



HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"

From the President

Unfortunately, I do not have good news to report in respect to the campaign to stop legislation allowing more development for tourism purposes in National Parks. The National Parks and Wildlife Amendment (Visitors and Tourists) Bill 2010 was passed on Friday 11 June. While conservation groups were able to get some changes, we remain concerned that the legislation significantly weakens the NPW Act in respect to commercial development.

Although disappointed, we will not be giving up on this issue. I would like to thank the many members who contacted me and helped with our work. The Society is committed to keeping national parks for nature and continuing the campaign (see full story on page 3 about our plans).

On a more positive note, our stall at Winter magic was a great success, largely due to the great work of students involved in the Drink Tap Water Campaign. The yellow and black 'Drink Tap Water' bottles were ready just in time and proved to be extremely popular. Students such as Laurie, Marc and Ben enthusiastically promoted the bottles and also explained, via a model supplied by Blue Mountains City Council, why managing water sustainably is important.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the hard work and significant contribution of David Bowskill in maintaining the Society's website for the last 5 years. David has spent many hours working on the website for which I am very grateful. David has now resigned and our new Website Officer is Alan Page. I hope that David will continue to be involved in our work.

Speak to you next month.

Tara Cameron

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MONTHLY MEETING: Friday, 30 July 2010

Sustainability and Biofuels: Aromatic Emissions?

Our guest speaker at the monthly meeting on Friday 30 July is Philip Dolan. Philip is a sustainability consultant, with a background in education / training, most notably designing and training for the Green Loans / Household Sustainability Assessment course. He is a member of the Blue Mountains Building Designers Association with his best effort being the design of a 10 Star Energy Efficient straw bale house after 10 years of doing energy ratings. He designs non-utility water and energy systems for domestic application.

His talk will cover the three aspects of sustainability: financial, social and environmental, related to the production of biofuels. He will talk about his journey with straight used vegetable oil and biodiesel. Most of the pictures are his own, and he has been doing it for nearly 10 years on a variety of vehicles, so he can speak with some authority.

He will have jars of the products for the making of biodiesel, so people can see, smell and touch biodiesel.

Philip is happy for people to ask questions and challenge him throughout the talk. It will be a humorous, serious, frustrating, bewildering and hopefully enlightening and inspiring session.

Blue Mountains Conservation Society Monthly Meeting

7.30 pm, Friday 30 July 2010

**The Conservation Hut, far western end of
Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls**

Visitors are very welcome.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Saturday 28 August, 9.30 am. AN OUTBACK EVENT.

Our August monthly meeting will be held on a Saturday morning at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts. Carol Proberts and Jill Dark will speak and show photos from their recent visits to central Australia to witness the phenomenal bird breeding event during the inland floods. The meeting will start at 9.30 am.

Sunday 26 September, 11 am to 3 pm. BMCS PICNIC DAY.

Our annual picnic will again be held at Wilson Park, Wentworth Falls. Bring along your family and a picnic lunch. There will be tug-a-war and sack races, good company, music from the Gang Gang Bush Orchestra, and lots of fun. Make a note in your diary.

November. BUSH DANCE Dance to the music of the Gang Gang Bush Orchestra and celebrate 10 years of Blue Mountains World Heritage. Date to be announced.

**"Hut News", the newsletter of
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HUT NEWS EDITORIALS

The deadline for the next issue of Hut News
is **20 July 2010**

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BUSHCARE GROUP

The Valley of the Waters Bushcare
Group meets second Saturday of each
month, 9am till noon. Tools and gloves are
available. Bring a drink, a snack and a hat.

New members are always welcome.
Phone Karen on 4757 1929.

Nursery News Kevin Bell, Nursery Manager

Financially, May was a good month for the nursery where we wrote \$9,715, exclusive of GST, worth of invoices, the principal one being \$6,000 from Council's Carbon Offsets Scheme. We have submitted a quote for this same scheme for next year where the number of plants to be issued will be increased to five thousand. Keep a lookout in *The Gazette* or in *News from the Hill* to see when the vouchers will be made available and be quick! This year all three thousand had been taken in the first two days of issue.

June and July are traditionally leaner months as we close for sales over winter although we are still collecting some funds through invoices to Council (\$330) and Sydney water (\$275). Start saving now for our re-opening at Lawson on Wednesday 4th August and our re-appearance at the Lawson Magpie Markets on Sunday 15th August and the Blackheath Community Markets on Sunday 5th September. We will have a huge range of quality local plants to tempt you.

We now have a species list of plants to be supplied to the RTA for re-vegetation following the roadworks on the Great Western Highway between Tablelands Road and Wentworth Falls railway station. Altogether we will be preparing around ten thousand plants, mostly in forestry tubes but some in 150-200mm pots. We are sharing this contract with Wildplant Rescue and the species list resulted from our joint submission. Ten thousand plants mean ten thousand tubes so if you have any sitting around and not being used please return them to us where we will sterilise, clean and re-use them.

Our feature plant this month is one of the loveliest and most distinctive trees in the bush. *Angophora costata* or the Smooth-barked Apple is also known as Red Gum and its wonderfully gnarled trunk and branches just entice admiration. Its smooth deciduous bark is usually shed in November leaving a smooth, variably coloured and dimpled surface. It's hard to go past the beautiful specimen by the highway at Bullaburra without a sideways glance. The common name of "Apple" seems incongruous for this majestic tree, which can reach a height of 25m in good soils, but apparently its branching habit appeared to the early colonists to resemble that of an apple tree. Perhaps, there was just a hint of nostalgia there. We will have specimens of this tree in tubes in September with some advanced plants in large pots to be available early next year.

We will also have the Rough-barked Apple (*A. floribunda*) and the Narrow-leaved Apple (*A. bakeri*) in tubes. The former is a large spreading tree while the latter tends to be more compact but both are typical *Angophoras* with opposite leaves and a profusion of creamy-white flowers in late Spring/early Summer. If you are ever in the sandstone areas of the Central Coast of NSW at this time of the year you will be able to get a close look at these flowers on the more accessible Dwarf Apple (*A. hispida*) which is absolutely spectacular. Unfortunately, it does not occur in the Blue Mountains but with global warming, who knows in the future? Kevin Bell.



Left: *Angophora costata* showing typical branching habit of *Angophora* species, thought by early colonists to resemble that of an apple tree.

Photo by
Christine Davies.

Tourism Bill Passes – Now We Will Fight Proposal by Proposal

Andrew Cox

Don't believe the face-saving spin that the NSW State Government is putting on the changes to the National Parks and Wildlife Act in the name of tourism. The new legislation, passed by Parliament within a week of it being first tabled, delivers on an agenda pushed by NPWS that will see in our national parks more tourist cabins, lodges, eco-resorts, popular events, shops, restaurants, races, galleries, museums, conference centres and crowd-pleasing spectacles.

