



Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society

Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow's People

Newsletter

No 93
October 1993

P.O. BOX 29
WENTWORTH FALLS
N.S.W. 2782

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(047) 57 3272
Editor: Mrs Grace Bayley
(047) 59 1955

Meetings are held in the Conservation Hut at the end of Fletcher St, Wentworth Falls, at 7.30 pm on the last Friday of every month.

PROGRAMME

MONTHLY MEETINGS

- October 29: Surprise Programme!
November 26: Judy Smith will show slides and speak about our native birds.
January 28: Greg Manson will speak on the management of National Parks and Wildlife Services.

NB. There is no December meeting, but on Sunday 12th December there will be a Christmas get-together at the Hut, commencing at 10am. Members can go for a leisurely walk along the Overcliff walk and share lunch together. Bring your own or sample the delicious cuisine of the restaurant.

CALENDAR

- Sat. 23 October: 9am Plant Sale at The Hut. Contact 586561.
Fri. 5 November: 'TEN WEEDS FORTNIGHT'. Information promotion at Wentworth Falls shopping centre. Contact 843232
Sat. 26 February: Bush Care Forum at Springwood Civic Centre. Theme, 'World Heritage Depends on Bush Care.'
1994 Marketing Bush Care. 512143 and 516046
Sat. 18 March: Field workshop in environmental control for bush care workers
1994 and fan clubs. An alternative title is 'Green silt cloth in the Blue Mountains'.
Sat-Sun. 4-5 June 1994: World Environment Day (weekend). Springwood Civic Centre. Celebration of the environment by all Conservation and allied groups in the City of the Blue Mountains.
Contacts 514046 and 586561.

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WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS

Alan and Manei Cordeiro and family, Carolyn Skelton, Barbara Orr, Ronald Banyard and family, John Dacre and family, Fred Read, Lida Szabunia, Anna and Rene Fundelic.

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Reports

BUSH CARE

In line with the aims of our constitution

- 1) The Society has offered to letterbox hot spots for Blue Mts City Council where garden refuse is dumped in adjoining bushland. This practise results in weed invasion and build-up of fire fuel. Examples are Cliff Drive, Katoomba, and Valley Road, Wentworth Falls. Members may be asked to help from time to time.
- 2) A follow-up to the successful Bush-care Forum which we held in July is cementing the impact created on that day. A city-wide steering committee is strengthening the network and setting a broad policy for Bush Care/Regeneration groups. This is a Society initiative but works within the BMCC Bush Care section. If you are interested in contributing to the movement ask Virginia Bear (82 0768) in the first instance, for the nearest group. Robin Corringham is another person with information on the subject. (586561)
- 3) A letter has been sent to Dept. of Conservation and Land Management asking for the employment of a Land-care Co-ordinator to help bush-care groups with up-to-date information of land conservation and catchment management.
- 4) The Society has offered to pay membership fees to 'Greening Australia' for any bush-care group which has no money. This membership carries insurance for workers. If a group works within the Council framework, insurance is covered by the Council.
- 5) The Bush-care Forum is sponsoring a celebration of the environment on World Environment Day weekend, June 4-5 1994 at Springwood. The Society needs a group of 'ideas' people and good organisers to arrange a useful display. Or you may care to sing and dance. Convey your ideas and/or offers immediately to 586561 or a Committee member. You will be nagged about this so get it over with and be first in with your portmanteau of practical assistance.

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"TEN WEEDS FORTNIGHT"

This is the catchword for Weeds Awareness Fortnight, 1 - 14 November. Sponsored by the Bush-care Forum, every citizen is being asked to kill ten noxious weeds, e.g. blackberry, gorse, pampas grass, broom. This equals 600,000 weeds. Think of it!

The Society will have an information table at Wentworth Falls shopping centre on Friday 5 November. Volunteers please contact Judy on 82 3232 for roster hours. First to ring gets time of choice.

PLANT NURSERY ACTIVITIES

- 1) Plant Sale is on Saturday 23/10/93 at 9am at the Conservation Hut. The usual excellent selection of plants will be available at a fair price. The growing of native plants in our garden is more important than ever this year because of the price of water. It is proved that once our locally grown plants are established they require but a minimum of watering. Spread the word around!
- 2) National Park Contracts: Minehaha Falls Land Care Group. Seed has been collected for both projects. Some plants are up already and the potting commences. We are to supply 500 plants to Minehaha and 6000 to National Parks for rehabilitation work on Murphy's Glen, Ingar, Perry's Lookdown, Govett's Leap and Wentworth Falls. Thank you, National Parks.
The \$500 contract from the Minehaha Group for a package of instruction in plant identification, seed collecting and propagating has been completed. Thank you, Minehaha.

