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# O.F.F. NEWS

Published by

## OATLEY FLORA & FAUNA CONSERVATION SOCIETY

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January/February, 1990.

### EDITORIAL

A new year's greeting to all our members and friends. Let us hope that 1990 will be a good, healthy, happy and successful year and that it heralds a decade of positive developments for the environment. As no doubt you will be often reminded, 1990 is Australia's "Year of Landcare" and there will be a range of projects aimed at "greening" our country. Soil erosion and land degradation will certainly be major conservation issues this decade. Other concerns will be to solve the sewage and beach pollution, protecting the forests from wood-chipping, protection of coastal lands which have conservation values, the management and disposal of Crown lands and the problems of ozone depletion.

The 1980s has been a decade of mixed success, with a growing environmental awareness among the general public and an increased awareness in political circles of the power of the conservation vote. Against these successes have been many disappointments, but conservationists will continue the fight to ensure that our natural resources are not wasted and that there is a balance between preservation and development. As we enter the 1990s, we must become aware of what is happening to the environment and take action to prevent harmful effects; we must learn to make better use of our resources and to avoid waste. Then, with a little luck, the world will still be around for future generations to enjoy and the quality of life will be maintained. And remember, an individual -YOU- can make a difference.

Let us begin the new year with some good news on the conservation front.

### TASMANIAN SUCCESSES

Conservationists have much to celebrate in Tasmania. Capping a parade of environmental triumphs is the addition of over 600,000 hectares of wild country to the existing World Heritage area of 750,000 hectares. One-fifth of Tasmania is now listed as World Heritage. Threatened valleys such as the Lemonthyme, Upper Mersey and Little Fisher now have permanent protection. A large section of the South Coast Walking Track, previously unprotected, will become national park, and part of the breeding ground of the rare orange-bellied parrot, of which fewer than 200 individuals remain, has been added to the World Heritage nomination. These gains are also a tribute to the perseverance and electoral success of Tasmania's Green Independent members of parliament.

### BITOU BUSH CONTROL

Bitou Bush and the closely related Boneseed are weeds which have invaded much of Australia's coastal dunes. They eliminate native plants and local fauna. The CSIRO has been testing insects from South Africa, the home of Bitou Bush, to see if their release will help control the spread of these weeds. Larvae of one potential control agent, a moth, were released early in 1989, and two leaf-eating beetles are due for release soon. The larvae of a fly is known to eat the weeds' developing seeds. In the next few years we may see the results of this war against the beach invaders. (From ECOS, Summer 1989)

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Hon. President:	Val Boyan, 19 Denise Crescent, Peakhurst.	2210.	533 1013
Hon. Secretary:	Keith Underwood, P.O. Box 52, Mortdale.	2223	570 1149
Hon. Editor:	Alan Fairley, P.O. Box 148, Oatley.	2223	570 8332

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PAPER RECYCLING

The promised legislation to remove the Commonwealth's 20% sales tax on recycled paper has at last come into effect. This exempts paper that is 100% recycled and will provide incentive for new technology to produce quality papers from wholly recycled fibre.

Don't be discouraged by the so-called glut of waste paper. We must continue to recycle. The community must lead the way by providing new markets by being willing to buy recycled products and creating the financial incentive for industry. It's good news that Australian Newsprint Mills are currently looking at the possibility of using recycled fibre in newsprint. At this stage, ANM import about a third of the bleached softwood pulp used for newsprint; they need to be encouraged to replace this percentage with old newspapers. (NSW Update -ACF).

NEW BOOK

A new book entitled It's Easy Being Green by Rob Gell and Rosslyn Beeby offers common-sense suggestions for handling everyday activities in an environmentally sound manner. It outlines the problems facing us and ways in which individuals can help make a difference, in the home, work-place and wider community.

SOME THOUGHTS OF PETER GARRETT

It is hard to believe that the "Turn Back the Tide" concert held in Sydney early this year gathered 200,000 people at Bondi Beach to protest the fouling of the seas; that thousands have made their way down to the southeast forests of NSW to protect the great eucalypts, giving their time and liberty for the wilderness; or that the Green Independents have become a credible political force in Tasmania. The conservation movement has come in from the fringes and is now making its claim - which cannot be ignored - to have its values and concerns reflected in the political and social policies of the nation.

The term "green" in all its connotations and through all its misuses, still constitutes an attitude which recognises that our current way of doing things ultimately serves neither us nor our co-habiting species very well. The simple fact of recognition that we breathe as the earth breathes, when thrown up against scientific scenarios of a muggy, leaking atmosphere, accelerates our now chosen path to move towards a more benign way of living. It is apparent that if we don't replace conquering with co-operation then we are are risk.

In the face of mounting and continuous ecological threat, it may seem that the tasks ahead are too hard. Nothing could be further from the truth. People everywhere are now questioning the old ways. They are reaffirming the need to respect and protect nature and are conscious of the great urgency of the moment. Everywhere people are extending themselves by education and action to make their passage through life a positive and healthy one. (ACF Annual Report 1988-89).

MINING BAN IN NATIONAL PARKS

The NSW Government is to introduce legislation to ban mining in national parks. This decision honours a pre-election promise. The National Parks and Wildlife Act will be amended to enshrine the ban. There is general agreement on the incompatibility of mining in national parks and the need to preserve the integrity of the park system.

ARNCLIFFE WETLANDS

Remnant wetlands at Eve Street, Arncliffe, are to be the subject of a large scale restoration project anticipated to commence early in 1990 at an estimated cost of \$200,000. A draft plan of management for the area has been prepared and exhibited by the Water Board. The Eve Street wetlands are part of the once extensive salt marshes of North Barton Park and will provide an invaluable refuge for local and migratory birds and other wildlife. The proposed restoration programme reflects changing community and government attitudes to our disappearing wetlands and a recognition of their ecological value.

Some current issues requiring action.

#### CAPE YORK PENINSULA

For many years, the remoteness of the Peninsula has been its greatest protection. However, modern technology is changing all that. Plans for a spaceport at Temple Bay on the eastern side of the Cape threaten the integrity of the region. This project will swallow up a large percentage of the Cape's National Estate area, bringing roads, a port, a town and an airport. The environmental impact could be catastrophic for both the Cape and the Great Barrier Reef. Spacecraft launches produce extremely acidic high-volume exhaust clouds and waste water. Already real estate speculation is rampant and developers are scrambling to buy up land being offered by the State Government for a song. Since 1980, more than 100,000 hectares have been sold for an average of \$4.50 a hectare. In addition, rare wildlife is being exploited by unscrupulous dealers smuggling birds, orchids and reptiles to lucrative overseas markets.

Action. The Australian Conservation Foundation is calling for Federal action. A donation will help the campaign. Send your cheque to: ACF, 672B Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. Vic. 3122. Indicate that it is for the Cape York Peninsula campaign.

#### UPPER HACKING

The impact of the proposed urban expansion of Helensburgh on the Royal National Park continues to worsen. Wollongong City Council has applied to the NPWS for permission to destroy a significant archaeological site at Kellys Falls on the upper Hacking catchment and to resume land in the Garrawarra State Recreation Area.

Action. Write to your local State M.P. and Tim Moore, Minister for Environment, opposing urban expansion in the Hacking River catchment.

#### UPPER GEORGES RIVER SELL-OFF

Half the length of the Georges River from Appin to Casula, a total river frontage of 46 km, is under investigation for sale by the Department of Planning Minister, David Hay. It is regional open space acquired over the last 20 years to provide south-west Sydney with adequate parklands. A government consultant, Purdon and Associates, has proposed a reversal of the open space strategy by recommending the sale of 499 ha of regional open space and the non-acquisition of a further 112 ha of proposed open space. Campbelltown, Liverpool and Wollondilly Councils strongly object to the sale. The integrity of important wildlife habitats, including that of Sydney's largest koala colony, and significant Aboriginal sites and recreation opportunities along the length of the Georges River could be lost if the proposed sale proceeds. Proposals for medium density housing at important recreation areas like the Woolwash would be a serious blow to reserving the Georges River headwaters as park.

Action. Write to the Premier and express your concern at the proposal.

#### NORTH ENTRANCE PENINSULA

On 15 September the Wyong Shire Council voted that between 10 and 25 ha of Crown land at the North Entrance should become available to developers. North Entrance Peninsula is a strip of coastal sand dune which local conservation groups agree should become a national park. Although human encroachment on the area has taken its toll - sand mining, bitou bush invasion and a waste tip are some of the more obvious symptoms - the area includes patches of rainforest with rare species of figs, lillypilly and ribbonwood; eucalypts and casuarina line the lake's edge. The dunes are now set to be bulldozed for a four storey resort and a 18 hole golf course. A motion that a public inquiry should be held was defeated at the Council meeting.

