



WILDFLOWERS IN ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

On Sunday, July 23, OFF members and friends enjoyed a fabulous blue sky winter walk in the National Park from Waterfall to Heathcote. We walked along the Uloola track to Karloo Pools. Morning tea was by a waterfall and lunch at Karloo Pools.

There was a huge variety of wildflowers and spectacular creek, waterfall and valley views. Thanks to Matt for organising - a thoroughly enjoyable day.



More photos of the day can be seen in [Facebook](#) and on the OFF [website](#).

FLORA AND NATURAL ASPECTS OF EAST ARNHAM LAND.

This was a fascinating glimpse of East Arnhem Land, along the west side of the Gulf of Carpentaria. The Yolŋu people hold inalienable freehold title over this land and a permit is required for entry. It is one of the last strongholds of traditional Aboriginal culture and Tony and Kate were treated to a number of examples - Kate's painful sandfly bites were treated successfully with bush medicine (a poultice of two different herbs) and they enjoyed delicious queenfish cooked in paperbark. Vegetation ranged from riverine gallery forest to open woodland with red-flowered Darwin Woollybutts, and grassy coastal flats; Tony showed examples of the rich variety of flowering shrubs including many different peas. A fascinating presentation on a part of Australia few of us will ever visit.

NATIONAL TREE DAY

To celebrate National Tree Day on Sunday, July 30, dedicated OFF members joined with like-minded residents and other groups, to plant over 2,000 plants at Beverly Hills Park, Tallawalla Street, and another 400 in Evatt Park, Lugarno.

Thanks to all those volunteers whose efforts will help increase biodiversity and beautify both parks, and to [Georges River Council Bushcare](#) and [Lugarno Progress Association](#) - LPA for organising. Thanks also to Lugarno and Oatley Lions Clubs for providing much-appreciated refreshments to the many children, their parents and others who enjoyed a great community event.



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN TRIP TO SNOWY MOUNTAINS

For many years OFF members have spent a week or so in the Snowy Mountains in early January. However, firstly the 2019 bushfires and then COVID stopped this traditional activity. As these restrictions have now lifted, the committee would like to know if there is sufficient interest from our members to re-start this annual event in 2024. Therefore, if you are interested in going to Pygmy Possum Lodge at Charlotte Pass in early January for up to a week, please let Graham Fry know, he can be contacted on 9580 6621 or fryg45@gmail.com.

PROTECTING GLENLEE

Friends of Glenlee (FoG) held their AGM on 31 July to elect a new committee and discuss how to progress the campaign to preserve Glenlee. In this discussion on preserving Glenlee, the following points were made:

- * the need for Council to take further steps to acquire Glenlee and to set aside funding to do so. FoG would pursue funding for the Peakhurst Hub;
- * while Council had been unanimous in support of Glenlee, it had taken no action. It was agreed that Council should pursue grants. Friends of Glenlee should be part of the meeting with the Environment Minister;
- * the Minister should be asked to enact the Heritage Act to allow access to the Glenlee site.

It was also agreed that the Friends of Glenlee complete a NPWS form nominating Glenlee as a national park. The form can be found [here](#).

The Friends' report following the AGM is available [here](#), along with the President's report. [report](#)

A comprehensive report on FoG's past year's activities can be found [here](#). GRC has also received a [letter](#) from the Minister for the Environment.

If you have not yet signed the Save Glenlee petition, you can do so [here](#)



RE-GREENING

Another fabulous re-greening event was held on Saturday/Sunday August 12 & 13 at 'Moorlands' which is owned and managed by Vince Heffernan, a 6th generation sheep grazer and noted expert on new forms of regenerative land management. During the weekend more than 35 volunteers contributed to the ecological transformation which Vince commenced 25 years ago. It was incredibly satisfying to meet like-minded people from Melbourne, Ballarat, Bendigo, Canberra, Southern Highlands, Sydney, Robertson and join members of OFF to plant approximately 1300 native trees and shrubs. As they grow, these plantings will continue to expand the open, grassy woodland being created and provide habitat for many species of native animals and bird including the endangered Superb Parrot. During the next 2 months another 4200 trees and shrubs will be planted on various dates listed via this [link](#).

Simon Marnie from ABC Radio was on-site [interviewing](#) Vince, Janine and me (20:30 in) on Sun morning, as well as many folks who have contributed, and will now continue to contribute, to the success of this wonderful project.

Special thanks to James, Peter, Sonia, Melina, Judy and Rob for their support and contribution during the weekend.



