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O.F.F. NEWS

Published by

OATLEY FLORA & FAUNA CONSERVATION SOCIETY

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January/February 1991.

GEORGES RIVER ENVIRONMENT MEETING

Following the inspection of local parkland and Georges River foreshores to gain a first-hand knowledge of environmental problems (as reported in the last OFF News), a meeting of all interested parties was called by Terry Griffiths, MP for Georges River. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss submissions on specific projects which might be funded from the NSW Government's new Environment Trust Scheme and to allocate the projects in priority for consideration. It is estimated that there will be about \$2 million State-wide for allocation, and Terry Griffiths is anxious that some of this funding is available to worthwhile projects in Georges River.

The meeting was held on 17 December. Oatley Flora and Fauna was represented by our new President, Graham Quint, and by Alan Fairley. Other OFF members (Joan Aston, John Smith) were present but representing other organizations, such as Lugarno Progress Assoc. and Growing Green Consumers. Hurstville City Council was represented by the Mayor, Marie Ficarra, and the City Engineer. Other groups represented were Lime Kiln Bay Society, the National Trust Bush Regeneration Scheme, Georges River Trust and Southside Montessori Society.

With such a diversity of groups, opinion was varied about what projects should receive priority for funding, given it is unlikely that all submissions will be accepted. After much tossing around of ideas, the meeting unanimously decided to support the following:

1. Salt Pan Creek Foreshore Scheme - with focus on Riverwood Park, improving access, connecting Riverwood with the walks on the Bankstown side of Salt Pan Creek and a study into the sources of rubbish and pollution into the Georges River;
2. Bush regeneration projects, with special emphasis on Riverwood Park. A survey and cost estimate is to be made by the National Trust for bush regeneration teams in Lime Kiln Bay, Gungah Bay Reserve, Bay Road (Oatley) and Lugarno bush remnants;
3. One-off grant to extend Hurstville Council's facilities for propagating native tree species to assist in a Tree Replacement Program for the area.

Each of these projects will be developed into a submission and discussed further at a future meeting. Representatives came away pleased with the meeting and confident that some positive steps had been made towards improving the local environment.

SEWAGE UPDATE

Guy Yeomans, MP, has forwarded to the Society a press release on the early indicators of success which the Malabar deepwater ocean outfall is having on the condition of Sydney's southern beaches. It includes bacteriological data to support the view that there has been a "dramatic improvement in water quality at Sydney's beaches". However, it is still recognized that the same sewage continues to be pumped into the ocean, four kilometres offshore. Fay Sutton, ACF Councillor, has some interesting comments on this matter in the Nov. 1990 ACF Newsletter. These views will be printed in a later OFF News. It is also hoped that we can arrange an inspection of one of the sewage treatment works; Guy Yeomans is co-ordinating the arrangements.

COMING EVENTS

Meetings are held 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.***

February 4 (Monday). FIRST MEETING FOR 1991. Come along and say hello to everyone after the break. Collect your yearly programme of OFF activities. Members' slides, followed by supper. Bring up to 15 of your best slides (perhaps of recent trips); also a plate of food for supper. The Hon. Treasurer will be available to collect renewal membership fees.

February 25 (Monday). Sue Salmon of Australian Conservation Foundation will talk on Sustainable Development. Following the hugely successful talk by Dr. Judy Messer in 1990, there have been numerous requests for a similar evening. Sue Salmon comes highly recommended.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL. Fees are now due. The A.G.M. approved the following fees: \$10 for full membership; \$7 for concession. Fees include subscription to OFF NEWS (11 issues a year) and a programme of activities. You may renew directly at the next club night OR send a cheque to: Hon. Treasurer, P.O. Box 52, MORTDALE. 2223.

MINING BAN IN NATIONAL PARKS. Unfortunately, the recent legislation which promised to ban mining in NSW national parks has not lived up to its stated objectives. Despite its name, the Act is not what it seems. Conservation groups have condemned its provisions to guarantee existing rights for companies to mine in national parks and to give new rights to the government to mine in national parks.

CREEPING URBANIZATION OF COASTLINE. The Nature Conservation Council has strongly criticized the NSW Government for its policy (or lack of it) on coastal conservation. Its media release says that "creeping urbanization is posing a great threat to our coastal heritage. Land is being rezoned for urban and semi-urban development from Tweed Heads to Bega in the name of economically attractive tourism developments. For instance, a \$1 billion tourist and residential complex has been approved for the Eden area. A 20,000 population increase is predicted for the proposed Japanese city near Kingscliffe in northern New South Wales. Not to be outdone, the Hastings 2000 Project envisages a new city of 100,000 people." The NCC is concerned that the NSW Government is providing the impetus for these projects to proceed prior to the long-promised release of the Coastal Policy Framework.

CANE TOAD CONTROL. The cane toad was introduced into Australia in the 1930s and has since become a major pest in Queensland. There is a real threat to the Top End and its spread must be stopped or it will gain access to World Heritage areas of Kakadu National Park. The CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology plans to send two scientists to tropical America to study the toad in its natural home and to seek out possible pathogenic viruses to use against it. The work will investigate what are the natural predators of the toad's eggs and larvae, which are apparently unmolested in Australia.

SAVE SYDNEY HARBOUR. Vince Serventy, well-known conservationist and writer, has launched a Save Sydney Harbour campaign. He is calling for *No more sales of public foreshore land into private hands *Every opportunity to be taken to repurchase foreshore land as it becomes available *Maps showing foreshore public areas should be made available by local councils to all ratepayers *Open space areas should be linked where possible by boardwalks *A Sydney Harbour Conservation Authority should be set up, responsible for the ecological and aesthetic aspects of harbour conservation. The Save Our Harbour group can be contacted through Vince, at 8 Reibby Rd., Hunters Hill. 2110. Phone 817 3705.

