

HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"



Can fungi help us heal degraded environments?

At our monthly meeting on Friday 26 May guest speaker Dr Howard Wildman, a mycologist for over 30 years, will discuss his work on fungi and their potential role in combating environmental degradation.

Although over 100,000 different species of fungi have been described, it is thought that there are 1 to 1.5 million species, making them second only to insects as the most diverse group of organisms on the planet.

Howard will discuss both the negative aspects of fungi - as causal agents of plant and human diseases and as producers of food toxins; and their benefits - as food, as producers of fermented products, and as medicines in both western and traditional societies. However, it is as one of the main agents providing fundamental ecosystem services worth almost US\$20 trillion dollars per annum that fungi have their greatest environmental impact.

The general trends in our living landscapes are negative: soils are degrading, water quality is deteriorating and biodiversity is declining. Fungi can make a significant contribution to arresting this degradation through their role in ecosystem processes and vegetation dynamics.

Native fungi help maintain the health of ecosystems by building organic matter, sustaining soil nutrient cycling processes, improving soil fertility and promoting plant growth through mycorrhizal associations. As most plants depend upon these for normal healthy growth, Howard will discuss methods for returning mycorrhizal fungi to degraded lands.

The agricultural, forestry and food processing industries also generate vast quantities of organic waste, much of which consists of lignocellulosic materials. Appropriate bioremediation by fungi can convert these wastes into a valuable economic and environmental resource. Howard will explain how 'myco-remediation' can be used for soil creation, reclaiming degraded soils, and removing soil pollution without generating further waste streams.

The meeting and talk at the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls, will commence at 7.30 pm.

The environment is worth it!

Notes from the BMCS Annual General Meeting

The following article is based on the President's Annual Report—a full version of which is on our website.

At the Society's AGM on Friday 31 March, president Brian Marshall, thanked all members of the Society for their ongoing support. He also thanked the Management Committee for their efforts over a very busy year and acknowledged the contributions of retiring members Lyndal Sullivan, Christine Davies, Ron Withington, Rosemary Lathouris, Bob van Reyswoud and Margaret Sleath.

Keith Muir and the Colong Foundation, the Nature Conservation Council, the National Parks Association, the Lithgow and Capertee Valley Environment Groups, the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, and the Blue Mountains City Council were thanked for their invaluable cooperation.

Membership currently stands at about 870, down a bit from a few years ago. Brian feels we must recognise that there is an increasing emphasis on the short-term economy, materialism and growth, rather than the quality-of-life to be gained within a more caring, environmentally sustainable society. Although people remain concerned about climate change, the coal-fired economy, peak oil, nuclear power, water supply, species loss, and general environmental depredation, they have an economic tiger by the tail and are too frightened to back off.

However, he feels that the Society's campaigns and other activities remain critical, regardless of whether we win or lose, as they ensure that government, business, developers, miners, and others impacting on 'our' environment, recognise that the Society is looking over their collective shoulder.

"The strength of the environmental movement lies in its capacity to cooperate, its dedication, and its determination. The environment is worth it!"

Brian's address was followed by guest speaker, Ian Brown; photographer, writer and conservationist; who inspired us to redouble our efforts with his evocative images of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

1000 X \$10—Help RAID uphold our LEP

As you know from April's Hut News, the issue of Clause 10.8 (e) of LEP 1991 which began in Blackheath has become a mountain-wide issue, affecting unsewered properties across the Mountains. Residents Against Improper Development (through its subcommittee BRAID) is appealing the August 2005 judgement and on April 7 Council joined RAID's Appeal. Council and RAID wish to uphold the intention of Clause 10.8(e) that all properties zoned Residential Bushland Conservation must be connected to the sewer before subdivision and development can occur. Success requires a strong legal team and the funds to support them.

RAID thanks all those members of the BMCS who have already responded to RAID's 1000 X \$10 campaign - if 1000 people across the Mountains each donate \$10 then RAID has \$10,000 for its legal costs - but donations haven't reached one thousand yet. Are you in a position to donate \$10? (RAID also accepts larger amounts!)

Make cheques or money orders payable to RAID Inc, PO Box 354, Blackheath 2785.

