

# HUT NEWS

Issue No. 313  
April 2014



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"

## Monster Garage Sale

Nursery volunteers will hold a  
Monster Garage Sale on

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May**

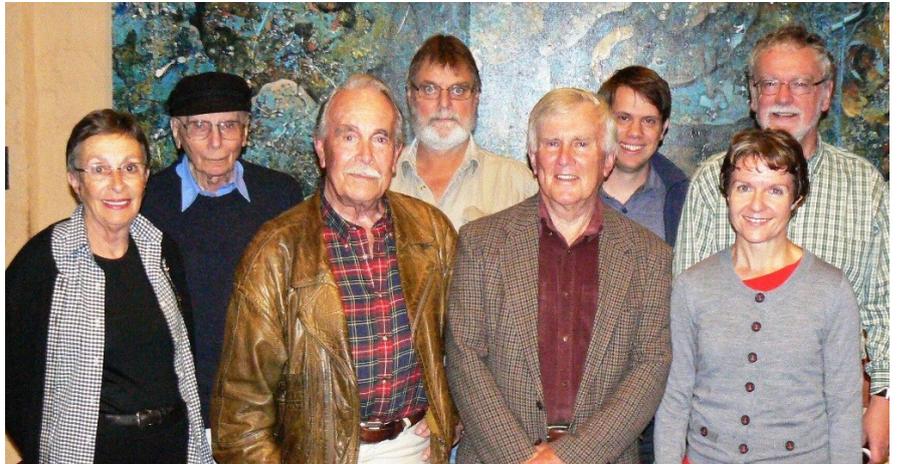
**BMCS Lawson Nursery  
Corner of Park and Cascade  
Streets, LAWSON**

It's time to clean out the cupboards,  
the bookshelves, the shed and  
the garage!

We want your books, CDs, crockery,  
bric-a-brac, tools, sports gear (how  
about that unused exercise bike or  
that tent you never use?), and small  
household items, but please – NO  
large furniture, NO clothing, and  
NO electrical appliances.

Please keep saleable items you would  
like to donate until May. You can drop  
them off at the Lawson Nursery on  
**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May or Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>  
May between 9 and 12**, or contact  
Sue (phone 4787 8887 or email  
nursery@bluemountains.org.au) to  
arrange collection.

All proceeds go to help the work of  
Blue Mountains Conservation Society.



At the Society's AGM, on Thursday 27 March 2014, members elected a  
new management committee for 2014/15. All positions were filled!

Welcome to our new president Alan Page, pictured here with **seven**  
former presidents who have held the position during the past 16 years.  
(From left they are Robin Mosman, Imre Gahl, Brian Marshall, Lachlan  
Garland, Kevin Bell, Peter Ridgeway, Tara Cameron and Alan Page).

We farewelled Peter Ridgeway, Lachlan Garland, Kevin Bell and Susan  
Crick who did not renominate for their positions. Thank you for a job well  
done! And we welcomed Sue Nicol, Paul Vale (who took the photo) and  
Annabel Murray who volunteered for the positions of Nursery Manager,  
Bushcare Officer and Publicity Officer. Thank you to all the members of  
last year's management committee who are staying on—just goes to  
prove that working on the BMCS Management Committee is rewarding  
and enjoyable!

After supper we watched a stunning slide show of members' photos:  
"Heart and Soul II".



## Nursery volunteers BBQ at Green Gully

Blue Mountains Conservation  
Society's nursery volunteers  
said farewell to Kevin Bell as  
Nursery Manager at a picnic/  
barbeque at Green Gully, in  
the Megalong Valley.

Kevin is understandably  
proud of the revegetation  
work at Green Gully, formerly  
Carlton's Farm and now  
National Parkland, because  
our nursery has supplied  
thousands of native plants for  
the project over the last five  
years. The project is  
ongoing.

Photo by Emanuel Conomos.

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**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT  
ISSUE OF HUT NEWS IS  
19 APRIL 2014**

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#### MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

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Email: [Ross@coster.com.au](mailto:Ross@coster.com.au)  
or write to

PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

## NURSERY NEWS

This is my first Nursery News as the new Nursery manager, although I am not new to the Nursery as I have worked with Kevin Bell at Blackheath for nearly ten years and overlapped with the previous manager, David Coleby. However in that time we have seen the business side expand considerably and Kevin has left some very big shoes to fill. I hope my feet are big enough and I'm sure with the help of our dedicated band of volunteers we will continue to be successful and profitable.

Propagating and growing plants and handing them on to happy and satisfied customers is a process that, in my case for one, becomes something of an obsession. Watching seeds germinate and grow from tiny seedlings to healthy plants or finding that your cuttings have produced good roots is immensely satisfying. You become extra aware of plants when you are out in the bush and your desire to learn more about them grows. I knew very little about native plants before I joined the nursery. If you think nursery work might interest you **please contact me**.

**We need more volunteers**, particularly at Blackheath Nursery where propagation work takes place. Blackheath Nursery works on Tuesdays 9-12, and Lawson works on Wednesdays 9-12 and handles plant sales as well as growing on and re-potting plants for larger contracts. If you can't help on those days perhaps you could lend a hand on Saturday mornings or at our market stalls. If you would just like to find out what goes on behind the scenes at Blackheath, contact me and we can arrange a tour.

**Feature plants:** *Hovea lanceolata* and *Indigofera australis* belong to the large family of plants called the *Fabaceae* or peas. They are leguminous plants bearing their seeds in pods and include many food plants such as peas, beans, lentils and peanuts. Many store nitrogen in root nodules and therefore improve soil fertility like clover and lucerne.



*Hovea lanceolata*, Photographer: M Fagg.  
Australian National Botanic Gardens  
<http://www.anbg.gov.au/>

In Australia many genera in this family have yellow flowers and include the familiar 'Eggs and bacon', but several have pink or purple flowers. *Hovea* is one of the latter. It is a shrub up to 2m tall and bears purple flowers clustered along the stems in late winter and early Spring. *Indigofera australis* has profuse clusters of pink-mauve flowers in early Spring and also grows up to 2m. While enjoying the gorgeous flowers of these two species you know they are also enriching the soil with their roots! They are at the nursery now.

**Huge Garage Sale:** Our Nursery is an essential part of ConSoc as it makes money to fund the Society's campaigns. To boost the coffers we are also planning a HUGE fundraiser in the form of a Garage/Yard Sale at Lawson Nursery. See page 1 for more details.

**Sue Nicol, Nursery Manager.** ([nursery@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:nursery@bluemountains.org.au) 4787 8887)

#### BMCS NURSERY PLANT SALES

**Lawson Nursery**, Wednesday and Saturday mornings, 9am to noon.

The nursery is located in the Lawson Industrial Area on the corner of Park and Cascade Streets, opposite Federation Building Materials - see map on our website [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)).

