

September '68

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**KALORI**

CONSERVE, PRESERVE, INVESTIGATE, EDUCATE

Kalori is published monthly by and for the members of the Lower Blue Mountains Wildlife Conservation Society.

The aims of the Society are, briefly, to:-

1. Educate the members and the community to the cultural values of nature.
2. Work for the reservation of areas of natural environment for the refuge and breeding of indigenous flora and fauna.
3. Carry out research into the distribution, population and species of flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains.

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Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month in the Springwood Fire Station, commencing 8.00 PM.

Bulletin No. 18  
September 1968.

Once again the meeting held on 8th August was very informal as no new business was forthcoming. Newsletters and communications from the various organizations to which we belong were tabled, the principle one being from the Nature Conservation Council notifying us that the Annual Dinner and Meeting would be held on 21st September at the North Sydney Town Hall, any members wishing to attend should notify the President - the dinner costs \$2 per head, and after the show there will be films and slides shown by Mr. Pollock of the Bank of N.S.W.

A report was received from Mr. Gregory regretting the fact that, due to the pressure of work he was unable to carry on as Treasurer of the Society. As we must have our money affairs in order, nominations to fill the position were called for and our new Treasurer is Mrs. Dark of Valley Heights - thank you Mrs. Dark for taking over this important position and thank you Peter for the very workmanlike manner in which you carried out the duties up to the present. Peter was one of our Foundation Members and has always been deeply interested in the movement. However a man's living must prevail.

The meeting, as usual degenerated into an informal discussion on the advisability of having our National Parks and other lands set aside for the Conservation of Flora and Fauna controlled by the Government. A new member Owen Williams, just returned from an overseas working trip associated with the Ecology of various areas in England, put forward the idea that the essential lands required for conservation and other kindred uses should be held freehold by a properly constituted Nature Conservancy. This discussion could be carried on with practical results.

Mr. Williams has indicated that he would give a talk on his overseas experiences and show some slides at our next meeting. This should be good so try not to miss it.

Next meeting will be on 12th September.

### SASSAFRAS GULLY WALK.

A very enjoyable walk was had on Sunday the 11th, down the Sassafras Gully and back up Parkes Gully to Faulconbridge. An interesting, informative and altogether pleasant day for those that attended. It is unfortunate that when the leaders of these field trips put so much work into preparing the day more people don't take advantage of the opportunity of learning more of our bush.

Though the season is early there were plenty of shrubs in flower, mainly wattles, some *B. ledifolia* and other early flowerers. The main beauty of the walk was the fact that much of the original flora of the semi-rainforest type of country was in evidence.

Various vines were noted, and because the area is little frequented by walkers there was an abundance of tree orchids something rare so close to civilization. Interesting features of the walk was the impact that a wind storm can create on the vegetation of an area. Where the trees had fallen and opened up the canopy, a remarkable difference was noted in the types of plants growing, leaving ugly scars in the rainforest type scrub.

Unfortunately, there was also mute evidence of the hand of man, and the effect that he has on the type of plant growth. In contrast with the wind caused change in growth, the line of the high tension wires, cleared to prevent damage to the wires in the case of a bush fire, appeared as a broad scald on the face of the bush. The area so cleared has been invaded by the lower type quick growing brush, such as wattles and layer vine, generating an environment that would be hard to imagine ever returning to the original type of cover.

To those who wish to see a major number of environments typical of the lower mountains this walk is ideal, for in the space of a few miles practically every type of community is seen, except perhaps the more exposed heath type vegetation, and coupled with this is the fact, there is evidence of the hand of man just sufficient to make the point.

This trip is excellent to those that wish to have a pleasant easy walk among the ferns, clear mountain streams and unspoiled bush and hear the multitude of birds - hear and see the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo, White-eared Honeyeater, Thornbills, Lyrebird, King Parrots, Rozella, and many others - Perhaps a few quiet moments with string and a bit of meat and see the large blue Yabby.

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## COLONG . . .

(17/1/60) 01/10/60

### THE BASIC FACTS

The Colong Caves Reserve, in the Southern Blue Mountains, was first gazetted in 1899 for the preservation of caves; was proclaimed a bird and animal sanctuary in 1928, and re-dedicated for public recreation and preservation of caves in 1939. It lies, 62 miles W.S.W. of Sydney, at the heart of a particularly beautiful and interesting wilderness area and wildlife refuge.

The Government's proposals for the Kanangra-Boyd National Park (a major conservation project under consideration since 1932) have always included the whole of the Colong Reserve, and did so as recently as January 1967. Since then the proposed boundary has been arbitrarily altered so as to exclude some 5000 acres, and with them about two thirds of the Colong Reserve (but not the Colong Caves themselves) in order to allow Commonwealth Portland Cement Company to use the limestone from within the Reserve for cement manufacture. The limestone is to be quarried, crushed on the site and transported by pipe in the form of slurry to the cement works at Maldon 42 miles away.

