



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"



Bylong Valley looking towards Wollemi National Park. The photo was taken in July of this year during a period of intense drought. Impacts of the proposed mine on water resources are a key concern. Photo by Peter Smith.

Bylong Coal Mine – What madness is this? Judy Smith

The Bylong Valley, some 40 km north of Rylstone, abuts the north-western edge of Wollemi National Park and the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. It is a valley of great beauty with fertile soils underlying productive agricultural land. A new open cut and underground coal mine, with a lifespan of 25 years, is proposed for the valley. All coal taken from the valley would be shipped direct to South Korea via Newcastle. The area of the proposed mine has outstanding natural values including critically endangered Box Gum Woodland and Regent Honeyeaters. Two thirds of all threatened birds, one half of all threatened mammals and two thirds of all threatened reptiles known to occur in the World Heritage Area (which covers over one million hectares) have been recorded in or are likely to occur in the area of the proposed mine.

In October of this year, as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its *Global Warming of 1.5° C* report, the NSW Department of Planning and Environment recommended that the proposed new coal mine in an amazing location was "approvable" subject to an array of often discretionary conditions.

What madness is this? The Society made submissions opposing the mine in 2015 and again in November of this year. We also spoke against the mine at the recent Independent Planning Commission (IPC) hearing in Mudgee. It is now up to the IPC to determine if the proposed mine gets a green light. Read the submission at <https://www.bluemountains.org.au/documents/submissions/2018/bs1811-bylong-mine.pdf>

Mick Dark talk inspires community discussion

The annual Mick Dark Talk for the Future honours the contribution of Mick Dark, a past president and life member of Blue Mountains Conservation Society and patron of Varuna. The event is co-sponsored by Blue Mountains Conservation Society and Varuna Writers Centre. The talk attracted a range of sponsors, including local organisations with an interest in healthy food production.

This year's talk certainly achieved its objectives "to inspire community discussion of environmental issues of local and global significance". The speaker was Charles Massy, a fifth generation sheep grazer, academic and author of the ground-breaking *Call of the Reed Warbler, A New Agriculture – a New Earth*. Charles' topic for the Mick Dark Talk: "It's time to wake up: Can regenerative farming save both the planet and human health?" challenged us to reconsider how we farm and produce food in Australia.

Charles Massey spoke of his own early experiences as a grazer and the damage that has been done to Australian soils due to the application of European farming methods. He was strongly critical of the increasing use of Glyphosphates (Round Up) and other chemicals in commercial food production. Such chemicals impact soil microbes and subsequently human health. He also spoke about global warming and how the IPCC report has given limited time for concerted worldwide action if we are to avoid more than 1.5 degrees warming.

Charles believes that "sustainability" has become an overused term and prefers the term 'regenerative' in relation to agriculture. He finished with a message of hope, expounding his belief that by connecting with the land and widely adopting regenerative farming methods, there is a way forward to a healthy and sustainable future.

"Hut News", the newsletter of
Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.
P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls, 2782
Phone 4757 1872 (leave message)
Email: bmcs@bluemountains.org.au
Web page: www.bluemountains.org.au
Facebook: Blue Mountains Conservation
Society Twitter: [bmcsnsw](https://twitter.com/bmcsnsw)

President: Madi Maclean 0412 428 202
president@bluemountains.org.au
Senior Vice President: Tara Cameron
0419 824 974 taracameron4@gmail.com
Second Vice President:
Don Morison 8230 2116
donmorison@bluemountains.org.au
Treasurer: Elizabeth Howard 0414 090251
eh_mistover@bigpond.com
Administration Officer: Jeanette Robertson
sao@bluemountains.org.au
Bushcare Officer: Paul Vale
4787 8080 0429 014 454
bushcare@bluemountains.org.au
Environmental Education Officer:
Valda Low
valda@mountaintracks.com.au
Events Coordinator:
Phoebe Coster 0408 223 843
Phoebe@coster.com.au
Landuse Officer:
Angela Langdon 0417 004 722
landuse@bluemountains.org.au
Meetings Secretary: Heather Hull
4739 1493 hhull001@bigpond.net.au
Membership Secretary: Ross Coster
4739 2987 0418 462 576
membership@bluemountains.org.au
National Parks/World Heritage Officer:
Lachlan Garland 0415 317 078
npwho@bluemountains.org.au
Newsletter Editor:
Christine Davies 4787 7246
hutnews@bluemountains.org.au
Nursery Manager: Hugh Brougham
0407 955 028
nursery@bluemountains.org.au
Publicity Officer: Annette Coulter
contact details to be advised
Sustainability Officer: Clare Power
sustain@bluemountains.org.au
Threatened Species Officer:
Judy Smith smitheco@ozemail.com.au
Website Manager: Alan Page
leurlan@hotmail.com
Walks Convenor:
Maurice Kerkham 4739 4942
mauricekerkham@hotmail.com
Bushfire Representative: Hugh Paterson
4751.2303, mob 0427 512 303
fmatter@bigpond.net.au

The **DEADLINE** for the next issue
of HUT NEWS is
19 JANUARY 2019
Christine Davies, 4787 7246
hutnews@bluemountains.org.au
PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES
Ross Coster
02 4739 2987 0418 462 576
membership@bluemountains.org.au

OPEN LETTER'S PLEA TO SECURE RADIATA PLATEAU

In a bid to see the future of Radiata Plateau secured, the Society co-ordinated the publication of an Open Letter, in the Blue Mountains Gazette, to the Hon Gabrielle Upton, NSW Minister for Environment and Heritage. Signatories to the letter include 30 local environmental and heritage community groups, as well as community leaders and state-wide environmental groups.

The coming together of such a diverse number of community groups and leaders is groundbreaking and demonstrates the widespread and sustained support in the Blue Mountains to see the Plateau conserved and protected forever.

The community, including the Society, has campaigned for over 30 years for the Plateau to be purchased by the State and Commonwealth Governments and become part of the Blue Mountains National Park, allowing nomination for its inclusion into the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

The Open Letter explains why protection is crucial and calls on the Minister to urgently recognise the ecological and heritage significance of the Plateau.

