

HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"



Some Environmental Good News for a Change!

At our next monthly meeting the Society's Environmental Education Officer, Craig Linn, will be taking us through some of the environmental good news for 2006. And before the jokes start about "Oh, so it's just a 2-minute presentation!", remember it's a big world and we've got a whole year to choose from.

It is tragic that scarcely a day goes by without the newspapers or electronic media telling us about yet another environmental disaster - either unfolding or impending. And yes this news is unfortunately all too often true. But, and there is a *but*, there is also a lot of good environmental news out there, which either goes un-reported or is relegated to a small item on page 17 or such like of the newspaper. So without being too Pollyanna-ish or Panglossian it's good for one's mental health to also focus occasionally on the wins for a change.



The presentation will be broad, covering both international and national environmental matters, but the second half will focus on NSW and the Blue Mountains in particular.

Those who have been to one of Craig's talks before will know that they are always interesting, you're bound to learn something new, and there are always lots of pictures. So come along, and go home feeling just a little bit better about the state of the world - for a change.

The meeting commences at 7.30pm on Friday 27 October at the Conservation Hut, western end of Fletcher St, Wentworth Falls.

Visitors most welcome!

More than any other time in history we can see the state of our world and measure its changes. A lot of the changes are for the worse, but there is also a lot of action to turn things around - to repair and to restore.

(Image: NASA Public Archive)

A Win for Yosemite Creek

As a result of the efforts of BMCS and Minnihaha Landcare group members, big improvements were made to development plans for a Landscaping Business to be located on Yosemite Creek, Katoomba.

Yosemite Creek, and its catchment, have received many thousands of hours of both volunteer and paid bush regeneration time over the last 15 years. Too much has been achieved to allow this development to go ahead without thorough scrutiny. In February this year, councillors deferred the decision on the proposed development to allow for further consultation, this time with the two community groups, who were concerned about the impact of this development on the creek as:

- it was located too close to the creek;
- it did not have an adequate area along the creek bank to be restored as an effective creek-line buffer zone of native vegetation; and
- it did not prevent potentially polluting materials (such as copper chrome arsenic) being stored on site - these substances could leach into the groundwater and ultimately contaminate the creek.

Improvements were made on each of these three issues. Whilst we concede that the modified development plans are still not ideal from a conservation and catchment protection perspective, the modifications are significant. The development applicant was also pleased with the changes made, to his credit.

This is a small but important win for the environment and the community. Unfortunately it took a lot of time and effort by council officers and the community because the affected Bushcare group was not consulted early in the process.

Hopefully a few lessons have been learned about the process, and the health of Yosemite Creek will continue to improve. For further information contact the Land-use Subcommittee on 4782 1635.

Lyndal Sullivan, Land-use Subcommittee



BIODIVERSITY ON THE BRINK



A Blue Mountains Forum

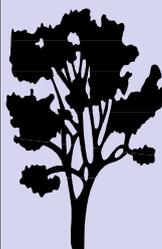
The Blue Mountains Conservation Society and Blue Mountains City Council are sponsoring a forum prepared by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW (NCC).

The forum will discuss current policy issues on biodiversity in NSW and recent legislative proposals such as biobanking and biocertification. The forum will include speakers from the Environmental Defenders Office, NCC, and more.

**7 pm, Wednesday 1 November
at the Conservation Hut,
western end of Fletcher St,
Wentworth Falls.**

All welcome. Put it in your diary now.

For more information, contact:
Clive Heywood-Barker
(BMCS) 4782 3345



HUT NEWS

"Hut News" is the newsletter of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.
P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls, 2782
Phone: 4757 1872 Fax: 4757 1753
Email: bmcs@bluemountains.org.au

President: Brian Marshall

4784 1148, marabeni@optusnet.com.au

Senior Vice President: Heather Hull

4739 1493, hhull001@bigpond.net.au

Membership Secretary: Rod Quirk

4784 1711, rod.quirk@exemail.com.au

Treasurer: Bart Beech

4739 9947, bbeech@invensys.com.au

Meetings Convenor: Jim Wallace

4784 3305, ozblu@optusnet.com.au

Plant Nursery Manager: Kevin Bell

(ph/fax) 4787 6436, khsbell@pnc.com.au

Environmental Education Officer:

Craig Linn 4751 4934,

craiginbm@optusnet.com.au

National Parks Officer: Don Cameron

4751 1130, dontara@ozemail.com.au

Threatened Species/Bushcare Officer:

Clive Heywood-Barker 4782 3345,

ozbundu@hotmail.com

World Heritage Officer: John Haydon

0421 479 146,

jhaydonmc@optusnet.com.au

Publications Officer: Phil Davey

4758 0198, pjd@turnerfreeman.com.au

Bushfire Officer: Hugh Paterson

4751 2303, goodbush@pnc.com.au

Lithgow Regional Sub-committee

Coordinator: Chris Jonkers 6355 1179,

cjonkers@ozemail.com.au

Website Manager) David Bowskill

Technical Officer) 4757 3416

Walks Convenor)davidbow@tpg.com.au

Administration Officer: VACANT

Meetings Secretary: VACANT

LandUse Officer: VACANT

Newsletter Editor: Juli Boddy

4759 2372, hutnews@bluemountains.org.au



International Day of Action on Climate Change

**Saturday Nov 4th 2006
11am Martin Place Sydney**

Join the growing movement demanding deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions through:

- Renewable energy guarantees
- No new coal-fired power or mines
- Better public transport

Letter of the Month—October 2006

Australia Left Behind

On ABC's Four Corners *What Price Global Warming?* (28.8.06) John Howard said "I want to see the evidence, I want to see the science, I want to see the proposition. I mean, these sweeping generalisations are next to useless". He also dismissed calls for Australia to cut its greenhouse emissions by 60% in order to combat the effects of global warming, saying that "60% would have enormously damaging impacts on our economy".

He should take the advice of Professor Matthew England, Director of the Climate and Environmental Dynamics Laboratory at UNSW, and see Al Gore's film *An Inconvenient Truth*. "Don't be fooled by self-anointed experts telling you he (Gore) has got it wrong. He hasn't", said Professor England.

Also, The Climate Institute has recently stated that "the uniquely Australian notion that reducing greenhouse gases harms economies and corporate profits is being blown out of the water by a surge in corporate activity to exploit the upsides of climate change. Carbon has a price, it is profitable and global companies are setting the pace."

"Companies around the world are using climate change as a strategic business driver across not only emissions reductions, but also the development of new markets, technologies and investment opportunities. The global response is, to a large degree, being driven by business. For example, there is a rush to invest in clean energy, a global market now worth \$74 billion. The global carbon market was worth \$13 billion last year and grew to \$18 billion in the first half of this year."

The Australian government is increasingly alone in its position. There has been a strategic shift in the position of the US on climate change, says the Climate Institute, and there is strong belief in corporate circles that the first action of the next President of the United States, Republican or Democrat, will be to initiate urgent action on climate change.

Send a short message to the Prime Minister using some or all of the following points:

- Ask him to go to see *An Inconvenient Truth*. Ask him exactly what more scientific evidence he needs before he will join other nations in taking drastic action to deal with global warming.
- Ask when is he going to look at what is happening in the economies of other countries which are already responding to global warming.
- Ask him to take immediate action to stimulate the Australian economy by adopting renewable energy targets of at least 10% by 2010 (Italy has just decided to double its renewable energy capacity to 22% by 2010).

It is important that the Federal Opposition also understand our concerns about global warming so you might like to send them a copy of your message too.

Contact Details: Post to Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600, or email:

The Hon John Howard: <http://www.pm.gov.au/email.cfm>

The Hon Kim Beazley: Kim.Beazley.MP@aph.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

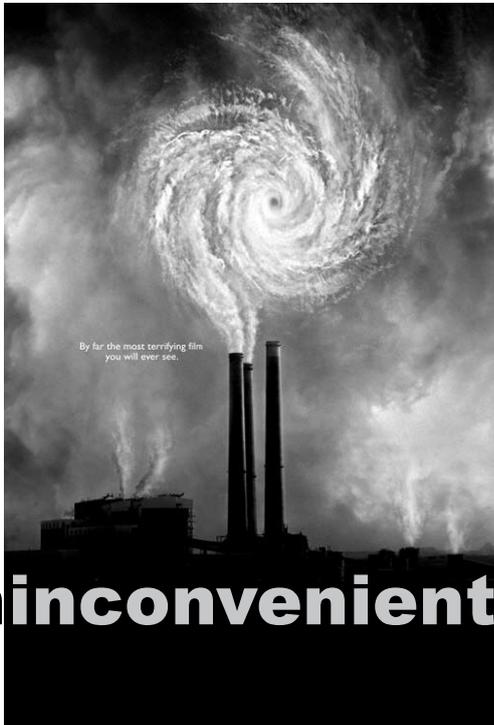
This day of climate action is timed to coincide with rallies all around the world in the lead-up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Nairobi, Kenya (6-17 November 2006). This will be the twelfth meeting of the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the second since the Kyoto Protocol came into force—and still Australia and the US refuse to ratify the protocol.

**We need to urge our government to do more about climate change.
So bring your family, friends, kids, bikes and placards for a fun walk
ending with speakers and entertainment.**

To make the journey more enjoyable, you can join fellow BMCS members on the 7.36am train from Lithgow (8.05 at Mt Vic, 8.25 at Katoomba, 9.05 at Springwood and 9.20am at Glenbrook).