**Blackheath Community Market**, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month at Blackheath Public School, 9am to 1pm.

**Magpie Market**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month at Lawson Public School, 9am to 2pm.

Tube stock \$2.50. Larger pots available.

Discounts for bulk orders and large contracts

Enquiries Sue Nicol 4787 8887, [nursery@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:nursery@bluemountains.org.au)

## The Gardens of Stone—a photographic journey with Hugh Speirs



Alice at the “Pulpit”, Bungleboori.  
Hugh Speirs.

### VALLEY OF THE WATERS BUSHCARE GROUP

The Valley of the Waters Bushcare Group meets on the second Saturday of each month, 9am till noon. Tools and gloves are available. Bring a drink, a snack and a sunhat. New members are welcome. Phone Karen 4757 1929.

### Great for mining: shame about the environment! Brian Marshall

The **Draft** NSW Biodiversity Offsets Policy for Major Projects<sup>1</sup> has the intention of “clarifying, standardising and improving biodiversity offsetting” for major project approvals. The policy will be applied to state significant development and state significant infrastructure (“major projects”) under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. It will happen irrespective of whether the determining authority is the Minister for Planning, the Planning Assessment Commission, or senior staff within the Department of Planning.

Why is the policy necessary? The justification and objectives **sound** sensible. The justification presses the right buttons by emphasising non-uniformity, uncertainty of outcome, the time element, and costs. It falls nicely into the domain of cutting red tape, but for whose benefit? If we call it ‘green tape’ the answer becomes obvious: to give miners certainty of outcome and, in doing so, effectively compromise the true value of the impacted biodiversity. As always, the language is right, but the devil is in the detail!

The policy is to be phased in over a transitional period which is likely to commence in the second half of 2014. ‘Phasing in’ will involve the proponents and the consent authority applying the policy ‘administratively’, but some flexibility will be applied in order to ‘accommodate any problems’ and address ‘finer details’. Read this as follows: to cover unforeseen deficiencies when the thought bubbles are turned into a practicable process; to allow miners to complain and have any ‘unnecessary’ constraint diluted; and (perhaps) to enable a backflip should the government have misjudged the strength of community opposition!

Once again we have a situation where a system has been devised on a ‘one size fits all’ basis. Just as the Minister for Planning’s new planning system was withdrawn due to its impracticability and its promoting the needs of developers over environmental and social concerns, so must the Minister for the Environment be

made to realize that this new offsets policy will not wash and is unacceptable in its present form. Her glossy statement that “*This policy will provide much-needed certainty for industry and improve environmental outcomes*”<sup>2</sup> is far from reality; industry’s certainty will be attained at the environment’s cost.

Some of the specific concerns stem from:

- The basic premise underpinning the ‘avoid, minimise, offset’ hierarchy being that the proponent’s application **will be approved** through complying with an offset determined under the Draft Framework for Biodiversity Assessment (FBA)<sup>3</sup>.
- The biodiversity investigations of the proposal under the terms of the FBA being conducted by an accredited ecological consultant **hired by the proponent** – this has the capacity to undermine the whole policy – government must appoint the consultant and pay the person from a central fund.
- The notion that the offset can be acquitted by paying money into the yet to be established NSW Biodiversity Offsets Fund for Major Projects<sup>4</sup>, or by other measures such as funding mine-site rehabilitation, and funding research and forms of education.
- The broadening (or effective abandonment) of ‘like-for-like’ requirements in determining an offset; such that it need not be matched to the impacted biodiversity and can be targeted to relevant ‘higher conservation priorities’.
- The consent authority being allowed to reduce offset requirements where they might otherwise render the project unviable and there are demonstrable overall social or economic benefits.
- The organization (OEH) charged with conserving the environment under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act* being complicit in the systemic subjugation of environmental well-being to the interests of the mining industry. (continued on page 4)

## Great for mining: shame about the environment! (continued from page 3)

It is unconscionable that, under this policy, threatened ecological communities and species **have little or NO protection**; all can be offset in variously contrived ways. If an ecological community exists in only ten places and three are destroyed, no sane person would deny that the risk to the remaining seven has exponentially increased. If a land system is unique, no sane person would sanction its destruction in exchange for throwing money at the NSW Biodiversity Offsets Fund.

Biodiversity is under severe pressure from the destruction and fragmentation of habitat in response to population growth, governments obsessed with commercial developments in National Parks and on Crown lands, and an economy keyed to the exploitation of finite natural resources by high-impact horrendously destructive methods. Why should we make it easier and less costly for increasingly powerful multi-national and foreign-owned companies to exploit our finite natural resources, when organizations attempting to protect the environment have very limited human and financial resources? The environment is part of your quality-of-life. It is time to take a stand!

**What to do! Please send in a submission.** It need not be long. Just say that you value biodiversity and the natural environment, and that the policy is unacceptable. Submissions regarding the policy may be made by email to [offsets.policy@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:offsets.policy@environment.nsw.gov.au)<sup>5</sup>. Submissions will be accepted up to 5 pm, Friday 9 May.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/biodiversity/1480bioffspol.pdf> – this is the draft policy document.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.enviroinfo.com.au/draft-biodiversity-offsets-policy-for-new-south-wales/#.Uzf2kF1vO70> – this reports Minister Parker's views.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/biodiversity/1482draftfba.pdf> – this aims to quantify the proposal's 'unavoidable' impacts, and identify the types of available offset which the proponent may use to prepare an offset strategy to accompany the application.

<sup>4</sup> [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/biodivoffsets/1481bioffund.htm](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/biodivoffsets/1481bioffund.htm)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/biodivoffsets/1480bioffpolmp.htm> – this provides additional options for making a simple submission.

**BLUE MOUNTAINS  
CONSERVATION SOCIETY Inc**  
'Like' us on Facebook:  
Blue Mountains Conservation Society  
Follow us on Twitter: [bmcsnsw](https://twitter.com/bmcsnsw)

## Welcome to new members

Jim Low, East Blaxland  
Valda Low, East Blaxland  
David Payne, Glenbrook  
Geoff Dernee, Cowra  
Anne Dernee, Cowra  
Narelle Duxbury, Dharruk  
Bob Debus, Leura  
Malcolm Wilson, Rozelle  
Nicole Schmidt, Blackheath  
Penny Speirs, Blackheath,  
Michael Smithers, Blackheath  
Colin Walters, Alexandria  
Karo Taylor, Alexandria  
Catherine Short, Faulconbridge  
Rob Short, Faulconbridge  
Margaret Fagan, Wentworth Falls  
Bob Fagan, Wentworth Falls  
Leah Godfrey, Blackheath  
Rick Kayess, Mt Riverview  
Vicky Bairstow, Mt Riverview  
Agnes Bairstow, Mt Riverview  
Felicity Martin, Faulconbridge  
Patricia Quinn, Faulconbridge  
Karyn Cunningham, Wentworthville

## Rediscovering wildlife

Dr Robert Mesiboy is a millipede specialist at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery and School of Zoology, University of Tasmania. Dr Mesiboy attended a conference in Sydney in December 2013 and in spare time took a train to Blackheath—and collected four species of millipedes on the edge of town.

