



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"



Radiata Plateau is for sale and community action is urgently required.

Write a letter to Hon Matt Kean, NSW Minister for the Environment, asking him to intervene and prioritise purchase of Radiata Plateau by the State Government. The more letters the better.

Read more on page 6.

Minister visits Mountains: Blue Mountains Gazette reports that NSW Environment Minister Matt Kean visited the Blue Mountains on July 26 and said he'd listened to Liberal Party colleagues in the Blue Mountains "about the importance of Radiata Plateau, the important natural, cultural and recreational values of the area". "We are having a very close look at acquiring the site for the purposes of incorporating it into the national park network" Mr Kean said. (*But?*) "There is a process we have to go through. We're currently working through the process and how we assess any property to add on to our national parks, and this site is no different." www.bluemountainsgazette.com.au/story/6291730/state-government-having-a-close-look-at-buying-radiata-plateau/

WE NEED TO WRITE LETTERS NOW!

Help with Threatened Species

Blue Mountains Conservation Society's geographic area of interest encompasses the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and its immediate surrounds. This vast area, over one million hectares, contains threatened species on a huge scale.

We look out for at least 7 frog, 4 reptile, 33 bird, 28 mammal, 2 dragonfly, 2 snail, 1 butterfly, over 100 plant and a few fungi threatened species, in addition to the threatened populations and ecological communities. Locally, we have around 200 threatened species, which equates to over one fifth of the threatened species in NSW.

This is far too many for one Threatened Species Officer.

If you would like to help with threatened species, either as part of a threatened species sub-committee or by joining a register of those able to help on an ad hoc basis, please contact me.

If we could conserve all of the threatened species in our area, or at least maintain the status quo, we would go a long way to leaving a half decent legacy for future generations.

Judy Smith, Threatened Species Officer
smitheco@ozemail.com.au

Time to plant native plants in your garden

Our native plant nursery has reopened after the winter break. Look for our volunteers at the Blackheath and Lawson markets on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. (Places and times on page 2)

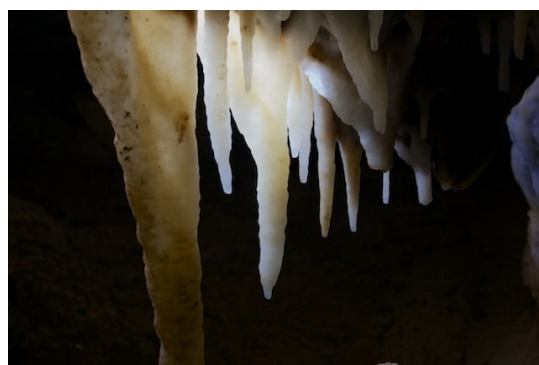


Will this little fish be one of the last of its kind?

A petition, signed by more than 12,000 people, calling for the NSW government to repeal the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act will be tabled and the issue debated in NSW Parliament on 22 August 2019.

An E-blast will be sent to members when we have details on how you can participate.

Read more on page 2.



How was the Kanangra Boyd Wilderness saved?

This photo by David Noble shows one of the limestone formations inside the spectacular Colong caves.

Would you mine this to make cement?

Read more on page 11.

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The **DEADLINE** for the next issue of
HUT NEWS is
17 AUGUST 2019

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FERAL HORSE PETITION BEFORE PARLIAMENT

In June this year a petition signed by more than 12,000 people calling for the NSW government to repeal the recently legislated Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act was handed to NSW Labor at NSW Parliament House. The petition and the feral horse issue in Kosciuszko will be tabled and debated in NSW Parliament on 22 August, 2019. NSW Labor will be supporting a Bill to repeal the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act. <https://reclaimkosci.org.au/>

In search of the Underfrog



The critically endangered northern corroboree frog is the subject of a recent documentary UNDERFROG. The only place in the world where these little frogs are found naturally occurring is in Kosciuszko National park at elevations of between 1300m and 1700m.

Over several months, during early 2019, ecologist and film-maker Harrison Warne enlisted the

assistance of other field specialists to search in prime locations within Kosciuszko for any signs of the corroboree frog. They kept keen eyes and ears tuned for their distinctive markings and croak. They found none and heard nothing of them. Not one sighting of frog or tadpole. Instead, during his search, Harrison found a national park being decimated by large numbers of out-of-control feral horses. With feral horses knowing no bounds, Harrison also found their impacts in declared Wilderness Areas and through areas of sphagnum bog and fen, a declared endangered ecological community.

The last of its kind?

The last remaining population of critically endangered stocky galaxias is confined to a three-kilometre section of a small stream in Kosciuszko National Park.

Since NSW Deputy Premier John Barilaro's controversial horse protection act, an increasing number of feral horses in the area have all but destroyed the fish's remaining habitat. The Reclaim Kosci campaign, led by the Invasive Species Council, is demanding urgent action. "In an extraordinary move, the NSW parks and wildlife service is now considering fencing the horses out of the last of the remaining habitat of these unique native fish, but this is just an expensive band-aid solution to an increasingly urgent issue." (Richard Swain, Reclaim Kosci)

Be involved!

Reclaim Kosci is organising a rally or meeting at Parliament House to support the Petition. Details are not available yet, but watch our website and E-blasts nearer the time or go to the Reclaim Kosci website.

Horses in Australia were introduced as domestic animals and should remain so. All of our national parks are threatened by this Act.

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

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

Tube stock \$3. Discounts for bulk orders.

nursery@bluemountains.org.au

School Strike for Climate – ‘It’s important to be the change that you want to see in the world’.

I met Meike on Federal election day, when she sat with her sign ‘Denial is not a climate policy’ outside the entrance to the Blackheath polling booth. Later, as seen in the photo, she was joined by other students, including Coco and Keisha.

