

# HUT NEWS

*"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"*



Issue No. 417  
September 2023



## At last! Feral horse control in Kosciuszko National Park?

The NSW Government is reconsidering aerial shooting to better tackle feral horses numbers in Kosciuszko National Park. Environment Minister Penny Sharpe is seeking feedback on the proposed amendment that would help reduce feral horse numbers and protect more than 30 native threatened species.

Feral horse numbers have increased by more than 30 percent in two years and could increase to more than 50,000 in the next decade unless stronger measures are introduced.

Sharpe said aerial shooting, if approved, would be carried out by skilled, highly trained shooters to the highest animal welfare standards. (Source: Sydney Morning Herald 8/8/23)

The Invasive Species Council warns that there is likely to be a small but vocal opposition to these changes. That's why it's crucial the NSW Government hears from you!

Tell them you support aerial control to protect Kosci's native wildlife and ecosystems from the impacts of feral horses. Read more: <https://invasives.org.au/media-releases/proposed-change-to-allow-aerial-control-of-feral-horses-will-help-save-the-snowies/>

## Have your say

A draft amendment to the Kosciuszko National Park Wild Horse Heritage Management Plan is available for your feedback. For further information and to have your say, go to this link: <https://bit.ly/3DUntT8>

Comments close 11 September 2023

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Darug and Gundungurra people, and pay respect to their elders past, present and emerging.

An article in the August Hut News included a youtube link to **The Pilliga Project**.

Every Australian should watch this. It outlines the ongoing Coal Seam Gas extractions and its spread around the country. It is not just the Narrabri region. The devastating effect on our underground water reserves and hence our farming threatens our future.

An important 35 minute video to share far and wide.

Google "The Pilliga Project" - watch - and take action. Join us at Circular Quay at 11.30am on Thursday 14th September. (Details are underneath)

-- Susanne Rix, BMCS member.

## Stop Coal Seam Gas RALLY

Save the Pilliga and Liverpool Plains

When: Thursday, 14 September, 11.30AM

Where: Circular Quay

March from Customs House to the NSW Parliament

Join us in solidarity with Gomeroi people defending culture and farmers needing certainty for ongoing food production. Santos' coal seam gas (CSG) plans for north-west NSW, including the proposed Narrabri Gas Project, are opposed by Gomeroi Traditional Owners, farmers, the union movement and civil society.

There are significant concerns these plans will have a detrimental impact on the Pilliga Forest and groundwater as well as threatening highly productive agriculture on the Liverpool Plains.

## Blue Mountains Conservation Society NATIVE PLANT NURSERY

We will be back at the Blackheath Growers Market on **SUNDAY 10<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER** and on the 2nd Sunday of every month.



We will have a good selection of tube stock: *Prostanthera* (mint bush) for a splash of purple or mauve, *Crowea* and *Bauera* pretty in pink, *Acacia* for a bright gold, and many more. For enquiries or to place an order -

Please contact :

Nursery Manager, Paul Irwin:

[plantnurserybmcs@outlook.com](mailto:plantnurserybmcs@outlook.com)

# President's report -- Annette Cam

## 1. Annual Planning Day meeting

After our Management Committee meeting on 19 August, we met with members of subcommittees for our "Annual Planning Day". This was very successful and will be reported on at a later date.

## 2. General Meeting at the Conservation Hut

You might have read in the Blue Mountains Gazette (Wednesday August 16) that the Conservation Hut has been leased by Shane and Belinda Simpson, who own the two cafes 2773 Glenbrook and Laughin' Boy at Emu Plains. We are hoping to organize a General Meeting at the Conservation Hut in October or November. More information soon!

## 3. Western Sydney International airport flight paths

I was scheduled to meet with our local federal member, Ms Susan Templeman, on 23 August to discuss our concerns regarding the impact of the flight paths on the Blue Mountains NP and the World Heritage Area. Our concerns centre around the impact of noise on the wildlife, particularly in the lower Blue Mountains National Park, and concurrent impacts on the ecology of the park. We want to see a program of research implemented to collect data on the ongoing effects on the wildlife under these flight paths, starting with baseline data detailing the situation as it now exists. Remember, you can voice your views on the flight paths directly with MP Susan Templeman via an online survey. The link is: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WSIFlightpathcommunitysurvey>

## 4. Sydney Basin Koala Network

On behalf of ConSoc and support from the MC, I have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Total Environment Centre (TEC) to participate in the Sydney Basin Koala Network (SBKN). In doing so we join a group of 16 partners and collaborators who are dedicated to saving our koalas. I will provide further information about this initiative in upcoming newsletters, but you can check out the work the SBKN is doing on their website by either entering "Sydney Basin Koala Network" into your search engine or by following this link <https://www.sydneybasinkoalanetwork.org.au>

## 5. Concern regarding roaming cats

ConSoc wrote to the NSW Government recently about our concerns regarding the impact of cats on our local wildlife and our wish to see domestic cats properly contained. This matter was referred to the Office of Local Government to respond to us. They have emphasized the need to consult with councils and communities, to provide "enhanced public education and targeted compliance measures" and that there needs to be consideration of the "additional administrative and financial burden on councils in mandating cat containment or curfews." ConSoc will continue to follow-up on this important issue and what measures are being taken. Some actions that Councils might take to make protection of wildlife from cats genuinely effective could require changes to State Legislation that transferred additional powers to Councils.

As always, thank you to our ordinary members, our subcommittee members and our management committee members for their ongoing dedication to our beautiful Blue Mountains Environment.

