



GRC DRAFT LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN (LEP)

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society (OFF) made a submission to the draft LEP and this can be viewed here, along with other submissions:

<http://off.oatleypark.com/2020/06/02/anger-at-proposed-changes-to-foreshore-controls/>

The next milestone in this process is consideration by the Georges River Local Planning Panel (LPP) of a report on the Outcomes of Public Exhibition and Finalisation of Georges River Local Environmental Plan 2020 at its next meeting which will be held over 2 days - **Thursday 25 June and Friday 26 June 2020** via an interactive platform.

You can make a representation to the panel on this form:

<https://www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/Council/Online-Forms/Local-Planning-Panel-Application> . **Please request to speak to the panel to ensure the panel understands the importance residents place on this issue.**

Information on the LPP and its processes can be seen here:

[https://www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/Development/Development-Applications/Local-Planning-Panel-\(LPP\)](https://www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/Development/Development-Applications/Local-Planning-Panel-(LPP))

EDEN PENGUIN UPDATE (from Chris Lloyd)

A small team were given permission to travel to Eden and install some of the experimental penguin burrows at Wheel Cove in mid-May – just before the breeding season. Nicholas Carlisle, Chris Lloyd and local ranger Wendy Noble used an inflatable rubber boat (RIB) to get five burrows, tools, and a sound system into the cove where they were assembled and installed over the next few days. The sound system broadcast penguin colony noises out to sea and is driven by a solar system up on the top. One highlight during installation was hearing penguins calling from the water just off from the cove. The sound system during the day also attracted the local White-bellied Sea Eagle pair who attracted the Ravens and so on until there was quite a cacophony in the narrow gullies. There are still more burrows to install but these will come down when a more community focussed event can be made of the installation. There were a few glitches and the residents on Eagles Claw, including the Sea Eagles, are getting the sound effects night and day instead of just nightly. Hopefully someone with better technical skills than mine will sort that out. We tried as far as possible to get materials sourced from the area, including the solar system, and we are grateful for assistance from the Cat Balou and the NPWS Eden Workshop and staff. It's now up to the local penguins to inspect the new housing estate and give us their verdict.

OATLEY PARK IN WINTER



Now that the Covid-19 restrictions have eased, why not re-discover the tracks of Oatley Park? You will not see many flowers in bloom in mid-winter, but the bushland still has a special magic about it. There are some shrubs in flower at this time. They include: the green-flowered *Correa reflexa*; the small 4-petalled white flowers of *Zieria pilosa*; stunning golden cones of *Banksia spinulosa*; and white tiny clustered tubes tubes of *Woollisia pungens*.

CITIZEN SCIENCE – OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

Some OFF members already help scientists by volunteering with the Digivol program, run by the Australian Museum. Digivol co-ordinates projects for scientific institutions from around Australia, and sometimes overseas, that utilise the time and special talents of volunteers. Many of the projects entail identifying animals in images captured by motion sensor cameras in the field. These cameras take many images, some of them triggered not by animals, but by movement of vegetation in the wind etc.

Volunteers can view the images and select those that include an animal to identify, thus allowing researchers to focus on the relevant images only. Examples include monitoring of mallee fowl mounds, and the identification of fauna drinking from water stations (some of which were funded by bushfire recovery appeals). Other projects include transcribing handwritten labels linked to specimens in the Museum's insect collection, and transcribing diaries of early naturalists. Overall it is a rewarding way to fill in the hours at home while at the same time contributing to our understanding of nature. For more information connect to <https://volunteer.ala.org.au/>

PLANTING IN MOORE RESERVE

On Thursday 4th June, OFF members planted 350 tubestock of native plants in Moore Reserve. These complement the existing plantings surrounding the off-leash dog enclosure, and increase habitat for native fauna. Some were planted in circular mulched areas throughout the grassed expanses as habitat islands for small creatures, providing links to larger stands of vegetation.

The tubestock were purchased from Sutherland Shire Council Nursery and funded by Georges River Councillor's Ward Discretionary Fund allocated by Cr Sandy Grekas .Helping with the planting were Sandy and her husband Dave, and Erin Fardy, Bushcare Senior Operations Leader.

A GOOD NEWS STORY

For some good news about small land-holder farmers in Zimbabwe click: <https://www.bbc.com/future/bespoke/follow-the-food/the-lost-seeds-helping-to-feed-a-nation.html> .