I’d wanted to interview Meike for Hut News, and fortuitously we were on the same train carriage recently, so we made the most of this and had the discussion below.

To keep abreast of plans for the Springwood School Strike for Climate, which will be held outside the Springwood library from 11-12.45pm on September 20th, see the Macquarie Electorate Student Climate Activists (MESCA) Facebook page. In terms of support they’d like people to bring placards on the day and to help them put up posters closer to the date and you can email or message them at this link <https://www.facebook.com/MESCA.NSW/>

Discussion with Meike, 15 years old. Member of MESCA.

When did you become involved with the School Strikes for Climate?

I first became involved because I went to the first School Strike in Australia, and I was just inspired by the young people who had shown up, and that night I went home and I contacted the organisers, and from then I started working to create a Blue Mountains group and having it more accessible for people not in central Sydney. And I was mainly inspired to join by my parents and my school, I go to Kindleshill School, to speak up about the way I want my future to look, and the way I want our future to work, in a way that no one is put down, or at risk of being affected by the climate emergency.

What’s your involvement been?

With the school strike, I’ve helped to organise the students in the Blue Mountains to get down to Sydney, as well I’m involved with MESCSA (Macquarie Electorate Student Climate Activists) in organising a protest on September 20th in Springwood.

For the election, I made some signs and I went and sat outside Blackheath polling booth with a sign that said ‘Denial is not a policy’. And that was speaking about both Labor and Liberal refusing to acknowledge the climate crisis and emergency.

Why do you think it’s so important that people support the School Strike for Climate?

I think it’s so important that people of all ages come because showing that you stand with young people as an older person, empowers us. And as a student I admit I don’t know everything there is to know, but to have people there supporting us, who do know more, it helps us to be stronger and united. And if we stay united that’s when we’ll see change.

What are your concerns about the climate?

My main concerns are the affect that climate change has on everyday people. We are seeing drastic changes in the weather, we are seeing small islands sinking and we are seeing people driven from their homes due to the climate crisis. These people that are being affected, they aren’t in the higher class, they are lower and middle



class, so I think it’s important that for me, as someone who is in a better position than some other people, I should be speaking as loud as I can to defend them, if they are unable to defend themselves.

You talked about your parents, have you been inspired by them?

Yes, so my parents have always been an inspiration to me. They’ve been activists since they were quite young, as well as my grandma. I guess it’s something I never question doing, if there’s something I don’t agree with I’m going to speak out about it, and I think it’s an important thing to not just sit by and let things happen to you, it’s important to be the change that you want to see in the world.

Image: Meike, Coco and Keisha outside the Blackheath School Polling Booth, Federal Election Day, 2019.

Clare Power

Sublime Point, dawn

A rock pool’s still surface
now ruffled by a breeze,
now tickled by rain drops.

Majestic dawn opens her veil,
trailing long tresses of cloud
over the face of Mount Solitary.

Katoomba disappears.

There’s a plane somewhere above
but nothing matters
save being here on this timeless rock
breathing bellbird song and tumbling water
as colours caress clouds
that slumber in the valley.

To be alive this sacred moment
standing between moon and sun
in my spirit place.

Brendan Doyle

A Plea for Grassy Woodland

Judy Smith, Threatened Species Officer

The Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWA) supports a mosaic of different types of eucalypt forest and woodland. One precious type, covering a mere 2% of the GBMWA, is 'grassy woodland'. Grassy woodland prefers fertile soils (including shale, granite and basalt soils) and grows in rain shadow areas at low elevations in the Burrendong, Nattai and Wollondilly river valleys, and on the fringes of the Cumberland Plain and Hunter Valley. Subalpine grassy woodland grows at high elevations on the Boyd Plateau and near Mount Werong.

Grassy woodland has an open, grassy understorey. Its shrub layer is much sparser than that of the more usual sclerophyll forests on sandstone. Across the GBMWA, grassy woodland is dominated by various eucalypts including Forest and Blakely's Red Gums, Grey, White, Yellow and Apple Boxes, and Narrow-leaved, Broad-leaved, Beyer's and Mugga Ironbarks, as well as Snow Gum and Mountain Gum in subalpine areas.

Grassy woodland is very rare and very poorly conserved. It has always been scarce within the GBMWA but was once common in surrounding areas to the east, west and north, where it has mostly been cleared for agriculture. In the GBMWA, grassy woodland supports a fauna that is quite different in composition to that of the usual sandstone eucalypt communities. Our small area of grassy woodland helps maintain an extraordinarily high number of threatened species. A suite of threatened birds, 'the declining woodland birds', including the Little Lorikeet, Turquoise Parrot, Brown Treecreeper, Speckled Warbler, Regent Honeyeater, Painted

Honeyeater, Black-chinned Honeyeater, Grey-crowned Babbler, Dusky Woodswallow, Hooded Robin and Diamond Firetail, is associated with grassy woodland. Other associated birds are the Common Bronzewing, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Southern Whiteface, Western Gerygone, White-throated Gerygone, Weebill, Fuscous Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Striped Honeyeater, White-

browed Babbler and Jacky Winter. Grassy woodland supports populations of Red-necked Wallabies and Grey Kangaroos, grazing animals seldom found in sandstone forest, where grass is scarce.