Action. Write to Wyong Shire Council and the Premier expressing your anger at the Council's decision and asking for the protection of such parcels of Crown land.

COMING EVENTS

Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick Street (near corner of Letitia Street), Oatley. Visitors and Children are welcome at all meetings and field days. Please make yourself known as you come in. \*\*\* It is intended that meetings will commence promptly at 7.45pm. \*\*\*

February 5 (Monday). FIRST MEETING FOR 1990. Come along and say hallo to everyone after the break. Collect your yearly programme of OFF activities. Members' slides and supper. Bring along up to 15 of your best slides and also a plate of food for supper. The Hon. Treasurer will be available to collect renewal membership fees.

February 26 (Monday). TOURING TURKEY. A slide evening with Alan Fairley. Alan will show his slides of his recent trip through this most varied and beautiful country.

March 3 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Kurnell bush ramble - easy walk to coast. Meet at Visitors Centre, 10 am. Bring lunch and water. Leader: Heather Mackey; tel. 528 7071.

OATLEY PARK FLOWER DAY

The next flower study day will be the first Monday in March. Details later.

SMIGGINSWEEK, 1990

There is still a vacancy at Smiggins for the second week, from January 27 to February 3. Anyone interested in a week of walking in the Snowy region, please ring Keith Underwood, 570 1149.

Publications recently received, and available at club night

\*ECOS, Summer 1989/90. Articles on the most recent research into rural tree decline (dieback), the effect of anti-fouling paints on oysters in the Georges River, and the return of seals to sub-Antarctic islands.

\*State of the Environment, Newsletter from the Hon. Tim Moore, Minister for the Environment. Includes information on Sewerage progress, Wastewater monitoring, ocean outfalls, sludge re-use and Environmental Offences and Penalties Bill.

\*Outlook, Newsletter of Water Board, Southern Region. Information on Total Catchment Management, extension of sewerage and wetlands management.

\*Total Environment Centre Newsletter, November 1989. Items on Green Politics, hazardous wastes, Federal Liberal-National Environment Policy, Threats to Sydney Harbour, Medium Density Housing, Urban Bushland and Off-road Vehicles Policy.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

OATLEY FLORA AND FAUNA CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Membership fees:

Household.....\$8.00  
Concession (pensioner, student)..\$5.00

Fees include subscription fo OFF NEWS (issued monthly) and to programme of activities.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Return with cheque to: Hon. Treasurer, P.O. Box 52, Mortdale. 2223.  
OR pay directly at the next club night.



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February/March, 1990.

### THE DEBATE CONTINUES ...

As a result of articles appearing in OFF News (July & August 1989) criticizing the N.S.W. Government's forest management policies in the Eden area, we have received a letter from Ian Causley, Minister for Natural Resources, and a number of Forestry Commission papers which support the continued 'harvesting' of forests in the Eden Management Area. This letter and the documents were forwarded to the Society by Guy Yeomans, Member for Hurstville.

The letter dismisses the view that the only way natural values of the area can be maintained is to set them aside in national parks. It argues that conservation "embodies both preservation and utilisation and the need for a balance between them. This balance is now substantially in place in the Eden area where more than forty per cent of the publically owned forests (some 140,000 ha) has been explicitly excluded from integrated logging and a further eight per cent is subject to special constraints to protect particular environmental values."

Conservationists have argued that intensive logging for woodchips threatens the wildlife, especially the koala population and the 24 species of tree-dwelling mammals and birds which require hollows for breeding which are found only in old trees. Also the risk to flora is great as there are many populations of rare and endangered plants in the region.

Mr Causley's letter states: "The protection to flora, fauna and other values provided by these large areas is complemented by an equivalent area of State Forest subject to harvesting for timber production under normal prescriptions for multiple-purpose management which include provision for the long-term conservation of flora, wildlife and other values. To preserve all remaining natural areas in an undisturbed condition would be to derive less than optimal benefits from them now and in the future."

### Documents include:

- \*Pages from the Forestry Commission's Environmental Impact Statement
- \*An extract assessing the economic effects of excluding Coolangubra and Tantawangalo from logging
- \*A summary of the Environmental Impact Statement
- \*Forestry Commission leaflets titled "The True Story of Eden" and "The Forests of Eden".

So that members can familiarize themselves with these documents, they have been placed in a file which will be available at Society meetings. Also in this file are background notes on the south-east forest battle from the Wilderness Society, a briefing paper on Eden Woodchipping from Nature Conservation Council, notes on "What's Wrong With Woodchipping" and an article by Dr. Steffen of CSIRO entitled "Woodchipping: danger signs for an ecological tragedy". Read these and make up your own mind about what should be done to provide a stable economic base for the Eden area and also to ensure that the natural environment is adequately protected.

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Also available for your perusal at OFF meetings is a 148 page Discussion Paper on "Coastal Development In New South Wales" from the Standing Committee on State Development of the Legislative Council. In it are listed 234 proposed tourism developments along the coastline.

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Alan will show his slides of his recent trip through this most varied and beautiful country.

March 3 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Kurnell bush ramble - easy walk to coast.

Meet at Visitors Centre, 10 am. Bring lunch and water. Leader: Heather Mackey; tel. 528 7071.

March 5 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am. at picnic 'castle'.

If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

March 26 (Monday). The return by popular demand of Michael Spence. Michael spoke to us last year on Northern India. This year he will tell us about Rajasthan (India) and show some of his excellent slides taken in December/January.

\*\*\*O.F.F. PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR 1990 IS NOW AVAILABLE, A COPY WILL BE ISSUED ON RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP\*\*\*

SEAWEEK '90 - a week of activities promoting awareness of our marine environment from March 24 to April 1 and coordinated by the Marine Education Society of Australia (MESA). Highlights will include a launch at the Sydney Aquarium in Darling Harbour by solo yachtsman Ian Kiernan; activities for children at the Sydney Aquarium; Discovery Room activities at the Australian Museum; Tank Stream Walks; tours of Goat Island and Fort Denison; special activities at Taronga Zoo; tours of the historic 'James Craig' and 'Waratah' by Sydney Maritime Museum. For further information contact Carol Soden on 555 1840.

HURSTVILLE ADULT LEISURE LEARNING CENTRE. An OFF member, Kim Ford, conducts an Environmental Issues class every Tuesday at Uniting Church Halls, The Avenue, Hudson Street, Hurstville, between 10.45 am and 12.15 pm. You are invited to attend. The cost is only \$8.00 per semester and for that fee you may attend other classes. An outline of the course is available. Contact the co-ordinator on 588 3181.

Kim also presents a science programme for beginners on Radio 2SER FM (107.3 MHz) on Mondays at 10.05 am. Entitled "New Horizons from the Shoulders of Giants", it is an interesting and authoritative presentation. Kim is a retired nuclear technology R&D engineer, with some 40 years experience. The year's programme is available from OFF meetings.

HURSTVILLE STREET TREES. Hurstville City Council's proposal to systematically remove all large trees planted under electricity wires has provoked a lot of community concern. There is no doubt that the removal will alter the streetscape of many areas. O.F.F. Conservation Society's position is that we recognize Council's view that tall trees like Tallowoods and Tristania should not have been planted originally and that it is a significant expense to lop them each year. However, we do not agree that they should be replaced with a mono-culture of small bottlebrushes and we have supplied Council with a list of tall shrubs and small trees suitable for street plantings. We are also concerned with the report that Council intends to keep the details of the tree removal secret "to prevent unnecessary protest". People affected should have the opportunity to argue specific cases with Council; in this way, unnecessary removals can be prevented. All streets affected should be circulated in advance with a leaflet which explains Council's plans.

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### MOORE RESERVE

About 300 local residents attended a protest meeting at Moore Reserve, Hurstville Grove on March 4. It was called to get expressions of opinion on Kogarah Council's 5 development options for the park. A number of OFF members were present and Alan Fairley was one of the speakers to the meeting. Gary Punch, MP, Guy Yeomans, local MLA, and the three ward aldermen were also present and spoke to the gathering.

The meeting was clearly against any development option, rejecting playing fields, cricket pitch, new car parking and additional toilet facilities. It called for the park to remain a passive recreation area, with some landscaping and tree planting to improve its attractiveness. The point was made that with about 72% of Kogarah Municipality's parkland already playgrounds or sporting fields, this was a rare opportunity to increase passive open space and redress the destruction that has taken place as inlets have been filled in for playing fields.

There is always pressure on Council by an active organized minority to convert open space into playing fields, but surely the time has passed when this is done without consideration of the interests of the greater community. Taking up a suggestion of Gary Punch, we have written to Kogarah Council requesting they join with Hurstville and Rockdale Councils to study the playing fields situation in St. George (including school ovals) and to develop plans to better utilize these facilities.