Hon. President:	Graham Quint, 16 Evans Street, Peakhurst.	2210	534 3239
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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IS YOUR GARDEN A WEED NURSERY?

Community co-operation is needed to stop the spread of weeds. Some weeds can be quite attractive and are widely grown in gardens, but they spread far and wide into vacant lots and local bushland, displacing native vegetation. This spread is costly to control and very destructive to our unique environment.

The spread of weeds takes place in several ways. Birds, animals, wind and water carry seeds into bushland where they germinate; dumped garden litter and lawn cuttings also spread weeds. Some weeds, like Pampas Grass and Rhus Tree, are totally prohibited, and people with these plants on their property face fines of \$1000 or more in NSW. Problem plants include Cape Ivy, Large and Small-leaved Privet, Ochna, Madiera Vine, Morning Glory Balloon Vine, Honeysuckle, Wild Olive, Wandering Jew, Bitou Bush, Crofton Weed, Fishbone Fern and Asparagus Fern.

We should look carefully at the types of plants we have chosen to grow, and if necessary replace the 'problem' plants. There are considerable advantages to be gained by growing native plants; they are drought resistant, attract native birds and reduce the need for insecticides.

THE COST OF WEED REMOVAL

Some idea of the expense involved in removing weeds from bushland can be seen in recent estimates from the National Trust for a team of bush regenerators to work in a reserve for about 12 months. During this time primary weed clearance should be completed but continued follow-up and maintenance would be necessary.

Area 1: Bay Road, Oatley - cost of a team for this project: \$35000.

Area 2: Lime Kiln Bay, Oatley - also \$35000.

Area 3: Blackbutt Avenue, Lugarno - also \$35000.

The cost of a five year regeneration project for Riverwood Park could be as much as \$135000.

Multiply these local figures by the number of reserves in Sydney, then throughout Australia, and you can see that the eradication of community weeds and the regeneration of our native bushland is a massively expensive task.

GEORGES RIVER FORUM As reported in last OFF News, this Society is part of a coalition of environmental groups planning to make submissions for funds to improve the environment of the Georges River. Work on these submissions is under way and another meeting with the Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Tim Moore, is planned for 18th March.

OATLEY PARK FIRES Oatley Park has had five fires sweep through the bushland in recent weeks. There is obviously one or more fire-bugs at work. Areas burnt included patches of the Black-eyed Susan (Tetratheca neglecta). Oatley Park is a major stronghold of this rare and endangered species, and we will be anxious to see if individual plants regenerate.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL. Fees are now due. The A.G.M. approved the following fees: \$10 for full membership; \$7 for concession. Fees include subscription to OFF NEWS (11 issues a year) and a programme of activities. You may renew directly at the next club night OR send a cheque to: Hon. Treasurer, P.O. Box 52, MORTDALE, 2223.

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February 25 (Monday). Sue Salmon of Australian Conservation Foundation will talk on Sustainable Development. Following the hugely successful talk by Dr. Judy Messer in 1990, there have been numerous requests for a similar evening. Sue is the ACF Campaign Co-ordinator, and has been for 3 years. In that time, she has worked on the Greenhouse Effect, ozone depletion, coastal development, forestry issues and pulp and paper industry. She works presenting submissions to governments, lobbying ministers and putting ACF's position to industry. Sue is also Deputy Convener of the Board of Environmental Defenders Office. All these experiences should result in an interesting and informative evening.

March 2 (Saturday). Field Day to JIBBON in the Royal National Park. Meet at the Bundeena Ferry Wharf, Cronulla, at 9.15 am. Ferry leaves 9.30. It is intended to walk in a circuit around Jibbon Head. The track is eroded in places and lined with prickly plants, so you are advised to wear long-sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Bring swimmers and drinking water. At the end of the walk, there will be an optional viewing of a gemstone collection in Bundeena. Leader: Mamie Clark. Contact: 546 3570.

March 4 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am at picnic 'castle'. For more information ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

SMIGGINS FOR THE SIXTH TIME.

(Note by Harry Whaite).

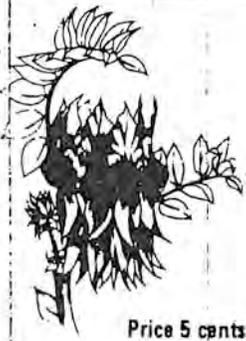
In January, Norm and Win Tonkin again opened Smiggins Chalet for the benefit of O.F.F. members and their friends. Over the years, I have noticed increasing independence by individuals and small groups who are 'doing their own thing'. This has taken quite a load off those of us who for some reason have come to be regarded as the leaders.

In both weeks we had the usual mixture of good, bad and indifferent weather. Whilst the first week was reasonably warm, rainy and often windy, the second was mainly fine, cold and windy. Visits were made to old favorites such as the escarpment above Rainbow Lake (Diggers Creek Dam), the Porcupine, Kosciusko summit, Blue Lake, White's River hut (and Schlink Pass), Mount Tate and North Rams Head. A trip on to Rams Head itself was curtailed by uncertainty and lack of time, and to Mount Twynan because of the weather. New trips included Thompson's Plain, Dead Horse Gap via the Crackenback Chairlift, Charlotte Pass to Mount Stillwell and beyond, the Waterfall Trail at Sawpit Creek, and a boat trip on Lake Jindabyne.

The highlight of the first week was the appearance of the 'Smiggins Players' at considerable no-expense. Our primary (and kindergarten) school children banded together to produce three five-minute skits which were presented before nightly slide showings. They were highly applauded.