What remains of the grassy woodland, both within and adjacent to the GBMWA, provides very high conservation value fauna habitat. Many birds that are rare or absent in the GBMWA, including threatened species, are more common in grassy woodland remnants in surrounding agricultural lands. The GBMWA alone is not

sufficient to protect these species. Unfortunately, the GBMWA lacks a designated buffer zone. Conservation measures and sympathetic land management on adjacent lands will be critical if the threatened species of the grassy woodland are to survive. At present, decisions on the proposed Bylong coal mine adjacent to the GBMWA and the raising of Warragamba Dam wall are pending. Should such developments be approved, yet more grassy woodland within and adjacent to the GBMWA will be wiped out and the grassy woodland species will take another step towards extinction.

Image: Male Hooded Robin, a threatened bird of the grassy woodland. The photo was taken by Peter Smith.



Spaceship Earth Alan Page

In the movie Apollo 13, in an incident which I can only assume is based on fact, Ken Mattingly (played by Gary Sinise) is tasked with reducing the energy usage of the stricken Apollo13 module from 60 amps to 4 amps. They had to preserve enough energy to run the computers during re-entry. By disabling many devices, and turning them on only when required, he was able to achieve this remarkable goal. Of course it meant turning off heating and several other near essential facilities.

Here on "Spaceship Earth" most of our appliances seem to have standby circuitry and resist our efforts to turn them off completely. But what if our spaceship did not have unlimited resources?

For many years now, Dianne and I have turned off unused appliances and lights. It may be negligible, but it all adds up. We put our computers "to bed" when not in use – turning them off at the wall. The other night I was turning off the oven/cooktop – it only has a clock – but that simple "click" made me feel I was helping reduce the energy use of our personal spaceship. It felt good.

We're not obsessed by this and our contribution towards saving energy is small, but just imagine what might be achieved if this action were to spread to the next house, the next street, the next town, and so on. Click!

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

**BLUE MOUNTAINS
CONSERVATION SOCIETY**
www.bluemountains.org.au

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Economic Growth at Any Cost? Ross Coster

A lot of what we do at the Conservation Society is campaign to oppose 'developments' that will have a negative environmental impact. Western Sydney airport, Katoomba airfield commercialisation, Croc Park on Bodington Hill, resorts, road widening, parking lots, subdivisions, denser housing ... the list goes on and on.

Why do these things keep popping up for us to oppose? Why do we need more resorts, houses, apartments, airports, parking lots, and ever wider roads? The answer is population growth.

Our population is growing at the fastest rate in the OECD, driven by high immigration, and huge numbers of 'temporary' visa holders working in Australia.

We take in about 200,000 immigrants every year, well above the long-term average of 70,000 per annum, and there are about 2 million visa holders working in Australia at the moment. We do this to generate economic growth, and in fact the immigration rate is set by the Treasurer (not by science or need) to generate a GDP growth figure 'within the target range' of 2-3%.

Our politicians use GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as a measure of our national wellbeing. GDP is just a measure of how much money changes hands in a given period. If the economy is growing then all is well, right? Wrong!

When a bushfire rages through a Blue Mountains town and destroys dozens of homes, the effort of cleaning up and rebuilding generates economic growth. When a cyclone flattens a town in North Queensland, the clean up and rebuild again generates economic growth.

When a coal mine tears up the landscape, collapses rock formations, drains swamps, poisons water, pollutes the atmosphere, it is all good because it generates jobs and growth. When a row of quality old homes is demolished for a new apartment 'development', everybody makes money, there are lots of construction jobs, and the economy grows.

How can a crude measure like GDP growth ever measure what is really happening in our society? Why are we now forced to treat GDP growth as a "God"?



We live in a society, not an economy. The economy is supposed to serve us, to provide us with food, water, shelter, education and health care.

We have it all backwards, as now we have to do whatever it takes to grow the GDP, even at the cost of our health, our lifestyle and our environment.

This is lazy Political thinking exemplified by this simple formula: Growth = Jobs = Money = Happy People = Government Re-Elected

In Penrith the council has become addicted to this formula, approving thousands of apartments in massive 10 storey buildings, and plans to go to 20, 30 and even 40 stories. This leads to the need for massive upgrades to roads, water, sewerage, power, parking, shopping, with all the expected impacts including congestion, noise and pollution.

There has to be a better way. We can't just grow our population, consumption and affluence forever.

We are running a giant growth ponzi scheme and sooner or later it will collapse.

Cartoon by Adrian Teal, CartoonStock.

DESTINATION PAGODA campaign—recent events

On 30th June, around 100 people attended the installation of a commemorative plaque in honour of unionists and environmentalists Vernon Moffitt and Joyce Moffitt at State Mine Heritage Park, Lithgow. Vernon and Joyce played a significant role in the Lithgow-Bathurst environment movement and the creation of the Gardens of Stone National Park. The Lithgow Environment Group organised the event and attendees were taken to see Lithgow's spectacular pagoda landscape at Dobbs Drift Lookout before the ceremony.

On 2nd July, the documentary movie, *Destination Pagoda*, received an enthusiastic response from a full house at the charming Mount Victoria cinema. This was an opportunity for people who share an optimistic vision for Greater Lithgow's environmental and economic future, no matter which local government area they themselves live in.

It was one of a series of presentations about spending proposals for tourist infrastructure in the pagoda region around Lithgow, mainly in the existing Gardens of Stone National Park and the proposed Gardens of Stone Stage 2, which could be easily listed as a State Conservation Area with minimal disruption to existing land uses.

The spending proposals are being jointly advanced by Blue Mountains Conservation Society, Lithgow Environment Group and the Colong Foundation for Wilderness. One of Destination Pagoda's co-authors, the experienced environmentalist Ian Brown and BMCS's own Gardens of Stone Officer Madi Maclean, helped explain the documentary's purpose to the audience.