Walk Against Warming is co-ordinated by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. More information: 9279 2466 or ehowden@nccnsw.org.au

Visit the BMCS website at: www.bluemountains.org.au



BRAID fundraiser at Mt Vic Flicks

**saturday
4 november 2006
8pm**

Guest Speakers →

Rebecca Gilling

Actor and environmentalist

Catherine Fitzpatrick

Greenpeace Team Leader, Energy and Climate Campaign

All tickets are \$20 [include drinks and after movie supper]

Please purchase tickets in advance from:

Bogbean Health Foods, Blackheath & Megalong Books, Leura.
enquiries 4787 5822

an inconvenient truth

help our Supreme Court action to protect the
Blue Mountains from over-development

[joint appeal between BRAID and BMCC of Clause 10.8e-LEP 1991]
BRAID blackheath residents against improper development

COMMENT THE WINDS OF CHANGE!

by Brian Marshall

One year ago, I started to write a series of articles on 'Climate change: a geologist's viewpoint'. But writing progress was rapidly overtaken by the need to engage in the Society's more local environmental and 'housekeeping' issues.

In the intervening year, the debate on climate change has also moved on. Doubt has been overtaken by abundant evidence. Few now question the reality of climate change (*aka* global warming) and the man-generated contribution related to 200 years of industrialisation. Few also doubt that the rate of change is accelerating, in part due to 50 years of increasing car and heavy truck dependency, and a massive increase in air travel.

Many predict that the world is approaching a catastrophic 'tipping' point (effectively the run-away steep part of an exponential curve) induced by over-population and its ever-increasing demands on exploitable space (= land clearing and deforestation), by escalating consumption of greenhouse-producing finite resources in coal- and oil-based economies, and by the laws of physics that affect icecap melting and the impacts of fresh water on sea levels and ocean dynamics. Even John Howard acknowledges climate change, but he steadfastly insists that the effects will be less disastrous than predicted, despite being confronted by 'middle of the road' rather than 'worst case' scenarios.

For those unconvinced, perhaps go to Antarctica or Greenland and Iceland (from which I have recently returned) and see first hand the contracting icecaps and retreating glaciers. Or ask the citizens of La Paz, whose glacier-sourced water supply has recently had its 'use by' date shortened from 30 to 15 years due to accelerating global warming. Or consult the satellite imagery of critical regions over the past 15 years (e.g., over the past two years the Greenland icecap has melted at about 2 ½ times the rate of the preceding two years). Or simply pay a few dollars and see Al Gore's 'An inconvenient truth'.

For those already convinced by the wealth of data demonstrating the reality and causes of climate change, the principal consideration must be how to combat it.

So how do we combat it? First and foremost, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but how should this be achieved?

Environmentalists, uranium miners, the liquid gas industry and the renewable energy industries (e.g., biofuels, and wind,

solar and tidal energies) all agree that coal dependency must be curtailed, whereas the coal industry and governments/economies based on coal, trumpet a future involving clean-coal technology and carbon sequestration, as if their full-scale commercial viability has already been established. Big business sees a carbon-trading scheme as an essential component of an orderly transition, and the uranium industry and certain (erstwhile?) environmentalists advocate a nuclear solution. And at another extreme, some civil engineers and enviroscientists advocate disaster-mitigation planning, such as building up the levee banks and/or relocating populations from low-lying regions of the planet; quite an exercise!

Far too much energy is expended in trying to pick the best answer to combating climate change. For example, an increasing number of people are sufficiently misguided to hail nuclear energy (miraculously divorced from weapons) as either a panacea that will permit 'greenhouse-reduced' economic growth, or a 'transitional' solution; but whether transitional to renewable energy or oblivion is unclear. My aim is neither to become immersed in a nuclear energy/weapons debate, nor to 'pick winners'. I would rather emphasise that programs to combat climate change **MUST BE MULTIFACETED**. And if anyone mentions cost, what is the cost of failure?

Does anyone seriously think that the coal industry won't be pursuing research that will make it cleaner? Does anyone (apart from the Prime Minister) not believe that a carbon-trading scheme is essential, and that renewable energy resources should be prioritised and receive at least the levels of subsidy granted to the coal industry? Does anyone not expect the deployment of 'engineering' solutions and population transfer (they are already happening)? And regrettably, does anyone really doubt that human greed will ensure the exploitation of nuclear energy, despite the facts that heavy government subsidies are essential, an economically viable method of nuclear waste disposal has yet to be resolved, and the proliferation of nuclear weaponry is a reality.

Conclusions: appreciate that greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced starting yesterday. Advocate a sustained multifaceted attack. Beware of snake-oil salesmen, one-eyed politicians with economic gods, vested business interests, and impractical idealists, all of whom can sap your energy by embroiling you in picking winners and either/or arguments.

The bottom line? People power is a form of renewable energy, so be part of the solution and apply people power unsparringly to politicians of all persuasions!

THE BULLETS ARE FLYING Brian Marshall

Around Winter Magic time you may have signed a petition or written to State Government or the NSW Game Council opposing the roll out of recreational hunting in State Forests. You were probably concerned about our Blue Mountains State Forests, including the highly visited Newnes State Forest. After all, who wants a family picnic curtailed by a wayward bullet?

