



## "Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow's People"

### Great Year for the Society!

This has been a great year for the Society! Our membership has increased by 30% since March. There have been big attendances at our Friday meetings. The Society has been pressing hard for World Heritage listing for the Blue Mountains and has been lobbying Council and Government on many environmental issues. We have developed an active and strong Land Use committee, started a bushcare group.....

Happy Christmas to everyone and we are hoping for an even better year next year.

(There will be no December General meeting due to Christmas holidays.)

### Christmas Trees

Christmas is a wonderful time to weed out some of the young pines (weed of the month!) from the bush. A Christmas tree in every room!!! Cut the tree close to the ground so that it won't resprout.

If you don't want to go into the bush to cut your own, CORE (Coalition of Residents for the Environment) is selling pine trees taken out of the bush:

**When:** Saturday 21 December, 8-11am  
**Where:** at car-park outside Jewels  
**Cost:** donation to CORE.

Core has permission from NPWS and Council to cut these weed trees. Trees are being collected on Thursday and Friday afternoons. Any volunteers are welcome, or information about suitable trees to cut. Contact Lyndal Sullivan 82.1635.

### Feral Invasion!

This year the starlings and sparrows seem to be more numerous in Blackheath. In November a pair of Spotted Turtle Doves, not usually seen in Blackheath, was spotted.

Is the Katoomba pigeon population spreading? In their natural habitat these feral pigeons nest on cliffs (what a horrible thought!).

Have members noticed recent spreading of Indian Mynahs, Spotted Turtle Doves, or feral Pigeons?

Please let us know — phone Christine (87.7246) or write to P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls.

If anyone would be interested in doing simple surveys or nest records of these species, please contact Bonnie Doon Fauna Study Group 82-2218.

### Nature Track Bushcare Group

At the November bushcare day we started concentrating on the beginning of the track behind the first house. Bags and bags of Monbrechia and Coriopsis and armloads of tree lucerne were removed. It was pleasing to see some of the neighbours coming to help.

Mark these coming workdays in your diary: **Monday 9 December, 20 January, 17 February, 9 am to 12 noon.** Meet at The Hut at 9 am. (Bring your own gloves and morning tea.) For more information phone Jessica (57.2783).

### Macro Invertebrates Day

Learn how to monitor water quality by utilizing the life in the streams. The species of invertebrates found in a stream give an indication of the overall quality of the area.

**When:** Saturday 14 December, 10 am.  
**Where:** Old Ford Reserve, Megalong  
Enquiries: Di Shanks 22.2555.  
(Picnic facilities are available.)

### Weed Collection

Would anyone be interested in collecting and pressing Blue Mountains weed specimens to be used by the Society? We would like to display each "Weed of the Month" in The Hut. (Phone Jessica, 57.2783)

### Queens Road Lawson

At its meeting on Tuesday 12 November Council resolved as follows:

"That Council refuse consent to stage two of the development for the following reasons:-

1. Stage two represents an over-development of the site which will involve excessive clearing of native vegetation.
2. Stage two does not comply with Clause 10.5(d) of LEP91, for the reason that it does not incorporate effective measures to ensure that no adverse environmental impact occurs in respect of:
  - (1) any rare endangered species of flora and fauna or its habitat.
  - (2) any open forest community
  - (3) the hydrological aspect of the locality
  - (4) any lake, lagoon, perennial and non-perennial watercourse."

### Endangered Butterfly

The NSW Scientific Committee of NPWS has finally determined that the Bathurst-Yetholme Copper Butterfly is an endangered species and is to be listed on Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Endangered Species Act. This is our most endangered and rarest butterfly. It relies on the Blackthorn scrub where it lays its eggs, and an attendant ant which cares for the larvae. (See October *Hut News*.) (contd. page 2)



### Weed of the Month: Pine Tree — *Pinus radiata*

This tree is very easy to grow — a Cockatoo can do it! It grows quickly, eventually to an enormous height, shading out native species and covering the ground with a thick layer of needles which the native plants hate but other weeds such as ivy and holly love — and a hundred years down the track it can cause enormous (and expensive) problems for the next generations.

Many of the older pine trees are now past their use-by date and are a danger to life and property. The cost of removing them is enormous.

Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoos love the pine cones and spread them into the bush.

We don't need to plant more! If you need a thick windbreak in your garden grow a fir which doesn't become a weed.

The natural diet of the Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoos is Banksia seeds and insect larvae from the trunks and branches of wattles and other natives. *Acacia longifolia* is a favourite. These plants are available at the Conservation Society plant nursery (contact David Coleby 84-1395).

### Who needs to grow a weed!



<i>"Hut News"</i> , the newsletter of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.		
P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls, 2782.		
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Bushwalks:	Chris Woods	82.3419
Land Use	Don Morison	87-6912
Bushcare	Jessica Yuille	57.2783
Editor:	Christine Davies	87-7246

## Land Use Report

### Bodington Hill Zoo

A recent Supreme Court decision may allow a zoo to go ahead on Bodington Hill. Strict adherence to environmental laws will be necessary to minimise the impact, if the development does take place.

### EMP2 Deadline

Mountains residents groups generally do not accept the view of some BM Council staff that Environment Management Plan 2 cannot be displayed as a draft Local Environment Plan until October 1997.



Council's most recent resolution gives some hope of more rapid progress but a much stronger resolution would have been better.

An October 22 letter from State Member Bob Debus to his colleague, Planning Minister Craig Knowles, shows that Mr. Debus appreciates the depth of community concern over Council's tardiness.

### Trucks and Cars and Planes

The RTA has sent BMCS a circular letter about its latest piecemeal planning exercise which happens to be at Lawson. As usual, the RTA is not addressing the overall transport—land use implications of its policies, including pressures on the natural environment.

Federal Member Kerry Bartlett has written to BMCS stating his intention to pass on more information about possible airport sites at Badgery's Creek and Holsworthy. Unfortunately, his Federal Cabinet colleagues have refused to release some documents about Holsworthy under Federal Freedom of Information guidelines.  
—Don Morison.

## New Members

### Welcome to new members:

Tom and Wendy Whitton, Katoomba  
Margaret Henley, Lawson  
J & M Grant, Faulconbridge  
B Frecklington, Wentworth Falls  
Grahame Bailey, Lawson  
Jan Cutler, Leura  
Meredith Heyward, Leura  
Lester Ives, Blackheath  
Judy Stebbing, Leura  
Ken and Tricia McLean and Family,  
Wentworth Falls

Pauline Smith, Wentworth Falls  
Alan and Shelley Oliver, Katoomba  
Paul and Sue Armstrong, Springwood  
Dr Andrew Reiner and Ms Harbans Kaur,  
Leura

Rob Curtis, Wentworth Falls  
Rosemary Morrow, Katoomba  
CA and RE Fitzgerald, Glenbrook  
Gary Brooker, Strathfield  
Mr and Mrs Jackson-Hope, Blaxland

## Endangered Butterfly (contd.)

It is threatened by grazing of domestic and feral animals, clearing of habitat, burning, weed infestation, and over-collection of the species.

The species is likely to become extinct in nature in NSW unless the factors threatening its survival cease to operate.

## Environmental Law Workshop

The society recently co-hosted a workshop with the Environmental Defender's Office on 23/11/96 at Mid Mountains Neighbourhood Centre, Lawson. The venue was filled to capacity, with 65 attendees, including many prominent environmentalists.

The speaker, James Johnson, was excellent. He spoke about the laws which govern activities that impact the environment. He particularly highlighted those actions that can be taken by environmentalists when they believe that proposed activities are detrimental to the environment. The workshop was kept relevant to the Mountains, and continuous audience participation ensured that attendees benefited.

A further benefit of the activity was the opportunity for networking among the audience. There are many environmental groups in the Mountains, but too often, they operate in isolation. Gatherings such as this help to strengthen the bonds between groups fighting for the environmental cause.

## Feeding Native Birds

Many people get a lot of pleasure out of feeding native birds. Some say that small amounts of the right type of food is OK, if it is given at irregular times so that the birds are not reliant and still forage for themselves. Others say that it is a luxury that we can no longer afford, that it upsets the delicate balance of nature and jeopardises the welfare of the birds.