Radiata Plateau is for sale: Society calls on NSW Government to purchase

The Maharishi Foundation Australia Ltd, owner of Radiata Plateau, has put the Plateau on the open market for the first time in nearly 20 years. The Blue Mountains Conservation Society is urgently calling for the NSW Minister for the Environment Matt Kean to purchase Radiata Plateau so it can be included in the national park reserve system.

The Plateau has outstanding conservation significance. There are nationally listed endangered species and ecological communities, including Blue Mountains Swamps. The property also includes a state significant heritage site “Blacks Ladder”, an indication of its important cultural value to the Aboriginal community.

The Plateau is widely used by bird watchers, bush-walkers and rock climbers and it is feared new owners will stop public access. The Plateau’s scenic cliff lines are a tourist drawcard and can be seen from lookouts along Cliff Drive and from the Megalong Valley. All of this is in jeopardy if the Plateau remains in private hands.

Community action is urgently needed – the Plateau is on the open market, and the vendor’s preference is to sell to the NSW Government for the area to be reserved for conservation and public access. This may be the last chance to acquire the Plateau – Minister Kean needs to make a defining and landmark conservation decision, leaving a lasting legacy for the NSW community.

We need your help!

We are asking the community to send letters to Matt Kean, NSW Minister for the Environment asking him to intervene and prioritise purchase of Radiata Plateau. We need to send a clear and resounding message: **buy the Plateau now**. The more letters sent the better – the goal is 500 letters by the end of August.

What to do

Go to the *Leave Radiata Plateau Wild* website <https://www.bluemountains.org.au/radiata/what.shtml> to download suggested text for your letter to Minister Kean. Individual personalised letters carry more weight with politicians than form letters or emails. By following the

instructions, you can send the letter electronically to the Minister or alternatively post your letter.

The Society has already written to Minister Kean, as well as other politicians. You can see our letter to Minister Kean on the Society website here: (<https://www.bluemountains.org.au/documents/submissions/2019/bl190703-radiata-minister-kean.pdf>)

What else you can do

Get social and help spread the word! Take a picture of yourself on the Plateau and link to the following:

- Facebook (insert link to Society Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BlueMountainsConservationSociety/>)
- Twitter (insert link to Society Twitter account <https://twitter.com/bmcsnsw>)
- Instagram (insert campaign Instagram account <https://www.instagram.com/leaveradiataplateauwild/?hl=en>)

Join our campaign mailing list <https://www.bluemountains.org.au/subscribe.html> here to keep up to date with the campaign

What about crowd funding?

Many people have approached the Society about commencing a crowd funding campaign to purchase the Plateau. The Society is actively looking at options, including crowd funding – more on this soon.

What if the NSW Minister for the Environment says no to purchase?

The Society believes management by the National Parks and Wildlife Service is the best option to conserve in perpetuity the Plateau’s biodiversity and heritage values and ensure ongoing public access. However, if the Minister ultimately says no to purchase we are looking at other alternatives.

Image: Cliffs of Radiata Plateau viewed from the Megalong Valley. Photo by Alan Page

Weekend in the Bylong Valley

Extract of an article by Clare Power

The beautiful Bylong Valley is adjacent to the northern part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. An open cut coal mine, proposed for the productive floodplain of the valley, will tear up strategic farmland, draw water away from the aquifer that feeds the Bylong River and agricultural enterprises and fundamentally alter the character of the district. While the proposed KEPSCO mine is a relatively small mine, its impacts will be huge.

I recently attended a “Be there for Bylong” weekend, hosted by Bylong Valley Protection Alliance and Lock the Gate to enable people to experience the valley and understand more fully the many objections against the mine.

We approached the Bylong Valley from Rylstone, just as the late afternoon light illuminated the escarpment at the entrance to the valley. From the camping area we had a stunning view of the ridges and during the night the Milky Way was stupendously awesome! There was a great sense of camaraderie as people gathered around the fire drums provided by local farmers, and arranged ourselves in to a candle lit Save Bylong sign. We were heartened in the evening by an NZ film, *Living the Change* which we watched in the community hall.

The next morning a panel of three members of the Bylong Valley Protection Alliance briefed us about the impacts of the proposed mine on the valley and surrounds. Warwick Pearce, a landholder, pointed out that there are many unaddressed Aboriginal heritage issues with over 300 sites being affected by the mine and spoke about the fragility of the water supply in the valley.

Dr Merran Auland, a farmer in the valley, explained that KEPSCO have bought up 1000s of acres of farmland in the valley, which are now unproductive areas of rich farming land and has meant the decimation of the social fabric of the community. The KEPSCO agreement, should the mine proceed, would give the remaining farmers in the valley some water for their homes and stock, but they won't give a firm agreement about protecting water for environmental flows and farming.

Bev Smiles from Wollar has been fighting the development of new mines in the Hunter since the early 1990s. She has seen the detrimental and cumulative impact of these mines on local communities, the environment and the waterways. As more farms are sold and population numbers decrease significantly, communities such as Wollar and Bylong lose their schools, churches, and general stores, and other social activities, and those who are left behind feel stranded and socially isolated.

Ten days later, Phil Kennedy a farmer from the Bylong Valley presented the Bylong Valley declaration to the Independent Planning Commission in Sydney.

The Bylong Declaration states: We declare our support for protecting the Bylong Valley from coal mining; We will conserve its rich heritage, fertile farmland and outstanding environment; Let's boast the Bylong Valley as a global training hub for restorative agriculture and natural sequence farming, create ongoing jobs for this region and beyond, and opportunities to be shared with the world.

More info: www.lockthegate.org.au/new-south-wales-hunter-valley-coal-mines

The full article can be found at www.bluemountains.org.au/hutnews/hutnews-1908-bylong-update.pdf



Photo: Farmer Phil Kennedy presenting the Bylong Valley Declaration to a representative of the IPC. On the table are samples of produce from the Bylong Valley.