HUT NEWS

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Website Improvements

Since its first meeting in early April, our Information Technology Sub-committee has been working to update and enhance the Society's website.

We will soon have more space available for information and photographs, as well as a new 'Plant Nursery' section highlighting the native plants propagated at the Society's nursery.

Website Manager, David Bowskill, is currently improving the design and navigation aspects of the site.

He is also coordinating a review of all information on the site to ensure it is still relevant and reflects the current objectives of the Society. More frequent updating of material is planned in the future.

We are also working on a version of Hut News which is faster and easier to download.

Alan Harris, IT Sub-committee

Letter of the Month—May 2006

No Help from the Feds –It's Up to the States

With the 2006 Asia Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (AP6) resulting in no targets, no timetables and no mechanisms for reducing greenhouse pollution, it has been left to the Australian states to address the biggest threat now facing the world – global warming.

NSW lags well behind the other states on wind, solar and bio-energy:

- Less than 1% of NSW's energy comes from new renewable sources.
- No renewable energy targets have been set.
- Several other states have already accepted the necessity of a 60% cut in emissions by 2050.
- Without support, four new wind energy projects proudly announced by the NSW government may not get built.

Send a short message to the Premier of NSW asking:

- Will he commit to renewable energy targets –
 - 15% by 2012
 - 25% by 2020
- How will NSW work towards a 60% cut in emissions?
- What is being done to ensure that the four wind energy projects announced by the government will in fact be built?
- What incentives are being planned, eg. to assist households to change from electric to solar hot water heaters?

It is important that the leader of the Opposition also understands our concerns about global warming. You might like to send a copy of your message to him too.

Contact Details: Post to Parliament House, Macquarie St. Sydney 2000, or email:

The Hon Morris Iemma: thepremier@www.nsw.gov.au

The Hon Peter Debnam: peter.debnam@parliament.nsw.gov.au

For information on how you can reduce your personal contribution to greenhouse emissions, visit the ACF Greenhome Guide at www.acfonline.org.au/greenhome.

Rosemary Lathouris and Robin Mosman

Australian Governments deliver lack-lustre environmental performance

Each year Yale and Columbia Universities, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, release their Environmental Performance Index (EPI).

This year's EPI results for 133 nations have recently been released, and the top ranked three nations for 2006 are in order: New Zealand, Sweden, and Finland. Unfortunately Australia did not make it into the top 10, coming in overall at rank 20.

While 20th out of 133 may not sound too bad, there are a couple of specific category results that warrant the loud ringing of alarm bells. The first of these is our ranking in the Sustainable Energy category, way back at 86th out of 133. Much more serious however, is our ranking in the Water Resource category – here we ranked 119th out of 133 – not a result anyone would like to bequeath to their children and grandchildren. It is however no shock when one considers the federal and state governments' handling of water issues over the last few years - the Murray River's state, the Snowy River sell out, and desalination lunacy are just the most recent examples.

It was therefore interesting to note that the EPI report concludes that the two most important determinants of environmental performance are the wealth of the nation and the quality of its environmental governance. Clearly on any measure Australia is a wealthy nation, as is the top ranked nation New Zealand. We must therefore conclude that the quality of environmental governance in Australia is lacking. Why are none of us surprised?

If you would like to read the whole report, sections, or a summary then links can be found at: <http://www.yale.edu/epi/>.

Craig Linn, Environmental Education Officer

Visit our website at: www.bluemountains.org.au

VERY MUCH WANTED! YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU TODAY

The Society failed to fill the position of Meetings Secretary at the March elections for Management Committee. We need a Meetings Secretary urgently. This is your opportunity to contribute to the running of the Society.

The work would involve about 10 hours per month, initially cooperating with the Administrative Officer, but you or we could happily expand it to fill your available free time. Secretarial experience (can you use a ballpoint?) and basic computing (Word and email) are an advantage.

Please don't hesitate through uncertainty or self-doubt. We are dying to hear from you. Contact Brian Marshall (4784 1148), Heather Hull (4739 1493), Liz van Reyswoud (4757 2694) or Alan Harris (4757 4545) to find out more.

