



LIFTING THE VEIL ON THE UNIQUE WILDLIFE OF NORTH WESTERN INDIA

At the OFF meeting on 24th May David Waterhouse shared photos and stories of the wildlife he encountered in Gujarat and Rajasthan in January 2019. His presentation was easily heard by the audience in the hall.

David travelled in the cool weather season of NW India (December to February) and visited open plains, forests and wetlands in national parks, reserves and sanctuaries. He discovered Gujarat had a big tourist industry (pre-COVID) that attracted many Indians as well as overseas visitors, and acknowledged the help of Alan Fairley and St George Travel in planning visits to lesser-known locations.

David said the experience and keen sight of his driver and local guides helped him see some rare and unpredictable mammals and birds such as Laggar Falcon and a pack of Indian Wolves. His own skill in spotting wildlife was also valuable. He commented that the fauna seemed generally undisturbed by human interference. David photographed large flocks of Greater Flamingos, Eurasian Cranes and Eurasian Spoonbills in the wetlands; large mammals in drier areas included Wild Asses (in the Little Rann of Kutch), handsome Blackbuck with elegant spiral horns, Asiatic Lion and Tiger. Some of the birds were familiar to David because they migrate to the UK; one was the attractive and quaint Hoopoe whose flight he described as resembling that of a giant butterfly.

David's knowledge and appreciation of fauna world-wide was evident in his talk and he has written evocatively of African wildlife in his publication "Experiencing Wild Africa".

PLANTING DAY AND DESALINATION TOUR AT KURNELL

On 15 June OFF members and representatives from Helensburgh's Symbio Wildlife Park combined forces to plant more than 400 gums from 3 species. The planting was arranged by Colin Storey on empty land at the Kurnell Desalination Plant and when established will be a regular food source for 11 Symbio koalas.



After lunch - members went on a very interesting tour of the Desalination Plant. It was a very successful day and contacts were made with Symbio hopefully leading to a Symbio visit and working on more projects together.

UPDATE ON GLENLEE, LUGARNO

A developer has lodged an application to subdivide this estate into 31 lots, demolish buildings, remove trees and build roads. The farm is of immense social, cultural, historical and ecological value. A recent on-site community meeting attracted more than 100 concerned residents as well as Mayor Kevin Greene and Cr Colleen Symington. Many people spoke on the importance of the environmental and historical factors. Glenlee has tall eucalypt bushland which provides a home to echidnas, swamp wallabies and endangered wildlife, as well as rich vegetation. Glenlee is also notably significant for its signs of indigenous occupation and a legacy of early Australian history. If you haven't already written a submission, please do so – send to GRC at mail@georgesriver.nsw.gov.au For help go to OFF's web [site Save Historic Glenlee](#) page for OFF's submission and others already made.

If you would like to see this property saved as a public reserve including public access to the Georges River foreshore, please also consider signing Mark Coure MP's Glenlee Petition ([Glenlee Petition.htm](#)) as well as this petition to the NSW Legislative Assembly: [Signing ePetition \(nsw.gov.au\)](#) and write to Federal member David Coleman david.coleman.mp@aph.gov.au



A GOOD NEWS STORY - A NEW NATIONAL PARK - Environment Minister Matt Kean's announcement of a new national park near Broken Hill is the largest ever acquisition for the national park estate at 153,415 ha. It is in the far north west corner of NSW, just east of Tibooburra. The Bulloo River is a feature with an expansive floodplain and vast wetlands. There is a wide variety of ecosystems, including aeolian dunes, acacia and saltbush shrublands, sandplain and chenopod grasslands, gibber rises and coolabah lined channels. There are also mapped 39 Plant Community Types and more than 25 threatened fauna species. There is also significant Aboriginal and European history.