Dr Mesiboy wrote: "One of the collections was exciting: *Hoplatria clavigera*. This species was first collected in 1936 by a visiting Swedish botanist, and described by a German millipede specialist a few years later. Apparently due to mislabelling, *H. clavigera* was said to be from 'Gippsland', where it definitely doesn't occur. The only other known specimens of *H. clavigera* were found years ago in an American museum, labelled 'Australia' with no other details. Thursday's find not only puts *H. clavigera* correctly on the map, but also shows that it's still alive, well and readily available for further study in the Blue Mountains."



## Living with wildlife

This insect was photographed in my garden in Wentworth Falls in December 2013. It is big, maybe 5 or 6 cm long. It has a black head, red thorax and black abdomen with orange specks. The spikes on the black legs are orange.

"Search and Discover" at the Australian Museum" identified it as a king cricket, genus *Anostostoma* sp, female. It is an undescribed species, two such species living in the Greater Sydney Area, and they are in the same family as the New Zealand Weta. They are not common and the museum asked me if I still had the cricket alive as they have a male and are looking for a mate for it! Margaret Fagan.

**The Gardens of Stone Visitors Map**  
\$7.50 plus \$1.50 postage.  
Buy the map online  
([www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)) or  
write to BMCS, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782  
with your cheque or money order.

## Large-scale renewables integration not costly

According to a new study just released by the International Energy Agency (IEA) the large-scale adoption of renewable energy technologies like solar and wind can come at "little additional cost in the long term." In fact the study said solar PV and wind could generate 30 per cent of a given market's electricity generation without significant economic disruption. Peter Green.

You can read more here - <http://econews.com.au/news-to-sustain-our-world/iea-large-scale-renewables-integration-not-costly>.

## Three myths the coal seam gas industry wants you to believe

"Faced with wide-ranging criticism of mining practices and lack of transparency, the CSG industry has launched a campaign to convince the general public, and policy makers, that it's in Australia's national interest to allow an expansion of CSG. They have concentrated their efforts on three ideas: that an expansion of CSG will create a large number of jobs; that without a big increase in CSG extraction, gas prices will rise dramatically; and that an expansion of CSG will reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. But according to our new report – *Fracking the Future* – those claims are often exaggerated, and are sometimes based on outright falsehoods." Richard Denniss, Adjunct professor, Crawford School at Australian National University.

Read more: <http://theconversation.com/three-myths-the-coal-seam-gas-industry-wants-you-to-believe>

## Protecting the environment in planning for a new airport

Don Morison

As debate about Badgery's Creek as an airport site continues, a vision emerges of "budget" airlines minimising their costs and passengers' fares by flying "no frills" services. The airport will open with a limited impact on surrounding areas but that would grow steadily. For many years, most Sydney flights will still go to and from Mascot.

Projecting straight lines in various directions from the Badgery's Creek site, one finds that many possible flight paths go over national parks, dedicated water catchment areas and small communities heavily reliant on tourism and other activities that depend on the pristine condition of the natural environment.

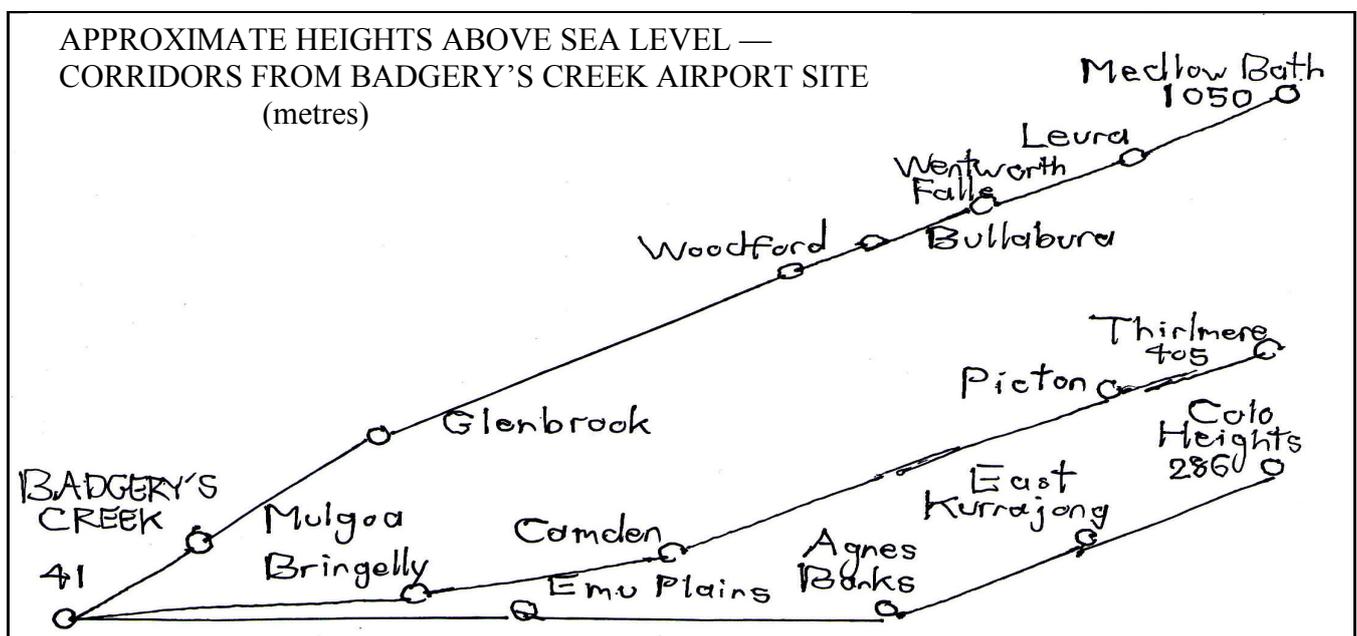
The impacts of aviation on other activities arise from the number of flights, the noisiness of individual aircraft types and the usual altitude at which particular regions are overflown. The regions of the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Wollondilly have suffered relatively little from Mascot activities because many Mascot flights do not overfly them and those that do maintain a relatively high altitude. As an airport at Badgery's Creek expanded its operations, this would change.

