are the interactions people have with birds in their own backyards, as this can have a huge impact on bird diversity and abundance. One of the most common ways people interact with birds is through providing food and water.

The Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study aims to gather quantitative data on the effects of supplementary feeding and providing water for birds and the reasons why people provided food and/or water. In doing so we aim to develop purpose guidelines for people who feed birds to do so with minimum risk to birds.

You can sign up for and to participate in The Australian Bird Feeding and Watering Study by visiting [www.feedingbirds.org.au](http://www.feedingbirds.org.au). The survey will start on Monday the 1st of August when we will ask you to monitor the birds visiting your bird baths and/or feeders 3 times a week. The survey will run for 4 weeks and will end on Sunday the 28th of August.

If you have any questions about the study check out our Q&A section or just send me an email ([g.cleary@deakin.edu.au](mailto:g.cleary@deakin.edu.au)) Gráinne Cleary

### Blue Mountains Fauna and Flora Preservation Society

"Protect our Birds and Animals,  
Save our Flowers and Trees."

President:

Mr. B. Schleicher, MA

Hon Secretary:

Miss R. Schleicher, J.P.

"Currawong",

Origma Avenue,  
Hazelbrook.

Telephone M249

"Currawong"

Origma Ave

Hazelbrook NSW

16/5/57

Dear Miss Bowden

As you are down in Sydney perhaps you may like to go to the Wildlife Preservation Society's annual meeting? I will enclose the notice about it.

There is another Conference of representatives of Conservation Societies on June 1<sup>st</sup> called by Mr. Griffiths. It will deal with the report of the Committee appointed by the previous conference to deal with resolutions passed by it.

Special attention will be given to the laws governing formation & maintenance of Parks.

We have been asked to send 2 representatives. My brother will go as one of them. I had thought of asking you to be the other but Mary Campbell told me you would not be able to go as you had to accompany the Nature Outings.

My brother rang up Mr. .... and he hopes to be able to attend the Conference as our second delegate. Unfortunately as this Conference is a week before our next Fauna and Flora meeting we shall not be able to discuss anything we might wish to place before it.

We will advertise your "Outings" expedition on the 25<sup>th</sup> in the local paper. I hope that you will have good weather for it & a good attendance & that in every way it will be a very successful day.

It is cold tonight & last night we had a frost, temp. 36°.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Schleicher

Hon. Secretary

**Letter from Ruth Schleicher to Isobel Bowden, 16/5/57.** A photocopy of this handwritten letter on letterhead was supplied by Jim Smith. Jim will speak about Ruth Schleicher at the Forum on Women Pioneers in Conservation on Saturday 23 July at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts.



This “Blue Trail” is a collective description for sites in the western Blue Mountains that arouse natural or cultural interest or both. Most are only a short walk from roads or vehicular tracks. One day, a high quality walking path may link them.

## **21. NELLIES GLEN, Katoomba**

Dripping with natural beauty and history, Nellies Glen is a Katoomba landform named after the daughter of a 19th century entrepreneur John Britty North for whom the main lookout above the glen is now named. Phillip Hammon and Phillip Pells' tome, “The burning mists of time”, records that he was an early local councillor and member of the Sydney Stock Exchange. North also made a path from his home near Shell Corner down into the Glen to visit his “Glen Shale Mine”. It crossed the top of Bonnie Doon Falls, home to *Pherosphaera fitzgeraldii*, the Dwarf Mountain Pine. This is among Australia's rarest plant species, growing only in the spray of south facing waterfalls between Wentworth Falls and Katoomba.

From Nellies Glen the gubernatorial couple, Lord and Lady Carrington, began their horseback journey to Jenolan Caves, guided by the renowned poet and horseman, Harry Peckman. The charming switch-backing bridle path was partly obliterated in 1968 when former Blue Mountains engineer, the late John Yeaman, launched the second unsuccessful attempt to directly link Katoomba and Megalong by road.

The late Les Maxwell was a lonely figure as he operated a piece of council machinery alone near the cliff edge, trying to create fill for the road which ended being too steep (source: Smith, Jim, lectures in local history, Blue Mountains TAFE 1991). In the late 1990s, former Deputy Mayor Terri Hamilton was among those who championed the now partly successful revegetating of the resulting scar. The Glen is now a landmark on the Six Foot Track.