Let's look at the results of the intense two-month campaign, begun when Environment Minister, Frank Sartor, first flagged to BMCS that he was proceeding with tourism changes arising from the much-opposed 2008 Taskforce on Tourism and National Parks.

The first time that environment groups saw the tourism legislation in April 2010 it was clear that shopping centres, fun parks, convention centres and other exclusive commercial developments not normally associated with national parks would soon be allowed.

NPWS used a phoney argument to push the case for change. They suggested that because the current national parks Act allows 'hotels' and the Bill removes that word (along with adding some sustainability criteria), this proves the Government was 'strengthening' the Act. This was nonsense, and the Environment Minister ultimately saw through the scam and intervened.

A much-improved version of the Bill emerged two weeks later. Some of the most offensive parts of the Bill were removed and much of the important integrity of the national parks Act that has successfully served to constrain commercial leasing powers was reinstated. The types of new commercial developments in parks was narrowed, but still covered an expanded range compared to the current Act. They now included new sporting and recreational facilities, cultural facilities and conference and function centres. Until now, most of these uses were only allowed in the approximately 900 existing buildings already standing in national parks across NSW. Accommodation (including potentially hotels), food outlets and tourist amenities continue to be permitted.

Importantly, it appeared that the expanded range of commercial activities would not be sufficiently constrained by the over-riding conservation purposes of the national parks Act, and only the most extreme and inappropriate examples would be ruled invalid by a court. The new Bill thus cleared the way for a new building program for a plethora of commercial developments in our national parks.

Important accountability measures that allowed the public and the Advisory Council to comment on draft leases were also weak.

The debate between the Government and BMCS and other environment groups regressed into an argument between lawyers. Tim Robertson SC, the barrister who first sounded the alarm bell on the horror of the original version of the legislation, became the enemy of Government. The Government countered with its own legal advice that sidestepped the major issues raised by Tim by commenting on the much-improved version of

the legislation. Additional minor improvements were made to the legislation and the government lawyers again attacked Tim Robertson who was trying to advise environmental groups on successive versions of the legislation while overseas in Mauritius.

Sensing it was losing support for the changes, on 9th June the Government rammed its legislation through both houses of Parliament in a day while environment groups were still getting detailed legal advice. In a clear conflict of interest, the NSW Government-run legislation drafters, Parliamentary Counsel, refused to draft a key amendment sought by the Greens.

The Opposition supported the Bill, but tried to prevent new accommodation in all World Heritage Areas including the Blue Mountains. They also supported an attempt by the Greens to reinstate the 'objective test' for the application of important leasing restrictions. These amendments were narrowly lost by one vote due to lack of support from the Shooters and Christian Democrats.

The Minister in Parliament refers to his legal advice that says the Bill "would strengthen the environmental controls and checks and balances in the Act on the environmental impact of developments in national parks". Yes, this was an improvement of sorts because previously there were no specific criteria against which to measure a new development. However this provided little comfort for those developments that are not suitable, even if the impacts are low.

The direct environmental impact of a new resort or other new building is a separate question compared to whether it should be permitted in a national park in the first place. The fact that a cliff top restaurant uses solar energy, tank water, wins a design award and is built on an old car park site doesn't automatically make the proposal less offensive.

One important safeguard added to the Bill is that before new commercial tourist developments can be built, they must be spelt out and subject to public consultation via a change to the national park's plan of management. This gives the community a chance to speak out against new proposals.

The Government blocked attempts to put a maximum duration on lease terms, to set up an environmental performance system for lessees and to require all lease renewals to be placed on public exhibition.

BMCS President, Tara Cameron, joined environment groups' outrage over the Bill. She warned, "**the Blue Mountains will now be a target for developments such as resorts and restaurants inside the National Park. The towns will be bypassed as tourists are bussed in from Sydney straight to the new resorts. We will fight each and every development proposal.**"

The tourism legislation is set to come into operation in September or October. NPWS have clearly flagged that they want to use these new tools to have more commercial development in national parks, rather than encouraging it outside of parks.

The campaign against tourism developments in national parks is just beginning.

Dr Mark Diesendorf on 'A Sustainable Energy Future for Australia'

A report by Sue Morrison

"Sustainable energy is the least cost and fastest greenhouse solution." (McKinsey Report)

At our monthly meeting on 28 May, Dr Diesendorf gave his thoughts about the energy technologies and policies which could lead us into the 21st century.

Mark began by outlining the current proposal to expand Mt Piper Power Station. If it went ahead it would pump approximately 11-12 million tonnes of additional CO₂ into the atmosphere every year for the next 40 years, increasing NSW's greenhouse gas emissions by about 8%. It would also result in more coal mining, more fly ash, more air pollution and greater water use (unless they opt for the less likely air-cooled option). Construction would take place over approx. four years, with a boom/bust jobs cycle – up to 1,000 jobs (mostly workers from outside Lithgow) at peak, with only 50 ongoing operational jobs remaining on completion.

His main concern with this proposal is that it would *undermine incentives to transition to a renewable energy future*. With nuclear and carbon capture and storage unable to make a contribution to emissions reductions in the short to medium term, only renewable sources of energy (together with demand-side policies) can make the dramatic reductions in Australia's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions required by 2020.

Mark outlined how a mix of different technologies could ensure the capacity and reliability to meet NSW's electricity needs. Solar, wind and biomass can be rolled out relatively quickly compared to large-scale construction projects like coal-fired or nuclear power plants.

UNSW (and other) research has shown that manufacture and maintenance of renewable energy power plants and components would create **more jobs than traditional energy sources**, e.g. coal creates 1 job year per kilowatt hour of electricity generated, compared with biomass approx. 3.5 job years (if 50% Australian content for components). Windpower creates 2-3 job years (with 50% Aust content) or 3.5-5 job years (with 80% Aust content).

The components for large fossil-fuel power plants are generally made overseas, but renewable energy components are often smaller and more readily able to be manufactured and transported within Australia, especially in existing industrial regions.

Energy efficiency is the cheapest, fastest and easiest solution to meeting Australia's power needs, with upfront costs being repaid over time. Mark believes we are 20 years behind Europe on this. Initiatives such as replacing household electric hot water with solar could save the equivalent of up to 4600MW of coal-fired power (in Aust) or 2300MW (in NSW). Only 5-6% of Australia's households have solar hot water and government plans to phase out electric hot water are proceeding at "a glacial pace" (Mark noted the irony of this statement, with glaciers now melting at accelerating speed!).