The most obvious impact from low altitude flying is noise. While curfews and construction techniques such as double glazing windows are used in populated areas near airports, life cannot go on as before. This would be

especially impactful in areas whose reputation with tourists depends on being quiet and natural. In aircraft operations, procedures such as "fuel dumping" can sometimes be necessary and effects on natural areas below cannot always be avoided. In the worst scenario, if even a small aircraft crashes or makes an emergency landing in a natural area, massive disruption could be caused by search, rescue and recovery operations.

The economics of maintaining higher altitudes to minimise risk is influenced by the surface topography on the approaches to an airport site. The accompanying diagram shows the approximate changes in distance above sea level on various straight line routes radiating from the Badgery's Creek site and passing over or near large natural areas and water catchment areas.

Federal MPs such as Louise Markus (Member for Macquarie) are part of a group being consulted by the Prime Minister on the future of the Badgery's Creek site. The diagram reveals that the corridor between Badgery's Creek and the upper Blue Mountains would be particularly susceptible to low altitude overflight. It would be interesting to know the attitude of Ms Markus and her colleagues to gaining guarantees against the use of flight paths that would be highly damaging to susceptible areas.



## A touch of reality perhaps! Brian Marshall

There is a degree of euphoria affecting many, including the numerous political commentators who ranged from ruthless to less than objective in their criticism of the previous federal government. The Prime Minister seems to be 'on a roll' (love him or hate him), the Australian political map is dominantly blue, the economy (bless it or blast it) seems to be picking up, confidence is largely optimistic (but fragile!), and employment figures for February were better than expected. Consequently, provided that one is employed and cares little about the local, state, Australian and global natural environments, Australia's short-term complacency is understandable.

No, this is not an article about the destructive capacities of state and federal governments that largely express the will of the voting public in terms of greed is good. Nor is it intended to depress you (or me for that matter!), but if you recognise that the environment is as important as the economy in terms of your lifestyle or well-being index, this article may interest you. It deals with the employment figures and the way we are being duded. How exciting! Please read on!

The media and markets thrive on volatility, so when they reacted to the increase in employment for February, they focused on the seasonally adjusted estimates, which emphasise volatility, rather than the trend estimates<sup>1</sup>. And, of course, governments embrace superficially positive employment data, irrespective of unemployment now hitting 6% (or should I use journalese and say that it has crashed through the 6% barrier?) and despite the age of entitlement being (selectively) over.

The trend estimates for February 2013 to February 2014 show that employment grew by only 0.5% (~58,000 jobs), whereas the expectation from a growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 3% (actually 2.8%) over the same period amounts to 1.5% or some 170,000 jobs. So why has employment growth not matched GDP performance?<sup>2</sup>

One could invoke jobs lost (or to be lost!) from the car industry and Qantas, but despite all the media hype and political grandstanding the numbers over the February 2013-14 year are too small (though critical for those affected). The real explanation is wider reaching and comes down to the evolving resources boom.

'Net' exports are largely due to the resources boom and account for about 2.4% of the 2.8% GDP-growth. So what? Well, as the boom moves from the investment to the production stage it lifts GDP but does little for employment-growth. In fact, the mining industry's contribution to jobs is flattening or even declining. Exploration and particularly construction generate employment, whereas production is increasingly automated and less direct labour is needed. This is a minor reason why governments are pushing coal-seam gas and shale-bed gas; the associated exploration and construction phases will smooth out the mining industry's construction dip.

Surely this isn't a problem? After all, if resources contribute a major share of GDP, the revenue is flowing into Australia, and re-distributed through company and personal taxation and the trickle-down effect<sup>3</sup> such that its purchasing power stimulates the economy. Everyone is a winner! Or should be! Unfortunately, our mining

industry has about 80% foreign ownership, so the money goes offshore. The only sensible way to combat this and ensure that Australians benefit from exploitation of our finite natural resources is to have a **mineral resources rent tax (MRRT)**.

Doesn't Australia already have an MRRT? Yes, and although poorly devised, it is starting to pay dividends. It would be far better, were it designed to cover a bigger basket of resources and not have been distorted for the benefit of the 'big' miners.

Isn't the government aiming to abolish this tax? Regrettably yes, either because of an ill-defined political principle (like destroy everything introduced whilst in opposition), or to reward foreign-owned big miners for helping to bring down the previous government. Regardless, abolishing an MRRT is against the best interests of Australian jobs and a successful transition to an Australian economy less dependent on finite natural resources.

Perhaps, as the pigs fly overhead, the government will have a Damascus road conversion and repent! I would like to believe this, but negative actions generally pander to the worst side of human nature and are easily implemented. In contrast, positive actions which appeal to a human's better side require understanding and a degree of self-sacrifice, and happen slowly. A couple of quotations indicate how slowly but we continue to strive and hope.

From the Code of Hammurabi, 1772BC: "*The first duty of any government is to protect the powerless from the powerful*" – yet it still doesn't happen!

From Elizabeth Farrelly, 2014<sup>4</sup>: "*...environmentalism is not just the way of the future. It's the only way we'll have a future*" – yet it still doesn't register!

<sup>1</sup> For those wishing to see why, please go to <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/6202.0>

<sup>2</sup> Much of the following part of this analysis reflects ideas in an article by Ross Gittins in the SMH – refer to <http://www.smh.com.au/business/ending-mining-tax-will-damage-jobs-20140316-34vh1.html>

<sup>3</sup> Regrettably the trickle-down effect decays exponentially such that it is negligible by the time it reaches the poorer sections of the community.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/just-two-choices-are-left-for-the-environment-20140319-352o8.html>

### How big is your backyard?

"Far from being the outside area immediately beyond your back door, it extends more than 600 kilometres. The notion of sustainable cities requires us to redefine our backyard. For cities are not, and never will be sustainable within their boundaries. Instead the backyard of a sustainable city extends well past what you see from your back door. The challenge is how can we contribute to the stewardship of this extended backyard?"

This article by Dr Kelvin Montagu, who is a member of the Society, takes conservation outside of national parks and onto farmland. There's a link to a survey at the end.

<http://www.abc.net.au/environment/articles/2014/02/26/3951344.htm>

### Three Presidents Alan Page

Three former Society presidents did not re-nominate for the new Management Committee. Kevin Bell, Lachlan Garland and Peter Ridgeway. I will miss their sage advice and humour.

Interestingly, most of the Management Committee members over the years are quietly spoken but have a depth of knowledge and character that I am drawn to.

Kevin was president in 2003 and 2004, and then served as Nursery Manager until this year. He occasionally acts as a kind of linesman or boundary rider at MC Meetings, clearly pointing out when we think about getting involved with issues outside our domain. Over the last 10 years he has led a team at our nurseries that have brought in significant revenue which has enabled us to successfully and professionally mount campaigns. Campaigns such as Coalpac, DLEP13 and Delta Energy.