-- Annette Cam, President

## Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.

**Post:** PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

**Phone:** 0490 419 779 (leave message)

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

**Website:** [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

**Facebook, Twitter and Instagram:**  
addresses can be found on website.

**President:** Annette Cam 0450 215 125

[president@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:president@bluemountains.org.au)

**Senior Vice President:** Tara Cameron

[taracameron4@gmail.com](mailto:taracameron4@gmail.com)

**2nd Vice President:** Alan Page

[alanpage7@bigpond.com](mailto:alanpage7@bigpond.com)

**Administration Officer:**

Jeanette Robertson

[sao@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:sao@bluemountains.org.au)

**Bushcare Officer:** Paul Vale 0429 014 454

[bushcare@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:bushcare@bluemountains.org.au)

**Environmental Education Officer:**

*Vacant* - [bmcs@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:bmcs@bluemountains.org.au)

**Events Coordinator:** Andrew Solomon

0408 267 078 [events@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:events@bluemountains.org.au)

**Gardens of Stone Project Officer:**

*Vacant* [natpks@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:natpks@bluemountains.org.au)

**Land Use Officer:** Angela Langdon

[landuse@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:landuse@bluemountains.org.au)

**Meetings Secretary:** Heather Hull

0456 618 948 [hhull001@bigpond.net.au](mailto:hhull001@bigpond.net.au)

**Membership Secretary:** Ross Coster

0418 462 576

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

**National Parks & World Heritage Officer:**

Madi Maclean

[natpks@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:natpks@bluemountains.org.au)

**Newsletter Editor:** Christine Davies

[hutnews@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:hutnews@bluemountains.org.au)

**Nursery Manager:** Paul Irwin

[plantnurserybmcs@outlook.com](mailto:plantnurserybmcs@outlook.com)

**Publicity Officer:** Hayley Poynton

[publicity@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:publicity@bluemountains.org.au)

**Sustainability & Climate Change Officer:**

Nathalie Verellen

[sustain@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:sustain@bluemountains.org.au)

**Threatened Species Officer:** *Vacant*

[bmcs@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:bmcs@bluemountains.org.au)

**Treasurer and Public Officer:**

Elizabeth Howard 0414 090 251

[eh.mistover@bigpond.com](mailto:eh.mistover@bigpond.com)

**Website Officer:** Alan Page

[alanpage7@bigpond.com](mailto:alanpage7@bigpond.com)

**Bushwalking Convenor:** Doug Nicholls

0455 850 753 [doug nicholls@bigpond.com](mailto:doug nicholls@bigpond.com)

**Bushfire Representative:**

Hugh Paterson 0427 512 303

[fmatter@bigpond.net.au](mailto:fmatter@bigpond.net.au)

**THE DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER  
HUT NEWS IS 12 SEPTEMBER**

[hutnews@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:hutnews@bluemountains.org.au)

**Enquiries: Christine 4787 7246**



## Activism Works: Part 1

# The Big Tree

-- Susanne Rix

Crossing Tasmania in my rented camper-van, I stopped. Or did my heart stop? There on the edge of the road a sign: **"World Heritage Area - Franklin Gordon Wild Rivers National Park for next 56 Km"**

This was a sign we protesters in the 1970s never imagined we'd ever see. My eyes welled as I leapt from the van to photograph the sign. I thumped my chest in victory. My park! My river! Mentally, in that moment, I took total credit for saving the Franklin. The song we sang as protestors became the ear worm for the rest of my trip across Tasmania. **"Save the Franklin. Let it be. Save the River for You and Me"**

It wasn't just me of course. My part was minuscule. But the massive grass roots movement was finally heard by politicians and with a change of government the Franklin was saved.

On this trip, I was visiting the endangered Tarkine on the West Coast, a vast wilderness area that has become the target of the insatiable foresters and miners. The protest actions aren't as well publicised, the protesters lower in number - but the mission is similar. **Save the wilderness for our future generations.**

On my return journey, a seductive sign beacons: **"The big tree. 20 KM"**. I turned off the highway. Bitumen became dirt, dirt became mud. As I drove deeper, into what was left of the old growth forest, I could feel the pain of the trees. The remains of forest logging, some with massive stumps metres across, revealed a wasteland of the now dead ancient forest.

The Styx state forest is the home of the aptly named Giant Ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*), the tallest hardwoods and the tallest flowering plants on earth.

With each turn off, I considered how I would ever find my way out of here. As I skirted potholes in my ungainly 2 WD van, I wondered at my own bravado. Stupidity perhaps. Should I really head into an isolated forestry area, with no mobile coverage, alone at dusk? Images of Belanglo came to mind.

Finally, after yet another turn past a foresters stand littered with fallen trunks and tree stumps. **"The Big Tree. Park Here."**

I followed the path through the understory of myrtles, giant ferns and a carpet of vivid green moss. It was easy to find 'the big tree' in the small 5 acre reserve. It was trapped behind the timber walkway - his dead companions.

OMG. Soo big. I tried to follow the trunk to the canopy, but had to hold on to the railing as I leaned backwards. Majesty. Tasmania's royalty. 500 years old, 20 metre girth and almost 90 metres high.

A sign beside it belittled its big tree status, **"The bigger tree - this way"**. I followed, reverently. Somehow I wanted to pray or meditate or something to show my awe and respect to this ancient monument. Lonely in its isolation and witness to the war against nature as it grieves for the death of its family.



