



FORESHORE SCENIC PROTECTION AREA (FSPA) REVISITED

The Foreshore Scenic Protection Area (FSPA) is still under threat from Georges River Council (GRC). In 2020, nearly 3 years ago, the communities of Oatley West, Mortdale, Peakhurst, Peakhurst Heights and Lugarno soundly rejected GRC's attempt to drastically reduce the area of the FSPA in the Georges River Local Environmental Plan (LEP). We wanted to retain and protect the green and leafy nature of our suburbs.

Since that time, GRC engaged consultants to carry out a Biodiversity Study and a Foreshore Scenic Character Study (FSCS). You will recall late last year Council was asking residents for feedback before 30th Nov 2022, on these 2 studies. OFF considered this to be a far too important and complex proposal to come to grips with in the short time available and sought, with support from Mark Couré MP, an extension of the deadline for feedback. Thankfully, Council acceded to that request extending the deadline to 31 March 2023.

The Character Study calls for a significant reduction to the FSPA (over 3,300 lots) in western parts of the Local Government Area (LGA) while only partially substituting it with potentially less protective "Unique Character Areas" (UCA). It is proposed that 1,049 lots currently in the FSPA will not be included in either of the proposed FSPA or UCAs.

The studies also propose that FSPA zone controls in Georges River LEP 2021 be weakened to exclude environmental values when considering a Development Application (DA), and recommends moving and rewording these key biodiversity protection objectives from the FSPA section to a new separate biodiversity section which covers the whole LGA.

We are urging residents to again write a submission to GRC before the new closing date of 31 March 2023. The Nov /Dec 2022 OFF newsletter presented some key points for submissions summarised below:

1. For GRC not to alter or reduce the areas covered by the FSPA in Oatley West, Mortdale, Peakhurst, Peakhurst Heights and Lugarno.
2. Retain the existing zoning objectives for the FSPA as stipulated in GRC LEP 2021 Cl. 6.6(1)
3. Retain the 7 paragraphs as detailed in Cl. 6.6(3) of GRC's LEP, which also places an emphasis on environmental factors as well as the built environment, which must be considered by GRC prior to issuing any development consent for a DA within the FSPA.
4. In light of GRC's tree canopy study, no consideration should be given to reducing lot sizes or other measures which could result in loss of biodiversity.
5. That GRC retain the controls within its LEP of 700sqm for the creation of a new lot, 1,000sqm lot size for a dual occupancy and 30% minimum landscape area within the entire existing FSPA.
6. The Biodiversity Study included a desk top assessment across the whole LGA. However supporting field surveys were limited to the areas with higher biodiversity values (Level 2 and level 3) identified in the desk top study. Biodiversity in more urban and developed areas may be under-represented.
7. Council to introduce new local character clauses and character statements in its LEP (rather than the DCP) for each Unique Character Area identified in the FSCS to complement the existing zoning controls for the FSPA in GRC LEP 2021.
8. GRC prepare Development Control Plans (DCP) for: a) New green corridors for existing/future habitat connectivity corridors; and, b) Areas to improve tree canopy coverage.

OFF is further reviewing the proposals in the documents and gathering expert advice and also welcome members' comments (forwarded to oatleyff@gmail.com) so they can potentially be shared through OFF to other members and assist us to formulate a comprehensive submission.

Please keep an eye on the OFF website, Facebook page and emails for updates and advice on this campaign and make sure you submit your comments prior to the deadline of 31 March 2023.

We must protect our precious biodiversity and canopy cover and ensure that these proposals ultimately are used to enhance not destroy these aspects of our local environment.

LOT SIZE SURVEY

For the GRC's survey of lot size preference for those areas proposed to be excluded from the proposed FSPA or UCAs, we urge you to vote in favour of retaining the larger lot sizes and hence protect our precious biodiversity.

If you have already sent a submission, you can send another submission with any new or additional points you wish to make!

GLENLEE

The NSW State Labor Party have [pledged](#) to protect Glenlee and committed to implement a new Interim Heritage Order, which will allow time for further indigenous and natural heritage assessments to be carried out. These studies are required by the NSW Heritage Council to allow them to assess if the site is worthy of being placed on the NSW State Heritage Register.

2023 NSW STATE ELECTIONS

There's a state election coming up in less than two weeks.

Do you know where all five candidates for the seat of Oatley stand on local and statewide environmental matters?

OFF members and friends want to see a measured plan to resolve long-standing environmental problems, and want it backed up with how those measures will be implemented and funded.

Environmentalists are exasperated with the exploitation and neglect of the environment, including:

- Weak biodiversity legislation;
- 10/50 remnant tree carnage;
- Inadequate penalties for illegal tree removal and vandalism;
- The need to cull exotic species, e.g. horses and deer;
- The proposed raising of Warragamba Dam wall;
- Loss of habitat, e.g., accelerated encroachment of housing developments into koala territory; and
- Coal mining under Woronora and other southern water catchments.

There are also local matters such as Georges River Council's intended contraction of the Foreshore Scenic Protection Area; the 6.5 hectare deficit in open space; continuing pollution of local creeks and the Georges River; and the preservation and acquisition of Glenlee.

OFF will be asking all candidates for the seat of Oatley where they stand on these, and other pressing environmental matters and we will publish their responses on Facebook and our website.

NCC has also issued a paper outlining their concerns to be taken into account by voters at this month's state elections. They are: Koalas, Logging and Climate. You can find out more about these issues and how they affect the environment by going to their website: https://www.nature.org.au/election_platform.

