



FISH INTELLIGENCE AND LEARNING BEHAVIOUR

On 27 October, Professor Culum Brown intrigued an audience of 32 members with his extremely interesting presentation on fish intelligence. During his career, Culum has made a significant contribution to the study of behavioural ecology of fishes and its application to fisheries science. He explained how different fish species have adapted their sight, hearing, taste and sensitivity to electromagnetic fields to their different environments. He also discussed fish culture, social structure, cooperation and feeding, memory and their ability to feel pain.

Culum concluded with comments on the importance of marine reserves which are a safe haven and critical breeding grounds for many species.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbCkMojpEss&ab_channel=OatleyFloraandFauna

UPDATE ON GLENLEE

The conciliation conference listed for 22 October 2021 has been deferred until 1st February 2022. In the meantime detailed heritage studies are being undertaken. Friends of Glenlee (FoG) needs to use the extra time as strategically as possible and the best way is to engage an ecologist to do an ecology report. It is the missing link in the residents' case. To engage an ecologist FoG needs \$7000 and has put out a call for further donations.

At the Council meeting on 25 October Council resolved:

"(f) That the General Manager investigate, analyse and model the purchase of Glenlee through development contributions, other external and internal funding sources and submit a separate report to Council."

Unfortunately, no timeframe was given for undertaking this investigation. A large number (70) of residents wrote directly to GRC, the Councillors and our local state and federal MPs to support this recommendation.

The Association has also reached out to the NSW Government for help and has secured the support of the Legislative Council (upper house) with unanimous support for a motion by the shadow Spokesperson for the Environment, Penny Sharpe, calling on the Government to purchase the property

In the meantime Glenlee is being featured in a National Trust exhibition called No Time to Spare. A similar exhibition of the same name in 1962 saved 34 properties from destruction. This [Exhibition](#) features 20 historic properties in danger of being destroyed.

Don't forget that you can help save the natural and cultural heritage of Glenlee, by making a donation to the Save Glenlee fighting fund, or by joining the Friends of Glenlee Association and sign the petition asking the government to buy Glenlee for the community and future generations.

<https://www.saveglenlee.com> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/603634930557880>



Glenlee looking towards Oatley Park

WARRAGAMBA DAM WALL RAISING- 'GIVE A DAM' CAMPAIGN

As members are aware the NSW Government is proposing to raise the Warragamba dam wall by 17 metres to protect downstream communities from flooding. An EIS has recently been released for exhibition but

examination by Give a Dam indicates that this EIS is fundamentally flawed in key areas. Some examples include:

- Just three hours was spent surveying for koalas and one day spent surveying for platypus across 65 kilometres of watercourse that will be intermittently inundated by the raised dam wall.
- The extent of the inundation that will occur in the pristine Kowmung and Kedumba Rivers is seriously understated. This means that the certain environmental and cultural damage that would be done in their catchments is not admitted.
- Impacts to threatened species from dam inundation have only been considered for one quarter of the impact area (1,400 hectares of the 6,000 hectare impact area).
- No experts were engaged to undertake studies of the impact of the dam project on the Outstanding Universal Values for which the Blue Mountains national parks were originally placed on the World Heritage list.
- The NSW Government has refused to obtain the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of the Traditional Owners, the Gundungurra People, to the dam project.
- Just one quarter of the impact area has been surveyed for its Aboriginal cultural significance -- which alone found over 300 significant cultural sites.
- Eighty percent of the Blue Mountains World Heritage area was fiercely burnt in 2020. This has damaged the ecology of the area but no new field surveys have been conducted to understand the present condition of threatened species.
- The official responsible for the assessment of biodiversity offsets [had a conflict of interest with the proponent, WaterNSW](#)

Making your voice heard about the EIS is easy when you use the online form and submission guide. Go to [Make a submission about the EIS - GIVE A DAM](#) **Submissions close 29 November.**

MOUNTAIN BIKES IN GRC RESERVES

Georges River council is currently conducting a survey on BMX and Mountain Bike Riding in Georges River. Unusually it is in 2 parts, one anonymously for bike riders and another for community members, who must identify themselves. If you wish to see our natural reserves protected and riders catered for formally please participate in the survey(s):

[BMX and Mountain Bike Riding in Georges River | Your Say Georges River \(nsw.gov.au\)](#) **Consultation period is 18 October 2021 to 21 January 2022**

CALL FOR COMMITTEE POSITIONS

As noted last month, our Secretary, Liz Cameron, is resigning at the AGM in February after 13 years in the position. So we are looking for someone to nominate for the position or to share it with another member. See last month's item for details of the position. If you are interested to nominating contact Kim Wagstaff. Liz is available to explain more about the position.

In addition, our long-standing membership officer, Robin Dickson, is also resigning. Robin has been on the committee for 28 years, filling the membership officer's position for 17 years, as well as being Secretary for 11 years. This position entails keeping the membership list up to date, issuing membership renewals and following up on payment of fees.

Remember, key committee positions need to be filled to continue the ongoing work to protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment, our raison d'être.