GROUNDWATER Life-Blood of the Environment

The Groundwater Subcommittee is involved in promoting the responsible management of groundwater and surface water in the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment. It interacts with Councils, the Catchment Management Authority, Sydney Catchment Authority and Sydney Water, as well as with other environmental groups.

If you are interested in any facet of Blue Mountains swamps, creeks, waterfalls and wild rivers, and their dependent ecosystems, and the deleterious impacts of climate change, urban development and mining, then you might gain fulfilment from joining the subcommittee.

Technical knowledge is not essential, but enthusiasm and willingness to learn will increase your enjoyment and value.

If you would like to join this subcommittee or find out more, please contact Brian Marshall (4784 1148) or Sue Ernst (0429 692 870, s.ernst@bigpond.net.au).

Is council serious about environmental damage?

How quickly should council respond to sediment pouring into a creek or bushland being bulldozed? Should it impose fines and take environmental vandals to court?

These are some of the issues dealt with in Council's new draft Enforcement Policy. This policy is **important** because it will guide whether incidents of environmental destruction get priority attention or any action at all.

For example: Have you ever asked Council to stop a tree being cut down, or to take action against residents who dump garden waste over the back fence into a bushland reserve?

Copies of the draft policy are available at council offices, libraries or on www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au.

Write to council **before 22nd May** and let them know what is important to you.

Address your letter or email to :

Draft Enforcement Policy, Blue Mountains City Council, Locked Bag 1005, Katoomba 2780 or council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Points you may consider making:

- Which incidents should be responded to immediately?

Do you think that incidents of environmental destruction **currently in progress** should be given the highest priority? Should an urgent rating be warranted where damage may be averted by an immediate response?

- How far should council take environmental matters?

Council should adopt a policy of taking environmental damage seriously, and always following through to ensure the damaged is repaired (as much as possible) and to impose penalties ?

If you want help in writing your letter, contact Monica Nugent on 4782 4116.

Correction

In the March issue of Hut News a review of the February Monthly Meeting regarding the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute contained some inaccuracies on Page 6.

The third paragraph should have read:- the overall turnover of the Institute since its inception about two years ago

has been approximately \$1.06million. This includes research funding grants as well as contributions from the eight founding partners.

In paragraph four on the seven Institute programs:- the Aboriginal Cultural Mapping Project is in fact co-managed by Professor Paul Tacon in conjunction with Mr Shaun Hooper (not Cooper as was stated in Hut News).

Hope emerges for a shift in US Greenhouse policy

It's not easy to find any good news about climate change these days, but over the last two months there does appear to have been a very significant shift in the mainstream US media's coverage of climate change.

For many years the science of climate change has been incorrectly portrayed in much of the US media as just a theory and still a matter for debate. However, in March the mainstream US media changed course with declarations such as "*By any measure, Earth is at the tipping point*" in the title of Time Magazine's 29th March cover story, which then went on to assert that "*Suddenly and unexpectedly, the crisis is upon us.*"

While this is not the change we need in our planet's physical atmosphere it is a very real change in the media policy environment of the US, which is after all the biggest greenhouse polluter on Earth.

For years the US public has been subjected to a disinformation campaign, but on the 26th March the American Broadcasting Corporation's (ABC) news department (as part of a full week of coverage) came out with an article titled: "*Was Confusion Over Global Warming a Con Job?*". The article goes on to answer in the affirmative, and notes that "*To redefine global warming as theory – not fact – the industry [Big Oil and Big Coal] funded research by "friendly" scientists.*" While this isn't news to most well informed environmentalists, it will be for many in the ABC's audience – and these people are US voters. The article then goes even further stating that "*The industry's influence even extends to the White House*", with a former oil industry lobbyist who until recently was a senior adviser to the president on environmental matters being accused of "*editing scientific reports to make global warming seem less threatening.*"

It is too early to say whether having a better informed US populace will translate into a change in US policy on climate change. However it is certainly heartening to read that the Washington-based Worldwatch Institute assesses this new media direction as "*a remarkable shift with far-reaching policy implications.*" We can only hope so – it is at least a step in the right direction.

