



FIELD TRIP TO THE BAIRNE TRACK, KU-RING-GAI CHASE NP

Sunday 28th February was a beautiful day, inviting all OFF members outdoors to enjoy the natural beauty of Ku-ring-gai National Park. Adrian Buzo led the walk which followed the Bairne Track out to some stunning views overlooking Pittwater, Scotland Island and Sailors Bay. The bush was serene and decorated by wildflowers of various kinds, a large (one metre-plus) goanna raised his head to check us out then moved on. Only six members turned up for this rich experience, 2% of the OFF membership. Yet we as a group have travelled to Ku-ring-gai several times in the past. This lack of support is worrying, disheartening and discourages members from organising field trips in the future. Julian Sheen

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY SUNDAY 7th MARCH.

Our site this year was Poulton Park in the vicinity of Morshead Drive, South Hurstville. Fifteen OFF members were delighted to be joined by ten members of Oatley Lions and two members of the GRC Poulton Park Bushcare group. 22 bags of rubbish and 4 bags of recyclables (including 2 bags of beverage containers suitable for Return and Earn) were collected. By comparison, at the same site in 2013, we collected 20 bags of rubbish and 11 bags of recyclables; this demonstrates the success of the container deposit scheme. Some notable rubbish items were a double bed wire frame and at least six soccer balls. Several people took OFF brochures and programs, including a young family independently collecting rubbish who happened on our site; they had found a \$10 note which was going to pay for a special treat of ice-cream.

DAY OF ACTION FOR KOALAS!

Koalas in NSW are at risk of extinction like never before. It's time to take a stand. In 2021, koalas need you to be their voice. We need to tell the pollies we won't back down until there's no more clearing of koala habitat - for the timber industry, for new suburbs, for anything.

Join the Save Our Koalas Day of Action rally and march, beginning in Hyde Park Sydney, near the Archibald Fountain and marching to mega-developer Lendlease's Sydney office.

Get creative with your own placard or grab one available on the day. Remember to take photos and help create a storm on social media! If you are on Twitter help #SaveOurKoalas to trend, so let's make it happen using #SaveOurKoalas and #SaveSydneyKoalas

Meet at **Hyde Park Sydney at 11am on 21st March** near the Archibald Fountain, then march to Lendlease's Sydney office in Barangaroo.

The Nature Conservation Council NSW, Bob Brown Foundation, Extinction Rebellion, Total Environment Centre, Save Sydney's Koalas, National Parks Association and more will be there. As well as you!

You can indicate you are coming at:

catefaehrmann.org/koalas_DOA_21032021 **RSVP NOW**



WONGAWILLI COLLIERY, MODIFICATION 2 PROPOSAL

Wollongong Coal Ltd (WCL) is seeking approval for a 5-year extension to their coal mining operations at their Wongawilli Mine to build their proposed North West Mains Driveage, comprising four tunnels extending about 8 km further into the Metropolitan Special Area of the Sydney Water Catchment and will go under the Avon Reservoir.

OFF submitted an objection to the NSW Planning Department on this proposal based on the impacts on water, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impacts. If this application is successful, further mining can be expected in future as WCL's stated intention is as follows "Approval of the modification will enable the NWMD to be completed, and during this period Wollongong Coal propose to seek separate approval to mine within the North West and South West Domain utilising the existing Wongawilli pit top infrastructure with a 30 year mine life."

In effect this application is the 'thin end of the wedge'. If we are to take effective action on reducing global Greenhouse Gas emissions it must start now. OFF recommend the application be rejected or at least any approval that might be granted be conditioned to ameliorate the above impacts on water supplies and the environment.

SNOWY 2 TRANSMISSION LINES

Snowy Hydro have gone out to public consultation with a proposal for a double row of massive overhead transmission towers to cut a swathe 8km long and with up to a 200m cleared vegetation easement right through Kosciuszko National Park!

A campaign to have the transmission lines placed underground seems to be gaining traction, as highlighted in these articles:

- Independents band together on KNP powerlines
- Outrage over Snowy 2.0 transmission line concession in Kosciuszko National Park



Example of possible outcome.

Snowy Hydro is also facing an uphill battle, struggling against mounting costs for its landmark Snowy 2.0 hydropower project, the global economic downturn affecting energy prices, and poor short-term rainfall projections:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-29/snowy-hydro-scheme-credit-rating-downgraded-rainfall-cost-blowout/12713252>

GREATER SYDNEY LANDCARE NETWORK PLANTING (GSLN)

and Landcare NSW, with funding from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), are partnering with Land Managers across Greater Sydney (GS) to plant 100,000 trees to improve ambient temperatures, habitat, connect green corridors and improve biodiversity. OFF has partnered with GSLN, with participation of Georges River Council, to plant 150 trees in 3 local reserves as part of this Creating Canopies Program.

You can assist this work, starting at **8am on 24 March**, at Henry Lawson Reserve, Peakhurst (between Henry Lawson Drive and Jacques Avenue). Enter from Jacques Ave. On completion of planting at this location we will then move to Peakhurst Park near the corner of Trafalgar St and Pearce Ave. Bring water and snacks, wear a hat and suitable clothing. Tools will be supplied. Need more info? Phone Kim Wagstaff on 0437 791 988.

Send an email to the decision makers today and Say NO to Overhead Transmission Lines in Kosciuszko National Park. Your email will also count as a submission for the Kosciuszko NP Plan of Management public consultation.