To coincide with the Open Letter, the Society is planning a series of meetings with the Minister, Shadow Minister and other parties, seeking support for purchase of the Plateau. The Society also continues to pursue discussions with the owners of the Plateau.

For more information about the campaign please visit: <https://bluemountains.org.au/leaveradiataplateauwild>

CONTAMINANTS CHALLENGE RECYCLING

Research commissioned by Planet Ark for National Recycling Week found more than 90% of Australians believe recycling is the right thing to do and 59% have a high level of trust in kerbside recycling. But simple mistakes clog up recycling machines, degrade the value of recycled materials, increase waste going to landfill and increase the cost of recycling.

More than 180 councils across Australia said the top recycling mistake was throwing soft plastics (such as bread bags), which gets caught in sorting machines, into the kerbside recycling bin. (SMH 12/11/18)

In the Blue Mountains, kerbside recycling results improved significantly with the introduction of a new waste service in 2016, when recyclables in the garbage bins reduced from 11.48% in 2014 to 8.17% in 2016. Initiatives included more flexibility in bin sizes and a high level of communication – advertisements in the Gazette, the Resource Recovery Guide for residents' fridges, the free Waste App with a comprehensive A-Z list of what can and cannot be recycled, and Council's website. See links below.

Blue Mountains City Council's continuing challenge is the level of contamination in the recycling bin, made up of the following:

- Recyclables in a plastic bag (0.6%)
- Composite - e.g. paper or cardboard packaging lined with foil and/or plastic; Gazette still wrapped in its plastic wrapper (1.5%)
- Contaminated paper, e.g. paper towels and tissues (1.3%)
- Other plastic – polystyrene (1%)
- Other (less than 1%)

As you can see, contaminants come in small amounts of all sorts of materials. Our Council finds it best to focus on communicating what can go in the recycling bin and make it as clear as possible.

<https://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/residents/waste-and-recycling/our-household-waste-service#yellow>

<https://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/residents/waste-and-recycling/waste-results-how-are-we-doing>

THE CHICKEN AND THE EGG by Christine Davies

Travelling down the mountains, I could see a thick layer of brown smog hanging over the Sydney Basin. What was in the air I would be breathing in Penrith? Is going to visit a doctor a health hazard? **It's set to become much worse!**

Blue Mountains Conservation Society opposes the Western Sydney Airport proposal on environmental grounds. The issues have been well documented in previous publications of Hut News. Other groups oppose the development on behalf of the health and wellbeing of the people of Western Sydney. **But nobody is listening.** Why? Let's go back a bit ...

A second Sydney airport, which had been rejected at least twice before, was proposed at Badgerys Creek. **Ignore it and it will go away!**

The Sydney Airport Corporation, which operates Kingsford Smith Airport, was offered first right of refusal and they turned it down as a bad investment. **It's a bad investment and it will go away!**

So the Government does a dodgy EIS which rationalises all the problems and decides to build the airport, at a cost of \$5-\$6 billion taxpayer funds, in the hope of flogging it to somebody else who will operate it in competition with Kingsford Smith Airport (which is in a better location near public transport, desirable accommodation and world famous tourist attractions). **It's beginning to sound like an even worse investment.**

Then the project started to grow. Now the airport will be an Aerotropolis. There will be logistic facilities, a science park, a university ... 100,000 new homes will be built on the Cumberland Plain. And suddenly we need to raise the Warragamba Dam wall to prevent floods (another proposal rejected at least twice before).

There's lots of money to be made in development!

Has the Second Sydney airport proposal laid a golden egg which has nothing to do with aviation?

The fertile soils of the Cumberland Plain, once the food bowl of Sydney, are to be covered with asphalt and concrete. The soils of Australia are mostly old and infertile. Are we so flippant with scarce resources?

The Cumberland Plain is a flood plain *"an area of land adjacent to a stream or river which stretches from the banks of its channel to the base of the enclosing valley walls, and which experiences flooding during periods of high discharge"* (Wikipedia). Raising the Warragamba Dam wall will not stop floods from other rivers and streams whose waters discharge onto the Cumberland Plain, but it will damage precious wilderness rivers and wilderness areas upstream of the dam.



www.pinterest.com.au

This impression of the future atmosphere in the Penrith area is unfortunately not just an abstract art masterpiece

Who will use a Western Sydney Airport? Technology allows communication without travel. A Very Fast Train could and should replace domestic air services along the east coast. Kingsford Smith Airport would be a preferred option for most people travelling to and from overseas destinations. That leaves the cheapest air carriers - many with poor safety records - and freight, with 24-hour truck movements to and from Badgerys Creek. That layer of brown smog will become thicker and permanent.

Air transport in its present form is a polluting industry. We know we have to reduce emissions and do it NOW. But who will lead the way to plan for a clean energy and transport future where new coal mines and redundant second airports will not be built?

IN THE MEANTIME

An Upper House committee, chaired by Fred Nile, has suggested there needs to be a fast motorway through the Blue Mountains to deliver agricultural produce from the Central West to Badgerys Creek (ignoring that the Central West has no way of producing fresh food as high quality as could the land destroyed for the airport).

AND Another Government press release implied Badgerys Creek is associated with numerous Sydney schoolgirls taking a trip to the United States to train as astronauts.

This airport stretches logic.

BMCS NURSERY PLANT SALES

We offer the home gardener, landscaper or contractor a big variety of quality local native plants at economical prices.

Blackheath Community Market, 1st Sunday of the month at Blackheath Public School, 9am to 1pm A market possible on 6th January—watch for an email. .

Magpie Market, 3rd Sunday of month at Lawson Public School, 9am to 2pm

No Magpie Market in January

Tube stock \$3. Discounts for bulk orders.