Report to

DISAPPOINTMENT DEPARTMENT

Not one member has made a suggestion for a well considered environment project to use the money the Nursery team has earned. I'm sure you care. Let us have your suggestions no matter how uncertain you may feel about their suitability.

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WENTWORTH FALLS NATURE TRACK

This is our track and was developed as a resource for teaching and leisure 30 years ago. Done up by National Parks recently, interpretive material written by Isobel Bowden has been updated and the old system of referring numbers to text in a leaflet expanded. We are happy to have been able to contribute \$1000 to the interpretive material programme.

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AUDIO-VISUAL PACKAGE FOR BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

This is underway and should be completed soon. It will then be available to all brigades. The idea is for brigade members to reach a better understanding of the natural environment of the Blue Mountains and the impact of fire.

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REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY THE SOCIETY IN THE LAST QUARTER

To Environment Protection Authority

Re Development Application for T.A.F.E. complex at Wentworth Falls.
We are interested in the decontamination of the site (ex oil storage and recycling).

To Blue Mountains City Council

Requesting in-house training for engineering section staff in correct understanding and use of environmental controls. We have been asking for this for four years!

To Total Catchment Management Committee

Ditto. Plus is there an Australian standard for environmental controls?

To Total Catchment Management Committee

Asking that Total Catchment Management concept be urged on major developers, to be put into design/management plans. e.g. Housing Commission, Public Works.

To B.M. City Council

Requesting answers to letters dating from April 1993.

To Water Board

Request for urgent consideration of rehabilitation works surveyed and promised in March 1992 and not done.

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WALKS REPORTS.

Wildflower Walk, September 16 1993. Ten folk turned up at Glenbrook station and proceeded into the National Park as far as the Jack Evans track head. We were all delighted with the flowers and scenery. Glimpses of Erskine Creek from above prepared us for the delight of lunching by the deep green water. The flowers were superb - masses of yellow hakea, many of the yellow egg-and-bacon clan and cousins, white conospermum and mauve comesperma, eriostemon; but the star of the show was the white wedding bush, Rininocarpos pinifolius. There was also an unexpected pleasure in seeing two large sprays of rock lilies in an inaccessible spot.

NB. The editor would like to publish more reports of walks in the next newsletter.



EXTRACTS FROM OTHER PUBLICATIONS

EUCALYPTUS

Source: The Green Book

Eucalyptus trees have been used in reforestation programs in deforested countries such as India and Portugal, because they grow rapidly in poor soil. Some plantations of eucalyptus have been eligible for EEC subsidy, but local farmers are now destroying them because of their adverse effects. These trees consume large amounts of water and soil nutrients and so compete with crops and with indigenous trees. In areas of low rainfall their natural toxins are not washed away and the soil may become polluted. In Portugal farmers and 'green' activists are united in protest against their plantation "en masse". In India there are indigenous trees which grow more quickly than Eucalypts.

Meanwhile, in Australia, forests of these trees are decimated each year in order to provide 5 million or more tonnes of woodchip to countries such as Japan. Australian wildlife is threatened by the impoverishment of eucalyptus forests. In their native environment the adaptation of eucalypts has resulted in a diverse species which tolerates conditions which would threaten the survival of other species, such as impoverished soils and forest fires.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH

Source: "MY HEART SOARS", George, Chief Dan, and Hirnschall, Helmut, Hancock House, Saanichton, British Columbia, CANADA, 1974.

"The spirit world is connected with the world of breathing creatures. An old man cannot be too happy about his after life. If his soul should choose a tree after it has left his body, what will become of it? What future does a tree have nowadays?"

"We are as much alive as we keep the earth alive"

In British Columbia the tall firs and cedar forests are harvested for construction and also for wood pulp. The practice of clearfelling is under dispute on the west coast of Vancouver Island. There is a temperate rain forest very different from our own.

NATIVE FOREST NETWORK IN ACTION

The First International Temperate Forest Conference was held in Deloraine, Tasmania last November, at the base of the Great Western Tiers. Professor David Bellamy and other speakers addressed the need for international strategies to stop the clearfelling of native temperate forests. The Second International Temperate Forest Conference will take place in the ecosystem of the Rockies, Montana, USA, in 1994.