Mark believes **wind power** is no longer an "alternative energy source" – it is mainstream and could easily generate 20% of Australia's electricity by 2020 (note that Beyond Zero Emissions' *Zero Carbon Australia 2020* renewable energy

scenario allows for up to 40% windpower, see. www.beyondzeroemissions.org).

Global wind capacity is now 159,000MW (at end 2009), with China having doubled its wind capacity every year for the past five years. Windpower was the biggest contributor to new generating capacity in the EU during 2008-2009 and Denmark plans to expand to 50% wind by 2020. Because Denmark's grid is connected to other countries, its windpower network can expand rapidly without causing transmission problems due to fluctuating supply. In terms of policies, Europe and other countries leading on windpower all have **commercial feed-in tariffs**, with the cost spread over all electricity users.

Mark dispelled a number of **myths about windpower**, saying there are organised anti-wind lobby groups (e.g. Country Guardians in the UK or Landscape Guardians in Aust) spreading misinformation in a similar way to climate change deniers. Wind is *not* intermittent and unreliable and claims about bird kills, bushfire risk and visual impact are either untrue or exaggerated. Existing coal mining and coal-fired power stations have a far greater overall environmental impact than any renewable energy source.

CSIRO studies have shown that 2600MW wind at multiple, dispersed sites *can* substitute for 1000MW coal-fired electricity. Hydro or fast-start gas peaking plants can readily act as backup if required. The Great Australian Bight has the best coastline for windpower, but S.A. needs a better grid connection to the eastern states to avoid power drop-outs when the prevailing wind drops.

Bioelectricity from crop residues could supply 20% of Australia's electricity needs by 2020 without using any additional land. Two plants generating bio-electricity in NSW almost went bankrupt because of Australia's poorly designed Renewable Energy Target (RET) and recently-announced changes will not take place until 2011.

Concentrated solar thermal technology is not new but has seen a revival post-2004 in Spain and the U.S. "Baseload" solar power can now be provided using thermal heat storage in molten salts, water, rockbeds, graphite or ammonia. Although current plants only have 7.5hrs storage, there are no technological barriers to providing longer storage. This technology is on the brink of being fully commercial (i.e. mass produced), with new plants being built in Spain and the U.S. (and a recent announcement by Abu Dhabi to build the world's largest concentrated solar plant). Economies of scale mean the cost is already coming down and is likely to be competitive with existing power sources within a decade.

Solar PV global capacity is now 22GW (at end 2009), with an annual production of 7GW in 2009. Because of lack of storage capacity, this technology is best used for daytime intermediate and peak loads. Costs are still high but are likely to be competitive with existing power by 2020, especially as the cost of fossil fuels (i.e. coal & gas) rises.

Government policies

The most significant policy incentive for renewable energy in NSW is **the gross feed-in tariff**, but this only applies to small systems up to 10kW and lasts for only 7 years (subject to review in 2012 or whenever 50MW of installed PV capacity is reached).

The Federal Government's proposed **Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme** (which Mark called the *Carbon Pollution*

Continued on page 10.

ENERGY MATTERS OUT WEST *Report from Lis Bastian, Climate Adaptation Officer for Central NSW Councils and BMCS CC/Sustainability Officer*

The 17 Councils of Central NSW have accepted my Regional Resilience Strategy Options Paper. They've also agreed to advocate for cycleways and cycling as serious transport options, they're lobbying for rail, and have agreed for me to pursue the feasibility of setting up an electric vehicle recharge network to link Sydney to Canberra via all our Central NSW Councils.

I'd like to work with Blue Mountains to get an initial pilot recharge station set up to link Sydney to Central NSW. The idea is that, initially, we celebrate the fact that recharging is still slow and run a campaign, "Come to Central NSW to Recharge Your Batteries". Slow Food and Slow Travel!

As you would appreciate a pilot or trial would simply be to iron out issues about "range anxiety" but would also attract more opportunities by the very fact that it transforms an idea to a reality.

You might like to view the Jamieson Report put together by Mark Diesendorf and Graham Pearman and others. It advocates for electric vehicles and can be downloaded from the NRMA Website.

To coincide with all this, we're holding an Electric

Vehicle Challenge on Mt Panorama in Bathurst on July 29. All are welcome to attend the Challenge and the Mayoral Bike Ride that will precede it.

I've also set up the Shiny Halo Website. Anyone who posts a positive action in the comments section of any article will get a tree planted in Central NSW. School children, for example, could take personal actions, get political by posting the action, and have a tree planted for them as well. Very empowering and educates them that they can't just consume but also need to put something back into the environment that is supporting them.

<http://centroc.com.au/shinyhalo>

Country Energy has offered a \$500 prize to whoever posts the most entries. I think this could be a great vehicle for connecting city people to the rural environment out west, on which they often don't even realise they depend.

I'm also looking at creating a sort of "offset" tent for all major events where visitors can pay for one or more trees to get planted after they leave.

Thanks again for all the hard work you're all doing.
Lis Bastian.

ALMOST A BIRD Neil Kirby

I was walking through Blue Gum Swamp, Winmalee on 10th May 2010 when I stopped at 3.20pm at a lagoon to look for and listen for any birds. I became aware of something on the surface of the lagoon blowing bubbles and snorkeling. The light was poor and I thought at first it was a duck but when I put my binoculars on it I realised to my complete surprise that it was a Platypus only 3m from me. It floated for about one meter and then dived and came up a few minutes later about 20m away.

I followed the platypus for about 50m downstream for the next 10 minutes. It would only come to the surface for a few seconds and then dive and surface again after a few minutes 10-20m away. My only regret was that I didn't have my camera with me to photograph this remarkable animal.

I had previously assumed that Platypus were extinct in this valley even though they were once common prior to the 1950's. I have been walking regularly through Blue Gum Swamp for the past 45 years and I had often stopped at what I considered suitable lagoons to watch and wait for Platypus to surface.



Photograph by Nicole Duplaix
Australian Geographic
<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/platypus.html>

The lagoons have completely dried out in recent years during severe droughts but the area over the last three years has had above-average spring and summer rainfall and all the lagoons have been flushed out perhaps making them once again attractive to Platypus. I have submitted this sighting to the NSW Wildlife Atlas.

Neil Kirby.

First 100% Electric Vehicle Challenge at Mount Panorama, Bathurst, on 29 July 2010

As the world begins to come to terms with the implications of peak oil, Central NSW Councils are remaining abreast of the rapid developments in the electric vehicle industry both in Australia and overseas. To share this information with the community, Centroc will be hosting the first 100% Electric Vehicle Challenge on Mt Panorama in Bathurst on the 29th July, 2010 as part of the "Recharging the Region" Summit at the Mount.