GRC SIGNIFICANT TREE REGISTER

Nominations to the Significant Tree Register (STR) have now closed. There was a flurry of activity during the last week of the nomination period, with a total of 247 nominations across the whole Georges River area. Many thanks to those who participated. It demonstrates to the Council that the residents are passionate about their local streets, not just our bushy parklands. An OFF delegation met with GRC project officers in July to discuss details of the STR and

what benefits the Council sees in promoting this project, particularly since no additional protections are envisaged. Their response was fairly vague, other than "other councils are doing it". However, it came to pass that GRC have captured all (~32,400) street trees in the LGA and entered them in a database. The system is in its early days and does not currently include trees in public reserves or private landholdings. Public reserves are expected to be captured in the next phase. While this is a very positive announcement, OFF has asked that this information become public in some form. In the meantime, the consultants engaged to conduct the STR are in the process of evaluating the nominations, with a report to council expected later in the year. The future role of the STR will then be determined.

Coming OFF Events in August/September 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_daK5memiUVeVb7bERgr5WgKybj2w Note: Some OFF presentations & movies can now be found on [YouTube](#)

21 August 2023: Kelp Forests

Marine kelp forests cover 1/3 of our world's coastlines supporting a rich tapestry of biodiversity throughout our oceans. But they are increasingly threatened with some areas reporting over 90% declines. Despite their importance and the threats they face, they are absent from international conservation dialogue and very few countries consider them in their national policy.

Dr. Aaron Eger (an OFF research grant recipient) is Founder and Program Director of the Kelp Forest Alliance (KFA), a global research driven not for profit, working to change the status of kelp forests. Together with 550 kelp experts, professionals, and citizens from 27 countries, the KFA is launching the Kelp Forest Challenge, calling for the restoration of 1 million and protection of 3 million Ha of kelp forests by 2040, a monumental challenge. He is also lead author on the first kelp restoration guidebook.



27 August Sunday – Blue Gum Swamp Track, Winmallee (near Springwood)

Medium grade walk. Meet at 10am at the end of White Cross Road. Beautiful walk amongst the ferns and the tall Blue Gum Eucalyptus trees. Bring your walking poles if required as it's a steep descent into the valley on a fire trail. The walk is approx. 10 km and will be around 4 hours. Please bring water, snacks and lunch, as well as something to sit on as it is damp on the forest floor. Leader: Lesley Wylie, 0400 562 085.

24 August 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. This month we will be at Gannons Park supervised by a GRC Bushcare Officer and we welcome new [bushcarers](#).

9 September 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 GRC Bushcare Officer on 0435 963 643 before coming.

17 September – Advance notice - Walk on Mt. Kiera Track and Wollongong Botanic Garden. Note change of date from Program.

18 September – Advance notice – Meeting: Social Science Research into Weed Management. Sonia Graham, Weed Specialist.

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 lack of supplies this month's activity is cancelled...

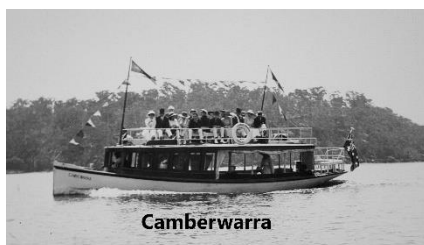
CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY meetings held at 2.30 pm on the second Sunday of every month. These meetings are now being held on-line using Zoom The address is <http://zoom.us/j/7868786878>

APS SUTHERLAND GROUP – CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

Celebrate with the Australian Plant Society on the weekend of 2-3 September by visiting an [open garden](#). Enjoy six gardens of Australian Plants Society Sutherland Group members. Entry to each garden by gold coin donation. Refreshments and plant sales at selected gardens.

OHHS CRUISE

Oatley Heritage and Historical Society (OHHS) will be holding a cruise on the Georges River on 22nd September. Starting at Sans Souci Wharf and



journeying to the old Lugarno Punt site, taking note of historical features, we will enjoy a relaxing sojourn on our wonderful Tucoerah (Georges) River. Meet at the wharf at Sans Souci Park at 11am. Cost is \$51 for seniors, including lunch. Enquiries, Rodger Robertson, 0408 232 874

OFF 2023 RESEARCH GRANTS

Four grant applications were received this year. However, our budget of \$6,000 only allowed us to fund three of the applications. The research covered by these projects is wide ranging and includes the study of the fertile land effect in arid environments, the effects of kangaroo grazing on bird populations in Witchelina Nature Reserve and to research how work on restoration flood dependant vegetation in the indigenous managed Gayani Wetlands. Each recipient is encouraged to give a presentation about their research to an OFF meeting in 2024, something to look forward to next year.

MEMBERSHIP.

Members whose memberships have lapsed are more than welcome to re-join by sending a completed membership [form](#) to the Secretary.

Don't forget to check the [OFF Facebook](#) page and [website](#) to see how fellow members have been contributing to our precious environment.