### A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE FEDERAL ELECTION

Tucked away in a small corner of the Daily Mirror of March 2 was a news item headed VOTER BLUES CENTRE ON GREENS. It was a report of a survey done by Legal and General Insurance which found that "voters are more concerned with the environment than with housing mortgages and interest rates". 37 per cent listed the environment as the top priority in the week of the survey. The group director said that politicians who ignore this over the next month and instead focus only on making us either concerned or relaxed about the economy will do so at their peril. Such reporting must make us wonder who sets the political agenda and what role the media has in defining the issues to highlight. Is the current disenchantment with political parties the result of their obsession with 'the economy' when a large number of people believe other issues are more urgent??

In O.F.F. Conservation Society there is a broad spectrum of political beliefs held by members, so the Society has always been a-political, taking no side, praising both government and opposition when deserved and criticizing both when necessary. In this tradition, we set out below some features of the environmental policies of the parties and other facts which may be relevant to the concerned conservationist on polling day.

Liberal-National policy; \$3 million for a study of the pollution problems of the Brisbane, Derwent and Tamar Rivers; a doubling of funding for soil conservation; additional Loan Council borrowings for NSW to help clean up beach pollution.

Labor. At the time of printing, Labor's environmental policy has not been announced. There has been the report of a promise of \$10 million to save Queensland's tropical rainforest. Labor's record has been good, if not perfect, on the environment - use of Federal powers to establish World Heritage Areas, mining banned in Kakadu, moves to make Antarctica a world wilderness park, plan to plant one million trees, extension of Barrier Reef Marine Park.

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March 26 (Monday). The return by popular demand of Michael Spence. Michael spoke to us last year on Northern India. This year he will tell us about Rajasthan, India, and show some of his excellent slides taken as recently as January this year.

Note. The discussion and voting on Incorporation of the Society will not be held this meeting as printed in the programme. It has been delayed until a future meeting.

March 31 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Walk in Manly Dam Reserve, led by Alan Fairley. The Reserve is 370 hectares of bushland between Balgowlah North and Allambie Heights. Road access is via King Street, Manly Vale. A circuit track runs through the park, a distance of 7.5 km. It should take us about 3½ hours. Lunch on the way beside Curl Curl Creek. Carry drinking water. For those not wanting to do the whole circuit, there are picnic and barbecue facilities on the foreshore of the lake and a series of shorter nature trails. Meet 10 am at main park gates. An entry fee per car is payable at the main gate if you wish to park inside. UTA buses leave from Wynyard and Manly Wharf to King Street, Manly Vale, from where it is a 1 km walk to the park. Ask at club night if you need a lift.

April 2 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am at picnic 'castle'. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

April 23 (Monday). BUSH BIRDS with Jim Frances.

WANTED Members interested in assisting with making up display material for use at Shopping centres, Lions Displays and Environment Week. Contact Lesley Cox for Details, 579 3782.

LIBRARY SERVICE. Did you know that the National Parks and Wildlife Service, now located at Hurstville, has an excellent environmental library open to the public for research purposes? Open weekdays (except Wednesday) until 4.30 pm.

MORE ON THE ELECTIONS (cont. from page 1)

\*Nationals policy: this is a concern for conservationists as it promises the go-ahead for mining in Kadadu Stage 3, more uranium mining and a uranium enrichment industry. It is also against the use of Federal power to override the States on environment issues (this power saved the Franklin from being damned).

\*Democrats. Their policies have the approval of the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Wilderness Society, who have recommended a vote for Democrats and second preference to Labor.

\* The Senate in NSW has a team of Environment Independents, consisting of Irina Dunn, Peter Prineas and Harry Recher. All are strong conservationists; Irina Dunn is a sitting Senator, with strong views on peace and environment issues.

\* Barton electorate. Sitting Labor MP, Gary Punch has distributed a leaflet devoted entirely to environmental matters and presenting his environmental credentials. The Liberal candidate, David Macauley, in his leaflet mentions the environment, but in a general way, in a few lines and last after a list of other issues.

(Election comment by the Editor, Alan Fairley, 17 Lloyd Street, Oatley).

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### CONFRONTING THE FUTURE

Some thoughts of Charles Birch, Challis Professor of Biology, Uni. of Sydney.

"We live in a unique period of human history when mankind can add to the population of the earth a thousand million people in 13 years. We can, in 13 years, do what took our ancestors over a million years to do.

In the world as a whole, 200,000 hectares disappear every day under concrete and asphalt to make way for factories, suburbs and roads. The so-called 'green belts' around some Australian cities gradually disappear with the extension of urban areas for houses and factories. More people, more cities and more industries mean less natural areas, less original countryside.

Most Australians live on or near the coast. This is the coast that is being mined for beach sands, cleared for woodchips, developed for tourist resorts and flattened by the urban octopus and speculative land division. Future planning must be national in its scope. It must aim to preserve remaining rainforests, sand dune vegetation, coastal wetlands, estuaries and mangrove areas, coastal lakes and lagoons. The coastal estuaries are the spawning grounds of most of our edible fish. Before we are much older, if present trends continue, the Australian coast will have lost most of its attraction and much of its value. The battle to save one small part - the Myall Lakes - for a national park has been a gigantic one. It will be a major battle to work for the preservation of more of the coastline for the future."

### LOGGING BAN IN THAILAND

The forest conservation movement in Thailand, which has been growing steadily in the last few years, achieved its most striking success so far in January with the approval by the Government of a nationwide logging ban, possibly the first of its kind in the world. The ban was the result of public pressure of three types. The first consisted of increasingly strident protests from rural villages, particularly in the hilly north of the country, against timber companies' destruction of catchment areas and traditional irrigation systems crucial for agricultural subsistence. The second was the campaign among conservationists and others against a 1988 Judicial Council ruling that unexpectedly reactivated logging concession agreements in some of the country's most important wildlife sanctuaries and other protected areas. The third (and most divisive politically) derived from the widespread public shock and outrage at deforestation-related mudslides in south Thailand in November 1988 which took the lives of hundreds and buried villages and farmland under metres of logs, uprooted trees and sand.

(For more on this topic, see Total Environment Centre Newsletter, Feb. 1990.)

### NORTH QUEENSLAND

The Queensland Government has frozen the freeholding of land on Cape York Peninsula and dropped its court challenge to wet tropics World Heritage listing. It has banned logging in virgin rainforests and is re-evaluating 252 development proposals planned for the Queensland coast. It will examine ways of closing the Cape Tribulation road, consider buying back freehold land on the Daintree River and double the State's area of national park.

### WOODHENS ON SHOW

Two rare and endangered Lord Howe Island Woodhens have gone on display at Taronga Zoo to draw public attention to the plight of this vulnerable species. In 1980 there were only 6 breeding pairs in the wild. Following an intensive captive breeding programme, there is now thought to be 200 birds on the island. The Zoo aims to breed and maintain a self-sustaining population outside Lord Howe.

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April 23 (Monday). BEAUTIFUL BUSH BIRDS. Atalk with slides by Jim Frances.

Jim is well-known in 'birdo' circles and is a member of the Field Ornithological Society. An interesting and informative evening.

April 28 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. UPPER LANE COVE RIVER and DEVLINS CREEK. This is an easy walk of about 11 kilometres, along tracks; likely to be boggy in parts after rain. We follow the river down from Thornleigh for about 4 km and then up Devlins Creek for a further 3 km. Catch train from Oatley at 8.50 am, changing at Redfern to the 9.34 am train to THORNLEIGH via Strathfield. We return from Epping and should be home by 5.00 pm. Leader: Harry Whaite; contact; 57 6459.

May 7 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am at picnic 'castle'. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 5237458.

May 28 (Monday). FRIENDS OF THE EARTH. Atalk about recycling.

Note that this meeting will be followed by a special general meeting called to discuss and adopt the proposal that this Society incorporates. (See OFF News Supplement for details).

1990 ANNUAL DINNER. We are pleased to announce that this year's guest speaker at the O.F.F. Annual Dinner is to be Peter Prineas. Peter is an environmental lawyer and conservationist, author of a book on wilderness and a green candidate for the Senate in the recent elections. A fine speaker with a wealth of experience, he will be another in the long list of distinguished guests at our Annual Dinner.

RECYCLING NEWS. Recent figures from the Waste Management Authority (WMA) show that the largest component of domestic waste collected by Councils in Sydney is food and garden waste - about 200,000 tonnes a year. This increase is partly due to the adoption of the big bin system and to the bans on backyard burning. Composting is now being encouraged by many as one good way to reduce our weekly garbage flow. The WMA is working on a leaflet for house-holders who want to start composting and making productive use of their food scraps and garden litter. From A.C.F., NSW Update).

HURSTVILLE TREE REMOVAL. The Society has written to Hurstville Council asking it to clarify the policy of tree removal following reports that large old indigenous trees are also threatened in some streets. We originally believed that only trees planted under wires would be affected.