There are many reasons why the State Government should have listened, but it didn't. Instead, the 'responsible body' (the NSW Game Council), on which hunting interests are disproportionately represented, proceeded unfettered.

Replies to letters from BMCS to State Government assured us that all would be well! Checks and balances are in place, hunting would be restricted to responsible registered persons, and signage would be in place notifying other stakeholders, etc., etc. There has predictably been no reply to letters sent to the arrogant NSW Game Council.

On 15 August, a pet Kelpie was shot in Double Duke State Forest. The owner was using his chainsaw to cut wood about 40m away (Sydney Morning Herald, 22 August, 2006). The Game Council conceded that signage was not in place but defended the hunter's action on the grounds that the dog was unrestrained and potentially a threat. According to the owner, the dog was a good-natured family companion for his four children. Luckily, the owner left his children at home.

On 9 September, a hunter became separated from his two companions as a result of an accident whilst chasing after his pig-dogs (The Canberra Times, 25 September, 2006). When the dogs returned without him, a protracted search by Police and SES workers found him after his 30-hour ordeal. The man had light clothing, no food and was ill-prepared for the overnight conditions of snow and sub-zero temperatures.

Of course accidents happen, but are these examples of the 'responsible behaviour' by 'registered experienced hunters' that will ensure your family's safety?

On 4 September, the Minister for Primary Industries was asked, amongst other questions related to the Game Council's performance, about the (inadequate?) second round consultation process regarding opening forests to hunting. He was also asked when the Government would release advice about any risk assessment related to opening State Forests to hunting, and what was the situation regarding liability for compensation for death or injury. His answers, due on 25 September, are eagerly awaited.

What can you do?

Again, write to the responsible Minister (Ian Macdonald), your local Member (Bob Debus) and local newspaper deploring the State Government's disregard for your safety and of your clearly stated opposition to such hunting. Tell them that 'paper regulations and signage' are a poor substitute for body armour. And tell them that it is not too late to rescind the declaration and remove hunting from the top 50 most frequently visited State Forests.

The election nerve is very sensitive to people power!

It's child's play to book a hunt (which is just as well as you only need to be 12 years old to get a hunter's licence) as the home page of the Game Council website (www.gamecouncil.nsw.gov.au) proudly proclaims:

[Click here to](#)

BOOK YOUR HUNT ON PUBLIC LAND IN NSW

DECLARED HUNTING AREA

This State forest is declared for hunting by licensees under the Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002

Firearms are used to control feral animals in this State forest

For further information please contact the Game Council NSW on (02) 6360 5100

...and how do the rest of us know where these intrepid hunters are?

Just look out for these little yellow signs which are springing up in our State Forests - and then decide how lucky you're feeling today.

REVISED DATE FOR

Gardens of Stone Stage 2 PUBLIC MEETING

Friday 20 October, 7-9pm

Uniting Church Hall

223 Katoomba St, Katoomba

Refreshments will be served

Free Entry, All Welcome

This meeting, advertised in the

September 'Hut News'

for 29 September, has been rescheduled and will now be held on Friday 20 October.



Apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

The Gardens of Stone Stage 2 proposal was launched last November by the Colong Foundation and the BMCS. The aim is to expand the Gardens of Stone and Blue Mountains National Parks and establish a new State Conservation Area in recognition of the region's natural, cultural and historical value.

The meeting will include a slide show of stunning images from the proposal area, an overview of the threats from mining, forestry and recreational activities, and a chance for people to express their views. Site visits and bushwalks to parts of the proposal area are also being organised over the coming months.

So come along and discover the natural wonders that lie to our west - the success of the campaign depends on local support.

(For details of a second meeting, to be held in Lithgow, please contact David Brazil david@dbrazil.com, or Karen McLaughlin karen.mclaughlin@ozemail.com.au.)



Above: Cape Horn locality, 4km SE of Baal Bone Gap, Wolgan State Forest.

Top: Pagoda Daisies- a rare species found in the proposal area.

Roadside propaganda coming to a village near you

The RTA (and at least one of its contractors) is using false and misleading signage to maintain the ignorance of the driving public and to promote themselves as an environmentally aware and proactive organisation. Although the RTA's practice of providing misleading information on revegetation areas is widespread and not new, the signs appearing at recently-landscaped highway-side sites in the Blue Mountains seem to be strategically placed and use colour in their effort to win hearts and minds. Or are the whole of the RTA and/or some of its contractors really that ignorant?

"NATIVE PLANT REGENERATION AREA PLEASE KEEP OFF"

may look good but these signs are being placed in areas where most, if not all, natural regeneration has actually been suppressed by land-scraping, weed-matting, deep covering with wood chips and the planting and maintenance of non-native plants.