If I hadn't been afraid of being alone in an isolated forestry grove, I would have slept the night with their majesties, there in the forest, among these lonely princes.

The slaughter of old growth forests continues in Tasmania. The Tarkine is the next forest in danger of the same demise. Will my granddaughter's generation be able to witness these majesties? We need to continue the fight.

<https://www.wilderness.org.au/about/tasmania>

Photos by Susanne Rix - more on page 8.

## Fighting for the Forests

### Bob Brown Foundation:

takayna / Tarkine: The ancient forests, mountains and coastline of takayna urgently need protection as a World-Heritage-listed National Park, returned to Aboriginal ownership. Take Action: Save Masked Owls. Tell Minister Pliibersek to Protect Tarkine Rainforests. Help us reach 20,000 signatures ... Read more: <https://bobbrown.org.au/campaigns/takayna/>

### Wilderness Australia:

There is news of an emerging new threat to our forests and climate. We must stop our forests being sold to fund fossil fuel emissions. Read more: <https://www.wildernessaustralia.org.au/>

### Wilderness Society:

Extinction is a choice ... We need strong new environment laws so that the places we love can be protected ... **Email Minister Pliibersek!** Read more: <https://www.wilderness.org.au/>



# We're not all Darryl Kerrigans - Why we like our airports curfewed

## -- Opinion by Don Morison

The movie character Darryl Kerrigan is a satirical joke. A bare majority of Australians seem to like satirical jokes. A significant minority are unable to understand the point of any joke at any time. So let's explain this one to them.

Darryl Kerrigan in "The Castle" movie has persuaded his family to spend their weekdays living under the flight path a few metres from Melbourne airport and their holidays staying under high transmission lines at Bonnie Doon. His character is a lovable specimen of Australian individuality but satire operates partly through exaggeration and the comic device in play with Darryl is that virtually no other Australians would be so individualistic as to appreciate aircraft noise and high voltage electric power lines in the way that he does.

The politics operating at a number of locations in Australia show our country certainly does not have a homogenous population of Darryl Kerrigans. It is reasonable to suspect that the Western Sydney airport proposal, which the private sector rejected an opportunity to invest in, is about transferring airport noise away from the suburbs of Sydney's eastern metropolis and is not necessarily about catering to reliably predictable future air traffic demand.

In Queensland, there are renewed calls to impose a curfew on Brisbane airport where 24-hour aircraft noise has increasingly impacted otherwise highly desirable riverfront suburbs. Some analysts think that the loss of three major party Brisbane electorates to the Greens at the May 2022 Federal election was significantly influenced by the aircraft noise issue.

9 NEWS HEADLINES Aug 8, 2023

Flight paths to change ... Queensland's south-east impacted ... **New Brisbane flight path proposal offers relief to some and pain for others ...**

In the Blue Mountains, we could put a lot of energy into arguing with the Federal Government's consultants about where the flight paths will go. But no arrangement entered into now will escape tinkering or wholesale abandonment in future terms of Government.

With apologies to Darryl, most of us, whether we are in our own homes or we are walking or tent camping in our Greater Blue Mountains National Parks, value periods within the 24-hour cycle being reserved for sleep and peaceful



meditation. If we lose these we cannot concentrate on the vital pursuits of sustainability and environmentalism that will protect what is most important for ourselves and the following generations.

A curfew-free airport is still worth vigorously opposing.

The village of Linden, whose heritage-worthy observatory could be severely affected by currently proposed flight paths, is reacting with great apprehension to the fear of night-time aircraft noise. These homemade signs are the proof.



*Wollemia nobilis* top view  
Photographer: John Dalton  
<john.dalton@bigfoot.com> -  
Own work DD BY-SA 3.0

## The passing of Mr Carrick Chambers

9Newspapers have marked the passing of the botanist, Mr Carrick Chambers, who was born in 1930 and is credited with confirming the identity of the species, *Wollemia nobilis*, better known as the Wollemi Pine, in 1994. (SMHerald 17/8/23)

Mr Chambers is also credited with overseeing the opening and development of the Blue Mountains Botanic Garden, Mount Tomah. To Chambers is attributed the quote that the *Wollemia nobilis* discovery is "the botanical equivalent of finding a small dinosaur still alive on earth".

The identification of the Wollemi Pine followed its discovery by National Parks ranger Dave Noble in the region of the northern Blue Mountains, known as the Wollemi, and discussions with botanists Wyn Jones, Ian Allen and Ken Hill.

The contribution of Mt Tomah Gardens to research, tourism and education about Blue Mountains ecology is immeasurable.

Hut News invites readers to share your memories of Mr Chambers, the discovery of the Wollemi Pine and what Mount Tomah Gardens has become.

-- The Hut News Team [hutnews@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:hutnews@bluemountains.org.au)



# More Regent Honeyeater News

-- Judy Smith and Peter Smith

The previous August Hut News noted some exciting recent sightings of the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater in coastal NSW. In June this year, the two birds pictured were sighted at a North Coast location which has been variously described as north of Coffs Harbour or north of Woolgoolga. These birds were feeding in Swamp Mahogany *Eucalyptus robusta* trees which were then flowering prolifically. Both birds were unbanded, hence wild-bred. We think (based on Peter's many photos) that one is a young male in its first year of life (the brown feathers are remnants of its juvenile plumage) and the other an adult, most likely female. It was good to see the young male, showing that there was at least some breeding success in 2022, although we don't know where.

