



### FUNGAL BIODIVERSITY ECOLOGY, DIVERSITY AND DISTRIBUTION

On Monday 15th April, our speakers, **Vanessa McPherson** and **Michael Gillings** presented a very interesting and colourful look at the Fungi world, found particularly in the Lane Cove area (within just a 5km radius). The amazing revelation that approx 90% of the specimens collected had no identification or descriptions as yet, shows how little we know of this part of our Australian ecosystem. How we then use the knowledge of this Fungi world, will require further study in order to use these important organisms in the regeneration efforts of our community.

If you were not one of the 30 or so people attending this talk (in person and on ZOOM), you can view it on OFF's YouTube channel [here](#).

### GRAYS POINT TO AUDLEY LOOP VIA HACKING RIVER

Great Autumn weather for our Grays Point to Audley loop track, with 20 people joining the walk. We saw early banksia, and wattle flowers, 'eggs and bacon' pea flowering plants, red and white native fuchsias, and large Eucalyptus and Angophoras trees.

We enjoyed a nice morning tea along the Port Hacking river (some friendly leeches tried to join in), and a picnic under the big trees at Audley. Walking back up to Grays Point via the Honeymoon steps was a good challenge and we were rewarded with a great view down the river from the Bungoona lookout. Photos of the day can be seen in [Google Photos](#).

### GLENLEE UPDATE - in brief

Glenlee has now been sold to a private owner. Following a successful Notice of Motion by Cllr Mahoney, Council will request Minister Sharpe's urgent authorisation for access to Glenlee to carry out assessments of the property for its Aboriginal and natural heritage. Several other measures called for included immediate protection of any Aboriginal objects and places located on the site in accordance with the NP&WAct. The presence of numerous middens, grinding grooves, and a sandstone rock bowl indicate a high potential of further artefacts existing on the site. It seems it will take the combined efforts of the Minister and Council to protect the moveable objects and relics etc that may be found on the site.

### FIRST RE-GREENING EVENT FOR 2024

On Saturday 13 April, an amazing transformation occurred at Beale Park, Peakhurst. Approximately 100 volunteers from joined a community planting event to plant 2,500 native trees and shrubs.

Oatley Flora & Fauna Conservation Society (OFF), Greater Sydney Landcare (GSLC) and Georges River Council commenced planning this project over one year ago. OFF Vice President, Adrian Polhill said, "It was so satisfying to see community and environmentally minded volunteers from within and outside the Georges River area come to together to make a difference to the landscape". Danielle Packer, GSLC Creating Canopies Project Manager, was very impressed with their efforts and commented, "Most of the plants were small flowering trees and shrubs which our native bees and pollinators will love! We also planted large canopy trees to provide more shade for the residents who enjoy this park."

The majority of the plants were grown by the Menai Wildflower Group, a nursery run by volunteers (including OFF members) on premises provided by Cleanaway.

Thank you to all who took part, including 22 OFF members, Councillors Peter Mahoney and Christina Jamieson and many local residents. A special thank you to Matt Allison for all the pre-work and hole digging, and to Greater Sydney Landcare for providing a delicious lunch. (cont)

Remember to check the OFF Facebook page and OFF website for more information and news, and comment on OFF's activities



You can also read the Greater Sydney Landcare report [here](#).



### IMPACTS ARISING FROM SYNTHETIC TURF PLAYING FIELDS

OFF made a submission on draft guidelines for 'Synthetic Turf in Public Open Space' (thanks Adrian Polhill):

In 2022, Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society (OFF) conducted a micro plastics survey at a synthetic turf playing field complex in the Georges River local government area, and submitted the survey results to the Chief Scientist & Engineer, as well as the local council. OFF's submission urged the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer investigate and clearly state the essential preventive mitigation measures which must be implemented at all synthetic turf playing fields (including those already constructed as well as those being planned) as soon as possible to protect our beautiful creeks, bushlands and biodiversity.

Fast forward two years, to April 2024, OFF is very disappointed, after reading the recently issued draft guidelines for 'Synthetic Turf in Public Open Space', many of the mitigation solutions suggested in our submission to the Chief Scientist are not included. We urge you to be much more prescriptive with the ongoing management and maintenance measures, otherwise our biodiversity will continue to be irreparably impacted.

The submission then made recommendations for a number of comments on issues to be included in the final report:

1. Community & Social Impacts
2. Climate Change Issues
3. Community Health
4. Environmental Health
5. Synthetic turf playing fields Design and Maintenance Issues



Crumb rubber infill on the synthetic turf playing field at Poulton Park showing the build-up on the edges of the ground.