Enquiries: Hugh Brougham 0407 955 028

nursery@bluemountains.org.au

PRESIDENT'S REPORT Madi Maclean

The Society has ended the year with a very successful state election event, *A Cleaner Greener NSW and Blue Mountains* at Lawson Mechanics Institute on 31 October. This was thanks to the many people who worked on making this event a reality.

I want to talk particularly about the themes in the society's proposals and recognise the work our member committees do advocating on your behalf.

Kate Smolski, CEO of the NSW Nature Conservation Council provided the state context outlining their statewide policy platform. Then I and committee members, Judy Smith, Ross Coster, Lyndal Sullivan and Carolyn Williams spoke to the key local issues we want our candidates and their parties to address and the policies we want them to support.

The society's presentation was organised under the following themes.

Protecting our Blue Mountains national parks:

conserving threatened species; stopping inappropriate commercial development in national parks; stopping the impacts of the Western Sydney Airport; increasing National Parks and Wildlife funding for our region for such things as restoring adequate day-to-day management, increasing feral and invasive species control and improving biodiversity management in the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Expanding the national parks estate: by adding the Gardens of Stone unprotected area, Radiata Plateau; plus four areas of land (at Kings Tableland, Katoomba, Falconbridge and Glenbrook) which will enhance the Blue Mountains National Park.

Appropriate local development: protecting our leafy streets by ensuring the introduction of the R6 Zone and maintaining community input into medium density housing developments.

Climate change and coal mining: no new coal leases – the proposed Bylong mine is a new coal mine and should not be approved; binding targets of net zero emissions by 2040; binding targets to achieve 100% of our electricity from renewables by 2030; a funded transition strategy for coal-dependent communities such as Lithgow.

The Society's advocacy and campaigns depend on the work and expertise of members on our committees along with other experts at times. Members research issues, make presentations and write submissions on your behalf. I am very pleased that, at the *Cleaner Greener event*, some of those members spoke about our policy positions in their particular areas.

The program also had a short update on the Wild Rivers campaign from Harry Burkitt of the Colong Foundation and contributions from Local MP, Trish Doyle, and NSW Greens spokesperson, Justin Field.

More information is on our website: <https://www.bluemountains.org.au>. We will continue to update election information on this site.

The society's next state election activities are sending the main candidates a questionnaire based on these themes, then collating and publishing the answers. We will also be running another event next February/early March which we will announce in the new year.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

THURSDAY, 14 FEBRUARY, 2019
Sunset Gathering at the
Conservation Hut Wentworth Falls
6.30 pm arrive and a cuppa—7 pm start

Join with members of Blue Mountains Conservation Society to share a glorious sunset view, supper and a guest speaker.

Talk to old and new members and exchange ideas, meet some of the management committee and learn about recent Society activities and find out how you can become involved. If you are not already a member of the Society this is an opportunity to find out more.

The Conservation Hut is situated in Blue Mountains National Park at the end of Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls.

Residents love our wide leafy streets

Recently some friends, long-term residents of the Blue Mountains, were overheard discussing how good it is to live in the mountains. They all agreed that we are very LUCKY to have escaped the development which is happening in areas of Sydney.

We had to interrupt and tell them that luck had very little to do with it, but it was not the time or the place to go into long detail about campaigns by Blue Mountains Conservation Society and others to help the Council install a Local Environmental Plan (LEP) which protects our environment, only to have it overturned and the ongoing battle to spare us from some of the "one-size-fits-all" planning laws preferred by the present State Government.

These friends particularly love the wide leafy streets in areas such as Leura, Wentworth Falls, Blackheath and Glenbrook characterised by large lots, established gardens and classic Mountain style older houses. When the Blue Mountains developed its LEP it quickly became apparent that to protect these areas a standard residential zone was not suitable. Council instead proposed that a new tailored residential zone called R6 be used, which the State Government originally agreed to but is now refusing to accept a "R6" zoning to protect these neighbourhoods.

And so the campaign continues.

VALLEY OF THE WATERS BUSHCARE GROUP

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

NEW MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

Phone Karen 4757 1929.

NSW lagging in renewable energy generation by Clare Power

A recent report from the International Energy Agency claims that renewables are overtaking fossil fuels globally in new power generation. According to an ABC news summary of the report, electricity has surpassed oil as the biggest source of growth in energy demand for the first time. Of wind, solar, biomass, hydro and other renewables, solar and wind dominate as the main sources of renewable electricity generation with record capacity installed in the past year.

However, despite some cause for optimism, the report also cautions that the world is not on track to meet the Paris emissions targets. The recent IPCC report proposes that in order to meet our climate change targets, up to 85% of global power generation needs to come from renewables by 2050. As it stands with the current trajectory and new planned fossil fuel power generation plants under construction we are heading for 2.7 degrees above pre-industrial levels which is described as catastrophic climate change.

It is highly concerning then to consider the federal government's absence of a strong policy, let alone commitment, that addresses climate change via ambitious emissions reduction targets and fosters strong renewables' initiatives. The Climate Council has recently released a report which considers renewable energy policies and actions taken by Australian state governments who have had to take greater responsibility for these due to federal government inaction.

Given the upcoming state elections, I encourage you to look at the 'laggard' status bestowed by the Climate Council to NSW. Our state is significantly behind the ACT, Queensland and South Australia 'across a range of renewable energy measures – percentage renewable energy, wind and solar capacity per capita, proportion of households with solar, and renewable energy targets and policies'. This report which can be found at <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/2018/10/30/leaders-laggards-states-renewable-energy/> places NSW barely past Western Australia and Northern Territory who are still at the 'starting blocks' according to the 2018 renewable energy score card. In contrast, almost 50% of the ACT's electricity came from renewable sources, and the territory looks like meeting its target of 100% renewable energy in 2020 and is investing heavily in renewable energy storage. Queensland and South Australia have the highest proportion of houses with rooftop solar and both states score highly in large scale renewable energy projects.