What we are actually looking at in the picture is a 'synthetic vegetation' (with the exception of one native eucalypt behind the deciduous tree and the remnant vegetation on the other side of the highway). By 'synthetic', I mean existing almost entirely as an artificial creation. To read true this sign would need to be re-located into the remnant vegetation on the other side of the highway and would probably be obscured by the native plants that are able to regenerate in that situation!

In the garden bed shown, more appropriate wording for the sign would be:

"EXOTIC GARDEN RECENTLY ESTABLISHED"

or

"REVEGETATION USING EXOTIC PLANTS PLEASE KEEP OFF".

Of the plantings in the picture, Heath-leaved Banksia, *Banksia ericifolia*, is the only real 'native' species in this context (i.e. to ridge-tops in the upper Blue Mountains), but as it also occurs over extensive areas of eastern New South Wales, we have no idea where the seed came from. That is we do not know the provenance of the plants, or even their subspecies, so we don't know how well they will survive (especially post maintenance period) or whether they will genetically compromise local populations of *B. ericifolia*. (A similar



One of several signs recently put up around Wentworth Falls (it has maroon writing with a green border)

situation was clearly illustrated when the Sunshine Wattle, *Acacia terminalis*, at Soldiers Pinch between Blackheath and Mount Victoria were in flower recently. The roadside plantings are of *A. terminalis angustifolia*, a sub-species with cream flowers, not native to the upper Blue Mountains ridge-tops. The local native, *A. terminalis aurea*, with its golden yellow flowers, is abundant above these plantings.)

The other plants in the garden bed are also not native to this area: some are from the northern hemisphere (eg. the deciduous tree); some are from other parts of Australia (eg. exotic grevilleas and wattles). All except the single eucalypt are planted, therefore they cannot be said to be "regenerating". Revegetation is a last-ditch effort at landscape restoration, to be used only when natural regeneration has become impossible, and wherever possible plants should be grown from locally-collected native plant seed. The patch of land in the picture could have regenerated from the seed-bank still present in the existing soil, unfortunately this is now buried beneath imported soil, weed matting, woodchips and exotic plants and signs.....

Clive Heywood-Barker,
Threatened Species / Bushcare Officer

Dates for your diary in October...

- 1 Oct - 5 Nov, 9am-4.30pm
13 Moons: a year's journey through the blue mountains bush
Photo exhibition by Chris Ireland
Blue Mountains Heritage Centre
Govetts Leap Rd, Blackheath
(see September 'Hut News' for details)
- Friday 20 October, 7-9pm
Gardens of Stone Stage 2 Public Meeting
(See notice on page 4)
- Sunday 22 October, 9-10am
Service of Worship 'Planet Earth'
Leura Uniting Church
Cnr. Grose & Megalong Sts.
The Bible contains many poetic reflections on the beauty and wonder of the world. Robin Mosman, a past president of BMCS, will speak about the perils it faces today.

*'If you care about your ecological footprint, come and join us!
All welcome!'*

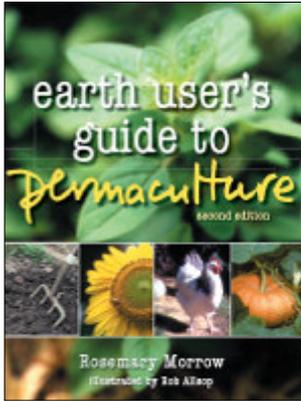
- Sunday 22 October (full day)
Birding Essentials Workshop
Coastal Environment Centre
Lake Park Rd, N. Narrabeen
Improve your birdwatching skills, learn about bird physiology & adaptations, habitat issues, etc. Organised by Pittwater Council, call 9970 6905 for details.
- Saturday 14 October, 9am-noon
BMCS Nursery's Big Spring Sale
(see notice on page 7)
- Saturday 21 October, 10am-noon
Introduction to writing Haiku
(see notice on page 8)
- Friday 27 October, 7.30pm
BMCS Monthly Meeting
Some environmental good news

for a change!

(See notice on page 1)

...and coming up in November

- Wednesday 1 November, 7pm
Biodiversity on the Brink
A Blue Mountains Forum
(See notice on page 1)
- Saturday 4 November, 11am
Walk Against Warming
International Day of Action on Climate Change
(See notice on page 2)
- Saturday 4 November, 8pm
An Inconvenient Truth
BRAID fundraiser at Mt Vic Flicks
(See notice on page 3)
- Saturday 11 November, 8.30am-3pm
Glenbrook Spring Festival
Come and visit us at the BMCS stall.



Book Review: *Earth User's Guide to Permaculture (second edition)*

Local Blue Mountains author and environmentalist, Rowe Morrow, has just released her most recent book *Earth User's Guide to Permaculture (second edition)* replete with lovely clear illustrations by Rob Allsop.

For those who already have a copy of the first edition it is important to note this second edition is totally updated throughout and greatly expanded - with new chapters and more than a 110 extra pages. Most importantly however there is even greater emphasis on the importance of how we must move "creatively into the future" to meet the environmental challenges of climate change, decline in fresh water availability, and the social shocks that will accompany the end of the age of cheap oil.

