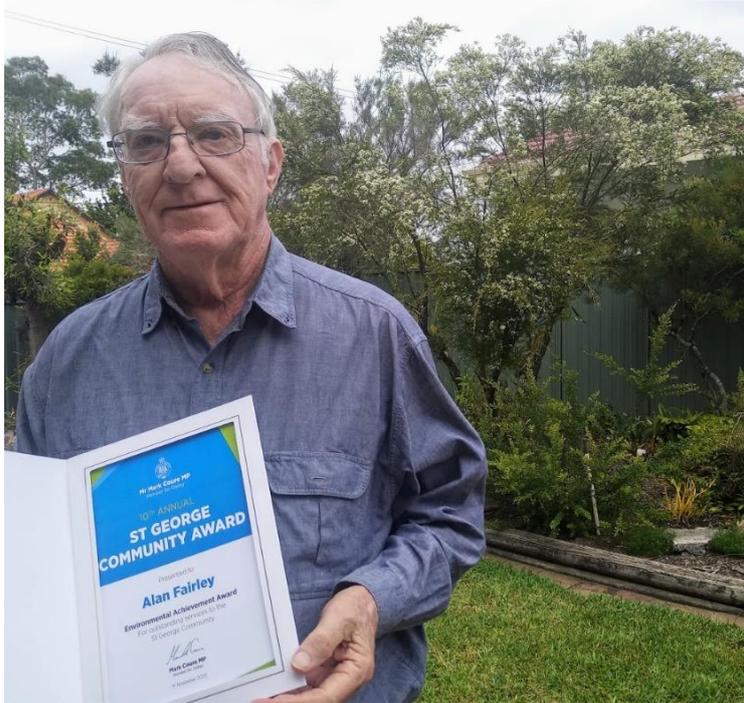




ALAN FAIRLEY RECEIVES ST GEORGE COMMUNITY AWARD



The citation for Alan's award read:
 Alan Fairley has been a member of the OFF committee for 47 years, as President, Editor and Vice-President. For longer than that he has campaigned to protect the biodiversity of our bushland, wetlands and street trees from numerous threats including inappropriate development. Alan's advocacy for the environment is reinforced by his vast local knowledge and years of experience, which are highly valued by younger members of OFF and the wider community. He is a skilled communicator and has generously shared his knowledge and love of nature on innumerable bushwalks and through countless talks. Alan's prolific list of publications includes Native Plants of the Sydney Region, a foremost field guide for naturalists, bushwalkers & photographers.
 Alan is also standing down from the OFF committee this year. OFF owes him a great deal and thanks him for his many years of service to OFF and the natural environment.

WHY EVERYONE SHOULD CARE ABOUT AUST'S FLYING FOXES

Flying foxes are one of Australia's most misunderstood and maligned native animals, and efforts to protect them can be hindered by misinformation and poor public sentiment. They have never been more at risk than they are now, with extreme heat waves, bushfires and habitat destruction, entire populations of this 'keystone species' are plummeting. And yet, could the biggest threat to these unique animals be public perception? In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been reports that members of the public are becoming increasingly concerned about sighting flying foxes in the wild, even though scientists concur that bats were not to blame for the transfer of the virus. Never before has it been so crucial to protect flying foxes — not only for their sakes, but for the future of entire ecosystems and the many native animals that rely on them. But in order to change the future for fruit bats, first we need to change the public narrative about these unique Australian animals. The following report lists five very good reasons to foster compassion and respect for these 'gardeners of the sky':
https://animalsaustralia.org/features/why-bats-need-your-love.php?ua_s=email

OATLEY BOWLING CLUB site remediation is about to commence. A Draft Masterplan and Plan of Management is also being developed by GRC, which has also approved a minimum 28 days public exhibition period, including a public hearing, to commence after 20th January 2021. Please look out for this and consider commenting when it is available

OFF RECEIVES ST GEORGE COMMUNITY AWARD for Environmental Achievement

The award citation read, in part:
 Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society Inc. (OFF) was established in 1955 by local residents concerned about the destruction of plants and wildlife in local parks and reserves. Over the 65 intervening years OFF's activities and area of interest has expanded and the primary aims of the Society are to stimulate interest in Australian flora and fauna; foster an understanding of the need to conserve our natural environment and cooperate with other organisations in protecting the environment. Now, with around three hundred members, the Society is a leading conservation group in the St George area. OFF's mission is: "*Working to protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment locally and globally.*"
 Thank you to Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society and members for their time and tireless efforts in protecting our beautiful flora and fauna and ensuring the preservation of the environment for future generations.



2021 MEMBERSHIP

Annual \$25 membership subscription was due January 1st 2021. This can be paid by Electronic Funds Transfer: it is IMPERATIVE that you enter your name into the transfer document otherwise there will be no record of your subscription payment/donation. Bank Details: BSB: 062 206. Act Number: 901997. OR:

POST: Cheque or money order mailed to address in the footer
 CASH, CHEQUE or CARD at OFF events

The annual Membership Fee of \$25 for individuals or households covers attendance at OFF events and activities. OFF membership fees have not increased since 2005, so you are most welcome to add a donation to your payment. Donations will be directed to OFF's annual postgraduate grants, assisting research by University students on topics relevant to OFF's mission. Your continued membership supports OFF's ongoing efforts to protect, conserve and enhance our natural environment both locally and globally, as our mission statement declares, so it is very important. Thanks to members who have already renewed and made generous donations.

BRIEFLY SPEAKING

STREAMWATCH details Heather Stolle 0425 291 879. This activity usually takes place on the Tuesday morning (9.00 am) after OFF General Meetings. This month we will be at Dairy Creek on 2 February.