A further exciting sighting was reported in July of a banded zoo-bred Regent Honeyeater joining the "north of Coffs Harbour/Woolgoolga" birds. The banded bird had moved from Werakata State Conservation Area, a little to the east of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (Yengo NP). It had travelled some 350 km, which is over 300 km further than recorded previously for any zoo-bred birds released into the wild in NSW.

We visited the North Coast site again in August and have so far found one unbanded Regent Honeyeater. Swamp Mahoganies are still flowering but fading. This bird appears to be feeding on Coast Banksia *Banksia integrifolia* flowers, which are now attracting many honeyeaters and lorikeets on the North Coast.

The highly mobile Regent Honeyeaters are spectacular but blend into the foliage when feeding in eucalypt flowers. The North Coast/Werakata SCA birds may well visit the Blue Mountains.



Sightings of these rare (approaching extinction) birds are to be treasured and provide valuable information - we encourage everyone to actively search for them in flowering plants, especially eucalypts, mistletoes, banksias and even planted Grevilleas. We should also seek to ensure that no further known or potential Regent Honeyeater habitat is cleared or degraded, it might just be essential one day.

(Photos by Peter Smith)



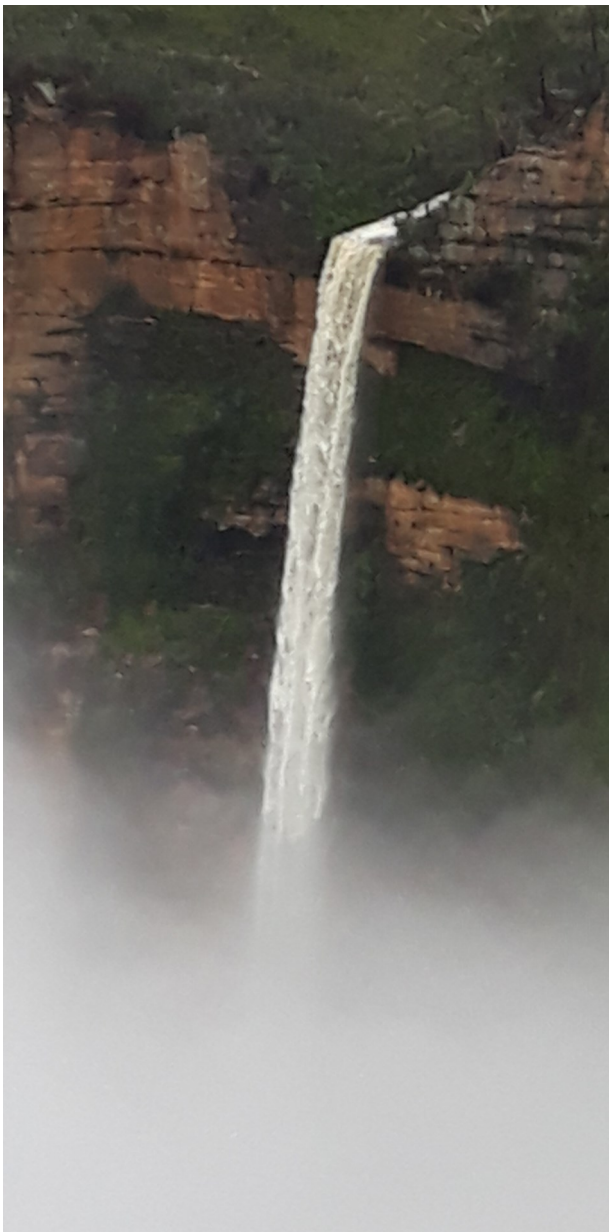
## Spring Wildflowers

Spring is here and the bush is full of wildflowers. If you wish to know what they all are, why not join us on a Plant Study Group outing? We meet once a month. Find out more on the website - <https://www.bluemountains.org.au/psg/index.shtml> or enquiries Meredith: [mountains@westnet.com.au](mailto:mountains@westnet.com.au).

Photos: The group admiring one of our August favourites at Faulconbridge: *Leucopogon fletcheri* (Helen Yoxall) and *L. fletcheri* flower (Sue Nicol)







## Govetts Leap Catchment Group

Govetts Leap Catchment Group was established in Blackheath last year to protect and improve the natural environment of the catchment of Govetts Leap Brook which flows over Govetts Leap.

It is based on the catchment groups which successfully operate elsewhere in the Blue Mountains.

The initial focus of the group is on weeds in the urban areas of the catchment, particularly broom, gorse, Himalayan honey-suckle and blackberry. Over many years, and particularly since the 2019-20 fires, much control work has been done in the natural areas of the catchment by bushcare volunteers, National Parks and Council staff and contractors. Weeds in these areas are largely under control. However, weeds at the urban boundaries continue to provide a source of new seed to the natural areas.

The group has identified weed problems across the urban area and will work with land managers, principally Council, to control these. In an effort to increase public awareness, the group prepares informative weed posters at flowering times and places these on noticeboards and social media in Blackheath.

The group is also exploring opportunities to improve long term weed control across the catchment.

The group meets formally with land managers every 2-4 months, and informally as needed.

The initial members of the group are all active in bushcare within the catchment. The group would welcome any new members who have an interest in the catchment and support the group's aims.

For further information, contact the Coordinator: Keith Brister on 0414 778786, email [govettsleap.cg@gmail.com](mailto:govettsleap.cg@gmail.com), website [govettsleapcatchmentgroup.wordpress.com](http://govettsleapcatchmentgroup.wordpress.com)

Image: Bridal Veil Falls (Govetts Leap), Blackheath  
(Keith Brister)

## Seeing Green -- Alan Page

It's twenty years since I began taking photos of wildflowers, and then having the joy of identifying them, learning about them and placing them on my website.