Lachlan was president in 2011 and 2012 and served as Membership Secretary from 2009 to 2014. My memories of Lachlan as President are from his masterful handling of the No Hunting Rally in Katoomba in 2012 and speeches he made at our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration later that year. I will continue to enjoy a quiet ale with Lachlan and will be seeking his advice.

Peter was president in 2013. Unfortunately he is now engaged in a very personal game of musical chairs at work. Most of us haven't had the chance to get to know Peter, but have been impressed with his drive, knowledge and passion. He will be missed.

While Kevin is off enjoying the next chapter in his life, I wouldn't be at all surprised if Lachlan and Peter return to the Management Committee sometime in the future. There is a light in the window and the door is well and truly open.

### Call to Protect Nature

The World Commission for Protected Areas, part of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and one of the key advisers to the World Heritage Committee, has sent an open letter to Prime Minister Tony Abbott, urging his government to take a leadership role in protecting nature.

While Mr Abbott's recent speech to timber industry, vowing not to "lock up" any more forests in national parks, was the catalyst for the letter, the commission's members had been concerned with a broader retreat across federal and state governments in protecting land set aside for conservation. "This retreat from many years of leadership and achievement by governments of all political persuasions is both unfortunate and unprecedented", the letter said.

### Facts won't beat the climate deniers – using their tactics will

"If there's one thing decades of advertising, public relations, psychology research and science communication have taught us, it's that throwing facts at opposing opinions with the hope of changing people's minds is like playing golf with a pineapple: it's not just useless, it's actively counterproductive."

Read more: <http://theconversation.com/facts-wont-beat-the-climate-deniers-using-their-tactics-will>

### For my grandson

For you my grandson I wish  
whales and dolphins in the deep,  
eagles and butterflies,  
buzzing bees and crawling beetles,  
fat wombats and swooping cockatoos,  
stars and stallions,  
pigs and porcupines  
and crystal creeks where platypus play.

I wish for you  
corals of curious colours,  
watchful waiting wobbegongs,  
icy icebergs and snowy snowdrifts,  
drippy jungles full of  
shy and screeching creatures,  
frogs on logs,  
snakes by lakes  
– but not too close –  
and wilderness that goes on forever.

Brendan Doyle.

### Blue Mountains DLEP 2013 Update Angela Langdon

The exhibition of the DLEP 2013 closed on 5<sup>th</sup> March. We thank all members who made a submission and helped out at various Society information stalls and events during the exhibition period.

The Business Papers for the Council meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March state that 565 submissions were received. They are available for public viewing on the Council's website.

Council planning staff will be reviewing the submissions over the next few months and will conduct site inspections and briefings for Councillors. If you have concerns about a particular block of land it is important that you contact your Ward Councillors and send them a copy of your submission. Issues raised in the submissions may result in proposed amendments which will go to a series of extraordinary Council meetings beginning in May. Council will notify you prior to the date of the Council meeting relevant to your submission.

The Landuse Committee will be keeping a close eye on this process and will also be undertaking its own analysis of the submissions. Our preliminary analysis will be in the next Hut News.

The Council's timeframe proposes that the DLEP 2013 will be finalised and endorsed at the September extraordinary meeting and then sent to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for final approval. However, the Department wanted the endorsed DLEP 2013 submitted to it by the end of June so it is possible that it may not agree to Council's timeframe. The Department may (again!) put pressure on Council to speed up the process.

Once back at the Department, the DLEP 2013 is vulnerable to having key provisions changed or disallowed. Our consistent position has been that, if the exhibited DLEP 2013 is significantly changed (e.g. environmental protections watered down or removed), Council should request re-exhibition and call a public hearing.

## Peter Green's 60 Hints for Living Sustainably, continued — Hints 41-60

- Dispense with the absurd idea of cathedral ceilings in cold climates.
- Forget about the ambience of large expanses of glass – use heavy curtains and pelmets for temperature control.
- Repaint house walls (particularly internal) when necessary, not just for a change of colour.
- Install roof solar water heating system; for most of summer you can turn off the mains switch; install solar PV panels.
- Play sport.
- Walk and ride bikes regularly, and make walks/rides a replacement for car trips, not just as exercise after work (walk to train, walk to shops, church, etc). A regular walk to shops with backpack or trolley benefits you and the environment. My regular shopping walk is 8km return.
- Car pool.
- Drive lower than the speed limit on motorways, accelerate slowly and don't brake suddenly.
- Catch the train; never take a car to the airport.
- Minimise lawn area, and mow lawns with a push mower; use a hand lawn edger.
- Avoid motor sports until non-petroleum fuelled vehicles are introduced.
- Use a rake and broom (and destroy those evil blower/vac abominations).
- Avoid escalators and elevators; use the stairs.
- Turn on computers only when needed, and don't leave them on unattended for long periods.
- Insulate garage doors if garage under main house roof.
- Don't make single purpose car trips; plan ahead the things that need to be accomplished and achieve them all in a single trip.
- Shop on the way home from work.
- If you see someone walking, don't automatically offer them a lift; think about joining them in future.
- Exhort your local parliamentarian to drive the environmental reform process; they are too inclined to follow instead of lead.
- Collect and use rainwater on the garden; harass Sydney Water to introduce an authentic 'user pays' system (my water bills are always over 90% fixed charges, so why bother conserving?)

Over to you .....



### The Hidden Landscape Robyn Collier

In May I am having my third exhibition of paintings at the **Lost Bear Gallery - Lurline Street, Katoomba**. Entitled '**The Hidden Landscape**' it is a reflection of some of the remote places I have visited - things I have seen - subjects I have felt compelled to paint.

"Hidden" refers to the more indirect subjects I have chosen or distances I have travelled or bushwalked to find those subjects. Some of these places have not been visited by many people - such as Talia Dunes in the Eyre Peninsular, Bithongobel Lookout in the Border Ranges N.P. or Mick's Creek at Cowra.

The exhibition will be opened by **Phil Koperberg on 3rd May 2014 at 3p.m.** and will run from the 1st - 20th May. All welcome. The painting (above), "Ramparts of Butterbox Point" will be raffled to raise money for the Mayoral Appeal to aid the bushfire victims.

### BOOK REVIEW: Wasteland, Wilderness, Wonderland, by Gil Jones

Subtitled "**Getting to know Sydney's Sandstone Country**", this beautifully illustrated book is published by the Blue Mountain Education Research Trust, based in Lawson. The author, Gil Jones, grew up in the sandstone country and here shares his love for it with anyone who has eyes to see and a heart to understand.