While Tasmania sourced 87% of its electricity from renewable sources, including hydro, NSW sourced a miserable 12% of electricity from renewable sources. Kate Smolski, from the NSW Nature Conservation Council pointed out just prior to the 2018/19 Government budget that the NSW government have 'barely spent anything

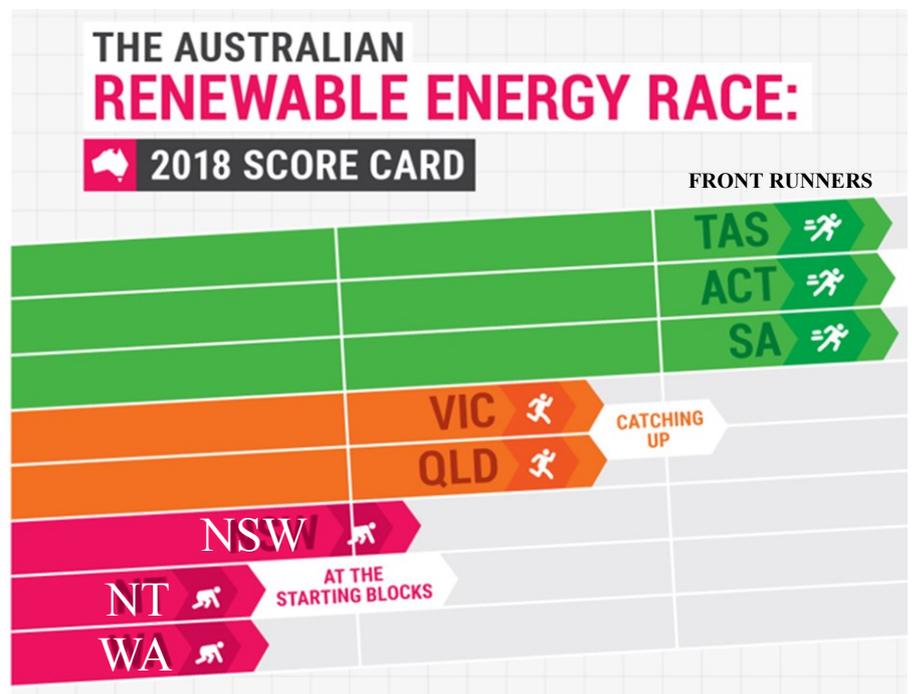
from the \$500 million fund which is supposed to ramp up renewables investment and energy efficiency'. Climate change was not mentioned in the NSW government treasurer, Dominic Perrottet's budget speech. At another date, he claimed that the plan to raise the height of Warragamba Dam wall is part of the Government's climate change strategy, and the development of the Bylong coal mine is occurring under his watch.

With the NSW state election only a few months away, this is an opportune time to pressure political parties to commit to renewable energy targets that contribute to significant and meaningful reduction of emissions. As encouragement, I share some lines with which I was quite taken in the Saturday Paper of November 10th. In drawing on a speech by Abraham Lincoln, Barry Jones (former president of the ALP and a minister in the Hawke Government) was inspired to write the following lines:

The great tasks before us are to dedicate ourselves to recognise that environment and economy are inextricably linked, and act accordingly. The human condition is fragile, and we must abandon rigid thinking, confusing prejudice with principle.

We must consecrate ourselves to saving Planet Earth, our home, where our species, *Homo sapiens*, lives and depends for survival. All nations, and all people, must dedicate themselves to protecting our global home rather than the short-term national, regional or tribal interest. We must highly resolve to save the air, save the soil, save the oceans to guarantee that our species, and the noblest aspects of its culture, shall not perish from the Earth.

This text was taken from an article in the print edition of The Saturday Paper on Nov 10, 2018 as "Saving Planet Earth". <https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/opinion/topic/2018/11/10/saving-planet->



BOOK REVIEW by Judy Smith

A Sense of Wonder Towards Nature. Healing the Planet through Belonging. Haydn Washington.

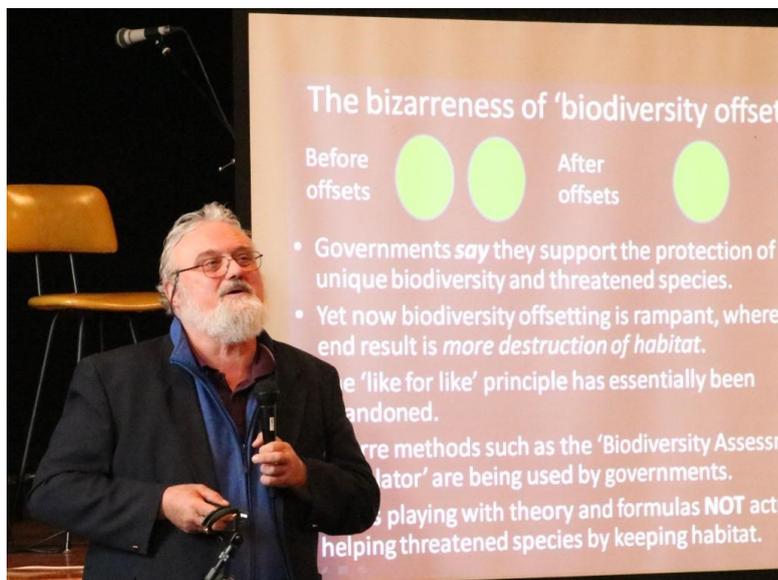
Published by Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon. 2018.

"Awe and respect for our surroundings invokes a sense of reverence and responsibility to protect nature's abundance and generosity. Haydn Washington's book is a much needed reminder of our utter embeddedness in and dependence on nature for our survival and well-being" – David Suzuki. We could all benefit from Haydn's reminder.

Haydn is an environmental scientist, a poet and a writer who has immersed himself in wild places and appears very much at ease living on the edge of wilderness. Haydn has used his skills and his own acute appreciation of the intrinsic value of nature to bring together *A Sense of Wonder Towards Nature*. Haydn suggests that it was probably the hardest book he has written (he has written six books on environmental issues), in part because it may be the most important. I suggest it was also hard because he cares so deeply and lives what he writes. It is an important, and also a brave, book.