The book, of course, meets the needs of those wanting to learn the basics of permaculture. In this, it clearly sets out the ecological themes within which permaculture exists and then goes on to the practical matters of applying permaculture to your home, your land, and your life. I have read quite a few books on permaculture and there are three things I particularly like about Rosemary's approach. First, it is practical and clear with nice straightforward diagrams to illustrate nearly all points. Second, there are strong ethical and social themes flowing through the text with a succinct ethical tasks list at the start of each chapter and a section of the book dedicated specifically to social permaculture. Third, this book emphasises the critical point that we have moved to a stage in history where *conservation* alone is not enough and that we must all actively seek to repair and restore what is already damaged and lost.

I read the first edition back in 1994 and thought it was a good book, this new 2006 second edition is a really good book and addresses many of the issues we are all facing in the 21st century. You can apply this book at many levels: you can plant a vegetable garden to meet more of your food needs; you can live more perceptively with the native plants and animals of your locale; you can develop a whole site water plan; you can reach out and help to build stronger and more resilient communities; to name just a few. At all of these levels there is useful material presented.

In his foreword to the book, the renowned permaculturist David Holmgren notes that in this second edition Rosemary "consolidates her substantial and ongoing contribution to the understanding and application of permaculture as a design system for living lightly yet abundantly on this earth". I couldn't say it better.

Earth User's Guide to Permaculture (second edition) by Rosemary Morrow, illustrated by Rob Allsop, is published by Kangaroo Press and is available at most good bookshops - but please buy it locally and support not just our local authors and illustrators but our local bookshops as well!

**Craig Linn,
Environmental Education Officer**

Three things you can do to help save the Macquarie Marshes

Even if you didn't make it to our monthly meeting on Friday 29 September to hear Bev Smiles talking about the Macquarie Marshes, you can still help save this precious wetland and the birds which depend upon it.

The National Water Initiative, signed off by the NSW and Federal governments in 2004, gave irrigators private property rights for their water licences. To acquire more water for the Marshes, the public must now buy it back at market prices (currently about \$2000 per megalitre in the Macquarie Valley). Programs such as the Riverbank Fund and the Wetland Recovery Project aim to restore flows to the Marshes but more water is needed. Healthy conditions exist in only a small core of the total marsh area, there has been no successful colonial waterbird breeding since for 6 years and 2000 hectares of river redgums are dying.

So what can you do? -

1. Write to the NSW Government (Premier Morris Iemma and Environment Minister Bob Debus)
 - congratulate them on the Riverbank Fund Initiative;
 - request major additional funding for Riverbank, specifically for Marshes environment water, whilst irrigators are willing to sell;
 - emphasise that the Riverbank Fund, under DEC management, is a better outcome than the DNR Wetland Recovery Project.
2. Write to the Federal Government (Prime Minister John Howard and his advisor on Water Policy, Malcolm Turnbull)
 - congratulate them on the decision to buy back water for the environment and for contributing to the NSW Wetlands Recovery Project;
 - request that similar matching dollars (\$105 million) be allocated to the NSW Riverbank Fund, specifically for the Marshes, whilst irrigators are willing to sell.
3. Send copies of your letters and any replies to Bev so she can keep track of the campaign effort.

**Bev Smiles
Western Program Manager
National Parks Association of NSW
PO Box A96
Sydney South 1235
(Ph. 9299 0000, Fax 9290 2525)**



Aerial view of part of the Macquarie Marshes during wetter times. (Photo: National Parks Association of NSW)

In memory of Aleen Hanley

“How did you become interested in conservation and the natural environment?”

What was it that captured your imagination?”

These are questions that Aleen Hanley thought most important to ask ourselves to discover how best to foster a passion for conserving and maintaining the natural world in the younger generation.

On 9 August 2006, Aleen’s friends and fellow members of the Society for Growing Australian Plants, the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society (LBMCS), and the Glenbrook Lagoon 530A Committee, met at the Glenbrook Native Plant Reserve to celebrate and honour her life. Aleen dedicated her life to conservation, she lived her passion, in action and with humour.

Aleen came to live in Glenbrook in the early 1970s and immediately put her interest in the environment, natural and historical conservation to use. She was one of the backbone members of the LBMCS, working as its Librarian for many years and as Secretary in 1979. With Jill Dark, she ran the LBMCS stall at Springwood Ivy Market each month for many years, raising funds from home-grown plants and second-hand items. Friends commented how she “was always there” - always at meetings, working bees and special functions.

Aleen’s diligent work as Librarian, collecting articles on conservation issues, continued after the amalgamation of the Lower and Upper BMCSs. Her impeccably kept records and

documents, detailing the work of the LBMCS and the history of Conservation in the Blue Mountains at a very vulnerable time during the 1970s, 80s and 90s, became a valuable addition to Springwood Library’s local history collection. Aleen kept LBMCS members informed of current issues in the national conservation and political arena. Her finger was always on the pulse. She read widely, was a great source of information and guidance, helping in dealing with and contributing to major issues during the life of the Society.