We thank Norm and Win for having made the Chalet accommodation available, and hope they will be able to do so again next January.

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Hon. Secretary:	Keith Underwood, P.O. Box 52, Mortdale.	2223	570	1149
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March/April, 1991.

MORE ON HURSTVILLE'S STREET TREES

Hurstville City Council has commissioned consultants to undertake an environmental assessment of the street tree management of Hurstville. Leader of the consultancy team, Helen Armstrong, spoke briefly to OFF members at last meeting to explain the purpose of the survey and to appeal for community involvement.

The assessment will involve a complete survey of trees in Hurstville, including street trees, trees in parks, garden trees and trees on foreshore peninsulas. The consultants intend to run a workshop with the people of Hurstville to identify the problems and develop solutions. To be most effective, the workshop will need to represent all the different interest groups in the community.

The workshop will enable people to discuss what makes up the character of Hurstville, how street trees contribute to the environment, what problems exist, what are the best ways of dealing with overhead wires and how much different techniques cost. The workshop will conclude with a set of strategies derived from all interested members of the community.

At this stage, it is planned to have the workshop on Sunday, 24 March, at Suites 1 and 2, Entertainment Centre, Hurstville Council Chambers, from 10 am to 4 pm. All OFF members who are residents of Hurstville City are urged to attend. For confirmation and information, contact Mr. Chris. Little, City Engineer on 579 6222.

MORE ON HELENSBURGH DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The Helensburgh District Protection Society reports that the Helensburgh Study is due before Sutherland Council sometime in March. Total objections to the plan have been 3434; support 164. The major points of objection are: (a) need to protect the Royal National Park and the need for a buffer of protection; (b) the effect on the water quality of the Hacking River; (c) the ineffective ponds proposed for the development; (d) other environmental issues, such as loss of trees, Aboriginal sites affected, industrial pollution; (e) inadequate roads and infrastructure; (f) destruction of village life.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

At our last meeting OFF members heard Sue Salmon of ACF talk about the concept of sustainable development. Other views on this topic are presented in recent publications received by the Society. In Colong Bulletin No 123, Professor Brian Marshall defines S.D. as "the catch-cry of those who seek to improve the community's standard of living by growth in GDP per capita, whilst concurrently adopting 'sound/responsible' environmental policies." In Nature Conservation News (Sept 1990), the NCC expresses the view that the planet and its ecosystems cannot withstand further development based on the exploitation of non-renewable resources; in other words, "there is no such thing as sustainable development". The NCC prefer the term "ecological sustainability". A third article on this topic is by Ted Trainer (our speaker for April). In a wide ranging discussion about economic growth, limits to growth and sustainability, he comes to the conclusion that the only solution is in a "radical conserver society in which we develop settlements and lifestyles that provide all people with a high quality of life on very low and stable levels of resource consumption".

Each of these articles will be available at the next meeting on the back desk.

COMING EVENTS

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March 23 (Saturday). Field Day to Middle Harbour and Bantry Bay. It was intended to walk the eastern side of Bantry Bay from Seaforth Oval, but this area was burnt out this summer. We will now walk the tracks from Roseville Bridge to Bantry Bay, returning via Killarney Heights. Distance is about 8 km return. The track follows the edge of Middle Harbour, which is a delightful area within Davidson State Recreation Area. We'll call in at Flat Rock Beach and skirt around the old ammunition depot on Bantry Bay. There are fine views over Bantry Bay, which has the cleanest water in all of Sydney Harbour. (The depot is not open to the public). Return over the ridge through the suburb of Killarney Heights. About a 4 hour walk (with lunch). Leader: Alan Fairley; contact on 570 8332. Meet 10 am in Davidson Park beside Middle Harbour under Roseville Bridge. If travelling by car from Roseville, access to the park is awkward as there is no right turn and you must go up the hill towards Forestville and make a U-turn. There are buses from Chatswood Station to Roseville Bridge.

March 24 (Sunday). Clean-up Day: see details below.

March 25 (Monday). The return of Michael Spence. Michael has shown his excellent slides and amused us with his descriptions of his trips through India on two previous occasions. He was so popular that members have requested more. This year's topic: Back to the Raj.

April 7 (Sunday). O.F.F.'s contribution to Heritage Week. This year's theme for Heritage Week is "Save the Bush", with emphasis on remnant areas of native bushland. We will conduct two guided walks in Oatley Park for the public and OFF members.

Walk 1: 10 am to 12 midday. Meet Oatley Park entrance, Oatley Park Avenue. Leader, Alan Fairley, will take a walk through the various habitats of the park with emphasis on wildflower identification.

Walk 2: 10 am to 12 midday. Meet corner Waterfall and Acacia Sts., Oatley West. A member of the Lime Kiln Bay Society will lead an inspection of plant regeneration work, and walk along the mangrove zone of Lime Kiln Bay.

April 8 (Monday). The regular monthly Oatley Park flower study walk; this month it is part of Heritage Week activities. Meet 10 am at the picnic 'castle'. For more information, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

NATIONAL CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN - Sunday 24 March.

The Clean Up Australia Committee is planning a clean-up of waterways on March 24. Oatley Flora and Fauna has agreed to participate and will clean up the Lime Kiln Bay mangrove area.

Members who are willing to help are asked to meet at 9.30 am at the corner of Bay and Dame Mary Gilmore Roads, Oatley. Bring gloves and wear protective shoes; a rake could be useful. About two hours participation is required.