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 <http://zoom.us/j/7868786878>

OATLEY PARK BUSHCARE and LOCAL OFF BUSHCARE are both currently cancelled, but are due to restart in February. If the Covid-19 situation changes, updates will appear on the GRC Facebook and GRC website and current volunteers will be notified via email.

We would welcome new bushcarers. Just contact:
<https://www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/Council/Volunteering>

Coming OFF Events in January/February 2021

OFF Full Year Events Calendar will be at: <http://www.oatleyflorafauna.org.au/index.php/progam/>

OFF will continue with the monthly guest speaker program for 2021. We also plan to return to face-to-face meetings (except AGM). Changes at the Oatley RSL and Community Club mean that Monday evenings are no longer available to OFF for our general meetings. As a consequence, meetings will now be held in the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick St Oatley. Note that Government COVID rules will apply at these face-to-face meetings. Meetings may also be available on-line, using the video conference application Zoom, which you can download for free via this link: <https://zoom.us/> or from Play Store (Google) or App Store (Apple). You should run a test before meetings to ensure you can connect on the night. If this is possible, you will receive an invitation prior to meetings or use the link below. Note that some earlier presentations can be found on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCd_PLK8og40D0ekuYAys3IQ

1 February 2021 – OFF Annual General Meeting

Our first Monday meeting for the new year will be the Annual General Meeting. Hear reports about what OFF has been doing in the past year, and elect a new committee for 2021. You are invited to nominate at the AGM. This year the Society needs to fill some positions: assistant Secretary (eg, taking minutes, recording attendance, recording correspondence, checking post office box, etc.) and OFF News Editor. Please consider stepping up and contributing to your society. Note that this meeting will be held via ZOOM only. Apologies to those who were hoping to attend in person.

22 February 2021 — Sir Joseph Banks – his life and legacy

Rhonda Daniels, long-time member of Australian Plants Society, Sutherland Group shares the life and legacy of Sir Joseph Banks, patron of natural sciences. As a young man, Banks collected many plant specimens in 1770 on Captain Cook's *Endeavour* voyage, followed by a long life supporting scientific discovery. Recognising the 250th anniversary in 2020, Rhonda will highlight the botanical and scientific legacy of Banks including being remembered in the *Banksia* genus and many place names including Joseph Banks Native Plants Reserve at Kareela.

7 March 2021 (Sunday) – Advance Notice Clean Up Australia Day

OFF's site for this year's clean up has not been selected yet, but please keep the date free.

2021 Activity Program

We are at that time of the year again when we are planning for 2021. Many activity dates are now filled, but there are still a few vacant dates on which members could consider leading an activity. Activities can range from an urban stroll to a 15km walk, to a cruise on Port Hacking. This is an important component of OFF, so please consider. Contact Graham Fry on fryg45@gmail.com or 9580 6621 with your ideas for an activity. The program has to be finalised by late January to be included in the 2021 printed program.

Meetings of the Society are at the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick 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, current COVID-19 restrictions apply, ie, masks must be worn in-doors and numbers are restricted to 20 plus organisers to maintain social distancing.

OFF ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2020

The accounts are shown in the tables below. One element is new. The use of a Petty Cash account to pay simple bills. This was approved by the Committee and ensures prompt and simple payment of small expenses.

We ended 2020 without any outstanding Grants as they were all finalised during the year. The underlying situation is managed by the Committee on a monthly basis.

Income and expenditure statement	2020	2019
INCOME		
Subscriptions	4,050.00	3,921.02
Donations	3,380.00	2,608.94
Sales/Stalls, etc.	0.00	546.00
Grants various	7,567.01	8,000.00
Annual dinner	0.00	1,765.00
2020 Calendar sales	436.11	5,295.34
2021 Calendar sales	4,823.00	0.00
Lions loan for calendar	1,000.00	263.80
EDO bird cards and other benefits sales	272.55	549.65
Miscellaneous Income	0.01	0.28
TOTAL INCOME	21,528.68	22,950.04
EXPENSES		
OFF Newsletter printing & postage	(1,025.24)	(1,210.49)
Insurance	(390.00)	(390.00)
PO box rental	(134.00)	(130.00)
Brochure printing various	(215.20)	(146.40)
Office of Fair Trading	(47.00)	(46.00)
2021 Calendar costs	(3,212.00)	(3,131.00)
Donations and Membership to other bodies	(536.05)	(700.00)
Annual dinner	0.00	(1,520.00)

Net 2020 Calendar payments	(2,206.34)	0.00
Grants expenditure	(17,008.19)	(38,669.75)
ZOOM	(237.80)	0.00
Research grants	(2,000.00)	(6,000.00)
Oatley Lions Festival stall	0.00	(150.00)
EDO and other payments		(940.65)

Miscellaneous	(64.29)	(284.86)
TOTAL EXPENSES	(27,076.11)	(53,319.15)

SURPLUS	(5,547.43)	(30,369.11)
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BANK RECONCILIATION and other information

	2020	2019
Chq acct balance as at 1 January	20,231.20	50,600.31
PC acct	(409.15)	0.00
Transfer from Fixed Term Deposit	4,000.00	0.00
Surplus on year	(5,547.43)	(30,369.11)
Chq acct balance 31 December	18,274.62	20,231.20
Petty cash balance	409.15	0.00
Various term deposits	5,003.26	8,651.38
Total balance at bank 31 December	23,687.03	28,882.58

Grants held for other organisation (balance)	0.00	38.72
Grants for OFF unspent	0.00	9,404.00
Loans from Oatley Lions	1,000.00	0.00
Unpresented cheques	4,000.00	0.00
Net balance for OFF	18,687.03	19,439.86

Rodger Robertson, Hon Treasurer, January 2021