When bushwalking it was easy to see a small splash of red or yellow or white or even blue. But green and brown? Much of the bush is green and brown, so my brain automatically filtered out those colours.

My first encounter with a green flower was with a greenhood orchid in Lane Cove National Park. The Nodding Greenhood (*Pterostylis nutans*). Amusingly, once I saw one, I saw quite a few. This experience also helped me adjust my search to look for small ground hugging flowers.

I now see green flowers, such as the delightful Green Spider Flowers (*Grevillea mucronulata*) – which are currently flowering in the Blue Mountains.

A few years ago, Ian Brown and I were searching for the uncommon Dwarf Flannel Flower (*Actinotus gibbonsii*) on Newnes Plateau. Like the Pink Flannel Flower (*A. forsythii*) it only seems to appear the summer after a bushfire.

Ian found it on a bushwalk, and took me there a few days later and although he exclaimed "*here we are*", I couldn't immediately see it because it is mainly prostrate and, unlike the Pink Flannel Flower, its flowers are brown and blend into its surroundings.

When on bushwalks I regularly stop and take in my surrounds. I breath in and relax. "*Look, listen and enjoy!*" I call it.



Nodding Greenhood  
--*Pterostylis nutans*

(Alan Page)

# Chats of the Paroo Darling (Peery) National Park NSW

-- Annette Cam

***This is the fourth in a series of articles about the birds of the Paroo Darling National Park, far western NSW.***

Graham and I have seen three chat species in our birds survey work for NSW NPWS since April 2022 in the Paroo-Darling National Park. These are: Crimson Chat (*Epthianura tricolor*), Orange Chat (*E. aurifrons*) and the White-fronted Chat (*E. albifrons*).

In August/September 2022, after considerable rain had fallen across the area of the park during earlier in the year, there were large swathes of brightly-coloured wildflowers across the park. As well, there was much growth on the shrubs, herbs and other groundcover plants that grow in the various vegetation communities. This increase in plant growth was accompanied by an influx of many species of birds which fed on flowers, nectar, seeds, leaves or insects and this included these three species of chats.

Chats are small birds, 11-13 cm long, are part of the honeyeater family Meliphaga and have a brush-tipped tongue. They feed on ground insects and have a bouncing flight. They are quite common, although you have to be in the right place at the right time to see them!

## Crimson Chat.

We saw numbers of strikingly-coloured Crimson Chats particularly in areas of blue bush (*Maireana pyramidata*), saltbush (*Atriplex nummularia*) and lignum (*Muehlenbeckia florulenta*) on the sand dune at the southern end of Poloko Lake, which is close to the northern end of the national park. The males are particularly eye-catching, with their bright crimson and contrasting dark brown feathers.

Crimson Chats are found throughout inland Australia in semi-arid and arid regions mainly dominated by open shrublands, dunes, plains or grasslands. In areas of unpredictable rainfall, they are nomadic following the rains. As well as eating ground insects, they have been seen to take nectar and insects from flowers.

## Orange Chat.

This species was seen in the sedge and lakebed hermland around the edges of Peery Lake, as they foraged for invertebrates on the ground amongst the low vegetation. Another strikingly-coloured bird, the male's plumage is bright orange with a black face and throat, the female paler yellow with pale orange rump. The species is highly nomadic in arid and semi-arid zones of Australia. They inhabit low, treeless shrublands dominated by saltbush, bluebush or samphire.

## White-fronted Chat.

We saw this species on a sandy mound-spring at the edge of Peery Lake, flitting about the low herbs on one of the mound springs. Whilst less colourful than the Crimson or Orange Chats, they are nonetheless an eye-catching bird, with their bold black, white and grey plumage.

White-fronted Chats live in salt marshes and damp, open areas with low vegetation including around lake edges and beaches. They occur across southern Australia. White-fronted Chats used to be recorded across the Sydney region, but draining and filling swamps for housing has reduced their habitat and they are now very rarely seen in this area.



Crimson Chat © John Barkla 2010 birdlifephotography.org.au



Orange Chat © David Newell 2020 birdlifephotography.org.au



White-fronted Chat © Michael Hamel-Green 2022  
birdlifephotography.org.au

## Feedback or Complaints

If you have some feedback or complaint about the Society, you can send an email to the society's email address -[bmcs@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:bmcs@bluemountains.org.au) - or to the President -[president@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:president@bluemountains.org.au)

Please ensure you provide your name in the email. We take correspondence seriously and will respond.

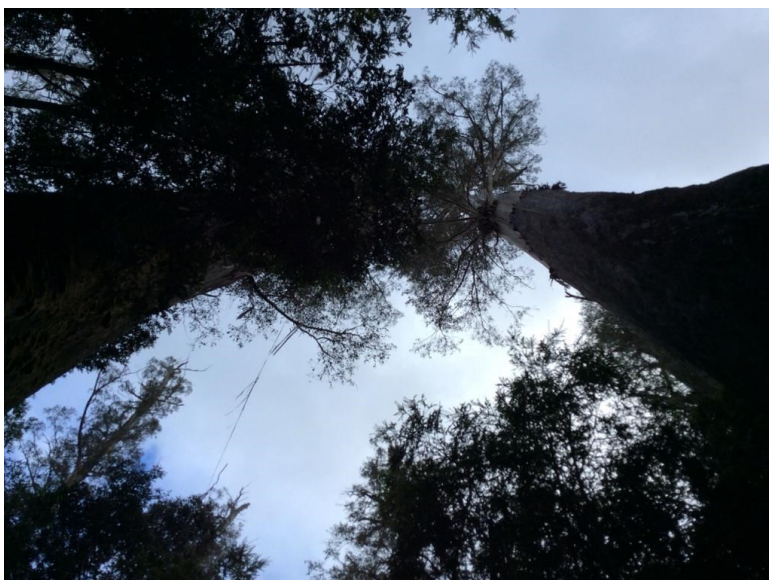


## Activism Works: 1. The Big Tree

(continued from page 3)