Haydn's book is not a quick, easy read but what of real value is quick and easy. The whole inspires but each reader will probably have a preferred chapter, for me Chapter 4 "*The great ethical divide – anthropocentrism vs ecocentrism*" stands out. My suggestion – read Haydn's book and see what you think.

I highly recommend *A Sense of Wonder Towards Nature*, it is a book to treasure. It should be available in every library. It would make an excellent lasting gift for both the seasoned environmentalist and anyone that cares. It matters. I will now re-read it.



This photograph of Haydn Washington was taken at our Threatened Species Day event in September 2018 by Alan Page.

BMCS Planning & 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

Those on public payrolls must be allowed to do their jobs

Don Morison

Allegations are growing that experts in the public sector in New South Wales are no longer able to make proper inputs to government decisions and let ordinary citizens know their considered assessments of government policies.

The issue of feral horses is vital to the environment cause in the Blue Mountains and New South Wales generally. In 2013, the documentary movie "The Man from Cocks River" depicted an extremely expensive exercise of roping and removing dozens of feral horses from the Sydney drinking water catchment. Intense distress on the part of the horses was recorded on camera.

Earlier this year, the NSW Government gave feral horses in Kosciuszko National Park heritage status contrary to scientific advice and in November 2018 articles in the Sydney Morning Herald and elsewhere suggested that public sector scientists trying to make objective input to a conference that dealt with this issue were prevented from doing so.

Also in November, inexplicable last-minute changes to a Great Western Highway upgrade in Blackheath rendered previous public consultation exercises useless. A bulletin circulated to residents failed to mention that the NSW Government is conducting further studies that could make construction work, already underway along the highway, pointless.

Although the future of national park boundaries is a proper matter for a government policy, we face the prospect of private members who seem uninformed by expert opinion moving to revoke an entire national park and not being obstructed by the State Government.

It is unprecedented for public sector sources to be ignored or gagged on such a broad range of issues which should be most carefully considered by the Premier and multiple senior ministers. The NSW Government needs to explain exactly where the impetus for this massive change in the culture of governing has originated.

Koel, Koel ...

I hear a squawk, is it a hawk?

No, it's a Koel, well, well, well.

Its boring refrain will drive me insane.

Summer will wane, silence again,

But I'll still be insane.

Rosemary Butler

An exciting year for the Events Coordinator



I started the year in February with the Sunset Gathering at the Conservation Hut Wentworth Falls. I had Jim Low entertaining and asked a young lady named Heidi Allen to speak about what it was like to be a young conservationist. She was such a delight to listen to and the crowd loved her very much. She was so pleased when the Member of Parliament Trish Doyle took her aside and told her how amazing she was. I look forward to seeing what this young lady does in the future.

We helped out with the “Two Bobs” event at the Hub at Springwood. This was a Public Forum with Bob Debus and Bob Brown, organised by the Colong Foundation on the flooding of Blue Mountains Wild Rivers by raising Warragamba dam wall. Sadly I was not in attendance for this.

From Sunset Gathering to the AGM, no rest for the wicked. I helped organise and run this event where we had three new Life Members presented on the night - Margaret Baker, Ross Coster and Heather Hull. We had a talk after the meeting by Jean Kitson and it was a very enjoyable event.

In April we had Ann Young present her “Upland Swamp” talk. With over 60 members in attendance, it was clearly obvious that events were growing more popular and we needed to look for venues with a little more room than the Hut.

I worked on getting outside Beachwing Flags to complement our pull up displays. These flags are for outdoor and I am pleased that they can be used for so many events.

Springwood Foundation Day was a fun and exciting outdoor event. It was a day of sunshine, rain and lots of talking with many people. Sadly I found it difficult to get volunteers for this event, but I will be trying to improve that in the coming year.

Our EDO Workshop was run at The Mechanics Institute at Lawson with 41 people attending. This was a very informative experience and I look forward to working closely with the Land Use Sub-Committee with future workshops.

So roll on to September. Judy Smith organised a great line up of guest speakers. With Judy’s help, together we ran a most successful Threatened Species Day. With over 120 in attendance this was just such a wonderful day.

Our next event was to try and educate not just members but the politicians with our “Cleaner Greener” night. With over 70 people in attendance I believe this was another successful event for the Conservation Society.

Lastly came the Mick Dark Talk co-hosted with Varuna. I believe that everyone who attended enjoyed the night very much.

We are planning another Sunset Gathering in February 2019, and I’m not sure what else is in store for the new year, but I hope every member holds onto their hats and enjoys the ride. Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped during this year.

Phoebe Coster, Events Coordinator
phoebe@coster.com.au

Get involved - a Blue Mountains Citizen Science Project

A Citizen Science Project is underway to monitor plant and animal movements in the upper Blue Mountains. The program was started by The Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute and is assisted by NPWS wildlife ecologist Dr Ricky Spencer from the University of Western Sydney and Tom Mann for Blue Mountains TAFE. It began last year monitoring sites at Scenic World and is now expanding to new areas in **Blackheath and Wentworth Falls**. The attached photo is of a koala seen recently in Blackheath.

The monitoring will occur at Blackheath and potentially Wentworth Falls around the Conservation Hut. No wildlife expertise is necessary! Volunteers will be trained to collect data by using hand-held cameras at specific locations, and for the collection of images from remote camera traps.

The team at **Blackheath** will be coordinated through the NPWS. Please contact John Merson at the at the World Heritage Institute j.merson@bmwhi.org.au People interested in getting involved at **Wentworth Falls around the Conservation Hut** please contact Tara Cameron at taracameon4@gmail.com



Koala seen recently near Govetts Leap, Blackheath

Mothership Earth

By Ross Bridle

To breathe the clear air of our Mountains,
To bathe in their deep peace and calm,
To explore without worldly distraction -
Enjoy now, as the future alarms.

Such things that we just take for granted
When dealing with day-to-day life
Are those things that will prove most precious
When the passage of time gives hindsight.

To Man, Nature is nought but a resource -
All that matters is G.N.P.,
More people, more profit, more damage.
What on Earth will our future be?