Coming OFF Events in March/April 2021

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

We have returned to face-to-face meetings, starting at 7.30pm, in the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick St Oatley. Meetings will also be available on-line, using the video conference application Zoom, which you can download for free via this link: <https://zoom.us/> or from Play Store (Google) or App Store (Apple). You should run a test before meetings to ensure you can connect on the night. If you are on the OFF News email list, you will receive an invitation prior to meetings or use the link in the meeting details. See below for more details of the arrangements for this meeting.

Note that some OFF presentations and earlier movies can now be found on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCd_PLK8og40D0ekuYAys3lQ

22 March 2021 — Environmental drivers of woody plant structure form the coast to the desert

One of the three recipients of the 2021 OFF Research Grants, UNSW Post-grad student Jingyi Ding will be presenting on Woodland structure and function in response to increasing aridity. Jingyi will talk about how the structure of Australian trees and the soil fertile islands formed under vegetation change as environments become drier and how the relationship between biodiversity (e.g., tree, soil microbes) and ecosystem functions change with different vegetation communities. Based on field surveys from the Sydney coast to Cameron Corner across NSW, her research aims to provide implications on the response of Australian ecosystems to predicted drier climates.

For this meeting there is no need to pre-register, as the maximum capacity limit of the hall has been increased under the recent relaxation of COVID19 rules.

If you're using ZOOM, please login before 7.30pm: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3742141020?pwd=i_daK5memiUVeVb7bERqr5WgKybj2w

28 March Sunday – Unexpected animal habitats and heritage landscapes -south-western Sydney

Meet at Campbelltown at 9:30 am, car pool and visit nearby reserves that are known habitats for koalas and squirrel gliders in the morning. The walk will include a wander past the ruins of the old Glen Lorne estate with its homestead ruins, beautiful trees, and dams remains built before 1832. This activity is easy. For the more intrepid, in the afternoon, we will go onto Dharawal National Park nearby to walk down with an optional swim in one of the best swimming holes of O'Hares Ck. The walk in and out is short but very steep. The activity has been structured as easy in the morning, and hard in the afternoon. Pat and Barry Durman, will be our local koala guides, together with Geoff Francis. The Campbelltown Art Centre also has interesting exhibitions.

Numbers are limited, so contact the walk organiser to book and for exact meeting point details. Sharyn 0421 714 391.

Meetings of the Society are at the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick St Oatley from 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm, usually on the fourth Monday of the month. Visitors and accompanied children are welcome at meetings and field days. As noted above, the meeting is also accessible on-line.

COVID requirements and information for attendees at the hall

A yoga class uses the hall immediately prior to our OFF meeting and surfaces will have been wiped clean

Do not attend if you feel unwell

Check-in via the QR code or the sign-in book (for those without smart phone and/or COVID app.)

Hand sanitiser will be available. All attendees are requested to wear a face mask

Seats will be arranged to facilitate social distancing.

Attendees should remain seated for the duration of the meeting

Please wait until you are outside the Hall before having a chat.

Members who have not renewed their 2021 membership are reminded that fees are now due.

BRIEFLY SPEAKING

OATLEY PARK BUSHCARE group is normally on second Saturday each month starting 12.00 pm, except January. Meet at the entrance on Oatley Park Avenue. New participants welcome, please contact John Kensett - GRC Bushcare Officer, m: 0435 963 643.

LOCAL BUSHCARE Members can assist by volunteering to maintain OFF planting sites each month on the Thursday after general meetings (except December) at 8.00 am. On Thursday 25 March, we will be working at Boorea Reserve, supervised by a GRC Bushcare Officer.

STREAMWATCH Details Heather Stolle 0425 291 879. This activity usually takes place on the Tuesday morning (9.00 am) after OFF General Meetings. This month we will be at Myles Dunphy Reserve on 23 March.

FORMER OATLEY BOWLING CLUB PLAN OF MANAGEMENT AND MASTERPLAN

Georges River Council has prepared a Draft Plan of Management and Masterplan for the former Oatley Bowling Club and Closed Road, Oatley. They are inviting the community to provide their comments/feedback on the draft to help Council finalise these documents. The Drafts will be on public exhibition from 3 March 2021 to 31 March 2021. You can view the plans at:

- <https://yoursay.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/former-oatley-bowling-club-plan-of-management-and-masterplan>, or
- Georges River Civic Centre, MacMahon Street, Hurstville, between the hours of 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, or
- Hurstville and Clive James libraries, within library hours

Council will also be hosting a webinar to ensure everyone has the opportunity to ask questions and have their say about the draft Plan of Management and draft Masterplan. The webinar will be held on **16 March 2021**. To register please [click here](#).

This has been a long-running issue for the Oatley community. OFF will make a submission, to seek good environmental outcomes and to minimise detrimental impacts on Myles Dunphy Reserve. Members are also encouraged to make submissions, which close on 14 April.

THE ROAD TO SAVING AUSTRALIA'S REGENT HONEYEATERS

The world watches with bated breath as the future of one of our most endangered birds hangs in the balance. (OFF has previously assisted ANU PhD Student, Ross Crates, with Regent Honeyeater research.)

<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/wildlife/2021/01/the-road-to-saving-australias-regent-honeyeaters/?fbclid=IwAR3XeuSmUJtSFPpOwTX-6xU7JwrcGHJXNYQs-hoM25hrPIQrfm9ZTGSFbX0>.