NOTE ON FIELD DAY IN APRIL

The April 22 field day is to inspect Dr. Ted Trainer's self-sufficiency property along the river at East Hills (from 2 pm). Dr. Trainer has requested that we inform him of how many people will be arriving so he can make suitable arrangements. If you intend to be present on that day, please inform Val Douglas at the next meeting (March 24) or ring her on 580 7783.

FOLLOW-UP TO SUE SALMON'S TALK

At last meeting, Sue Salmon mentioned the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in June 1992. Sue left OFF members a copy of notes on the agenda for that meeting. They will be available from the desk at the next meeting.



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April|May, 1991.

EDITORIAL

FEDERAL LABOR DISAPPOINTS

Given that the green vote in last Federal election made such a decisive difference in the results, few people would have imagined that Labor's environmental performance would be so disappointing. It was with a feeling of betrayal that many conservationists heard about Canberra's move to introduce forestry resource protection legislation. Such a policy is designed to entrench the loggers in native forests and to give loggers areas of old growth forest which should be protected and available to be enjoyed by the whole community. The action clearly illustrates the hollowness of Labor's promises, its lack of commitment to environmental issues and the sell out of its ideals to the short term needs of the recession and the forces of economic rationalism.

Pressure must be kept on Labor politicians to show them that green issues are important and that to ignore them would mean a loss of votes. They must carry the message to Canberra that environmental protection is still a major concern amongst voters. Our local M.P., Gary Punch, has been slow to respond to letters asking him about his attitude to 'Resource Security', although it should be noted that Frank Walker, former State MLA for Georges River and now Federal Member for Robertson, has clearly stated his opposition to Forestry Resource Protection and has argued that position within the Party.

(The views expressed above are those of the Editor and not necessarily those of OFF Cons. Society Inc. The Editor invites comment on the issues raised.)

Georges River Forum

Submissions have been finalised to apply for grants to improve local bushland areas. Graham Quint and John Smith represented the Society at an inspection day where members of the Forum took the Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, to view the various sites for which money has been applied. The Minister seemed impressed with the level of organization concerning the submissions. Closing date for the applications for the grants is 10 May. It will be interesting to see what level of financial support is forthcoming.

Community Forum

Alan Fairley and John Smith represented the Society at a forum at Hurstville Council Chambers called to discuss and give community input to the study being carried out on street trees of Hurstville City. About 30 members of the public attended as well as a number of landscape design students. (Not bad for an all-day Sunday session which clashed with Clean Up Day). The City Engineer, Mr. Chris Little, was in attendance for the whole day. The team of consultants, under the leadership of Helen Armstrong, has mapped all the street trees in Hurstville and all the streets which have overhead wires. Much of the morning session was spent discussing attitudes to tree lopping and gauging feelings about different types of plantings along streets. Practical issues, such as costs of lopping, replanting, wire bundling and underground wiring, were examined. We now wait to see if the consultant's report, when finally presented to Council, contains many of the ideas presented at this meeting.

COMING EVENTS

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April 22 (Monday). An evening with Dr. Ted Trainer, Lecturer at Uni. of NSW. Ted will talk on his favourite topic, THE TRANSITION TO A CONSERVER'S SOCIETY. Re-think your ideas on recycling, re-use, town-planning, energy conservation and everyday living.

April 27 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Inspection of Dr. Trainer's self-sufficiency property along the river near East Hills. Numbers restricted to those who have already informed Val Douglas as requested in the last OFF News. Meet 2 pm in the park beneath the rail bridge at East Hills.

There will be a 2 - 2½ hours morning walk along tracks on the Pleasure Point side of the Georges River, looking at some of the bushland areas proposed for urban development. Meet 10.30 am in the park beside the river beneath the rail bridge at East Hills. This is within easy walking distance from East Hills Station. We will be returning to the riverside park for lunch.

(Dr. Ted Trainer is one of the most outspoken critics of the growth ethos. He is an expert on global eco-sociological problems. He has written a number of books including Abandon Affluence, Developed to Death, Let's Scrap Economics and There are Alternatives. Ted has worked to develop an educational site for introducing people to sustainability themes.)

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

May 27 (Monday). Gary Schoer asks the question 'Who were the Aboriginal people south of Botany Bay?' - hear some answers.

17-19 May: ENVIRONMENT AND RECYCLING EXHIBITION at Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour. Open from 10 am to 6 pm, Friday to Sunday. The exhibition will feature the latest in practical solutions to today's environmental problems. There will be displays from Federal and State Governments, Local Councils, environment groups and commercial groups. On Friday, 17 May, over 5000 school children are expected to visit Darling Harbour where they will view the schools Recycling Poster Competition winners. There will also be plays, poems and songs on stage during the day, all with a green theme.

Activities Up-date

*30 members and friends attended the field day to Bantry Bay. It was a fine sunny day; the scenery was beautiful and company pleasant.

*10 keen OFF members trooped through the mud of Lime Kiln Bay on Clean Up Day. More than 20 bags of rubbish, plus tyres and other large junk, were hauled out of the mangroves.

*Our President, Graham Quint, met with Hurstville City Engineer to discuss proposed drainage works at the river end of Gungah Bay Road, Oatley. This followed Council's concern about doing work and potential damage to natural bushland. It is good to see that Council is now more aware of the need for community consultation and of its responsibility to protect our local environment.

OVERDUE SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Treasurer (Harry Whaite) wishes to thank those who rang up and/or paid up when he sent out reminders with the March OFF News. There remains only a hard core of non-communicators. Will they please contact him, either by letter to 15 Freeman Ave, Oatley, or by telephone (580 6459) re their intentions?

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Hon. Secretary:	Keith Underwood, P.O. Box 52, Mortdale.	2223 570 1149
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RENEWED THREAT TO NATURE CONSERVATION

National Parks and Wildlife Service, Nature Conservation and the NSW Planning System under attack. Comment by our President, Graham Quint.