Changes in climate compel us
To take action on cause and effect -
To show Mothership Earth some compassion,
Lest she founder on the rocks of neglect.

Illegal clearing of bushland

The Blue Mountains Gazette recently featured a front page story on a court case related to illegal clearing of bushland at Woodford. The property in question is clearly visible from the highway and the Society received many phone calls and emails from concerned residents when the clearing originally took place.

In relation to this incident the Society made a number of representations to Council raising concerns and encouraging Council to take regulatory action. It was very pleasing to see Council take the case to court, and achieve a positive result with the defendants pleading guilty.

The Society frequently gets reports of suspected illegal clearing of bushland and it is the most commonly raised concern by residents. The Society however is a volunteer community organisation and we cannot follow up reports of suspected illegal clearing with Blue Mountains City Council as promptly and as comprehensively as we would like. If we are to protect our beautiful bushland it's up to all of us to take action.

The most effective way to get action in relation to illegal clearing is for residents to lodge reports and complaints with Council as soon as they see suspect activity. The August 2018 Hut News (available online) provided clear advice on how to report suspected illegal clearing, including what information is required. The Society's online Planning and Development toolkit (available at the Society's website) also provides a comprehensive how to guide to reporting illegal clearing.

Land Use sub Committee

A SNAKE ENCOUNTER

A friend, who shall be Anonymous, was telling us about a snake she encountered on a rural property she was minding for a relative. The snake was VERY BIG and VERY AGGRESSIVE.

Anonymous told it to shoo and, instead of going away, this enormous venomous viper started to attack. Anonymous was terrified. She fended it off with an umbrella and was lucky to live to tell the tale.

The snake, whose species wasn't identified, might have had a different tale to tell. We don't know his name, but we shall call him Cecil.

Cecil was having a rest after swallowing a tasty rat when this person arrived on the scene. The person was VERY BIG and VERY AGGRESSIVE.

The person opened its mouth in a threatening manner and proceeded to come closer. Cecil was terrified and tried to escape but there was no way past this monster who started attacking him with her umbrella.

As Anonymous told the story – and the snake had grown much larger and probably had a row of sharp teeth by this time (one of her audience suggested it might have been a crocodile) – she realised she was in trouble and backed off, allowing the snake to escape.

It's good that this story has a happy ending for both Anonymous and Cecil.

I don't have any advice for Cecil, but if a person comes across a snake at close quarters, it's best to try and back off and leave it alone. Snakes don't have ears so it's no good shouting at them. They do feel vibrations and will escape if they can but, like any creature, will try to protect themselves if they are attacked or cornered. They are native animals and all native wildlife is protected in Australia.

DANGEROUS ANIMALS IN AUSTRALIA

This is an extract from an Australian Geographic story (March 2016).

Australia is renowned for its venomous snakes, scary spiders and even painful plants. Between 2000 and 2010, there were 254 reported and confirmed animal related deaths in Australia, according to the latest report from an online database of coronial cases.

The data confirmed that HORSES were the most 'deadly' animal in Australia (77 deaths in 10 years, mostly related to falls). COWS (including bulls) accounted for 33 deaths – 16 by causing motor vehicle accidents, the rest by crushing, piercing or 'unknown'. The majority of the 27 deaths caused by the third biggest killer, DOGS, were from attacks, mostly occurring on children under 4yo and elderly. Next was the KANGAROO which contributed to the deaths of 18 people (mostly related to car accidents), followed by BEES and SHARKS (16 each). SNAKES (14 fatalities) and CROCODILES (9 fatalities) made the list at seventh and eight place, followed by EMUS which caused 5 deaths (all from motor vehicle accidents). Other deadly animals included FISH, SHEEP, GOATS, CAMELS, CATS and JELLYFISH, which caused 39 deaths combined.

<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/wildlife/2016/03/here-are-the-animals-really-most-likely-to-kill-you-in-australia/>



Nine TINGlers* from Blue Mountains Conservation Society joined a dozen walkers on day six of their continuing Save Kosci trek from Sydney to Mt Kosciuszko. They were lunching in Telopea Park at Buxton in the Southern Highlands when we caught up with them, after we met for coffee in Thirlmere and a quick visit to Thirlmere Lakes National Park, now of course nearly always dry, but that's another story. Just a few TINGlers matched the pace of the Save Kosci group over 10 km through the wildflower-strewn bush around Balmoral, with others walking a shorter distance.

Linda from Colong Foundation for Wilderness issued high-viz vests and signs that proclaimed our support to a few people on the quiet road, whilst discussing the damage to Australia's highest national park increasing with the lack of control of the brumbies.

Large hooved ferals pound the ground hard, a particularly damaging impact around water sources. The endangered spectacular Corroboree Frog needs help to remain longer alive in the wild than on the protesters' vests and campaign items.

Our NSW government has chosen to ignore the 2016 draft report recommending reduction of brumby numbers following lobbying from horse groups. We need to push back to keep the national park as intended with a good chance for its rightful original fauna and flora. Horses are delightful animals in their place, serving many purposes for us.

This Save Kosci walk continues until December 8 or 9 at the summit. Bushwalkers and other supporters were invited to join the protest by walking, driving, helping financially, or with publicity, research, agitation or just in numbers registered. Thank you to Don Morison for organising for us to be part of it.

Geoff Dernee, TING

* TING - Thursday Interpretive Nature Group.

90 scientists sign Kosciuszko Science Accord

A national conference was held at the Academy of Science in November to present and discuss the latest research and observations of the impacts of feral horses on the Australian Alps.

The conference saw 90 scientists sign a Kosciuszko Science Accord that called on the NSW Government to acknowledge the damage being done to Kosciuszko National Park by feral horses, to repeal the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018 and cooperate with Victoria and the ACT to help remove feral horses from alpine and subalpine protected areas, among other things. <https://www.science.org.au/files/userfiles/support/documents/kosciuszko-conference-abstracts-8nov18.pdf>

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

(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

Welcome to new members

George Bate	Saskia Krinks
Claire Bate	Amelia-Jane Krinks
Jenny Lloyd	Catherine Mahony
Michael Law	Mary Fell
Stephen Krinks	Gordon Fell
Ann Niddrie	Barbara Lepani

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY www.bluemountains.org.au

'Like' us on Facebook:

Blue Mountains Conservation Society

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

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.