*"As I drove deeper, into what was left of the old growth forest, I could feel the pain of the trees. The remains of forest logging, some with massive stumps metres across, revealed a wasteland of the now dead ancient forest."*



*"I tried to follow the trunk to the canopy, but had to hold on to the railing as I leaned backwards. Majesty. Tasmania's royalty. 500 years old, 20 metre girth and almost 90 metres high."*

## Robert's Ranges

Celebrating the haunts of map-maker Robert Sloss. The flower buds of *Gompholobium grandiflorum*, from the *Fabaceae* family, anticipate springtime on a lonely path near West Glenbrook Reserve.

Image: Alethea Morison



## Management Committee changes - Vacancies to be filled - Find out more ...

The Society's Management Committee is elected by members at our Annual General Meeting which is held in March, to serve until the following AGM. During the year, any changes or new appointments are confirmed by the Management Committee. All MC members are volunteers.

The following changes were confirmed at the management meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The Society's website is now under the management of Alan Page. Andrew Solomon continues on as Events Coordinator. Adam Curry will continue his contribution to the Society in subcommittee.

There are two vacant positions: Environmental Education Officer and Threatened Species Officer.

We need new volunteers to fill these two vacant positions. The main qualifications are a love of the Blue Mountains and a passion for protecting the natural environment, along with some expertise or a willingness to learn. The appointments would be until the date of the AGM in March 2024.

To find out more, please contact Alan Page - [alanpage7@bigpond.com](mailto:alanpage7@bigpond.com)

## Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park Draft Plan of Management: public consultation

The Blue Mountains National Park and Kanangra-Boyd National Park Draft Plan of Management is on public exhibition until **26 September 2023**. Work has started on a Society submission. Members are encouraged to read the Draft Plan. Go to this link: <https://bit.ly/47E1JCm>



# The Reappearance of My Old 'Paddymade' Rucksack

-- Jim Low

Vacating a home after forty years or more there has not been easy. But it has been filled with some pleasant surprises. For instance, my old Paddy Pallin Tramper rucksack reappeared. Hanging on a nail under the house floorboards, it emerged from its lengthy, dark exile, its cotton duck fabric finely coated in sawdust. It was like saying hello again to an old, forgotten friend.

Not the most body friendly rucksack, with its metal frame that gave the small of one's back a rough working over and with its straps that cut into one's shoulders, all this was forgotten on its return.

Born in England in 1900, Frank 'Paddy' Pallin arrived in Australia in 1926. Pallin was a pioneer of the Sydney Bush Walking Club and had a lifelong association with the Scouting movement. A conservationist's love for the outdoors, in the early 1930s he began making clothes and gear for the bushwalker and camper. He later opened his first store in George Street where he sold his 'Paddymade' quality products.

I purchased my rucksack in the early 1960s at the Paddy Pallin store in Castlereagh Street. An advertisement dated July 1960 described it as 'suitable for young people and ladies'. It cost me seven pounds four shillings and six pence.

Pride and independence were felt as I set off on my first walking adventures, my rucksack filled with all that I would need, I hoped. But my old pack is now full of memories of those places we ventured together all those years ago.

There's the first of those revitalising Blue Mountains bush walks, a magical visit to the Blue Gum Forest accompanied by an arduous ascent of Victoria Falls in fading light. There's the time when a high school friend and I hitch hiked around the then underdeveloped Gold Coast. I remember the night train journey from Sydney to Leeton in an unsuccessful search for fruit picking work. That experience was followed by another train trip to Healesville where I picked cucumbers for three weeks. I fondly recall the solo walks I made in the Warrumbungle Mountains while teaching in the area. All these memories from long ago are treasured, and my Paddy Pallin Tramper was my trusty, constant companion.

My old rucksack was initially on the throw out pile. Not any more. I think I will hold onto it for just a bit longer.



Images by Jim Low

## Blue Mountains City Council Community Net Zero Plan - SURVEY

This survey will help inform the Plan by understanding the types of actions people are already undertaking to reduce emissions at home, actions they would like to take, as well as identify barriers to action and ways Council can best support the community.

[https://yoursay.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/community-net-zero-plan/survey\\_tools/community-net-zero-survey](https://yoursay.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/community-net-zero-plan/survey_tools/community-net-zero-survey)

## How to Join the Society

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society is an incorporated voluntary organisation of more than 900 members. Our goal is to protect, conserve and advocate for the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains. You can become a member. Join online at [www.bluemountains.org.au/joining.shtml](http://www.bluemountains.org.au/joining.shtml) or phone 0418 462 576.

Membership includes our monthly newsletter, Hut News, by post and online.