It is very enjoyable to have birds come to the garden and to see them up close, but are we being kind or cruel?

Overfeeding by humans can cause many problems. Crimson Rosellas breed in response to the abundant food supply. In the winter there is not enough food for the artificially inflated population and many of the young die off.

Food provided is often inappropriate and can be fatal to wildlife. Poor nutrition can lead to bone deformities, reduced ability to cope with cold weather, susceptibility to disease and general bad health.

Sick birds are attracted to the free food. Diseases such as beak and feather disease are transmitted easily where there are large numbers of birds. Viral, fungal and bacterial diseases can result in many birds dying a slow and painful death. Birds can also transfer diseases and parasites to humans.

Seed trays attract feral species such as Indian Mynahs who aggressively and successfully compete with local wildlife for



**Membership Enquiries:** The Society is keen to have new members who are concerned about the welfare of the Blue Mountains natural environment. Contact the membership secretary, Ross Coster: Work (047)59.1247, Home 59.1837 FAX 59.1095, or write to P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782.



food and nesting hollows, and mice and black rats which come out at night for an easy feed (and attract snakes!). Seed falls to the ground and birds are attacked by cats.

If you want to be close to the wildlife it would be better to plant native plants in your garden. Include some nectar-producing plants such as Grevilleas to attract Honeyeaters. Plants help create an appealing habitat for a wide range of animals including frogs. Provide safe nesting sites — plant dense prickly shrubs for small birds, and seek advice from WIRES about nest boxes.

If you haven't got a garden you could find a spot where birds often feed and visit them regularly in their habitat. (A pair of binoculars and a bird book are worthwhile investments.)

If you want really close contact with native birds and animals, join Blue Mountains WIRES and help to care for injured and orphaned wildlife (phone 54.2946).

## Looking Back ....

Tenders were recently called for the making of a four feet wide track, to lead down to the bottom of the Waterfall at Govett's Leap. Tenders, of which there were several, have been opened with the result that Mr. J. Henson of Katoomba, is lowest, and has been accepted, for 60 pounds, Mr. Williams, of this town, being second lowest, at 68 pounds. This is considered a very reasonable price and the promoters are sanguine of its being a great success. This track will enable tourists and others to walk into the Grose and explore the beauties which have hitherto been inaccessible from this point. Large lagoons, from which fish are obtainable, are to be seen, with trees and ferns, at an enormous height. The general beauty is beyond expression here. The promoters intend to continue in their good work by making tracks along the bottom to different parts, which must undoubtedly tend to swell the large numbers who visit this favourite pleasure resort, thereby doing good in every way to the town.

*Lithgow Mercury, 29/4/1898.*

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## Butterfly Flowers

Caper White butterflies, migrating north, floating from flower to flower, hesitating, drinking the nectar, sipping the dew.

*Drosera binata*, insect-eating plants — sticky fingers reaching out, beckoning, wearing a garland of white butterflies.

—Christine Davies (*Blackheath*, 3/11/96)

## Leisure Walk

Darwin's Walk was enjoyed by a group of eight walkers on Monday 4 November. The weather was overcast but it did not stop our pleasure for the delights of the scenery, wildflowers, animal life and various birds.

The rain held off till we were nearly back at Wentworth Falls Park where we were invited to Ruth Milton's home nearby for a very welcome hot drink and light lunch. Thank you Ruth for an enjoyable end to our leisure walk.—Heather Hastie.

**Kanimbla Valley Excursion** On the way to Kanimbla we stopped off in Hartley Valley to look at revegetation efforts on degraded country which has been grazed for 100 years leaving weeds and eroding granite soil.

A graphic illustration of the damage caused by rabbits was the bare eroded soil and regrowth on either side of a rabbit proof fence. We were near Marsden Hill,

named after Samuel Marsden who owned land around there, an exposed granite hill seen from many of the lookouts.

Charles Johnson is an excellent host and eager to show off the bushland in his part of the Kanimbla Valley. Our short walk covered a number of vegetation types, woodlands with different associations of trees, a heathy hill which was recently a mass of wildflowers, and creekside with ferns and a moist cool atmosphere (here Charles demonstrated how his hydraulic ram would pump water if there were enough water in the creek, but the parched earth still needs a lot of soaking rain before the creeks are running full).