The announcement by the Premier of New South Wales of his allocation of portfolios in the new State Ministry and the implications of this action for nature conservation and the planning system in this State are of great concern to O.F.F. The National Parks and Wildlife Service will be virtually dismembered. It is to become simply and National Parks Service, losing its Wildlife, Wilderness and new national park investigation responsibilities. These functions will be taken over by a 'Policy Unit' in the Ministry of the Environment.

Additionally, the control of State Recreation Areas will be taken from the NPWS and given to National Party Minister for Conservation and Land Management, Garry West, who will also control the former Department of Lands, the Forestry Commission and the Soil Conservation Service. The operations of the Water Boards throughout NSW will become the responsibility of the Minister for Housing. The Water Board had formerly opposed a number of outer Sydney housing development proposals because of their likely impact on the environment.

The National Party's Ian Causley has been appointed as the new Minister for Natural Resources, controlling the old Department of Mineral Resources, the Fisheries Division of the old Department of Agriculture and the Department of Water Resources. The Fisheries Division has also opposed various developments because of their anticipated adverse impacts on waterways and water fauna. National Party MP Gerry Peacocke has been appointed the new Minister for Local Government, and the National Party's Robert Webster is the new Minister for Planning.

With the exception of Tim Moore's Environment Ministry, all those Ministries relating to the natural environment and the vital Planning and Local Government Ministries have all been allocated to the Coalition's junior partner, the National Party. (The National Party has 17 seats in the Lower House compared to the Liberal Party's 32 seats).

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is based at Hurstville within the region of activity covered by OFF. As members of the Society we each share an extra special responsibility to act to protect the Service from these unprecedented attacks and to speak up when nature conservation itself is under major threat.

Members of OFF are requested to write urgently (in the next few days) to your local State Member of Parliament putting your own viewpoint and seeking his/her support and representations to the Premier and ministerial colleagues. Parliamentarians gauge the level of community concern on such matters by the number of individual letters they receive from their constituents. This may be the best and only opportunity to rectify this situation. If you are sufficiently concerned to write, please let us know so that the Society can itself determine the level of support for this vital campaign.

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June 24 (Monday). Stephanie Strange gives an insight into ANTARCTICA. Stephanie shows some stunning slides of this unique wilderness from icebergs and penguins to human impacts on this fragile and beautiful environment. Seen from a tourist's point of view, but through the artistic eyes of an expert photographer.

June 29 (Saturday). MIDDLE LANE COVE RIVER. Suburban bushwalk. Meet 10 am at the Lane Cove River end of Joubert Street, Hunters Hill (near the old Fig Tree Bridge abutment in Joubert Street). The walk includes the west and east banks of the river and features urban bushland, waterside industries and some historic homes. Distance is about 13 kms, with a few steep grades. More information from Keith Underwood, 570 1149.

July 1 (Monday). Oatley Park flower study walk. Meet 10 am at the picnic 'castle'. If in doubt because of weather, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

July 22 (Monday). Bird-man Jim Frances will talk on BIRD MIGRATION.

HELENSBURGH SUCCESS: HISTORIC WIN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Our Society has supported the long-running battle to protect the environment of the Upper Hacking River catchment and to prevent overdevelopment of the township of Helensburgh. This issue was reported in OFF NEWS in June '89, June '90, July, '90, Aug '90, Oct '90 and March '91. It is pleasing to report that Helensburgh District Protection Society and its supporters have had a major victory.

On 29th April, Wollongong City Council voted 9 to 6 against the Helensburgh Plan. In its decision the Council decided:

- * not to proceed further with urban expansion into the Gills Creek or Camp Creek catchments;
- * to support the continued development of Helensburgh by growth of up to 40% over the current population level by increased density within the existing town boundaries;
- * to rezone non-urban land as Environmental Protection (Hacking River);
- * to develop (with the State Government) guidelines on pollution control and to reduce the existing pollution levels entering Hacking River.

MORE GOOD NEWS

Urban Action, the newsletter of the NSW Urban Environment Coalition, reports three successes for the environmental movement.

Mona Vale. The ridgetop between Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and Davidson S.R.A. (In the vicinity of St. Ives Showground) had been threatened with development which would have alienated an important wildlife corridor between the two reserves and destroyed rare plants. A Land Assessment report, recently released, recommends that Crown Land bushland be preserved.

Londonderry tip. On 26th March the State Government reversed its decision to build Australia's largest landfill tip at Londonderry near Penrith. The victory was the result of an 18 month campaign by residents and Penrith City Council.

Seven Mile Beach sandmining. After a 3 year campaign, local residents and councils have beaten a massive sand extraction proposal at Seven Mile Beach, on the south coast near Gerroa. The battle ended in the Land and Environment Court. Over 50 hectares of hind-dine forest were to be excavated to obtain 3.45 million tonnes of sand for construction fill.

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August/September, 1991.

FOCUS ON SYDNEY SEWAGE

On Saturday, 14 September, O.F.F. has arranged an inspection visit to Malabar Sewage Treatment Works, commencing at 2.30 pm. Meet outside the Works at Fishermans Road, off Dacre Street, Malabar - on the left hand side of Fishermans Road. Please ring Alan Fairley on 570 8332 or see him at the next meeting if you intend going. Alan will be leading a short walk in the morning at La Perouse through Botany Bay National Park to Cape Banks. Meet 9.30 am in front of Bare Island entrance, La Perouse. Bring a picnic lunch. After lunch we will drive to Malabar.

The following article about Sydney Sewage was written by ACF Councillor, Fay Sutton, and appeared in ACF Conservation News.