Craig Linn,
Environmental Education Officer

GARDENS OF STONE STAGE 2 PROPOSAL - WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

Brian Marshall

The Gardens of Stone Stage 2 Proposal

The Gardens of Stone Stage 2 Proposal (GoS2) by the Colong Foundation, BMCS and the Colo Committee was launched in late 2005 and reported in the December issue of Hut News. The proposal covers 40,000 hectares extending from Medlow Bath north-northwest to Capertee and requires the creation of State Conservation Areas (SCAs) over regions with exploitable underground coal resources, and extensions to National Parks in other portions.

(The map of the proposal is only clear when viewed in colour, so could not be reproduced in Hut News, but will be placed on our website. Copies of the proposal are available in ring-bound book form. ed.)



Pagoda formations near Gooch's Crater, an unprotected area of upland

What is happening now?

A second book (Stage 2 Illustrated) has 'joined' the proposal and both are under consideration by Government through the Department of the Environment and Conservation. Copies of the proposal have (*inter alia*) gone to the Premier, appropriate Ministers and local Members, pertinent members of the Opposition and Greens, the Mayors and General Managers of the Blue Mountains (BMCC) and Lithgow City Councils (LCC), and the Aboriginal Tribal Council.

Plans are in train to develop further awareness of and support for the proposal through a range of meetings with politicians, conducted tours of the region, presentations to organisations such as the Aboriginal Tribal Council, Bushwalking Clubs and the World Heritage Institute.

The World Heritage Area Advisory Council support the proposal and have commended it to the BMCC. It would seem that BMCC will support the broad thrust of the proposal, although they may possibly prefer to retain small portions of the National Park extensions under Council management. The Blue Mountains tourist industry and the Emirates (Wolgan Valley Resort) are supportive. So also are environmental groups in the Lithgow and Capertee regions, and organisations such as the National Parks Association.

Opposition to the proposal has predictably come from coal mining and sand extraction companies, off-road 4WD and trail bike organisations, and other forms of vested interest.

LCC has opposed the proposal in principle and has adopted an intensely critical and destructive approach. This is surprising, since the Lithgow community has much to gain (including employment and diversification) from a sustainable tourist industry that would be enhanced by passage of the proposal. Aspects of LCC's opposition are detailed in the following article.

Opposition from Lithgow Council

The Society is most concerned at the reception given to the GoS2 proposal by Lithgow Council on 18 April 2006.

The tone of the meeting was set by the Mayor's comments about perceived inaccuracies (to which there was negligible time allowed for verbal or written responses) within a substantial document principally produced by volunteer organisations. The Mayor even implied that the carefully produced maps might be deliberately misleading. Furthermore, having used his microphone-aided position to present largely destructive comments, he employed his position of Chair to restrict responses made to matters raised by him and other councillors.

Council time was spent searching for debateable errors, rather than understanding the scope of the proposal and its broader implications for the future of Lithgow and the western Blue Mountains. The proponents were treated as charlatans, rather than representatives of organisations seeking to protect the magnificent values of the region. It is instructive that Len Ashworth reported (Lithgow Mercury, 20/04/06): "*The session was held in an atmosphere of undisguised hostility...with Councillors accusing the lobbyists of engaging in hidden agendas, half-truths and outright lies*".

Disregarding the unsatisfactory way in which the meeting was conducted, Councillor's questions focused on the implications for the coal industry, methods of achieving better environmental protection from irresponsible trail-bike and 4WD use, the impact on the 'local' timber industry, and the Bells Line of Road Superhighway. The implications for Lithgow in terms of protecting a beautiful region and sustaining an expanding tourist industry were seemingly of little interest to them.

Much was made of Centennial Coal's refusal to endorse the proposal. Centennial believes that Government already heavily controls operations, and reservation within an SCA *might* place further constraints on underground mining. Centennial's attitude classically expresses corporate risk-aversion. Why take the slightest risk when the company has nothing to gain? Why give the 'environment' a free kick? In fact, why do anything for the benefit of the environment that isn't mandated by Government? An SCA was the selected form of protection because of its compatibility with underground coal mining, yet this is disregarded.

