

KATOOMBA AND DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Newsletter No.42

Price 20¢

Registered for transmission through Post Category (B)

EDITOR W. ALCORN Rutland Road Medlow Bath. N.S.W.2780.



HYACINTH  
ORCHID

Patron. Allen A Strom. A.M.

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is only beauty put into practice"

Jean Jacques Rousseau.

O U R SOCIETY

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Walks are held on 1st saturday of month and adver-  
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COMING EVENTS

January 30th....A Talk by bill Tomassetti.

Later speakers will be given in following issues.

6th December 1980

As advised in our last issue, this is our Xmas  
Social Day with a walk from The Hut at 10.30am a barbecue most  
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RED-CAPPED ROBIN

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Next day, Nov. 20th about 10 am, while working in my garden, I was  
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The original pair are still here, and no doubt are building again,  
which birds usually do when their nests are predated. If anyone  
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of the Blue Mountains a suitable temporary habitat for this species.

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THE BRADLEY METHOD OF BUSH REGENERATION.

The following most interesting and useful article appeared in the  
November Newsletter of the Blue Mountains Group, Society for growing  
Australian Plants. We thank them for permission to reproduce it:-  
On the 5th September we welcomed to our meeting Ev.Hickey, the Bush  
Regeneration Officer for the National Trust, who spoke to us on the

Bradley method of Bush regeneration.

Brief History The Bradley Sisters developed this method following their retirement, when they began weeding and scientifically observing their results in Ashton Park. Strict documentation and weed counts were kept over many years, and by 1965, when they began recruiting voluntary workers, the work was well proven. Joan Bradley produced a small book on their methods.

The National Trust, which had a few properties with many weeds, employed Joan and paid workers to assist her. This placed the whole system on a professional basis and it gained increasing acceptance by councils. The first property, Blackwood Reserve, was tackled in 1976. Here a major problem was dense privet - 10 plants/square metre which allowed no other understorey. Within 3 years of its clearance 90 to 105 species of native plants had returned. It now consists of a beautiful stand of Blackbutt, with glades of ferns and maidenhair. As with any area, Blackwood was well documented - the area is mapped, time in man-hours to remove a particular weed determined, and time for any weeds to return noted.

Principles 1. Work from good bush to bad - - have energy and health of bush on your side. 2. Move on a narrow weed front - if you disturb too much, light gets in - favours exotics. 3. Mulch heavily - use weeds to mulch, placing them in a way that they will die. 4. let regeneration dictate the rate of clearing.

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2. Disturb soil as little as possible  
3. Replace mulch and top layer of soil  
4. Mulch with weeds themselves - but remove some things. eg. bulbs  
5. Remove all species of exotics. Here identification is most important from the start.  
6. If climbers have infested trees, cut the stems and remove roots. Don't pull vines off trees as this could do more damage.  
7. A follow up (which should require very little time) is always necessary. After fire, go in quickly and remove the weeds.

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2. Privet - cut off the top (eliminates damage elsewhere) weed around the base to find small natives. Wiggle plant to find the roots. Trace out the roots - this is meticulous and hard work, but very heartening. Hang roots upside down in a tree. Be sure to get all the lateral roots as it is these and not the tap root which are dangerous. Replace soil and mulch.  
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Last year Winsome Gregory showed a group of us from the Society an area near The King's Table where *Actinotus forsythii*, the pink flannelflower grows, there are very few areas of sandstone

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From our Land-use Committee

Threatened Resources of the Blue Mountains' Region

Immediately to the west of the Cities of Sydney and Parramatta there is a rugged, wooded plateau, the watershed of which extends east-west and has become both the site of the City of Blue Mountains and the service corridor to the western cities and plains. Do we want it to become an extension of the crowded urban sprawl of Sydney and Parramatta? or to become a tourist centre like the Gold Coast and others with their urban uniformity?

It is a region with distinctive features which provide an opportunity TO MAKE IT A REGION WITH A DISTINCTIVE FLAVOUR. We must conserve and use to advantage, rather than destroy, its special resources.

It offers the role of an area of unspoilt naturalness for the growing populations of the adjacent cities; who use it as a retreat for active and passive relaxation and a breath of fresh air, and enjoy its expansive views of wild grandeur, its waterfalls and variety of vegetation. Records indicate that it is these features which have attracted people for more than a century. Very importantly it is one of the principal parts of the catchment area of the Hawkesbury River system, including the Warragamba Dam. Its importance reaches far beyond local considerations. It must not become just another suburban area. Its distinctive resources will disappear as the people seeking them change them

Tourism is one of its main roles. Tourism will become a threat to its character and thereby itself be threatened, if not controlled with knowledge and care and in conformity with its characteristics.

Threats to the Characteristics and resources of the Blue Mountains

include basic threats such as those to Natural Water systems and to vegetation, and more superficial threats such as visual, air and noise pollution the main watershed is not included in reserves therefore the catchment areas of the streams, and the escarpments are vulnerable and need protection. Threats are made more serious by the fact that the natural environment they effect is largely National Park and other open space to which the ridges drain, these reserves become polluted, degraded, overused as the need for them increases.