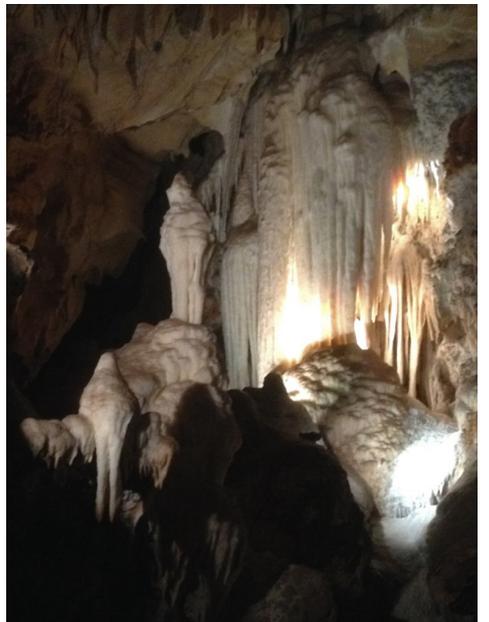
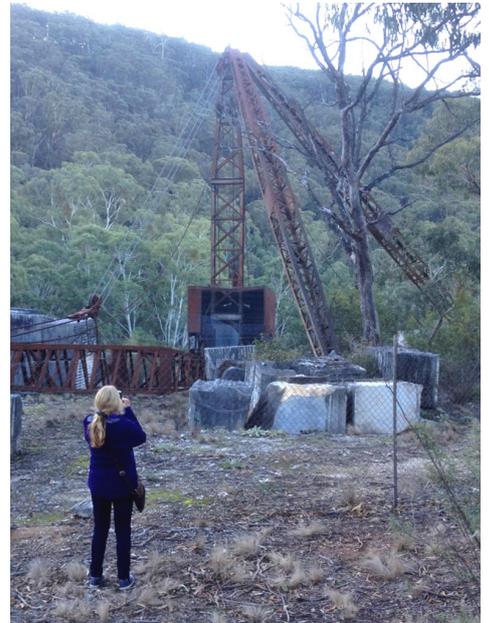
## **22. MARBLE – A NATURAL AND CULTURAL TREASURE: Wombeyan – Taralga District**

Marble – metamorphosed limestone – has captivated people through history. At Wombeyan Caves are marble formations as breathtaking as the limestone formations of Jenolan. Nearby is evidence of modest attempts to obtain marble for architectural purposes. A steam crane that was first engaged in constructing Sydney's Spit Bridge is spending its rusting years overlooking Wombeyan's western marble quarry. It was a tremendously challenging operation to cut the marble into geometrically precise blocks, using strong wires to separate the marble from the karst.

The unusual quality of the rock can still be perceived by visitors to either the western or northern quarries. To appreciate the use of the marble in a built environment, you need to go as far as the Taralga Hotel and admire the marble hearth stone, transported from Wombeyan to be placed in the lounge in the north western corner of the ground floor.

Examining this aspect of the Greater Blue Mountains mining history is fascinating. But don't let it leave you short of time to admire the caves themselves. Marble and limestone are at their most wonderful when seen in the timeless structures of an underground paradise.

**Images, clockwise from top:** Partly successful regeneration on cliff edge above Nellies Glen; Sign from an earlier fauna study (Don Morison); Anne-Marie finds the old Spit Bridge crane at a marble quarry; Figure-like formations and shawl, Wollondilly Cave (Colin Carpenter); Marble hearth stone, Taralga Hotel (Christine Davies)



## BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY Inc: BUSHWALKING ACTIVITIES

Membership of the bushwalking group is open to Society members. The BMCS Bushwalking Guide which explains the numbered grades can be found on the Society's website [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) or can be posted on request. For more information call Maurice Kerkham 4739 4942, mobile 04024 02783, email [mauricekerkham@hotmail.com](mailto:mauricekerkham@hotmail.com) or write to PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782. **Late changes to the program will be published on the website.**

**SATURDAY WALKS:** Usually a full day longer walk at a faster pace. Bring morning tea, lunch and adequate water. If you are a new walker to Saturday walks, before attending contact the designated contact person or the Group Co-ordinator Harold Thompson [harold.thompson@bigpond.com](mailto:harold.thompson@bigpond.com) 6355 1762 or mobile 0409 010 737

**Saturday Walks driver reimbursement:** *In an effort to ensure that car drivers are adequately compensated for the use of their vehicles a driver reimbursement policy applies* (Check [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) Saturday Walks page for details)

Jul 9 **Gardens of Stone** – off track - part exploratory. Contact Leader for more detail. Leader **Hugh** 0423 309 854, best after 8pm, or email: [hue.s@optusnet.com.au](mailto:hue.s@optusnet.com.au) - 5Km - Gr -3 - Map **TBA**

Jul 16 **Hat Hill to Bald Hill via Bald Head Ridge** with possible extension to Anvil Rock. Leader **Harold** 6355 1762 or 0409 010 737. Meet at Blackheath station carpark 8.00am. 7Km. Gr3. Map **Mt Wilson**

Jul 23 **Gardens of Stone**. The little known, unbelievable **Twin Heads** - off-track - part exploratory. Contact leader: Leader **Hugh** - 0423 309 854, best after 8pm, or email: [hue.s@optusnet.com.au](mailto:hue.s@optusnet.com.au) 5km. Gr-3. Map **Cullen Bullen**.