An SCA is incompatible with open-cut coal mining or sand extraction. A small tract with open-cut coal potential in the upper Cox's River-Long Swamp region would be affected by the proposal. However, because this involves water supply, a development application would probably be opposed by environmental groups, concerned local residents, the EPA, State Water, and the Federal DEH (in relation to protection of endangered swamps under the EPBC Act). Granting an SCA could therefore save everyone substantial amounts of time. In any case, the State Government can excise any portion of the proposal that it deems inappropriate.

A sand/kaolin mine was recently approved and the Boral property remains on care and

(Continued on page 5)

Opposition from Lithgow Council
(Continued from page 4)

maintenance. The Society is opposed to the mine and to any additional sand extraction. Granting an SCA over the unaffected region would preclude further development applications.

The view that people have a 'right' to use 4WD vehicles and trail bikes on crown land and apparently within a State Forest was strongly put. While not rejecting this, Councillors acknowledged the need for better environmental protection, but questioned whether an SCA would or could provide it.

There is no 'right' to use vehicles off-road in a way that damages the ecosystem and imposes mechanical noise to the detriment of others. Rejecting potential protection because some irresponsible use will be ongoing is akin to abandoning drink-driving regulation because there are still some offenders. The argument that 'they have to go somewhere to practise their sport' is spurious; bona fide clubs can negotiate access to private property or perhaps State pine forest for their members. It is not the role of GoS2's proponents to organise this.

The proposal requires that forestry activities progressively stop. Council emphasised the loss of associated jobs and considered it unacceptable. Appropriate compensatory measures would be needed, and a mechanism was mentioned at the meeting. But this is the role of Government, not that of the GoS2 proponents.

Council can have its coal industry, AND an expanding and sustainable tourist industry, AND preserve its magnificent environment. Instead, the baby is going out with the bath water!

Fungal Forays

Each year as the temperature drops and the leaves begin to fall, weird and wonderful fungi emerge in our local reserves and the even more weird and wonderful members of the Sydney Fungal Studies Group emerge to study them.

Seriously though, the Sydney Fungal Studies Group aims: to advance the study of fungi, particularly the larger ones; to educate people of all levels of expertise in the science of mycology; and to interact with groups with closely related interests. In other words, they endeavour to enhance our understanding of the natural world and to have fun whilst doing so -maybe they're not so strange after all!

The group is running two Fungi Field Days in the area to identify and record mushrooms, toadstools and slime moulds.

May 20 Coachwood Glen, Blackheath
Elma & Ray Kearney 9428 5336

June 17 Mt Wilson
Alec Wood 9570 1113

For more information, take a look at their weird and wonderful website at www.sydneyfungalstudies.org.au.

Nursery News Kevin Bell

This month's feature plant is *Clematis aristata*, commonly known as Old Man's Beard, Goats Beard or Traveller's Joy. And it is a joy to see with its abundant and spectacular white, starry flowers to 5cm in Spring followed by fluffy masses of bearded fruits which inspired its other names.

It is a widespread and versatile climber, useful for mingling amongst shrubbery or growing over trellises and walls. The foliage of both suckers and seedlings is decorative, being purplish underneath with flecks of silver on the upper surface. It is easy and quick to grow in shade or full sun and is even hardy enough to survive in dry positions under eucalypts. We have good stocks of *C. aristata* for just \$2.50 at both our nurseries.



Clematis aristata (Photo: Australian National Botanic Gardens)

Our annual autumn sale on Saturday 8 April was an outstanding success and raised \$1,480 for the Society. We sold 592 plants and gave away about another 150 of surplus and advanced stock, to the delight of our customers.

We still have good stocks of a variety of plants just waiting to be planted now, the best time of the year for such activity. Our Blackheath nursery will close during June and July and stock will be moved to Lawson which will remain open through winter. We will also be at the May Magpie Markets in Lawson (3rd Sunday of the month) for those who can't get to our weekday openings.

Our call for donations of local seeds has not gone unheeded! Many thanks to the kind anonymous person who left three bags full of beautiful *Banksia* cones hanging on my front gate. It almost seems a shame to have to singe them so they will release their seeds, but that is exactly what Nature intended!