IMMIGRATION AND POPULATION. It is refreshing to hear the new leader of the Opposition, Mr. John Hewson, and the NSW Opposition leader, Mr. Bob Carr, both call for a discussion of acceptable levels for Australian migration. Such a debate should not be on racial grounds, but on the question: Can our economy and our environment sustain the current levels of migration? The blind faith that extra people are necessarily good for the country, that we must populate or perish, is now being questioned. Consider these two views of scientists,

"Australia is possibly perilously close to reaching a maximum sustainable population. We think too much about man's well-being rather than about the health of the planet as a whole." (Sir Mark Oliphant).

"Every additional Australian you have means Australia is going to be a poorer country because you have a finite pie that you are trying to give away as rapidly as possible... You need someone who can get up and say: 'Look, 17 million Aussies is just too many!'" (Professor P. Ehrlich).

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# OFF NEWS

Published by

## OATLEY FLORA & FAUNA CONSERVATION SOCIETY

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May/June, 1990.

### Hurstville Street Tree Removal

Our enquiries to the Council regarding its policy for removal and replacement of street trees under overhead wires have brought the following response:

The Council resolved on 21 March 1990 "That Council commission the preparation of an Environmental Assessment regarding the proposed revision of the tree removal and replacement programme, for consideration by Council under Sec. 111 of Part V of the EPA Act.

That the Mayor and Executive Committee be authorised to engage the services of appropriately qualified and experienced consultants to undertake the Environmental Assessment.

That should the Assessment indicate that the revision of the tree removal programme as currently proposed is environmentally and economically viable in whole or in part, a Management Plan be prepared in conjunction with environmental consultants.

Further, that in the interim, the tree removal and replacement programme NOT be implemented, other than for reasons of safety."

### ACF Comment on the Election Results

Conservationists can claim much of the glory from the ALP victory in the recent Federal Election. The success of the 'Vote for the Environment' campaign, launched by the ACF and The Wilderness Society, is clearly indicated in the analysis of the election results.

Firstly, the environmental issue increased dramatically over the period of the election. An opinion poll just prior to the election showed 81% of voters rated the environment as an important issue - one which would decide their vote. Opinion polls also showed a dramatic shift on the question of which party would best handle the environment, with an increasing acknowledgement of the Democrats position and a drop in support for the Coalition on the issue.

Secondly, the analysis showed that in nine electorates targetted by ACF and TWS, the campaign added 2.5% to the Democrat and Independent vote and increased the proportion of their preferences to the ALP to 70% compared to a national average of 60%. This was a crucial factor in the re-election of the ALP. (Conservation News, April 1990).

### North Entrance Update

As reported in OFF News of January this year, Wyong Shire Council has approved the building of a resort hotel in the coastal dunes of North Entrance Peninsula. In a letter of reply, Mr. Tim Moore, Minister for the Environment (who receives and reads our newsletter) points out that some 780 hectares of Crown land on the Peninsula are being investigated as part of the proposed Wyrabalong National Park. The other part of this Park is on the coast between Bateau Bay and Forresters Beach. The Peninsula's dunes support forests of Angophora costata, while pockets of littoral rainforest occur in more sheltered areas. The rare Magenta Lilly Pilly (Syzygium paniculatum) has been recorded and a Fig (Ficus fraseri) reaches the southernmost limit of its distribution in the rainforests.

No date has yet been set for gazettal of the new Park as it depends on negotiations with other land management authorities for land transfer.

COMING EVENTS

Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick Street, (near corner of Letitia Street), Oatley. Visitors and children are welcome at all meetings and field days. Please make yourself known as you come in. \*\*\*It is intended that meetings commence promptly at 7.45 pm.\*\*\*

May 28 (Monday). Peter Hopper from FRIENDS OF THE EARTH will talk about recycling and saving our limited resources.

Note that this meeting will be followed by a special general meeting called to discuss and adopt the proposal that this Society Incorporates. (See last Month's OFF supplement for details.)

June 2 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Visit to BICENTENNIAL PARK at Homebush and short easy walks. The Park was opened in 1988 to commemorate Australia's Bicentenary; it features landscaped picnic and recreation areas as well as over 50 hectares of tidal wetlands and mangroves. There are barbecue facilities, viewing towers, a boardwalk through the mangroves and plenty of car parking. Depart Hurstville Station by 8.56 am. train, change at Redfern for train to Concord West, a five minutes walk from the park. Meet at the Information Centre at 10 am. Bring picnic lunch. Leader: Mamie Clark, contact 546 3570.

June 4 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am. at picnic 'castle'. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

June 25 (Monday). Julian Sheen on NEW ZEALAND.

Total Environment Centre (TEC) - Cruise on the Hawkesbury at Windsor, Sunday 3 June 1990. Meet 10 am. at Windsor Wharf beside the bridge in Bridge Street. Cruise the river towards Sackville, passing the sites of some of Australia's earliest white settlement. Price \$25. For more information, telephone TEC on 241 2523.

Needed. A volunteer to print this newsletter each month. If you have access to a photocopier or printer and can do 250 copies of this newsletter (usually 2 sides, i.e., 500 copies), please contact Alan Fairley on 570 8332. Paper supplied, if needed. The Committee would like to thank Bill Benson who has been having OFF NEWS printed for the last few years. His help has been invaluable and has been a major reason for costs being kept down and the newsletter being available every month on time.

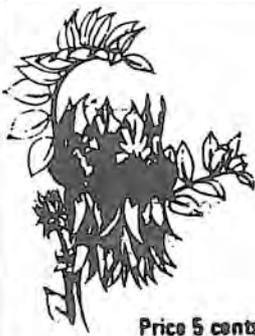
Moore Reserve. Following the protest meeting attended by 300 local residents on March 4 (reported by OFF NEWS, March/April 1990), Kogarah Council received 1131 submissions. Only 4.8% of these were in favour of active recreation. Subsequently, members of the Council voted 7 - 4 for passive recreation. A draft plan will be drawn up and exhibited. All OFF members living in Kogarah Municipality should find out how their Ward Alderman voted and make comment on the draft plan when it is completed.

Inspection Tour of South-east Forests

Local M.P. Guy Yeomans, has invited two members of our Society to accompany him and other parliamentarians and media representatives on a week-end inspection of the South-east forests in the Eden area. Alan Fairley and Graham Quint have been nominated by the committee to act as our representatives. It is planned to spend one day talking to conservationists and the other day with forestry spokesmen. A full report will be made in the next OFF News.

Magazines received: Wildlife Australia (Autumn 1990); WIRES Newsletter; ACF Conservation News; Habitat (April 1990). All these magazines are available at next club night.

Hon. President:	Val Boyan, 19 Denise Crescent, Peakhurst.	2210	533	1013
Hon. Secretary:	Keith Underwood, P.O. Box 52, Mortdale.	2223	570	1149
Hon. Editor:	Alan Fairley, P.O. Box 148, Oatley.	2223	570	8332



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# O.F.F. NEWS

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June/July, 1990.

### SOUTH-EAST FORESTS INSPECTION

The pro- and anti-logging debate has been raging for a long time, but today it is focused most intently and most bitterly in the native hardwood forests around Eden and Bega. So, when an invitation was extended by Mr. Guy Yeomans, M.P. for Hurstville, for a representative of O.F.F. to accompany an inspection tour of the south-east forests, it was accepted not only with appreciation, but with eager anticipation to see the situation first-hand. The tour took place on the week-end of 2-3 June. Alan Fairley was chosen by the committee to represent the Society. Here is a brief account of the week-end's activities.

"Guy Yeomans had arranged for 18 people to fly to Merimbula. These included five government MPs. In addition to Mr. Yeomans there was Malcolm Kerr (Cronulla), Allan Andrews (Heathcote), Philip White (Earlwood) and Chris Hartcher (Gosford). There were also 3 conservationist, 2 high school students, one Deputy Principal, 3 journalists and a spokesman for the Forest Products Association. At Merimula we were met by a group from the SE Forest Alliance and Tantawangalo Catchment Protection Association. Their spokesman was Roland Breckwoldt, well-known conservationist, local farmer and expert on rural land use. In a convoy of cars we were taken to Tantawangalo State Forest and along the New Line Road. Over a picnic lunch at Six Mile Creek and at various sites along the way, the need for conservation was explained.

The total SE Forest Concession area is 279,000 hectares. Of this, the local conservation groups want 80,000 ha to be made into national parks. They point out that current forestry practices will log the entire area within 20 years. This would mean the destruction of all the old trees which provide hollows for nest<sup>ing</sup> mammals and birds and would cause siltation of the Tantawangalo Creek which supplies nearby towns and farms with their fresh water. The flora and fauna reserves and narrow stream preservation zones are inadequate to protect wildlife and rare plants, they claim. Public pressure has prevented logging in Tahtawangalo thus far, except for some 'trial logging' which was recently approved by Mr. Causley and Mr. Murray.