The following quotation is from the Report of the National Estate Committee of Inquiry, Canberra, 1974: "3.79 By comparison with other continents, Australia is deficient in rivers and streams. Not only are there few of them, but they carry much less water in relation to the size of their catchment - - - 3.81 - - - land use in catchment areas can profoundly and deleteriously affect the character of the river - - - siltation, salination - - - nutrient supply - - - eutrophication - - - Some of the worst effects come from the clearing of timber on the banks of watercourses - - - 3.84 It is important that careful control be exercised over the use of catchment areas of all rivers - - - "

Consequences of Changes to Natural Water Systems may be both local and distant. Causes of change include interference with vegetation; filling in of swamps, denudation of watersheds and small catchment areas above swamps, roadworks, guttering of watercourses, cutting into the water-table, redirection of drainage, covering ground with buildings, pathways etc. (their guttering, spouting and drains connected to Council drains;) pollution by people congregated together for accommodation, tourist attractions, industry, etc., and use of creek waters and watercourses by these.

The consequences include disturbance to catchment and retention of rainwater (by interference with swamps and vegetation above them, etc.), to direction, speed and volume of drainage, and to purity and ph of water. Some of the results of these are rapid, forceful run-off with erosion of soil, creek beds and escarpments, also inconsistency of supply for flora, fauna, waterfalls and finally rivers, also gouging (by loads of sediment formed by man-made erosion).

Vegetation is part of the watercatchment and retention system and necessary for the provision of a continuing supply. It covers and maintains the poor soil; gives both oxygen and moisture to the air and removes carbon dioxide; it mitigates the effects on water, soil, flora and fauna of hot sun and drying winds; it provides the characteristic variety of habitats for animal life and food for migrating birds; it gives beauty and interest to both close and distant views and contributes to scenic and recreational attractions. Any action that enhances drought conditions and that reduces or changes the nature of the vegetation may have dangerous consequences in this vulnerable region. The effects of frequent, out-of-season burns is not yet known. The understory (rapidly diminishing) is an important element of our Hawkesbury sandstone vegetation.

Increase of population and development means increase of threats. Unwise development increases threats. Subdivisions often result in denudation, erosion, interference with natural drainage, encroachment of gravel and sand onto adjacent vegetation and into creeks; bulldozed areas often remain for months before construction work or planting commence. Badly sited roads and service trails result in erosion and changes in drainage patterns. Badly sited residences, scenic motels, swimming pools, tourist attractions, sewerage systems cause problems. Depletion of inadequate water supplies means less flow from dams into the creeks below them. Industry and mining need to be carefully restricted.

Clifftops and Escarpments in whatever zoning they occur are characteristics of B.M. scenery, they are threatened by buildings, roadways, unsuitable agricultural usage, lookouts and other tourist attractions. Consequent pollution and erosion effect not only the escarpments themselves and views but headwater swamps and watercourses on top and valley creeks and forests below, undeveloped land still exists within or near townships; this is needed for wise regional planning, but there is the problem that these are mainly privately owned by people being forced to sell in an effort to meet rising costs, and public money is not made available to secure them; there are threats to crown land and other open space by sale to developers or by alien usage in sites where they are needed to preserve adjoining reserves or scenic vantage points.

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Important considerations in planning for the Blue Mountains should be

- (1) the concept of the role of the mountains as a special region and
- (2) the optimum population which the land can carry without being destroyed for this role (or roles); the wisest uses of this region within its wider national context, without destroying its ecology, hydrology and the scenic attractions for which it is famous.

Our Society has, since 1974 submitted that these two aspects should be the basis on which all planning, especially choice of population alternatives is considered.

In response to a questionnaire with rate notices in 1975 ratepayers voted in favour of the bushland character of the Mountains being retained, and in favour of a population figure between that for strategies II and III of the Strategy plan; this was later determined by planners at 85,000.

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From page 2.

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JAMISON CREEK LAND

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However the Minister has since advised that he is placing an Interim Conservation Order on all land zoned Rural near the Jamison Creek. This includes Pors. 11 and 12. Protection of the area is ensured for two years while its importance is being evaluated. The Minister's decision is heartening to those concerned about this ecologically and historically important area.

The Land Preservation Fund Committee would like to thank all who helped raise the money already in the Fund and the people who had generously promised to donate money towards purchase of this particular land. Demonstration of their concern in such a practical way following the Society's sixyear effort to draw attention to the vital importance of the area must have helped towards emphasising to the Minister the need for its protection.

The L.P.F.C. has recommended another block of Environmentally Sensitive Land suitable for reserve, for members' approval.

*This version of the Newsletter was re-typed from the original by Phoebe Coster in May 2022 to enable search engines to 'see' the text. Minor changes have been made to correct typographical errors and to add clarity.*

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