If you love of plants, come and join our volunteers on Tuesday mornings at Blackheath or Wednesday mornings at Lawson. No experience is necessary, just a willingness to work and enjoy the company.

Contact Kevin Bell on 4787 6436 for information.

"Aggie Assault" recognised by DEC

On Saturday 11 March, a group of 14 volunteers, some from our own Valley of the Waters Bushcare Group, and two National Parks and Wildlife Service officers, removed over 3000 mature agapanthus plants to prevent them gaining a foothold in the Blue Mountains National Park.

This month their efforts were recognised in a Department of Environment and Conservation press release which began:

"A popular ornamental plant and common garden escapee is ready to conquer the world heritage listed Blue Mountains National Park, unless we stop it."

Valley of the Waters Bushcare coordinator, Karen Hising, said that while not advocating the immediate wholesale removal of agapanthus from residents' gardens, cutting off the seed heads before they ripened and bagging all cuttings and disposing of them in the bin were two practical ways to reduce their spread into bushland.

She also encouraged people to consider using local native species such as Mat Rush (*Lomandra longifolia*) and Flax lilies (*Dianella* species) instead. Both are attractive, readily available and have the added benefit of requiring less water.

Agapanthus is just one of many species threatening the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area," said Upper Mountains Area Manager, Mr Richard Kingswood. Many popular ornamental plants are also environmental weeds with the potential to smother native vegetation and change ecosystems forever.

As many of you already know, one of the best ways to learn about these problem plants and how to control them appropriately is to volunteer a few hours each month with your local bushcare group.

For more information, contact the Blue Mountains City Council Bushcare Program on 4780 5528, or have a look at the website at www.weedsbluemountains.org.au.

Source: Department of Environment and Conservation, Media release, 21 April 2006.

BMCS Bushcare

The Valley of the Waters Bush Care group works in the Blue Mountains National Park at Wentworth Falls on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

Tools are provided but bring morning tea, gloves and drinking water. New members are always welcome. Contact Karen on 4757 1929 for meeting place and more information.

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY BUSHWALKING GROUP

Membership of the bushwalking group is open to Society members. **Cost of insurance and affiliation fees is \$15 per member.** For further information, contact the coordinator (listed) or Walks Convenor, David Bowskill (4757 3416, davidbow@tpg.com.au)

MONDAY LEISURE WALKS

Usually 'Short Day' walks of 3-5 hours, suitable for walkers of average fitness. Graded medium, these walks may include some short rock scrambles or sections off track. Bring morning tea and lunch. Carry at least 1 litre of WATER, 2 litres on warm days.

May-15	Watson's Bay to Bondi <i>Grand Coastal Cliff Walk.</i>	Mary	4787 6918	Top of escalators at Central Station	9.30 a m
May-22	Lockley's Pylon <i>Heath walk with great views over the Grose Valley.</i>	Laurel	4784 1554	Leura Station carpark (cnr GWH)	9.15am
May-29	Bus trip, West Head, Kuringai NP <i>Sydney's 'Fjordland'. Fare \$10, pay when booking.</i>	Norah	4757 4058	BMCC depot, South St, N.Katoomba	8.30am
Jun-5	Sublime Point, Leura <i>Views to Mt Solitary and the Three Sisters.</i>	Mary	4787 6918	Leura Station carpark (cnr GWH)	9.15am
Jun-12	Charles Darwin's Walk, W. Falls <i>Named after Charles Darwin who walked it!</i>	Bob & Mary	4784 1334	Wentworth Falls, Stockyard carpark	9.15am

THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS

Easy to medium grade walks conducted to suit walkers on the day. Slower walkers are catered for; on longer walks there may be an option for a slower group to complete only a section of the walk. Carry at least 1 litre of WATER, 2 litres on warm days.