### MEMBERSHIP.

Thank you to those members who have paid their annual fees, particularly to those who also made generous donations. Remember, it is necessary for fees to be paid by 30 June, otherwise membership lapses.

## Coming OFF Events in May/June 2024

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

Meetings are held in the Uniting Church Hall, Frederick St Oatley, starting at 7.30pm. Meetings will also normally be available on-line, using the video conference application Zoom. **However, this meeting will not be available on ZOOM.** Some OFF presentations & movies can now be found on [YouTube](#)

### 20 May – The Unending Biological Diversity of Our Planet - Look at Flies! Dr Dan Bickel Aust Museum Senior Fellow

There are between 4 and 10 million species in the world, but fewer than 20% have been named and described. Is it possible to describe all life on Earth? Some large groups of animals occur across continents and contain many species not yet identified or collected. An example is true flies, the order Diptera: (from the Greek: di = two, ptera = wings). In this well-illustrated talk, Dan will compare the well-known fly fauna of Europe with the flies of some other regions where they have not been studied nearly as extensively. He will discuss the hurdles to describing all species and what may actually be out there.

**Please note: this meeting will not be available on ZOOM**

### 26 May 2024 (Sunday) – Malabar Headlands Loop Track. (Note. This field day has been swapped with June's programmed field day.)

Meet at 9:30am at the Arthur Byrne Reserve carpark, Maroubra. We start on the Boora Point walking track that has great coastal views in the Malabar Headland National Park. And then we will join up with the Western Escarpment walking track that takes us through native heath with wildflowers and bird habit and back to the carpark. Its approx. 8kms in total. A lot of the walk will be on a raised metal board walk. Bring along water, snacks and lunch.

Leslie Wylie, Contact. 0400 562 085

### 23 May - 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 to 11 am. This month we will be at Boorea Reserve (near Oatley station) supervised by a GRC Bushcare Officer. We welcome new bushcarers:

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

### 8 June - 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). Meet at the entrance on Oatley Park Avenue. New participants welcome. Please check with GRC Bushcare Officer on 0435 963 643 before coming.

**Advance Notice: 17 June – General Meeting: Building Bridges to Boorowa – an Urban-rural Tree-planting Partnership. Andrew Scott.**

**Advance notice: 30 June (Sunday) -- Field Day: Red Hands Cave, Glenbrook. Leader: Matt Allison.**

**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.**

## BRIEFLY SPEAKING .....

**STREAMWATCH** takes place on the Tuesday morning (9.00 am) 1 week after OFF General Meetings. **However, this month Streamwatch is cancelled** due to the unavoidable absence of key volunteer operatives. For queries phone 0430968260.

**CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY** meetings are 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>

## ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES SUPPORTED BY COUNCIL

The following Notices of Motion, put to Council's April 22 meeting by **Clr P Mahoney**, were carried unanimously:

- NM 034-24 Initiative to improve Native Vegetation Cover:** Notifying residents about the importance of planting on private properties and holding a Tree Forum;
- NM035-24 Plan to Increase Native Tree Cover:** (in public spaces); and
- NM041-24 Reducing Pollution in the Georges River:** (Lime Kiln Bay Wetlands refurbishment and GPTs needed in local catchments).

Importantly, all of these motions were supported by OFF speakers in the public forum at the start of the meeting.



## UPDATE ON PLATYPUSES REINTRODUCED TO ROYAL NP



(Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water)

Despite the pollution problems from the nearby Metropolitan Colliery, a platypus puggle has been born in the Royal National Park for the first time in 50 years. A breeding program released a number of platypus into the area last year. The six-month old offspring of two of the released platypus, who has been named Gilli, is certainly a welcome find for the scientists involved in the program. (NCC)

Related to this, Metropolitan Collieries has pleaded guilty in the Land and Environment court to 3 charges relating to its Helensburgh mine in 2022. These charges relate to 2 significant pollution incidents at Camp Gully Creek which flows into the Hacking River in the Royal NP. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) alleged that Metropolitan Collieries were responsible for 2 discharges of coal contaminated water. Penalties will be determined later this year.

The severity of the pollution – incl. large lump of coal - can be seen in the photo at left, from the Hacking River just downstream of Camp Gully Creek and Fig Tree Flat picnic area at Audley after the big storm in early April 2024.