The evening was spent at Seahorse Inn on Twofold Bay. Evening meal was with the compliments of the logging industry. Seated on each table were representatives of the Forestry Commission, Forest Products Association and the wood-chip company, Harris-Daishowa. The same group took us around by bus on Sunday. We inspected regrown forest, a flora reserve, a coupe being currently logged and various areas of Coolangubra State Forest. Over barbecue lunch provided by the Bombala Forest Support Group, the loggers' position was presented and argued. They argue that current logging practices will preserve the forest for both wood-chips and saw-logs, that any extraction of areas for national parks will destroy the viability of the industry and that as 45% of the forest will not be logged, plants and animals have adequate protection. Emphasis was given to the number of studies made in the forest on birds, koalas, rare plants, erosion, hydrology, and other matters, to determine management procedures.

Some general impressions:

- \* The Forestry Commission is locked into its present position because of its long-term management strategies;
- \* The Forestry Commission has joined sides with, and acts as spokesman, for the logging and wood-chip industry - as a government department concerned with managing the forest, it should be more balanced;
- \* The "Forest of the Future", according to the Forestry Commission, is a regrowth forest, with a few large trees left for future saw-logs and with a regrowth of saplings harvested every 20 years;
- \* The conservationists are not "long-haired dole bludgers", but local farms and citizens who are educated, articulate and concerned;

Cont. on Page 2. ...

COMING EVENTS

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\*\*\*It is intended that meetings will commence promptly at 7.45 pm.\*\*\*

June 25 (Monday). Talk and slide presentation. SEEING NEW ZEALAND THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES. Presented by Julian Sheen. Some members will no doubt remember Julian's last slide presentation in June 1985 when his topic ranged from Western Australia to Sulawesi and the deserts of Arizona and Egypt. This will be another evening not to be missed.

June 30 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Ferry trip to Watsons Bay and short walk to explore South Head. On the tip of South Head sits the Hornby Lighthouse and two historic cottages, all built in 1858 after the disastrous wrecks of the Dunbar and the Catherine Adamson. The headland is part of Sydney Harbour National Park and beautiful views are obtained over the harbour. Take train from Oatley at 8.20 am; change at Town Hall for Circular Quay. Ferry to Watsons Bay departs 9.25 am, arriving at 10.05 am. Leader: Val Argall; contact on 579 1874.

July 2 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am at picnic 'castle'. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

\* Forestry workers fear the surrender of one hectare of forest would mean the end of logging in the whole forest. They doubt that 'greenies' would be satisfied with 80,000 ha national park, and point to ACF and TEC policies to end woodchipping and create a north-south Greater Escarpment National Park."

HELP FOR THE HACKING RIVER The National Parks Association (Southern Sydney) and the Friends of the Hacking River are making an URGENT plea for help. Wollongong City Council is soon to place on public exhibition its Local Environmental Plan (Draft) which could propose the doubling of the size of Helensburgh, including a 40 hectares industrial estate and 2000 more houses. This will have a devastating effect on the Hacking River, leading to increased siltation and pollution within the Royal National Park and the destruction of animal and plant communities. If this type of urban sprawl is allowed to continue, the Royal National Park will become an isolated piece of urban bushland surrounded by housing. Alternatives do exist.

Both the NPA and FOHR are trying to raise public awareness and to develop material which will influence Council and the State Government. Fund-raising stalls and training workshops have already been held. Help is still needed on monthly street stalls, through cash donations and letter writing. Any donation to NPA over \$2 is tax deductible as NPA is a registered charity. Contact Gary Schoer at 570 1813, or NPA Inc., P.O. Box 131, Sutherland 2232, OR Keith Muir, Friends of Hacking River, c/- TEC, 18 Argyle Street, Sydney, 2000, phone 247 4714.

(Members of O.F.F. made an inspection trip of the Helensburgh area on Saturday 16 June to familiarise themselves with the problems).

Betty Weekes (former OFF Committee member and editor of OFF NEWS) has written to the Society from her new home at Evans Head. She wishes to be remembered to all her OFF friends. She is still involved in conservation matters, being Hon. Sec. of the Lower Richmond Branch of the Friends of the Koala and member of The Richmond-Evans Environmental Society (TREES). In her letter she reports on the fight to protect wetland and wildlife habitat on the banks of the Evans River and the preservation of koala habitat in the area. Betty hopes that her OFF friends who are visiting the North Coast will call on her. The address is available from Keith Underwood or Ida Carder at the club meeting.

ECO DISASTER BUS TRIP TO LONDONDERRY The Nature Conservation Council is running a full-day bus trip to Londonderry (near Richmond, Nepean River) on Sunday 24 June. The purpose is to inspect the site of the proposed NSW government's major waste landfill site. This site is in a very environmentally sensitive area of bushland. The trip is a fine opportunity to visit a beautiful remnant of Cumberland Plain bushland as well as to learn more about the problems of waste management in the Sydney region.

Cost: \$15 (concessions on request). Contact Barbara Hoffman on 247 4206.



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July/August, 1990.

### EVENING FUNCTION - "WHAT CAN ONE PERSON DO?" from John Smith

On 20th June 110 people gathered at Oatley Public School Hall to hear what they could do to help the environment. The evening took the form of a speaker (Rosemary Brown of Greenpeace) followed by a lively discussion session, then a break for people to see and discuss the products and information on display. The displays were: of less-damaging products from the supermarket; of pamphlets and information from a number of sources; about composting and recycling; about buying organic fruit and veges; about cleaning your home without toxic chemicals; and about groups (like O.F.F.) that people can join.

Peoples' responses were positive, and a large number were interested in another similar function, in joining a group to order organic fruit or veges or in helping form a group to be active in "green consumerism" - finding the best products to use and telling people about them and where to get them.

Much information (including our lists of supermarket products) is available, and we are buying the video which was featured in the promotion to lend to people. We are willing to bring our displays of products and information to other groups' meetings. To follow up, we will be having a working meeting on 30th July at Oatley Public School at 8 pm. Please come along, or ring John and Adrienne Smith (579 3561) or Barbara Westbury (570 7893) or Jenny Whaite (570 9743).

### HELENSBURGH/HACKING CAMPAIGN

Those at our last meeting heard Bob Crombie tell us about the dangers of urban expansion in the Helensburgh area and the importance of expressing our immediate disapproval of Wollongong Council's draft plan for development. As a result of our requests for more information, the Friends of the Hacking River have sent details, including an aid to writing a submission. These will be available at the next meeting, but it is important to do something immediately.

Write to one or all of the following: The Hon. Nick Greiner, Premier of NSW, Parliament House, Sydney. 2000; Wollongong City Council, PO Box 21 Wollongong East. 2520; Mr. Rod Oxley, General Manager, Wollongong City Council, PO Box 21, Wollongong East. 2520.

### Some suggested points you could make

- \* Reject Wollongong Council's draft plan for urban sprawl in the catchment of Royal National Park, Australia's oldest national park;
- \* Support the call for a public hearing to review the draft plan to double the size of Helensburgh;
- \* Add all Crown lands and reserves in the catchment of the Hacking River to the Royal National Park (eg, Kellys Falls Reserve);
- \* Extend the Illawarra Escarpment Park to permanently protect the vital forest wildlife corridor between Royal National Park and the Illawarra Escarpment;
- \* Urban sprawl and industrial development at Helensburgh would severely degrade the Hacking River. Erosion and sedimentation would cover entire aquatic habitats and result in the loss of deepwater amenities for boating and swimming;
- \* Pollution controls on urban run-off are not adequate to deal with the results of urban expansion in the Hacking catchment. The Hacking River is a "Specially Protected" river and that standard must be enforced.

COMING EVENTS

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July 23 (Monday). A talk by Peter Helman, Chairman, State Placements on the National Register. A most informative night. Hear about World Heritage sites and National Estates. What areas are of world or national value and should be preserved? What is already on the list?

July 28 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Wodi Wodi Walking Track, Stanwell Park. This track, reopened in 1989, has a few steep slippery patches which are easily negotiated with care. The historic Bullock Track will also be climbed for views of Stanwell Park and the coastline. Take train from Hurstville at 8.19 am, Sutherland at 8.28 am; arrive Stanwell Park at 9.00 am. Leader Val Argall: contact on 579 1874.

August 6 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am at picnic 'castle'. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

August 27 (Monday). A night for noting in your diary. The well-known writer and conservationist Vincent Serventy.

ADDITIONAL FIELD TRIP. Bus trip to the newly opened Mt. Annan Botanical Gardens near Campbelltown. Saturday 15th September. Depart Oatley Station at 9.30 am. More details in next newsletter, but tickets will be on sale at next club meeting. Cost: \$9.00 per person. As there are only 45 seats, book early to avoid disappointment. See Alan Fairley for details.