As well as an **all day mini expo** at the Pit Complex which will showcase bikes, cars and recharge options, the Summit's programme includes a **Mayoral Bike ride at 11.30 am**, where mayors and the public are invited to showcase the latest in pushbike and electric bike technology **and then the Electric Vehicle Challenge at 1.30pm**. This is not a race but a chance for electric vehicles to demonstrate their capabilities and for visitors to Mt Panorama to speak with people who've had first hand experience of building, converting and driving electric vehicles of all types, from a quad bike to a 100% 4 wheel-drive Triton ute, and from a converted Capri to a Formula Green racing car!

Welcome to new members

Margit Franklin-Spaeth, Springwood
Steph Chew, Wentworth Falls

COMMENT - by Brian Marshall

From coal to nuclear 'nirvana':

Or a passport to oblivion?¹

Part 2 (a necessary diversion)

Part 2 was to comprise the "nuclear option, 'renewables', the fallacy of energy shortfall, over-population, and Australia's lead, need and greed". Much of this will now form part 3. Having spent most of May and early June overseas 'catch-up' work has limited my time to research the issues. Also, in this Hut News, Sue Morrison has summarised Dr Mark Diesendorf's May monthly meeting address on "A sustainable energy future for Australia". This facilitates commencing part 2 with comment on 'renewables', before switching to the Resource Super Profit Tax (RSPT). The RSPT is contentious and several members have asked me, as a geologist, about the mining industry's arguments.

CCS (fundamental to 'clean coal' and comprising carbon capture, transfer and storage) is neither technically nor commercially proven at a scale capable of combating coal-fired power emissions (see part 1). Optimists hope CCS will be viable by 2030, short-term² realists believe it should be abandoned in favour of a more cost-effective 'gas' (LPG, CSG and UCG) transition to nuclear power, and environmental realists endorse an immediate and increasing commitment to cost-effective 'renewables'. Common to all is the need for a realistic price on carbon-based emissions, and this is below Australia's horizon until at least 2013.

How does this affect the Australian coal industry and its lucrative exports? 'Dirty' coal-fired power benefits from governmental procrastination. In the absence of a realistic carbon price and any environmental conscience, 'dirty' coal will remain the fuel of choice. Unsurprisingly, coal companies are rapidly expanding operations so that 'dirty' coal can be exploited before it loses its competitive edge and profits decline. It's called making hay while the sun shines!

And so to 'renewables'

'Dirty' coal's gain translates into a loss for 'renewables', but this **could and should** be negated due to increasing GGE and climate change.

Long established 'renewables' include hydroelectric and volcanic-based geothermal schemes. Many countries already exploit such natural assets, but countries such as China and Brazil are proceeding with increasingly massive hydro-schemes to the detriment of some of the world's major rivers. Other 'renewables' such as granite-based 'hot rock' geothermal schemes³ and exploitation of tidal energy have a future but have yet to receive broad acceptance. The former has temporarily stumbled at the pilot-plant stage, whereas the latter (despite the 40-year old Rance tidal power station in Brittany) has been criticised for negative impacts on estuarine ecosystems, fishing and natural scenic values and is only now gathering momentum. Even the two most rapidly growing 'renewables' (solar and wind power) have detractors in terms of the misuse of agricultural land, social disruption, noise (wind) and visual pollution, bird-strikes and migration-disruption (wind), and ongoing misinformation about weather-dependency and the capacity to meet base load demand.

Consider the following: most forms of 'renewable' power generation have some adverse environmental and social

consequences – there will always be detractors whether from total self-interest, a genuine concern for some aspect of the environment, or worries about social issues; oil, coal and gas powers, and nuclear power, all derive from rapidly depleting finite resources; oil, coal and gas fuels are GGE intensive, whereas nuclear fuels are linked to other well-known drawbacks. So a choice must be made between the economic 'merits' of rampantly exploiting finite fuel resources associated with the global risks of uncontrolled GGE and/or nuclear war, and the somewhat parochial issues linked to 'renewables'. **To me it's a no-brainer!**

The case (particularly in Australia) for **now** moving rapidly to solar and wind power generation is compelling⁴. 'Gas' power will in some cases replace 'dirty' coal, but those advocating a gas-powered 'transition' to 'renewables' are misguided and/or suspect! At best, they reflect a genuine belief that this will smooth the changes and ensure least social impact. At worst (as with the 'clean' coal fable) they reflect the vested interests of those multinational and national companies benefiting from governmental procrastination.

On recent visits to Germany, Austria, Poland, the Baltic Countries and China I was impressed by the abundance of wind and solar power generation. This affirmed previous impressions gained in the US, Denmark and the UK (though less so with solar!). It also reflects the determination in Europe and elsewhere to reduce GGE, despite the disappointment at Copenhagen. It comes as no surprise that Matthew Wright states⁵: "*Renewable energy is the fastest growing power source in the world, and already generates base-load electricity...Large solar thermal plants with heat storage can dispatch power around the clock...regardless of whether the sun is shining, and make handsome profits during demand peaks...Wind power is being installed on scales that dwarf Australian grid requirements...While Australia continues to throw money at 19th-century technologies, Spain, China, the US and others are charging ahead with zero emissions power generation, and creating export markets.*"

Australia's tragedy is that the Rudd government promised strong action on GGE and then faltered. By the time it digested the Garnaut Report, strong-action rhetoric gave way to cautious minimalism. Then, by the time it negotiated the outrageously generous compensation packages with 'disadvantaged' big business, the Coalition, and the Independents, well-funded 'deniers and sceptics' orchestrated a global campaign to undermine climate change science. This opened the door to unashamed self-interest. The Greens and Coalition Senators rejected the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) for totally opposing reasons, the political pendulum swung, and the Rudd government effectively rolled over. With a policy vacuum and the Coalition firmly in the 'deniers and sceptics' camp, big business moaned about 'uncertainty' but rapidly seized the opportunity to embrace 'business-as-usual'.

'Government' and 'Goliath': the Resource Super Profit Tax (RSPT)⁶

The RSPT has riled mining companies and their 'dependants' (e.g. minerals councils and similar bodies). Differences between the Rudd government and major mining companies seem irreconcilable. Let's look at the two camps.

The 'Government' camp. Royalties, which vary between states and mined commodities, tax output per tonne rather than profit. Compared with royalties, company profits have

grown enormously. Rather than profits from these finite resources swelling company coffers and flowing to executives and shareholders, 'Government' wants more benefit for 'all Australians'. The envisaged benefits comprise boosting national superannuation savings, building more infrastructure (roads, rail and ports), and investing in health and education.