"In 1980 the Sydney Water Board decided to send the effluent from the Malabar, Bondi and North Head sewage works a few kilometres offshore via three underground tunnels. The Malabar outfall is now operating and the other two will be commissioned in several months. The outfalls will keep most of the sewage away from the beaches most of the time by trapping it in the cooler layers of ocean. The deep waters which we are now starting to pollute rarely come up to the beaches, so we can soon expect the beaches to be much cleaner. Unfortunately for the ocean's inhabitants, the same amount of pollution goes out of the distant outfalls as used to go out from the cliff face.

The Water Board and State Government are to be congratulated for their acknowledgement that ocean disposal of virtually untreated effluent is unacceptable. In response to public pressure, they now plan to upgrade the treatment works to secondary standard in the years to come. This will then mean that huge quantities of sludge will be filtered from the sewage before it is released to sea. The problem is that Sydney's sewage is contaminated with industrial waste such as heavy metals, organochlorines, etc., so the sludge cannot be used as fertiliser.

The most harmful component of the sewage is the industrial waste, so industry must be prevented from discharging to the sewer. The Government will probably argue that it cannot accomplish that and will prefer to intercept the pollution at its treatment works and then incinerate the toxic sludge. This is an undesirable compromise although it may be some improvement on earlier plans to simply let the pollution go out to the ocean. We cannot let the public think that just because the beaches are cleaner, we are no longer polluting the ocean. The Government says it is committed to achieving an 'equivalent' of secondary treatment. The task ahead for environmentalists is to pressure the Government to prevent toxic waste from entering the sewers and to remove all sludge from ocean outfall effluents."

GREEN INVESTMENTS

On World Environment Day 1991, the Australian Conservation Foundation launched Australia's first green investment bond. It is the result of a joint venture between ACF and the Over 50s Friendly Society. The purpose of the bond is to enable investment that is both financially sound and environmentally responsible. It follows the success of similar funds overseas. The smallest initial investment is \$1000. The bond has low charges, no redemption fees and is readily accessible. Further information can be obtained on the toll free number 008 033 262

COMING EVENTS

Meetings are held 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.

August 26 (Monday). Come touring the game parks of Africa. Slides and talk by Victor Gage.

August 31 (Saturday). FIELD DAY. Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, - walk to Bobbin Head. Depart Chase gates, North Turrumurra, at 10.15 am and walk via the Warrimoo Track to Bobbin Head. After lunch return via the old road, visiting Aboriginal rock engravings. Distance about 10 km with reasonable grades. Train departs Oatley Station 8.20 am; change at Central for 9.03 am to Turrumurra. Then 9.55 am bus from the station to Chase Gates. For those travelling by car, there is parking near the Chase Gates, either inside or outside the National Park. Instead of the return walk, you may wish to return by bus from Bobbin Head to Turrumurra; it departs at 2.15 pm. Leader and contact: Janet Aitken, 790 2211.

September 2 (Monday). Spring Flower Day in Oatley Park. Flower study walk. Meet 10.00 am at the picnic 'castle'. For more information, ring Nancy Beattie on 523 7458.

***Special Activity: Saturday 14 September. Morning walk, followed by inspection of Malabar Sewage Treatment Works. For details, see over page.

***Annual Dinner: A date to enter into your diary. This year's OFF Annual Dinner will be held at Peakhurst Bowling Club on 16 November 1991.

CHAE LUNDI FOREST ISSUE

State laws have been very selectively applied at Chaelundi. Over 200 arrests to allow logging stand in contrast to State Cabinet's rejection of the Environment Minister's attempts to make an Interim Protection Order safeguarding the area's two dozen endangered animal species. Conservationists have had to take three separate actions in the Land and Environment Court to invoke protective measures under the Environmental Planning and Assessment, Heritage and National Parks and Wildlife Acts. These Acts should have been used by the State's administration as a matter of course. Perhaps, one day, police may be mobilised to protect endangered species!

MORE WILDERNESS UNDER THREAT

The Colong Committee reports threats to three more areas of wilderness in N.S.W. In the Nattai Valley there is an application to construct a two storey building which will dominate the valley and be seen from viewpoints above it. (This follows the refusal of an application to have a market garden and logging operation on the site). Another application has been made for a house on a site 15 km west of Yerranderie, a spot surrounded by national park land and within the Water Board catchment area. Nadgee, the only remaining coastal wilderness, is also threatened. Mt. Nagah, overlooking the wilderness, has been selected by O.T.C. as the site for an installation which will be visible for several kilometres. Locals are protesting about the lack of access to beaches and the restrictions on control burning within the wilderness.

PUBLICATIONS

NSW Wires Newsletter (Winter 1991) contains interesting articles on the role of foxes as predators on native animals and on legislation for the protection of native fauna in NSW.

Wildlife Australia (Winter 1991) contains items on logging in East Gippsland, the discovery of a lost possum and Australia's wildlife trade.

Habitat Australia (Vol. 19, No. 3) is devoted to Aboriginal perspectives on conservation.

Hon. President:	Graham Quint, 16 Evans Street, Peakhurst.	2210	534	3239
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Sept X



O.F.F. NEWS

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OATLEY FLORA & FAUNA CONSERVATION SOCIETY



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WATER BOARD FUNDING FOR BUSH REGENERATION

The Water Board has accepted O.F.F.'s submission for Special Environmental Programme funding to repair and regenerate the bushland in Gungah Bay Reserve. This is the large and important bushland remnant west of Oatley Station, behind the Bowling Club, and bounded by Waratah Street, Mulga Road and the bay. The creek which runs through the reserve is particularly in need of attention. The construction of the sewer line many years ago helped introduce weeds to the gully and urban run-off and work by past Councils have added to the problem.