VOLUNTEERS are needed to help or set up stalls in the campaign to protect the Hacking River and Royal National Park from the developments around Helensburgh. Those who heard Bob Crombie at our last meeting will know the urgency of this action. Contact Dr. Martin Jaffe on 525 2530 (Home).

GEORGES RIVER STATE RECREATION AREA. The Society has received a copy of the Draft Plan of Management for this S.R.A. The Plan will be carefully examined and a submission made. The closing date for public comment is 7th September.

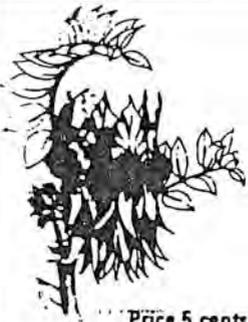
WASTE PAPER COLLECTIONS. The Society recently expressed its concern to Hurstville <sup>Council</sup> City about media reports that paper collection and recycling is on the verge of collapse because of the glut of waste paper and the consequent drop in price per tonne paid to collectors.

The Council replied that the programme is currently in total disarray and there is a prospect that it may be abandoned entirely in the near future, at least temporarily, until market forces improve. The very real fear is that the incessant disruption to the waste paper recycling service will reflect on the community as a whole and destroy the hard earned support of all residents for the current recycling programme. The Council is currently exploring avenues to overcome the problem.

Greetings have been received from Edwin and Connie Dalziel. Both are long-term members of O.F.F.; Edwin became Hon. Treasurer of this Society in 1959 and remained in that position for 9 years. Both are now involved in environmental groups in the Port Stephens area. Connie's hospitalisation after a serious fall in the garden has restricted their activities, but they hope to soon get back into the fight against development around their new home.

MAGAZINES RECEIVED. Conservation News (June 1990), featuring items on sustainable development, recycling of newsprint and pastoralism. Habitat (June 1990), featuring David Suzuki, Victoria's Mallee Parks, a dam threat near Cairns and the return of India's tigers.

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### INSPECTION OF UPPER HACKING RIVER CATCHMENT

On 16 June eight OFF members accompanied Bob Crombie of Friends of Hacking River on an inspection from the Waterfall causeway to Cedar Flats, Otford, Bald Hill and the site of the proposed development at Helensburgh. The following points impressed us:

- Royal National Park was the first proclaimed national park in Australia. It is important for the diverse habitats it contains (heath, dry and wet forest, rain-forest). It is an acclaimed ecological, educational and recreational resource. Central to its viability is the Hacking River.
- Bob demonstrated to us the changes and pressures already apparent in the river, such as sediments washed down from the coal colliery below Helensburgh, weed infestations, and erosion. Sedimentation and water quality are also affected by developments such as the Otford Valley horse riding farm.
- Bob stressed the importance of the wet forests in the south of the park as the main habitat for large animals such as wallaby and possibly potaroo. He also stressed the importance of the wildlife corridor between RNP and the Illawarra escarpment.
- The proposed development at Helensburgh will seriously affect the Hacking River, the forests and the wildlife corridor.
- Bushland behind homes in a small cul-de-sac was inspected. Stormwater and sullage drainage has led to degradation and weed infestation. It was therefore alarming to learn that all surface water from the proposed 2000 homes is to be piped to two 'sacrificial' gullies - Gills Creek and Camp Creek - which flow directly into the Hacking River.
- We visited Gills Creek which flows over the escarpment close to Kellys Falls into tall rainforest in the valley below.
- It is easy to imagine the high level of runoff to this creek from the proposed development and the subsequent damage to the rainforest below the escarpment. Included in the runoff would be household detergents, pool chemicals, weedicides, pesticides, etc.
- Apart from the direct effects on the Hacking River and the forests, Bob mentioned the additional pressures which would be placed on roads and recreational facilities within the RNP. He foresees road straightening and widening along Bertram Stevens Drive to cope with increased traffic and speed, as well as further encroachments on bushland to cope with increased recreational use.

Report from Val Argall

The Draft HELENSBURGH PLAN has been released and will be on display for public comment until 10 October at Wollongong City Council and Helensburgh Library. OFF will purchase a copy for our examination and comment; members are encouraged to comment individually.

### OATLEY BIKE TRACK

Committee members were surprised when they inspected the proposed bike track plans on exhibition at Hurstville Council. The track is to be built in three stages from Roberts Avenue tip site, around Oatley Heights Park, down to Lime Kiln Bay and around to Oatley Park. It is to be a wide concrete strip. There was no consultation with community groups (especially Lime Kiln Bay Society which has spent years restoring the native vegetation of the upper bay), no supporting documentation for conclusions about the impact on the environment, no rationale (we believe even the Bicycle Institute doesn't want it) and no reference to the State Planning Policy on Urban Bushland. OFF has made a submission, and with the support of Terry Griffiths, MP, we expect to have a meeting soon with Council's Planning Division.

COMING EVENTS

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\*\*\*It is intended that meetings will commence promptly at 7.45pm.\*\*\*

August 27 (Monday). The well-known author/conservationist Vincent Serventy will talk on Saving Australia. Vince is an entertaining speaker with a wide experience in many areas of natural history. Many of us will have copies of his books. A topic of vital importance not to be missed.

September 1 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Ferry trip on western Pittwater and a walk through Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park. Pittwater is probably Sydney's most beautiful waterway. We will catch the ferry to Lovett Bay wharf, walk on fire trails around West Head, and return to the ferry at Elvina Bay. The total walk is about 8 km. Wonderful wildflowers. Bring lunch and drinking water. Ferry leaves Church Point (Pittwater) at 10 am. Give yourself 2 hours to drive to Church Point. Return to Church Point about 3.30 pm. Leader: Alan Fairley. Contact: 570 8332. Ferry cost \$5, half price for pensioners/children.

September 3 (Monday). Oatley park flower study walk. Spring flowers. Meet 10 am at picnic 'castle'. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

September 15 (Saturday). BUS TRIP. Additional field day to the newly opened Mt. Annan Botanical Gardens near Campbelltown. A botanist will take us on a circuit of the Gardens to give us an idea of the overall plan. See specialist planting, 1100 species on Terrace Garden, the Visitor Centre opened 29 July and the Rare and Endangered flower beds. Free time to walk some of the 24 km of tracks. Picnic facilities available. Cost: \$9 per person. There are only 45 seats on the bus, so advance booking is essential. The bus is already half booked; those intending to go must have paid by next meeting (August 27). Contact: Alan Fairley, 570 8332 or see Ida Carder at the next meeting.

September 22 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Walk: Waterfall - Karloo Pool - Heathcote. Spring Wildflowers. Leader: Val Argall, 579 1874.

GEORGES RIVER STATE RECREATION AREA.

A Draft Plan of Management has been released for this park. Copies of the Draft Plan are available from the National Parks and Wildlife Service at Hurstville; the deadline for public comment is 7 September. As many members as possible should read the plan and comment on it.

This Society has made the following comments: Horseriding should be prohibited in the S.R.A.; water-skiing should be restricted to clearly defined and safe areas where bank erosion can be minimised; in view of the proposed urban development at West Menai, immediate steps should be taken to enlarge the S.R.A. and to locate rare and endangered plant associations; sand dredging in the Georges River near Little Salt Pan Creek should be phased out within 2 years and there should be no extension of dredging in the river, (currently, Quality River Sands pays a royalty to the State Recreation Area); there should be full restoration of the land-based dredge site by planting indigenous plant species.

A copy of our submission was sent to Terry Griffiths, MP for Georges River. Mr. Griffiths was asked to support the phasing out of sand dredging. He advised that it was his belief that sand mining would end in March 1991, if not before.

Publications received and available at club nights for members: \*"Sludge Management - Options for Disposal" (Water Board); \*Conservation News (July 1990); \*The Colong Bulletin (July 1990); Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union Newsletter (June 1990).

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September/October 1990.

### INCORPORATION

The Society has been officially incorporated in terms of the Associations Incorporation Act, 1984, effective from 24 July 1990.

### HELENSBURGH DEVELOPMENT

The Society has purchased a copy of the Draft Helensburgh Plan from Wollongong Council. It is being carefully examined with a view to making a submission. If any member would like to read this Plan and to make a submission (before 10 October), ring Val Argall on 579 1874.

### OATLEY BIKE TRACK

Our Secretary, Keith Underwood, has had a meeting with the Planning Department of Hurstville to discuss our concern about the proposed bike track along Oatley Heights Park. Our objections were made and Council views heard. Council welcomed our input and appreciated our expertise on managing the affected bushland.