A foundation member of the Society for Growing Australian Plants at Glenbrook, for decades Aleen attended the Wednesday workdays and Nursery duty selling plants. Cleaning up the honeysuckle at the Reserve was a particular concern of hers. Members are missing her extensive knowledge of ferns, and the resident possum misses its regular lunch of food morsels collected by Aleen - the sometimes reluctant offerings from lunches not quite completed.

Friends will remember her passion, her keen mind, her political sharpness, her great and subtle sense of humour, her love of her cats and classic old movies and of the native animals and plants, and her smile - as though there was always something more going on inside, a great depth of knowledge and political intrigue she would like to share, and a sense of fun. Aleen will be sorely missed by her friends and colleagues, and the Blue Mountains is a better place thanks to her absolute dedication to the environment.

Christine Stickley, Past President, Lower BMCS

Nursery News Kevin Bell

This month we continue our survey of pea plants in the mountains with the genus *Bossiaea*, named for Joseph Hughes de Bossieu de la Martinière (1758-1788), a French physician and botanist. He joined the scientific expedition sent out in 1785 in L’Astrolabe and La Boussole under the command of Comte de La Pèrouse. The voyage ended in tragedy in the New Hebrides when the two ships were wrecked on a reef and every man was lost, including the young Martinière, just some weeks short of his 30th birthday. The disappearance of the La Pèrouse expedition remained one of the great sea mysteries for 40 years.

Bossiaea is an endemic genus, found in all states, with 12 species in the Sydney district. They are mostly recognized by their flattened stems and yellow flowers with red centres. As for all pea plants, which have rather hard seeds, we treat them with boiling water and allow them to soak overnight before placing them in a propagating mix of peat moss and coarse sand. Germination is usually quick and fruitful. We propagate 3 species in our nurseries, *Bossiaea rhombifolia*, *B. obcordata* and *B. heterophylla*, but plan to add more later.

B. rhombifolia is a small bushy shrub with rhomboid leaves which point upwards. It is very decorative both in foliage and flower and is now filling the Lower Mountains bush with colour.

B. obcordata, known commonly as Spiny Bossiaea, is widespread and also currently in flower in the Lower



The colourful Spiny Bossiaea, *Bossiaea obcordata*, one of two species currently flowering in the lower Blue Mountains.

(Photo: www.thebegavalley.com)

Mountains. It is a small rigid shrub with heart-shaped leaves and spine-tipped branchlets.

B. heterophylla is a widespread, highly variable small shrub with a colourful display of flowers in autumn - we are collecting its seed now. It makes a good rockery plant.

On 5 September the nursery volunteers combined a seed collecting expedition at Green Gully or Carlon’s Farm in the Megalong Valley with a BBQ picnic at the excellent facilities provided by the NPWS. The area has recently been added to the Blue Mountains National Park and we have secured a contract to re-vegetate the degraded area there after years of cattle and horse grazing.

So it’s not all work and no play if you become a nursery volunteer. New recruits are always welcome - no experience is necessary, just a love of plants. Enquiries to Kevin Bell on 4787 6436.

To rejuvenate your garden, come along to our

BIG SPRING SALE

9am to noon

**Saturday 14 October
at the Conservation Hut**

over 1000 plants
more than 70 species
standard forestry tubes
\$2.50 each

For every 4 plants bought, select one free from a specially marked box.

20% discount for purchases of more than 50 plants

So grab a box and come early for the best selection. Our volunteers will be on hand to help you with your choices.

We look forward to seeing you there!

BMCS Bushcare

The Valley of the Waters Bushcare 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 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 Walks Convenor, David Bowskill (4757 3416, davidbow@tpg.com.au).

BEFORE ATTENDING, PLEASE DISCUSS THE WALK WITH THE LEADER (listed below)

- THIS IS ESSENTIAL IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST WALK OR YOU ARE UNSURE OF THE CLASSIFICATION.

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.

Oct-16	Bellbird Hill, Megalong Valley <i>The name says it all!</i>	Ron	4757 1526	Blackheath Station carpark	9.00am
Oct-23	Rigby Hill to Pierce's Pass, Bells Line Rd <i>Another new walk for our group.</i>	Heather	4739 1493	Mt Victoria Station carpark	9.00am
Oct-30	Colliers Lookout, Blackheath <i>Upper mountains heath, valley views, BBQ.</i>	Bob	4787 6584	Blackheath Station carpark	9.00am
Nov-6	Mount Boyce environs <i>Views of Kanimbla Valley.</i>	Terry	4784 6918	Blackheath Station carpark	9.00am
Nov-13	Empire pass, Lawson <i>Magnificent waterfalls, creek walk.</i>	Ron	4757 1526	Lawson Station carpark	9.00am

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.