Though the mining area may be relatively small when compared with the whole Park, it will involve the removal of a complete mountain (Mount Armour), the erection of a crushing plant on the site and of a 100 million gallon capacity dam nearby on the Kowmung River - the only unpolluted major tributary of the Warragamba Dam - the disposal of overburden and cleared timber, the slurry pipe, pylons carrying power lines, a network of service roads, workmen's quarters, all of which must cause erosion, siltation and pollution; the reverberation of blasting and the perpetual all-pervading dust cloud which will hang over the area. This industrial intrusion, visible or audible (or both) from its farthest confines, will ruin the wilderness character of the Park.

Applications to mine in the Reserve were refused by the Government of the day in 1939, and again in 1958, not because it was in a reserve (our out-of-date N.S.W. Mining Act gives the Government legal power to ignore this type of reserve), but because it was held to be "inimical to the public interest. Yet the present Government granted this consent in July

COLONG (Cont'd)

1967, arguing that "this was in the best interests of the State", and refused, in spite of all protests, to reconsider it or allow it to be contested before a Mining Warden's Court.

From the Company's point of view this high quality limestone will be cheap to mine and to transport to its existing works at Maldon, and the cement produced there is exempt from the Road Tax payable by its less centralised competitors. It would therefore be highly profitable, particularly as the price of cement in Sydney would not be affected.

New South Wales is particularly rich in limestone deposits, and suitable sources exist in many areas which can be mined at a reasonable profit. The Government can still, without undue cost or hardship, revoke the Colong leases and substitute others in such places, where the scenic and wilderness value is much lower.

A meeting of representatives of fifty conservation and allied organisations was held at Sydney University on 29th May 1968, which unanimously passed a number of resolutions deploring the Government's action, rejecting its arguments and calling upon Government and Parliament to review the Cabinet's decision, and asking for a full public enquiry.

It also set up a Colong Committee of eight noted conservationists under the chairmanship of Professor R.N. Johnson, B. Arch. ARIBA, FRAlA, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at Sydney University, to direct and co-ordinate a campaign for the mobilisation of public opinion in order to bring pressure on the Government to change its mind, to revoke the mining leases it has issued in the area, and to re-include that part of the Kanangra-Boyd National Park which has been excluded.

The Committee believes that, important as the Colong issue is, much more is involved. If mining on this destructive scale is allowed here it will be the green light for the State Governments and mining companies of all kinds, everywhere, to go ahead regardless of any consideration but that of immediate profitability.

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This month there are two important dates for our members to remember

September 14th the North Springwood Show Day at which your Society will be conducting a stand in conjunction with members of the Springwood Bushwalking Club, B.M.S.G.N.Plants, Mr. Ormsby of Linden and various members of the local Bushfire Brigades.

We hope to have a distinguished display with Nature Books and papers for sale, photo displays and other typical information. We would be pleased to see any of our regular members at the stand and particularly any of your friends and acquaintances.

September 21st. the Blue Mountains Group of the S.C.A.P. will be holding an open day at Mrs. Kelly's at Glenbrook. Funds raised at this function are to be spent on developing the Glenbrook Native Plants Reserve.

To those who went on the various field trips organised this year I would like to borrow any notes that you made as to the plants, birds and animals seen on those trips. If your notes are in a book would you lend me the book for a couple of days and I will copy them and return them to you.

Remember that this month is the start of the bushfire season, when in the bush be careful of fire and keep the eyes open for those that are not so careful.

Lin Paish.

ACTIVITIES FOR 1968

Field trips are generally held on the Sunday following the monthly meeting. Final details of meeting times etc. will be given by the leader of each trip to the meeting immediately before the trip, and will be published in Kalori.

- August 11th. Sassafras Gully. Leader D.Perrin, phone 512078.  
August 17th. Wwntworth Falls. Kat. and Dist.W.C.S. Hut.  
Sept. 14th. North Springwood Show.  
Sept. <sup>22nd</sup> 15th. Heathcote Primitive Reserve.G.Croghan,Warrimoo 402.  
Oct. 13th. Barren Grounds. Leader J. Ferguson.  
Nov. 17th. Newnes State Forest.
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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

To the Treasurer,  
Mr. P. Gregory,  
115 Grose Road,  
Faulconbridge.2776.

Enclosed please find the sum of \$            to cover one years membership\*  
Name in full .....  
Address in full .....  
Occupation .....

\*Individuals \$2.00 annually or \$20.00 Life.  
Associates \$1.00 annually.  
Junior 30 cents annually.