Covid-19 and climate change have made it harder than ever for farmers in Zimbabwe to survive. This 'Practical Action' Project is encouraging a return to traditional, local crop varieties to safeguard their future. It is good to know such projects can benefit those most in need.

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.

FACEBOOK

Don't forget to keep an eye on the OFF Facebook page. You can add your comments or use any of the icons  to show your interest in posts. This is a good way for OFF and its members to keep up to date with issues and show their opinions on them.

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

2020 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

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.

Coming OFF Events in June/July 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.

22 June 2020 — Conserving Cumberland Plain Vegetation. Peter Ridgeway is a Conservation Ecologist specialising in conservation & restoration of the Cumberland Plain region. He advises government, community and private land managers to develop and manage conservation initiatives with a focus on threatened species and ecological community recovery, bushland conservation and invasive species management. He also provides advice & training to local community and volunteer organisations across Sydney and the Blue Mountains. Members will recall that during the recent bushfires Peter was instrumental in setting up a number of water stations for fire affected animals. Members will receive an email with the Zoom details in the days before the talk.

Field Trip 28 June – Scarborough Ponds Trail between Kogarah and Ramsgate (limit 20 due to current restrictions).

Leader: Graham Fry. An easy walk of about 5km on flat ground, the trail explores an area that many of us pass by but have never visited. The area is surprisingly rich in birds and has some interesting mature trees. The trail passes through parkland and sporting fields and weed-infested patches but also some beautiful forest. Much of this area is set aside for a future toll road extension and inevitably there will be another fight to save it. **It is necessary to book with the leader, who will provide details of the meeting time and place; it is recommended participants drive to the location.**

OFF Annual Dinner

The annual dinner will now be held later in the year due to the current restrictions. When Mortdale RSL informs OFF that normal operations are resuming, a new date will be set and members notified. Donations for the annual raffle are still most welcome. Contact: Sue Howard 9579 1718 or Vicki Bolling 9580 3107.

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. Bushcare is now allowed again, so it will be held on 11 July. Meet at the main entrance in Oatley Park Ave. New participants welcome, please contact John Kensett - GRC Bushcare Officer, m: 0435 963 643

LOCAL BUSHCARE Members can assist by volunteering to maintain OFF planting sites on the fourth Thursday of each month (except December) from 8.00 am to 11 am. We will be back on 25 June at Boorea Reserve, near Oatley Station.

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. We will re-commence this month on 23 June at Dairy Creek – meet at the Scout Hall in Glen Road.

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.

PROPOSED WARRAGAMBA DAM RAISING

At our last meeting Harry Burkitt, from community group 'Give a Dam' discussed 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 as well as potentially put the Blue Mountains in danger of losing its UNESCO status.

Give a Dam has found some success by engaging corporate organisations such as insurance companies and super funds. In addition they continue to lobby the local politicians. He requested support (donations, letters to MPs etc.) from OFF members as the campaign is expected to continue for +2 years. This very interesting talk was attended by >40 participants in the second OFF Zoom on-line meeting.

A link to the Give a Dam website with tips on how you can help the campaign can be found on: https://www.giveadam.org.au/take_action

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

The first guest speaker to an OFF meeting this year was Vince Heffernan. Vince is undertaking regenerative agriculture on his fat lamb property between Goulburn and Yass and is keen to encourage biodiversity by adding to the more than 70,000 native trees and shrubs he has already planted. Some OFF members have indicated their interest in joining a planting weekend to support Vince's efforts, perhaps in September or October this year. If you would like to take part, please contact committee member Adrian Polhill (0424 478 498).

THE WEATHER DIARIES (Sydney Film Festival Movie)

The flying foxes that soar across Sydney each evening face many challenges: impacted by heatwaves, evicted from urban parklands, struggling to survive an ongoing loss of habitat. Bat carers save a handful here and there, and ecologists document their struggles, as threats escalate. Filmed over six years, *The Weather Diaries* reaches its climax in 2020, as temperatures soar, bushfires rage, and flying fox pups die in record numbers. Drayton ruminates on our failure to value these essential pollinators and the forests they sustain, and reflects on the implications for her daughter Imogen, a girl long inspired by Studio Ghibli's *Princess Mononoke*, who's emerging from the classical confines of the Conservatorium High School to embark on a career as an electronic pop artist.



Go to <https://ondemand.sff.org.au/film/the-weather-diaries/> for tickets.

You can watch this film any time that suits you between June 10th - 21st.