Wild Life in Blackheath

Winter days and winter nights

Despite the cold, and the rain, and the wind, and the frost, there is something special about winter in Blackheath. At the mere mention of snow, tourists flock to see it, but the snow rarely arrives on cue and, when it does fall, comes without warning.

Sunshine is a feature of winter days. In the cold weather, gum trees turn their leaves to the sun to better photosynthesise. The leaves reflect the sunlight and sparkle in the breeze.

The lovely Sunshine Wattle flower in the winter. Even on the dullest days, the golden blossoms of the Sunshine Wattle light up the bushland.

Coming home one night, we made a sidetrip to Govetts Leap Lookout – as one often does. There was no moon and the distant glow of lights from Sydney seemed to be dimmed. The Grose Valley was in complete darkness and the Milky Way stretched across the sky like a river, spangled with the lights of innumerable stars. It was very humbling.

On a winter's morning, if you brave the cold and go to the lookout at dawn to watch the sunrise, you will hear the songs of numerous lyrebirds in the valley. The lyrebirds breed in winter and the male lyrebirds are starting the day with a song and a dance to try to attract the attention of the females of the species.

Christine Davies

It's our turn now!

The conservation campaigns of today are built on a long history of experience, evolution, learning by activists and, at times, making mistakes and analysing them in a way that produces better results for the future.

In coming issues, Hut News will offer a series of profiles featuring women and men of the recent or less recent past. We will look at what they achieved for the Blue Mountains environment during their lives and how that can inspire us now.

The struggle to purchase the Blue Gum Forest in the Grose Valley in the early 1930s is rightly regarded as seminal for the Greater Blue Mountains conservation movement. The Blue Gums were about to be felled to make a walnut plantation. Economic times were far from favourable but the architects of the Blue Gum forest campaign were able to focus public attention on the importance of the issue.

From this beginning, the national park system of the Greater Blue Mountains has expanded to the 1.03 million hectares of World Heritage Area we are the custodians of in 2019. Through the addition of Gardens of Stone Stage 2, Radiata Plateau and other strategic areas, this system of Reserve lands can become even more effective in the future.

It might not be unfair to look at the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century as an age of the short attention span. The changes in warfare, economic stability, technology and gender roles shift many people's attention in first one direction and then another, even without mentioning the already obvious (to most) impacts of climate change on the ecology and human settlement.

We will need to focus again and again on how stoical and single-minded environmentalists have needed to be in the past and will

have to be in the future. Even when we think we have heard all we can absorb about environmental crises several times over, we must not dismiss such topics as boring or irrelevant.

To profile the environmentalists of the past, it must be noted that much of Australian history since non-indigenous people have arrived has been documented by male historians. Nevertheless, a degree of research into the local history of the Blue Mountains reveals that, from long ago, there were women, both indigenous and non-indigenous who comprehended the ecology of the Blue Mountains intensively and were dedicated to conserving it.

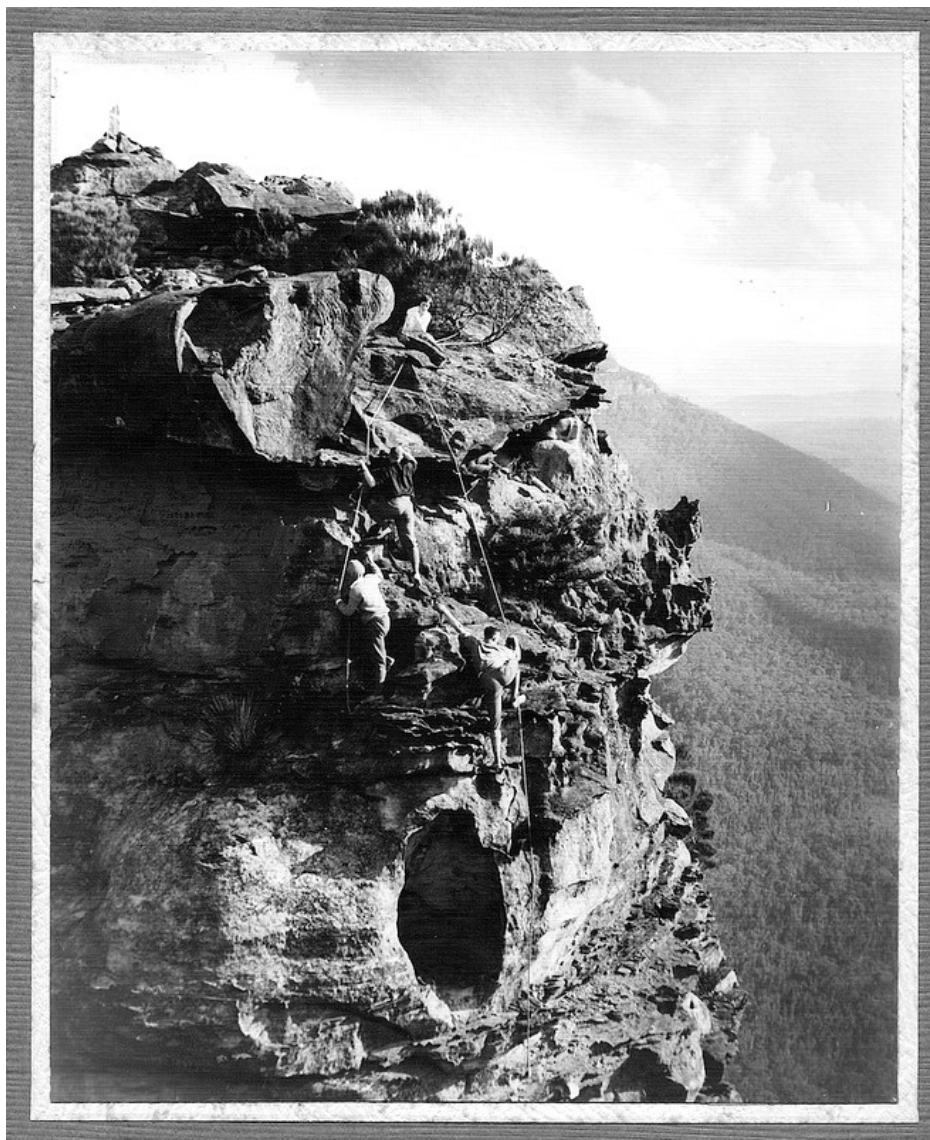
In 2015, Blue Mountains Conservation Society conducted a seminar at Wentworth Falls School of Arts entitled "The women pioneers of conservation". The speakers on the stage were both males and females, united by their admiration and commitment to understanding what women of past eras had contributed to modern day environmental consciousness in our region.