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".

WHAT IS YOUR NAME? by Denis Kevans

What is your name? My name is Bye-a-marra,
Bye-a-marra? You're not Bye-a-marra,
You're the orange fronted desert chat.
Oh, not Bye-a-marra, I'm the orange fronted desert chat.
Sounds like a mouthful of shellgrit.

I want to be Bye-a-marra, that's what I want to be.

What is your name? My name is Gina-gillie-lin.
Gina-gillie-lin? You're not Gina-gillie-lin.
You're the lesser Western districts black and white piping shrike.
Not Gina-gillie-lin? Lesser Western districts black and white piping shrike?

Sounds like a mouthful of darning needles.

I want to be Gina-gillie-lin, that's what I want to be.

What is your name? My name is Wandella-lin-dalla,
Wandella-lin-dalla? You're not Wandella-lin-dalla,
You're the striated white-throated stridulated Southern brown-eared marsh warbler.
Not Wandella-lin-dalla? Striated white-throated stridulated Southern brown-eared marsh warbler?

Sounds like a mouthful of cardboard.

I want to be Wandella-lin-dalla, that's what I want to be.

What is your name? My name is jinka-ringie-gill.
Jinka-ringie-gill? You're not jimka-ringie-gill.
You're the white-naped, long-tailed, purple-bummed, curvy-beaked, backward somersaulting honeyeater.
Not jinka-ringie-gill? White-naped, long-tailed, purple-bummed, curvy-beaked, backward somersaulting honeyeater?

Sounds like a mouthful of cornflakes.

I want to be jinka-ringie-gill, that's what I want to be.

I am not the orange-fronted desert chat,
I am not the lesser Western districts black and white piping shrike.

I am not the striated white-throated stridulated Southern brown-eared marsh warbler.

I am not the white-naped, long-tailed, purple-bummed, curvy-beaked, backward somersaulting honeyeater.

I am Bye-a-marra, I am Gina-gillie-lin, I am Wandella-lin-dalla, I am Jinka-ringie-gill.

I want my real name, please,

No, not please,

I want my real name.

Fire Trail widening

At the moment the Society is getting reports from concerned residents about bushland clearing, and associated environmental impacts, associated with the widening of fire trails in bushland reserves, especially in the Lawson area. The Society understands that this trail widening and vegetation removal is part of a new state-wide standard for fire trail maintenance.

If you are concerned about the environmental impact of this fire trail maintenance activity we urge you to make your views known via letter and email to Blue Mountains Council and the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Land Use sub Committee

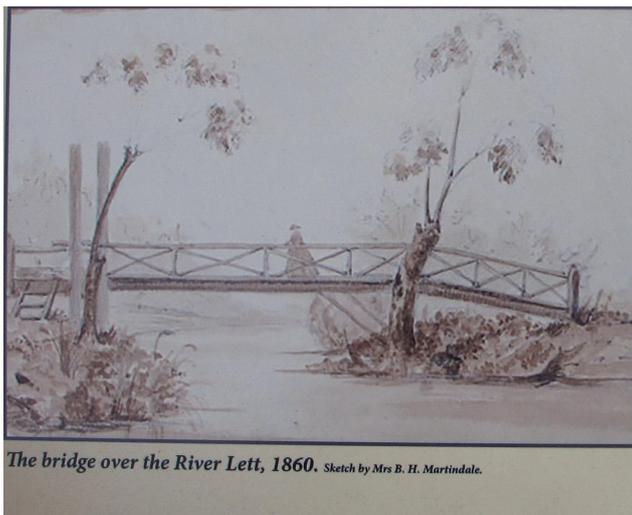
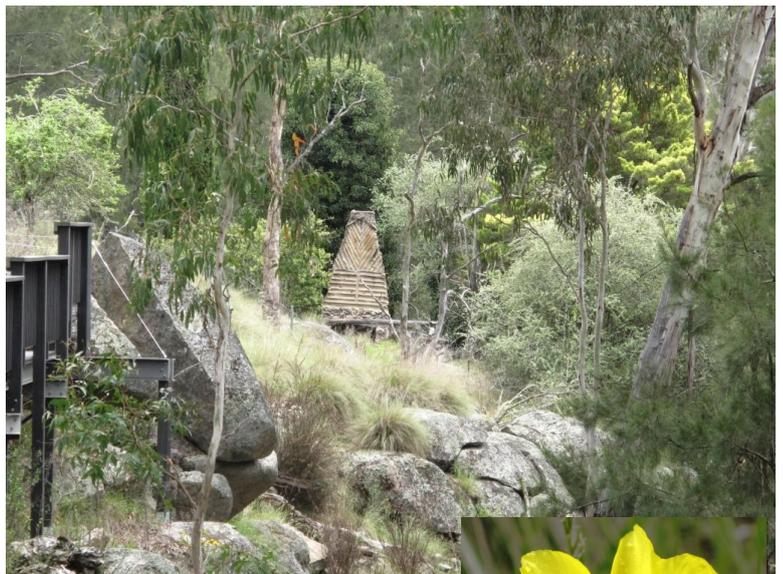
**54. ROWSON'S RIVER WALK,
Hartley Historic Village**

Eastern Rosellas, Crimson Rosellas, currawongs, blue wrens and tree creepers graced a spring day on the newest tourist trail at the Hartley Historic Village. The National Parks and Wildlife Service now cares for the relics of this village, built because Governor Bourke wanted a new police district created some years after William Cox's 1815 road between Emu Ford and Bathurst attracted population to this valley.

