



GRC DRAFT LEP

The date for submissions to the Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2020 has now been extended until 31 May, following representations from residents and the local member, Mark Couré. It involves extensive changes to update and harmonise the two former council's LEPs. The increased density planned under the revised Foreshore Scenic Protection Areas (FSPA) is of great concern and we encourage members to view the plans and comment on them to council. Over 2,000 properties in the former Hurstville City council area will be removed from the FSPA. This would result in the minimum lot sizes for a house being reduced to 450m² and for a dual occupancy development to 650 m² where a minimum block size after subdivision will be 300m². This will result in smaller gardens, fewer trees and wildlife and general loss of the leafy character in the affected areas. Loss of tree canopy and impacts on biodiversity and local threatened species and ecological communities have not been properly considered. Other impacts include increased traffic, reduced street parking, increased pressure on infrastructure, including stormwater and sewerage systems, leading to more creek and river pollution.

See: <https://yoursay.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/lep2020>

Please consider these changes carefully and make your views known to council by making a submission, no matter how brief. OFF has prepared a preliminary submission which can be viewed here: <http://off.oatleypark.com/2020/05/18/preliminary-off-submission-on-georges-river-lep/>

FACEBOOK

OFF has a Facebook page which is full of lively, up-to-date items of vital interest to OFF members and to our local and extended community eg, drastic changes to Georges River Council's Local Environmental Plan. It's a great communication medium for OFF to reach a broad audience. Hop on today to keep up to date and join in the conversation or react to the posts by using any of

these icons    

   to participate or make a comment. And if you haven't been on Facebook before or don't have a Facebook account you can still easily view the page as it is open to everyone. So please try it and give some feedback on your experience.

Head to: Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/OatleyFloraandFauna?>



**Stay safe.
Stay home.**

Do your part to stop
the spread of COVID-19.

If dogs can stay,
so can you.

OATLEY CALENDAR 2021

OFF is calling for photos to be used in the 2021 calendar, highlighting natural images of Oatley and the Georges River. A limit of 5 entries per person is allowed with 1 photo per person published in the calendar. Entries should be taken within the Georges River Council area and emailed to OFF2021calendar@outlook.com with the photographer's name, image title and short description of when and where the photo was taken. Entries close on 15th August 2020.

RECLAIM KOSCI

Member Linda Groom, who spoke to OFF meeting in March 2019 writes: OFF member Liz Cameron has taken up her sewing needles to stitch a threatened daisy to help Kosciuszko In the campaign to save Kosciuszko National Park from feral horse damage. Liz has created two, hand-sewn replicas of Max Mueller's Burr Daisy, one of the alpine plants that are threatened by feral horses

Liz answered the call from the Reclaim Kosci campaign to create the replicas. She and volunteers from all parts of Australia are creating objects ranging from the sewn replicas to collages and watercolours of horse-threatened alpine plants and animals. Reclaim Kosci will present some of these to politicians, once the coronavirus restrictions permit, and will sell some for fund-raising.

Reclaim Kosci has work-shopped the designs and provided guidance to the volunteers. All the volunteers working on sewn replicas are using slightly different approaches – an excellent way to demonstrate that they are individually hand-crafted, and to reflect the natural variation between individual flowers

Max Mueller's Burr Daisy (*Calotis pubescens*) is among a dozen or more rare Kosciuszko plants that are listed by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) as threatened species. Its known distribution is limited to five sites in the Snowy Mountains. According to the OEH, feral horses threaten this delicate flower in three ways – it is trampled by the horses, sometimes eaten by the horses, and is being out-competed by the invasive ox-eye daisy, which is spread by the horses.

If any OFF members have art or craft skills and would like to contribute to this project, with the aim of reducing the environmental damage by feral horses in Kosciuszko National Park, they are very welcome to contact Linda Groom, lindagroom@invasives.org.au



OVERFLOWING RUBBISH BINS

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society has written to Georges River council expressing its concern about the accumulation of rubbish (particularly in overflowing rubbish bins) in public parks and reserves since the COVID restrictions were introduced. OFF recognises that more people are exercising in open spaces in the LGA because they are confined to the neighbourhood and other exercise options are not available. So it is not surprising that more litter will be dropped. OFF also recognises that numbers of Council staff and contractors may be reduced because of COVID restrictions. However OFF has indicated to GRC that it is most anxious that the rubbish bins be emptied more frequently to avoid overflows (and to thus reduce the availability of food scraps for foxes and other scavengers) and would also appreciate more frequent collections of scattered rubbish. OFF members are doing their bit to pick up rubbish and recyclables when they see them in public areas. Members are asked to take the time to photograph some of the offending bins and hot spots for rubbish. If your phone/camera has a GPS, the Waste Team at GRC would appreciate the exact locations. You can also use the app Snap Send Solve to notify council.

GRANTS

* The new brochure describing the Headland Track in Oatley Park has now been printed. The graphic designer from Georges River Council is now designing the signs and marker posts that will be installed on the track.

Coming OFF Events in May/June 2020

OFF Full Year Events Calendar at: off.oatleypark.com/program

OFF will continue with the monthly guest speaker program for 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, we must conduct these meetings on-line. The meetings will be run using the video conference application Zoom, which you can download for free via this link: <https://zoom.us/> or from the Google Play Store or from the App Store for Android and Apple devices. You should run a test before the meeting to ensure you can connect on the presentation night. You will receive an invitation prior to meetings with the Meeting Id and Password.