There are also ordinary positions available on the committee, if you wish to assist in guiding the Society into the future, please consider joining the committee and having your say in what the Society does.

Coming OFF Events in November/December 2021

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

Due to the current COVID restrictions, meetings will only be available on-line until further notice, 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_PLK8og40D0ekuYAs3lQ

22 November – Climate Change, Habitat Associations and Range Limits of the Weedy Sea Dragon

Sam Allan is a Master's research candidate with the Fish Ecology Lab in the School of Life Sciences at the University of Technology Sydney. His presentation will focus on research conducted over the past 18 months in Sydney, concentrated in Botany Bay, Bondi and Manly, as well as Port Stephens. Sam will present findings from research work detailing how weedy seadragons (*Phyllopteryx taeniolatus*) interact with their prey and habitat. He will address the significance of these findings in relation to the conservation of this iconic species into the future as the climate changes.

Sam, a recipient of an OFF research grant, is passionate about marine conservation and is actively involved in local diving and surfing communities, as well as the marine science research field. He believes that conservation efforts for unique species, such as seadragons, can be effective in garnering awareness for broader conservation issues.

6 December - Christmas Picnic in Oatley Park 5.30pm in the Castle (arrive earlier if you would like to park nearby). BYO meal and Christmas cheer and perhaps a chair and small table to supplement the seating in the Castle. COVID precautions: there will be a sign-in sheet and hand sanitiser; please maintain social distancing; if sharing food please consider individually-wrapped items, or using tongs. You can renew your membership at the picnic. After a year with few OFF gatherings, this will be a nice opportunity to catch up with other members in a relaxed social gathering. New members are particularly welcome.

4, 11 and 18 December - Street Stalls to sell 2022 Oatley calendar. Please contact Secretary (02 9580 6621) if you are able to assist at these stalls. Oatley 4 Dec, Mortdale 11 Dec and Oatley 18 Dec.

Advance notice: 7 February - Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Although the 2021 program has been interrupted by COVID lockdowns, we are optimistic that we can resume the field program in 2022 (with appropriate protocols if necessary)

Society meetings are normally held 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. Meetings are also accessible on-line using ZOOM. Please login before 7.30pm: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3742141020?pwd=i_daK5memiUVeVb7bERgr5WgKybj2w

COVID-19 information. As noted above, the next meeting will only be held on-line.

Please do not attend the Uniting Church Hall until notified

BRIEFLY SPEAKING

OATLEY PARK BUSHCARE group is normally on the second Saturday each month starting 12.00 pm, except January. Now that COVID lockdowns have stopped we will start again on 11 December. Please check with Bushcare officer on 0435963643 before coming.

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. Bushcare will not be commencing until 1 December, so there will be no session this month.

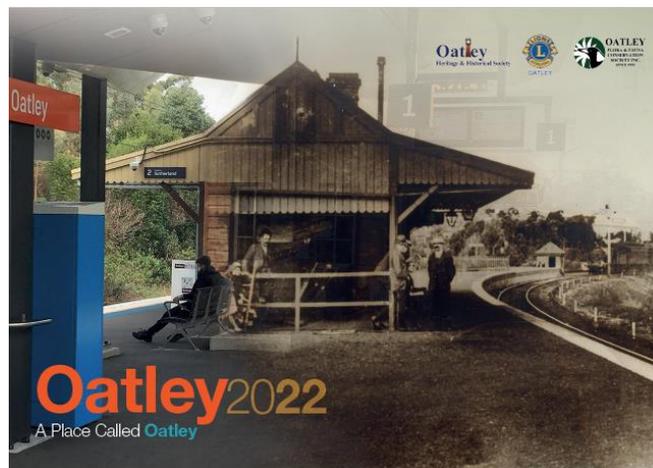
STREAMWATCH Details Heather Stolle 0425 291 879. This activity usually takes place on the Tuesday morning (9.00 am) after OFF General Meetings. This month we will be back at Dairy Creek on 23 November.

CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY (CCL) SOUTHERN SYDNEY SUBURBS
Meet at 2:30 pm on second Sunday each month. Meetings are face-to-face at Club Oatley with masks & 1 person/4m². Limited participation online. Welcome for light lunch at 1:15. Also hybrid meetings at 7:30 pm on fourth Tuesday at SMSA, 280 Pitt St. Online address for both meetings is zoom.us/j/2023151151. If lockdown then online only. More information from George Carrard 95793020 text 0467044892.

BOOREA RESERVE. This name has now been adopted by the NSW Geographical Names Board (GNB). As stated in last month's Newsletter, this

name acknowledges the traditional owners as Boorea is the indigenous name for one of the dominant trees of the area, the Turpentine...

2022 OATLEY CALENDAR will be available at the Christmas picnic and at OFF's street stalls in December (see dates above). It is also available from Oatley West Newsagent, Mullane's Pharmacy, Povelli's, Hungry Spoon and St Kai Cafes. Or contact Rodger Robertson 0408 232 874 if you need it mailed to you.



Remember the **OFF Facebook** page is there to keep up with OFF's activities and other interesting environment news.