There is evidence of wombats and platypuses at this site and the sound of traffic from the Great Western Highway only a short distance away detracts little from the enjoyment of walking. You can imagine what the vegetation was like when the Wiradjuri indigenous people were the only humans here, although a large number of introduced species are now competing with the Eucalypts and Casuarinas.

The track is named for Leslie Rowson who had a hut at the far end from the village of what is now the main boardwalk, before World War 2. There are some stairs but the zigzagging trail down from the old Hartley petrol station and the boardwalk make this site much more accessible to people with limited mobility.

Illustrations (clockwise from top) Patterns in the branches of Casuarinas overhanging the River Lett; Visitors admire the granite boulders from the boardwalk that is largely constructed out of recycled materials; Ruins near the riverside boardwalk; Weeds can almost be forgiven with the colour they add to a spring walk along the River Lett. (photos by Christine Davies) The bridge over the River Lett, 1860, sketch by Mrs B H Martindale.



The bridge over the River Lett, 1860. Sketch by Mrs B. H. Martindale.

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.

Sections of the Blue Trail featuring the western Blue Mountains can be found in past issues of Hut News: www.bluemountains.org.au/hutnews.shtml The full Blue Trail is being added at www.simplyaustralia.com.au/category/blue-trail/



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 or can be posted on request. For more information call Maurice Kerkham 4739 4942, mobile 04024 02783, email 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 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 Saturday Walks page for details)

Dec 8 **Mount Victoria Tracks** . Leader **Alice 47393086** Meet at Wentworth Falls stn. CP 8.00am. or ring Alice. 10km. Gr3. Map Mt Wilson & Hartley.

Dec 15 **Saturday walkers Christmas Party...**Contact **Bob 0408947325** or **Emanuel 0419773906** for more details.

Dec 22 to Feb 24 No walks are organised. Walkers can meet at Wentworth Falls Carpark, 8.00am and decide on a walk and leader for that day. Contact : **Harold -0409010737, or Emanuel 0419773906** to register interest.

Remember to keep cool and stay hydrated.

**Some suggestions for selecting a walk on hot days:* Grand Canyon, Porters Pass, Edenberry Falls, Valley of the Waters, Horseshoe Falls, Den Fenella, Walls Cave.

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

Dec 10 **Valley of the waters and Inspiration Point Wentworth Falls.** Very pretty walk with waterfalls Steep steps in and out of valley. Meet Wentworth Falls Station car park 8.45 am. Car pool. Meredith 4782 4823. Grade 3.

Dec 17 **Darwins Walk and Xmas get together in the Park. Wentworth Falls.** Bring along a plate or something to share. Meet Wentworth Falls Station car park 8.45 am. Mary and Wayne Read 0429 021 296. Grade 2.

Dec 24 and 31 **NO WALK**

Jan 7 **Odin Head, Mount Victoria.** Great views of Grose Valley. About 6km. Meet Mount Victoria Station 8.50 am. Car pool. Chris Smith 4787 6979 and Ros King 0417 261 465. Grade 2.

Jan 14 **Undercliff, Den Fenella etc Wentworth Falls.** Walk via cliff tracks, Con Hut, Wilson Pk & return to village. Meet Wentworth Falls Station car park 8.45 am. Meredith 4782 4823. Grade 2/3.

Jan 21 **Berghofers Pass, Mount York.** Historic early Blue Mountains Road. Meet Mount Victoria Station 8.50 am. Car pool. Maurice 4739 4942. Grade 2.

Jan 28 **Hyde Park, mid Hartley.** Easy walk to River Lett. Meet Mount Victoria Station 8.50am. Car pool fee \$5. Maurice 4739 4942. Grade 2.

Feb 2 **Victory Track Faulconbridge to Springwood.** Rainforest. Bring swimmers. Start Faulconbrige Station and return via train from Springwood. Faulconbridge Station Car Park (South Side) 8-50am. Wayne and Mary Read 0429 021 296. Grade 3.

Feb 11 **Empire Pass Lawson.** Walk to Frederica Falls and then along creek to Dante's Glen, Fairy Falls, Echo Bluff and return to Lawson Station. Approx 8Km. Meet Lawson Bowling Club car park 8.40 am. Lyn Bevington 0432 352 850. Grade 3.

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, denfenella12@bigpond.com

Dec 13 **Christmas Party in Doreen's Studio.** Ring Doreen on 6355 2371 for details. Please bring either a salad or dessert, whatever you wish to drink and a wrapped gift to the value of \$10 for Naughty Santa. Phone Beverley on 4757 2076 if you need a lift from Mount Victoria Station.

Dec 20 and 27, Jan 3 **No walk.**

Jan 10 **Mermaids Cave and Coachwood Glen, Megalong Valley.** Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 8.40 am. Leader Beverley 4757 2076. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2.

Jan 17 **South Lawson waterfalls.** Meet Lawson Station south side 8.40 am. Leader Keith 0411 162 345. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2.

Jan 24 **Birrabang Ridge, Bells Line of Road.** Meet Mount Victoria Station 8.45 am. Leader Beverley Car pool \$5. Take lunch. Grade 2.

Jan 31 **Bonnie Doon, Katoomba.** Meet Katoomba Station 9am. Leader Beverley. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2.

Feb 7 **Boronia Point and Hornes Point, Mount Victoria.** Meet Mount Victoria Station 8.45 am. Leader Beverley. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2.

Feb 14 **Deanei Reserve, Springwood.** Meet rear of Westpac Bank, 9.10 am. Leader Maurice 4739 4942. Grade 1.

Society bushwalks on facebook: Visit <https://www.facebook.com/bmcslongerbushwalks/>

Gardens of Stone Visitors Map

The Visitors Map is full of suggested walks and trips. It is in full colour, 60 by 85 cm in size, and covers the entire Gardens of Stone region at a 1:100,000 scale, making it ideal for planning your next trip to the area. You can buy a map on the society's website at www.bluemountains.org.au/GoS_VisitorsMap.htm

For information about Plant Study Group and Thursday Interpretive Nature Group

Go to our website
www.bluemountains.org.au and
click on "Activities"