Coincidental or not, within a couple of years of this seminar, the management committee of the Conservation Society contained a majority of female representation. This was the first time anyone could remember this occurring, it continues to the present time and, undoubtedly, maximises the resources of intellect and energy that we need so much to pursue environmental campaigns.

In presenting "It's our turn now", we will bring a small part of the stories of both women and men who built the foundations of modern day Blue Mountains environmentalism.

The women and men of the Blue Mountains' past did not fritter away the opportunities this unique place gave to them. It's our turn now!

Image: Eleanor Dark, Eric Lowe, Osmar White, Eric Dark on the Boars Head Rock 1931. Notes: The first ascent of Boars Head Rock. Eleanor Dark is belaying, Eric Lowe is approaching the Mantelpiece, followed by Osmar White with Eric Dark last. Provenance: Photo by James (Jim) Starkey, copy donated by his daughter Jane Chadwick and son Ian. **The Starkey Collection, Blue Mountains City Library – Local Studies.**



Bob Brown Stands Up to Stupidity

Former Greens parliamentarian, Dr Bob Brown, delivered the 2017 Mick Dark Talk for the Future and has made numerous worthwhile contributions to various national debates since then. (The Mick Dark Talk for the Future has been jointly hosted as an annual event by Blue Mountains Conservation Society and Varuna Writers Centre since 2015).

Recently a proposal for a so far unspecified number of wind turbines on Robbins Island, off the north west coast of Tasmania, has emerged. Dr Brown has very sensibly noted the large number of endangered bird species that could be affected by the proposal and attempted to prepare the Australian public for an intelligent debate about the costs and benefits of this particular scheme.

As a result, Dr Brown has been subjected to an unprecedented burst of completely ignorant and boof-headed criticism from multiple parts of the political spectrum, sadly including State and Federal Labor leaders as well as other major party figures.

In an article in the Saturday Paper (20/7/19), Dr Brown makes a robust defence of his standpoint in what could be seen as a model for environmentalists refusing to be cowed by the rank stupidity in much current political commentary. <https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/opinion/topic/2019/07/20/the-robbins-island-wind-farm-debate/15635448008477>

Don Morison

Statement to World Heritage Committee

In 2000, when the Greater Blue Mountains was added to UNESCO's World Heritage list, Bob Debus was NSW Minister for Environment with responsibility for National Parks. He passed legislation to forbid any further increase in the area then inundated by the Warragamba Dam. That legislation was repealed last year.

Mr Debus made a statement to the 43rd World Heritage Committee meeting at Azerbaijan in July 2019.

In the statement, he asked that the World Heritage committee requires the rigorous assessment of the new construction on property upstream and downstream of the dam in order to avoid impacts on the World Heritage Area's Outstanding Universal Value.

Read the full statement on the Colong Foundation website: <https://www.colongwilderness.org.au/news/>

Not as it seems

Once, in my garden, I saw a spider which disguised itself as a bird dropping, hidden on a little branch in full sight of predators like birds. I was curious—it seemed out of place.

When I touched it, it moved and turned into a spider. Bird-dropping spiders are found throughout much of eastern and southern Australia and are "moderately common in suburban gardens".

Just as amazing is its method of hunting, described by the Australian Museum (<https://australianmuseum.net.au/learn/animals/spiders/bird-dropping-spider/>): At night the Bird-dropping Spider hangs from the edge of a leaf or twig on a short silk thread, its forelegs outstretched. While doing this it releases a chemical scent (pheromone) that mimics the airborne sex pheromone released by female moths to attract their mates. The unfortunate male moths that are attracted by the spider's deceiving pheromone eventually flutter close enough to the spider to be grabbed by its strong front legs.

Christine Davies

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

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 WELCOME
Phone Karen 4757 1929

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.

Take a Climate Action: Stand With Our Children Robin Mosman

In the fight against global warming and climate change, there are things we can and should do as individuals, and there are things that are too big, and for which our governments must take responsibility.

UN Secretary General Ramon Guterres has called for an Emergency Climate Summit on 23 September, blasting world leaders for not doing enough to implement the 2015 Paris climate accord goal of keeping global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. He said “We are still not doing enough, nor moving fast enough, to prevent **irreversible and catastrophic climate disruption**”. He is asking them to come with concrete, realistic plans to reduce carbon emissions by 45 per cent by 2030, and net zero by 2050.

Sir Richard Attenborough has warned “The **collapse of our civilisations** and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon” unless urgent action is taken against global warming.