The RSPT follows the Henry Review's approach to taxing the mining industry. It proposes to refund state royalties and levy a 40% tax on super profits currently defined as the 10-year government bond rate (about 6%). Conversely, if a given project is losing money it will receive a 40% tax credit, 'Government' thereby underwriting 40% of any loss. Concurrently, the 'normal' company tax will be reduced from 30 to 28%. There is no retrospectivity in that the RSPT will only apply to future profits.

The bottom line is that, following the precedent (but not the detail) established for taxing the super profits of offshore petroleum companies, those of onshore mining companies will pay more tax.

The 'Goliath' camp. Individuals have a visceral hatred of tax increases but righteously accept tax reductions (they are our due, so why not before this?) 'Goliath' is no different. The profits are rolling in and are expected to boom in the next financial year, so don't rock the boat! 'Goliath' is therefore running a \$100 million scare campaign. Based on a full-page advertisement in the SMH⁷, 'Goliath' wants consultation over five issues: reduction of what it considers would be the highest mining tax rate in the world; removing the 'retrospective' application to existing projects; varying tax rate according to the commodity; excluding taxation of infrastructure or secondary processing; and failing to streamline the current royalty system. The advertisement emphasises the potential damage to Australia's reputation as a low risk destination for direct foreign investment, and it anticipates the consequent cancellation or deferral of mining projects, loss of thousands of jobs in mining and related industries, weakening of remote and regional communities, and reduced economic benefits for all Australians. It states that the Petroleum Resource Rent Tax (PRRT) is inappropriate for the mining industry.

The bottom line is either make substantial changes to the CSPT (read concede not consult), or the scare mongering will continue to the detriment of 'Government'.

Analysis. 'Independents'⁶ recognise that: 'Goliath' has a duty to grow profits and maximise shareholder returns; the argument for replacing royalties with a levy based on profits is sound; and 'Government' (despite debate about the royalty, company tax and profit figures) must ensure all Australians benefit from windfall exploitation of finite resources.

'Non-mining' criticism of 'Government' has focused on lack of consultation within cabinet and with the mining industry (despite extensive consultation as part of the Henry Review)⁸, attempting to impose a new system rather than extending the conditions of the offshore PRRT to cover onshore resources, and uses of the CSPT revenue stream. Although the identified uses arguably serve the national interest, a strong case exists for establishing a 'future' fund for when the windfall dries up and/or the resources run out.

'Non-government' criticism of 'Goliath' has focused on the hyperbolic and false claims in parts of its scare mongering⁶ 'Goliath' urged the Henry Review to scrap the royalty system in favour of a profit-based tax regime, whilst concurrently

seeking a reduced company tax rate. In terms of total tax, it wanted to break even or perhaps pay 'a little more' under boom conditions. It was shocked by the RSPT and spat the dummy!⁹

The RSPT must affect any mining company's operations. To think otherwise is ludicrous. However, a super profits tax only applies when a significant profit level is exceeded, and then only a portion (40% for the RSPT) is taken. This leaves plenty of profit to continue business. And if one company pulls out, another company will move in! Some local jobs may go and there may be short-term uncertainty, but revenue will still enter the community. Likewise, if the product is exported, revenue will enter the Australian economy, irrespective of how much goes to 'Government'. Deals with China are still being signed and WA has raised certain royalties to improve its return, both proceeding despite the 'collapse of the mining industry' under the 'dire threat' of the RSPT.

Statements about the RSPT making other countries more attractive for investment and even moving offshore are window dressing. Australia attracts/retains mining corporations because it is well endowed with resources, close to Asian markets, has a qualified workforce, has democratic government, has financial, political and social stability, and has adequate infrastructure. 'Goliath' is sitting pretty! But in any case, multinationals operate on most continents despite some countries carrying much higher levels of risk. They do this by offsetting perceived risks against lower levels of environmental compliance and higher rates of return¹⁰. Perhaps the biggest threat to iron ore mining in Australia and Brazil, but not for a few years, comes from the massive Siberian Kimkan deposit, as China diversifies to overland supply rather than seaborne routes¹¹.

Conclusions

In relation to coal versus renewables and the RSPT saga, mining corporations, their dependant organisations, professional lobbyists, and other consultants 'monster' governments by emphasising job loss, community decay, offshore relocation, and economic decline for every Australian. This is achieved through media saturation and it works! Government, despite its resources, can't withstand (or even survive) such a campaign, particularly when dealing with an opportunistic opposition and an impending election.

The RSPT campaign might be the first time in Australia that multinationals have **overtly** used their purchasing power to thwart government. The confrontation has been hosed down⁸, but what if 'Goliath' doesn't get major concessions? And conversely, if major concessions are made against the national interest, then why do we have an elected government? Could it be to preserve an orderly environment within which the masses are exploited for the disproportionate benefit of the few? Could this "new freedom" comprise "government of the people,¹² by the people" subject to the multinationals' self-interest?

Elected governments must govern for the people!

Dr Brian Marshall

(Endnotes on page 8)

Phytophthora dieback in the Greater Blue Mountains

In March, a collaborative project between The Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, the University of Sydney and the University of New South Wales began investigating the occurrence of tree dieback in the Greater Blue Mountains WHA (GBMWH). The project, led by Springwood resident, Zoe-Joy Newby, aims to better understand the impact *Phytophthora* is having on native vegetation.

Dieback caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, a fungal-like organism, was classified as a 'Threatening Process' by the Commonwealth of Australia in 2001. *Phytophthora* is particularly devastating in open forests, where it infects understorey species, followed by the overstorey, altering ecosystem structure. *Phytophthora* has caused large amounts of devastation in Western Australian Jarrah forests and Banksia woodlands where over 2000 plant species are believed to be susceptible. In various national parks of Victoria, *Phytophthora* has caused habitat loss and landscape change, and nearly two thirds of Tasmania are believed to be infested. Once *Phytophthora* gets into the soil it is virtually impossible to remove.

Phytophthora lives and moves in soil, via root-to-root contact or through movement of spores in free water and may remain dormant in dry soil for up to three years. When the environment becomes favourable, for example after a large rainfall event, *Phytophthora* rapidly reproduces and spreads. Infected plants often appear wilted, as disease affects the roots. Tip or branch dieback may occur and be sustained in large trees over many years, while herbaceous species may develop lesions or wounds at the base of the stem. Highly susceptible species can die in as little as eight weeks.

The occurrence of *Phytophthora*- related dieback in GBMWH has been anecdotally suggested for many years, but a report released in 2008 by the Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA, revealed *Phytophthora* is present and causing disease. The first aim of this project is to define, at a regional scale, where dieback is occurring. It is essential we have community help.