The Water Board has approved a three year bush regeneration contract for the site. It is envisaged a minimum of 4,000 person hours will be spent on bush regeneration and target weed control in the reserve. The work will include the whole reserve but concentrating on the creekline, gully slopes and Water Board impacted areas. It is expected to begin this month and be completed by June 1994. During this time, the Board will work with Hurstville Council and OFF to develop a management strategy for Gungah Bay Bushland Reserve.

GEORGES RIVER FORUM

The Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, has responded to Terry Griffiths' letter regarding the failure of the Georges River Forum to gain grants from the Environmental Trust Grants scheme (see last OFF News). The letter pointed out that there were 575 applications for grants and 57 were awarded. Grants were made by Technical Committees, who assessed the "practicability and overall worthiness" of each application. Mr. Moore suggests that we should "re-examine our applications and apply again next year when there will be an expanded pool of funds".

FRIENDS OF THE-BAT NIGHT

Members may be interested in an evening with the flying foxes at Gordon on Saturday, 2 November, being organized by the Friends of Bats. Visitors will meet at the Baptist Church Hall, Park Avenue, Gordon at 5 pm. Meet new-born bats and inspect a restoration project. Refreshments at 6 pm. (bring a plate). A guest speaker on Flying-foxes at 6.30 pm., followed by a walk to watch the bats fly out of the valley. Entrance fee: \$2.00 per person.

THE GREEN KITCHEN

- The Water Board has issued some practical suggestions to help 'green' your kitchen. Under the slogan THINK BEFORE YOU PUT IT DOWN THE SINK, their list of DON'TS includes:
- Don't pour oil and grease down the sink. They are difficult and costly to process and this cost will come back on you;
 - Don't overuse chemical cleaning products and bleaches. They kill the treatment bacteria in the sewerage system and may prove harmful to human health and the environment;
 - Don't tip tea leaves, coffee and milk down the sink;
 - Don't install an in-sink garbage disposal unit. Food scraps can join tea and coffee on the compost heap;
 - Don't let taps leak. A drip a second is 7,000 litres a year.
 - Don't wash up four times a day when twice will do.

Some DOs next month.

COMING EVENTS

Meetings are held 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 28 (Monday). JERVIS BAY. Talk and slides. Hear what is happening to this beautiful part of the NSW coast. An area where conservation issues are clearly focused - development vs preservation, national park vs military usage, tourist paradise vs paradise lost. This talk will be followed up by a field trip to the area on the weekend.

November 2 & 3. WEEKEND CAMPING TRIP TO JERVIS BAY. Meet at Currawong Camping Area, 18 km south-east of Nowra, on Saturday morning. Allow 3 hours for the drive from Oatley. Afternoon activities will commence at 12.30 pm. For further information, contact Val Argall, 692 4218.

November 4 (Monday). Flower Day in Oatley Park. Flower study walk with Nancy Beattie. Meet 10.00 am. at the picnic 'castle'. For more information, ring 523 7458.

November 16 (Saturday). ANNUAL DINNER. This year's Annual Dinner will be held at Peakhurst Bowling Club on November 16th (7 pm. for 7.30 pm.). Our guest speaker is Ms Julie Whitfield, Parks Manager, Woollahra Municipal Council. Cost: \$16.00. Please book as soon as possible by contacting Tom Chater on 570 7249. We need 100 people minimum to break even; past dinners have been pleasant, with charming company and interesting speakers. Don't miss this opportunity to mix and chat with your friends.

SMIGGIN HOLES

There are still vacancies for both weeks (18 January to 25 January, and 25 January to 1 February) at Smiggin Holes. Enjoy a week of summer walking in the Snowy Mountains. Contact Keith Underwood on 570 1149.

1992 DIARIES

We now have only 4 National Parks of Australia Diaries left. These make ideal gifts for overseas friends. Priced at \$9.00 each, they are excellent value. Reserve yours by phoning Alan Fairley on 570 8332.

RIVERWOOD PARK

Following our disappointment at missing out on the Environmental Trust Grant for Riverwood Park (as reported in last OFF News and picked up by the Leader in an article on 3rd October), we have applied for funds through the Greenspace Program. This application is with the support of Hurstville City Council, which will be required to provide funds on a \$ for \$ basis.

ANNUAL DINNER RAFFLE

It has been traditional for members to donate groceries/delicacies for the raffle at the Annual Dinner. Val Douglas (580 7783) is again calling on the generosity of members for any items you might wish to contribute.

RECENT SUCCESSES

The Society's first Spring Flower Night was judged by all as a great success. There was a large attendance, including many new faces. Thanks to all those who helped on the night, especially the expert speakers and those who brought along plants. It will probably become a regular part of the Society's calendar.

The outing on 14 September to La Perouse and Malabar Treatment Works was extremely informative and interesting. The group was taken underground to inspect the various stages of treatment. After the inspection we could appreciate some of the problems faced by the Water Board and what moves they are making to improve our environment.

ECOS - Spring 1991

The Society subscribes to this excellent magazine from CSIRO. This edition contains articles about the impact of ozone thinning, the ghost bat and growing vegetables in mulch. The magazine is available at the desk at club night.

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More Menai Bushland Under Threat

Representatives of OFF joined National Parks Association and others on a recent inspection of the land under threat at Lucas Heights-Menai. The Waste Management Authority wishes to rezone Crown bushland between Heathcote Road and Bardens Ridge downstream from the existing waste depot to establish a new tipping facility. Major conservation groups and resident groups are opposing the proposal. An Environmental Impact Statement will be on public display at Sutherland Council in December and interested people are invited to make a personal submission on the proposal to Sutherland Council, P.O. Box 17, Sutherland, 2232.