May-25	Hat Hill - Bald Head Ridge, B'heath <i>Short ascent to ridge top walk with extensive views.</i>	Phil	4787 5560	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	10.00am
Jun-1	Linden to Woodford <i>Train from Woodford to Linden. Walk back (~4km) via Kings Cave, Caley's Repulse and other historic features.</i>	John	4757 1558	Woodford Station (9.53am train)	9.45am
Jun-8	Den Fenella Wentworth Falls <i>Walk from picnic area to lookouts and to Den Fenella via Undercliff track.</i>	Simone	4757 3416	Wentworth Falls carpark (near clock)	10.00am
Jun-15	Castle Head, Narrowneck <i>Walk along ridge to lookout, via firetrail and bush track, possible exploratory walk as well. Bring lunch.</i>	Joan	4782 2218	Gearins Hotel, Katoomba	10.00am
Jun-22	Centennial Glen, Walls Ledge, B'heath <i>Great views on bush tracks, some steps.</i>	Phil	4787 5560	Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre	10.00am
Jun-29	BUS TRIP TO TARONGA ZOO <i>Cost of bus trip and Zoo entry: \$20 to BMCS bushwalkers. Payment at booking essential.</i>	Simone	4757 3416	Katoomba bus depot	8.30am

WEEKEND WALKS

These walks are all graded MEDIUM: + indicates they include some hard climbing; (+) indicates the hard climbing is optional. If this is your first walk, or you are unsure of the classification, please discuss it with the leader or Walks Convenor before attending. Carry at least 1 litre of WATER, 2 litres on warm days.

May-20	Vera Falls MEDIUM	Ron	4757 1526	Wentworth Falls Station carpark	8.30am
May-27	Grose R. via Faulconbridge Pt MEDIUM(+)	Andy	4758 6302	Faulconbridge Station carpark	8.30am
Jun-3	Victoria Falls to Pierces Pass MEDIUM+ <i>Phone Bill as limited to ten people.</i>	Bill	4758 8545	Mt Victoria Station carpark	8.00am
Jun-10	Bell to Wollangambe Ridge MEDIUM	June	4787 7312	Mt Victoria Station carpark	9.45am
Jun-17	Golden Staircase to Mt. Solitary MEDIUM+	Bill	4758 8545	Gearins Hotel carpark	8.30 am
Jun-24	Cripple Creek MEDIUM	Liz	4754 4966	Valley Heights Station carpark	9.00am

HELP WANTED, PLEASE!

A sub-convenor is needed to help prepare the Saturday walks program for the Hut News. As David is currently overhauling our website, he only has time for overall coordination but not detailed planning. If you can spare 1-2 hours each month to help with this important task, please contact David Bowskill (4757 3416, bushwalks@bluemountains.org.au).

Thankyou to Christine

A big thankyou to Christine for her many years of producing Hut News. After only one edition, I'm in awe of someone with the passion, dedication (and stamina) to produce 122 issues!

However, what really shone through in Christine's farewell article was her genuine love of the Blue Mountains and her quiet pride in being amongst those who have worked so hard to preserve them. But perhaps most of all, her sense of hope for the future, renewed each time she sees another suddenly transfixed by the beauty of this place.

With so much depressing news on the environment, it's heartening to reflect on how much has been achieved by so-called 'ordinary' people.

I feel I have some pretty big boots to try to fill. So I beg your patience whilst I'm learning how to do this job, but feel free to contact me if you have any comments.

Regards, Juli

Hut News Editor

Thursday Morning

*Shoulder to shoulder
with rain-laden banksias
and quiet swordgrass
butterflies...
We lead and follow
each other
along the path.*

Bernadette,
23/3/06



Looking for a Mother's Day gift?

Plants make beautiful gifts for Mother's Day or any other occasion and some of the loveliest native plants can be found in the Blue Mountains.

Our Blackheath and Lawson nurseries have gift vouchers for \$10, \$20 or \$50. They are also available at our monthly meetings or by sending a cheque to P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls, 2782.

Welcome to new members

Lyn Oliver, Springwood
J. Harrington, Katoomba
Winifred Noake, Springwood
Peter Marr, Baulkham Hills
Robert and Sheena Coupe, Leura
Charles Russell and Nada Mikes,
Blackheath

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

Elizabeth van Reyswoud

Phone 4757.2694

Email: mcreysw@bigpond.net.au

Post: PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782