The expertise of Dick Turner is amazing, with a wonderful knowledge of plants and an eye for the tiniest orchid, and the ability to pick out the smallest sound from the bird chorus and identify the bird.

We saw a number of Flying Duck Orchids. To us they look like little ducks, but to a male wasp they look like attractive females, his curiosity ensuring the continuation of the orchid species.

Some of the birds identified were the Rufous Whistler, Leaden Flycatcher, Sacred Kingfisher, Grey Fantail, Yellow Robin, Gang Gang Cockatoo, and the Spotted Pardalote.

## HANOI 4 pm

Beautiful women, beautiful women, streets full and roads full of beautiful women, riding their bicycles, riding their motor bikes, stylishly dressed, some riding single some riding double, all ride with dignity, all ride with grace, elegant, exquisite Vietnamese women riding home.

—Graham Alcorn, March 1996.

## Reinitz Pass

With a misty morning sunrise clearing to a hot overcast day, we met at Mount Victoria Station for our walk. We stopped at Pulpit Rock with its superb 180° views, then on down the Little Zigzag into Kanimbla Valley. At the turnoff to Bushranger Cave (Canimbla Cave) we saw a young nanny "with ear tag". We stopped for lunch on a large rock after which we continued on Reinitz Pass and up Wilson Glen, visiting Ross Cave and stopping often to enjoy the views across the valley. — Carol Butcher.

## Get Well Soon, Joan

The Society's hard-working Education Officer, Joan Williams, is recovering from an operation. We send our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

## In the Bush

So pleasant has been the Spring scene that Bunyip finds it quite easy to wallow in the local billabongs — and there are many!

Some of the charms are readily accessible, others involve a little more effort on the part of the seeker.

In some ways Wentworth Falls is fortunate that power lines run from Lawson, N.W. towards Blackheath. These lines have to be periodically checked and this is done by way of rough tracks running off the ends of existing town streets, Lawson View road for instance terminates in an access to Bruce's Walk and another fork gives an easily walked two kilometres through

relatively unspoiled bushland. The end of Henderson Road also leads to a flowery spectacle and detours can be made around the quiet roads

of Somme, Clarendon and Duperry. The end of Edwards Parade is another good access point and it has the scenic bonus of the hilly slopes running up to Rock Lilly Ridge from Wentworth Creek.

Kittyhawk Avenue, Lamartine and View Road corner, Beatty Street are others, and one can explore the end of streets running north of Katoomba. — I could go on but it would make dry reading. Just pick

a nice week day morning, pack a plant reference book and magnifying glass and try any one of the above streets. A new hobby might await and unlike the birds the flowers await inspection.

Waratahs! What a season of visual pleasure they have given us. Everyone speaks of their profusion. The exit road from Govetts Leap parking area provides easy viewing from a car, though the blooms will be well past their prime by now.

A master florist could do no better than what Nature displays in the wild. A broad foreground of white *Conospermum* often as not flanked by

swathes of purple *Comesperma*, a bush of six or so Waratah blooms amid a back drop of bright yellow isopogons is an unforgettable sight. The species mentioned are quite common just now.

Are you one of the many who get mixed up when viewing *Conospermum* and *Conesperma*. The latter is a Polygalaceae and the former a Proteaceae. From "Dictionary Botanical Names, Australian Plant Names compiled and illustrated by Don Perrin whom I suspect was an early member of this society, I learn that *Conospermum* is from Greek 'conos' for cone and 'spermum' a seed, so we have a cone like seed which of course we don't see. *Comesperma* on the other hand is derived from the Greek 'come'

meaning hair and 'sperma' meaning seed, again not readily visible; so none of the above is much use to our memory. A bit corny perhaps but my memory trick is to associate Conos with ice cream cone, i.e. white, and give it to Mum.

