



AUSTRALIA'S BUSHFIRES DEVASTATE NATIVE WILDLIFE AND BUSHLANDS

Australians, and the world have been shocked and saddened by the extent and ferocity of the recent bushfires. Whilst the media has focused (quite rightly) on the loss of life, property destruction and the efforts and tenacity of the firefighters, another loss has taken place which is equally as tragic. This is the destruction of vast areas of natural habitat, from tall eucalypt forests to coastal heath and alpine woodlands. National Parks and Nature Reserves, which protected important ecosystems have been reduced to ash.

With this destruction comes the decimation of the bushland's inhabitants - its koalas, wallabies, possums, other marsupials, birds, reptiles and insects. And who knows what effect the fires have had on endangered species, such as the potoroo and ground parrot? The shrubs and tree cover of the bushland will eventually recover, but there is no certainty that the animal life will regain its numbers and diversity. As conservationists we must promote wise decision-making in the post-fire period and hope that our natural environment continues to be managed in a scientifically based and sympathetic manner.

We encourage members, as well as making donations to relief agencies, to also donate to wildlife rescue and rehabilitation organisations. An easy way to ensure that your donation goes most effectively to rescue groups is to follow the NCC's (Nature Conservation Council) advice and donate to [NSW Wildlife Council's Wildlife Drought and Fire Recovery Fund](#), or the [Australian Wildlife Society's Wildlife in Fires appeal](#). OFF is a member of the NCC and is confident that funds will be distributed to a range of wildlife rescue groups as needed.

OFF has donated \$100 to the Koala Hospital, Port Macquarie and \$100 to F.A.W.N.A., Port Macquarie (For Australian Wildlife Needing Aid). Also, thanks to the members who have undertaken to regularly deliver food, water stations, feeders and handmade pouches to Wildlife Rescue South Coast and Shoalhaven Bat Clinic. These have been generously donated by Oatley IGA, Fruit Box Mortdale, Ace Gutters as well as local residents, and are much appreciated. Members are also welcome to donate to these causes at www.wildlife-rescue.org.au/.



The following link may be useful, in understanding the impact of the recent fires: www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/parks-reserves-and-protected-areas/fire/park-recovery-and-rehabilitation/recovering-from-2019-20-fires/understanding-the-impact-of-the-2019-20-fires

SNOWY MOUNTAINS JANUARY 2020 TRIP CANCELLED

OFF has had a tradition of organising a week for its members in the Snowy Mountains over summer. At this time of the year, the alpine flowers are putting on a magnificent display and combined with the much cooler weather than in Sydney makes for a great week enjoying the beautiful scenery and the pleasant company of fellow OFF members.

Unfortunately, the threat of bushfires caused the NPWS to close the park and so disappointingly for those OFF members who had booked accommodation they had to cancel their reservations. Hopefully, we will return in 2021.

NOTICE OF AGM AND CALL FOR NOMINATIONS TO JOIN OFF COMMITTEE

Best wishes for 2020 are extended by the 2019 Committee to all our members and friends. The first meeting for the year will be the Annual General Meeting on Monday, 3 February where the 2020 office bearers and Committee will be elected. Come along to the meeting for a report on OFF activities and accomplishments over the past 12 months. This is your chance to comment on activities, management and direction of your society.

Meeting start time is 7.30 pm. Also, a reminder that we are calling for members to form a new Committee for 2020, you are invited to nominate at the meeting.

MYLES DUNPHY RESERVE FLYING FOXES

During the recent hot weather there was a "heat stress" event in the flying fox camp located in the reserve. This led to the death of some animals, including young. It is normal for flying foxes to come low in extreme heat, but they can become stressed and panic if people go near them.



We therefore ask that members and the public assist in the recovery of the colony as follows:

1. Avoid the reserve on any day where the temperature exceeds 40 degrees.
2. Do not attempt to handle any flying foxes.
3. Call WIRES on 1300 094 737 if you have any concerns.

ST GEORGE COMMUNITY AWARDS 2019

OFF members Melissa Derwent and Debbie Andrew received awards at the 2019 St George Community Awards late last year. They both received Environmental Achievement Awards, while Melissa also received an Individual Volunteer Achievement Award for her work with Hike it Baby. Congratulations to both for their wonderful contributions to our community

DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH PETITIONS

At OFF's meetings and alongside our successful annual sale of calendars at stalls in Oatley and Mortdale prior to Christmas, there were a considerable number of signatures collected for two important petitions:

1. Saving old growth forests from logging
2. Against coal mining under southern Sydney water catchments.

The Committee extends its thanks to all OFF members, and the many non-OFF members for their signatures of support.

2020 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Subscription is still only \$25 per person or family (living at the same address for the year).

Coming OFF Events in January/February 2020
OFF Full Year Events Calendar at: off.oatleypark.com/program

3 February 2020 – OFF Annual General Meeting

Our first Monday meeting for the new year will be the Annual General Meeting. Hear reports about what OFF has been doing in the past year, followed by the election of a new committee. Following the AGM there will be an opportunity to show photos of recent OFF trips.