You can call on the government to act on these issues by signing an open letter. Follow the QR code, or go to this site: https://www.nature.org.au/protect_native_forests



CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY 2023 (Poulton Park)

On 5th March, 59 volunteers collected 18 bags of rubbish, 5 bags of recyclables and a variety of large items including five rubber tyres, 13 soccer balls and a crab trap. The rubbish bags were all removed by Monday afternoon, thanks to the assistance of GRC Waste Education Officer Emma Bennell. A very big thank-you to 2nd Mortdale Scouts and Oatley Lions for their assistance. Some helpers waded deep into the mangroves and two were rewarded for their efforts by finding a \$100 note and a \$50 note.

Coming OFF Events in March/April 2023

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

We have returned again 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 this link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3742141020?pwd=i_daK5memiUVeVb7bERqr5WgKybj2w Note: Some OFF presentations & movies can now be found on [YouTube](#)

18 March Saturday – Ridge Track, Georges River national Park, Lesley Devine.

This walk will include an extended walk around the Yeramba Lagoon loop track and then back along the Ridge track to where we started. It's approx. a 6 km walk (about 4 hours) with some challenging rock scrambles and uphill climbs on the Ridge track - but worth the views down to the Georges River and good native bushland. If you use walking poles bring them along. Bring lunch, snacks and water, and something to sit on as we will be sitting on rock ledges to enjoy the views. Meet at 9:30am in the 1st picnic area on Burrawang Beach Road which is to the right once you enter the park from Henry Lawson Drive (don't go straight where the large boat trailer carpark is, go to the right and follow the road until you get to the 1st picnic area. There is also a toilet block located there.

20 March 2023: Olive Pink Botanic Garden, Alice Springs.

Ian Coleman, the curator at the Alice Springs Botanic Garden, will introduce us to the Garden and tell us about Olive Pink, a passionate advocate for improved rights and conditions for Australia's Indigenous people, and after whom the garden is named. Olive founded the garden and after intense lobbying it was gazetted in 1956 as the Australian Arid Regions Flora Reserve. It is located adjacent to the Todd River, not far from the centre of Alice Springs.

Ian will discuss various aspects of the garden and events that take place (including the Olive Pink Opera presented in early October 2022), interesting plant species of the Garden, the work of volunteers and research projects. He will also tell us about the unfolding ecological disaster of buffel grass in Central Australia and the importance of land restoration and botanic gardens, how termites not worms do all the work in the desert, working with Aboriginal communities, Central Australian Landcare projects and potential impact of climate change on flora in the arid regions.

23 March 2023 - Local Bushcare

Members can assist by volunteering to maintain OFF planting sites on a Thursday either 1 or 2 weeks after general meetings (exc Dec) from 8.00 am to 11 am. Next month we will be at Boorea Reserve supervised by a GRC Bushcare Officer and welcome new bushcarers.

<https://www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/Council/Volunteering>

8 April 2023 - Oatley Park Bushcare

OFF members volunteer to carry out bush regeneration at Oatley Park on the second Saturday each month starting 12.00 pm, (except January). Please check with Bushcare officer on 0435 963 643 before coming.

Advance notice: 17 April - Meeting. Flying Fox Conservation and Management. Matt Mo and Libby Timmiss (Dept of Planning and Environment)

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

BRIEFLY SPEAKING

STREAMWATCH Due to the change of general meeting dates, this activity will now take place on the Tuesday morning (9.00 am) 1 week after OFF General Meetings. This month we will be at Myles Dunphy Reserve on 28 March. Please check by ringing 0430 968 260 before coming, particularly as our equipment supplies have not yet been replenished.

CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY meetings held at 2.30 pm on the second Sunday of every month. These meetings are now being held on-line using Zoom The address is <http://zoom.us/j/7868786878>

RESILIENT WILDLIFE of the sprawling suburbia of south-eastern Sydney is described in an article co-authored by Matthew Mo, who will be speaking to our meeting in April (on flying foxes), and can be viewed [here](#) [download the article by clicking on the PDF button below the iguana photo].

MEMBERSHIP. Members are reminded that membership fees are due, if you have not already paid.

NESTBOXES

Susan Rhind, a wildlife conservation biologist, has a background working on hollow nesting animals and nestboxes, along with zoologist partner and researcher Murray Ellis. She presented an interesting talk about the need for nest boxes; whether nest boxes are useful and used by animals; which of our local mammals (and other groups) need tree hollows; whether nest

boxes are as good as natural hollows; if there have been successful nest box programs; making nest boxes attractive to animals; common problems with boxes; nestbox design and installation; some current research on nestboxes and alternatives; and finally, findings from nestboxes installed on the presenter's property at Bergalia.

Susan's talk can be viewed on OFF's YouTube channel [here](#).

POWERFUL OWLS NESTING IN NESTBOX

In exciting news a pair of Powerful Owls have raised two chicks in a Lane Cove nest box – the second known record of a Powerful Owl pair nesting in a constructed timber box, and the first known record in NSW.

The new parents have been captured at the nest box by Council's infrared night vision cameras. See the OFF Facebook post [here](#), or read the full story at <https://bit.ly/3XjaNg6>

SHARYN CULLIS AWARDED

Sutherland Shire Environment Centre has awarded the 2022 Bill Ryan Activism Award to Sharyn. This award was created in 2019 to share this World War 2 veteran's spirit of non-violent direct action for the benefit of the environment. After a decades long history of environmental activism a well deserved, albeit posthumous, honour for Sharyn.

Don't forget to browse the OFF **Facebook** page and **website** to find information on OFF's activities and events, or to comment on issues.