OFF FACEBOOK PAGE

Don't forget the OFF Facebook page, which is full of interesting stories and photos. Members can also contribute to this page by forwarding items to the administrator by sending a message to the OFF Facebook page. At the top of the OFF page click on



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

28 June 2021 — *Habitat use by arid birds under land management and drought related stressors*

Simon Gorta, ecologist, UNSW research assistant and OFF research grant recipient will discuss his research, conducted in semi-arid Sturt National Park, and the adjacent pastoral properties of Lindon and Bollard's Lagoon Stations in South Australia over the dingo fence, during the height of the drought in 2019. He investigated how the bird communities in the region persisted during the drought and in response to the dingo fence separating the national park and pastoral properties, studying their abundances and community composition compared to similar studies in wetter, more resource abundant times. Simon is interested in how animals respond to environmental cues, and how to use our understanding of these responses to better manage our ecosystems.

4 July Sunday. *Palm Jungle Loop Track in Royal National Park*

Medium to hard walk, 10km round trip. Meet 9:45am at Garawarra Farm carpark. We will head down the track to Burning Palms beach, then up the coast track through Palm Jungle to Werrong lookout (steep uphill ascent last 20 minutes). If we're lucky we may get to see whales out to sea travelling south. Then we walk back along the Garawarra Ridge path to the carpark. Bring lunch, snacks and lots water, and swimmers if you want a dip in the ocean. Also a toilet block has recently been added in the Garawarra Farm carpark. Leader: Lesley Wylie 0400 562 085

The OFF Field Officer is now drafting next year's program and would welcome the participation of members. If you have any ideas for an outing or would like to lead one, please contact Lesley Wylie on 0400 562 085.

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 using ZOOM. Please login before 7.30pm: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3742141020?pwd=i_daK5memiUVeVb7bERqr5WqKybj2w .

COVID requirements and information for attendees at the hall

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. Seats will be arranged to facilitate social distancing.

Attendees should remain seated for the duration of the meeting

BRIEFLY SPEAKING

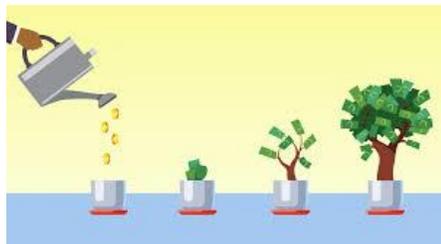
OATLEY PARK BUSHCARE group is normally on the second Saturday each month starting 12.00 pm, except January. Next event will be 10 July. Meet at the entrance on Oatley Park Avenue. New participants welcome, please contact John Kensett - GRC Bushcare Officer, m: 0435 963 643.

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 1 July, we will be working at Boorea Reserve (opposite Oatley Station), 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 29 June.

THE ECONOMICS OF BIODIVERSITY AND INVESTMENT

According to the World Economic Forum "More than half of the world's \$US44trillion in economic output is moderately or highly dependent on nature." The pricing of nature and natural assets have long been ignored or exploited in market pricing. Finally, the true cost of production is starting to be considered. Many of the world's largest institutional investors (Global Pension funds) as well as many individual



investors, are starting to make themselves heard, explicitly demanding that companies and investment managers consider sustainability, climate change and nature. The challenge is to develop an accounting price for nature that can be consistently costed into the price of goods and production, combined with a system that focuses on investments and economic activity that encourage sustainable consumption and production. The investment tide is slowly turning – but there is still a long way to go. See more [here](#)

KOALA UPDATE

On 5 June, members celebrated World Environment Day in Hyde Park and helped highlight the threats facing our precious remaining koalas. Koalas are forecast to become extinct by 2050 with loss of habitat being the leading cause. Currently koalas are



listed as a **vulnerable** species in NSW, QLD and ACT. However, the federal government has just announced that there will be an investigation whether koalas facing habitat loss and the effects of climate change should be up-listed to an **endangered** species.

Nature Conservation Council NSW has a petition to sign calling on relevant NSW Ministers to take immediate specific actions to save koalas from extinction. See details at [Koalas Need Trees - sign the petition](#)