Reminder: The Society is looking for someone to manage the OFF Website and a new OFF News Editor.

24 February 2020 – Presentation on Transitioning to Sustainable Farming, by Vince Heffernan

This meeting will feature Vince Heffernan - a lamb producer who in the last 15 years, has converted his father's conventional sheep farm to a sustainable farm based on biodynamic principles see: <http://www.moorlandslamb.com.au/>. Vince is also the Chair of the Upper Lachlan Landcare Group, an Ecologist and Regenerative Agriculture advocate. <https://www.upperlachlanlandcare.org.au/>. He is based in Dalton and comes to Sydney 1-2 times each month to sell his outstanding produce at Everleigh Markets.

1 March 2020 – Advance Notice Clean Up Australia Day

This year OFF will be cleaning up the edges of Lime Kiln Bay. Meet at Jinna Reserve, South Peakhurst (at the bottom of Pamela Avenue) any time between 8.30 am and 12.00 noon. Bring waterproof shoes, hat and gloves.

Meetings of the society are held at the Oatley RSL Club Sub-Branch Hall, 25 Letitia St, Oatley (adjacent to main building) from 7.30 to 9.30pm, usually on the fourth Monday of the month. Visitors are welcome at meetings and field days.

BRIEFLY SPEAKING

MYLES DUNPHY STREAMWATCH details Heather Stolle 0425 291 879. This activity usually takes place on the Tuesday morning (9.00 am) after OFF General Meetings. New volunteers always welcome.

LOCAL BUSHCARE Members can assist by volunteering to maintain OFF planting sites. Ring Matt to confirm dates and site locations on 0408 605 923.

On Thursday 30 January, 2020 weeding and planting work will be done at Boorea Reserve (River road near railway underpass) from 8.00 am -11.00 am.

OFF FACEBOOK PAGE

In case you weren't aware, we are on Facebook at Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society. The page is updated regularly with news and photos and you are welcome to send in any items of interest. To follow us on Facebook, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/OatleyFloraandFauna?>



OFF ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2019

| Income and expenditure statement | 2019 | 2018 |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Subscriptions | \$3921.02 | \$3600.00 |
| Donations | \$2608.94 | \$1721.00 |
| Sales stalls etc | \$546.00 | \$141.00 |
| GRC Grants various | \$8000.00 | \$6750.00 |
| Interest | \$0.00 | \$722.14 |
| Annual dinner | \$1765.00 | \$1672.00 |
| Calendar sales 2019/2020 | \$5295.34 | \$1806.00 |
| Lions loan for calendar | \$0.00 | \$3000.00 |
| Bird cards | \$363.80 | \$39.00 |
| Miscel income | \$0.28 | \$1591.30 |
| EDO & other payments | \$549.65 | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$22,950.04 | \$21,042.44 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| OFF newsletter print/post | (\$1210.49) | (912.99) |
| Insurance | (\$390.00) | (\$495.00) |
| PO box rental | (\$130.00) | (\$127.00) |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Brochure printing various | (\$146.40) | (\$477.75) |
| Dept Fair Trading | (\$46.00) | (\$95.00) |
| 2019 calendar repay loan | (\$3131.00) | (\$3214.00) |
| Donations/M'ship other bodies | (\$700.00) | (\$895.26) |
| Annual dinner | (\$1520.00) | (\$1482.00) |
| Calendar expenses | \$0.00 | (\$3561.80) |
| Grants expenditure | (\$38669.75) | (\$3131.73) |
| Equipment | (\$189.57) | \$0.00 |
| Research grants | (\$6000.00) | (\$4386.00) |
| Lions stall | (\$150.00) | (\$150.00) |
| EDO and other payments | (\$940.65) | \$0.00 |
| Miscellaneous | (\$95.29) | (\$1484.05) |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | (\$53,319.15) | (\$20,412.58) |

SURPLUS (\$30,369.11) \$629.86

BANK RECONCILIATION

| | 2019 | 2018 |
|--|--------------|------------|
| Chq Acct balance (1st Jan) | \$50600.31 | \$14970.45 |
| Surplus on year | (\$30369.11) | \$629.86 |
| Chq Acct (31 Dec) | \$20231.20 | \$50600.31 |
| Term deposits | \$8651.38 | \$8490.07 |
| Total bank balance (31 Dec) | \$28882.58 | \$59090.38 |
| Grants held for other organisations | \$38.72 | \$3866.27 |
| OFF grants (unspent) | \$9404.00 | \$36404.00 |
| Loan from Oatley Lions | \$0.00 | \$3000.00 |
| Net Balance for OFF (total held less unspent grants) | \$19439.86 | \$15820.11 |

Notes: The substantial deficit is almost totally a timing issue for the \$30K grant we received in 2017 and spent in 2019. So the deficit here is offset by the \$37K surplus we had in 2017.

The best way to determine the position of the organisation is in the balance of cash at the bank without the Grants monies included. This shows the total going from \$15,820 at Jan 1st 2019 to \$19,439 at Dec 31st 2019.

Rodger Robertson , Hon Treasurer OFF