Jul 30 **Wongarra Hill and explore into Wongarra Gully** - lots of spectacular views into the Grose. Contact Leader for details. Leader **Emanuel** 4757 1090 or 0419773906 or email [emanuelnddi@yahoo.com.au](mailto:emanuelnddi@yahoo.com.au) 6Km Gr3 Map **Mt Wilson**

Aug 6 **Gardens of Stone** – off track - part exploratory. Contact Leader for more detail. Leader **Hugh** 0423309854-or email: [hue.s@optusnet.com.au](mailto:hue.s@optusnet.com.au)--5Km - Gr 3 –Map **TBA**

Aug 13 – **Govetts Leap, Rodriguez Pass to Junction Rock** and up the **Horse Track to Evans Lookout**. 600M ascent/descent- Leader **Warren** 4787 5403-Meet at Blackheath Station Carpark-8.15am-9Km-Gr 3-Map **Katoomba**

**MONDAY LEISURE WALKS:** Short Day walks of 3-5 hours, suitable for walkers of an average fitness. Bring morning tea and lunch and adequate water. The Group Co-ordinator is Keith Dorrian, 4736 1010, 04111 62345, [keithdor53@hotmail.com](mailto:keithdor53@hotmail.com)

July 11 **Red Hand Cave** Variation via Camp Fire Creek and return via the Ironbarks. Glenbrook National Park. Approx 10 Km circuit. Meet Glenbrook Station carpark east 8-30am. Leader Meredith 4782 4823. Grade 3

Jul 18 **Braeside Walk to Govetts Leap**. Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 9-40am, Car Pool. Leader Tracy 0434 362611. Grade 2

Jul 25 **Little Zig Zag & Wilsons Glen, Mount Victoria**. Circuit walk via Pulpit Rock & Regents Pass. Steep sections. Approx 6 km. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.45 am. Ros 0417 261 465. Grade 2/3

Aug 1 **Newnes, Wolgan Valley**. Visit an Aboriginal art site then stroll around historic shale mining ruins, 2.4 km. Meet Mt Victoria Rail Station 8.50. Car pool \$7. Meredith 4782 4823. Grade 2.

Aug 8 **Nepean River walk, Emu Plains/Penrith**, start at Emu Plains Station. Easy walk along both banks of the river. Lunch at O'Donahue's. Meet Emu Plains Station 9.45 am. Judith 4785 6310. Grade 2.

**THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS:** Walks 2-3 hours conducted at a leisurely pace to suit walkers on the day. Bring morning tea, adequate water and lunch if noted. Group Co-ordinator is Beverley Thompson, 4757 2076, [denfenella@optusnet.com.au](mailto:denfenella@optusnet.com.au)

Jul 14 **Asgard Swamp, Mount Victoria**. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.50am. Leader Tracy 0434 362 611. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2

Jul 21 **Christmas in July. Royal Hotel, 220 Macquarie Road, Springwood \$24**. Meet at the hotel 12.30pm. Book and pay Beverley 4757 2076.

Jul 28 **Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway, Rhodes**. Meet Strathfield Station 9.15am. Leader Rose 9420 2103. Take lunch. Grade 2

Aug 4 **Little Zig Zag, Mount Victoria**. Circuit along track constructed in 1877 for access to Kanimbla Valley. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.50am. Leader Rosemary 6355 2292. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 3

Aug 11 **Lockleys Pylon, Leura**. Best views of the Grose Valley and Mounts Hay and Banks. Meet cnr The Mall and Megalong Street Leura. Leaders Jeanette and Alan 4757 3750. Car pool \$5. Take lunch. Grade 2/3

## How do they feather their nests?

Where do birds find the feathers to line their nests? There is plenty of spider web, grass, bark, lichen and moss around, but you don't see piles of feathers lying about in the bush.

Recently a pair of Eastern Spinebills built their small, cap shaped nest in a stiff-leaved Calistemon bush in my garden. It was extremely well hidden, and nestling down in the thick feather lining when I found it were two small young.

Alas, late one evening about a week later I found three feathers on the ground. Feeling in the nest, it was empty. Next morning, the ground was covered with feathers. The predator, probably a Pied Currawong, had apparently returned and pulled out the lining looking for further morsels.

We gathered the feathers from the ground and those remaining in the nest and counted them—70 in all, in a nest the size of a small coffee cup!

Graham Alcorn, 1986.

Read about our bushwalkers' exploits on Facebook—with lots of wonderful photos.

<https://www.facebook.com/BmcsBushwalking>

**BmcsBushwalking**

and

<https://www.facebook.com/bmcslongerbushwalks>

**bmcslongerbushwalks**