Here are some points made by the NPA about the conservation value of the land. A flora and fauna survey made by Kevin Mills and Associates (March 1990) for the 'Proposed extension of the Lucas Heights Regional Waste Disposal Depot' has identified some of these values. The area contains at least nine significant native plant species scattered over 100 locations within a one and a half by one kilometre area. Rare plants include Hibbertia nitida, Tetratheca neglecta, Melaleuca deanei and Lomandra fluviatilis. On our recent inspection we also found a large stand of Allocasuarina diminuta, a plant with a very scattered distribution in the Sydney area and rarely seen.

Mills report identifies 5 different vegetation communities; some, like the Stringybark/Ironbark forest, have high conservation value. Add to this 250 native plant species, 80 bird species, sugar gliders, feathertail gliders and an apparently large population of swamp wallabies in the gullies, and the arguments are compelling why this area should be added to the new Georges River National Park.

The Waste Management Authority is pushing ahead with their rezoning plans. Without a creative waste minimisation strategy, the WMA sees no alternative. Without a massive public outcry, we can wave this pristine patch of local bushland goodbye. It is every bit as valuable as that at Londonderry. You are encouraged to speak up for it. Write letters to the local papers and to your local member. For more information, contact Gary Schoer, Secretary of Southern NPA on 570 1813.

THE GREEN KITCHEN (Part 2)

More practical suggestions from the Water Board to help green our household.

- Do use a sink strainer;
- Do use detergent sparingly and ensure it is biodegradable;
- Do investigate 'natural' cleaners, such as bicarbonate of soda;
- Do use a plug, otherwise it is just water down the drain;
- Do use cold water instead of hot to rinse hands and dishes;
- Do fully stack the dishwasher. (Do you really need a dishwasher?);
- Do have a container on hand for used cooking oil;
- Do separate garbage (vegetable matter can be used for garden compost; recycling of tins, bottles and paper will reduce the amount of land-fill space needed and save areas like the Menai bushland);
- Do use energy-efficient and water-saving appliances.

Local Bushland Funding

Representatives of the Society were present on 11th November when Terry Griffiths, MP, presented cheques to Graham Quint for the two successful grant applications under the Environmental Trust Scheme. Successful projects were bush regeneration at Lugarno Parade (\$1870) and Cedar Street, Lugarno (\$6000).

COMING EVENTS

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November 25 (Monday). A special for the last meeting of 1991. Something different.

Chris Pratten, well-known to conservationists from his work on the National Trust and Nature Conservation Council, will tell us about another of his interests in a talk entitled 'Nature Walkabout' with Neville Cayley & Son, Ellis Rowan, the Royal Worcester Porcelain Co., Minton, and other English Pottery.

The talk will be followed by a supper. Please bring along some festive fare, such as cake, biscuits, sandwiches, nuts, sweets, to make the last meeting of the year a memorable one.

*** THERE WILL BE NO MEETING, FIELD DAY OR OATLEY PARK FLOWER DAY IN DECEMBER OR JANUARY. THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE THE A.G.M. ON 3RD FEBRUARY.

Jervis Bay camp-out

Thirty-two members and friends attended the camping weekend at Currawong, Jervis Bay, on the weekend of 2/3 November. Saturday afternoon was spent walking in Abraham Bosom's Reserve, to Mermaids Inlet and around Coomies Circuit. Apart from the beautiful weather and spectacular views of inlets and cliffs, a highlight was the large number of wildflowers, especially the pink flowers of Leptospermum rotundifolium and the various Melaleucas. On Sunday we drove to Point Perpendicular for a walk around the cliffs, to Devils Gorge and to Long Beach for lunch. Wildflowers were in abundance, especially in heathlands which had been burnt last year. Grass Trees (Xanthorrhoea minor) were flowering magnificiently, and there were lots of Kunzea, Xyris, Callistemon, and other delightful surprises. Everyone was impressed with the area and agreed with our last speaker, Dr. Paul Adams, that the public lands should have national park status.

Special Thanks

One of the essential behind-the-scenes members helping to produce this newsletter is Fiona Sutch. Fiona has done the photocopying each month. Unfortunately (for us), Fiona is about to move from the area. We thank her for her invaluable support.

Which means --- we need a volunteer to run off the newsletter each month. There are 11 issues a year, with 240 copies per issue. OFF will pay for costs of paper and other incidentals (to be negotiated). If you are able to help, ring Alan Fairley on 570 8332.

Georges River National Park

We have been advised by Terry Griffiths, MP for Georges River, that the Georges River State Recreation Area will become a National Park. This decision follows concern that SRAs were to be removed from the control of the Minister for the Environment and given to the National Party's administration of CALM (Conservation and Land Management), the former Lands Dept. The government has reassessed the conservation-recreation values of these areas and has decided to make most into national parks. This means that their conservation values are better protected.

Additions to Society Library

At the last meeting, our guest speaker, Dr. Paul Adams, donated a number of publications which will be available for loan at future meetings. They are: Coastal Wetlands of NSW, a survey and report, with 41 maps.

NSW Rainforests - The Nomination for the World Heritage List, Paul Adams for National Parks and Wildlife Service.

A sunburnt Country: Europeans and the Australian Environment. A lecture by Paul Adams to Durham University, 1988.

A Field Guide to the Common Shelled Molluscs of NSW Estuaries, a Coast and Wetlands Society publication.

Copies of Wetlands, Journal of Coast and Wetlands Society, including a special issue on Jervis Bay.

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