## Blue Mountains Conservation Society 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](http://www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml)



## Thought-provoking New Zealand 6: The rarity of land mammals in NZ

© Christine Davies

Last year, the organisation known as Forest and Bird was seeking to recruit a permanent manager and volunteers for the Te Hoiere Reserve Restoration Project in the Marlborough district of New Zealand's South Island. The reserve, also known as Pelorus Bridge Reserve, has been the focus of conservation efforts over the past decade to protect a stand of vegetation that is home to a colony of New Zealand Long-tailed Bats.

The bat (or pekapeka) is the only terrestrial mammal that is native to New Zealand. There are two types of endemic bat – the long-tailed (pekapeka-tou-roa) and the lesser short-tailed (pekapeka-tou-poto). The long-tailed bat has the highest threat classification of Threatened - Nationally Critical.

In 2020, two members of the Thursday Interpretive Nature Group visited Te Hoiere Reserve. Although, it boasts a large swimming hole in the district between Picton and Nelson, which is one of New Zealand's most popular recreational playgrounds, we were most impressed with the emphasis on conservation by the managers of the reserve. It was possible to wander along the paths between the large, well-established, trees and read about how significant this particular bat colony is to the biodiversity of New Zealand and what a challenge it is to protect the bats from the effects of weeds and predators.



## Te Hoiere Bat Recovery

Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve/Titiraukawa, and Pelorus River/Te Hoiere, ancestral lands and waterways of Ngati Kuia, are home to one of the last remaining populations of bats – New Zealand's only native land mammal – in the top of the South Island.

A small population of long-tailed bats roosts in the forest around the bridge and camp site. On warm summer evenings, they can sometimes be seen after dusk, circling high in the forest canopy or flying along the river. When it becomes darker, they can often be glimpsed foraging for moths above the street lights.

## The wonder of the wattles!

Against the backdrop of the majesty of the Greater Blue Mountains, nature astounds us with a succession of events which each have their turn according to the season.

In the Upper Blue Mountains this winter, especially in areas which were burnt in the fires of 2019/20, there is a fabulous display of the beautiful golden Sunshine Wattles (*Acacia terminalis*) which have grown in the bushland among the blackened trees. Three and a half years after the fire, the Sunshine Wattle blossoms are at their finest.

Acacias are pioneer species and germinate from seed present in the soil. They grow up quickly in areas that have become open after a disturbance or a fire and help other species by fixing nitrogen in the soil and providing shelter. In desert landscapes they are recognised as a keystone species with most desert fauna depending on them, either directly or indirectly, for food and shelter.

Indigenous people traditionally use them for a wide range of purposes including food, medicines and tools. They were among the plants used by early colonists in a building technique known as "wattle and daub". Vertical wooden stakes, or wattles, were woven with horizontal twigs and branches and daubed with clay or

mud. Hence the common name, "wattle".

Almost 1,000 species of Acacia occur in Australia, making it the nation's largest genus of flowering plants. The Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha* Benth) is Australia's national floral emblem and, when in flower, displays the national colours - green and gold. The first day of September is National Wattle Day. Many Acacias flower at other times of the year.

You can start a native garden by planting local Acacia species to prepare the soil.

Many wattles are prone to insect attack and are generally short-lived. I planted an *Acacia longifolia* in my garden (from the Consoc native plant nursery) when I started my native garden in 2001. It grew quickly and, for several years, I enjoyed watching the King Parrots which came at the same time every year to feed on its immature seeds.

By the time you read this, the Sunshine Wattle will have faded. But, at the beginning of August, another wattle is beginning to flower in the upper mountains – it is already in full flower in the lower mountains. It is Sydney Golden Wattle (*Acacia longifolia*).

-- Christine Davies

The image on page 11 of the Sunshine Wattle beside the fire-trail to the Braeside Walk, Blackheath, was taken by me on 6/8/23.





## BUSHWALKING:

Enjoy the bush, learn about the Blue Mountains natural environment and find out why bushwalking has been a popular pastime in the Blue Mountains for more than 100 years. Our bushwalking convenor is Doug Nicholls [dougnicholls@bigpond.com](mailto:dougnicholls@bigpond.com), phone 0455 850 735.

Walks are graded and generally suitable for walkers of average fitness but may vary in degree of difficulty. Participants need to be aware of their own capabilities and can discuss with the bushwalking convenor, group coordinator or leader.

Underneath is a brief summary of walks and leaders for this month. **Check our website <https://www.bluemountains.org.au/bushwalking.shtml> for a detailed walks program and program changes.**

**MONDAY LEISURE WALKS:** Short day walks 3-5 hours. Bring morning tea, lunch and adequate water. Coordinator: Melanie Lawson 0431 214 687.

[melanielawson@outlook.com.au](mailto:melanielawson@outlook.com.au).

Sep 18 **Red Hands Cave** Glenbrook railway carpark 9:10am Wayne 0429 021 296

Sep 25 **Kanuka Brook/Crayfish Pool** Glenbrook railway carpark 9:10am Lyn 0432 352 850

Oct 2 **Public Holiday – no scheduled walk**

Oct 9 **Moya Point & Lillians Bridge** Conservation Hut carpark Wentworth Falls 9:30am Kathy 0422 209 812

Oct 16 **Mt Piddington/Rienits Pass Track/Bushrangers Cave** Mount Vic railway CP 9:40 Melanie 0431 214 687

**TUESDAY FITNESS WALKS:** Coordinator: Susan Nicholls (4754 1516 [suerosn@bigpond.net.au](mailto:suerosn@bigpond.net.au)).