Sydney City stands on the eastern rim of a shallow basin defined by deeply dissected sandstone plateaus encircling the lowlands of western Sydney and extending west to Lithgow, north to the Hunter Valley, and south to the Illawarra escarpment. In this book we join surveyors, scientists, writers and artists in the physical and intellectual exploration of Sydney's sandstone country - its landscape and landscape history, and its distinctively Australian vegetation with its Gondwanan inheritance. And we recall the ruthless dispossession of its first people whose rock engravings and cave paintings give us a glimpse of a sense of country and belonging which is critical to a fulfilled future in this privileged place. Price: \$40.00. Available from Turning Pages Springwood, Lamdha Wentworth Falls, Megalong Books Leura, Gleebooks Blackheath.

### Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition Australian Museum, Sydney 29 March to 1<sup>st</sup> June

Admission Free after general admission

See 100 power images selected from more than 40,000 entries worldwide and discover the amazing world we live in.

## Loose Feathers, with Carol Probets

Mention lorikeets and most people think of those noisy multi-coloured extroverts, the Rainbow Lorikeets, that hurtle around the neighbourhood like gangs of hooligans. But not as many people realise there are smaller, more cryptic, elusive and even threatened species of lorikeets in our area.

Earlier in March I walked down to the old abandoned sewage works below Leura Forest in the Jamison Valley. It's an incredibly beautiful place and hard to reconcile its previous function with its wild setting. Every now and then, a flock of tiny fast flying birds would erupt from the treetops with a rapid high-pitched *zweet zweet!* and disappear like bullets across the sky. This is a typical view of Little Lorikeets! Even if you're lucky enough to see where a flock lands, they seem to completely disappear in the eucalypt foliage as they climb through the canopy, feeding from blossom.

It's no wonder they're hard to see. About the size of a plump Budgerigar but with a shorter tail, they're almost completely green with just the face bright red. Like all lorikeets, they have a brush-like tongue adapted for feeding on nectar and pollen. This has led to a nomadic lifestyle as they move around the landscape from the coast to the western slopes, in search of flowering eucalypts such as the irregularly flowering box and ironbark trees of the drier woodlands. Flowering mistletoe is another important resource.

Like many of our woodland birds, numbers appear to have declined. Land-clearing in agricultural areas has robbed them of their richest food sources and suitable hollow-bearing nest trees. In 2009, Little Lorikeets were listed as Vulnerable in NSW. So it's always a thrill to see flocks of them in the mountains, even if it's just the briefest glimpse!

Larger than a Little Lorikeet, but smaller than a Rainbow, is the charismatic Musk Lorikeet. It's coloured mostly green like the Little Lorikeet but has a red patch extending behind the eye, and is slightly easier to see! Last month, I was surprised to find flocks of Musks in the Megalong Valley, together with a variety of small honeyeaters attracted by flowering *Eucalyptus viminalis*.

Perhaps a lack of suitable flowering further west this year has brought these two species into our area. I still haven't figured out what the Little Lorikeets were feeding on in the Jamison Valley, but flowering *Eucalyptus deanei* (the magnificent Mountain Blue Gum) is one possibility. I also noticed flocks near the Scenic World boardwalk during the past few weeks. The small lorikeet species are certainly a wonderful challenge for any birdwatcher. Let's hope we can see increased numbers again in the future.

**Carol Probets**, [origma@westnet.com.au](mailto:origma@westnet.com.au), Twitter: [@carolprobets](https://twitter.com/carolprobets)



Little Lorikeet, photographed by Trevor Qusted

### You can become a member of Blue Mountains Conservation Society

- **Post** this Application Form with your cheque or money order to: Blue Mountains Conservation Society, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782, **OR**
- **Join online** at: [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

(Use capitals please—even for email address)

Name(s) 1. ....  
2. ....  
3. ....

Address: .....  
.....PC .....

Phone(s) .....

Email .....

**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. ....

**MEMBERSHIP FEES** (please circle one item)

Single \$30 Concession (Senior/Student) \$20

Household \$35 Household Concession \$25

Corporate (negotiable)

Membership (circled above) \$ .....

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

Bushwalkers: please add  
\$20 per walker per annum. \$ .....

**TOTAL AMOUNT** \$ .....

Send my copy of Hut News by  
Please tick box  mail  internet only

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; Website and social media; Plant nursery assistance; Bushcare; Publicity/photography; Water quality/sourcing studies; Administration;

**ENQUIRIES:** Phone 02 4757 1872

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

### IRONFEST, Lithgow April 25-27

While you are visiting the Ironfest Festival look for the Lithgow Environment Group's (LEG) stall. LEG is working to preserve the balance of nature in the Lithgow region and to promote its rich natural heritage, often under recognised.

**The Greater Blue Mountains  
World Heritage Experience**  
[www.worldheritage.org.au](http://www.worldheritage.org.au)

## 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.

JOIN Blue Mountains  
Conservation Society,  
or renew your membership online.  
[www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

### Sustainable Society

<http://www.conversationearth.tv/>

This link is an excellent site. I commend the short video. The speakers are impressive; through Sustainable Population Australia I have dined with Al Bartlett, Bill Ryerson and Paul Ehrlich. They are all wonderfully inspirational and talented people (actually Prof Bartlett recently passed away; a great loss to the world). Peter Green.

### Flaptastic spectacular !!! Gary Humble



The third annual BatNight at Katoomba Falls Reserve was a raging success with well over 200 people turning up for a fun-filled night.

Excited families turned up to register for a walk down to the Falls lookouts with Discovery Rangers Nathan and Dindy to

spot the flying hunters. Visiting author, Aleesah Darlison captivated children with her telling of the story of Warambi, the bent-winged bat and explanation of the process of writing her books. David Hay's gentle tales of bats at Jenolan went over wonderfully and Marg Turton and Gary Humble's talks fascinated all.

Once again the BatCave was the centre of attention for young visitors, who emerged tattooed, masked and eared, keen to find out more about these captivating creatures.

Excitement too amongst raffle ticket buyers, as the prize pool of Family Passes to Jenolan Caves (x2), Australian Museum (x2) and Taronga Zoo were extremely tempting and meant there was a good chance of winning a prize. As a result, we made more than enough from the raffle to pay for another Disco Ranger for next year.

Visitors were interested to hear about the program of other family-friendly events that the Society is planning for the future. We distributed many copies of BushTrackers guides and Hut News to potential new members.

Thanks to Rob Hartness and his team at Katoomba Falls Kiosk for a superb job of providing their venue and excellent comestibles. The team of 15 volunteers, including Emma Kennedy from BMCC, put in a huge effort.

Bat Girl Marg Turton was grateful for all the assistance from BMCS in organizing and running the night and is already planning for next year's flaptastic spectacular. Photo: Goulds Long-eared Bat.