Oct-12	The Gully, Katoomba, with Jean Murphy* Simone	4757 3416	Outside Katoomba Aquatic Centre	10.00am
<i>A description of life in The Gully by Traditional Owner and Elder of the Gundungurra People, Jean Murphy.</i>				
Oct-19	Echo Point to Katoomba Cascades	Joan	4782 2218	Gearins Hotel carpark
<i>Easy cliff top walk.</i>				
Oct-26	Bus trip to Mt Annan Botanic Gardens	Simone	4757 3416	Katoomba Bus Depot, South St.
<i>Cost \$10 for bus and entry. Bookings essential.</i>				
Nov-2	Blue Mountains Reptiles with Alan Lobb* Simone	4757 3416	Hazelbrook Commuter carpark	10.00am
<i>A look at reptiles in the Terrace Falls area (donation of \$5 per person if possible) (near Selwood's puzzles)</i>				
Nov-9	To be advised. Contact Simone on 4757 3416.			
Nov-16	West Katoomba Lookouts	Joan	4782 2218	Gearins Hotel carpark
<i>Easy cliff-top walk to lookouts over Megalong Valley. Suited to those of limited ability.</i>				

* Part of the **THURSDAY INFORMATIVE WALKS SERIES** - a full program can be found on our website.

WEEKEND WALKS

Before attending, please discuss the walk with the leader or the Weekend Walks organiser, Jim Percy (4758 6009). Carry at least 1 litre of **WATER**, 2 litres on warm days.

Oct-14	Linden to Lawson Ridge MEDIUM/HARD	Jim	4758 6009	Lawson Stn carpark (N side)	8.30am
<i>Great views across Woodford Creek to Lawson Ridge. Total 10km: 3km on firetrail, 7km off track, creek crossings.</i>					
Oct-21	Pinnacles Track, Dufaurs Head MED/HARD	Kate	9939 2624 / 4882 3122	Leura School Mt Hay Rd	8.30am
<i>The wonders of Lycon Rill and historic Yardley Family Cave. 12km, rough at times, but well worth the effort.</i>					
Oct-28	Ingar pool and Mt Bedford circuit EASY	Bob	4757 2694	Wentworth Falls Station carpark	9.00am
<i>2-3km, some scrambling, a swim in the pool and an extended 'Significant Birthday' lunch - bring goodies to share.</i>					
Nov-4	Weed-busting in Katoomba Creek EASY	Liz	4754 4966	Please contact Liz before 31 Oct for details.	
<i>Combined Bushwalking Groups activity in the Katoomba and Govetts Creek area, organised by NPWS, BMCC and Katoomba Creek Bushcare Group. Learn bush regeneration techniques (tools & training provided), meet like-minded people and enjoy an afternoon tea supplied by NPWS afterwards. Full day activity, bring lunch and water.</i>					
Nov-11	Blue Gum Forest MEDIUM/HARD	Meredith	4782 4823	Leura School Mt Hay Road	8.30am
<i>Great views into Govetts and Grose Gorges, lunch beneath magnificent Blue Gums. 6-7km, steep descent and ascent.</i>					
Nov-18	Mt Banks & Explorers Brook MEDIUM	Jim	4758 6009	Mt Victoria Station carpark	8.30am
<i>Magnificent views of the Grose Valley. Optional 2-3km detour to return, with wet feet, via Explorers Brook (HARD).</i>					

Would you like to write Haiku?

One of the places the Interpretive Walkers went last spring was Porter's Pass, at Blackheath. The track is pretty rough, I gather that much of it is on BMCC land, but at least there are handrails where it matters.

*Into the chasm
the mountain waters rush and
splatter at the pass.*

Some time later, Karen McLaughlin guided us to Deep Pass on the Newnes Plateau. One of the pleasures of the area is the NSW emblematic flower, which are best there, she said, in mid-October.

*Thunder rolling
for the best act this spring -
bright red waratahs.*

I am going to teach a short course in haiku writing at the Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre (Gardiner Crescent) soon. I will be giving a little orientation on Saturday 21 October, from 10am-12noon at the Centre, and also showing how haiku can be made into art objects.

The course will run on Wednesdays from 25 October to 15 November, two mornings 9am-12noon and two mornings 10am-12noon. There will be a small charge for the course. Phone me on 4751 3935 for more information.

A chance to slow down, observe and refresh - come along!

Diana Levy

Welcome to new members

Raewyn Proctor, Hazelbrook
Robert & Evelyn Hamilton, Leura
Mike & Kerry Speak, Blackheath
Susan Cornwell & Michael
Peppercorn, Faulconbridge
Gareth & Maggi Williams,
Blackheath
Patricia Lakke, Glenbrook
Lynda Barling-Day, Lawson
Sue Pietsch, Glenbrook

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

Rod Quirk
Phone 4784 1711
Email: rod.quirk@exemail.com.au
PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782