Superannuation funds and investors representing US\$34 trillion recently urged all world leaders to accelerate their response to the climate crisis with utmost urgency. They described the climate crisis as a major and foreseeable risk that requires **immediate action to protect retirement savings**.

In response, the United Kingdom government announced a new target of zero emissions by 2050, and created a Net Zero Taskforce to help businesses meet this goal.

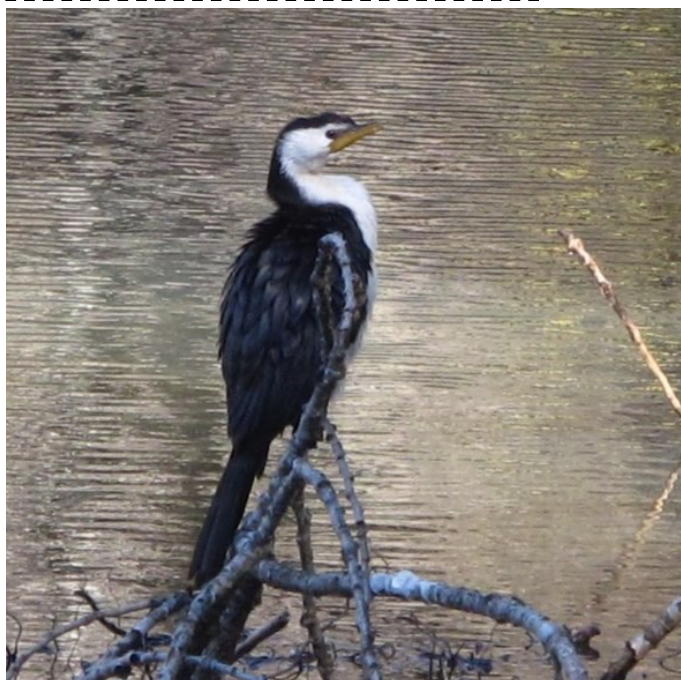
By contrast, Australia’s target, of 26-28 per cent reduction below our 2005 emission levels by 2030, is described by the Climate Council of Australia (CCA) as ‘woefully inadequate’, and the Morrison government has no credible policies to meet even that. In their recent report the CCA state: “The government’s lack of climate change action is the defining leadership failure of the past decade. Delaying action has shortened the time we have left to reduce emissions and makes it more challenging to do so”. Our emission levels have risen every year since 2015 since the Abbott government repealed the carbon price scheme introduced under Labor. Some states are acting on renewables, but NSW has 10 new coal mines waiting approval, and Queensland has already approved Adani.

Time is running out for effective action on climate change, and Australia is particularly vulnerable, a dry continent “at the edge of habitability”. The most effective action we can take as individuals at this time is to **take action** to put pressure on our governments to step up to their responsibilities. Courageous, intelligent young Australian students have called for a **Global StudentStrike4Climate on Friday 20 September**, in their effort to do this. We adults must not leave this huge burden to our children. They seem to be the only ones who understand that their and their country’s future is at stake. I urge you to make at least one of your individual actions be to **stand beside them** on that day.

Winter visitor

Sometimes a cormorant visits the “duck pond” at the Blackheath Memorial Park and stays a few days. There is no natural food for ducks in the pond and Council signs try to discourage visitors from feeding them. But cormorants have the ability to dive and, according to my book, yabbies are a favourite food of the Little Pied Cormorant.

In winter, the deciduous trees surrounding the pond are bare, but on this July winter’s day the breeze was brisk and the pattern of the ripples on the surface of the water made a pretty background. Christine Davies.





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 TRAIL QUESTION 1: How was the Kanangra Boyd Wilderness saved?

The threat of inundation from a higher Warragamba Dam wall is not the first near-death experience for the Kanangra Boyd Wilderness or other wilderness areas within the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

The declaration of parts of Kanangra Boyd and southern Blue Mountains National Parks as a single cohesive wilderness area followed years of campaigning by environmental groups against destructive land use proposals. In the 1960s, proposals emerged to carry out limestone mining at Colong Caves, one of several spectacular groups of underground caves in the southern Blue Mountains. In May 1968, Milo Kanangra Dunphy (1929-1996) founded the Colong Committee, which led to the relinquishing of mining leases over the caves by 1972. Milo Kanangra received his given names from his father, Myles Dunphy, one of the most famous of a group of activists who launched the campaign for a Greater Blue Mountains National Park system in the 1930s.

Meanwhile, the Committee had to contend with a proposal to clear 2000 hectares of native vegetation on Boyd Plateau for a Radiata Pine plantation. The Committee's efforts persuaded the NSW State Pollution Control Commission to agree that Boyd Plateau did not need to be used for timber production. The Committee later became the Colong Foundation for Wilderness which has been active ever since in protecting Australian wilderness areas. Their website provided much information for this article. ([link](#)).

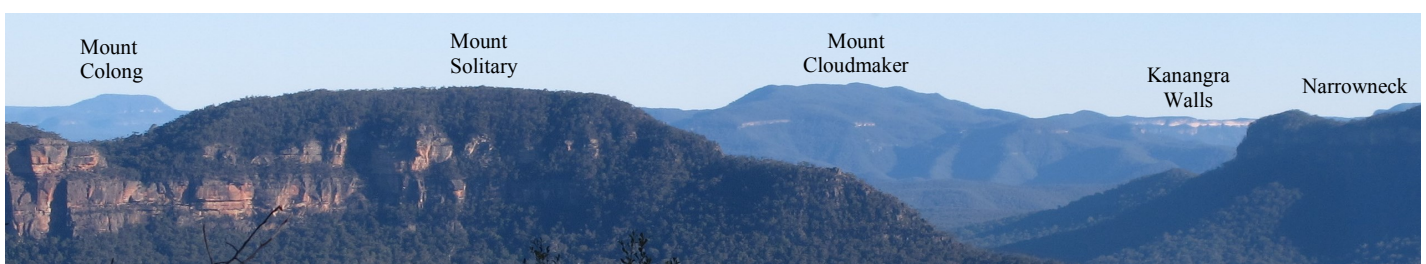
More recent environment group actions have included the purchase of an inholding on Boyd Plateau by the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society (since merged into the Society that produces Hut News) and opposition into upgrades to the famed multi-day Kanangra to Katoomba bushwalk which could have led to building bushwalking huts and other commercialisation.