### Tony Abbott's wilderness claim doesn't check out

The Federal Government has applied to have 74,000 hectares of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage delisted by the United Nations. On March 4, 2014, Prime Minister Tony Abbott told a timber industry dinner: "... that 74,000 hectares is not pristine forest. It's forest which has been logged, it's forest which has been degraded, in some cases, it's plantation timber that was actually planted to be logged."

ABC Fact Check examined the Prime Minister's claim. Expert analysis suggests more than 85 per cent of the area has not been logged, and that there is only a small amount of degradation or plantation timber. "Most of it consists of forests dominated by tall trees that were alive when Europeans invaded Australia." Further, UNESCO does not require an area to be "pristine" in order to be listed as a World Heritage Area.

Mr Abbott's claim doesn't check out.

Read more: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-26/tony-abbott-tasmanian-wilderness-claim-does-not-check-out/5345072>

### Bottlenose Dolphin helped by divers

A dolphin tangled in fishing line sought help from a diver in the waters of Hawaii. The amazing encounter on January 11 was captured on video and the diver, Keller Laros, spent about eight minutes tending to the needy mammal who readily accepted the help.

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/2gvgkHSyKFE>

## WAR CLOUDS

Towards the climax of one of Clint Eastwood's 1970s westerns there is a rare quiet moment during which the body count remains steady and Clint sits reflectively, gazing out at the surrounding country. By his side his leading lady asks if he ever watches the clouds and muses that they always seem "to drift like dreams across the sky". Clint, of course, is puzzled. He really doesn't know clouds at all.

Had she asked this of Harry Phillips (1873-1944), however, our most widely loved Blue Mountains photographer, she would have got a very different response. Harry loved clouds, saw in them beauty and meaning and took every opportunity to photograph them, his cloudscapes featuring prominently in the many view books he produced during his lifetime. Known to drop everything when the mists rose or the sky thickened, some might have felt that he lived with his head in the clouds. But his was a passion, shared with his friend Frank Hurley, which fuelled in him a deeply thoughtful and religious nature.

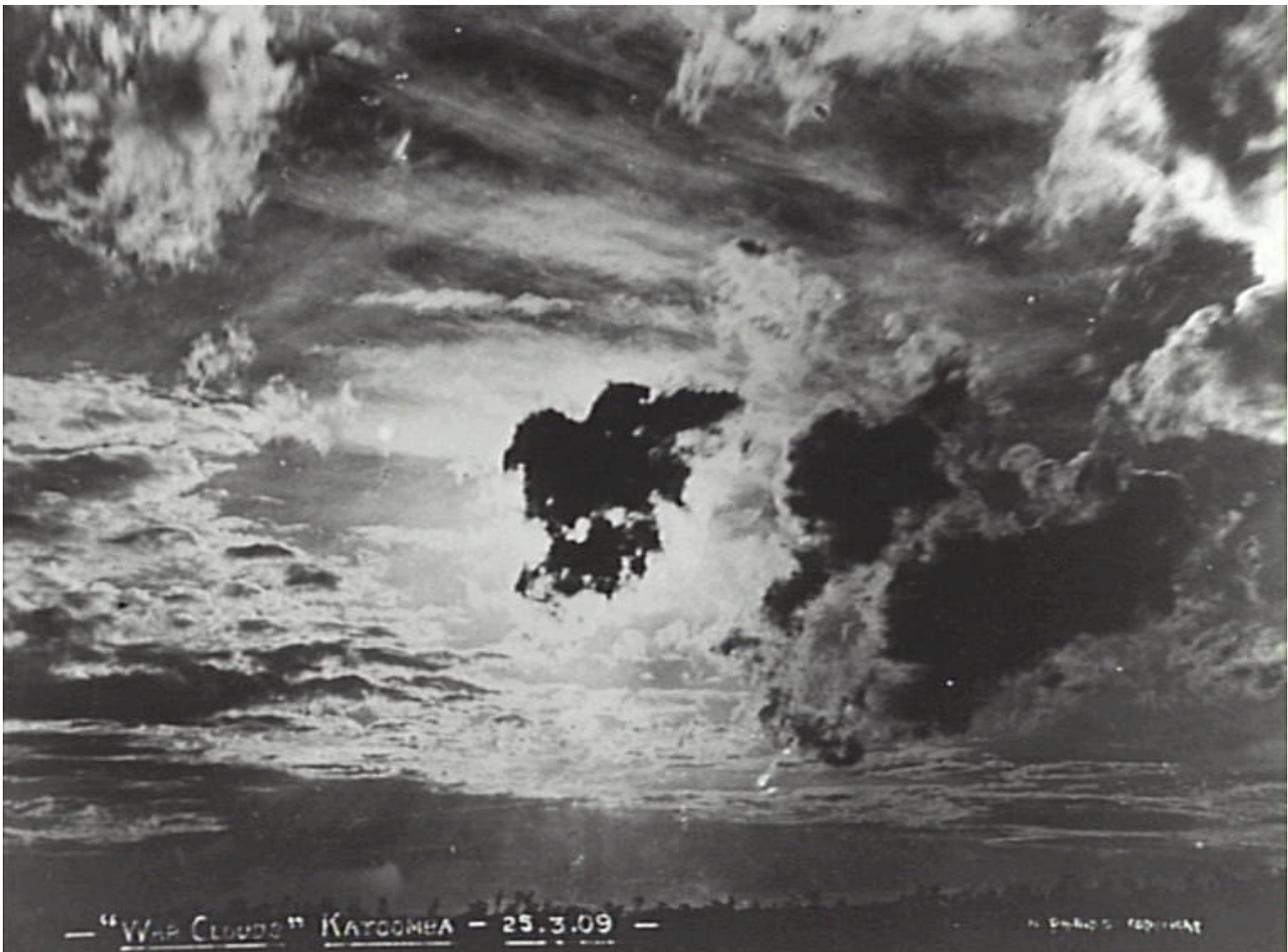
In 1914 he published *The Cloud*, a strange, personal, beautiful and disturbing book in which Shelley's well-known poem is enclosed in a photographic accumulation of clouds and their reflections. When people appear they seem often to be on the point of disappearing. The whole book fizzles with mystical meaning and concludes with perhaps Phillips' most famous cloud photograph, a sky that spoke to him in the language of prophecy. 'War Clouds' is no benign dream but a nightmarish vision of impending disaster. This was 1914 after all!

The photograph had actually been taken some years earlier on 25 March 1909 and superficially depicts a sunset above Katoomba in which "three large black clouds were drifting about as if sparring for certain places". More profoundly, Phillips saw in this a prophetic symbolism that boded ill; the German Eagle (grasping in its talons a helpless Belgium), British Lion and Russian Bear plus a supporting cast of minor European powers were all present in the drama of that cloudscape. So moved and troubled was he by what he saw as a warning from the Almighty that he sent copies of the photograph to governments, leaders and influential people around the world. As a result he and his photograph achieved a degree of international celebrity and initiated a vigorous correspondence with others of like mind during the following years. He was not alone during those dark times in harbouring convictions of approaching war.