Satellite imagery and remote sensing techniques combined



Dieback caused by the phytophthora root rot fungus affects a wide variety of ecosystems, such as the banksia woodland shown here.

Photo: John Hicks. Source: <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/publications/pubs/p-root-rot.pdf>

with extensive community-assisted soil sampling will identify where *Phytophthora* occurs. Once this is known, associations with particular soils, vegetation and climates can be identified and areas matching these criteria can be mapped for the whole GBMWH.

Community engagement is crucial- for two reasons. Firstly, human activities are the greatest causes of the spread of *Phytophthora*. Anybody walking, riding or driving through soil has the potential to spread the pathogen. Secondly, to teach people about the risk *Phytophthora* presents to the GBMWH and encourage them to actively stop contamination.

All community members can take precautions to help prevent the spread of disease. Ensure your shoes and equipment are free of dirt, and consider spraying them with 70% methylated spirits. Wash down vehicles before and after entering parks, park in designated areas, remain on designated roads and tracks and follow all park signage. Prevention is always better than cure.

If you would like more information on this project, *Phytophthora* or how you can get involved, please contact diebackproject@bmwhi.org.au; or contact the Plant Disease Diagnostic Unit at the Royal Botanic Gardens on (02) 9231 8138

From coal to nuclear 'nirvana': Or a passport to oblivion? Part 2 (a necessary diversion), pages 6 and 7.

Endnotes:

- ¹ Only essential references provided – the fully referenced article is available on request from the author or Hut News Editor.
- ² 'Short term' is used because 'gas' and nuclear power generation both utilise finite resources.
- ³ Brian Marshall, *The Granite solution: power down below*, Hut News June 2007 Issue No 237 pp4-5.
- ⁴ Mark Diesendorf 2009 *Climate Action* UNSW Press pp63-71; also Tom Arup *Solar, wind power may meet 2020 energy use* SMH June 22 2010 News p8.
- ⁵ Matthew Wright *Handicapped by 19th-century technology* SMH February 3 2010 Business Day p6.
- ⁶ Excellent articles looking at the RSPT include: <http://www.stubbornmule.net/2010/05/resource-super-profit-tax-everything-correctly-explained-r-s-p-t-e-c-e/>; Peter Hartcher, *Robin Rudd and Chicken little vie for high ground*, SMH June 12-13 2010 News Review p9; Ian Verrender, *In miners' war on tax, logic is first casualty*, SMH June 10 2010 Business Day p9; Peter Martin, *The ore won't stay in the ground for long*, SMH June 23 2010 Business Day p8.
- ⁷ Minerals Council of Australia, *An industry wide solution requires industry wide consultation*, SMH June 22 2010 News p9.
- ⁸ Julia Gillard has just become Prime Minister and opened the door for negotiations – this is the trouble with writing articles in turbulent times.
- ⁹ Somewhat amusingly, China is investigating a resources tax to combat bloated corporate profits and slow environmental destruction – it is being opposed by the mining community! [John Garnaut, *Now China mulls resources tax*, SMH June 10 2010 Business Day p1.
- ¹⁰ Consider: Adam Nossiter, *Silence spells greater disaster for Niger Delta*, SMH June 19 2010 p21 and John Vidal, *Nigeria's crude reality*, SMH June 23 2010 News p8.
- ¹¹ Andrew Kramer, *In ore-rich Siberia the past is a foreign country*, SMH June 12 2010 Weekend Business p7.
- ¹² With apologies to Abraham Lincoln and his Gettysburg address.

Loose Feathers, with Carol Proberts

The Pilotbird gets its name from its habit of accompanying the Superb Lyrebird through the forest in the manner of a small pilot boat accompanying a large ship entering or leaving a harbour, or a pilotfish with a shark. By following the lyrebird it can snatch any small invertebrates uncovered by the larger bird's scratching. But in our area it seems not many Pilotbirds have read the bird books because you only rarely see them doing this. Although Pilotbirds are resident throughout the Blue Mountains, if you see a small bird following a lyrebird, it's much more likely to be one of the scrubwrens or the Yellow Robin, which have learnt to take advantage of the considerable earth-moving ability of the lyrebird's powerful feet.

Lyrebirds spend the majority of their time raking the forest floor, turning over soil and leaf litter, fallen bark, rocks, and dragging rotting wood aside to uncover a multitude of invertebrates - insects, spiders, worms, small crustaceans - in the moist soil. In some parts of the Jamison Valley rainforests, the lyrebirds are almost continuously attended by groups of White-browed and Yellow-throated Scrubwrens hopping along behind, boldly darting around and between their legs, sometimes accidentally getting caught up in the lyrebird's claws and tossed back in a shower of leaf litter. Others will converge on the freshest pockets of scratched earth as soon as the lyrebird moves ahead, to pick off what it has left behind.

This association is obviously beneficial to the smaller birds while the lyrebird doesn't seem to mind, and the smaller birds probably take prey which is too small to be of value for the lyrebird.

Pilotbirds are said to associate with lyrebirds more often in the moist eucalypt forests of Victoria. Here in the Blue Mountains, the Pilotbird's main habitat requirement seems to be a dense shrub layer or understorey, hence they are usually found in eucalypt forest but not often in rainforest. I also regularly see them in clifftop areas, and along the edges of tracks in heathland (again confirming that they don't read the books!), including places where there are no lyrebirds. They are plump, robin-sized birds with a soft scalloping on the breast, an orangey-brown face and bright chestnut at the base of the tail. Their call is one of the sweetest, most melodious sounds of the bush, very loud for a bird of its size, and is often mimicked by the lyrebird.

Carol Proberts *origma@westnet.com.au*



(Bell Bird photo by Graham Nelson)

About Bell Birds and Lerps Christine Davies

The Great River Walk will follow the Hawkesbury-Nepean River from its source near Goulburn to its mouth at Broken Bay. A section of the walk at Penrith starts near the Penrith Rowing Club and follows the river past the weir for about one kilometre. At the end of the path you can go past some blocks of stone and continue for a short distance where eucalypts have been planted as part of the next stage of the walk. A colony of Bell Miners (Bell Birds) has taken up residence there.

It's not often you can see Bell Birds up close. Usually they are high up in the canopy, but these trees are still small. Bell Birds establish large territories and vigorously defend their territory and the psyllids and lerps they feed on. Psyllids are tiny sap-sucking winged insects that feed on native trees and shrubs, especially eucalypts. Lerps are protective covers constructed by the nymphs of psyllids, formed from the honeydew excreted by the nymphs on the leaf surface. The honeydew consists of sugars and amino acids which crystallise on contact with air.