Source: Native Forest News, Midyear 1993.

Members' Contributions

In the Sandstone Wilderness

(the coastal and mountain
heathlands of the Hawkesbury
Sandstone of the Sydney area)

Often I've stood on a sandstone rock
light brown or a purplish grey,
and I've looked afar and known
the spell of the wide expanse,
of the clear blue call of the distant range
and the evening peace of its gold and purple folds.
I've heard gurgling murmers that tell
of a creek in the bush, nearby.
The bush with its pungent scents
and tangle of leaves and cones
of vivid shapes and forms
with many different, lovely little flowers.
And in the trees with their branches spread across the sky
small birds make busy twittering talk.

The creek when found, a joy of varied pools and rocks;
clear pools that are linked by crystal ropes
and shining veils and little waterfalls,
some deep and cool green on cushions of sand,
some shallow on honey-brown rock, and on to some
the bushes drop pink flowers.
They ripple the light up to branches and leaves
sending sunlight to laugh
in unexpected places.

One day it was windy. The wind
hurled the branches;
slender white limbs tossed triumphantly
flexing with the wind.
Currawongs shrieked, wild and melodious.
We revelled with them,
sensing their joy of adaptation in the whole.
We forgot our separate selves and became
one with time and all things
bigger because
part of something big.
We knew not its meaning, no more than the birds knew,
but we sang our thanks exultantly, and we know that
we have and can give so much more than the rest.

Beryl Cooley

Beryl is a long-term member from Wentworth Falls, who
has recently moved to Turramurra. Thank you for this
delightful prose-poem.

Editor

THANK YOU

Thanks to our older members, you are sincerely missed!
Although no longer active we're proud you're on our list.
You can't often come to meetings now or do much of the task,
but thank you, Golden Oldies, for your vision in the past.
We value every member and need the young ones too,
we understand that lots of folk have got too much to do.
Your interest and your members' fees are very useful ways
to help the Conservation causes in these hard new days.

Anon.



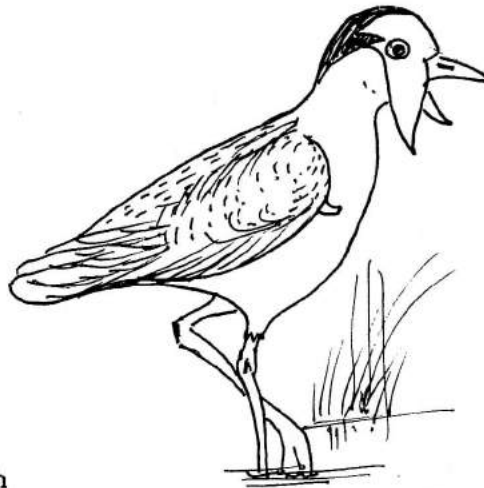
THE SEASONS

SPRING ON THE GOLF COURSE

The Masked Planer (*Vanellus miles*)
Once masked planers were rare in the mountains, but nowadays they are not uncommon in open wet grassland created by settlement. Thus you will see the handsomely marked birds on golf courses, at septic tank outfalls like Bulls Camp and the Academy paddock at Woodford.

They are a good sized bird about as big as a galah but more pear-shaped, and with long spindly legs; their feet built for poking about in the wet as they look for crustaceans, insects, small invertebrates, and seed when it's dry. They are olivey-fawn on the back and wings, with white fronts. The head is black, and bright yellow wattles adorn the face. The nest is sparsely lined scraped in the ground and aggressively defended. But it is by the lonely cry as they beat through the night that you will remark them. It rakes the air as a Ke-Ke-KekekeK--- and hangs. The listener takes time to be still, where to, where from?

Robin Corringham



Three judges on a State Appeals Court in Michigan, USA, waxed poetic this week when they upheld another court's dismissal of a lawsuit seeking damages for injuries to a tree. The tree, an oak, was on the property of William Fisher, of Oakland County, and was hit by a car which ran off the road. Mr Fisher sued the driver and the owner of the car for the cost of having a tree surgeon repair the oak, plus further money to compensate for loss of some of the tree's beauty. Mr Fisher's suit was dismissed by a lower court and he appealed. The panel's written judgment went:

We thought that we would never see

A suit to compensate a tree.

A suit whose claim in tort is prest

Upon a mangled tree's behest.