At the last Hurstville Council meeting the matter was discussed. There is obviously some confusion about the exact route of the bikeway. Local residents have objected to it being built along the top fire trail which goes very close to their homes. Council has said it is planned for the lower fire trail, but it is only lower in the western section of the park, and is close behind houses along Waterfall Road.

At the Council it was resolved: to alleviate the level of concern from residents and local groups, that a detailed assessment of all submissions be carried out, to be followed by further investigation of the proposal by the Council's Engineering Department. An amended proposal then be prepared if necessary. Development application will then be made for removal of any affected bushland as required by State Planning Policy 19. The whole project will eventually be re-exhibited with more detailed plans for further comment. (With a bit of luck, by this stage the whole idea will be shown as the waste of money that it is). In the meantime, there will be on site meetings with residents, aldermen, Engineers Dept. and groups like ours to discuss concerns.

### BIRD ATLASSERS

We have received a letter asking us to draw members' attention to the NSW Bird Atlasers. They are a group of people scattered throughout the State who collect information on native birds to build up an accurate registrar of distribution and requirements. Further information may be obtained from the letter at Club night or by writing to Jennifer Southeron, "Old Dromana", Moree. 2400. Tel: 067 533 242.

### RECYCLING OF NEWSPRINT

How many trees make a New York Times? At last count the Sunday edition required 75,000 trees to go through the pulper. It makes you wonder how many trees were cut down to supply the paper for the last Saturday's Sydney Morning Herald. Do we need all those additional pages of advertising, or are they just totally wasted in most cases? Do we need to buy two or even one paper every day? Why not tell the newsagent that you do not want the advertising sections? The waste of paper is particularly disgraceful when we consider the lack of recycling facilities. The monthly collection of newspaper in Hurstville Municipality has even ceased. Newspapers account for 25 per cent of our national paper consumption and use no recycled paper. Newspapers are not worth the wholesale destruction of the earth's forests, particularly when recycled newsprint could, and should, replace the virgin pulp currently required. What is needed is a more responsible industry and legislation to ensure the use of the present glut of old newspapers. (Details from Conservation News, June 1990).

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Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick Street (near corner of Letitia Street), Oatley. Visitors and children are welcome at all meetings and field days. Please make yourself known as you come in.

\*\*\*It is intended that meetings will commence promptly at 7.45 pm.\*\*\*

September 22 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Walk: Waterfall - Kangaroo Creek - Karloo Pool - Heathcote. Pools and spring wildflowers. The Kangaroo Creek to Karloo Pool involves off track walking, creek crossings and rockhopping - for the sure-footed. Meet in parking area at Waterfall Station at 9.30 am. Train: from Hurstville, 9.00 am; Mortdale, 9.02 am; Sutherland, 9.11 am. Leader and contact: Val Argall, 579 1874.

September 24 (Monday). Talk by GRAEME MCKINTY, who will tell us about a successful project, TREES ON FARMS. Rural land degradation and soil erosion is seen by many as Australia's most urgent environmental problem. The planting of trees and the preservation of existing tree cover are important means to overcome this problem.

October 1 (Monday). FLOWER DAY IN THE PARK. Oatley Park flower study walk. (Yes, even though it is the long-weekend, the walk is still on). Meet 10 am at picnic 'castle' near the baths. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

October 20 (Saturday). Next FIELD DAY. Train trip to MOSS VALE. This has been a very enjoyable trip in the past. Details in next OFF News.

THREE IMPORTANT EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

1. The ann. OFF camping weekend is on 3/4th November. It may be necessary to change the venue from Blackheath to somewhere else in the Blue Mts. More details in later newsletter.
2. Annual Dinner. Evening of 24th November. A date for your diary. This year's guest speaker will be Peter Prineas, Environmentalist, author and former Director of National Parks Association.
3. November 26th - our last formal event of the year; Annual General Meeting and members' supper.

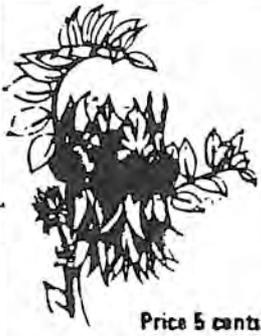
SMIGGIN HOLES

Win and Norm have again offered to open their chalet at Smiggin Holes next year from 19 January to 2 February. The chalet will be available for one or two week bookings. Keith Underwood will take the names of those who wish to make firm bookings. Please telephone Keith before 12 October or after 5 November on 570 1149.

Other happenings

- \* Did you see the wildflower display at Oatley Post Office? OFF was asked to put on a small display to coincide with the issue of the new 43 cent stamp depicting Australian wildflowers. The display used some of Alan's pressed flower collection of Oatley Park, and Ida and others mounted some very attractive pictures and posters. The display looked good and should be excellent publicity for the Society.
- \* Thirtytwo people attended our Pittwater walk for the last field day. Despite an over-cast day, the flowers in Ku-ring-gai Chase were beautiful. Especially noticeable were three species of Boronia, Eriostemon australasius, Phebalium squamulosum and Darwinia.
- \* The Annual Conference of the Nature Conservation Society will be held on the weekend of 27/28 October. OFF will be represented by two delegates.
- \* The annual Lions Club fete at Oatley will be held on October 20th; OFF hopes to have a stall, although it is on the same day as our field trip.
- \* Our last advertised speaker, Vincent Serventy, was unable to attend. After much frantic activity, our programme officer, Val Douglas, managed to get Judy Messer of NCC as a replacement. Good work, Val!! From all reports it was one of the best and most informative nights we have ever had.

Hon. President:	Val Boyan, 19 Denise Crescent, Peakhurst.	2210	533 1013
Hon. Secretary:	Keith Underwood, P.O. Box 52, Mortdale.	2223	570 1149
Hon. Editor:	Alan Fairley, P.O. Box 148, Oatley.	2223	570 8332



Price 5 cents

# O.F.F. NEWS

Published by

## OATLEY FLORA & FAUNA CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Registered by Australia Post - Publication No. NBH1041



October/November 1990

### PUBLIC MEETING ON HELENSBURGH PLAN

A public meeting was held at Sutherland Shire Council Chambers on Tuesday, 25 September to explain and discuss the Draft Helensburgh Plan. The OFF Conservation Society was represented by Val Boyan and Alan Fairley. The Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Frank Arkell, chaired the meeting and detailed explanations of the plan, its implications and the issues which arise were given by the Manager and Assistant Manager of the Planning Department. Questions and comment followed. All speakers, except one, were against the proposals.

Although the Council officers kept saying that no position had yet been taken by Wollongong Council and that the plan was put forward simply as the basis of discussion, there is no doubt that planning officers favour some type of development and that the overall concept of an expanded Helensburgh is accepted as a fait accompli. The main justification for development is that the people of Helensburgh want a shopping centre and a high school and an increased population is needed to make these possible. However, on questioning, it was agreed that a survey taken in 1986 showed 69% of Helensburgh's residents were against development and that there was no guarantee that more people would result in the construction of a high school.

It is proposed to rezone Gills Creek catchment, an area of 110 hectares, and to build 1100 homes for 3000 to 4000 people; there will also be a 40 ha industrial development in the catchment. Camp Creek may also be rezoned for less intensive development. Both Gills and Camp Creeks flow into the upper Hacking River, and therefore will be major pollution sources for the Royal National Park. About \$27 million will be spent to bring water and sewer facilities to the development. A lot of detail was given about ponds which would safeguard the water quality of the Hacking River, but with questioning it became obvious that the technology was untried and there were serious doubts about the effectiveness of such ponds.

A real fear is that the development of Helensburgh will begin a massive development of bushland between Sutherland and Wollongong, including Maddens Plains, which will eventually see bushland corridors disappear and Sydney's suburbs merge with Wollongong. The Royal National Park will then become an isolated island surrounded by houses. Although the present Wollongong Council denies that there are any hidden agendas, Council's Town Planning Committee in 1984 said that "Council's first priority is to promote the urban expansion of Helensburgh to the extent of physical land development - say approximately 30,000." The capacity for the new water/sewerage addition is about 30,000 and the 1990 Helensburgh L.E.P. considers population growth from Sydney will spill over into this area by about 20,000.

So far, 95% of all submissions received by Council have been against the plan. The closing date for submissions has been extended to 31 October. It is important that Council receives as many objections as possible.

### TREES BY THE MILLION

Members at our last meeting heard Graeme McKinty tell us about the "Trees on Farms" project, a campaign funded by the Federal One Billion Trees Program. It aims to encourage and assist rural people to re-tree their land through expert staff support, grants for projects and information and research activities. Support material includes booklets and brochures which are available at club night.

COMING EVENTS

Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick Street, (near corner of Letitia Street), Oatley. Visitors and children are welcome at all meetings and field days. Please make yourself known as you come in.