There are many other birds to see on the way, water birds on the river and woodland birds in the native vegetation which has been planted along the walk. We also saw a Sea Eagle soaring overhead. Christine.

Membership Application Form

(Use capitals please—even for email address)

Name(s) 1.
2.
3.

Address:
.....PC

Phone(s)

Email

MEMBERSHIP FEES (please circle one item)

Single \$25 Concession (Senior/Student)\$15
Household \$30 Concession (Senior/Student)\$20
Corporate (open to negotiation) \$100

Bushwalkers only.:
(\$20 per walker per annum) \$.....

Donation (tax-deductible) \$.....

TOTAL AMOUNT INCLUDED \$.....

Note: All fees include GST at the relevant rate.

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; Web or database management; Plant nursery assistance; Bushcare; Publicity/photography; Water quality/sourcing studies; Society administration.

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.

ENQUIRIES: Phone (02 4757 1872)
Email: membership@bluemountains.org.au

Please cut out and forward this form with your cheque or money order to:
Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.
PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls NSW 2782

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.

Dr Mark Diesendorf on ‘A Sustainable Energy Future for Australia’ (continued from page 4)

Reinforcement Scheme!) was a huge distortion from the ideal model and would have meant an increase in GHG emissions until at least 2034. It provided *no incentive for economic restructuring* from dirty to clean industries and householders/small businesses would have paid for the scheme, rather than the biggest polluters (who would be generously compensated around \$20 billion over 10 yrs).

Programs such as the Solar Flagships scheme are not sufficient to drive the necessary transition to renewables, with at best four demonstration-scale plants proposed by 2015 (and none using the most efficient solar technology with storage).

Mark believes the principal **policies required to drive sustainable energy** in Australia are:

- strong greenhouse gas reduction targets
- immediate implementation of the promised revisions to the RET (to separate the small & large-scale renewable energy markets and provide greater incentives for large-scale wind & bio-energy)
- commercial feed-in tariffs for large scale renewable energy generation (this is the short term “kickstart” policy, whereas a carbon price/tax is a longer term solution)
- urgent implementation of a carbon price with no exemptions (apart from necessary ‘border adjustments’)
- a ban on new, conventional coal-fired power stations (e.g. under the EPBC Act)
- mandatory energy performance standards, ratings and labels for all buildings and electrical appliances.

These policies need to be accompanied by an immediate upgrade of Australia’s electricity transmission network to accommodate major expansion of new renewable energy.

“Our existing power structure is threatening democracy”

When questioned about the reasons why Governments resist the necessary transition to renewables, Mark highlighted the existing powerful vested interests (including unions as well as the coal, electricity, oil, aluminium, steel, cement, motor vehicle, and even the forestry & agricultural industries). A massive increase in community-based activism is required to counter this powerful influence on Government policy.

What can you do?

With Federal & State elections due this year and early next year, *now* is the time to raise your voice in support of the transition to renewable energy. The Federal seat of Macquarie is highly marginal and the State electorate of Blue Mountains may change hands at the next election.

Lobby the Federal and NSW governments to implement the necessary policies (above) as a matter of urgency. Write to, email or visit your local MPs. Write to the Premier, the Prime Minister and relevant State & Federal Energy Ministers. Ask them *why* they are not supporting a rapid transition away from polluting power sources, given the urgency of addressing climate change.

EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR WANTED

We need a volunteer who can take on the position of Events Co-ordinator. The position will entail booking and organising stalls, maintaining a list of people who are willing to assist on the stalls. For more information contact Liz 4759 2694, email mcreysw@bigpond.net.au.

BMCS stall at Winter Magic Festival



Katoomba High School students Marc and Laurie (right) explain, via a model supplied by Blue Mountains City Council, why managing water sustainably is important.

Down the Wallaby Track — a backward glance, with John Low

TRAGEDY AT THE FALLS

Walking recently with the 'Interpretive Bushwalkers' along the cliff top near Govetts Leap, we stopped at Barrow Lookout above the lip of Govetts Leap Falls and reflected on a tragedy that occurred almost 53 years ago. The mist closing in and the dark, green and brown cliff face, wet from the rain, gave a particular poignancy to the story.

At noon on Saturday 19 October 1957 a taxi driver waiting at Govetts Leap Lookout became concerned when his client failed to return from a walk he had begun earlier that day. The driver's missing passenger was the eminent, Australian-born archaeologist, Prof. Vere Gordon Childe, 65 years of age and recently retired as Director of the Institute of Archaeology in the University of London.

As a boy Childe had spent numerous holidays in the Blue Mountains at the home, 'Chalet Fontanelle' (now the 'Whispering Pines' guesthouse), his parents had built near the top of Wentworth Falls. Educated at the universities of Sydney and Oxford and finding his political and pacifist views unwelcome in Australia, he left in 1921 to pursue a successful international career in archaeology. In retirement he returned home and renewed his acquaintance with the Mountains while pursuing a longstanding interest in geology.

Childe left the Carrington Hotel by taxi at 8am with the stated intention of investigating the geology of the cliffs along the valley's rim near Govetts Leap. A little after midday a tourist found his compass and other personal effects by the track near the falls and the police were notified. His body was not found until the following morning.

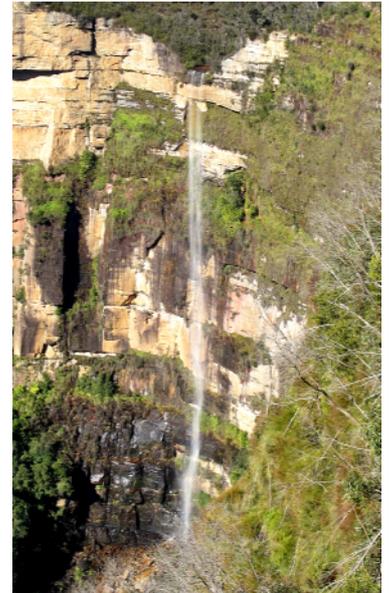
It was a fifteen year old member of the search party, a local Blackheath boy, who alerted his fellows to thick scrub on a ledge 500 feet up from the bottom of the falls.

With great difficulty they stretched Childe's remains down and then up the 1500 foot cliff side to the road. In the newspapers the next day his death competed for space with the issue of whether Tulloch's owner would allow the Melbourne Cup favourite to run.

Did Childe commit suicide? A profoundly shy man, uncomfortable in society, he was deeply unhappy with the Australia he found on his return. After 35 years absence little had changed and he wrote a very revealing letter to his successor at the London Institute confirming his readiness, even desire, for death. Some, though, like the receptionist at the Carrington who spoke with him at length on the night before his death were not convinced and stressed the significance of small but out-of-character details such as his hotel bill left unpaid. The coroner returned a verdict of accidental death but the debate is certain to continue.