A tree whose battered trunk was prest

Against a Chevy's crumpled chest.

*A tree that faces each new day
With bark and limb in disarray.*

A tree that may forever bear

A lasting need for tender care.

Flora lovers though three

We must uphold the court's decree.

SEEING THE LIGHT

Some people view with concern the small quick-fix solutions to many of the extravagant uses of the earth's resources. We point, for instance, to low energy consumption light bulbs. The use of these is said to reduce carbon emissions of power generating plants through reducing energy consumption. But it may not be so simple because much of the energy used in lighting units is dissipated as heat. Letters to the editor in New Scientist puts it succinctly - "What are the environmental implications of preferring low energy consumption units over incandescent units in a cradle-to-grave view?" The sum is complex and the factors to be considered are interaction between lighting and heating systems, energy intensive manufacture of components and the eventual economy of the exercise. The dilemma is, do we vote for this new "environmentally friendly" lightbulb which may not be available to everyone, or do we stay with the incandescent bulbs and the cheaper conventional fluorescent lighting? An alternative is to pressure the electricity manufacturing and distributing industry to invest in economy products such as house insulation as a substitute for more power stations? This also has the attraction of a potential for more jobs. What do you think?

R. Corringham.

LOGGING COMPENSATION

The long disputed facts about just how many jobs would be lost with the cessation of logging on Fraser Island has now been resolved. All 67 workers who were retrenched have been able to find alternative work and over 200 jobs have been created by the economic compensation package.

Source... 'Moonbi' 83

EXCURSION PROGRAMME

It is essential on all excursions in the hot weather that members carry at least 1 litre of water.
Please carry on all walks: First Aid Kit, Torch, Matches, Warm shirt or Sweater, Protective Rainwear, Hat. Wear safe footwear

All people attending excursions do so at their own risk

Members arriving by train should advise contact prior to the excursion. Train timetable on week-days might be altered. Walks starting times and meeting places will remain as stated.

NOVEMBER

Sunday 7 Kanimbla Valley: 1) Garden inspection and morning tea provided by Rachel Makinson.
2) Walk in Kanimbla Valley (bring lunch) - inspect regeneration of burn conducted in April - explore gullies in the valley.
3) Afternoon tea will be provided by Charles Johnson.
Meet at Mt Victoria Station car park at 9.30 am.
Contact Christine Davies 877246

Thursday 18 Walls Ledge and Centennial Glen, Blackheath.
Meet in commuter carpark at Blackheath Station at 9.30 am
Contact Grace Bayley 59 1955

Saturday 20 Wildflower walk. Braeside and clifftop walk from Blackheath to Evans Lookout. Meet in Commuter carpark at Blackheath Station at 9.30 am. Contact Robyn Corringham 58 6561.

DECEMBER

Sunday 5 Ross Cave/ Reinit's Pass/ Pulpit Rock. Meet at Mt Victoria Station carpark at 9am. Contact June Baxter 877312.

Thurs 16 Terrace Falls. Meet at Hazelbrook shopping centre carpark at 10 am. Contact Bob Jones 588361.

Sat 18 Exploratory walk, Lawson and Bedford Creek area. (Wet walk, bring spare shoes) Meet at Hazelbrook Station at 9am.
Contact Muriel Healey 586575

JANUARY

Sunday 2 Exploratory walk. Meet at Mt Victoria Station carpark at 8.30 am. Contact Olive Noble 87 8342.

Sat 15 Mystery walk. (Wet, bring spare shoes). Meet at Mt Victoria Station carpark at 8.30. Contact, John Noble 87 8342.

Thurs. 20 Grand Canyon. Meet in commuter carpark at Blackheath Station at 9.30. Contact, Bert Davies 58 8586.

MORE OF 'WALKING WITH MURPHY' WISDOM

All natural water is polluted.
Darkness falls before the campsite is reached.
new batteries are always flat.
The last tentpeg always finds a rockshelf just under the grass.
Wind and rain always blow into your shelter.
All diseases and sicknesses show their first symptoms on a walk - as far out as possible.
Firewood is wet.
Waterproof matches aren't.
The only small sharp stone in the district is under your sleeping bag.

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Membership / Renewal Form

Name.....

Address.....

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Family \$15 per year

Single \$10 " "

Pensioner Family \$10 " "

Single Pensioner \$6 " "

Membership corresponds to the year April 1993 to 31 March 1994 Please enclose
stamped addressed envelope if a receipt is required.