Phillips was a remarkable man, enthusiastic and committed to the Blue Mountains. He brimmed with ideas and opinions, often unorthodox and controversial, and in the natural world of the Mountains found not only a strong personal connection but a grandeur that reflected the workings of Providence. 'War Clouds' is an expression of all these aspects of his character. In his wanderings he looked up as well as around: "Listen", said the narrator of Delia Falconer's novel *The Service of Clouds*, "I will make the clouds rain stories for you".

John Low ([grizzlybear3au@yahoo.com](mailto:grizzlybear3au@yahoo.com))

Photo courtesy of Local Studies Section, Blue Mountains City Library.



## BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY Inc: 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](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) or can be posted on request. For more information call Maurice Kerkham 4739 4942 email [mauricekerkham@hotmail.com](mailto: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. Bring morning tea, lunch and adequate water. If you are a new walker to Saturday walks, before attending contact the designated contact person or the Group Co-ordinator Jim Percy—phone 4758 6009, email [jp34@tpg.com.au](mailto:jp34@tpg.com.au) Check [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) for updates.

**Saturday Walks driver reimbursement:** *In an effort to ensure that car drivers are adequately compensated for the use of their vehicles a driver reimbursement policy applies* (Check [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) Saturday Walks page for details)

- Apr 12 **Gardens of Stone.** A short, slow walk, off track, Gr 3/4 exploratory. 4WDs necessary. Two spaces may still be vacant. Ring Hugh after 7pm, 0423 309 854.
- Apr 12 **Dawes Ridge to the end of Track via Mount Twiss.** Leader Karen 4751 9695. Meet at End of Glossop Rd Linden at the observatory 8.30am. 15Km. Gr 3. Map Katoomba/Springwood.
- Apr 19 **Easter Saturday - Roberts Pass.** A classic mountains walk. Leader Bart 4739 9947.  
Meet at Wentworth Falls Station Car Park 8.00 am. 10 km- Gr 3-Map Katoomba
- Apr 26 (Saturday of Anzac Day LWE) **Gardens of Stone.** A short, slow walk, Gr. 3/4 exploratory. 4WDs necessary. Two spaces may still be vacant. Ring Hugh after 7pm. 0423 309 854.
- Apr 26 (Saturday of Anzac Day LWE) **Black Billy Head mine and Bellbird Ridge to Bellbird Point,** with a scramble up to mine entrance- Leader Bill Webster 4787 6082 Meet at-Blackheath Station CPark 8.00am 12KM Gr 2/3- Map Jenolan
- May 3 **Victoria Falls Burra Koran Flat and return** Contract leader before the walk as this track may remain closed and an alternate walk may be programmed –Leader Harold 9600 8005 or 0409010737
- May 10 **Crossing of the Blue Mountains of NSW 2013/14.** Day 6 Blackheath to Mt Victoria - off track may be involved. Postponed from November 2013-Leader Jim 4758 6009 - Meet at Blackheath Station Carpark 8.20am 9Km –final route is not decided may be Gr 3 or 4 Contact leader nearer the event. Map Mount Wilson.  
(Check with the leader first, then the BMCS website ([www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)) for updates)

**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 Keith Dorrian, 4736 1010, [keithdor53@hotmail.com](mailto:keithdor53@hotmail.com)

- Apr 14 **City Walk - La Perouse.** Meet Central Station 9-30am. Bus to La Perouse then coastal walk around area. Leader Tracy 0434362611. Grade 3.
- Apr 21 **Wentworth Falls walk.** Start at station car park to Conservation Hut then Falls, Rocket Point return to station via Darwin's Walk. Meet Wentworth Falls Car Park 8-45am. Leader Ken 0423450200. Grade 3.
- Apr 28 **Goochs Crater.** Meet Mt Victoria Stn 8-45am. Car Pool Fee \$5. Leader Maurice 4739 4942 or 0402402783. Grade 2/3.
- May 5 **Glenbrook. Abseilers Track, Mt.Portal.** Very steep, but short, ascent to Tunnel View Lookout. 8kms. Meet 9.20am Glenbrook Station carpark. (Car Pool or walk to Park Entrance). Leader Ros 0417 261 465 or 4733 3880. Grade 3.
- May 12 **Bus Trip \$12 - Dharug National Park, Mill Creek Circuit Wisemans Ferry.** 8km round walk. Meet Springwood Car Park behind Westpac 7-45am. Book and pay Tony 9625 3985. Leader Francoise Matter 0438512301. Grade 2/3.

**THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS:** Walks 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 Beverley Thompson, 4757 2076, [roybev12@bigpond.net.au](mailto:roybev12@bigpond.net.au)

- Apr 10 **Cronulla to Gunamatta Bay.** Take lunch. Meet top escalators Central Stn 9.10am. Leader Maurice 4739 4942 Grade 2.
- Apr 17 **Porter's Pass Blackheath.** Historic track built in 1866 with amazing views of Kanimbla Valley, rock formations and waterfalls. Car pool. Take lunch. Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 9.45am. Leader Tracy 0434 362 611. Grade 2
- Apr 24 **Lyrebird Lookout Wentworth Falls.** Bush track to lookout. Car pool. Meet Wentworth Falls Stockyard Car Park 9.30am. Leader Beverley 4757 2076. Grade 2
- May 1 **Govett's Leap to Pulpit Rock Blackheath.** 3.3km one way. See heath, swamps and waterfalls. Take lunch. Car pool. Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 9.45am. Leader Tracy 0434 362 611. Grade 2
- May 8 **McMahon's Lookout Wentworth Falls.** Unending views across Lake Burragorang. Take lunch. 4WD pool \$5. Numbers limited unless more people volunteer their 4WD. Contact leader if you can. Meet Wentworth Falls Stockyard Car Park 9.30am. Leader Maurice 4739 4942. Grade 1
- May 15 **Little Zig Zag Mount Victoria.** Circuit along track constructed in 1877 for access to Kanimbla Valley. Car pool. Take lunch. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.50am. Leader Rosemary 6355 2292. Grade 3.

### BMCS Planning and Development Resource Kit

Do you want to take action on an environmental issue in your neighbourhood or the Blue Mountains more broadly?

Do you want information about the laws and procedures relating to development and environmental protection?

Find out what **YOU** can do! Go to the Planning and Development Resource Kit [www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml](http://www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml)

Bushwalkers visiting Lake Wallace, Wallerawang, found a large number of these insect shells on the underside of a wooden rail fence, quite a way from the water and across an unsealed road and grass verge. They were identified as the shells of Dragonfly nymphs—a very different shape to the adult dragonfly. Christine.