Sep 5 **Portal Lookout/ Euroka/ Ironbarks Circuit** G2/7K, Rob 0400 672 336

Sep 12 **Toongabbie to Westmead** G2/10K, Judith 0419 780 640.

Sep 19 **Valhalla Head Mt Victoria** G2/7K, Doug 0455850753.

Sep 26 **Evans Crown** G2/2.5K, Maurice 0402402783.

**THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS** are 2-3 hours and are conducted at a leisurely pace. Coordinator: Beverley Thompson (4757 2076 [denfenella12@bigpond.com](mailto:denfenella12@bigpond.com))

Sep 14 **Horseshoe Falls Circuit, Hazelbrook (4kms)**. Meet Hazelbrook Shops (north) 10am. Carpool. Take lunch. Maurice 0402 402 783. Gr2.

Sep 21 **Knapsack Gully & Elizabeth Lookout**. 3km. Meet Glenbrook Station CP (east) 9.30am. Take lunch. Maurice 0402 402 783. Grade 1.

Sep 28 **Bus trip to Mount Annan Botanic Gardens**. See website for details.

Oct 5 **Wentworth Falls/ Rocket Point/ Mulherans Masterpiece/ Lincolns Rock**. Meet Stockyard CP 9.30am. Carpool. Take lunch. Libby 4759 2969. Gr 2

Oct 12 **Yondell Avenue Fire Trail and Tracks, Springwood**. Meet Car Park behind Westpac Bank 9.15am. Carpool. Take lunch. Ros 0417 261 465. Grade 2

**SATURDAY WALKS:** Usually a full day, longer walk at a faster pace. Coordinator Harold Thompson 04090 10736, [Harold.thompson@bigpond.com](mailto:Harold.thompson@bigpond.com)).

Sep 2 **Liversidge Hill**. Harold 0409 010737, Mt Vic Stn CP 8.45am. Gr3, 9km. Map Mt Wilson.

Sep 9 **Dalpura Wander**. Harold 0409010737. Mt. Vic. Stn. CP. 8.30 am. Gr 3, 8km. Map Mt Wilson

Sep 16. **Upper Bungleboori**. Harold 0409010737. Mt Vic. Stn. CP. 8.30am. Gr 3, 9km. Map Lithgow.

Sep 23 **Koombanda Ridge**. Harold 0409010737. Mt. Vic. Stn. CP. 8.30 am. Gr 3, 7km. Map Mt Wilson

Sep 30 **Kamara Ridge**. Harold 0409010737. Mt. Vic. Stn. CP. 8.30 am. Gr 3, 7km. Map Mt Wilson

Oct 7 No walk programmed.

Visit the Saturday walks facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/bmcslongerbushwalks?fref=nf>





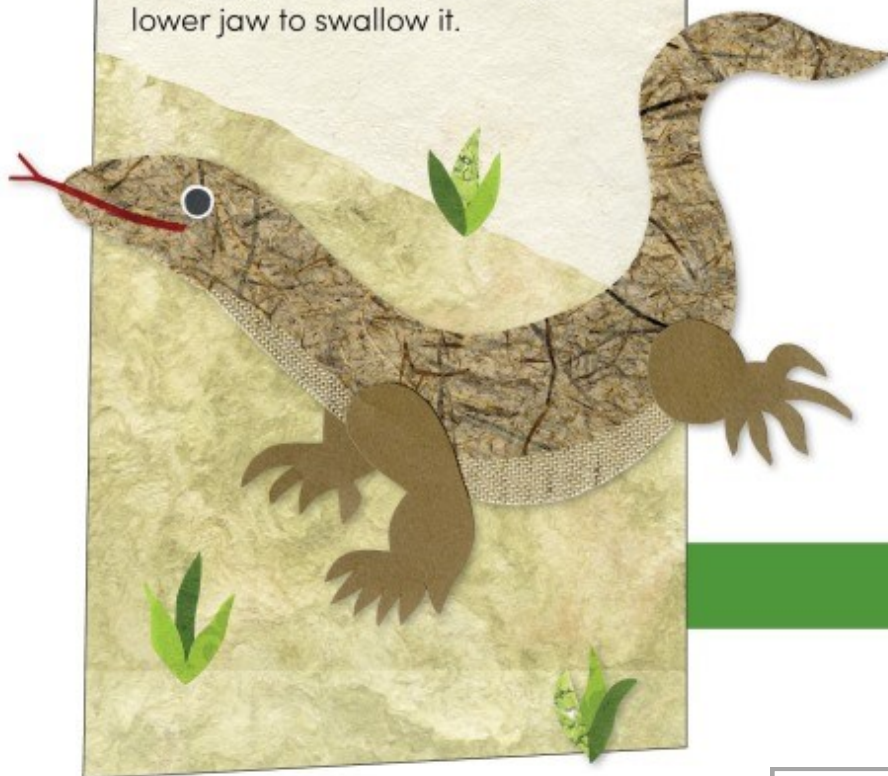


Blue Mountains **WATER SKINKS** can detach their tail when they are in danger. Regrowing them takes a long time and requires a lot of energy.

**WATER DRAGONS** can hold their breath underwater for up to 90 minutes.



A **GOANNA** finds prey by flicking its tongue and picking up scent molecules from the air. If the prey is large, goannas can unhinge their lower jaw to swallow it.



**LIZARD**

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Published by Blue Mountains  
Conservation Society in "Hut News"

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Collect the pages as they appear in Hut News.

<https://bluemountains.org.au/documents/hutnews/archive/wild-image-LETTER-L.pdf>