\*\*\* It is intended that meetings commence promptly at 7.45 pm. \*\*\*

October 20 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Train trip to Moss Vale via Unanderra. Beautiful escarpment scenery, waratahs and other spring flowers. Train leaves Hurstville Station at 9.20 am (look for special carriage); depart Moss Vale at 2.20 pm. Contact and leader: Val Argall, 579 1874.

October 22 (Monday). Talk on the 'ABORIGINAL ARTIFACTS IN THE SOUTH SYDNEY REGION' by Les Bursill, Head Archaeologist with the Sutherland Survey Team.

November 3 and 4. CAMPING WEEKEND. Bungleboori on Newnes Plateau. (Note the change from the printed programme). Meet at Blackheath Station on Saturday at 9.30 am (across the railway crossing near the station). Morning walk - Centennial Glen, Blackheath. Afternoon - travel to Bungleboori and set up camp. Access by gravel road. Sunday walk - Old Coach Road-Wolgan Valley-Glow Worm Tunnel-Pagoda Track - distance about 9 km. Contact: Val Argall, 579 1874.

November 5 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am at picnic 'castle'. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

"SING WITH THE WIND" - 100 BUSHWALKERS' POEMS

This collection covers the years 1902 to 1979. The poems were mainly written by bushwalkers and have been selected by Colin Gibson, a member of this Society and a veteran of the Franklin, Daintree and Southeast Forest campaigns. Colin introduces his subject with a fairly brief, but interesting summary of the history of bushwalking in the Sydney region during this century. We have a number of copies for sale at \$9 (a discount on the RRP of \$9.95). They will be available at meetings.

GREEN CONSUMERISM NIGHT

'REDUCE, RE-USE, RECYCLE' - the catch-phrase of many caring environmentalists who adjust their life-style to match their principles. The idea is very simple and the reduction in environmental damage that can result is quite substantial. However, there is a mass of products available. How do you determine what is best?

To assist in the choices and to help your own motivation, come along on October 31st. We have speakers from the Australian Conservation Foundation, Earthkeepers and the 'Cleanhouse Effect' shop. Each has some interesting things to say and some tips for you. There will be a chance to ask questions. As well, we have displays of products from local shops and supermarkets, and loads of information about life-style tips and preferred product choices. We also have a door-prize of a hamper of Green products.

WHEN: Wednesday, 31 October, 7.30 for 8.00 pm.

WHERE: Oatley West School Hall, Oatley Park Ave., Oatley.

COST: Optional \$2.00 at the door

FROM: Growing Green Consumers

CONTACT: John and Adrienne Smith (579 3561), Barbara Westbury, Val Douglas

ANNUAL DINNER

Saturday, 24 November. Peakhurst Bowling Club - 7.30 pm. Guest speaker: Peter Prineas, author and former director of National Parks Association. Tickets: \$16.00 each. Payments should be made prior to the dinner, preferably at the next club night, or contact Ida Carder, 580 5909, or Val Douglas, 580 7783.

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## OATLEY FLORA & FAUNA CONSERVATION SOCIETY



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November/December, 1990

### ANNUAL DINNER

By now we hope that everyone has purchased a ticket to the Society's main social event, the Annual Dinner. It is a night when friends can get together for a chat or you can renew acquaintances with people you haven't seen for a while. We need 100 people to attend if the night is to be a financial success and if prices are to be kept down. If you have not yet indicated that you are coming, it is not too late!! Ring Tom Chater on 570 7249 to reserve a place; payment can be made at the door.

Details. Date: Saturday, 24 November, 7.30 pm. Place: Peakhurst Bowling Club. Guest Speaker: Peter Prineas, author and former director of National Parks Association. Cost: \$16.00 per person.

### SLOW PROGRESS IN QUEENSLAND

Those who hoped that Labor's election victory in Queensland would bring a new era of environmentally responsible government are now having serious doubts. In its first eleven months of office, the Goss Government has displayed an alarming tendency to play down its environmental policies and election promises in order to stay on good terms with industry.

Rather than taking a lead on important land use decisions, the government has preferred to side-track them into long-running inquiries. There are now more than 80 inquiries, reviews and task forces going on in Queensland. One promise was to declare all Crown land areas on Fraser Island as national park and to create a Great Sandy Region national park comprising Fraser Island and an expanded Cooloola. So far Labor has failed to deliver and the island's rainforest is still being logged.

For a discussion of what is happening on Fraser Island, see the latest copy of Habitat, October 1990 (held at club meeting). This issue also has articles on guarding the Great Barrier Reef, Multi Function Polis, Biotechnology and Africa's rhinos.

### THE GREENHOUSE CHALLENGE

The following is a statement made by the CSIRO in a submission to the Australian Science and Technology Council. It partly explains why more and more people are being attracted to environmental causes and why politicians cannot afford to ignore the groundswell of green concern.

"More than any other issues, the greenhouse effect and to a lesser extent the depletion of the ozone layer, have brought home to the public the seriousness of our situation, and so pushed the environment into the mainstream of politics. Their emergence as major concerns has also changed completely community perceptions of more local environmental issues such as the protection of wilderness areas, the logging of native forests, and pollution. Until recently these were generally regarded as isolated single issues, political sideshows. Now, they have become components of a much larger issue which is challenging the economy in its political significance". (From The Colong Bulletin).

### OFF's 1991 PROGRAMME

A lot of work and time has been put into organizing a varied, interesting and informative programme for next year. Our thanks to Val Argall for her work as Field Officer and to Val Douglas for getting speakers for club nights. What other organization can plan 12 months in advance - and usually without any hiccups, foul-ups or mess-ups? The printed programme will be available at the first meeting after the Christmas-New Year break.

COMING EVENTS

Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick Street, (near corner of Letitia Street), Oatley. Visitors and children are welcome at all meetings and field days. Please make yourself known as you come in.

\*\*\* It is intended that meetings commence promptly at 7.45 pm. \*\*\*

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 November 24 (Saturday). ANNUAL DINNER. See details on front page.

November 26 (Monday). ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING followed by members' slides and supper. Presentation of reports on the Society's activities and progress over the past year; election of new committee; discussion and general business. At the end of the AGM slides will be shown. Bring along about 10 of your favourite slides—perhaps of trips, flowers or beautiful places. Members have been to a wide range of places in the past year, so there should be plenty of interesting pictures. Please bring a plate of food to help with supper.

\*\*\* A note from Nancy Beattie — there will be no Oatley Park flower study days in December, January or February. They will resume in March 1991.

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 \*The Society has been busy over the past month. Val Boyan and John Smith represented OFF at the annual Nature Conservation Council; Val Douglas and Alan Fairley had an OFF stall at the Oatley Lions Day; Val Douglas represented us at the Growing Green Consumer night at Oatley West School; Val Boyan and Keith Underwood met with the Environment Minister, Tim Moore, and local Councillors to discuss Georges River problems.

\*The Moss Vale train trip was a great success. Val Argall reports that 43 members and friends attended.

\*At its last meeting, OFF committee agreed to donate \$300 to the NCC to help pay for a parliamentary Liaison Officer; \$50 was also donated to ACF to support their endangered species programme.

\*Two publications have arrived which may be of interest to members. The first is information from GUTS (Committee for Urban Transport Sanity); the second is a Water Board report on the Special Environmental Programme outlining how your \$80 environmental levy is being spent. We have also received a news release from the Premier, forwarded by Guy Yeomans, MP, giving some information on the recently announced South East Forests Agreement. All these will be available at the next club meeting on the back desk.

\*We have had some recent contact with the people who operate The Cleanhouse Effect, an environment shop at 345 King Street, Newtown. They sell a wide range of environmentally safe products, including paints, varnishes, laundry and cleaning products, natural soaps, recycled paper products and energy efficient light bulbs. They stock only products which are unlikely to damage the environment during manufacture, use or disposal, don't cause unnecessary waste and do not use materials derived from threatened species. One tenth of the shop's profits is returned to environmental groups and research. In a society which is increasingly becoming aware of waste, pollution, toxicity and Greenhouse Effect, it is pleasing to see some people doing something practical to protect our world and to educate consumers into a conservation ethic.

\*Some good news. The N.S.W. Government has passed legislation banning mining in national parks. The Very Fast Train syndicate has opted for an inland route via Canberra and the Hume Highway, avoiding cutting through the Gippsland wilderness.

\*Nattai National Park. For many years conservationists have hoped that the Nattai would be made into a national park. The proposal covers 75,000 ha, with a wilderness core of 30,000 ha; it extends from the southern Blue Mountains east to the Southern Highlands around Mittagong and would help protect Lake Burragorang, Sydney's main water supply. The area contains dramatic cliff-lined gorges, extensive river flats, unusual and rare plants and abundant wildlife. The NPWS have been working on the proposal, but you can help speed up the matter by writing to the Premier, urgently requesting that the Nattai be made a national park with a wilderness core.

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