Next month I will write about Waratahs and the reason for their

profusion. Happy walking in the bush. —  
**The Bunyip.**

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**  
DECEMBER

**BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY NATIVE PLANT NURSERY**  
**OPEN TUESDAY MORNINGS 9 am to 12 noon**  
**PLANT SALES VOLUNTEERS ARE WELCOME TO HELP**  
**CONTACT DAVID COLEBY 84.1395**

- 01 (Sun) **The Ruined Castle.**  
Meet outside Gearins Hotel, Katoomba, at 9.30. Duration 6 hours. Grade 8. Contact Chris Woods 82.3419. (Steep descent and ascent of Golden Stairs.)
- 02 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — Evans Lookout, Clifftop Walk, and Rachel's Track** (Car swap). Meet at Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre at 9.30. Contact John Gaynor 87.6071.
- 07 (Sat) **CHRISTMAS PARTY** in The Hut picnic ground. Meet at 10 am for a short bushwalk followed by a picnic lunch. A barbecue will be available. Bring your own meat and drinks and a plate (with food on it) to share. (A fold-up chair might also be useful.) Contact Christine Davies 87.7246.
- 09 (Mon) **Nature Track Bushcare Group.** Meet at The Hut at 9 am.. Bring your own gloves and morning tea. Tools are provided, but extra secateurs could be handy. Contact Jessica 57.2783.
- 09 (Mon) **Leisure Walkers' Christmas Lunch at Hargrave's Lookout.** There will be a short walk followed by lunch. Meet at the Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre at 10.30 am. (lunch at 12). Bring a plate of food to share. Contact Norah Gaynor 87.6071.  
(Note: Leisure Walks will resume on 13 January 1997.)
- 10 (Tues) **Nursery's Champagne and Orange Christmas Lunch** at Govett's Leap picnic area at 12 noon. All welcome. Bring a plate of food to share.
- 14 (Sat) **Macro Invertebrates Day.** Old Ford Reserve, Megalong, 10 am. (See page 1)
- 17 (Tues) **Committee Meeting** at The Hut at 7 pm.
- 18 (Wed) **Bushwalk—Wentworth Falls Lake and Water Nymphs Dell.** Meet Wentworth Falls Railway Station car-park, north side, at 9.30 Grade 5. Contact John Gibbs 82.6509.  
(Note: Bushwalks will resume on 15 January, 1997).

JANUARY

(Note that January Leisure Walks will start at 8.30 a.m.)

- 13 (Mon) **Earlybird Leisure Walk — Den Fenella.** Meet at Wentworth Falls Station car-park (nearest GWH) at 8.30. Contact Lee Tredinnick 57.4030.
- 15 (Wed) **Bushwalk —Lyrebird Dell.** Meet Leura Railway Station car-park at 10 am. Duration 4 hours. Grade 4. Contact Heather Hastie 84.1297.
- 18 (Sat) **Bushwalk** —(To be advised).
- 20 (Mon) **Nature Track Bushcare Group, 9-12.**
- 20 (Mon) **Earlybird Leisure Walk — Echo Point to Leura Cascades.** Meet at Katoomba Station (northside, near Gearin's Hotel) at 8.30. Contact Heather Hastie 84.1297.
- 28 (Tues) **Committee Meeting** at The Hut at 7 pm.
- 31 (Fri) **Bush Dance with Vinegar Hill Bush Band at The Hut at 7.30. ALL WELCOME.**

**Note:** Bushwalks have been graded:- 1-3 easy, 4-7 medium, 8-10 harder. Most walks in the mountains contain some uphill sections. If walkers are in any doubt about their ability to participate in a particular walk they should contact the leader. Bush walks are usually "day" walks and walkers bring their lunch.  
Leisure walks are generally easy to medium grade and conducted at a slow pace. They are usually "morning" walks, lasting about 3 to 3½ hours. Bring morning tea.  
ALL walkers are required to carry drinking water — 1 litre minimum.

**KIDS' CORNER**

*Hut News* would like to hear from children with poems, stories or essays about the Blue Mountains.



**The Jewel Beetle**

One day I went on a bushwalk and as we investigated a *Conospermum longifolium* one of our group spotted a jewel beetle. Looking at it closely I saw it was a dark shade of metallic blue and its wing caps were light yellow with blue spots. When it opened its wing caps I saw its wings were exactly like a fly's but bigger. It was about 5 and a half centimetres big. It was a spectacular moment for me since I had never seen a jewel beetle before this.

*Alex Wylie Atmore, Age 8.*

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