In his chosen field Childe's ideas have remained influential and internationally he is highly respected. In the Blue Mountains, while there is no marker, the area near the top of Govetts Leap Falls will always be associated with his memory.

John Low (johnlow@iprimus.com.au)



Save our Swamp Project wins National Local Government Award Michael Henson

BMCC has been received a National Local Government Award in the 'Innovation in Natural Resource Management' category for its role as the lead agency of the 'Save our Swamps' project.

The genesis of the award can be traced back to 2005 with the successful nomination of Blue Mountains Swamps as part of the federal Temperate Highland Peat Swamps on Sandstone EEC by the Blue Mountains Conservation Society. Council responded to the listing by increasing its existing efforts to conserve these significant swamp communities by establishing the Upland swamp restoration 'Save our Swamps' program in 2006.

The 'Save our Swamps' program is an integrated program that consists of an on ground swamp remediation program, a community awareness raising program, a community engagement, education and on ground volunteering program through Swampcare, a school

education program, a private landholders incentive program and a capacity building program for agency staff and community groups, which has received ongoing funding from the NSW Environmental Trust and the federal 'NHT' and 'Caring for Country' programs since its inception.

In the 5 years since its inception the project has lead to over 30 ha of Blue Mountains Swamp undergoing bush regeneration, protected over 50 Ha of vulnerable downslope Blue Mountains Swamp areas, treated over 600m of channelised swamp with soft engineering swamp rehydration structures and planted 11,825 endemic swamp plants. In addition 2.5km of tracks impacting negatively on Blue Mountains Swamp communities have either been closed and rehabilitated or stabilized with soil conservation works.

Partnerships, initially with Lithgow City Council protecting Newnes Plateau

Shrub Swamps and subsequently with Wingecarribee Shire Council (WSC) and Gosford City Council (GCC), has seen the Save our Swamps model widely adopted on a regional scale with BMCC acting as the lead agency in building the capacity of the partner councils to deliver high quality conservation and restoration outcomes protecting Temperate Highland Peat Swamp systems and their associated threatened species across almost their entire range.

The Save our Swamps project and council would like to thank the fantastic and committed members of the Blue Mountains community who have played a role in protecting our significant and wonderful Blue Mountains Swamps and who have contributed to making the Save our Swamps project a success.

To find out more visit www.saveourswamps.com

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY 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 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. Before attending ring the designated contact person or the Group Co-ordinator Jim Percy 4758 6009 or email jp34@tpg.com.au

Date	Details	Contact	Meet at	(km)	Grade	Map
Jul 17	Wongarra Ridge to Walls Ridge - some steep slides/scrambles. Protective clothing necessary. Book in by the preceding Thursday.	Hugh 0423309854	Contact Leader. Party limit of 8 (wilderness area)	6	3/4	Mt Wilson Series 3. Never go off track without a map!
Jul 24	Christmas in July - Jemby Rinjah , 12.30 pm. 336 Evans Lookout Road, Blackheath. \$40 pp, 3 course lunch, deposit \$20 on booking	AnneMarie 4759 2172	Walkers meet Evans Lookout CP, 10 am?	5?	2	Katoomba
Jul 31	Carlons, Breakfast Creek to Iron Pot Ridge , 400m, gloves and 2 litres of water at least	Bill 4758 8545	Mt Vic Station Carpark 7 am	12	4	Jenolan
Aug 7	Hurley Heights firetrail , views along the ridge with exploring of large overhangs and other features.	Bob 4757 2694	Leura School, Mt Hay Road, 8.30 am	11	3	Katoomba
Aug 14	Crayfish Pool - delightful spot on Kanuka Brook and other highlights of the BMNP - Red Hands gully and Campfire Creek	Liz 4754 4966	Glenbrook Station carpark, 8.20 am	12	3	Penrith
Sept 13-17	Forward Notice Deep Pass mid week camp	Jim 4758 6009	Contact leader for directions and possibilities	Various	Variable	NPWS Brochure

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 Judith Dyer, 4758 6310, judithbushwalker@hotmail.com

Date	Details	Grade	Contact	Meet
Jul 12	Leura Falls and old sewer site, Leura. Falls and forests.	3	Phil 4787 5560	Leura Station car park 9.30 am. Car pool.
Jul 19	Manly to North Head. Historic ADF site and breathtaking views.	2	Heather 4739 1493	Top of escalators, Central Station, 9.30 am
Jul 20	TUESDAY. Christmas in July. Lunch and cruise on paddle-wheeler at Windsor. Cost \$35.		Judith 4758 6310	
Jul 26	BUS TRIP. Bent's Basin. Cost \$10. Book and pay Birgitta 4784 3191. Driver Bob.	2	Heather 4739 1493	BMCC Depot, South Street, North Katoomba, 8.30 am.
Aug 2	Blue Gum Swamp - Grose Head South. Walk to lookout. Grose Valley views.	2/3	Heather 4739 1493	Rear Springwood Civic Centre 8.30 am. Car pool.
Aug 9	Kanuka Brook, Glenbrook. Walk to lovely pool and waterfall.	3	Ros 4733 3880	Glenbrook rail car park 9.30 am. Car pool.

THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS: Walks of 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 Gail Schwedler 4782 1215 platypusprotected@yahoo.com.au

Jul 15	Bonnie Doon, Katoomba. Clifftop walk with views.	1/2	Joan c/o 4782 1215	BM Council Chambers carpark, 9.30 am.
Jul 22	Evans Crown Circuit. Some 'on track' some 'off track' walking past spectacular boulder formations. Lunch at Tarana Pub or BYO	2/3	Phil 4787 5560	Mt Victoria Station, 9.45am. Car pool. Petrol contribution required.
Jul 29	Radiata Plateau, Katoomba. Fairly flat walk to magnificent view.	2	Joan c/o 4782 1215	BM Council Chambers carpark 9.30 am.
Aug 5	Ikara Head, Mt Victoria. Mainly level walk on ridge through heathland. Option to lengthen walk, so bring lunch.	2	Marie 4787 1257	Mount Victoria Station 9.45am
Aug 12	Castle Head, Katoomba. Short walk on Narrow Neck, track through heath to Castle Head below.	2	Joan c/o 4782 1215	BM Council Chambers carpark 9.30am
Aug 19	Paradise Pool, Linden. Exceptionally beautiful pool, beach and waterfall.	2/3	Maurice 4739 4942	Linden Station, north side, 9.15 am

**The next series of Interpretive Bushwalks will start on Thursday 22nd July.
Enquiries to Christine 4787 7246, hutnews@bluemountains.org.au**