Captions (photos from top):

In 1954, after the film “Jedda” was nearly ready for release, some footage had been damaged and it was reshot in this location at Kanangra Walls although Charles Chauvel's movie is set in the Northern Territory. (<https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/visit-a-park/parks/kanangraboyd-national-park>)

A limestone formation inside the spectacular Colong caves. (David Noble <http://www.david-noble.net/blog/?p=3765>)

The outstanding landforms in the Kanangra Boyd Wilderness occupying the southern horizon from the viewpoint on the Leura escarpment. The powerline that marks the northern boundary of the gazetted wilderness is a short distance behind Mount Solitary from this perspective. (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 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)

- Aug 10 Megalong Cemetery to Swing Bridge along the 6ft Track.** Leader Alice 47393086 or 0425738766. Meet Wentworth Falls Stn. CP 8.30am. 15k, Gr 3, Map Hampton.
- Aug 17 Hippocrene & Vera Falls.** Leader Mike 47573660. Meet Wentworth Falls Stn. CP 8.30am. 11k, Gr3. Map Katoomba.
- Aug 24 Evans Crown.** Leader Emanuel 0419773906 Ring Leader for details and to book in. 5k, Gr3, Map, Tarana.
- Aug 31 Martins Lookout, Lost world via Kings Link.** Leader Alice 47393086 or 0425738766. Meet Springwood Stn CP. 8.30am 10k GR 3, Map Springwood
- Sep 7 Midsummer Nights Grotto.** A wonderland with elves and fairies. Leader Hugh 0423 309 854 or huespe47@gmail.com Contact leader for details. 6k. Grd 3. Map, Cullen Bullen.
- Sep 14 Victory Track and Magdala Track.** Leader Eddie 47842691. Meet Falconbridge Stn. CP Nth. side 8.30am. 12k, Gr 3, Map Springwood.

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

- Aug 12 Porters Pass Blackheath.** Circuit walk from Blackheath Station. 8 kms Approx. Blackheath Station Car Park 8-45am. Ros 0417 261 465. Grade 3.
- Aug 19 Mt Banks Summit from Bells line of Rd.** A Steep spectacular start with a bit of exploring at the top and a sheltered return Approximately 6.5 Km. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.50 am. Car pool fare \$5. Lindy 0434 829 690. Grade 3.
- Aug 26 St Columba's Cross Springwood.** Sassafras Gully Loop via St Columbus Cross and Perch Ponds. 10 km, 250m elevation, 100m off track, Springwood Station Car Park (Nth Side) 9-00am Car Pool to start of walk at end of Sassafras Gully Road. Gordon Watson 0413 991 524. Grade 3.
- Sep 2 Glenbrook Lagoon, Mt. Sion Park & Lennox Bridge "Historical Walk".** Meet Glenbrook Station car park 9.30 am. Maurice 0402 402 783. Grade 2.
- Sep 9 Butterbox Point and Mt Hay Leura.** Great valley views. Approx 6Km. Meet Leura Station car park 9.25 am. Car pool fare \$5. Lindy 0434 829 690. 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, denfenella12@bigpond.com

- Aug 15 La Prouse Walk.** Meet top of escalators Central Station 9.30am. Leaders Keith 0411 162 345 and Tracy 0434 362 611. Take lunch. Grade 2
- Aug 22 Darwins Walk, Wentworth Falls.** Meet Stockyard Carpark 9.30am. Leader Keith 0411 162 345. Take lunch. Grade 2.
- Aug 29 Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens.** Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.50am. Leader Beverley 4757 2076. Carpool \$5. Take lunch. Grade 1
- Sept 5 Mulherans Masterpiece, Wentworth Falls.** Meet Stockyard Car Park, Wentworth Falls 9.30am. Leader Beverley. Carpool. Take lunch. Grade 2
- Sept 12 Fortress Ridge with option to continue to Darks Cave.** Meet cnr Leura Mall and Megalong Street 9.30am. Leader Roger 4787 7432. Carpool, 4WD preferred. Take lunch. Grade 2
- Sept 19 Nature Trail, Wentworth Falls.** Meet Stockyard Car Park, Wentworth Falls 9.30am. Leader Christine 4757 2864. Carpool. Take lunch. Grade 2

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

Welcome to new members

Mona Taylor	George Lafferty	Robert Thompson
Ken Quinnell	Robert Fredericks	Sophia Kevans
Ian Power	Jelena Emmerick	Alexa Troedson
Elizabeth Charlton	Cheryl Minns	Hedy Stahel
Susan Lenehan	Michael Minns	Christopher Indyka
Richard Mills	Catherine Weaver	
Shaunnagh Dorsett	Catherine Wallace	

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/

For information about PLANT STUDY GROUP and TING (Thursday Interpretive Nature Group) Go to our website www.bluemountains.org.au and click on "Activities"

A BEQUEST: Please remember us in your Will.

The Law Society of NSW recommends the following wording: "I bequeath the sum ofplf \$..... 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 Blue Mountains Conservation Society".