25 May 2020 — The proposed Warragamba Dam wall height increase.

Harry Burkitt from Give a Dam will discuss the NSW Government's controversial plan to raise the height of the Warragamba dam. This is likely to have "significant impacts" on threatened species in the Blue Mountains, and potentially put the Blue Mountains in danger of losing its UNESCO status.

Members will receive an email with the Zoom details in the days before the talk.

Field Trip 31 May – Lime Kiln Bay – Cryptogam field trip and workshop (limit 15).

Leaders: David Eldridge and Heather Stolle. (Cryptogams are algae, lichens, mosses and ferns, but also include non-photosynthetic organisms traditionally classified as plants, such as fungi, slime moulds and bacteria.) **Cancelled due to COVID-19 as will all field trips until June, unless otherwise notified.**

Advance Notice – OFF Annual Dinner, 9 July 2020

Members and friends are invited to attend our Annual Dinner. The dinner will be held on Thursday 9 July 2020, in the Macquarie Room at Mortdale RSL, 6.30 pm for a 7 pm start. The cost is \$38 per person. Dinner includes a two-course meal with bread rolls, cupcake, and self-serve tea and coffee. Guests may purchase their own drinks at the bar. Donations for our annual raffle are most welcome. Contact: Sue Howard 9579 1718 or Vicki Bolling 9580 3107.

Note that the dinner has been postponed till later in the year, date to be notified in future Newsletters.

Meetings of the Society are normally held at the Oatley RSL Sub-Branch Hall, 25 Letitia St, Oatley) from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm, usually on the fourth Monday of the month. Visitors and accompanied children are welcome at meetings and field days.

However, until the restrictions of the COVID-19 Pandemic are lifted meetings will be held digitally using the Zoom application.

BRIEFLY SPEAKING

OATLEY PARK BUSHCARE group is normally on second Saturday each month starting 12.00 pm. However, due to the Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic, these groups are cancelled until further notice.

LOCAL BUSHCARE Members can usually assist by volunteering to maintain OFF planting sites on the fourth Thursday of each month (except December) from 8.00 am to 11 am. But these sessions are cancelled until further notice due to the Coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic

MYLES DUNPHY STREAMWATCH details Heather Stolle 0425 291 879. This activity usually takes place on the Tuesday morning (9.00 am) after OFF General Meetings, but are cancelled due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY meetings held at 2.30 pm on the second Sunday of every month. These meetings are now being held on-line using Zoom. The address is zoom.us/j/3920795005.

GLOBAL WARMING

As reported last edition OFF has formed four teams to research specific topics and formulate a suggested strategy and action plan on how the community can work towards minimising greenhouse gas emissions. The major outcome of this strategy, is to provide solutions on how the community can work towards minimising the impact we have on global warming and ways to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Thanks to all members who have joined one of the teams. A draft document which includes strategy, objectives & actions has been distributed and discussed with each team via zoom meetings.

Members still interested in joining a team can contact Adrian Polhill (0424 478 498).

LONGWALL MINING UNDER SYDNEY'S WATER CATCHMENT

Catherine Cunningham, Aquatic Ecology Specialist at Sydney Water presented her findings from a study of the impact of longwall mining within Sydney's water catchment areas. She clearly indicated the biodiversity of the river systems had been impacted by current long wall coal mining activities in the Woronora catchment area. This very interesting talk was attended by >45 participants in the first OFF Zoom meeting.

A recording of the meeting and related presentation slides can be found on the OFF web site at: <http://off.oatleypark.com/category/talks/>

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

Our first guest speaker in 2020 Vince Heffernan, who gave an excellent presentation on Regenerative Agriculture, has indicated that he is keen to encourage biodiversity by adding to the more than 70,000 native trees and shrubs he has planted on his property. These plants have already increased the biodiversity of bats, insects, reptile and marsupial species. In creeks and dams, he has planted aquatic plants to create habitat for water birds, native fish, frogs and turtles. He plans to plant more wattle & understorey shrubs, increase plantings along creeks, replicate grassy woodlands by planting more edible native shrubs and additional tree planting in various paddocks as many trees need to be replaced as the drought knocked them out. All of these activities will conserve and add to biodiversity by providing suitable habitats many birds, mammals, reptiles, frogs, insects and spiders, as well as food sources for birds and mammals

Some members have already indicated their interest to join a planting weekend to support Vince's efforts. In addition to various planting activities, OFF could also conduct surveys (e.g. bird count, biodiversity count) and return on annual basis to monitor trends. The expected time frame for this event would be September/October this year.

If you are interested to join the exciting weekend away, please contact Adrian Polhill (0424478498) or any member of the OFF committee.

NPA VIRTUAL BUSH WALKS

It is sad that members cannot currently participate in the activities listed in the OFF 2020 program. In the meantime you might enjoy some virtual walks courtesy of our colleagues in the National Parks Association of NSW. These have been compiled into an online publication that includes a wide range of destinations. Our Favourite Walks – a Collective Effort from the Bushwalkers of the National Parks Association of NSW edited by Brian Everingham, President, Southern Sydney Branch of NPA NSW.

https://online.flipbuilder.com/lhry/nupg/?fbclid=IwAR28ph380eM0AAEiLHW86Yu0u-sG_vosn4zrxbClwzB9sXMFCjB7WaLUa_k

2020 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE Many thanks to OFF members who have paid their subs for 2020. OFF values your continued membership; please renew soon if you have not done so already. Subscription is still only \$25 per person or family living at the same address.